

22-June-2026

Statement from a Department Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water spokesperson

A control operation for all feral animals, including wild horses, in parts of Kosciuszko National Park is currently underway and will finish on 11 July 2026.

This follows:

- The removal of over 5,000 horses in aerial control operations during 2024.
- Aerial control of wild horses in 2025 in limited, specific areas of the park.

Animal welfare is our highest priority. All control activities follow strict standard operating procedures and animal welfare standards. These procedures were developed with RSCPA NSW and independent expert veterinary advice and are informed by legal requirements and are reviewed regularly.

Numerous independent audits and inspections have been undertaken by RSPCA NSW and independent vets with no evidence that horses have been incorrectly shot and no adverse animal welfare outcomes. These include:

- An independent veterinary assessment of the NPWS preliminary program in November 2023 found that the median time to insensibility (death) was less than five seconds and that no non-fatal wounding was detected in the animals or carcasses examined. The assessment identified the use of multiple shots taken in rapid succession as a contributing factor to achieving rapid insensibility and reducing the risk of non-fatal wounding.
- An April 2024 animal welfare assessment by an independent vet also found no departures from the standard operating procedures and no adverse animal welfare outcomes.
- RSPCA NSW audits in 2023 and 2024, found NPWS to be compliant with its standard operating procedures and raised no issues.
- NSW Legislative Council's November 2024 report into the "Proposed Aerial Shooting of Brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park" found "no clear evidence that any breaches of animal welfare have occurred in the aerial culling program to date".

The Daily Telegraph contacted NPWS seeking comment on a range of matters relating to feral horse management in Kosciuszko National Park, including issues raised by third parties and general concerns about animal welfare, rehoming and consultation and responses were provided.

They did not provide any photograph for verification, nor specifics of allegations.