



**ACT**  
Government

Justice and Community Safety

<b>OPERATING PROCEDURE</b>	Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre
<b>OPERATING PROCEDURE NO.</b>	S4.617
<b>SCOPE</b>	Alexander Maconochie Centre

## PURPOSE

To provide the requirements and instructions for safe capture and release of snakes within the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) and its surrounding grounds.

## PROCEDURES

### 1. Appointment of snake handlers

- 1.1. The Director, Safety Health and Wellbeing, Justice and Community Safety, will adopt a formal risk management approach to determine the number of snake handlers required at the AMC facility.
- 1.2. Prior to being appointed as a snake handler, successful applicants will be required to complete a snake handling rescue training program and have a first aid qualification.
- 1.3. Appointed snake handlers will be retrained in this program at least every two years.
- 1.4. Appointed snake handlers will undertake the role according to, and within the bounds of their training and will be appointed for the term of the currency of their qualifications and license.

### 2. Licensing and compliance

- 2.1. The General Manager, AMC must apply for a snake handling licence on behalf of AMC snake handlers every 12 months. ACT Corrective Services will be responsible for all costs associated with training and licensing and provide the required equipment for workers to safely undertake this role.
- 2.2. Where licensing has not been renewed, snake handlers will not be permitted to capture and release snakes.
- 2.3. Licensing only permits snake handlers to capture snakes on the grounds of AMC. This licence and any records required to be kept must be available for inspection by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna or any Conservation Officer.

### 3. Reporting

- 3.1. All snake encounters must be reported through Riskman by the staff who saw the snake.
- 3.2. Where a snake handler captures and releases a snake, the snake handler must record in Riskman the date and duration of captivity, purpose of relocation, where the snake was located and released, species and number of snakes.

- 3.3. The snake handler must also record in Riskman any deceased animals including location, species and reason for death, if known.
- 3.4. Upon receiving information on the location or capture of a reptile that is non-native to the ACT region, the snake handler must immediately notify a conservation officer within Licensing and Compliance or the relevant ACT Parks and Conservation Service district and follow the officer's instructions regarding that animal. Contact for conservation officers are as follows:
  - PCS South - 6207 2087
  - After hours call Access Canberra 13 22 81 and ask for wildlife ranger.
- 3.5. Where a Code Pink occurs all staff present must complete an Incident Report.

#### **4. Capture and release of a snake**

- 4.1. When a snake is sighted on the AMC grounds, a snake handler must be notified immediately.
- 4.2. The area in which the snake is located must be cleared of all detainees. Staff must maintain a safe distance from the snake.
- 4.3. The snake handler must don all PPE and respond with a First Aid Kit that contains two pressure immobilising bandages.
- 4.4. When attending the specified area to remove a snake, the snake handler must have a second person with current first aid training in attendance.
- 4.5. The snake handler will capture the snake in accordance with all licencing guidelines and training.
- 4.6. Once the snake is captured, the second person must walk ahead of the handler to clear the pathway and prevent injury or incident on the walk to the release location.
- 4.7. The second person assisting the handler must pick up a red AMC fire key from the Gatehouse to access the primary release location. If a red AMC fire key cannot be obtained, the snake may be released at the secondary location.

*The primary release location for captured snakes is outside the external perimeter, using the fire gate on the southern perimeter. A secondary release location is at the furthest eastern perimeter of the AMC property, near the storm water swale. Snake handlers are provided maps of these areas and may contact Facilities Management for information if necessary.*
- 4.8. The snake handler must release the snake as soon as possible and at the latest within two hours of the snake being captured.
- 4.9. Where a captured snake is found to be injured and needs to be euthanised to alleviate suffering, the snake handler must take the snake to a qualified veterinarian for lethal injection.
- 4.10. Should a bite occur, the second person will:
  - a. call a Code Pink
  - b. keep the bite victim calm and still
  - c. apply pressure bandage
  - d. administer any other appropriate first aid in accordance with first aid training

- e. maintain security of the area, ensuring other workers and detainees are at a safe distance
- f. monitor the location of the snake and maintain a safe distance.

## **5. Personal Protective Equipment**

5.1. The following personal protective equipment must be used by the snake handler when attending to the capture and release of snakes by the snake handler:

- a. leather boots
- b. snake gaiters and long trousers
- c. long sleeve shirt
- d. Leather gloves
- e. first aid kit
- f. Capture Kit

## **6. Environmental management**

6.1. To reduce the suitability of the environment for snake populations, good housekeeping practices should be implemented. These include but are not limited to:

- a. prompt disposal of rubbish (e.g., food scraps)
- b. keeping external doors to buildings closed
- c. maintaining grass at low level
- d. removing ground cover plants near walkways
- e. controlling rodent populations.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS**

- Licensing and Compliance, Territory and Municipal Services, ACT Government: Snake Handling Licence and Compliance requirements
- Code Pink Medical Emergency Procedure
- Riskman
- Incident Reporting, Notifications and Debriefing Policy

Corinne Justason  
Deputy Commissioner Custodial Operations  
ACT Corrective Services  
11 April 2022

**Document details**

Criteria	Details
Document title:	<i>Corrections Management (Snake Handling – Alexander Maconochie Centre) Operating Procedure 2022</i>
Document owner/approver:	Deputy Commissioner, Custodial Operations, ACT Corrective Services
Date effective:	The day after the notification date
Review date:	3 years after the notification date
Responsible Officer:	General Manager, Alexander Maconochie Centre
Compliance:	This operating procedure reflects the requirements of the <i>Corrections Management (Policy Framework) Policy 2020</i>

Version Control			
Version no.	Date	Description	Author
V1	January 2022	First Issued	S Leedham