Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

**Management plan template**

*Exhibited Animals Act 2015*

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| Applicant name: | Click here to enter text. |
| Applicant company: (if applicable) | Click here to enter text. |

Part A - Species detail

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| This application is for: ***(click box to select/deselect)*** |
| [ ]   | A particular animal |  |
| [x]  | A single species |  |
| [ ]  | Animals of a taxonomic grouping (e.g. more than one sub-species). |  |
|  | Please indicate which category. |  |
|  | [ ]  A [ ]  B [ ]  C1 [x]  C2  |  |
|  |  |  |
| In the table provided record the common name, scientific name, maximum number of animal’s proposed (male and female if relevant) and indicate the relevant box for breeding requirements. If there is not sufficient space provided you may attach a list of the information and submit it with this Management Plan application. |
| **Common name** | **Scientific name** | **Maximum number proposed** | **Breeding** | **Nonbreeding** |
| Meerkats | *Suricata suricatta* | 6M | [ ]  | [x]  |
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**Part B - Relevant experience**

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| [ ]   | Relevant up-to-date experience for the proposed species held by the department |
| [x]  | Relevant up-to-date experience for the proposed species attached |
| [ ]  | Relevant up-to-date experience for the proposed species detailed below: |
|  | Click here to enter text. |

Part C - Species Exhibition and dealings

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| How do you propose to keep the animal: ***(click one or more boxes to select/deselect)*** |
| [ ]  | In a travelling collection (i.e. no fixed location)? (e.g. not held at a regular enclosure site within Queensland) |
| [ ]  | In a regular enclosure at the regular enclosure site not available for viewing by the public? |
| [x]  | In a regular enclosure at the regular enclosure site that is open to the public most of the time? |

Part D - Exhibition & dealing activities proposed

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| How do you propose to exhibit the animal: ***(click one or more boxes to select/deselect)*** |
| [x]  | In its regular enclosure at the regular enclosure site? *(e.g. primary enclosure at the zoo)* |
| [ ]  | In a controlled area outside the regular enclosure at the regular enclosure site? *(e.g. in a stadium, stage area or other designated area within the zoo)* |
| [ ]  | In a regular enclosure, in a controlled area outside the regular enclosure site? *(e.g. in a fully enclosed enclosure displayed on tables under a marque enclosed with bollards or a 1.2m high removable barrier or in a fenced area surrounded by 6 foot removable cyclone mesh fence)* |
| [ ]  | In a controlled area outside the regular enclosure site? *(e.g. removable snake pit with 1.2m high walls with canvas floor sewn into the bottom of the walls or completely enclosed fenced off area with)* |
| [ ]  | Outside a regular enclosure and controlled area off the regular enclosure site? *(e.g. roaming with carpet python at a school fete or market place)* |
| [ ]  | Recording the animal’s image at the regular enclosure site for display to the public? *(e.g. posting images and recorded footage of authorised animals in social media networks)* |
| [ ]  | Recording the animal’s image for the purposes of film and television production? |

Part E - Significant relevant risks and relevant adverse effects

For ***each*** activity proposed in part C complete details below by identifying:

* any significant relevant risks or adverse effects; and
* how you propose to manage these risks associated with the exhibition and dealing of the animal(s) for each of the topics below:
1. Please record details or forward attachments of details for the regular enclosure at the regular enclosure site for the animal and identify the maximum number of each species that will be held within the proposed enclosure *(e.g. plans, photos, diagrams, enclosure specifications).*

**Meerkats have specific needs for space, shade, sun, shelter, stimulation, enrichment and to promote natural behaviours for viewing, digging and denning. Construction of the enclosure will meet the NSW Standards for Exhibiting Carnivores in NSW in relation to space/animal. The enclosure has double door entry and will be a total of 80m2 plus an additional night denning area that is fully enclosed. A concrete foundation under the substrate will prevent digging.**

**A sand substrate will allow the natural instinct to dig however will not support the construction of burrows that may collapse and suffocate the animals. Various piping sizes with a minimum of 150 mm piping will be provided as substitute burrows which will interlink with chambers constructed with timber to act as dens. As per attached plans the enclosure walls will be Color Bond and therefore unclimbable and additional glass viewing areas will be incorporated into the Color Bond panels as per the attached (specifications included).**

**The enclosure will be furnished with tree stumps, logs and roots and additional enrichment toys to allow for areas to forage in, elevation for sentry duties and areas to hide in the event of perceived danger.**

1. Please record details or forward attachments for all other regular enclosures, other proposed authorised enclosures or controlled areas you will use for the animal and record the maximum number of each species that will be held within the proposed enclosures where relevant *(e.g. travelling enclosures, holding enclosures, controlled areas).*

**Transport will only be required if being taken to the vet surgery. Every effort will be made to have the vet attend any sick individuals at the regular enclosure. A secure key locked carry case will be used if required to travel animals to the vet. Advice will be sought from a veterinary surgeon regarding the need to sedate individuals during travel periods.**

**A separate housing area for sick or recovering animals will be available and can be reviewed in the “Multi species quarantine enclosure guidelines”.**

1. Identify animal welfare risks and how they will be managed relevant to the exhibition and dealing activities proposed *(e.g. enclosure fixtures, heating, water, diet, enrichment, training and conditioning).*

**Meerkats need to regulate their body temperature. Shade will be provided through structures and trees to provide areas where they can sprawl to reduce heat and areas for exposure to the sun during cold weather. During winter heat pads will provide additional warmth in the den.**

**Meerkats require access to good quality water and three automatic water feeders will be installed in areas where they will be shaded from the sun and easily accessible. Feeders will be regularly cleaned and disinfected.**

**Meerkats require access to good quality feed and the ability to forage. We will be feeding predominantly insects, mealworm and some meat in a way that mimics their natural instinct to forage. Food will be hidden in containers and treat balls to encourage foraging and will be buried in suitable containers to encourage searching and digging. For further details please see attached diet schedule.**

**Sufficient vegetation will be provided in the enclosure that will attract insects, spiders, beetles, lizards etc which will provide an added food source and enrichment opportunities. Additionally we will be feeding seasonal fruit and vegetables as an alternative nutrient source and to provide variety and interest. Vitamin and mineral supplements will be provided if appropriate (on veterinary advice).**

1. Identify the relevant human safety risks associated with the exhibition and dealing of the animal relevant to the proposed activities (excluding public interaction activities).

**There are no significant human safety risks with meerkats. The meerkats being sourced are captive bred and have all been imprinted at an early age. They could inflict small painful bites so to minimise these risks keepers are trained in proper handling and capture of meerkats. Scoop nets are used if necessary to minimise handling when needing to capture individuals. For further details regarding the daily care of this species including handling, enclosure cleaning please refer to the “Meerkat daily procedures guide”.**

**Meerkats must be handled to minimise negative impacts. Staff attending to the enclosure will be trained in safe handling and restraint of meerkats. Records of training and qualifications will be held on site. To accustom animals to being handled keepers will regularly hand feed individuals and allow individuals to approach and sit with them whilst being fed.**

1. If any of the activities proposed with species involve public interaction, provide detail including any significant relevant risks and how they will be managed.

**No public interaction is planned with the meerkats.**

1. Identify any other significant animal welfare, biosecurity or safety risks that could be associated with the proposed exhibition and dealings of the animal.

**Disease spread can be a risk. Respiratory problems are most common. Meerkats in captivity appear to be susceptible to Toxoplasmosis so thorough disinfection of all cleaning equipment and the control of feral animals and also vermin are done in accordance with our “Control and Eradication Management Procedures”. Raking of the enclosure will be completed every morning to remove all faecal matter, old food, and expose areas of soil to sun.**

**All meerkats will be thoroughly vet checked and vaccinated for common diseases using our regular vet who has skills and experience of exotic mammal veterinary practices. Daily inspections will be undertaken to observe individuals and records will be kept on individual weight, behaviour, appetite and general health. Vet intervention will be taken at the earliest sign of ill-health.**

**Suitable biosecurity risk mitigation measures will be used to mitigate disease spread between enclosures. Staff known to be exposed to disease will clean and disinfect footwear on leaving higher risk areas and prior to entering the enclosure. Hand sanitisers are available for use. Keepers are trained to use hand sanitizers on entry and exiting each enclosure.**

1. How you will manage reproduction of the animal, including for example arrangements for progeny of the animal if breeding permissions are requested?

**All males**

1. What are the relevant adverse effects associated with exhibition and dealing of the animal related to the proposed activity(s) and how will they be prevented or minimised? *(e.g. How will the applicant prevent or minimise an event such as escape, theft, animal attack or other for each activity proposed. If an event were to occur how the applicant proposes to prevent or minimise the effects on animal welfare, health, safety or wellbeing of a person or social amenity, the economy and environment.)*

**Meerkats are inquisitive animals and may follow a keeper in search for food. Escape may also be possible by digging under the perimeter enclosure fence or by climbing the enclosure wall. Escape is mitigated by including a 2m high by 1.5m wide double door self-closing entry and exit point for keepers. Additionally the enclosure will be fully roofed preventing escape and the substrate will be fully concreted to prevent digging their way out.**

**Theft is unlikely as there will be no public access to the enclosure. Cameras are installed as a safeguard and a security guard stationed at the front entrance employed to watch the various live camera feeds. All doors will be key locked at all times and meerkats will be locked in night dens at night. In the event of theft the police will be contacted and Biosecurity Queensland notified.**

**Part F - Supporting information checklist**

Please indicate in the boxes provided how, if any, the relevant documents have been submitted:

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| **Document** | **Up-to-date documents held by the department**  | **Document attached** | **Information detailed****this management plan** | **Not Applicable** |
| Policies including procedures and guidelines .  | [ ]  | [x]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Pictures, diagrams and plans of proposed regular enclosure. | [ ]  | [x]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Pictures, diagrams and plans of other proposed enclosures and controlled areas.  | [ ]  | [x]  | [ ]  | [ ]  |