

Date: 31 December 2012  
Ref: WC 02680/12

Mr Jürgen Schilfarth  
Chairman  
European Elephant Group

JMFMSF@aol.com

Dear Mr Schilfarth

I refer to your correspondence recommending changes be implemented for managing elephants at Sydney's Taronga Zoo.

Firstly, I am very pleased to inform you that Ms Lucy Melo, the senior keeper injured in the incident involving the juvenile elephant, Pathi Harn, has returned to work and is back with her beloved elephants.

WorkCover has made enquiries into this matter and met with management, staff and Work Health and Safety representatives of Taronga Zoo. I can assure you that a review of elephant management practices has been undertaken and advice sought from professionals in Australia and overseas. This has resulted in changes being made to the Zoo's systems of work.

As part of those changes I can inform you that Pathi Harn, and the other male juvenile, Luk Chai, have been in transition from 'free contact' to 'restricted contact' for several months, with the training for this new interaction commencing in May 2012. I am advised that this training is an essential part of the transition process for the effective long-term management of the herd, by ensuring understanding and compliance with all required behaviours once 'restricted contact' is implemented. Other elephants in the herd are also at different stages of training for transition to 'restricted contact' with all expected to be fully trained and managed in that manner by mid-2013.

WorkCover will continue to work with the Zoo and monitor the implementation of the changes to secure appropriate work health and safety standards at the Zoo.

Thank you for your interest in promoting workplace safety for elephant keepers.  
I trust this information is of assistance to you and the European Elephant Group.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Watson', with a large loop at the end of the name.

*John Watson*  
General Manager - Work, Health and Safety  
**Safety, Return to Work and Support Division**