

# Koala search guide

For machine operators





## Managing koalas in forestry operations within native forests and hardwood plantations

There are detailed regulations designed to protect koala habitat and populations in State forests where timber harvesting occurs. All operators are required to have an understanding of the regulations (CIFOA and P&A), and accreditation in identifying habitat, preferred species and koalas in the field. This guide applies to operations being undertaken in native forests and hardwood plantations.

Koalas may be found in all species in all forest types so you must operate under the assumption that there are koalas in every harvest operation. This means you must **continually search** and maintain **constant vigilance**. Don't forget to record your searching on the iPad.

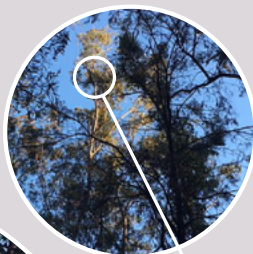
***Note:** This search guide is a reference for machine operators and does not replace the search, habitat protection and training requirements detailed in the regulations. It should be read in conjunction with the:*

- Coastal IFOA (CIFOA) for native forests or Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation (P&A) for plantations
- Forestry Corporation Standard Operating Procedures
- Koala emergency response plan
- Koala information for forestry workers.

## → Search guide

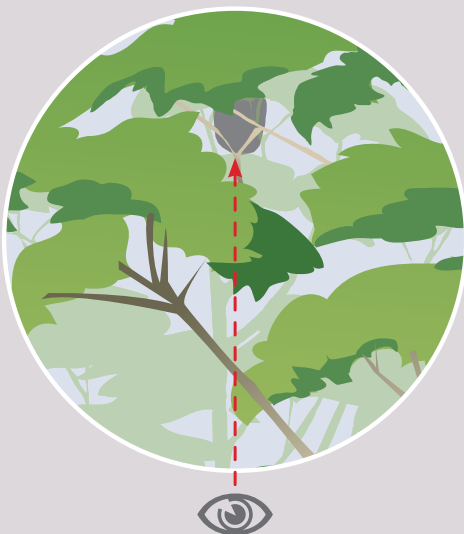
### ① Look everywhere all the time, remembering that koalas are very difficult to spot.

Every tree must be checked before felling, regardless of the species or type of operation. Koalas can be difficult to see high in the canopy so continue to scan and search throughout operations.



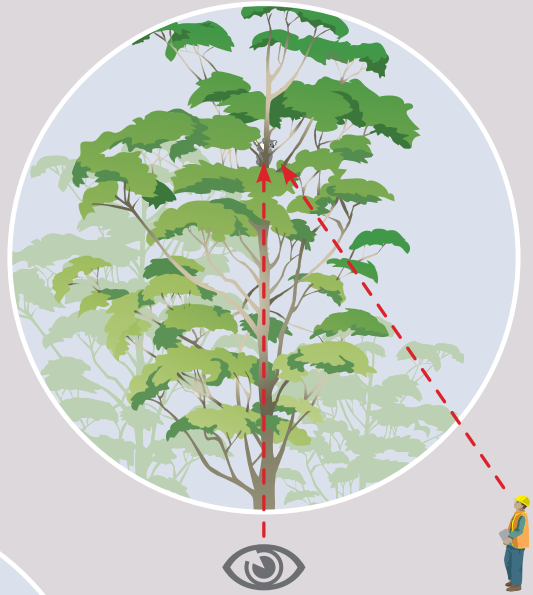
### ② Don't concentrate just on the immediate tree

Visibility changes as you harvest trees and move through the forest. Constantly scan the canopy, forest floor and surrounds.



### ③ Check from a distance – better angle, less obscured

Koalas are more challenging to spot from directly below as there may be foliage below the koala. It is often easier to spot koalas when you are looking at the canopy as you approach an area of forest or from a distance.



## Triage

### **If you see a koala at any time:**

**STOP** any machinery or operations near the koala.

**PROTECT** the koala by establishing a temporary 25-metre radius exclusion around the koala. Do not attempt to move the koala.

**REPORT** the sighting to the Forestry Corporation Harvesting Supervisor who will report to ecologists.

**SEARCH** the exclusion zone. If the koala moves on from the exclusion zone, operations may resume in the area only after the completion of a thorough search coordinated by Forestry Corporation staff, unless a permanent exclusion is created by Forestry Corporation. Operations may not resume without the explicit approval of Forestry Corporation.

### **If the koala:**

- has no visible injuries
- is moving around normally
- is small cat sized or bigger.

### **IT DOES NOT NEED ASSISTANCE.**

### **If the koala:**

- has weeping eyes
- has a brown stain on bottom
- is not placing weight on limb(s)
- is in poor body condition
- is displaying unusual behaviour (e.g. restricted movement, unusual posture)
- is smaller than 6-week old kitten.



**IT NEEDS ASSISTANCE. Follow the emergency response plan to assist in immediate veterinary care.**

### **If the koala is deceased:**

- and not too decomposed, collect and provide to koala care group.
- is too decomposed, take note of its age, sex and other details and provide information to Forestry Corporation.



## Koala emergency response plan

### For the care and transport of a sick or injured koala



**Step 1** – If a koala needs assistance, immediately call Forestry Corporation who will advise if a koala care group or Forestry Corporation ecologist can attend.



**Step 2** – Contain on ground using blanket.



**Step 3** – If koala care group or Forestry ecology staff unavailable, catch koala and transport safely to koala group.

### If transporting a koala:

- Place a blanket over the koala.
- If available, prepare a holding container that allows easy access to get the koala in and out, have enough space so the koala can sit up, provide adequate ventilation.
- Line the bottom of the container with towels.
- Move the koala into the container and place gum leaves in with it to reduce stress.
- Keep the area quiet and shaded.
- Transport the koala directly to a koala care group or veterinary hospital.
- Do not expose or show koala to colleagues as this is stressful for the animal and can cause further issues.
- Contact Forestry Corporation as soon as practical.