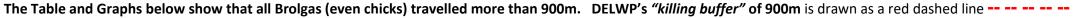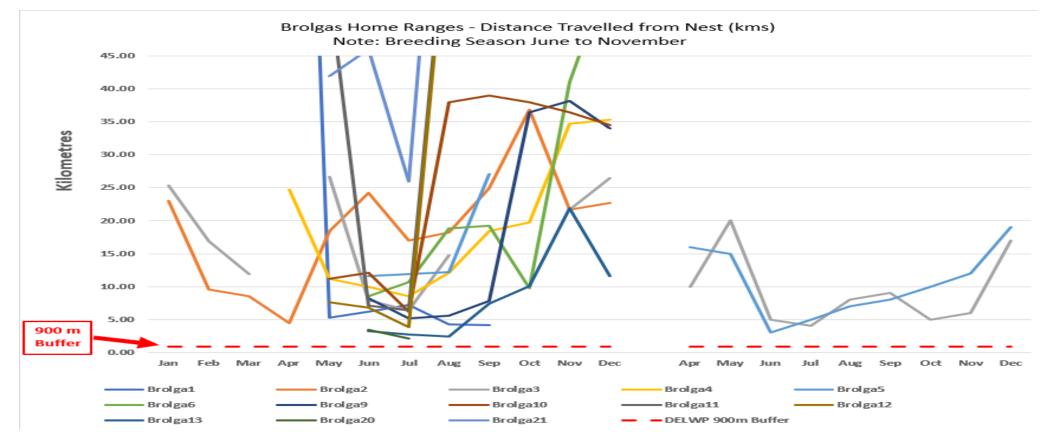# Educating the Lawyers – Lesson 32: Our Brolgas are not for Wind Companies to Kill Off

Wind turbines will annihilate the genetically pure Endangered Southern Brolga Species by displacement unless there is adequate buffering from Brolga nesting home ranges.

Inka Veltheim was commissioned by DELWP (Vic Govt) and the Wind Industry to identify the protection buffer distance needed.

Veltheim tracked 22 Brolgas (walking chicks, flighted chicks, juveniles, and adults) throughout South West Victoria during the years 2011 and 2012, using GPS tracking.

**Her tracking data, graphed below, clearly shows that Brolgas predominantly travel between 5km - 35km from their nests during breeding seasons (June – November).**

Without a minimum 5km buffer from breeding wetlands to turbines, Brolgas are chased away, they won't breed and the genetically pure Southern Brolga species will die off.

But this evidence was damning for wind farm developments. DELWP went into panic mode, suppressed the data, and left Veltheim to report on **walking chicks only.**

In her Thesis, Veltheim ignored the data she collected on the flighted chicks, juveniles, and adult birds. **Her Thesis ignored 93% of the GPS tracking data collected.**

DELWP's proposed buffer of 900m will cause Brolgas to be displaced from breeding home ranges, preventing successful breeding, and eventually **killing off the species.**

**900m is not evidence-based.** By using Veltheim's walking chick data, the Vic Govt has ignored the true buffer size needed to protect Brolgas from displacement by turbines.

Veltheim has since published her full research (Veltheim et al 2022). She now states 5.2 km is the distance 95% of the Brolgas travel whilst in residence at their home range.

**The Table and Graphs below show that all Brolgas (even chicks) travelled more than 900m. DELWP's** *"killing buffer"* **of 900m** is drawn as a red dashed line -- -- -- -- --



Brolgas Home Ranges - Distance Travelled from Nest (kms)
Note: Breeding Season June to November

# Kilometres Travelled from Nest    Source: Inka Veltheim - Brolga GPS Tracking Data

| Brolga | Flocking Range Months | | | | | Home Range - Breeding Months 2011 | | | | | | | | | Home Range / Breeding Months 2012 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Brolga 1 | 173.00 | 181.10 | 177.50 | 169.40 | 5.30 | 6.20 | 7.20 | 4.30 | 4.10 | | 103.30 | 171.30 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 2 | 23.00 | 9.60 | 8.50 | 4.50 | 18.38 | 24.20 | 17.00 | 18.20 | 24.90 | 36.90 | 21.70 | 22.70 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 3 | 25.30 | 16.90 | 11.90 | | 26.70 | 7.90 | 6.40 | 14.80 | | | 21.70 | 26.50 | | 10.00 | 20.00 | 5.00 | 4.00 | 8.00 | 9.00 | 5.00 | 6.00 | 17.00 |
| Brolga 4 | | | | 24.70 | 11.20 | 10.00 | 8.50 | 12.10 | 18.40 | 19.70 | 34.70 | 35.30 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 5 | | | | 30.80 | | 11.60 | 11.90 | 12.20 | 27.10 | | 31.80 | | | 16.00 | 15.00 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 7.00 | 8.00 | 10.00 | 12.00 | 19.00 |
| Brolga 6 | | | | | | 8.50 | 10.70 | 18.80 | 19.20 | 9.80 | 41.00 | 58.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 9 | | | | | | 8.20 | 5.20 | 5.60 | 7.80 | 36.50 | 38.20 | 34.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 10 | | | | | 11.20 | 12.10 | 6.20 | 38.00 | 39.00 | 38.00 | 36.50 | 34.50 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 11 | | | | | 55.00 | 7.10 | 6.40 | 70.20 | 100.30 | 70.80 | 62.80 | 53.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 12 | | | | | 7.60 | 6.80 | 3.80 | 69.00 | 72.00 | 70.50 | 67.20 | 52.50 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 13 | No second year of data for this chick | | | | | 3.20 | 2.73 | 2.43 | 7.39 | 10.10 | 21.90 | 11.60 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 20 | No further data - assumed chick died | | | | | 3.48 | 2.16 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brolga 21 | No obvious nesting | | | | 42.00 | 46.00 | 26.00 | 98.50 | 98.00 | 98.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Insufficient Data: Brolgas 7,8,14,15,16,17,18,19,22    Bird may have died or GPS signal was lost

## Distance (kms)    The Kilometres each Brolga travelled from their nest per month (as per Table). Note Home Range Months June - November