

# 2009 AERIAL SURVEY OF FERAL HORSES IN THE AUSTRALIAN ALPS



Report prepared for the Australian Alps Liaison Committee

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**AUSTRALIAN ALPS**  
NATIONAL PARKS

**Erratum:**

The survey area figures for Victoria and NSW (page 9 of this report), when originally published, were erroneously transposed. They have been corrected in this version (i.e. 1282 km<sup>2</sup> for Victoria and 1578 km<sup>2</sup> for NSW). This error had no bearing on any other data or conclusions presented in the report.

## **Summary**

The feral horse population in the Australian Alps national parks (AANP), extending from the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), through New South Wales (NSW) and into Victoria, has been monitored using helicopter aerial survey in 2001, 2003 and most recently in 2009. These three surveys have been conducted using standardised methods to enable comparison of populations over time. Aerial surveys followed east-west transects spaced 2km apart across the main areas of the known distribution of horses in the Australian Alps national parks, excluding the Byadbo Wilderness in southern Kosciuszko NP and adjacent areas of the Alpine NP, and the Talbingo Dam area of north-west Kosciuszko NP. The survey only covered national parks, so feral horses in adjacent state forest and crown land were not included. Minor modifications to transects were made for the 2009 survey to account for some known changes in distribution since the previous survey in 2003.

Data from the 2009 survey was analysed using line transect techniques for two observers combined (after Walter & Hone 2003). The 2001 and 2003 surveys used this method, though an alternative method using mark-recapture distance sampling has recently been developed (Laake *et al.* 2008). The estimated size of the population from the 2009 survey is 7679 horses (coefficient of variation 25.4%). This represents an annual increase of 21.65% per annum since the previous estimate in 2003, which is close to the maximum intrinsic rate of increase for horses. If the population continues to grow at this rate it will reach over 13 800 horses by 2012, with a likelihood of increased environmental implications. The feral horse population has also increased its distribution since 2003.

Recommendations arising from this survey include:

- Monitoring of feral horse populations in the AANP continues with a suggested five year frequency. That is, the next monitoring survey be conducted in 2014.
- Re-analyse data for 2003 and 2009 using mark-recapture distance sampling (MRDS) (Laake *et al.* 2008).
- Distribution maps of feral horses in the AANP be updated with the results of this survey and other sources.
- Determine habitat preferences of horses in the AANP and predict areas where horses have the potential to spread to.
- Consider incorporating additional areas of feral horse distribution (including Byadbo, Talbingo, adjacent state forests) into future abundance monitoring.
- Group size estimation should be reviewed before conducting the next survey.
- Helicopter set-up should be reviewed before conducting the next survey.

## ***Introduction***

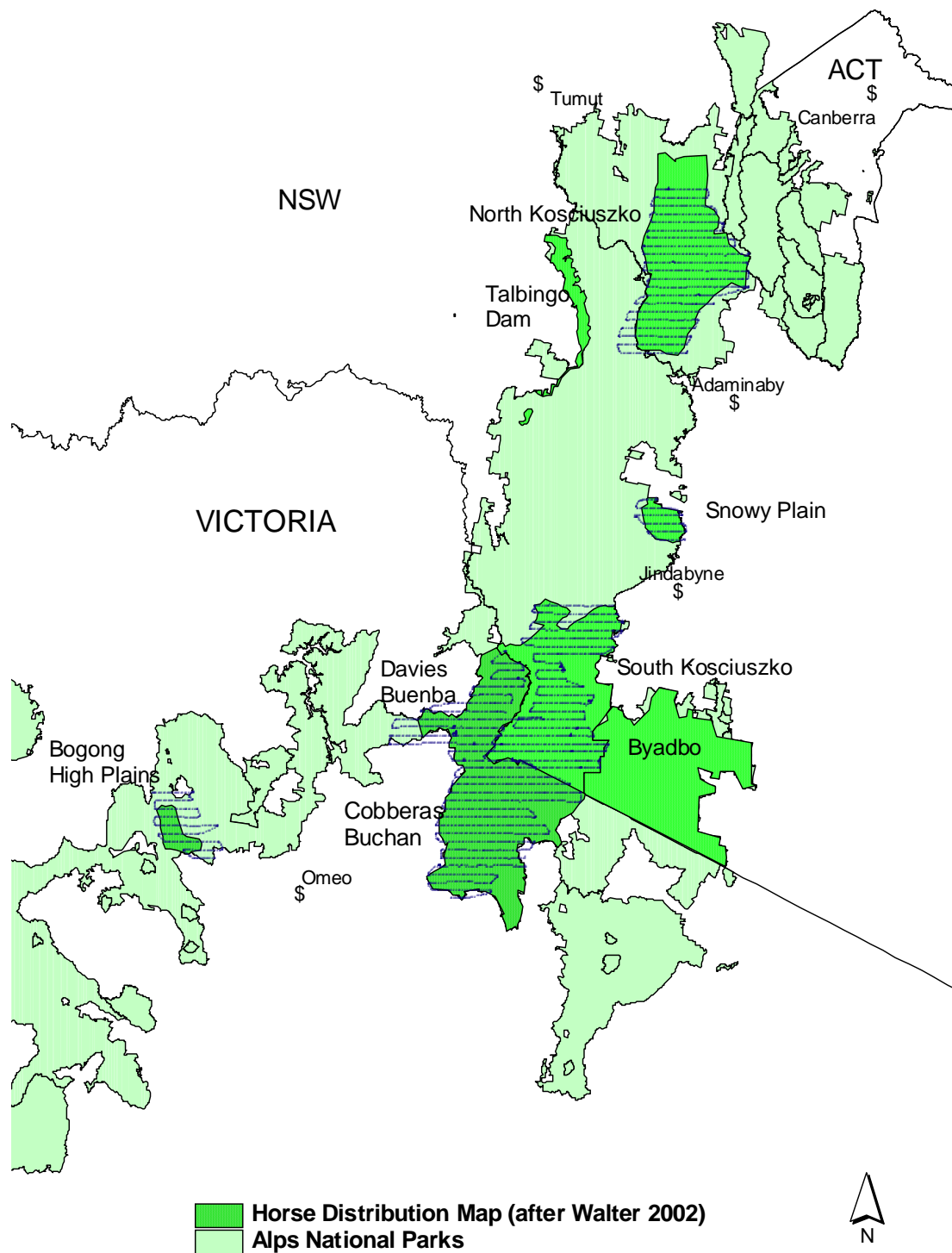
The first aerial survey of the feral horse population in the AANP was undertaken in 2001, resulting in an estimate of 5200 horses (coefficient of variation (CV) = 31.6%) (Walter & Hone 2003). The survey was re-run in 2003, after 71% of the distribution and habitat of the horse population was burnt by wildfire, and the population estimate was 2369 (CV = 33.8%) (Walter 2003). This report presents the findings of the most recent survey carried out in 2009.

## ***Methods***

The survey was conducted over 5 days from the 6-10<sup>th</sup> of April 2009, from a Bell Jet Ranger helicopter with the doors removed, with total flying time of 28 hours. The weather during flights was cold to cool (6- 16°C), clear to partly cloudy with light winds. The time of year, aircraft and weather conditions are the same as previous surveys.

All surveys (2001, 2003 and 2009) were conducted at the same time of year, using standardised methods, so that population estimates can be compared over time and follow those described in Walter and Hone (2003). Transects run east-west, 2km apart following every odd gridline on a 1:100 000 topographic map (2009 transects are illustrated in Map 1 and tabulated in Appendix 1). The aircraft was flown at approximately 100kmhr<sup>-1</sup> at a height of 100m above ground level. The survey used two observers on the left-hand side, one in the front left-hand seat and the second in the rear left-hand seat. The front observer (M. Dawson née Walter) has been consistent between all surveys, but the rear observer has changed (J. Hone in 2001 and 2003, and G. Symonds in 2009). On sighting a group of horses from the air, each observer independently noted the time along the transect, estimated the group size and assigned the group to one of four distance classes from the helicopter (0-50m, 50-100m, 100-150m, 150-200m). The classes were delineated using a bar attached to the underside of the helicopter, which was calibrated prior to the survey.

The 2009 transects were logged during flight (Map 1). There were minor modifications to transects that were flown in previous years to account for range expansion and to exclude areas that have been flown in the past but were not suitable horse habitat (transects that have been modified are indicated in Appendix 1).



**Map 1:** 2009 feral horse aerial survey transects (blue lines) logged during flight. The map also illustrates a feral horse distribution map within the Australian Alps national parks in 2001.

## ***Analysis***

This report analysed the data using line transect techniques for two observers combined (Walter and Hone 2003) because previous surveys used this method and comparisons between years can be made.

Estimates of density of horse groups were made using Program DISTANCE 5.0 (Thomas *et al.* 2006). The observations for both observers were combined into one data set (following Walter and Hone 2003). The 150-200m distance class was excluded from analyses in Program Distance because of an unexpectedly large number of groups sighted in this category. The likely causes of this were that the aircraft flew higher than 100m above the ground (thus we were including horses further than 200m away) or incorrect calibration of survey bar at the start of the survey.

Mean group size and standard error were estimated for each observer and compared to mean group size from previous aerial surveys and ground surveys. The product of estimated total number of groups and mean group size gave the estimated total number of horses. Variance was estimated by the exact variance of the product. The 2001 survey showed that observers underestimated group size because individuals within a group were missed (Walter and Hone 2003). Program DISTANCE's size biased regression group size estimates were also a poor fit and biased low. Therefore, I used mean group size estimates from ground surveys in 2001 ( $5.65 \pm 0.51\text{SE}$ ) in the 2009 calculations after comparing the observed group size of both observers in 2009 to 2001.

The total area surveyed ( $2860 \text{ km}^2$ ) was calculated as total transect length (1430 km) x 2, given that transects were 2km apart. The 150 m strip width used in the survey means that the survey sample represents 7.5% of the total survey area.

## ***Results***

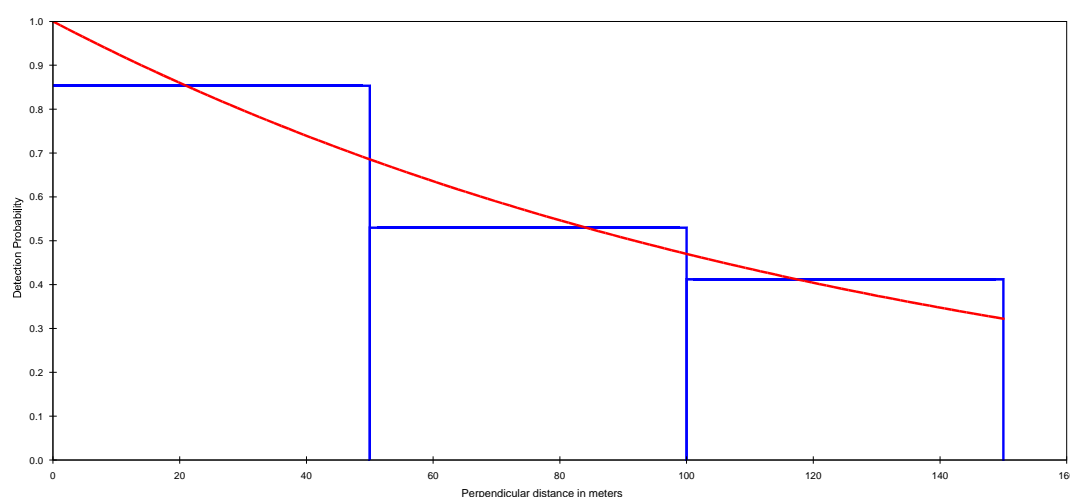
The survey covered an area of  $2860 \text{ km}^2$  (Table 1). Eighty-four unique groups of horses were observed (in the 200 m-wide strip) and the number of groups observed in each region ranged from 0.11 to 0.34 groups per  $\text{km}^2$  of transect (Table 1). Observer 1 saw 58 groups while observer 2 saw 68 groups, 42 of these groups were seen by both observers. The proportion of groups seen by both observers gives an index of sightability in each region and is primarily a function of vegetation cover where continuous and denser vegetation reduces sightability. Sightability, was high on Snowy Plain and the Bogong High Plains (though there were very few samples) and low in Davies Buenba (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Area of regions surveyed for wild horses in the Australian Alps national parks in 2009 and the number of observed groups of horses (before analysis in Program Distance).

| Region             | Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) | Number of groups sighted | Number of groups per km <sup>2</sup> * | Percent of groups seen by both observers |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| Snowy Plain        | 84                      | 1                        | 0.11                                   | 100                                      |
| North Kosciuszko   | 774                     | 26                       | 0.34                                   | 58                                       |
| South Kosciuszko   | 720                     | 24                       | 0.33                                   | 46                                       |
| Davies Buenba      | 372                     | 9                        | 0.24                                   | 11                                       |
| Cobberas Buchan    | 736                     | 19                       | 0.26                                   | 53                                       |
| Bogong High Plains | 174                     | 5                        | 0.29                                   | 80                                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>2860</b>             | <b>84</b>                | <b>0.29</b>                            | <b>50</b>                                |

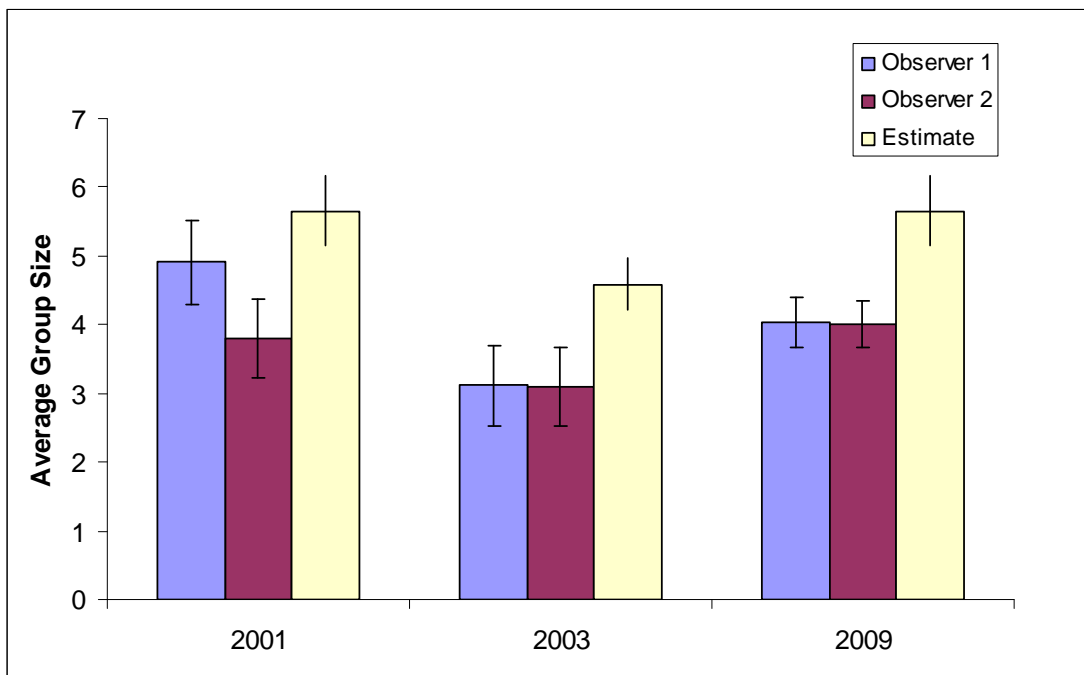
\* Number of groups sighted along transects (200 m-wide)

The estimated density of groups of horses from Program DISTANCE was 0.475 groups per km<sup>2</sup> (CV = 23.9%), which when multiplied by the average group size of 5.65 equates to 2.69 horses per km<sup>2</sup>. This gives a population estimate of 7679 horses over the survey area (CV = 25.4%). The probability of observing a group of horses in the survey area was 0.598. Program DISTANCE selected the negative exponential model with a minimum AIC value of 130.4335 to fit the 2009 data (Figure 1). The goodness of fit (probability of a greater chi square value) of the negative exponential model was 0.69.



**Figure 1:** Negative exponential model fitted to line transect data collected in 2009 for both observers combined from 0-150m.

Sixty-one groups were included in line transect analysis. These represent all of the groups observed by either observer in the 0-50 m, 50-100 m and 100-150 m distance categories (see Appendix 2 for data including the 150-200 m distance category). Mean group size estimates were the same for both observers. Observer 1 saw 4.03 ( $\pm$  0.37 SE) horses per group and observer 2 saw 4.00 ( $\pm$  0.34 SE) (Figure 2). Observed group size of both observers in 2009 to 2001 was not significantly different (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Average size ( $\pm$  SE) of horse groups for observers and the estimate of group size used in population estimation in each aerial survey.

There was no significant difference between the two rear-seat observers' (J. Hone - 2001 & 2003 and G. Symonds - 2009) abilities to observe groups or individuals within groups. The ratio of number of groups sighted, and observed group size compared to observer 1 (M. Dawson – all surveys) were similar (Figure 2).

I have observed an expansion of areas occupied by the feral horses over the last decade (on ground and aerial observations), which has been corroborated by park management staff from Environment ACT, NSW DECC and Parks Victoria. The distribution has expanded:

- In northern Kosciuszko in the Fiery Range, Yellow Bog, Kiandra, and on the ACT border;
- west of Snowy Plain in Kosciuszko NP;
- along the Murray River (near Tom Groggin) on the NSW/Victoria border;



- In Byadbo Wilderness, Kosciuszko and adjacent areas of Victoria; and
- On the Bogong High Plains, Victoria.

## **Discussion**

### **Population Size**

The role of feral horses in the Australian Alps ecosystem is increasing at a landscape level as the population is growing and spreading. The population estimate of 7679 horses (CV = 25.4%) in 2009 is the highest recorded for horses since monitoring began in 2001 and is likely to be the highest in the history of the Australian Alps. Feral horse populations were initially small after they were released in the mid-1800s and were subsequently controlled by leaseholding graziers. Evidence suggests that the sudden growth in the population is only recent (see Walter 2002: Chapter 2).

The feral horse population has fluctuated since monitoring began in 2001 (Table 2). The population size dropped dramatically between 2001 and 2003 coinciding with severe and extensive wildfires (Walter 2003). The estimated rate of increase in the feral horse population between 2003 and 2009 of 21.65% per annum ( $\lambda = 1.2165$ ) is very close to the maximum intrinsic rate predicted by Walter (2002: p. 70) of  $\lambda = 1.22$  for the Australian Alps. This indicates that there have been minimal factors limiting the growth of the feral horse population over the last 6 years. If the population continues to grow at this rate, it is predicted to exceed 13800 by 2012. A study on population dynamics of feral horses in the AANP at three localised sites suggested that populations may become food limited at densities of 6.4 horses/km<sup>2</sup> (Walter 2002: Chapter 4) (more than double the density estimate for 2009).

**Table 2:** Summary of results from feral horse aerial surveys in 2001, 2003 and 2009.

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b> | <b>Density (horses / km<sup>2</sup>)</b> | <b>Abundance</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>CV</b> | <b>Source</b>      |
|-------------|------------------------------|--|------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| 2001        | 2789                         | 1.86                                     | 5200             | 1643      | 31.6%     | Walter & Hone 2003 |
| 2003        | 2717                         | 0.87                                     | 2369             | 800       | 33.8%     | Walter 2003        |
| 2009        | 2860                         | 2.69                                     | 7679             | 1950      | 25.4%     | This study         |

The number of horses in each region surveyed can be generally estimated by multiplying the density of horses by the area of the region. Therefore the number of horses in Victoria and NSW (survey areas of 1282 and 1578 km<sup>2</sup>, respectively) would be an estimated 3442 ( $\pm 874$  SE) and 4237 ( $\pm 1076$  SE) respectively. As the data set is larger in 2009 there are opportunities for running analyses separately for smaller land

units. Preliminary analyses were made (for NSW and Victoria separately) and the results were not greatly different to what is presented here. However Program Distance selected different detection functions for different regions, goodness of fit was variable and group size estimates were different for each state. Table 1 illustrated that observers saw different densities of groups in different regions and that sightability differed by region. There may be opportunities to refine the results by stratifying the data to reflect patterns in the landscape. I would recommend stratifying areas with extensive open plains (such as the Bogong High Plains, Snowy Plain and parts of north Kosciuszko) from areas with more continuous woodland and forest because of the different sightability in these areas. Furthermore, groups appear to be larger on the open plains than in woodland and forest independent of sightability (pers. obs.).

### **Distribution**

Horse distribution has changed since it was mapped 8 years ago (Walter 2002). This is supported by reports by parks staff across the AANP in Victoria (C. Pascoe pers. comm.), the ACT (ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands 2007) and in NSW (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2008). The changing distribution of feral horses needs to be monitored along with abundance. Due to the low sampling intensity of aerial survey and its cost, it is not a suitable technique for mapping distribution. Distribution mapping should be done using expert knowledge as outlined in the recommendations, below.

The three aerial surveys undertaken to date have not incorporated estimates of horse numbers in Byadbo and adjacent areas of Alpine National Park or around Talbingo Dam because densities were very low in 2001 and the terrain is very steep (steep terrain reduces the effectiveness of this survey method because it is difficult to retain a survey height of 100m). Park managers have reported an increase in horse numbers in these areas. These areas should be considered for inclusion in future surveys. Horse populations on the boundary of the AANP often continue into adjacent State Forest and other land tenures. Consideration should be given to including these areas in future feral horse monitoring and management programs. Confining feral horse management and monitoring to just AANP tenures will restrict the effectiveness and completeness of such programs.

Knowledge of the potential spread of feral horses is important for a strategic approach to feral horse management. To date there has been no mapping of potential horse habitat that would indicate new areas that horses could colonise. Horses do not currently occupy all suitable habitat within the AANP. For example, there are areas within the

AANP that horses have occurred in the past, such as Namadgi National Park (Higgins 1994). Mapping areas that are suitable horse habitat in the AANP would address this.

### **Analysis**

The 2001 feral horse aerial survey included all areas from the distribution maps for the AANP (Walter 2002), however as we flew the areas, we realised that they incorporated unsuitable habitat in parts of the Buckwong and Buchan Rivers in Victoria, and north of Broken Cart in northern Kosciuszko. Consequently, some were excluded in the 2003 survey and more were excluded in 2009 to expedite surveys. New areas were included in the 2009 survey due to range expansion (appendix 1) however no horses were observed in these areas, which is probably a result of low densities, and low sampling intensity. Adjustments to survey area could result in comparatively higher density estimates over time but this is unlikely to date because any increases from excluding unsuitable habitat has been compensated by adding new areas in which no groups were observed.

Excluding the 150-200m distance class from analyses was necessary however it meant that model fitting in Program DISTANCE was less reliable because fewer parameters could be used. Data and survey bars should be checked each day in future surveys to avoid this problem.

For line transect techniques for two observers combined, the negative exponential models gave the best fit to the data in both 2001 and 2009, while the half-normal model fitted the data best in 2003 (Walter and Hone 2003; Walter 2003). This pattern is intuitive given that vegetation was dense in 2001 and 2009 and sightability decreased rapidly with distance from the aircraft (see Figure 1 for illustration). In 2003 the fires dramatically improved sightability through the vegetation, and subsequently the proportion of horses detected further from the aircraft was high. The negative exponential model (unlike the half-normal) produces high estimates because the function does not cross the x-axis at 1.0. Thus the 2001 and 2009 estimates may be biased slightly high relative to 2003.

It is advisable to review methods for group size estimation. Group size estimation was based on 2001 ground surveys because group size estimates from Program DISTANCE are underestimates (Walter and Hone 2003). Group size has a strong influence on estimates of horse population size and density because they are made by multiplying estimated number of groups by group size.

Analyses in the current report used line transect techniques for two observers combined to allow for comparisons with the 2001 and 2003 surveys. It does not use mark-

recapture theory (instead the data for the two observers are combined), but it does use line transect theory. Computer programs have been developed recently (using the 2001 feral horse dataset) to combine mark-recapture and distance sampling techniques (MRDS) (Laake *et al.* 2008), optimising the advantages of both techniques and minimising their limitations. In essence, mark-recapture theory is used to determine the number of groups sighted on the line ( $g(0)$ ), and line transect theory is used to determine the detection function. It would be advisable to analyse all previous and future data sets using MRDS.

### **Recommendations**

- 1) Monitoring of feral horse populations in the AANP continues with a suggested five year frequency. This would mean the next monitoring survey be conducted in 2014.
- 2) Re-analyse data for 2003 and 2009 using mark-recapture distance sampling (MRDS) (after Laake *et al.* 2008).
- 3) Carry out a review of distribution maps incorporating horse density and habitat mapping. The revised distribution map could be constructed using the information presented here and by using expert knowledge. Parks staff and others with knowledge of feral horses could illustrate on a map with a grid (of approximately 2km<sup>2</sup>) where horses are absent, at low densities, at high densities, or don't know.
- 4) Determine habitat preferences of horses and predict areas where horses have the potential to spread. The distribution map could be overlayed on a vegetation map to determine the habitat preference of horses. It could then be used as a basis for determining the potential spread of horses based on habitat suitability.
- 5) Byadbo and adjoining areas of the Alpine National Park, Talbingo Dam and adjacent State Forests in Victoria and NSW should be considered for inclusion in future surveys.
- 6) Group size estimation should be revisited before conducting the next aerial survey because it has a strong influence on population estimates and current estimates are extrapolated from 2001. Group size should be estimated from ground surveys or from other surveys where groups are followed such as aerial mark-recapture estimates of wild horses using natural markings (Dawson and Miller 2008). Alternatively, it may be possible through analytical means.

- 7) Helicopter set-up should be reviewed prior to undertaking future surveys. In the three surveys conducted to date, the transect bar attached to the helicopter prevents doors being attached. A modified survey boom would allow the rear right-hand door to be attached. As a result, safety, comfort and air movement within the air craft would be improved. The two left-hand doors should remain off to ensure observers have a clear view. The use of harnesses (instead of seatbelts) should also be considered for passenger safety.

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## Appendix 1: Transects

### NORTH KOSCIUSZKO

| Transect | start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|          | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| NK1^     | 647000  | 6027000  | 631300  | 6027000  | 15.7                 |
| NK2^     | 630300  | 6029000  | 647000  | 6029000  | 16.7                 |
| NK3^     | 648000  | 6031000  | 630800  | 6031000  | 17.2                 |
| NK4^     | 631600  | 6033000  | 649000  | 6033000  | 17.4                 |
| NK5^     | 650000  | 6035000  | 632700  | 6035000  | 17.3                 |
| NK6^     | 633500  | 6037000  | 650000  | 6037000  | 16.6                 |
| NK7      | 653000  | 6039000  | 635000  | 6039000  | 18                   |
| NK8      | 638000  | 6041000  | 655000  | 6041000  | 17                   |
| NK9      | 662000  | 6043000  | 638000  | 6043000  | 24                   |
| NK10     | 638000  | 6045000  | 662000  | 6045000  | 24                   |
| NK11     | 662000  | 6047000  | 637000  | 6047000  | 25                   |
| NK12     | 637000  | 6049000  | 662000  | 6049000  | 25                   |
| NK13     | 662000  | 6051000  | 637000  | 6051000  | 25                   |
| NK14     | 637000  | 6053000  | 659000  | 6053000  | 22                   |
| NK15     | 658000  | 6055000  | 638000  | 6055000  | 20                   |
| NK16     | 638000  | 6057000  | 655000  | 6057000  | 17                   |
| NK17     | 655000  | 6059000  | 639000  | 6059000  | 16                   |
| NK18     | 639000  | 6061000  | 654000  | 6061000  | 15                   |
| NK19     | 653000  | 6063000  | 639000  | 6063000  | 14                   |
| NK20     | 640000  | 6065000  | 652000  | 6065000  | 12                   |
| NK21     | 652000  | 6067000  | 640000  | 6067000  | 12                   |
|          |         |          |         |          | <b>386.8</b>         |

^ Transects lengthened for the 2009 survey.

Transect NK22 was not flown due to the lack of suitable habitat and because flying conditions were poor with low sun angle and rugged terrain.

### SNOWY PLAIN

| Transect | Start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|          | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| SP1      | 646000  | 5981000  | 641000  | 5981000  | 5                    |
| SP2      | 638000  | 5983000  | 647000  | 5983000  | 9                    |
| SP3      | 646000  | 5985000  | 637000  | 5985000  | 9                    |
| SP4      | 635000  | 5987000  | 646000  | 5987000  | 11                   |
| SP5      | 641000  | 5989000  | 635000  | 5989000  | 6                    |
| SP6      | 637000  | 5991000  | 639000  | 5991000  | 2                    |
|          |         |          |         |          | <b>42</b>            |

## SOUTH KOSCIUSZKO

| Transect            | start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|---------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|                     | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| SK1                 | 630000  | 5965000  | 611000  | 5965000  | 19                   |
| SK2                 | 610000  | 5963000  | 630000  | 5963000  | 20                   |
| SK3                 | 631000  | 5961000  | 610000  | 5961000  | 21                   |
| SK4                 | 609000  | 5959000  | 631000  | 5959000  | 22                   |
| SK5                 | 629000  | 5957000  | 607000  | 5957000  | 22                   |
| SK6                 | 609000  | 5955000  | 629000  | 5955000  | 20                   |
| SK7                 | 626000  | 5953000  | 610000  | 5953000  | 16                   |
| SK8                 | 611000  | 5951000  | 616000  | 5951000  | 5                    |
| SK9                 | 617000  | 5949000  | 611000  | 5949000  | 6                    |
| SK10                | 611000  | 5947000  | 617000  | 5947000  | 6                    |
| SK11                | 621000  | 5945000  | 611000  | 5945000  | 10                   |
| SK12                | 611000  | 5943000  | 624000  | 5943000  | 13                   |
| SK13                | 621000  | 5941000  | 610000  | 5941000  | 11                   |
| SK14                | 609000  | 5939000  | 622000  | 5939000  | 13                   |
| SK15                | 622000  | 5937000  | 606000  | 5937000  | 16                   |
| SK16                | 605000  | 5935000  | 623000  | 5935000  | 18                   |
| SK17                | 624000  | 5933000  | 601000  | 5933000  | 23                   |
| SK18                | 600000  | 5931000  | 628000  | 5931000  | 28                   |
| SK19                | 627000  | 5929000  | 599000  | 5929000  | 28                   |
| SK20                | 599000  | 5927000  | 626000  | 5927000  | 27                   |
| SK21                | 626000  | 5925000  | 610000  | 5925000  | 16                   |
| SK22*               | 614000  | 5923000  | 620000  | 5923000  |                      |
| SK23*               | 622000  | 5921000  | 617000  | 5921000  |                      |
| * not flown in 2009 |         |          |         |          | <b>360</b>           |

## DAVIES/BUENBA

| Transect | start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|          | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| DB1      | 599000  | 5951000  | 606000  | 5951000  | 7                    |
| DB2      | 607000  | 5949000  | 598000  | 5949000  | 9                    |
| DB3      | 597000  | 5947000  | 607000  | 5947000  | 10                   |
| DB4      | 607000  | 5945000  | 595000  | 5945000  | 12                   |
| DB5      | 594000  | 5943000  | 604000  | 5943000  | 10                   |
| DB6      | 604000  | 5941000  | 591000  | 5941000  | 13                   |
| DB7      | 582000  | 5939000  | 602000  | 5939000  | 20                   |
| DB8      | 602000  | 5937000  | 576000  | 5937000  | 26                   |
| DB9      | 575000  | 5935000  | 602000  | 5935000  | 27                   |
| DB10^    | 601000  | 5933000  | 582000  | 5933000  | 19                   |
| DB11^    | 584000  | 5931000  | 600000  | 5931000  | 16                   |
| DB12     | 599000  | 5929000  | 589000  | 5929000  | 10                   |
| DB13     | 590000  | 5927000  | 597000  | 5927000  | 7                    |
|          |         |          |         |          | <b>186</b>           |

^ Transects shortened for the 2009 survey.



## COBBERAS/BUCHAN

| Transect          | start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|-------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|                   | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| NV1               | 610000  | 5925000  | 592000  | 5925000  | 18                   |
| NV2               | 591000  | 5923000  | 614000  | 5923000  | 23                   |
| NV3               | 618000  | 5921000  | 590000  | 5921000  | 28                   |
| NV4               | 589000  | 5919000  | 621000  | 5919000  | 32                   |
| NV5               | 621000  | 5917000  | 588000  | 5917000  | 33                   |
| NV6               | 588000  | 5915000  | 608000  | 5915000  | 20                   |
| NV7               | 610000  | 5913000  | 587000  | 5913000  | 23                   |
| NV8               | 586000  | 5911000  | 613000  | 5911000  | 27                   |
| NV9               | 613000  | 5909000  | 586000  | 5909000  | 27                   |
| NV10              | 587000  | 5907000  | 614000  | 5907000  | 27                   |
| NV11              | 607000  | 5905000  | 588000  | 5905000  | 19                   |
| NV12              | 587000  | 5903000  | 607000  | 5903000  | 20                   |
| NV13              | 607000  | 5901000  | 587000  | 5901000  | 20                   |
| NV14 <sup>^</sup> | 584000  | 5899000  | 600000  | 5899000  | 16                   |
| NV15 <sup>^</sup> | 600000  | 5897000  | 584000  | 5897000  | 16                   |
| NV16 <sup>^</sup> | 585000  | 5895000  | 602000  | 5895000  | 17                   |
| NV17              | 592000  | 5893000  | 590000  | 5893000  | 2                    |
|                   |         |          |         |          | <b>368</b>           |

<sup>^</sup> Transects shortened for the 2009 survey.

## BOGONG HIGH PLAINS

| Transect          | start   |          | end     |          | transect length (km) |
|-------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------|
|                   | easting | northing | easting | northing |                      |
| BHP0 <sup>#</sup> | 516000  | 5919000  | 526000  | 5919000  | 10                   |
| BHP1 <sup>#</sup> | 525000  | 5917000  | 517000  | 5917000  | 8                    |
| BHP2 <sup>#</sup> | 517000  | 5915000  | 527000  | 5915000  | 10                   |
| BHP3 <sup>#</sup> | 527000  | 5913000  | 517000  | 5913000  | 10                   |
| BHP4 <sup>#</sup> | 517000  | 5911000  | 532000  | 5911000  | 15                   |
| BHP5 <sup>#</sup> | 527000  | 5909000  | 518000  | 5909000  | 9                    |
| BHP6 <sup>#</sup> | 520000  | 5907000  | 532000  | 5907000  | 12                   |
| BHP7 <sup>#</sup> | 533000  | 5905000  | 524000  | 5905000  | 9                    |
| BHP8              | 527000  | 5903000  | 531000  | 5903000  | 4                    |
|                   |         |          |         |          | <b>87</b>            |

<sup>#</sup> Transect added, shortened or lengthened for the 2009 survey

## **Appendix 2: 2009 feral horse survey data (Distance input file)**

| <b>Study Area</b> | <b>Area</b> | <b>Transect name</b> | <b>Transect length</b> | <b>Distance</b> | <b>Cluster Size</b> |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP1                  | 5                      |                 |                     |
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP2                  | 9                      |                 |                     |
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP3                  | 9                      | 175             | 4                   |
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP4                  | 11                     |                 |                     |
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP5                  | 6                      |                 |                     |
| Snowy Plain       | 84          | SP6                  | 2                      |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK1                  | 15.7                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK2                  | 16.7                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK3                  | 17.2                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK4                  | 17.4                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK5                  | 17.3                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK6                  | 16.6                   |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK7                  | 18                     | 75              | 1                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK8                  | 17                     | 75              | 17                  |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK8                  |                        | 125             | 6                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK8                  |                        | 175             | 4                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK9                  | 24                     |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK10                 | 24                     | 175             | 4                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK10                 |                        | 25              | 6                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK11                 | 25                     | 175             | 1                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK11                 |                        | 25              | 3                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK12                 | 25                     | 125             | 11                  |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK12                 |                        | 75              | 6                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 | 25                     | 25              | 1                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 |                        | 25              | 5                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 |                        | 175             | 7                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 |                        | 175             | 4                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 |                        | 125             | 3                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK13                 |                        | 125             | 4                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK14                 | 22                     |                 |                     |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK15                 | 20                     | 175             | 1                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK15                 |                        | 125             | 9                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK16                 | 17                     | 175             | 4                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK17                 | 16                     | 25              | 7                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK17                 |                        | 175             | 2                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK18                 | 15                     | 175             | 2                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK18                 |                        | 125             | 5                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK19                 | 14                     | 75              | 2                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK19                 |                        | 25              | 9                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK20                 | 12                     | 175             | 1                   |
| North Kosci       | 774         | NK21                 | 12                     |                 |                     |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK1                  | 19                     |                 |                     |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK2                  | 20                     |                 |                     |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK3                  | 21                     | 25              | 2                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK4                  | 22                     |                 |                     |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK5                  | 22                     | 175             | 10                  |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK5                  |                        | 125             | 8                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK5                  |                        | 75              | 6                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK5                  |                        | 25              | 2                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK6                  | 20                     | 75              | 1                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK7                  | 16                     | 175             | 2                   |
| South Kosci       | 720         | SK8                  | 5                      | 25              | 5                   |

|             |     |      |    |     |   |
|-------------|-----|------|----|-----|---|
| South Kosci | 720 | SK9  | 6  | 175 | 4 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK10 | 6  |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK11 | 10 |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK12 | 13 |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK13 | 11 |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK14 | 13 |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK15 | 16 | 75  | 8 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK16 | 18 |     |   |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK17 | 23 | 25  | 3 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 | 28 | 75  | 4 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 |    | 25  | 1 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 |    | 75  | 5 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 |    | 125 | 3 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 |    | 25  | 2 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK18 |    | 125 | 2 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK19 | 28 | 25  | 1 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK19 |    | 175 | 3 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK20 | 27 | 25  | 4 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK20 |    | 25  | 1 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK20 |    | 125 | 4 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK21 | 16 | 75  | 3 |
| South Kosci | 720 | SK21 |    | 25  | 4 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB1  | 7  |     |   |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB2  | 9  | 25  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB3  | 10 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB4  | 12 | 175 | 3 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB5  | 10 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB6  | 13 | 175 | 3 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB7  | 20 | 25  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB8  | 26 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB9  | 27 | 25  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB9  |    | 25  | 3 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB10 | 19 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB11 | 16 | 25  | 2 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB12 | 10 | 75  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 372 | DB13 | 7  | 75  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV1  | 18 | 175 | 7 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV1  |    | 25  | 6 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV2  | 23 | 175 | 4 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV3  | 28 | 25  | 3 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV4  | 32 | 125 | 3 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV5  | 33 | 175 | 1 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV5  |    | 175 | 1 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV6  | 20 | 75  | 3 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV6  |    | 75  | 2 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV7  | 23 | 75  | 5 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV7  |    | 25  | 8 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV7  |    | 75  | 2 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV8  | 27 | 25  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV9  | 27 | 25  | 1 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV10 | 27 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV11 | 19 |     |   |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV12 | 20 | 75  | 3 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV12 |    | 25  | 2 |
| North Vic   | 736 | NV12 |    | 175 | 5 |

|           |     |      |    |     |   |
|-----------|-----|------|----|-----|---|
| North Vic | 736 | NV13 | 20 |     |   |
| North Vic | 736 | NV14 | 16 |     |   |
| North Vic | 736 | NV15 | 16 |     |   |
| North Vic | 736 | NV16 | 17 | 75  | 3 |
| North Vic | 736 | NV16 |    | 25  | 3 |
| North Vic | 736 | NV17 | 2  |     |   |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP0 | 10 |     |   |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP1 | 8  |     |   |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP2 | 10 |     |   |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP3 | 10 | 125 | 4 |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP3 |    | 175 | 6 |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP4 | 15 | 25  | 6 |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP5 | 9  | 125 | 3 |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP6 | 12 | 125 | 8 |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP7 | 9  |     |   |
| Bogong HP | 174 | BHP8 | 4  |     |   |