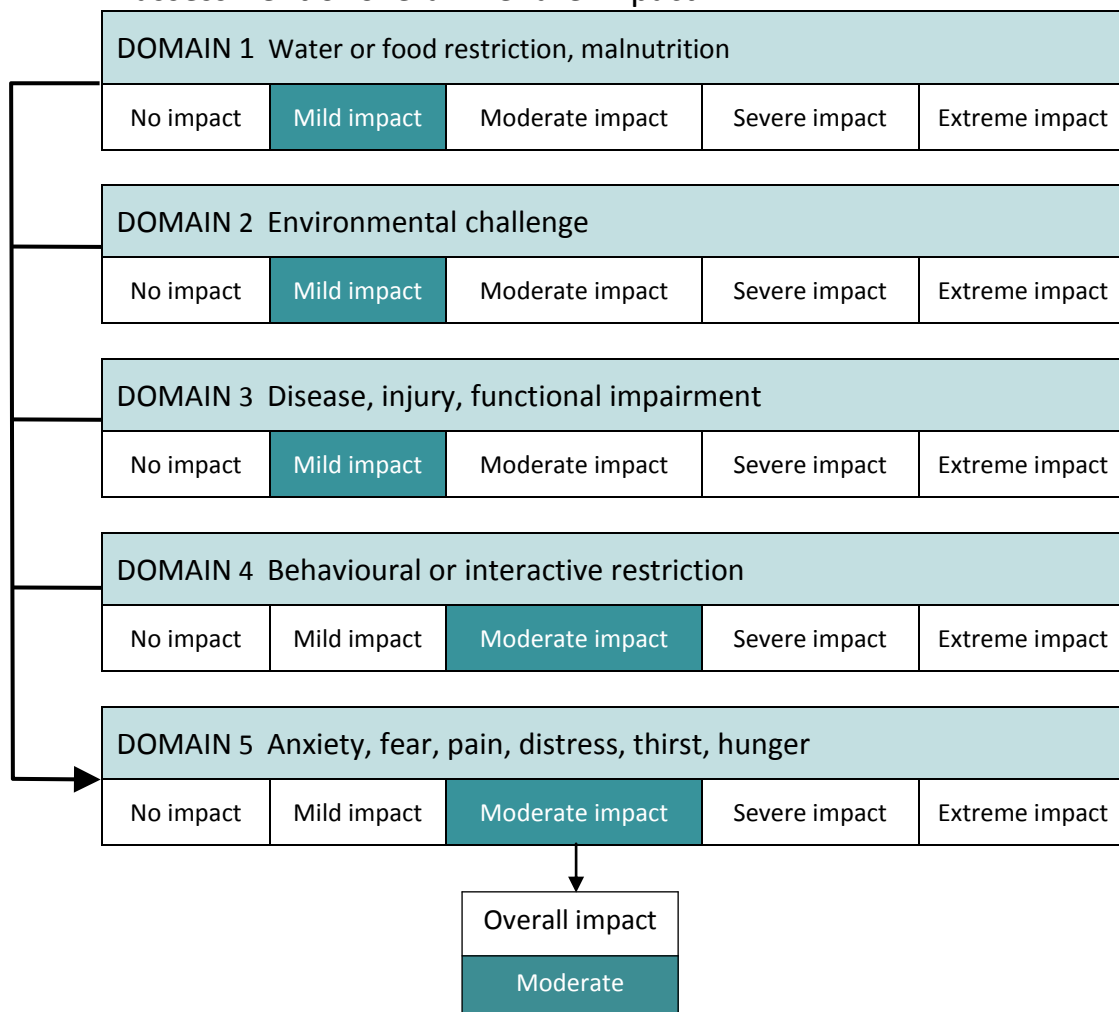


Control method: Yarding and holding feral camels

Assumptions:

- Best practice is followed in accordance with the standard operating procedure CAM003 Mustering of feral camels (<http://www.feral.org.au/tag/camel-sop/>).
- Adequate food and water is available in holding yards, especially if the period from yarding to transportation of animals to abattoir (or elsewhere) is going to be prolonged.
- Yards are appropriately designed to avoid animal injury.
- A skilled operator, who holds an appropriate firearm license, is always readily available with a suitable calibre firearm to euthanase any injured and non-commercial animals.
- Removal of camels for slaughter or export is a multi-stage process. This assessment applies from after mustering into yards (i.e. from when the gate is closed) until immediately before loading for transportation to a domestic abattoir for slaughter (or port, for live export). Separate assessments have also been made for mustering; loading and transport to the abattoir; and lairage and slaughter. The assessment of the impact of yarding and holding should not be considered in isolation from these other stages as the cumulative effects of these procedures will compound welfare impact.

PART A: assessment of overall welfare impact



Date of assessment: 23/09/2013

Last saved: 4/11/2013 9:29 AM

DURATION OF IMPACT				
Immediate to seconds	Minutes	Hours	Days	Weeks

SCORE FOR PART A:	6-7
Summary of evidence:	
Domain 1	<p>When camels are mustered into yards it can take a few days for them to become accustomed to taking food and water from a trough, so there may be a short period water and/or food restriction.</p> <p>A significant problem with holding camels in yards in remote areas, is the logistics of providing them with food and water whilst they are waiting to be transported. There are limited numbers of trucks adapted for the transport of camels, therefore holding periods can be long (sometimes around 2 weeks). If adequate food and water is not provided during this time, then the impacts in this domain will be much more severe.</p>
Domain 2	<p>Shade is typically not available in the yards, therefore there is likely to be some exposure to environmental extremes during holding. However, shade is not as important for camels as for other species as they have adapted to living in environments with very little shade.</p>
Domain 3	<p>There is a chance that injuries could occur when camels first enter the yards, especially if any animals try to escape, however the camels usually adapt well to being confined and settle down quickly. Drafting animals into compatible groups promptly will help to prevent injuries from fighting. If yards are poorly designed or are badly constructed with protruding sharp edges, the impact in this domain will be higher.</p>
Domain 4	<p>Yarding and holding feral camels causes significant behavioural restriction as the animals are confined in yards and are drafted into different groups so cannot perform the full range of natural behaviours. Unfamiliar animals can get forced together, whilst social groups can get split up resulting in negative impacts. For example, penning multiple bulls together with a cow will result in excessive aggression among the bulls and separation of a dependent young from its mother will cause agitation in both the calf and the female.</p>
Domain 5	<p>Camels are likely to experience a moderate degree of distress during yarding and holding due to the combination of disrupted (and sometimes restricted) feeding, behavioural restriction, human handling and also injuries, fear, anxiety etc. related to changes in social structure.</p>

PART B: assessment of mode of death

Not performed – see assessment for slaughter

Summary

CONTROL METHOD:	Yarding and holding feral camels
OVERALL HUMANENESS SCORE:	6-7
Comments A descriptive, qualitative study of a single mustering operator, at one location over two days involving the yarding of approximately 500 camels, has been performed to assess some of the animal welfare impacts of mustering (unpublished data, J. Hampton). In this study the yard site, size, design and drainage were all deemed to be appropriate. No sharp edges, barbed wire or narrow wire were present in the yards. All animals had access to drinking water and adequate quality feed inside the yards. Males and females were not separated for at least 16 hours after mustering. As there were no bulls in rut at the time of the observations, there was deemed to be less urgency to separate male and female animals. Bull-catcher vehicles were used inside the yards to facilitate flow of animals.	