

What Do UXO and Kangaroos Have in Common

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Canberra, Australia The Australian Defence [Defense] Department announced that they want to shoot close to 3,000 kangaroos within the Majura military training range. The Defense Department claims that the kangaroo population in the area is so dense (estimated at 1,100 kangaroos per square mile) that the habitat of several endangered species is being destroyed. They also claim that the kangaroo population is too dense for the drought-ravaged environment to sustain and without the thinning of the population, they face starvation.

The plan calls for the Defense Department to hire professional shooters to shoot the kangaroos as early as July. Animal rights activist have actively protested and threatened to trespass on the site to physically stop the shooting. The Defense Department fired back with warnings of UXO in the area as well as threats of prosecuting trespassers. A Defence spokeswoman was quoted as stating the Majura Training Area is "a live firing range that does contain areas of historical UXO" and that the area is currently used as an active firing range that also poses significant hazards to trespassers.

So far it seems as though the UXO warnings are working as one leader of an activist group was quoted as stating that "a road blockade might be more suitable than occupying the site" after learning of the explosive hazards associated with the site. The arguments and debates will surely continue as Canberra's local government is expected to decide this week whether to approve the plan.