



### AUTHORITIES AND ENDORSEMENTS

Amongst other roles, the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS) which is part of the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts oversees the recruitment and training of bird and bat banders in Australia. This is done through the issue of Authorities which are recognised by the State and Territory nature conservation agencies. In broad terms, ABBBS Banding Authorities authorise the holder to use ABBBS bands and may be regarded as "skills tickets", confirming that the Authority holder has a specified level of skills in capture, handling, and banding birds or bats. **Please note that these conditions and requirements are under review, and should be regarded as a guide only.**

### ABBBS BANDING AUTHORITIES

There are currently three classes of ABBBS Banding Authorities in use.

#### A-class Authority

This Authority is issued to competent banders who have sufficient skills and experience to undertake banding without supervision.

- Qualifications:**
1. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.
  2. Applicants are not generally eligible for an A-class authority until they have held a C-class authority for 2 years, and have banded 500 birds or 50 bats, under the direct supervision of an A-class bander.
  3. Applications must be supported by at **least** two reports from A-class supervising banders, attesting to the applicant's experience and competence in methods of capture, handling, measuring and banding birds/bats, and in data management. Referees are expected to state how many birds/bats they have observed the applicant process.
- Projects:** A-class banders may apply to undertake their own projects although many A-class banders elect to assist on projects run by other banders. Bands and other equipment will only be issued for use on approved projects.
- Permits:** A-class banders are required to hold the necessary State/Territory permits to trap, band and release wildlife. State/Territory wildlife agencies are notified of applications for enrolment as an A-class bander.
- Responsibilities:** A-class banders with approved projects are responsible for
1. ensuring accurate and timely provision of all banding data to the ABBBS, preferably in an electronic format following the 'Capture of Disk Data' (CODD) guidelines
  2. supplying bands and equipment for banders assisting with the project
  3. ensuring that all necessary State/Territory permits are held
  4. disseminating the results of their project to the wider scientific community
  5. ensuring that the bird/bat handling and banding techniques employed during their study are always of the highest standard and that the safety of the birds/bats remains of paramount concern to all involved with the work.
- Duration:** A-class authorities are issued for one year.

## R-class Authority

This is a restricted authority enabling the holder to operate under limited A-class supervision and under prescribed conditions. R-class authorities may be issued to people who have substantial banding-related skills but who do not meet the full requirements for an A-class authority. R-class authorities may also be issued to applicants with relevant banding experience seeking to research a specific species for a limited time (eg university research). After a period of training, C-class banders may apply to have their authority upgraded to R-class. It is important to note however, that unsupervised banding generally will not contribute towards qualifying for an A-class authority.

- Qualifications:**
1. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.
  2. Applicants are expected to have considerable banding experience, or particular skills, experience, and knowledge of a target species or group.
  3. Applications must be supported by
    - two referee reports supporting the application, including at **least** one provided by an A-class bander who has first-hand knowledge of the applicants related skills, experience or particular knowledge, and
    - an A-class bander's agreement to provide adequate training and supervision.
    - **For R-class banders wishing to apply for their own project, both referee reports must be from A-class banders, or equivalent.**

**Projects:** In special circumstances, R-class banders may apply to undertake their own projects, although most R-class banders elect to assist on projects run by other banders. ABBBS's support of R-class projects is at the discretion of the ABBBS Project Officer, and is not automatic. Bands and other equipment will only be issued for use on approved projects.

**Conditions:** Conditions may be specified restricting the Authority-holder to prescribed species, circumstances, capture methods etc.

**Duration:** R-class authorities are issued for one year.

**Permits:** R-class banders are required to hold the necessary State/Territory permits to trap, band and release wildlife. State/Territory wildlife agencies are notified of applications for enrolment as an R-class bander.

**Responsibilities:** R-class banders **with approved projects** are responsible for

1. ensuring accurate and timely provision of all banding data to the ABBBS, preferably in an electronic format following the 'Capture of Disk Data' (CODD) guidelines
2. ensuring that all necessary State/Territory permits are held
3. disseminating the results of their project to the wider scientific community
4. ensuring that the bird/bat handling and banding techniques employed during their study are always of the highest standard and that the safety of the birds/bats remains of paramount concern to all involved with the work.

## C-class Authority

This class of authority is issued to enable would-be banders to acquire appropriate training and experience by assisting A-class banders with approved projects. C-class banders are required to **always** band under direct supervision of an A-class bander. C-class banders may not hold any trapping methods endorsements.

- Qualifications:**
1. Applicants must be at least 14 years of age.
  2. Applicants need not have had previous experience in handling and banding birds or bats
  3. The application must be supported by a current A-class bander who shall be responsible for the training and conduct of the C-class Bander.

**Projects:** C-class banders will assist A-class banders on approved projects. Bands and equipment will be provided by the A-class bander/project supervisor. Projects will not be approved for C-class banders, nor will they be issued with bands or equipment by the ABBBS.

**Duration:** C-class authorities are issued initially for one year. **Upgrade or renewal at the end of one year is not automatic.**

**Permits:** C-class banders operating in the ACT, Tasmania and Western Australia are required to hold a State permit to trap, band and release birds or bats. In the other States/Territories, C-class banders are covered by the permit held by their A-class supervisor. In all cases, the State/Territory agencies are notified before issue of C-class authorities.

## **ENDORSEMENTS**

Banding Authorities are endorsed with the capture methods for which the Authority-holder has been assessed as competent. Banding Authorities will carry one of the following endorsements:

Nil (trainee bander)	
Rehabilitated birds/bats only	(Level I)
Basics (not mist- or cannot-nets)	(Level II)
Mist-nets	(Level III(A))
Cannon-nets (birds only)	(Level III(B))
Mist-nets and cannon-nets (birds only)	(Level IV)

Endorsements are renewed along with the Banding Authority and are not intended to be held in perpetuity once granted. They should relate to projects that the bander intends to be involved with.

### **Level I: Rehabilitated birds/bats only**

Banders holding the Level I endorsement may band birds/bats rehabilitated following sickness or injury as part of an approved banding project. Level I endorsement does not infer that the bander is competent to treat the animal's sickness or injury, nor does it include any methods of wild capture. Banders may require a permit from the State or Territory fauna agency to keep birds/bats during the rehabilitation period and it is the bander's responsibility to determine when such permits are required. The minimum qualification for this level is 20 birds/bats processed under supervision. Referee reports are required to progress to higher levels of endorsement.

### **Level II: Basic capture methods**

This endorsement includes rehabilitation banding as well as all capture methods except mist-nets and cannon-nets. This endorsement is typically required by banders who band

- nestling birds
- birds that can be captured by hand (eg shearwaters, penguins, boobies)
- birds that can be trapped with hand-held or thrown nets (eg albatross)
- birds captured using hoop nets, cage traps, and clap-nets
- raptors
- bats

The minimum requirements for this level are:

- using raptor traps - 20 birds processed under supervision
- using other methods - 100 birds/bats processed under supervision.

### **Level III(A): Mist-nets**

This endorsement covers the use of mist-nets as well as rehabilitation banding and basic capture methods. Use of mist-nets requires considerable tuition from experienced operators. The minimum requirements are:

- capture and processing of 100 birds/bats using mist-nets under the supervision of qualified banders
- reports from 2 qualified banders confirming that the applicant is sufficiently experienced and competent in the use of mist-nets.

### **Level III(B): Cannon-nets**

This endorsement covers capture of birds (not bats) using explosively-propelled trapping devices such as cannon-nets, rocket-nets and nonnacs. Banders who will lead a cannon-netting operation are required to hold this endorsement (other banders who assist require Level II or Level III(A) endorsement). The endorsement also covers banding of rehabilitated birds and use of basic capture methods but is **NOT** an automatic endorsement to use mist-nets.

This endorsement will not be given readily and applicants will be expected to show proficiency in all aspects of the use of explosively propelled trapping devices, particularly the safety practices.

The minimum qualifications for Level III(B) are:

- capture and processing of 500 birds using cannon-nets etc under the supervision of qualified banders
- reports from 2 qualified banders confirming that the applicant is sufficiently experienced and competent in the use of explosively propelled trapping devices such as cannon-nets.

A permit to operate an explosive device or to handle explosives may be required from the State or Territory government. Enquiries on this matter should be directed to the relevant State or Territory fauna agency.

### **Level IV: Mist-nets and cannon-nets**

This level of endorsement incorporates all methods of capture dealt with in Levels I, II III(A), and III(B).