

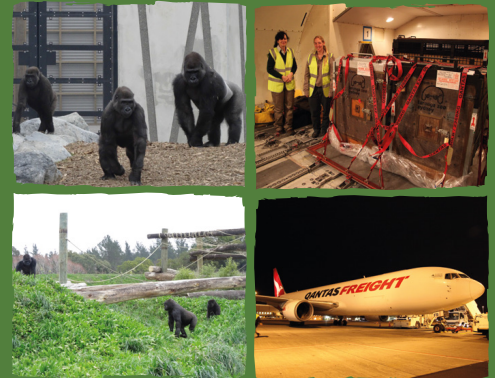
# Group Moves of Great Apes

Moving a single animal, no matter what the species is a difficult task. There are many things to consider such as the logistics of the transfer, whether its within the zoo to a new exhibit or between zoos, the paperwork involved, sedations for health checks, training for injection or crating, will the zoo need to design or construct a crate? How will the animal travel? Will an external transport company need to be involved? Will that animal be in that crate for an extended period of time and the health implications of this, even down to the smallest of details such as the temperature fluctuation the animal may undergo during transit. So many aspects need to be considered to successfully move any animal particularly one as dangerous and intelligent as a great ape. So what happens when a group of animals needs to be moved and does moving multiple animals together make this process even more complicated?

## International move of a Bachelor group of Gorillas from Australia to New Zealand

In 2014 Orana Wildlife Park, South Island, New Zealand embarked on its most ambitious project to date, creating a purpose built Great Ape centre to house the first Gorillas in the country.

Two male gorillas from Taronga Zoo and one male from Mogo Zoo were transferred to a quarantine facility in Sydney and resided on separate sides of the enclosure. On the day of transfer the two Taronga males were separated by a dividing wall within the large bed area leaving only one door through which to remove the animals, which was on the side of the oldest male. Hand injection was attempted at the same time but unfortunately only the youngest was successfully injected. Due to there being more animals than doors he was unable to be removed until the older male was darted, by which time he had regained consciousness and also had to be darted. Once all three males were crated they were transported by truck to the airport where they were loaded onto a freight plane along with minimal air staff including two pilots, one air stewardess and two keepers. The gorillas were checked several times throughout the flight which arrived in Christchurch in the early hours of the morning. The first Gorilla to be unloaded was the smallest and therefore in the smallest crate. Due to a miscalculation the crate was smaller than the crate slide which had to be rectified. The first gorilla unloaded and then moved down to the end of the three beds in order for the second gorilla to be unloaded. The second male also had to be moved down to the second bed to leave enough room for the last and largest gorilla to be unloaded which meant he was in the crate for a longer period of time. Once all three were settled they were introduced together over the next few days and let out to explore the rest of their habitat.



## Internal enclosure move of a group of 17 Chimpanzees



A new three storey chimpanzee habitat with a large outside area was constructed at Twycross Zoo in 2018, named Chimpanzee Eden. The first group of thirteen chimps were hand injected and crated one by one and moved to the new exhibit where health checks were carried out before releasing the animals into their new enclosure.

This was achieved over several days by two teams of keepers and vets, a moving team and receiving team. The moving team were responsible for the hand injections and crating whilst the receiving team performed health checks and recovered the animals.

Many months of preparation into the groups' social structure were needed in order to move four individuals per day that would not destabilise the groups current situation. The group included a dominant male but also three other males, one of which was entire and vying for dominance. It was decided these two individuals would be moved together to avoid further complications during re-introduction.

A second group of four individuals were moved several months later in the same way in a single day. The two groups reside on separate sides of the new building and are currently undergoing introductions.

## Export of 4 Bonobos and Import of 4 Bonobos in one day

Taking place over a single day the first four Bonobos arrived from Plankendaal Zoo in Belgium at around 7am. The four Bonobos that were preparing for export were brought into the bed area first thing in the neighbouring habitat in case the noise from the others deterred them from coming in. The remaining eight Bonobos in the group were shut in the outside area while the four new Bonobos were unloaded into the beds. As a buffer bed was needed to be able to unload each animal the first male was let out of the crate and moved down to the end bed, checked over visually and moved into the empty day area, followed by a second adult male and finally the female and youngster. The new animals were left with a minimal team for observations whilst the crates were disinfected and moved to the opposite side of the enclosure in preparation for the next four Bonobos.

The first pair, a mother and two year old son were separated into a bed. Though both were trained for hand injection it was decided to only hand inject the mother in case the mother's sedation was unsuccessful leaving the baby in a dangerous situation if his injection was successful. The Mother was hand injected and once asleep keepers were able to go in and hand inject the youngster clinging to the mother's torso. The pair were health checked and recovered in their travelling crates whilst the next individual was hand injected, followed by the last Bonobo. The crates were moved down to the vet centre whilst the animals fully recovered and then into the export van. The 4 Bonobos left the Zoo bound for their new home in Plankendaal at 8pm.

