



Australian Government

National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



AIDR HANDBOOK SHOWCASE | WEBINAR SERIES

Planning for Animals

WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2025, 1.00PM – 2.15PM (AEDT)





Acknowledgement of Country

AIDR acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which you all join us from today and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in this event.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters across Australia.



Welcome

John Richardson

Interim Executive Director

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR)



Housekeeping

- You will remain muted and your camera will not be activated for the duration of today's event.
- Today's event will be recorded and made available after the event.
- Please enter questions for our speakers in the Q&A function, not the chat box.
- Please use the chat box to share any thoughts or reflections during the presentation
- Please be respectful to each other when posting your comments or questions.



Speaker Introduction

Dr Mel Taylor

Honorary Associate Professor, Macquarie University

Senior Knowledge Exchange Officer, NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre, NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Planning for Animals



Planning for animals

Overview

Dr Mel Taylor

Honorary Associate Professor, Macquarie University

Current publications

Australian Emergency Management Arrangements



Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers



Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience



Community Recovery



Disaster Resilience Education for Young People



Emergency Planning



Evacuation Planning



Flood Emergency Planning for Disaster Resilience



Health and Disaster Management



Incident Management



Land Use Planning for Disaster Resilient Communities



Lessons Management



Managing Exercises



Managing the Floodplain



National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG)



Planning for Animals



Public Information and Warnings



Safe and Healthy Crowded Places



Systemic Disaster Risk



Tsunami Emergency Planning in Australia



The AIDR Handbook Collection

<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/collections/handbook-collection/>

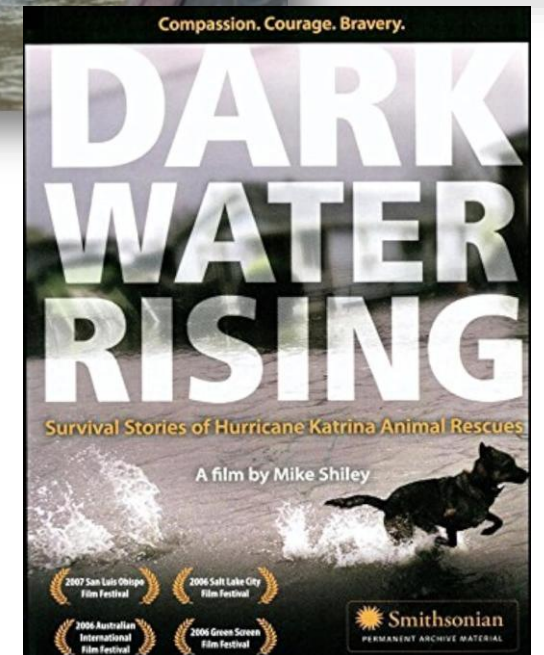
How did we get to where we are?

- Background
 - Events that shaped animal emergency management (AEM)
 - Why animals matter
 - The NPPAD and MAiD (2013-2018)
- Handbook development (2019-2022)
 - The 2019/20 bushfires
 - Scoping the handbook
 - Grappling with complexity
- The 'Planning for animals' handbook (2023-2025)
 - Content preview



A catalyst for change...

- Hurricane Katrina, 2005
 - 50,000 dogs and cats left behind
- Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act, 2006)
- Planning for Animal Wellness (PAW Act, 2022)



Why do animals matter?

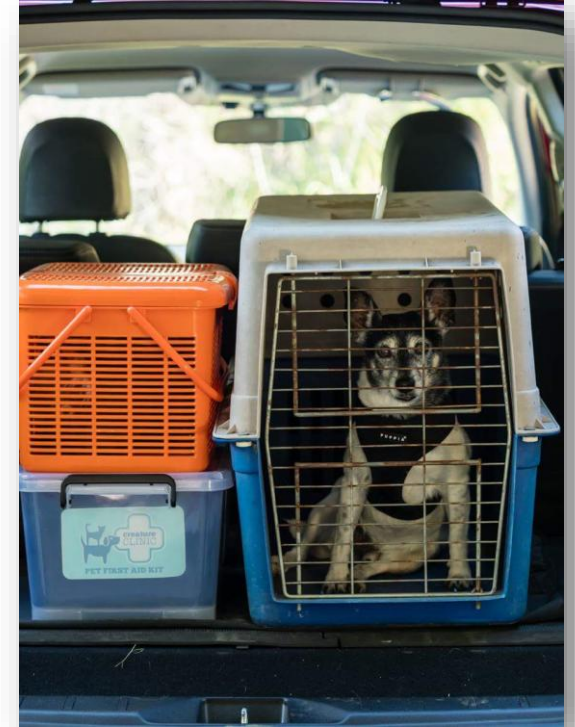
- Impact on people's decision making and behaviour (human-animal bond)
- Potential issues for the safety of people, their animals, and emergency responders
- Some people
 - unprepared - don't plan for what they'll do with animals
 - risk their lives to save animals
 - fail/refuse to evacuate
 - abandon animals/expect others to rescue them
 - have unrealistic expectations if they evacuate
 - return early to rescue animals



"take them or leave me" ultimatum...

Would you evacuate if you could not take your animals?

- 43% ‘definitely would not’ evacuate and a further 42% ‘might not’ evacuate or would question the need to leave.
- Only 14% said they would ‘probably’ or ‘definitely’ evacuate without their pets.



“This would be a traumatic experience if I was required to make this dreadful decision.”

“I would rather burn to death than leave my cats!”

“Having lost a dog in a bushfire there is no way I would leave without our current dog, saying that if we had to leave (were given evacuation notice) I would leave, but with the dog. I'd like to see someone try and argue with me about it.”

Impacts on 'Recovery'

- Grief resulting from animal loss is often diminished or ignored (disenfranchised)
- Pet loss equated to loss of a sibling (Stokes et al, 2002)
- Trauma for responders and animal custodians



Memorial to animals lost in the bushfire in Winmalee, Blue Mountains, 2013

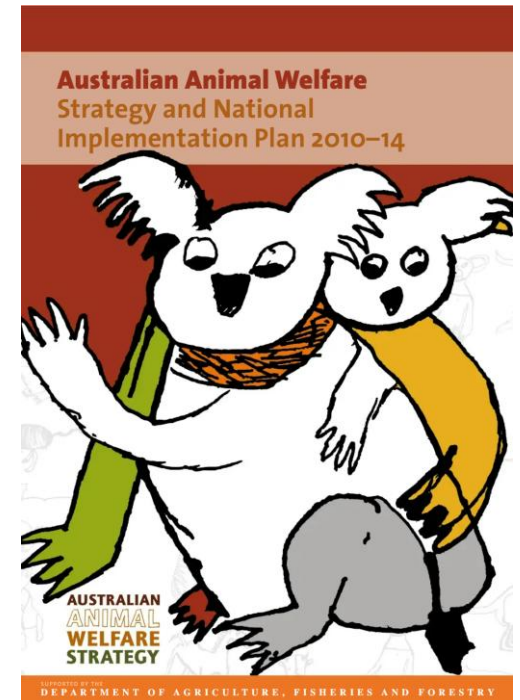
National guidance for AEM (2013-2014)

- **National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters (NPPAD)**

- National Advisory Committee for Animals in Emergencies
- Endorsed by ANZEMC 2014



- Uptake/Implementation assessed in 2020
- Focussed on planning
 - Planning process (9 principles)
 - Disaster plans (15 principles)

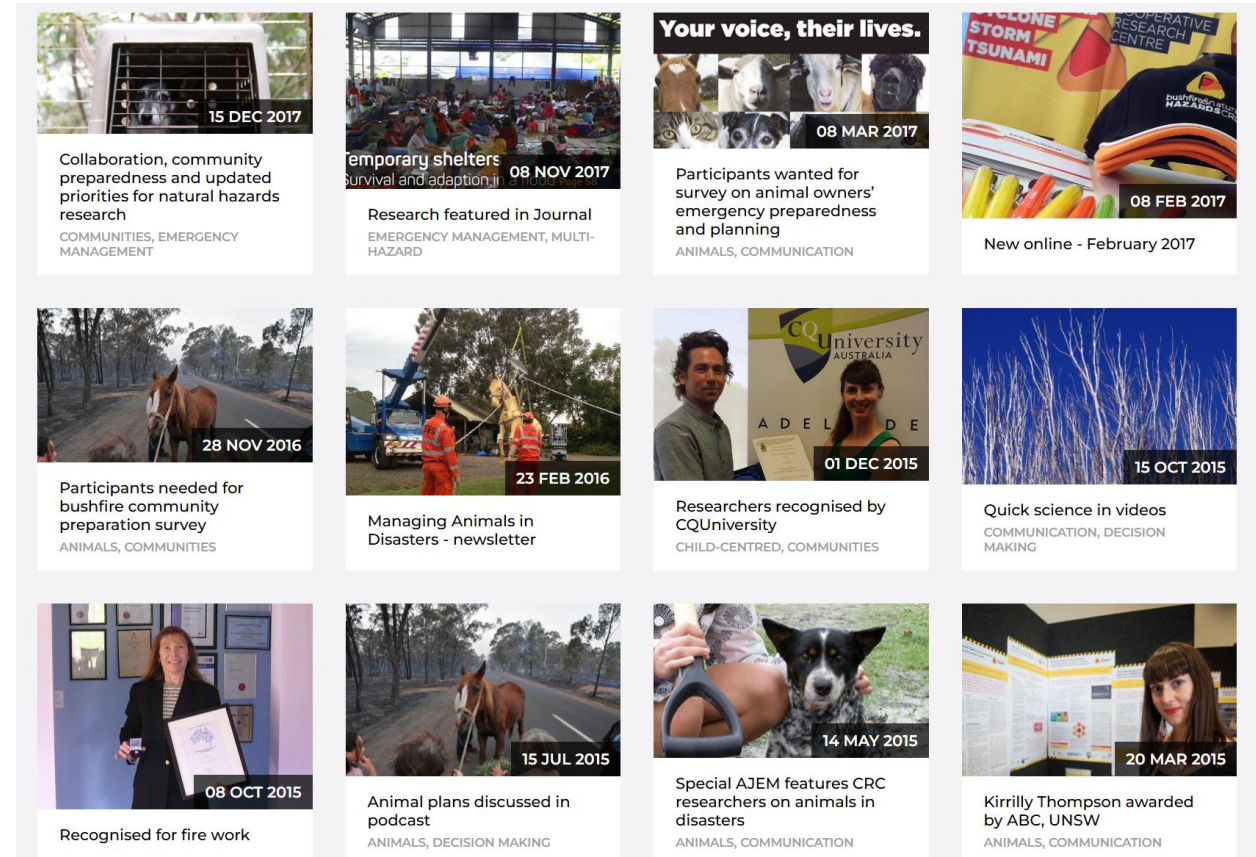


Managing Animals in Disasters MAiD (2014-2018)



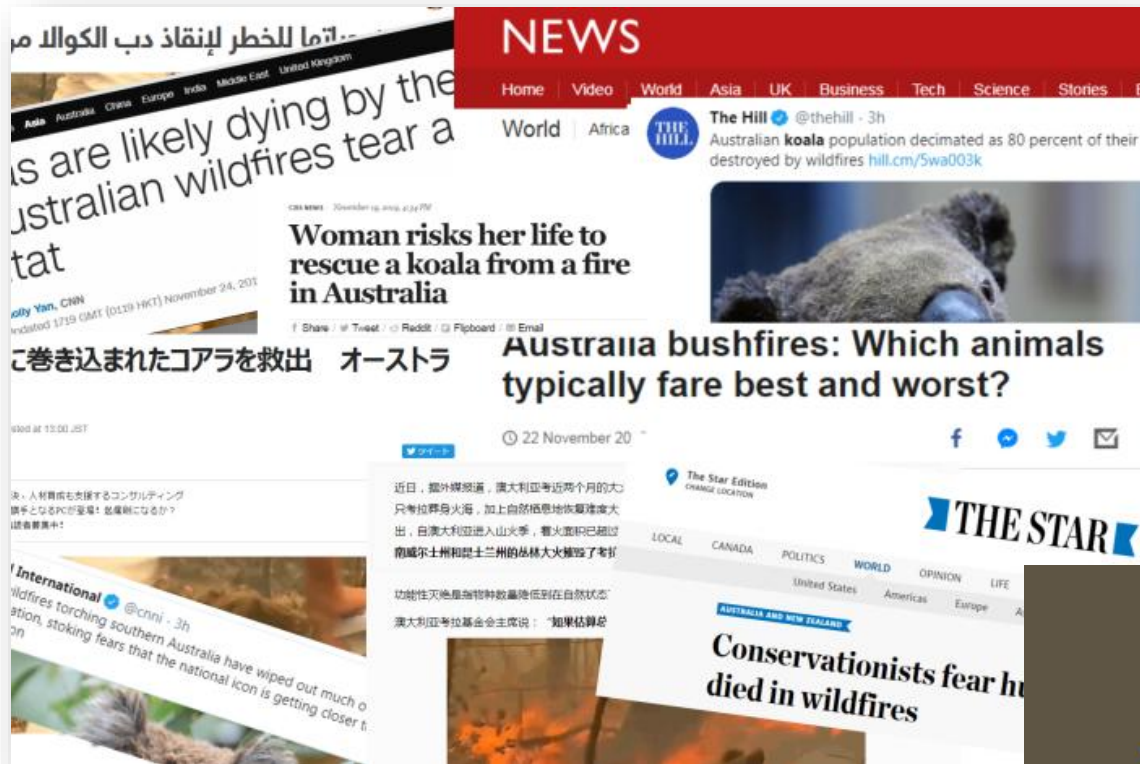
bushfire&natural
HAZARDSCRC

- Developed an Australian/New Zealand evidence base for AEM
- Led to further community-led and community-based research, engagement activities, and resources
- Recommended a national handbook for AEM



<https://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/animalsindisasters> (BNHCRC site being migrated currently)

Impacts of 2019/20 bushfires in Australia



- Devastating impacts on wildlife
- 3 billion animals killed or displaced
- 60,000 koalas
- >80,000 livestock



SA Govt. SA Independent Review of 2019/2020 bushfires

Handbook scoping (2021-2022)

Stakeholder consultation

- Online survey of national and international stakeholders to assess support for handbook, audience, desired content/needs (n=280)
- Focus groups with representatives from broad range of potential Australian stakeholders to discuss survey findings, re. content idea and identify any other activities or planned activities of relevance

Search of Inquiries and Reviews

- BNHCRC Inquiries and Reviews database used to search for AEM-relevant recommendations (2000 onwards)

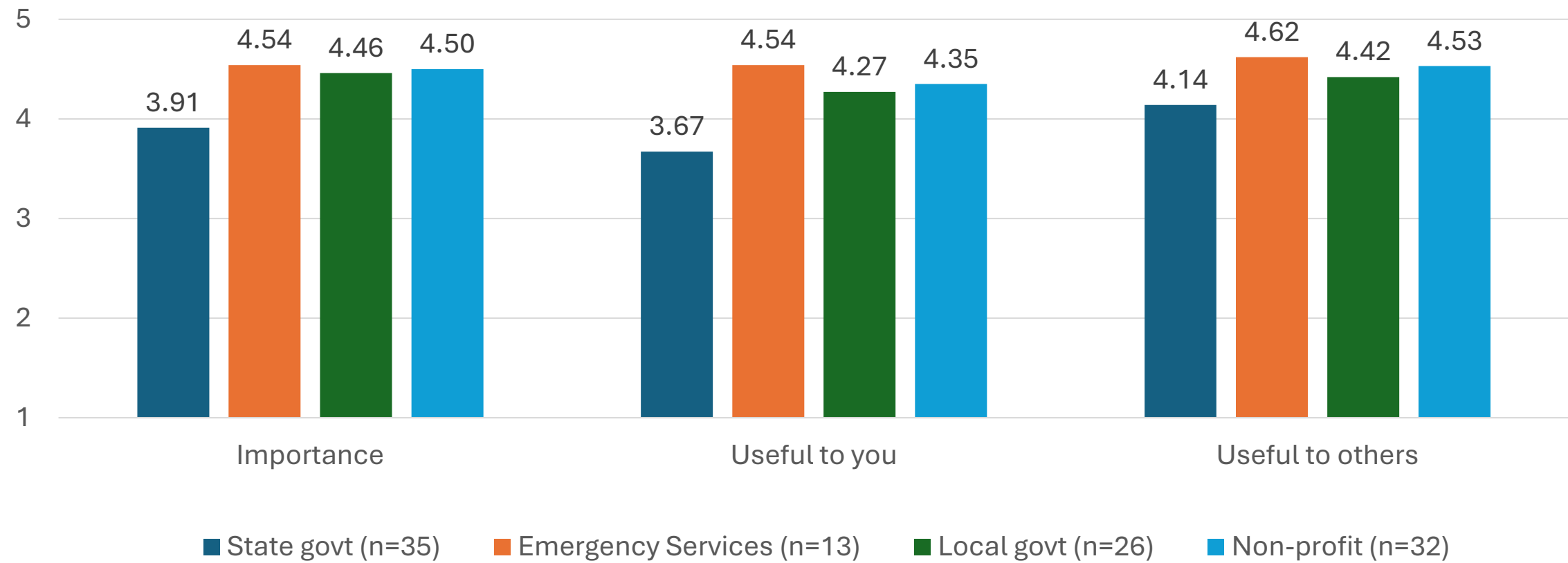
Environmental scanning

- Informal review of recent research, policy, funded projects, and professional activities



Stakeholder attitudes towards the handbook

Attitudes towards Handbook - Australia only (mean ratings)



Scoping recommendations (selection)

Stakeholder-related

- Strong support for a handbook, need to recognise the broad range of stakeholders (and their knowledge/integration in EM).

Balance of emphasis and consideration of target audience

- Both public safety and animal welfare are important in this area, but balance will be required for intended target audience. The latter (target audience) needs further consideration.

Inclusive content required

- In terms of animals/categories, and 'phases' of disaster. However, more to gain from focus on preparedness/planning.

Content needs to be up to date









- NPPAD has strong general support, but implementation is patchy, and focus is limited to 'managed' animals. Need to consider latest thinking/approaches.

Handbook development and drafting (2023-2024)

Managing complexity



Table 1: Animal categorisation framework.

| ANIMAL CATEGORY NAME | | ANIMALS INCLUDED (EXAMPLES) | CUSTODIANS (TYPICAL) | CONTEXT / ENVIRONMENT (EXAMPLES) |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Household animals – companion, assistance and support |  | ‘Pets’ e.g. dogs, cats, birds, pocket pets, fish, reptiles, exotics. Also, assistance, service, support, small working animals | Individual owners and households | Homes, workplaces, schools, holiday locations – usually with owner |
| Household animals – outdoor |  | ‘Pet’ livestock, small numbers of horses, pigs, chicken, goats. Small breeders e.g. dogs. | Households, small landholders, hobby farmers, small business owners | Private property, sometimes taken to shows or events |
| Agricultural and commercial animals |  | Commercial livestock, horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens, ducks, fish/aquatic | Farmers, livestock producers, medium / large business owners, event organisers | Farms, commercial enterprises, schools, tourism, petting zoos, trail riding, racing stables |
| Animals in veterinary and holding facilities |  | Mostly cats and dogs but other animals too | Under temporary care of small / medium business owners, veterinarians | Kennels, catteries, agistments, pounds, veterinary practices, hospitals, research laboratories, livestock transport |
| Captive wildlife – native and exotic |  | Zoo animals e.g. zebra, elephant, birds, monkey, captive native wildlife in care | Business (zoo) owners, individual rehabilitators and carers | Sanctuaries, zoos, wildlife hospitals and smaller-scale rehabilitation |
| Free ranging wildlife – native |  | E.g. kangaroos, bats, wombats, koalas, possums, birds, freshwater fish, lizards, platypus, crocodiles | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, government agencies, public and others invested | Uncontained, localised, free ranging |
| Animals in rural and remote Indigenous communities |  | Dogs, cats and others | Individual and collective / community ownership | In homes and free ranging locally |
| Feral animals |  | Feral species e.g. pigs, deer, goats, camels, horses, cats, foxes | Landowners / managers | Uncontained, localised, free ranging |

Handbook development and drafting (2023-2024)

Additional Challenges



RSPCA Queensland and Queensland Fire & Emergency Services staff came together recently for joint training as we regularly work with QFES in attending animals in emergencies.... See More



185 Likes
4 Comments

Federated system - Legislation, roles and responsibilities, terminology

Animal Emergency Management 'maturity' – ad hoc / bolt-on / integrated

Multi-sectoral/multidisciplinary - priorities, theoretical standpoints, language

Primacy of human life

Handbook development and drafting (2023-2024)

Solution...

Working group members

AIDR acknowledges the expert guidance from the Working Group in developing this handbook:

- **Amanda Nardi-Wallace**, MEmergMan, former State Animal Welfare Emergency Coordinator, Western Australia
- Animal Evac New Zealand, **Dr Steve Glassey**, Patron
- Animal Emergency Incident Management Network ANZ, **Julie Fiedler**, Secretary
- Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities (AMRRIC), **Dr Bonny Cumming**, Head of Innovation and Strategy
- BML Veterinary Consulting Ltd and Massey University Joint Centre for Disaster Research, **Dr Hayley Squance**
- Community NRM, **Peta O'Donohue**
- NSW Primary Industries and Regional Development, **Glenda Briggs**, former Regional Director
- Homes NSW, **Bec Southwell**, Senior Regional Disaster Welfare Officer (prior role Blue Mountains City Council)
- Homes NSW, **Samantha Colwell**, Deputy State Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator
- Erica Honey Consulting, **Erica Honey**, Principal Consultant
- National Emergency Management Agency, **Finn Hicks-Bullock**, Policy Officer Strategic and Resilience Policy
- NSW State Emergency Service and Animal Emergency Incident Management Network ANZ, **David King**, Vice Chair
- NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, **Leeanne Raines**, Emergency Management Officer

- NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, **Karen Roberts**, Senior Emergency Management Officer
- Pyrenees Shire Council, **Kathryn Doroshenko-Pempel**, Emergency Management Coordinator
- RSPCA QLD, **Dr Mandy Paterson**, Principal Scientist
- South Australia Police, **Senior Sergeant First Class Dr Russell Dippy**, Emergency Management Coordinator, Emergency and Major Event Section
- Wildlife Health Australia, **Dr Simone Vitali**, Program Manager – Emergencies
- WIRES, **Jennie Murray**, Head of Programs
- Zoos Victoria, **Fiona Ryan**, Senior Manager Wildlife Welfare Programs

Additional guidance was provided by Loriana Bethune (Gender and Disaster Australia), Bhiamie Williamson (National Indigenous Disaster Resilience), Dr Marianne Sison, Frances Quan Farrant (People with Disability Australia), Jay Potter (Pets in the Park), Sarah Bloustein and Liz Cotton (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water), Dr Sahra McFetridge (South Australia Department of Education), Dr Stephen Van Mil (Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital), Dr Kylie Hewson and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Dedicated to Archie Richardson, 2008-23. The face of Red Cross' Rediplan and faithful companion.

Sail on, fair hound.

Handbook contents



| | |
|---|---------------|
| Chapter 1: Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Purpose of this handbook..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Audience | 3 |
| 1.3 Scope | 3 |
| 1.4 Terminology..... | 4 |
| Chapter 2: Foundations | 5 |
| 2.1 Hazard risk context..... | 6 |
| 2.2 Key concepts | 6 |
| 2.3 Categories of animals..... | 9 |
| 2.4 Roles and responsibilities..... | 10 |
| 2.5 Legislative, policy and practice context..... | 10 |
| Chapter 3: Why do we need to plan for animals? | 12 |
| 3.1 The significance of animals in Australia..... | 13 |
| 3.2 The human-animal bond | 13 |
| 3.3 The human-animal bond in emergencies..... | 14 |
| 3.4 Assistance animals | 14 |
| 3.5 Livelihoods..... | 15 |
| 3.6 Protecting wildlife..... | 15 |
| Chapter 4: Principles for planning for animals | 16 |
| 4.1 Context | 17 |
| 4.2 Principles..... | 17 |
| Chapter 5: Planning to reduce risk | 18 |
| 5.1 Locating animal facilities on low hazard risk sites..... | 19 |
| 5.2 Hazard reduction measures..... | 19 |
| 5.3 Values-based decision making | 20 |
| 5.4 Property management..... | 20 |
| 5.5 Business practice..... | 20 |
| 5.6 Health and wellbeing..... | 21 |

Handbook contents



| | |
|--|-----------|
| Chapter 6: Planning to prepare for effective emergency response | 22 |
| 6.1 Awareness raising and community messaging..... | 23 |
| 6.2 Media, public information and warnings..... | 23 |
| 6.3 Early evacuation..... | 24 |
| 6.4 Shelter in place for animals..... | 25 |
| 6.5 Emergency shelters and animals..... | 25 |
| 6.6 Animal emergency shelters, holding areas and safe areas..... | 26 |
| 6.7 Informal sheltering locations..... | 26 |
| 6.8 Food and water..... | 27 |
| 6.9 Biosecurity..... | 27 |
| 6.10 Health..... | 27 |
| 6.11 Death and disposal..... | 27 |
| 6.12 Rescue..... | 27 |
| 6.13 Reunification..... | 28 |
| 6.14 Protection of habitat..... | 28 |
| 6.15 Emergency planning..... | 28 |
| 6.16 Capability and capacity building..... | 30 |
| Chapter 7: Planning for recovery | 31 |
| 7.1 Capacity building..... | 32 |
| 7.2 Safety..... | 32 |
| 7.3 Impact and needs assessment..... | 32 |
| 7.4 Temporary accommodation..... | 33 |
| 7.5 Animal health and welfare..... | 33 |
| 7.6 Death and disposal..... | 33 |
| 7.7 Managing goodwill..... | 34 |
| 7.8 Managing livestock..... | 34 |
| 7.9 Managing captive wildlife – native and exotic..... | 34 |
| 7.10 Managing wildlife..... | 34 |
| 7.11 Trauma and stress – human and animal..... | 35 |
| 7.12 Longer term planning for recovery..... | 35 |
| Chapter 8: Continuous improvement | 36 |

AIDR Planning for Animals Handbook



Some of the friends that helped inspire the working group for this handbook.



Speaker Introduction

David King

Senior Operator

NSW State Emergency Service Hawkesbury Unit



Planning for Animals

When things go wrong

David King



“Kiny”

Representation



Incidents involving domestic animals



Disasters involving domestic animals



The human-animal bond

A US survey showed us **83% of the public will risk their lives** to save an animal

History warns us that **8% of all flood-related fatalities** in Australia from 1788 to September 1996 **resulted from people's attempts to save stock, property or pets** — even when the animal or pet was not their own

The human-animal bond can affect how people behave in emergencies and disasters.

www.bartacic.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NON-NFCC-FRS-Initial-Situational-Awareness-Jim-Green-v5-WEBSITE.docx.pdf

Thompson, K., Every, D., Rainbird, S., Cornell, V., Smith, B., & Trigg, J. (2014). No Pet or Their Person Left Behind: Increasing the Disaster Resilience of Vulnerable Groups through Animal Attachment, Activities and Networks *Animals*, 4 (2), 214-240 DOI: 10.3390/ani4020214

Planning for an effective emergency response

Clear roles and responsibilities between combat agencies, emergency services, government and non-government agencies

NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management (SERM) Act (1989) defines 'rescue' as the safe removal of persons or domestic animals from actual or threatened danger of physical harm

EMERGENCY PLANS & SUB-PLANS, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES

Primacy for human life

In a major disaster our emergency services will soon run out of capacity to help animals.

Animal custodians need to avoid reliance on our emergency services by:

- Having a plan (shared)
- Knowing where and how to take their animals to a safer place
- When to enact their plan (larger animals take longer to relocate)

Helping animal custodians to plan and prepare for incidents involving their animals

Project OHANA

Ohana means family. *Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten*

Animals

Useful resources to help you plan and prepare for animals during a flood.

“GET READY
ANIMALS”

Template, Document, Factsheet

Pets emergency plan and grab
and go fact sheet



Checklist

Generic horse emergency kit
checklist



Template, Checklist

Make an animal emergency
plan



“ANIMAL READY
COMMUNITY”

Document

Keeping your animals safe in an
emergency in the Hawkesbury-
Nepean region



Document

Emergency Grab and Go bag
for pets

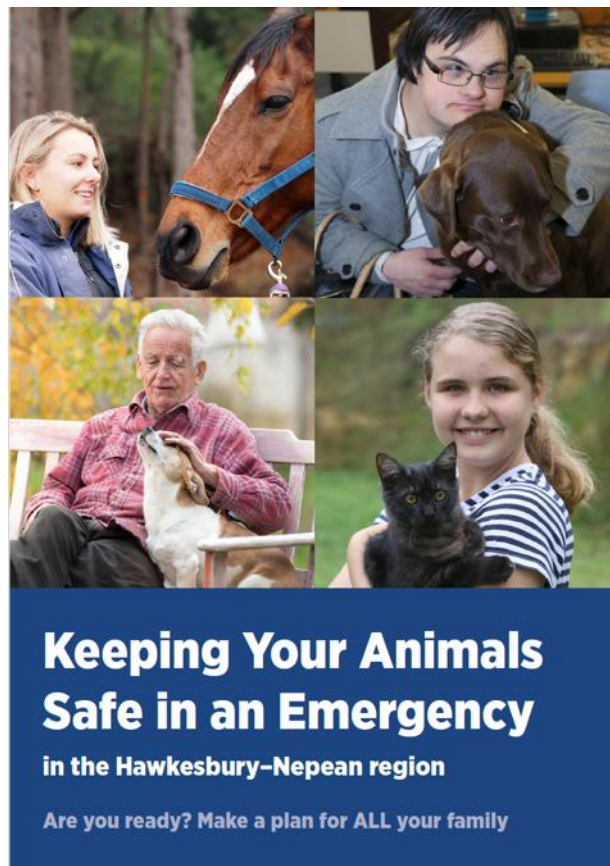


Document

Keeping your animals safe in an
emergency



Helping animal custodians to plan and prepare for incidents involving their animals



The role of our emergency services, and other government and non-government organisations, prior to and during major incidents or disasters

Timely and informative WARNINGS

Meaningful ADVICE to animal custodians

SUPPORT to animal custodians



BUSHFIRE



FLOOD



This handbook is great to start the conversation

“Animals Matter”





Animals in Emergencies and Disasters Conference

9 - 10 May 2025

Massey University, Palmerston North, NZ

Animals in Emergencies: Current and Future State, Policy, Capacity, Capability
Technical Aspects - Animal Incident Management
Animals in Disasters: Current and Future State
Emergency Response at Racing and Equestrian Events



Speaker Introduction

Erica Honey

Consultant

Erica Honey Consulting



Veterinary & Volunteering in WA

Erica Honey

MBA/MHRM MEmergMgt.GradCertPDev BSc (Hons) RVN

Disclaimer: The following information is not legal advice.





Introduction

- **Animal Emergency Management (AEM)** has grown significantly in Au over the last 15 years.
- **Veterinary Emergency Management** is a growing discipline of AEM
- Includes functions such as: rescue, triage, decontamination, biosecurity prevention & preparedness, medical treatment, euthanasia & body disposal
- It is often a functional role within incident command system operations
- **Veterinary lens & specific needs for**, Prevention, Preparedness, Response & Recovery.
- **All hazards, all species** * Emergency Animal Disease approaches are different.
- **One health-One Welfare**
- Planning is essential to ensure community resilience
- Local, district, State or Territory & National
- Use the ***Planning for Animals Handbook*** to plan with others

Emergency Animal Disease: AUSVETPLAN, AQUAPLAN





Stakeholders

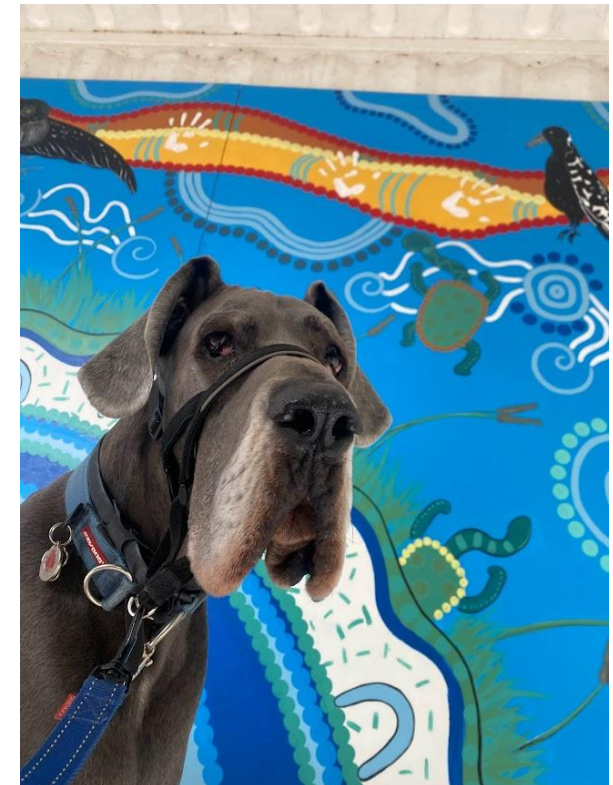
Use the *Planning for Animals Handbook* to plan alongside key stakeholders. Share expertise.

Imperative we engage our veterinary, animal & emergency stakeholder groups early on.

- Veterinary Primary Care/General Practice in the district
- Emergency & Critical Care & speciality veterinary practice (including dermatology & veterinary behaviourists)
- Wildlife hospitals & rehabilitators
- Wildlife departments
- Veterinary Social Workers (a new occupation for Australia)
- Local government
- Shelters & animal welfare groups
- Boarding & catteries
- Dog daycare
- Agricultural departments, groups & grounds
- Animal transporters
- Marine animal rescue
- Oiled Wildlife Response

Emergency services, State Emergency Service, Bush Fire Brigades, Marine Rescue

Think recovery long term, who & what will you need?

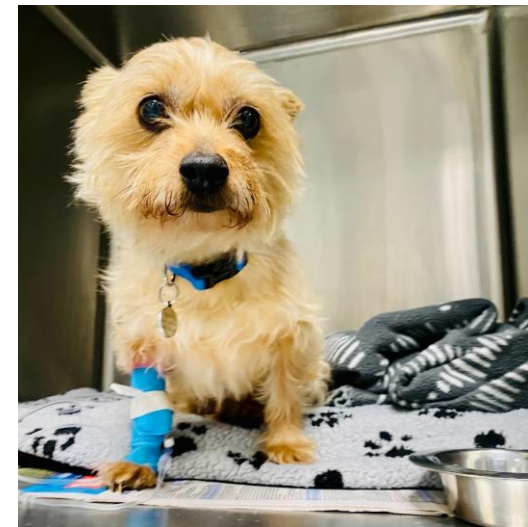




Considerations for Veterinary Professionals

- **Veterinary medical justice** & one welfare-one health may look different in disasters.
- **Contextualised care**, rather than 'best practice' a holistic veterinary approach
- **Use a disaster veterinary medicine approach (military/war medicine).**
Expect supply chain issues e.g.intravenous fluid shortages or medications.
No utilities or internet
Worst case scenario
- **Mitigate risks** e.g. use downtime procedures for medical notes.
- The Incident controller holds ultimate responsibility in rescue incidents.
Clear communication is crucial. Meet & Prepare before an emergency occurs.
- **Link in with pre established networks & services** e.g. human welfare
- Consider what is reasonable.

This information is not legal advice.



Considerations for Veterinary Professionals

- Ensure contingencies & expectations are clear between stakeholders. Write it down in the plans
- Its appropriate to state what the practice can & cannot do.
- Refer refer refer, think capacity & capability before during & after, recovery can take years
- Develop practice plans, district veterinary plans & liaise about EM arrangements.
- Veterinary practice needs are complex, the **Planning for Animals Handbook** provides a great start & helps you to plan alongside key stakeholders for community resilience.





Working with Veterinary Professionals

- Veterinary Professionals advocate for animals & people, first do not harm.
 - Veterinary workforce shortages
 - Veterinary technologists & nurses are highly skilled & are key like in human health
 - Veterinary & community needs are complex
 - Human Animal Bond e.g. wildlife, feral & farm animals & livestock
 - Legal risks
 - Access for pet guardians, animal owners & vulnerable communities to veterinary healthcare is a complex
 - Fatigue management & psychological care is crucial for veterinary professionals
 - Include veterinary professionals in your disaster exercises
 - Use the Planning for Animals Handbook to assist.
- Share your experience with each other to create robust Local Government & District arrangements & State/Territory Plans.



Planning for Animals



Be sure the veterinary professional is comfortable with the task e.g. not all vets are comfortable treating a horse in a rescue scenario. The drugs are different and our professionals often specialise/work in one area of veterinary medicine.



Develop a Common Language

- As AEM merges with EM, a **common language needs to be established**.
- **Communication is a challenge** in EM, ensure extra steps are taken by confirming the correct message has been received.
- Some words can be the same yet have different meanings in veterinary & emergency management.
 - ‘operation/s’ a veterinary surgery or an active incident or exercise
 - ‘emergency’ a veterinary medical emergency or an incident.
- Both Veterinary & EM love acronyms, be prepared for that.
- When planning define the key points using the **AIDR glossary** & avoid jargon & acronyms until all stakeholders understand & the shared culture has matured.



Wildlife rehabilitation - Tili the wombat
Image: Simone Vitali



Volunteering

- Vets Beyond Borders
AVERT: Australia Veterinary Emergency Response Team (local & deployment)
- WA Wildlife
- WA State Emergency Service K9 Search Section (DFES)

Thank you





Speaker Introduction

Fiona Ryan

Senior Manager Wildlife Welfare Programs

Zoos Victoria



Fiona Ryan

Emergency Preparedness and Response for Wildlife Impacted by Disasters

ZOOS
VICTORIA
Fighting Extinction

Captive Animal Institution Preparedness



Sumatran Tiger



White-cheek Gibbon

Image credit: Rick Hammond

General Considerations

Understanding the impacts of disasters

- How may a site be impacted?
- What are the risks to the animals?
- How might infrastructure be impacted?
- Identify general disaster mitigation strategies
- Outside of hours plans

Connections with local emergency services

- Connect with local lead agencies
- Communicate plans

Planning presents many challenges

Planning and Preparedness

Species specific considerations

- Options for individual species
- Dangerous animals
- Large animals
- Biosecurity

Health and welfare

- Risk assessment
- Stress associated with moving
- Risk of injuries
- Housing requirements
- Nutritional requirements

Image credit: Jo Howell

Planning and Preparedness

Threatened species programs

- Ex-situ
- Recovery teams
- Stakeholder engagement
- Permits

Evacuation options

- Connect with other institutions that house same species
- Consider how long animals need alternative holding

Preparedness and training

- Key roles identified, including decision makers
- Staff trained to implement plans
- Equipment and supplies for moving, e.g. *transport crates*
- Plan review – *species and infrastructure changes*



Helmeted Honey-eater

Image credit: Jo Howell

Preparedness and Response to Wildlife Impacted by Disasters





Victorian koala

General Considerations

Jurisdictional arrangements

- Who is the lead agency
- Is there a formal wildlife response plan
- What is the pathway to become involved

Understanding the emergency environment

- Taking directions from agency
- How does your role/skill set fit into the response?
- How long can you sustain help?
- Human safety is priority

Preparedness training

- Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) Awareness
- Basic Wildfire Awareness
- Hazardous Tree Awareness



Rainbow lorikeet

General Considerations

Expectations

- Challenging working environment
- Large numbers of injured animals
- Habitat loss
- Loss of infrastructure
- Community impacts

Self awareness and self care

- Can you operate in the environment?
- High level of euthanasia
- Decisions without clinical resources
- Sometimes you can't do anything

Remuneration

- Time
- Equipment, drugs and consumables

Media/community expectations

General Considerations

What skills and resources can you offer?

- Assessment of impacted wildlife
- Seeking advice/available expertise *
- Establish field clinic? – *managing operations*
- Open vet clinic to wildlife? – *business impacts*
- Field search and assessment
- Darting/lethal firearms

Species specifics

- Where will wildlife be cared for following assessment?
- How will ongoing veterinary care be provided?
- Threatened species
- Release options



*ANZCVS Position Statement - INTEGRATION OF WILDLIFE
VETERINARIANS INTO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
(anzcvs.org.au)

Preparedness and Response

What species are you going to encounter?

- What species are in the area – *local knowledge*
- Species behaviour knowledge
- Animal handling skills
- What injuries might be encountered
- Size and behaviour – how will you manage the assessment?
- Threatened species

Necessary supplies and equipment

- Capture and restraint equipment
- Animal housing
- Veterinary drugs and consumables
- Nutrition

Biosecurity and Zoonosis

- Australian bat lyssavirus
- Mange

Record keeping

- Consistent approach
- Ideally protocols and standard forms pre-prepared
- Systems for record keeping and tracking cases

Eastern grey kangaroo

Wildlife Welfare During Emergencies

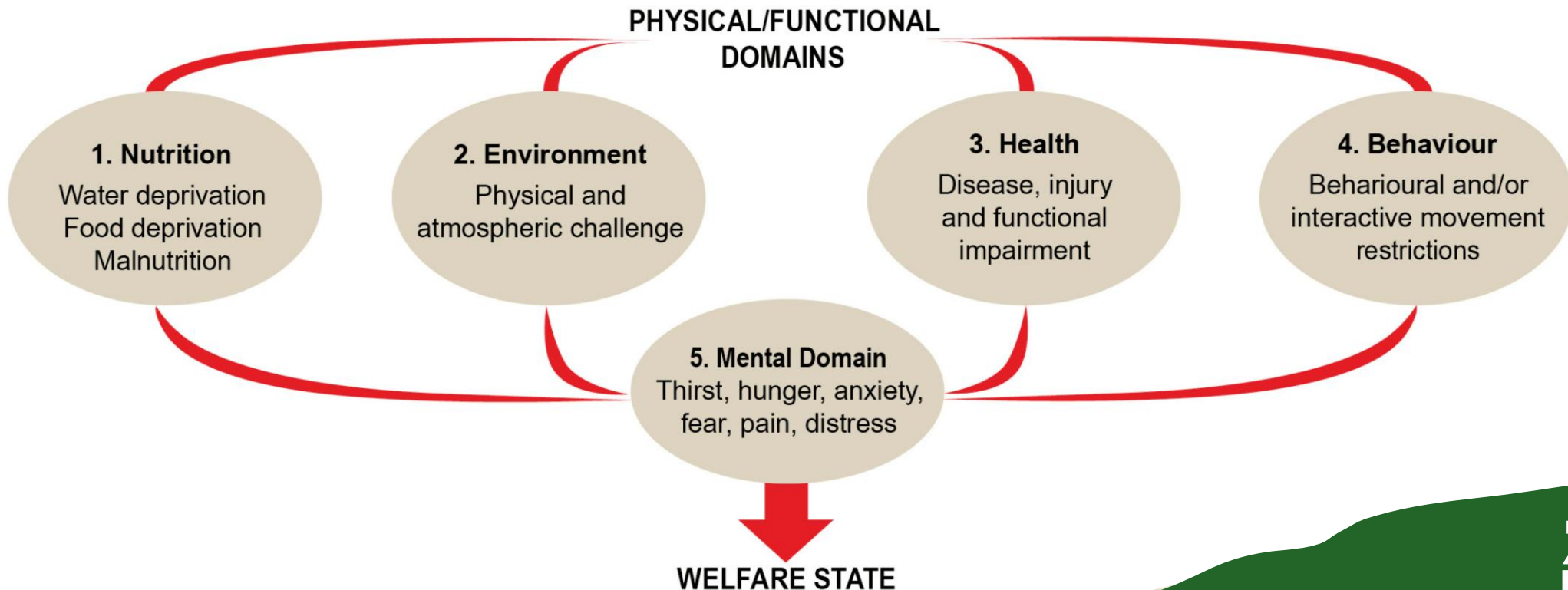




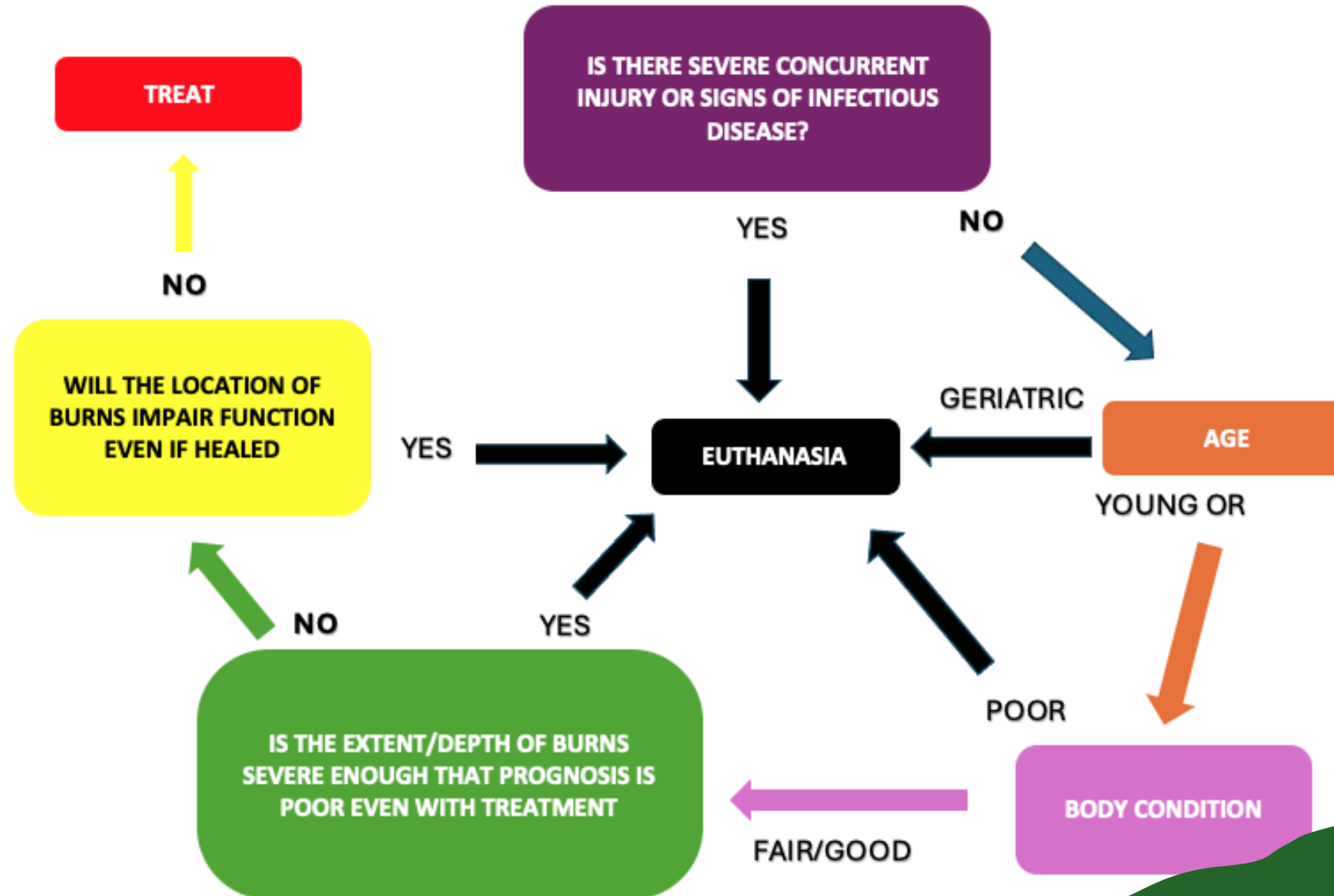
Wildlife Welfare During Emergencies



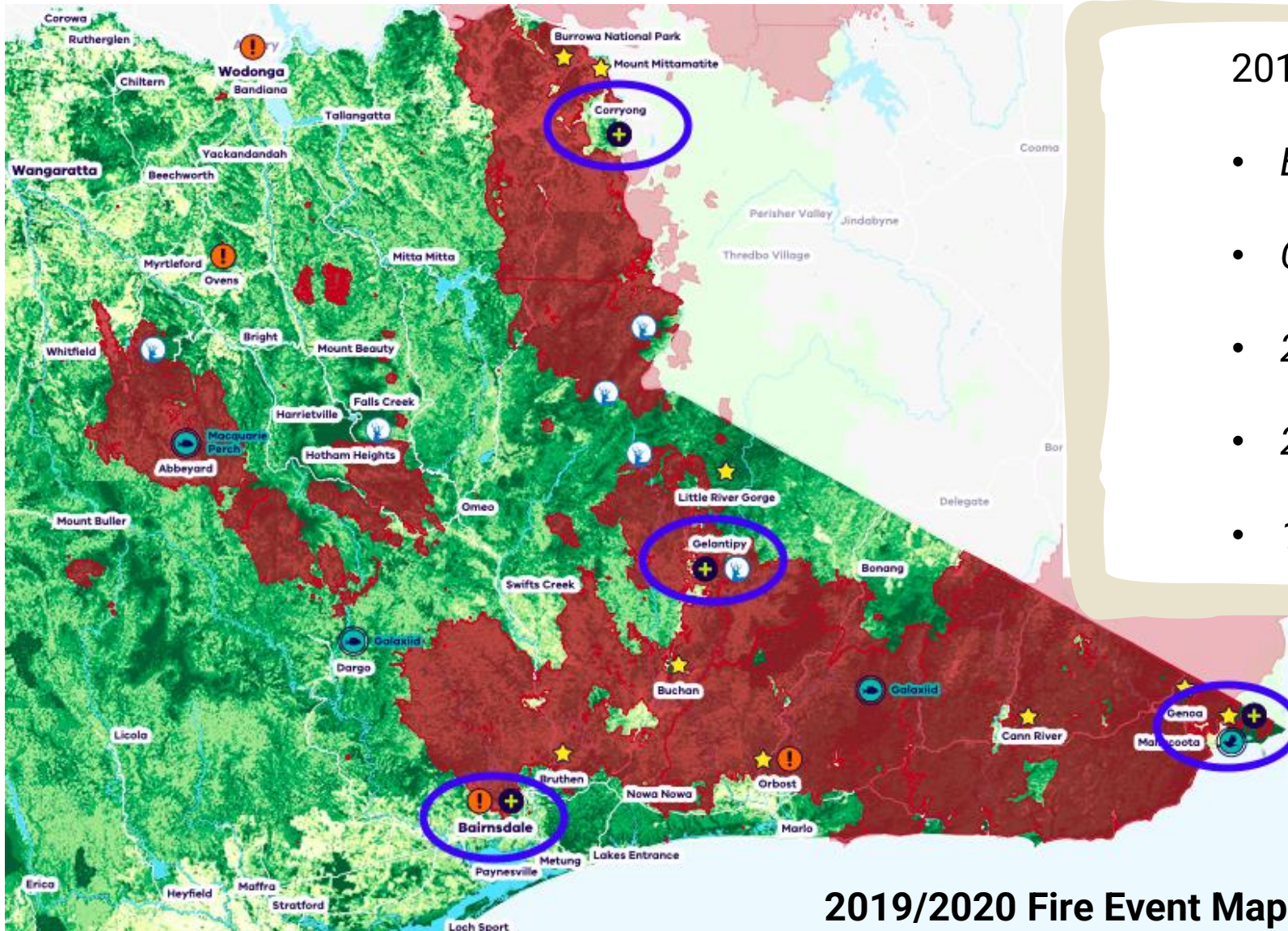
- Case decision making requires a different approach to day to day
- May be critically injured wildlife
- Humane euthanasia – welfare tool
- Resources are not unlimited



Decision Tree Example: Wildlife Assessment During Bushfire



Wildlife Welfare During Emergencies – Context



2019/2020 Fire Event (Victoria area)

- *Burnt 1.5 million hectares*
- *Close to 3000 animals assessed*
- *259 presented to 4 triage units*
- *20% euthanised in triage units*
- *14 koalas monitored release project*

 DEECA triage unit



Wildlife Welfare During Emergencies



Supplying water and food for free-living wildlife after natural disasters

October 2023

This document is published as a **working draft** and will be updated periodically as new information becomes available. Please check the WHA website (<http://www.wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/>) for the current version. This information was collated with the generous and coordinated support of a team of ecologists, wildlife veterinarians, wildlife nutritionists and wildlife rehabilitators throughout Australia.

Key points

- 1. Providing food for free-living native wildlife is generally not recommended.**
 - If areas of natural bush remain, there is no need to feed wildlife and it is best to allow wildlife to forage for food and water naturally.
 - If you live near a bushfire zone, allowing your property to become a natural food and water source for wildlife for a short period of time (e.g. a few weeks) is one way you can make a difference until the Australian bush starts to recover.
- 2. Always take the advice of your local authorities and do not enter fire affected areas until it is safe to do so. Your safety remains the priority.**
- 3. Seek guidance from relevant authorities before providing any food to wildlife after natural disasters (particularly for threatened species). Strategies, including regulated feeding programs, may already be in place.**

- State of environment before disaster
- Animal population prior to the disaster
- Supplementary feeding generally not recommended
- Wild population changes post event

Victorian koala

Thank you!

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Q&A

Don't forget to put your questions in the Q&A function.



Event concludes

Thank you for attending today's webinar.

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