

There are a number of consistent reminders that:

- animals are a factor in decision making in emergency situations
- failing to accommodate animals in emergency response can have direct impact on decisions by people to evacuate in timely ways
- human-animal relationships are not only relevant to the individual animal owner and their companion animal, but equally influence and impact community and society generally. How these relationships are managed affects resilience, how communities achieve 'post-traumatic growth' (Tedeshi 2004) and how society as a whole responds.

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About the author

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National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters

World Animal Protection has been working to assist animals and communities in disasters for the past 50 years. Over this time, they have built significant expertise across the disaster cycle from preparedness to mitigation to response to recovery.

In Australia, the organisation works with a wide range of stakeholders to integrate considerations of animals into disaster policy and planning. The focus is on building disaster resilience to the benefit of everyone.

The organisation has held three annual workshops on the topic in partnership with the Department of Agriculture's *Australian Animal Welfare Strategy*. Following the 2012 'Building Resilience: Animals and Communities Coping in Emergencies' workshop, the National Advisory Committee for Animals in Emergencies was established as an interim committee with the aim of taking a collaborative and proactive approach to the integration of animals into disaster management planning across all jurisdictions and communities.

The committee developed the *National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters*, which was designed as a non-prescriptive tool to support jurisdictions

as they improve disaster management planning by ensuring that animals are considered. The *National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters* have been endorsed by the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee. This follows earlier endorsement by animal welfare authorities through the Animal Welfare Committee. Such high-level endorsement demonstrates national, cross-departmental commitment to best practice with respect to animals in disasters planning.

The *National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters*¹ are available to emergency services agencies, State Disaster Co-ordination Groups, and other parties for reference as they review emergency management plans and policies, as well as operational procedures.

1 *National Planning Principles for Animals in Disaster*: At: www.ava.com.au/sites/default/files/AVA_website/FINAL%20National%20Planning%20Principles%20for%20Animals%20in%20Disasters.pdf