This fact sheet outlines the responsibilities of government agencies for animal welfare in emergencies.

The primary responsibility and duty of care for animals always remain with the person in charge of the animal (the owner or carer). They should have a rehearsed emergency plan for their animals which includes an evacuation kit, suitable transport and multiple evacuation routes where possible.

Responsibilities of government agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEDJTR - Agriculture Victoria</th>
<th>DELWP</th>
<th>Local government</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• primary agency for welfare of livestock and companion animals</td>
<td>• primary agency for wildlife welfare</td>
<td>• care of animals at relief centres (where capacity exists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• all hazards, all species excluding wildlife</td>
<td>• coordination of wildlife agencies &amp; volunteers</td>
<td>• stray, wandering and lost animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• coordination of animal welfare agencies.</td>
<td>• wildlife welfare assessment.</td>
<td>• disposal/burial of carcasses.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Responsibilities of key partner organisations

Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)
Maintains and coordinates a volunteer database of veterinarians and veterinary nurses to support animal welfare emergencies

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
May assist Agriculture Victoria and DELWP to undertake animal welfare assessment activities and provide animal welfare resources as required

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF)
Liaises with Agriculture Victoria to determine the scale and coordination of fodder distribution requirements

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
Provides coordination of local government areas impacted by emergencies and provides resource sharing arrangements

NOTE- access or requests to any key partner organisations must be made via DEDJTR or DELWP as appropriate (depending on the incident). They will coordinate and communicate to ensure state oversight, prioritisation and to avoid duplication.
Emergency animal welfare response structure

The State Biosecurity Operations Centre (SBOC) at Attwood is the preferred facility to lead large scale livestock and companion animal welfare responses, but Agriculture Victoria maintains a flexible approach to suit the geographical location and nature of the incident. DELWP will lead wildlife response activities through the Incident Management Team and the State Control Centre. The structures below represent arrangements for a level two or three incident.

DELWP Wildlife
Links to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at state level through State Animal Welfare Commander DELWP, which is also connected to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at regional emergency management Team and incident levels

AVA
Links to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at state level through State Animal Welfare Commander
Links to DELWP at state level through State Agency Commander

RSPCA
Links to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at state level through State Animal Welfare Commander
Links to DELWP at state level through State Agency Commander

VFF
Links to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at state level through State Animal Welfare Commander

Local Government
Links to DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) at regional level through Regional Agency Commander (Regional Animal Welfare Commander) and at incident level through DEDJTR (Agriculture Victoria) Incident Agency Commander.