

Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan

(Revision 2 - October 2019)





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Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (Revision 2) 2019

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Definitions

Agency	A government agency, including commonwealth, state or local government authority.
Animal	Refer to the definition in Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 which basically includes any live member of a vertebrate species (other than human) and some crustaceans.
Animal welfare	How an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal; the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment.
Animal Welfare Commander	A role established by Agriculture Victoria within DJPR to lead the agency's emergency animal welfare support services at the state, regional and/or incident level.
Biosecurity	The protection of the economy, the environment, social amenity or human health from negative impacts associated with the entry, establishment or spread of animal or plant pests and disease, or invasive plant and animal species.
Command	The direction of personnel and resources of an agency in the performance of that organisation's role and tasks. Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an agency
Communication	The engagement and provision of information across agencies and proactively with the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
Community Connection	The understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders and all communities to support resilience and decision making.
Companion Animal	Any non-human vertebrate animal kept for the purpose of companionship, recreation, protection or work.
Consequence	The management of the effect of emergencies on individuals, the community, infrastructure and the environment.
Control	The overall direction of response activities in an emergency. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency response plan and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.
Control agency	The agency responsible for leading the response to a particular type of emergency
Coordination	The bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective response to and recovery from emergencies. The main functions of co-ordination are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective control has been established and maintained; • Ensure effective information sharing; and • Systematic acquisition and allocation of resources in accordance with the requirements imposed by emergencies.
Domestic Animal Businesses	Licensed premises under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 including pet shops, dog/cat breeding and boarding establishments and dog training establishments.
Emergency	An emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria, or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria
Emergency Management Team	A team which assists a controller in formulating a response strategy and in its execution by all agencies, and which assists the Emergency Response Coordinator in determining resource acquisition needs and in ensuring coordinated response to an emergency.

Emergency Relief	The provision of life support and essential needs to persons affected by an emergency
Emergency Relief Centre	A building or place established to provide life support and essential needs to persons affected by an emergency (including evacuees). Emergency relief centres are established on a temporary basis to cope with the immediate needs of those affected during the initial response to the emergency. They do not imply any longer-term use of facilities as a location for recovery services
Emergency Response Coordinator	A person appointed as state, regional, municipal or incident emergency response co-ordinator, whose role is to co-ordinate the response to an emergency.
Evacuation	The planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return.
Fodder	Feed for livestock such as hay or pre-prepared feedstuffs designed specifically for livestock.
Livestock	Any animal kept for the purposes of primary production, including cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, ratites, buffalo, camels, alpacas, goats, deer or horses, including where used for recreation.
Managed animal	Any animal including wildlife and exotics that is owned or possessed or is under a person's care, control or supervision.
Organisation	Any non-government or not for profit entity, company or authority.
Person in charge of animals	A person who is the owner or has the animal in their possession or custody, or under the person's care, control or supervision and any employee or agent of the owner of the animal.
Principal Officer Wildlife Emergencies	A role established by DELWP to lead the agency's emergency wildlife welfare response at state level and support response activities at a regional or incident level.
Recovery	The assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning
Salvage slaughter	The processing of animals through an abattoir. Livestock impacted by an emergency, suitable for salvage slaughter are those that do not show signs of distress or disablement and are fit enough to be transported.
State Agency Commander	A role established within state government departments like DJPR and DELWP to coordinate its emergency response arrangements across the organisation at a State level.
Support agency	An agency which provides services, personnel or material to support or assist a control agency or affected persons.
Triage	The process of determining the priority of veterinary treatment based on the severity of an animal's condition. This rations veterinary treatment efficiently when resources are insufficient for all animals to be treated immediately.
Triage Site	A site where animals are assessed and their treatment needs (including euthanasia) are determined. Sites may include capacity for provision of first aid but will not include facilities for ongoing treatment.
Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Committee	A consultative forum chaired by DJPR that provides ongoing leadership and oversight in the development and review of plans and policies relating to emergency animal welfare management in Victoria.
Wildlife	Any vertebrate animal indigenous to Australia, some non-indigenous vertebrates (deer and game birds declared to be wildlife under the <i>Wildlife Act, 1975</i>), any terrestrial invertebrates listed as threatened under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, 1988</i> , and does not include fish within the meaning of the <i>Fisheries Act, 1995</i> .

Acronyms

AVA	Australian Veterinary Association (Victorian Division)
AWC	Animal Welfare Commander
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DAMP	Domestic Animal Management Plan
DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services
DJPR	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EMMV	Emergency Management Manual Victoria
EMT	Emergency Management Team
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
IC	Incident Controller
IMT	Incident Management Team
IMS	Incident Management System
LGO	Local Government Officer
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MFB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
NLIS	National Livestock Identification System
PAS	Pet Animal Shelter
POCTA	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1986
POWE	Principal Officer Wildlife Emergencies
PV	Parks Victoria
RAC	Regional Agency Commander
RAWC	Regional Animal Welfare Commander
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SAC	State Agency Commander
SAWC	State Animal Welfare Commander
SCC	State Control Centre
SERO	State Emergency Response Officer (of Victoria Police)
SES	Victoria State Emergency Service
SIGs	Special Interest Groups
VEAWC	Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Committee
VicPol	Victoria Police
VFF	Victorian Farmers Federation

Foreword

Animal welfare is important to both the Government and the Victorian community.

Many types of emergencies in Victoria inevitably affect animals and can cause significant suffering. Furthermore, recent disasters in Australia and overseas highlighted that the bonds between people and animals strongly influence decision making in times of crisis and the resilience of individuals and communities. The lack of adequate planning for the management of animals and their welfare in emergencies often result in poor, last minute decisions with dangerous or fatal consequences for animals and their owners or carers.

While the responsibility for the welfare of an animal remains with the person or persons in charge of that animal, many different agencies and organisations are available to assist during emergencies in Victoria.

The *Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan* (the Plan) is intended to be a reference for all agencies, organisations, groups and individuals with responsibility for animal welfare during emergencies. It provides principles and policy for use in emergency planning, response and recovery phases. It defines the roles and responsibilities of agencies and organisations.

The plan has the overarching objectives of:

- Contributing to enhanced human safety and community resilience through effective planning and management of animals in emergencies; and
- Ensuring animals are better considered and protected from suffering during and immediately following emergencies.

The plan was developed following extensive consultation with emergency management and animal welfare stakeholders including the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Committee. It has been developed in line with the National Planning Principles established by the National Advisory Committee for Animals in Emergencies.

The plan confirms that:

- The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions is the primary state agency for the provision of welfare support for all animals other than wildlife in emergencies; and
- The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is the primary state agency for the provision of welfare support for wildlife in emergencies.



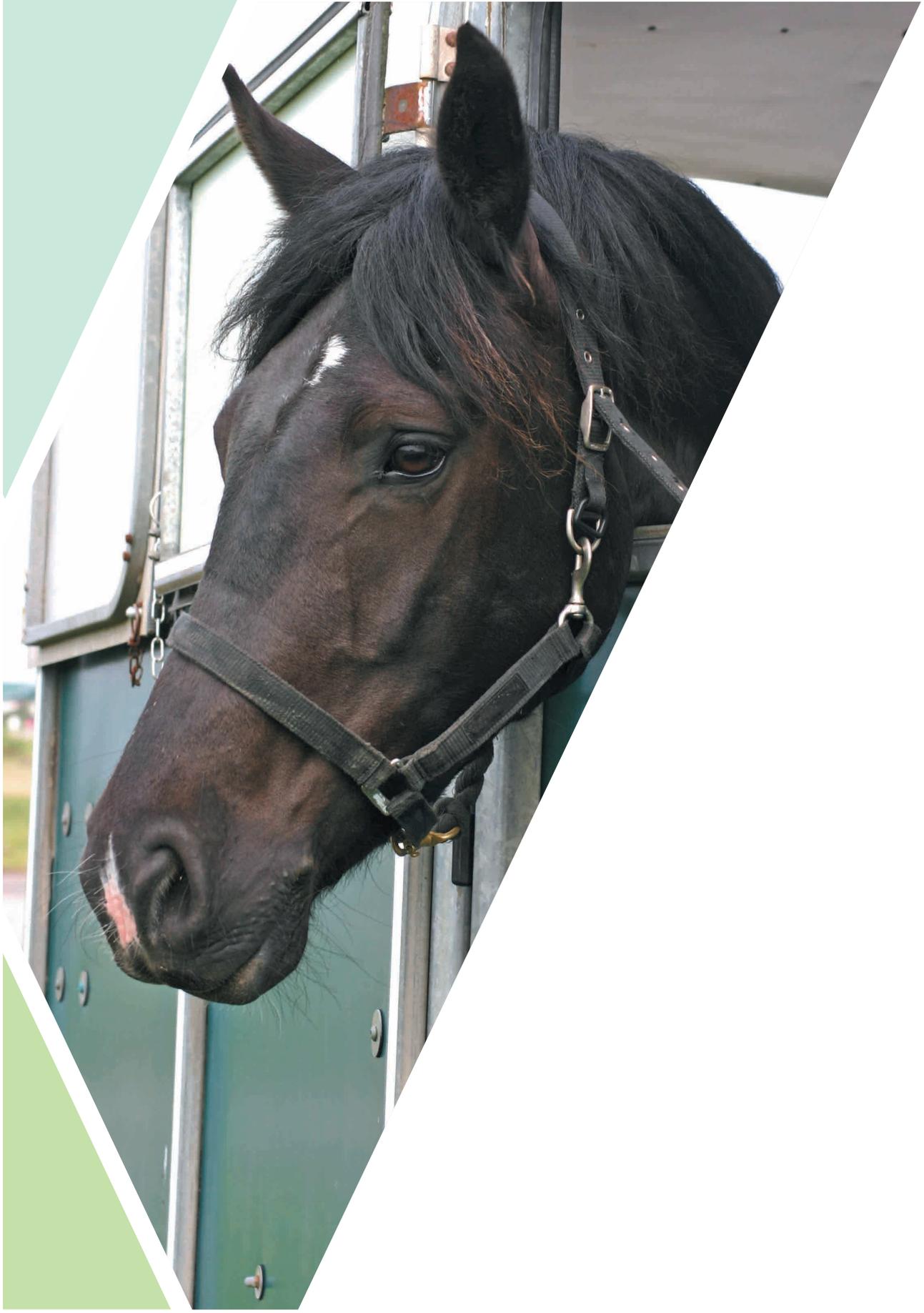
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Department of Environment,
Land, Water and Planning



1.0 Introduction

Emergencies and natural disasters can have significant impact on the welfare of animals and their owners.

Animals play a significant role in both the lives and livelihoods of Victorians. Victorians own large numbers of livestock including more than 20 million cattle and sheep, over 60% of Victorian families are estimated to own pets or horses, and animals are kept for a range of other uses including sport and recreation.

While it may be difficult to enumerate how much wildlife is present in Victoria or is at risk during emergencies, there is significant concern for wildlife welfare at government and community levels, identifying a need for there to be intervention to minimise harm. Human interest in the welfare of native animals can be reflected in the 325 Shelter Operators and 261 Foster Carers currently authorised to rehabilitate wildlife in Victoria.

The original Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (the Plan) was established in 2011 following recognition by the Victorian Black Saturday Bushfires Royal Commission of the importance of the bonds that people form with animals. They identified the significant impact these bonds can have on people's decision making about if and when they would relocate, and ultimately their safety during emergencies. The Commission also noted that improving agency coordination would help to provide more effective relief to all animals regardless of whether they are wildlife, stock, companion animals or pets.

The Plan sought to clarify roles, responsibilities and formal arrangements between the various stakeholders for the delivery of all emergency response, relief and recovery activities in relation to animal welfare. It also established a commitment to annual updates and regular reviews.

As administrator of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (POCTA), the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), administers the Plan.

This version of the Plan is the outcome of the second (2019) review of the original plan and is based on the collective experience of agencies and organisations identified as having a role in contributing to positive animal welfare outcomes during an emergency. It also takes account of recent changes to Victorian emergency management arrangements, as well as Victorian machinery of government changes.

The Plan acknowledges that Victoria's emergency management arrangements define DJPR as the primary agency for animal welfare relief and recovery services for all animals other than wildlife. This role is consistent with the department's responsibility for administration of POCTA.

The Plan also acknowledges that Victoria's emergency management arrangements define the Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DELWP) as the control agency in responding to cetacean (dolphin and whale) entanglements, strandings and vessel strike, and wildlife affected by marine pollution in addition to being the primary agency to respond to wildlife welfare caused by a defined emergency (including wildlife affected by fire). These roles are consistent with this department's responsibility for administration of the *Wildlife Act 1975* and the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

The Plan acknowledges that local government also has a key role in supporting emergency animal welfare activities. Local government is responsible for the coordination and operation of emergency relief centres, and support emergency relief and recovery operations and planning.

The Plan also acknowledges that numerous non-government organisations assist in the management of animal welfare, with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), the Victorian Division of the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA), and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) having special capability to assist.

2.0 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this document is to provide the Victorian community, including emergency services and the animal management sector, with a plan that integrates arrangements for animal welfare with the State's formal emergency management arrangements to ensure that animals are planned for and their welfare is appropriately addressed in any emergency.

The scope of the Plan is to provide a coordinated approach to the management of animal welfare impacts as a direct result of an emergency incident in Victoria.

The Plan encompasses all hazards excluding animal disease incursions. Animal disease incursions will be managed as part of a national response under the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN). The implementation of the Plan is not subject to the national arrangements associated with AUSVETPLAN.

The Plan does not replace specific agency operational emergency management plans, rather it provides for the overarching coordination between response, relief and recovery agencies and organisations.

To achieve this, the Plan focusses on the efficient and effective management of animals, and coordination of animal welfare support services before, during and after an emergency event and describes:

- The planning arrangements for animal welfare support services in emergency preparedness, response, relief and recovery;
- The roles and responsibilities of agencies, organisations, owners and carers in planning for and providing emergency animal welfare support services; and
- Operating arrangements during an emergency for animal welfare agencies and organisations, emergency service agencies and animal owners and carers.

3.0 Guiding principles

In implementing the Plan, the following principles apply:

- Protection and preservation of human life is paramount;
- The responsibility for the welfare of animals at all times remains with the person in charge of an animal;
- Integrating consideration of animals and their welfare into emergency planning, at all levels, will improve animal welfare outcomes and have a positive impact on human safety and resilience.
- Recognition that the bonds people have with their animals' impact on their decision making and behaviour in an emergency.
- This plan encompasses all hazards as emergencies of all types can impact on animals or require animal management processes to be implemented.
- While arrangements described in this Plan are typical, it is recognised that a Control Agency may recommend additional or alternative actions at the incident, regional or state level to meet the needs of the particular emergency;
- As the capacity and capability of agencies and organisations delivering animal welfare support services will change, an adaptive, flexible and whole of government approach to arrangements is essential to ensuring the objectives of this Plan are met; and
- Partnerships between government agencies and non-government organisations contribute to a range of animal welfare support services during an emergency.



4.0 Authority and governance

The Plan should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation and plans that may identify further strategies, arrangements and resources that assist planning and delivery of animal welfare support services following an emergency event in Victoria. Relevant documents include but are not limited to:

- *Emergency Management Act, 1986, Emergency Management Act, 2013*
 - State Emergency Response Plan
 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan
 - Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)
 - Municipal Emergency Management Plans
 - Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plans
- *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1986 (POCTA)*
 - Underpinning Codes and Standards for the Welfare of Animals
- *Domestic Animals Act, 1994*
- *Livestock Management Act, 2010*
- *Impounding of Livestock Act, 1994*
- *Wildlife Act, 1975*
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, 1988*
- *Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Act, 2004*

The *Emergency Management Act (1986 and 2013)* is the empowering legislation for the management of emergencies in Victoria.

The *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* is the principal legislation for animal welfare. It establishes legislative powers to prevent cruelty to animals encourage the considerate treatment of animals and improve the level of community awareness about the prevention of cruelty to animals including wildlife.

The *State Emergency Response Plan* identifies Victoria's organisational arrangements for managing the response to emergencies.

The *State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan* identifies Victoria's arrangements for the delivery of emergency relief and recovery services in Victoria

The *Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)* contains policy and planning documents for emergency management in Victoria and provides details about the roles different organisations play in the emergency management arrangements.

The custodian of the Plan is DJPR. This role is consistent with DJPR's responsibility for administration of *POCTA*. This Act is the main legislation for animal welfare in an emergency and provides powers for the Department Head, inspectors and veterinary practitioners in an emergency to ensure any animal welfare issues can be appropriately addressed.

DELWP has the lead role in implementing the Plan with respect to wildlife. This role is consistent with this department's responsibility for administration of the *Wildlife Act 1975* and the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* as well as its responsibilities under the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.

The Plan is intended to be a reference for all agencies, organisations, groups and individuals with responsibility for animal welfare during emergencies. The Plan is a reference for use in the development of *Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMPs)* and *Domestic Animal Management Plans (DAMPs)* and provides guidance to other non-government organisation plans with respect to animal welfare arrangements in Victoria.



5.0 Responsibilities of animal owners, managers and carers

The *State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan* states that individuals should seek information to make informed decisions on how to prepare for emergencies and should help meet their own relief and recovery needs wherever possible. Following an emergency, individuals and households need to be as self-sufficient as possible, because in the first instance, agencies will offer emergency support to the most vulnerable community members.

In the event of an emergency, animal welfare may be compromised if management arrangements are not effectively in place. While this plan identifies the role of government agencies and animal welfare support organisations in addressing animal welfare impacts during an emergency, this does not negate an individual or company's legal obligations to provide for the welfare of animals they own, manage or control.

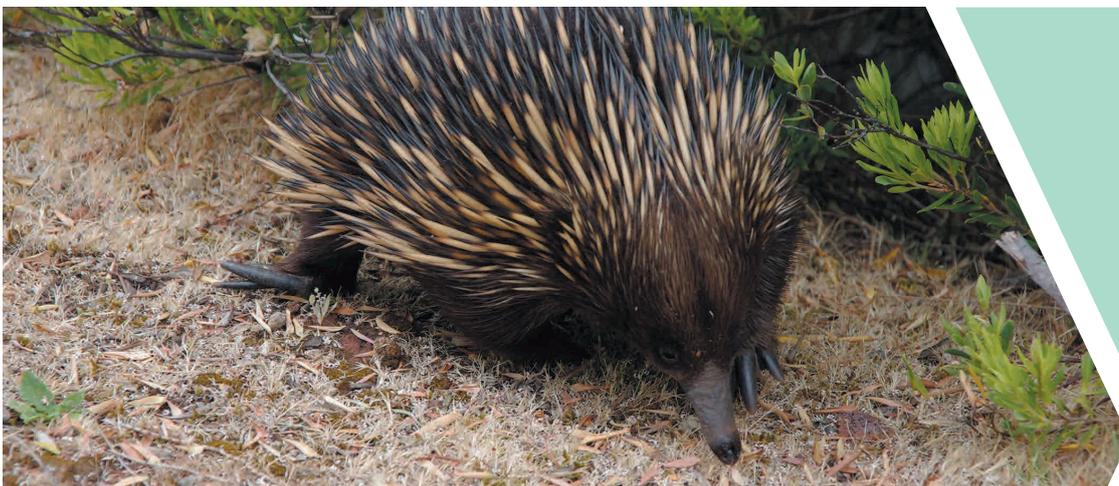
As defined in *POCTA*, the person 'in charge' of an animal has primary responsibility (duty of care) to ensure it is protected from unreasonable pain or suffering. For those in charge of animals, including companion animal owners, livestock owners, wildlife shelter operators and foster carers, zoos and animal businesses planning for emergencies is critical. Personal safety plans and household or property plans should include contingencies for animals regardless of whether they will either remain on the property or be relocated during an emergency.

It is acknowledged that in the event of an emergency, standards of animal care may be compromised. Those in charge of animals may have to relocate quickly, potentially leaving animals behind, and may be restricted in their ability to care for animals. For this reason, the underpinning principle in addressing animal welfare for managed animals in an emergency is for those in charge to take pre-emptive action by planning for animal needs, implementing these plans and taking action early so that welfare problems can be avoided or minimised.

Such planning needs to include identifying whether animals will be relocated or left on a property, preparing an area for any animals left behind to ensure they are given the best chance of survival, ensuring that animals can be identified and having transport and animals ready so that people can relocate with them in a timely and safe manner. Further advice to assist animal owners integrate the welfare of their animals into their emergency plans is available from the Agriculture Victoria website.

Microchipping and registering animals such as dogs, cats and horses can greatly assist in the identification and tracking of stray or relocated animals during an emergency.

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), Australia's system for identifying and tracking beef and dairy cattle, sheep and goats, can be used in an emergency event to assist in the identification of relocated or stray livestock animals.



6.0 Animal welfare support services

A number of government agencies and non-government organisations contribute to improved animal welfare outcomes by providing or facilitating a range of animal welfare support services during an emergency.

If animals are impacted during emergencies, Victoria's emergency management arrangements details that:

- DJPR is the primary agency for animal welfare (other than wildlife) support services; and
- DELWP is the control agency in responding to cetacean (dolphin and whales) entanglements, strandings and vessel strike, and wildlife affected by marine pollution and is the primary agency to respond to wildlife welfare caused by a defined emergency (including wildlife affected by fire)

As primary agencies with animal welfare responsibilities during emergencies, DJPR and DELWP will establish links with other agencies and organisations with emergency responsibilities as well as those organisations involved in the management of animal welfare to coordinate the delivery of animal welfare support services.

The Plan defines animal welfare support services as including, but not limited to, the following activities:

- Planning for animals in the event of an emergency;
- Management of displaced animals (including relocated animals);
- Animal welfare assessment, veterinary treatment, humane destruction, salvage slaughter and disposal;
- Provision of emergency pet food, livestock fodder and water; and
- Planning for longer term recovery.

6.1 Planning for animal welfare in the event of an emergency

For agencies and organisations involved in the provision of animal welfare support services, planning should include:

- Developing and reviewing plans and procedures to address their emergency animal welfare responsibilities;
- Conducting training and exercising to test arrangements in plans and procedures and develop organisational capacity and capability;
- Ensuring contacts are current across government and non-government agencies and organisations;
- Ensuring relationships and agreements with other agencies, groups and organisations are maintained;
- Ensuring community resilience programs contain clear and consistent advice that encourages the community to make informed decisions about their safety and the safety and welfare of the animals under their control; and
- Contributing to relevant committees and forums at the state, regional and local levels.

DJPR and DELWP will work with other agencies to promote consistency of animal welfare arrangements within the various tiers of emergency management plans. This includes documentation of appropriate emergency animal welfare arrangements in MEMPs and associated emergency animal welfare sub-plans through participation on Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees.

DJPR convenes the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Committee (VEAWC) that includes representation from stakeholders who have a role in addressing animal welfare needs in an emergency including DELWP, RSPCA, MAV, AVA, VFF and representative local government councils.

The VEAWC provides a consultative forum to develop, maintain and review the Plan and support its implementation. This includes the development and dissemination of information designed to improve the capacity of animal owners to protect and provide for their animals during an emergency.

6.2 Management of displaced animals (including relocated animals)

Managing relocated animals at Emergency Relief Centres

Ensuring arrangements for managed animals are described in evacuation and relocation procedures will improve animal welfare and human safety outcomes. If animals are not included in relocation processes, some people may choose to remain with the animals and risk their lives. Alternatively, people may turn up at relief centres with animals regardless of whether or not centres are set up to cater for animals or they may independently relocate with animals to locations which may not be safe.

Under Victoria's emergency management arrangements, local government is responsible for the coordination of the provision and operation of emergency relief centres. In doing so, it is important that municipal plans include procedures for managed animals that may present at these sites. However, at all times the person presenting with the animal remains responsible for the animal.

Relief centre arrangements should include provision for the registration, treatment and short-term housing of animals. Where arrangements cannot be made at the site, animal owners should be advised of the alternative arrangements that are in place. Consideration should be given to:

- Animal admission, identification and record keeping;
- Secure and functional housing or holding facilities and their proximity to relief centres;
- Feed, water and shade requirements;
- Access to veterinary treatment for injuries, illness and humane destruction;
- Identification and contacting of owners;
- Animals requiring specialist attention (such as horses and wildlife);

- Animal species and gender separation, including requirements for housing and control of any dog that has been declared dangerous or menacing by council; and
- Staff and community health and safety.

Non-government animal welfare organisations, including the RSPCA, may have resources to support the management of relocated animals at relief centres and other facilities.

Victoria's standards for animal containment and care are provided for in Codes of Practice, which may not be fully achievable or appropriate in emergency situations. DJPR can provide advice on requirements for relocated animals for control and support agencies in emergency situations. Guidelines for animals at relief centres have been developed and are available on the Agriculture Victoria website.

Emergency containment of stray animals

Stray companion animals or livestock may become a hazard and require emergency containment or impoundment. The *Impounding of Livestock Act 1994* and the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* detail the powers and requirements of land owners or occupiers, and agencies in relation to impounding activities as well as conditions under which animals must be kept to ensure animal welfare needs are met and future welfare problems avoided (e.g. food, water and shelter requirements). Agencies involved in impounding animals may vary depending on the type and location of the animal. However, local government is the appropriate first contact point for reports of stray animals.

Displaced wildlife

Where wildlife has been displaced and has been captured or contained by emergency response personnel or members of the public, they should be assessed by an appropriate officer appointed by DELWP. If injured, the assessment will determine the need for treatment and rehabilitation or euthanasia. A Wildlife Response Plan developed by DELWP for the incident will define how and where wildlife can be released.

6.3 Animal welfare assessment, veterinary treatment, humane destruction, salvage slaughter and disposal

Every effort should be made to minimise the level of pain and suffering of affected animals with the resources available. Critical to this is the timing of assessment, treatment and humane destruction or salvage slaughter activities.

Animal welfare assessment

DJPR (animals other than wildlife) and DELWP (wildlife) are responsible for assessing the direct impacts of an emergency on animals. This process entails scoping the incident, its impact and consequences, then defining appropriate objectives, tactics and resources to enable an effective response.

Any officer authorised under *POCTA* is obliged to address animal suffering or report animal welfare needs to relevant agencies regardless of species or land tenure.

In principle however:

- DJPR will attend to animal welfare assessments and refer assessments involving wildlife to DELWP;
- DELWP will attend to wildlife welfare assessments and refer assessments involving all other animals to DJPR.

If owners or emergency agency personnel become aware of an animal welfare assessment need, contact with DJPR (managed animals) or DELWP (wildlife) will assist a prompt response. On-ground assessment activities managed by both agencies will commence once authorisation to enter impacted areas has been given by the control agency.

DJPR assessment teams comprising officers authorised under *POCTA* will undertake on-ground assessment of impacted animals (other than wildlife) to assist animal owners to make decisions about the best course of action for their animals. RSPCA officers and private veterinarians may assist DJPR operations, particularly with the assessment of companion animals and horses. Animals will be assessed based on the need for treatment, immediate humane destruction or salvage slaughter. Landholders can undertake their own assessment and destruction of stock and may also seek advice from private veterinarians once they can gain safe access to affected animals.

DJPR assessment teams will give priority to properties with the largest number and severely impacted animals. These properties will be identified as part of the initial scoping of the incident.

DELWP will lead and manage all assessment and triage activities for wildlife impacted by an emergency. Wildlife teams deployed by DELWP will determine whether affected wildlife require any intervention or treatment. These teams may include volunteers who have been suitably trained, accredited and equipped.

Treatment

Wildlife that are assessed as being suitable for treatment and rehabilitation by DELWP wildlife teams will be captured and taken for veterinary assessment (triage).

When veterinary treatment of managed animals is required, animal owners and carers will normally be advised to seek veterinary advice from a private veterinarian.

In some parts of the state, veterinary services are limited and the added demand resulting from a major emergency can limit animal owners' access to treatment for their injured animals. In an emergency, DJPR will liaise with DELWP, AVA and local government to determine private veterinarian practices' capacity to meet animal treatment needs and coordinate the development of agreed processes to bridge identified capacity gaps.

Actions to address capacity gaps may include facilitating additional support for local practices, directing animal owners and carers to veterinary practices with latent capacity and the establishment of triage sites where animals can be assessed and their treatment needs (including euthanasia) determined. Depending on the circumstances, triage sites may include capacity for provision of first aid but will generally not include facilities for ongoing treatment.

AVA will work with DJPR and local government to facilitate contact with veterinarians and veterinary nurses wishing to assist in the provision of animal welfare support services in affected areas for livestock and companion animals. They will also liaise with DELWP to facilitate the staffing of triage centres with contracted veterinarians and veterinary nurses as required. In addition, AVA will liaise with practices within and adjoining the impacted area to develop options to address unmet animal welfare needs.

The RSPCA may also be able to establish or support treatment activities at triage sites.

Humane destruction or salvage slaughter

It is the responsibility of the person in charge of animals to arrange for the humane destruction or salvage slaughter of emergency affected animals where the animals will continue to suffer if they remain alive, or where the animals have little or no chance of survival. DJPR will assist in the humane destruction or salvage slaughter of managed animals when the person in charge cannot or will not perform the necessary actions to alleviate the suffering of their animals. DJPR will liaise with the RSPCA and local government to identify opportunities for suitably trained and equipped, *POCTA* authorised officers from these organisations to assist in these activities.

Wherever possible, destruction activities will take place in consultation with the person in charge of affected animals. In situations where owners cannot be found, power for immediate destruction in their absence is provided for under *POCTA*.

DELWP is responsible for managing the assessment and treatment or euthanasia of wildlife during and following an emergency. This will be undertaken by field crews at the incident or by a veterinarian at the triage centre or a private veterinary clinic. While it is prohibited to destroy native wildlife under the *Wildlife Act*, registered veterinary practitioners and appropriately authorised officers may euthanase wildlife in accordance with *POCTA*.

Methods of destruction of animals must be humane. Guidance on acceptable methods is available in the relevant codes or standards for welfare which can be found on the DJPR website.

Disposal

The timing of animal carcass disposal is critical since any delay not only poses a risk to human health and the environment, but also the morale of emergency personnel and the affected community. It is critical that approved methods of carcass disposal are utilised and procedures are followed to minimise inherent risks of disposal, including biosecurity, environmental contamination or the spread of disease.

A number of on-farm and off-farm options exist for the disposal of animal carcasses resulting from an emergency, including licensed landfills, knackeries and rendering facilities, high temperature incineration and on-farm burial. Victoria's emergency management arrangements establish municipal councils as responsible for the coordination of clean-up activities in an emergency including disposal of dead animals.

These same arrangements establish DJPR as the provider of advice regarding the disposal of dead or maimed animals including location, type and number of animals to be disposed. DJPR will liaise with DELWP to establish a consolidated view on carcass disposal needs resulting from the incident. They will report these needs to local government who will liaise with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to identify suitable sites for disposal and ensure that appropriate disposal methods are adopted.

DELWP will liaise with Museum Victoria on any requirements to retain wildlife specimens of importance for inclusion in the State Collection.



6.4 Provision of emergency pet food, livestock fodder and water

Animals require access to food and clean drinking water. In emergency situations, allocation of feed and water will likely be based on meeting the basic needs to ensure animal survival. It is the responsibility of the person in charge of animals to plan for and provide feed and water for impacted animals.

Emergencies may impact on water quality or supply leading to the need to supply alternative water sources. Emergencies may also impact pastures and other sources of food usually available to sustain livestock and companion animals. DJPR and the VFF have entered into an agreement that provides for an effective fodder distribution service to assist the Victorian farming community meet immediate animal welfare needs during a major emergency. The agreement provides arrangements for DJPR to support the VFF to establish and maintain local fodder depots and manage donations of fodder, including the transport of fodder to these local depots, where it is jointly established that such a need exists.

To assist in the early identification of the need to activate the agreement, DJPR will scope the initial phase of an emergency to determine the likely extent of emergency fodder needs prior to conferring with the VFF to determine an appropriate approach to address this need.

DJPR will work with owners to assess emergency fodder and water needs of animals, and direct animal owners to fodder depots or distribution centres and water points where they have been established by either the relevant local government council or water authority.

The person in charge of animals will be encouraged to make their own arrangements for the collection of fodder and water. Where this is not possible, DJPR will liaise with local government and fodder depots to attempt to facilitate the transport of fodder and water to address urgent animal welfare needs.

Longer term fodder and water supplies are the responsibility of the person in charge of animals. In situations where the minimum needs of animals are unlikely to be met, consideration will need to be given to sale, agistment or humane destruction.

Donations of pet food may also be made in large scale emergencies. DJPR and the RSPCA will liaise with local government to determine suitable local arrangements for impacted pet owners to access donated pet food.

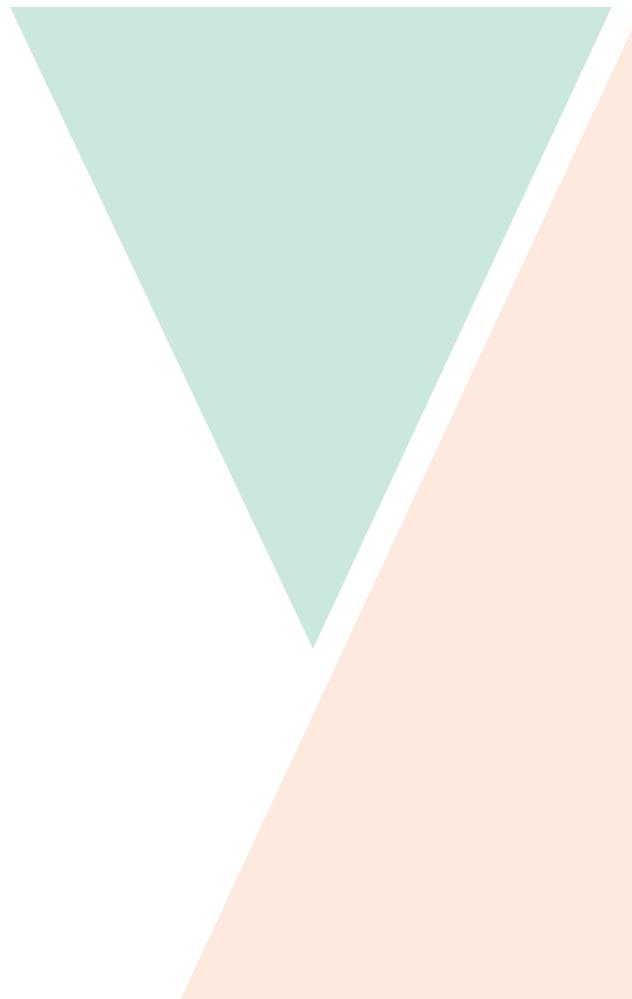
6.5 Planning longer term recovery

Victoria's emergency management arrangements identify DJPR as responsible for policy development, state-wide coordination and operational delivery for the agricultural relief and recovery environment including animal welfare. DJPR will deliver this role in partnership with other recovery agencies including local government.

Information collected by DJPR and DELWP on animal impacts during the course of an emergency will inform government rehabilitation or recovery projects following significant emergency events.

In the case of livestock, rehabilitation and recovery planning will consider feed planning and pasture management, water supplies including dam management and animal health considerations (e.g. fly strike, foot rot).

In the case of wildlife, DELWP will develop rehabilitation and release plans for treated animals.



7.0 Emergency management

7.1 Command, control and coordination

Victorian emergency response management operates within a three tiered framework – state, regional and incident. Victoria also bases its emergency response arrangements on the management functions of control, command coordination, consequences, communication, and community connection, which are broadly described as:

- Control - the overall direction of response activities in an emergency, operating horizontally across agencies.
- Command - the internal direction of personnel and resources of an agency, operating vertically within the agency.
- Coordination - the bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective response to and recovery from emergencies.
- Consequences - The management of the effect of emergencies on individuals, the community, infrastructure and the environment.
- Communication - The engagement and provision of information across agencies and proactively with the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
- Community Connection - The understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders and all communities to support resilience and decision making.

A control agency is the agency responsible for leading the response to a particular type of emergency. Part 7 of the *EMMV* addresses emergency management agency roles, including defining control agencies and key support agencies for response.

Appendix 1 of the Plan identifies the emergencies that are likely to have animal welfare implications and the control agency and primary state government animal welfare support agencies for such emergencies, as well as associated plans and procedures that describe specific operational arrangements.

In the case of cetacean entanglements, strandings and vessel strike, wildlife affected by marine pollution emergencies and emergency animal disease incursions, animal welfare is an intrinsic aspect of managing the emergency as part of either DELWP or DJPR exercising control of these emergencies.

In other emergencies such as bushfire, floods, traffic accidents and heat events, impacts on animal welfare may be incidental to the broader emergency. In these instances, Agriculture Victoria Animal Welfare Commanders (AWC) will ensure effective provision of the agency's emergency animal welfare response, relief and recovery responsibilities. Similarly, DELWP State Agency Commanders (SAC) and Principal Officer Wildlife Emergencies (POWE) will ensure effective provision of the agency's emergency wildlife welfare response, relief and recovery responsibilities.

DJPR and DELWP will represent respective animal welfare interests at all tiers by active participation in Emergency Management Teams (EMTs) that are convened, in the event of an emergency, or in preparation for an anticipated emergency.



7.2 Agriculture Victoria Animal Welfare Commanders

The Agriculture Victoria State Agency Commander is in place at all times. The Agriculture Victoria State Agency Commander undertakes the role of State Animal Welfare Commander unless they delegate that role to another officer due to the scale of an incident or incidents. Agriculture Victoria Regional Agency Commanders (RACs) undertake the role of Regional Animal Welfare Commanders (RAWCs) as required.

RAWCs are the initial point of regional contact to address livestock and companion animal welfare needs in the event of an emergency. Where an emergency has the potential to impact livestock and companion animals, the RAWC will liaise with the control agency and local government representatives on the Regional Emergency Management Team and the Incident Emergency Team to establish a shared understanding of the animal welfare situation.

The SAWC is responsible for:

- Actively monitoring the potential risks to welfare of managed animals as a consequence of current and predicted conditions including weather and the status of existing emergency incidents across the state;
- Liaising with relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations including DELWP, AVA, RSPCA, MAV, VFF and local government to enable effective and timely preparedness and delivery of animal welfare support services during an emergency;
- Ensuring DJPR's emergency animal welfare operations are properly resourced, with appropriate management structures in place at the state, regional and incident levels;
- Ensuring that the welfare of animals is appropriately considered during emergency response and relief operations, in accordance with the Plan;
- Providing oversight and direction to DJPR staff involved in the establishment and delivery of emergency animal welfare services at the regional and incident levels;
- Actively identifying and seeking solutions to operational and policy issues relevant to emergency animal welfare.

7.3 DELWP wildlife welfare arrangements

The DELWP SAC is in place at all times. The SAC will be supported by the POWE and regionally by the DELWP Regional Agency Commanders (RACs) who are the initial point of contact to address wildlife welfare needs in the event of an emergency.

Where an emergency has the potential to impact wildlife welfare, the DELWP RAC will liaise with the Incident Controller and local government MERO as a member of the EMT established for the incident with respect to wildlife welfare. The POWE will also be consulted.

The POWE is responsible for:

- Actively monitoring the potential risks to wildlife welfare as a consequence of current and predicted conditions including weather and the status of existing emergency incidents across the state;
- Liaising with relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations including DJPR, AVA, RSPCA, MAV and local government to enable effective and timely preparedness and delivery of wildlife welfare services during an emergency;
- Ensuring DELWP's emergency wildlife welfare operations are properly resourced, with appropriate management structures in place at the state, regional and incident levels;
- Ensuring that the welfare of wildlife is appropriately considered during emergency response and relief operations, in accordance with the Plan;
- Providing oversight and direction to DELWP staff involved in the establishment and delivery of emergency wildlife welfare support services at the regional and incident levels;
- Managing direct reports within the State Emergency Wildlife Response Unit; and
- Actively identifying and seeking solutions to operational and policy issues relevant to emergency wildlife welfare.

7.4 State strategic control priorities

The State Strategic Control Priorities provide clear direction on the factors that must be considered and actioned during response to any emergency. The intent is to minimise the impacts of emergencies and enable affected communities to focus on their recovery as early as practicable.

The State Strategic Control Priorities will underpin the planning and operational decisions made when managing the response to emergencies within Victoria. The State Strategic Control Priorities are:

- Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes:
 - Safety of emergency services personnel; and
 - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/ tourists located within the incident area.
- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety.
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that supports community resilience.
- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence.
- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability.
- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

7.5 Incident management system (IMS)

Emergencies by their nature are dynamic and often complex events. As such traditional workplace management arrangements adopted for the planning and delivery of business as usual programs are often inadequate to ensure the efficient and effective management of response operations.

An IMS is the system used primarily by the control agency to provide support to the Incident Controller. All control agencies must be in a position to implement an effective IMS in response to an emergency. An IMS is not a fixed set of rules, but rather a flexible and dynamic methodology that can cater for an escalation or change in the severity of an emergency. All IMS must be based on five key principles:

- Flexibility - The approach must be able to be applied across the full spectrum of incidents and account for variations in the nature of the hazard, the scale of the incident, the complexities presented, the number of agencies and the duration of the incident.
- Management by Objectives - The Incident Controller, with the Incident Management Team (IMT), determines the desired objectives of the incident with the objectives communicated to everyone involved with the incident to ensure a common understanding of what is required.
- Functional Management - Utilisation of functions to manage an incident. For every incident, an Incident Controller is appointed who is ultimately responsible and accountable for all functions. Depending on incident size and complexity, the Incident Controller may elect to delegate functions to others and may also appoint deputies.
- Unity of Command - One Incident Controller directing and coordinating the actions of all forces, one set of objectives, one Incident Action Plan which is approved by the Incident Controller with each individual reporting to one supervisor.
- Span of Control - Relates to the number of groups or individuals that can be successfully supervised by one person. Up to 5 reporting groups or individuals is desirable.

Consistent with these principles the Incident Controller holds overall responsibility for managing all activities to resolve the incident. The Incident Controller leads an IMT where the functions of Operations, Planning, Public Information, Logistics, Intelligence, Investigation, Finance, Administration and Safety may be delegated to IMT members.

Three classifications of incident are recognised in the Plan.

Incident Classification	Characteristics
Level 1	Small scale incidents that are generally resolved through the use of local or initial response resources only. Impacts are localised and are generally routine and expected
Level 2	More complex incidents in either size, resources or risk. They are characterised by deployment of resources beyond initial response and/or sectorisation of the emergency and/or establishment of functional sections due to levels of complexity. Impacts are often more substantial with some medium-term implications.
Level 3	Characterised by degrees of complexity that requires a more substantial establishment for management of the situation. The Incident Controller will usually delegate all functions other than control. Impacts to the community, infrastructure and the environment are often major with significant long-term implications.

7.6 Responding to the needs of animals including wildlife in an emergency

Prior to high risk days (e.g. Code Red days, Major Flood warnings) the SAWC, in consultation with the POWE, will facilitate the provision of situational information and intelligence to registered animal welfare agencies and organisations to assist with operational readiness.

In the event of an emergency impacting animals, including wildlife, AgVic RAWCs and DELWP RACs will ensure appropriate measures are in place to address such impacts.

By their very nature, Level 1 incidents are usually small and of short duration and result in only limited and localised animal welfare impacts that can be readily addressed through local DJPR and DELWP staff liaising with control agency staff as part of the EMT. In these incidents it is expected that issues will primarily be resolved by local personnel, with key contacts listed in MEMPs.

Where the incident has resulted in, or has the potential to result, in significant animal welfare impacts, DJPR and DELWP's preferred approach is for animal (including wildlife) welfare operations to be fully integrated with the control agency's response operations. Where DJPR or DELWP is not the control agency for the incident, their agency commanders will engage the Incident Controller via the EMT to ascertain the most appropriate level of integration for the incident.

In these instances, DJPR and or DELWP will actively engage with the control agency, local government and relevant animal welfare agencies and support organisations to:

- Communicate known and anticipated animal welfare impacts;
- Explain existing management arrangements in place to resolve the emergency(s);
- Advise on current and anticipated levels of resourcing required to address these impacts;
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of agencies and organisations against the Plan and confirm contact details; and
- Confirm ongoing management, resourcing, logistics, communication and reporting arrangements.



7.7 Initial impact assessment

The *State Emergency Response Plan* specifies that control agencies are responsible for instigating and managing initial impact assessment for the purposes of capturing the nature and scale of the impact of an incident. Initial impact assessment is undertaken in the first 48 hours of an incident and may lead to the early identification of animal welfare issues.

The basic information required by DJPR and DELWP to respond to animal welfare issues relates to the location, type and approximate number of impacted animals. This information should be referred to DJPR in the case of animals other than wildlife, and DELWP in the case of wildlife. This information will be used to assist DJPR and DELWP to scope and prioritise the delivery of animal welfare response.

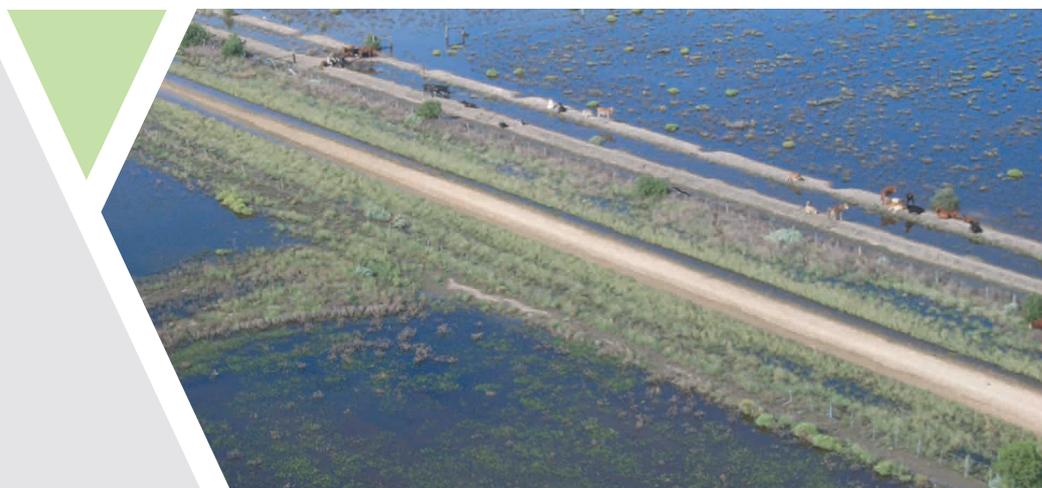
7.8 Processes for requesting supplementary resources

When supplementary resources (personnel, equipment or services) are needed to respond to animal welfare, the principles for accessing resources defined in the *State Emergency Response Plan* will be followed. Principles are based on an agency or organisation first exhausting all resources owned or directly within their control (i.e. through a pre-existing arrangement) prior to requesting assistance from elsewhere.

Both DJPR and DELWP can access RSPCA and interstate government resources if necessary and facilitate access to non-government volunteer organisations that may not be detailed in municipal plans. These arrangements extend to engaging AVA to assist in facilitating access to veterinarians.

At the local level, requests for supplementary resources should be submitted to the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM), ensuring the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC) is aware of the request. It is noted that the MERO may perform the role of MRM in conjunction with their role as MERO during an emergency. Following a request for animal welfare support resources, the MERC will source resources from the responsible regional agency commanders; Agriculture Victoria RAWC for animals other than wildlife or DELWP RAC for wildlife.

At the regional level, requests for resources can be submitted directly to the responsible regional agency commanders (Agriculture Victoria or DELWP). The regional agency commander will seek resources within the region and if necessary escalate unfulfilled resource requests to the responsible state agency commander (the Agriculture Victoria SAWC for animals other than wildlife or the DELWP SAC in consultation with the POWE for wildlife).



7.9 Managing supplementary resources including volunteers

DJPR maintains a contact list of animal welfare organisations that can assist in the delivery of animal welfare support services during an emergency. DJPR coordinates requests for animal related assistance using this information. Details from the list may also be provided to local government and emergency services agencies, where permitted by listed organisations.

Volunteer groups with an interest in livestock and companion animal welfare can pre-register their services with DJPR (www.agriculture.vic.gov.au).

Volunteer organisations should also identify specialist equipment that may be used during emergency animal welfare activities (e.g. portable stockyards).

Under Section 21 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2014*, employers have an obligation to 'provide such information, instruction, training or supervision to employees of the employer as is necessary to enable those persons to perform their work in a way that is safe and without risks to health'. This obligation is extended to engaged contractors and volunteers deployed directly by an agency.

Volunteers deployed directly by DJPR or DELWP are required to work within established emergency management structures to maintain personal safety, prevent duplication of effort and ensure the efficient and effective use of resources. For these reasons, volunteers are required to abide by established volunteer management processes which include pre-requisite training and accreditation, registration, communication and reporting procedures, as well as the use of personal protective equipment and the adoption of hazard specific safety measures.

DELWP may utilise trained volunteers to assist in assessment of wildlife at the incident. To facilitate this, DELWP has a process to ensure volunteers it deploys to assist its emergency animal welfare operations are provided with appropriate supervision, induction and training and, where necessary personal protective equipment. These arrangements are communicated to volunteers registered directly with DELWP.

The rehabilitation of wildlife will occur via the existing network of wildlife foster carers and shelter operators. Further information on volunteering for wildlife response can be found at www.wildlife.vic.gov.au.

7.10 Access to impacted areas

To ensure the safety of paid and volunteer personnel involved in animal welfare activities, authorisation to enter the area impacted by the emergency must first be obtained from the Incident Controller. Permission to enter areas will be based on arrangements described in the *Guidelines for the Operation of Traffic Management Points During Class 1 Emergencies* and the *Joint Agency Standard Operating Procedure for Traffic Management at emergencies (JSOP J03.10)*, Agriculture Victoria AWCs and DELWP RACs will liaise with Incident Controllers to establish safe access to impacted areas at the earliest opportunity.

7.11 Information collection and sharing

Organisations working under the direction of DJPR or DELWP will use established forms and reporting systems and processes to enable comprehensive and consolidated reporting of loss and damage information and referral of specific animal welfare needs. This summary information will be provided to control agencies and local government as required.

Referral of specific animal welfare needs, including those identified through control agency initial impact assessment, may require disclosure of personal information to other agencies or organisations involved in the provision of these services.

To ensure information sharing is consistent with the *Information Privacy Act, 2000* the following principles apply:

- Wherever possible, when collecting information from affected persons for use by other agencies or organisations, the collecting party will disclose the purpose of collection to the affected person;
- Personal information will only be disclosed to other agencies or organisations involved in the management of the emergency or for the provision of relief and recovery services; and
- Agencies and organisations are required to use and share information for the original purposes for which it was obtained only, unless the collecting agency or organisation believes the use or disclosure is necessary for law enforcement purposes (Schedule 1 of the *Information Privacy Act*; The information privacy principles).

8.0 Roles and responsibilities

As a result of an emergency animal welfare is often compromised at a time when the owners and carers of animals are under great stress. While the primary responsibility and duty of care always remains with the person in charge of an animal, emergency animal support services provided by a range of government and non-government agencies and organisations can assist. A brief description of the roles and responsibilities of key agencies and organisations is provided below.

8.1 Australian Veterinary Association (Victorian Division)

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain a volunteer data base of veterinarians and veterinary nurses.• In consultation with DJPR and DELWP, prepare and distribute fact sheets and other technical information to veterinarians treating injured animals.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact AVA members and other relevant stakeholders who may be affected to gather information about the situation.• Inform AVA members and other relevant stakeholders about the emergency response.• Utilise the resources of the AVA Communications Team as appropriate.• Assist DELWP and DJPR with the dissemination of relevant information.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate communication between veterinarians and AVA through telephone contact and electronic communications.• Facilitate contact with veterinarians and veterinary nurses to establish opportunities to assist in the provision of animal welfare support services in affected areas.• Assist in the identification of veterinarians and practices within affected regions.• Report urgent animal welfare needs arising from the emergency to DJPR and DELWP.• Liaise with DJPR, DELWP and veterinarians and practices within and adjoining the impacted area to develop options to address unmet animal welfare needs• Liaise with pharmaceutical companies using their distribution networks to transport essential supplies to existing practices and any triage sites established in response to the emergency.• In consultation with DELWP liaise with Zoos Victoria in the dissemination of information and advice for veterinarians regarding the treatment of wildlife.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise the AVA Benevolent Fund of veterinarians in difficult financial circumstances as a result of the emergency.

8.2 Country Fire Authority

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction

- Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.
- Work with DJPR and DELWP in the development and delivery of appropriate animal welfare messages in community education programs.

Response

- When a control agency, ensure approved animal welfare messages are provided to the community and media.
- Ensure animal welfare and other rural issues identified through initial impact assessment activities are referred to DJPR and DELWP.

8.3 Department of Health & Human Services

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction

- Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.

Relief

- Ensure animal welfare requests for assistance are referred in accordance with established protocols.
- Liaise with DJPR where emergencies impact on human health to identify if there are any associated animal health issues.



8.4 Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions is the primary state agency for the provision of welfare support for all animals other than wildlife in emergencies.

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represent DJPR and the state’s managed animal welfare arrangements on relevant emergency management and animal welfare committees and forums.• In partnership with control agencies, develop and implement community education programs to inform animal owners of their responsibilities during an emergency• Communicate emergency welfare arrangements and operational requirements for managed animals to relevant stakeholders.• Provide advice to agencies, organisations and the community regarding livestock and domestic animal welfare management in emergencies and risk management planning.• Develop, maintain and communicate protocols that describe restrictions and standards to be used by all personnel, including animal welfare volunteers, deployed by DJPR as part of their animal welfare operations (training needs, personal protective equipment, communications, fatigue management and other OHS requirements).• Maintain and regularly review this Plan.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice to control and support agencies regarding the impact, or potential impact of an emergency on managed animal welfare, including biosecurity (disease) risks and management strategies.• Liaise with DELWP, local government and relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations to enable effective and timely delivery of managed animal welfare support services during an emergency.• Develop information for the public and media relating to the management of managed animals impacted by the emergency, for release through the Incident Controller.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaise with DELWP, local government and animal welfare support agencies and organisations to ensure effective allocation of resources.• Identify and assess injured and affected animals (other than wildlife).• Provide advice on options for treatment, humane destruction or emergency salvage slaughter.• Where necessary, assist with humane destruction of injured or affected animals.• Inform and coordinate animal welfare organisations, volunteer groups or community groups wanting to contribute.• Assess and report losses and damage to agricultural assets and animals, and needs of affected persons and communities to government.• Investigate complaints relevant to animal welfare.• Liaise with DHHS where emergencies impacting on human health may also have associated animal health issues.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice about feed planning and pasture management, water supplies including dam management, and animal health considerations, which will vary depending on the incident type (e.g. fly strike, foot rot).

8.5 Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is the primary state agency for the provision of welfare support for all wildlife in emergencies.

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk Reduction Activities

- Represent DELWP and the state's wildlife welfare arrangements on relevant emergency management and animal welfare committees and forums.
- Communicate emergency wildlife welfare arrangements and operational requirements to relevant stakeholders.
- Provide advice to agencies, organisations and the community regarding wildlife welfare management in emergencies and risk management planning.
- Develop, maintain and communicate protocols that describe restrictions and standards to be used by all personnel, including wildlife volunteers, deployed by DELWP as part of their wildlife welfare operations (training needs, personal protective equipment, communications, fatigue management and other OHS requirements).
- Develop and deliver training programs to volunteers.

Response Activities

- Provide advice to response agencies regarding the impact of an emergency on wildlife.
- Liaise with DJPR, local government and relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations to enable effective and timely delivery of wildlife welfare support services during an emergency.
- Develop information for the public and media relating to the management of wildlife impacted by the emergency, for release through the Incident Controller.

Relief Activities

- Liaise with DJPR, local government and animal welfare support agencies and organisations to ensure effective allocation of resources.
- Identify and assess injured and affected wildlife. Refer treatment needs to triage points (when established and where relevant).
- Establish triage sites
- Provide advice on options for treatment and rehabilitation or euthanasia of affected wildlife.
- Inform animal welfare organisations, volunteer groups or community groups wanting to contribute.
- Investigate complaints relevant to wildlife welfare
- Develop a wildlife release strategy and arrange for animals requiring further care to be transferred to approved shelters
- Ensure the treatment and care of wildlife is conducted in accordance with relevant legislation and codes of practice (the *Wildlife Act 1975* and wildlife rehabilitation guidelines).

Recovery Activities

- Provide advice on wildlife carcass disposal needs to local government, where required or appropriate.
- Provide advice to land management agencies and the community on wildlife rehabilitation.
- Manage initiative projects relevant to wildlife rehabilitation on crown land.

8.6 Emergency Management Victoria

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.• Work with DJPR and DELWP in the development and delivery of appropriate animal welfare messages in community education programs.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure approved animal welfare messages are provided to the community and media.• Ensure animal welfare and other rural issues identified through initial impact assessment activities are referred to DJPR and DELWP.

8.7 Local Government

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure emergency relief and recovery components of MEMPs detail local emergency animal welfare arrangements and providers for relevant animal welfare services including consideration of the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– DJPR (managed animals) and DELWP (wildlife) contacts for animal assessment activities,– carcass transport providers and disposal sites,– options for the housing and management of displaced animals, including those presenting at emergency relief centres,– potential sites for donated fodder distribution,– alternative emergency water sources for animals, and– systems for the management of offers of assistance or donations made to local government.• Communicate municipal animal welfare contacts and arrangements to relevant stakeholders.• Reference animal welfare information in publications and websites to assist broader community awareness, education and understanding.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaise with relevant local animal welfare agencies and organisations to enable effective and timely delivery of council's animal welfare support services.• Provide input to information for the public and media relating to the management of animals impacted by the emergency and arrangements for relocated animals for release by the Incident Controller.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide assistance with urgent animal welfare needs, including emergency shelter, water or fodder.• Manage donated goods and services offered to the municipality.• Emergency confinement of stray animals within the local government area.• Referral of animal welfare needs to responsible and animal welfare support organisations.• Coordination of clean-up activities, including disposal of dead animals.• Provide a municipal point of contact for other agencies and organisations (e.g. control agencies, DJPR, DELWP, RSPCA, AVA and VFF), in relation to animal welfare needs or issues.• Make provisions for animals presenting at emergency relief centres that include provision for the registration, treatment and housing of animals at the relief centre or advise animal owners of alternative arrangements where animals cannot be housed at the site.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with DJPR to assist in ongoing animal welfare recovery within the municipality.• Coordinate recovery services for animal owners and carers.

8.8 Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state and regional plans.• Work with DJPR and DELWP in the development and delivery of appropriate animal welfare messages in community education programs.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a control agency, ensure approved animal welfare messages are provided to the community and media.• Ensure animal welfare issues identified through initial impact assessment activities are referred to DJPR and DELWP.

8.9 Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Victorian Branch)

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead the annual review of the RSPCA Emergency Response Plan and associated documents.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist DJPR and DELWP to undertake animal welfare assessment activities in accordance with established emergency management structures, when requested.• Report animal welfare needs in accordance with established emergency reporting systems and processes.• Manage the distribution of donations made to RSPCA to established distribution centres.• Provide advice to pet and horse owners on issues relating to animal welfare.• Respond, where appropriate, to requests for animal welfare resources, in accordance with the State's emergency resource supplementation process.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice to pet and horse owners on issues relating to animal welfare.

8.10 Victorian Farmers Federation

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contribute to the development of plans and protocols for the provision of fodder relief to assist the farming community to minimise the effects of emergencies on animals in the care of rural landholders.• In consultation with DJPR distribute fact sheets and other technical information to primary producers
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaise with DJPR to determine the scale of fodder distribution requirements.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appoint a State Fodder Coordinator to coordinate fodder donations and distribution across affected areas.• Establish local arrangements to service affected areas based on advice from DJPR.• Manage donations of fodder including the transport of fodder to local depots.• Provide weekly progress reports on fodder distribution operations to DJPR.• Assist with the dissemination of relevant information to primary producers.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise DJPR and local government on longer term recovery needs of landholders.• Assist with the dissemination of relevant information to primary producers.

8.11 Victoria Police

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a control agency, ensure approved animal welfare messages are provided to the community and media.• Ensure arrangements are in place at traffic management points that allow effective and timely delivery of animal welfare support services into impacted areas consistent with agreed guidelines.• Ensure animal welfare and other rural issues identified through initial impact assessment activities are referred to DJPR and DELWP.

8.12 Victoria State Emergency Service

Prevention / Mitigation / Risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.• Support DJPR and DELWP measures to integrate emergency animal welfare arrangements into municipal level plans.• Work with DJPR and DELWP in the development and delivery of appropriate animal welfare messages in community education programs.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a control agency, ensure approved animal welfare messages are provided to the community and media.• Ensure animal welfare and other rural issues identified through initial impact assessment activities are referred to DJPR and DELWP

8.13 Wildlife Shelters and Carers

Relief and Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide assistance in wildlife assessment activities under the direction of DELWP and in line with conditions and standards outlined in relevant plans and protocols.• Where appropriately authorised, provide treatment and rehabilitation of wildlife affected by emergencies, with the intent to release to the wild once recovered.
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9.0 Communication

All agencies and organisations are responsible for updating emergency contact lists. DJPR (animals other than wildlife) and DELWP (for wildlife) will assist this process by maintaining and distributing their agency's state and regional contact arrangements. They will also develop and distribute key contact details for relevant animal welfare stakeholders. These details will be maintained on both agency websites.

DJPR and DELWP will actively promote the Plan and associated volunteer engagement processes, SOPs and related plans and codes of practice/standards with emergency animal welfare support organisations (including RSPCA, AVA and VFF), state government control agencies, local government and the broader community.

DJPR and DELWP will develop appropriate animal welfare messages for inclusion in community resilience programs managed by emergency management agencies and local government. This activity will include the development and dissemination of information designed to improve animal owners' understanding of their animal welfare responsibilities and enhance their ability protect and provide for their animals during an emergency.

They will also provide advice on animal welfare information for inclusion in tailored timely and relevant community warnings issued by control agencies to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety and the safety and welfare of the animals under their control.

Further information on animals and wildlife in emergencies is available at Agriculture Victoria (www.agriculture.vic.gov.au) and DELWP (www.wildlife.vic.gov.au) websites.

Agriculture Victoria maintains a range of publications including:

- Guidelines for animals at emergency relief centres
- Municipal emergency animal welfare plan template
- Checklists for evacuating with animals
- Codes and standards for the welfare of animals

State Emergency Animal Welfare Contacts

Agriculture Victoria State Animal Welfare Commander
03 5573 0950

DELWP State Agency Commander
1300 134 444



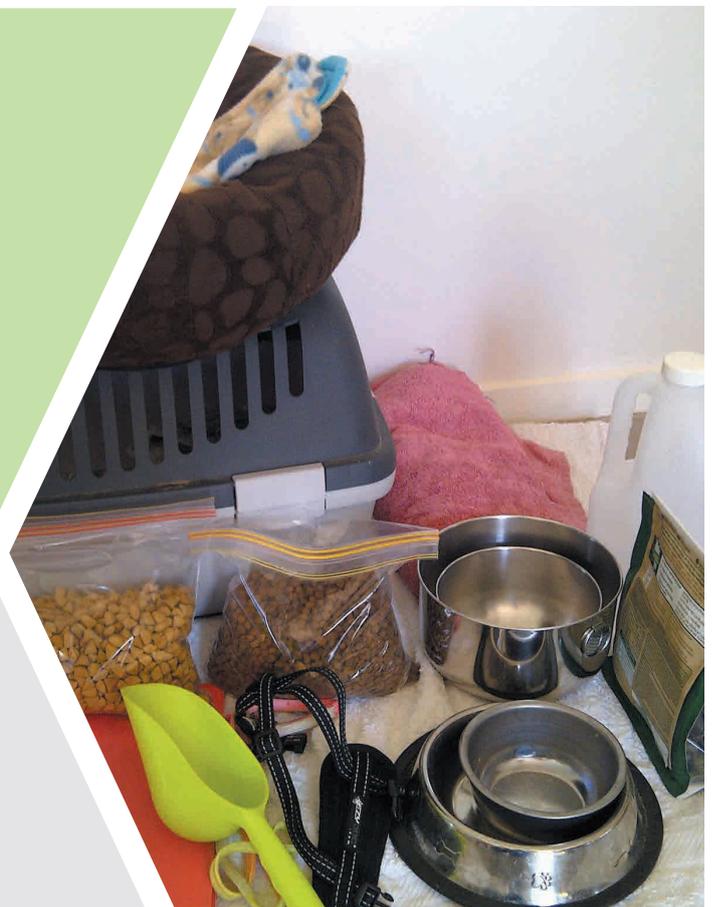
10.0 Training and exercising

Agencies and organisations are responsible for understanding the competencies and level of training required by their personnel to participate in emergencies.

Opportunities will exist to practise integrated animal welfare support service provision through municipal, regional and state exercises. DJPR and DELWP will engage with EMV and control agencies at the state, regional and local levels to ensure opportunities for exercising of animal welfare arrangements are considered in the development of exercise programs. DJPR and DELWP will liaise with key animal welfare organisations and local government animal management staff to facilitate their active involvement in exercise programs where an animal welfare focus is included.

DJPR and DELWP will encourage exercise programs to support the desired outcome of animal welfare operations being fully integrated with the control agency's response operations.

DJPR and DELWP will communicate the outcomes and learnings from exercises to relevant stakeholders.



11.0 Evaluation and review

In the interests of continuous improvement, all agencies and organisations should evaluate their own operational performance in relation to animal welfare responsibilities following an emergency.

DJPR and DELWP will conduct After Action Reviews (AARs) following emergencies requiring significant activation of the arrangements described in the Plan including all Level 2 / Level 3 emergencies with significant animal welfare impacts. Both agencies will ensure appropriate involvement of support agencies (e.g. RSPCA, AVA, and VFF) and local government.

DJPR and DELWP will communicate the outcomes and learnings from AARs to relevant stakeholders.

DJPR will also lead a comprehensive review of the Plan in consultation with key stakeholders every three years. The timing of the review will be such that changes can be reflected in the annual review of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, the State Emergency Response Plan, the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, MEMPs and other relevant agency or organisation plans. The Plan review will include consideration of the outcomes of AARs.



Appendices

Appendix 1:

Specific operational plans for emergencies that impact animal welfare

Emergency	Control Agency	Primary Agency for Animal Welfare Support	Relevant Animal Welfare Plans and Procedures
Storm (including hail), Flood, Tsunami, Earthquake	SES	DJPR – Animals other than wildlife DELWP - Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
Fire	CFA / DELWP / MFB (depending on location)	DJPR – Animals other than wildlife DELWP – Wildlife	Bushfire on public land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Response Plan for Wildlife Impacted by Fire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Volunteers in Wildlife Emergencies Resource Manual (DELWP) Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
Cetacean (whale and dolphin) entanglements, strandings and vessel strike	DELWP	DJPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Cetacean Emergency Plan (DELWP, 2015)
Wildlife affected by marine pollution emergencies	DELWP	DJPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife Response Plan for Marine Pollution Emergencies (DELWP, 2007)
Emergency Animal Disease	DJPR	DELWP - Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AUSVETPLAN Operational Procedures Manual: Livestock welfare and management Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
Transport Incidents (involving livestock)	Victoria Police	DJPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DJPR Standard Operating Procedure: Transport Accidents Involving Livestock in Transit Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
Hazardous spills or leaks (gas leaks, chemical, oil, radioactive or biological)	Gas, Chemical, Oil (CFA, MFB) Biological and radioactive (DHHS)	DJPR – Animals other than wildlife DELWP - Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
State Heat Plan	Victoria Police	DJPR – Animals other than wildlife DELWP – Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan

Note: Wildlife emergency information can be found at:

<https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/wildlife-emergencies/wildlife-emergencies>

agriculture.vic.gov.au/animalemergency