



**SEMC**  
STATE EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

# Animal Welfare in Emergencies

## STATE SUPPORT PLAN

### RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Department of Primary Industries  
and Regional Development

### APPROVED BY

State Emergency Management  
Committee

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## Amendment Table

No.	Date	Details	Amended by
1	March 2019	Interim plan only - Version 00.01 - Initial release of (Interim) State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies	DPIRD
2	November 2019	Version 01.00 – Initial release of State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies. Significant amendments include clarification of activation arrangements and DPIRD roles and responsibilities.	DPIRD
3	June 2021	Version 2.0 - Amendments approved by SEMC (Resolution Number 32/2021) as per <a href="#">amendments table May 2021</a> .	SEMC Business Unit
4	December 2022	Version 2.01 - Amendments approved by SEMC Executive Officer (Resolution Number 17/2021). Statement of fact changes and updated hyperlinks to new SEMC website as per <a href="#">amendments table December 2022</a> .	SEMC Business Unit
5	October 2023	Version 2.02 - Consequential amendments approved by SEMC to reflect the change in terminology from 'welfare' to 'emergency relief and support' and related terms (resolution number 77/2023) and statement of fact and accessibility amendments approved by the SEMC Executive Officer (resolution number 17/2021) as outlined in State EM documents <a href="#">amendments table October 2023</a> .	SEMC Business Unit





The SEMC acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples throughout the state of Western Australia as the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, work and volunteer. We recognise Aboriginal peoples' continued connection to land, waters and community, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

This document was designed to be viewed electronically and aims to meet the West Australian Government's accessibility and inclusivity standard, including meeting the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) at level AA. If anything in this document is inaccessible to you, or you are experiencing problems accessing content for any reason, please contact the State Emergency Management Committee Business Unit at [semc.policylegislation@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:semc.policylegislation@dfes.wa.gov.au).

All of the State emergency management legislation and documents can be accessed via the [State Emergency Management Framework](#) page of the [State Emergency Management Committee website](#).



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# Part One:

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# Introduction



In 2018, the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) formally assigned the role and responsibility for coordinating animal welfare in emergencies to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

The State Support Plan Animal Welfare in Emergencies (this Plan) has been prepared by DPIRD in collaboration with the SEMC, relevant Hazard Management Agencies (HMAs) and controlling agencies and the Animals In Emergencies Working Group under the sponsorship of the SEMC – Response Capability Subcommittee.

The Plan acknowledges that Western Australia’s emergency management arrangements define DPIRD as the primary agency for coordinating animal welfare services in emergencies.

The Plan clarifies roles and responsibilities between the various stakeholders for the delivery of emergency response and recovery activities in relation to animal welfare in emergencies. The Plan acknowledges that as the closest level of government to the affected community, local government also has a key role in supporting emergency animal welfare activities.

It is important to note that the owner or person responsible for caring for an animal (the carer) is responsible for the welfare of that animal.

It is acknowledged that the owner or carer’s ability to address animal welfare issues may be hampered or prevented due to the nature of the emergency. In such cases, local arrangements may assist. If local arrangements do not exist, are inadequate or have been exhausted, the controlling agency or HMA may determine the need to access the arrangements under this Plan.

## 1.1 Authority to Plan

This Plan has been prepared by DPIRD in line with State Emergency Management Policy section 1.5.6 and section 5.9.7.

## 1.2 Purpose

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

The primary aim of emergency response is to protect the safety of people. In order to fulfil this aim, the following factors regarding animals must be taken into account:

- research proves that the bonds people have with animals will influence their decision-making and behaviour during an emergency (for example, failing to relocate to a safer place if they cannot take their pets with them).
- people will often put themselves at risk for animals in emergencies even if those animals are not their own. This risk-taking can lead to dangerous or fatal consequences.

The objectives of this Plan are to:

- define roles and responsibilities for the provision of animal welfare services in relation to the preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies for all hazards; and
- provide a framework for the coordination between government agencies, non-government agencies, industry, the community and owners or carers of animals.

## 1.3 Scope

This Plan covers the arrangements for animal welfare in emergencies within the geographical boundaries of Western Australia. It is applicable to all hazards except animal and plant biosecurity – these arrangements are detailed within State Hazard Plan Animal and Plant Biosecurity.

### 1.3.1 Definition of Emergency

This Plan applies to emergencies as defined in section 3 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, that being:

“the occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard which is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response”.

Should an incident meet the definition of an emergency in line with section 5.3 of the State Emergency Management Policy, this Plan is available as part of the State Emergency Management Framework. The HMA, in consultation with the Controlling Agency, will contact DPIRD to access these arrangements, as detailed in section 3.2 of this Plan.

### 1.3.2 Classification of Animals

The *Animal Welfare Act 2002* defines an animal as:

1. a live vertebrate; or
2. a live invertebrate of a prescribed kind, other than a human or a fish.

For the purposes of this Plan, animals have been classified into the following five categories, which are defined in Appendix B: Glossary of Terms:

- livestock;
- horses;
- companion animals;
- animals in Perth Zoo or wildlife parks; and
- wildlife

## 1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The owner or carer of an animal is responsible for the welfare of that animal and should include planning for its welfare in preparedness for, response to and recovery from an emergency.

As prescribed in section 5.9.7 of the State Emergency Management Policy, DPIRD has the role and responsibility for coordinating animal welfare services in emergencies.

In an emergency, when the capability of the owner or carer and any local arrangements are no longer sufficient or effective then:

- DPIRD is responsible for coordinating the provision of animal welfare services to support the owner or carer or local arrangements for the animal categories of livestock, horses and companion animals.
- The Department of Biodiversity Conservations and Attractions (DBCA) is responsible for coordinating the provision of animal welfare services to animals in Perth Zoo and advising the owner or carer of wildlife and wildlife parks. Prior to being taken into care or under control or supervision, there is no owner or carer for wildlife.

It is recommended that each agency with a role or responsibility under this Plan has appropriate operational procedures detailing their response arrangements in accordance with this Plan. These arrangements should be complementary to the agency's operational procedures detailing their roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Plan.

## 1.5 Guiding Principles

This Plan aligns with the following guiding principles, as described in Appendix B of the State Emergency Management Policy:

- risk management approach;
- shared responsibility for resilience;

## 1.0 | INTRODUCTION

- all-hazards approach;
- graduated approach;
- all-agencies coordinated and integrated approach;
- continuous improvement;
- community engagement; and
- integrated information management.

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 objectives of this plan are met. This Plan is underpinned by the State Emergency Management principles of shared responsibility and graduated response.

This Plan also incorporates the National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters<sup>1</sup>, which are as follows:

- explicitly recognise that integrating animals into emergency management plans will improve animal welfare outcomes;
- explicitly recognise that integration of animals into emergency management plans will help secure improved human welfare and safety during disasters;
- aim to clearly identify roles and responsibilities within command and control structures in sufficient detail to allow for effective implementation of animal welfare measures;
- recognise the wide range of parties involved in animal welfare at each stage of the disaster cycle and ensure these organisations are consulted during writing or reviewing disaster plans;

- respect the role of local government as 'first responders' in disasters and acknowledge local government expertise in understanding local needs and resource availability, especially with reference to animal welfare and animal management arrangements within the local area;
- consider how best to ensure effective integration and implementation of the plan by, for example, extensive consultation during the planning process or inclusion of an animal welfare element in requirements for disaster training exercises;
- include effective communication about plan implementation with those parties who may be involved as well as those who may be impacted by disasters; and
- be communicated in language that is accessible to all stakeholders including the general public.

## 1.6 Related Documents and Legislation

This Plan is to be read in conjunction with the State Emergency Management Framework, including the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, *Emergency Management Regulations 2006*, State Emergency Management Policy, Plans, Procedures, Glossary and Guidelines.

In addition, this Plan should be read in conjunction with:

- Oiled Wildlife Response Plan (DBCA).

The primary welfare legislation in Western Australia is the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> National Advisory Committee for Animals in Emergencies (2014) National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters. AAWS and World Animal Protection.



## 1.7 Exercise and Review Periods

DPIRD is responsible for the review and exercising of this Plan, in accordance with State Emergency Management Policy section 1.5.10.

This Plan may be exercised independently or as part of stakeholder exercises, such as those for State Hazard Plans (Westplans) or broader State emergency management arrangements. An activation of the response arrangements within this Plan during an emergency may satisfy the requirement to exercise, as described within State Emergency Management Policy section 4.9.

DPIRD will exercise the capabilities required to fulfil their roles and responsibilities described within this plan, in accordance with State Emergency Management Policy section 4.8.5.



# Part Two:

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# Preparedness



## 2.1 Responsibility for Preparedness

The owner or carer should ensure they have a reasonable level of preparedness for their animals. Local Government emergency risk management planning may identify animal welfare considerations and Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) may include Animal Welfare Plans to address these.

This Plan addresses preparedness in relation to State coordination of animal welfare in emergencies where the capacity of the owner or carer and the local arrangements are no longer sufficient or effective. As the agency assigned with the role and responsibility for coordinating animal welfare services in emergencies, DPIRD is responsible for the strategic oversight of the State's arrangements for animal welfare in emergencies.

Further advice to assist the owner or carer to integrate the welfare of their animals into their emergency plans is available from the DPIRD website under [Animal Welfare in Emergencies](#).

### 2.1.1 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

- the DPIRD Incident and Emergency Management branch will be a centralised point of contact to provide advice and assistance to ensure animal welfare is better considered before, during and immediately after emergencies;
- coordinate and support the development and implementation of plans, policies and procedures for the coordination of animal welfare in emergencies;
- chair the Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies (CAWE) to address animal welfare considerations in emergencies, and maintain a contemporary database of stakeholders to assist with animal welfare in emergencies;

- promote and support Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMC) and controlling agencies for the inclusion of animal welfare considerations in emergency plans;
- promote public awareness and community engagement to improve preparedness for animal welfare in emergencies;
- develop, maintain, and promote effective working relationships with the Emergency Management sector, to include support to the SEMC, District Emergency Management Committees (DEMCs) and LEMCs, where identified risks and emergency management arrangements are relevant to animal welfare. This representation will ensure local emergency management arrangements and preparedness planning captures animal welfare considerations and outcomes; and
- develop and maintain lists of potential DPIRD support personnel available to assist with DPIRD responsibilities under this Plan, as applicable.

### 2.1.2 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

- identify considerations relating to wildlife welfare in emergencies;
- maintain membership on the CAWE to address animal welfare considerations in emergencies;
- develop and maintain an internal emergency animal welfare operational plan, including the Oiled Wildlife Response Plan; and
- develop and maintain lists of potential support personnel available to assist with their responsibilities under this Plan, as applicable.

### 2.1.3 Department of Communities

- reference animal welfare information in publications and websites to assist broader community awareness, education and understanding;
- maintain membership on the CAWE to promote collaboration between human and animal welfare considerations.

### 2.1.4 Local Government

- consider developing, maintaining and reviewing a Local Government emergency animal welfare plan; and
- maintains representation on the CAWE via the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) CAWE member.

### 2.1.5 Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies

Established networks and productive collaboration between agencies and organisations is essential to the effective provision of animal welfare support services in the event of an emergency

The CAWE is established by DPIRD to provide a forum to address the maintenance of this Plan and the underlying arrangements, and to assist in maintaining capacity at a State level. DPIRD chairs the CAWE. The Terms of Reference for the CAWE is available in Appendix D.

## 2.2 Key Planning Considerations

The planning considerations for the owner or carer of an animal should include:

- if it is likely the animal will be evacuated or remain onsite;
- if transportation is adequate and available to relocate the animal, under potential logistical constraints (i.e. road closures, window of safe evacuation);

- if suitable areas and adequate provisions are available for animals left on a property to minimise the risk of harm (i.e. area at lowest risk of hazard impact, sufficient food and water access for prolonged absence);
- if animals, and their owner or carer, can be identified (i.e. companion animal/horse microchipping, National Livestock Identification System); and
- if they are prepared for self-sufficient recovery and for how long.

When planning to support owners or carers in a local or State arrangement, the key considerations should include:

- access to information and resources for persons evacuating with animals;
- availability of transportation support and advice;
- availability of locations to house evacuated animals;
- management of displaced or stray animals;
- assessment of impacted animals;
- treatment of impacted animals;
- euthanasia;
- disposal of deceased animals;
- provision of emergency food, water, shelter; and
- recovery arrangements

These key considerations, in relation to the State coordination of animal welfare in emergencies, are addressed in this Plan.



## 2.3 Community Information and Education

DPIRD maintains publications to assist in community education for animal welfare in emergencies, which are available on the DPIRD website. DPIRD will collaborate with organisations in agreement under this Plan to develop a suite of tools and information to assist in preparing for animal welfare in emergencies.

During periods where there is a very high or extreme likelihood of an emergency occurring, DPIRD will liaise with the relevant controlling agencies or HMAs, and the organisations in agreement under this Plan, to share situational information and promote proactive preparation for animal welfare.

## 2.4 Funding Arrangements

Organisations in agreement with this Plan must maintain funding and resources to maintain their capacity and capability outlined in their plans. Some prevention and preparedness funding opportunities are located on the [SEMC website](#).



# Part Three:

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# Response



## 3.1 Operations

Prior to the Plan being requested and the Animal Welfare Emergency Group (AWEG) being formed, DPIRD may alert the CAWE of a potential or perceived significant impact to animal welfare from an emergency. CAWE organisations should stand up any internal procedures as appropriate.

Additionally, DPIRD may support local arrangements for animal welfare prior to the Plan activation through the provision of advice, communication and providing connection to animal welfare stakeholders or service providers. DPIRD has membership on both metropolitan and regional DEMCs. When an Incident Support Group (ISG), or Operational Area Support Group (OASG), has been established, it would be prudent for the Incident Controller to include a DPIRD representative into any operational group established to support the incident.

## 3.2 Plan Activation Procedures

The controlling agency or HMA may determine the need to activate the arrangements under this Plan where:

- animal welfare is beyond the capacity and capability of the owners or carers, and
- any local or district arrangements are no longer sufficient or effective; or
- no local or district arrangements exists.

As the first course of action, where an ISG, or OASG, has been established and includes a DPIRD representative, the Incident Controller may make a request to the DPIRD ISG/OASG representative to activate this Plan.

### Notes

<sup>2</sup> The DPIRD State Support Plan - Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number is for emergencies only (08) 9368 688.

Where an ISG, or OASG, has not been established, or no DPIRD ISG/OASG representative is available, then the Incident Controller may call the DPIRD State Support Plan Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number<sup>2</sup> to request activation of this Plan.

In addition, DPIRD may recommend to the Incident Controller to activate this Plan.

Approval to activate the Plan is by the Executive Director, Biosecurity, DPIRD.

## 3.3 Responsibility for Response

The Controlling Agency or HMA has the authority to direct when and if, any response actions can be performed as part of the overall response to the emergency. DPIRD will liaise with the Controlling Agency or HMA to coordinate the State animal welfare arrangements when they are required.

### 3.3.1 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

In accordance with the State emergency management principles of shared responsibility and graduated response, DPIRD will aim to coordinate animal welfare services in support of existing local or district arrangements. Where no arrangements or service providers are available, DPIRD will undertake the activities.

- liaise with the relevant controlling agency or HMA as a liaison officer and/or member of the ISG or OASG;
- coordinates the activation of the DPIRD internal operational plan in line with this Plan;
- contribute to public information released during the emergency;

- provide situational reports to the CAWE on animal welfare in the emergency;
- establish the AWEG to consult on actions undertaken by DPIRD in coordinating animal welfare services for an emergency;
- liaise with the local government and other organisations to coordinate response activities including:
  - providing support and advice on transportation for evacuating animals;
  - identifying the availability of locations to house evacuated animals;
  - managing displaced or stray animals; assisting owners and carers to obtain Restricted Access Permits, where applicable;
  - assessing and triaging impacted animals;
  - identifying/administering treatment;
  - performing/assisting with transportation for euthanasia or perform on-site;
  - advising on/arranging for disposal of deceased animals;
  - identifying/providing emergency food / water / shelter; and
  - identifying and reuniting animals with their owners or carers.
- Coordinate arrangements to best utilise volunteers and donations relevant to DPIRD animal categories;
- coordinate the reporting and future investigation of animal welfare complaints arising as a consequence of the emergency;
- liaise with and advise Local Government and other organisations about suitable temporary containment and other welfare needs of animals.

### 3.3.2 DPIRD Animal Welfare Emergency Group

The AWEG is a multi-organisation liaison group formed to assist DPIRD in coordinating animal welfare services during an emergency. It consists of organisations from the CAWE, and other organisations or agencies DPIRD deems relevant for animal welfare services in an emergency. The Terms of Reference for the AWEG is available in Appendix E. Functions of the group include:

DPIRD:

- provide current situational reports from the ISG/OASG, on the emergency and its impact on animal welfare requirements, services and response activities;
- detail any significant issues;
- detail any request for services or resources;
- update on the outcome of previous AWEG meeting issues or requests;
- maintain records of meetings and outcomes; and
- report AWEG outcomes back to the ISG/OASG.

AWEG Liaison Officers:

- provide situational updates as to the status of animal welfare requirements, services and response activities relating to their organisation or sector;
- advise DPIRD of potential and actual animal welfare issues or requests;
- where possible, provide advice, services and/or resources, on behalf of their represented organisation or sector, in response to issues or requests, and
- where requested, provide a representative to attend the ISG/OASG as appropriate.



### 3.3.3 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

- provide support to DPIRD, as requested;
- coordinate animal welfare services for animals in Perth Zoo; and
- liaise with and advise Local Governments and other organisations and the owner or carer of wildlife and wildlife parks about suitable temporary containment and other welfare needs of wildlife.

### 3.3.4 Department of Communities

- where appropriate, provide input to information for the public and media relating to alternative animal housing arrangements;
- if known, advise evacuees presenting at centres of alternative animal housing arrangements;
- convey information provided by DPIRD relating to animal welfare to people in welfare centres; and
- liaise with DPIRD in relation to reuniting owners with their animals

### 3.3.5 Hazard Management Agencies/Controlling Agencies

- request access to the arrangements under this Plan by contacting the DPIRD representative on the ISG/OASG or through the DPIRD State Support Plan-Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number<sup>3</sup>, as required;
- liaise with DPIRD to integrate animal welfare considerations into the overall response; and
- liaise with DPIRD to include coordinated animal welfare considerations into the public information plan.

#### Notes

<sup>3</sup> The DPIRD State Support Plan-Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number is for emergencies only (08) 9368 3688.

<sup>4</sup> In some situations, there may be an advance agreement between the HMA and the Controlling Agency to be in control of the public information function during an emergency. Such arrangements are documented within the relevant State Hazard Plan (State Emergency Management Policy section 5.6.10).

### 3.3.6 Local Government

- activate the Local Government emergency animal welfare plan or contingency arrangements where identified within LEMA; and
- liaise with DPIRD to provide a coordinated approach to animal welfare response actions, where relevant.

## 3.4 Response Arrangements

### 3.4.1 Public Warnings/Information

The HMA is responsible for the management of public information during an emergency<sup>4</sup> DPIRD will provide relevant information to the HMA, which may include:

- information and resources for persons evacuating with animals;
- the state of the general welfare of animals involved in the emergency;
- the location/s of animals;
- the process for owners to find and reunify with their animals; and
- public donations e.g. the location/s for donations or that they are no longer required.

DPIRD may address the public and the media directly in relation to animal welfare, as agreed with the HMA. Matters that are not the direct responsibility of DPIRD are to be referred to the HMA.

### 3.4.2 Transportation Support and Advice

The owner or carer has the responsibility to determine, where possible, if their animal/s will be evacuated or remain on location and plan for how this will be achieved. In an emergency, DPIRD will liaise with the controlling agency or HMA and the local government to provide information on potential resources and advice on evacuating with animals. This may include:

- road closures, safe alternatives and suitability for traffic;
- early evacuation consideration for those travelling with large animal carriers; and
- transport services or volunteer options.

### 3.4.3 Locations for Evacuated Animals

Owners and carers should first seek to evacuate their animals to the properties of friends, family and private shelter facilities outside of the area in which the emergency is taking place.

Local governments and the community may have facilities to house evacuated animals. DPIRD will coordinate with these entities to advise the public of locations to house evacuated animals if available.

Due to health and safety considerations, animals are not permitted inside community evacuation centres with the exception of recognised assistance animals. LEMAs should identify if animals can be accommodated in the vicinity of community evacuation centres and if not, what alternate options are available. Where information is not available at the time of evacuation, owners or carers with no alternatives should proceed to the community evacuation centre and await further advice.

Outlining clear arrangements for animals in evacuation and relocation procedures will improve both animal welfare and human safety outcomes.

### 3.4.4 Managing Displaced or Stray Animals

Escaped or released (stray) animals evading a hazard can pose a risk to people, other animals, property or themselves. Stray animals may require containment or impoundment; powers are available under legislation to achieve this as follows:

- Hazard Management Officers and authorised officers, appointed by the HMA or State Emergency Coordinator respectively may have powers to move direct or prohibit the movement of animals within, into, out of or around an emergency area for the purpose of emergency management if specified in the instrument of appointment and if an emergency situation or state of emergency is declared (section 67 *Emergency Management Act 2005*);
- a police officer also has the powers to move direct or prohibit the movement of animals within, into, out of or around an emergency area for the purpose of emergency management if an emergency situation or state of emergency is declared (section 71(2) *Emergency Management Act 2005*);
- Authorised Officers may have powers, during a state of emergency, in relation to the containment and of an animal, if specified in the instrument of appointment (section 75 *Emergency Management Act 2005*); and
- other hazard specific legislation may also apply, such as in a bushfire, subject to a section 13 authorisation, a police officer or authorised person may do all or any of the following:
  - (a) direct, or by direction prohibit, the movement of persons, animals and vehicles within, into, out of or around the affected area or any part of the affected area;
  - (b) direct the evacuation and removal of persons or animals from the affected area or any part of the affected area;



(c) close any road, access route or area of water in or leading to the affected area (section 4B (2) *Bush Fires Act 1954*).

### 3.4.5 Access to Non-Evacuated Animals

Where animals are not evacuated, timely assessment and the application of treatment, routine care, euthanasia and deceased animal disposal, where applicable, is critical. Access to impacted and restricted areas to undertake assessment and management of animals is at the discretion of the Incident Controller.

Entry into emergency-affected areas may be restricted for a number of reasons. For community safety, road closures will often be set up which delay people's return to their properties and any animals remaining there. Animal owners or carers should not attempt to access the area unless permission has been given by the agency controlling the emergency.

In some situations, residents/property owners may be able to enter an affected area earlier than the general public in order to protect their property and attend to non-evacuated animals (proof of identity or property ownership is required).

Where access to impacted areas may not be permitted to residents/property owners or the general public for a protracted time, DPIRD will liaise with the controlling agency or HMA in relation to the issue of Restricted Access Permits to address animal welfare considerations. Restricted Access Permits may be issued in accordance with the State Emergency Management Plan section 5.3.3.

### 3.4.6 Assessment of Non-Evacuated Animals

Where access is permitted to owners or carers, all effort should be made by those persons to undertake the assessment of impacted animals in their charge, and initiate ongoing management.

Where access permits have been coordinated by DPIRD, it will also coordinate the following:

- assessment of impacted animals;
- prioritisation of (triage) the welfare needs of animals; and
- provision of a welfare assessment to assist the controlling agency or HMA to include animal welfare considerations in ongoing response and recovery operations.

### 3.4.7 Treatment

DPIRD, or DBCA in relation to animals in Perth Zoo, will liaise with local government and other organisations to:

- determine the local veterinary capacity to meet animal treatment needs;
- identify capacity gaps in animal treatment; and
- coordinate actions to address capacity gaps, including:
  - providing additional support for local veterinary practices;
  - directing owners and carers to local veterinary practices;
  - liaising with veterinary practices adjoining impacted areas to assist with animal treatment needs;
  - facilitating contact with volunteer veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses; and
  - establishing triage sites for assessment and treatment (including euthanasia) of animals

Where these actions relate to the welfare of wildlife, DBCA will advise the owner or carer of wildlife and wildlife parks.

### 3.4.8 Euthanasia

Methods of euthanasing animals must be humane. Where the owner or carer is unable to arrange euthanasia either on-site or by transporting to a suitable premises, and the animal has little or no chance of survival or continues to suffer harm if it remains alive, DPIRD will liaise with the controlling agency or HMA, to facilitate arrangements for euthanasia. Where this relates to wildlife or animals in Perth Zoo or wildlife parks, DPIRD will consult with DBCA. Actions may include:

- providing advice on the euthanasia of an animal or animals;
- providing advice on the fitness of an animal for transport;
- identifying suitably trained and equipped personnel to assist;
- identifying suitable resources to assist; and
- coordinating access permits for the purpose of transportation or on-site euthanasia.

There are significant liability issues concerning the movement, treatment and euthanasia of animals, in particular companion animals and high worth animals such as breeding livestock or racehorses, this is especially so if the owner or carer of the animal is not present or consulted.

Wherever possible, euthanasia activities will take place in consultation with the owner or carer. Where it is not possible to identify or contact the owner or carer of an animal and euthanasia is required, the owner or carer should be contacted as soon as is practical afterwards. Western Australia legislation provides the following powers for officers to euthanase an animal:

- an inspector appointed by the chief executive officer of DPIRD under the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* may humanely destroy an animal where it is reasonably believed to be suffering so severely that destroying it would be the humane thing to do [section 41 *Animal Welfare Act 2002*]; and
- during a state of emergency, for the purpose of emergency management,

an Authorised Officer appointed by the State Emergency Coordinator may contain, remove or destroy an animal in the emergency area (section 75 *Emergency Management Act 2005*)

Information on the euthanasia of sheep and cattle is available on the DPIRD website: [Recovering for animal welfare after emergencies](#) under Assessing cattle after a fire and Assessing sheep after a fire.

Recommended methods for the euthanasia of other livestock (including horses) are set out in the [Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines: Land Transport of Livestock](#).

Methods of euthanasing kangaroos are covered in the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Non-commercial Purposes 2008 at <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlifetrade/publications/national-code-practice-humane-shootingkangaroos-and-wallabies-non-commercial>.

### 3.4.9 Disposal

The disposal of deceased animals is the responsibility of the owner or carer, however, DPIRD will coordinate with the controlling agency or HMA and Local Governments to provide advice on the timely and appropriate disposal of deceased animals during an emergency. Where this relates to wildlife or animals in Perth Zoo or wildlife parks, DPIRD will consult with DBCA.

Guidance on approved procedures for deceased animal disposal is available on the DPIRD website: [Recovering for animal welfare after emergencies](#) under Sick and injured animals: Deceased animal disposal.

### 3.4.10 Provision of Emergency Food, Water and Shelter for Animals

Emergencies may affect the supply and quality of water, pastures and other sources of food usually available to animals. This is particularly significant for non-evacuated animals located within the impacted area.



During the response phase, DPIRD will coordinate, in liaison with the controlling agency or HMA, the provision of emergency food and water by:

- identifying animals requiring access to food and water as part of the welfare assessment within the impacted area;
- liaising with local organisations to identify evacuated animals requiring access to emergency food and water;
- identifying potential sources of food and water including depots, distribution centres and water; and
- coordinating donations of food and other resources.

The allocation of food and water will aim to meet animals' basic nutritional requirements. In situations where the minimum requirements of an animal are unlikely to be met, consideration should be given to the agistment, temporary rehousing, rehoming, sale, adoption or euthanasia of an impacted animal, where relevant.

Shelter for animals located within the impacted area may also be significantly affected. During the response phase, DPIRD will coordinate, in liaison with the controlling agency or HMA, the provision of emergency shelter.

### 3.4.11 Reunification of Animals with Owners or Carers

Owners or carers should ensure their animals can be identified through appropriate up to date identification systems such as microchipping and the National Livestock Identification System. Further information on Animal Identification is available on the DPIRD website: [Preparing for animal welfare before emergencies](#).

The agency with responsibility for the coordination of a particular category of animals will coordinate with local government for the identification and reunification of displaced or stray animals during or as soon as practicable after an emergency.

If owners or carers are located within welfare centres, DPIRD will liaise with Department of Communities to reunite owners with their animals during or as soon as practicable after an emergency. For further information on Lost animals, see the DPIRD website: [Recovering for animal welfare after emergencies](#).

### 3.4.12 Volunteers and Donations

During emergencies, additional resources and services may become available through charity/community groups and may include volunteering and donations of goods. DPIRD, or DBCA for animals in Perth Zoo, will coordinate arrangements to best utilise such resources and services, as required. Where volunteers and donations relate to the welfare of wildlife, DPIRD will consult with DBCA, as required.

Unmanaged donations and volunteers can pose a hindrance to response activities and communication with the public as to when, where and what to donate needs to be timely and consistent. Every effort will be made to redirect volunteers and donations to suitable and established animal welfare service providers, and relevant animal related organisations. DPIRD will coordinate the updating of public messaging to provide consistent information for volunteering and donating and to promote the safety of individuals and responders.

All recovery activities in relation to volunteers and donations should be coordinated through the Local Recovery Coordination Group to avoid duplication of efforts (State Emergency Management Plan section 6.12)

## 3.5 Financial Assistance

Where an agency or organisation included in this Plan provides or assists in providing animal welfare services each agency will meet its own costs unless agreed otherwise prior to the provision of those services. Additional information about funding in emergencies can be found in the [Criteria for meeting costs associated with emergencies guide](#) available on the SEMC website.

The owner or carer is responsible for the costs associated with the welfare of his/her animal. Activities undertaken for the welfare of an animal should wherever possible, take place in consultation with the owner or carer. During an emergency, it may not be possible to identify or contact the owner or carer and an Authorised Officer may be required to undertake activities for the welfare of animal without prior consultation. Section 56 of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* provides for a person who has incurred costs under certain sections of the Act to apply for the recovery of costs from the owner or carer.





# Part Four: Recovery

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## 4.1 Responsibility for Recovery

Local Government is responsible for managing recovery following an emergency affecting the community in its district under section 36(b) of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*. Many of the activities covered under Part Three of this Plan will continue into the recovery phase of emergency management. During this time, DPIRD will coordinate to return the responsibility for ongoing animal welfare activities back to the local government and the owners and carers of animals

### 4.1.1 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

- liaise with the State Recovery Coordinator or Controller and the WALGA to transition recovery back to local government;
- liaise with relevant agencies to transfer responsibility for ongoing animal welfare activities back to local government and the owner or carer;
- provide advice to the Controlling Agency or HMA and local government on animal welfare considerations, as part of the recovery plan;
- participate in post-emergency debriefs and reviews, as requested; and
- undertake a review of this Plan's effectiveness in consultation with the CAWE.

### 4.1.2 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

- assist DPIRD in providing animal welfare advice for the recovery plan;
- participate in post-emergency debriefs and reviews, as requested;
- participate as a member of the CAWE in reviewing this Plan; and
- review the effectiveness of the DBCA operational plan.

### 4.1.3 Department of Communities

- consider animal welfare to the extent possible during the coordination of emergency relief and support services.

### 4.1.4 Hazard Management Agencies/Controlling Agencies

- liaise with DPIRD to include animal welfare consideration into the recovery plan; and
- include animal welfare in post-emergency debriefs and reviews.

### 4.1.5 Local Government

- include animal welfare considerations in any recovery plan;
- liaise with DPIRD to transition the ongoing animal welfare activities back to the control of local government and the owner or carer;
- review the effectiveness of any animal welfare plans; and
- ensure local government is represented on the CAWE, via the WALGA member, to participate in reviewing this Plan.





# Appendices

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## Appendix A: Distribution List

This State Support Plan is available on the [SEMC website](#). The agencies below will be notified by the Responsible Agency (unless otherwise specified) when an updated version is published on this website:

- All agencies and organisations with responsibilities under this Plan
- Emergency Management Australia (SEMC Business Unit to notify)
- Minister for Emergency Services (SEMC Business Unit to notify)
- SEMC, SEMC Subcommittee and SEMC Reference Group members (SEMC Business Unit to notify)
- State Library of Western Australia (SEMC Business Unit to notify).

## Appendix B: Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

Terminology used throughout this document has the meaning prescribed in section 3 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* or as defined in the State Emergency Management Glossary. In addition, the following definitions apply.

### Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Animals in Perth Zoo or Wildlife Parks</b>	All animals kept in Perth Zoo or establishments licensed by the DBCA.
<b>Companion animal</b>	Any animals other than horses kept primarily for companionship, hobbies, sport or work.
<b>Horse</b>	Any horse or equine hybrid (Equus caballus; Equus asinus).
<b>Register.Find.Reunite</b>	A system that records the details of the location and well-being of persons in, or who have been evacuated from, an emergency affected area. This information can be used to respond to enquiries from friends and relatives. Refer to the State Support Plan - Emergency Relief and Support.



Term	Definition
<b>Livestock</b>	<p>Has the meaning of Stock as defined in regulation 4 of the <i>Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Regulations 2013</i>, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• buffalo including buffalo cattle hybrids;</li><li>• camel;</li><li>• South American camelids;</li><li>• cattle including cattle buffalo hybrids;</li><li>• deer and any hybrids;</li><li>• emu;</li><li>• goat;</li><li>• ostrich;</li><li>• pig;</li><li>• poultry and any hybrids;</li><li>• sheep.</li></ul>

Term	Definition
<b>Organisation</b>	<p>Has the meaning of 'person in charge' in the <i>Animal Welfare Act 2002</i></p> <p>"Person in charge, in relation to an animal, means -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the owner of the animal;</li> <li>(b) a person who has actual physical custody or control of the animal;</li> <li>(c) if the person referred to in paragraph (b) is a member of staff or another person, that other person; or</li> <li>(d) the owner or occupier of the place or vehicle where the animal is or was at the relevant time".</li> </ul>
<b>Triage</b>	<p>The process by which animals are sorted and prioritised according to their needs for care, veterinary treatment or euthanasia.</p>
<b>Wildlife</b>	<p>An animal that is indigenous to Australia's land or waters, living without regular human intervention or support and having the meaning of fauna, as defined within the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>.</p>

## Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
<b>AWEG</b>	Disaster Victim Identification
<b>CAWE</b>	Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies
<b>DBCA</b>	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
<b>DEMC</b>	District Emergency Management Committee
<b>DFES</b>	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
<b>DPIRD</b>	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
<b>HMA</b>	Hazard Management Agency
<b>ISG</b>	Incident Support Group
<b>LEMA</b>	Local Emergency Management Arrangements

Acronym	Meaning
<b>LEMC</b>	Local Emergency Management Committee
<b>OASG</b>	Operational Area Support Group
<b>SAWEC</b>	State Animal Welfare Emergency Coordinator
<b>SEMC</b>	State Emergency Management Committee
<b>WALGA</b>	Western Australian Local Government Association



## Appendix C: Response Roles and Responsibilities

DPIRD has the primary role of coordinating the State animal welfare arrangements as required during an emergency. The following are the response roles and responsibilities of agencies under this Plan. Brief all-hazards information is also provided for agencies who may have a role under this Plan—full details of these roles and responsibilities can be found in the State Emergency Management Plan, Appendix E.

All agencies should maintain appropriate internal plans and procedures in relation to their specific responsibilities.

Organisation	Response Responsibilities
<b>Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support to DPIRD, as requested;</li> <li>• Coordinate animal welfare services for animals in Perth Zoo; and</li> <li>• Liaise with and advise local government and other organisations and the owner or carer of wildlife and wildlife parks about suitable temporary containment and other welfare needs of wildlife.</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where appropriate, provide input to information for the public and media relating to alternative animal housing arrangements;</li> <li>• If known, advise evacuees presenting at centres of alternative animal housing arrangements;</li> <li>• Convey information provided by DPIRD relating to animal welfare to people in evacuation centres; and</li> <li>• Liaise with DPIRD in relation to reuniting owners with their animals.</li> </ul>

Organisation	Response Responsibilities
<p><b>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development</b></p>	<p>In accordance with the State emergency management principles of shared responsibility and graduated response, DPIRD will aim to coordinate animal welfare services in support of existing local or district arrangements. Where no arrangements or service providers are available, DPIRD will undertake the activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with the relevant controlling agency or HMA as a liaison officer and/or member of the ISG or OASG;</li> <li>• Coordinates the activation of the DPIRD internal operational plan in line with this Plan;</li> <li>• Contribute to public information released during the emergency;</li> <li>• Provide situational reports to the CAWE on animal welfare in the emergency;</li> <li>• Liaise with the local government and other organisations to coordinate response activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying the availability of transportation support and advice for evacuating animals;</li> <li>- identifying the availability of locations to house evacuated animals;</li> <li>- managing displaced or stray animals;</li> <li>- assisting owners and carers to obtain Restricted Access Permits, where applicable;</li> <li>- assessing and triaging impacted animals;</li> <li>- identifying/administering treatment;</li> <li>- performing/ assisting with transportation for euthanasia or perform on-site;</li> <li>- advising on/arranging for disposal of deceased animals;</li> <li>- identifying/providing emergency food/water/shelter; and</li> <li>- identifying and reuniting animals with their owners or carers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Organisation	Response Responsibilities
<p><b>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development</b></p> <p>[continued]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate arrangements to best utilise volunteers and donations relevant to DPIRD animal categories;</li> <li>Coordinate the reporting and future investigation of animal welfare complaints arising as a consequence of the emergency; and</li> <li>Liaise with and advise Local Government and other organisations about suitable temporary containment and other welfare needs of animals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hazard Management Agencies/ Controlling Agencies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request access to the arrangements under this Plan by contacting the DPIRD representative on the ISG/OASG or through the DPIRD State Support Plan-Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number<sup>5</sup>, as required.</li> <li>Liaise with DPIRD to integrate animal welfare considerations into the overall response; and</li> <li>Liaise with DPIRD to include coordinated animal welfare considerations into the public information plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local Government</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activate the Local Government emergency animal welfare plan or contingency arrangements where identified within LEMA; and</li> <li>Liaise with DPIRD to provide a coordinated approach to animal welfare response actions, where relevant.</li> </ul>

### Notes

<sup>5</sup> The DPIRD State Support Plan-Animal Welfare in Emergencies Number is for emergencies only (08) 9368 3688.



## Appendix D: Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies (CAWE) Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies is housed on the [DPIRD webpage - Engagement and events](#).

## Appendix E: Animal Welfare Emergency Group (AWEG) Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Animal Welfare Emergency Group is housed on the [DPIRD webpage - Engagement and events](#).

