
Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan



May 2020

Version 2.0



Northern Grampians Shire Council
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VERSION CONTROL TABLE

Version	Date	Author/s	Brief description of change
1.0	April 2018	Coordinator Environment & Community Protection, Emergency Management Officer	First version. Endorsed by NGS MEMPC on 28 March 2018.
2.0	May 2020	Emergency Management Officer, Manager Regulatory Services (MERO), Coordinator Environment & Community Safety, Team Leader Community Safety	General update to reflect current planning arrangements within Council. Endorsed by MEMPC on 21 May 2020.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVA	Australian Veterinary Association (Victorian Division)
AWLO	Animal Welfare Liaison Officer
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services
DJPR	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
EAWP	Emergency Animal Welfare Plan
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MFESB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
NGSC	Northern Grampians Shire Council
POCTAA	<i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986</i>
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VFF	Victorian Farmers Federation

GLOSSARY

Agency	A Government agency, including Commonwealth, state or local government authority.
Animal	Refer to the definition in <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTAA)</i> which basically includes any live member of a vertebrate species (other than human) and some crustaceans.
Animal welfare	<p>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.</p> <p>Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing.</p> <p>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.</p>
Assistance animal	<p>An assistance animal is legally defined under commonwealth legislation [1] as “a dog or other animal that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) accredited under a State or Territory law to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of disability; or(b) accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed in the regulations; or(c) trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability and meets standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.”
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.
Commander	A role established by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) to lead the agency’s emergency animal welfare support services at the state, regional or incident level.
Common Operating Picture	The shared and consistent understanding of the incident held by the IMT and other stakeholders.
Companion animal	Any non-human vertebrate animal kept for the purpose of companionship, recreation, protection, or work.

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 coordination 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 <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> 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 (ERCs) 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 coordinator, whose role is to coordinate 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 and 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 the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to lead the agency's emergency wildlife welfare support services 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 DELWP to coordinate its emergency response arrangements across the organisations 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> .

1. Purpose

The Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC) Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP) has been produced pursuant to Section (20) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and assists in the management of animal welfare during an emergency. This plan has been developed with reference to the Victorian EAWP.

These arrangements have been prepared as a sub plan to the Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

The purpose of this plan is to assist in the coordination of animal welfare support for domestic animals and livestock before, during, and after an emergency.

2. Scope

Victoria's emergency management arrangements define the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) as the primary agency for livestock, companion animal and wildlife welfare support services during emergency response. As the closest level of government to the affected community, local government also has a key role in supporting emergency animal welfare activities.

This plan provides a coordinated approach to the management of animal welfare in the Northern Grampians Shire in the event of an emergency. The Northern Grampians Shire consists of an area of almost 6,000 square kilometres and encompasses large areas of farmland as well as large expanses of National Park and State Forest.

The Northern Grampians Shire has approximately 2,672 companion animals registered, along with a substantial livestock and wildlife population. This plan provides a framework during any emergency that impacts animal welfare, to clarify responsibilities and highlight existing emergency response plans and procedures.

Fire, flood, storm, and road transport incident (large commercial vehicle) have been identified as risks within the Northern Grampians Shire which could impact on the welfare of domestic animals and livestock.

This plan has been developed to guide local emergency animal welfare arrangements for these risks with emphasis given to:

- Identification of affected animals
- Management of evacuated animals at Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs)
- Management of stray or roaming animals
- Animal welfare assessment
- Veterinary treatment and triage
- Humane destruction or salvage slaughter
- Carcass disposal
- Provision of emergency pet food, livestock fodder, and water
- Coordination of donations and offers of assistance

Number of domestic animals registered within the Northern Grampians Shire

To understand the potential scope of services that may be required within the Northern Grampians Shire, the dog and cat population as at 7 April 2020 was as follows:

Animal	Numbers Registered
Dogs	2,072
Cats	637

3. Audit

This EAWP is a sub-plan of the Northern Grampians Shire MEMP prepared under Section 20(1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, and as such is subject to the audit provisions as detailed in Section 21A of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*.

4. Plan development, endorsement, testing and review

This plan has been developed by NGSC and external stakeholders with roles and responsibilities in local emergency management arrangements.

As a MEMP sub-plan, the NGSC EAWP has been endorsed by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) on the date indicated on the title page.

The EAWP will be tested by an exercise every three years unless it has been activated for an emergency event. An evaluation of the exercise will be tabled with the MEMPC for their review.

An updated version of the EAWP will be published every three years, as a sub plan of the MEMP.

5. Aim and objectives

The aim of this EAWP is to define agreed arrangements for the management of emergency animal welfare within the municipality including:

- Roles and responsibilities of key agencies and stakeholders
- Operational interactions between key agencies and stakeholders
- Resources (personnel, facilities, equipment, services) to be used in the delivery of animal welfare services

The overarching objective of the EAWP is to:

- Contribute to enhanced public safety and community resilience within the municipality through effective planning and management of animals in emergencies.
- Ensure animals within the municipality are better considered and protected from suffering during and immediately following emergencies.

6. Plan activation

The Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) will activate the EAWP following advice from the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (Victoria Police) or DJPR.

Triggers for plan activation may include:

- Opening an ERC,
- Carcass disposal, and/or
- Donated fodder or stock water supply

In large-scale emergencies, the DJPR Animal Welfare Liaison Officer (AWLO) will oversee the implementation of the plan in consultation with Council's Coordinator Environment and Community Protection or Emergency Management Officer.

When the plan is activated, Council will be responsible for monitoring the capacity to house and feed companion animals and, in conjunction with DJPR, source shelter and feed for affected pets.

7. Business continuity

The NGSC Business Continuity Management Framework establishes the procedures necessary to ensure the emergency response, resumption and recovery of the Council's operations and business activities during a business interruption event.

The Framework is supported by the Business Continuity Management Plan, which provides guidance for the resumption and recovery of the Council's critical business functions and activities in accordance with pre-established timeframes and ensures compliance with the NGSC Business Continuity Management Policy.

8. 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.

8.1 Primary agencies

The following agencies have a primary role in emergency animal management support.

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)

DJPR is the primary agency for livestock and companion animal welfare support services in emergencies and has the following responsibilities:

Prevention / mitigation / risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Represent DJPR and the state's 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 animal welfare arrangements and operational requirements to relevant stakeholders. ● Provide advice to agencies, organisations and the community regarding 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 occupational health and safety requirements). ● Regularly review this EAWP.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide advice to control and support agencies regarding the impact, or potential impact of an emergency on animal welfare, including biosecurity (disease) risks and management strategies. ● Liaise with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), local government and relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations to enable effective and timely delivery of animal welfare support services during an emergency. ● Develop information for the public and media relating to the management of 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. ● Maintain the Common Operating Picture with respect to animal welfare. ● 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. ● Advise local government of containment needs of stray or roaming animals and disposal needs of dead or injured animals (e.g. location, number and type of animals). ● Assess fodder and water needs of impacted animals and advise distribution bodies of needs (quantity, type, location). ● 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 the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) where emergencies impacting on human health may also have associated animal health issues.

Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide advice to individuals, communities, agencies and government on strategies for the re-establishment of rural enterprises and economic recovery. ● Provide advice about fencing (for safe ongoing containment), 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).
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Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

DELWP is the primary agency for wildlife welfare support services and has the following responsibilities:

General wildlife welfare responsibilities	
Prevention / mitigation / risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 occupational health and safety requirements). ● Develop and deliver training programs to volunteers.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liaise with DJPR, local government and animal welfare support agencies and organisations to ensure effective allocation of resources. ● Maintain the Common Operating Picture with respect to wildlife welfare. ● 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i> and wildlife rehabilitation guidelines).
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Bushfire	
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a coordinated response for the rescue, treatment and rehabilitation of wildlife affected by fire. • Manage the activities of approved wildlife volunteers.
Marine pollution	
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a coordinated response to dealing with wildlife impacted by marine pollution, including oil or chemical spills, under the <i>Wildlife Response Plan for Marine Pollution Emergencies</i>.
Cetacean strandings and entanglements	
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a coordinated response to cetacean strandings, for either living or deceased animals, under the <i>Victorian Cetacean Emergency Plan</i>. • Provide a coordinated response to cetacean entanglements under the <i>Victorian Cetacean Emergency Plan</i>.
Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee carcass management on the foreshore of crown lands managed directly by DELWP.
Wildlife affected by disease	
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Agency for response to wildlife affected by disease.

Local government

Local government has the following responsibilities for emergency animal welfare support in emergencies:

Prevention / mitigation / risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure emergency relief and recovery components of MEMP detail local emergency animal welfare arrangements and provide 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
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carcass transport providers and disposal sites ○ Options for the housing and management of displaced animals, including those presenting at ERCs ○ Potential sites for donated fodder distribution ○ Alternative emergency water sources for animals ○ 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 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, catering or fodder and veterinary needs. ● Manage donated goods and services offered to the municipality. ● Emergency confinement of stray animals within the local government area. ● Refer animal welfare needs to responsible animal welfare support organisations. ● Coordinate cleanup activities, including disposal of dead animals. ● Provide a municipal point of contact for other agencies and organisations (e.g. control agencies, DJPR, DELWP, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals [RSPCA], Australian Veterinary Association [AVA], and Victorian Farmers Federation [VFF]), in relation to animal welfare needs or issues. ● Make provisions for animals presenting at ERCs that include provision for the registration, treatment and housing of animals at the ERC, or advise animal owners of alternative arrangements if animals cannot be housed at the site.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist DJPR in ongoing animal welfare recovery within the municipality. ● Coordinate recovery services for animal owners and carers.

Local government contains the following key emergency management positions to coordinate emergency animal welfare before, during, and after an emergency.

Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The MERO is responsible for the coordination of Council resources and activities in support of a controlling agency managing an emergency.
Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The MRM, in consultation with the MERO, is responsible for the coordination of relief and recovery activities.

ERC Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ERC Manager manages the ERC and the services provided therein.
Community Safety Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety Officers advise and consult with the MERO and MRM on emergency animal welfare support issues.

8.2 External agencies

The following agencies may provide emergency animal welfare support depending on the emergency location and their resource capacity.

Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)

Prevention / mitigation / risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a volunteer database 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"> • In level 2 and 3 incidents with significant animal welfare impacts, the AVA will activate the AVA Emergency Taskforce to: <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 the AVA through activation of the 1300 number, mobile telephone contact and electronic communications. • Facilitate contact with volunteer 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 to 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.

Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) (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. • 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 state emergency resource supplementation processes.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to pet and horse owners on issues relating to animal welfare.

Wildlife Shelters and Carers

Relief and recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance in wildlife rescue, recovery and relief 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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8.3 Other state agencies

Other state agencies that have responsibilities in emergency animal welfare support are listed below.

Country Fire Authority (CFA)

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"> • When CFA is the 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.

Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)

Prevention / mitigation / risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure animal welfare arrangements are included in all state, regional and incident plans.
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Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure animal welfare requests for assistance are referred in accordance with established protocols. • Liaise with DJPR where emergencies impact on human health to identify any associated animal health issues.
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Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)

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.

Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFESB)

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"> • When MFESB is the 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.

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF)

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 fodder depots 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 in 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.
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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 Victoria Police is the 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.

Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES)

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 VICSES is the 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

8.4 Community planning

Animal owners are responsible for planning for the management of their animals in an emergency event. As with any emergency planning, this should occur early and prior to an event.

It is strongly advised that residents include animals (i.e. pets and livestock) in their emergency plan, and that these animals are properly identified with name tags, registration tags, microchips or brands, and that stock registers are current and stored in a safe place. Information on pets and emergencies can be found on the [DJPR website](#).

Information which should be included in resident emergency plans include:

- Veterinary details
- Local animal welfare agency details
- Pet information and advisory services

- Help for injured or trapped native animals
- For larger animals, details of animal transport services.

Council's Community Safety unit may assist with arranging transport services after liaising with the MERO. However, animal owners must be advised prior to arrangements being made that they will be responsible for all costs associated with the transport and housing, feeding, and veterinary inspection (where required) of their animals. Owners must also be advised that Council accepts no responsibility for any losses or damage that may be incurred during transportation.

Residents should consider whether they will move pets and other animals to a safer place on days of high risk or when warnings are issued.

Preparedness on days of High Risk during flood, bushfire, severe storm and Total Fire Ban

Moving animals to a safer place should be done early to avoid risks to residents and their animals. It should be noted that late evacuation can be very dangerous. If the decision is made to stay in the home or on the farm, pets should be brought indoors, separated in a quiet room with small or preferably no windows, and provided with food and water. Residents should be advised not to comfort animals, as the animal may sense their anxiety. For more information on pets and bushfires, go to the [CFA website](#).

General care for domestic pets during emergencies

If pets are likely to be at risk, pet owners should make every effort to relocate pets to a safer area in advance. This may include boarding kennels, the homes of friends or relatives, or a temporary animal shelter or established evacuation centre which accepts animals.

General care for livestock during emergencies

Stock owners should develop an emergency plan including or considering the following.

- 24hr contact details of local stock transport companies.
- Coordinate the relocation of livestock with neighbours, friends or livestock associations.
- Fit gates on internal fences to avoid stock on public roads.
- Contact DJPR to determine the level of assistance they can provide.
- Know the Property Identification Codes (PIC) tags or the National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS) tags of your stock to enable tracking. Know your login and passwords to access this information.
- Mark gates and water locations on a map of your property, and have this map available in case someone else needs to move the stock.
- On High Risk days, move stock to a safe area before leaving your property for any length of time.
- In a severe storm, place animals under solid cover if possible.
- In flood events, relocate stock to a property that will not be impacted by flood waters. Ensure that the site has adequate feed. Council's Planning Department may be able to advise details of properties that may be impacted by floodwaters.
- In a bushfire, move animals to a closely grazed or ploughed paddock (preferably near the homestead), with drinking water, steel fencing, and preferably shade.

If a resident is unable to take their animals

The RSPCA advises that animals should only be left behind when it is impossible to take them during evacuation or move them in advance. The RSPCA also advises that if animals have to be left and are in danger of a painful death, owners should humanely 'put them down' where possible. If animals need to be left behind, the following precautions should be taken:

- Leave pets indoors.
- If pets have to be left outdoors, do not tie them up.
- Place pets (separated) in rooms with small or preferably no windows (use easily cleaned areas, laundry, bathroom, or toilet). Avoid rooms with large windows.
- Provide adequate food and water in large heavy containers that cannot be tipped over. Consider leaving a slow-dripping tap that can supply a constant supply of water.
- Provide birds with food dispensers that can regulate the amount of food.
- Ensure all pets are properly identified.
- Leave a note containing the owner's contact details.

9. Operational arrangements

9.1 Preparedness

- Animal welfare support services will be represented by NGSC and DJPR at MEMPC meetings.
- Emergency animal welfare services will be built into at least one exercise every three years.
- Council officers will undertake the necessary training to ensure the specified accreditations are maintained:
 - *POCTAA* authorisation - DJPR
 - Basic Wildfire Awareness - Forest Fire Management Victoria online training
- Council will ensure information in this plan is reviewed and updated annually.

9.2 Prevention

The MEMPC will encourage emergency animal welfare planning to residents of, and visitors to, the municipal district by promoting information sources through various means including the council website.

9.3 Response and relief

In the event of an emergency impacting animals, an appointed DJPR AWLO will interact with the MERO or their delegate to ensure animal welfare arrangements are in place that allow effective scoping, management and referral of animal welfare needs as well as distribution of relevant public information.

9.4 Recovery

Longer-term animal welfare needs will be documented and addressed through Municipal Recovery Plans.

10. Emergency animal welfare services

10.1 Identification of affected animals

In the event of an emergency, information on registered animal populations can assist to scope the effort required to address animal welfare issues. Animal registers can also help to identify stray or roaming animals, or those presenting at ERCs.

Council will liaise with the DJPR AWLO in the identification of impacted livestock (DJPR) and companion animal (Council) populations. In smaller scale incidents where these roles have not been activated, Council and/or DELWP or Parks Victoria will work with the DJPR AWLO listed in this plan.

10.2 Management of displaced animals

Managing animals presenting at ERCs

The welfare of animals can be a deciding factor for people in making decisions about their personal welfare, including evacuating a threatened property or seeking emergency shelter.

In the event that people have no other option but to bring their animals to the designated ERC, arrangements can be made to relocate the animals to the NGSC Pound or another suitable location if necessary. For example, animal owners may be staying in temporary accommodation where their animal/s are not permitted, in which case Council may be able to offer support in the form of housing their animal/s temporarily at the Pound.

There is no provision for animals to remain at the ERC for extended periods, however [assistance animals](#) will be permitted to remain with their owners at the ERC. Other animals permitted to remain with their owners at the ERC for a short period will be determined on a case by case basis.

When an animal is brought to the ERC, the following process should be followed.

1. If the animal is with its owner:
 - a. If the animal requires medical attention, provide the owner with local veterinarian details.
 - b. If temporary housing is required for the animal:
 - i. Contact a Community Safety Officer.
 - ii. Arrange for an Officer to meet the owner and animal at the Pound.
 - c. If temporary housing is not required, and the owner wishes to enter the ERC for a short period (i.e. to register with Red Cross, obtain information, etc.), their companion animal may be temporarily accommodated in a suitable area (on a case by case basis).
2. If the animal is not with an owner:
 - a. Request Community Safety Officer attendance at ERC.
 - b. If the animal requires first aid, ongoing care or significant treatment, Officer to arrange for transfer to a veterinarian.
 - c. If the animal appears fit and healthy, Officer to transfer the animal to the Pound or other suitable facility.

Animals that are admitted to the Pound will be processed by Officers using normal impound procedures.

If a Community Safety Officer is not available to attend the ERC, neighbouring councils may be contacted to request additional Community Safety Officer support.

If the NGSC Pound is impacted by the emergency, neighbouring councils may be contacted for animal management support.

People transporting livestock to an ERC are to be directed to the nearest large, safe venue for holding them (see [Appendix 4](#)) (not available in public version of Plan due to privacy reasons).

Emergency containment of displaced (unconfined) animals

Livestock detained as a direct consequence of an emergency should be conveyed to the NGSC Pound or other suitable location, and owners should be notified when appropriate.

DJPR can be contacted to provide assessment for any displaced livestock that have been injured, and can attend the NGSC Pound to provide support to Community Safety Officers.

Normal procedures for handling impounded stock will apply if the owners cannot be located. However, where it is clearly evident that a recovered animal in good condition was located in or near the emergency area, such animals are to be held for a minimum period of 14 days.

10.3 Animal welfare needs assessment

Animal welfare needs assessment includes veterinary treatment, humane destruction, salvage slaughter, fodder, water, and carcass disposal. DELWP will assess the needs of wildlife, in partnership with Parks Victoria and registered wildlife groups. DJPR will assess livestock and companion animal welfare support needs on private property.

Livestock and companion animal welfare assessment needs on private property will be reported to DJPR for action through the DJPR Emergency Management Liaison Officer at the Incident Control Centre, or the DJPR AWLO. In smaller scale incidents where these roles have not been activated, reports can be sent to the DJPR Animal Welfare Officer listed in this Plan. DJPR will liaise with both Council officers and the RSPCA to ensure a coordinated and appropriate response.

Wildlife welfare assessment needs will be reported to the Incident Controller or Planning Officer in the Incident Management Team, or Wildlife Welfare Officer if in place. In smaller scale incidents where these roles have not been activated, reports will be sent to the DELWP or Parks Victoria contact listed in this plan.

It is the responsibility of the person in charge of animals to arrange for the humane destruction or salvage slaughter of impacted 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 animals when the person in charge cannot perform the necessary actions to alleviate the suffering of their animals. This assistance may

include referral to veterinarians, DELWP or the RSPCA. *POCTAA* trained and equipped officers (from the RSPCA or Council) may also assist.

Where possible, destruction activities will take place in consultation with the person in charge of affected animals. In situations where owners cannot be found, indemnity for immediate destruction in their absence is provided by Section 21 (ii) of *POCTAA 1986*.

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. 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 *POCTAA*.

Methods of destruction of animals must be consistent with the relevant Code of Practice, such as the *Codes of Accepted Farming Practice for the Welfare of Animals* (species specific in the case of livestock), *Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses* and *Code of Practice for the Welfare of Wildlife during Rehabilitation*.

10.4 Veterinary treatment

While the treatment of animals will ideally be organised by owners in conjunction with their private veterinarian, local practices may be overwhelmed or inaccessible in a large-scale emergency.

Stawell Veterinary Clinic provides an after-hours service every other weekend. Council has access to this after-hours service, with the understanding that Council are responsible for costs including after-hours fees.

Stawell Veterinary Clinic may also be able to assist with triage of animals in an emergency, however it should be noted that the Clinic site is not suitable for large animals. Other triage support organisations include RSPCA and AVA (see [Appendix 1](#)) (not available in public version of Plan due to privacy reasons).

10.5 Coordination of carcass disposal

The *Emergency Management Manual of Victoria* lists several agencies with responsibilities in the disposal of carcasses as a result of an agricultural emergency. Specific agency responsibilities include:

- Municipal councils: Coordination of cleanup activities, including disposal of dead animals (domestic, native, and feral).
- DJPR (Agriculture Victoria): Provision of advice about the disposal needs of dead or injured animals.
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA): Provision of emergency approvals in line with the *Environment Protection Act (1970)* where required, e.g. mass animal burials and ensuring that appropriate waste disposal methods are adopted, and environmental clean-up activities conducted.

In an emergency, DJPR will liaise with each municipality regarding the carcass disposal needs of livestock and companion animals (number and type of animals and location). The EPA can assist each municipality to identify suitable sites for disposal.

For wildlife, where a response is based on the Bushfire Protocols, it is the responsibility of the triage veterinarian to work with each municipality to oversee the disposal of carcasses of euthanised wildlife. DELWP will liaise with Museum Victoria on any requirements to retain wildlife specimens of importance for inclusion in the State Collection.

DJPR has a list of licensed landfill sites that may take dead animal carcasses across the state. Other sites may be identified and assessed in consultation between the Environmental Health Officer from the municipality where the site is located and the EPA before an emergency, and listed in this plan as appropriate.

For biosecurity purposes, it is preferable to dispose of carcasses on the affected property. Where this is not practically possible, NGSC's designated site for carcass disposal (flood and drought) is as follows.

Stawell Landfill
 Statewide Waste
 494 Pomonal Road, Stawell
 Ph: 0439 639 256 / 0419 309 737

10.6 Emergency fodder

In large-scale emergencies, fodder may be donated for distribution to affected animal owners. DJPR will work with the VFF or local government in the establishment of distribution sites. Suitable sites within the Northern Grampians Shire may include:

- NGSC Pound, 15-21 Ormston Road, Stawell
- Lord Nelson Park, 26 Dunston St, St Arnaud

10.7 Emergency water supply points

In the event that emergency water supplies are needed for livestock (due to contamination of private supplies), water may be collected by owners from the following sites (viewable on Council's online [Community Map](#)).

Lake Fyans Bore 4 Tunnel Road, Lake Fyans	Joel Joel Well 2047 Landsborough Road, Joel Joel
Garden Gully Bore 329 Garden Gully Road, Great Western	Stuart Mill Bore 74 Teddington Road, Stuart Mill
Campbells Bridge Bore 348 Campbells Bridge Road, Campbells Bridge	Carapooee Bore Dunolly Road, Carapooee
Greens Creek Bore 17 Tulkara Road, Greens Creek	St Arnaud Nelson Park Bore Alma Street, St Arnaud
Morrows Crossing Bore 988 North Woodlands Road, Navarre	Darcys Bridge Bore 161 Darcy Bridge Road, Moolerr
Barratt Road Bore 958 Barratt Road, St Arnaud North	Paynes Pool Bore Paynes Pool Road, Wal Wal

Coopers Bore Old Rupanyup Rd, Glenorchy (near Murtoa-Glenorchy Rd)	Duxsons Bore Duxsons Road, Wallaloo East (at Duxsons farm)
Smiths Road Bore Moyreisk-Redback Road, Moyreisk (at Smiths Rd)	

It should be noted that Council is not responsible for the water quality and does not test the quality of the water. It is the user's responsibility to test and use the water for stock at their own discretion.

10.8 Donations

Council cannot be registered as a charitable organisation, and therefore the MRM will require the assistance of local animal welfare organisations to coordinate the distribution of pet food donations and non-food donations.

Council does not have the capacity to establish or administer fundraising or collections to receive donations of goods or monies on behalf of animals affected by a disaster. However, Council is accountable for any monies granted or donated directly to Council as a result of any emergency event, and will implement systems to receive and account for all such donations.

Any donations received by Council will be used broadly for recovery functions with regard to the manner the donation was intended.

10.9 Offers of volunteer assistance

In large scale emergencies, offers of volunteer assistance may be made to Council. These offers will be directed to the [Volunteering Victoria](#) portal. Wildlife volunteers will be managed by DELWP.

Volunteer organisations that may be contacted for assistance include:

- Adoptable Pet Rescue
- RSPCA
- Wildlife carers

Council's position on the use of volunteers to assist in the management of impacted animals is through collaboration with one of the organisations listed above.

10.10 Recording reports of animals requiring emergency welfare support

Reports received by Council of animals requiring services provided by another agency/organisation will be recorded in Crisisworks and referred to the relevant agency/organisation within 24 hours of receipt. Referrals received by Council of animals requiring services provided by Council will be recorded in Crisisworks with action initiated within 24 hours of receipt.

11. Information sharing

At times, animal owner/carer details may need to be provided to animal welfare support agencies to ensure comprehensive assessment of animals impacted by an emergency. This enables the coordinated delivery of services to affected owners/carers and their animals.

Any personal information captured during the registration process must be in compliance with privacy legislation. However, in an emergency situation, the public interest in safety will override the privacy requirements of the *Information Privacy Act 2000*, even where the emergency response was not the primary reason for collection.

Information Sheet 02.10 from the Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner states:

“Usually an organisation should only use information for the purpose it is collected (IPP 2). However, if new personal information is collected in order to respond to an emergency, sharing that information where necessary with other organisations involved in the disaster response or recovery may be considered to be disclosure for the primary purpose of collection.”

12. Process for requesting additional resources

Council is a signatory to the Municipal Association of Victoria's *Municipal Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing Protocol* to ensure resource continuity, both externally to support neighbouring councils and internally to support the Northern Grampians Shire should resources become limited and/or unavailable.

Should the NGSC require additional assistance in a large-scale emergency, support requirements will be discussed with DJPR and DELWP for emergency animal support.

13. Financial measures

Financial accounting for municipal resources utilised in emergencies must be authorised by the MERO or the MRM, and shall be in accordance with the normal financial arrangements of NGSC.

Appendix 1 - Local contact information for emergency animal support

Content removed for privacy purposes.

Appendix 2 - Statewide contact information for emergency animal welfare support

Consult DJPR for advice (where appropriate) on who to contact in an emergency event.

Organisation	Phone	Website
Australian Horse Industry Council	0478 351 112	www.horsecouncil.org.au
Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)	1300 137 309	www.ava.com.au
Cat Protection Society of Victoria	03 8457 6500	www.catprotection.com.au
Central Animal Records (microchips)	1800 333 202	www.car.com.au
Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)	1300 650 172	www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)	136 186	www.agriculture.vic.gov.au
Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)	136 186	www.delwp.vic.gov.au
Dogs Victoria	(03) 9788 2500	www.dogsvictoria.org.au
Feline Control Council	(03) 9720 8811	www.fccvic.org
Ferret Rescue	0403 388 647	www.vicferrets.org.au
Governing Council of Cat Fancy	0408 300 392	www.catsgccfv.org.au
Help for Wildlife	0477 555 611	www.helpforwildlife.co
Pet Address (Search engine for microchip numbers)		www.petaddress.com.au
Red Cross	1800 733 276	www.redcross.org.au
RSPCA	(03) 9224 2222	www.rspcavic.org
The Lost Dogs Home	(03) 9329 2755	www.dogshome.com
VicRoads	131 170	www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
VicEmergency Hotline	1800 226 226	www.emergency.vic.gov.au
Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF)	1300 882 833	www.vff.org.au
Wildlife Rescue and Information Network Inc.	0419 356 433	www.wrin.asn.au
Wildlife Victoria	(03) 8400 7300	www.wildlifelvic.org.au
Zoos Victoria	1300 966 784	www.zoo.org.au

Appendix 3 - Animal accumulation centres

Content removed for privacy purposes.

Appendix 4 - Available animal housing sites

Content removed for privacy purposes.

Appendix 5 - Emergency animal welfare kit checklist

This checklist ensures there is a complete Emergency Animal Welfare Kit for Council's Community Safety Officers to respond to emergency animal welfare needs and process animals at an Emergency Relief Centre.

Item	Quantity	Checked
NGSC Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	1	
Legal document folder	2	
Pens	4	
Drinking bowl	2	
Dog lead	2	
Catching pole	1	
Rags - packet	1	
Water bottle - 10L	1	
Horse lead & headstall	1	

Note that the above list is not exhaustive, and other items (such as gloves, microchip scanners, muzzles, etc.) are kept either in the Community Safety vehicles or at the Pound.

Appendix 6 - Related documents and legislation

- Related documents
 - Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds (Revision 1) (Aug 2018)
 - Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (Revision 2) (Oct 2019)
 - Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan
 - Northern Grampians Shire Domestic Animal Management Plan

- Relevant legislation
 - *Emergency Management Act 1986 & 2013*
 - *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1986 (POCTA)*
 - *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*