

EMERGENCY ANIMAL WELFARE PLAN 2022

Pyrenees Shire
MEMPC

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Acronyms

AVA	Australian Veterinary Association (Victorian Division)
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DAMP	Domestic Animal Management Plan
DFFH	Department of Housing, families and Health
AgVic	Department Agriculture Victoria
DEECA	Department of Environment, Energy, Climate Action
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
FFMV	Forest Fire Management Victoria
IC	Incident Controller
IMT	Incident Management Team
IMS	Incident Management System
LGO	Local Government Officer
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator
MEMO	Municipal Emergency Management Officer
NLIS	National Livestock Identification System
AS	Animal Shelter
POCTA	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1986
POWE	Principal Officer Wildlife Emergencies
PV	Parks Victoria
RAC	Regional Agency Commander
PIC	Property Identification Code
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SAC	State Agency Commander
SAWC	State Animal Welfare Commander
SCC	State Control Centre
SERO	State Emergency Response Officer (of Victoria Police)
SES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VFF	Victoria Farmers Federation
VEAWC	Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Committee
VicPol	Victoria Police



Definitions

Agency	A government agency, including commonwealth, state or local government authority.
Animal	Refer to the definition in Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 which basically includes any live vertebrate species (other than human) and some crustaceans.
Animal welfare	How an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behavior, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal; the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment.
Animal Welfare Commander	A role established by Agriculture Victoria within DJPR to lead the agency's emergency animal welfare support services at the state, regional and/or incident level.
Biosecurity	The protection of the economy, the environment, social amenity or human health from negative impacts associated with the entry, establishment or spread of animal or plant pests and disease, or invasive plant and animal species.
Command	The direction of personnel and resources of an agency in the performance of that Organization's role and tasks. Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an agency. Extended in ICC environment.
Communication	The engagement and provision of information across agencies and proactively with the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
Community Connection	The understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders and all communities to support resilience and decision making.
Companion Animal	Any non-human vertebrate animal kept for the purpose of companionship, recreation, protection or work.
Consequence	The management of the effect of emergencies on individuals, the community, infrastructure and the environment.
Control	The overall direction of response activities in an emergency. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency response plan and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.
Control agency	The agency responsible for leading the response to a particular type of emergency
Coordination	The bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective response to and recovery from emergencies. The main functions of co-ordination are to: Ensure effective control has been established and maintained; ensure effective information sharing; and Systematic acquisition and allocation of resources in accordance with the requirements imposed by emergencies.
Domestic Animal Businesses	Licensed premises under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 including pet shops, dog/cat breeding and boarding establishments and dog training establishments.
Emergency	An emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria, or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria
Emergency Management Team	A team which assists a controller in formulating a response strategy and in its execution by all agencies, and which assists the Emergency Response Coordinator in determining resource acquisition needs and in ensuring coordinated response to an emergency.

1. Purpose

This Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP) has been produced pursuant to Section 20 (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and assists in the management of animal welfare during and after an emergency. The Plan has been developed with reference given to the *Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan*, the *Pyrenees Municipal Emergency Management Plan*.

2. Scope

The emergency risks, identified in the Pyrenees Shire, could impact animals directly or indirectly through loss of habitat and food sources include, but limited to:

- the effects of drought
- flood
- fire
- animal disease
- Storm events
- Transport accidents
- Heatwaves

All have been identified in Municipal Emergency Management Plan's risk register as having a high or moderate risk which could impact the welfare of companion animals, livestock and wildlife within the municipality.

The MEMP reference pages:

Pyrenees Shire Snapshot statistical data relevant for consideration when activating this plan:

Snapshot

Animal populations

Pyrenees Shire has a population of approximately 7,650 people of which just under half own a domestic pet.

Registered Dogs: 2350 & Cats 570, research indicate that these numbers are on average are higher in some areas by 20 to 50 %

Statistical data estimate a further 10% of animals remain unregistered in most LGAs, to increase animal numbers in the shire.

Environmental Scan

The land area zoned for farming approximately 2285 Sq Km, beef and sheep traditional farming production in the shire however horses, goats and chicken farming are also present in the shire. It is near impossible to know the numbers of livestock in the shire, however with such a large rural holding it is considered to be high.

Crown land under the classification of State, Regional and National Parks spans 510 square km, creating habitat for a wide range of animal species, as the wildlife corridors extend into neighboring shires parks land to the north and west of the shire and in the south.

Home to native species of mammals, reptiles and bird life throughout the natural bushlands, open lands and forests.

Pyrenees shire forms part of the Grampians Region on the Victoria State emergency plan, which also identifies the broad regions risks and considerations relating to animals.

Community Values

Animals have intrinsic value and can suffer in disasters from injury, pain, hunger, thirst, fear and distress. The World Organisation for Animal Health defines animal welfare as: “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 behavior, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress”.

The community has an expectation that emergency management arrangements will allow for a coordinated approach to the management of animal welfare impacts to companion animals, livestock, and wildlife.

Roles & Responsibilities

While the responsibility for the welfare of domestic animals always remains with the person in charge of the animal/s, governments can play a supporting role in helping people exercise their responsibility for the animals in their care, containment, and disposal.

Wildlife which also includes pest animals such as rabbits and foxes are managed by DECCA and stakeholders in their teams, usually with the assistance from other agencies and community rescue groups.

Agencies such as Council, RSPCA and DEECA also play a vital role in managing stray and injured animals resulting from an emergency event or natural disaster.

This plan has been developed to guide local emergency animal welfare responders and arrangements to address the risks with emphasis on the following key deliverables:

- Identification of affected animals
- Management of evacuated animals at Emergency Relief Centres
- Management of stray or roaming animals
- Animal welfare assessments
- 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
- Coordination of support agencies and networks relevant to animal welfare

3. Audit

This *Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan* is a sub-plan of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan prepared under Section 20 (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and as such is subject to the audit provisions as detailed in Section 20A of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*.

4. Plan development, endorsement, testing and review

This plan is developed under the relevant legislative requirements, which includes an endorsement process both at the MEMPC and REMPC level, in which it will be reviewed according to legislated cycles within the Act.

The Core membership for MEMPCs will include key agencies with assumed responsibilities under the Act

The formation of groups within this committee such as sub committees and working groups form to further define and scope the actions and objectives of the identified areas, such as Animal Welfare in Relief and Recovery.

Plans are tested and reviewed in line with all sub plans of MEMPs, record of these actions captured in the appendix and reported on to MEMPC and to Relief and Recovery subcommittees who meet two times a year

Outlined below are key animal/stock welfare emergency management planning processes and arrangements for preparing the municipality for an emergency incident.

The Pyrenees shire has identified a number of representative groups and organizations that will have specific knowledge to contribute to the implementation of planning of the EAW

<i>Stakeholder</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>tertiary</i>
Agriculture Victoria	✓		
DEECA	✓		
VicPol	✓		
Local vets		✓	
RSPCA		✓	
PSC	✓		
EPA		✓	
Wildlife support groups		✓	
Community			✓
Neighboring Rangers		✓	
VFF		✓	

Membership of the Pyrenees Shire Emergency Animal Welfare Team will comprise representatives from groups and organizations that understand animal health disease issues and are key stakeholders that have infrastructure or local knowledge across animal welfare throughout Pyrenees Shire

The MEMPC’s Relief and Recovery subcommittee will oversee the review and any amendments according to the Act.

The testing of this plan will form part of the relief and recovery exercises conducted.

The plan will be reviewed according to the legislative guidelines, which includes statutory requirements and the process for completion.

Relief and Recovery Team

Includes the following but is not limited to:

- Council Community Safety and Amenity Officer (Ranger)
- DJPR – Agriculture Victoria
- DEECA - responsible for wildlife welfare arising from a declared emergency.
- Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO)
- Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
- NGO Animal Welfare groups

- ARC
- DFFH
- RSPCA
- VFF

5. Aim and objectives

The aim of the Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan 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 Plan is to:

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

6. Plan activation

This plan will be activated by local and or state agency officers, dependent on the scale, the type of the emergency risk and the impact it will have on animals in this area.

In some circumstances only limited parts of this plan will require to be activated and in others the whole plan maybe need to be activated.

In each case the person initiating activation maybe different, however it will always aim to meet the objectives of this plan, to minimize impacts to animal health and wellbeing including reducing and relieving suffering caused by an event.

The Municipal Emergency Resource Coordinator (MERC) will activate the plan following advice from the Agriculture Victoria and or Pyrenees Municipal Emergency Management officer (MEMO)

Agriculture Victoria will oversee the implementation of this plan for livestock involved and DEECA officers will be responsible for the management and welfare of wildlife.

The triggers for activation may include but are not limited to the following:

- Opening a Relief centre (on site or virtually)
- An event on the scale that may involve multiple animals and agencies to manage
- A declared emergency status in an area which may or may not involve in evacuations
- A transport accident event such as stock trailer roll overs
- A biological outbreak

In implementing this plan, the following principles apply:

- The safety and welfare of all people is always a priority.
- The responsibility for the welfare of owned animals remains with the person in charge of an animal.
- Emergency arrangements for animal welfare do not override normal legislative functions however the given circumstances may call for discretion in managing compliance given potential risks to human life or other practical limitations perceived to be present during the emergency.
- Notwithstanding anything in this plan, control agencies may recommend additional or alternative actions/plans from regional/ state level to meet the needs of the emergency situation.

Once a threat or incident is known, the EAW team will be either formed and placed on alert/standby or activated and then they respond to the emergency as required.

In large scale emergencies, lead agency officers and the ICC controller, will oversee the implementation of the plan during the emergency.

7. Business continuity

Pyrenees Shire Council

The Pyrenees Shire Council has in place two Community Safety and Amenity Officers (Rangers) who are capable to assist to manage areas of emergency relief and recovery for animals, increasing probability that one at least will be available at any one time. Depending on the scale of the event, resources assistance maybe required from outside the municipal district.

Agriculture Victoria has multiple veterinary officers and animal health officers who manage emergency relief and recovery operations for livestock in the South West region of Victoria as part of their BAU roles. An afterhours service is provided via the Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Hotline Number 1800 675888 which ensures that each part of the state is covered by at least one officer with back up from local staff in the event of assistance being required out of normal business hours.

DEECA:

The DEECA State Agency Commander (SAC) is in place at all times. The SAC will be supported by the Principal Officer Wildlife Emergencies (POWE) and regionally by the DEECA Regional Agency Commanders (RACs) who are the initial point of contact to address wildlife welfare needs in the event of an emergency. Where an emergency has the potential to impact wildlife welfare, the DELWP RAC will liaise with the Incident Controller and local government MEMO as a member of the EMT established for the incident with respect to wildlife welfare. The POWE will also be consulted.

8. Responsibilities Defined Action Plan

The Emergency Management Act 2013 defines roles and responsibilities at the State level and the Animal Plant, Marine and Environmental Biosecurity Sub Plan will be activated and its will be responsible for disease and biological threats in the region.

For local responses the Pyrenees MEMP Relief and Recovery committee has developed this Animal Welfare Sub Plan which identifies the roles and responsibilities in animal welfare, each agency will fulfill a role in cooperation with other emergency relief personal, stakeholders and the community. Lead agency identified according to the EM Act will be Agriculture Victoria for livestock and DEECA for the wildlife and Local Government for domestic pets.

Role	Responsibilities
PSC MEMO PSC MRM	Provide guidance and support to the Council Animal Rangers Activate relief centre activities which includes ensuring domestic pets are considered in the plans and activities
Agriculture Victoria	Coordinates animal welfare response activities and planning involving livestock and some domestic pets, as guided in this plan Conducts initial impact assessments. Triage injured and sick animals, for treatment or destruction

	Provides assistance in the identification processes using livestock and property records systems, currently in place such as PIC and NLIS tags
Community and Amenity Officer/s (Ranger)	Provide accurate information to the MEMO and Council's Crisis Management team applying local knowledge and intel relating to domestic pets and livestock ownership. Provide other agencies with support and assistance. Provide information and support to relief center attendees who require assistance with their pets. Provide assistance with logistics and information.
Council Environmental Health Officer	Responsible for supervising site selection and burial of dead animals in accordance with EPA and Agriculture Victoria guidelines. Liaises with EPA and Dept Health authority as required.

Role	Responsibilities
DEECA Animal Welfare Officer - Wildlife	Responsible for the provision of information advice and assistance with the welfare of wildlife that have been impacted by an emergency. Triage injured and sick wildlife, which may involve destruction To coordinate activities of rescue organizations and community members assisting in communication with the Incident controller
Municipal Emergency Resource Coordinator (MERC)	Assist with coordination of animal movement, on roads/tracks and or via transport, providing traffic management assistance If Victoria Police is the Incident Controller will provide guidance and direction for the safe on-site locational operations necessary to respond to animal welfare matters, coordinated through the lead agencies as required

Other stakeholders and resources that may be involved in the activation of this plan:

- Australian Veterinary Association
- RSPCA
- Victorian Farmers Federation
- Parks Victoria
- Wildlife Networks
- Blaze Aid
- EPA
- Stock transport carrier
- Pet boarding facilities
- Ballarat & Bendigo Animal Shelters
- Volunteer Organizations



9. Operational Arrangements

9.1 Preparedness and Prevention (Before)

Animal welfare support services will be represented by Council and DEDJTR at the Pyrenees Shire Council Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. Emergency animal welfare arrangements will be tested during relief and recovery exercises.

Lessons learnt from recent events shared and noted across the states to gain knowledge and understanding of real situations involving animals and emergencies.

The Emergency Management Coordinator, for Pyrenees Shire Council, will ensure that the information in this plan is reviewed and updated annually.

Key Agency staff /officers will undertake necessary training, in their respective areas of responsibility, to ensure that staff maintain the following specified accreditations, skills and knowledge:

- POCTAA authorisation
- First Aid
- Animal rescue & recovery
- Firearms / Bolt gun safety and use

Agriculture Victoria- Staff/Officers undertake training to ensure staff maintain accreditation, skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies involving livestock. This training includes:

- POCTAA & LDCA authorisation
- First Aid
- Animal assessment, rescue & recovery
- Firearms safety & use
- Truck rollover training

DEECA is the lead agency for wildlife response preparedness including:

- Develop response plans and standards.
- Develop and deliver training and accreditation.
- Instigate and lead response activities.
- Develop and communicate approved incident and response messages to stakeholders.
- Activate the Wildlife Emergency Support Network via deployment requests through the State Control Centre.

Awareness of local emergency processes and preparedness is everyone's responsibility, agencies such as Department Agriculture: Animal welfare Victoria, CFA, SES and Council publish information about emergencies and animals. This information is highlighted during an emergency event and community are encouraged to ensure their emergency plans include plans for their animals.

9.2 Response / Relief (During)

In the event of an emergency impacting animals, an Agriculture Victoria Officer for animal welfare will interact with the relevant Incident Controller and the MEMO or their delegate to ensure that animal welfare arrangements are in place that allow effective management and referral of animal welfare needs, as well as the distribution of relevant public information.

This phase of the operation will see the following activities undertaken:

- Activation of this plan
- Planning and preparation for the deployment of the field team
- Planning and communication to stakeholders to be in a state of readiness
- Coordination of resources

- Communication plan to the agencies, media and community

9.3 Recovery (After)

In this phase of the emergency, longer term animal welfare needs will be documented and addressed through the MEMPC Relief & Recovery sub plan of which this plan is a part of.

Information is gathered through the following activities:

- Deployment and management of the EAW field team during the recovery phase
- Management and reporting of the gathered information and
- De-Activation of the EAW operation

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) set out the actions required for each stage and the roles within them. These are contained in Appendix 2.

Ongoing relief activities to be delegated to the relevant teams or animal owners will be connected to organizations offering resources such as water, fodder, fencing and holding.

10. Emergency animal welfare services

Pyrenees Shire is a rural regional town likely to be impacted by fire, flood and storm events.

Other identified risks are related to transport accidents. The main towns of Pyrenees Shire of Beaufort and Avoca have major arterial roads through them which are the route for livestock transporters. Any accidents involving these carriers will cause death and injury to animals and then the incident will cause risks to road users in the vicinity of the incident.

In any event uncontained animals caused by an event and or damaged fences resulting in large numbers of stock escaping properties causing further risks to themselves and to road users and emergency responders, a response and plan should be a priority for the Incident Controller (ICC). Key operational responders will be Victoria Police, Council staff and Agriculture Victoria members and council officers.

With injuries to animals comes the need for destruction, this service to be coordinated by lead agencies who will coordinate resources from RSPCA, AVA members and with local assistance. (see 10.2)

In the case of declared disease outbreaks a range of actions will be considered by lead agencies, destruction may involve euthanasia, incineration and or burial.

These actions will involve agencies Council, Environmental Health Officers, Planning officers and the EPA where applicable.

The shire is also home to vast numbers of wildlife that are likely to become displaced and on the move during the event or be likely to be injured or require euthanasia because of the impact of the event such as fire, floods and storms. This response will be a coordinated action plan between DEECA, Wildlife networks and RSPCA and the Incident Controller at the time.

10.1 Identification of affected animals

Identification of domestic dogs and cats:

Council uses a rates/property data base linked to registered cats and dogs in the shire.

Microchip organizations such as Central Animal records and AAR also have records of registered animals of many different species.

Council received requests for services or assistance will be recorded in Council's computer system and any other relevant records management system used during the event.

Identification of livestock

Agriculture Victoria will identify livestock through the NLIS and PIC number systems, in some case microchips and other livestock tagging systems.

Council will work with Agriculture Victoria to identify any impacted livestock and companion animals. Requests for services or assistance shall be recorded by Agriculture Victoria's record management systems in place for the event.

Wildlife

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

10.2 Management of displaced animals

Managing animals presenting at emergency Relief Centers

Council's Relief Centre Operational plans guide the way evacuated animals are managed when they are presented with their owners at emergency relief centres. No stray domestic pets will be located at the centre, instead they will be transported to the local shelter for holding periods however not subject to normal pound processes, as recovery commences, owners will be traced and notified by Council officers or shelter operators.

In summary

Companion animals can be accommodated in the following manner under the supervision of the owner:

- In designated area inside the relief centre
- Tethered in a shady area with water available
- In their pet cage or cage provided by Rangers such as council vehicles with cages.
- Species should be separated unless from the same household
- Animals should be also located away from other people including children

If the above options are not possible the Community Safety and Amenities Officer (if available on site) will assist with the placement of animals to an off-site facility if required. Supervision still remains the responsibility of the owner.

If the Community Safety and Amenities Officer is not available, the ERC Coordinator will provide the pet owner with a list of private pet facilities where animal/s can be cared for or accommodation that also takes pets. It shall be the animal owner responsibility to follow up on this action further.

Emergency containment of displaced (unconfined animals)

The primary responsibilities, for containment of animals, is the responsibility of the owner or person in charge of the animals at the time.

Local community and agency may provide resources such as temporary yards or repairs or may decide to move animals on foot to another location, coordination plans to be

communicated through the Incident controller or the MERC at the time or if after an event the relevant agency at the time in charge.

Agriculture Victoria and Council officers will liaise with the impacted farmers to sort out control arrangements after triaging the animal welfare matters and may request assistance from the MERC /MEMO regarding the following:

- control issues on roads
- additional resources to assist to contain animals

Animals unconfined during an emergency will be managed by the Incident controller, this maybe the MERC or other lead agency and relevant animal welfare agency officers. Consideration for the risks the uncontained livestock may cause and the possible injuries the animals could be exposed to, means an immediate operational response must be implemented while the safety of the personal and the community is also considered. Local council officers may provide data for identification investigations together with Agriculture Victoria's systems of identification in this area in if owner is not on site.

10.3 Animal welfare Assessments

Livestock and companion welfare assessment needs on private property will be reported to DJPR Agriculture Victoria (Ag Vic) by their Liaison officer situated at the Incident Control Centre (ICC). In smaller incidents when the ICC is not running, reports can be sent to the Agriculture Victoria, Animal Welfare Officer listed on the contact list for this plan or on the MEMPC list.

Agriculture Victoria will assess livestock and companion animal welfare support needs on private property.

Council officers provide support to lead Agency when it is sought, other agencies may assist on request such as R.S.P.C.A, Veterinarians, Animal Health officers and others listed in this plan.

Using local communication networks and Council will assist Agriculture Victoria to contact impacted property owners and determine the types and level of assistance required.

In absence of the owners, the euthanizing of animals will be the decision between the lead agencies and qualified personal such as a veterinarian or RSPCA officer.

Impact Assessments

Agriculture Victoria

Will deploy staff on the ground to conduct the following assessments:

- Agricultural assets, fencing and livestock losses
- Needs of affected persons and communities
- Wood, grain and feed losses

Granular impact assessment data is provided to local government immediately after collection, and aggregate data is inputted into the EM-Impact system to ensure impacts are clearly understood.

At times other agencies may help in these actions depending on the scale of the event at the time.

DEECA

When required and when safe to do so, DEECA will deploy Wildlife Field Assessment Teams, as part of the incident response through the Incident Control Team, to undertake the on-ground observation and assessment of impacted wildlife, euthanasia or the capture and

transportation of animals for further veterinary assessment. Wildlife observations and interventions are recorded electronically for further analysis. Community members and other responders to the incident can record and report injured wildlife observations directly to DEECA via the Wildlife Emergency app which can be downloaded from either the Google Play store or Apple store.

10.4 Veterinary Treatment



The treatment of companion animals will need to be organized by owners with their own private veterinarian.

The assessment process in Section 10.3 will assist to guide treatment options.

For companion animals, where an owner is not present, Council officers may transport animals to a Vet or the Animal shelter for assessment and possible emergency first aid until the owner is

contacted.

In large scale events treatment may not be possible cost wise for the owner, agencies such as Council, RSPCA and others may have rescue and recovery groups to contact that may provide assistance for cases of treatment classified as minor.

For major treatment, where the animals suffering is too great, humane destruction maybe the only option, this decision (in absence of the owner) will be the chief veterinary officer or any other authorized officer on site at the time.

10.5 Coordination of carcass disposal

The Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV), in relation to carcass disposal, states the following:

- Local government is responsible for the coordination of clean-up activities including disposal of dead animals. This is not on private land.
- Agriculture Victoria provides advice about the disposal and rehabilitation of stock affected by an emergency
- The Victorian Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), through the EHO, provides advice on disposal and site selection

Council can provide assistance with site selection due to their local knowledge and access to property databases. If Council, for whatever reason, conducts the full disposal process (p 8-4 of the EMMV), then Agriculture Victoria will provide advice when required.

The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) will be activated when the MEMO receives reports that animals are being impacted by an emergency and require burial/disposal. There are 3 likely scenarios:

1. Small Impact – 1 – 50 animals
2. Medium Impact – 50 – 1,000 animals
3. Huge impact – 1,000 – 5,000 +

The PSC will engage contracted EHO services to deal with levels 1 and 2, but a level 3 scenario may require additional coordinated resources to either assist with this burial task or backfill the other public health requirements related to the emergency. This assessment will need to be made at the time of the incident. Assistance maybe required through ERV and EMV as the resources within Council are limited.

Agriculture Victoria and Pyrenees Shire Council officers will plan possible future actions which could include:

- Identifying possible burial pit locations

- Location of affected animal and their numbers
- Whether it could be possible to have just one burial pit or if multiples will be required.
- Location of Pet food processors for small scale events

Burial Pits Requirements

EPA advice and legislative requirements control these activities:

The burial site:

- Should not penetrate the water table
- Be deep enough to contain all the animals and leave 2m of top cover
- Include drainage around the pit to prevent storm water penetration.

Smaller numbers of dead animals from non-farm properties may come to notice a day or two later. Council may at times, aid with burial in the form of providing a backhoe to dig a hole and a truck to cart the deceased animals to a pit.

Other considerations

Cultural and heritage overlays will also need consideration especially when large areas of lands are involved, consulting Councils planning department to provide assistance in this area is recommended.

10.6 Emergency Fodder

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is a key agency in the support of sourcing fodder for animals within an affected farming community.

The VFF website notes that there is a long-standing arrangement between the VFF and Agriculture Victoria to provide funding for emergency fodder relief. This arrangement is triggered when the scale of the event is beyond what a local community can manage.

The funding provided by Agriculture Victoria helps transport donated fodder to affected farmers or a designated location. Local government will work with Agriculture Victoria and the VFF in the establishment of sites.

10.7 Emergency Water

Local agencies including Council and DEECA have water trucks that can supply a limited amount of water to supply impacted livestock, until a longer-term solution can be found.

In the Pyrenees MEMPC has a map of the bore site locations.

Private suppliers can also be engaged by the owner, assistance longer term maybe provided by recovery agencies such as Rural Aid and a like.

Financial assistance may be available to cover the cartage costs during early recovery phase, referrals to relevant organizations with assistance from personal at local relief /recovery center or from online portals as directed by Council officers.

In any case it is essential under POCTA legislation to ensure food and water is provided to animal's times especially in difficult times during emergencies.

10.8 Donations

In large scale emergencies, donations of money or other material aid for animals is often driven by community groups.

Donations for impacted animals facilitated through:

- Direct donations to established animal welfare organizations such as local vets and shelters

- Donations of monies to established organizations that maybe facilitated by other recognized agencies/ stakeholders such a local business assisting such as the Bendigo Community Bank of Beaufort.

Any requests for animal fodder and alike to be coordinated by the most appropriate organization or persons at the time, the results of which needs to be shared with key agency staff such as Agriculture Victoria and local Council.

The location of the collection and storage points will be decided at the time by the Relief and Recovery teams, taking into consideration the following:

- Access for vehicles/ people
- Safety considerations for loading and unloading
- Manual handling considerations
- Protection from weather and from theft
- Actions to prevent spoilage

10.9 Management of Volunteers

The contribution made by volunteer animal welfare groups during emergencies is recognized in the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan. The purpose of this plan is to outline Victoria's emergency animal welfare arrangements and how volunteer animal welfare groups can contribute.

At a local level wildlife coordination shall be facilitated by Parks or DEECA officers on site

Other offers of assistance to be coordinated with key considerations relating to safety and priorities already decided by lead agencies of which may be CFA, Council, MERC or Agriculture Victoria.

Communication a key to the success of any work performed during and after an event.

Therefore, messaging to the greater community should clearly outline a simple process to be involved that will include the lead person, the meeting locations and the actions to be achieved and by who.

This will be the same for any calls for assistance or need for resources such as foster homes, resources and other needs.

10.10 Recording reports of animals requiring emergency welfare support

Each agency will have a system of recording service requests.

Crisis works platform is currently used in council.

If Pyrenees Shire council receives this data, it will be recorded into the preferred system at the time and the information transferred to the relevant authority in a timely manner.

Given that animal welfare needs may result in a loss of life, if not resolved in a window of time from receiving the request, council will actively encourage and support a communication platform to monitor request actions

Agriculture Victoria will record requests for animal welfare and support on the appropriate campaign page on Bio web.



11. Information Sharing

To ensure comprehensive assessment of animals impacted by an emergency, animal owner/carer details may need to be provided to animal welfare support agencies or organisations. This enables the delivery of urgent services to persons affected and their animals. Agencies such as Council, DEECA and Agriculture Victoria agree to manage and share information in accordance with the principles of the Information Privacy Act 2000, their own privacy policies and guidelines provided by the Office of the

Victorian Privacy Commissioner (Info Sheet 02.10). Where information is disclosed, council will attach a written note to the relevant file as to why the information was released and to whom.

Victoria legislation also authorizes the sharing of information under State and Local Government Acts and Acts and regulations related to animal welfare.

More recently the integration of information through the EM-Cop platform as guided by the current processes in place in the SEMP/REMP.

12. Process for requesting additional resources

Requests for supplementary resources will be consistent with principles described in the State /Regional Emergency Response Plan and Municipal Emergency Response Plan.

Requests maybe made by council, CFA, SES or Vic Police as per the agencies protocols and as described in the local MEMPs in the section of relief and recovery.

13. Financial measures/Budget

Council

Council will meet the initial costs of resources it has deployed as part of its own response operation. Expenditure for council-controlled resources utilized in emergencies must be authorized by the MEMO or the MRM and shall be in accordance with the normal financial arrangements of the Municipality.

All requests, including agencies, are logged into the platform/record management systems in place at the time to ensure accurate tracking and deployment.

To assist with the monitoring of expenditure, costs centers will be created as to collect and isolate the Incident's costs. When the option is available, Council will also seek reimbursement for same under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements as identified in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

Other agencies

Control agencies are responsible for all costs involved in that agency responding to an emergency. Government agencies supporting the control agency are expected to defray all costs from their normal budgets.

Community

Community members who relocate their animals (whether to private or council established areas) are responsible for all costs relating to transport to and from these facilities. A number of government and not for profit agencies may be able to provide financial assistance or grants to affected individuals who have incurred costs in relation to animal stock loss, relocation etc. These may be announced dependent on the severity of the event; however, the following agencies can provide advice for those seeking information:

- Agriculture Victoria
- Rural Finance Corporation of Victoria
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Centrelink
- Red Cross
- Department Health



Appendix 1 – Contact Information

EAW Local Contact Information 2023 (**Not for public display**)

Appendix 2 – Standards operating procedures/safe work procedures

1. Municipal Emergency Relief Centre EAW Procedures

PSC ERC ANIMAL WELFARE PROCEDURES – ACTIONS REQUIRED		
PETS ON ARRIVE AT RELIEF CENTRE WITH THEIR OWNERS		
THE RANGER OR FACILITY COORDINATER DO THE FOLLOWING		
1	Explain to the pet owners the conditions under which animals are able to be managed on site.	
2	<p>Companion animals can be accommodated in the following manner under the supervision of the owner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tether • Cage <p>If the owner does not have a cage or tether, and the owner cannot place the animal with friends, then the matter will be referred to the Community Safety and Amenity Officers. If they are on site they will handle the placement of animals to an off-site facility, however, supervision will still remain the responsibility of the owner.</p>	
	All species should be separated from each other and from the public attending the Relief Centre.	
3	If the Community Safety and Amenity Officers are unavailable, the ERC Facility Manager will try to find alternative accommodation for the animal/s which may be at the owner's expense.	

2. Pyrenees Shire Council EAW Coordinator – Assisting Primary Producers Procedures

Agriculture Victoria is the lead agency providing animal welfare assistance to primary producers. Council animal welfare officers provide support to Agriculture Victoria when it is sought. The following actions may be undertaken once they have been agreed upon with Agriculture Victoria

PSC EAW COORDINATOR – Actions Required		X / ✓ / NA
1	Using local communication networks, contact impacted property owners and determine the types and level of assistance required.	
2	With reference to the Pyrenees Shire Municipal Emergency Plan communication action (date, time and format) contact Agriculture Victoria and share this information. Prepare for deployment into the field. Assisted resources protocols/process to be activated if required	
3	Use the approved access points and procedures to visit the impacted properties and meet with the property owners. Observe Council OH&S procedures and equipment standards.	
5	Complete the impact assessment providing advice and assistance. Report to Agriculture Victoria and the PSC MEMO on the situation and any requirements.	
IF FARM STOCK REQUIRE EUTHANASIA AND BURIAL:		
6	Contact the PSC EHO advising that a burial pit/s is required, follow this plan for actions/authorizations	
7	Agriculture Victoria and the PSC Community Safety and Amenity Officers work together to coordinate the management of the injured animals. Liaise with the impacted farmers to decide control arrangements.	
8	Liaising with the EHO, coordinate the burial of the dead animals.	
9	Call the MERC or MEMO to request assistance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control issues security • additional resources 	
10	Keep tally of animal disposal numbers and inform Agriculture Victoria and the MRM daily.	
11	Follow the team deployment SOP ensuring PSC staff time is well managed and they are debriefed at the end of each day. Responsibility for this process will be the MRM.	

3. Environmental Health Officer (EHO) - Burial Pits Procedure

The EHO will be activated when the MRM receives reports that animals are being impacted by an emergency and require burial/disposal. There are 3 likely scenarios:

4. Small Impact – 1 – 50 animals
5. Medium Impact – 50 – 1,000 animals
6. Large impact – 1,000 – 5,000 +

The PSC EHO is able to deal with levels 1 and 2, but a level 3 scenario will usually require additional coordinated resources to either assist with this burial task or backfill the other public health requirements related to the emergency. This assessment will need to be made at the time of the incident.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER – ACTIONS REQUIRED		X / ✓ / NA
DURING THE RESPONSE PHASE – ANIMALS ARE BEING IMPACTED		
1	Gather more information on the emergency and its impacts on animals by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirming reports • Examining maps of impacted areas • Liaising with the PSC Information Systems Officer for mapping 	
2	Liaise with the PSC Community Safety and Amenity Officers and Agriculture Victoria to plan possible future actions which could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying possible burial pit locations • Location of affected animal and their numbers • Whether it could be possible to have just one burial pit or if multiples will be required 	
DURING THE RECOVERY PHASE: ACCESS TO THE IMPACTED GROUND IS AVAILABLE		
ONCE ACCESS IS AVAILABLE, THE EHO WILL:		
3	Collate the animal impact data received from Agriculture Victoria and the PSC staff. Maps can be developed as more detail emerges and the impacted area and animal numbers become clearer.	
4	With the aid of maps and the Information Systems Officer, the EHO in consultation with EPA, Planning Officer will consider the ground available for burial sites and identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood plains • Aboriginal heritage overlays • Water bore field • Water catchments (including dams) • Underground cables and pipes • Environmental overlays 	

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER – ACTIONS REQUIRED		X / ✓ / NA
5	Based on the data gathered in 4, choose the most appropriate burial site/s closest to the greatest concentration of animal numbers.	
6	Engage landowners to use this location/s. Emphasize that the pit/s may need to be used by other landowners.	
7	Advise the MRM of the need to arrange the excavation of the pit/s. Provide clear maps showing the locations. Also advise Agriculture Victoria and stakeholders.	
8	Burial Pits Requirements: advice from the EPA, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the environmental considerations. • Be deep enough to contain all the animals and leave 2m of top cover • Include drainage around the pit site 	
9	Before Burial: Liaise with Agriculture Victoria and advise that each animal carcass needs to have procedures conducted before burial so gas bloating can be minimized and the pit is stabilized.	
11	Smaller numbers of dead animals from non-farm properties may come to notice a day or two later. Council may be required to provide assistance with burial for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a backhoe to dig a hole • Provide a truck to cart dead animals to a pit 	
10	EHO will need to follow up with all of these actions to ensure all the above is undertaken correctly. This is then reported to the MRM and Agriculture Victoria /Rangers.	
11	Participate in the operational debrief upon the request by either the MEMO and/or the MRM.	

4. Municipal EAW Coordinator – Assisting Non-Farm Property Owners Procedure

PSC is the lead agency providing animal welfare assistance to non-primary producers. Agriculture Victoria animal welfare officers provide support to the PSC staff when it is sought.

PSC EAW COORDINATOR – Actions Required		X / ✓ / NA
ONCE REPORTS OF NON-FARM BEING IMPACTED, THE AEW COORDINATOR WILL:		
1	Liaise with the PSC Information Systems Officer and prepare a map of the impacted non-farming area.	
2	Using local communication networks, contact impacted property owners and determine the types and level of assistance required - essentially a needs assessment. Liaise with Agriculture Victoria and the MERO.	
3	Using the agreed communications plan (date, time and format) contact Agriculture Victoria and share this information. Prepare for deployment into the field.	
4	Use the approved access points and procedures to visit the impacted non-farm properties and meet with the property owners. Observe Council OH&S procedures and equipment standards.	
5	Complete the impact assessment providing advice and assistance to the property owners and their impacted animals. Report to Agriculture Victoria and the PSC MEMO on the situation and relay any requirements.	
6	Liaise with the PSC EHO regarding numbers and disposal requirements of dead animals on these smaller properties. Determine a burial plan and advise the property owners, Agriculture Victoria and the MEMO.	
7	<p>Coordinate animal welfare assistance provided to affected non-farm property owners. Other than animal disposal, animal welfare requirements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary accommodation/agistment • Fodder • Containment <p>All requests to be logged into Incident Management System in use at the time.</p>	
8	Follow up on the actions arising from these requests for assistance.	
9	Provide a full report to the MRM on completion of this recovery operation	
10	Participate in any operational debriefs.	

