

MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD)

Improving preparedness, response, and resilience through individual and organisational collaboration



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The Managing Animals in Disasters project (MAiD) is seeking to identify and build best practice approaches to animal welfare emergency management to enable engagement with animal owners and other stakeholders in disasters/emergencies.

THE PROJECT

Issues: Consideration of animals can impact on people's decision making and behaviour during natural disasters causing potential issues for public and responder safety.

Goal: The MAiD project goal is to improve outcomes for public safety and the resilience of responders, animal owners, those with animal-related businesses, and their communities.

Outputs: Project activities will lead to the development of evidence-informed support tools to assist operational response, communication and professional development. These could include training resources, guidelines, or engagement materials.



FIRST YEAR ACTIVITIES (JAN-DEC 2014)

A series of small scale exploratory scoping studies is taking place in Year One to gather information about the range of issues and challenges faced by responders and animal owners in the context of managing animals in natural disasters.

Year One activities include

- ▶ **Critical audit:** of policies, initiatives, and research literature.
- ▶ **Engagement:** with end-users, responders, and other stakeholders (see below)
- ▶ **Interviews with animal-related business owners:** their preparedness, expectations, experiences, needs (see right)
- ▶ **Interviews with spontaneous and/or untrained volunteers:** their activities and coordination with EM response.
- ▶ **Knowledge exchange workshop:** to review scoping outcomes, shortlist priority issues and target groups. (Tues 19/08/14, Sydney)



Interviews with South Australian livestock producers: Livestock producers are an important potential target group for the MAiD project. We conducted a set of interviews with livestock producers about their experiences during a recent bushfire.

Some preliminary findings are presented below:

- ▶ **Preparedness and planning:** no formal written 'risk management plans' in place, although many things have been done to prepare and manage the risk using a 'common sense' approach. Generally felt they had no choice but to 'stay and defend' their property and animals.
- ▶ **Warnings and situational awareness:** remoteness can lead to limited access to emergency information. High situational awareness was maintained, however, due to local knowledge, networks, and past experience.
- ▶ **Experiences:** high self-efficacy led farmers to regularly place themselves in high-risk situations, e.g. moving livestock at the last minute.
- ▶ **Challenges for engagement:** different needs to other owner groups. High self-efficacy can lead to resistance. Perceived lack of need for more information and disaster preparedness not viewed as a discrete activity.

PROJECT STAGES

The project comprises four stages.

- 1. Scoping and exploration:** to identify priorities and needs suitable for development of support tools/materials.
- 2. Field work:** to gain an in-depth understand of priority areas and inform support tools/materials development.
- 3. Development:** of prototype tools and materials with project end users.
- 4. Assessment and evaluation:** of the support tools/materials.



Engagement: responders, end-users, stakeholders (see figure above), and specialists have been approached for information to inform the project.

Outcomes of the scoping activity with Responders will be presented at the BNHCRC Research Forum: Tues 02/09/14, 3pm.

PROJECT END USERS

The MAiD project team would like to acknowledge the project end users: ACT ESA, NSW SES, TFS, DFES, and AGD: AEMI.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact the project team: maid@uws.edu.au

