

# MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD)

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



Dr Mel Taylor<sup>1,2</sup>, Ms Megan McCarthy<sup>2</sup>, Dr Penny Burns<sup>2</sup>, Dr Kirrilly Thompson<sup>3</sup>, Mr Greg Eustace<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Psychology, Macquarie University, <sup>2</sup> Centre for Health Research, Western Sydney University, <sup>3</sup> Appleton Institute, Central Queensland University, <sup>4</sup> RSPCA Queensland

**THE MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS PROJECT (MAiD) IS SEEKING TO IDENTIFY AND BUILD BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES TO ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO ENABLE ENGAGEMENT WITH ANIMAL OWNERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES.**



### YEAR 1: Establishing an evidence base

First year activities included a series of small studies, documentation research, and broad stakeholder engagement

- ▶ to scope the issues and challenges in animal emergency management in the Australian context and,
- ▶ to identify priority areas for future focus and outputs.

### Recent Project Outputs

- ▶ **Audit Report:** a compendium of sources relating to animal emergency management in Australia – legislation, policies, plans, community engagement materials, current and recent initiatives, and research.
- ▶ **Publications and Presentations:** journal articles and conference presentations. Significant contribution to Australian Journal of Emergency Management special edition on Animals in Emergencies (April 2015).
- ▶ **Workshops:** scoping workshop with stakeholders to discuss issues and priorities, workshops run by RSPCA QLD with local government to assist with planning for animals.
- ▶ **EMA Podcast:** contribution to podcast on animals in disasters (July 2015).

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For copies of project outputs or further information, please contact: mel.taylor@mq.edu.au

### MAiD: 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:** to improve outcomes for public safety and the resilience of responders, animal owners, those with animal-related businesses, and their communities.

### YEAR 2: Targeted research

Establishment of baselines and priority-setting in Year 1 have led to two targeted research projects.

- ▶ **Integration of Emergent informal volunteers:** looking at the challenges and benefits within the context of animal emergency management, using the 2015 Sampson Flat bushfires as a case study. Status – in progress.
- ▶ **Living on the edge - peri-urban animal owners:** integrating the mapping of animals and the intentions of owners to develop dialogues with owners, local government, and other stakeholders to aid animal emergency management. Status – in development.



### END USER COMMENT – Sandra Barber, Manager Community Education, Tasmania Fire Service

One of the primary responsibilities of the Tasmania Fire Service is to support bushfire-prone communities to plan and prepare for bushfires. Small holders and animal-related businesses in these communities face additional challenges in preparing their properties, pets and livestock. This research project has already led to enhanced collaboration between government and community organisations working in this area. We look forward to gaining a better understanding of the concerns of animal owners, so that we can better inform and support their bushfire planning and preparation.

