MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD)
IMPROVING PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND RESILIENCE THROUGH INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION

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Presentation to the BNHCRC Research Advisory Forum
Thursday 12th April 2016
MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD): AIM AND GOAL

AIM - To identify and build best practice approaches to animal emergency management to enable engagement with animal owners, and other stakeholders in disasters and emergencies.

GOAL - The goal is to improve outcomes for public safety and the resilience of responders, animal owners, those with animal-related businesses, and communities.
MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD): PROJECT TEAM AND END-USER ORGANISATIONS

Mel Taylor
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Lisel O’Dwyer
Greg Eustace

Western Sydney University

Government of Western Australia
Department of Fire and Emergency Services
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**Holding on to hope**

FREE

Glenwood, Newfoundland and Labrador

Still looking for my Frankie. He was in the Aspens of wildwood estates in Abasand. If anyone has seen him please contact me so I can get him home. I know its a long shot because our building is gone but animals are smart. I just hope someone kicked the locked doors in of the building...Please PM me with any info. Thanks.

**FREE**

Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Our cat Econo, he jumped out of my little brothers arms upon arriving in barge landing during the evacuation yesterday. Please please keep an eye out if you are in the area or know someone who is share this post. He's my best friend. My whole family loves him very much, he has a collar on. If you find him call 780-714-1253 or inbox me! TIA

**Connie Perri-Loree shared Bianca Sims's post.**

May 8 at 6:07am


**Bianca Sims ➤ Fort McMurray evac relocation help group**

May 7 at 6:35pm

These dogs are at the Edmonton Humane Society! I hope this helps someone find their baby! A lot of them are from Wood Buffalo 🚪.
Fort McMurray evacuees get relief for 4 members at shelter

Some 70 animals are being housed at the Lac La Biche evacuation centre.

Erin Collins • CBC News
May 6, 2016

Fort McMurray fire has resulted in the evacuation of many residents. As a result, pets have been left behind in homes that are under threat of fire. The situation is critical for these animals, as they are potentially facing starvation and dehydration.

In response to this crisis, a petition has been launched to demand immediate action to save pets in homes 5 days after the Fort McMurray fire. The petition is available on Change.org, and anyone can sign it to show their support.

It's been five days since many residents had to evacuate Fort McMurray without being able to rescue their pets from their homes. There are likely hundreds of pets locked in homes, potentially dying from lack of food and water.

For many of us, pets are part of the family. Whether or not they can be saved, they certainly experience suffering and being left without food and water for this long will have caused significant suffering.

Given that Fort McMurray has been deemed safe enough for journalists to visit, and given that trained volunteers experienced in similar emergencies have volunteered to assist the SPCA in rescuing animals, it is crucial that we take action now to ensure the safety of these animals.

We urge Premier Rachel Notley, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, the Alberta SPCA, and any other government agencies and emergency responders who have jurisdiction over this issue, to IMMEDIATELY provide access to all trained animal rescue volunteers who can demonstrate their training and experience, and who are willing to sign waivers regarding the risks they are taking, and who agree to work under the direction of the SPCA.

We also request that emergency first responders be allowed to enter homes WITHOUT a warrant (including breaking to enter in these situations when a pet owner has insisted on the government form that they give permission for this, in order for their pets to be rescued).

Sign the petition on Change.org to show your support.

4k shares
240 comments
RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Scoping activities (Phase 1)

Audit: formal policies, procedures and local initiatives, research
Stakeholders: priorities and needs
Responders: organisational priorities, responder experiences and needs

Field work (Phase 2)

Spontaneous volunteers/’non-traditional’ responders  (South Australia / National) – with DELWP and AEMI
Peri-urban animal owners (Tasmania) – with TFS, DPIPWE and Local Govt
Horse owners - experiences of the 2015 SA bushfires (South Australia) – with CFS and Horse SA
Building an ARC (New South Wales) – with Blue ARC

PhD Research

Animal Owner – Responder interface (South Australia) – with CFS, PIRSA, SAPOL
SCOPING OUTPUTS – AEM AUDIT

Main findings

- A systems approach to emergency management is essential – integration of animal emergency management is required.
- There are clouded collaborations, misunderstandings of responsibilities and issues around interagency coordination.
- Lack of status of animal emergency management impedes progress and results in organisational fragility in this ‘non-core’ business.
- There is a lack of consistency in public communication– multiple messages from multiple stakeholders.
- Animal emergency management is a ‘people’ issue – broader engagement is needed.
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# MAPPING OF CHALLENGES TO RESEARCH PROGRAM CONTRIBUTION

## Challenges in AEM

### Phase 2 – Field Studies

- Spontaneous volunteers
- Horse owners’ experiences
- Peri-urban animal owners
- Building an ARC Owner - Responder interface

### PhD research

- Owner - Responder interface

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in AEM</th>
<th>Phase 2 – Field Studies</th>
<th>PhD research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The physical management/rescue of animals in natural disasters</td>
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<td>b. Interactions with animal owners during disaster response</td>
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<td>c. Interactions with animal owners in disaster preparedness and planning</td>
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<td>d. Interactions with members of the general public</td>
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<td>e. Post-disaster impacts in management of animals or their owners</td>
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<td>f. The logistics available to respond to animals in natural disasters</td>
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<td>g. Unclear policy or operational responsibilities</td>
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<td>h. Inter-agency coordination around the management of animals or their owners in natural disasters</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Co-ordination with non-emergency service agencies</td>
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<td>j. Managing/dealing with untrained/spontaneous animal-related responders</td>
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[bnhcrc.com.au]
SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS
COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, AND INTEGRATION IN ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
OVERVIEW

Rationale

• Importance of AEM
• Appetite for informal volunteering
• Range of challenges and opportunities in harnessing volunteers/volunteer groups in AEM

Aim

• To explore issues around the integration of informal volunteers in animal emergency management
CASE STUDY - SAMPSON FLAT BUSHFIRE

Using Sampson Flat bushfire as a case study to explore questions regarding the challenges for, and strengths and limitations of, informal volunteering in this context.

WHY SAMPSON FLAT?

- Timing
- Rich source of information from social media and traditional media sources
- Unique insight (SAVEM)

- Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA
- RSPCA SA
- South Australian Veterinary Emergency Management
- SA Fires Animal Reunite
- Horse SA
- Livestock SA
- Primary Producers SA
- Lost Pets of Adelaide
- Lost and Found Horses and Ponies SA
- Fauna Rescue of SA
- Disaster Animal Response Team Australia
- National Animal Rescue Groups of Australia
- Lucky Little Paws Rescue and Adoptions
- Greyhound Racing
- Pets and Their People
- Help Save the Furry Ones
- Animal Welfare League SA
- SA Rabbit Rescue & Adoptions
- Amanda Vella’s SAHA Horse Rescue Sanctuary
- University of Adelaide Equine Centre
- SA Kennels, Catteries, Aviaries and Agistments
- Canine Emergency Rescue Squad
- Adelaide Hills Bushfire Lost Pets Register
- Statewide Community Assistance Database SA
- Sampson Fire Livestock & Animal Support
- SA Fires, People and Pet Temporary Relooming
- Walking Forward Disaster Relief Team
INTERVIEWS

• Coordinators/administrators of emergent informal volunteer groups

• Members of established animal organisations (extending)

• Members of the volunteer group South Australian Veterinary Emergency Management (SAVEM),

• Trained emergency services personnel and personnel from key government agencies
INITIAL THEMES

Communication - uncertainty about roles and direction

...we sort of felt, is there something else we should be doing? Or should we not be doing this? Or are we doing this correctly? That sort of thing...communication around what’s going on now, where’s it heading now, that sort of thing that I think we sort of thought we might be more in the loop about”.

Perceived gap/speed of Government response

...there was a lag time a definite three day lag time. So, in that three days is actually when a lot of the relocations look place, a lot of community initiatives, the setting up fodder ... all that sort of stuff happened in that three day window without government.

Need for coordination/collaboration

...I think there needs to be a centralised sort of hub if you like, where needs are posted and whichever group can take on that particular task takes it on and sees it right through to the end”
PART II – SURVEY OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS

- To (try to) capture hard to reach segment
- Expanded to recent disaster events
  - January 2015 onwards
  - Across jurisdictions / National study
- Launch – late May 2016
- Focus on
  - Roles and contributions
  - Coordination, communication and collaboration with other groups
  - Achievements and challenges
HORSE OWNERS

EXPERIENCES OF THE 2015 SA BUSHFIRES
QUOTES (RESPONDERS)

‘very emotional situations in time of large fires endangers staff and public’

‘In the event where owners have been told to evacuate pets/animals are often forgotten, when told they cannot return this causes many problems for emergency crews. Endangering life for animals is a big decision and can stretch already busy emergency crews to the limits. Again owners need to take responsibility for their pets/animals where safe to do so. If they chose to leave them behind they cannot get angry when told for their own safety they cannot return.’

‘Roads used for evacuating communities blocked by horse floats… People helping to evacuate friends’ horses with no plan or idea of the area and not knowing the roads into or out of the area they have gone into to assist.’
HORSE OWNER EXPERIENCES OF 2015 SA BUSHFIRES

• Initially Sampson Flat bushfire
• Extended to Pinery bushfire
• Online surveys
  • Sampson Flat
  • Pinery (late May)
PERI-URBAN ANIMAL OWNERS
PLANNING FOR ANIMALS: A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER STUDY OF PERI-URBAN ANIMAL OWNERS
PERI-URBAN ANIMAL OWNERS

Aim: To map peri-urban animal populations in a bushfire prone area with an overlay of owner evacuation intentions.

- Identification and location of animal concentrations
- Survey of community
- Mapping / planning with stakeholders
RESEARCH PLAN

- Coordinate with next round of TFS ‘Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods’ to identify location/s
- Use existing DPIPWE, ABS, and other local data for initial ‘mapping’ of animal concentrations
- Survey owners’ animal holdings, plans, intentions
  - Use local livestock networks as entry points, especially horse-related
  - Leverage TFS BRN events/networks in target community
- Liaise with Local Council
  - Locations, capacity, routes
- Feedback to community
BUILDING AN ARC
ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY-LED ANIMAL READY COMMUNITY (ARC)
BUILDING AN ARC

**Aim:** To assist with, and document, the setting-up of an Animal Ready Community.

- Linked to group behind ‘As the smoke clears’
- Links to local networks and resources
BUILDING AN ARC

• Speaking to key people – past and current formal roles
  – Interviews
  – Capturing experiences from the 2013 fires
  – What happened, who did what, challenges, changes since
  – What are current needs

• Identifying local animal networks
  – Groups, Associations, Businesses
  – Animal Mapping

• Identifying needs of local animal owners
  – Information, practical, support
  – Survey / workshops

• Setting objectives
• Support with community materials
PROJECT UTILISATION

• Each element has potentially useful outputs
• Initial discussion identified two priorities for utilisation
  • Mapping and planning process
  • National AEM guidelines document → AEM Handbook
QUESTIONS?

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