

Emergency Animal Welfare Plan



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Version History

No.	Details	Date
1	Endorsed by LEMC as Version 1.0	14 March 2022
2	Amended as a component of the review of the City's Local Emergency Management Arrangements (addressing the style, design and content of all emergency plans and sub-plans)	July 2022 – September 2022
3	Endorsed by LEMC as part of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements review	November 2022





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The State passes

establishes



State Emergency Management Committee

noted

reports to



District Emergency Management Committee

noted

reports to



Local Emergency Management Committee

Rockingham LEMC

endorsed by

assists with the development of



endorsed by

consults with

External stakeholders

Internal stakeholders

State Emergency Management Legislation

State policy, plans, procedures and guidelines

writes

requires Local Governments to have

Local Emergency Management Arrangements

forms the framework

to which LEMAs must align



Local Emergency Management Arrangements

----- City of Rockingham LEMA



LEMA Overview



Emergency Management Plan



Emergency Risk Management Plan



Emergency Animal Welfare Plan



Emergency Communications Plan



Recovery Plan





Department of Communities Local Welfare Plan



Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding



Other emergency management documentation, plans, procedures, systems and processes

Introduction



The safety and welfare of people during emergencies is considered paramount, however, the safety and welfare of animals owned by those people has a significant impact on their safety and welfare; animals are a part of our lives and livelihoods.



Authority

This plan is a sub-plan of the Emergency Management Plan and forms part of the City of Rockingham's *Local Emergency Management Arrangements*, and has been endorsed by the City of Rockingham Local Emergency Management Committee. The Plan has been produced in accordance with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Local Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies Guide (July 2020).

The Local Emergency Management Arrangements have been prepared and approved by the City of Rockingham in accordance with the Emergency Management Act 2005¹.



Aim

To assist the community with animal welfare during emergencies.



Purpose

Research has shown that:

- people will delay/avoid evacuation if animals have not yet been evacuated
- people will take significant risks to access animals
- the loss of pets during an emergency can have a greater impact on a person's psychological wellbeing than the loss of a home.



Purpose (continued)

The National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters notes that:

- animals have intrinsic value
- animals contribute to human health and wellbeing
- · animals have economic value
- failure to account for animals during emergencies puts human life at risk
- the community expects emergency management arrangements will include provisions for the welfare of animals, and that failure to do so incurs unacceptable social and economic impacts.²

The purpose of this plan is to acknowledge the importance of animal welfare during emergencies, and to document the City of Rockingham's arrangements for the welfare of animals at such times so as to ensure a common understanding between agencies and stakeholders involved in managing emergencies.



Objectives

The objectives of the Emergency Animal Welfare Plan are to:

- develop a mutual understanding of the emergency animal welfare arrangements of the City of Rockingham amongst relevant emergency management stakeholders
- · promote resilience in the community for animal welfare
- maintain City of Rockingham preparedness for animal welfare during emergencies
- assist the community to locate immediate care and shelter for animals during emergencies
- reunite animal owners with lost animals due to emergencies
- ensure animal welfare issues are factored into response and recovery decision making.





Context

The plan has been prepared as required by, and in accordance with, State legislation, regulation and policy³. As such, the Emergency Animal Welfare Plan, should be read in conjunction with the suite of documents that form the City's *Local Emergency Management Arrangements*. The Local Emergency Management Arrangements are available at **www.rockingham.wa.gov.au**.

Arrangements relevant to this plan are summarised in the City of Rockingham Local Emergency Management Arrangements and include:

- Emergency Management Act 2005
- · Emergency Management Regulations 2006
- State Emergency Management Policy
- · State Emergency Management Plan
- · Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960
- National Planning Principles for Animals in Disasters
- National Guidance on the Management of Whale and Dolphin Incidents in Australian Waters⁴
- RSPCA Policies⁵
- State Support Plan: Animal Welfare in Emergencies⁶
- Local Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies: Guide and Template⁷
- Oiled Wildlife Response Plan⁸
- Animal Welfare Act 2002
- Biosecurity and Animal Management Act 2007
- Standards and Guidelines for the Health and Welfare of Dogs in WA⁹
- Dog Act 1976
- Cat Act 2011
- Pets and Other Animals¹⁰
- Large Animals Rescue Operations¹¹
- · Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

^{3.} See s41 of the Emergency Management Act 2005

 $^{{\}it 4.} \quad www.gov. au/environment/marine/publications/national-guidance-mgt-whale-dolphin-incidents-australian-waters$

^{5.} www.kb.rspca.org.au/article-categories/rspca-policy/

^{6.} www.semc.wa.gov.au/emergency-management/plans/state-support-plans

^{7.} www.agric.wa.gov.au/animalwelfare/animal-welfare-emergencies

 $^{8. \}hspace{1.5cm} www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/conservation-management/marine/wildlife/West_Australian_Oiled_Wildlife_Response_Plan_V1.1.pdf$

www.agric.wa.gov.au/animalwelfare/standards-and-guidelines-health-and-welfare-dogs-wa

^{10.} www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/animalwelfare/Pages/petsandotheranimals. aspx

^{11.} www.afac.com.au/insight/doctrine/article/current/large-animal-rescue-operations



Scope

The scope of this plan is limited to:

- the geographical boundaries of the City of Rockingham Local Government District as Gazetted
- animal welfare in relation to emergency management activities within the City of Rockingham
- the scope of any memoranda of understanding established for recovery management purposes between the City of Rockingham and other local government areas.

Animal disease outbreaks and biosecurity emergencies are not within the scope of this plan.¹²



Animals in the City of Rockingham at a Glance¹³

of Australians have had a pet at some time in their life

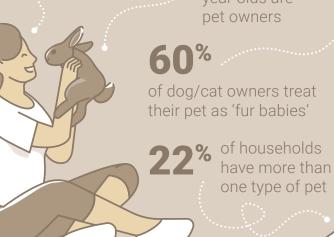
66%

of pet owners talk to their pets as if they could understand them

% of pet owners are female

of pet owners report their pet has a positive impact on their lives

of 18-24 year olds are







,070

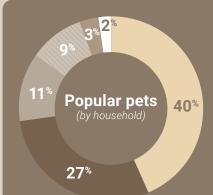
(as at 31 October 2022)











- dogs (40%)
- cats (27%)
- birds (9%)
- small (3%)
- reptiles (2%)

Primary production animals:





180 horses 75 goats



5,934 1,058 cattle





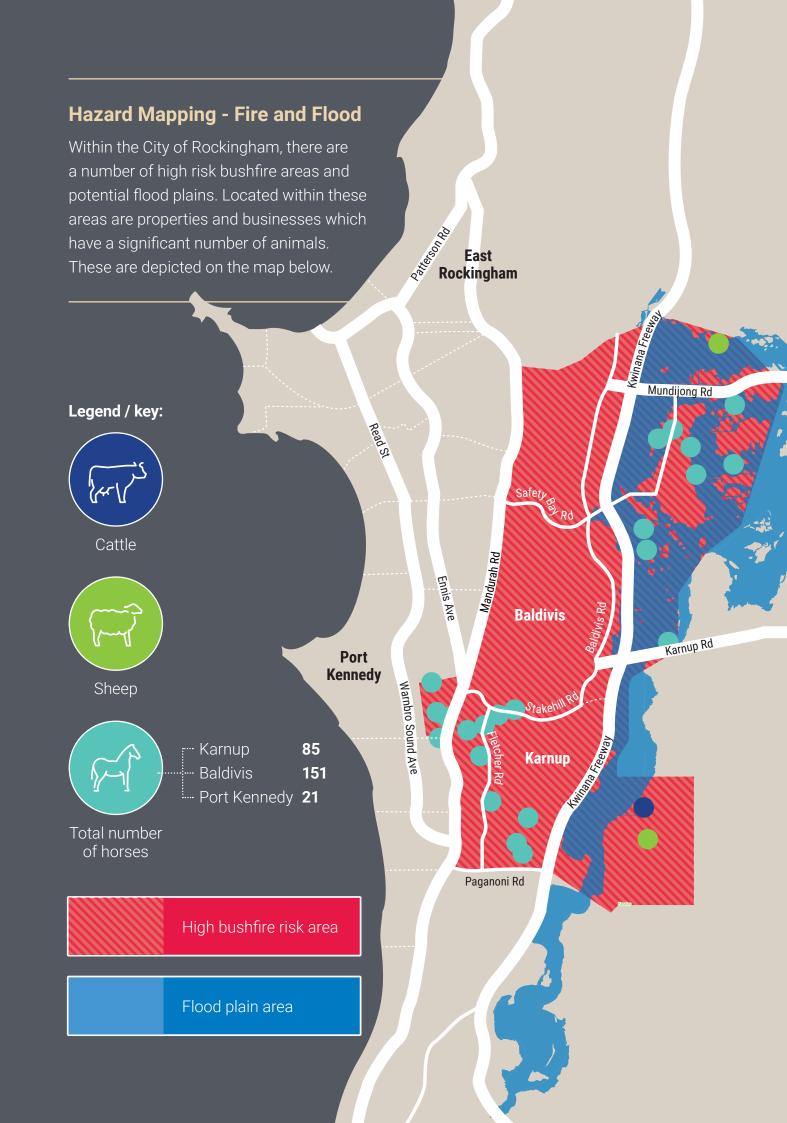


58 pigs 10 camelids

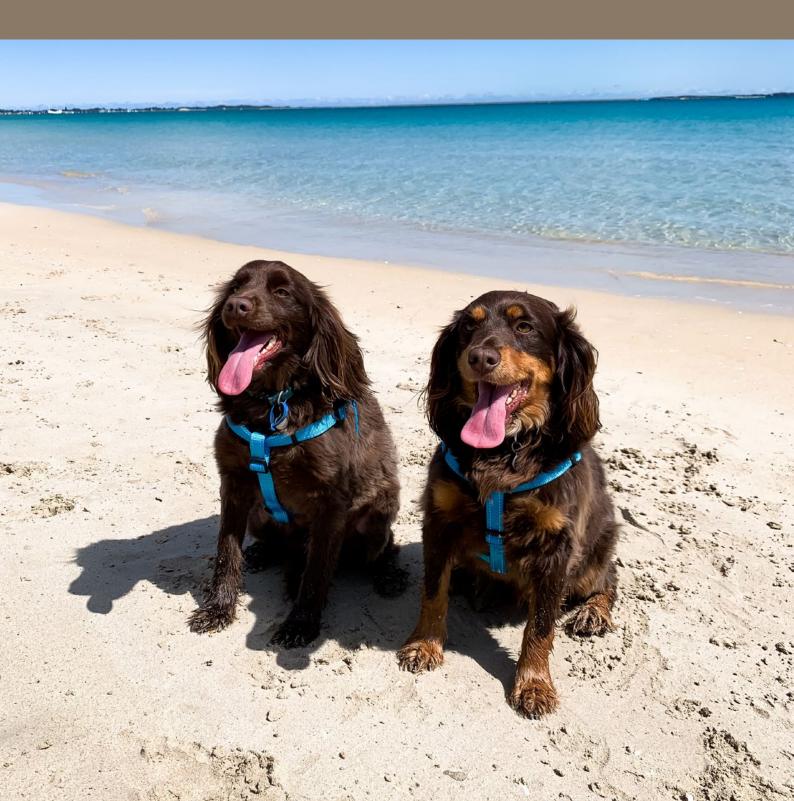


from **family (48%)** and **friends** (21%) when they cannot look





Governance



Managing the welfare of animals in an emergency event requires a number of organisations to work together. The City of Rockingham is committed to supporting the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to help safeguard animal welfare in our community.



Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies

The Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies is established by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. The purpose is to provide a forum for maintenance of the *State Support Plan: Animal Welfare In Emergencies* and maintaining state capacity to provide for animal welfare during emergencies. The committee has no formal role during emergencies, but members may be asked to participate in the Animal Welfare Emergency Group.

Local Governments are represented on the Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies by the WA Local Government Association



Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

The Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is the lead agency for coordinating animal welfare following an emergency¹⁴.



Animal Welfare Emergency Group

The Animal Welfare Emergency Group is a multi-organisation liaison group formed during an emergency to assist the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in coordinating animal welfare services¹⁵. Participants in the group will be determined based on animal welfare needs specific to the emergency.



Local Animal Welfare Coordinator

The City of Rockingham's Local Animal Welfare Coordinator is the Coordinator Ranger Services or suitably qualified delegate.

The Local Animal Welfare Coordinator will support the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development during emergencies, and act as a liaison officer for animal welfare related matters.

Taking into consideration the scale of the emergency, nature of the hazard and the impacts on the community, the Local Animal Welfare Coordinator may create a support team. The support team may include representation from:

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- City of Rockingham Ranger Services
- RSPCA or other animal welfare groups
- Parks and Wildlife Services
- Veterinarians.



Roles and Responsibilities

Many organisations have a role to play in animal welfare during an emergency, they include, but are not limited to, those listed below.

Their role in relation to this plan (and noting that they may have other responsibilities per other plans) are:

- Animal owner
 - overall responsibility for the welfare of their animals prior and during an emergency
 - plan and be prepared for a range of hazards that may impact their livestock, horses or companion animals
- Hazard Management Agency
 - consult with Incident Support Group on animal welfare issues
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
 - coordinating provision of animal welfare services for owned animals
 - liaise with Hazard Management Agency on animal welfare issues
 - implementation of State Support Plan: Animal Welfare in Emergencies



Roles and Responsibilities (cont.)

- Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions
 - coordinating provision of animal welfare to wildlife and animals in zoos/wildlife parks
- · City of Rockingham
 - Local Animal Welfare Coordinator
 - » liaise with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development on animal welfare needs in the district
 - » provide updates to the Local Recovery Coordinator
 - » raise animal welfare issues with the liaison offer on Incident Support Group
 - » coordinate, for the City of Rockingham animal welfare response / recovery within district per this plan
 - Field Officers (City Rangers)
 - » Support and follow instructions from the Local Animal Welfare Coordinator
 - » Provide support to Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development as required
- RSPCA
 - provision of specialised knowledge for animal welfare



Prevention



The prevention strategies outlined in the *Emergency Management Plan* will include promoting resilience. With higher levels of resilience, the community may prevent the worst of the impact of an emergency on the welfare of their animals.

The City of Rockingham's Emergency
Management Plan outlines prevention
and mitigation strategies in relation to
emergencies. As such this plan does not
focus on prevention.

The provisions of this plan aim to promote the welfare of animals during an emergency. However, during an emergency the safety of humans takes precedence.



Preparation



While governments have a role in animal welfare during emergencies, it is the 'animal's owner' that is ultimately responsible for considering their animals when planning and preparing for emergencies.¹⁶



Community Preparedness

The owners of animals are responsible for the welfare of their animals. An emergency does not free the owner of that responsibility. Owners are encouraged to consider the needs of their animals prior to an emergency and have plans or contingencies for the welfare of their animals.

The City of Rockingham will continue to educate and raise awareness that encourages animal owners to:

- prepare emergency plans that include the management of their animals, with provisions for evacuation, safe zones on their property and movement arrangements
- complete hazard management and risk reduction activities on their properties or premises
- prepare and maintain an 'emergency pack' with resources they will need to provide for the welfare of their animals in an emergency.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development publishes guidance for animal owners to prepare and plan for animal welfare during emergencies.

Encouraging people to prepare and plan for their animals' welfare in the event of an emergency will:

- · improve the outcomes for the animals concerned
- · increase the safety of the owner.



Community Preparedness (cont.)

The City of Rockingham will incorporate into community resilience promotions that owners of animals:

- have the responsibility for animal welfare at all times, including emergencies
- will need to consider that their animals will need food/water/shelter
- will need to consider when they will evacuate their animals during an emergency
 - noting that it may take much longer to evacuate animals than themselves
- · will need to consider how they will evacuate their animals
 - what equipment is necessary
 - what transportation (trucks, trailers, etc.) they need, noting that that they may not be able to access the resources they would normally use for such purposes





Community Preparedness (cont.)

- · will need to consider where they will take the animals
 - pets (except recognised assistance animals) are not allowed inside evacuation centres for health and safety reasons. Owners should make alternative arrangements for their animals
 - that the place will need an adequate environment (food/water/fences/shelter) for the animals
- prepare a kit that contains what they will need to care for their animal while at a place of evacuation
 - which includes their veterinarian's contact details, and any other relevant telephone contacts
- should register/microchip or otherwise ensure that their animals can be identified, to prove ownership and facilitate reuniting animals with owners
- should ensure vaccinations are up to date, as the animals may be co-located with other animals
- consider plans for ongoing evacuation should their properties be damaged and require remedial work to make them safe for their animals
- consider plans for the welfare of animals they cannot evacuate, including:
 - how they will check-up on the animals
 - how they will prevent animal escapes.





City of Rockingham Preparedness

The City of Rockingham's Local Emergency Management Plan has guidance on how the City of Rockingham is preparing for emergencies in general. For the welfare of animals in emergencies the City of Rockingham:

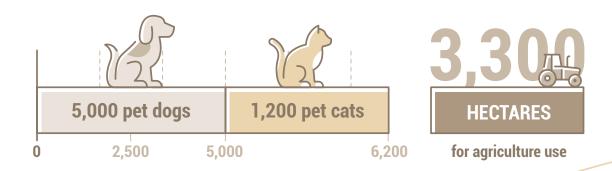
- includes animal welfare in public awareness campaigns focusing on emergency management
- has developed arrangements for animal welfare in the event of emergencies (most notably this plan), and supporting procedures
- engages in relevant training to ensure personnel are able to support animal welfare organisations, especially the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- will identify, in the Community Profile, facilities that require consideration during an emergency, such as animal accommodation facilities and veterinary clinics
- will identify suitable locations for owners to evacuate their animals during an emergency.



Community Profile

The welfare of animals within the community requires knowledge of the community. For example, as at October 2022 there was approximately 5,000 pet dogs and 1,200 pet cats registered in Rockingham, and 3,300 hectares of land for agricultural use, accommodating over 7000 livestock animals.

The City of Rockingham Emergency Management Plan establishes a *Community Profile* as a part of the *Local Emergency Management Arrangements*. The inclusion of statistics and other information about animals in the community in the *Community Profile* will assist emergency management activities, especially during an emergency.





Contact List

The City of Rockingham's Emergency Liaison Coordinators are to ensure that the details of animal welfare organisations, and other relevant stakeholders are maintained in the *Local Emergency Management Arrangements*.



Evacuation Planning

It is expected during evacuations, animal owners will want to evacuate with their animals. Pets are not permitted at evacuation centers (except recognised assistance animals). Owners should make alternative arrangements for their animals. If this is not possible, still proceed to the evacuation centre with your pets and await further advice.

The persons best placed to plan for the evacuation of animals are the owners of those animals. If owners consider their pet's needs ahead of an evacuation then the need to establish evacuation centres for animals is reduced. In developing community resilience for emergencies the City of Rockingham will promote the benefits of pre-planning arrangements for animals ahead of emergencies.

The City of Rockingham will develop procedures for utilisation of identified animal evacuation sites, and undertake contingency planning. Contingency planning may identify:

- places nearby identified as community evacuation centres where an improvised animal evacuation shelter may be established, taking into consideration access needs, shade and water
- · how to contain animals
- ensuring animals and owners are clearly identified, and a reliable means of contacting owners is noted.



Training

The Coordinator Ranger Services will identify opportunities for advancing the training of City of Rockingham personnel that potentially may be engaged in animal welfare operations support for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development during emergencies.



Validation

The City of Rockingham *Local Emergency Management Plan* requires that the *Local Emergency Management Arrangements* be evaluated annually, as a part of an exercise.

Opportunities to incorporate the animal welfare function into exercises are to be considered.

Following an emergency, the effectiveness of animal welfare provisions requires evaluation. Of particular interest would be:

- effectiveness of public education to prepare for emergencies
- conduct of animal evacuation facilities (if opened).

Targeted research/surveys may be required to gather information. Other matters, such as the operations of the Local Animal Welfare Coordinator may be fed into the overall evaluation of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements per the provisions of the Local Emergency Management Plan.



Review

The Emergency Animal Welfare Plan will be reviewed:

- after an emergency or incident that requires the activation of this Plan
- after training or exercise of involves this Plan
- every five (5) years
- any other time as deemed appropriate by the City of Rockingham's Local Emergency Management Committee.





Response/ Recovery



Following an emergency the community will respond (to save lives, property, and the environment) and then engage in recovery (coming to terms with impacts, and managing the disruptions). The involvement of animals in emergencies has significant impacts on response and recovery activities.



Management

The relevant Hazard Management Agency has overall lead during the response phase of an emergency.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has a coordination role for animal welfare in emergencies¹⁷.

The City of Rockingham has the lead for managing recovery. However, the Hazard Management Agency retains the lead until the formal transition to recovery. The mechanism for this is outlined in the *Local Emergency Recovery Plan*.



Emergency Warning

In preparation for an anticipated emergency (e.g. when bushfire danger is elevated) or when a warning has been issued, the Emergency Liaison Coordinators in conjunction with the Local Animal Welfare Coordinator will:

- determine availability of kennels and cat enclosures at the City of Rockingham's Animal Welfare Facility to accommodate evacuated animals if the need arises
- assess the level of personnel available to assist in the event of an emergency
- prepare Ranger Services personnel in the event of an emergency.



Public Information

Public Information in regards to animal welfare during an emergency will be provided by the Hazard Management Agency with assistance from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the City of Rockingham. During Recovery, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development will take the lead for coordinating Public Information, supported by the City of Rockingham.



Evacuations

High Risk Facilities

Within the boundaries of the City of Rockingham, there are a number of businesses and premises that could be housing a significant number of animals. The evacuation of animals from these facilities may be particularly problematic during an emergency, due to the number of animals or other complicating factors. The details of such places are kept in the *Community Profile*, and include:

- animal boarding kennels
- livestock and horse agistment
- veterinary facilities with large animal holding
- City of Rockingham Animal Management Facility.

The locations of these facilities should be brought to the attention of the Hazard Management Agency if there is a potential they may be impacted by the hazard.

Evacuating

Animal owners should consider the needs of their animals as soon as possible, and allow enough time to evacuate themselves and the animals they wish to evacuate with.

Owners are responsible for the transport of animals they are evacuating. It is especially important for owners of large animals to have pre-arranged transport arrangements.

The Hazard Management Agency will provide guidance on which areas need to be evacuated and on access/egress routes.



Evacuations (cont.)

Animal Sheltering

Animals are generally not permitted at evacuation centres established for people.

The City of Rockingham has identified a number of potential animal evacuation sites. However, the capacity of these sites is limited and the use of them may be restricted depending on the circumstances at the time. Owners should attempt to identify a safe place to shelter their animals (e.g. with family, friends).

Potential evacuation sites include:

- City of Rockingham Animal Management Facility
- · Dixon Road Reserve, Rockingham
- Lark Hill Training Complex
- Equi-Evac Network
- Mundijong Sale Yards.

When a community evacuation centre is established, the City of Rockingham will endeavour to identify a location close-by where animals may be taken.

Owners need to be aware that this may not be possible or may quickly reach capacity.

Owners will also be reminded that they remain responsible for the welfare of their animals sheltered in an identified site or improvised shelter. This includes regularly tending to their animal's needs. If an owner is unable to tend to their animal's needs, this will be undertaken by a third party at the owners cost.

Animal Collection

When the sheltering of animals is no longer required, it is the owner's responsibility to arrange collection of their animals from the designated animal facility.



Evacuations (cont.)

Access to Properties

Protecting human safety is the paramount priority of all agencies. To protect people, access to areas may be restricted where the risk to the community is sufficiently high. The Hazard Management Agency will initially make such assessments and will continue to restrict access until it is safe to allow entry. Restricted Access Permits may be provided enabling temporary access to properties to check on animal welfare.

The City of Rockingham will assist animal owners who have animals within a restricted area by:

- liaising with the Hazard Management Agency to determine when access may be granted
- bring awareness of welfare concerns for animals in restricted areas to the attention of the Incident Support Group, which includes the Hazard Management Agency
- assist property owners to obtain Restricted Access Permits if available.

Return

When access is granted to return to an area evacuated or restricted, property or animal owners will need to assess the welfare of animals that were not evacuated.

Prior to returning animals evacuated from properties the owner must ensure:

- the property is adequately fenced to prevent escape or other animals entering
- other animals that entered the property are appropriately dealt with
- that there is adequate food, clean water and environmental conditions for safe and liveable animal occupation.

Following return, animal owners need to be aware that their animals may be stressed and traumatised by the emergency, and hence the level of care for the animals may increase for a time following the emergency.



Stray or Lost Animals

Ranger Services will assist with the management of strays and lost animals. Ranger Services maintains a register of lost animals and has access to microchip and registration databases for ownership information.

Members of the community should

report animals they have lost or found to Ranger Services.

Reports of lost or found animals may be reported to the City of Rockingham via the Customer Services (08) 9528 0333, customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au or using the online request/enquiry form¹⁸.

Ranger Services will assist in reuniting owners and animals, by:

- using Public Information Channels, especially the City of Rockingham website, to notify the community of animals that have been found
- notify owners of registered/microchipped animals found.



Animal Rescue

Beach Strandings

Asset Services has developed procedures should marine fauna (alive or dead) be found beached on City of Rockingham foreshores. The procedures relate to animals including, but not limited to: whales, seals, dolphins, turtles, penguins, seabirds and fish. These procedures will be maintained to ensure alignment with appropriate guidance.

Large Animals

The City of Rockingham is not responsible for large animal rescues, however may be called upon to assist the relevant hazard management or combat agency in their management of these emergencies.

Distressed Animals

If the City of Rockingham is alerted to an animal that may be in distress, then the owner, the RSPCA, a veterinarian, or other qualified person will be sought to determine if the animal is indeed distressed and to identify options to relieve the distress.



Euthanasia

Euthanasia of animals remains the responsibility of animal owners and should be carried out in a humane manner. If an animal is clearly suffering, and there is little chance of relieving the suffering, attempts will be made to contact the owner. However, a suitable officer¹⁹ may arrange to have the animal euthanised in the absence of the owner, or in the case of wildlife.

The City of Rockingham may assist in the process to minimise suffering caused by emergency situations by supplying qualified Rangers to assist with euthanasia.



Disposal of Animal Remains

The disposal of the carcasses of animals euthanised or otherwise killed due to the emergency will be undertaken in consultation with animals' owners or relevant authorities. Such disposal may be undertaken if the remains present a risk to human health, or may impact the social wellbeing of the community.

The City of Rockingham may facilitate access to its landfill facility for the disposal of carcasses.



Donations

Any donations offered to the City of Rockingham for the purpose of animal welfare will be directed to the RSPCA or Red Cross.



Glossary

Camelids - members of the biological family *Camelidae*, which includes: dromedary camels, Bactrian camels, llamas and, alpacas.

Companion animal - Any animals other than horses kept primarily for companionship, hobbies, sport or work²⁰.

Emergency - the occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard which is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response²¹.

Emergency area - the area to which an emergency situation declaration or a state of emergency declaration applies.²¹

Evacuation - the planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return.²¹

Evacuation centre - a centre that provides affected people with basic human needs including accommodation, and water. In addition, to enhance the recovery process, other welfare/recovery services should also be provided.²¹

Hazard - an event, situation or condition that is capable of causing or resulting in loss of life, prejudice to the safety, or harm to the health of persons or animals; or destruction of, or damage to property or any part of the environment and is defined in the Emergency Management Act 2005 or prescribed in the Emergency Management Regulations 2006.²¹

Hazard Management Agency (HMA) - a public authority, or other person, prescribed by the Emergency Management Regulations 2006 to be a Hazard Management Agency for emergency management, or an aspect of emergency management, of a hazard.²¹

Horse - Any horse or equine hybrid (*Equus caballus*; *Equus asinus*).²⁰

Livestock - Has the meaning of Stock as defined in regulation 4 of the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Regulations 2013, including the following: buffalo including buffalo cattle hybrids; camel; South American camelids; cattle including cattle buffalo hybrids; deer and any hybrids; emu; goat; ostrich; pig; poultry and any hybrids; sheep.²⁰

Restricted area - a declared area in which defined rigorous conditions apply to the movement into, out of, and within, of specified animals, persons or things.²¹

Warning - information provided to people at risk before or during an incident/emergencies advising them to take appropriate action to reduce losses.²¹

Wildlife - An animal that is indigenous to Australia's land or waters, living without regular human intervention or support and having the meaning of fauna, as defined within the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016.²⁰



