

## Animal evacuation sites

Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area (AASFA) has the responsibility for the coordination of the care and welfare of animals at emergency evacuation sites either at locations

- declared as evacuation centres for people to attend with their animals
- established specifically for animals during emergencies (usually larger animals).

AASFA personnel will set up evacuation sites for animals and ensure animal welfare is maintained, which may include the emergency provision of feed and water, and veterinary care or treatment.

Animal owners remain responsible for the care and welfare of their animals at evacuation sites and will be assisted by AASFA personnel.

### Planning considerations

- AASFA Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) representatives may have assessed and recorded details of sites appropriate for the accommodation of animals.
- Considerations for the location of an animal evacuation site include:
  - Being outside the hazard impact area
  - Existing facilities available for the required period e.g. showgrounds, boarding kennels, veterinary surgeries
  - Address welfare, safety and security e.g. yards, enclosed with lockable gates, easily accessible water
  - Accessible to accommodation, transport systems/routes, service providers (e.g. catering)
- Capacity considerations include:
  - Suitable for likely animal types and numbers
  - Potential for expansion with additional buildings or yards
  - Quarantine areas (for unhealthy or unvaccinated animals) and general biosecurity implications
  - Areas for storage, office, toilets and meals.

### Roles and responsibilities

Evacuation centres (people and animals) are activated and publicised to the community by the combat agency. AASFA requirements at centres will be communicated through the AASFA Liaison Officer (LO).

AASFA may activate specific animal evacuation sites with the approval of the combat agency at the request of stakeholders/community.

The roles required and structure will depend on the size and complexity of the evacuation site. Refer to the Field Crew and Field Team Leader (if required) roles in the Operations section of the [DPI emergency response roles](#).

### Setting up evacuation sites and maintaining animal welfare

AASFA field teams are required to:

- a) Receive a [briefing](#) on what to do and relevant safety issues (see [Safety](#) below)
  - Be allocated to a location
- b) Arrange access with the site controller e.g. Welfare Services, animal shelter manager
- c) Review safety assessment
- d) Collect or arrange resources (see [Resources](#) below)
- e) Travel to location – enter site abiding by specific biosecurity plan or general biosecurity duty ([‘come clean’](#)), meet site controller or receive handover from AASFA personnel
  - Site induction may be required
- f) Conduct an on-site risk assessment

g) Conduct task – which may include:

### Setting up site

- Plan layout with separation between:
  - registration and office activities
  - animal housing – preferable for type, behaviours (eg dangerous) and quarantine
  - storage – animal food, waste
  - people accommodation/sleeping areas
- Establish registration/information point – could be co-located with Welfare Services
- Establish shelter – set up of cages, pens or spaces with adequate husbandry requirements and addressing ‘at risk’ animals, e.g. non-vaccinated, sick or aggressive animals
- Organise extra facilities if required e.g. loading ramps, portable yards
- Display directional and information signs (with buildings/rooms uniquely identified, e.g. numbered)
- Ensure sufficient parking for vehicles including effective traffic management
- Ensure site safety complies with [emergency procedures for EOCs and field sites](#) including completion of [site workplace inspection checklist](#)

### Maintaining animal welfare

- Register all animals on arrival on an [animal registration form](#), including welfare needs
- Give animal owners/carers an [information sheet](#) outlining care responsibilities and ensure owners/carers understand and meet responsibilities
- Ensure animals are housed or restrained appropriately and have access to feed and water
- Assist owners as required/requested including organising emergency veterinary care
- Log data on the [evacuated animal register](#)
- Manage access to animals to prevent theft or escape and ensure welfare is not compromised, e.g. provision of 24/7 security
- Record return to the rightful owner and complete [animal registration form](#).
- Liaise with site controller

### Demobilisation of site

- Transfer unclaimed animals to an animal welfare agency
- Retrieve non-consumable resources (e.g. cages) at the end of care period.
- Liaise with site controller

h) Record

- Complete an event log (includes on-site RA, site capacity)
- Task data e.g. safety checklists, [animal registration form](#), [evacuated animal register](#)
- Photos

i) Depart property – ‘go clean’, discuss tasks completed and follow up actions with site controller or replacement AASFA personnel

j) Report to supervisor

- Conduct [debrief](#) including reporting any issues and [incidents](#)
- [Download and label photos](#)
- Report data collected

k) Restock, return or maintain resources

## Resources

General resources (required by all field teams)

- Vehicle - suitable for terrain and conditions
- First aid kit – suitable for location/conditions, may include additions (e.g. snake bite kit)
- PPE – suitable for the task and conditions, e.g. enclosed, non-slip footwear, sun protection (hat, sunscreen), wet weather gear, insect repellent (refer to the [safety](#) risk assessment/safe work method statement)
- Recording devices with GPS capability – tablets, paper/pens/clipboard, camera (preferably waterproof and GPS capable)
- Data collection forms - event log, [animal registration form](#), [evacuated animal register](#)
- Communication/safety devices – suitable for the area, e.g. mobile phones, radios (on GRN), satellite phones, personal locating beacon (PLB) or tracking device/App for remote/isolated work
- Water and food (for people)
- Contact details e.g. LCC, other teams, Welfare Services
- Information e.g. local area maps (maybe available on recording devices)

Task specific resources are listed in [Appendix 1](#).

## Safety

Safety issues must be addressed by implementing appropriate controls. Risks may include:

- [Driving vehicles](#)
- [Fatigue management](#)
- [Handling animals in emergencies](#)
- [Manual handling](#)
- [Remote and isolated work](#)
- [Working around plant and equipment](#)
- [Working on or around water](#)

Evacuation can be highly emotive and stressful. Personnel need to be mindful of their own, peer and community health and wellbeing.

## Further information

NSW Department of Primary Industries – [Operations resources and publications](#)

[Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act \(POCTA\)1979](#)

[State Emergency Management Plan - Major evacuation centre guideline](#)

## Appendix 1 – Resource requirements for an animal evacuation site

AASFA or other agency response trailers may contain these resources

Item	Quantity (Minimum)	TR/Action required
Animal ID tags (attach to collar or cage)		
Bowls – food & drinking	As required	
Bucket & watering can	1 each	
Cages, various sizes (portable)	As required	
Chairs	2-4	
Cleaning equipment – broom, rake, dustpan & brush	1 each	
Clock – 24 hour	1	
Collars & leads – dog, cat, horse/large animal	As required	
Commercial radio – battery operated	1	
Computers with network capability	1	
Desk top filing system	1-2	
Digital camera, waterproof (phone can replace)	1	
Disinfectant solution & applicator	1 each	
Document trays (in/out)	2	
Dog poop bags	2 rolls	
Extension leads & power boards	2 each	
Animal food – basic & easily stored (emergency supply only)	1-2 days	
Hardware – cable ties, utility knife, basic tools, tape, rope		
Hose & connections	1	
Kitchen facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refrigeration</li> <li>• Tea/coffee facilities – kettle</li> <li>• Sink, potable water</li> </ul>	Access to facilities is desirable or catering	
Linen/towels – for bedding in cages	As required	
Litter & trays		
Office stationery – some of everything in a standard office store including paper, pens, pencils, highlighters, folders, scissors, clips, blue tack, Post-It self stick wall pad		
Paper towel		
Personal hygiene – hand soap or sanitiser		
PPE – overalls, gloves (surgical & manual handling), eyewear, dust masks	Cover number staff for 2 days	
Printer/copier/scanner – b&w - networked, A4-A3, adequate supplies & back up service	Access to	
Safety – First aid kit, cones/bollards, tape		
Signs – directional and information, eg Animal registration, parking, no entry/restricted access/caution, waste	As required	
Specialist carbon pads - Record of Conversation, Task Request books (Note: TR books not to be used if access to internet available)	at least 2 of each initially	
T cards & T card hangers (to track animals at large site)	As required	
Tabards (AASFA)	2/role (for washing)	
Tables	Min 1 for registration	
Waste bags (general)	100	
Waste bins (animal, general, paper, recycle) – number depends on frequency of emptying	3	
White board & markers	1	