

Animal evacuation sites

This document provides guidance for AASFA personnel to establish and manage animal evacuation sites, to compliment the [Evacuation Management Guideline](#), [AASFA Supporting plan](#) and local/regional/state processes. It outlines the key requirements, responsibilities and considerations whilst allowing flexibility in undertaking AASFA's role.

Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area (AASFA) has the responsibility for the coordination of the care and welfare of animals at emergency evacuation sites, which may include the emergency provision of housing/cages, feed and water, and veterinary care or treatment. Evacuation sites include evacuation centres (EC) or animal safe places (ASP).

	Evacuation Centre	Animal Safe Place
Managed by	Welfare Services	Agriculture & Animal Services
Emergency assistance for people	Yes	No
Emergency assistance for animals	Yes (where permitted)	Yes

The responsibility for animals at both ECs and ASPs remains with their owners. In circumstances where animal owners are unable to care for their animals, a request may be made to AASFA to assist.

An evacuation centre may only be a transition point for people and their animals. AASFA may provide advice or assistance for accommodating animals offsite if required. Information regarding suitable alternate animal care arrangements and approval process will be provided to field crew by your response supervisor. An approved task request (TR) is required to detail service and expenditure approval, with the TR number given to the provider for invoicing.

In situations where the impact of an emergency exceeds the capability of existing EC arrangements, a major evacuation centre (MEC) may be established under the control of the State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOC). This guide does not specifically consider AASFA arrangements for animal care at a MEC, as responsibilities and resourcing will need to meet the requirements of the emergency.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) is responsible for the identification and evaluation of ECs and ASPs, with AASFA representative providing input on animal care suitability and capacity.
- When required, suitable ECs and ASPs are activated and publicised to the community by the combat agency and/or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). AASFA requirements at centres will be communicated through the AASFA Liaison Officer (LO).
- Operational roles required and reporting structure will depend on the size and complexity of the evacuation site. Refer to the Field Crew and Field Team Leader roles in the Operations section of the [DPI emergency response roles](#). Personnel in these roles should be trained in field operations and have the appropriate skills and knowledge e.g. small or large animal husbandry/handling skills.
- In some circumstances, consultation with your supervisor will be required to determine the best course of action for some animals that present at a site, e.g. sick or unvaccinated animals.
- Biosecurity risks need to be managed. Notification of suspected animal disease or pests and any response actions are to follow biosecurity emergency management process (outside AASFA operations).
- Planning and Logistics personnel, in the control centre, will support the establishment, resourcing and demobilisation of evacuation sites.

Planning considerations

- The evacuation site identified for the response may have been pre-assessed as appropriate for the accommodation of animals by the LEMC. Details can be obtained from the LEMC or REMC AASFA representative and are identified in local or regional plans.
- Considerations for the location of an ASP include:
 - proximity to evacuation centre/s
 - being outside the actual and potential hazard impact area
 - existing facilities available for the required period e.g. showgrounds, saleyard
 - address welfare, safety and security for staff and animals e.g. yards, enclosed with lockable gates, easily accessible water, lighting, shade/shelter
 - accessible to accommodation, transport systems/routes, service providers (e.g. food supplies).
- 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 (refer to [Biosecurity in animal evacuation centres](#))
 - areas for storage, office, toilets and meal breaks for AASFA personnel.
- The form [AASFA/Biosecurity control centres & evacuation sites assessment](#) provides a more comprehensive assessment process.

Setting up animal 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 manager e.g. Welfare Services, facility manager
- c) Collect or arrange resources (see [Resources](#) below)
- d) Travel to location – enter site abiding by specific biosecurity plan or general biosecurity duty ('come clean'), meet site manager or receive handover from AASFA personnel
 - Site induction required
- e) Conduct an on-site risk assessment and review of site conditions (condition report). Ensure all issues/damage are documented in event log and photos taken. Involving site manager in process is recommended to agree on "original condition".
- f) Conduct task – which may include:

Setting up animal site

- Plan layout with separation between:
 - animal housing – preferable for type, behaviours (e.g. dangerous) and quarantine
 - storage – animal food, waste
 - identified or established people accommodation/sleeping and catering areas (Welfare to advise locations).
- Establish 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 and biosecurity requirements, 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).
- When required coordinate parking for vehicles and effective traffic management.
- Ensure site safety complies with [emergency procedures for EOCs and field sites](#).
- Consider interaction of people and animals with environment and facilities to minimise any potential damage e.g. eating foliage, scratched flooring, tyre marks on lawn areas.

Maintaining animal welfare

- Provide animal owners/carers access to the [information sheet](#) outlining care responsibilities and ensure they understand and meet their responsibilities.
- Discuss options with animal owners if animals appear unwell or aggressive. Offsite alternatives may be required for the welfare and safety of other evacuees and their animals.
- Assist animal owners/carers to ensure animals are housed or restrained appropriately and have access to feed and water. AASFA resources that are lent to owners/carers must be recorded and managed for return within the response resource management system.
- Assist owners as required/requested including organising emergency veterinary care.
- Manage site access to reduce the likelihood of animal theft or escape e.g. provision of security.
- When AASFA assumes responsibility for an animal (see Registration), their welfare and security must be maintained in consultation with the owner/carer.
- Liaise with site controller.

Registration

- Animal registration is only required when AASFA assumes responsibility for an animal, at the request of its owner/carer, using the [animal registration form](#). Animals are not required to be registered when they remain in the care and control of their owners/carers.
- AASFA is not required to assume responsibility for animals left alone in appropriately secure and safe containment, with adequate food and water, with regular owner/carer attendance checks.
- Log data on the [evacuated animal register](#).
- Record return of animal/s to the rightful owner and complete animal registration form.

Demobilisation of site

Responsibility for the demobilisation of a site belongs with the IMT. Any disputes or claims for compensation should be escalated to the Incident Controller (IC).

- Transfer unclaimed animals to an animal welfare agency.
- Retrieve, clean and decontaminate non-consumable resources (e.g. crates).
- Site returned to pre-use condition (refer to agreed condition report and photos).
- Liaise with site manager.

g) Record

- Complete an event log (includes on-site risk assessment, site capacity).
- Data e.g. numbers of animals at specific times, provision of resources.
- Photos.

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

i) Report to supervisor

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

j) 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 statements.
- Recording devices with GPS capability – mobile/tablets, paper/pens/clipboard, camera (preferably waterproof).
- Data collection forms (electronic or hardcopy) - event log, evacuated [animal registration form](#), [evacuation site animal register](#).
- Communication/safety devices and chargers – 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 AASFA personnel).
- 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](#).

EM resource availability including animal evacuation kits, forward command vehicles, response trailers and animal crates should be recorded and managed in the EM Resource Management System ([RMS](#)).

Donated goods are not accepted by AASFA. Persons with donated goods should be informed to make their offers directly to affected persons or via a charity organisation.

Safety

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

- [Driving vehicles](#)
- [Trailer towing and use in emergency management](#)
- [Fatigue management](#)
- [Handling animals in emergencies](#)
- [Manual handling](#)
- [Working around plant and equipment](#)
- [Working on or around water](#)
- [Dealing with aggressive stakeholders](#)

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

Public information

- Media enquiries are to be directed to the AASFA public information media role
- Provision of response information is the responsibility of the combat agency and/or Police. Personnel at an evacuation site must limit communications to the community to animal welfare advice and owner responsibility information. Seek direction from your response supervisor for further guidance.

Further information

[NSW DPI – Resources and publications](#)

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

[Welfare Services Functional Area Supporting Plan](#)

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	
Event log	1 each personnel	
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"> • Refrigeration • Tea/coffee facilities – kettle • Sink, potable water 	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		
Shelter – portable e.g. marquee, gazebo	1	
Signs – directional and information, e.g. Animal registration, parking, no entry/restricted access/caution, waste	As required	
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	