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HAZARDSCRC

THE INTEGRATION OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS INTO ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Experiences from the 2015 South Australian Sampson Flat
bushfire

Mel Taylor

School of Psychology, Macquarie University NSW

Megan McCarthy

Centre for Health Research, Western Sydney University NSW

Greg Eustace

RSPCA Queensland, QLD

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Australian Government
Department of Industry and Science

Business
Cooperative Research
Centres Programme

MANAGING ANIMALS IN DISASTERS (MAiD): PROJECT TEAM AND END-USER ORGANISATIONS



MACQUARIE
University
SYDNEY AUSTRALIA

Mel Taylor



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



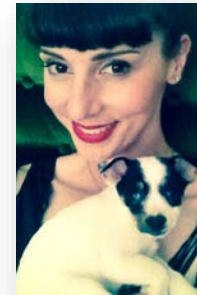
Penny Burns



Megan McCarthy



Kirrilly Thompson



Greg Eustace



Tasmania
Fire Service



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Emergency
Management Institute



Government of South Australia
South Australian Fire and
Emergency Services Commission

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.



10 YEARS SINCE HURRICANE KATRINA



ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (AEM)

Why does it matter?



When does it matter?

A close-up photograph of a horse's eye. The eye is brown and has a reflection of a fire, suggesting the horse is in a dangerous situation. The horse is wearing a brown leather bridle.

For their sake...

Know your bushfire risk...
and make a plan for all your family.

For more information visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au
Bushfire Information Hotline 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)

DUNGOG/HUNTER FLOODS (APRIL 2015)

Three dead, four houses washed away in Dungog

By Janelle O'Neill and Fairfax reporters April 21, 2015, 12:15 p.m.

Like 3.3k Tweet 4 +1 0



AFTER: The scene in Dungog on Tuesday, April 21, 2015.

6.30pm: A woman who was among three people killed in flash flooding this morning was trying to save her dog when she was washed away, a resident says.



ILLAWARRA FLOODS (AUGUST 2015)



GENERAL ISSUES IN AEM

- Complexity
 - Responsibilities
 - Coordination
 - Communication
- Skills
- Resources



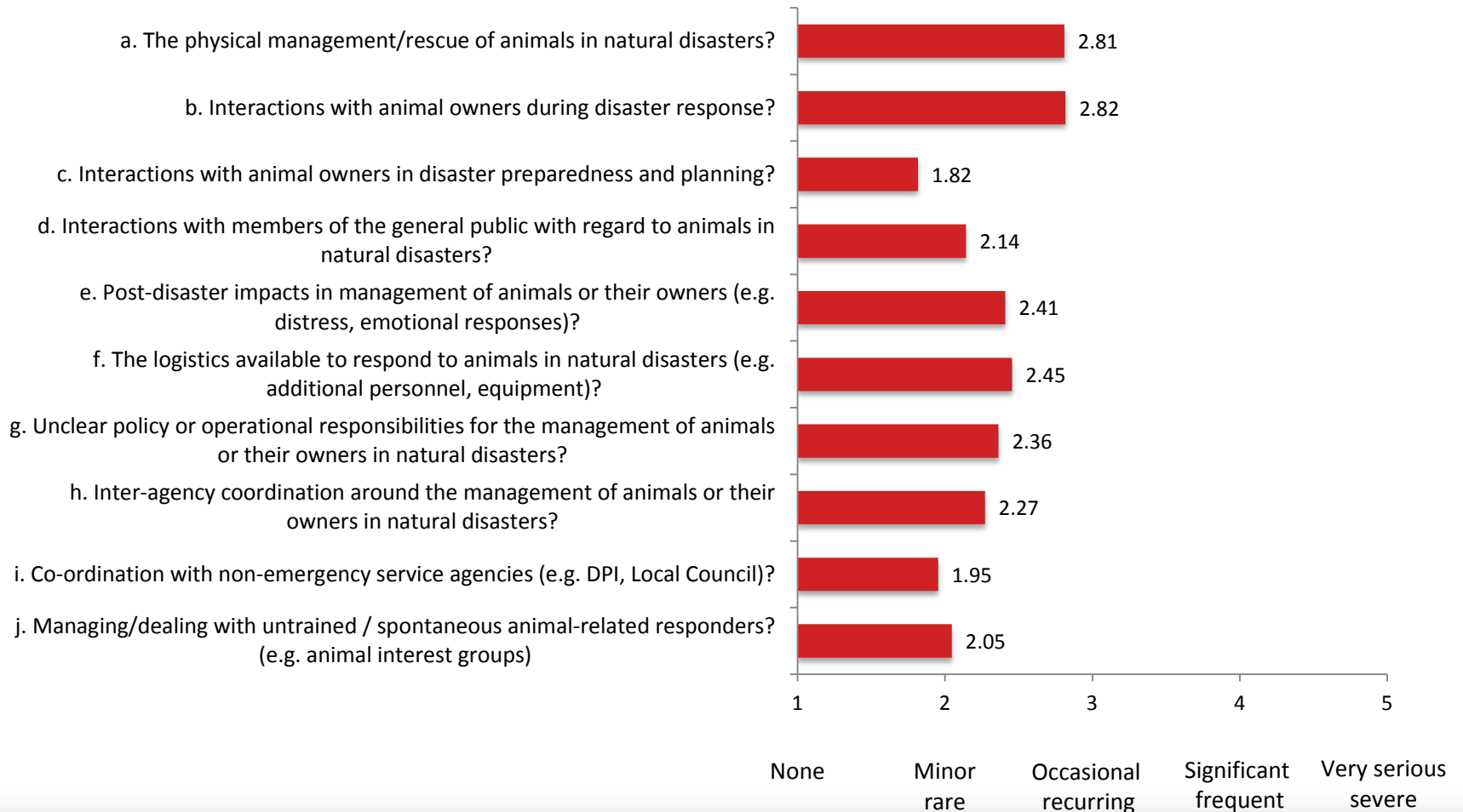
THE AEM LANDSCAPE



Animal
Emergency
Management

SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

**Are there problems or difficulties for your organisation, in regard to...
(Emergency Services Organisations' responses only)**



MISMATCH OF NEEDS AND RESOURCES

...leads to high profile response issues

(US - Heath and Linnabarry, 2015)

- Lack of clear command and direction
- Pet owners failing to evacuate because of their pets
- Pet owners evacuating without their pets
- Pet rescues of animals from premises after owners have left them behind
- Stray animals
- Unaccountable fundraising
- Mismanaged volunteers

INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS IN AEM – WHY DO THEY DO IT?

- Interest and strength of feeling
- Desire to help
- Perceive a gap in emergency response
- Personal connection
- Attainable / accessible(?)



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post from the organization NARGA. The post features the NARGA logo, which consists of a paw print with the word 'NARGA' above it. The post title is 'NARGA: together we will make a difference' and it was posted 4 hours ago. The text of the post is as follows:

Are you looking for something meaningful to do? Would you like a bunch of new friends to chat to online? Do you have an hour or more to spare a day? Do you love animals and have empathy for their human families? Are you passionate and caring? Maybe a voluntary position with the Lost Pet Registers is what you are looking for? Full training given, ongoing support and an opportunity to lead a team when you are ready. This is all done online so you will need a computer with internet. Please comment or send us a message if you are interested. We look forward to working with you!

INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS IN AEM

– HOW DO THEY DO IT?

- Social Media (digitally-enabled)
- +
- Support convergence in emergencies and disasters
 - Local and rapid information sharing
 - Mobilisation of resources
-
- Hard to control consequences
 - Demanding - hard to control workload – rumours/myth-busting, mavericks, trolls

ISSUES FOR INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING GROUPS IN AEM

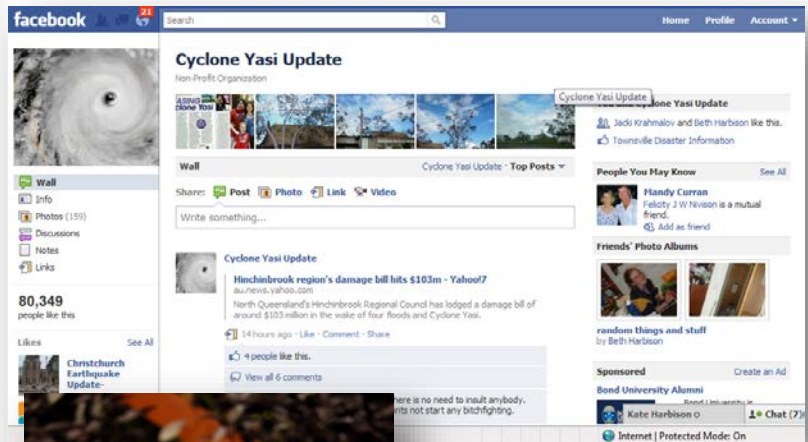
- Lack of integration
 - Communication
 - Information
 - Awareness
 - Roles and responsibilities
- Lack of legitimacy
- Permanency
- Structures
- Personalities and leadership



SOCIAL MEDIA IN DISASTERS - SUCCESS STORIES



Mel Irons



Garrett Wells



Sam Johnson

STUDY: THE INTEGRATION OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS INTO ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Rationale

- Importance of AEM
- Appetite for informal volunteering
- Stakeholder survey and workshop responses

Aim

- To explore issues around the integration of informal volunteers in animal emergency management
- 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 THE SAMPSON FLAT EVENT?

- Recent event
- Good data on official animal losses (PIRSA)
 - Not perfect
- Many organisations and groups active on social media
- High profile animal events
 - Public interest
 - Many news stories

Rachel Westcott – AFAC Presentation
Veterinary Emergency Management
at the Sampson Flat bushfire
Thursday, 11.35. Stream 5

SAMPSON FLAT BUSHFIRE LIVESTOCK LOSSES NOT AS HEAVY AS INITIALLY FEARED

Friday 16 January 2015

Livestock losses in the recent bushfires in the Sampson Flat area, north east of Adelaide, have been smaller than originally feared.

Chief Veterinary Officer with Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA), Dr Roger Paskin, said today indications to date were that the livestock impacts of the fire were very light.

"In all, 304 livestock properties were impacted by the fire and the cumulative number of livestock affected was 933 animals destroyed – 703 of those directly by the fire," Dr Paskin said.

"The majority of those destroyed were 611 sheep and 74 'other' animals (including meat rabbits). Only 18 cattle perished as a result of the bushfire.

"It should however be noted that the data given here represents only the information that's been provided to PIRSA and that the true figures on stock losses may be slightly higher."

Dr Paskin said that PIRSA had contacted all 304 affected property owners (leaving messages in some cases) and had visited 142 properties, seven of which had received follow-up visits.


"PIRSA staff had to destroy 85 animals, the majority of them sheep," he said. "Producers also destroyed a further 145 animals, most of which were sheep but also included 12 head of cattle.

SAMPSON FLAT FIRE: SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

- 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 Rehoming
- Walking Forward Disaster Relief Team

SIGNIFICANT ANIMAL EVENTS IN SF FIRE - TEA TREE GULLY KENNELS AND CATTERY



NEWS  LOCATION: Sydney, NSW [Change](#)

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Adelaide Hills bushfire: Dogs and cats perish as blaze sweeps through Tea Tree Gully Kennels and Cattery

Updated 5 Jan 2015, 3:11am




PHOTO: Owners of the Tea Tree Gully Boarding Kennel say they are devastated having lost their kennel and animals to bushfires. (ABC News: Tom Fedorowytch)

A large number of dogs and cats have died in a fire that swept through a boarding kennel in Inglewood in the Adelaide Hills.

RELATED STORY: Firefighters battle to control SA blaze as temperatures set to rise

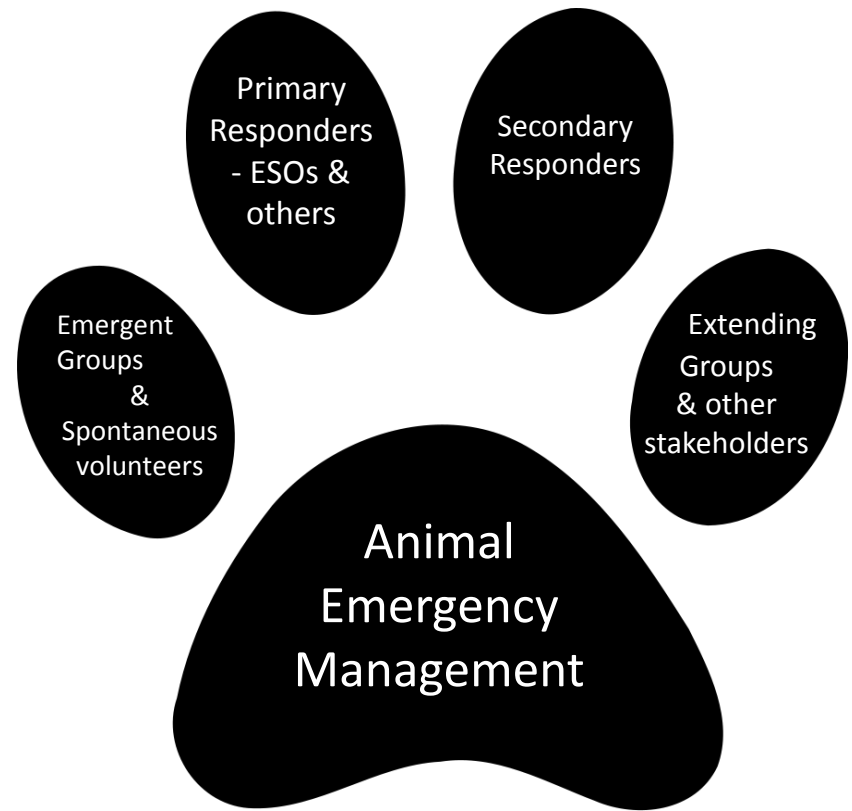
RELATED STORY: Fire-affected residents wait to hear if homes are still standing

SF MEDIA - SIGNIFICANT ANIMAL STORIES



STUDY: WHO ARE WE INTERESTED IN?

- 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



STUDY: WHAT DO WE WANT TO KNOW?

- For Emergent Informal Volunteer Group Coordinators
 - Skills, knowledge and training
 - Approach to work, organisational philosophy, leadership
 - Perceived role
 - Social media role and usage
 - Engagement/relationship with established organisations
 - Experiences during Sampson Flat fire
- For other groups
 - General engagement with emergent volunteer groups
 - General role and experiences during Sampson Flat fire
 - Experiences with emergent volunteer groups and other informal volunteers

RESULTS (EARLY THEMES)

Communication - uncertainty about roles and direction

"...I think that's really where we felt a little bit like we weren't sure if we were doing the right thing or what we've been asked...we thought we'd know..."

...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".

RESULTS (EARLY THEMES)

Perceived gap/speed of Government response

“Because of the date of the fire which was the day after New Year’s day, and a Friday, Government took three or four days to mobilise in the full sense. Obviously CFS was there and that sort of thing....

...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.

...Government needs to recognise that that will happen and facilitate it, or allow it or support that kind of community resilience, that community drive to help themselves”.

RESULTS (EARLY THEMES)

Need for coordination/collaboration

"I think it is important to have cooperation between groups. It can get a bit frustrating when someone posts on a group or page everyone go here or go there and you get forty people turning up to help one goat. And another place that needs assistance gets nothing.

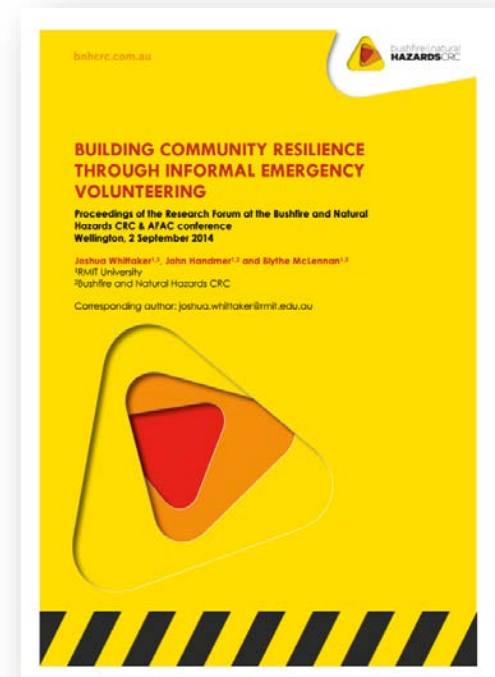
...I think there needs to be a centralised sort of hub if you like, where needs are posted and whichever group can take on that particular task takes it on and sees it right through to the end"

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH A LACK OF INTEGRATION OF INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS IN THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

- Potential for
 - Confusion
 - Inefficiency / inconsistency
 - Duplication of effort
 - Community frustration
- Public safety issues
- Squandering and devaluing of resources
- Issues of sustainability over the long term

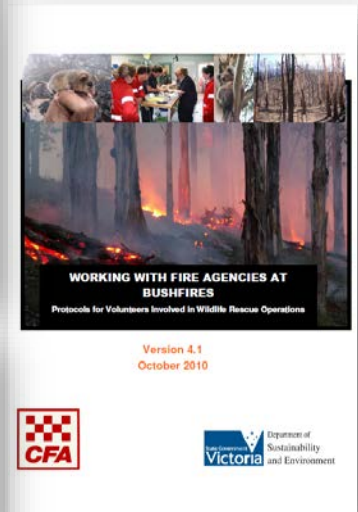
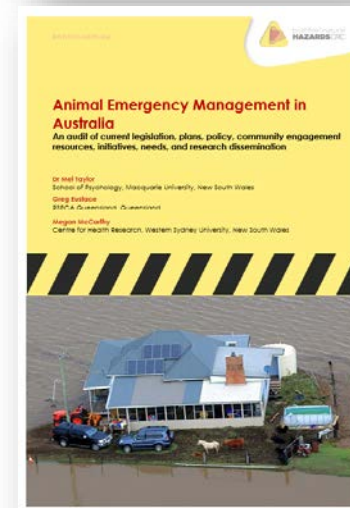
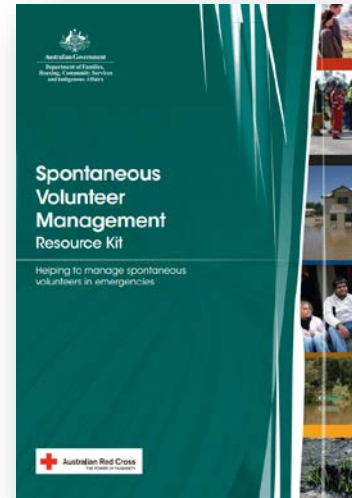
WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO THE FORMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF INTEGRATING INFORMAL VOLUNTEERS IN AEM?

- Additional expertise / skill
- Extended capacity
- Role creation – organisational advantages
- Improved outcomes for human well-being and animal welfare (One Welfare)
- Citizen participation
- Shared responsibility
- Enhanced community resilience



FINAL WORDS: POTENTIAL HELP/SOLUTIONS

- Available resources
- Adopting/adapting models of AEM in other countries (e.g. US)
 - Animal emergency responders (AER)
 - Credentialing
 - Volunteer manager
 - Community Animal Response Team (CART)
- Is AEM an opportunity for a new direction in emergency management?



QUESTIONS?



Mel Taylor: mel.taylor@mq.edu.au

Megan McCarthy: m.mccarthy@uws.edu.au