

# When animals can't be relocated in emergency situations

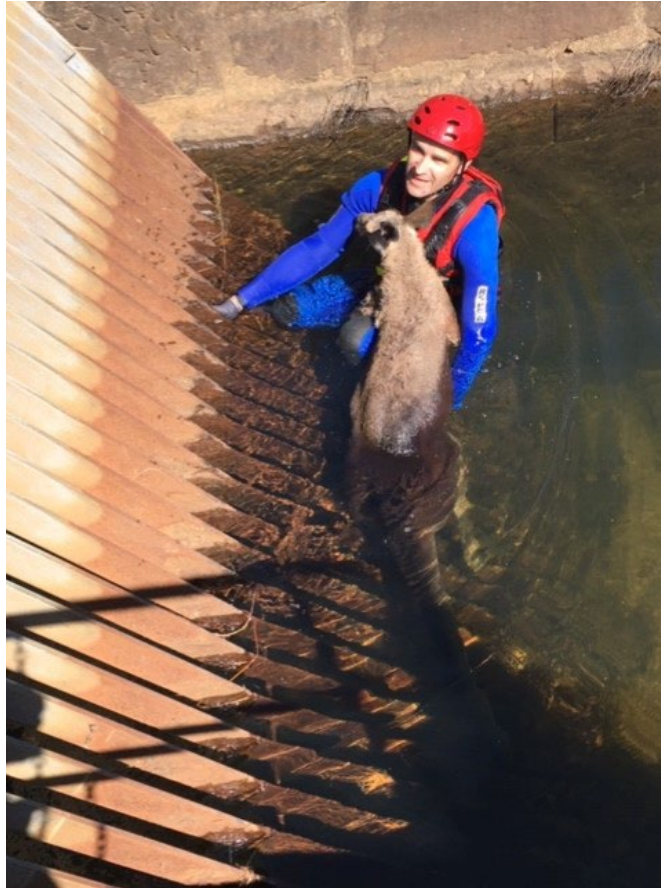


Feeding in situ or when euthanasia is required

Slade Macklin



## Who are we and what do we do:



- Captive population management
- Consultancy for legislative compliance & animal welfare
- Capture & handling of domestic, livestock, native & exotic animals
- Swift water and flood rescue
- Technical animal rescue
- Tranquilisation and darting
- Transport & logistics
- Vertebrate pest management
- Emergency management and deployment capability



## Our recent experience with animals in natural disasters

- Black Summer 2019/2020 bushfires
- 2021/2022 flooding events throughout NSW





## How we were involved in these natural disasters



- Transport and logistics (land and marine)
- Euthanasia
- Discrete recovery and disposal operations
- Interagency operations in dynamic areas of high risk
- Provide large animal and wildlife veterinarians to assist

## Considerations in emergency situations

- Equipment
- Animals in question
- Animal Behaviour
- Animal handling
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Rescue techniques
- Medical considerations
- Zoonoses
- Rescue turns to recovery





## Animals likely to encounter during natural disasters

- Companion animals – dogs, cats, pocket pets
  - Wildlife – koalas, macropods, possums, birds, flying foxes
  - Exotic – snakes, primates, big cats (always expect the unexpected)
  - Livestock – cattle, horses, sheep, goats, alpacas
  - Other species – deer, emu, donkeys, bison
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- Species considerations and species-specific behaviour

## When animals can't be relocated in emergency situations



- Reasons why an animal can't be relocated
  - Abandoned incl. infant, high volume of animals vs available resources, poor forward planning, rising flood waters/bushfire in the area, access, injured, old age,
- Situations that require an animal to be euthanised
- High risk/hazard to humans to rescue animal(s)
- Members of the public interference
- PIC numbers inaccurate for reporting then hinder rescue operations
- Importance of animal impact assessments



# When animals can't be relocated in emergency situations

## Euthanasia considerations

- Pain in animals must be prevented, relieved and managed whenever possible. Euthanasia is indicated where an animal is suffering, or is likely to suffer, intractable pain, where treatment is ineffective or is not pursued.

*(AVA policy on pain and analgesia, 2014)*

- Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) guidelines state that euthanasia is used:
  - when pain, distress or suffering are likely to exceed manageable levels
  - when the health or welfare of animals is irredeemably compromised; this can include animals affected by drought or other natural disasters.

*(AVA policy on euthanasia, 2023)*

- Often met with individuals opposed to such decisions and not having the animals' best interest in mind (e.g. 2019/20 bushfires)





## Euthanasia considerations

- Location (i.e. zero ability to rescue/relocate)
- Euthanasia prior to impact of an area
- Assessment of subject animal's food, water, shelter, veterinary treatment
- Pre-existing conditions (i.e. animal in poor health/obvious neglect)
- Failure to provide veterinary care
- Body condition
- Cannot thrive on its own and in its own environment
- Owner consent
- Veterinary assessment

## In situ feeding

- Feeding in situ (when to employ this and how this is managed)
  - Methods: road, boat and air access
  - Volume of food to consider
  - Number of animals/species
  - Sustainable feed
  - Species specific needs
  - Age specific needs





# Case study 1 – Lower Macdonald





# Case study 2 – Wisemans Ferry





## Livestock – codes of practice, guidelines and legislation

- [\*Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979\*](#)
- [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012](#)
- [Reference material](#) – DPI documents
- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle
- AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY WELFARE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR GOATS
- Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep
- Body scoring/assessment (BCS) (Welfare scoring nutritionally deprived beef cattle, dairy cattle and their crosses, sheep and horses)
- Essential to keep up to date with advice and best practice, especially in times of natural disasters



# Questions?

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