



INFORMATION  
NEWSLETTER  
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## Background

Late last year we issued our first letter to everyone who at that time participated in a SAVEM event, or had indicated their interest in doing so.

In that letter, we outlined how SAVEM had come into being; and where we were hoping to head. We recorded the first year now completed involving volunteer registration and training.

Being “incident ready” is a work in progress, however :

- we are operate under a structured Plan where
- we have undergone Assurance, whereby we are accepted by other emergency services and the SA State Emergency Plan, and have access to Government funding post incident
- we have a set internal structure, engaged and enthusiastic volunteers, a training program and we are evolving Standard Operating Procedures (which are expanded below).

## Activation

We were very aware that the southern Flinders Ranges fire at the beginning of 2012 could have threatened the township of Wilmington, which prompted us to identify more fully work we have yet to do. This event galvanised the need to be prepared with personal ‘to-go kits’, as well as the reminder that SAVEM standard materials to hand need also to be ‘to go’ ready. SAVEM volunteers who have attended workshops will remember the discussions regarding Personal Preparedness, and we cannot be complacent about this.

## SAVEM Plan

This document has been updated from its April 2011 draft which was used within training workshops but not circulated. We thank Meredith Jenner at PIRSA for her efforts in this regard.

The formalised Plan is now copied and can be issued to any interested volunteer who has undertaken SAVEM activities up to now.

The Plan contains descriptions of *organisational roles* including *key individual position tasks and responsibilities*.

This information was one of the most requested through the feedback forms we encourage training participants to fill in for us.

## SAVEM structure

We are fortunate to be able to draw on the expertise and established processes made available to us through PIRSA. Our structure aligns with the Australasian Interservice Incident Management System™ (AIIMS™).

The AIIMS Manual, given to all Team Leaders at no cost to them, is subtitled, “A management system for any emergency”. This system, structured, practical and flexible, is at the core of SAVEM activity. Our Standard Operating Procedures span the AIIMS defined Functional Management areas of Control, Planning, Operations, Logistics and Public Information (AKA Media).

### **Training program for 2012**

In 2011 we had about 100 people undertake the Introductory workshops (3 were run to meet that demand). This creates a core of personnel with some understanding of how and why we behave during an emergency activation the way we do.

We expect to meet further demand for this with more such workshops in 2012.

This will mean that when we are activated and working in a Response/Recovery mode, SAVEM inducted volunteers will work alongside others who have no previous exposure to SAVEM or AIMS, having volunteered as a spontaneous response to an incident. SAVEM trained vets, nurses, wildlife carers and others from beyond the veterinary community can provide guidance, ensuring good processes and outcomes aligned to the SAVEM Plan.

The **next workshop** will be held on **26<sup>th</sup> February**, the subjects being Legislation and Information Management. Guest speakers will present relevant aspects of the State Emergency Management Act, the Controlled Substances Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Places are still available to attend.

### **Team Leaders**

In 2011 we ran an inaugural Team Leader workshop, followed by a repeat of the program for a second group in early 2012. The emphasis here expands onward from the first training. The aim for Team Leaders is to develop and explore the skills and knowledge that will result in team success during a SAVEM response, and:

- to understand the SAVEM structure in more detail, the roles and responsibilities of team members, and human behaviours in emergency situations
- to identify the areas within which personal interests and skills can be best applied
- to contribute to the evolution of the processes which will be used in that functional area.

### **SOPs**

Standard Operating Procedures are succinct written statements which describe how to deal with processes in the event of activation. They are intended to be readily available in the SAVEM Training Manual, and copies will be made available to volunteers in any of the Functional areas.

The Training Manual also includes Policy Statements, again being easily accessible to clarify and help direct SAVEM activities.

### **SAVEM as a not-for-profit**

SAVEM operates entirely as a volunteer not-for-profit organization, both at its committee level and operationally.

Nevertheless there are ancillary costs and disbursements which need to be met to be able to structure and evolve emergency management, such as venue hire and meals for training days.

We at SAVEM would like to again acknowledge the support we have received from the South Australian Fire & Emergency Services Commission, SAFECOM, in terms of funding via the Emergency Management Volunteer Support Scheme, a joint initiative of the State and Federal Governments.

SAVEM has been invited to feature in a publication of the Federal Attorney-General's Department describing successful State by State projects which have received EMVSS funding.

Furthermore, due to Government funding, there are no membership fees or participation costs for volunteers taking part in SAVEM training and development.

To operate efficiently, effectively and independently, and to be able to apply for Grant funding in its own right, SAVEM was Incorporated in October 2011 as a not-for-profit organisation under the SA Associations Incorporations Act. Subsequently an ABN was received, a bank account opened, and required insurances obtained. SAVEM is headed with a 3 person core committee. These volunteers generate the continuity of the agency, and set policy and priorities to developing the structure and activities in which all volunteers participate. The committee come from government and private business, and have past experience in community organizations.

**Dr. Rachel Westcott** is the Coordinator, and veterinary and public point of contact. She is the foundation President.

Rachel operates the mobile veterinary practice Homecare Vet to Pet. She also was a police officer, a radiographer (and remains licensed) in a major public trauma centre, and for a decade has been the Controller vet at the Australian International Three Day Event.

Secretary Treasurer is **Mr. Emilis Prelgauskas**

He is an architect in private practice with decades of experience in not-for-profit organizations in his professional fields, in his local community and sporting interests.

The committee also draws on the expertise of **Dr. Nancy Bombardieri** who had extensive experience as a Veterinarian in the Private sector, and now works for Government at PIRSA in Biosecurity SA.

**Dr. Samantha Mead**, now with SIDS for KIDS, formerly Executive Officer AVA SA Division continues to offer her organisational expertise to SAVEM.

AVA SA Division committee in 2011 unanimously voted to continue to support SAVEM activities. The quiz night in 2011 and the funds raised there were allocated to SAVEM.

### **SAVEM in the media**

In January 2012, SAVEM was featured in the **Hills and Valley (Messenger Press)**, and in the Mt Barker **Courier**.

Consequently, a group of volunteers from beyond the Veterinary community has been formed, and an information evening has been held. One member of this group has begun constructing the SAVEM website, and South Australian based ISP **Internode** has offered to host SAVEM's web presence at no cost to SAVEM.

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