



Newsletter Vol. 2 No. 2 May 2013

1.0 Bushfire season ends

We can all breathe a cautious collective sigh of relief as another summer ends. SAVEM continues to get stronger in its ability to respond, and as the preparation season (AKA "Peacetime") is now upon us, we have the luxury of cooler weather and a little extra time to improve our personal and organisational preparedness. But this window of opportunity will quickly pass!

Described below are recent events which have strengthened our ability to respond, and ways in which you can participate in building individual and collective readiness toward next season.

We are all volunteers. It is therefore with appreciation that we regularly thank all of you and the inputs you make. We hope that what we do has the added benefits of providing you with both personal satisfaction and extra skills you can bring to your everyday working life.

1.1 Public outreach

To be effective, it is imperative that local Emergency Service personnel and members of the public come to know of our role, so that over time SAVEM becomes the natural, default 'go to' agency to manage animals during and after emergencies. We expect this will take years to embed, but good progress is being made, as we make the most of every opportunity as it arises.

Carol Haley has presented an information session to some community groups. Many thanks to Carol for her eager support and well received presentations. She is finding, as do we all, that receptiveness covers the full spectrum of responses witnessed at any gathering. Most worrying are individuals who don't distinguish between personal animal owner responsibilities before/during/after events; and our wider role to rescue, triage, treat and return affected animals in Emergencies.

The majority of information presentations are headed by the SAVEM Coordinator, because it is important that our public message is always consistent.

If you have opportunity to inform people about what we do; use the brochure and provide contact back to the Coordinator.

If you would like to do more, talk through the pitfalls and obligations with Rachel.

Please remember the SAVEM Awareness brochures are available to distribute to local community and workplace networks, or indeed any other group relevant or interested. Just send an email with a mailing address and we will post some out to you.

2.0 Published in ProVet 'Partners in Practice' magazine

ProVet SA has been an industry support to our activities since 2009. At their invitation we provided an overview of our role to their corporate magazine. This formed a two page spread in their Autumn 2013 edition.

A more technically in-depth paper about South Australian animal arrangements has been prepared toward publication in the national Australian Journal for Emergency Management.



It is worth bearing in mind that Emergency response falls under State based legislation and control. While we are aware of a range of organizations nationally putting together a committee about animal rescue arrangements, this regrettably has no formal role or contribution to activation, and is likely to be no more effective than attempting to run the South Australian CFS from Sydney!
SAVEM's focus remains on effective in-field performance.

2.1 Pt. Lincoln Level 1 training

Dr. Nancy Bombardieri and Dr. Rachel Westcott travelled to Port Lincoln on 10th February 2013 to run a Level 1 training day.

The gathering was arranged by Vets on Eyre; the day was fully subscribed with veterinarians, wildlife carers and also representatives of local CFS, SES, DEWNR, and Council.

This successful day effectively provided public outreach as well as training, and many participants requested a Training Exercise to be held there later in the year.

2.2 Mt. Barker CFS Fire Ground training for Team Leaders

When this opportunity was announced to SAVEM's network, we quickly found it oversubscribed. The CFS offered us 20 places at the Region One Headquarters at Mt. Barker, on Sunday 17th March 2013, so Team Leaders were given preference to attend on this first occasion.

There are enough enquiries in hand for us to ask for another training day. The timing of this is in the hands of the CFS, and will depend on availability of their resources. CFS Instructor Megan McArthur, tasked with compiling this first SAVEM training day, put together an excellent, practical program for us, and we are most grateful for her efforts on our behalf. Our thanks go to Dr. Oliver Funnell who coordinated with the CFS at a demanding time of year, resulting in a format to suit our needs. We have sent CFS headquarters our thanks. We have in return been able to assist Megan with her studies by providing her with participant attendance/feedback sheets from the day.

2.3 Koala treatment sheet

The DEWNR Abundant Species Unit is working through policy on management of Koalas across South Australia. The issues here differ from other parts of Australia where koalas are endangered or suffer from other threats. SAVEM was identified as a key stakeholder in Koala management, which led to two face to face meetings with DEWNR.

This blended well with the draft material put together by veterinarians on treating injured koalas over the last year, and permitted Rachel to edit that material into a draft Treatment Sheet, which went to review amongst veterinarians with relevant experience.

The completed sheet has been uploaded onto the SAVEM website, alongside other Treatment Sheets which are already publicly accessible.

It is also being offered to AVA SA for their upcoming hard copy Bulletin.

Because of the extensive literature available on koalas, and the complexities experienced in managing this species, the Treatment Sheet is intended only as a primer. Beyond this SAVEM will hold a full folder of inputs on koala treatment drawn from Victoria, NSW, Australia Zoo and other published sources. Minton Farm is assisting in the genesis of this manual.



When you need more detailed information, contact the Coordinator for help in accessing reference material and obtaining advice from those with clinical expertise.

We hear anecdotally that the Treatment Sheets we publish are brought to the attention of students at Adelaide University Vet School, which reminds us about the potential for 'multiplier effect' spread of benefit from the things we do. Feedback from the vet students is that they eagerly await publication of new Treatment Sheets.

3.0 Upcoming training

The current preparation season is being filled with training venues:

MOUNT GAMBIER

Date: 28 July 2013
Level One (Introductory) training workshop
Venue: TBA

RIVERLAND

Date: Late June 2013
Level One (Introductory) training workshop
Venue: TBA

ADELAIDE AND ADELAIDE HILLS - BUSHFIRE EXERCISE

Date: 24 & 25 August, 2013
A one and a half day workshop open to all participants who have already undertaken Level 1 training.

Venue: To be held in and around the Crafers Institute. This is the stone hall which is situated at the end of the Crafers 'off ramp' of the South Eastern Freeway when coming from Adelaide. There is plenty of parking adjacent to the venue or in the ParknRide carpark across the road.

The Institute committee is hiring the facility for our use after their regular booking times.

The Saturday afternoon SAVEM session will be devoted to a 'refresher' course, which will be an abbreviated version of the Level One workshop.

The Sunday is an all day Response Exercise using our resources and processes. We are heartened that CFS and *Leading Emergency Services* staff have already indicated their interest in joining us for this important event.

This will maximise our ability to learn, identify weaknesses, strengthen our processes, and build relationships with other Emergency agencies.

4.0 More animal treatment sheets to come

In coming months, the next Treatment Sheets to be compiled will be for Kangaroos and Wombats.

If you would like to contribute material, contact Rachel.
Contributors are always credited in the literature created.



4.1 More SOPs

During the preparation season, further work on documentation of SAVEM's Standard Operating Procedures will be required. Entry to Premises, Identification of Animals, In Field Communications and Triage Procedures will all need to be brought to operational level.

5.0 Communications

You will note that we make our best endeavours to communicate across all participants, via these occasional newsletters, web site updates, and so on.

The SAVEM Board, and individuals working on particular tasks across the large range of things we need to do, are very aware of the need to communicate well with the whole organisation.

So please don't hesitate to use the on-line forms via the website, drop us an email, text or ring us with any of your questions or suggestions. If there is someone you know who would like to receive the SAVEM Newsletters, we are only an email away.

Community groups, service clubs or local Emergency Service brigades are very welcome to request a SAVEM information presentation at any time.

Looking forward to seeing you at a Workshop, the Winter Exercise, or both!

Rachel Westcott

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"The purpose of life is a life of purpose." Stuart Ellis, AM, Leading Emergency Services, and Director, Australian Fire Authorities Council.