

SHARING TRACKS

WHAT IS SHARING TRACKS?

Working in animal health and management can be rewarding, but we understand it also has some challenges, especially for those working in rural and remote communities where access to animal health and management services and resources is limited. SharingTracks has been designed to share lived experiences and give you the latest information in companion animal health and management.

Sharing tracks is a network for collaboration and support, where ideas and knowledge can be shared for program planning and service delivery. Although it is developed and distributed by [Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities \(AMRRIC\)](#), we hope that most of the newsletter's content will reflect the voice of our readers and their communities.

We'd love for this newsletter to include stories from you about your community to help others understand more about the different approaches to companion animal health and management.

Do you want to share a question or story in our next issue? Feel free to contact us at sharingtracks@amrric.org.



**SIGNUP TO SHARING TRACKS
NEWSLETTER [HERE](#)**

FEATURED ARTICLE: PREPARING FOR DISASTERS



As we head into the holiday season, it is important to remember that this time of year is also a high-risk period for emergencies across Australia, from bushfires in the south to flooding in the north. Regardless of the type of emergency, these disasters can have a big impact on the health and well-being of people and animals in communities.

Why is Animal Emergency Management Important?

Remote communities across Australia are highly vulnerable to severe weather events such as bushfires, floods and cyclones during the summer months. When these emergencies happen, they often require rapid responses to protect the health and safety of affected communities. As these responses are usually focused on humans, the needs of animals—pets, livestock and wildlife—are often overlooked in disaster planning, which can lead to significant problems.

WE CAN HELP!

**FOR AMRRIC SUPPORT
PREPARING FOR DISASTERS
CONTACT US AT 08 8948 1768**

Many communities lack local evacuation centres, making it difficult for residents to seek shelter during emergencies. What makes the situation even more challenging is that where evacuation centres do exist, they may not be able or willing to take animals. This can be a major issue, as many animal owners are unwilling to evacuate without their pets and may even risk their own safety to protect them. Adding to this is the fact that many communities have large populations of free-roaming dogs, cats, and sometimes horses, many of which are loved and cherished family members. Socioeconomic factors such as limited finances, lack of access to resources, housing instability, limited



transport, and other health issues can also limit the ability of pet owners to make their own arrangements for their animals, making it even harder for them to provide proper care for their animals during an emergency. This highlights the importance of including animals in emergency preparedness to safeguard their well-being and that of their owners.

AMRRIC's Emergency Management Hub

Because of these challenges, planning for animals in emergencies is important for protecting both human and animal lives in emergency situations. AMRRIC's [Emergency Management Hub](#) provides tailored resources and culturally appropriate strategies to help remote communities prepare for extreme weather.

This includes guidance on creating emergency plans for animals, assembling pet-specific emergency kits, and managing free-roaming animal populations. By prioritising preparedness, communities can minimise risks, ensure safety, and address the unique needs of residents and their animals during disasters.

Emergency planning resources for local governments available on the hub include printable decision trees, a companion animal emergency management template, and emergency responder staff training. It also contains links to external resources and communications materials that can be shared with the community.

**Check out
AMRRIC's Emergency
Management Hub!**



SCAN ME
To Find Out More



Animal Emergency Kit



People working in animal health and management are encouraged to have an animal emergency kit ready, including first aid supplies, identification tools, food and water, and equipment for safely handling animals during an emergency. This can include:

1. Identification and Record-Keeping

- Forms and notepads for recording animal details and owner information
- Tablets or laptops pre-loaded with the AMRRIC App or other animal management software.
- Microchip scanners
- Temporary animal ID tags and collars

2. First Aid Supplies

- Disposable gloves
- Gauze swabs for cleaning wounds
 - Note: Bandages are not recommended unless animals have 24/7 supervision
- Sterile saline for flushing wounds
- Antiseptics and disinfectants
 - Cetrigen (purple spray – disinfectant and insect repellent)
 - Betadine (disinfectant)
- Electrolytes (e.g. Lectade) for rehydration

3. Veterinary Supplies (Prescription-Only Medicines)

In some communities, Animal Management Workers might be trained and authorised to stock and use prescription-only medicines under their vet's direction. Where this arrangement exists, the animal first aid kit might also include:

- Antibiotics (tablets, oral, liquids, ointments)
- Antifungals (tablets, ointments or shampoos)
- Anti-inflammatories (pain relief)
- Sedatives
- Euthanasia solution (Lethobarb)



We encourage Animal Management Workers to discuss what veterinary supplies can be included in an animal emergency kit with their veterinary service provider.

4. Handling and Restraint Equipment

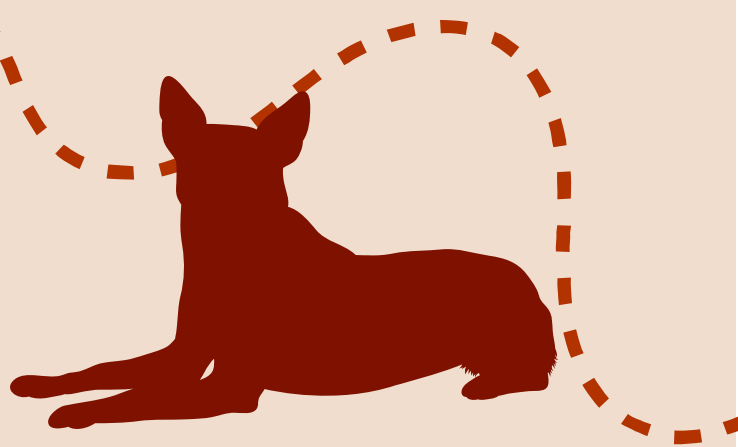
- Gloves for animal handling (bite-resistant)
- Muzzles
- Leashes, harnesses and slip leads
- Blankets and bedding
- Animal crates or carriers for confinement/transport

5. Food and Water Supplies

- Non-perishable animal food
- Portable water containers and bowls

6. Cleaning and Sanitation

- Disposable gloves and gowns
- Disinfectants and cleaning supplies that are safe for animal use
- Rubbish containers and bags



NEW SCIENCE: DISEASES THAT CAN SPREAD FROM HORSES

Equine zoonotic disease risks in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities: a critical review

Authors: E Christofi, J Hoopes, C El-Hage, J Coffin, T Riley, B Cumming

Domestic horses can be found in rural and remote communities across northern Australia, with some communities having a long history of working with horses for stock work, travel, and other daily activities. Despite these relationships, horses are not commonly included in local animal health and management programs the way cats and dogs are. While relationships between communities and horses can have many benefits, whenever people and animals live closely together, there is a risk that diseases can spread from animals to people. These are known as **zoonotic diseases**.

To learn more about these risks, University of Sydney veterinary student Elias Christofi completed a research project during his placement

with AMRRIC in 2022. He looked at what research exists on diseases that horses may carry that could affect people living in remote communities.

The review found only six published studies that focused on horse-related diseases in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia. Across these studies, only five disease-causing organisms were studied, including Giardia, Cryptosporidium, Hendra virus, and certain antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Research from other parts of Australia suggests that other diseases linked to horses may affect the health of people living in remote communities, but these diseases have not yet been studied in this context.

Because so little research has been done in this area, it is hard to fully



understand the risks of diseases spreading between horses and people in remote areas. Limited access to veterinary services, healthcare, and diagnostic testing in many remote areas may increase these risks, as diseases may go undetected for longer, making treatment and prevention more difficult.

The study shows that more community-led research is needed to understand these risks. Local knowledge and priorities should guide future work to fill these knowledge gaps and support communities in making informed decisions about managing horses. The study also highlights the importance of community-driven approaches to disease monitoring and prevention, and

the central role of Indigenous knowledge in shaping future research, surveillance, and health strategies for horses in communities.

You can read the abstract of the article [here](#). If you would like to request access to the full article, please email us at info@amrric.org.

If horses are a challenge in your community, the team at AMRRIC can provide advice on ways they can be humanely managed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

How do I get a copy of the newsletter?

The easiest way to stay up to date with the latest edition of Sharing Tracks is to subscribe to our newsletter by clicking [here](#). This will add you to a mailing list that is only used for the newsletter. You can opt out of receiving the newsletter at any time. You can also keep up to date by following AMRRIC's [Facebook page](#). If you miss an issue, you can also check out our newsletter archive [here](#).

How often is the newsletter published?

Right now, a new edition of Sharing Tracks will be sent out monthly, but we're always open to suggestions. Don't want to wait for the next newsletter? No problem. Our social media pages will be updated as news, articles and stories become available.

How do I submit an article or ask a question?

If you want to ask a question or include an article in our next newsletter, simply send us an email at sharingtracks@amrric.org, or send us a message on our Facebook page.

