

PROCEDURE 1

Universal PAWS response

Purpose: Provide one simple sequence for any emergency, before applying the hazard-specific procedure.



SITE CUSTOMISATION REQUIRED. This national baseline must be adapted through a site risk assessment, worker consultation and advice from the relevant state or territory regulator, emergency services, council, insurer and veterinarian. Human life takes priority.

Business and site details

Business legal name		Trading name	
Site / branch		ABN	
Physical address		Emergency entry / cross street	
Site manager		Incident Controller	
Maximum dogs		Maximum people	
Operating hours		Main phone	

Document control

Issue date		Next review date	
Approved by		Position	

Activate this procedure when

- Any situation threatening a person, dog, property, safe containment, essential services or the business's ability to provide care.
- An official warning, evacuation direction, fire alarm, serious injury, escape, uncontrolled aggression, contamination or critical equipment failure.

P Protect people	A Alert and activate	W Welfare and secure dogs	S Sign off accountability
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Step-by-step emergency response

- 1 P - Protect people.** Stop work, identify immediate danger, keep people out of the hazard area and call Triple Zero (000) for any life-threatening emergency, fire or crime in progress. Human life takes priority.
- 2 A - Alert and activate.** Raise the alarm, notify the Incident Controller, call the relevant vet or emergency service, take the emergency folder and start a written time log.
- 3 W - Welfare and secure dogs.** If safe, stop movement, close barriers, place one secure control on each dog, separate incompatible or infectious dogs, provide essential first aid within training, and move only by the designated route.
- 4 S - Sign off accountability.** Count people and dogs by name at the point of origin, departure, arrival and handover. Report missing, injured, isolated or left-behind animals immediately. Communicate, preserve records and begin recovery only when authorised.

Do not

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|-------------|--|
| STOP | Create a second casualty by entering smoke, fire, floodwater, traffic, unstable structures, electrical hazards, violence or contamination. |
| STOP | Allow owners, bystanders or off-duty staff to enter an unsafe site or self-deploy. |
| STOP | Post names, images, blame or unverified public information. |

After the immediate danger

- Check whether the incident is notifiable to the WHS regulator or another authority. Requirements vary by jurisdiction and are changing; verify locally.
- Preserve the incident site and evidence where required, except for actions needed to help a person, remove a deceased person, make the site safe or assist police.
- Debrief staff and support affected people. Replenish equipment, record corrective actions, and stop operations whenever critical safety controls cannot be maintained.

Assigned emergency roles

Incident Controller	Selects the safe action, liaises with emergency services and authorises recovery.	
People / Area Warden	Protects people, sweeps assigned areas if safe and reports status.	
Dog Movement / Canine FA	Secures, identifies, separates, triages and moves dogs within training.	
Communications / Recorder	Calls services and owners, maintains the time log and preserves records.	

Procedure readiness checklist

- ☐ Brief every worker on the PAWS sequence and who becomes Incident Controller on each shift.
- ☐ Maintain a live dog-and-person census that remains accessible during a power or network outage.
- ☐ Keep an emergency folder, radios, torches, first-aid kits and an incident log ready for immediate use.
- ☐ Pre-assign dog holding zones so injured, incompatible, infectious and unknown dogs remain separated.
- ☐ Confirm emergency vehicle access, gate control and a person to meet responders.
- ☐ Test the alarm, communications and accountability process in scenario-based drills.

Site-specific arrangements

Alarm / activation method	
Emergency command point	
Dog holding and separation zones	
Backup communications method	

Emergency contacts and notifications

Triple Zero / emergency service		Primary or emergency veterinarian	
Owners, insurer and relevant authority		Primary / emergency vet	

Recommended drill: Run a mixed scenario requiring alarm, dog containment, a written log and full accountability.

Drill, review and authorisation record

Last drill date		Participants	
Corrective action owner		Action due date	
Procedure authorised by		Authorisation date	
Gaps identified / corrective actions			

Sources and further guidance

- [1] [Safe Work Australia - Emergency plans and procedures](#)
- [2] [Safe Work Australia - WHS duties for emergency plans](#)
- [4] [Safe Work Australia - WHS regulator contacts](#)
- [5] [Triple Zero - Australia's emergency call service](#)
- [19] [Safe Work Australia - Incident notification](#)

Review date: source links and national emergency numbers were checked for the master manual on 31 August 2026. Confirm local numbers, warnings, laws, codes, licences and veterinary arrangements before issue and at every review.