

Out of the Ark:

Rethinking Animals in Disaster Response

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1

PART ONE

Background/Introduction

Why we're doing this

A Theoretical: The Garden Hill First Nation



Thought Experiment:

Week 1

An intense fire season is well underway in early July, prompting emergency provincial resources. People are already fleeing, but the smoke has grounded all commercial flights.

Week 2

A province-wide state of emergency is declared due to Winnipeg running out of space to house those displaced. You haven't evacuated yet, because the CAF C-130s don't allow animals.



Out of the Ark: Rethinking Animal Welfare in Disasters

Developed a project with Professor Aaida Mamuji and Cheryl Rogers of CDART examining strengths and gaps in Canada's animal disaster response system.

- Semi-structured interviews
- Over 24 participants with various stakeholders, organization executives, and government employees: to properly understand these diverse perspectives
- A comprehensive literature review
- Qualitative analysis and corresponding data visualization using diagramming tools

Shown Here:**Public Law No: 109-308 (10/06/2006)**

(This measure has not been amended since it was passed by the Senate on August 4, 2006. The summary of that version is repeated here.)

Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 - Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure that state and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency.

Authorizes the Director to: (1) study and develop plans that take into account the needs of individuals with pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency; and (2) make financial contributions, on the basis of programs or projects approved by the Director, to the states and local authorities for animal emergency preparedness purposes, including the procurement, construction, leasing, or renovating of emergency shelter facilities and materials that will accommodate people with pets and service animals.

Authorizes federal agencies to provide, as assistance essential to meeting threats to life and property resulting from a major disaster, rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs to individuals with household pets and service animals and to such pets and animals.

Definitions and application

1 (1) In this Act:

"animals" means the following types of animals:

- (a) domestic pets;
- (b) animals trained to assist in law enforcement activities, whether the animals are used by a peace officer or by a person acting under the direction of a peace officer;
- (c) guide dogs and service dogs within the meaning of the *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act*;
- (d) livestock within the meaning of the *Livestock Act*;
- (e) animals that are lawfully kept in zoos, sanctuaries, rehabilitation centres or facilities for education or research;
- (f) without limiting paragraph (e), live animals that are lawfully possessed under the *Wildlife Act*;

Emergency management plans

52 (1) An emergency management plan must be prepared in accordance with this section and the regulations.

(2) Subject to the regulations, an emergency management plan must describe at least the following:

- (a) measures that are necessary or advisable for the purposes of each phase;
- (b) the roles, powers and duties of persons identified in the plan by name, title or position;
- (c) requirements for emergency resources;
- (d) procedures for engaging emergency systems;
- (e) the emergency management training and exercise programs that will be conducted;
- (f) measures to mitigate any adverse effects of an emergency on
 - (i) individuals who may experience intersectional disadvantage, and
 - (ii) vulnerable individuals, animals, places or things;
- (g) measures to promote cultural safety;
- (h) any prescribed matters.

(3) In addition to the requirements of subsection (2), the emergency management plan of a local authority must

- (a) include a plan for the evacuation and care of individuals and animals in the area within the jurisdiction of the local authority,
- (b) include a description of each area, if any, that is described for the purposes of section 120 [consultation, engagement and cooperation with Indigenous peoples] in one or more of the following:
 - (i) an agreement made under section 55 (1) (e) [consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples];
 - (ii) any other agreement with an Indigenous governing body, and
- (c) specify the Indigenous governing body in relation to each area described.

(4) An emergency management plan must be based on all of the following:

- (a) all applicable risk assessments that are available;
- (b) the results of the actions required under sections 54 and 55;
- (c) any prescribed matters.



2

PART TWO

What We've Heard

The voices of people on
the ground

SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Nothing can be done without money for food, medicine, hygiene, shelter, and so on

CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Animals are most often overlooked in major decision making

Animals in E.M.

INTER-AGENCY DRAMA

Disagreements horizontally – and vertically – in the “food chain” of animal response

SUCCESSION CRISIS

Aging experts are taking their institutional knowledge with them

*We would go out and assist. What we found is that it gets really expensive because **there's no way to get reimbursed for costs.** So we could raise money, raise donations, that sort of thing: but unless we have a formal agreement in place, **it's very hard** to get emergency response funds **through the provincial government, or the federal government, or the municipality** – unless you have a formal agreement in place with them.*

– Interview #10, animal disaster expert in Alberta

The cost of the food going up for us is just overwhelming. We just simply cannot afford it as a not-for-profit. [...]

What they're seeing is criminal.

I mean, animals are starving and dying, and puppies, and there's just only so much that they [the RCMP] can do, and it's really having an impact on them. Psychologically and emotionally.

– Interview #4, animal response expert in Manitoba

We had the same issue with the SPCA on some of the sites, when the SPCA would just turn up on day three and decide they're gonna take on animals:

whereas the local authority would then go to the SPCA and say, "hey, you know... you weren't called in on this..."

- Interview #7, leader in an animal response NGO

*That organization that I mentioned, they are not big fans of the SPCA. There has been some tension in the past, like: **there's just differing views.** So just historically, we haven't worked well together and I don't know why that is. [...] We experience it throughout the province. It's a lot of small communities, right? [...] I guess **we're often viewed as the organization that has the money and the resources, but that's not always true.***

– Interview #9, regional SPCA representative

If you're from Gimli, Manitoba, and there's a fire and you need to bring in your pet: no problem. The Province of Manitoba covers agriculture animals. They cover companion pets, they cover people. Everything. You know, all aspects of a person's life is covered if it's rural or city people. But if it's an indigenous community: forget it...they don't get it. So why is that? Why don't they have a right to take their animal?

– Interview #4, animal disaster expert in Manitoba

They don't necessarily plan for, "well, what happens if the entire community is evacuated and you've got 250 free roaming dogs? What's happening with those dogs?"

– Interview #4, with an animal disaster expert in Manitoba

I get worried sometimes 'cause...I have seen a shift over the years where we used to have a lot more interest from younger people about to come and volunteer, but we're not seeing that as much anymore... It's anecdotal, but like: if I look at my own kids, their group of friends and stuff: they don't seem as passionate to volunteer with things and... I don't know why that is. I don't know how to get people in it, but I see an aging volunteer base.

– Interview #5, animal disaster expert in Alberta



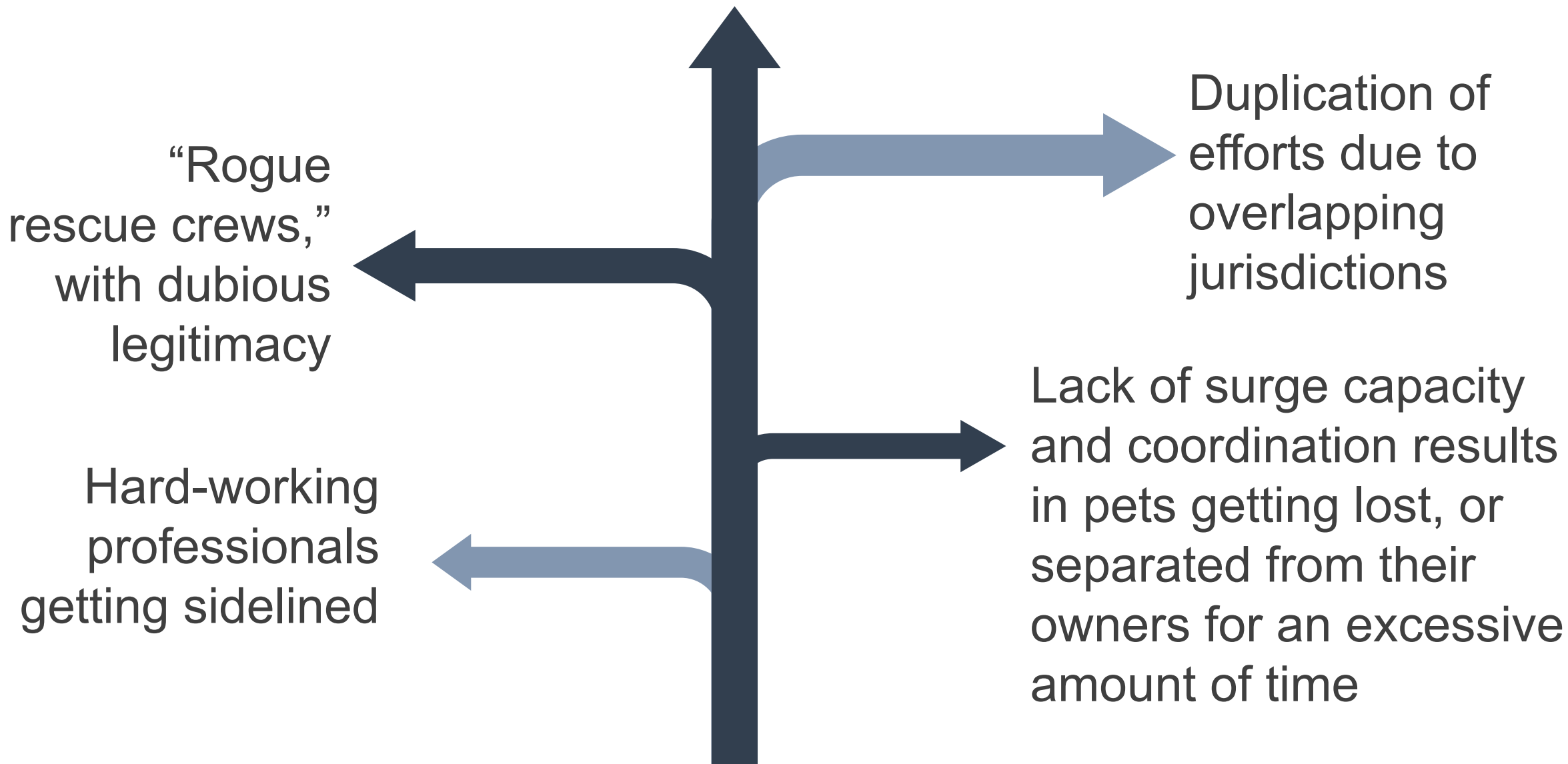
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PART THREE

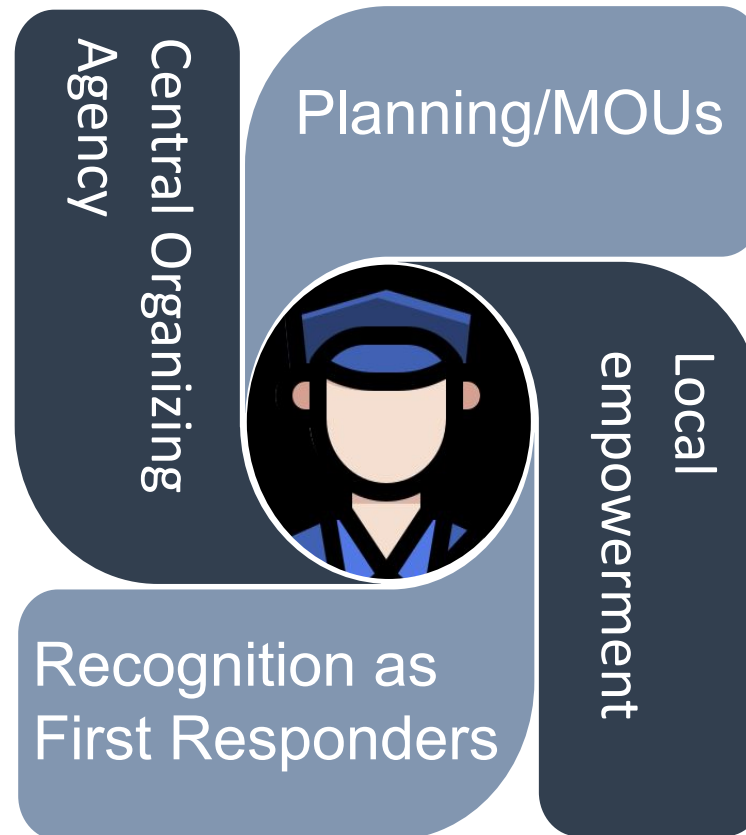
Conclusion

What can we do to
make things better?

A few organizations achieving objectives, at great cost



- We need a “shot caller” for animals in DEM
- Already somewhat in-practice for Alberta EM (functionally, the ABVMA)
- Could be ratified at the regional, provincial, or federal level
- These professionals must be allowed “behind the red line”: both to allow their victims to be prioritized, as well as keeping other first responders safe



- Ensures legal responsibility for all parties involved
- Prevents potential disputes and unexpected disruptions (i.e. finding a reception centre during the Fort McMurray fires)
- Usually the only solution possible for remote/isolated communities
- Without a plan and experienced partners involved, you might be on your own!



“One With the Strength of Many”

Thank you for your cooperation

★ Practice good planning!

★ Stay vigilant!

Unum cum virtute multorum