

Animal Emergency Management

Animals in our society

Animals of all kinds are integral parts of our society and economy, accounting for over 100 billion dollars in annual commercial livestock and poultry production and a pet care industry that exceeds 50 billion dollars yearly. Nearly 60% of our nation's households include pets, a number greater than the number of households with children. The human-animal bond is a powerful force, helping provide companionship for many individuals, creating positive impacts on mental and physical health. Service animals provide augmentation to the senses of sight and sound to disabled persons, and both dogs and horses add critical capabilities to our law enforcement and emergency response community. Caring for animals helps provide meaningful stewardship experiences, helping build responsibility within our society. The culture and heritage of livestock production is part of our national legacy as well as a critical part of our national food infrastructure. Similarly, research animals provide significant assistance in developing a better understanding of science, health, and people.

Animal Emergency Management Assumptions

1. People will risk their lives and, thereby, the lives of others to protect both companion animals and livestock.
2. An inability or unwillingness to evacuate animals will adversely impact evacuation operations and may result in human fatalities.
3. Livestock disease emergencies, whether natural, accidental or intentional in origin, will have tremendous negative impacts on the domestic economy, international trade, national food supply, public health, public confidence, and psychological and social well-being of livestock producers.
4. Emergency responders have a legal obligation to offer evacuation, shelter, and other services to police animals and to service animals (those directly supporting individuals with special medical and psycho-social needs), equivalent to those provided to people.
5. There is an ethical and societal responsibility for animal emergency management plans to provide for the welfare of all animals impacted by a disaster. This includes the provision of food, water, and shelter, and appropriate veterinary care or humane euthanasia for injured and sick animals.

Animal Emergency Management Responsibility

The primary responsibility for evacuating and providing care for animals during an emergency -- whether it is a hurricane, flood, earthquake, wild fire, or terrorist incident -- rests with the animals' owners. However, experience has shown that this is often impossible when 1) owners are unable to evacuate with their animals and are forced by urgent circumstances to leave them behind, 2) owners become separated from their animals during or after an evacuation, and 3) when animal shelters are not available in close proximity to human shelters so that owners can evacuate to an appropriate destination where they can continue to provide daily care. Accordingly, emergency preparedness and response planning must address how animal related needs will be met. Such considerations must be accomplished at all levels, including local, state,

and federal plans. State and local actions for animal emergency management should focus on (1) point-of-service planning and exercises; (2) multi-agency coordination and voluntary organization participation, with an emphasis on local animal-related NGOs; (3) training and resource management initiatives; and (4) citizen preparedness and participation programs. Federal actions must focus on identifying the veterinary and animal support resources that are most likely to be requested by states because of disasters where their local and state resources are insufficient to meet these needs.

State and Local Leadership – The Animal Response Plan

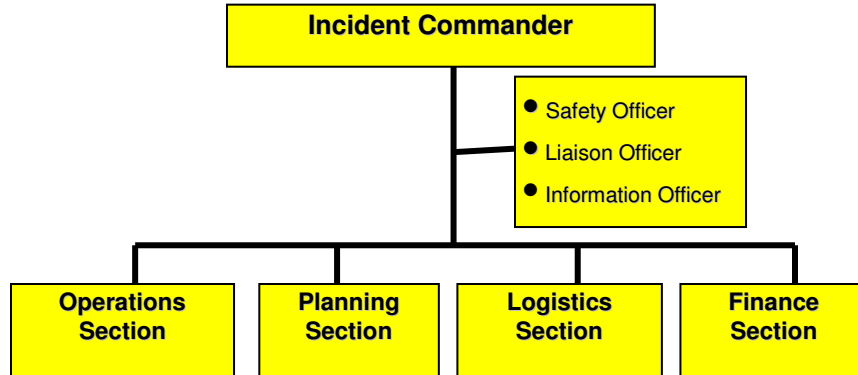
Each state and local municipality should have an Animal Response Plan (ARP) for companion animals, livestock, research animals, exhibit animals, and wildlife. The ARP provides guidelines for rapid response to events affecting the health, safety, and welfare of human beings and animals. The veterinary medicine and animal care activities (in the preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery activity phases of emergency management) should include, but are not limited to: small and large animal housing, husbandry (feeding, cleaning, milking, etc.), and veterinary care, facility usage, evacuation options, and displaced pet/livestock, wildlife, and exotic animal assistance. Because of the overwhelming logistical issues related to evacuation of large numbers of livestock requiring specialized facilities for their care (e.g., farrowing houses for sows and milking parlors capable of handling hundreds to thousands of animals), livestock owners (and their essential operational personnel) should be allowed to either shelter-in-place or immediately return to care for their animals. Livestock owners should be provided priority access to and assistance in resuming normal operations for humane care reasons and also to minimize both immediate and downstream economic impacts of operational interruption.

Emergency Management Systems Overview

The National Response Plan (NRP) assigns responsibilities and sets target capabilities for federal, state, local and tribal governments as well as their non-governmental partners. The NRP has established 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESF) that provide a functional framework for emergency preparedness and response. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. It standardizes incident management processes, protocols, and procedures for use by all responders. The Incident Command System (ICS) is one of the key components of NIMS. All emergency response and support personnel are required to have a working knowledge of ICS. Two of the key resource management issues mandated under NIMS are resource typing (defining interoperable resources, such as teams and equipment) and credentialing (qualifications and capabilities of individuals.)

Incident Command System basic structure:

www.fema.gov/nims for additional resources



Emergency Support Functions: Animal issues in the NRP

The National Response Plan contains many direct and extrapolated animal-related issues. The NRP applies a functional approach that groups the capabilities of Federal departments and agencies and the American Red Cross into essential functions to provide the planning, support, resources, program implementation, and emergency services that are most likely to be needed during Incidents of National Significance. This concept is known as the Emergency Support Function (ESF). The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanism to provide assistance to State, local, and tribal governments or to Federal departments and agencies conducting missions of primary Federal responsibility. The following table provides a summary of some of these key issues within the 15 national ESFs:

Support Function	Summary of animal issues
ESF-1: Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation of people will often necessitate transportation of companion animals, especially during emergency evacuations and rescue efforts. • Livestock and agricultural product movement may be a significant issue for transportation authorities during disease outbreaks • Transportation of large volumes of emergency supplies of animal feeds (hay, grain, and species-specific rations) may be necessary when a natural disaster has destroyed local pastures and stored feed supplies.
ESF-2: Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal issues will be impacted by any disruption of communications. • ESF Incident Commanders require multiple clear channels of timely information from the field in order to make evidence-based decisions. • Emergency operations personnel in the field require timely flow of information and policy decisions back from the ESF IC in order to assure optimal coordination of field operations and to minimize frustration and duplication of effort.
ESF-3: Public works and Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of agricultural infrastructure during utility disruption • Dead animal removal and disposal management support by public works in coordination with ESF-11 Agriculture (USDA ARC), which has the lead for animal carcass disposal issues.

ESF-4: Firefighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal evacuation issues during wildfires – decision process to issue evacuation orders, determination of safe routes for evacuation, safeguarding owners returning to carry out evacuation of their animals
ESF-5: Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of animal and agricultural stakeholders and concerns during planning and preparedness processes
ESF-6: Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass care of associated animal populations secondary to and coordinated with the mass care and housing of human populations
ESF-7: Resource Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary citizen participation programs • Donations management for animal and agriculturally related materials
ESF-8: Public Health and Medical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USPHS Veterinary care for animal populations • Address mental health and victim/responder/ community resilience issues associated with rescue or (conversely) with abandonment and loss of animals. • Assist ESF-11 with coordination of animal issues across the other ESFs • Zoonotic disease issues impacting human and animal health • Veterinary resources as a surge capacity for public health and medical systems
ESF-9: Urban Search and Rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals are part of search and rescue emergency response provider teams • Search and rescue actions in support of animal populations require active coordination with ESF-11 and ESF-8, as well as local Animal Control Officials
ESF-10: Oil and Hazardous Materials Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid environmental assessment activities related to animal populations and animal agriculture facilities and supplies • Decontamination of affected animal populations • Proper disposal of contaminated food and animal feed, and decontamination waste water and cleaning materials
ESF-11: Agriculture and Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livestock disease response, some non commercial animal issues • Rapid emergency impact assessment activities related to animal populations and animal agriculture facilities and supplies • Assurance of the safety and security of the commercial food supply, as well as sources of edible animal protein normally immediately available to subsistence hunters, fishermen, and farmers • Wildlife issues in disasters
ESF-12: Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peripheral animal issues (feeding, humane care, climate control, timely milking, removal of wastes) related to energy impacts on agriculture
ESF-13: Public Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing public safety challenges pertaining to evacuation of citizens and their animals
ESF-14: Long Term Community Recovery and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery of agricultural systems and economic sectors should be measured in terms of hours or days of operational interruption, in addition to the direct losses, because of the extremely time-sensitive nature of many aspects of livestock management and humane care. • Biodefense related to animal agriculture and companion animals • Human-Animal Bond impacts on community mental health resilience
ESF-15: External Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational awareness pertaining to animal issues must be centrally coordinated in order to be effective and have bi-directional information flow. • It is important to have a single clearly identified source of official information. • Incorporation of animal-related messages into the public information process at the local, state and national levels.
<p>While all of the above issues are clearly of concern, many of these issues are not specifically addressed in the NRP. Although some federal agencies are tasked with certain animal-related responsibilities, there remain some significant ambiguities concerning federal responsibilities.</p>	

National Initiatives Related to Animals and Agriculture

A number of federal and national non-governmental programs are in place to support animal emergency issues. Key examples (not a complete list) of national efforts include:

US Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency programs for primary response and to assist states have a primary focus on response to infectious disease emergencies in livestock • National Animal Health Reserve Emergency Corps program to utilize veterinary professionals to support USDA emergency response efforts
US Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Readiness Force provides rapidly deployable active duty and reserve component veterinary officers and teams with training and experience in veterinary public health, zoonotic disease surveillance and control, biosecurity, biohazards, facility/shelter management, and emergency animal response/incident command leadership. • Medical Reserve Corps program targets veterinary personnel among community medical professionals.
Department of Homeland Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Agriculture Coordinating Councils • Agricultural Infrastructure Protection • NDMS assets, which include Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT), to provide mobile veterinary hospital services • A Center for Faith Based Organizations is being established in the Preparedness Directorate
National Animal Control Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National organization of animal control officers (ACOs), who work at the local government level (usually sheriff's department or municipal equivalent) • ACOs have the primary regulatory (legal) authority over all stray and abandoned animals within their jurisdiction • ACOs are essential stakeholders and gate-keepers in all discussions of Animal Emergency Management • Affiliated State Animal Control Associations
American Veterinary Medical Association and Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial and professional support of federal response programs, such as the VMAT program • Grants to states to support animal emergency preparedness efforts
Delta Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary organization specific to human-animal bond issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Humane Association – (the other major Humane Association) • Code 3 •
Humane societies and animal rescue organizations including non-governmental, charitable organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has formal agreements with FEMA and the American Red Cross for animal protection and disaster mitigation and response. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ HSUS Disaster Response Teams are available to assess damage, evaluate impact on animals, and provide support to local community. • A large number of other national and regional animal welfare/advocacy/rescue organizations are actively involved in supporting emergency preparedness and response efforts related to animals
United States Animal Health Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAHA provides a forum for State Agriculture Officials, animal health professionals, and production agriculture to discuss key issues and compile competent recommendations concerning animal and agricultural emergency concerns.
Species-specific and industry-wide associations related to animals (not all inclusive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Horse Council and State Horse Councils • National Cattleman's Beef Association (including state chapters) • National Farmers Union • American Feed Industry Association • National Pork Board

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Pork Producers Council • National Chicken Council • National Turkey Federation • American Kennel Club • American Boarding Kennels Association • Cat Fanciers Association • Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council • Dairy Management, Inc. (formerly American Dairy Association) • National Milk Producers Federation • American Zoo and Aquarium Association
State animal emergency programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including State Animal or Agricultural Response Team (SART) programs. See following paragraph for additional information.

State Animal Emergency Management Programs

State programs include a number of models using various names, including State Animal Response Team (SART) programs and State Agricultural Response Team (also SART), designed to help build local response capacity. These programs extend over a wide range of organizational formats, from government agencies to a non-governmental public-private partnership based in a charitable organization. At least 20 states as of January of 2006 have created programs that would fall under this general classification. In most states, a typical partnership behind such programs include emergency management, state veterinarians, departments of agriculture, veterinary colleges and cooperative extension, veterinary medical associations, public health, animal control associations, livestock associations, and animal welfare organizations. These programs have been working within an informal network to share ideas and to work to address various issues of mutual concern. One common goal across many of these state programs is to support the development of local all-hazards animal/agricultural response capacity.

Local Animal Emergency Management Programs

At the local level, all-hazards animal programs are described by a varied nomenclature, the Community or County Animal Response Team programs (CART) is perhaps the most common description, but a number of other terminologies are used to describe community or regional programs. In some states, SART and CART programs have begun establishing a strong relationship with state and local Citizen Corps Councils. In other states, they have yet to be instituted.

Standard Animal Emergency Management Response Planning Issues

Animal Shelters

Pre-identify locations that can serve as temporary shelters for evacuated and rescued animals, including pet animals, horses, and livestock.

Water, food, and bedding

Pre-arrange contracts for a continuous supply of food, water, and bedding for designated animal recovery/shelter locations. Arrange for appropriate bedding that can be changed often enough to prevent odor and filth, and discomfort to the animals. At a minimum plan for two week's supply of food and water; water requirements are for both drinking and cleaning.

Personnel to care for animals

Pre-arrange agreements through the EMAC system for support. Establish networks and pre-credential volunteer workers/organizations.

Transportation

Identify open-sided or climate-controlled trucks and vans to transport equipment, supplies and animals. Each vehicle should be equipped with supplies such as fix-a-flats, jacks, spare tire, tow-ropes, first-aid kits and jumper cables. Scale-able plans from personal vehicles to commercial transportation.

Communications

Plan for emergency communications and radios for all animal recovery locations and traveling teams. Communications "trees" of phone numbers and pager numbers should be developed in advance. Investigate pre-arranged toll-free numbers and CB radio bands for emergency use.

Environmental Support

Identify and pre-position generators and fuel supply for every major animal recovery location.

Contamination Control/Quarantine

Pre-designate animal recovery locations, protocols, and standard paperwork/ datafields to check animals for injuries, hazmat exposures, and diseases. Plan for the quarantine of animals; i.e., the seclusion and securing of diseased/contaminated animals. Identify appropriate sanitary procedures for storage of food/water, removal of contaminated food/water, and timely disposal of feces/carcasses (in coordination with USDA NRC).

Search and Rescue

Coordinate search and rescue of stranded and displaced animals at the local level through the Animal Control Office of the Sheriff/Police Department. All teams should be dispatched and monitored via the appropriate search and rescue incident commander dispatching personnel. On-the-ground supervision and safety is the responsibility of team leaders whose credentials are acceptable to the ACO or other delegated authority.

Animals caught or extricated by anyone other than their owners must be surrendered to the custody of the ACO.

Security

A security system with numbered, date-stamped, laminated ID access cards issued for workers listed on an approved protocol is ideal. T-shirts and ball caps indicating "Animal Search and Rescue" do not meet security requirements for ID of officially credentialed workers, but may be useful for recognition at a distance of teams working in the field. Pre-arrange security contracts and pre-credential response workers/organizations to secure facilities and provide support to roving recovery teams.

Assessment

Teams tasked with field assessment activities should report on a daily basis counts and semi-quantitative assessments of animals rescued and their conditions (via their team leaders to ESF-11). Summary information should be obtained through interviews with key personnel, "mining" data posted by NGOs on web sites, and by physical visits to shelters or secured property. Access to property for livestock owners (with escorts and appropriate PPE where appropriate) will ensure essential response, daily operations and

recovery activities are addressed at the earliest possible opportunity. Local escort coordination (e.g., at the level of the county sheriff or police department) is essential to minimize interruptions to essential agricultural and other animal care daily operations. Assessment findings should be posted and updated daily – in summary format for general audiences, and with greater detail available to owners and other authorized personnel.

Veterinary Support

Pre-arrange local/ state veterinary support (veterinary teaching hospital, state veterinary association members, etc.) via contracts or other mechanisms.

Strategic Communications

Address concerns prior to an incident and advertise response operations to manage expectations and risk. Provide maps of search and rescue efforts and embed media to get correct message to the public without exaggeration. Assessment findings should be posted and updated daily – in summary format for general audiences. Emphasize the “official” sources of information, and encourage “unofficial” lines of communication to participate in briefings to the unified command/lead ESF.

Planning Recommendations

1. Address animal-related concerns within emergency management systems.
2. Develop an Animal Response Annex to state and local disaster plans that acknowledges the strength and importance of the human-animal bond in American society, and recognizes the need to plan to provide special assistance for certain special-needs populations who are particularly dependent upon their companion animals.
3. Develop a national database, updated annually, that provides ready access to necessary information for rapid credentialing (or pre-credentialing) of animal response workers (e.g., veterinarians, vet techs, animal control officers, field rescue teams, dog trainers, animal behaviorists, and animal shelter managers, for small animal rescue operations) by officials of affected states (and/or federal officials). Large animals and agricultural species will require different sets of skills, specific to the affected species and ag-industry segments.
4. Make mandatory the inclusion and coordination of local grassroots voluntary animal care groups with local government disaster planning activities. Encourage the use of these groups as partners in planning for and executing the evacuation process to decrease resistance to evacuation orders and speed the evacuation process.
5. Require disaster response exercises to include animal rescue and response. Participants should address systemic failures of transportation, power, water, sewer, and communication systems as part of animal emergency management.
6. Identify standard metrics to measure impact of incidents and/or government directed shut down of operations to agricultural/livestock industry.

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