

## **Emergency Support Function (ESF) # 16 Veterinarian Services and Animal Care**

Primary Agency: Department of Agriculture and Industry

Support Agencies: Department of Transportation  
Alabama Emergency Management Agency  
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Alabama Department of Environmental Management  
Department of Public Health  
Military Department  
Department of Corrections

Primary Points of Coordination and Associated Actions:

- ESF #1 (Transportation) transportation assets
- ESF # 5 (Information and Planning) coordinates mission assignments and consolidates SITREPS.
- ESF #8 (Health & Medical Services) coordinates public health issues.
- ESF #10 (Hazardous Materials) coordinates disposal of animal remains
- ESF # 14 (Volunteer and Donations) provides volunteer and donations information

### **I. Introduction**

#### **A. Purpose**

This appendix provides guidelines for rapid response to disasters affecting the health, safety and welfare of human beings and animals. Veterinary medicine and animal care resources in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery include, but are not limited to small and large animal care, facility usage, displaced pet/livestock assistance and mass animal fatalities.

#### **B. Scope**

ESF # 16 plans and coordinates actions to prevent the loss of animals due to a disaster, and if necessary disposal of animal carcasses.

### **Policies**

The assets available to ESF #16 will be used to assist county emergency operations with their effort to move animals, recover from disaster, prevent the spread of disease and provide emergency veterinarian support.

The priorities for allocation of these assets are as follows:

Local jurisdictions involved in disaster activities will commit all available resources in ensuring public health and safety. They will have limited capabilities to care, feed, shelter and dispose of animal carcasses and little or no capability dealing with exotic animals, animal diseases, and mass care, feeding, sheltering and disposal of animal carcasses. When the situation exhausts local resources, they will request state assistance. Upon notification of such a request, the State Veterinarian will:

1. On behalf of the Governor of the State of Alabama, issue policies and guidance covering provisions and distributions of veterinary resources within the state.
2. Arrange with animal feed, veterinary medicine and other animal materials suppliers to meet shortages in supplies as reported by local governments.
3. Arrange for transfer of Department of Agriculture personnel in the state to meet the needs of the affected area.

### **III. Situation Analysis**

This section discusses the process of evaluating the severity and consequences of an incident.

- A. People evacuating from natural and man-made disasters will need assistance in finding shelter for pets.
  - B. Animals will be lost/injured/escape during natural and man-made disasters.
  - C. Disease or natural/man-made disasters could cause mass fatalities in domestic and exotic animals as well as wildlife and fisheries.
- A. Under certain conditions, animals may need to be evacuated from an affected area.

### **IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

#### **A. General**

1. The State Veterinarian as the Director of the Department of Agriculture and Industry will direct the performance of veterinary and animal care functions in conjunction with the conduct of state emergency operations and protective actions. The primary focus of this effort will be to provide those emergency services needed to address animal welfare and public health and safety concerns. This can include but not be limited to; emergency medical care, temporary confinement and animal shelter, food and water, identification and tracking for return to the owner for animals affected by the disaster and disposal of dead animals.
2. In a disaster situation, personnel of the Department of Agriculture will be

deployed to assist local veterinarians and volunteers. Disaster tasks will take priority over normal operations.

3. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) from the Department of Agriculture and Industry will be responsible for coordinating the departments services internally and with other agencies.
4. The local emergency management agency should request assistance for veterinary and animal care from AEMA. The AEMA will coordinate with the Department of Agriculture and Industry to provide supplemental assistance. The Department of Agriculture may request assistance from adjoining states or federal agencies. The AEMA will coordinate information concerning requests for assistance with FEMA.
5. During a declared disaster, when the State Donations Coordinating Team has been activated, information concerning veterinary services, animal care, sheltering and animal food will be coordinated with the Department of Agriculture and Industry's EMC.

## **B. Organization**

1. The Department of Agriculture and Industry will provide sufficient personnel to staff the State EOC while operational or as requested by AEMA. The personnel will be skilled professionals with subject knowledge to expedite decisions for the agency.
2. The EMC for the department will coordinate public information with the AEMA Public Information Officer and when necessary coordinate soliciting needed resources with volunteer agencies.
3. The Department of Agriculture and Industry will maintain the following lists:
  - Resource providers available in disaster situations.
  - Key sites that may be impacted by disease or disasters.
  - Exotic animal shelters and confinement areas in Alabama and adjoining states.
  - Available animal shelters and confinement areas including personnel contacts.
  - Organizations and agencies that provide non-medical Volunteers for animal care.
4. The Department of Agriculture will coordinate providing food and water to animals in shelters and confinement areas that cannot obtain or transport food and water.

## **V. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Primary Agency**

The primary agency for ESF 16 is the Department of Agriculture and Industry and its responsibilities are as follows.

1. Assure availability of resources for the disaster area.
2. Record incoming requests for assistance, and the action taken.
3. Establish a protocol for prioritizing response activities.
4. Develop a department standard operations guideline for responding to disaster situations.
5. Declare an agricultural emergency, when such exists, make, adopt and promulgate rules and issues orders during the term of the disaster.

### **B. Supporting Agencies:**

1. The Department of Transportation will:
  - a. Assist in providing vehicles for transportation when available.
  - b. Assist in providing front-end loaders and dump trucks for disposal of animal carcasses.
2. The Alabama Emergency Management Agency will:
  - a. Provide request assistance from county EMA's.
  - b. Provide assistance in dissemination of public information.
3. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will:
  - a. Assist in providing information for feeding and sheltering requirements of certain species of animals.
  - b. Coordinate with state and local animal control personnel in the capture of escaped or released exotic species or wildlife.
4. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management will:
  - a. Develop procedures on the acceptable disposal of animal carcasses

in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and Industry.

- b. Upon request, provide a list of incinerators, landfills, approved burial sites, or rendering plants for an affected area.
5. The Alabama Department of Public Health will:
  - a. Assist in providing quarantine status of the affected area.
  - b. Coordinate public health issues in the event of a potential contagious disease.
6. The Alabama National Guard will:
  - a. Provide heavy equipment for the disposal of animal carcasses.
  - b. When appropriate, coordinate military veterinary assistance.
7. The Alabama Department of Corrections will provide inmates to assist in the collection and disposal of animal carcasses.
8. Other Agencies:

Auburn University

The Center for Disease Control

## **VI. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- As soon as essential immediate needs are taken care of the State Veterinarian will:
  1. Consult with AEMA and appropriate state agencies to coordinate additional resources that may be needed.
  2. If anticipated supplies or services are inadequate, refer to the State Disaster Coordinator (AEMA) for recommendations to the governor for additional adjoining states or federal assistance.

## **VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES**

American Veterinarian Medical Association Emergency Preparedness and Response Guide