

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2006

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 7 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL ANIMAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

DATES: MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, OCTOBER 12-18, 2006

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

All-hazards animal emergency management addresses critical issues impacting public safety, public health, animal health, animal welfare, agricultural and pet industry economic systems, wildlife, and the environment. Approximately sixty percent of American households contain pets with many of these animals considered family members. Additionally, commercial livestock, non-commercial livestock, wildlife, service animals, and animals in research comprise the diverse population of animals that must be considered within emergency management plans.

Studies conducted by the National Academy of Science clearly indicate the continuing convergence of animal health, human health, and environmental health and the concept of "one medicine" should be embraced. We need to bridge relationships among interdisciplinary areas. Animal health is truly at a crossroads. The convergence of animal health with human and ecosystem health dictates that the "one world, one health, one medicine" concept must be embraced to improve overall global health.

Animal owners and the owner's agent are primarily responsible for animals during emergency events; however, state, local and federal governments have responsibilities when disasters affect critical infrastructures and when citizens are unable to take effective action to protect animals under their care. The hurricanes of 2004 and 2005 highlighted the need to more effectively prepare for emergencies, disasters and catastrophes involving animals within all levels of emergency plans. These complex and challenging issues will demand collaboration and resource support by every level of government, private industry, animal owners and a broad array of non-governmental organizations.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges that the The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS)

- be mandated and funded, as the lead federal Emergency Support Function–11 (ESF-11) agency, to coordinate all-hazards, all-species animal emergency management

- establish a coalition of national stakeholders on animal emergency management to ensure coordination and long-term maintenance of national animal emergency management capabilities
- revise ESF-11 to incorporate an expanded USDA role and responsibility as the lead governmental agency in charge of coordination of animal issues in disaster including; companion animals, livestock, service animals, and laboratory animals.
- engage federal agencies in support of all-species, all-hazards animal emergency management issues, including the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, and other federal entities; that

The Department of Homeland Security

- revise the National Response Plan and supporting documents to address animal emergency management in detail with ESF-11 designated as the lead ESF for all-hazards, all-species animal issues with many other ESFs providing strong support roles.
- incorporate such provisions as needed to support the PETS Act of 2006.
- engage all national key stakeholders in this National Response Plan (NRP) revision process
- fund development of institutional infrastructure and national programmatic activities to assure the national, state and local ability to achieve animal emergency management goals.; and that

Congress

- appropriate funding to states for the development of animal emergency management plans and implementation of sustainable animal emergency response capabilities.

RESPONSE:

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services appreciates the opportunity to address emergency response issues; however, the Animal Care division has the lead for companion animal emergency response within APHIS. The USDA Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs delegated responsibility for companion animal evacuation and sheltering to APHIS, and leadership to Animal Care. Animal Care is working to integrate emergency response for companion animals with livestock in order for APHIS to provide all-hazards, all-species responses to natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and terrorist activities.

Animal Care has begun work to address each of the four issues identified in the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) resolution:

Funding and mandate

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has requested APHIS-Animal Care to be the lead Emergency Support Function -11 (ESF-11) agency for companion animal response. Animal Care is developing an interagency agreement with DHS to provide support for program activities during FY 2007. Animal Care requested funding from Congress in FY 2008 to coordinate the companion animal components of all-hazards, all-species emergency management.

Establish a coalition of stakeholders

Animal Care is working to establish a coalition of national stakeholders on animal emergency management. State Animal Response Teams, State departments of agriculture, humane organizations, animal rescue organizations, and societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals are some of the stakeholders who must provide input in order to ensure an effective and efficient response to emergencies. USAHA, the National Emergency Management Association, or the American Veterinary Medical Association could serve as an umbrella organization for a coalition of stakeholders on companion animal emergency response.

Revise ESF-11

Animal Care is working with DHS to develop a National Concept of Operations and revise the ESF-11 section of the National Response Plan. These documents will integrate companion animal evacuation and shelter issues into an all-hazards, all-species, emergency response plan for animals.

Engage Federal agencies

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has a role in companion animal evacuation and shelter under ESF-8. Animal Care is collaborating with HHS and other work Federal agencies to identify roles and responsibilities.

Department Of Homeland Security (DHS), Science and Technology Directorate

DHS is committed to its mission and strategic goals, which are:

Mission

We will lead the unified national effort to secure America. We will prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation. We will ensure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigrants and visitors, and promote the free-flow of commerce.

Strategic Goals

Awareness -- Identify and understand threats, assess vulnerabilities, determine potential impacts and disseminate timely information to our homeland security partners and the American public.

Prevention — Detect, deter and mitigate threats to our homeland.

Protection — Safeguard our people and their freedoms, critical infrastructure, property and the economy of our Nation from acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

Response — Lead, manage and coordinate the national response to acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

Recovery — Lead national, state, local and private sector efforts to restore services and rebuild communities after acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

Service — Serve the public effectively by facilitating lawful trade, travel and immigration.

Organizational Excellence — Value our most important resource, our people. Create a culture that promotes a common identity, innovation, mutual respect, accountability and teamwork to achieve efficiencies, effectiveness, and operational synergies.

DHS is engaged and supports the re-write the National Response Plan (NRP) and supporting documents to address animal issues. Through the Animal Issues Working Group, many national key stakeholders have had the opportunity to provide input into the NRP re-write process. Additionally, DHS supports the NRP, which states that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), serve as the lead for Emergency Support Function–11 (ESF-11) which is responsible for coordinating animal emergency response issues.

DHS sponsored, Animal Issues Working Group, involved in the NRP re-write has recommended the following in its final report:

“This revision of the NRP must take into account that the Stafford Act has been amended (through the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act of 2006) to require State and local disaster plans to specifically address animal issues. The PETS Act of 2006 also requires that Federal plans “take into account the needs of individuals with pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency.” The NRP should consider the implications of the PETS Act on incident response.”

DHS through its many programs has supplied, since 2001, the following:

Provided nearly \$37.5 billion to State, local, and tribal governments to enhance first responder preparedness of which \$22 billion was allocated through Department grant programs. This includes a total of \$25.5 billion in support related to terrorism and catastrophic preparedness events, with \$16.3 billion allocated through the Department.

For 2008, DHS proposes within its budget the following:

Increase non-defense homeland security spending by 9.5 percent Government-wide compared to 2007, excluding 2007 emergency funding and borrowing authority for interoperability grants; Provide an additional \$2 billion in grants for first responder preparedness—on top of \$1 billion in interoperable

communications grants previously authorized—and over \$5 billion in funds that State, local, and tribal governments are currently spending.