

## **Q. APPENDIX XVII: EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION 17 - ANIMAL PROTECTION**

**PRIMARY AGENCY:** Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**SUPPORT AGENCIES:** Department of Health, Department of Management Services, Division of Communications, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service

**VOLUNTEER RESOURCES:** Florida Veterinary Medical Association, Florida Animal Control Association, State and Local Animal Care Support Agencies, National Animal Care Support Agencies

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of Emergency Support Function 17 is to coordinate the response of State agencies in assisting local and volunteer organizations to provide all animals affected by the disaster with emergency medical care; evacuation; rescue; temporary confinement, shelter, food and water; and identification for return to the owner. The coordination may also involve diagnosis, prevention, and control of diseases of public health significance. Disposal of dead animals is also a major concern.

### **II. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

#### **A. GENERAL**

The coordination of State agencies involved in assisting local and volunteer agencies includes tasks before, during, and after a disaster where local resources are not sufficient and local government requests State assistance.

1. Provide emergency medical care for all animals, including commercial livestock, poultry, fish, and exhibition (racing) animals; zoo animals; laboratory and research animals; wildlife; and domestic pets.
2. Coordinate with Emergency Support Function 15 (Volunteers and Donations) to refer volunteer personnel to the county; coordinate efforts to provide water, food, and shelter and other physical needs to animals; and store and distribute animal food and medical supplies to the requesting county.
3. Coordinate with Emergency Support Function 14 (Public Information) to ensure that information is provided on the location of animal shelters and other animal-related matters before, during and after the disaster. Also, coordinate public education efforts, such as brochures distributed to veterinary offices. Abandonment of animals should be discouraged due

the welfare of both the animals and the public. When necessary, assist with soliciting needed resources to fill shortages.

4. Coordinate efforts to rescue and capture animals including relocation before the disaster. Counties will identify available barns, pastures, kennels, etc., with local agencies and volunteer organizations.
5. Coordinate with local agencies to establish a system to register identification data in an effort to reunite animals with their owners.
6. Coordinate with Emergency Support Function 15 (Volunteers and Donations) the storage of emergency relief supplies and their distribution to animal caretakers/shelters.
7. Coordinate with Emergency Support Function 8 (Health and Medical Services) for the identification, prevention and control of diseases of animals, which have public health significance, including epidemiological, and environmental health activities.

## **B. ORGANIZATION**

1. Emergency Support Function 17 is organized to ensure rapid response to animal care needs in the disaster area. The primary and support agencies, including local animal control, must have a thorough and up-to-date disaster plan that has been coordinated through the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as the primary agency. The State Plan will be operational in nature, and will be standardized whenever possible. Each county should have an Animal Emergency Coordinator focal point before contacting the State. When activated, agencies in Emergency Support Function 17 will operate under the Plan and its support documents.
2. Emergency Support Function 17 focuses primarily on emergency medical care, evacuation, rescue, capture, temporary confinement, shelter, provision of food and water, identification and tracking for reunification of owners with their animals and on disposal of dead animals.
3. The primary agency for Emergency Support Function 17 is the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services with direct contact for animal issues in the State Veterinarian's Office. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services personnel assigned to Emergency Support Function 17 will provide daily direction. This direction is limited to operation of the Emergency Support Function 17, assignment of personnel to handle requests for assistance, and ensuring that requests for assistance are prioritized, met, and documented. The Emergency Support Function 17 establishes coordination with other appropriate Emergency Support Functions and will maintain open communications with these Emergency Support Functions in both the planning and operational phases.

4. Support agencies will operate with the daily leadership of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services personnel. Support agencies will be appropriately assigned based on known capabilities and in accordance with their own operating procedures. Should a conflict arise between the primary agency and a support agency, the issue will be turned over to the Division of Emergency Management on-site Operations Officer for resolution.
5. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as the primary agency will provide sufficient personnel to staff the Emergency Support Function 17 24 hours per day, 7 days per week while operational or as requested by the Division of Emergency Management. The personnel will be managers, skilled professionals with subject knowledge, and operations personnel qualified to expedite decisions for the agency.
6. The primary and support agencies of Emergency Support Function 17 will respond directly to the Human Services Branch Chief who reports to the Operations Section Chief (**see Section IV. A. 2. Figure 3 of the Basic Plan**).
7. In coordination with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, support agencies will be encouraged to develop plans that support their Emergency Support Function 17 assignments.
8. The primary agency will prepare for disaster exercises as requested by the Division of Emergency Management. The support agencies will be requested to have a system in place for response of personnel to the disaster exercises.

**C. NOTIFICATION**

1. Upon notification by the State Warning Point of a potential or actual event requiring response, Emergency Support Function 17 will notify all support agencies and organization members by telephone or through the communication facilities at the State Warning Point.
2. All support groups contact persons will be instructed to alert their contacts throughout the State to ensure all available resources are on standby.
3. Other resources inventories will be confirmed for possible use.

**D. ACTIONS**

1. Preparedness.
  - a. Emergency Support Function 17 will conduct at least one training program annually for county animal emergency coordinators and other interested persons.

- b. Emergency Support Function 17 assists in releasing information annually on disaster planning and safety for animals through news releases or brochures.
- c. Emergency Support Function 17 develops and maintains a database of all county animal emergency plans and a list of all county animal emergency coordinators.
- d. Emergency Support Function 17 will develop, maintain and regularly update lists of available animal shelters and confinement areas for Florida, (including shelter for exotic or zoo animals) as provided by county animal coordinators, and for other states as needed. The database will include personnel and resource information.
- e. When feasible, Emergency Support Function 17 will assist county animal emergency coordinators in identifying suitable facilities for shelters and confinement areas.
- f. Emergency Support Function 17 develops and maintains a database of medical and non-medical volunteers and agencies that will provide care assistance. This will include information on the type of service being offered, number of volunteers, resources available, contact person with telephone numbers and logistical abilities of each.

2. Response.

- a. Emergency Support Function 17 will track the activities of all available animal shelter facilities and confinement areas identified before, during, and after the disaster. This tracking will be based on information provided by the county animal emergency coordinator.
- b. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate with Emergency Support Function 5 to provide information on the location and availability of shelter space, food, and water for animals.
- c. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate with Emergency Support Function 11 and Emergency Support Function 15 regarding storage sites and staging areas for animal food and medical supplies.
- d. Emergency Support Function 17 may be called upon to serve the State Emergency Response Team in various areas of Field Operations (i.e., the Forward State Emergency Response Team, Impact Assessment Teams: Rapid Response Team, Preliminary Damage Assessment Team, Disaster Field Office operations, Recovery Center operations, intrastate and/or interstate mutual aid assistance, etc.).

- e. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate damage assessment through the County Emergency Animal Coordinator.
  - f. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate the assignment of relief personnel and the distribution of supplies from supply areas or staging areas.
  - g. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate the consolidation or closing of animal shelters or confinement areas, personnel, and supplies as the need diminishes.
  - h. Emergency Support Function 17 with support agencies, will coordinate the animal medical services needed for animal shelter and confinement areas.
  - i. Emergency Support Function 17 will coordinate with Emergency Support Function 1, Emergency Support Function 3, and Emergency Support Function 8 for the removal and proper disposal of animal waste and dead animals.
3. Recovery.
- a. Emergency Support Function 17 will assist support agencies for long term maintenance, placement, or disposition of animals which cannot be returned to their normal habitat or which have been separated from their owners.
  - b. Document all disaster related activities and their costs.

#### **E. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

- 1. Emergency Support Function 17 will be activated as requested by the Division of Emergency Management to provide assistance prior to or following the occurrence of a disaster when local capability to respond appears insufficient for the magnitude of the disaster.
- 2. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is the primary agency for Emergency Support Function 17. Authority for actions required in an emergency is designated in Section 570.07(21), and 585.08, F.S., *To declare an emergency when such exists in any matter pertaining to agriculture; and to make, adopt, and promulgate rules and issue orders which will be effective during the term of such emergency.*
- 3. Emergency Support Function 17 activities will be coordinated through the State Emergency Operations Center. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as primary agency, will provide staff at the State Emergency Operations Center 24 hours per day, as requested by the Division of Emergency Management.

4. Emergency Support Function 17 will assist local animal control agencies, humane organizations, livestock, or farming organizations, or other animal industry representatives. All federal assistance for animal care, such as military veterinarians, must be requested by the animal emergency coordinator and must be coordinated through Emergency Support Function 17.
5. Animal Support Agencies, State, district, and county coordinators will be the contact at the local level for coordination.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. PRIMARY AGENCY – DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES**

1. Develop and maintain a roster of personnel that staff Animal Issues Annex for 24 hours per day, 7 days per week coverage as long as the Emergency Operations Center is operational.
2. Assure the availability of resources for the disaster area by maintaining a data base including the following:
  - a. A list of shelters and confinement areas for each county.
  - b. A list of food and water sources provided by support agencies.
  - c. A list of animal medical personnel by county.
  - d. A list of county animal emergency coordinators.
3. Establish a protocol for prioritizing response activities.
4. Coordinate activities with other Emergency Support Functions.
5. Be prepared at all times to report status of Emergency Support Function 17 disaster related activities.
6. Will develop and maintain standard operating procedures that detail all necessary activities. The Standard Operating Procedures will be coordinated with the support agencies and organizations, and the Division of Emergency Management.
7. Will develop with assistance from support agencies and organizations, disaster exercises.

#### **B. SUPPORT AGENCIES**

1. County Animal Emergency Coordinator or Local Animal Control Agency:

- a. Identify the possible locations within the county for emergency animal shelters and confinement areas.
  - b. Request assistance when local resources are insufficient to meet the need.
  - c. Maintain a list of permanent available shelters and confinement areas.
  - d. Maintain a list of local sources for food and water for sheltered and confined animals.
  - e. Develop plans and agreements for the disposal of animal carcasses and wastes.
2. University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service:
- Identify and educate commercial and non-commercial animal owners on animal emergency safety and animal emergency needs for food, water, power, etc.
3. Department of Health
- Coordinate with Emergency Support Function 17 to diagnose, prevent, and control zootoxic diseases (such as rabies) and other animal-related conditions of public health significance.
4. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission:
- a. Conduct warnings and assist in the coordination of evacuation of zoo animals (including mammals, birds, and reptiles) kept in major exhibits/wildlife dealers/circus facilities as needed.
  - b. Conduct assessment of lost or escaped "exotic" animals.
  - c. Using specialized personnel and equipment coordinate recapture of potentially dangerous or hazardous exotic animals with zoos, dealers and owners.
5. Department of Environmental Protection:
- a. Assist in the coordinating of the needs of marine life before, during, and after a disaster.
  - b. Assist with the assessment of damage to marine life.
  - c. Assist with the removal of beached or dead marine life.

6. Florida Veterinary Medical Association:
  - a. Appoint designated representative for coordinating with Emergency Support Function 17.
  - b. Coordinate volunteer veterinarians and technicians to provide health care.
  - c. Provide documentation of injuries and deaths of animals for owners or for insurance purposes.
7. Local Animal Support Agencies and Organizations:
  - a. Provide volunteer personnel for animal care.
  - b. Establish an adoption procedure consistent with Chapter 703, Florida Statutes, for unclaimed and lost animals.
8. National and State Animal Support Agencies and Organizations:
  - a. Provide damage assessment personnel to assist in determining what resources may be needed from outside the State.
  - b. Assist in the coordination of the outside assistance and relocation of animals outside the affected area.

**C. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Resources required before the disaster:
  - a. Shelters and confinement areas available at the time of evacuation so that owners can leave their animals.
    - 1) Food and water
    - 2) Identification tags or collars.
    - 3) Medical supplies and possibly a source of electricity.
  - b. Personnel:
    - 1) Shelter and confinement area coordinators.
    - 2) Animal-care volunteers.
2. Resources Required for Continuing Operations - (Examples):

Fence material, bedding, cages, vehicles, portable telephones, animal traps (Have-a-Heart), animal catchpoles (dog, cat), water and disinfectant for cleaning (household/bleach).

**IV. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Currently under development.

**V. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES**

(See Emergency Support Function 11)