



1931 N. Meacham Rd.  
Suite 100  
Schaumburg, IL  
60173-4360  
phone 847.925.8070  
800.248.2862  
fax 847.925.1329  
[www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)

September 13, 2007

Federal Emergency Management Agency  
National Incident Management System  
National Integration Center

Re: National Response Framework

Dear Madam/Sir:

I am writing on behalf of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), established in 1863 and the largest veterinary medical association in the world. As a not-for-profit association established to advance the science and art of veterinary medicine, AVMA is the recognized national voice for the veterinary profession. The association's more than 75,000 members comprise approximately 86% of U.S. veterinarians.

The AVMA commends FEMA for its efforts on the National Response Framework and its dedication to working towards a comprehensive approach to emergency preparedness and response.

The veterinary profession is committed to the promotion of preparedness for disasters and emergencies. The AVMA developed our Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) with the American Veterinary Medical Foundation and the National Medical Disaster System. We are proud of our federal veterinary response teams and the excellence they have illustrated providing emergency veterinary care for animals in need during times of national emergencies, including the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks and the after effects of the Hurricane Katrina disaster in Louisiana and Mississippi. These response teams exemplify valor and excellence during times of emergencies, and they perform valuable public health functions. In addition, the AVMA fully supports the efforts of the AVMF to fund programs to promote emergency preparedness and to provide relief to members after disasters strike.

The AVMA contends that while the National Response Framework exemplifies an ever stronger emergency preparedness system for the United States, it is not comprehensive. Specifically, the AVMA asserts that the FEMA National Integration Center should ensure the development of an Animal Annex within the National Response Framework to address all species-all hazards issues. Currently, questions exist regarding the federal agency that would lead on disaster issues associated with companion animals. A clear, comprehensive plan must be implemented to address animal issues in emergencies, as such issues truly affect the public health.

We compliment FEMA for its efforts in striving to develop an excellent National Response Framework, but all-species/all-hazards preparedness plans must be in place for the NRF to be fully comprehensive for the United States to be prepared for disasters and emergencies.

Please feel free to contact Dr. Lynne A. White (800-248-2862 ext. 6784 or [lwhite@avma.org](mailto:lwhite@avma.org)) should you need any additional information or explanation of AVMA's comments.

Respectfully,

Lyle Vogel, DVM, MPH  
Interim Assistant Executive Vice President  
American Veterinary Medical Association