



Animals in Disaster Working Group Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 18, 2024

The meeting commenced at 9:04 am.

In attendance:

Cal Animals Emergency Management Committee (Cal Animals): R. Soulsby.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW): R. Lovell.

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA): S. Brown, M. Francesconi, A. Jones, A. Raj.

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES): B. Blair, D. Chapman, Z. Corbo, S. Halpain, K. Nielsen, S. Murdock, J. Ortega, E. Rubio, L. Stanley, V. Vasquez.

California Department of Social Services (CDSS): F. Carrillo, E. Clinton, J. Dulay, S. Duncan.

California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (CAVMRC): J. Kerr.

California Community Animal Response Teams (Cal CARTs): N. Tobias.

City of San Jose Office of Emergency Management: S. Sledge.

Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control: Lt. P. Maradiaga.

University of California, Davis, California Veterinary Emergency Team (UC Davis CVET): S. Buhl, W. Burke, A. Patterson, M. Ziccardi.

Riverside County Animal Services: Lt. James Huffman.

I. Stakeholder Updates

a. CDFA Agriculture CA-ESF 11 (A.Raj)

- Participating in Cal OES mass evacuation working group. Providing input on a mass evacuation guidance document, focusing on fairground resources coordination.
- Participating in Cal OES Diablo Canyon Power Plant Ingestion Pathway Exercise. Providing subject matter expertise on agriculture and livestock/animal carcass disposal.
- Preparing for upcoming weather (flood and firing season).

b. CDFA CARES (S. Brown)

- Responding to Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). California has 28 infected premises in Merced, Fresno, San Benito, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Lassen, and Sonoma Counties. Total of 6.6 million birds have been euthanized or died.
- Updating documents to reflect policy changes, CVET Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and legislation.

- CARES Resource Catalog will be updated and completed by end of January and will be distributed. Please send updates to Sonia.Brown@cdfa.ca.gov to make it a valuable tool.
- Local government emergency animal shelter assessment form was updated and distributed to animal services, offices of emergency services, agricultural commissioners, and volunteers in November 2023.
- Created an infographic on the Livestock Agricultural Pass (Ag Pass) Program and encourages producers to sign up for the program if available in their county.
- Developing guidance on animal mortality disposal during rendering destructions, animal disease, and natural disasters.
- Participating in Cal OES mass evacuation working group and providing input on mass evacuation guidance document.
- Participating in Cal OES Diablo Canyon Power Plant Ingestion Pathway Exercise.
- Gathering animal annexes to serve as examples and will be uploaded to the CARES website when received.

c. Cdfa Fair Grounds (M. Francesconi)

- Received a grant from the Humane Society to purchase large livestock panels.
 - Will be used for eight fairgrounds, and each will have a designated region.
 - Twenty portable panels per fairground.
 - Ready to be deployed if needed.

d. UC Davis CVET (A. Patterson and Dr. M. Ziccardi)

- Developing different trainings for CVET and animal responders.
 - In-person equine handling training.
 - CVET basics interactive course.
 - Veterinary specific courses and will share as those are developed.
- Signed an MOU with the Northern California Association of Equine Practitioners.
- Attended an Outreach event in San Diego to meet with county members and the Humane Society to discuss their animal response capabilities.
 - Will be attending more regional events this year.
 - Contact CVET if your region is looking for a facilitated discussion or tabletop exercise to test response capabilities.
 - Continuing to work on outreach to other counties. Reports will be online as they are completed.
- Will attend various conferences this year (e.g., California Emergency Services Association Conference, veterinary, emergency management).
- Working on development of local assistance program.

- Providing local assistance grant to local CARTs to fund planning and preparedness activities.
 - Grant funds will be released in the approximately one month.
 - UC Davis and CVET responded to avian botulism in Kern County in 2023.
 - Developed wild bird rehabilitation center and closed before Thanksgiving. At the center, cared for more than 1,200 birds, and greater than 70% were released.
- e. Cal OES Preparedness (D. Chapman)**
- Discussion with CDFA and UC Davis CVET on how to improve the format of working group meetings and 2024 objectives.
 - N. Richmond continues to review county emergency operations plans ensuring large animal evacuation plans are included.
 - Continuing to watch weather patterns in case of an emergency.
 - Fact sheets are still currently with management and being reviewed.
 - Attending the Cal CART Summit this March.
- f. Cal CARTs (N. Tobias)**
- Finally received nonprofit status which will assist in shelter programs and getting resources to CARTs.
 - Approved for ASPCA grant for 75 livestock panels.
 - Cal CARTs's website is now online and functional.
 - Visit the website to become a member, and/or contact Cal CARTs if there is something you would like posted as a resource.
 - Cal CARTs Summit March 11-12, 2024. Program agenda is almost complete and also working with CVET on training.
- g. CDFW (R. Lovell)**
- Response to a disaster for commercial aquaculture are tied to the loss of power or road access.
 - Focus is keeping aquaculture alive in place and entails backup power, backup oxygen, and ensuring a timely response.
- h. CDSS (E. Clinton, J. Dulay)**
- Expanded internal animals working group, with a large focus on AB 781
 - Plan to work closely with Red Cross, CDFA, and Animals in Disasters Working Group.
 - Please forward any information on exercises, meetings, trainings, or updates to CDSS.
- i. Cal OES Regions**
- Coastal (E. Rubio):
 - Monitoring Sonoma County for HPAI.
 - Inland (K.Nielsen and S. Murdock.)

- Requesting a presentation to the working group from Humane Emergency Animal Rescue Team (HEART), organization established by Stefanie Geckler. Organization that trains volunteers how to be an animal control officer (ACO) in a time of need.

ACTION ITEM: S. Murdock will follow up with Stephanie Geckler for a presentation to the working group.

- Southern (J. Ortega):
 - Shared 2024 Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) Crosswalk, AB 781 summary, and link to the legislation with southern region emergency services coordinators (ESCs).
 - Strengthening knowledge base of AB 781 among southern region ESCs. Was able to provide summary and what Cal OES is looking for.
 - Recommending ESCs to research local non-profits and state links for pet and shelter preparedness.
 - In February, Riverside County will be working on a mega shelter plan and will have a pet component. May be reaching out to partners for input.
 - S. Brown (CDFA): Recommend contacting San Bernardino County Operational Area as a resource, as they have an award-winning mega shelter plan.
- Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) (L. Stanley):
 - Still need further development for a tool to request ACOs from EMMA.
 - Need descriptive tasks, capabilities, authorities, qualifications, and equipment that is clear for jurisdictions to build their EMMA requests.
 - R. Soulsby (Cal Animals) is willing to assist with this process, and L. Stanley is open to other working group members with a good understanding of local government and ACO capabilities.
 - Contact Lindsey.Stanley@caloes.ca.gov if interested in assisting.
- j. **Cal Animals (R. Soulsby)**
 - New disaster program manager: Ryan Soulsby
 - Focus on educating local authorities on disaster preparedness and response, resource typing, and MOUs.
 - Available to volunteer for any workgroup or collaboration.
 - Ensuring local animal control agencies know how to request resources through EMMA.
 - R. Soulsby is deployable. Cal Animals will have their active committee and will be in communication with local authorities.
- i. **ACOs (Los Angeles, Lt. P. Maradiaga)**
 - Conducted a readiness inspection for all southern care centers. Vehicles and centers were inspected for emergency response capabilities.
 - Conducted an activation and response training.

- Continuity plan submitted to Office of Emergency Management.
- In the process of revamping operational area emergency plan.

k. Ag Commissioners

ACTION ITEM: Dr. Jones will find a representative for Ag Commissioner by the next working group meeting.

II. Future of the Working Group

a. Potential 2024 Objectives

- Refocus on position typing.
- Meet and develop guidance or best practices for AB781.
- Implement corrective action/hotwashing after an event to prevent past challenges.
- Increased input from ACOs to build better tools and/or groups.
- Subcommittee to address shelter staffing in shelters.

ACTION ITEM: D. Chapman and A. Patterson to develop a survey response or poll for most pertinent objectives.

b. Meeting Format Recommendations

- Report on activities each meeting versus presentations on key topics.
 - Deeper discussions into specific topics.

III. Topics for next Working Group Meeting

a. The transition from Web EOC to Salesforce

- Transition will start February 15, 2024.
- Resource request functionality in Web EOC is no longer available.
- Scheduling training for Cal OES regions regarding Sales Force.

b. Potential presentation from Stefanie Geckler with HART.

This meeting adjourned at 10:16am.