



## Animal Protection Support Annex

### Regional Coordinating Organizations

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

### Local Jurisdictions

Alexandria  
Arlington County  
Bowie  
College Park  
District of Columbia  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Frederick County  
Gaithersburg  
Greenbelt  
Loudoun County  
Rockville  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
Prince William County  
Takoma Park

### State Government Organizations

Maryland Emergency Management Agency  
District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency  
Virginia Department of Emergency Management  
District of Columbia Department of Health  
Maryland Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)  
District of Columbia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters  
Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters

### Federal Government Organizations

Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Department of Health and Human Services

### Private-sector and Non-governmental Organizations

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)  
American Red Cross (ARC)  
Fund for Animals  
Maryland Animal Disaster Planning Advisory Committee (MD ADPAC)

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Purpose**

The Animal Protection Support Annex facilitates communication and coordination among regional entities to ensure an effective and timely response in emergency situations where animals and the animal industry may be affected. Planning for animals is a necessary part of the emergency response for the following reasons:

1. People refuse to evacuate without their pets and/or try to return early to unsafe areas, thereby putting themselves and public safety responders in danger;
2. Public health and safety risks are caused by animals at large;
3. Public health and safety risks are increased by animal carcasses;
4. Local economies that include animal-related businesses may be affected;
5. Animal issues are a potential public relations catastrophe; and
6. Need for control of self-responders (i.e., unauthorized volunteers) and misuse of donations.

### **B. Scope**

The Animal Protection Annex is intended to focus on information regarding animal- and animal-industry-related emergencies that have local and state impacts, and may require inter-jurisdictional coordination. The Animal Protection Support Annex also coordinates necessary information to determine animal services needs across the region as the result of a regional emergency.

1. This Annex is designed to facilitate communication and coordination activities among appropriate agencies in order to protect animals during an emergency situation and to protect the public from disease, injury, or other health public safety risks associated with an animal- or animal-industry-related emergency or disaster.
2. The scope of this Annex is broad because it is intended to include the activities and capabilities of organizations, governments, as well as private and non-governmental entities that might have a role in addressing an animal emergency within the National Capital Region (NCR). This approach to animal protection is intended to foster the development of a common vision for the protection and welfare of animals among COG jurisdictions.

3. For the purposes of this plan, animal protection includes the following:

Promoting information sharing in order to assist animal owners in protecting themselves and their animals in case of an emergency or disaster.

Promoting information sharing in order to assist the animal industry in protecting itself in case of an emergency or disaster.

Evaluating public health and safety risks potentially associated with animal emergencies and considering ways to avoid or minimize their effects.

Conducting conference calls in order to assess the status of each jurisdiction with regard to a particular emergency, and discussing how best to mount a regional response to the crisis.

4. The Animal Protection Support Annex is intended to focus on communication and coordination among appropriate agencies with regard to the following situations: a regional emergency or disaster situation arising from natural or human-induced catastrophes that places animals at the same potential risk as human beings, as well as other emergencies unique to an animal-service response, such as a fire at a local animal shelter.

## II. Policies

- A. The Animal Protection Support Annex will not usurp or override the authorities, policies or inter-jurisdictional agreements of any federal agency, state government, local government, or other jurisdiction.
- B. COG will facilitate coordination among member organizations to ensure that animal protection procedures are maintained and consistent with the stated missions and objectives of the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP).
- C. Essential Elements of Information (EEIs) will be coordinated through the Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System (RICCS) in instances of regional emergencies.
- D. The Animal Protection Support Annex cluster group will provide a liaison to R-ESF #5 as needed.
- E. The Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Memorandum of Understanding for Animal Services provides for mutual assistance among the signatories with regard to managing any emergency or disaster and facilitates the following:
  1. The maintenance of good order;

2. Provision of animal care and control; and
3. The maintenance of public safety within the region during a state of emergency or other crisis situation that requires animal services assistance beyond the capacity of a signatory jurisdiction or agency.

### **III. Situation**

#### **A. Emergency Condition**

Both large and small-scale emergencies (i.e., a fire at the local animal shelter, large-scale animal hoarder, or a natural disaster) may adversely affect an animal and/or the public on a regional basis.

#### **B. Planning Assumptions**

1. The Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Memorandum of Understanding for Animal Services is the primary instrument of coordination and communication of animal-related activities among COG jurisdictions.
2. For the purposes of this Annex, a “domestic pet” is defined as a cat or dog; “livestock” are defined as cattle, sheep, hogs, goats, horses, or poultry; “exotics” are defined as animals from another area of the world; and “wildlife” are defined as animals living in a natural undomesticated state.
3. Coordinating entities under the Animal Protection Support Annex will perform tasks under their own authority, as applicable, in addition to coordinating their animal-protection activities with the overall RECP.
4. Local coordinating jurisdictions are encouraged to be a signatory to the Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Memorandum of Understanding for Animal Services.
5. Individual coordinating jurisdictions are encouraged to develop local emergency animal-protection plans that include an inventory of resources located within each jurisdiction. This inventory should contain:

A roster of boarding facilities that can be used as temporary shelters;

A roster of locations housing animals;

A list of veterinarians in the NCR; and

Facilities or other resources with special or unique capabilities that are able to assist animals and animal owners during an emergency.

6. Each jurisdiction is encouraged to identify locations within their area where animal carcasses can be buried or burned and to establish MOUs in advance with the Department of Energy (DOE) to facilitate this process if the need occurs. In the event that carcasses need to be moved elsewhere, biosecurity measures should be developed for this operation and MOUs with other areas should be established.
7. Each jurisdiction is encouraged to develop and share information regarding supplies and equipment they would need in order to respond to an animal disaster; and to either purchase that equipment, develop MOUs for the sharing of equipment, or put contracts in effect to purchase at the time of the need. This list should be reviewed at least every six months and revised as necessary. A system for rotation of dated supplies (i.e., drugs) should be developed.
8. The welfare of animals, as well as any possible associated public-health implications, is sometimes forgotten during emergency situations. In addition, specific provisions for the welfare of animals, such as pets and livestock, are not always made in advance. As a result, animals are often abandoned and left to fend for themselves in times of emergency. Consequently, a serious problem may result and the animals may suffer deprivation and/or untreated injuries and also may create a public health and safety risk for human beings is created.
9. Working animals should be accorded the same protection as other animals.
10. Pet owners evacuating from a vulnerable community who are not seeking temporary shelter in a mass-care center should make every effort to relocate with their pets.
11. While there are extended care and temporary boarding facilities for domestic pets throughout the region, owners should have a plan for protecting their pets that includes provisions for evacuating with pets or using pet-friendly sheltering.
12. Livestock should be confined in a secure structure on high ground with access to food and water, if possible. Animal owners who evacuate should take with them appropriate identification, immunization, and health records for all animals left behind.
13. Proper preparation and effective coordination of animal issues enhances the ability of emergency personnel to protect both human and animal health and safety.
14. A roster of veterinary hospitals, kennels, and other boarding facilities that will participate in the temporary sheltering of domestic pets may be developed, maintained, and shared with appropriate regional agencies and organizations.
15. A roster of locations housing animals may be developed as part of the Animal Protection Annex. This list may be maintained and shared with appropriate regional agencies and organizations.

16. Local jurisdictions shall designate an Animal Services Representative to be part of the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This person shall have animal protection services expertise, the authority to act in case of emergency situations, as well as the ability to identify and coordinate available regional animal services-related resources.

## **IV. Concept of Coordination**

### **A. General**

1. Major and minor emergencies, as well as potential or actual regional emergencies that cause animal specific crisis situations will be cause for utilization of the Animal Protection Support Annex.
2. The Animal Protection Support Annex will establish a capability to collect, analyze, synthesize, and disseminate information concerning regional emergencies, including those of the traditional realm and those unique to an animal-service response, through the RICCS.
3. The supporting regional agencies in this Annex will coordinate and execute their respective animal service and protection responsibilities during the emergency.
4. The Animal Protection Cluster Group liaison to R-ESF #5 will monitor the situation and address all information requests regarding emergency animal protection.
5. To facilitate coordination among R-ESFs and Support Annexes, the RICCS will monitor their respective emergency-specific activities and will report all accumulated information back to the R-ESFs and Annexes involved.

### **B. Organization**

The Animal Services Disaster subcommittee, one of six formed by the Animal Services Committee, is composed of regional animal services representatives and is chaired by the Deputy Director of the Animal Services Division for Montgomery County.

The Animal Protection Cluster Group is composed of representatives from all local coordinating organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions, as listed on page one and two of the Annex. (Additional coordinating organizations and agencies may be added to the list as the Annex is further developed). The group will provide 24-hour contact information and participate in RICCS notification and coordination in the event of an animal related emergency. Subgroups of the Animal Protection Cluster will be formed and composed as follows:

1. Designated representatives of the participating local government jurisdictions' animal services agency, as well as HSUS Disaster Services and Fund for Animals representatives; and

2. Directors of each jurisdiction's animal welfare shelter(s), as well as HSUS Disaster Services and Fund for Animals representatives (to initiate a conference call, this subgroup must coordinate through their local government animal services agency or the government designated representative, i.e., contracted agency.)

The Animal Services Committee is a regional task force with representatives from the 17 COG jurisdictions and from private sector and non-governmental organizations to share and coordinate information regarding animal services current events, problems, and training opportunities throughout the region. Chaired by the Associate Director of the Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources, Animal Management Division, the Committee has six standing subcommittees, including finance, humane education, training, wildlife, disaster services, and dangerous dogs.

Coordination of regional animal protection and service issues will be initiated by the Animal Services Disaster Subcommittee. This group will act as the Annex representative in policy discussions, negotiations with other R-ESF and Annex clusters, and in other matters.

In order to address emergency situations whenever they occur, an Animal Protection Cluster Group will be formed by the Animal Services Committee.

### **C. Notification**

Upon request of any participating Animal Protection Support Annex organization, agency, or jurisdiction, the RICCS will:

1. Notify the Animal Protection Support Annex's appropriate regional coordinating agencies;
2. Identify support agencies who may need to supply subject-matter expertise to the RICCS;
3. Establish communication with appropriate state agencies; and
4. Establish communication with appropriate federal agencies.

If any participating Animal Protection organization, agency, or jurisdiction is made aware of a potential or actual regional emergency, communications will be made in accordance with RICCS protocols and in cooperation with R-ESF #2—Communications Infrastructure.

### **D. Coordination**

In the event of an emergency situation that may have regional animal-protection implications, the Animal Protection Cluster, or subgroup thereof, will use the following protocol for conference calls:

## 1. Initial Actions

Upon detection of an animal-related incident, COG, the affected jurisdiction, or any of the local jurisdictions, as defined on page one of the Annex, will make an internal assessment of the situation. The affected jurisdiction will serve as the lead for the Animal Protection Cluster. If COG or the affected local government jurisdiction(s) determines that the event is of regional significance, it may contact the RICCS concerning the regional emergency and ask that the CAOs (in the event of a full-scale regional emergency, and not an animal-specific emergency) and the Animal Services Cluster, or subgroup thereof, be notified of the regional emergency.

Based on the nature and extent of the regional emergency, COG, the affected jurisdiction, or any of the local jurisdictions may initiate a conference call to be convened through the RICCS to discuss the animal-specific or regional emergency.

The conference call would be used to determine the type and extent of the animal-specific or regional emergency, ongoing actions, coordination among jurisdictions' animal services agencies, responses and public messages, identify the next steps, and discuss any other key regional issues.

## 2. Continuing Actions

Additional conference calls may be scheduled or may be initiated by COG, the affected jurisdiction, or by any of the local jurisdictions as required by the ongoing regional or animal-specific emergency.

There will be continuous monitoring, coordination, communication, and response for each incident with information facilitated through the RICCS.

Subject matter experts from any participating animal services organization, agency, or jurisdiction will provide the appropriate analysis of the regional impact of the regional emergency to the CAOs, if necessary, and the Animal Protection Cluster through the RICCS to facilitate the regional response.

## 3. Stand Down

At the point where the regional emergency is no longer affecting more than one jurisdiction, a notification will be made through the RICCS and a stand down debriefing conference call will take place.

#### 4. After-action Critique

Once the regional emergency has been terminated, the Animal Protection Cluster will prepare an Incident Assessment Summary Report on the lessons learned and will present this at a regularly scheduled meeting.

#### 5. Coordinating Capabilities

There will be coordination with Regional Emergency Support Functions:

R-ESF #3—Public Works and Engineering

- Coordination regarding disposal of animal carcasses

R-ESF #4, #9, and #10—Fire, Technical Rescue, and Hazardous Materials Operations

- Coordination and communication with US&R personnel for animals left behind and/or individuals remaining behind in an incident situation

R-ESF #5—Information Planning

- Coordination and communication with RICCS

R-ESF #6—Mass Care

- Identification of potential pet shelters near approved emergency American Red Cross shelters

R-ESF #7—Resource Support

- Coordination of additional resources needed from outside affected jurisdictions

R-ESF #8—Health, Mental Health, and Medical Services

- Identification of diseases which have public health significance, including epidemiological and environmental health activities
- Coordination regarding mental health implications during incident situation
- Provision of resources for people with animals and animal-protection responders

R-ESF #13—Law Enforcement

- Coordination with public safety authorities in cases of animal-specific emergencies and/or evacuation situations

R-ESF #14—Public Information

- Provision of information on location of animal shelters and other animal-related matters before, during, and after the disaster.
- Coordination of public education efforts such as brochure distribution.

R-ESF #15—Donations and Volunteer Management

- Refer volunteer personnel to the appropriate jurisdictions' agencies

- Coordinate efforts to provide food, water, shelter and other physical needs to animals

## V. Responsibilities

### A. Animal Protection Support Annex Coordinating Organizations

Agencies participating in a regional response will contribute EEIs to RICCS based on the regional emergency.

The Animal Services Committee is composed of local coordinating jurisdictions outside of those defined as member governments in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, as this committee, and thereby the Animal Protection Annex, extends its coordination to Anne Arundel County.

### B. Essential Elements of Information

Coordinating agencies are responsible for providing information concerning animal protection activities to RICCS and to their group (TBD), in emergencies with regional or animal-specific implications as stated in the planning assumption for the Animal Protection Support Annex.

1. One of the primary purposes of the RECP is to facilitate the exchange of information among the signatory agencies during regional public emergencies. R-ESF #5—Information and Planning is responsible for the exchange, analysis, reporting and dissemination of regional information. R-ESF #5 contains detailed information about the process of information exchange and describes regional EEIs that have been determined as the minimum essential information categories to satisfy coordination needs across the R-ESFs and through the RICCS.
2. During the Animal Protection Support Annex, conference call, the agencies listed are responsible for providing the following essential elements of information concerning regional emergencies involving animals during the conference call:

Status of transportation system;

Status of key contractor support;

Status of any animal issues (disease potential, harm to human population, etc.);

Location of the animal emergency, including considerations of the demographic profile of the affected locale(s);

Jurisdictions involved;

Status and analysis of initial assessments, including considerations of any injuries or medical emergencies;

Resource availability, terms, and conditions, logistical considerations;

Response priorities;

Potential implications;

Need for other functional support;

Previous lessons learned and their current applicability; and

Special circumstances (e.g., zoos, research laboratories, or seniors who are pet owners).

C. Special unique capabilities, needs, requirements, or specific organizations are addressed below:

1. Biological, Nuclear, Incendiary, Chemical, or Explosive (B-NICE) weapons;
1. Animal diseases;
2. Special rescue situations;
3. Zoos;
4. Private, non-governmental, organizations, resources, and agreements include the following:

Humane Society of the United States: HSUS' Disaster Services Program provides a comprehensive approach to disaster education and training, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. When a disaster strikes, the HSUS Disaster Response Teams (DART) move quickly to assess the damage and evaluate the impact on animals, and then to provide the most appropriate support to the local community. Working with local emergency responders, local human associations and shelters, and local disaster volunteers, the disaster response program is supported by a network of trained and equipped staff volunteers available for response.

American Red Cross: The American Red Cross works in conjunction with HSUS and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to transform the caring and concern of the American people into immediate action.

Fund for Animals: The Fund for Animals maintains animal care facilities for the rescued and orphaned. It works for the protection of wildlife and domestic animals through advocacy campaigns, education, legislation, litigation, and hands-on care.

Maryland Animal Disaster Planning Committees (ADPAC): These committees are organized nationwide by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in collaboration with local animal disaster authorities and humane organizations. In Maryland, the MD ADPAC is co-chaired by Dr. Jack Casper, DVM, responsible for government disaster planning for animals and Anne Culver, Director of Disaster Services for HSUS. ADPAC membership is open to everyone and its purpose is to bring together all organizations interested in protecting animals against disaster threats and to coordinate in responding to animals in emergency situations.

5. Specialists (For example, animal-specific resources, animal therapy).

## **VI. Preparedness Cycle**

The Preparedness Cycle is a means of assuring a high level of readiness for the RECP through continuous improvement in the plans and procedures. The cycle begins with sound planning practices, followed by training of personnel who will be engaged in executing those plans. Once personnel have been trained, plans and procedures are tested through exercises or simulations designed to check planning assumptions against a range of scenarios. The performance of the respective organizations is evaluated as a means of refining the plans, and the cycle repeats. The Animal services committee and COG are responsible for maintaining the preparedness cycle.

### **A. Planning**

1. The Animal Services Committee is responsible, as the broad animal protection regional body, for continuously coordinating planning under the Animal Protection Support Annex, including review and revisions of the Annex. All participating animal services coordinating agencies will contribute to the planning of the Annex.
2. Planning will include a comprehensive assessment of current capabilities in the animal services and protection emergency response and coordination needs.

**B. Training**

Ongoing and scheduled training related to the RECP and the Animal Protection Support Annex responsibilities will be developed and carried out. Training will include workshops and educational campaigns to assist local communities, animal services personnel, and coordinating agencies.

**C. Exercise**

In order for the RECP to be effective, a series of animal-protection communication and coordination simulations/ and exercises are to be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis. The exercise series includes tabletop exercises, functional communications and coordination drills, and field exercises conducted by COG or other organizations.

**D. Evaluation**

In order to facilitate continuous improvement of the Animal Protection Support Annex's communication and coordination of animal protection-related activities, as designated in the RECP, the plans, policies and procedures that support readiness and proficiency are to be evaluated through real-world experiences and exercises.

**E. Corrective Action**

Lessons learned from exercises and real world experiences will be captured in a corrective action system and the issues tracked to ensure that they are resolved and incorporated into plan revisions as appropriate.

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