



Agricultural Emergency Management Preparedness & Response Planning (AEM-PReP) for 2015 & Beyond

VS leads the way to ensure our nation is prepared and effective in managing animal health issues that could threaten the U.S. economy or quality of life for people or their animals. When faced with agricultural livestock and poultry health incidents, VS will lead national and regional responses. When requested, and when applicable resources are available, VS will also support responses to other incidents and hazards especially those involving animals.

VS has a long history of animal health emergency and incident response and is adapting its long-standing approaches to the changes occurring at agency, department and federal levels. Although much of the basic framework for emergency response is in place, VS is challenged to become a more proactive response organization.

VS' Charge for Emergency Management

- Lead responses to agricultural livestock and poultry health incidents and support responses to other incidents involving animals
- Establish a culture of readiness that permeates VS; readiness includes having a fully capable data management system.
- Collaborate on preparedness and response with industry, States, Tribes, and other Federal agencies is crucial to success.

Challenges

1. Cultivate a culture of response readiness that permeates VS.
2. Leverage resources with partners.
3. Refine the VS interface with the broader response.

Proposed VS Goals for Emergency Management

Goal 1: Cultivate a culture of response readiness that permeates VS

1. Clarify the core and secondary scope of response
2. Clarify roles, responsibilities, and resources
3. Develop new tools and methods
4. Ensure that VS has a capable system to effectively and efficiently manage and share emergency management data
5. Train employees in field capabilities and methods that are essential to our response
6. Expand exercise opportunities including a comprehensive training/exercise calendar
7. Strengthen VS Incident Management Teams.
8. Focus on continuity of business planning and other ways to help industry recover from emergencies

Goal 2: Leverage resources

1. Develop a steady, predictable stream of funding
2. Succession planning is key to ensure the ability to respond with the required expertise
3. Expand the pool of resources by sharing similar capabilities across APHIS and across other agencies
4. Improve VS' ability to integrate outside resources into responses

Goal 3: Refine the VS interface with the broader response network

1. Improve collaboration with States and other partners
2. Plan for flexible and scalable responses
3. Incorporate accredited veterinarians and other resources into responses
4. Align with Administration, USDA, and APHIS strategic directions.

Proposed Future Directions & Activities

By the end of 2012, the AEM PReP working group recommends that VS: 1) provide full support to develop and transition to a fully-capable data management system, 2) continue to support business continuity planning and risk assessment, 3) use Incident Command System (ICS) methods more in VS employees' non-emergency work and train VS personnel to be official ICS trainers, 4) enhance the support for Incident Management Team (IMT) Methods, Training, and Qualifications, and 5) support efforts to recruit for emergency management positions and to incorporate the National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps (NAHERC) and accredited veterinarians into responses.

For 2013 and beyond, the group suggests investing more in 1) new tools and methods, 2) training and hiring practices that will ensure VS continues to have needed core expertise, 3) exercise programs to ensure effective responses, and 4) steady, predictable funding streams.

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