



Frequently Asked Questions

1. WHY DOES VETERINARY SERVICES (VS) HAVE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAMS (NIMTS)?

Response to animal disease outbreaks is a critical VS mission area. Incident Management Teams (IMTs) provide VS with the capability to respond to disease outbreaks and other animal health emergency response events. VS deploys a National IMT when an outbreak exceeds a State's capacity and resources to respond. NIMTs conduct training and preparedness activities in order to ensure that operations during an emergency response situation are organized, effective, and efficient.

2. HOW MANY NIMTS DOES VS HAVE?

VS has 5 NIMTs, named by color (Red, Green, Blue, Gold, and Indigo). Each team consists of 26 personnel, all volunteers.

3. WHEN ARE THE NIMTS ON-CALL?

The 5 NIMTs rotate being on-call for 3-week (21-day) periods. Thus, each is on-call for 3 weeks, then off-call for 12 weeks. A calendar displaying on-call periods is available on the NIMT SharePoint site.

4. DO NIMTS EVER DEPLOY OUTSIDE OF THEIR ON-CALL PERIOD?

It is rare for an NIMT to deploy outside of its on-call period, but it may happen under certain circumstances. The most common of these circumstances is when multiple NIMTs would need to be deployed at the same time for a large-scale outbreak response, such as the highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak in 2015.

5. HOW LONG ARE NIMT DEPLOYMENTS?

IMT deployments are typically 3 weeks (21 days); however, deployments may be shortened or extended due to operational considerations.

6. HOW OFTEN DO THE NIMTS DEPLOY?

Obviously, we cannot predict when disease outbreaks will occur. As such, there have been times of heavy IMT deployments and long stretches with no IMT deployments. VS has deployed NIMTs (or portions of a team) for responses to outbreaks of bovine tuberculosis (CA), highly pathogenic avian influenza (WA, OR, CA, MN, IA, WI, IN), and new world screwworm (FL).

7. WHO CAN SERVE ON AN NIMT?

Any VS employee is eligible to serve on an NIMT. Talented VS employees volunteer to be part of NIMTs and improve VS' emergency response capability.

8. DO I NEED TO BE A VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICER OR AN ANIMAL HEALTH TECHNICIAN TO SERVE ON AN IMT?

No. VS needs talented individuals of many different skills and abilities to serve on NIMTs. The most important attributes of successful NIMT members are: flexibility, adaptability, organization, attention to detail, and ability to work in a fast-paced environment.

9. WHAT TYPES OF POSITIONS ARE ON NIMTS?

All IMTs include the following positions. Many of these positions are two-deep to allow for redundancy, succession planning, and the capacity to respond to large-scale outbreaks.

- Incident Commander (2)
- Operations Section Chief (2)
- Planning Section Chief (2)
- Logistics Section Chief (2)
- Administration/Finance Section Chief (2)
- Safety Officer (2)
- Liaison Officer (2)
- Public Information Officer (2)
- Situation Unit Leader (1)
- Resource Unit Leader (1)
- Documentation Unit Leader (1)
- Disease Reporting Officer (1)
- Information Technology (2)
- EMRS Specialist (2)
- Epidemiologist (2)

10. HOW DO I KNOW WHICH POSITION(S) WOULD BE A GOOD FIT FOR ME?

All NIMT positions have a written position description that can be found on the NIMT SharePoint site. Talking with current NIMT members can also help to assess which positions may be the best fit for your skill set.

11. ARE THERE TRAINING PREREQUISITES TO SERVE IN CERTAIN POSITIONS?

The only mandatory prerequisites to serve on an IMT are completion of ICS-100 (Introduction to the Incident Command System [ICS]) and ICS-200 (ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents), both of which can be taken through AgLearn. Additional training courses are preferred, but these can be taken after being assigned to an NIMT.

12. HOW MUCH TIME DO I NEED TO DEVOTE TO SERVING ON AN NIMT?

Even when you are not deployed, there are still time obligations to conduct NIMT training and preparedness.

As an NIMT member, you can expect to be invited to 2-3 training or seminar events each year. Each of these events are 2-3 days in duration and may require travel (paid by APHIS Emergency

Management Safety and Security Division [EMSSD]). These events are typically held at one of the hub locations.

Additionally, each team will have regularly scheduled team meetings (frequency and duration are at the discretion of the Incident Commander) that are typically held by phone. There are also NIMT position-specific working groups that meet regularly by phone to improve processes and procedures.

13. HOW CAN I VOLUNTEER TO SERVE ON AN IMT?

All prospective NIMT members are required to fill out an NIMT nomination form. This form allows you to summarize your qualifications and select which NIMT positions you are interested in. Once your nomination form is completed, it should be submitted to Pat Fritts. The Incident Commanders from each team can then review your nomination form and decide if they want to offer you an opportunity to serve on their team.

14. DO I NEED MY SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL TO SERVE ON AN NIMT

If you are a VS employee, supervisory approval and support is not required prior to submitting a nomination; however, your supervisor will be contacted for approval before a final decision to place you on a team is made.

APHIS employees who do not work for VS should discuss their desire to work on a VS NIMT with their supervisor. Supervisory approval is required when you submit your nomination. Nominations submitted without a supervisor's signature will not be considered.

15. ONCE ASSIGNED TO AN NIMT, HOW DO I GET ADDITIONAL TRAINING THAT IS SPECIFIC TO MY ASSIGNED POSITION?

Once you are selected for and assigned to an NIMT position, you will be scheduled for any additional training required for that position by APHIS EMSSD. This includes the following courses:

- ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
- ICS-400 Advanced ICS
- O-305 All-Hazards USFA Type 3 Incident Management Team Training
- Position-specific training.

16. ONCE ASSIGNED TO AN NIMT, DO I HAVE TO STAY IN THE SAME POSITION?

No. You can move to other positions with the approval of your team's Incident Commander.

17. IF I AM SELECTED FOR AN NIMT, HOW LONG AM I OBLIGATED TO SERVE ON THAT TEAM?

The NIMTs are staffed with volunteers. Thus, there is no minimum length of time or time limit applied to your service on an NIMT. Volunteers can remain on an NIMT for as long as they like and resign whenever they are no longer able to serve.

18. WHAT HAPPENS IF I'M ASSIGNED TO AN NIMT, BUT I CAN NO LONGER SERVE?

You can resign from your NIMT position at any time for any reason. There are no adverse consequences for resigning.

19. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ON VS NIMTS?

Access the [NIMT SharePoint site](#) to view current rosters, a calendar with on-call periods, the VS NIMT newsletter, and additional informational materials.

20. WHO CAN I CONTACT WITH ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Additional NIMT-related questions can be directed to Pat Fritts. Additionally, you can reach out to personnel on the NIMT rosters—all of them will be able to assist with any questions you may have.