

California Animal Response
Emergency System
(CARES)

(Awaiting approval by the CA Emergency Council)
June 21, 2001

I. INTRODUCTION

Following the 1997 floods, the Governor's Flood Emergency Action Team (FEAT) recommended that "OES in cooperation with local animal control officers, the Department of Food and Agriculture, and U.C. Cooperative Extension, review procedures for livestock and pet evacuation and develop animal safety and relocation procedures to be used in future emergencies" (FEAT Final Report, p. 86). As a result the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) facilitated the formation of a committee to develop a comprehensive state plan for responding to animal issues during disasters.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish the working structure for the California Animal Response in Emergency System (CARES). This system organizes and coordinates the response of state agencies in assisting local government and volunteer organizations to address the needs of animals during disasters, and defines the roles and responsibilities of participants in CARES.

III. PRIMARY AND SUPPORT AGENCIES

Primary Agency:

California Department of Food and Agriculture

Support Agencies:

Governor's Office of Emergency Services
California Department of Fish and Game
University of California at Davis Cooperative Extension Service
California Department of Health Services
California Department of Social Services
Local Emergency Services, Animal Control Officers, County Animal Coordinators
California Veterinary Medical Association
Community-Based Organizations
State and National Animal Support Agencies and Organizations

IV. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

CALIFORNIA ANIMAL RESPONSE EMERGENCY SYSTEM (CARES)

Animal -	Commercial livestock, companion animals, exotic pets, and restricted species
Captive wildlife -	Any non-domestic animals in captivity as a pet, exhibition animal, or production animal
Emergency -	See State of California Emergency Plan, May 1998, page 89 (Federal Definition) and page 94 (State definition)
Livestock -	Any cattle, sheep, swine, goat, or any horse mule or other equine whether live or dead (FAC § 18663)
Pet/companion animal -	Any household animal including, but not limited to, cats, dogs, or other carnivores whether or not for public exhibition (FAC § 19211)
Restricted species -	Any animal requiring a license or permit from the Department of Fish and Game (See California Department of Fish and Game Manual 671 for listing)
Service animals -	Animals specially trained to guide, signal, or assist people with disabilities or special needs
State Emergency Plan -	The State of California Emergency Plan, as approved by the Governor, which serves as the basis for statewide emergency planning and response (dated May 1998)

ACRONYMS

ARC -	American Red Cross
CACDA -	California Animal Control Directors Association
CACASA -	California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association
CARES -	California Animal Response in Emergency System
CDFA -	California Department of Food and Agriculture
CDFG -	California Department of Fish and Game
CHRB -	California Horse Racing Board

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CVMA -	California Veterinary Medical Association
DHS -	California Department of Health Services
DOC -	Department Operations Center
DSS -	California Department of Social Services
EARS -	Emergency Animal Rescue Service
EOC -	Emergency Operations Center
FAC -	California Food and Agriculture Code
FEAT -	Flood Emergency Action Team
HSUS -	Humane Society of the United States
OA -	Operational Area
OES -	The Governor's Office of Emergency Services
REOC-	Regional Emergency Operations Center
RIMS -	Response Information Management System
SEMS -	Standardized Emergency Management System - the system used in all California emergency incidents during multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency response
SOC -	State Operations Center
UC Davis -	University of California, Davis

V. CARES COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- A. The CARES Committee is responsible for developing statewide guidance and policy for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation involving animals before, during, and after a disaster in accordance with SEMS.
- B. The CARES Committee will consist of the following state agencies: CDFA, OES, CDFG, DHS, DSS, UC Davis, CHRB.

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The following non-state agencies have agreed to participate: CACASA, CACDA, CVMA, EARS, HSUS, ARC.

- C. Other agencies may participate upon request and approval by the Committee.
- D. A CDFA representative will chair the CARES Committee.

VI. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. It is assumed that the following activities have occurred prior to initiating the actions outlined in this document:
 - The State assumes that local government has taken all necessary actions to respond to the emergency prior to requesting assistance from the state;
 - Local government has responded to the emergency by activating its emergency response plan and response teams;
 - Local government has called upon its local resources, implementing mutual aid and cooperative agreements for additional services and personnel.
- B. During a disaster, if local resources are insufficient to meet existing needs, OAs may request state assistance through the REOC. Requests from cities and other local jurisdictions must be made through the OA. CDFA will coordinate with State OES to identify and task state agencies to assist local government with animal-related issues in accordance with SEMS. CDFA may also identify non-government organizations, community based organizations, and private sector resources to assist local government during disaster response and recovery.
- C. During times that a REOC is not activated, cities and counties may access information and/or direction through CARES by contacting CDFA.
- D. CDFA is the lead state agency for animal-related issues through CARES. CDFA will perform its disaster duties in accordance with the California State Emergency Plan, its Administrative Order, and state laws and regulations.
- E. CDFA shall activate CARES, when requested by OES.
- F. CARES response activities are coordinated through the appropriate REOC, and in coordination with the SOC.
- G. The County Animal Coordinator or person designated by the County Emergency Plan or County Emergency Services Director will be the contact for CARES at the local government level. County animal coordinators

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should be skilled professionals with knowledge of local animal plan(s) and available resources.

- H. CDFA shall coordinate all requests for federal assistance through the SOC.
- I. If CDFA or a local city or OA request assistance from a national animal rescue and support group, those rescue organizations will be requested to work within the structure of SEMS. These groups shall operate under the general direction of, and in coordination with, the local Incident Commander or County Animal Coordinator in accordance with the Incident Command structure established for that incident.

VII. ORGANIZATION OF CARES

- A. The primary and support agencies identified in CARES, at the local and state level, and local emergency management, should develop and maintain a current coordinated and cooperative supplement or annex to the local emergency response plan, which includes operating procedures, and checklists. A copy of these documents should be provided to CDFA as the lead agency for CARES.
- B. When activated, CARES participants shall operate under the plan and its supporting documents, in accordance with SEMS.
 - 1. CDFA personnel shall provide disaster direction through the CDFA DOC. This direction shall address all emergency response activities of CDFA and is not limited to the operation of CARES. The DOC shall use SEMS and facilitate the assignment of personnel to handle requests for assistance, and to ensure those requests for assistance are prioritized, completed, and documented.
 - 2. CDFA, as the primary agency, shall provide sufficient personnel to staff the REOC and/or SOC, 24 hours-per-day, seven days-per-week while operational or as requested by OES. The CDFA personnel shall be skilled professionals qualified to expedite decisions for the agency.
- C. Responding state agencies shall operate within the CARES structure during a disaster through the leadership of CDFA personnel.
 - 1. Supporting state agencies shall be appropriately tasked by State OES based on known capabilities, training, and in accordance with their operating procedures and applicable Administrative Orders.

2. Should a conflict arise between CDFA and a CARES support agency during disaster operations, the SOC or REOC Operations Chief or Director shall act to resolve the issue.

VIII. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

A. Mitigation

1. Information shall be provided to inform the public about disaster planning and safety for animals through news releases and/or brochures.
2. Guidance will be developed to reduce future losses of animals in disasters from various natural and man-made hazards.

B. Preparedness

1. Local emergency management and local animal control organizations should cooperatively develop and maintain an animal response plan as an annex or reference to their County Emergency Plan.
2. CDFA will identify resources available from CARES participants.
3. CDFA will compile a database of local resources to be used for animals in disasters in each OA. The resources included in these lists shall include: county animal coordinator contact information, available volunteers and personnel, available supplies, available facilities, and available transportation.
4. CARES participants should participate in training and disaster exercises as requested by OES.
5. Other types of assistance may be utilized to further disaster preparedness efforts including legislation, preparation or certification of training materials, and/or the creation of Memorandums of Understanding, which are SEMS compliant.

C. Response

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1. CDFA shall activate CARES when requested by OES. However, at any time during a local emergency, information and/or direction from CARES can be accessed by contacting CDFA.
2. Local agencies should, and state agencies shall, participate in CARES to share information about available storage sites and staging areas for animal food and medical supplies, animal shelter and confinement areas, transportation resources, and any other additional supplies.
3. A CARES Representative shall coordinate with the REOC/SOC Public Information Officer and DSS, the Department responsible for care and shelter, to ensure that information on the location and availability of animal shelters and animal care resources is provided to the public and to other response organizations before, during, and after the disaster.
4. Local agencies should, and state agencies shall, participate in CARES to assist local government, through the REOC/SOC, to coordinate the evacuation of animals prior to an impending disaster and rescue or capture animals impacted by a disaster.
5. State agencies participating in CARES should assist with emergency support for affected commercial livestock, companion animals, exotic pets, and restricted species in accordance with their operating procedures and applicable Administrative Orders. Service animals will be allowed access in accordance with the National American Red Cross Care and Shelter policy.
6. Local and state agencies participating in CARES shall coordinate with State DHS and local health officials to identify, prevent, and control animal diseases that may impact public health.
7. State agencies participating in CARES shall assist with efforts to provide food, water, shelter, and veterinary care to affected animals.
8. CARES participants may be requested to assist with the allocation of supplies and resources to OAs through the REOC/SOC in accordance with SEMS.

D. Recovery

1. Local and state agencies participating in CARES shall coordinate with CDFA and State OES for the consolidation, distribution, or deactivation of state resources.

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2. CARES participants should assist the county animal coordinators and local support organizations to coordinate veterinary medical services until they can be provided locally.
3. CARES participants should coordinate with the Operational Area EOC to remove and properly dispose of animal carcasses.
4. CARES participants should coordinate damage assessment with the County Animal Coordinators and County Agricultural Commissioners.
5. CARES participants may assist with the reunification of animals with their owners.

IX. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Primary Agency:

California Department of Food and Agriculture

1. Shall, in coordination with County Animal Coordinators, CVMA, and UC Davis, develop and maintain lists of resources, County Animal Coordinators, CVMA volunteer medical personnel, and other volunteers and agencies able to provide assistance.
2. Shall develop and maintain standard operating procedures for prioritizing decision making during response activities. These procedures should be consistent with the procedures of State OES and the support agencies and organizations involved.
3. With assistance from State OES, shall release information on disaster planning and safety for animals through news releases and/or brochures.
4. May conduct training for county animal coordinators and other interested organizations.
5. Shall develop and maintain a roster for 24 hours-per-day, seven days-per-week staff coverage of the REOC.
6. Shall activate CARES, when requested by State OES.
7. If requested, shall assist county animal coordinators with identification of suitable facilities for shelters and confinement areas.

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8. Shall be prepared at all times to make reports, either verbally or through RIMS.
9. Shall coordinate activities with the appropriate sections of the local government EOC's, REOC, and SOC.
10. With assistance from State OES, shall coordinate animal issues during multi-state disaster responses with the Federal Emergency Management Agency or emergency management agencies in other states.
11. With assistance from the CARES committee, shall annually review and update the CARES Plan and Standard Operating Procedures after a major event and complete an after-action report within 90 days.

B. Support Agencies:

1. Governor's Office of Emergency Services
 - a. Shall assist CDFA in coordinating emergency response resources during disasters.
 - b. Shall assist CDFA in developing and review standard operating procedures.
 - c. Shall assist CARES participants in coordinating and reporting damage assessment.
 - d. Shall assist state agencies participating in CARES in releasing information on disaster planning and safety for animals through news releases and/or brochures.
 - e. Shall conduct disaster preparation exercises in conjunction with CDFA.
2. California Department of Fish and Game
 - a. May be available to assist permitted facilities in the location of suitable alternative housing for their restricted species.
 - b. May conduct warnings and assist in the evaluation of confined wildlife and exotic animals including, but not limited to, those held under CDFG permits.

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- c. May assist with the assessment of lost or escaped captive wildlife, exotic animals, oil-soaked birds or other species as deemed appropriate.
 - d. May coordinate the use of specialized personnel and equipment to recapture potentially dangerous escaped captive wildlife and exotic animals.
- 3. University of California Cooperative Extension Service
 - a. Should identify and educate animal owners on disaster planning for animals.
- 4. California Department of Health Services
 - a. Shall coordinate with CDFA to diagnose, prevent, and control zoonotic diseases and other animal related conditions that may impact public health.
- 5. California Department of Social Services
 - a. Shall coordinate with CDFA to provide information on the location and availability of potential animal shelters, and animal care resources to the public and other responding organizations before, during, and after a disaster.
- 6. Local Emergency Services, Animal Control Officers, or County Animal Coordinators
 - a. Should identify possible locations within the county for emergency animal shelters and confinement areas.
 - b. Should maintain a list of local sources of food and water for sheltered and confined animals.
 - c. Should maintain a list of local transportation resources.
 - d. Should establish an adoption procedure consistent with local statutes for unclaimed animals.
 - e. Should develop plans and agreements for the disposal of animal carcasses.

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- f. May request assistance from CARES participants, when local resources are insufficient to meet needs.
 - g. Should identify and document animal injuries and deaths as a result of a disaster.
7. California Veterinary Medical Association
- a. Should appoint a liaison to coordinate with CDFA for veterinary medical support during a disaster.
 - b. Should coordinate volunteer veterinarians and technicians to provide veterinary medical care.
 - c. Should document animal injuries and deaths under the care of the veterinary disaster team.
8. Community-Based Organizations
- a. May provide volunteers to be registered and trained Disaster Service Workers as personnel to support CARES.
 - b. May provide additional resources.
9. State and National Animal Support Agencies and Organizations
- a. When requested, may work through CARES using SEMS to provide damage assessment personnel to assist in determining what resources may be needed from outside the OA.
 - b. When requested, may work through CARES using SEMS to deliver services, supplies, or other forms of assistance in coordination with the County Animal Coordinator.

X. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

CDFA shall maintain trained staff to document and track response related costs in coordination with the Finance and Administration Section of the REOC. Local and state agencies participating in animal rescue and shelter during a disaster should keep complete and accurate records of incurred costs for potential reimbursement.

IX. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES

California State Emergency Plan
Administrative Orders for State Agencies

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California Emergency Services Act
California Master Mutual Aid Agreement
Standardized Emergency Management System Regulations
California Governor Executive Orders (W-9-91, W-156-97, etc.)
State of Emergency/State of War Standby Orders (Standby Order #8)
California Government Code
State Agency Emergency Plans
 MOUs, Letters of Agreement, Contracts, Joint Powers Agreements, etc. (e.g.,
 HSUS MOU with the American Red Cross)
State Disaster Service Worker Rules and Regulations
Emergency Planning Guidance for Local Government, 1998, State OES
Guide for All-Hazards Emergency Operations Planning, State and Local Guide
 (SLG) 101, FEMA, September 1996, Attachment G: Health and Medical,
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