

## **Communications Plan for an Animal-Specific Threat**

In the event of a possible animal threat event, Veterinary Services (VS) would take the following communications measures to inform Federal, State, local, and industry representatives of the situation and necessary precautions to be taken. In addition to the following activities, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Emergency Operations Center (AEOC) would immediately be activated and emergency personnel could be reached at 800-601-9327. After hour phone calls to the AEOC are forwarded to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Emergency Operations Center, which is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### Within the First 4 Hours of Notification of an Animal-Specific Threat:

- A conference call will be immediately set up with the VS Management Team (VSMT), State Veterinarians, and Area Veterinarians in Charge (AVIC) to alert them of the situation and discuss necessary precautions.
- A second conference call will be held with industry representatives, laboratory officials, and specialty practitioners to alert them of the situation and discuss necessary precautions.
- A follow-up Emergency Management Operations Center (EMOC) Notice would be sent out by e-mail to the VSMT; State Veterinarians; AVIC's; all Federal, State, local, and industry representatives; laboratory officials; and specialty practitioners, alerting people to be aware of unusual symptoms with animals and/or individuals acting suspicious.

### Within the First 24 Hours:

- An emergency contact list will be distributed to the VSMT; State Veterinarians; AVIC's; Federal, State, local, and industry representatives; laboratory officials; and specialty practitioners.
- Talking points, draft press releases, questions and answers, and other public outreach information will be distributed to the VSMT; State Veterinarians; AVIC's; Federal, State, local, and industry representatives; laboratory officials; and specialty practitioners.
- Media interviews will be conducted by VS and other animal health officials using consistent Talking Points for a cohesive, complete, and unified approach.

### As the Situation Develops:

- Follow-up EMOC Notices will be sent out including status updates, talking points, press releases, questions and answers, outreach publications, etc.

\* If computer and telephone communications are interrupted the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services would be activated.

For comments and/or questions regarding this communications plan please contact Ms. Linda Smith at 301-734-8073, 240-508-9749, or by e-mail at [linda.b.smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:linda.b.smith@aphis.usda.gov).