



CARES Program Assessment Report

*A Project in Support of the California Animal Response
Emergency System (CARES)*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Disclaimer and Disclosure	i
Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary.....	1
1 Introduction	1
2 Background	1
3 Purpose, Scope and Methodology	1
4 Key Findings.....	1
4.1 Region I.....	2
4.2 Region II	3
4.3 Region III.....	5
4.4 Region IV.....	7
4.5 Region V	8
4.6 Region VI.....	10
4.7 State and Federal Level.....	12
5 Analysis of Findings	14
5.1 Planning	14
5.2 Training.....	14
5.3 Exercises	14
5.4 Resources	14
6 Recommendations.....	16
6.1 Planning	16
6.2 Training.....	16
6.3 Exercises	17
6.4 Resources	17
6.5 Program Development.....	17
7 Appendices	18
7.1 Survey Results	19
7.2 Operational Area Summaries	34
7.2.1 Region I.....	34
7.2.2 Region II	43
7.2.3 Region III.....	54

7.2.4	Region IV.....	64
7.2.5	Region V.....	73
7.2.6	Region VI.....	80

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW: The California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) sponsored an assessment of the current state of affairs for animal emergency response in the State of California. CVMA and its partners and consultants developed and implemented an online survey that was sent to over 850 local, regional, tribal, state, and federal government organizations and non-governmental/private sector organizations. Responses were received from 195 individuals. CVMA consultants then followed-up with contacts at county emergency management and/or animal services agencies.

FINDINGS:

- Plans and response procedures at the field level are in place and for the most part complete; this is not the case, however, for animal emergency management plans and mutual aid agreements. Organizations want written guidance and support with planning and relationship building to enhance coordination and communication.
- Participation in field level training and drills and exercises is strong, but active organizations felt their training and exercise program could be much improved. Likewise, provision of training at the local government/operational area level and inclusion of animal issues in emergency operations exercises was seen as not yet adequate to meet local area manager's needs. Organizations want accessible training, training program development guidance, actual training materials, and support for drills and exercises.
- Resources for animal emergencies are a huge issue. Resource lists are incomplete and levels of personnel, equipment and supplies are insufficient. Resource databases, mutual aid plans and agreements, and additional resources and funding are needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following actions are recommended to improve preparedness and response capability in the State.

Planning:

- Provide templates, guidance and best practices for plans, procedures, key resource acquisition guides, mutual aid agreements, and memoranda of understanding.
- Address integration, coordination and communication among: government and non-governmental organizations; evacuation and animal sheltering responders; proponents of co-located shelters and co-sheltering; and smaller cities, rural communities and the operational area.
- Support the development of a State Animal Emergency Mutual Aid Plan.
- Explore resources and funding to support planning efforts.

Training and Exercises:

- Support provision of training and exercises to increase coordination among key partners.

- Address small and large animal care, animal care and shelter operations, large-scale field response, and evacuations.
- Support training and exercises for smaller cities and rural communities.
- Provide and/or support local level training that is practical, affordable and on a flexible schedule.
- Provide guidance on animal emergency response training program and course development.
- Explore resources and funding to support training efforts.

Resources

- Develop a resource database and lists of available physical resources and organizations.
- Explore the acquisition of key resources related to sheltering, evacuation, transportation, and care of animals.
- Explore the acquisition of supplies for animal care and personnel protection.
- Support the development of animal emergency mutual aid plans and agreements.
- Explore funding for additional personnel and equipment.

Program Development

- Conduct facilitated regional program development workshops throughout the state to: sustain interest in CARES; educate participants on the current CARES program; provide requested opportunity for cross-jurisdictional and cross-functional interaction at a regional level; and receive feedback and input from participants on the future of CARES and its mission, services, products and activities.

1 INTRODUCTION

The California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) partnered to support and improve the California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES) Program. Part of that effort is an assessment of the current state of affairs for animal emergency response in the state. The goal is to identify key areas and activities that will further the development of CARES and thereby support the agencies and organizations that are responsible for protection, response and recovery efforts for animals in disasters.

2 BACKGROUND

California law (Government Code 8608) requires Cal EMA to incorporate CARES, developed by CDFA, into the state's emergency management system. CARES can only be successful through collaborative efforts among stakeholders. To that end, the CARES Steering Committee, representing key organizations and animal experts, was established in 2011. In 2012, Cal EMA awarded a grant to the CVMA to support the committee, help develop and update guides and other materials, better define the specific role of CARES, and help identify or establish an organization to support CARES.

The major goals of the committee are to ensure that:

- CARES is consistent with State Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) pursuant to California Government Code Section 8607(a).
- There is a structural framework in place to sustain and maintain CARES.
- CARES meets the needs of public and private organizations that protect and care for animals during disasters.

3 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this assessment is to assess the overall state of animal emergency planning and preparedness in the state and to provide recommendations for improvement. The assessment covers the status of disaster plans, mutual aid agreements, supply caches, training and exercises, and other topics pertaining to animal disaster planning and response.

An online survey was sent to over 850 local, regional, tribal, state, and federal government organizations and non-governmental/private sector organizations that participate in animal disaster planning and response. Examples of recipients include sheriff's departments, animal services/control departments, animal shelters, city and county emergency planners, county agricultural commissioners, farm bureaus, and other non-profit animal groups. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent via email by CVMA and included a signed letter from CVMA, CDFW and Cal EMA on February 14, 2013. CVMA followed up with an email with the link to the survey on February 19; survey reminders were sent out on February 27 and March 6.

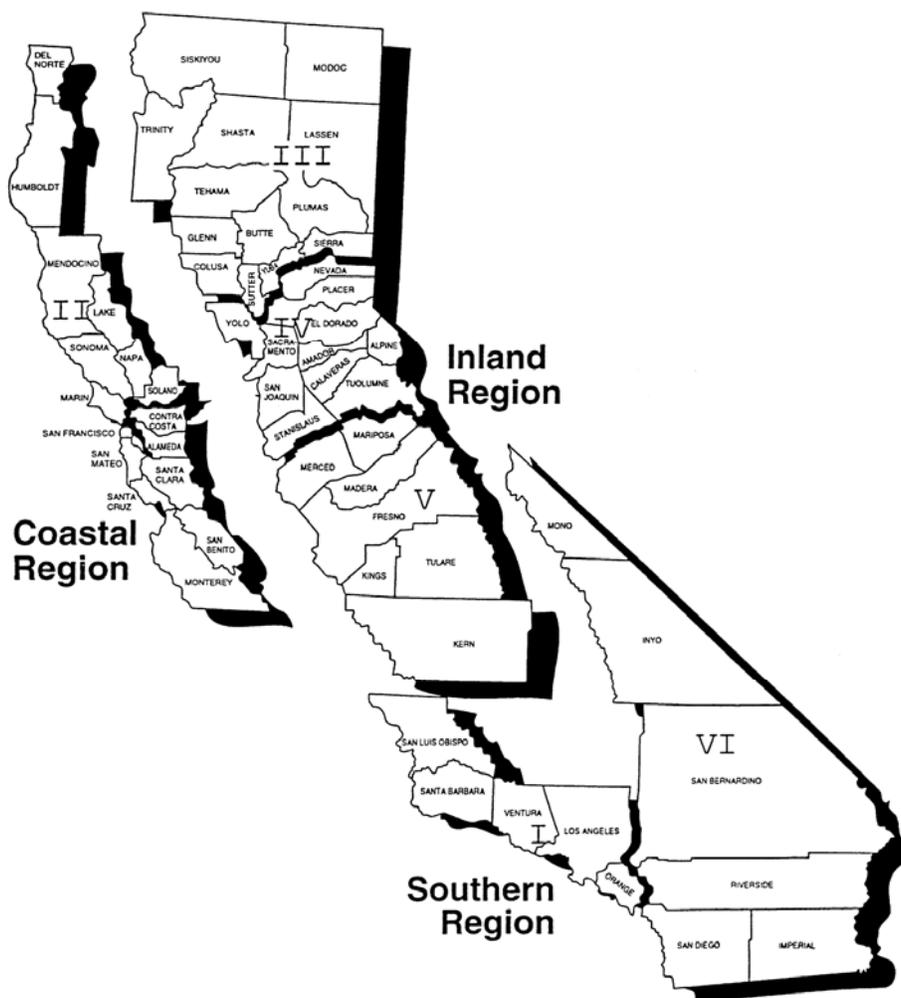
Responses to the survey were received from 195 individuals. Follow-up contacts were made with county emergency management and/or animal control agencies to ensure an understanding of summarized data and to give the Operational Area level an additional opportunity to provide insight on the strengths and gaps of their animal emergency management programs.

4 KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the survey and follow-up contacts are grouped by California’s six mutual aid regions (see figure below). An overview of the state and federal level agencies and organizations that replied is also included in this section.

A compilation of the all the survey results is included in Appendix 7.2. Individual Operational Area Summaries are provided in Appendix 7.3.

NOTE: Survey respondents were given the choice to answer questions in three areas relating to their experience: those with responsibility for field response; those that coordinate activities as a local government or Operational Area entity; or those that support animal care issues as a non-governmental or private sector entity. In some cases, respondents did not reply to all survey questions. Therefore, totals for some questions may not equal the total number of possible respondents for that category.



4.1 REGION I

Operational Areas: Los Angeles, Orange, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from all five operational areas. Of the forty-seven survey respondents, forty-one were from government organizations (twenty-seven emergency management and fourteen animal care) and six from non-governmental/private organizations. Thirty-one respondents had field level responsibilities and thirty-eight had local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for three-quarters of the responding entities; one-third of those are considered complete or very complete. At the local government/operational area level, less than half the entities responding stated they have an animal emergency plan. In the non-governmental/private sector, one-third have a written plan and one-third participate in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Over half the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the eighteen local government/operational area responding organizations expressing an opinion, one-third stated that they are able to coordinate pretty well or well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Almost two-thirds of the respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training and almost half have participated in drills or exercises; third of those responding stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, ten of the twenty-eight responding entities stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and six of seventeen indicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, one-third of the respondents said their resource lists are complete to very complete. At the local government/operational area level, two of the twenty-six respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is sufficient to very sufficient. Out of twenty-six respondents, ten have a supply cache and nine have just-in-time purchase agreements. Two of the five non-governmental/private sector respondents have formal agreements with government agencies to provide disaster services. Seven of the twenty-four respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Effectiveness of field level response
- Participation of field personnel in training and exercises

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Templates, *how-to* guidance and best practices for plans, SOPs, resource lists, and MOUs for government, volunteer rescue operations, facilities (e.g., zoos) and animal businesses (e.g., groomers).
- Information on animal evacuations.
- Plan development support.
- Support for planning with local and regional partners.

TRAINING

- Small and large animal care in disasters.
- Evacuation and deployment, especially response to large animal evacuations.
- More training for volunteers.
- Materials to conduct training, e.g., low cost, sustainable, internal.

EXERCISES

- Drills and exercises for care of both small and large animals in a disaster.
- Practice evacuation plan for animal shelters and for large and commercial animal.

RESOURCES

- Lack of trained field responders.
- Shelters for large and small animals.
- Trailers for large and small animal evacuation and movement.
- Basic animal care supplies.
- Mutual aid plan and agreements for animal resources.

4.2 REGION II

Operational Areas: Alameda, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from twelve of the sixteen operational areas. Of the thirty survey respondents, twenty-one were from government organizations (ten emergency management and eleven animal care) and nine from non-governmental/private organizations. Eighteen respondents have field level responsibilities and nineteen have local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for two-thirds of the responding entities. Half of those are considered complete to very complete. At the local government/operational area level, two-thirds of those responding stated they have an animal emergency plan. One-third of the non-governmental/private organizations have a written plan and almost half participate in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Well over half the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. In interviews, three operational areas noted they coordinate and plan with a variety of organizations. Of the seven local government/operational area responding organizations expressing an opinion, almost half stated that they are able to coordinate pretty well or well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Over half the respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training and participate in drills or exercises; one-quarter of those responding stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, seven of the eleven responding entities stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and that EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, more than one-third of the respondents said their resource lists are complete to very complete. Six operational areas mentioned volunteer resources as an asset. At the local government/operational area level, one of the eight respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is sufficient. Out of eleven respondents, five have a supply cache and three have just-in-time purchase agreements. One of the nine NGO/private sector respondents has a formal agreement with government agencies to provide disaster services. Two of the eleven respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Development and completeness of field level plans and procedures.
- Development of local government/operational area animal emergency plans.
- Effectiveness of field response.
- Participation of field and local government/operational area personnel in training and exercises.

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Template, guidance, and best practices to address plans and procedures, and resource needs.
- Support for and assistance with plan development.
- Support for planning and relationship development with local, regional, state, and industry partners, including non-governmental organizations.

TRAINING

- Training on a regular schedule on plans and procedures for staff and volunteers.
- Training with key partners, including non-animal care personnel and voluntary organizations.
- Guidance on training development.
- Additional funding to support training opportunities.

EXERCISES

- Comprehensive exercise program that includes drills and exercises for plans, procedures and agreements with field and emergency management personnel.

RESOURCES

- Need additional resources specific to animal operations, including equipment for animal care and personnel protection, transportation vehicles, and mobile response trailers.
- Additional personnel and volunteers to support operations during emergencies.
- Mutual aid plans and agreements for animal resources.

4.3 REGION III

Operational Areas: Butte, Colusa Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yuba

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from eleven of the thirteen operational areas. Of the twenty-six survey respondents, twenty were from government organizations (sixteen emergency management and four animal care) and six from non-governmental/private organizations. Twelve respondents had field level responsibilities and seventeen had local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for two-thirds of the responding entities. A majority of those are considered complete to very complete. At the local government/operational area level, eight of eleven responding to the question stated they have an animal emergency plan. Of the six non-governmental/private organizations, one has a written plan and one participates in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Half the operational areas noted that there is a wide variety of animal response entities and organizations that support emergency operations and coordinate effectively with each other. Over half the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the ten local government/operational area responding organizations expressing an opinion, two

stated that they are able to coordinate pretty well or well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Over half the respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training and participate in exercises. Over half of the respondents stated their training and exercise program is not sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, two of the nine respondents stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and three of eight indicated EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, slightly less than half of the respondents said their resource list is complete to very complete. At the local government/operational area level, the highest rating by three of the eight respondents was that the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is somewhat sufficient. Out of nine respondents, four have a supply cache and three have just-in-time purchase agreements. Three operational areas stated they have mutual aid agreements or memoranda of understanding in place for resources. One of the six NGO/private sector respondents has formal agreements with government agencies to provide disaster services. One of the nine respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Development and completeness of field level procedures.
- Effectiveness of field level response.
- Participation in training and exercises at the field level.
- Broad spectrum of organizations involved in response.

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Training and guidance in the development of animal-specific plans, policies, agreements, and procedures, including large animals.
- Funding that supports additional plan development.
- Information handouts for animal preparedness for individuals and families.

TRAINING

- Training to increase coordination and communication and enhance protocols and procedures for government and non-governmental animal and emergency response personnel.
- Guidance in the development of an animal training program, including the needs of large animals.
- Local training opportunities that both are practical and affordable.
- Funding that supports training.

EXERCISES

- Drills and exercises to enhance protocols and procedures, increase coordination and communication efforts and determine gaps and improvements.

RESOURCES

- Resource database and lists of the available resources and organizations that are willing and able to assist in animal response operations.
- Equipment for response and shelter operations and funding that supports procurement of additional resources.
- Mutual aid plans and agreements for animal resources.
- Funding for additional personnel.

4.4 REGION IV

Operational Areas: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus Tuolumne and Yolo.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from ten of the eleven operational areas. Of the twenty-six survey respondents, fifteen were from government organizations (six emergency management and nine animal care) and ten from non-governmental/private organizations. Twelve respondents had field level responsibilities and thirteen had local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for over half of the responding entities. Less than half of those are considered complete to very complete. At the local government/operational area level, four of nine responding to the question stated they have an animal emergency plan. Of the five responding non-governmental/private organizations, one has a written plan. Five of the nine respondents stated they participate in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Three-quarters of the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the seven local government/operational area organizations expressing an opinion, two stated that they are able to coordinate pretty well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Slightly more than half of those responding with field responsibilities stated they have received training and participate in exercises. One-third of the respondents stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, three of the seven respondents stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and five of seven indicated EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, slightly less than half of the respondents said their resource list is complete. At the local government/operational area level, one of the six respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is sufficient. Two of seven respondents knew of a supply cache and one of eight knew of existing just-in-time purchase agreements. Half the operational areas noted they have strong support from non-governmental agencies and volunteers. Two of the nine NGO/private sector respondents have formal agreements with government agencies to provide disaster services. Two of the nine respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Participation in field level training.
- Effectiveness of field response.
- Support and participation from non-governmental organizations and volunteers.
- Inclusion of animal-related issues in EOC exercises.

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Template for an Animal Emergency Response Plan that includes evacuation.
- Model resource lists.
- Development and assistance to complete a written plan.
- Guidance and assistance to set up effective disaster animal response programs in the smaller cities and rural communities.
- Model for integration and communication between non-governmental organizations, public agencies, and CARES.
- Better coordination with key partners.

TRAINING

- Training for field responders and animal care and shelter operations.
- Training to familiarize first responders with Animal Emergency Plan.
- Training provided locally due to travel prohibitions and funding issues.
- Disaster-specific training for smaller cities and rural communities.

EXERCISES

- Drills and exercises specific to animal care and shelter operations and mutual aid agreements.
- Drills and exercises to familiarize first responders with Animal Emergency Plan.
- Drills and exercises for smaller cities and rural communities.

RESOURCES

- Personnel, equipment and supplies.
- Financial support for non-governmental organizations to acquire and maintain equipment.
- Resources for evacuation, transportation and sheltering.
- Mutual aid plans and agreements for animal resources.

4.5 REGION V

Operational Areas: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced and Tulare.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from all seven operational areas. Of the seventeen survey respondents, twelve were from government organizations (seven emergency management and five animal care) and five from non-governmental/private organizations. Eight respondents had field level responsibilities and ten had local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for half of the responding entities. One-quarter of those are considered complete. At the local government/operational area level, two of seven responding to the question stated they have an animal emergency plan. Of the five responding non-governmental/private organizations, two have a written plan and three participate in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Three-quarters of the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the seven local government/operational area organizations expressing an opinion, one stated that they are able to coordinate well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Half the respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training; one-quarter have participated in drills and exercises. None of the field level respondents stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, two of the six respondents stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and that EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, one-quarter of the respondents said their resource list is complete. At the local government/operational area level, none of the seven respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is sufficient. Three of six respondents have a supply cache and just-in-time purchase agreements. None of the four NGO/private sector respondents has a formal agreement with government agencies to provide disaster services. None of the six respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Effectiveness of field response
- Participation in field level training

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Templates for plans and mutual aid agreements, including large scale evacuation and commercial livestock
- Guidance for smaller cities and rural communities
- Guidance on and benefits of developing a County Animal Response Team
- Coordination and communication among government and non-governmental organizations

TRAINING

- Training for field and local government/operational area entities, particularly in large-scale field response and evacuations

EXERCISES

- Drills and exercises, particularly in large-scale field response and evacuations

RESOURCES

- Equipment and supplies for evacuation and sheltering including small animals, horses and livestock
- Mutual aid plan and agreements for animal resources
- Funding for staff and resources

4.6 REGION VI

Operational Areas: Imperial, Inyo, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from all six operational areas. Of the thirty-one survey respondents, twenty-two were from government organizations (nine emergency management and thirteen animal care) and nine from non-governmental/private organizations. Fifteen respondents had field level responsibilities and twenty-one had local government/operational area level responsibilities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for over three-quarters of the responding entities. Well over half of those are considered complete or very complete. At the local government/operational area level, over half of those responding to the question stated they have an animal emergency plan. Of the four responding non-governmental/private organizations, one has a written plan. Three of nine respondents participate in their jurisdiction's animal planning activities.

Three-quarters of the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the ten local government/operational area responding organizations expressing an opinion, six stated that they were able to coordinate pretty well or well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Almost three-quarters of the respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training; less than half participate in drills and exercises. One-third of the field level respondents stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area level, seven of the thirteen respondents stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and five stated that EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, slightly less than half of the respondents said their resource list was complete or very complete. At the local government/operational area level, one of the eleven respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) was sufficient or very sufficient. Six of thirteen respondents have a supply cache and three have just-in-time purchase agreements. Two of the nine NGO/private sector respondents have a formal agreement with government agencies to provide disaster services. Seven of the thirteen respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

STRENGTHS

- Development and completeness of field level procedures.
- Development of local government/operational area animal emergency plans.
- Effectiveness of field response.
- Coordination with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.
- Participation in field and local government/operational area level training.
- Support from local communities.

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Support and assistance for development of plans, procedures and protocols to address the needs of animals, including large animals and livestock, during emergency response operations.
- Evaluation of animal demographics to ensure planning and preparedness meet potential needs.
- Educational materials for the public on preparedness.

TRAINING

- Training for field and local government/operational area personnel, including animal care and shelter operations.
- Training to support increased coordination among government and non-governmental entities.
- Affordable local training with a flexible schedule.
- Additional funding for training opportunities.

EXERCISES

- Exercises for the local government/operational area plan and field response.

RESOURCES

- Additional personnel to take on the responsibility of addressing animal needs.
- Equipment and supply caches to support response, including care and shelter operation.
- Resource database of available resources.

- Additional trained personnel to respond to the needs of animals during emergencies.
- Resource database that identifies available resources in the region and state.

4.7 STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey responses were received from eleven governmental organizations (eight emergency management and three animal care) and eight non-governmental/private sector entities¹. Seven respondents had field level responsibilities and eight had support responsibilities for local government/operational area level.

CURRENT SITUATION

Field level plans and procedures are in place for almost three-quarters of the responding entities. More than half of those are considered complete or very complete. At the local government/operational area support level, all seven entities responding stated they have an animal emergency plan. Of the eight responding NGO/private sector entities, two have a written plan. Five of seven respondents participate in their jurisdictional animal planning activities.

Three-quarters of the respondents rated the effectiveness of their field response as effective to very effective. Of the six responding government organizations expressing an opinion, three stated that they were able to coordinate pretty well or well with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

Six of seven respondents with field responsibilities stated they have received training and five participate in drills and exercises. Half of the field level respondents stated their training and exercise program is sufficient. At the local government/operational area support level, two of the six respondents stated they have been trained on animal response coordination activities and five stated that EOC exercises include animal issues.

At the field level, two of the four respondents said their resource list is complete. At the local government/operational area support level, three respondents stated the level of resources available to their agency (personnel, equipment, and supplies) is somewhat sufficient. Two of five respondents have a supply cache and four have just-in-time purchase agreements. None of the four non-governmental/private sector respondents have a formal agreement with government agencies to provide disaster services. One of the six respondents stated that the Master Mutual Aid Agreement adequately addresses animal-related resources.

¹ California State Government: Department of Fish and Wildlife; California Emergency Management Agency; Department of Social Services; University of California, Davis (School of Veterinary Medicine; Oiled Wildlife Care Network). Federal Government: Federal Emergency Management Agency; United States Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Non-Governmental: California Veterinary Medical Association; California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps; Pet Safe Coalition; California Poultry Federation; California Dairy Campaign.

STRENGTHS

- Development and completeness of field level plans and procedures.
- Development of government animal emergency plans.
- Participation of non-governmental/private sector in planning activities.
- Effectiveness of field response.
- Coordination with the Regional Emergency Operations Center.

GAPS AND NEEDS

PLANNING

- Development of non-governmental/private sector plans to coordinate with governmental entities.
- Guidance for evacuation (including for those unable to be evacuated), animal sheltering, and co-sheltering.

TRAINING

- Resources and funding to expand training programs.

RESOURCES

- County resource roster.
- Resources and funding for equipment.

5 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.1 PLANNING

Local, state and federal government agencies have put plans and procedures in place for field response and at their respective governmental levels. Most field response plans are viewed as complete. However, it appears animal emergency management plans are not as complete across the state. While many non-governmental/private sector organizations participate in planning activities, there are few with written plans. It is clear that organizations and agencies want written guidance and templates for plans, procedures, and agreements for the variety of animal emergency response activities they carry out. In addition, those same entities recognize that written materials will not solve all their problems and they have asked for support and assistance with plan development.

Many regions reflect strong support and inclusiveness from local communities, voluntary agencies and volunteers in planning and response and recognize how critical this is. The same need exists at the local, regional and state levels for support with planning and relationship building to enhance coordination and communication among all government and non-governmental stakeholders.

5.2 TRAINING

Participation in field level training is strong across the state and, together with plans and procedures, supports an effective field response. Even so, most field organizations felt that training was not sufficient. Far less than half the local government/operational area level respondents have been trained on animal response coordination. There is a need for training to increase coordination across governmental levels and functional responsibilities. In order for that training to be accessible, providers must recognize the limitations of agency budgets and ability to travel.

There is a need to provide not only the training itself, but to provide guidance on the development of training programs and to provide actual training materials. This will support sustainability by allowing organizations to deliver their own training.

5.3 EXERCISES

Participation in drills and exercises by field level organizations is fairly strong. However, like training, field level organizations overwhelmingly stated that their exercise program is insufficient. At the local government/operational area level, the majority of emergency operations center exercises do not include animal issues. Planning, training and exercises are important for effective preparedness, especially considering that exercises are the closest that organizations and their staff will come to a real event for practicing their skills. There is a need for drills and exercises to practice and test coordination and communication among all levels of responders.

5.4 RESOURCES

Resources for animal emergencies are a huge issue in the state. Only thirty percent of organizations with field responsibilities stated that their resource lists are complete and less than ten percent of

local government/operational area entities have a sufficient level of personnel, equipment and supplies. Additional resources and funding to support and maintain them is needed.

These organizations do recognize that it is not realistic for them to have a sufficient amount of resources to respond to a disaster on their own. The need for databases of available resources, along with mutual aid plans and other types of resource use agreements is critical.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides recommendations to support the improvement and sustainment of the CARES Program.

6.1 PLANNING

- Develop templates for and guidance on the following for the field and local government/operational area levels:
 - Plans
 - Procedures
 - Resources identification and acquisition
 - Mutual aid agreements
 - Memoranda of understanding for government and non-governmental organizations.
- Ensure that guidance addresses integration, coordination and communication among government and non-governmental organizations; evacuation; animal sheltering; and co-located shelters and co-sheltering.
- Provide specific guidance for animal response programs for smaller cities and rural communities.
- Develop guidance usable for key non-governmental animal care entities that assures alignment and integration with field responders and local government/operational areas during disasters.
- Include best practices in guidance materials. Ensure plans align with other public sector emergency programmatic plans, i.e., strategic, emergency operations, mitigation, recovery, hazard specific plans, etc.
- Support the development of a State Animal Emergency Mutual Aid Plan.
- Explore resources and funding to support planning efforts.

6.2 TRAINING

- Identify and provide training for the specified audiences on the following topics:
 - Training to increase coordination among key partners, including government, non-governmental agencies and both animal and non-animal emergency response personnel.
 - Training for field and local government/operational area personnel, including small and large animal care in disasters, animal care and shelter operations, large-scale field response, and evacuations (including large animals) and information to familiarize first responders with animal emergency management plan.
 - Disaster-specific training for smaller cities and rural communities.
- Provide practical and affordable local training on a flexible schedule.

- Provide guidance on the development of an animal emergency response training program.
- Provide guidance on training course development, including materials to conduct training.
- Explore resources and funding to support and expand training programs and opportunities.

6.3 EXERCISES

- Provide and support drills and exercises to test, improve and enhance protocols and procedures and increase coordination and communication efforts for field responders and local government/operational area.
- Ensure that drills and exercises address large-scale field response, evacuations and care and shelter operations for both large and small animals.
- Support drills and exercises tailored for smaller cities and rural communities.

6.4 RESOURCES

- Develop a resource database and/or lists of the available resources and organizations that are willing and able to assist in animal response operations.
- Explore the acquisition and identification of shelters for large and small animals; trailers and transportation vehicles for large and small animal evacuation and movement; equipment and supply caches to support response, including equipment for animal care and shelter (small animals, horses and livestock) and personnel protection.
- Support the development of animal emergency mutual aid plans and agreements.
- Explore funding for additional personnel and equipment.

6.5 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The four recommendation areas above – planning, training, exercises, and resources – are vital to the development and maintenance of an animal response and management program by government and non-governmental entities at all jurisdictional levels. The recommendations cover not only the provision of guidance documents, but also support for coordination activities among the key stakeholders. In fact, the recommended documents are only as good as the processes used to develop them and the interaction among those with identified roles and responsibilities.

To that end, it is recommended that facilitated regional program development workshops be held throughout the state. The purpose of the workshops is to sustain interest in CARES generated by this assessment process; educate participants on the current CARES program; provide an opportunity for cross-jurisdictional and cross-functional interaction at a regional level; leveraged the capabilities of the concerned and responsible and, very importantly, to receive feedback and input from participants on the future of CARES and its products and activities.