



United States Department of Agriculture

# **APHIS 1050 Emergency Mobilization Guide**

**9/14/2018**

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## Introduction

Preventing and controlling animal and plant diseases is vital to protecting American agriculture. Ensuring a uniform response approach to agricultural emergencies, animal confiscations, and all-hazards incidents enables the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to mobilize the correct resources at the correct time to the correct location.

When there is a widespread or long-term disease outbreak, the Agency responds with unified leadership from the start. This is particularly important when additional personnel may be required. All APHIS employees play a critical role in our emergency response efforts.

Each APHIS program uses this guide when mobilizing and deploying personnel and resources for incident response.

## Purpose, Design, and Scope

The purpose of the APHIS Emergency Mobilization Guide is to facilitate the cost-effective and timely coordination of resources needed to successfully respond to agricultural and all-hazards incidents. The guide identifies standard response procedures for APHIS and includes considerations for all response phases. These phases include:

**Activation:** The initial Agency-level notification that an APHIS response is required. In this stage, the APHIS Management Team (AMT) considers what response activities are needed and what resources may be required to effectively respond to the incident. During this stage, Agency personnel are notified that a response is required. See Chapter 1 of the guide for more information.

**Mobilization:** Actions taken to gather resources that support APHIS' response. This includes identifying the personnel, equipment, and assets required to support the response. See Chapter 2 for more information.

**Deployment:** Moving identified resources to operational areas. When the deployment is virtual and not physical, this phase begins when an employee's duties are altered to support the response. See Chapter 3 for more information.

**Demobilization:** Actions taken to return deployed personnel, equipment, and assets to their permanent Official Duty Stations (ODS)/locations and/or status. See Chapter 4 for more information.

**Deactivation:** Intentionally concluding incident operations. In this phase, Agency personnel have returned to their normal duties, and the response is determined to have concluded. During this phase, APHIS ensures that lessons learned during the response are captured and that corrective actions are documented, tracked, and taken to improve future response efforts and enhance Agency capabilities. See Chapter 5 for more information.

## Chapter 1—Activation

Activation Checklist

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
1.1	Initial Response		
1.2	Notifications		
1.3	Establish Command Structure		
1.4	Identify Resource Needs		
1.5	Funding for Salaries		
1.6	Human Resources Considerations		
1.7	Funding for Response		
1.8	Cooperative Agreements		
1.9	Contracting		
1.10	Property Management		
1.11	Security		
1.12	Information Technology		
1.13	Information Management		
1.14	Resource Priorities		
1.15	Human Health		
1.16	Safety & Health		
1.17	Exemptions		

### 1.1 Initial Response

The initial response to an incident is handled at the local level. After being notified of a threat to U.S. agriculture or natural resources, the lead APHIS program:

- Establishes the scope and scale of the incident,
- Determines if a response is needed,
- Accounts for which State and locally available resources are responding to the incident, and
- Identifies the appropriate level of response required.

The lead program identifies when the response requirements exceed those available at the local level and require support from additional Agency personnel.

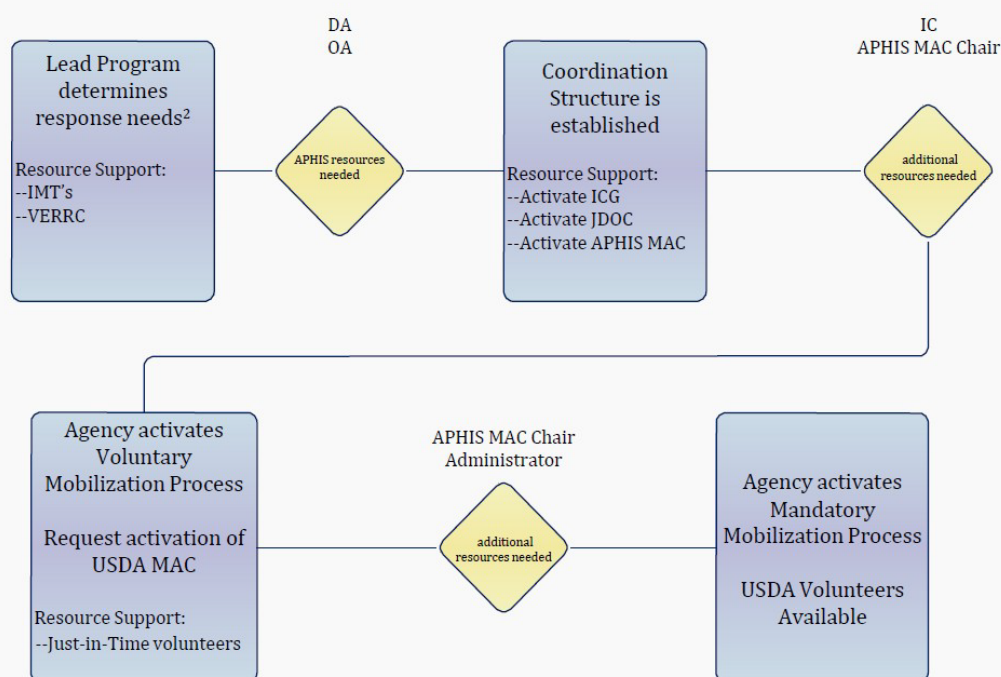
#### ***Records Management***

The lead program's Records Liaison will ensure all response records are included in official records file plan(s) (MRP 401/401A) and maintained in accordance with the Federal Records Act as well as associated laws, regulations, and policies.

Figure 1, on the following page, displays the mobilization process for APHIS to most incidents and all-hazards responses:

# APHIS Mobilization Process<sup>1</sup>

(NOTE: Process map reflects steps, not time)



<sup>1</sup> Temporary hires (e.g. NAHERC), term appointments and contractors are used as needed throughout the incident.  
<sup>2</sup> The Lead Program can activate mandatory mobilization for its employees at its discretion

January 2018

**Figure 1. APHIS Mobilization Process**  
*\*acronyms defined in Appendix 1*

## 1.2 Notifications

Notification of an incident requiring response occurs as follows:

- First, the Deputy Administrator, or their representative, of the lead program notifies the Office of the Administrator and the APHIS Dr. Jere L. Dick Operations Center (JDOC) of the incident and the need for resources. The JDOC may be reached by email at [aphis.emergency.operations.center@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:aphis.emergency.operations.center@aphis.usda.gov) or by telephone at 301-436-3110.
- The JDOC notifies the APHIS Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC), the AMT, Program Leaders Group (PLG), and APHIS Dispatch of the incident. The JDOC also provides notification to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Operations Center consistent with the requirements of Departmental Manual (DM) 1800-1, Chapter 3.
- The APHIS Dispatch Lead must notify the Director/Acquisition and Asset Management Division (AAMD) and the Branch Chief, Procurement Branch/AAMD when initiating dispatch to a new incident.

### 1.3 Establish Command and Coordination Structure

When an incident requires the Agency's response, APHIS employs the appropriate command/coordination structure. As a Federal Agency, APHIS follows National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidance for response activities. The Incident Command System (ICS), a component of NIMS, is a standardized management tool used for meeting the command and control demands of emergency and non-emergency situations.

Incident response begins at the local level. After assistance is requested, the APHIS lead program establishes an Incident Command and accompanying organizational and management structure, implemented by one Incident Commander (IC). If an incident grows in complexity to include additional jurisdictions of both Federal and State governments, a Unified Command (UC) structure may be implemented. Under the UC, several agencies work together through one or more ICs to establish a common set of objectives and priorities. Together, multiple ICs in a UC have the same responsibilities as one IC in a Single Command structure.

Emergency personnel manage both Single and UC structures using a collaborative approach with the following characteristics:


- Common organizational structure;
- One command post;
- Unified planning process;
- Unified resource management;
- One Incident Action Plan (IAP); and
- Delegation of Authority.

In a UC Structure, all agencies with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for the incident jointly provide management direction to an incident through a common set of incident objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan (IAP). Each participating agency maintains its individual authority, responsibility, and accountability. Each Command and General staff position under UC is filled by one individual. Large, complex incidents may require the use of deputies or assistants to meet response need. Additional Sections may be activated if needed based on the incident complexity and/or resource needs.

Based on the length of time of the response, the lead program determines if more than one IC will be needed to manage the incident to its conclusion. Once delegated, the IC is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations. The responsibilities remain with the IC until delegated to another individual.

In order to provide a consistent approach to incident response, APHIS currently supports ten (10) Type 3 Incident Management Teams (IMTs) that are available to support large or complex animal or plant health emergencies. Each team consists of at least 16 employees staffing the IC, Command and General Staff positions within the IMT structure. APHIS has added security and biosecurity positions to the IMTs to





address Agency-specific issues during a response. The IMTs are available to respond to an incident within 24 to 48 hours of activation. When a local jurisdiction requests assistance, the IMTs work cooperatively with responders in a UC structure.

The IMT members receive position-specific training, including both NIMS and APHIS coursework. The APHIS Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services – Emergency Management, Safety and Security Division (MRPBS-EMSSD) oversees the coordination and delivery of the training and exercise program to the IMTs, and on an as available basis for other employees. NIMS training for employees who are not members of an IMT is available through AgLearn, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and local emergency management organizations. APHIS program-specific coursework is available through points of contact in each program. Area Command (AC), Emergency Operations Center, and MAC Group training is also available for responders and APHIS leadership.

The lead Program activates the appropriate elements of an IMT to provide command and control of the incident. Depending on the scale of the incident, the lead Program may identify a National Incident Coordinator (NIC) to coordinate the incident.

An AC may be established for larger, more complex responses or for responses requiring multiple Incident Command posts. The purpose of an AC is to oversee the management of a large or complex regional incident and coordinate the allocation of resources in support of the incident and the Unified Command. Typically, ICs in a UC structure report to an AC.

#### ***APHIS Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC)***

During any significant APHIS-led emergency response, the lead Program Area Deputy Administrator or Associate Deputy Administrator(s), and/or the Director of the Emergency, Management, Safety, and Security Division (EMSSD) (who is also the Chair of the APHIS EPC) are authorized to approach the APHIS Office of the Administrator (OA) to recommend that an APHIS Multi Agency Coordination (MAC) group be stood up to support the ongoing response.

The APHIS MAC serves as the senior level leadership group to support ICs, the NICs, and Program Area Senior Leaders when responding to significant agricultural emergencies. In collaboration with the APHIS Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC), as appropriate, the APHIS MAC provides support and assistance to APHIS-led responses requiring resources that exceed the lead Program Area's capacity. When an APHIS MAC is established, the sole objective is to ensure the efficient, effective, and, ultimately, successful execution of the emergency response by:

- Providing the requisite resources and logistical support; and
- Implementing the Administrator's instructions, guidance, and policies to achieve the established goals and priorities.

Once activated, an APHIS MAC serves as the standing, coordinating body in support of the Program Area's goal.

In accordance with the APHIS Mobilization Process, once APHIS resources outside of the lead Program Area are determined to be necessary, APHIS OA will discuss

the situation with the lead Program Area Deputy Administrator or Associate Deputy Administrator(s), the NIC, the IC(s), and the Director of EMSSD, and anyone else it deems appropriate, including the APHIS EPC. A decision should then be made as to whether or not to establish a Coordination Structure, to include the activation of an Incident Coordination Group (ICG), the APHIS Jere L. Dick Operations Center (JDOC), and an APHIS MAC. EMSSD will maintain/be the official record-keeper of all MAC records and will ensure the records are included in an official file plan (MRP 401/401A).

### ***APHIS Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC)***

When believed appropriate, APHIS OA will stand up an APHIS MAC to support the emergency response. APHIS OA will advise the AMT and the APHIS EPC in writing when an APHIS MAC is established. APHIS OA will also update the APHIS workforce regarding the emergency response and the need to stand up the APHIS MAC.

APHIS EPC members appoint APHIS MAC Group representatives from their units when an incident-specific MAC Group is established. The APHIS EPC provides leadership on day-to-day emergency preparedness activities. APHIS MAC groups are responsible for providing Agency-wide coordination to discrete response activities that require resources and support beyond a given unit or units.

## **1.4 Identify Resource Needs**

ICs, working with the Command and General Staff, identify the resource needs for the upcoming planning cycles. The ICs provide resource requests to the NIC who identifies possible sources for filling the requests.

Resource Requests are submitted by the NIC to the APHIS Emergency Qualification System (EQS) Manager who works with the Program Emergency Manager points of contact (POCs) to identify the requested resources. Considerations include position descriptions, qualifications, length of deployments, and the experience level required for the position.

The Program Emergency Manager POCs coordinate with the APHIS EQS manager to ensure that positions are filled by adequately trained personnel, the position requirements match the position description, and personnel/resource requests are identified for as many predictable deployment cycles as possible.

***The Emergency Responder Position Catalog*** is used to facilitate the process of requesting resources and filling emergency response positions. The catalog was developed as a companion document to the EQS database and defines the qualification requirements for positions needed for agricultural health and all-hazards emergency responses. Defining positions in a standard catalog facilitates requesting resources and filling emergency response positions with appropriate and qualified responders in accordance with National Response Framework (NRF) and NIMS requirements.

### ***Staffing***

APHIS' first line of available resources is volunteers. Employees from the lead program, members of the Volunteer Emergency Ready Response Corps (VERRC) and volunteers from other APHIS Programs and Support Units are the preferred choice to support an incident or emergency. Additionally, APHIS may use term and temporary hires, and volunteers from other USDA agencies or Federal entities.

If it is determined that the incident or emergency exceeds its current response capacity, the APHIS Agency Mandatory Mobilization (AMM) Plan may be implemented. Procedures and guidelines for mandatory mobilization are in Chapter 2, Section 2.4 of this guide.

APHIS facilitates the deployment of personnel to a response and continually tracks information, including employees' availability statuses, through internal dispatch systems.

### ***Qualifications and Requirements***

#### Verifying Employee Qualifications Resource Request

The APHIS EQS Manager works with program personnel to ensure that all information within the EQS is up to date. The EQS Manager works with programs to match position requirements with employee qualifications.

#### Match Job Series with Resource Request/Pay Grades

In addition to established position descriptions, programs may supply the APHIS EQS Manager with occupational series' that fit the criteria for incident position descriptions. This information is included in EQS under each employee's profile and may be used as sorting criteria for emergency responses. Position descriptions include a *recommended* grade level based on duties for that position.

## **1.5 Funding for Salaries**

The funding source is not to be used as criteria when deciding who is available to participate in emergency response. Appropriated funds can be used for base salaries for all responders. During a mandatory mobilization, the Agency may need to estimate the salary costs of responders who are paid from funding sources other than appropriated funds and include this in the next request for emergency funding when appropriated funding sources are unavailable.

All APHIS responders charge their base salaries to appropriated funds within their program. If employees who perform work on user fee, reimbursable, or trust fund programs deploy; they charge their base salaries to appropriated funds within their program. (If that presents serious financial difficulty for the Unit, the Deputy Administrator consults with Program Planning and Development's (PPD) Budget and Program Analysis Staff (BPAS) and the Administrator's Office to discuss and agree on a workable solution.). Employees that fill in behind them charge their salaries to the respective user fee, reimbursable or trust fund account. During total mobilization, the Agency may decide to include an estimate for the salary costs for temporary, term employees and non-APHIS employees, hired specifically for the emergency response. These employees charge their salaries to the emergency funding

accounting codes.

APHIS typically does not request emergency funding to cover salaries of current employees because APHIS has already received funding for those employees in the fiscal year's appropriations bill. Consequently, employees may only charge their base salary to emergency funding if APHIS included an estimate for salary costs in the emergency funding request. To do otherwise may be considered an augmentation of an agency's appropriation.

If employees are detailed from other Federal agencies to assist APHIS with APHIS led emergency responses, APHIS reimburses the agency for the employees' overtime and travel if the support is provided for less than sixty (< 60) days. If the support exceeds sixty (> 60) days, APHIS reimburses the agency for base salary, overtime, and travel. All non-APHIS responders (employees detailed to APHIS to assist with emergency response) charge their overtime and travel to an APHIS accounting code associated with an Interagency Agreement between APHIS and the agency providing the employees. Interagency agreements are charged to emergency funding. For Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 responses under mission assignment, FEMA reimburses overtime and travel, but does not typically reimburse base salary. Reimbursement of base salary can be negotiated as part of the mission assignment for employees paid by non-appropriated funds.

## 1.6 Human Resource Considerations

The lead program coordinates with the Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services (MRPBS) Human Resources Division (HRD) for guidance and direction on human resource issues.

### ***Time, Attendance, Tours of Duty, and Pay***

The lead program works with HRD to develop appropriate guidance on time and attendance, including the appropriate tours of duty for the response, and premium pay considerations regarding overtime and compensatory time.

### ***Recruiting and Appointment Types***

#### Hiring Options or Hiring Authorities

For some responses, it is necessary to augment existing personnel resources with additional personnel. There are various methods available to appoint individuals into the Federal Service through competitive and excepted service hiring authorities. They include:

**Veterans** – While veterans receive preference in competitive hiring, there are several appointment authorities specific to hiring veterans:

- Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA),
- 30 Percent or More Disabled Veterans, and
- Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA).

Also, the Schedule A appointment authority provides for hiring people with severe disabilities, which may be used to hire disabled veterans. Aside from

veteran authorities, positions may also be filled through internal and/or external options.

**Internal options:**

- Detail.
- Reassignment.
- Promotion.
- Career Ladder Promotion.

**External options:**

- Non-competitive appointment of certain military spouses.
- People with disabilities.
- Pathways program for students and recent graduates.
- Reinstatement eligible.
- Re-employed annuitants.
- Contracted experts or consultants.
- Volunteers and/or Non-Governmental Organizations
- Direct hire authority for certain occupations.

Recruitment can be conducted through:

- Internal recruitment – Merit Promotion.
- External recruitment – Delegated Exam.
- Targeted recruitments and outreach efforts.

Types of Appointments – Hires

**Term appointment** – Used for work of project nature that is not expected to exceed 4 years.

**Temporary appointment** – Used to meet a temporary workload requirement, complete a project, or fill a temporary staffing need. Appointments are effective for up to 2 years.

**Permanent appointment** – A career or career conditional appointment.

***Onboarding Process***

Onboarding is the new employee experience, which can include new appointment paperwork (typically handled through an online process) and a 1-day orientation.

## **1.7 Funding for Response**

Initial response activities are often funded by the Congressional appropriations that APHIS receives for animal and plant health surveillance and monitoring activities. When it becomes apparent that the scope of an outbreak exceeds available funding, lead program personnel work with their program Resource Management Staff (RMS) to request additional funding. The program RMS consults with PPD's BPAS to determine if there are funding sources available including carryover balances from previous animal disease or plant pest responses. When those sources are exhausted, the Agency seeks emergency funding, which is usually transferred from Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

Requests for emergency funding require approval from the Secretary of Agriculture. Program personnel work with BPAS to develop the decision memorandum, which includes actions taken to date, status and impacts of the pest or disease presence, strategy for the response, economic implications, roles and contributions of those involved, and estimates of the funding required for each major activity outlined in the response. The estimates should be well reasoned and tailored to the specific response. Estimates generally include costs for responding to the emergency, such as any temporary or term personnel salary and benefits, travel expenses of responders, contractual support, cooperative agreements with others assisting in the response, indemnity or compensation payments, cleaning and disinfecting costs, equipment, and supplies.

The approval process for obtaining emergency funding can take time and much of it is out of APHIS' control. The basic process for obtaining the funding is to develop the decision memorandum and obtain the Secretary's approval to transfer funding from CCC. When the Secretary approves the transfer, the Financial Management Division (FMD) submits an apportionment request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) through USDA's Office of Budget and Program Analysis. After OMB approves the apportionment, FMD submits a request to USDA's Farm Service Agency to transfer the funding from their CCC account to APHIS. There are many offices that must be contacted and consulted, each of which may have questions and requests for additional information or clarification.

APHIS must obtain the approved apportionment from OMB before incurring any obligations; to do otherwise may be considered a violation of the Anti-deficiency Act. So, it is important that program personnel allow adequate lead time to request additional funding and not wait until current funding is in danger of running out.


Program personnel should consult with BPAS and FMD about the appropriate incident-specific accounting codes. Program RMS staffs can submit requests for new FMMI codes to FMD by sending an email to [Master.Data.Requests@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Master.Data.Requests@aphis.usda.gov).

## **1.8 Cooperative Agreements**

Under a cooperative agreement, the Federal Government provides funding or an item of value authorized by public statute and plays a substantial role in the outcome of an activity.

To achieve its mission, APHIS routinely cooperates with State and local governments on surveillance and monitoring activities. Many agreements are already in place, and the framework is there to increase cooperative work in the event of a plant pest or animal disease outbreak. Depending on the outbreak, APHIS may need to enter into cooperative agreements with other entities (including non-Federal organizations) to assist in the response.

Each program has agreement specialists who can make an initial determination about whether a cooperative agreement is needed or is the proper vehicle to accomplish the work. Regulations governing the particular plant pest or animal



disease also serve as a guide. Regulations may prescribe indemnity payments, the use of a compliance agreement, compensation payments, grants, and guidelines for what costs can be reimbursed or paid. Program agreement specialists should consult with FMD Agreement Services Center personnel for policy guidance.

Program Agreement Specialists and the FMD Agreement Services Center will consult with Program Records Liaisons and/or IMC to ensure records management responsibilities are included in cooperative agreements, as appropriate. APHIS must ensure it maintains all of its records and authorizes proper use of its records.

Program Agreement Specialists and FMD Agreement Services Center will work with IMC to ensure compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act which gives APHIS the legal authority to collect information from the public (non-U.S. Federal Government employees performing their official duties).

## **1.9 Contracting**

### ***Procurement Contracts***

When it is necessary to procure goods or services to meet the program mission, there are a few items that require full attention. Program offices are required to prepare and submit a complete requisition package with their Integrated Acquisition System purchase requisition.

#### Cost/Price Estimate and Quantities

Cost and price estimates can be completed by reviewing previous prices for the same or similar purchases (they do not need to be MRPBS purchases). If you are ordering products or equipment, your item type should be the product billed by quantity. The quantity and unit of measure (i.e., each, dozen, box, carton, and unit price) should be entered. If you are buying monthly services or other services you can do as a quantity, you should enter the item type as services billed by quantity (months), along with the unit of measure and rate per unit. If your service cannot be broken down by a quantity, then your item type should be billed by only the amount entered.

#### Item Description (Statement of Work (SOW)/Performance Work Statement or Product Specifications)

The item description fully describes the product, service, or objective of the procurement. The item description is the most important part of procurement. Describe the items needed in as much detail as possible. Include catalog numbers, part numbers, size or color specifications, and the previous order number or contract number.

Also, when describing items for service requirements, you must follow the requirements of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 37.6. These requirements include:

- A performance work statement,
- Measurable performance standards (i.e., in terms of quality, timeliness, quantity, etc.) and the method of assessing contractor performance against



- performance standards, and
- Performance incentives where appropriate. When used, the performance incentives correspond to the performance standards set forth in the contract.

The item description defines the work to be performed, services to be rendered, and/or the product it delivered. In addition, the respective responsibilities of the government and the contractor are defined and provide an objective measure that both the government and the contractor can use to determine when the work is complete and payment is justified.

Some item descriptions are easier to prepare than others. For example, off-the-shelf products may not be difficult to prepare because specifications and state-of-the-art capabilities are known quantities and can be defined easily. SOWs for the development of services to support a new system may be more difficult to define. Planning for all the requirements and contingencies may be difficult, but care must be taken to ensure that all requirements are included.

Required Justification(s) (i.e., Other Than Full and Open Competition/Sole Source, Single Source, or Brand Name)

Sole source or proprietary purchases are sometimes necessary to meet a specific program or Agency need. However, such purchases require a justification for the selection of a product and a comprehensive, detailed explanation for the exclusion of all other products. This information may also be supported with market research. Justify in writing all Sole/Single Source purchases as well as Brand Name purchases.

Prior to and during a response, Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer Representative requirements should be considered and defined for the response. Standard contract language to support fiscal law should be considered for use during response activities.

All contracts will include required records management language in accordance with DR 3080-001. This contract language ensures the laws, regulations, and policies that apply to records and information used and maintained by APHIS also apply to contractors and/or others working on behalf of APHIS. All records must remain APHIS property and cannot be used except as explicitly as authorized by APHIS in writing.

## **1.10 Property Management**

### ***Facilities/Lease***

The Real Property Team in APHIS is delegated the authority to lease real property in urban and rural areas under CFR 41 101-17.4701, 101-18.104-3 and 101-19.301. During response activities, APHIS personnel, when possible, utilize USDA owned and leased space. If such space is not available, APHIS seeks other Federally-owned or leased space, prior to considering alternative solutions. During an emergency space may be leased without competition.



**Note:** The Realty Team is the only authorized contact with the lessor for negotiations of all space aspects from rent to alterations, preparation of lease documents, etc. Program officials are not warranted contract officials and should not negotiate directly with the lessor or broker.

The Realty team assists in writing user agreements for space where there are no costs or if there are expenses other than rent. If there is no GSA controlled space available, the Realty Team works with USDA to request emergency procurement authority.

### ***Incident Vehicle Operations***

These standards address driving by personnel actively engaged in all-hazard response activities, including driving while assigned to and from a specific incident or event (includes travel to a rest location). In the absence of more restrictive agency policy, these guidelines will be followed during mobilization and demobilization as well. Individual agency driving policies will be consulted for all other non-incident driving.

- Agency resources deployed to an incident will adhere to the current agency work/rest policy for determining length of duty day.
- No vehicle operator will drive more than 10 hours within any duty day.
- Multiple drivers in a single vehicle may drive up to the duty day limitation provided no driver exceeds the individual driving (behind the wheel) time limitation of 10 hours.

A driver will drive only if they have had at least eight (8) consecutive hours off duty before beginning a shift.

### ***Defensive Driving Training***

USDA's Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) requires that all USDA drivers certify every three years that they have a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle driven; and have read and understand the policy in DR-5400-006

### ***Vehicle Options***

Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) provide the guidance needed to determine the type(s) of vehicle utilized for any deployment. The regulation requires that the most advantageous method of transportation be authorized for travel to, from, and during a deployed period. When driving is deemed to be the most advantageous method of transportation available, then the traveler's options, by order of precedence, are listed below:

- Government Owned Vehicle (GOV). GOV travel is presumed to be the most advantageous method of transportation.
- Rental Vehicle. If a GOV is not available, but it's been determined that travel must be performed by automobile, then a rental vehicle should be authorized.

**NOTE:** Additional directives apply to the use of rental vehicles. Check with your assigned travel specialist prior to entering into any rental agreements for official business.

- Privately Owned Vehicle (POV). POVs are deemed to be the most

advantageous method of transportation only after other options have been exhausted.

All travel must be completed by the most expeditious means of transportation practicable and commensurate with the nature and purpose of your duties. In addition, APHIS must consider energy conservation, total cost to the Government (including costs of per diem, overtime, lost work time, and actual transportation costs), total distance traveled, number of points visited, and number of travelers.

### ***Paying for fuel and repairs***

Use of the Fleet Charge Card and Alternative Payment Methods, and Agriculture Property Management Regulation 110-34 Motor Vehicle Management. In addition the certification includes understanding of agency specific requirements, which for APHIS are contained in MRP 5400 MRP Motor Vehicle Manual. Finally, each driver has to review the training provided in the USDA Fleet Card User Certification Course.

## **1.11 Security**

Security training for deploying APHIS personnel and contractors, as needed, includes:

- Situational awareness training for field personnel;
- Operations security for field and office personnel; and
- Training and briefings specific to the area of deployment (drug activity, local gangs/criminal groups, criminal or other security concerns about/in close proximity to the work site and/or lodging, etc.)

### ***Workplace Violence***

All incidents of workplace violence (threats, intimidation, harassment, bullying) must be reported to security personnel for investigation. Allegations of workplace violence committed by contractors are reported to security personnel and the contracting officer.

### ***External Threats***

All incidents of threats, intimidation, and verbal abuse by non-government and non-contractor personnel are reported to MRPBS Emergency Management, Safety, and Security Division (EMSSD) personnel. In coordination with or through assistance from local law enforcement agencies, EMSSD security personnel investigate, assess, and mitigate all external threats to APHIS personnel and contractors.

### ***Coordination with Law Enforcement Agencies***

Upon deployment, EMSSD security personnel do the following:

- Make contact with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies in the operation area.
- Provide security briefings for law enforcement agencies.
- Attempt to negotiate agreements with State and local law enforcement agencies to provide off-duty officers for security support.
- Attempt to initiate intelligence-sharing activities with law enforcement agencies.

- Coordinate external threat and workplace violence investigations with State/local law enforcement agencies.

### ***Security Briefings for Incident Command Staff***

EMSSD security personnel provide regular briefings to Incident Command staff about security incidents, issues, corrective/mitigating actions, and outstanding/ongoing concerns, as well as give recommendations regarding personnel and site security.

### ***Management of Private Security Guards***

EMSSD security personnel decide on the request for, and deployment of, private security guards and obtain the necessary consent to deploy guards on private property. These personnel also manage security guard contracts and monitor the performance of security guard companies and individual guards.

## **1.12 Information Technology**

MRPBS' Information Technology Division (ITD) provides engineering and operational support for IT systems used by the programs. These systems are deployed across the United States and at our international offices. ITD has internal standard operating procedures (SOPs) that outline how these services can be acquired. A copy of the SOPs may be found at <https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/aphis-mrp-itd/ITStds-SOPs/Lists/IT%20SOPs/Procedures.aspx>

**Note:** Credentials are required for access to the APHIS network. The standard credential is the USDA LincPass, acquired as part of the employee on-boarding process. APHIS MRPBS has developed an expedited credentialing process for rapidly providing credentials to responders.

**Communications.** The IC coordinates with the ITD Telecommunications Mission Area Control Office about the following communication considerations:

- Cellular telephones;
- Landline phone systems;
- Network capabilities (includes cabling for phones and PCs);
- Broadband access;
- Radio/satellite;
- Video conferencing; and
- Wireless Internet Access (Wi-Fi).

**IT Equipment.** The IC coordinates with the ITD Chief Technology Officer about the following IT considerations:

- Computers;
- Printers;
- Scanners;
- Projectors;
- Other hardware or peripheral devices; and
- Access controls for VPN, networks, and systems.

**IT Support Services.** The IC coordinates with the ITD Enterprise Operations

Services Branch for the following IT operational support activities:

- Enterprise server support;
- Web access/support;
- Privileged access;
- IT equipment deployment/configuration;
- End-user technical assistance; and
- After hours support.

### 1.13 Information Management

Reports, including situation updates and information requirements, are submitted to the APHIS JDOC by email at [aphis.emergency.operations.center@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:aphis.emergency.operations.center@aphis.usda.gov) or by telephone at (301) 436-3110, as well as to response program leadership.

***Situation Reports.*** APHIS provides situation reports for significant animal or plant health emergencies to the USDA Operations Center. The Agency follows the APHIS Emergency Operations Center SOP for Situation Reporting to fulfill reporting requirements.

***Media and Congressional Communications.*** Accurate, consistent, and timely communication to the public, stakeholders, media, and Congress is vital to our effectiveness as an Agency in an emergency response situation. To ensure a consistent messaging, it is imperative that the IC and all response personnel use the following guidance when contacted by the media, Congress, or someone interested in obtaining Agency records:

- All Congressional calls, meeting requests, and written inquiries must be sent to Legislative and Public Affairs' (LPA) Legislative Affairs staff.
- All media calls must be referred to the onsite Public Information Officer (PIO) before providing any information to a reporter. If there is not a PIO onsite, the reporter should be referred to LPA's Public Affairs staff for coordination with the Joint Information Center (JIC).

Requests for Agency records that are subject to review and analysis under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) must be sent to LPA. This includes Agency records not available on APHIS' Web site or published, bound, or in brochure format for public dissemination.

### 1.14 Resource Priorities

When competition for resources occurs, such as when the Agency is responding to a widespread outbreak or multiple incidents simultaneously, the APHIS MAC Group establishes national priorities and develops resource deployment plans in concert with the NICs.

When competition for resources occurs within an APHIS program, the program follows the guidance of NIMS and internal program policies. When APHIS resources are required from other Agency program areas, the NIC works with other APHIS programs in the MAC Group to establish national priorities and develop resource

deployment plans.

When setting national and regional priorities and developing resource deployment plans, several criteria are considered, including:

- Maintaining mission-critical work;
- Maintaining the ability to respond to additional potential incidents involving agricultural bioterrorism, invasive species, diseases of wildlife and livestock, support to APHIS-regulated facilities, and conflicts between humans and wildlife;
- Maintaining support for APHIS' coordination of ESF #11 response to assist the FEMA and States, Tribes, and Territories impacted by disaster;
- Limiting costs without compromising safety; and
- Supporting NRF/FEMA ESF #11 mission assignment tasking.

Deployment plans specify the priority for dispatching resources to respond to an incident based on these criteria and the scope and severity of the incident, as determined by the APHIS MAC Group through consultation with affected program and support units.

## 1.15 Human Health

Health Monitoring: Medical monitoring may be required when there is a significant chance of transmission of an infection during or after deployment. APHIS EMSSD works with the lead Program, the Veterinary Services (VS) One Health Program Office, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local public health to identify appropriate measures for health monitoring. Based on the agent and risk to human health, personnel monitor their health status in accordance with identified requirements or recommendations. Personnel coordinate with the Safety Officer at the incident for specific guidance and questions. Demobilized responders are monitored by state and local public health for development of any influenza-like illness.

Other (non-zoonotic but infectious): Personnel who develop symptoms of an infectious disease should seek medical attention as appropriate. They must notify their site-supervisor or the IC and notify the safety officer of their illness. Any restrictions imposed by the healthcare provider are conveyed to the site-supervisor, and the responder follows the directions of the healthcare provider.

It is understood that effectively addressing the stressors of responders and other types of workers is not only important as an occupational health concern, but it is critical to team function and cohesion, productivity, and may help reduce more long-term and serious behavioral health consequences.

**Telework.** When individuals are harmed or become ill as a result of their duties during an emergency response, the telework program may allow eligible employees to work from an alternate worksite while recovering from the injury or illness. Additional telework information is located at [Human Resources Desk Guide \(HRDG\) 4368 - Telework Program - Section A.](#)

## 1.16 Safety and Health

APHIS develops an incident-specific safety and health plan for each incident that includes job hazard assessments, medical monitoring, and the use of personal protective equipment, among other things. The NIC works with the Safety Officer, program safety and health personnel, and Agency safety and health personnel to develop and implement the plan.

In approximately 2004, the National APHIS Safety and Health Council identified a need for a cadre of Safety Officers as well as a standardized training program. The responsibility for this program resides with the Safety and Health, and Environmental Protection Branch (SHEPB) of Emergency Management Safety Security Division (EMSSD), which coordinates Safety Officer, Safety Coordinator, as well as Supervisory Safety and Health training and deployments. Dispatchers contact SHEPB when they are notified of a newly initiated response. SHEPB then discusses safety and health needs for the response with the Incident Command. A fully trained Safety Officer is necessary for the response activities:

- if operations involve duties that are not considered part of the responder's everyday job,
- if the operations are taking place in an unfamiliar environment to the responder, or
- if life safety conditions exist.


Training and assignment of Safety Officers and Safety Coordinators to support incident response is coordinated at the Agency level by MRPBS EMSSD SHEPB. SHEPB and Dispatch verify eligibility of Safety Officers and Safety Coordinators to ensure, prior to deployment, that all training and certifications are current and up to date.

## 1.17 Exemptions

Despite the importance of mandatory assignments to an emergency incident, APHIS personnel, under certain circumstances, may be excused from an assignment. Acceptable reasons for being excused from mandatory mobilization include (but are not limited to):

- Serious medical condition/illness
- Personal hardship or prior obligations
- Child/Elder care
- Military duty
- Jury duty
- Union activity
- Annual leave

Reasonable consideration will be given to any employee seeking to be excused from a detail assignment. All exemption requests must be approved by the employee's deputy administrator or designated official. Exemption requests will be reviewed in consultation with the servicing employee relations specialist. The employee will be notified of approval or disapproval of the request. If the exemption



is not approved, the employee is expected to fulfill the original deployment assignment.

PPQ employees have special provisions that are covered under collective bargaining agreements (CBA). Additional exemption information, guidance, and forms for PPQ bargaining unit employees can be found at the following Web site:

<https://my.aphis.usda.gov/wps/myportal/myaphis/employeeresources/human-resources/lr/> :

- National Association of Agriculture Employees MOU;
- National Association of Plant Protection and Quarantine Office Support Employees MOU;
- CBA between the National Association of Agriculture Employees and APHIS-PPQ; and
- CBA between the National Association of Plant Protection and Quarantine Office Support Employees and APHIS.

## Chapter 2—Mobilization

**Mobilization Checklist**

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
2.1	Mobilization		
2.2	EQS Resource Requests		
2.3	Voluntary Mobilization		
2.4	Agency Mandatory Mobilization		
2.5	Volunteer Emergency Ready Response Corps (VERRC)		
2.6	Physical and Virtual Deployments		

### 2.1 Mobilization

Mobilization includes considerations and activities that are conducted in order to deploy personnel to an incident. The IC coordinates with APHIS Dispatch to develop a complete list of all employees working on the incident to ensure an account of all responders for certification and tracking purposes.

### 2.2 EQS Resource Requests

Personnel qualification records are managed in the APHIS EQS. The EQS is an information management system that tracks training and certifications for APHIS employees. This system tracks the status of resources to and from an incident. All resources mobilized for an incident receive deployment orders using this system. Supervisors will ensure that employees who do not possess or have access to electronic devices during emergency mobilization, receive all communications regarding their deployment orders.

Resources required from outside the Agency are expected to meet the qualifications for the positions being requested. Any organization or agency providing resources to fill interagency requests for animal and plant health or all-hazards incidents of moderate or higher complexity coordinates with the APHIS MAC for resources requested outside of APHIS.

The lead Program coordinates APHIS incident response at the national and/or underlying levels, depending on State requests and the scope of the incident. The IC works with State and Federal program managers at field locations to establish APHIS Incident Command Posts, if applicable, and fill incident needs from local sources when possible. Local human resources include local temporary hires, State personnel, and local APHIS employees. When incident needs cannot be met locally, requests for additional resources are sent to the APHIS Dispatch email group.

#### ***Baseline Availability***

Supervisors for each work location/unit determine the number of employees that are available for TDY assignments from within their unit. The “*availability number*” is based on the minimum number of employees required to accomplish their primary



mission minus employees on scheduled or unscheduled absences, details, etc. This number is utilized by APHIS Dispatch when making TDY assignments.

## 2.3 Voluntary Mobilization

When a program response assessment determines additional resources outside the local duty station are required, the IC is responsible for establishing contact with their program leadership and APHIS Dispatch to begin the resource request process.

Upon initial contact, the IC designee provides APHIS Dispatch with a complete list of all employees currently working on the incident<sup>1</sup> to ensure a complete accounting of resources and to verify the establishment of an incident.

### **Resource Requests**

The IC or designee completes a Resource Request Workbook<sup>2</sup> and sends it to the APHIS Dispatch inbox: [APHIS.Dispatch@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:APHIS.Dispatch@aphis.usda.gov). This inbox notifies all dispatchers that resources are requested to respond. The resource request must include the following information:

- Reporting instructions to include:
  - Incident location (City/State) (if different from reporting location);
  - Reporting location (if different from incident location)
  - Nature of the incident;
  - Date/time needed;
  - Demob date/time;
  - Expected work hours;
  - Position(s) requested;
  - Quantity needed;
  - Resource assigned (if by name)
  - Description of working conditions;
  - Known physical demands required;

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<sup>1</sup> In many cases, employees have been assigned to an incident within their local area or State prior to a need for additional resources. It is important that the IC or designee submit these names to APHIS Dispatch to maintain a thorough accounting of all employees' statuses in the EQS and document experience history.

<sup>2</sup> A Resource Request Workbook, ICS 260 Resource Order form, or an EMRS Request Workbook is used to request resources throughout the lifetime of an incident. The spreadsheet is developed to allow the IC or designee and APHIS Dispatchers to track all resources and when they are requested. The ICS 260 Resource Order Form is also a standard form used in the ICS.

- Qualifications<sup>3</sup> and any special skills<sup>4</sup> needed;
- Uniform requirements;
- Additional equipment or special needs required that are not supplied by the Incident (i.e., government identification, IT needs, etc.);
- Incident contact name and phone number
- APHIS Financial Code;
- Additional information as required

Normally the IC or designee makes all efforts to allow 14 days notification for an emergency response assignment. This applies to Volunteer Call-Out Requests and mandatory deployment assignment notifications. For complex incidents where a NIC has been named, after reviewing the resource request, APHIS Dispatch submits it electronically to the NIC for final approval and prioritization.

**Note:** The NIC may require justification for less than 14 days advance notification.

Upon approval (within 24 hours or sooner as required by the nature of the incident), APHIS Dispatch follows the prescribed protocols to establish the incident in the EQS database and generates a resource request solicitation.

APHIS Dispatch creates a Call-Out Announcement and sends it electronically to all APHIS employees. Minimum criteria for each Call-Out Request Announcement includes:

- Closing date and the time period to respond;
- Specific dates of the TDY assignment (when known);
- Location and nature of the emergency;
- Expected work hours;
- Physical demands required;
- Specific qualifications and any specialty positions needed; and
- A statement recognizing that the information may be subject to change.

Typically Call-Out Requests are open for a minimum of 24 hours to allow employees to respond. In the case of ESF #11 or IMT activations, the timeframes may be shorter based on the nature of the incident.

### **Selection**

Employees who wish to volunteer for an assignment are required to respond within the timeframe established in the Call-Out Request. All responses are time stamped,

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<sup>3</sup> It is recommended that Incident Command staff select resources based on **The Emergency Responder Position Catalog**. Specialized secondary skills (i.e., foreign language, sign language, etc.) can also be requested.

<sup>4</sup> If specialized secondary skills are required for the assignment, the Incident Command staff must prioritize each requested skill by level of importance

and late submissions are not considered for selection unless there are remaining vacancies after the initial selection is complete.

**Note:** All announcements are made using Eastern Standard Time.

The employee must fully complete the EQS volunteer survey and receive supervisory approval to be considered for selection. Incomplete survey responses will not be considered.

The EQS volunteer survey includes the following for all requests:

- Qualifications (based on qualification identifiers used in EQS) and specialized skills required for the incident;
- Certification of “fully successful” for the most recent annual performance rating or “satisfactory” for the last Incident Personnel Performance Rating (ICS 225);
- Date the volunteering period closes;
- Self-certify specific skills requested for the incident; and
- Supervisor approval.

In addition, the EQS volunteer survey may request the following:

- Valid driver’s license;
- Active Government travel card;
- Current defensive driving course certification;
- Bargaining unit affiliation;
- Current Concur (Travel and Expense) account; and
- Current medical clearance(s) for identified job hazards, including respirator fit-testing.

Once the announcement closes, APHIS Dispatch sorts employee selections based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications (based on qualification identifiers used in EQS and requested specialized secondary skills);
- Additional required certifications as listed in survey;
- Return from Assignment Date (RAD); and
- Service Computation Date (SCD)<sup>5</sup>.

APHIS Dispatch ranks the volunteer survey responses by: qualifications; prioritized skills required; RAD (oldest date first), and SCD (oldest date first). The Incident Command staff has the authority to allow selection to be based on sorting criteria or to select specific volunteers. Justification to select a volunteer outside of outlined sorting criteria is submitted to Labor Relations and the MAC Group representative and documented by APHIS Dispatch. APHIS Dispatch maintains clear communication with the Incident Command staff to ensure agreement with information submitted, as well as authorization to proceed toward mobilizing the selected employees.

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<sup>5</sup>SCD denotes the time at which the employee began service with APHIS.

**Note:** Only RADs for assignments completed after September 30, 2012 are used for tracking purposes. If employees have either the same or no RAD, the SCD is used for sorting for volunteer and mandatory selections.

APHIS Dispatch posts all volunteers, selected employees, and the criteria list used for each “Just in Time Announcement” or Mandatory Assignment Announcement within the EQS database in the “EQS Announcements” section. Any employee wishing to view the results is required to access this SharePoint site. As a courtesy to the incident, selected employees, and their supervisors are notified, APHIS Dispatch does not email non-selected employees.

Certain positions that are in high demand, where there are limited numbers of qualified employees, are centrally deployed. These positions include, but are not limited to, the Command and General Staff positions on IMTs. During voluntary mobilization, employees with the appropriate qualifications receive a questionnaire on their availability for deployment, and are required to obtain supervisory approval for possible deployment. Prior to deployment, the employees are contacted by APHIS Dispatch to confirm availability, and concurrence of the supervisor.

## **2.4 Agency Mandatory Mobilization (AMM)**

To be prepared to respond to any emergency, the Agency developed an Agency Mandatory Mobilization (AMM) plan, which provides the framework for a standardized Agency approach to emergency response and guidance on mandatory mobilization/deployment. For reference purposes, this guide and the “APHIS Mobilization Guide and Mandatory Plan Q & A” are located on the [\*\*MyAphis - APHIS Emergency Response Information page.\*\*](#)

Each APHIS Program is responsible for utilizing this plan and its guidance when managing their staff’s mobilization and deployment. When the emergency expands into needing resources beyond what the lead Program can accommodate, the AMM plan is activated, in part, when all other resources have the potential to be exhausted.

Incident Command/National Incident Command determine and identify the resources necessary to meet the response needs. If the available number of volunteers does not fill the resource request needs, the IC or NIC elevates the need to the APHIS MAC Group. If the need is great enough, the APHIS MAC Group issues an APHIS Mandatory Mobility declaration. In the event of an APHIS Mandatory Mobility declaration, mandatory selection procedures are used after the volunteer list is exhausted. If an AMM declaration is issued, all Agency functions continue; however, they may function at a diminished capacity in order to support the APHIS response. During a response that requires mandatory mobilization, the lead Program plans for and contributes the maximum resources possible based on the expertise of its employees and knowledge of the emergency at hand.

All APHIS positions are eligible for mobilization and deployment and included in the mandatory list of personnel that may be deployed during a response. The mandatory list is maintained by APHIS Dispatch and is used when the volunteer list is

exhausted for all program incidents. The decision is made based upon the critical need for assistance. With input from the IC or designee, the APHIS MAC Group decides whether to use the mandatory list for incidents. Labor Relations is notified.

### ***Deployment Process***

A mandatory deployment Agency-wide activation is rare and the emergency is likely handled via volunteers and other means (e.g., contractors, term/temporary hires, other USDA agency assistance, etc.). When an Agency-wide activation occurs, job skills and experiences from employees throughout the Agency are needed and individuals with the desired skills are activated over those individuals who lack the specific skills listed in emergency positions. Examples of tasks that may be needed include:

- Administrative Support:
  - Contracting.
  - Agreements.
  - Budget Planning and Execution.
  - Information Technology.
  - Safety and Security.
  - Administrative Support.
  - Public Affairs and Communications.
- AgHealth Support:
  - Biosecurity.
  - Cleaning and Disinfecting.
  - Euthanasia and Disposal.
  - Diagnosis and Inspection.

APHIS' first line of resource availability is through the use of volunteers. In addition to employees from the lead Program and volunteers from other APHIS Programs, the Agency utilizes, in no particular order, contractors, term and temporary hires, and/or volunteers from other USDA Agencies or Federal entities (requires USDA MAC activation/initiation) to support the incident or emergency. If all resources above are expended, and more resources are still needed, the Agency activates mandatory mobilization. Programs internally manage the process to determine their baseline percentage of staff availability.

When mandatory mobilization occurs, the Agency has determined that all Agency functions continue, but in a diminished capacity. In an effort to quantify that, an across the board percentage is established for the minimum people resource contribution each Program is asked to make available. However, the lead Program contributes the maximum resources possible based on the expertise of its employees and knowledge of the emergency.

Funding sources are not used as criteria for deciding who is available to respond to an emergency. Employees who perform work on user fee, reimbursable, or trust fund programs can mobilize. Program management needs to manage the workload when these employees are deployed. Options include reducing the level of services provided to customers or re-assigning other employees to fill in (including those that

cannot deploy due to personal or medical hardships). When employees who perform work on user fee, reimbursable, or trust fund programs deploy, they charge their base salaries to appropriated funds. Employees that fill in behind them charge their salaries to the respective user fee, reimbursable, or trust fund account. Travel and overtime are charged to emergency funding. If emergency funding allows for the payment of employee base salary, the Program/Support Units seek guidance from the Financial Management Division on the use of emergency funds.

The minimum resource (people) baseline contribution each Program should be prepared to provide to the emergency at any given time may be up to 30% of the current workforce.

Each program is responsible for utilizing the AMM and its guidance when managing their staff's mobilization and deployment.

**Note:** APHIS Mandatory Mobility can be declared for any incident. For reference purposes, the APHIS Mobilization Guide and Mandatory Plan Q & A are located on the [\*\*MyAphis - APHIS Emergency Response Information page.\*\*](#)

## **2.5 Volunteer Emergency Ready Response Corps (VERRC)**

The APHIS Administrator committed the Agency to expanding the current voluntary mobilization process to include a ready reserve corps of employees who are pre-trained for specific response positions. The VERRC was created to meet that commitment.

VERRC members are Agency volunteers who apply for specific responder positions, complete required position specific training, and possess the clearances to deploy to an incident when needed. All full time (non-seasonal) APHIS employees are eligible and encouraged to apply for the program at any time; ideally prior to the start of an incident response. Seasonal interns, contractors, and Foreign Service workers are not eligible for this program.

VERRC applications are completed and stored within the EQS database to ensure that APHIS has response capability to any unforeseen incident. Eligible volunteers must meet all standard voluntary mobilization requirements as listed in Section 2.3, *Voluntary Mobilization*, before being considered VERRC qualified. Deployments are determined by the type and scale of the incident to the needs of the Agency.

The VERRC ensures permanent employees throughout the Agency are provided the opportunity to support an emergency response and are sufficiently trained to respond to an incident. The use of the voluntary mobilization process allows the Agency to leverage trained APHIS employees in the event of an incident.

### ***VERRC Qualification Process:***

- APHIS full time, permanent employees apply to VERRC using the EQS database.
- Application to VERRC must be approved by supervisor.
- VERRC Management coordinates training, if needed, to ensure an applicant

meets the requirements of the position(s) they apply for. When all requirements are met VERRC Management will update an applicant's status to "VERRC Qualified" in EQS.

***Emergency Response Process:***

- VERRC Management receives resource request(s) from APHIS Dispatch and queries the EQS VERRC database for qualified VERRC volunteers to fill the resource need. The eligible VERRC applicant pool is then rank-ordered by: RAD (oldest date first) followed by SCD (oldest date first).
- VERRC Management reaffirms that the volunteer is available and willing to accept the assignment and ensures that supervisory approval is granted.
- VERRC Management provides the name of the qualified, available VERRC volunteer to APHIS Dispatch.
- APHIS Dispatch issues resource order.

## **2.6 Physical and Virtual Deployments**

Mobilization includes both physical and virtual deployments. *Physical deployments* involve an actual movement of resources to the incident or incident support location. *Virtual deployments* involve being assigned new duties to support the emergency response from the employee's ODS. Virtual deployments may require 100 percent of an employee's work time and may not allow the employee to perform their regular job duties. Virtual deployments include working on teams whose members are geographically dispersed and where work is coordinated via email, conference calls, and other Web and IT systems. Requests for incident resources specify when physical or virtual deployments are needed. Both types require mobilization orders from APHIS Dispatch.

## Chapter 3—Deployment

**Deployment Checklist**

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
3.1	Dispatch Activities		
3.2	Employee Pre-Deployment Checklist		
3.3	Making Emergency Response Travel Arrangements		
3.4	Length of Assignment(s)		
3.5	Employee Injury, Occupational Illness, and Assistance		

### 3.1 Dispatch Activities

After resources have been identified, the process for physically or virtually deploying employees involves close communication between the employee, APHIS Dispatch, and support personnel (i.e., travel, time and attendance, and other subject matter experts). The following are processes and responsibilities for deployment:

APHIS Dispatch Lead must notify the Director/AAMD and the Branch Chief, Procurement Branch/AAMD when initiating dispatch to a new incident.

APHIS Dispatchers check:

- Qualifications in EQS;
- Supervisory approval status;
- Medical clearance/respirator fit testing, if necessary.
  - This includes having up-to-date vaccinations against tetanus, flu, etc. (as required or needed by specific incident)
- Availability timeframe;
- Accounting code changes necessary for travel, if applicable; and
- Basic equipment/resources for position requested (e.g., laptop, purchase card, travel card, defensive driving certificate, etc.).

Resource Request Orders (RRO) originate from APHIS Dispatch and you should not initiate travel prior to receiving an official RRO. All RROs must be managed within the Emergency Qualification System (EQS). During the initial deployment notification get as much of the following information as possible:

- Location of incident and/or reporting address
- Incident point of contact (POC) and contact phone number(s)
- Reporting not later than time and date
- Travel reservations and transportation plans (air, auto, etc.) and routes
- Lodging arrangements
- Required clothing and protective equipment
- Anticipated length of deployment

APHIS Dispatchers create a Resource Request Order by:

- Filling the pending resource request with qualified personnel; and



- Sending a selection letter with the resource order to the employee and a copy to the supervisor, IC or designee, and other program officials as needed.

### 3.2 Employee Pre-Deployment Checklist

Each APHIS employee should can take action to be prepared for deployment for any emergency response APHIS is requested to support. Refer to Appendix 2, *Basic Deployment Checklist: What to Bring*, to assist in your personal preparations and maintain readiness.

- Responders should provide APHIS Dispatch and the incident Check-In Unit (identified on the original resource order), with travel arrangements within 48 hours or as soon as arrangements are made after receiving orders to include:
  - If flying, the complete flight itinerary (departure, arrival, flight numbers, etc.); and
  - If driving, vehicle and travel information (license plate number, year/make/model of vehicle, estimated time of departure and arrival, and the planned travel route).
- The employee is responsible for reporting to the incident at the assigned date, time, and location noted on the resource order.
- If the employee is unable to report due to an unforeseen event, they are responsible for immediately notifying APHIS Dispatch and the IC or designee identified on the original resource order.
- The employee must ensure they know which POCs to call regarding travel arrangements outside of normal business hours, if needed.
- The employee must read all directions, emails, orders, and any information provided by Dispatch.

### 3.3 Making Emergency Response Travel Arrangements

In most emergency response situations, responders will have advance notice and will receive detailed instructions for making their travel arrangements from the APHIS Dispatchers.

Employees who need to travel within 24 hours or do not have enough time to make travel arrangements using normal agency procedures should use the following processes:

#### ***Current Employee with a Government Issued Travel Card***

The employee calls the **Travel Management Center, BCD Travel**, to make reservations at **1- 800-877-6120 (within US)**. The employee tells BCD to bill the airline tickets to the employee's individual travel card account. BDC can access this information in the employee's profile. The employee should create a travel authorization in *Concur* and have it approved as soon as practical.

#### ***New employee OR an Invitational Traveler***

The employee calls the **Travel Management Center, BCD Travel**, to make

reservations at **1- 800-877-6120 (within US)**. The employee informs the agent that the purpose of travel is for emergency response and to charge the airline tickets to the **APHIS, Central Billed Account**. BCD Travel will contact an APHIS Travel Services Center representative to receive approval of the charges. BCD Travel will then make the reservations and will email the itinerary to the employee.

In order for BCD Travel to create a profile and book airline reservations for the employee's travel, the employee must be prepared to provide BCD Travel with the following information:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Sex
- Phone number
- Email address

When the employee creates the travel voucher for this trip, the employee must ensure that the reimbursement for the airline tickets is to the Central Billed Account rather than the employee's travel card.

### **3.4 Length of Assignment(s)**

The scope and severity of the incident and employee health and safety are two primary factors in determining the length of an assignment.

The typical length of a single deployment to an incident is 21 days. Longer or shorter deployments do not normally occur; however deployment duration may fluctuate based on the needs of any given incident.

#### ***21-Day Deployment***

Most responders who physically deploy to incidents work 21 consecutive days (excluding travel) and are assigned an unpaid mandatory day off approximately midway through the assignment, as determined by the incident supervisor. Following completion of their 21 workday cycle, responders are normally demobilized and returned to their ODS for a minimum of 14 days before being eligible for a redeployment.

#### ***28-Day or Longer Deployment (Extended Tour)***

Some employees may be assigned to physically deploy to incidents for 28 or more consecutive days. Extensions beyond 28 days must be approved by the Incident Command and General Staff, the lead program unit, and the employee's home station supervisor. Employees on 28-day or longer deployments must be assigned a minimum of two (2) non-consecutive unpaid days off each 28 day period. Following completion of the 28-day or longer deployment, employees demobilize and return to the ODS for a minimum of 14 calendar days before being eligible for redeployment.

#### ***7-Day Deployment***

In rare situations, employees may be assigned to physically deploy to incidents for 7 consecutive days.

### **Administrative Leave**

Employees participating in deployments will be granted administrative leave as outlined in the HRDG 4630. Administrative leave is not provided to employees who never leave the ODS (virtual deployment).

To be eligible to receive administrative leave, the employee's time and attendance (T&A) records must show that they worked the minimum required amount of time. The approving official must include a written statement with supporting documentation (e.g., a statement from the supervisor in WebTA and deployment orders either attached to the T&A or placed in the T&A file).

Additional information about administrative leave is available in HRDG 4630 – Absence and Leave - Section D. Depending on the complexity of the response, additional guidance and restrictions may be implemented and included in the dispatch orders to ensure APHIS employees are adhering to personal safety and health measures and protecting American agriculture.

The administrative leave (TC 66) must be used at the **beginning of the first day** you are expected to return to duty at your ODS for your regularly scheduled TOD. Additionally:


- It will not be used at a later time.
- It must be granted upon return from each assignment.
- It will not be granted when the report day is a holiday or non-duty day. For example if you return from assignment on Sunday, you are expected to report for duty on Monday and if Monday is a holiday you are not entitled to administrative leave. Likewise if you return on Friday and your next scheduled duty day is Monday, you are not entitled to administrative leave.
- The approving official must include a written statement with supporting documentation.

Figure 2, should be used as the guideline for scheduling administrative leave:

<b>If you normally work Monday – Friday and you return from an assignment on :</b>	<b>Then you will:</b>
Friday	Not be granted any administrative leave. You must report for duty on Monday.
Saturday	Not be granted any administrative leave. You must report for duty on Monday.
Sunday	Receive administrative leave in the amount listed in HRDG 4630 – Absence and Leave - Section D.
Wednesday	Receive administrative leave in the amount listed in HRDG 4630 – Absence and Leave - Section D.

**Figure 2. Administrative Leave Guidance**

### **Extensions**



If the nature of an incident requires assigned employees' deployments to be extended, ICs obtain ODS supervisor approval. Incident POCs send ODS supervisor approval, incident supervisor approval, and the new demobilization date to APHIS Dispatch prior to the original demobilization date. Dispatch updates the demobilization date, creates an updated resource order to reflect the extension, and sends a copy of the updated order to all POCs from the original order.

### ***Reassignments***

Emergency responses are dynamic. In some cases, positions filled by employees may be subject to change depending on incident needs. Employees should expect to remain flexible and maintain clear communication with incident personnel regarding changes or reassignments that cannot be performed based on employee qualifications. Incident POCs notify APHIS Dispatch of any position changes or reassignments for tracking purposes and for inclusion in the dispatching systems.

### ***Work Schedule and Rest Policy***

The Incident Command at the temporary duty station establishes daily work schedules for all employees.

Work/Rest Guidelines must be met on the majority of incidents. In the majority of cases, Incident supervisors will plan for and ensure all personnel are provided a minimum 2:1 work/rest ratio (for every 2 hours of work or travel, provide 1 hour of sleep and/or rest).

Work shifts that exceed 16 hours and/or consecutive days that do not meet the 2:1 work/rest ratio will be the exception, and work shifts will not exceed 24 hours. However, in situations where this occurs, for example, initial response, incident management personnel will resume 2:1 work/rest ratio as quickly as possible. The intent of the guidelines is to manage fatigue and provide flexibility for ICs managing initial response, extended deployments, and large incidents. The guidelines are designed to ensure that for every 2 hours of work or travel, 1 hour of time off will be provided within a 24-hour period. It does not matter when the 24-hour period starts; all time recorded on the clock is counted as hours of work; time off the clock is counted as hours of rest, including meal breaks.

The IC must justify work shifts that exceed 16 hours and those that do not meet 2:1 work/rest ratio. Justification will be documented in the daily incident records. Documentation will include mitigation measures used to reduce fatigue.

The on-site manager and/or direct supervisor, in collaboration with the Safety Officer, is responsible for ensuring that employees are given the proper amount of time off for rest. This means being aware of employees who have long shifts or who may be exhibiting physical and mental signs of stress.

For voluntary deployments, consideration is given to employees willing to extend their term or redeploy for an additional rotation with incident and ODS supervisory approval.

### ***Records Management***

Incident supervisors/command will ensure all employees and individuals working on behalf of APHIS for the incident appropriately document their work, acknowledge their records management responsibilities, and adhere to an official file plan (MRP 401/401A). In addition, records management responsibilities will be included in standard operating procedures, as appropriate.

## **3.5 Employee Injury, Occupational Illness, and Assistance**

When individuals are harmed or become ill as a result of their duties during an emergency response, they coordinate with the incident supervisor, incident Safety Officer, and the Finance Chief to ensure that all workers' compensation claims are processed

The Finance Chief works with EMSSD to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to resolve workers' compensation issues.

Detailed information regarding Worker's Compensation can be found on the ***APHIS Worker's Compensation Program web page***.

### ***Employee Assistance Program***

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a professional counseling and referral service to help APHIS employees with personal and professional problems. It is free, confidential within the limits of the law, and voluntary. EAP can assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with emotional, family, marital, alcohol or drug use/abuse, and relationship problems. For immediate assistance, call **1-800-222-0364**.

Additional EAP information is located on the ***MyAPHIS - Employee Assistance Program web page***.

## Chapter 4—Demobilization

Demobilization Checklist

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
4.1	Out Processing		
4.2	Human Health		

### 4.1 Out Processing

Incident supervisors/command will conduct records exit inventories for all employees and individuals working on behalf of APHIS for the incident to ensure all records are appropriately maintained.

Prior to demobilizing, the Logistics Section provides the employee with demobilization instructions and an exit survey. The employee is responsible for following the demobilization instructions and checking out of the incident with the Logistics Section, as well as completing the exit survey.

During checkout, the employee:

- Turns in all equipment and supplies issued at the incident;
- Turns in all receipts for items purchased;
- Confirms return travel itinerary information with APHIS Dispatch and Incident POC;
- Receives an Incident Personnel Performance Rating Form (ICS 225), completed by the incident POC or supervisor; and
- Receives a Demobilization Check-Out Form (ICS 221). ICS forms are also available at <http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/icsforms.htm>.

**Note:** In a situation where an employee has multiple incident supervisors during their deployment cycle, each supervisor evaluates and provides an Incident Personnel Performance Rating Form (ICS 225) for the period that the employee was under their supervision prior to the supervisor departing the incident. At the end of the employee's deployment cycle, the evaluations cover the entire deployment period. This ensures that the employee is evaluated by the supervisor who was present for the period being covered in the evaluation. This also occurs when an employee, while still deployed, is reassigned to a different position with a different incident supervisor. In these cases the evaluation occurs prior to the reassignment of the employee.

As part of demobilization, the employee documents their experiences during the incident in an exit survey, which helps to capture lessons learned. The information is used to evaluate against incident objectives and responder capabilities as part of an After Action Report (AAR) for the incident. The lead program oversees the development of lessons learned, a root cause analysis, and an AAR following Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidance. This information helps APHIS develop a training and exercise program to improve responder capabilities for future responses. See Chapter 5 of this guide for more



information.

The employee sends an email to notify APHIS Dispatch within 24 hours of their safe return to the ODS.

The IC or designee has the following responsibilities during out processing:

- Once an employee has completed check out, send the completed ICS 221 form or the actual release date/time, along with the travel itinerary confirmation for the employee, to the APHIS Dispatch email box
- File the original copy of ICS 225 in the official incident record. Provide one copy of the ICS 225 to the employee, and send another copy to the employee's ODS supervisor.
- Remind the employee to notify APHIS Dispatch by email of their safe arrival to their ODS

When necessary and before a position is relieved, replacement personnel for the required function must be dispatched and arrive within the deployment cycle of the departing individual.

Upon completion of the assignment, employees must go through the checkout process with the Incident Planning Section or, if not established, their incident POC before departing.

## **4.2 Health Monitoring**

Each responder should monitor their health status according to the guidance received with the demobilization instructions. APHIS EMSSD, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local public health determine necessary health monitoring guidance and provide direction to employees regarding social distancing from family members, co-workers, and peers.

## Chapter 5—Deactivation

Deactivation Checklist

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
5.1	Contract Close-Out		
5.2	Financial Close-Out		
5.3	APHIS MAC Group Stands Down		
5.4	NIC/Lead Program Stands Down		
5.5	Partial/Total Deactivation Procedures		
5.6	Transfer of Control		
5.7	Dispatch Close-Out		
5.8	Records Management		

### 5.1 Contract Close-Out

Contracts are to be closed per USDA Procurement Advisory 93A, and Appendices. The designated Contracting Officer (CO) oversees contract closeout activities with assistance from the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). The CO may delegate duties of contract closeout to other procurement personnel, except for actions that require a CO's warrant.

The CO utilizes the USDA Procurement Advisory 93A Appendix A - Contract Closeout Checklist and the FAR to ensure that all actions are completed.

**Note:** A completed contract is not closed if the contract is in litigation, under investigation, pending a termination action or if there is an outstanding claim.


### 5.2 Financial Close-Out

The Lead Program RMS is responsible for monitoring and managing funding obligated/expended on emergency response activities. The RMS reports out on the Status of Funds (SOF) for the emergency funding during monthly SOF meetings with the appropriate Deputy Administrator and the Office of the Administrator.

Depending upon the severity and nature of the emergency; program management, the IMT, or the RMS may elect to set up a separate organization or office that manages daily financial activity.

As part of demobilization efforts, the program RMS monitors open contracts, agreements, and other obligations and takes appropriate steps to close out these documents. If vendors and cooperators are still submitting invoices/bills, these obligations may need to remain open. If a separate organization or office was established to monitor this activity during the incident, once the organization or office is closed, the RMS is responsible for continuing to monitor these open items to ensure they are closed out.





The close-out of financial documents for an emergency response follows standard Agency procedures for closing out documents. Each RMS must be familiar with the procedures or know which office to contact for assistance if needed.

### **5.3 APHIS MAC Group Stands Down**

When the level of response to incident has scaled back and no longer requires the support of the APHIS MAC group to assist with resource prioritization, coordination, and assistance, the APHIS MAC Chair makes a determination to scale the MAC Group to a level appropriate to the response. The APHIS MAC Chair determines what authorities and processes are delegated to the AC, UC or APHIS Program, and what MAC Support continues (if needed). When the MAC chair determines that operations are no longer required or appropriate, the MAC chair directs the MAC Group to stand down.

### **5.4 National Incident Coordinator (NIC)/Lead Program Stands Down**

After the emergency response is complete, APHIS works with federal agencies; state, tribal, and local governments; and the private sector to develop and implement systems designed to provide long- term stability and protection from the pest or disease that caused the emergency. A delegation of authority is bestowed upon the local jurisdiction and long term recovery planning efforts are developed at the program level which may include regulations, eradication, and best management practices. The NIC and Lead Program stand-down the response only after the NIC ensures that incident objectives were met and an orderly, safe and efficient return of resources to their original location and status has occurred.

### **5.5 Partial/Total Deactivation Procedures**


Based on the availability of resources, APHIS may proceed with a partial deactivation. In these cases, resources may continue to mobilize to the incident for an interim period until the acquisition of permanent personnel can be established. Although most resources are demobilized, APHIS continues to mobilize resources to augment a transition into an established program.

When resources are no longer mobilized to support an incident, APHIS Dispatchers will work with the lead program to determine if the response is deactivated and close it out in the EQS database. Dispatchers will follow a demobilization SOP for deactivating response.

### **5.6 Transfer of Control**

Transfer of control relinquishes authority and responsibility back to the local jurisdiction.

At the conclusion of the incident, the IMT demobilizes and responsibility for the response transfers to the program at a local level. A program may be normally funded and semi-permanent staffs replace the IMT. The activities continue until



incident objectives are met, quarantines are lifted, and regulations are no longer in effect. This process may extend beyond the initial emergency response, and can last a number of years. After further program review, the program may become more permanent, funded by a specific budget line-item incorporated into the APHIS program.

## **5.7 Dispatch Close-Out**

Deactivation occurs when there are no longer any additional employees mobilized for the response. Dispatchers communicate with incident personnel to determine that an incident has been deactivated and close out the incident in the EQS database. The APHIS MAC Group, IC, and APHIS Dispatch collaborate to determine if there is a partial or complete deactivation required. APHIS may continue to send resources to assist with the transition to local and/or program control.

## **5.8 Records Management**

APHIS must document and preserve its work in accordance with the Federal Records Act and associated laws, regulations, and policies. APHIS employees deployed to resolve an emergency have records creation and retention responsibilities, as they do during their normal work assignments. Information created or received during the course of Government business are records, regardless of their media format.

Some examples of records that must be retained during emergency deployment might include situational reports, animal disease testing data, plant pest survey information, hazardous material information, delegation of authority protocols and organizational charts, payroll records, agreements, and contracts.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, there may be other types of records created that would need to be retained until the end of their legal disposition period as prescribed in official file plans (MRP 401/401A). For more detailed information, please visit the APHIS Records Management Web site and/or contact your program Records Liaison or MRPBS Information Management and Compliance (IMC) ([records@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:records@aphis.usda.gov) and/or 301-851-2483) for assistance.

## Chapter 6—Corrective Actions Program

Corrective Actions Program Checklist

	Task	Date/Time Completed	Verified
6.1	EQS Records Validation		
6.2	Lessons Learned		
6.3	After-Action Review and Improvement Planning		
6.4	Training, Testing, and Exercise Program		
6.5	Required Training		
6.6	Just-in-time Training		
6.7	Experience and Qualifications Training		

### 6.1 EQS Records Validation

All APHIS employees are responsible for maintaining accurate records in EQS. Employees receive semi-annual validation requests, and supervisors are responsible for validating their employees' information in the system. EQS utilizes information from various APHIS systems. Validation is vital to ensure accurate emergency contact and qualification information.

### 6.2 Lessons Learned

The lead program ensures that all relevant data pertaining to the response is collected to support effective evaluation and improvement planning. To ensure comprehensive capture of lessons learned, the lead program will engage all programs who participated in the response in hot-washes, after action reviews (AAR), and development of improvement plans (IP). Both positive and negative lessons learned should be included in the data.

As a condition of their demobilization from the response, incident response personnel will complete a standardized post-operation survey or debriefing to feedback their lessons learned and provide recommendations for future improvement.

The NIC, in conjunction with the lead program exercise personnel and the EMSSD Training and Exercise program, schedules a hot-wash. A hot-wash provides incident personnel and leadership an opportunity to discuss incident and program strengths and areas for improvement immediately following the conclusion of the incident. Hot-washes also provide a chance to distribute additional surveys that, when completed by participants, can be used to help generate the AAR/IP. The information gathered during a hot-wash is incorporated into the AAR/IP and intended to improve future responses.

### 6.3 After-Action Report and Improvement Plan (AAR/IP)

Once incident response information is analyzed using the data collected from the

hot-wash and surveys, APHIS performs an additional qualitative assessment to identify potential corrective actions. Corrective actions are concrete, actionable steps intended to resolve capability gaps and shortcomings identified in APHIS responses or exercises. In developing corrective actions, the NIC, lead program exercise program personnel, and EMSSD Training and Exercise Manager first review the draft AAR/IP developed following the hot-wash. They then convene an After-Action Meeting (AAM) to confirm that the issues identified by evaluators are valid and require resolution. The reviewers identify which program has responsibility and/or authority for taking action on the identified issues. The reviewers determine an initial list of appropriate corrective actions to resolve the identified issues. The draft IP is developed.

APHIS MAC Group representatives should attend the AAM along with the NIC and reviewers to answer any questions or provide necessary details about the incident. During the AAM, participants seek to reach final consensus on strengths and areas for improvement, as well as revise and gain consensus on draft corrective actions. Also, as appropriate, AAM participants develop concrete deadlines for implementing corrective actions, identify specific corrective action owners/assignees, and identify resources necessary for implementation. All APHIS program areas are responsible for developing implementation processes and timelines and keeping their leadership informed of the implementation status. A final report is developed including:

- Actionable corrective actions,
- Assignment of responsibility for each corrective action
- Timelines and resources for corrective actions completion
- Corrective Actions from each IP
- Inclusion in the Agency Corrective Action Program.

The APHIS MAC Group tracks progress and reports the status of Corrective Actions from responses, training, and exercises quarterly to the AMT and EPC.

## **6.4 Training, Testing, and Exercise Program**

APHIS supports a robust emergency management training and exercise program in its preparedness efforts. The Agency takes a comprehensive approach toward emergency management training and promotes capability improvement through training programs offered by local emergency management organizations and agency-sponsored NIMS courses online; virtually and in classrooms.

A well-executed training and exercise program allows for:

- Testing, evaluating, and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment, assumptions, and interagency agreements;
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- Improving interagency coordination and communications;
- Identifying gaps in resources;
- Measuring performance; and
- Identifying opportunities for improvement.

MRPBS-EMSSD leads the coordination of APHIS' Emergency Management Training and Exercise Program and follows guidance outlined in the HSEEP, including

emergency responder training and exercise activities.

## 6.5 Required Training

USDA officials and the APHIS Chief Human Capital Officer determine the mandatory training that all APHIS employees must complete. Mandatory courses are typically designed to meet an Agency training obligation codified in law, regulation, policy, directive, memoranda, or some other recognized authority. The MRPBS Center for Training and Organizational Development oversees the list of APHIS mandatory trainings, which can be found at <https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/aphis-svc-ctod/SitePages/APHIS%20Mandatory%20Trainings.aspx>.

Each position in the APHIS Emergency Responder Catalog may have position-specific training.

## 6.6 Just-in-time Training

Just-in-time training refers to training that is delivered on an as-needed basis, specific to an incident, and usually on a technical or complex subject matter. The lead program determines what incident-specific training is required for responders. For NIMS-specific training, the lead program works with EMSSD to coordinate and deliver the training. For mandatory and other training outside of the NIMS curriculum, the lead Program considers development of a training program to expedite response-specific training, similar to the National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps academy established in 2015 during the response to widespread highly pathogenic avian influenza.

### ***Training Before, During, and After Deployment***

APHIS follows the guidance of NIMS and uses ICS training programs to prepare employees to follow emergency response procedures and protocols. APHIS provides training opportunities that include on-the-job, online, and classroom-based training, as well as shadow assignments. The lead program develops an incident training strategy and coordinates with EMSSD to develop and deliver the strategy, including targeted coursework required of employees prior to deployment.

The scope and complexity of an incident may require training for employees whose credentials lapse while on deployment. Examples include defensive driver or cybersecurity training. As part of the response contingencies, the lead program accounts for circumstances requiring onsite training.

## 6.7 Experience and Qualifications Training

### ***AgLearn and EQS***

APHIS identifies certain incident-specific positions that require mandatory or optional training. These positions may require internal and external training. All training must be accurately captured within AgLearn and EQS.

Employees and supervisors are responsible for maintaining and validating accurate information in each employee's AgLearn and EQS profile to ensure effective emergency management. Employees identify discrepancies in their AgLearn history and make the necessary adjustments to ensure accurate data is transferred to EQS.

Employees maintain position certification for positions held at an incident based on the duties performed. These records are used for validating qualifications for future deployments.

### **ICS**

MRPBS-EMSSD oversees the development and delivery of ICS training for the Agency. Currently, ICS training is delivered to participants who are members of the NIMT(s) or other program responders with experience in emergency response.

Available ICS courses include:

- ICS 100, 200, and 800 in an AgLearn environment.
- ICS 300, ICS 400, IC, Public Information Officer, Liaison Officer, Safety Officer, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief and Finance/Admin Section Chief training in virtual and classroom environments.
- ICS 700, which is currently available through the FEMA Independent Study program. More information about this course can be found at: <http://www.training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx?all=true>
- Resource Unit Leader, Situation Unit Leader, Division/Group Supervisor, and Supply Unit Leader in virtual and classroom environments.
- United States Fire Academy 0305 Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Team Course in a classroom environment

Completing the coursework leads to a USDA and/or FEMA certification of completion.

MRPBS-EMSSD works with the Programs and Support Units to identify additional training (e.g., HAZWOPER, Contracting Officer Representative, etc...) required for each position in the APHIS Emergency Responder Position Catalog1534

### **Outside Vendors**


APHIS makes every attempt to provide internal training to equip employees with the necessary skills to perform their emergency response duties. When internal training is unavailable, APHIS procures the necessary training through appropriate means.

## Appendix 1: Acronyms

AAMD	Acquisition and Asset Management
AAR	Division After Action Report
AAM	After Action Meeting
AC	Area Command
AMT	APHIS Management Team
AMM	Agency Mandatory Mobilization
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
BPAS	Budget and Program Analysis Staff
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CCC	Commodity Credit Corporation
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Contracting Officer
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DCC	Dispatch Coordination Center
DM	Departmental Manual
DR	Departmental Regulation
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EMRS	Emergency Management Response System
EMSSD	Emergency Management, Safety, and Security Division
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EPC	Emergency Preparedness Committee
EQS	Emergency Qualification System
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMD	Financial Management Division
FMMI	Financial Management Modernization Initiative
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
GSA	General Services Administration
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

HRD	Human Resources Division
HRDG	Human Resources Desk Guide
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Commander
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
IP	Improvement Plan
IST	Incident Support Team
IT	Information Technology
ITD	Information Technology Division
JDOC	Jere L. Dick Operation Center
JIC	Joint Information Center
LPA	Legislative and Public Affairs
MAC	Multi-Agency Coordination
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRPBS	Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services
NIC	National Incident Coordinator
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NIMT	National Incident Management Team
NRF	National Response Framework
OA	Office of the Administrator
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ODS	Official Duty Station
PC	Personal Computer
PIO	Public Information Officer
PLG	Program Leaders Group
POC	Point(s) of Contact
PPD	Program Planning and Development
PPQ	Plant Protection and Quarantine
RAD	Return from Assignment Date
RMS	Resource Management Staff
SCD	Service Computation Date
SOF	Status of Funds





SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOW	Statement of Work
T & A	Time and Attendance
TDY	Temporary Duty
UC	Unified Command
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VEOA	Veterans Employment Opportunity Act
VERRC	Volunteer Emergency Ready Response Corps
VPN	Virtual Private Network
VRA	Veterans Recruitment Appointment
VS	Veterinary Services

## Appendix 2: Basic Deployment Checklist: What To Bring

The checklist below contains a list of recommended items that may be needed on any deployment. This list is not all inclusive and should be expanded/reduced to meet your specific deployment needs.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b><u>Essential:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> USDA PIV Card (LincPass)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Second Form of Photo Identification (Driver's License, Passport, etc.)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Active USDA Travel Card (with PIN)</li></ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b><u>IT Items:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Government Issued Laptop (w/charging cord)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Government Issued Cell Phone (w/charging cord)</li></ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b><u>Clothing and Protective Equipment:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Seasonally appropriate work clothes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Safety gear:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ear plugs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Eye protection</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Helmet</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Boots</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Gloves</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Respirator</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vest</li></ul></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Laundry bag and detergent*</li></ul> <b><u>Essential Toiletries:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Soap/shower gel/shampoo</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush, toothpaste*, dental floss, and mouthwash*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shaving supplies (razor*, blades*, and shaving cream*)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Comb and/or hairbrush</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant*;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol-based hand sanitizer*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent containing DEET*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sun Block (SPF 15 or higher*), lip balm, and body lotion*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Scissors*, nail clippers*, and tweezers*</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cotton swabs</li></ul> <p><b><i>* If flying, check TSA requirements and restrictions.</i></b></p>



**Other Items for Daily Living**

- ☐ Prescription medication (for a minimum of 21 days)
- ☐ Basic medical items (aspirin, first aid items, antacids, eye drops)
- ☐ Extra pair of prescription glasses, eyeglasses repair kit and copy of prescription or contact lenses and contact lenses cleaner\*
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Waterproof watch
- ☐ Flashlight and spare batteries
- ☐ Security/money belt
- ☐ Re-sealable plastic bags
- ☐ Portable water purifier (if instructed)
- ☐ Small sewing kit
- ☐ Personal comfort items (e.g., family photos, spiritual material)

***\* If flying, check TSA requirements and restrictions.***

## Appendix 3: Authorities and References

Congress has provided USDA with the legal authorities and resources needed to carry out its roles and responsibilities. Pursuant to the delegations of authority made by the Marketing and Regulatory Programs Undersecretary to the APHIS Administrator, APHIS is provided legal authorities under the following laws:

- Animal Health Protection Act (AHPA) (P.L. 107-171, Title X, Subtitle E; 7 U.S.C. 8301 et seq.);
- Animal Welfare Act (AWA) (P.L. 89-544; 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.);
- Plant Protection Act (PPA) (P.L. 106-224; 7 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.); and
- Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act (PHSBPRA) (P.L. 107-188; 21 U.S.C. 356, 360e; 42 U.S.C. 201, 243, 247d, 262, 264, 266, 290hh, 1301, 5196b et seq.).

Additional APHIS response authorities can be found in USDA Departmental Manual 1800-001, Incident Preparedness, Response, and Recovery, located online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/departmental-manual-1800-001>