

**SECTION V****Recruitment Information**

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## The IVMA-Emergency Response Force

### Information Sheet

#### **Background information**

In the years 1988 to 1993 97 counties in Indiana received federal emergency aid, i.e., a state of emergency was declared that was greater than the individual counties could deal with. Even though Indiana has approximately 31 million animals and is primarily an agricultural state, the need of animals in disasters has only recently been addressed.

In 1993 the Indiana Veterinary Medical Association decided to take proactive measures to help animals and their owners affected by large scale disasters. To achieve this an Ad Hoc "Disaster Preparedness Committee" was formed with the mission to collaborate with the State Emergency Management Agency to develop a state wide plan for animals and their owners affected by disasters. In 1995 the Veterinary Care Annex was adopted as part of the State Basic Plan for Emergencies, which provides the mechanism for appropriate mitigation and care of animals and their care takers affected by disasters. Another purpose of the IVMA Disaster Preparedness Committee was to work towards authoritative recognition of veterinarians as official responders during a disaster. This is vital, since only recognized responders can work with the Emergency Management Agency during disasters. This was accomplished through a Memorandum of Understanding between the IVMA, Indiana Board of Animal Health and the Indiana State Emergency Management Agency. Now veterinarians in Indiana have the appropriate recognition and authority to help with animal issues in disasters it is time to recruit members to join the IVMA Emergency Response Force (IVMA-ERF).

#### **What is the IVMA-Emergency Response Force?**

The IVMA-ERF consists of a list of pre-enrolled veterinarians that are willing to help the State Veterinarian and the State Emergency Management Agency to respond to animal issues during declared disasters. During a declared disaster IVMA-ERF members are active in the field, where they coordinate, to the best of their ability, all activities related to the needs of animals and their owners. These responsibilities may include coordinating animal rescue, capture, treatment, preslaughter inspection and euthanasia and are implemented in close cooperation with other experienced animal health personnel. These include animal control personnel, veterinary technicians and zoo keepers, who are also pre-enrolled through similar programs with the Emergency Management Agency.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding the IVMA has accepted to recruit veterinarians, which will make up the Emergency Response Force. The Memorandum also obliges the Indiana Emergency Management Agency, in a state of declared emergency, to provide liability coverage and, as long as state funding is available, for reimbursement of expenses. Copies of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Indiana Board of Animal Health and the IVMA are available from the IVMA.

#### **What does a member of the IVMA-Emergency Response Force have to do?**

First, to become a member you must pre-enroll with the IVMA-ERF. Once you are enrolled you are placed on a list of veterinarians that are willing to help in the event of a declared disaster. This list is kept at the State Veterinarian's Office, since this is the agency that would activate veterinarians in the state of emergency. If an "ERF Veterinarian" is called upon to help during a disaster, he/she would first decide whether he/she is able to respond at that time. If he/she can respond he/she would receive instructions on where to go and how to get there. Throughout

the time of activation ERF Veterinarians will be considered temporary volunteers for the State of Indiana. As the coordinator of the response for animal needs in disasters, ERF veterinarians are not expected to be the persons that do all the hands on work. Rather, they are liaisons, who communicate the needs of animal owners to the Emergency Operations Center (emergency headquarters), so that the response in the field is optimized. All members of the IVMA-ERF will meet at least once a year to discuss and improve the program. (Veterinarians are NOT eligible for any privileges under this program if they are not pre-enrolled with the IVMA-ERF).

**What do you have to do to enroll in the IVMA-ERF?**

To enroll in the IVMA-ERF is simple. You must have a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or equivalent degree, have three years of veterinary work experience and be licensed to practice in Indiana. Then all it requires is for you to complete an IVMA-ERF application form and return it to: IVMA Disaster Preparedness Committee, 4901 Seville Court, Indianapolis, IN 46208. Your application will be processed, by including your name on the list of veterinarians willing to help in a disaster. On your behalf the IVMA will request for you to receive the Independent Study Guide "Emergency Preparedness USA" (IS-2) from the Emergency Management Institute, Emmitsburg, MD. (EMI is the training arm of FEMA). You should receive this home study course in approximately two to four weeks. We strongly encourage you to complete it before becoming involved in a disaster. Once you have completed this short course (it takes about 4 hours at your convenience), and submitted it to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, you will also receive a certificate from FEMA for your efforts. This can be displayed at your practice. That's all, folks!

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian E. Heath Bsc, VetMB, MVetSci, MRCVS, Dipl.ACVIM  
Chair, IVMA, Disaster Preparedness Committee



7. Do you have a pager?

Yes / No

If yes, please provide your pager number. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you have two way communication frequency?

Yes / No

If yes, please provide information on how to access it \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you federally accredited? (This is not a requirement)

Yes / No

10. Are you an IVMA member? (This is not a requirement)

Yes / No

11. Do you have at least three years of experience in veterinary practice? (This is a requirement)

Yes / No

12. Do you certify that you do not habitually use intoxicating beverages to excess; abuse narcotics, drugs or other controlled substances; of exhibit criminal, dishonest, infamous, or notoriously disgraceful conduct?

Yes / No

13. Are you interested in finding out more about the AVMA Emergency Response Force? (The AVMA-ERF) responds to disasters at the national level. If you answer "Yes" your name and address will be forwarded to the AVMA disaster preparedness coordinator, who will then contact you for pre-enrollment with the AVMA-ERF.

Yes / No

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all of my statements are true, correct, complete and made in good faith, signed

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your time and concern  
Sebastian Heath, Chair, IVMA Disaster Preparedness Committee

Briefly, describe your experience working with animals.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe any present or past volunteer experience. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have rescue/ care equipment of your own?  YES  NO If yes, please describe

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The following volunteer jobs are described in below. Please indicate with a check, the task(s) in which you are interested.

ANIMAL CARE: includes establishing shelter, providing food, water and sanitation, inventory control, record keeping, assisting the Emergency Field Veterinarian appointed by the Indiana Board of Animal Health.

ANIMAL RESCUE AND CONTROL: reconnaissance, field rescue, assisting with animal care when needed

Please indicate the times when you would be *regularly* available for training.

SUNDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

MONDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

TUESDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

WEDNESDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

THURSDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

FRIDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

SATURDAYS \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments regarding availability: \_\_\_\_\_

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between IBAH and IAAC allows for rapidly available veterinary assistance in the event of a disaster or mass incident in the State of Indiana, in which animals require rescue, capture, veterinary medical care, preslaughter inspection, euthanasia, recommendations for housing, feed, care and carcass disposal.

To work efficiently and effectively with the established SEMA response program, it is necessary for IAAC-ERF volunteers to understand how this program works. Therefore, ERF volunteers will be required to pursue the following training.

- |   |
|---|
| <p><b>TRAINING REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of one home study course available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, listed as HS-2.</li> <li>2. Completion of a minimum of one (1) PSTI training course per year.</li> <li>3. Participation in state sponsored mock disaster trials.</li> <li>4. Attendance of a minimum of one (1) IAAC training session per year.</li> <li>5. Maintenance of current tetanus vaccination and completion of rabies preventative prophylactic series.</li> <li>6. Red Cross basic and CPR training recommended, but not required.</li> <li>7. Submission of an IAAC-ERT statement of field professionalism.</li> </ol> |
|---|

FEMA and PSTI sponsored training is free of charge. An order slip for the home study FEMA training courses will be provided once this application has been completed and submitted, as will a calendar of PSTI training opportunities. During PSTI training, if you live more than 50 miles from the class site, you will be reimbursed for personal mileage at 26 cents per mile and your housing will be provided by the State.

Since many animal shelters and animal control departments are relatively small, and may not be in a position to lose a staff member for very long, a "deactivation" clause has been written into the MOU. IAAC-ERT volunteers may withdraw from the emergency site at any time after notifying the Emergency Operations Center of their pending departure

### CHAIN OF COMMAND

State Emergency Management Agency (PSTI)  
PSTI is the agency responsible for coordinating all emergency and disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities in Indiana.

↓  
Indiana Board of Animal Health (IBAH)  
IBAH is the Indiana agency responsible for coordinating veterinary actions in disasters.

↓  
Emergency Field Veterinarian (IVMA volunteer)  
Responsible for coordinating all efforts to rescue, capture, triage, treat injured, inspect preslaughter or humanely destroy animals affected by the emergency. The EFV will also determine the housing, feed and care requirements of animals affected by the disaster and the needs for carcass disposal.

↓  
Indiana Assn. of Animal Control (IAAC)

↓  
Indiana Veterinary Medical Assn. Technician (VMAT)

↓  
Zoo Personnel

IAAC, VMAT and Zoo personnel responders will work cooperatively with the Emergency Field Veterinarian. The Emergency Field Veterinarian will work through the IBAH to secure equipment and supplies, it will be up to the IAAC, VMAT and Zoo teams to "do the work".

### **IAAC -- EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM**

#### QUALIFICATIONS

1. Minimum of one year experience in the animal care related field. Professional references from employer will be obtained.
2. A valid Indiana drivers license and knowledge of current animal law in the state of Indiana.
3. The ability to prioritize situations pertaining to animal rescue as they occur and the ability to assist in the rescue of domestic and/or wild animals as the need arises.
4. Must be able to work with other individuals as a team and accept instruction and direction through the chain of command.
5. Should possess the ability to deal tactfully and professionally at all times with the general public, even under the most adverse conditions.
6. Must be able to work in unfavorable conditions that require physical stamina.
7. Must possess effective oral and written communication skills.
8. Must submit to background and criminal history check
9. Must be a current member of the IAAC.

**IAAC -- EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM**

**VOLUNTEER WORKER'S AGREEMENT**

For the purpose of obtaining permission from the Indiana Association of Animal Control (IAAC) to perform service for the Emergency Response TEAM (ERT), I state that I am an adult 18 years of age or older. I propose to serve without compensation as a volunteer worker for such period or periods and at such time or times as may be mutually agreed upon by myself and the IAAC Emergency Response Committee. I will act entirely on my own risk and responsibility within the direction of the Emergency Field Veterinarian appointed by the Indiana Board of Animal Health. I am aware of the dangers which are inherent in the handling of animals and the hazards which are encountered in the course of the normal pursuit of life and living.

NOW, IN CONSIDERATION, of the IAAC's willingness to delegate to me assignments of work within the scope of the Emergency Response Team's charitable purposes, subject to the revocation of such activities by myself or by the IAAC at any time, I make the following commitments:

1. I assume responsibility for all risks of loss or damage or injuries that may be suffered by me or to property owned by me or in my custody in the course of my activities on behalf of the IAAC from any cause, including but not limited to ordinary negligence attributed or which might be attributed to the IAAC or any of its agents, directors, officers, servants, employees or other volunteer workers, whether sustained or suffered on any premises under the control of the Emergency Response Team or at any other premises not under the control of the Emergency Response Team, or when enroute to or from all such places or premises by any means of travel, including but not limited to (a) privately owned vehicles, (b) my own automobile or vehicles borrowed by me, (c) vehicles owned or controlled by the IAAC, in each case whether said vehicle is operated by me or other persons, and (d) public transportation.

2. I hereby release, discharge and indemnify the IAAC and its agent, directors, officers, servants, employees and volunteer workers of and from and in respect to any and all claims, actions and rights of cause of action, present or future, whether known, anticipated or unanticipated, on account of any personal injury, including death, or loss of or damage to any property, suffered or sustained by me from any cause incident to arising out of, during or in connection with, my performance of volunteer services at the place or places and in the performance of activities as are described in this agreement.

The representations, conditions and commitments contained in this instrument shall be binding upon my heirs, next-of-kin and personal representatives.

" I CERTIFY THAT THE FACTS CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTAND THAT, IF ACCEPTED, FALSIFIED STATEMENTS ON THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL.

I AUTHORIZE INVESTIGATION OF ALL STATEMENTS CONTAINED HEREIN AND THE REFERENCES LISTED ABOVE TO GIVE YOU ANY AND ALL INFORMATION CONCERNING MY EMPLOYMENT AND ANY PERTINENT INFORMATION THEY MAY HAVE, PERSONAL OR OTHERWISE, AND RELEASE ALL PARTIES FROM ALL LIABILITY FOR ANY DAMAGE THAT MAY RESULT FROM FURNISHING SAME TO YOU."

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

\_\_\_\_\_  
witness (IAAC representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

NOTARIZATION REQUIRED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

## INFORMATION SHEET ON THE AVMA EMERGENCY RESPONSE FORCE

To: IVMA-ERF members

### What is the AVMA - Emergency Response Force?

The AVMA-ERF is a national level response mechanism to help animals in disasters, which is very similar to what we have in Indiana. Their function, however, is primarily involved with the treatment of animals and public health. The field response of the AVMA to national level disasters is organized in teams called Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMATs). VMATs can either be large animal, small animal, preventive medicine and public health, or wildlife emphasis. Each team will consist of one veterinarian and two veterinary technicians. Their duties will be coordinated through Regional Veterinary Activities Commanders (ReVAC) and Veterinary Staff Officers (VSO). The ReVACs and VSOs advise the US Public Health Services and Federal Emergency Management Agency on the appropriate use of VMATs. Indiana is part of the Northern Region, which includes the following states: CT, DC, DE, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VA, VT, WI, and WV.

When activated, veterinarians will be paid a salary commensurate with a civil service rating that is compatible with the professional skill requirements for each position. Veterinarians generally will receive a government service (GS) rating of 13, corresponding approximately to \$1,840.00 per 2 weeks. Individuals will be covered by federal workman's compensation, and they will be exempt from licensure, certification, or registration requirements in states in which they are not licensed. In addition they will be protected under the Federal Tort Claims Act against personal liability within the scope of their federal employment.

### What happens on activation of a VMAT?

When the need arises, the Office of Emergency Preparedness of the US Public Health Service will call VMATs to active duty depending on the type and numbers of animals that need attention. Once a decision has been made which VMATs to deploy, VMAT team leaders fill in the necessary personnel forms to place the VMATs on emergency federal status. Once activated VMATs report within 24 hours to a designated staging area near the disaster area. Personnel will then be transported to the Disaster Field Office, where they will report to the Chief of Field Operations (CFO) of the US Public Health Service. VMATs will link up with pre-positioned equipment and will operate as mobile units in the disaster area as directed by the CFO on the advice of the ReVAC.

### How do you enroll as a VMAT member?

It's very simple. Write to Dr. Candace Lundin, AVMA, 1931 North Meacham Road, Schaumburg, IL 61808 and ask for an application form. As the recruitment of Hoosier veterinarians for the Indiana state plan is based on the AVMA system, if you qualify in Indiana you should also qualify for the AVMA.