

Appendix 1: Methodology

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Continuum from Independent to Collaborative Work		
Completely Independent	In Between	Completely Collaborative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate development of plans, protocols, roles and responsibilities • No agreements, no joint plans or protocols • No joint work done • Rely on own authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited joint development • Joint plans, agreements and protocols often not written; • Plans, agreements and protocols have finite life span • One collaborator feels more ownership than the other • Limited accessibility to plans, agreements and protocols • No or limited planned reviews or updates • Squeaky wheel principle • Joint work is informal, ad hoc or situational • Joint work is reaction to current situation or events • Collaborators pitch in as they are able and authorities allow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans agreements and protocols jointly developed • Written joint plans, agreements and protocols • Plans and agreements have longer life span • Collaborators feel equal ownership • Fully accessible plans, agreements and protocols • Regularly reviewed and updated • Transparent mechanism to address need for out-of-cycle changes • Joint work is done in a formal way • Joint work proactively anticipates future needs • Gap analysis done jointly; jointly developed strategy for use of State and Federal authorities

Project Plan

Purpose

To assess APHIS and State collaboration on emergency response preparedness.

Background

Several states complained that there were breakdowns in the communication and processes for working with APHIS on the movement of firewood from Emerald Ash Borer infested states to non-infested states. This problem, they said, could be indicative of a larger problem of breakdowns in collaborative systems, protocols and processes for working together on other emergencies and in jointly being prepared to respond to emergencies.

Project Description

APHIS and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) will collaborate to assess how well APHIS and States work together to prepare to respond to emergencies focusing on areas such as, but not limited to:

- Emergency response plans
- State and Federal authorities needed to respond effectively
- Federal and State roles and responsibilities
- Communication protocols
- Agreements
- Test exercise programs

We will assess collaboration in these areas (and others as needed) by carrying out this project to be completed by February 2008.

Roles and Responsibilities

We will work with NASDA primarily through the Animal and Plant Industries Policy Committee. APHIS and NASDA will also work with the National Plant Board (NPB), National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO), the Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), State-level animal care personnel. Specific roles and responsibilities include:

APHIS Policy and Program Development, Planning Evaluation and Monitoring staff (PEM) -- facilitates assessment working group, compiles, collates, and analyzes data; drafts information collection tools. Conducts interviews and focus groups/listening sessions to collect qualitative data. Drafts report and delivers final product. Makes sure project plans and progress updates are easily available to interested parties.

Assessment Working Group (AWG) -- appointed by key State organizations and APHIS Management to provide input on information collection tools and recommendations. The AWG is not intended to continue for more than 4-6 months total. There will be a need for face-to-face meetings at the very start and close of the Assessment. There will be few update meetings by conference call in the middle of the project. E-mail will be a main form of communication.

AWG Membership (up to 15 members):

- NASDA -- one co-chair and one or two additional members
- NPB – one member to represent general work on plant health and one to represent work done on biotechnology
- NASAHO – one member
- AFWA – one member
- State-level animal care personnel – one member
- APHIS – One co-chair and one representative each from Animal Care (AC), Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS), Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Veterinary Services (VS), and Wildlife Services (WS). Representatives should include some personnel who serve on the Emergency Management Leadership Council (EMLC).

Office of the Administrator, APHIS – Approves project plan, receives briefings on progress and recommends course corrections if needed. Receives final product. Works with the APHIS Management Team (AMT), APHIS organizational unit management teams and the EMLC to determine disposition of the recommendations and to facilitate needed actions or follow-up.

NASDA – Provides co-chair and one-two additional representatives to AWG. Main sponsor of the survey. Receives final product from PEM/AWG. (NASDA meeting in February) Facilitates disposition of the recommendations at the state level. Helps to ensure implementation of appropriate state-level recommendations.

NPB, NASAHO, AFWA, State Level AC organization(s) – each provides a member for the AWG; if possible, co-sponsors the survey for their constituents; helps to ensure implementation of appropriate state-level recommendations.

NASAHO – Help to identify and ensure participation of the boards of animal health in states where animal health issues are managed not by the State Department of Agriculture but by such boards

Assumptions:

- Data collection will include collecting state views and APHIS views of collaboration related to emergency response preparedness
- Focus on collaboration as it relates to emergency preparedness and response for plant and animal pest and disease emergencies and include biotechnology, wildlife and animal welfare (particularly the new line of work for AC in pet rescue)
- AWG to include representatives from NASDA, NPB, NASAHO, AFWA and State-level animal care personnel along with APHIS personnel
- APHIS participation on committee to include AC, BRS, LPA, PPQ, VS, WS
- This study will not focus on the FEMA/SEMA partnerships
- Actual data collection and analysis will be done by PEM with input/guidance from the AWG

Design

Steps	Who	Due
1. Assemble AWG	PEM	Aug 31, 07
2. Convene the AWG	PEM	Oct 3, 07
3. Develop draft questionnaire and other data collection instruments.	PEM/AWG	Oct 5, 07
4. Send questionnaire to key personnel in states to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine expectations and reality of collaborations with APHIS b. Learn what is working and what is not c. Ask for suggestions for improvements 	NASDA/NPB/ NASAHO, AFWA, State AC orgs	Oct 07
5. Send questionnaire to appropriate APHIS personnel in states to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine consistency of APHIS efforts b. Learn what is working well and what is not c. Ask for suggestions for improvements 	PEM	Oct 07
6. Take a small (about 12) “purposeful” * sample of states and through a combination of visits, face-to-face interviews and phone interviews, learn more about collaboration expectations and experiences, what is working best and what is most in need of improvement and what suggestions they have for improvements.	PEM	Dec 07
* Purposeful sampling would be used to get a representative yet diverse group of states (based on agreed-to criteria). Sample choices would be based on input from APHIS, NASDA and other partner organizations		
7. Take advantage of already scheduled meetings to listen to state and APHIS perspectives through focus groups and listening sessions. (i.e. NASDA meeting 9/23, USAHA October 2007, NPB executive meeting with PPQ LT in Nov. 07).	PEM	Sep 07 to Jan 08
8. Collate and analyze responses to questionnaire and qualitative data collections. Write report of findings.	PEM/AWG	Jan 08
9. Based on findings, the AWG and PEM would develop a short list of recommendations for APHIS and States to consider for improving collaboration and processes for working together.	PEM/AWG	Early Feb 07

Assessment Working Group Members

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

Allan Hogue

Assistant Deputy Administrator
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Biotechnologist
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James Ivy, Intergovernmental Affairs
Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)

Carlos Martinez

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Sherry A. Sanderson

Asst. Regional Director, Western Region (Co-Chair)
Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ)

Dr. Mark Davidson

Associate Director-Emergency Management, Western
Region
Proxy: Dr. Burke Healey, Associate Director, Eastern
Region
Veterinary Services (VS)

Martin Mendoza

Associate Deputy Administrator
Proxy: Janet L. Bucknall, Deputy Director for
Wildlife Operations
Wildlife Services (WS)

OTHER PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Karey Claghorn

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
National Association of State Departments of
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Public Information Director
Florida Dept. of Ag. and Consumer Services
Communication Officers of State Departments of
Agriculture (COSDA)

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Animal Emergency Management Programs

Dr. William L. Hartmann (Bill)

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Minnesota Board of Animal Health
National Assemblé of State Animal Health Officials
(NASAHO)

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Terry K. Walker

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Arkansas State Plant Board
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Facilitators:

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Planning Evaluation and Monitoring Analysts
Policy and Program Development, APHIS

APHIS Sample Questionnaire

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to assess the current condition of collaboration between APHIS and States. The results of the survey will help APHIS, the National State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and their other partners focus recommendations on ways to encourage the most appropriate level of collaboration to enhance national incident response preparedness. Though survey time will vary, most should be able to complete it in about 10 to 15 minutes the first time through. If you collaborate with more than one State or State Agency, subsequent surveys will take less time. Please allow enough time to complete at least one survey. If you leave the questionnaire before it is complete, when you return, you have to start over.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and State Agencies are increasingly called upon to respond to a host of agricultural emergencies, emerging issues and other incidents from the traditional plant and animal health situations to newer areas of responsibilities including animal evacuation and sheltering and biotechnology events. Response preparedness is constant and continuing work. Being prepared to effectively respond to large scale emergencies depends to a large degree on the collaboration between State and APHIS personnel that occurs in program work every day.

This questionnaire focuses on your collaboration expectations and experiences between APHIS and State Agencies. Your responses should consider the entire range of an incident or challenge that you may face and not only the actual moments of crisis. You are asked to consider the collaboration between APHIS and State Agencies in developing and working out 1) incident response plans, 2) understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response, 3) communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced), 4) test exercise programs like tabletops, etc., 5) how you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities, 6) mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed), 7) monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents.

Continuum from Independent to Collaborative Work		
Completely Independent	In Between	Completely Collaborative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate development of plans, protocols, roles and responsibilities • No agreements, no joint plans or protocols • No joint work done • Rely on own authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited joint development • Joint plans, agreements and protocols often not written; • Plans, agreements and protocols have finite life span • One collaborator feels more ownership than the other • Limited accessibility to plans, agreements and protocols • No or limited planned reviews or updates • Squeaky wheel principle • Joint work is informal, ad hoc or situational • Joint work is reaction to current situation or events • Collaborators pitch in as they are able and authorities allow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans agreements and protocols jointly developed • Written joint plans, agreements and protocols • Plans and agreements have longer life span • Collaborators feel equal ownership • Fully accessible plans, agreements and protocols • Regularly reviewed and updated • Transparent mechanism to address need for out-of-cycle changes • Joint work is done in a formal way • Joint work proactively anticipates future needs • Gap analysis done jointly; jointly developed strategy for use of State and Federal authorities

For the questionnaire, please consider collaboration as represented as a continuum from completely independent to completely collaborative as described below. You will be asked to rate your collaboration between APHIS and State Agencies and among various organizational units in APHIS on a scale from 1 to 7. One (1) corresponds to the column marked “Completely Independent” and 7 corresponds to the column marked “Completely Collaborative.” Numbers 2 through 6 correspond to the column marked “In Between.” In answering this questionnaire, please keep this continuum in mind

Introduction (This Section Has 2 Questions)

1. What State are you stationed in? And what part of APHIS do you work for?

	State		APHIS
Please select:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

*

2. What State and State Agency do you collaborate with? (If you collaborate with more than one State and/or State Agency, you will have the opportunity to repeat the questionnaire for each State and State Agency)

	List of States	State Agencies
Please select:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Areas of Collaboration (This Section Has 3 Questions)

3. Rate how collaborative you and the State Agency SHOULD BE in preparing to respond to an incident that occurs in your state.

EXPECTATIONS

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. Developing and working out incident response plans								
b. Understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response								
c. Communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced)								
d. Test exercise programs like tabletops, etc.								
e. How you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities								
f. Mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed)								
g. Monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents								

5. Rate on the same scale how collaborative you and the State Agency are RIGHT NOW in each of the following areas:

6. REALITY

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. Developing and working out incident response plans								
b. Understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response								
c. Communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced)								
d. Test exercise programs like tabletops, etc.								
e. How you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities								
f. Mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed)								
g. Monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents								

5. If you would like to clarify any of your answers or offer additional details to your answers to questions 3a through 4g, please use this space:

Final Thoughts on State Collaboration (This Section Has 3 Questions)

6. In collaborating with the State Agency what is working best?

7. What most needs improvement?

8. Anything else you want to say about the collaboration?

9. Is this your first time completing this questionnaire?

Yes

No

Internal Collaboration (This Section Has 3 Questions)

Think about your collaboration with other APHIS units.

10. Rate how much you SHOULD BE collaborating with other APHIS units in preparing to respond to an incident in your State.

EXPECTATIONS

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. Animal Care								
b. Biotechnology Regulatory Services								
c. Legislative and Public Affairs								
d. Veterinary Services								
e. Plant Protection and Quarantine								
f. Wildlife Services								

11. Rate on the same scale how much you are collaborating with other APHIS units RIGHT NOW.

REALITY

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. Animal Care								
b. Biotechnology Regulatory Services								
c. Legislative and Public Affairs								
d. Veterinary Services								
e. Plant Protection and Quarantine								
f. Wildlife Services								

12. If you would like to clarify any of your answers or offer additional details to your answers to questions 10a through 11f, please use this space:

Information and Guidance (This Section Has 4 Questions)

13. Please rate how satisfied you are with the guidance and information you receive from your REGIONAL OFFICE.

	1. Not Satisfied	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Extremely satisfied	N/A
a. Thoroughness								
b. Accuracy								
c. Practicality								
d. Timeliness								
e. Ease of access								

14. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #13, please use this space:

15. Please rate how satisfied you are with the guidance and information you receive from your HEADQUARTERS.

	1. Not Satisfied	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Extremely satisfied	N/A
a. Thoroughness								
b. Accuracy								
c. Practicality								
d. Timeliness								
e. Ease of access								

16. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #15, please use this space:

Final Thought on Internal Collaboration and Guidance (This Section Has 1 Question)

17. Anything else you would like to say about your internal collaboration and guidance?

Communication (This Section Has 2 Questions)

18. Who DO you hear from FIRST about agricultural incidents in other states?

- a. Headquarters
- b. Your Region
- c. The state with the incident
- d. Your state contact
- e. National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)
- f. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
- g. The media
- h. Other

Other (please specify)

19. Who SHOULD you hear from FIRST about agricultural incidents in other states?

- a. Headquarters
- b. Your Region
- c. The state with the incident
- d. Your state contact
- e. National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)

- f. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
- g. The media
- h. Other

Other (please specify)

Final Thoughts on Communication (This Section Has 2 Questions)

20. How could communication about incidents in other states be improved?

21. Any other comments on communication about incidents in other states?

Thank You!

If you DO NOT collaborate with any additional States or State Agencies, please CLOSE the browser to exit the survey. Your responses have been saved. If you want to review your answers press PREV.

However, if you are done this questionnaire and want to complete another one for a different State or State Agency you collaborate with, please click the DONE button.

State Sample Questionnaire

Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to assess the current condition of collaboration between APHIS and States. The results of the survey will help APHIS, the National State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and their other partners focus recommendations on ways to encourage the most appropriate level of collaboration to enhance national incident response preparedness. Though survey time will vary, most should be able to complete it in about 10 to 15 minutes the first time through. If you collaborate with more than one State or State Agency, subsequent surveys will take less time. Please allow enough time to complete at least one survey. If you leave the questionnaire before it is complete, when you return, you have to start over.

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This questionnaire focuses on your collaboration expectations and experiences between APHIS and State Agencies. Your responses should consider the entire range of an incident or challenge that you may face and not only the actual moments of crisis. You are asked to consider the collaboration between APHIS and State Agencies in developing and working out 1) incident response plans, 2) understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response, 3) communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced), 4) test exercise programs like tabletops, etc., 5) how you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities, 6) mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed), 7) monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents.

Continuum from Independent to Collaborative Work		
Completely Independent	In Between	Completely Collaborative
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For the questionnaire, please consider collaboration as represented as a continuum from completely independent to completely collaborative as described below. You will be asked to rate your collaboration between APHIS and State Agencies and among various organizational units in APHIS on a scale from 1 to 7. One (1) corresponds to the column marked “Completely Independent” and 7 corresponds to the column marked “Completely Collaborative.” Numbers 2 through 6 correspond to the column marked “In Between.” In answering this questionnaire, please keep this continuum in mind

Introduction (This Section Has 3 Questions)

1. Please indicate which Agency or Office you MOST identify with, and which State you work for.

Agency or Office State

Please select:

Other (please specify)

*2. Who do you collaborate with most in APHIS (if you collaborate with more than one part of APHIS, you will have the opportunity to repeat the questionnaire for each part if you choose to)

- a. Animal Care
- b. Biotechnology Regulatory Services
- c. Legislative and Public Affairs
- d. Plant Protection and Quarantine
- e. Veterinary Services
- f. Wildlife services
- g. Office of the APHIS Administrator

3. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #2, please use this space:

Possible Areas of Collaboration (This Section Has 3 Questions)

4. Rate how collaborative you think you and this APHIS unit SHOULD BE in preparing to respond to an incident that occurs in your state.

EXPECTATIONS

	1. completel y independe nt	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completel y collaborat ive	N/A
a. Developing and working out incident response plans								
b. Understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response								
c. Communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced)								
d. Test exercise programs like tabletops, etc.								
e. How you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities								
f. Mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed)								
g. Monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents								

5. Rate on the same scale how collaborative you and this APHIS unit are RIGHT NOW in each of the following areas:

REALITY

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. Developing and working out incident response plans								
b. Understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response								
c. Communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced)								
d. Test exercise programs like tabletops, etc.								
e. How you and APHIS use your respective legal authorities								
f. Mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed)								
g. Monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents								

6. If you would like to clarify any of your answers or offer additional details to your answers to questions 4a through 5g, please use this space:

Preparing to Respond to Incidents (This Section Has 4 Questions)

7. How do you receive guidance and information from this APHIS unit to help you PREPARE TO RESPOND to an incident?

(Please check all that apply)

- a. Printed materials
- b. Internet postings
- c. E-mail
- d. Phone calls
- f. Other

Other (please specify)

8. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #7, please use this space:

9. Please rate how satisfied you are with this guidance and information you receive from this APHIS unit to help you PREPARE TO RESPOND to an incident.

	1. Not Satisfied	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Extremely satisfied	N/A
a. Thoroughness								
b. Accuracy								
c. Practicality								
d. Timeliness								
e. Ease of access								

10. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #9, please use this space:

During Incidents (This Section Has 4 Questions)

11. How do you receive guidance and information from this APHIS unit DURING AN INCIDENT?

(Please check all that apply)

- a. Printed materials
- b. Internet postings
- c. E-mail
- d. Phone calls
- e. Other

Other (please specify)

12. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #11, please use this space:

13. Please rate how satisfied you are with guidance and information you receive from this APHIS unit DURING AN INCIDENT.

	1. Not Satisfied	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Extremely satisfied	N/A
a. Thoroughness								
b. Accuracy								
c. Practicality								
d. Timeliness								
e. Ease of access								

14. If you would like to clarify or offer additional details to your answer to question #13, please use this space:

Final Thoughts on APHIS Collaboration (This Section Has 3 Questions)

15. In collaborating with this APHIS unit what is working best?

16. What most needs improvement?

17. Anything else you want to say about your collaboration with this APHIS unit?

*18. Is this your first time completing this questionnaire?

Yes

No

Internal State collaboration (This Section Has 4 Questions)

Think about the collaboration in your State between your agency and other key State agencies.

19. Please rate how collaborative you SHOULD BE in preparing to respond to an incident.

EXPECTATIONS

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. State Animal Response Team, Veterinary Reserve Corps or other similar programs								
b. State agency for animal health								
c. State agency for plant health (i.e. Division of Plant Industry)								
d. State Fish and Wildlife Agency								
e. Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners or Directors								
f. Other								

Please specify other agency:

20. Rate on the same scale how collaborative within your State you are RIGHT NOW:

REALITY

	1. completely independent	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. completely collaborative	N/A
a. State Animal Response Team, Veterinary Reserve Corps or other similar programs								
b. State agency for animal health								
c. State agency for plant health (i.e. Division of Plant Industry)								
d. State Fish and Wildlife Agency								
e. Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners or Directors								
f. Other								

Please specify other agency:

21. If you would like to clarify any of your answers or offer additional details to your answers to questions 19a through 20f, please use this space:

22. Any other comments about collaboration among agencies in your State?

Communication From Other States (This Section Has 4 Questions)

23. Who DO you hear from FIRST about agricultural incidents in other states?

- a. APHIS
- b. The state with the incident
- c. Your own State officials
- d. National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)
- e. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
- f. The media
- g. Other

Other (please specify)

24. Who SHOULD you hear from FIRST about agricultural incidents in other states?

- a. APHIS
- b. The state with the incident
- c. Your own State officials
- d. National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)
- e. Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
- f. The media
- g. Other

Other (please specify)

25. How could communication about incidents in other states be improved?

26. Any other comments on communication about incidents in other states?

Thank You!

If you DO NOT collaborate with a different part of APHIS, please CLOSE the browser to exit the survey. Your responses have been saved. If you want to review your answers press PREV.

However, if you are done this questionnaire and want to complete another one for a different part of APHIS you will have the opportunity.

Additional Questions Asked in Surveys

Questions asked of Animal Response Teams or similar programs

Animal Response Teams, Introduction

In October of 2006 the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act became law and carries with it a general mandate for states and local communities to address issues pertaining to people with household pets and service animals within their emergency plans. In addition, within APHIS, Animal Care has been tasked with supporting companion animal emergency issues, including offering technical support for emerging state plans. While local communities often have the bulk of any statutory authorities pertaining to issues surrounding pets, the PETS Act does create a need for states to become actively involved in planning efforts pertaining to the needs of people with household pets and service animals. The emerging organization, the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs is composed of many of the state entities that will be tasked with implementing such state plans and supporting the development of similar local plans. This creates the opportunity for productive collaboration among such state efforts and with USDA Animal Care to address these issues. The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Programs (NASAAEP) would like to assist by collecting data that can be shared with both states and USDA pertaining to these companion animal issues.

In addition to the main assessment conducted about APHIS/State collaboration, this survey should be answered by the state agency or sponsored organization (such as a SART program, veterinary medical reserve corps or any similar program) that will be charged with leading the implementation of the state plan components related to household pets and service animals. Identifying those key state stakeholders and their needs will be extremely helpful in moving forward on collaborative projects.

Animal Response Teams

27. What state agency or state-designated organization is (or will be) tasked to be the lead entity on state plans on household pets and service animals and who is the primary contact for that agency or organization?

Agency or organization:	
Contact name:	
Title:	
Address Line 1:	
Address Line 2:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Cellular phone:	
Other comments:	

28. How would you characterize your state emergency plan for household pets and service animals?

- a. draft plan is in development
- b. An initial written plan is in place and work is in progress to support that plan
- c. A plan is in place with substantial progress on support elements for that plan
- d. A plan is in place along with support elements and the plan has been exercised or used in a major disaster.
- e. Other

29. What additional state agencies or organizations provide critical support for this plan?

30. What are your greatest needs at this point with respect to development and implementation of such plans?

31. Understanding that USDA Animal Care cannot provide funding to state programs, please rate the following potential areas of USDA APHIS Animal Care assistance:

	Not Important	2	3	4	Very Important	N/A
State planning assistance						
Technical support on mitigation, preparedness, response or recovery issues (e.g. evacuation, transportation, sheltering, decontamination, etc.)						
Information and guidance materials						
Training						
Credentialing and resource typing assistance						
Other:						

32. Other comments:

SPHD and SPRO Specific Questions

27. Overall, how IMPORTANT is the relationship between you and the State Plant Health Director in accomplishing the goals of:

	1. Extremely Important	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Not Important
Your State							
APHIS-PPQ							

28. Overall, how EFFECTIVE is the relationship between you and the State Plant Health Director in accomplishing the goals of:

	1. Extremely Effective	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7. Not Effective
Your State							
APHIS-PPQ							

Percentage of States Responding to the Survey

Number of surveys received and percentage of States or Territories represented by APHIS unit or State Agency

	APHIS Unit or State Agency	Number of Surveys Received	Percentage of States or Territories Represented
APHIS	Plant Protection and Quarantine	50	80.4% (41)
	Veterinary Services	98	76.5% (39)
	Wildlife Services	81	90.2% (46)
State Agencies			
State Agencies	Animal Response Team or similar program	53	74.5% (38)
	Animal Health Agency	50	72.5% (37)
	Fish and Wildlife Agency	51	52.9% (27)
	Office of Secretary, Commissioner or Director	64	74.5% (38)
	Plant Health Agency	82	96.1% (49)

List of States, Interview Questions and Positions

List of States visited and (numbers of personnel interviewed)

State	Number	State	Number
California	12	Michigan	13
Florida	14	Minnesota	11
Iowa	9	New York	10
Louisiana	10	North Dakota	10
Maine	9	Oregon	10
Maryland	10	Texas	12

Note: An additional six Supervisory Animal Care Specialists were also interviewed

Positions surveyed and/or interviewed

APHIS Personnel	State Personnel
Plant Protection and Quarantine State Plant Health Director	State Plant Health Agency State Plant Regulatory Official
Veterinary Services Area Veterinarian in Charge Area Emergency Coordinator	State Animal Health Agency Director of the Board of Animal Health (if needed) State Veterinarian
Wildlife Services State Director	State Department Fish and Wildlife Secretary, Commissioner or Director Other key wildlife collaborator as needed
Animal Care Supervisory Animal Care Specialist (nationally and interview only)	State Animal Response Team Director or Lead
	State Department of Agriculture Secretary, Commissioner or Director
	State Department of Agriculture Communication Official

Interview Questions Asked

1. Who from (APHIS or the State) do you need to collaborate with in preparing to respond to emergencies
2. For each area listed, please explain what adequate and appropriate collaboration with (APHIS or the State) is, then explain how and why your expectation differs from the current reality
 - a. Developing and working out incident response plans;
 - b. Understanding of roles and responsibilities in a response;
 - c. Communication protocols (who knows what when; why and how is it announced);
 - d. Test exercise programs like tabletops, etc.;
 - e. How you and (APHIS or State) use your respective legal authorities;
 - f. Mutual aid agreements (formal means to share resources like staff and equipment seamlessly as needed); and,
 - g. Monitoring and reporting on progress during incidents.
3. Overall what is going best in working with (APHIS or the State) to prepare to respond to emergencies?
4. What most needs improvement?
5. When an incident occurs in a neighboring or nearby state, how do you collaborate with your counterpart in that state?
6. When an incident occurs in any other state how should you be informed?
7. What do you envision as the most valuable potential elements in the role of USDA APHIS Animal Care in providing technical and other support for state emergency programs pertaining to people with household pets and service animals? (As Appropriate)

Appendix 2: Plant Health

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Findings—Plant Health Emergencies

The table below (see Table 1.) summarizes the survey data.. Consistent with the overall results of the survey, the APHIS, PPQ State Plant Health Directors (SPHDs) and the State Plant Health Officials (including SPROs) agree generally on the most important areas for collaboration. The only differences are that State Plant Health Agency personnel would move *Communication Protocols* to the top spot in expectations for collaboration and *Mutual Aid Agreements* would move from last spot to fifth.

While there are a few differences, the SPHDs and Plant Health Agency personnel have similar expectations overall for collaboration. Expectations for both groups of respondents are similar while the current perception of reality is lower for the State Plant Health Agency officials than for the SPHDs. This is especially true for *Communication Protocols* and *Roles and Responsibilities*.

Table 1. Difference in SPHDs' and Plant Health Agency Personnel's perceptions and expectations of collaboration

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	SPHDs' Expectation of Collaboration	SPHDs' Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between SPHDs' Expectation & Current Perception	State Plant Health Expectation of Collaboration	State Plant Health Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between Plant Health Expectation & Current Perception	Difference between SPHD and State Plant Health Gaps
Roles and Responsibilities	6.58	5.54	1.04	6.57	4.71	1.86	.84
Communication Protocols	6.54	5.68	0.86	6.61	4.65	1.96	1.10
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.49	5.53	1.15	6.54	4.91	1.63	.48
Developing Response Plans	6.49	5.49	1.26	6.18	4.36	1.82	.56
How Legal Authorities are Used	6.30	5.48	1.44	5.97	4.58	1.39	.05
Test Exercise Programs	6.23	5.04	1.03	5.84	4.33	1.51	.48
Mutual Aid Agreements	6.11	4.93	1.46	6.16	4.29	1.87	.41
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #cccccc; margin-right: 5px;"></div> High </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Low </div>							

The differences between SPHD and State Plant Health Agency gaps shows that *Communication Protocols* has the largest difference. The least difference in gaps is in *How Legal Authorities are Used*.

For this section, the PPQ/National Plant Board Communications Working Group asked to include questions on how important and effective the SPHD and SPRO relationship is in accomplishing the goals of APHIS PPQ and the State Plant Health Agencies. Consistent with the other data, in this section, both the SPHD and SPRO

have similar ratings of importance (See Table 2.). Also, like the rest of the data, the SPROs rate the effectiveness lower than the SPHDs for accomplishing the goals of both PPQ and the State Agencies

Table 2. Importance and effectiveness of relationships in accomplishing goals

Relationships	Importance of relationship in accomplishing the goals of:		Effectiveness of relationship in accomplishing the goals of	
	APHIS-PPQ	Your State	APHIS-PPQ	Your State
SPHD relationship with SPRO	6.50	6.31	6.15	6.10
SPRO relationship with SPHD	6.18	6.18	5.48	5.55

While PPQ sees the reality of collaboration with the states as more positive than the States see it, PPQ sees the gap between their expectation and current perception for internal collaboration as bigger than the State Plant Health Agencies see the gaps internal to their states. PPQ sees the most need for collaboration in APHIS with LPA and BRS. The State Plant Health Agencies see their biggest internal collaborators as the Offices of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors. See Table 3 and 4 for the internal collaboration for plant health emergencies.

Table 3. PPQ’s expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration

APHIS Units	PPQ’s Expectations of Collaboration	PPQ’s Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between PPQ’s Expectation & Current Perception
Plant Protection and Quarantine	6.77	6.39	.38
Legislative and Public Affairs	6.24	4.71	1.53
Biotechnology Regulatory Services	5.48	4.22	1.26
Veterinary Services	5.02	3.82	1.20
Wildlife Services	4.56	3.12	1.44
Animal Care	4.10	1.89	2.21

Table 4. State Plant Health Agencies’s expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration

State Agencies and Offices	Plant Health Expectations of Collaboration	Plant Health Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between Plant Health Expectation & Current Perception
Plant Health Agency	6.69	6.39	.30
Office of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors	6.18	5.41	.77
Fish and Wildlife Agency	4.98	4.16	.82
Animal Health Agency	4.92	4.21	.72
State Animal Response Teams	4.69	4.08	.62

- High
- Low

In the interviews, most plant health respondents (from both States and APHIS) said that they talk about planning with each other. All said they did collaborate, but the meaning of that concept differed when they explained: the most common descriptions were “we provided comments” or “they gave us comments” or “we reviewed their plan.” Several State respondents felt that APHIS should provide national templates that can be adapted to the various states and some said APHIS should offer some comments or approval of the multistate partnership templates. A few other APHIS and State plant health respondents commented that there was no empowerment at the local level (only at the region or headquarters).

Most plant health respondents felt there were problems with communications protocols or were unaware of the existence of any protocols. Several stated that protocols should be written. State respondents often added that APHIS was slow and not timely in its communication and other activities. Several plant health respondents on both the APHIS and State side said that all communication should be sent simultaneously to SPROs and SPHDs.

The key comments about roles and responsibilities in the plant health arena pertained to a need to make them clearer, and that they should be in writing. In addition, plant health respondents cited concerns about APHIS’ authority not being clear in regards to plant health. Two State people commented that ICS was a burden to use and not helpful. Several PPQ respondents stated they were not allowed to share any state authority and almost half of PPQ respondents said there is nothing in writing between APHIS and States clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Almost everyone from either APHIS or the States said that there were few, if any, test exercises and several said they participate when invited but have had no way to sponsor (pay for) an exercise. Only two respondents on the State side said they felt there was joint work on designing the exercises. Many examples of exercises mentioned general disasters (oil spills, hurricanes, pandemic flu).

Much of the qualitative data collected on open-ended survey questions and in interviews involved discussing what is going best and what most needs improvement in working with APHIS or States on incident response

preparedness. Both APHIS and the State respondents had similar passion around some key issues: communication and relationships. There were also several more general comments collected.

What is Going Best

Communication was addressed at length under what is going best.

- From the surveys, 32 of the 58 APHIS respondents indicated it was the communication that was going best. Of that, 20 respondents cited the ease and openness of communicating with the SPRO and six respondents specified the sharing of information. Nine of the SPHD's cited the meetings (monthly, trade specific, task force and committee) as going well.
- For the State surveys, 50 of the 77 responses involved communication. Specifically, 15 of those place the communication between the SPRO and SPHD as what is working best.
- From the answers given in the APHIS and State interviews, some characteristics of high quality communication emerge: frequency – communicate regularly, lots of meetings and phone calls; know who to call (communication trees, personal relationships, etc.); proximity/accessibility – easy to get ahold of, located close together, after-hours availability; trust/know each other a long time, frank conversation; and understand roles and expectations.

Another area respondents said that was working the best involved the **relationships** between APHIS and State counterparts.

- APHIS had 12 respondents that said the people and relationships are what works best, including having a general understanding of each other or a long-term working relationship, and having a mutual understanding of goals.
- Of the 44 who said relationships, 24 state survey respondents specifically cited the relationship between the State and APHIS personnel as going best
- In the interviews, several APHIS respondents commented that what is best dealt with simply getting things done and learning from experiences—Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) work, long term relationships with SPROs, Incident Command System (ICS) training. Some comments were made by both APHIS and State respondents about the importance of being collocated with counterparts to foster closer relationships.

Other general responses about what is going best included:

- Mentioned in descending order of frequency in the written State surveys: developing response plans, test exercise programs, cooperative agreements and sharing of resources.
- On the State side, 12 people listed only general positive comments with no specific examples. Twice appreciation for funding was expressed and one respondent mentioned that BRS does a “great job” of dealing with emergencies.

Six State respondents saw no need for improvement.

What Most Needs Improvement

When asked about what needed improvement in working with either APHIS or the State, communication was again mentioned most frequently in both the written questions and interviews.

- APHIS survey respondents mentioned communication the most. This included 5 respondents specifically indicating that both regional/headquarters and the States go through the SPHD to improve communication. APHIS respondents expressed a desire to have more communication from the States about their activities and more meetings with counterparts.
- Of the 71 State written responses about areas of improvement, 31 were regarding improvements in communication. These included information being timely, early, and simultaneous, having follow-up after incidents, and improvements in APHIS internal procedures. State respondents also commented on the need for APHIS to be timelier in responding. Sometimes this meant that information should be shared simultaneously with both SPROs and SPHDs.
- In the interviews, both APHIS and the State respondents mentioned frequently that there are problems with role of and communications with the regions and HQ. Several respondents expressed confusion about authority and clarity of direction or instructions. Other comments dealt with needing timeframes for communication and decision making – particularly involving HQ and regions. However two State respondents said they get better service and information from regional program managers and HQ.

Comments related to relationships also appeared frequently under what most needs improvement from both APHIS and State respondents.

- Six APHIS survey respondents said that people and personal relationships are what most needs improvement.
- Ten State written responses were related to improvements needed with personnel or at the interpersonal relationship level. Comments included needing more interpersonal contact, having little involvement, overworked APHIS personnel and the need for better customer service.
- In the interviews, APHIS respondents said that there was a need to formalize relationships, get States more comfortable with the ICS system, and develop more written agreements. Several State respondents expressed interest in strengthening the relationship with SPHD.

On the topic of what most needs improvement general comments included:

- Twelve APHIS respondents indicated that developing, updating and formalizing plans was the improvement most needed. This included developing them together and having accessibility to each others' plans.
- Twelve State respondents cited need for improvement in development of incident response plans and protocols prior to an incident and then reviewing them periodically, and identifying the roles and responsibilities.
- In the interviews, other areas that needed improvement that were cited by more than six respondents (APHIS and/or State), included: money/resources/aid agreements, test exercise programs, legal authorities, and identifying roles and responsibilities.

- Three respondents (APHIS and/or State) requested more monetary support and resources for emergency response.

Survey Data: Plant Health Community Summary of Responses

Question: What is going best in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 58 responses
- 32 respondents designated communication. Of that, 20 respondents cited the ease and openness of communicating with the SPRO and 6 respondents specified that the sharing of information as what is going best in working with the State.
- 12 respondents indicated that the relationships with State personnel are what was going best. They have a general understanding of each other, long term working relationship, and mutual understanding of goals.
- 9 respondents cited that the meetings (monthly, trade specific, task force and committee) are what is working best.
- Other responses included: developing response plans (7), test exercise programs (5), cooperative agreements/sharing of resources and understanding roles and responsibilities (3).

States

- Total of 77 responses
- 50 respondents indicated communication. Specifically, 15 of those cited the communication between the SPRO and SPHD as what is working best.
- 44 respondents cited relationships with the people in APHIS, including collaboration with local staff (24) and regional staff (4).
- Other comments included: test exercise programs (3), co-location (2)
- General positive comments (12).

Question: What needs improvement in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 57 responses
- 15 respondents indicated that communication was the most important improvement needed to be made. This included 5 respondents specifically indicating that both regional/headquarters and the states go through the SPHD to improve communication.
- 12 respondents indicated that developing, updating and formalizing plans was the improvement most needed, including developing them together and having accessibility to each others plans.
- Other responses included: money/resources/aid agreements (6), test exercise programs (5), legal authorities (5), identifying roles and responsibilities (4), and people and personal relationships (4).
- 6 respondents saw no need for improvement.

States

- Total of 71 responses
- 31 responses related to communication, including timely, early, simultaneous, no follow up after incident, internal procedures, and regional/HQ issues.
- 10 respondents indicated people and relationships need improvement: more interpersonal contact, little involvement, overworked APHIS personnel, customer service.
- 8 responses addressed developing incident response plans and protocols in advance and reviewing.
- Other comments included: identifying roles and responsibilities (6), funding/cooperative agreements (5), legal authorities and test exercise programs (2), and meetings (1).
- Other: IT systems, regional improvements, CBI, working with trading partners, and IES.

Question: How could communication about incidents in other states be improved?

APHIS

- Total of 28 responses
- 15 responses addressed improving the communication from the regional office and headquarters.
 - Example- “rumors and personal communication will dictate the flow of information. Regions and HQ should communicate immediately, even without all the details, so the SPHDs are informed as soon as possible. We are in the position of trust and should be part of the internal communications.”
- 5 respondents noted the SPHD/SPRO as a means of improving communication. The SPHD should communicate directly with neighboring SPHD and likewise for the SPRO.
- Other comments included: we should capitalize on the success of the NPB and verifying information prior to distribution.

States

- Total of 33 responses
- 10 respondents indicated that timely/early communication needs improvement.
- 8 responses cited improving communication through national organizations (plant board/NASDA).
- 4 responses addressed improving communication between the SPHD and SPRO- simultaneous communication.
- Suggestions include: mass e-mail, talking points, list serve, outlined procedure.

Question: Other responses on your internal collaboration and guidance?

APHIS

- Total of 7 responses
- 4 responses cited problems at the levels above the State, specifically regional and HQ program managers communicating with the SPRO; CPHST communicating with stakeholders without the region or state involved; inexperience at HQ, and HQ staff not accessible.

States

- Total of 16 responses
- 8 responses for good collaboration within State agencies.
- Other responses include: needing clear guidance, not always consulted, no programmatic involvement.

Question: Do you have any other comments on collaboration?

APHIS

- Total of 30 responses
- 17 respondents thought that the working relationship with the State and State personnel is going well overall.

States

- Total of 18 responses
- 7 respondents indicated preference to hearing about incidents through national organizations (NASDA/NPB).
- 5 respondents listed hearing from other States. 3 of the 5 indicating hear from other States as not positive and 2 as positive.
- 2 responses were for a need for early communication from APHIS.

Interview Data: Plant Health Community Summary of Responses

Question 1: Who from (APHIS or the State) do you need to collaborate with in preparing to respond to emergencies?

APHIS (PPQ, BRS)

- The State Plant Regulatory Official (SPRO) and State Department of Agriculture were mentioned most frequently (more than 10). SPRO mentioned by almost all respondents.
- Others mentioned more than 5 times included: Tribes, U.S. Forest Service, and State DNR.
- Mentioned more than once: DHS Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Port Authority, Extension Agencies and Universities (labs), and State Foresters.
- NOT MENTIONED: State Ag or General Emergency Managers or VS.

States

- The State Plant Health Director (SPHD), others in PPQ, and PPQ Regional or Program Managers were mentioned most frequently (more than 10). The SPHD was mentioned more than any others.
- Others mentioned more than 5 times included: PPQ Deputy Administrator's office, and the National Plant Board,. Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) was mentioned more than once as was U.S. Forest Service, State Forest Service, and LPA.
- NOT MENTIONED: Tribes, DHS, State Emergency Managers.

Question 2: Plans, Roles and Responsibilities, Communications Protocols and Test Exercises

APHIS

- Most respondents said that they talk about planning with States. The most frequently cited examples were "we provided comments" or "they gave us comments." At least 5 people said they have their own plans. A few others said plans were in progress or not written down. At least one respondent said plans were in place and working well.
- The key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing. Two respondents stated they were not allowed to share any State authority. At least five respondents said there is nothing in writing between APHIS and States.
- Most respondents felt there were problems with communications protocols or were unaware of the existence of any protocols. Two respondents said there were good communication protocols in place. Several stated that protocols should be written.
- Almost everyone said that there were few, if any, test exercises and several said they participate when invited but have had no way sponsor an exercise.
- At least two respondents felt that APHIS should provide National templates that can be adapted to the various States and several said that there was no feeling of empowerment at the local level (only at the region or headquarters).

States

- Most respondents said they participate in planning with APHIS. The most frequently cited examples were "we provided comments" or "they gave us comments" or "we reviewed their plan." A few others said plans were in progress. There were several respondents who said they each had their own plans.
- The key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing. In this subgroup more than four respondents cited concerns about APHIS' authority not being clear in the plant health arena. At least two respondents said APHIS should offer some comments or approval of the multistate partnership templates.

- Several respondents said they were aware of communication protocols. At least two expressed that the role of APHIS LPA is unclear. Most said there was nothing in writing and offered that maybe they should be in writing. More than five respondents said that APHIS was slow and not timely at all in its communication and other activities. At least three people said that all communication should be sent simultaneously to SPROs and SPHDs.
- Almost everyone said that they were invited to and participated in some sort of test exercise. Only two said they felt there was joint work on designing the exercises. Many examples of exercises seemed to relate to general disasters (oil spills, pandemic flu) and several said industry was heavily involved in test exercise programs.
- Two people commented that ICS was a burden to use and not helpful and at least one person said that Eastern Region PPQ does not seem to be using ICS much at all.

Question 3: Overall what is going best in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies?

APHIS

- Although similar points and descriptors about communication and relationships were used by these respondents, they were not mentioned by everyone nor emphasized as much by this group as by the previous respondents. Again, the frequency, proximity, accessibility, and honesty were mentioned as strengths. Most respondents also stated that they were talking about communication and relationships with their local counterparts when listing positives.
 - Example: “Open communication. Straight talk—if (a) problem, we will talk about it and resolve it.”
- This subgroup mentioned three times that there are problems with regional and headquarters (HQ) communications and role. Several respondents expressed confusion about authority and clarity of direction or instructions.
 - Example: “What comes from headquarters is not always as it should be.”
 - Example: “Headquarters and region need to be on the same page.”
- Several comments dealt with simply getting things done and learning from experiences—from Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) work, long term relationships with SPROs, Incident Command System (ICS) training...
 - Example: “Process is working well not by design but by fact—(we are) not having any conflicts at this time nor have we had any for the last couple of years.”

States

- In this subgroup, almost everyone mentioned some aspect or element of communication or relationships. From the answers, some characteristics of good relationships and high quality communication emerge such as in the answers from the first subgroup: proximity, frequency, accessibility, and willingness to “work with us.”
 - Example: “(SPRO and SPHD) talk almost daily to check in. Being in the same location- work together and play together-understand each other. We have been able to respond because we trust each other and have confidence in them trust and confidence is what matters when there is an emergency.”
- Twice, mention was made of problems with regions and HQ not being clear or timely in their responses or communication. There was also concern expressed at least twice that the SPHD can be part of the problem and that both SPHDs and SPROs should get simultaneous notifications.
 - Example: “We need more training on Federal procedures and authorities and on what the PPQ role is.”
- Twice appreciation for funding was expressed and one respondent mentioned that BRS does a great job of dealing with emergencies.

Question 4: What most needs improvement (in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies)?

APHIS

- APHIS plant health respondents also expressed confusion about roles and responsibilities of PPQ in a) helping states prepare for any response b) what can they commit to in other situations. This was mentioned by more than three respondents. The need to work with tribes was also stated by more than one person.
 - Example: “(PPQ) side could have guidance on what PPQ should do: write our own plan, work jointly with the State? What would the protocol be...(we) need to work with tribes better and more on emergency response preparedness.”
 - Example: “It is unclear about what activities can or cannot be charged to Federal funds...and unclear how logistical support would be handled in an emergency.”
- At least three respondents expressed a desire to have more communication from the States about their activities and more meetings with counterparts. Some comments were made about the importance of being colocated with counterparts. Along with this idea were two comments about the need to formalize things and get them in writing. Also, several respondents cited the need to get States more comfortable with the ICS system.
 - Example: “Not sure how things will work when I leave, might need to formalize things before I leave.”
 - Example: “would like quarterly meetings with State counterparts to talk about practical realities.”
- Several respondents commented on problems with protocols, follow through, information flow, and decisions from regions and HQ.
 - Example: “(State) PPQ people are not empowered to make decisions... (so) more staff is needed in Riverdale to make decisions more quickly. And follow through from meetings.”
 - Example: “In the past few years, the authority of the regions has been taken away—now headquarters is making decisions that are destructive...”

States

- At least six respondents commented on the need for APHIS to be timelier in responding. Sometimes this meant that information should be shared simultaneously with both SPROs and SPHDs. Other comments dealt with needing timeframes for communication and decision making – particularly involving HQ and regions. This subgroup also expressed frustration dealing with those outside the State, however at least two respondents said they get better service and information from regional program managers and HQ.
 - Example: “Communication from HQ – volume and timeframe. Sometimes (we) avoid things because it will be tied up in headquarters. The SPHD has limits placed on him.”
 - Example: “Communication outside the local area...information coming from region or national levels can be quite slow...confusing. Sometimes it takes a long time...”
 - Example: “Response time...it seems to me that should be able to put people in an area (for response work) in two weeks and now they can’t.”
- Several comments reflected a desire for more training and exercises to get people more experienced with ICS. At least four people expressed interest in strengthening the relationship with SPHD and trying to improve communications which are currently perceived as weak.
 - Example: “Simultaneous communication happens on some occasions...If people change, that could also change.”
 - Example: “Need a very experienced incident commander who can get people and make things happen—SPHDs are not prepared to do this but could be.”

- At least three respondents requested more monetary support and resources for emergency response.

Question 5: How do you collaborate with your counterpart in another state?

APHIS

- Six respondents indicated they collaborate with their neighboring counterparts.
- Other responses included: the regional office, not through the regional office, dependent on the State involved, and SPHD phone calls.

States

- Four respondents collaborate with their neighboring counterparts.
- Other responses include: National Plant Board and the region is too slow in responding.

Question 6: How should you be informed?

APHIS

- Eight respondents want to be informed through the region, and four specifically through email.
- Other responses include: the SPRO alert system, other personnel and one indicated it was not important.

States

- Three respondents indicated through the national organizations such as NASDA and NPB.
- Two responses were for both, their state counterpart and simultaneous communication.
- Other response included APHIS.

Appendix 3: Animal Health

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Findings—Animal Health Emergencies

The table below (Table 5) summarizes the survey data. Similar to the overall results of the survey, the APHIS, VS AVICs and AECs and the State Animal Health Agency personnel agree generally on what areas are most important for collaboration. State Animal Health Agency personnel would move *Developing Response Plans* up to 4th and *Mutual Aid Agreements* up to 5th while moving *Test Exercise Programs* down to 6th and *How Legal Authorities are Used* down to the final spot.

Expectations are similar for the top three areas (*Roles and Responsibilities*, *Communication Protocols*, and *Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress*). *Expectations for Test Exercise Programs* and *How Legal Authorities are Used* are lower (.46 and .39 lower respectively) for the State Animal Health Agency personnel than for VS personnel. The current perceptions of collaboration are lower across the board for the Animal Health Agency personnel than they are for VS AVICs and AECs.

Table 5. Difference in VS' and State animal health officials' expectations and perceptions of collaboration

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	VS' (AVIC/AEC) Expectation of Collaboration	VS' Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between VS' Expectation & Current Perception	State Animal Health Expectation of Collaboration	State Animal Health Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between Animal Health Expectation & Current Perception	Difference between VS and State Animal Health Gaps between Expectation and Current Perception
Roles and Responsibilities	6.62	5.15	1.47	6.49	4.25	2.24	.77
Communication Protocols	6.58	4.97	1.60	6.45	3.97	2.48	.88
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.51	5.28	1.23	6.34	4.91	1.96	.73
Test Exercise Programs	6.51	5.28	1.24	6.05	4.10	1.95	.71
Developing Response Plans	6.38	5.14	1.25	6.18	4.03	2.15	.90
How Legal Authorities are used	6.23	5.08	1.14	5.84	3.87	1.97	.83
Mutual Aid Agreements	6.22	4.77	1.45	6.16	3.77	2.39	.94
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #cccccc; margin-right: 5px;"></div> High </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Low </div>							

The differences between VS personnel's and State Animal Health personnel's gaps show that *Mutual Aid Agreements* has the largest difference. The least difference in gaps is in *Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress*.

Wildlife Services (WS) and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies are an important part of the animal health community of collaborators. They work on surveillance for diseases in wildlife and each have resources and

assets that make them valuable for incident and emergency response. They do not see themselves as leading a response; rather they each see themselves as available for helping those who are leading responses. They also see themselves as each others' main collaborators on everyday work. See Tables 6 and 7 for more data about their collaboration. In interviews with the animal health community (VS, including AECs, WS, State Vets, State Fish and Wildlife Agencies), several people commented that APHIS WS was not regulatory so they were able to play less formal roles in response while being very helpful, and at least two people commented that WS' wildlife disease management program was a great asset in emergency response preparedness.

Table 6. Comparison of WS' and State Fish and Wildlife Agencies' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perception

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	WS Expectation of Collaboration	WS Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between WS Expectation & Current Perception	State Animal Health Expectation of Collaboration	State Animal Health Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between Animal Health Expectation & Current Perception	Difference between WS and State Animal Health Gaps
Roles and Responsibilities	6.57	5.41	1.16	6.67	6.00	.67	+.49
Communication Protocols	6.52	4.13	1.39	6.83	5.66	1.17	+.22
Test Exercise Programs	6.39	4.52	1.87	5.60	4.75	.85	+1.02
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.30	5.33	.97	6.33	5.80	.53	+.44
Developing Response Plans	6.26	4.95	1.31	6.17	5.84	.33	+.98
How Legal Authorities are Used	5.80	4.84	.96	6.17	5.17	1.00	-.04
Mutual Aid Agreements	5.78	4.30	1.48	6.17	5.75	.42	+1.06

- High
- Low

Table 7. Comparison of WS' and State Animal Health Agencies' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	WS Expectation of Collaboration	WS Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between WS' Expectation & Current Perception	State Fish and Wildlife Expectation of Collaboration	State Fish and Wildlife Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between Fish & Wildlife Expectation & Current Perception	Difference between SPHD and State Plant Health Gaps
Communication Protocols	6.23	4.67	1.56	6.38	5.03	1.35	.21
Roles and Responsibilities	6.12	4.74	1.38	6.35	5.23	1.12	.26
Developing Response Plans	5.91	4.30	1.61	6.00	4.92	1.08	.53
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	5.84	4.59	1.25	6.16	5.12	1.04	.21
Test Exercise Programs	5.76	3.84	1.92	5.62	4.40	1.22	.70
How Legal Authorities are Used	5.48	4.36	1.12	5.92	5.20	.72	.50
Mutual Aid Agreements	5.49	3.84	1.65	5.81	4.89	.92	.73

- High
- Low

Like PPQ, VS sees the realities of collaboration with the States as more positive than the States see it, and VS sees the gap between their expectation and current perception for internal collaboration as bigger than the state animal health agency sees the gap internal to their states. In looking at internal collaboration, VS sees its main collaborators (other than VS itself) to be LPA and WS. WS sees its main collaborators (other than WS itself) to be LPA and VS.

On the state side, the top two collaborators of the Animal Health Agencies (other than themselves) are 1) State Animal Response Teams or Veterinary Response Corps or similar programs and 2) Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The top two collaborators with Fish and Wildlife Agencies (other than themselves) are Animal Health Agencies and the Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors. See Tables 8-11 on internal collaboration for animal health emergencies.

Table 8. VS' expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of internal collaboration

APHIS Units	VS' (AVIC/AEC) Expectation of Collaboration	VS' Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between VS' Expectation & Current Perception
Veterinary Services	6.76	6.81	+.05
Legislative and Public Affairs	6.13	4.61	1.52
Wildlife Services	6.00	4.79	1.21
Animal Care	5.58	4.47	2.11
Plant Protection and Quarantine	5.45	4.44	1.01
Biotechnology Regulatory Services	4.53	2.58	1.95

Table 9. WS' expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of internal collaboration

APHIS Units	WS Expectation of collaboration	WS Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between WS Expectation & Current Perception
Wildlife Services	6.17	6.00	.17
Legislative and Public Affairs	6.08	5.54	.54
Veterinary Services	5.85	4.72	1.13
Plant Protection and Quarantine	4.36	2.35	2.01
Biotechnology Regulatory Services	4.23	1.71	2.52
Animal Care	3.97	1.71	2.26

Table 10. State Animal Health Agencies' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration

State Agencies and Offices	Animal Health Expectation of Collaboration	Animal Health Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between Animal Health Expectation & Current Perception
Animal Health Agency	6.29	6.00	.29
State Animal Response Teams	6.03	5.06	.97
Fish and Wildlife Agency	6.00	5.14	.86
Office of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors	5.88	5.25	.63
Plant Health Agency	5.29	4.67	.62

Table 11. State Fish and Wildlife Agencies' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration

State Agencies and Offices	Fish and Wildlife Expectation of collaboration	Fish and Wildlife Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between Fish and Wildlife Expectation & Current Perception
Animal Health Agency	6.37	5.37	1.00
Offices of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors	6.29	5.04	1.25
Fish and Wildlife Agency	6.27	5.54	.73
Plant Health Agency	5.86	4.71	1.15
State Animal Response Teams	5.48	4.00	1.48

High
 Low

In the interviews, most respondents said they participate in planning with the APHIS or States. The most frequently cited examples were “we provided comments,” or “they gave us comments,” or “we reviewed their plan.” A few APHIS respondents said APHIS/State personnel all sat at the table together to work on the plan. On the State side, five people said they have their own plans and others said plans were in progress and that industry led the development of plans (this seemed most common in the poultry industry).

On both APHIS and the State side, the key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing, and that APHIS has not stated what they would actually offer to states in emergencies (particularly all-hazard responses). Several APHIS respondents said they felt the states would like APHIS to take more responsibility than they have authority for. Five State

respondents said they were comfortable sharing state authority with APHIS. Other State respondents felt there was a good role for the Federal partners to be the ones who “call the meeting” and try to bring all parties together and suggested that APHIS should provide templates or a “seal of approval” to existing templates like those that exist for multistate partnerships.

Most APHIS and State respondents felt there were problems with information dissemination. Six APHIS and/or State respondents said there was nothing about communication protocols in writing and stated that maybe they should be in writing. Three APHIS respondents said they were aware of communication protocols and felt they were followed. Four State respondents said that there were good communications protocols. One State respondent said there was no need to write anything down because they work together so well with APHIS.

On both APHIS and State sides almost everyone said that they were invited to and participated in some sort of test exercise. Many examples of exercises seemed to relate to general disasters (oil spills, hurricanes, pandemic flu) and several said industry was heavily involved in test exercise programs. Only two APHIS respondents said they felt there was joint work to design the exercises. Several State respondents felt people were burned out on test exercises and expressed frustration at the time expended on them.

Much of the qualitative data collected on open-ended survey questions and in interviews involved discussing what is going best and what most needs improvement in working with APHIS or States on incident response preparedness. Both APHIS and the State respondents had similar passion around the key issues of communication and relationships. In the animal health arena, there was substantial discussion of resources and cooperative agreements.

What is Going Best

Communication was discussed at length under what is going best.

- Seventeen of the 60 APHIS respondents indicated communication with the State was going best. Specifically, they found their State partners to be candid, timely, have open communication with APHIS and to be in frequent contact.
- Communication was also the most frequent response on the State surveys as 35 respondents cited communication, including: direct calls between personnel, having conference calls and daily briefings.
- In the interviews, almost every State or APHIS respondent mentioned some aspect or element of communication. From the answers, some characteristics of high quality communication emerge, listed in order of how many times cited from most mentioned (all were cited more than once): frequency – communicate regularly, lots of meetings and phone calls; know who to call (communication trees, personal relationships, etc.); proximity/accessibility – easy to get ahold of, located close together (after hours availability); trust/know each other a long time, frank conversation; understand roles and expectations.
- From the State interview respondents, there was additional focus on communication as going best when balanced, when States do not feel run over, and when participating together in decision making.

Another area that respondents cited when asked what was working best involved the relationships between APHIS and State counterparts.

- In addition to the positive forms of communication, 13 APHIS respondents found the relationships with State personnel, including the working relationships, having a quality partnership, knowing each other personally, and having the formal and informal interactions, as what was going well in working with the State to prepare to respond to incidents.
- On the State side, 40 of the 89 responses were for the people and relationships with APHIS. The reasons included a mutual trust, sharing of knowledge, openness, having a common goal, confidence in the people, having a direct working relationship and personal contact.
- In the interviews, APHIS and State respondents mentioned respect for each others' technical knowledge and skills, the AEC program staff, and several state personnel expressed a desire to have things in writing with APHIS and to emphasize that we all have common goals in the era of all-hazards responses.

Other general responses included:

- Eleven APHIS respondents cited the development of formal response plans as what was going best.
- Other State responses for what was working well included the technical program areas and attending and holding joint meetings.
- In the interviews, resources were mentioned several times as part of what is best; there was an emphasis on the need for money and all the accompanying processes to getting and spending money.

What Most Needs Improvement

When asked about what needed improvement in working with either APHIS or the State, communication was again mentioned most frequently in both the written questions and interviews.

- When APHIS respondents were asked to indicate what they felt needed improvement with working with the State to respond to incidents the highest number of respondents felt the communication between APHIS and the States needed improvement. The specific areas mentioned include the timeliness of information from APHIS, the efficiency, and the willingness to share information.
- State personnel in animal health were also asked to provide areas that could be improved upon. The results included 22 of the 82 respondents indicating that the communication between APHIS and the State needed improvement. The specific areas included the timeliness of information from APHIS, the efficiency of information delivery and the willingness to share information.
- In the interviews, APHIS and State respondents cited problems with communication and timeliness from region and headquarters. Many respondents (more than 10) expressed concerns with the ability of regions and HQ to provide beneficial information, follow through, and provide timely support in an emergency. There were several comments that noted there was a lack of documentation for many aspects of emergency responses.

Comments related to relationships did not appear frequently under what most needs improvement from both APHIS and State respondents. However, comments about roles and responsibilities, including more formal ways of discussing relationships, were mentioned frequently.

- Several APHIS respondents cited determining authorities during an incident and questions around the ICS/NIMS area and roles as needing improvement.
- Eight State respondents indicated that the identification of the roles and responsibilities, determining who will do what when, was what most needs improvement. More than one State respondent felt APHIS could provide help with what the National Response Framework means to States, noting there is no mention of plants in it and that animal disease response requires a different model than the typical local-first framework.
- In the interviews, APHIS respondents felt the most improvement needed involved leadership and clarity on what APHIS is willing to do. What exactly does all-hazards mean and when should States expect us to show up? Many respondents said they didn't know what to tell their State counterparts about what we are planning in regards to all-hazards and even animal health response.
- State respondents said in the interviews that APHIS should take a larger role in providing written SOPs and templates on things like plans, response guidelines, etc. Along with these concerns was the idea that APHIS needed to be more aggressive in bringing in the State DNR agencies and providing them information before making decisions that impact wildlife (hunters).

There were significant comments offered from both APHIS and State personnel on resources and cooperative agreements.

- Six APHIS respondents said the cooperative agreement/funding and resources area needed improvement.
- Twenty two State respondents cited improvements needed in the transparency of funding and simplification of the cooperative agreement process.
- In the interviews, on both the APHIS and State sides, there were also comments on the need for more resources; that APHIS should have money to provide to the States to help on preparation work. At least five respondents commented that there were problems in the cooperative agreement system. Respondents from some smaller States said the smaller amounts of money required too much administrative work to track, too much reporting and not enough flexibility.

Survey Data: Animal Health Community Summary of Responses

Question: What is going best in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 60 responses
- 17 respondents indicated communication with the State. This includes: frequent, candid, timely, and open communication.
- 13 respondents cited the people and the relationships with State personnel. Including: working relationships, quality partnerships, knowing each other, and formal and informal interactions.
- 11 responses notes the response plans developed.
- Other responses included: technical programs (8), participating in meetings (7), and test exercise programs (6).

States

- Total of 89 responses
- 40 respondents indicated the people and relationships with APHIS. Mutual trust, sharing knowledge, openness, common goal, confidence, direct working relationship, and personal contact.
 - Example: “The current state director is very good at communication, anticipating future needs and issues, looking for ways to collaborate, and looking for ways to meet each other's goals. He is also clear on APHIS' role in situations and the need for clarity for all parties' roles and responsibilities. In addition, he seems to be neutral on issues and seeks to understand all sides and to not steer a particular outcome.”
- 35 respondents cited communication -- direct calls, local, conference calls, daily briefings.
- 6 respondents indicated the technical program areas.
- 5 responses for attending and holding joint meetings.

Question: What needs improvement in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 54 responses
- 8 respondents noted communication.
- 6 responses were regarding cooperative agreement funding/resources and developing response plans.
- Other responses included: determining authorities (5), questions around the ICS/NIMS (4), need for more time (4), understanding roles and responsibilities and attending meetings (2).

States

- Total of 82 responses
- 22 respondents indicated communication -- timeliness of information, not efficient, not willing to share.
- 15 responses were regarding transparency of funding and the cooperative agreement processes--simplify.
- 8 responses indicated the need for identifying the roles and responsibilities, determining who will who does what when.
- 5 respondents cited needing more test exercise programs and formulating incident response plans collaboratively.
- Other comments included: management/internal (4), legal authorities and personnel (3), attending meetings (2).

Question: How could communication about incidents in other states be improved?

APHIS

- Total of 36 responses
- 11 responses were for there to be early communication regarding incidents in other States.
 - Example: “a within-agency release could be done prior to public announcements. I most often hear about outbreaks on the news.”
- 22 respondents had suggestions on ways to improve the communication. These included: email alert (7), concurrent notification of incidents (5), and a prioritized list of States (3).
- Example: “Information about emergencies in other States should be distributed concurrently to all VS offices. Chain-of-Command distribution of this type of information only hinders the timeliness and usually creates duplicate distributions.”

States

- Total of 45 responses
- 11 respondents indicated a need for standardized protocols.
- 7 respondents listed timely/early communication needed -- simultaneous communication to the AVIC and State Veterinarian.
- 2 respondents indicated the current communication is good.
- Suggestions included: listserv, alert notices, conference calls, national bulletin system, and website for outbreaks, electronic newsletter, direct contacts, and hotlines.

Question: Other responses on your internal collaboration and guidance?

APHIS

- Total of 6 responses
- Responses include: no mandate to interact within APHIS, communication a problem, yearly interagency training needed.

States

- Total of 12 responses
- 9 respondents indicated the collaboration among Agencies is good.

Question: Do you have any other comments on collaboration?

APHIS

- Total of 17 responses
- 5 respondents made positive responses around the collaboration (excellent, good).
- 6 respondents had areas they would like improvements made regarding cooperative agreements (3), field level collaboration, and institutionalized “stove pipes.”

Interview Data: Animal Health Community Summary of Responses

Question 1: Who from (APHIS or the State) do you need to collaborate with in preparing to respond to emergencies?

APHIS (VS AVIC and AEC; WS)

- The State Vet, Board of Animal Health, and State (Ag) Emergency Manager were mentioned most frequently (by more than 10 respondents)
- Others mentioned more than 5 times included: State DNR or Fish and Game and the Emergency Management Agency or Safety and Health or Community Health Departments.
- APHIS personnel also listed other APHIS units several times – Wildlife Services (WS), Veterinary Services (VS), and Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) were mentioned more than once. Animal Care (AC) was only mentioned 1 time.
- In all states with large poultry industries, the industry representatives were listed as key collaborators and other industries (beef council) were also mentioned. Also: Universities and Extension Agents (more than once).
- The state port authority was also referenced by at least one respondent.
- NOT MENTIONED: Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or Tribes.

States (State Veterinarians, State Wildlife Contacts)

- The Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC), WS and other VS contacts (not Area Emergency Coordinator (AEC) or AVIC) were most frequently mentioned (more than 10). The AVIC was mentioned most frequently of all.
- Others mentioned more than 5 times included the AEC, State Emergency Management Agency, State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and State Agriculture Department
- Poultry and other industries, and the Office of the Inspector General were mentioned several times. AC was mentioned once as was Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA).
- NOT MENTIONED: DHS or Tribes.

Question 2: Plans, Roles and Responsibilities, Communications Protocols and Test Exercises

APHIS

- Most respondents said that they participate in planning with the States. The most frequently cited examples were “we provided comments” or “they gave us comments,” or “we reviewed their plan.” A few others said plans were in progress. There were several respondents who said they all sat at the table together to work on the plan.
- The key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing, and that APHIS has not stated what they would actually offer to States in emergencies (particularly all-hazards responses). Several respondents said that they felt the States would like APHIS to take more responsibility than we have authority for and at least three said they were able to share State authority.
- Two or three respondents said they were aware of communication protocols and felt they were followed. Most said there was nothing in writing and offered that maybe they should be in writing. There seemed to be several cases where protocols were thought to be “in process” and four people said that there were good communications protocols.
- Almost everyone said that they were invited to and participated in some sort of test exercise. Only two said they felt there was joint work on designing the exercises. Many examples of exercises

seemed to relate to general disasters (oil spills, pandemic flu) and several said industry was heavily involved in test exercise programs.

- Several people commented that APHIS WS was not regulatory so was able to play less formal roles in responses, and at least two commented that the WS disease management program was a great asset in emergency response preparedness.

States

- Most respondents said that they participate in planning with APHIS. The most frequently cited examples were “we provided comments,” or “they gave us comments,” or “they reviewed our plan.” At least five people said they have their own plans. A few others said plans were in progress and that industry led the development of plans (this seemed most common in the poultry industry).
- The key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing. At least five State respondents said they were comfortable sharing State authority with APHIS.
- Most respondents felt there were problems with information dissemination. More than four respondents said there was nothing about communication protocols in writing and stated that maybe they should be in writing. One respondent said there was no need to write anything down because they work together so well with APHIS.
- Almost everyone said that they were invited to and participated in some sort of test exercise. Only two said they felt there was joint work on designing the exercises. Many examples of exercises seemed to relate to general disasters (oil spills, pandemic flu) and several said industry was heavily involved in test exercise programs. Several respondents felt people were burned out on test exercises and expressed frustration at the time expended on them.
- More than one respondent felt APHIS could provide help with what the National Response Framework means to states, noting there is no mention of plants in it and that animal disease response requires a different model than the typical local-first framework.
- Others felt there was a good role for the Federal Partners to be the ones who call the meetings and try to bring all parties together, and APHIS should provide templates or “a seal of approval” to existing templates such as the ones that exist for multistate partnerships.

Question 3: Overall what is going best in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies?

APHIS

- Almost every person who answered this question from this subgroup mentioned some aspect or element of communication or relationships. From the answers, some characteristics of good relationships and high quality communication emerge, listed in order of how many times stated from most mentioned (all were cited more than once): Frequency – communicate regularly, lots of meetings and phone calls; Know who to call (communication trees, personal relationships, etc.); Proximity/accessibility – easy to get ahold of, located close together (after hours availability); Trust/know each other a long time, frank conversation; understand roles and expectations.
 - Example: “The greatest assets here are the people. We work with great people. There is great transparency, trust, and no personality problems.”
 - Example: “Communication—(we) know each other well and know who to call. Know what to expect from each other.”
- Several times National Incident Management System (NIMS) and standardization were mentioned as part of what is best and examples such as plans and test exercises were cited. The AEC program was listed three times. These items were mentioned much less frequently than communication, appearing about 3-4 times in this subgroup. When these examples were given, the majority of interviewees said

this work was “in progress” and definitely moving in the right direction. Experiences in planning for Avian Influenza (AI) were mentioned by several people.

- Example: “Willingness of State to include anyone who wants to be part of a test exercise, very inclusive.”

States

- This subgroup, comprised of State personnel, also mentioned many of the same communication and relationship characteristics, although slightly less often. There was additional focus on communication being balanced, not feeling run over, and participating together in decision making.
 - Example: “(we) keep up to date and networking and get (ting) to know each other builds trust.”
- Resources were mentioned several times as part of what is best. There was an emphasis on the need for money and all the accompanying processes to getting and spending money.
 - Example: “The money we get from the cooperative agreements is the best thing about collaboration with APHIS.”
- At least 2 respondents stated that while local communication and work was good, as soon as things moved to the national or regional level they were frustrated or things didn’t seem to get done in a timely manner. The lack of speedy response seemed to be most distressing element.
- Several people expressed a desire to have things in writing with APHIS and to emphasize that we all have common goals in the era of all-hazards responses. As in the previous subgroup, there was an acknowledgement that documents like plans were works in progress at present. There were also several mentions of experience gained on AI
 - Example: “Conference calls on (the) emergency when (it is) time to engage it goes ok. We are making progress and are more prepared today than 6 years ago to detect and respond to FADs (foreign animal diseases).”

Question 4: What most needs improvement (in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies)?

APHIS

- This subgroup provided roughly three main areas for improvements:
 - Need for leadership and clarity on what APHIS is willing to do. What exactly does all-hazards mean and when should States expect us to show up? Many respondents said they didn’t know what to tell their State counterparts about what we are planning in regards to all hazards and even animal health response.
 - Example: “Need to decide what side of the fence we sit on and let the stakeholders know.”
 - Example: “During the slaughter plant incident there was confusion about who makes the decisions”
 - Problems with communication and timeliness or responses from regions and headquarters. Many respondents (more than 10) expressed concerns with the ability of regions and HQ to provide beneficial information, follow through and provide timely support in an emergency.
 - Example: “We need clarity from regional and HQ on what help is available and when.”
 - Example: “Finish what we started before starting something new.”
 - There were several comments that noted there was a lack of documentation for many aspects of responses, at least six people said they wished they had a more updated and better detailed MOU with their State counterparts and at least two said they never got around to getting an MOU in place.

- Example: “We should work to get some of this stuff in writing and the MOU current with a regular cycle of revisions.”
- More than one respondent noted there was confusion about the role of FEMA, DHS, and even APHIS AC in all-hazards responses. There was also a need expressed to work more with State DNR-type agencies and public health.
- Several respondents expressed frustration at getting the States and other necessary partners all together and focused on emergency response work. At least two AECs said they had a very challenging time calling necessary meetings for planning and exercises. There were also comments on the need for more resources; that APHIS should have money they can provide to the States to help with preparation work. More than once, respondents said there was a need for more meetings and especially more test exercises (run by APHIS).
 - Example: “State needs to maintain their response plan better. Hasn’t been updated in a number of years.”
 - Example: “(we) have a lack of resources to the point were we would not be able to give support in a real emergency.”

States

- State respondents also expressed frustration with APHIS over what to expect and what the definition of all-hazards is—when can they count on APHIS and for what? At least two respondents stated that they did not think the AEC position was well defined or was not helpful as it was presently being implemented.
 - Example: “getting clearer direction on what is an all-hazard response—do not care what they decide, but need to make a decision.”
 - Example: “(the) AEC—they create these positions, their hands are tied and what they can do is not what we need.”
- There was consensus from respondents that the real concerns they have are with the regions and HQ and between USDA and DHS. States did not have a lot of confidence in getting information from outside the State. States felt that APHIS should take a larger role in providing written SOPS and templates on plans, response guidelines, etc. Along with these concerns was the idea that APHIS needed to be more aggressive in bringing in the State DNR agencies and providing them information before making decisions that impact wildlife (hunters).
 - Example: “DHS is saying one thing and USDA is saying something else.”
 - Example: “(I) question how national involvement would work and see turf as an issue nationally.”
 - Example: “(we) wanted a template to be consistent with other States and wonder if APHIS even has a good template they could give out.”
- At least five respondents commented that there were problems in the cooperative agreement system. Respondents from some smaller states said the smaller amounts of money required too much administrative work to track--too much reporting and not enough flexibility. Other States also made comments that they felt APHIS should provide more money for exercises and other preparedness activities and that the States should be granted maximum flexibility in using the money.
 - Example: “The cooperative agreement system on both the APHIS and State side needs improvement and enhancements for managing the money, including tracking and documentation systems.”

Question 5: How do you collaborate with your counterpart in another state?

APHIS

- Eleven respondents said they would contact their counterpart directly in the neighboring state.
- Eight respondents indicated they would work through the regional offices.

- Three respondents said they would work through the AVIC, three said they would work through AFWA or the state wildlife director.
- One response was to work through the State veterinarian in the neighboring state and one indicated the SART would provide the connection.

States

- Thirteen respondents would contact their neighboring state contact directly.
- Two respondents would contact someone within their state.
- Other responses include: Midwest Health and AFWA.

Question 6: How should you be informed?

APHIS

- Fourteen respondents would prefer to be informed through the regional offices or headquarters.
- Five respondents want a phone call if they will be directly involved and an email when indirectly involved. Two responses indicated email only.
- Three respondents believe that APHIS management withholds information when they should be informed.
- Other responses include: not from the media, “health alert system”, AVIC in neighboring State, State vet and dependent on the situation.

States

- Five respondents indicated they would prefer to be informed through the professional organizations including: NASAHO, AFWA, NASDA, USAHA
- Five respondents want to be contacted through email and three for a phone call.
- Three respondents prefer to be contacted through APHIS personnel, two for a phone call from headquarters and two for a APHIS listserv.
- Two respondents want to be contacted through the Department of Agriculture and two were dependent on the situation.

Appendix 4: All-Hazards

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Findings: All-Hazards Emergencies

Responding to all-hazards emergencies has been an emerging area of emergency preparedness and response for the APHIS units and State Agencies involved in this study. While some of the all-hazards arena remains unclear, one such area, animal evacuation and sheltering, has been gaining traction.

In October of 2006 the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act became law and carries with it a general mandate for States and local communities to address issues pertaining to people with household pets and service animals within their emergency plans. In addition, APHIS personnel have been tasked with supporting companion animal emergency issues, including offering technical support for emerging State plans. While local communities often have the bulk of any statutory authorities pertaining to issues surrounding pets, the PETS Act does create a need for States and APHIS to become actively involved in planning efforts pertaining to the needs of people with household pets. An emerging organization, the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs composed of many of the State entities that will be tasked with implementing such State plans and supporting the development of similar local plans.

This section takes a look at the data we collected on animal evacuation and sheltering as a way of gaining some insight into preparing for and responding to all-hazards incidents. The first important piece of data is that only 21 of 48 State survey respondents identified themselves as being part of a State Animal Response Team or Veterinary Response Corps or similar program. More than half (27 of 48) identify themselves as being part of an Animal Health Agency in the State.

Table 12 summarizes the survey data as explained in the section *Findings-Introduction*. The APHIS survey data is a little different than in the other sections because the number of respondents is low: there were only ten APHIS respondents who addressed the collaboration with State Animal Response Teams or Veterinary Response Corps or similar programs. All ten were from VS. It is important to note here that AC did not participate in the survey because we interviewed all of the AC Supervisory Animal Care Specialists nationally.

Generally, both APHIS and the State respondents agree on the order of importance for collaboration with only the position of *Developing Response Plans* and *Mutual Aid Agreements* being different. The State respondents would move *Mutual Aid Agreements* up to the fifth spot and move *Developing Response Plans* to the last spot.

As in all the survey data, the current perception of the reality of collaboration is lower for the SART respondents than for the APHIS, VS respondents. The gaps are also wider for the SART respondents than for the APHIS respondents, though the differences in the gaps is smaller in this set of data than in the other sets of data reported.

Table 12. Difference in Animal Care’s and SARTs’ expectations and perceptions of collaboration

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	APHIS Expectation of Collaboration	APHIS Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between APHIS Expectation & Current Perception	SART Expectation of Collaboration	SART Current Perception of Collaboration	Gap between SART Expectation & Current Perception	Difference between APHIS and SART Gaps
Roles and Responsibilities	6.70	5.33	1.37	6.36	4.79	1.57	.20
Communication Protocols	6.60	5.13	1.48	6.23	4.45	1.79	.31
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.60	5.00	1.60	6.21	4.48	1.73	.13
Test Exercise Programs	6.60	5.25	1.35	6.04	4.31	1.73	.38
Developing Response Plans	6.60	5.33	1.27	5.83	4.03	1.49	.22
How Legal Authorities are Used	6.50	4.86	1.64	5.93	4.86	1.50	.14
Mutual Aid Agreements	6.50	5.00	1.50	6.04	4.11	1.93	.43
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #cccccc; margin-right: 5px;"></div> High </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin-right: 5px;"></div> Low </div>							

The differences between APHIS and SART gaps shows that *Mutual Aid Agreements* has the largest difference. The least difference in gaps is in *Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress*.

In looking at internal collaboration, VS respondents see AC as their third main collaborator (other than VS itself) after LPA and WS. Their expectation for collaboration with AC is 5.58 and their current perception of the reality of their collaboration is 4.47 for a gap of 1.11. This gap is the lowest of the top three collaborators for VS.

On the State side, the top four collaborators of the SARTs are 1) Animal Health Agencies and 2) State Animal Response Teams or Veterinary Response Corps or similar programs, 3) Offices of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors, and 4) Fish and Wildlife Agencies. We include all four of these here because the respondents identify themselves as being part of both Animal Health Agencies (27 of 48) and SART (21 of 48) and all were rated their expectation of collaboration as more than 6.0. The gap is highest for the collaboration with Offices of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors (1.39), and Fish and Wildlife Agencies (1.78). See Table 13 and 14 on internal collaborations for all-hazards emergencies.

Table 13. SART or similar programs' expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of internal collaboration

APHIS Units	SART Expectation of Collaboration	SART Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between SART Expectation & Current Perception
Animal Health Agency	6.79	5.91	.88
State Animal Response Teams	6.65	5.88	.77
Offices of Commissioners, Secretaries or Directors	6.27	4.88	1.39
Fish and Wildlife Agency	6.11	4.32	1.78
Plant Health Agency	5.77	4.19	1.58

Table 14. VS' expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of internal collaboration

APHIS Units	VS' (AVIC/AEC) Expectation of Collaboration	VS' Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between VS' Expectation & Current Perception
Veterinary Services	6.76	6.81	+0.05
Legislative and Public Affairs	6.13	4.61	1.52
Wildlife Services	6.00	4.79	1.21
Animal Care	5.58	4.47	1.11
Plant Protection and Quarantine	5.45	4.44	1.01
Biotechnology Regulatory Services	4.53	2.58	1.95

In the interviews, most APHIS and State respondents said that that they believed planning was in progress in some form or fashion. Most indicated that APHIS or the State agencies were held up or in some way waiting on a National Plan or that States were moving very slowly on this emergency preparedness area.

Almost every respondent on both the APHIS and State side expressed confusion about roles and responsibilities in the area of all-hazards response, particularly on animal sheltering and evacuation. The key comments about roles and responsibilities focused on the need to decide what APHIS' role is and document it. There was a desire for guidance, direction, and consistency in what is expected in the arena of animal sheltering and evacuation. However, several people said either that these activities should be turned over to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (humane societies, private veterinarians), or that there will need to be local first responders and APHIS is not suited to be involved.

Many APHIS respondents said communication protocols should be developed and that we need to let States know who we are and what we do. There was a general sense that there was not much written on any front. A few respondents indicated that there was general understanding on how they would proceed based on other experiences, such as with tuberculosis and exotic Newcastle disease. Some State respondents said that they were concerned that communications and other problems would occur outside the local area and impact the response.

Almost all respondents said they were unaware of or had not participated in any test exercises. Two APHIS respondents cited recent experiences as part of an Emergency Support Function (ESF)-11 activation where they thought things went well and they provided valuable assistance.

Much of the qualitative data collected on open-ended survey questions and in interviews involved discussing what is going best and what most needs improvement in working with APHIS or States on incident response preparedness. In the all-hazards (animal sheltering and evacuation) community, there was a much smaller sample size for both interviews and written surveys. Both APHIS and the State respondents had similar passion around some key issues: communication and need for clarity and leadership in determining roles and responsibilities.

What is Going Best

- Two APHIS survey respondents indicated the best elements of preparing to respond to incidents are the people and the relationships they had with SART personnel. The remaining responses were for the communication they received, the planning and preparation that had been done, and the county response team that was in place.
- On the State side, there was a larger sample set. Individuals in the SART position or State emergency coordinators cited the best elements as the people in APHIS and the relationships in place. This included their willingness to work with the State office, the AEC maintaining good communication, being easily accessible, and being proactive. The second largest number of responses was for the communication, including emails, attending meetings, phone calls, communication with field staff and direct contact with VMOs. An additional seven respondents listed a generally positive working relationship with APHIS.
- In the interviews, the most frequently mentioned factor for APHIS respondents was that everyone is highly motivated to want to help out. But then respondents were quick to observe that they did not feel they know what to do or what should be done by APHIS in this area. At least three respondents clearly stated that working under FEMA during ESF-11 activation was going well. At least two respondents cited the fact that the NGOs should take the lead in this area..
- Also during interviews, the State respondents cited that communication is going well as long as the proper people are involved. There was a general consensus that forming the appropriate network on these all-hazards issues is important. One State respondent noted that “up the line” in APHIS (outside the state), communication gets frustrating. At least two respondents commented that the professionalism and technical expertise APHIS brings to the table was what was going best.

What Most Needs Improvement

- APHIS respondents (four) cited increased planning and guidance, increased communication and defining the roles and responsibilities as need improvement.

- The State respondents cited communication as needing the most improvement, including a formalized communication system, communication from regional offices and headquarters, more consistent communication, more meetings, and timely information. In addition to communication, the role of the AEC was noted as needing improvement by eight respondents. This included the role being better defined, a higher degree of involvement, general lack of support by APHIS, need for personnel specifically dedicated to emergency planning, clarification on authorities, and more representation.
- In the interviews on both the APHIS and State sides, almost all respondents commented that they felt there was a great need for clear written guidance about what APHIS’ role and responsibility is in all-hazards situations, especially regarding animal rescue. It is clear from comments that there is no consensus about what is expected and what should be offered.
- Most State interview respondents thought the APHIS program area involved would be VS, although at least three had positive experience working with AC. An APHIS respondent who had worked on the Katrina response noted that APHIS could provide overall coordination to all the NGOs because, unlike the NGOs, APHIS is not competing for media attention during responses.

Two additional questions were asked of the respondents who are part of State Animal Response Teams or similar programs. The first asked respondents to characterize the condition of their state emergency plan for household pets and service animals. Almost 70% say their plan is either in development (30.6%) or a plan is in place and work is in progress to support that plan (38.9%). See Table X below.

The second question asked respondents to rate potential areas of APHIS Animal Care assistance. While more respondents said that technical support (67.6%) is very important, information and guidance materials had the highest average rating (4.40).

Table 15. Current condition of State emergency plans for household pets and service animals

Stage of Development	Percentage (number)
A draft plan is in development	30.6% (11)
An initial written plan is in place and work is in progress to support that plan	38.9% (14)
A plan is in place with substantial progress on support elements for that plan	16.7% (6)
A plan is in place along with support elements and the plan has been exercised or used in a major disaster	5.6% (2)
Other*	8.3% (3)

*Other comments: 1) unknown, 2) None yet, 3) draft plan in revision 4) no plan, 5) A written plan exists but is a paper tiger and has no support elements and no work is in progress to improve it

Table 16. Potential areas of APHIS Animal Care assistance

	Not Important	2	3	4	Very Important	N/A	Average
State planning assistance	2.9% (1)	8.6% (3)	5.7% (2)	28.6% (10)	51.4%	2.9% (1)	4.21
Technical support on mitigation, preparedness, response or recovery issues (e.g. evacuation transportation, sheltering, decontamination, etc)	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	8.8% (3)	14.7% (5)	67.6% (23)	0.0%	4.38
Information and guidance materials	0.0%	5.7% (2)	11.4% (4)	20.0% (7)	62.9% (22)	0.0%	4.40
Training	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	8.8% (3)	23.5% (8)	61.8% (21)	0.0%	4.38
Credentialing and resource typing assistance	2.9% (1)	5.9% (2)	5.9% (2)	20.6% (7)	64.7% (22)	0.0%	4.38
Other*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5% (1)	75.0% (6)	12.5% (1)	

*Other comments: 1) Convincing state emergency officials and Livestock and Poultry officials to play well and take a lead 2) Networking assistance 3) Transportation guidelines 4) Take the NATIONAL lead 5) Clarification of authority 6) Credentialing and resource typing has been a state function since 2000. USDA provides expertise for the classes and assures that all VMOs and technicians are credentials

Survey Data: All Hazards Community Summary of Responses

Question: What is going best in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 5 responses
- 2 respondents indicated the people and relationships
- Other responses include: communication (1), planning and preparation (1), county response teams (1).

States

- Total of 36 responses
- 22 respondents indicated that the people and relationships were what was going best in working with APHIS. This includes: willingness to work with the State office, AEC maintaining communication, easily accessible, and being proactive.
- 12 responses were for the communication, including emails, attending meetings, phone calls, communication with field staff and direct contact with VMOs.
- 2 respondents indicated that nothing was going well; APHIS personnel are uninterested and not engaged.
- 7 additional responses noted a good/positive working relationship with APHIS.

Question: What needs improvement in working with APHIS or the State?

APHIS

- Total of 4 responses
- Responses include: planning, guidance, state NGO lead, communication, and roles and responsibilities.

States

- Total of 32 responses
- 12 respondents cited communication as what needed improvement. This includes: formalized communication system, communication from regional offices and headquarters, consistent communication, more meetings, and timely information.
- 8 responses were regarding the role of the AEC including a need for role definition, degree of involvement, lack of support, personnel specifically for emergency planning, clarification on authorities, and more representation.
- Other comments included: more time (2), proactive involvement (2), and too much third party involvement (1).
- 7 additional responses said: chain of command issues, empowering AC personnel, funding, and no opportunity to collaborate.

Question: How could communication about incidents in other States be improved?

APHIS

- Total of 1 response
- Previous problems have been corrected

States

- Total of 12 responses
- 5 respondents indicated the use of professional organizations: NASDA is good at communication, USAHA and NIAA, and AVMA website.
- 3 responses said that communication was fine.
- Other suggestions included: email system, lack of personal agendas, alert system and lessons learned.

Question: Other responses on your internal collaboration and guidance?

APHIS

- Total of 1 response
- Efficient state response teams

States

- total of 14 responses
- 10 responses noted that the internal collaboration was working well.
- 4 respondents saw a general need for improvement.

Question: Do you have any ideas for improving communication?

States

- total of 18 responses
- suggestions included: listservs (3), alert system, phone call with confirmation, database of programs, State situational reports, internet and fax, common protocol, notification of AVIC, and web-based communication.
- 2 respondents indicated that more timely communication was needed.

Question: What is the greatest need for development and implementation?

States

- Total of 27 responses
- 14 respondents indicated that additional funding and resources were needed. Supplies, equipment, resources identification, shelters, and personnel.
- 3 respondents indicated a need for additional guidance.
 - Example: "The FEMA Pet Sheltering Best Practices and FEMA Pet Evacuation and Sheltering Reimbursement Policy documents have just been received, and will provide guidance. Templates and models which provide options that the local community can customize are essential. At this point everyone is starting from scratch and "inventing their own wheel".
- Other responses included: legal authorities (2), people and staffing (2), development of plans (3), time, recognition, communication, partnering with organizations, and stand-alone SART.

Question: What other State Agencies should we be collaborating with?

- see attachment

Interview Data: All Hazards Community Summary of Responses

Question 1: Who from (APHIS or the State) do you need to collaborate with in preparing to respond to emergencies?

APHIS (SACS)

- Mentioned more than 5 times: VS, Private Groups including veterinarians, State Veterinarians
- Mentioned at least once: AC, WS, State Animal Rescue Teams (SARTs), State DNR
- NOT MENTIONED: DHS, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), PPQ

State (SART)

- Mentioned more than 10 times: AVIC, AEC
- Mentioned more than 5 times: SART, State Emergency Management Agency
- Mentioned at least once: State Vets, State DNR, AC, PPQ, WS, and Office of the Inspector General
- NOT MENTIONED: DHS, Tribes

Question 2: Plans, Roles and Responsibilities, Communications Protocols and Test Exercises

APHIS

- Most respondents said that they believed planning was in progress in some form or fashion. Most indicated that they or the State agencies were held up or in some way waiting on a National Plan or that States were moving very slowly on this whole emergency preparedness area.
- Almost every respondent expressed confusion about roles and responsibilities in the area of all-hazards response particularly on animal sheltering and evacuation. The key comments about roles and responsibilities focused on the need to decide what APHIS' role is and document it. There was a desire for guidance, direction, and consistency in what is expected in the arena of animal sheltering and evacuation. However, several people said that either these activities should be turned over to NGOs or that there will need to be local first responders and we are not suited to be involved.
- Many respondents said communication protocols should be developed and that we need to let States know who we are and what we do. Almost all respondents said they were unaware of or had not participated in any test exercises. There was a general sense that there was not much written on any front.
- Two respondents cited recent experiences as part of an ESF-11 activation where they thought things went well and they provided valuable assistance.

States

- Several respondents said they believed planning was in progress in some form or fashion and at least one cited a completed plan. There were several comments on perceived deficiencies in the ICS system, especially for events that require longer term support.
- Almost every respondent expressed confusion about APHIS' roles and responsibilities in the area of all-hazards response particularly on animal sheltering and evacuation. Almost all respondents said they were unaware of or had not participated in any test exercises.
- There was a general sense that there was not much written on any front. Several respondents said there was general understanding on how they would proceed based on other experiences, such as with tuberculosis and exotic Newcastle disease. At least one said indicated concern that communications and other problems would occur outside the local area and impact the response.

Question 3: Overall what is going best in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies?

APHIS

- In this subgroup, the most mentioned factor was that everyone is highly motivated and wants to help. But then respondents were quick to observe that they did not feel they know what to do or what should be done by APHIS in this area. At least three respondents clearly stated that working under FEMA during an ESF-11 activation was going well.
 - Example: “All of our folks are really motivated and want to do a good job.”
- At least two respondents cited the fact that the NGOs should take the lead in this area.
- Almost all respondents acknowledged that response work in this area is not well organized or documented.

States

- The comments here reflect that communication is going well as long as the proper people are involved. There was a general consensus that forming the appropriate network on these all-hazards issues is important.
 - Example: “Good Communication...the fact that they are always at the table together.”
- One respondent noted that “up the line” in APHIS (outside the state) communication gets frustrating.
- At least two respondents commented on the professionalism and technical expertise APHIS brings to the table.
 - Example: “(APHIS people) are very knowledgeable about animal issues, unlike DHS; (it) has been easy working with them because of their knowledge.”

Question 4: What most needs improvement (in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies)?

APHIS

- Almost all respondents commented that they felt there was a great need for clear written guidance about what APHIS’ roles and responsibilities are in all-hazards situations, especially regarding animal rescue. It is clear from comments that there is not consensus about what is expected and what should be offered.
 - Example: “We need written guidelines and policies explaining what our roles are. Better communication as to what our role should be when an emergency takes place.”
 - Example: “Hard to know what our position is and what to do in these situations. Some like it and volunteer.”
- The need for training, funding, and coordination was expressed by a few respondents. Someone noted that APHIS could provide overall coordination to all the NGOs because, unlike the NGOs, APHIS is not competing for media attention during responses..

States

- Many respondents from the States expressed concern about what everyone’s roles and responsibilities are in regards to animal evacuation (non-farm). Most respondents thought the APHIS program area involved would be VS, although at least three had positive experience working with AC.
 - Example: “Federal partners can convene the meeting, especially involving more than one State, to discuss these issues.”
- Three responders felt the AEC position could be helpful with this work but two stated they were very disappointed with the AEC and had virtually no contact with that person.
 - Example: “Wonder if the AECs were told what their jobs were—they get information from the State but not the other way—need to better understand each others’ authority.”

- Example: “The AEC is the person who could help build these relationships.”
- At least three comments pertained to the need for APHIS to provide templates for plans and the need for additional funding to support these activities. Also mentioned that it is important for the person from APHIS to really know the State structure and personnel and not be heavy handed when assisting with a response to an incident.

Question 5: How do you collaborate with your counterpart in another State?

APHIS

- Two responses were noted for: having no State counterpart, through the regional office and contact from the State needing assistance.
- One response included they would activate as needed

States

- Two responses were for: through a multi-state partnership/association and through the neighboring state veterinarian.
- One response was recorded for: neighboring SART and having not collaborated.

Questions 6: How should you be informed?

APHIS

- Six respondents would like to be informed through the regional/headquarters office.
- One respondent does not collaborate.

States

- Two responses were for: in-State secretary/commissioner’s office, AVMA website with email prompt, and email or phone calls from State with information.
- One response was recorded for: friend from a neighboring State and not in the newspaper.

Appendix 5: General Support

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Findings: General Communication and Support

General Support

According to the data we collected, there are three important sources for general communication and support:

- APHIS Office of the Administrator (OA)
- APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)
- State Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors (these include the departmental communication officers)

There are a few respondents from State Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors who have high expectations for collaboration. The most important area for them to work with APHIS OA is *Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress* and *Test Exercise Programs*. See Table 15 showing the expectations and current perceptions of collaboration of this group of State personnel with APHIS OA.

Table 17. State Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors* expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of collaboration with APHIS Office of the Administrator

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	State Expectation of Collaboration	State Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between Expectation & Current Perception
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.38	5.50	.88
Test Exercise Programs	6.38	4.75	1.63
Roles and Responsibilities	6.13	4.63	1.50
Developing Response Plans	6.13	4.63	1.50
Communication Protocols	6.00	4.25	1.75
How Legal Authorities are Used	6.00	4.57	1.43
Mutual Aid Agreements	5.75	4.38	1.38

* Consists of 8 responses

- High
- Low

Both State and APHIS respondents see APHIS LPA as an important collaborator. State personnel see LPA particularly important in working with them on *Communication Protocols*, *Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress* and developing *Roles and Responsibilities* and have high expectations for collaboration in all three areas. Their current perception of collaboration is low (all under 4.0). As a result these are the highest gaps recorded in this survey: all more than 2 and *Communication Protocols* approaches 3 (2.92). See Table 16 showing the results of State expectations and current perceptions of collaboration with LPA.

Table 18. State expectation, current perception and gap between expectations and current perception of collaboration with APHIS LPA

Areas of Emergencies Response Preparedness	State Expectation of Collaboration with LPA	State Current Perception of Collaboration with LPA	Gap between State Expectation & Current Perception
Communication Protocols	6.36	3.44	2.92
Monitoring of and Reporting on Progress	6.34	3.52	2.83
Roles and Responsibilities	6.23	3.65	2.58
Developing Response Plans	5.71	3.52	2.20
Mutual Aid Agreements	5.65	2.90	2.75
Test Exercise Programs	5.29	3.36	1.93
How Legal Authorities are Used	5.13	3.12	2.01

APHIS respondents from PPQ, VS and WS all see LPA as their most important collaborator other than themselves. The average of the APHIS respondents expectations are more than 6.0. The gap between their expectations and their current perceptions is 1.53, 1.52 and .54 respectively. See Table 17 showing the results of APHIS expectations and current perceptions of collaboration with LPA.

Table 19. PPQ's, VS' and WS' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration with APHIS LPA

APHIS Units	Expectation of Collaboration with LPA	Current Perception of collaboration with LPA	Gap between Expectation & Current Perception
Plant Protection and Quarantine	6.24	4.71	1.53
Veterinary Services	6.13	4.61	1.52
Wildlife Services	6.08	5.54	.54

■ High
 ■ Low

While APHIS respondents don't see the State Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors as important collaborators, State respondents do. All four categories of State respondents see these offices as important collaborators, although Animal Health Agencies slightly less so:

- Fish and Wildlife: 6.29
- State Animal Response Teams or Veterinary Response Corps or similar programs: 6.27
- Plant Health Agencies: 6.18
- Animal Health Agencies: 5.58

See Table 18 showing the expectations and current perceptions of collaboration with State Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors

Table 20. State Agencies' expectations, current perceptions and gaps between expectations and current perceptions of internal collaboration with Offices of Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors

State Agencies and Offices	Expectation of Collaboration	Current Perception of collaboration	Gap between Expectation & Current Perception
Fish and Wildlife Agencies	6.29	5.04	1.25
State Animal Response Teams or similar programs	6.27	4.88	1.39
Plant Health Agencies	6.18	5.41	.77
Animal Health Agencies	5.88	5.25	.63

- High
- Low

APHIS Guidance

Both APHIS and State respondents rated APHIS guidance. For APHIS, the guidance from regions is considered better than the guidance from headquarters. The guidance overall from VS headquarters rated lowest and the guidance from WS regions rated best. Also, the top-rated aspect of APHIS guidance by APHIS respondents is its *Accuracy* (except for WS regions where *Ease of Use* topped the list). The worst aspect of APHIS guidance, according to APHIS respondents, is *Timeliness*. (Again, except for WS regions where *Practicality* was the worst aspect.)

For State respondents, the guidance received during a response is generally considered better than the guidance received to help States prepare to respond. The guidance from WS rated overall highest and the guidance from VS was rated lowest. The best aspect of the guidance to help States prepare is its *Accuracy* (except for BRS where *Ease of Use* topped the list). The best aspects of guidance during a response are: *Accuracy* (LPA, VS and AC – AC had three aspects tied for the best: *Thoroughness*, *Accuracy* and *Practicality*), *Ease of Use* (PPQ and WS) and *Thoroughness* (BRS). The worst aspects of APHIS guidance during a response are: *Timeliness* (BRS, LPA, PPQ and VS), *Ease of Use* (AC) and *Practicality* (WS). See Tables 19-21 showing the complete results from the survey on guidance.

Table 21. Ratings of PPQ, VS and WS regional and headquarters guidance

Aspects of Guidance	PPQ		VS		WS	
	Regional	HQ	Regional	HQ	Regional	HQ
Thoroughness	4.74	4.22	4.67	4.13	5.71	5.34
Accuracy	5.09	4.47	4.93	4.59	5.61	5.41
Practicality	4.61	4.02	4.50	3.74	5.50	4.89
Timeliness	4.61	3.98	4.45	3.58	5.66	4.84
Ease of use	4.91	3.82	4.73	3.82	5.89	5.32

Table 22. State ratings of APHIS guidance given to *prepare* to respond to incidents

Aspects of Guidance	AC*	BRS**	LPA	PPQ	VS	WS
Thoroughness	5.50	4.60	4.91	4.75	3.86	5.34
Accuracy	5.75	5.00	5.14	4.84	4.30	5.57
Practicality	4.75	4.70	4.91	4.39	3.77	5.37
Timeliness	5.50	4.70	4.26	4.33	3.66	5.37
Ease of use	5.75	5.20	4.66	4.83	3.98	5.29

* consists of 4 responses

** consists of 10 responses

Table 23. State ratings of APHIS guidance given *during* a response

Aspects of Guidance	AC*	BRS**	LPA	PPQ	VS	WS
Thoroughness	5.00	5.50	4.65	4.75	4.38	5.47
Accuracy	5.00	5.29	5.15	4.76	4.57	5.42
Practicality	5.00	5.29	4.79	4.46	4.09	5.39
Timeliness	4.75	4.86	4.38	4.36	4.00	5.45
Ease of use	4.50	5.43	4.53	4.77	4.43	5.55

* consists of 4 responses

** consists of 7 responses

High
Low

General Communication

During the interviews, participants were asked to indicate how they would collaborate with their counterpart in a neighboring State. For APHIS personnel, 23 of the 41 respondents indicated they would contact their counterpart directly and eleven of the respondents work with the regional office to assist a neighboring State. In the case of State personnel, nineteen respondents indicated they would also contact their counterpart first, however ten respondents listed working through the professional organizations.

When asked on the survey how they preferred to hear about incidents in other States, APHIS personnel preferred to hear first from their regions and second from Headquarters. The interview data supported this, with 28 of the 47 responses preferring to be informed through the regional office or headquarters. States on the survey indicated a preference to hear from APHIS, the State with the incident or from their own State officials in that order. See Tables 22 and 23 showing the complete results on how respondents currently hear about incidents and how they prefer to hear. In the interviews, eighteen respondents felt they should be informed through APHIS and eighteen through the professional organizations.

Table 24. APHIS preferences on how they want to hear about incidents in other States

Communication Methods	PPQ		VS		WS	
	Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred
Headquarters	2 (5.4%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.5%)	9 (21.9%)	8 (22.9%)	11 (32.4%)
Your Region	21 (56.8%)	33 (86.8%)	9 (22.5%)	28 (68.3%)	12 (34.3%)	20 (58.8%)
The State with the incident	2 (5.4%)	2 (5.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Your State contact	6 (16.2%)	0 (0%)	8 (20.0%)	2 (4.9%)	3 (8.6%)	1 (2.9%)
NASDA	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.9%)
AFWA	0 (0%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The media	1 (2.7%)	0 (0%)	14(35.0%)	0 (0%)	11 (31.4%)	0 (0%)
Other	5 (13.5%)	1 (2.6%)	8 (20.0%)	3 (7.3%)	1 (2.9%)	1 (2.9%)
	n= 37	n=38	n=40	n=41	n=35	n=34

Table 25. State preferences on how they want to hear about incidents in other States

Communication Methods	Actual	Preferred
APHIS	44 (20.3%)	104 (48.6%)
The State with the incident	34 (15.7%)	45 (21.0%)
Your own State officials	28 (12.9%)	24 (11.2%)
NASDA	46 (21.2%)	20 (9.3%)
AFWA	7 (3.2%)	6 (2.8%)
The media	28 (12.9%)	1 (0.5%)
Other	29 (13.4%)	14 (6.5%)
	n=217	n=214

■ High

When State personnel were asked to comment in the survey regarding what improvements in communication they felt were needed, 29 of the 128 responses were for more timely communication from APHIS, and specifically, simultaneous communication. Additionally, 25 respondents would improve the communication and prefer the communication through the national or professional organizations, NASDA, COSDA, NPB, USAHA, NIAA and AVMA. Other responses for improved communication included standardized protocols, improvement in the communication between the State counterparts, and a change at the APHIS management level. Five respondents only noted positive communication.

Of the 65 responses collected from APHIS personnel indicating their preference for improving communication, 15 cited an improvement needed on the communication from the regional offices and headquarters. Eleven would have prefer there to be early communication regarding incidents in other States, and five respondents would improve the communication between the State counterparts, in addition to the seven responses for concurrent or simultaneous notification of incidents. Ten responses included specific suggestions, including email alerts and a prioritized list of State contacts.

Interview Data: The Good and the Need for Improvement

In the interviews discussing what is going well and what needs improvement, several APHIS and State respondents cited the professionalism, expertise, and strength of interpersonal relationships in the States as things going well. Three State respondents mentioned that the role of NASDA, specifically the conference calls and Bob Ehart (in communication with APHIS was good and getting better). Several APHIS and State respondents cited strong work by APHIS LPA and good connections with LPA staff.

Several respondents on both sides mentioned frustration with Regional and HQ communications and cited a general lack of speedy response by APHIS regions and HQ as a regular problem. APHIS respondents said APHIS is not as good as they need to be in planning and letting partners know what the Agency is going to do. However, it was noted that frequently, “in the moment” we prove ourselves, but perhaps it would be better if there were more specific documents, so that the states know what to expect and if we met those expectations.

Almost all APHIS and State interview respondents cited the need to have consistent and clear communications protocols. Respondents felt that this was the most important area of collaboration with states but also where the most work needs to be done by both APHIS and States. Respondents said that communication protocols were not in writing and that sometimes presented problems.

Several APHIS and State respondents were aware of COSDA/APHIS LPA communication protocols but felt they were not regularly followed. Three state respondents stated that APHIS should work more with COSDA on communications. Several State respondents said that APHIS should use NASDA to help with communications. State respondents also observed that there seemed to be more confusion about roles, responsibilities and communication on the plant health side than the animal health side.

This need for communications protocols was mentioned by APHIS respondents in a different context—of States following them and respecting chain of command especially for routine business. There was a problem noted by more than one responder with States bypassing SPHDs/AVICs/regions and going right to HQ or even the Under Secretary's office. Comments reflected that States have a right to call "up the chain" but not as routine behavior and not without at least letting local counterparts know.

Survey Data: General Support Summary of Responses

(Information from the States only)

Question: What is going best in working with APHIS?

- Total of 63 responses
- 45 respondents indicated communication. 19 respondents specified that it was the conference calls. Other responses included emails and maintaining open lines.
- 27 respondents placed the people and relationships as what is going best in working with APHIS. Including: personal contact, regular interaction, accessible, supportive, and valued by producers.
- 3 responses included the technical program areas.

Question: What needs improvement in working with APHIS?

- Total of 61 responses
- 36 responses for improvements in communication. Of that, 15 were regarding receiving early/timely information during an incident. Other comments included: talking with PIO before an incident, internal communications to APHIS, knowing who will communicate first, advanced planning, and non-existent communication.
- 20 respondents indicated that the improvement needed to be made at the management level or regarding authorities.
 - Example: “APHIS needs to trust its own public affairs people enough to share information with them during emergencies and allow them to share it with us. We're on the same side. It doesn't help APHIS anymore than it helps the States when we're blindsided. I don't think the higher-ups at APHIS intend that to happen, but that's the effect when they don't trust us with info we need to do our jobs and help them out.’
- Clarification as to federal and State roles in communicating about an incident.
- 5 responses around people and building relationships.
- Other responses included: funding (5) and test exercise programs (2)

Question: How could communication about incidents in other States be improved?

- Total of 38 responses
- 12 responses for the NASDA/COSDA communication -- appreciate getting the same message and annual meetings, would like a clearer protocol on what types of incidents to share.
- 12 respondents indicated that the communication needs to be early and timely.
- 2 respondents cited that management-level staff members need to increase the information they share with States.
- Other responses included: talking points, message mapping, and blind website posting with email alert, mass email, and standardized protocol.

Question: Other responses on your internal collaboration and guidance?

- Total of 12 responses
- Comments included: making progress, relationship dependent on pressure from public, not always being consulted.

Question: Do you have any other comments communication about incidents in other States?

- Total of 17 responses
- 7 respondents placed information they receive from NASDA/COSDA.

- Example: “I typically hear from NASDA and/or APHIS about events in other States. Although APHIS may be the source of info, NASDA/COSDA is a great clearing house for Ag news and information, so both are valuable and neither needs to be the exclusive "voice" among the states.”
- Other suggestions included: forums, working with Multi-state partnership for Security in Agriculture, and talking points.

Interview Data: General Support Summary of Responses

Question 1: Who from (APHIS or the State) do you need to collaborate with in preparing to respond to emergencies?

APHIS (LPA, AMT, Region/HQ Managers)

- Mentioned more than 3 times: AVIC, State Public Information Officer (PIO), Industry
- Mentioned at least once: SPHD
- NOT MENTIONED: Tribes, DHS, State Emergency Managers

State (NASDA, COSDA)

- Mentioned more than 10 times: LPA, AVIC
- Mentioned more than 5 times: PPQ, Office of the Administrator, WS
- Mentioned at least once: Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) office, NASDA, Industry, AEC
- NOT MENTIONED: DHS, Tribes, State Emergency Managers

Question 2: Plans, Roles and Responsibilities, Communications Protocols and Test Exercises

APHIS

- In this subgroup, there were a variety of comments offered about what APHIS' role is or should be. Many of these respondents were from people at the regional level and above. Comments ranged from providing State directors/AVICs/SPHD the tools to be prepared to respond to emergencies to making sure states all have ICS training. Still others thought that our role is to manage or coordinate and offered that depending on the scale of the emergency, that can create some confusion for our State cooperators.
- At least two respondents stated that the Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Managers within the APHIS Regional Offices should assume the coordinating role for emergency preparedness and response issues with State counterparts.
- One respondent felt APHIS' main role is to make sure there is a consistent message and clarify the policy documents; prioritizing response readiness with other issues.
- Many respondents felt that APHIS is making major efforts to have plans in place and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) at the State-level and is relying on ICS across the board.
- A few others felt that APHIS is not as good as we needed to be in planning and letting folks know what we are going to do. However it was noted that frequently, "in the moment" we prove ourselves. But perhaps it would be better if there were more documented procedures so that the States know what to expect and if we met those expectations.
- Almost all respondents cited the need to have consistent and clear communications protocols. Respondents felt that this was the most important area of collaboration with States but also where the most work needs to be done by both APHIS and States.
- Several respondents cited the need for APHIS to streamline internal communications procedures and for APHIS to educate state cooperators on trade issues so States could work with us and be given timely information but understand how to use it and not hurt trade situations. Respondents felt these discussions could occur in advance with States and perhaps cooperative agreements could be used or some other mechanism.
- There was strong consensus from respondents that communication is the most important area for collaboration so both sides understand roles and responsibilities. One person stated that APHIS needs to do things on our own and States on their own, but we need to be clear with each other about it; as long as we are communicating, we can decide what to do jointly and what separately.

- In regards to test exercises, several respondents commented on the need for implementation of a national plan of test exercises. However it was noted that there are serious budgetary constraints preventing us from having a plan of exercises. Therefore, one respondent said exercises feel ad hoc, hit or miss, and it doesn't feel we are moving from point a to point b and getting better to prepare to respond through the exercises.
- One respondent stated that the States' confidence in APHIS as a partner is not as high on the plant side as on the animal side. However, the respondent said that if we had more exercises that would help build confidence, particularly in States that do not have any actual emergency response experiences.

States

- Most respondents said that they participate in planning with in some way with APHIS. At least five people said plans were in progress and six commented that everyone has there own plans. The most frequently cited examples of working with APHIS were that "we provided comments," or "they gave us comments," or "they reviewed our plan."
- The key comments about roles and responsibilities pertained to a need to make them clearer, that maybe they should be in writing, and that APHIS has not stated what they would actually offer to States in emergencies (particularly all-hazards). Several respondents said that they felt APHIS takes lead in Nationally important incidents but State had to be equal partner, neither can do it alone. At least three others said that they felt APHIS' role is to provide guidance and information and liaison with other States. A few respondents observed that there was more confusion about roles, responsibilities and communication on the plant health side than the animal health side. One person commented that when there are things that are working well, if you look closer, it seems to be the relationships that are the backbone.
- At least five respondents said that communication protocols were not in writing and that sometimes presented problems. Several expressed a desire to have them in writing. Several respondents were aware of COSDA/APHIS LPA communication protocols but felt they were not regularly followed. At least three respondents stated that APHIS should work more with COSDA on communications. Two expressed frustration in not feeling able to work with LPA more. There seemed to be several cases where protocols were thought to be "in process" and two people said that there were good communications protocols. Several respondents said that APHIS should use NASDA to help with communications.
- Many respondents said that they were invited to and participated in some sort of test exercise. Several examples of exercises seemed to relate to general disasters (oil spills, pandemic flu).

Question 3: Overall what is going best in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies?

APHIS

- This subgroup cited communication as a challenge (even though the question was about what is going best). It was stated that internal communication within States can be a problem, and it was mentioned twice that once certain communication issues were worked out, situations greatly improved or when lessons learned were reviewed more communication was emphasized.
- The APHIS emergency response infrastructure and ICS system were cited by several respondents as going well.
- At least two respondents said they believed that the States were gaining a greater awareness for the role of APHIS and what we could do. It was pointed out specifically that recognition for what AC can provide is growing in the States. However it was noted that that recognition and awareness is not as strong on the plant side.

States

- Several respondents in this category cited the professionalism, expertise, and strength of interpersonal relationships in the States as things going well.
- Three respondents mentioned that the role of NASDA, specifically the conference calls and Bob Ehart, in communication with APHIS, was good and getting better.
- Four respondents cited strong work by APHIS LPA and good connections with LPA staff.
- Several members of this group of respondents also mentioned frustration with Regional and HQ communications and cited a general lack of speedy response by APHIS regions and HQ as a significant and regular problem.

Question 4: What most needs improvement (in working with APHIS or States to prepare to respond to emergencies)?

APHIS

- Several respondents felt there were problems within APHIS and between APHIS and States, and within the States around communication protocols and practices. A need for consistent written protocols that are adhered to was expressed.
 - Example: “finding a better balance between the need to filter and scrub information and the need to get info out to SPHDs and AVICS where the information is very powerful. We have tipped the balance to the info scrubbing and filtering bit and away from getting information out where it can be powerful.”
 - Example: “Some of our reporting schemes are very cumbersome before information reaches the ground level.”
 - Example: “Constantly working with States and find NASDA people not working together with State vets and need to reach out to commissioners and vets...”
- This need for protocols was mentioned by other respondents in a different context—of States following them and respecting chain of command especially for routine business. There was a problem noted by more than one responder with States bypassing SPHDs/AVICS/regions and going right to HQ or even the Under Secretary’s office. Comments reflected that States have a right to call “up the chain,” but not always and not without at least letting local counterparts know.
 - Example: “it’s that expectation bit that hangs us up sometimes – whether it’s communication or how we’re going to respond. We’re not as good about planning and letting people know what we’re going to do. In the heat of the moment...We can prove ourselves pretty quickly. But if there were documents or outlines so a State would know what to expect if there were a tier 1 or a tier 2 type of emergency, and actually follow through on that, it would help.”
 - Example: “A good clear chain of command and clear channels for communication are critical to ensure information is delivered as intended. If regions are unaware of HQ initiatives (and vice versa) inevitably problems will result.”
- There were several additional comments about lack of resources and lack of understanding of the States about APHIS resources and the lack of them.
 - Example: “We have a lack of resources in key areas of our emergency preparedness and response mission area.”

States

- Many of the comments in this area pertained to LPA. Most people had positive perceptions of LPA staff and work they do, but it was stated that APHIS programs and USDA politics hinder the ability of LPA staff to work with the States -- this was mentioned more than once. Also at least two comments dealt with misunderstandings about confidential business information and how to share information.

However, people also expressed frustration with getting help after 5 P.M. Eastern time and with the fact that LPA staff do not seem to travel to the field much.

- Example: “Knowing when information is going to be released. We want to be collaborating on crafting a message and maintaining consumer confidence- think we can work together to get something out.”
- Responders in this area also had consensus around general problems and need for more communication from APHIS. Timeliness, responsiveness, decisiveness, and clarity were all cited as sometimes lacking. It was also observed by more than one commenter that after conversations occur, APHIS needs to follow through and act. An example about the National Strategy for EAB taking a year and then being only in outline form was offered among others.
 - Example: “Sitting down and having an honest conversation about where we go and then doing it.”
 - Example: “Communication and making sure information flows in a timely manner. Local APHIS offices have to check with regional and headquarters and there is no information flowing- example- money for funding emergencies. We are no longer comfortable unless things are in writing.”
- Several comments were directed at the need for change and action from APHIS in how they work with States. These pertained to two main things: a) resources—making them available, timely, and having more; b) communication—need to make more information available to states in a more timely way (trust us).
 - Example: “Funding part...too sketchy...verbal commitment to back our expenses but sometimes final agreement on funding left up in the air for months at a time...needs to be better source of funding for emergency response. We need advance notice to plan for our budget cycles/appropriations process.”
 - Example: “APHIS has difficulty making decisions at the local level – reluctance of staff to make a decision and must go up the line for decisions...APHIS Administrator should look at how much authority and leeway they give to their staffs.”
 - Example: “USDA needs to recognize and understand NASDA and use us more – use Bob Ehart.”
- It is also worth noting that three or four responders said that there was nothing that needed improvement and that working with APHIS was great.

Question 5: How do you collaborate with your counterpart in another state?

- Four respondents were collaborating with the COSDA/NASDA organization
- Three respondents indicated it was dependent on the situation and through their neighboring counterparts
- One response was received for: listserv, email/phone, and APHIS.

Questions 6: How should you be informed?

- Ten respondents want to be informed through the COSDA/NASDA channels.
- Six responses were for phone/email contact, specifically including a calling tree, an email from APHIS and an email from the other State department of agriculture.
- Other responses included: State vet, dependent on the situation, program area contact and APHIS.

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