

# **National Veterinary Stockpile and Multi-State Partnership Foot-and-Mouth Disease Logistics Exercise June 16–19, 2009**

## **EXERCISE SUMMARY**

The National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) in coordination with the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture (MSPSA) conducted a comprehensive exercise for responding to a multi-state, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak from June 16 to June 19. The exercise started with a tabletop (TTX) in Illinois and continued with full-scale exercises (FSEs) where the NVS deployed to Illinois; Nebraska; Ontario, Canada; and Kentucky. The purpose of the exercise was to review, test, and evaluate the logistical response to an FMD outbreak by the NVS and participating Midwest States.

## **TTX–ILLINOIS, JUNE 16–17**

The TTX used an FMD outbreak scenario as the basis for presentations, panel discussions, and participant questions on various aspects of a multi-state and international FMD response. Discussion topics included:

- APHIS, State, Canadian, and industry response activities;
- NVS background, capabilities, request process, State planning tools, and available 3D (depopulation, disposal, decontamination) support contracts, the latter to support States that would not have enough of their own personnel;
- The role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General for investigating the origin of the outbreak; and
- FMD vaccination considerations and resources available from APHIS, the North American FMD Vaccine Bank (NAFMDVB), and the NVS.

Approximately 120 people participated in the TTX, including representatives from the MSPSA States, APHIS, Food Safety Inspection Service, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Mexico, NAFMDVB, Department of Homeland Security, FBI, Navajo Nation, private industry, private practitioners, and academia. The TTX gave officials from these organizations an opportunity to network and discuss the many complexities responders would face during a real FMD outbreak.

## **FSEs**

FSEs tested the NVS's ability to simultaneously deploy countermeasures (supplies, equipment, and vaccine [simulated for the exercise]) to multiple locations. They also tested State NVS plans to receive, manage, and issue the countermeasures. Illinois, Nebraska, and Kentucky received 48 tri-walls, 14 of which represented 3 push packages containing personal protective equipment (PPE), disinfectants, and simulated FMD vaccine. Canada received one push package of 5 tri-walls. Experts at FSEs in the United States demonstrated proper techniques for donning and doffing PPE. The following describes each FSE.

## **FSE–ILLINOIS, JUNE 18**

State players and observers from the APHIS regional offices, seven States, Canada, and Mexico rated the exercise a success. The NVS deployed countermeasures to the State-designated warehouse where participants tested their ability to receive, store, control, pick, and stage NVS

countermeasures for supporting responders at simulated infected premises. Benefits of the exercise included the ability to examine the countermeasures the NVS would deploy and how to set up a warehouse to process and issue them. Lessons learned included the need for training on the NVS and State logistics and warehouse processes. They also included the need to modify NVS packing slips, module color-coding, and the inventory management file.

### **FSE—NEBRASKA, JUNE 18**

Nebraska established its NVS warehouse in an empty airplane hangar on the northwest side of the Lincoln airport. The facility's multiple bay doors and ample floor space made it ideal for processing the 48 tri-wall containers in the NVS' push pack. The purpose of the exercise was to evaluate the State's NVS plan and standard operating guidelines, validate execution of the plan, and evaluate whether State personnel are able to meet incident response team requirements using NVS countermeasures. The Nebraska FSE was a resounding success with 12 players and 40 observers from a variety of backgrounds.

### **FSE—ONTARIO, JUNE 18**

The Canadian FSE tested NVS procedures (including customs documentation) for deploying NVS countermeasures across the international border. Following the shipment's prompt arrival at 8:00 a.m., Canadian personnel unpacked, inventoried, and practiced issuing push package contents to responders. Unpacking and inventory activities included the confirmation that the simulated vaccine remained at proper temperature prior to arrival. The exercise concluded at approximately 12:00 p.m., following a meeting of all participants to identify lessons learned. Notable participants included logistics experts from the NVS and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

### **FSE—KENTUCKY, JUNE 19**

The Kentucky FSE ran from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and was a success. An incident management team from MSPSA deployed to Kentucky to manage and perform warehouse activities inside a Kentucky Department of Agriculture warehouse. The advanced training and preparation of the team allowed it to perform its duties quickly and effectively. The exercise identified actions Kentucky and the NVS could take to further improve. These included improving the offload of the NVS' shipment, the NVS' inventory management file, and the accuracy of the NVS packing slips. Many of the 50 participants said the exercise helped them prepare for receiving and managing NVS countermeasures during a real event and practice the logistics procedures—often ignored or downplayed in other training venues—that a real response would require.

### **RESULTS OF THE EXERCISE**

The exercise succeeded in multiple ways. Its no-fault environment provided a collaborative forum for training and networking that will improve the region's coordination and collective response in the future. It also increased participant knowledge about the NVS, the logistics response processes and procedures that a large-scale outbreak will require, and the need for NVS training workshops. It highlighted the need to train those who will operate state warehouses that receive, manage, and issue NVS countermeasures. It identified the need to further discuss industry business continuity plans, APHIS vaccination policy and implementation, and interagency/interstate communication and collaboration. The exercise also highlighted areas where APHIS and its partners need to further improve their response to an FMD outbreak.