



APHIS Animal Care Emergency Programs

Roles in 2008 Hurricanes





United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service




USDA APHIS Animal Care

- Role in 2005 Hurricanes
 - Provided support for impacted regulated facilities
 - Field assessment after Rita
 - Some support to FEMA/states
 - No planned role
 - Poorly defined missions
 - Some problems over expectations/roles






Animal Care Emergency Programs

- Funding began in Fiscal Year 2008
- 2 EP Veterinary Medical Officers by May
- EP Veterinary Medical Officers added in July and August (total to 4)
- Supported FEMA Planning Warm Cell in Baton Rouge, LA starting in June with AC employees
 - Companion Animal Management Unit (CAMU)
 - Planned extensively with LA via Warm Cell
 - Baton Rouge exercise with LDAF and LA SART




LA Parish Pickup Point Exercise June 2008, Baton Rouge, LA

Hurricane Gustav

AC deployments

- **Louisiana**
 - Coordination (pre/post)
 - AC personnel at JFO and LDAF operations
 - Field (Pre-landfall)
 - AC personnel at Parish Pickup Points – heat stress evaluation
 - AC personnel assessments of state pet shelters (LA SART)
 - Conditions - calm
- **Texas**
 - ESF#11 and AC VMO at IFO in Austin, TX
- **FEMA RRCC: Denton, TX**
 - AC EP SVMO - SME-Assist ESF#11 Desk Officer
- **Eastern Regional Office:**
 - Coordination with Region IV states



National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs



2008 National Summit on Companion Animal
Emergency Management, Baltimore, MD
September 10-11, 2009



Hurricane Ike

- **Texas**
 - AC personnel SME presence at JFO and Texas Animal Health Commission (pre/post)
 - Field assessment teams in SE TX under TAHC (post landfall)
- **RRCC in Denton, TX**
 - AC VMO acting as ESF#11 Desk Officer
- **Louisiana**
 - Maintained AC SME presence at LDAF from JFO
 - Held over from Gustav
 - No field missions



SME Role: Gustav and Ike

- Provide subject matter expertise on management of pets to FEMA, ESF#11, ESF#6, and State.
- Worked at JFO, LDAF and TAHC locations
 - Communication, situational awareness, reporting, and subject matter informational support.
 - Resource management assistance



Challenges – SME Role



- **Communications**
 - Toward the incident – too little
 - Upstream, overwhelming!
- **Questions**
 - How many pets?
 - What's happening?
 - How much will it cost?
 - Obstacle courses/hoops!
 - Where can I get a hotel room?



Ike Field Assessment Issues



- Mission – Support TAHC assessment of SE TX
 - 5 day deployment
- Conditions - disastrous
 - Communications
 - Cellular (=/-)
 - Need: Satellite/radio
 - Food/lodging/fuel
 - Safety equipment



Mission: Support TAHC

- **Pet issues**
 - Pet sheltering - Anahuac
 - Few pets in surge area
 - Communications & coordination with local
- **Other issues**
 - Cattle carcasses/strays
 - Contamination feed/water
 - Debris hazards
 - Personal protective equipment



How many hazards?



6 Lessons we should learn from 2008

1. Coordinated response is essential
 - Local, State, Federal, NGO
 - AC can contribute effectively through personnel at JFO, SEOC, and other locations.
2. Need to develop clearer understanding of roles, responsibilities and operating protocols between Federal ESFs 6, 8, 9, 11 and 14 pertaining to pets.
 - Including veterinary medical resource requests
3. Public Assistance and “what will it cost” issues will drive or hinder state requests for assistance.
 - Need better expertise on FEMA PA DP 9523.19



Lessons we should learn from 2008

4. Pet statistics are needed (and in great demand)
 - Best-practices/standards for data collection are not developed.
 - Data must come from the local level in most cases
 - Need collaborative data collection process (Fed/State/Local/NGO)
5. AC personnel and their state partners need additional training to maximize effectiveness
6. We need to work on field safety, logistical support, and communications for AC personnel



Contact Information

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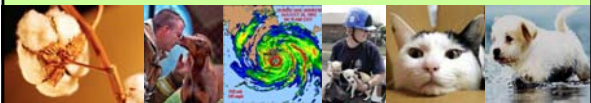
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2008 Hurricane Season Dolly, Gustav, Ike



Elizabeth Serca

State Program Manager – Emergency Management Relations, American Red Cross
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National Hurricane Conference

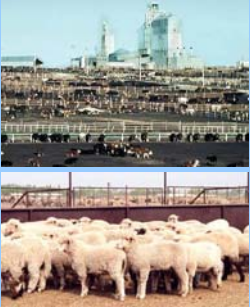
April 6-10, 2009 • Austin, Texas

Introduction

- Animal impact on Texas economy
- Recent legislation (Texas HB 88 and federal PETS Act), in addition to hurricanes, have reiterated the unique role animals and agriculture possess in emergency management
- Brief overview of Texas EM system and how small animals fit into it
- Specific lessons learned from 2008
- Next steps for TAHC and TXSART

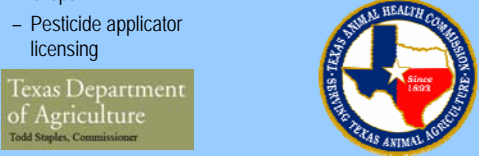
Why Do We Care? Animal Issues Are Big Issues

- **Animal issues are big issues**
 - 22.8 million residents in Texas
 - Nearly 62% of households have at least one pet. That makes between 8 and 9 million dogs and cats
 - 1 million horses represent about 11% of all horses in the US
 - 15 million head of cattle
 - Animals outnumber humans over 30 to 1 in Texas



Two Texas Ag Agencies


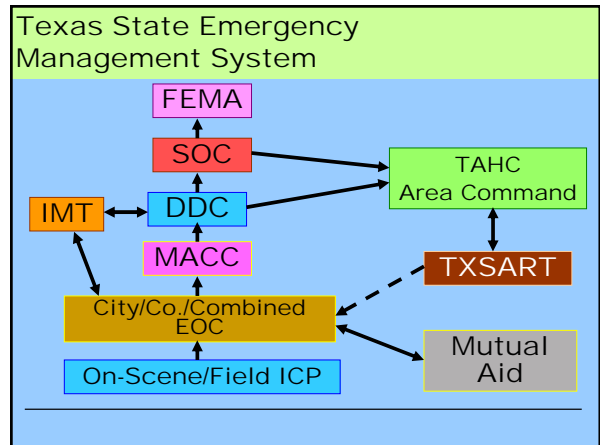
- Texas Department of Agriculture
 - Marketing
 - Weights and measures
 - Crops
 - Pesticide applicator licensing
- Texas Animal Health Commission
 - Livestock and poultry health regulatory agency




No State of Texas agency is legislatively directed to address companion animals.

TXSART is Born

- TXSART is the Texas State Animal Resource Team
- Formed in February 2006 modeling the best efforts of other states' programs
- Housed within the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation, a non-profit organization
- A non-profit identity allows TXSART to better serve the state
 - Ability to solicit and receive donations (resources and money)

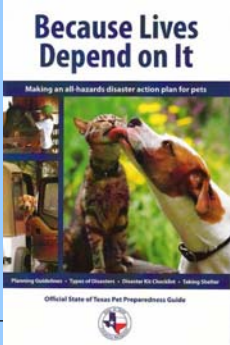
Texas and Planning for Pets During Evacuation



- HB 88
- State Hurricane Shelter and Mass Care Plan
- Special needs categories (0-5)
- Evacuation and host jurisdictions responsibilities
- Attachment 6 "Animal Care"

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/downloadableforms.htm>

Official State of Texas Pet Preparedness Guide



Because Lives Depend on It
Making an all-hazards disaster action plan for pets

Planning Evacuation • Types of Disaster • Disaster Kit Checklist • Taking Shelter

Official State of Texas Pet Preparedness Guide

Lessons Learned

Hurricane Dolly

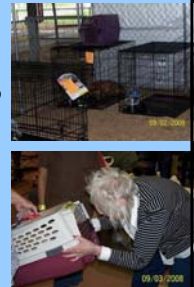
- Landfall on July 23 on South Padre Island. Category 1/2 strength. Peak sustained winds about 100 mph
- Areas affected by event: Aransas, Bexar, Brooks, Calhoun, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio, Starr, Victoria and Willacy Counties
- Prelim damage total: \$750 million to \$1 billion
- Operations conducted: Impact assessments

AAR Points

- Area Command improvements: stick to planning schedule/timeline, provide one email and phone number, utilize checklists, signage
- Determine whether field or AC should make calls to vet clinics
- Utilize ICS in field: determine how to link with TFS IMT. Need one contact from field to AC. Develop org chart from this – assign small and large animal branches?
- Define a mission, objectives – operational plan
- Define roles and responsibilities for AC and field personnel, training
- Pre-deploy or not, where to stage
- Clarify how and when to do assessments
- TXSART specifically – procedure for requesting resources in absence of ED, procedure for deployment of resources

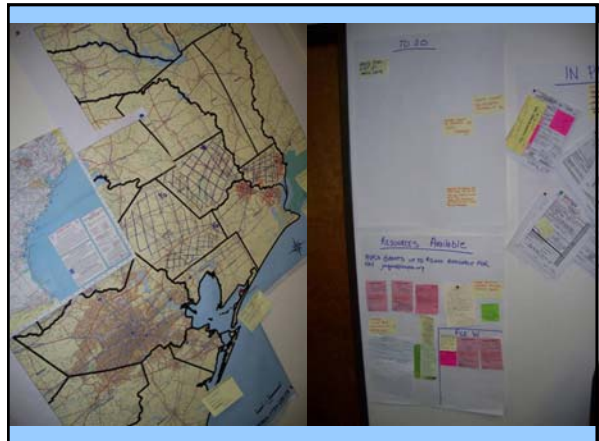
Hurricane Gustav

- Landfall on September 1 at Cocodrie, Louisiana. Category 2 strength.
- East Texas received rain bands and wind gusts, localized flooding was predicted
- Estimated insured losses total: \$4 billion to \$10 billion
- Operations conducted:
 - Shelter support (animal and human) – Lufkin/Nacogdoches, DFW Metroplex, Austin
 - General readiness
 - Evacuation support
- No AAR held due to quick development of Hurricane Ike...



Hurricane Ike

- Landfall on September 13 as a Category 2 storm on Galveston Island/High Island/Sabine Pass
- Counties issuing disaster declarations: Anderson; Brazos; Burleson; Caldwell; Chambers; Collin; Denton; Ellis; Fort Bend; Galveston; Grayson; Grimes; Gregg; Harris; Harrison; Henderson; Houston; Hunt; Jasper; Jefferson; Johnson; Kerr; Kirbyville; Lamar; Leon; Liberty; Limestone; Madison; Matagorda; McLennan; Menard; Milam; Navarro; Newton; Panola, San Jacinto; Smith; Tarrant; Upshur; Walker; Waller; Washington; Wood
- Preliminary damage estimates: \$6 to \$25 billion
- Operations conducted: What didn't we do?!





Requests for Assistance

- 3 sheltering operations overseen – Humane Society of Southeast Texas (HSSET - Beaumont), Chambers County (Anahuac), and Galveston County Animal Control (Texas City)
- City of Baytown – Requested crates, bowls. TAHC had crates to provide. Uncertain if bowls were found after several attempts to get donated.
- City of Angleton – Requested temporary building for shelter, crates, dog and cat food, cat litter. City ended up working with Alvin for sheltering after an assessment with ASPCA team, so request was not filled.
- City of Alvin – Requested crates, leashes, bowls, dog and cat food, cat litter. TAHC had crates to provide. Leashes were donated by Campbell Pet Company via an ask from AVMA. Uncertain if bowls were found. Worked with Alvin to jointly shelter animals.
- City of Port Arthur – Dog food and animal control assistance. ASPCA teams provided help for a few days and a delivery from Hill's Science Diet eased their pet food needs. A generator was also delivered by the TAHC.
- City of Orange – Requested a temporary animal shelter and sheltering assistance while main shelter was cleaned up. A team of IFAW volunteers worked with the ACO. A delivery of Hill's Science Diet was also facilitated.

Miscellaneous

- Media, media, media. Had a TXSART Council member release my daily report(s) and provide TXSART information without my consent.
- 9,093 volunteer hours worked by 128 volunteers in Ike alone. (This doesn't include the SPCA of Texas folks who graciously accepted the initial animals from the HSSET shelter.)
- We had 3 people during the operational hours working at AC at the TAHC – myself, Jay Sabatucci, and Karen Medicus (who was spelled by Tiffany Mahaffey and Allison Cardona from the ASPCA). We 3 managed the small animal field operations from Austin. Dwayne Easley, then Torrinda May, from the TAHC was a liaison with the TAHC ICP in Beaumont where some field volunteers were staged. Only one TAHC person was our ICP contact at any one time and they were not going off-site to be "eyes on the ground" and resolve communication problems that kept occurring.

- TXSART received one \$100 donation to the program from a resident of Missouri; other funds received to-date by the TVM Foundation (TXSART's parent organization) are covering the generator purchases made for distribution to veterinary practitioners.
- PetsMART Charities requires TXSART's approval AND request for the Relief Waggin's.
- The HSSET announced they were clearing their shelter as they were shutting their doors Oct 1. Ended up working to try to get animals placed that weren't claimed because of the potential backlash that "the State is pulling resources so all the animals had to be euthanized."
- Uncredentialed spontaneous volunteers!
- Oh, and the NVRT...

Cumulative Lessons Learned EVACUATION

- Requests for crates/bags/restraints less than 24 hours prior to mandatory evacuation
- Bites to people loading bus
- Including shelter animals on buses with evacuee-owned animals?
- Less animals needing transport with special needs evacuees than estimated
- System and database improvements needed for state RFID tracking



Questions Being Pursued

- MOAs and MOUs – Between TXSART and Council members called upon to do work on behalf of the TAHC? Between TAHC and those organizations directly? What about MOAs and MOUs with the national nongovernmental organizations? Need to have relationships documented per FEMA. Even Hill's Science Diet wants to work out an agreement beforehand.
- MOA/MOU between TXSART and TAHC once we figure out what we can/are willing to do/continue doing
- Clearly need eyes on the ground to be impartial, yet knowledgeable to communicate situation to Area Command and/or ICP to operate more smoothly.


- We have clearly moved into response – whether the ED sitting shifts at the SOC or working Area Command on having people deploy into the field on behalf of the TAHC (Dean, Dolly, Gustav, Ike). Do we revive and refine the "task force/strike team" concept alluded to in the original Strategic Plan? DO we continue building relationships to deploy TXSART partners? How do we address liability issues? How do we address that there's no legal charge for TAHC to address companion animal disaster issues therefore no way to legally pass authority to TXSART to address?
- Resource items owned by partner agencies – what is TXSART responsibility AND expectation of administration, tracking, and management from request to deployment to collection? (e.g. TAHC cages, TVMA generators)
- Assessment – pursuant to the response role, comes a need to determine what the status is of the impacted area. What facilities should these be? Who should inspect? How to report?

- ### Pats on the back...
- We could not have handled this response if it weren't for the many individuals, organizations, and companies that contributed
 - Great appreciation owed to (and in no particular order!):
 - Merial
 - NLS
 - Campbell Pet Supply
 - Hill's Science Diet
 - American Humane Association
 - ASPCA
 - HSUS
 - IFAW
 - AVMA
 - SPCA of Texas
 - Kerr County CARRT
 - PetSMART Charities
 - TAHC
- This doesn't even touch all those that assisted on the large animals and livestock. And if I forgot anyone for the companion animals, it wasn't intentional!!*

Pet Response in Hurricanes Gustav and Ike

Local Animal Issues Committees: Structure and Function – Impact on Ike

Brett D. Scott, Ph.D.
Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service



- ## Animal Issues Committees in Texas
- 2006, Jack Colley, Division of Emergency Management, Chief requested that each Emergency Management jurisdiction create an Animal Issues Committee (AIC).
 - Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service advised the Texas Animal Health Commission that their Extension Agents would assist local emergency management coordinators in creating these AICs.
 - Developed as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita to help communities prepare for disasters and animal-related issues.
- 