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## **Virginia State Animal Response Team (VASART) Organizational Structure: Roles and Responsibilities**

### **CART (Community Animal Response Team) Member Roles and Responsibilities**

#### CART Officers

**Team Leader:** Each CART must have a team leader who coordinates the communication with the locality's emergency management office. Coordination with local emergency management should begin when the team is first considered and continue on whatever basis the two parties feel is appropriate. If the locality does not already have an emergency plan for animals, the team leader should discuss with the local emergency manager initiating the formation of a written plan and engage other community stakeholders for input regarding the plan. This plan should detail emergency response needs as well as roles and responsibilities specific to animals in that locality including (i) the local agency or entity with regulatory authority associated with animals (ii) primary and back up locations that will be used for deployment activities and logistical needs such as equipment storage and (iii) the CART's current animal response capabilities. In addition, the team leader should inquire about and include, where appropriate and as directed by the local emergency management representatives, any local mutual aid agreements that would affect animal emergency response in the written plan. This animal specific response plan should become part of the locality's overall emergency response plan and, as guided by the local emergency manager, be maintained under the appropriate Emergency Support Function. The leader and emergency manager should discuss the formation of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with other localities where needed. These MOUs may address a number of issues such as sharing resources, personnel and equipment in the wake of a disaster.

The local emergency manager, in coordination with the leader, should also initiate communication with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Office of the State Veterinarian and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) about the formation of the team and its availability as an emergency response resource. Availability as a statewide, deployable asset through the Virginia Emergency Operations Center will require an MOA with the Commonwealth.

The team leader must submit a written summary regarding the CART to the Virginia State Animal Response Team Board of Directors (VASART BOD) for initial review. (See below for annual recertification.) The document "Community Animal Response Team (CART) General Information and Response Capability Statement" is available at [www.virginiasart.org](http://www.virginiasart.org) to assist team leaders in fulfilling this requirement. This document will prompt the leader to provide information such as the number of and credentials associated with all team members; the name and contact information for the local

emergency manager; the team's specific response capabilities; and the local resources available to support the response. A CART will be considered operational capable only after this statement is reviewed and approved by the VASART BOD. The CART is then eligible to be activated by the local emergency manager.

CARTs may consist of as many members with as many skills (see "CART Members: Roles, Responsibilities and Credentials" below) as is thought necessary to assume the response capabilities detailed in its written statement as provided to the VASART BOD. It is important that a team not respond beyond the scope of its members' credentials and as team members and/or team response capabilities change, the team leader must notify the VASART BOD and local emergency management. It is also important for team leaders to ask team members, particularly in regard to team members who may be asked to respond in a different capacity in an emergency, (e.g., animal control officers), about other duties team members may be required to perform during an emergency response as part of their fulltime positions or volunteer activities in order to have a thorough understanding of the team's capabilities.

In addition to the required training for all CART members, CART leaders should also complete the training listed on the training chart at the end of this document. Ideally, all required training must be completed within the first year of assuming the role of team leader. If required training cannot be completed in this time, it must be completed by the end of the second year of the leader's tenure.

In addition to animal specific issues and basic incident command training, leaders should encourage team members to have basic knowledge in the areas of personal emergency preparedness. Resources in this area can be found at <http://www.ready.gov/are-you-ready-guide> and <http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia>.

Team leaders are also encouraged to complete ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents and IS 111.a – Livestock in Disasters. Information concerning ICS 300 classes is available via local emergency managers as well as the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's "EM Community" information which can be found at [www.vaemergency.gov](http://www.vaemergency.gov). IS-111.a is available through FEMA's ISP.

Team leaders are also strongly encouraged to identify a deputy team leader and additional back up personnel who could assume command of the team if the leader is unavailable. Provide contact information for these individuals to local emergency management.

The deputy team leader should complete the same training as the team leader and should, along with the team leader, provide recommendations and information to the local emergency manager about the emergency response needs specific to animals in that locality and assist in developing a written plan in that regard.

Team leaders should also assist team members interested in a particular response area, such as large animal technical rescue or animal sheltering in disasters, in seeking

advanced training in these areas. Team leaders may then assign certain team members to leadership roles or work within the CART. Additional advanced professional development courses, including the Virginia Emergency Management Association's certificate program, can be found at the links below.

- <http://vemaweb.org/>
- <http://www.vaemergency.gov/emergency-management-community/training-events/>
- <https://training.fema.gov/is/>

**Team leaders should work with local emergency managers and planners to coordinate participation in functional and/or tabletop exercises specific to the CART's role in the emergency operations plan. In general and particularly during team trainings and exercises, team leaders should emphasize to team members that, when deployed, a team is operating under the auspices and/or direction of local emergency management who will be coordinating its activities with the Office of the State Veterinarian and VDEM as appropriate. A team leader should also ensure that team members have a very clear understanding about the process by which the team is activated.**

At least once per year, team leaders should coordinate outreach activities to promote general public awareness about the team and/or emergency preparedness. Examples of outreach activities include team promotion as part of a community event, social media postings and field exercises where the public is invited to observe or participate. Additional guidance about outreach activities is available from the VA SART BOD.

Each CART shall be recertified annually by the VA SART BOD. As part of this process, team leaders shall review the team's status with the local emergency manager in regard to items such as member capability; equipment inventory; agreements the team has with other jurisdictions and/or local support agencies; and the animal response aspect of the locality's emergency response plan. In addition, team leaders shall complete and submit materials requested in the "CART Annual Recertification Requirements and Guidelines" document to the VASART BOD each year by a date determined by the BOD. The VA SART BOD will review changes in the membership and capabilities of the CARTs and reassess a team's status accordingly.

### CART Members: Roles, Responsibilities and Credentials

The following role descriptions and criteria are based, in part, on the information contained in the FEMA document entitled "Animal Emergency Response (AER) Positions Credential." This document was developed to help standardize the credentialing of first responders as part of interstate deployments under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/25768>.

The VASART BOD recommends that CART leadership personnel be familiar with this document and use it to assess the credentials of those interested in CART membership,

particularly in regard to those who will be serving in a General Support Personnel capacity below.

Veterinarian:

Veterinarians must:

- Maintain a current Virginia license, a copy of which must be on file with the CART leadership.
- Complete training outlined for members and additional training as appropriate to any specialty service or leadership activities.
- Participate in team trainings on a basis determined by the team leadership, but at least annually.
- Be a member in good standing of a CART prior to participating in any additional response efforts (i.e. deployment to another locality).

Veterinarians may be responsible for one or more of the following duties when deployed:

- Providing medical care for injured or sick animals
- Ensuring humane animal handling and care
- Recommending infection control measures to reduce the likelihood of animal to animal and/or animal to human disease transmission
- Performing euthanasia
- Participating in animal depopulation
- Monitoring and making recommendations in regard to humane care standards of animals

Depending on the mission, veterinarians may be asked to perform additional animal healthcare and/or disease control duties. As guided by their team leader, veterinarians should participate in trainings that would help prepare them for anticipated deployment duties.

Education/Experience Required: minimum DVM or equivalent degree and license in Virginia. One or more years of clinical practice strongly recommended.

Veterinarians and who are EMAC qualified must comply with disaster provisions of the professional licensing requirements of the state to which they will be deployed.

Animal Technicians (Licensed Veterinary Technicians, LVTs):

Animal Technicians (ATs) must:

- Maintain a current Virginia veterinary technician's license, a copy of which must be on file with the CART leadership
- Complete training outlined for members and additional training as appropriate to any specialty service or leadership activities
- Participate in team trainings on a basis determined by the team leadership, but at least annually

- Be a member in good standing of a CART prior to participating in any additional response efforts (i.e. deployment to another locality)

ATs will assist veterinarians in providing a range of veterinary services needed during a disaster. ATs may be responsible for assisting with any one or more of the following duties when deployed: animal healthcare, animal depopulation, humane animal handling, diagnostic sample collection, medical records maintenance, and basic animal husbandry. ATs may be asked to perform additional animal healthcare, husbandry and/or disease control duties. As guided by their team leader, ATs should participate in trainings that would help prepare them for anticipated deployment duties.

Education/Experience Required: current Virginia veterinary technician's license, and at least six months of clinical practice under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

Animal Technician (LVT's) who are EMAC qualified must comply with disaster provisions of the professional licensing requirements of the state to which they will be deployed.

Animal Control Specialist:

Those wishing to serve in the capacity of an animal control specialist (ACS) for a CART must:

- Present evidence of at least 1 year of experience as an animal control officer
- Present documentation indicating that he/she has successfully completed the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Virginia Animal Control Officer Training Standards
- Complete training outlined for members and additional training as appropriate to any specialty service or leadership activities
- Participate in team trainings on a basis determined by the team leadership, but at least annually
- Be a member in good standing of a CART prior to participating in any additional response efforts (i.e. deployment to another locality)

ACSs will support veterinarians, ATs and animal handling specialists by providing a range of duties including identifying specific safety procedures that must be taken in handling animals, knowledge of humane handling practices, knowledge of state laws and regulations pertaining to animals, and knowledge of health department guidelines and procedures related to animal bite and potential rabies exposures. ACSs may be asked to capture/control animals thought to be a threat to public safety and/or as part of the restraint necessary for physical exams or medical procedures. ACSs may be asked to interface with local public health in regard to animal bites or other rabies oriented issues that may arise as part of an emergency response. ACSs may also be asked to feed and exercise animals, clean areas where animals are hospitalized/housed/sheltered and/or perform basic medical record keeping and/or clerical duties.

### Animal Handling Specialist:

Those wishing to serve in the capacity of an animal handling specialist (AHS) must:

- Present evidence of at least two years animal handling experience.
- Present written recommendation from a veterinarian with whom he/she has worked.
- Complete training outlined for members and additional training as appropriate to any specialty service or leadership activities.
- Participate in team trainings on a basis determined by the team leadership, but at least annually.
- Be a member in good standing of a CART prior to participating in any additional response efforts (i.e. deployment to another locality).
- Be at least 18 years of age.

AHSs will support the veterinarians and/or the ATs in providing a range of veterinary and animal husbandry services needed during a disaster. AHSs may be asked to feed and exercise animals, humanely restrain and handle animals, clean areas where animals are hospitalized/housed/sheltered and/or perform basic medical record keeping and/or clerical duties.

Education/Experience Required: minimum two years of animal handling experience and a written recommendation from a veterinarian with whom he/she has worked.

### General Support Personnel:

Those wishing to serve as General Support Personnel (GSP) within a CART must:

- Present evidence of knowledge and skills germane to the desired role for review by the team leadership.
- Participate in team trainings on a basis determine by the team leadership, but at least annually.
- Assist with basic animal care and/or clerical duties under the supervision of AHSs.
- Be a member in good standing of a CART prior to participating in any additional response efforts (i.e. deployment to another locality).
- Be at least 18 years of age.

Training

**Virginia State Animal Response Team  
Community Animal Response Team Training Compliance Template**

<b>Training Requirement</b>	<b>Who must complete NIMS /Course Definitions</b>	<b>Available Resources</b>	<b>Who must complete VASART Training Definitions by Position</b>	<b>Team Status</b>
<b>Emergency Companion Pet Sheltering Course 16 Hour VASART Standard Operating Procedures</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency preparedness, incident management or response including volunteers. Includes executive, managerial and responder levels within agencies and governments, ICS positions and EOC/MACS staff.	VASART	All	Local SMA (1) EMAC(2)
<b>Pet First Aid and CPR</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency response, shelter response.	Online Courses, Team Veterinarian Louisa CART	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>Basic First Aid / CPR</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency response, shelter response.	Many Community Resources	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS-700.a NIMS: An Introduction</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency preparedness, incident management or response including volunteers. Includes executive, managerial and responder levels within agencies and governments, ICS positions and EOC/MACS staff.	Classroom and online Independent Study versions available.(3)	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS-100.b Introduction to ICS</b>	All personnel at the entry, first line supervisor, middle management, command and general staff levels of emergency management operations including volunteers	Classroom and online Independent Study versions available.	All	Local SMA EMAC

<b>IS-200.b ICS for single resources and Initial action incidents</b>	All personnel at the entry, first line supervisor, middle management, command and general staff levels of emergency management operations including volunteers	Classroom and online Independent Study versions available.	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS 800.B National Response Framework: An Introduction</b>	All CART officials with emergency management responsibilities as well as those who interact with the Emergency Support Functions	Online Independent Study only	Only those who also have emergency management responsibilities; *Useful for officers designated to work in an emergency operations center.	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS -10.a Animals in Disasters: Awareness and Preparedness</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency response, shelter response.	Online Independent Study only	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS-11.A: Animals in Disasters: Community Planning</b>	All CART personnel with a direct role in emergency response, shelter response.	Online Independent Study only	All	Local SMA EMAC
<b>IS-706 NIMS Mutual Aid</b>	This course is designed for CART personnel directly related to response and coordination of Mutual Aid Teams.	Online Independent Study Only.	Only SMA or EMAC Team Leaders	SMA EMAC
<b>IS-806 Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services</b>	This course is intended for government executives, private-sector and nongovernmental organization (NGO) leaders, and emergency management practitioners.	Online Independent Study Only.	Only SMA or EMAC Team Leaders	SMA EMAC
<b>IS-811 Emergency Support Functions (ESF) #11 - Agriculture</b>	This course is intended for government executives, private-sector and nongovernmental organization (NGO)	Online Independent Study Only	Only SMA or EMAC Team Leaders	SMA EMAC



<b>and Natural Resources Annex</b>	leaders, and emergency management practitioners.			
<b>IS-2900 National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) Overview</b>	The target audience for this course is the whole community—individuals, local, State, tribal, territorial, insular area governments and non-governmental organizations—who have a role in providing recovery support	Online Independent Study Only	SMA OR EMAC TEAM MEMBERS	SMA EMAC
<b>IS-111 LIVESTOCK IN DISASTERS</b>	Emergency management officials and livestock owners.	Online Independent Study Only	CART Team members with a large animal element or CART members who may be called upon in a situation involving livestock due to demographics. SMA or EMAC Team Members	SMA EMAC
<b>IS-244.b Developing and Managing Volunteers</b>	This course is for emergency managers and related professionals working with all types of volunteers and coordinating with voluntary agencies.	Online Independent Study Only	TEAM LEADERS	LOCAL SMA EMAC
<b>IS-660 Introduction to Public-Private Partnerships</b>	State and local emergency management professionals and planners; personnel from response agencies; personnel from Federal, State, local, and Tribal government agencies that may participate in continuity planning efforts; members of public-private partnerships of collaborative relationships; and representatives from private-sector organizations involved in emergency management and/or continuity planning, and response actions.	Online Independent Study Only	TEAM LEADERS	LOCAL SMA EMAC

<b>IS-909 Community Preparedness: Implementing Simple Activities for Everyone</b>	Whole community including emergency management personnel and representatives of faith-based and nonprofit organizations	Online Independent Study Only	TEAM LEADERS	LOCAL SMA EMAC
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- (1) State Mutual Aid (SMA)
- (2) Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)
- (3) FEMA Independent Study Courses <https://training.fema.gov/is/>

## GLOSSARY

### **EMAC – Emergency Management Assistance Compact:**

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a type of interstate mutual aid agreement that facilitates the sharing of assistance among states during emergency events, including natural and man-made disasters. EMAC was ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1996. EMAC is the most widely adopted mutual aid arrangement in the United States; it has been adopted by all states, the District of Columbia, and some territories.

### **SMA- Statewide Mutual Aid:**

In emergency services, mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. This may occur due to an emergency response that exceeds local resources, such as a disaster or a multiple-alarm fire. Several states have statewide mutual aid systems.

### **EMAC REQUIREMENTS:**

Are you a state asset?

If you are not a state asset, does your state have enabling legislation that makes you a temporary agent of the state so you can legally deploy under EMAC?

In short, an entity or agency must be a Governmental Organization or a well insured NGO to be eligible to submit a Mission Ready Package that list the organizations resources.

### **SMA REQUIREMENTS:**

The same requirements for EMAC.

**FEMA INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES**

Emergency Management Institute (EMI)

Through its courses and integrated programs, EMI serves as the national focal point for the development and delivery of emergency management training to enhance the capabilities of State, local, and Tribal government officials; volunteer organizations.

Training can be found at [training.fema.gov](https://training.fema.gov)

All of the IS courses listed above are available online via the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Independent Study Program (ISP) which can be accessed via <https://training.fema.gov/is/> by choosing the menu option “IS Course List”.

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CART Leader Signature

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Date

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Local Emergency Coordinator Signature

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Date

