

FEMA US&R IST

IST Veterinary Specialist Handbook

Strategic Management and
Field Operations Guide

Lori Gordon, DVM
IST Veterinary Specialist



Table of Contents

IST Veterinary Position	Page 2
Description of Duties	
Criteria and Training Matrix Requirements	
Acceptance Protocols	Page 3
Veterinary Equipment and Supplies	Page 4
Activation Protocols	Page 5
Deployment Protocols	
Paperwork	
Arrival Protocols	Page 6
Situational Updates	
Duties - Managerial, Medical, Safety, Decontamination, Documentation	
Paperwork	
Operational Guidelines	Page 8
Logistics	
Reporting	
Forms and Paperwork	
Demobilization	Page 9
Checkout Procedures	
Travel	
Paperwork	

Third Draft 2023

FEMA National US&R Response System

Incident Support Team:

IST Veterinary Specialist

Position Description

The IST Veterinary Specialist has overall responsibility for the management and supervision of the medical care and evaluations of all Task Force Canines. The IST Veterinary reports directly to the IST Medical Officer and/or the Deputy Medical Officer.

Description of Duties:

The IST Veterinary Specialist is responsible for:

- Assisting in the development of all Task Force canine safety procedures in coordination with the other Task Force sections
- Being available to assist in Task Force canine care activities
- Determining the veterinary organizational and logistics needs
- Receiving briefings and situation reports and ensuring that all medical personnel are kept informed of status changes
- Providing situation reports and maintaining records and reports
- Advising the Medical office/Deputy Medical Officer regarding considerations and recommendations for potential health risks and mitigation of these risks to search canines
- Ensuring a continuum of veterinary care and coordinating interaction with all appropriate outside veterinary entities
- Performing additional tasks or duties as assigned

These responsibilities include both managerial and operational duties during a deployment as required to fulfill the medical needs of Search Canines, with approval from the IST Medical Officer.

Managerial responsibilities include, but are not limited, to: IST DVM daily log, canine-specific medical plan, canine-specific hazmat and safety concerns, available veterinary resources, and up to date deployed canine roster.

Operational responsibilities may include, but are not limited, to: providing medical care directly to deployed canines, providing advice to medical personnel regarding canine medical needs, and obtaining and/or maintaining canine medical records.

Position Requirements and Criteria:

Individuals who meet the following requirements and criteria will be eligible to become IST Veterinary Specialists in the DHS/FEMA National US&R Response System. The IST Veterinary Specialist shall:

- Meet all Administrative and General Training requirements
- Be a licensed Veterinarian who has experience with canine medical and emergency care
- Complete all training as required by the DHS/FEMA National US&R Response System IST Training Matrix

IST Veterinary Specialist Training Matrix Requirements

- First Aid/CPR
- Haz Mat First Responder Operations
- ICS – I-100
- ICS – I-200
- ICS – I-700
- ICS – I-800
- FEMA US&R Orientation
- NFPA 1670 Awareness Training
- 29 CFR1910.134 Respiratory Training
- FEMA S&R WMD Enhanced Operations
- GPS Awareness Training

Acceptance of IST Veterinary Specialist Position

Acceptance to the IST Veterinary Specialist position includes several responsibilities and there are reference sites to access:

- Attend the next available IST Course; there are annual IST continuing education seminars scheduled thereafter
- For information and guidance, please refer to <https://www.responsesystem.org/> where there is an IST link <https://www.usar.ist/> (password required)
- As an alternate position for all 3 teams (Red, White, and Blue) there is IST alternative group information forum: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/ist-alternates>
- Clothing order – issued through the Logistics Management Specialist by the Accountable Property Officer for Urban Search & Rescue
- IST Veterinary Specialist identification badges are a special order placed with an individual to be determined at each IST CE meeting
- Each month you will receive an e-mail and/or text message regarding your availability to deploy; fill out the form as directed promptly

Veterinary Equipment and Supplies

- FEMA US&R Task Force medical caches are designed to include equipment, supplies, and medications in type and quantities sufficient to include the treatment of deployed Search Canine team members.
- The IST Veterinary Specialist may choose to bring additional equipment, supplies, and/or medications to augment Task Force cache items
 - As deemed necessary in addition of the approved cache list to address projected needs for the specific type of deployment – i.e. terrain (urban, wide area) weather (heat, flood, cold), disaster (terrorist, natural, fire, landslide)
 - Veterinary-specific medications unavailable to non-veterinarians allowed as optional items on the approved cache list

- Time-sensitive expiration medications that require acquisition by a veterinarian as the deployment is enacted

Activation Protocols

Deployment parameters

- If requested to deploy, this must be approved by your Task Force Program Manager
- There is a 2 hour readiness window
- You will receive Activation Order and Invitational Travel Letter via e-mail
 - Once order is received, either contact National Travel directly to arrange air travel (800-294-8283); alternatively a National Travel Agent will contact you to make flight arrangements
 - Enterprise (<https://www.enterprise.com/en/home.html>, 855-266-9289) is the contract agency for ground transport
 - Hotel or other destination will be as directed on your order
 - Notify via phone call to the FEMA National Response Coordination Center (NRCC ESF 9 Desk) @ 202-646-2449 of your location at each juncture of travel: all air/ground departures and arrivals during mobilization until you arrive at IST destination

Paperwork

- Keep track of deployment hours on time sheet for documentation of hours to be paid
 - Pay is via sponsoring task Force; they will receive your time sheet
 - Pay begins 3 hours prior to mobilization flight/ground transport; ends with arrival home
 - Time sheet will be signed by ESF 9 Leader (part of demobilization checkout)
- Maintain daily unit log form 214
- Keep documentation/receipts of all expense paid by you up front to submit later for reimbursement
- Document which meals are not provided for reimbursement at GSA rates
- Liability and Protection incidences require documentation and claim filing

- Deployment protection: FTCA Federal Tort Claims Act; injury claims up to 3 years
- Training protection: FECA Federal Employee Compensation Act
- Worker's Compensation is an additional state and federal coverage resource

Upon Arrival at IST Base of Operations (BoO)

- Report to the lead Medical Officer and Deputy Medical Officer
- Obtain briefing from Service Branch Director or Logistics Section Chief:
 - Information on any canine injuries that occurred during initial response operations
 - Name and location of Safety Officer.
 - Mapping resources
 - Location of current operations
- Develop roster of the current deployed canines, to include:
 - Handler Name
 - Task Force Affiliation
 - Contact phone number
 - Contact e-mail address
 - K9 name
 - Search discipline: Live Find (LF) or Human Remains Detection (HRD)

Medical

- Determine available veterinary emergency medical services:
 - Number and location of veterinary treatment stations, clinics.
 - Number and location of stand-by ground transportation, helicopters, and medical personnel available.
 - Potential for special medical problems, i.e., hypothermia, dehydration, heat stroke, exposure to hazardous materials, etc.
 - Medical supplies needed.
- Respond to requests for canine medical treatment and transportation with the approval of the Medical Office and/or Deputy Medical Officer.
- Request/supervise transport support if required; order through established Incident Chain of Command.

- Prepare a veterinary section of the Medical Plan (ICS Form 206), including procedures for major medical emergency. This plan should be coordinated with the medical organization within the Operations Section. Plan should include:
 - Medical Assembly Area.
 - Triage Area.
 - Ground transport traffic route.
 - Landing Zone for rotary wing transport
 - Veterinary Aid Station Location(s).
 - Closest veterinary hospitals.
- Advise of risks associated with local flora, fauna, endemic insects and diseases, disease vectors, and zoonotic potential (i.e. Leptospirosis, rabies, etc.)
- Obtain approval for Medical Plan from Safety Officer.
- Coordinate Veterinary Medical Plan with local hospitals.
- Respond to requests for medical supplies.

Hazmat, Safety

- Develop canine-specific Hazmat and safety concerns, to supplement Forms ICS 208 and ICS 208H
- Canine-specific guidelines may include, but are not limited, to:
 - Weather environment (hyperthermia, hypothermia, dehydration, etc.)
 - Terrain for operations (rubble, flood water, mud, bracken, hot tarmac, ash)
 - Endemic insect, parasite, and animal populations
 - Endemic diseases (leptospirosis, tick-borne, etc.)
 - Water contamination concerns (sewage, animal/human remains, oil, etc.)
 - Hazardous materials (anti-freeze, asbestos, etc.)

Decontamination Protocols

- Based on potential and confirmed hazardous materials exposures, weather, available equipment and water sources
- Recommend level of external decontamination
 - Whole body versus targeted/limited areas

- Gross versus technical
- Dry versus wet versus vacuum
- No soap. soap and soap type (baby, dog shampoo, dishwash liquid)
- Antimicrobial (Chlorhexidine/sodium hypochlorite and the dilution)

Public Information

- Acquire information regarding the following for the public at large:
 - Human shelters that allow pets
 - Animal shelters taking animals during disaster
 - Animal rescue teams operating in the area, both large and small species
 - Public information contacts (Animal Control Officer, State Veterinarian)

Documentation

- Submit reports as directed; provide copies to Documentation Unit Leader.
- Provide briefing to relief on current activities and unusual circumstances.
- Document all activity on Unit Log (ICS Form 214).
- Notify Medical officer, Safety Officer and Logistics Section Chief of all accidents and injuries.
- Prepare medical reports; provide copies to Documentation Unit Leader and Medical Officer
- Alert other Task Forces of additional concerns that develop

Operational Guidelines

- Direct response/providing canine medical care in person to Task Forces in theater
- Logistical needs may include
 - Vehicle
 - Gas Card or location of FEMA filling station
 - GPS
 - Satellite Phone
 - MREs
 - Water

- Sign out and sign back in whenever leaving or returning to the IST BoO
- Approval to go operational must be approved by the Medical Officer/Deputy Medical Officer, and also likely the IST/Deputy IST Leaders and Safety Officer.
- All activities, incidents, summary of veterinary issues shall be reported to the Medical Leader/Deputy Medical Leader, or highest ranking medical personnel present

Demobilization

- Demobilization Checkout procedure Form ICS-221 must be completed before leaving
 - Unit Leader performance rating Form ICS 225
 - Logistics signoff: IST Cache, Communications, Facilities, Ground Support Unit
 - Planning signoff: ICS 214, ICS 225
 - Federal signoff: ESF 9 Group Supervisor signs Time Sheet, to submit to sponsoring Task Force for paid hours of deployment
 - Travel: itinerary
- Travel
 - Once demobilization order is received, either contact National Travel directly to arrange air travel (800-294-8283); alternatively a National Travel Agent will contact you to make flight arrangements
 - Enterprise (<https://www.enterprise.com/en/home.html>, 855-266-9289) is the contract agency for ground transport
 - Keep track on time sheet and save all documentation, including maintaining daily unit log form 214
 - Notify via phone call to the FEMA (NRCC ESF 9 Desk) @ 202-646-2449 of your location at each juncture of travel: all air/ground departures and arrivals during demobilization, including final arrival home.

Paperwork

- All federal paperwork must be submitted within 30 days of demobilization
- Submit reimbursement request for anything you paid for up front; include documentation/receipts of all submitted expenses

- Meals not provided are submitted for reimbursement per the GSA per diem meal rates (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>), within 5 days of demobilization
- Personal equipment that is lost/stolen may be submitted for reimbursement, however reimbursement is not guaranteed and usually not granted
 - FEMA 61-5 report
 - Include official record of the incident

DRAFT