



North Valley Animal Disaster Group Standard Operating Guidelines

Title: MEDIA AND PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)

Objective: To assure that the media, public, volunteers, and donors get the most accurate information in a timely manner

Description:

Responsibilities of the Public Information Officer include:

- Coordinate and/or create written and recorded content for all media
- Coordinate and/or create still and video photography for internal and external use
- Develop (with leadership approval) short-term and long-term messaging strategies
- Be the Liaison Officer to the Mutual Aid Agency Representatives and provide guidelines and approval for released information including: photos, social media, fundraising, etc.
- Send critical time-sensitive messages to status@nvadg.org and/or WhatsApp
- Press Release (updated daily, even if no change)
 - Brief account of activities, number of volunteers, and any noteworthy events
 - Location and hours of shelter(s)
 - Daily shelter counts
 - Inform the public how to make a request for services (Hotline 530-895-0000)
 - How to coordinate media shelter visits
 - How to coordinate stories with evacuation teams
 - How the public can help (donation of monies, supplies, etc. and mechanism)
 - PSA: take your animals with you, etc.
- Post to Facebook
 - Include photographs AND videos
 - Pay to “boost” any compelling stories
 - Use PayPal donation feature to request assistance
- Post to Website
 - Add or update Header
 - Photo gallery with captions
 - Personalize PayPal button with pleas for immediate needs
- Post to Instagram
- Post to Twitter
- Write a status report email to our Stakeholders and Retired Volunteer

- Incident briefing and requests for funding
- Write a (separate) email daily to all our volunteers (Active and Reserve, whether they responded or not)
 - Give them daily briefings of incident status
 - Inform them of whom oversees each department for that day, or the next day (BCPH, AGS/NVADG, Staffing, PIO, Small Shelter, Large Shelter, Comms, etc.
 - Include a Safety Note: hydration, heat exhaustion, taking breaks, etc.
 - Remind them of picture policy and to send photos to photos@nvadg.org
- Update Ring Central Virtual Attendant message
- Answer Info@nvadg.org emails
- Repost all NVADG social media Public Daily Information Reports put out by Cal-Fire and the Incident Command Team (Get on their mailing list.)
- Part of the ICS command includes a Public Information Officer (PIO). Direct any media inquiries to the PIO, Group Supervisor or his/her designee.
- If you are interviewed in your role as a volunteer, be mindful of the words you use and how you appear. Your community is hurting, people are losing precious belongings.
- Be aware when TV cameras are on site. This is how the community will be assured their pets are safe. Look professional and make safe, happy animals be the focus of the filming.
- Never speak about the cause of the disaster. Refer them elsewhere.

Journalists are likely to ask six questions in a crisis:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

These relate to three broad topics:

- What happened?
- What caused it to happen?
- What does it mean?

Related Documents Attached: FAQs During a Deployment

Refer to the Community Outreach SOG for non-deployment FAQs

What is your name and title?

What is your group doing here today? What is your situation? What is going on?

We are evacuating animals from _____. We have set up a Temporary Shelter at _____.

How many people are working? What are their backgrounds and skill levels?

We have ___ Volunteers working today. They have all gone to mandatory training consisting of: Introduction to Animal Rescue, Incident Command System, Fireline Safety Training, Evacuation and Shelter Training, Radio Training, Animal First Aid, etc. We also have Volunteers that are RVTs, Vets, Firefighters, Nurses, etc.

What are YOU doing here today? I am the Public Information Officer. I am assisting in getting accurate information to the community... I am the Animal Shelter Lead; my job is to make sure the animals are as healthy and happy as possible.

Who is in charge? Butte County Animal Control is in charge. We are a volunteer mutual aid resource that they officially requested.

When were you requested, and by whom? We received an official dispatch request through the Butte County Sheriff Office at _____ per our County Memorandum of Understanding.

Why did YOU get involved? I love animals . . . I want to help my community and this is a great group . . .

What are the qualifications of your personnel? XX+ hours of disaster training including the classes listed above, accepted and sworn in as a California Disaster Service Worker, passed a thorough background check....

How do you receive your authority? Butte County Supervisors adopted County Resolution 04-173, officially designating us as the official County Animal Response Team (CART), a volunteer organization directed by Butte County Public Health Animal Control Department.

Why is your group providing these services? To save human and animal lives, and to reduce suffering...

Do you need additional volunteers? Who? What type of skills do they need? Where should they go? The Volunteer Coordination Center is located at _____. Handling animals and entering active fire areas requires extensive training. All our volunteers attend multiple trainings before they are certified to respond. They also go through a background check and are sworn in as California Disaster Service Workers. Because of these requirements, we cannot

use convergent or spontaneous volunteers who have not previously completed the training. If volunteering with NVADG is something that you would like to do, we have our annual training the 3rd weekend in January. You may download an application on the NVADG website at www.nvadg.org

Do you need donations of money or supplies? What and where? We need donations to cover feed, fuel, and other extremely important supplies. Evacuated animals are stressed and it is critical that they are fed only specific feed. It is imperative that animals are housed in specific, safely-designed enclosures. Therefore, we cannot accept any feed or crates. Donations are tax deductible and can be sent to: PO Box 441, Chico CA 95927, or through PayPal at www.nvadg.org

How is the group funded? We are a non-profit organization that relies on the generosity of our community and on grants. Donations are tax deductible and can be sent to: PO Box 441, Chico CA 95927, or through PayPal at www.nvadg.org

What should the public be doing to help protect their own animals? Have agreements with your neighbors that you will take care of each other's animals when you are gone. Have a safe place to take your animals if you have to evacuate.

How many animals have you saved so far? Statistics?

How can you rationalize spending resources on animals when people need help? Humans are a priority. Professional Law Enforcement and Firefighters are all assisting with human needs. All of the Volunteers in our group are ADDITIONAL personnel that have been assigned specifically for animal issues. By helping evacuate and shelter the animals, we free up other agencies to help the human side of the disaster.

Where can people go to reclaim their pets? The Temporary Animal Shelter is located at: _____.
Are any recovered animals up for adoption? All unclaimed animals will be turned over the local Shelters. They may be adopted after the required waiting period.

Are there local Veterinarians involved? Yes. The CVMA (and VMAT) and local Vets have trained with our group and are assisting today.

Is there any cost to the owner of the animals? No. We do not charge anything for the work we do.

What is considered a "disaster" and who will make the call on it? State, County? The County or City will determine if a local disaster is declared. A disaster does not have to be declared for NVADG to be activated.

What gives your group the legal right to come on a stranger's property and remove their animals without their permission? We only respond when specifically requested by a property

owners, while working by County Resolution and a Memorandum of Understanding with Butte County.

We heard a rumor of... Don't respond to any rumors.

How many volunteers to you have? - Do you need more volunteers? At the present time we have approximately ___ volunteers.

Have you requested, or turned down additional resources, and if so, why? NVADG is not in charge of ordering additional resources. We are just one volunteer entity working for Butte County Animal Control. Butte County is the only one that may request and authorize additional resources to respond.

What lessons were learned, and were they implemented? We learned.... We implemented...

Don't answer any questions about the cause of the fire/flood, or acreage burned, etc. Direct the person to the Joint Information Center (JIC), the Fire Information Officer, or the appropriate agency.

The Golden Rule: If you don't know the answer – say, "I don't know the answer, but will find out and get back to you."

Who are the "cooperating" groups?

- Butte County
- Cal-Fire/Butte County Fire
- Butte County Search and Rescue
- Butte County Sheriff's Office Communications Reserve Unit
- Butte County Sheriff's Office
- Butte Humane Society
- Butte County Fire Safe Council
- City of Chico, Town of Paradise
- Chico, Paradise, Oroville and Butte County Animal Control
- California Highway Patrol
- American Red Cross
- Chico Equestrian Association
- Paradise Horseman's Association
- Mutual Aid Animal Control
- Other Animal NGOs
- National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition (NARSC)
 - Association for Animal Welfare Advancement (AAWA)
 - American Humane
 - American Red Cross
 - American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
 - Association of Zoos & Aquariums

Code 3 Associates
International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)
National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency
Programs (NASAAEP)
National Animal Care & Control Association
Petfinder Foundation
PetSmart Charities
RedRover

Common Messages:

Boy Scout Motto: Be prepared; Don't be a victim.

Listen to "official" resources, not rumors on social media.

Have pre-arranged plans on a DISTANT location to bring your animals.

Have pre-arranged plans with neighbors to help each other. Be nice to your elderly, special needs, widowed, etc. neighbors, check on them to make sure that they are ok.

Livestock: Keep your horse trailer hooked up, backed in, full of fuel.

Evacuation: Don't delay; don't expect somebody to knock on your door to tell you to leave.

Plan ahead of time what you are going to take; have a "go-bag."

Bring with you: medications, medical records, first aid kit, leashes, harnesses, and/or carriers, current photos of your pets, food, potable water, bowls, cat litter/pan, and can opener.

Print information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to foster or board your pets.

Essentials: Family and Animals, Life Saving Medications.

With a credit card and a stop at a convenience store, you can pick up everything you need.

Sheltering in Place: Make your home/barn a safe haven, 100' minimum clearance, "Defendable"

If you are away from home, call the Hotline at 895-0000. If the Safety Officer allows us, NVADG may be able to retrieve your animal for you.

77 Questions Commonly Asked by Journalists During a Crisis

1. What is your name and title?
2. What are your job responsibilities?
3. What are your qualifications?
4. Can you tell us what happened?
5. When did it happen?
6. Where did it happen?
7. Who was harmed?
8. How many people were harmed?
9. Are those that were harmed getting help?
10. How certain are you about this information?
11. How are those who were harmed getting help?
12. Is the situation under control?
13. How certain are you that the situation is under control?
14. Is there any immediate danger?
15. What is being done in response to what happened?
16. Who is in charge?
17. What can we expect next?
18. What are you advising people to do?
19. How long will it be before the situation returns to normal?
20. What help has been requested or offered from others?
21. What responses have you received?
22. Can you be specific about the types of harm that occurred?
23. What are the names of those that were harmed?
24. Can we talk to them?
25. How much damage occurred?
26. What other damage may have occurred?
27. How certain are you about damages?
28. How much damage do you expect?
29. What are you doing now?
30. Who else is involved in the response?
31. Why did this happen?
32. What was the cause?
33. Did you have any forewarning that this might happen?
34. Why wasn't this prevented from happening?
35. If you are not sure of the cause, what is your best guess?
36. Who caused this to happen?
37. Who is to blame?
38. Could this have been avoided?
39. Do you think those involved handled the situation well enough?

40. When did your response to this begin?
41. When were you notified that something had happened?
42. Who is conducting the investigation?
43. What are you going to do after the investigation?
44. What have you found out so far?
45. Why was more not done to prevent this from happening?
46. What is your personal opinion?
47. What are you telling your own family?
48. Are all those involved in agreement?
49. Are people over reacting?
50. Which laws are applicable?
51. Has anyone broken the law?
52. How certain are you about whether laws have been broken?
53. Has anyone made mistakes?
54. How certain are you that mistakes have not been made?
55. Have you told us everything you know?
56. What are you not telling us?
57. What effects will this have on the people involved?
58. What precautionary measures were taken?
59. Do you accept responsibility for what happened?
60. Has this ever happened before?
61. Can this happen elsewhere?
62. What is the worst-case scenario?
63. "What lessons were learned?
64. Were those lessons implemented?
65. What can be done to prevent this from happening again?
66. What would you like to say to those that have been harmed and to their families?
67. Is there any continuing the danger?
68. Are people out of danger? Are people safe?
69. Will there be inconvenience to employees or to the public?
70. How much will all this cost?
71. Are you able and willing to pay the costs?
72. Who else will pay the costs?
73. When will we find out more?
74. What steps need to be taken to avoid a similar event?
75. Have these steps already been taken? If not, why not?
76. What does this all mean?
77. What else can go wrong?

Dos and Don'ts of Interviews

Before the Interview:

- Prepare
- Organize frequently asked for facts
- Practice
- Respect deadlines
- Be there for them - return their calls
- Know the law regarding media
- Treat media equally
- Suggest interesting story ideas

During the Interview:

- Assume you're being recorded
- Speak officially - no opinions
- Give the whole story
- Highlight your priorities (messaging)
- Say "I don't know" - but help find answer
- Think "soundbite" or quote
- Listen to the question
- Anticipate questions
- Correct mistakes
- Remember you are the expert

Don't:

- Lie or fake it
- Go "Off the record"
- Say "No comment"
- Use jargon or terminology
- Speculate
- Make flippant remarks
- Wear sunglasses on camera
- Comment on a Comment
- Repeat a negative
- Say it if you don't want it used
- Fill the "pregnant pause"
- Lose control of the interview
- Argue with the media
- Try to say everything at once
- Respond to emotional appeals with emotion
- Tell one media what another is doing
- Send a news release unless it is newsworthy



NVADG PIO/Media Leader Check List

Time Done	Action
	Coordinate and/or create written, still, and video content for all media
	Coordinate with JIC, BCPH, and BCSO. Get messages approved if appropriate
	Send critical messages to: status@nvadg.org
	Encourage sharing of photos to: photos@nvadg.org
	At last once a day – even if nothing has changed, post to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print, Radio, and TV Press Release/Interviews • Facebook • Twitter • Instagram • NVADG Website Monitor these sites and respond with any clarifications.
	Email all volunteers daily briefing, status report
	Email all Stakeholders daily status report – with photos
	Keep Team Leaders informed
	Acquire and supervise assistants as necessary
	No sunglasses, don't speculate, offer sound bites and photo opportunities