

Florida State Agricultural Response Team (FLSART) Organizational Declaration

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

- Section 1. *Definition.* The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is the lead agency for animal and agricultural emergencies. To fulfill its responsibilities as lead to emergency support function seventeen (ESF-17), the Department facilitated the development of the State Agricultural Response Team (SART) as a planning, training, and response support group with the aid of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (UF IFAS), UF College of Veterinary Medicine, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). SART partners have specific interests and resources that can be utilized to address the needs of the State of Florida. SART is composed of partner agencies and organizations including local, state, and federal agencies, private sector entities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Section 2. *Mission Statement.* SART is a multi-agency coordination group consisting of governmental and private entities dedicated to strengthening all-hazard disaster capabilities through partnerships. Florida SART will support an effective and coordinated incident response for the animal and agricultural sectors in the State of Florida.
- Section 3. *Strategic Imperatives.*
1. Support an Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 Multi-agency Coordination Group for state-level response activities for animal and agriculture issues.
 2. Develop and support an ESF-17 Incident Management Team with equipment and training.
 3. Develop and support ESF-17 response resources such as the Mobile Animal Response Equipment (MARE) Units, College of Veterinary Medicine Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service (CVM VETS), Florida Veterinary Corps with funding and or training.
 4. Develop and support County and RDSTF Regional outreach, training and information coordination in order to enhance local and regional ESF-17 response capabilities.
- Section 4. *Principal Agency.* As designated by the state Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 supports and coordinates the states' response efforts for

animal and agricultural issues. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is the lead agency for ESF-17, and as such, provides resources in support of its activities. Because of the broad and diverse nature of ESF-17, a multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction coordination effort was required to assist in the coordination of resources and support from the involved agencies and organizations. As such, FDACS shall serve as the Principal Agency.

**ARTICLE II.
STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Section 1. *General Powers.* The business and affairs of Florida SART shall be managed by its Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall also provide guidance and technical expertise, as well as administrative support to the efforts of SART. The Steering Committee shall work to address the needs of the ESF-17 ECO and the Principal Agency.
- Section 2. *Number, Term, and Qualifications.* The number of Members constituting the Steering Committee shall be at a minimum: the ESF-17 ECO, Chairman, and Vice Chairman. Other Members may be appointed to terms as specified and approved by the ESF-17 ECO. The Chairman and Vice Chairman, upon their respective appointments, shall serve a maximum term of two years, and shall not be subsequently reappointed to the same office or position. Other Members shall serve a term of length as determined by the ESF-17 ECO.
- Section 3. *Appointment of Members.* The State ESF-17 ECO shall appoint the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and other Members as necessary. Members shall be composed of state and/or federal entity designees whose statutory responsibilities involve animal or agricultural functions.
- Section 4. *Removal.* Any member may be removed at any time with or without cause by the ESF-17 ECO.
- Section 5. *Vacancies.* Any vacancy occurring shall be filled by appointment. The ESF-17 ECO has the sole power of appointment. The Chairmen of the Steering Committee will submit a nomination for additional members to the Steering Committee for approval.
- Section 6. *Chairman of the Steering Committee.* The Chairman of the Steering Committee shall serve as Chairman of the Advisory Board. The Chairman is responsible for the development of meeting agendas, in coordination with the ESF-17 ECO. The Chairman shall also be responsible for nominating new Members to both the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board.

- Section 7. *Vice Chairman of the Steering Committee.* The Vice Chairman of the Steering Committee shall serve as Vice Chairman of the Advisory Board. The Vice Chairman is responsible for the production of records, and for the writing and distribution of meeting minutes, in coordination with the ESF-17 ECO.
- Section 8. *Quorum.* A majority of the members of the Steering Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Committee.
- Section 9. *Meetings.* The Steering Committee shall meet, at minimum, quarterly. Additionally, the Steering Committee may hold monthly meetings when at least half of the Steering Committee Members are available.

ARTICLE III. ADVISORY BOARD

- Section 1. *General Powers.* The Advisory Board shall make, from time to time, policy recommendations to the Florida SART Steering Committee. Board Members shall work to meet the needs and requests made by the State ESF-17 Emergency Coordinating Officer (ECO).
- Section 2. *Duties.* The Advisory Board is essential for the identification of needs, the establishment of priorities and methods, fostering communication, increasing collaboration for the use and support of resources, and providing technical guidance. As such, the Advisory Board shall:
- Work with FDACS, USDA, UF College of Veterinary Medicine and UF/IFAS to develop and strengthen SART
 - Serve as a liaison body between local groups and SART
 - Build relationships with federal, state and local government and community leaders to effectively advocate for SART
 - Assist in providing guidance to SART
 - Help give long-range direction
 - Identify/Obtain resources
 - Assist with public relations
- Section 3. *Number, Term, and Qualifications.* The number of Board Members constituting the Advisory Board shall be variable based on the number of Partner Entities. Herein, "Partner Entities" may be commonly referred to as "(SART) Partner(s)." Each SART Partner will appoint a Board Member. The SART Steering Committee may appoint other Board Members, as necessary, at

any time, which shall have subject matter expertise.

Section 4. *Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Advisory Board.* There shall be a Chairman of the Advisory Board. In the absence of a Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Board and perform such other duties as may be directed by the Board.

Section 5. *Appointment, Term, and Qualifications of Chairman and Vice Chairman.* The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the SART Steering Committee shall serve as the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Advisory Board. The Chairman and Vice Chairman, upon their respective appointments, shall serve a maximum term of two years, and shall not be subsequently reappointed to the same office or position. The Vice Chairman may be appointed to the office of Chairman at the end of the Chairman's term. The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be restricted to State-level, University, or Federal-level government employees.

**ARTICLE IV.
MEETINGS OF ADVISORY BOARD**

Section 1. *Regular Meetings.* A minimum of two regular meetings of the Advisory Board shall be held within the calendar year at such place as the Advisory Board Chairman may designate. In addition, the Advisory Board Chairman may approve the time and place, either within or without the State of Florida, including Internet meetings or telephone conference calls, for the holding of additional regular meetings.

Section 2. *Special Meetings.* Special meetings of the Advisory Board may be called at the request of the ESF-17 ECO or the Advisory Board Chairman.

Section 3. *Notice of Meetings.* Regular meetings of the Advisory Board shall require notice of no less than two weeks. The person or persons calling a special meeting of the Advisory Board may, at three days before the meeting, give notice. Meeting notices may be delivered by post or electronic communication.

**ARTICLE V.
PARTNER ENTITIES**

Section 1. *General.* To fulfill the Mission and Strategic Imperatives of SART, emphasis is placed on forging strong collaborations with agencies and organizations, including local, state, and federal

agencies, private sector entities, and non-governmental organizations. SART Partner Entities (“Partners”) shall enhance Florida’s capabilities to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to, all-hazard animal and agricultural emergencies within a state-wide response framework. Partners shall be willing to commit state-wide response capabilities.

Section 2. *Number and Qualifications.* The number of Partners shall be variable based on admission to Florida SART. Partners shall be capable of providing resources and working in coordination through the state emergency management system and the ESF-17 ECO. Partners shall, at minimum, complete fully applicable application forms and provide other documentation as required by the Steering Committee.

Section 3. *Admission.* Local, state, and federal agencies, private sector entities, and non-governmental organizations willing to be considered for admission as a Partner, shall submit an application to the SART Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall review Partner Entity applications and determine approval.

Section 4. *Removal.* Any Partner Entity may be removed at any time with or without cause by the vote of a majority of the Steering Committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Partner Entities may also be removed for non-attendance of Advisory Board meetings.

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERS

Section 1. *General.* Recognizing the need for accurate and timely information disbursement to achieve a coordinated multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional incident response for the animal and agricultural sectors in the State of Florida, SART shall support a general membership to include local, state, and federal employees, not-for-profit agency staff, for-profit business employees, and the general public.

Section 2. *Number and Qualifications.* The number of members constituting SART shall be variable based on the number of interested individuals and organizations. SART members shall, at minimum, complete fully applicable registration forms and other information as required by the Steering Committee.

Section 3. *Role.* SART Members are approved to receive pertinent electronic communications as determined by the ESF-17 ECO or the Chairman of the Advisory Board. Members shall not assume that

they are part of a “response team.” SART will work to provide information to interested Members wanting to become part of an agricultural or animal response unit.

Section 4. *Removal.* Any member may be removed at any time with our without cause by the ESF-17 ECO or the Chairman of the Advisory Board.

Section 5. *Compensation.* No member shall receive compensation for their services.

ARTICLE VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. *Amendments.* Except as otherwise provided herein, these organizational declarations may be amended or repealed, and new declarations may be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Advisory Board members then holding office at any regular meeting at which a quorum is present, provided that at least two weeks written notice is given of intention to alter, amend, repeal or adopt new amendments. The Principal Agency shall also have full authority to amend or repeal any declarations contained herein.

Section 2. *Records and Web Site.* Florida SART shall keep correct and complete records and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of Advisory Board meetings. A Web site shall be maintained at <http://www.flsart.org>.

ARTICLE VIII. ACRONYMNS AND DEFINITIONS

CVM	College of Veterinary Medicine (At The University of Florida)
DOACS	Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
ECO	Emergency Coordination Officer
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FLSART	Florida State Agricultural Response Team (synonymous with SART)
IFAS	Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences
MARE	Mobile Animal Response Equipment (M.A.R.E.)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SART	State Agricultural Response Team
UF	The University of Florida
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VETS	Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service