

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

# Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Multi-Agency Coordination and Operations Plan

November 2023



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## Executive Summary

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is a highly contagious avian disease which is spread and carried by migrating birds. Infected birds may transmit HPAI to other wildlife and domestic poultry, resulting in a serious threat to these populations in Massachusetts. Because the virus continues to pose a serious threat to the Commonwealth's economy and bird populations, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts HPAI Multi-Agency Coordination and Operations Plan (hereafter "the plan") has been developed to ensure the response to an HPAI incident is safe, rapid, and effective in mitigating the significant impacts to the State's economy, as well as its wildlife and domestic bird populations. This plan is a framework through which the response will be executed.

Per this plan, in the event of a positive case in domestic birds or a large die-off (>10) of wildlife, the Unified Command Group (UCG) will be informed of the event and response actions will be discussed. At this time, emergency declarations may be requested. Agencies with roles and responsibilities under the plan will be notified and activated to support response operations. If a need exists, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) will be activated to provide support to operations. Otherwise, operations will take place immediately. Operations then take place in accordance with best practices from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other states' experiences. Operations are generally divided into six stages:

1. Detection
2. Site Assessment
3. Depopulation
4. Disposal
5. Decontamination and/or Fallow Period
6. Site Clearance and Repopulation

WebEOC will be the primary information sharing platform used for supporting the Commonwealth's response and ensure situational awareness and maintaining a common operating picture for the duration of the event. A Joint Information Center (JIC) may also be established to provide timely, accurate, and consistent information to local officials and the public. The Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide contains information for responders to provide to curious or confused community members.

Operational coordination in the field will be critically important to the success of HPAI incident response. As the situation is constantly evolving, best practices from other States and Federal agencies will be utilized to ensure a cohesive response effort. A variety of information systems are available to meet this need.

Detailed guidelines have been created to guide State agencies throughout the response. These guidelines are contained within the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide, which is maintained by the HPAI Working Group.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose**

To best control the spread of the disease, state response to outbreaks of HPAI will have to be swift and coordinated. As such, designated leaders from several state agencies have worked together to create a state-level multi-agency coordination and operations plan. The purpose of this plan is to effectively and cohesively coordinate multi-agency state response to any potential or actual outbreak in Massachusetts. The following agencies and organizations have a significant role in the execution of this plan:

- Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR)
- Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP)
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS)
- Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW)
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)
- Massachusetts National Guard
- Massachusetts State Police (MSP)
- Massachusetts 211 (Mass 211)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Agency-specific procedures and guidelines are detailed in the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide.

### **1.2 Scope**

This plan applies to state agencies designated to respond to an actual or potential outbreak of HPAI in wild and domestic settings, as well as to the federal agencies that will provide significant support. The roles and responsibilities of these agencies are detailed in this plan. This plan serves as a functional annex to the Commonwealth's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

The main plan does not discuss specific methods or best practices for detecting, assessing, depopulating, disposing of, or decontaminating a facility. Those aspects are covered in the HPAI Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide.

### **1.3 Goals and Objectives**

The following goals and objectives have been established in development of this plan. These goals and objectives are not listed in order of priority.

1. Detect and communicate information regarding new and ongoing incidents of HPAI.
  - Test suspected cases of HPAI in line with existing agency policies and procedures.
  - Effectively communicate detection of suspected and confirmed cases to relevant agencies.
2. Control the spread of HPAI immediately following detection.
  - Depopulate birds in accordance with federal guidance and best practices.
  - Clear infected premises as soon as is feasible.
  - Take appropriate measures to mitigate the spread and effect of an outbreak.
3. Protect the health and safety of responders by following the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide.
  - Provide critical safety information to individuals involved in response operations.
  - Provide adequate training and equipment for individuals involved in response operations.
  - Ensure that appropriate services are available for decontamination, depopulation, and disposal efforts.
  - Ensure appropriate monitoring procedures are in place for individuals exposed to infected poultry or contaminated materials.
4. Establish appropriate command and control structure for a multi-agency response to suspected or confirmed cases of HPAI.
  - Ensure notification of all partners occurs in line with policy established in this plan.
  - Follow established resource request procedures.
  - Carry out all actions in accordance with this plan.
5. Ensure information regarding suspected or confirmed cases of HPAI is shared with all involved partners.
  - Maintain situational awareness of suspected or confirmed cases of HPAI within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
  - Coordinate public information through a JIC.

6. Identify critical information in advance of an event.
  - Identify legal responsibilities and authorities of lead and support agencies involved in response to an outbreak of HPAI.
  - Draft resource coordination and prioritization protocols.
  - Identify agency roles, responsibilities, and planned actions during all response phases, including site management, depopulation, disposal, and disinfection.
  - Identify available emergency financial programs for potential reimbursement to the Commonwealth associated with response operations.

## 1.4 Situation

HPAI is a highly contagious disease among birds that is carried and spread primarily by wild aquatic birds. Commercial and backyard poultry flocks are particularly susceptible to this disease, although other bird and mammal species can also be infected. In 2022, HPAI was detected in wildlife (e.g., waterfowl, gulls, raptors, scavengers) and domestic poultry across the country. As of May 2024, there were 1,144 outbreaks in 48 States and five outbreaks in domestic (classified non-Poultry by the World Organization of Animal Health (WOAH)) flocks in Massachusetts. It is possible that other strains may appear in the future.

The current Eurasian HPAI H5N1 virus has been circulating globally since 2021 and was introduced into North America in November of that year. Since this time, HPAI viruses have been detected in commercial and backyard poultry flocks, wildlife, or captive wildlife throughout the United States.

In 2022, positive HPAI cases were documented in wildlife in all lower-48 states. Nine states have had infections in commercial poultry farms, with 212 premises affected. Eleven states have had infections in backyard flocks, with 21 premises affected. Efforts to control HPAI require coordinated response by local, state, and federal agencies to control its spread. These efforts have resulted in the destruction of 7.5 million turkeys and 42.1 million egg-layer and pullet chickens, with devastating effects on businesses and at a cost to federal taxpayers more than \$950 million. The 2022 outbreak diminished in the warm summer weather, but it did not end. Migratory wildlife continued to influence the spread of HPAI.

More recently, the HPAI H5N1 strain has been documented in a number of species of wild mammals, including red fox in New York, and Harbor seals in Maine. To date, no positive cases in mammals have been documented in Massachusetts.

Although HPAI infections in people are rare, the possibility of transmission of the disease spreading to humans cannot be ruled out. In such cases, the virus can enter

through a person's eyes, nose, or mouth, or be inhaled. Based on information from previous human cases, risk is considered most significant for people who have had close contact without protective equipment with infected birds or their indoor environments.

To best control the spread of HPAI in the Commonwealth, careful action must be taken. It is important to note that even when biosecurity measures are taken, and federal guidance and best practices are followed, occurrences of HPAI within the Commonwealth remain possible.

## **2.0 Concept of Operations**

### **2.1 Notification**

If a report of confirmed or suspected case of HPAI is made, it will be communicated to MEMA's 24/7 Communications Center at (508) 820-2000. Through established procedures, MEMA's Communications Center will relay this information to MEMA's Director or designee who will direct MEMA's Communication Center to notify members of the UCG via Everbridge/AlertsMA that a conference call will convene to determine the best course of action and share any critical information.

The UCG is an entity that has the authority to make and implement critical decisions about HPAI response actions, particularly when those activities require coordination among multiple agencies. The UCG is comprised of designated representatives of the following agencies:

- DAR
- DFW
- DEP
- DPH
- DFS
- MEMA

### **2.2 Initial UCG Conference Call**

Upon notification of a positive or presumptive positive bird or flock, the initial UCG conference call will be led by subject matter experts from DAR, DEP, and DFW. The purpose of the call is for coordination and situational awareness only, and this call does not automatically trigger any follow-up action by the UCG. A determination on any follow-up actions, to include subsequent UCG conference calls and the need to activate the SEOC, will be made by the UCG during the discussion. If it is deemed important that the information be communicated beyond the UCG, this Group may include other support agencies with roles and responsibilities under this plan in subsequent conference calls.

## **2.3 Direction and Control**

Many incidents may not require the SEOC to be activated, but will require the UCG to be convened regularly, beyond the initial UCG conference call, for situational awareness purposes and briefings on operational needs. Responding agencies will consistently update the UCG on actions taken and actions planned for managing the incident. MEMA will use the standing incident event in WebEOC where response agencies can input relevant data. The actions of response agencies will be discussed among the UCG, and any necessary additional planning will occur. As response activities continue, subsequent UCG conference calls will be convened until responding agencies report the incident has been stabilized.

MEMA's Director, in consultation with the UCG, may choose to activate the SEOC in support of an incident. If the SEOC is activated, a more complex command-and-control structure will be established. Additionally, agencies with operational roles and responsibilities under this may choose to activate their own EOCs. Local communities may also choose to activate their EOCs.

## **2.4 Briefing Local Officials**

As the incident unfolds and more information is known about a suspected or confirmed case of HPAI, the UCG will convene as needed to discuss when and how to notify and brief local officials in the impacted community and potentially in surrounding affected communities. Once that decision is made, MEMA will be responsible for organizing such a briefing and managing the logistics of it via the regional offices in Agawam, Tewksbury, and Franklin.

Municipal officials on the call may include:

- Chief municipal officer (Mayor, City Manager, etc.)
- Emergency Management Director
- Fire Chief
- Police Chief
- Local Board of Health
- Animal Inspector
- Animal Control Officer
- Public Works Director

## **2.5 Phases of Responses**

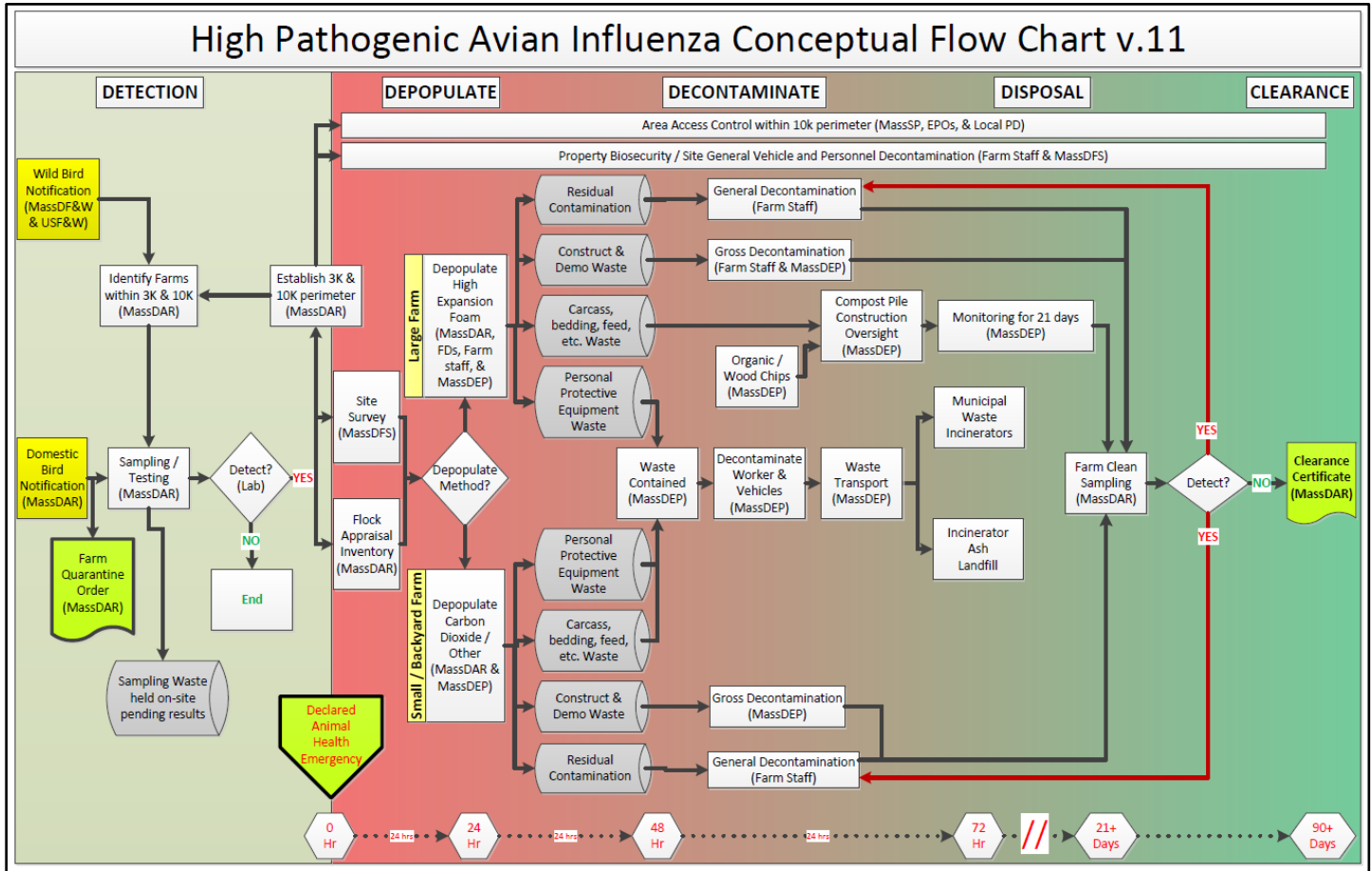
Response is divided into the following seven distinct stages:

1. Detection
2. Site Assessment
3. Depopulation
4. Disposal

5. Decontamination and/or Fallow Period
6. Site Clearance, and Repopulation.

The phases are described in greater detail below, however the best practices and more specific guidance for these operations is contained within the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide. Below in Figure 1 is an image depicting a sample workflow for an HPAI activation.

Figure 1 Example Conceptual Flow Chart



### **2.5.1 Detection**

The detection phase includes activities related to surveillance of avian populations (wild and domestic) to identify potential and actual cases of HPAI. Detection is carried out by DAR for domestic birds and DFW for wild animals. Detection is comprised of three distinct components:

- Surveillance: Routine sampling through DAR and DFW involving routine sampling of wildlife and domestic poultry.
- Testing: DAR and DFW initiate testing on carcasses if they have reason to believe one or more deaths are related to disease.
- Notification: DAR and DFW, whichever detects the potential or confirmed case, will make appropriate notifications to State response partners as described in Section 2.1 Notification.

### **2.5.2 Site Management**

The Site Management Phase includes activities to manage the spread of HPAI on infected, contact, or at-risk premises. Activities will be slightly different, depending on whether the birds are wild or Domestic. These activities may include Quarantine, Site Assessment, and Control Zone Establishment.

#### **a. Domestic Flocks**

- Quarantine: A quarantine order will be ordered for the premises to prohibit the movement of birds and bird products into or out of the site and to mandate biosecurity measures be taken.
- Site Assessment: Infected premises will be assessed, and areas of contamination will be identified and mapped. Flock appraisals will be conducted. This area will be the “Hot Zone.”
- Control Zone Establishment: Zones of control will be established in line with guidance contained within the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide. Additionally, a 10km perimeter will be established if the flock is a WOAHPoultry flock.

#### **b. Wild Birds**

- Quarantine: As public parks are public land, there is no known authority or mechanism for denying access to the area, nor for keeping any birds on premises from leading. However, signs explaining the hazard and the risks posed by approaching the work area should be displayed, and the risks clearly explained.
- Site Assessment: Infected premises will be assessed, and as many members of the infected flock will be located as is reasonable. The area in which these birds are found will be the “Hot Zone”.

- **Control Zone Establishment:** Given that wild birds are difficult to control, and the public nature of land owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, establishing a control zone will be difficult and may not be feasible. While the most useful strategy will be determined based on the details of the event, the most likely path forward will be to inform any individuals who approach the area of the nature of the response and recommend they not approach.

### **2.5.3 Depopulation**

If a determination is made in accordance with the most up to date guidance from the USDA that a WHOA Poultry Flock is positive, all birds on premises must be depopulated regardless of their infection status. If the SEOC is activated, it will support this phase with a Depopulation Group.

In wild birds, it may be impossible to track and depopulate the flock which contains the infected birds. In such cases, depopulation activities should focus on those sick birds who remain on-site upon the approach of responders.

### **2.5.4 Disposal**

Once depopulation has occurred, carcasses and all infectious/hazardous waste will be collected and disposed of. It will likely either be on-site composting or packaging and transportation to an approved solid waste incinerator or other approved disposal facility. These activities will take place in accordance with USDA, DAR, DEP, DPH, and USDA best practices contained within the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide.

For scenarios involving impacted wildlife on DCR properties, or other large populations of impacted wildlife (>10 individuals at same location), the carcasses and all hazardous/infected waste will be collected and disposed of by being packaged and transported to approved solid waste incinerators or other approved disposal facilities.

If transportation to an approved solid waste incinerator or other approved disposal facility is planned, MSP and MEP will be made aware so coordination on roadways, including escorts if needed, occurs.

When the SEOC is activated, the Disposal Phase is supported by the Waste Management Group.

### **2.5.5 Decontamination/Fallow Period**

Decontamination of equipment and personnel involved in site management, depopulation and disposal activities must occur on an ongoing basis to ensure that vehicles, equipment, and response personnel do not spread the virus. Gross decontamination of infected premises must occur once infected birds and waste are removed from the site to ensure the virus is eradicated from the premises. However, in some cases, a fallow period may be sufficient. This determination will be made by DAR in accordance with current best practices.

When the SEOC is activated, the Decontamination Phase is supported by the Site Management Group.

### **2.5.6 Site Clearance**

Once all infectious waste has been removed from an infected premise and the infected premise has been decontaminated (in accordance with current best practices), the premises will be monitored and tested to verify eradication of the virus. Once the site is determined to no longer have HPAI present, it will be issued a certificate of clearance, and repopulation can begin if so desired.

In the case that a fallow period is used, the site will be monitored monthly as appropriate. When the SEOC is activated, the Site Clearance Phase is supported by the Site Management Group.

## **2.6 SEOC Activation**

If it is determined by the UCG that the SEOC should be activated for a HPAI incident, MEMA's Director will activate the SEOC. It will serve as the state's command and control center for supporting complex operations. The SEOC activation level will be determined by MEMA's Director

In such a case, MEMA will notify the Point of Contact (POC) for the agencies and organizations that have operational roles and responsibilities under the plan. Depending on the operational needs of the incident, a representative from those agencies and organizations with relevant responsibilities may be requested to support the SEOC. All agency representatives assigned to the SEOC are expected to have the authority and ability to commit their agencies' resources. More information on SEOC activation can be found in the Commonwealth's CEMP.

Additionally, in support of a HPAI incident, state agencies may activate their individual operations centers to support the SEOC and tactical response operations. Impacted local communities may also activate their EOCs to coordinate response with the SEOC.

## **2.7 SEOC Organization**

During a response to a HPAI incident, the SEOC will operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) and according to the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). State response operations will be directed from the SEOC under a unified command structure, with the agency senior leaders that comprise the UCG serving in this role. To maintain an optimal span of control for all staff, the SEOC Director will organize activated staff into functional sections, branches, units, groups, and any other necessary operational elements required in coordination with the SEOC Operations Sections Chief.

To best support the implementation of this plan, one or more Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) may be activated. The SEOC Director in consultation with the Operations Sections Chief will make this determination based on the needs of the incident. The ESFs that may be activated include, but are not limited to:

- ESF-4: Firefighting
- ESF-8: Public Health and Medical Services
- ESF-10: Hazardous Materials and Environmental Protection
- ESF-11: Animals, Agriculture, and Natural Resources
- ESF-13: Public Safety and Security
- ESF-15: Public Information and External Affairs
- ESF-16: Military Support

Additional ESFs may be activated as needed.

If the scale of the event requires it, three operational groups will be stood up in the Operations Section to support the following critical HPAI response missions in the field: site management, depopulation, and waste management. Several agencies, each associated with their specific ESF, will designate staff to work within these Groups.

1. Site Management Group: The Site Management Group will coordinate all site assessment and management activities on/about infected premises, at-risk premises, contact premises, and within 10km (6.2 mile) control zones, including but not limited to flock monitoring and surveillance, initial site assessments, establishment of “hot zones” on infected premises, site mapping, issuance of quarantine orders and Biosecurity measures, issuance of permits for transportation of birds, bird products, and other agricultural products within, into, and out of control zones, post-depopulation site activities, and determining when infected premises no longer pose risks and may be repopulated. Agencies assigned to this Group include DAR, DFW, DEP, MEMA, MSP, and MEP.
2. Depopulation Group: The Depopulation Group will coordinate all aspects of depopulation activities and operations on infected premises, including determining depopulation methods, ensuring the availability of necessary resources, coordinating and tracking personnel and contractor operations, and tracking depopulation operations. Agencies assigned to this Group include DAR, DFW, DEP, DFS, and MEMA.
3. Waste Management Group: The Waste Management Group coordinate all aspects of the disposal of carcasses after depopulation and all hazardous/infected waste, including determining the methods of disposal, coordinating and tracking disposal operations, overseeing on-site composting (where applicable), coordinating

transportation to incinerator or other disposal sites (where applicable). Agencies assigned to this Group include DAR, DFW, DCR, DEP, DFS, MEP, MSP, DPH and MEMA.

In general, these Groups will have a direct report to either the Operations Section Chief, or the Deputy Operations Section Chief for their ESFs or Groups. In the event the SEOC Operations Support Branch is activated, these Groups may be stood up under this Branch with a direct report to the Branch Director.

### **3.0 Emergency Declarations**

When HPAI is detected on a broad scale across multiple locations and the outbreak is deemed to require more resources than are currently available, it may become possible to request an emergency declaration. Emergency declarations generally grant additional authority to take actions to manage the situation, including but not limited to issuing quarantine orders, livestock travel restrictions, waiving minimum permitting times, or accessing additional funding or permitting deficit spending. Types of emergency declarations are listed below. More than one of these declarations can be in effect simultaneously.

#### **3.1 Gubernatorial State of Emergency**

The Governor of the Commonwealth has the power to declare a Gubernatorial State of Emergency upon the occurrence of a natural or manmade disaster. A State of Emergency may apply to a specific city or town, multiple communities, or counties, or to the entire Commonwealth, and gives the Governor broad authority to implement emergency measures to ensure the safety and health of the residents of the Commonwealth, to preserve their property, to take appropriate steps to mobilize state assets, and to take other emergency actions for the protection of the Commonwealth. Actions such as issuing quarantine, isolation, or evacuation orders, restricting access to given areas, implementing curfews, taking property, or assisting with access to property, rationing supplies, imposing driving bans or travel restrictions, waiving regulatory or statutory requirements, waiving minimum time frames for obtaining permits, and authorizing emergency procurements, may be implemented as part of the declaration if circumstances warrant.

However, a State of Emergency itself does not automatically trigger any ban or restriction; the Governor issues subsequent Executive Orders to impose specific restrictions, orders, or waivers to meet the needs of a threat, emergency, or disaster. These Executive Orders have the force of law and supersede existing law if there is any conflict between a law and the Executive Order. This State of Emergency does not provide a waiver from Federal law, particularly if assets or support must cross State borders. In such cases, a Presidential Disaster Declaration may be required.

### **3.2 Presidential Disaster Declaration**

The Governor may request that the President issue an Emergency Declaration or a Major Disaster Declaration under the Stafford Act. The Governor's request will be submitted to the President through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Administrator. The request must be submitted within 30 days after the onset of the disaster and at a minimum must include the following information:

- Justification for the request.
- Magnitude and severity of the disaster.
- Types of disaster assistance needed.
- Federal, state, and local resources which have been or will be committed to respond to the incident.
- Estimated Federal funds needed.
- Certain required certifications. MEMA maintains a list of appropriate request criteria and needed certifications.

Upon receipt of the request, the FEMA Regional Administrator will formulate a recommendation that will be forwarded to the President for action along with the original request.

Following the issuance of an Emergency or Major Disaster Declaration, the Governor and the FEMA Regional Administrator will enter into an agreement that stipulates:

- Areas eligible for Federal assistance.
- Programs being made available.
- Division of costs between the state and Federal government.
- The time over which assistance will be provided.
- Other specific conditions for receiving Federal disaster assistance.

Whenever the President declares a Major Disaster Declaration or an Emergency Declaration, USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) will make emergency loans available to eligible applicants in declared and contiguous counties, provided that the Presidential declaration is not solely for Category A or Category B Public Assistance or Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance, and the Presidential Major Disaster declaration is for losses due to severe, general disaster conditions including but not limited to conditions such as flood, hurricane, or earthquake.

### **3.3 USDA Secretarial Disaster Designation**

The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to designate counties as disaster areas to make emergency loans to producers suffering losses in those counties and in counties that are contiguous to a designated county. In addition to emergency loan eligibility, other emergency assistance programs, such as FSA disaster assistance programs, have historically used disaster designations as an eligibility requirement trigger.

Eligible natural disasters are disasters in which damaging weather conditions or other adverse natural occurrence phenomena have substantially affected farmers causing severe production losses. Eligible natural disaster conditions include drought, flooding,

excessive rain and humidity, severe storms, lightning, hail, mudslides and landslides, snow, ice, blizzards, frost, freeze, below-normal temperatures, wind, tornadoes, hurricanes, typhoons, tropical storms, fire, excessive heat, volcanoes, pests, and disease. For natural disaster occurrences, a county must either show a 30 percent production loss of at least one crop or a determination must be made that other lending institutions will not be able to provide emergency financing.

A disaster designation specifies:

- The disaster that resulted in the designation.
- The incident period (dates) of that disaster.
- The specific counties included in the designation.

Requests for a USDA Secretarial disaster designation are made to the Secretary of Agriculture by a Governor or Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), an Indian Tribal Council leader, or by an FSA State Executive Director (SED).

### **3.4 FSA Administrator's Physical Loss Notification**

When only qualifying physical losses (including livestock) occur as a result of a disaster, the FSA SED can submit a request to the FSA Administrator to make a determination that a natural disaster has occurred in a county, resulting in severe physical losses. If the FSA Administrator determines that such a natural disaster has occurred, then emergency loans can be made available to eligible farmers for physical losses only in both the primary county (the county that was the subject of that determination) and the counties contiguous to that county.

### **3.5 Secretarial Quarantine Designation**

Any quarantine imposed by the Secretary of Agriculture under the Plant Protection Act or the animal quarantine laws, as defined in section 2509 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, automatically authorizes emergency loans for production and physical losses resulting from the quarantine in a primary county (the county in which the quarantine was in force) and (where the quarantine effects extend beyond that county) the counties contiguous to that primary county. A quarantine designation is requested of the Secretary of Agriculture by an FSA SED.

## **4.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **4.1 HPAI Working Group**

The HPAI Working Group is comprised of representatives from DAR, DFW, MassDEP, DCR, DPH, DFS, MEMA, MEP, MSP, and USDA. This group was established to conduct state-level preparedness and response planning for HPAI. The HPAI Working Group is responsible for development of this plan, maintaining the Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide and for sharing situational awareness about ongoing activities in the Commonwealth, as well as any national best practices among the Group.

## **4.2 State Agencies**

In the event of an activation of this plan, there are numerous state agencies that will play a significant primary role in its implementation. This section of the plan outlines those agencies and their roles in this plan.

### **4.2.1 Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources**

- Conduct routine surveillance and testing of domestic poultry flocks, including testing for avian influenza.
- Provide general guidance to owners of all domestic poultry farms and flocks regarding proper Biosecurity measures.
- Provide notification of all positive test results from domestic poultry flocks to state agencies that will be involved in response operations.
- Issue quarantine orders and ensure Biosecurity orders/standards are implemented for domestic farms/flocks with positive HPAI test result(s) or with birds suspected of having HPAI.
- Identify poultry farms and flocks within a 10km (6.2 mile) radius of any positive test result in domestic poultry and coordinate the establishment of a control zone if needed.
- Conduct enhanced surveillance and testing of domestic poultry within the 10km (6.2 mile) around infected premises.
- Conduct flock appraisals and risk assessments of HPAI infected farms/flocks prior to depopulation.
- Authorize/Order, conduct, supervise and/or guide depopulation, disposal, and decontamination activities at HPAI infected premises.
- Issue permits for movement of poultry products within, into, and out of Control Zones.
- Monitor premises needing to move agricultural products within or out of a Control Zone
- Retest infected premises at appropriate intervals after decontamination and disposal processes are complete. If HPAI virus is detected, repeat the decontamination process until no virus is detected on premises.
- Responsible for monitoring activities at premises undergoing a fallow period.
- Issue certificates of clearance to premises that have been determined to be free of the HPAI virus either by testing or compliance with fallow period recommendations.
- Coordinate as necessary with the USDA on response operations and receive appropriate subject matter expertise.
- Coordinate as necessary with the USDA on reimbursement procedures, as well as with state agencies who may be sub-recipients to DAR for reimbursements.
- Coordinate as necessary with local animal control officers and animal inspectors for reporting unusual activity within quarantine zones.
- Coordinate as necessary with DPH on the acquisition of cached equipment from the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS).
- Provide coordinated Geographic Information System (GIS) Support to the SEOC.
- As necessary, support public messaging.

#### **4.2.2 Department of Fish and Wildlife**

- Conduct routine surveillance and testing of wildlife for avian influenza.
- Coordinate testing and surveillance on farms containing permitted wild species.
- Issue quarantine orders for farms with propagated, captive wild bird flocks with positive HPAI test result(s) or with birds suspected of having contracted HPAI.
- Authorize and/or order the depopulation of propagated, captive wild flocks on premises with HPAI-infected birds.
- Respond to reports from the public of dead or ill wildlife and conduct testing of the specimens for HPAI as appropriate.
- Provide notification to the UCG of positive test results for large outbreaks of >10 individuals at the same location.
- Coordinate with the UCG on a response when large die-offs of wildlife (>10 individuals) occur from HPAI.

#### **4.2.3 Department of Environmental Protection**

- Provide staff and/or contractor support to DAR for depopulation of infected poultry flocks. The agencies' cooperative work is memorialized in an interagency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- Provide staff and/or contractor support to DAR for segregation, packaging, and transport of infected materials to approved solid waste facilities and/or incinerators.
- Coordinate staff and/or contractor support to DFW in cases of large outbreaks in wild birds (>10 individuals at the same location) for potential depopulation, collection, packaging, and transport of infected materials to approved solid waste facilities and/or incinerators.
- Provide staff and/or contractor support to conduct gross decontamination of infected areas on infected premises.
- Provide contractor support to construct and monitor compost piles on farms capable of composting after depopulation of infected flocks has been completed.
- Coordinate procurement and delivery of bulk composting materials.
- Provide staff and/or contractor support to provide technical assistance and/or conduct activities related to composting.
- As necessary, coordinate the decontamination of vehicles, responders, and containers associated with state HPAI response operations.
- Coordinate with fire departments (as identified by DFS) with equipment and/or materials to deploy high expansion foam in support of depopulation of infected poultry flocks.
- In the event of a positive case of HPAI, contract with, reach agreement with, and deploy fire departments identified by DFS for the use of their equipment and supplies to apply DEP purchased foam.
- Purchase and provide materials and resources – including high-expansion foam - required for depopulation operations.
- Purchase and provide resources - including decontamination foam/solution - to support decontamination operations.
- Coordinate the transportation and storage of depopulation supplies.

- Coordinate the disposal of used personal protective equipment and other contaminated materials associated with state agency HPAI response operations.
- As required, coordinate with DCR, DPH, MSP, MEP, and other agencies in the disposal of carcasses and infectious waste, including on-site composting, off-site transportation of waste, and disposal of waste (including incineration).
- As required, provide approvals for commercial incinerators to burn infectious waste and, if necessary, for ash landfills to accept HPAI waste materials.
- Provide coordinated GIS Support.
- As necessary, support public messaging.

#### **4.2.4 Department of Conservation and Recreation**

- Provide materials needed for on-site composting of carcasses/infectious waste on depopulated farms.
- Collection and disposal of infected wildlife on DCR properties.

#### **4.2.5 Department of Public Health**

##### **a. Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management**

- Serve as the lead coordinating entity for any human health and medical resources that are needed.
- If resources are needed from the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS), assist in coordinating a request for and delivery of these resources to the state Receipt, Stage, and Storage (RSS) facility, and, as required, oversee RSS facility operations.
- Provide situational awareness on health and medical issues to the public health and healthcare community as needed.
- Assist in the development and release of public information related to the level of public health risk.
- Assist in identifying and deploying Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) or Disaster Behavioral Health Network volunteers from MA Responds who are trained to provide disaster behavioral health support to address the needs of individuals participating in HPAI control activities and the public.
- If testing determines that HPAI has been transmitted to a person in Massachusetts, serve as the lead coordinating office within DPH for the public health response as directed by the Commissioner or designee and in collaboration with other DPH bureaus and offices, and other state agencies.
- If testing determines that HPAI has been transmitted to a person in Massachusetts, collaborate with Bureau of Infectious Disease (BID) and the Commissioner's office to develop guidance for local health and other healthcare stakeholders and work with the Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (OPEM) to request any medical countermeasures (MCM) that may be needed from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS).

**b. Bureau of Environmental Health**

- Collaborate with DEP on waste management options for disposal of bird carcasses and related materials, which are classified as infectious waste.
- As required, work with DEP to identify solid waste facilities to be used for the disposal of infectious waste and assist in the development of disposal protocols for these facilities.
- Coordinate with DAR to provide necessary approval for composting of bird carcasses and related materials, which are classified as medical waste on designated farms.
- Review and make recommendations to the Commissioner or designee regarding approval of protocols for transportation of infectious waste for disposal.

**c. Bureau of Infectious Disease**

- Review relevant guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and develop/ implement protocols for a monitoring program of workers or other individuals who handled or worked around infected birds.
- Develop guidance for self-monitoring by responders who come into direct contact with infected birds or their contaminated environment without appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Determine the potential role of anti-viral medication such as oseltamivir (“Tamiflu”) for chemoprophylaxis for HPAI.
- Work in collaboration with DAR and USDA to provide information to Massachusetts poultry industry representatives on ways to prevent the spread of infection in their flocks (Biosecurity measures).
- Assist in the development and release of information to the general public related to the level of public health risk and steps that can be taken to decrease the possibility of transmission.
- If testing determines that HPAI has been transmitted to a person in Massachusetts, collaborate with OPEM and the Commissioner’s office to develop guidance for local health and other healthcare stakeholders.
- Coordinate with OPEM to request any MCM that may be needed from the SNS.
- Consult with CDC as necessary.
- Develop testing guidelines and protocols for detecting HPAI in exposed people.
- If necessary, conduct appropriate influenza testing of provided samples to rule out HPAI in workers who develop respiratory symptoms after exposure to infected birds.

#### **4.2.6 Department of Mental Health**

- As needed, provide crisis counseling services to citizens affected by an outbreak in their flock.
- As needed, assist in arranging Critical Incident Stress Management services for responders.

#### **4.2.7 Department of Fire Services**

- In advance of a positive case of HPAI, identify local fire departments with resources (application equipment and supplies) capable of deploying high-expansion foam for depopulating poultry flocks. This information will be shared with MassDEP. In the event of a positive case, DEP will take the lead in contracting with, reaching agreement with, and deploying such departments for the use of their equipment and supplies to apply DEP purchased foam.
- Provide on-site training for response personnel on use of personal protective equipment.
- Provide technical expertise on the PPE needs for state agencies involved in response operations.
- Conduct initial reconnaissance of properties identified as containing infected birds and produce and provide to the SEOC detailed site plans delineating contaminated areas and areas where decontamination activities will take place.
- Provide assistance in establishing property Biosecurity procedures and protocols, including emergency decontamination of farms/premises that have positive cases of HPAI.
- Provide assistance for establishing property biosecurity procedures and emergency decontamination of personnel and vehicles involved in response operations at infected farms/premises.
- Provide technical advice and support in managing hazardous and infectious materials and in controlling the spread of the disease to other animals or humans.

#### **4.2.8 Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency**

- Maintain the State HPAI Multi-Agency Coordination and Operations Plan.
- Coordinate information sharing amongst the UCG and the HPAI Working Group.
- Convene information sharing calls with impacted jurisdictions at the direction of the UCG.
- Serve as the lead state agency for command and coordination of operations at the SEOC.
- Coordinate public information activities of state agencies.
- Develop and disseminate of situational awareness messages and maintain a common operating picture.
- Coordinate the support and involvement of Mass 211 in public information efforts.

- As required, coordinate with the Governor's Office on whether to issue a gubernatorial state of emergency in the event of a confirmed finding of HPAI.
- As required, draft the Governor's Emergency Declaration, and coordinate with other agencies to determine emergency orders/directives/measures that may need to be included in the Declaration.
- As required, coordinate resource support from other states through Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or International EMAC.
- As required, coordinate resource support from the federal government in coordination with FEMA.
- Support GIS mapping of farms/flocks within a 10km (6.2 mile) radius of the positive HPAI result.
- As required, coordinate with the Governor's Office and FEMA to request a federal emergency declaration or presidential disaster declaration.

#### **4.2.9 Massachusetts Environmental Police**

- As required, provide personnel to support law enforcement security operations at quarantined/infected premises.
- As required, provide personnel for enhanced monitoring of Biosecurity measures, and compliance with quarantine orders, on/around infected premises and within 10km (6.2 mile) Control Zones.
- Assist in designating approved routes for shipment of waste materials.

#### **4.2.10 Massachusetts State Police**

- Provide personnel to support law enforcement security operations at quarantined/infected premises.
- As requested, provide personnel for enhanced monitoring of Biosecurity measures, and compliance with quarantine orders, on/around infected premises and within 10km (6.2 mile) control zones.
- Assist in designating approved routes for shipment of waste materials.

#### **4.2.12 Massachusetts National Guard**

- As directed, provide personnel to response operations, including but not limited to site assessment and management activities, security and surveillance operations, flock depopulation, transportation, GIS mapping, or other activities.
  - Restrictions to this apply, outlined in detail in the ESF-16 Annex to the CEMP.

#### **4.2.13 Mass 211**

- As needed, field telephone reports from the public of dead or diseased birds, both domestic and wild.
- Ensure that reports are accurately recorded and passed on to the SEOC or MEMA's 24/7 Communications Center in a timely fashion for coordinated information flow and determination of potential response actions.

- As needed, serve as a source of information for the public, who may call with questions or concerns. Refer callers with questions beyond the capacity of Mass 211 to answer to appropriate state agencies or resources.
- As requested, and provided by the Commonwealth, provide timely and accurate information on Mass 211's website.

### **4.3 Federal Agencies**

In the event of an activation of this plan, there are numerous Federal agencies that will play a significant primary role in its implementation. This section of the plan outlines those agencies and their roles in this plan.

#### **4.3.1 Federal Emergency Management Agency**

- As requested by MEMA and authorized by federal law and regulation, coordinate the provision of direct federal assistance.
- As requested by MEMA and authorized by federal law and regulation, conduct Preliminary Damage Assessments.
- If a request for the presidential disaster declaration is submitted by the Governor, review the request, and submit a recommendation to the President.
- If a presidential disaster declaration is issued, coordination of federal disaster assistance in collaboration with MEMA.

#### **4.3.2 US Department of Agriculture**

- In coordination w/ DAR, conduct both routine surveillance and testing (as available) of domestic poultry flocks (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services/ Veterinary Services), including testing for avian influenza.
- In coordination with DFW conduct routine surveillance and testing of wild bird populations for HPAI (USDA-Wildlife Services, National Wildlife Health Center).
- In coordination with DAR, respond to infected premises to conduct depopulation, disposal, and decontamination activities.
- In coordination w/ DAR and DPH, supply cached equipment and PPE to affected areas (APHIS Veterinary Services/ NVS).
- In coordination with DAR, provide reimbursement and indemnity payments to farm owners/ bird owners in accordance with USDA policies.
- In coordination with and through DAR, provide reimbursement to state agencies for eligible HPAI response activities.
- In coordination with DAR, provide support for Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) to enable situational awareness and common operating picture, including the software, training, and staff needed for its operation.
- As needed, assist MEMA with the Public Disaster Assistance process if a Presidential Disaster Declaration is being investigated.

## **5.0 Situational Awareness and Information Sharing**

### **5.1 Overview**

Maintaining situational awareness and establishing a common operating picture is critical for all agencies and organizations involved in the response to potential or actual cases of HPAI in Massachusetts.

The SEOC will use the following information-sharing platforms and communications tools to provide essential information to public safety partners:

- WebEOC
- Emergency Management Response System
- Geographic Information Systems
- Situational Awareness Statements
- Incident Action Plans
- Briefings

### **5.2 WebEOC**

WebEOC is one of the primary incident management tools utilized by MEMA, local emergency management agencies, and numerous regional, state, and federal agencies and organizations to share situational awareness and manage resource requests and mutual aid during major incidents and disasters.

For an HPAI incident, WebEOC will function as the SEOC's primary platform for recording, tracking, and sharing information with public safety and state agency partners and managing resource requests and mutual aid related to HPAI. A WebEOC "Event" will be created specifically for tracking and managing HPAI response operations. Within the WebEOC HPAI Event, several boards will be utilized to manage information and track resources. These boards include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Significant Events Board: The Significant Events Board will serve as the general situational awareness and common operating platform to provide overall awareness of response activities.
- Site Status Board: The Site Status Board will be used to capture and share information that is specific to sites (infected premises, at-risk premises, contact premises) and control zones. This will allow for comprehensive tracking and sharing of information about response actions at or pertaining to specific sites or controls zones.
- Incident File Library: The File Library will be used to save, store, and share plans, maps and documents pertaining to HPAI response operations.

Access to the WebEOC HPAI Event Boards will be provided only to those individuals, agencies and organizations that have a demonstrated need for access to the information. All personnel, agencies and organizations working within the SEOC and supporting HPAI response operations will be expected to utilize WebEOC as the primary platform for documenting, tracking, and sharing information about HPAI response operations.

### **5.3 Emergency Management Response System**

EMRS is a web-based tool used by USDA APHIS Veterinary Services to manage information related to routine investigations of Foreign Animal Disease (FAD), state-specific disease outbreaks, and other national animal health emergencies. EMRS helps provide timely and effective responses to animal health emergencies by streamlining the collection, management, and analysis of data from FAD investigations and other incidents. EMRS facilitates animal traceability, managing information on permits, movements, tracing, animal records, and animal identification. Based on their EMRS user roles, federal and state veterinary medical officers, animal health technicians, and various disease specialists and epidemiologists (state and federal) can:

- Collect and view animal disease data.
- Manage service activities.
- Manage resources.
- Create reports.
- Create maps of specific areas.

USDA and/or DAR will have access to and utilize EMRS in the SEOC and will post information from EMRS into WebEOC, and from WebEOC into EMRS, as necessary and required.

### **5.4 Geographic Information Systems**

If the State EOC is activated, a GIS Unit will be stood up within the Planning Section. The GIS Unit will utilize both pre-populated geospatial information and new data sets as needed to support incident operations and situational awareness requirements. Graphic products may include situation maps, briefing maps, and live, interactive web mapping, and mobile GIS applications. GIS products will be shared via MEMA's ArcGIS and WebEOC platforms.

If the SEOC is not active, GIS resources may be made available upon request at the determination of MEMA.

### **5.6 Situational Awareness Statements**

When the SEOC is activated for HPAI response operations, the Situation Unit will prepare Situational Awareness Statements (SASs) as circumstances warrant and as directed by the Unified Command Group. SASs will provide timely information on the status of the overall response and on significant incidents, actions, and decisions. SASs will be posted in WebEOC and disseminated via email to stakeholders.

If the SEOC is not activated, MEMA's Director or designee may assign the Planning Unit to develop and disseminate SASs to stakeholders depending on the severity of the event.

### **5.7 Incident Action Plans**

If the SEOC is activated, the Planning Section will issue Incident Action Plans (IAPs) as necessary on a schedule determined by the UCG. The IAP identifies the objectives and

priorities for the operational period for the SEOC and provides essential information regarding organization, position assignments, communications information, briefings schedule and weather conditions. The IAP will be distributed to all SEOC representatives and will be posted to the WebEOC Incident File Library.

## **5.8 SEOC Briefings**

If the SEOC is activated, regular briefings will be conducted for all personnel assigned to the SEOC. At the discretion of the UCG, personnel in the MEMA Regional EOCs and other facilities may be invited to participate in briefings via a virtual teleconference system and/or conference call bridge. A conference call bridge will be dedicated for these briefings.

The SEOC will publish a schedule of briefings in each day's IAP. In addition to scheduled briefings, the SEOC will conduct briefings as circumstances warrant to exchange information and discuss incidents/events, critical decisions, resource needs, mutual aid, etc. Advance notice of all briefings will be disseminated via WebEOC, by telephone, and through the MEMA Regional EOCs and agency/organization representatives present in the SEOC.

## **5.9 Public Information**

It is critical to communicate with the impacted municipalities regarding operations taking place in their communities. Municipal agencies which should be included in this discussion may include:

- Mayor's Office
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Emergency Management Director
- Natural Resources Department
- Recreation Department
- Board of Health
- Public Works Department

Messaging for responders approached by members of the public is contained within the Multiagency Health and Safety Guide (last revised in 2023).

If the SEOC is activated, a JIC will be established for the purpose of coordinating, developing, and disseminating public messaging. The JIC may operate virtually in-whole or in-part, or it may operate with all its members working in the SEOC.

It is recommended that the following agencies have a presence in the JIC or have a contributing voice to the development of any joint agency communications:

- Governor's Office
- Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

- Executive Office of Health and Human Services
- Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
- DFS
- MSP
- MEMA
- DAR
- DFW
- MassDEP
- MEP
- DCR
- DPH

In addition to the activation of a JIC, Mass 211 will be utilized as a public reporting and answering point for questions and resources. As a reporting mechanism, the public will be able to call 2-1-1 to report dead or suspicious domestic or wildlife. Once reports are received, Mass 211 will pass on the information to MEMA. If the SEOC is activated, the report will be passed directly to the SEOC. If the SEOC is not activated, then the report will be passed to MEMA's 24/7 Communications Center, who will relay the information to DAR and/or DFW. Additionally, as an information resource, members of the public and affected populations may call Mass 211 to ask questions and obtain information related to HPAI.

If there are questions regarding reporting of sick or dying birds, the following text has been provided:

To report sick or dead domestic poultry use the <https://www.mass.gov/forms/poultry-disease-reporting-form>) or by calling the Division of Animal Health at 617-626-1795. To report sick or dead wildlife use the online form found at <https://www.mass.gov/forms/report-observations-of-dead-wild-birds>

## **6.0 Administration, Finance and Logistics**

### **6.1 Financial Considerations**

The costs associated with an outbreak of HPAI may be extremely high and have significant impacts on agency budgets. Additionally, agencies may be able to seek reimbursement of costs through USDA or other federal programs, or to seek supplemental funding from the state. As such, documentation and record keeping of all preparedness and response costs is critically important.

In the event of widespread or multiple outbreaks of HPAI, the response will require many agencies to coordinate and may include many locations of concurrent operations. Each agency involved in the response, or that incurs expenses related to the response of an outbreak of HPAI, will be responsible for internally documenting their costs. Costs that should be documented include, but are not limited to:

- Straight time labor versus overtime costs
- Contractor costs
- Separation of costs incurred based on the county in which the work was completed (this separation is necessary for potential reimbursement under various federal programs)
- Capital purchases
- Consumable equipment
- Rental agreements
- Costs associated with just in time training
- Costs associated with requesting and receiving National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) resources

## **7.0 Plan Development and Maintenance**

This plan will be updated in accordance with the Emergency Management Program Administrative Policy and will ensure that appropriate stakeholder input is incorporated into updates. Additionally, this plan will be reviewed following any exercise or activation of the plan that identifies potential improvements. Revisions to this plan will supersede all previous editions and will be effective immediately.

The Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guide is maintained by the HPAI Working Group and will be updated as needed/ new information as it becomes available.

### **7.1 Training and Exercise**

This plan will be exercised as necessary, either via a stand-alone exercise or as part of a larger exercise that incorporates HPAI Coordination. All exercises will follow Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) standards for development and evaluation.

## **8.0 Demobilization**

If the SEOC is activated, agencies can work with the SEOC Planning Section and Operations Section to contextualize demobilization planning, including accessing data around trends, workloads, upcoming operations, and other information, as needed. Agencies can also request updates on priorities, objectives, and tasks as operations slow or cease. If the SEOC is not activated, this support can be requested by contacting the MEMA.

Agencies are responsible for managing their own assets, including demobilization procedures for ensuring the safe, orderly, and efficient return of personnel and resources to their original locations and operating status when their missions supporting HPAI response have concluded.

Demobilization of rostered and mobilized personnel and resources will be initiated based on operational needs at the direction of the UCG. It should be noted that agencies may be subject to rapid recall or to an SEOC activation based on operational needs.

## **9.0 Authorities and References**

### **9.1 Authorities**

The following is a list of applicable legal authorities which may apply if there is an HPAI outbreak or this plan is activated:

#### MA Department of Agricultural Resources

- MGL c. 129, §2 – Grants authority to DAR’s director of animal health to make and enforce reasonable orders, rules and regulations relative to the examination, quarantine, care and treatment or destruction of domestic animals affected with or exposed to contagious disease, the burial or other disposal of their carcasses and the cleansing and disinfection of premises where contagion exists or has existed.
- MGL c. 129, §6 – Sheriffs and police officers “shall” assist the director of animal health or inspector of animals upon request.
- MGL c. 129, §7 – Permits the director of animal health, any of his agents or an inspector to enter any building, enclosure, or other place to inspect or examine animals or the places they are kept.
- MGL c. 129, §11 – Permits the director of animal health to order the isolation or killing of a domestic animal if the public good requires such. An order for killing shall be issued in writing by the director and shall contain such direction as to the examination and disposal of the carcass and the cleansing and disinfection of the premises.
- MGL c. 129, §21 – Permits an inspector of animals who, after examining a domestic animal has reason to believe it is affected with a contagious disease shall immediately cause it to be quarantined or isolated for at least 10 days. Take other sanitary measures to prevent the spread of such disease as may be necessary or as ordered by the director of animal health.
- MGL c. 129, §22 – Requires service of notice of quarantine to be served by an inspector of animals or officer qualified to serve civil process.
- MGL c. 129, §30 – Permits fines and imprisonment for violation of isolation or quarantine orders.
- MGL c. 129, §37 – Permits the Commissioner of Agriculture or his designee to impose fines for violations of any rules, regulations, orders, licenses or permits issued under this chapter. Establishes concurrent jurisdiction to enforce this chapter and to restrain violation in both Superior and District court. Allows application for an injunction in order to protect human or animal health without alleging or proving the lack of other adequate remedies at law.

#### MA Department of Public Health

- MGL c. 17, §2A – Grants the commissioner of public health certain powers upon declaration of a public health emergency by the governor.
- MGL c. 111, §31A – Removal or transport of garbage through town or city streets requires permit from local board of health. Motor vehicles owned by the Commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions and motor vehicles engaged under contract with the Commonwealth in the transportation of garbage or refuse are exempt from this provision.
- 105 CMR 480.000 – Establish minimum requirements for the management of medical or biological waste (which is defined at 105 CMR 480.010 to include animal waste infected with avian influenza). 105 CMR 480.550 states the following conditions under which DPH may approve, in writing, alternative methods not authorized by 105 CMR 480.000 for the treatment, storage or disposal of medical or biological waste : (1) an application has been submitted to DPH; (2) the method has been validated by scientific studies acceptable to the DPH; and (3) that method has been approved by DPH's Medical and Biological Waste Alternative Treatment Review Group; and (4) if the waste it to be transported off-site, the waste treatment facility has been approved by MassDEP or, if shipped out of state, by the appropriate agency in that state.
- 105 CMR 480.200: Disposal. (D) Contaminated Animal Waste – Contaminated animal waste shall be disposed of at an approved incineration facility, by proper burial, by internment, or by an alternate method approved in writing by the Department. Unprocessed liquid pathological waste may also be disposed of in accordance with 105 CMR 480.200(A), and tissue may also be disposed of in accordance with 105 CMR 480.200 (C).

#### MA Department of Fisheries and Wildlife

- MGL c. 131, §25A – Permits Director of Fisheries and Wildlife to issue and serve a quarantine order to owner or person in charge of premises who he has reason to believe possess a wild or undomesticated bird afflicted with a contagious or infectious disease.
- MGL c. 131, §25B – Permits Director to issue an order of destruction of a quarantined bird if so required by the “public good”. Order shall also include directions for the disposal of the carcass and the disinfection of the premises.
- MGL c. 131, §25C – Sets forth penalties for violation of quarantine orders.

#### Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

- MGL c. 21A, §10C – Grants wardens, environmental police officers and deputy environmental police officers police powers throughout the Commonwealth, subject to rules and regulations adopted by the director of law enforcement.
- MGL c. 21A, §10E – Permits wardens, environmental police officers and deputy environmental police officers enter upon and pass through private lands in the performance of their duties.

#### Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

- M.G.L. c. 111, §150A –Grants broad authority to the Department to issue permits to solid waste facilities, including the authority to condition those permits in order to protect the public health.

- 310 CMR 19.061(3) (c): Management Requirements for Medical or Biological Waste – This regulation requires that no biological waste can be disposed of at a landfill or incinerator unless the waste is rendered non-infectious pursuant the requirements of DPH's regulations at 105 CMR 480.000: *Minimum Requirements for the Management of Medical or Biological Waste (State Sanitary Code Chapter VIII)*.
- 310 CMR 19.007(1) – Permits MassDEP staff and authorized representatives to enter any facility or other property where solid waste is located to “protect the public health, safety or the environment,” provided staff and authorized representatives receive consent. MassDEP staff and authorized representatives may enter without consent “if emergency conditions require immediate entry, or as otherwise authorized by law.”
- 310 CMR 19.007(4) – Requires owners and operators of facilities or other property not to restrict, impede or delay an inspection by MassDEP personnel or authorized representatives where the inspection request was reasonable or otherwise authorized by law.
- 310 CMR 19.007(5)— Authorizes MassDEP to seek a warrant from a court, judge, justice or magistrate if access is denied or MassDEP cannot locate the owner, operator or person in control of the facility of property.
- G.L. c. 21E, § 8 – Authorizes MassDEP to enter any site location for the protection of public health, safety, or welfare, or the environment at reasonable times and upon reasonable notice, to investigate, sample, and inspect any records, conditions, equipment, practice, or property. In the event that the Department reasonably determines as a result of such investigation, sampling, or inspection that there has been a release or that there is a threat of release of oil or hazardous material from or at such location, MassDEP and its authorized personnel, agents, representatives, or contractors may enter such location and areas proximate thereto and undertake such actions pursuant to section four and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan relative to the assessment, containment, and removal of oil or hazardous material as it reasonably deems necessary.
- G.L. c. 21E, §4 (Response Actions) – Authorizes MassDEP to take or arrange for such response actions as it reasonably deems necessary, whenever it has reason to believe that oil or hazardous material (including infectious disease) has been released or that there is a threat of release of oil or hazardous material. Prior to undertaking any response action, MassDEP must notify the owner or operator of a site. Such notice shall not be required when, because of an emergency or other circumstances, the giving of such notice would be impractical.

#### Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

- Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 (MA Civil Defense Act) – Identifies MEMA as the lead state agency to coordinate a state response to an emergency or disaster. Outlines the powers of the Governor during a declared state of emergency

## 9.2 References

Contact the respective agency for more information and/or a copy of the document.

### MA Department of Agricultural Resources

- MDAR Multi-Agency Health and Safety Guidance (v4)
- MDAR Infectious Disease Plan
- MDAR Lowly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response Plan

### MA Department of Environmental Protection

- Mass DEP Compost Plan
- Mass DEP/ Contractor Health and Safety Plan
- Mass DEP Operations: Large Farm/ Compost Flow Chart
- Mass DEP Operations: Small Farm/ CO2 Flow Chart
- Mass DEP HPAI Decontamination Plan

### MA Department of Public Health

- Mass DPH ESF 08 - ConOps for HPAI

### Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

- Commonwealth of MA CEMP  
<https://www.mass.gov/lists/state-emergency-management-all-hazards-plans>

### U.S. Department of Agriculture

- USDA HPAI Biosecurity Checklist  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/downloads/animal\\_diseases/ai/HPAIChecklist.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/animal_diseases/ai/HPAIChecklist.pdf)
- USDA HPAI Preparedness and Response Plan 2017  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai\\_response\\_plan.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai_response_plan.pdf)
- USDA State Checklist  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/newstatechecklist.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/newstatechecklist.pdf)
- USDA Overview of Finance and Administration Procedures and Requesting a DUNS and SAM number  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/1-overviewfinanceadminprocedures.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/1-overviewfinanceadminprocedures.pdf)  
Instructions for DUNS and SAM number- see page 27  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/animal\\_diseases/avian/downloads/vsg-8603.2-procedures-claims-h5h7-lpai-poultry.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/avian/downloads/vsg-8603.2-procedures-claims-h5h7-lpai-poultry.pdf)
- USDA Ready Reference Guide- Overview of Zones 2016  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/hpai\\_zones.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/hpai_zones.pdf)
- USDA HPAI Control Area Permitting Process 2022

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/permittingprocess.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/permittingprocess.pdf)

- USDA HPAI Permits- EMRS Customer Gateway  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/emrs\\_gateway\\_rrg.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/emrs_gateway_rrg.pdf)
- USDA Control Area Release Guidance  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/control\\_area\\_release.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/control_area_release.pdf)
- USDA Timeline, Eligibility, and Approval for Restocking Guidance  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/criteriarestock.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/criteriarestock.pdf)
- USDA Restocking Criteria for a Commercial Premises  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/restockingtemplate\\_ltr.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/restockingtemplate_ltr.pdf)
- USDA Post C&D Environmental Sampling Guidance  
[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/downloads/hpai/env\\_sampling\\_proced.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/downloads/hpai/env_sampling_proced.pdf)

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Animal Product:** Blood or any of its components, bones, bristles, feathers, flesh, offal, skins, and any by-product containing any of those components that originated from an animal or bird.

**Appraisal:** The assignment of a value for a specific animal based on all its attributes (e.g., blood lines, age, proofs, body condition, conformation, and health) and the current value of similar animals.

**Area Veterinarian in Charge:** The lead federal veterinarian for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS) agency in a specified area. Nationwide, AVICs are assigned to areas that encompass one or more states. They administer the federal veterinary programs within their assigned areas, in conjunction with the State Veterinarian's Office.

**Biosecurity:** A series of management practices designed to prevent the introduction of disease agents onto or prevents the spread from an animal production facility.

**Buffer Zone:** Zone that immediately surrounds an Infected Zone or a Contact Premises.

**Cleaning and Disinfection:** Practices involving a combination of physical and chemical processes that kill or remove pathogenic microorganisms – a combination that is vital for the eradication of disease.

**Confirmed positive diagnosis:** The State Veterinarian's determination that an animal has contracted a high-risk infectious animal disease, based on a definitive laboratory test, clinical symptoms, epidemiological information indicative of the disease of interest, and, when available, the judgment of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Assistant Area District Director (AADD)

**Control Zone:** Consists of an Infected Zone and Buffer Zone.

**Depopulation:** A method by which large numbers of animals must be destroyed quickly and efficiently with as much consideration given to the welfare of the animals as practicable. Usually reserved for emergency disease situations for containment of disease.

**Epidemiology:** The study of disease in populations and of factors that determine its occurrence.

**Eradication:** Reduction of an infectious disease's prevalence in the global host population to zero.

**Euthanasia:** Deliberate ending of an animal's life in a manner that causes minimal pain and distress.

**Fomite:** An inanimate object or material on which disease-producing agents may be conveyed (e.g., feces, bedding, harness, clothes, and vehicle tires).

**Foreign Animal Disease:** A terrestrial animal disease or pest, or an aquatic animal disease or pest, not known to exist in the United States or its territories.

**Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician:** A veterinarian who has received specialized training qualifying her or him to diagnose specific animal diseases using field analysis, laboratory test results, or a combination of the two.

**Free Area:** Includes a Surveillance Zone. Area not included in any Control Area.

**Hot Zone:** A zone, as identified by DAR, which contains infected birds and contaminated materials. This may include the entire farm or a portion of it.

**Infected Premises:** Premises where a presumptive positive case or confirmed positive case exists based on laboratory results, compatible clinical signs, case definition, and international standards.

**Monitored Premises:** Premises objectively demonstrates that it is not an Infected Premises, via flock testing or epidemiological investigation. Monitored Premises meet a set of defined criteria in seeking to move susceptible animals or products out of the Control Area by permit. These premises may be in the infected zone or the buffer zone.

**Movement Controls:** Control and/or restrictions of the movement of people, animals, vehicles, and equipment so that Biosecurity can be maintained during a disease outbreak.

**National Veterinary Stockpile:** Established by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 and operational in 2006. Able to deploy large quantities of veterinary resources anywhere in the continental U.S. within 24 hours.

**Outbreak:** The occurrence of more cases of disease than expected in a given area, or among a specific group, over a particular time period; many epidemiologists use the terms outbreak and epidemic interchangeably.

**Premises:** Includes a tract of land, and all of its buildings, as well as a separate farm or facility that is maintained by a single set of services and personnel.

**Presumptive positive diagnosis:** The State Veterinarian's determination that an animal has contracted an infectious animal disease, based on a field analysis by a Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD) and/or preliminary laboratory results and, when available, the judgment of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC).

**Quarantine:** To place animals in strict isolation to prevent the spread of disease.

**Surveillance:** Actions taken to determine the extent of an infectious disease outbreak, including identification of new cases.

**Surveillance Zone:** Zone outside and along the border of a Control Area. The Surveillance Zone is part of the free area.

**Tracing:** The process of determining all movements of infected or suspect animals back to disease incubation periods from the first known case and forward to the time of quarantine.

**Vaccinated Premises:** Premises where emergency vaccination has been performed. This may be a secondary premises designation.

**Vector:** An insect or any living carrier that transports an infectious agent from an infected individual to a susceptible individual or its food or immediate surroundings.

**Veterinary Services Incident Management Teams (VS IMTs):** Consists of trained teams of the United States Department of Agriculture animal industry specialists prepared to respond on short notice to agricultural and infectious disease incidents. The teams stand ready to assist the State Veterinarian with incident management and field operational command positions.

**World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH):** The intergovernmental organization created by the International Agreement of 25 January 1924, signed by 28 countries. In April 2011, the WOAH totaled 178 Member Countries. WOAH standards are recognized by the World Trade Organization as reference international sanitary rules. The purpose of the OIE is to guarantee the transparency of animal disease status world-wide.

**WOAH poultry** – all birds reared or kept in captivity for the production of any commercial animal products or for breeding for this purpose, fighting cocks used for any purpose, and all birds used for restocking supplies of game or for breeding for this purpose, until they are released from captivity.

**WOAH non-poultry-** Birds that are kept in a single household, the products of which are used within the same household exclusively, are not considered poultry, provided that they have no direct or indirect contact with poultry or poultry facilities. Birds that are kept in captivity for other reasons, including those that are kept for shows, racing, exhibitions, zoological collections and competitions, and for breeding or selling for these purposes, as well as pet birds, are not considered poultry, provided that they have no direct or indirect contact with poultry or poultry facilities.

**Zoonotic Disease/Zoonoses:** Diseases which are transmissible between animals and humans under natural conditions.

## Appendix B: Acronyms

AVIC	Area Veterinarian in Charge
AAVLD	American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians
AHE	Animal health emergency
AHT	Animal health technician
AI	Avian influenza
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
APIE	Air Pollution Incident Emergency
AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
BID	Department of Public Health Bureau of Infectious Diseases
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
DAR	Department of Agricultural Resources
DCR	Department of Conservation and Recreation
MassDEP	Department of Environmental Protection
DFS	Department of Fire Services
DFW	Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
DOT	Department of Transportation
DPH	Department of Public Health
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMRS	Emergency Management Reporting Software
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EOPSS	Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FAD	Foreign Animal Disease
FADDL	Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (Plum Island, NY)
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
FSA	Farm Services Agency
FSIS	Food Safety and Inspection Service

GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HASG	Health and Safety Resource Guide
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
HSPD-9	Homeland Security Presidential Directive-9
IMT	Incident Management Team
JIC	Joint Information Center
LPAI	Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza
MANG	Massachusetts Army National Guard
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
MEP	Massachusetts Environmental Police
MSP	Massachusetts State Police
NADC	National Animal Disease Center
NAHERC	National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps
NAHLN	National Animal Health Laboratory Network
NAHEMS	National Animal Health Emergency Management System
NAHRS	National Animal Health Reporting System
NAHSS	National Animal Health Surveillance System
NCAHEM	National Center for Animal Health Emergency Management
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
NVS	National Veterinary Stockpile
NVSL	National Veterinary Services Laboratories
NVSL-Ames	National Veterinary Services Laboratories-Ames, IA
NVSL-FADDL	National Veterinary Services Laboratories-Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory Plum Island, NY
NWHC	National Wildlife Health Center
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PIO	Public Information Officer
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPQ	Plant Protection and Quarantine
RSS	Receipt, Staging, and Storage
SAS	Situational Awareness Statement
SED	State Executive Director

SEOC	State Emergency Operations Center
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SNS	Strategic National Stockpile
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UCG	Unified Command Group
USAHA	United States Animal Health Association
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VMO	Veterinary Medical Officer
VS	Veterinary Services
WOAH	World Organization for Animal Health
WS	Wildlife Services

## **Appendix C: DEP and MDAR Animal Health Memorandum of Understanding**

**Description:** This document details cooperation and deconflicts responsibilities related to the response operations on infected premises. It outlines the authorities to be used for specific actions related to these activities. It also details the means by which the MOU may be modified or terminated.

A copy of this document is contained within the MEMA Planning Unit Microsoft SharePoint folder under the sub-folder HPAI. Contact MEMA to access this document.

## **Appendix D: Approval of On-site Composting as an Alternative Treatment Methodology**

**Description:** This document is a response from the Department of Health and Human Services to a request from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources from 2018 to allow on-site composting of HPAI-related carcasses in accordance with 105 CMR 480.000 and in line with recommendations from USDA guidance.

A copy of this document is contained within the MEMA Planning Unit Microsoft SharePoint folder under the sub-folder HPAI. Contact MEMA to access this document.