

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT - OMB NO. 0579-0071
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONSE SYSTEM (EMRS)
FORMERLY: FIELD EPIDEMIOLOGY DATA SYSTEM (FEDS)**

August 2008

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

Title 7, U.S.C. 8301, The Animal Health Protection Act, authorizes the Secretary to prevent, control, and eliminate contagious, infectious, and communicable diseases. Disease prevention is the most effective method of maintaining a healthy animal population, continuing a safe food supply and enhancing APHIS' ability to compete in marketing its animal and animal product worldwide.

Disease prevention is the most effective method for maintaining a healthy animal population and enhancing our ability to compete in the world market of animals and animal products.

In connection with this mission, the Veterinary Services (VS) Program of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) investigates suspected foreign animal disease (FAD) occurrences. Through these investigations, APHIS is able to protect the health of the U.S. livestock and poultry populations.

APHIS' authority to investigate suspected occurrences of FADs in livestock or poultry is delineated in Public Law 87-518, dated July 2, 1962; and 21 U.S.C. 111, 112, 113, 114, 114a, 120, and 134a. The regulations implementing these laws are found in part 53 of Title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations*.

Through its FAD Surveillance Program, the Emergency Management Staff of VS compiles essential epidemiological and diagnostic data that is used to define FADs and their risk factors. The data is compiled through the VS Emergency Management Response System (EMRS), a web-based database for reporting investigations of suspected FAD occurrences. This electronic collection of data replaces VS Form 12-27, which is no longer in use.

2. Indicate how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

Emergency Management Response System (EMRS)

When a potential FAD incident is reported, APHIS or State animal health authorities dispatch a foreign animal disease diagnostician to the site to conduct an investigation. The Federal or State diagnostician obtains vital epidemiological data by conducting field investigations and by interviewing the owner/manager of the premises being investigated. Information recorded in EMRS includes items such as the following: the purpose of the diagnostician's visit to the site, the name and address of the owner/manager, the type of operation being investigated, the number and type of animals on the premises, whether any animals have been moved to or from the premises and when this movement occurred, the number of sick or dead animals, the results of physical examinations of the affected animals, the results of postmortem examinations, the number and kinds of samples taken, and the name of the suspected disease.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

Data that at one time was collected on a hard copy of the VS Form 12-27 is now obtained electronically. This allows disease epidemiological and diagnostic information to be collected and transmitted easier and faster. It must also be noted that this electronic form is completed by a State or Federal diagnostician, not by the owner/manager of the premises being investigated. The owner/manager assists in this process by verbally providing information for input into the EMRS. In 2004 the electronic architecture for EMRS was put in place to reduce public burden. The EMRS can be accessed only by State Departments of Agriculture or VS field veterinarians. Step-by-step instructions for accessing and using this system can be found at the following website:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ep/EMRS_for_Routine_FAD_Investigations.htm

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose described in item 2 above.

The information that APHIS collects is not available from any other source. APHIS is the only Federal agency responsible for detecting and eradicating FADs.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The information collected is the absolute minimum needed to conduct meaningful surveillance for FADs. There are no small entities included in this collection.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

If this information is not collected, APHIS will have no way to detect and monitor FAD outbreaks in the United States, thus eliminating the possibility of early detection and eradication. A FAD outbreak would be an economically damaging event not only for the U.S. livestock or poultry industries, but for the U.S. consumer as well.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

This information collection is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines established in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting form, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the Agency's notice, soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

APHIS has engaged in productive consultations during 2008 with the following individuals concerning the information collection activities associated with this program:

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On Friday, April 11, 2008, pages 19802-19803, APHIS published in the Federal Register, a 60-day notice seeking public comments on its plans to request a three year renewal of this collection of information. No comments from the public were received.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

This information collection activity involves no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or Agency policy.

No additional assurance of confidentiality is provided with this information collection. However, the confidentiality of information is protected under 5 U.S.C. 552a.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include reasons why the Agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This information collection activity asks no questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

•Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.

See APHIS Form 71. Burden estimates were developed from discussions with APHIS headquarters and field personnel, State veterinary authorities, and owner/operators of livestock and poultry operations in the United States.

•Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.

Respondents are owner/operators of livestock and poultry producing operations. APHIS estimates the total annualized cost to these respondents to be \$66,079. APHIS arrived at this figure by multiplying the hours of estimated response time (2,640 hours) by the estimated average hourly wage of the above respondents (\$25.03).

\$25.03 is the hourly rate derived from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics June 2005 Report - National Compensation Survey: Occupational Wages in the United States, August 2006. See <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/sp/ncbl0832.pdf>

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There is zero annual cost burden associated with capital and start-up costs, operation and maintenance expenditures, and purchase of services.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The annualized cost to the Federal government is estimated at \$106,914.00. (See APHIS Form 79.)

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

The number of respondents increased by +25, and the total annual responses increased by +100, due to a slightly larger number of animal incidents in the United States (such as vesicular stomatitis outbreaks in the west) resulting in increased APHIS activity in the area of disease surveillance and investigation and an increase of 100 burden hours bringing the new total burden hours to 2,640. These developments have resulted in increased use of the Emergency Management Response System.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

APHIS has no plans to publish information it collects in connection with this program.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

No forms are included in this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."

APHIS can certify compliance with all provisions under the Act.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

There are no statistical methods associated with the information collection activities used in this program.