



## State Animal Response Teams

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **More than 1,500 Displaced Animals Receive Treatment in Hattiesburg, Miss.**

*N.C. SART uses its diverse areas of expertise to assist Mississippi Animal Response Team*

**Raleigh, N.C. (September 22, 2005)** – The emergency management specialists, veterinarians and animal control officers, who make up the incident team coordinated by North Carolina’s State Animal Response Team (SART), utilize their various fields of expertise to assist with the animal response efforts in Hattiesburg, Miss.

Mississippi’s Animal Response Team (MART) has organized a large-scale animal shelter and supply distribution center to provide relief to the Gulfcoast areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

“We are working in cooperation with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to organize and maintain inventory control of donated goods,” said Sharron Stewart, deputy pesticide administrator, N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services.

More than 1,500 displaced animals have been processed and cared for at the Hattiesburg facility. Currently the shelter houses approximately 900 animals.

“These animals have been traumatized by the storm and it is our job to care for them, gather their information and try to reunite them with their proper families,” said Dr. Mary Blinn, shelter veterinarian for Charlotte/Mecklenburg Animal Control. “With so many animals, we still have a big job ahead of us.”

In addition to Blinn, the N.C. team also includes two other veterinarians and two veterinarian technicians.

The N.C. team is charged with assisting with the overall management of the animal response and recovery efforts. In order to complete its mission, N.C. SART recruited multiple emergency management and communications experts, along with the veterinary experts, to work with MART on these and many other tasks involved with this relief effort.

Acting as Planning Section chief, Mark Howell, an emergency management specialist from Hickory, N.C., is responsible for overseeing and providing strategy to accomplish each day’s objectives.

“Coming from North Carolina, a state that has seen its fair share of natural disasters, we hope that we will be able to offer some of our experiences and insights to help MART with this animal response and recovery effort,” said Howell.

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About SART:

*Founded in North Carolina after Hurricane Floyd, SART's mission is providing prevention, response and recovery for animal emergencies. SART's public-private partnership includes governmental agencies, veterinarians, animal industry and advocacy groups. SART is the recognized national leader in the implementation of the Incident Command System (ICS) as a means for managing animal emergencies during disasters, and promotes the formation of County Animal Response Teams on the local level. For more information go to [www.sartusa.org](http://www.sartusa.org).*

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