Good Afternoon!
I am Paul Studivant, Division Chief of St Johns County Animal Control.

And the Florida Animal Control Association (FACA) Representative:
The Florida Animal Control Association is the subject matter expert when it comes to companion animals and can be a resource for other animal issues of concern for ESF-17 Response

Whether it be..................
fire
flood
HURRICANE
Or foreign animal disease outbreak
A common thread in all disasters is:

Where there are people issues there will be a corresponding animal issue.
The why is simple:
Animals belong to people.
either emotionally as pets, friends, companions, or replacement for lost family members......
Or as livestock & livelihood.
These bonds are real and as strong as steel cable.
Today, meeting the needs of people is not the only concern with disasters. Animals have taken a new place in preparedness, planning and legal requirements.

Some people will not leave a disaster without their animals even if it puts their life in danger. Likewise if they have an animal at home they will want to get to that animal or have someone get to that animal in and after a disaster. We must understand these issues to properly prepare.
Basic things that need protection:

• Family
• Residences/Homes
• Personal Property/Possessions
• Pets

• What is the most important?
When asked, which one they would want given a rescue priority ... *family and pets nearly tie as the top priority, this is how we now think of pets*
Florida has designated Emergency Support Function 17 as the support function for Animal Issues during all emergencies.
Primary responsibility for ESF-17: Animal Protection rests with The local ESF-17 Coordinator Through the Local Emergency Management Agency
why choose the local animal care and control agency for this role.....

it is the most logical selection.....
First:

When the local, or state, or the federal government issues an Emergency Declaration, as a county agency, our public resources become available to the citizens at risk.

There is legal authority for animal control officers similar to law enforcement and code enforcement officials making them first responders.
Volunteer groups, industry or private industry alone cannot offer these total resources.

Someone needs to be in charge that has a permanent stake in the local area and has a true responsibility to the citizens (i.e. local government)
Second:

Statutory Authority mandates through Chapter 252...

252.38 Emergency management powers of political subdivisions.--Safeguarding the life and property of its citizens is an innate responsibility of the governing body of each political subdivision of the state.

252.34 Definitions.--As used in SS. 252.31-252.60, the term:

(1) "Disaster" means any natural, technological, or civil emergency that causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to result in a declaration of a state of emergency by a county, the Governor, or the President of the United States.
Third: . . . .

Our state certified, trained animal care professionals, and our valued contacts with volunteer and other organizations that are ready to assist in an effected area.

This means in a real emergency situation no emergency can occur that we cannot have a person on scene to assist our citizens in less time than an outside group that may not know the area or may have to be dispatched from a distance. Animal Control has experience in responding within an hour to emergency calls every day.
IT IS THE GOAL OF ESF-17 ANIMAL PROTECTION

To provide rescue, protective care, feeding and identification of animals separated from their owners.
And to provide for public health and safety.
FACA Can Provide:

1. Expertise
2. Experience
3. Training
4. Special Skills/Equipment
5. Highly Trained Animal Handlers
6. State Certified Staff for Chemical Immobilization and Euthanasia when Required
FACA’s Mission is to provide professional support and companion animal expertise for disaster and ESF-17 response. Through experience, education, and expertise.

The Florida response to Katrina has shown that FACA agencies are able to work as a very cohesive and professional group even with members from different agencies working together. That is due to the training and continued support provided by FACA to animal control agencies throughout the state.
This is done through mitigation activities, preparedness plans, response to emergencies, and recovery operations.
Some of the Resources:

Florida Animal Control Association
Florida Veterinary Medical Association
Florida Cattlemen's Association
DART
Disaster Animal Response Team
EARS
Emergency Animal Rescue Service
Sunshine Horse Council
FACA can assist with... emergency disease control...
coordination of evacuation and rescue...
temporarily confinement, shelter, food and water for displaced animals...
prevent or control the spread of disease of public health significance
and assisting with the disposal of dead animals.
Our Policies

ESF 17 will be implemented at the request of the local Emergency Operations Center.
ESF 17 may seek assistance from animal control agencies, humane or volunteer organizations, livestock or farming organizations, or other animal industry or govt. agencies.
Our Policies

ESF 17 works through the County's Designated Animal Issues Coordinator only.
A disaster’s effects may be larger than the abilities of the local agency to handle, and far exceed its available resources and as such we have to have well defined support agencies and develop partnerships to assist us.
Partners in Protection

Law Enforcement

Marine Patrol
That old saying that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link is never more true than in Disaster Management.
Local, county, state, and federal response agencies must maintain the strength of the chain by having well defined and written MOUs, or plans.

FACA will not serve as a replacement for lack of planning, but will help fill a support function to the local plans when resources are needed.