

VERMONT AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS  
FOOD SAFETY CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
Meat Inspection Service  
MONTPELIER, VT  
Roger Allbee, Secretary



# MIS DIRECTIVE

5500.2  
Revision 6

3/19/14

## SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT RESPONSE

### I. PURPOSE

This directive outlines the procedures that the Emergency Management Committee (EMC) is to follow while managing a non-routine incident.

### II. CANCELLATION

FSIS Directive 5500.2, Revision 5 Significant Incident Response, 10/17/11

### III. BACKGROUND

A. A significant incident presents a grave or potentially grave threat to public health involving VT-regulated product. Examples of significant incidents include but are not limited to the following:

1. life-threatening, human illnesses potentially implicating VT-regulated product;
2. Class I recalls resulting from one or more illnesses involving VT-regulated product or if a Recall Committee is unable to reach consensus on whether the Agency should request that a company conduct a recall;
3. deliberate contamination of VT-regulated product;
4. An incident reported in a National Terrorism Alert System (NTAS) alert issued, updated, or revised by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is determined to pose a risk to VAAFPM personnel or the food and agriculture sector;
5. animal disease with potentially significant public health implications for VT-regulated product;

6. ineligible foreign product in the United States (U.S.) where there is a reasonable probability that the consumption of the product will pose a serious health hazard,

7. high risk products in the U.S. as identified by Customs and Border Protection;  
and

8. suspicious activities observed by program personnel while performing their normal duties.

9. Illegally imported or smuggled products in the United States (U.S.) where there is a reasonable probability that the consumption of the product will pose a serious health hazard;

B. Additional situations that VT may consider as non-routine incidents include:

1. natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes);

2. terrorist attacks on the nation's critical infrastructures;

3. other incidents requiring a national coordinated response that result in the activation of the Emergency Support Function -11 (ESF-11) or State Support Function – 11 (SSF-11), which is described in the Agriculture and Natural Resources Annex to the National Response Framework; and

4. incidents involving VT-regulated products and law enforcement authorities, e.g. stolen trucks.

#### **IV. AGENCY PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REPORTING A SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT**

A. Agency personnel are to immediately report any potential non-routine incident through supervisory channels. The information reported, at a minimum, is to include:

1. the name of the person who reported the incident,

2. date and time of the incident,

3. location of the incident,

4. the type of threat, hazard, or disease,

5. the type of product involved, and

6. number of reported illnesses and deaths (if applicable).
- B. VT state personnel do not have access to NRIMS. They will review the incident information and if appropriate, develop the IR.
  - C. For Class I recalls resulting in one or more illnesses (Section V, 2 of this directive), the Agency will initiate post the recall release in collaboration with the VT Dept. of Health (VTDOH).

## **VI. REVIEW OF THE NRIR**

A. The Director Food safety and Consumer Protection, Head of Service, Meat Inspection Chief, Compliance Officer, or their designees, will review the NRIR and, as appropriate, decide:

1. that no action is required at this time,
  2. to alert the EMC, or
  3. to activate the EMC.
- B. If the group determines that no further action is necessary at that time, the NRIR will either remain open, be closed, or be archived. An NRIR is closed when the incident that caused the report is resolved. An NRIR is archived when it is determined that the incident will take an extended period of time to resolve such as a criminal investigation is pending.
  - C. If the group determines that the incident may warrant further discussion, or needs action, the Secretary of Agriculture will be notified.

## **VIII. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)**

A. The EOC is comprised of senior management personnel, or designee, from each of the VT State Support Functions (SSF). Each SSF representative has the authority to commit, as necessary, the resources of his or her respective function in responding to the incident. The EOC duty roster is available on DisasterLan. The list contains on-call members and contact information for each SSF.

B. The Agency may, at any time, on any day of the year, address and manage the response to a non-routine incident involving potentially adulterated or adulterated VT-regulated product. In the event the incident does not result in VT-regulated product adulteration, the purpose of the SSF-11 activation would be to determine how to work with other involved agencies to assign responsibilities for any additional information gathering, and how to best provide the public with information about the safety of the

product.

C. The DEMHS serves as the Incident Commander (IC). The IC coordinates the work of the EOC in response to a particular non-routine incident. Depending on the nature, scope, and complexity of the incident, the IC may designate SSF 11 as IC to coordinate key activities critical to the management of the incident.

## **VIII. THE WORK OF THE AGENCY IF ADULTERATION OF VT REGULATED PRODUCT**

A. The Agency evaluates the information provided on the NRIR and determines what further information is needed to complete the assessment of the non-routine incident. The Agency also develops and implements an incident action plan.

B. The Agency, acting as SSF-11 if activation of the EOC, coordinates the development of responses to questions about the incident, including responses to standard questions about illness prevention, hazard detection, incident containment, and remediation. This is done in coordination with the VTDOH.

C. When the incident has been resolved, the IC, in conjunction with the EOC members, will deactivate the EOC. The NRIR will be closed.

## **IX. COMPLETING FSIS FORM 5500-8 IMPACT OF SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS ON ESTABLISHMENTS, WAREHOUSES, AND IMPORT ESTABLISHMENTS**

A. Agency personnel complete FSIS Form 5500-8 to collect and submit information about the operational status of official establishments, facilities that handle FSIS-regulated products (e.g. warehouses), and import facilities affected by a non-routine incident such as an earthquake or hurricane.

**NOTE:** The form is available in Outlook Public Folders\All Public Folders\Agency Issuances\Forms\5000 Series.

B. The following information is needed to complete the 5500-8:

1. the official identification numbers for non-operational establishments or facilities;

2. the addresses of non-operational high volume distribution points (e.g. wholesale grocery suppliers or transportation centers); and

3. the reason why the establishment or facility is not operational:

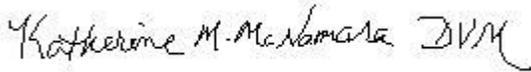
a. no establishment or facility personnel present;

- b. damage from flooding;
- c. building destroyed;
- d. no electricity; or
- e. other (specify).

C. After the initial submission of a completed FSIS Form 5500-8, it will be updated each time there is a change in a facility's operational status. Daily updates are not needed if there is no change in status.

## **X. ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION**

The information collected about non-routine incidents in NRIMS including operational status of establishments will be evaluated and analyzed by VT Meat Inspection Service.



Katherine M. McNamara, DVM  
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