PREPARATION. READINESS. EXECUTION.

BACKGROUND

The American Humane Association's Red Star® Rescue and Emergency Services for Animals responds to natural and man-made disasters, including animal cruelty, to assist animals and communities in crisis. The team consists of a national roster of approximately 200 professionally trained staff and volunteers.

During the past 10 years, Red Star has saved and sheltered more than 80,000 animals. An 82-foot rescue rig – fully equipped for both animal rescue and veterinary services – is the centerpiece of a fleet of boats and vehicles ready to deploy anywhere in the country on a moment's notice.

Founded in 1916 during World War I, Red Star has been involved in virtually every major relief effort, from Pearl Harbor to 9/11, as well as the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan, Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, the deadly tornado in Moore, Oklahoma, and most recently, the devastating floods in South Carolina.

Mission Manager, Inc. donated its incident management software to the Red Star team in September 2014 as part of its commitment to helping first responders save lives and property. Today, the team actively uses Mission Manager to manage its volunteer roster, deploy and track members during missions, and automate reports.

> "With the support of Mission Manager, the Red Star team can do a better job than ever in saving animal lives."
> – Randall "Randy" Collins
> National Director for Red Star Rescue and Emergency Services

THE CHALLENGE

Prior to adopting Mission Manager, the team did not have a comprehensive volunteer management system in place. Team leaders managed its volunteer roster by spreadsheet and deployed members via cut-and-paste email messages. Members were checked in/out of missions on a clipboard sheet, tasks and assignments were done by pen-and-paper, and reports typed up manually for reimbursements.

THE CHALLENGE

Without a comprehensive volunteer management system in place, Red Star leaders needed to find a more efficient way to manage and track their nationwide volunteers.

When an emergency occurred – whether it was a natural disaster or animal cruelty case – team leaders had to callout members via email batches and track responses manually. They also had to check in/out volunteers on a clipboard sheet, track field activities by ham radio and phone, and produce reports by pen-and-paper.

THE SOLUTION

Mission Manager provides an all-encompassing, automated solution for daily team management, mission execution and reporting. Now, with a click of a button, administrators can quickly deploy members based on qualifications, track volunteers and events in real time, and quickly produce reports for debriefs for reimbursements.

THE RESULTS

- Increased response speed
- Improved field communications
- Enhanced situational awareness
- Faster reimbursements
- Reduction in human error
- Savings in time and money

As a national organization with volunteers scattered throughout the country, it was clear that the team needed a more efficient way to manage and track their members before, during and after missions. They needed to find a more robust method to deploy their teams, especially during natural disasters when time was of the essence. They also needed to have better tools to prep for missions, particularly for animal cruelty cases that involved pre-planned raids.

"In the past, we managed our volunteers the old-fashioned way – practically on a stone tablet – which was very labor intensive," said Dean Berenbaum, former American Humane Association Emergency Services Resource Manager who rolled out and customized Mission Manager for the Red Star team.

THE SOLUTION

As an all-encompassing system, Mission Manager has made a tremendous difference for the team by integrating the volunteer roster, live mission data and reporting functions.

> **"Mission Manager has been a godsend for the Red Star team – it's comprehensive and very flexible," said Berenbaum. "It has helped the team become much more efficient by simplifying the volunteer management process."**

Because Mission Manager allows the team to easily manage its personnel roster, it is a lot easier for administrators to do a callout and track the volunteers' time on a deployment, he added.

"Now we have a database of our volunteers' information at our fingertips, rather than having to rely on a glorified spreadsheet," said Josh Cary, deputy director of Red Star team, who currently serves as the team's primary administrator for Mission Manager. "Administrators can now communicate more effectively with volunteers, regardless of their geographic region, because it is cloud-based in nature."

Although Cary admits the team is "barely scraping the surface" of Mission Manager's full functionalities, he is particularly impressed with the software's ease-of-use, the roster and efficient three-way callout feature. "We are delighted to use Mission Manager," he said, "and are looking forward to getting more in-depth with the features so we can fully integrate it into our operations."

HOW MISSION MANAGER IS USED

■ **PERSONNEL ROSTER:** The team relies heavily on the roster to determine who is field qualified and available for a mission. They need to make sure vaccinations are up-to-date, and see members' qualifications for animal handling and equipment. "It's a fabulous tool that shows volunteers' specialties," said Berenbaum. Best of all, the roster can be self-managed by the members per permission levels granted, which saves significant time for administrators.

■ **CALLOUTS:** In the past, the team handled its callouts by dividing up its roster, sending out several batches of email messages and tracking responses manually. "Now the callouts are super easy," said Berenbaum. "You just type a message and hit 'send,' (either individually or as selected categories), and it'll reach members by email, text or voice. That cuts hours of time when preparing for a deployment."

■ **CHECK IN/OUT:** Prior to Mission Manager, the team leader tracked volunteers with check in/out forms, where members had to manually write their emergency contact information. "Now as teams assemble, all that information is in the system once they check in," said Berenbaum.

■ **TASK ASSIGNMENTS:** Administrators can quickly assign tasks based on specialties, including dog teams, cat teams, etc., with a click drag-and-drop function. "That way everyone knows who's where and doing what," said Berenbaum.

■ **MAPPING/SITUATIONAL AWARENESS:** The team uses the mapping tool for preparation and real-time situational awareness during deployments. "The mapping tool is incredibly easy to use and especially useful when prepping for a mission," said Berenbaum. "You can use Mission Manager offline (without internet services) to mark the location of the command post; animal shelters; and the nearest hospitals, urgent care clinics and hotels – and print it out for distribution to the team … If you dig even deeper, you can determine the weather at each location and much more – it's like a treasure chest," he said.

■ **TRACKING & REPORTING:** Mission Manager produces detailed mission reports following a deployment, saving administrators hours of time. "Mission Manager is a huge help with our timekeeping reports and After Action Reviews," said Berenbaum, "The information from the radio logs self-populates the forms needed for reimbursements and automatically tracks the volunteers' hours and expenses; whereas in the past, we'd have to deal with up to 30 sheets of paper to total up volunteer hours," said Berenbaum, "And that was a massive chore."

MISSION MANAGER-SUPPORTED DEPLOYMENTS

Mission Manager has supported numerous Red Star animal rescues that made national headlines, including:

- **American Humane Association's Red Star® Rescue team involved in dramatic rescue effort underway in animal cruelty case involving 46 cats seized from Memphis-area home**
American Humane Association's 100-year old Red Star® Rescue Team Deploys to Save, Rehabilitate, and Care for Animals in City of Bartlett Animal Control's investigation (January 12, 2016)

- **National rescue team and giant truck arrive to help animals caught in historic South Carolina flooding**
American Humane Association's Red Star® Rescue Team and 50-foot Vehicle Deployed to Help Animals Following Devastating Rains and Floods (Oct. 29, 2015) .

- **Dramatic rescue effort underway in animal cruelty case involving seven horses, mules, and a mini-horse**
American Humane Association's Red Star® Rescue Team Deploys to Save, Rehabilitate, and Care for Animals in Fayette County Sheriff's Office Animal Cruelty Investigation (July 16, 2015)

- **American Humane Association deploys Red Star® Rescue Team to care for more than 80 dogs in Indiana**
Team sets up temporary shelter to provide around-the-clock to care for dogs seized from Posey County home (June 12, 2015)

- **American Humane Association's Red Star Rescue Team to help in New Jersey Animal Shelter Crisis**
Volunteer team and 50-foot Lois Pope Red Star Rescue Vehicle arrive to help 91 cats and 15 dogs found in deplorable conditions, build a better future for thousands of animals (December 8, 2014)

Check out the videos below to see the Red Star team in action and learn more about their beginnings.

- **VIDEO: Red Star national transport: Hundreds of dogs rescued and get new leash on life**

- **VIDEO: History of the American Humane Association's Red Star Team**

ABOUT MISSION MANAGER

Mission Manager provides cloud-based software designed to help save lives and property by enabling first responders to operate more efficiently and effectively. Mission Manager's team member and asset management capabilities, combined with its calendar and communication functions, allow users to enhance team readiness through optimized training and seamlessly integrate mission-specific operations during real-time events. Since 2011, Mission Manager has supported approximately 7,000 actual missions ranging from single-person rescues to large public events and full-scale natural disaster response. Mission Manager is currently used in all 50 US states, and on every continent except Antarctica. Truly a global tool, Mission Manager is available in 80 languages. For learn more, visit www.missionmanager.com