

Virginia Department of  
Emergency Management



2006

VERTTE



After-Action Report

**VERTEX 2006  
AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **VERTEX 2006 AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. The title of this document is the Consolidated Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) 2006 After-Action Report (AAR) Executive Summary.
2. Points of contact:

**Virginia Department of Emergency Management**  
10501 Trade Court  
Richmond, Virginia 23236  
Phone: (804) 897-6500  
E-mail: [www.vaemergency.com](http://www.vaemergency.com)

**VERTEX 2006  
AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Table of Contents**

**Executive Summary.....5**

    Exercise Scope .....5

    Exercise Overview .....5

    Exercise Participants .....6

    Exercise Evaluation .....6

**Chapter 1: Exercise Objectives.....8**

**Chapter 2: Exercise Overview .....9**

    Scenario .....9

    Participating Organizations..... 10

    Number of Participants..... 12

# **VERTEX 2006 AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Executive Summary**

Domestic security preparedness involves a cycle of outreach, planning, capability development, training, exercising, evaluation, and improvement. Successful exercises lead to an ongoing program of process improvement. This AAR is intended to assist the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC), the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT), and supporting jurisdictions by providing the following:

- Identification of strengths to be maintained and enhanced
- Identification of potential areas for further improvement
- Recommended follow-up actions

The suggested actions in this AAR should be viewed as recommendations only. In some cases, agencies may determine that the benefit of their implementation does not outweigh the costs. In other cases, agencies may identify alternative solutions that are more effective or cost-efficient. Each agency should review the recommendations and determine the most appropriate actions and resources (time, staff, funds, etc.) for implementation.

## **Exercise Scope**

The Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) 2006 Functional Exercise (FE) was a 6-hour exercise conducted on April 27, 2006, focusing on the response and recovery operations associated with the impact from a major hurricane 72 hours after making landfall on the eastern coast of Virginia causing widespread power outages, major infrastructure damage, flooding, and casualties. The exercise was designed to assess the Commonwealth, represented by the agencies and departments, both State and Federal, that comprise the VERT and operating from within the VEOC to provide a coordinated response in support of local jurisdictions impacted by a major storm/large-scale disaster. Participants played out activities at both the operational and planning levels, with an emphasis on decision-making, coordination, process execution, recognition, situational assessment, and the interoperability of communication during a multi-agency response. The activities of nonparticipating agencies were simulated.

The VERTEX 2006 FE scenario incorporated the information and activity developed for the VERTEX 2006 Senior Leaders Seminar held by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) on February 16, 2006. Scenario details were incorporated into situation reports, WebEOC entries, and Gubernatorial Executive Orders for reference during the exercise.

## **Exercise Overview**

VERTEX 2006 was a 6-hour, simulated-time functional exercise that lasted from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on April 27, 2006. The exercise focused on the response and recovery operations associated with the impact from a major hurricane making landfall on the eastern coast of Virginia. The exercise was designed to assess the Commonwealth, represented by the agencies and departments that comprise the VERT and operate from within the VEOC to provide a coordinated response in support of local jurisdictions impacted by a major storm/large-scale disaster.

# VERTEX 2006

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Exercise Participants

VERTEX 2006 attendees were designated the following roles for the purposes of the exercise:

- **Players** were the employees of the participating agencies and jurisdictions who would have active roles in responding to and recovering from the aftermath of a major hurricane. These personnel performed their emergency response and recovery roles as they would have in real life. Players responded to the simulated information or requests that should have initiated response actions relative to the exercise scenario. The players were the means by which the various systems and processes for command, control, and communication were demonstrated and evaluated.
- **Controllers** planned and managed the exercise, and substituted for EOC personnel and agencies not actually participating in the exercise. Controllers provided key data to participants and prompted or initiated certain participant actions to ensure exercise continuity. Controllers are the only individuals who can provide information or direction to the players. Controllers were present in all areas of the exercise and were accountable to a single Senior Controller.
- **Evaluators** were chosen by the planning committee based on their expertise and their ability to comment constructively on exercise response and recovery activities. They had a passive role in the exercise; they were there only to note player actions and in no way interfered with the flow of the exercise. Evaluators were present in all areas of the exercise and were accountable to the controllers in their area.
- **Observers** visited or viewed selected segments of the exercise. They did not participate in exercise play and did not perform control or evaluation functions. Observers were managed by players in each exercise venue according to their established methods for doing so.

### Exercise Evaluation

A controller and evaluator (C/E) briefing was conducted on Wednesday, April 26, 2006, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Headquarters at 10501 Trade Court, Richmond, VA 23236. At this briefing, evaluators were issued their materials for review, including exercise evaluation guides (EEGs), evaluation write-up templates, etc.

Evaluators constituted subject-matter experts on agency- or jurisdiction-specific plans, protocols, and procedures. They were assigned to various exercise venues or functions.

Once at their venues, all evaluators were to coordinate with their respective venue controllers to optimally position themselves within their assigned areas for maximum effectiveness in data collection. Each evaluator was to work with his or her specific controller to note any weaknesses in the master scenario events list, and to propose injects through the Senior Controller to the Exercise Director.

## **VERTEX 2006**

### **AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

After the exercise started, evaluators were responsible for collecting and recording exercise data, such as the dates and times of significant events and how players handled exercise issues (positive and negative). Immediately after the exercise, evaluators were asked to review their forms and notes to ensure an accurate reconstruction of events and activities for discussion at the C/E debriefing on Friday, April 28, 2006, at the VDEM Headquarters. Evaluation materials, including notes and forms, constituted part of the exercise documentation and were submitted to the exercise support staff at the C/E debriefing.

In addition to these activities, evaluators were responsible for post-exercise activities, such as collecting and recording information from the hot washes (debriefings) and submitting correctly formatted issue write-ups for inclusion in this after-action report.

# **VERTEX 2006 AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Chapter 1: Exercise Objectives**

The VERTEX 2006 Functional Exercise was designed to assess the response and recovery operations of the VERT, Federal departments and agencies, Department of Defense, and the impacted jurisdictions three days following a Category 4 hurricane in the Commonwealth. The agreed-upon exercise objectives were as follows:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the VEOC in conducting response and recovery operations, share critical information with participating jurisdictional EOCs, and maintain situational awareness.
2. Evaluate the ability of the VEOC to use its automated tools in managing mission requests and assignments and to monitor resources allocated to those missions.
3. Assess the ability of the VEOC to support the evacuation and sheltering of a large population before a hurricane impacts the east coast.
4. Assess the ability of the joint information center to provide emergency information to the media and the public.
5. Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the layout, design, and functionality of the new EOC.



# VERTEX 2006 AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Chapter 2: Exercise Overview

### Exercise Name

Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) 2006

**Duration** 6 hours

### Exercise Date

April 27, 2006

### Sponsor

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

### Type of Exercise

Functional Exercise (FE)

### Focus

- Response
- Recovery (Limited Play)
- Prevention
- Other

### Classification

- Unclassified
- For Official Use Only (FOUO)
- By Invitation Only

### Scenario

- Chemical release or threat (C)
- Biological release or threat (B)
- Radiological release or threat (R)
- Nuclear detonation or threat (N)
- Explosive detonation or threat (E)
- Cyber (Y)
- Other/Natural Disaster

# **VERTEX 2006 AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Locations**

- Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)
- Loudoun County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Northeast Region Office of U.S. Army Installations Management Agency EOC
- Region 3 Tabletop Exercise Venue
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Emergency Coordination Center (ECC)
- Virginia National Guard Joint Operations Center (JOC)

## **Jurisdiction/Entity Receiving Exercise**

Commonwealth of Virginia

## **Participating Organizations**

- VEOC:
  - Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
  - Department of Aviation
  - Department of Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel
  - Department of Conservation and Recreation
  - Department of Corrections
  - Department of Criminal Justice Services
  - Department of Environmental Quality
  - Department of Fire Programs
  - Department of Forestry
  - Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
  - Department of General Services
  - Department of Health
  - Department of Historic Resources
  - Department of Housing and Community Development
  - Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services
  - Department of Military Affairs
  - Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy
  - Department of Motor Vehicles
  - Department of Rail and Public Transportation
  - Department of Social Services
  - Department of State Police
  - Department of Transportation
  - Marine Resources Commission
  - State Corporation Commission
  - Virginia Employment Commission
  - Virginia Information Technology Agency
  - Virginia Port Authority
  - Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters

# VERTEX 2006

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- American Red Cross
- Loudoun County EOC:
  - Command and Control
  - Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Operations
  - Information and Planning
  - Law Enforcement
  - Public Health
  - Public Information
  - Public Works and Engineering
- Region 3 Tabletop Exercise Venue:
  - Buckingham County
  - Halifax County
  - Mecklenburg County
  - Cumberland County
  - Prince Edward County
- VDH ECC:
  - ECC Manager
  - Administration Support
  - Hospital Coordinator
  - Logistics Coordinator
  - Office of Drinking Water
  - Office of EMS
  - Office of Environmental Health Services
  - Office of Epidemiology
  - Office of Information Management/Communicator
  - Public Information Officer
  - Radiological Health
  - Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator
- Northeast Region Office of U.S. Army Installation Management Agency EOC:
  - Watch Officer
  - Message Center
  - Battle Captains
  - Director of Public Works
  - Director of Human Resources
  - Director of Public Information
  - Director of Legal Affairs
  - Resource Manager
  - Family Assistance

**VERTEX 2006**  
**AFTER ACTION REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- Virginia National Guard JOC:
  - Battle Captain
  - Journal Noncommissioned Officer
  - NCO In Charge
  - JOC Watch Team Leader
  - JOC Watch Team Member
  - Personnel Representative
  - Logistics Representative

**Number of Participants**

- Players ..... 220
- Controllers ..... 32
- Evaluators ..... 13