

Virginia Department of
Emergency Management

2007



Functional Exercise

April

2007



VERTTE



After-Action Report

Executive Summary

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to analyze exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support the development of corrective actions. The Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia's Emergency Response Team (VERT) hurricane functional exercise (FE) (VERTEX 2007) was developed to test the VERT's preparations, response, and recovery operations. This exercise was evaluated using the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines, specifically and in alphabetical order by the capabilities of Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place, Communications, Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution, Economic and Community Recovery, Emergency Operations Center Management, Emergency Public Information and Warning, Fatality Management, Firefighting Operations and Support, Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense, Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings, Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services), Medical Surge, Structural Damage and Mitigation Assessment, Urban Search and Rescue, and Volunteer and Donations Management. Law Enforcement capabilities are covered under Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place, Emergency Operations Center Management, and Fatality Management, while Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination is covered under Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings.

Among the capabilities not included in this report are Environmental Health, Onsite Incident Management, and Restoration of Lifelines.

The exercise planning team comprised numerous and diverse agencies, including but not limited to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM); Virginia Department of Health (VDH); Virginia State Police; Virginia Department of Military Affairs; Department of Transportation; Department of Social Services; Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Virginia Information Technologies Agency; Department of Environmental Quality; jurisdictional representatives from the emergency management regions; DHS, DoD, and other Federal entities; and Old Dominion University's Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center.

The Virginia Fusion Center's focus was primarily the Noble Resolve Exercise with NORTHCOM and providing pertinent information to and through the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) during VERTEX 2007. The simultaneous National Capital Region exercise, Regional Response '07, was coordinated to be a stand-alone exercise, held within the framework of VERTEX 2007 using the same scenario. The VDEM Region 3 Tabletop Exercise was also conducted during VERTEX 2007 as a follow-on to that region's 2006 tabletop exercise concerning inland host sheltering in central Virginia.

Section 1: Exercise Design Summary

VERTEX 2007 was a 3½- day event conducted April 23–26, 2007, in Richmond, VA. Through the exercise, various Commonwealth and local agencies and jurisdictions realized their roles, responsibilities, and emergency response capabilities when responding to the aftermath of a major hurricane. The hurricane made initial landfall in North Carolina, quickly impacting the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, and took a northwestern to northeasterly direction, moving through central Virginia, the National Capital Region (NCR), northern portions of Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

A tabletop exercise was conducted for the local jurisdictions in Emergency Management Region 3 in conjunction with the VERTEX 2007. It involved local decision makers in a discussion of hurricane evacuation and response issues, policies, and procedures, with a focus on inland host sheltering.

The Noble Resolve exercise, a U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) exercise supported by U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM), was conducted April 9–13, 2007, preceding the VERTEX 2007 Functional Exercise (FE) with objective elements and overlapping scenario.

The Regional Response '07 exercise was conducted by the NCR, and was involved in ancillary exercise play concurrent with the VERTEX 2007 FE on April 26, 2007.

It must be noted that the VERTEX 2007 exercise involved many challenges. However, by incorporating all of the events within the context of the larger exercise, the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) demonstrated an ability to respond to multiple issues simultaneously.

Exercise Purpose and Design

The purpose was to demonstrate the preparedness system and the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Emergency Operating Plan (VEOP) and the Virginia Emergency Operations Center's (VEOC's) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). More specifically, the exercise focused on the critical entities responsible for directing, communicating, and coordinating Virginia's response and recovery efforts with regard to emergencies.

Exercise Objectives, Capabilities, and Activities

Capabilities-based planning allows for exercise planning teams to develop exercise objectives and observe exercise outcomes through a framework of specific action items that were derived from the Target Capabilities List (TCL). VERTEX 2007 was well underway in the design phase when the final U.S. Department of Homeland Security TCL was published in February 2007. It was determined that evaluation should be conducted using the most current Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs).

However, due to the timing of the release of the TCL and VERTEX 2007 planning process, the selection of capabilities and activities and matching them with specific objectives did not occur.

Consequently, the controllers and evaluators were asked to determine which TCLs were appropriate based on the scenario and the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) they were evaluating. The capabilities listed below form the foundation for the organization of all objectives and observations in this exercise. (The activities are captured in Chapter 3: Analysis of Capabilities.)

- **Objective 1:** Demonstrate the effectiveness of the VERT in conducting response and recovery operations and sharing critical information with participating jurisdictional emergency operations centers (EOCs) and maintaining situational awareness.
 - **Communications**
 - **Critical Resources Logistics and Distribution**
 - **Economic and Community Recovery**
 - **Emergency Operations Center Management**
 - **Firefighting Operations and Support**
 - **Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings**
 - **Medical Surge**
 - **Structural Damage and Mitigation Assessment**
 - **Urban Search and Rescue**

- **Objective 2:** Demonstrate the VERT's ability to define requirements, and locate, acquire, and plan for the distribution and accounting of critical personnel, facilities, and materiel in support of the response.
 - **Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution**
 - **Firefighting Operations and Support**
 - **Medical Surge**
 - **Structural Damage and Mitigation Assessment**
 - **Urban Search and Rescue**

- **Objective 3:** Demonstrate the ability of the VERT to use its automated tools in managing mission requests and mission assignments, and to monitor resources allocated to those missions.
 - **Communications**
 - **Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution**
 - **Firefighting Operations and Support**
 - **Urban Search and Rescue**

- **Objective 4:** Demonstrate the ability of the VERT to support the evacuation and sheltering of a large population before a hurricane impacts the east coast.
 - **Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place**
 - **Firefighting Operations and Support**
 - **Mass Care**
 - **Urban Search and Rescue**
 - **Volunteer and Donations Management**

- **Objective 5:** Demonstrate the ability of the joint information system (JIC) to provide emergency information to the media and the public.
 - **Communications**
 - **Emergency Public Information and Warning**

- **Objective 6:** Demonstrate the functionality and effectiveness of the VEOC as a multi-agency coordination center to support emergency response operations.
 - **Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution**
 - **Economic and Community Recovery**
 - **Emergency Operations Center Management**
 - **Fatality Management**
 - **Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense**
 - **Mass Care**
 - **Volunteer and Donations Management**

- **Objective 7:** Demonstrate the effectiveness of the Commonwealth of Virginia Fusion Center to collect disparate pieces of data, analyze them, produce actionable intelligence, then disseminate that information to as wide a range of agencies as possible.
 - **Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings**

- **Objective 8:** Demonstrate the integrated coordination efforts and communications and response capabilities among hospital, health, and emergency management entities in response to a hurricane affecting hospital operations.
 - **Medical Surge**

SECTION 2: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Details

Exercise Name

Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) 2007

Type of Exercise

Functional Exercise

Exercise Start Date

April 23, 2007

Exercise End Date

April 26, 2007

Duration

3.5 days

Location

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)/Virginia Fusion Center (VFC)

Virginia Department of Health Emergency Coordination Center

Virginia Department of Transportation Emergency Operations Center

JFHQ-VA JOC

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Region 3, Consolidated

Sponsor

VDEM

Program

State Homeland Security Grant Program; Fiscal Year 2006

Mission

Prevention

Protection

Response

X Recovery**Capabilities**

- Citizen Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place
 - Includes Law Enforcement
- Communications
- Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution
- Economic and Community Recovery
- Emergency Operations Center Management
 - Includes Law Enforcement
- Emergency Public Information and Warning
- Fatality Management
- includes Law Enforcement
- Firefighting Operations and Support
- Food and Agriculture Safety and Defense
- Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings
 - Includes Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination
- Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding, and Related Services)
- Medical Surge
- Structural Damage and Mitigation Assessment
- Urban Search and Rescue
- Volunteer and Donations Management

Scenario Type

Hurricane

Exercise Planning Team

The planning team comprised of representatives from the agencies, departments, and supporting organizations that are part of the Virginia Emergency Response Team. The exercise planning team's efforts were directed by VDEM.

Participating Organizations

VEOC/VFC

Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) 1-16, staffed by:

- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Virginia Department of Aviation
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Virginia Department of Corrections
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs
- Virginia Department of Forestry
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Virginia Department of General Services
- Virginia Department of Health
 - 24 Health Districts
 - 6 Regional Hospital Coordinating Centers
- Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services
- Virginia Department of Military Affairs
- Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Virginia Information Technologies Agency
- Virginia Office of Commonwealth Preparedness
- Virginia Office of the Attorney General
- Virginia Office of the Secretary of Public Safety
- Virginia State Corporation Commission
- Virginia State Police

Virginia jurisdictions included 40 cities and counties across the seven VDEM regions.

Emergency Management Region 1:

- Amelia County
- Chesterfield County
- City of Colonial Heights
- City of Emporia
- City of Hopewell
- City of Petersburg
- City of Richmond
- Dinwiddie County
- Goochland County
- Henrico County
- New Kent County

- Prince George County
- Sussex County

Emergency Management Region 2:

- City of Winchester
- Page County
- Spotsylvania County

Emergency Management Region 3:

- Buckingham County
- Halifax County
- Mecklenburg County
- Prince Edward County

Emergency Management Region 4:

- Carroll County
- Pulaski County

Emergency Management Region 5:

- City of Chesapeake
- City of Newport News
- City of Norfolk
- City of Portsmouth
- City of Suffolk
- City of Virginia Beach
- York County

Emergency Management Region 6:

- City of Roanoke
- Henry County

Emergency Management Region 7 (participants were included in a simultaneous exercise with the National Capital Region [NCR]—Regional Response '07):

- Arlington County
- City of Alexandria
- City of Fairfax
- City of Falls Church
- City of Manassas Park
- Fairfax County
- Loudoun County
- Prince William County
- Town of Herndon

Federal participants:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region III
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- National Weather Service (NWS), Sterling and Wakefield, VA
- U.S. Joint Forces Command – NORTHCOM (Noble Resolve Exercise)
- U.S. Army Installation Management Command – Northeast Regional Office
- U.S. Coast Guard – Sector Hampton Roads
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Army, Ft. Eustis

NCR participants:

- State of Maryland
- Montgomery County, MD
- Prince George’s County, MD
- Frederick County, MD
- District of Columbia Emergency Management
- Joint Forces Headquarters (JFHQ) – NCR
- Federal Protective Service
- Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority
- PEPCO
- Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Nongovernmental Organizations:

- American Red Cross
- Association of Continuity Planners
- Home Depot Corporation
- Dominion Virginia Power
- Wal-Mart Corporation

Exercise Support Contractors:

- CRA, Inc.
- ICF, consulting (NCR, Regional Response ’07 Exercise)
- General Dynamics, Advanced Information Systems (Noble Resolve Exercise)

Number of Participants

- Players: approximately 300 daily
- Controllers: 24
- Evaluators: 12
- Observers: approximately 25

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