

Virginia Department of  
Emergency Management

2009



Functional Exercise

May 21, 2009



VERTTE



Executive Summary

**VDEM Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise  
Functional Exercise**

**May 21, 2009**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**20 November 2009**

## **HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**

1. The title of this document is the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) Functional Exercise (FE) After-Action Report (AAR)/ Improvement Plan (IP).
2. For more information, consult the following points of contact (POCs):

VDEM:

Mr. Hampton H. Hart, Jr.  
Director, Office of Training and Exercises  
Virginia Department of Emergency Management

## CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Handling Instructions .....</b>                      | <b>ii</b> |
| <b>Executive Summary .....</b>                          | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Section 1: Exercise Overview .....</b>               | <b>3</b>  |
| Exercise Details .....                                  | 3         |
| Participating Organizations .....                       | 6         |
| <b>Section 2: Exercise Design Summary .....</b>         | <b>10</b> |
| Exercise Purpose and Design .....                       | 10        |
| Exercise Objectives, Capabilities, and Activities ..... | 10        |
| Scenario Summary .....                                  | 14        |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Thursday, May 21, 2009, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) conducted a functional exercise (FE) for the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) on Midlothian Turnpike.

There were approximately 165 participants, controllers, evaluators, VIP's and observers at the VEOC. In addition to the ESFs other participants included the Virginia Fusion Center, Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT), Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, Rappahannock Electric Cooperative, Dominion Power, State Corporation Commission, and RACES. Loudoun County and the City of Hampton participated by activating their EOCs. Both jurisdictions participated using WebEOC. The VERT also utilized the VIPER technology in the VEOC.

The exercise Simulation Cell (SIMCELL), along with the RACES team was located in the Commonwealth's command vehicle.

## SECTION 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

### Exercise Details

#### Exercise Name

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Virginia Emergency Response Team Exercise (VERTEX) Functional Exercise (FE)

#### Type of Exercise

FE

#### Exercise Start Date

May 21, 2009

#### Exercise End Date

May 21, 2009

#### Duration

6 hours

#### Locations

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Loudoun County

City of Hampton

Virginia Army National Guard (VANG), Joint Operations Center (JOC)

#### Sponsor

VDEM

#### Program

State Homeland Security Grant Program (Fiscal Year 2008)

#### Mission

Prevention

Protection

Response

Recovery

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**Executive Summary****Capabilities**

- Critical Infrastructure Protection
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Management
- Emergency Public Information and Warning
- Intelligence Analysis and Production
- Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination
- Medical Surge
- Restoration of Lifelines
- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Fatality Management
- Mass Care
- Public Safety and Security Response

**Scenario Type**

Terrorists detonate several improvised explosive devices (IED) in Northern Virginia and in Hampton Roads; train derailment with a chemical release, and subsequent evacuation in Loudoun County.

**Contract Exercise Support**

- CRA, Inc.

**Participating Organizations***Federal:*

- Department of Military Affairs
- Department of Homeland Security

*State:*

- VDEM
- Commonwealth of Virginia, Office of the Governor
- Virginia Army National Guard (VANG)
  - Joint Operations Center
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- Virginia Department of Aviation
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)
- Virginia Department of Corrections
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VD FP)
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VD OF)
- Virginia Department of General Services (DGS)
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH):
  - Division of Radiological Health

**Executive Summary**

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- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME)
- Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM)
- Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (BHDS)
- Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME)
- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
- Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Virginia Fusion Center (VFC)
- Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)
- Virginia Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP)
  - Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator’s Office
- Virginia State Corporation Commission (VSCC)
- Virginia State Police (VSP)
- Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD)

*Local:*

- City of Hampton
  - Office of Emergency Preparedness
- Loudoun County
  - Department of Animal Care and Control
  - Department of Family Services
  - Fire and Rescue
  - Fire Marshall’s Office
  - Department of General Services
  - Health Department
  - Department of Information Technology
  - Management and Financial Services
  - Office of Emergency Management
  - Public Schools

*Others:*

- American Red Cross
- Dominion Power
- Garner Environmental Services, Inc.
- Rappahannock Electric Cooperative
- The Salvation Army
- Wal-Mart



### **Number of Participants**

- Players – 123
- Controllers – 11
- Evaluators – 17
- Observers – 10

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## SECTION 2: EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

### Exercise Purpose and Design

The exercise was conducted on May 21, 2009, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Exercise play was scheduled for 6 hours or until the Exercise Director and Senior Controller determined that the exercise objectives have been met at each venue.

#### Purpose

The purpose of the VERTEX 2009 series was to demonstrate the preparedness system and the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan and the Virginia Emergency Operations Center's (VEOC's) Standard Operating Procedures. More specifically, the series examined the Commonwealth's response and recovery efforts from a human-caused emergency/disaster.

#### Scope

The VERTEX 2009 FE focused on the response and recovery phase of operations associated with significant weapons of mass destruction events impacting Virginia. Additionally it involved the coordination of Emergency Management Assistance Compact requests, sheltering and evacuation, significant damage to the transportation and other critical infrastructure, widespread power disruptions, and casualties. The FE was played out at both the operational and planning levels, with an emphasis on decision making, coordination, process execution, recognition, situation assessment, and interoperability of communications during a multi-agency response.

### Exercise Objectives, Capabilities, and Activities

Capabilities-based planning allows exercise planning teams to develop exercise objectives and observe exercise outcomes through a framework of specific action items derived from the Target Capabilities List. The capabilities listed below formed the foundation of the objectives and observations in this exercise. For the FE, each capability was linked to several corresponding activities and tasks to provide additional detail.

Based on the identified exercise objectives below, the exercise planning team demonstrated the following capabilities during this exercise:

The VERTEX 2009 FE Exercise Planning Team selected objectives that focus on evaluating emergency response procedures, identifying areas for improvement, and achieving collaborative solutions. This exercise focused on the following strategic objectives:

Executive Summary

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**Objective 1:** Demonstrate the ability of the joint information system (JIS) to coordinate emergency information and distribute it to the media and the public.

- **Emergency Public Information and Warning:**

- Improve the experience level of non-VDEM joint information center (JIC) staff.
- Demonstrate the close coordination with local public information officers (PIOs).
- Incorporate risk communication practices into JIC communications.
- Prepare talking points for a Governor’s news briefing within 1 hour of event (PIO).
- Demonstrate the ability of the Virginia Department of Transportation’s (VDOT’s) public information systems to coordinate emergency information and distribute it to the public.

**Objective 2:** Demonstrate the adequacy of emergency response plans regarding the command, control, coordination, and communication of public health and medical response strategies most needed to decrease illness, mortality, and other adverse consequences.

- **Emergency Public Information and Warning**
- **EOC Management**
- **Medical Surge**

**Objective 3:** Demonstrate the ability of the VERT to support the evacuation and sheltering of a large population after critical road networks are degraded.

- **Citizen Evacuation and Shelter in Place:**

- Demonstrate VDOT’s ability to assist in unplanned local evacuations and direct citizens to shelters.

- **Volunteer and Donations Management:**

- Demonstrate the ability to identify and deploy volunteers for evacuation shelters in a timely manner.

**Objective 4:** Discuss and examine the Commonwealth’s plans and procedures to conduct response and recovery operations and the processes to share critical information and maintain situational awareness with Federal and State agencies.

- **EOC Management:**

- Demonstrate VDOT’s ability to gain rapid situational awareness and generate immediate response to unplanned chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives (CBRNE) events.
- Demonstrate VDOT’s ability to perform rapid situational and damage assessment and to implement or devise plans for short-term/long-term traffic diversion.
- OP 5.1: Acquire and Communicate Operational-Level Information and Maintain Status (JFHQ – VA ESF 16):
  - Collect/share operational information (OP 2.2)
  - Communicate operational information (OP 5.1.1)
  - Assess operational situation (OP 5.2)
  - Conduct operational mission analysis (OP 5.3.1)
  - Coordinate/integrate joint/interagency support (OP 5.7)
  - Coordinate Civil Support in the United States/Virginia (OP 8.4.5)

Executive Summary

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- OP 5.1: Acquire and Communicate Operational-Level Information and Maintain Status (VaNG JFHQ-VA Joint Operations Center [JOC]):
  - Conduct operational mission analysis (OP 5.3.1)
  - Collect/share operational information (OP 2.2)
  - Communicate operational information (OP 5.1.1)
  - Coordinate/integrate joint/interagency support (OP 5.7)
  - Assess operational situation (OP 5.2)
  - Coordinate Civil Support in the United States/Virginia (OP 8.4.5)

**Objective 5:** Demonstrate the effectiveness of the Virginia Fusion Center (VFC) to collect, analyze, and disseminate actionable intelligence and situational awareness information to as wide a range of partners as appropriate.

- **Critical Infrastructure Protection:**

- Demonstrate the VFC is able to assess probable immediate threat(s) to identified critical assets within Virginia, based on incident(s) reported to the VFC and report those threats to the appropriate law enforcement and security agencies responsible for critical infrastructure/key resources (CI/KR) protection.

- **Intelligence Analysis and Production:**

- Demonstrate the ability of the VFC to access, classify, and prioritize appropriate intelligence information from Federal agencies and VFC partners in a timely manner. Based on available information, draft and disseminate a written product(s) suitable for release at the Law Enforcement Sensitive and For Official Use Only levels.

- **Intelligence/Information Sharing and Dissemination:**

- Demonstrate the VFC is able to receive timely notification from the VEOC, local, and/or Federal partners concerning incidents occurring in Virginia. Based on this/these notification(s), the VFC is able to communicate situational information to VFC staff and partners (including the Virginia State Police (VSP) Executive Staff and Virginia government officials) in a timely manner.

**Objective 6:** Demonstrate the functionality and effectiveness of the VEOC as a multi-agency coordination center to support emergency response operations.

- **EOC Management:**

- Demonstrate the functionality and effectiveness of the Transportation EOC (TEOC) to coordinate its response in a multi-agency environment to support emergency response operations.
- Demonstrate the ability to anticipate the types of information required by the participating agencies and Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) based on the scenario and to supply that information.
- Demonstrate the ability to incorporate “non-written” information into Planning Section products (e.g., visually displayed information, VIPER data, verbally transferred information, open-source information from the Internet).
- Demonstrate the ability to create real-time reporting vs. historic documentation (e.g., create live “rolling” briefings updated continuously; instant spot reports).

Executive Summary

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- **Restoration of Lifelines:**
  - Discuss and examine VDOT’s plans and procedures for getting traffic rerouted if the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel is not functional for an extended period.
  - Examine VDOT’s actions in dealing with gridlock between Springfield and Fredericksburg because of a CBRNE event.
- **Volunteer and Donations Management:**
  - Demonstrate the ability of the VEOC to coordinate the receipt and delivery of donated cash and goods for use by multiple response agencies.

**Local Objectives**

**Loudoun County**

1. Demonstrate the ability to maintain a detailed operating picture of the incident(s) within Loudoun County and general situational awareness of incidents throughout the Commonwealth.
  - **Communications**
  - **On-Site Incident Management**
2. Demonstrate the effectiveness of the EOCs activated support functions to communicate critical information and coordinate the actions.
  - **Communications**
  - **On-Site Incident Management**
  - **EOC Management**
  - **Emergency Public Information and Warning**
3. Demonstrate the ability of the EOC to use automated tools in managing incident information, significant events, mission tasking, resource requests, and other associated functions.
  - **Communications**
  - **On-Site Incident Management**
  - **EOC Management**
4. Assess the effectiveness of the locally revised Planning “P” for EOC activities.
  - **Planning**
  - **EOC Management**

## Scenario Summary

This exercise was built upon previous VERTEX activities and “exercise time” began as the Commonwealth was dealing with two nearly simultaneous vehicle-borne IED explosions which had occurred the evening prior. These explosions, caused by large amounts of ammonium nitrate occurred first at the Springfield Interchange in Fairfax County, and 4 minutes later in the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel during the afternoon rush hour. In the Fairfax county incident, cesium 137 was also detected. An Al Qaeda-affiliated Group claimed responsibility for these attacks. Later, on that same evening, a suspected cyber event against Dominion Power, caused rolling black-outs state-wide.

On the morning of the actual exercise, participants were notified that a CSX train had derailed in Clarke County, VA. Due to the confusion caused by the events of the previous evening, it was not immediately known whether the train was carrying HAZMATs, but it was later discovered that the train was carrying a large amount of chlorine and that the Loudoun County communities of Round Hill and Purcellville were threatened by a chlorine plume.

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