



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Emergency Management

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Governor Robert F. McDonnell
Members of the General Assembly

FROM: Michael M. Cline 

RE: Status of Emergency Response Plans

The following is a report required by Code of Virginia §44-146.18B3 on the status of state and local emergency management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (COVEOP)

The State Planning Assistance (SPA) Program within the Preparedness Division of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) maintains the COVEOP and presents the plan to the Governor for promulgation once every four years. The COVEOP most recently promulgated in December of 2007 has undergone numerous updates since that time. In 2010 the Radiological Emergency Response Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Hurricane Emergency Response Plan, and eight of the seventeen Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) were all updated.

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP)

In April of 2010, EMAP accredited the Commonwealth's emergency management program after an extensive review process of nearly ten months. Virginia is one of thirty other state and local emergency management programs to receive this voluntary accreditation, which includes an in-depth review of the plan for compliance to the latest emergency management planning standards. Sixty-two other standards, including Laws and Authorities, Warning and Communications, and Training, were also reviewed.

“Working to Protect People, Property and Our Communities”

LOCAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS

There are 139 jurisdictions in Virginia with emergency management programs. Each jurisdiction is responsible for maintaining and keeping current a local emergency operations plan (EOP). An EOP is deemed to be current if it is comprehensively reviewed, revised, and adopted by the local governing board every four years, pursuant to the Code of Virginia §44-146.19E.

The Local Planning Assistance (LPA) Program within the Preparedness Division of VDEM is responsible for assisting local governments with the review and maintenance of their Local Government Emergency Operations Plans (LEOPs). LPA staff attends local plan meetings within various jurisdictions and reviews plans off site. There are also planning tools and other resources including a basic plan template and hazard specific appendices that have been developed and maintained by LPA, which are available to the local governments to use as guides during the planning process. LPA developed and offered a workshop that outlines the planning process and introduces use of the plan template.

The following is a summary of the current LEOP status in the Commonwealth of Virginia:

- There are 115 jurisdictions with current EOPs (83%). At the end of 2009, there were 99 current EOPs (71%).
- There are 24 plans that have expired, but nearly all jurisdictions are progressing with plan development and revision.
- It is expected that 11 plans will be revised and adopted by the governing board of the jurisdiction by March 31, 2011, which would bring the total to 126 (91%).

Recognizing that a current EOP is a cornerstone of an effective local emergency management program, LPA's outreach efforts strengthen the partnership between VDEM and local governments and have had a significant, positive impact on readiness.

Annual Emergency Management Assessment

Each local jurisdiction is required to report an assessment of its emergency management program annually by July 1, pursuant to Code of Virginia §44-146.19F. Each year, LPA notifies the jurisdictions and provides a reporting form to facilitate this process.

The Local Capability Assessment of Readiness (LCAR) process is an opportunity for each jurisdiction to assess its capabilities and identify strengths and challenges in its emergency management program. The results present a statewide view of local preparedness and an opportunity for VDEM to deploy resources to the jurisdictions to help improve local emergency management programs.

The reporting form addresses 10 aspects of an emergency management program including Planning; Operations; and Public Education and Outreach via 84 questions. A 100 point scale is applied.

The following are average scores in each category based on 136 reports of the 139 jurisdictions required to submit reports:

- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment: 71%
- Resource Management and Logistics: 66%
- Planning: 81%
- Direction, Control, and Coordination: 72%
- Communications and Warning: 76%
- Operations: 78%
- Training: 66%
- Exercise, Evaluations, and Corrective Actions: 60%
- Crisis Communications, Public Education, and Information: 64%
- Administration and Finance: 65%

- Average of All Categories: 71%

The Preparedness Division of the VDEM will continue to support and enhance state and local preparedness in the Commonwealth through LPA and SPA planning efforts. Please contact me if you have any questions or need any additional assistance.

C: Honorable Marla Decker, Secretary of Public Safety
 Honorable Terrie Suit, Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness
 Division of Automated Legislative Services
 Mr. George O’N Urquhart, Senior Program Project Manager & Legislative Liaison