

**REPORT ON THE STATUS OF STATE AND LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

November 2012

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (COVEOP)**

The State Planning Assistance 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. In preparation for the 2012 promulgation of the plan, members of the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) comprised of state agencies, non-governmental, and private sector partners, conducted a comprehensive review and update of the basic plan, 17 emergency support function annexes, five support annexes, and six hazard specific annexes in 2011. This review included a newly developed Technological Hazards Annex that addresses special considerations posed by low-frequency, high impact technological hazards resulting in extended power and/or communications outages. The 2012 version of the COVEOP was promulgated by Governor McDonnell on August 20, 2012, and has undergone several updates since that time. One update of note is the addition of an Earthquake Annex that addresses the unique response needs, capabilities, and considerations not addressed elsewhere in the plan.

**LOCAL 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 access to a web based system 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 80 questions. A 100 point scale is applied.

While all of the jurisdictions reported, four did not complete the assessment and did not receive a final score. The following average scores are based on 135 actual completed reports, or 97% of the jurisdictions. The average score for each category is provided. The number in parentheses is the average score for the 2011 results for comparison.

- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment: 68% (67%)
- Resource Management and Logistics: 71% (69%)
- Planning: 85% (82%)
- Direction, Control, and Coordination: 80% (75%)
- Communications and Warning: 82% (77%)

- Operations: 77% (80%)
- Training: 67% (66%)
- Exercise, Evaluations, and Corrective Actions: 62% (56%)
- Crisis Communications, Public Education, and Information: 69% (65%)
- Administration and Finance: 71% (65%)
- **Average of All Categories: 73% (68%)**

The overall average assessment improved as well as most categories. It appears that VDEM's efforts to support and partner with the local governments has had a positive impact on local emergency management throughout the Commonwealth. In particular, VDEM regularly devotes time and resources to the following program areas in local government:

- Planning
- Training
- Exercise Evaluation and Corrective Action
- Crisis Communications, Public Education and Information.

### **LOCAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS**

There are 139 jurisdictions with independent local emergency management programs and each is responsible for maintaining and keeping current a local emergency operations plan (LEOP). An LEOP is deemed current if it is comprehensively reviewed, revised, and adopted by the local governing board every four years, pursuant to Code of Virginia, §44-146.19E. Since August of 2012 all jurisdictions in the Commonwealth have current LEOPs, achieving Governor McDonnell's goal.

The Local Planning Assistance (LPA) Program in the Preparedness Division at VDEM assists local governments in order to facilitate the process of plan development and revision. This aid consists of, but is not limited to:

- Two LPA planners each dedicated to three VDEM regions (planning services are delivered to local governments in VDEM Region 7 by Local Support Services staff).
- An LEOP template document which addresses consideration of citizens with special needs.
- A hurricane annex which was developed in 2012 and posted on the VDEM website in addition to other annexes that are already available.

The outreach efforts, as well as the guidance available on the VDEM website, contributed to the local governments having 100% compliant EOPs. It is the intent of LPA staff, as well as the Preparedness Division, to help jurisdictions maintain current, viable EOPs.

## **INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

There are 40 state Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) in Virginia. Each IHE is responsible for adopting and maintaining a current crisis and emergency plan pursuant to the Code of Virginia §23-9.2:9. The plan must be reviewed and revised every four years and adopted by the Board of Visitors (or other governing board). This law became effective on July 1, 2008, and VDEM advised the state institutions of higher education that they should have a current, adopted plan in place by July 1, 2012. The adoption must be certified in writing to VDEM. However, a copy of the plan is not required to be submitted.

The following 16 institutions or 40% have current crisis and emergency plans as evidenced by documentation on file at VDEM:

Four-year institutions submitted copies of resolutions of adoption by their Board of Visitors:

- Richard Bland College
- Longwood University
- University of Virginia
- College of William and Mary
- Virginia Military Institute
- Virginia Tech
- George Mason University

Community Colleges submitted EOPs to VDEM and were subsequently adopted by the State Community College Board:

- Southside Virginia Community College
- Danville Community College
- Patrick Henry Community College
- John Tyler Community College
- Dabney Lancaster Community College
- New River Community College
- Tidewater Community College
- Eastern Shore Community College
- Northern Virginia Community College

Institutions that developed plans prior to July 1, 2008, which have expired:

- Virginia Commonwealth University
- University of Mary Washington

The following institutions have not provided documentation of plan adoption to VDEM as required by the Code of Virginia:

Four-Year Institutions:

- Virginia State University
- James Madison University
- University Virginia at Wise

- Christopher Newport University
- Eastern Virginia Medical College
- Norfolk State University
- Old Dominion University

Community Colleges:

- J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College
- Germanna Community College
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Lord Fairfax Community College
- Central Virginia Community College
- Piedmont Virginia Community College
- Mountain Empire Community College
- Southwest Virginia Community College
- Paul D. Camp Community College
- Thomas Nelson Community College
- Virginia Western Community College
- Wytheville Community College

The Code of Virginia §23-9.2:9 was amended in 2010 requiring the President and Vice President of each institution of higher education to annually review the crisis and emergency plan and to certify this review in writing to VDEM. This requirement only applies during the interim years between plan adoptions, as it is expected that the President and Vice President should review the plan as part of the plan revision process.

Southside Virginia Community College adopted its EOPs prior to 2012 and submitted the annual certification of the executive review in 2012.

The following IHEs adopted EOPs prior to 2012 but did not submit the annual certification of the executive review in 2012:

- George Mason University
- Virginia Tech
- Patrick Henry Community College

LPA staff offers similar assistance to the IHEs that they offer the local governments including:

- The two LPA planners are available to review plans of the institutions in the VDEM regions they are assigned.
- A template was posted on the VDEM website and revised in 2012 based on the needs of the IHEs, available at: <http://www.vaemergency.gov/em-community/plans/eop-templates-college>.

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Copy: Honorable Robert F. McDonnell, Governor  
Members of the Virginia General Assembly  
Honorable Marla Decker, Secretary of Public Safety  
Honorable Terrie Suit, Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security  
Division of Automated Legislative Services  
Michael M. Cline, State Coordinator, Virginia Department of Emergency Management  
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