CURTIS C. BROWN
State Coordinator of
Emergency Management

ERIN SUTTON
Chief Deputy State Coordinator
of Emergency Management

December 3, 2021

Dear Reader,

On behalf of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, thank you for your patience with the additional time needed for the submission of our annual reports. Since January 2020, our small team of around 150 teammates has been working 24/7/365 serving our citizens and visitors across the Commonwealth through dozens of natural and humanmade disasters and large-scale events. This includes several significant rallies, flooding events, civil unrest, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, inauguration, the Capitol riot, a cyber attack on critical infrastructure, hundreds of protests, repatriation, winter weather, hurricane season, and numerous other high-profile and impactful incidents. My agency is ready to help, and here to serve. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Curtis Brown, State Coordinator

Saving lives through effective emergency management and homeland security.
"A Ready Virginia is a Resilient Virginia."

Virginia Department of
Emergency Management

2020 **Annual Report**

Virginia Comprehensive
Emergency Management Report

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Curtis Brown
State Coordinator

Over the past year, the rise, frequency, and impact of disaster events kept pace as the Commonwealth again faced one of the busiest years on record. The 2019 hurricane season saw a number of large storms with Hurricane Dorian playing a central role causing significant rainfall and flooding. 2020 began with a historic pro-2nd Amendment rally at the Virginia Capitol, where more than 22,000 armed attendees gathered to share their concerns. The COVID-19 pandemic arrived shortly thereafter and changed the disaster landscape for generations to come.

The enormity of the once-in-a-century event forced the Commonwealth to reexamine the definition and role of government, and how to leverage the state's physical and personnel assets to preserve the health and well-being of our neighbors and our communities — especially those who have been historically and disproportionately impacted by disasters. The Commonwealth took extensive steps to ensure life safety while simultaneously balancing the economic effects of those decisions.

As directed by the Governor, VDEM activated the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) to bolster the Virginia Department of Health in its effort to combat the rapidly growing virus. This effort eventually included dozens of state agencies and hundreds of state employees laying the foundation for an incident that would soon test the resources and resolve of our country and our Commonwealth.

As of December 10, 2020, the VEST has been activated for a record 269 days straight for the COVID-19 pandemic; coordinating the acquisition of over 195,000,000 pieces of personal protective equipment to include masks (cloth, surgical and respirator), gloves, patient and service provider gowns, protective coveralls, face shields, goggles, boot and hair covers, non-contact thermometers etc. Given the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, people with disabilities, and other marginalized and at-risk populations across Virginia, the

VEST Unified Command was designed to include experts focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Health Equity Leadership Taskforce serves as a direct report to the Unified Command leadership and provides guidance to various COVID-19 working groups on prioritizing the needs of communities of color, people with disabilities, and other marginalized and at-risk populations. The Taskforce is supported by the Health Equity Working Group composed of stakeholders from within state government, non-profit and faith-based organizations, and the private sectorthat provide insights on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. Prioritizing equity as a key feature of the ongoing response has resulted in diverse and inclusive massive print and digital awareness campaigns, health equity-driven pilot project that provides personal protective equipment to our most vulnerable communities, the live interpretation of press conferences, and the translation of incident-related documents and social media into 6 languages.

While the Commonwealth was facing the COVID-19 pandemic, we also experienced significant social movements that required resources and personnel throughout the summer, as well as the busiest hurricane season on record. The VEST was activated for a record setting three disaster declarations – at the same time. With economic impacts of COVID-19 reaching into the billions, the Commonwealth will require sustained operations to ensure that the pandemic is kept in check until a vaccine has been approved and distributed.

This report will provide you with a snapshot of the various projects and efforts of our agency, but what it is unable to capture, is the amount of work that VDEM team members have poured into these responses as they dealt with a virtual work environment, took care of their loved ones, experienced COVID-related deaths, were touched by the social movements personally, and balanced innumerable stressors that resulted from this year's events. Although VDEM is a small agency, we stand ready to support our local, state, and federal partners as we work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all Virginians.

Curtis Brown
State Coordinator
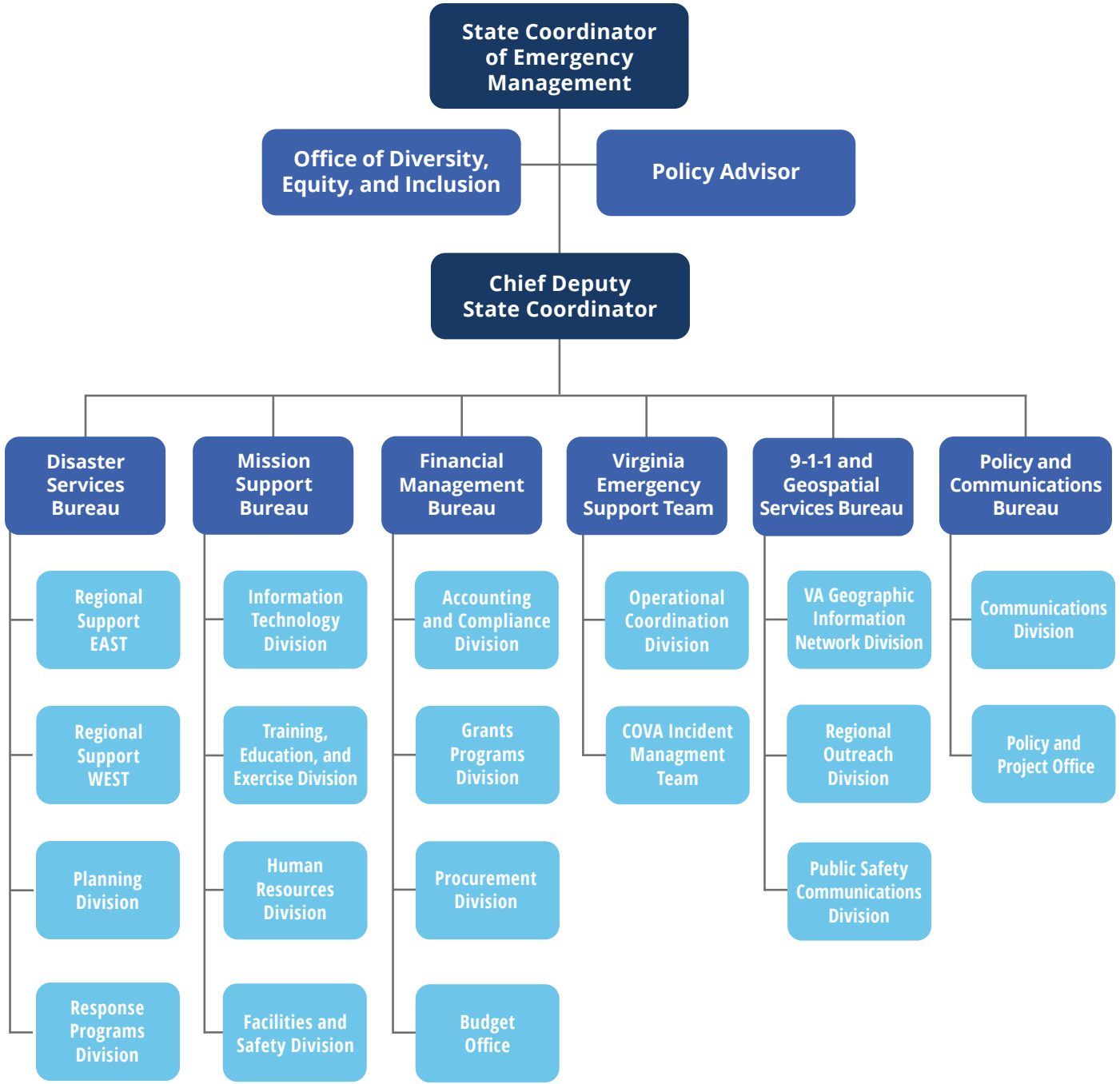
Authority

In July 1973, just 13 months after Hurricane Agnes caused record-breaking flooding across Virginia, the Commonwealth took measures to ensure that Virginia and its residents would be protected from the effects of disasters, both natural and human-caused. The Virginia Office of Emergency Services was created. That office was renamed the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) in 2000 (Va. Code Ann. § 44-146.18), and today, VDEM works with local, state, and federal agencies and voluntary organizations to provide crucial resources during emergencies. VDEM's mission is to save lives through effective emergency management and homeland security. We do this by coordinating the state's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery in partnership with government and private sector parties. The 9-1-1 Services and Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN) Advisory Boards, the agency's newest partners, offer additional support to VDEM's mission through a variety of 9-1-1 and geospatial services.

Responsibility

New threats and vulnerabilities arise constantly in our dynamic risk environment. From threats of terror to hurricanes, from cybersecurity breaches to flooding, today's challenges are the focus at VDEM, in an agency that evolves to address them. While some threats strike with little to no warning, others provide time for VDEM to work jointly with federal and local partners to prepare, mitigate, and respond to the event. VDEM continues to improve its readiness by planning for all hazards and improving our statewide response system by providing training, equipping teams with the best technology, and exercising together as a team comprising local, state, and federal governments, private sector partners, and non-governmental organizations. VDEM can now amplify its readiness with the addition of 9-1-1 and geospatial services offered to its stakeholders.

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Functional Organizational Chart — October 2021

Leadership

Curtis Brown | *State Coordinator of Emergency Management*

In June of 2020, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam named Curtis Brown the State Coordinator of Emergency Management, calling on this seasoned emergency manager to take on the leadership role at VDEM. Mr. Brown was promoted to this position after serving as VDEM's Chief Deputy State Coordinator for six years. He also served as the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer in his prior position.

Curtis Brown has homeland security and emergency management policy experience at the federal, state, and local levels. Within VDEM, he also served as Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Home-land Security in Virginia, and he was the Chief Deputy State Coordinator at VDEM from 2014 to 15. Before this he was Regional Emergency Management Administrator for the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, was a member of the professional staff on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, and was Senior Special Assistant to the Governor in the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness in the Kaine Administration.

Mr. Brown holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Radford University, a Master of Public Administration from Virginia Tech, and a Master of Arts in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is a graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School's Executive Leaders Program, Virginia Executive Institute, Commonwealth Management Institute, and FEMA's National Emergency Management Executive Leadership Academy in Virginia. He has also been named a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) by the International Association of Emergency Managers.

Erin Sutton | *Chief Deputy State Coordinator*

In October 2020, Erin Sutton was appointed by Governor Ralph Northam to lead the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. She is the second woman to hold this position, and is the first female leader to come from a local government.

Ms. Sutton has worked in the field of emergency management for the past 15 years. Most recently, she served as Director of the City of Virginia Beach Office of Emergency Management, a position she had held since 2014. Prior to that role, she held several positions within the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health, where she helped develop the Virginia Beach Medical Reserve Corps and led the citywide pandemic planning effort as Emergency Planner.

Ms. Sutton holds a master's degree in microbiology and immunology from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She also earned a bachelor's degree in biology at Radford University. Among her credentials, she is a Certified Emergency Manager, Certified Floodplain Manager, and has her Project Management Professional certification.

John Northon | *Deputy State Coordinator, Disaster Services Bureau*

John Northon began working for VDEM in January, 2018, as the Training, Education, & Exercise Division Director. In July, 2019, he was promoted to and currently serves as the Deputy State Coordinator, Disaster Services Bureau. Mr. Northon served for 20 years in the United States Air Force. Throughout his 20 years, he served multiple deployments to Kenya, Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other countries in the Middle East. He retired from active duty in 2014.

Mr. Northon graduated from the United States Air Force Academy and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and assigned to the Security Police (later Security Forces) career field. He holds a master's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Military University.

Andres Alvarez | *Deputy State Coordinator, Mission Support Bureau*

Andres Alvarez serves on the executive leadership team of VDEM, and oversees information technology, human resources, facilities and safety, as well as the training, education, and exercise functions of the agency. Mr. Alvarez joined VDEM after serving as Chief of Administration at the Virginia Department of Forestry. He also served as Director of Consumer Protection at the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and as Planning Director and Administration Bureau Commander with the Portsmouth, Virginia Police Department.

Mr. Alvarez is the past president of the North American Gaming Regulators Association, and a former member of the Virginia Motor Vehicle Dealer Board and the Virginia Board for Towing and Recovery Operators. He is a graduate of the Virginia Executive Institute, the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute, and the Executive Education program at Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems and a Master's in Business Administration, both from Old Dominion University.

Dorothy Spears-Dean | *Deputy State Coordinator, 911 and Geospatial Services Bureau*

Dr. Spears-Dean joined VDEM on July 1, 2020, as leader of the agency's 9-1-1 and Geospatial Services (NGS) Bureau. This bureau is responsible for providing legislatively mandated services to a wide range of stakeholder and constituency groups, in partnership with the 9-1-1 Services and Virginia Geographic Information Services (VGIN) Advisory Boards.

Prior to joining VDEM, Dr. Spears-Dean was employed by the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) as the Public Safety Communications Coordinator for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy from Virginia Commonwealth University, a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Richmond, and a Bachelor of Arts from The College of William and Mary.

As a public safety practitioner and administrator, Dr. Spears-Dean has served in a variety of capacities. Currently, she is an appointee to the Federal Communications Commission's Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council (CSRIC). She has also served as a National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA) Board Member, and she is a subject matter expert for several United States Department of Homeland Security work groups. Dr. Spears-Dean is an accomplished author, presenter, and the recipient of the 2017 "Outstanding Government Leader" award, a national recognition presented by the NG9-1-1 Institute.

Cheryl Adkins | *Deputy State Coordinator, Financial Management Bureau*

Cheryl Adkins is the Chief Financial Officer of VDEM. Before being named CFO in 2017, she served as VDEM's Grants Director, a position she held since 2003.

Ms. Adkins is responsible for all of the agency's financial operations, including budgeting, purchasing, grants management, and accounting functions. She also heads up the Commonwealth's disaster financing and plays a key role in the continued development of FEMA programs.

Michelle Oblinsky | *VEST Bureau Chief*

As VEST Bureau Chief, Michelle Oblinsky works with VDEM and other state agencies to ensure the readiness of the VEST and the Virginia Emergency Operation Center systems. She previously served as the Deputy Coordinator of Emergency Management for Chesterfield County, and as Emergency Management Planner for the City of Chesapeake. She is recognized as both a Certified Emergency Manager with the International Association of Emergency Managers, and as a Professional Emergency Manager in Virginia.

Ms. Oblinsky has completed the National Emergency Management Advanced Academy, as well as the National Emergency Management Executive Academy. She has been active on the board for the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA) since 2010 and currently serves as the VDEM Representative to the VEMA Board of Directors. Ms. Oblinsky holds a master's degree in geography planning from UNC Charlotte, as well as a bachelor's degree in planning from VA Tech.

Dillon Taylor | *Chief of Staff*

Dillon Taylor serves as the Chief of Staff and Senior Counsel at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Prior to this role, he served as the Assistant Director of External Affairs, where he was responsible for coordinating VDEM's legislative efforts and communication with elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels.

Before joining VDEM in early 2018, Dillon worked as an honors attorney with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Transportation Safety Board, where he worked on rulemaking, enforcement, litigation, arbitration, and aviation accident investigations. Dillon obtained his law degree from the University of Richmond School of Law, and he is currently an adjunct professor of law at U of R. Prior to law school, Dillon spent nine years as a professional firefighter and engineer with the Northwest Fire District in Pima County, Arizona. He was assigned to the special operations team as a dual-trained hazardous materials and technical rescue technician specializing in multi-agency response and project management.

Lauren Opett | *Communications and Chief Agency Spokesperson*

Lauren Opett has been with VDEM since 2013. In her current role, she directs and implements communications strategies that support the Commonwealth's emergency management mission, coordinates the release of statewide emergency/disaster public information messages, and leads the Virginia Joint Information Center during emergencies. During her tenure with VDEM, she has served as JIC Manager for several state activations in the Virginia Emergency Operations Center for situations including hurricanes, tropical storms, tornado outbreaks, winter storms, first amendment events, and the most recently, pandemic.

Ms. Opett has worked in the fields of homeland security and emergency management both at the federal and state level for more than 15 years. She is certified as a Professional Emergency Manager in Virginia and a Master Exercise Practitioner. Lauren is an adjunct instructor for FEMA and a member of the International Association of Emergency Managers. She previously served on the Board of the Virginia Emergency Management Association.

Ms. Opett holds a master's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Military University and a bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech.

Desiré Branch-Ellis | *Policy Advisor*

Desiré Branch-Ellis serves as the Policy Advisor at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. In this role, she is primarily responsible for the integration of public health and emergency management. Prior to joining the VDEM team, she worked in Governor Ralph Northam's administration as the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry and Restoration of Rights Specialist. Ms. Ellis graduated from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University with a Master of Public Health and a certificate in the Socio-Contextual Determinants of Health.

EAST DIVISION
- **Region 1** – 5 Employees
- **Region 5** – 7 Employees
- **Region 7** – 8 Employees

WEST DIVISION
- **Region 2** – 4 Employees
- **Region 3** – 4 Employees
- **Region 4** – 4 Employees
- **Region 6** – 6 Employees

The Disaster Services Bureau: Ready to Respond

VDEM's Disaster Services Bureau is designed for effective planning and quick response to support Virginia's local governments. This year marked a particularly active period for all involved. The bureau has four divisions: Regional Support East, Regional Support West, Response Programs, and Planning.

Regional Support Divisions (East and West)

VDEM has seven regional offices, which are split into East and West Divisions. Each regional office is led by a Chief Regional Coordinator and a team of professional emergency managers who work with local partners to help ensure a fast, agile, and integrated approach to disaster response and recovery. Members of VDEM's Training, Education, and Exercise Division (TEED) and Search and Rescue (SAR) programs are also embedded in each division.

The divisions are divided into seven regional offices that opened in 2016, from where over 25 percent of our staff stands ready to serve across the state. Increasing the department's regional capacity has put VDEM in a better position to support local and regional planning, response, and recovery operations

Of note this past year were the responses to COVID-19 and the First and Second Amendment Protests. Regional Support staff adjusted to the necessitated increase in virtual support to localities and built or strengthened many partnerships, especially with the health community. A significant effort was given to the distribution of requested Personal Protective Equipment. Regional staff also assisted with protests and unlawful assemblies, served in Incident Management Teams, supported supply efforts, and facilitated communications needs as requested.

Response Programs Division

The Response Programs Division oversees VDEM's special operations, fleet management, and disaster logistics branches.

Special Operations Branch

Search and Rescue: The Search and Rescue (SAR) program began in 1985 with agency support of a statewide training event organized by a small handful of volunteers. Currently, there are 21 volunteer SAR teams in Virginia, with nearly 500 volunteers who are supervised and trained VDEM personnel. These teams are on call 24/7, and their capabilities include ground search and rescue, wilderness technical rescue, cave rescue, K9 live-find and human remains detection, human tracking, and equine search. In FY20, VDEM-led SAR teams conducted 96 separate missions in both urban and rural settings, saving the Commonwealth over $2.5M through the use of volunteer resources. VDEM's SAR program is routinely called upon nationwide for their expertise, and is considered one of the premier SAR organizations in the country.

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS): In close coordination with the Department of Aviation and the FAA, VDEM recently established one of the nation's first public safety drone programs. This program includes special training for public safety UAS operators, deployment of UAS in each VDEM region, the hosting of a joint international conference on Public Safety UAS with Piedmont Virginia Community College, and coordination of the York County and City of Harrisonburg UAS programs. Last year, VDEM's UAS teams were deployed 20 times.

HazMat: VDEM's hazardous materials program provides assistance to local jurisdictions in emergency situations involving hazardous materials and weapons of mass destruction. Each VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer (HMO) is trained and equipped to assist with the identification of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials. Technical assistance or on-scene response from one or more HMO is available on a 24/7 basis and is coordinated through the Situational Awareness Unit. VDEM also coordinates 12 state hazardous materials teams consisting of trained technicians across the Commonwealth. Last year, VDEM received 1,409 hazardous materials notifications, responded to 192 hazardous materials incidents, and activated the regional hazardous materials response teams 17 times.

Fleet Management Branch
The Fleet Management Branch is responsible for the maintenance and coordination of 78 vehicles. The VDEM fleet is comprised of emergency response vehicles that include hazardous materials, search and rescue, communications/command vehicle (COM 1 & TSU), and regional office fleet, as well as administrative vehicles.

Disaster Logistics Branch
The Disaster Logistics Branch is the central resource management component of VDEM. During both "blue-sky" days and disasters, the Disaster Logistics Branch coordinates resource requests from localities and tribal nations, manages receipt and distribution of disaster supplies, and assists state agencies in resource demands relative to disaster response and recovery. These activities often include the establishment, management, and staging of disaster relief points of distribution (PODs); fulfillment of resource requests from state Emergency Support Functions in the Virginia Emergency Support Team; the coordination of logistics for regional and state Incident Management Teams; the request and deployment of capabilities from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC); and the maintenance of equipment pods that can be set up to support incidents across the Commonwealth.

Technical Rescue: Statewide, VDEM works with seven Urban Search and Rescue teams who are responsible for the extrication and medical stabilization of victims trapped in collapsed structures. Last year, these teams responded to 14 missions in Virginia.

Radio Communications Cache: VDEM coordinates five local fire department-based radio communications caches that are strategically located around the state to support first responder communications during large-scale events. Last year, there were 46 communication cache deployments for planned events and emergencies.

Incident Management Teams: VDEM coordinates four regional incident management teams that provide expert staff from law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, and GIS. Each team is specially trained and experienced in coordinating operations and planning for complex incidents and disasters. Last year, there were 14 IMT deployments to support incidents in the Commonwealth.

Swiftwater Rescue: Over the past year, VDEM has leveraged grant funds to develop a statewide swiftwater rescue program. Currently, 28 teams from across the state are working together to establish training, equipment, and deployment standards. This added capability will better prepare the Commonwealth for statewide flooding events.

Air Operations: Over the past year, the VDEM Search and Rescue program has established a statewide air operations manual that incorporates all aspects of aerial capability incumbent to a disaster (SAR, vertical hoist, damage assessment, logistics movement, etc.) This VDEM-led effort was coordinated with all entities providing air assets during a disaster, including the US Coast Guard, Army National Guard, Life-Flight, Civil Air Patrol and numerous drone operators. Knowing that disasters know no borders, contiguous states were also included to allow for seamless response across state lines and air deconfliction around political borders.

EMAC Missions in 2019-2020

The Commonwealth of Virginia is a member of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which allows states to request resources from other states following a Governor's declaration of emergency. Virginia is scheduled to be the National Coordinating State for EMAC in 2021, and is currently a member of the Executive Task Force as the Task Force Chair Elect.

In 2020, Virginia supported an EMAC deployment to the State of New York (on behalf of New York City) with a Fatality Manager. This single resource deployment supported New York City's Office of the Medical Examiner with a Fatality Manager. The Virginia resource assisted with mortuary affairs and management of the Body Collection Point Task Force. This included the coordination of recovering and transferring remains to next of kin, funeral homes, or long-term storage facilities. The strain on hospitals and morgues has been immense, as more than 20,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the city.

Planning Division

The Planning Division provides both strategic and operational planning as well as intelligence and information sharing for VDEM. Planning provides a methodical manner to engage the whole community in preparedness efforts through the lifecycle of emergency and disaster preparedness. It helps determine required capabilities; identify gaps in capabilities; and establishes a framework for operationalizing roles and responsibilities to all hazards protection, prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. The Division is comprised of the Strategic Planning Branch, Operational Planning Branch, the Situational Awareness Unit, the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Unit, and the Virginia Fusion Center (VFC) personnel.

The Strategic Planning Branch responsibilities include the development and maintenance of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP), its Hazard Specific Annexes and Support Annexes, the Commonwealth's Continuity of Government Plan, the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Commonwealth's Recovery Plan, and VDEM's Continuity of Operations Plan. Strategic Planning also leads the Commonwealth's emergency management accreditation, the annual Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), the State Preparedness Report (SPR), and the Local Capabilities and Readiness Assessment (LCAR). Ahead of the 2020 hurricane season, VDEM developed a contingency plan to supplement the COVEOP for VEST emergency/disaster operations in the COVID-19 environment. This supplemental document addressed workforce, evacuation, transportation, emergency sheltering, and feeding for state agencies. It also provided guidance to localities to assist in modifying their plans for the COVID-19 environment.

The Planning Division also supports the VFC, which is the state's multi-disciplinary Intelligence Center. The VFC is a collaborative effort between the Virginia State Police and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to provide operational and strategic counter terrorism/criminal information and intelligence to law enforcement, military, public safety, governmental, and private sector decision-makers, as well as to the public. VDEM provides personnel to the VFC who assist with intelligence gathering and product development on existing and emerging threats that may affect prevention, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts before, during, and after events and emergencies.

The GIS unit of the Planning Division supports steady state and disaster operations with geographic information system products for situational awareness, response operations, grants projects distribution, and recovery efforts for individual assistance. The GIS unit uses geospatial technology to collect, manage, analyze, and display information geospatially to provide a visual understanding of data. The GIS data provides VDEM, the VEST, state agency and local partners, and the public with real-time information using dynamically updated applications that identify operational readiness, resource status, and deployment of personnel; perform forecasting; and make data-driven decisions for the more effective management of disasters and events. Specific products provided by GIS include:

- Know Your Zone Evacuation routes
- Real-time status of state personnel and resources
- Visualization of flood-prone geographies
- Operational dashboards for response and recovery data
- Geographic distribution of disaster assistance
- Location and density of vulnerable populations, and
- Daily tracking of VDEM-engaged incidents to include hazardous materials, medical flights, and search and rescue missions

These products drive data-driven decision-making for the Situational Awareness Unit (SAU), the Regional Staff, Response Programs, policymakers, and other state and local agencies.

The SAU serves as the 24/7 central point for situational awareness and notification of events occurring across the Commonwealth. The Center coordinates the receipt and dissemination of relevant information to promote coordination among VDEM personnel; the State Fusion Center; local, state, Tribal, and federal agencies; state emergency operations centers (EOC) nationwide; and federal homeland security and emergency response agencies. The SAU also serves as the state warning point for Virginia's two nuclear power stations and is the link to the federal government for the Nationwide Emergency Alert System (EAS). Information shared by the SAU to its partner agencies includes:

- Situational awareness of ongoing events and incidents
- Operational planning for imminent emergencies
- Status reporting of events and resource requests
- Public safety personnel tracking
- Off-hour notification for state agencies
- Government alerts and warnings
- External emergency communications

SAU analysts must assess threats; monitor emerging events and emergency incidents; coordinate medical flights, search and rescue missions, hazardous materials responses, and technical rescue teams in order to assist local response personnel and agencies across the state; and provide a continuous stream of information to agency response personnel, state agencies, and decision-makers. To coordinate this information sharing, the SAU staff monitors social and traditional media information feeds; telephone hotlines; and direct communications with first responders, local governments, emergency managers, Virginia State Police and other state agencies, as well as the private sector. The SAU is the around-the-clock entity at VDEM that links local, state, federal, non-governmental, and private sector partners through regular communication to enhance preparedness, response, and recovery coordination.

Mission Support Bureau: Meeting the human and infrastructure needs of the agency

The Mission Support Bureau provides essential administrative and operational services that help all other components in the agency accomplish their legislative mandates and deliver their respective services.

Training, Education, and Exercise Division

VDEM's Training, Education, and Exercise Division (TEED) coordinates and manages the Virginia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Training and Exercise program for state and local emergency management professionals, first responders, volunteer organizations, and private-sector partners.

In 2020, TEED coordinated, facilitated, or conducted 219 training sessions across the state with a total of 4,563 enrolled students and 4,782 contact hours. Division staff also launched the first ever Emergency Management Preparedness Program Basic Academy in cooperation with the US Coast Guard. In response to COVID-19, staff members virtualized Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) 100 and 200 level classes, digitized the entire collection of student manuals for all Incident Command System (ICS) courses, and completed six large scale exercises and two special events.

Two staff members completed and received designation through the US Department of Homeland Security/FMEA as a Master Exercise Practitioner (MEP). Staff members also collaborated with colleagues in Response Programs to deliver specialized hazardous materials training programs, including tank truck emergency response workshops and propane IQ classes, as well as the acquisition of training simulators that replicate current tanks and containers used to transport hazardous materials.

Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division (HR) provides value-added resources and expert consultation to managers and colleagues to ensure optimum program effectiveness. Specific functional areas include talent acquisition, employee relations, performance management, classification and compensation, policy development, and workforce planning.

In consultation with the office of the State Coordinator and agency executive leadership, HR provided staffing information that was critical to ensure VDEM was able to continue to provide essential services while maintaining a staffing level of 80%, or 143 filled positions out of an authorized MEL (maximum employment level) of 179. The resulting target vacancy rate of 20% is the result of efforts to reduce expenses in the face of continued reductions in federal grant support in recent years.

During FY2020, the HR staff conducted recruitment, selection, and onboarding processes for 27 hires and out-processed 31 employees. The logistical challenges resulting from COVID-19, the staff transitioned to completely virtual interview process and onboarding processes. The HR staff also spent a considerable portion of their time as members of the team that is working on the testing and implementation of Cardinal, the Commonwealth's future accounting and timekeeping system. Cardinal's implementation date has been moved tentatively to Spring 2021.

Information Technology Division

VDEM's Information Technology (IT) Division oversees support for all VDEM-hosted as well as externally hosted applications. Our staff leads the implementation of new applications, identifies new technologies for implementation within the VDEM environment, and ensures compliance with all governance pertaining to the Commonwealth's information technology security, project management, and procurement standards

IT supports many of the applications utilized by the agency, including WebEOC Crisis Management software, ArcGIS mapping applications, planning software, Crisis Track damage assessment software, multiple grants management applications, as well as numerous SharePoint applications. During activations of the Virginia Emergency Support Team, IT provides extensive application, audio-visual, video-teleconferencing, and end user support to ensure that the members of the VEST are able to effectively support the agency's mission in times of crisis.

VDEM's IT staff was involved in the move and modernization of our network as we relocated to a new headquarters office, helped transition certain Virginia Emergency Support Team applications to a modern environment, assisted in the virtualization of the Joint Operations Center, engaged in a project with VITA and the McChrystal Group to deploy and utilize MS Teams and SharePoint across the agency for greater collaboration, and oversaw the acquisition and distribution of IT equipment to fully support teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Facilities and Safety Division

VDEM's Facility and Safety Division is tasked with overseeing the operation and management of all agency facilities to maximize readiness and responsiveness while ensuring the continued safety and well-being of our employees and visitors. The agency is headquartered in North Chesterfield, Virginia, and it has seven regional offices. The agency operates the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), also in North Chesterfield, and it operates a hazmat training program on property owned by York County.

The Facilities and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that our buildings and their services meet the needs of our workforce and comply with all applicable health and safety standards. In collaboration with the Deputy State Coordinator for Mission Support, the Facilities and Safety Officer ensures that all agency leases and memoranda of agreement involving real estate, temporary storage units, and so forth, comply with all applicable mandates and regulations of the Division of Real Estate and Facilities Management in the Department of General Services.

During FY2020, the agency relocated its headquarters from a location that it had occupied for almost 25 years to a new building that was completely renovated to facilitate more interaction and better communication among the many work teams. Those plans were impacted by COVID-19 and the need to institute strict physical distancing practices. In response to COVID-19, the Facilities and Safety Officer, in collaboration with the Procurement team, installed portable handwashing stations and hand sanitizers throughout our facilities, and retained the services of an environmental contractor to conduct deep cleaning of our offices and key operational facilities such as the EOC and the Situational Awareness Unit.

9-1-1 and Geospatial Services Bureau: Saving Lives with Data and Information

The 9-1-1 & Geospatial Services (NGS) Bureau provides a variety of data and information services to local, state, and federal stakeholders. The bureau is organized into three service units:

- Public Safety Communications (PSC) Division
- Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN) Division
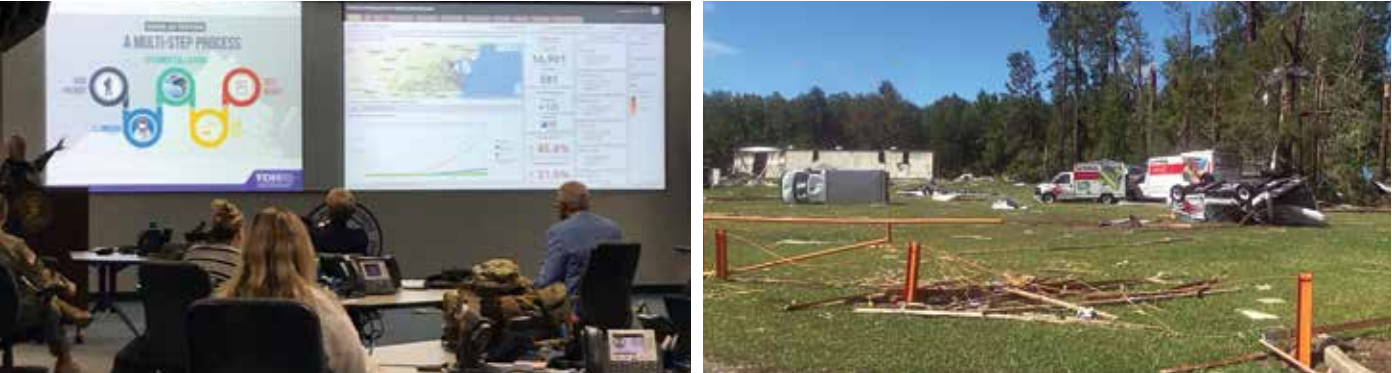- Regional Outreach Division

Collectively, the NGS divisions are prepared to assist any local 9-1-1 or GIS program as well as state agencies' GIS programs, bringing their essential services to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The PSC Division supports local 9-1-1 programs through funding and technical assistance and provides staff support to the 9-1-1 Services Board. The VGIN Division supports local and state agency GIS programs through technical and data assistance and provides staff support to the VGIN Advisory Board. Both divisions utilize a common outreach effort through the bureau's Regional Outreach Division.

Public Safety Communications Division

The Code of Virginia (44-146.18:5) establishes that the PSC Division "shall provide staff support to the 9-1-1 Services Board and encourage, promote, and assist in the development and deployment of statewide enhanced emergency telecommunications systems."

The 9-1-1 Services Board is leading Virginia's efforts to transform an outdated 9-1-1 system into a digital network that is faster and more efficient, and has greater Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) capabilities to better serve its citizens and visitors for years to come. Overall, the 9-1-1 system relies on decades-old technology tied to voice-centric communications. It relies on an analog network that is being replaced by newer technologies. The Commonwealth is moving forward in its evolution of enhanced 9-1-1 technology in order to ensure high-quality, state-of-the-art services to its citizens and visitors.

To accomplish these goals, the 9-1-1 Services Board, supported by the NGS Bureau, has planned for and initiated the processes for moving Virginia PSAPs to a Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) system. NG9-1-1 is based on a modern internet protocol (IP) network that has the ability to deliver calls to the appropriate 9-1-1 center faster, transfer 9-1-1 calls and associated data anywhere as needed, interconnect with other public safety systems and databases, and to securely receive multimedia communications like text, photos and videos in an efficient and timely manner. As service providers begin abandoning legacy circuit-switched technology, there is an urgency to update the 9-1-1 infrastructure to NG9-1-1. Actions have begun to transform the outdated system to a new digitally-based network that is faster, more efficient, and has greater capabilities to serve Virginia's citizens. The Code of Virginia §56-484.16 requires full implementation of NG9-1-1 by July 1, 2023.

FUNDING AND CONTRACT	13 PRECONDITIONS	13 DELOYMENT WITH GEOSPATIAL ROUTING
MITIGATION PROPOSAL Outlines GIS, CHE, diversity, and other PSAP and GIS Specific Requirements	**DIVERSE CONNECTIVITY PROJECT**	**ARCHITECTURE PHASE**
Funding Request Submitted by PSAP	Construction Contract with PSAP	PSAP Site Remediation
Funding Request Recommended by 9-1-1 Services Board Funding Committee	LEC Survey and Work List	CPE Network Design
Funding Approved by 9-1-1 Services Board	PSAP Contracts with Vendor for Needed Work	Architecture Review
Contract Executed by: PSAP, NG9-1-1, Service Provider	Diversity Constructed	Order AVPN Circuits for Integration Phase
NOTES: • Blue and orange steps must be completed in order from top to bottom • All green column items must be completed before proceeding with orange Deployment Phase for i3 deployment. They may be completed in any order and can be done simultaneously. • Green "Mutual Decision" column items should be complete about 90 days before the planned cut-over date. • If not all Green column items are met, steps in orange may be altered to deploy PSAP on the ESInet without complete i3 functionality. PSAP would move to i3 functionality as green preconditions are met.	**GIS PROJECT**	**INTEGRATION PHASE**
	Provisioning and PSAP Boundaries Developed	POI to Aggregation Site Network for Region
	GIS Kickoff Meeting i3 Coach Assignment	GIS Date Provisioning
	EGDMS Critical Errors Resolved	**DEPLOYMENT PHASE**
	ALI to RCL Issues Resolved	Pre-Cutover Planning and Testing
	Mutual Decision that GIS Supports Geospatial Call Routing	Planned PSAP Cut-Over Date:
	CALL HANDLING EQUIPMENT	PSAP Cut-Over
	CHE Supports i3 (PSAP Responsibility)	

Figure 1: Overall NG9-1-1 Deployment Steps

Throughout FY 2020, the Board has had a number of accomplishments, the majority of which directly support the implementation of NG9-1-1. Below is a partial list of these accomplishments:

- Awarded $55.6 million to 111 PSAPs for NG9-1-1 deployment projects
- Assisted Fairfax County in its deployment of NG9-1-1 on June 3, 2020 – the inaugural NG9-1-1 deployment in Virginia
- Supported 110 PSAPs in their efforts to deploy Text-to-9-1-1 before the legislative mandate of July 1, 2020

Virginia continues to be a nationally recognized leader in 9-1-1 and the Board is well positioned to address any emerging challenges to the 9-1-1 ecosystem in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Virginia Geographic Information Network Division

The VGIN Division was established in 1997 by Virginia Code and is designed to "foster the creative utilization of geographic information and oversee the development of a catalog of GIS data available in the Commonwealth." Core functions of VGIN are:

- To develop and recommend policies and guidelines required to support state and local government exchange, acquisition, storage, use, sharing and distribution of geographic or base map data and related technologies

- To compile a data catalog consisting of descriptions of geographic information systems (GIS) coverages maintained by individual state and local government agencies

- To set priorities for the development of state digital geographic data and base maps that meet the needs of state agencies, institutions of higher education, and local governments

- To provide services, geographic data products, and access to its repository of data at rates established by the division

Regional Outreach Division

The Regional Outreach Division serves as the bureau's connection to local governments in the areas of 9-1-1 and GIS. The division consists of seven regional coordinators, one for each of the VDEM's regions. The regional coordinator positions were developed in early 2006 in response to the desire of the 9-1-1 community across the Commonwealth to have guidance, assistance and support in maintaining and optimizing operations.

Since that time the division has grown and currently educates and supports local PSAPs and GIS staff on the policies, plans and processes of the NGS Bureau, the 9-1-1 Services Board, the VGIN Advisory Board, and all related committees. The regional coordinators provide effective outreach for 9-1-1 and geospatial coordination and technical assistance through the development and maintenance of collaborative relationships with local governments and regional organizations.

Regional outreach improves the efficiency of the NGS Bureau by being the first point of contact for correspondence, questions, and feedback. It also improves the bureau's efficiency since most of its efforts impact both 9-1-1 and GIS throughout the Commonwealth.
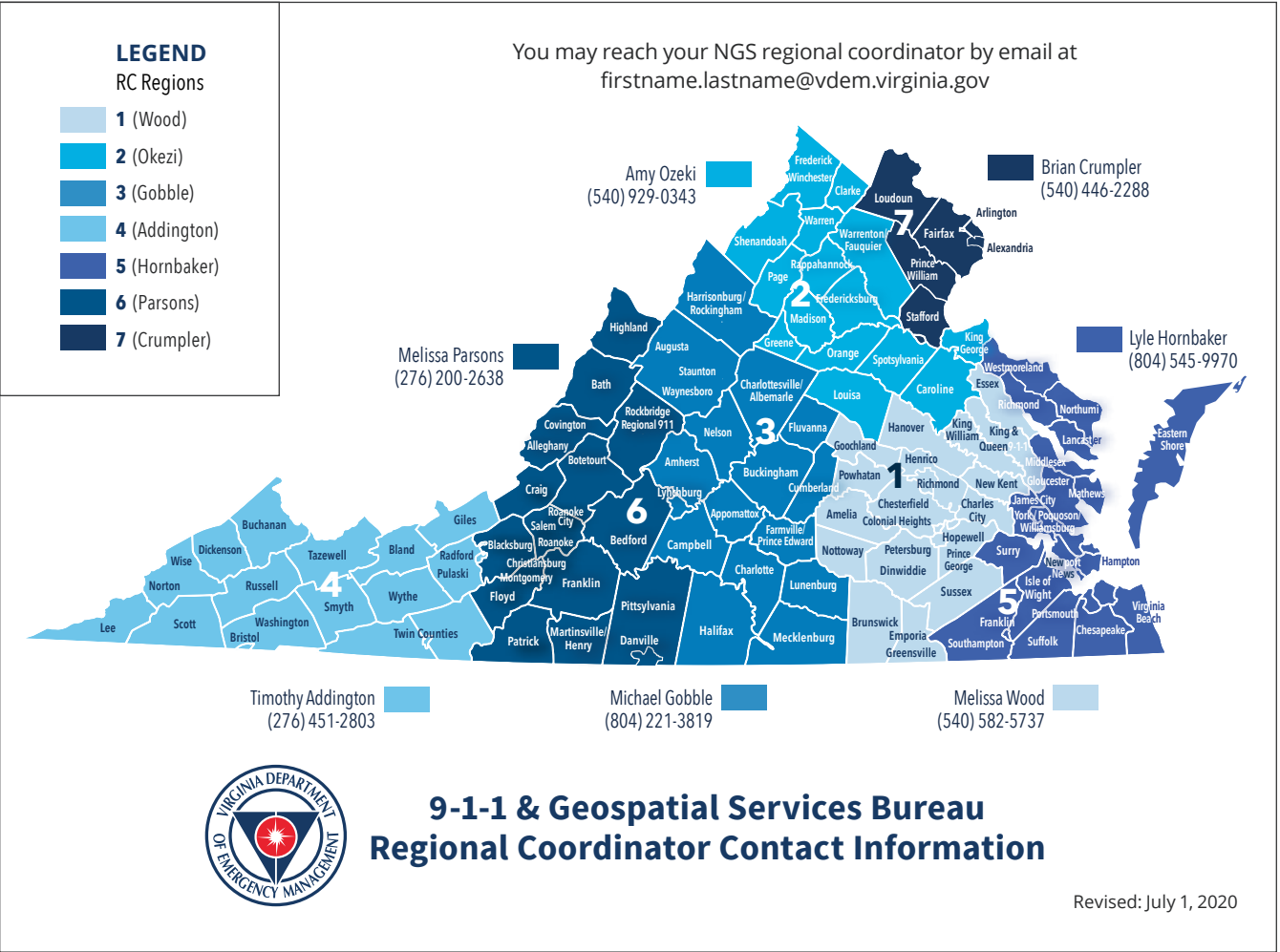

Figure 2: NGS Bureau Regions and Coordinators

Currently, the Regional Outreach Division is primarily focused on assisting 124 PSAPs in the Commonwealth with their transition to NG9-1-1. The regional coordinators (RCs) are key in assuring that each PSAP meets the July 1, 2023 legislative requirement for deployment. A significant amount of work in the areas of education, collaboration among stakeholders, and task management is being done by each RC while assisting the PSAPs in their region to meet their mandated requirements. This will ensure that deployments are accomplished in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Another significant accomplishment during the first half of 2020 was the deployment of Text-to 9-1-1. Virginia Code § 56-484.16, B states in part that, "on or before July 1, 2020, each PSAP in the Commonwealth shall deploy equipment, products, and services necessary...to enable the PSAP to receive and process calls for emergency assistance sent via Short Message Service (SMS) text message." The RCs worked closely with each PSAP and text vendors to ensure that the legislative requirement was met. Because of those efforts and the role of the RCs, this was a successful undertaking in Virginia. This service is available to provide more access to 9-1-1 for people with disabilities, and to those in situations where it is dangerous to make a voice call to request help.
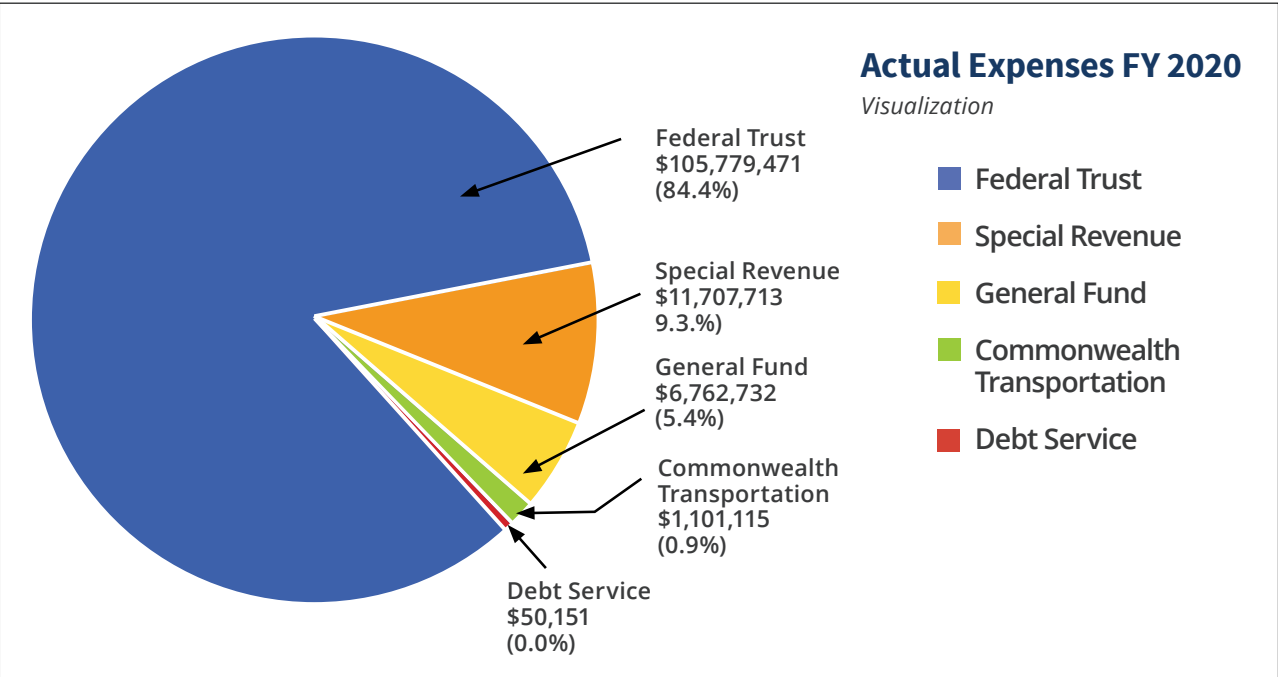
Financial Management Bureau: Supporting State and Local Responders

Emergency management in the Commonwealth is a shared responsibility between the state and localities, and federal grant funding is essential to maintaining and building capacity in our ever-evolving threat environment. VDEM's Financial Management Bureau strategically manages the agency's grant programs, as well as its revenue and expenditures.

Operating under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer, the bureau coordinates state and federal grants, accounting, procurement, business compliance, and budget and financial management and planning.

The Budget Office

The VDEM Budget Office plans, formulates, justifies, analyzes, and executes the agency's operating budget. This office also determines multi-year financial requirements utilizing general funds, special funds, and federal grant funds to plan for organizational growth and preparedness.

Actual Expenses FY 2020
Visualization

Federal Trust
$105,779,471
(84.4%)

Special Revenue
$11,707,713
9.3.%)

General Fund
$6,762,732
(5.4%)

Commonwealth
Transportation
$1,101,115
(0.9%)

Debt Service
$50,151
(0.0%)

- ■ Federal Trust
- ■ Special Revenue
- ■ General Fund
- ■ Commonwealth Transportation
- ■ Debt Service

	2019-20 ACTUAL
▶ Federal Trust	$105,779,471
▶ Special Revenue	11,707,713
▶ General Fund	6,762,732
▶ Commonwealth Transportation	1,101,115
▶ Debt Service	50,151
TOTAL	**$125,401,183**

Data filtered by Fund, Expenses and exported on October 13, 2020. Created with OpenGov.

The Grants Division

The VDEM Grants Division is a one-stop-shop for credible programmatic and financial grant leadership, transparent data processes, and collaborative partnerships with stakeholders. The division manages federal assistance to measurably improve capability and reduce the risks the Commonwealth faces in times of man-made and natural disasters.

Federal grants are essential for state and local emergency management efforts. At VDEM, we rely on grants including the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program, the State Homeland Security Program, the Emergency Management Grant Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program, and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant Program.

VDEM also administers and/or coordinates federal assistance as a result of a major disaster declaration by the President. These include the Public Assistance Grant Program to reimburse local governments, state agencies, tribal governments, and certain private non-profit organizations for eligible disaster-related damages and expenditures. Individual Assistance Grant Programs may be available to offer help to individuals and households through crisis counseling, disaster unemployment, disaster legal services, and other programs.

The Procurement Division

The VDEM Procurement Division's goal is to deliver the best solutions by providing a full range of acquisitions services to disaster and non-disaster programs. To accomplish this, the division considers the state and federal laws, rules, and regulations that govern the acquisition process in a manner that is directly focused on the mission for VDEM.

The Procurement Division provides pre- and post-award contracting and acquisitions support to all divisions in the agency to ensure stewardship of public funds by following the state and federal (where applicable) acquisition regulations and best practices.

The Procurement Director is the Co-Chair of the Commonwealth's Disaster Procurement Working Group. This group, which is composed of key state agency procurement professionals, addresses disaster contracting to ensure the Commonwealth has the contracts in place (where practicable) to respond to disasters.

The Accounting & Compliance Division

The VDEM Accounting & Compliance Division is committed to providing integrated technology management for all financial system-related matters, and to operating and maintaining the agency's financial systems.

The division also manages financial controls, operations, and policy; prepares, reviews and consolidates agency financial statements; and implements the agency's internal controls program. This division is committed to providing solutions to enable our core mission.

The Virginia Emergency Support Team

The Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) coordinates the statewide response and recovery efforts for incidents, events, crises, emergencies, and disasters of all types when an event goes beyond the capacities of the local jurisdiction. The VEST has more than 200 trained members from several Executive Branch state agencies, private sector, and volunteer organizations. The VEST works out of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center, a secure facility co-located with the Virginia State Police Administrative Headquarters at 7700 Midlothian Turnpike in North Chesterfield, Virginia.

The VEST was activated four times in FY20 for events including Hurricane Dorian, Lobby Day, and severe flooding in southwest Virginia, and it remained activated for COVID-19 for most of 2020. During the COVID-19 activation, multiple other events that required multi-day, and even 24-hour/7 days-a-week VEST support, included severe flooding in the Roanoke Valley and Southwest Virginia, as well as civil rights events that continued for months.

Full activation can draw more than 200 response professionals to the Virginia Emergency Operations Center from state agencies, FEMA, the US military, the Army Corps of Engineers, and multiple private-sector partners. The newly introduced COVID-19 environment is actively changing operations that require more flexibility and virtual operations.

When does the VEST step into action?

The VEST can be activated when:

- A Declaration of Emergency is made by the Governor;

- Local and regional capabilities can't sufficiently address the impact of an event; or

- The State Coordinator or VEST Bureau Chief orders activation to support a high-profile emergency or non-emergency event, or an event that demonstrates the need for a state-level request for assistance.

The Virginia Emergency Operations Center is always open 24x7x365 at one of four operational levels:

| Condition: **GREEN** Steady state | Condition: **YELLOW** Activated/monitoring | Condition: **ORANGE** Partially activated | Condition: **RED** Fully activated |

Who is part of the VEST?

The VEST uses a hybrid Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Support Functions (ESF) to manage incidents and events. Under this system, the VEST is divided into functional sections to coordinate response:

Planning Section: During a disaster, critical information on actions, plans, and responder decisions comes in at all times. The Planning Section funnels this information into situation reports, spot reports, and briefings for the Governor and other decision-makers.

Operations Section: Each emergency response effort is categorized into an Emergency Support Function (ESF). In the Operations Section, these ESFs work together to track status updates, actions, and resource requests.

Logistics Section: Local requests for assistance involve the flow of personnel, equipment, and services from place to place. The Logistics Section fulfills requests for help with technology, information, transportation, inventory, warehousing material, and packaging.

Finance and Administration Section: This section provides overall financial management and administration support to help with incident management activities. This includes monitoring costs associated with an incident, analyzing disaster costs for funding requests, and providing financial status reports to leadership on a daily basis.

Recovery Section: The Recovery Section is responsible for collecting and analyzing damage documentation submissions, making recommendations for potential disaster declarations, and collaborating with leadership to develop short- and long-term recovery strategies.

The Joint Information Center: Public Information Officers from 40 state agencies work together to ensure the most accurate, up-to-date information is available to the public. They disseminate this information through social media messages, news releases, and media interviews.

Policy & Communications

Emergency management is all about working together — and that is the focus of the Policy & Communications bureau. This bureau is responsible for cross-bureau/cross-divisional projects, data analytics, and organizational planning, legislative relations and intergovernmental affairs, policy development, project management, master calendar creation and maintenance, ethics, FOIA, legal reviews, and stakeholder engagement.

Communications

The Communications division works to educate the public about emergency preparedness, and spreads awareness of VDEM's activities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards. The division heads up comprehensive public outreach programs, preparedness marketing efforts, social media, news releases, the VDEM website, media relations, and outreach to elected officials. Communications works to ensure that messaging from the agency is looked at from a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens to promote accessibility of information for all Virginians and visitors. The division is also responsible for managing the agency's Freedom of Information Act request responses and stakeholder engagement.

Project Management

The Project Management Office oversees cross-bureau and cross-divisional projects to ensure effectiveness and efficiency while coordinating resources and deadlines. The Project Management Office also provides guidance and standards in the execution of projects throughout the agency to include those with an IT component to ensure that all our efforts are synchronized and collaborative.

Agencywide and COVID-19 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

§ 1. *The Department of Emergency Management shall review its emergency services and disaster preparedness programs to determine if changes to those programs are necessary in order to address the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency and individuals with access or functional needs. The Department shall complete its review no later than November 1, 2020, and report its findings to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology and the House Committee on General Laws. Such report shall include any recommendations for legislation that would be required to fully address the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency and individuals with access or functional needs. As used in this section, "individuals with limited English proficiency" means individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.*

Communications Overview Addressing Above Changes

During emergencies and disasters, public messaging can mean the difference between life and death. While many platforms can be used to push out timely information, the COVID-19 pandemic has thrust society into more online dependency. Due to limitations with social distancing and quarantines, vulnerable populations will now rely more than ever on access to digital messaging such as the internet.

Workarounds and alternatives to digital messaging have been used in the past to meet requirements set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. However, many critical aspects of daily life have moved online, making it difficult to rely on those other methods. Interactive tools and/or sites that are well-intentioned suddenly prevent those with access and functional needs from accessing information readily available to those without access and functional needs.

The Commonwealth recognizes the importance of giving every Virginian and visitor access to critical information – whether it be in an emergency or to perform a daily function. It is for this reason that several key initiatives have been implemented to ensure equity in messaging.

Training for State Employees
One of the first steps in filling this gap is recognizing that not everyone understands the complexities and requirements for providing accessible communications. To address this, *Communication Accessibility during a State of Emergency: Guidance for State Agencies* was published in April and distributed to all state agency Public Information Officers. This document was created to provide key guidance related to provision of information and messaging which is accessible to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf blind, blind, and visually impaired.

To accompany this guide, an online training course was also made available. The course included information on how to effectively make public service announcements, improve accessibility for press briefings, and secure resources such as Sign Language Interpreter (SLI) services, and Real Time Captioning/CART for remote meetings such as teleconferencing and video conferences. The training also addressed site accessibility for people with disabilities including the major features of 508 compliance: closed captioning and subtitles, screen reader capability, accessibility with the keyboard, and transcription.

In an effort to address health equity as well, just in time training was delivered to government employees at the state and local level, assisting with programs for vulnerable communities across the Commonwealth. *Health Equity Before, During, and After a Disaster — Just in Time* Training allowed personnel to discuss several key topics such as the rationale for centering equity in disaster response, recognizing the differences between equity and equality, understanding the social determinants of health, utilizing data and research related to health equity, and explaining unconscious bias and cultural humility. This training was developed by the Health Equity Working Group and the Virginia Emergency Support Team to promote the consideration of health equity in all aspects of preparedness, response, and recovery to a disaster.

Press Conferences and Written Guidance

In addition to the ongoing efforts to address digital roadblocks, great progress has been made at the state level to address accessibility issues for press conferences and written guidance as well. ASL interpretation is now made available for all press conferences, and all Executive Orders have undergone ASL translation as well. To be inclusive of our communities with limited English proficiency, all Executive Orders and guidance related to COVID-19 have been translated into Virginia's top 6 languages – Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, and Tagalog. Virginia is also one of only a handful of states that now offers live Spanish translation of all that Governor's press conferences.

Social Media and Community Engagement

Social media graphics and content are one of the fastest ways to reach a large audience. Recognizing this, all life safety graphics produced by VDEM are now translated into the top six languages and posted to social media and the vaemergency.gov webpage. This year, the *Hurricane Evacuation Guide during the COVID-19 Pandemic* was also translated into multiple languages, including plain text format, to ensure it was accessible. Printed copies were made available to localities for distribution to those communities that cannot access digital information or that requested a hard copy.

Increased efforts have also been made to amplify public safety messages to vulnerable communities. This includes TV ads, radio messaging, and public events that also take diversity, equity, and inclusion into consideration. Research has been conducted to identify these communities, and targeted outreach efforts have been conducted to ensure messages are received by the whole community. VDEM is in the process of launching a Virginia Partners in Preparedness Program, which will bring together various groups to serve as trusted messengers for their communities. Examples of these partners include advocacy groups, non-profits, faith based and voluntary organizations. The goal is to have these groups promote emergency preparedness and keep their communities informed of response and/or recovery measures as well.

Websites

State agency websites are in the process of being evaluated for accessibility issues. This summer, a memo was sent to all state agency heads promoting the accessibility of the Commonwealth's digital properties. The Virginia Joint Information Center, led by VDEM, partnered with Virginia-based company Capital One to assist with this effort. Capital One's Digital Accessibility Group is providing pro bono reviews of public facing portions of state websites to determine what pages and functions are not accessible to those using assistive devices and technologies. These reports will assist state agencies in better understanding where the issues are and how to correct them.

Recommendations

During emergencies and disasters, public messaging can mean the difference between life and death. While many platforms can be used to push out timely information, the COVID-19 pandemic has thrust society into more online dependency. Due to limitations with social distancing and quarantines, vulnerable populations are now more reliant than ever on access to digital messaging such as the internet, which can further exacerbate inequities and access issues. The following recommendations are intended to capture potential legislative options to enhance the Commonwealth's capacity to better serve those with access and functional needs and limited English proficiency.

Partners in Preparedness/Community Outreach Program Manager

In an effort to combat the pre-existing systematic inequalities that leave many communities vulnerable before, during, and after a disaster, VDEM recommends developing a program manager position that will assist with the creation and coordination of a formalized Partners in Preparedness program and ongoing community outreach campaign. This position will work to ensure that the agency thoroughly engages with partners that can promote and enhance programs and communication by serving as trusted messengers within their communities. These partners come from all industries including but not limited to advocacy groups; education; business/commerce; faith-based; health care; nonprofits; and government agencies.

Seven (7) Regional Public Communications Specialists

Currently, VDEM's seven regional offices do not include the capacity to maintain communications campaigns or outreach events tailored for the communities they serve. Instead, they rely on communications division staff members at headquarters in Richmond to handle the public information for all 130+ localities served by VDEM. These positions are not only responsible for the agency's entire communications strategy, but during a disaster, they are tasked with managing the state Joint Information Center.

Having full time communications and outreach specialists in the regions not only enhances the agency's ability to communicate as a whole, but provides an individualized focus whereby communities most at need are prioritized and have a local point of contact to provide timely and accurate information. In addition, by having communications personnel living and working in the region they serve, they are also more attune to the needs of the communities, current gaps, and resources available to assist. During blue sky days and disasters, these positions will also serve as a liaison to HQ and the state JIC, informing them in real-time if there are any communications needs coming from their communities.

Public Outreach Competitive Grant Program

In Virginia, many localities have emergency managers and/or public information officers that are not full-time, have other primary job responsibilities, or are volunteers. To better assist our localities with public outreach and preparedness campaign development, a pass-through grant program should be developed to provide funding for developing, enhancing, and sustaining communications efforts, particularly to communities disproportionately impacted, communities of color, those with access and functional needs, limited English proficiency, and others most at risk.

This program would provide localities with support that could fund efforts such as those listed below:

- Have a dedicated Public Information Officer or Outreach Specialist that could work with communities to identify needs, development outreach materials, and engage with their residents before, during, and after an emergency

- Create campaigns that are inclusive of their whole community and plan for/address any gaps

- Conduct public outreach events that bring information and resources directly to the communities, potentially partnering with community leaders/trusted messengers

- Provide technology support and/or enhancements that can assist with reaching the whole community with a specific emphasis on this with access and functional needs

- Ensuring digital communications are 508 compliant, to include websites, apps, and documents

- Provide digital and print resources in multiple languages that are present in their communities

Additional Support Opportunities

211 Virginia is staffed with trained professionals (run by VDSS) that take public inquiry calls and suggest sources of help using one of the largest databases of health and human services in Virginia. Currently, they have one bilingual-Spanish Community Resource Specialist (CRS) on staff and a temporary specialist in training that is bilingual in English and Spanish. 211 currently uses Transperfect for translation services. Ideally, to provide Spanish Language services they would need at least 5 bilingual CRS plus a bilingual supervisor who can perform call monitoring in both languages.

To address capacity issues, 211 could also use additional permanent CRS to address capacity issues in general. They have augmented staff with temporary workers from a service, however this has been challenging to keep these positions filled.

In addition to this support, there is also a need to have a dedicated language translation line that can assist call takers in all languages, particularly during disasters. With more than 100 languages spoken in Virginia, it is impossible to have this capacity built in. These translation services can be accessed 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week to assist during blue sky and disaster operations.

Our annual reports: A call for consolidation

In 2019, the Virginia General Assembly passed House Bill 2133, which directed VDEM to consolidate the following 11 reports into one document to be called the Virginia Comprehensive Emergency Management Report. Each report can be found under its corresponding tab. These reports can also be found at *Code of Virginia* 44-146.18:4. They include separate reports on:

1. The current readiness of Virginia's search and rescue efforts;

2. The jurisdictions that received financial assistance during the prior fiscal year because they were located in an area declared to be in a state of emergency, but not declared to be a major disaster area for which federal assistance was provided, and the amount each such jurisdiction received;

3. The status of the Commonwealth's emergency shelter capabilities and readiness;

4. All assets received during the prior fiscal year as a result of a law-enforcement seizure and subsequent forfeiture by either a state or federal court and their estimated net worth;

5. The forfeiture of federal grant funding by any state agency that is required to return such funding as a result of not fulfilling the specifications of a grant;

6. The results of the annual statewide drill conducted by the Governor in accordance with § 44-146.17:2 in preparation for a potential large-scale disaster;

7. The number and types of training and exercises related to man-made and natural disaster preparedness that were conducted by the department, the costs associated with such training and exercises, and the challenges and barriers to ensuring that state and local agencies are able and ready to respond to emergencies and natural disasters;

8. The mandates administered by state agencies and imposed on local governments, an estimate of the fiscal impact of the mandates on the affected local governments, and a written justification as to why the mandate should or should not be eliminated;

9. The status of continuity of operations programs, plans and systems of the Commonwealth's executive branch agencies. Such plans shall include a description of how the agency or institution of higher education will continue to provide essential services or perform mission essential functions during a disaster or other event that disrupts normal operations;

10. The state of the Commonwealth's emergency prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts, and the resources necessary to implement them; and

11. The status of emergency management response plans throughout the Commonwealth and other measures taken or recommended to prevent, respond to, or recover from disasters, including acts of terrorism.
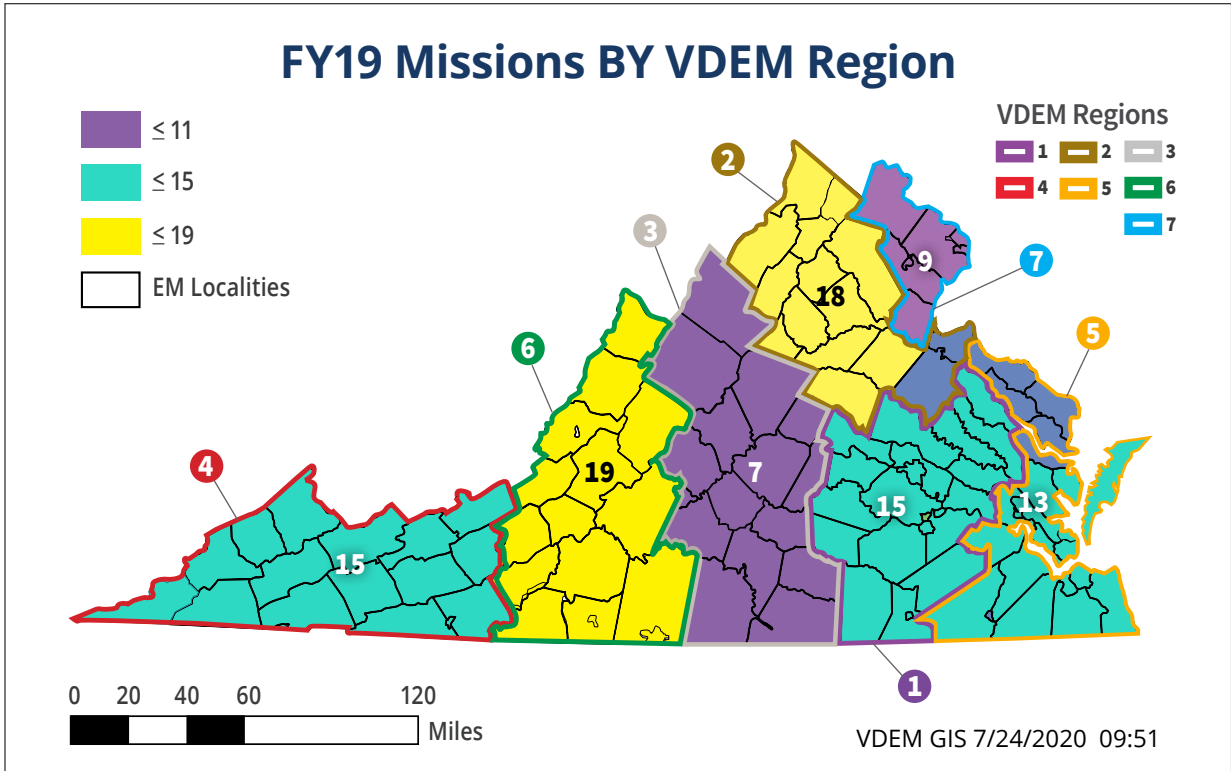
1. Search & Rescue

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.1:

1. The current readiness of Virginia's search and rescue efforts.

VDEM has coordinated with the Virginia Search and Rescue Council (VASARCO) to provide wilderness and lost person search and rescue (SAR) since 1985. The program by VASARCO has 20 recognized volunteer search and rescue teams, with 500 members across the Commonwealth. VDEM supports the program with three professional SAR officers. SAR personnel also assist law enforcement with the search for evidence and missing homicide victims.

In FY20, the program executed 96 missions at the request of localities, who asked for specialized SAR resources coordinated through VDEM. VDEM's ability to utilize volunteer resources is critical to the success of the SAR program and missions across the Commonwealth. Virginia's SAR Program is highly regarded throughout the nation for best-in-class quality in the training and coordination of search and rescue efforts.

VDEM GIS 7/24/2020 09:51

Mission Totals by FY

Status 1 – Alive & Well
Status 2 – Alive; Assistance Needed
Status 3 – Deceased
Status 4 – Mission Suspended
Status 5 – Evidence Search

Legend: Status 1, Status 2, Status 3, Status 4, Status 5 across FY 2020, FY 2019, FY 2018, FY 2017, FY2016, FY 2015, FY 2014, FY 2013, FY 2012, FY2011
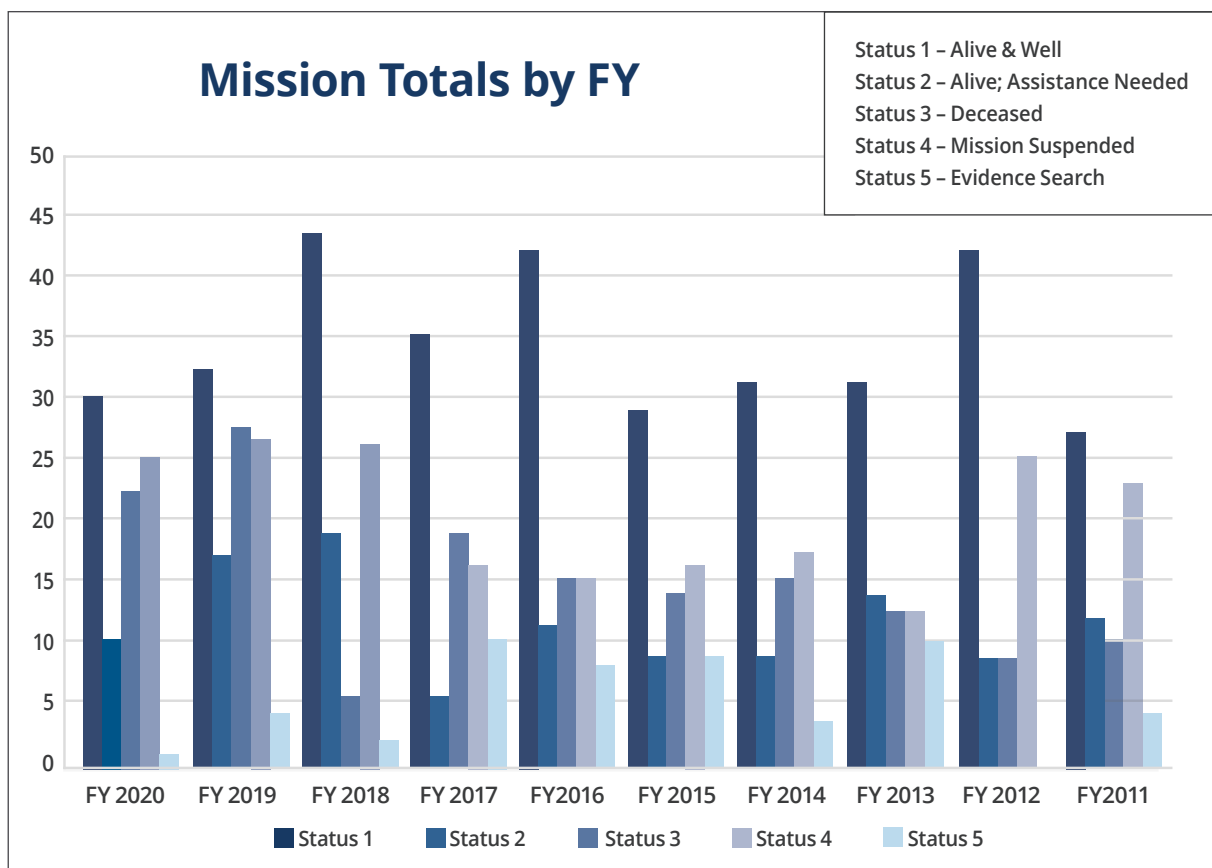
The SAR Program provides training, administrative support, and operational coordination to search and rescue efforts statewide. The SAR program provides specialized expertise in search theory, search management, and specialized resources such as search canines and operations in wilderness and austere environments throughout the Commonwealth. Training is provided to stakeholders by highly experienced SAR practitioners. Administrative support and training content are based on consensus standards aligned with best practices and national standards, and are developed in coordination with the Virginia Search and Rescue Council before being adopted by VDEM. Operational coordination is provided through SAR coordinators and volunteer search mission coordinators on search incidents upon request of the locality.

Search and rescue operations are divided into four mission specialties, according to the conditions and environment of where or how the incident has occurred:

1. **Aeronautical missions** – include downed or missing/overdue civil aviation aircraft missions, and emergency calls for help broadcast through an emergency distress beacon (EDB). An EDB might originate from aircraft, marine craft, or a personal locator beacon.

2. **Inland/wilderness missions** – comprise the bulk of the agency's response in support of local jurisdictions to help locate a lost or missing person. On average, the agency will support 80 to 90 missions per year throughout the Commonwealth. Missing children and wandering Alzheimer's/ dementia subjects comprise the top two demographics of missing person missions.

3. **Marine/waterborne missions** – include distressed/sinking vessels, boating incidents, flooding, and swiftwater rescue incidents, which often result in a drowning.

4. **Urban Search and Rescue/technical rescue** – include major events with significant impact to multiple citizens, which may result in victims being stranded or trapped in collapsed structures or fallen debris. These events may include wide-area searches such as in the aftermath of a hurricane.

FY20 Mission Types (96 Cases)
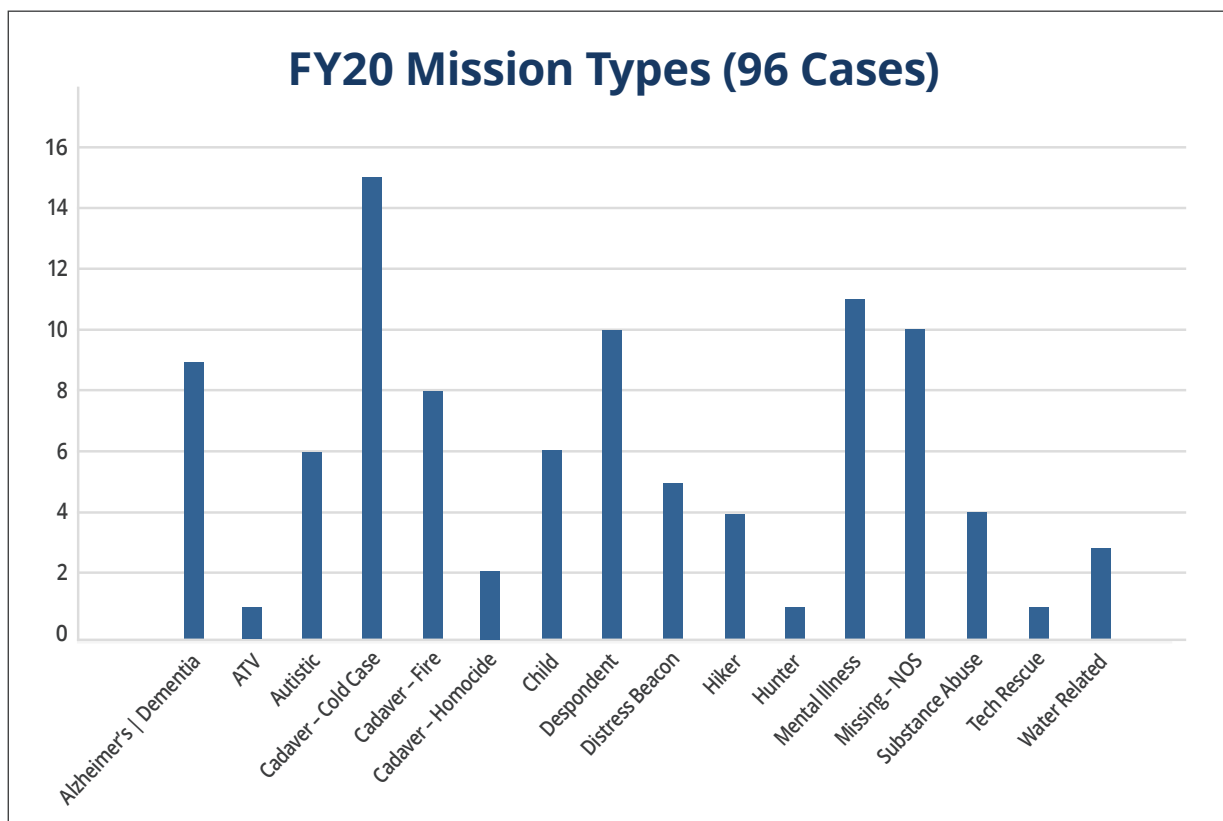
SAR Program Management

VDEM's SAR program consists of a Chief of Search and Rescue who serves as the program manager, as well as two regionally based search and rescue officers in the eastern and western parts of the Commonwealth. Additionally, the agency employs 22 highly skilled adjunct instructors who assist in the delivery of training classes statewide.

The SAR Program is organized into 11 program areas:

1. **Program Management** – VDEM ensures that the normal operations of the program, including response to missions, are timely and appropriate to the needs of the localities.

2. **Training** (supported by the VDEM Training, Education, and Exercise Department) – VDEM provides specialized training to police, fire-rescue, EMS, emergency managers, volunteer search and rescue responders, and others who might have a duty to respond to a search and rescue emergency.

3. **Virginia Emergency Support Team** (Team (Emergency Support Function #9 Search and Rescue) – VDEM coordinates with local, state, and federal agencies to form a response to both man-made and natural disasters.

4. **Search and Rescue** – The search and rescue program provides a coordinated response to lost or missing persons throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, utilizing approximately 500 trained volunteers.

5. **Search Management** – VDEM and its member search and rescue groups provide mission management to search and rescue events as requested.

6. **Search and Rescue Canine** – The search and rescue program provides canine teams for every mission, including live find and human remains detection missions.

7. **Search and Rescue Equine** – The equine search and rescue teams provide a means to search large areas quickly and efficiently and can be used to evacuate a subject if they are able to sit in a saddle.

8. **Search and Rescue Tracking** – Trackers, or human-trackers, are used throughout SAR missions to follow a path made by the subject, or to simply age a clue for its appropriateness to the mission.

9. **Wilderness Rescue** – Several teams within the search and rescue program provide expertise on technical rescues involving the rescue of rock climbers or an evacuation over technical terrain.

10. **Cave Search and Rescue** – The program's cave rescue teams respond to those requests for assistance when subjects are lost underground, or need to be extricated from a cave.

11. **Vehicle Based Search** - Vehicle based searches are comprised of UTVs and ATVs to be used during the search for lost or missing persons, and the evacuation of those persons.

VASARCO, Volunteer Groups and Other Agencies

The Virginia SAR Program has an active relationship with Virginia Search and Rescue Council (VASARCO). The Virginia Search and Rescue Council is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that represents the collective voice of the Virginia SAR community. VASARCO fosters communication between its volunteer organizations and VDEM. VASARCO also helps develop and coordinate the SAR system in Virginia by interpreting guidance from VDEM and ensuring compliance within volunteer teams.

Membership within VASARCO is mandatory for teams who seek and maintain a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with VDEM. Quarterly VASARCO meetings, regular committee meetings, and monthly VASARCO Board/VDEM SAR Program conference calls promote a cooperative environment and provide an avenue for teams to share information and work collaboratively to address and resolve issues that affect the teams. VASARCO membership is diverse and encompasses teams seeking a new MOU, SAR groups that have a long history of service to the Commonwealth, as well as authorities that have jurisdiction over SAR and other response partners.

Volunteer Search Groups (501c3 Non-profit Organizations) with MOUs with VDEM:

1. Amherst County Search and Rescue
2. Angel Search and Rescue
3. Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference
4. Black Diamond Search and Rescue
5. Blue & Gray Search Dogs
6. Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group
7. Christian Aid Ministries SAR
8. Commonwealth Search and Rescue
9. DOGS East
10. Greater Atlantic Rescue DOGS
11. K9 Alert Search and Rescue
12. Mid Atlantic DOGS
13. Piedmont Search and Rescue
14. Rockingham Augusta Search and Rescue
15. Search and Rescue Tracking Institute
16. Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group
17. Spotsylvania Sheriff's Office SAR
18. Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group
19. Tidewater Search and Rescue
20. TROT Search and Rescue
21. Virginia Search and Rescue Dogs Association
22. Virginia Wing - Civil Air Patrol

Other state agencies with SAR roles include:

- **Virginia State Police** (VSP) – Provides human tracking/trailing canines and supports SAR missions with trained ground searchers. If requested, VSP can send their Special Response Teams and Tactical Field Force to supplement the volunteer response.

- **Department of Conservation and Recreation** (DCR) (State Parks) – Supports SAR missions with trained ground searchers and can supplement the volunteer response if needed.

- **Department of Corrections** (DOC) – Provides human tracking/trailing canines and supports SAR missions with ground searchers if needed.

- **Department of Wildlife Resources** (DWR) – Supports SAR missions with trained ground searchers.

- **Marine Resource Commission** (MRC) – Supports SAR missions by assisting localities with maritime search and rescue along the major rivers and Chesapeake Bay.

State SAR Standards

The Virginia SAR standards outline the process and procedures for achieving and maintaining necessary certifications. As outlined in Code of Virginia § 44-146.18 (G) (4)(7), trained SAR assets must have obtained a minimum level of training in order to respond for a certain function, whether it be ground searcher or a management asset. The standards also detail what is required of teams of practitioners seeking a new MOU.

A major reorganization and revision of the current standards continued in FY19 and FY20 in order to ensure all standards are current and align with industry standards such as American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the standards of response partners within the Commonwealth and national partners such as National Park Service and the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR).

The Commonwealth's SAR standards are based on core capabilities that address the functions that each team is expected to perform. Certifications and courses are based on competencies, behaviors, and tasks for individual practitioners.
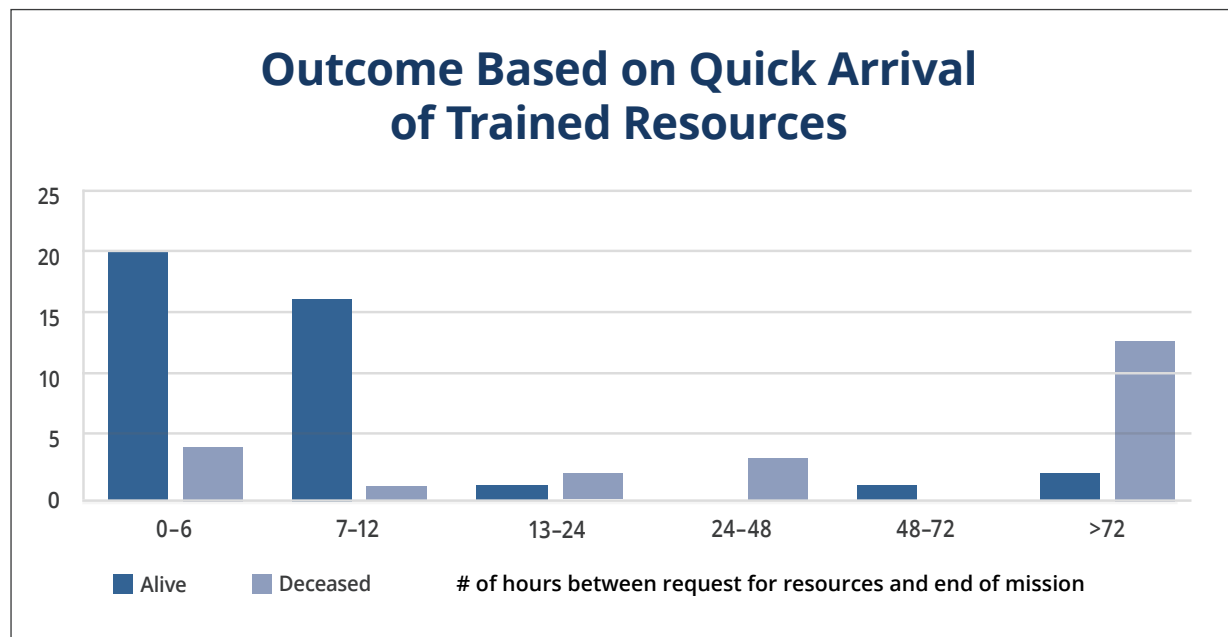
Training Programs

Training programs were significantly reduced in FY19 due to agency budget limitations, which were the result of longstanding reductions in federal grant programs. Due to its success, the SAR program often receives requests for Virginia's training materials and practices from other states, localities, other organizations throughout the United States and some international locations. The SAR program employs capable instructors who are respected, highly skilled leaders and practitioners within the Virginia SAR community.

The training program provides a tiered system of classes and certifications for first responders and SAR practitioners, as well as other courses and workshops that support certification. Best practices and lessons learned are implemented into training with recent and relevant training content for all levels.

SAR Training Classes FY 16-20
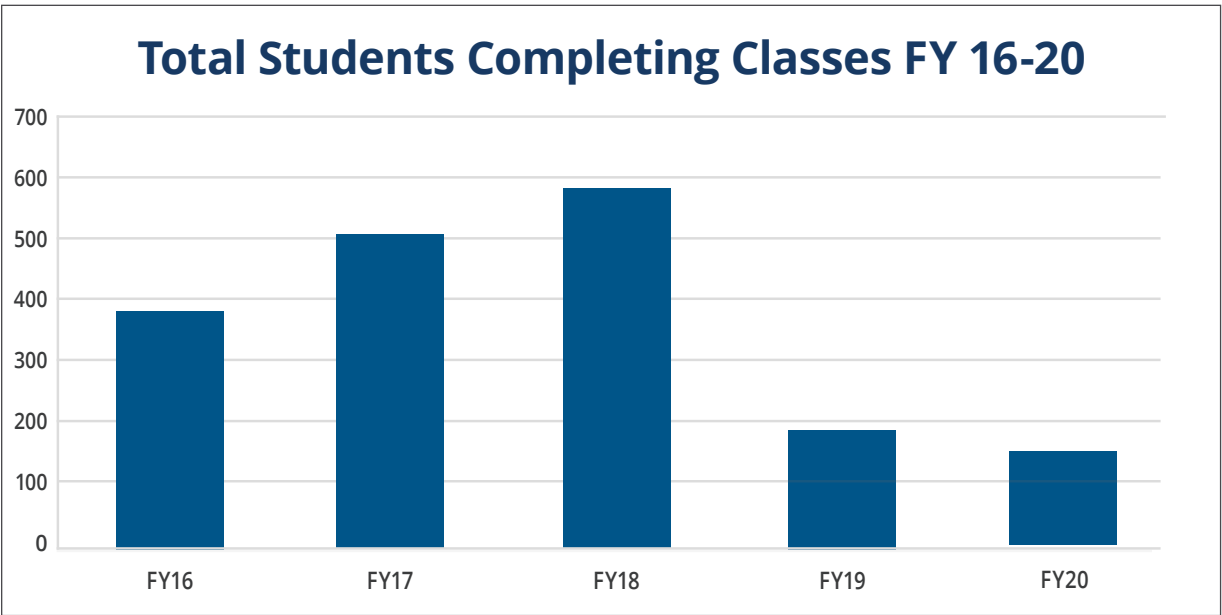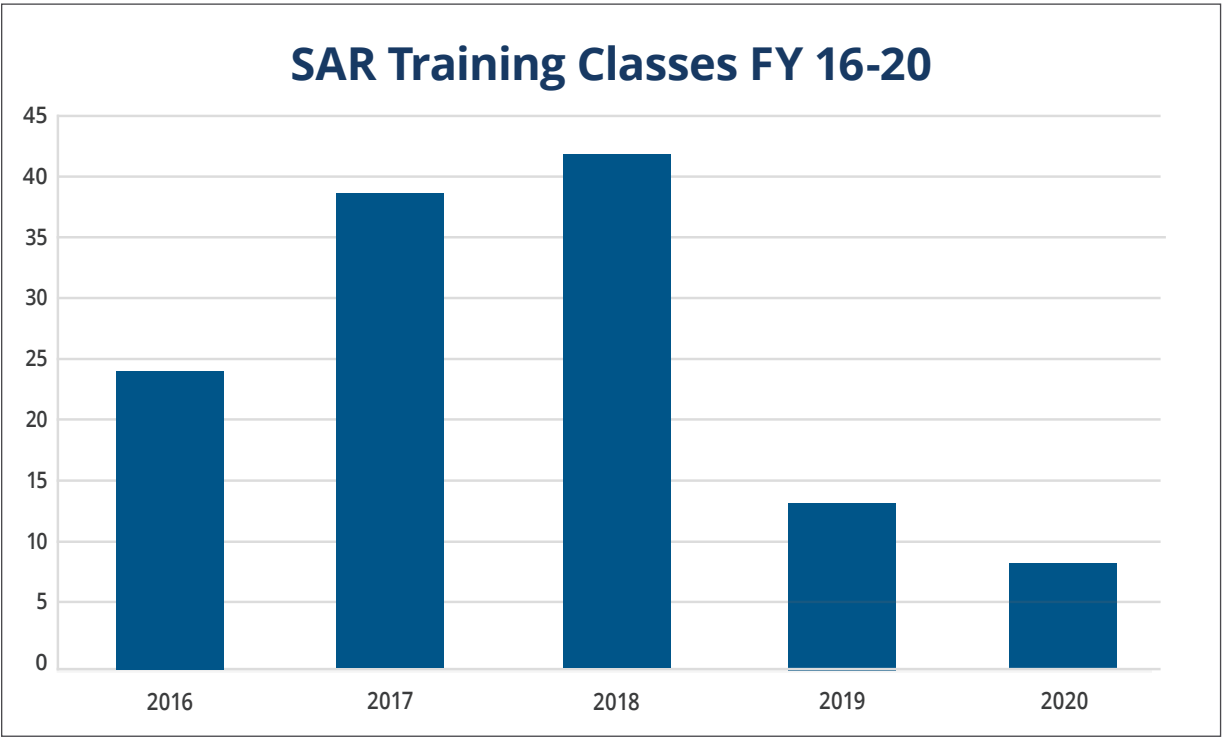
CLASSES OFFERED WITH NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS					
	FY16	**FY17**	**FY18**	**FY19**	**FY20**
Classes Offered	24	38	42	13	8
Participants	378	505	582	190	154

2. Local Financial Assistance

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.2:

2. The jurisdictions that received financial assistance during the prior fiscal year because they were located in an area declared to be in a state of emergency, but not declared to be a major disaster area for which federal assistance was provided, and the amount each such jurisdiction received.

Summary

The following localities received financial assistance in FY20.

LOCALITY NAME	DISASTER	AMOUNT	DATE
Fairfax County	Support for Charlottesville Rally	$ 42,631	9/04/2019
Franklin County	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 6,249	10/23/2019
Roanoke, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 12,219	10/23/2019
Salem, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 6,142	10/23/2019
Fairfax, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 25,217	10/23/2019
Harrisonburg, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 9,202	10/23/2019
Alexandria, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 19,318	10/23/2019
Bristol City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 10,109	10/23/2019
Arlington County	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 35,102	10/23/2019
Bedford, Town of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 26,773	10/23/2019
Chesterfield County	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 7,565	10/23/2019
Lynchburg, City of	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 13,526	10/23/2019
Bedford County	Support for Hurricane Dorian	$ 26,773	12/23/2019
New Kent County	Support for Lobby Day	$ 2,057	04/15/2020

3. Emergency Sheltering

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.3:

3. The status of the Commonwealth's emergency shelter capabilities and readiness;

Recent Changes in Responsibility and Reporting

The Sheltering Coordinator position, funding, and responsibilities for state-level sheltering was transferred from VDEM to VDSS during the 2019/2020 fiscal year. Due to COVID-19, VDSS received an extension to submit four shelter-related reports for 2020 and 2021; these are due October 1, 2021. The following VDSS reports replace this tab, since the budget language was adopted after the Comprehensive Annual Report was originally codified.

Appropriation Act - Item 358 A.
Description: Annual report on the Commonwealth's emergency shelter capabilities and readiness.

Appropriation Act - Item 358 B.1.
Description: Report on the recommendations and challenges of implementing a model state shelter plan, including, but not limited to, the process of mobilization and demobilization of the shelter; relocation of residents when a state shelter is deactivated; warehousing of pre-positioned supplies; potential use of existing resources and vendors already under contract with institutions of higher education; and cost estimates for resources that would be reimbursed by the Commonwealth.

Background

Emergency sheltering capabilities and readiness is a shared responsibility across state agencies and localities in the Commonwealth. By code, localities are required to provide emergency sheltering capabilities for their residents. State sheltering capabilities may become necessary if sheltering needs exceed the localities' capacity and capability.

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) is the lead agency responsible for state managed sheltering in the Commonwealth. Other state agencies supporting VDSS include state universities, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Virginia State Police, the Virginia Information and Technology Agency, and VDEM in carrying out these responsibilities as designated in the COVEOP. The Department of General Services (DGS) supports both VDEM and VDSS with statewide contracts for site-specific goods and services necessary to operate state shelters. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) is responsible for engaging with and supporting localities in their emergency shelter planning and preparedness efforts.

Status of Local Sheltering Capabilities

All localities are required to provide an annually-updated emergency management assessment and data related to emergency sheltering capabilities to VDEM. Localities are required to update their shelter information, to include location, capacity, capability, and presence of backup power to VDEM.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, localities have been working to identify solutions and develop non-congregate sheltering plans, as well as adjust congregate sheltering plans to account for reduced capacity due to social distancing. Factors included in these evaluations include availability of suitable facilities and staff and public health precautions requiring significant increases in per-person space allocations. VDEM has supported this effort by surveying hotel/motel resources and providing a list of establishments for local shelter planners to use in their preparedness efforts.

4. Assets From Law Enforcement

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.4:

4. All assets received during the prior fiscal year as a result of a law-enforcement seizure and subsequent forfeiture by either a state or federal court and their estimated net worth.

Summary

In FY20, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) did not receive any assets as a result of a law-enforcement seizure or subsequent forfeiture by either a state or federal court.

5. Federal Grant Forfeiture by Agencies

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.5:

5. The forfeiture of federal grant funding by any state agency that is required to return such funding as a result of not fulfilling the specifications of a grant.

Summary

In FY20, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) did not collect any grant funding that was forfeited by a state agency due to not fulfilling the specifications of a grant.

6. Annual Statewide Exercise

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.6 regarding the results of the annual statewide large-scale disaster drill that is required by § 44-146.17:2.

Introduction

VDEM did not conduct the annual statewide drill during this fiscal year, due to COVID-19 restrictions on movement and the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center.

VDEM's Training, Education, and Exercise Division conducted two statewide long-term blackout exercises: EARTHEX 19 and GRIDEX V. These exercises challenged state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private industry to protect against, respond to, recover from, and implement continuity plans related to a large-scale disaster with long-term blackout conditions. The two exercises – combined with the extended statewide operations between the state partners, local partners, federal partners, non-governmental organizations, and private industry – have developed a strong working relationship at all levels, while developing new procedures and operations. These exercises, along with the response to COVID-19, tested the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP). Participants included the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST), which consists of more than 40 state agencies, seven VDEM Regions, 95 counties, and 38 localities.

EARTHEX

VDEM held the EARTHEX 19 Black Sky Incident Tabletop Exercise on October 4, 2019, for the purposes of identifying needs on the part of local, regional, private, nongovernmental, and state partners during long-duration power outages; validating any gaps in the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) Standard Operating Guides (SOGs); and developing a Long-Term Power Outage Annex in accordance with COVEOP, the Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Assurance Plan, applicable agency plans and procedures, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and VEST SOGs.

Participants included representatives from the following jurisdictions and agencies: Virginia State Police (VSP), Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Office of Drinking Water (ODW), Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME), Verizon Wireless, Virginia Army National Guard (VaNG), Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC), and Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA). The participants represented the following Emergency Operations Center sections: Command and General Staff, Regional Support, Plans Section, Joint Information Center, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 1, ESF 2, ESF 3, ESF 9, ESF 12, ESF 13, and ESF 16.

The following exercise-specific objectives were evaluated and successfully completed:

Objectives

- Discuss the efficacy of the plans and procedures outlined in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Assurance Plan, applicable agency plans and procedures, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and VEST SOGs to enhance the ability of local, regional, state, and private sector responders to coordinate a response to a Black Sky incident. (Aligns to Planning)

- Discuss the ability of the local, regional, state, and private sector responders to coordinate and share services and resources, and identify any gaps in response capabilities, in response to a Black Sky incident in accordance with Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Assurance Plan, applicable agency plans and procedures, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and VEST SOGs. (Aligns to Operational Coordination)

- Discuss the ability of local, regional, state, and private sector responders to stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services in response to a Black Sky incident in accordance with Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Assurance Plan, applicable agency plans and procedures, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and VEST SOGs. (Aligns to Infrastructure Systems)

- Discuss the ability of the local, regional, state, and private sector responders to provide all decision makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response, in response to a Black Sky incident in accordance with Commonwealth of Virginia Energy Assurance Plan, applicable agency plans and procedures, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and VEST SOGs. (Aligns to Situational Assessment)

Observations

The EARTHEX 19 tabletop exercise involved multiple state partners and private industry members in response to a large-scale, electricity grid security and crisis response focused on Virginia's efforts toward strengthening the grid. Pulling from recent real-world events, the scenario allowed participants to take action and encouraged members to work together in the wake of power outages and critical infrastructure failures. Discussions focused on several key issues:

- Communication was key, not only on how to message the community but also the restoration of communication to the emergency community.

- Security concerns on movement of all commodities due to long term effects of the loss of power.

- The need for the whole community's involvement in this type of incident

- Long term management of displaced people due to the storm and loss of infrastructure.

- Discussion of how to best to bring infrastructure back online.

GRIDEX

Grid Ex V was an unclassified, large-scale electricity grid security and crisis response exercise conducted by the North America Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) on November 13-14, 2019.

Grid Ex V – Virginia Tabletop was a follow-up exercise focused on Virginia's efforts toward strengthening the grid. Grid Ex V provides the electricity industry with the voluntary opportunity to exercise their response to simulated severe cyber and physical security attacks. The purpose of the 2019 Grid Ex V – Virginia Tabletop was to examine and discuss the ability of private, nongovernmental, and state partners to respond to and recover from a simulated coordinated cyber and physical security threat and incident to North America's grid per plans, policies and procedures. The 2019 Grid Ex V – Virginia Tabletop ran about three hours and had representatives from regional, state, nongovernmental, and private sector organizations.

Participants included 35 representatives from the following agencies: the Virginia State Police (VSP); Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT); Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM); Virginia Office for Public Safety and Homeland Security; Virginia Department of Health (VDH); Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME); Verizon Wireless; Virginia Army National Guard (VaNG); Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC); Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS); Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); and Dominion Energy. The participants represented the following Emergency Operations Center sections: VEST Director, Public Information Officer, Emergency Support Function (ESF) 1, ESF 2, ESF 3, ESF 6, ESF 8, ESF 12, ESF 13, ESF 15, and ESF 16.

The following exercise-specific objectives were evaluated and successfully completed:

Objectives

- Exercise incident response plan(s)

- Expand local and regional response

- Engage critical interdependencies

- Improve communication

- Gather lessons learned

- Engage senior leadership

Observations

The 2019 GRIDEX V tabletop exercise involved multiple state partners and private industry in response to a large-scale, electricity grid security and crisis response focused on Virginia's efforts toward strengthening the grid. Pulling from recent real-world events, the scenario allowed participants to take action and encouraged members to work together in the wake of power outages and critical infrastructure failures. Discussions focused on several key issues:

- The interconnection of ideas between public and private capabilities (a key takeaway from this exercise)

- Policy changes and private sector interests for future response needs

- The need for the whole community's involvement in this type of incident

- Interoperability and possible alternative options among all agencies

- Continuation of the development of ESF 14 and Public-Private Partnerships

- Focus on DHS Protective Security Advisors, Army & Air Guard Cyber Units, ODAC, and other companies as possible resources

- STARS radio capabilities vs. current usage vs. realistic maintenance/testing/potential of alternative usage

Virginia COVID 19 Response

On March 12, 2020, VDEM activated the Virginia Emergency Operations Center in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The State Emergency Operations Center has brought together multiple federal, state, and local agencies along with private industry to respond to the pandemic and help reduce the spread of COVID-19. In an ever-changing situation, teams at the State Emergency Operations Center are creating and implementing plans on important topics like essential supplies, testing, and lab capacity. The event has led to many lessons learned that will increase the ability of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center to better respond in a crisis.

Observations

The COVID response successfully captured many areas of strength and necessary improvements to bolster the VDEM response plans, policies, and procedures and develop future training and exercise efforts. These include:

- The ability of the VEST Command and General Staff to establish incident management and IAP processes

- The ability of the VEST Operations Section to coordinate the management of ESF operations

- The ability of the Plans Section of the VEST to analyze incident information and develop and disseminate incident specific documentation through appropriate channels

- The ability of the VEST Logistics Section to provide facilities, services, and support

- The ability of the JIC to deliver coordinated, prompt, and actionable incident information

- Frequent dialogue took place between the Regional Support Branch (RSB) and localities regarding critical regional requirements

The following areas have been identified for improvement:

- Functioning effectively as a team in a virtual environment requires overcoming additional barriers to enable participants' engagement.

7. Training & Exercises

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.7 regarding the number and types of training and exercises related to manmade and natural disaster preparedness that were conducted by the Department, the costs associated with such training and exercises, and the challenges and barriers to ensuring that state and local agencies are able and ready to respond to emergencies and natural disasters.

VDEM's Training, Education, and Exercise Division (TEED) coordinates and manages the Virginia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Training and Exercise program for state, tribal, and local emergency management professionals, first responders, volunteer organizations, and private-sector partners. During this reporting period, TEED coordinated, facilitated, or conducted 225 training sessions across the state, which were attended by 4,686 students. Topics included Incident Management, Search and Rescue, Hazardous Materials Response, the Emergency Management Institute Basic and Advanced Academies, and weekly Virginia Emergency Support Team training. The COVID-19 shutdown resulted in approximately 79 course cancellations statewide and left many programs on pause during response efforts.

In addition, TEED coordinated and/or conducted ten disaster-related exercises and workshops with more than 775 participants, evaluators, and controllers. The annual FEMA-evaluated Virginia Operations Plan Exercise (VOPEX), which focuses on nuclear power incidents, was rescheduled to February 23, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Exercise Division did conduct four local exercises and was involved in six state level exercises and workshops prior to the COVID-19 shutdown. The COVID-19 shutdown did postpone or cancel five local exercises and 11 Radiological Response and Recovery exercise events. The Exercise Division will work to best support the scheduled exercises in the future.

Virginia hosts FEMA Basic and Advanced academies, and VDEM was the first state agency approved by FEMA to deliver these programs. We are in the process of finishing the first cohosted Basic Academy with the United States Coast Guard. The academies are designed to reinforce the qualities needed to lead emergency management programs and provide relevant management theories and concepts.

Training Courses

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Advance Professional Series	Incident Command System/ Emergency Operations Center Interface	G191	This one-day course works best when delivered to Incident Command System and Emergency Operations Center personnel from the same community. The course provides an opportunity for participants to begin developing an ICS/EOC interface for their community. The course reviews ICS and EOC responsibilities and functions and depends heavily on exercises and group discussions to formulate the interface.	4	$1,614	$6,456
Advance Professional Series	Recovery From Disaster, The Local Government Role	G205	This resident course is designed for local disaster recovery teams consisting of emergency managers, city/county administrators, public works directors, building inspectors, and community planners. The course focuses on the roles and responsibilities of each team member, and provides guidance on developing a local disaster recovery plan. Best practices in disaster recovery are summarized in a toolkit included in the course materials. Participants are given the opportunity to develop an outline of their own recovery plan during the course.	2	$1,614	$3,228
Advance Professional Series	Basic Public Information Officer	G290	This two day course is designed for the new or less experienced Public Information Officer (PIO) and focuses on essential emergency PIO functions. The course will teach PIOs how to write a news release, conduct an on-camera interview and prepare awareness campaigns. The class is a prerequisite for the Advanced Public Information Course (E388) at the Emergency Management Institute. Elective for Advanced Professional Series (APS) certification.	2	$1,614	$3,228
Advance Professional Series	Joint Information System/Center Planning for Public Information Officers	G291	This one-day course is designed to equip Public Information Officers (PIOs) to establish and operate in a Joint Information System/ Center (JIS/JIC). The purpose of the course is to build on the solo PIO competencies gained in the Basic PIO courses and apply those skills in an expanding incident. Participants will also gain a working knowledge of operational practices for performing PIO duties within the NIMS multiagency coordination system.	1	$1,614	$1,614

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Foundations of Emergency Management	L0101	FEMA recognizes the need to tie training programs to an established set of emergency management competencies and to a Career Development Program through a progressive training and education system that includes the entry-level Academy, called the National Emergency Management Basic Academy. Training objectives for this course are based on the newly established emergency manager competencies that the National Emergency Management Association; the International Association of Emergency Managers; and state, local, territorial, and tribal emergency management professionals have established in coordination with EMI. he following topics in emergency management are covered in this course: history; legal issues; intergovernmental and interagency context; influencing and organizing; social vulnerability issues; managing stress; collaboration, preparedness, and team-building; mitigation, response, prevention, and protection; ethical decision-making; recovery; technology; administration; and the future.	2	$1,614	$3,228
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Science of Disasters	L0102	This course in the Emergency Management Basic Academy is designed to provide the participants with an overview of scientific principles and concepts that shape our increasingly dangerous world.	1	$1,614	$1,614
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Planning: Emergency Operations	L0103	This course in the Emergency Management Basic Academy is designed to give basic concepts and planning steps to those new to the field of emergency management so that they may apply planning discipline and skills to challenges in their jobs. The course content includes emergency management planning doctrine and steps to take to accomplish writing plans and using them to deal with special events, which are common challenges for all jurisdictions. The content also derives from Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, Developing and *(Continued next pg.)*	1	$1,614	$1,614

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Planning: Emergency Operations	L0103	*(Continued from previous pg.)* Maintaining State, Territorial, Tribal and Local Government Emergency Plans and its six-step planning process and inclusive Whole Community philosophy. Likewise, doctrine from Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201, Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis, is included in the course. Special event planning is then explained in the course and table group activities to analyze plans for special events are conducted.	1	$1,614	$1,614
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Public Information and Warning:	L0105	This course introduces students to the role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) in emergency management. Students are also introduced to basic of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS).	2	$1,614	$3,228
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program	L0146	This 2-day period of instruction is for those individuals that are directly involved in the planning, design and evaluation of training exercises. The intermediate level training course incorporates exercise guidance and best practices from the HSEEP Volumes. It is an interactive course that allows participants to share personal lessons learned and best practices while gaining practical experience. In addition to the instructor-led course presentations, the course includes small group activities, videos, group discussions, and introductions to HSEEP and related initiatives such as supporting technology (e.g., HSEEP Toolkit) and capabilities-based planning (e.g., UTL and TCL). This approach provides participants with hands-on experience that readily translates to real-world exercise responsibilities. Activities include creating exercise documentation, conducting planning conferences and briefings, and practicing exercise evaluation.	4	$1,614	$6,456
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	WebEOC	Various	These courses are designed to teach users the foundations of WebEOC, Virginia's crisis-disaster management software. Participants will be introduced to logging into WebEOC and all of the boards used for situation awareness and sharing information.	10	$1,614	$16,140

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Incident Command System (ICS)	Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	ICS300	The 18 hour Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) course is intended for those who could fill supervisory level positions during an incident. The course will permit the student to develop an ICS organizational structure, list staffing requirements, prepare a briefing, lead or participate in a planning meeting, identify resources, develop goals, prepare an action plan and become familiar with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).	15	$1,614	$24,210
Incident Command System (ICS)	Advanced Incident Command System	ICS400	This 14 hour course is designed for a multidiscipline audience of staff who would likely serve as incident commanders in an ICS structure. Topics include command and general staff, unified command, major incident management, area command, and multiagency coordination. The course includes group activities, a tabletop exercise, and a final examination. The target audience for this course is senior personnel who are expected to perform in a decision -making capacity in an Area Command or Multiagency Coordination Entity.	12	$1,614	$19,368
Incident Command System (ICS)	Incident Command System Overview for Executives/ Senior Officials	ICS402	This 2 to 4-hour course is designed to provide a broad-level orientation to the Incident Command System (ICS) for Executives and Senior Officials (including elected officials, city/county managers, agency administrators, etc.). Topics include Part 1: What Is ICS?, Part 2: ICS Organization & Features, Part 3: Unified & Area Command, Part 4: Coordination & Incident Management Assessment, Part 5: NIMS Preparedness. Course presentation should also include review of the following locality-specific documents: Local and State laws/policies relevant to incident management, Local and State incident management roles and responsibilities, Local Emergency Operations Center procedures and the Local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).	1	$1,614	$1,614
Advance Professional Series	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Management and Operations	G775	This 2 1/2 day course provides the participant with training in the methods and procedures to effectively manage and operate an *(Continued next pg.)*	2	$1,614	$3,228

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Advance Professional Series	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Management and Operations	G775	*(Continued from previous pg.)* emergency operations center (EOC) during crisis situations. The course identifies considerations affecting site selection and design for an effective EOC; staffing, training, and briefing EOC personnel; and operating and managing an EOC during various emergency situations. This course is especially valuable for senior emergency management officials and any individual designated to serve in an EOC during emergency events.	2	$1,614	$3,228
Emergency Management Basic Academy & Advance Academy (Includes WebEOC)	VEST	Various	These courses are designed to provide VEST participants sustainment training, Training provides basic awareness training.	36	$1,614	$58,104
Incident Command System (ICS)	Incident Command System Overview for Executives/ Senior Officials	O305	This five-day course serves as a basic introduction to the activities and processes of a Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT), enabling them to be better prepared to support large scale or complex operations in their communities. This course meets the needs of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF) while focusing on the importance of developing and operating as a functional USFA Type 3 AHIMT and will assist individual responders to perform as viable team members.	1	$41,851	$41,851
Incident Command System (ICS)	All-Hazards Position Specific Planning Section Chief	L962	This course provides local-and state-level emergency responders with a robust understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Planning Section Chief (PSC) on an All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT).	1	$19,842	$19,842
Incident Command System (ICS)	All-Hazards Position Specific Liaison Officer	L956	This course provides local-and state-level emergency responders with a robust understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Liaison Officer (LOFR) on an All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT).	1	$10,302	$10,302

TRAINING CATEGORY	COURSE NAME	COURSE NUMBER	COURSE DESCRIPTION	# FOR FY20	COST PER COURSE	TOTAL COST FOR FY2020
Incident Command System (ICS)	All-Hazards Position Specific Logistics Section Chief	L967	This course provides local-and state-level emergency responders with a robust understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Logistics Section Chief (LSC)on an All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT). These responsibilities fall into two categories: responding to the incident and effectively fulfilling the position responsibilities of a Logistics Section Chief on an AHIMT.	1	$23,980	$23,980
Incident Command System (ICS)	All-Hazards Position Specific Public Information Officer	L952	This course is designed for a Public Information Officer (PIO) assigned to an incident as a member of an All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT) and local IMTs, as well as for the PIO assigned to an incident as an Assistant PIO in a variety of capacities.	1	$20,680	$20,680
TOTAL				**206**	**$140,865**	**$269,985**

Challenges and Barriers to Training and Exercises

Concurrent FEMA Curricula Updates to NIMS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (EMI) establishes the curricula for the National Incident Management System (NIMS). VDEM continues to implement NIMS and ICS changes that EMI develops and publishes on a regular and recurrent schedule, and VDEM works to ensure our instructors have the most up-to-date curriculum.

Lack of Instructors and Students to Fill Available Classes in Rural Areas

There is an historical challenge of finding enough instructors and enough students to fill classes, especially in rural regions. Small localities have a difficult time being able to break away for a two-day course due to limited staffing. Additionally, training often requires back-fill and overtime costs within respective departments.

Ongoing Response Operations Result in Cancellations or Postponements

When real-world emergencies occur at the local and state level, VDEM's courses are subject to cancellation. Disaster operations, especially during hurricane season, can result in training staff being reassigned to field operations or to functions within the Virginia Emergency Support Team in the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC).

Reduced Federal Grant Support

FEMA has significantly reduced the amount of grant support for state and local governments, resulting in cuts to training and exercise programs in the Commonwealth, particularly during the past two years. Over the last decade, it is estimated that FEMA's grant support has declined by 70%, (an average of $30 million less on a per-year basis).

DATE	EXERCISE NAME	LOCALITY (S) INVOLVED	REGION	TYPE	HAZARD TYPE	MISSION AREA	CORE CAPABILITIES EVALUATED	PERSONNEL ATTENDING
7/8/2019	Harrisonburg JMU MCI FSE	City of Harrisonburg James Madison University VDEM Region 3 Sentara RMH UVA SEMM RMC Events, VSP	3	Full Scale	Mass Casualty	Response	Planning, Operational Coordination, Public Health / Healthcare / Emergency Medical Services, Mass Care Services, Public Information and Warning, On Scene Security / Protection and Law Enforcement	324
7/8/2019	Henry County Martinsville Speedway Tabletop	Henry County Martinsville Speedway	6	Full Scale Tabletop	Active Shooter	Response	Planning, Operational Coordination, Public Health / Healthcare / Emergency Medical Services, Mass Care Services, Public Information and Warning, On Scene Security / Protection and Law Enforcement	49

DATE	EXERCISE NAME	LOCALITY (S) INVOLVED	REGION	TYPE	HAZARD TYPE	MISSION AREA	CORE CAPABILITIES EVALUATED	PERSONNEL ATTENDING
7/18/2019	Operation Pipeline Tabletop Exercise	Franklin County	6	Tablet Tabletop	Pipeline damage/ Natural Gas Release	Response	Planning, Operational Coordination, Operational Communications, Situational Assessment, Public Information and Warning	49
8/6/2019	Buckingham County Active Shooter/ Terrorist Threat Tabletop Exercise	Buckingham County	3	Tabletop	Active Shooter/ Terrorist Threat	Response	Planning, Operational Coordination, Public Health/ Healthcare / Emergency Medical Services, Mass Care Services, Public Information and Warning, On Scene Security / Protection and Law Enforcement	84
10/4/2019	EARTHEX			Tabletop	Power outage, Technical Hazards	Recovery	Planning, Operational Coordination, Situational Assessment, Infrastructure Systems	26
10/23/2019	VDH Cardinal Reserve Statewide Full Scale Exercise	VDH VDH regional Local Health Districts VEST	VDH Regions & VEST	Full Scale	Pandemic	Response	Support for VDH Exercise	Support for VDH Exercise
11/14/2019	Grid Ex V- Virginia Tabletop Exercise	VDEM VEST Dominion VDH VDSS VSP VDMME VANG VDOT VOPSHS Verizon DCR SCC	VEST	Tabletop	Power outage, Technical Hazards, Cyber Security	Response	Public Information and Warning, Operational Coordination, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Cyber Security, Physical Protective Measures, Supply Chain Integrity and Security, Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment, Environmental Response / Health and Safety, Infrastructure Systems, On Scene Security / Protection and Law Enforcement, Operational Communications	35
11/15/2019	Local EPZ Training (Virtual)	EPZ & IPZ Webinar with Localities	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	REPP	REP	Webinar	Outreach	4 Localities

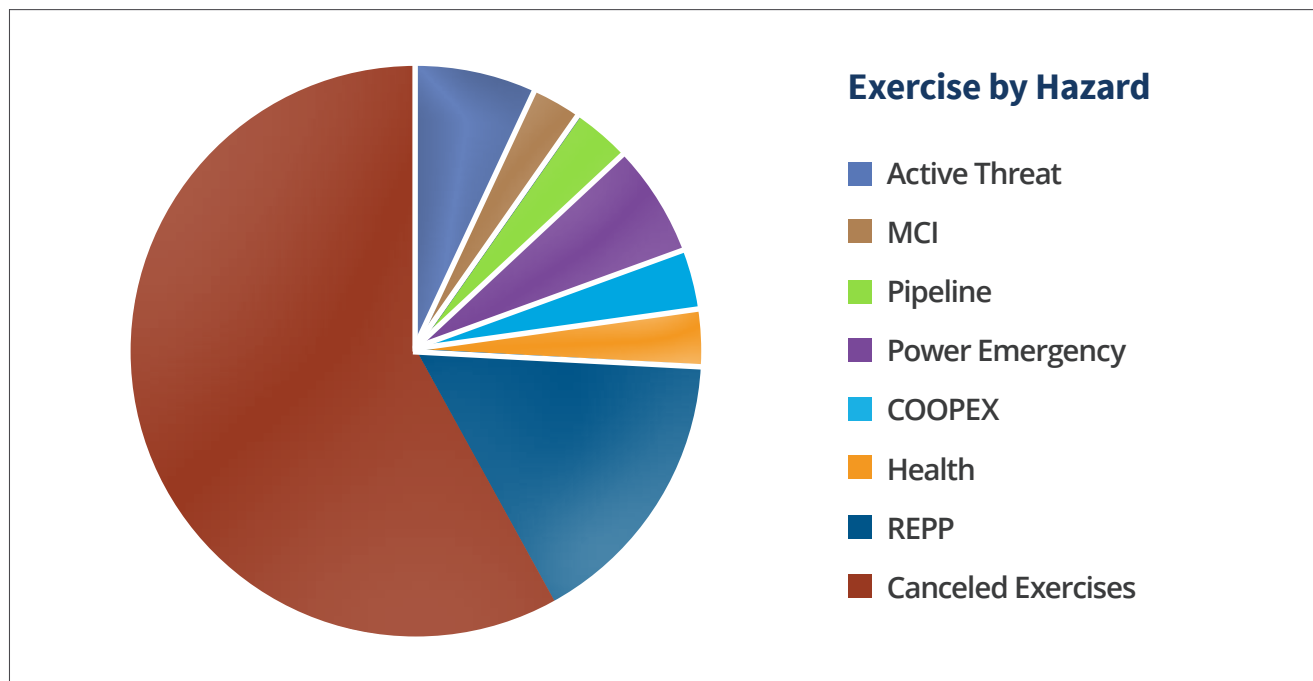| DATE	EXERCISE NAME	LOCALITY (S) INVOLVED	REGION	TYPE	HAZARD TYPE	MISSION AREA	CORE CAPABILITIES EVALUATED	PERSONNEL ATTENDING
11/18/2019	Local EPZ Training (Virtual)	EPZ & IPZ Webinar with Localities	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	REPP	REP	Webinar	Outreach	4 Localities
11/21/2019	Local EPZ Training (Virtual)	EPZ & IPZ Webinar with Localities	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	REPP	REP	Webinar	Outreach	4 Localities
11/25/2019	Local EPZ Training (Virtual)	EPZ & IPZ Webinar with Localities	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	REPP	REP	Webinar	Outreach	3 Localities
1/16/2020	REP Stakeholder's Workshop	VEST	VEOC	COOP	Drill	Response		66
1/30/2020	REP Stakeholder's Workshop	State	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	REPP	REP	Response	Outreach	128

Canceled Exercises

DATE	EXERCISE NAME	LOCALITY (S) INVOLVED	REGION	TYPE	HAZARD TYPE	MISSION AREA
3/17/2020	Operation Whirlwind	Alexandria (POSTPONED)	7	Full Scale	Tornado	Response
3/28/2020	Northampton FSE	Northampton (Postponed)	5	Full Scale	Propane Tank Explosion at Hotel	Response
5/8/2020	Arlington Active Threat Exercise	Arlington (Postponed)	7	Full Scale	Family Assistance Center	Response
4/1/2020	Regional PIO Workshop	Regional (Postponed)	7	Workshop	Public Information	Response
5/27/2020	Federal Outreach & just in time training	State (Canceled)	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	Seminar	REP	Response / Recovery
5/28/2020	Ingestion Recovery Tabletop Exercise	State (Canceled)	1, 2, 3, 5, 7	Tabletop	Nuclear Hazard	Recovery
5/29/2020	School District Interview	Orange County (Canceled)	7	REPP	REP	Response
5/29/2020	School Interview	Orange County (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/1/2020	Regional Logistics Exercise	Regional (Canceled by Region)	2	Functional	TBD	Response
6/15/2020	EAC – Moss Nuckols ES	Louisa Co. (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/16/2020	EAC – Prospect Heights MS	Orange County (Canceled))	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/16/2020	MS-1 Drill	Orange County (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response

DATE	EXERCISE NAME	LOCALITY (S) INVOLVED	REGION	TYPE	HAZARD TYPE	MISSION AREA
6/16/2020	Mary Washington Hospital MS-1 (With Orange EAC/MS1)	Mary Washington Hospital (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/17/2020	School District Interview	Spotsylvania County (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/17/2020	School Interview	Spotsylvania County (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response
6/18/2020	EAC – Courtland HS	Spotsylvania County (Canceled)	2	REPP	REP	Response

Exercise by Hazard

Exercise by Hazard

- Active Threat
- MCI
- Pipeline
- Power Emergency
- COOPEX
- Health
- REPP
- Canceled Exercises

Summary Statistics

- Total courses: 225
- Total course participants: 4,686
- Total course costs: $933,614
- Total exercises: 13
- Total exercise participants: 775
- Total exercise and delivery costs: $582,265
- Total combined course, exercise, and delivery cost for FY20: $1,515,879

8. State Agency Mandates

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.8:

8. The mandates administered by state agencies and imposed on local governments, an estimate of the fiscal impact of the mandates on the affected local governments, and a written justification as to why the mandate should or should not be eliminated.

Summary

In FY20, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) worked with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Commission on Local Government, to review VDEM-specific mandates on local governments. In FY20, VDEM did not establish any new mandates on local governments, and therefore did not have any new mandates to publish in the *Catalog of State and Federal Mandates on Local Government* (Catalog).

However, on July 1, 2020, VDEM absorbed the Integrated Services Program (now known as the 9-1-1 and Geospatial Services (NGS), which had one mandate to transfer to VDEM from VITA (the previous reporting agency for ISP).

Implementation of E-911 Services
Local governments shall be served by an E-911 system by July 1, 2003, unless the 9-1-1 Services Board grants an extension and shall, by July 1, 2020, be able to receive and process calls for emergency assistance sent via Short Message Service (SMS) text messages.

The catalog can be found at:
https://dmz1.dhcd.virginia.gov/MandatesSearch/MandatesSearch.aspx, and contains VDEM-specific mandates on local governments, fiscal impacts, and justifications.

9. Continuity of Operations

§ **44-146.18:4.** State Coordinator of Emergency Management responsible for annual Virginia Comprehensive Emergency Management Report.

A. The Department of Emergency Management (the Department) shall create a comprehensive tabulated annual report, known as the Virginia Comprehensive Emergency Management Report (the Report), that shall include the annual Threat Hazard Identification Risk and Assessment (THIRA) report that the Department submits to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as information on the following:

9. The status of continuity of operations programs, plans, and systems of the Commonwealth's executive branch agencies. Such plans shall include a description of how the agency or institution of higher education will continue to provide essential services or perform mission essential functions during a disaster or other event that disrupts normal operations.

Summary

As of September 2019, Executive Order 41 (2109) requires each State Agency to:
include emergency preparedness planning, training, and exercises as basic responsibilities. Additionally, each State Agency shall include emergency preparedness in its strategic planning and performance management process. All State Agencies shall support cabinet-level continuity of government efforts, develop and maintain a continuity of operations plan, use all resources and capabilities to support statewide response and recovery efforts and provide emergency public information resources.

As a result of the new EO41 language, agencies or institutions of higher education are required to develop continuity of operations plans, but are no longer required to submit such plans to VDEM for review. VDEM continues to provide support to agencies in the development and maintenance of such plans, including the provision of templates to develop agency specific Occupant Emergency Action and State Agency Continuity Plans. Additional technical support is available from the VDEM continuity of operations coordinator by request.

An October 2020 survey on agency and institutions of higher education COOP activity in response to COVID-19 highlighted many successful implementations of these plans and documented areas in which challenges persist. The survey showed that 90% of the responding organizations reported a full or partial implementation of an agency COOP plan; 58% of the participating organizations have already revised existing COOP plans as a result of the COVID-19 driven COOP responses; and 59 agencies highlighted successes in implementing their COOP plans. Examples reported include:

- The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) was able to deploy all personnel into a telework status within 48 hours of a decision being made by agency leadership. Virginia State Parks and Natural Area Preserves remained open to the public and had record high levels of public visitation.

- The Motor Vehicle Dealer Board reduced costs of in-person Board Meetings and Hearings by going virtual; the existing VOIP phone system allowed office staff to work from home without purchasing additional work phones.

- The Office of Children's Services moved its statewide New CSA Coordinators training to a virtual platform within 90 days of the Governor's State of Emergency declaration.

- The Virginia Department of Transportation field workforce maintained productivity on most work while increasing productivity of state and contract workers due to reduced average daily traffic volumes – which allowed for extended lane closures and more hours to do work such as paving. Increased productivity of office staff has prompted efforts to plan for what post-COVID-19 work will look like at VDOT.

- The Virginia Economic Development Partnership's greatest success is the ability to accomplish the organization's goals, objectives, and overall mission in an environment where all employees are teleworking.

- The Department of Planning and Budget was in the process of transitioning to an online workflow process to reduce the need for hardcopy paper flow when the pandemic began. The department also created an online library of materials needed for staff to research information and complete routine assignments remotely.

- The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) has been able to adapt its office procedures in order to maintain essential functions and interdepartmental cooperation by utilizing digital communication methods. VDDHH has not only continued the agency's essential functions, but has also substantively contributed to the success of the Unified Command by providing a staff member to serve in a command position as Access and Functional Needs Officer while also maintaining their regular management duties.

Many agencies reported similar challenges in maintaining operations – physical environment considerations, internet-related limitations, and employee engagement or morale concerns. Several agencies noted process- or resource-specific challenges, such as:

- At least half of the VDOT staff work in the field and are not eligible for telework. These employees continue to be challenged by virtual school and demands on their time for other dependent care.

- The Motor Vehicle Dealer Board still receives physical mail and processes checks manually, which means we still have to have a set number of staff working on site. We have been working over the past year on the plans, requirements, infrastructure and functional use for a web-based portal for our dealers to process transactions without the need to send in physical documents and payments.

- Virginia State Parks had to furlough the vast majority of its seasonal/wage staff at the beginning of the pandemic. With record high levels of public visitation at State Parks and Natural Area Preserves, remaining staff have been stretched to – and beyond – capacity to ensure the operations of the Park and Preserves for public use.

- The biggest obstacle that the Treasury faced was the lack of an established electronic signature standard for the agency. As a result, different units established different procedures to seek approval from management without original signatures. Some of these procedures did not comply with "auditable checks and balances".

Agencies that participated in the COVID-19 COOP Survey included:

Board of Accountancy
Center for Innovative Technology
Danville Community College
Department of Accounts
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Department of Aviation
Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Department of Corrections
Department of Criminal Justice Services
Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Department of Elections
Department of Environmental Quality
Department of Forensic Science
Department of Forestry
Department of General Services
Department of Historic Resources
Department of Housing and Community Development
Department of Human Resource Management
Department of Juvenile Justice
Department of Labor and Industry
Department of Medical Assistance
Department of Planning and Budget
Department of Rail & Public Transportation
Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity
Department of Social Services
Department of Taxation
Department of the Treasury
Department of Transportation
Department of Veterans Services
Department of Wildlife Resources
Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia
James Madison University
Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
John Tyler Community College
Lord Fairfax Community College
Motor Vehicle Dealer Board
New River Community College
Office of Children's Services
Office of the State Inspector General
Old Dominion University
Patrick Henry Community College
Paul D. Camp Community College
Piedmont Virginia Community College
Radford University
Rappahannock Community College
Richard Bland College

The Science Museum of Virginia
State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
Southwest Virginia Community College
Thomas Nelson Community College
University Of Mary Washington
Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority
Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
Virginia Commission for the Arts
Virginia Economic Development Partnership
Virginia Employment Commission
Virginia Fine Arts Museum
Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth
Virginia Highlands Community College
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Virginia State Police
Virginia Tech
Virginia Tourism Authority
Virginia Western Community College
Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center
Wytheville Community College

10. Secure & Resilient Commonwealth

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) submits this report pursuant to § 44-146.18:4.10

10. The state of the Commonwealth's emergency prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts and the resources necessary to implement them.

Summary
The Commonwealth's evolving risk environment includes pandemics, the opioid crisis, recurrent inland and coastal flooding and sea-level rise, cybersecurity threats, tornado activity, hurricanes, domestic terrorism, civil unrest, election security, severe winter weather, and myriad other challenges. Over the past year, the Commonwealth of Virginia experienced a global pandemic, and large scale protests – both peaceful and violent – that challenged us to evaluate how our state prevents, protects against, mitigates, responds to, and recovers from man-made and natural disasters.

Prevention
Prevention efforts include activities designed to proactively interdict events that may lead up to an emergency or disaster event. VDEM's prevention efforts consist of preparedness efforts to plan, organize, equip, train, and exercise before an emergency or disaster occurs.

Planning
The following list represents planning updates that VDEM undertook in F Y20 (with further updates listed as well):

- **VDEM Continuity Plan: The VDEM Continuity Plan has been updated for 2020:** The VDEM Continuity Plan has been updated for 2020.

- **Continuity of Government (COG) Plan:** The COG plan ensures the continuity of Virginia's state-level government during times of disaster or another crisis. This plan is being updated using a collaborative, whole community review and revision process to incorporate lessons learned from real-world events, current guidance, and best practices.

- **Complex Coordinated Attack Plan:** This is a series of new plans being developed through the Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack grant program. It includes seven regional and one state-level coordination plans for responding to coordinated attacks of all kinds. All eight plans will be completed no later than August 2021.

- **Stakeholder Preparedness Report:** This report is currently being prepared and will be completed by the end of 2020.

- **Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA):** This report is currently being prepared and will be completed by the end of 2020.preparedness responsibilities of state agencies and public institutions of higher education. Governor Northam promulgated the revised Executive Order 41 on September 3, 2019.

- **Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP):** The Commonwealth's EMAP re-accreditation is underway. Currently, VDEM is facilitating the Commonwealth's self-assessment to gather necessary documentation, draft proof of compliance documents, and identify and resolve compliance issues.

- **Family Assistance Plan:** The Family Assistance Operations plan is currently under development using a collaborative, whole community review and revision process to incorporate lessons learned from real-world events, current guidance, and best practices, and to expand the scope of the plan to include criminal incident

- **Local Capability Assessment for Readiness (LCAR):** The LCAR is an annual survey normally conducted in the spring; in 2020, this effort was delayed to accommodate state and local COVID-19 response efforts. The 2020 surveys are slated for dissemination and analysis in the late summer of 2020.

- **Tropical Storm and Hurricane Response Annex:** This annex is currently being revised to incorporate the Tiered Evacuation program and updated evacuation timing estimations from the 2020 Army Corps of Engineers Hurricane Evacuation Study. We anticipate completion of this annex update in early 2021. In addition to the standard annex, VDEM developed a specialized **Hurricane Planning Guidance for the COVID-19 Environment** document to facilitate coordination among key stakeholders.

- **Terrorism Consequence Management Annex:** This annex is being updated using a collaborative, whole community review and revision process to incorporate current guidance and best practices. We anticipate completion of this update in mid 2021.

Addressing Capability Gaps

Addressing capability gaps for localities, state agencies, and non-profit organizations involves pass-through grants from the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG), State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), Hampton Roads Urban Area Security Initiative (HRUASI), and the Non-Profit Security Grant (NSGP).

ACRONYM	GRANT TITLE	FY	PASS-THROUGH
HRUASI	HSGP/Hampton Roads Urban Area Security Initiative	State FY20/Grant FY19	$2,600,000
SHSP	State Homeland Security Program	State FY20/Grant FY19	$6,460,000
EMPG	Emergency Management Program Grant	State FY20/Grant FY19	$2,677,131
NSGP	Non-profit Security Grant	State FY20/Grant FY19	$547,500
		TOTAL	**$11,737,131**

11. Status of Plans

Introduction

This report summarizes the actions taken during 2020 to improve disaster preparedness through the maintenance of state and local plans. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) is responsible for developing and coordinating state level plans; providing technical support to localities, state agencies, and public institutions of higher education (IHEs) regarding disaster preparedness; and coordinating state resources requested by localities, other states, and U.S. territories.

In the past year, VDEM's seven regional offices provided coordination and support to localities before, during, and after disaster operations. During non-disaster operations, regional staff participated in planning meetings and exercises, and provided technical support to both localities and IHEs.

VDEM also reviewed and exercised the newly revised Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP), which contained significant structural changes to simplify and streamline content and clarify Secretariat and Agency roles and responsibilities.

Local Emergency Operations Plans

Code of Virginia § 44-146.19(E) requires that each political subdivision (cities, counties, and five towns with independent emergency management programs) shall prepare and keep current an emergency operations plan (EOP) for its area. Plans must be updated every four years.

As indicated in the following tables, as of September 1, 2020, 118 of the 138 jurisdictions (86%) have up-to-date EOPs. Eight of the jurisdictions with expired plans are in the final phase of adopting updates; one jurisdiction has reported that the revision process is on hold due to COVID-19 response.

State Plans for Colleges

Institutions of Higher Education Crisis and Emergency Management Plans (CEMP)

There are 40 public institutions of higher education (IHEs) within the Commonwealth and all must meet the requirements of §23.1-804 of the *Code of Virginia.* These requirements include:

- The governing boards of each public IHE are to develop, adopt, and keep current a crisis and emergency management plan.

- Each public IHE is to conduct a comprehensive review and revision of its crisis and emergency management plan to ensure that the plan remains current. The governing board shall adopt the revised plan formally every four years and the adoption will be certified in writing to VDEM.

- Annually, the chief executive officer of each public institution of higher education is to review the institution's crisis and emergency management plan, certify in writing to VDEM that a review has been completed, and make recommendations to the institution for appropriate changes to the plan.

- Each public institution is to conduct a test or exercise of the plan annually and certify in writing to VDEM that it was conducted. Activation of the crisis and emergency management plan and completion of an after-action report by the IHE in response to an actual event or incident satisfies the requirement to conduct such a test or exercise.

Currently, 33 (82%) of state IHEs are compliant with these requirements. This is a decrease from 2019, when 38 (95%) were compliant. IHEs that have notified VDEM that they plan to bring the CEMPs into compliance in the near future are noted in the tables below.

The following chart provides an itemized list of requirements and compliance by the IHE Out of Compliance Plans

Eastern Shore Community College	Awaiting adoption letter from college administration
Patrick Henry Community College	
Longwood University	Plan update is being completed
Danville Community College	
Radford University	Planning to be completed and adopted by end of September; new EM
University of Virginia at Wise	Planning to pass at board meeting 8/28/20
University of Virginia	Planning to present to the Board at December meeting for adoption

State and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans

PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION (PDC)	PLAN EXPIRATION DATE	FUNDING SECURED FOR PLAN REVISION	COMMENTS
Region 2000 (11)	1/8/2018	HMGP 4262	Plan update in progress
SHSP Southside PDC (13)	9/1/2025	HMGP 4262	Plan is approved
Cumberland Plateau PDC (2)	2/9/2025	PDM 2017	Plan is approved
LENOWISCO PDC (1)	8/14/2019	Plan recently funded under HMGP 4401	Plan update in progress
Roanoke Valley-Allegheny PDC (5)	9/3/2024	HMGP 4262	Plan is approved
Central Shenandoah PDC (6)	12/18/2018	HMGP 4291	Plan is complete; adoptions to take place soon
Middle Peninsula PDC (18	2/1/2022	Plan recently funded under HMGP 4401	Plan is approved; update in progress
West Piedmont PDC (12)	2/9/2022	Plan recently funded under PDM 2018	Plan is approved; update in progress

PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION (PDC)	PLAN EXPIRATION DATE	FUNDING SECURED FOR PLAN REVISION	COMMENTS
Northern Virginia RC (8)	3/26/2022	Plan recently funded under PDM 2018	Plan is approved
Accomack-Northampton PDC (22)	4/9/2022	Plan recently funded under HMGP 4411	Plan is approved; update in progress
Hampton Roads PDC	4/30/2022	Plan recently funded under PDM 2019	Plan is approved; update in progress
Richmond Regional and Crater PDCs (15 and 19)	8/7/2022	Plan recently funded under HMGP 4411	Plan is approved; update in progress
George Washington Regional Commission (16)	10/4/2022	Submitting under BRIC 2020	Plan is approved
New River Valley PDC (4)	11/27/2022	Submitting under BRIC 2020	Plan is approved
Commonwealth Regional Council (14)	12/13/2022	Plan recently funded under PDM 2019	Plan is approved; update in progress
Northern Neck PDC (17)	2/7/2023	Submitting under BRIC 2020	Plan is approved
Thomas Jefferson PDC (10)	3/19/2023	Plan recently funded under HMGP 4411	Plan is approved; update in progress
Northern Shenandoah Valley PDC (7)	8/7/2023	PDM 2015	Plan is approved
Rappahannock-Rapidan RC (9)	12/10/2023	Plan recently funded under PDM 2018	Plan is approved
Mount Rogers PDC (3)	2/26/2024	Plan recently funded under PDM 2018	Plan is approved
State Plan	3/13/2023	Plan recently funded under PDM 2018	Plan is approved; update in progress