

Virginia Emergency Operations Plan

(This document is a work in progress.)

Mission

The emergency management mission of Virginia State Government, as reflected in the Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), is to plan and prepare for emergency operations which will ensure the minimalization of casualties and property damage, and that normal operations will be restored as rapidly as possible in the event of a large-scale emergency or disaster situation.

Purpose

The Virginia EOP provides for state-level emergency operations in response to any type of disaster or large-scale emergency affecting the state. It assigns duties and responsibilities to departments, agencies, and support organizations for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. It also provides the needed framework within which more detailed emergency plans and procedures can be developed and maintained by both state agencies and local governments.

Scope

Historically, major emergencies in Virginia have been floods, hurricanes, winter storms, hazardous materials accidents, gas pipeline accidents, power failures, resource shortages, drought, and environmental contamination. Such hazards are ever-increasing in frequency and severity due to factors such as urban development in vulnerable coastal areas, industrial expansion, traffic congestion, and the widespread use and transport of hazardous materials.

In Virginia, counties and independent cities have the primary responsibility for emergency operations and will commit all available resources to save lives and minimize property damage. Should local emergency response capabilities be overwhelmed, outside assistance is available, either through mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions or from the state through the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Concept of Operations

The Virginia State EOP and local EOPs are predicated upon the concept that emergency operations will begin at the city and county level. A local emergency should be declared and local resources capable of handling the situation should be fully committed before state and federal assistance is requested. State assistance will be provided upon request when emergency or disaster needs exceed local capabilities. Should the State become overwhelmed, as with a major flood or hurricane, federal disaster assistance becomes available, especially during the recovery period.

Organization

The Virginia EOP is comprised of a Basic Plan, 14 annexes which detail the emergency support functions, and attachments to these annexes.

Basic Plan

The Basic Plan part of the Virginia EOP is an overview of the state's emergency response organization and policies.

Annexes

Each functional annex of the Virginia EOP includes a concept of operations and an action checklist to help each function or agency gear-up for emergency operations. Agencies with primary emergency duties and responsibilities are also expected to develop and maintain separately published and more detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) as needed.

A brief overview of each functional Annex of the Virginia EOP follows.

Functional Annex A—Direction and Control

The purpose of Functional Annex A is to provide a centralized State Government direction and control operation--the Virginia State EOC--from which to coordinate the provision of guidance and assistance to local governments, and to help the Governor, or his designee, to formulate policy, establish priorities, collect information, produce the required reports, and monitor the implementation of state and local EOPs.

Functional Annex B—Communications and Warning

The purpose of Functional Annex B is to provide the capability for the reception and transmission of priority, formal message traffic for the Virginia EOC on a 24-hour-a-day basis; to receive and transmit prioritized emergency message traffic to localities and state agencies in support of imminent or actual emergency operations; and to relay warnings, weather advisories, and intelligence information on a prioritized basis.

Functional Annex C—Public Information


The mission of the Public Information Office (PIO) is to make the public aware of potential emergency situations and of appropriate protective actions and to keep the public informed about an ongoing emergency or disaster situation and to provide protective action guidance as appropriate.

Functional Annex D—Law Enforcement

The purpose of Functional Annex D is to minimize public confusion and turmoil during disaster or large-scale emergency operations by providing effective law enforcement services, such as the enforcement of laws, traffic control, the investigation of crimes, the security of evacuated areas, and the protection of life and property.

Functional Annex E—Mass Care

In times of emergency, the purpose of Functional Annex E is to coordinate the provision of sheltering, feeding, emergency first aid, emergency relief supplies and other basic human services provided by state and state-level voluntary agencies; assist affected localities in the provision of human services; and to provide state government assistance with federal repatriation operations.



During normal operations, the Mass Care Annex functions to assist localities to develop and maintain a capability to care for displaced persons in public shelters; assist localities to develop and maintain a capability to deliver relief supplies and services to disaster victims; assist localities in preparing to care for the disabled, the elderly, and other special needs populations in time of emergency, primarily by encouraging and facilitating self-sufficiency; and develop and maintain procedures for the state's role in repatriation.

Functional Annex F—Firefighting

The purpose of Functional Annex F is to provide assistance to local governments in preventing and controlling large urban fires and rural wildfires, to coordinate mutual aid among fire/EMS departments as needed, and to assist with Virginia State EOC operations as appropriate.

Functional Annex G—Health and Medical Services

The disaster mission of Health and Medical Services is to coordinate the provision of critical support to local governments to reduce mortality, morbidity, and detrimental long-term health effects to the citizens and to facilitate the earliest practical recovery to normalcy.

Functional Annex H—Energy Mission

The purpose of this annex is to set forth the policies and procedures to be used in responding to and recovering from fuel shortages, power outages, and capacity shortages which impact or threaten to impact significant numbers of citizens.

Functional Annex I—Public Works and Engineering

The purpose of Functional Annex I is to assist with Virginia State EOC response and recovery operations as appropriate. This includes assisting local governments with:

- Debris clearance;
- The restoration of water and sewer systems; and
- The demolition or stabilization of any damaged buildings, dams, or other structures which have become a public safety hazard due to the event.

Functional Annex J—Military Support

This Annex functions to coordinate both state and Federal military support. The Department of Military Affairs will plan for, coordinate, and control military assistance to civil authorities in accordance with regulations. The Virginia State EOC will request federal military assistance (including support from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) when required and in accordance with regulations.

Functional Annex K—Search and Rescue

The Search and Rescue (SAR) mission is to use all available resources, including personnel, facilities, and equipment to locate and render necessary assistance to persons, aircraft, and vessels that may be in distress.

Functional Annex L—Resource Support Mission

The purpose of Functional Annex L is to provide a basis for the management and provision of designated critical resources and supplies in support of disaster operations. Designated resources are food and water and disaster relief donations.

Functional Annex M—Mutual Aid

The purpose of this Annex is to set forth the task assignments and concept of operations for implementing in-state mutual aid under the Statewide Mutual Aid program (SMA) and/or interstate mutual aid in accordance with the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

Functional Annex N—Functional Annex N is intentionally left blank.

Functional Annex O—Financial Management

This Annex provides financial management guidance for the Department of Emergency Management and other state agencies which respond to a disaster to ensure that funds are provided expeditiously and that financial operations are conducted in accordance with established state and federal policies, regulations and standards.

