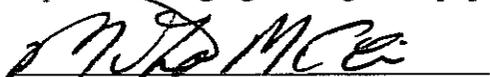


Report on the Response of the Virginia
Department of Emergency Management to
the Impact of the Aging of Virginia's
Population

November 15, 2007

Pursuant to legislation enacted by the Virginia General Assembly of Virginia, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.



Michael M. Cline
State Coordinator

14 NOV 07
Date

Executive Summary

While VDEM does not specifically target any direct services to Virginians age 60 and older, we do work with local governments to ensure that their plans include this population. In addition, the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP) addresses the needs of seniors and other special populations.

Furthermore, we have developed a brochure specifically detailing disaster preparedness information for seniors. Likewise, seniors are also encouraged to join our Virginia Citizen Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams and the Reservist Workforce Program, which are all managed by VDEM at the state level.

Due to recent changes in legislation authorizing localities to require the review of emergency plans for assisted living and nursing facilities, more requests for emergency planning assistance from local government and perhaps facility planners are expected. For the past three months, VDEM staff has been working with representatives of the Virginia Emergency Management Association to develop a plan review matrix to assist local emergency managers as they review facility plans to allow for consistency across the state. The matrix will also be distributed through the licensing agencies directly to these facilities so that the facility management can make more coordinated and complete emergency plans.

Agency Description

The mission of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management is to protect the lives and property of Virginia's citizens from emergencies and disasters by coordinating the state's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery efforts.

Reporting directly to the Secretary of Public Safety and the Governor of Virginia, VDEM works under the broad authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000, as amended.

1. To the extent such data is available, the number of persons who received services from the agency in the past fiscal year who fell into each of the following age ranges: 65-74; 75-84; and 85 and older. If the agency can provide data that compares such numbers to numbers of senior citizens served in the past, please do so. If the agency lacks specific information about the numbers of senior citizens it serves, but has other evidence indicating that it is serving more or fewer senior citizens than it has in the past, please describe the basis for that estimation.

VDEM does not specifically target any direct services to Virginians age 60 and older. We do work with local governments to ensure that their plans include this population. The Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP) addresses the needs of seniors and other special populations.

2. Identify the agency services that are utilized by senior citizens 65 and older in significant numbers. Indicate whether the agency has the capacity at present to serve all interested seniors or whether the demand for certain services exceeds the agency's capacity. If so, does the agency maintain waiting lists for services?

VDEM does not specifically target any direct services to Virginians age 60 and older. We do work with local governments to ensure that their plans include this population. The Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Plan (COVEOP) addresses the needs of seniors and other special populations.

3. Identify current agency programs, specifically designed to serve seniors 65 and older, that fall into any of the following six categories: Health Care/Wellness; Education; Public Safety; Recreation; Financial Security (including Housing); and Transportation.

The senior group, along with others, is targeted for recruitment into Virginia Citizen Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams, and the Reservist Workforce Program, which are managed by the agency on a statewide level. The Virginia Public Inquiry Center (VPIC), managed by the agency, often receives phone calls during emergencies from this population segment.

4. Identify the extent to which your agency provides "consumer-oriented" publications and Web sites online that are designed to be "senior-friendly." If the information you currently provide is not readily accessible to seniors, identify any steps your agency is taking to improve accessibility.

VDEM developed a brochure targeting the senior audience with disaster preparedness information. Information is also available on our Web site at www.va.emergency.com. During 2005, VDEM surveyed the preparedness level of this population and included the expected growth into our long-range strategic planning.

5. Describe the effect that the aging of the agency's own workforce will have on its ability to deliver services. Consider the number of retirements expected in the next two years, the effect these retirements might have (e.g., loss of leadership or institutional knowledge in

certain programs), how losses might be replaced (*e.g.*, promotions or transfers, recruitment, use of wage staff, including retirees, re-engineering, outsourcing), and the costs or savings from the replacements (*e.g.*, staff development cost, salary savings). This item might be addressed by summarizing relevant portions of the agency's workforce plan.

Approximately five percent of the VDEM workforce will be eligible to retire within the next two years and approximately nine percent over the next five years. VDEM will have to maintain its commitment to offering specialized training to keep the workforce proficient in advancing the emergency management profession.

These retirements will impact leadership and institutional knowledge. In order to replace losses in these areas, the agency will need to continue grooming current employees for promotion and/or transfer opportunities. In addition to these efforts, VDEM has developed an internship program/partnership with a number of colleges and universities offering a Bachelor of Arts in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

Reservist personnel are an option for temporarily supplementing staff losses until vacancies can be filled. Reservist can be brought in to work up to three months on special projects. This program provides additional personnel to support the state's actions during major disasters and emergencies, or on an as-needed basis.

6. Describe any other services or programs that the agency has implemented or plans to implement in the future to address the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

Due to recent changes in legislation authorizing localities to require the review of emergency plans for assisted living and nursing facilities, more requests for emergency planning assistance from local government and perhaps facility planners are expected. For the past three months VDEM staff has been working with representatives of the Virginia Emergency Management Association to develop a plan review matrix to assist local emergency managers as they review facility plans to allow for consistency across the state. The matrix will also be distributed through the licensing agencies directly to these facilities so that the facility management can make more coordinated and complete emergency plans.