Why is VDEM reorganizing?

Last year, a strategic review of the agency was conducted. The findings showed that, in order to be prepared for the wide range of challenges in today's dynamic risk environment, VDEM must adjust the way we carry out our mission. This reorganization will enable VDEM to better serve our stakeholders through enhanced collaboration between local and state emergency managers, first responders, federal, private and non-profit partners, and the residents of the Commonwealth. It will also allow the agency to better focus on its mission and provides a better span of control for leadership.

To promote a more resilient Commonwealth, Governor McAuliffe has laid out a vision for emergency management that includes:
1. Building regional capacity
2. Improving professional development
3. Ensuring a quick, integrated response
4. Implementing strategic and sustainable programs

How exactly has VDEM reorganized?

VDEM's reorganization consists of three phases:
1. The Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) is now the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST)
   a. Every VDEM employee is an all-hazard emergency management professional.
   b. All staff is undergoing training and everyone has been assigned to one of three VEST teams.
   c. VDEM staff will train and exercise with agency partners from various Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) as part of the VEST.
   d. VEST teams will rotate in 12-hour shifts during disasters to sustain around-the-clock operations.
2. A comprehensive reorganization of the headquarters organizational structure.
   a. This phase began July 1, 2015.
   b. There are no longer 12 divisions each reporting to the state coordinator's office.
   c. Now VDEM is configured into two distinct bureaus:
      i. Disaster Services – Oversees Regional Support East (Regions 1, 5 and 7), Regional Support West (Regions 2, 3, 4 and 6), Planning, and Response Programs, which includes: search and rescue, urban search and rescue, technical rescue, incident management teams, radio cache system and logistics.
      ii. Mission Support – Administers Human Resources, Information Technology, Recovery and Mitigation, Finance, headed by a chief financial officer (CFO), and the Training, Education and Exercises Division (TEED).
   d. The former responsibilities of Local Support Services, Preparedness, Technological Hazards, and Operations have been reassigned.
   e. All planning across the agency has been integrated into a single planning division, which:
      i. Conducts strategic planning.
      ii. Integrates operational planning, daily situational awareness through the VDEM Watch Center, and intelligence analysis from the Virginia Fusion Center.
3. Establishing regional offices across the Commonwealth.
   a. Based on the successful model instituted in Region 7
   b. Initiating the process to double the number of staff assigned to each region over the next year.
   c. At a minimum, each region will have a chief regional coordinator, disaster response and recovery officer, hazmat officer, and regional all-hazards planner.
   d. Additional staff may be identified based on the region's needs.

I understand VDEM will have regional offices. Will VDEM continue to provide one-on-one assistance locally during steady state and crisis?

Yes. In fact, more capacity will be added to enhance one-on-one assistance to localities with the increased staff in the regions. We are in the process of establishing offices that are centrally located within the region to ensure a quick and integrated response. This will further advance our core responsibility to support local needs. Regional office staff will serve as a one-stop shop for providing a full range of service to localities.

How will VDEM's restructuring affect the level of coordination and support that localities and partner agencies can expect from the Commonwealth?

One of the most significant improvements you can expect to see once the new structure is fully operational will be the additional resources devoted to coordination at all levels. Most importantly, the capabilities of existing VDEM programs will continue.

What are some of the other changes we can expect to see?

The Training, Education and Exercise Division (TEED) is consolidating various training and academy programs from across the agency to ensure consistent, continuous, and strategic professional development for state and local emergency management personnel that incorporates lessons from disasters. TEED is serving as the single point of contact to track and schedule training programs and to house certifications and record-keeping.

Similarly, all grant and funding programs will be consolidated under a CFO. In doing so, VDEM will improve grant management and customer service to stakeholders. Most significantly, this will assist stakeholders by having a one-stop shop for grants to leverage funds. This will help ensure that localities are taking full advantage of the funds available to them and not returning unused grant funds.

In addition, the Policy and Program Analysis Office was created to track legislation, coordinate policy, and work with active VDEM committees on agency performance measures. The External Affairs Division now fulfills the agency's public relations, stakeholder relations, internal communication, and engagement programs.

What changes can we expect in the administration of grants?

This year, the stakeholder-driven peer review process for State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grants has been further enhanced. In May, stakeholders revised the scoring formula that will determine which projects receive funding. The revised scoring formula now places greater weight on regional collaboration. Regional subject matter expert groups have been established to review each project submitted to ensure the project aligns to the current regional priorities, as deemed by the stakeholders. Awards to winning projects are expected mid-to-late September 2015.

At the request of the stakeholders, this year there will be a reserved amount of non-competitive SHSP funding for statewide deployable assets. This process will ensure that all of these assets are sustained at a certain level to respond as needed without competing against each other.

As federal funding sources for emergency management keep diminishing, we need to continue working together to develop sustainable funding sources that will reduce our reliance on federal grant money over the long-term. These improvements to the grant allocation process promote transparency and collaboration, and bring Virginia closer to the goal of creating strategic and sustainable programs to support emergency management in the Commonwealth.

Questions or comments about VDEM's new structure? Email lessons@vdem.virginia.gov or state coordinator Jeff.Stern@vdem.virginia.gov.

2015-2016
STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN VIRGINIA

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT & RISK SCAN (RISK = T | V | C)

bakken crude ISIL hurricanes cybersecurity flooding
ebola critical infrastructure state budget deficit
citizens needing assistance north anna tornados sea level rise
surry hampton roads UASI

CURRENT CAPABILITIES & APPROACH	GOVERNOR'S VISION FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	2015 GOALS	LONG-TERM GOALS
GRANTS *Treated separately - SHSP, EMPG/LEMPG, HMEP, PSGP, DP, HMGP; limited/different strategy*	**QUICK, INTEGRATED RESPONSE**	**VDEM SPECIFIC:** *VERT/VEOC more towards staffing rosters*	**GROW NON-GRANT FUNDING SOURCES**
DEPLOYMENT POSTURE *Richmond/NCR-centric; VDEM silos; local & state assets independent*	**STRATEGIC & SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS**	*HQ reorganization to integrate divisional silos (Disaster Services & Mission Support)*	**IMPROVE GRANT SOURCE AMOUNT** *PSGP/UASI*
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT *OTJ*	**REGIONAL CAPACITY FOR DISASTER RESPONSE**	*Distribute resources & build regional offices*	**ENSURE PROGRAMS ARE SUSTAINABLE OVER TIME**
SITUATIONAL AWARENESS *Tends toward descriptive ("this happened; happening")*	**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**	**STATE-WIDE:** *SHSP grant revision (stakeholder driven & transparent)*	**DEFINE, BUILD & FUND BASELINE CAPABILITIES** *For CBRNE/HAZMAT, Communications, Situational Awareness, Alert Warning Notifications, Incident Management, SAR, Planning, Fusion*
TRAINING, EXERCISES, PLANS, RESOURCES *Fragmented/competitive*		*Integrate all funding sources and strategic needs*	
		Count state & local assets and establish deployment posture and "mission packages"	