

**VIRGINIA OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STATE
STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLAN**



2010-2013

INTRODUCTION

§32.1-111.3 of the *Code of Virginia* requires the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, statewide emergency medical services plan by the Virginia Office of EMS (OEMS). The Board of Health must review, update, and publish the plan triennially, making such revisions as may be necessary to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commonwealth's emergency care system. The objectives of the plan shall include, but not be limited to the eighteen objectives outlined in §32.1-111.3.

Over the past few years, much attention has been paid to the development of the plan. Some of this is due to review of reports, namely the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) Review of Emergency Medical Services in Virginia, the National Association of State EMS Officials "State Emergency Medical Services Systems: A Model" report, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report "EMS at the Crossroads", the Association & Society Management International (ASMI) report "Regional Emergency Medical Services Council Study", the planning session report of the Regional EMS Council Process Action Team, as well as planning sessions conducted by the standing committees of the state EMS Advisory Board. The recommendations made by these committees have assisted in driving the planning process forward.

As the *Code of Virginia* mandates, this plan must be reviewed, updated, and published triennially by the Board of Health. The Office of EMS appreciates the opportunity to present this document to the Board, and values any input that the Board provides, as well as the input of any other stakeholder, or interested party.

This operational plan identifies the specific initiatives required of the OEMS staff in executing the 2010 – 2013 Strategic Plan. Each objective and action step is intended to accomplish those items most critical to the Strategic Plan in the given fiscal year. The Strategic Plan is designed to improve priority areas of performance and initiate new programs. Therefore, much of the routine, but important work of the OEMS staff (i.e., EMS agency licensure, EMS vehicle permitting, EMS provider certification, grant awards, technical assistance, etc.), is not included in the Operational Plan.

No later than 3 months prior to the end of a particular fiscal year the OEMS staff will evaluate progress on the plan and begin the process of creating the Operational Plan for the next fiscal year.

Core Strategy 1: Develop Partnerships

Key Strategic Initiatives

1.1 Promote collaborative approaches.

- 1.1.1 Use technology to provide accurate and timely communication within the Virginia EMS System
- 1.1.2 Promote collaborative activities between local government, EMS agencies, hospitals, and community colleges to support more community based EMS programs which lead to increased recruitment and retention of certified EMS providers.
- 1.1.3 Provide a platform for clear, accurate, and concise information sharing and improved interagency communications between the Office of EMS, state agencies and EMS system stakeholders in Virginia.
- 1.1.4 Identify resources and/or opportunities to work collaboratively with other state agencies, organizations, and associations to improve processes and patient outcomes.

1.2 Coordinate responses to emergencies both natural and man-made.

- 1.2.1 Support, coordinate and maintain deployable emergency response resources.
- 1.2.2 Increase knowledge of Emergency Operations capabilities with Emergency Managers, leaders, and supervisors on a local, regional, and state level.
- 1.2.3 Assist EMS agencies to prepare and respond to natural and man-made emergencies by incorporating strategies to develop emergency response plans (the plan) that address the four phases of an emergency (preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery) and to exercise the plan.

Core Strategy 2: Create Tools and Resources

Key Strategic Initiatives

2.1 Sponsor EMS related research and education.

- 2.1.1 Sponsor research and other projects that contribute to high quality EMS and improve patient outcomes utilizing data collected by the EMS Registries.
- 2.1.2 Determine quality of EMS service and conduct analysis of trauma triage effectiveness.
- 2.1.3 Establish scholarships for EMS provider education.
- 2.1.4 Evaluate the impact of an aging workforce on service provision around the State.

2.2 Supply quality education and certification of EMS personnel.

- 2.2.1 Ensure adequate, accessible, and quality EMS provider training and continuing education.
- 2.2.2 Enhance competency based EMS training programs.
- 2.2.3 Develop, implement and promote leadership and management standards for EMS agency leaders.
- 2.2.4 Align all initial EMS education programs to that of other allied health professions to promote professionalization of EMS.
- 2.2.5 Increase the amount and quality of pediatric training and educational resources for EMS providers, emergency department staff and primary care providers in Virginia.
- 2.2.6 Provide an increased number of training opportunities for EMS personnel in Emergency Operations methods and activities.

Core Strategy 3: Develop Infrastructure

Key Strategic Initiatives

3.1 EMS Regulations, Protocols, Policies, and Standards

- 3.1.1 Review and assess state and federal legislation related to the EMS system.
- 3.1.2 Establish standards for the utilization of Air Medical Services.
- 3.1.3 Establish statewide Air/Ground Safety Standards.
- 3.1.4 Develop criteria for a voluntary Virginia Standards of Excellence Accreditation Program for EMS Agencies.
- 3.1.5 Maintain and enhance the Trauma Center designation process.
- 3.1.6 Maintain and enhance the Regional EMS Council designation process.
- 3.1.7 Establish standardized methods and procedures for the inspection and licensing and/or permitting of all EMS agencies and vehicles, including equipment and supply requirements.
- 3.1.8 Through a consensus process, develop a standard set of evidence-based patient care guidelines and standard formulary.

3.2 Focus recruitment and retention efforts

- 3.2.1 Develop, implement, and promote a comprehensive recruitment and retention campaign for EMS personnel and physicians, supporting the needs of the EMS system.
- 3.2.2 Support and expand the Virginia Recruitment and Retention Network.
- 3.2.3 Develop, implement, and promote the EMS Leadership and Management standards program.

3.3 Upgrade technology and communication systems

- 3.3.1 Assist with, and promote, the compliance of all emergency medical radio systems with state and federal regulations for narrow banding and interoperability.
- 3.3.2 Promote emergency medical dispatch standards and accreditation among 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Virginia.
- 3.3.3 Provide technical assistance on wireless communication products available for use in the emergency medical community.
- 3.3.4 Establish statewide centralized dispatch system for air medical service.

Core Strategy 3 – Develop Infrastructure (Continued)

3.4 Stable support for EMS funding

- 3.4.1 Standardize EMS grant review and grading process by graders at regional and state level.
- 3.4.2 Develop a “Best Practices” resource guide on the procurement of EMS and rescue vehicles to include the use of existing or “cooperative” contracts in conjunction with the Department of General Services – Division of Purchases and Supply.
- 3.4.3 Develop uniform pricing schedule for state funded items.
- 3.4.4 Develop standard specifications for state grant funded equipment awarded to eligible non-profit EMS agencies.
- 3.4.5 Assist EMS agencies to identify grant programs and funding sources for EMS equipment, training, and supplies.
- 3.4.6 Integrate state grant funding programs with other related grant funding programs.
- 3.4.7 Develop guidance documents to assist EMS agencies account for the use of state grant funds and develop internal audit processes.

3.5 Enhance regional and local EMS efficiencies

- 3.5.1 Standardize performance and outcomes based service contracts with designated Regional EMS Councils and other qualified entities.
- 3.5.2 Improve regulation and oversight of air medical services statewide.
- 3.5.3 Educate local government officials and communities about the value of a high quality EMS system to promote development in economically depressed communities and the importance of assuming a greater responsibility in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of it’s emergency medical services system.

Core Strategy 4: Assure Quality and Evaluation

Key Strategic Initiatives

4.1 Assess compliance with EMS performance driven standards

- 4.1.1 Maintain statewide data-driven performance improvement process.
- 4.1.2 Maintain statewide pre-hospital and inter-hospital trauma triage plan.
- 4.1.3 Maintain statewide pre-hospital and inter-hospital stroke triage plan.
- 4.1.4 *Develop and maintain statewide pre-hospital and inter-hospital ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) triage plan.***
- 4.1.5 Review and evaluate data collection and submission efforts.
- 4.1.6 Review functional adequacy and design features of EMS vehicles utilized in Virginia and recommend changes to improve EMS provider safety, unit efficiency and quality of patient care.
- 4.1.7 Measure EMS system compliance utilizing national EMS for Children (EMSC) performance measures.

4.2 Assess and enhance quality of education for EMS providers

- 4.2.1 Update the certification process to assure certification examinations continue to be valid, psychometrically sound, and legally defensible.
- 4.2.2 Update quality improvement process to promote a valid, psychometrically sound, and legally defensible certification process.
- 4.2.3 Explore substitution of practical examination with successful completion of a recognized competency based training program conducted by accredited training sites and using computer based technology for written examinations.

4.3 Pursue new initiatives that support EMS

- 4.3.1 Engage the EMS system in unintentional injury, illness, and violence prevention efforts.
- 4.3.2 Develop, implement, and promote programs that emphasize safety, wellness, and the physical health of fire and EMS personnel.

Resources

In developing this plan several resources were used in addition to meetings and interviews with the Director and Assistant Director of OEMS.

- Code of Virginia: § 32.1-111.3. Statewide emergency medical care system. Requires a comprehensive, coordinated EMS system in the Commonwealth and identifies specific objectives that must be addressed.
- EMS Agenda for the Future: A document created by the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) that outlines a vision and objectives for the future of EMS. August 1996
- OEMS 5-Year Plan: July 1, 2007-June 30, 2010
- Service Area Strategic Plan State Office of Emergency Medical Services (601 402 04) which describes the statutory authority and expectations for OEMS and identifies the growing EMS needs of the citizens and visitors of Virginia.
- Service Area Strategic Plan Financial Assistance for Non Profit Emergency Medical Services Organizations and Localities (601 402 03) This service area includes Virginia Rescue Squads Assistance Fund grants program, Financial Assistance to Localities to support Non Profit Emergency Medical Service (EMS) agencies, and funding provided to support Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads (VAVRS).
- State Emergency Medical Services Systems: A Model: National Association of State EMS Officials – July 2008
- EMS at the Crossroads: Institute of Medicine - 2006
- Agency Planning Handbook: A Guide for Strategic Planning and Service Area Planning Linking to Performance-Based Budgeting: Department of Planning and Budget 2006-2008 Biennium, May 1, 2005
- Joint Legislative Action Review Commission (JLARC) Report – House Document 37, Review of Emergency Medical Services in Virginia. 2004.
- EMS Advisory Board Committee Planning Templates – Developed May-August 2009
- Regional EMS Council Process Action Team (PAT) Retreat Report - November 2008.