Secure Commonwealth Panel  
November 29, 2006  
Library of Virginia  
Minutes

Opening Remarks
The meeting was opened at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman Robert P. Crouch, Jr., who gave opening remarks regarding the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group (CPWG) and its role as staff support to the Panel.

The Panel members, CPWG members and guests then introduced themselves.

The Chair noted that partnership is the key to the Panel’s successes. Interoperability is a good example of the influence of the Panel, as it is now seen as a model for other states to follow and that common language adoption in the first responder community is a resulting example. The Chair noted that the Panel should seek to identify areas where there may be gaps and to develop strategies to address these gaps.

The Chair gave an Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP) update, welcoming the new Deputy Assistant Marc Follmer and the new Grants Coordinator, Susan Mongold to the OCP team. He also stated that OCP continues to build the seven Regional Preparedness Advisory Committees (RPAC), as directed by code, to ensure the inclusion of regional perspective and involvement in preparedness efforts. He reviewed the session held with the colleges and universities to discuss their academic and operational preparedness efforts. He also mentioned the possibility of holding an annual combined meeting for the Secure Commonwealth Panel (SCP), CPWG and the RPACs. He stated that OCP is working on a more robust website, complete with links to preparedness partners.

Wendy Hoffman then mentioned that a tentative schedule, travel vouchers and additional logistics information were contained in the Panel member’s notebooks.

Strategic Plan
Deputy Assistants Steve Mondul and Marc Follmer, of OCP, gave a presentation on the Virginia Preparedness Strategic Plan. A history of the plan was reviewed, focusing on the document as flexible and living. Strategic Plan linkages to other documents both state and federal were reviewed. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) scoring of the 2005-2006 grant goals was reviewed. It was stated that OCP is working with DHS to obtain consistency with DHS activities and objectives in identifying and responding to gaps in Virginia. The current DHS revision cycle was detailed. Once this process is mature, the results will be shared with the Panel and OCP will report out at next meeting on the results of the process. The 2005-2006 goals were reviewed, some highlights included business and industry, outreach, first responders, health and medical, and critical infrastructure sub-panel recommendations from 2005. Several related questions were answered. It was noted that the succession protocol for the Governor had its genesis in this Panel. The annual update process and the goal behind it were reviewed and
preparations needed for revision were discussed alongside the role of the Panel in this process. They closed by reminding the Panel that the strategic plan drives grant process, OCP performance measures and OCP goals and accomplishments.

Health and Medical Sub-panel Report
Delegate John O’Bannon (Chair) gave the sub-panel report. He reviewed progress of the sub-panel, which has chosen to follow the same pattern as last year. The larger meeting was scheduled for the following day at the Crown Plaza on W. Broad at 8:30a.m. It will serve as a large stakeholder focus group and a forum for determining the issues to address. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has done a large amount of work on pandemic flu, such as exercises. The hospital community, the Metropolitan Medical Response Systems (MMRS) and first responders play an integral role. It was noted that it is a challenge to keep stakeholders integrated.

Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz, Deputy Commissioner Emergency Preparedness and Response at VDH reviewed the pandemic flu planning activities, VDH Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) requirements and Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association (VHHA) coordination. Several issues she addressed were altered standards of care, legal issues, collaboration with local governments and private entities, special needs shelters and alternate care sites, and the role of physicians working and that the Governor has approved purchase of anti-virals for stockpile (covers 25% of population in pandemic). She also stated that there is a need to develop a plan for anti-viral distribution and that a group is to be formed for this, human resources is addressing personnel policies development, and VDH is working on prioritization for information technology (IT) with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) for pandemic flu emergencies. It was also mentioned that a recent statewide pandemic flu exercise after action report is in process. Delegate O’Bannon stated that challenges such as in the National Capital Region (NCR) for distribution need to be addressed.

Several questions were raised such as what is Virginia’s surge capacity, how is distribution being handled for rural areas versus urban, is there a contamination factor if pan flu victims are outside of hospital, what the guidelines were for distribution of vaccines and anti-virals to first responders, do we have enough masks and respirators and what regional law enforcement outreach efforts are being conducted?

It was noted that VDH is working to get messages out proactively (note video on website - www.vdh.virginia.gov/pandemicflu) and that the Attorney General and the Governor co-hosted a drill recently on legal issues surrounding a large scale emergency.

Business and Industry Sub-panel Report
Leigh Middleditch (Chair) gave the sub-panel report and quoted from a Journal of International Affairs article to open discussion on how the human race does and does not react to catastrophes. He stated that continuing education is critical and that the Chambers of Commerce can play a role, citing the example of Charlottesville. He then addressed the three Sub-panel objectives. The Sub-panel met with the Virginia State Police (VSP) on fusion center information sharing with business organizations, it was determined that business liability issues may fall to the Attorney General’s Office, and
attending insurance agency representatives stated that there is little opportunity to
decrease premiums such that the Commonwealth should address building codes instead.
The question “Is a regulatory solution needed?” arose, bringing up free market and
reentry concerns. The Critical Incidents Analysis Group at UVA under Dr. Greg Sathoff
has done a Ft. Belvoir pandemic flu credentialing study that was reviewed. It was stated
that exercises are important to ensure plans are valid.

Michael Cline gave overview of the scope of exercises and types of cooperation
occurring using a portion of the DHS Homeland Security Grant Program grants,
including 7 regional and at least two statewide exercises each year. He stated that there is
a push for localities to participate and a contractor is available to assist local governments
to develop their own exercises. The agencies have exercises and the CPWG helps to
ensure outreach to bring everyone on board. DHS and federal agencies in the NCR also
provide opportunities to participate in exercises.

A question regarding comprehensive approaches to after action reports (AARs) and
Lessons Learned (LLs) was answered citing that all DHS grant funded exercises require
AARs. The LLs post-Katrina identified the need to follow up and fix identified gaps.
Information on this will be made available to the Panel through www.vaemergency.com,
unless it is sensitive security information. Per Chairman Crouch, OCP will develop a
resource list for where to find information on state agency websites and place it on the
OCP website. It was also noted that the Virginia Department of Emergency Management
(VDEM) newsletter is great and available through the VDEM website as well.

It was noted that the Institute for Business and Home Safety (Florida) has good resources
on the preparedness and mitigation efforts going on in the private sector. It was also
noted that state-level regional exercises are conducted in almost all regions; however
jurisdictions are simply required to “exercise,” not to participate in regional exercises, a
key in deferring to local autonomy.

Several prevention effort pilot projects were briefed, including Virginia’s pilot of unified
credentialing of first responders in the NCR in coordination with Arlington (First
Responder Authentication Card (FRAC) card result of 9/11 – Mike McAllister). This
project has a nexus with insurance and utilities by authenticating those who need to get
into an area after an emergency. There is a CPWG sub-committee working on a timeline
for implementation. It was noted that this is separate from the Transportation Workers
Identification Card (TWIC) and Common Access Card (CAC) efforts and it can include
licensing health care information as well. The ODU Modeling and Simulation
partnership with Joint Forces Command (Virginia Modeling and Simulation Center) is a
Governor’s Initiative on modeling disaster simulations and testing how Virginia’s
relationship with the military in times of disaster.

In conclusion, the sub-panel Chair thanked VSP, Dr. Don Butts and Marc Follmer for
their work and expressed an interest in augmenting the panel with additional members
such as WalMart. It was noted that OCP and VDEM had met with WalMart and Home
Depot. It was noted that the sub-panel may want to consider adding Jason Jackson
Critical Infrastructure Sub-panel Report
John Knapp (Chair) then gave the Critical Infrastructure Sub-panel report. He stated that this was a brand new committee, which had just held one meeting. Another is planned for later in December. The sub-panel has identified a set of objectives regarding what needs to be accomplished, specifically; Virginia needs a comprehensive CI plan and strategy. The sub-panel reviewed previous efforts, the strategic plan, the role of the fusion center, private sector partnerships, the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) and the activities of the National Capital Region’s CIP working group. In addition funding concerns were discussed regarding sources of funding, such as grants, privates matches and general assembly funds. Other issues such as Geographic Information System (GIS) and ACAMS databases and the FRAC card system were addressed. Another area addressed was the Buffer Zone Protection Program which complements the identification and hardening of critical infrastructure sites; to date almost 50 Buffer Zone Protection Plans have been funded and put into place. This sparked a conversation about who gets grant monies and why. The role of transportation security in freight and passenger rail systems was addressed and reference was made to the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding for Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Virginia’s partnership with Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) in an Eastern corridor pilot was mentioned.

Chairman Crouch stressed the desire to partner with private sector stakeholders in the process. He stated that the sub-panels needed to define how the membership of sub-panel will be structured and who needs to be at the table. The Health and Interoperability efforts were cited as examples. It was suggested that the CIP Sub-panel should include the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPCs) in and Local emergency managers in the process, sparking a discussion of the role of LEPCs in general. The Chairman also asked the Panel members to think about 2008 needs identification in preparation for next years’ General Assembly session.

Questions about mandating building codes for critical infrastructure facilities, the National Asset Database, funding concerns, water supplies, standard mitigation practices from DHS and accessibility compliance were raised.

It was asked whether the state could collate a book on local water security, to cover accessibility of information, hardening and noting that security is a combination of effects not just a better lock on the door.

It was noted that Virginia is continually updating the accuracy of the critical infrastructure information it maintains.

Outreach Sub-panel Report
Greg Lusik gave the sub-panel report for Regina Williams (Chair), who was unable to attend. He noted that the Outreach Sub-panel is a new creation and thanked the Chair for her participation and several members of the Sub-panel for their participation. He reviewed the objectives and areas of agreement on emphasis for outreach that the group came to in their first meeting. He stated that partnership with the localities is key, especially through the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) and the Virginia Municipal League (VML). He stated the need to get in touch with these organizations and get on their agendas. He also addressed inclusion of special needs populations, the need to assist localities with grant opportunities, the criticality of using a regional approach, toolkits for business readiness, the need to work with other Sub-panels on effort and interoperability between localities and VSP. He stated that the interoperability plan calls for hiring an interoperability outreach coordinator and cited the example program of Chesterfield’s Health District Emergency Preparedness and Response Division Citizen Advisory Board. The group also views outreach as adding to the job description of VDEM, OCP and VDH to develop a coordinated program statewide. It was also mentioned that the group should consider adding a local chamber of commerce member to the committee.

It was noted that VDEM has public information officers and that the Virginia Citizen Corps Council spear-headed a Citizens Guide for Preparedness and for Businesses as well and that the Winter Campaign will launch next week, to complement the tornado, hurricane and flood campaigns. It was also noted that September is national preparedness month and that focused outreach workshops for special needs are to begin in March and the NCR outreach UASI funding was used for a citizen alert network with potential to spread across the state. It was then noted that citizens play a role in response too and need to understand how to get ready.

The importance of outreach with primary, secondary and higher education was reviewed, such as in Danville and with the NOAA weather alert radio program, as part of building a culture of preparedness to complement volunteerism programs, such as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), VIPS, MMRCs, Neighborhood Watch and FireCorps. It was stated that schools are an excellent way to get out information, just like stop-drop-and roll.

**First Responders Sub-panel Report**
Colonel Henry Stanley (Acting Chair) gave the First Responder Sub-panel report. He reviewed the objectives of the Sub-panel and talked about the baseline statewide communications inventory, covering what we have and we need, including the localities that have received equipment through Statewide Area Radio System (STARS). He stated that the group strongly supports the Regional Preparedness Advisory Committees as they give police and fire a voice. He discussed the “Ten codes effort” and that first responders continue to market it.

Terry Bowes, of VSP, gave an overview of STARS, the statewide radio system that VSP initiated with Motorola to enable all state agencies to be on one radio system that can expand to local jurisdictions. He stated that equipment problems are being addressed and
that data incorporation is being worked on by Motorola. The 2009 completion date includes links to local jurisdictions but does not include funding for that piece. There is only the grant for the Richmond area 14 jurisdictions without cost to them. The goal is to provide the link to additional localities without cost and the Interoperability effort is trying to maximize the link to STARS. He reviewed that requirement that grants must be used to purchase authorized equipment only and that several advisory committees are in place to provide input and guidance.

Several questions were addressed regarding plans for in the event of a complete loss of communications infrastructure, funding, specific equipment such as balloons, the role of the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) and how all of this relates to Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) activities.

It was noted that from a national perspective Virginia is ahead, for further information please visit www.telecontinuity.com. It was also noted that OCP audits executive branch COOP plans and wants to partner with legislative and judicial branches on COOP/COG.

**Lunch Break**

**General Discussion**

Three of the four Panel meetings next year will probably be outside of Richmond. Panel members are eligible for reimbursement for travel to Sub-panel meetings (see Wendy). Before March (the next meeting) the Chair requests that Sub-panels meet at least once, though there is no obligation to have those meetings in Richmond. The Chair encouraged use of the community college system and state agencies and discouraged renting rooms for meetings when they can be obtained for free from state agencies.

**Next Steps**

In the next steps discussion several specific issues were addressed including the need to review railroads to assess vulnerability, the role of sulfur-hardened chips for key state agencies, radiation hardening hardware, the potential for a regional pilot program and the transition report issues.

The Chairman noted that if Sub-panels added adjunct members, that they should let OCP know whom they were inviting to attend meetings, but that OCP would only pay travel expenses for those members who were official members appointed by the Governor as members of the SCP.

OCP agreed to send an electronic map of the 7 homeland security regions to the Panel members. Wendy also noted that Tab 6 for some members was missing pages, so she would email the contents to the Panel members and CPWG.

It was requested that the Panel be allowed to view OCP’s tracking of proposed legislation and that the OCP website be developed to enable interactive SCP and Sub-panel activities.
Closing Remarks
Chairman Crouch thanked Wendy Hoffman for all of her good work. He then thanked
the Panel members, CPWG members and guests for their participation stated that OCP
looks forward to working with everyone in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.