



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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MEMORANDUM

To: Virginia localities developing or participating in the development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan

From: Michelle Pope
Acting State Hazard Mitigation Officer

Date: October 25, 2003

Re: Mitigation Planning Guidance #1a:
Virginia Mitigation Planning Participation Requirements

These guidelines are intended to explain the role and participation requirements for localities and regional planning agencies involved in the development of a regional hazard mitigation plan. While the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) and the related FEMA guidance documents provide specific details on what is to be in each plan for each locality, FEMA has not yet released its guidance on the development of regional / multi-jurisdictional plans. In the interim, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) has compiled these brief guidelines for use in the development of a regional plan.

For a locality developing a single jurisdiction plan, the guidelines provided in section A.1 below should suffice as a general guide. For more specific information, please refer to the current FEMA guidance documents.

A. What are the responsibilities of the regional planning agency in a multi-jurisdictional plan...

1. ...for a plan prepared by the regional planning agency?

- a) Coordinate the regional planning committee efforts and solicit appropriate people from the necessary stakeholder groups to participate on that committee.
- b) Coordinate the mitigation planning efforts of the localities in that region.
- c) Compile the necessary background data on the region, the localities, and their census and historical hazard information.
- d) Collect necessary data from the localities for use in the mitigation plan.
- e) Provide quality control in the planning process to be sure that all localities included in this plan have their concerns adequately addressed within the plan.
- f) Provide any currently available regional data needed for this planning process. **
- g) Perform the necessary risk assessment, vulnerability assessment, and loss estimation analyses for the region and for each locality.
- h) Assist localities in the development and prioritization of their respective mitigation strategy lists.
- i) Incorporate the local mitigation strategies into the plan.
- j) Develop and prioritize a mitigation strategy list to address regional concerns.
- k) Write the plan and its various sections, incorporating the local data and information where necessary and available.

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- l) Meet with the respective localities, the regional public, and the planning committee enough times to gain consensus about the plan contents, purpose, and implementation process.
- m) Work with the planning committee and localities to review the components of the plan and the overall draft and final versions of the plan.
- n) Document hours and efforts put toward mitigation planning effort to document in-kind cost match.
- o) Work with the state and FEMA to review and revise the plan as needed.
- p) Draft a final plan based on local, planning committee, state, and FEMA comments.
- q) Work with localities to move the final plan through the required public comment and local adoption process.
- r) Submit a final plan to the state and FEMA for final approval.
- s) Submit the approved plan to the localities for adoption.

2. ...for a plan prepared by an outside contractor for the region and its localities?

- a) Serve as a liaison between the localities in that region and the contractor.
- b) Serve as Project Director for the plan development, assisting and providing guidance to the contractor regarding the local jurisdictions.
- c) Assist the contractor with soliciting and collecting necessary data from the localities for use in the mitigation plan.
- d) Assist the contractor with setting up and running the necessary planning committee and public meetings to support the plan development process.
- e) Provide any currently available regional data requested for this planning process by the contractor. **

B. What are the responsibilities of a locality (city, county, or town) in a multi-jurisdictional plan?

- 1. Provide any currently available local data requested for this planning process by the county, regional planning agency, or contractor leading the development of this plan. **
- 2. Review the hazards identification, risk assessment, vulnerability assessment, and loss estimation results for the locality, and provide comments and revisions as necessary.
- 3. Assist the regional planning agency or the contractor in the development of mitigation strategies to address the locality's specific hazard and loss concerns.
- 4. Review the draft and final mitigation plans to ensure the locality's concerns and issues are adequately and accurately addressed, and provide comments for revision as necessary.
- 5. To endorse the final plan document before it is sent to the state and FEMA for final review.
- 6. To adopt the final plan following the final FEMA review using the appropriate public participation guidelines as described in and required by the *Code of Virginia* Title 15.2 Section 2204 and Sections 2223 to 2232.
- 7. Document hours and efforts put toward mitigation planning effort for in-kind cost match documentation.

C. What are the participation requirements for a town that is not required to and has not opted to develop its own section of a county or regional mitigation plan,?

- 1. Provide a notice of intent to the lead planning agency that the town has chosen to allow the respective county perform the planning functions for the town.
- 2. Provide any available local data as requested to support an adequate and accurate assessment of the town conditions in the plan. **
- 3. Review the relevant sections of the plan related to the town to ensure accurate representation of the Town's concerns in the plan.
- 4. Adopt the final plan after FEMA review using the appropriate public participation guidelines described in and required by the *Code of Virginia* Title 15.2 Section 2231.

**** A note about providing data and information for use in the HMP development process:**

New data or information should NOT be developed to fulfill the DMA2K planning requirements. All information requests may be met with the currently "best available" data. All such information requests should be considered and handled as FOIA requests to the local government and addressed within the appropriate and required timeframe. However, any parts of the plan where data or information is not currently available should state this fact, and efforts should be identified in the mitigation strategies section as to how this deficiency will try to be rectified before the revision of the plan in five years.