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This plan was developed as part of the effort to standardize long-range planning across the eleven EMS regions in Virginia, along with the long-range statewide EMS plan developed by the Virginia Office of EMS.

You will notice that the plan is very broad in scope. It is not intended to address ongoing and day-to-day work and initiatives.

The plan is intended to be reviewed and updated annually.

Please feel free to address any questions or comments to:

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# Core Strategy 1: Develop Partnerships

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## Key Strategic Initiatives:

### 1.1 Promote collaborative approaches

- 1.1.1 Develop and foster relationships with federal, state, and local partners, educational institutions and other Regional EMS Councils.
- 1.1.2 Promote collaboration and partnerships with the Southwest Virginia EMS Council, Blue Ridge EMS Council and others relevant to developing service area concepts and effective partnerships and collaboration.
- 1.1.3 Strengthen ongoing relationships with Virginia Department of Health, other state departments, public safety, public health and medical facilities.
- 1.1.4 Foster regional involvement in EMS-related legislative initiatives.
- 1.1.5 Cultivate grass roots support for Strategic Initiatives.
- 1.1.6 Continue to develop extensive and meaningful collaborations with the Blue Ridge and Southwest Virginia EMS Councils, to include work toward unified protocols, drug boxes, policies and plans.
- 1.1.7 Collaborate with hospitals and other health care institutions within the service area to foster and sustain cooperative programs, including supply and drug box exchange agreements and mobile integrated care.
- 1.1.8 Develop, support and update policies to ensure appropriate utilization of free-standing emergency departments, and ensure that such departments are addressed in resource documents such as regional protocols and plans.



### 1.2 Attract and support outstanding health care providers

- 1.2.1 Cultivate partnerships with universities, colleges, accredited training programs, and others to attract and educate EMS providers.
- 1.2.2 Recruit and assist in retaining EMS physicians.

### 1.3 Further community based prevention

- 1.3.1 Encourage illness and injury prevention programs through collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

### 1.4 Identify resources for responses to emergencies both natural and man-made

- 1.4.1 Enhance relationships with local Emergency Managers and other federal, state, and local agencies.
- 1.4.2 Support ongoing training, evaluation and develop resources for emergency preparedness and response.
- 1.4.3 Participate in and support activities relating to MCI planning and preparedness activities and projects within the region.

# Core Strategy 2: Utilize Tools and Resources

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## Key Strategic Initiatives:

### **2.1 Facilitate EMS performance improvement and related research**

- 2.1.1 Support and encourage research and other projects utilizing collected EMS data.
- 2.1.2 Promote quality assurance and performance improvement in EMS service and trauma triage, stroke triage and STEMI compliance, along with other identified critical care initiatives.
- 2.1.3 Support development of, and encourage the best use of the electronic Virginia EMS Registry to support meaningful data collection and research to promote evidenced-based decision-making affecting the EMS system.

### **2.2 Support quality education and evaluation of EMS personnel and Agencies**

- 2.2.1 Expand availability of ALS Training. Support existing accredited training programs and develop new programs and sites as needed.
- 2.2.2 Promote leadership and management training for board and staff to include best practices for operating a non-profit organization, particularly relating to fiscal and organizational management.
- 2.2.3 Support and improve processes for evaluation of ALS and BLS candidates.
- 2.2.4 Provide technical assistance to educational institutions desiring to provide EMS education.
- 2.2.5 Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with organizations and educational institutions to further EMS education in the region and elsewhere.
- 2.2.6 Conduct and/or sponsor various certification and non-certification educational courses and programs throughout the region as needed. As our communities transition back to normalcy from the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is important to promote programs such as community CPR and First Aid to pre-pandemic levels to improve overall outcomes in the public health arena.
- 2.2.7 Work cooperatively with OEMS educators and other outside resources to maximize the impact of their offerings, and utilize all outside resources to achieve the greatest benefit to EMS providers and other stakeholders within the service area.

### **2.3 Foster appropriate use of system-wide EMS resources**

- 2.3.1. Support education, legislation and programs to promote appropriate use of EMS resources.

### **2.4 Provide resources to support the EMS system**

- 2.4.1 Provide tools to assist in recruitment and retention events across the region.
- 2.4.2 Provide resources and information to instructor network.
- 2.4.3 Promote and provide enhanced resources for quality EMS education.
- 2.4.4 Provide loaner bank of training equipment and publications.
- 2.4.5 Facilitate referrals and reporting of information to the operational medical directors using the Medical Incident Review process and the regional Performance Improvement Committees.

- 2.4.6 Develop and publish regional EMS operational guidelines (protocols) in conjunction with and as approved by the region's operational medical directors.
- 2.4.7 To aid in reducing operational costs for local governments and non-profit EMS agencies, provide and promote processes for procurement of assets using cooperative agreements/purchasing contracts for EMS equipment and other necessary assets.

**2.5 Provide guidance documents to promote unified response**

- 2.5.1 Develop and revise, and promote compliance with regional plans addressing response to specific medical situations, such as development of a Trauma Triage Plan and Stroke Triage Plan.
- 2.5.2 Assist EMS agencies and providers, and other stakeholders in responding and reacting to public health emergencies, outbreaks and epidemics by providing information, emergency protocols, and best practices.
- 2.5.3 The recent COVID-19 Pandemic illustrated the need for regional cooperation amongst local EMS Agencies to share resources from equipment to staffing resources. The Council will develop coordination plans to help facilitate information sharing using a multi-jurisdictional approach.

# Core Strategy 3: Develop Infrastructure

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## Key Strategic Initiatives:

### 3.1 Develop and strengthen board of directors

- 3.1.1 Periodically review and revise board governance documents.
- 3.1.2 Cultivate further board member participation.
- 3.1.3 Utilize a meaningful board member orientation program to optimize board member familiarity with WVEMS and its programs and operations.

### 3.2 Adequately staff the Western Virginia EMS Council

- 3.2.1 Ensure adequate staffing and procedures to support the variable nature of the EMS system requirements and challenges within the region.
- 3.2.2 Assess and adapt the Council's role in ensuring appropriate EMS provider training.
- 3.2.3 Provide ongoing workforce development and supporting resources to maintain a proficient and productive staff.
- 3.2.4 In response to increased audit standards for non-profits, continually monitor and improve fiscal management and accountability standards.
- 3.2.5 Cultivate and support efforts to work within and beyond identified regional service areas in concert with OEMS to best benefit all stakeholders.
- 3.2.6 Apply for, obtain, and maintain VDH designation according to the policies, regulations and directives put forth by the Virginia Department of Health.

### 3.3 Focus recruitment and retention efforts

- 3.3.1 Support and promote recruitment and retention campaigns within the region.
- 3.3.2 Promote and conduct annual EMS awards program.
- 3.3.3 Identify and promote opportunities for financial assistance for EMS education throughout the region.
- 3.3.4 Support regional crisis intervention initiatives.

### 3.4 Upgrade technology and communication systems

- 3.4.1 Promote improved EMS communications systems and information sharing.
- 3.4.2 Promote the use of technology in EMS reporting and quality assurance.
- 3.4.3 Improve IT security and redundancy for all EMS regions.
- 3.4.4 Plan and implement information-sharing and electronic communications enhancements to benefit WVEMS and other regions.



### **3.5 Improve EMS Governance and Broad-based Participation**

3.5.1 Encourage attendance and participation by board members, operational medical directors and staff with relevant groups and organizations such as:

- State EMS Advisory Board
- State Medical Direction Committee
- Other committees and workgroups of the State EMS Advisory Board
- Financial Assistance Review Committee
- Virginia Association of Governmental EMS Administrators
- Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads

3.5.2 Monitor proposed impactful legislation at the local, state and federal level, and work to effectuate legislation that positively impacts EMS within our region and in general.

3.5.3 Work to inform the public, local governing bodies, hospitals and healthcare systems, and other stakeholders of matters that impact EMS in general and within the region.

### **3.6 Maximize EMS funding**

3.6.1 Encourage pursuit of alternative funding sources including revenue recovery and increasing operating efficiencies.

3.6.2 Provide assistance to eligible applicants in applying for Rescue Squad Assistance Fund and other grants.

3.6.3 Assist in maximizing the effectiveness of the RSAF by providing meaningful information in the grading and review process.

3.6.4 Ensure appropriate stewardship of EMS council funds.

3.6.5 Support and advocate for a stable funding stream for state and regional infrastructure to include effective use of Four-for-Life funds by OEMS and the regional councils.

# Core Strategy 4: Promote Other Regional & Statewide Initiatives

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## Key Strategic Initiatives:

### **4.1 Further and Promote Projects in Conjunction with NSPA**

- 4.1.1 Collaborate and support activities of the Near Southwest Preparedness Alliance in preparing facilities such as hospitals, free-standing emergency departments, alternate care sites, long-term care facilities, etc. as part of the Commonwealth's healthcare preparedness initiatives.
- 4.1.3 Assist in staffing and operating Regional Healthcare Coordinating Centers (RHCCs) and other NSPA resources.
- 4.1.4 Provide other contractual services as needed.

### **4.2 Utilize External Contracts and Promote External Initiatives**

- 4.2.1 Through agreements, and whenever possible, support outside initiatives such as the Virginia EMS Symposium by providing fee-based fiscal and other administrative services.
- 4.2.2 Provide technological support for statewide resources such as the VA EMS Jobs database and the multi-regional CTS Registration System.
- 4.2.3 Maintain availability to assist other regions, OEMS, other agencies and organizations to enhance EMS and healthcare delivery in Virginia.
- 4.2.4 Support Medical Reserve Corps within the service area as requested. Provide assistance to VDH relating to MRC(s) as agreed upon.
- 4.2.5 Facilitate information technology support for all regional EMS councils as provided for and funded by contract between OEMS and WVEMS.

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Mission**

The mission of the Western Virginia EMS Council: As an integral part of Virginia's comprehensive EMS system, WVEMS serves to assess, identify, coordinate, plan and implement efficient and effective regional EMS delivery systems in partnership with Virginia's Office of Emergency Medical Services and EMS Advisory Board.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Planning Committee and Process**

The WVEMS Staff Leadership Group serves as the planning committee for the annual updates to this plan. The Leadership Group consists of the Executive Director, Business Manager, Regional Education Program Director and the Executive Director of the Near Southwest Preparedness Alliance.

The process to revise and update this plan included a review of the mandates set forth in the Code of Virginia and the WVEMS Contract with OEMS. The WVEMS board of directors discusses the plan's components, and board members are encouraged to consider the strengths and weaknesses of, and opportunities and threats affecting the EMS system in Virginia and the WVEMS region. Directors are asked to send comments to the executive director for inclusion in the final draft.

Public comment is invited. Then at the March board of directors meeting each year, final review and discussion takes place, and the resulting document is presented for adoption.

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