

# Office of Emergency Management

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LOB #245:

## **TRAINING AND EXERCISE**

### **Purpose**

The Training and Exercise (T&E) Division within OEM fulfills three of the five components of preparedness undertaken by the County – training, exercising and evaluation. Utilizing the concept of Whole Community, the T&E Division provides training opportunities not only for Fairfax County personnel but includes other local, state, federal, nongovernmental and private partners.

The T&E Division is responsible for emergency management, incident command system, and emergency operations center training and exercises. These include discussion- and operations-based exercises, EOC training, and position-specific and mission-critical certifications. A large part of this effort also includes providing federally-directed and state-mandated NIMS training and Incident Command System (ICS) training along with County mandates, ensuring NIMS compliance throughout the County.

### **Description**

The T&E Division is comprised of a team of Emergency Management Specialists who work diligently on improving the County's preparedness in the event of an emergency. This team consists of one County-funded Emergency Management Specialist and two UASI grant-supported Emergency Management Specialist IIIs (one Training and Exercise Officer and one NIMS Training Officer). The team focuses on providing cutting edge emergency management training, all-hazards training and multi-agency exercises including EOC and field exercises. It is responsible for maintaining the County's compliance with NIMS.

The T&E Division leads a County multi-agency training committee to create a multi-year training and exercise program following the guidelines provided by the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). The committee identifies County training and exercise needs and schedules seminars, workshops, tabletops, drills, functional and full-scale exercises needed to prepare the County in the event of an emergency.

An annual large-scale multi-agency exercise enhances training by providing a realistic learning environment to practice response and recovery skills in real time. All exercises and real-world incident responses include an after-action process to document lessons learned and areas for improvement or corrective actions. Corrective actions are the gaps identified after a real emergency or exercise. The Corrective Action Program (CAP) managed by OEM assigns agencies to address those gaps and tracks their progress and completion. Closing these gaps is a critical step to better the County's ability to respond to and recover from an emergency.

### **Benefits**

Training and exercises are a key component to becoming a ready and resilient community. OEM trains to be prepared, educated, knowledgeable and skilled, enabling department staff to react with confidence and efficiency during emergencies. Exercises are used to hone skills and identify areas for improvement during future emergency responses. After several years of large-scale EOC functional exercises that each lasted two to three days, the County was tested with real world events including Snowmageddon, Tropical Storm Lee, and Derecho. During these events, County staff along with our partner organizations and residents performed their duties with ease and familiarity and in some cases better than expected. These successes were noted by many involved and were attributed directly to the department's training and exercise efforts.

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## **Mandates**

Training is mandated at all levels, from County classes to state and federally-mandated certifications, to meet our basic and advanced competencies and qualifications. The office also mandates state level and professional certifications, which are only achievable through classes and exercise participation and exercise development and execution.

National Incident Management System: Commonwealth of Virginia Executive Order 102 (2005) made local adoption of the NIMS a requirement for receiving federal preparedness funding that passed through the Commonwealth. The Board of Supervisors adopted NIMS as the County standard for incident management on November 22, 2005.

### County Requirements

Fairfax County Procedural Memorandum, No.93-01 "Fairfax County Multi-Agency Emergency Exercise Policy" dated November 12, 2008 states in part; "To ensure the mutual benefit to Fairfax County government and partner agencies, the Office of Emergency Management is charged with the overall coordination of the Fairfax County Multi-Agency Emergency Exercise Policy, the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and compliance with HSEEP. HSEEP compliance is defined as adherence to specific HSEEP-mandated practices for exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning."

NIMS and its components are a major part of training efforts and are incorporated into exercises and real life events.

### Federal Requirements

Federal departments and agencies are required to make adoption of NIMS by local, state, territorial, and tribal nation jurisdictions a condition to receive Federal Preparedness grants and awards. The NIMS Implementation Objectives were developed to guide jurisdictions in their implementation of NIMS. NIMS implementation is assessed through the direct reporting of data to FEMA utilizing the *Unified Reporting Tool*.

Federal Register - U.S. Vol. 54, No. 97

44CFR201.6 – Mitigation Planning with Federal Funds

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title44-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title44-vol1-part201.pdf>

Commonwealth of Virginia Governor - Executive Order 102

Adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and use of the National Preparedness goal for Preventing, Responding to and recovering from crisis events in the Commonwealth.

<http://www.vaemergency.gov/sites/default/files/ExecutiveOrder102.pdf>

### State Requirements

Code of Virginia §44-146.19

<http://law.justia.com/codes/virginia/2006/toc4400000/44-146.19.html>

Commonwealth of Virginia Governor - Executive Order 102

Adoption of the NIMS and use of the National Preparedness goal for Preventing, Responding to and recovering from crisis events in the Commonwealth.

<http://www.vaemergency.gov/sites/default/files/ExecutiveOrder102.pdf>

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## Trends and Challenges

The number and scale of events that trigger the EOC to activate have increased over the past several years, thus causing the need for responders to train and exercise at a more complex level.

Since 1953, Fairfax County has had 16 federally-declared disasters: five hurricanes, five severe storms, four snowstorms, one flood, and one ice event. Of these 16 disasters, two occurred in the 1970s. The other 14 happened between 1993 and 2012. In fact, 2003 and 2010 each had two declarations, and 2012 had three. Although the number and frequency of declared disasters rises and falls cyclically, the overall trend indicates the frequency and total numbers of declared disasters nationally is increasing. Additionally, the data supports that there is a clear upward trend in the frequency of federally-declared disasters in Fairfax County.

This upward trend increases the need to train and exercise for disasters. In addition, staffing turnover at both OEM and other agencies creates a void in trained and experienced staff, leaving the County vulnerable during activations.

Reduced grant funding and County budget limitations have affected the ability to bring large scale and complex exercises to the County. Competing projects and programs make it more difficult to support our strategic goals. OEM continues to rely more and more on County OEM training staff to fill roles normally contracted out. The result is less complex exercises and fewer classes offered to support goals.

## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #245: Training and Exercise</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$117,640	\$107,219	\$127,228
Operating Expenses	15,920	15,420	86,275
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$133,560</b>	<b>\$122,639</b>	<b>\$213,503</b>
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund</b>	<b>\$133,560</b>	<b>\$122,639</b>	<b>\$213,503</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	1 / 1	1 / 1	1 / 1
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>1 / 1</b>	<b>1 / 1</b>	<b>1 / 1</b>

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## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Total number of instructor-led NIMS and ICS courses	NA	NA	34	26	26
Total number of students that completed the instructor-led NIMS and ICS courses	264	249	258	200	200
Total number of emergency management trainings conducted excluding NIMS/ICS required courses	NA	NA	34	15	20
Total number of discussion-based exercises conducted	NA	NA	13	8	10
Total number of operations-based exercises conducted	NA	NA	8	15	20

The T&E Division metrics were based on the number of training classes, drills, seminars, workshops and operational exercises OEM conducted. In most of these cases, OEM was the lead instructor(s) and program or project manager(s) and exercise director, planning team or manager.

A challenge this year was an aggressive campaign to prepare the County and region for the 2015 Fairfax World Police and Fire Games (WPFPG) in addition to the regularly scheduled offerings. This made the numbers soar well beyond the normal or expected. The T&E Division taught more NIMS/ICS classes to help staff prepare for the games, chaired and co-chaired the WPFPG training committee and, based on the needs of the region, added classes, drills, seminars, workshops and exercises beyond normal levels.

The end result of the WPFPG preparation was better than expected. The T&E Division compressed 24 months of planning into 8 months and developed a training and exercise schedule to meet those needs. Most of the offerings took place in a 6-month period, which was extremely aggressive but turned out very successful.