

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose**

Vermont's State Homeland Security Strategy (SHSS) has been developed to identify the priorities for enhancing local, regional and state capabilities to prevent, protect, respond to and recover from an all hazards incident or pre-planned event. It is understood that Vermont cannot prepare for every possible hazard; however, through careful capabilities-based planning we can strategically allocate resources to enhance our preparedness and response. The SHSS has been developed based upon the annual Capability Assessment most recently conducted in September, 2008 by Vermont's Statewide Grants Review Committee (SGRC) and five standing Working Groups. The SGRC consists of local, state and regional stakeholders who are subject matter experts in their field.

In the event of a terrorist attack or major disaster, the Department of Public Safety will assume primary responsibility at the state level to ensure that emergency response organizations are adequately prepared and supported before, during and after a crisis. This will entail preparing for a crisis through planning, equipping, training and exercising. It will also require close coordination and a comprehensive state and local response to any large-scale crisis, mounting a swift and effective recovery effort. The Vermont Department of Public Safety will make citizen preparedness a priority. Educating Vermont's families on how to be prepared for a disaster and tips on how to respond in a crisis will be given special attention.

The Vermont Department of Public Safety is responsible for coordinating the capability to anticipate, preempt and deter threats to Vermont whenever possible. The Vermont Homeland Security Unit (HSU) is responsible for assessing the vulnerabilities of Vermont's critical infrastructure and will take the lead in evaluating these vulnerabilities and coordinating with federal, state, local and private partners to ensure the most effective response. Vermont Emergency Management Division (VEM) will facilitate and coordinate state level response support for all hazards incidents that exceed local capability to resolve.

The state of Vermont will apply all the resources available from the various federal, state and local preparedness programs to address unique planning, equipment, training and exercise needs. These programs assist in building enhanced and sustainable capabilities to prevent, protect, respond to and recover from any all hazards incident or pre-planned event.

### **Vision**

The September 11<sup>th</sup>, Oklahoma City, Madrid, London and 1993 World Trade Center attacks highlighted the fact that domestic and international terrorist groups have the resources and commitment to operate with deadly accuracy anywhere in the world. A terrorist committed to a cause, whether acting alone or on behalf of an international terrorist organization, can cause mass casualties, economic instability, long-term contamination of the environment and disabling of critical infrastructure. Non-terrorism related catastrophic incidents such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, an influenza pandemic or a nuclear power plant failure suggest that the same effects can be experienced from natural or accidental causes.

Vermont adheres to an all hazards approach to disaster response. It is understood that no single agency or level of government has all the necessary resources to effectively prepare for, respond to and recover from the effects of a large-scale disaster, such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The vision of the State Strategy is to bring together first response resources, government, private sector and citizens to effectively plan for, prevent, protect, respond to and recover from any all hazards incident. Vermont has identified key stakeholders who participate in developing and enhancing emergency responder capabilities that are in line with all of the National Priorities. These stakeholders actively participate in this process to ensure all perspectives are considered, resulting in a better prepared state.

History has demonstrated that catastrophic events can quickly overwhelm all entities of government and first responders. One example of Vermont taking a proactive step relating to disaster response was in 2006 when the Governor of Vermont signed into legislation the creation of four Public Safety Districts. Vermont's State Emergency Operations Plan conceptualized Regional Coordination Centers within each district. In a catastrophic regional or statewide event when the State Emergency Operations Center may be overwhelmed, these centers will coordinate resources between state and local jurisdictions during catastrophic events. These Regional Coordination

Centers are currently being identified, equipped and staffed. The centers will be exercised once they are equipped and staffed.

## Focus

Public Safety personnel face many challenges as they strive to protect Vermont's citizens, critical infrastructure, historic landmarks and way of life. Vermont's northern border, entirely with Canada, is approximately 89 miles in length and is comprised of land area as well as two large bodies of water: Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog. Both lakes define a portion of the Vermont/Canadian border and provide recreational access to both countries. Lake Champlain is part of the Intracoastal Waterway and is the nation's sixth largest lake. Montreal, Quebec, with a population of 3.4 million, is the closest large city and is located 72 miles north of the international border and approximately 110 miles from Burlington, Vermont's largest city. Vermont has two interstate highway systems that serve as major transportation corridors through which high volumes of commercial motor vehicles travel to both Quebec and Montréal. Vermont is also connected to Canada through an international railroad system.

During the winter months, heavy snowfall can make a portion of the border region inaccessible. The two major lakes can freeze during winter months, making them accessible by foot, ATV, snowmobile or other means and thus potentially exploited by criminals. The porosity of the border and the known existence of criminal organizations (to include terrorist cells) within two hours of the Vermont/Canadian border make it a concern for law enforcement.

Natural disasters that have previously occurred within the northeastern United States and eastern Canadian Provinces provide information about what Vermont can reasonably expect and the damages that may result during all hazards incidents. Examining disasters that have occurred throughout the nation provides useful information for planning purposes. Such potential hazards have been inventoried and assessed to include: flooding, ice storms and other extreme weather events. Vermont also frequently responds to a variety of Hazardous Material incidents, such as tractor trailer and rail incidents.

Entergy Vermont Yankee nuclear power facility is located in Vermont, with an Emergency Planning Zone that covers parts of Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire and creates a challenge in dealing with the implementation of multiple State Emergency Operations Plans. Although Vermont has few nationally recognized critical infrastructure sites, numerous government and private sector resources have been identified as State Critical Infrastructure or Key Resources (CI/KR). If this infrastructure was damaged or destroyed the results could create significant casualties, economic instability or cause damage to public morale and confidence within our state.

In our efforts to address the needs identified in the State Capability Assessment, Vermont has developed the following initiatives and associated capabilities as priorities:

- Interoperable Communications
  - National Priorities:**
    - Strengthen Communications Capabilities
    - Expanded Regional Collaboration
    - Implement NIMS and NRF
  - Capabilities:**
    - Communications
- Strengthen the State of Vermont's Capability to Respond to a CBRNE Event
  - National Priorities:**
    - Strengthen CBRNE Detection, Response and Decontamination Capabilities
    - Expanded Regional Collaboration
    - Strengthen Communications Capabilities
    - Strengthen Planning & Citizen Preparedness Capabilities
  - Capabilities:**
    - CBRNE Detection
    - Search and Rescue (Land Based)
    - WMD/Hazardous Materials Response and Decontamination
    - Fire Incident Response Support
    - Explosive Device Response Operations
    - Responder Safety and Health
    - On-Site Incident Management

- Structural Damage Mitigation Assessment
- Maximize Medical Surge, Mass Care and Mass Casualty Incident Capabilities
  - National Priorities:**
    - Expanded Regional Collaboration
    - Implement NIMS and NRF
    - Strengthen Medical Surge & Mass Prophylaxis
    - Strengthen Planning & Citizen Preparedness Capabilities
  - Capabilities:**
    - Medical Surge
    - Mass Prophylaxis
    - Mass Care (Sheltering, Feeding and Related Services)
    - Volunteer Management and Donations
    - Isolation & Quarantine
    - Medical Supplies Management & Distribution
    - Emergency Triage & Pre-Hospital Treatment
    - Food & Agriculture Safety & Defense
    - Epidemiological Surveillance & Investigation
    - Laboratory Testing
    - Animal Disease Emergency Support
    - Fatality Management
    - Environmental Health
- Planning
  - National Priorities**
    - Strengthen Planning & Citizen Preparedness Capabilities
    - Expanded Regional Collaboration
    - Implement NIMS and NRF
    - Strengthen Communications Capabilities
  - Capabilities:**
    - Citizen Preparedness and Participation
    - Citizen Protection: Evacuation and/or In-Place Protection
    - Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution
    - Economic and Community Recovery
    - Emergency Operations Center Management
    - Emergency Public Information and Warning
    - Restoration of Lifelines
    - Risk Management
    - Structural Damage Mitigation Assessment
- Information Sharing and Analysis
  - National Priorities**
    - Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities
    - Expanded Regional collaboration
    - Strengthen Communications Capabilities
    - Implement the NIMS & NRF
  - Capabilities:**
    - Critical Infrastructure Protection
    - Intelligence & Information Sharing and Dissemination
    - Information Gathering and Recognition of Indicators and Warnings
    - Intelligence Analysis and Production
    - Counter-Terror Investigation and Law Enforcement
    - Emergency Public Safety and Security Response

## Coordination

The Governor of Vermont has designated the Vermont Department of Public Safety as the State Administrative Agency (SAA) and the Commissioner of Public Safety as the State Administrative Agent for the State Homeland Security functions. The Director of the Homeland Security Unit has been designated as the Homeland Security Advisor. The Governor's Homeland Security Advisory Council (GHSAC) was formed through Executive Order by the Governor of Vermont on February 20, 2003 and updated in 2007. The Council includes members from the

following communities as appointed by the Governor: Volunteer Firefighters / EMS, Professional Firefighters, Career Fire Chiefs, Vermont State Police, Municipal Police, Sheriffs, Federal Government, Municipal Government, and Private Community Organizations. The Council also includes the following members or their designees: The Adjutant General, Director of Emergency Management, Secretary of Administration, Speaker of the House and a member of the Senate. The Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, the Commissioner of Health, and the Commissioner of Public Safety are ex officio members of the Council. The GHSAC receives updates from the Director of Vermont Homeland Security on local and regional issues and the distribution of federal homeland security grants.

Vermont has developed and continues to utilize the State NIMS Implementation Plan. The Vermont Public Safety Academies are tasked with delivery of ICS training. Vermont currently trains with and utilizes the National Incident Management System developed by FEMA, US Department of Agriculture, National Wildfire Coordinating Group and the National Fire Administration. Training is offered to first and second responders, emergency support personnel and non-governmental organizations who request the training through the two Public Safety Academies. Vermont is currently in the process of training responders in ICS position specific roles. Vermont will utilize the FEMA train the trainer model for ICS position specific training.

The state has created four Public Safety Districts that are geographically aligned with the Vermont State Police Troop Areas. Each District is managed by the respective State Police Troop Commander. Troop Commanders have been designated as the Public Safety District Coordinators. The Public Safety District Coordinators will discharge emergency management powers within their district to ensure that situational awareness is maintained, a communications plan exists, the Incident Command System is utilized, the intelligence function is used, provide support and coordination with local command and implement the state infrastructure protection plan in any multi-jurisdictional response to a major or catastrophic crisis.

Development of Vermont's 2008 State Strategy involved a broad spectrum of stakeholders from emergency response and support organizations throughout Vermont. Additionally, there was representation from support organizations including hospitals, State Agencies, private sector and local and regional emergency planning organizations. These representatives varied in expertise from supervisory, mid-management and executive levels of their respective organizations and serve to represent the stakeholders' viewpoints at the local, district (Public Safety District, EMS District, Local Emergency Planning Committees, Regional Planning Commission), statewide and regional (interstate, international) level. Specific subject matter experts in HAZMAT, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), swift water, Bomb, interoperable communications, intelligence and information sharing, medical surge capacity and mass prophylaxis were represented in our Capabilities Assessment.

The key stakeholders and the representatives mentioned above comprise the Statewide Grants Review Committee and capabilities-based Working Groups. These Working Groups convene to assess Vermont's strengths and weaknesses relating to the 37 Target Capabilities and 8 National Priorities, update the State Homeland Security Strategy based on this Assessment, and assists the Vermont Homeland Security Unit with writing grant applications. Vermont's Homeland Security Unit staff act as facilitators to each group. The Working Groups draft Investment Justifications and submit them to the Vermont Homeland Security Unit for review. Upon review of the application by the Vermont Homeland Security Unit and the Commissioner of Public Safety (SAA), the final application is presented to the Working Groups and the Statewide Grants Review Committee for final approval.

### **Effort**

Established capabilities-based Working Groups consisting of subject matter experts are in place to review and assess Vermont's position relating to the 8 National Priorities and 37 Capabilities.

Interoperable communications continues to be Vermont's number one priority. The Working Group formed to address interoperable communications is known as the Vermont Communications (VCOMM) Board. VCOMM's mission is to assess the State's overall interoperable communication capability, policies and needs; to advise on strategies to create an interoperable, accessible radio system for police, fire and emergency service responders that links local, state and federal agencies in Vermont as well as international and regional agencies in Canada and our neighboring states and to meet mandates from the Federal government.

To date, VCOMM has developed the Statewide Interoperable Communications Plan, developed a draft Standard

Operations Procedure template, funded over \$1.1 million of emergency requests for communications equipment and has made it possible for all of Vermont's first responders to have their radios reprogrammed to utilize the national calling and tactical interoperability frequencies as recommended by the National Emergency Communications Plan.

The next priority identified through the Capability Assessment is to strengthen the state of Vermont's capability to respond to a CBRNE event. Through analysis, this Working Group identified areas of improvement to include the enhancement of training, equipping and exercising Vermont's first responders. Components of this initiative include: Bomb, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), swift water rescue and HAZMAT capabilities. Vermont has identified flooding as the number one hazard throughout the state resulting in a need for enhancing swift water rescue and USAR capabilities.

The third priority identified through the Capability Assessment is to maximize medical surge, mass care and Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) capabilities. This capability-based Working Group identified the need for eight fixed facilities around the state to house regional community medical surge/mass care centers, with the potential to have an animal shelter co-located or within a short distance from the medical surge/mass care centers. The development of these centers will greatly enhance Vermont's ability to respond to and recover from a medical surge and mass care incident as well as the reception of neighboring state's evacuees. Additionally, the creation of an Emergency Medical Service Task Force to respond throughout the region has been identified as a need that will be developed as a part of this initiative.

The fourth priority identified was based on the need for increased planning efforts within Vermont, as well as improved coordination and information flow through all levels of Emergency Management. The Planning Working Group has identified the following focus areas:

- Typing and tracking resources
- Researching an appropriate NIMS compliant credentialing system and method of implementation
- Identifying and outfitting a more suitable State Emergency Operations Center
- Further development and enhancement of local Emergency Operations Plans
- Identify the hazard highlighted by hydroelectric dam Emergency Action Plans within the local Emergency Operations Plan
- Enhancing long term recovery planning
- Enhancing school crisis planning
- Development of a statewide plan for Commodity Points of Distribution

The final priority identified is based on an analysis of Vermont's information sharing, analysis and dissemination capability. This capability is spearheaded by a group of state and local law enforcement representatives, working together to ensure that the right decision makers receive the right information in the appropriate timeframe. This will be facilitated by the Vermont Fusion Center (VTFC). The VTFC undertakes an all crimes approach in producing real-time, accurate and actionable intelligence. The VTFC utilizes a regional intelligence sharing platform that serves Vermont, northeast states and Canada. Vermont's statewide information sharing platform has existed since 1997, is operated by the Vermont Law Enforcement Community and maintained by the VTFC. Ongoing information sharing initiatives will enable all law enforcement agencies within the state to participate in this vital national priority. The Vermont Joint Terrorism Task Force will soon be co-located with the VTFC, increasing the collaboration efforts between the two entities. This collaboration will place demands on the VTFC thereby creating the need for additional staffing resources.

### **Description of Jurisdictions**

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the Governor of Vermont, at the recommendation of the State Terrorism Task Force, approved the four Vermont State Police Troop Areas to serve as the Terrorism Management Districts for planning and response purposes. The Terrorism Management Districts were changed in State Statute in July 2006 to Public Safety Districts, with designated coordinators with emergency management authority within those districts, and to reflect an all hazards approach to threats facing the state.

The Vermont State Police currently coordinates with local emergency response organizations in the state for major incidents. The Public Safety Districts provide 24-hour coverage for all municipalities in the state for major incidents or pre-planned events. The Public Safety District Coordinators will provide assistance in command, control and

communications support for any local Incident Commander in the event of an all hazards incident. The State Police and other State personnel will support the local Incident Commander utilizing a Unified Command structure.

The state of Vermont is divided into 246 local municipalities (cities, towns,). Over one-half of the municipalities contain less than 1,000 residents. Most of the local municipalities have active first response organizations, however their ability to respond to complex incidents involving hazardous materials, such as WMD chemical and biological agents, is limited by a lack of trained personnel and specialized equipment. Local departments rely on mutual aid and/or state agencies for additional personnel and equipment and other necessary resources.

### **Regionalization and Mutual Aid**

Vermont is a small state that relies on mutual aid to respond to all hazards events. This includes intrastate, interstate and international support. Traditionally, an informal system of mutual aid between the first responder communities existed; however, steps have been taken to formalize this mutual aid process. By leveraging the Homeland Security Grants, the first responder community has agreed to a local, and when appropriate, statewide regional mutual aid approach for responses to major events. These mutual aid agreements conform to current state laws that protect first responder's liability and are designed to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from a major incident. Local agencies have established Mutual Aid Agreements (MAAs) with surrounding and bordering states and have maintained them for years. Over the past four years, local agencies have worked toward formalizing MAAs utilizing the NIMS guidance established in 2004. Currently, there are three state laws that allow Vermont to share resources with other states and in one instance with Canada. The first such law is the New England State Police Administrative Compact. This interstate compact allows for the sharing of State Police resources anywhere in New England. This was activated during the Democratic National Convention in Boston in 2004. The second law that allows Vermont to share resources outside the state is the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. This compact allows for the sharing of resources throughout the country and was used extensively during the national Hurricane crisis faced in 2005. The last law that allows Vermont to share resources with neighboring states and Canada is the International Emergency Management Assistance Compact. This law allows Vermont to share resources with all the New England States and six Provinces in Canada.

It will be the responsibility of the Public Safety District Coordinator to direct resources with the State Emergency Operations Center and the Joint Field Office (JFO) to the incident commander during catastrophes. It is state's goal to continue to build capabilities within these districts to support events such as mass decontamination, mass casualty, USAR operations, swift water rescues, and major investigative responses to a WMD/major event. This will dovetail with the National Response Framework should a major event occur that requires a federal response.

Vermont has taken steps forward in the area of regional collaboration with regards to information sharing. The VTFC has been established on a local, state, regional (New England and New York), Federal (FBI, DHS, USCG), and International (Quebec) level. Vermont has solidified this collaboration effort with formal agreements.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Steps**

**1. Goal:** Establish interoperable communications throughout the state of Vermont. VCOMM directly supports the Communications capability through the purchase and deployment of effective communications systems for the first responder community. This goal ensures first responders are equipped, trained and exercised with the tools to effectively communicate during all hazards events.

**1.1 Objective:** Implement phase one, the Lifeline System, of the statewide interoperable communications system and start developing phase two

**1.1.a Step:** Install and utilize the National calling and tactical frequencies in all Vermont first responder mobile and portable radios.

**1.1.b Step:** Secure a contract with a radio communications vendor for the build-out of the Lifeline System to include equipment, engineering costs, factory staging, system installation, microwave installation, performance bond, site development/civil work and training for identified infrastructure.

**1.1.c Step:** Complete infrastructure and technological construction & upgrades for the

development of the Lifeline System.

**1.1.d Step:** Begin the planning and implementation of phase two.

**1.2 Objective:** Implement the DHS approved Statewide Interoperable Communications Plan, including the development and dissemination of a statewide Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) template.

**1.2.a Step:** The VCOMM Operational Committee will draft SOP template.

**1.2.b Step:** Disseminate the Statewide SOP template to all Vermont first responders.

**1.2.c Step:** Conduct seminars to gain feedback from first responders to ensure that the procedures are accurate and will be utilized once finalized.

**1.2.d Step:** Finalize SOP template.

**1.2.e Step:** Integrate SOP into the basic and in-service training at Vermont's two Public Safety Academies.

**1.2.f Step:** Conduct discussion and operations based exercises to validate the SOP.

**1.3 Objective:** Utilization of the National calling and tactical channels for multi-agency response to incidents and events by all first responders.

**1.3.a Step:** The VCOMM Operational Committee will provide training aides to the first responder community on the use of the National calling and tactical channels.

**1.3.b Step:** Train and exercise on the use of these channels.

**1.3.c Step:** The Public Safety Academies will work with the first responder community to provide continuing education and training.

**1.4 Objective:** Identify sustainability funding to maintain the statewide interoperable communications system and to meet future mandates (e.g. FCC narrow-banding compliance by 2013).

**1.4.a Step:** Work with the Vermont Telecommunications Authority, other state organizations related to Communications and IT and the Private Sector to identify and obtain funding opportunities.

**1.4.b Step:** Identify potential local, state and federal earmarks for sustainability.

**2. Goal:** Enhance preparedness planning at a state and local level through the implementation of key activities.

**2.1 Objective:** Continue the development and use of web-enabled disaster management software, DisasterLAN.

**2.1.a Step:** Hold trainings for emergency support function personnel and local officials on DisasterLAN.

**2.1.b Step:** Develop the electronic Local Emergency Operations Plan and Rapid Response Plan Template.

**2.1.c Step:** Complete the resource model for identifying, ordering, tracking and demobilization of resources in DisasterLAN.

**2.2 Objective:** Update the current State Emergency Operations Plans to integrate it with the NRF and to include Dam Emergency Action Plans and long term recovery planning.

**2.2.a Step:** Review dam Emergency Action Plans and ensure that the hazard they represent are appropriately reflected in both state and local Emergency Operations Plans.

**2.2.b Step:** Integrate plans into DisasterLAN.

**2.2.c Step:** Train and exercise personnel on assisting local communities during disasters.

**2.3 Objective:** Initiate development of a statewide system to credential emergency management and response personnel for deployment for intra state, inter-state and international through VEM and EMAC established procedures.

**2.3.a Step:** Determine what resources will be credentialed based on FEMA and EMAC guidance through the state NIMS Working Group.

**2.3.b Step:** The NIMS Working Group will develop a plan on how Vermont implements credentialing.

**2.3.c Step:** Complete the gathering and data entry of resource typing information for use in DisasterLAN.

**2.3.d Step:** Establish a procedure to ensure that updates and maintenance of resource typing information on the DisasterLAN occur.

**2.3.e Step:** Identify what equipment is necessary to credential personnel.

**2.4 Objective:** Establish a baseline of emergency preparedness for all schools throughout the state of Vermont.

**2.4.a Step:** Contract with Vermont School Crisis Planning Team (VSCPT) to conduct preparedness work.

**2.4.b Step:** VSCPT to assess the condition of emergency readiness in all Vermont schools.

**2.4.c Step:** Upgrade Vermont School Crisis Guide with new emergency information and send to all Vermont schools.

**2.4.d Step:** Identify schools in need of immediate Phase One assistance using the Vermont School Crisis Guide.

**2.4.e Step:** Train school and emergency personnel to lend direct support for creating all hazards emergency plans within target schools.

**2.4.f Step:** Establish a continuity of effort through developing school/public safety teams.

**2.4.g Step:** Train and exercise school and emergency personnel.

**2.5 Objective:** Develop a statewide plan for Commodity Points of Distribution (CPOD).

**2.5.a Step:** Local Emergency Planning Committees identify local points of distribution.

**2.5.b Step:** Coordinate with in-state retailers on availability of commodities.

**2.5.c Step:** Train local volunteers on how to operate a CPOD.

**2.5.d Step:** Incorporate each local plan into the statewide CPOD plan.

**2.5.e Step:** Exercise select CPOD around the state.

**3. Goal:** Enhance community preparedness and participation.

**3.1 Objective:** Provide volunteers with the skills necessary to assist in response to all hazards incidents.

**3.1.a Step:** Update the standardized basic Citizen Emergency Response Team training program.

**3.1.b Step:** Recruit, equip and train new Citizen Corps volunteers.

**3.1.c Step:** Continue training of existing Citizen Corps volunteers.

**3.1.d Step:** Provide ICS training to members of the Citizen Corps Program, NGOs and private



sector partners through the Public Safety Academies.

**3.1.e Step:** Support Neighborhood Watch and Fire Corp Programs

**4. Goal:** Strengthen the state of Vermont's Capability to respond to CBRNE events, including USAR, Swift Water, IED and HAZMAT incidents.

**4.1 Objective:** Complete equipping USAR and Decontamination teams throughout the State.

**4.1.a Step:** Acquire equipment to move USAR Team cache.

**4.1.b Step:** Acquire trench rescue equipment for the USAR Strike Teams

**4.1.c Step:** Acquire enhanced equipment and training for HAZMAT/Decontamination response system.

**4.2 Objective:** Enhance the State USAR Task Force and Regional Strike Teams to be fully operational and deployable as two USAR Type III teams.

**4.2.a Step:** Identify funding source for a USAR Project Manager to organize and oversee USAR day-to-day program management, training, personnel records, etc.

**4.2.b Step:** Continue providing USAR strike teams and task forces with identified equipment, training, exercises and logistical support.

**4.2.c Step:** Continue delivering necessary training to the regional strike teams to respond to Rope and Confined space incidents at the technician level and Trench incidents at the operations level

**4.2.d Step:** Step: Continue training of two Type III teams at the operational level of structural collapse.

**4.3 Objective:** Continue to implement ICS training in accordance with the Vermont NIMS Implementation Plan. Continued WMD, USAR, IED and other CBRNE/WMD training as required by federal regulations and/or to meet the needs of new national priorities.

**4.3.a Step:** Continue funding of the Public Safety Academy training coordinator positions (one at the Fire Academy and one at the Police Academy).

**4.3.b Step:** Conduct capabilities assessment to determine training needs.

**4.3.c Step:** Continue programmatic funding for training.

**4.4 Objective:** Develop a mechanism and process to increase the level of retention of members throughout Vermont's First Response Agencies.

**4.4.a Step:** Identify funding source to complete this objective.

**4.4.b Step:** Conduct an assessment regarding current retention levels, turnover rate and reasons for turnover.

**4.4.c Step:** Identify mechanisms to retain key personnel.

**4.4.d Step:** Implement the mechanisms throughout the State.

**4.4.e Step:** Catalog the results at quarterly intervals.

**4.5 Objective:** Increase the ability of Vermont's First Responders to safely handle emergency situations.

**4.5.a Step:** Develop plans that address Responder Safety and Health personal protective equipment (e.g., maintenance, assignment, integrity of PPE).

**4.5.b Step:** Provide position-specific training for personnel to support Responder Safety and Health (e.g., safety officers, Hazmat personnel).

- 4.6 Objective:** Increase the level of written Standard Operating Procedures and plans throughout Vermont.
  - 4.6.a Step:** Develop written standard operating policies and procedures internal to the state Bomb Squad.
  - 4.6.b Step:** Develop written standard operating policies and procedures internal to the USAR team
  - 4.6.c Step:** Develop written standard operating policies and procedures internal to response organizations.
  
- 5. Goal:** Provide needed community based medical surge and mass care services for both general and at-risk populations and support the need for domestic animal sheltering. This will incorporate the ability to effectively provide triage and pre-hospital treatment.
  - 5.1 Objective:** Identify two facilities in each of the four Public Safety Districts with the ability to be utilized as large capacity shelters and med-surge centers
    - 5.1.a Step:** Confirm initial four facility locations.
    - 5.1.b Step:** Begin outreach to local communities who will host the initial four facilities for increased participation in planning by local governmental representatives and private sector representatives in Vermont's four Public Safety Districts.
    - 5.1.c Step:** Confirm final four facility locations.
    - 5.1.d Step:** Begin outreach to those local communities who will host the final four facilities for increased participation in planning by local governmental representatives and private sector representatives within Vermont's four Public Safety Districts.
    - 5.1.e Step:** Complete written Standard Operating Procedures for the four facilities.
  
  - 5.2 Objective:** Develop staffing for each of the facilities.
    - 5.2.a Step:** Continued volunteer recruitment and task assignments for individuals and organizations to support the eight facilities.
    - 5.2.b Step:** Conduct training in each of the four Public Safety Districts on a multi-discipline and multi-agency basis for both the general and at-risk populations and domestic animal sheltering to address medical surge and mass care capability and capacity.
  
  - 5.3 Objective:** Equip each of the facilities with appropriate Mass Care, Medical Surge and Animal Shelter supplies.
    - 5.3.a Step:** Identify funding sources for equipment.
    - 5.3.b Step:** Acquisition of equipment for facilities (auxiliary power capability, shelter trailers) and community based medical surge supplies/equipment.
  
  - 5.4 Objective:** Exercise each facility.
    - 5.4.a Step:** Conduct a workshop and tabletop exercise within each facility and one functional exercise in each of the four Public Safety Districts to identify challenges in planned response to Medical Surge and Mass Care Incidents.
  
  - 5.5 Objective:** Establish Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Task Force Response.
    - 5.5.a Step:** Continue planning this initiative through the statewide Working Group.
    - 5.5.b Step:** Develop a "white paper" outlining the development of the EMS Task Force.

- 5.5.c **Step:** Seek support of state governmental agency for sustainment.
  - 5.5.d **Step:** Assess and evaluate equipment needs.
  - 5.5.e **Step:** Recruit team leaders for Task Forces.
  - 5.5.f **Step:** Develop procedures for activation and implementation of Task Force Response.
  - 5.5.g **Step:** Train and exercise Task Forces.
- 5.6 **Objective:** Collaborate with the Northern New England Metropolitan Medical Response Team (NNEMMRS) and Southern Vermont Medical Reserve Corps (SVMRC) on regional initiatives.
- 5.6.a **Step:** Vermont Emergency Management & Vermont Homeland Security Unit will participate in NNEMMRS planning meetings.
  - 5.6.b **Step:** NNEMMRS will be activity engaged in the development of operational procedures for Vermont's eight regional Medical Surge & Mass Care Centers.
  - 5.6.c **Step:** NNEMMRS & SVMRS will be utilized as initial staffing for Vermont's regional centers when they are stood up.
6. **Goal:** Improve the ability to identify patterns and indicators of criminal and terrorism-related activity in the state to enable successful detection, prevention and enforcement actions.
- 6.1 **Objective:** Enhance the ability of the VTFC to collect, analyze and disseminate intelligence information to Federal, State, local and private sector security partners.
- 6.1.a **Step:** Identify funding source to acquire and train additional Intelligence Analysts to improve information sharing including the management of web based information sharing platform. (Automated Trusted Information Exchange) ATIX.
  - 6.1.b **Step:** Certification of all Intelligence Analyst personnel in the Field Intelligence Analysis Training and other required standards.
  - 6.1.c **Step:** Enhance interagency intelligence analysis, sharing and dissemination through the acquisition of this Analyst and implementation of ATIX.
  - 6.1.d **Step:** Enhance awareness of services available through the VTFC to the emergency responder community.
  - 6.1.e **Step:** Continue to host and participate in intra-state, inter-state and international Information Sharing planning meetings.
  - 6.1.f **Step:** Enhance the information sharing platform by conducting regional planning meetings
  - 6.1.g **Step:** Evaluate current process of reporting and investigating Suspicious Activity Reports and enhance the statewide process to ensure the following:
    - a. all Suspicious Activity Reports (SAR) are investigated immediately by local law enforcement agencies
    - b. all SAR reports are reported immediately to VTFC and JTTF if appropriate
    - c. all SAR reports disseminated vertically and horizontally to the appropriate agencies
    - d. develop new statewide policy on SARs
- 6.2 **Objective:** Enhance the ability for local law enforcement officers to share information and intelligence with the VTFC by equipping local law enforcement with Mobile Data Terminals.
- 6.2.a **Step:** Continue working with the established Law Enforcement Working Group to utilize existing criteria to prioritize and expand the distribution of Mobile Data Terminals.
  - 6.2.b **Step:** Continue to identify and prioritize through a needs assessment the agencies that are in critical need of Mobile Data Terminals and distribute to those local agencies through the law enforcement Working Group.

- 6.2.c Step:** Train and exercise law enforcement officers in information sharing, the use of Mobil Data Terminals, IED recognition/awareness, and WMD response.
  - 6.2.d Step:** Through the VTFC conduct local, regional and international planning meetings to share information.
  - 6.3 Objective:** Support the newly formed Joint Terrorism Task Force.
    - 6.3.a Step:** Evaluate the needs of the Task Force to ensure they have adequate equipment necessary to perform their function upon moving to the Law Enforcement Support Center
    - 6.3.b Step:** Purchase equipment identified in the assessment
    - 6.3.c Step:** Support attendance at planning meetings and training opportunities appropriate for their mission
    - 6.3.d Step:** Support all over-time for investigations above the current allotment from the Department of Justice.
- 7. Goal:** Implement the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) in the state of Vermont.
- 7.1 Objective:** formally adopt the November 2008 Vermont Infrastructure Protection Plan (VIPP)
    - 7.1.a Step:** Maintain and build upon the existing Infrastructure Protection (IP) Working Group consisting of representatives from various sectors.
    - 7.1.b Step:** Maintain the state's critical infrastructure/key resources (CI/KR) database and begin the transition of this data to Automated Critical Asset Management System (ACAMS).
    - 7.1.c Step:** Expand upon the CI/KR data and make site specific information available to Law Enforcement and Emergency Management in accordance with Protected Critical Infrastructure Information act (PCII).
    - 7.1.d Step:** Train appropriate personnel on how to conduct vulnerability assessments and how to use ACAMS for the tracking of all CI/KR information across all sectors.
    - 7.1.e Step:** Conduct Vulnerability Assessments for CI/KR, beginning with those determined to be most critical.
    - 7.1.f Step:** Train appropriate personnel on how to improve the protection of Critical Infrastructure using the principles of the Vermont and the National Infrastructure Protection Programs.
    - 7.1.g Step:** Reduce site specific vulnerabilities through effective identification of equipment or actions that address security gaps as identified through vulnerability assessments.
    - 7.1.h Step:** Complete Law Enforcement Response Plans and Buffer Zone Protection Plans as needs are identified through vulnerability assessments.
    - 7.1.i Step:** Share security information across sectors through implementation of web based Automated Trusted Information Exchange (ATIX) platform. This is being done in accordance with Vermont's ATIX implementation plan.
    - 7.1.j Step:** Maintain established CI/KR databases and vulnerability assessments through use of Automated Critical Asset Management System (ACAMS).
    - 7.1.k Step:** Identify a funding source and hire a Protective Security Advisor (Planner) to work within the Fusion Center to maintain RISS ATIX, and maintain liaison with the 17 critical infrastructure.
    - 7.1.l Step:** Maintain IP Working Group in order to ensure continued maintenance of stakeholder cooperation and information sharing.

#### Progress Evaluation Plan

HSU will provide oversight for implementation of the state's strategic plan. HSU has assigned all programmatic monitoring to its Grant Managers on staff. This monitoring will include the local first responder's evaluation of the State Strategy's Implementation progress. During these monitoring visits, staff will examine how the grants impact the local, district, region and state areas relating to all hazards. Staff will identify strengths and areas for improvement relative to the State Strategy and its implementation. Staff will provide feedback to the HSU Director for input into the GHSAC quarterly executive meetings to ensure that the State Strategy is on track.

HSU will conduct quarterly Working Group meetings to ensure that goals and objectives for each Working Group are implemented. Additionally, HSU staff will have the responsibility of making revisions to the Working Group's focus as needed in order to meet those designated goals in the State Strategy. This review will be shared with the GHSAC for coordination.

The lessons learned from exercises and actual incidents and events within the state will be compiled and distributed to all first response organizations in the state. HSU will coordinate with the State Fire and Police Academies to provide WMD, ICS and IED training for all response personnel. Additionally, the results of exercises and training will be evaluated quarterly.

HSU will provide outreach information regarding the state's strategic plan to all local and state officials and the public at large. HSU posts the Strategy on the HSU web site at [www.vthomelandsecurity.org](http://www.vthomelandsecurity.org). Additionally, HSU will provide information on the web site concerning sub-grants, training announcements, Homeland Security sponsored exercises and Vermont's NIMS Implementation Plan.

The Commissioner of Public Safety meets regularly with the Governor and Lt. Governor to review the implementation of the state's Homeland Security Strategy to ensure that all levels of government work towards common goals. The Governor has created a Homeland Security Advisory Council (GHSAC) that is chaired by the Lt. Governor. The mission of the Governor's Homeland Security Advisory Council is to assess the State's overall homeland security preparedness, policies, and communications and to advise on strategies to improve preparedness and response. The Commissioner of Public Safety and Director of HSU meet regularly with the GHSAC to seek advice on implementation of the strategy, as well as to inform Council members on measures taken to improve homeland security.

HSU has established a Statewide Grants Review Committee to provide advice regarding fair and equitable distribution of sub-grant funds to local fire, police and emergency medical organizations. The Committee is composed of key stakeholders from state and local first response organizations. Committee members represent career and volunteer fire departments, state and local police, state and local emergency management, local emergency planners and both paid and volunteer emergency medical organizations.

HSU staff will provide regular progress reports, including completion of the Initial Strategy Implementation Program and Bi-Annual Strategy Implementation Program to FEMA staff, providing detailed information regarding grant expenditures and proposed future homeland security measures.

HSU will coordinate with local first response organizations, key state staff, the Governor's Office and key federal agencies in Vermont to ensure that all goals and objectives listed in the State Homeland Security Strategy are met in the most efficient manner and to the fullest extent possible. This coordination will occur through the Statewide Grants Review Committee.

HSU will coordinate with key local, state and federal partners to ensure that the local and state responders in Vermont receive funding and support to conduct planning, training, exercises and to acquire appropriate preparedness equipment. HSU will work with local and state officials and private sector representatives to ensure that critical infrastructure sites in Vermont are adequately protected.