

2016-18 Executive Progress Report

Commonwealth of Virginia
Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security
Department of Fire Programs

At A Glance

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs is committed to providing the highest level of professional development and statewide risk reduction efforts.

Staffing 70 Salaried Employees, 0 Contracted Employees, 0 Authorized, and 12 Wage Employees.

Financials Budget FY 2017, \$41.23 million, 5.70% from the General Fund.

Trends

Legend ↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, → Steady

Key Perf Areas

↑ VFIRS Participation

↑ Pro-Board registrations

Productivity

↑ Certifications printed online

Legend

↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening, → Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov

Background and History

Agency Background Statement

Virginia has been on the cutting edge of technology in training firefighters since 1969 when the Fire Services Training section was initially established within the State Department of Education. The responsibility for fire services training was later transferred to the Division of Fire Services Training under the State Fire Commission, and later moved to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP), after the Agency was established, and the State Fire Commission was abolished. Throughout this period, agency leaders were instrumental in the development of the first national firefighter professional qualifications standards, and guided Virginia through the process of becoming one of the first states to have its fire-training programs fully accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro-Board). An accreditation the Agency still holds today.

Today, VDFP is deeply committed to improving fire protection in the Commonwealth and continuing the long-held tradition of achieving excellence through training. Virginia enjoys national prominence for a training system that offers one or more levels of competency certification in every discipline covered by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. The Virginia system is unique in providing training and certification without cost to students or fire departments.

Information Technology: In an effort to bring superior customer services to stakeholders, the agency has an internal Information Technology (IT) Division which manages agency applications. VDFP further receives IT Services from Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) and its Partnerships (ITP) to perform day-to-day business functions.

- **Future Projects/Upgrades:** VDFP is currently working on redeveloping the Fire Services Training Record System (FSTRS) in an effort to make it a full web based application for better access to internal and external customers.
- **Image Trend:** The Agency is pursuing efforts to obtain this web-based record management that will enable it to efficiently meet stakeholders' needs while also streamlining operations. Status is Pending

Major Products and Services

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs provides:

- **Funding** - The Agency provides financial assistance to Virginia's fire services through the distribution of the Aid-to-Localities (ATL) grant program as well as through various other grant programs (i.e. Live Fire Training Structure grant).
- **Professional Development** - As a nationally-accredited fire service training entity in Virginia, the Agency provides training programs for both

career and volunteer emergency responders throughout the Commonwealth.

- Research - As the managing agency for the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS), the Agency is responsible for data collection, analysis, and information reporting to Virginia's fire services, Virginia's policy makers, and nationally to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The Agency also utilizes the data it collects to both identify and promote fire services best practices.
- Operational Support & Technical Assistance - As a Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) agency, VDFP provides both operational and technical assistances to communities in need during emergencies of all types. This includes both support in the Virginia Emergency Operations center (VEOC) and in-the field.
- Fire Prevention Inspections – The State Fire Marshal's Office [SFMO] has the responsibility of protecting life and property for the citizens of the Commonwealth through the utilization of inspectors to complete fire safety inspections; by conducting building plans reviews for fire safety measures; and by conducting construction inspections for fire safety systems in all state buildings.

VDFP also provides technical assistance and consultation services to Virginia's localities through the completion of fire and emergency medical services (EMS) studies. The Agency, in collaboration with the Virginia Fire Services Board, Department of Forestry and Office of Emergency Medical Services performs Fire & EMS Studies at the request of a locality to examine various operational and organizational issues within the locality.

Customers

Customer Summary

Virginia's fire service is comprised of approximately 69.4 percent volunteer fire departments; 19.9 percent combination (volunteer and career) departments; and 12 percent career departments. Based on comments from the fire services, there is a decline in the number of volunteers, but an increase in service expectations created by local preparedness needs. Volunteer recruitment and retention and the ability to provide training to this customer base is an area of focus for the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP). VDFP recognizes that without volunteer fire service personnel, many communities could not provide emergency services protection. The Agency continues to monitor this trend within the fire services to ensure training is accurately meeting the needs of our diverse customer base.

One way in which the Agency has modified its training delivery to accommodate the needs of the volunteer fire service is the development of on-line training. The Agency currently offers several courses on-line through an on-line educational portal that allows students to attend training based on their schedule and learning pace. The Agency believes this modified learning environment is working well and will continue to develop and expand this product.

The demand for inspections and technical assistances from the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) also continues to see a steady growth. The Agency, has therefore, been working with localities to encourage their adoption of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code to allow localities the capabilities of completing inspections. Additionally, the State Fire Marshal's Office is working to develop programs that will expand its technical assistance and training programs for code officials, design professionals, contractors, building owners and other clients. It is VDFP's intent that these efforts will enhance the uniform and accurate application of codes and standards statewide, which will provide increased safety statewide.

Customer Table

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Resident	Citizens of the Commonwealth	8,001,024	8,001,024	Stable
Local Government Employee	Fire and emergency service providers, career and volunteer, throughout the Commonwealth	79,844	80,000	Increase
Aged	Adult Care Residences inspected	207	227	Stable
Business and Finance	Nightclubs	20	22	Stable
Child	Child Care facilities inspected	510	561	Stable
Construction	Sets of construction documents reviewed for conformance with applicable codes and standards	1,839	2,022	Increase
Consumer	Certification of Pyrotechnicians	188	207	Increase
Consumer	Responses to requests for technical assistance on content, intent, and application of building	36	40	Stable
Employer/ Business Owner	Permits issued for the use, manufacturing, storage and sale of explosives	69	76	Increase
Health Care	Inspection of Private hospitals	28	31	Stable
Health Care	Life Safety Code inspections of Health Care Facilities (nursing home and other health care)	2,321	2,553	Increase
Higher Education Institutions	Inspection of State-owned dormitories	594	653	Increase
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Cities, Counties and Towns in the Commonwealth	324	324	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Cities, Counties, and Towns in the Commonwealth	323	323	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Fire Departments in localities across the Commonwealth, eligible to report into VFIRS	575	575	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Inspection of Schools	1,509	1,660	Increase
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Inspections in response to requests, complaints or hazardous conditions	304	334	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Local fire departments	759	759	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Local fire departments receiving grant funding	759	759	Stable
State Agency(s),	Inspection of State Correctional Facilities	414	455	Stable
State Agency(s),	Inspection of State-owned critical infrastructure and key resources	96	106	Increase
State Agency(s),	Inspections of state construction projects	1,021	1,123	Stable

Finance and Performance Management

Finance

Financial Summary

VDFP's non-general funding comes from the Fire Programs Fund, a special revenue fund collected from a 1% levy on five lines of insurance (home, farm, marine, fire and miscellaneous property). Seventy-five percent of that funding is directed back to local governments to support the fire services through the Aid-To-Localities (ATL) entitlement grant program. The remaining twenty-five percent of the Fire Programs Funds is utilized for the Agency's operating budget and for the delivery of fire service training.

The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is funded from the General Fund and special revenue funds (special revenue funds include: registration of reduced ignition propensity cigarettes (RICP) through the fire standard compliant cigarette registration program; permit fees for the manufacturing, storage, use, and sale of explosives and fireworks; and certain inspection-related fees).

Fund Sources

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2017	FY 2018
0100	General Fund	\$2,368,475	\$2,370,100
0200	Special	\$929,155	\$929,155
0218	Fire Programs Fund	\$30,194,977	\$30,213,365
1000	Federal Trust	\$250,000	\$250,000

Revenue Summary

The Agency receives special revenue funds through it's general fund for the following State Fire Marshal's activities.

- One of the key responsibilities of the State Fire Marshal's Office is the inspection program for the reduced ignition propensity cigarettes (RICP) program. This inspection program is done in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and the State Fire Marshal's Office receives special revenue funds through the fire standard compliant cigarette registration program.
- The State Fire Marshal's Office also charges various permit fees related to the manufacturing, storage, sale, and use of explosives and fireworks within the Commonwealth. These special revenue funds are received through the Blasters and Pyrotechnician certification programs.
- The State Fire Marshal's Office also provides contractual inspection services to several state government and private entities to include the inspection of college dormitories, correctional facilities, and health care facilities.

The Agency receives special revenue funds through it's non-general funds for the following activities.

- Through the operations of the agency bookstore, which sells training materials to Virginia's fire and emergency services personnel.
- The Agency also receives less than 1% of the it's non-general funding from various federal grants to provide training services to local fire and emergency services personnel.
- The Agency's non-general fund also receives modest revenues from our general business activities, which include activities such as: bad check reimbursement fees; debt collection and car pool reimbursement.

Performance

Performance Highlights

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) mission is to enhance public safety by providing supplemental funding, training, fire prevention and life safety education, along with statewide fire code enforcement. VDFP strives to ensure that training meets the needs of Virginia's fire and emergency services personnel. Virginia is seen as a leader in the delivery of National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro-Board) certified training. Pro-Board certified training is important to the Agency and those receiving the training because of the portability of that training certification within the state and to other states.

Training portability is becoming more crucial for the fire service because of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Personal Identity Verification-Interoperability/First Responder Authentication Credential (PIV-I/FRAC or FRAC) standard. The FRAC standard developed a standard, interoperable, secure, role-based identity management technology that is vital to coordinated regional emergency response, such as the response to the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon in 2001.

The Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) provides local fire departments and governments, as well as state and federal agencies, valuable information about the fire and emergency related responses in the Commonwealth of Virginia. VFIRS participation is reported annually on a calendar year basis. The current calendar year's data is reported as a running total.

An important performance indicator for the State Fire Marshal's Office is the number of inspections conducted annually as it relates to the safety of the citizens of the Commonwealth. This is a new measure that includes inspections related to the Life Safety Code, the Statewide Fire Prevention Code, state construction, and Critical Infrastructure/Key Assets (CI/KA). Inspection numbers are reported annually on a calendar year basis.

Selected Measures

Measure ID	Measure	Alternative Name	Estimated Trend
96074402.003.001	Number of fire departments participating in the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS).	VFIRS Participation	Improving
96074403.002.001	Number of certifications issued annually in compliance with national accreditation standards.	Pro-Board registrations	Improving
96074403.002.002	Number of Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) Attendance Certificates printed via the Agency's on-line training database.	Certifications printed online	Improving
96076401.001.001	Percentage of Aid-To-Localities Entitlement funds disbursed.	Percentage of Aid-To-Localities Entitlement funds disbursed.	
M960SA12010	Total number Critical Infrastructure and Key Assets (CIKA) of inspections conducted annually by the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) inspectors.	Total number Critical Infrastructure and Key Assets (CIKA) of inspections conducted annually by the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) inspectors.	

Key Risk Factors

Several factors will have a significant impact on the agency over the next several years:

- Fire Service Evolution – Virginia's fire service has seen a decline in purley fire related incidents with a continual shift towards rescue and other fire-related incidents. This is partly due to better building and fire prevention codes as well as increased promotion of fire and life safety awareness programs. However, as incident types shift and technology advances, fire service operations and tactics must change as well. As a training agency, VDFP must adapt training and delivery methods to meet the ever changing needs and demands for Virginia's fire service personnel.
- SFMO Inspections – The SFMO provides inspection services for those localities that have not adopted the Statewide Fire Prevention Code. Additionally, the SFMO provides consultative services to all localities regarding the Statewide Fire Prevention Code. There has been an increase in the number of inspections and requests for consultation; however, the current fee structure does not provide adequate funding to maintain staffing levels. Additionally, budgetary reductions have caused staffing to be reduced. In order to maintain adequate staffing and service delivery an updated fee structure is needed.
- Workforce – Another factor that presents a risk for agency operations is staffing. The agency is authorized for a full-time equivalent level of 72 positions. In the next five years, 30 percent of VDFP's full time employees will be eligible to retire with unreduced benefits. In addition, VDFP faces a high turnover rate for field positions. As a result, the department expects to hire a large number of new employees over the next several years and will need to invest in extensive training in order to maintain or improve service and productivity levels.

Agency Statistics

Statistics Summary

The following statistics illustrates the comprehensive level of services as provided by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

- In FY12, the Agency successfully distributed \$22.2 million dollars in Aid-to-Localities (ATL) grant funding. For FY13, the Agency will distribute \$23.6 million dollars in Aid-to-Localities (ATL) grant funding. (Localities have two fiscal years to collect their ATL grant funding.)
- In FY13, the Agency offered 1,966 training programs. As a result, the Agency issued 14,299 Pro Board nationally accredited training certificates for FY13. A complete listing of the VDFP training programs issued in FY13 can be found in the below table.
- In calendar year 2012, the State Fire Marshal's Office completed 10,937 inspections. These inspections included:
 - 96 (or 100%) of all critical infrastructure and key assets (CIKA) facilities/buildings in the Commonwealth;
 - 947 Life Safety Code inspections;
 - 7,939 Fire Prevention inspections; and
 - 1,995 State Construction inspections.
- In calendar year 2012, the Agency accurately captured 97.5% of Virginia's fire incidents in the voluntary Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS).

Statistics Table

Description	Value
Number of Funded* Training	207
Number of Non-funded** Training	318
Number of Partially Funded Training	350
Number of Reimbursable Training	33
Total VDFP Pro Board Registered Certificates (since January 1, 2008)	103,296
*Funded training are provided at no cost to the locality.	0
** Non-Funded courses are training programs the Agency does not provide financial support.	0

Management Discussion

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

VDFP's focus is on improving services, reducing costs, providing research and analysis, and promoting safety in the Commonwealth. In an environment with changing incident responses and advances in technology, VDFP strives to provide training that meets the needs of the fire service through multiple delivery methods. In order to accomplish this, the Agency has embraced the Commonwealth's online Knowledge Center (KC) system. In utilizing the KC, the agency has adapted 16 courses and 51 module-type trainings that fire and emergency services personnel can take online, anywhere, and at anytime.

Additionally, the agency is utilizing data from the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) to modify and adopt training that mirrors the "real life" fire service issues and needs. This provides the Agency the ability to adequately identify areas of need and fund training programs to improve fire service delivery and safety.

Information Technology

The Agency maintains the Fire Service Training Record System (FSTRS) and the State Fire Marshal's Office database as out-of-scope databases. As vital databases to the service delivery of the Agency, the proper programming and management of these two databases remains a paramount priority for the Agency.

Workforce Development

As a Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) Agency, the Agency's roles and responsibilities have been rapidly changing to encompass the Commonwealth's preparedness needs. As such, the Agency continues to focus its hiring needs for certain positions on a prerequisite set of skills that focus on emergency management. Although this has modified our Agency's hiring practices for some positions, the Agency feels it is able to adequately recruit and retain qualified staff. This requirement will continue to be a factor that impacts the Agency's recruitment and retention.

The methodology and curricula for training the fire service in Virginia is likewise changing and as a result, these requirements include a greater number of man-hours than has previously been utilized. As stated previously, this creates challenges throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia as related to staffing levels, recruitment and retention.

Additionally, with the increasing number of buildings and localities requiring the resources of the State Fire Marshal's Office, a greater number of man-hours and resources must be utilized. This in turn also creates challenges for the Agency.

Physical Plant

The Agency's headquarters office is located in Glen Allen, VA and houses multiple branches including the Administration Branch, Finance Branch, Training & Technical Services Branch, Training & Operations Branch, the State Fire Marshal's central office and Division 1 office. The Agency's headquarters is comprised of four (4) office buildings located within the same office complex. The Agency's division offices are located in six geographical areas, which include Division 2 – Orange; Division 3 – Farmville; Division 4 – Chilhowie; Division 5 – Fort Monroe; Division 6 – Roanoke; and Division 7 – Fairfax.

All of the Agency's office space is leased from either another state agency or private property management company. To improve customer service as well as operational efficiency, the regional offices of the State Fire Marshal's Office were combined with the Division Offices in FY2011 and FY2012. Further, the Agency has acquired lease spaces to collocate staff with other services used by fire and emergency services personnel. For instance, the Office of Emergency Medical Services is located next to the Agency headquarters office in Glen Allen and the Division 5 – Fort Monroe office. Similarly, the Division 7 – Fairfax office is collocated within the regional offices of the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia State Police.