

## Emergency Support Function #4 FIREFIGHTING

### Lead Agencies

- Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP)
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

### Support Agencies and Organizations

- Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)
- Virginia Marine Resource Commission (VMRC)
- Virginia State Police (VSP)
- Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME)

### Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #4, as part of the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT), supports the detection and suppression of wildland, and structural fires.

### Scope & Applicability

ESF #4 monitors and supports firefighting activities, including the detection and suppression of fires on all private, state, and federal lands and provides resource support as needed.

### Policies

- All agencies assigned responsibilities within this ESF will develop and maintain the necessary plans, standard operating procedures, mutual aid agreements, and model contracts to successfully accomplish their tasks.
- VDFP and VDOF will jointly coordinate the acquisition of personnel and resources to supplement the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) as needed.
- Short-term response for initial attack to fire incidents will be handled at the local level.

- VDOF will participate in the national wildland fire response system and use national training and performance standards consistent with key management principles of NIMS for incident management.
- ESF #4 conforms to national standards and policies to address three priorities:
  1. Life safety (for the public and response personnel).
  2. Incident stabilization.
  3. Property conservation consistent with the tenets of the Incident Command System (ICS).

### Organizational Structure

VDFP is responsible for the Structural Fire Service. VDOF is responsible for the Wildland Fire Service as well as for wildfire prevention and suppression throughout the Commonwealth.

Coordination and support of local fire suppression organizations is accomplished through VDOF, VDFP, and VDEM.

At the regional and division level, the Fire Chief of each organization will name a liaison representative to the other organizations and

establish a positive working relationship between organizations.

### **Concept of Operations**

#### 1. Structural

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs is charged with assisting localities and local fire (fire-rescue) departments to achieve and sustain satisfactory fire prevention and suppression capabilities through direct support for training, serving as a clearing house for information, and assisting with the provision of appropriate supplies needed to conduct local training initiatives.

VDFP also maintains a log of key firefighting resources to assist localities, and supports VDOP during wildland fire events.

#### 2. Wildland

Pursuant to § 10.1-1105, 10.1-1139, the State Forester shall supervise and direct all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the Commonwealth; and shall take such action as is authorized by law to prevent and extinguish forest fires.

The State Forester will coordinate support for local fire fighting operations occurring in forest and grasslands as appropriate. In fulfilling this responsibility, it is assumed that some structural fire fighting resources will be necessary in rural areas as a supplement to the operations of wildland firefighting.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

#### Virginia Department of Fire Programs

- Provide liaison as needed with local fire services.
- Provide fire and specialized rescue support to incidents as needed or requested.

- Provide specialized training for structural fire suppression and advanced incident management as appropriate.

#### Virginia Department of Forestry

- Coordinate and perform wildland fire suppression and response statewide.
- Coordinate and perform forest and forest fire law related enforcement activities statewide, including wildland fire origin and cause investigation and all related criminal and civil actions related to this effort.
- Develop specialized response resources and crews according to capabilities including: dozer crew, chain saw crew, fireline hand crew, equipment repair, other specialized equipment, transportation, etc.
- Provide specialized training for wildland fire suppression and advanced incident management as appropriate.

#### Department of Conservation and Recreation

- Provide available personnel for fire suppression operations. Develop firefighting hand crews or chain saw crews and crew leaders with training in basic fire control, chain saw use and safety.
- Provide crew boss training for personnel who will supervise crews.
- Provide law enforcement officers for traffic control and security measures and assist in fire investigations.
- Provide available equipment to support suppression operations.
- Assist in repair and maintenance of fire tools and equipment as resources allow.

## Department of Military Affairs

- Coordinate state military forces and resources employed in emergency fire suppression operations under the direction of VDOF.
- Provide military support of: back-up communications; area security and traffic control; heavy equipment, such as bulldozers and water supply; aerial reconnaissance; aerial cargo delivery; and water buckets.
- In selected Guard units, provide personnel for firefighting hand crews, dozer crews or chain saw crews and crew leaders with emergency onsite training in basic fire control, chain saw use and safety as necessary to support a response mission.

## Virginia Department of Transportation

- Provide personnel to operate heavy equipment in fire suppression operations.
- Develop and provide firefighting hand crews, dozer crews, chain saw crews, and crew boss/leaders.
- Provide equipment; such as chain saws, bulldozers and water tankers.
- Provide ground transportation for fire personnel.
- Provide back-up field communications.
- Provide mechanics for repair and support of fire equipment.
- Provide fuel to support fire fighting operations.

## Department of Aviation

- Provide air transportation and support, fire detection, and reconnaissance operations when requested.

## Department of Corrections

- Provide personnel, to include inmates within security limitations for support of fire suppression operations.

## Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

- Provide personnel to support fire suppression activities to include law enforcement personnel for traffic control and security
- Provide equipment for transportation of fire fighters (to include 4X4 vehicles, boats, etc.).

## Virginia Marine Resource Commission

- Provide boats, fixed winged aircraft, and four-wheel drive vehicles for transportation of fire fighters and equipment.
- Provide law enforcement personnel for traffic control, security and fire investigation.

## Virginia State Police

- Coordinate evacuation with VDOF, local governing officials and law enforcement personnel.
- Provide back-up field communications and emergency radio repair.
- Provide command post support.
- Assist local law enforcement agencies in providing security, traffic control, and law enforcement at evacuation centers and fire areas.
- Provide rotor and fixed wing aircraft for fire suppression and reconnaissance operations and transportation of fire personnel.
- Assist in the investigation of fires.

Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy

- Provide personnel to support fire suppression operations.
- Provide transportation for personnel who will supervise crews.
- Provide maps showing locations of gas or oil wells, gathering pipelines and associated facilities.

**Authorities & References**

*Authorities*

- Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws
- Code of Virginia, § 10.1-1105, 10.1-1139.

*References*

- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) 4.6.3: The emergency operations/response plan shall identify and assign specific areas of responsibility for performing essential functions in response to an emergency or disaster. Areas of responsibility to be addressed include: firefighting/fire protection.