

Secure & Resilient Commonwealth Panel

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Approved Meeting Minutes

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November 13, 2019

West Reading Room- Patrick Henry Building

1111 East Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23219

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m

Attendees:

Brian Moran, Chairman and Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security

Daniel Carey, Secretary of Health and Human Resources

Ryant Washington, Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security

Shawn Talmadge, Assistant Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security

Jon Check, Raytheon

Colonel Rusty McGuire, Virginia National Guard

John Bell, Superintendent of the Norfolk Juvenile Detention Center

Rob Cary, Chief Deputy Commissioner of VDOT

Michael Hamlar

Elizabeth Leffel

Dr. Jonathan Newmark

Dr. M. Norman Oliver

Dr. Andrew Ramsey

Jim Redick, Director of Emergency Management, City of Norfolk

Col. Gary Settle, Superintendent Virginia State Police

Dr. Jeff Stern, State Coordinator of Emergency Management

Cathie Hutchens, for Attorney General of Virginia

Executive Secretary Karl Hade, Supreme Court of Virginia

Marci Stone

Welcoming Remarks

Secretary Brian Moran, Chair, welcomes group back after their last meeting in March and instructs members to introduce themselves

Member Introductions

All Panel members introduced themselves.

Adoption of Minutes

Panel Member Dr. M. Norman Oliver brings up the motion to adopt minutes. Dr. Jeff Stern seconds it. The minutes were adopted.

Homeland Security Vision Updates- Shawn Talmadge, Assistant Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security provided an update on the Homeland Security Programs.

Cyber Security - Additional funding has been allocated for equipment, assessment, and studies on cyber security. The Homeland Security Division and the Department of Elections conducted the first ever joint cyber training focusing on preparation for elections and monitoring at the state level. There is still a need to review and update the cyber security strategy.

Interoperability – 6.5 million dollars were allocated in the Governor’s budget for COMLINC along with four full-time positions to provide training exercises and updates. These positions will be housed by the Virginia State Police. The Statewide Interoperability Plan is in its final draft and the FirstNet network is still expanding.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) - Four regional workshops were held around the state on Unmanned Aircraft Systems. The first ever counter and detection UAS workshop was conducted jointly with the FAA and FCC. After the workshop was complete, reference of best practices website was created and a DOA working group was formed.

Port Activities - Port recovery exercises, led by the US Coast Guard, were conducted leading up to the first recovery plan regarding activities outside the channel.

Update from the Virginia State Police

Virginia Violent Crime Report

Lt. Keenon Hook (VSP) was introduced to present the Virginia Violent Crime Report. The report represents events that occurred, instead of arrests or convictions. Virginia is ranked fourth nation-wide in murder rates, and is ranked first lowest in violent crime among neighboring states, as well lowest compared to like populations and population densities. In Virginia, crime against property is trending down, crime against people is stagnant, and crime against society is trending up. Extortion and blackmail is up 225% over the last five years, possibly due to a small data set and largely influenced by crimes like sextortion and revenge porn - both which have proliferated recently. In all, property crime categories saw the largest decrease.

Commonwealth Threat Assessment Update

First Sergeant Austin White of the Virginia State Police was introduced to present the Commonwealth Threat Assessment Update. In narcotics, heroin and fentanyl proved most common while drug derivatives of fentanyl also increased. Methamphetamine remains in the top five of lab tests. A new threat has presented through counterfeit THC vape cartridges which contain harmful chemicals and are causing health problems nationwide. A continued threat of domestic and foreign terrorist groups is misrepresentation, such as fake credential use, phishing and fraud. The white supremacist groups American Identify Movement and Patriot Front have been censored on Facebook and Twitter and were forced to move to other platforms. These groups have moved to flash demonstrations which increase criminal activity and make it harder for law enforcement to investigate. Propaganda from these organizations is expected to increase. The US Department of Homeland Security has added the threat of white supremacist terrorism to their list of priorities. Foreign terrorism has seen an increase in activity through calls for violence against the US after the targeted killing of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. ISIS has lost most of its territory but continues to inspire homegrown extremists. Gang activity has been increasing since

July – focused on graffiti and assaults. MS13 has overtaken the bloods as largest group. Local gangs have allied with the 18th Street Gang, increasing the potential for conflict. Gang recruitment is on the rise and is focused on younger groups. Outlaw motorcycle gangs have lessened activity in VA but have had events in surrounding states. Instances have been recorded of street gangs and motorcycle gangs working collaboratively – specifically around drugs. Cyber-attacks have occurred in the form of sustained DDoS attacks which blocked Amazon infrastructure websites in October. Online misinformation has increased through paid individuals who produce believable fake articles and deep fakes. In a Virginia School District, ransomware was discovered on its servers. The school district had cyber insurance so they were able to recover their systems but were without access to them for a period of time. The Fusion Center now has a new email: vfc@vfc.vsp.virginia.gov

Health and Human Resources Sub Panel Update – Gun Violence

Bob Mauskapf from the Virginia Department of Health provided context regarding how mass shootings should be viewed with a public health perspective as well as an update on overall gun violence trends in the Commonwealth.

Rosie Hobron, of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), was introduced to discuss gun violence trends from OCME data. Guns, motor accidents, and drugs are the three most common unnatural causes of death. Guns account for the second leading cause of unnatural death and are used 2/3rds of the time for suicide. Virginia has higher rates than the national average for suicide, but maintains lower rates in homicide. Of the 1200 suicides in 2018, 56% used a firearm. Of the 425 homicides in 2018, 72% were with a firearm. Most of the gun-related suicides and homicides occur with handguns. Suicides using guns are higher in rural areas and are mostly men, mostly white and older on average. Homicide victims tend to be mostly black, younger men.

Panel Member Dr. Daniel Carey asked if, when including all types of suicide, do men still commit suicide at a higher rate? Rosie Hobron responded yes.

Heather Board of the Virginia Department of Health, was introduced to discuss the relationship between public health and gun violence. Gun violence is a public health crisis and is mainly committed by males in their 20s. There has been a 20% increase in gun violence over 5-year period. Assault and unintentional harm are most often the cause of injuries from gun violence. Self-harm follows suit and is mostly committed by white males from the ages of 24-54 and is quite prevalent in Southwest Virginia. Unintentional gun violence tends to mostly affect younger, black males and is more prevalent in Central Virginia. In order to enact violence prevention, the conversation must be reframed beyond certain forms of violence. Guns have the potential to amplify levels of violence. Understanding this violence requires attention paid to multiple factors. Victims of violence are likely to be subject to multiple types of violence and people who are violent in one context are likely to be violent in others. Prevention efforts must address multiple levels of violence at the same time and introduce protective factors into communities.

Assistant Secretary Talmadge requested that information on gun violence be sent to the Health and Human Resources subpanel for review and requested they draft recommendations to present

at the next meeting. He also suggested that a draft charter be produced for a statewide organization to study gun violence in the form of a task force or subpanel.

Disaster Response Update

EO 41 and EO 42 Update, Dr. Jeff Stern

Hurricane season is almost over and while it was a busy one in the Atlantic, Virginia did not suffer the brunt of many hurricanes. Dr. Jeff Stern was reappointed to the FEMA council. A FEMA empowered task group was enacted to help examine ways that states and localities can build their own disaster response capacities without needing federal funding – this might be a precursor for what the future looks like as federal funding has continually lessened each year. A one-page emergency declaration process was adopted. The EOP was updated with an emphasis on the responsibilities of cabinet members and agencies. The staff that supports ESF in EOCs was also outlined. Specific threats will be included into the updated annexes that will be added to the EOP and the potential addition of intelligence in the EOC will be assessed. The updated EO 41 focuses on preparedness across state agencies along with all workforce employees and their families. Agencies which have emergency responsibilities will have pre-disaster contracts in place, especially regarding the Department of Social Services and sheltering. The contracts must be federally compliant for reimbursement. Debris removal contracting working group will help coordinate new FEMA rules. State agencies in EOC must have a liaison officer based on EO 41. They must have direct access to agency head and be able to make decisions on behalf of the agency.

Vote on Local Emergency Commission Planning Members

Dr. Jeff Stern brought forward a motion, seconded by Jim Redick, to appoint several individuals on the Local Emergency Commission. Jerry Ford from Montgomery County was appointed along with four individuals from Cumberland County.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Closing Remarks

Secretary Moran thanked all for their participation and commitment to the Secure and Resilient Panel. He looks forward to the upcoming General Assembly Session and will report back on next meeting. Full panel meeting date will likely be scheduled in April.