



VERMONT FIRST RESPONDER GUIDE TO AN ACT OF TERRORISM



2009

INTRODUCTION	2
SECTION 1 - TERRORISM	3
SECTION 2 - THREAT/RISK ASSESSMENT	4
SECTION 3 - TERRORIST THREAT NOTIFICATION	7
UNITED STATES HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY	7
THREAT LEVELS AND VERMONT NOTIFICATION.....	8
SECTION 4 - OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES	9
ORGANIZATION OF STATE, DISTRICT AND LOCAL TERRORISM RESPONSE RESOURCES	9
INITIAL TERRORISM RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL FIRST RESPONDERS	10
FIRST RESPONDER SPECIFIC GUIDELINES	11
FIRST RESPONDERS AND CRIME SCENE AWARENESS	12
COMMAND AND CONTROL	13
COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FIRST RESPONDERS	14
VCOMM - A GUIDE TO INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS.....	16
FIRST RESPONDER RESOURCES.....	17
<i>State Rapid Assessment and Assistance Team (SRAAT)</i>	17
<i>State Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Team</i>	18
<i>Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)</i>	18
<i>Vermont Fusion Center (VTFC)</i>	18
<i>The Vermont National Guard</i>	18
<i>State Police Specialized Response Units</i>	19
<i>Federal Terrorism Response Coordination</i>	20
SECTION 5 - LOGISTICAL SUPPORT	21
VERMONT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	21
STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (SEOC)	21
SECTION 6 - WMD/SUSPICIOUS THREATENING SUBSTANCE INCIDENTS	25
SECTION 7 - RESPONSE TO BOMB THREATS	27

INTRODUCTION

The safety and protection of the citizens and visitors in the state of Vermont is a primary responsibility for many first responder agencies including law enforcement, fire departments and emergency medical services. The continuous threat of a terrorist event in the United States makes it imperative that Vermont's first responders be prepared to perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

The Vermont Department of Public Safety (DPS) is tasked with working with federal, state and local agencies on strategies to effectively respond to an act of terrorism in the state of Vermont. Recent changes in federal emergency preparedness plans, including various Presidential Directives regarding national preparedness and state and local implementation plans for emergency preparedness, are examples of how federal, state and local governments must adapt to the ever changing world of terrorism. Vermont first responders have received training in the Incident Command System as mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5 and Vermont Governor James Douglas' Executive Order mandating the adoption of NIMS across all emergency response disciplines.

The state of Vermont has limited capabilities to respond to a terrorist event. Therefore, local, state and regional response resources will play a critical role during the initial stages of response. In July of 2006, under Title 20, the Vermont State Legislature passed a law creating Public Safety Districts in the state of Vermont and authorized the appointment of Coordinators for each of the districts. The Commissioner of Public Safety designated the State Police Troop Commanders as the Public Safety District Coordinators. Additionally, the Public Safety District Coordinators will direct the newly created Regional Coordination Centers (RCC). The RCCs were created to assist the State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) in coordinating resources to our local communities at a time when the SEOC becomes overwhelmed during a major catastrophe.

In October 2001, DPS published the *Guidelines for Emergency First Responders to an Act of Terrorism in Vermont* in order to deal with the rapidly evolving emergency response issues following the World Trade Center and Pentagon incidents. These Guidelines have been updated in 2009 and are designed to provide first responders with the guidance to respond effectively to terrorist threats.

SECTION 1 - TERRORISM

Terrorism is defined as the unlawful use of force or violence against a person or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives. We know the following about terrorism:

- Terrorist events may occur with little or no warning and may involve a variety of tactics that are not limited to bombing, hostage taking, chemical, biological or nuclear incidents.
- The fact that an emergency is the result of a terrorist event may not be clear during the initial phases of crisis response and an event may not be determined to be a terrorist event for hours, days or even weeks after the event.
- A terrorist attack will more than likely overwhelm local and regional response capabilities.
- The local and state emergency response organizations must develop tactical and technical response capabilities to deal with the wide range of terrorist threats.
- No single agency at the local, state or federal level possesses the authority and expertise to act unilaterally on the issues that could arise while responding to an act of terrorism in Vermont.
- Adequate capability may or may not exist to alert or warn the public of impending terrorist activities.

SECTION 2 - THREAT/RISK ASSESSMENT

The assessment of current terrorist threat levels in the state of Vermont is a continuing task of multiple federal, state and local agencies. The Vermont Fusion Center is a critical component of this ongoing assessment to assemble, analyze and disseminate information throughout the State. The threat/risk assessment identified the following concerns relating to terrorism:

- Vermont has an extensive border with Canada, to include three bodies of water.
- This border continues to provide easy access for criminals to gain entry into the United States.
- Canada reports that many organized crime and terrorist organizations are known to be located within its country all of which pose threats to the US.
- Vermont's interstate highway system provides easy transportation to American population centers located in New York City, Boston and Washington D.C.
- Terrorist cells may currently be operating within the United States waiting for an opportunity to conduct their terror operations.
- Terrorist cells may try to destroy critical infrastructure in an attempt to cripple government operations. Terrorist cells continue to obtain or are attempting to gain control of Weapons of Mass Destruction to be used against population centers within the United States.
- Terrorist cells are accessing readily available information found on computer based programs to assist them in developing their terrorism plans.

Chemical /Biological/Radiological/Nuclear/Explosive (CBRNE) Threats

Based on the terrorist incident threat assessment conducted for Vermont, the potential risk for a terrorist incident is low but would have high consequence. Terrorist acts may involve arson, shootings and bombings. Although highly unlikely, these attacks may include the use of chemical and biological agents, radiological dispersion devices or nuclear detonations.

According to experts from local communities and state and federal government, a CBRNE related terrorist attack would quickly overwhelm a community's or state's emergency response resources. A large, covert CBRNE related attack would represent a public safety and health catastrophe that could result in tens of thousands of victims. If first responders suspect that a CBRNE related attack has/is taking place while responding to the scene of an incident, personal protective equipment measures should be employed. If the attack is covert in nature, first response resources may be tasked with additional responsibilities as directed by Unified Command as well as the Vermont Department of Health (VDH). Those responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, pharmaceutical stockpile security, health lab security, enforcement of quarantines, hospital security,

traffic control at strategic entry/exit points into a suspected contaminated area and crowd control.

Chemical

Indications of a possible chemical incident include:

1. Prior warning or threat.
2. Explosions that disperse mists, gases or oily film.
3. Presence of spray devices or pesticide/chemical containers.
4. Unexplained mass casualties without obvious trauma.
5. Casualties exhibit nausea, breathing difficulties, convulsions or other symptoms of poisoning.
6. Unexplained odors.
7. Dead birds, fish or other animals and lack of insects in the incident site and downwind.

Biological

Although the public health community would be heavily involved in a response, other key agencies such as police, fire and EMS would have significant response roles. If a terrorist were to overtly use a package or device containing only a small amount of a biological agent inside an enclosed building, the incident response might be consistent with that of a hazardous materials (HAZMAT) response. A covert biological attack may not be identified for hours, days or weeks and will more than likely be identified by the public health community.

Biological agents are living organisms (bacteria, viruses) or toxins (poisons produced by plants or bacteria) that tend to be more lethal per weight than chemical weapons. These agents can be released as an aerosol spray or introduced into the water or food supply with widespread implications. These agents may be naturally occurring or genetically engineered to be resistant to various environmental conditions or available medications.

General indicators of possible biological agent use include:

1. Large epidemic with an unusual number of ill or dying.
2. Particularly high volumes of victims complaining primarily of respiratory symptoms that are severe and are associated with an unprecedented mortality rate.
3. The cause of the infection is unusual or impossible for the particular region.
4. Multiple, yet simultaneous epidemics (i.e. animals and humans with the same illness).
5. Dead animals of multiple types are encountered.
6. The delivery vehicle of the agent is identified.
7. Prior intelligence reports or claims by aggressors of a biological warfare attack.

Radiological and Nuclear

There are millions of potential sources of radiation material worldwide that can be used in “Dirty Bomb” or Radiological Dispersal Devices (RDD). Although RDD is not likely to cause mass casualties, the fear of radioactivity and the fact that an area may be rendered useless by contamination for a very long time, make the RDD a favorable weapon of terrorists.

An RDD attack may cause casualties, economic damage and potentially public panic. The impact would depend on many variables such as meteorological conditions, type and amount of radiological material, duration of exposure and method of dispersal.

If terrorists were to detonate a nuclear bomb, casualties would be enormous. Estimates for a small nuclear bomb in Manhattan are more than 100,000 immediate deaths and comparable numbers of subsequent deaths from the effects. Even a small nuclear device detonation would cause massive destruction and devastation and would require the implementation of multiple response plans.

Explosives

Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) are a very common terrorist tool being used to conduct bombings around the world. The potential of this type of device being used is extremely high as material to build IED is readily available to most people. The fact that these devices can be transported and utilized in conjunction with hazardous materials, such as gasoline tankers, makes the use of IEDs a very popular terrorist tactic. First responders must be educated on the various types of IED and instructed on proper protocols in dealing with them.

SECTION 3 - TERRORIST THREAT NOTIFICATION

United States Homeland Security Advisory

Vermont participates in the US Homeland Security Advisory System, which has matured during the past four years to disseminate information regarding the risk of terrorist acts to the homeland. This system provides warnings in the form of graduated “threat conditions” that would increase as the risk of the threat increases. From the lowest threat to the highest threat, the levels/colors and suggested protective measures are as follows:

GREEN – low threat level

- refine and exercise preplanned protective measures
- ensure personnel receive training on department or agency specific protective measures
- regularly assess facilities for vulnerabilities and take necessary steps to reduce them

BLUE – guarded threat level

- check communications with designated emergency response or command locations
- review and update emergency response procedures
- provide the public with necessary information

YELLOW – elevated threat level

- increase surveillance of critical locations
- coordinate emergency plans with nearby jurisdictions
- assess further refinement of protective measures within the context of the current threat level

ORANGE – high threat level

- coordinate necessary security efforts with armed forces or law enforcement agencies
- take additional precaution at public events
- prepare to work at an alternate site with a dispersed work force
- restrict access to essential personnel only

RED – severe threat level

- assign emergency response personnel and pre-position specially trained teams
- monitor, redirect or constrain transportation systems
- close public and government facilities

- increase or redirect personnel to address critical emergency needs

Threat Levels and Vermont Notification

The Department of Public Safety Homeland Security Unit will have the primary responsibility of providing current terrorist threat information to Vermont's first responders and critical infrastructure partners, predominately through an e-mail system. In addition to this system threat notification may take place via a number of other warning systems. These systems include, but are not limited to, the Vermont Emergency Management Emergency Alert System, NLETS/VLETS, mass facsimile and phone contact with local government officials.

The Vermont Homeland Security Unit, in partnership with the Regional Information Sharing System, continues to build out a new information sharing platform. Automated Trusted Information Exchange (ATIX) is the new information sharing platform that allows access to bulletin boards for emergency postings and updates. The Regional Information Sharing System Partner is providing any first responder organization, NGOs, and private industry access to ATIX free of charge.

SECTION 4 - OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Organization of State, District and Local Terrorism Response Resources

State Terrorism Response

The Governor designated the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety as the Lead Law Enforcement Officer responsible for Vermont's terrorism response planning and coordination. The Department of Public Safety is the lead state agency in charge of crisis management. Crisis management involves, but is not limited to, coordination of local/regional/state response resources, terrorist threat assessment and investigation, event identification, preserving life and minimizing risk, event containment, event mitigation, preventing secondary casualties and emergency public information.

Once an emergency has been identified or suspected to be a terrorist event, federal terrorism response will take place. The Department of Public Safety shall coordinate with local law enforcement, FBI and the Joint Operations Center (JOC) to ensure Unified Law Enforcement Command.

District Terrorism Response

The Governor recognized the need for coordinated local and regional terrorism response planning. The state of Vermont is divided into four Public Safety Districts. These districts are the same as the Vermont State Police Troop Districts. The Troop Commanders of these districts have been designated by the Commissioner of Public Safety as the Public Safety District Coordinators (PSDC). The PSDC has the responsibility of coordinating all district terrorism response resources. The PSDC can be contacted through the Public Safety Answering Points as follows:

A Troop Command	802-878-7111
B Troop Command	802-334-8881
C Troop Command	802-773-9101
D Troop Command	802-875-2112

Local Terrorism Response

Nothing in this plan diminishes the responsibility of local emergency response agencies in planning for and responding to a terrorist event. Effective terrorism response begins at the local level. It is incumbent upon each emergency response organization within a community to ensure that they properly plan, train, equip and exercise their first responders.

Initial Terrorism Response Considerations for all First Responders

In order to ensure the safety of Vermont's emergency service responders and the citizens of Vermont, the scene of the emergency must be quickly and accurately evaluated to determine the threat to the public and first responders. It is recommended that all first responders treat every call as if it is a potential crime scene until determined otherwise. Once the event has been accurately identified, quick and decisive actions by emergency responders can mitigate and isolate existing hazards.

The following actions should be considered when responding to the scene of an emergency:

- Safely respond
- While en route note suspicious persons or vehicles that may be leaving the area. Make note of registration #'s, vehicle and personal descriptions. Notify law enforcement of information.
- Approach scene slowly and do 360 degree scan of area (Size it Up)
 - Identify the nature of the incident and evaluate the threat
 - Look for people and objects that seem out of place for the location and time of the call- if it looks suspicious it probably is
 - Look for indicators of CBRNE events (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives)
 - debris field
 - mass casualty
 - responder casualties
 - severe structural damage
 - dead animals and vegetation
 - infrastructure systems failure
 - unusual odors, colors of smoke and vapor clouds
- Treat affected area as a crime scene
- Deny entry for other than life safety measures
 - Identify and separate witnesses
- Notify Supervisor of emergency
- Take personal protective measures
- Life/Property/Risk Assessment
- All first responders should be aware of the threat of a possible secondary device when responding to a suspected terrorist event. If at all possible, hasty perimeter sweeps should be conducted to ensure the safety of all first responders.
- Establish proper perimeters/zones (HOT/WARM/COLD)
- Initiate Incident Command System (ICS)
- Establish a Command Post

- Identify Incident Commander
- Evaluate need for additional response resources
- Secure safe response routes for additional responding resources
- Identify staging areas for the incident
- If appropriate, notify adjacent communities re: potential hazard

First Responder Specific Guidelines

The scope of first responder duties and responsibilities during terrorism response is immense. The following is a list of recommended guidelines to be used by first responders. These guidelines are not intended to reproduce or replace existing response protocols within each response discipline, but are intended to facilitate the thought process during the initial phases of terrorism response.

Emergency Medical Services

- Identify hazards if they are present
- Use appropriate self-protection measures
- Notify local hospitals of potential large number of incoming patients
- Provide pre-hospital medical triage
- Treat affected patients utilizing existing EMS protocols
- Initiate or participate in the Incident Command System
- Never transport contaminated patients. All potentially contaminated victims should be decontaminated prior to being transported, including hydro-carbon products (gasoline/diesel fuel etc.)
- Treat as a mass casualty incident

Law Enforcement

- Isolate/secure the scene
- Ensure supervisor is notified
- Evaluate the scene for security concerns
 - ongoing criminal activity
 - consider victims to be possible terrorists
 - secondary devices
 - additional personnel needed or mutual aid
- Initiate and participate in the Incident Command System
- Secure scene perimeter/ Inner-outer
- Treat as a crime scene
- Preserve evidence
- Identify and separate witnesses
- Assist with criminal investigation

- Participate in traffic control
 - staging areas
 - entry/egress points
- Assist in the control and isolation of patients
- Assist with evacuation of victims and potential victims

Fire Service

- Isolate/secure the scene
- Evaluate scene safety/security
- Execute emergency response functions according to existing department protocols
- Limit overhaul
- Initiate or participate in the Incident/Unified Command System
- Assist in risk assessment for rescue & fire operations
- Rescue victims
- Extinguish fire
- Stage incoming units
- Support law enforcement during incidents regarding terrorist threat such as standby with fire equipment, traffic control, etc.
- Activate and coordinate with HAZMAT Teams
- Provide or support onsite decontamination as trained
- Assist in denying entry
- Request additional resources if needed

FIRST RESPONDERS AND CRIME SCENE AWARENESS

First responders must balance the duties and responsibilities of their jobs while recognizing that they are working in and around a crime scene. While the preservation of life and property take precedence, first responders must be alert to evidence of criminal activity and take every precaution not to destroy it. This section covers things to be aware of when working in/around a crime scene.

Factors to consider at crime scenes:

1. Is the scene safe? Personal protection and safety of yourself and others is the #1 priority.
2. Proceed SLOWLY! Don't rush into the scene. What are you seeing, hearing, smelling, etc? What are you not seeing, hearing, smelling that normally you would? Look for anything or anybody suspicious.
3. Secure and freeze the scene. Set up appropriate perimeters or hot/warm/cold zones. Limit access to the scene to those persons who have an absolute and official necessity to enter.

4. Is a protective sweep warranted by law enforcement for any suspects?
5. Injured persons- While this is a priority, first responders must be cognizant of potential evidence.
6. Searching for injured persons must be done in an orderly fashion, keeping in mind you are at a crime scene.
7. Law enforcement should establish a crime scene log.
8. If there is obvious evidence present, point this out to law enforcement and emergency personnel who can usually perform their duties without damaging or altering evidence.
9. Do not touch anything unless exigent circumstances exist.
10. Do not smoke, eat or drink at scene.
11. Do not use telephones at scene (i.e. residential telephone).
12. Do not use bathrooms or sinks.
13. Do not cover or touch bodies of deceased persons.
14. Do not walk in blood or other bodily fluids.
15. Do not turn light switches on/off.
16. Do not allow unnecessary personnel into scene. Law enforcement must only allow EMS personnel necessary to tend to victims.
17. All first responders must use one or limited paths of travel into and out of crime scenes.
18. Persons found inside crime scenes should be relocated to the outer perimeter. Identify and separate witnesses as necessary.
19. Law enforcement must attempt to identify all persons at scene.
20. All first responders should make law enforcement aware of any potential evidence they see.
21. Approaching victims outdoors - Take the least likely path of travel to the victim always looking where you step.
22. In hallways and doorways walk to the left or right rather than through the center.
23. Do not take photographs.
24. Attempt to identify bystanders who are taking photographs.
25. Do not speak to media. This should be done by the designated Public Information Officer. Investigators will decide what information is to be released.
26. First responders should make notes of how they gained access to the crime scene. Was the door ajar? Unlocked? If the first responder had to move anything or destroy evidence to perform their duties please document this and let law enforcement know.
27. Secure pets at scene so animals don't destroy evidence.

Command and Control

The Governor of Vermont has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the State standard for incident management through executive order. The key to effective scene management is the quick and efficient implementation of the Incident Command System. Response plans should be coordinated at the local and regional level to ensure effective deployment of response resources and to establish local/regional command structure guidelines. Throughout the incident, local response agency commanders will remain in operational control of their response resources but will fall under the operational responsibility of the local Incident Commander. Agencies are encouraged to utilize Unified Command whenever practicable.

Communications Resources Available to First Responders

As emergency situations develop, the local Incident Command Post or communications center may become overwhelmed with communications traffic on local response frequencies. In this case, a local Incident Command Post may request the following assistance from the Department of Public Safety:

- **PSAP-** the Department of Public Safety has four Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) in Derby, Rockingham, Rutland and Williston; one in each Public Safety District. Each is equipped with additional communication resources, equipment and staffing to facilitate the flow of communication during an emergency. In the event that local communications centers are unable to manage the volume of communications traffic, the local Incident Commander should contact the appropriate Troop Commander within the affected district to request communication assistance to include dispatch services, telecommunications and additional staffing at the PSAP.
- **Critical Incident Dispatch Team** – This team of highly trained communications specialists can deploy to assist the local/unified/regional command structure during a terrorist event. This team has training in critical incident dispatching and will assist the affected dispatching center with communication operations. This team may deploy to a local communications center, PSAP or may arrive to support the Incident Command System in the Mobile Command Post. Team members are located in each Public Safety District to allow for timely response. Upon notification, these teams will be capable of being operational within one hour. Requests to activate this team should be made through the Public Safety District Coordinator.
 - **Mobile Command Post-** there are currently multiple mobile command posts located throughout the state of Vermont available to assist with communication during an incident. A mobile command post can serve as a stand alone command and control center or to supplement existing command and control resources.

The following agencies have mobile command posts:

- Brattleboro Police Department
- Bennington County Sheriff's Department
- Middlebury Police Department

- Lamoille County Sheriff's Department
- Newport Fire Department
- Grand Isle Sheriff's Department
- Barre City Police/Fire Departments
- South Burlington Fire Department
- St Albans City Police Department
- Vermont State Police (Two: One North- One South)

VCOMM - A GUIDE TO INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS

What is VCOMM and what does it do?

The Vermont Communications (VCOMM) Board is comprised of representatives from a wide variety of first responder organizations. Fire, EMS, law enforcement and other sharing partners are represented. The VCOMM web page contains a list of these representatives. Current VCOMM objectives are:

- Assess the State’s overall interoperable communications capability, policies and needs.
- Advise on strategies to create an interoperable, accessible radio system for fire, EMS and law enforcement first responders linking local, state and federal agencies in Vermont with each other and surrounding jurisdictions.
- Provide guidance in meeting federal mandates for communications planning and FCC narrowbanding initiatives.

For more information about VCOMM, or to find VCOMM representatives, go to: www.dps.state.vt.us/vcomm

Nationwide Narrowband Interoperable Communications Channels

VHF

Label	Frequency	Tx CTCSS	Rx CTCSS	Description
VCALL	155.7525	156.7 hz (5A) (Required)	156.7 hz (5A) as follows:	National Calling
VTAC 1	151.1375		Portables must have “monitor” button or use carrier squelch on receive.	National Tactical
VTAC 2	154.4525		Mobile radios must not decode CTCSS when “off hook”. Must have “monitor” button or use carrier squelch on receive.	National Tactical
VTAC 3	158.7375			National Tactical
VTAC 4	159.4725			National Tactical VT Fire R IT

UHF

Label	Frequency	Tx CTCSS	Rx CTCSS	Description
UCALL	453.2125	156.7 hz (5A) (Required)	156.7 hz (5A) as follows:	National Calling
UTAC 1	453.4625		Portables must have “monitor” button or use carrier squelch on receive.	National Tactical
UTAC 2	453.7125		Mobile radios must not decode CTCSS when “off hook”. Must have “monitor” button or use carrier squelch on receive.	National Tactical
UTAC 3	453.8625			National Tactical

Use of Interoperable Channels

Calling channel: The calling channel shall be used to contact other first responding agencies or one of the eight Public Safety Answering Points. The calling channels may also be used for setting up tactical communications for specific incidents.

Tactical channels: The tactical channels are to be used for the coordination of activities between different agencies in a mutual aid situation.

Dispatch Centers and Interoperability: The PSAPs will be capable of communications on V-CALL and U-CALL channels to provide a lifeline capability throughout the state.

Who determines when to use U-Call/V-Call and U-Tac/V-Tac?

- An Incident Commander or Unified Command determines whether or not to use these channels and which ones will be used.

What are U-Call/V-Call and U-Tac/V-Tac?

- U-Call and V-Call are shared national calling channels and U-Tac and V-Tac are shared national tactical channels. These channels are for **multi-agency** responses similar to Fire Ground and Mutual Aid channels. The U-Tac/V-Tac frequencies will allow interoperability between all agencies that have these frequencies in their radios. The U-Call/V-Call frequencies will allow direct communication with a PSAP while responding to any region in Vermont.

When can these frequencies be used?

- During any **multi-agency** response. Note: The PSAPs will not have the ability to monitor the U-Tac/V-Tac frequencies.

Where can I use these frequencies?

- Anywhere in the state of Vermont. In the future you will be able to use these frequencies in our neighboring States & Provinces for interoperability or for “lifeline” requests.

Why would I want to use these?

- They will alleviate the congestion often encountered at an incident by having multiple channels available for use.

Note: When the Incident Commander, Unified Command or Communications Officer decides to communicate on these frequencies, the area PSAP should be notified that the U-Tac/V-Tac frequencies are being utilized.

First Responder Resources

State Rapid Assessment and Assistance Team (SRAAT)

SRAAT is a state asset designed to support local agencies during a terrorist event. SRAAT has personnel from critical emergency response fields that can deploy to the jurisdiction to assist the local Emergency Operations Center. This team is capable of providing immediate access to information regarding regional and state emergency response resources. Contact Vermont Emergency Management when requesting this asset.

State Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Team

The State HAZMAT response team is capable of responding to any HAZMAT related incident within thirty minutes. The team shall be requested through Vermont Emergency Management.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)

The State of Vermont has 11 USAR Strike Teams strategically located throughout the state to enable timely response to incidents. USAR specializes in technical rescues in confined space, trench rescue and light building collapse rescues. The Teams can also provide information to Incident Commanders on the structural integrity of a building. Two of the Strike Teams can also provide swift water rescue capabilities. The Teams shall be requested through your local mutual aid agreements or Vermont Emergency Management when requesting assets for the two Type 3 USAR Task Forces (one north and one south).

Vermont Fusion Center (VTFC)

The VTFC assists all law enforcement officers within the Vermont community, region, and nationally in their efforts to prevent, detect and prosecute crime. The Vermont Fusion Center mission is to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence information regarding both potential criminal activity and ongoing criminal activity in Vermont and other jurisdictions that may adversely affect the state of Vermont. Additionally, it is the mission of the VTFC to promote the safety of all responders. The VTFC may be accessed through your local law enforcement agency or the Public Safety District Coordinators.

The Vermont National Guard

The Vermont National Guard will play a critical role in both crisis and consequence management during a terrorist incident.

The following is a list of support resources the Vermont National Guard can provide to assist local/regional first responders:

- Air/ground transportation for specialized response units (e.g. Tactical Services Unit, Search and Rescue, Crowd Control, K-9)
- Law enforcement support – Army MP and Air Force Security Forces

- Air medical evacuation
- Ground medical evacuation vehicles
- Tactical vehicles (armored)
- Rescue vehicles (ambulances)
- Engineer equipment
- Administrative equipment (busses/cars)
- Secure staging areas for first responders
- Emergency medical care
- Assist with mortuary responsibilities
- Traffic control
- Emergency shelters
- Mobile cooking facilities
- Water trailers
- Alternate command and control locations

Civil Support Team – The Civil Support Team is a response unit that will support civilian authorities during a terrorist incident.

During a terrorist incident, National Guard assets should be requested through the Public Safety District Coordinator of the affected area who will facilitate the request and deployment of the assets and will serve as the direct line of communication with the Vermont National Guard. The PSDC will make the request through Vermont Emergency Management.

State Police Specialized Response Units

The Vermont State Police have specialized teams trained in crisis management that may be called upon to assist the local Incident/Unified Command. A local Incident/Unified Command in need of one or more of these teams should make a request through the local barracks Commander to the Public Safety District Commander. The specialized response units are as follows:

- Tactical Services Unit
- K-9 Unit
- Hostage Negotiation Unit
- Bomb Squad
- Wilderness Search and Rescue Unit
- Scuba Team
- Critical Incident Stress Management Team
- Crowd Control Team

Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) Strike Team:

The MMRS Strike Team is an asset that can be activated with any of the above specialty teams. They provide advanced medical capability that includes surgeons and other emergency medical professionals. They are activated by Vermont Emergency Management and bring mobile resources that can be used as emergency medical facilities.

Mass Casualty Incident Trailers:

The thirteen Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) trailers are strategically located throughout the four Public Safety Districts. These MCI trailers are hosted by local EMS departments. The trailers have been placed in locations with departments capable of delivering at least one trailer within 60 minutes to an incident anywhere in Vermont. Each trailer has the ability to support a minimum of fifty patients. The trailers are equipped with an array of Basic and Advanced Life Support equipment resources that would be likely to be outstripped in an MCI incident. This equipment includes spine boards, oxygen delivery systems, bandaging materials, splints and similar patient care materials. The responding trailers have inflatable shelters with heaters. The ability to respond to a mass casualty incident is critical. Whether it's a manmade or natural disaster, the ability to provide immediate aid to a large group of ill or injured patients is a top priority for the state.

Federal Terrorism Response Coordination

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been designated as the lead federal law enforcement agency in charge of investigation during a terrorist event. Should a terrorist incident take place in Vermont, the FBI will implement a federal crisis management response. The FBI will designate a federal on-scene commander to ensure that Federal assets are deployed to Vermont as needed to assist in the response to a suspected or actual terrorist event.

As the lead Federal agency in charge of the investigation, the FBI will manage the investigation from the Joint Field Office within the Joint Operations Command (JOC). The JOC acts as the focal point for the strategic management and direction of on-site investigations and intelligence activities, identifies local and state requirements, and prioritizes and coordinates the federal terrorism response as it relates to investigations. The local FBI field office will deploy a Crisis Management Team that will establish the JOC at a location to be determined by the FBI. The Public Safety District Coordinator will be responsible for interfacing with the JOC in an effort to effectively manage local, state and federal response resources. Just as in the case of the Incident Command/Unified Command process, under the guidance of the FBI, command and control of responding agencies will remain with the designated officials of the agencies providing the resources.

SECTION 5 - LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Vermont Emergency Management

Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) is responsible for the coordination of statewide resources when the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) activates to assist local communities during any terrorist incident.

State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)

Depending on the scope of the event(s), representatives from the following agencies operate from the SEOC to coordinate agency specific resources. These are known as State Support Functions (SSF):

- SSF1 TRANSPORTATION
- SSF2 COMMUNICATIONS
- SSF3 PUBLIC WORKS/ENGINEERING
- SSF4 FIREFIGHTING
- SSF5 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
- SSF6 MASS CARE, FOOD & WATER
- SSF7 RESOURCE SUPPORT
- SSF8 HEALTH/MEDICAL SERVICES
- SSF9 SEARCH/RESCUE
- SSF10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
- SSF11 AGRICULTURE/NATURAL RESOURCES
- SSF12 ENERGY (DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE)
- SSF13 LAW ENFORCEMENT
- SSF14 PUBLIC INFORMATION

Additionally, a Vermont Army National Guard representative would staff the State Emergency Operation Center.

Public Safety District Coordinator (PSDC)

The state of Vermont is divided into four Public Safety Districts in geographical alignment with the Vermont State Police Troop areas. The PSDC in each District is the Troop Commander. The Public Safety District Coordinator (Troop Commander) shall be responsible for the following:

1. Situational Awareness

- A. Captains will maintain situational awareness of all major hazards at all times in their Districts
- B. Captains are expected to report all emerging events in their PSD through surveillance and assessments

2. Respond to Major Events within PSD (20VSA3(c))

- A. Captains will respond to or cause others to respond to emerging or major events within their PSD.
 - B. Captains will be responsible for situational awareness and information flow to appropriate personnel.
 - C. Captains will be prepared to respond, if appropriate, to the event to assist in the following capacity:
 - 1. Coordinate State Resources
 - 2. Assist with ICS/UC
 - 3. Ensure that a Communications Plan has been established
 - 4. Establish Situational Awareness for appropriate personnel (SEOC, SSF #13)
 - 5. Establish Intelligence Link (if appropriate)
 - 6. Make available all hazards plans through DisasterLAN
- 3. Incident Command/Unified Command (20VSA3(c))**
- A. Captains will be responsible for ensuring that all major events within their PSD are managed by NIMS.
 - 1. Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5 and the Vermont Governor's Executive Order (No. 03-05) require that all events be managed by NIMS.
 - 2. Captains or designated personnel are to lend any assistance to local jurisdictions when requested.
 - 3. Captains or designated personnel are required to be part of the Unified Command whenever State Resources are requested.
 - a. Including but not limited to State HAZMAT Team (non fire related), Bomb Squad, Tactical Services Unit, SCUBA Team, Hostage Negotiation Team, Search and Rescue Team, Major Investigations, Possible Terrorist Related Events and Mobile Support Units if appropriate. (20VSA3(c) and 7(2))
- 4. Establish Communications Plan at Major Events (20VSA3(c))**
- A. Captains shall be responsible for ensuring that all major events follow the statewide communications plan.
 - B. Captains will make available or designate the PSAP as the initial Communications Center of major events if appropriate.
 - C. Captains will be responsible for requesting the Mobile Command Post and the Critical Incident Dispatch Team through established protocol.
 - D. Captains will ensure that all major events have a communications plan (ICS 205).
- 5. Implement Vermont's Infrastructure Protection Plan (Title 20VSA3)**
- A. The Commissioner has delegated the authority to develop, implement, and maintain Vermont's Infrastructure Protection Plan (VIPP) to the Homeland Security Director.

- B. PSDCs will execute VIIP upon notification from the Director of Homeland Security.
 - C. When appropriate, PSDCs will notify the Director of Homeland Security when significant Critical Infrastructure (CI) changes occur in their respective PSD
 - 1. CI is defined by DHS through the National Infrastructure Protection Program.
 - 2. Vermont may also add CI where the Director determines to be significant.
 - D. PSDCs will ensure that individual plans to implement and execute any VIIP operational plan through the station level.
6. **State Rapid Assessment and Assistance Team (State Emergency Operations Plan, Appendix 1) (20VSA3(a)(1))**
- A. PSDCs will be members of the SRAAT developed by VEM.
 - B. SRAAT is responsible for the rapid assessment and assistance to local authorities at the scene of the event.
 - C. The SRAAT will provide for the following:
 - 1. Support and Coordination (SSF Support)
 - 2. Communications Plans (PSDC)
 - 3. Other Assistance as determined by the Assessment
7. **Support and Coordinate with Vermont's Deployment of the Strategic National Stockpile (Vermont Department of Health SNS Plan)**
- A. The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) maintains the State's Implementation Plan for the deployment of Pharmaceuticals for chemical, biological or natural disasters.
 - B. This plan has designated clinics within each PSD that will require support and coordination.
 - 1. These locations are designated as For Official Use Only (FOUO) and must be safeguarded.
 - C. PSDCs will coordinate with VDH, through the Assistant Field Force Commander, when this plan is activated.
8. **Regional Coordination Center (SEOP Appendix 1)**
- A. A Regional Coordination Center (RCC) is a fixed facility designed to support and coordinate available resources within a PSD when the capability of the Incident Coordination Team at the SEOC to support multiple operations in the state is exceeded. The RCC will be activated upon the request of the SEOC and concurrence and coordination with the Commissioner and the respective PSDC.
 - B. Upon request the PSDC will designate a Regional Coordination Center in their respective PSD for the support and coordination with the event and the State EOC. The PSDC will be responsible for the coordination and management of the RCC.

- C. The function of the RCC is to provide logistical support to the Incident Commander of the event(s) in their respective PSD or other PSD as the situation will dictate.
- D. The PSDC may be responsible for designating locations to receive and distribute resources within the PSD.
- E. See Appendix A for further description.

SECTION 6 - WMD/SUSPICIOUS THREATENING SUBSTANCE INCIDENTS

State Resource Guidelines

When responding to “suspicious” package/powder calls, it is imperative that all first response personnel, managers, supervisors and dispatching staff have a good working knowledge of the published response protocol found further down in this document.

The initial call will be directed to a law enforcement officer or in some cases, fire department personnel. The responder will ask the appropriate questions to determine why this powder or substance is suspicious. The following questions will assist in the assessment:

- Was the person expecting this package?
- Does the person recognize the name/company of the sender?
- Is there a return address?
- Is there an obvious strange smell coming from the package?
- Is the package stained or discolored in any way?
- Is there a threat located on the outside of the package?
- Have there been any recent disgruntled employees?
- Is this location an obvious target for a threat?
- Is there any reason to believe this is a genuine concern?

Absent any suspicious findings, the following options can be given to the person who received the package:

- Open the letter/package
- Mark the letter/package “refused/return to sender”
- Throw the letter/package away

IF THIS IS CONSIDERED A SUSPICIOUS LETTER/PACKAGE EVENT, THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOL MUST BE FOLLOWED TO REQUEST STATE RESOURCES:

- Establish Unified Command between fire and law enforcement.
- Notify the Public Safety District Coordinator (Vermont State Police Troop Commander).
- Ensure that the perimeter is secure and determine if evacuation is necessary.
- Identify if there has been exposure and isolate victims to a safe and secure area.
- Consider staging area for EMS.
- Ensure air handler system in affected building is off, if appropriate.
- Assign an investigator to determine the validity of the threat.

The PSDC and/or designee will respond to coordinate response with Unified Command.

SECTION 7 - RESPONSE TO BOMB THREATS

All first responder agencies should have a clear understanding of each others roles/responsibilities when responding to Improvised Explosive Device (IED)/bomb threats. Response to IED/bomb threats is extremely dangerous due to the potential loss of life and injuries to civilians and first responders as well as the destruction of property. It is recommended that all first responder agencies become familiar with the Vermont Law Enforcement Response Plan to Bomb Threats. First responders should follow local policy and procedures for dealing with threats of bombings to include response, deployment, search, evacuation and assistance to specialized units. It is recommended that first responder agencies employ Unified Command in response to IED/bomb threats. The staging of EMS and other resources to enable timely response to the incident should be a priority.

Recommended First Responder Procedures:

- notify supervisor
- consider number of personnel needed
- monitor suspicious activities while en route to scene
- proceed to the scene and establish Unified Command
 - Fire shall be responsible for directing and controlling EMS at the scene of all bomb calls
- consider staging areas for fire/LE/EMS
- attempt to make contact with the reporting witness, building point of contact and any other witnesses to obtain situational awareness
- immediately set up a protective perimeter of at least 300 feet (unless utilizing a safe relocation structure) and restrict the use of any radio and cell phones within that perimeter if threat or suspected device is determined to be valid
- determine initial objectives:
 - secure scene and evacuate if necessary
 - search for secondary devices
 - evaluate and investigate the threat (gathering facts/history to help determine the course of action to be taken)
 - are there other hazards nearby such as propane tanks/gas lines/fuel storage
 - call for resources (Bomb Squad) ONLY AFTER THREAT HAS BEEN EVALUATED AND HAS BEEN DETERMINED TO BE VALID - Bomb Squad activation must go through VSP Commanders
 - If an object has been located and determined to be suspicious, refer to the Law Enforcement Response Plan for suggested evacuation, search and investigation procedures.