

COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Directive revises Department-wide policy and responsibilities for the comprehensive emergency management program.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This Directive addresses emergency management policies regarding planning, mitigation, response and recovery, including the continuation and rapid restoration of the Department's vital functions under all conditions.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness is responsible for the contents of this Directive.
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK:** VA Handbook 0320, Comprehensive Emergency Management Program.
- 5. RESCISSION:** VA Directive 0320, Emergency Preparedness Planning October 18, 1999.

/s/
R. James Nicholson
Secretary

CERTIFIED BY:

/s/
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Assistant Secretary
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COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE. This Directive provides Department-wide policy for the management and administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Comprehensive Emergency Management Program including VA's Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans. It assigns emergency preparedness responsibilities to all levels of Department management and provides a central point of coordination for these activities within the Department and with other departments and agencies. Department-wide emergency planning and coordination activities are extensions of the regular missions of the Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials.

2. POLICY.

a. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials will maintain sufficient capabilities to meet essential functions during a national emergency, including the capability to respond to the needs of individuals and State and local governments where required by law or binding Directive.

b. VA comprehensive emergency management plans and programs will be developed and tested annually Department-wide as an integral part of VA's continuing activities.

c. VA Continuity of Operations plans will identify mission essential functions/operations to be performed under all circumstances. This will include procedures for performing these functions, the necessary resources to implement the plans, and mitigation strategies that would lessen the impact of future emergencies.

d. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials are authorized to delegate the functions assigned by this Directive and to authorize successive delegations to organizations or employees under their respective jurisdiction. Copies of these written delegations shall be sent to the Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness. All delegations must comply with VA Directive 0000, Delegations of Authority, dated November 22, 1999.

e. VA employees subject to military mobilization will be available for recall to active duty.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Secretary of Veterans Affairs:

(1) Ensures that an all-hazards Comprehensive Emergency Management Program and COOP Plans are established.

(2) Delegates authority to ensure continuity of essential VA operations.

b. The Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness:

(1) Ensures the development, dissemination and implementation of the Department's Comprehensive Emergency Management Program.

- (2) Directs the VA emergency management programs, operations, and activities.
- (3) Serves as the Department's representative to senior Federal emergency preparedness councils and committees.
- (4) Designates a senior VA Official to serve as Director of the Crisis Response Team (CRT).
- (5) Provides day-to-day direction of the VA's emergency management program activities.
- (6) Coordinates the Department's review process of proposed Federal legislation, rule changes, and other policy documents relating to emergency management.
- (7) Manages Departmental-level participation in inter-agency exercises and is responsible for Department level exercises.
- (8) Ensures that VA has a viable Test, Training, and Exercise (TT&E) program.
- (9) Consults with other Federal Departments and Agencies to ensure VA policies and plans are consistent with national response plans, security guidelines, and policies.
- (10) Ensures the infrastructure at VA emergency relocation sites.
- (11) Serves, as directed, as the Department's representative to senior Federal emergency preparedness councils and committees.

d. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials:

- (1) Identify and prioritize the essential functions of their organizations during emergencies.
- (2) Develop an organizational emergency management plan and provide a copy to the Office of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness.
- (3) Ensure resources, materials and equipment are readily available, key personnel are identified and trained to support organizational emergency management plans.
- (4) Ensure the organizational emergency management plan is exercised at least annually.
- (5) Establish standing delegations of authority and maintain a current list of successors for their own organizations; provide copies to the Office of Policy, Planning and Preparedness.
- (6) Designate an individual (e.g., an Emergency Planner) and an alternate who can effectively represent the organization regarding the comprehensive emergency management program.
- (7) Ensure applicable emergency operating, financial and legal records are identified and available.

4. REFERENCES.

- a. Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions, April 3, 1984.
- b. Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities, November 18, 1988.
- c. Executive Order 12657, Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance in Emergency Management Planning at Commercial Nuclear Power Plants, November 18, 1988.
- d. Executive Order 13247, Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Veterans Affairs, December 18, 2001.
- e. Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950, as amended.
- f. Federal Preparedness Circular (FPC) 65, FEMA, June 15, 2004.
- g. National Response Plan, DHS, December 2004
- h. National Security Act of 1947, as amended.
- i. National Security Decision Directive Number 47 (NSDD-47), July 22, 1982, Emergency Mobilization Preparedness.
- j. Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 39, U.S. Policy on Counterterrorism, June 21, 1995 (Classified).
- k. PDD 62, Protection Against Unconventional Threats to the Homeland and Americans Overseas, May 22, 1998.
- l. PDD 63, Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP), May 22, 1998.
- m. PDD 67, Continuity of Operations Planning, October 21, 1998.
- n. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended.
- o. Public Law 97-174, May 4, 1982, as amended, Title 38 USC §8111A "VA and DOD Health Resources Sharing and Emergency Operations Act".
- p. VA Handbook 6300.2, Management of the Vital Records Program, February 8, 2001.
- q. 36 CFR 1236, Management of Vital Records, July 1, 1998.
- r. 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 101-2, Occupant Emergency Program, July 1, 1998.