

Secure Commonwealth Panel  
Business and Industry Sub-panel Meeting  
July 9, 2007

Leigh Middleditch - Chair

A meeting of the Secure Commonwealth Panel's Business and Industry Subpanel was held on July 9, 2007 at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center. Attendees included: Don Butts, Jim Neale, John Knapp, Margaret Moore, Calvin Royal, George Molaski, George Roarty, Eric Casey, Dorothy Spears-Dean, Robert Mauskapf, Pat Satterfield, Brenton Burgess, David Anderson, Ouita Davis, Tony Caputo, Matt Benedetti, Elwood Thomas, Jr., Hugh Keogh, Anthony McKinney, Jeffery Graf, Dan Jenkins, John Donahue, Thomas Gosse, Robert Bradshaw, Melissa Dickinson, Lt. Col. Jon Page, Kristen DiGirolamo, Constance McGeorge, Mary Louise DeViney, Mike McAllister, the Honorable John Watkins, Wes Kleene and Marc Follmer. Participating by telephone were Jeff Rezin, Dave Austin, Lauren Tedder, Cathy Hutchins, Kelly Hobbs, Alain Sadeghi, Ed Martella, Mark Milich and Joe Ricks.

Leigh Middleditch acted as Chair of the meeting and Marc Follmer acted as Secretary. Following a call to order and introductions, the Chair introduced John W. Knapp, Chair of the Critical Infrastructure Subpanel. Mr. Knapp and other members of the Critical Infrastructure Subpanel were kind enough to attend, and contribute to, the meeting.

Fred Vincent, Special Assistant for Commonwealth Security at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), made a presentation to the subpanel concerning the Virginia Fusion Center, its history, mission and desire to work closely with the business community to expand the Fusion Center's capabilities. Mr. Vincent stated that the Fusion Center's mission was twofold: To prevent terrorist attacks; and to Support the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for all other hazards and emergencies by centralizing information and resources to provide an effective response to emergencies.

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Virginia law mandated the establishment of a multiagency fusion intelligence center to receive and integrate terrorist-related intelligence and information. See, Va. Code §52-47. Virginia law also requires VDEM to coordinate intelligence activities relating to terrorism with the Virginia State Police (VSP). See also, Va. Code §44-146.18 et seq. The Fusion Center acts as the joint intelligence center and allows VDEM and the VSP to coordinate and be responsible for the receipt, evaluation, and dissemination of emergency services intelligence pertaining to all probable hazards affecting the Commonwealth.

Mr. Vincent advised that businesses should be able to receive information from the Fusion Center to better their internal processes to help protect themselves from terrorist attacks and other natural and man-made disasters and emergencies.

Mr. Vincent continued that the Fusion Center collects information from various sources including open-source information such as CNN, from the general public via the Fusion Center's Terrorism Hotline, law enforcement reports, as well as from other various Federal and state agencies, including classified information.

Mr. Vincent advised that the Fusion Center would like to receive information from the business community which may be pertinent to its mission especially the prevention of terrorist attacks. Mr. Vincent reviewed the seven signs of potential terrorism with the subpanel members:

1. Surveillance – persons are drawing diagrams, taking notes using binoculars to observe potential targets;
2. Elicitation – attempts to obtain information concerning people, places, company security procedures, key figures within the company;
3. Tests of a Company's Security – bomb threats may be called into the company or other attempts made to breach the company's security in order to determine how the company and local officials respond to the threats;
4. Acquiring Supplies – harmful chemicals, infectious materials, weapons components;
5. Suspicious Persons – use of cameras, oddly dressed persons, looking out of place;
6. Trial/Dry Runs – practice runs, route travel; and
7. Deploying Assets – putting people or supplies in place for an attack.

The Fusion Center would like business to forward detailed descriptions of activities or situations meeting the above criteria, including detailed physical descriptions or persons and/or vehicles. Information can be reported to the Fusion Center via phone or email. The Fusion Center is staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Mr. Vincent cautioned that if business observed any activity requiring an immediate, emergency response, that they should contact 911 emergency services before reporting the information to the Fusion Center.

Mr. Vincent gave the example of a person observed taking multiple pictures of the midtown tunnel. Law enforcement authorities, acting on a tip, investigated and found the person to be a tourist, but a record was made and other security partners notified.

Mr. Vincent continued that the Fusion Center produces various intelligence products including: daily briefings for law enforcement services and for the public, special bulletins on upcoming events or potential trends on interest, as well as annual and event-specific threat assessments. This information can include raw information on breaking events that are potentially related to terrorist attacks or more formal bulletins on specific issues such as counterfeit goods. Information may be customized for specific partners upon request.

Mr. Vincent explained the Virginia Critical Information Shared System (VCISS) to the subpanel members. VCISS is a web-based information sharing system including daily reports and special bulletins issued at various access levels. Access is granted following

a request and application to the Fusion Center. Participants were provided with applications for access to VCISS and were strongly encouraged to submit an application.

Following Mr. Vincent's presentation there was a brief discussion on the issue of cyber security and whether, when researching cyber crime, the Fusion Center should look for key components and identifying characteristics such as country of origin, language, type of cyber invasion, to better guard against cyber attacks. There was a discussion of determining which persons and agencies should be notified when a cyber attack has occurred.

Michael Nelson, the Deputy Director of Operations for the Department of Emergency Management provided the participants with a tour of the EOC and an explanation of the role it plays in

- Resource co-ordination in times of crisis,
- Serving as the Commonwealth's primary state warning point;
- Information dissemination,
- Search and rescue co-ordination,
- Flood warning systems, and
- Emergency Management assistance to other states
- Disaster contracting – Gartner, etc.

Mr. Nelson explained the Commonwealth has also integrated seven important business partners directly into the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Representatives of those seven partners will sit in the EOC during times of disaster providing the Commonwealth with ready access to the resources private businesses can supply.

The EOC liaises with the Virginia Tourism corporation for information on scheduled events and travelers, the Virginia Retail Merchants Association and Old Dominion Association of Contingency Planners.

Mr. Nelson described the hurricane exercises and other mock disasters used by the EOC for training purposes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.