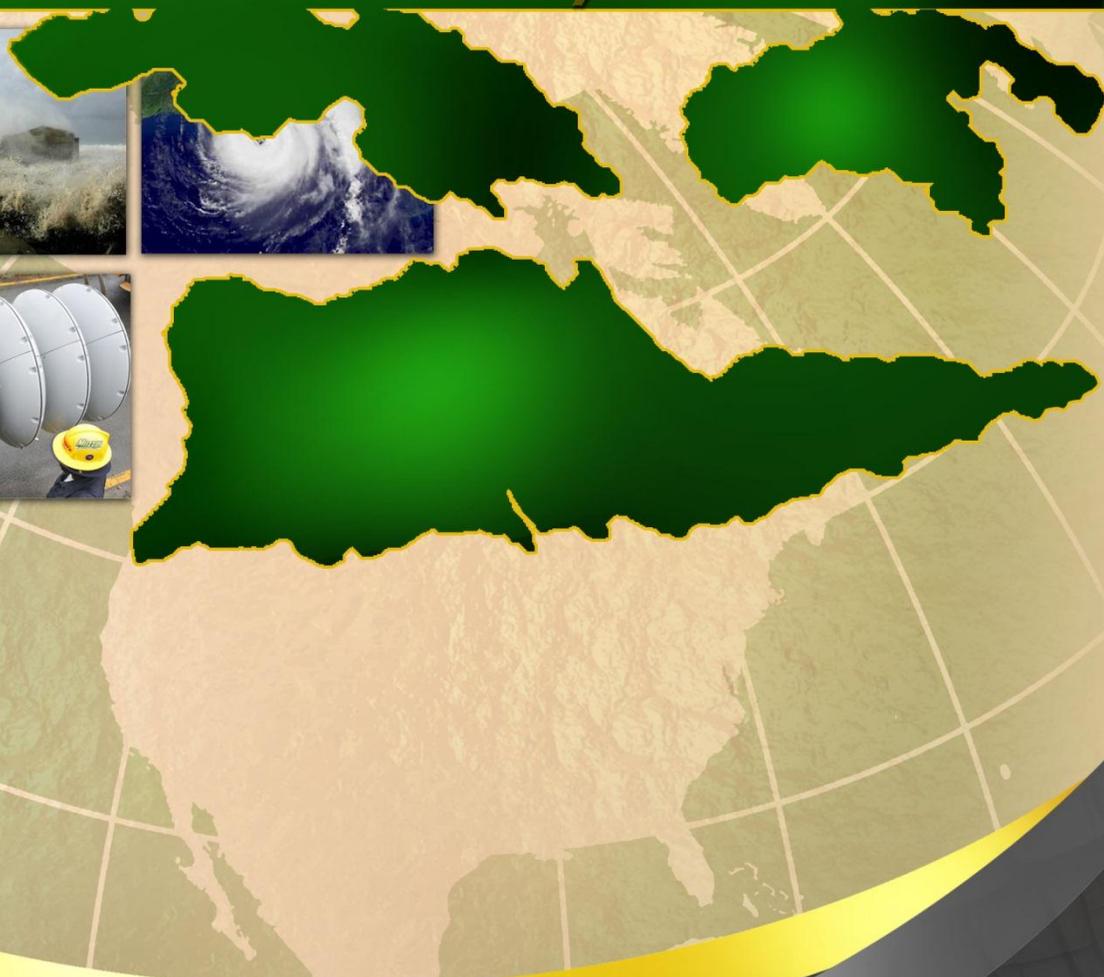
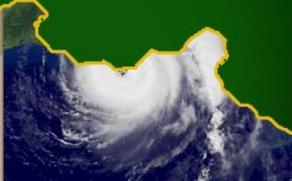




# VITEMA

VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## *Annual Report 2011*



**BG ELTON LEWIS**

**DIRECTOR**

VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY/  
HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

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## ***Our Vision***

*To be the pre-eminent emergency management agency in the Caribbean and the Nation by providing an effective, responsible, and professional network of services to ensure resiliency before, during, and after a natural or man-made incident that may impact the safety and well-being of the U.S. Virgin Islands.*

## ***Our Mission***

*The principal mission of VITEMA as a first response coordinator, is to save lives and property of the territory's population, by preparing territorial organizations to respond to, recover from and mitigate against All-Hazards, through planning, coordinating, training and exercise activities and is the sole Virgin Islands government agency designated to supervise, administer and coordinate All-Hazards response and recovery operations.*





Flag Created by BG Elton Lewis

*The official flag of the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency was adopted in September 2011. It consists of a simplified, combined version of the Great Seal of the United States Virgin Islands between the letters and the seal of the VITEMA since its inception in 1981.*

*The eagle holds a laurel branch in one talon which represents our mission to save lives and protect property from natural and man-made disasters through determined planning. The arrows in the other talon represents our steadfast vision that the Virgin Islands become the pre-eminent leader of emergency management in the Caribbean and the Nation by providing an effective and professional network of services to ensure resiliency before, during, and after a natural or man-made incident.*

*The red and white stripes encapsulated by a blue border are a symbol of the charges of VITEMA – homeland security, 911 emergency operations and emergency preparedness and response. The flag of green and gold chain symbolizes the resilience and unity of VITEMA through oneness of mind and body of all its members.*

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## To Our Stakeholders



BG Elton Lewis  
*VITEMA Director*

*“VITEMA achieved significant milestones and notable ‘firsts’ for the Territory, while adapting and enhancing the ability to operate in a period of limited financial and human resources.”*

**D**uring Calendar Year 2011, the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) continued to operate across a wide spectrum of missions and to advance the seamless transformation of VITEMA to a Cabinet-level agency with newly-established jurisdiction of public assistance, homeland security and the 9-1-1 emergency system.

This year the Agency achieved significant milestones and notable ‘firsts’ for the Territory, while adapting and enhancing the ability to operate in a period of limited financial and human resources. From the routine to the noteworthy, I will highlight just a few examples.

VITEMA spent much of the year entrenched in strategic planning for catastrophic events. Between July and August 2011, VITEMA installed and tested the first phase of the Tsunami Siren Warning System, a modern warning system with the capability to alert and warn the public of multiple hazards utilizing both tone and voice messaging. With the installation of the operational siren warning system — for the first time in more than three decades — the Virgin Islands has a built-in redundancy for public safety warnings. Laterally, VITEMA and its contractor, Witt Associates, spent months collaborating with key representatives of the public,

private nonprofit sectors to develop a comprehensive plan for a coordinated response and recovery from a tsunami. In July of this year, I approved the Territory's first Tsunami Plan, a manual that will serve as a guide for the Territory's coordinated response.

This year, we also stepped up our training and exercise roster to provide training for response to structural collapse, campus emergencies and active shooter, for the first time. More than 100 emergency responders and managers received these critical training courses.

We ended the year on a high note, bringing together federal and local government agencies, voluntary agencies and the maritime industry for the largest multi-hazard and maritime full-scale exercise the Territory has ever seen. The exercise – Operation Tide Breaker – set the groundwork for possible future interstate agreements and for building intergovernmental partnerships.

In the *2011 Annual Report*, we expound on these and other accomplishments.

I thank the VITEMA staff, our Emergency Support Function Coordinators and first responders, the American Red Cross of the Virgin Islands, VI Search and Rescue, our state and federal partners, numerous selfless volunteers and our private sector partners for contributing to the successes VITEMA has attained this year. They all support VITEMA's mission and we appreciate their commitment to preparing our community for all hazards and their service in making our community safer and recovery faster. We look forward to our continued success in 2012.

//SIGNED//

BG ELTON LEWIS

Director

*“Envisioning the Future and Setting the Agenda”*

## About the Director

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**E**lton Lewis was nominated by Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr., for the position of Director of the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) on November 23, 2010. On December 6, 2010 he was appointed Acting Director. He was sworn in as Director on May 3, 2011 following his confirmation by the 29th Legislature of the US Virgin Islands. He also serves as Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor. In this most critical capacity, Director Lewis assists the Governor with his most important responsibility, that of protecting citizens, property, and businesses from the threat of terrorism and natural and man-made disasters.

Most recently, Governor De Jongh appointed Lewis to serve as the State Coordinator for the 1033 Law Enforcement Support Program, which is administered through the Defense Logistics Agency. As the State Coordinator, Lewis is charged with facilitating the process of law enforcement agencies acquiring military surplus equipment. The Law Enforcement Support program also provides general equipment that agencies may need to function but perhaps are unable to afford.

Prior to his appointment as VITEMA Director, Lewis worked as the Director of the Joint Staff for the Virgin Islands National Guard and served as Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) from March 2003 to January 2007. He received his Associate of Arts Degree in General Studies at Central Texas College in 1982 while serving in the U.S. Army and later received his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice from Roger Williams University. He has a graduate certificate from Central Michigan University in Leadership.

Lewis is a member of the Virgin Islands National Guard (VING) where he holds the rank of Brigadier General and serves as the Assistant Adjutant General. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, 154th Session; the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College; the U.S. Army Protective Service; and has completed the U.S. Army War College as a senior fellow with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). He served as a security specialist with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security-(FEMA) as well as on numerous special projects, task forces and commissions. He has participated in the following professional development and training courses: Terrorism Planning Course; Incident Command System Training; National Incident Management System Training Program; and special training in a National Response Plan.

He is a member of the National Guard Association (NGAUS) and the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP), Military Police Regimental Association - Life Member; Association of the United States Army (AUSA) - Life Member; and a member of the American Legion, Post 85. Lewis is also a member of American Federal Contract Investigators Association (AFCIA), International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA).

## VITEMA's Leadership Team

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Director.....	Elton Lewis
Assistant Director.....	Noel Smith
Chief Financial Officer.....	Clement C. Magras
Deputy Director, Administration & Finance.....	Debra Henneman-Smith
Deputy Director, Grants Management.....	Jonetta Darden
Deputy Director, Planning & Preparedness.....	Al Javois
Chief Systems Manager/Logistics.....	Asim Frett
Public Information Officer.....	Christine Lett
Manager, VI Fusion Center.....	Wayne Bryan
Manager, St. Thomas-St. John District 9-1-1 ECC.....	Carolyn Wattley
Manager, St. Croix District 9-1-1 ECC.....	Ninafe Awong
Manager, St. Thomas Emergency Operations Center.....	Joseph Hodge
Manager, St. John Emergency Operations Center.....	Linda Williams
Territorial Communications Officer.....	Adelle Williams
Exercise Planner.....	Roy McFarlane
Training Coordinator.....	Irvin Mason
Facilities Manager, St. Croix.....	Ethelbert Benjamin

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# *EXECUTIVE* SUMMARY

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*“We leaned forward in 2011, to achieve our goals of strengthening the Agency’s strategic planning and response capabilities for all hazards, building on our technology and ensuring we meet federal requirements to secure much-needed grant funding.”*

*BG Elton Lewis*

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# PREPAREDNESS & PLANNING

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“Broadening Our  
Scope of Readiness”

**A**fter more than three decades, VITEMA installed the first phase of a modern [All Hazards Warning System](#), significantly advancing and expanding the Territory’s early warning capabilities for catastrophic events.

In May 2011, VITEMA set the first warning siren into the ground near the Cyril E. King Airport at St. Thomas, beginning the first of a two-phase project designed to bolster VITEMA’s ability to quickly notify communities of a tsunami and other hazards.

Between May and July, VITEMA’s contractor, American Signal Corp., and its local representative Bronx Communication, and the VI Water and Power Authority installed four sirens each on St. Thomas and St. Croix and two on St. John.

The four sites on St. Thomas include the Cyril E. King Airport, Griffith Park, the Yacht Haven Sugar Mill and the Red Hook Marina. On St. Croix, the sirens were installed at the



**Figure 1 Siren installation at the Christiansted Parking Lot.**

David C. Canegata Ballpark at Estate Welcome, the Government Parking Lot in downtown Christiansted, on Emancipation Drive in Frederiksted and near the Legislative Building at downtown Frederiksted. On St. John the sirens were installed at the Winston Wells Park at Cruz Bay and near the Guy Benjamin Elementary School in Coral Bay. (See Appendix A)



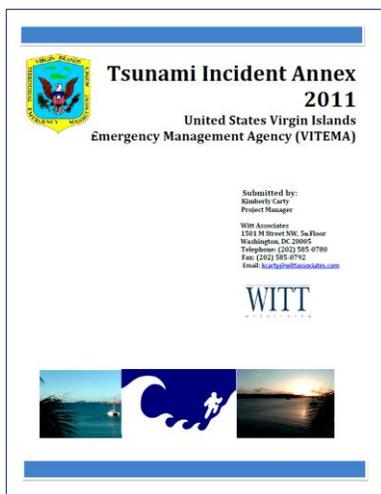
Figure 2 WAPA personnel prepare to mount a siren onto a utility pole.

WAPA, an important partner in the project's success, installed the poles on which the sirens are mounted at no cost to VITEMA. An additional 11 sirens are slated for the second phase and is expected to be installed by summer of 2012. At the end of the project, VITEMA will have installed 22 sirens that will be tied to and triggered by the Territory's VI Alert system. The project is being funded by two (2) \$350,000 US Department of Homeland Security grants.

### *Tsunami Incident Annex*

With Governor John P. de Jongh Jr.'s overhaul of the Territory's emergency management system, VITEMA shifted from solely hurricane and storm readiness to the broader approach of all-hazards preparedness. As recent tsunamis tragically impacted countries across the globe, including Japan and Chile, VITEMA looked comprehensively at closing the gaps on guidance for this type of no-notice event. In December of 2010, VITEMA hired Witt Associates, a Washington DC-based public safety and crisis management consulting firm, to help establish a tsunami response plan.

In August of this year, the VITEMA Director approved the final draft of the *Tsunami Incident Annex*, which will be incorporated as an addendum to the Territorial Emergency Operations Plan. No such plan existed prior to this and its completion is a significant milestone in VITEMA's planning efforts. This project was funded by the Public Finance Authority.



The *Tsunami Incident Annex* establishes guidelines for VITEMA and other primary emergency response agencies to utilize in an effort to minimize the potential for loss of life from a tsunami incident. It provides guidance on how emergency managers can provide timely, accurate, reliable, and effective tsunami information and support to at-risk populations, government agencies, schools and other organizations and institutions within the Territory on a timely basis. As part of the development process, VITEMA and Witt Associates' planners, spent several weeks meeting and gathering pertinent data from various local government agencies, key infrastructure officials, field experts, and the

University of the Virgin Islands' Data Center. The *Tsunami Incident Annex* and the All Hazards Warning System have thrust the Virgin Islands within reach of the Tsunami-Ready status, which is VITEMA's ultimate goal.

In addition to these projects, VITEMA joined with NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and the University of North Carolina-Wilmington in conducting the first-ever community survey on tsunami knowledge in the Virgin Islands. Surveys were distributed by mail to residents territorywide during spring 2011. The information collected is being used to evaluate the Territory's warning products and to assist NOAA with its tsunami outreach in the Virgin Islands.



In other areas of catastrophic planning, VITEMA worked closely with FEMA Region II in the development of an annex to its All Hazards Plan that specifically addresses the federal response to earthquake and tsunami in the Virgin Islands. To accomplish this task, FEMA established a six-step plan which includes a course of action development workshop for key public and private sector representatives. VITEMA coordinated this workshop which was held in November 2011, and included officials from; the Chambers of Commerce, HOVENSA, Cruzan Rum, Pueblo, Cost-U-Less, the USVI Hotel & Tourism Association, American Red Cross of the Virgin Islands, Tropical Shipping, US Geological Survey, NOAA, Federal Aviation Administration, US Department of Justice, US Department of Agriculture, US Department of Health and Human Services, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Coast Guard,

US Department of Transportation, US Department of Energy, the VI departments of Education, Agriculture, Public Works, and Police, WAPA and the VI National Guard.

The purpose of the workshop was to empower stakeholders to help shape Federal response plan for supporting the Virgin Islands when responding to a catastrophic earthquake and/or tsunami, to develop courses of action to meet objectives and to proactively integrate the whole-community disaster management capabilities.

This territory-federal plan is a first for FEMA Region II, VITEMA and the Virgin Islands.

Finally, this year VITEMA launched its first Earthquake Public Service Announcement (PSA) to raise awareness about preparedness for this type of event. The PSA, which features the VITEMA Director, provides basic information on what to do during and after an earthquake and encourages residents to visit VITEMA's website, [www.VITEMA.gov](http://www.VITEMA.gov) for more information.

The PSA debuted in September on various cable networks and will run through April 2012.

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# TRAINING & EXERCISES

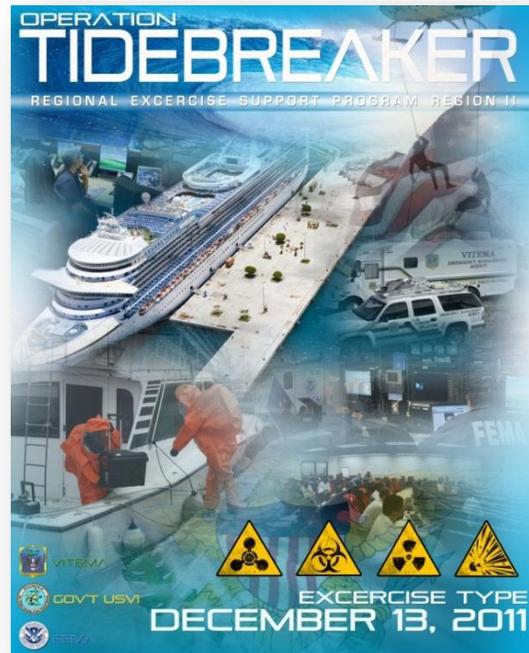
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“Building a Ready Force of  
Emergency Managers”

VITEMA, as a policy, conducts training and exercises to enhance the readiness of our emergency managers and responders and to improve the effectiveness of our emergency operations centers. During 2011, VITEMA hosted numerous courses, including for response to structural collapse, campus emergencies and active shooter, and conducted several exercises, including a major full scale exercise to test and assess our response capabilities for terrorist incidents.

### *Exercises*

On December 13th, 2011, more than 30 local and federal government agencies and the maritime industry, participated in the Territory’s annual full-scale Multi-Hazard & Maritime Exercise. The exercise, titled *Operation Tide Breaker*, was the largest ever developed by VITEMA, in collaboration with the FEMA and the VI National Guard’s 23<sup>rd</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support



Team (WMD CST). Using the Incident Command System developed by the US Department of Homeland Security, the three entities conceptualized, honed and scaled the exercise over several months to develop scenarios and venues that would test the full array of emergency responders' incident management capabilities.



**Figure 3 The VING 23<sup>rd</sup> WMD CST, VI Fire Service, VI Police Department, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, VI EMS, and the Florida Advanced Surgical & Transportation (FAST) Team, participate in 'Operation Tide Breaker.'**



In recent years, national preparedness priorities have steered the focus of homeland security toward planning for uncertainties.

*Operation Tide Breaker* encompassed three scenarios that required a cross section of local and federal emergency response agencies interfacing to manage various incidents, including a bomb threat, an active shooter, a maritime hazardous material release incident and medical airlift. Exercise players and evaluators included the 23<sup>rd</sup> WMD CST, VIPD, VI Fire Service, VITEMA, FBI, FEMA, VI Fusion Center, 911 Emergency Communications Center, VI WAPA, the VI Department of Health-Emergency Medical Services, St. Thomas Rescue, Schneider Regional Medical Center, WICO, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, the VI Emergency Medical Service, the Florida Advanced Surgical and Transport (FAST) Team, US Departments of Health and Human Services and Veteran Affairs and more.



**Figure 4 VITEMA Director Elton Lewis presents Celebrity Eclipse with an award of appreciation for participating in Operation Tide Breaker.**

The exercise played out at several venues on St. Thomas including the VI Water and Power Authority Harley Plant, the Lionel Roberts Stadium, the WICO dock, VITEMA EOC, Schneider Regional Medical Center, and the Cyril E. King Airport. Capabilities that were evaluated included; intelligence/information sharing and dissemination, interoperable communications, onsite incident management, emergency triage and pre-hospital treatment, medical evacuation, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)/Hazardous Material (HazMat) response and explosive device response operations.

*Operation Tide Breaker* scenarios included; a bomb threat to WAPA forcing a plant evacuation, a hazardous material release onboard a cruise ship that causes passengers to become ill and ultimately requires the governor to activate the 23<sup>rd</sup> WMD CST, and an active shooter and explosive device at the Lionel Roberts Stadium that requires a response from the VIPD Special Response Team, VI EMS, Rescue, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> WMD CST. VITEMA tested its communications capabilities and activated the EOC as part of the exercise.

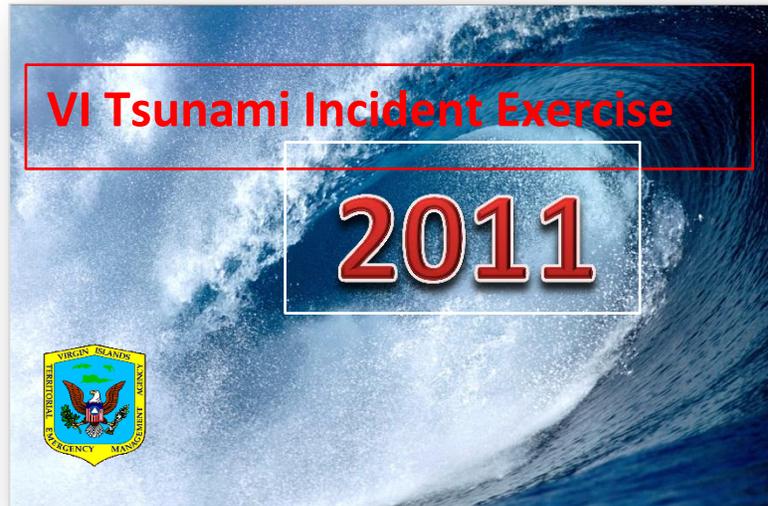
The full-scale exercise allowed responders to assess their capabilities, pinpointing their strengths and weaknesses. An After Action Report Conference is scheduled for February 2012.

VITEMA commended Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and WICO leadership for their participation in this year's exercise. As part of *Operation Tide Breaker*, the maritime industry is significantly contributing to a whole-community approach to emergency management and to enhancing the Territory's preparedness.





VITEMA also conducted the first tsunami-specific preparedness exercise ever held in the Virgin Islands in October 2011. The exercise provided an opportunity for first responders, local and federal agencies and the private sector to evaluate procedures for a structured and coordinated response to a tsunami, using the newly-created *Tsunami Incident Annex*.



The tsunami exercise allowed local agencies to review their operational lines of communications, their tsunami warning and emergency response standard operating procedures, and promoted emergency preparedness. An After Action Conference is scheduled for 2012.

On March 23rd, 2011, VITEMA, in collaboration with local broadcasters, also conducted the first demonstration of the Territory's Emergency Alert System (EAS) as part of our participation in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) annual Caribbean-wide Tsunami Exercise. The purpose of the demonstration was to determine the readiness and effectiveness of the system and to make any necessary improvements or adjustments.

To the extent that it provided VITEMA and local broadcasters with a better picture of the current Emergency Alert System, identified glitches in our notification strategies, and established a baseline for future demonstrations — the demonstration was a success.

Approximately 12 broadcasters participated. VITEMA aims to develop a robust Emergency Alert System to address the segment of the local population, such as senior citizens, that continues to rely on radio and television for emergency information. Improvements to the VI Emergency Alert System Plan are ongoing.

On Nov. 9, 2011, at 3 p.m. Atlantic Standard Time, VITEMA and Virgin Islands broadcasters also participated in the first-ever top-to-bottom nationwide EAS test conducted by FEMA, NOAA and the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC). The federal agencies were evaluating whether the national EAS would work as intended should public safety officials ever need to send an alert or warning to a large region of the United States.

The national Emergency Alert System is an alert and warning system that can be activated by the president, if needed, to provide information to the American public during emergencies. NOAA's

National Weather Service, governors, and state and local emergency authorities also use parts of the system to issue more localized emergency alerts.

Local broadcasters participating in the test included WSTA, WSTX, WGOD, WIVH, and the WJJC family of radio stations along with Innovative Cable. FEMA transmitted the EAS code for a national emergency which broadcasted for 30 seconds. The EAS code and alert was received by WSTA, the primary entry point, and rebroadcasted until it was completely distributed to participating stations in the Territory. The national test revealed that the Territory's two districts may need separate entry points to distribute an EAS message.

Other exercises conducted by VITEMA include an Education Table Top Exercise to assist education officials with fortifying their school disaster plans, and a US Coast Guard Maritime Exercise to identify gaps as they pertain to the Maritime Firefighting Plan and the Area Maritime Security Plan for the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

### ***Training***

The agency also initiates training to increase preparedness in all aspects of emergency management and homeland security. During fiscal year 2011, VITEMA provided numerous training opportunities for emergency managers and responders, law enforcement personnel, firefighters, and hospital staff, including the following courses: National Incident Management System, Introduction to Incident Command System, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Risk Assessment training, Wide Area Search and Rescue, Incident Terrorist Bombings and Prevention, and Response to Suicide Bombing Incidents. One of the highlights of the FY 2011



Training Calendar (See Appendix B) was the structural collapse course, offered for the first time to local firefighters and rescue personnel.

In September 2011, approximately 35 firefighters and search and rescue personnel participated in a building collapse rescue exercise on St. Thomas. The exercise was the culmination of a Basic Structural Collapse Operations course coordinated and hosted by VITEMA and funded and instructed by the FEMA.



**Figure 5 Firefighters and Rescue personnel receive structural collapse response training and participate in a mock exercise. Below. FEMA Instructors hold an exercise ‘hotwash.’**



FEMA trainers provided firefighters and search and rescue personnel with classroom and field instruction on collapse causes, warning signs, safety precautions, void identification, search techniques, team operations, building construction awareness, and initial fire department operations. The specialized training course material was developed by the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Office of Fire Prevention and Control and Office of Counter Terrorism for the New York State Fire Training Program.

### ***Virgin Islands Fusion Center***

New training opportunities also were made possible by the Virgin Islands Fusion Center, a unit of VITEMA's Office of Homeland Security. On June 24, 2011, Gov. de Jongh signed an

Executive Order formally establishing the Virgin Islands Fusion Center to improve intelligence gathering and sharing among public safety and public service agencies.

During 2011, the Virgin Islands Fusion Center offered the highly-technical courses for local and federal law enforcement agencies and emergency response personnel and the private sector security, including from the VI Police Department, VI Port Authority, Lottery Enforcement, TSA, Department of Education, University of the Virgin Islands, WAPA, Innovative Corp, Department of Justice, U.S. Marshal Service, FBI, St. Thomas Rescue, WICO, Tutu Park Mall, and Yacht Haven Grande. The courses are listed below.



Center offered the highly-technical enforcement agencies and emergency sector security, including from the Authority, Lottery Enforcement, University of the Virgin Islands, Justice, U.S. Marshal Service, FBI, St.

### VI Fusion Center FY 2011 Training Calendar

<i>Training</i>	<i>Instructors Provided By</i>
<b>Active Shooter Seminar &amp; Tabletop</b>	US DHS
<b>i2 Analytic Software Training</b>	US DHS
<b>Improvised Search Procedures</b>	US DHS Office of Bombing Prevention
<b>Identifying and Seizing Electronic Evidence</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>Foundations of Intelligence Analysis</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>Advanced Criminal Intelligence Analysis to Prevent Terrorism</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>Cybercop 101 - Basic Data Recovery and Acquisition</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>Intermediate Data Recovery Analysis</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>GPS Interrogation Course</b>	National White Collar Crime (NW3C)
<b>Law Enforcement Online Portal Training</b>	US DHS
<b>Surveillance Equipment Seminar</b>	US DHS

Since its inception and throughout 2011, the VI Fusion Center also assisted law enforcement agencies by providing key intelligence that led to apprehension and arrest of fugitives and a recovery of a vessel stolen from Tortola and brought to St. Thomas. The VI Fusion Center has also assisted VIPD with its cold cases.

The VI Fusion Center also has within its purview, protection of the Territory's key resources and critical infrastructure. In 2011, with support of the US Department of Homeland Security, Fusion Center staff conducted Site Assistance Visits to various facilities including; WAPA's plants, the Schneider Regional Medical Center, Luis Hospital & Medical Center, WICO, Crowley Liner Services, the Crown Bay Dock, Yacht Haven Grande and Tropical Shipping. The Fusion Center assisted these facilities by identifying security weaknesses and suggesting corrective actions.

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# OPERATIONS & EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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“A Coordinated Response  
To Multiple Hazards”

**V**ITEMA activated its Emergency Operations Center and played a pivotal role in a coordinated response to emergencies that impacted the Territory, including hazardous material release and tropical storms and hurricanes. VITEMA also made significant improvements to its EOC to including the ability for the centers territorywide — St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John — to videoconference internally and externally.

### *Unified Command – ‘Operation Breathe Easy’*



**Figure 6** EPA, DPNR, VITEMA and VING 23rd CST officials hold a press conference to discuss Unified Command’s ‘Operation Breathe Easy.’

In May 2011, on the island of St. Croix, multiple local and federal agencies co-located and established a Unified Command to coordinate its response effort to an unknown gaseous odor that permeated a large area of St. Croix, from mid-island to Frederiksted. The unknown odor made numerous residents ill and forced the immediate closures of schools and government offices. The coordinated effort was dubbed *Operation Breathe Easy*.

Unified Command, which was located at the VI National Guard's Estate Bethlehem Armory, included representatives of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), VI Department of Health, VI Fire Services' HAZMAT Unit, VITEMA, and the VI National Guard's 23<sup>rd</sup> WMD CST, which was activated by Governor De Jongh to provide technical expertise in support to VITEMA and DPNR's effort, the lead agencies for the event.

VITEMA worked alongside DPNR, EPA, Fire Service-Hazmat and the 23<sup>rd</sup> CST to formulate a 48-hour plan of operation and to create Joint Assessment Teams to conduct air monitoring

and to take liquid samples at the Hovensa oil refinery, the Diageo rum factory, and other sites at the south shore industrial complex. The teams conducted both day and night operations based on calls to VITEMA's 911 Emergency Communications Center and on atmospheric conditions. Unified Command also completed a Plume Model outlining affected areas based on calls to



**Figure 7 Gov. John P. de Jongh Jr. conducts a site visit at Unified Command.**



**Figure 8 An EPA official reviews a Plume Module developed by the VING's 23<sup>rd</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team using data collected from multiple agencies.**

VITEMA's 911 Emergency Communications Center and reports from the Department of Health and the Juan Luis Hospital. Within one week, through a process of elimination, Unified Command determined that the unknown odors originated from both the Hovensa oil refinery and the Diageo rum factory. DPNR issued Compliance Orders to Hovensa LLC and Diageo USVI, requiring the companies to take immediate corrective actions.

### *Active Storms*

VITEMA's Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) activated for storms and hurricanes that threatened the Virgin Islands during 2011 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Between July and September, VITEMA's EOCs activated for Tropical Storms Emily and Maria, Hurricane Irene. For each event, the VITEMA Director convened the Virgin



**Figure 9 Hurricane Irene causes flash flooding at downtown Christiansted.**

Island Emergency Management Council, for daily reports and

conference calls to coordinate the Territory's response, including the opening of shelters, the closure and reopening of ports, government operations, and the implementation of a curfew. The storms caused minimal damage to the Territory. The Virgin Islands hardest hit by Hurricane Irene, however, the cost of damages caused by this storm did not meet the \$1 million threshold for federal assistance. The EOC also activated for Vice President Joe Biden's visit to St. Croix in December, providing 24-hour communications support to United States Secret Service.



**Figure 10 VITEMA, FEMA and VING officials appear on WJKC radio stations with talk show hosts V. Anne Golden, Holland Redfield and Kim Jones to update the community on Hurricane Irene. Right. Lewis speaks with Wes Small of Channel 8 News.**

### ***Emergency Operations Center & Communications Enhancements***

Before, during and after a disaster, VITEMA's EOCs are the nuclei for co-locating federal and local emergency responders for a coordinated response and recovery effort. It is vital that the EOCs are capable of communicating with each other and the outside world.

In 2011, VITEMA significantly enhanced the communication capabilities of its EOCs territorywide. To accomplish this, VITEMA collaborated with FEMA's National Continuity Programs' Readiness Division to implement a comprehensive network that provides data, systems, applications, technical standards, and an underlying infrastructure consistent with FEMA's system. The Territory's EOCs now feature diverse communications capabilities: Internet Protocol (IP) networks with access to the Internet via satellite and commercial internet service providers (ISPs), Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephones, satellite terminals, video teleconferencing, Radio over IP (RoIP) and long-range FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) high-frequency (HF) radio capabilities.

This means, VITEMA can now directly communicate — by phone, radio, Internet and video conference — with FEMA's main EOC at Mt. Weather, Virginia, and any other EOC on FEMA's network, no matter where they are in the country. VITEMA fortified this capability by installing deployable satellites at each of the EOCs that can provide the same connectivity in the event the primary communication lines are inoperable. This enhanced capability provides first responders, emergency management officials and key leadership in the Virgin Islands with robust backup communication methods which are necessary to maintain contact with federal resources during all-hazards events.

FEMA also supported VITEMA with communications training as well as supporting documentation in the form of a Concept of Operations (CONOPS), user guides, policy development, test and exercise requirements, and ongoing operations and maintenance support.

Similarly, VITEMA also installed deployable satellites to shore up the *VI Alert* mass alert and notification system in the event phone and Internet services in the Virgin Islands go down during an emergency.

#### ***VITEMA St. Croix***

This year, VITEMA was faced with the challenge of relocating staff and the Emergency Operations Center to a new facility. VITEMA relocated its St. Croix operations after its Hermon Hill facility was deemed uninhabitable due to a mold infestation.

By the end of January 2011, the St. Croix office moved its office to a temporary location at King Cross Street, Christiansted, and began the arduous task of transforming the three-story building to meet the needs of the Agency. This transformation included wiring the offices with a new phone and network system. Today, the temporary facility has been completely outfitted with a fully-functioning EOC, Communications Room, Media Room, a private conference room, staff offices and a dedicated military liaison office.



Figure 11 Above. VITEMA's temporary facility at King Cross Street, Christiansted. Below. The St. Croix EOC has been completely furnished and is capable of video-conferencing. The Communications Room is fully functional.



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# GRANTS MANAGEMENT

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“Maximizing and Sustaining  
Federal Grant Funding”

VITEMA spent much of fiscal year 2011 revising its federal grants management procedures and internal controls to insure efficiency and accountability. Over the years, the Office of Homeland Security — now integrated with VITEMA to enhance accountability and oversight — has been audited as part of the federal Single Audit of the VI Government and by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). There were numerous findings resulting in questioned costs and reflecting poor compliance with grant terms and conditions. VITEMA, working closely with the DHS-FEMA grants management team, initiated corrective actions to improve our management of grants VITEMA receives.

Recent reports indicate significant improvement in grants management and accountability.

Among the Grants Managements Division’s other notable accomplishments is the completion of an updated hazard mitigation plan and the closures of previously-declared disasters.



**Figure 12** In 2011, the Department of Public Works reconstructed the Mount Pleasant box culvert and roadway utilizing Public Assistance grant funding. The box culvert was destroyed during Hurricane Omar in 2008.

### ***Hazard Mitigation***

In May 2011, VITEMA successfully updated the [Territorial Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), identifying steps that can be taken to mitigate hazards that can cause or exacerbate emergencies or disasters. The Territorial Hazard Mitigation Plan is critical to qualifying for federal hazard mitigation and public assistance grant funding from FEMA and every state and territory is required to update its plan every three years or lose access to all FEMA funding after a disaster. To ensure that we met this mandate, VITEMA created Hazard Mitigation Committees on St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John and held hearings territory-wide to gather input from the general public. The results of the hazard identification process and discussions revealed that drought, rain-induced landslides and wildfires needed to be included in the updated plan. The plan update was funded with a grant from FEMA for which VITEMA qualified.

With Governor De Jongh's signature of approval, the updated Territorial Hazard Mitigation Plan was submitted to FEMA in April 2011. FEMA approved the plan on May 26, 2011, allowing the Virgin Islands to maintain its eligibility to receive various disaster assistance grants including Public Assistance, Fire Management Assistance, Hazard Mitigation and Flood Mitigation. The plan can be viewed online at [www.vitema.gov/mitigation/index.html](http://www.vitema.gov/mitigation/index.html).

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) provides funds to the local government to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration in order to reduce the loss of life and property in future disasters. As a result of Hurricane Omar, approximately \$1.2 million in hazard mitigation grant funding was awarded to the Territory in 2011 and made available to various government agencies and the American Red Cross for the installation of hurricane shutters and to the VI Port Authority to mitigate flood and windstorm damage at its facilities. VITEMA was also able to capture competitive Hazard Mitigation



**Figure 13** Left. A WAPA transformer built for the Christiansted Underground Project. Right. Prince Street near the Watergut area was one of the first areas of Christiansted to receive electric underground cables.

Grant and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant funding. Ongoing projects under these competitive grants includes the VI Water and Power Authority Electric Underground Project, which involves burying cables to the Territory's major critical facilities such as hospitals, airports, commercial districts, university facilities, densely-populated areas and town districts. This project will significantly reduce the Virgin Islands' electrical downtime after hurricanes and major disasters in the future. In 2011, Phase I of the Christiansted Underground project was completed and Phase II began. A similar project at the Charles Harwood Facility was also complete and the downtown St. Thomas project has begun. Underground electrical capability already exists to the University of the Virgin Islands on both islands, to airports on both islands and hospitals on both islands – all funded by FEMA and administered by VITEMA.

### ***Public Assistance***

In 2010, VITEMA reported that it had achieved another milestone it successfully closed out Hurricane Hugo Disaster Assistance after 21 years. The Agency drew down the last outstanding funds of almost \$1 million and distributed it to the eligible recipients who had been waiting for this final payment. This year, VITEMA is reporting the closeout of several other storms. As of July 31, 2011, VITEMA can officially report the final closeouts of Hurricane Bertha, Hurricane George, and Hurricane Lenny by FEMA. These storms had remained open since 1996 and through the extraordinary efforts of the VITEMA staff, the Agency has supplied FEMA with the necessary documentation to close these storms permanently. It is a feat of gigantic proportions for VITEMA. VITEMA is now working diligently to close the disasters known as the 2003 Flood Event and the 2004 Tropical Storm Jeanne.

### ***Closed Disasters as of FY 2011***

<b>Disasters</b>	<b>Declared</b>	<b>Total Disaster Cost</b>	<b>Date Closed</b>
<b>Hurricane Hugo</b>	09/20/1989	\$118,450,732.00	8/22/2011
<b>Hurricane Bertha</b>	07/11/1996	3,510,716.00	03/9/2011
<b>Hurricane Georges</b>	09/24/1998	4,828,820.00	06/07/2011
<b>Hurricane Lenny</b>	11/23/1999	4,844,695.58	04/202011

The Grants Management Division also worked throughout 2011 to monitor progress of and provide technical assistance to sub-grantee agencies that qualified to receive federal aid as a result of recently-declared disasters. Through a joint effort with FEMA, the Grants Managements worked to ensure that supporting documentation, budgets and quarterly reports for pending Project Worksheets were being completely on a timely basis. *(See Appendix D & E)*

### ***Open Disasters as of FY 2011***

<b>Disaster</b>	<b>Declared</b>	<b>Disaster Cost to Date</b>
<b>2003 November Flood</b>	12/09/03	\$2,251,265.96
<b>Tropical Storm Jeanne</b>	10/07/04	2,202,429.36
<b>Hurricane Omar</b>	10/29/08	8,749,119.35
<b>Hurricane Earl</b>	09/28/10	1,884,973.06
<b>Tropical Storm Otto</b>	11/01/10	1,032,760.36
<b>Tropical Storm Tomas</b>	11/29/10	1,910,522.45

Finally, in October, VITEMA hosted the Annual Public Assistance Workshop territorywide for authorized representatives for governmental and certain private nonprofit entities. The workshop to provided information on FEMA's Public Assistance (Infrastructure) grant programs, which reimburse the territorial government the cost of eligible emergency protective measures, including debris removal, and can fund the repair, restoration, reconstruction or replacement of public infrastructure such as roads and bridges, water control facilities, public buildings and contents, public utilities, and parks and other recreational facilities damaged during a declared disaster. Some non-profit organizations may qualify for aid to restore certain types of facilities that include educational, utility, emergency, medical, custodial care, and other facilities that provide essential governmental types of services. FEMA's Public Assistance (Infrastructure) and HMGP grants reimburse 75 percent of the project's eligible costs.

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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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“Empowering Our Community”



Figure 14 Twenty-seven Seventh Day Adventist students joined TEEN CERT.

**A**s the emergency management agency for the Virgin Islands, VITEMA’s mandate also is to prepare citizens for all hazards. The Agency do this by periodically offering disaster preparedness and response training, by sponsoring events and by integrating skilled volunteers with the staff to augment operations. This year we developed and initiated new programs to help us accomplish this mission and revived others.

### *CERT*

This year VITEMA re-energized the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program in the St. Thomas-St. John district and launched a Teen CERT pilot program on St. Croix.

In the event of a major disaster where roads may be impassible, first responders may not be able to respond immediately to calls for emergency assistance. The CERT and Teen CERT programs train citizens in basic disaster response skills so they can assist in their neighborhoods, workplaces and schools following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.



Figure 15 CERT participants use skills learned in the classroom including search and rescue, incident command operations, medical operations and extinguishing small fires in field practices and during a mock exercise.

VITEMA in partnership with Search and Rescue trained and certified more than thirty (30) participants in St. Thomas and a class of twenty-seven (27) St. Croix Seventh Day Adventist high school students on St. Croix. Participants dedicated 20 hours to learning a range of disaster response skills, including fire suppression, light search and rescue, and CPR. The trainings culminated with mock full-scale exercises that tested all of the skills learned in the classroom and during hands-on training. As certified CERT members, they are a part of the emergency management family and will be called on to take a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their districts.

### ***2011 All-Hazards Preparedness Expo***

In addition to CERT training, on June 2 - 3, VITEMA hosted the 2011 Annual All Hazards Preparedness Expos on St. Croix and St. Thomas respectively, to heighten awareness of being prepared. More than 20 agencies, representing the local and federal government, voluntary organizations and the private sector, participated in this event. Hundreds attended on each day

and VITEMA itself used the opportunity to disseminate preparedness information and to encourage citizens to register for *VI Alert*. VITEMA worked to heighten awareness about being prepared for the hazards that may impact the Territory.

The theme of the 2011 Expo was “*Empowering the Community*,” which reflected a collective mission of arming the Virgin Islands community with information necessary to properly prepare for and respond to disasters, whether natural or manmade, early warning or no-

notice.

VITEMA’s goal is to ensure that when disaster strikes, the community is prepared for it and resilient enough to survive it. The expo

kicked off with a motorcade of emergency vehicles that rode from the east end to the west end of the islands to the venues. The motorcade was immediately followed by faith community prayer for an uneventful hurricane season.

Participants included the Department of Human Services which has oversight of shelters, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor’s Banking and Insurance Division, the VI Water and Power Authority, the VI Police Department, the American Red Cross, Search and Rescue, the VI National Guard, NOAA, FEMA-Caribbean Area Division and Home Depot.

On both days, VITEMA provided information on the Territory’s Tsunami Warning Siren Installation project, disseminated brochures on its CERT training, and assisted individuals with registering for *VI Alert*, the VI’s mass alert and notification system.

Several speakers enumerated the steps individuals, families and businesses can take to be ready and encouraged everyone to make preparedness one of their top priorities. The event was sponsored by Innovative Corp. and Banco Popular of the Virgin Islands.



Figure 16 VITEMA Director Elton Lewis gives opening remarks at the All Hazards Preparedness Expo at Sunny Isles on June 2, 2011. Below, Jennifer Matarangas-King, of Innovative Cable served as the Mistress of Ceremony.

# All Hazards Preparedness Expo

June 2, 2011, St. Croix ~June 3, 2011, St. Thomas



### ***Volunteers & VITEMA Internship Program***

Early in 2011, as the fiscal constraints prevented the hiring of new personnel, VITEMA adjusted its focus to building a strong cadre of volunteers to help fill gaps in services the agency provides to Virgin Islands residents and visitors.



Today, we boast a solid, core group of volunteers who have been imbedded in our EOCs and in our operations, where their knowledge and expertise is most-needed. Our partnership with the Virgin Islands amateur radio clubs is also a result of this posture.

In September 2011, VITEMA also initiated an Internship Program geared towards attracting students seeking work experience and to do research in emergency management and homeland security. In October 2011, a doctoral student who is pursuing studies in Public Policy Administration with an emphasis in Emergency Management joined VITEMA. The title of her research is the “Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management, a study of the United States Virgin Islands.”

### ***Amateur Radio Operators***



In June of this year, VITEMA and radio amateur clubs throughout the territory formed a working relationship to enhance emergency communications during disasters. The goal of the relationship is to assist VITEMA with development and implementation of a series of plans and activities which will enhance disaster communications.

Amateur radio has a long history of providing public service, especially in times of disasters. Many of the participating VI amateurs are experienced veterans of past disasters. “Ham radio” as it is frequently called, has proven its value in many past disasters by being a major player in providing redundant communications. It is often one of the few, if not the only, form of communication after major disasters.

Ham radio operators are licensed by the FCC and are hobbyists who utilize their talents to promote their skills and assist the public. They are only licensed to communicate with other amateurs, however, programs such as this have proven especially valuable to governmental agencies. Hams are forbidden to profit monetarily from their activities.

Local radio amateurs currently have repeaters which provide hand-held radio coverage over most areas of the territory. There are approximately 250 licensed radio amateurs in the USVI, of which about a third are active.

Participating radio amateurs will work closely with VITEMA personnel and be required to complete many of the same disaster readiness training classes as governmental officials.

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# The Way Forward

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“A Whole-Community Approach  
To Emergency Management”

**A**s we look ahead to 2012, VITEMA is ambitiously projecting the completion of the All Hazards Warning System project and the installation of tsunami signage throughout the Territory. Even more so, VITEMA is driving toward the attainment of Tsunami Ready status, which would signal to States across of the US mainland, to our Caribbean neighbors and to the rest of the world that we are prepared to manage this type of catastrophic event as a community. Among our other charges in 2012, are plans to finally secure warehousing to store life-sustaining commodities in the event a major disaster renders our ports and other main arteries impassable. The Virgin Islands’ unique geographic location demands that we plan for this possibility as help may not available within the first 48 hours of a catastrophic disaster. This has been and continues a top priority for the Agency.

As we usher in the New Year and reflect on the previous one, we cannot help but note VITEMA’s expanding role and the need to build a homegrown cadre of emergency managers. To that end, we will also steadfastly continue our discussions with the University of the Virgin Islands on developing a bachelor’s degree program in the field of emergency management for the Territory — a small investment in our community that will yield significant returns in terms of our capacity to manage incidents in the Virgin Islands.

We continue to be challenged by the lack of financial and human resources but we also resolve to continue leaning forward to accomplish these goals. VITEMA will continue to enhance its strategic planning and response capabilities for all hazards, building on our modern technology and ensuring we meet Federal requirements to secure much-needed grant funding.

In 2012, VITEMA will adopt FEMA’s new philosophical concept called the “*Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management.*” As a concept, Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests. We anticipate that this type of approach will result in a better informed community and shared understanding of community needs and capabilities. This is the way forward for the US Virgin Islands.

## Appendix A – All Hazards Warning System Map



### SIREN LOCATIONS

#### St. Croix

D.C. Canegata Ballpark, Christiansted  
 Christiansted Parking Lot  
 Legislative Building, Frederiksted

#### St. John

Cruz Bay  
 Coral Bay

#### St. Thomas

Red Hook Marina  
 Yacht Haven  
 Griffith Park  
 Cyril E. King Airport

## Appendix B - Personnel

VITEMA TOTAL BUDGETED MANPOWER POSITIONS FISCAL YEAR 2012			
	CLASSIFIED 58	UNCLASSIFIED 39	TOTAL 95
	GENERAL FUND 71	FEDERAL FUND 20	4 UNFUNDED TOTAL 95
DIVISIONS/UNITS	STX District	STT/STJ District	Total Manpower
<i>ADMINISTRATION &amp; FINANCE</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	3	7	10
VACANT	1	0	1
FEDERAL FUND			
FILLED	0	0	0
VACANT	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL ADMIN. &amp; FINANCE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>OPERATIONS - MAIN</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	2	1	3
VACANT	0	1	1
FEDERAL FUND			
FILLED	0	2	2
VACANT	1	3	4
<i>OPERATIONS - EMERG. CALL CTR.</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	22	21	43
VACANT	1	1	2
UNFUNDED POSITIONS	1	2	3
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>
<i>GRANTS MANAGEMENT - MAIN</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	0	3	3
VACANT	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUND			
FILLED	0	0	0
VACANT	0	3	3
<i>GRANTS MANAGEMENT - RECOV.</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	3	1	4
VACANT	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL GRANTS MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>PREPAREDNESS</i>			
FEDERAL FUND			
FILLED	1	6	7
VACANT	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL PREPAREDNESS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>LOGISTICS</i>			
GENERAL FUND			
FILLED	1	3	4
VACANT	0	0	0
UNFUNDED POSITION	0	1	1
FEDERAL FUND			
FILLED	1	1	2
VACANT	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL LOGISTICS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>

## Appendix C – FY 2011 Training Calendar

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<b>TRAINING</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>ICS 100</b>	February	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>ICS 200</b>	February	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>CERT</b>	February	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>Wide Area Search (PER213)</b>	March	<b>St. Thomas and St. Croix</b>
<b>NIMS</b>	April	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>WMD Treat and Risk Assessment</b>	May	<b>St. Croix</b>
<b>WMD Enhanced Treat and Risk Assessment</b>	May	<b>St. Croix</b>
<b>WMD Treat And Risk Assessment</b>	May	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>WMD Enhanced Treat and Risk Assessment</b>	May	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>ICS 100, 200, and NIMS Management</b>	June	<b>St. Thomas</b>
<b>Advance Incident Management Unified Command</b>	July	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>EOC Operations and Planning for All- Hazards</b>	August	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>Law Enforcement Prevention and Deterrence of Terrorist Acts</b>	August	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>Shooter Emergency Response</b>	September	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>WMD Tactical Operations</b>	October	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>Screening of Person by Observational Techniques</b>	November	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>
<b>Medical Preparedness and Response Bombing Incidents</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>St. Thomas, St. Croix</b>

## Appendix D – Declared Disasters

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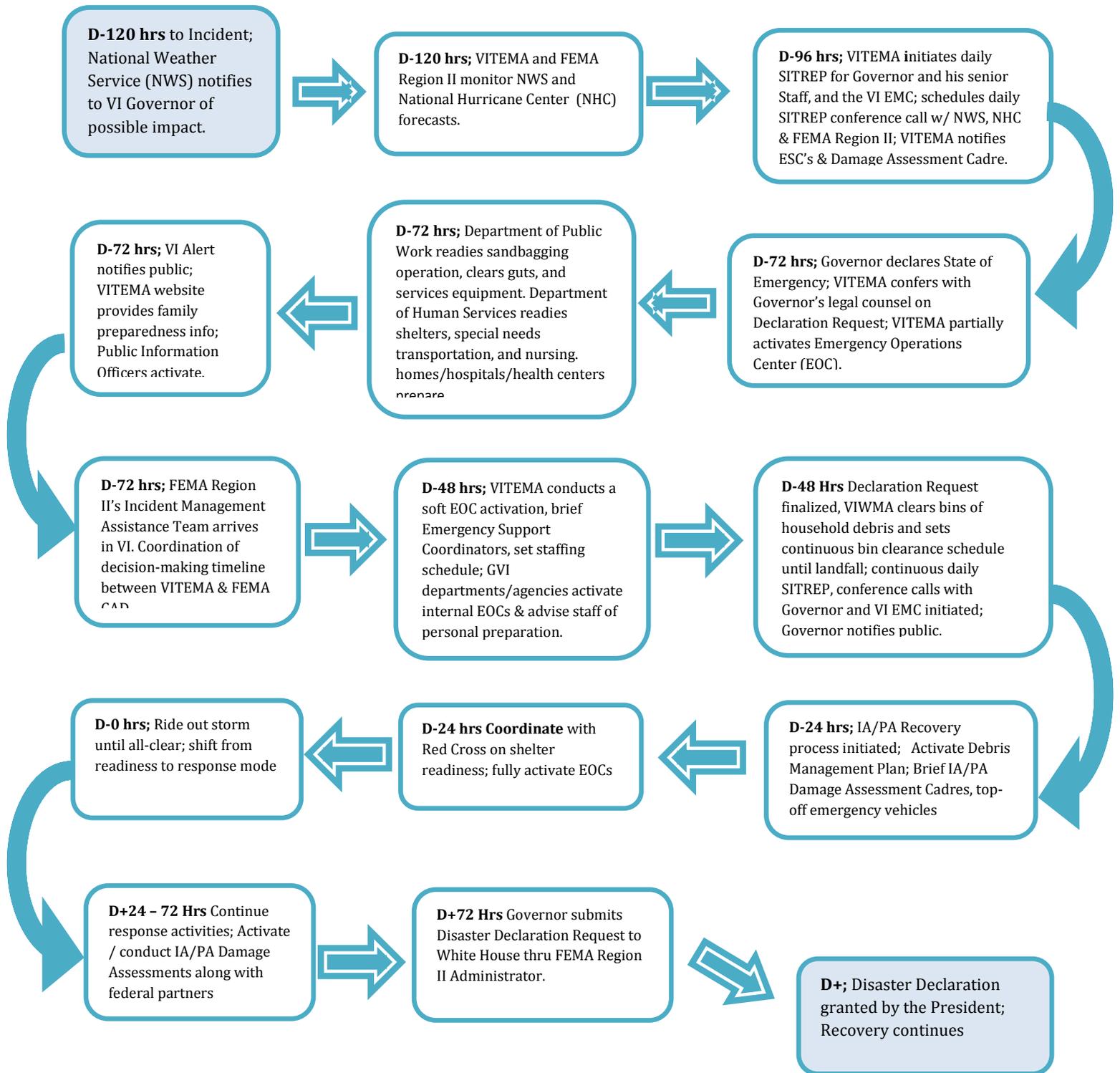
### *Closed Disasters as of Fiscal Year 2011*

<b>Disaster</b>	<b>Declared</b>	<b>Total Disaster Cost to Date</b>
<b>2003 November Flood</b>	12/09/03	\$2,251,265.96
<b>Tropical Storm Jeanne</b>	10/07/04	2,202,429.36
<b>Hurricane Omar</b>	10/29/08	8,749,119.35
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<b>Tropical Storm Tomas</b>	11/29/10	1,910,522.45

### *Open Disasters as of Fiscal Year 2011*

<b>Disasters</b>	<b>Declared</b>	<b>Total Disaster Cost</b>	<b>Date Closed</b>
<b>Hurricane Hugo</b>	09/20/1989	\$118,450,732.00	8/22/2011
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<b>Hurricane Georges</b>	09/24/1998	4,828,820.00	06/07/2011
<b>Hurricane Lenny</b>	11/23/1999	4,844,695.58	04/20/2011

## Appendix E - Disaster Process Timeline





*Special **Thank You** to Jason T. Young, Akimo I. Lionel and Ricky Gidron for creating the 'Ready USVI' Logo and the artwork featured on pages 16, 17 and 35 of this publication.*

# VITEMA

VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

