



Fire & EMS Studies

§ 9.1-203. Powers and duties of Virginia Fire Services Board; limitation.

A. The Board shall have the responsibility for promoting the coordination of the efforts of fire service organizations at the state and local levels. To these ends, it shall have the following powers and duties to:

- (4). Provide technical assistance and advice to local fire departments, other fire services organizations, and local governments;

Virginia Fire Services Board

Fire & EMS Studies

Study Committee Members:

- VFSB Member – Serves as Chair
- VFSB Member – Serves as Vice Chair
- OEMS Staff – Representative from within requesting locality
- VDFP Staff – Serves as administrative liaison
- VDFP Division Chief – Representative from Division not within requesting locality
- VDOF Staff – Representative from within requesting locality

Study Request Timeline

- Formal request received by VFSB/VDFP
- Request letter from locality presented to VFSB for approval
 - If approved, VFSB Chair appoints Study Chair & Vice Chair (both VFSB members)
 - VDFP coordinates the OEMS, DOF and VDFP Division Chief members
- Once study is approved, VDFP notifies the requesting locality and provides them with the initial study letter and questionnaire. (handout #1)



Study Request Timeline

Continued

- **First Meeting** (teleconference):
 - Scheduled once locality has completed questionnaire
 - Teleconference Meeting: participants include Study Committee; requesting locality Fire Chief/Director; County Administrator/City Manager; and in some cases the locality's governing body (i.e. BOS).
 - During the teleconference:
 - Introductions
 - Review of Study Process (meetings; site visits; study completion)
 - Discussion of Study Request (themes)
 - Schedule Site Visit

Study Request Timeline

Continued

- **Study Team develops list of sample questions**
 - Generated from theme areas and other usual areas of study
- **VDFP Staff arranges logistics of the Site Visit**
- **VDFP Staff gathers background information from the requesting locality, such as:**
 - Maps, By-Laws, Ordinances, Budgets, VFIRS Data, etc.
- **Study Team Conducts Site Visit**
 - Meets with all relevant Fire and EMS organizations/entities
 - Conducts a Town Hall Meeting for general public input

Study Request Timeline

Continued

- **Study Team Compiles Site Visit Notes**
 - Study notes compiled by VDFP Staff
 - Study notes organized into 'themes'
- **Study Report written from Site Visit Notes**
 - VDFP staff writes study Report
 - Study report sent to Committee to review
 - Study draft sent to requesting locality for technical review
 - Once finalized, the study report is sent to the VFSB members for their review and approval for release

Study Completion!

- Final Study report is provided to VFSB members; County Manager/City Manager; Fire Chief/Public Safety Director; Locality Governing Body (i.e. BOS); and each Fire/Rescue dept.
- Final report findings presented to the requesting locality's Governing Body.
- 1 year after study completion, the Agency sends out the follow-up feedback survey. (handout #2)



Questions?





COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Michael Reilly
VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD CHAIR

Virginia Department of Fire Program *Virginia Fire Services Board*

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Thank you for submitting a request for technical assistance from the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB).

You may be aware that the Fire Services Board is established (§ 9.1-202, *Code of Virginia*) as a policy board in which it is specifically charged by statute to promulgate public policies or regulations. The Board consists of 15 members representing various industries relevant to the fire service. One of the numerous powers and duties of the Board includes the provision of technical assistance and advice to local fire departments, other fire services organizations, and local governments.

In order to provide an excellent level of service to requesting agencies/entities, a specific process has been established. To ensure fairness and equity, the requesting agencies/entities agree that:

- Study results will be openly presented to the elected/appointed governing body, the requesting agency as well as any additional requesting organization(s);
- All direct expenses are to be incurred by the local government;
- The time frame noted for technical assistance will be accepted; and,
- All relevant organizational data will be made available to the study committee; and

- A central point of contact will be provided to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. Please ensure the contact is available Monday – Friday from 9 am to 5 pm, and nighttime and weekends as needed.
- Within 6 to 9 months of the Study completion, the Department of Fire Programs will email the locality a feedback follow-up survey. It is requested that the locality complete the survey so the Agency and Board can gain valuable in-sight into the success and areas of improvements for future studies. Your participation in the feedback survey is important to the Agency and Board.

Further, to ensure that VFSB has some initial information, enclosed is a brief pre-study Self-Assessment Questionnaire. This information enables the VFSB to evaluate your request more completely and to assign appropriate resources. We ask that this be returned within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

As the VFSB Chair, I will appoint a VFSB Member as the chair of your study engagement. The VDFP will appoint a division chief to the study as well. Additionally, if your study request includes a review of EMS activities, a representative from the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) will be assigned to this committee as well.

Your study will include the identification of challenges and strengths within your delivery system. Based on the noted concerns and issues, the study will include recommendations to correct those concerns and issues. Alternative choices for resolution of the concerns may also be offered. In effect, your study will be a “high-level” review of observations and recommendations. The implementation or full development of the recommendations would be the responsibility of the local government and service delivery agencies.

On behalf of the Virginia Fire Services Board, thank you very much for your interest in our technical services and we look forward to working with you and your organization.

Sincerely,

Virginia Fire Services Board Chair

FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Name:

Title:

Locality Name:

1. This request is being made by:
 - Local Fire Department
 - Other Fire Services Organization
 - Local Government
 - Other: Please specify

2. Can you provide a current organizational chart?
(If yes, please email it to policyoffice@vdfp.virginia.gov)
 - Yes No

3. What best describes your fire operations response?
 - Career
 - Volunteer
 - Combination (both career and volunteer)

4. What best describes your EMS operations response?
 - Career
 - Volunteer
 - Combination (both career and volunteer)

Organization Establishment

5. Is your organization (fire or EMS agency/department(s)) established by local or county government ordinance?
 - Yes
 - No

Other:

6. Are all of the organizations (fire or EMS agency/department(s)) participating in this study established by a local government or county government ordinance?

- Yes
- No
- Other:

7. Does the local government's establishing ordinance clearly authorize all services that are provided by your organization (fire or EMS agency/department(s))?

- Yes
- No

8. Does your organization have stated short and long term goals?

- Fire
- EMS
- Other:

Centralized Authority

9. Do you operate under a centralized fire and EMS authority?

- Yes
- No

10. If yes to the above, is there a position that oversees the central fire and EMS organization:

- Yes
- No

Funding and Resources

11. Does the local government provide funding for?

- Fire
- EMS
- No funding provided

12. Does your organization charge for?

- Fire Services
- EMS Services
- We do not charge

13. Does the jurisdiction/locality government own the:
(Check all that apply)

- Fire apparatus
- EMS vehicles
- Station(s)

14. Does your jurisdiction/locality have a:

- Fire Marshal
- Public Fire and Life Safety Educator

15. Does your jurisdiction/locality have:

- A Coordinated Centralized Training Program for Fire
- A Fire Training Officer
- A Coordinated Centralized Training Program for EMS
- An EMS Training Officer

Standardization

16. Has your jurisdiction/locality adopted the State Fire Prevention Code?

- Yes
- No

17. Does your jurisdiction/locality provide public fire and life safety activities?

Yes

No

18. Does your jurisdiction/locality have formal written Mutual or Automatic Aid Agreements with other jurisdiction(s)/locality(s)?

Fire

EMS

We do not have formal written Mutual or Automatic Aid agreements

19. Does your jurisdiction/locality have current, written, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and/or Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) that all organizations within the jurisdiction/locality follow?

Fire

EMS

We do not have SOPs and/or SOGs

20. Does your jurisdiction/locality have established written Response Time Criteria?

Fire

EMS

We do not have written Response Time Criteria

21. Does your jurisdiction/locality have centralized and structured dispatch criteria with predetermined response criteria?

Fire

EMS

We do not have an centralized, structured dispatch criteria

22. Does your dispatch center practice Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)?

Yes

No

23. Is your jurisdiction/locality NIMS compliant?

- Yes
- No

Staffing and Information Management

24. Does your jurisdiction/locality have a written policy for minimum staffing level for:

- Fire
- EMS
- We do not have a written policy for minimum staffing levels.

25. Does your jurisdiction/locality have a structured Recruitment and Retention Program?

- Career Fire
- Volunteer Fire
- Career EMS
- Volunteer EMS
- We do not have a program

26. Does your jurisdiction/locality have a centralized data collection system?

- Fire - VFIRS
- EMS - PPDR
- EMS - VPHIB

Population and Study

27. What is the daytime population of the area being served?

28. What is the nighttime population of the area being served?

29. Have you had a similar study conducted within the past five years?

- Fire
- EMS
- Other:

30. What prompted your request for this study?

Please provide detailed comments:



**Virginia Department of Fire Programs
Virginia Fire Services Board**

Fire & EMS Study Questionnaire

In an effort to constantly improve our processes, the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB), the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) is soliciting your feedback from your experience with the Fire & EMS Study.

We appreciate you taking the time to answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

We believe that the information is of vital importance and will assist in improving the Board's development and delivery of locality requested studies.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Jurisdiction: _____

Signature

Date

Please indicate your opinion of the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The final study was easy to understand, interpret and use.					
The final study included findings and recommendations applicable to the locality.					
The study was completed in a timely manner.					
Site visits from the study committee were well scheduled and allowed for sufficient comment time.					
The study included applicable findings related to the fire service delivery of the locality.					
The study included applicable findings related to the EMS service delivery of the locality.					
Expectations of the study were clearly defined up front and met by the committee.					
The locality was satisfied with communications throughout the study.					
The Board of Supervisors was satisfied with the final report and presentation.					
The locality was satisfied with the overall process and final report of the Fire & EMS study.					
The study included applicable findings related to the 911 service delivery of the locality.					

Please answer the below questions. Please feel free to include as much information as necessary to answer each question. Your feedback will be use to continue to improve and enhance the Fire & EMS Studies conducted by the VFSB.

What did you like most about the Fire & EMS Study process?

What did you like least about the Fire & EMS Study process?

What other recommendations could be made to improve the Fire & EMS Study process?

What problems or issues were encountered while attempting to implement the study recommendations?

Of the recommendations made by the Study, what has been implemented? If nothing, why not?

For the portions of the study implemented, what has succeeded? Why? If they didn't succeed, why not?

Additional Comments:

Would your jurisdiction be interested in appearing before the VFSB for an exit interview? Yes No

