



Virginia Emergency Management Association Institutions of Higher Education Caucus

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

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Foreword and Document History

This document was created and approved by the elected Board of Directors for the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Caucus of the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA) in 2023. The Strategic Plan presents an overview of the Caucus and provides strategic direction for its current and future leadership through the year 2026. It will be reviewed and updated annually or as needed by the Caucus Vice-Chair, with a new Strategic Plan to be developed for 2026-2029. This is the third version of the IHE Caucus Strategic Plan.



Introduction

The Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA) Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Caucus was established in March 2012. The Caucus was created to provide opportunities for public and private college/university emergency management (EM) professionals to be involved in VEMA, gain support from other EM professionals working in localities/jurisdictions across the Commonwealth of Virginia, and serve as a forum to advocate for change to State legislative requirements placed on colleges/universities. Comprised of four (4) peer-elected officers, the Caucus Board of Directors is charged with providing executive leadership for EM professionals at colleges/universities throughout the Commonwealth.

MISSION

The mission of the VEMA IHE Caucus is to collaboratively support the growth and sustainment of high-quality emergency management programming for Institutions of Higher Education within the Commonwealth of Virginia through advocacy, information sharing, and professional development.

VISION

The VEMA IHE Caucus strives to be the premiere collaborative organization supporting and advocating for emergency management at institutions of higher education within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PURPOSE

Strategic planning facilitates continuity between elected officer transitions and supplies direction for Caucus growth. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to outline the goals of the current Caucus Board of Directors and provide the membership with an opportunity to collectively shape future Caucus goals.

SCOPE

This Strategic Plan covers a period of three (3) years, from March 2023 to March 2026.

Caucus Roles and Responsibilities

The officers and/or individuals identified in this section are assigned specific roles and responsibilities as pertaining to Caucus business and this Strategic Plan.

CHAIR

The Caucus Chair serves a two-year elected term and is responsible for the overall administration of all Caucus business and established working groups. For the purpose of this Strategic Plan, the Chair is responsible for the development and implementation of the goals outlined by the Caucus Board of Directors.



VICE-CHAIR

The Caucus Vice-Chair serves a two-year elected term and is responsible for the overall administration of all Caucus business and established working groups in the absence of the Chair. The Vice-Chair is also responsible for maintaining and updating governing documents and the Caucus Strategic Plan.

SECRETARY

The Caucus Secretary serves a two-year elected term and is responsible for ensuring all official Caucus business is documented, including but not limited to issuance of meeting agendas and minutes. In addition, the Secretary is responsible for maintaining and updating the Caucus content on the VEMA website. The Secretary shall, for the purposes of this Strategic Plan, develop a method for tracking and documenting the progress of individual goals outlined herein.

ELECTED BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

The Caucus Elected Board Representative serves a two-year elected term and is responsible for representing the Caucus on the VEMA Board of Directors—serving as an intermediary between VEMA and the Caucus. For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, the Elected Board Representative shall be responsible for any part of a goal that involves communicating or requesting assistance from the VEMA Board of Directors or Executive Board.

MEMBER

Caucus Members are responsible for actively participating in the business of the Caucus and VEMA. Accordingly, Members may be requested to enlist individual expertise or leverage relationships to assist or lead in the furtherance of one or more goals outlined in this Strategic Plan.

Strategic Planning Method and Process

At the IHE Caucus annual meeting held in March 2022, the Board of Directors announced plans to begin working on development of the new Caucus Strategic Plan. Caucus membership was encouraged throughout the planning development with the Board of Directors facilitating an assessment through a survey that examined the Caucus needs. The Board of Directors used the survey results and answered the questions of “what have we accomplished over the previous strategic plan” and “what do we want to do over the next three years” to serve as the Strategic Plan foundation.

Using the input from the survey, and answers to the aforementioned questions, the Board of Directors developed the draft Strategic Plan for final presentation to the Caucus membership at the annual Virginia Emergency Management Symposium (VEMS) meeting in March 2023.



Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Milestones

The VEMA IHE Caucus 2023-2026 Strategic Plan is organized into goals, objectives, and milestones.

GOALS

General in nature but clear in concept, goals represent strategic ends toward which fundamental Caucus program elements are directed. Goals are subject to review and revision during the annual IHE Caucus meeting at VEMS.

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan goals are:

1. Expand Professional Development Opportunities
2. Programmatic and Professional Collaboration
3. Information Coordination

OBJECTIVES

Objectives outline practical, achievable initiatives which directly support the development and enhancement of Caucus programs under the auspices of its strategic goals. Objectives will annually be re-evaluated and revised as necessary during the IHE Caucus meeting at VEMS. *For the list of objectives, see Appendix A.*

MILESTONES

Each objective is broken down into measurable milestones that provide a realistic operational strategy and timeframe/accountability method for accomplishing each objective. Milestones which have not been reached during their designated timeframe are assumed to be ongoing and will be continually evaluated as needed. The status for each milestone will be reported as a percentage of completion. For milestones listed with a frequency (e.g., annually), the percentage of completion is relative to the planning period. Therefore, a milestone with an operational timeframe of “annually” which is completed on time will increase by 33% each year until complete. *For the list of milestones, see Appendix A.*

Status updates for each milestone will be presented annually during the IHE Caucus meeting at VEMS, which will also be outlined in Appendix C of this plan.



Method and Schedule for Plan Implementation, Evaluation, Maintenance, and Revision

As per the Caucus By-Laws, the Caucus Chair maintains the primary leadership role in Strategic Plan implementation. The Caucus Vice-Chair is responsible for development, evaluation, maintenance, and revision of the Strategic Plan, to include the continual facilitation, coordination, and tracking of its goals, objectives, and milestones. It may be necessary for other Caucus Members to assist with and/or assume responsibility for some elements of the Strategic Plan, as requested and necessary.

Objectives and milestones of the Plan will be reviewed by the Caucus Chair annually, who will delegate/coordinate appropriate assignments to/with Caucus membership. One or more Caucus Members may be assigned to overseeing one or more objectives and/or milestones.

The Caucus Chair maintains the authority to implement Strategic Plan updates and revisions on an as-needed basis, in accordance with provisions set forth in the Caucus By-Laws.

The Strategic Plan will be distributed to Caucus Members for review and evaluation during the IHE Caucus annual meeting at VEMS. Membership will be provided with a presentation of the goals, objectives, milestones, and associated timelines set forth in the Strategic Plan. This presentation will also explain progress made on overall Strategic Plan implementation to-date. Caucus Member feedback will be solicited to identify Strategic Plan elements that should be revised or updated, and a vote of approval may be requested for any major revisions.



Appendix A: VEMA IHE Caucus Three-Year Strategic Action Plan

Note: Operational Timeframes align with calendar year (CY) quarters.

Goal 1: Expand Professional Development Opportunities		
Communities look to emergency managers for leadership and guidance during times of crisis. Developing skill sets and learning best practices can provide confidence in one's ability to lead their organization. The VEMA IHE Caucus can provide the platform to support member needs and create an environment that encourages professional development. Professional development can enhance a member's status on their campus while strengthening the capabilities and skills for career growth.		
Milestones	Operational Timeframe	Status
Objective 1.1: Provide professional development opportunities to the higher education emergency management community.		
1.1.1: Provide members with at least two training opportunities on an annual basis.	Annually	0%
1.1.2: Facilitate at least one professional development opportunity that is available in-person or virtually to all members on an annual basis.	Annually	0%
Objective 1.2: Establish a mentorship program for members interested in professional certification.		
1.2.1: Establishment of a mentorship program for professional certification.	2024	0%
1.2.2: Achieve at least 50% of members in the mentorship program to earn certification within 3 years of beginning enrollment.	2027	0%



Goal 2: Programmatic and Professional Collaboration

The nature of emergency management typically results in a less than optimal volume of resources to effect the optimal program. These resource challenges are common to all programs, and the solution can be addressed through partnerships and collaboration across programs. The VEMA IHE Caucus is uniquely positioned to facilitate collaborative efforts across programs and emergency managers throughout the commonwealth.

Milestones	Operational Timeframe	Status
Objective 2.1: Create networking opportunities for IHE EM representatives throughout the calendar year.		
2.1.1: Facilitate two or more in-person (when available) events, annually, with programming to support networking opportunities.	Annually	0%
2.1.2: Add caucus members to VEMA committees with emphasis on committees that are applicable to the caucus.	Annually	0%
Objective 2.2: Expand, develop, and improve communication across VEMA IHE EM representatives.		
2.2.1: Leverage the Basecamp platform to facilitate topical conversations across the membership through the development of topic-oriented Basecamp Projects.	2024	0%
2.2.2: Create, distribute, and analyze a survey to all members with respect to communications challenges, potential improvements, and topical interests.	2023	0%
2.2.3: Implement opportunities for improvement from 2.2.2 survey.	2024	0%



Goal 3: Information Coordination		
To make informed decisions guiding IHE EM program development, IHE emergency managers need to be able to draw from a convenient, centralized source of information to identify compliance requirements, best practices, lessons learned, legislative updates, emerging threats and hazards, and other relevant topics.		
Milestones	Operational Timeframe	Status
Objective 3.1: Create and implement mechanisms for sharing and/or tracking information relevant to IHE emergency management.		
3.1.1: Develop means to cultivate and track (as applicable) relevant EM topics.	2023	0%
3.1.2: Develop, implement, and market a process to promote awareness of and support content generation for 3.1.1.	2023-2024	0%
3.1.3: Maintain the knowledge base through intentional focus by tasking at least one member annually to manage growth.	2024	0%
Objective 3.2: Expand opportunities and means by which Virginia IHEs can partner and collaborate on emergency management topics, challenges, and solutions.		
3.2.1: Implement a program to promote NIMAA participation of VEMA IHE members in excess of 80%.	2026	0%
3.2.2: Conduct or facilitate one or more educational and learning opportunities, such as a workshop or focused discussion each year, with emphasis on relevant emergency management topics.	Annually	0%



Appendix B: Areas of Emphasis

Multiple objectives and sub-objectives of this document are written to focus on the implementation of programming, solutions, and events that will generate value to the membership without listing specific areas of emphasis. This appendix includes the areas of emphasis as both a means to develop operational definitions for each, and document the specific topical areas by which the success of these objectives and subobjectives will be measured. This topic focuses on those programs, operations, or administration that return positive results, are repeatable, and are generalizable. Members can benefit from shared successes as a means to learn from the experience of other institutions. Each of the following is an area of emphasis for this strategic planning period:

- Lessons learned – Knowledge, techniques, documentation, or otherwise valuable information obtained through experience in real-world events and exercises.
- Best practices – Actions, methods, approaches, and other practices that have demonstrated success across multiple agencies, institutions, or geographical areas. While not necessarily measured as better than other practices, these include elements with established successful track records.
- Legislative updates – Emerging regulatory or legislative information that has the potential to impact emergency management programming at Virginia Institutions of Higher Education, and is known to the VEMA IHE caucus.
- Threats and hazards – Actions or occurrences that may adversely impact the public safety or business continuity of member institutions consistent with generally acceptable definitions of each.
- Business continuity – The concepts, planning, and programming relative to institutional business functions and general operations.
- Other pertinent EM information – Other information, that in the view of the VEMA IHE caucus, could be valuable to member institutions, their personnel, and their programming.



Appendix C: Annual Review & Updates

This section will capture status updates and notes of the strategic plan’s goals, objectives, and milestones to create a more efficient method for the annual review. The first update will be presented during the 2024 IHE Caucus annual meeting.



Institutions of
Higher Education
Caucus