

2026 Status Update: Incident Response Assessment Progress

February 24, 2026



DEPARTMENT OF
**EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS,
PREPAREDNESS
AND RESPONSE**

Purpose of Today's Update

Purpose of the Incident Response Assessment (IRA):

- The City commissioned an independent assessment following the January 2025 winter storm and water emergency.
- The goal: Identify gaps and concrete improvements to strengthen future responses.
- Implementation of recommendations is a phased effort. This update focuses on actions that have been completed to strengthen future emergency response.

Summary of Progress to Date

At a Glance

- Key emergency operations procedures have been formalized.
- EOC staffing, coordination, and briefing structures have been strengthened.
- Communications and documentation practices have improved.
- Additional recommendations are underway.

Operation Center (EOC) Activation & Staffing

Completed Actions

- ✓ **12-hour operational periods** and **72-hour staffing** expectations formally established. **(1.08)**
- ✓ Early engagement of Human resources for **EOC worker wellness**. **(1.04 A)**
- ✓ Formalized **EOC activation notification** procedures to ensure timely citywide stakeholder engagement. **(3.04) (3.01)**

Why This Matters

- Reduce staff fatigue
- Increased watch stander effectiveness
- Predictable training pathways/professional development
- Clearer expectations for departments
- More sustainable operations during extended incidents



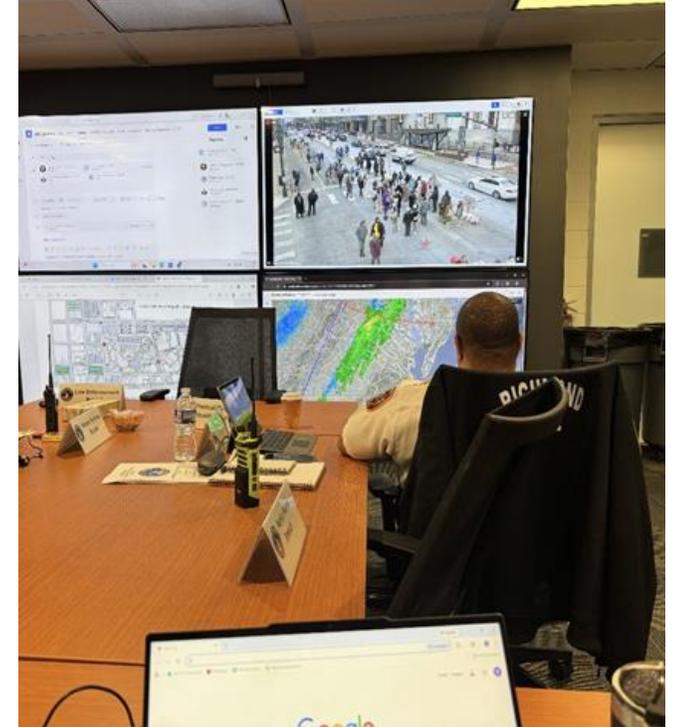
Command & Coordination

Completed Actions

- ✓ Clarified expectations for **Emergency Management Liaisons to provide timely technical expertise** and ensure early integration of subject-matter experts into incident response. **(3.07)**
- ✓ Formalized a **structured briefing and meeting cadence** in the updated EOP to support coordinated decision-making. **(3.09 B)**
- ✓ **Strengthened communication between the Policy Group and the full EOC** to improve alignment during incident response. **(3.03)**
- ✓ Regular **situational briefings formalized** during activations **(4.01)**
- ✓ Defined and communicated a **reporting cadence** to support organized emergency response coordination. **(4.04 C)**
- ✓ Established an **EOC support team** trained to utilize WebEOC for resource request tracking and coordination. **(6.05 A)**

Why This Matters

- Faster decision-making, coordination, and situational awareness.
- Strengthens resource tracking and accountability.
- Ensures an up-to-date Common Operating Picture on requests for assistance including who is the requester, who has accepted the request, how long it has taken, and when it's completed



Information Management & Documentation

Completed Actions

- ✓ **WebEOC established as the required system** for all resource requests. **(2.10 B)**
- ✓ **Activity log designated** as the official record of EOC actions. **(4.04 B)**
- ✓ **Standard Situation Report (SitRep) template** identified and implemented. **(4.04 A)**
- ✓ Implemented **structured, well-documented EOC status updates** to support operational planning. **(4.02)**
- ✓ Integrated **GIS staff into the EOC support team** to enhance real-time data collection and situational awareness. **(4.03)**
- ✓ Improved EOC documentation by maintaining **updated contact lists and requiring sign-in records** for in-person and virtual activations. **(2.09)**

Why This Matters

- Improved situational awareness and operational planning.
- Strengthens documentation and accountability.
- Provides an up to the minute and actionable Common Operating Picture (COP), ensuring cross communication with other City offices, State agencies and potentially Federal assets.

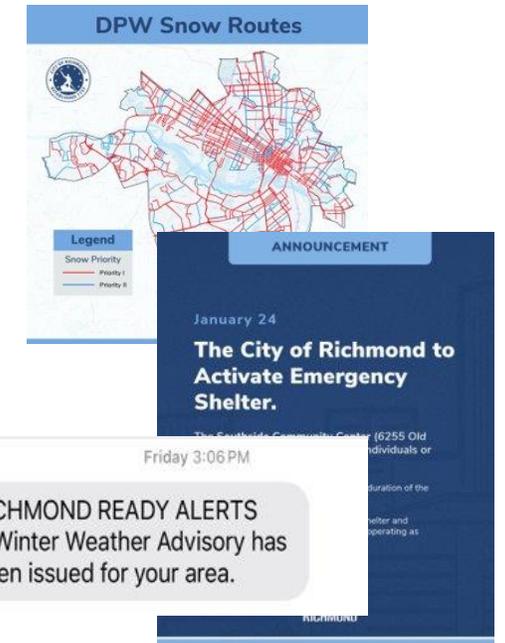
Communications & Public Information

Completed Actions

- ✓ Standardized **Richmond Ready** alert procedures and trained partners on coordinated emergency notification processes. **(5.03)**
- ✓ **Strengthened coordination between the EOC and 311 call center** to ensure accurate, vetted public information during incidents. **(5.06)**
- ✓ **Standardized City Council communications** through a designated liaison and consistent briefing cadence. **(3.08)**

Why This Matters

- Ensures timely, accurate, and consistent emergency information.
- Strengthens information flow to the public and City leadership.
- Increases public safety by providing vetted and verified information to the public directly.
- Allows for the disruption of disinformation from social media and the ill-intentioned.



Planning & Preparedness

Completed Actions

- ✓ Developed a **multi-year, FEMA-aligned Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP)** establishing citywide preparedness priorities and baseline EOC training requirements. **(1.01 A)**
- ✓ Strengthened **After Action Report processes** to support continuous improvement following incidents.
- ✓ Established a **structured schedule for developing and updating emergency plans** and integrated it into the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP). **(1.09 A)**
- ✓ Strengthened emergency preparedness accountability by **publishing emergency plans** in PowerDMS and requiring acknowledgment by response personnel. **(1.05 B)**
- ✓ Developed **department cost recovery roles, tools, and training** to support coordinated financial recovery efforts during incidents. **(7.02)**

Why This Matters

- Strengthens long-term preparedness and accountability
- Improves financial recovery after emergencies.
- Ensures establishment or, and compliance to, positional training requirements making the EOC greatly more effective and prepared.



How We're Strengthening the City's Preparedness Framework

- Implementation of the **Integrated Preparedness Plan**
 - **(1.07,3.05,4.04)**
- Incorporation of the **External Affairs Annex** to the EOP
 - **(3.02,3.06B,3.09A)**
- Finalization of the **Crisis Communications Plan**
 - **(4.05,5.02,5.08)**
- Finalization of the Updated **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)**
 - **(2.08,3.05,3.09,4.04)**
- Develop a central repository of **MOUs and Mutual Aid agreements**
 - **(2.04)**
- **Joint Preparedness Committee** (including external stakeholders)
 - **(2.05,8.01)**

Key Takeaways

- Significant operational improvements have already been implemented.
- Additional enhancements are advancing through structured planning and policy updates.
- Preparedness is now embedded into policy, training, and continuous improvement processes, including system refinements informed by real-world use.

Questions?

