

VA INTEGRATED OPERATIONS CENTER (VA IOC)

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Directive establishes specific Department policy for the VA Integrated Operations Center.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:** The Directive provides VA policy and responsibilities for the VA Integrated Operations Center.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness, Office of Emergency Management is responsible for the contents of this Directive.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE AND HANDBOOK:**
 - VA Directive 0321 Serious Incident Reports
 - VA Handbook 0322 VA Integrated Operations Center
- 5. RESCISSION:** None

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/

Roger W. Baker
Assistant Secretary for
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/s/

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Assistant Secretary for
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VETERANS AFFAIRS INTEGRATED OPERATIONS CENTER (VA IOC)

1. PURPOSE: To establish policy for the Department of Veterans Affairs Integrated Operations Center in order to raise readiness, provide services to Veterans and the Nation, and protect people and assets continuously and in time of crisis.

2. POLICY

a. VA will establish and operate an Integrated Operations Center (VA IOC) under the direction of the Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness (OSP), in coordination with Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials, in order to provide the Secretary a single office responsible for proactively collecting, coordinating, and analyzing information in order to make recommendations to VA leadership.

b. VA Watch Officers from OSP will staff the VA IOC with 24-hour coverage.

c. Administrations and Staff Offices/Organizations will provide Watch Officer coverage to the IOC as follows:

(1) 24 Hour Coverage:

- (a) Veterans Health Administration;
- (b) Veterans Benefits Administration;
- (c) National Cemetery Administration;
- (d) Office of Information and Technology.

(2) Daily Coverage:

- (a) Office of Human Resources and Administration;
- (b) Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs.

(3) On-Call Coverage: All other VA Staff Offices/Organizations.

d. The VA IOC will serve as the Department's fusion point for integrated planning and data analysis to present recommendations to VA Senior Leaders and to coordinate with stakeholders and Federal Departments and Agencies.

e. The VA IOC will provide a central location for the synchronization and coordination of information, intelligence, and threat communication that have the potential to impact VA.

f. The VA IOC will facilitate timely decision-making by providing situational awareness and fully coordinated recommendations relative to developing and ongoing events and incidents that have the potential to impact VA.

g. The VA IOC will serve as the Department's fusion center for coordinating all VA assets that may impact VA's ability to perform the Primary Mission Essential Function (PMEF) and the associated supporting Mission Essential Functions (MEFs).

h. Nothing in this policy for reporting serious incidents changes existing reporting requirements under 38 CFR 1.200 - 1.205 (Referrals of Information Regarding Criminal Violations).

i. In the event of an actual or alleged data breach, notify the information security officer, privacy officer, and supervisor, and follow other established procedures as provided by VA Handbooks 6500 "Information Security Program, and 6500.2 "Management of Security and Privacy Incidents".

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Secretary of Veterans Affairs:

(1) Directs the establishment of the VA Integrated Operations Center;

(2) Designates the Assistant Secretary of Operations, Security, and Preparedness as the Department's Senior VA Official for the oversight, management and operation of the VA IOC.

b. Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness:

(1) Serves as the Senior VA Official for the oversight, management and operation of the VA IOC;

(2) Delegates management of daily VA IOC operations to the Director, VA IOC;

(3) Delegates authority to VA Watch Officers to initiate contact with personnel throughout VA;

(4) Establishes and presides over a VA IOC working group in order to provide coordination and oversight of the VA IOC;

(5) Ensures VA IOC policies and plans are consistent with national directives, policies, plans, and security requirements;

(6) Ensures the VA IOC utilizes the Incident Command System to enable transition from normal operations to crisis management;

(7) Provides coordination of information, intelligence, and threat communication that has the potential to impact VA;

(8) Determines National Security clearance levels for VA IOC Staff;

(9) In coordination with the VA IOC working group:

- (a) Develops VA IOC Directives, Handbooks, and Standard Operating Procedures;
- (b) Develops and submits VA IOC budget;
- (c) Determines appropriate staffing levels for the VA IOC;
- (d) Develops VA IOC professional development training and certification program.

c. Director, VA Integrated Operations Center:

- (1) Maintains contact with Federal Departments and Agencies and VA liaisons to Federal Departments and Agencies;
- (2) Maintains contact with Federal, State and Local Departments and Agencies in the National Capital Region;
- (3) Maintains situational and operational awareness on the status of VA PMEF and MEFs;
- (4) Receives, analyzes, disseminates, tracks, and archives information on incidents, information, intelligence, and threat communication that have the potential to impact VA;
- (5) Issues Request for Information and Request for Action to all Administrations and Staff Offices/Organizations regarding but not limited to: reporting requirements, information sharing, operational status, personnel accountability, asset (personnel/equipment) location, availability and deployability, and continuity of operations;
- (6) Produces situation reports;
- (7) Tracks and reports the VA Line of Succession;
- (8) Monitors and alerts appropriate VA personnel of changes to Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government conditions, and provides Continuity status to Federal Departments and Agencies in order to meet Department continuity requirements;
- (9) Maintains rosters of Administration and Staff Office/Organization Watch Officers.

d. Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries and other Key Officials:

- (1) Designates a representative to serve on the VA IOC working group;
- (2) Provides personnel who are knowledgeable and experienced to serve as their IOC Watch Officer with delegated authority to initiate contact throughout their respective Administration or Staff Office/Organization as representatives of the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, or Key Official;
- (3) Ensures compliance with training requirements for VA IOC personnel;
- (4) Ensures compliance with National Security clearance for VA IOC personnel;

(5) Responds to VA IOC Request for Information and Request for Action regarding, but not limited to: reporting requirements, information sharing, operational status, personnel accountability, asset (personnel/equipment) location, availability and deployability, and continuity of operations.

e. VA Watch Officers:

(1) Serves as representatives of the Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness;

(2) Executes the Roles and Responsibilities in section 3 c. of this Directive;

(3) Has authority to initiate contact with personnel throughout VA;

(4) Has authority to issue Request for Information and Request for Action to all Administrations and Staff Offices/Organizations regarding but not limited to: reporting requirements, information sharing, operational status, personnel accountability, asset (personnel/equipment) location, availability and deployability, and continuity of operations.

f. VA Administration and Staff Office/Organization Watch Officers:

(1) Serves as representatives of their respective Administration or Staff Office/Organization;

(2) Executes the Roles and Responsibilities in section 3 c. of this Directive;

(3) Has authority to initiate contact throughout their respective Administration or Staff Office/Organization serving as representatives of their Under Secretary or Assistant Secretary;

(4) Has authority to issue Request for Information and Request for Action to all Administrations and Staff Offices/Organizations regarding but not limited to: reporting requirements, information sharing, operational status, personnel accountability, asset (personnel/equipment) location, availability and deployability, and continuity of operations.

g. VA Integrated Operations Center Working Group:

(1) Assists in development of VA IOC Directives, Handbooks, and Standard Operating Procedures;

(2) Provides input to VA IOC budget;

(3) Assists in determining appropriate staffing level for the VA IOC;

(4) Assists in developing VA IOC professional development training and certification program.

4. DEFINITIONS

(1) 24-Hour Coverage: A physical presence in the VA IOC on a 24-hour basis, to include weekends and holidays.

(2) Daily Coverage: A physical presence in the VA IOC during normal duty hours.

(3) On-Call Coverage: Ability to provide personnel to the VA IOC on an as needed basis, to include overnights, weekends, and holidays, and during OPM declared government closures.

(4) VA Watch Officer: Watch Officers from the OSP who represent both the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for OSP. VA Watch Officers will provide the coordination function within the IOC.

(5) Administration and Staff Office/Organization Watch Officer: Representatives from the Administrations and Staff Offices/Organizations who represent their Undersecretary, Assistant Secretary, or Key Official in the IOC. They will be referred to as VHA Watch Officer, OI&T Watch Officer, etc.

(6) RFA – A request issued from the VA IOC to external or internal VA stakeholders to execute a specific action

(7) RFI – A request issued from the VA IOC to external or internal VA stakeholders to obtain specific information.