

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2020 SESSION

CHAPTER 88

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-221 and 2.2-230 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Department of Military Affairs; change of secretariat.

[H 990]

Approved March 3, 2020

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.2-221 and 2.2-230 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 2.2-221. Position established; agencies for which responsible; additional powers and duties.

A. The position of Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security (the Secretary) is created. The Secretary shall be responsible to the Governor for the following agencies: the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority, Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Criminal Justice Services, Department of Forensic Science, Virginia Parole Board, Department of Emergency Management, ~~Department of Military Affairs~~, Department of State Police, Department of Fire Programs, and Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council. The Governor may, by executive order, assign any other state executive agency to the Secretary, or reassign any agency listed above to another Secretary.

B. The Secretary shall by reason of professional background have knowledge of ~~military affairs~~, law enforcement, public safety, or emergency management and preparedness issues, in addition to familiarity with the structure and operations of the federal government and of the Commonwealth.

Unless the Governor expressly reserves such power to himself, the Secretary shall:

1. Work with and through others, including federal, state, and local officials as well as the private sector, to develop a seamless, coordinated security and preparedness strategy and implementation plan.

2. Serve as the point of contact with the federal Department of Homeland Security.

3. Provide oversight, coordination, and review of all disaster, emergency management, and terrorism management plans for the state and its agencies in coordination with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and other applicable state agencies.

4. Work with federal officials to obtain additional federal resources and coordinate policy development and information exchange.

5. Work with and through appropriate members of the Governor's Cabinet to coordinate working relationships between state agencies and take all actions necessary to ensure that available federal and state resources are directed toward safeguarding Virginia and its citizens.

6. Designate a Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator to ensure that all communications-related preparedness federal grant requests from state agencies and localities are used to enhance interoperability. The Secretary shall ensure that the annual review and update of the statewide interoperability strategic plan is conducted as required in § 2.2-222.2. The Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator shall establish an advisory group consisting of representatives of state and local government and constitutional offices, broadly distributed across the Commonwealth, who are actively engaged in activities and functions related to communications interoperability.

7. Serve as one of the Governor's representatives on regional efforts to develop a coordinated security and preparedness strategy, including the National Capital Region Senior Policy Group organized as part of the federal Urban Areas Security Initiative.

8. Serve as a direct liaison between the Governor and local governments and first responders on issues of emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

9. Educate the public on homeland security and overall preparedness issues in coordination with applicable state agencies.

10. Serve as chairman of the Secure and Resilient Commonwealth Panel.

11. Encourage homeland security volunteer efforts throughout the state.

12. Coordinate the development of an allocation formula for State Homeland Security Grant Program funds to localities and state agencies in compliance with federal grant guidance and constraints. The formula shall be, to the extent permissible under federal constraints, based on actual risk, threat, and need.

13. Work with the appropriate state agencies to ensure that regional working groups are meeting regularly and focusing on regional initiatives in training, equipment, and strategy to ensure ready access to response teams in times of emergency and facilitate testing and training exercises for emergencies and mass casualty preparedness.

14. Provide oversight and review of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's annual statewide assessment of local and regional capabilities, including equipment, training, personnel, response times, and other factors.

15. Employ, as needed, consultants, attorneys, architects, engineers, accountants, financial experts, investment bankers, superintendents, managers, and such other employees and agents as may be necessary, and fix their compensation to be payable from funds made available for that purpose.

16. Receive and accept from any federal or private agency, foundation, corporation, association, or person grants, donations of money, real property, or personal property for the benefit of the Commonwealth, and receive and accept from the Commonwealth or any state, any municipality, county, or other political subdivision thereof, or any other source, aid or contributions of money, property, or other things of value, to be held, used, and applied for the purposes for which such grants and contributions may be made.

17. Receive and accept from any source aid, grants, and contributions of money, property, labor, or other things of value to be held, used, and applied to carry out these requirements subject to the conditions upon which the aid, grants, or contributions are made.

18. Make grants to local governments, state and federal agencies, and private entities with any funds of the Secretary available for such purpose.

19. Provide oversight and review of the law-enforcement operations of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority.

20. Take any actions necessary or convenient to the exercise of the powers granted or reasonably implied to this Secretary and not otherwise inconsistent with the law of the Commonwealth.

§ 2.2-230. Position established; agencies for which responsible; additional duties.

The position of Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs (the Secretary) is created. The Secretary shall be responsible to the Governor for the following agencies: *Department of Military Affairs*, Department of Veterans Services, Veterans Services Foundation, and Virginia Military Advisory Council. The Governor may, by executive order, assign any other state executive agency to the Secretary, or reassign any agency listed above to another Secretary.

The Secretary shall by reason of professional background have knowledge of veterans affairs and military affairs, in addition to familiarity with the structure and operations of the federal government and of the Commonwealth.