

VACO 2013 Achievement Award: Criminal Justice and Public Safety
LIRV, Henrico County (Virginia) Police Division

Executive Summary

Effective January 1, 2011, the Henrico Police Regional Logistics Incident Response Vehicle (LIRV) program was operational. This program offers a new service to the government of Henrico County as well as its citizens and those working in and visiting the County. This program allows a logistical presence by the Evidence and Logistics Unit to situations whereas extended services would be required. This resource offers supplemental equipment support through the use of the outfitted response vehicle such as remote lighting, traffic control signs, vehicle dollies, traffic cones, traffic wands, safety vests, floatation devices, on-board computers, on-board radios, radio and battery charging systems, roadway clearing tools, folding tables and chairs, hydration equipment, food sources, and encompassing and closeable tents for rehabilitation. The vehicle, also, is equipped with multiple fire suppression extinguishers, biohazard kits, medical kits, shooter go-packs, breaching tools, ballistic shields, a generator, shorelines and outlets, additional electrical ports, and a remote control powered overhead spot lighting system.

This resource is designed to support sworn officers in the execution of their duties whereas in the past, multiple members may have been called upon to acquire each item needed or for relief. Now, using this resource, more sworn officers can remain in service to provide law enforcement service. This resource supports the Henrico County Fire Division whereas in the past, Fire would provide rehabilitation services and lighting. Now, Police is able to work in conjunction with Fire and to assume those services when needed, allowing Fire resources to return to service.

With this new resource, Evidence and Logistics Unit personnel were introduced to and trained in the operation of the response vehicle, the duties of the associated response, the equipment on board, and any limitations. This resource promotes intergovernmental cooperation, as Henrico County is the only law enforcement agency with a Logistical Incident Response Vehicle.

This program introduces a new way for law enforcement to parallel techniques adopted under the US Department of Homeland Security. This resource, as defined, is expected to respond to requests from other entities within Central Virginia to provide critical scene support. The LIRV is teamed with the American Red Cross for extended scene support when necessary.

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Problem Overview

The Henrico County Police Division created this resource as a means to provide additional support during long-term incidents and events. Another purpose was the reduction of the number of emergency personnel on a scene by giving technical responsibilities to Evidence and Logistics Unit personnel. This also reduces the amount of overtime and associated expenses.

Though there are no legal obligations that exist relative to this resource, the Division allows its use to provide critical support to emergency personnel as well as citizens. This resource is an example of the fundamentals of the NIMS/ICS structure of which all emergency agencies have an opportunity to be a part. .Logistical support is deemed critical during long-term scenes, and the equipment used on board the Response vehicle is specific to those needs.

The intent behind this resource is having as many pieces of equipment onboard one vehicle that could possibly be needed during any type of event or declared emergency while having trained staff to operate it. The result is saved time and allows for a better and more effective use of existing resources and personnel.

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Innovation

The Henrico County Police Division Logistics Incident Response Vehicle program was established to lessen the need for multiple resources at an extended emergency scene. The objective of this resource is the providing of specialized equipment to sustain long-term emergencies while allowing additional emergency personnel to remain clear. This resource offers supplemental equipment support through the use of the outfitted response vehicle such as remote lighting, traffic control signs, vehicle dollies, traffic cones, traffic wands, safety vests, floatation devices, on-board computers, on-board radios, radio and battery charging systems, roadway clearing tools, moveable tables and chairs for rehabilitation along with hydration equipment, food sources, and encompassing and closeable tents for rehabilitation. The vehicle, also, is equipped with multiple fire suppression extinguishers, biohazard kits, medical kits, shooter go packs, breaching tools, ballistic shields, a generator, shorelines and outlets, additional electrical ports, and a remote control powered overhead spot lighting system.

The development and implementation of this program totaled 18 months and has proven to be a successful resource in the services it provides to Police, Fire, and the County's citizens. This resource also serves other governments within Central Virginia as needed and in cooperation with Henrico County Emergency Management. The Henrico County Government Administration acknowledges this program and now has an expectation of the resources and services provided. The outfitted vehicle can serve as a quick response mobile command center for Police and Fire from which to operate. The design of this resource and the official typing and definition was a cooperative effort between Henrico County Police, Fire, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Various forms of technology were used during the creation of the LIRV. Websites were helpful during the outfitting of the LIRV; information was gathered from Federal sites lending to the typing and defining of the resource; databases were sought for statistical data on costs associated with responding personnel and equipment expenses. This project was created based on statistics that would be gathered during a declared emergency. Currently, the technology onboard the vehicle consists of; GPS, Mobile Data Terminals, digital radio systems, remote area lighting, infrared capabilities and additional phone wiring equipment.

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Significance

Given the current economic issues seen across the country, Henrico County always stays abreast with changing trends and forecasts economic needs well. As such, in projecting future budget constraints, this resource serves to reduce costs associated with staffing long-term, large-scale incidents. Some of the savings can be found by looking at fuel costs, equipment usage, and staffing hours. Essentially, multiple resources at a scene are replaced with one. This allows for self-sustaining and not having to impose on other agencies within the County in order to acquire other equipment. If used according to its objective, the LIRV could potentially reduce the amount of budgeted dollars spent on contracted services to the County during time where it has been determined road closures should be in effect during storms, et cetera.

The operating and capital costs of this program are minimal. Operating costs are associated with the staffing provided from the Division's Evidence and Logistics Unit as well as the maintenance of the equipment onboard. The capital outlay was for the equipment kept onboard the vehicle. The vehicle was an existing Division vehicle refurbished during the development stages. The capital outlay totaled approximately \$11,000. To staff the resource is approximately \$31 per hour per person. Fuel costs are deemed in accordance with current economic pricing of diesel fuel as well as the maintenance costs associated with vehicle repair. As the program evolves, additional equipment and a replacement vehicle will need to be purchased. These costs could be as much as \$150,000 if purchasing new.

The LIRV has been used on multiple occasions as mentioned previously. It has assisted on a multi-jurisdictional person hunt where the LIRV's equipment and services were used to sustain a long-term perimeter and operation. The LIRV served hundreds of law enforcement officials from other areas within Central Virginia, as well as providing back-up support to Fire and the American Red Cross. LIRV provided lighting support along with food and hydration support.

This resource's success can be measured by the on-hand accessibility of specialized equipment provided to officers and Fire requested. This also proves successful in that the turn-around time for equipment and needs to be met are minimal if any down time exists at all. This resource has proven to be very cost effective during each incident it has served.