

# **CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

**PHASE 1: RESULTS**

**National VOAD**

**2021**

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# SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

## Purpose

The State & Territory VOAD Capability and Capacity Project aims to:

- Build capacity within State/Territory leadership
- Incorporate data & technology to facilitate collaboration and illustrate impact
- Increase diversity amongst State/Territory VOAD membership
- Develop sustainable funding strategies

All with the goal of furthering the impact of State/Territory VOADs within their communities and equipping VOAD Leadership with new and established resources to continue upholding the 4C's and supporting members across the National VOAD Movement.

## Capturing Data

A baseline analysis is completed using a profile form. Utilizing 81 questions – the information covering general leadership information, VOAD inception date, internal and external membership activity, VOAD leadership structure, financial status of the VOAD and more is obtained from each State/Territory VOAD. The use of this form along with a scheduled 1-hour call with each State/Territory VOAD Representative helps formulate a standardized understanding of each State/Territory VOAD's capacity in 2020 and a realistic snapshot of how VOADs are functioning.

By looking at the collected data through the lens of the four pillars of the NVOAD Strategic Plan: Membership Engagement, Leadership Development, Financial Sustainability and Telling Our Story through Technology, we will establish specific goals and metrics for each region. Additionally, each VOAD grouping will receive data collected for their geographical region. This regional data will result in a new and improved National VOAD LEAD program over the course of the next few years.

## Pilot Region

The first phase of this project began in November 2019 & was focused on the 10-Midwest State VOADs, thanks to a grant from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies. The cohort in the Midwest serves as our pilot region and as an invaluable national resource, as we work collectively to strengthen our network through strategic goal-setting and informed resource development. Data from our State/Territory VOADs, outside of the Midwest Region, will help validate and highlight our findings to be used across all State/Territory VOADs in building and developing resources applicable to all State/Territory members.

## Long-Term Goals

While the first phase of the project will be gathering preliminarily data to gauge realistic goals and templates for VOAD leadership development, we will be looking to build capacity and resiliency in each of the 56 State/Territory VOADs. The Capacity & Capability Project's overall outcomes include:

- Consistent trained State/Territory VOAD leadership.
- Governance that creates reasonable leadership continuity, effective community engagement, & communication.
- Resources, technology, and training material specific to State/Territory VOAD needs to promote capacity and capabilities.

National VOAD Strategic Plan can be found here.

[Strategic Plan | VOAD \(nvoad.org\)](https://www.nvoad.org/Strategic-Plan)

# SECTION 1.1: PROJECT FUNDING

## INITIATIVES OF GRANT

We were provided a grant through our partnership with Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies to support this project through all phases. The overall purpose of the project is to evaluate the current status of State/Territory VOADs and provide appropriate training to enhance their capabilities and capacity to deliver services for disaster survivors in collaboration with the government and private sectors.

## PILOT REGION - MIDWEST

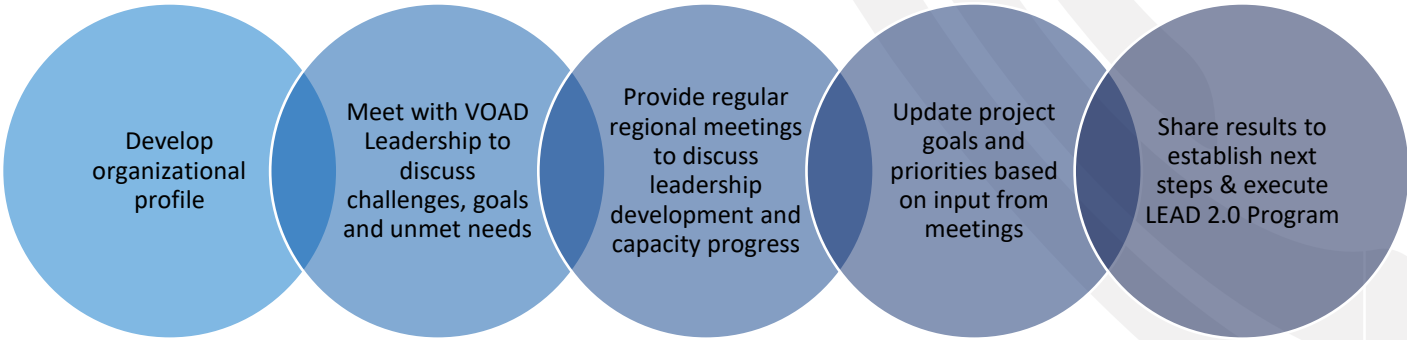
To ensure our guidance and tools produced meet the needs of each of the State/Territory VOADs, we have established a 'pilot region' of 10 Midwest State VOADs. The State VOADs included in this region are: Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The Midwest VOAD cohort was established with a Kickoff Meeting in Omaha, Nebraska in February 2020. During this meeting, we went over the results from their Phase 1 interactions with the project (completed Profile Forms and one-on-one conversations) and prioritized capacity goals for the region moving forward. We continue to meet with this cohort on a monthly basis as desired by the participants.



# SECTION 1.2: PROJECT PROCESS & LONG-TERM GOALS

## PHASE 1 – PROCESS



## PHASE 1 - TIMELINE

Phase 1 of this project kicked off in November 2019 and concluded in March 2021.

## LONG-TERM PROJECT GOALS

- Strengthen capacity of State/Territory VOADs in disasters during “blue-sky” periods to be able to respond better during “grey-skies.”
- Establish and strengthen standards and processes of VOAD structure and operations to improve the delivery of services during a natural disaster
- Build and reinforce regional relationships to improve coordination and collaboration
- Improve local, community disaster preparedness through convenings, trainings, and technical assistance
- Strengthen VOAD leadership engagement within their regional networks to broaden their National influence
- Enhance VOAD visibility and recognition in communities to improve collaboration with non-traditional disaster CBO’s, government partners, and community leaders

## PROJECT DATA SOURCES

All data collected and shared through this project comes from the following:

- Profile Forms with data submitted by VOAD Leadership
- Verbal confirmation during one-on-one conversations with VOAD Leadership
- Data available through VOAD websites and mass communications
- Data available for public consumption through the census bureau, FEMA, and other accredited agencies

# SECTION 1.3: REGIONAL COHORTS

## REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

### Midwest

- Arkansas
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- South Dakota

### Southeast Region & Islands

- Alabama
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Puerto Rico
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- USVI

### Great Lakes Region

- Indiana
- Illinois
- Michigan
- Ohio
- Wisconsin

### Central Atlantic Region

- DC
- Delaware
- Maryland
- Virginia
- West Virginia

### Northwest Region & Islands

- Alaska
- AM SAMOA
- California
- CNMI
- Guam
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Oregon
- Washington

### Northern Atlantic Region

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Jersey
- New Hampshire
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

### Southwest Region

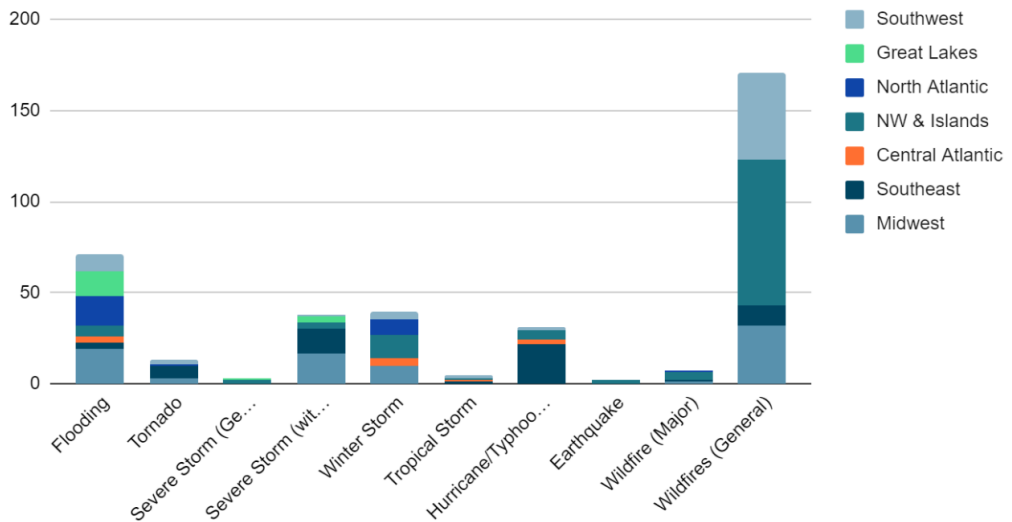
- Arizona
- Colorado
- Louisiana
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- Texas
- Utah
- Wyoming

## COHORT MEETINGS

We meet on a monthly basis with the Midwest VOAD cohort. All other cohorts meet on a quarterly basis to discuss current VOAD capacity needs, successes and regional topics. The meetings are intended to serve each regions needs with input from participants shaping discussion topics and regional goals.

# SECTION 1.4: FEMA DECLARED STORMS

FEMA Declared Storms (2016-2019) By Region



## FEMA Declared Disasters Individual Assistance

	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Arkansas	Arkansas	Alabama	Alabama
	Florida	California	American Samoa	Alaska
	Georgia	Florida	California	Arkansas
	Louisiana	Georgia	Florida	Iowa
	Minnesota	Louisiana	Georgia	Mississippi
	Mississippi	Michigan	Hawaii	Missouri
	Missouri	Mississippi	Indiana	Nebraska
	North Carolina	Puerto Rico	North Carolina	Ohio
	South Carolina	Texas	South Carolina	Oklahoma
	Tennessee	USVI	South Carolina	South Dakota
	Texas	West Virginia	Texas	Texas
	Virginia			
	West Virginia		Wisconsin	

# SECTION 1.5: NATIONAL TRENDS

COMMON TRENDS VOADS ARE EXPERIENCING THROUGHOUT ALL REGIONS IN RELATION TO VOAD SUCCESS

## CAPACITY STRENGTHS

- Membership enthusiasm for the movement
- Membership outreach and recruitment
- Engaging FEMA and State Emergency Management in the movement
- Coordinating services during response and recovery

## CHALLENGES & OBSTACLES

- Time balance of leadership
- Locating technology expertise to support website and data collection
- Funding travel and attendance to National VOAD Conference
- Developing and sharing table-top exercises
- Virtual meeting fatigue

## CAPACITY GOALS

- Recruiting new leadership and developing strong transitions
- Educating local and state Emergency Management on value of VOAD
- Increasing National Member Organizations interaction and engagement with State/Territory VOADS
- Building a stronger online and data-focused presence to share the value of VOAD
- Engaging COADs and local CBOs
- Recruitment of non-traditional members
- Strengthen VOAD involvement in mitigation and preparedness



## SECTION 1.6: VALUE OF VOAD

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE MENTIONED REPEATEDLY DURING PHASE 1'S DATA CAPTURE. COMMON ANSWERS SHARED BY VOAD LEADERSHIP HAVE BEEN INCLUDED BELOW:

### WHAT IS THE VALUE OF VOAD?

- Volunteer Management & Hours
- Filling Unmet Needs
- Long Term Recovery
- Community Leadership

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF VOAD?

- Relationship Building
- Information Sharing
- Facilitating Coordination Forums

### WHY WOULD AN ORGANIZATION JOIN VOAD?

- Networking/Collaboration Opportunities
- Access to Data/Unmet Needs
- 4C's Credibility/Affiliation
- DCM Work Development
- Access to Resources/Training
- Organizational Development
- Speaking the "same language"
- Elevate Organization

# SECTION 2: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

THE PROFILE FORM AND OUR ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS WITH VOAD LEADERSHIP GATHERED INFORMATION TO UNDERSTAND LEADERSHIP CAPACITY. VOADS WERE ASKED ABOUT THEIR LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE, TERM LIMITS, ELECTION & NOMINATING PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES.

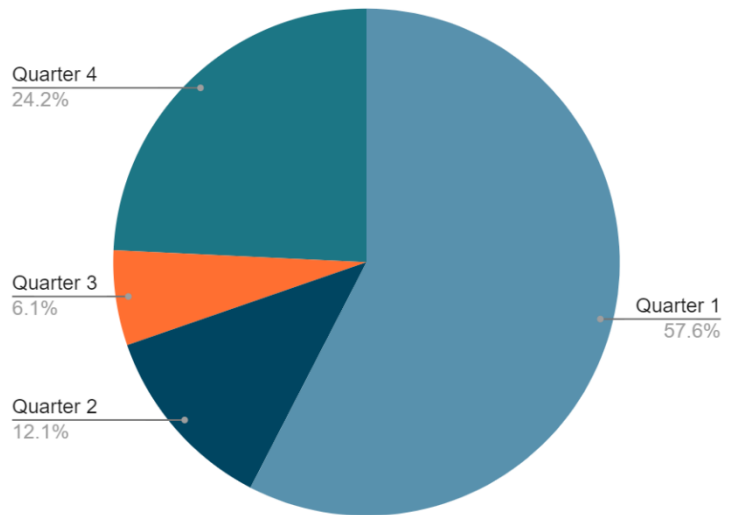
## OUTLINING LEADERSHIP CONSISTENCY FOR STATE AND TERRITORY VOAD OFFICERS:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>36% of VOADs reported 1-year term lengths</li><li>50% of VOADs reported 2-year term lengths</li><li>10% of VOADs reported 3-year term lengths</li><li>3% of VOADs reported 5-year term lengths</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4% of VOAD reported no term limits</li><li>76% of VOADs reported 2 term limits</li><li>19% of VOADs reported 3 term limits</li> <li>23% of VOADs reported Secretary &amp; Treasurer Officer positions have no term limit</li></ul>
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**2/3 of VOADs LEADERSHIP REPRESENT NATIONAL MEMBER AGENCIES**

**1/3 of VOADs LEADERSHIP REPRESENT LOCAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

Annual Meetings by Quarter

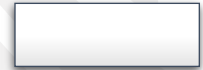


## 2.1: DISCUSSION ON IMPLEMENTING AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PAID LEADERSHIP



Reasons to instate a full or part-time Executive Director:

- Establishes consistency in goals and mission
- Professionalizes the movement
- Affords focused attention from leadership during responses



Reasons not to pursue paid staff for a State/Territory VOAD:

- Strays away from the volunteer culture of VOAD
- Requires time and capacity to manage paperwork and finances
- Low-disaster areas do not have the engagement to fulfill paid staff
- Difficult to find a candidate with necessary experience

*Figure 2.1: Data as reported during one-on-one discussions.*

### BALANCE OF TIME

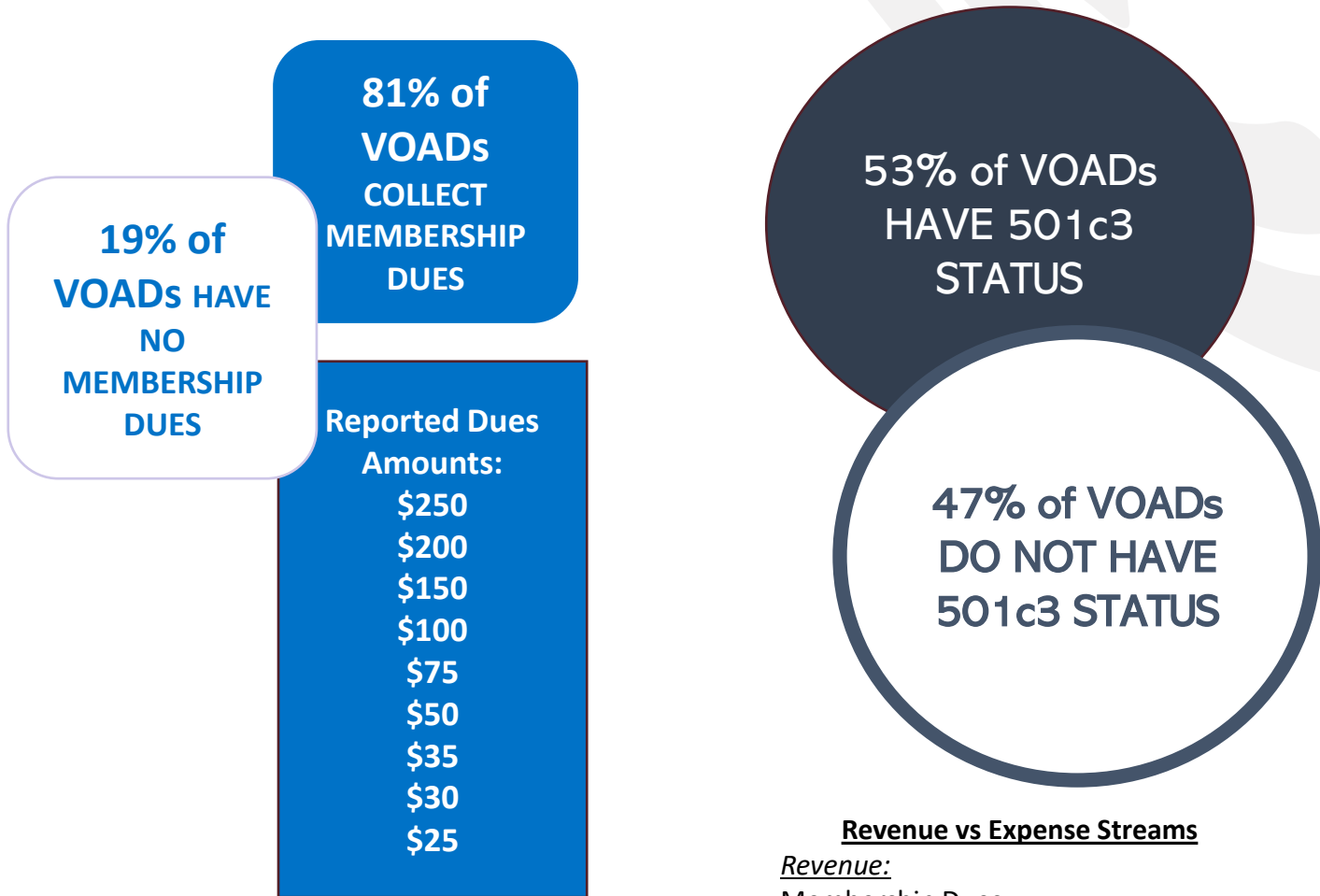
**VOAD Leadership reported feeling overwhelmed with the requirements of their role within the VOAD.**

**Particularly during responses, many VOAD Leadership reported needing to attend to their own organizational requirements ahead of their responsibilities with their VOAD. This balance of time and energy often creates a lack of necessary coordination for their VOAD membership.**

**While several VOADs reported having built capacity within their Board of Directors to reduce the impact of these situations, this was the minority.**

# SECTION 3: FUNDING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

THE PROFILE FORM AND OUR ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS GATHERED INFORMATION TO EXPLORE STATE/TERRITORY VOADS FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, SPECIFICALLY, REVENUE STREAMS, 501C3 STATUS AND GRANT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES.



Many VOADs reported they collected dues to offset admin, travel or 501c3 costs. There was a clear interest and desire to develop grant-funding strategies among many of the VOADs who participated.

### Revenue vs Expense Streams

#### Revenue:

- Membership Dues
- Public Support/Gifts In-Kind
- Other Revenue (Grants, Partnerships)

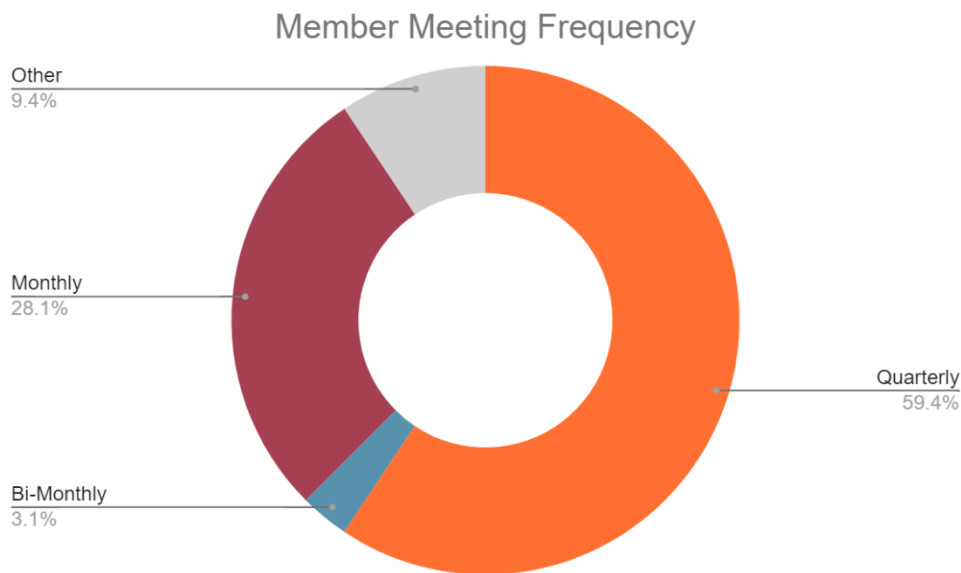
#### Expenses:

- Program Services (Redistribution to Membership)
- Management & General (Office Supplies, Marketing, Local Transport)
- National VOAD Conference
- National VOAD Fall Members Meeting

# SECTION 4: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & DIVERSITY

THE PROFILE FORM AND OUR ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS GATHERED INFORMATION ON MEMBERSHIP DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT, MEETING FREQUENCY, ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIP VETTING PROCESSES.

## EXAMINING MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MEETINGS



*\*Due to COVID-19, many VOADs reported increasing their membership meeting frequency in 2020. Several VOADs reported heightened engagement from those meetings resulting in their membership gaining a more in-depth understanding of their fellow members efforts and capabilities and an overall stronger VOAD network within their State/Territory. However, by the end of 2020, several VOADs reported membership fatigue and a decline in meeting participation.*

### Meeting Activities

- State EM Run Exercises
- Member Agency Exercises/Trainings
- No Blue Skies, Always Engaged in Events
- FEMA Exercises/Trainings
- Spotlight Member Agency
- Lunches & Networking Opportunities

### Membership Categories

- 11 VOADs recognize only two categories
- 22 VOADs recognize more than two categories of membership

# SECTION 4: MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & DIVERSITY

## State & Federal Relationships

Nearly all VOADs listed relationships with their State Emergency Management and FEMA VALs as 'good.' The majority also stated these relationships could be stronger with increased participation and engagement.

22 VOADs have  
a seat in the  
EOC

27 VOADs are  
listed in their  
State/Territory  
Emergency  
Response Plan

## Local Relationships

- **30 VOADs** reported having a recognized **COAD structure**
- 2 VOADs reported MOUs with their COADs
- 6 VOADs recognize VOADs as a membership category within their State/Territory VOAD

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

In 2020, many VOADs expressed an interest in establishing or beginning conversations on diversity, equity and inclusion. There is an on-going effort to understand their community needs, how to reach vulnerable populations with this issue in mind, and ways VOAD can engage to strengthen community resilience from a National level.

## Top Reported Languages

### Served by VOAD

#### Other than English:

- Spanish
- German
- Chamorro
- Japanese
- Somali
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Tagalog
- French
- Navajo
- Haitian Creole

# SECTION 5: TECHNOLOGY & DATA TO TELL THE STORY

THE PROFILE FORM AND OUR ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS GATHERED INFORMATION ON VOAD USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND DATA TO SHARE THEIR STORY INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY TO POTENTIAL PARTNERS, USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA, THE DART PLATFORM, AND INTEREST IN USING THE NEW NATIONAL VOAD WEBSITE.

10 VOADs reported having an updated Capabilities Matrix/Membership Directory

DART Suite of Modules has been activated by the following VOADs:

Colorado  
Delaware  
Hawaii  
Maryland  
Minnesota  
Connecticut  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
Pennsylvania  
Virginia

16 VOADs are active on Social Media using the following platforms:

Facebook  
Twitter  
LinkedIn  
Instagram  
Pinterest  
Shutterfly  
Alignable

Links to all State/Territory VOAD Websites & Emails can be found on the National VOAD webpage:  
[www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org)

## SECTION 6: GOALS & PRIORITIES

The following is an analysis of the top priorities and goals identified from the data captured and conversations with VOAD Leadership within each of the four strategic initiatives: Leadership Development, Technology & Data to Tell the Story, Membership Engagement and Financial Sustainability. The guidance provided by the participants have laid the blueprints for the next phases of the Capacity & Capability Enhancement Project.







### Immediate Resource Needs

- General Officer Job Descriptions
- Welcome Webinar Introducing National VOAD to new Leadership
- Toolkits and Templates for VOAD operations
- Additional networking opportunities across the VOAD Network



### Long-Term Leadership Development Goals

- Strengthen Leadership Transitions
- Standardization of leadership expectations
- Establishment of paid or consistent staffing within executive leadership

## GOALS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

### RELATIONSHIPS

Communication and collaboration between VOAD members presented a consistent opportunity for growth among all VOADs. There was a clear desire for more opportunities to inform partners, members, and associates about capabilities and available resources. The result would be a stronger network of organizations that understand their internal capacity and how to secure external partnerships and assistance in times of need.

### INITIAL ON-BOARDING

One of the largest challenges VOAD Leadership faced was the initial burden of understanding the VOAD movement, their officer responsibilities, and the disaster cycle at large.

There was a clear desire for strengthening the leadership transitions through welcome webinars hosted by National VOAD, long-term engagement activities between regional leadership and toolkits.

The long-term goal will be to establish institutional knowledge within each State/Territory VOAD to ensure stability within the movement and create a foundation for each VOAD to move closer to achieving their specific priorities.

### REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

A frequent concern from VOADs in all regions was the lack of time to accomplish all the roles and duties of VOAD officer positions. Moving forward, we hope to create an environment where realistic expectations are set and the necessary tools and resources for building leadership capacity are clearly defined. Whether that means developing officer job descriptions to define expected workloads for incoming leadership or to present alternative governance structures to bridge the current gap, there are many resources that National VOAD plans to develop to meet this urgent need.



### Technology & Data Priorities

- Increase visibility of VOAD movement
- Provide tools and training to VOAD Leadership on technology resources



### Long Term Technology & Data Use Goals

- Continued advancement of data collection tools
- Increase website activity for all VOADs

## GOALS FOR DATA & TECHNOLOGY TO TELL OUR STORY

### SHARING THE VOAD STORY

There is a need to increase the visibility of the VOAD movement. It was clear that efforts to recruit new membership, provide awareness for community members, and to support the work of each VOAD has been hindered by a lack of brand recognition and data sharing. Through our new **State/Territory VOAD websites**, we hope to provide the platform needed for VOADs to share their own unique stories with their specific audience.

### INCREASING CAPACITY

By using our DART Suite of Modules, we hope to enable each of the VOADs to further their mission and goals of getting resources into the hands of survivors as quickly and as safely as possible. These modules include: In-Kind Donations, Volunteer Management, Client Connect, and Disaster Case Management. We continue to work with VisionLink and VOAD members to tailor DART to the immediate needs of the overall network.

### DATA COLLECTION

There is a clear need for the VOAD movement to be able to display their value and work in measurable ways. To further understand the capacity gaps and showcase improvements and successes, we will need to develop tools for each VOAD to measure their work independently.



### Resource Priorities

- Expand reach to vulnerable and underrepresented communities
- Increase resource library for blue-sky meetings
- Refresh membership rosters



### Long Term Membership Engagement & Diversity Goals

- Build strong relationships between National Member representatives and State/Territory VOADs
- Incorporate non-traditional partners into membership including private-sector
- Enhance communications between VOADs to share resources and SOPs

# GOALS FOR MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

## **BLUE - SKY ENGAGEMENT**

To increase membership commitment and networking, we will work with State/Territory VOADs to find additional table-top exercises and activities during blue-skies.

## **MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS**

Several VOADs are seeking ways to refresh their membership rosters by reestablishing relationships with members that have dropped in participation and by elevating their membership good-standing requirements to ensure a vibrant and communicative VOAD.

There is a growing conversation regarding the best practice of having only two categories of membership (voting/non-voting) versus more elaborate structures which may allow for a more diverse membership and encourage more involvement from particular sectors.

## **TRAINING PROGRAMS**

VOAD Leadership frequently highlighted a desire for standardization of expectations for their VOAD performance which could be achieved through training and curriculum development offered by National VOAD. We hope to meet this need with our LEAD Program curriculum in the second phase of this project.



### Funding Strategies Priorities

- Determine funding needs to provide greater support to membership
- Establish 501c3, as appropriate
- Grant workshops



### Long Term Sustainable Funding Goals

- Implement full or part time staff to VOAD Leadership
- Equip all State/Territory VOADs to handle grant funding
- Ensure all State/Territory VOADs can attend National VOAD Conference

## GOALS FOR FUNDING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

### **ESTABLISH 501C3**

Education on the benefits and long-term upkeep of the 501c3 is desired. There is also a need for internal growth within many of the interested VOADs to support this potential structural advancement.

### **GRANT FUNDING**

VOADs are increasingly becoming a prominent member of their local emergency response coordination efforts, as such, they are in a unique position to be granted funds for specific response and recovery activity. To take advantage of these opportunities for their membership, there needs to be an increase in training opportunities for VOADs to learn about grant applications, management, and reporting.

### **NATIONAL VOAD CONFERENCE**

As described in the Membership Agreement, State/Territory VOADs are asked to participate in the National VOAD conference each year. It was reported by the majority of VOAD Leadership that the conference has become cost-prohibitive and they are unable to meet this membership requirement on a yearly basis. We seek to create scholarship opportunities to enable more participation from the State/Territory VOAD Leadership at our meetings.



## Resource Highlights

### Governance Structures with Paid or Consistent Leadership

- IA VOAD/IDHRC
- NJ VOAD
- TX VOAD
- WV VOAD

### Voluntary Structures

- SC VOAD

### COAD Manuals & LTRG Resources

- IA VOAD/IDHRC VOAD
- MO VOAD
- MT VOAD
- NJ VOAD

### Membership Rosters & Engagement Tools

- RI VOAD
- WY VOAD

### Membership Engagement Spotlight

- Great Lakes Region

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

## S U C C E S S E S

VOAD Leadership reported many successes in resource development, membership enthusiasm and a growing membership roster.

## C H A L L E N G E S

There is an overwhelming concern about VOAD Leadership understanding the role and value of their VOADs. This was discussed within each region, as we look to the future of the movement, it would benefit each VOAD to look internally at their membership capabilities to understand their role within their specific locations, to enable coherent and concise conversations at the National level on how the movement can more effectively support their work and overall success.

## F U T U R E

It was consistently noted that the VOAD movement is in the midst of very intentional and pivotal changes at the structural level.

As the membership votes on key issues over the coming year, there is a great opportunity for capacity growth. The movement will need to continue to ensure all communities across the nation are receiving the support they need and deserve before, during and after disaster events. We will continue to support State/Territory VOADs establishing strong leadership development opportunities within their uniquely established transition plans to keep the institutional knowledge of the movement within each VOAD.



## NEXT STEPS

### Resource Development for Phase 2

#### Curriculum:

- Reimagining of LEAD 2.0 Curriculum
- VOAD 101 Toolkit

#### Webinars/Meetings:

- Introducing 'Welcome Webinar' for all incoming VOAD Leadership starting Q2 2021
- Providing Quarterly Regional Cohort Meetings
- Introducing Governance Webinars and Workshops
- Focused seminars based on priority lists generated through Phase 1

#### Continued Support:

- DART Trainings
- Website Support
- Scholarship Opportunities for National VOAD Conference
- Recovery Tools Workshops

In 2013, National VOAD initiated a program called LEAD - Leadership, Engagement and Development program, producing modules to help build State/Territory capacity through guidance documents, tools and resources. We will be updating the LEAD materials to reflect the relevancy, training curriculum and needs born out of the Capacity and Capability Project. This tool will provide State/Territory VOADs guidance on organizational structure, member engagement, bylaw reviews, technology usage, private sector/government relationships, and financial sustainability.

We will continue to pilot our work with the Midwest 10-State VOADs to ensure the resources and tools are relevant to the ever-progressing nature of the VOAD movement.

As each of the 56 State/Territory VOADs have varying needs and abilities in assisting their communities, we will complement the LEAD Program development work with continued cohort meetings to build regional relationships and address specific needs as they arise.