

Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide
Emergency Management and Response Coordination Project

MARTHA'S VINEYARD

Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination **Strategic Integration & Implementation Plan** 2027–2031



Prepared for Dukes County and the Martha's Vineyard Communities
March 2026

For Official Use Only

RECORD OF CHANGES

Changes to this Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan should be made following each evaluation; additional revisions may be made on an as-needed basis. The Emergency Management Coordinator will have responsibility for making any updates to the plan. The table below will be used to document when changes have occurred.

[illegible]

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management Strategic Plan establishes a five-year roadmap for building a coordinated, resilient, and sustainable emergency management system across the Island's six municipalities and the Wampanoag Tribal Nation. The plan is designed to strengthen collective preparedness and response capabilities while preserving the authority, operational responsibility, fiscal control, and command structure of each jurisdiction. Its central purpose is to create the coordination architecture needed to manage incidents that exceed the practical capacity of any one community without centralizing emergency management or replacing local decision-making.

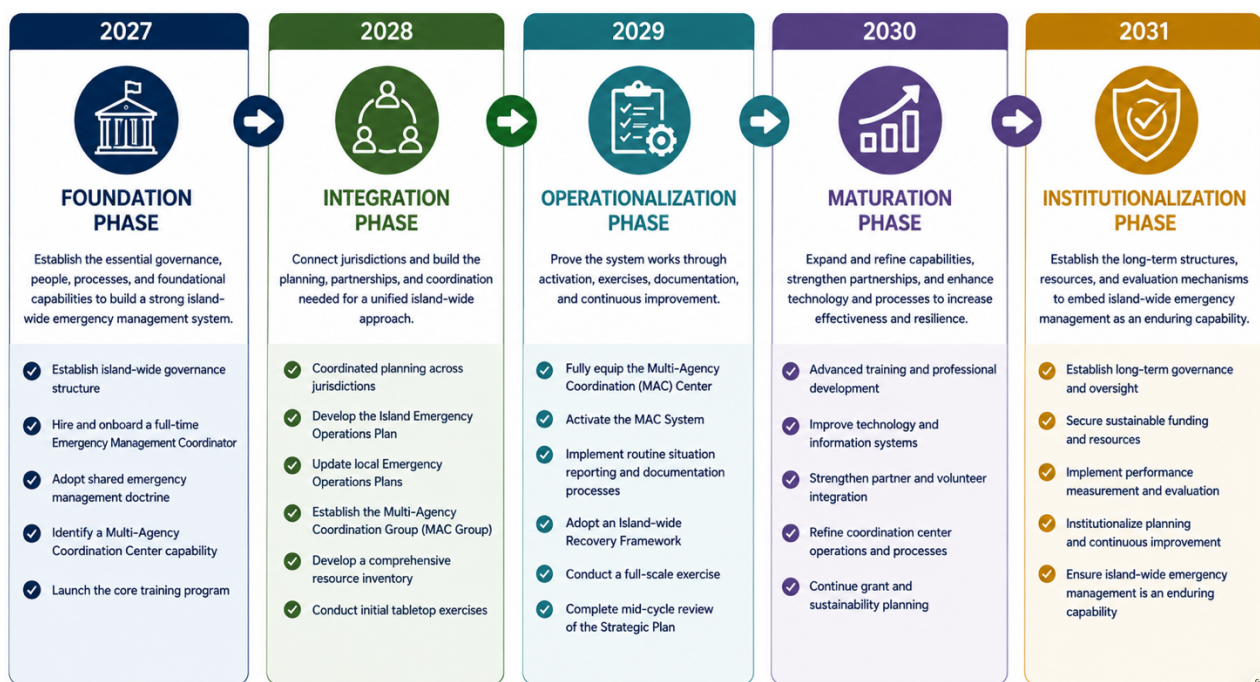
Implementation will occur through five sequential phases from 2027 through 2031.

- The 2027 *Foundation Phase* will establish the island-wide governance structure, hire and onboard a full-time Emergency Management Coordinator, adopt shared emergency management doctrine, identify a Multi-Agency Coordination Center capability, and launch the core training program.
- In 2028, the *Integration Phase* will connect jurisdictions through coordinated planning, development of the Island Emergency Operations Plan, updates to local emergency operations plans, establishment of the Multi-Agency Coordination Group, development of a resource inventory, and initial tabletop exercises.
- The 2029 *Operationalization Phase* will focus on proving that the system works by fully equipping the coordination center, activating the MAC System, implementing routine situation reporting and documentation processes, adopting an Island-wide Recovery Framework, conducting a full-scale exercise, and completing a mid-cycle review of the Strategic Plan.
- The 2030 *Maturation Phase* will expand and refine capabilities through advanced training, improved technology, stronger partner and volunteer integration, refined coordination center operations, and continued grant and sustainability planning.
- By 2031, the *Institutionalization Phase* will establish the long-term governance, funding, evaluation, and planning structures necessary to make island-wide emergency management an enduring capability.

The plan is organized around seven strategic priorities.

- Governance and leadership will provide the organizational foundation and clarify roles, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and activation procedures.
- Planning and continuity will create a consistent framework by assessing and updating jurisdictional emergency operations plans, developing the Island EOP, addressing functional annex gaps, and strengthening continuity of operations and continuity of government planning.
- The MAC System will provide island-wide coordination, information sharing, resource prioritization, public information support, and recovery coordination while remaining separate from tactical command.

- Response and recovery initiatives will improve resource management, situation reporting, disaster cost tracking, recovery planning, and FEMA Public Assistance documentation.
- Training and exercises will build practical capability through annual preparedness workshops, role-based training, elected-official orientation, discussion-based exercises, operations-based exercises, and a full-scale exercise by the end of 2029.
- Information, communications, and technology efforts will establish interoperable communications, shared situational awareness, common operating picture capabilities, and coordinated public information procedures.
- Funding and sustainability efforts will diversify grant support, develop jurisdictional cost-sharing, establish a long-term financial model, and ensure annual performance reporting and future strategic planning.



Progress will be measured through a focused executive scorecard rather than by comparing municipalities against one another. Key indicators include establishment of the governance body and Emergency Management Coordinator in 2027; adoption of the Island EOP and updates to jurisdictional plans by 2028–2029; establishment and exercise of the MACC and MAC-G by 2028–2029; annual completion of core training and exercises; development of a resource inventory and routine situation reporting process; adoption of the Recovery Framework and improved Public Assistance readiness by 2029; and continued progress toward diversified funding and long-term sustainability through 2031. These measures are intended to demonstrate system maturity, identify gaps, and support informed executive decision-making.

Successful implementation will require sustained political support, stable funding, active participation by municipal and tribal leadership, consistent sharing of plans and resources, and a commitment to addressing corrective actions identified through exercises and real-world incidents. Elected officials will play a critical role by approving the governance structure, supporting the Emergency Management Coordinator, ensuring participation by key personnel, encouraging information and resource sharing, and helping establish a sustainable financial model. Their continued engagement will be necessary to move the plan from a written strategy to an operational capability.

The implementation logic is straightforward: establish governance, provide dedicated staffing, adopt shared doctrine and plans, build the MACC and MAC-G, train and exercise personnel, improve information and resource sharing, strengthen response and recovery capabilities, and institutionalize a sustainable island-wide emergency management system. The executive priority is to build the foundation early, connect the jurisdictions and systems in 2028, validate the capability by 2029, improve it through 2030, and sustain it by 2031. This is not a plan to centralize emergency management; it is a plan to coordinate it more effectively across Martha's Vineyard.

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PROMULGATION STATEMENT

MARTHA'S VINEYARD ISLAND-WIDE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC INTEGRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Purpose and Authority

The Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan (Strategic Plan) provides a coordinated, multi-jurisdictional framework for building and sustaining emergency management capability across Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This plan encompasses the six municipalities of Aquinnah, Chilmark, Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, and West Tisbury, along with the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), and reflects the shared commitment of all participating jurisdictions to the safety, resilience, and continuity of life on Martha's Vineyard.

By virtue of the authority vested in us as the duly elected and appointed representatives of our respective jurisdictions within Dukes County, Massachusetts, we hereby jointly adopt and promulgate this Strategic Plan. This plan is issued in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 (Civil Defense Act), Massachusetts General Laws governing municipal emergency management, the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the National Response Framework (NRF).

Statement of Adoption

This Strategic Plan provides Martha's Vineyard with the policy foundation and implementation roadmap for a unified, island-wide emergency management program. It does not supersede, diminish, nor transfer any municipal authority over local emergency management operations. Each municipality retains full authority over its own emergency declarations, response operations, and local resources. This plan establishes a shared governance structure, the Martha's Vineyard Multi-Agency Coordination System (MAC-S), and the programmatic goals through which all participating jurisdictions will collectively advance preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capacity.

It is hereby directed that the Martha's Vineyard Emergency Management Coordinator, or their designee, is authorized to implement the Strategic Plan, administer the Multi-Agency Coordination System (MAC-S), and coordinate island-wide emergency management program activities on behalf of the participating jurisdictions and Dukes County. All participating departments, agencies, municipal officials, and partners are directed to familiarize themselves with this plan and to actively support its implementation.

This plan is effective immediately upon execution by the undersigned authorized representatives and supersedes all previous versions of any island-wide emergency management strategic plan or coordination agreement.

Signatory Jurisdictions

The undersigned authorized representatives of their respective jurisdictions hereby adopt and promulgate this Strategic Plan.

TOWN OF AQUINNAH

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of Aquinnah

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of Aquinnah

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of Aquinnah

Date:

TOWN OF CHILMARK

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of Chilmark

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of Chilmark

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of Chilmark

Date:

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of Edgartown

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of Edgartown

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of Edgartown

Date:

TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of Oak Bluffs

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of Oak Bluffs

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of Oak Bluffs

Date:

TOWN OF TISBURY

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of Tisbury

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of Tisbury

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of Tisbury

Date:

TOWN OF WEST TISBURY

[Town Administrator Name]

Town Administrator

Town of West Tisbury

Date:

[Emergency Manager Name]

Emergency Management Director

Town of West Tisbury

Date:

[Select Board Chair Name]

Chairperson, Board of Selectmen

Town of West Tisbury

Date:

WAMPANOAG TRIBE OF GAYHEAD

[Tribe Chairperson Name]

Tribal Council Chair

Wampanoag Tribe of Gayhead

Date:

[Additional Wampanoag Representative Name]

[Title]

Wampanoag Tribe fo Gayhead

Date:

DUKES COUNTY

[County Administrator Name]

County Administrator

Dukes County

Date:

[Commission Chair Name]

Commission Chair

Dukes County

Date:

This plan is adopted and promulgated as of the date of the last authorized signature above.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

MISSION AND VISION

Mission Statement

Our mission is to build and sustain a coordinated, whole-community emergency management system for Martha's Vineyard that improves daily preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities across all Island jurisdictions, preserving local authority while enabling effective, integrated action when incidents exceed single-jurisdiction capacity.

Vision Statement

Martha's Vineyard is a resilient, coordinated, and well-prepared island community whose residents, visitors, and government partners are protected by effective, professional, and sustainable emergency management.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Martha's Vineyard operates within a unique geographic, governance, and infrastructure environment. The Island comprises six municipalities and the Wampanoag Tribal Nation, each retaining independent authority over emergency operations within their jurisdictional boundaries. Functional interdependence, however, means that disruptions to ferry service, the airport, the hospital system, fuel supply chains, or public health services can affect every community simultaneously.

Hazard exposure includes coastal storms, hurricanes, severe winter weather, infrastructure disruption, public health emergencies, seasonal population surges, and transportation dependency. The Island's seasonal population increases nearly threefold during peak summer months, creating recurring periods of elevated risk that may convert a manageable incident in November into an overwhelming emergency in July.

The Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination Project conducted comprehensive research, plan analysis, a Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment (HVA), stakeholder workshops, and engagement with emergency management professionals to establish the factual basis for this Strategic Plan. That process revealed a consistent and operationally significant finding: Martha's Vineyard possesses committed local leadership and functional baseline plans but lacks the structured, doctrinal emergency management program and island-wide coordination architecture required to manage a sustained, complex, multi-jurisdictional emergency effectively.

THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

Key findings from the HVA and stakeholder workshops include:

- Existing hazard identification is broadly accepted and accurate. The core challenge is not hazard awareness but capability depth and operational integration.
- Plans are the most consistently reported capability, but many are not current, not exercised, and not shared across jurisdictions. There is no island-wide accountability for plan completeness or accuracy.
- Exercises are a persistent gap across all towns and disciplines. Multi-jurisdictional and cross-sector exercising is especially limited.
- Training is uneven, particularly for advanced emergency management functions, EOC operations, and coordination roles.
- No island-wide coordinating body with authority to coordinate emergency management currently exists. Coordination stops at routine mutual aid.
- Facilities, resource inventories, and communications systems are inconsistently documented, interoperable, and available island wide.
- Recovery documentation and FEMA reimbursement processes are not standardized, leaving Martha's Vineyard communities with unrealized reimbursement opportunities from past disasters.

THE PLAN

This Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan establishes a five-year (2027–2031) framework for the phased implementation of an island-wide emergency management and response coordination program. The Plan pursues two parallel objectives:

First, improvement of Martha's Vineyard's day-to-day emergency management preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities through the implementation of a doctrinal program for planning, training, exercising, grant acquisition and management, and reporting, aligned with Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and FEMA standards and frameworks.

Second, building of coordination capability and capacity through the development and implementation of a Multi-Agency Coordination System (MAC-S), Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC-G), and Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), modeled on established Massachusetts examples (Barnstable County, Franklin County) and adapted specifically for Martha's Vineyard's governance structure, culture, and operational realities.

The MAC framework provides strategic, off-scene coordination and policy guidance during large-scale or complex incidents while preserving municipal command authority and autonomy. It establishes an island-wide structure for sharing situational awareness, prioritizing resources, managing public information, and supporting recovery without centralizing control. This approach respects the cultural and legal importance of local authority while creating opportunities for collaboration that benefit each town through improved training access, better-documented resource inventories, enhanced grant competitiveness, and maximized recovery reimbursements.

SECTION 2: SITUATION OVERVIEW

The following section describes the Martha's Vineyard operational environment, within which this Strategic Plan will be implemented. Understanding the Island's ground truth is essential context for the goals, objectives, and implementation roadmap that follow.

THE ISLAND ENVIRONMENT AND INTERDEPENDENCE

Martha's Vineyard is primarily divided into six municipalities, Aquinnah, Chilmark, Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, and West Tisbury, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah). Each jurisdiction retains independent authority. Functionally, however, the Island is a single operational system. Critical infrastructure systems cross jurisdictional lines and are shared dependencies:

- Ferry service and port operations (the Island's primary supply and evacuation corridor)
- Martha's Vineyard Airport (alternate logistics and evacuation capability)
- Martha's Vineyard Hospital (the sole acute care facility for approximately 20,000 year-round residents and up to 75,000+ seasonal visitors)
- Fuel supply chains (disruption affects heating, transportation, and generator operations island-wide)
- Public health and emergency medical services systems
- Utility infrastructure (electric, telecommunications, water)

Disruption to any one of these systems can create cascading effects across all jurisdictions. A multi-day ferry disruption, for example, rapidly impacts food, fuel, and medical supply chains across the entire island. No municipality controls all components of these systems, and no single municipality can manage disruption to these systems alone.

Hazard Environment

The Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment conducted for this project confirms that existing island hazard identification, as documented in the Dukes County Hazard Mitigation Plan and ResilientMass, is accurate and broadly accepted by island stakeholders. Primary hazards include:

- Coastal storms, nor'easters, and hurricanes
- Severe flooding from storm surge and precipitation
- Severe winter weather, including ice storms and blizzards
- Infrastructure disruption, including utility outages and supply chain failures
- Transportation dependency disruption (primarily ferry service)
- Public health emergencies, including pandemic or epidemic disease outbreaks
- Seasonal population surge (risk amplification factor)
- Emerging threats: cyber-attacks, intentional hazards, climate-amplified storm intensity

The HVA process confirmed that the core challenge is not hazard identification. Stakeholders broadly understand potential threats to the island. The core challenge is operational readiness and coordination capability depth to manage those hazards when the consequences escalate beyond routine response.

Current Emergency Management Capability Assessment

The HVA and stakeholder workshops produced a consistent and operationally credible picture of current emergency management capability across the Island. Key findings include:

Strengths:

- Committed local leadership and professional first-response personnel
- Established plans as the most consistently present capability across hazards
- Strong informal networks and mutual aid traditions among responders
- Broad, realistic awareness of the island's hazard environment
- Existing coordination forums (REPC, DCEMA) that provide a foundation for expansion\

Gaps:

- Doctrine: No consistent, documented doctrine for island-wide coordination. No shared activation thresholds, resource request pathways, or public messaging responsibilities.
- Organization: No island-wide coordinating body. Coordination stops at mutual aid. Many jurisdictions have 'dual-hat' positions where the Emergency Manager is also the tactical Incident Commander, creating a conflict of roles at scale.
- Training: Uneven across hazards and disciplines. Limited understanding of EOC operations, MAC-level coordination, and elected-official emergency management responsibilities.
- Exercises: The weakest capability area. Multi-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary exercising is severely limited. Plans are not routinely tested for accuracy or gaps.
- Equipment and Materiel: Resource inventories are not comprehensive nor shared. Shelter supplies, logistics pathways, and telecommunications reliability during peak season are concerns.
- Personnel: Emergency management is largely a collateral duty. Shelter operations, public information, and volunteer management are particularly understaffed.
- Facilities: No designated island-wide EOC. Shelter sites lack MOUs, staffing models, and resource strategies.
- Policy/Planning: Many towns lack updated EOPs, COOP plans, and functional annexes for mass care, public information, volunteer management, and donations management.
- Recovery Documentation: Inconsistent documentation standards have resulted in missed reimbursement opportunities after past disasters, including COVID-19.

THE COST OF INACTION

The assessment data gathered during the project development process and stakeholder input do not indicate a lack of commitment or competence. The data indicates structural coordination gaps that have identifiable impacts on emergency response and recovery. The cost of maintaining the status quo is not abstract. It is operational and fiscal, with multiple negative consequences:

- Fragmented Situational Awareness
- Competition for Resources
- Reduced Reimbursements
- Lost Mitigation Opportunities
- Seasonal Risk Amplification:
- Degradation of Public Trust

Fragmented Situational Awareness:

Information may remain siloed within jurisdictions, delaying island-wide mission prioritization, enabling resource competition, and degrading response efficiency.

Uncoordinated Resource Requests:

The island towns have a finite resource inventory at any given time. They are additionally hampered, relative to mainland Massachusetts towns, by the challenge of acquiring and/or replacing resources during an emergency. This poses two significant problems absent a coordinated situational assessment and resource request system:

- Without rapid situational awareness and coordinated damage assessment, all six towns will be competing with one another for supplies, vendors and material to solve the same problems, instead of developing a prioritized, integrated response strategy and leveraging their collective procurement resources to obtain a single vendor at a better price.
- When resources must be requested from the Commonwealth, uncoordinated requests risk competition for attention and then for resource allocation. Towns competing for the same MEMA resources during a regional disaster diminish the probability of each town getting adequate support. The more rapidly Martha's Vineyard towns can submit Single Point of Contact mission-based resource requests to MEMA, the more likely they are to get prioritized action and rapid results.

Reduced Reimbursement Efficiency:

Inconsistent documentation standards and recovery tracking can reduce or delay FEMA reimbursement. This was demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of proper documentation and understanding of the FEMA Public Assistance process left at least tens of thousands of dollars on the table instead of in Martha's Vineyard town coffers.

Lost Mitigation Opportunities:

Mitigation grants require compliance with standards, demonstrated management capability, and coordinated strategy and documentation. Fragmentation weakens competitiveness for grant money that could drive improvements in capability and capacity and fund emergency management programming.

Seasonal Risk Amplification:

The Island's seasonal population surge significantly exceeds year-round healthcare and logistics capacity representing an annual risk of an incident that could be routinely managed in November becoming an overwhelming incident in June. That risk comes with potential impacts including increased loss of life, degraded infrastructure, and services for everyone, whether year-round resident or seasonal visitor, significant fiscal losses, and increased exposure to litigation.

Public Trust Degradation:

Inconsistent messaging, visible inter-jurisdictional disagreement, or delayed recovery can erode public confidence.

Volunteer Sustainability Risk:

Smaller communities rely heavily on what is currently an aging volunteer infrastructure. Improvements to an island-wide emergency management system that include preparedness considerations for volunteer integration and management provide an opportunity to mitigate the loss of volunteer labor, on which the island towns are heavily reliant. However, without integrated volunteer support planning, each community's capacity for resilience decreases over time.

Recommendation:

The Island-Wide Emergency Management Program should establish a three-year, hazard-focused preparedness cycle as a core program requirement. For each cycle, the Island should identify three to five priority hazards based on its hazard mitigation plan, risk assessments, recent incidents, and stakeholder capability gaps. Planning, equipment investments, training, public education, and exercises should then be aligned with these hazards to build and sustain measurable island-wide capabilities.

For example, the 2027–2030 cycle could focus on blizzards, coastal flooding, infrastructure disruption, and nor'easters. This coordinated approach would strengthen stakeholder understanding of each hazard, its potential cascading impacts, and the actions necessary to support an effective island-wide response and recovery. At the end of each cycle, the program should evaluate progress, document remaining gaps, and establish priorities for the next three-year period.

SECTION 3: GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

PRESERVATION OF MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

The island-wide emergency management and coordination system described in this Strategic Plan is designed to strengthen collective capability without diminishing individual authority. Each municipality and the Wampanoag Tribal Nation retain:

- Full statutory authority under applicable Massachusetts General Laws
- Jurisdiction and operational responsibility within their own boundaries
- Fiscal control over their own resources and expenditures
- Decision-making authority for activation and deactivation of local EOCs
- Command and control of their own response personnel

The island-wide coordination construct specifically does not:

- Issue operational orders or assume tactical command authority
- Control municipal personnel or direct their deployment
- Control municipal expenditures
- Replace town Emergency Operations Centers or supersede local EOPs
- Function as a centralized command entity

The purpose of island-wide coordination is not to centralize authority. It is to align policy, information, resources, and recovery processes when events exceed the practical boundaries of a single jurisdiction. No elected official or emergency manager will be relieved of any authority or responsibility.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The recommended governance structure places the program administratively under Dukes County, with operational oversight and direction vested in a representative group of island emergency management stakeholders. This structure may be implemented through the existing Dukes County Emergency Management Association (DCEMA) and/or the Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC), expanded to include the authorities and responsibilities outlined in this plan. Selecting a specific governance and oversight body will be an initial task for implementation of this strategy.

The governing body will be responsible for:

- Approving and overseeing implementation of this Strategic Plan
- Providing policy guidance for island-wide coordination activities
- Overseeing the Emergency Management Coordinator position
- Approving activation criteria and de-activation protocols for the MAC System
- Providing fiscal oversight for program funding
- Reviewing and approving plan updates and revisions

THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

A full-time Martha's Vineyard Emergency Management Coordinator is the critical enabling element of this Strategic Plan. The Coordinator is a program manager, not an incident commander. The Coordinator does not assume operational authority over any town's emergency response. The Coordinator's responsibilities are programmatic and facilitative:

- Strategic Plan implementation and management
- Island-wide training and exercise program coordination
- Resource inventory development and maintenance
- Grant identification, proposal writing, coordination, and management
- Performance tracking and annual program reporting
- MAC System activation facilitation and coordination support
- Planning integration and EOP development support across jurisdictions
- Stakeholder education and relationship management

The Coordinator reports to the governing body and does not function as an independent authority. The position is funded initially by the participating jurisdictions. As the program matures, the position's funding should evolve to include a combination of grant funding and jurisdictional contributions, as defined in the sustainable funding plan (see Goal 7, page 34).

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION SYSTEM (MAC-S) ARCHITECTURE

The Multi-Agency Coordination System

The Multi-Agency Coordination System is the operational coordination architecture for the island-wide emergency management program. The MAC model is already present and effectively used in Massachusetts, including successful implementation and activation in Barnstable and Franklin Counties, and has been adapted for Martha's Vineyard's specific governance structure and operational context.

A MAC System is not a command structure. It is a coordination architecture. It provides the facilities, personnel, policies, procedures, and communications that enable different agencies and jurisdictions to coordinate information and messaging, prioritize incident response objectives, and allocate critical resources. The MAC System components are:

The Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC-G)

The Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC-G) is a policy and decision-making body comprised of senior officials or authorized representatives from participating jurisdictions. The MAC-G supports mission prioritization, resource alignment, information integration, and executive policy coordination. It does not direct tactical operations, assume command authority, or supersede local governance.

The Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC)

The Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) is a physical or virtual facility that serves as the operational hub for island-wide coordination. The MACC supports situational awareness, resource management, Joint Information System coordination, and documentation during activations. It may be a designated facility, a virtual capability, or a flexible combination.

MAC System activation will be considered when any of the following criteria are met:

- Upon the recommendation of on-scene incident commander(s)
- At the request of a participating town Emergency Manager
- Following a disaster declaration

And/or when:

- Multi-town impacts exist or are anticipated
- Shared infrastructure disruption affects multiple jurisdictions
- Resource prioritization requires collective alignment across jurisdictions
- Sustained operational scale and duration exceeds routine communication and mutual aid mechanisms
- Recovery operations, documentation and reimbursement require a coordinated approach

MAC System de-activation occurs when collective coordination needs subside to a level manageable through routine mutual aid and local operations. A partial de-activation/devolution process may also be used for

situations in which targeted operations supporting all towns and requiring coordinated sustained operations remain active, but the whole system is not required to support these activities. Devolution and De-activation will be the decision of the [Decide who has the authority to demobilize/devolve the operation] and implemented by the Emergency Management Coordinator or their designee.

SECTION 4: FIVE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION ROAD

Programmatic Implementation will occur in five phases from 2027 through 2031. Each phase builds upon the previous phase. Advancement within the roadmap is tied to milestone completion, not calendar progression alone. The phases are interdependent: Phase I must establish the governance and staffing foundation before later phases can operationalize the MAC System and training programs. The table below outlines a high-level implementation by project phase aligned with an annual timeframe. It provides areas of focus, specific tasks, and basic key performance indicators (KPIs) for each phase.

	Phase I 2027 Foundation	Phase II 2028 Integration	Phase III 2029 Operationalization	Phase IV 2030 Maturation	Phase V 2031 Institutionalization
Focus	Governance & Structure	Planning & Training	MAC System Active	Expansion & Refinement	Sustainability
Key Tasks	• Establish governance body • Hire EM Coordinator • Develop and adopt shared doctrine • Develop and Conduct IPPW • Begin EOP assessments • Identify MACC facility	• Island EOP drafted • Jurisdictional EOP updates begin • Core training deployed • MACC facility MOU, lay-out and required resources established • Island-wide Resource inventory initiated	• MAC-G staffed and trained • MACC fully equipped • Drill or Functional exercise conducted • Documentation systems live and practiced regularly • Recovery framework adopted • Mid-cycle review completed	• Functional/Full-scale exercise development and conduct • Advanced training • Grant applications • MACC second-year operation • Volunteer development and integration	• Sustainability plan finalized • End-of-cycle evaluation • Next Strategic Plan drafted • EMAP self-assessment • Program fully self-sustaining

	Phase I 2027 Foundation	Phase II 2028 Integration	Phase III 2029 Operationalization	Phase IV 2030 Maturation	Phase V 2031 Institutionalization
Focus	Governance & Structure	Planning & Training	MAC System Active	Expansion & Refinement	Sustainability
		First exercises (Tabletop) conducted		- Identify and secure technology enhancements - Start Sustainability Plan	
KPI Targets	- Governance body formed; - Coordinator hired - Shared Doctrine adopted	- Island EOP complete 80% of personnel complete core training	- MAC System exercised - All plans current - Routine SITREP system operational	- Annual exercise program sustained - Grant applications submitted	- Program self-sustaining - Next plan drafted - EMAP readiness assessed - Used as a metric to assess the overall “health” of the MAC System and its component parts (e.g. Town and stakeholder plans, training and exercise participation)

	Phase I 2027 Foundation	Phase II 2028 Integration	Phase III 2029 Operationalization	Phase IV 2030 Maturation	Phase V 2031 Institutionalization
Focus	Governance & Structure	Planning & Training	MAC System Active	Expansion & Refinement	Sustainability
Grant App Timeline	• Apply for the following areas: ○ Planning ○ Staffing ○ Assessment ○ Training	• Apply for the following areas: ○ Emergency Operations Planning Implementation ○ Discussion Based Exercises ○ Training	• Apply for the following resources: ○ MACC Equipment ○ Interoperable comms ○ Regional response equipment ○ Functional Exercises	• Institute an annual EM grant review and application program. • Continue applying for areas to enhance Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, and capabilities	• Continue applying for areas to enhance and sustain Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, and Exercise capabilities
Best Grant Opportunities	• Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) • State Homeland Grant Program (SHSP) • Staffing for Adequate Fire and	• EMPG • SHSP • HMGP • SAFER • Emergency Operations Center Grant Program (EOCGP)	• EMPG • SHSP • HMGP • SAFER • EOCGP • Next Generation Warning System	• EMPG • SHSP • HMGP • SAFER • EOCGP • Next Generation Warning System • BRIC	• EMPG • SHSP • HMGP • SAFER • EOCGP • Next Generation Warning System • BRIC

	Phase I 2027 Foundation	Phase II 2028 Integration	Phase III 2029 Operationalization	Phase IV 2030 Maturation	Phase V 2031 Institutionalization
Focus	Governance & Structure	Planning & Training	MAC System Active	Expansion & Refinement	Sustainability
	Emergency Response (SAFER) • Hazard Mitigation Programs (HMGP)*		• Building Resilience in Communities (BRIC) • Port Security Grant Program (PSGP)	• PSGP	• PSGP

SECTION 5: STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES

The seven goals described in this section are the strategic priorities that will drive implementation of the Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination program from 2027 through 2031. These goals address two lines of effort:

1. Improved day-to-day emergency management preparedness and capability, and
2. Development and operationalization of the Multi-Agency Coordination System.

Each goal includes supporting objectives and specific milestones with assigned responsibilities. Goals are interdependent; progress in one goal supports progress in others.

GOAL ONE:

Establish a Coordinated Island-Wide Emergency Management System

Create the governance structure, operational doctrine, and coordination architecture that forms the foundation for island-wide emergency management.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 ESTABLISH THE ISLAND-WIDE GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT BODY

Formal governance is the prerequisite for every subsequent goal. No coordination system is sustainable without defined authority, accountability, and decision-making processes. This objective establishes the organizational framework within which the island-wide program will operate.

Milestones 1.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
1.1.1	Convene initial governance formation meeting with representatives from all six municipalities, the Wampanoag Tribal Nation, and Dukes County to establish the island-wide emergency management program oversight body.	Governing Body
1.1.2	Adopt a formal charter or memorandum of agreement (MOA) defining the Strategic Plan implementation and management governance structure, member responsibilities, decision-making authority(ies), and program oversight expectations.	Governing Body
1.1.3	Define activation criteria and de-activation protocols for the MAC System and formally adopt as program doctrine.	Governing Body
1.1.4	Establish a recurring governance meeting schedule (at minimum quarterly) and review and reporting cadence for the Strategic Plan.	Governing Body
1.1.5	Address all components of the Strategic plan and make any adjustments to the timeframe and/or methodology to best suit the needs of the Martha's Vineyard Stakeholders	Governing Body

OBJECTIVE 1.2 ESTABLISH AND FILL THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR POSITION

The Emergency Management Coordinator is the enabling mechanism for this entire plan. Without dedicated staffing to drive implementation, monitor progress, and serve as the facilitative hub for island-wide coordination, the goals in this plan will not be achieved. This objective prioritizes establishing the position early in Phase I.

Milestones 1.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
1.2.1	Develop the Emergency Management Coordinator position description, classification, salary range, and reporting structure.	Governing Body
1.2.2	Identify and secure initial funding sources for the Coordinator position through grant programs, county allocation, or jurisdictional contributions.	Governing Body
1.2.3	Conduct a competitive recruitment and selection process for the Coordinator position.	Governing Body
1.2.4	Onboard the Coordinator and establish a 90-day orientation plan that builds familiarity with all island jurisdictions, plans, stakeholders, and operational systems.	Governing Body / Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 1.3 DEVELOP AND ADOPT SHARED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DOCTRINE

Doctrine is the foundation of consistent, coordinated emergency management. Each Martha’s Vineyard town should have a set of emergency management plans, structures, protocols and internal understandings of how they address incidents within their jurisdiction and how to request support from neighbors and from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In short, their own doctrine regarding how emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery works within their borders. An island-wide emergency management and response coordination system will require additional development of a shared doctrine. Without a shared doctrine, each jurisdiction will continue to operate independently, with no common language, no shared expectations, and no framework for scaling from local response to island-wide coordination. Shared doctrine includes activation thresholds, communication expectations, resource request pathways, documentation standards, and public messaging responsibilities.

Milestones 1.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
1.3.1	Develop a Martha's Vineyard Emergency Management Standard Operating Guide (SOG) covering MAC System activation, EOC operations, island-wide coordinated resource request standards (e.g., mission-based request), situation reporting, and documentation standards. - This will form the “backbone” of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan - See the draft Martha’s Vineyard Island-Wide	Emergency Management Coordinator
1.3.2	Adopt the SOG through the governance body and distribute to all participating jurisdictions.	Governing Body / Coordinator
1.3.4	Incorporate shared doctrine into island-wide training and exercise activities.	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL TWO:

Reinforce and Standardize Emergency Operations Planning

Improve the completeness, accuracy, consistency, and interoperability of emergency operations plans across all island jurisdictions.

Planning is fundamental to preparedness. The HVA and stakeholder workshops confirmed that plans are the most consistently reported capability on Martha's Vineyard, but also that plan completeness, currency, accuracy, and inter-jurisdictional alignment are unknown or inconsistent. This goal addresses the planning foundation that all other capability areas depend upon.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE MARTHA'S VINEYARD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP) ASSESSMENT

Before new plans are developed, the current state of all existing plans must be understood. This assessment will produce the first island-wide inventory and quality assessment of emergency management planning. This task was started during the Strategic Plan development project; however, not all relevant plans were available for review, nor may all types of emergency management and response plans exist in each town.

Milestones 2.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
2.1.1	Develop an EOP assessment tool aligned with FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 and Massachusetts MEMA planning standards.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.1.2	Conduct assessments of the existing EOPs and functional annexes across all six municipalities and the Wampanoag Tribal Nation.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.1.3	Compile assessment results into an Island-Wide Planning Status Report to identify gaps, inconsistencies, and priorities for remediation.	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
2.1.4	Present findings to the governance body and develop a prioritized EOP Remediation Plan.	Governing Body / Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 2.2 SUPPORT JURISDICTIONAL EOP DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATING

Using the assessment findings as a guide, the Coordinator will work with each jurisdiction to update or develop emergency operations plans that meet professional standards, reflect current hazards and capabilities, and are consistent with island-wide coordination protocols.

Milestones 2.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
2.2.1	Develop a standardized Martha's Vineyard EOP template, including base plan and priority functional annexes (public information, sheltering, mass care, continuity, volunteer management, donations management).	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.2.2	Provide technical assistance and planning support to jurisdictions for EOP development and updating, prioritized by gap assessment findings.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.2.3	Establish a recurring EOP review cycle (annual review, full update every three years) for all island jurisdictions.	All Jurisdictions / Coordinator
2.2.4	Develop a shared planning repository accessible to all island emergency management stakeholders.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 2.3 DEVELOP THE COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Island EOP provides the operational framework for coordination during incidents that exceed single-jurisdiction capacity. It is the operational extension of the MAC System doctrine and the primary planning tool for the MACC.

Milestones 2.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
2.3.1	Draft the Island EOP base plan, including purpose, scope, situation overview, concept of operations, MAC System activation criteria and structure, and agency roles and responsibilities.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.3.2	Develop Emergency Support Function (ESF) annexes covering the functions most critical to island-wide response, including communications, mass care, resource support, public information, and transportation.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.3.3	Conduct a stakeholder review and comment process for the Island EOP draft.	Jurisdictions / Coordinator
2.3.4	Formally adopt the Island EOP through the governance body and implement a distribution and orientation program for all participating agencies.	Governing Body / Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 2.4 DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN CONTINUITY PLANNING

When disasters strike, continuity of government and continuity of operations are essential. Ensuring that essential government functions continue and that critical services are maintained is a key element of community resilience.

Milestones 2.4

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
2.4.1	Assess the current status of Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) plans across all island jurisdictions.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.4.2	Provide technical assistance for COOP/COG development and updating, prioritized by gap assessment findings.	Emergency Management Coordinator
2.4.3	Develop a Martha's Vineyard COOP planning template aligned with FEMA guidance.	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL THREE:

Build and Operationalize the Multi-Agency Coordination System

Develop, equip, staff, and exercise the MAC-S/MAC-G/MACC coordination architecture for island-wide emergency response and recovery coordination.

This goal implements the MAC System described in Section 4.4. The MAC System is the operational expression of island-wide coordination. Building it requires establishing the MACC facility capability, staffing the MAC-G, developing standard operating procedures, equipping the coordination function, and validating all components through training and exercises.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 ESTABLISH THE MACC FACILITY CAPABILITY

The MACC requires a designated facility, or validated virtual capability, with sufficient space, communications infrastructure, and equipment to support island-wide coordination operations. The facility need not be newly constructed; an existing facility that meets baseline requirements is the preferred approach.

Milestone 3.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.1.1	Develop MACC facility requirements and specifications based on anticipated staffing, operational functions, and technology needs.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.1.2	Conduct a site assessment of potential MACC host facilities across the island, evaluating access, power resiliency, communications infrastructure, and space adequacy.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.1.3	Select and designate the MACC primary facility and at least one alternate. Execute a facility use agreement with the host organization.	Governing Body / Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.1.4	Assess and address facility equipment and technology gaps, including communications (radio, telephone, internet), situational awareness displays, and documentation systems.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.1.5	Develop and implement an emergency power and generator plan for the MACC facility.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 3.2 ESTABLISH AND STAFF THE MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP (MAC-G)

The MAC-G is the policy and decision-making body of the MAC System. It is comprised of senior officials or their authorized representatives from all participating jurisdictions and key agencies. The MAC-G is not a standing, full-time body; it activates when the MAC System activates.

Milestones 3.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.2.1	Define MAC-G membership, including required jurisdictions, agencies, and functional areas (emergency management, public health, healthcare, transportation, utilities).	Governing Body / Coordinator
3.2.2	Identify primary and alternate MAC-G representatives from each jurisdiction and key agency; document in the Island EOP.	All Jurisdictions / Coordinator
3.2.3	Develop MAC-G activation procedures, position job aids, and decision support tools.	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.2.4	Conduct an initial MAC-G orientation session and tabletop exercise.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 3.3 DEVELOP MACC STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POSITION JOB AIDS

The MACC must have documented procedures that enable it to activate quickly, operate consistently, and perform its coordination functions effectively. Position-specific job aids ensure that personnel can perform their roles even under stress and with limited prior experience in the MACC environment.

Milestones 3.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.3.1	Develop MACC activation and de-activation procedures consistent with the Island EOP and MAC System doctrine.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.3.2	Develop MACC operational position job aids for all primary MACC functions, including MACC Manager, Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance, and Public Information Officer.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.3.3	Develop MACC forms and documentation systems for situation reports, resource requests, action plans, and incident logs.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.3.4	Develop Joint Information System (JIS) procedures to support coordinated public information and messaging during island-wide activations.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 3.4 TRAIN AND EXERCISE THE MAC SYSTEM

The MAC System is only as capable as the people who staff it. Training ensures that MACC personnel understand their roles and can perform them effectively. Exercises validate that the system works as designed under simulated operational stress.

Milestones 3.4

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
3.4.1	Develop a MACC training curriculum covering NIMS/MAC principles, MACC operations, position-specific functions, and software/technology systems.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.4.2	Train all identified MACC primary and alternate personnel to their assigned positions.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.4.3	Conduct an annual MACC tabletop exercise to validate procedures and build team familiarity.	Emergency Management Coordinator
3.4.4	Conduct a full-scale MAC System activation exercise by end of Plan Year 3 (2029).	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL FOUR:

Strengthen Response and Recovery Capabilities

Improve Martha's Vineyard's operational readiness for response and recovery through standardized procedures, resource inventories, documentation systems, and recovery frameworks.

OBJECTIVE 4.1 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE ISLAND-WIDE RESOURCE INVENTORY

Understanding what resources exist across the island, and where they are, is a prerequisite for effective resource management during a disaster. The resource inventory is also the foundation for mutual aid planning and MACC resource coordination functions.

Milestones 4.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
4.1.1	Develop a standardized resource inventory methodology and template consistent with NIMS resource typing standards.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.1.2	Coordinate with all jurisdictions, key agencies, utilities, healthcare, and transportation partners to compile a comprehensive island-wide resource inventory.	All Jurisdictions / Coordinator
4.1.3	Establish a resource inventory management system accessible to the MACC and participating jurisdiction EOCs.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.1.4	Implement a semi-annual resource inventory review and update process.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 4.2 STANDARDIZE SITUATION REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION

Consistent situation reporting and documentation supports decision-making at all levels, enables accurate resource requests to the Commonwealth, and ensures that disaster expenditures are documented to support reimbursement claims.

Milestones 4.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
4.2.1	Develop standardized Situation Report (SITREP) templates for jurisdictional and island-wide use, consistent with Massachusetts MEMA reporting formats.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.2.2	Develop standardized resource request forms and processes consistent with MEMA and FEMA requirements.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.2.3	Develop disaster cost-tracking procedures and templates aligned with FEMA Public Assistance eligibility requirements.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.2.4	Train emergency management personnel across all jurisdictions on SITREP, resource request, and cost-tracking procedures.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 4.3 DEVELOP A MARTHA'S VINEYARD DISASTER RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

Recovery from a major disaster on Martha's Vineyard will require coordinated action across all jurisdictions, with the state, and with federal agencies. A defined recovery framework clarifies roles, streamlines resource access, and maximizes reimbursement.

Milestones 4.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
4.3.1	Engage recovery stakeholders, including all jurisdictions, Dukes County, MEMA, nonprofit partners, and the business community, in a recovery planning process.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.3.2	Develop a Martha's Vineyard Recovery Framework consistent with the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) and Massachusetts recovery guidance, including Recovery Support Function assignments.	Emergency Management Coordinator
4.3.3	Develop a FEMA Public Assistance orientation and documentation program to ensure all jurisdictions understand reimbursement eligibility and documentation requirements before a disaster occurs.	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL FIVE:

Coordinate a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Program

Implement a structured, needs-based training and exercise program that builds core competencies, validates plans and procedures, and is aligned with FEMA and MEMA standards.

The HVA and workshop findings consistently identified training and exercises as the weakest Martha's Vineyard capability areas. Addressing this gap requires a systematic approach: an annual Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW) to identify needs, a multi-year training schedule that addresses those needs, and a recurring exercise program that validates progress. Training must address not only tactical responders but also EOC staff, elected and appointed officials, and partners who may never have understood their emergency management roles.

OBJECTIVE 5.1 ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN ANNUAL INTEGRATED PREPAREDNESS PLANNING PROCESS

The *Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop* (IPPW) is the annual mechanism through which Martha's Vineyard will collectively identify training and exercise priorities, review gaps, and update the multi-year training and exercise plan.

Milestones 5.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.1.1	Convene the first Martha's Vineyard IPPW in Year 1 (2027) with representation from all jurisdictions and key partner agencies.	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.1.2	Produce an annual Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) documenting training and exercise priorities, scheduled activities, and resource requirements.	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.1.3	Maintain the IPP as a living document, updated annually and aligned with this Strategic Plan.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 5.2

Implement a Structured Training Program

Training must be systematic, needs-based, and aligned with identified gaps. The training program will address emergency management fundamentals, EOC and MAC operations, position-specific competencies, elected official orientation, and functional areas such as public information and sheltering.

Milestones 5.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.2.1	Develop a Martha's Vineyard core training curriculum matrix defining required courses by role category (emergency manager, EOC staff, first responder, elected/appointed official, key partner).	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.2.2	Coordinate and schedule delivery of FEMA and MEMA training courses to address identified gaps, with emphasis on IS-700 (NIMS), IS-800 (NRF), ICS courses, G-775 (EOC Management), and MAC System courses.	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.2.3	Develop and deliver elected and appointed official emergency management orientation briefings to all island jurisdictions.	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.2.4	Track training completion across all personnel and maintain comprehensive training records.	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.2.5	Ensure training is aligned with all applicable state and federal requirements, including NIMS compliance requirements.	Emergency Management Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 5.3

Implement a Progressive Exercise Program

Exercises validate training, test plans, and build operational readiness that cannot be achieved through training alone. The exercise program will be progressive, moving from discussion-based exercises to operations-based exercises as the program matures, and will be tied to the corrective action process to ensure identified gaps are addressed.

Milestones 5.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.3.1	Conduct at least two discussion-based exercises (seminars, tabletop exercises) annually, addressing a range of island-relevant hazard scenarios.	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.3.2	Conduct at least one operations-based exercise (drill, functional exercise, or full-scale exercise) annually beginning in Year 2 (2028).	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.3.3	Conduct a full-scale, island-wide multi-jurisdictional exercise by end of Year 3 (2029).	Emergency Management Coordinator
5.3.4	Implement a formal After-Action Review (AAR) and Improvement Plan (IP) process for all exercises and all actual MAC System activations.	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
5.3.5	Maintain a Corrective Action Program (CAP) to track, prioritize, and monitor resolution of identified areas for improvement.	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL SIX:

Modernize Information Management, Communications & Technology Systems

Improve situational awareness, interoperability, and information sharing across all island jurisdictions through shared systems, protocols, and technology adoption.

Effective emergency management depends on timely, accurate, and interoperable information. The HVA and workshop findings confirmed that Martha's Vineyard's communications and information management systems are inconsistently developed, poorly interoperable, and not organized to support island-wide coordination. This goal addresses the technology, communications, and information infrastructure required to support the MAC System and improve day-to-day emergency management effectiveness.

OBJECTIVE 6.1 CONDUCT AN ISLAND-WIDE COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Before systems can be improved, current capabilities and gaps must be understood.

Milestones 6.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
6.1.1	Assess current communications systems across all jurisdictions, including radio systems, mass notification platforms, alert and warning systems, and data-sharing platforms.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.1.2	Identify interoperability gaps and develop recommendations for improvement.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.1.3	Develop a Martha's Vineyard Communications Plan that defines primary, alternate, contingency, and	Emergency Management Coordinator

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
	emergency (PACE) communication pathways for routine operations and MACC activations.	

OBJECTIVE 6.2 IMPLEMENT A SHARED SITUATIONAL AWARENESS SYSTEM

A shared situational awareness system provides the island-wide common operating picture that is currently absent. This system enables the MACC to track resources, incidents, and impacts across jurisdictions in real time.

Milestones 6.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
6.2.1	Evaluate available situational awareness and EOC software platforms (e.g., WebEOC1, VEOC, Rave, or equivalent) for suitability to Martha's Vineyard's operational environment.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.2.2	Select, procure, and configure a shared situational awareness platform for MACC and participating jurisdiction EOC use.	Governing Body / Coordinator
6.2.3	Train all MACC and EOC personnel on the selected platform.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.2.4	Integrate the situational awareness platform into MACC activation procedures and exercise activities.	Emergency Management Coordinator

¹ WebEOC is recommended because it is used by MEMA and the Martha's Vineyard towns already have accounts)

OBJECTIVE 6.3 DEVELOP A UNIFIED PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNING STRATEGY

Consistent, accessible, and coordinated public information is a critical emergency management function. Martha's Vineyard currently lacks a unified approach to public information, risk communication, and public warning. This objective addresses that gap.

Milestones 6.3

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
6.3.1	Assess current public information and warning capabilities across all jurisdictions, including Wireless Emergency Alerts, mass notification systems, social media management, and Joint Information System procedures.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.3.2	Develop a Martha's Vineyard Public Information and Warning Plan defining roles, responsibilities, message approval processes, and platform management.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.3.3	Ensure the Public Information Plan meets federal accessibility requirements (Section 508) and includes provisions for non-English speaking and access/functional needs populations.	Emergency Management Coordinator
6.3.4	Incorporate public information operations into all exercises.	Emergency Management Coordinator

GOAL SEVEN:

Ensure Sustainable Funding & Long-Term Program Governance

Develop a diversified, sustainable funding strategy and governance framework that ensures the island-wide emergency management program operates effectively beyond the initial implementation period.

OBJECTIVE 7.1 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A DIVERSIFIED FUNDING STRATEGY

Long-term program sustainability requires diversified funding that does not depend entirely on any single grant program or jurisdictional contribution. The Coordinator's role in grant management is a key element of this strategy. Note that grant management can be complex, and as the program evolves, this is a likely area where additional support will be needed.

Milestones 7.1

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
7.1.1	Identify and map all applicable federal and state grant programs that can support Martha's Vineyard emergency management program activities, including FEMA BRIC, BSIR, HSGP, and EMPG programs.	Emergency Management Coordinator
7.1.2	Develop a multi-year grant strategy that aligns funding opportunities with Strategic Plan implementation priorities.	Emergency Management Coordinator
7.1.3	Develop a jurisdictional cost-sharing model for program operating costs not covered by grant funding.	Governing Body / Coordinator
7.1.4	Develop a program financial sustainability plan for years beyond the initial grant-funded period.	Governing Body / Coordinator

OBJECTIVE 7.2 ESTABLISH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

Accountability requires measurement. The program's performance will be tracked through a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with each goal (see *the following section on Performance and Accountability*). Annual performance reports will provide transparency to participating jurisdictions and the governing body.

Milestones 7.2

Milestone	Milestone Description	Responsibility
7.2.1	Develop a program performance measurement framework with KPIs for each Strategic Plan goal.	Emergency Management Coordinator
7.2.2	Publish an annual program progress report to the governing body and all participating jurisdictions.	Emergency Management Coordinator
7.2.3	Conduct a comprehensive mid-cycle Strategic Plan review at the end of Year 3 (2029) to assess progress and adjust implementation priorities as needed.	Governing Body / Coordinator
7.2.4	Conduct a formal end-of-cycle evaluation at the conclusion of Plan Year 5 (2031) to inform development of the next Strategic Plan.	Governing Body / Coordinator

SECTION 7: PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Program performance will be measured through a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) aligned with each Strategic Plan goal. The Emergency Management Coordinator will compile performance data and publish an Annual Program Progress Report to the governing body and all participating jurisdictions. Metrics assess system maturity and program effectiveness, not municipal ranking.

Goal Area	Key Performance Indicator	Target Timeframe
Governance & Structure	Governance body established and meeting regularly; Coordinator position filled; MOA executed	Year 1 (2027)
Planning	Island EOP adopted; % of jurisdictions with updated EOPs; Missing annexes developed	Year 2–3 (2028–2029)
MAC System	MACC facility established; MAC-G staffed and trained; MAC System exercised	Year 2–3 (2028–2029)
Training	% of required personnel completing core training curriculum; Training records maintained	Annual (2027–2031)
Exercises	Exercises conducted per schedule; AAR/IP completed for all exercises; Corrective actions closed	Annual (2028–2031)
Resources	Island-wide resource inventory complete and current; SITREP system operational	Year 2–3 (2028–2029)
Recovery	Recovery Framework adopted; Cost-tracking procedures in use; PA documentation training complete	Year 3 (2029)
Funding	Grant applications submitted; Cost-sharing model adopted; Sustainability plan complete	Annual (2027–2031)

The governing body will conduct a mid-cycle Strategic Plan review at the end of Year 3 (2029) to assess progress, adjust implementation priorities, and ensure the program remains responsive to evolving island needs and capabilities. A comprehensive end-of-cycle evaluation at the conclusion of Year 5 (2031) will inform development of the next Strategic Plan.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This Strategic Integration and Implementation Plan is a roadmap, not a checklist. Its goals and objectives are interdependent, and implementation requires sustained commitment, leadership engagement, and dedicated resources. The Emergency Management Coordinator is the primary driver of plan implementation, supported by the governing body and all participating jurisdictions.

Implementation success depends on:

- Sustained political will and executive-level support from all participating jurisdictions
- Adequate and stable funding for the Coordinator position and program activities
- Consistent stakeholder engagement and participation in training, exercises, and planning activities
- Willingness to share plans, resources, and information across jurisdictional lines
- Commitment to the corrective action process, acting on identified gaps, not simply identifying them

PLAN MAINTENANCE

This Strategic Plan is a living document. It will be reviewed and updated according to the following schedule:

- Annual review: The Coordinator will conduct an annual review of plan progress and present findings to the governing body. Minor updates may be made at this time.
- Mid-cycle review: A comprehensive review will be conducted at the end of Year 3 (2029) to assess progress, realign priorities, and adjust the implementation roadmap.
- End-of-cycle evaluation: A formal evaluation will be conducted at the conclusion of Year 5 (2031) to inform development of the next Strategic Plan.
- Trigger-based review: The plan will be reviewed and updated following any significant incident that activates the MAC System, any major change in jurisdictional structure or authority, or any significant change in state or federal guidance that affects the plan's assumptions or frameworks.

CONCLUSION

The residents, government, and institutions of Martha's Vineyard demonstrate consistent resilience, capability, and commitment to public safety. This Strategic Plan does not argue that those qualities are absent. It argues that they are not yet organized into the systemic, doctrinal emergency management program and island-wide coordination architecture that the Island's operational realities require.

The evidence is clear. The hazard environment is well understood. The gaps are known. The cost of inaction is documented, not abstractly, but in missed reimbursements, untested plans, uncoordinated responses, and the compounding risk of an aging volunteer infrastructure meeting a growing seasonal population without a coordination system capable of managing a major island-wide event.

This plan provides a roadmap. It preserves every jurisdiction's authority and identity. It builds a coordination capability that serves each town's interests individually and all towns' interests collectively. It aligns with national and Massachusetts emergency management frameworks, maximizing grant competitiveness and reimbursement potential. And it does so through a phased, milestone-based approach that prevents premature expansion and ensures foundation precedes complexity.

The Island retains control. The Island gains coordination architecture. The Island reduces fiscal risk. The Island strengthens resilience. That is the return on this investment.

The work ahead is significant. But the Martha's Vineyard Island-Wide Emergency Management and Response Coordination project team's engagement with island stakeholders confirms that the will to do this work exists. The professional expertise, community relationships, and the genuine commitment to the island's residents and visitors are present across every jurisdiction that participated in this process. This plan gives that commitment direction, structure, and a measurable path forward.



ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
AAR	After-Action Review
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (FEMA Grant)
CAP	Corrective Action Program
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
COG	Continuity of Government
DCEMA	Dukes County Emergency Management Association
DOTMLPF-P	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities, Policy
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EMPG	Emergency Management Performance Grant
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HSGP	Homeland Security Grant Program
HVA	Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment

Acronym	Definition
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
IP	Improvement Plan
IPPW	Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop
JIS	Joint Information System
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MAC-G	Multi-Agency Coordination Group
MAC-S	Multi-Agency Coordination System
MACC	Multi-Agency Coordination Center
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDRF	National Disaster Recovery Framework
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
POETE	Plans, Organization, Equipment, Training, Exercises

Acronym	Definition
REPC	Regional Emergency Planning Committee
SITREP	Situation Report
SOG	Standard Operating Guide
THIRA	Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

APPENDIX A: GRANT FUNDING OPTIONS

The following menu contains some, not all, emergency management/emergency response grant programs that could offer assistance to Dukes County and its municipalities. The menu below also outlines areas where the Martha's Vineyard EM program can start planning for applications to these grant funding streams, if available.

Grant Program	Application Pathway	Potential Uses	Best Strategic-plan Year(s)
Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)	Massachusetts is the direct FEMA applicant. Dukes County and municipalities may receive subawards through MEMA.	EM Coordinator support where allowed; EOP development; planning; training; exercises; MAC System administration; documentation; EOC operations; continuity; and EMAP readiness.	2027–2031 annually. Begin during Foundation and maintain throughout the plan.
State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)	County, municipalities, sheriff, fire, EMS, emergency management, and other eligible agencies participate through the Commonwealth's investment process.	Interoperable communications; MACC equipment; cybersecurity; intelligence and information sharing; hazardous materials; mass-casualty response; planning; training; and exercises.	2027–2031 annually. Planning and training in 2027–2028; equipment and operational capabilities in 2029–2031.
Emergency Operations Center Grant Program	State Administrative Agencies apply to FEMA on behalf of state and local projects. Local projects may require congressional designation or state selection, depending on the NOFO.	MACC/EOC construction, renovation, backup power, communications, displays, information systems, furniture, security, and operational improvements.	Develop in 2027–2028; apply in 2028 or 2029. The facility, MOU, site control, layout, cost estimate, and resource requirements should be established first.
Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)	Individual career, combination, or volunteer fire departments; regional approaches may be possible where permitted. Volunteer firefighter interest organizations may apply for recruitment and retention activities.	Career firefighter hiring and volunteer recruitment and retention, including outreach, marketing, onboarding, physicals, training-related recruitment costs, and other eligible incentives.	Develop in 2029; apply in 2030. Aligns with Phase IV volunteer development and integration. Departments should collect staffing, turnout, response-time, call-volume, and seasonal-demand data beginning in 2027.

Grant Program	Application Pathway	Potential Uses	Best Strategic-plan Year(s)
Next Generation Warning System Grant Program	Dukes County and its towns are not direct applicants under the FY 2026 NOFO. Only states and federally recognized Tribal governments may apply. The county should submit a proposed island-wide project to Massachusetts for inclusion in a state application. The Wampanoag Tribe may have a direct pathway.	Warning sirens; giant-voice systems; resilient alerting; satellite and internet-connected warning capabilities; streaming-service alert distribution; IPAWS-related improvements; redundancy; cybersecurity; and warning capability assessments.	Assess in 2027–2028; pursue through Massachusetts in 2029. The FY 2026 opportunity closed August 7, 2026.
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	Dukes County and municipalities apply as subapplicants through Massachusetts. Federally recognized Tribal governments may apply directly.	Coastal resilience; stormwater and drainage; critical-facility protection; resilient utilities; backup power where tied to natural-hazard mitigation; evacuation routes; infrastructure hardening; flood mitigation; and eligible building-code activities.	Develop in 2027–2028; apply in 2029 or 2030. Projects should have preliminary engineering, benefit-cost analysis, environmental information, cost estimates, site control, and match commitments.
Port Security Grant Program (PSGP)	Eligible port authorities, ferry systems, terminal operators, local governments, and maritime agencies. For Vineyard projects, the Steamship Authority, terminal owner, or entity responsible for the regulated maritime asset may need to be the lead applicant.	Ferry-terminal security; waterside surveillance; access control; interoperable marine communications; cybersecurity; patrol and response equipment; security planning; training; and exercises. Ferry participation has additional Coast Guard-related conditions.	Develop partnerships in 2027–2028; apply in 2029–2031. Confirm asset ownership, Area Maritime Security Plan alignment, Coast Guard coordination, and long-term maintenance responsibility.
Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)	Municipal, volunteer, and combination fire departments; nonaffiliated EMS organizations; eligible regional applications involving multiple departments.	PPE; SCBA; interoperable communications; cardiac monitors; EMS equipment; rescue equipment; marine-response equipment; training; wellness; facility modifications; and eligible vehicles.	Inventory needs in 2027–2028; apply in 2028–2031. A regional application may be appropriate after completing the island-wide resource inventory.

Grant Program	Application Pathway	Potential Uses	Best Strategic-plan Year(s)
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)	County and municipal governments apply through MEMA after funding is activated by a presidential major-disaster declaration.	Critical-facility hardening; generators; flood protection; elevation and acquisition; drainage; coastal projects; wildfire mitigation; utility protection; and infrastructure resilience.	Maintain application-ready projects from 2027–2031. Applications depend on disaster-generated funding, so projects should be scoped before a declaration occurs.
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)	County and municipal governments apply through Massachusetts. Projects generally must benefit NFIP-insured structures or reduce the NFIP's exposure.	Acquisition, elevation, relocation, demolition, floodproofing, project scoping, and community flood-mitigation projects involving eligible NFIP-insured properties.	Identify properties and projects in 2027–2028; apply in 2028–2031. Maintain current NFIP, repetitive-loss, property-owner, mitigation-plan, and benefit-cost information