

Part I: Attachments
OMB Control Number: 1820-0664
Expiration Date: 9/30/2006

The Commonwealth of Virginia

State: Virginia

Attachment 1: Basic Information

Name of Lead Agency: Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Lead Agency: Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)

Address of Lead Agency: 8004 Franklin Farms Dr.
Richmond, VA 23229

Name and Title of Certifying Representative for Lead Agency: James A. Rothrock, Commissioner

Address of Certifying Representative: 8004 Franklin Farms Dr.
Richmond, VA 23229

Telephone for Certifying Representative: 804.662.7010

Email for Certifying Representative: James.Rothrock@drs.virginia.gov

Name and Title of Program Director: Kenneth H. Knorr

Address for Program Director: Department of Rehabilitative Services
VATS
8004 Franklin Farms Drive
Richmond, VA 23229

Telephone for Program Director: (804) 662-9995 - Voice

Email for Program Director: Ken.Knorr@drs.virginia.gov

Name of Implementing Entity:

Name of Applicable Division and/or Subdivision of Implementing Entity

Address of Implementing Entity:

Name and Title of Program Director:

Address of Program Director:

Telephone for Program Director:

Email of Program Director:

ATTACHMENT 2 Lead Agency and Implementing Entity

2.1 Identification and Description of the Lead Agency as the Implementing Agency

Identify and describe the Lead Agency referred to in §4(C)(1)(A) of the AT Act

2.1A Identification and Description of Lead Agency if an Implementing Agency is not Designated

In 1990, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia designated the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) as the lead agency for the Statewide Assistive Technology (AT) Program. The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS), a program within DRS, is and will continue to be directly responsible for implementing, conducting and overseeing the activities of the State AT Program.

The mission of DRS is: “In partnership with people with disabilities and their families, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services collaborates with the public and private sectors to provide and advocate for the highest quality services that empower individuals with disabilities to maximize their employment, independence and full inclusion into society.” The Department provides services to help Virginians with disabilities become more independent and self-sufficient. The agency’s vocational rehabilitation program serves eligible individuals age 14 and over. The program provides services to people with all types of physical, mental, or emotional disabilities who are willing and able to work, regardless of income, or type of device or service that they may need.

The DRS has 36 field offices located across the state so that services can be easily accessed. Vocational rehabilitation services help people with disabilities get ready for, find, and keep a job. We have a residential training and medical rehabilitation center known as the [Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center](#). The agency also partners with a network of community rehabilitation providers, also known as [Employment Services Organizations \(ESOs\)](#). These organizations provide [Employment and Vocational Services](#) throughout the state. DRS collaborates with schools in providing [transition services](#) for students with disabilities moving from high school to further education, work or independence. DRS also administers programs which offer a broad range of services to individuals with disabilities to enhance opportunities for independent living.

Since 1990, DRS/VATS has provided Virginians with disabilities free access to information and referral services, an accessible web site, and publications in accessible formats on extensive topics related to disability rights, laws, policies, programs, services, and funding opportunities for assistive technology (AT). Publications have been targeted to specific audiences, such as student transition services, educators and aging, plus descriptions of resources for funding the cost of devices and services.

VATS is a statewide Assistive Technology Program designed to improve access to and acquisition of assistive technology devices, services and funding for all Virginians. The mission of VATS is to ensure that Virginians of all ages and abilities can access and acquire the appropriate, affordable assistive and information technologies and services they need to participate in society as active citizens.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

VATS provides Assistive Technology services statewide, which include provision of information and referral; AT devices, demonstrations, training and technical assistance; recycled devices and equipment; and public awareness activities. To accomplish this, VATS partners with regional sites located at George Mason University (northern region), Old Dominion University (southeast region), and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (southwest region).

The DRS/VATS maintains Memoranda of Understanding and Annual Scope of Activities Agreements with these sites whose activities for FFY07 are:

- development and operation of a regional device demonstration and equipment loan program;
- participation in regional recycling teams to assist in identifying existing recycling initiatives and to support developing programs;
- development and implementation of strategies for timely acquisition;
- conducting training and public awareness activities to include events designed to facilitate transitions;
- design prototype Online AT Device and AT Exchange Database (GMU Regional Site)
- update website to include an AT demonstration site, event calendar, regional resources, and consortium minutes;
- update and maintain List serve (VT Regional Site);
- provide outreach and technical assistance to underserved, under-represented rural and targeted populations;
- collect data and report quarterly and annually;
- undertake regional initiatives based on the needs of each region; and
- assure consumer and community involvement and direction.

During June 2006 each Regional Site was given \$20,000 to build their capacity to loan, demonstrate, and recycle assistive technology. Each site has also begun collaboration with the Centers for Independent Living in their regions to establish recycling “programs” where there are none.

During the 2006 FFY, staffing changed in the VATS central office. VATS now has 4 full-time and 1 part time employees. Three (3) of the full-time staff are professional staff with advanced degrees and vast experience in the field of rehabilitation. The part-time person is assisting with VATS’ IT activities. Staff have expertise and experience in AT that includes policy and program development; AT training and workshops for consumers, service providers, educators, and administrators; and technical assistance at the local, state and national levels in acquisition, alternative loan financing, and use of low-tech devices for the aging. Staff have also assisted in the development of web based accessibility standards used by DRS and the other Disability Services Agencies.

One staff is an adjunct instructor at George Washington University, teaching graduate courses in Assistive Technology and Disability. Experience in teaching exceeds 20 years.

Staff has published in peer-review journals in the areas of loan financing, AT, spinal cord injury, and systems change. Numerous handbooks and materials have been developed to support the access to and acquisition of assistive technology for targeted populations. All are active in the community serving on various boards, committees, task forces, and councils. For example VATS staff participate on the Statewide Education and Assistive Technology Task Force that is

The Commonwealth of Virginia

advising on making AT needs a part of the Individualized Education Plan and getting information out to parents.

In addition to the advisory council described in attachment 3 of this plan, VATS and its Regional Sites will ensure that programs are consumer responsive by seeking direct feedback from consumers who access the program, using on-site interviews or follow-up surveys.

2.1B Identification and Description of the Lead Agency if an Implementing Entity is Designated In the case that the Governor designates an Implementing Entity to carry out responsibilities under the AT act as allowed under §4(c)(1)(B), an identification of the lead Agency and certification of the assurances in Part I are sufficient for completing item 2.1

Not Applicable

2.2 Identification and Description of the Implementing Entity Identify and describe the Implementing Entity referred to in §4(c)(2)(B) of the AT Act, if such an Implementing Entity is designated by the Governor.

Not Applicable

2.3 Show of Good Cause for Change in Lead Agency or Implementing Entity If the Governor has chosen to change the lead Agency or, if applicable, Implementing Entity as allowed in §4(c)(1)(C) of the AT Act, provide an explanation of good cause⁴ for this redesignation.

Not Applicable

ATTACHMENT 3 STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL

- 3.1 Membership of the Advisory Council Identify the members of the Advisory Council and each member's designation as an individual with disabilities who uses AT, a family member or guardian of such individual, or a representative of a State agency or other entity.

The VATS Advisory Council is composed of seventeen (17) members, ten (10) who are individuals with disabilities and use AT. The remaining seven (7) members of the Council represent state and non-profit agencies including: the Department of Education, Department for Blind and Vision Impaired, the VA Council of Independent Living Centers (VACIL), the Workforce Investment Board, the Department for the Aging, and Department of Medical Assistance Services. The percentage of consumer representation is 62.5%, exceeding the requirement established in the AT Act of 1998, as amended. Council members live in cities and counties throughout the state and are representative of both rural and urban areas of Virginia.

Consumer/Family Representation

Chet Avery	State Rehabilitation Council
Tom Dowling	Virginia Association for the Deaf
Joe Foresta	Brain Injury Council
Scott Higdon	Consumer Representatives
Doug Owens	Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
Ricky Palmateer	Regional Site
Celestine Walker	Statewide Independent Living Council
Bob Williges	Consumer Representatives
*To be replaced	State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind
*To be replaced	Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority

Mandated Public Agencies

John Eisenberg	Department of Education
Peggy Fields	Department for Blind and Visually Impairments
Doug R. James	Department of Rehabilitative Services
The Honorable Horace Webb	Virginia Workforce Investment Council
Brenda Wickard	Virginia Council of Independent Living Centers

Other State Agencies

Paula Drever	Department of Medical Assistance Services
Ben Garrett III	Department for the Aging

*The VATS is awaiting a nominee from the AT Loan Fund Authority. They have had a significant turnover in board members, are appointing a new chair, and a new director. As soon as this process is complete, the Board will act on their nominee. In June 2006 the representative of the State Rehabilitation Council of the Blind left the Council due to a change in job responsibilities.

3.2 Structure and Operation of the Advisory Council Describe the structure and operations of the Advisory Council.

The VATS Advisory Council meets quarterly and rotates meeting locations around the State to share the travel to and from meetings. The Council has appointed a Chairperson who will work with the VATS Director to develop the agenda and content of the meetings. In addition to the Chair, the Council has appointed a Vice Chair, who will be the rising Chairperson, and a Secretary who will review minutes prepared by staff and act as the signatory. The Council selected three (3) subcommittees: Planning, Legislation, and Recycling.

The Council will follow Robert's Rules of Order in conducting each meeting. At the chairperson's discretion, council decisions will be made either through consensus or by member vote. It will be the responsibility of VATS staff to make meeting room arrangements, develop materials for information packets for each member, and assure accessibility of meeting sites and materials. Staff of the VATS will update the Advisory Council on program activities, and present any planned initiatives for Council input. The composition of the Council will enable input that is consumer-driven and consumer-responsive.

Members of the Council are solicited through requests for nominees from Governor appointed disability councils, advocacy groups, regional sites, and mandated state agencies. Official appointments are determined by the Commissioner of the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Each member's term will be for 3 years, with the option of an additional 3 years. At the end of 6 years, members will have to resign for at least 1 year. Members who represent specific agencies or councils will go off the advisory council when they are no longer serving on the councils they represent. The same will be true for those employed by the State agencies. The Council, with support from the VATS staff, will be responsible for soliciting new members.

ATTACHMENT 4: MEASURABLE GOALS

Because a data collection instrument was not available during year one, Virginia will establish a baseline for each of the goals 4.1 through 4.7 during year 2. Thereafter VATS will submit an amendment identifying the long term goal and short-term goals set to improve upon this baseline during year three of the State Plan. This baseline will be established by using a data collection instrument and procedures to be determined by RSA.

4.1 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Education

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who access device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and make a decision about an AT device or service for educational purposes as the result of the assistance they receive.

4.2 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Employment

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who access device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and make a decision about an AT device or service for employment purposes as the result of the assistance they receive.

4.3 Goal for Improving Access to AT in Community Living

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who access device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and make a decision about an AT device or service for community living purposes as the result of the assistance they receive.

4.4 Goal for Improving Access to IT and Telecommunications

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percent of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who access device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and make a decision about a device or service that meets IT/Telecommunication needs as the result of the assistance they receive.

4.5 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Education

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percentage of individuals with disabilities who acquire an AT device or services, through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who obtain a device or service for educational purposes that they might otherwise not have obtained.

4.6 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Employment

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3
- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percentage of individuals with disabilities who acquire an AT device or services, through State financing activities or reutilization programs, and obtain a device or service for employment purposes that they might otherwise not have obtained.

4.7 Goal for Improving Acquisition of AT in Community Living

Long-term goal:

- Short term goal for year 3

The Commonwealth of Virginia

- Short term goal for year 2

To establish a baseline measure of the percentage of individuals with disabilities who access State financing activities or reutilization programs and obtain a device or service for community living purposes that they might otherwise not have obtained.

- 4.8 Additional Measurable Goals If applicable, describe any measurable goals that the State
- A referral to the VATS funding specialist is made when complications suggest deeper discussion with the consumer. Often these have to do with funding denials, difficulties with a provider, and require additional information and advocacy. Knowledge of rights and state/federal policy can provide guidance and can be provided through this in depth technical assistance.

ATTACHMENT 5 STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

5.1 State Financing Activities Describe how the State will implement State financing activities as described in §4(e)(2)(A)

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, as the lead agency responsible for administering and supervising the use of Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, funds made available under the grant received by the Commonwealth, has decided not to expend funds to support state financing activities. (See Attachment 7)

5.2 Device Reutilization Program Describe how the State will implement a device reutilization program as described in §4(e)(2)(B) of the Act.

VATS priority is to build a network of reutilization programs Statewide. During year one, we made significant progress in establishing recycling planning teams. We have continued to work with the three (3) teams that resulted from the March 2005 Recycling Summit. Then in November 2005, the former Secretary of Health and Human Resources called another summit for Northern Virginia (NOVA). Out of this effort, one team has begun meeting with the objective of developing an AT recycling “program” for the Fairfax, Arlington, and Alexandria areas.

The NOVA team is moving forward with resolving all of the challenges to setting up a program: money, space, refurbishment, and redistribution. VATS and the Foundation for Rehabilitation and Equipment and Endowment (FREE) are collaborating with this group to advise them on how other localities have met these challenges and to assist in identifying resources to support the effort. Team members are working with those in their networks who can contribute to the program’s effort. VATS has contributed \$5,000, which the team will use to hire a part time person who can focus on building relationships in the community, identifying existing recycling initiatives with whom to partner, and identifying possible funding sources.

In addition to these four, VATS has begun working in 7 additional areas. Six of the 7 are at the point of identifying the key players and bringing them to the table to confirm community commitment to establishing AT recycling initiatives. VATS awarded start-up grants of \$5,000 to 5 of the 7 areas. These went to Center’s for Independent Living (CILs) in areas that are currently underserved with the following requirements:

- Grant funds must be used towards establishing AT recycling initiatives. Activities to consider include:
 - purchase of a steam cleaner to sanitize the donated devices; parts or supplies needed to repair equipment;
 - community development to establish community commitment to planning and implementing a recycling program;
 - purchase parts or repairs for donated items; or
 - to add storage space.
- VATS requires submittal of a plan for use of the money. This can be as simple as a list of activities with the estimated expenditures per activity.
- The \$5,000 must be obligated by September 30, 2006 and completely liquidated by December 31, 2006.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

- Vats requires both a programmatic and fiscal report by October 15, 2006.
- Vats requires specific data reporting that must include how many individuals acquired recycled devices and, for each individual, if that equipment will be used in the categories of education, employment, or community living. This data will be due January 15, 2006 so that we know what happened for the entire 6 months, July 1 – December 31, 2006

VATS granted \$11,000 to a recycling initiative that is limited by insufficient storage space and the lack of staff who can coordinate recycling initiatives. The CIL receiving the grant funds is currently collaborating with their local Arc to establish one location in which to store equipment for redistribution. Both entities are already recycling on a limited basis. VATS is providing technical assistance to support resolution of their challenges, to help establish a collaborative through which others can pool resources, and to find potential funding sources.

Goodwill of Central Virginia received a grant of \$11,000 to support continuation and expansion of their program. They have been operating a recycling program for 7 years. VATS was instrumental in program start-up, working with the Richmond United Way to grant the start-up funds. VATS' staff continues to serve on their Advisory Board and facilitates meetings of a new expansion planning team. The Goodwill's recycling program provides medical/adaptive equipment, including new and gently used mobility equipment, bathroom safety equipment, expendable medical supplies and other items donated by the community. New start-up initiatives tour this program to see how each step of AT recycling is done.

Goodwill of the Valleys, working with FREE and VATS, has replicated the Richmond model. This Goodwill received a grant of \$35,500 from VATS to be shared with FREE in Roanoke (\$8500) and Martinsville (\$11,000), and to support the start-up activities in the Lynchburg area (\$5,000). The Goodwill of the Valleys will have \$11,000 to support their collaborative program with FREE. These funds will allow each of these locations to hire a staff coordinator; purchase refurbishing equipment and supplies; procure equipment for loan and demonstration; and to store, collect, and redistribute devices.

For the grant, all programs will reciprocate by collecting and reporting data to VATS about the access to and acquisition of equipment to include number and types of recycled, loaned, or demonstrated devices by disability type and intended use, i.e., in education, employment, or community living. In addition, they will assist VATS in identifying other recycling or loan operations in their areas who may wish to become participants in Virginia's recycling network.

During years two (2) and three (3), VATS will continue to provide support and technical assistance to evolving programs and to building the Statewide network

VATS will encourage programs to be comprehensive and inclusive of all types of disabilities, ages, and types of devices needed. As resources allow, VATS will continue to provide technical assistance and to act as a catalyst for the implementation of community-specific, consumer-driven recycling programs. VATS will submit an amendment to the State Plan to update accomplishments in Year 2 and to outline the steps to be taken in Year 3.

VATS and Department of Medical Assistance Services

VATS staff worked with a representative of the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) through December 2005. In January the State administration changed and work came

The Commonwealth of Virginia

to a halt. The new challenge is to get an audience with the new Secretary of Health and Human Resources to educate her about AT recycling and about the advantages of collaborating with VATS to recycle Medicaid purchased equipment. During Year 2 of the Plan, VATS will seek the support of the Secretary and the Director of DMAS to proceed with our work.

VATS Advisory Council

The Chairperson of the Recycling subcommittee of the Council is also a member of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD), Virginia's Development Disabilities council. He has organized a recycling committee of the VBPD to work hand-in-hand with VATS recycling initiatives. Members of the recycling committees have been invited to attend and participate in the recycling programs or planning teams in their localities. Additionally, both committees will be forming a legislative agenda through which advocacy for State financial support for recycling can be attained. Each of the members has been asked to communicate with their local legislators prior to the next session of the General Assembly.

The Commissioner of the Department of Rehabilitative Services has called a meeting of representatives of all disability boards and councils to meet together in the fall to develop a collaborative legislative agenda. Representatives of the VATS Advisory Board and the VBPD will participate, bringing recycling of AT to this agenda. Results of this meeting will be reported in the AT State Plan updates for Year 3 of the Plan.

5.3 Device Loan Program Describe how the State will implement a device loan program as described in §4(e)(2)(C)

On July 1, 2006 VATS allocated \$20,000 of carry-over funds to each site to expand device loan and demonstration capability. On a very limited basis, VATS central office and all Regional Sites have established and offer short-term loans of equipment in collaboration with the other stakeholders within their regions. VATS central office and all Regional Sites will continue to identify other AT providers interested in short-term equipment loans. During the next year, VATS and these providers will contact manufacturers and other possible sources of AT equipment for donations that can be used for short-term loans.

VATS has developed the database for the resource directory that includes the equipment available for loan. The directory will be located on the VATS website, so consumers will know what is available for loan and who can provide it. Consumers who do not have access to the internet can obtain this information through the VATS statewide information and referral system or by contacting the VATS central office or Regional Sites. Where there is no local resource, the directory will allow consumers to access the equipment from other localities. To obtain the loaner equipment, consumers will contact the source of the equipment. If the needed equipment is available, the consumer is responsible for making the necessary arrangements.

In the process of identifying existing recycling operations, loan programs have been identified. Though these programs consider themselves loan closets, in effect they are recycling since their loans are open-ended and they do not necessarily get the device back. These programs have not and may not be willing to institute all of the components of recycling, since for the most part they are accepting donations and loaning donated equipment. They do not keep equipment that needs to be cleaned or repaired.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

VATS will be working with these programs during year two (2) to provide assistance in integrating all components of a recycling program. If they aren't interested, they will not be considered partners of the statewide recycling network. However, if they choose, they may be included in the online resource directory.

VATS will collaborate with public and private entities to support the implementation of device loan programs that provide short-term loans of assistive technology devices to residents of the State regardless of age or disability, type of equipment needed, or type of residence.

5.4 Device Demonstration Program Describe how the State will implement a device demonstration program as described in §4(e)(2)(D)

Device demonstrations are an integral part of all of VATS activities. For example, demonstrations of AT equipment are always included in presentations, exhibits, trainings, workshops, outreach, and public awareness activities. VATS has built demonstration kits specifically tailored to various audiences including educators, employers, children and seniors. Using funds from a variety of sources, VATS Regional Sites have been able to purchase demonstration equipment and, over the years, developed sophisticated demonstration labs with a substantial inventory of AT equipment. VATS has been able to support this using grant funds.

The AT Demonstration and Training Lab at George Mason University operates a very sophisticated program that is oriented to computer-based assistive devices and software that can benefit GMU students and faculty. The lab is open to students and faculty who wish to learn what assistive technology is available and how it can be used to support the student's educational goals. Many students with disabilities access the lab through the Disability Resource Center that helps the students with disabilities acquire the accommodations they need. Center staff will take the student to the lab to show what AT equipment is available and how it can be used. In addition, the GMU library has an exhibit of AT devices that are available to all students and faculty during library hours.

On the first Tuesday of each month, the lab at GMU is opened to individuals in the broader northern Virginia community. Individuals from the community must make appointments and the appointment is limited to 1 hour. If the GMU lab does not have the type of device that an individual needs, they will direct him/her to local vendors and others who have the device available.

The VATS Northern Regional Site, in collaboration with the AT Demonstration and Training Lab at George Mason University, has become a vendor for the state vocational rehabilitation program and provides device demonstrations and prescriptive device-specific trainings for consumers on a pilot basis. During the second half of year one, a pilot program was developed to provide prescriptive training on assistive technology devices and equipment to vocational rehabilitation customers and to provide case specific technical assistance to Department of Rehabilitative Services Field staff. During the course of these trainings, it may be appropriate to demonstrate similar devices and/or equipment to facilitate the acquisition of the most appropriate device by the customer.

The Regional Site serving the southwest portion of the state is also oriented to assistive technology computer accommodations. This VATS Site operates the Special Services Lab which provides equipment demonstrations and trainings on site and is also providing equipment

The Commonwealth of Virginia

demonstrations for state VR counselors and consumers within their region. This regional site sponsors several conferences (Real World Day in the fall of 2005, Real World Day Middle School in the spring of 2006 and College Bound in the summer of 2006). These events feature demonstration of a variety of assistive technology devices. This site's coordinator has developed an extensive "Devices Resource List" that is available to consumers and lists devices, retailer websites and current prices. This list is constantly updated. This "Vendor List" is also distributed that provides the vendors, contact information, and types of AT devices that are sold. This list will be included in the VATS web based vendor resource directory (See Attachment 5.3)

The southeast Regional Site at Old Dominion University opened an equipment demonstration lab on site in the fall of 2005 with an emphasis on computer and software accessibility and opened This site is working with private vendors to coordinate demonstrations and trainings of the vendor's products. This site is working with local Centers for Independent Living and Vocational Rehabilitation Field offices to provide demonstrations of AT and IT devices and equipment.

The public and consumers can access demonstration sites through the VATS Information and Referral service. The toll free number is published in the human services pages of telephone books statewide and is included on the websites of organizations who provide disability related services. Once the contact is made, a detailed discussion regarding individual needs and assistive device and service possibilities occurs. Upon identification of potential devices, demonstration centers are identified and the referral is presented to the consumer.

Demonstration sites include the VATS Regional Sites, vendors, or other providers, such as the field offices of the Department for Blind and Vision Impaired and the Department for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Location and the caller's ability to get to a site for demonstrations are considered to help insure accessibility. Where possible, device kits can be taken to the individual's home. Some are referred to DRS local field offices, where they can receive assistive technology devices and services as a part of their rehabilitation process. A device demonstration center prepares for the consumer's visit, choosing a comprehensive variety of alternative devices for demonstration with the assistance of a trained staff.

Demonstration centers often have equipment that is disability specific i.e., mobility, communication, learning disability, hearing. A comprehensive listing of centers operating statewide with their particular areas of emphasis will be part of the Information and Referral network and online resource directory, which are both being developed and will be managed by VATS.

Given that VATS, in and of itself, does not have the staff or financial capacity to provide device demonstrations statewide, it has been necessary to partner with other AT providers and vendors to work toward a more comprehensive system. Over the next two years, VATS and its partners will continue to seek additional funding and to bring other providers into the system to fill the gaps in localities and in devices available for demonstrations.

During the first year, VATS allotted \$76,402 to the Regional Sites to purchase assistive technology devices and equipment to increase the device demonstration capacity. On July 1 2006, VATS allotted an additional \$ 60,000 to the Regional Sites to purchase assistive

The Commonwealth of Virginia

technology devices and equipment to further increase the device demonstration capacity of the regional sites.

During the remaining two years, all VATS sites will explore ways to partner with assistive technology device vendors to offer device demonstrations. VATS Central, as part of a broader continuing education plan, will explore the use of emerging video conferencing and Podcasts as a way to offer device demonstrations.

ATTACHMENT 6 COMPARABLE SUPPORT

6.1 Source and Amount of Support Identify the State-level activity for which there is comparable support, the source of this support, the amount of the support, and the project year for which this support is being provided.

Not applicable

6.2 Comparability Demonstrate that this support is comparable in terms of funding and that the activities are comparable in terms of scope.

Not applicable

6.3 Coordination and Collaboration Describe how the State will coordinate activities and collaborate with the appropriate entity, if the comparable funds are provided to, or the activities are conducted by, an entity other than the Lead Agency or Implementing Entity.

Not applicable.

Attachment 7: State Flexibility

7.1 Identify each State-level activity the State is choosing not to carry out.

Virginia has chosen not to carry out State Financing Activities

7.2 Maintenance of Statewideness and Comprehensiveness Demonstrate that the Statewide AT Program will continue to be comprehensive without conducting this activity.

Virginia supports State financing activities through a Memorandum of Understanding between DRS and the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority (ATLFA) to increase access to and funding for assistive technology devices and services statewide. With technical assistance from VATS, the ATLFA was set up to be the source of low-interest loans, guaranteed loans, and small business loans that would allow targeted individuals and entities a way to purchase AT devices and services. A formal relationship with SunTrust Bank enables the ATLFA to offer low-interest loans for the purposes of home modifications, purchase of a modified vehicle, and other devices or equipment that exceed \$4,000. Loans under \$4,000 are provided directly by ATLFA.

In the first 2 years of ATLFA operation, VATS awarded the ATLFA \$248,000 which they used to draw down other federal grants and to match state and local monies that would increase the funds available for loans. They have been tremendously successful in building capital and currently are the best funded AT loan authority in the nation. They have no waiting lists and continue to be able to meet the demand.

Loans are available statewide for anyone over 18 who applies. In the case of those under 18, parents, family members, or guardians can apply in their behalf. Loan terms and repayment plans are lenient to help consumers afford the equipment or devices they may need. The ATLFA buys down the interest rate 4% below the interest rate SunTrust charges to an approved applicant. If a consumer is turned down by SunTrust, they can apply directly to the ATLFA for the loan. Consumers are expected to demonstrate their ability to repay the loan, but credit standards are less stringent than the bank's.

The ATLFA maintains a fully accessible website which includes explanations of the type of loans available, forms and applications, and contact information. VATS will continue to advertise the ATLFA on its website, at conferences and workshops, and in materials.

7.3 Achievement of Measurable Goals Demonstrate that the State can reach its measurable education goals, employment goals, telecommunications and information technology goals, and community living goals without conducting such activities.

Because more than adequate State financing is available through the AFLFA, VATS will use the AT Act funds to support initiatives in device reutilization, device loan and device demonstration programs that will increase access to and acquisition of AT equipment and services in the targeted areas: education, employment, telecommunication and information technology, and community living. By applying AT Act funds to State-level activities, excluding financing, greater progress can be made in developing the other programs that, at this time, are still in a

The Commonwealth of Virginia

start-up mode. Focus in these other areas will increase statewide availability of needed devices and services.

7.4 Coordination and Collaboration Describe how the Lead Agency will coordinate activities and collaborate with entities in the State that do conduct this activity, if the State chooses not to conduct this activity because another entity already conducts it.

As noted in section 7.1, DRS maintains a Memorandum of Understanding with the ATLFA. The MOU sets forth an agreement between DRS and the ATLFA for the transfer of funds from DRS to ATLFA to use as a fund of last resort for consumer services. DRS provides the funds. The ATLFA administers the funds and reports to DRS on how and how much of the funds were used.

ATTACHMENT 8: STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- 8.1 Training and Technical Assistance Activities Describe how the State will provide training and technical assistance to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals from local settings statewide, including representatives of State and local educational agencies, other State and local agencies, early intervention programs, adult service programs, hospitals and other health care facilities, institutions of higher education and businesses as described in section 4(e)(3)(B)(i) of the AT Act.

Training

Over the next two years, the Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) will continue to offer a number of training activities to public and private entities. It will continue to develop new training curriculum to respond to specific training needs identified by the community, or through the direction of the State AT Council. Trainings that will be offered will include:

- **General training on assistive technology** During the period covered by this plan, VATS staff will improve upon existing training programs by developing a standardized, customizable training consisting of modules on assistive technology devices, services, and funding within Virginia. These topics will specifically highlight assistive technology and employment, aging, housing including universal design and visitability, and disability specific requests upon demand.
- **Pre-service training for human service professionals** VATS staff collaborates with several high schools, colleges and universities located in Virginia and Washington, D.C. to provide pre-service training on AT to students in special education, occupational therapy, physical therapy, rehabilitation counseling, and social work at undergraduate and graduate levels. The training is developed to include information for a broad array of disabilities and devices and includes device demonstration.

Depending on the specific setting, VATS central and regional site staffs are adjunct faculty or consultants for provision of this type of training. The regional site located at George Mason University offers an accredited fifteen credit hour assistive technology certificate program as well as a masters degree and doctoral degrees in AT. Examples of pre-service training in the first year of this three year plan include college classes at a local community college, graduate level vocational rehabilitation class at George Washington University and the completion of the Assistive Technology Certificate Program at George Mason University.

- **Vocational rehabilitation counselor skills training** VATS staff provides training to State vocational rehabilitation staff as part of the orientation for new counselors. During the first year, VATS staff participated in the training program for new vocational rehabilitation counselors and the orientation program for new staff.

In the second year, VATS staff will collaborate with VR agency staff to conduct a newly developed training program for state vocational rehabilitation field staff to update them on new assistive technology devices, services and programs within Virginia. The goal of

this training program is to assist counselors and evaluation staff in the support of assistive technology identification and acquisition throughout the rehabilitation process.

VATS will also assist in the development and of another targeted training activity that will offer an initial training on assistive technology throughout the VR process in a distance learning format. If successful, in the third year of this process, VATS will assume a lead role in developing additional similar AT trainings.

- **Training for professionals and caregivers** VATS staff train professionals and caregivers who are involved with services for the specific groups such the aging population. VATS staff is working with select adult education programs and Area Agencies on Aging to provide trainings on assistive technology to this population. VATS Regional Site staff conducted two workshops entitled *Assistive Technology for Older Adults* and *Living and Growing with Assistive Technology* at the Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference in the January 2006.
- **Your Power/Your Choice Conference** is a one day regional conference which occurs annually that is a collaborative effort in the Southeastern region spearheaded by the Southeast VATS site. The self-advocacy conference deals with a range of issues including assistive technology, advocacy and transition. There is a plenary session, breakout presentations, and a vendor/exhibit hall. This year's conference, held in March of 2006, was attended by over 150 consumers, families and professionals.
- **AT Task Force of the Virginia Department of Education (VADOE)** is one of eight priority projects for the Department and VATS staff is represented on their statewide advisory board. Also, faculty from the VATS northern Virginia site at George Mason University is leaders in this task force. The AT Taskforce is charged with improving AT services to school aged children with disabilities in Virginia through professional development and support of the personnel that serve those children. The VATS Advisory Council includes a representative from VADOE who will help facilitate VATS involvement in this project.

Technical Assistance

The Virginia Assistive Technology System provides technical assistance to individuals, agencies and organizations by request. Some of these initiatives include:

- VATS through a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) provides training, information, and technical assistance to Virginia's Executive Branch Agencies on accessible information technology.
- On October 6, 2005, Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)/ Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) and the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) jointly hosted a successful seminar for 92 Executive Branch Agency webmasters and other stakeholders on implementing the Commonwealth's Accessibility and Web Site Standards. The Secretary of Technology and the DRS Commissioner opened the seminar. The seminar covered the legal requirements of accessibility, an Accessibility & Usability Conversion Walkthrough, a demonstration of Web Testing Tools and an

The Commonwealth of Virginia

overview of resources offered by VATS, DRS and VITA to assist agencies in transitioning their sites to meet the standards with minimal effort and disruption.

As part of the web site transition effort, DRS hosts an extensive online library, Virginia's Web Accessibility Template Guide (<http://www.vadsa.org/watg/>), which offers definitions, step-by-step tutorials, links, resources, and contact information for ongoing assistance in site transition to the template system. The VATS Web Accessibility Specialist tested all of the Executive Branch Agencies web sites for accessibility and determined the areas that failed. The specialist is available upon request to work with the agency web masters on accessibility issues.

- On April 19, 167 people attended the IT accessibility workshop that VITA's Policy, Practice & Architecture (PP&A) Division in partnership with the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)/Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) hosted at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Both the Secretaries of Technology and Health and Human Resources and the Commissioner of the Department of Rehabilitative Services delivered opening remarks. Various subject matter experts including IT accessibility engineers from the US Patent and Trademark Office addressed various aspects of assistive technology implementation. The successful workshop focused on implementing accessibility in non-Web applications and systems. The session delivered the message that IT accessibility is understandable and attainable. In addition, 11 vendors demonstrated a variety of assistive technology products and solutions. VATS is providing technical assistance to VITA to assist the agencies in the development of an implementation plan for accessibility.
- VATS will continue to provide technical assistance to VITA and the Executive Branch Agencies through September 30, 2006, at which time NIDRR funding for continuation of technical assistance will no longer be available. However, VATS will assist VITA in the development of a training program for procurement officers to ensure that procurement of information technology goods and services meet the Virginia Information Technology Accessibility Standards.
- The VATS regional sites and the statewide I&R system (either directly or through referral) will continue to provide information and technical assistance to consumers, service providers and educators on how to make existing IT accessible.
- VATS will collaborate with the State Alternative Financing Program (ATLFA) to ensure that people with disabilities have access to an array of options for acquiring AT devices and services. Consumers will acquire needed AT through loans from the ATLFA and access to the Consumer Services Fund, administered by the ATLFA. For consumers who are not eligible for these programs, VATS will provide technical assistance to assist the consumers in identifying and selecting the appropriate AT device and in acquiring the needed technology through it's established equipment recycling programs and those under development throughout the Commonwealth. VATS also offers an on-line database of service providers who provide AT and related services.
- VATS will collaborate with the ATLFA and provide direct consumer technical assistance around funding and policy issues when needs cannot be met at the information and referral contact. The VATS Information and Referral (I&R) Specialist provides technical

The Commonwealth of Virginia

assistance to consumers to assist them in acquiring needed AT. However, the I&R Specialist refers persons directly to the ATLFA when complications suggest deeper discussion with the consumer is needed. Often these have to do with funding denials, difficulties with a provider, and require additional information and advocacy. Knowledge of rights and state/federal policy can provide guidance and can be provided through this in depth technical assistance.

- The AT Initiative (ATI) at George Mason University (GMU), a VATS Regional Site, has a mission to provide individuals with disabilities at GMU with access to technology, which is available to all GMU employees and students, so that they have the tools needed to be as independent and successful as possible in GMU's academic environment.

The ATI provides AT evaluations, loaner equipment, and technical support to the GMU community. The Director of the ATI also provides direct support to the Information Technology administration to promote and support 508 based web accessibility at GMU. Because of the value to its employees and the community, in 2006 support for the ATI has expanded to include the University Equity Office, Disability Resource Center and the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities.

- The AT Demonstration and Training Lab at George Mason University provides opportunities for members of the community to visit a state-of-the-art AT lab in Northern Virginia to see and try some of the more than 350 assistive technology devices, including mobility, communication, cognitive, computer, and software programs housed in the Kellar Institute for Human disAbilities.

The lab also provides the facility that is used for certificate and graduate degree training, workshops and professional development, AT screening, and research and development activities. Due to demand and interest from the community, the lab is now open one day a month for exploratory activities and interests of those who may need assistive technology. This allows consumers, families and professionals to make better choices when considering assistive technology for education and communication.

- VADOE Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTAC) provide comprehensive technical assistance services to all of Virginia's school systems through eight regional sites organized by the superintendent's regions in Virginia. Included are the following services:
 - Consulting with school-based teams;
 - Providing information services, including periodic newsletters;
 - Linking and networking resources together;
 - Managing a lending library of multi-media resources and technology
 - Facilitating long-term technical assistance to schools;
 - Presenting information about T/TAC services;
 - Referring to other services; and
 - Developing and conducting workshops.

Each of the 8 TTACs has at least one full time AT specialist and they also have a lending library with AT devices and software. TTAC has developed a mobile training program that enables first hand education in the community.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

- TTACOnline.org is a free professional development and information web site sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education. One of the major areas of emphasis of TTACOnline is Assistive Technology and the Assistive Technology Task Force is responsible for monitoring the site for VADOE. VATS staff is a member of the Task Force.

The site contains extensive AT online training web shops and workshops, information on local, state and national AT events, resources for AT, and technology accommodations for alternate and alternative assessment of children for state standards based testing. Webshops are self-paced, online workshops designed by T/TAC and Assistive Technology professionals throughout Virginia. They are presented as a collection of pages or slides. To date, assistive technology webshops have been specifically developed in the following areas Autism, Deaf/Blind, Developmental Delay, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and AT for disability in general.

- Fairfax Long Term Care Coordinating Council (LTCCC) has a VATS N representative appointed to the council. The LTCCC provides community leadership to promote and assure an accessible, affordable, integrated, and dynamic state-of-the-art collaborative system enabling seniors and adults with disabilities to live independently in the community of their choice, and to support the needs of families, caregivers, and service providers.

The Access subcommittee has worked to provide information on Assistive Technology and has helped establish a partnership with SeniorNavigator.org, a statewide website for seniors that has substantial information available on Assistive Technology. During the first year of this plan, VATS staff from the Northern Regional Site and the Central Office joined members of the LTCCC on a separate workgroup to support Lutheran Housing Services development of 8 fully accessible, universally designed townhouses in a local planned community.

VATS will continue to provide technical assistance in a similar manner over the next two years.

Transition

The AT Act requires that the VATS specifically focus on training around transition. This includes transition for students with disabilities who are leaving high school for employment or post-secondary education and transition for those entering or maintaining community living. Initially, VATS will offer two separate initiatives, described below, and during the period covered by this plan, VATS will expand both programs in structure and scope (adding new program tracks, offering the program to more groups) and by replicating one program in another region of the Commonwealth.

- College Bound is a program offered by the VATS regional site at Virginia Tech since 1999. It is a college transition workshop for Virginia students who are rising high school juniors, seniors, and college freshmen with disabilities and their parents. This 3-day event, held in June 2006, allows students to experience life in a residence hall. Students

and parents attend workshops on AT self-advocacy, college skills, financial assistance, and the student's rights and responsibilities in a university setting.

This year, an Educator Track was added to the Student Track and the Parent Track of College Bound to help fill a "missing link" in providing students and their families critical transition information. Both the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities and the Virginia Department of Education contributed substantial funds to develop this Educator Track. In 2006, 32 students, 25 parents and 15 educators from the various school systems in the far southwest regions of Virginia participated in College Bound.

- Say YES (Your Education Solution) To College During the first year of the three year period, the College Bound program was replicated by the VATS Southeast Regional Site. This program, entitled Say YES (Your Education Solution) To College was held at Old Dominion University in June 2006. Say YES to College was funded in part by the Virginia Department of Education's T/TACS at Old Dominion University, The College of William and Mary, and Virginia Assistive Technology System. It was also a collaborative effort between transition specialists from the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, Endependence Center Inc., Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Tidewater Community College, Virginia State University and school divisions throughout Superintendents' Regions 2 and 3. School districts that participated in the planning included Chesapeake, Eastern Shore, Hampton, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Virginia Beach and was supported by two different TTACs, several universities and community colleges within the region and several disability service agencies. Attendance included 33 students, 13 mentor leaders (all college students with disabilities), 20 parents, 20 committee members, and 12 special guests.
- Real World Day is a program offering Assistive, Learning, and Living Technologies and Resources headed by the Southwest Regional Site at Virginia Tech. It is a day long workshop designed for high school students with disabilities, adult consumers, their families, and interested service practitioners and professionals. Real World Day features a great deal of hands-on AT, awareness activities, and several dozen vendors/agencies exhibit. VATS staff will collaborate on training in sessions on assistive technology, career choices and the transitioning process to higher education, and independent living. During the past year, a similar program targeting middle school students entitled Real World Day-Middle School was developed and conducted.
- Real World Day –Middle (RWD-M) took place at New River Community College (NRCC) on April 28, 2006. This was the first year that a RWD event was targeted to Middle School children. The focus of this daylong transition event was on creating opportunities to explore educational, career and assistive technology strategies to enhance the middle school student's abilities. 50 students and 11 educators from 4 schools throughout the region attended this event 37 staff members, volunteers and college students helped with the event
- College Quest is a one-day conference for college-bound high school students with disabilities and their parents. The conference includes panel discussions by college students with disabilities and parents whose children with disabilities have attended

The Commonwealth of Virginia

college, small group workshops of interest to students and parents. Topics such as Essential Skills for Academic Success in College, Spectrum of Supports in College, Self-Determination Skill Development, College Searches via the Internet, Essential Technology for College, Online Classes in College and Financial Aid were included.

- Future Quest The Northern Virginia Transition Coalition sponsored the seventh biennial conference, “Future Quest: A College and Career Forum for Students with Disabilities, Parents, and Professionals” on November 19, 2005 at George Mason University’s Johnson Center, in Fairfax, Va. Just over a thousand students with disabilities, along with parents and educators participated in workshops on assessment and planning, resources and options after high school, career planning, career/technical schools, employment strategies, and the college application process.
- Creating High Expectations – The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities transition project was awarded to VATS Southwest Regional Site at Virginia Tech and the Department of Teaching and Learning, College of Human Resources and Education. During the previous six months and over the next twelve months, this project will provide lesson plans, activities, and resources for middle school and high school educators, students and their families in the southwest region of Virginia. In June 2006, field testing for the CHE Learning modules began. During the second year of this plan, the field tested modules will be modified and made available for distribution.
- Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) Youth Leadership Forum – VATS staff participate in the annual Forum on AT and transitioning to the participants of the Forum. On July 11, 2006, the VATS Director presented at the Forum and moderated a panel session, that included service providers and a vendor. The session focused on AT and education, advocating for needed AT and sources for the acquisition of AT.

8.2 Public Awareness Activities Describe how the State will provide information to targeted individuals and entities relating to the availability, benefits, appropriateness, and costs of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services as described in §4(e)(3)(B)(ii) of the AT Act.

Public Awareness Activities Describe how the State will provide information to targeted individuals and entities relating to the availability, benefits, appropriateness, and costs of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services as described in §4(e)(3)(B)(ii) of the AT Act.

VATS will continue to increase public awareness through development and dissemination of print products and materials as well as through its statewide information and referral service and reciprocal links to and with major web sites. During the first year, VATS Central and all VATS Regional Sites have developed, reproduced and distributed information flyers and brochures. During this same period, all regional sites were required to conduct one training per month per site. This requirement is exceeded. Several regional site activities are specifically designed to promote awareness of assistive technology such as judged assistive technology design competitions at elementary, middle and high school levels. VATS Central Office staff also conducts public awareness activities at a similar rate as the regional sites. Where possible, press coverage of events is encouraged and welcomed

The Commonwealth of Virginia

The Virginia Assistive Technology System offers the services of the VATS Information Technology Access/Information and Referral Program. This program offers in-depth information on AT devices, services and funding to consumers, family members, professionals, employers, case managers and other service providers. The information specialist collaborates with service professionals, vendors and manufacturers to develop a statewide network of assistive technology vendors and to obtain information on new and emerging technologies. The information and referral service is accessed by a toll free number or by electronic link from the VATS webpage.

The goal of VATS is that the website contains active and relevant links to other web based resources. VATS will solicit consumer input as to the most appropriate links for inclusion on the VATS website. To accommodate persons with cognitive impairments, the number of links will be minimized. People can access information on assistive technology devices and services through a number of search engines or by direct contact with an information specialist. All information will be web based, offered in an accessible format and targeted to the individual needs of Virginians with disabilities.

VATS will continue to use a multifaceted approach (Internet, exhibits, presentations, and trainings) to increase awareness about assistive technology devices and services. By using multiple means of information sharing, positioning and disseminating print materials and products, VATS will maximize the number of individuals with disabilities that obtain information on assistive technology devices and services, local, regional and statewide AT resources and the funding options available to them. Information on the acquisition, funding options, and consumer rights on acquiring AT and Virginia Assistive Technology Device Warranties Act will be available in print, large print, electronic and other requested alternate formats.

VATS will continue to increase public awareness through development and dissemination of print products and materials as well as through its statewide information and referral service and major web sites. All information will be web based and accessible and targeted to the individual needs of Virginians with disabilities. Examples of such materials include:

Assistive Technology in the Student's Individualized Education Program – provides a handbook for parents and school personnel to guide them through the acquisition process for obtaining assistive technology in the IEP process. (Available in print and for download on the VATS website).

Assistive Technology and Aging – a handbook for Virginians who are aging and their caregivers. It is an exhaustive collection of local, state and national resources. (Available in print and for download on the VATS website).

A Resource Guide to Assistive Technology Funding – a directory of assistive technology resources across the Commonwealth. This guide is available in print and for download on the VATS website. In year one, the information contained in this resource guide was updated. In year two, this information will be reformatted posted on the VATS website and funding sources will be incorporated into the electronic vendor database.

AT Lemon Law – this flyer is in broad distribution and describes the comprehensive assistive technology lemon law and consumer rights.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

AT Business Display – VATS staff participated in the development of an AT display targeted to employers. The display is currently being used by DRS to increase the awareness of AT and its applications to employment. VATS staff demonstrated the AT display on April 19, 2006 at a statewide training of IT managers at the Richmond Convention Center.

VATS.org is the website for the Virginia Assistive Technology System and includes general information on assistive technology, information and referral, an equipment exchange bulletin board, lists of publications and links to other programs or materials. The website contains approximately twenty five information pages, averages one hundred nineteen page view requests per day and transfers four megabytes of data per day. The VATS web site provides reciprocal links to a variety of organizations such as:

- VATS Regional Sites All VATS Regional Sites maintain fully accessible websites and are reciprocally linked to the VATS website
- SeniorNavigator.com Senior Navigator.com addresses the needs of seniors, adults with disabilities and those who care for them. Person utilizing this site will find local resources and information on health, disabilities and aging, as well as local events for your community. Using the Quick Search feature, users will find everything from assisted living facilities to fitness, from adult day care services to Alzheimer's support groups, from flu shots to assistive technologies.
- TTACOnline.org T/TAC Online is a resource for educators working with children with special needs. It is designed for information, resources, and training to be available in a timely manner. There are several things available on the web site. Users can find events to attend, and resources, such as books and other websites that deal with a specific disability. Training is also available on the web site offered in a distance learning format. This type of training is referred to on the site as webshops. Webshops are self-paced, online workshops designed by T/TAC and Assistive Technology professionals throughout Virginia. They are presented as a collection of pages or slides. To date, assistive technology webshops have been specifically developed in the following areas Autism, Deaf/Blind, Developmental Delay, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and AT for disability in general. All of this material is organized under the categories (including AT) on the left navigation panel. This site also includes Local School Improvement Plans and the Enhanced Standards of Learning and alternate and alternative assessment that can be searched for specific information using the search engine.

During the first year, VATS staff reviewed the website design of the VATS site, and the website of all AT Act Projects and other organization to assist staff in designing useful information and features into our new version. Bi-weekly meetings were held with web designer and VATS staff. During the second year, a completely redesigned, fully accessible website will be launched at www.vats.org. The structure and design of this site will allow for more intuitive navigation while meeting the most current accessibility requirements and standards. The new version will also include a searchable vendor database and a fully functioning used equipment exchange feature.

- 8.3 Coordination and Collaboration Describe how the State will coordinate activities among public and private entities that are responsible for policies, procedures, or funding for the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services to individuals with disabilities, service providers, and others to improve access to assistive technology devices and assistive technology services as described in §4(e)(3)(B)(iii) of the AT Act.

VATS continues to coordinate with public and private entities including those listed in Section 9 and beyond. The structure of the Virginia Council on Assistive Technology provides a natural mechanism for coordination and collaboration with those agencies responsible for policies, procedures, funding and provision of assistive technology devices and services. The Council has been actively involved in all aspects of the VATS program. The individual members have taken the initiative in their respective communities to participate with recycling efforts.

They are working with other disability-related organizations to encourage collaboration in the development of a legislative/advocacy agenda. Members are identifying potential funding sources to support funding for VATS initiatives. The Council has a presence at meetings of the Virginia Disability Commission, a non-partisan legislative commission consisting of legislators, people with disabilities and citizens-at-large, to promote funding and support for the statewide recycling programs. The Council will continue providing the leadership, guidance and oversight for VATS project coordination. (See §3, “Structure and Operation of the Advisory Council”)

VATS coordinates and collaborates with a diverse array of public and private entities including:

- A model public/private partnership with the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment Endowment (FREE). These partners work with many communities in Virginia to assist them in the development of equipment recycling programs. The partners have been able to identify and involve members of the private sector such as physicians, hospital administrators, durable medical equipment companies and others to participate in the design, development and delivery of recycling programs. Individuals from the private sector are addressing some of the most significant obstacles to establishing programs including AT assessments, storage and transportation of AT equipment. In July 2006, VATS provided FREE with funds to purchase AT recycling equipment, tools, supplies, etc. and for administrative costs to promote the establishment of new recycling programs in the Commonwealth. (Cross reference §5.2)
- In areas that have established recycling programs such as Goodwill of Central Virginia, surplus equipment is abundant. Through a collaborative partnership with Rotary Club International, the surplus AT is shipped to developing nations, and is available to their citizens with disabilities. In July 2006, VATS provided Goodwill of Central Virginia and Goodwills of the Valleys with funding for the purchase of AT recycling equipment, tools, supplies, etc to enhance their existing recycling program. (Cross reference §5.2)
- AT that is no longer being used by an individual is often donated and in some cases abandoned. Organizations such as Funeral Homes, churches, disability-related organizations and associations are the recipients of this equipment. These organizations are not necessarily equipped to store, refurbish and deliver this AT to individuals in need. In some instances they have established an informal network so they can share and obtain

The Commonwealth of Virginia

AT. VATS is identifying these organizations and offering to include them in an on-line database. Network partners will be able to post AT that they want to share with others and find needed AT for their constituents. As a partner, the entities will be expected to provide information related to type of disability, type of AT and its intended use (community, education, employment).

- The 16 Virginia Centers for Independent Living (CIL) are the first point of contact for people with disabilities in their areas. The CILs will encourage consumers to utilize the AT equipment exchange offered on the VATS web site. This partnership will result in the acquisition of AT for people with limited to no resources or medical insurance. In July 2006, VATS provided 6 of the CILs with funding for the purchase of AT recycling equipment, tools, supplies, etc to enhance their existing recycling program. (Cross reference §5.2)
- VATS established an Inter-agency Workgroup on Aging with representatives from the Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Department of Aging, Virginia Area Agencies on Aging, Virginia Department of Social Services/Adult Protective Services and the Virginia AARP to increase awareness of low-tech AT solutions that provide more independence and greater safety for older Virginians. The workgroup has been inactive for the past several years, however the partnership will be renewed to determine ways that they can support Virginia's seniors.
- VATS in collaboration with the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) facilitated the development of the Virginia Information Technology Accessibility Standards. VATS played a vital role, as trainer and technical assistance expert, in the implementation of these standards related to web site accessibility and accessibility of non web-based applications. VATS will continue to provide technical assistance to VITA and the Virginia Executive Branch Agencies through September, 2006, at which time NIDRR funding for continuation of technical assistance will no longer be available. However, VATS will assist VITA in the development of a training program for procurement officers to ensure that procurement of information technology goods and services meet the Virginia Information Technology Accessibility Standards.
- VATS and DRS developed Virginia's Web Accessibility Template Guide that offers definitions, step-by-step tutorials, links, resources, and contact information for ongoing assistance in site transition to the template system. VATS will distribute materials on web accessibility and resources to all Local Education Agencies to assist them in the development of accessible web sites. With an accessible website, students with disabilities will be able to register on-line, obtain a course syllabus, participate in distance education opportunities, take their tests on-line, and identify resources such as VATS web site for the identification, selection and acquisition of AT.
- VATS will continue collaborating with The Virginia Department of Health, Office of Family Health Services in the development and implementation of the Health Promotion for People with Disabilities Project (HPPD) that is located in the Division of Chronic Disease Prevention & Control. HPPD's mission is to promote the health of people with disabilities, prevent secondary conditions, and eliminate disparities between people with

The Commonwealth of Virginia

and without disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- VATS, the DRS Transition Coordinators and the Virginia DOE are updating the IEP Handbook to ensure that students with disabilities, their parents and advocates are aware of their legal rights to AT devices and services, strategies for ensuring that recommended AT is included in the students IEP; and, potential funding sources for the acquisition of AT.
- VATS will continue collaborating with TTACOnline which is a free professional development and information web site sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education. One of the major areas of emphasis of TTACOnline is Assistive Technology and the Assistive Technology Task Force is responsible for monitoring the site for VADOE.
- In July 2006, VATS provided George Mason University (GMU) with resources to support the development of an on-line database of AT devices, service providers, vendors, etc. VATS has developed a similar database, however, by combining the resources from VATS, GMU and a number of State Agencies, this database of information will be greatly enhanced.
- VATS will continue collaborating with the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, the VR program in the Commonwealth of Virginia, to insure that coordination of services include consideration of assistive technology devices, services and funding throughout the rehabilitation process from application status to closure.
- VATS will continue collaborating with Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority (ATLFA) to insure that people are aware of AT devices, services and funding. (Cross reference §8.1)
- VATS will continue collaborating with the VATS regional sites that are located at three Universities within Virginia. VATS will collaborate with the sponsoring organizations of the regional sites to provide those activities as outlined in the scope of work and to mutually pursue grant opportunities in accordance with our respective missions and strategic plans.
- VATS will also continue collaborating with the Virginia Department for Blind and Vision Impaired, the Virginia Council of Independent Living Centers (VACIL), the Workforce Investment Board, the Virginia Department for the Aging, and the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services on projects of mutual interest and benefit.

ATTACHMENT 9: INVOLVEMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES

- 9.1 Nature and Extent of Resources Describe the nature and extent of resources that will be committed by public and private collaborators to assist in accomplishing identified goals.

VATS has existing relationships with multiple public and private collaborators that will serve as essential partners in accomplishing project goals as described in Attachment 4. Primary partners and their levels of participation include the following (reference Attachment 5):

Goodwill of Central Virginia (Formerly Goodwill Industries of Richmond)

VATS assisted Goodwill to secure funding from United Way to establish an AT reutilization program. Several of the VATS staff serve on the recycling advisory committee and participate in the implementation of the program. The program provides medical/adaptive equipment, including new and gently used manual and power wheelchairs, ambulatory devices (walkers and canes), scooters and bathroom safety equipment (raised toilet seats and shower seats). Items donated by the local community are received, inspected, repaired as needed, then cleaned. They are then distributed to persons in need based on requests and recommendations for assistance, which can be made at any time by an individual or referral sources.

This program serves all ages and all types of disabilities and is limited only by the type of equipment donated. Goodwill now funds a full-time staff to coordinate the program. In FY06, VATS provided \$11,000 to Goodwill to purchase AT recycling, demonstration and loaner equipment, tools and supplies. These funds will be used to expand their existing recycling program. Goodwill has an abundance of AT devices and through a partnership with Rotary Club International, devices are shipped to developing nations that lack these resources.

Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (FREE)

FREE is a private Foundation whose mission is to acquire and provide rehabilitative equipment to maximize functional independence and improve quality of life. Its vision is to assist underserved adults to whom equipment is not otherwise available and to serve as a model program for other communities. VATS participated in the development, implementation and expansion of the FREE model and assisted in replication of the model in south central VA, a rural and underserved region of the State. FREE funds a full-time staff coordinator and the Carillion Roanoke Memorial Rehabilitation Center donate the time of a physical therapist to refurbish used equipment. FREE serves all ages and all types of disabilities.

In FY06, FREE partnered with Goodwill of the Valleys in the Roanoke area to expand their existing recycling program and established programs in the Martinsville and Lynchburg areas. To support the development and expansion of these programs, VATS provided funding in the amount of \$35,500 to support administrative expenses and to purchase AT recycling, demonstration and loaner equipment, tool and supplies.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

Statewide reutilization program development

In FY 06, VATS provided seed money in the amount of \$36,000 to initiative recycling programs in 6 of the Centers for Independent Living to include disAbility Resource Center in Fredericksburg; Clinch ILC in Grundy, Valley Associates in Independent Living in Harrisonburg; Appalachian ILC in Abingdon; Independence Resources Center in Charlottesville; and, Endependence Center in Norfolk. VATS will continue to provide technical assistance to these programs, and to act as a catalyst for the implementation of community-specific, consumer-driven recycling programs in other areas.

Regional Sites

VATS contracts with regional sites located within state universities located in southwest, eastern, northern and central Virginia. These sites focus primarily on State-Leadership activities. The universities have provided resources and supports to complement and enhance the regional efforts. The universities capacity to deliver assistive technology training, technical assistance and public awareness activities is substantially greater that the State AT Program. In addition, the universities have supported the development of equipment recycling, demonstration and loan programs. In FY 06, the regional site combined budget was \$160,650.

Virginia State Agencies

VATS works closely with all State Disability Agencies to assist consumers in acquiring AT devices and services. The agencies have demonstration laboratories that concentrate on the clients they serve. The agencies provide AT assessments, and purchase prescribed AT devices and services. The agencies conduct trainings and workshops that include sessions on AT acquisition and funding. They include AT in their public awareness initiatives. By combining resources the Virginia AT Program reaches consumers of all disabilities in all parts of the Commonwealth. To support the expansion of these AT demonstration labs VATS provided \$45,475 in FY 06 to the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, the Rehab Center for the Blind and two DRS regions.

AT and Aging initiative

VATS established an Inter-agency Workgroup on Aging with representatives from the Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Department of Aging (VDA), Virginia Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), Virginia Department of Social Services/Adult Protective Services and the Virginia AARP. The workgroup has been inactive, however, during FY 07 VATS will work with these partners to identify unmet needs of Virginia's seniors and develop a program to respond. A handbook entitled *Assistive Technology and Older Virginians*, that describes AT devices, services and funding for older Virginians and their caregivers has been and continues to be distributed widely across the State.

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Center for Excellence – Virginia's Center for Excellence at VCU has a memorandum of understanding with VATS to provide staff support for a funding/policy specialist and an information technology web accessibility specialist. This contract will not be renewed during FY07 due to a shift in priorities and limited resources. VATS and VCU received a grant from the Commonwealth Neurotrama Initiative to determine the applications of personal digital assistant AT for persons with cognitive impairments.

Virginia Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority (ATLFA)

VATS will collaborate with the ATLFA and provide direct consumer technical assistance around funding and policy issues when needs cannot be met at the information and referral contact. The VATS Information and Referral (I&R) Specialist provides technical assistance to consumers to assist them in acquiring needed AT. However, the I&R Specialist refers persons directly to the ATLFA when complications suggest deeper discussion with the consumer. Often these have to do with funding denials, difficulties with a provider, and require additional information and advocacy. Knowledge of rights and state/federal policy can provide guidance and can be provided through this in depth technical assistance.

- 9.2 Mechanisms to Ensure Coordination Describe the mechanisms established to ensure coordination of activities and collaboration between the implementing entity, if any, and the State.

Not applicable

- 9.3 Involvement of State Advisory Council Describe the nature and extent of the involvement of the State Advisory Council in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the activities carried out through the grant, including setting the measurable goals required in section 4(d)(3).

The Council continues to meet at least quarterly to review and evaluate progress toward measurable goals, the work of VATS and its Regional Sites, and to evaluate the general direction of the program. As described in §5.2, the Council has taken particular interest in the development of a Statewide AT recycling network and have chosen to keep this as their focus for Year 2.. Council members are actively involved with the planning teams in their home areas and report progress to the Council at its quarterly meetings. One council member agreed to serve as the chair of the Council's recycling subcommittee and has initiated activities within his own network.

During Year 1, he and another council member initiated contact with members of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, Virginia's Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council, and invited DD Council members to participate in the VATS subcommittee to further the cause of establishing a recycling network in Virginia. Eight (8) DD Council members joined the subcommittee and are advocating for the Council to make this one of their priorities for the coming year.

At their request, VATS provided an update on current AT recycling initiatives and progress to the Developmental Disabilities Council at their June meeting. Following the presentation, the recycling committee chairman read a letter that is to be sent to members of the Virginia General Assembly to make them aware of recycling programs in the Commonwealth.

VATS is sharing recycling planning team meeting dates with the DD Council public relations person, so any interested parties can attend meetings in their home areas. He also used a human services list serve requesting that anyone who knew of existing recycling/loan programs to identify those to the VATS recycling coordinator. Six (6) have self-identified and will be invited to join the recycling network.

The Commonwealth of Virginia

In September representatives of both councils will participate in a meeting with other disability councils to develop a collective legislative agenda. They will advocate for State support for recycling.

The VATS Advisory Council was to review State Plan amendments at their June meeting, but the meeting was canceled due to severe weather. What is being submitted will be presented at the September meeting. Any suggested changes will be sent as amendments to RSA.

ATTACHMENT 10: STATE SUPPORT

- 10.1 State Support for State-level Activities If applicable, describe how the State will support with State funds any State-level activities described in section 4(e)(2).

The State support of State Level and State Leadership activities is a line item of \$124,000 in the Governor's budget. VATS receives these funds and distributes them among the 3 Regional Sites to carry out the State-level Activities, including reutilization, loan and demonstration. The State has opted not to do the State financing activity as described in Attachment 7. The responsibilities of the Regional Sites are spelled out in our Memorandum of Understanding and Scope of Work as described in Attachment 2. This \$124,000 is the total State support.

- 10.2 State Support for State Leadership Activities If applicable, describe how the State will support with State funds any State Leadership activities described in section 4(e)(3), if applicable.

The annual State contribution of \$124,000 can also be used by the Regional Sites for State Leadership Activities as described in their scope of work. The State does not contribute any other monies for support State Leadership Activities.

ATTACHMENT 11: ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION OF FUNDS.

11.1 Tracking Expenditures Describe planned procedures for tracking expenditures for activities described in §4(e)(2).

The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS), administered by the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), will use the Agency's financial tracking system to track all federal AT Act grant expenditures to ensure that 70% of the federal award will be spent on State Level Activities and that of the 30% allocated for State Leadership Activities, 5% will be specifically allocated for Transition. During year 2, DRS will assign a project code to track expenditures and revenue for VATS. A task code will be assigned to track expenditures as "State-Level or "State Leadership" by amount. Individual activities within these categories will be assigned a phase code to differentiate among the initiatives.

A report will be generated to provide Summary data that will be maintained on current expenditure percentages to ensure that the required distribution is met at the end of the fiscal year. This procedure will follow the statute's requirement of tracking allocations between state level and state leadership activities.

The VATS sub-contractors will be required to track all federal AT Act grant expenditures as stipulated in their subcontracts with DRS/VATS. These entities will be required to maintain documentation and submit a report to demonstrate their compliance with a proportional distribution of expenditures.

11.2 Proposed Budget Allocations Attach a budget containing proposed allocations for activities described in sections 4(e)(2) AND (3).

VATS FY06 BUDGET

BUDGET CATEGORY	FY06 BUDGET	State Level	State Leadership
PERSONNEL			
Project Director	10,145	8,116	2,029
Community Resource Coordinator	15,000	7,500	7,500
Administrative Program Specialist III	14,981	13,483	1,498
Program Support Technician	<u>5,996</u>	<u>2,398</u>	<u>3,598</u>
TOTAL SALARIES	46,122	31,497	14,625
FRINGE BENEFITS	<u>12,453</u>	<u>8,094</u>	<u>4,359</u>
TOTAL SALARIES/FRINGE BENEFITS	58,575	35,591	18,984
REGIONAL SITES			
VATS Northern Virginia	81,535	51,307	30,228
VATS Southeast Virginia	55,273	27,055	28,218
VATS Southwest Virginia	<u>41,256</u>	<u>24,251</u>	<u>17,005</u>
TOTAL REGIONAL SITES	178,064	102,613	75,451
CONTRACTUAL			
DBVI	10,000	10,000	
WWRC	15,159	7,579	7,520
FRS	30,316	15,158	15,158
Goodwill of Central Virginia	35,500	35,000	
Goodwills of the Valleys	11,000	11,000	
Centers for Independent Living	<u>36,000</u>	<u>36,000</u>	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	137,975	115,237	22,738
OTHER			
Rehab Engineering Seminar	4,500		4,500
Interpreter Services	<u>295</u>	<u>295</u>	
TOTAL OTHER	4,795	295	4,500
TOTAL DIRECT COST	379,409	257,736	121,673
INDIRECT COSTS	6,886	3,994	2,892
TOTAL	386,295	261,730	124,565