Use of Existing Infrastructures for Greater Continuity Readiness

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Continuity Readiness

• “Our biggest concern is whether an agency has a clear idea of what it absolutely has to do, no matter what.” [Identify Mission Essential Functions]

• In several cases, agencies never trained for or rehearsed emergency plans . . . . causing concern that when disaster strikes, “people will be sitting there with a 500-page book in front of them.” [Responsiveness and Executability of Plans]

Source: Linda Koontz, GAO Director of Information Management, “U.S. Plan for Flu Pandemic Revealed”, in Washington Post, 4-16-2006
Bottom Line Up Front

• Hundreds of Federal Executive Branch continuity essential persons could be efficiently and effectively trained
  – For no-notice readiness to execute agency continuity plans
    • Using existing dispersed infrastructures;
    • Without perturbing nor undermining daily operations;
      – At cost of increased local travel expenditures.
Daily Continuity Readiness & Dispersion are National Policy

• “Continuity requirements shall be incorporated into daily operations of all executive departments and agencies.”

• “As a result of the asymmetric threat environment, adequate warning . . . . might not be available, and therefore all continuity planning shall be based on the assumption that no such warning will be received.”

• “Emphasis will be placed upon geographic dispersion of leadership, staff, and infrastructure in order to increase survivability and maintain uninterrupted Government Functions.”

Source: NSPD-51/HSPD-20, “National Continuity Policy”
Daily Continuity Readiness & Dispersion are Foundations for Implementation

• “Incorporating geographic dispersal in an organization’s normal daily operations, as appropriate, can significantly enhance the organization’s resilience . . . .”

• “While some leadership and staff want to be located ‘close to the flagpole’ (i.e. headquarters) organizations should appropriately disperse staff elements and functions away from the main headquarters building on a routine operating basis to enhance the survival of key personnel and functions.”

• “. . . . . (National Continuity) Policy makes clear that continuity planning for execution of Federal executive branch Essential Functions must be integrated into daily operations, functions, plans, and mission areas.”

Source: National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan
Dispersed Continuity Infrastructures

Federal Executive Branch Departments & Agencies:
- Category I – 13
- Category II – 16
- Category III – 13
- Total: 42
- Category IV – All EB organizations . . . . not otherwise identified in Categories I – III

National Response Framework: 15 Emergency Support Functions

National Infrastructure Protection Plan: 18 Critical Infrastructure Sectors

Source: National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan

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Suggestions for Greater Use of Existing Dispersed Infrastructures

• Define what “daily” means to gain and sustain continuity readiness (resilience).
• Gain consideration and involvement by senior leaders.
• Evaluate regular temporary work arrangements at dispersed continuity facilities.
• Use business process analyses that focus on continuity plan execution.
• Consider adapting H1N1 preparedness methods & Department /Agency telework infrastructures.
Collaboration Among Continuity and Telework Planners: A Potential Dual-Benefit Solution

• “Primary goal of continuity in the Executive branch is the continuation of essential functions.*
  – “COOP. . .must be functional within 12 hours and may last up 30 days. *

• Telework Goals:**
  – To ensure continuity of operations
  – Find targeted productivity improvements
  – Reduce costs of overhead, real estate, transit, and to environment
  – Improve employees’ ability to manage their work and life obligations

* www.telework.gov
** OPM, Status of Telework in the Federal Government – Report to Congress 2010
### Comparison of Key Aspects

#### CONTINUITY

- Operational resiliency
- Selected specialists
- 12 hours, up to 30 days
- Infrastructure available
  - Communications and dispersed facilities
  - Local travel funds for training

- Agency continuity coordinators *

#### TELEWORK

- Productivity efficiencies
- Numerous volunteers
- Daily increments
- Infrastructure being developed
  - Dispersed telework centers

- Agency telework coordinators *

* Need to collaborate
Continuity Linkages to Telework

• www.telework.gov
  – Infrastructure of Federal Executive Branch telework coordinators
  – Integrate continuity expectations into telework agreements
  – Allow continuity essential persons to telework regularly

• OPM’s Annual Reports to Congress

• Report: *On Demand Government*, July 2010
  – Increase teleworking to 600,000 federal employees by 2014
  – Agencies must link telework to mission continuity plans
  – Agencies must solve INFOSEC challenges
  – Senior leaders must set the tone . . . .

• Telework Enhancement Act, December 2010
Conclusions

- The policy goals of continuity readiness and dispersion for the Federal Executive Branch are vital.
- Continuity communications/IT and facilities infrastructures for the Federal Executive Branch have been purchased and are sustained in annual budgets.
- Increased use of these dispersed infrastructures by continuity essential persons would efficiently enhance resilience of the Federal Executive Branch.
- The vast Federal Executive Branch telework infrastructure can also be efficiently leveraged to achieve these vital goals.