

Strengthening Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) Implementation Plan

(Chapter for the IDOG)

April 11, 2016

Background

The lack of standardization in the use and structure of Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans creates inefficiencies and jeopardizes agency ability to provide for the health and safety of personnel and the public during emergency situations. Strengthening COOP through standardization will ensure readiness and seamless continuity during activation.

In consultation with FS Emergency Management Specialist, Office of the Chief and DOI Emergency Management and International Programs Specialist, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) the recommendation to use the standard Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continuity of operations (COOP) plan template was unanimous. Implementation of this standard across the wildland fire agencies will resolve the situation described above.

Although it is not possible to plan COOP for every possible situation, this document meets federal and non-federal standards as determined by FEMA and will ensure that essential elements are included in all COOP plans.

Resolution

This approved national standardized template provides instruction and guidance for the development of Dispatch Center Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The template is flexible enough to tailor to local needs while meeting the requirements to facilitate all essential functions during natural disasters, emergencies or other situations that may disrupt normal operations. All Interagency Wildland Fire Dispatch Centers will utilize the following template available at the FEMA COOP Planning & Templates web site: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90025>. The template is a minimum standard.

Training for development of your local COOP plan can be acquired through in the following way: FEMA cadre will teach a group of no less than 15 people at no charge. This training takes approximately 2 days. Contact the regional FEMA point of contact at <http://www.fema.gov/about-continuity-operations-coop-division> under the link entitled Regional Continuity Manager (RCM) Contact Information.

- Interagency Center Managers Training Academy
 - A one-day virtual webinar is currently being prepared by FEMA. This training will be made available on demand, accessible via the internet. This page will be updated with specific access information as soon as the course is made available.
- FEMA training can be also be acquired through the following website: <https://training.fema.gov/emicourses/schedules.aspx>. Class number is L0550-Continuity of Operations Planning COOP. This training is available in a classroom setting. See the website for additional information.

Test, Training and Exercise (TT&E)

Testing, training and exercise activities as described in the template are to be conducted annually. The National Wildland Fire Coordination (NWCG) National Coordination System Committee (NCSC) will develop recommendations for fire management leadership to incorporate into annual reviews.

Implementation Period

- Recommended that all wildland fire dispatch centers develop this standardized COOP template by May 2017.
- COOP capital investment needs as determined through testing should be budgeted for locally in a phased manner to be completed by May 2020.