Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Webinar

March 31, 2015
Presenters

- Colleen O’Brien, National Capital Region Planner
- James Tully, Training and Exercise Administrator
- Elizabeth Webster, Adaptive Planning Branch Manager
Welcome

- Brendan McCluskey, Director of Preparedness
Webinar Objectives

- Understand the benefits of COOP planning and maintaining a COOP program
- Discuss needed updates to State agency COOP plans following the Inauguration
- Review the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) COOP requirements
- Present the new Maryland COOP Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) website for managing and maintaining the Maryland COOP Program
Agenda

- COOP Overview
- Plan Maintenance
- EMAP Requirements
- HSIN COOP Website
Webinar

COOP Overview

Plan Maintenance

EMAP Requirements

HSIN COOP Website
Continuity of Operations Defined

- COOP is an **effort** within an organization to ensure that its **essential functions continue** to be performed during a wide range of emergencies until normal operations can be resumed.
What is a COOP Event?

- Loss of access to a facility (in whole or in part)
  - *e.g.*, following a fire

- Loss of services due to a reduced workforce
  - *e.g.*, during pandemic influenza

- Loss of services due to equipment or systems failure
  - *e.g.*, IT systems failure
Why Have a COOP Plan?

- Provide a framework that ensures essential functions and services will continue to operate and be provided.

- Support resuming and sustaining operations for a period up to 30 days, until the normal operations resume.

- Executive Order 01.01.2013.06 (Maryland Emergency Preparedness Program) requires every State agency to develop and maintain a COOP plan.
Benefits of COOP Planning

- Enables an agency to maintain "business as usual" despite disruptive events

- Allows an agency to anticipate events and necessary response actions

- Improves performance through the identification of agency essential functions that must be supported in an emergency

- Improves communication to support essential functions throughout the agency
Benefits of COOP Planning Cont’d.

- Protects the interests of an agency's customers
- Protects agency staff from job loss
- Protects agency data and information needed to continue operations
- Good business practice
Elements of a Continuity Program

- Leadership Commitment
- Risk Analysis/Business Impact Analysis
- Key Program Personnel
- Corrective Action Program
- Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan
- Test, Training & Exercise Program
COOP Plan Objectives

- Ensure the safety and security of staff and visitors
- Enable staff to perform essential functions
- Identify essential personnel for performing essential functions
- Ensure an alternate facility can support essential functions
- Facilitate the timely resumption of services
Elements of a COOP Plan

- COOP is about supporting **Essential Functions**

- Plan elements that support essential functions include:
  - Orders of Succession
  - Delegations of Authority
  - Notification/Communications
  - Vital Records
  - Staff Considerations
  - Alternate Facilities/Telework
  - Devolution
  - Reconstitution
Essential Functions

- Essential Functions defined:
  - An organization’s important or urgent activities and business functions that must continue with no or minimal interruption under all circumstances.

- Why it is important:
  - Enables the organization to accomplish its mission.
  - Enables an organization to identify and prioritize resource and personnel needs for continuity.
The State has essential functions of government.

Each State agency has essential functions that should support the State’s essential functions of government.

Each State agency also has internal essential functions that are critical to each agency’s ability to function.

Support functions should also be identified to enable the performance of essential functions.
Orders of Succession

Orders of Succession defined:
- The positions within an agency that can assume senior agency positions in the event that senior officials are unavailable/unable to execute their duties.

Why it is important:
- Provides for the orderly, predetermined assumption of senior agency positions during an emergency.
# Orders of Succession Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Position</th>
<th>Successor 1</th>
<th>Successor 2</th>
<th>Successor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEMA Executive Director</td>
<td>Director of Administration</td>
<td>Director of Preparedness</td>
<td>Director of Operations</td>
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<td>Director of Administration</td>
<td>Grants Manager</td>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
<td>Public Assistance Officer</td>
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<td>Director of Preparedness</td>
<td>External Outreach Branch Manager</td>
<td>Active Learning &amp; Exercise Branch Manager</td>
<td>Adaptive Plans Branch Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Operations</td>
<td>MJOC Manager</td>
<td>SEOC Manager</td>
<td>RLO Program Manager</td>
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Delegations of Authority

Delegations of Authority defined:
- The **grant of authority** established prior to a COOP event, which is the basis for allowing a person to assume the authority to perform the duties of an absent senior staff member.

Why it is important:
- **Specifies** the **activities** that may be performed by those authorized to act on behalf of the senior officials.
- Documents the **legal authority** for officials to make key policy decisions during a continuity situation.
- Allows for the **quick, uninterrupted performance** of leadership duties.
Notification/Communications: With Staff

- COOP plan activation and other information should be disseminated to staff
  - How does your agency disseminate such information? (e.g., via email or phone)
  - Do you have staff email and phone number information on hand or can contact information be easily accessed?
  - Other means?
Notification/Communications: With Internal and External Partners

- How do you communicate with internal and external agencies and partners/stakeholders?
- Are your means of communication redundant and resilient?
- How quickly are they available?
- Are they sustainable for 30 days?
Vital Records

Vital Records Defined:
- An agency’s vital data required for performing essential functions, which should be maintained on secure systems and backed up on redundant servers.

Why it is important:
- Essential to the continued functioning of the organization.
Key Personnel

- Key Personnel defined:
  - Personnel who are necessary to perform essential functions, including:
    - Agency Leadership
    - Staff who regularly perform the essential functions, or who have special knowledge or expertise

- COOP plans must identify key personnel, and ways to ensure they are able to continue performing essential functions.
Staff Considerations: Roles & Responsibilities

- Understand continuity roles/responsibilities
- Be willing to perform duties as assigned to ensure the agency can continue its essential functions
- Ensure critical documents are backed up and/or protected
- Take technology home, if appropriate
- Attend training related to performing continuity duties
- Ensure family members are prepared/taken care of
Staff Considerations: Personal Preparedness

- Staff should be encouraged to engage in personal preparedness:
  - Create a **Go Kit**
    - Visit Ready.gov
  - Develop a **family emergency plan**
Alternate Facilities

Alternate Facilities defined:
- A location, other than the primary facility, where essential functions can be performed during a COOP event.
- The location depends on the nature of the event:
  - A location in another part of the primary facility
  - Remote from the primary facility

Why it is important:
- Provides a place for essential functions to be performed.
Alternate Facilities & Teleworking

- What is your alternate site plan?
  - Do you have an MOU with the agency you are relying on?
    - *If you don’t you may not be able to use that site.*

- Where should staff report?
  - Can some staff telework?
  - Are there staff that must report *in-person*?
Devolution

- Devolution defined:
  - A different agency will perform your agency’s essential functions, in the event that your agency cannot be reached, until the your agency can re-assume its duties.

- Why it is important:
  - Ensures continuity of essential functions.
Reconstitution

- Reconstitution defined:
  - The process by which agency personnel resume normal operations at the primary operating facility.
  - *Note: Reconstitution should start immediately*

- Why it is important:
  - Reconstitution activities begin with the activation of the COOP plan, in order to ensure the return to normal operations as quickly as possible.
Parts of your COOP plan that *may* have changed in January 2015

- Essential Functions
- Leadership and Essential Personnel
  - Personnel contact information
  - Emergency alerting information
- Orders of Succession
- Delegations of Authority
- Notification/Communications
- Alternate Facilities/Telework
Maintaining the Plan

- Update bi-annually or as needed
  - Executive Order 01.01.2013.06 (Maryland Emergency Preparedness Program) requires every State agency to develop and maintain a COOP plan, which is to be updated every 2 years at a minimum.
Maintaining the Plan Cont’d.

- Use the MEPP Strategic Plan Maryland Preparedness System Cycle to maintain, update, and improve COOP plans (available on MEMA’s website)

- Consider offering regular staff training
## Maintaining the Plan Cont’d.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>COOP plan update and certification</td>
<td>- Review entire plan for accuracy.</td>
<td>Annually</td>
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<td>- Incorporate lessons learned and changes in policy and philosophy.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Manage distribution.</td>
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<td>Maintain orders of succession and delegations</td>
<td>- Identify current incumbents.</td>
<td>Semiannually</td>
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<td>and delegations of authority</td>
<td>- Update rosters and contact information.</td>
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<td>Maintain alternate location readiness</td>
<td>- Check all systems.</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td>- Verify accessibility.</td>
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<td>- Cycle supplies and equipment, as necessary.</td>
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<td>- Maintain point of contact information.</td>
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<td>Monitor and maintain vital records program</td>
<td>- Monitor volume of materials.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>- Update and remove files.</td>
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<td>Revise COOP checklists and contact information</td>
<td>- Update and revise COOP checklists.</td>
<td>Annually</td>
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<td>for essential personnel</td>
<td>- Confirm and update essential personnel information.</td>
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What is EMAP?

- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) defined:
  - The voluntary standards, assessment, and accreditation process for disaster preparedness programs that applies credible standards in a peer review accreditation process.

- State of Maryland is EMAP accredited
EMAP Requirements: COOP Plans Shall...

- Be **developed with stakeholders** and provide for regular **review and updates**. (4.6.1)

- Contain the following **elements**: (4.6.2)
  - Purpose, scope, and/or goals and objectives
  - Authority
  - Situation and assumptions
  - Functional roles and responsibilities
  - Logistics support to implement the plan
  - Concept of operations
  - Plan maintenance
EMAP Requirements: COOP Plans Shall (4.6.5)...

- Identify and describe how essential functions will be continued and recovered in an emergency or disaster.
- Identify essential positions and lines of succession.
- Provide for the protection or safeguarding of critical applications, communications resources, vital records/databases, process and functions that must be maintained during response activities.
- Identify and prioritize applications, records, processes and functions to be recovered if lost.
- Address alternate operating capability and facilities.
Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) Website Overview
COOP Program Management Using HSIN

- Each agency has a dedicated page to:
  - Save a copy of the agency’s COOP plan
  - Maintain information on the COOP POC

- Access to each agency COOP page is limited to the designated COOP POC

- The COOP site provides access to:
  - Webinars
  - Plan Templates
  - Best Practice Guidelines

- The COOP site allows COOP POCs to:
  - Share information and coordinate using the Discussion Board
  - Post announcements
Logging Into HSIN

- Be nominated for a MD-EM account
  - Notify Elizabeth Webster to request site permission, if needed

- Create an account
  - Notify Elizabeth Webster to be put into the special permission group for the Maryland COOP site (the site access is limited to the COOP POCs for each agency)

- Note: works best in Internet Explorer or Firefox when HSIN is a “trusted” site
Resources

› Maryland COOP HSIN website – coming soon

› MEPP Strategic Plan – http://mema.maryland.gov/community/Documents/2013_MEPP_StratPlan_SIGNED.pdf

› MEMA COOP planning resources – http://mema.maryland.gov/community/Pages/coop.aspx
Thank You! Questions?

http://mema.maryland.gov

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