



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.

H-3

For the meeting of: Jan. 20, 2015

Date: Jan. 6, 2015
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Phillip Smith-Hanes, County Administrative Officer *PSH*
Subject: Continuity of Government

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive the presentation on Continuity of Government (COG) planning;
2. Adopt the COG plan and each department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP); and
3. Direct department heads to ensure designated representatives continue to work with the COG task force and annually update their department's COOP.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

All county funds

DISCUSSION:

On Sept. 25, 2012 the Board of Supervisors received a presentation on Continuity of Government (COG)

Prepared by Sean Quincey

CAO Approval

Amey Olsen

REVIEW:

Auditor _____ County Counsel _____

Human Resources

RP/OF

Other

JP H. H. H.

UNIVERSITY

TYPE OF ITEM:

☐ Consent
☒ Departmental
☐ Public Hearing
☐ Other _____

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. H2

Meeting of: Sept. 25, 2012

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
Upon motion of Supervisor _____

Seconded by Supervisor _____

Ayes
Nays
Abstain
Absent

SEE ACTION SUMMARY

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated:

By: _____

Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board

planning. At that meeting the Board directed each department head to identify two representatives within their department to work with the COG task force and develop their department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Before the Board today is the first product of that process.

In addition to presidential directives and federal policies, it is the policy of the County of Humboldt to respond quickly at all levels in the event of an emergency or interruption of service delivery. In order to do this, each county department must ensure their ability to perform essential functions under all circumstances. Each department's COOP document identifies the elements necessary to perform those essential functions, including: critical documents; mission critical systems; lines of succession; alternate facilities; equipment and supply lists; key vendors; and employee rosters.

Findings

By working with representatives from each department in developing their COOP, the COG task force was able to identify deficiencies and interdependencies in continuity plans that affect multiple departments. In addition, by analyzing each department's COOP, the task force identified elements of these plans that sometimes conflicted with or complemented each other, and at other times it was possible to see trends developing in some of the key components of the COOP.

While all departments and their functions are important, not all activities are essential to the point where they cannot be interrupted.

The basis of this plan is the county's essential functions. The rest of the plan describes the things departments need in order to perform those functions.

Essential Functions

The county has identified its essential functions. The COG task force considers a function essential if it is mandated by law, or if it is otherwise necessary to provide vital services. Each department's essential functions are further categorized based on the amount of time in which that function needs to be restored.

- Category 1
These functions cannot be interrupted. Most of the Category 1 functions are carried out by first responders and agencies responsible for maintaining 24-hour facilities, like the jail, Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility and juvenile hall.
- Category 2
These are functions that must be back up within 12 hours of an interruption. They often include the county's initial response to an emergency and some basic, core functions of a department. Some functions include: emergency resolutions, purchases, damage assessment, public information, debris removal, insurance claims, etc.
- Category 3
These are functions that can be brought back on line once the Category 1 and 2 functions are established. Most county business falls in to category 3 functions.

Alternate Facilities

Each department designated alternate facilities for an unannounced relocation of essential functions and/or personnel. These facilities must possess the capability for personnel to perform essential functions under the category 1, 2, and 3 timelines previously mentioned. In addition, the facility must have reliable logistical support, services and infrastructure systems.

Until this effort, there had never been a coordinated review of alternate facilities. Through this coordination process, the COG task force found while some departments had given much thought to their relocation plans and even used those plans, others were relying on using facilities that either could not logistically support them, or had not coordinated with the agencies that control their desired relocation facilities. After coordinating with all the departments that took part in the COOP planning process, the COG task force can say with confidence that each of these departments has an alternate facility that is ready to hold their essential staff if they were forced to relocate.

One of the ways the COG task force ensured that each department has a relocation facility was to pre-designate facilities. These facilities are used for day-to-day business, but if needed can accommodate at least 15 staff and have the technical infrastructure to support them. The facilities are:

- Community Wellness Center, 907 7th Street, Eureka
- Department of Health & Human Services, Social Services, 605 K Street, Eureka
- Humboldt County Courthouse, 5th Floor Conference Room, 825 5th Street, Eureka

Regarding larger events that affect multiple departments, the COG task force found only a few facilities that are currently able and ready to house more than one department simultaneously. These include local veterans halls and the Humboldt County Fairgrounds in Ferndale.

Through the process of identifying alternate facilities for larger events, the task force found that multiple entities (local, state, federal, non-profit) are looking at the same areas as relocation sites. Many of those sites, however, do not have the capacity to house multiple entities. This problem of competing interests requires that the process of pre-designating an alternate facility needs to be coordinated and/or formalized through memorandums of understanding (MOUs), contracts, or other means. The COG task force has taken a first step to accomplish this by working with the real property agent and outside entities.

Critical Documents

Like categorizing their functions, departments looked at critical documents the same way. These are the documents needed to carry out category 1, 2, and 3 essential functions. Not all documents are critical as they relate to the essential functions.

Some of the types of documents identified by multiple departments as critical include: emergency plans and manuals; personnel files/records; employee contact lists; client lists/files; standard forms/templates; payroll information; time sheets/studies; grant documents; work orders; and historic records.

Several departments have many of their critical documents, especially older documents, only in hard-copy form. Departments have expressed the need to convert their records to electronic form, and each department has its own process for tackling this issue. Some are slowly converting hard-copy records to electronic, including the public defender and district attorney case management systems. However, the COG task force did not identify any other coordinated process involving multiple departments.

Mission Critical Systems

These are systems such as information technology and communications that are necessary to support essential functions. Some systems are also infrastructure-related, such as the boilers and generators in the jail and Sempervirens Psychiatric Health Facility.

The County Administrative Office Information Technology Division (IT) maintains several servers that support various county essential functions. The servers are backed up on tapes every weekday, and once a

month a back-up tape is taken off site to be stored. County IT has limited backup hardware and does not maintain a hot site, or secondary data center, where this information is constantly updated and would be immediately ready to use if the current IT servers were destroyed. If data needs to be restored at an off-site location from the off-site tape, replacement server hardware would be needed in order to continue operations. The time to restore data for any given system could vary from 12 hours to several days depending on several factors, including whether the incident requires the county's network to be replaced, or how quickly the county can acquire the appropriate hardware.

Similar to the situation with county servers, many other mission critical systems lack dependable redundancy. Often this is because county systems are aged and require an investment to upgrade. In these cases, county departments should review their systems and work with IT to upgrade, if necessary.

Given the somewhat precarious situation of their mission critical systems, departments seem to rely too heavily on IT to restore services quickly. Departments must have an alternate means of carrying out their essential functions when IT services cannot be immediately restored.

Logistics

Logistics is the management and flow of resources and is key to a successful COOP activation. The items identified in this section are actionable items that will take time, effort and in many cases, funding to implement during and in preparation of a disruption in service delivery.

In their COOPs, departments often identified far more personnel and equipment than is necessary to perform their essential functions. In a COOP activation event, it is unrealistic to expect that an entire department and its equipment would be able to relocate in less than 12 hours, or even 24 hours. This type of planning could lead to delays and inefficiencies in the recovery process. It is important that departments refine this portion of their plans to identify only the resources they need to carry out their essential functions.

OTHER COG BENEFITS

Department representatives assigned to work with the COG task force attended at least one orientation meeting to become familiar with the county's approach to continuity planning. They were also required to take specific FEMA courses, either on-line or in-person. Any future COG efforts would include this requirement. The courses include:

- IS 700 – Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- IS 100 – Introduction to the Incident Command Systems (ICS)
- IS 200 – ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS 546a – Continuity of Operations Awareness Course
- IS 547a – Introduction to Continuity of Operations

NEXT STEPS

The first version of this plan, the plan that is before the Board today, is a "snapshot in time" and gives readers an idea of the county's current continuity capability. However, this plan is designed to be updated annually. If the Board chooses to continue this work, the COG task force can make efforts to coordinate and improve these plans and present you with annual updates.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is a direct, ongoing cost to each county department and this is the cost associated with staff's participation in developing the department's COOP. These costs will vary depending on the staff assigned to work with the COG task force.

Development of the county's COG supports the Board's Strategic Framework by providing for and maintaining infrastructure, creating opportunities for improved health and safety, managing our resources to ensure sustainability of services and protecting vulnerable populations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

All county departments.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

Continuity of Government Plan
Annex C – Essential Functions
Annex D – Alternate Facilities
Annex E – Critical Records
Annex F – Lines of Succession
Annex G – Delegation of Authority
Annex H – Mission Critical Systems
Annex I – Logistics, Vendor Roster
Annex I – Logistics, Equipment Requirements
Annex I – Logistics, Supply Requirements