



090 FW 1

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter:

- A. Describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) policy for continuity of operations (COOP),
- B. Identifies the responsibilities of employees for COOP planning and implementation, and
- C. Describes the requirements for planning, coordination, and implementation for COOP.

1.2 Why is COOP planning important? COOP planning helps us ensure that we can perform essential activities and functions during the full range of human-caused, natural, technological, and national security emergencies.

1.3 What is the scope of this chapter?

- A. This policy applies to Headquarters and our mission essential facilities, which include all Regional offices, the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), and the Clark R. Bavin National Forensics Laboratory.
- B. Field stations must be included under the Regional COOP plan or, if the Regional office believes it is necessary, have an independent plan specific to their responsibilities (e.g., an additional component to their station/complex disaster operations plan).

1.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

- A. **COOP Team Member.** This is a designated member of a COOP team who is prepared to respond to any situation that disrupts our ability to function from our primary business location.
- B. **Essential Functions.** These are the functions that enable the Federal Government to provide vital services, exercise civil authority, maintain the safety and well-being of the general populace, and sustain the industrial/economic base in an emergency.
- C. **Go Kit.** A go kit is a set of pre-packaged materials that is moved to alternate facilities when a COOP plan is activated. These include professional items (vital work-related information, including vital personnel records) and personal items used for sustenance (clothing, etc.). See Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Items to Include in Go Kit	
Professional Items	Personal Items
Up-to-date essential personnel roster	Clothing and shoes
Map to alternate site	Jacket or sweatshirt
Badges and proper IDs	Glasses
Laptop computer	Medications
USB flash drive	Cash or credit cards
	Toiletries
	Personal items needed for up to 14 days

D. Mission Critical Employee. These are COOP team members who are critical to the COOP mission and are expected to report for work in accordance with their COOP plan to support and sustain Service operations in an emergency.

E. Mission Essential Functions. These are a limited group of Department- and Service-level functions that must be continued throughout or resumed rapidly after a disruption of normal activities.

F. Reconstitution. Reconstitution is the restoration of normal operations after a catastrophic event.

1.5 What are the authorities for this chapter?

A. National Security Presidential Directive 51/Homeland Security Directive 20 ([NSPD 51/HSPD 20](#)), National Continuity Policy.

B. [900 DM 1](#), Policy, Functions, and Responsibilities of the Emergency Management Program.

C. [900 DM 2](#), Continuity of Operations.

D. Department of the Interior [Personnel Bulletin No. 05-02](#), Telework Policy.

1.6 What is the Service’s policy on continuity of operations? It is our policy to:

A. Comply with the Department’s COOP policy;

B. Have in place a comprehensive and effective COOP program to ensure continuity of essential functions under all circumstances;

C. Allow COOP team members to telework, if necessary and appropriate (see the Department’s [Personnel Bulletin No. 05-02](#), Telework Policy); and

D. Ensure that employees at every level are aware of the COOP program.

1.7 What is the leadership succession plan should the Director not be available? If the Director is not available, the leadership succession plan follows the levels of responsibility in Table 1-2 below. (Also see [Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Memorandum dated September 25, 2009, Designation of Succession for Presidentially-Appointed, Senate Confirmed Positions.](#))

1.8 Who is responsible for continuity of operations for the Service? Table 1-2 shows responsibilities for the Service’s COOP program.

Table 1-2: Responsibilities for the COOP program	
These employees...	Are responsible for...
A. The Director	<p>(1) Serving on the Secretary’s COOP team;</p> <p>(2) Leading the execution of the Service’s essential functions, essential support activities, and reconstitution, if he/she is not deployed with the Secretary’s COOP team (the Deputy Director (Operations) does this if the Director is deployed with the Secretary’s COOP team);</p> <p>(3) Advising the Assistant Secretaries and the Secretary of the Interior on our COOP plan and program;</p> <p>(4) Designating a Service Emergency Coordinator and alternate (see 090 FW 2, Emergency Management), who are responsible for COOP planning and preparedness; and</p>

	<p>(5) Ensuring that the Service identifies essential functions for Headquarters and Servicewide.</p>
B. The Deputy Director (Policy)	<p>(1) Serving as a successor to the Director,</p> <p>(2) Serving on the Secretary's COOP team, and</p> <p>(3) Assisting the Director when advising the Assistant Secretaries and the Secretary on our COOP plan and program.</p>
C. The Deputy Director (Operations)	<p>(1) Leading the execution of the Service's essential functions, essential supporting activities, and reconstitution if the Director and Deputy Director (Policy) are deployed with the Secretary's COOP team;</p> <p>(2) Coordinating response activities with the Departmental COOP team and the Regions;</p> <p>(3) Maintaining up-to-date orders of succession and delegations of authority for the Headquarters COOP plan;</p> <p>(4) Advising the Director on COOP policy;</p> <p>(5) Serving as the team leader for the Service COOP team;</p> <p>(6) Serving as a successor to the Director when the Deputy Director (Policy) is unable to do so; and</p> <p>(7) Serving as a backup on the Secretary's COOP team if the Director or the Deputy Director (Policy) is unavailable.</p>
D. The Chief - National Wildlife Refuge System (Chief-NWRS)	<p>(1) Providing overall leadership and oversight of the Service's COOP program,</p> <p>(2) Approving the Headquarters COOP plan, and</p> <p>(3) Ensuring Headquarters is ready to execute its COOP plan and activating it.</p>
E. The Deputy Chief - NWRS	<p>Activating the Headquarters COOP plan in the absence of the Chief-NWRS.</p>
F. The Chief, Division of Refuge Law Enforcement	<p>(1) Advising the Chief-NWRS on activating the Headquarters COOP plan,</p> <p>(2) Supervising the Service's Emergency Coordinator and overseeing the COOP program,</p> <p>(3) Providing operational direction for response activities involving refuge law enforcement and security during emergencies and integrating those requirements into the Headquarters COOP plan, and</p> <p>(4) Directing implementation of Headquarters COOP testing, training, and exercise activities.</p>
G. Service Emergency Coordinator	<p>(1) Serving on the Secretary's COOP team;</p> <p>(2) Managing the Service's COOP program, interpreting policy, and providing guidance Servicewide;</p> <p>(3) Advising the Chief-NWRS, the Deputy Chief-NWRS, and the Chief, Division of Refuge Law Enforcement about Headquarters plan activation;</p> <p>(4) Revising and maintaining the Headquarters plan and ensuring it conforms to applicable mandates and guidelines;</p>

	<p>(5) Providing for COOP readiness and ensuring Servicewide compliance with this policy;</p> <p>(6) Developing, maintaining, and conducting exercises/tests of the Headquarters COOP plan in coordination with the Department;</p> <p>(7) Acting as a liaison to the Departmental Emergency Coordinator on emergency management matters;</p> <p>(8) Identifying alternate and backup positions for the Headquarters COOP personnel roster;</p> <p>(9) Coordinating operational COOP activities;</p> <p>(10) Maintaining the Service's Web page on the EM-SAFETALK site;</p> <p>(11) Maintaining emergency contact information for Headquarters COOP team members;</p> <p>(12) Maintaining situational awareness and executing alerts and warnings;</p> <p>(13) Providing alert and notification messages to the Headquarters COOP team members and alternate facility personnel; and</p> <p>(14) Coordinating with Regional Emergency Coordinators when a Region has an active COOP situation.</p>
<p>H. Assistant Director - Business Management and Operations (AD-BMO)</p>	<p>(1) Developing and maintaining the Headquarters occupant emergency plans;</p> <p>(2) Working with the Department's Office of Financial Management to determine how to fund the costs for alternate facility activation, including lodging and meal expenses;</p> <p>(3) Assuring safety of dams and flood control activities on Departmental lands;</p> <p>(4) Directing and coordinating reconstitution activities for Headquarters staff;</p> <p>(5) Providing safety and health, finance, engineering, space, logistics, and acquisition support; and</p> <p>(6) Providing building status to employees in Headquarters and Washington metropolitan region by updating the building status hotline number (202) 208-6606.</p>
<p>I. The Assistant Director - Information Resources and Technology Management (AD-IRTM)</p>	<p>(1) Maintaining the Headquarters Local Area Network (LAN) contingency plan;</p> <p>(2) Providing reliable communications and information technology (IT) during emergencies;</p> <p>(3) Developing strategies, policies, or waivers of policy related to IT to allow the execution of essential and support functions remotely during a Headquarters COOP event; and</p> <p>(4) Managing the Service's records management program, including vital records.</p>

<p>J. The Chief, Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)</p>	<p>(1) Serving on the Secretary's COOP team;</p> <p>(2) Providing operational direction for response activities involving law enforcement special agents during emergencies and integrating those requirements into the Headquarters COOP plan; and</p> <p>(3) Serving as successor to the Director when neither Deputy Director is available.</p>
<p>K. The Director, NCTC</p>	<p>(1) Providing support to the Department's and the Service's COOP mission,</p> <p>(2) Acting for the Service while the Service's COOP leadership team is en route to NCTC (the alternate site), and</p> <p>(3) Coordinating with the western alternate site (Region 6 in Denver) and preparing the Service's COOP leadership team location for activation.</p>
<p>L. The Assistant Director - Endangered Species</p>	<p>Serving as a successor to the Director when the Deputy Directors and the Chief, OLE are unavailable.</p>
<p>M. The Assistant Director - External Affairs</p>	<p>(1) Serving as a successor to the Director when the Deputy Directors, Chief, OLE, and the Assistant Director – Endangered Species are unavailable; and</p> <p>(2) Providing emergency information to employees in Headquarters and the Washington metropolitan region by updating the information on the Service's main Web site.</p>
<p>N. The Assistant Director - Fisheries and Habitat Conservation</p>	<p>Coordinating with the Department's Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) on issues related to the environmental program, oil discharges and hazardous substance releases, and application of environmental safeguards in all-hazard emergency activities.</p>
<p>O. Assistant Director - Budget, Planning and Human Capital</p>	<p>(1) Coordinating with the Department's Office of Human Capital on development of policy related to:</p> <p>(a) Pay and compensation for emergency workers, and</p> <p>(b) Appropriate support services for employees and their families affected by disasters or other emergencies;</p> <p>(2) Ensuring that a Service Employee Accountability Plan is in place;</p> <p>(3) Coordinating with the Department on budget activities related to COOP activation, including preparation of requests for supplemental appropriations; and</p> <p>(4) Coordinating with facilities staff on building status updates.</p>
<p>P. The Regional Director for Region 6</p>	<p>(1) Serving as a successor to the Director when none of the officials in the sections above are available,</p> <p>(2) Supporting functions in the Region 6/Headquarters COOP Support Agreement, and</p> <p>(3) Maintaining contact with the Region 6 COOP Coordinator, particularly during times of increased threat.</p>

<p>Q. Regional Directors and the Clark R. Bavin National Forensics Lab Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Developing and maintaining an individual COOP plan separate from the Headquarters plan, (2) Managing and executing emergency programs and functions within their respective areas of responsibility, (3) Designating a COOP planner for their facilities, (4) Ensuring timely and accurate reports are sent to the Service COOP team upon request, (5) Determining the essential functions of their office, (6) Ensuring that training and exercises are accomplished in accordance with their COOP plans, and (7) Identifying potential COOP team members for their offices.
<p>R. Regional Emergency Coordinators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Managing the Region's COOP program, interpreting policy, and providing guidance; (2) Advising Regional management about Regional plan activation; (3) Revising and maintaining the Regional plan and ensuring it conforms to applicable mandates and guidelines; (4) Providing for COOP readiness; (5) Developing, maintaining, and conducting exercises/tests of the Regional COOP plan; (6) Acting as a liaison to the Service Emergency Coordinator on emergency management matters and coordinating with him/her during a Regional COOP activation; (7) Identifying alternate and backup positions for their COOP personnel roster; (8) Coordinating operational COOP activities for their facilities; (9) Maintaining emergency contact information for Regional COOP team members; (10) Maintaining situational awareness and executing alerts and warnings; and (11) Providing alert and notification messages to Regional COOP team members and alternate facilities.

<p>S. Managers/supervisors</p>	<p>(1) Preparing the work force to deal with a COOP plan activation by:</p> <p>(a) Designating emergency employees, mission essential employees, or other special category employees and coordinating with the servicing Human Resources office to have those titles added to employee position descriptions, and</p> <p>(b) Ensuring that employees have taken required training and are familiar with how to accomplish potential COOP assignments;</p> <p>(2) Taking the following preliminary steps to ensure their employees transition smoothly and safely from normal operations to COOP operations:</p> <p>(a) Becoming familiar with human capital strategies and policies to handle contingencies posed by COOP operations,</p> <p>(b) Accounting for their employees in an emergency situation and reporting as described in the Service's Employee Accountability Plan,</p> <p>(c) Maintaining protocols for designating and activating emergency employees under their supervision,</p> <p>(d) Ensuring both regular and emergency employees have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities under the COOP plan,</p> <p>(e) Developing a procedure for maintaining contact with employees during closures of Service buildings, and</p> <p>(f) Giving employees emergency guides and preparedness information, as needed; and</p> <p>(3) Serving as the primary point of contact for teleworkers and regular employees granted excused leave during COOP operations in which Service buildings are closed by:</p> <p>(a) Keeping an updated employee accountability process with current phone numbers and addresses;</p> <p>(b) Attempting to verify the safety and whereabouts of employees and sending this information to the Division of Human Capital or following predetermined disaster/COOP requirements for their Service location;</p> <p>(c) Maintaining lines of communication with employees to spread information and announcements, make work assignments, and recall employees back to work; and</p> <p>(d) Identifying employees who are able to telework from residences or alternate work sites.</p>
<p>T. Employees</p>	<p>(1) Becoming familiar with the purpose and objectives of the COOP program;</p> <p>(2) Working with their managers/supervisors to fully understand their roles and responsibilities during COOP plan activation, including employee accountability and any required training;</p> <p>(3) Understanding how the Service will inform and instruct them during an emergency;</p>

	<p>(4) Remaining accessible to managers/supervisors and being prepared to resume work at any time (from a temporary worksite location if necessary), even during periods of excused absence;</p> <p>(5) Providing current contact information to supervisors in case of an emergency; and</p> <p>(6) Updating emergency contact information in Employee Express, as needed.</p>
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1.9 What do COOP team members have to do?

A. COOP team members bear the overall responsibility for maintaining the Service’s essential functions during COOP operations. They must be able to perform each of their job responsibilities under the pressures of time, relocation, and potentially austere facilities.

B. Due to the critical nature of their positions, COOP team members must:

- (1) Read and understand the COOP plan;
- (2) Read and understand any COOP-related procedures specific to their roles and responsibilities;
- (3) Understand Service essential functions, how their office supports them, and how to maintain them during COOP operations;
- (4) Understand personal roles and responsibilities during COOP operations;
- (5) Respond to COOP alerts, notifications, and deployment instructions;
- (6) Be prepared to serve at an alternate operating facility for a period of up to 30 days, and potentially longer;
- (7) If necessary, inform a manager/supervisor of their inability to immediately relocate, and assist the manager/supervisor with designating a qualified alternate;
- (8) Identify vital files, records, and databases needed to execute mission essential functions;
- (9) Review guidelines for readiness and maintain a constant state of personal and professional readiness;
- (10) Prepare and maintain personal and professional go kit items;
- (11) Provide current contact information to their Emergency Coordinator (Servicewide or Regional) or whoever is responsible for updated COOP rosters;
- (12) Enter into a telework agreement for emergencies;
- (13) Develop and maintain a family emergency notification/contact plan; and
- (14) Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in COOP testing, training, and exercise activities.

1.10 What are the required elements of a viable COOP program? At a minimum, COOP programs must address the elements in Table 1-3.

Table 1-3: Required elements of a viable COOP program	
A. Plans and Procedures	Written plans must address, at a minimum, the sections described in Table 1-4 .

B. Essential Functions	Identify and prioritize essential functions required to provide essential services, exercise civil authority, save lives, and protect the health and safety of the public and employees.
C. Delegations of Authority	Pre-delegate authorities for making decisions about policy and other issues. Clearly established delegations of authority are important for ensuring that personnel know who has authority to make decisions in a COOP.
D. Orders of Succession	Establish, publish, and maintain orders of succession to key positions.
E. Alternate Operating Facilities	Identify alternate location(s) where the organization can conduct essential activities or functions. At least one location should be physically and geographically separate from the primary location to ensure that operations can be conducted regardless of the disruption.
F. Interoperable Communications	Identify critical communications and IT systems to support connectivity between leadership, internal organizational units, other agencies, critical customers, and the public.
G. Vital Records and Databases	Identify, protect, and make available electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information to support essential functions.
H. Human Capital	Designate emergency employees, mission critical employees, and other special categories of employees. Determine dismissal or closure procedures, how to make announcements on operating status, and how to determine the status and location of non-emergency employees. Identify ways to communicate with employees, making them aware of operating and facility conditions. Determine what pay flexibilities are available and issues related to benefits.
I. Tests, Training, and Exercises	Provide a program for annual testing, training, and exercising of COOP capabilities. Test the COOP plan and practice its implementation to ensure the plan's viability and identify deficiencies.
J. Reconstitution	Identify procedures for restoring normal operations after a catastrophic event. Consolidate resources to allow the organization to become fully functional; establish a new permanent operating site if needed; move personnel, equipment, and records; and notify non-deployed personnel to assure an orderly transition to normal operations.

1.11 What are the requirements for developing and coordinating COOP plans?

A. Headquarters, each Region, and each mission essential facility (NCTC and the Clark R. Bavin National Forensics Lab) must develop and maintain a COOP plan.

B. Because COOP plans provide for continuity of essential functions, they may encompass multiple units or facilities in a single plan. Plans must clearly specify subordinate units that must prepare individual COOP plans, or indicate that the subordinate units have appended information to the plan of the parent office.

C. At the discretion of the Regional office, units (e.g., refuges, hatcheries, etc.) within that Region may either be included in the Regional plan or be required to develop and maintain their own plans.

D. [Occupant Emergency Plans](#) and COOP plans must be coordinated and mutually supportive.

1.12 What are the required elements for a COOP plan?

A. The plan must include the elements in [Table 1-3](#), and:

- (1) Be implementable both with and without warning;
- (2) Ensure that the procedures in the plan make essential functions operational within 12 hours of COOP activation;
- (3) Allow for maintaining operations for up to 30 days;

(4) Include regularly scheduled testing, training, and exercising of personnel, equipment, systems, processes, and procedures to ensure that all components are functional and effective if there is a need to activate the COOP;

(5) Include regular risk analysis of alternate operating facilities conducted in accordance with [432 FW 1](#), Physical Security in Service Facilities;

(6) Locate alternate operating facilities in areas where we can maximize the ability to initiate and maintain continuity of operations by ensuring distance from primary facilities and potential threats and hazards; and

(7) Include procedures for developing, maintaining, and annually reviewing COOP capabilities and plans.

B. Table 1-4 describes the sections that make up a COOP plan.

Table 1-4: Sections in a COOP plan	
Section of the Plan	Description
A. Essential Functions	Documents essential functions derived from planning under section B in Table 1-3 , and addresses agency interdependencies and resource requirements.
B. Orders of Succession and Delegations of Authority	Documents orders of succession for key positions and delegations provided in accordance with planning under sections C and D of Table 1-3 .
C. Alternate Operating Facility(ies)	Designates alternate facilities derived from planning under section E in Table 1-3 .
D. Vital Records	Describes vital records, systems, and databases addressed under section G in Table 1-3 , their location, and how they can be accessed.
E. COOP Activation	Documents the decision process for activation of COOP plans during no-warning and warning scenarios. Includes contact numbers, radio call signs, or other information needed to implement critical communications system, and how those numbers and information will be maintained. Because contact lists must be frequently revised, we recommend including those lists as an appendix to the COOP plan.
F. Notification and Employment	Describes procedures and provides checklists, as needed, for notification of alternate facilities, COOP team members, senior leadership, and others when the COOP is activated. Also provides instructions for moving personnel and other resources (including go kits) to the alternate facility.
G. Initial Operating Capability	Describes procedures and provides reference material and checklists, as needed, to assure COOP team and alternate facilities reach operational status within 12 hours. Includes delineation of responsibilities for COOP team members, alternate facility reception, and orientation.
H. Alternate Facility Operations	Describes procedures and checklists, as needed, on how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order necessary equipment and supplies that are not pre-positioned, • Manage situation tracking and implementation of essential functions, and • Provide ongoing communications with other organizational units, non-deployed personnel, other agencies, critical customers, and the public.
I. Reconstitution	Provides procedures and checklists for plans developed under section J of Table 1-3 to redeploy personnel and transition to normal operations.

1.13 What are the training requirements for employees involved in the COOP program? COOP planners, team members, and their alternates must complete the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System (ICS) training as required in the [Department’s Emergency Management Policy Guidance Bulletin 2007-1 “National Incident Management System Training Requirements”](#) and the [December 5, 2008 Service memorandum, “National Incident Management System \(NIMS\) Regional Training.”](#) See Table 1-5 for the training requirements for employees on the Service

or the Secretary's COOP teams.

Table 1-5: Training Requirements for employees on the Service or the Secretary's COOP Teams	
Training	Required?
ICS- 400 Training, Classroom	Recommended
IS-546a COOP Awareness Course (online Fema.gov)	Yes
IS-547a Intro to COOP (online Fema.gov)	Yes
IS-100 ICS (online on DOI Learn OS-LE-001)	Yes
IS-200 ICS (online on DOI Learn OS-LE-002)	Yes
IS-700 NIMS, An Introduction (online on DOI Learn OS LE-007)	Yes
IS-800a NRF, An Introduction (online on DOI Learn OS LE-008)	Yes
H-337 Classroom	Recommended