

## **Lesson Overview**

A COOP plan assumes that an agency's primary facility is unusable for some period of time. As such, COOP implementation involves the deliberate and preplanned movement of selected personnel to an alternate operating facility.

This lesson will present an overview of COOP implementation, including:

- The phases of implementation.
  - The decisionmaking process related to implementation.
  - Special issues related to devolution and reconstitution.
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## **COOP Versus OEP**

FPC-65 makes a distinction between emergencies that result in short-term unavailability of a facility and those that result in long-term unavailability.

- Emergencies, such as a hazardous materials incident, may require facility evacuation with little notice. These emergencies result in the activation of the Occupant Emergency Plan—OEP—but cause only a short-term disruption.
  - Emergencies that are so severe that an agency facility is unusable for a period long enough to impact normal operations, may require COOP plan implementation.
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## **When To Implement the COOP Plan**

Agencies should develop an executive decisionmaking process that:

- Allows for a review of the situation.
- Provides the best course of action for response and recovery.

Following an established decisionmaking process will help to preclude premature or inappropriate activation of a COOP plan.

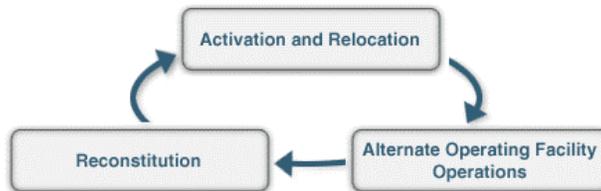
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## Implementation Phases

FPC-65 factors COOP implementation into three phases:

1. Activation and relocation
2. Alternate operating facility operations
3. Reconstitution

Each of these phases will be described on the next screens.



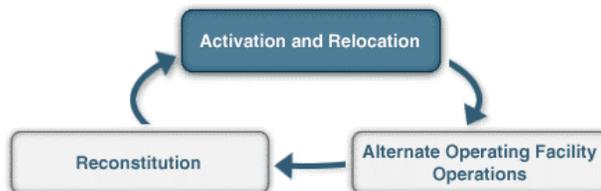
Three phases of COOP implementation: Activation and Relocation, Alternate Operating Facility Operations, and Reconstitution.

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### Phase I: Activation and Relocation

Phase I: Activation and Relocation encompasses the initial 12-hour period following activation of the COOP plan. During Phase I operations, agencies:

- Activate plans, procedures, and schedules to transfer essential functions, personnel, records, and equipment to alternate operating facilities.
- Notify appropriate offices and agencies of COOP activation, regardless of agency location and the time of activation of call-down procedures.



Three phases of COOP implementation: Activation and Relocation, Alternate Operating Facility Operations, and Reconstitution. Activation and Relocation is highlighted.

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### Activation

Agencies must be prepared to activate their COOP plans for all emergencies, regardless of warning period. Agencies must also plan to activate their COOP plans during both duty and nonduty hours.

Activation also requires notification of:

- Alternate facilities.
  - The FEMA Operations Center (FOC).
  - Other points of contact, as appropriate.
  - COOP essential and nonessential personnel.
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## COOP Team Deployment

COOP implementation will generate stress for the ERG as they prepare to depart quickly to the alternate facilities. Written procedures to guide the deployment process can reduce stress and ensure that no important concerns are overlooked during the transition.

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## Deployment Procedures

These procedures should specify:

- What the ERG should do and the materials that they should take to the alternate facility.
- Administrative requirements associated with travel to and check-in at the alternate facility.

Based on the threat level, procedures may allow for partial deployment of essential functions that are critical to operations.

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## Relocation

Relocation involves the actual movement of essential functions, personnel, records, and equipment to the alternate operating facility. Relocation may also involve:

- Transferring communications capability to the alternate facility.
  - Ordering supplies and equipment that are not already in place at the alternate facility.
  - Other planned activities, such as providing network access.
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## Devolution

In some cases, it may be necessary to activate the COOP plan through **devolution**. Devolution planning supports overall COOP planning. Devolution planning addresses emergencies that may render an agency's leadership and staff unavailable or incapable of supporting essential functions.

If devolution is necessary, prioritized essential functions are transferred to a devolution site, usually a regional or field office. Agency direction and control of essential functions is transferred to the devolution site.

Agencies are required to complete devolution planning as part of their COOP planning processes.



Devolution from Headquarters to the Devolution Site.

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### **Special Issues for Devolution**

Devolution planning involves several special issues.

- Personnel at the devolution site must be trained to perform the essential functions to the same level of proficiency as agency primary personnel.
- Vital records, documents, and databases must be available and up to date at the devolution site.
- Communications and information management systems must be transferred to the devolution site.
- Delegations of authority must include senior personnel at the devolution site.

Developing specific procedures for devolution during the COOP planning process will facilitate devolution should it become necessary.

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### **Phase II: Alternate Operating Facility Operations**

Phase II: Alternate Operating Facility Operations covers the period from 12 hours after activation up to 30 days. During Phase II, agencies will conduct essential functions from the alternate facility.

Prioritizing essential functions during the planning process is key to initial operations to ensure that the highest-priority functions are activated first. Lower-priority essential functions are then brought online as soon as possible.

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### **Transition To the Alternate Facility**

Written procedures to guide ERG members through the transition to the alternate facility will result in quicker COOP implementation. Issues that should be addressed by these procedures include:

- Minimum standards for communication and direction and control to be maintained until the alternate facility is operational.
- Activation of plans, procedures, and schedules to transfer activities, personnel, records, and equipment.
- Securing the primary facility and nonmovable equipment and records.

The transition to the alternate facility will occur more quickly if all needed equipment and administrative supplies are located at the facility before an emergency occurs.

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### **Go Kits**

Go Kits are packages of records, information, communication and computer equipment, and other items related to an emergency operation. Each ERG member should prepare Go Kits in advance and keep them up to date and available should deployment be necessary.

Kits should contain items that are essential to supporting the team member's operations at the alternate site.

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### **Alternate Facility Operations**

Operations at alternate facilities will vary widely depending on the agency and its essential functions. Despite this variability, there are some common issues that should be planned for to facilitate alternate facility operations. These issues include:

- Execution of mission-essential critical functions.
  - Establishment of communications to all critical customers.
  - Assignment of responsibilities to key staff.
  - Augmentation of staff if it is determined that initial staffing is inadequate.
  - Accountability for staff, including non-ERG personnel.
  - Development of plans and schedules for reconstitution.
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### **Reception and Inprocessing**

The COOP plan must establish a reception area and inprocessing procedures for deployed personnel. Personnel must know where to go to check in and receive assignment to their work spaces. Arriving personnel may also need information about hotels, restaurants, laundry facilities, and medical treatment facilities.

Inprocessing packets should be prepared in advance of COOP activation and provided to employees for inclusion in their go kits. The packets should include information, such as:

- Hours of operation.
  - Anticipated duration of the relocation, if known.
  - Safety and security measures.
  - The information line telephone number.
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### **Personnel Accountability**

COOP procedures must provide for accountability of deployed and nondeployed personnel. Accountability is critical to ensure that:

- All personnel are safe.
  - ERG members have arrived at the site.
  - Replacement personnel and augmentees can be identified quickly, when necessary.
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### **Phase III: Reconstitution**

Reconstitution describes the agency's processes to return as a fully functional entity in its primary facility or a long-term temporary facility.

Basic planning for reconstitution should take place concurrently with COOP planning. Specific reconstitution planning should begin as soon as the COOP is implemented.

Because reconstitution can be very complex, many agencies will designate a Reconstitution Coordinator whose job it will be to focus solely on reconstitution issues.

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### **Reconstitution Tasks**

Reconstitution involves a myriad of tasks. Among the primary tasks are:

- Determining that the agency's primary facility is suitable for normal operations to resume from that site.
  - Scheduling an orderly return to the facility.
  - Transfer of vital records, documents, and databases.
  - Transfer of communications capabilities.
  - Notification of all employees.
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### **Reconstitution Resources: GSA**

Part of reconstitution planning should involve the identification of resources to help:

- Determine the extent of repair or restoration required to make the agency's primary facility usable.
- Identify new space if the primary facility has been destroyed or will take an extensive period of time to repair.

The General Services Administration (GSA), or your State or local government facilities coordinator, can provide assistance in securing office space and procurement of furnishings, equipment, and services required to return agency operations to normal.

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### **Reconstitution Resources: OPM**

As your agency reconstitutes, there may be questions that arise involving personnel issues, such as:

- Pay for nondeployed personnel.
- Overtime pay for ERG members.
- Collective bargaining issues.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), or your State or local human resources, budgeting, or personnel office, will make a determination about payroll issues. OPM also has specialists available to assist agencies in addressing collective bargaining and other personnel issues.

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