

B. Conducting periodic COOP exercises

COOP plan maintenance should include a plan of progressive exercises. Exercises should test and improve COOP:

- Plans and procedures.
- Systems.
- Equipment.

An effective exercise plan should include a variety of hazards and exercise types. Full-scale exercises should simulate actual emergency conditions. Exercises should include the phase-down of alternate facility operations and the return to normal operations.

A comprehensive after-action report should be completed following each exercise. Lessons learned should be incorporated into revisions to the COOP plan, training plan and exercise plan.

Exercises should include the full spectrum of COOP operations:

- Alert, notification and activation.
- Relocation to the alternate facility.
- Operations.
- Logistical support, services and infrastructure at the alternate facility.
- Devolution.
- Reconstitution.

C. Developing a Multiyear Strategy and Program Management Plan

To ensure COOP plans always reflect current conditions, they should be reviewed at least annually as part of each agency's training and exercise program. Changes in the agency's structure, essential functions or mission should be posted to the plan as they occur. Long-term plan maintenance should be undertaken carefully, planned in advance and completed according to an established schedule.

Major issues to be considered in COOP plan maintenance include:

- Designation of a review team.
- Identification of issues that impact the frequency of changes required to the COOP plan.