



KC RICE/SLICE '14 REGIONAL INTER-AGENCY CONTINUITY EXERCISE **After Action Report**

Kansas City and
Greater St. Louis
Federal Executive Board

October 27, 2014



FEMA



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Handling Instructions

1. The title of this document is the KC RICE/SLICE '14 Regional Inter-Agency Continuity Exercise After Action Report (AAR).
2. The information gathered in this AAR is UNCLASSIFIED. The control of information is based more on public sensitivity regarding the nature of the exercise than on the actual exercise content.
3. All exercise participants should use appropriate guidelines to ensure the proper control of information within their areas of expertise and protect this material in accordance with current agency-specific directives.
4. Public release of exercise materials to third parties is at the discretion of the Greater Kansas City Federal Executive Board and the Greater St. Louis Federal Executive Board.
5. For more information, please consult the following points of contact (POCs):

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Executive Summary

Continuity exercise, KC RICE/SLICE '14, demonstrated the ability to activate an agency Continuity of Operations plans (COOP) and evaluate continuity plans and reconstitution procedures. The purpose of this exercise is to test the Federal Community's ability to activate, mobilize and commence initial emergency Continuity of Operations under guidance outlined in Federal Executive Board (FEB) Federal Continuity Directive FCD-1, federal statutes, Executive Orders, and Agency plans in response to severe emergency that affects the Kansas City metropolitan area.

KC RICE/SLICE '14 established an environment for players to exercise their continuity plans and procedures. The exercise focused on PLANS AND PROCEDURES through coordination of activities with external partnering agencies and critical vendors notionally during real time and 14 days after the event.

The exercise was conducted on July 30, 2014 at 8:00 am from multiple agency exercise locations in Kansas City and St. Louis following the STARTEX (Start Exercise) message from the Exercise Director.

Overall, KC RICE/SLICE '14 successfully provided a learning environment that presented an opportunity for agencies to review their continuity plans and procedures, interact with other agencies, and reinforce the need for robust continuity planning, training, and exercises. This report will analyze the exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

This exercise was designed to establish a learning environment for all participants, analyze the exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows with example comments:

- Telework Policies
 - Ability to work tele-commute and work at off-site locations
 - Everyone seemed to know the steps to take when evacuating, such as taking their laptop's home, forwarding their phones, and exiting the building to their telework sites. We were able to account for all staff even those on travel. Staff was able to perform MEFs without any difficulty and they all were able to access electronic systems and networks at their telework site
 - Agency did preliminary planning for the exercise by conducting telework training and authorizations, COOP computer setup and refresh...
 - [Agency participants] were successful in connecting to VPN and shared drives using laptops from their offices over hotspot/Wi-Fi connections
- Communications
 - Everyone was knowledgeable about the plan, we had the right people there, and communications infrastructure was solid

- We communicated well and everyone chimed in to participate. We had IT support there and it was very helpful to have their assistance and knowledge
- Plans/procedures/communication system/redundant IT systems
- Alert and Notification
 - [Agency] utilized AtHoc a software based system to perform employee accountability. It was the first time we had done this [Agency]-wide

Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

Observation 1: Roles and Responsibilities of ERG and non-ERG members

Issue: Through the transferring of new members there needs to be an increase organizational awareness about COOP and individual roles and responsibilities.

Examples of Lessons Learned:

- Changing work force that requires training on at least a semi-annual basis to ensure all supervisors are well versed in COOP and emergency planning
- The agency is short some critical internal key capabilities like contracting officers
- There is room for improvement in training staff on ways around limited communication, such as limited internet access and phone service.
- COOP Plan does not provide all the details needed for less experienced people that could be tasked with responsibilities under successor or delegation of authority hierarchies if necessary. More detailed step-by-step responses about [essential function] transfer is needed
- A major work component was not included because they do not normally handle facility, personnel or legal issues. However, we needed to have an executive from their component as a consultant

Recommendation: More training with the ERG staff and non-ERG members is needed. Agencies also need to train backup ERG personnel on their roles and responsibilities during Continuity operations.

Observation 2: Accessing Essential Records

Issue: Agencies addressed the inability to access essential records through internal networks.

Examples of Lessons Learned:

- The plan needs to include provisions about processes to set up file recovery space. This is an area where file fragments can be collected from the debris
- People need to login and test their equipment more so they can avoid minor glitches that come up when you haven't logged in or tested the stuff frequently

Recommendation: IT needs to be involved as members of the Continuity Working Group to address limiting factors when it comes accessing essential records during a COOP event.

Observation 3: Reconstitution plans need to be reviewed.

Issue: Not all agencies present had prepared adequately for reconstituting their agencies.

Examples of Lessons Learned:

- Reconstitution needs per program or office could be better defined
- Reconstitution site is hot but space is limited. Would require additional specific equipment for alternate site to be fully operational

Recommendation: Agencies must develop reconstitution annexes to their COOP Plan to include plans and procedures for replacing their primary operating location in the event that it is rendered unusable by the inciting incident.

Exercise Overview

Exercise Details

Exercise Name

KC RICE/SLICE '14

Type of Exercise

Full Scale Continuity Exercise

Exercise Date

July 30, 2014

- 7/30 Full Scale Exercise
- 7/30 Interagency Hot Wash

Duration

4 hours

Locations

Various COOP Locations throughout the Kansas City and St. Louis areas

Sponsors

Kansas City Federal Executive Board
Greater St. Louis Federal Executive Board
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VII

Mission

Continuity of Operations
Reconstitution Operations

Scenario Type

No notice event/terrorist event/cyber event

Participating Organizations

KC RICE '14
BOP/North Central Regional Office
DOI-OST/AIRR
DOT-FRA
FAA Central Region
FBI-Kansas City Div.
FDA
FEMA Region VII
FPS-Region 6
Federal Transit Admin.
GSA-OMA
HHS
HUD-Kansas City Regional Office
NARA
NNSA
NWS-National Log. Spt. Center
SSA
TSA-MCI
USACE-Kansas City Dist.
USDA-OCIO-ITS
USCIS-NBC
USCIS-NRC
USDA GIPSA
USDA-RMA
SLICE '14
AMC/A7
DISA/DECC St. Louis
FBI-St. Louis
GSA-St. Louis East Field Office
GSA-St. Louis West Field Office
HUD-St. Louis
NGA
TSA-STL
US Attorney-Southern IL
US District Court-Eastern District of MO
US Pretrial
US Probation Office
USA CECOM SEC STL
USDA FSA – St. Louis
USDA FSIS OPHS Midwestern Laboratory
USPS-Gateway Dist.
VA RMC

VA-St. Louis RO

Number of Participants

- 42 agencies & organizations
- ~ 700 Participants
- 46 Facilitators

Of the **42** agencies that participated in KC RICE/SLICE '14, **23** (55%) provided input to this AAR.

106 (~ 15%) of individual Participant Evaluation Forms were received.

Exercise Design Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this exercise was to allow agencies to validate continuity plans and reconstitution procedures following a potential terrorist event and while undergoing a cyber-attack.

Exercise Objectives

KC RICE/SLICE '14 focused on the following objectives:

1. Demonstrate capability to conduct MEFs from an alternate work location and from a telework location.
2. Demonstrate the capability to conduct MEFs in an IT-constrained environment due to factors such as cyber terrorism and/or space weather.
3. Demonstrate ability to conduct reconstitution planning.

Exercise Scenario

Overview

KC RICE/SLICE '14 focused on continuity plans and reconstitution operations designed to establish a no-fault learning environment for participating organizations to practice and examine their plans and procedures. For the purpose of this exercise, participants operated under conditions for the following scenario:

The exercise included one Major Events set on July 30, 2014 following a potential terrorist event. Agency's primary locations were damage causing them to activate and operate from their Continuity Facility. Subsequent injects included exercising agency responses during a cyber-attack.

STARTEX occurred on the morning of Wednesday, July 30, 2014 at 0800 a.m. The scenario allowed participants to test their ability to perform essential functions from the continuity facility, communications systems operability, with the focus of the scenario eventually shifting to reconstitution. ENDEX occurred at 12:00 p.m.

Hot Wash

Immediately following the conclusion of the KC RICE/SLICE '14 Exercise, the facilitators conducted a non-site hot wash. The purpose of the hot wash was to discuss the full scale exercise and create action items in order to improve the agency's overall continuity capability. Individual feedback forms were electronically delivered before the exercise and submitted from all exercise participants after the hot wash.

All groups identified three areas of strength and three areas of potential improvement to share with the plenary session. A representative from each group was given several minutes to present on strengths and areas for improvement at the plenary session following the exercise.

Participants also were given the opportunity to provide feedback on overall exercise design and organization.

Feedback forms submitted and information collected during the hot wash and major event briefs were the basis for this AAR.

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Analysis of Objectives

This section of the report reviews the performance of the exercised objectives, activities, and tasks. Observations are organized by objective, followed by a summary and corresponding observations and recommendations.

OBJECTIVE 1: DEMONSTRATE CAPABILITY TO CONDUCT MEFs FROM AN ALTERNATE WORK LOCATION AND FROM A TELEWORK LOCATION.

Observation: Successful

Analysis:

Many Agencies reported having success in the capability to conduct their MEFs from an alternate work location and from a telework location. Employees know their roles and responsibilities as ERG and non-ERG and accounting for all personal. The scenario did not test the viability of agency staff to work from their designated telework location; exercise play was limited to agency Continuity Facility locations.

Discussion:

Several Departments and Agencies expressed concern over new personal in ERG positions and COOP procedures that are in place.

Recommendations:

1. Departments and Agencies provide periodic training to employees on COOP procedures to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have the training, experience, certification, etc. required in carrying out their duties.
2. Discuss how critical Essential Functions (EFs) will continue from a telework location with the planning required to perform those functions.
3. Departments and Agencies need to identify solutions or alternative actions to challenges, gaps or vulnerabilities in organizational continuity plans and procedures during a terrorist event.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEMONSTRATE THE CAPABILITY TO CONDUCT MEFs IN AN IT-CONSTRAINED ENVIRONMENT DUE TO FACTORS SUCH AS CYBER TERRORISM AND/OR SPACE WEATHER.

Observation: Successful

Analysis:

Departments and Agencies recognized that robust and redundant systems are required to ensure MEFs are conducted in an IT constrained environment.

Discussion:

Existing plans have not fully been evaluated to ensure that they are as complete as necessary for allowing Departments and Agencies to identify and perform their MEFs.

Several participants acknowledged the value of including their IT professionals in the continuity planning process.

Recommendations:

1. Departments and Agencies should incorporate real IT failures in exercises to make a point that the threat is real.
2. Departments and Agencies should stress the importance of incorporating IT personnel into the continuity planning process and to also have IT personnel on the ERG.

OBJECTIVE 3: DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO ACTIVATE AGENCY CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANS AND TO CONDUCT INTERNAL RECONSTITUTION PLANNING AND COORDINATION ACTIVITIES WITH EXTERNAL PARTNER AGENCIES AND CRITICAL VENDORS NOTIONALLY 14 DAYS AFTER THE EVENT.

Observation: Successful

Analysis:

Some Departments and Agencies were confident in their ability to execute continuity plans to include reconstitution, with only minor areas for fine tuning, while other participants had a plan but noticeable gaps in reconstitution.

Discussion:

Several Departments and Agencies have expressed concern over the lack of a solid reconstitution plan.

Recommendations:

1. Continuity plans are living documents that require regular updates and revisions. An annual review, as well as participation in interagency exercises such as this and the conduct of internal exercises, helps to maintain a current and relevant plan.
2. (From FCD 1, Annex M) Organizations are required to internally identify and document all perceived reconstitution needs via completion and submission of SF-2050, "Reconstitution Questionnaire." Organizations can centrally download and submit this form via classified systems at <https://gsapergamum.gold.ic.gov>. Organizations without access to classified systems can access this form via unclassified means at gsa.gov/forms and submit via classified fax at 202-501-1068. Organizations are required to annually review and re-submit the SF-2050. Organizations may contact GSA's Office of Emergency Response and Recovery at eoc@gsa.gov and/or 202-501-0012 for further instructions. Agencies should also contact their agency reconstitution point of contact at their headquarters element on submitting the SF-2050 and include the completed form in their Essential Records packet.

Conclusion

KC RICE/SLICE '14 was a success. Participants were able to evaluate their plans against the scenario and find areas to improve their continuity programs.

Participants learned the importance of quality inter-organizational communication and reconstitution. Continued exercises of COOP will always be beneficial to all organizations. Participants being prepared prior to each event are the key to success, saving our operations and even saving lives. Each exercise or event allows participants to continually review their current COOP plans and make changes as needed. Participants should take advantage of Controller training to discuss the actual scenario at some level of detail to have a better understanding of the parameters of the exercise.

As an overarching take-away, the exercise illustrated that the participating organizations well situated to move forward in their planning for continuity related events, but would benefit greatly from additional participation of other Departments and Agencies operating in the Kansas City/St. Louis Region.

Exercise planners also recognized the need to inform the Federal Protective Services MegaCenter of future exercises. During KC RICE/SLICE '14, some Agency recipients of the pre-exercise message on July 29, 2014 mistook the message as an actual NTAS alert despite the presence of "EXERCISE-EXERCISE-EXERCISE" disclaimers. Future exercises will include notification to FPS and other law enforcement agencies of upcoming exercises.

Appendix A: Recommendations

Below is a consolidated list of the recommendations previously presented in the AAR, a result of exercise KC RICE/SLICE '14, conducted July 30, 2014:

Table A.1 *Recommendations*

Objective	Recommendations
<p>Objective 1: Demonstrate capability to conduct MEFs from an alternate work location and from a telework location.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departments and Agencies provide periodic training to employees on COOP procedures to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have the training, experience, certification, etc. required in carrying out their duties. 2. Discuss how critical Essential Functions (EFs) will continue from a telework location with the planning required to perform those functions. 3. Departments and Agencies need to identify solutions or alternative actions to challenges, gaps or vulnerabilities in organizational continuity plans and procedures during a terrorist event.
<p>Objective 2: Demonstrate the capability to conduct MEFs in an IT-constrained environment due to factors such as cyber terrorism and/or space weather.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departments and Agencies should incorporate real IT failures in exercises to make a point that the threat is real. 2. Departments and Agencies should stress the importance of incorporating IT personnel into the continuity planning process and to also have IT personnel on the ERG.

Objective	Recommendations
<p>Objective 3: Demonstrate the ability to activate agency Continuity of Operations plans and to conduct internal reconstitution planning and coordination activities with external partner agencies and critical vendors notionally <u>14 days</u> after the event.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuity plans are living documents that require regular updates and revisions. An annual review, as well as participation in interagency exercises such as this and the conduct of internal exercises, helps to maintain a current and relevant plan. 2. The planning process for reconstitution is challenging and complex. In order to assist in the scoping of U.S. Government reconstitution plans and active programs, organizations are required to internally identify and document all perceived reconstitution needs via completion and submission of SF-2050, "Reconstitution Questionnaire." Organizations can centrally download and submit this form via classified systems at https://gsapergamum.gold.ic.gov. Organizations without access to classified systems can access this form via unclassified means at gsa.gov/forms and submit via classified fax at 202-501-1068. Organizations are required to annually review and re-submit the SF-2050. Organizations may contact GSA's Office of Emergency Response and Recovery at eoc@gsa.gov and/or 202-501-0012 for further instructions.

Appendix B: Agency's Feedback Form

Agency Specific Objectives

A. General Observations

- It was a good scenario that tested various elements of our BCP.
- The objectives were cleared and I believe they were accomplished.
- Able to meet objectives or able to coordinate with appropriate personnel for reconstitution activities.
- Good flow and Moderator knowledgeable about exercise and identified weaknesses.
- Lead controller well organized and value to the exercise.
- One major agency goal was to test abilities through a functional exercise for the first time.
- Our agencies primary objective is to ensure that all employees can perform daily duties from a remote work site in the case of situations arising when access to our regular work site is unavailable.
- All objectives were able to be met. COOP plans were reviewed. SF 2050s were utilized for Reconstitution Planning. [Agency] Notification Line was tested.
- There were only 2 players and 1 Lead Controller. The players represented an Essential Function and a critical support function of IT Systems. The senior official and backup were unavailable (on travel) due to an urgent and unexpected matter. The players were able to address management responses, contractual issues, and other elements not necessarily part of their immediate areas of responsibility. Some responses were more generic than would be appropriate in an actual COOP scenario but most were sufficient for the purpose of this exercise considering only two players were participating. Communication systems via telework were available and functional. Essential functions and required support activities seemed well thought by the players.
- It was good to get the team back together and test what worked and didn't. If it didn't we could discuss right there what the problem was and ways to correct it. We had all the people we needed to make that happen. We were able to test equipment and determine our readiness for a real COOP event.
- The COOP site was great. Everything worked well, there was ample space, and it had all the required resources.
- Useful exercise that gave us an opportunity to mobilize our COOP.
- The exercise was timely and assisted in providing training to staff that are new to the Regional Office. The agency tested notification systems and used agency specific injects to assist staff in better understanding COOP planning and operations.
- IT staff was able to have infrastructure set up and in place by STARTEX at 0800, very lively discussion during the full duration of the exercise with senior leaders and ERG staff versed on the region's CMEFs and basic COOP doctrine and implementation, excellent support from Continuity Facility host agency.
- Exercise was run efficiently and was a good refresher. The importance of having a good communication system in place to reach employees was highlighted. Can't

plan for every contingency, but this exercise got all ERG members talking and familiar with each individuals' responsibilities. Some ERG participants felt that much of the exercise did not pertain to them.

- Fourteen Agencies within the Department participated in the KC RICE '14 at the alternate location. All were successful in connecting to VPN and shared drives using laptops from their offices over hotspot/Wi-Fi connections. During parts of the exercise when failed telecommunications were simulated, staff communicated via BlackBerry pin to pin, Instant Messaging, and personal cells and e-mail addresses. Because of additional training provided by FEMA, staff was better prepared to plan for reconstitution. Each agency provided the Facilities Manager their space and communications needs (SF2050) which will be filed for COOP purposes.

B. Structure and Flow

- The flow was pretty fast-paced and kept participants active and continuously thinking. There could have been more scenarios between the 2-week jump ahead and the "normal operations".
- Well organized and appropriate for our activities.
- Exercise flow was good. It moved along timely and the time line jump was a great feature.
- It was a useful structure that was flexible enough for us to interject our agency specific facts.
- Good brainstorming and contributions in round table format.
- The exercise next time should probably focus exclusively on the two weeks after the event time span.
- The exercise time line was built well. We utilized Facebook, Google Docs and Kansas City FEB Webpage throughout the duration of the exercise.
- Good flow and structure for the exercise.
- Some injects during the exercise were out of synch with the exercise time line (item would have been addressed earlier for example), flow of injects was well paced. Tracking of injects completion passed to ERG members of Response Division; this function should perhaps be assigned to another division as Response would be heavily engaged during a real event.
- Everything was done via telework. This prevented direct interaction of players (as in a physical setting) but no particular problems with flow were observed. The Lead Controller did not have assistance to log responses; however, electronic logging in a dedicated email account was used. The exercise was 1/2 hr behind at the start of part 2 but caught up by the scheduled (noon) end time. The Lead Controller is completing this report because the senior official is not available. Other comments: confusing on extent of damage to facilities and hard to assess needs for new temporary building; months (not days) of planning needed to get fully operational site(s) ready with phones, internet, etc.; unclear about how/when a physical relocation site would be used.
- I thought the exercise went smoothly and was structured well. People were kept busy throughout the exercise and there wasn't much down time.

- The exercise flow enabled staff time to think, plan, and use internal resources that were necessary to accomplish task associated with staff safety, mission critical functions, and protection of assets.
- Mostly positive comments were received on the flow and most felt the exercise was an efficient use of time.
- The Deliberation Team (eight key leaders) met via conference call following the FEB Elevated Threat Alert Notification to discuss building status, employee accountability and next steps for COOP to alternate site. The Deliberation Team agreed to COOP to the alternate site the following morning. A telephone call tree exercise for staff accountability was ordered by the Regional Director, and appropriate staff was notified to meet at the designated COOP site the following morning at 0730 hours. The morning of July 30, and following brief remarks by Executive Officer and Controller for the exercise, injects began to be delivered at about 0810 hours. Flow of injects was only moderately stressful at times, but responses were consistent with exercise play back to the Controller. EndEx was at 1130 hours with an internal hot-wash and discussion following.

C. Agency Preparation for the Exercise

- As with all COOP exercises, there was room for improvement, but that is the reason we run these and test our BCPs.
- Preparation was excellent.
- There were four offerings of a familiarity class about the exercise. Individual players 30 days out were encouraged to start reviewing the plan.
- Adequate documents and plans are in place.
- We found that our COOP members were fully prepared to exercise our COOP responsibilities.
- We have maintained a COOP for approximately Ten Years. We average about three COOP site visits per year along with monthly visits to the site by staff members.
- NARA was well prepared for KC RICE 14.
- The agency was well prepared for the exercise and able to participate with the alternate lead in charge with no issues.
- ERG was well prepared for the exercise through training and understanding of the Continuity Plan. There were some gaps in their collective knowledge of some aspects of the plan such as reconstitution planning.
- All good had plenty of time to review material.
- COOP POC is new and has been on steep learning curve learning about continuity. Several meetings have occurred to prepare for the exercise but several ERG members had other priorities preventing participation. Better [inter-agency] coordination would have helped prevent some "double-booking" of key staff. A positive note is that two very critical technical ERF members remained committed and available in the weeks and months preceding the exercise and they participated fully today.

- We prepared a lot for the exercise and I think that was good. It forced everyone to make sure all of their COOP tools were updated and ready. Sometimes people put this on the back burner so this puts it back in the forefront of people's minds.
- The unique environment of the [Agency] allows our office to COOP within our own agency and buildings. Each of our facilities has adequate capabilities to facilitate the office personnel enabling the Regional Office to accomplish the mission essential functions it is routinely tasked with.
- All material needed for participants were available.
- Agency was well prepared with COOP plan, knowledgeable participants, and ability to work at alternative locations.
- The Department's COOP Coordinator convened the internal COOP workgroup (representing 14 agencies) on April 28, May 13, and July 2 to prepare for the exercise. The COOP Coordinator and some agency leads participated at the FEMA led Reconstitution training held on May 14th. One-on-one assistance was provided for completion of the SF2050 by COOP Coordinator and Facilities Manager. A pre-site visit was conducted by the COOP Coordinator one month prior to the exercise, and COOP meeting room was set up the day prior to the exercise. Prior to the exercise, a logistics sheet was prepared and distributed for agency leads and exercise staff to use for reference with location, times, items to bring, etc. Directional road signs were placed directing participants to the correct building on the morning of the exercise.
- Some participants could have been a bit more prepared with actual scenario and expectations.

D. General Comments about Agency Participation in the Exercise

- We limited Agency involvement to just our local command. No other [Agency] directorates participated.
- Well organized and test of our plans/procedures.
- Things for the agency went reasonably well. Everyone had a good attitude about the event.
- ERG demonstrated a solid understanding of the region's Continuity Plan and able to put it in place - arrived at the Continuity Facility, use network connections to access essential records and shared drives, conduct secure satellite and cell phone tests and had good input throughout the extent of the exercise.
- This was the agency's first COOP exercise and it was a great learning experience.
- We learned that although we prepared for the exercise there will be glitches and issues that occur. We had several hardware failures to occur at our COOP site but our IT personnel on site were able to make the necessary fixes.
- Good participation from [Agency] ERG staff.
- All participants were fully invested.
- District team did an excellent job and facility team should also consider participation in the future.
- Good for the alternates to come to the Continuity Facility.
- Staff exhibited a good working knowledge in regards to COOP and the local plans. Those staff new to the office was able to reach out for assistance as needed

to ensure they became familiar with the needs of their department and the Regional Office.

- Participation level of management dropped just immediately prior to exercise due to unexpected circumstances. Better Agency coordination may have prevented two ERG members being pulled into other non-crisis obligations the week of the exercise. Agency IT staff was very helpful in making systems and equipment available to help exercise go well and get better documented.
- Our participation was good. We had most of our COOP teammates there so we had high participation. It was good for everyone to get to know each other better and to better understand everyone's roles on the COOP team.
- Some comments were received that indicated a more [Agency]-centric scenario would be beneficial. Many of the ERG participants would not have reconstitution responsibilities.
- Agency participation was limited with 6 overall participants out of 35 possible. Due to mission work and vacations it was difficult to get volunteers. Everyone that participated was able to fully participate and complete exercise mission goals.
- The Department is pleased with the level of participation and preparedness it experienced for the exercise. The Department is confident that it can meet the basic mission essential functions (MEFs) from a remote site. Other general comments from staff that participated: Liked the way the exercise was run. It was nice that the information was shared with everyone. Good combination of learning/discussion and exercise. Glad we exercised Reconstitution Plan. Validating to know we have a plan. We need to develop a priority list for the order in which agencies are back to a new location. The planning for the priority list may include discussions of whether to bring back mission essential program functions first rather than the entire agency at once. As a Department that has emergency response responsibilities, overlapping COOP with a real disaster situation was more difficult than just having a COOP experience where the building is not habitable due to fire or flood, etc.

Strengths

- A thorough knowledge of the BCP was exhibited and prioritizing was properly done.
- Ability to respectfully discuss topics and intelligently resolve scenarios.
- Good team work, good communication, right people in the room, and COOP site met needs perfectly.
- Everyone was knowledgeable about the plan, we had the right people there, and communications infrastructure was solid.
- Plans/procedures/communication system/redundant IT systems.
- Reconstitution, replacement of furniture supplies, and teleworking for [Agency] not so much of an issue due to agency working from remote locations in normal operations. Calling tree includes non-district employees, contractors, and also includes PIN information.
- Good understanding of the Essential Functions and what must continue with using alternate site(s). Good understanding overall of how COOP is supposed to work and what staff is responsible for what functions.

- We were pretty prepared, knew how to respond to most situations.
- Communicated well and everyone chimed in to participate.
- We had IT support there and it was very helpful to have their assistance and knowledge.
- Ability to work tele-commute and work at off-site locations.
- Our ability to utilize bureau sites that are always operational and have the necessary space and equipment to facilitate accomplishing essential functions without delay.
- We had the subject matter experts for each department in the room and there was great communication going on. We have a good COOP site.
- Scenarios provided strength (Felt like scenarios were more realistic.)
- Feedback & ideas from COOP team members. (Communication)
- IT involvement.
- Emergency Notification system notified the players prior to the day of exercise
- Lots of good cross functional communications
- Good delegation to other team members
- Willingness of everyone to participate
- Well organized and identified areas in need of improvement
- Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) are identified accurately
- A small team approach helped get more participation out of the staff.
- All players were actively participating.
- The use of web sites to post situational awareness was well received.
- Some comments were received that indicated a more FBI-centric scenario would be beneficial. Many of the ERG participants would not have reconstitution responsibilities.
- Alternate facility locations outside of the downtown Kansas City area. Up to date Continuity Plans and Reconstitution Documents in place.
- One agency actually worked the issues and logistics concerning space and needs during the exercise.
- Great connectivity utilizing hotspot/Wi-Fi.
- Staff represented at the exercise understands the importance of preparing for a COOP event, took the exercise seriously in their planning, and identified areas for improvement – including the need to involve more people in the COOP plan.
- Good IT support!
- Response staff ran inject play, keeping track of injects still outstanding and ensure correct regional branches had ownership as dictated by the inject subject
- Secure comms worked well; tests very successful.
- Good interaction across the ERG during injects play.

Weaknesses

- Knowledge of reorganized units and responsibilities within the Agency was noted.
- Some individuals who should have participated did not.

- Should create a list with approved telework staff (while this list is small, it is not formalized).
- We have several tenants that occupy our primary office space and we did not include them in our COOP planning process. Our future COOP plans will include all tenants.
- Minor COOP plan revision updates.
- Not all communication systems worked properly and current COOP plans need to be updated to include other agencies within the facility.
- Contact lists existed in electronic form; the sense is that we needed printed hard copies.
- Not all agencies housed within the facility are accounted for, so we need it expand our plan & team to include representatives from all agencies.
- We were also not about to communicate easily at the classified level. We don't think that there is a good fix for this. We will have to drive 10 miles to Scott AFB in order to send and received classified communications.
- COOP Plan does not provide all the details needed for less experienced people that could be tasked with responsibilities under successor or delegation of authority hierarchies if necessary. More detailed step-by-step responses about EF transfer are needed. "Answers" seem somewhat "canned" and unconvincing that everything needed would be available and put into place in a real scenario. Players did not adequately describe a phase-in approach to reconstitution of staff and equipment--more work is needed there.
- Reconstitution needs per program or lab could be better defined.
- An always changing work force that requires training on at least a semi-annual basis to ensure all supervisors is well versed in COOP and emergency planning.
- File system and training to employees more frequently.
- People need to login and test their equipment more so they can avoid minor glitches that come up when you haven't logged in or tested the stuff frequently. It helps to use regularly so you are familiar.
- We discovered we needed to put an interpreter list in our COOP materials.
- We need to do more staff training so they know exactly what would be expected during a COOP event.
- Lack use of equipment.
- Saved up-to-date list in COOP folder.
- The Kansas City Accountability report needs to be updated, with instruction for all managers on the time constraints and on the compilation of the report.
- CIO should adjust the [Agency]/IT Disaster Recovery plan to reflect the changes of the [Department]. An analysis should be completed to determine exactly what the Agency/IT capabilities are in the event the [primary facility] is unavailable for both a short and lengthy amount of time, up to and including the necessity and requirements for an alternate site.
- Side discussions that were not communicated to all participants should be limited.
- Training personnel to conduct Escrow payments outside of the Kansas City should be enhanced.

- More work is needed to develop internal procedures to facilitate internal communications
- The agency is short some critical internal key capabilities like contracting officers
- The plan needs to include provisions about processes to set up file recovery space. This is an area where file fragments can be collected from the debris.
- Ability to contact employees if cell phones are not available.
- More frequent senior staff level meetings will need to be conducted especially during initial days of the disaster. This was not fully exercised and became apparent especially for coordination of messaging to staff. Also, it may be helpful to use polling options in e-mails to staff to determine if how they are doing, for staff accountability, and if people have connectivity. Possibly doing this frequently throughout first few days.
- Realized we need to get routine staff more educated on COOP.
- Develop job sheets in the agency for mission essential functions. Take laptops home every day.
- Mail service for the Department and other agencies supported in the federal building is not fully operational for a COOP. Planning is underway and needs thoughtful coordination now.
- ERG needs more understanding of the reconstitution Annex in the Plan and how to execute it.
- Need to incorporate HF comms testing into future exercises.
- Need to develop a recovery planning playbook for the region.

Conclusion

A. Agency takeaways

- SLICE 14 was a good test against our BCP. Most exercises don't completely pertain to our mission or affect our mission as much as this one did.
- Evaluate more in depth reconstitution needs.
- All agencies should prepare for unexpected. COOP sites should also be as user friendly as possible with as much comparable facilities as possible.
- Frequent updating and exercise are essential.
- Does the COOP contain information about telework for the primary and alternate employees who report to the alternate site?
- Move all COOP info out of the Management folder on the shared drive and put it in a new folder so all Primary and Alternates have access.
- Be prepared to act on an emergency at any time.
- Keep reviewing and improving the COOP plan, testing COOP operations and abilities.
- We need to account for all agencies within our facility and assure proper training on SOPs for all housed in the facility.
- This week, the IT Contractor sent an employee to cover for. The [Agency] was not informed in advance - he just showed up. He is not listed on our COOP calling tree. The plan does not address this situation. Bigger issue-- the contractor's failure to communicate. What can be done to prevent this?

- Training on the COOP, Use of PIN # and How to access FDA electronically from a remote location needs to be done
- Recommend updated, detailed, instructions be loaded on every laptop (not a shared or U: drive) on how to access the FDA network from a remote location
- The District needs an electronic filing system.
- Add a section to COOP which provides general instructions to all employees. Include a requirement for employees to report at least weekly their accomplishments.
- We are on the right track. Our COOP plan does not need to be modified substantially.
- More frequency of conducting training in COOP.
- Recommend reaching out to other [offices] to ask what alternate work options are in their COOP
- Add SF2050 to COOP folder?
- List of topics to research and document.
- Have a page/information on [Agency] SharePoint to provide updates on reconstitution activities/status
- Need to revise COOP Plan. Need to keep ERG active throughout the year and not just before or during annual exercises. Reconstitution planning needs much more attention to the myriad of details that would be necessary. The timeframe to reconstitute would probably be unacceptably long (months) using customary acquisition and contracting approaches. It would take a huge effort to get a temporary or rebuilt site totally functional.
- We have a list of items that we will work on to be better prepared. We plan to answer most of the reconstitution questionnaire and have that data available in our COOP materials. We want to set up more partnerships for alternate space and we will provide employee training. In addition, we will create a general phone # that can be forwarded wherever we are for the public and bar. We have one for employees, but we want to keep that separate from employee us. Finally, we will work on some minor issues that can easily be corrected.
- All participants are to be commended for their frank discussion to solve complicated issues in the event of an actual event.
- IT support plans
- Emergency Relocation Facility (ERF) must be addressed.
- The agency will and can be adaptive in a coop environment.
- Communication systems need improving and plans need to be updated.
- Not all contingencies can be planned for. Keep good records in the fly away kit regarding contact information for employees, GSA and [Agency].
- Stronger encouragement of staff to take home their government supplied laptop if applicable.
- Telework capabilities are the strongest we have ever experienced thereby, potentially mitigating the need for long term COOP at an alternate site, if at all.
- More work on creating a Reconstitution priority list for agencies returning to a new worksite.
- Develop disaster communication messages for staff.

- In response to exercise MSELs, assumptions were made by participants for their entire agency. This would likely not happen in a real crisis, as coordination with agency leads would be necessary.
- It may benefit doing a two day exercise of telework with all staff simultaneously to find and test true limitations?
- Telework will continue to be a key component of Continuity planning and the region has accomplished this.

B. How could the Exercise get better

- Maybe having a conference line designated for participants to utilize for questions that could be answered by the facilitator.
- We need more players committed and remain committed so we can have more of a full team to play. We need to have our DC agency people involved in a KC exercise--we are their devolution site but they need to understand OUR needs if WE have to COOP.
- More participation and preparedness by some participants.
- While we are a small agency (10) employees. A total of five individuals indicated that the exercise should last the entire day.
- Everyone liked this exercise because it felt realistic. It flowed well and we kept to our schedule.
- Better synchronization of MSEL injects with the scenario time line, more communication tests (HF), Lead Controller should not release injects to all members of the ERG; rather they should get sent to a designated person who will then serve to track them during the exercise as they arrive and are acted upon.
- There were no concerns noted with the exercise flow or content.
- More detailed scenario information up front. The exercise could be better by focusing exclusively on the last section, two weeks afterwards.
- Hold the training meetings in person to allow meeting other agency players and building those relationships.
- Some comments suggested that the scenario be modified to have better participation from all ERG members.
- Tailor future exercises with relevant Department MSELs action items that involve cross agency coordination, or a specific agency case scenario that involves a discussion among the agencies.
- Create a scenario a little less intense that pushes us out of our normal work space and doesn't additionally cause the agencies to think of what they will be doing in response as well.
- This was categorized as a full-scale exercise, but to fully exercise the capability, all employees would need to stay home, contact them, contact HQs, contact partners, etc. This exercise seemed more like a Tabletop exercise with a field trip component.

C. Additional Comments

- Well organized and good controller.

- More attention to payment and payroll may be warranted in planning. The key ERG members needed there were not available to play but it seems likely more work is needed anyhow. More backups are needed for key people.
- If possible more agency interaction like with GSA is desired.
- Great exercise!
- A complete day would be recommended for COOP exercises.
- Was interesting mix of integration of COOP and security elements for this exercise.
- The Department would benefit greatly from a Send Word Now type of emergency notification system that could be utilized across all agencies within the Department. This would provide a centralized and consistent message to employees with the possible addition of a confirmation response capability added to help for accountability of staff.
- Consideration of new alternate site for the west part of metropolitan area as lease for the current alternate site will expire at the end of the fiscal year.
- Is there a plan between DHS/FEMA/GSA in helping federal employees have access into cordoned off roads and damaged work space if it is possible to collect their belongings? Will the normal PIV card provide enough identification/access to get through a road block, etc.?
- The Department will look at internal responses to exercise injects, and the final KC RICE '14 AAR for improvements in our COOP.
- Media: We had a discussion at the exercise about how to respond to media inquiries about the Department and status of employees. The assumption was that GSA would likely be the conduit for communicating the status of the government operated buildings and accountability of staff (after gathering the agency data) to the local media. Is this correct?

Appendix C: Participant Feedback Form

1. How much knowledge of Continuity of Operations Plan(s) and your role during continuity activation did you have prior to exercise?

None of the Knowledge	6%
Some	21%
Most	39%
Nearly all of the Knowledge	33%
Not Applicable (N/A)	2%
Total	100%

2. How prepared were you for the exercise?

Not Prepared at All	0%
Somewhat	13%
Moderately	40%
Completely Prepared	44%
Not Applicable (N/A)	3%
Total	100%

3. How did the exercise affect your understanding of Continuity of Operations Plan(s) and your role during continuity activation?

Very Negative Effect	0%
Somewhat Negative	0%
Somewhat Positive	21%
Very Positive Effect	75%
Not Applicable (N/A)	4%
Total	100%

4. How well did you understand the exercise's objectives listed?

No Understanding	0%
Some	1%
Moderate	25%
Complete Understanding	72%
Not Applicable (N/A)	2%
Total	100%

5. How well did the exercise meet the stated objectives?

None of the Objectives	0%
Some	3%
Many	41%
All of the Objectives	51%
Not Applicable (N/A)	6%
Total	100%

6. How helpful was the exercise materials and information you were provided before and during the exercise?

Not at all Helpful	0%
Somewhat	8%
Moderately	32%
Extremely Helpful	55%
Not Applicable (N/A)	5%
Total	100%

7. How would you rate the amount of time allowed for the exercise?

Much Less Time Than Needed	2%
Somewhat	2%
A Little Less Time Needed	11%
Just Enough Time	82%
Not Applicable (N/A)	3%
Total	100%

8. How well organized was the exercise?

Not at All Organized	0%
Somewhat	1%
Moderately	10%
Very Well Organized	86%
Not Applicable (N/A)	3%
Total	100%

- 9. Off-Site Exercise Execution – Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the exercise play and your ability to successfully receive the exercise action items in a timely and accurate manner.**

Not at All Organized	0%
Somewhat	1%
Moderately	12%
Very Well Organized	65%
Not Applicable (N/A)	22%
Total	100%

- 10. Considering all of the expectations you may have had about the exercise, to what extent has the exercise met your expectations?**

Falls Short (1)	1%
2	0%
3	0%
4	1%
5	6%
6	5%
7	25%
8	35%
9	18%
Exceed (10)	10%
Total	100%

11. What is the most significant thing that you learned from the exercise?

- The need to be more detailed in my responses to the different scenarios presented.
- Improve what is needed for reconstitution efforts on a per lab room basis.
- Greater understanding of which Divisions are ultimately responsible for what activities/challenges.
- Updating information on the COOP stick.
- I had not been a part of this exercise before so it was very interesting to participate.
- Importance of communication and coordination between all components.
- Distinctly defined roles and expectations for each.
- We found a few gaps in availability of information to contact staff which we are fixing immediately. We were able to account for all staff quickly and perform our functions effectively.
- There are many things to consider when a situation occurs that involves the activation of the COOP plan. Be prepared and have your documents up to date.
- The need for continued preparation; preparation is key.
- Need to discuss ERG and connectivity procedures/requirements in a workshop format prior to exercising. Some responses should be automatic (push) rather than waiting for a RFI.
- Our ERG needs more understanding of the Continuity Plan, specifically reconstitution planning.
- More emphasis is need on long term continuity planning.
- How all aspects fit together - all team members worked well together.
- All stake-holders have an invested interest in keeping the agency functioning.
- Need planning to ensure recovery leadership has checklist, topics, issues for program and operational restoration, activation, monitoring, etc.
- Additional clarification/information that needs to be included in the plan.
- The importance of training for all officers on off-site capabilities.
- As ACF has a lead role in disaster response, if the same situation that caused COOP to be activated was also a disaster affecting children and families in the Region, I would have to have other staff trained to manage the COOP as I will be required at the JFO or other disaster response location.
- To be prepared; would like to become more versed in COOP planning.
- Good to see all injects to recognize responsibilities and functions of the other divisions.
- Connectivity at the alternate site.
- Gave me a better working knowledge of the COOP.
- The timing and level of cooperation is something that we have had no real world practice in. We have had to work off site due to snow conditions, but domestic unrest would be something both not forecast and unexpected. The back up of two regions was good, and the real life reality of cyber warfare was well represented.
- That communication is key because each disaster will require different responses depending on areas and people affected.
- That everyone needs to communicate, but otherwise it is just like teleworking.
- Gaps in communication and solutions.

- If building unavailable, there is likely 2-4 week time to rebuild IT server and access to LAN before all access to regular work sites etc.
- The exercise was a significant learning experience in many ways, as I am not a member of the ERG, and was attending the exercise as a substitute. Nearly every aspect of the exercise was educational for me, and very beneficial to my own preparedness.
- This was my first exercise; now that I've been through it, I have a better idea as to what to do and how to prepare.
- We need to do more planning for emergency communications and involvement in the exercise.
- That all active participants need to remain involved with no outside distractions.
- Lack of Internet connectivity is a bigger issue than I anticipated. Many of us are not skilled enough in IT to overcome some of the obstacles we will face.
- Make sure the folks teleworking the exercise are on the mail list ahead of time, so injects are timely.
- The various roles our staff will have in the event of an emergency.
- People were not the main focus of the COOP.
- Greater understanding of which Divisions are ultimately responsible for what activities/challenges.
- IT setup was smooth and quick.
- NOC detected IP conflict between the two switches at COOP site. NOC assigned different IP range to Switch A while exercise was in progress with-out down time.
- Helped prepare the Postal Service for an actual emergency
- It was helpful to see the other responses, which triggered an action I may have overlooked.
- The level of scope involved in shifting operations to different locations. The amount of people that would have to be involved and how difficult it would be.
- Need for communication web is critical given our particular MEF's.
- Annual practice/exercises are important.
- The ability to communicate is the most important part.
- Practice helps us be ready for the real thing, to see what kind of problems may come up like communication or computer problems that can be corrected now rather than during the real event.
- All staff needs to be provided with laptops to ensure accessibility and continuity need for continuity plans for leadership and personnel within agencies importance of use and accessibility of share drives.
- Folks are prepared to and can work effectively from remote locations. Our communication tools are adequate to support such scenarios.
- The level of expertise within the Region.
- The blue team will take orders from the Red Team because the briefings are being conducted at the COOP site. I also learned that we need to be prepared for what may seem like absurd situations such as cyber warfare.
- The exercise raised my awareness of the areas within and outside my Agency that I will need to communicate with during a COOP.

- At one point I was not included on email, but a task was required of me. This was remedied, I received the task.
- Also, I was not able to read all responses, and respond if needed, before I received the next stage.
- From IT outlook. The setup procedures went quite well. Users were able to come in and plug and play.
- IT needs more business continuity planning and to write procedures for what systems, networks, and connectivity options are in place currently.
- More internal notification is needed.
- Need to spend more time reading and becoming familiar with our Continuity Plans.
- Communication is the key to the whole exercise. Updating the charts to note taking to talking to select supporting departments to leadership. Constant updates and communication is important.
- Very knowledgeable team, someone from one of the functional areas could provide an answer or expertise for practically every scenario that came up.
- That communication & notification must be established in an event.
- That telecommuting at least occasionally should be done so you know what things to grab out of your office to be able to work from home and how to forward your phone, login to the system/server, etc. Because it has taken me several rounds of telecommuting and working with the Help Desk to set up my computer to work from home. Wish we could access our archived emails.
- Just being able to read the various e-mail traffic about injects and the inject responses, helped give insight to what was going on even if the injects did not pertain to me or my program directly.
- Relocation sites and notification.
- The COOP exercise always makes us think of possibilities and come up with solutions. This is always good! It allows us to know what our plan is.
- The need to be more detailed in my responses to the different scenarios presented.
- I believe the Postal Service will be ready in any event.
- Accessing 'living' documents that exist hard copy only in the office will be impossible and we need a more formal procedure for converting these to electronic copies.
- Our default COOP is to telework. One of our staff who teleworks infrequently did not have the necessary system updates to connect to the network. Going forward we will ensure people periodically connect to the network offsite.
- Injects and how they were responded to.
- The importance of cross lateral support and communications between all participating agencies.
- While the message traffic produced by the untargeted injects was excessive, it did provide an insight into other areas of the Regional office and their activities.
- The need to assess communication assets and the ability to communicate with all key partners.
- The CIRT component did a nice job of integrating likely legal issues into the exercise within the context of the COOP training.

- The excellent communications capability for the players at the COOP. The organization and excellent and good information flow. Another plus was the ease in getting a good staff count of all my staff that was either deployed, teleworking or elsewhere. Our RRCC played a key role in the exercise with their input and mentoring allowing for good team work.
- Injects were not many for my position other than coordination of staffing. Was a positive time to share information with those who would impact my position.
- As the Admin Officer/Human Resources Officer, I learned that I need to find out the policy on designation of personnel as "essential," and what the responsibilities of "essential" personnel are in a COOP situation.
- We need to do more planning for emergency communications and involvement in the exercise.
- The important of participating in a joint exercise with specific scenarios.
- No issue with overall operations during the exercise, however, the exercise was an excellent opportunity to verify that the division appears to have the capability of fully conducting business remotely via telework.
- We need to talk about how the classified mission effects the plan. Who guards the secure spaces in our facility during such events?
- Communication. You can never have enough information given to you regarding the event to help you with your role.
- Everyone worked together as a team.
- That the communication between the team is stronger than I thought.
- Just a better understanding of the continuity process and some of the intricacies that I hadn't previously considered.
- Refer to the plan.

12. What deficiencies in your Continuity of Operations Plan(s) or Continuity planning did you identify?

- Which organization or entity provides security physical security for an inhabitable building will be further discussed.
- Reconstitution planning awareness is a shortfall.
- Contractor policy for COOP needs to be addressed.
- Contact listing info within the Global is not current, had my folks contact ESD and it was an easy fix.
- Safety considerations or annotations for the facility. No evacuation routes, no discussion of sheltering locations. At a minimum, floor plans should be posted in the area exercising or utilized for an actual event.
- We identified several gaps between our prepared COOP binder materials, and the information or plans we will need in a real emergency. We will be updating the COOP materials to include additional information, instructions to staff, prioritization of reconstitution, records preservation, and after-event feedback.
- Telecommuters should be able to alternate working hours as not to tie up or slow down the servers.
- I had to identify that my staff was contacted for the emergency info provided, communicate with the ERT group to report to the assigned area, Make sure my

staff was accounted for, and confirm on the resources that my unit could offer for the units that were affected.

- VPN access; adding eDAS to MEF with PASS.
- Basically, whether a backup plan exists for persons without laptops to continue doing their jobs in an emergency. Also the role of contractors in those situations (can we keep them busy).
- In a scenario such as this the commercial telecom, wire line and wireless will be greatly overloaded and maybe unusable. We need to plan more on how we can carry out our mission if these capabilities are not available. Our COOP facility needs to have backup installed and mission capable without having to take equipment in and set up.
- Gaps in ability to communicate.
- What if the cyber warfare was completely successful? What would be the backup for that condition?
- Need to re-look at our reconstitution plan to make sure it fits all scenarios.
- The ability to access records, what groups are truly essential, and a greater understanding of where back-up facilities should be located.
- Lack of laptop access for administrative staff that will be essential to continuity of operations.
- COOP planning for satellite offices.
- Need to include the IBSSC, ASC, Credit Union, and ZIP Trip in planning and execution.
- Supervisory staff needs to ensure they have updated contact information for all of their staff in the event of an emergency.
- Post 30 days, we will still need an alternate/permanent site to bring majority of staff back to work site.
- What to do with non-management employees when there is no work for them.
- Management's participation is needed.
- Long range plans need to be discussed and potentially revised, other domiciled agencies were not fully engaged
- The written plan is somewhat vague.
- Not all employees were initially identified by the Leadership that are tenants in the building.
- We need list of names/phone numbers of critical contacts and a list of approved personnel w/picture to enter our secure location.
- The need to update COOP cards for officers.
- Some additional contact information needs to be added to ensure everyone knows who to contact in central offices.
- Some communication ideas; need to adapt to multiple locations.
- Agencies COOP is not on SharePoint.
- I believe COOP standard operating procedures for each division may be helpful in a real-life COOP scenario. Each division may have been able to respond to each inject much faster and with more confidence about the plan of action if they had an SOP they could reference. The division could also attach the SOP to their response in order to show how they plan to proceed.

- IT needs to communicate more information about "what to do" and what resources are available. Avaya Communicator, vital records, points of contact, MOVI, etc.
- Not enough specifics.
- Not enough guidance at the beginning of the exercise to know who was doing what roles. Use of technology with social media and the computers in the room and use of LAN lines.
- Identifying and developing a plan for sensitive documents.
- Need to understand PSC COOP.
- Need additional emergency contact lists. Need to create some hints and tips sheets to be sure we're thinking broadly for handling each issue that arises. Need to get some clarification from our headquarters about how to handle certain issues. Need to meet with other Offices within my Agency to have conversations now about how we would proceed.
- Reconstitution portion may need more detail or expansion.
- Additional contacts are needed.
- We may need to add another person to the line of succession.
- Which organization or entity provides security physical security for an inhabitable building will be further discussed.
- Accessing 'living' documents that exist hard copy only in the office will be impossible and we need a more formal procedure for converting these to electronic copies.
- Our default COOP is to telework.
- Lack of coordination with the Court regarding the Court's plan for continuing operations if the courthouse is no longer available.
- It was a good reminder of how difficult it could be to manage the physical information inside the office in the event that the USAO was targeted. The sensitive data would have to be identified, recovered, and protected. Similarly, physical files would have to be relocated to continue operations.
- We have not communicated with the Courts regarding their COOP plans so we can align our alternate site(s) with theirs. We have not gained a complete understanding of the computer and communications capabilities of all our alternate sites. We do not have a point of contact list readily available on our iPhones. Our COOP team may need to be made larger, and we may need a second satellite phone.
- In a scenario such as this the commercial telecom, wire line and wireless will be greatly overloaded and may be unusable. We need to plan more on how we can carry out our mission if these capabilities are not available. Our COOP facility needs to have backup installed and mission capable without having to take equipment in and set up.
- Need to determine if the Regional ISSO is involved in some way.
- Equipment!
- Some issues understanding technology abilities.

13. What would you like to see done differently in future exercises?

- I would like to see more communication to exercise participants who aren't lead-controllers.
- More specific content in injects.
- Include staff in scenarios and provide them instructions so they will know what to do in the event something were to happen. (For example: Active-Shooters training, tornado/fire drills.)
- Need a workshop to go through the COOP plan and discuss procedures with an eye towards developing pre-planned responses/reports.
- Live simulations; more live role playing.
- More details need to be introduced in injects to be able to answer them.
- Recommend using WebEOC instead of the bulletin board. I think it was confusing. Also, might want to rearrange the room seating the senior staff and at a table in the middle and having the rest of the staff circle out. This might help communication across sections.
- More accurate and realistic use of the ERG as it would realistically get employed if we activated our Continuity Plan.
- Include all domiciled agencies.
- I thought this exercise was explained in detail and injects sent appropriately, would not change anything.
- More upfront guidance on the roles of each individual. More updates on what is happening. More communication between departments.
- Consider full staff participation during exercise (small agency such as ours has this ability). All to telework and send/receive messaging as indicated by exercise injects.
- Not different, continued and expanded; the limitations and conditions that were implemented.
- It was somewhat confusing to have the unannounced telework event on the same day as the COOP exercise. Lots of staff was confused with regard to what they were participating in.
- This will help identify deficiencies that may not be otherwise detected by limited participation
- Have ENS notification done after hours
- Nothing, well organized exercise.
- Have more individuals involved in the exercise.
- Allow more time.
- Different scenarios.
- A list assigning tasks naming employee to perform that task as well as a backup employee.
- Beforehand have key leadership to visit other agencies (Local and Federal) to see how their Command Center is set up. The City of St. Louis and St. Louis County Command Centers are state of the art. We have Scott AFB 40 miles away that has the one of the world's largest command centers. Ft. Leonard Wood Army which is two hours away or half way between KC and STL, is the Military training center for Chemical Warfare. They are bound to at least glean what a Command Center looks like and how it operates.

- I was not able to see the decision or response to each inject. I would like to see the plan of action for each injects in order to know that it's been discussed and a decision was made.
- More communications exercise to mirror real world possibilities.
- People to realize this is an exercise. In a real emergency the time right after the emergency will not go smoothly. People probably won't go right home and work, or have transportation home etc.
- I think it would be helpful to go over a scenario related to HHS OPDIVS specifically. I suggest that we take 15-30 minutes to do a case study of one particular scenario where a disaster impacts health care delivery, and discuss how we need to communicate across OPDIVS as we handle the scenario. I believe all parties need to be involved in all communications as much as possible.
- More frequent, shorter exercises with a specific focus on certain items.
- ERG Red and Blue teams need to be involved in exercises. As a blue team member coming in to my first exercise, it was somewhat intimidating not to know what to expect. Having all members available helps train for devolution.
- Required test of unified communications (i.e. Office Communicators, instant messages, etc.) for Agency employees.
- Include someone from PSC.
- Exercise was appropriate.
- I would like to see more communication to exercise participants who aren't lead-controllers.
- Eliminating assumptions that the network is always operational and the communication from DC to KC is stable. Perhaps periodic network outages and seeing how staff reacts to that.
- I felt it went well as it was presented.
- It would be nice to see a full-scale exercise where all players are involved, not just "key" players. Without all players being involved, it would be hard for the "rest of the staff" to know how to react to a real event.
- Target the injects to the appropriate parties. This would both reduce confusion and provide greater realism.
- In a future COOP, if there is an operational JFO, it would be a good way to exercise the communications and real interaction with them.
- Have FBI and Courts participate.
- More communications exercise to mirror real world possibilities.
- This was great. All the technology worked too.
- Use of a PA or Bull-horn, hard to hear updates from RRCC reps, incorporate evacuation from COOP site--like fire or bomb threat.

14. Off-Site Agencies: Please provide additional comments that you may have on the off-site exercise execution and your ability to communicate with the exercise staff and on-site agency representatives:

- Communication was excellent.
- The off-site facilities were outstanding.
- Went well, kudos to IT for allowing seamless operation.

- Off-site location worked great for emergency team. We did not communicate with on-site people.
- Well organized; effective.
- Staff also need to know if they will be tele-working and know where the off-site locations are located. (i.e. Cape, Hannibal etc.).
- Off site was excellent. Good communications, good facility and overall a good place for an off-site.
- Our IT staff has done a great job making sure our COOP site is ready for us.
- Having all of the HHS agencies in one room was very helpful and facilitated communication and learning from each other, The VPN and wireless access to email worked well from the start of the exercise and throughout.
- Off-site exercise worked well. It allowed for discussion across OPDIVs, which was helpful.
- The system really was sluggish today.
- Communication was not impacted by the exercise. However, I was not certain who I reported to and what actions I needed to take. Most communication seemed to stay with the Red Team and the Blue Team was not engaged in any plan of action.
- Limited communication was done with off-site agencies, but believe we would have had more contact if actual emergency took place. We really should have a checklist of all agencies and phone numbers created for Johnny on the spot, shelters, pantries, Mayor and FEMA etc.
- All the communications worked well and timely. No problems communicating with HQ and staff still at the office.

Any additional comments:

- Thanks to all the staff that worked on preparing a good training exercise.
- Great experience.
- Other types of threats and secondary damage can adversely affect agency response. Agencies should expect a multitude of secondary effects from the principle natural disaster." The STARTEX inject indicates that events were driven by a series of terrorist activities, not a natural disaster. According to the Agencies Devolution Plan, "Our primary Recipient Region for devolution is in Region III." Inject for #1.4, another region was offering to assume responsibilities, this is confusing to me. Overall, I was troubled by the usage of the injects. IAW HSEEP, each MSEL entry should contain among other things, at a minimum, the intended player (i.e., agency or individual player for whom the MSEL event is intended). It appeared throughout this exercise that injects were delivered to all agency participants. This created not only an artificiality of omniscience, it proved very confusing. In example, inject 1.8 inputs that the State of Missouri EOC is calling requesting DOD assistance. The MO EOC is not going to call everyone on the ERG with this request. The inject should have been targeted at who would be called, the RWC.

- Very productive and informative. Time well spent on preparedness.
- David Teska did an outstanding job as always keeping the staff on track and focused for the exercise event. With David orchestrating our COOP for the region, we are better prepared and will succeed if/when there is a real world event.
- I've participated in both KCRICE exercises and in HHS exercises, and find this KCRICE one to be one of the best.
- While there was no issue with communicating with internal and external customers/personnel, there were a couple of very minor issues related to maximizing the functionality of a blackberry device and the Lync system which have been corrected.
- Nice exercise.
- Good exercise, good refresher on what should be done.
- Good job to all.
- These exercises are important. Looking forward to RICE 2015!
- Things worked much better than last time. The phone tree is a mess. It is unreliable and promotes confusion. It is like playing telephone and if you are at the end of the phone tree, by the time you get the call, there isn't much message left. However, unlike the game telephone - you need the information. It was nice having the messages and information coming from one person, so everyone got the same message at the same time, and it was a good message with correct and helpful information.
- Acted on behalf of another.
- Training was very good and hopefully items discussed will be followed up on at a later date.
- Thanks! It was very helpful to me in my work! WE should participate in this annually.
- I thought the exercise was well organized and planners did all they could. My response with regard to being "completely prepared" is not a reflection of the planners but of my perception that you can't be completely prepared without knowing the scenarios coming your way. I was as prepared as I could be.
- Very good training. Makes me feel more confident in my role.
- I think everyone needs to be aware of what to do and where to go.
- Thanks for the chance to participate.
- I felt the exercise went well, highlighted some potential issues that will need clarification.
- The exercise seemed to go smoothly, and to have been effective for improving preparation and response to an actual event. It may be helpful for all program managers to participate in an off-site exercise.

- I understand the exercise is a possibly temporary location; I would like to see all of the cables better secured or stowed to better prevent trip hazards.
- Good exercise. Great having OPS control flow.
- I was assigned a position but a superior performed my duties so I became a casual observer; would like to be given the opportunity to participate next time.
- We had a great turn out of the ERG Red, nearly 26 in attendance. The RA also mandated that R7 staff (non-ERG) conduct an unscheduled telework day at the same time as KC RICE '14.

Appendix D: Acronyms

Table D.1 *Acronyms*

Acronym	Meaning
AAR	After Action Report
BIA	Business Impact Analyses
BPA	Business Process Analyses
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CWG	COOP Working Group
ENDEX	End of Exercise
ERG	Emergency Relocation Group
ExPlan	Exercise Plan
FE	Functional Exercise
FEB	Federal Executive Board
FOUO	For Official Use Only
GSA	General Services Administration
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
MEF	Mission Essential Function
MSEL	Master Scenario Events List
POC	Point of Contact
STARTEX	Start of Exercise

Appendix E: Glossary of Terms

This glossary explains some of the terms that will be used during the development, conduct, and observation of Exercise Sound Response 2011. Terms are listed alphabetically.

After Action Review (AAR). A comprehensive assessment of the exercise prepared by the Evaluation team. It includes a summary of the exercise scope, scenario, participants, and play. Most importantly, it contains an analysis of the achievement of each exercise objective. It may also include an assessment of the exercise management process including the planning, control, and observation of the exercise. This report is developed from the comments and observations recorded by Evaluators during and after the exercise. It identifies deficiencies, problems, and issues that require corrective action.

Controller. Controllers plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the exercise incident site, and possibly take the roles of individuals and agencies not actually participating in the exercise (i.e., in the Simulation Cell [SimCell]). Controllers direct the pace of exercise play and routinely include members from the exercise planning team, provide key data to players, and may prompt or initiate certain player actions and injects to the players as described in the Master Scenario Event List (MSEL) to ensure exercise continuity. The individual controllers issue exercise materials to players as required, monitor the exercise timeline, and monitor the safety of all exercise participants.

Continuity of Operations (COOP). Continuity of Operations, as defined in the National Security Presidential Directive-51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-20 (NSPD-51/HSPD-20) and the National Continuity Policy Implementation Plan (NCPIP), is an effort within individual executive departments and agencies to ensure that Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs) continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents and technological or attack-related emergencies.

Corrective Action Program (CAP). The formal program that supports the identification and resolution of requirements for corrective action and the formal, appropriate integration of corrective action into interagency Continuity of Operations community. Managed by NCP with assistance from the CAP Review Board, the CAP ensures the continuing evolution and refinement of the Federal Executive Branch Continuity of Operations capability.

ENDEX. The end of the exercise. This term refers to the formal conclusion of the exercise. No player activity occurs after this time.

Emergency Relocation Group. Personnel identified as essential to the accomplishment of agency essential functions. These personnel are expected to relocate to an agency's continuity site upon activation of the agency COOP plan.

Controller/Evaluator Handbook. A document that establishes how the Evaluation effort will be managed. It includes the overarching objectives and a copy of all Evaluation forms.

Data Collectors. Individuals who record their own as well as participants' observations during the exercise. They note the actions taken by participants and maintain a chronology of those actions. Their responsibility is to provide an assessment of how well the objectives were accomplished. Data Collectors may also be Controllers and/or Evaluators.

Evaluator. Chosen for their expertise in the functional areas they will observe. Evaluators measure and assess performance, capture unresolved issues, and analyze exercise results. Evaluators passively assess and document participants' performance against established emergency plans and exercise evaluation criteria, in accordance with HSEEP standards.

Exercise Director. A member of the exercise management team and the senior decision maker at an exercise location. Assisted by the exercise deputy director and the senior controller, the exercise director has the authority to suspend or cancel exercise activity in response to real-world emergencies and can authorize changes in the exercise to facilitate the accomplishment of objectives.

Exercise Planning Team. The exercise director, the deputy exercise director, and the senior controller. These are the senior personnel at the exercise location who oversee the actions of the Evaluators, controllers, and interagency response cell members.

Exercise Objectives. The specific actions to be performed or the capabilities to be demonstrated by exercise participants. Developed early in the planning effort, effective exercise objectives will ensure that participants know what is to be accomplished, who will do it, under what conditions and finally to what measurable standard. Objectives are the basis for the assessment/observation effort.

Exercise Plan (EXPLAN). The comprehensive plan for the exercise. The EXPLAN provides all exercise participants with pertinent information: the lead-in scenario, participants, points of contact, exercise objectives, assumptions, responsibilities, and administrative and security information. It is developed from the approved Concept and Objectives Paper that contains the approved exercise objectives.

Inject. Injects are MSEL entries that controllers must simulate—including directives, instructions, and decisions. Exercise controllers provide injects to exercise players to drive exercise play towards the achievement of objectives. Injects can be written, oral, televised, and/or transmitted via any means (e.g., fax, phone, e-mail, voice, radio, or sign).

Master Scenario Events List, MSEL. The MSEL is a chronological timeline of expected actions and scripted events to be injected into exercise play by controllers to generate or prompt player activity. It ensures all necessary events happen so that all objectives can be met.

Players. Exercise participants who respond in a realistic manner to the scenario events. They do so by using the plans, procedures, and equipment on which they have been trained. In other words, they demonstrate their ability to carry out their mission. Also referred to as responders in exercises.

Scenario. A sequential, narrative account of a hypothetical incident or accident. The scenario provides the catalyst for the exercise and is intended to introduce situations that will inspire responses and thus allow demonstration of the exercise objectives.

STARTEX. The start of the exercise. This term refers to the formal beginning of player activity.

Trusted Agent. Trusted agents are the individuals on the exercise planning team who are trusted not to reveal the scenarios details to players prior to the exercise being conducted.