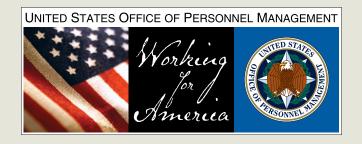




# FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD NETWORK

Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report



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## **Executive Summary**

Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) are catalysts for communication, coordination and collaboration among Federal agencies across the country. FEBs comprise a vibrant network to advance Federal initiatives and programs outside Washington, D.C. Their outreach extends to State and local levels of government to increase opportunities for cooperation beyond the Federal community. The Boards identify strategic partners, bring them together, and facilitate collaboration to achieve common goals.

In Fiscal Year 2008, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the FEBs worked together to develop and implement the FEB Strategic and Operational Plan (2008-2012). The Plan outlines the values, mission, goals and priorities for the network of 28 Boards, and serves as a guiding document for FEB programs and activities. The Strategic and Operational Plan is configured along the FEB lines of business - Emergency Preparedness, Security and Employee Safety; Human Capital Readiness; and the Foundational Function of Intergovernmental and Community Initiatives. The Plan clearly establishes consistent network expectations and desired results.

A major area of emphasis for the Boards is assisting local agencies to better prepare for emergency events. As a result, during Fiscal Year 2008, all FEBs hosted an interagency emergency planning exercise. This exercise provided an opportunity for local agencies to test their continuity plans and network with leaders within the Federal, State, and local communities. Through participation in the exercise, agencies often identified action items to improve their preparedness.

With the pending closure and potential job losses resulting from the U.S. Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) effort, FEBs partnered with OPM and local agencies to support job fairs targeting affected employees. Job fair representatives provided information on the Federal hiring process, navigating the USAJobs website, interviewing tips, resumé writing, and Intergovernmental Career Transition Assistance Program eligibility.

A significant accomplishment for OPM and the FEBs was quick action to address each of the four recommendations in a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report (GAO-07-515) entitled, "The Federal Workforce: Additional Steps Needed to Take Advantage of Federal Executive Boards' Ability to Contribute to Emergency Operations" issued May 2007. The four recommendations were:

- 1. OPM should work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop a Memorandum of Understanding, or some similar mechanism, to formally define the FEB role in emergency planning and response.
- 2. OPM should initiate discussions with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to consider integrating the FEB emergency support responsibilities into national emergency planning documents, such as the National Response Plan.

- 3. OPM should continue its efforts to establish performance measures and accountability for the emergency support responsibilities of the FEBs before, during and after an emergency event that affects the Federal workforce outside Washington, D.C.
- 4. To help ensure FEBs can provide protection to the Federal workforce in the field, OPM, as part of its strategic planning process for the FEBs, should develop a proposal for an alternative to the current voluntary contribution mechanism that would address the uncertainty of funding sources for the Boards.

OPM is pleased to announce all recommendations within GAO Report 07-515 have been addressed and closed. Detailed information regarding the approach and results of addressing these recommendations follows within this report.

Year after year, FEBs deliver a host of valuable services to their member agencies, and this year was no exception. These services included emergency planning, leadership and skills training, sharing of best-practices, peer recognition, and alternative dispute resolution. In addition, FEBs provided the opportunity for agencies to stretch beyond their individual agency missions, and work together on common issues. Such opportunities develop relationships among agency leaders that create an environment of collaboration leading to increased efficiency benefiting the entire Federal community.

#### **Federal Executive Board Locations**



### **Background**

By Presidential Directive in 1961, President John F. Kennedy established FEBs to improve interagency coordination and communication among Federal departments and activities outside of Washington, D.C. The Director of OPM is responsible to the President for the organizational and programmatic activities of the FEBs.

The need for effective coordination among Federal organizations' field activities was clear then, and is even more important in today's environment. Approximately 90 percent of all Federal employees work outside the National Capital Area, and most Federal programs are implemented through the regional and local offices of Federal departments and agencies. Regional and local Federal officials are the Federal Government's principal representatives to the vast majority of our nation's citizens.

Under the direction and guidance of the OPM Director, the Boards function in four general areas:

- (1) coordinating local approaches to national programs and shared management needs;
- (2) providing a forum for the exchange of information between Washington and the field about programs, management methods and administrative issues;
- (3) communicating from Washington to the field about management initiatives and other concerns for the improvement of coordination; and
- (4) raising awareness at the national level of local issues.

Today, there are 28 FEBs located in areas with significant Federal populations. The Boards are comprised of the highest-ranking local officials from each Federal agency located in the FEB area. Board leadership and structure consist of elected officers (Chair, Vice Chair) and Committees and Councils designated to direct FEB programs. The regulatory responsibilities outlined in section 960, title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, provide the guidance from which FEBs draw their general operating instructions.

Each FEB staff office is authorized two full-time equivalent (FTE) Federal employees (Executive Director and Assistant), who manage the daily operations of the Board. Administrative funding is provided by a host department or agency, while project funding is covered by the local member agencies. In Fiscal Year 2008, OPM, as the oversight authority for FEBs, collaborated with Executive Directors to identify common work objectives to standardize FEB program measures and individual performance expectations based on the FEB Strategic and Operational Plan. As a result, FEB Executive Directors and OPM designed an innovative, network-wide performance-management system, which will be piloted by all Executive Directors in Fiscal Year 2009.

#### Nationwide Federal Executive Board (FEB) statistics:

- 28 FEBs are located across the nation
- Approximately 705,900 Federal civilian employees are served in FEB areas
- On average, 140 Federal agencies are served in each FEB location, depending on the size of the Federal presence in FEB area

#### FEB services are delivered in three categories of emphasis:

- Emergency Preparedness, Security and Employee Safety
- Human Capital Readiness
- Intergovernmental and Community Initiatives

#### FEBs are located in the following centers of Federal activity:

Atlanta Minnesota Baltimore New Mexico Boston **New Orleans** Buffalo New York City Chicago Newark Cincinnati Oklahoma Cleveland Oregon Dallas-Fort Worth Philadelphia Pittsburgh Denver St. Louis Detroit Honolulu-Pacific San Antonio Houston San Francisco

Seattle

South Florida

Kansas City

Los Angeles

# Line of Business I: Emergency Preparedness, Security and Employee Safety

#### Activity Category: Emergency Preparedness

FEBs increase emergency preparedness of Federal communities by serving as the hub for information and coordination in their locales.

The November 1, 2005, issuance of the *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza*, guides our nation's preparedness and response to an influenza pandemic with the intent of (1) stopping, slowing or otherwise limiting the spread of a pandemic to the United States; (2) limiting the domestic spread of a pandemic, and mitigating disease, suffering and death; and, (3) sustaining infrastructure and mitigating impact to the economy and the functioning of society. The *Strategy* charges the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services with leading the Federal pandemic preparedness.

In Fiscal Year 2008, FEBs partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), to provide briefings to the Federal, State,

and local communities on Closed Points of Dispensing (PODs). Closed PODs are public sites, such as school gymnasiums, set up to dispense medication to the public in the event of a health emergency. They are used for screening, dispensing products and educating employees about health threats and preventive measures. Closed PODs are necessary to ensure continuity of government operations. Through FEBs, Federal, State, and local community representatives received informational briefings on the procedures to sponsor the establishment of a Closed POD, and solicit volunteers to staff its operation. To date, several FEBs have:



Federal, State and local government agency representatives participate in the Baltimore FEB tabletop Exercise

- coordinated with State and local government representatives to establish Memoranda of Understanding with agencies willing to operate as Closed PODs and dispense medications to employees and family members, ultimately reducing the impact of an infectious disease or pandemic on the Federal workforce;
- signed a Memorandum of Understanding with State Departments of Health agreeing to work together to develop a plan for operating a POD for Federal employees, contractors, and their families following a non-medical model in which dispensing of medical materials can occur in the first 48 to 72 hours after a bio-terrorist event;
- worked with State Departments of Health and CDC officials to identify priority prophylaxis treatment for key Federal employees in the event of a terror attack or pandemic situation;

4. coordinated with city and county health representatives to identify the number of Federal first responders/military installations that would need Strategic National Stockpile medications/vaccines should a health crisis occur.

#### Activity Category: Continuity of Operations

# FEBs improve continuity of government operations by facilitating planning and coordination among Federal agencies.

Agencies still face the need for guidance in developing a unified response system to emergency events. This structure also should provide clear definitions and methods for dealing with any disaster situation. FEBs are increasingly recognized for their role in preparing their local communities for emergency situations. As such, FEBs strive to create and deliver meaningful Federal emergency response and multi-agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) exercises. FEBs promote established emergency preparedness procedures and protocols to support an interconnected Federal community.

This year, each FEB facilitated an emergency tabletop exercise, during which participants tested agency continuity plans, and networked with Federal, State, and local community leaders. Tabletop exercises are structured to provide information about specific emergency situations, such as a pandemic influenza outbreak or a terrorist attack, and engage participants in practice decision making during the emergency. These exercises raise awareness about how agencies can prepare in advance and continue operations during an emergency event. Some feature organized workshops to address issues related to policy, statute or procedural concerns, and provide an opportunity to collectively capture, analyze and tackle these issues. Participants also have the opportunity to test evacuation, continuity, response and recovery procedures. FEBs coordinate after-action reviews for agencies to evaluate their readiness and discuss issues raised as a result of the exercise.

FEBs continue to furnish information and provide opportunities for agencies to learn more about pandemic influenza and actions necessary to continue Federal services, while protecting employees. FEBs coordinate pandemic influenza training and briefings and facilitate open discussions about Federal workforce operations in the event of a health-related emergency.

#### Activity Category: Emergency Communications

# FEBs assure awareness of Federal communities by providing timely and accurate communication of emergency information.

FEBs played a critical coordination and communication role during the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. During the Democratic National Convention, the Denver FEB, through agreements and coordination set up in advance, received continuous updates from the city and county of Denver and local authorities. Status updates from city, county and Federal agencies and regular traffic and street closure reports were shared with all Federal agencies in the Denver metro area.

In advance of the Republican National Convention, the Minnesota FEB released five biweekly newsletters to all Federal agencies providing updates on the event and potential effects on the community. During the convention, the Minnesota FEB developed and released daily newsletter briefings to all Federal agencies. Due to large demonstrations one day, the FEB recommended an early release of all non-emergency Federal personnel in the downtown area to facilitate a safe commute home for employees.

"The Federal Executive Board of Minnesota played a key role in heightening awareness and keeping the Federal community well-informed during the Republican National Convention. Early collaborations with the RNC Convention Committee ensured ongoing concerns were addressed. The overall impact of the FEB oversight was invaluable."

Anne Lewandowski, District Manager Social Security Administration Saint Paul, MN

In September, the Houston and New Orleans FEBs played critical coordination roles during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. An important service FEBs provide to their local communities includes preparation for emergency events. Engaging in tabletop exercises helps agencies test, coordinate and build upon their existing continuity plans. During Gustav and Ike, several agencies successfully implemented their continuity plans and operated from alternate sites. To ensure updated information was available, FEBs communicated with local agencies to determine the storms' effect on agency readiness and operating status. FEBs maintained contact with, and provided updates and briefings to, both OPM and FEB members throughout the events. Additionally, FEBs provided guidance, assistance and information to local Federal agencies, which aided their successful reconstitution.

"The assistance provided by the New Orleans Federal Executive Board in the days before, during and after Hurricane Gustav struck the Louisiana coast was invaluable to us at the Social Security Administration. The daily conference calls kept the lines of communication open between Federal agencies serving New Orleans and the surrounding area, and the updates provided by the National Weather Service kept us all apprised of the latest information regarding the storm. The efforts of the New Orleans Federal Executive Board during this event were truly appreciated by our agency and contributed to a smooth decision-making process as the events surrounding the storm unfolded."

Dennis W. Bruhl, District Manager Social Security Administration Covington, LA

Under the Emergency Preparedness, Employee Safety and Security line of business, OPM requires FEBs to maintain 24/7/365 contact information for senior officials in the FEB geographic area using the United States Private Public Partnership (USP3). USP3 is a national collaboration with various local, State, and Federal partners, providing a common network and repository for members to share information and 24/7 emergency notifications. In Fiscal Year 2008, FEBs adopted the USP3 system as the primary means for issuing emergency notifications and sharing information. The USP3 system allows for rapid notification of an emergency or threat to all members at the rate of thousands of messages per minute. Utilizing voice, text and email channels simultaneously, the system is able to distribute messages by capitalizing on each notification method's strength and enhance the overall reliability and effectiveness of the notification system.

"Thank you for all that you do to keep Federal employees in the area informed. I have really appreciated this essential communications link during my tenure as the USCG Group Commander and Deputy Sector Commander in Boston."

John C. O'Connor III, Ed.D Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Boston, MA

# Line of Business II: Human Capital Readiness

#### Activity Category: Recruitment Initiative

FEBs conduct outreach to inspire and educate young people and other key pools of talent needed by government.

Federal Career Days and Career Fairs continue to provide thousands of job seekers the opportunity to have questions about Federal employment answered and connect with hiring managers and agency human resources representatives. FEBs partner with OPM, local colleges and universities, and the Partnership for Public Service to host general job fairs and targeted Federal career events. This year, FEBs co-sponsored career fairs specifically for veterans, employees displaced by Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), and a bilingual-diversity event. FEB career fairs reach thousands of potential Federal employees.

FEBs play an active role in promoting Federal service to the public by working with local



Students participate in the internship program offered by the Minnesota FEB office

universities and colleges to provide internships and career opportunities for their college students and graduates. FEBs help connect interested applicants with agencies offering job opportunities to students. Further, several FEBs host interns in FEB offices. Interning at an FEB office provides students with exposure to dozens of local agencies, their staff and their missions. The services FEB interns provide directly support the FEB and local Federal communities, and this hands-on experience encourages intern interest in a future permanent career in the Federal Government.

FEB Executive Directors, as avid supporters of public service, personally advocate for students to consider Federal employment in a variety of ways. This year,

among many other public service promotion activities, Executive Directors provided Federal hiring briefings to local colleges and universities, served as instructors and members of University Public Administration Advisory Boards, and promoted public service in their local communities by participating in different initiatives, such as "Principal for a Day".

FEBs provided significant resources to agencies and employees affected by BRAC. The Greater Kansas City FEB and OPM hosted a Job Fair for local Defense Finance & Accounting Service employees who were to be displaced August 30, 2008, due to the BRAC. Representatives presented information on Federal hiring processes, navigating USAJobs, interviewing tips, and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligibility. The FEB assisted agencies in understanding the ICTAP and Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) regulations in order to advance understanding of displaced employee hiring procedures.

"Our recent site closure resulting from BRAC prompted a genuine display of caring and support from the Federal community sponsored by the local FEB. In the spirit of outreach, the FEB coordinated an on-site Federal Job Fair and repeatedly encouraged support from all agencies to consider our talented work force for hiring. As a result, today many of our former talented employees continue to serve in the Kansas City federal community helping to minimize the impact of BRAC."

Don Lisenby, Former Site Director Defense Finance and Accounting Service Kansas City, MO

Additionally, in the wake of the BRAC impact on the workforce of several major installations/agencies, the St. Louis FEB provided affected member agencies with information for their employees interested in continued Federal Government employment. The Boston FEB conducted a briefing entitled "Landscape of the Local Federal Workforce" for two military organizations to be impacted by BRAC in 2009, and conducted resume writing training for Federal employees affected by displacement.

#### Activity Category: Alternative Dispute Resolution Program

FEBs provide cost-effective services to resolve disputes and preserve working relationships through use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

To support the efficient resolution of disputes and formal claims, FEBs provide low or no cost, high-quality mediation services to Federal agencies through the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)/Shared Neutrals Program. The ADR/Shared Neutrals Program is a cooperative arrangement between participating Federal agencies that make reciprocal agreements for ADR services and share resources cooperatively. These ADR consortiums and Shared Neutrals Programs help avoid costly formal procedures and litigation.

During the past year, more than 561 cases were successfully settled, resulting in an estimated cost avoidance of more than \$20.7 million. (Cost-avoidance measurements are based upon information outlined in the study on "Cost Savings Associated with the Air Force Alternative Dispute Resolution Program," 1996. Costs have been adjusted for inflation using the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator.) To ensure effective and current ADR programs, FEBs offered ADR Refresher Training and Basic Mediation Training to current and new mediators.

#### Activity Category: Awards and Recognition

# FEBs improve morale of the Federal workforce by celebrating the people who serve our Nation.

FEB Awards and Recognition Programs are a forum by which the local Federal community



Over 360 individuals attended the Kansas City FEB 15th Annual 2008 Public Employees Recognition Award Ceremony

honor and recognize outstanding Federal employees. These programs highlight the exceptional service of high-performing Federal employees, and serve as an opportunity to acknowledge the difference these individuals made in their role as public servants. These events focus on the important contributions individuals make to support and advance the work of their agencies, their colleagues, and their communities.

This year, FEBs sponsored Awards and Recognition Programs in which 4,367 awards were presented to Federal employees, with more than 15,000 people in attendance. Recognition of extraordinary work and

individual dedication to public service helps remind the Federal community and the public of the important work the Federal workforce does.

# Activity Category: Leadership Development and Common Needs Training

# FEBs develop the Federal workforce by providing critical training opportunities and learning experiences.

FEBs recognize the need to coordinate their member agencies' efforts and provide training to improve the Federal workforce. In order to make these training opportunities available to as many Federal employees as possible, FEBs offer sessions at low or no cost. This year, FEBs provided training opportunities to 29,415 Federal employees at an estimated cost avoidance of more than \$8.1 million.

While agency training needs vary from location to location and year to year, some developmental needs remain constant. With the pending retirement and potential loss of knowledgeable and experienced leaders in the Federal sector, agencies have been faced with the need to develop effective leaders. To this end, FEBs sponsored Leadership Forums, Executive Leadership Development Programs, and Leadership classes. Current managers and supervisors were offered classes to facilitate recognition and development of different management styles and approaches to supervision.

This year, FEBs acknowledged changes in the Federal workforce by sponsoring Multigenerational Diversity training. The current Federal workforce encompasses many areas of diversity. One of the areas not often addressed is that of generational differences. By addressing differences and understanding employee diversity, supervisors and employees are better equipped to build quality working relationships and a healthier working environment. In an effort to address the differing career

approaches and expectations of older and younger generations of Federal employees, training and workshops focused on biases, relationship awareness and generational differences.

Another timely information contribution FEBs provided this year was that of identity theft. FEBs co-sponsored Identify Theft Training Seminars in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, State Police, and the U.S. Coast Guard. Sessions focused on individual protection and controlling agency exposure to risks and the dangers associated with the compromise of personal information, passwords and credit.

# Foundational Function: Intergovernmental and Community Initiatives

#### Activity Category: Assistance to Agencies

FEBs improve communications among Federal agencies within each FEB, across the nationwide FEB network, and between FEBs and Washington, D.C.

FEBs, as a conduit between Washington, D.C. and Federal field agencies, serve their communities by providing a forum for discussion, whereby the local Federal community exercises coordinated approaches to administration initiatives and improve agency efficiency.

In the Fiscal Year 2008 Federal budget, an item was included to transition from non-foreign cost-of-living allowance (COLA) to Locality Pay. Senator Akaka, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and District of Columbia, introduced the bill in Congress. Federal employees located in Hawaii, a non-foreign COLA location affected by the proposed change, had many questions and concerns. The FEB hosted Senator Akaka and other representatives in more than 22 onsite meetings where 1,300 Federal employees gathered to understand the impact of the bill. The FEB worked closely with members of Congress, heads of Federal agencies, COLA Committees, the Federal Managers Association, unions, delegates from Alaska and Guam and many other interested parties. The coordination efforts and communication abilities of the FEB helped make this potential substantial change affecting Federal employees more transparent and better managed.

To support agency and employee compliance with established rules and policies, FEBs provided Hatch Act briefing materials for Federal agencies to distribute prior to the Presidential primary season. The Hatch Act restricts the political activity of executive branch employees of the Federal Government who work in connection with Federally funded programs. In addition, FEBs hosted Presidential Transition Training for managers and supervisors, and transition briefings for member agencies to prepare for the new Administration.

#### Activity Category: Combined Federal Campaign

FEBs support the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) by providing Federal employees the opportunity for charitable-giving in their local areas.

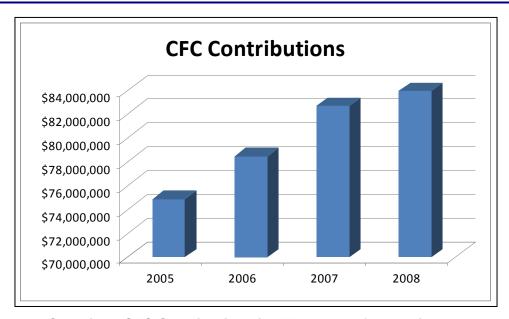
FEBs provide strong leadership and support for the CFC outside Washington, D.C., and serve as vital connections between the Federal Government and local communities. They provide quality assurance, oversight, and accountability as well as leadership for the National CFC Advisory Committee and regional workshops.



Once again, FEB efforts exceeded campaign goals. Specifically, they garnered new resources, engaged in agency activities, sponsored campaign kickoff activities, and built partnerships with civic leaders to promote giving. Total 2007 CFC receipts amounted to more than \$273 million. Campaigns in FEB areas collectively raised more than \$83.9 million toward this total.

"The 2007 Combined Federal Campaign was, by all measures, a tremendous success! The number of our local donors reached 5,589 and our total contributions set a new record at \$1,575,132. Our administrative overhead rate was a very efficient 7.28 percent, while the number of local charity applications reached an all-time high. Finally, we produced a local (animated) CFC video that CFCs around the country used in their 2008 campaigns. As a result, our campaign theme "Change for a Better Future" motivated thousands more CFC donors to support deserving charities in communities throughout the world."

Bill McNamee, Oregon FEB Chair and Field Office Director U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Portland, OR



**Combined CFC Contributions in FEB Areas of Operation** 

## Activity Category: Community Service Activities

#### FEBs cultivate community relations by coordinating Federal participation.

In order for the FEBs to be a center for coordination and collaboration among the Federal community, FEBs are actively involved with local activities. FEBs serve as focal points for Federal volunteer opportunities and community services. Examples include mentorship programs with schools, book and computer equipment drives, blood drives, food and clothing drives, housing projects, and holiday toy drives.

#### Value Added to Federal Communities

Through collaboration and sharing resources, FEBs added value and provided cost-savings to Federal agencies and the taxpayer.

To achieve fiscal efficiencies, FEBs organize and offer programs leveraging agency resources to produce maximum public value:

#### Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

The Boards coordinated alternative dispute resolution programs, providing mediators to agencies at no or low cost. Agency employees volunteer to serve as mediators, and receive initial and refresher mediation training hosted by the FEB. ADR programs in Fiscal Year 2008 resulted in an estimated cost-avoidance of more than \$20.7 million.

#### Common Needs Training

FEBs assessed agencies' common-needs training requirements, and provided instructors and conference space to deliver training at no or low cost. Common-needs training includes briefings and training on current issues or initiatives of importance to the Federal community. Delivery of common-needs training in Fiscal Year 2008 helped agencies avoid additional expenditures of more than \$8.1 million in training costs.

#### Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

FEBs played a significant role in their area campaigns. They helped raise more than \$83.9 million for the CFC in the calendar year 2007 campaign, which took place in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2008.

Overall, FEBs demonstrated that through active membership and continued coordination by Federal agency leaders, agencies reduced duplicative efforts and achieved increased efficiencies. FEBs continue to be well-positioned to advance Administration and agency initiatives outside of Washington, D.C.



# UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 1900 E Street, NW Washington, DC 20415