

Implementation Action Plan

Joint Agency Planning

Issue:

There is a need for an effective joint planning effort on numerous fronts to ensure that both Agencies are jointly placing priority on the agriculture mission and approaching mission delivery cooperatively and consistently.

Recommended Response:

- Institutionalize the APHIS-CBP Task Force as the central planning group for activities that implement or support the shared mission.
- Empower the Task Force to coordinate, either directly, or through the establishment of appropriate sub-groups, planning activities, such as:
 - Strategic planning
 - Establishment of joint performance measures
 - Establishment of annual national operating goals and plans that lay the foundation for development of joint plans at the regional/district and local levels for:
 - Smuggling Interdiction and Trade Compliance
 - Trend Analysis
 - National Identification Services
 - National Agriculture Release Program
 - Compliance agreements for animal-related issues
 - Data management including IT issues
 - Bio/Agro-terrorism
 - Agriculture related training
 - Others as identified
- COOP and other emergency planning (see emergency response plan).

Correlation to Report Recommendation or Other Feedback:

Many of the concerns raised in the reports and by stakeholders at the Stakeholder Forum center on a lack of focus on the agriculture mission as a priority mission and the inability of the two agencies to come together and move forward on critical issues and actions in support of plant pest and foreign animal disease exclusion and safeguarding. In addition to strategic planning, joint planning activities could include sharing of information, quality assurance, establishment of performance measures, and specific joint operations.

Findings:

While there have been some success stories related to planning, including training and budget, planning is, by and large, an *ad hoc* effort that leads to

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uneven results. Both agencies would benefit from having a permanent, flexible, core planning mechanism to help align the vision, goals, and mission delivery in the two agencies. The Task Force should have a clearly articulated planning function as part of its charter; should be empowered by management in each Agency to represent the views of each Agency; and have stable, high-level, cross-cutting membership. The Task Force should be directed to develop a planning calendar and coordinate the planning activities identified in that calendar, ensuring that appropriate Agency reviews are incorporated into the process. The Task Force should also be able to call on appropriate staff in each Agency to participate in various planning efforts. Plans developed under this process should be available on an intranet or internet site for employees and/or stakeholders, as appropriate.

Expected Outcome:

Over time, the result of joint planning will be greater focus on the mission and alignment of the two agencies on the mission and mission priorities. There will be a shared vision and clearly defined, mutually agreed upon goals to achieve. In the end, better overall focus should result in improvements in measured performance. Specific measurable outcomes might include:

- Establishment of joint planning calendars at the national and local level.
- Periodic reporting of organizational accomplishments, performance measures, outcome data, and trend analysis findings that is shared among all locations through a Website or other mechanism.
- Establishment of a transparent mechanism to gather stakeholder input into the planning process.
- A seamless and harmonized response to inquiries raised by Congress and others that reflect the actual state of affairs in both agencies.
- Joint strategic plans linked to each agencies operational plans.

Implementation Plan:

Tasks

- Revise Task Force charter to include a planning function and validate permanent Task Force members.
 - Define range of planning functions that will be routinely handled by the Task Force within its charter.
 - Develop annual planning calendar. (Task Force)
 - Develop planning and monitoring processes/protocols. (Task Force)
 - Define clearance process for approval of final plans. (Task Force)
- Designate and charge responsible individuals from both agencies with the initiation of planning activities.

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- Establish process for addressing *ad hoc* planning needs.
- Establish internet/intranet sites for posting joint plans.

Communications Needs

- Review and approval by Agency/Department leadership with concurrence on establishment of identified groups.
- Create a clear charge for the Task Force related to ongoing joint planning efforts, incorporate in charter, and communicate throughout both work forces and to stakeholders.
- Internet or Intranet sites for posting of joint plans.

Accountable Individual/Group

- APHIS Administrator and CBP Commissioner
- Task Force

Resources

- Implementation of this plan will require an ongoing commitment of time by the members of the Task Force and any groups established to work under the coordination of the Task Force.
- Commitment to provide and empower the resources needed to complete the action plan.

Sequencing / Linkages


All Action Plans

Challenges to Implementation

None identified.

Review Block -- for the use of Agency/Department leadership in adopting, modifying, or rejecting the plan.

Joint Agency Planning Implementation Action Plan adopted by both agencies on June 26, 2007, by:



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