

# Appendix A

## USDA FSA FY 2011 Shutdown Contingency Plan

### FSA Emergency Operations Protocol During a Government Shutdown

#### Background

This protocol is based on a situation when the government has ceased normal functions and assumes that there is not currently an emergency that is being responded to by Farm Service Agency (FSA). It serves to codify how the Emergency Response Group (ERG) and Devolution Emergency Relocation Group (DERG) will operate before, during and after a government shutdown. This protocol relies heavily on the concepts and plans set forth in FSA's Continuity of Operations (COOP) plan and Pandemic plan.

Emergency response at FSA involves three groups of people: the ERG, the COOP Team, and the DERG. The ERG is comprised of FSA executive leadership and emergency response staff, and convenes whenever an incident occurs impacting FSA personnel, facilities, or programs. The ERG may also be convened whenever a request is received for FSA support to a local, state, or national incident (e.g., hurricane, flood, attack). The COOP Team is composed of the ERG's supporting staff. This includes all individuals who have responsibility to support one of the three FSA essential functions (critical commodity operations, the Agriculture Priorities and Allocations System, and emergency management/agency administration) which support National Essential Functions. The DERG is responsible for continuing FSA essential functions when the ERG and COOP Team are not able to continue operations due to impacts to the National Capital Region (NCR). In addition, the DERG may supplement the ERG remotely to continue essential functions.

#### Essential Functions

FSA Mission Essential Functions are critical activities that must be continued throughout or resumed within 12 hours and sustained for at least 30 days, despite disruption or serious threat to normal operations, in order to continue to perform the Agency's mission. The three functions listed below are FSA Mission Essential Functions:

1. Purchase and deliver processed commodities programs, such as the National School Lunch, Commodity Supplemental Food, Food Distribution on Indian Reservations, and Disaster Assistance programs.
2. Ensure continuous supply of food and food resources during an emergency by redirecting non-governmental commodities to the impact area(s) under authority of Title I of the Defense Production Act, Priorities and Allocations (APAS)
3. Perform FSA Emergency Management and Agency Administration functions in order to ensure the continuation of FSA Essential Functions.

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In the event that higher guidance is provided regarding what should be deemed essential during the period of the shutdown, the new guidance will inform what work is performed by FSA. Existing plans can likely be utilized to identify resources required for the performance of most functions.

### **Pre-Incident Readiness**

All parts of FSA are required to engage in annual COOP planning. This involves identifying which of the programs and activities in each area support one of the three FSA essential functions; the resources required to perform those functions; and where, in a traditional COOP scenario, the activity would be performed.

Through careful examination, the Deputy Administrators, Chief Officers, and Office Directors are able to provide information about their activities that can have application beyond the scope of traditional COOP planning. The elements they have identified as always being required will, by definition, always be required and cannot be suspended during a COOP event. These elements can be used to identify which FSA employees will be required to continue working in order to ensure that FSA continues to perform its essential functions.

### **Activation**

The EPD Director and Deputy Director will monitor operations and threat conditions through State Directors, USDA Operations Center, DHS/FEMA, and the media. If, in their judgment, there is an emergency or heightened threat condition, either official may activate the ERG. If the incident impacts the National Capital Region in such a way as to make the ERG unavailable, the DERG will be activated according to triggers in the FSA COOP Plan.

### **Incidents Not Impacting NCR (Non-COOP)**

Once it is evident that the ERG should activate, EPD will contact the EPD Director, Deputy Administrator for Management, Associate Administrator, and FSA Administrator. After briefing them, the ERG will be notified using the MIR3 automated notification system. This system will notify ERG and DERG members and alternates (if primary members are unresponsive) via telephone and email. Depending on time of day, office phone, office email, mobile phone, and home phone will be used. ERG members should respond to the automated message in order to indicate that they received the message. The automated system also allows for the reporting of additional information if requested (e.g., en route to emergency relocation facility (ERF), cannot report, working remotely) and members should respond as appropriate. The Devolution Coordinator will also be alerted since the DERG will be on immediate standby.

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ERG members will respond according to instructions in the notification message. After receiving an initial incident briefing to determine scope and impact of the incident, the ERG will decide whether or not to activate the additional members or the DERG in Kansas City, MO. It is important to note that, in most cases, relocation will either not be required (i.e., incident does not impact NCR) or may not be possible. If local relocation is required, ERG and COOP Team members are expected to use their personal vehicles/public transportation to travel to the designated location within 12 hours of notification. If any member of the ERG cannot relocate if requested, he/she should notify the FSA COOP Coordinator immediately, and send an alternate. If any member of the COOP Team cannot relocate if requested, he/she should notify their ERG member immediately, and send an alternate.

Depending on the incident, the ERG and DERG may be the only personnel notified and/or activated. If the threat or incident causing COOP Plan implementation is expected to be prolonged, the COOP Team members will be notified and asked to report to an alternate location or telework. If the incident impacts the entire NCR, the DERG will continue FSA essential functions until the NCR returns to an operational state.

#### **Incidents Impacting NCR (COOP)**

In the event that the USDA receives a threat or warning before an incident occurs, or directly following a threat or incident to the NCR or USDA HQ, the Secretary, with the support of the Secretary's Crisis Action Team (CAT), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and DHS, would review the incident and determine whether to implement the USDA HQ COOP Plan and potentially evacuate the buildings/areas. OHSEC will determine the timeframe for Plan activation. If the situation permits, it is recommended that building evacuation not occur until the OpsCenter has completed its notification process.

ERG members will relocate according to instructions in the notification message. After receiving an initial incident briefing to determine scope and impact of the incident, the ERG will decide whether or not to activate the additional COOP Team members or the DERG in Kansas City, MO.

ERG members may elect to continue essential function management via telework, particularly if the interruption is expected to be relatively short in duration. The DERG may be used to supplement and support the continuation of essential functions.

If local relocation is required, ERG and COOP Team members are expected to use their personal vehicles/public transportation to travel to the designated location within 12 hours of notification. If any member of the ERG cannot relocate if requested, he/she should notify the FSA COOP Coordinator immediately, and send an alternate. If any member of the COOP Team cannot relocate if requested, he/she should notify their ERG member immediately, and send an alternate.

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During non-duty hours, should a threat or incident occur and the Secretary or Administrator decides to implement the USDA COOP Plan, non-COOP personnel will receive information and guidance via radio and television stations. COOP personnel will receive notification via phone and email.

**At any time, ERG or DERG members may be asked to call the EPD Emergency Conference Line to coordinate response efforts. This number is 800-867-6144, pass code 6761#.**

### **Initial Briefing**

Based on a number of different factors, the initial meeting may be held virtually using the EPD Conference Line (1-800-867-6144 pass code: 6761#). The initial briefing of the ERG will include the following elements as described FSA Emergency Response Handbook:

- Roll call of all participants, by office and division;
- Statement of who is the Administrator (or Acting Administrator) if COOP situation;
- Situation update from EPD or the Devolution Coordinator to include why the ERG or DERG was activated;
- Status report, including operational capability, from each office and division;
- Identifying and addressing any issues requiring follow-up actions; and
- Decision by the Administrator or designee on the course of action for the day for the ERG/DERG, to include determining:
  - The offices and divisions that still have full operational capability within their primary operating facility (e.g., NCR or Kansas City) and therefore will not devolve their essential functions; and
  - The offices and divisions without full operational capability within the primary operating facility (e.g., NCR or Kansas City) and therefore will devolve their essential functions to their devolution of operations counterpart.
- EPD will announce any specific instructions for the day and the time and date for the next Status Call.

### **Sustained Response**

An emergency occurring during a government shutdown of any period will require a variety of actions by the ERG. Subsequent meetings of the ERG will focus on the coordination of response actions between the ERG components and updates on the performance of essential functions. An agenda will be distributed by EPD prior to each meeting.

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Regular meetings will continue until the emergency is over. Topics covered will include status of administrative areas, (number of staff working, any issues/needs related to continued performance of activities); any updates on the budget situation; and employee communication.

#### **Incident Termination and Follow-Up**

Formal termination of the response will occur once all emergency activities have ceased and operations have returned to pre-incident conditions. EPD is responsible for the conduct of an incident review and the development of an After Action Report (AAR). The AAR will be used to identify any corrective actions associated with the lessons learned from the incident.