

## **FSA IT Contingency Planning Overview**

### **Task Overview**

The Department recently released an IT Contingency Planning Guide aimed to provide Department system owners with guidance on developing IT contingency plans for their systems. Per this guide, an IT Continuity of Support Plan and, depending on the system's tier level, a Disaster Recovery Plan must be developed and maintained for all FSA GSS's and MAs. To support these efforts, we created an IT Contingency Planning Checklist, and will conduct a workshop focusing on the major aspects of contingency planning and how to use the checklist to determine a plan's compliance with Departmental standards.

### **Task Details**

The purpose of the IT Contingency Planning Checklist is to assist SSOs and contractors with evaluating the compliance of their systems' existing IT contingency plans to the Department's contingency planning policies. The IT Contingency Planning Checklist is intended to be used in conjunction with the Department's IT Contingency Planning Guide. To create the checklist, we reviewed the Departmental guidance and developed a list of questions that highlighted the primary requirements of the Department's document. These questions were then grouped under one of three focus areas: Forming the Contingency Plan, Implementing the Contingency Plan, and Testing and Training. The questions can be answered by either noting that the requirement has been completed, or that it has not been completed with justifying remarks. To assist SSOs with understanding the appropriate definitions and terminology used throughout the Guide, a frequently asked questions section is included at the beginning of the Checklist.

The purpose of the IT Contingency Planning workshop is to assist SSOs with understanding the components of Continuity Of Support/Disaster Recovery Plans (COS/DRP), explain why these documents are necessary and useful, and furnish them with the capability to recognize a quality COS/DRPs for their systems. For the training materials, we created a power point presentation for the system SSOs that covers the main objectives of Contingency Planning and how to use the IT Contingency Planning Checklist. The training covers some of the basics of contingency planning, such as definitions, roles and responsibilities, and phases of system disruption. It then goes on to discuss how a Major Application's contingency plan meshes with its General Support System's plan, focusing specifically on systems at the VDC. Finally, the training provides guidance on how to use the Contingency Planning Checklist to determine if a system's plan covers all the material mandated by the Department.

### **Task Status**

While the initial drafts of both the IT Contingency Planning Checklist and the IT Contingency Planning Training materials have been included in this set of deliverables, the final drafts will be completed by September 25, 2002. Training has been scheduled for the SSOs on September 25, 2002. Because of the Department's requirement for Contingency Plans to be completed and submitted for Departmental review by the end of the year we expect that the SSOs will fully welcome the checklist as an aid to assist them in making the deadline.