



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES, Director

Subject: Role of the Chief Human Capital Officer in Ensuring the Security of the Federal Workforce

More than ever, the work of Federal employees is critical to the well-being and security of our Nation. Since the events of September 11th, we are resolved to ever maintain our vigilance against possible future attacks while at the same time preparing should they occur. President Bush has made it clear that, while safety is of the utmost concern, the greatest government on earth will not be brought to a halt in the face of a threat.

The key to ensuring that the Federal Government maintains its ability to carry out basic, necessary agency functions in the face of both man-made and natural threats is advance planning and preparation. In the last two years, the Federal Government has significantly improved the level of emergency preparedness. Plans are in place to ensure that continuity of operations in the event of an emergency. Participating agencies understand their responsibility to be prepared, and they know what steps they can make right now to adequately staff their essential operations should an emergency arise.

As key Government officials, you have as one of your primary responsibilities the safety and health of the Federal employees in your agency. This is a critical responsibility I share with each of you and one that absorbs my thoughts every day. It is important that this vital issue be an active part of your daily planning and preparation as well. I would like to point out that in addition to your security and emergency staff, you have another resource at your disposal - your **Chief Human Capital Officer** or, for many of the small independent agencies, your Human Resources Director. This individual can advise you and obtain valuable resources to ensure the security and safety of your workforce. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has made a number of tools available to assist your Chief Human Capital Officer/HR Director. OPM has developed three emergency guides for Federal managers, employees and their families to use in their emergency preparedness efforts. These guides are available for download from our Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/emergency/>, and I commend them to you and your emergency preparedness teams. OPM has sample protocols available for evacuation and egress procedures. These and other tools and flexibilities will be discussed at a Forum on Emergency Planning and Preparedness tomorrow, January 29, 2004, that OPM is once again hosting for agencies. Finally, OPM's Center for Security and Emergency Actions is prepared to provide assistance to your security and emergency preparedness staff.

I have attached a document that addresses the most important aspects of these emergency preparedness programs, grouped into three categories of measures that can be taken. Essentially, these are the areas we are surveying again at this time. OPM conducted the first such survey last fall. The survey for FY 2004 offers agencies the opportunity to report on their programs' current status, including updates to their emergency personnel designations. I have directed OPM's Human Capital Officers to work with your organizations to update the survey and ask that you provide your agency's input about your emergency preparedness measures to OPM by COB **February 15, 2004**.

Thank you for participating in the call for this important information. If your staff has further questions, they should not hesitate to contact Marta Brito Perez, our Associate Director for Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability. She may be reached at 202 606 1575 or Marta.Perez@opm.gov.

[Attachment](#)

cc: President's Management Council
Chief Human Capital Officers
Technical Assistants to the Chief Human Capital Officers
Human Resources Directors

SUMMARY OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

OPM has developed three emergency guides for Federal managers, employees and their families to use in their emergency preparedness efforts. These guides are available for download from our web site at <http://www.opm.gov/emergency/>.

Within these guides are several references to basic actions that every Federal agency should be doing right now - at a minimum - to educate, and protect the safety our teammates. The items listed in the three broad categories below are useful as a baseline for agencies as they evaluate whether they have fulfilled the minimum obligations to secure the safety of Federal employees.

I. Agency Planning

- A. Update Occupant Emergency Plans;
- B. Conduct Threat Assessments. The Federal Protective Service conducts recurring threat assessments for GSA-controlled property. Appropriate contact numbers for FPS Regional Offices can be found at www.gsa.gov. Federal agencies in buildings not managed by GSA should contact the local FBI Office or local police for emergency preparedness and/or threat assessments.
- C. Practice Shelter-in-Place/Evacuation/Fire Drills Regularly;
- D. Ensure Protection for Special Needs Employees;
 - 1. Survey employee population for employees who may have special physical needs,
 - 2. Implement "buddy system" for special needs employees,
(www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-154.pdf) [Get Acrobat Reader](#)
- E. Distribute Emergency Guides.
- F. Designate Emergency Personnel.

II. Employee Communication

- A. Conduct "town-hall" meetings with employees to discuss risks and communicate contingency plans, and other building specific evacuation and shelter-in-place plans;
- B. Actively solicit employee comments/suggestions for improvements via email, homepages, suggestion boxes, etc.;
- C. Update employees on plans/changes via email and other means of communication;
- D. Maintain updated emergency contact information for senior executives.

- E. Meet with union officials to seek assistance with communication of emergency plans;
- F. Remind employees experiencing stress-related concerns that Employee Assistance Programs are available.

III. Building Operations

- A. Test fire/safety public address systems;
- B. Check air handler cutoffs for emergency access;
- C. Ensure signage for evacuation/egress routes is clearly visible;
- D. Ensure your safety/security personnel maintain continual communications via walkie-talkie, cell phone, pager, etc.