

WHITE PAPER SUBMISSION - 2004 NMCI Industry Symposium

AUTHOR: First Virtual Communications (www.fvc.com)

TITLE:

Teleworking Initiatives Provide the Foundation for Government Continuity of Operations Programs

Communications technology delivers improved productivity, continuity and compliance with the Office of Personnel Management's teleworking programs.

ABSTRACT:

This whitepaper is intended for U.S. Federal & State government agency Executives and Information Technology workers who need to design and deploy programs that meet Federal guidelines for Continuity of Operations and Teleworking Initiatives. This document will summarize the requirements of COOP and OPM's Telework mandates and demonstrate how Click to Meet can help you meet these objectives with a solution that has a proven track record in mission-critical environments.

First Virtual Communications' Conference Server is the software MCU at the core of the largest multi-point collaboration and conferencing deployment in the world. Click to Meet™ is used by the US Department of Defense, through integration in the Defense Collaborative Tool Suite (DCTS) program. There are tens of thousands of DCTS ports currently deployed throughout military forces worldwide.

The demand for Continuity of Operation and Disaster Preparedness is often associated with the events of September 11, 2001, and the Anthrax contamination of the Hart office building in November of the same year. While the Department of Homeland Security has been driving the need for inter-agency communications and collaboration, the reality is that these mandates and laws originate in the months and years prior to 2001, but certainly the September 11 events have made continuity planning a top priority.

The U.S. Federal Government and its agencies are under enormous pressure to rapidly comply with a wide range of directives. Continuity of Operation Planning (COOP) must include provisions for Emergency Relocation Sites (ERS), which provides a tactical use for telework programs. In parallel, the communications infrastructure must be provisioned to maintain or reestablish control and direction, minimize the effects of the crisis, reduce crisis response times and regenerate full agency function as quickly as possible.

The requirement for federal agencies to meet the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Public Law 106-346, § 359 of Oct. 23, 2000 can assist in making telecommuting a part of the daily work environment. The law states, "Each executive agency shall establish a policy under which eligible employees of the agency may participate in telecommuting to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance."

Telework programs impact your workforce, and if it impacts your workers, then the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 requirements must be taken into account. Simply put, you must provide multiple modes of communication, access to facilities, or reasonable accommodations as well as access to information.

The issue for the manager is that these various communication modes must interoperate and interact for effective communications especially in times of crisis.

This whitepaper demonstrates how COOP, OPM and ADA initiatives can be met effectively and affordably by deploying a single communications solution, which delivers audio, video and data collaboration capabilities. A distributed workforce can help you comply with current regulations, but it can also improve productivity, improve the quality of life for employees and reduce operational expenses across the organization.