



The Greater Kansas City F E D E R A L E X E C U T I V E B O A R D

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FEB Testing Federal Pandemic Planning

Kansas City, Mo. – The Greater Kansas City Federal Executive Board (KC FEB) is proactively planning for the Federal Government's need to remain operational while facing a national pandemic by implementing training and testing programs designed to prepare local agencies for incidents of national significance.

Over the last year, the KC FEB Emergency Assessment and Response Committee's Continuity of Operations Working Group has provided training workshops and shared operational plans with all area Federal agencies in preparation for a pandemic influenza in the U.S. In addition, the FEB held a Pandemic Regional Interagency Continuity of Operations tabletop exercise on June 6 to test the plans that have been created.

"We really needed to get out-of-the-box early on this one and make sure we have effective and workable plans in place," said Steve Tanner, Director of the USDA Kansas City Commodities Office and Director of the Greater KC FEB. "The Kansas City Federal Executive Board is arguably the best FEB in the nation, and the leadership shown by the team in making this initiative happen means the federal workers in Kansas City will be fully prepared to handle a pandemic influenza outbreak in this area should one occur."

Co-Chairmen of the KC FEB committee in charge of continuity of operations Brad Scott, GSA Regional Administrator, and Dick Hainje, FEMA Regional Director, directed the June 6 exercise – which included more than 300 managers representing more than 50 Federal agencies. The exercise simulated an existing bird flu virus mutating into a human virus. As the virus began spreading throughout the world and North America, agencies were given action items and asked to answer questions dealing with the simulated events.

With the release of the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan, and the previously released version of the Federal Preparedness Circular 65 (June 2004), Federal agencies have the responsibility to create an annex to continuity of operations plans that focus on events like pandemics. KC FEB objectives include:

- Increasing awareness of the requirements for continuity planning with regard to a pandemic event;
- Identifying special considerations for protecting the health and safety of Federal employees while maintaining essential government functions and services;
- Insuring agencies have explored procedures for telework, safe havens and other distancing techniques; and
- Identifying solutions and alternatives to challenges faced during a pandemic.

The KC FEB has been testing continuity of operations plans since 2003. The Kansas City Federal community has conducted the largest continuity of operations exercise outside the Washington, D.C., area each of the past five years.