



Continuity of Operations (COOP)

Essential Functions



Unit Introduction and Overview

Unit objectives

- Define Essential Function
- Identification of Essential Functions
- Prioritization of Essential Functions
- Determining Resource Requirements



What is an Essential Function?



According to FEMA.....

- ▶ Those functions, stated or implied, that state departments & local jurisdictions are required to perform or are necessary to:
 - Provide vital services
 - Exercise civil authority
 - Maintain the safety of the general public
 - Sustain the industrial/economic base during an emergency



What is an Essential Function

In Short, they are business functions that allow the organization to perform its mission

- Must continue under all circumstances
- With minimal disruption (12-hours or less)
- Be sustained for 30 days minimum
- Pandemic Influenza: Plan for beyond 30 days, up to 90 days



In addition.....

Agencies must determine those functions:

- ▶ Explicitly assigned by law (i.e. statute, executive order, ordinance, etc.)
- ▶ Established by the agency head
- ▶ That provide vital support to another agency



**What is an example
of an essential
function that is
required by law?**



Idaho Disaster Preparedness Act of 1975

“To prescribe the roles of the Governor, State Agencies, & Local Governments in prevention of, preparation for, response to & recovery from disasters”



**Why do we need
to identify
Essential
Functions?**



Identification & Prioritization of Essential Functions is a prerequisite for COOP Planning

- ▶ Establishes the planning parameters that will drive all other COOP planning activities
 - Staff, Vital Records/Critical Systems, Equipment, Supplies, & Facilities



Essential Functions are the Nuts & Bolts of COOP





The 4-Step Process

- ▶ Step 1: Identify All Functions
- ▶ Step 2: Identify Essential Functions
- ▶ Step 3: Prioritize those Essential Functions
- ▶ Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements



Step 1: Identify All Functions

- ▶ Recommended approach by FEMA
- ▶ Identify your areas of responsibility
- ▶ Some tools that may help include:
 - Statutory Responsibilities, Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, Org charts, Emergency Plans, SOPs, Legal Authorities, Exercise After Action Reports, etc.



IDAHO EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION #1

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Agency: Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)

Support Agencies: Idaho Military Division (IMD)
- Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS)
- Idaho National Guard (IDNG)
- Public Safety Communications

Idaho Department of Administration (DOA)
- Division of Purchasing (DOP)
- Division of Public Works (DPW)

Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC)

Idaho Department of Education (IDOE)

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG)

Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)

Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR)

Idaho Geological Survey (IGS)

Idaho State Police (ISP)

Civil Air Patrol (CAP)



Area of Responsibility (AOR)

- ▶ Use Worksheet #B1
 - List Areas of Responsibility (AOR) that your agency is responsible for.
 - Remember: Statutory Responsibilities, Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, Org charts, Emergency Plans, SOPs, Legal Authorities, Exercise After Action Reports, etc.



Functions Performed by AOR

▶ Use Worksheet #B2

- Select one AOR from worksheet #B1 and write in down at the top of the form:
- Next, list the functions performed under this AOR and include a brief description of the activities typically performed by each function



Step 2: Identify Essential Functions

- ▶ Once a list of all functions is compiled, the COOP planning team, in conjunction with management, must determine the criteria for selecting essential functions
- ▶ Determine what functions must continue under all circumstances



Step 2: Identify Essential Functions

- ▶ Pitfalls to avoid
 - Improper identification of essential functions will have a negative effect on your COOP





Step 3: Prioritize Essential Functions

- ▶ Use Worksheet #B3
- ▶ Prioritize functions according to those activities that are pivotal to resuming operations
- ▶ Prioritization requires determination of:
 - Time criticality of each essential function
 - Sequence for recovery of essential functions and their critical processes



Step 3: Prioritize Essential Functions

- ▶ Use Worksheet #B4
- ▶ Use a tier system to represent the timing of bringing each function up to an operational status during an emergency
 - Tier 1 = (0 – 12 hrs)
 - Tier 2 = (13 hrs to 1 week)
 - Tier 3 = (1 week to 2 weeks)
 - Tier 4 = (2 weeks to 30 days)
 - Tier 5 = (30 + days)



Step 3: Prioritize Essential Functions

- ▶ Use Worksheet #B5
- ▶ Used to further evaluate essential agency functions.
- ▶ Only use this worksheet for those functions determined to be critical or essential.



Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

Use Worksheet #B6 & B7

Examine the processes & services that support Essential Functions:

▶ Staffing

- Personnel are properly trained & credentialed for their COOP responsibilities
- Possess the authority to perform the assigned essential function
- Are capable of serving as a backup for a primary COOP team member



Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

Staffing (Cont)

▶ Other considerations:



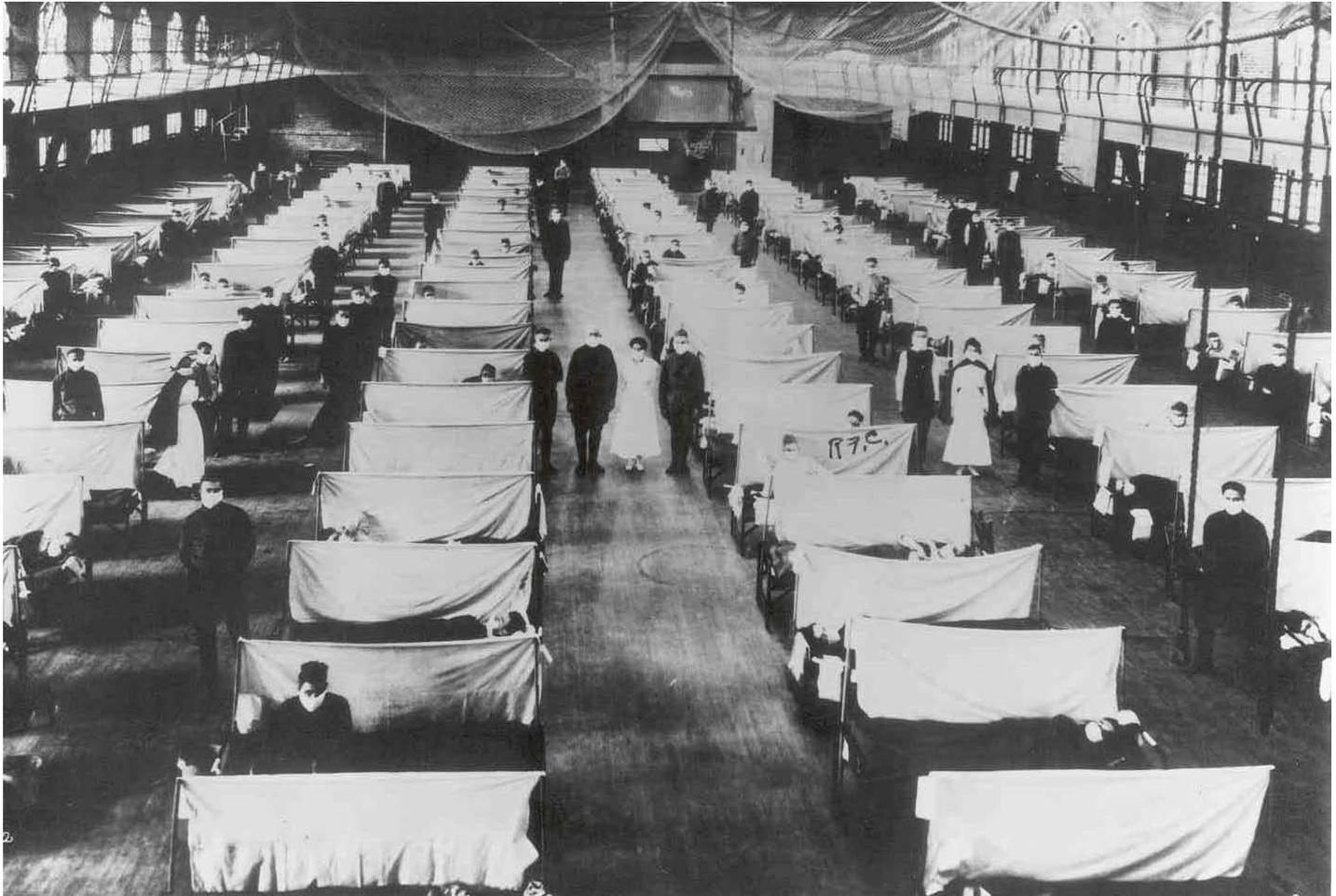
- Can the employee work long hours?
- Would serving as an emergency response group member cause personal hardship?
- Can the employee remain calm in an emergency?



**What else should
you consider when
determining COOP
Staffing?**



What about a Flu Pandemic?





Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

- ▶ What about a Flu Pandemic?
 - Recommend planning for 40% absenteeism rate for periods of about 2 weeks at the height of the pandemic wave
 - Absent for 4–6 weeks
 - Some may never return
 - Influenza comes in waves, each lasting 6–8 weeks with several months between waves



Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

- ▶ Equipment and critical systems
 - Identify computer systems, communications capabilities, unique equipment, tools
- ▶ Vital Records & Databases
 - Identify the types of data necessary to support essential functions (hard copy and electronic)
 - Clearly outline the processes to retrieve vital records and information when deployed



Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

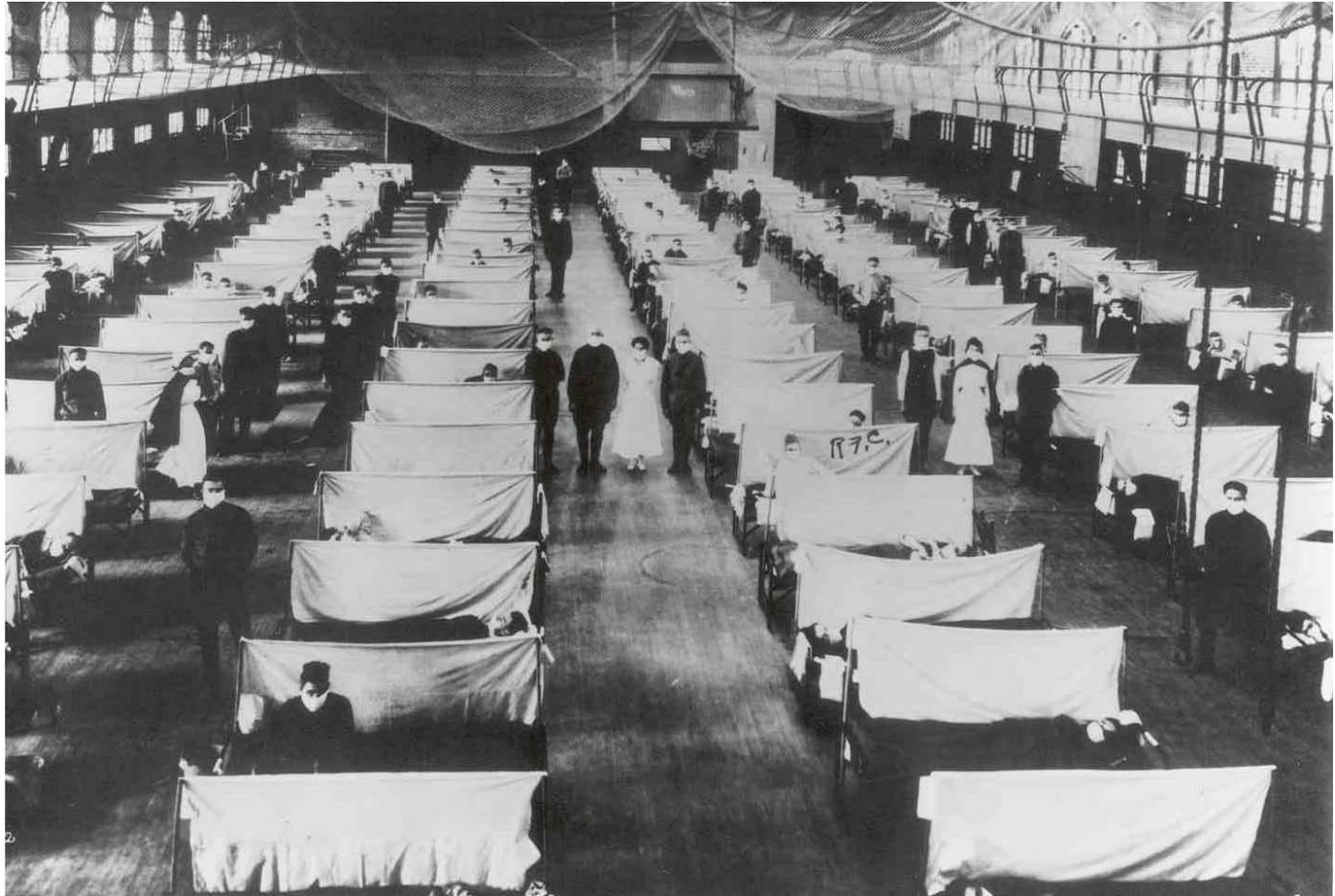
- ▶ **Supplies**
 - Equipment, office supplies
- ▶ **Review Essential Functions Annually**
 - Missions change / Customers change



What other Resource Requirements should you consider?



What about a Flu Pandemic?





Step 4: Determine Resource Requirements

- ▶ Review the adverse effects that a pandemic could have on critical contract and support services that your agency relies on to deliver essential functions
- ▶ Develop mitigation strategies to address possible shortages of supplies and services



Summary

- ▶ This unit:
 - Introduced and defined Essential Functions
 - Identified the 4–Step Process
 - Identify All Functions
 - Identify Essential Functions
 - Prioritize Essential Functions
 - Determine Resource Requirements
 - Pandemic Influenza Considerations

Questions/Comments?