



Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Marine Fisheries

Training | Michael S. Loeffler | July 2023



Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

What is the COOP and why should I Care?

- Required by N.C. General Statute 147-33.89
- Business Continuity Plan (BCP): A plan that details how an individual organization will ensure it can continue to perform its Essential Functions during a wide range of emergencies. (FEMA)
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) – An effort within individual organizations to ensure they can continue to perform their Essential Functions during a wide range of emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies. (FEMA)



Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Purpose:

- Outlines priorities and procedures to restore essential DMF operations following events that disrupt normal business functions.
- Examples:
 - Extreme weather events (hurricanes, floods, etc.)
 - Pandemic disease outbreaks
 - Specific problems to specific areas (e.g., flooding of a LAN room)



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Scope

- Applies to DMF processes and operations by location.
- DMF staff located in the Wilmington and Washington Regional Offices (WIRO and WARO, respectively) fall under the regional office COOPs. Once these offices are re-established by the regional office administrator, DMF program critical processes and priorities will restart operations.
- Addresses:
 - Normal business services
 - Services provided during emergency situations



Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Objectives:

- Ensures continuous performance of DMF essential functions during an emergency.
- Ensures safety to DMF employees.
- Protects essential equipment, records, and other assets.
- Reduces disruption of operations.
- Minimizes damage and losses.
- Achieves orderly recovery from emergency operations.
- Identifies relocation sites and ensures operational and managerial requirements are met before an emergency occurs.



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Training

- DMF employees must be aware of the plan and how to implement during an event that disrupts operations.
 - This power point
 - Staff meeting discussions by team leaders
 - Updated personal contact information
- The division conducts an annual review and updates when necessary.
- The plan is tested through scheduled and unscheduled events:
 - Tabletop exercises (scheduled)
 - Snow days (unscheduled)
 - Power outage (scheduled and unscheduled)
- Hard copies* of the COOP will be distributed to be maintained at the office and home locations:
 - Director
 - Deputy Director
 - Section Chiefs
 - Other identified staff

*The COOP contains confidential information and is only shared and accessed by authorized individuals.



Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

Essential Functions (Business Processes)

- Statewide Critical - affects large portion of the state's population or statewide core functions and needs to be restored within one (1) week or serious consequences will threaten the future of the mission.
 - Zero (0) functions identified in DMF
- Agency Critical - affects department's core functions and needs to be restored within one (1) week. These processes must be restored or replaced by alternate processes from one week to one month to ensure a minimal level of service to citizens. Can be delayed until support systems (e.g. computer, phone service, and transportation) are restored.
 - Eight (8) functions identified in DMF
- Program Critical - affects a program's core functions and needs to be restored within one (1) week to a time not exceeding one (1) month.
 - 30 functions identified in DMF
- Non-Critical - little or no impact on core functions - Can be delayed for longer than one (1) month without serious consequence to the mission. These processes are not included in this COOP
 - DMF did not identify any, but if not listed as agency or program critical, would be considered non-critical





Agency Critical Essential Functions

- COOP Development and Activation
- Compliance (provide law enforcement communications)
- Compliance (monitoring for fisheries regulations and public health regulations by land, water, and air)
- Laboratory Operations and Analysis
- Health Safety - Recreational Waters, Certified Shellfish/Crustacea Plants, & Harvesting
- Public Information Office (Communication)
- Technical IT Support (Computers, Software and IT Infrastructure)
- Facilities (division-owned)



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Program Critical Essential Functions

Vessel, Vehicle and Heavy Equipment Outfitting & Maintenance	Commercial Fisheries Statistics Programs - Trip Ticket Program	Permit Program
GIS Program	Commercial Fisheries Statistics Program - Quota Monitoring	Construct and Maintain Artificial Reefs
Accounts Receivable and Payable	Commercial Fisheries Statistics – Logbooks	Socio-Economic Program
Budget Planning and Analysis	Recreational Fisheries Statistics - North Carolina Coastal Angling Program	Support to the Marine Fisheries Commission
Purchasing Services	Recreational Fisheries Statistics - Tagging Program	Federal Aid
Warehouse Operations	Recreational Fisheries Statistics - Creel Surveys	Fishery Management Plans
Human Resources	Commercial License Program	Fishery Stock Assessments
Fishery Biological Data Collection	Coastal Habitat Protection Plan	Public Trust/Submerged Lands Program
Biological Database Management	Recreational License Program	Capital and Repair/Renovation Coordination
Shellfish Lease Program	Systems Development and Coordination	Mapping Shellfish Habitat

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Essential Functions (Business Processes)

- Each function has an assigned business owner – a section chief

Succession of Order

- Necessary in case the primary, key contacts are unavailable or unable to execute their duties.
- Division Level (in order):
 1. Director (Environmental Division Director)
 2. Deputy Director (Environmental Program Manager I)
 3. Marine Patrol Chief (MF Law Enforcement Director)
 4. Fisheries Management Section Chief (Environmental Program Supervisor II)
 5. Habitat and Enhancement Section Chief (Environmental Program Supervisor II)
 6. Shellfish Sanitation & Recreational Water Quality Section Chief (Environmental Program Supervisor II)

After the first notification by the Director/Deputy Director, additional contacts are identified through a call tree following the chain of command to the following (each section is to maintain a call tree so that all employees are notified).

1. Section Chief (Essential Functions Leader and Team Leader)
2. Section Chief notifies next in line
3. Supervisors notify employees

Note: Supervisors and employees are to keep each other informed of their status

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Succession of Order by Location

Location	First	Second	Third	Fourth
All Locations	Director/Deputy Director	Marine Patrol Colonel	Fisheries Management Section Chief	Habitat & Enhancement Section Chief
Morehead City – Headquarters	Director/Deputy Director	Marine Patrol Colonel	Fisheries Management Section Chief	Habitat & Enhancement Section Chief
Morehead City – Central District Office	Shellfish Sanitation & Recreational Water Quality Section Chief	Fisheries Management Southern District Manager	Marine Patrol Captain	Fisheries Management Environmental Program Supervisor I
Elizabeth City	Fisheries Management Environmental Program Supervisor I	Senior* Conservation Biologist II	Senior* DMF Employee	
Manteo	Marine Patrol Captain	Fisheries Management Northern District Manager	Senior* Conservation Biologist II	Senior * DMF Employee
South River	Marine Mechanic Supervisor I	Senior Research Vessel Captain	Senior* DMF Employee	
WIRO/WARO	Regional Office Manager	Environmental Program Supervisor II/Environmental Program Supervisor I (WIRO), Environmental Program Supervisor I (WARO)	Marine Patrol Captain (WIRO), Senior* Conservation Biologist II (WARO)	Senior* Conservation Biologist II (WIRO), Senior* DMF Employee (WARO)
*Senior = length of state service				

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Essential Functions (Business Processes) Teams

- Responsible for leading, maintaining, response, and recovery

Team	Team Leader
DMF Administration and Management Team	Director and Deputy Director
DMF Administrative and Maintenance Services Team	Administrative and Maintenance Services Section Chief
DMF COOP Team	Director and Deputy Director
DMF DIT Information Technology Team	DIT DMF Section Chief
DMF Fisheries Management Team	Fisheries Management Section Chief
DMF Habitat and Enhancement Team	Habitat and Enhancement Section Chief
DMF Law Enforcement Team	Marine Patrol Colonel (Section Chief)
DMF License and Statistics Team	License and Statistics Section Chief
DMF Public Information Team	Public Information Officer
DMF Shellfish Sanitation & Recreational Water Quality Team	Shellfish Sanitation & Recreational Water Quality Team Section Chief



Reconstitution

- Once transfer of essential functions (business processes) has occurred, DMF will provide a status report for the following:
 - DMF staff
 - Employee displacement reports
 - Emergency response
 - Damage assessment and security of facilities
 - IT systems
 - Vital records assessment
 - Priority recovery efforts
 - Situation reports



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Alternate or Reduced Facility Operations

- If one or more offices become inaccessible, essential business functions and operations will be transferred or replicated.
- The Director, Deputy Director, and Essential Function's Team Leader will coordinate to transfer processes.

Morehead City Headquarters	Morehead City – Central District Office	Elizabeth City	Manteo	South River
1. Employee homes (teleworking)	1. Employee homes (teleworking)	1. Employee homes (teleworking)	1. Employee homes (teleworking)	1. Employee homes (teleworking)
2. DMF Central District Office	2. DMF Headquarters	2. Manteo	2. Elizabeth City	2. DMF Headquarters
3. DEQ Regional Office (WARO or WIRO)	3. DEQ Regional Office (WARO or WIRO)	3. DEQ Regional Office (WARO)		3. DMF Central District Office
4. DEQ Headquarters	4. DEQ Headquarters			

Note: DMF staff located in the WIRO and WARO fall under the regional office COOPs' alternative worksites. Most likely first alternative worksite will be employee homes.

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Summary

- Essential functions leaders and team leaders need to understand their role in implementing the plan.
- Circumstances (disasters) can place any employee in charge of operations (succession of order).
- Use opportunities such as snow days, power outages, etc. to test call trees and the plan.

