IT Program Assessment
FEMA – Infrastructure

Review

The DHS CIO conducted a comprehensive program review of the FEMA Infrastructure program during September 2011. Program observations include the following:

In its current state, the Network Managed Services (NMS) system does not meet all of the Fault, Configuration, Accounting, Performance, Security (FCAPS) model criteria as described in the International Standards Organization (ISO) Telecommunications Management Network model. The Program Governance is managed through consistent engagement with stakeholders and customer advocate liaisons to ensure requirements and expectations are met. In addition, program management disciplines are being conducted; specifically focusing on risk and configuration management.

Risk are being identified and mitigated, as well as ensuring that all systems go through a well-documented enterprise-wide configuration management process

The program has a number of risks:

- If the component does not invest in Network Infrastructure Lifecycle Refresh then the viability of the FEMA NMS remains at significant risk
- If the impact on the help desk function is not carefully managed and prioritized then activities such as email migration, disaster activity, and the addition of new customer support areas is at risk
- If the agency does not provide for equipment refresh then desktop support will be hampered and have limited value
- If IT infrastructure in the buildings within the National Capital Region (NCR) are not upgraded then the network may be at risk.
- If telephone systems that have reached end-of-life or do not provide wireless capability then maintaining the system is questionable
- If aging and end-of-life A/V equipment is not replaced then frequent system outages will continue to occur
- If staff levels are not adjusted for day-to-day operations and contingencies then the program may not be able to continue normal service when staff are deployed to contingency sites

Mitigation Strategy

The FEMA Infrastructure program has “way forward” plans that include comprehensive IT infrastructure assessment and planning to refresh the network and upgrade the infrastructure. The agency must also ensure that the help desk function is manned appropriately to provide satisfactory user support. All systems go through a well-

documented enterprise-wide configuration management process. FEMA must also address the need for equipment refresh and facility upgrades to preclude system outages. Identify all end-of-life telephone systems and take steps to upgrade or replace before the entire system suffers a catastrophic failure. If the use of A/V equipment is considered a priority then the agency must plan for replacement of these aging systems. The program is in the initial stages of undergoing a human resource performance planning exercise to ensure “right size” resources are available.

Assessment

The FEMA Infrastructure program continues to manage current resources well in order to meet the requirements of day-to-day operations. The program will implement it’s “way forward” plans as they materialize per the schedule for completion during FY2012. The program will be closely monitored to evaluate the results of its comprehensive planning efforts. The CIO assesses the FEMA Infrastructure program as Level 3 – Medium Risk.

Score: 3