At a Glance

EPA Can Better Assure Continued Operations at National Computer Center Through Complete and Up-to-Date Documentation for Contingency Planning

What We Found

We found that key NCC and information security system contingency planning documents were either not up to date or did not exist. These documents should contain the detailed guidance and procedures necessary for restoring a damaged system. Three NCC contingency plans had several required elements missing. The latest version of the NCC Disaster Recovery Plan was missing telephone numbers for some points of contact and had incorrect telephone numbers for others. In addition, we found that a contingency plan with recovery information specific to a system that maintains data on emergency equipment availability did not exist.

> **Timely recovery of NCC operations from a disaster may be hindered by the lack of documented information needed for the full functioning of all NCC operations.**

NCC has not made it a priority to put into place a process to keep its information security system contingency planning documents current. NCC has also not established processes to alert management that the Business Impact Analysis is outdated. Also, owners of a sampled application had not created a contingency plan that contains recovery information specific to the system. Without up-to-date contingency planning documents, NCC cannot identify and prioritize information systems and components critical for supporting the organization's mission and business processes, which could affect NCC's ability to respond timely and effectively to an unforeseen disaster.

Recommendations and Planned Agency Corrective Actions

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information develop and implement a process to keep the center's information security contingency planning documents current, update and communicate the status of the Business Impact Analysis that identifies and prioritizes information systems and components critical to supporting the EPA's mission, and develop and implement a process to ensure that all contact information for disaster recovery teams is kept up to date.

We also recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste and Emergency Response develop a contingency plan for the Emergency Management Portal system that identifies system-specific recovery strategies.

The recommendation addressees agreed to take sufficient corrective action for all recommendations.