

VA ENTERPRISE DESIGN PATTERNS IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS



Office of Technology Strategies (TS)
Office of Information and Technology (OI&T)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope

The purpose of this Enterprise Design Pattern (EDP) is to provide guidance to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) projects on how to conduct a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) to support contingency planning, including Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Disaster Recovery Plans (DRP). This guidance will ensure that all projects complete BIAs in a standardized manner to support the completion of risk assessments and the development of contingency plans per VA Directive 6500 policies.

A BIA, as defined by National Institute of Standards and Technology Special Publication (NIST SP) 800-34, Rev. 1, Contingency Planning Guide for Federal Information Systems, is an analysis of an information system's requirements, functions, and interdependencies. A BIA is required to correlate information systems with critical mission/business processes (e.g., VA's Mission Essential Functions¹ (MEFs)) and respective services. BIA outcomes characterize system contingency requirements, priorities, and the consequences of a disruption. These outcomes inform leadership and system/process owners on investment and recovery strategies for mission critical systems and processes. Additionally, the outcomes provide contingency planning requirements, priorities, backup plans, recovery plans, and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) security controls for all VA System Inventory (VASI) systems and non-VASI systems in accordance with Federal Continuity Directive 1 (FCD 1), NIST SP 800-34, Rev. 1 and VA Directive 6500.8 (Appendix D), Information System Contingency Planning.

Business Need

A process-based BIA determines level of risk, recovery time requirements and objectives, vulnerability values, and required mitigation strategies for continued MEF support. Out-comes from a process-based BIA will aid in the development of Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans for the continuation of essential functions. A system-based BIA correlates systems with critical mission/business processes and serves to characterize the consequences of a disruption to those systems. Currently, per VA Directive 6500.8, Information System Contingency Planning, all systems listed in the VA Systems Inventory Systems of Record (VASI SOR) are required to conduct a system-based BIA prior to obtaining an Authority to Operate (ATO). It will determine the mission and business processes supported by the system, the recovery criticality² of the system including impact level and time metrics, and recovery investment requirements for the system.

Approach

A BIA validates the VA Primary Mission Essential Function (PMEF) to “provide medical and hospital services for Veterans, and during a disaster or emergency, for civilian victims as appropriate,” and validates VA’s MEFs so they continue despite a disruption of normal activities or resume rapidly thereafter. Additionally, a BIA informs contingency planning efforts that directly address a material weakness identified by VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) during its fiscal year (FY) 2015 FISMA audit (Finding 5, Recommendation 24), as referenced in Appendix D.

A standardized approach to an enterprise BIA is required to adequately assess, identify, and prepare for the impact of a disruption to mission critical systems, vital business processes, or MEFs. A process-based BIA will help determine which processes are mission critical. Conversely, a system-based BIA will help determine which systems require more planning, preparation, support, investments, and recovery strategies. A BIA will also support consistency across other contingency planning artifacts such as COOP, Business Continuity Planning (BCP), and DRP.

[Enterprise Design Patterns](#) (EDPs) are developed by TS in coordination with internal and external subject matter experts and stakeholders. An EDP is a reusable capability guidance document that identifies best practice approaches and resources for achieving VA IT strategic objectives. The EDP Team uses industry trends and innovations; enterprise architectural standards; and guiding principles for capabilities and constraints to improve efficiency and effectiveness and define solutions to reoccurring technical problems. The EDP helps guide the design of IT systems and services by VA project teams.