

VA ENTERPRISE DESIGN PATTERNS IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT CONTINGENCY PLANNING



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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope

Many business functions within Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) are dependent on Information Technology (IT) systems. These include benefits claims processing, disbursement allocation, burial arrangements, and health records. Interruptions and disruptions to these systems could delay health claims processing; disability disbursement; effective treatment of patients by VA physicians; and burial of a Veteran.

Business Need

This EDP identifies contingency planning gaps within VA and recommends best practices for bridging those gaps. The document can be used to evaluate and update existing policies, and create new policies which will provide the authority and guidance necessary to: man-date developing and maintaining effective contingency plans; develop comprehensive recovery strategies so that systems can be recovered quickly and effectively following a disruption; streamline the current ISCP assessment process required for all systems deemed “Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) High”; and to create an evaluation methodology that assesses the completeness of contingency plans.

Approach

Solutions for bridging contingency planning gaps within VA include: ensuring authoritative oversight of contingency planning throughout the enterprise; establishing evaluation criteria to determine a contingency plan’s compliance with NIST 800-34, Rev. 1 and VA Hand-book 6500.8; leveraging a best practice tool that interoperates with the Information System Contingency Planning Assessment (ISCPA), assesses contingency planning within VA, and flags outdated or

incomplete system information; and incorporating a training program that better prepares system owners for the contingency planning assessment process.

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.