VITA's Role in Telework

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Opportunities for State and Private Sector Employees
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Pandemic Readiness and Telework

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Pandemic Overview

- Virginia Department of Health advises it is a not a matter of *IF* there is a pandemic, but rather *WHEN*

- Pandemic planning assumptions are unique:
  - Events last months rather than days or weeks
  - Multiple waves of occurrence, not one
  - Reduces workforce by 30-40%

VITA's Pandemic Planning Team

- VITA Pandemic Flu Preparedness Committee
    - Convened in May 2006
    - Committee consists of functional and technical subject matter experts from VITA and Northrop Grumman
    - Telework is one aspect of readiness plan
        - VITA is addressing telework for its employees, as well as maintaining operations for Executive Branch agencies

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Pandemic Readiness

- Goal: Maintain essential Commonwealth functions
    - The definition of "essential" is different due to the longer time period associated with a pandemic event
    - Challenge for telework and all infrastructure service provisioning is identifying which Commonwealth functions are essential
    - Once essential functions are identified, the capacity needed to support telework can be assessed

Pandemic Readiness

- The Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, under the direction of the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, has formed Continuity of Operations and Pandemic subcommittees
  - VITA is participating in both subcommittees
  - Subcommittees working to establish priorities for continuing and restoring government functions
  - Established priorities will assist in assessing the capacity for delivery of technology services in the event of an occurrence

Commonwealth Networks and Telework

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Network Background

- Current Executive Branch network environment
  - VITA runs approximately 85 separate networks
    - Originally, these networks were independently established for each agency
  - Each network possesses individual characteristics, creating a heterogeneous environment
    - This makes a single approach to managing network infrastructure, including remote access to the network in support of telecommuting, not viable

- In near term, VITA's ability to aggressively promote telework is directly influenced by disparate network environment

- VITA is working and will continue to work with agencies to support telework

Network Background

- Transformed network environment coming
    - A single, centrally-managed network serving the Commonwealth (or "enterprise network") will be ready in 2009
        - Network being built as part of IT Partnership with Northrop Grumman

- Will serve as foundation for a spectrum of telework solutions
    - When VITA offers multiple remote access solutions, that can be available for all customer agencies, each solution will only need to be implemented once

Current Telework Environment

- Individual agency approach to telework mirrors disparate network environment
  - Some agencies are aggressively implementing telework, others are not, and there are many in between
  - Absence of Commonwealth-wide telework policy contributes to inconsistent telework implementation
    - Agencies establish own telework policies under current Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Telecommuting policy

- Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance is reviewing state practices and policies related to telework as first step to helping facilitate greater telework implementation
  - Office established within the Office of Secretary of Technology pursuant to Executive Order 35 (2006) in September

Current Telework Environment

- Services available from VITA today that support telework include:
  - Virtual private network
  - Web-based access to e-mail
  - Wireless e-mail (e.g. BlackBerry) and mobile phone

- Agency telework plans must comply with Commonwealth security policy, standards and guidelines
  - Results of upcoming SJR 51 (2006) report by Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) are expected to reinforce APA's "previously reported issues and highlight the fact that security in the Commonwealth continues to be high risk"

Telework Options

- Agencies seeking to establish a telework program, or build upon an existing program, will need to consider many choices with network implications, including:
    - Connection
        - Dial-up
        - Web access
        - Virtual private network (or VPN)
    - Computer and peripheral ownership
        - State-owned
        - Employee-owned
    - Telework applications
        - E-mail
        - Network file access
        - Other enterprise applications (e.g. CARS)
        - Agency-specific applications

Agency Costs

- Directly influenced by technical factors
  - Generally, the more technical work necessary to establish an agency's desired telework environment, the greater the cost

- Technology on market today that facilitates secure, remote access
  - However, this may introduce significant costs per agency implementation
  - We recommend that Agencies balance present telework goals against arrival of enterprise network in 2009

To Explore Telework, Agencies Should…

- To explore telework, agencies should contact their VITA Customer Account Manager

- VITA's initial questions:
  - Has the agency analyzed its telework business needs?
  - Does the agency have a telework policy in place based on current statute (§ 2.2-2817.1)?
  - Does the agency's network have adequate security?

![VITA - Virginia Information Technologies Agency]

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