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**Free handbook helps transportation agencies plan Continuity of Operation and Continuity of Government (COOP/COG)**

*Mineta Transportation Institute publication also benefits private industry*

**San Jose, Calif., October 26, 2011** – The [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://transweb.sjsu.edu) (transweb.sjsu.edu) has just published a handbook to help transportation agencies create their Continuity of Operation and Continuity of Government (COOP/COG) plans while complying with the federally mandated National Incident Management System (NIMS). [\*Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government for State-Level Transportation Organizations\*](http://transweb.sjsu.edu/project/2976.html) was written for the public sector, but it also can be used by private industry to develop its own business continuity plans. Created by Professional Continuity Practitioners Frances Edwards, PhD, and Daniel Goodrich, the handbook is available for free download from <http://transweb.sjsu.edu/project/2976.html>

The book is unique because, while the federal government requires specific compliance, it does not specify how COOP/COG plans should be created, especially as they relate to state-level transportation agencies, the entire State Highway System, and the responsibility to support specific essential functions related to the State DOT Director's role in the governor's cabinet. There is also no guidance on where the COOP/COG planning and organizing fits into the NIMS at the local or state-level department or agency. This has left local, state, tribal and territorial government agencies, and private sector owners of critical infrastructure and key resources, to create their own solutions – a challenge that can be daunting and, at worst, uncoordinated. This handbook solves that problem by providing easy-to-follow guidelines that can be implemented across the organization or among agencies.

“In an emergency, organizations must remain in operation first in order to help their constituents,” said Dr. Edwards. “If the critical transportation infrastructure is compromised – be it highways bridges or even an agency's computer system – the organization is incapacitated unless it has a plan in place to address maintaining its essential functions. Identifying these functions is the key to success.”

This report covers the research conducted to determine how to integrate COOP/COG into the overall NIMS approach to emergency management, including a connection between the emergency operations center (EOC) and the COOP/COG activity. The first section presents the research and its findings, analysis and recommendations. The second section provides training for the EOC staff of a state-level transportation agency using a hybrid model of FEMA's Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Support Function (ESF) approaches, including a complete set of EOC position checklists, and other training support material. The third section provides training for the COOP/COG Branch staff of a state-level transportation agency, including a set of personnel position descriptions for the COOP/COG Branch members.

The handbook focuses on the most critical operational functions, offering a model essential-functions list to help organizations determine which of those functions must be supported at all costs and which can be suspended. Many agencies and organizations believe that if an emergency operations center (EOC) is planned out, then all the issues are covered, said Mr. Goodrich.

“That isn't necessarily true because it assumes that the EOC is being supported by the rest of the organization that is assumed to be intact,” he continued. “But what happens if half the necessary staff do not report to work? What happens if key internal services are off-line? How long can staff work without

receiving a check from payroll? What if a critical building is suddenly shut down due to health related concerns? We've taken those questions, put them into one publication, and provided a way to address them while remaining in compliance with federal requirements for public agencies."

Mr. Goodrich says that private industry can strip out the portions that relate specifically to the public sector and still have an excellent guidebook to help keep their businesses operating through an emergency.

Combining this document and MTI Report 11-01, [Generic Continuity of Operations/Continuity of Government Plan for State-Level Transportation Agencies](#), will give the end user not only a core COOP/COG plan, but also a training package to complement it. MTI Report 11-01 is also available for free download at <http://transweb.sjsu.edu/project/1080.html>

### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Frances Edwards, PhD, CEM is director of the Master of Public Administration program and professor of political science at San José State University. She is Deputy Director of the DHS NTSCOE of the Mineta Transportation Institute at SJSU, where she is also a Research Associate and teaches emergency management in the Master of Science in Transportation Management program. Her current research is focused on the continuity of operations process and its relationship to emergency management in transportation organizations. She is also researching issues related to climate change and transportation, and transportation security issues. Dr. Edwards is a member of the National Academy of Sciences Transportation Research Board's ABE40 Committee, focused on critical infrastructure security. She is widely published and is regarded as a leading authority in her field, with twenty years experience as an emergency management practitioner.

Daniel Goodrich, MPA, CEM, is an adjunct professor and Research Associate with the Mineta Transportation Institute at San José State University, where he teaches security for transportation managers. He was selected as a 2006 Fellow of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, and studied terrorism in Israel at Tel Aviv University. He is a recognized expert in security and emergency response, with experience in the city, county and private sectors.. Mr. Goodrich served in the US Marine Corps for ten years, including leadership positions in Security Forces. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from San José State University and is a Certified Emergency Manager.

### **ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE**

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer, focusing on multimodal surface transportation policy and management issues, especially as they relate to transit. MTI was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The Institute is funded by Congress through the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including grants from the US Department of Homeland Security. DOT selected MTI as a National Center of Excellence following competitions in 2002 and 2006. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from the Board's assessment of the transportation industry's unmet needs. That led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. Visit <http://transweb.sjsu.edu>

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