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Telework Exchange Federal Pandemic Flu Continuity of Operations Study Reveals Chronic “Autoimmune” Infrastructure Deficiencies

*Federal Employees Demand Telework Tonic –
Agencies Remiss in Not Prescribing Remote Operating Remedy*

ALEXANDRIA, Va., May 11, 2006 – The Telework ExchangeSM, a public-private partnership focused on eliminating telework gridlock in the Federal government, today announced the results of “Federal Contact: Bird Flu in America” – a Federal government pandemic flu Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning preparedness study. The study reveals chronic deficiencies in the Federal government’s pandemic preparedness and that Feds plan to lobby their managers for telework options. Despite the fact that the President’s National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza directs Federal agencies to accelerate telework programs, managers are delinquent in taking the prescribed medicine.

The top-line study findings show that the Federal government will grind to a halt in the event of a pandemic – 73 percent of respondents assert that they will not show up at the office. Alarming, 71 percent of respondents assert that their agency is not prepared to continue operations in the event of a pandemic flu – only 21 percent of respondents know that their agency has a pandemic flu COOP plan. Running contrary to the President’s guidance, only a minority of respondents note that their agencies’ COOP plans incorporate telework – just 27 percent. The study indicates that telework improves agencies’ COOP performance. Of respondents who note that their agencies’ COOP plans incorporate telework, 73 percent assert that their agency is prepared to continue operations in the aftermath of a flu pandemic.

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Focused on a remedy, some 59 percent of respondents state they will approach their managers about clarifying their telework options to proactively prepare for a potential pandemic.

This study parallels the December 5, 2005 Telework Exchange/Citrix “COOP: A Wake Up Call” study. The change in results between the two studies shows that Federal employees’ confidence in agency COOP planning is falling. While 40 percent of respondents in December noted that their agency was not prepared to continue business operations in the wake of a man-made or natural disaster, today some 71 percent note that their agency is not prepared to continue business operations in the wake of a flu pandemic. Comparing Federal employees’ concerns between December 2005 and today shows that Feds are increasingly anxious. Today, 81 percent of respondents flag high gas prices as a significant concern versus 68 percent in December. Fifty-three percent cite concern about future terrorist attacks on U.S. soil up from 47 percent in the last study. Up from just 27 percent in December, today 37 percent of respondents are worried about a flu pandemic.

“We all hope that this is a phantom pandemic, however our Federal COOP shortcomings are clearly chronic and very real,” said Stephen W.T. O’Keeffe, executive director, Telework Exchange. “Katrina has shown us the price of neglecting proper planning. Telework provides immediate value today and helps safeguard against disaster tomorrow. We applaud Chairman Davis and Chairman Wolf for their leadership in examining Federal disaster preparedness. While the Federal government prescribes preparedness, it is clearly failing to take its own medicine.”

The Telework Exchange “Federal Contact: Bird Flu in America” – a Federal government pandemic flu COOP planning preparedness study is based on a survey of 266 Federal government employees. To download the full results, please visit www.teleworkexchange.com.

Telework Exchange Town Hall Meeting June 15 – Focus on Federal COOP

Telework Exchange will host a Town Hall Meeting on June 15 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. to discuss Federal telework and next steps to make telework a standard operating procedure across the Federal government.

The program includes a “Driving Your Continuity of Operations Planning: Maximizing Your Business Continuity Preparedness” session. Featuring Linda Koontz, Director of Information Management Issues, Government Accountability Office and Craig Wilson, First Responder Partnership Coordinator, Department of Homeland Office of National Capital Region Coordination, the session will be moderated by the Cyber Security Industry Alliance. For more information on the event, please visit www.teleworkexchange.com/townhallmeeting.

About the Telework Exchange, LLC

The Telework Exchange is a public-private partnership focused on demonstrating the tangible value of telework and serving the emerging educational and communication requirements of the Federal teleworker community. The organization facilitates communication among Federal teleworkers, telework managers, and IT professionals. For more information on Telework Exchange, please visit www.teleworkexchange.com.