



Report Summary

Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General

The Social Security Administration's Second Support Center Disaster Recovery Capability (Limited Distribution) (A-14-10-30110)

Our objective was to determine how the Second Support Center (SSC) will support the Social Security Administration's (SSA) current and future Disaster Recovery Plans.

We determined that SSA had taken steps to improve its disaster recovery posture to avoid an extended disruption of service should the National Computer Center (NCC) become unavailable. However, until the SSA validates the results of its Accelerated Disaster Recovery Environment exercise and the Information Technology Operations Assurance project goals are met, there is a risk of diminished service during the recovery period should the NCC become unavailable. Before October 2012, an extended disruption of service would limit the Agency's ability to provide service to the public within the first 7 days of a disaster. Furthermore, until SSA tests and validates the critical NCC applications restored at the SSC at a level of processing that represents the daily workload levels of the Agency, there is a risk that the systems will not fully function if the NCC is unavailable. This may increase the time the systems are unavailable, extending the disruption of service to the public.

Additionally, SSA only plans to recover critical workloads at either site in the case of a disaster. All non-critical workloads would be restored only if a business need arose. Without a documented plan for the recovery of non-critical workloads, many of SSA's management information systems, forecasting, cyclical, regional, and end-user developed applications will remain unavailable. Therefore, SSA should consider updating its plan to include recovering its non-critical workloads, if a business need arises. In addition, the Agency should continue to migrate its legacy disability systems to a new technology in a timely manner so the need for a commercial hot site could be minimized or eliminated.

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