

SSA Climate Action Plan Verbal Progress Report – July 19, 2023

1. What key accomplishments has your agency achieved in working toward implementing each of the priority actions outlined in your CAP?

SSA Response: The accomplishments related to our five priority actions in our CAP are related to activities that are continual daily operations as follows:

- Priority Action #1: Prepare for Increased Disruptions to the Power Supply from the Electricity Grid from Storms or Heatwaves:

We continue to utilize advanced metering systems to identify high-energy usage. This helps us determine if we can reduce electrical load and assess the need for any additional emergency generators and Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) systems.

In addition to our back-up generators, we utilize a campus cross tie system that allows us to supply 100 percent electrical power to the facilities on our headquarters (HQ) campus in the event of a power disruption from our initial supply source. In addition to the use of back-up generators, we have energy reduction plans that go into effect when the grid is reaching its capacity, usually during heat waves.

Additionally, we remain aware of any increased risks by following information from the National Climate Task Force, the National Climate Assessment reports, and through interagency initiatives.

- Priority Action #2: Plan Backup Water Supply to Respond to Reduced Water Supply for Facilities:

We are in the process of shifting Priority Action 2 from “Backup Water Supply” to “Outside Air Usage.” This shift focuses on how changes in outside air help us adapt quickly to changing environmental conditions, including airborne viruses and environmental events, such as the recent Canadian wildfires. We will update Priority Action #2 during the next iteration of our CAP submission.

- Priority Action #3: Prepare for Coastal Flooding, Including Increased Flooding, or Inundation in Coastal Locations:

We continue to monitor our delegated facilities for any imminent flooding caused by sea level rise. At our delegated facilities we do not foresee any impact from sea level rise or coastal flooding. Climate.gov is a resource we use to track climate change over time.

- Priority Action #4: Prepare for Increased Flooding in Non-Coastal Locations:

We monitor for any changes in flood plain areas that may affect our delegated facilities. If changes occur and the need arises to close and move personnel, we will relocate our staff to an alternate facility to maintain operations.

- Priority Action #5: Prepare for Increased Disruptions and Damage to Transportation Infrastructure:

We have internal processes in place where we oversee and inspect Government-owned roads and parking lots.

2. Are there pressing challenges and remaining opportunities related to implementing each of the priority actions outlined in your CAP? What are they?

SSA Response: We address our challenges and opportunities through our day-to-day work and therefore are not aware of such challenges in implementing our current priority actions..

3. What are the datasets, decision support tools, technical capabilities, and/or networks that have proven to be most useful for assessing climate vulnerabilities to your agency's mission, operations, services, assets, and facilities?

SSA Response: The main tool we use is our climate vulnerabilities assessment of our delegated facilities. Our staff rate the risk and vulnerabilities to the electrical supply at these sites due to heat events as low to medium. We rate these vulnerabilities as low to medium because our facilities have backup generator power. The assessments determined that the HQ buildings have enough generator power to remain 100 percent operational if a power grid failure occurred. Flooding vulnerability and risk ranked low to no impact on this assessment. All buildings are above sea level and there is very little to no impact from river flooding or increased precipitation. We rely on GSA to assess climate vulnerabilities for our leased facilities.

4. What significant gaps in data, capacity, and/or resources remain, and how is your agency addressing them?

SSA Response: We do not believe there are any significant data gaps that need to be addressed.

5. Are there interagency or external partnerships that have proven to be key in advancing implementation of your CAP?

SSA Response: We work closely with GSA when considering climate vulnerabilities of our leased locations and delegated facilities.

6. What approaches have been most effective in enhancing the climate literacy of your agency's workforce with respect to adaptation and resilience?

SSA Response: The Sustainability Speaker Series for the Federal Community hosted by the White House Office of the Federal Chief Sustainability Officer, which we share with agency employees, has been effective. Also, employees are provided climate literacy training through the Federal Energy Exchange, Sustainable Facilities Tool, and Federal Energy Management Program. Employees put this knowledge into practice during their work and personal lives by investing in water conservation, energy savings, and other environmental programs. We also have a Tackling the Climate Crisis webpage available to all agency employees that provides important information on how the agency support Climate Change

initiatives and how employees can implement changes at home.

7. How has your agency integrated environmental justice and equity when implementing priority actions outlined in your CAP?

SSA Response: No priority items outlined in our CAP require integration with environmental justice and equity. We do, however, work with GSA on identifying their efforts in accomplishing environmental justice priorities at our delegated facilities.