



Telework... Past, Present & Future

Working for America

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



Message from the President

“Today more than 40 million Americans work out of their homes during all or most of the week, plugged into the company network by telephone, fax, and computer. For families across America, this change has brought great convenience and flexibility. But for those with disabilities, it's nothing less than a revolution – opening a world of new opportunities and potential.”

- George W. Bush



Message from the Director



Director James: *“Telework is an important and attractive work option for the Federal Government and its employees, while providing another flexibility for responding to emergency situations. It also helps employees balance their work and personal responsibilities, benefits our transportation systems, conserves resources, and improves the quality of life while at the same time making federal service attractive to prospective employees and encouraging current employees to remain in federal service.”*

- Kay Coles James



Federal Telework Programs

Telework is an important and attractive work option for the Federal Government and its employees which:

- Provides flexibility for responding to emergency situations
- Helps employees balance their work and personal responsibilities
- Benefits our transportation systems & conserves resources
- Improves employees' quality of life while making federal service attractive to prospective employees
- Encourages current employees to remain in federal service



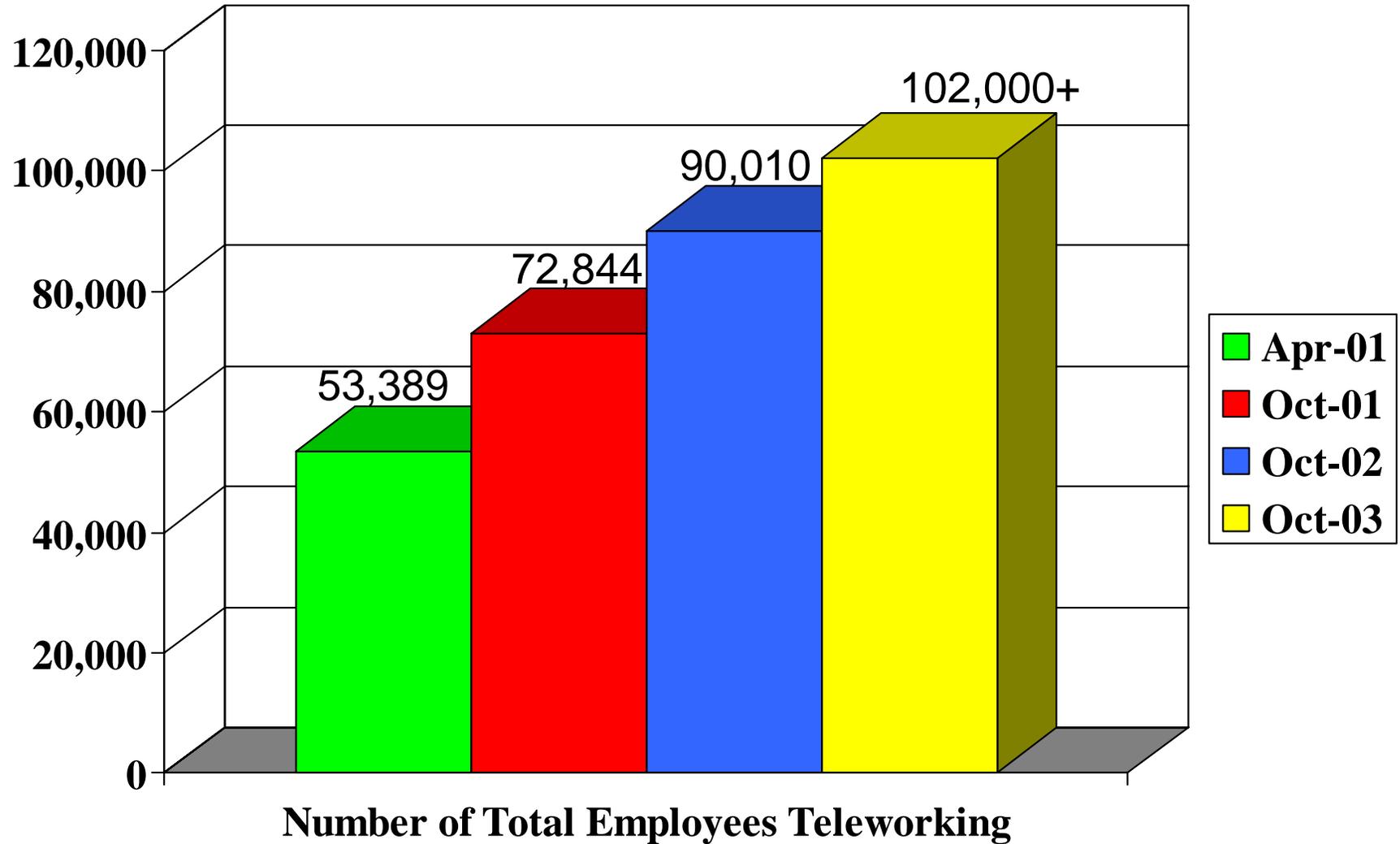
Telework in the Federal Government

- In October of 2000, Section 359 of Public Law 106-346 provided that:

“Each executive agency shall establish a policy under which eligible employees of the agency may participate in telework to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance.”

No later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of OPM shall provide that the requirements of this section are applied to 25 percent of the Federal workforce, and to an additional 25 percent each year thereafter.”

Federal Telework Growth Trend



What's New?

- Enhanced OPM/GSA web site, www.telework.gov
- Managers' Handbook
- "Telework...it works" Toolkit
- Telework 101 for Managers & Telework 101 for Employees on www.golearn.gov
- What's Newer?
 - Emphasis on telework as a key component of emergency planning



Emergency Planning

- Recent guidance on emergency planning has emphasized the role of telework
- Agencies have flexibility on how to use teleworkers in emergency situations

But,

- It won't happen spontaneously!
- A viable telework program is the foundation that must be in place!

A vertical strip of an American flag is visible on the left side of the slide, showing the stars and stripes.

Why is Telework an Important Part of Emergency Planning?

- Telework is a virtual resource solution
- Telework provides access to resources that may not be available otherwise
- Telework can augment COOP facility capacity during emergencies
- Some key staff may not report to COOP sites



Support that Can Be Provided by Teleworkers:

- Conduct agency financial transactions with appropriate security and authentication mechanisms
- Support leadership in accomplishing agency mission
- Provide remote administration of essential support systems
- Provide help-desk support
- Ensure continuity of business operations

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How to Prepare for Emergency Telework

- Develop a cadre of regularly scheduled “core” teleworkers
 - Teleworkers will experience working electronically, learn to communicate with colleagues and clients by doing it regularly
 - They won’t need to master a new computer program while responding to a disaster
 - Managers will learn how to supervise a “virtual workforce” by doing it under normal conditions



For Telework to Work Smoothly:

- Work must be organized to facilitate electronic communication & eliminate paper-based processes when possible
- Employees need to experience functioning in a “virtual office”
- Employees need to be linked via computer and telephone from home or alternative work sites
- Employees need to know how to connect with others via computer and telephone
- Managers need to be comfortable supervising people they don’t see regularly



Try the Soft Sell

- Situational status can sell telework to hesitant managers and employees
- Agency policy can be reviewed for clear distinction between core and situational telework
- Telework agreements can be tailored to the two categories
 - Core telework - must be regular and recurring at least 1 day a week
 - Situational telework - occasional and non-routine



Ease Them In

- The data show many **situational** teleworkers work away from the office almost as often as their **core** counterparts

But,

- **Situational teleworkers and their managers have not been willing to commit to the arrangement!**



Structure for Success

- Formalize situational arrangements
- Set a specific length of time for the trial period
- Move to core if both parties like the arrangement
- It's a no-risk, everybody-wins approach!



Other Planning Pointers

- Build emergency response contingencies into employees' telework agreements
- Include agency telework coordinators in disaster planning and exercises
- Help managers understand that telework is an important agency tool, not just a “nice to have” flexibility for employees



What's More in 2004?

- OPM/GSA will develop more training modules
- OPM and GSA are integrating telework as a human resources flexibility into training for supervisors and managers!
- OPM/GSA will continue to provide guidance and assistance

But,

- Responsibility to achieve is with the agencies!

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Future of Federal Telework

- All agencies will have a policy
- Organizational culture will shift
- Employee and organizational leadership concerns will continue to be addressed
- Agencies will get on-going guidance
- Telework will be incorporated into various OPM Management Development Center courses

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Future of Federal Telework

- Higher Utilization Rates
- Increased telework Training
- Increased marketing, demonstration, and exposure to successful programs and IT solutions



Future of Federal Telework

- Communication of emerging trends and technologies continues
- Agencies take proactive role in partnering to achieve Congressional goals
- Telework evolves as new workplace flexibility
- Recruitment of individuals with disabilities and short-term illnesses continues with technology made available to meet their needs



OPM/GSA Telework Resources

- Governmentwide telework website, www.telework.gov for comprehensive information and links
- Telework courses for employees and managers available free to Federal employees on www.golearn.gov.
- Telework promotional materials available
- Telework incorporated into various OPM Management Center course development



Contact Information

For more information,
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