

PUBLISHED DOCUMENT

PD 25111 Business continuity management – Guidance on human aspects of business continuity



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Foreword

Publishing information

This Published Document is published by BSI and came into effect on 30 September 2010. It was prepared by BSI panel BCM/1/-/8, under the authority of Technical Committee BCM/1, *Business continuity management*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

Use of this document

As a guide, this Published Document takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification and particular care should be taken to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

It has been assumed in the preparation of this Published Document that the execution of its provisions will be entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, for whose use it has been produced.

Presentational conventions

The provisions in this Published Document are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

The word “may” is used in the text to express permissibility, e.g. as an alternative to the primary recommendation of the clause. The word “can” is used to express possibility, e.g. a consequence of an action or an event.

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

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1 Scope

This Published Document (PD) gives guidance on the planning and development of human resource strategies and policies for the key phases following a disruption:

- coping with the immediate effects of the incident;
- managing people during the period of disruption (the continuity stage); and
- supporting staff after recovery of normal operations.

This PD supports business continuity, as covered in BS 25999, highlighting the needs of people who could be involved in, or affected by, a disruption. It provides guidance for anyone with responsibility for human resources associated with business operations. This covers top management through all levels of the organization: from those with a single site to those with a global presence; from small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) to organizations employing thousands of people. The extent of application depends on the organization's operating environment and complexity.

This PD is not a definitive guide to managing an incident, but a review of the implications for managing the impacts on staff and others who could be affected. It is not applicable to the activities of emergency planning inasmuch as that topic relates to civil emergencies.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this Published Document, the following terms and definitions apply.

2.1 business continuity

strategic and tactical capability of the organization to plan for and respond to incidents and business disruptions in order to continue business operations at an acceptable predefined level

[BS 25999]

2.2 business continuity management (BCM)

holistic management process that identifies potential threats to an organization and the impacts to business operations that those threats, if realized, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organizational resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities

NOTE Business continuity management involves managing the recovery or continuation of business activities in the event of a business disruption, and management of the overall programme through training, exercises and reviews, to ensure the business continuity plan(s) stays current and up-to-date.

[BS 25999]

2.3 business continuity plan (BCP)

documented collection of procedures and information that is developed, compiled and maintained in readiness for use in an incident to enable an organization to continue to deliver its critical activities at an acceptable predefined level

[BS 25999]

2.4 disruption

event, whether anticipated (e.g. a labour strike or hurricane) or unanticipated (e.g. a blackout or earthquake), which causes an unplanned, negative deviation from the expected delivery of products or services according to the organization's objectives

[BS 25999]

2.5 employee assistance programme (EAP)

contracted service provided to organizations, usually by external healthcare providers

NOTE Staff are provided with a freephone telephone number, which is usually 24-7. The telephone line is usually staffed by counsellors who can provide advice over the phone or arrange face-to-face counselling. The EAP maintains a geographical list of affiliated counsellors who provide counselling on its behalf. Callers can also access life management services that provide information on a wide range of issues, such as employment rights, divorce and money management. The organization has to understand what capability the EAP has for responding to incidents and for crisis awareness briefings.

2.6 human aspects of business continuity

elements associated with the management of people involved in, or affected by, a disruptive event in order to minimize trauma and maximize productivity and recovery, and achieve the objectives of business continuity

2.7 human impact analysis

method of determining the likely health and welfare effects of incidents, alternative actions or decisions

2.8 incident

situation that might be, or could lead to, a business disruption, loss, emergency or crisis

[BS 25999]

2.9 incident management plan

clearly defined and documented plan of action for use at the time of an incident, typically covering the key personnel, resources, services and actions needed to implement the incident management process

2.10 incident management team

management team specifically designated before or at the time of an incident to manage the organization's response

2.11 invacuate

move people to predetermined areas inside the building/site in order to protect them from external dangers during an incident

2.12 organization

group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships

EXAMPLE

Company, corporation, firm, enterprise, institution, charity, sole trader or association, or parts or combinations thereof.

NOTE 1 The arrangement is generally orderly.

NOTE 2 An organization can be public or private.

[BS EN ISO 9000:2005]

3 Overview of the human aspects of business continuity

3.1 Introduction

The causes of disruptions are many and varied, which is why business continuity management focuses on developing and delivering plans to manage the consequences of such disruptions through a series of predetermined, exercised and tested responses. Predicting the human response to a given set of events is more difficult, so it is useful to have in place a process that enables those responsible for the human aspects of business continuity to ensure that the needs of everyone who could be affected are taken into account.

Such a process is intended to ensure that the principal business processes of the organization are maintained or recovered within predetermined timescales following the recognition that normal operations have been disrupted, while meeting the needs of the people involved in delivering the business continuity solution.

3.2 The human impacts of disruption

The organization needs to understand the resources that might need to be deployed in order to maintain or recover operations. Business continuity management (BCM) good practice requires a business impact analysis (BIA) to be undertaken to identify the critical activities and processes that support the key products and services of the organization. Prioritizing the welfare and safety of people above other business concerns greatly enhances the organization's brand and its staff's motivation and morale.

However, BIAs might not take full account of the contributions made by different groups of staff members or individuals. Even where key personnel have been identified, the organization should be alert to the assumptions made about the ability or even willingness of these groups to respond in accordance with the business continuity plan (BCP). Therefore, the team responsible for developing BCPs should normally include a person responsible for people [human resources (HR)] in the organization.

The organization should consider the possible wider impacts of a disruption on groups and individuals who are not identified as key personnel for the maintenance or recovery of operations. Not only does the organization have responsibilities (including a duty of care) to a wide range of people, but these people include members of staff, upon whose loyalty the organization depends, and suppliers and customers with whom the organization has to maintain a continuing relationship (see Annex A).

Research by the Chartered Management Institute [1] has consistently shown that the most frequent disruptions to organizations are those involving failure of IT and communications technologies, loss of power and other utilities, and severe weather. BCM is concerned with the consequences of such events, and an understanding of the range of effects on people (see Annex B) will inform an understanding of the human issues that need to be addressed following an incident. It is therefore recommended that the BCM planning process includes a "human impact analysis" to complement the BIA. This should consider

the ways in which people could be affected by disruptions. Examples of the human impacts of the more frequent disruptions are given in Annex B.

In developing the response to a disruptive incident the organization should consider the well-being of the staff [a)] and the communications [b)] required to provide reassurance and motivation to those affected by the disruption. In addition, the organization should ensure that it has in place appropriate support services [c)] that can be activated when required. Each of these considerations should be systematically applied to the groups and individuals identified in Annex A, at each of the phases discussed in Clause 4, Clause 5 and Clause 6.

a) Well-being of staff

- Responding with urgency to assist those most directly affected by the incident.
- Ensuring the welfare and security of people for whom the organization is responsible.
- Responding to individual concerns and anxieties.
- Providing appropriate facilities for those responding to the incident.
- Remaining sensitive to the unpredictable nature of human responses.
- Treating all people with respect and in line with the organization's policies.

b) Communications

- Finding out where people are and determining their current condition and concerns.
- Telling people what has happened and providing reassurance.
- Explaining to people what needs to happen.
- Managing the need for information from staff and other affected persons.
- Taking account of the needs of individuals affected by the incident, recognizing that relevant information of value to the incident management team (IMT) could be forthcoming.

c) Mobilization of support services

- Mobilizing the services required to support and reassure all members of staff and enable the relevant persons to follow the procedures set out in the incident management plans and BCPs.
- Providing clear direction through effective leadership at all levels.
- Ensuring that all staff affected by the incident remain motivated and positively disposed towards the organization.

When an incident is over, it is important for staff involved in the response to receive some degree of reward or recognition. All staff affected by the incident need to know that changes will occur as a result of the incident; that learning has taken place to ensure that the incident is not repeated. Those who are not injured but have worked over and above their hours of work and taken on additional tasks should be thanked in some way for their efforts. This can be done informally and formally. It is usually very positive to involve managers and directors in a formal process of appreciation.

Those staff holding key responsibilities in responding to an incident should be aware of how people can behave when confronted with an unexpected incident. This may be achieved through appropriate training, perhaps psychological first aid or mental health first aid training. Such training should be cascaded to all those with front-line responsibility for staff in a crisis (care teams, first responders, human resources staff, occupational health teams). The training should include details of where front-line staff can off-load their own experiences after managing a crisis.

4 Arrangements for coping with the immediate effects of the incident

4.1 General

For many IMTs, the application of Clause 3 might be no more than what they regard as good management practice. However, under pressure even the most effective people managers can neglect the basic courtesies and respect due to staff members, customers and others.

Additionally, the consequences of certain disruptive incidents can place more complex demands on the IMT, for which even the best-planned exercises or good management practice cannot easily prepare the team. The most frequent of these is where evacuation of working facilities becomes necessary. In some cases, e.g. the threat from an explosive device in the vicinity of the workplace, the decision will be made to “invacuate”.

4.2 Evacuation/invacuation

4.2.1 General

The organization should identify a place(s) of safety where staff/visitors/contractors are to assemble when necessary; this may be away from the site or within the site, depending on the threat.

The organization should ensure that staff/visitors/contractors are aware of the evacuation/invacuation arrangements. Details should be included in induction programmes for new starters, and provided for visitors/contractors.

4.2.2 Evacuation

An evacuation occurs when people immediately move to a place of safety away from the building or site. Emergency procedures or action cards should be put in place to facilitate evacuation in response to, for example, fire, a suspect package, a bomb threat and white powder.

Additional assembly/muster areas should be identified in case the initial assembly/muster area cannot be occupied. Alternative assembly/muster areas should be identified at various distances from the site in case the original assembly/muster area falls within an emergency services cordon. If such a cordon is widened then people can be moved in a coordinated and controlled manner to these predetermined locations. Ideally, the assembly area should not only be easily identifiable and accessible but should offer shelter and protection.