Business Continuity - A Quick Checklist

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Introduction

Business continuity is relevant and applicable to every organisation regardless of size and complexity. An effective business continuity programme ensures that you can respond to threats and incidents effectively, continue to deliver your strategic objectives and includes:

- the identification of priorities and solutions to potential threats and disruptive events
- the creation of appropriate response structures and plans and,
- promotes validation and continuous improvement.

Use this quick checklist to look at your business continuity arrangement to identify what key steps you need to take.

If you need additional guidance, please use the Business Continuity Guidance document – a walk-through of the key stages of the business continuity lifecycle.

Managing your Business Continuity arrangements (Policy and Programme Management)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
1. Do you have a Business Continuity Policy in place?		
2. Does your policy outline the reasons for implementing business continuity and key prinicples?		
3. Does your policy outline how you should build and maintain your business continuity programme to keep key services running in the event of a disruption?		
4. Does your policy outline the scope of your business continuity programme e.g. which products and services are included and which are not?		
5. Is it clear who is accountable for business continuity within your organisation?		
6. Have roles and responsibilities been defined to support business continuity arrangements e.g. incident response staff?		
7. Do you have sufficient capacity and capability to manage and implement your business continuity programme?		
Embedding business continuity within your organisation (Embedding)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
8. Is business continuity seen as a priority in your organisation?		
9. Do you have a senior member of staff leading on business continuity?		
10. Is business continuity considered when setting objectives?		

11. Is business continuity integrated into working practices?		
12. Is business continuity discussed at meetings?		
13. Is business continuity considered when entering into new products or services?		
14. Do staff with responsibility for business continuity have the appropriate skills and competencies?		
15. Has a budget been identified to support business continuity?		
16. Have people received training on business continuity?		
Understanding your organisation (Analysis)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
17. Has your organisation undertaken a Business Impact Analysis (BIA)? (technique used to determine business continuity requirements)		
18. Have you identified the key products and services you need to keep up and running during a disruption?		
19. Are you clear which processes and activities support your key products and services?		
20. Have you assessed the impact if those key products and services were disrupted?		
21. Have you agreed a time period when you must recover your key products or services?		
22. Have you agreed the minimum level of service that is acceptable during a disruption?		
23. Do you understand what resources are required to keep your key products and services running?		
24. Do you understand any key dependencies linked to your key products or services?		
25. Have you considered the different threats that could disrupt your organisation?		
26. Have you assessed the impact of each threat?		
27. Have you assessed the probability of each threat?		
28. Have you prioritised the threats you need to put business continuity arrangements in place for?		

Designing your business continuity plans (Design)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
29. Have you used information from your BIA and threat assessment to inform your business continuity solutions (strategy to keep your key products and services running)?		
30. Are you clear what business continuity solutions are available e.g. alternative sites, remote working, data access, alternative supplier?		
31. Have you considered the costs versus benefits to help inform your business continuity solution?		
32. Have you considered putting in place measures to reduce the probability of the threat occurring or the impact if it did occur?		
33. Have you agreed a business continuity plan template which outlines the key elements you need to cover in your plan?		
Implementing your business continuity plan (Implementing)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
34. Do you have an incident response structure in place should a disruption occur?		
35. Is it aligned to your existing management structure?		
36. Are the business continuity solutions fully understood to ensure that key products and services are kept up and running?		
37. Would people know where to access your business continuity plans?		
38. Would people understand what to do in the first hour? first day? first few days?		
39. Is there a communications plan in place?		
40. Are communication channels clear?		
41. Does your plan include both activation and stand down procedures?		
Validating your business continuity plan (Exercising, maintaining and reviewing)	Yes/No/ Don't know	Actions
42. Has your business continuity plan been tested recently?		
43. Have lessons learned from any test been incorporated into your plan?		
44. Is your business continuity plan maintained in line with organisational changes to ensure it is accurate and up-to-date?		
45. Is your business continuity plan reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is stays relevant?		

This guidance is provided for information purposes based on Enterprise Risk Management best practice and is general and educational in nature.

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You acknowledge that over time, this guidance may become out of date and may not constitute best market practice.

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Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc
Benefact House
2000 Pioneer Avenue
Gloucester Business Park
Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4AW
www.ecclesiastical.com

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