

## **BUSINESS CONTINUITY FAQs**

### **What is Business Continuity?**

Business Continuity is the planning process that aims to ensure that whatever the cause of any direct or indirect incident such as failure within your supply chain, an act of terrorism or fire at your premises has a minimal effect on your business. It helps organisations anticipate, prepare for, mitigate, respond and recover from disruptions as quickly as possible with minimal effect on the business.

### **What is a Business Continuity Plan?**

A business continuity plan should be a set of instructions of what to do, and what not to do, at the time of a crisis. It is often created by someone, or a group of people, who know how the whole business is run.

Business continuity is about thinking ahead and planning for a crisis that could affect your business, making sure that it can survive. In short, it is about ensuring that a crisis does not become a disaster.

### **Why is it important to my Business?**

Nearly 1 in 5 businesses suffer a major disruption every year. Yours could be next and without a recovery plan you reduce your chances of survival. By making Business Continuity planning part of the way you run and organise your businesses it will assist you in recovering from the disaster/disruption as quickly as possible. It will ensure that your staff know their roles and responsibilities in the event of the unexpected and will result in a rapid well managed response to the disaster. It will also provide a framework for building resilience and the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of your key stakeholders, the reputation of the brand and value creating activities of your business.

Without a BCP you could suffer from:

- loss of business
- damage to reputation/land
- loss of customers
- loss of staff
- impact on cost of insurance
- loss of share value
- failure of business

### **Does a small company need a Business Continuity Plan?**

Yes, even a sole trader is advised to have systems in place to be able to continue his/her work in case of fraud, theft, sabotage, flooding, fire, IT and utility failures and terrorist attacks.

## **What does it involve?**

Working through an agreed process such as the key 5 steps outlined below:

1. Analyse/understand your business/business impact analysis.
2. Determine the business continuity management strategies.
3. Develop and implement a business continuity response.
4. Develop and build a business continuity culture.
5. Exercise, maintain and regularly audit your plan.

## **Why should I use a Business Continuity Plan?**

Experience shows that businesses are far more likely to survive a disaster if they have thought about it in advance, and planned accordingly.

1. Banks, investors, insurers, customers and suppliers will take a company that has a business continuity plan much more seriously.
2. Business continuity plans build employee confidence. Employees will appreciate the fact that the business is doing all it can to protect their safety and place of work.
3. In the end, business continuity is about responsible management. It makes a business a safer place to work and contributes to financial stability.

## **What systems should be in place to assist with a fast recovery programme?**

It is very important to focus on keeping back-ups and copies of documents off-site, as well as having a plan that focuses on your mission critical activities and caters for an alternative site to work from.

## **Is it as difficult as it sounds?**

No, the process and information gathered allows for a step by step approach to be adopted. You should appoint a senior person as project manager to manage and audit the process.

## **What will it cost to create a business continuity plan?**

The cost will be relatively little and at the end of the exercise you will have a plan to protect your business. The benefits of having a working continuity plan will outweigh any small expenditure.

## **Why can't I pay for a consultant?**

You can, the Business Continuity Institute (BCI) maintain a list of accredited practitioners.

Details of practitioners can be obtained from the BCI.

Telephone: 0870 603 8783  
Email: [www.thebci.org](http://www.thebci.org)  
Fax: 0870 603 8761

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Reading  
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However you will need to be involved in the process as you have the in depth knowledge of your business (needs and requirements) and ultimately the continuity arrangements need to be owned by management and staff.

## **Haven't I got enough to do?**

All Managers are busy people but you have a duty to ensure that the business is resilient enough to survive a disaster or major disruption. Time and Resources invested now will pay dividends in the event of a future disaster and remember the probability of some disaster or disruption affecting your business in the next five years is high.

## **How much time will it take?**

It depends on the organisation and the process you adopt but it should be kept simple and effective. Part of the process should be to consult with staff and bring them into the process, you may well rely upon them in an emergency. The smaller the size of your business, generally the less time it is likely to take.

## **How much will it cost?**

There is a cost involved in larger scale risk reductions but many recovery options cost little to implement, such as backing up data, replicating systems, having a list of emergency contact numbers etc.

## **How should a company communicate a business continuity plan to its employees?**

Without due alarm. The plan should be communicated to all employees in an easy to understand, accessible format that emphasises the company's commitment to Business Continuity management.

## **Once I have written the plan do I need to do anything else?**

Yes, you need to keep it up to date and exercise on a regular basis and most importantly give a copy to key personnel who should keep their copy at home.

## **How can the Council Help?**

The Civil Contingencies Act requires us to provide generic advice and assistance to local businesses and voluntary organisations on business continuity. Your local emergency planning unit can be contacted via:

### **Craven District Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **Hambleton District Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **Harrogate Borough Council**

Tel: 01423 556014  
Emergency.planning@Harrogate.gov.uk

### **North Yorkshire County Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **Richmond District Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **Ryedale District Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **Scarborough Borough Council**

Tel: 01723 232323  
emergency.planning@scarborough.gov.uk

### **Selby District Council**

Tel: 01609 532246  
emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

### **City of York Council**

Tel: 01904 551003  
emergency.planning@york.gov.uk

## **Where can I obtain further information?**

Business Continuity Institute  
UK Resilience  
The Emergency Planning Society  
The Institute of Risk Management  
MI5  
Global Continuity  
Environment Agency

[www.thebci.org](http://www.thebci.org)  
[www.ukresilience.info](http://www.ukresilience.info)  
[www.the-eps.org](http://www.the-eps.org)  
[www.theirm.org](http://www.theirm.org)  
[www.mi5.gov.uk](http://www.mi5.gov.uk)  
[www.globalcontinuity.com](http://www.globalcontinuity.com)  
[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)