



“Hope is not a plan.”

S. Kerr

Business Continuity Plan(ning)

All organizations whether large or small have aims and objectives such as to grow, to provide services and to acquire other businesses. These aims and objectives are generally met via strategic plans to achieve an organization’s short, medium and long term goals. Business Continuity Management (BCM) will ensure that these aims and objectives are not compromised by unexpected disruptions.

Definition of Business Continuity Management:

“A holistic management process that identifies potential impacts that threaten an organization and provides a framework for building resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value creating activities.”

(The Business Continuity Institute)

Business Continuity Planning

Within the BCM Programme phase, choices will have been made with regards to staffing of the BCM programme, this will also include:

- Staffing considerations for writing and maintaining plans (e.g. centralised or decentralised planning team);
- Selection of products, tools or templates to build plans with.

During the Strategy phase, decisions will have been made regarding the required response structure and recovery capability that is required to address adverse situations.

The most critical business teams, support teams and specialist teams alike, will all need to prepare their response and recovery.

The obvious way to do so is write down their response and recovery actions, instructions, processes and structures in a plan.

Plans

Depending on the BCM ambitions and objectives (see BCM Policy), plans may need to serve a number of purposes:

- **Audit & compliance:** written and formalised plans are evidence of advance preparation for responding to disruptions;
- **Operational response:** a plan can equally be a collection of operational instructions, a guide and actions for use in adverse situations.

About Ascore

Ascore is specialized in operational risk management consultancy and staffing. Operational risk management, information security, business continuity and compliance to laws and regulations are major cornerstones of our services.

Ascore assists its customers with the incorporation of operational risk management at all levels and in all areas of their organization, including day-to-day operational decisions. No decision should be taken in any organization without applying proper operational risk management. It can be applied throughout the entire life cycle of any activity or project. In order to minimize risk, it is however preferable to apply operational risk management is applied at the beginning phase of a project or operational activity.

About Ascore Academy

Ascore offers, through the Ascore Academy, an extensive education and awareness program, covering several open classes, events and customized education experiences.

Contact

For further and additional information, please contact us on Tel. +32 (0)9 243 10 20 or info@ascore.com

On all Ascore services our general terms of delivery apply.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING

Methods

In close collaboration with your organization, Ascure will select the planning method, tools and templates that suit best to your specifications and organizational culture.

Ascure can provide skilled and competent staff that can help you with:

- Set-up/creation of plans;
- Maintenance and review of plans;
- Assessment/benchmark of plans.

With regards to planning tools and products, Ascure can provide you with expert skills and advise for:

- Elaborating Requests For Proposals;
- Defining selection criteria for products/tools and their vendors alike.

When pieces of your critical business are outsourced, Ascure can conduct assessments and gap analysis on your behalf on your outsourcing partner's continuity and recovery plans and solutions, so you can rest assure that their provisions are adequate.

Outcomes and Deliverables

Depending on the type and nature of the team for which the plan is written, the plan may differ in name and contents:

- Business Continuity Plan;
- Emergency response Plan;
- Crisis Management Plan;
- Business Recovery Plan;
- Disaster Recovery Plan;
- Product Recall Plan;
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Never the less, all plans should have a number of elements in common (eg document management information) and in addition the above mentioned plans all have some typical content that needs to be covered.

Ascure will ensure that any plan written will follow best practices and standards so that any statutory or regulatory requirements can be met.

Furthermore, Ascure will assure that the whole of plans will cover the entire lifecycle of a disaster/disruption, this from the start until final resolution.

Next step

With your business and the environment in which it operates constantly changing, it is essential that plans are reviewed and maintained according to defined and agreed frequencies. A typical review cycle is annual or upon material changes, never the less the frequency should be tailored to the needs of your organization.

Following on the elaboration and maintenance of plans, these plans and the teams that need to execute them must be put to the test. Exercising and testing support is described in a separate flyer and is aiming at validating the competence.

Business reviews and assessments of Plans, Solutions and Arrangements (see separate flyer) are alternate ways to check whether the response and recovery is meeting the objectives and specifications.

Interested in world-class education and training on business continuity, crisis management, disaster recovery or pandemic planning: visit the website of the BCM Academy Belgium (www.bcmacademy.be).

For more information, please contact:
Tel.: +32 (0)9 234 10 20
E-mail: info@ascure.com www.ascure.com
Bijenstraat 16-17, B-9051 Ghent, Belgium