

BUSINESS CONTINUITY ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

This assessment checklist will help you put your business continuity plan together. The assessment has been split into sections for ease of reference. Document relevant details/information/procedures and you will then have a business continuity plan. Not all the questions may be relevant to your business.

BUILDING FACILITIES

- Do you have evacuation procedures for your buildings?
- Are the fire exits clearly marked and fire procedures in place?
- Do you regularly practice fire drills?
- Do you have primary and secondary evacuation points at a suitable distance away from the building(s)?
- Do you have a site plan of your building(s)?
- Do you have generator backup systems in place?
- Do you have an alternative building to use in an emergency?
i.e. where your business or critical elements of your business could continue to operate from?
- Do you check on a regular basis that the heating and air conditioning is working?
- Have you familiarised yourself and your staff with the location of the mains switches and valves (electricity, gas, water)?
- Do you carry out end of day inspections i.e. to check everybody has left?
- At the end of the working day do you have procedures in place to make sure that all appliances are switched off and doors and windows are locked?
- Do you regularly check the integrity of external fences and doors?

PERSONNEL

- Have you got a list of all employee contact telephone numbers and home addresses?
- Do your staff know who is in charge in the time of a crisis?
- Have your staff been given specific roles in the event of a crisis?
- If your business could not operate from its present location could your staff work from an alternative location, or some of them work from home etc?
- Do you have members of staff with first aid or medical training?

SECURITY

- Is there a security system installed?
- Do you have a security policy?
- Do you give advice or training on security?
- Do you check references fully?
- Are contractors checked fully (i.e. company as well as each individual)?

PAPER AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

- Do you copy/back up your information?
- Do you store your critical paper documents in fire/waterproof containers?
- Do you have copies of critical accounts and contracts at a separate location?
- Is someone responsible for the upkeep of your files and accounts?

IT

- Are your IT systems critical to the running of your business?
- If your IT systems went down do you have manual processes that could maintain critical documentary/administrative functions?

IT (continued)

- Do you know how long it would take to recover IT functions if your system went down?
- Who would restore your system if it went down and do you have their contact details?
- Do you have a tested IT disaster recovery plan?
- Is your computer anti-virus software up to date?
- Are documented IT security policies and procedures in place?
- Are all your computer users fully aware of email and internet usage policies?
- Is your company system part of a larger network?
- Do you know how many platforms/servers/applications or operating systems support critical business functions?
- Is expertise of how to use your IT system, knowledge of where critical documents are electronically stored etc, limited to one individual?
- Do you have vital computer information stored on back up discs held off premises?

SUPPLIERS

- Do you have alternative suppliers for critical equipment/ stores/ parts/ goods/ products etc?
- Do you have an arrangement with your critical suppliers where they will inform you if they cannot make a delivery?
- Do your suppliers have a business continuity plan?
- Do you have your suppliers correct contact details – both office hours and out of office hours?

COMPANY EQUIPMENT

- Do you have someone accountable for the assets of your company?
- Do you have an inventory and is it regularly checked?
- Do you have controls over the movements of your company equipment?

CUSTOMERS

Do you have the correct contact details for all your main customers?

Do you have any key customers who you will need to be in constant contact with during a crisis?

LOCATION

Have you thought about the types of risk that might occur due to the actions/operations of other businesses near to you?

Have you thought about the types of risk associated with the environment i.e. flooding from nearby river, snow, severe weather etc?

INSURANCE

Do you have sufficient insurance to pay for disruption to business, cost of repairs, hiring temporary employees, leasing temporary accommodation and equipment etc?

Do you have your insurance company's details in order to contact them immediately at the time of an incident?

ASSESS THE RISKS

Consider what are the most likely and greatest risks to your business?

Analyse the risk by asking yourself the following questions:

- How likely is it to happen?
- What effect will it have on the business?
- How can you cope with it i.e. what do you need to do to stay operational if it takes place?
- What preventative measures can you take to prevent them from happening or minimise the effect they will have on your business?
- Are you insured against the worst eventualities?

PUBLIC RELATIONS (MEDIA)

Bad publicity or incorrect information given out during an incident can make or break a company's reputation. If your business has a major incident then PR will influence how existing and potential customers, suppliers and all other stakeholders will view your business.

Nominate a company spokesperson, ensure all staff know who it is, ensure that they have some training in media handling.

During an incident ensure:

- That your company gives out a consistent message
- Staff are kept informed
- Advertisements are placed in local or national papers as needed

GENERAL

Have you prepared an emergency pack? If you have prepared a pack have you included the following items?

- Business recovery plan
- List of employees with contact details
- Details of IT providers
- Contact details for clients and suppliers
- Building site plan
- Spare keys
- Computer back up tapes/discs
- First aid kit
- Stationary/message pads/coloured pens and pencils
- Torch with spare batteries
- Megaphone
- Tape
- Mobile phone/s fully charged

GENERAL (continued)

- Disposable cameras
- Dust and toxic fume masks

Is your business continuity plan:

- Clearly documented
- Easily accessible
- Understood by key personnel?

Is there someone in your organisation who will have responsibility for maintaining and up-dating your plan?
