

SUBJECT AREA 8 – BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN EXERCISE, AUDIT, and MAINTENANCE

Establish an exercise/testing program which documents plan exercise requirements including the planning, scheduling, facilitation, communications, auditing and post review documentation. Establish maintenance program to keep plans current and relevant. Establish an audit process which will validate compliance with standards, review solutions, verify appropriate levels of maintenance and exercise activities and validate the plans are current, accurate and complete.

A. THE PROFESSIONAL’S ROLE IS TO:

- A.1** Establish an Exercise/Testing Program
- A.2** Establish Plan Maintenance Program
- A.3** Establish a Business Continuity Audit Process
- A.4** Communicate Exercise/Test Results and Recommendations

B. THE PROFESSIONAL SHOULD DEMONSTRATE A WORKING KNOWLEDGE IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

B.1 Establish an Exercise/Testing Program

B.1.a Develop an exercise program which meets organizational continuity objectives.

- (i) Obtain executive sponsorship for exercise/testing program development
- (ii) Align with the organizations business strategy and tactical requirements.
- (iii) Provide a high level of confidence for the continuity of operations.
- (iv) Develop a realistic, progressive and cost effective program.

B.1.b Document exercise/testing standards and guidelines.

- (i) Document Exercise Requirements
 - a. Identify test types which may include, business, facility and technical testing
 - Walk-through / tabletop reviews

- Integrated (transmission of data to/from multiple applications/systems)
- Backup and connective validation to another application(s)/system(s)
- Standalone
- Call trees
- Line of business (LOB) functional processes
- Facilities, e.g. buildings and work areas

b. Define testing program objectives and select appropriate scenarios

c. Define assumptions and limitations

d. Identify Participants and their Roles and

- Responsibilities
- Recovery Team(s)
- Observers/reporters
- Time keepers
- Auditor/reviewers
- Facilitator
- Suppliers
- Out-sourced Services and Providers

(ii) Scheduling Exercises

a. Develop a multi-year progressive schedule

b. Develop specific testing schedule on an annual basis.

B.1.c Determine Exercise Requirements

(i) Define and document exercise objectives

a. Define and document in-scope/out-of-scope requirements

b. Approximate the types of incidents the organization is likely to experience. Include suitable activities to exercise various facets of the BC Strategies, example(s):

- Technical - does the equipment work?
- Procedural - are the procedures correct?
- Logistical - can people access the recovery facility and execute their recovery procedures?
- Timelines - can the required RTOs be achieved?

(ii) Define exercise notification process

- Announced/planned
- Unannounced/surprised
- (iii) Define and document criteria aligned with exercise objectives and scope:
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative

B.1.d. Identify Pre Exercise activities

- (i) Identify resources required to conduct the exercise. Identify participants (example(s): business unit contacts, IT representatives, umpires, adjudicators, etc). Ensure all understand the objectives and their roles. Provide an inventory of hardware, software and physical assets required for the exercise (examples: PC/laptop, Security access, telephone, applications, printers, etc).
- (ii) Document and communicate specifications for the exercise environment.
 - Production vs. Test
 - Business Day vs. Weekend
- (iii) Provide a timetable of events and circulate to all participants, facilitators and adjudicators

B.1.e. Identify Exercise Activities

- (i) Conduct Exercise.
 - Should an incident occur during an exercise you should have a predetermined mechanism for cancelling the exercise and invoking the actual business continuity process.
- (ii) Record Exercise process.
 - Document exercise results via the activation and maintenance of the issues log.
- (iii) Declare end of exercise.
 - a. Shut down procedures.
 - b. Perform clean-up activities.

B.1.f. Identify Post Exercise activities

- (i) Conduct debriefing sessions to review exercise results and identify actions for improvements.
- (ii) Post-Exercise Reporting
 - a. Provide a comprehensive summary with recommendations,
 - b. Document Action Plan report
 - Identify Open Issues
 - Identify actionable items with responsibilities and timeframes for resolution.
 - Monitor (and escalate where necessary) progress to completion of agreed actions
 - c. Communicate Exercise Results
 - Document Lessons Learned
 - Document expected versus actual results
 - Document unexpected results

B.2 Establish Plan Maintenance Program

B.2.a. Define Plan Maintenance Method and Schedule

- (i) Define ownership of plan data
- (ii) Prepare maintenance schedules and review procedures
- (iii) Select maintenance tools
- (iv) Monitor maintenance activities
- (v) Establish plan update process
- (vi) Ensure that scheduled plan maintenance addresses all documented recommendations.

B.2.b Define Change Control Process

- (i) Analyse business changes with planning implications
- (ii) Develop change control procedures to monitor changes
 - Create proper version control; develop plan re-issue, distribution, and circulation procedures

- Identify plan distribution lists for circulation
- Process to update plans based on response to Audit findings

- (iii) Set guidelines for feedback of changes to planning function
- (iv) Implement change control process

B.3 Establish a Business Continuity Audit Process

B.3.a. Define Audit Method and schedule.

- (i) Select appropriate audit types.
 - Internal Audit
 - External Audit
 - Self Assessment

B.3.b. Document Audit Standards and Guidelines

- Select/Develop any needed audit tools

B.3.c Establish Audit Schedule

B.3.d. Conduct/Monitor Audit Activities

- (i) Audit the Plan Structures, Contents, and Action Sections
 - Audit BC Program requirements, documents and standards
 - Audit BC templates and plan
 - Audit test requirements and results
 - Audit repository for plan and test results
- (ii) Audit the Plan Documentation Control Procedures
 - Audit version control process and documentation
 - Audit distribution lists and associated processes
 - Audit change control process

B.3.e. Review Management response to Audit findings

- (i) Confirm responses have been submitted and action plans documented.
- (ii) Verify completed actions have been captured in the plan.