

# Promoting Business Continuity in South Staffordshire



***A lot of businesses might not survive a major disruption...would yours?***

Produced by the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit in support of:

Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council, South Staffordshire Council, Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Stoke on Trent City Council and Tamworth Borough Council.

## Introduction

No-one in business wants to be affected by a major incident or disaster. However, if one does occur, we hope that there is someone, somewhere who knows what to do. In the initial response to an incident such as fire or flooding, we know that the Emergency Services will play a major role. But what happens beyond the initial response? Or

what happens, for example, in the case of IT failure or widespread staff sickness when disruption occurs that the Emergency Services would not be expected to respond to? This is where a Business Continuity Management (BCM) programme comes in. Its purpose is to ensure that everyone in your business is capable of responding to and recovering from an incident, both individually and collectively, to get the business back on its feet as quickly as possible with the minimum of fuss to minimise financial and non-financial impacts.

## What is BCM?

BCM is a process that improves the ability of businesses to function despite internal or external disruption. It is a management process put in place to consider, and prepare for, the 'what ifs' that might affect a business on any given day.

## Why should your business consider BCM?

Implementing BCM and making it part of your core business processes will help prepare your long term business to survival when faced with anything from a flood to a fire. It will assist in preparing your business quickly resume 'business as usual' in a logical and controlled manner.

Without effective BCM, a natural or man-made disaster, such as:

- fire;
- adverse publicity;
- floods and storms;
- act of terrorism;
- loss of key personnel or premises;
- computer failure;
- equipment failure;
- environmental disaster;
- power failure;
- product contamination;
- failure of critical suppliers;

**"90% of businesses that lose data from a disaster are forced to shut within two years."**  
*London Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

...could result in any one or more of the following:

- loss of income;
- loss of critical services/equipment;
- loss of reputation and/or customers,

- legal actions taken against your business;
- staff issues, and/or
- impact on insurance payments

It is essential that all businesses, large and small, plan ahead so that they can continue to operate through and beyond a period of disruption. A structured Business Continuity Plan (BCP), focusing on the mission/time critical activities that *all* businesses have, could help to identify the following examples of coping with sudden disruption:

- temporarily re-locating some staff to work out of another pre-identified office or building;
- temporarily moving the business to an alternate site;
- cross-training or multi-skilling existing staff;
- Providing back-up IT and telecommunications systems.

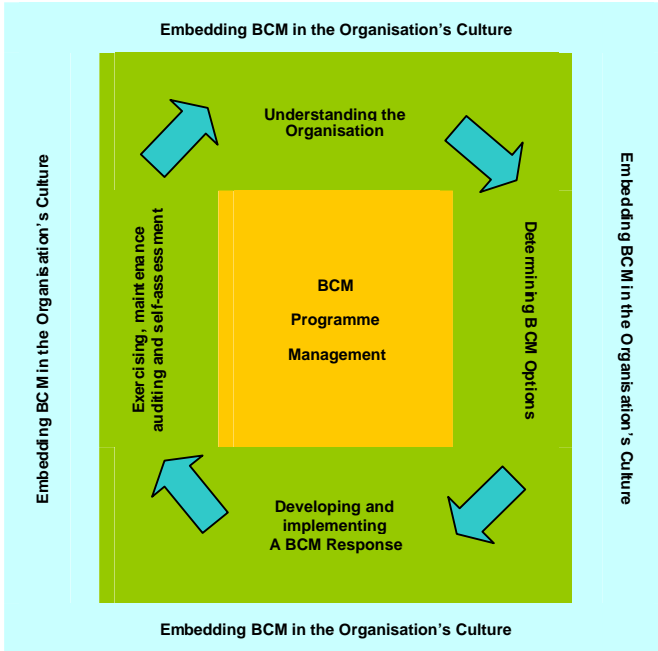
## The 6 Stages of the BCM Life-cycle

Implementing BCM is a simple, structured process:

1. **BCM programme management** - enables the business continuity capability to be both established and maintained appropriate to the size of the business. The strategy needs to be supported and driven from the very top of the organisation down.
2. **Understanding your organisation** - identifies the critical products, services and functions in your business. It also identifies the activities and resources required to achieve these areas of your business.
3. **Determining BCM options** - selecting an appropriate strategy to mitigate loss, thereby maintaining your business' critical functions. The choices made should take into account resilience and countermeasure options already present within the business.
4. **Developing the BCM response** - building your business' risk tolerance by improving operational procedures and practices and putting in place BCP to ensure that interruptions to service can be dealt with as quickly as possible.
5. **Embedding a BCM culture** - Embedding a BCM culture in the business core values and daily operational procedures ensures BCM principles are adopted across your business processes. This will involve education and

awareness training for all stakeholders including employees, suppliers and contractors.

6. **Exercising, maintenance auditing and self-assessment** – ensuring that your BCP is up to date, your staff are aware of it and they are exercised in its use.



## The Bottom Line

Many businesses decide not to implement BCM because of the perceived impact on the Bottom Line – the cost of re-allocating existing staff to BCM planning, the cost of exercises, audits and reviews to name but a few. In making *your* decision on BCM, consider the hidden value of the BCM process:

- As a management process, BCM can highlight efficiencies and economies in your business that you otherwise might not have been aware of - *it could save you money.*
- BCM is scalable – *it does not have to be a drain on resources.*

- The cost of committing to BCM could well be minute when compared to the cost of getting your business up and running without BCM in place. In times of disruption, resources are scarce and it takes time to procure extra resources if existing arrangements are not in place through BCM. *This could cost your business in downtime, lost orders and reduced brand/customer loyalty.*
- BCM improves your staff's awareness of the business. *It promotes innovation, integration and teamwork.*

## Where can I find further information?

- UK Resilience – [www.ukresilience.info/index.shtm](http://www.ukresilience.info/index.shtm)
- The Business Continuity Institute – [www.thebci.org](http://www.thebci.org)
- The Emergency Planning Society – [www.the-eps.org](http://www.the-eps.org)
- Continuity Central – [www.continuitycentral.com](http://www.continuitycentral.com)
- Global Continuity – [www.globalcontinuity.com](http://www.globalcontinuity.com)
- The Institute of Risk Management – [www.theirm.org](http://www.theirm.org)
- Survive – [www.survive.com](http://www.survive.com)
- London Prepared – [www.londonprepared.gov.uk](http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk)
- MI5 – [www.mi5.gov.uk](http://www.mi5.gov.uk)
- Civil Contingencies Unit – [www.staffordshireprepared.gov.uk](http://www.staffordshireprepared.gov.uk)
- Preparing for Emergencies – [www.pfe.gov.uk](http://www.pfe.gov.uk)
- The Home Office – [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

## What your Local Authority can do for you.....

Local Authorities have a duty to promote Business Continuity planning in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. They can assist the business and volunteer communities by providing initial business continuity information and advice on where useful sources of information relating to BCM can be obtained

Your Local Authority and the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit may also be able to assist you in more detailed BCM preparation such as exercises. There may be a charge for more specific advice and/or support.

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**Disclaimer:** This guidance is provided as general information about planning for emergencies. It is not intended to replace detailed guidance and planning specific for your business. You should consider whether you need to obtain this.