

Business Continuity Planning Process

The business continuity process can be separated into four main stages. Each stage should be continually reviewed, rehearsed and updated to ensure your plan meets the needs of your business.

Preparedness

Identify the threats to your business, examine potential vulnerabilities from every angle, and discuss these issues with staff, customers and even suppliers. Do your research, contact agencies that can offer information and ideas to deal with the prospect of an emergency event. Once you have identified the threat or issues, be proactive and plan for the likelihood of an event occurring. Put a framework in place to respond to these risks. Document your plan and train your staff. Conduct regular drills to ensure all staff know how to respond to a range of emergency events.

Response

This phase is the immediate action taken during or just after an event to minimise the damage, loss of life and ensure the continuity of the business. Your response team will delegate responsibilities, monitor timeframes, gather accurate information and coordinate the overall response process.

Recovery

Sound planning during this phase ensures your business is back up and running as quickly as possible. Consider issues such as clean up teams, contact lists, off site work stations, secondary dangers like damaged power lines and contaminated water, as well as staff and client communication.

Prevention

While prevention of an emergency event is not always possible, minimising unnecessary loss of income, stock, information and time is realistic. Some risks are easier to identify than others, analyse the impacts an emergency event will have on your business and treat the issues. Consider how effective your business continuity plan is in relation to different emergency events.

FURTHER INFORMATION

NSW Government Industry and Investment

<http://toolkit.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Business Chamber

132696

www.nswbusinesschamber.com.au

State Emergency Services

132 500

www.ses.nsw.gov.au/

Emergency Management Australia

(03) 5421 5100

<http://ema.gov.au/>

Tweed Shire Council

(02) 6670 2400 or 1300 292 872

www.tweed.nsw.gov.au

Australian Government Initiative

1800777275

business.gov.au/emergency

Visit the Tweed Shire Council website and follow the links to specific combat agencies. Keep an eye out for emergency management seminars in your local area.



The outcome of having a strong and current continuity plan is that you, your business and your staff are prepared and secure if an emergency should strike. Remember, business continuity is vital to business success.



Emergency Management Business Continuity Plan

Information sheet



Why create a Business Continuity Plan?

The prospect of an emergency event that disrupts the flow of your business is real. Recent emergency events, not only in the Tweed Shire, but across Australia have highlighted the need for all businesses to develop a resilient and functional business continuity plan.

A business continuity plan is the responsibility of the business owner or the business manager in charge of operations. Business continuity planning relies on leadership, clear communication and support from all staff during development, implementation and reviewing of the plan process.

Business continuity planning should be an extension of risk management procedures and long term business goal setting. When developing a business continuity plan it is important to consider a range of issues related to the overall function of your business during an emergency event.



Creating a Business Continuity Plan



Business Continuity is Everyone's Business

Emergency events can occur at anytime and in a majority of cases with little or no warning. While it is possible to forecast certain weather patterns or anticipate general problems such as power blackouts, for the most part it is very difficult to predict when an emergency event will occur.

An emergency event can have both short term and long term negative effects on your business and clients. To protect your business in the event of an emergency and ensure business continuity, you must cover all the basics before an emergency event arises.

Business continuity refers to a business's ability to continue to function and provide essential business services to customers and suppliers during and after an emergency event. Emergency events can include bushfire, severe storms, power shortages or flooding. It is important to consider the functions and resources associated with your business to ensure it can continue to operate during an emergency event and recovery phase whilst minimising the impact to infrastructure, resources and staffing.

When preparing a Continuity Plan consider these questions;

Staffing

Do you know your employee's entitlements during an emergency event?
Is your staff aware of emergency procedures within your workplace?
Can your business continue to function if isolated during an emergency event?

Will your staff be able to play an active role in your business during an emergency period?

If the emergency happens after hours can you and your staff work remotely?

Equipment

Is your equipment and resources safe during an emergency event?
Can you access your essential equipment in the case of an emergency?
How will the loss of telephone and internet services affect your business?

Can your business function without power for extended periods?
Can your business operate without sewage facilities?

Information storage and retrieval

Is your business data regularly backed up?
Is your backed up business data only stored on site?
Do you have remote access to your business data?
What data and information would everyone in your business need access to during an emergency event?
How much time and effort will be required to retrieve lost information?

Property

Do you have an Emergency Plan?
Have you considered evacuation routes for your business and home?
Will your business property be accessible during an emergency?
Can you safely store you business equipment during an emergency period?
Do you know the emergency event history of your business property?
What are the current emergency risks to your business property?
Have you discussed a continuity plan with other businesses in your area?

Insurance

Have you discussed emergency events with your insurer?
Are you covered for a range of emergency situations specific to your property and business?
What Government support is available for your business during and after an emergency event?

Clients

Can you still service your clients during an emergency situation?
Will your reputation be compromised if you cannot service your clients during an emergency event?
Are your clients also affected by emergency events?
If your business cannot operate, will your customers wait for your business to become functional, or will they go elsewhere?

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Business Continuity Plan Flow Chart

