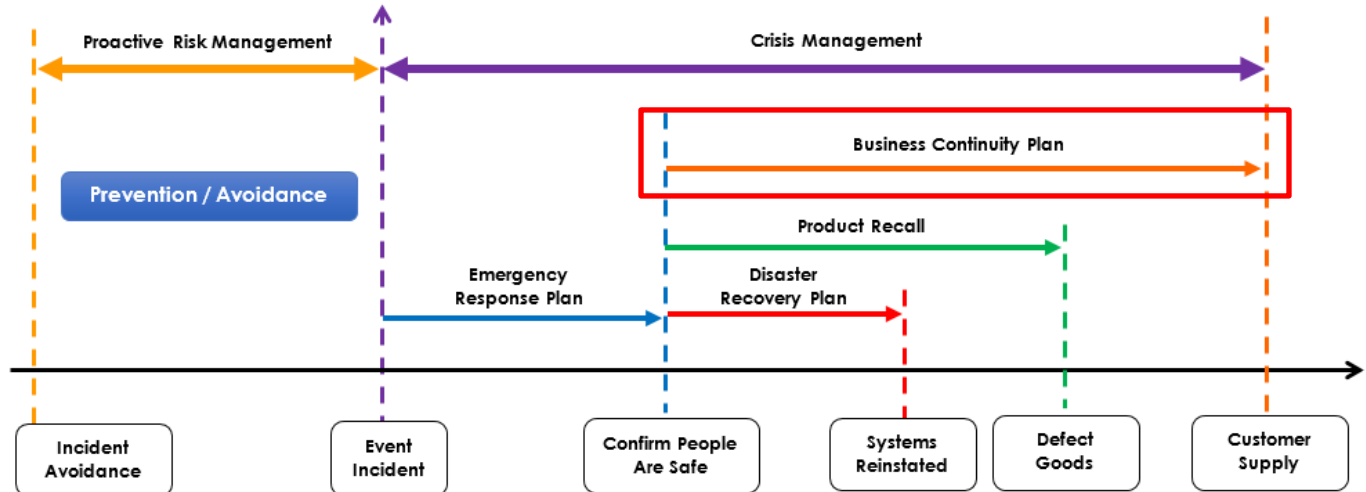


WHAT IS A BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN?

Crisis management is the process which deals with a major event that poses a threat to the organisation, its stakeholders, and/or the reputation of the business in the eyes of the general public. During a crisis, a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) maybe required depending on the scenario.



BCP provides detailed plans for recovery of the business following an interruption. The BCPs are focused on reinstating supply to customers in the quickest possible fashion. It includes both recovery of the operation and continuity of supply using alternate means.



The following is a high level guide for the key elements of the BCP process.

Incident	An incident occurs that interrupts a critical business process.
Activation	Senior management activate the BCP based on an assessment of the expected duration of the interruption.
Execution	Persons designated responsibility for these actions implement the plan.
Stand Down	Business activities have recovered to a position that the BCP can be ended.

PREPARATION

BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS

A Business Impact Analysis (BIA) must be conducted before the BCP is developed. BIA assists the business to identify the critical process, determine the resources required and the capacity of the business to continue with business operations. Critical processes are defined as those processes that have a potential to impact on the ability to deliver products or services and therefore require a formal BCP.

The BIA will define the ART and MAO of the business which will establish if a BCP is required. If the ART is greater than the MAO than a BCP is required.

- Available Recovery Time (ART): The expected time required to recover from an interruption with current resources;
- Maximum Allowable Outage (MAO): The time available to ensure ongoing supply to customers.

ART > MAO → BCP

Overall, the BIA should give an insight to:

- Existing and required controls – Processes, capabilities, infrastructure and other resources;
- The level of vulnerability of the business;
- The organisation's priorities;
- The importance of interrelationship with other disciplines and activities;
- The effects of existing controls, and if required, improvement of those controls.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN STEPS

It is important to be prepared for a crisis. Where possible of course prevention is preferred, but there are many examples of crisis being well managed and conversely poorly managed, and preparation is key. Creating the BCP will ensure you have the details to provide to optimum situation for the business to recover in a short period of time.

Acknowledging the need for a detailed BCP to ensure reinstatement of production and recovery of business systems is important. The BCP is detailed steps to be taken when identified critical processes are interrupted. These processes for continuity require resources which include:

- Data – could include product, customer, supplier, social media, etc.;
- People – such as key internal team members (i.e. recovery team) or 3rd party consultants for expertise (equipment and machinery experts), and;
- Equipment – what equipment will you need to fix the problem.

Communications during and after an incident are important to promptly inform the relevant stakeholders of an incident and to avoid unwanted disruption. The initial communication should provide sufficient information and advise the relevant stakeholder to await further information. Staff and the management team will be busy dealing with the emergency response and looking into the crisis with the initial assessment of the situation.

A follow up communication should consist information about the impact of the incident and how it affects the stakeholders. This communication must also include the proposed corrective actions to mitigate or solve the problem.

For maximum compliance, the following standards provide a description of the BCP process:

- *AS/NZS 5050:2010: Business Continuity – Managing disruption-related risk*
- *HB 292-2006: A Practitioners Guide to Business Continuity Management*

The BIA process and the BCP also recognise preparatory actions that may be required to ensure recovery timeframes can be achieved.

BCP ACTIVATION

Activation is based on the Maximum Allowable Outage (MAO) and Available Recovery Time (ART). The BCP activation is conducted if the ART is greater than the MAO. Senior management are responsible for the activation of the BCP and the recovery team will ensure that these processes are executed. The BCP will consist of all the necessary information and contact details.

To better navigate through the activation of the BCP and the crisis, create a checklist to include the responsibilities of the different departments, personnel and other resources (third party consultants). This checklist can also include specific actions to be taken during the crisis to safeguard the recovery of critical processes and provide minimal disruption to the business. Or contact Victual for assistance.