



A Guide to Business Continuity Competencies for Applicants to a Professional Grade of Membership of the Business Continuity Institute

to be used in conjunction with the

Good Practice Guidelines 2008

This document has been prepared as a guidance document for applicants seeking a professional membership grade of the Institute to enable them to gain some understanding of the competencies expected of a professional member.

This is not an exhaustive list and is intended to supplement the information provided in the Good Practice Guidelines 2008 – *“A Management Guide to Implementing Global Good Practice in Business Continuity Management”*.

It should be noted that the Good Practice Guidelines 2008, Chapter 6, Appendix contains a ‘Professional Skills Mapping’ from the original ten BCI / DRII certification standards to the six stages of the Good Practice Guide.

SUBJECT AREA 1: BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Professional's role is to:

- Understand the content of a BCM Policy
- Identify the scope and objectives of a BCM Programme
- Identify and assign BCM responsibilities
- Co-ordinate and manage the initiation and ongoing implementation of a BCM Programme
- Implement effective BCM documentation, controls and change management mechanisms
- Understand relevant standards, regulations and legislation
- Obtain and monitor appropriate budget for BCM

BCM policy

- Define BCM within the organisation
- Define the scope of the BCM programme
- Seek senior management commitment for BCM
- Establish the governance framework for the management of the organisation's BCM programme including responsibilities, monitoring and reporting to senior management
- Establish the BCM principles, guidelines and minimum standards to be adopted
- Develop an implementation and maintenance plan for the policy

BCM responsibilities

- Define how the elements of the BCM programme will be resourced
- Identify and engage appropriate personnel
- Seek allocation of resources to meet requirements of the BCM programme
- Conduct briefings for allocated resources in their role
- Identify appropriate training for personnel with BCM roles

BCM programme

- Define how the success of the BCM programme will be measured
- Seek appropriate budget for the implementation of the programme and manage it
- Establish the processes for each stage of the BCM lifecycle
- Oversee the completion of activities within the programme
- Determine the associated documentation to be developed
- Consider immediate requirements for incident management and mitigation measures
- Promote BCM internally and externally
- Monitor the performance of the BCM programme

SUBJECT AREA 2: UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANISATION

The Professional's role is to:

- Understand the business
- Undertake a Business Impact Analysis
- Identify critical activities
- Estimate continuity requirements
- Evaluate threats (risk assessment)
- Determine choices

Understand the business

- Gain an appreciation of the organisational structure and culture
- Identify the key products and services, criticality and timeliness of activities
- Identify the key threats and mitigation strategies

Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

- Understand the principles and scope of the BIA process
- Obtain full support from senior management to conduct BIA
- Understand the available data collection mechanisms and determine the most appropriate
- Identify suitable subject matter experts for each business process
- Gather the relevant information through interviews/workshops or questionnaires
- Identify activities that support critical business processes and identify owners
- Determine impacts of a disruption to each activity/process across the organisation that may damage organisation's reputation, assets or financial position
- Quantify timescales where interruption becomes unacceptable to organisation
- Capture 'Maximum Tolerable Period of Disruption' and 'Recovery Point Objectives'
- Seek sign off of findings by process owners
- Present findings to senior management and seek approval to adopt the findings as the basis for determining a business continuity strategy

Estimating Continuity Requirements

- Provide the resource information to determine or recommend recovery strategies
- Identify internal and external resource requirements to support activities
- Quantify the people, technology and telephony resources required over time to maintain business activities at an acceptable level and within the maximum tolerable period of disruption
- Seek sign off of requirements by process owners
- Present requirements to senior management and seek approval to adopt the findings as the basis for determining a business continuity strategy

Evaluating threats (Risk Assessment)

- Understand the principles of risk assessment
- Devise an appropriate scoring mechanism
- Identify the internal and external threats that could cause a disruption and assess their probability and impact
- Evaluate and prioritise threats
- Identify risk mitigation measures
- Develop a risk management control and action plan

SUBJECT AREA 3: DETERMINING BUSINESS CONTINUITY STRATEGY

The Professional's role is to:

- Confirm the resource requirements for which continuity strategies (eg people, premises, technology etc.) need to be developed
- Identify available strategy options, their advantages, disadvantages, and cost ranges
- Determine viable recovery strategies within business functional areas
- Consolidate strategies
- Identify alternative, off-site facilities and services
- Develop business unit strategies
- Seek approval and commitment from senior management for developed strategies

Strategy options

- Use the results of the BIA to confirm the resource requirements
- Identify alternative ways of providing resource requirements following a disruption, the costs and implications
- Develop an evaluation method and set baseline criteria for analysis
- Analyse the appropriateness of each option to meet the business need
- Prepare cost/benefit analysis of strategy options
- Present options and recommended solutions to senior management for approval

Implement strategy solutions

- Prepare 'statements of requirements' for use in formal invitations to tender and contracts or formal agreements, including any jurisdictional and regulatory requirements
- Interpret supplier proposals in relation to the statement of requirements
- Identify any exclusions from the statement of requirements and advise on additional or alternative offerings
- Select, using a procurement process, the resource and service suppliers and products required to meet the business need
- Draw up an action plan to enable the agreed strategy solutions to be implemented

SUBJECT AREA 4: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING BCM RESPONSE

The Professional's role is to:

- Understand the general principles for an effective response
- Determine an appropriate incident response structure
- Develop a viable incident management plan
- Develop a method for creating business continuity plan(s) and oversee its implementation
- Develop a method for creating activity response plan(s) and oversee its implementation

Incident response structure

- Select and implement an incident response structure appropriate to the organisation that will facilitate the response to any incident that might cause serious disruption to the organisation
- Identify and select meeting rooms or other facilities to act as a 'command centre'
- Identify the resources required within the command centre and if possible, install them before an incident occurs

Incident management plan

- Select the method for developing an incident management plan
- Develop an incident management plan to provide a documented framework to enable the organisation to manage any type of incident, regardless of cause
- Validate the plan using techniques such as a desk-top walkthrough
- Develop an ongoing exercising and maintenance process for the plan to ensure it remains current

Business continuity plan(s)

- Select the method for developing business continuity plan(s)
- Develop business continuity plan(s) to provide a documented framework to enable the organisation to resume all of its business processes within their recovery time objective
- Validate the plan(s) using techniques such as a desk-top walkthrough
- Develop an ongoing exercising and maintenance process for the plan(s) to ensure it remains current

Activity response plan(s)

- Provide advice as to whether activity response plans are needed
- Select the method for developing activity response plan(s)
- Develop activity response plan(s) to provide a documented framework for individual areas of the business to respond to and recover from any incident
- Validate the plan(s) using techniques such as a desk-top walkthrough
- Develop an ongoing exercising and maintenance process for the plan(s) to ensure it remains current

SUBJECT AREA 5: EXERCISING, MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW

The Professional's role is to:

- Understand the general principles of exercising, maintenance and review of BCM arrangements
- Determine an appropriate exercising programme
- Exercising BCM arrangements
- Maintaining BCM arrangements
- Reviewing BCM arrangements

Exercising programme

- Understand the types of tests and exercises that can be included in an exercising programme
- Develop a programme which is practical, cost-effective and appropriate for the organisation
- Develop the associated tools and documentation to support the programme
- Facilitate or oversee the implementation of the exercising programme
- Conduct post-exercise debriefing sessions to review exercise results
- Develop post exercise report(s) to identify lessons learned
- Implement actions to address identified lessons, monitoring their progress and escalating as necessary

Maintenance programme

- Understand the need for a monitoring and maintenance programme
- Develop a distribution procedure for all BCM documentation including change control
- Develop an appropriate monitoring procedure and associated status reporting
- Develop an appropriate maintenance programme
- Develop the associated tools and documentation to support the maintenance programme
- Oversee the implementation of the maintenance programme
- Review and monitor the submission and content of incoming status reports
- Develop regular status reports for submission to the BCM governance framework

BCM review

- Understand the need for the review and audit of BCM arrangements
- Develop a BCM assurance process
- Implement the process at regular intervals
- Conduct or contribute to audits of BCM arrangements including contracted resources and services
- Conduct or contribute to audits of plan structures, content and document control
- Produce regular review reports on BCM arrangements for submission to the BCM governance framework
- Include any necessary amendments in the ongoing BCM programme

SUBJECT AREA 6: EMBEDDING BCM WITHIN THE ORGANISATION'S CULTURE

The Professional's role is to:

- Understand the general principles of embedding BCM within the organisation's culture
- Assess the level of BCM awareness and training
- Develop BCM within the organisation's culture
- Monitor cultural change
- Report on current levels of awareness on a regular basis

Awareness

- Establish the objectives of a BCM awareness programme
- Identify options for raising awareness
- Identify the audiences for your BCM awareness programme (eg. senior management, team members, new employee orientation, current employee refresher, etc)
- Analyse the awareness needs of all areas of the organisation
- Develop a generic strategy for developing BC Awareness
- Supplement the generic strategy with alternative approaches to meet particular departments / teams needs, if required
- Acquire or develop awareness tools (eg. poster campaign, online articles, road shows, etc)
- Produce regular status reports on awareness for submission to the BCM governance framework

Training

- Establish the objectives of a BCM training programme
- Identify options for inclusion in the organisation wide training programme
- Identify the audiences for the training programme
- Outline your strategy for BCM training
- Acquire or develop training tools (eg. in-house trainers, workshops, scenario rehearsals, computer-based training programmes, etc)
- Develop and deliver training as appropriate

Other opportunities

- Identify possible opportunities for embedding BCM within the organisation's culture
- Be proactive in taking those opportunities and overseeing their implementation