TEN STEPS TO RESILIENCE

Nearly *one* in *five* organisations suffer a major disruption. With no recovery plan you have less of a chance of survival. By planning now, you increase the chance that your business can recover quickly from an emergency.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

By following this 10-point checklist you will help make your organisation more resilient to unforeseen emergencies, even if you can only manage to take action on some of the tips within this document, you will be more prepared than you possibly are now.

The guide is not intended to replace a full Business Continuity Management programme which takes time to develop and implement. However, under each heading there are a number of suggestions to help improve your business resilience. For each of the issues described you can indicate your own planning status by ticking either fully considered (F), partially considered (P) or no action taken (N).
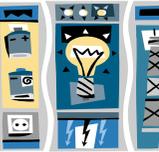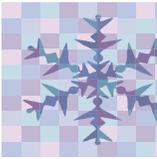
WHAT IS BUSINESS CONTINUITY?

Business Continuity is a management process that provides a framework to ensure the resilience of your business to any eventuality, to help ensure service to your key customers and to protect your brand and reputation. It provides a basis to ensure your long-term survivability following a disruptive event. Unplanned events, e.g. accidents, criminal activity or natural disasters, can have catastrophic effects on your organisation. There are five main steps to business continuity cycle.

	CATEGORY		CHECKLIST	F	P	N
	PEOPLE Your employees and volunteers are your most important assets –without which your organisation would not exist. Consider cross training your staff/volunteers in their colleagues role. If for any reason key members of staff/volunteers are missing other employees/volunteers can absorb their workload. • If sickness is the cause of staff/volunteer unavailability (such as a wide spread infection like Influenza) consider making arrangements for staff to work remotely – thus reducing the possibility of infection. • Can you stop performing some activities? Can resources from one activity be diverted to other, more important, areas? • Consider the use of agency staff.	**STEP 1**	Staff cross trained	☐	☐	☐
			Consider staff remote and home working	☐	☐	☐
			Know which activities will cease if limited resources	☐	☐	☐
			Arrangements for use of agency staff in place	☐	☐	☐
	DATA & INFORMATION Your organisation may store a large amount of paper or electronic records, you may be legally obliged to do so, or your organisation may simply rely on this archive. • Make sure key records are safe and secure from damage. You will already need to do this for those records you have a legal obligation to keep. • Consider backing up key documents in another location – you do not need to back up all documents. Start by reviewing what is important and what is not. This may also help to review your general record keeping policies. • Password protect your data for use by authorised people only and store passwords safely • Have a Code of Conduct for storage/access	**STEP 2**	Hard and soft copy records safe and secure	☐	☐	☐
			Key documents backed up offsite	☐	☐	☐

			Computer records backed up	☐	☐	☐
COMPUTER AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS Many organisations rely on computers and telecommunications equipment to carry out their functions. • Make sure your computer records are regularly backed up and stored in a secure location (away from your main site) • Make sure you know where to go to replace or repair key computer systems should they fail • Make sure you have alternative methods of communications should your primary systems fail. Consider purchasing extra mobile phones on different networks, keep an analogue phone ready as cordless telephones rely on an electricity supply • Make sure you have one paper copy of all key contacts (securely stored)	**STEP 3**	Replacement of key computer equipment In place	☐	☐	☐
		Alternative methods of communication considered	☐	☐	☐
SUPPLIERS, DISTRIBUTERS & CUSTOMERS Your organisation may rely on suppliers or distributors somewhere down the line. You may source parts and labour from third parties or use them to deliver products and run computer and telecommunications systems. If one of these suppliers could not deliver, what would you do? • Speak to your suppliers and ask them if they have any Business Continuity arrangements. If they do, ask to see their plans, if they do not you may wish to reconsider using them as suppliers or have a back up supplier ready if things go wrong. • Ask them how long it would take them to get back into business. • If you have no other options – consider stockpiling a resource of what the supplier is providing. The amount of stockpiling will be determined by the risk of a disruption and the amount of product you use over a given time period. • When tendering for new contracts with suppliers, ensure it includes a requirement for a Business Continuity Management process that follows the Business Continuity Guidance. • Do you act as a supplier? Your customers will be affected by your decisions, so involve them if you can & they may be reassured by your planning process • How will you contact your suppliers, distributors and customers to tell them you have been affected by an incident • If your premises are not safe/available for use plan how you will inform clients and what impact this could have on clients who normally come to your premises, i.e. what is the impact on them and how can you support them.	**STEP 4**	Suppliers have own BCM arrangements	☐	☐	☐
		Stockpile reserve of key resources	☐	☐	☐
		BCM included in the tendering process	☐	☐	☐
		Involve your customers and who you supply	☐	☐	☐
		Contact arrangements for suppliers, distributors and customers in place	☐	☐	☐

UTILITIES Your organisation relies on supplies of electricity, gas and water; although these organisations can be regarded as suppliers their criticality earns them extra attention. Have you considered what to do if their services are not available? • A building without these key supplies may not be usable. Therefore, you should treat such a disruption as a denial of access (see the "*premises & furniture*" section below) • Consider a back-up generator to provide electricity (this option is often very expensive) • Find out what they will need to know and what their emergency supply procedures and targets are	**STEP 5**	Back up generator in place or on standby	☐	☐	☐
		Contact your utility suppliers – what are their emergency recovery plans in your area	☐	☐	☐
PREMISES & FURNITURE Your organisation will rely on a place of work; whether that is a purpose built office, a stall selling your products or a room in your own home. • Check that you are insured against damage to your building • What information does your insurer need from you? Do you need their permission to replace damaged critical equipment immediately? Will the existence of a Plan reduce your premiums? • You will need to complete an assessment of your most critical activities and systems • Make sure several people hold keys for your building, if one is unable to get to work you will still be able to open the building. Keeping details of key holders is also important if you need to get access outside normal working hours • If you rent your business space, find out what plans and assistance your landlord or management company may be able to provide • If your building is inaccessible, or damaged, you may need to consider working from another location. Can your employees work from home? Renting a second working space for your business would be an expensive option. • Consider contacting other local businesses to agree a mutual aid strategy. • Ensure your building complies with fire safety regulations • Contact Environment Agency	**STEP 6**	Check your insurance cover	☐	☐	☐
		Compliance with fire safety regulations	☐	☐	☐
		Key data and systems backed up elsewhere	☐	☐	☐
		Key holders identified	☐	☐	☐
		Contact your landlord	☐	☐	☐
		Know how to rent another office space	☐	☐	☐
		Flood risk assessment carried out	☐	☐	☐

PLANT & MACHINERY Your organisation may rely on items of machinery or plant • Do you hold spare parts for key pieces of plant and machinery? Do you know how to repair them? Do you have a maintenance contract with a supplier - if so see the *"suppliers, distributors & customers"* section • Do you need to source extra capacity for key pieces of machinery or plant in case you experience a failure? • Can you agree mutual arrangements with a competitor to provide assistance if you are unable to continue trading?	**STEP 7**	Spare parts for key pieces of machinery in store	☐	☐	☐
		Maintenance contracts in place	☐	☐	☐
		Mutual arrangements with competitors in place	☐	☐	☐
SEASONAL FLUCTUATIONS Does your organisation have any natural fluctuations of operational activity e.g. payroll, or accounts? Do you have any key periods for trading for example the summer months? • During these critical times, certain functions will become even more important. Should you suffer a disruption, you should ensure that these areas are resumed as quickly as your risk assessment tells you • At these times, the points listed above become more critical to ensure your businesses can cope with an unforeseen disruption	**STEP 8**	Seasonally critical functions identified	☐	☐	☐
UNDERSTAND YOUR ENVIRONMENT… OTHER CONSIDERATIONS • What do your neighbours do? Could an incident at their site impact on your business • What information will the emergency services require from you. How can you help them by ensuring access routes, and providing information (key holders etc)? Tell them what you will need (access to your building etc), information on chemicals stored or other health and safety items they would need to be aware of.	**STEP 9**	Contact your neighbours	☐	☐	☐
		Contact the emergency services	☐	☐	☐

CRITICAL RECOVERY TIMES It may be that the impact would be felt immediately, after several days or it could escalate over time. Understanding the time it would take for your business to feel the pain from a disruption is important, as this will dictate what you need to concentrate on first. • Consider how essential each of the elements of your businesses are. Through a simple process like this you have completed a basic risk assessment of the areas of your business that have a priority for action over others.	**STEP 10**	Assess the criticality of your businesses functions	☐	☐	☐