



# Business Continuity In Suffolk

## Step 4. Develop Your Plan

The purpose of your Business Continuity Plan is to ensure that your organisation's critical activities can continue during a disaster and can get back to a normal level of operation as quickly as possible.

Your plan should be flexible enough to be useful in whatever event that may happen, but should be detailed enough to safeguard the top priority critical activities identified in Step 1 and meet the highest risk threats identified in Step 2.

We recommend you consider the following items and use the template provided.

1. Contact the Emergency Services and follow their instructions.
2. Take any immediate action to help injured people such as staff, customers, the general public and contractors.
3. Assess the damage to your organisation.
  - The number of staff injured or unavailable
  - Damage to property, premises or building
  - Damage to plant, equipment or vehicles
  - Damage to stock

Take any immediate action to secure your property, for example any cash you may have on site.

4. Identify which critical activities will be disrupted by the damage caused.
5. Contact those people who will be able to help you recover these critical activities. For example:-
  - Staff not effected by the event
  - Your manager or the proprietor of the organisation
  - Your insurer
  - Your county or borough emergency planning or business continuity unit
  - Suppliers, contractors or other business partners
  - Trade associations and support organisations such as Chamber Of Commerce

Note – you may need to inform people if an off-site meeting location is to be used.

### 6. Action Plan

Now set the actions required to recover the critical activities disrupted that you need to take over the next: 24 hours; 2–3 days; up to 1 week; 1–2 weeks; and more than 2 weeks.

Remember – in your Business Impact Assessment (step 1) you listed:-

- The number of staff needed and any particular individuals or skills or knowledge
- The amount of building space required for the operation
- Any particular building that your critical activities could be relocated to
- Any particular plant, equipment and materials required
- Any particular information, data or IT required
- Key external organisations you may depend on such as suppliers

#### Top Tips

1. **Start a log of your actions** as soon as possible in case there are any enquiries after the event.
2. **Back up data regularly** and store copies off site in a secure place. Low cost back up options include CD writers or DAT tape recorders. Practise restoring the data in an IT system outside your own to ensure it works.
3. **Ensure that important paper documents**, such as contracts and employee information, are protected. Make copies and use fire resistant and waterproof storage containers.
4. **Be clear about what your insurance policies cover** and what they don't so that there are no nasty surprises when you subsequently make a claim. Keep copies of the relevant policies off site so that you know immediately what to do in the event of an incident. Review your insurance cover regularly to ensure it keeps pace with any changes in the business.
5. **Have an emergency pack** (sometimes called a grab-bag) which may include your Business Continuity Plan, as well as a first aid kit and a mobile telephone.
6. **Check you have an evacuation procedure** for the premises in which your organisation is located.

#### 7. Communicate

Firstly, it is essential to keep your staff informed regarding the emergency and the response actions being taken. Staff may be concerned about:-

- colleagues who may be injured
- what is expected of them today
- whether to turn up for work tomorrow
- whether there will still be a job for them if the building has gone up in smoke, etc.

Consider issuing a help-line number for staff to call in on or, depending on the scale and type of emergency, tannoy announcement, email, intranet, poster in reception area or canteen, local radio or phone call to all staff.

Remember – providing information quickly will stop rumours!

Secondly, the same principles apply to organisations you depend on and depend on you.

Thirdly (and by no means least), you should consider telling your customers as much as you can, even if all you can do is put a sign up in the shop window.

You might also need to appoint a member of your staff to act as a liaison officer to liaise with emergency services, other staff, customers, suppliers, support organisations, the media and any other organisations caught up in the event.