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power with responsibility

Disaster recovery planning –
how to create a resilient strategy

Disaster recovery planning – how to create a resilient strategy

The recent storms across the UK have highlighted just one of the many threats to business continuity. As well as hazards caused by extreme weather, rising fuel costs and vulnerability of energy supply can have a massive impact on your business stability.

A business continuity survey conducted by Regus found that 30% of companies with fewer than 50 employees had no disaster recovery plan. How would your business stand up should the worst happen?

A disaster recovery plan can be simpler than you may think. This white paper will guide you through the process, from initial risk assessment to creating your own plan, using a set of templates that can be adapted to suit your business.

> We have seen first-hand the long-term effect of business disaster – despite the short-term protection of insurance, 80% of businesses affected by a major incident either never re-open or close within 18 months.
> *AXA Insurance*

What are the risks to business continuity?

The first place to start is a risk assessment. There are many different ways to evaluate risk and every business will have differing risks. By using the areas below you can work through the risks that your business faces.

The main factors used are covered under the business model PESTLE. Using the outline of this model you can evaluate the 'mesoeconomic' (areas where the business operates and can have limited influence on the impact) or 'macroeconomic' environments (which the business is impacted by but has no control over). These break down into Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental.

For the purpose of disaster planning, it is unlikely that Social influences will impact the outcome and some considerations may fall across more than one area. Some examples that could affect power supply are:

- Risk of terrorism.
- Middle East Instability / OPEC Cartel.
- The Russian energy supply is vulnerable due to political mood.
- Union unrest in the UK could affect energy supply.
- A growing inability to conduct business manually; technology requires power.
- Deteriorating mains power due to 'dirty' power.
- Environmental and economic pressure to reduce carbon emissions.
- Desire for 'clean' power.
- Unreliability of wind or solar power.
- Increase in extreme weather conditions.

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Disaster Scenario One

A good example for disaster recovery is loss of power.

In the first white paper we looked at the impact of loss of power to a business. This same process needs to be applied across all areas of risk to provide the most resilient disaster recovery plan.

If the initial impact of loss of power is not life threatening or financially catastrophic then usually the next consideration is expectation. What does your business provide to your customers and what expectations do they have? How would your business be impacted and what would be the resulting effect on your customers?

Think about public expectations. Without power, public expectations cannot be met; no airline bookings, no online shopping, no heating, no light.

Primary impact - income stream

- Telephones
- Computers
- All high technology power

Secondary impact - mechanical or physical issues

- Despatch scanners
- Forklift/ Equipment charging
- Access barriers not working
- Lift

Equipment Malfunction

Legislation

Renewables

Expectation

Risk of Power Failures

Hazards of Nature

Human Error

Terrorism

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How can you plan for disaster recovery?

You need to have a robust disaster recovery and business continuity plan. This needs to contain all the information required to minimise impact to the business and provide enough information to allow the best progression of business continuity.

Not only is a disaster recovery plan important for your business, it is important for your customers. How will you maintain service levels and communication with customers in the event of a disaster? You customers may think it's a shame you've had a fire or a flood but their primary concern is how your unfortunate situation will affect their business. Harsh but true.

Create your disaster recovery plan from the customer's perspective. What things are critical to ensure business continues?

Think about how well it demonstrates your business capability if, in the event of a disaster, your customers are not affected. It will support your relationships with them and give confidence.

What is priority? Back office systems underpinning the business, or getting customer facing departments up and running while you work on systems to support the business?

Your disaster recovery plan is a live document and should be regularly updated. Ensure that you hold the most up to date copy and update annually as a minimum. A copy of the disaster pack also needs to be stored off site, as the incident could make building access either unsafe or impossible.

Reception   **Phone**   **Email**   **Website**

Aims and objectives

Aim

The aim of the Emergency and Business Continuity Plan is to mitigate the effects of any catastrophe that might occur within or adjacent to the premises, which could disrupt the core activities of the organisation to such an extent that it may cause loss of production, profit, or require the relocation of the business.

Objectives

- To save life
- To prevent escalation of the incident
- To safeguard the environment
- To protect property
- To enable a timely and orderly recovery of the business

" Mitigate the effects of any catastrophe that may cause loss of production and profit. "

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Creating a Disaster recovery plan

Equipped with all of the information from the planning and risk assessment stages of this process, you can now start to create the plan.

Method

- Provide clearly defined courses of action
- Provide a place for the recording of resources
- Identify 'Key Holder' personnel, resources and functions
- Identify critical systems and functions and define alternative procedures
- Identify additional short term resources required for supporting partial operation
- Provide a guide for actions which will ensure minimal disruption
- Identify those who must be notified and kept informed of the incident
- Document the location of data (electronic and paper) in off-site storage
- Enable sufficient flexibility to cater for losses of varying scale

The plan will be activated by the most senior manager on site when any incident occurs which necessitates evacuation and involves the use of outside agencies, other than the Emergency Services.

It is vital to ensure that copies of this Plan are kept OFF-SITE because a simple situation can rapidly escalate to require Plan activation.

Primary planning considerations

Include in here a list of emergency contacts and the order in which they should be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Then create a list of all business critical providers.

- Telecoms provider
- ISP (Internet Service Provider)
- Gas and Electricity providers
- Water supplier

Then create a list of all business critical providers.

- Intruder alarm company
- Security companies
- CCTV
- Fire Alarm company
- Hired/leased equipment
- Insurance company
- Fleet management
- Facilities/maintenance

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Responsibilities

Outline the accountable people responsible for action and management of the 'Disaster Pack'.

The responsible person will maintain the 'Disaster Pack' which shall include:

- A copy of this Disaster Recovery Plan
- Building and Site plan(s)
- Floor plan(s)
- Pocket notebooks
- Personnel details including home phone numbers
- Location of backup copies of vital computer and paper records
- Signage notifying evacuation to planned evacuation site or other location
- Clipboard, tape, pens, torch + fresh batteries, etc.

Basic company information

- Premises address
- Telephone number
- Facsimile (FAX)
- E-Mail
- Co. Registration number
- VAT Registration number
- Type of building/acreage of site
- Construction
- Number of floors/floor areas
- Entrances and approaches
- Number of offices
- Number of factory units
- On-Site Location of building and site plans
- Off-Site Location of building and site plans
- Communications equipment detail

Hazards associated with the premises

- Electricity supply
- Gas supply
- Water supply
- Chemicals in store
- Flammable substances
- Compressed gases
- Oil & diesel storage

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Structure Emergency Response Team

Set up an emergency response team including a main contact and alternative.

- Emergency Coordinator - takes ultimate responsibility for emergency planning and implementation

- Evacuation Manager - ensures safe evacuation

- Building Manager and Salvage Co-ordinator - makes building safe and prevents further damage, makes best use of anything salvageable

- Security Manager - ensures safety of plant and equipment

- IT/Communications Manager - ensures retention of vital electronic records and facilitates communications and rapid IT recovery

- Records and Personnel Manager - ensures paper documents and personnel records safety and all Disaster Pack personnel records are kept current

- Relocation Manager - ensures rapid relocation to restart operations

Supporting documents can be found in the appendix and include:

- Emergency contact form for the premises.
- Actions and decisions log.
- Emergency Response Team action checklists
- Coordinators action checklist
- Evacuation Manager checklist
- Evacuation Manager's Evacuation Plan
- Building Manager and Salvage Co-ordinator checklist
- Security Manager checklist
- IT/Communications Manager checklist
- Records and Personnel Manager checklist
- Relocation Manager checklist
- Re-occupation checklist

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Planning for Disaster – It's not just about the plan

The plan is the document that will facilitate the management of the incident but other key areas for considerations are outlined below.

Implement disaster communications plan

Consider the responses that need to be set up to inform customers and stakeholders of a possible delay in communicating, or dealing with their requirements. The objective is to communicate effectively and update them regularly.

- Consider diverting phones to a fully briefed member of staff, who can communicate and reassure while the disaster recovery location (and customer service communication centre) is set up. And/or

- Check if your telecoms provider can host an emergency message/ voicemail service and create a process to implement this.
- Set up a home page 'emergency message' that can be activated remotely, and create a process to implement it.

- Set up and automatic email response for all incoming mail, and create a process to implement it.

If your business has a satellite office it may be that provision is only required for message diversion, both telephone and email. If you do not have a satellite office you will need to consider a disaster recovery location.

Set up disaster recovery location

Assess the business locations and plan a dedicated Disaster Recovery Centre which will provide an alternative location, being nearest to most office-based Team Members.

In the event of a major disaster rendering head office unusable, or a major communications infrastructure failure occurring at any time, add in the process for diverting communications to ensure minimal customer communications loss.

> " The objective is to communicate effectively and update them regularly. "

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Working with the Media

Working with the Media can protect the company's corporate reputation and public image. However, statements relating to the incident should be cleared with the Police first, if possible.

Never give details of injuries or fatalities.

The Media can be intrusive and will be keen to get information as quickly as possible.

It is therefore wise to have one or two persons trained and nominated to deal with the press, radio and television. Staff should always refer the Media to those persons.

A holding statement can be given early on, following an incident:

•

Give the Media information or they will manufacture it. If you promise more information at a specific time, give it at that time or tell them you still do not have any to give but will give them some as soon as you can.

Giving something, such as a short history of the company, number of employees, the fact this is the first incident of its kind to happen to the company, will always be appreciated. Never say 'No Comment' and always tell the truth.

" Give the Media information or they will manufacture it. **"**

Example Holding Statement

'The company can confirm that an incident arose within our premises at (location) at (time).

No further information is available at the present time as the Emergency Services are still dealing with the incident. The company's Emergency and Business Continuity Plan has been activated and our Emergency Response Team will work in liaison with the Emergency Services in order to keep damage to a minimum.

A further statement will be issued once the situation has been clarified.

In the meantime, the Emergency Services may have more up-to-date information'

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Re-occupation

The return phase will be planned and controlled by the Police in consultation with the Local Authorities and all relevant agencies including the Town Centre Partnership. Major considerations will include traffic arrangements and ensuring that the evacuated property is kept as safe as possible.

Factors affecting return

Before an area is opened for evacuees to return, the Police will liaise with all relevant agencies to ensure that the area is:

- Free from contamination with Chemical or Biological agents, if the original incident was of a chemical/biological nature or caused secondary chemical/biological accidents. Appropriate scientific officers will advise.

- Free from physical hazards such as unstable structures. Owners should be asked to make arrangements for dangerous buildings to be made safe before a general return is permitted. In certain circumstances, District Councils can compel owners to make buildings safe or can arrange for the work to be done and charged to the owner. Other hazards such as debris blocking roads should be removed.

- Relatively free from Public Health hazards such as substantial amounts of sewage effluent. Public Health Doctors and Council Environmental Health Officers can advise.

- Capable of having essential services such as communications, gas, water, electricity, and sewage restored within a reasonable time. Providers of these services should all be involved in this phase. They can provide repair teams to enter the area once it has been cleared of hazards and can advise on how long repairs will take.

It may be necessary for property holders, or their representatives, to make an initial visit to survey damage and begin making arrangements for repair.

Under no circumstance should you return to the premises unless it has been cleared by the relevant authorities.

Summary

Your Disaster Recovery Plan will be as unique as your business, but consider the risks and review what your business will need to deal with an incident. Correct management will mitigate any damage.

Appendix -
Example disaster recovery plan and supporting forms

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Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan

Company name:

Address:

Date:

Completed by:

**This is a live document and should be regularly updated.
Ensure that you hold the most up to date copy.**

Update ANNUALLY as a MINIMUM

**This document also contains SENSITIVE information and should be treated as such.
All outdated copies should be destroyed by shredding.**

Emergency Contacts and Key holders Details

IMPORTANT:

Each time a change is made to this page, enter the new date below:

DD/MM/YYYY

Main Key holder and Managing Director

Name:

Telephone:

Mobile Phone:

Second Key holder

Name:

Telephone:

Mobile Phone:

Third Key holder

Name:

Telephone:

Mobile Phone:

Intruder Alarm Company

Name:

Telephone:

Mobile Phone:

CCTV Monitoring

Name:

Telephone:

Mobile Phone:

Telephone Support, Lines & Calls Provider

Name:

Telephone:

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EMERGENCY CONTACT

IF IT IS NECESSARY TO EVACUATE THE BUSINESS PREMISES, COMPLETE THIS FORM
(use permanent marker pen, removable with meths)
AND DISPLAY ON DOOR/WINDOW BEFORE LEAVING

Name of premises:

Contact person:

We have moved to:

Time of leaving building: **AM**   **PM**

Contact telephone no:

Other occupants notified of evacuation   **YES**   **NO**

Other occupants in building   **YES**   **NO**   **NOT Known**

UTILITIES

Mains electric   **YES**   **NO**

Gas supply   **YES**   **NO**

Water supply   **YES**   **NO**

OTHER INFORMATION:

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM ACTION CHECKLISTS

These Checklists relate to the IMMEDIATE ACTIONS to be taken in the event of activation of this Plan

Tasks may need to be reassigned in the absence of a nominated team member,
therefore, alternates should always be pre-identified.

All members of the Team should log all activities and the reasons behind their actions

If tasks are allocated before any Emergency, a Safer and Quicker evacuation can be achieved.

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EMERGENCY CO-ORDINATOR

Accurately assesses the situation and liaises with Emergency Services

☐ **TAKE THIS PLAN WITH YOU**

☐ **Contact Emergency Services and gives accurate assessment of incident**

☐ **Coordinates Emergency Response Team Members**

☐ **Nominates assistant to help with administrative matters**

☐ **Nominates Liaison Officer to Emergency Services**

☐ **Liaises with neighbouring properties**

☐ **Liaison with Local Authority**

☐ **Liaison with Media**

☐ **With Security Manager, notifies Police of who is authorised to access site cordon**

☐ **On completion of evacuation and safe dispersal of staff, briefs staff and begins planning immediately for a safe return to normality**

☐ **Considers all financial aspects of recovery**

Team Leader to reassign tasks in the absence of another team member

All members of the Team should log all activities and the reasons behind their actions

ACTION/DECISION SHEET

Date: ....

Time: ....

Name: ....

Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

....

....

Decision taken and reasons: ....

....

....

Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

....

....

Decision taken and reasons: ....

....

....

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Coordinaters Action Checklist – Additional Items

Depending on the incident, there may be time to consider other factors:

Think about the following in case of evacuation during working hours:

Who secures valuables:

Name:

Who turns off:

Water:

Gas:

Electric:

Shut all windows

Name:

Lock up premises (UNLESS A DEVICE IS SUSPECTED WITHIN YOUR PREMISES OR ACCESS IS NEEDED BY THE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Remove certain items (relating to security or legal)

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EVACUATION MANAGER

Ensures safe evacuation

- Collects or organises collection of on-site disaster pack if safe to do so

- During operating hours ensures all staff, residents, contractors, and members of the public evacuate the building via the safest route (working with Security Manager) and does so 'Calmly, Firmly, and In Control at All Times'

- Ensures safety at all time, especially when crossing roads

- Checks building to ensure no one left

- Nominates someone to direct Emergency Services onto site if safe to do so

- Congregate all staff at known planned evacuation point

- Takes roll call as appropriate and informs Police of result

- Tells staff that Police may require a statement

- Ensures Emergency Services have access via a key holder to locked buildings following evacuation

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ACTION/DECISION SHEET

Date: ....

Time: ....

Name: ....

Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

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Decision taken and reasons: ....

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Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

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Decision taken and reasons: ....

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EVACUATION MANAGER'S EVACUATION PLAN

The Evacuation Plan for the premises should be tested regularly to ensure all persons know where to assemble and what to do.

Evacuation Assembly Points relating to the Town Centre Response Plan have been determined in advance and are identified in the Plan, which is a restricted document not available to the public. The Police will notify you where to go.

Your own Evacuation Assembly Points for Fire and other events NOT notified in advance by the Police or Fire Brigade must therefore be suitably located to ensure personnel safety in the event of an explosion such as from gas or other event. Current evacuation distance guidelines indicate that the locations you choose should be at least 500 metres from your premises.

When determining Evacuation Assembly Points think carefully about:

- **Ability of Staff and Public to reach the Point safely**
- **Clear access for Emergency Services**
- **Staff and Public Safety at the Point**
- **Toilets**
- **Seating**
- **Water**
- **Shelter**
- **Transport (either to site or home)**

EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINT(S) ....

....

....

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BUILDING MANAGER & SALVAGE CO-ORDINATOR

Makes building safe and prevents further damage, makes best use of anything salvageable

- Isolates Services if safe to do so
- Maintains list of organisations contracted to assist in recovery
- Contacts Contractors
- Contacts insurers for damage assessment
- Assist Relocation Manager in resource allocation at alternative premises

IF SAFE TO DO SO

- Prevents damage to equipment, machinery, furniture, valuables, documents etc
- First Aid
- Firefighting
- Sheeting over
- Removes Essential Items and identifies salvageable resources

Team Leader to reassign tasks in the absence of another team member

All members of the Team should log all activities and the reasons behind their actions

ACTION/DECISION SHEET

Date: ………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Time: ………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Name: ………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Source of Information: …………………………………………………………………………… .

Action/Information: …………………………………………………………………………………… .

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Decision taken and reasons: …………………………………………………………………..

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Source of Information: …………………………………………………………………………… .

Action/Information: …………………………………………………………………………………… .

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Decision taken and reasons: …………………………………………………………………..

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SECURITY MANAGER

Ensures safety of plant and equipment

Secures Building if appropriate

Secures valuable items if appropriate

Liaises with Police and Security Firm

Protects any evidence including CCTV

With Emergency Co-ordinator, notifies Police of who is authorised to access site

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Time: ....

Name: ....

Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

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Decision taken and reasons: ....

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Source of Information: ....

Action/Information: ....

....

....

Decision taken and reasons: ....

....

....

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IT/COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Ensures retention of vital electronic records and facilitates communications and rapid IT recovery

Ensures back up of all IT-based information - if no time to back up vital or has not been done, grab main computer base unit(s) only if it is safe to do so

Ensures ERT members have adequate communications equipment

Obtains additional Mobile Phones or Radio's, spare batteries, chargers and keeps a list of all users phones/radios are issued to and their contact numbers/call signs

Maintains strict radio discipline of all users especially when relaying information on missing or injured persons or fatalities

Priorises and switches telecommunications and computer links to alternate location

Ensures main switchboard number is operational, with additional operators to handle increased number of calls. Use call divert facilities if necessary

Prioritises the IT recovery steps if required to maintain business continuity

1. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

2. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

3. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

4. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Ensures communications link available for staff to call home

Maintains website

Team Leader to reassign tasks in the absence of another team member

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Decision taken and reasons: …………………………………………………………………………..

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RECORDS & PERSONNEL MANAGER

**Ensures paper documents and personnel record's safety and all
Disaster Pack personnel records are kept current**

- [ ] **On evacuation, takes all vital paper records if safe to do so - suppliers, customers, shareholders, accounting (invoicing, bank, etc)**

- [ ] **Informs staff if out of hours**

- [ ] **Liaison with owners**

- [ ] **Liaison with and reassurance of partners**

- [ ] **Liaison with shareholders**

- [ ] **Refreshments for and reassurance of staff**

- [ ] **Arranges for defusing and debriefing of staff, if required**

- [ ] **Handles calls from relatives (but does not give details of injury or death - this is for the Police to manage)**

- [ ] **Arranges food, travel, lodging for recovery staff**

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Decision taken and reasons: ………………………………………………………………………………..

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RELOCATION MANAGER

Ensures rapid relocation to restart operations

- Activate alternate location for vital business operations

- Determine priority for reactivation of work areas

- Obtain transport to move resources to alternate locations

- Coordinate removal and relocation of personnel and resources

- Liaise with and reassure suppliers - confirm delivery dates

- Liaise with and reassure customers - ensure order completion

- In consultation with Emergency Coordinator, places articles in press following incident to inform customers and suppliers

Team Leader to reassign tasks in the absence of another team member

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