



alarm

A guide to business continuity management

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KNOWLEDGE

About Alarm

Alarm is a membership organisation run by Members, for Members. Its purpose is to support risk and insurance professionals and those that deal with the management of risk as part of a wider role, within organisations that provide or support our communities and citizens.

For more information about Alarm and membership, please visit the Alarm website: alarm-uk.org. Alternatively email: admin@alarm-uk.org or call **0333 123 0007**.

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Foreword

The impact of a disruption to services in the public sector is a risk that many have identified at a strategic level and it figures largely in corporate and strategic risk registers. The wide range of threats, the increasing reliance on technology and public expectations, often voiced through social media, all mean that the need for plans to deal with disruptions is more important than ever before. This is reinforced by the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*, which imposes a statutory duty for organisations to be resilient.

The challenge for public sector organisations is how to plan to maintain services during incidents, which may not only disrupt resources but also require support to an affected community. The threat from terrorism has grown in recent years but it is not only bombs that can disrupt: how about a flu epidemic, crime scene or even a simple lottery win? Business and service continuity is just that: continuing to provide key services despite interruptions of whatever nature. Alarm has produced this document, having recognised the need to provide clear help and guidance in this area to enable local authorities and other public sector front line responders to fulfil service and statutory obligations.

We hope this Guide provides the wherewithal to develop a robust business continuity infrastructure that will enable resilience and help to carry on when facing an incident.

Introduction

While most public service organisations have emergency plans for civil contingency business continuity plans can often be forgotten. The Act however, lays equal emphasis on business continuity planning and civil contingency so critical public services can continue during an emergency.

The Guide was originally written to assist Members comply with the requirements of the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004* with respect to business continuity planning. This update reflects current standards and practices, including a list of reference sites for further information. It is prepared jointly by Alarm and BGG Associates for Alarm Members and aims to provide an introduction to and awareness of the BCM process to help local authorities and other public sector front line responders meet the duties placed on them by the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*. Many of the case studies and examples used throughout the Guide are local authority biased but the principles apply to other organisations.



This Guide is organised into three parts. The first part (sections three and four) explains the context for business continuity management and the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*. The second part (sections five to nine) follows the plan, do, check, act (PDCA) cycle covering the steps required to implement a business continuity management system. The third part (sections 10-11) contains case studies and lessons learnt, plus a table of useful sources of information.

Organisations without business continuity management systems, or ones refreshing plans will find the whole of this Guide useful. Organisations reviewing the adequacy of existing plans should find the checklists in tables three to nine a helpful starting point.

The *Civil Contingencies Act 2004* sets out two types of responding organisations known as category 1 and category 2. Category 1 responding organisations include principal local authorities and emergency services - police and fire services. A full list of organisations which fall into these two categories can be found in section 12 of this Guide. **It should be noted that this Guide will often refer to local authorities in respect of this legislation but this will also include other category 1 (front line) responders unless otherwise stated.**

For organisations in Scotland the subject matter of this Guide is covered by an update to the document *Preparing Scotland* on the Ready Scotland website here: readyscotland.org/ready-government/preparing-scotland/