



Procedure

Implementing a business continuity plan

Audience

Department-wide

Implementation Date: 12/10/2018

Version: 1.0

Purpose

This procedure outlines the process that should be followed when activating and deactivating a business continuity plan (BCP).

Overview

BCPs are activated when the impacts of a disruption event are unable to be managed within normal operations and the outage is likely to exceed the maximum acceptable outage period, as identified in the business impact assessment.

The department adopts a scalable approach to BCP activation, depending on the complexity and severity of an event. BCPs may be activated individually or in tandem, and may be activated in their entirety or only in part, depending on the nature of the disruptive event. For example scenarios and more information on how these plans interact, refer to the [Business Continuity Management Framework](#).

Responsibilities

BCP owner – Deputy Director-General/Regional Director

- Endorse BCP activation.
- Ensure there is appropriate resourcing and the necessary support to effectively implement BCPs and perform BCP roles.
- Monitor progress updates from Event Leads.
- Review escalated issues and decide whether an escalated continuity response or disaster and emergency management arrangements are needed.
- Endorse BCP test report and changes to the BCP.

Operational BCP Lead – minimum level Director

- Develop a set of criteria for activation and deactivation of the BCP.
- Assess need to activate BCP.
- Seek BCP Owner approval to activate the BCP.



- Notify relevant parties of BCP activation.
- Manage the BCP implementation.
- Report on the status of the BCP implementation to the Coordination BCP lead, BCP owner or Response Controller, as appropriate.
- Monitor and escalate issues to relevant parties as required.
- Monitor and manage BCP team wellbeing.
- Deactivate the BCP, in consultation with Coordination and BCP Owner, and notify relevant parties.
- Conduct post-event review with BCP staff and other relevant parties to identify lessons learnt.

Coordination BCP lead – minimum level Executive Director

- Provide leadership to Operational BCP lead(s).
- Assess need to activate BCP.
- Seek BCP Owner approval to activate the BCP
- Notify relevant parties of BCP activation.
- Manage the BCP implementation.
- If multiple Operational BCPs are activated:
 - prioritise BCP activation
 - prioritise critical resource allocation (infrastructure, IT, people)
 - act as single point of contact for BCP matters.
- Report on the status of the BCP implementation to BCP Owner/Response Controller, as appropriate.
- Review escalated issues and decide whether an escalated continuity response or disaster and emergency management arrangements are needed.
- Monitor and escalate issues to BCP Owner as required.
- Monitor and manage BCP team wellbeing.
- Deactivate BCPs, in consultation with Operational BCP Owners/BCP Owner/Response Controller, and notify relevant parties.
- Conduct post-event review with BCP staff and other relevant parties to identify lessons learnt.

Regional BCP lead – minimum level Director Regional Services

- Provide leadership to schools on BCP matters.
- Assess need to activate BCP.
- Seek BCP Owner approval to activate the BCP.
- Notify relevant parties of BCP activation.
- Manage the BCP implementation.
- If multiple schools require continuity support:
 - prioritise BCP activities
 - prioritise critical resource allocation (infrastructure, IT, people)
 - act as single point of contact for continuity matters.

- Report on the status of the BCP implementation to BCP Owner/Response Controller, as appropriate.
- Review escalated issues and decide whether an escalated continuity response or disaster and emergency management arrangements are needed.
- Monitor and escalate issues to BCP Owner as required.
- Monitor and manage BCP team wellbeing.
- Deactivate BCPs, in consultation with BCP Owner/Response Controller, and notify relevant parties.
- Conduct post-event review with BCP staff and other relevant parties to identify lessons learnt.

Response Controller

- Lead/manage the response to the disaster or emergency event, as outlined in the [Disaster and emergency management arrangements](#)
- Prioritise BCP activation and liaise with Coordination leads in activating plans.
- Allocate and coordinate resources to support BCP activation.

School Principals

- Develop a set of criteria for activation and deactivation of continuity arrangements, outside of a disaster or emergency event.
- Assess need to activate continuity arrangements, in consultation with Regional BCP Lead and Owner.
- Notify Regional BCP Owner of the need to activate the Regional BCP to support school continuity arrangements.
- Work with Regional BCP Lead to ensure school continuity needs are managed.
- Provide status reports to Regional BCP Lead, BCP Owner or Response Controller, as appropriate.
- Monitor and escalate issues to relevant parties as required.
- Monitor and manage staff wellbeing.
- Deactivate continuity arrangements, in consultation with Regional Lead and BCP Owner, and notify relevant parties.
- Conduct post-event review with staff and other relevant parties to identify lessons learnt.

Resource recovery support – Information Technology, Infrastructure Services and Human Resources Branches

- Provide advice and support to BCP leads on operational resource matters, including outside disaster and emergency management arrangements.
- Assist in prioritising and allocating critical operational resources to meet BCP implementation needs.
- Participate in debriefing session, contributing to identification and actioning of lessons learnt.

Emergency and School Security Unit, Infrastructure Services Branch

- Maintain a register of activated BCPs.
- Maintain situational awareness of activated BCPs and issues escalated during BCP implementation.
- Recommend activation of disaster and emergency management arrangements as outlined in the [Disaster and emergency management arrangements](#).

- Provide support to critical business functions as required, even without activation of disaster and emergency management arrangements.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

- Manage internal and external corporate communications under disaster management arrangements, as directed by the Response Controller.
- Assist in the preparation and dissemination of messages if necessary under business continuity requirements.

Process

The following table provides a high level overview of the business continuity landscape, including the types of disruptions, involved parties and escalation and information pathways. This procedure is structured around the three types of disruption and the roles identified in this table.

Management action	Disruptive event management (no disaster and emergency management needed)					Disaster and emergency management		
Type of disruption	Disruption to a single critical business function			Disruption to multiple critical business functions contained to a corporate area (branch/division) or a region (including regional office and schools)		Disaster or emergency disruption to multiple critical business functions across one or more corporate area (branches/divisions) or region (including regional office and schools) or the whole department.		
Impacted area	Corporate	Regional office	School	Corporate	Region	Corporate	Region	Whole department
Event lead	Operational BCP Lead	Regional BCP Lead	School Principal	Coordination BCP Lead	Regional BCP lead	Executive Response Controller (ERC)		
Escalation and information pathways	Operational BCP Lead ↓ ↑ Coordination BCP Lead ↓ ↑ BCP Owner	School Principal ↓ ↑ Regional BCP Lead ↓ ↑ BCP Owner	School Principal ↓ ↑ Regional BCP Lead ↓ ↑ BCP Owner	Operational BCP Lead ↓ ↑ Coordination BCP Lead ↓ ↑ BCP Owner	School Principal ↓ ↑ Regional BCP Lead ↓ ↑ BCP Owner	Operational BCP Lead/School Response Controllers ↓ ↑ Coordination/Regional BCP Leads ↓ ↑ BCP Owner/Regional Response Controllers ↓ ↑ Executive Response Controller		

Escalation and reporting
 Authorising and direction
 Information exchange (as required)

Steps to implementing a BCP

There are six main steps in the successful implementation of a BCP.



Disruption to a single critical business function

Assessing for activation

- In the lead up to a disruptive event, or as a disruptive event is beginning, the Operational BCP Lead/Regional BCP Lead/School Principal (Event Lead) should monitor the situation.
- Event Lead should assess their operational readiness and make necessary preparations for BCP activation.

- Triggers for activation should be based on a risk assessment. Considerations should include:
 - location of the disruption and potential impacts (e.g. branch-wide disruption vs. targeted impact)
 - capacity of the business area to manage the disruption (i.e. could it be controlled using existing management action)
 - stakeholder, political, media or reputational implications
 - time of year.
- Activation of a BCP may also be triggered by:
 - an interdependent BCP being activated
 - advice from a resource recovery support area that an outage is likely to occur
 - the Coordination/Regional BCP lead if:
 - multiple critical business functions are impacted
 - senior management has information that warrants activation
 - the department is operating under disaster and emergency management arrangements (at the local, regional, departmental or state level).

Activating BCPs

- To activate a BCP, the Event Lead must escalate their assessment of the event and seek approval from the BCP Owner.
- Following activation of a BCP, the Event Lead should immediately notify:
 - their immediate BCP escalation point
 - Operational BCP leads to notify the Coordination BCP lead
 - Regional BCP leads to notify the BCP owner
 - School principals to notify the Regional BCP lead
 - staff involved in implementation of the BCP
 - resource recovery support (to commence restoration of required operational resources – ICT, infrastructure, HR)
 - any interdependent functions (to ensure functions can adapt as needed and any related BCP(s) are activated)
 - staff not required in the BCP response (outlining what is required of them while the disruptive event is being managed)
 - customers and/or stakeholders (advising them how they might be affected)
 - Emergency and School Security Unit (ESSU) for situational monitoring
 - Community Engagement and Partnership (CEP) for broader communication requirements.

More information on communicating during BCP activation can be found in the [Communication considerations guideline](#).

Implementing BCPs

- The Event Lead is responsible for overseeing the implementation of actions identified in their BCP.
- The Event Lead should regularly report BCP implementation status. Status reporting should include:
 - success of activation, including effective communication to all affected parties
 - current status, including service levels and engagement with resource recovery support contacts
 - issues and risks
 - BCP team wellbeing and any rostering considerations

- The Event Lead should maintain communication with parties notified at the time of activation to keep them up-to-date on the situation. More information on communicating during BCP activation can be found in the [Communication considerations guideline](#).

Escalating issues

- Any issues identified by the Event Lead should be escalated to the immediate BCP escalation point.
- The Event Lead should notify ESSU of any escalated issues in order for it to:
 - maintain situational awareness
 - make a recommendation to the relevant response controller to activate disaster and emergency management arrangements, if necessary and appropriate.
- Escalation may be required for a number of reasons, for example:
 - maximum acceptable outage is at risk of being exceeded
 - minimum performance standards are at risk of not being achieved
 - there is insufficient capacity to implement the BCP with existing resources
 - impacts of disruption have increased in size, severity and/or complexity.
- The Coordination/Regional BCP Lead may decide to activate their BCP if they determine a larger business continuity response is required. To do this the Coordination/Regional BCP Lead must seek approval from the BCP Owner.
- The Coordination/Regional BCP Lead may decide the event requires a disaster and emergency management response. They must escalate this decision to the BCP Owner.
- If the BCP Owner decides the event does require a disaster and emergency management response, they must escalate this decision to the Executive Response Controller to make a determination who will, if required, activate the department's [disaster and emergency management arrangements](#).

Deactivating BCPs

- The Event Lead determines when a BCP can begin to be deactivated based on their monitoring of the situation.
- A BCP can be decommissioned in its entirety or in stages, depending on the business function and the nature of the event.
- The Event Lead must:
 - prioritise which BCP activities can be stopped and/or transitioned back to business-as-usual and when
 - determine how any backlog of work, and/or transition of work carried out under alternative arrangements, is to be actioned
 - communicate the deactivation of the BCP, and associated resumption of business-as-usual activities, to all parties notified at the time of activation.
- The Event Lead should conduct a welfare check of staff impacted by the event and monitor staff wellbeing during the transition back to business-as-usual.

Post-event review

- The Event Lead should conduct a post-event review of the entire BCP process, from pre-activation to deactivation to identify strengths and opportunities to improve.

- Lessons should be incorporated into any relevant plans, processes and systems, and shared with all relevant stakeholders.

Disruption to multiple critical business functions

Assessing for activation

- In the lead up to a disruptive event, or as a disruptive event is beginning, the Coordination BCP Lead/Regional BCP Lead (Event Lead) should monitor the situation, consulting with Operational BCP Leads/School Principals as required.
- The Event Lead should assess operational readiness and make necessary preparations for BCP activation.
- Triggers for activation should be based on a risk assessment. Considerations should include:
 - location of the disruption and potential impacts (e.g. branch-wide disruption vs. targeted impact)
 - capacity of the business area to manage the disruption (i.e. could it be controlled using existing management action)
 - stakeholder, political, media or reputational implications
 - time of year.
- Activation of a BCP may also be triggered by:
 - Operational BCP Leads/School Principals escalating issues or advising of a situation affecting multiple critical business functions
 - senior management having information that warrants activation
 - an interdependent BCP being activated
 - advice from a resource recovery support area that an outage is likely to occur
 - the department is operating under disaster and emergency management arrangements (at the local, regional, departmental or state level).
- The Event Lead should escalate their assessment of the event and, if BCP activation is required, seek approval from the BCP Owner to activate their BCP.

Activating BCPs

- To activate a BCP, the Event Lead must seek approval to activate from the BCP Owner.
- Following activation of a BCP, the Event Lead should immediately notify:
 - staff involved in implementation of the BCP
 - resource recovery support (to commence restoration of required operational resources – ICT, infrastructure, HR)
 - any interdependent functions (to ensure functions can adapt as needed and any related BCP(s) are activated)
 - staff not required in the BCP response (outlining what is required of them while the disruptive event is being managed)
 - customers and/or stakeholders (advising them how they might be affected)
 - Emergency and School Security Unit (ESSU) for situational monitoring
 - Community Engagement and Partnership (CEP) for broader communication requirements.

More information on communicating during BCP activation can be found in the [Communication considerations guideline](#).

Implementing BCPs

- The Event Lead is responsible for overseeing the implementation of actions identified in their BCP.
- The Event Lead oversees and coordinates the implementation of associated Operational BCPs/school continuity arrangements.
- Event Leads in the regions (Regional BCP Leads) work in consultation with School Principals to ensure appropriate continuity arrangements are implemented effectively.
- The Event Lead receives regular status updates from Operational Leads/School Principals, including:
 - success of activation, including effective communication to all affected parties
 - current status, including service levels and engagement with resource recovery support contacts
 - issues and risks
 - BCP team wellbeing and any rostering considerations.
- The Event Lead should regularly report BCP implementation status to the BCP Owner.
- The Event Lead should maintain communication with parties notified at the time of activation to keep them up-to-date on the situation. More information on communicating during BCP activation can be found in the [Communication considerations guideline](#).

Escalating issues

- Any issues escalated to or identified by the Event Lead should be escalated to the BCP Owner.
- The Event Lead should notify ESSU of any escalated issues in order for it to:
 - maintain situational awareness
 - make a recommendation to the relevant Response Controller to activate disaster and emergency management arrangements, if necessary and appropriate.
- Escalation may be required for a number of reasons, for example:
 - maximum acceptable outage is at risk of being exceeded
 - minimum performance standards are at risk of not being achieved
 - there is insufficient capacity to implement the BCP with existing resources
 - impacts of disruption have increased in size, severity and/or complexity.
- The BCP Owner may decide the event requires a disaster and emergency management response. They must escalate this decision to the Executive Response Controller.
- If the Executive Response Controller decides the event does require a disaster and emergency management response, they will activate the department's [disaster and emergency management arrangements](#).

Deactivating BCPs

- Event Leads in corporate office (Coordination BCP Leads), in consultation with Operational BCP Leads and BCP owner, determine when a BCP can begin to be deactivated based on their monitoring of the situation.
- Event Leads in the regions (Regional BCP Leads) work with School Principals to determine when to deactivate BCP activities.
- A BCP can be decommissioned in its entirety or in stages, depending on the business function and the nature of the event.
- The Event Lead must:
 - prioritise which BCP activities can be stopped and/or transitioned back to business-as-usual and when

- determine how any backlog of work, and/or transition of work carried out under alternative arrangements, is to be actioned
- communicate the deactivation of the BCP, and associated resumption of business-as-usual activities, to all parties notified at the time of activation.
- The Event Lead should conduct a welfare check of staff impacted by the event and monitor staff wellbeing during the transition back to business-as-usual.

Post-event review

- The Event Lead should conduct a post-event review of the entire BCP process, from pre-activation to deactivation to identify strengths and opportunities to improve.
- Lessons should be incorporated into any relevant plans, processes and systems, and shared with all relevant stakeholders.

Disaster and emergency events

During a disaster and emergency event

- BCPs may be activated prior to a disaster and emergency event, or as a result of a disaster and emergency management event.
- When disaster and emergency arrangements are activated, BCP leads must follow the direction of the Response Controller.
- BCPs must work in tandem with emergency response plans (ERPs), which take precedence over BCPs during a disaster and emergency situation.
- ERPs outline the disaster response and recovery efforts needed during a disaster or emergency situation, with a focus on protecting the immediate safety and wellbeing of students, staff and stakeholders in our facilities, while BCPs ensure the continuity and prioritisation of critical services that must remain in operation to at least a minimum level.

After a disaster and emergency event

- Some BCPs may still be required after a disaster and emergency arrangements are ceased due to flow-on effects and an inability to immediately return to business-as-usual.
- BCP Owners, in consultation with Coordination/Regional BCP Leads, will determine which BCPs must remain active and advise BCP Leads/Teams accordingly.
- BCP Leads should follow the steps outline earlier in this procedure to guide successful implementation, communication, escalation of issues and deactivation of their BCP.

More information on the department's disaster and emergency management arrangements can be found on the [disaster and emergency management](#) webpage.

Definitions

Business continuity plan	A documented collection of strategies and actions for use in a disruptive event to enable a critical business function to continue to deliver its services to an acceptable minimum level and transition to normal operations and performance levels
BCP team	All staff involved in the implementation of a BCP.
Coordination BCP	Coordination BCPs are overarching plans developed for each branch/division. A Coordination BCP ensures more effective prioritisation and coordination of the continuity response should multiple operational BCPs be activated. It also helps reduce duplication of communication, expediting recovery of operating resources.
Critical business function	A business function, or part thereof, identified as essential for the continuation of critical services (direct service delivery, managing areas of lowest risk appetite and our contribution to the short-term financial viability of staff and stakeholders).
Disruptive event management	Capabilities to ensure the department can continue to deliver critical service should an event cause a disruption that is beyond the management of normal business operations
Disaster and emergency management	Specialists capabilities to manage a serious disruptive event, including safeguarding people and assets, minimising business disruption and returning the department as quickly as possible to normal service delivery
Emergency Response Plan	Emergency response plans (ERPs) provide details on how schools, regions and the department prepare for and responds to disaster or emergency situations.
Event Leads	<p>Event Leads is a term applied to officer responsible for leading a business continuity response. This procedure identifies Event Leads in two different scenarios:</p> <p>Disruption to a single critical business function – depending on the area affected the Event Lead will be the Operational BCP Lead, Regional BCP Lead or School Principal.</p> <p>Disruption to multiple critical business functions – depending on the area affected the Event Lead will be the Coordination BCP Lead or the Regional BCP Lead</p>
Interdependent functions	The reliance of a critical business function on another function (not necessarily a critical business function) to fulfil its operational requirements. For example, receiving essential data (input) from elsewhere or sending required data (output) to another business area. An interdependent function can be with another internal business area or an external organisation.
Maximum acceptable outage	The maximum period of time the department can tolerate a disruption to a critical business function.
Operational BCP	Operational BCPs are used to ensure individual critical business functions are able to continue to operate, at least to a minimum level of capability and performance, following a disruptive event and transition back to normal operations and performance levels.

Regional BCP	Regional BCPs are used by each region. Regional BCPs contain a combination of operational and coordination BCP requirements. Regions cater for school BCP requirements through the Regional BCP.
Response Controller	<p>There are three types of Response Controllers that assume this function during a disaster and/or emergency event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Response Controller – for events impacting a school • Regional Response Controller – for events impacting whole regions • Executive Response Controller – for events impacting across the department, including regions.

Legislation

- [Financial Accountability Act 2009 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Disaster Management Act 2003 \(Qld\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Related policies

- [Business Continuity Management Policy](#)
- [Business Continuity Management Framework](#)
- [Enterprise Risk Management Framework](#)
- [Enterprise Risk Management Policy](#)
- AS ISO 22301:2017 Business continuity management systems – Requirements
- AS/NZS 5050:2010 Business continuity – Managing disruption-related risk

Related procedures

- [Developing a business continuity plan procedure](#)
- [Disaster and emergency management procedure](#)

Guidelines

- [Communication considerations guideline](#)

Supporting information/websites

- [Business continuity supporting resources](#)
- [Disaster and emergency management arrangements](#)

Contact

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Nil

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