

CAB Training Cards



कृषि बैंकिंग महाविद्यालय, भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
विद्यापीठ मार्ग, पुणे-411016
College of Agricultural Banking, Reserve Bank of India
University Road, Pune-411016



What is Business Continuity Planning? (BCP)

Critical services or products are those that must be delivered to ensure survival, avoid causing injury, and meet legal or other obligations of an organization. BCP is a proactive planning process that ensures critical services or products are delivered during a disruption. It includes:

- Plans, measures and arrangements to ensure the continuous delivery of critical services and products, which permits the organization to recover its facility, data and assets.
- Identification of necessary resources to support business continuity, including personnel, information, equipment, financial allocations, legal counsel, infrastructure protection and accommodations.

Having a BCP enhances an organization's image with employees, shareholders and customers by demonstrating a proactive attitude. The additional benefits are improvement in overall organizational efficiency and identifying the relationship of assets and human and financial resources to critical services and deliverables.

Why is BCP important?

Every organization is at risk from potential disasters that include:

- Natural disasters such as tornadoes, floods, blizzards, earthquakes and fire
- Accidents
- Sabotage
- Power and energy disruptions
- Communications, transportation, safety and service sector failure
- Environmental disasters such as pollution and hazardous materials spills
- Cyber-attacks and hacker activity.

Creating and maintaining a BCP helps to ensure that an institution has the resources and information needed to deal with these emergencies.

Creating a BCP

A BCP typically includes five sections:

1. BCP Governance
2. Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

3. Plans, measures, and arrangements for business continuity
4. Readiness procedures
5. Quality assurance techniques (exercises, maintenance and auditing)

BCP Governance

A BCP contains a governance structure often in the form of a committee that will ensure senior management commitments and define senior management roles and responsibilities.

The BCP senior management committee is responsible for the oversight, initiation, planning, approval, testing and audit of the BCP. It also implements the BCP, coordinates activities, approves the BIA survey, oversees the creation of continuity plans and reviews the results of quality assurance activities.

Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

The purpose of the BIA is to identify the organization's mandate and critical services or products; rank the order of priority of services or products for continuous delivery or rapid recovery; and identify internal and external impacts of disruptions.

Plans for business continuity

This step consists of the preparation of detailed response/recovery plans and arrangements to ensure continuity. These plans and arrangements detail the ways and means to ensure that critical services and products are delivered at a minimum service levels within tolerable down times. Continuity plans should be made for each critical service or product.

Readiness procedures

Business continuity plans can be smoothly and effectively implemented by:

Having all employees and staff briefed on the contents of the BCP and make them aware of their individual responsibilities

Having employees with direct responsibilities trained for tasks they will be required to perform, and be aware of other teams' functions

Quality assurance techniques

Review of the BCP should assess the plan's accuracy, relevance and effectiveness. It should also uncover which aspects of a BCP need improvement. Continuous appraisal of the BCP is essential to maintaining its effectiveness. The appraisal can be performed by an internal review, or by an external audit.

A Business Continuity Plan is a tool that allows institutions to not only moderate risk, but also continuously deliver products and services despite disruption.

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Compiled by
Shri A S Pillai,
GM & MOF