

Business continuity

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An emergency or major incident is likely to place a significant burden on the police. Business continuity planning helps police forces understand the relative priority of functions if their ability to maintain day-to-day operations has been compromised. A continued policing provision is still required, both in the area directly affected and across the rest of the force area. This requirement is one of the strategic objectives in maintaining the rule of law. The effectiveness of any response to an incident can be reduced where there is a partial or full breakdown in law and order in the location and wider affected area.

Business continuity management is the strategic and tactical capability of the organisation to plan for and respond to incidents and business disruptions, so business operations can continue at an acceptable pre-defined level.

The starting point for business continuity plans is that normal business cannot be achieved in extraordinary circumstances. It is, therefore, important that resources can be deployed and reallocated to critical functions. Planning must consider the likelihood and effects of losing one or more critical activities or infrastructure. Business continuity plans list the minimum resources and staffing levels required to fulfil only those functions.

Plans should consider the IT, equipment, building and human resources required to deliver identified critical functions for each department. The risk and resilience of each force is different and must be evaluated locally.

Category 1 responders produce local business continuity plans. Local resilience forums (LRFs) need to be aware of these plans and support business continuity management activities.

For further information see:

- [**British standard ISO 22301**](#)
- [**Cabinet Office guidance on the role of LRFs**](#)
- [**Cabinet Office expectations of Category 1 and 2 responders**](#)
- [**Planning**](#) section of this APP

Sustainability

To ensure sustainable business continuity plans:

- arrangements should assume the worst-case scenario from whatever cause
- each force should undertake a review to identify and prioritise its critical functions and calculate how they would be provided over a prolonged period of time
- reviews should include identifying which non-critical functions will become critical with the passage of time

Example

This is an example of identified critical functions (source: South Yorkshire Police).

1. To maintain effective communications with the public.
2. To answer all 999 calls.
3. To provide an appropriate response to immediate and priority incidents.
4. Maintain the ability to deal with:
 - major, critical and emergency incidents
 - serious crime
 - firearms incidents
 - the protection of vulnerable people
 - serious public order
 - fatal and serious road traffic collisions
5. Ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff through the provision of effective training, equipment, support and governance to deal with operational challenges.
6. To provide custody facilities and associated criminal justice and administration functions.
7. To deal effectively with all matters that have an impact on:
 - community cohesion
 - credibility and force reputation

8. To provide effective command and control of incidents. Maintain a cadre of personnel with specialist knowledge, such as:

- firearms officers
- critical incident commanders

Note: Critical functions are likely to be similar in all forces. Support departments should identify which functions are required to support the delivery of critical functions.

For further information see [**British Standard EN ISO 22301:2019 Security & Resilience – Business Continuity Management Systems – Requirements**](#) (British Standards Institution, 2019).

Tags

Civil emergencies