



Policy Location Corporate Services

Policy Title Business Continuity Management Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of the Business Continuity Management Policy is to clearly document the Buloke Shire Council's (Council) commitment to implementing, overseeing and continuously improving Business Continuity Management (BCM); recognising the important of business resilience and long term performance. The purpose of BCM to protect the interests of the Buloke Shire Council and its internal and external stakeholders by employing a rigorous process to develop, implement and operate a BCM system to effectively manage and mitigate potential disruption risks to critical functions and services, and to identify minimum resources and capabilities required to restore critical Council functions.

Scope

This Policy applies to all critical functions and services of Council, and to all staff involved in the delivery of those functions and services. It encompasses all aspects of strategic and operational areas of Council.

This Policy relates to the broad range of business-disruptive events and situations that may potentially impact on the organisation, whether in whole or in part, on a scale beyond the normal capabilities of management to address as part of day-to-day operations.

This Policy excludes any Policy relevant to emergency management which may result in business disruption.

Definitions

In this policy –

“Business Continuity” is the uninterrupted availability of all key resources supporting critical business functions.

“Business Continuity Management (BCM)” means a whole-of-organisation process for managing operations to ensure critical functions can, in the event of a disruption arising from internal or external events, be maintained or restored in a timely fashion.

“Business Continuity Management System” is the collection of processes and resources delivering the BCM Policy and provides the means to achieve the organisational objectives using the business continuity plans.

“Business Continuity Plan” is a methodology for initial recovery in the event of a disruption to business that is regularly reviewed for currency.

“Business Unit” defines the sections within the organisation which manage a specific function under the responsibility of a senior manager.

“Critical Function” refers to a function within a business unit which is considered an essential service.

“Critical Function Owner” is any person assigned by senior management to be responsible for the implementation of continuity arrangements if a critical

function is interrupted.

“Stakeholder” means any person or body of people with a vested interest in the performance of the organisation, including but not limited to residents, creditors, insurance agencies and staff.

Policy Statement

Council shall develop and maintain a sound BCM system to effectively enable Council to re-establish functions and services in a timely and efficient manner, with minimal disruption to stakeholders. By understanding the environment, vulnerabilities and criticalities of the organisation, Council is committed to ensuring there is a clear understanding of what accountabilities and responsibilities are in place when emergency, continuity and recovery response are in effect.

Guidelines

Planning

1. Council will maintain business continuity plans for key locations and business processes.
2. The Chief Executive Officer oversees the establishment and facilitation of the business continuity management system throughout the Council.
3. The Business Continuity Coordinator is responsible for:
 - a. Identification of critical objectives, in conjunction with senior management, business units and critical function owners
 - b. Identification of processes to ensure Council can continue to achieve its critical objectives should interruptions occur through documentation of minimum resources and response times needed to assure operational continuity through an effective business impact assessment
 - c. Coordination of business continuity management implementation
 - d. Ensuring all staff understand their roles and responsibilities when a major disruption occurs, in conjunction with senior management and supervisors.
4. The Business Continuity Coordinator, with input from senior management and extended management, will regularly test and report on the effectiveness of the business continuity plan.

Development and Maintenance

1. Senior management, extended management and critical function owners, in conjunction with the Business Continuity Coordinator, are responsible for:
 - a. Identifying key objectives within their business unit which must be achieved during and after a major disruption, taking into account stakeholder expectations of acceptable service delivery.
 - b. Thoroughly evaluating the impact of disruption risks on critical business functions.
 - c. Considering likely future scenarios which may result in a disruption to the business.
 - d. Providing targeted guidance to staff involved in business continuity management.
 - e. Identifying critical business functions and processes.
 - f. Ensuring there is clarity in relation to specific response actions, roles and responsibilities, including integration with other Council documents, resources and plans.
 - g. Identifying the people, infrastructure and data resources required to maintain a minimum acceptable level of operations.
 - h. Identifying communication requirements and methods of dissemination.

- i. Ensuring testing of the system occurs on a regular basis.
2. Senior management, extended management and critical function owners are accountable for the creation and implementation of business continuity plans within their respective areas, including building consensus and commitments to the requirements of the plans, establishment of maximum tolerable outage periods, ensuring appropriate resources are made available to enact the plan and ensuring the currency of the plan is maintained.
3. Senior management, in conjunction with the Business Continuity Coordinator, is responsible for the development of a formal testing program, which may include but will not be limited to simulation testing, and reporting on the effectiveness of the business continuity plan.
4. All staff are expected to recognise the importance of business continuity, to be familiar with the provisions of this Policy, and to understand and support the processes which will enable the organisation to continue to achieve its critical objectives.
5. The business continuity plan will include:
 - a. Clearly defined and agreed roles and responsibilities of staff involved in managing any disruption.
 - b. The expected standards for restoration and resumption of services and functions.
 - c. Information regarding the levels of accounting practices and legislative requirements to be maintained.
6. Council will endeavor to accurately identify its critical functions and continually reflect upon changing environments and practice to aid the recovery process and minimise extraordinary costs resulting from an event.
7. Council is committed to investing time, capital, tools and techniques to ensure business continuity is a fully embedded business management process.

Review

1. In conjunction with the senior management team, the Business Continuity Coordinator is responsible for regularly testing and reporting on the effectiveness of the business continuity plan.
2. The Business Continuity Coordinator is responsible for annual reporting to senior management, the Audit Committee and Council on the effectiveness of Council's business continuity management system.
3. Senior Management will conduct a business continuity plan review on an annual basis, in consultation with the Business Continuity Coordinator.

References

This Policy was developed in accord with the following legislation:

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- *Local Government Act 1989*

This Policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents:

- Buloke Shire Council Risk Management Framework
- Buloke Shire Council Risk Management Policy
- HB 292-2006 *A practitioner's guide to business continuity management*