Workbook outlining an agile approach

Contents

Keywords[i] and concepts used throughout this approach

(The concept diagram on the cover uses keywords which are core to this approach)

Activity

Set of one or more tasks with a defined output

Business continuity

Capability of an *organization* to continue the delivery of *products and services* within acceptable time frames at predefined capacity during a *disruption*

Business continuity plan

Documented information that guides an *organization* to respond to a *disruption* and resume, recover and restore the delivery of *products and services* consistent with its *business continuity objectives*

Business impact analysis

Process of analyzing the *impact* over time of a *disruption* on the *organization*

Continual improvement

Recurring *activity* to enhance *performance*

Disruption

Incident, whether anticipated or unanticipated, that causes an unplanned, negative deviation from the expected delivery of *products and services* according to an *organization's objectives*

Documented information

Information required to be controlled and maintained by an *organization* and the medium on which it is contained. Documented information can be in any format and media, and from any source.

Effectiveness

Extent to which planned *activities* are realized and planned results achieved

Impact

Outcome of a *disruption* affecting *objectives*

Incident

Event that can be, or could lead to, a *disruption*, loss, emergency, or crisis

Interested party (preferred term) - Stakeholder (admitted term)

Person or *organization* that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected or potentially affected by a decision or *activity*

Monitoring

Determining the status of a system, a *process,* or an *activity*

Objective

Result to be achieved

Objectives can relate to different disciplines (such as financial, health and safety, and environmental goals) and can apply at different levels (such as strategic, organization-wide, project, *product,* and *process*. An objective can be expressed in other ways, e.g. as an intended outcome, a purpose, an operational criterion, or by other words with similar meaning (e.g. aim, goal, or target).

Organization or Entity

Person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities, and relationships to achieve its *objectives*

The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public, or private.

For organizations with more than one operating unit, a single operating unit can be defined as an organization.

Prioritized activity

Activity to which urgency is given to avoid unacceptable *impacts* to the business

Process

Set of interrelated or interacting *activities* which transforms inputs into outputs

Product / Service

Output or outcome provided by an *organization* to *interested parties*

EXAMPLE manufactured items, car insurance, community nursing.

Resource

All assets (including plant and equipment), people, skills, technology, premises, and supplies and information (whether electronic or not) that an *organization* must have available to use, when needed, in order to operate and meet its *objective*

The organization shall determine the **resource requirements** to implement the selected business continuity solutions. The types of resources considered shall include, but not be limited to:

a) people.

b) information and data.

c) physical infrastructure such as buildings, workplaces or other facilities and associated utilities.

d) equipment and consumables.

e) information and communication technology (ICT) systems.

f) transportation and logistics.

g) finance.

h) partners and suppliers.

Risk

Effect of uncertainty on *objectives*

An effect is a deviation from the expected — positive or negative.

Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

What does the current level of Risk mean?		
Priority	**Conditions / Circumstances**	**Recommended Action**
High	Conditions or Circumstances which could cause major adverse effect on the ability to achieve an objective.	▪ Requires giving high priority to immediate action. ▪ Requires significant senior management intervention - and may require significant mobilisation of resources, including external assistance; with potential for ongoing resource diversion.
Medium	Conditions or Circumstances which could cause moderate adverse effect on the ability to achieve an objective.	▪ Requires prompt action. ▪ Requires management intervention and may require external assistance.
Low **Very Low**	Conditions or Circumstances which could cause minimal but measurable impact on the ability to achieve an objective.	▪ Appropriate governance - and monitoring - generally mitigates these risks. ▪ Requires management attention and possibly, a minor use of external resources.

Top Management

Person or group of people who directs and controls an *organization* at the highest level

BUSINESS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (BIA)

If you are using this document to support draft work and discussions, make notes in the tables below.

Objectives, the Products/Services that help achieve this objective and the activities underpinning the Products/Services.

1. For **<INSERT objective here> and <INSERT product/service here>** then list the activities supporting this product/service **in priority order.**

Prioritized Activities
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6. Enter more lines into this table if and as required

2. Using the guidance set out below undertake a Business Impact Assessment of each of your "prioritized activities", filling in your answers to the following questions on the blank BIA Proforma sheet under the relevant headings. Or enter the information directly into AgileBCP®

PEOPLE	PREMISES	PROCESSES	PROVIDERS	PROFILE
Key Staff: What staff do you require to carry out this prioritized activity?	**Buildings:** What location(s) does this prioritized activity operate from? (Primary site, alternative premises)	**Information Technology:** What Information Technology is essential to carry out this prioritized activity?	**Reciprocal Arrangements:** Do you have any reciprocal agreements with other organisations?	**Reputation:** Who are your key stakeholders?
Skills / Expertise / Training: What skills / level of expertise is required to undertake this prioritized activity?	**Facilities:** What facilities are essential to carry out this prioritized activity?	**Documentation:** What documentation / records are essential to carry out this prioritized activity? How are these stored?	**Contractors / External Providers:** Do you tender key services out to another organisation? If so - to whom and for what?	**Legal and Financial Considerations:** What are your legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements? What are your financial issues
Minimum Staffing Levels: What is the minimum staffing level with which you could provide some sort of service?	**Equipment / Resources:** What equipment / resources are required to carry out this prioritized activity?	**Systems & Communications** What systems and means of communication are required to carry out this prioritized activity?	**Suppliers:** Who are your priority suppliers? Who do you depend on to undertake this prioritized activity?	**Vulnerable Groups:** Which vulnerable groups might be affected if this prioritized activity is not done?

BIA PROFORMA – for each product or service, complete for each prioritized activity

PEOPLE	PREMISES	PROCESSES	PROVIDERS	PROFILE
Key Staff:	Buildings:	Information Technology:	Reciprocal Arrangements:	Reputation:
Skills / Expertise / Training:	Facilities:	Documentation:	Contractors / External Providers:	Legal and Financial Considerations:
Minimum Staffing Levels:	Workstations:	Systems & Communications	Suppliers:	Vulnerable Groups:

TIPS: CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCREASING YOUR RESILIENCE

PEOPLE	PREMISES	PROCESSES	PROVIDERS	PROFILE
Key Staff: Can staff be contacted out of hours? Could extra capacity be built into your staffing to assist you in coping during an incident?	**Buildings:** Could you operate from more than one premise? Could you relocate operations in the event of a premise being lost or if access to the premise was denied?	**IT:** Is data backed-up and are back-ups kept off site? Do you have any disaster recovery arrangements in place?	**Reciprocal Arrangements:** Do you have agreements with other organisations regarding staffing, or use of facilities in the event of an incident?	**Reputational Damage:** How could reputational damage to your organisation be reduced? How could you provide information to staff and stakeholders in an emergency (e.g. press release)?
Skills / Expertise / Training: Could staff be trained in other roles? Could other members of staff undertake other non-specialist roles, in the event of an incident?	**Facilities:** Are any of your facilities multi-purpose? Are alternative facilities available in the event of an incident?	**Documentation:** Is essential documentation stored securely (e.g. fireproof safe, backed-up)? Do you keep copies of essential documentation elsewhere?	**Contractors / External Providers:** Do you know of alternative contractors or are you reliant on a single contractor? Do your contractors have contingency plans in place? Could contractors be contacted in the event of an incident?	**Legal Considerations:** Do you have systems to log decisions; actions; and costs, in the event of an incident?
Minimum Staffing Levels: What is the minimal staffing level required to continue to deliver the prioritized activity at an acceptable level? What measures could be taken to minimise impacts of staff shortfalls?	**Equipment / Resources:** Could alternative equipment / resources be acquired in the event of an incident / disruption? Could key equipment be replicated or do manual procedures exist?	**Systems & Communications:** Are your systems flexible? Do you have alternative systems in place (manual processes)? What alternative means of communication exist?	**Suppliers:** Do you know of suitable alternative suppliers? Could key suppliers be contacted in an emergency?	**Vulnerable Groups:** How could vulnerable groups be contacted / accommodated in the event of an incident?

TIPS: USING BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS TO BUILD A PLAN

	BIA Identifies requirements for continuing prioritized activity	Plan Documents how requirements identified in the BIA can be achieved
PEOPLE	o Key Staff o Key Skills o Expertise / competence required o Minimum staffing levels required to continue / recover key functions	o Notification / invocation procedure / protocol o Management structure for dealing with an incident o Information and advice to staff (response procedures) o Key staff / contact list (including out of hours details) o Multi skill training in key areas o Reciprocal Arrangements to cover staff short falls o Home working o Staff welfare issues
PREMISES	o Key facilities o Key Equipment o Key Resources o Specialist Equipment o Security / restrictions o Alternative sites o Alternative facilities	o Loss / damage assessment o Site security o Relocation arrangements / protocol o Inventories of equipment/ resources and details of how to recover these o Salvage, site clearance and cleaning arrangements
PROCESSES	o Key processes o Critical periods o Key IT systems / applications o Key documentation / data o Record keeping requirements o Key communication requirements	o Action cards for recovery of key processes o Checklists o Copies / Back-ups / safe storage (recovery procedure) o Contingency procurement arrangements o Documented manual procedures o Data recovery procedures
PROVIDERS	o Key dependencies (supply and receipt) o Key suppliers o Key contractors / service providers / suppliers o Reciprocal arrangements in place with other organisations	o Contact details for key providers / contractors / suppliers / support services o Alternative suppliers (required for key functions) o Alternative providers (required for key functions) o Alternative contractors (required for key functions) o Resilience capability of suppliers / provider / contractors to business disruption o Third party business continuity arrangements
PROFILE	o Key stakeholders o Legal / statutory / regulatory requirements o Vulnerable groups	o Communication strategy / plan / procedures o Stakeholder liaison (regulator, clients, unions) o Media liaison o Public information / advice o Notification of at-risk groups / alternative care arrangements

Criteria Based Decision Making

Criteria based decisions provide a consistent and agreed approach. The RISK CRITERIA applied to the Critical Activities are listed below. Remember - there is no single right answer, no silver bullet but the principles and processes applied here have proven sound over a long time in many contexts.

*AgileBCP® enables you to a*pply your own KEY / LEGEND - edit the attributes in the criteria guidelines - to reflect the requirements of your context.

Criterion 1 - CRITICALITY
When scoring, please consider for how long this resource can be unavailable before there is a critical effect on the continuity of the activity. Scoring guidelines as follow: Attribute
(1) more than 1 week.
(2) 5 working days.
(3) 3 to 4 working days.
(4) 1 to 2 working days.
(5) less than 1 day.

Also consider if the resource was unavailable how that might influence the achievement of objectives. Scoring guidelines as follow: Attribute
(1) Insignificant: Negligible impact on objectives if resource is inactive.
(2) Minor: Effects on objectives easily remedied if resource is inactive.
(3) Moderate: Some objectives affected if resource is inactive.
(4) Major: Some important objectives cannot be achieved if resource is inactive.
(5) Absolute: All objectives are compromised if resource is inactive.

Criterion 2 - VULNERABILITY
How vulnerable is this resource in the current circumstances?
Vulnerability is a function of many things.
It is about the characteristics and features of the resource, and the dependencies and inter-dependencies associated with it, which make it more resilient, or more adaptable, or more fragile.

*For **people***, this may be about their factors such as health and their behaviour.

*For **premises***, it may be about such things as the integrity of the structure and relative location (in relation to other hazards).

*For **providers***, it may be about factors such as their size, capability, resilience, and replaceability.

*For **processes***, it may be about factors such as their fitness for purposes and backup.

*For **profile***, it may be about the nature of the prioritized activity, associated stakeholders and how well relationships associated with the activity are managed.

Attribute (1) for low vulnerability through to (5) for high vulnerability.

Criterion 3 - IMPACT

When attributing a measure please consider the level of impact (on its functionality) this resource has in the present circumstances?

For how long can the loss of capability (to support the achievement of objectives) be afforded?

Guidelines as follows:
(1) more than 1 week
(2) 5 working days
(3) 3 to 4 working days
(4) 1 to 2 working days
(5) less than 1 day

Also consider how impact might influence the achievement of objectives.

Guidelines as follows:
(1) Insignificant: Negligible impact on objectives
(2) Minor: Effects on objectives easily remedied
(3) Moderate: Some objectives affected
(4) Major: Some important objectives cannot be achieved
(5) Absolute: All objectives are compromised.

Simulation and Conversations

There is significant value in planning (as process) vs the value of a plan (as document)
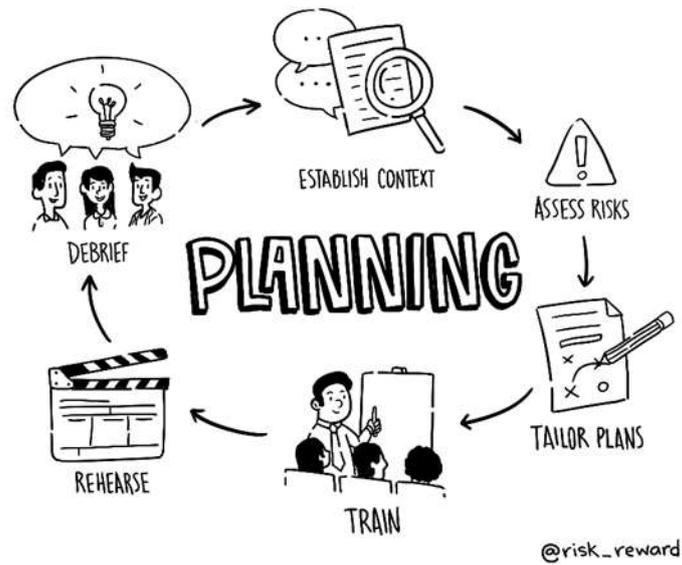
A sound way of populating the Business Impact Assessment information – and developing your arrangements to both mitigate before impact and respond after impact – is to hold short, frequent team meetings to discuss scenarios.
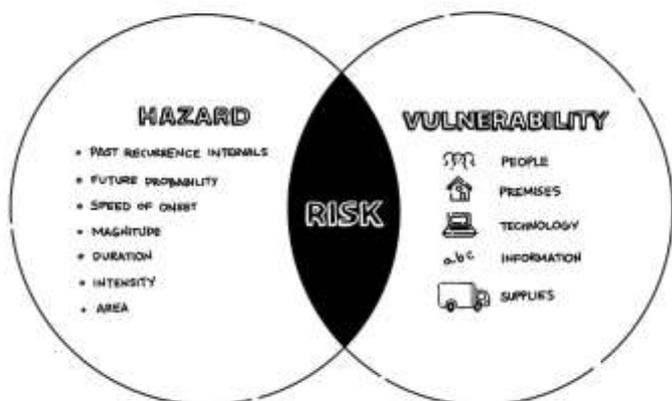
"Tables to use when simulating impact scenarios"

Damage assessment

[Based on damage to your business, complete the table below - shuffle in order of severity.]

Rank	Damage	Impact to business – the problem	Severity	Action	Recovery steps	Resources needed	Actioned by	Estimated date of completion
1	*[List any damage to buildings, assets, stock, documents, or surrounding area/community.]*	*[Describe direct or indirect impacts the damage will have on your business' critical functions.]*	*[High, Medium, Low.]*	*[Repair, replace, rebuild.]*	*[List the steps needed to recover the damage or solve the problem.]*	*[List the resources needed to solve the problem including any cost estimates, service providers, employees, building materials.]*	*[Assign someone to each task.]*	*[Due date for completion.]*
2								
3								

Recovery contacts

[Include organisations/people that will be, or will become, essential to recovery.]

Contact Type	Organisation Name	Contact	Title	Phone/Mobile number
Insurance	*[e.g. XYZ Insurance]*	*[e.g. G. Jones]*	*[e.g. Claims Advisor]*	*[(Area code) Number]* *[Mobile number]*
Telephone/ Internet services provider	—	—	—	—
Bank/building society	—	—	—	—
Employee (and next of kin)	—	—	—	—
Supplier (Main)	—	—	—	—
Supplier (Backup)	—	—	—	—
Customer	—	—	—	—
Business advisor	—	—	—	—
Accountant	—	—	—	—
Lawyer	—	—	—	—

Temporary Office Accommodation

["Temporary office accommodation" you can quickly access in an emergency.]

Rank	Type	Address	Equipment available	Resources needed
1	*[e.g. Private residence, hotel, temporary business centre.]*	*[Enter the address of your temporary office site.]*	*[List all the equipment available at the site. e.g. Computers, furniture, photocopiers, phones, paper]*	*[List all the resources you will need in order to use this site as a temporary office. e.g. Software, backups, staff, and any other equipment not already available at the location.]*

Data security & backup strategy

[How have you protected your data and your network (e.g. virus protection, secure networks and firewalls, secure passwords, and data backup procedures)? Detail your backup procedures below.]

Data for backup	Type of data	Frequency of backup	Backup media/ service	Person responsible	Backup procedure steps
[List essential data your business cannot recreate from other sources.]	*[e.g. Email, spreadsheet, payroll system data, website.]*	*[e.g. Daily, weekly, monthly]*	*[e.g. Tape, CD ROM, external hard disk drive, remote/online backup service.]*		*[List steps required or attach a procedure to the back of this plan]*

Expected cash flow

[A large percentage of businesses impacted by a significant disruption fail within a short period. This worksheet cash flow sheet can be developed before impact - during planning through conversations and simulations then applied after impact]

EXPECTED CASHFLOW [YEAR]	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
OPENING BALANCE	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Cash incoming						
Sales						
Asset sales						
Debtor receipts						
Insurance payout						
Government funding						
Other income						
Total incoming	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Cash outgoing						
Bank fees & charges						
Interest paid						
Credit card fees						
Utilities (electricity, gas, water)						
Telephone						
Fuel						
Lease/loan payments						
Rent & rates						
Motor vehicle expenses						
Stationery & printing						
Membership & affiliation fees						
Licensing						
Insurance						
Superannuation						
Income tax						
Wages (including PAYG)						
More…						
Recovery costs						
Purchases (Stock, equipment, supplies)						
Cleanup costs						
Rebuilding/repairs						
Security fees						
Accountant fees						
Solicitor fees						
Data recovery fees						
Advertising & marketing						
More…						
Total outgoing	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Monthly cash balance	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
CLOSING BALANCE	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

Key ideas underpinning response – an action planning agenda

Overview

This agile approach documents an Agenda based approach describing actions to be taken, resources to be used and the procedures to be followed during and after an event that significantly disrupts all or part of core business. It has been built on a risk-based, structured methodology.

Objective

The goals of the Agenda are:

- minimise the duration of business interruption

- facilitate effective decision making during a business interruption

- ensure an orderly resumption of acceptable business operations

Scope

The Agenda can be used to manage coverage of **Partial or Major interruption**:

- **From all hazards** (e.g. Fire, Floods, Earthquake, Disease, Storm, and Terrorism)

- **To any resources** (e.g. Information systems, Utility Outage, Supply Chain, and Key staff)

The likelihood of occurrence of any extreme events is not in the scope of this document.

The focus of this approach is on the availability of key resources – to maintain operability.

Process

Decision making - The Crisis Management Team will focus on four primary decision points:

     (1) what has happened - what are the risks (detection)?

     (2) what do the risks mean (recognition and interpretation)?

     (3) who needs to know what (communication to multiple stakeholders)?

     (4) who needs to do what (organization of a collaborative system)?

The agenda is based on applying Business Impact Analysis.

This will provide a sound basis to inform crucial decisions by the Crisis Management Team.

As noted in the International Crisis Management Standard, "*crises through a combination of their novelty, inherent uncertainty and potential scale and duration of impact, are rarely resolvable through*

the application of predefined procedures and plans. They demand a flexible, creative, strategic and sustained response". This Agenda informs actions – informed decisions by the Crisis Management Team.

- A crisis condition may occur because of an extreme event or uncertain conditions – it may be in geographic, social, political, or economic "space".

- Whoever first detects a crisis condition should address it **if they are capable and it is safe to do so**, and they should communicate with senior management by whatever methods are effective. Management will then decide whether to assemble the Crisis Management Team (face-to-face or by other means such as Skype or Zoom).

Phase	Objectives	Strategies
1. Initial Response	Assess the event. Minimize impact where safe and possible to do so. Communicate the scope of the event to any available member of the Executive. N.B. The "scope" of events is not always only in geographic space – it can be in social space	Staff in the proximity assess the event in terms of risk and impact
		Staff in the proximity provide an immediate response to the event if it is safe to do so **and** they are competent to do so. This may take the form of standard procedures.
		If an initial assessment of the event and its impact indicates a situation which significantly threatens continuity of business, staff in the proximity should communicate effectively within the organisation by informing (a) any managers of effected Prioritized Activities or Business Processes; and (b) any available member of the Crisis Management Team. Any available member of the Crisis Management Team who judges the nature of the information received is significant enough to "declare an event" should do so, thereby invoking full mobilization of the Crisis Management Team and the Continuity Arrangements (Phase 2 below).
	Communicate the impact of the event on prioritized activities to the Crisis Management Team	People responsible for key functions or key business processes start contingency actions **and** provide any available member of the Crisis Management Team with an initial Impact Assessment Report.

Agenda - Crisis Management Team meeting.

Start up and Initial Considerations

An assumption that can be made is that **'agility', 'flexibility' and 'adaptability'** will be key concepts that should be part of all decision making from this point onwards.

Ensure spouses/partners and families of people involved in the crisis are safe.

Set up a log of events in an agreed structure (e.g. "SMART"; or "what, who, why, when, how")

Confirm attendance and status of the Crisis Management Team - Confirm leadership.

Clarify the context of this event or circumstances to the extent that "immediately available" information allows you to establish "what has happened" – and "what are the risks":

- Confirm the adequacy of the initial response.

- Ensure immediate risk to others and business is identified and minimised.

Establish Context – key questions

• What are the organisation's critical objectives for the next 1 month, 3 months, and 6 months?

• How likely are these objectives to change over time? Will priorities change?

Scope what has happened. What do we know? What do we not know? What do we need to know?

Get updates which will advise the extent of impact / damage.

Focus: on **OPERABILITY** - on key problems and quick solutions.

Identify and rank problems to be solved. (Rank / Shuffle them as you go – confirm priority action as a closing decision before commitment to action)

Principle: Judge it based on the likelihood of achieving a solution quickly with available resources.

Communication

Who should be immediately communicated with – internally and externally - and about what?

Tip - Different stakeholders will need to be engaged with in different ways.

Determine which, if any external regulatory and prosecutorial bodies should be notified

Phase	Objectives	Strategies	
2. Continuity - Crisis Management Arrangements	Determine activities affected. Review resources required. Review expenditure required. Prioritize recovery. Develop an endorsed Action Plan addressing restoration of service objectives. Develop a Master List of Action Plans with an implementation schedule and status reporting schedule. Communicate management of the event.	**Communicate effectively within the organisation**	
		Develop Action Plans based on ongoing Impact Assessment Reports	If the event has impacts beyond the organisation then this should be factored into decision making. The Crisis Management Team will need to resource agreed priority business services and consider how it will release and support staff effected by the broader emergency.
		Develop a **Master Action Plan List**	
		Advise external stakeholders, customers and if appropriate, affected Government Agencies.	
		Manage any media communications, as necessary.	
	Maintain critical services to customers using adjusted resource allocation and temporary methods.	Maintain (and revise) the Action Plans based on updated Vulnerability Assessments (Based on the Criticality, Susceptibility and Impact on Resources supporting Prioritized Activities). These assessments should be updated - and communicated - whenever circumstances change.	
		Provide alternative sites and providers, as necessary.	
		Undertake repairs.	
		Impose temporary service restrictions, as necessary. **(Communicate to support the above strategies)**	

• **Review the interdependencies** for:

      o people (employees, contractors, volunteers, others),

      o data and information (internally and externally sourced),

      o infrastructure (including internal plant and physical assets, external infrastructure, etc.),

o services and supplies (internal and external, including customer services and supply chains, utilities, transport, and other essential services?

Understanding what not to do can be as important as knowing what to do:

• What objectives will not be pursued?

• What sites, functions, systems, processes, etc., will we not try to protect or maintain?

• What decisions and actions will we not make/take at this time?

Phase	Objectives	Strategies
3. Recovery	Complete repairs and/or replacements of resources to agreed standards. Stand down teams.	Undertake final repair/replacement Action Plans regarding resources. Stand down all teams (this may need to be phased).
4. Review	Improve Management capability.	Review to learn from the event by conducting an independently facilitated organisation debrief.

Notes

Remember - there is no single right answer, no silver bullet but the principles and processes above have proven sound over a long time in many contexts.

Endnotes

i The keywords applied in this approach are taken from ISO 22301 (2019) Security and resilience - Business continuity management systems - Requirements