

What to Do Before, During and After a Disaster

An Industry Guide to Developing a Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Plan

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What to Do Before, During and After a Disaster!

Preface: Alphabet Soup

Alphabet soup is a good way to deal with all the elements of emergency/disaster/continuity planning: EAP, ICS, FEMA, BCP, COO. But really, where do you go, what do you need, what resources are available?

Businesses are required by OSHA to have an Emergency Action Plan (**EAP**). The EAP lists many emergency contact numbers and generally describes what employees should do in various types of emergencies such as fire, tornado, etc.

This plan is useful, but only to a limited extent. Things that are not typically included in an Emergency Action Plan are:

- What if your location is “wiped out”?
- Who is the media contact?
- Where will you relocate?
- Do you have nearby facilities that can continue the operation of the non-functioning facility?
- How do you allocate resources for clean up?
- Who has control of your site in a disaster?
- How prepared is your business to reopen following a natural or man-made disaster or epidemic?
- Do you believe that insurance will take care of the losses?
- Where will your customers/clients, vendors/suppliers go, during downtime, when your building is destroyed or employees are quarantined and your business is knocked to its knees?
- Will your owners, board members/stakeholders be well informed about impact, on the bottom line, if there is no Business Continuity Plan?

The Federal Emergency Management System (FEMA) has developed a system for defining what staff or positions are needed during an emergency and who does what. The Incident Command System (**ICS**) could be very useful in determine who needs to take care of what responsibilities in an emergency within your company. If you familiarize you employees with ICS, your company will also be better suited in communicating on the same level with emergency responders who know and implement the ICS and National Information Management System (NIMS) when there is a natural or manmade disaster in a community.

The process of relocating a business or how to stay in business after a catastrophic event is typically referred to the Business Continuity Plan (**BCP**) or a Continuity of Operations plan (**COO**). Your insurance company might be able to supply a template for a **BCP** but the government has also developed a BCP template that could help. Several online sources are also available.

But the **BCP** does not always help DURING the emergency. So, you need to build a combination plan which includes most of the information from your existing **EAP**, add the components of your **BCP** and incorporate the use of the **ICS**. With these three pieces joined together, you will have all the information and preplanning to deal with most any disaster regardless of how sever.

The following pages contain information that could help you get started developing a total Business Continuity Plan.

- First is an overview of the Incident Command System (ICS) which could help determine what positions need to be assigned during and after a disaster.
- Second is a worksheet for determining resources that may be needed to respond to a company disaster and recover from it.
- Finally is an example of what should be considered, regardless of which template or system you use to plan for a catastrophic event in your business.

Whatever template or guidance document you use, be sure to include all of the elements that are needed to keep your business viable following an emergency. The following table from the Small Business Administration in their "Disaster Preparedness and Recovery 2012" document, summarizes the five areas that should be addressed in your complete Business Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Plan. (Note: Other than this chart, the SBA document does not provide much assistance in preparing the plan. It focuses on the financial aspect of post incident needs.)

Framework	Definition*	SBA Contribution
Prevention	Capabilities necessary to avoid, prevent, or stop a threatened or actual act of terrorism.	None
Protection	Capabilities necessary to secure the homeland against acts of terrorism and manmade or natural disasters.	Continuity of operations planning, employee safety planning, and business continuity counseling.
Mitigation	Capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impacts of disasters.	Continuity of operations planning, employee safety planning, and business continuity counseling. Portions of Physical Disaster Loans can be applied to improvements for mitigation.
Response	Capabilities necessary to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs after an incident has occurred.	Support NRF processes, including emergency management, mass care, and external affairs (preliminary damage assessments)
Recovery	Capabilities necessary to assist communities affected by an incident to recovery effectively, including, but not limited to, rebuilding infrastructure systems; providing adequate interim and long-term housing for survivors; restoring health, social, and community services; promoting economic development; and restoring natural and cultural resources.	Physical and Economic Injury Disaster Loans provide long-term housing for survivors; help restore health, social, and community services; and promote economic development. Small Business Recovery: Access to capital, counseling, and access to markets all promote economic redevelopment and long-term recovery.

Incident Command System (ICS)

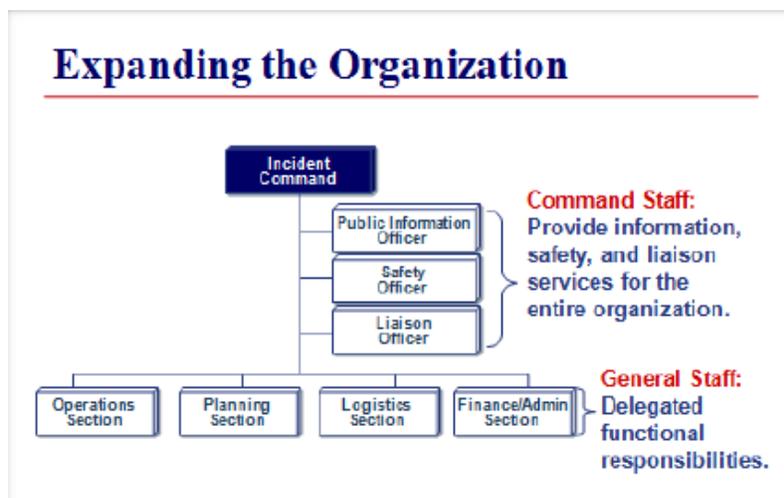
The Incident Command System (ICS) could be very useful in determine who needs to take care of what responsibilities in an emergency. If you familiarize you employees with ICS, your company will also be better suited in communicating on the same level with emergency responders who know and implement the ICS and National Emergency Management System (NIMS) when there is a natural or manmade disaster in a community.

Depending on your type of business or emergency, you may only need a few of the positions identified/described in the Incident Command System (ICS):

Incident Commander: The Incident Commander is specifically responsible for:

- Ensuring incident safety.
- Providing information to internal and external stakeholders.
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident.

These are critical functions and, until delegated, are the responsibility of the Incident Commander. The Incident may delegate each responsibility separately as follows to what is known as the "**Command Staff**":



Liaison Officer:

- Assists the Incident Commander by serving as a point of contact for representatives from other response organizations.
- Provides briefings to and answer questions from supporting organizations.

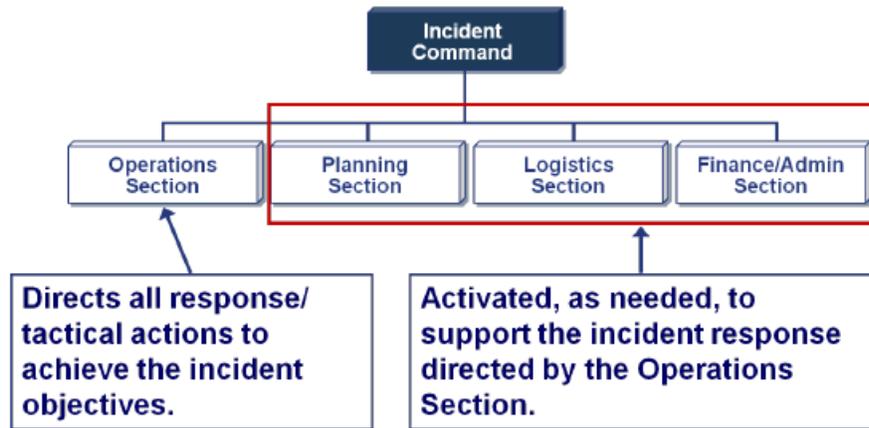
Safety Officer:

- Advises the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety.
- Works with the Operations Section to ensure safety of field personnel.
- Ensures the safety of all incident personnel.

Public Information Officer (PIO):

- Advises the Incident Commander on information dissemination and media relations. Note that the Incident Commander approves information that the PIO releases.
- Obtains information from and provides information to the Planning Section.
- Obtains information **from and provides information to the community and media.**

ICS: General Staff Positions



“General Staff” positions include:

Operations Section Chief: Will know h

Planning Section Chief

Logistics Section Chief: Will be in charge of ordering vehicles or

Finance/Admin Section Chief: Company controller

Incident Command	Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities and has overall responsibility for the incident.
Operations	Conducts operations to reach the incident objectives. Establishes the tactics and directs all operational resources.
Planning	Supports the incident action planning process by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation.
Logistics	Provides resources and needed services to support the achievement of the incident objectives.
Finance & Administration	Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses

Additional ICS Expansion

If an emergency situation warranted, the ICS system grows with the extent of the emergency. For example, each of the General Staff positions can be expanded to include more people. Here is a chart of the titles of additional members of the ICS team. This information is hopefully more than you would ever need to know about ICS development and implementation:

ICS Supervisory Position Titles

Organizational Level	Supervisor Title	Support Position Title
Incident Command	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff	Officer	Assistant
General Staff (Section)	Chief	Deputy
Branch	Director	Deputy
Division/Group	Supervisor	N/A
Unit	Leader	Manager
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	Single Resource Boss

General Business Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Planning Tips

What Should go Into a Business Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Plan?

Many examples of a BCP or OOP contain sections and charts for evaluating the risk and determining the severity of the proposed disaster, etc. The key is to keep your plan simple and take advantage of information you already have available. Do not reinvent the wheel.

Here's a checklist of things to keep in mind during business continuity planning:

- *Take the process seriously.* If you want to protect your business from unplanned events that could disrupt operations, create a plan. It doesn't have to be hundreds of pages long. It just needs the right information, and that information should be current and accurate.
- *Use [disaster recovery/business continuity standards](#) as a starting point.* Almost two dozen [business continuity standards](#) are available worldwide. In the U.S., several options are currently in use:
 1. NFPA 1600 (the current U.S. national standard)
 2. BSI BS 25999 (the British standard)
 3. FFIEC Business Continuity Handbook (used by the banking and finance sectors)
 4. DRII/DRJ Generally Accepted Principles (GAP)
- *Keep it simple.* Less can definitely be more in this situation, unless the user is primarily a technology-based group, such as IT.
- *Limit content to actual disaster response actions.* Assuming you are creating a plan to respond to specific incidents, include only the information needed for the response and subsequent recovery.
- *Make it happen.* Once the business continuity plan is complete, exercise it to ensure that the documented procedures make sense in the sequence indicated.
- *Be flexible.* A single template may not be universally applicable to all department and/or locations in your organization; consider other templates, software or consultants.

The keys to a creating a successful business continuity plan are to define step-by-step procedures for response and recovery, validate these activities through periodic exercising, and maintain the plan and its various components up to date.

The following is a sample table of contents with 10 major items.

Business Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Plan Table of Contents

1. Purpose: Why do we need this? List of natural and man-made disasters that could impact our business.
 - a. Tornado
 - b. Flooding
 - c. Explosion
 - d. ...
2. Scope: What facilities/Operations does this cover?
 - a. List of locations
 - b.
 - c.
3. Emergency Preparedness /Prevention:
 - a. What have we done or can we do to avoid an emergency/disaster?
 - i. Implemented Safety measures
 - ii. Engineering controls
 - iii. Followed Industry Standards with all procedures...
 - iv. How do we back up our IT data?
 - v. ...
4. Protection: What plans, procedures do we have in place for immediate protection?
 - a. Emergency Action Plan
 - i. Has emergency phone numbers
 - ii. Has some medical assistance numbers
 - iii. Has contractors – limited
 - iv. Has alarm system listed
 - v. Has gathering points in case of an emergency
 - vi. ...
 - b. Do we have a Risk Management Plan for any Chemicals we store
 - c. Do we have a chemical list?
 - d. Do we know how to shelter in place? Would this ever be needed?
 - e. What other documents/procedures/resources have we already developed for consideration in an emergency?
 - f. ...
5. Mitigation and Response:
 - a. What /Who have we assigned to critical positions in the event of a catastrophic event at one of our locations? (Refer to ICS section for responsibilities of each position). Do we need these positions filled for each location or is this a corporate role?
 - i. Incident Commander
 - ii. Safety Officer
 - iii. Public Information Officer
 - iv. Liaison Officer
 - b. Will the above positions/needs be enough or will we ever need the addition of :
 - i. Operations
 - ii. Planning
 - iii. Logistics
 - iv. Finances
6. Resources: In advance of an emergency, what critical information or resources can we identify or supply for the positions /needs listed above?
 - a. Company contact names and phone numbers.
 - b. Critical operations
 - c. Venders/contractors/Suppliers
 - d. Authorization for purchases
 - e. Where is our company relocation point?
 - f. ...
7. Communication: With whom will we share this plan?
8. Training: How do we educate our key people and all employees on the plan in case of an emergency?
9. Practice: Will we participate or initiate an "Exercise" to test our plan?
10. Review and Update? How often will this plan be reviewed and or updated and by whom?

Business Preparedness, Disaster and Continuity Plan

The following even pages are from www.ready.gov. The information may be filled out online and then printed, but the forms are not available in hard copy from the government website.



Business Emergency Plan

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan

PLAN TO STAY IN BUSINESS

Business Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number

The following person is our primary crisis manager and will serve as the company spokesperson in an emergency.

Primary Emergency Contact

Telephone Number

Alternative Number

E-mail

If this location is not accessible we will operate from location below:

Business Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number

If the person is unable to manage the crisis, the person below will succeed in management:

Secondary Emergency Contact

Telephone Number

Alternative Number

E-mail

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Dial 9-1-1 in an Emergency

Non-Emergency Police/Fire

Insurance Provider

For more information, visit www.ready.gov/business or call 1-800-BE-READY

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

PLAN TO STAY IN BUSINESS

The following natural and man-made disasters could impact our business:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM

The following people will participate in emergency planning and crisis management.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

WE PLAN TO COORDINATE WITH OTHERS

The following people from neighboring businesses and our building management will participate on our emergency planning team.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

OUR CRITICAL OPERATIONS

The following is a prioritized list of our critical operations, staff and procedures we need to recover from a disaster.

Operation	Staff in Charge	Action Plan
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

SUPPLIERS AND CONTRACTORS

Company Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Contact Name: _____ Account Number: _____
Materials / Service Provided: _____

If this company experiences a disaster, we will obtain supplies/materials from the following:

Company Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Contact Name: _____ Account Number: _____
Materials / Service Provided: _____

If this company experiences a disaster, we will obtain supplies/materials from the following:

Company Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Contact Name: _____ Account Number: _____
Materials / Service Provided: _____

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

EVACUATION PLAN FOR _____ LOCATION
(Insert Address)

The following natural and man-made disasters could impact our business:

- o We have developed these plans in collaboration with neighboring businesses and building owners to avoid confusion or gridlock
- o We have located, copied and posted building and site maps.
- o Exits are clearly marked.
- o We will practice evacuation procedures ____ times a year.

If we must leave the workplace quickly:

1. Warning System: _____

We will test the warning system and record results ____ times a year.

2. Assembly Site: _____

3. Assembly Site Manager & Alternate: _____

a. Responsibilities Include:

4. Shut Down Manager & Alternate: _____

a. Responsibilities Include:

5. _____ is responsible for issuing all clear.

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

SHELTER IN PLACE PLAN FOR _____ LOCATION
(Insert Address)

The following natural and man-made disasters could impact our business:

- o We have talked to co-workers about which emergency supplies, if any, the company will provide in the shelter location and which supplies individuals might consider keeping in a portable kit personalized for individual needs.
- o We have located, copied and posted building and site maps.
- o We will practice shelter procedures _____ times a year.

If we must take shelter quickly:

1. Warning System: _____

We will test the warning system and record results _____ times a year.

2. Storm Shelter Location: _____

3. "Seal the Room" Shelter Location: _____

4. Shelter Location & Alternate : _____

a. Responsibilities Include:

5. Shut Down Manager & Alternate: _____

a. Responsibilities Include:

6. _____ is responsible for issuing all clear.

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

COMMUNICATIONS

We will communicate our emergency plans with co-workers in the following way:

In the event of a disaster we will communicate with employees in the following way:

CYBER SECURITY

To protect our computer hardware, we will:

To protect our computer software, we will:

If our computers are destroyed, we will use back-up computers at the following location:

RECORDS BACK-UP

_____ is responsible for backing up our critical records including payroll and accounting systems.

Back-up records including a copy of this plan, site maps, insurance policies, bank account records and computer back ups are stored onsite _____.

Another set of back-up records is stored at the following off-site location:

If our accounting and payroll records are destroyed, we will provide for continuity in the following ways:

Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan (cont'd)

EMPLOYEE EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The following is a list of our co-workers and their individual emergency contact information:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

ANNUAL REVIEW

We will review and update this business continuity and disaster plan in _____.

Additional Notes:

Reference Information:

Sample Business Disaster and Continuity Plan

<http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/sampleplan.pdf>

Federal Emergency Management Agency, Incident Command System

<http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system>

RCI Safety

<http://www.rcisafety.com/>