



10 January 2007

Dear Colleague,

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT 2004: BUSINESS CONTINUITY PROMOTION

The purpose of this bulletin is to set out how we are taking forward work to identify and disseminate good practice in relation to the business continuity promotion duty. It also informs you of work the Cabinet Office is undertaking to develop centrally provided promotional materials. This is the first in a series of bulletins about work CCS is doing to support local responders in taking forward the newer aspects of the CCA. Bulletins on Business Continuity Management and communicating with the public will be published shortly.

Background

The Civil Contingencies Act requires local authorities to work with a wide range of partners to provide generic advice and assistance to the business and voluntary sector communities at large (e.g. through leaflets, websites, forums); and allows them to provide specific advice to individual businesses or voluntary organisations where they feel able to do so (e.g. plan and exercise development). An explanation of the duty and supporting guidance can be found in Chapter 8 of *Emergency Preparedness* but it may be worth drawing attention to two key aspects of the duty:

- The regulations require local authorities to cooperate with other local authorities in their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) area when taking forward their BCM promotion programmes. It is critical that programmes are delivered in partnership or in a coordinated way; and

- The regulations require local authorities to work with other responders within their LRF area who provide advice to businesses (e.g. fire, police) to ensure that the various programmes of work dovetail and synergies are exploited. All other Category 1 responders are required to cooperate with local authorities in taking the BC promotion agenda forward. This is a local authority lead piece of work, not a local authority only piece of work.

Furthermore, it is worth re-emphasising that local authorities are not starting from scratch or working alone when developing BC promotion programmes. The trick is to act as a catalyst and make full use of existing networks that are in place. In particular, local authorities should:

- utilise existing networks the authority already has in place for engaging with businesses and voluntary organisations (e.g. economic development units, partnerships with businesses, business rate letters) and make the most of these;
- engage with representative groups or professional bodies which can provide a route into businesses and voluntary organisations; and
- get buy-in from larger businesses in the area as they will be able to assist in raising the profile of business continuity management within the community

Additional support from CCS

As announced in a bulletin from Dan Greaves in August, and in response to feedback from local responders, CCS is leading a project to identify and disseminate good practice in relation to business continuity promotion and the other newer duties of the Act (business continuity management, communicating with the public and risk assessment).

In relation to business continuity promotion, a working group consisting of practitioners, representatives of the business community, business support organisations and marketing professionals has now been set up to steer the work. The first task for the group was to identify the issues that needed to be tackled and to agree a work plan for taking them forward. In addition to the expertise of the group, input has been sought from the local responder community through the initial bulletin, articles in magazines, regional workshops, EPC courses and seminars.

Based on the issues raised by the practitioner group and local responder community, a programme of work has been agreed. Over the next seven months, CCS with the support of the group will:

- Develop a promotional leaflet for use by local authorities. In practice, this will be a nationally agreed leaflet with national branding but with space for local authorities to add their own logo and contact details. We will fund the design costs centrally but it will be the responsibility of individual authorities to meet the printing costs. We will also aim to produce the leaflet in a form that can be displayed on local authorities' websites.
- Develop a national BCM toolkit hosted on the 'Preparing for Emergencies' website (which is the central portal for advice to businesses on BCM) that can be used by business and voluntary sector organisations when developing business continuity arrangements. It is envisaged that the toolkit – which will also be accessible via the Business Link website – will include:
 - a workbook setting out the steps an organisation should go through in ensuring they have sufficient business continuity arrangements in place;
 - business continuity checklist;
 - business continuity plan template;
 - advice on battle-boxes; and
 - exercise scenarios
- A suite of good practice examples to support local authorities address some of the trickier issues they will face when implementing the duty. We are proposing to focus on:
 - developing a strategy;
 - liaison with other responders;
 - using networks;
 - encouraging take-up (particularly amongst SMEs);
 - measuring effectiveness; and
 - advice on identifying case studies.

In addition to the outputs set out above, CCS will hold discussions with the Office of Government Commerce, as well as representatives of the accountancy, banking, and insurance industries to explore how we can work together to use some of the possible

drivers for encouraging businesses and voluntary organisations to put business continuity arrangements in place.

Your input

In developing these tools, I am keen to learn from what has been done locally to tackle these issues. In particular, I would like to know about any toolkits that are already in existence. These should be sent to me at tony.part@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

As always, we would be very pleased to receive any feedback you have on this bulletin. If you have got any questions or queries about any aspect of this letter, please contact us at ccact@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk.

EPC Course

The next EPC course on business continuity promotion will take place on 24-25 April. This course enables you to learn from some of the excellent work that has been undertaken by others and consider how you could adopt this as part of your own strategy. If you would like to book a place on the course, or would like further information visit www.epcollege.gov.uk or telephone 01347 821406.

Publication of Planning Assumptions for Business

On 4 December Bruce Mann wrote to you regarding the work that has been undertaken on the National Planning Assumptions. Following this, I am pleased to advise you that for the first time CCS has published an UNCLASSIFIED version of the Generic Challenges to Business Continuity on its Preparing for Emergencies website (www.pfe.gov.uk/business/generic_challenges). These are drawn from the Government's national risk assessment capability which identifies risks to the UK as a whole over a five year period. The generic challenges provide national guidance on the nature and scale of generic consequences that organisations may face. We believe these are useful when developing and reviewing business continuity plans, and when considering the business continuity requirements for organisations in their supply chain. This should prove to be a useful tool for the business community and other organisations.

TONY PART

Chair, Business Continuity Promotion Practitioner Group

Civil Contingencies Act Implementation Team

Local response gateway: preparing together