
**Security and resilience — Business
continuity management systems
— Guidelines for people aspects of
business continuity**

*Sécurité et résilience — Systèmes de gestion de la poursuite des
activités — Lignes directrices concernant les aspects humains de la
poursuite des activités*





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Published in Switzerland

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

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For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 292, *Security and resilience*.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to expand the guidance on managing the people aspects of an organization's preparation and response to disruptive events provided in ISO 22301 and ISO 22313. It assumes that the organization is aware of the principles of business continuity management and has established, or intends to establish, a business continuity management system (BCMS) aligned to these standards. The guidance is relevant to all levels of the organization: from top management to individual members of the workforce; from those organizations with a single site to those with a global presence; from small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) to organizations employing thousands of people.

In general, the English words "people" and "human" are frequently interchanged. In this document, the term "people" is referenced as it puts the focus on the individual person rather than a group intimated by the term "human".

People are a key driver of organizational success and, at the same time, are always an interested party in any activity supporting delivery of organizational objectives. The organization, therefore, should pay particular attention to people, recognizing the two-way relationship it has with them. This applies to an organization's business continuity goals.

This document is relevant to business continuity and human resources professionals, and managers responsible for organizational resilience, people management and people development. It is not a definitive guide to managing an incident, but a review of the implications for managing the impacts on the workforce and others who could be affected.

The guidelines in this document provide a uniform approach to developing the broad range of knowledge, skills, behaviours and practices required of capable people to deliver effective business continuity management.

Security and resilience — Business continuity management systems — Guidelines for people aspects of business continuity

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for the planning and development of policies, strategies and procedures for the preparation and management of people affected by an incident.

This includes:

- preparation through awareness, analysis of needs, and learning and development;
- coping with the immediate effects of the incident (respond);
- managing people during the period of disruption (recover);
- continuing to support the workforce after returning to business as usual (restore).

The management of people relating to civil emergencies or other societal disruption is out of the scope of this document.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 22300, *Security and resilience — Vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 22300 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

duty of care

moral or legal obligation to ensure the safety, well-being or interests of others

3.2

employee assistance programme

contracted support service provided to organizations to assist them in addressing productivity issues, and to assist employees in identifying and resolving personal concerns, including health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal issues that could affect job performance

Note 1 to entry: Adapted from the International Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA).

3.3

nominated emergency contact

person nominated by an individual staff member who is their chosen first point of contact in the event of the organization needing to make contact

Note 1 to entry: This may be the legal next of kin.

3.4

people aspects of business continuity

elements associated with the management of people involved in, or affected by, an incident in order to minimize distress, maximize productivity and recovery, and achieve the recovery objectives of the organization's business continuity programme

3.5

psychological critical incident

event or series of events that could cause significant emotional or physical distress, psychological impairment or disturbance in people's usual functioning

Note 1 to entry: Mental health professionals working in this field would normally refer to a "traumatic event" as a critical psychological incident. The term "critical psychological incident" is preferred as it implies an incident that may or may not be traumatic to the individual involved. Although there are several definitions of a traumatic event within the psychiatric and scientific world, critical psychological incident provides a more real world definition.

3.6

psychological education

provision of advice and guidance relating to psychological well-being

Note 1 to entry: It would usually include an overview of common reactions to distressing events in order to normalize them, reduce anxiety, provide simple self-help strategies to facilitate recovery in the first few days and provide where and when to seek further support.

3.7

psychological first aid

temporary, supportive intervention comparable to the concept of physical first aid

Note 1 to entry: Its goals include stabilizing the crisis situation, reducing emotional distress, providing advice on self-care and *psychological education* (3.6), identifying people who may need professional assistance and referring for further assistance, as necessary.

3.8

shelter in place

action to move people to predetermined areas inside the building/site in order to protect them from external dangers during an incident

Note 1 to entry: This may be referred to as invacuation.

3.9

workforce

anyone engaged in the delivery of the organization's objectives, including direct employees, agency staff, contractors and volunteers

4 People aspects overview

4.1 General

This clause identifies the background within which the people aspects of business continuity management are considered. Whatever the nature of disruption, the common factor is that people will always be affected.

A business continuity management system (BCMS) considers the resources required for the response to any disruptive event. People are an essential resource for the entire process and the organization will depend on their response as individuals to disruptive events and as members of response, recovery and restoration teams.

The people aspects approach also recognizes that everyone affected by a disruptive event is a potential casualty in some way, whether physically or psychologically impacted or by being subjected to change which has a longer-term effect on their daily lives and expectations. This includes people who are not members of the workforce but are directly affected by consequences of the event, e.g. clients or workforce family members.

As resources, casualties or both, people are also interested parties in the activities of the organization with opinions and expectations of their own. The approach recognizes that in the abnormal circumstances of a disruptive event, the impact of destabilization on an organization will lead to changes in the expectations of and on individuals. This applies not only to continuity activities in affected parts of an organization, but also to business as usual operations in apparently unaffected areas.

4.2 The need for a people aspects approach

ISO 22301 establishes the overarching requirements for people aspects of business continuity and addresses competence, awareness and communication, and the organization's duty of care.

In considering people aspects, it is important to understand at the outset what is at stake: what happens if the organization on the one hand, or its people on the other, fails to meet the expectations of the other. The potential impacts could be damaging to the organization and result from either real or perceived weaknesses.

- Failure to deliver duty of care in line with people's needs and expectations.
- Loss of willing, timely support from the workforce if people management is perceived as ineffective.
- Damage to reputation if consideration of people requirements is perceived as being neglected.
- Damage to the organization's long-term ability to retain, recruit and motivate the workforce.

Failure to manage people aspects could lead to the organization being unable to do the following.

- Prepare: Plans are not fit for purpose due to inadequate provision of competent and available resources.
- Respond: Immediate response is ineffective due to lack of training, poor understanding or motivation.
- Recover: Barriers to changes in working arrangements arising from poor understanding, motivation or capacity prevents successful implementation of recovery strategies.
- Restore: Unable to restore the organization to full capability through insufficient attention to people related issues.

In all people considerations, at all stages in the BCMS, the organization should consider and understand events and issues that could adversely impact:

- ongoing safety, security and productivity;
- discretionary effort;
- retention and development of skills and talent;
- recruitment of people;
- engagement and morale.

4.3 Structure

Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the arrangements needed to establish an effective approach to the management of the people aspects of business continuity. It is divided into two logical sections:

- the precursor steps required to establish the overall approach and capability;
- the detailed processes.

As indicated in the figure, each section is discussed in more detail in clauses that follow in this document.

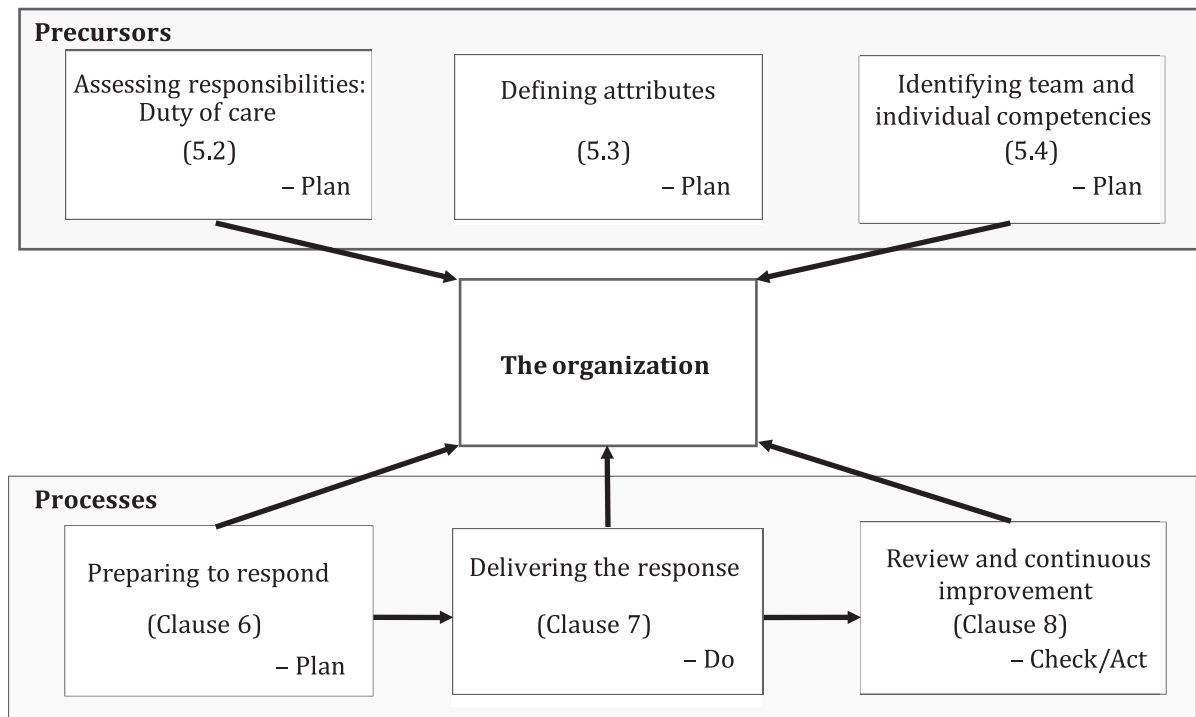


Figure 1 — Structure to manage people aspects of business continuity

Precursors establish the strategic approach to the people aspects of business continuity as identified by top management.

The development of the processes makes use of established techniques, including risk assessment, business impact analysis and preparation of incident management, business continuity and crisis management plans.

Post-event actions will address the review and continuous improvement activities necessary following a disruptive event or a near miss. Exercising will validate capability, rehearse people in their required tasks and identify learning needs to assist in the development or enhancement of competencies.

5 Precursors

5.1 General

Precursors are the arrangements and planning an organization should put in place to frame its approach and attitude to the people aspects of business continuity. They require top management to:

- analyse its responsibilities with regards to duty of care;

- describe the attributes it sees as important to the organization;
- define the competencies, including technical and not-technical skills and behaviours that individuals and teams should demonstrate.

Disruptive events place unusual pressures on people affected, either directly or indirectly. Active development of capabilities, both skills and behaviours, better prepares people as individuals and as members of a response team to cope with the unexpected.

In turn, a focus on the application and development of management and leadership attributes that deliver desired skills and behaviours offers additional value by enhancing the reputation of the organization.

5.2 Duty of care

In the response to any disruptive event, as part of its responsibilities, the organization owes a duty of care to a wide range of people who are interested parties both internal and external to the organization.

EXAMPLE 1 Evacuated workforce members who require a safe, effective procedure to be in place to ensure an efficient evacuation and proper accounting for people.

EXAMPLE 2 Response team members who require coping mechanisms to counter the stresses of managing the response.

EXAMPLE 3 Residents adjacent to a site that is on fire who are affected by the smoke and other residue.

[Table 1](#) identifies groups of people who could be affected and their needs, expectations or demands. It is not an exhaustive list and the organization should identify the communities that could be affected by any incident.

NOTE Responsibility for care for contractors and visitors will transfer to their parent organization after the immediate response phase.

Table 1 — Duty of care responsibilities

Group	Their needs, expectations and demands
Immediately impacted	
a) Immediate physical threat (workforce, customers, visitors) – at risk of harm	— A safe and secure location away from the immediate threat
b) Actual physical harm (workforce, customers, visitors) – injured	— Medical care, including first aid and prompt transfer to medical facilities when required
c) Evacuees/those sheltering in place (workforce, customers, visitors)	— Practical support (water, shelter, transport, food)
d) Outside site boundary (neighbours) – potentially affected	— Lines of communication (two-way)
e) Families	— Accurate information and appropriate advice
f) Witnesses to injury, threat or death	— Leadership
	— Psychological education

Table 1 (continued)

Group	Their needs, expectations and demands
Subsequently impacted	
a) Same site, unaffected location (workforce, customers, visitors) – not physically threatened	— Accurate information and practical advice — Direction on requirements and intentions
b) Rest of organization (other sites)	— Leadership
c) Workplace family (close colleagues/friends, those who had a near miss)	— Two-way communication — Psychological education
d) Contractor organizations	
e) Visitors' organizations	
f) Other external interested parties where there is an effect on people (customers, suppliers)	
Incident responders	
a) First responders: workforce (first aiders, fire marshals, trained responders) and emergency services	— Authority through invocation — Accurate information
b) Incident management teams: incident management, communications, relatives response	— Risk assessment — Objectives and how they change over time
c) Key workforce members (as identified in the business continuity plan)	— Communication pathways — Resources to deliver response, recovery and restoration
d) Supporting workforce – facilitating recovery and restoration	— Psychological education
e) Top management and line management	— Own well-being, including consideration of fatigue, working hours and critical incident stress — Feedback on progress and recognition of contribution involving engagement with senior management

5.3 Attributes of the organization

An organization that recognizes the importance of people aspects of business continuity should demonstrate the ability to:

- assess identified threats and control resultant risks to people related to disruptive events;
- ensure a safe working environment;
- recognize the role and added value of people in contributing to business continuity;
- promote and embed business continuity management through workforce engagement and involvement led by top management, supported by line management across the organization;
- make the protection of people on site during a disruptive event a priority;
- recognize the importance of engagement with families of those involved (casualties and responders);
- prepare and encourage individuals and teams to respond to the unexpected;
- commit to exercising and testing response arrangements;
- ensure efficient and effective communication (internally and externally) is a priority.

5.4 Team and individual competencies

Competencies refer to the skills and behaviours required by teams and individuals to deliver business continuity. This includes those with specific roles to deliver incident response and recovery, and, more widely, an awareness of individual responsibilities across the organization. These competencies are developed through both directed and experiential learning. The steps for this process are:

- organization-wide awareness programme on business continuity objectives and individual roles and responsibilities;
- identification of specific roles and responsibilities;
- learning needs analysis to identify skills and behaviours required;
- a programme to develop specific competencies;
- validation through exercising and assessment (in terms of quality and quantity acceptability by interested parties);
- maintenance programmes to ensure retention and continued availability of competencies.

6 Preparing to respond

6.1 General

The precursors provide the foundation from which to build the specific people elements into the organization's BCMS. The organization should identify, acquire and develop people with the right competencies to deliver the capability. The organization should consider the specific locations where this capability is required and plan for adequate strength and depth in resources for the time when they are needed.

People aspects should be given in-depth consideration at each stage of the business continuity management process. The organization should identify whom to involve in these activities and should aim for a broad participation of those disciplines that bring people-related expertise and insight to the process that is relevant and accurate:

- top management;
- line management;
- other process owners;
- safety, security and resilience professionals;
- human resources specialists;
- communications teams;
- technical specialists;
- occupational health and welfare departments;
- other interested parties (internal, e.g. legal, compliance, and external, e.g. third-party partners).

6.2 Business impact analysis

A business impact analysis (BIA) compiled in line with good practice should take full account of the contributions made by different people. Even where key people have been identified, the organization should be alert to the assumptions made about the ability, capability or even willingness of these people to respond in accordance with the developed business continuity plan (BCP).

The organization should consider the possible wider impacts of a disruptive event on people who are not identified as key to maintaining or recovering operations, but to whom the organization owes a duty of care (see [5.2](#)). This includes appreciating the potential impacts on those people whose perceptions and opinions in the longer-term could undermine restoration of full operational capability (see [4.2](#)).

6.3 Managing people risks in business continuity

Within an organization's risk management programme, due attention should be given to identifying and mitigating the people threats, probability of occurrence, impacts and dependencies identified through the BIA and risk management process. People responses to a disruptive event are hard to predict and cannot be taken for granted. Within this context, top management should engage the workforce in the threat identification process, both to ensure a wide range of views are considered and to build risk awareness across the organization.

Risk mitigation strategies from the people perspective should take account of all the legal, regulatory, ethical and moral requirements placed on the organization, including:

- recognizing the risk that there could be casualties following a disruptive event, which establishes the requirement to prepare for their efficient management, including engagement with affected families and being prepared to provide long-term psychological support where required;
- managing a changing business environment, which could impact terms of employment and individual roles and responsibilities, as well as the impact on the availability and individual skills required by the organization;
- preparing for the impact on the organization's workforce of external events (e.g. natural disasters, terrorism, infectious diseases, cyber-attacks, disruption to utilities or transport networks).

6.4 Including people aspects in business continuity management

Business continuity plans should include detailed arrangements to mitigate the impacts arising from the loss of people who are essential to delivering business objectives. This should be given equal importance to managing the loss of assets or technology. As well as the established process for succession planning, this should include plans to address the issues identified above. Detailed approaches to these challenges are considered in greater detail in [Clause 7](#).

The extent of the commitment by the organization to mitigation strategies for people issues should depend on the size of the potential impact to delivery and likelihood of disruption to business objectives arising from the non-availability of the workforce.

6.5 Knowledge, skills and abilities

6.5.1 General

ISO 22301 identifies requirements for competent people to underpin organizational performance. This concerns the determination of the competencies required, and how these can be achieved and sustained.

To deliver this, the organization should manage business continuity learning and development programmes to build business continuity capability through repeat interventions that are delivered through a blend of formal education and experiential learning.

6.5.2 Education

For individuals with strategic, planning and response team leadership responsibilities, learning that develops depth of understanding of business continuity and related concepts provides the learner with

a more holistic approach that supports the application of background knowledge and skills in managing different types of scenarios. These could include:

- academic study to achieve a professional qualification in business continuity and to develop knowledge of business continuity and related subjects;
- leadership and development programmes that build desired skills and behaviours;
- participation in professional learning or communities of practice networks.

6.5.3 Learning and development

For individuals across the business continuity and response team organization, learning interventions aim to deliver increased proficiency and ultimately performance, through a focus on developing the required skills and behaviours of individuals or teams. These could include:

- role-specific development to develop the individual's understanding of and ability to deliver their own business continuity responsibilities in the context of wider team and organizational objectives;
- team-specific development to improve collaboration within continuity response teams to enhance team performance in meeting response objectives;
- exercising (from table top to live play), which is scenario-based experiential learning to allow individual and team practice and feedback in a realistic and safe environment (see ISO 22398);
- game play, which develops desired behaviours and decision-making skills through virtual or physical business continuity scenarios that engage and motivate learners through competition, challenge and reward;
- responder and line manager development on the management of the possible psychological impacts of a disruptive event. The tools include early intervention techniques to support colleagues (see [Annex A](#)) and promote personal resilience to support health and well-being.

Learning outcomes should be observed, measured or assessed against learning objectives. Both positive and negative outcomes add value.

Learning tools and materials should be continually reviewed to ensure they recognize good practice and developments in learning techniques and technology.

6.5.4 Experience

Developing (and recording) the hands-on experience of individuals creates a larger and accessible pool of people with relevant knowledge, skills and abilities to manage a business continuity event. Approaches to this include:

- sharing experience and peer review of incidents;
- mentoring to support individual development;
- shared knowledge and collaboration using internal social networks.

6.6 Awareness across an organization

Everyone has a role to play in business continuity, but unless the organization makes people aware of what it entails and why it is important, the efforts of business continuity managers risk being diluted to the detriment of the organization. Business continuity managers could collaborate with top and line management, human resources and communications colleagues in three areas.

- Ownership: Clarify how individuals contribute to managing risks and delivering business continuity by integrating requirements into job roles and objectives.

- Involvement: Get people involved in the development and improvement of their departmental business continuity plans and get them to think about how an incident would affect them and their role. Seek participation in exercises from support roles and share results of exercises and steps being taken to improve.
- Communication: Develop organizational awareness programmes on the business continuity policy and response plans using multiple communication tools. This could be reinforced using branded, portable business continuity cards, with instructions for immediate action in the event of an incident.

7 Delivering the response

7.1 General

Previous clauses of this document have outlined the aspects that should be considered to establish the needs and expectations of the organization, its workforce and other interested parties for which the organization has a duty of care.

This clause considers the delivery of the response to a disruptive incident to meet the identified duty of care and the processes that will assist the organization in making the decisions that ensure its people continue to be available to deliver the organization's objectives.

The response depends on the nature of each disruptive event. These guidelines focus on people considerations that allow organizations to develop flexible arrangements that may be adapted and applied irrespective of the cause of disruption. The purpose is to amplify, not replace, the general arrangements for incident response described in ISO 22313.

[Figure 2](#) provides an overview of the subject areas included in [Clause 7](#) and provides a signpost to the user to the relevant subclause. Subjects are generally organized in line with the evolution of a disruptive event. The exceptions are people support strategies ([7.5](#)) and communications ([7.6](#)). Both are continuous activities throughout any disruptive event and are treated as such in this document.

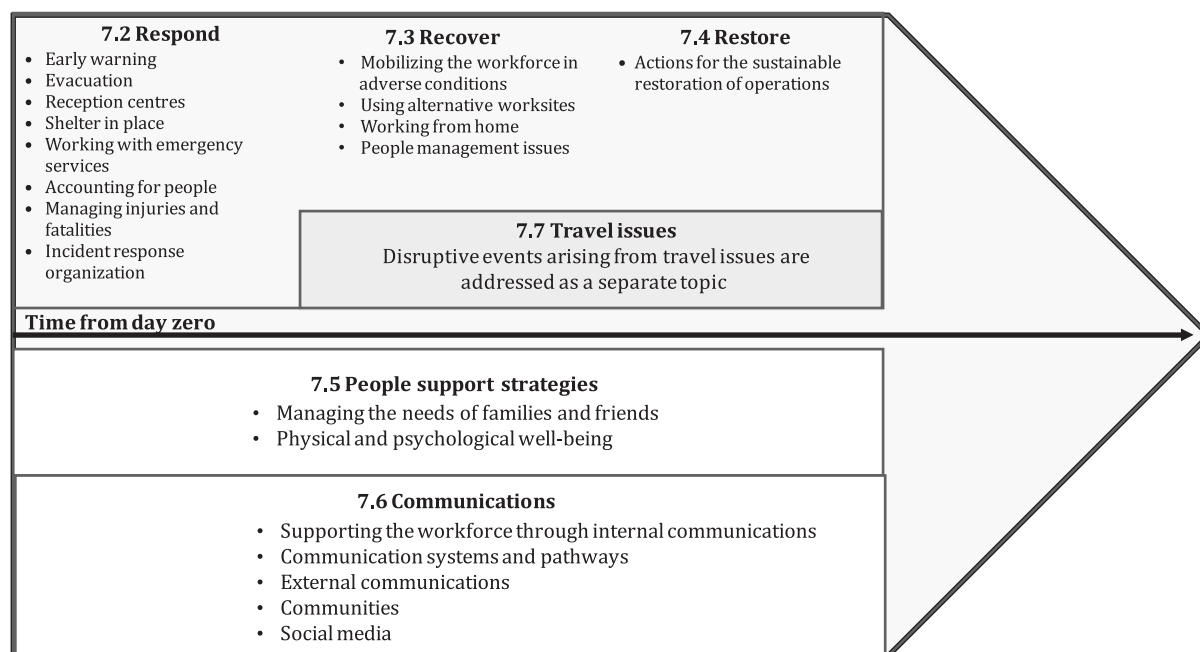


Figure 2 — Subject areas in [Clause 7](#)

7.2 Respond

7.2.1 General

The initial response is crucial to laying the foundations for managing the people aspects of business continuity across the duration of a disruptive event. The organization has an opportunity to identify and respond quickly to people needs and expectations from the outset. Failure to do this could undermine efforts further down the line and, in turn, will demand greater effort to catch up later to recover from early oversights.

It is important to recognize that the approach to managing people issues will develop as the extent and complexity of the event becomes known, which means that leaders should keep early decisions under review.

This clause, therefore, considers the people aspects of core elements applicable in almost every circumstance for which response is required to limit the impacts of negative outcomes.

People support strategies and communications are addressed separately in [7.5](#) and [7.6](#).

7.2.2 Responding to early warning

In some situations, an early warning of an imminent event can be detected or received, either through internal threat monitoring processes (from formal reviews to individual vigilance) or from external agencies. Warning allows the organization to mobilize necessary resources in advance and to prepare the workforce for the likely response.

EXAMPLE 1 IT system breach or failure which has a potential to escalate.

EXAMPLE 2 Cyber threat alert arising from another organization that has already been attacked.

EXAMPLE 3 Severe weather warning: hurricane, typhoon, flooding, etc.

EXAMPLE 4 Change to the terrorist threat level, including specific warning that the organization could be a target.

For internal alerts, it is important that everyone understands their responsibility to inform line management of real or potential threats and that, in turn, reported threats are assessed, escalated and managed collaboratively to enable effective assessment of the resultant risk and determine appropriate action. The organization could encourage this through an inclusive approach to building risk awareness across the organization and internal briefings to promote specific areas of concern.

For warnings from an external agency, a designated individual should liaise with the external agency ensuring continuing access to available advice and information as the event develops.

7.2.3 Immediate actions to protect and secure people

7.2.3.1 General

The preservation of life is the first priority for business continuity. The organization should have in place an effective capability to deliver all the following aspects to meet its duty of care responsibilities.

- Moving people to a place of safety (see [7.2.3.2](#) and [7.2.3.4](#)).
- Casualty management: Ensuring people are treated, managing hospital transfer logistics and information, and providing hospital liaison (see [7.2.3.7](#)).
- Accounting for people's whereabouts and well-being (see [7.2.3.6](#)).
- Identifying and managing fatalities: Liaison with the nominated emergency contact, pre-eminence in the process to confirm death and inform their emergency contact will vary depending on national practises and regulations (see [7.2.3.5](#) and [7.2.3.7](#)).

- Providing immediate shelter, welfare and support for survivors (see [7.2.3.3](#)).
- Providing early advice on self-help measures (see [Annex A](#)).
- Providing immediate advice on hazards, including guidance to the local community where there is a risk of dispersing a dangerous substance (see [7.2.3.5](#)).
- Ensuring a possible crime scene is preserved and understanding the legal position of individuals (see [7.2.3.5](#)).

For each organization, the extent of the capability required to deliver the above will vary. For example, compare the likely impacts on people for a disruptive event affecting an office with the response required to an incident affecting a manufacturing plant or a hazardous chemical or nuclear facility.

7.2.3.2 Evacuation

An organization should provide a safe location for the workforce, customers and visitors.

An evacuation occurs when people immediately move to a place of safety away from the scene of a disruptive event that poses a threat to people's safety. An evacuation could be planned in response to a perceived threat or occur in the wake of a disruptive event. The organization should have the following aspects in place.

- a) An evacuation plan that incorporates:
 - 1) identified place(s) of safety where people are to assemble when necessary;
 - 2) additional assembly/muster areas identified in case the initial assembly/muster area cannot be occupied;
 - 3) evacuation arrangements that are accessible and communicated to everyone via induction and visitor information packs;
 - 4) periodic evacuation drills involving everyone;
 - 5) evaluation of the effectiveness of drills;
 - 6) arrangements for the evacuation of people requiring assistance, including those with physical or learning disabilities and those who have been injured;
- b) alarms or other forms of communication in the facility or hazard zone;
- c) transportation needs as part of an evacuation;
- d) clearly marked evacuation routes;
- e) emergency lighting, where appropriate.

Fire marshals have an essential role in the evacuation process to shepherd people from their area of responsibility onto the evacuation route and to confirm or deny that an area of the building or facility is clear of people. At the muster point, each fire marshal should report the status of his/her area.

NOTE It is important to recognize that this is not a perfect system. Fire marshals could be away at the time of the incident or prevented from conducting a search.

Individual fire marshals should be aware of any specific responsibilities they could have, including facilitating the evacuation of people requiring special assistance.

7.2.3.3 Reception centres

For some organizations (e.g. industries operating offshore oil and gas facilities), evacuation could be a complex operation involving the mobilization of helicopters and ships. Similarly, organizations who are required to repatriate people from international locations will also need to deploy complex logistical

arrangements. To support this type of evacuation, organizations should have a practised plan in place to set-up and run a survivor reception centre at the most appropriate location. This could be the heliport or arrival boat jetty, or at an arrival point for international evacuees. This could be coordinated with local governmental organizations and emergency services responses to an incident, or an independent operation focused on meeting the organization's duty of care responsibilities. Access to the survivor reception centre should be controlled at all times to protect survivors and families from media intrusion and the inadvertent release of unconfirmed information about casualties.

People could wish to travel to the scene or to meeting points if they believe their family or friends could have been involved in an incident or emergency. Reception centres could be used to help reunite family and friends with survivors. The purpose of the reception centre is to provide:

- immediate shelter and information;
- registration, recording details of survivors and accounting for people;
- liaison with emergency services and any casualty bureau;
- communications: mobile phones and internet;
- first aid, triage and onward transfer to medical facilities;
- critical psychological incident management (see [Annex A](#));
- refreshment;
- toilets, showers and dry, uncontaminated clothing;
- initial interviews of survivors as potential witnesses and to gather evidence;
- separate facilities for families of survivors and/or missing relatives.

7.2.3.4 Shelter in place

Response team leaders should understand the risks that could trigger a shelter in place response. In simple terms, it is any event where going outside potentially presents a greater risk to health and safety.

EXAMPLE 1 Severe weather: It could be safer to remain inside a protected area.

EXAMPLE 2 Noxious chemical, biological or radiological release outside the building: It could be possible to maintain a safer environment inside the building.

EXAMPLE 3 Major explosion in near vicinity: It could be safer to remain inside protected from falling masonry and glass.

EXAMPLE 4 Gunfire: It could be safer to remain inside in a protected area.

For shelter in place, the areas should be clearly identified and accessible and, as with evacuation procedures, shelter in place procedures should be communicated and practised by the organization's workforce and visitors.

Factors to consider:

- identification of safe(r) places within the location, e.g. away from windows, lift lobbies basements;
- how to communicate with people in shelter locations;
- accounting for people;
- management of air conditioning, e.g. whether it be switched off or put to recirculation;
- provision of food, water and toilet facilities;
- management of individual concerns;

- maintaining location security;
- identifying the safest evacuation route once the outside threat has reduced;
- liaison with emergency services.

7.2.3.5 Working with emergency services

The organization has a responsibility to ensure the safety of emergency services personnel attending their site to deal with an incident. A designated, competent individual should have responsibility for liaison with them to provide critical, location-specific information and to coordinate actions being taken by the organization with the emergency services response.

The organization should understand the roles and protocols of the different primary response agencies for dealing with people involved in an event. This includes police services, fire and rescue authorities, health bodies, local governmental authorities, and environmental and maritime agencies.

Additional responsibilities regarding relationships with external agencies responding to an incident will depend on:

- whether the organization is the source of an incident (e.g. contamination of the local environment and/or industrial accident leading to health and safety and/or criminal investigation);
- whether the organization is affected by an event (e.g. people are trapped or missing);
- whether the organization has a role in providing resources required to mitigate the effects of an emergency (e.g. food, shelter, transport).

7.2.3.6 Accounting for people

Confirming the safety of the workforce and summarizing the results and implications is a top priority. In the event of an incident at a particular site, this includes visitors. It allows the organization to fulfil its duty of care to protect people and provide necessary care and support, as well as understanding how the impact on people could affect response, recovery and restore capability. It should be recognized that this is not a simple task. It needs sufficient resources that have been well-practised through exercises integrated with all response roles.

The process needs to provide rapid, accurate information on the following:

- where people are and how they have been affected;
- the precise number and identification of people injured/fatalities;
- confirmation of who is safe and their status;
- how status is changing as the event evolves;
- controls to allow cross-checking of information.

The process should recognize the diverse nature of the workforce and of the working arrangements whereby people are dispersed and frequently mobile, comprising people that might be directly employed, contractors or third-party providers and be based at specific sites, at home (those with no designated base) or on business travel.

The process should, therefore, account for people for a specific site, but also extend to trace the workforce, contractors and visitors from other sites and countries.

A robust starting point for reconciliation is vital to the accounting for people process. The organization should ensure it always has up-to-date workforce records available, including information on normal place of employment and line manager. Leaving this to chance or relying on systems in place, however state of the art, cannot guarantee this vital information will be available when it is needed: The organization should assign responsibility to ensure the relevant workforce data are maintained and

routinely test the accessibility and reliability of the system and its back-up. A controlled people on site or equivalent list should be current and available. It is important to ensure building access control systems are accessible remotely.

The method by which the organization initially alerts people to an incident underpins the effectiveness of the accounting for people process. Alongside the established local alarm systems, technology offers highly reliable, web-based mass notification services that provide an opportunity for:

- the organization to make contact quickly with their people;
- reaching anything from a handful to a significant number of people;
- individuals to confirm their whereabouts and status, from basic checking in to more detailed information on their actions, well-being and needs;
- the organization to provide status updates and instructions.

Notwithstanding the coverage of these tools, the process is likely to be imperfect. The organization should know what percentage of coverage could be achieved and how it will fill in the gaps through the use of other contact methods, such as:

- call trees;
- line manager points of contact;
- enterprise social networks;
- social media;
- other crisis communication tools.

7.2.3.7 Managing injuries and fatalities

First aiders should be qualified, experienced and prepared to provide initial care for injured people following a major incident. This support may have to be provided at the evacuation site using very basic resources until emergency services arrive. Responsibility for injured people does not end when the patient is handed over to medical services. The organization has an ongoing responsibility to the individuals in their care, and to their families, to provide continuing support, which may include knowing their whereabouts (e.g. which hospital has the casualty been taken to), facilitating arrangements for supporting families (e.g. caring arrangements, travel to hospitals), managing psychological impacts and facilitating longer-term support.

Good practice is to send a designated person/colleague to hospital with the casualty to provide support to the injured party and feedback on status.

Where a fatality occurs, this should be reported to the appropriate authorities and managed in accordance with local customs. Where the risk of fatalities is significant, provision should be made in plans for the secure and appropriate handling of the deceased, taking account of cultural and religious considerations.

For fatalities and serious injuries, the organization should ensure that top management are made aware so that communication and psychological support responses are carefully coordinated.

7.2.4 Incident response organization

Once the decision is taken to activate a response team, the organization should consider measures to facilitate set-up, so this takes place as fully and rapidly as possible and, once in place, gives people aspects priority.

- Ensure a response team member is specifically identified with the role of co-ordinating the response to people issues. This should be a different person from the team leader to ensure that duty of care

responsibilities are prioritised and met. The team leader could too easily be distracted by other activities, e.g. firefighting, site security, media response.

- Ensure the necessary people-focused roles/teams can be mobilized quickly. These are illustrated in [Figure 3](#).
- Identify alternative places for convening the response teams should the designated place be unavailable or inaccessible.
- Establish a robust system for calling out team members, e.g. use of two-way notification software and communications services.
- Establish if response team members are physically and psychologically able to mobilize.
- Communicate with deputies to determine the degree of support available.
- Identify logistical support to enable teams to convene and communicate practical advice to advise team members of solutions in place.
- Establish if remote communication tools are functional and provide any required technical support and advice.
- From the outset, ensure close coordination between people-focused response teams and roles to enable efficient execution of actions.

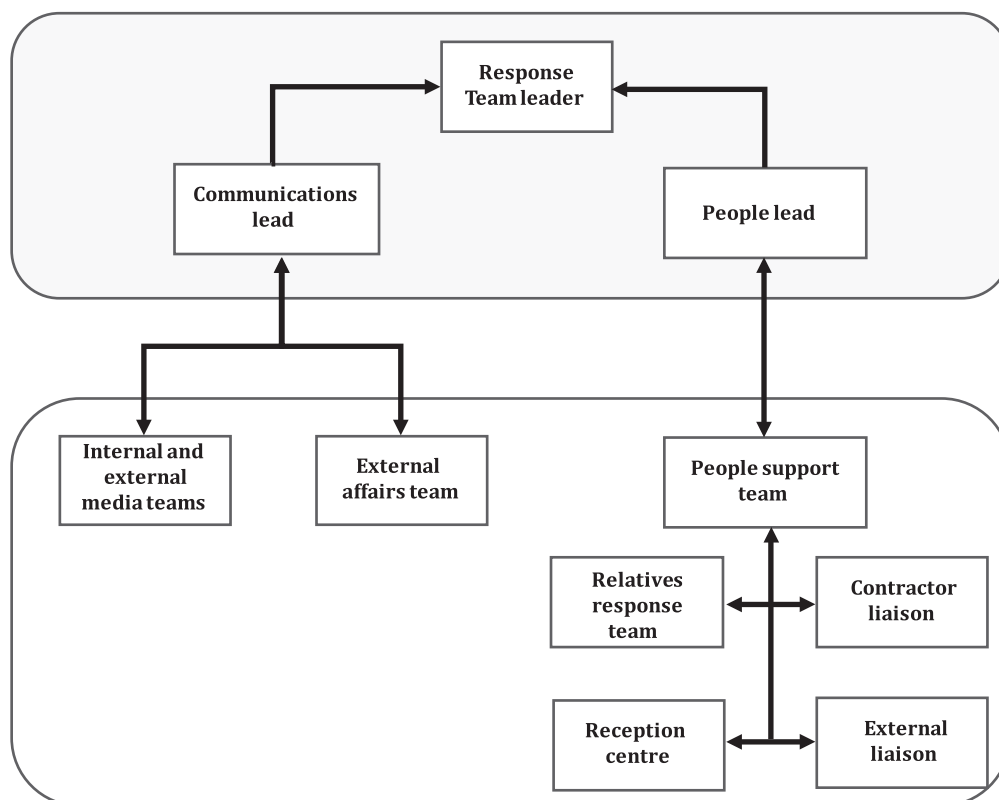


Figure 3 — People-focused response teams and roles

7.3 Recover

7.3.1 General

As any incident continues to develop, the focus of the response moves from the immediate actions required to protect people from the effects of that incident to the actions required to progress through the recovery and restoration phases. Alongside the detailed plans for recovery of processes, systems and assets, careful attention should be given to the management of people issues. This clause describes the most likely options and the factors that should be considered to maintain the support and motivation of people during the recovery phase.

This clause recognizes the vital importance of effective two-way internal communication to ensure that everyone understands what is required from them, how their work will be managed and the process by which they can raise problems with confidence that these issues will be addressed. All aspects of communication are addressed in [7.6](#).

7.3.2 Mobilizing the workforce in adverse conditions

The organization's ability to successfully continue operations will depend on the successful mobilization of its people. Thought should be given as to how to encourage and support their return at a time the organization most needs them.

The nature of an event will determine if an organization continues operations at existing premises or invokes alternative location plans. Whatever the decision, when faced with the fallout from incidents impacting health, safety and security, or severe disruption to transport networks and infrastructure, the organization should consider the factors that could affect people's willingness, as well as their ability to attend work:

- how individuals perceive the threats to themselves of travelling to or attending the workplace;
- how they perceive the threats faced by their families or their families perceive the risk faced by them, either from them leaving the home or the family being left at home;
- the understanding the individual has of their own contribution to ensuring continuity of business processes;
- the importance the individual places on the role of their organization in the response or on its overall mission;
- the availability of practical solutions to facilitate a return to work in changed or abnormal conditions.

The organization should explore people-focused solutions to different types of disruptive events to encourage people to come to work, for example:

- enhance workforce understanding of the incident in question, the potential threats and the steps to be taken to manage and mitigate the assessed risks to a point that it is safe for them to attend work;
- provide accurate, authoritative information from recognized government sources or professional bodies, where available, e.g. on health, safety and security issues;
- consider providing logistical support to enable people to get to work, e.g. due to a physical disruption to transport, but also if transport networks are perceived as unsafe;
- be prepared to provide support regarding families and loved ones; this may include temporary care arrangements or flexibility of working arrangements;
- consider offering medical support in the event of a health issue; this could include providing information about medication or referring staff to doctor's services;
- implement any preventative measures in line with authoritative advice, e.g. the provision and use of hand sanitisers in the case of certain infectious diseases.

7.3.3 Using alternative work sites

As part of the organization's continuity response, the workforce could be required to work from alternative locations. This could include contracted recovery sites, instant office facilities and sharing offices in other company buildings, which could be at a different geographic location. Making and validating plans to move to the chosen alternative sites is essential. This requires collaboration between facilities management, operational teams, human resources and technical support.

Alternative working facilities could become crowded as the organization seeks to maximize use of available space. Office facilities will be different from usual. Frequently, emergency offices are open plan and hot desking could be required; changes that users could find difficult to manage, even stressful. Unfamiliarity and discomfort will reduce efficiency and could lead to increases in process errors, which team leaders should take into account.

The challenges and threats this presents should be recognized and it should be ensured that issues are recognized quickly and managed in order to retain people's support. Failure to manage issues could lead to loss of goodwill, resignations, loss of skills, reduced productivity and further challenges when the business eventually returns to normal operations. Factors to consider when developing a recovery plan that requires people to work from an alternative site include the following.

- a) Do employment contracts include provision for requiring people to work at an alternative location?
- b) How will people travel to the new working location?
 - 1) Will there be shuttle buses from the usual place of work or pick-up points?
 - 2) Can public transport be used?
 - 3) Could there be a car share system?
 - 4) Is there sufficient car parking?
 - 5) What provisions are there for paying additional travel costs?
- c) The preparation of an induction programme for everyone at the new site covering:
 - 1) evacuation plan and exercise;
 - 2) office security arrangements;
 - 3) identification and training of fire marshals;
 - 4) identification of first aiders;
- d) Are catering facilities at the alternative site sufficient for the increased working population? Many recovery sites are located on industrial estates that do not have good facilities.
- e) Are facilities adequate? These include toilet facilities, showers, changing facilities, stowage of outdoor clothing, cleaning services, smoking areas, religious quiet spaces, etc.
- f) Do requirements need to be changed, for example, to modify working hours to cover increases in travel time, different working hours and impacts on family life (e.g. care arrangements)?

7.3.4 Working from home

In the event of office facilities being unavailable, temporarily working from home is frequently cited as the alternative arrangement for people. This is only a suitable option for some roles in an organization, typically those functions involving a significant amount of computer work or liaison with customers and third parties using communications tools. It may not be suitable for every individual. Working at home requires self-motivation, discipline to work without supervision and time management skills. It also requires the ability to cope with reduced social contact and the pressures of working in an environment where the demands of family life are difficult to ignore. Line managers should adapt how

teams are led and how individuals are supported. Many line managers require guidance and support to make this happen.

In advance of any incident, the organization should assess the practicality of working from home as a general continuity strategy and for all individuals who could be required to work from home. This includes consideration of the following aspects.

- a) The individual working environment: Does the person have a suitable workspace?
 - 1) Is there technical capability, including the organization's IT infrastructure and the individual's broadband and telephone connections?
 - 2) Does the individual have unrestricted access to a suitable home computer if company machines are not available?
 - 3) Can security of the organization, customer data and confidentiality of sensitive information be adequately maintained?
- b) Workflow management: How will individuals be tasked and how will appropriate quality checks be conducted?
- c) What will be the arrangements for the supervision of, and collaboration within, teams (e.g. daily contact with the team leader, internet-based audio-visual services for team conferences, face-to-face meetings at a suitable location every few days)?
- d) How will communications be adapted to keep people at home engaged with the wider organization, as well as with the continuity efforts underway?
- e) How will health and safety standards be met?
- f) How will health and well-being be monitored and what will be the access to support measures?
- g) Does the organization's and the individual's insurance cover working from home?
- h) How will this be sustained over time?
- i) Have all compliance issues been considered?

Where working from home is a practical continuity strategy, it is a cost-effective solution. Advance planning and routine validation of those plans ensure the capability is available when needed.

7.3.5 People management issues

It is important that there is a specific business continuity plan to ensure the provision of essential people management support during and after a disruptive event. There will be an array of issues arising from the specifics of any event. To manage these within specified timescales and to achieve the intended outcomes requires:

- people management policies and procedures that are adaptable to new work arrangements;
- people management professionals to have an understanding of the impact and implications of a disruptive event, insight into how people could react and knowledge of the support required;
- access to legal and regulatory expertise to protect the organization from the threat of litigation.

The organization's people management professionals should provide an established position and consistent approach on a range of policies and procedures that everyone understands and that managers are able to implement. This allows the organization to be clear about the scope of policy content and

also to explain the limitations of these measures and rejections of requests. The following list provides examples of the types of queries and issues that could arise.

- a) Pay:
 - 1) changes of workload or work location arising from an event and the possible implications for pay and allowances;
 - 2) overtime or bonus payments, where conditions and priorities for goals have shifted;
 - 3) accommodation, travel and subsistence costs where people are required to move;
 - 4) in the event of a result of serious injury, death or long-term illness, the impact on life insurance or pensions.
- b) Benefits:
 - 1) individual loans or advances;
 - 2) health care cover (and associated costs) made available to people and their families;
 - 3) requests for compensation for personal losses or damage.
- c) Attendance:
 - 1) holiday leave management to protect employee well-being or to accommodate heavy workloads;
 - 2) short- and long-term sickness absence related to the impacts of a disruptive event;
 - 3) carers commitments impacted by a disruptive event (e.g. infectious disease) or by a change in working arrangements;
 - 4) compassionate leave and time off for medical support;
 - 5) managing those who attend work when they are not fit to do so.
- d) Families: policies relating to costs incurred by family members.
- e) Working arrangements:
 - 1) flexibility about work location, work times and breaks;
 - 2) relaxation of dress codes, if appropriate.

Where applicable, trade union and workplace representatives should be involved in proposed changes to policies and procedures required as a result of a disruptive event.

7.4 Restore

7.4.1 General

This clause amplifies the guidance in ISO 22313 and sets out how the organization should plan and manage its return to normal operations. A planned approach is essential, if only to prevent it turning into another incident. All the interim arrangements will need to be undone and old or new business as usual procedures implemented. This requires a project plan in line with any change management process to protect business objectives and maintain the support and confidence of the workforce. It is not as simple as assuming people will pick up where they left off.

7.4.2 Actions for sustainable restoration of operations

People aspects to consider include the following.

- The focus of communication will change from response management to change management, supporting the organization as it adapts to the outcomes from the disruptive event. For example, anything from adapting to new premises to a change in business strategy, or from new corporate governance policies to the rebuilding of client confidence.
- Familiarizing the workforce with the requirements of updated or new technology, changed business processes, systems and procedures.
- Managing the return to work, including rebuilding any fractured team dynamics and monitoring/surveillance for any delayed onset psychological reactions.
- Recognizing the potential for long-term effects of a disruptive event on delivery of business objectives through a less resilient workforce. In particular, in safety critical organizations, the risk of further incidents could increase.
- The need for top management to demonstrate how the organization has recovered from the incident and engage with people on the future direction and resilience of the organization, ensuring this is widely communicated and understood.
- The impact of any event on the organization's human resource strategy. Plans to combat any negative impact on the availability, recruitment, retention and engagement of the skilled and productive workforce required for optimal organizational performance should be a priority.
- Implementing lessons identified from the incident, including updating crisis and continuity plans, strengthening governance and adapting to changes in business culture to make the organization more resilient.

7.5 People support strategies

7.5.1 Managing the needs of families and friends

The organization should support those close to individuals impacted by a disruptive event. In turn, perceptions about its ability in delivering this will impact its reputation among interested parties, not least its own workforce, its clients and its strategic partners. The organization should ensure it prioritizes this sensitive people aspect and be prepared to be responsive to people's needs as they develop.

Depending on the impact of the event, close family members and friends of people involved could be feeling intense anxiety, shock or grief or general concern in the aftermath of a disruptive event. This requires a sympathetic, understanding and well-managed approach. As a first priority, a dedicated, specifically trained point of contact should be established within the organization via a dedicated (toll free) number.

Appropriate and effective liaison and control should be in place to ensure that information is accurate, consistent and non-contradictory, and meets established protocols (e.g. who is authorized to confirm fatalities and inform the nominated emergency contact) and data protection requirements.

Communication with families should be both efficient and sensitive, satisfying the needs of the families through the provision of timely, accurate information and appropriate support. It may be appropriate to establish a schedule for communications so that families know when to expect further information to be made available.

The following systems and roles should be in place to embed communication with families into the overall response efforts.

- A robust system to record nominated emergency contact information and contact details. All members of the workforce should be required to provide details of their preferred emergency

contact and to ensure that these are kept up-to-date. These details should be accessible from a remote location. Ensure procedures for the storage and handling of personal information include controls to maintain legal compliance throughout an event.

- A dedicated relatives response team to be the interface between concerned family members, the organization and the wider community, and to ensure enquiries from family members are managed efficiently and sensitively. Team members should be practised and competent in their role, and possess the skills and personal attributes required for the role to equip them to handle the possible emotional reactions. Interpreters may also be required when language difficulties arise. Assigning members to this team based on convenience or assumption of capability could have a detrimental effect on the individual and the organization. The organization should also consider the size and scalability of the team to deal with events of different nature and duration (see [Annex B](#)).
- A single point of contact who will provide a focal point for understanding the needs of the affected family and for the delivery of information and support from the organization. The individual should have the necessary skills and experience, and should be supported in this role given the exposure to psychological distress that this could involve (see [Annex A](#)).
- Procedures within the response plan that protect information and ensure that only confirmed and approved factual information is shared with defined recipients in the correct order of priority. For example, the nominated emergency contact must be informed about a fatality before the media, and families should not be given unconfirmed information or false assurances. (See [Figure 3](#) for information sources and flows.)

Reception centres may be used to help reunite family and friends with survivors or provide a secure location where the organization provides families with information and support. Such centres should provide the capacity to register, interview and provide shelter for family and friends. Centres may be near the scene, in the area of the community affected, or at arrival and departure points. Centres enable the presence of trained external liaison representatives to provide critical support and serve as a link between the organization and the families. Interpreters may be needed when staff's families do not speak the organization's language.

Consider how families might react to a wide range of events: think beyond physical injury and workplace site boundaries to any situation where there is uncertainty about the well-being of an individual perceived to be linked to their work duties. For example, for infectious disease outbreaks, terror attacks, political unrest and natural disasters occurring away from the usual place of work.

7.5.2 Physical and psychological well-being

To deliver their duty of care responsibilities and support the well-being of the workforce, organizations should understand and respond to their people's psychological needs. People could be distressed or concerned about the impact of a disruptive event, they could also be affected by the demands of delivering the response and keeping the organization going in challenging circumstances over long periods. Potential psychological and physical responses will be highly individual and will be driven by the nature of the disruptive event and individual resilience levels. They will evolve throughout the course of the disruption and could endure well into the recovery phase and beyond.

How the organization responds from the outset will impact on the well-being of individuals in the short- and longer-term. It could also impact the effectiveness of the workforce in responding to a disruptive event and have implications on how the organization is perceived in the long-term.

Measures to support physical and psychological well-being should be flexible and varied; one size does not fit all. A good approach will recognize individual needs, and focus on practical support and appropriate psychological care that includes personal coping strategies, peer support and selective professional intervention. It will recognize that the duration of the support period could extend beyond the recovery of the business operations. Bear in mind that over time this type of support could require fewer resources but no less attention.

More information is provided on the available tools and on psychological and physical impacts in [Annex A](#).

It should be ensured that appropriate measures are:

- made immediately available for anyone affected by the death or serious injury of a colleague;
- rolled out across the organization quickly to prevent the build-up of issues;
- conspicuous, easily accessible and encouraging in the language used;
- widely communicated: don't assume that one means of communication will reach everyone;
- flexible: seek feedback from people and be prepared to adapt measures to fill any gaps that could arise.

Thought should be given to those involved in incident investigations or legal proceedings. Concerns about blame, responsibilities, legal processes and outcomes can also add to stress and anxiety. Advice should be provided to help people manage the process. Those accused of serious crimes/misconduct should be properly supported and risk assessment for harm to self or others should be an integral part of that support.

The well-being of members of the response teams should be considered: they will be required to sustain performance in challenging conditions. It should be ensured that they take adequate breaks and that they are encouraged to watch out for each other for signs of psychological distress.

A return to business as usual operations after an incident does not mean that all members of the workforce will also have returned to their usual selves. Support systems should be maintained that accommodate individual recovery patterns. People who are isolated through their working arrangements and do not have a natural support network should be considered; line managers should maintain an interactive team environment and encourage the use of the support measures in place.

Line managers have a role in preparing people returning to work for changes in both the physical and psychological state of the team affected by an incident. They should be provided with guidance to do this and support to manage any issues that arise.

As time passes, attention should be paid to ongoing media attention, legal milestones and significant anniversaries, and it should be ensured that support mechanisms are in place and recognized across the organization.

7.6 Communications

7.6.1 General

Communication is central to managing the people aspects of business continuity. The communications guidelines in this clause apply to the entire duration of a disruptive event, from the immediate response phase through to recovery and restoration of operations. They will evolve with each business continuity phase but represent the main principles that should be applied. They are adaptable to any type of disruptive event.

Whatever the event, the organization's reputation will be at stake. It will be affected internally and externally by how well the organization is perceived to have prioritized people concerns and how well it has responded overall.

Vital to this is consistency and timing between internal and external communications. The organization should make every effort to be the recognized source of up-to-date, trustworthy information, and should treat internal communications as a priority to build trust, confidence and motivation to support the organization as an event unfolds. Points of coordination and control between response teams (see [Figure 3](#)) should be written into emergency communications procedures to reinforce this point and ensure that the workforce always find out important information from the organization rather than via external sources.

Communication is a vital tool for managing the psychological and behavioural responses of people to a disruptive event. It is the means by which an organization provides the assistance and assurance that people need and expect and in turn will influence its ability to respond and maintain critical services.

Remember that communication is a two-way process that allows the organization to broadcast information on the one hand, and obtain feedback and solicit questions on the other hand, through a well-balanced combination of telling, listening and dialogue.

7.6.2 Importance of internal communication

Communication with the workforce is a priority from the outset and will remain so throughout any disruptive event and well into the recovery and restoration phases. The organization should consider and address the key needs and concerns that its people will have, and recognize that these will be dynamic and driven by the evolution of the event. Communications should be used to keep up-to-date on what matters to people, by getting their input and feedback, and to provide information on the same.

Communication is an important leadership responsibility. Top management should be visible and accessible in delivering the internal communications response, with line managers having a key role in facilitating the internal dialogue.

From physical incidents to cyber or regulatory breaches, the things that matter to people will follow a similar pattern. The team responsible for internal communications should be prepared to address and adapt to these needs and expectations throughout the duration of an event.

Within the boundaries of privacy and legal constraints, people should be told what has happened:

- people expect frequent and accurate updates that provide a clear explanation of what has happened, presenting the facts of the situation as known;
- communicate quickly and build trust by being open and honest, avoiding over reassurance;
- be clear about who has been impacted by the event: consider the workforce and contractors, business partners and clients with whom individuals could have a relationship, as well as the wider community;
- in the event of serious injury or fatality of a colleague, inform other members of the team with sensitivity and compassion;
- ensure people are kept informed about the progress concerning any colleagues who are injured, impacted or unaccounted for or any change in the status of the impact of the event.

Threats to the workforce or their families should be explained:

- people expect organizations to put workforce safety first: inform them that their safety is a priority and provide clear information on how their safety will be addressed;
- address the concerns people have for their families and colleagues. These will most likely be greater than their concern for the needs of the organization;
- provide adequate safety and technical information to inform individual risk assessments of the situation;
- reassure everyone that security measures are in place to protect their personal belongings or their personal information.

You should explain to people what action you wish them to take:

- give clear, practical advice (verbal and written material) on what people need to do and explain why this is required;
- explain the support measures that are available and how these are accessed;
- give direction on how the organization will continue to operate and the individual contributions required;
- make clear how you would like people to communicate with the organization during the event;

- communicate and continually reinforce the importance of the role that everyone plays in maintaining business continuity and the effect which this has on the organization's response;
- allow people to respond and be part of the recovery by encouraging their involvement; this could be through a range of internal or external activities, e.g. providing refreshments, collaborative problem-solving groups, supporting community initiatives.

A short- and longer-term view of organizational goals should be provided:

- communicate how the organization is responding to the disruption faced and where people fit into this on an individual level;
- let people know what the organization is doing to support colleagues or other adversely affected individuals;
- address realistic concerns, such as immediate requirements, increased workload, changing responsibilities, critical projects and eventual job security;
- project confidence: communicate about the organization's decision making and long-term plans with top management leading on these strategic messages.

For all aspects of internal communication, it should be ensured that messages from top management and line managers are aligned. As a disruptive event unfolds, communications should be updated to reflect new information.

People should be provided with information from a range of credible sources: externally through appropriate government bodies and subject matter experts, internally through top management, trusted line managers and colleagues.

People should be instructed to refer any media enquiries to a nominated representative of the corporate communications or media relations teams, or to an appropriate senior manager who is media trained. The organization should seek to ensure that people are not put under undue pressure by the media.

For contractor or third-party organizations, arrangements should be in place to ensure that relevant organizations are informed of the circumstances of the disruption and impacts on their people. A contractor liaison role within the response structure is recommended.

On an ongoing basis, it is important for top management and line managers to give feedback internally on the status of the response, and to visibly recognize the contribution of teams and individuals in delivering the response and keeping the business going.

7.6.3 Communication systems and pathways

The organization should establish robust systems for announcing and exchanging information internally with the workforce, as well as externally with customers, suppliers, local residents and other interested parties.

To reach as many people as possible, and for a smooth transition from routine to continuity communications, the organization should use a wide range of tools and make maximum use of its established communications platforms and methods. This will also help people to know where to access critical information (or pose questions) that will help them through the disruption and support their return to or continuation of work.

Mass notification two-way tools (see [7.2.3.6](#)) provide coverage that may be supplemented by other systems: incoming calls with recorded messages, helplines, website (dark-site) pages, line management and leadership briefings, and social media all provide a route for providing advice and information, which in turn helps to reduce the deluge of incoming queries.

Regular reviews of communications methods, including internal communications systems, are recommended, particularly the following:

- ensure the organization's internal communications structure and architecture is fit for its normal task regardless of business continuity requirements;
- frequently exercise internal and external communications plans and systems to respond to a wide range of continuity events;
- design exercises that integrate internal and external communications;
- keep two-way communication tools in mind rather than focusing on information flowing mainly from the organization;
- explore new tools and thought leadership to continually improve communications systems;
- ensure communication roles are clearly defined, including those of leadership and line management;
- keep current multiple methods to circumvent technology failures;
- ensure internal controls and feedback systems within communications teams and between response teams are clearly defined.

7.6.4 External communications

7.6.4.1 General

The needs and expectations of people affected by an event who are external to the organization are likely to mirror those of the workforce, such as facts about what has happened, understanding of threats to themselves, practical information about what to do and assurances about the organization's response.

Externally, and within the boundaries of privacy and legal constraints, the following people concerns should be reflected in external communications:

- expressing concern and regret, and demonstrating care;
- giving credible, accurate status updates that are trusted;
- demonstrating leadership through ownership and control of the situation;
- explaining that the incident is being investigated and the organization's support for this;
- providing access to the organization for information and support (e.g. contact numbers for media or relatives response);
- reassuring the public, customers, suppliers, etc., but not putting people at further risk through over-reassurance;
- detailing how the business will be affected, if at all, and acknowledging support from others; take the opportunity to demonstrate the resilience of the organization;
- avoiding promises, accusations or suggestions (sticking to the facts).

Consider the above from an outside-in perspective, i.e. how the (evolving) situation is perceived by those affected.

7.6.4.2 Communities

The organization could need to coexist with a devastated local community, and its external communications should demonstrate how, by being a member of the local community and supported by its workforce, it is fulfilling its social responsibilities and engaging in relief and associated activities.

The organization could rely on volunteers to support them in the early stages of an incident. External communication should empathize with these groups to encourage their support and recognize their contribution throughout the event.

7.6.5 Social media

Regardless of how organizations engage with social media in their day-to-day business, these multiple platforms should be recognized, monitored and managed as an important aspect of communicating with different groups of people during a disruptive event. This is where much of the conversation about what has happened will be taking place and is an important tool for people to seek and make contact.

The workforce, clients, media outlets and any interested party can watch an incident unfold on social media via the information that organizations and individuals post and comment on. Accessible to all, the information ranges from verifiable company statements to personal speculation and sentiments. Regardless of authenticity, it will influence people's perceptions of the impact and management of an event and, in turn, their behaviours.

It is important for the organization to recognize that this activity:

- can be influenced rather than controlled;
- can reach a wide audience where high-interest, people-related stories are concerned;
- include its own people as part of the social media community and conversation.

These factors add risks the organization should consider in terms of protection of brand, reputation and legal compliance, particularly where the message is inaccurate or defamatory towards the organization or its workforce.

The organization should:

- establish tools and techniques to monitor social media activity concerning an event;
- identify a role, responsibilities and a designated experienced individual (and deputies) to manage social media communications following a disruptive event, ensuring this is integrated into the overall communications plan;
- ensure internal communications are accurate, informative and aligned with external communications to ensure they can be repeated without undermining the communications plan (consider the workforce as potential advocates of the organization);
- provide the workforce with guidelines on social media use during an incident in line with how other external communication channels are managed. Where possible, use existing social media guidelines to support the response communications.

7.7 Managing the impact of travel issues

7.7.1 General

Travel, both national and international, is essential in most organizations to deliver business objectives. This clause discusses the response an organization should have in place to manage travel problems resulting from a disruptive event.

For organizations, travel could be daily travel to and from a place of work or a fundamental component of the organization's business. For many organizations in the global economy, international travel is also an essential component of doing business. The issues arising from a travel problem will be magnified by the degree of isolation, cultural differences and experience of the traveller.

Organizations' travel policies should establish the processes to be followed for business travel, which put in place the controls to ensure standards of duty of care are met. The organization should consider travel advice posted on government websites. Furthermore, travel policy could include the nomination

of a threat level or warning level as the trigger to prohibit staff from travelling to a particular destination and recalling staff currently at that destination. The organization should consider the need for specific kidnap and ransom plans.

7.7.2 Travel issues

The most likely issues which affect travellers are as follows.

- Health, which is a major consideration for anyone travelling, particularly internationally. Health risks range from the extreme, such as exposure to outbreaks of infectious diseases, to more common ailments linked to food and water ingestion. Organizations should ensure travellers are prepared and have access to medical intelligence, medical support and adequate healthcare while travelling.
- Accidents, particularly while driving an unfamiliar car on unfamiliar roads. For example, left-hand drive versus right-hand drive is a significant risk leading to either injuries to travellers or potential involvement with local police if unsafe driving is perceived to be a cause. Formal approval to drive a car while on a business trip, which takes into account likely risks and responses, should be part of the travel approval system.
- Crime, which affects thousands of travellers each year. The majority of incidents tend to be petty crime, such as theft, but violent crime, including assaults, rape, kidnap and murder, is commonly reported. This also includes industrial espionage. The risk profile of business travellers varies significantly depending on gender, sexual orientation, race and religion, so it is critical that organizations assess not only the potential security risks of locations that employees are visiting, but also the profile of the individual travellers. People travelling on business should be provided with information, advice and, where appropriate, training to ensure that they are aware of risks and how to avoid becoming a victim.
- Natural disasters, ranging from floods and earthquakes to volcanic eruptions, all place travellers at risk and/or disrupt travel plans. Including consideration of predictable severe weather events (e.g. the hurricane/typhoon season) into travel planning can mitigate this risk.
- Political instability and civil unrest is a risk that is of specific concern to business travellers. Tourists tend to avoid places where instability exists but, for many businesses operating in high-risk locations and emerging markets, travel is imperative regardless of the political situation. As a result, individuals may be required to visit locations where civil unrest is a considerable risk. Risks range from low-level transport disruption and difficulties getting around, to threats to personal safety as a result of riots and conflict.
- A terrorist event is a concern to all travellers. Business travellers are becoming more aware of the risks and demanding reassurance from their employers. Organizations are duty-bound to provide intelligence and security advice to their people to help mitigate potential impacts and provide support in the event of an incident.

7.7.3 Managing a travel incident

As with any other disruption affecting an organization, managing the impacts of a travel incident demands the same attention to assess the impacts on the people involved, their families and the organization and provide necessary support. Responding effectively is a requirement to deliver against standards of duty of care. Core steps should include ensuring that:

- response to travel incidents is included as a scenario within incident management plans;
- there is a pathway for travellers to report an incident and request help during all hours and all weekdays;
- the first point of contact (e.g. a security guard or a third-party organization) knows who and how to contact the incident management team;

- the first point of contact makes every effort to establish the name of the person calling, their current location, how they are to be contacted and what help they need;
- the incident management team have access to details of travel plans and nominated emergency contact details;
- how to mobilize support, e.g. contact arrangements for travel insurance companies, legal and consular support;
- how to activate the organization's kidnap and ransom plan.

8 Review and continuous improvement

8.1 General

Organizations should keep their arrangements for managing the people aspects of business continuity under review to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the organization. Typically, they should be reviewed annually, but, as with any other component of the BCMS, a review should be made following any significant change, e.g. a change of facilities or a significant change to business process.

8.2 Continuous improvement through exercising

As with all other aspects of the business continuity management process, the people aspects should be exercised with sufficient frequency to ensure that procedures remain familiar and effective. This may be combined with other exercises or specific learning and development events conducted using a mix of drills, table top and live exercises. Specific exercises should include, but are not limited to:

- test of automated call out systems at least every six months to ensure familiarity is retained; consider using a mass contact system more routinely to share important information;
- test call trees at least every six months and more frequently if there is high workforce turnover; maintaining complete and accurate contact lists is difficult;

NOTE For these first two items, a six month maximum period between tests allows for the ebb and flow of recruitment, departures, role changes and people movement within an organization.

- rehearse relatives responders teams, integrated with other teams;
- exercise the setting up and running of a reception centre if this is part of the strategy;
- table top procedures for managing casualties;
- practise working from home or from alternate locations if these are response and/or recovery strategies.

8.3 Feedback from the workforce or external agencies

The organization should ensure that there is a simple communication pathway to receive feedback on the effectiveness of the various measures in place to protect people during an actual incident and following an exercise. Frequently, this will be the best route to gain understanding about emerging issues.

It is important that people fully understand and trust the guidance given to protect them from the impacts of a disruptive event, which will make it more likely that individuals will respond in the way expected. Feedback provides the triggers to modify, change or reinforce the guidance.

Any event, exercise or real, involving external agencies, such as the emergency services, provides an opportunity to ensure that the response by both the external agency and the organization is in line with expectations. Engaging with the external agency post event to gain feedback is essential and valuable.

8.4 Record-keeping

Maintaining learning and development and exercising records is an essential contribution to the continuous development of the people aspects of business continuity management. It provides the pathway to monitor capabilities, record and monitor the implementation of lessons identified from disruptive events, near misses and exercises and demonstrate the commitment to delivering duty of care.

8.5 Risk review

The threats to people should be managed (i.e. assessed, treated, monitored, recorded and reported) as part of a risk management process integrated into all organizational activities and approved by top management. Threats, which could affect people, continue to develop and new threats emerge, which could require changes to the process.

Annex A (informative)

Psychological response management

A.1 Approach to trauma and psychological response management

A.1.1 General

Organizations require their people to continue to function and carry out their roles after a disruptive event occurs. The psychological well-being of the workforce affects how they function at work and, in turn, could impact organizational productivity, family units and the wider society, all of which could affect the organization's reputation. This annex provides greater detail on specific measures to help manage the psychological impacts of a disruptive event to support business continuity in the short- and long-term. These measures are adaptable to any type of disruption, recognizing that degrees of psychological impact will always be event- and person-specific.

In the wake of a disruptive event, most people will exhibit resilience, but many will experience short-term distress, which needs careful management. The latter group is likely to respond well to effective social support and management flexibility. A minority will, however, suffer mental health problems and will benefit from access to evidence-based care at an appropriate time.

The measures below represent a continuum of care for managing psychological distress arising from critical psychological incidents with referrals being made to higher levels of professional intervention based on individuals' needs.

A.1.2 Preparation for incidents

- Where risk assessments show that organizations or roles within it are at high risk of encountering psychological critical incidents, proactive preparation includes building psychological critical incident resilience, teaching awareness of post-incident procedures and preparing options for further post-incident support.
- Peer or manager support is the basic humane response towards those affected by a psychological critical incident and is delivered by non-specifically trained personnel. It comprises meeting basic practical needs, showing sensitivity to concerns, good interpersonal communication and signposting to further support.
- The provision of appropriate psycho-education may be offered verbally, but should be available in the form of a short educational leaflet.
- Peers or managers may be trained in basic psychological first aid to provide vital social support in the workplace. Research shows that the earlier appropriate support is provided following a traumatic event (psychological critical incident), the more quickly the majority of people will recover.
- Professional support services can be provided by employee assistance programmes, telephone helplines, psychological crisis management services or other health care providers. Organizations should ensure that the services they use have the expertise in dealing with reactions to psychological critical incidents, as these often do not respond well to non-directive forms of counselling.
- Human resources teams should be involved to ensure the selection of employee assistance programmes' service providers who know how to deliver trauma aware or crisis management support services.

A.1.3 Post-incident delivery of support

The organization should consider the following range of measures, recognizing that different combinations could be best suited to different organizations and situations.

a) Internal support measures.

- 1) Ensure peer or manager support is mobilized at the earliest opportunity. Provide guidance to managers on how to recognize signs of psychological impacts among team members and how to provide support. Guide managers on how to deal with the issues that could arise (e.g. absence, conduct, personal medical conditions, poor working relationships). This includes identifying individuals who feel they have to attend work but are not physically or psychologically fit to do so.
- 2) Distribute psycho-educational material through multiple communication tools to reach the target audience, including advice and information on the possible psychological impacts of a disruptive event (known as psychological education) to help people understand their feelings, reassure them that it is ok to feel stressed or anxious in the aftermath of an incident and encourage them to seek help should they feel the need to.
- 3) Enable trained members of the workforce to intervene at a more in-depth level to recognize the symptoms of distress in colleagues and actively support them. This is done through supportive listening, assessing their needs and helping to connect them to support resources. (This may be referred to as psychological first aid.)
- 4) Provide internal support networks so there are less formal opportunities for colleagues to interact and support each other as an event endures.
- 5) Encourage personal resilience and self-care measures by working with human resources teams to promote existing health and well-being benefits during business as usual and provide information to help people manage their own well-being. Use trusted, experienced human resources team members as points of contact for those needing help.

b) External resources.

- 1) Mobilize employee assistance programmes.
 - i) Immediately following a disruptive event, the role for professional crisis workers is to advise human resources or line managers about how to do the right thing rather than to provide counselling. They may help to stabilize someone in immediate crisis, provide psychological education to groups (where appropriate) on self-care strategies in the immediate future, assess further needs and triage/signpost individuals to further support.
 - ii) Where available, encourage staff to use existing confidential programmes to raise personal concerns, e.g. for financial issues, substance abuse, relationship concerns.
- 2) Where symptoms of psychological illness continue, human resources procedures should be in place to refer people to health care providers for review and diagnosis. Treatment should always be in line with medically agreed and approved guidelines.

NOTE Unstructured, unmanaged, immediate use of counsellors who are not qualified in crisis response is counter to what the evidence says works to mitigate psychological impacts and could make things worse.

More in-depth and tailored psycho-education should always be part of the professional support provided to an individual affected by a psychological critical incident.

c) Other opportunities.

- 1) Dynamic support from trained professionals to teams managing a specific event to minimize the risk to those involved (e.g. during a hostage situation).

- 2) People metrics analysis: Analyse available data on absence, resignations, disciplinary issues, etc., to detect current and emerging well-being issues.

A.1.4 Longer-term actions

- If, following an incident, someone is still highly distressed, they should be assessed by an appropriately trained professional (e.g. doctor, occupational health worker) and if they need trauma focused treatment this should be provided (directly or via health services).
- Over time, even after restoration of business operations, managers and those trained in psychological first aid should remain vigilant for emerging symptoms of late-onset psychological illness among their colleagues and should facilitate contact with internal teams who will arrange for appropriate support, internally or externally, as appropriate (see [A.4](#)).

A.2 Signs of acute psychological crisis

Disruptive events can cause a great deal of shock and psychological impairment. This could be at such a high level that the individual is not able to function as usual. In the following cases, they will usually require immediate support from trained psychological first aiders or mental health professionals:

- appearing highly distressed and emotional;
- uncontrollable panic, anger or tearfulness;
- dazed or confused;
- vacant expression;
- unresponsive to questions or requests to act;
- erratic behaviour or not being aware of danger.

A.3 Common reactions to a psychological critical incident

In the days and weeks following a disruptive event, most people will have some kind of reaction that could include the following.

- Changes in how they think and feel: Feeling tearful, anxious, depressed, helpless, angry or numb, or having intrusive thoughts and images.
- Physical reactions: Sleep disturbances, nightmares, sweats, poor concentration, trembling, headaches or muscle pain, digestive complaints, skin rashes or increased severity of a usual chronic complaint. If there are pre-existing conditions affecting the heart or breathing, the individual should always be encouraged to seek medical advice as the heightened levels of stress could prove dangerous.
- How they behave: Avoiding anything to do with the event or conversely compulsively looking for reminders, withdrawing from relationships, increasing the use of alcohol and cigarettes or any significant change in usual behaviour.

This psychological critical incident stress could be experienced acutely and/or as a more long-term chronic reaction. In the majority of cases, this reaction will subside over time as people gradually come to terms with the experience and its effects. Referrals to professional support should be considered where a reaction:

- is risking personal safety, e.g. suicidal thoughts, reckless behaviour, self-harm through alcohol abuse;
- is at a level that is causing distress or meaning the person is unable to function as usual;

- shows little sign of reducing, e.g. sleep patterns one week after the incident are as bad as the night after.

A.4 Signs and symptoms of psychological critical incident stress in the workplace

Some of the symptoms of psychological critical incident stress may not be as obvious to an outside observer or could be concealed. Managers should be vigilant towards:

- changes in physical condition or appearance;
- obvious signs of increased or inappropriate alcohol consumption;
- avoidance of certain situations or duties;
- becoming the subject of complaints about performance/attitude;
- disinterest in work;
- irritability and angry outbursts;
- being withdrawn, quiet or preoccupied;
- lateness or over-work;
- controlling behaviour;
- poor concentration, focus, decision-making or memory;
- negativity cynicism;
- general changes in behaviour or character;
- drop in work standards;
- absenteeism.

Annex B (informative)

Relatives response team

B.1 General

Many disruptive events will require an organization to prepare itself to manage interaction with family members who are seeking information about the status of people who could be involved in the incident. In this context, “family” refers to a wide group of people who have a genuine concern which needs to be managed (and some who don’t) and which requires a response. They include:

- relatives of employees;
- relatives of contract employees;
- relatives of visitors;
- friends;
- other members of the public;
- the media;
- others with no legitimate reason to require information.

NOTE 1 Relatives include the legal next of kin, nominated emergency contact or other relative.

NOTE 2 Friends include work colleagues.

NOTE 3 Other members of the public could have a good reason for making contact because they think their relative could be caught up in the incident.

NOTE 4 The media could use this pathway to access additional information for their story.

The recommended approach to managing this requirement is to establish a relatives response team, which is trained and available to mobilize when needed. The size of the team will depend on the overall size of the organization and the type and scale of any potential disruptive event. As a minimum, it should consist of two people to provide mutual support for each other in managing a task that has the potential to be very stressful. On a larger scale, it may involve a wide network of trained and competent individuals beyond the direct workforce.

B.2 Role

The role of the relatives response team is to provide confirmed information to families to meet their needs for timely, accurate information in line with communication strategies. Duties are to:

- take incoming calls, identify the caller and their concern and log appropriate information;
- validate the status of the caller as being legally entitled to receive specific information, e.g. nominated emergency contact or next of kin;
- communicate with families using approved and confirmed information;
- be the voice of the organization to concerned family members through the communication of agreed messages in a sensitive manner;

- help respond to the questions from callers and manage the follow-up of commitments made;
- if directed, make calls to relatives.

B.3 Requirements

The relatives response team will require the following.

- a) Clearly defined procedures for mobilization, set-up and delivery of duties.
- b) A team leader who will be the primary point of contact with the human resources lead within the main response team and who will have responsibility for managing the process and team members.
- c) A quiet, secure location to operate from with access to telephones and communications technology as used by the wider response organization (e.g. email, workflow).
- d) An information storage and retrieval system (can be paper-based) to record:
 - 1) the time of the incoming call;
 - 2) the name, role and location of the person about whom the inquiry is about;
 - 3) the name and contact details of the caller, and the verification of the status of the caller;
 - 4) details of information that has been shared;
 - 5) details of any promise made to take an action (e.g. call back, provision of support);
- e) Approved information, which may be given out.
- f) A prepared, familiar script for conducting calls.
- g) Training, exercising and rehearsal to prepare team members for their role.

B.4 Skills and attributes of team members

Given the sensitive nature of this role and the potential reputational consequences, the selection of members of the relatives response team should not be left to chance, convenience or assumption. Team members should be selected for their ability to:

- track and assimilate information as the incident evolves to ensure communications are factually correct and stay up-to-date;
- operate according to agreed team procedures, including agreed call handling techniques, data verification procedures, information logging and equipment handling;
- handle calls well, including demonstrating respect, politeness and empathy with callers, communicating with clarity, and remaining calm and patient throughout the call;
- work as an effective team member and be prepared to seek assistance if experiencing practical or stress-related difficulties.

B.5 Challenges

The organization should not underestimate the challenges faced by this team and should take these factors into account in planning and exercising activities.

- Meeting the expectations of callers: Approved information may not meet the needs of the callers, for example, it may not be possible to confirm whether someone is safe.
- Being swamped by the number of calls.

- Managing the psychological stress on call recipients.
- Maintaining a robust information flow between the main response team, the media teams and the relatives response team to ensure information is consistent between all three.
- Ensuring a robust control of personal information.

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