



DSPN

Disaster
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Continuity IQ

Fast Facts for our Valued Friends and Clients November 2007

Here are some bullets and brain teasers about current events from your friends at Disaster Survival Planning Network (DSPN). In this issue, we provide information about program management for business continuity. If you'd like to forward this message to your colleagues, just click the "Forward Email" link at the bottom of this page.

Fast Facts about Program Positioning

Did you know...

- NFPA 1600, the most widely-accepted benchmarking standard for business continuity, states that a "program coordinator shall be appointed by the entity and authorized to administer and keep current the program."
- A good way to increase the program coordinator's authority is to allow him/her to borrow authority from a sponsoring executive. This is achieved when executives send BC directives that have been drafted by the BC Coordinator.
- Another technique for increasing the BC Coordinator's authority is to arrange for executives to provide visible support of the program. This can be achieved by asking the executive sponsor to kick off key meetings.
- Section 4.3 of NFPA 1600 states that "an advisory committee shall be established by the entity in accordance with its policy" and that "the advisory committee shall provide input to or assist in the coordination of the preparation, implementation, evaluation, and revision of the program."
- A good way to ensure that your advisory committee is appropriately staffed and managed is to recruit a high level executive sponsor. If you have a choice, look for an executive that has personally been involved in a disastrous event.
- Another technique is to give your executive sponsor a leadership role by asking him/her to chair the regularly-scheduled meetings of the advisory committee.

Brain Teasers

True or False

1. NFPA 1600 recommends that business continuity programs be placed under the control of Enterprise Risk Management.
2. NFPA 1600 recommends that BC program coordinators be certified.
3. The BC Advisory Committee should include the BC Coordinator and representatives from all subgroups in the enterprise that own critical functions that need protection.
4. An important role of the BC Coordinator is to keep executives informed about objectives that various departments are setting and the progress they are making toward achieving those objectives.
5. An effective way to motivate department managers to achieve BC objectives is to link the achievement to their bonus plans.

Check your answers here...

Answers to the above questions:

1. *False.* The standard does not specify which department should control the business continuity program. In addition to Risk Management, several other departments are often the home of business continuity, including IT, Facilities, Operations, Security, and HR.
2. *False.* The standard is silent on the recommended qualifications of a BC coordinator, but certification, either by DRI International or by the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) is becoming a requirement in many organizations.
3. *True.* If an Advisory Committee does not have appropriate representation, it can easily get a distorted perspective about readiness. If this is your situation, you should work with your executive sponsor to help you improve representation on the committee.
4. *True.* Many coordinators use a periodic "report card" to keep executives informed about progress that is being made.
5. *True.* Linkage to bonus plans is becoming an increasingly popular incentive tool, particularly in mature programs.

Readiness Check

Hard-to-remember details:

1. Does your advisory committee have adequate representation?
2. Do your departments and business units continuously set objectives to provide incremental improvements to their readiness?
3. Do you have a standardized method to keep executives informed about progress toward objectives?
4. Do you "borrow" authority from your executive sponsor when you need it?
5. Do you ask your executive sponsor to chair regular meetings of your advisory committee?

New from DSPN

Check these out on our website:

- DSPN consultants are available to help you [audit your current plans](#) against emerging industry standards, such as NFPA 1600.
- DSPN can provide a [customized tabletop exercise](#) at your site that will be very engaging for your executive team.
- [Pandemic Experience for Executives](#) is a new tabletop exercise from DSPN that is customized for your situation at your site.

Comments and Contributions

Tell us what you think...



Thanks to all of you have sent us comments about this mailing.

In responding to recent incidents, did you discover an interesting detail that you would like to share with our readers? If so, send it along and we'll consider it for a future issue. If you want us to print a comment or submission about your company, be sure to give us permission when you write.

[Paul Klier](#)

Popular Services from DSPN

- [Benchmark Your Program Using NFPA 1600](#) is a one-day workshop we are staging in New Orleans in conjunction with the Continuity Insights Conference. Sign up now!
- In addition to our public workshops, DSPN offers [on-site workshops](#) that are customized for your priorities.

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