



Weather Proof Your Business:

Incident Response Kit

Prepared by:



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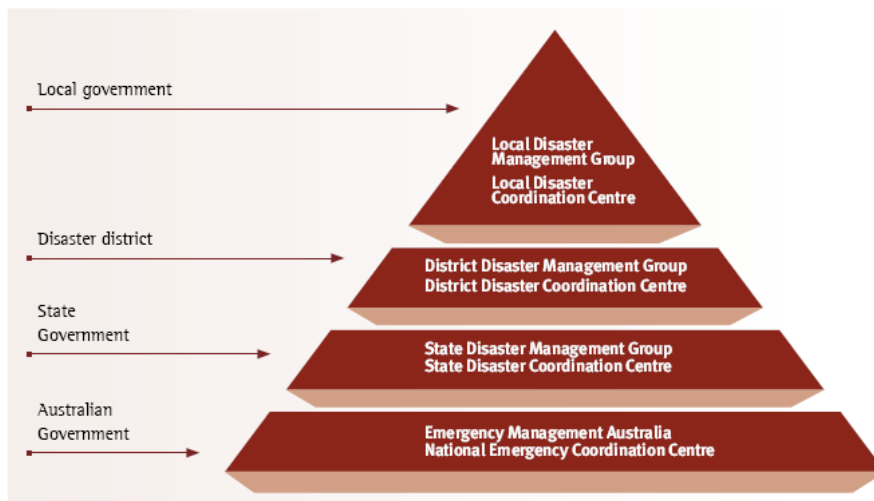
1.0 UNDERSTANDING CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A ‘crisis’ is ‘any situation that has the potential to affect long-term confidence in an organisation or a product, or which may interfere with its ability to continue operating normally’. Each crisis is unique. In turn, not all crisis types lead to similar consequences, differing from one another in both the scope and extent of damage caused.

‘Crisis Management’ is knowing what to do and how to do it with a team that is practiced and ready. By planning and preparing before a crisis happens you can ensure that your business recovers quickly. This could be the difference between staying in business or closing your doors.

Depending on the size and severity of a crisis, effective management may require the collaboration of local, state and even national bodies. Figure 1 below identifies the key bodies involved in coordinating Crisis Management in Queensland, further information on who does what is included in Appendix 1 - Crisis Roles and Responsibilities.

Figure 1: Disaster Management Coordination in Queensland

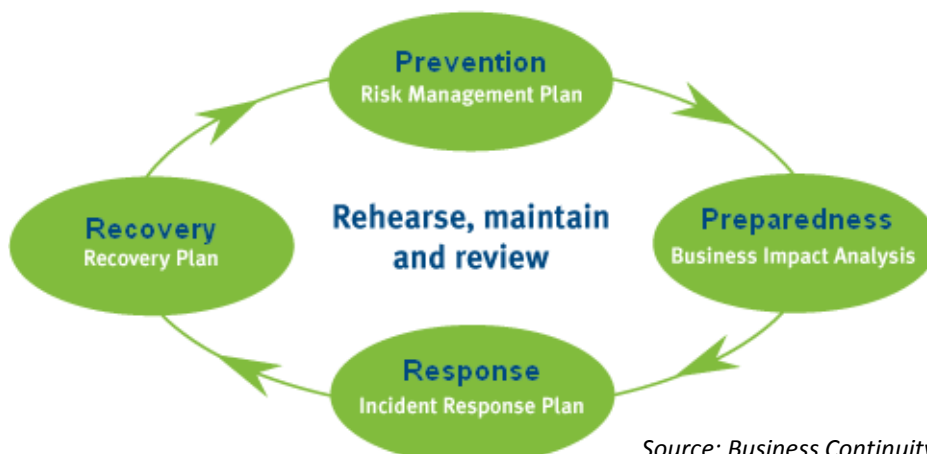


Source: State Disaster Management Plan 2008

1.1 The Four Phases of Crisis Management

While it is impossible to predict every kind of incident that may threaten your business, it is possible to develop a basic plan to cover a range of crisis events. The Queensland Government encourages businesses to use a comprehensive approach which recognises the value of the Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) model to assist you to build resilience in your business and minimise disruption should a crisis occur.

Figure 2: The Comprehensive Crisis Management Model



Source: Business Continuity Plan (DEEDI, 2009)

Table 1: The Four Phases of Crisis Management (Comprehensive Model)

1. Prevention – Risk Management planning

This step identifies and manages the likelihood and/or effects of risk associated with an incident. This involves identifying the risks that could impact your business and choosing the best ways of dealing with each. The questions you will need to ask yourself are:

- What could cause an impact?
- How serious would that impact be?
- What is the likelihood of this occurring?
- Can it be reduced or eliminated?

2. Preparedness – Business Impact Analysis

This step identifies and prioritises the key activities of a business that may be adversely affected by any disruptions. The Business Impact Analysis will use the information in your Risk Management Plan to assess the identified risks and impacts in relation to critical activities of your business and determine basic recovery requirements. You need to identify:

- Your critical business activities?
- What the impact to your business would be in the event of a disruption?
- How long could your business survive without performing this activity?

3. Response – Incident Response planning

This step outlines immediate actions taken to respond to an incident in terms of containment, control and minimising impacts. This is to prepare you for a timely response to critical incidents and reduce the impact of those incidents on your business operations. It also prepares key personnel to provide and coordinate an effective response to ensure minimal disruption to business operations in the event of emergency. You will need to:

- Complete an Immediate Response Checklist and Evacuation Procedures
- Identify what you may need to pack
- Assign responsibilities to your staff

4. Recovery – Recovery planning

This step outlines actions taken to recover from an incident in order to minimise disruption and recovery times. Recovery is the return to your pre-emergency condition. Performing your critical activities as soon as possible after a crisis event is your primary focus. The recovery process includes:

- Developing strategies to recover your business activities in the quickest possible time
- Identifying resources required to recover your operations
- Listing the persons who have responsibility for each task and the expected completion date.

REMEMBER...

Risk isn't static – changes in the environment and the community mean that new sources of risk will occur – so sources of risk must be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Communication and consultation are fundamental to risk management, a two-way process of internal and external communication and consultation must be established and maintained.

Not every action in a crisis is your responsibility – be sure you know who is doing what at a local, state and sometimes national level (see Figure 1 on page 3 of this kit).

Know and communicate to staff what triggers a crisis response and review risks they decide not to treat – priorities and circumstances may change

Only practice makes perfect - You should include a schedule for rehearsing, maintaining and reviewing your plans to ensure that they continue to meet your business needs.

1.2 Planning Your Business Continuity

The State Government Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) is the lead agency for economic recovery and for small-medium sized business recovery following a disaster event. A Business Continuity Plan template has been developed by the DEEDI to guide you through the process of being prepared for a crisis. Having a Business Continuity Plan will ensure the continuation of your business during and following any critical incident that results in disruption to your normal operational capability.

This Incident Response Kit forms just one part of your broader Business Continuity Plan. It is designed to assist specifically with the management of the crisis 'response' (step 3) and the early stages of recovery (step 4). Please refer to Appendix 2 and 3 for further information on Prevention (step 1) and Preparedness (step 2).

DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that every \$1 invested in disaster mitigation saves \$3 in recovery costs.

1.3 Tips for Effective Business Continuity Plans

A Business Continuity Plan will look different for every business, however, most good plans share some important features.

- The purpose and scope of the plan are stated at the beginning of the document
- All personnel with roles in the implementation of the plan are listed
- Risks to your business are identified and contingency plans documented
- The personnel who have the authority to invoke the plan and under what circumstances this should occur is documented
- Clear instructions for the crucial first hour after an incident are provided
- The critical business activities to be recovered and the timeframe and level of recovery needed is stated
- Contact numbers for staff, stakeholders and emergency services are recorded in one place in the plan
- A spokesperson for your business is identified

CASE STUDY: Paronella Park Cyclone Larry Recovery

In March 2006, Cyclone Larry devastated the popular tourist attraction Paronella Park near Innisfail. The cyclone cut a swathe through the park and left the five-hectare site covered in shredded vegetation. The most serious blow dealt by the cyclone was the damage done to the atmospheric old castle. Two walls collapsed into an area used to host nightly dinners for tour groups – a major source of revenue for the park. The grid power to Paronella Park was cut for 4 weeks and the Park remained closed for 6 weeks.

While the damage to Paronella Park was devastating, the Park has just experienced its most profitable year and expect this year to be even better. Mark Evans, who owns and operates the park with wife Judy, believes the reason they were so successful is because they were prepared -

“One of the reasons our recovery was so successful was that we had already drawn up a plan of how to respond to a disaster. It was very easy to just roll out the plan and respond to the cyclone” Mr Evans said.

Following Cyclone Larry, immediate steps for Mark and Judy were to contact suppliers and the local community. Mark and Judy let them know that they were temporarily out of operation but that they would be reopening. They asked suppliers if they would hold their outstanding debts until they were back in operation and canvassed the support of residents, who accounted for 30 to 40 per cent of park visits.

In broad terms while they are still repaying loans and debts incurred during the crisis, the recovery process took two years. Mark and Judy Evans stress however that in the aftermath they were presented with an opportunity not just to rebuild, but to improve the customer experience they offered.

“We believe the cyclone provided us with an opportunity to re-assess our business and the outcome is that we have a much better experience for our guests today” said Judy.

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) acknowledges the work of Paronella Park owners Judy and Mark Evans who demonstrated “enormous leadership” in an effort to revive and support operators impacted by the cyclone. “We just can’t say enough about the emotional support and good solid industry support they were able to provide,” Kim Harrington (QTIC) says. “They just stepped into it and were invaluable.”



2.0 INCIDENT RESPONSE PHASE

This kit will assist you to prepare an Incident Response Plan for your business. An Incident Response Plan identifies exactly what needs to happen in the event of a crisis including who to contact, areas of responsibility for your staff, how to record the sequence of events after the crisis and how to manage media and communication.

Your response to a crisis situation is a direct reflection of your level of preparedness, therefore you should have worked through the first two stages (Prevention and Preparedness) before completing this workbook. The ‘response’ phase can be broken into three stages:

1. Early Warning – Assessing the risks and preparation;
2. Immediate Response – the first hour after a crisis; and
3. Maintaining Control – the first 24-48 hours.

The timescale for each crisis is different, and in some cases you will not have an Early Warning or preparation time, further reinforcing the need to prepare now! Following the response phase is the recovery phase.



This Kit includes a series of instructions to help assist you in completing your Incident Response Plan. The Incident Response Plan template is attached as a separate file.

2.1 Stage One – EARLY WARNING

Improved scientific modelling and monitoring means that some natural disasters can be predicted a number of hours or days prior. While this is not the case in all crisis situations, an early warning can give you the necessary preparation time to significantly reduce the impacts on your business, your staff and your customers. Figure 3 below provides some examples of the types of natural hazards and risks you need to plan for:

Figure 3: Natural Hazards in Queensland

Natural Hazards		
Meteorological	Geological	Biological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclone • Heat Wave • Flood • Tornado • East Coast Low • Storm Tide • Sever Storms • Bushfire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earthquake • Landslip and/or debris flow • Erosion (with or without a disaster event) • Tsunami 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epidemic human disease, e.g. Chicken pox outbreak • Animal and plant disease, e.g. Foot and Mouth disease • Insect and vermin plague, e.g. Locust plague, rat infestation • Food and crop disease, e.g. Citrus canker • Emerging catastrophic disease, e.g. Avian influenza

Source: State Disaster Management Plan, 2008

During the Early Warning Stage you will need to assess the type and level of response your organisation will take. This may change on an hourly basis so it is important to be flexible and stay informed. Factors which you should take into consideration when assessing your response should include the:

- Size, severity and nature of the crisis;
- Likelihood of the threat to the safety and security of those you are responsible for;
- Impact on multiple sites or businesses (including transport systems); and
- Impact on critical infrastructure and industry.

The Early Warning Stage requires your business to open its communication channels to internal stakeholders including staff, customers and suppliers to advise them of the possible risks to allow contingencies to be developed. Depending on the severity, likelihood and possible impacts your response will move through five stages of risk response outlined in the following section.

2.2 Stage Two – Immediate Response – THE FIRST FEW HOURS

Your immediate response to a crisis situation is not the time to be deciding who needs to be communicated to and what information needs to be disseminated. These processes should be pre-determined through response planning. A five step process for immediate crisis response have been formulated and while they are sequential, you will need to constantly monitor or ‘assess’ the situation.



RESPONSE EXERCISE #1: CRISIS RESPONSE (5 STEPS) AND CHECKLIST



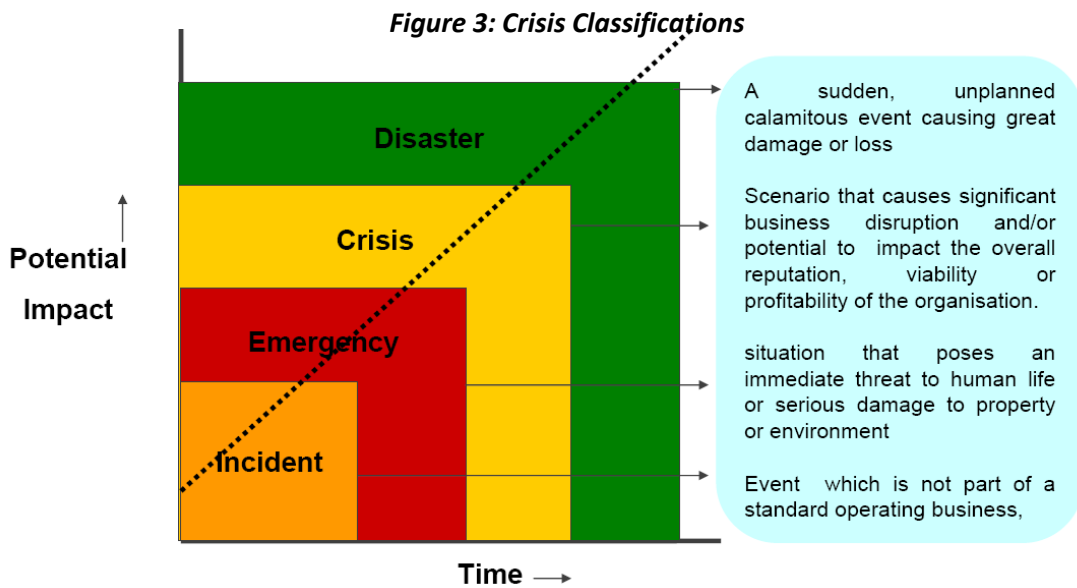
Included as the first two pages of your Incident Response Plan template is a “Crisis Response” instruction sheet and checklist to be completed in the event of a crisis. These pages should be printed, laminated, and posted up around your business.

2.2.1 STEP ONE: Assess the Situation

In many cases staff will have only a few seconds to assess a crisis situation before having to respond. How well this is managed is a reflection of their training, preparedness and the foundations of crisis and emergency management embedded in the company. The primary aim is to ensure that no-one else is exposed to unnecessary risks.

Tourism is particularly prone to external shocks, which by their nature are unpredictable and vary in severity. Classifying the level of crisis is an essential phase in the response process as it ensures the appropriate reactions are carried out effectively. Consequently this enables you to be proactive in managing potential threats.

Figure 3 below presents crisis classifications that have been established to ensure consistency in assessment of any sudden crisis situation. The criteria for these categories are broad because what may seem to be an incident or emergency when it first occurs may quickly escalate to a higher level.



Event	Trigger	Implication
Incident	<i>Not part of a standard operating business e.g. Loss of power</i>	Handled by responsible on-duty personnel
Emergency	<i>Poses an immediate threat to human life or serious damage to property or environment e.g. Hail storm</i>	Handled by the personnel who responded, with support from other employees (incl. off-site)
Crisis	<i>Significant business disruption and/or potential to impact the overall reputation, viability or profitability of the organisation e.g. Cyclone (category 1-2)</i>	Requires additional resources and people beyond the regular staff possible including outside vendors or consultants
Disaster	<i>Sudden, unplanned calamitous event causing great damage or loss e.g. Cyclone Category 3+, flood, bush fire, storm surge</i>	Situation will impact an extended area, over an extended period, requiring dedicated management effort . Business will have to be curtailed or discontinued and employees diverted from normal duties. Some employees may have to be let go, supplies halted, etc.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #2: TRIGGERS AND IMPLICATIONS



Refer to the Triggers and Implications table on page 5 of your Incident Response Plan. Fill in the implications column as it refers to your business.

2.2.2 STEP TWO: Emergency Response

Once it is clear that the all reasonable risks are minimised staff can begin an emergency response situation. This includes but is not limited to:

- i. Providing emergency first aid on-site;
- ii. Contacting emergency services (000); and
- iii. Evacuating the premises, emergency shut-down and taking the Go-Pack.

Key Questions

Depending on the type and severity of the crisis, do your staff know who to contact?

Have you got an evacuation or emergency shut-down procedure?

Do you have a 'Go-Pack'?

Your Emergency Response procedures should be documented in an Evacuation Plan, stored in a place accessible to all staff and visible to your patrons. These not only need to be clearly displayed but tested and practiced on a regular basis. It is also important to:

- Make sure key documents are stored safely and securely both on and off-site (off-site storage could be online or in an external storage space).
- Ensure documents are updated regularly and that current lists (such as customers) are available immediately.
- Remember that cash/credit cards may be needed for emergency expenditure.

WHAT IS A GO-PACK?

If you need to evacuate your site or premises, a Go-Pack is an emergency kit that can be easily carried off-site and contains key documents such as your Incident Response Kit.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #3: GO-PACK CONTENTS LIST



You should prepare a Go-Pack that is available either onsite or off-site (e.g. online). Appendix 4 provides recommendations on what your Go-Pack could include. Once you have decided what will go into your Go-Pack, fill in the Go-Pack Contents List in your Incident Response Plan.

2.2.3 STEP THREE: Communicate

A two-way process of internal and external communication and consultation must be established and maintained between decision-makers and stakeholders so that different views and areas of expertise are considered.

It is important that in the event of a crisis contact details for key internal and external stakeholders are not lost. A contact list should be kept up to date and used in case of an emergency. This list should not be limited to staff and clients, but should include suppliers, emergency personal, service providers and many others. You should review your contact list every 3 months, at a minimum, to ensure it remains up to date. Copies of this contact list should be kept in your Go-Pack and off site also.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #4: KEY CONTACT LISTS



The Incident Response Plan includes two templates to be completed:

- i. Contact List – Internal
- ii. Contact List – External

1. Clear Roles and Responsibilities (plus contingencies)

It is important that staff at the coalface of a crisis know exactly what their responsibilities are and who they should contact in the first instance. In addition, key staff and stakeholders in your business (whether they be on site or not) should have pre allocated roles and responsibilities to ensure no confusion exists about the tasks that need to be completed and no tasks are forgotten. In a small organisation, one person may have multiple roles.

The roles and responsibilities template in the Incident Response Plan allows you to assign responsibility for completion of tasks to designated 'roles' (e.g. Crisis Response Officer, Communication Officer, etc.). These roles should be allocated to staff members and back-up staff assigned to step-in if they are absent.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #5: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



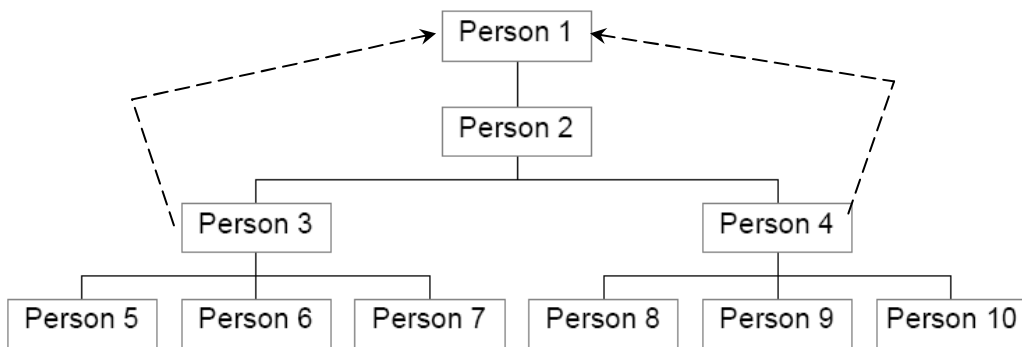
Complete the roles and responsibilities template in the Incident Response Plan. Provided in Appendix 5 is a list of the different tasks that you may like to allocate to staff. You should customise this table and the responsibilities to suit your business's needs and structure.

The staff members involved in this process should be given a copy of this table in order to understand their roles and task assignment and to allow them to undertake any pre-emergency planning.

2. Using a Contact Tree

Your contact hierarchy maps the network of people that need to be contacted in the event of an emergency. It is a visual representation of who contacts who in the event of a crisis. The contact hierarchy should also illustrate procedures for reporting back to a central location. This way the process for communication is managed and controlled. Figure 4 below is an example contact hierarchy.

Figure 4: Contact Hierarchy



RESPONSE EXERCISE #6: CONTACT HEIRARCHY



Once key contacts have been identified and roles and responsibilities allocated, draw a contact hierarchy into the Incident Response Plan. You may choose to use people's names or positions.

2.2.4 STEP FOUR: Evaluate

1. Response Checklist

The pressure of responding to a crisis situation can often mean that important actions are overlooked. To assist you in this critical time a 'Response Checklist' has been developed to help to ensure you have completed the necessary tasks in the immediate response. A copy of the Response Checklist is included in the front of the Incident Response Plan, you should review the checklist and add additional questions relevant to your business.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #7: RESPONSE CHECKLIST



A copy of the Response Checklist is included in the Incident Response Plan included in this workbook. Review the checklist and add additional questions you would find beneficial in a crisis.

2. Event log

An event log should be used on the day of the crisis to record all actions. This log will be useful in the recovery phase to trace back on who completed different tasks in case further follow up or clarification is required.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #8: EVENT LOG



A copy of the Event Log template is included in the Crisis Management Plan. The template records information regarding the decision and actions in the period immediately following the critical event or incident. Review the event log and make any changes you see necessary.

2.2.5 STEP FIVE: Re-Assess

Having made initial contact with key contacts and ensured key tasks are being completed, it is important to obtain feedback from both from your key stakeholders in the response process and external sources. Obtaining feedback will ensure you remain in control of the situation and can alter your response as the conditions change and new information comes to light.

CASE STUDY: VICTORIAN BUSH FIRES

The Victorian Bushfires that occurred on 7 February 2009 are considered to be the worst natural disaster in Australian history. Significant loss and damage resulted in many regions of Victoria. 173 people died in the fires.

Fires affected at least 70 communities and 300 areas. According to the Insurance Council of Australia on 4 March 2009, '... The general insurance industry has received approximately 8150 claims with an estimated insurable cost of \$1.02 billion'. However the full extent of costs to the communities will not be known for a considerable period of time. (EMA, 2009)



2.3 Stage Three - Maintaining Control – THE FIRST 24 HOURS

The first 24 hours are a vital time for effective two-way communication. Extensive tourism and business industry experience illustrates that good communication is essential for rapid crisis recovery. Lack of information or incorrect information at a time of public uncertainty or confusion can have long term negative effects on consumer confidence. Once the immediate response is underway it is time to begin external communication. Before you engage in any communication externally be sure you can answer the following questions:

- WHAT** happened and where?
- WHEN** did this happen?
- WHO** is involved?
- HOW** did it happen?
- WHAT** is currently being done?

DID YOU KNOW?

Approximately 25% of all news stories involve disasters or crises of some sort.

When collecting the data consider the following:

- Do you have **all** the facts (to the best of your knowledge)?
- What **other information** do you need to put the event into perspective?
- Has the situation been **confirmed**?
- Was your information source(s) **credible**?
- Is information **consistent** from several sources?

In some cases, the media may be alerted to the situation before all of these facts can be determined. Even if you do not have all of the information yet, it is important to notify your appointed 'spokesperson' to provide the media with a statement indicating that the situation is under investigation and that as soon as more information is available it will be provided.

2.3.1 Dealing with the Media

Ineffective and unprofessional communication with the media can exacerbate the crisis for tourism businesses, but responsible management can facilitate the recovery process. Operators should remember to work with the media, not against them: so the media should be managed, rather than controlled. Further, cooperation is always preferable to confrontation, and most importantly, the media is the communication medium to the wider community and prospective visitors. Provided below are guidelines for dealings with the media:

Effective crisis communications:

- Fully explains the true extent of the crisis
- Puts the issue into perspective
- Reassures the observers about the appropriate measures taken to control and address the situation.

- ✓ **Designate a spokespersons** - Information to the media should be provided by an authoritative source: a suitably trained, senior official, with additional trained spokespeople also available as a crisis may extend over many days
 - *Who would be an appropriate as spokespersons for your business?* _____
 - *Will they require training?* _____
- ✓ **Be honest and transparent** - Don't try to cover up mistakes, mislead or withhold critical information. The media will uncover the facts and may make you look dishonest or inept. When information is not

available, say so, and promise to respond at a later date. Also, avoid speculation and generalisations by not releasing information or commenting on any matter which is not in your control. If you say things that may result in other agencies being contacted, warn them of impending calls.

- ✓ **Do not impose a news blackout** - Always return media calls. Failure to provide information to the media will force the media to seek alternative news sources which may not always communicate the truth.
- ✓ **Organise your media response & act fast**- Establish a dedicated room and website and begin once you are ready to answer the five key questions: who, what, where, when, and why? Also, consider establishing a dedicated call-in phone line that will offer information to media or others.
- ✓ **Remember the victims in your media response**- Every crisis has its victims and many people will be receptive to your comments. Be sensitive and don't play the blame game.
- ✓ **Challenge untrue statements** - Monitor media reports and correct inaccuracies before they can be repeated. Use the media to highlight positive aspects by working positive details into news releases.
- ✓ **Put the crisis into context** - Use maps to demonstrate that the crisis is limited to a specific area.
- ✓ **Monitor what is being done** - Participate in inter-agency meetings to brief them on your situation and to identify the progress of response and recovery activities. Keep staff up-to-date on the crisis, it can prevent incorrect information being spread.
- ✓ **Listen to the media** - During crisis time, you may learn a great deal from the media that can be useful to you in further dealing with the crisis. Your media officer should liaise regularly with the media liaison officers appointed by other organisations. If you acquire new information regarding the crisis, just ask.
- ✓ **Coordinate with disaster management agencies to arrange media access** - Try to help organise media access to the area through disaster management agencies.
- ✓ **Avoid antagonizing the media** - A short tone at a press conference, during a phone call, or elsewhere can affect your future relationship with an individual or other media who may hear the conversation.
- ✓ **Give credit to other agencies, groups or individuals** working on the crisis, including your own staff.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #9: BRIEFING STAFF



It is important to brief your staff on how to manage the media in a crisis. While you will have appointed a media spokesperson, the media may approach various employees for a comment. The Incident Response Plan includes template for communication to be distributed to your staff. Complete the memo and distribute to your staff as soon as possible.

2.3.2 Develop your Messages

Once the crisis level has been assessed and factual information to be communicated has been confirmed, it is time to begin planning a response strategy for communicating critical information and for responding to potential questions for each audience. During this step, the Crisis Communications Team should:

- Develop a script for conveying key information points.
- Develop or refer to a list of questions that could be asked by a variety of audiences (families, media, partner, organizations) about the crisis.
- Modify pre-scripted messages, or develop new messages.
- Identify the best methods for delivery of key messages.
- Monitor crisis and update messages based on the crisis.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #10: MESSAGES MAP



The Incident Response Plan includes a 'Messages Map' which records key messages for communication following the crisis. Once completed, this Messages Map should be distributed to key stakeholders to ensure consistent messages are being delivered externally.

2.3.3 Press Releases

A press release is a useful way of getting information about your operation to the public, including staff, clients and suppliers.

You should use your press releases to not only communicate what has happened, but what you plan to do to respond. The press should also be used to communicate 'good news' stories and seek support if needed.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #11: PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE



A copy of the Press Release Template is included in the Incident Response Plan. The template records the information that should be included in a press release.

2.3.4 Frequently Asked Questions

A copy of Frequently Asked Questions is included in the Incident Response Plan. The template provides a list of frequently asked questions for you to prepare answers to prior to talking to the media.

RESPONSE EXERCISE #12: FREQUENTLY ASKED MEDIA QUESTIONS



In the event of a crisis, prepare responses to these frequently asked media questions.

Equine Influenza Outbreak

Equine Influenza in New South Wales and Queensland resulted in a significant multi-million dollar impact on the horse racing industry with the Spring racing carnivals, breeding season and associated tourism aspects affected. In addition the broader equine work, trade and pleasure activities have also suffered from losses in gambling revenue and stallion servicing fees, affecting the whole economy (Herald Sun, 2007).

A huge response with approximately 2000 staff was undertaken to control and eradicate the disease. There were more than 20 control and vaccination centres established across NSW and more than 63,000 horses were vaccinated in NSW during the outbreak. The NSW Government implemented a whole-of-Government response including Rural Lands Protection Boards, NSW Police, RTA, State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service and NSW Health.

The Equine Influenza affected not only the racing industry, it had a dramatic impact on tourism events, accommodation, and farm-stays. According to a study by the AHIC total association, business and community economic losses were \$522 Million or \$29 million per week between August and December 2007 (AHIC Equine Influenza Follow-up Economic Impact Study).



3.0 RECOVERY PHASE

Recovery is the return to your pre-emergency condition. The primary focus is performing your critical activities, as soon as possible, after a critical incident. No two crises will ever be the same, so each crisis recovery process will generate different problems requiring a range of knowledge and skills and, above all, the willingness and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Successful recovery relies on:

- Understanding the context and the residual effects;
- Recognising complexity and existing damage to property and infrastructure;
- Using community-led approaches;
- Ensuring coordination of all activities and knowledge of on-going disruption to services;
- Employing effective communication, personnel, equipment and measures for the recovery operation; and
- Acknowledging and building capacity.

While the recovery phase can take years depending on the crisis, there are immediate steps that should be completed. These include:

- Assessing the impact
- Activating your Recovery Plan
- Understanding your legal rights and responsibilities
- Monitoring Incident and Recovery

3.1 Assessing the Impact

The impacts of a crisis can be far reaching from physical impacts to social and economic impacts. There are a number of organisations that can help you to assess the impacts and plan your first steps including your insurer. You should identify in advance the organisations that can assist you and ensure you have their contact details on your external stakeholder contact list.

Community support is required to return operations to normal, so community agencies and organisation should be a part of the crisis recovery team.

REMEMBER...

After a crisis, report your losses to the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Industry Innovation (DEEDI).

Financial assistance to businesses is not automatic and DEEDI will submit a formal request to Emergency Management Queensland to activate loans under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). After this, eligible businesses will also gain access to other DEEDI departmental assistance.

3.2 Recovery Planning

Planning for recovery is integral to emergency preparation and mitigation actions may often be initiated as part of recovery. In developing your recovery plan, you should consider:

- Overall recovery objectives;
- Priority areas of action;
- Current and future needs of your staff and clients; and
- Available sources of assistance.

While specific recovery structures may be developed by the Queensland government during an event, it is important your business can also look after itself. A Recovery Plan should be prepared which identifies your critical business activities, recovery actions, resource requirements, recovery time objectives and who is responsible for the tasks.

RECOVERY EXERCISE #1: RECOVERY PLAN



A templated Recovery Plan is included at the end of this section. Complete the Recovery Plan table with the intention of supporting recovery in 'worst case' scenarios. It can then be modified according to the degree of loss to your business.

First and foremost, operators should ask themselves two important questions:

- How has the crisis affected my tourism business; and
- What has to be done to return operations to normal?

3.3 Understanding your Legal Rights and Responsibilities

Insurance

When an incident occurs, it is important that you report the event as soon as possible and be completely honest about the circumstances surrounding the claim. Dishonesty could result in an investigation and a delay in payment of your claim, or in it being refused. In making a claim you should:

1. **Produce all documents** or records supporting your claim.
2. **Cooperate** with the insurer and the people they employ to help assess the claim, such as investigators or doctors.
3. If you make a claim, the maximum an insurer will pay you is the amount of money, or '**sum insured**', in your contract. It is your responsibility to ensure the 'sum insured' covers everything.
4. **Be aware of the insurers' obligations.** That is, after you have submitted a claim on your policy, general insurers must:
 - i. Acknowledge within 15 business days that they have received your claim.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2006, 72% of people who reported to the Insurance Ombudsman Service (IOS) did not have the insurance cover they thought they did.

Further, of all the disputed claims reported, 66% were refused under an exclusion clause in their policy.

(IOS Annual Review 2006)

- ii. Keep you informed of the progress of your claim.
- iii. Advise you within a reasonable period whether or not your claim has been accepted or rejected.

In the first instance, insurance agencies will require the following information when making a claim:

- Your policy number and/or name, address and contact phone numbers;
- Information about where and when the incident occurred, and a verbal description of how it happened (events following, during and after);
- Details of any Police involvement - this may be a Police report number or the details of the Officer and Station a report was made to;
- Details of any other persons involved in the incident (if applicable);
- Detailed description of the accident including time and place; and
- Details of any witnesses to the incident.

REMEMBER...

Usually there are two separate parts to your policy – terms and conditions and the policy schedule or conditions. To properly understand your insurance cover, make sure you read the policy terms and the schedule together.

Human Resources

In planning for recovery, you need to find out what your employees are entitled to if there is a business closure due to circumstances outside of your control (for example, a natural disaster). If the employment contract/letter, Award or Agreement does not mention anything, then you can stand employees down unpaid for as long as they cannot usefully be employed - as set out in both the Queensland Industrial Relations Act and the Fair Work Australia Act.

In preparing for a crisis you should:

- Prepare an employee list with contact details and hourly rate of pay. This should be stored in your 'Go-Pack'
- Conduct drills and test evacuation and response plans for gaps
- Identify key skills and roles for business continuity (for example, payroll, banking)
- Investigate your employer obligations by reading your employment contracts/letters, Award(s) or Agreement(s), if you are unsure contact:
 - Wageline Queensland (www.wageline.qld.gov.au ph. 1300 369 945)
 - Fair Work Australia (www.fwa.gov.au ph. 1300 799 675)

In the event of a crisis you should:

1. **Contact staff** as soon as possible after the event.
2. **Initiate payroll processes.** I.e. will staff be unpaid, use their Annual Leave, or are you obligated to pay them during the closure?

3. **Consider how to retain key employees** to ensure their skills and knowledge stay with your business. For example, you may choose to give valued employees first opportunity at paid work during clean-up period to ensure they do not need to seek work elsewhere
4. **Recognise the achievements of your team.** Facing adversity connects people and strengthens their relationships as they overcome challenges together. Acknowledge the importance of that achievement to you and the business.

3.4 Monitoring

In the event of a crisis, you should work with relevant agencies, community leaders and media to ensure a consistent approach is being adopted and the informed decisions are being made. Be sure to not only monitor your own business recovery, but also the restoration of other business operations and learn from their wins and mistakes.

RECOVERY EXERCISE #2: INCIDENT RECOVERY CHECKLIST



An Incident Recovery Checklist is included in the Incident Recovery Plan. This checklist should be used to help guide the recovery process. Update this checklist to suit your own business.

Further, your crisis management team should monitor and evaluate community perceptions and reactions to the crisis to identify and address any community concerns. The public may have misinterpreted actions taken, or may be angry about perceived inaction during the crisis, and any misconceptions need to be addressed as they may have negative effects upon community support and the return to normal tourism operations

1. Media and Communication

Promotion, advertising and marketing post-crisis is an important part of the recovery process. Rebuilding a damaged or negative tourism image must be primarily founded on sensitivity and understanding. It requires strategic and effective management of media coverage and visitors perceptions.

Industry and government solidarity and marketing alliances can help present a consistent message and reduce the individual financial burden of destination promotion and re-branding. Extensive experience suggests that incentive and value adding (eg bonus nights, upgrades, tours or meals) prove more sustainable than heavy 'discounting' in the long term.

2. Debriefing

Debriefings should be conducted following any crisis response or exercise to analyse the management and outcomes of the crisis and to gain the information necessary to improve plans, procedures and the training of personnel.

Lessons from debriefing processes must be identified and acted upon to ensure the continual improvement of crisis management capabilities, and these lessons should be shared with other tourism businesses and tourism organisations so that the wider industry can benefit.

Following debriefing, the planning committee should:

- Analyse debriefing discussions and outcomes;
- Identify planning, training and operational needs;
- Identify timelines and allocate responsibilities;
- Revise and update the crisis management plan, as required;
- Organise additional training for personnel as necessary; and
- Test and evaluate revised plans and procedures and personnel.

Where possible, debriefing should take place within a few weeks of the crisis itself while events are still clear in people's minds.

3. Maximising the Benefits

Identifying how the lessons identified during debriefing processes can be shared with the wider tourism community so that everyone can benefit from the experiences of others.

Options to achieve this include:

- Debriefing reports sent to tourism organisations for dissemination;
- Personnel to contribute as guest speakers at other tourism training sessions/workshops/seminars;
- A tourism newsletter dedicated to crisis and disaster information and lessons; and
- Networking opportunities at workshops, etc.

Sunlander Train Crash

On January 1, 2009 a truck driver was killed and six passengers seriously injured when the Sunlander train carrying 127 people collided with the vehicle just 5 km north of Innisfail. The impact derailed two locomotives, two baggage cars and four passenger carriages.

According to passengers the crash response by QR and emergency services staff was "excellent". However, as with all disaster situations some improvements have been recommended with regards to the treatment of passengers. While QR ensured that passenger safety and wellbeing was always a priority following the crisis, passengers had to wait up to 2½ hours at the site without sufficient sun protection and some were left with severe sunburn.

Since the accident, Queensland Rail (QR) has spent approximately \$10 million on improvements to rail crossings throughout North Queensland. Passengers on the Sunlander were given refunds or a free trip as compensation, costing the company approximately \$25,000.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

1. Complete your **homework exercises**
2. Form your **Crisis Response Team** – ensure they have their contacts and responsibility cards
3. Put together your '**Go-Pack**' and put up your crisis response **instructions** in a place clearly visible to staff
4. Prepare / review your Crisis Management Plan or **Business Continuity Plan** – visit www.business.qld.gov.au for further assistance
5. **Rehearse, maintain and regularly review!**

APPENDIX 1: CRISIS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of organisations in the application of disaster management functionality is as follows:

Organisation	Responsibilities
Emergency Management Queensland	<p>Through the XO to the State Group the functions as described in the <i>DM Act 2003</i>, include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of advice and assistance to all agencies within Queensland's disaster management arrangements. • Provision of advice to disaster managers at all levels of the state's disaster management arrangements. • Ensuring that disaster management activities within the State are consistent with the strategic policy framework. • Facilitation of the development and maintenance of the State's Disaster Management Plan. • Operation and maintenance of the SDCC. • The maintenance of arrangements between the State and Australian government about matters relating to effective disaster management; and the coordination of State and Australian government assistance for disaster management and disaster operations • Training of disaster management stakeholders • Review of District and Local Plans
Queensland Police Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of peace and good order • Prevention of crime • Maintenance of any site as a possible crime scene • Coronial investigation procedures • Traffic control, including assistance with road closures and maintenance of road blocks • Crowd control • Coordination of evacuation operations • Coordination of rescue operations • Security of evacuated areas • Security of damaged premises • Registration of evacuated persons • Tracing or coordination of search for missing members of the community • Traffic, rail and air accidents • Guidance on Counter-Terrorism Issues
Department of Premier and Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent advice to the chair of State Group • Public Information Arrangements – Crises Communication Network • Coordinating strategic situational awareness in a terrorist event via the SCC; • Leadership of strategic policy in all hazards • Provision of support and advice to the Premier and Cabinet

<p>Queensland Fire & Rescue Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire control • Fire prevention • Rescue of trapped persons • Assist in pumping out of flooded buildings • Management of hazardous material situations • Provision of Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) information relative to hazardous materials • Provision of expert advisory services with regard to chemical incidents
<p>Queensland Ambulance Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, treatment and transportation of injured persons • Assistance with evacuations (persons with medical conditions) • Provision of advice regarding medical special needs sectors of the community
<p>State Emergency Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm damage response • Public education • Rescue of trapped or stranded persons • First aid • Traffic control • Short term welfare support • Assistance with impact assessment • Assistance with communications • Assistance with lighting
<p>Bureau of Meteorology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting of weather and the state of the atmosphere • Issue of warnings for gales, storms and other weather conditions likely to endanger life or property, including weather conditions likely to give rise to floods or bushfires • Supply of meteorological information • Publication of meteorological reports and bulletins • Provision of advice on meteorological matters
<p>Department of Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State's coordinating agency for social/community response and recovery planning & issues • Coordination of community recovery services including • Information on the range of recovery services available • Information on the psychological effects of disaster • Personal support services • Personal Hardship financial assistance measures - NDRRA / SDRA or other approved government assistance measures to eligible applicants • Provision of counselling and mental health services • Long term accommodation services • Facilitation of community participation in the redevelopment of social networks and community infrastructure

<p>Queensland Transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of transport and transport engineering support for disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery • Movement of disaster related equipment and supplies including food, water, fuel, sandbags and medical resources • Movement of people as a result of mass evacuation of a disaster affected community • Repairs to and reinstatement of road, rail and maritime infrastructure • Provision of transport engineering advice including infrastructure service capacities relating to roads, bridges, ports and rail lines • Provision of information at State and District Disaster levels on road, rail, maritime and air service closures and / or restrictions
<p>Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting risk management Prevention and Preparedness, strategies to small-medium businesses and primary industries. • Instigating and coordinating Response and Recovery arrangements of small-medium sized businesses and primary industries following a disaster event • Advice and assistance to eligible small-medium businesses and primary industries in relation to disaster recovery, loss or destruction of stock, crops or animals through DEEDI Regional Centres and via web and Departmental Hotline.
<p>Department of Public Works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional Lead agency for: Building and Engineering Services; Communications Infrastructure; and Emergency Supply. QBuild provides the functional response at a disaster district level on behalf of Public Works • Inspection and repair of damaged State Government built infrastructure • Support in damage assessment • Access to Government motor vehicle fleet • Liaison with telecommunication providers • Logistical support arrangements • Temporary built infrastructure solutions • DPW utilises a framework of support from all service areas within the departments administrative portfolio
<p>Environmental Protection Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of storm time advice • Environmental issues • Pest control and fire management programs • Increased level of monitoring, modelling and assessment and supply of relevant information to decision-makers • Increased effectiveness managing significant environmental risk with potential adverse impacts minimised • Responsibilities under the Hazmat Recovery Plan
<p>Queensland Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of medical resources • Lead agency for pandemics • Public health advice and warnings to participating agencies and the community • Psychological and counselling services for disaster affected persons • Ongoing medical and health services required during the recovery period to preserve the general health of the community

Local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance of Local government functions (via Local government business continuity and recovery Planning)• Maintenance of normal Local government services to the community and critical infrastructure protection• Development and maintenance of disaster management plans for the shire• Development and maintenance of a public education/awareness program• Establishment, maintenance and operation of a LDCC including the training of sufficient personnel to operate the centre• Coordination of support to emergency response agencies• Maintenance of warning and telemetry systems• Collection and interpretation of information from telemetry systems• Reconnaissance and post impact assessments for the shire• Debris clearance of roads and bridges• Issuance of public information prior to, during and post disaster impact events• Recommendations with regard to areas to be considered for authorised evacuation• Public advice with regard to voluntary evacuation• Provision of locally based community recovery services in conjunction with other recovery agencies• Evacuation centre management
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APPENDIX 2: PREVENTION

The Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) risk management process is ultimately designed to prevent risk. It provides a generic framework for organisations in the identification, analysis, assessment, treatment and monitoring of things that may have an adverse effect on your business. Phase 1 of the PPRR framework is concerned with identifying the sources of risk to the tourism destination or operator, including those which pose a threat to the safety and security of visitors and employees and seeking to reduce its impact. After identifying potential hazards, the best method of dealing with each should be selected.

Various means should be used to identify all sources of risk, including:

- Brainstorming ideas with personnel
- Checking historical records
- Consulting experts
- Using scenario analysis

Managers should perform a survey of their organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis). Based on the SWOT the business can evaluate the likely impact on the organisation of a particular type of crisis and work out how to reduce the possibility of it occurring.

A crisis management-led SWOT analysis should include a special look at the following:

- Existing crisis management and control programmes
- Hazards within the organisation, its buildings, policies and processes
- Potential socio-political, economic, technological or environmental crises
- Existing relationships with the media, the public and emergency services

Other questions to ask include:

- What could cause an impact?
- How serious would that impact be?
- What is the likelihood of this occurring?
- Can it be reduced or eliminated?

A crisis management-led SWOT analysis will identify potential problem areas that would otherwise go unnoticed in regular business analyses. Furthermore an analysis of this kind will uncover various potential crisis situations and lay out the resources available or required to manage those risks. Once the survey and analysis programme has been implemented, it must be evaluated and kept up-to-date

Useful Resources:

A Business Continuity Plan template has been developed by the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Economic Development and Industry (DEEDI) to guide you through the process of being prepared for a crisis.

[Click here](#) to download the Business Continuity Plan template.

The Business Development Unit of DEEDI also maintain a comprehensive web portal on [Business Continuity Planning](#) and all elements of Risk Management. This site will provide further information on how to prevent managing risks in your business.

1. Banks Group, (2009), [The right approach to Disaster Recovery](#)
2. London Resilience (2009) , [Business Continuity Planning advice for Businesses with 50-250 employees](#)
3. London Resilience (2009), [Preparing for emergencies](#)
4. Marsh, (2008), [Risk Alert- Typhoon Ketsana, Business Continuity Management](#)
5. PATA, (2003), [Crisis: It won't happen to us, Expect the Unexpected,](#)
6. Tourism Queensland (2007), [Regional Tourism Crisis Management Plan Template](#)

APPENDIX 3: PREPAREDNESS

In the event that a crisis cannot be avoided, it is important a business is prepared. “Being ready” involves more than just making plans and running an occasional drill. Organisations need to evaluate their crisis exposure and develop strategic, tactical and communication plans. Managers must regularly audit the plans, conduct crisis response management exercises and acquire crisis management skills. Managers and staff need to be psychologically and physiologically prepared for the impact and stresses that crisis events may impose upon them.

Don't just prepare your staff for a crisis, but your customers as well.

The whole chain of command must become part of the crisis management readiness programme, as it in turn becomes a part of the organisation's culture. This can be achieved in several ways:

- Make a senior executive directly responsible for crisis management issues
- Draw up a timetable for reporting on crisis management issues
- Include all employees in the presentation process
- Make crisis management issues part of the overall strategic planning process
- Communicate crisis management policy and procedure to all stakeholders

In preparing for a crisis, a business should conduct a Business Impact Analysis. A Business Impact Analysis involves assessing areas of a company's operations (critical activities) that are crucial to running business and determine basic recovery requirements. Critical activities may be defined as primary business functions that must continue in order to support your business

As part of your Business Impact Analysis you should assign Recovery Time Objectives (RTO) to each function. The RTO is the time from which you declare a crisis/disaster to the time that the critical business functions must be fully operational in order to avoid serious financial loss.

A Business Impact Analysis of your business should consider:

- Your critical business activities
- Where your business is most vulnerable
- What the impact to your business would be in the event of a disruption
- What would be the worst for your business
- Establish your breakeven point and how long your business could continue to function at reduced/minimum capacity / and what level that is
- How long could your business survive without performing this activity?
- How much you can afford to lose if you are unable to run your business for days/ weeks/ months?

Remember...

Consider not only the implications of a crisis on your immediate surrounds, but also other elements of your business that may not be right in front of you (e.g. a shuttle bus on its way to pick up guests, Charter Boats out at sea, staff on their way to work, etc.)

Information Back-up and Off-site Storage

A key step in preparing for a crisis is to ensure you have off-site storage of all of your company files. The most solid method for holding your information is to use an online back-up solution service. This is an encrypted and secure service that will provide a business with access to your computer files from any remote location.

An alternative to using an online back-up solution is to save your files regularly to an external hard drive and store this drive off-site. This hard drive should be kept in your 'Go Pack' or in an easily accessible location that is away from the business. This is a more affordable option however very labour intensive.

It is important that your company develops both back-up procedures and restoration procedures and responsible personnel should be interviewed to ensure procedures are being adhered to. The procedures should be included in your 'Go Pack' to assist in re-establishing your business in a timely manner.

At a minimum, it should become habit for a business to keep up-to-date hard copy records of existing and expected customers. This will mean that in an event of a crisis all persons can be accounted for and upcoming customers can be contacted.

Useful Resources:

A Business Continuity Plan template has been developed by the Queensland Government Department of Employment, Economic Development and Industry (DEEDI) to guide you through the process of being prepared for a crisis.

[Click here](#) to download the Business Continuity Plan template.

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3. PATA, (2003), [Crisis: It won't happen to us, Expect the Unexpected](#),
4. Tourism Queensland (2007), [Regional Tourism Crisis Management Plan Template](#)

APPENDIX 4: GO-PACK CONTENTS

Documents:

- Business Continuity Plan – your plan to recover your business or organisation in the event of a critical incident.
- List of employees with contact details – include home and mobile numbers, and even e-mail addresses. You may also wish to include next-of-kin contact details.
- Listing of current and expected visitors/clients with contact phone numbers.
- Supplier details with contact phone numbers.
- Contact details for emergency services.
- Contact details for utility companies.
- Building site plan (this could help in a salvage effort), including location of gas, electricity and water shut off points.
- Evacuation plan.
- Latest stock and equipment inventory.
- Insurance company details.
- Financial and banking information.
- Engineering plans and drawings.
- Product lists and specifications.
- Formulas and trade secrets.
- Local authority contact details.
- Headed stationery and company seals and documents.
- Document back up and restoration procedures.

Equipment:

- Computer back-up tapes/disks/USB memory sticks or flash drives.
- Spare keys/security codes.
- Radio and spare batteries.
- Torch and spare batteries.
- Hazard and cordon tape.
- Message pads and flip chart.
- Marker pens (for temporary signs).
- General stationery (pens, paper, etc).
- Mobile telephone with credit available, plus charger.
- Dust and toxic fume masks.
- Disposable camera (useful for recording evidence in an insurance claim).

This list is not exhaustive, and you should customise it to suit your business.

APPENDIX 5: TASKS TO BE COMPLETED

Included below is a list of tasks that will need to be completed in the immediate period after a crisis. These tasks should be allocated to staff in your business.

- Disaster site management
- Client / External Stakeholder communication
- Media communication
- Contingency / Logistics planning
- Staff communication
- Risk reduction planning - stop suppliers, staff and customers arriving
- Assess risk severity and identify the best course of action
- Coordinate disaster response with local disaster agencies
- Identify critical activities affected and trigger your recovery action plan
- Understand your legal risks and implications
- Keep updated information flowing