



## **Business Continuity Management – a proposed framework**

### **Overview**

Business Continuity Planning is the title given to the process of minimising the impact of 'disaster' on the business at any time. As with any other risk management process the subject will typically address a wide spectrum of risks that can be expected to change over time. Hence, like all management processes, BCP must be the subject of a rolling review if the investment in BCP Countermeasures is to prove effective.

BCP is now an accepted part of Corporate Governance, which means that it has become a routine topic on all management audits. As such it is important to ensure that the process of managing BCP is formalised and that the process creates an audit trail of sufficient quality to demonstrate that the process is properly under control.

This BCP Management Framework is designed to link the various activities that combine to make an effective programme, which over time will generate the necessary records to meet audit requirements. The Framework is described in the following pages, and is designed to repeat year on year.

### **Overall Risk Assessment**

Risk Assessment comprises two significant aspects, Risk Register and Business Impact Analysis. Both components must be reviewed annually or in the event of a significant change to the business or premises or supporting infrastructure (eg, IT systems). A process will need to be put in place to ensure that such significant changes are identified. It is proposed that:

- a) For IT related changes, this is immediately added to the change control process
- b) For other changes in the medium-term these will be identified via the revised risk management framework. For other changes in the short-term, a quarterly reminder will be issued by the BCP Manager.

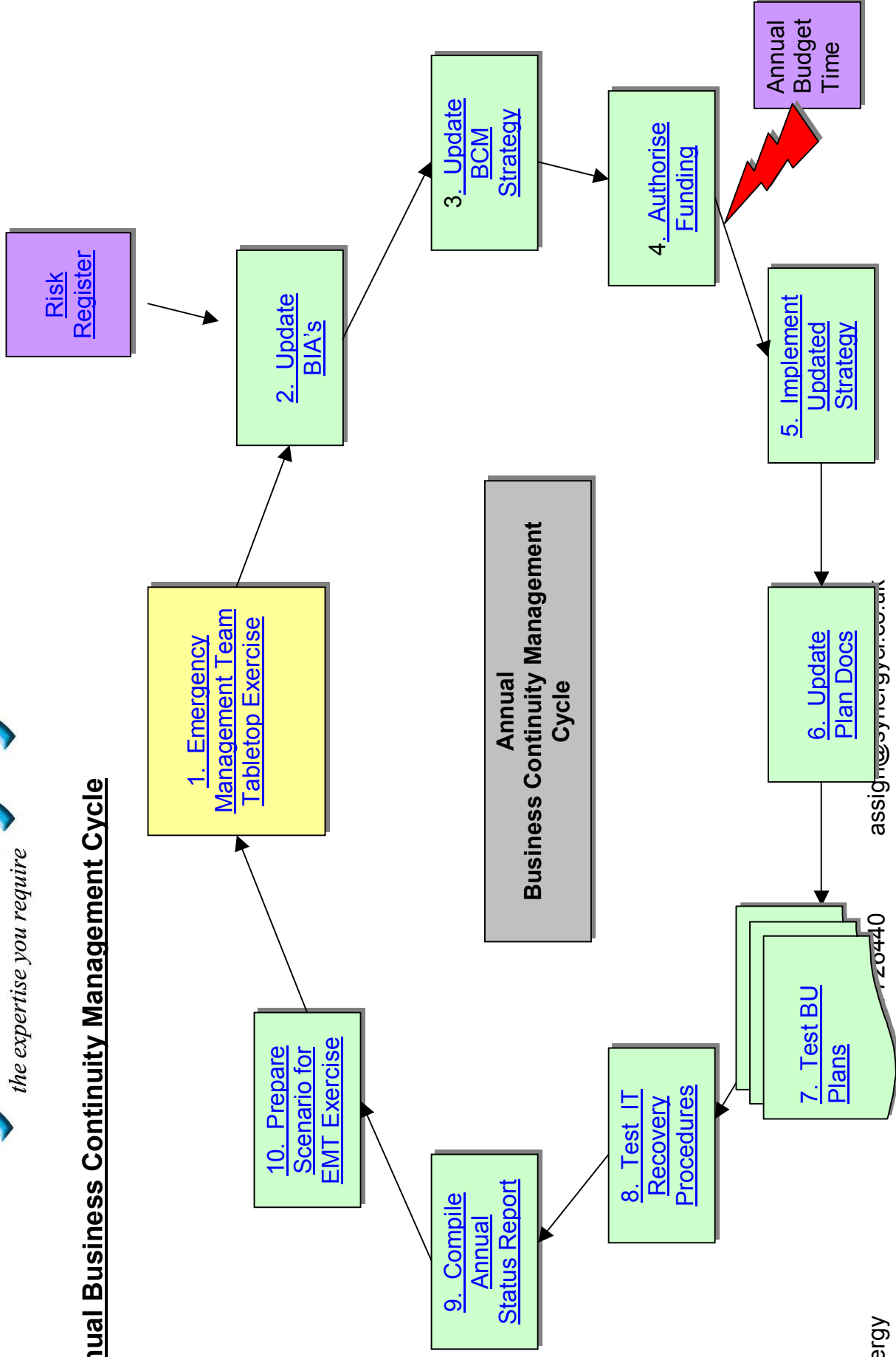
#### *Risk Register*

The Risk Register will be a composite document containing risks identified by each Business Unit (BU). Many of these risks such as loss of facilities, utilities or IT services, will be common to two or more BU's. The register will identify the risk and the Visa corporate strategy designed to mitigate that risk.

#### *Business Impact Analysis*

The BIA will be a composite document comprising a series of impact assessments for each of the entries in the Risk Register. This information will be used to devise a corporate strategy to be included against the corresponding risk in the Risk Register

## Annual Business Continuity Management Cycle





1. **Emergency Management Team Tabletop Exercise**  
The EMT desktop test is presented as the most logical point to commence the description of the cyclic process. A scenario will be designed to inform the EMT of the facilities available to them at the time and to expose any serious constraints that need to be addressed. Consistent participation of the EMT in routine testing of the overall company plans, supported by all members of the EMC, is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate true management commitment to the Business Continuity Programme.

The Company BCP documentation will include brief checklist style documents for each member of the EMT. EMT members will be expected to be familiar with their personal checklist. Each member of the EMT will be expected to retain a full BCP document for reference, but should the EMT be required to convene then the substance of the plan will be explained as required by the BCP Manager, who will act as a permanent advisor to the EMT for the duration of the incident.

2. **Update Business Impact Analysis (BIA's)**  
Particular BIA's may require updating as a result of the tabletop exercise. For example, if the tabletop exercise determined that a significant new IT system would affect one or more business units (either increasing or decreasing the impact to those particular units of a 'disaster'), then the corresponding BIA's should be updated accordingly.
3. **Update BCM Strategy**  
The framework requires the corporate strategy to be reviewed annually. This review will be based on information coming out of the annual Risk review.
4. **Authorise Funding**  
The framework assumes that any revision to the strategy will require a corresponding implementation programme (for some combination of process change, IT or infrastructure changes or resource focus). This will clearly need to be considered for funding and resourcing along with other Company projects. The framework will be scheduled such that production of the revised strategy and corresponding implementation plan ties in with the annual organisational budgeting process. The key milestone for the completion of this topic will be for the revised strategy to be endorsed by the EMC.



5. Implement Update Strategy

The Implementation programme is likely to comprise a number of projects funded and scheduled independently. The objective of each such project is the same - to enhance the overall ability to cope with disaster – the delivery of each project could be very different (some being relatively simple to implement within a short timescale, some potentially requiring a more significant change which may require many months of activity)

6. Update Plan Docs

When any such capability is delivered it will be incorporated into the corresponding BCM plans. If the change is significant then the affected plans will be re-issued immediately. If the change is minor then the new information will be included in revised documents to be issued at a nominated point in the annual cycle.

Revised plan documents will be issued prior to the annual round of Plan Tests.

7. Test Business Unit (BU) Plans

Planned tests should not be regarded as pass or fail events. Each test should be seen as a learning experience where the participants learn about their own capabilities to manage their business interests under extreme circumstances and the BCP Manager learns about the strengths and weaknesses of the corporate contingency plans.

It is usually necessary for all BU's to be tested each year as the scenario(s) used to test one will be similar to many other BU's and the lessons learned will be similar. However, it is proposed that over a 3-year cycle the company would aim to test all BU's, sharing the lessons learnt from each test with the entire organisation

New BU's will usually be tested in their second year once their business processes have bedded in.

8. Test Recovery facilities

All production IT systems will be tested annually.

New IT systems will be tested as part of the Production Release / Acceptance procedure

NB: It is important to remember that IT is a Business Unit as well as a Disaster Recovery resource.



9. Compile Annual Status Report

An annual report will be prepared to collate the findings of all tests carried out during the period. This report will be seen as the definitive view of the effectiveness of the Visa Business Continuity management programme.

This SVP Risk Management Division will review and endorse this appraisal prior to submission to the EMC.

10. Prepare Scenario for EMT test

The contents of this report will form the basis of the next tabletop exercise scenario to be explored by the EMT. The BCP Manager, Risk Management Division, will drive the creation of the tabletop exercise

And so the cycle repeats ....