

CONTINUITY AND RECOVERY PLANNING

The consequences of a disaster, emergency or disruption to your IT services can be reduced to an acceptable level. The key is a structured, systematic process designed to pro-actively manage identified risks, and the implementation of appropriate preventive controls.

However, preventive controls and other pro-active measures are no guarantee that risk events will not occur; the likelihood of their occurrence can never be entirely eliminated. Therefore, it is important that an organisation has practices and procedures in place that are easily and quickly implemented once a risk event has occurred.

The IT service continuity management (ITSCM) plan is a subset of the business continuity plan. The ITSCM plan describes the practices and procedures required to ensure continued operation and rapid recovery of an organisation's information technology environment in the event of a partial or complete disruption of services.

Making the commitment to maintain an ITSCM plan is a significant undertaking. It is important to recognise that successful continuity and recovery relies on expertise from within an organisation; an organisation's own people best understand its business, processes and risks.

The ITSCM plan does not assume that everyone is an expert in the field of risk management or technology recovery. Consequently, Frame's approach to developing the plan is to describe each phase of the process against a carefully defined framework.

Frame's IT service continuity management planning methodology treats the ITSCM plan as a logical document. It is comprised of several physical documents—policy, procedures, work instructions—supported with other business and technical information that may be required. This modular framework provides you with a pragmatic, achievable and maintainable ITSCM plan.



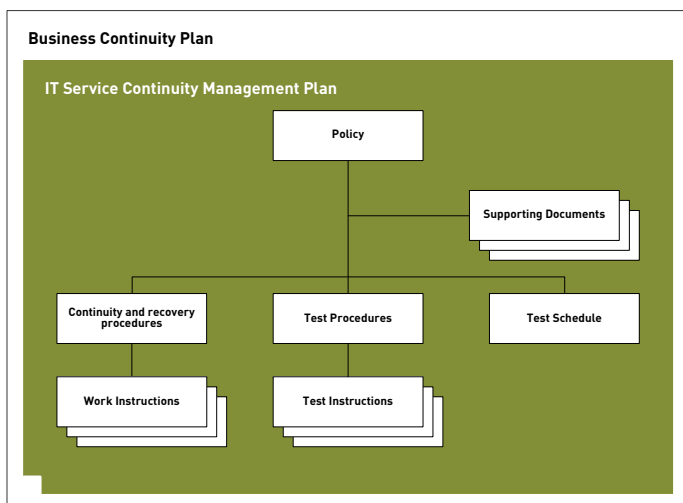
Starting or revising the ITSCM plan is a significant undertaking. Do not underestimate the effort involved.

The people with the skills necessary to produce the documentation are the same people supporting your technology services. They will likely be time poor and reluctant to divert their attention to a documentation exercise.

Once developed, the ITSCM plan requires ongoing maintenance to keep it current. This is essential to enable the plan to provide the support expected of it by your business. In reality, the plan may never be finalised. It is a matter of achieving a level that is acceptable for your organisation.

The Frame IT service continuity management planning methodology provides a modular framework to assist and streamline the process of developing an ITSCM plan. It guides you in a logical, step-by-step manner. We provide your staff with the tools necessary to achieve the best possible result: a suite of document templates, facilitation of the process, and transfer of the skills needed.

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Policy

The service continuity policy is the overall statement of preparedness. It defines the context of service continuity for your organisation, identifies the measures to be taken to provide service continuity in case of a disruption, and provides the framework for the preparation and maintenance of the ITSCM plan.

The policy needs to be read and understood by all staff within your organisation, so keeping it brief and to the point is essential to its success.

Procedures

Procedures describe the activities that will be undertaken as a part of continuity and recovery, and identify the tasks (work instructions) required to complete the activities.

Work instructions

Work instructions describe the steps required to complete a task that has been undertaken as a part of an activity (procedure).

Test procedures

The test procedures identify specific inspections and tests to be conducted to ensure the continued capability, viability and reliability of the ITSCM plan and, if applicable, your organisation's business continuity facility.

Test instructions

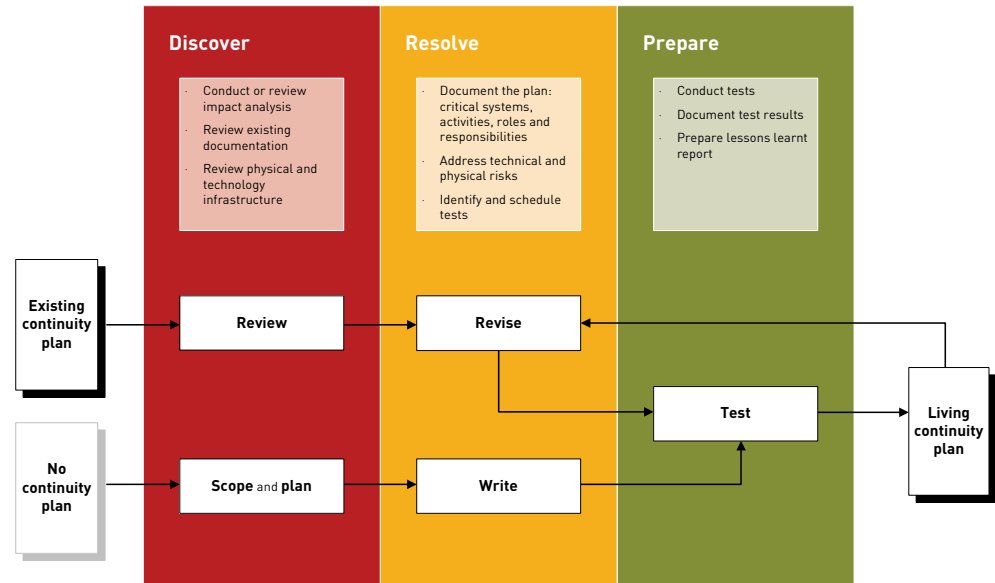
Test instructions describe the steps required to complete individual continuity and recovery tests.

Test schedule

The test schedule identifies the dates and times for the conduct of inspections and tests.

Supporting documents

The ITSCM plan is completed with a set of technical and business documents that contain information to support service continuity and recovery. The documents—such as equipment lists, an emergency contact list, and supplier details—may already exist or may need to be collated for reference by, or inclusion in, the plan.



Frame's approach

Frame's methodology has been derived from the business continuity management and planning practices published by:

- Australian and international standard organisations
- the Australian National Audit Office
- the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL)
- the Disaster Recovery Journal.

The Frame method conducts IT service continuity management planning in three phases: discover, resolve and prepare. The *resolve* and *prepare* phases are iterative and ongoing to ensure the ITSCM plan is always relevant.

Phase 1: Discover

The *discover* phase comprises information collation, review, analysis, discussion and documentation. The activities of the *discover* phase include:

- examining any existing impact assessment documentation
- reviewing any existing continuity and recovery documentation for currency and appropriateness
- reviewing any current, and any proposed, continuity and recovery infrastructure
- reviewing the physical site, and information and communications technology
- identifying elements of the ITSCM plan that are reliant on the business continuity plan.

The findings of phase 1 are documented in a report with recommendations for the way forward. At conclusion of this phase, Frame provides a detailed scope of work, resource plan and schedule for the completion of phases 2 and 3.

Phase 2: Resolve

During the *resolve* phase, we create the ITSCM plan or revise the existing plan, in accordance with the findings of phase 1. The *resolve* phase focuses on:

- revising or preparing the ITSCM plan, addressing deficiencies/gaps identified in an existing plan
- dealing with physical risks, technical risks, critical systems, and roles and responsibilities
- identifying and scheduling the tests required to verify the ITSCM plan.

Work conducted by Frame during phase 2 provides the framework to facilitate documenting the procedures and work instructions that are to be executed should a service disruption occur.

Phase 3: Prepare

The *prepare* phase consists of:

- conducting the ITSCM tests
- documenting the test results in a test report
- preparing a post-testing lessons learnt report.

Goals of continuity and recovery planning

- minimise the duration of a serious disruption to business
- facilitate effective decision-making during a disaster or emergency
- facilitate effective coordination of continuity and recovery tasks
- reduce the complexity of the recovery effort
- maximise the reliability of any business continuity facility
- ensure an orderly resumption of normal business operations
- set a standard for testing and reviewing the ITSCM plan

Preparedness

The primary objective of the ITSCM plan is to protect your organisation in the event that all or part of its communications and computer services are rendered unusable. The ITSCM plan will enable your organisation to continue operation following a disruption to service, including a disaster or an emergency, and to re-establish normal business operations within an acceptable period.

The ITSCM plan is developed to operate within the context of your operations requirements. The plan must be regularly tested, reviewed and updated to reflect current configurations, and to ensure that it continues to meet operations requirements.

Individual components of the ITSCM plan need to be modified as changes occur to your technology services environment. New systems, equipment and infrastructure, as well as retired systems, equipment and infrastructure, will impact the plan. Relevant procedures, work instructions and the test schedule must be reviewed and updated at the time such changes occur.

The ITSCM plan is a *living* document.

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