

Plan Exercise and Testing

Successful execution of recovery and restoration activities after an incident depends not only on a plan's comprehensiveness, but also on a team's ability to execute the plan. The more practiced the business continuity team, the more likely it will be able to meet the organization's objectives for response and recovery. Organizations cannot effectively react to change unless they are presented with opportunities to learn, improve and work as a cohesive team under potentially difficult or extreme circumstances.

Experience shows that plans which are untested have a greater likelihood of failure, resulting in lost revenue, damage to reputation and impeded customer fulfillment. Conversely, plans that are tested regularly help participants establish valuable relationships and familiarity with team members, and are better able to execute the plan in order to maintain customer satisfaction.

Further driving home the need to develop a strong business continuity program, stakeholders and regulatory bodies are requesting evidence that plans are audited, maintained and tested according to accepted practices and guiding principles such as Disaster Recovery Institute International (DRII) - Professional Practices for Business Continuity, 2013; Business Continuity Institute (BCI) – Business Continuity Management Good Practice Guidelines, 2013; National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1600 - "Standard on Disaster / Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs", 2013 and ISO 22301: Societal Security – Business Continuity Management Systems, 2012.

Aon's Business Continuity Management (BCM) services offer the expertise and resources to exercise and test your plan(s) and provide strategic plan enhancements. Plan testing can vary from structured walkthroughs to functional testing. If your plans have not been exercised by an independent and unbiased organization, they may fail in a time of need.

Plan Test Methodology

Our scenario-based tests are designed to evaluate both plan components and participants. By increasing plan exercise complexity on a scheduled basis, the teams become more synchronized in their thoughts and actions. We offer several plan exercise options:

- Structured walkthrough – an informal review with team members to assess comprehensiveness, effectiveness, and identify enhancements and deficiencies,
- Desktop – typically conducted in a conference room and is designed to execute documented plan activities in a stress free environment using a simulated event,
- Multi-location – simulated event across several locations where multi-level team's execute the plan,
- Functional – tests whether plan procedures are effective, assumptions are accurate and resources are available during a simulated event

The final report to management uses a scoring matrix, accompanied by specific recommendations, to support our observations. Tests evaluate the team's ability to:

- Use plan(s) effectively,
- Identify triggers and escalation points, make decisions and implement strategies,
- Communicate with constituents and identify necessary resources to support recovery.

We're here to empower results:

Contact an Aon Business Continuity Management expert for more information on how we can help optimize your risk program and create a more resilient organization.

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The various test options are based on complexity and past exercise frequency and maturity of the plan(s). An initial plan exercise could start with a structured walkthrough or desktop exercise increasing in complexity over time to a multi-location or functional exercise.

About Aon Global Risk Consulting

In today's challenging global environment, business risks are no longer isolated by industry, geography or country. Economic slowdown, regulatory changes, cyber crime, terrorism, increased competition, damage to reputation, and other critical risks are complex, inter-related and global in consequence. Aon Global Risk Consulting (AGRC) is the world's leading risk consulting organization. With nearly 1,800 risk professionals in 50 countries worldwide, AGRC consultants have the expertise and experience to recognize and address the unique challenges and opportunities that face our clients.

In close partnership with Aon's broking team, AGRC provides comprehensive and tailored solutions through a consistent global approach backed by a panel of industry experts. Our risk control, claims and engineering team consists of 600 professionals who support clients globally in the property and casualty risk control arena. Our Risk Consulting business unit includes leading disciplines that include actuarial, business continuity management (BCM), enterprise risk management (ERM), risk management outsourcing and risk feasibility. Our Actuarial & Analytics (A&A) practice consists of more than 100 consultants including 47 actuaries having Property & Casualty (P&C) credentials. Aon's Captive & Insurance Management practice is widely recognized as the leading captive manager, with local capabilities in over 30 countries.

Risk. Reinsurance. Human Resources.

