

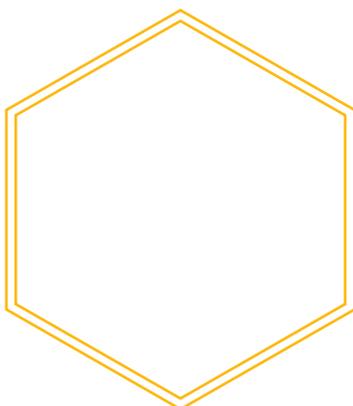
10 Questions to Rate Your Pensions Administration Crisis Resilience

With the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic being felt across many regions, markets and industries, not a day goes by without new predictions about the economic and human impact.

We have compiled ten questions to help you rate, out of 10 for each question, the resilience of your pensions administration service to the current crisis. The checklist may also help plan your business continuity responses for future crises.

These are ten areas where we at Aon have held ourselves to account during the COVID-19 crisis. Further information on how Aon has responded to the crisis, on behalf of the schemes and members we serve, can be found overleaf, and [here](#).

Your score



1. Critical activity

Has your administration team continued to process pension payrolls, bereavement / death benefits and retirement settlements within your usual SLAs?



2. Service and strategic projects

Has your non-critical day-to-day pensions administration service remained fully operational throughout the crisis, without the need to rely on work prioritisation plans? Have you received pensions administration support on your important strategic projects, to enable these to progress during the crisis?



3. Pension contact centre / member helpline

Has your front-line member helpline / contact centre remained fully operational throughout? Has the service evolved to meet the flexible needs of team and scheme members?



4. Postal services

Has your pensions administration service been able to maintain scanning, printing and postal services without requiring team members to visit offices?



5. Supporting team wellbeing

Was your administration team able to fully and immediately transition to homeworking, and were the teams provided with additional resource to help ensure a comfortable and productive working environment e.g. work PCs / laptops and additional IT kit such as large-screen monitors?



6. Electronic exchanges

Does your pensions administration service have an electronic / online facility for safe and swift member verification when processing death, retirement or transfer-out requests?



7. Business continuity plans

How comfortable are you with the business continuity plans for your pensions administration service, the platform used, and other providers involved in delivering the service, and their resilience if the current situation continues for a further six months?



8. Investing for the future

Has your in-house or outsourced administration service provider maintained its programme of investing in, and delivering, enhancements to its operating model?



9. Protecting members against scams

Beyond updating member communications in line with TPR's guidance on alerting members to pension scams, how well have you engaged with members to educate and protect them around the heightened risks of pension scams?



10. Protection against cyber risks

How confident are you in the cyber risk management framework for your pensions administration service, and its robustness to protect members' records and scheme assets against cyber-related threats?

How did you score?

A robust pensions administration service is essential in delivering the core purpose of a pension scheme – paying members’ benefits, correctly and on time. Pensions administration teams are the key workers of the pensions world, providing front-line service and contact to your scheme members. Their resilience is also vitally important in enabling pension scheme trustees and sponsors to drive forward their strategic goals for the scheme – in doing so, improving member outcomes through additional choice and security.

The list overleaf is not comprehensive, but how did you rate the resilience of your pensions administration service during the current crisis?

0–60

You probably want to prioritise taking action in several areas, to ensure you are better positioned to respond to a crisis. You may also have encountered a backlog of non-priority member enquiries which means returning to normality may take some time.

61–80

You may need to make further improvements to ensure you have greater flexibility within your operating model, and to be better positioned to respond to potential shocks.

81–100

You are well positioned to handle the issues that might arise during a crisis, but it is worth reviewing those areas which may not have been addressed to ensure you are comfortable with your arrangements. Now is also the time to consider what can be done to maintain this high level of resilience.

How have Aon performed?

At Aon, a consistent, tried and test Operating Model supports our 650 pensions administration colleagues, based around three centres of excellence (in Sheffield, Birmingham and Krakow). We work in partnership, as part of an integrated services approach, with our 200+ clients who value the benefits of our pensions administration and advisory teams working together with a clear understanding and expectation of their scheme’s needs, as well as their future journey plan and end-game targets.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, we are very proud to have maintained a high quality, consistent and stable service to the clients and members we serve. This includes:

- Our team transitioning to **100% homeworking** prior to UK lockdown, with colleagues invited to reimburse the cost of additional homeworking kit (including second monitors) required to work comfortably (having already been provided with laptops in recent years).
- Our **Pensions Contact Centre** also successfully transitioning to a flexible homeworking environment, with around **95%** of members rating their **call experience ‘excellent’ or ‘good’**, and over **80%** of members able to resolve their request on their first call (our **‘first call resolution’** measure) during the crisis.
- Remaining **fully operational** across all aspects of our service, teams and locations, with no need to call on work prioritisation plans.
- Continuing to **support key strategic projects** for clients, including GMP reconciliation and equalisation, member options exercises and risk settlement transactions.
- Maintaining productivity so that once volumes of work settled close to pre-crisis levels there was **no deterioration in service or member experience**.
- Rolling out **online ID verification** on death, retirement and transfer-out cases, and a **non-post facility** for members to send documents.
- An **uninterrupted** scanning, printing and post service through our third-party provider, Adare.

More generally, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has highlighted just how important and valued pensions administration teams are. The operating model we have developed over recent years, and continue to invest in, resonates with The Pensions Regulator’s recent comments that this crisis has highlighted just how vital a strong and resilient pensions administration service is in delivering for pension scheme members. We support [David Fairs’ comments](#) that *“the work of administrators isn’t just admin – it’s vital to savers”* and we take very seriously our responsibility to *“provide savers with the services and pensions they deserve”*.

Contact us

If you would like to know more about the actions you can take to enhance your scheme's resilience, please visit our dedicated [COVID-19 Response Site](#), and/or contact us directly.

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About Aon

Aon plc (NYSE:AON) is a leading global professional services firm providing a broad range of risk, retirement and health solutions. Our 50,000 colleagues in 120 countries empower results for clients by using proprietary data and analytics to deliver insights that reduce volatility and improve performance.

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