



**STANDARDS**  
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**A Practitioners Guide to  
Business Continuity Management**

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handbook

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# Handbook

## **A practitioners guide to business continuity management**

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# Preface

This Guide provides an overview of selected 'generally accepted practices' and emerging new practices used variously within Australasia, USA and UK. Business Continuity Management (BCM) practice is such that approaches that work well in one organisation may be wholly inappropriate for a different organisation. Extreme care therefore needs to be taken in deciding what and how aspects of BCM will be implemented within an organisation.

The structure of the Guide is based on Standards Australia/ Standards New Zealand Business Continuity Management Handbook HB 221:2004. Much of the information presented is fully consistent with HB 221. However, the principles of HB 221 have been significantly expanded upon and extensive new explanatory information is provided. This material is broadly consistent with the principles of other generally accepted practices such as NFPA1600 and the BCI Good Practice Guidelines 2005, Spring TR19: 2005; and the work of the DRII and DRJ.

Readers need to be aware that the content of this Guide represents in-progress research by the authors and is subject to change without notice.

This Guide is not intended to provide authoritative advice and no guarantee or warranty is provided as to the accuracy or applicability of any information provided in this Guide.

Dr Carl A. Gibson and Gavin Love

January 2006

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# 1 Business continuity management?

## 1.1 What comprises business continuity management?

A wide range of terminology has been used to describe the processes associated with managing disruptions. Some of these terms include:

- Business continuity planning;
- Continuity planning;
- Contingency planning;
- Crisis management;
- Disaster recovery planning;
- Emergency management;
- Incident management;
- Disruption management;
- Business resumption planning; and
- Business resilience.

Originally these terms each had distinct meanings, but with time they have become interchangeable for many organisations and practitioners. This has often caused confusion and at times heated debate amongst practitioners.

In recent years the term '**business continuity management**' (BCM) has emerged to replace this disparate terminology. Today, under the BCM umbrella, some of the terminology is beginning to return to its original meanings where:

- Business continuity planning is often used to refer to those BCM activities associated with activities that assist in the continuing availability and capability of property, people and information; and
- Disaster recovery planning is often used to refer to those BCM activities associated with the continuing availability and restoration of the IT infrastructure (but should not be confused with the wider recovery and restoration activities).

## 1.2 Defining BCM

The Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand handbook for Business Continuity Management (HB 221: 2004) defines business continuity as:

*'Business Continuity Management provides the availability of processes and resources in order to ensure the continued achievement of critical objectives.'*

This is an important definition as it identifies both what a well founded approach to BCM must achieve as well as the means of achieving it:

- **'critical objectives'**  
what the organisation, project, team, individual must absolutely strive to achieve, i.e. what are the priorities and what are less important. These will ultimately direct our focus for BCM;
- **'processes and resources'**  
the processes that will allow critical objectives to be achieved, and the resources required to support those processes;
- **'availability'**  
processes and resources must be capable and accessible; and
- **'continued'**  
the capability to achieve critical objectives needs to be sustainable in the face of future uncertainty.

### 1.2.1 The elements of good practice

BCM is **NOT** about having a nice printed document that contains some 'what ifs' and possible responses that can be presented to senior management, the Board or auditors to earn a tick off and then be stored in a drawer. BCM **IS** about having a robust process that allows individuals to:

- Better understand uncertainty about the future;
- Realise the potential for different types of disruption;
- Better plan for future management of those disruptions, and to put in place business improvement *now* to reduce the likelihood and/or consequence of significant future disruption.

The interrelationship of these elements is summarised in Figure 1.