

Life Without Barriers

National Business Continuity Plan.docx

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WE
LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS
WE

Championing opportunity for all

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The National Business Continuity Plan (NBCP) sets out the key principles and arrangements for the coordination and management of resources to ensure Life Without Barriers (LWB) maintains delivery of its core essential services and functions prior to, during and after a significant disruption event. The NBCP adopts a comprehensive all hazards approach to Business Continuity Management (BCM) through tailored prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective of the NBCP is to ensure the safety of our clients, people, infrastructure and continuity of essential services and functions across the entity including:

- Establish and implement structured processes, resources, systems and information necessary to continue or restore service provision to our clients and restore the operations of the organisation should any significant disruption occur.
- Prevent the loss of life, minimise property damage and minimise adverse impacts to our clients, carers, people and the organisation.
- Maintain local and national capability and capacity to coordinate and support the business continuity activities and resources necessary to ensure the continuity of essential services and functions across LWB.
- Maintain timely effective communication channels with employees, carers, clients, and families.
- Ensure recovery priorities are identified and contribute to an increase in individual and organisational resilience.

1.3 Scope of Plan

LWB supports some of the most vulnerable people all around the country. In every area of our operations, we help people access services and participate in the community. We support close to 23,000 people living in over 400 communities across the nation, in urban, rural and remote locations. We have 120 offices and provide 24/7 care in 650 homes around Australia. Our programs and services include:

- Child Youth and Family
- Disability
- Aged Care
- Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Support to Refugees & Asylum Seekers
- Home & Community Care
- Youth Justice

The NBCP applies to all LWB operations that are deemed an essential service or function. Essential services and functions are identified through a tailored Business Impact Analysis

(BIA) process. In the event of a significant disruption, a service or function deemed non-essential may temporarily be suspended (in consultation with key stakeholders) with appropriate arrangements made to re-establish and recover services as soon as practicable.

2. Operating Context

2.1 Global

As the world is heading into the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is measured optimism from those at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19. While the pandemic is transforming how we think about economies and societies, it is evident that future variants and outbreaks of COVID-19 will continue to impact business across the world for some time.

As a result, the World Health Organisation has embarked on the journey of imagining the future of infectious threats to mitigate the ongoing and anticipated risks of COVID-19 and other infectious threats in the next three to five years.

Of note, the World Economic Forum Global Risk Report 2022 highlights the economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological risks that have worsened the most since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic with 'social cohesion erosion' and 'livelihood crises' topping the list. In addition, risks such as extreme weather, infectious disease, mental health deterioration, cybersecurity failure, climate action failure, debt crisis, digital inequality and asset bubble burst are expected to become a critical threat over the next few years.

2.2 National

Following a year of unprecedented COVID-19 impacts, business interruption and cyber risk rank as the most concerning risks in Australia for 2022.

Other risks of concern in the national context include extreme weather events, continued pandemic outbreaks, supply chain disruptions, cyber-attacks, accelerated digitalisation, remote working, workforce attrition, climate change impacts and increasing policy and legislation change.

2.3 Organisational

LWB continues to research the global and national landscape to inform our business continuity and organisational resilience journey. We undertake risk scenario planning and business impact analyses to enhance our business continuity program to reduce the impact of business disruption.

This planning includes scenarios around prolonged and varied pandemic impacts, new infectious diseases, the geopolitical environment, increasing and changing regulatory obligations, extreme weather events, supply chain impacts and workforce attrition.

3. Responsibilities

LWB has a Business Continuity Management (BCM) Policy Guideline which outlines the commitment and approach to BCM and provides a consistent, overarching structure to support LWB in the development and implementation of the BCM program. The BCM Framework ensures that essential functions can continue delivering services to our clients following a business disruption event and aims to build high level of resilience in all sectors of service and sites when facing a major adverse event.

4. Related LWB Documents

The NBCP may be enacted alongside any other national or local emergency response or site safety management plan or may compliment other business continuity and emergency response procedures as shown below:

4.1 National Emergency Management Team Protocol

A National Emergency Management Team (NEMT) Protocol is in place to guide the response to emergency events and significant service disruptions, including COVID-19 and extreme weather events. During an emergency response, the NEMT is activated, led by a National Controller to coordinate and implement actions to effectively respond to or mitigate adverse impacts. The NEMT structure is scalable to support any type of business disruption, recognising the important role of local sites in responding to emergency events.

4.2 Pandemic plan – COVID-19 Response

A COVID-19 Emergency Response Pandemic Plan is in place with ongoing oversight and management of the pandemic led by the NEMT. The purpose of the Pandemic Plan is to enable LWB to mobilise, respond, adapt, and recover from the impacts of the pandemic based on two simple yet powerful organisational priorities:

- Continuity of care for the people we support
- Promoting the ongoing health and wellbeing of our employees.

The plan is enacted through the COVID-19 Response Unit (CRU), led by the Executive Lead COVID Response (the appointed “Incident Controller”), to support the Chief Executive to manage the ongoing COVID-19 response.

4.3 Health and Safety Emergency Management Planning

The Health and Safety Emergency Management plan outlines the requirements and associated responsibilities to effectively prevent, prepare for, respond and recover from emergency situations at an LWB site. The plan outlines:

- The roles and responsibilities of key people who manage emergencies at LWB workplaces.
- Emergency Response training requirements, and
- LWB internal processes and documents used to fulfil Legislative and Australian Standard requirements and best practice within our industry.

Key emergency planning documents include:

- Site safety management plans
- Extreme weather event management plans
- Personal emergency evacuation plans.

4.4 ICT Disaster Recovery Planning

LWB has established a set of metrics and boundaries to recover systems and data when an ICT disruption occurs. These arrangements minimise the business impact and allow timely recovery following a disruption.

5. NBCP Elements

5.1 Key Planning Scenarios

The NBCP has been developed to cover four key disruption scenarios across the breadth and scope of LWB’s service provision to clients and business operations:

Scenario	Examples
1. No People	Workforce (or part thereof) is unable to attend their work duties, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic / widespread disease / illness / plague • Public safety matters including government directives • Transport Incident e.g., major road, infrastructure failure • Severe Weather e.g., fire / flood / storm surge / severe storm / cyclone / heat wave / earthquake.
2. No Infrastructure	Critical asset (or part thereof) is unavailable or not accessible, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity failure / gas explosion • Fire / flood / storm surge / severe storm / cyclone / earthquake • Bombing / terrorist attack • Civil disturbance • Building collapse
3. No ICT	Core ICT applications are unavailable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Server or software failure • Cyber attack • Power outage • Telecommunications failure
4. No Supply Chain	Loss of key 3 rd party vendors or suppliers.

5.2 Business Impact Analysis

A Business Impact Analysis (BIA) process is conducted across the organisation to identify the critical services and operations in LWB and assess the potential impact of a disruption to service for each critical operation (service and function). Critical Operations for services and functions identified as ‘Essential’ are endorsed by the Executive.

5.2.1 Critical Operations

Critical Operations have been assessed with impact and criticality of activities or functions undertaken by a department or jurisdiction into the below two categories:

- **Essential Services**

Any direct or indirect support without which the safety, health or welfare of clients or employees would be endangered or seriously impacted. This includes some in home supports, supported living / residential care, probity, incident management and critical corporate activities.

- **Non-Essential Services**

All direct and indirect supports which have no material impact on the safety, health or welfare of clients or employees. This includes day centre / community access activities, continuous improvement projects and routine administration / reporting.

5.2.2 Facilities and People

Key resources (people, equipment and other utilities) that are used by each of the services / activities under normal operations have been assessed by the level of dependency that the service / activity has on a given resource. Details key employees and nominated backup person and any agency support arrangements within client service provision and corporate functions.

5.2.3 Internal and External Parties Dependencies

Key internal interdependencies of a function/ department in relation to the priority services / activities have been identified. Any external vendors or service providers are also identified.

5.2.4 ICT Dependencies

ICT applications that are used by each of the services / activities under normal operations have been assessed by the level of dependency that the service / activity has on a given ICT system / application.

5.2.5 BIA Data

The BIA critical operation data informs the overall scope and content of the business continuity program.

5.3 Business Continuity Recovery Strategies

Business recovery strategies are developed during the BIA process, this includes a gap analysis of recovery requirements and current organisational capabilities.

Depending on the nature and expected duration of the disruption, a separate plan for the recovery of non-critical activities and services will be developed in parallel to the BCP activation, if required.

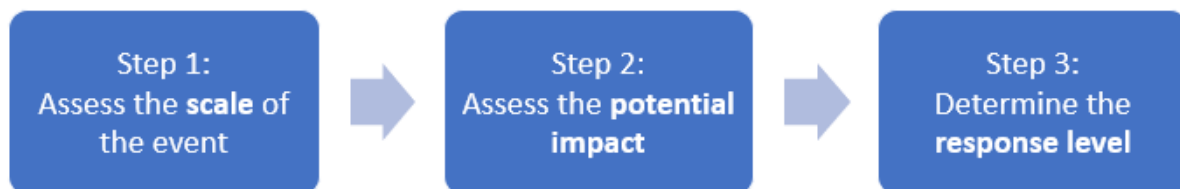
6.NBCP Activation Model

6.1 Activation criteria

The NBCP is activated when a significant disruption occurs, and where a pre-identified critical business function has, or is predicted to, exceed its maximum tolerable period of disruption (MTPD).

LWB has established a NEMT Protocol which outlines the response to emergency events. Local Incident Responder or Plan Owner will assess the situation and determine if escalation is required according with the NEMT protocol.

The below 3-step process documented in NEMT determines the appropriate response level:



The current NEMT protocol in LWB governs the necessary procedures on handling any emergency event.

6.2 Communication

In the event the NBCP is activated, the NEMT communication protocol is enacted. Collaboration and coordination of both internal and external communications from and between the National Controller and the Emergency Management Team is necessary to ensure that employees, clients and carers receive consistent, accessible and timely communications during an emergency event.

The NEMT protocol ensures communication is:

- Relevant, timely, accessible and clear
- Tailored to impacted communities and cohorts
- Provided through a range of communication channels (e.g., text, email, social media, where relevant).

6.3 Standing Down

The NBCP is stood down when the following criteria are met:

- Business-as-usual procedures have been resumed; and
- Recovery efforts have been completed; or
- The disruption has been resolved.

Once normal business processes have resumed, the Local Incident Responder should notify all relevant stakeholders, as per the NEMT communication strategy.

7. Plan Review and Maintenance

This NBCP is reviewed annually (or after a major service disruption event) to ensure the organisational structures, business priorities and escalation procedures remain accurate.

BIA documents are reviewed annually to ensure critical business functions and services are identified and reflect the aim and objectives of the business.

This NBCP may be audited to ascertain its adherence to the Business Continuity Management Policy and accreditation and regulatory requirements.

8. Training and Exercising

Business continuity training and exercising programs are developed to support the business in understanding specific responsibilities for example, developing, implementing, exercising and maintaining our business continuity arrangements. This is supported by an internal audit program.

The Business Continuity Manager regularly identifies the business continuity skills and competencies developing an appropriate business continuity training and exercising program and coordination across the organisation.

Business continuity exercises help to verify the effectiveness of all aspects of our business continuity arrangements and ensure the plan is fit for purpose.

9. Business Continuity Glossary

A Business Continuity Glossary has been developed to translate industry standard business continuity terminology into a suitable language that helps LWB understand the continuity context in our unique operating environment. Key definitions in this plan are shown below:

Term	Definition
Organisational Resilience	The foresight and situational awareness to prevent potential crises emerging and to turn crises into a source of strategic opportunity.
Business Continuity Framework (BCF)	A whole of system approach that builds on organisational capability and provides guidance to safeguard our clients, workforce and the organisation from significant disruptions.
Business Continuity Management (BCM)	A cyclic program of activities to enable service delivery readiness during disruptions and deliver improved organisational resilience.
National Business Continuity Plan (NBCP)	Integrated documented plans, systems and processes to prepare, respond, recover, resume, and restore service delivery during or following significant disruption.
Business Impact Analysis (BIA)	A process of analysing the various service disruption scenarios that could impact the safety and wellbeing of our clients, workforce and business operations.
National Emergency Management Team (NEMT)	The overall direction, leadership and coordination response to a significant disruptive event. In an effective, timely manner safeguarding our clients, workforce and the organisation to continue providing essential service and business operations.

Term	Definition
Pandemic	A pandemic is the worldwide spread of an infectious disease. Pandemics are more likely if a virus is new, able to infect people easily and can spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way.
Pandemic Plan	An overarching plan that guides all management and response activities including continuity of care for the people we support and promoting the ongoing health and wellbeing of our employees.
Scenario Exercising	Team-based desktop exercise to test LWB preparedness and resilience if certain events were to occur.
Essential Services (ES) Essential Functions (EF)	An essential or critical service or function that must be maintained to ensure continuity of service to our clients and support operations during a significant disruption.
Emergency Management	An event or emerging risk to LWB employees, clients, communities and assets that requires a coordinated effort beyond business-as-usual operations, to ensure we can effectively respond to or mitigate adverse impacts.
Business / Service Disruption	Any event, whether anticipated or unanticipated which disrupts the provision of essential services or functions at a location for an unacceptable time.
Essential Employees	Are workforce members identified as having a key role in the delivery of Essential services or functions.
Critical Suppliers	Are suppliers identified as having key product or service that support our Essential service delivery