

**Guide to the  
requirements of**

# **BS EN ISO 22301 2019**

A plain English guide to ISO 22301:2019  
Security and Resilience — Business  
Continuity Management System

[isoqar.com](https://www.isoqar.com)

# Contents

## 3 Foreword

## 4 Guide to Requirements

- 4 Clause 1 — Scope
- 6 Clause 4 — Context
- 8 Clause 5 — Leadership
- 9 Clause 6 — Planning
- 10 Clause 7 — Support
- 12 Clause 8 — Operation
- 14 Clause 9 — Performance Evaluation
- 15 Clause 10 — Improvement

## 16 Contact



# Foreword

## Benefits of a business continuity management system

A BCMS increases the organisation's level of preparedness to continue to operate during disruptions. It also results in improved understanding of the organisation's internal and external relationships, better communication with interested parties and the creation of a continual improvement environment.

There are potentially many additional benefits to implementing a BCMS in accordance with the recommendations contained in this document and in accordance with the requirements of ISO 22301.

Business continuity is the capability of the organisation to continue delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined capacities following a disruption.

Business continuity management is the process of implementing and maintaining business continuity in order to prevent loss and prepare for, mitigate and manage disruptions.

Establishing a BCMS enables the organisation to control, evaluate and continually improve its business continuity.

A business continuity management system (BCMS) emphasizes the importance of:

- Establishing business continuity policy and objectives that align with the organisation's objectives.
- Operating and maintaining processes, capabilities and response structures for ensuring the organisation will survive disruptions.
- Monitoring and reviewing the performance and effectiveness of the BCMS.
- Continual improvement based on qualitative and quantitative measurement.

A BCMS, like any other management system, includes the following components:

- (a). A policy
- (b). Competent people with defined responsibilities
- (c). Management processes relating to:
  - i. Policy
  - ii. Planning
  - iii. Implementation and Operation
  - iv. Performance Assessment
  - v. Management Review
  - vi. Continual Improvement
- (d). Documented information supporting operational control and enabling performance evaluation.

# Clause 1

## Scope

### 1.1

This document gives guidance and recommendations for applying the requirements of the business continuity management system (BCMS) given in ISO 22301. The guidance and recommendations are based on good international practice.

### 1.2

This document is applicable to organisations that:

- (a). Implement, maintain and improve a BCMS.
- (b). Seek to ensure conformity with stated business continuity policy.
- (c). Need to be able to continue to deliver products and services at an acceptable predefined capacity during a disruption.
- (d). Seek to enhance their resilience through the effective application of the BCMS.

### 1.3

The guidance and recommendations are applicable to all sizes and types of organisations, including large, medium and small organisations operating in industrial, commercial, public and not-for-profit sectors. The approach adopted depends on the organisation's operating environment and complexity.

### 1.4

Business continuity is generally specific to an organisation. However, its implementation can have far reaching implications on the wider community and other third parties. An organisation is likely to have external organisations that it depends upon and there will be others that depend on it. Effective business continuity therefore contributes to a more resilient society.

### 1.5

There are potentially many additional benefits to implementing a BCMS in accordance with the recommendations contained in this document and in accordance with the requirements of ISO 22301.

### 1.6 Clause 4

#### ("context of the organisation")

Involves the organisation:

- (a). Reviewing its strategic objectives to ensure that the BCMS supports them.
- (b). Reconsidering the needs, expectations and requirements of interested parties.
- (c). Being aware of applicable legal, regulatory and other obligations.

### 1.7 Clause 5 ("leadership")

Involves the organisation:

- (a). Reconsidering management roles and responsibilities.
- (b). Promoting a culture of continual improvement.
- (c). Allocating responsibility for performance monitoring and reporting.

### 1.8 Clause 6 ("planning")

Involves the organisation:

- (a). Re-examining its risks and opportunities and identifying actions to address and take advantage of them.
- (b). Establishing effective change management.

### 1.9 Clause 7 ("support")

Involves the organisation:

- (a). Establishing effective management of its BCMS resources, including competence management.
- (b). Improving employee awareness of matters that are important to management.
- (c). Having effective mechanisms for internal and external communications.
- (d). Managing its documentation effectively.

## 1.10 Clause 8 (“operation”)

Results in the organisation considering:

- (a). The unintended consequences of change.
- (b). Business continuity priorities and requirements.
- (c). Dependencies.
- (d). Vulnerabilities from an impact perspective.
- (e). Risks of disruption and identifying how best to address them.
- (f). Alternative solutions for running the business with limited resources.
- (g). Effective structures and procedures for dealing with disruptions.
- (h). Responsibilities to the community and other interested parties.

## 1.11 Clause 9 (“performance evaluation”)

Involves the organisation:

- (a). Having effective mechanisms for monitoring, measuring and evaluating performance.
- (b). Involving management in monitoring the performance and contributing to the effectiveness of the BCMS.

## 1.12 Clause 10 (“improvement”)

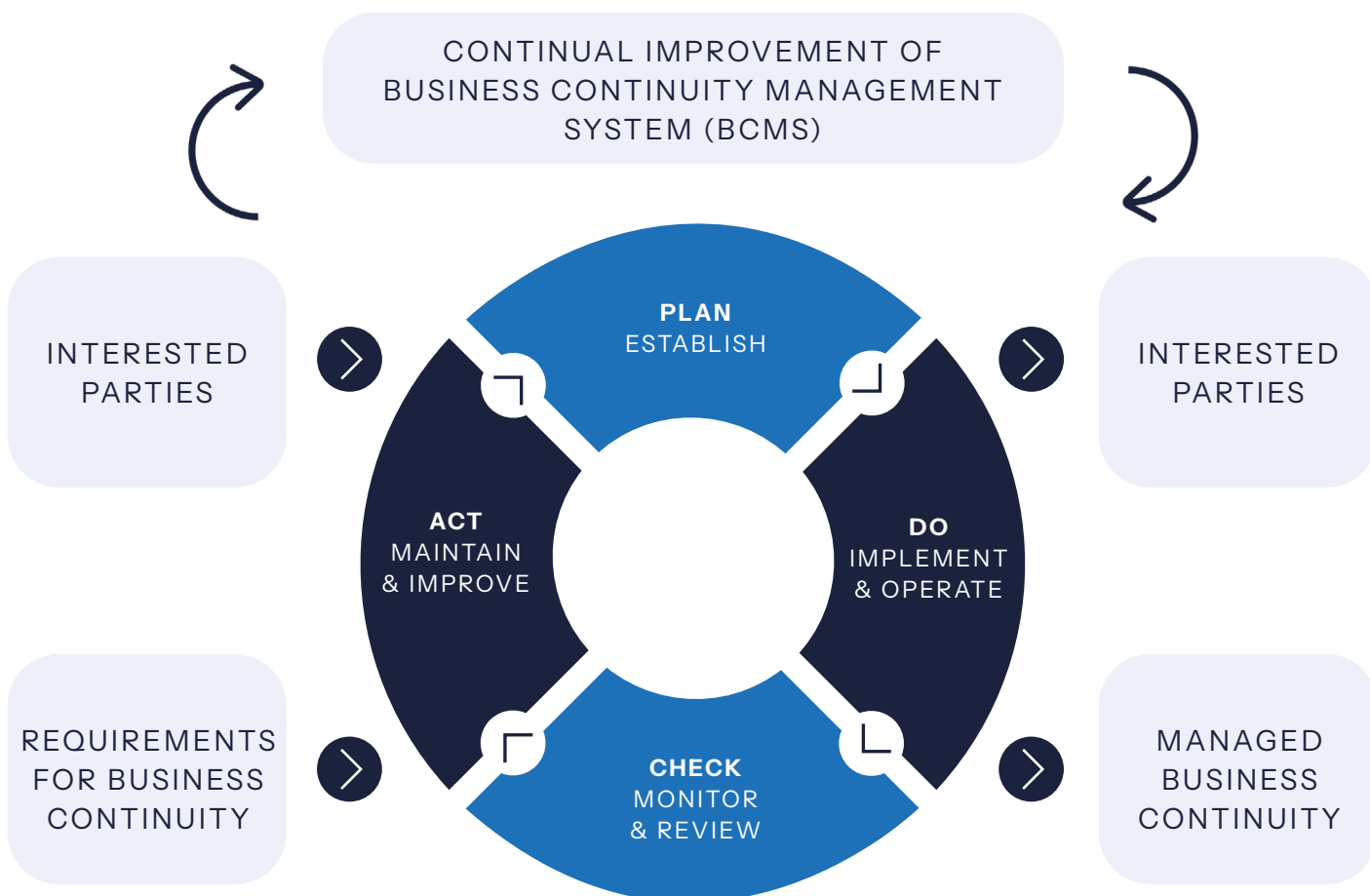
Involves the organisation:

- (a). Having procedures for monitoring performance and improving effectiveness.
- (b). Benefitting from continual improvement of its management systems.

### 1.13

As a result, implementation of the BCMS can:

- (a). Protect life, assets and the environment.
- (b). Protect and enhance the organization’s reputation and credibility.
- (c). Contribute to the organization’s competitive advantage by enabling it to operate during disruptions.
- (d). Reduce costs arising from disruptions and improving the organization’s capability to remain effective during them.
- (e). Effective during them.
- (f). Contribute to the organization’s overall organisational resilience.
- (g). Assist in making interested parties more confident in the organisation’s success.
- (h). Reduce the organisation’s legal and financial exposure.
- (i). Demonstrate the organisation’s ability to manage risk and address operational vulnerabilities.



# Clause 4

## Context of the Organisation

### 4.1 Understanding the organisation and its context

This clause provides recommendations for understanding the context of the organisation in relation to the BCMS.

You should evaluate and understand the external and internal issues that are relevant to your overall objectives, your products and services, and the amount and type of risk that it may or may not take.

**The organisation's external context includes, where relevant, the following:**

- The political, legal and regulatory environment, whether international, national, regional or local.
- Social and cultural aspects.
- The financial, technological, economic, natural and competitive environment, whether international, National, regional or local.
- Supply chain commitments and relationships.
- Drivers (e.g. Risk, technology) and trends having impact on the objectives and operation of the organisation.
- Relationships with, and perceptions and values of, interested parties outside the organisation.
- Communication channels, including social media, used for ascertaining and forming such Relationships.

**Your internal context may include, where relevant, the following:**

- Products and services, activities, resources, supply chains and relationships with interested parties.
- Capabilities in terms of resources and knowledge.
- Existing management systems.
- Information and data and decision-making processes.
- Interested parties within the organisation, including internal suppliers.
- Policies and objectives, and the business strategies that are in place to achieve them.

- Future opportunities and business priorities.
- Perceptions, values and culture.
- Standards and reference models adopted by the organisation.
- Structures, governance, roles, and accountabilities.
- Internal communication channels used for the exchange of information within the workforce.

### 4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties

You may owe a duty of care to a wide range of people within and outside the organisation. When establishing its BCMS, you should ensure that the needs and requirements of all interested parties are taken into consideration.

You should identify all interested parties that are of relevance to its BCMS and, based on their needs and expectations, should determine their requirements. It is important to identify not only obligatory and stated requirements, but also any that are implied.

When planning and implementing the BCMS, it is important to identify actions that are appropriate in relation to interested parties but differentiate between them.



## Legal and regulatory requirements

You should show that it has access to current and pending legal and regulatory requirements that are relevant to its operations and how these requirements are met.

Requirements can include:

- Incident response, including emergency management and other relevant legislation.
- Business continuity, which can dictate the scope of the programme or the extent or speed of recovery.
- Risk, requirements defining the scope or methods of risk management.
- Hazards.

If you are operating in multiple locations, you may need to satisfy requirements of different jurisdictions.

## 4.3 Determining the scope of the business continuity management system

The purpose of determining the scope of the BCMS is to identify its boundaries and applicability to ensure coverage of all relevant products and services, activities, locations, resources, suppliers and other dependencies.

You should prepare a statement that sets out the scope of the BCMS in a manner and in terms appropriate to the size, nature and complexity of the organisation.

You should establish, by reference to products and services, the parts of your organisation that are included within or excluded from the scope of the BCMS.

- Only including delivery of a specific product to a country or region.
- Excluding a product that is no longer viable or is of low value to the organisation.
- Only including a sub-set of products and services.
- Identify the organisation's products and services in a manner that enables all related activities, resources and supply chains to be identified.

The scope may:

- Include an indication of the scale or magnitude of incident that the BCMS will address.
- Identify how the BCMS fits into the organisation's business strategy and approach to risk management.

The scope determines the locations, products and services, activities and resources to which the BCMS applies. It follows that all dependencies will be in scope even if they have not been explicitly identified in the scope statement.

For example, if a manufacturing company includes a product in its BCMS scope, then the supply of raw materials, processing, delivery and any support functions at any location that are involved directly or indirectly in its delivery to the customer will be included.

## 4.4 Business continuity management system

The purpose of this subclause is to emphasize your need to implement and maintain processes that will enable the BCMS to meet the requirements of ISO 22301, including interactions between the processes.



# Clause 5

## Leadership

### 5.1 Leadership and commitment

All levels of management throughout your organisation should demonstrate leadership and commitment as applicable to their areas of responsibility.

Top management should demonstrate leadership and commitment by:

- Assigning managerial roles and ensuring they are fulfilled.
- Establishing business continuity policy.
- Appointing one or more persons with the appropriate authority and competencies to be responsible for the BCMS and accountable for its effective operation.
- Making available the necessary resources, including appropriate levels of funding.
- Providing other levels of management with support that enables them to demonstrate the leadership and commitment applicable to their areas of responsibility.

### Other managerial roles

Other managerial levels should demonstrate their leadership and commitment by:

- Establishing business continuity objectives that are compatible with the organisation's strategic objectives.
- Integrating the requirements into the organisation's business processes.
- Displaying awareness of applicable legal, regulatory and other requirements.
- Establishing roles, responsibilities and competencies.
- Achieving the intended outcomes of the BCMS.
- Actively engaging in the exercise programme.
- Conducting internal audits.
- Conducting effective management reviews.
- Directing and supporting improvement of the BCMS.

### 5.2 Policy

Top management should define and ensure the communication of the business continuity policy in terms of your objectives and its obligations, the following could be considered:

- Is a concise, high-level statement of top management's intention and direction for the BCMS.
- Is appropriate to the purpose of the organisation (given its size, nature and complexity, and to reflect its culture, dependencies and operating environment).
- Provides a framework for objective setting.
- Includes a clear commitment to satisfying applicable requirements, including legal and regulatory obligations.
- Includes commitment to continual improvement of the BCMS.

### 5.3 Roles, responsibilities and authorities

Top management should ensure the assignment and communication of responsibilities and authorities within the BCMS.

A member of top management should be responsible and accountable for the BCMS. Top management may appoint other bodies (e.g. a steering committee) to oversee the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the BCMS.

Representatives, irrespective of their other responsibilities, should be appointed with defined roles, responsibilities and authority for:

- Ensuring the BCMS conforms to the business continuity policy.
- Reporting on the performance of the BCMS to top management as well as the basis for improvement.
- Promoting awareness of business continuity throughout the organisation.
- Ensuring the effectiveness of procedures developed for responding to incidents.



# Clause 6

## Planning

### 6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities

You should determine actions to address the issues identified in 4.1, the needs and expectations of interested parties identified in 4.2, and the legal and regulatory requirements identified in 4.2.2.

This determination should include consideration of risks and opportunities and their potential impact on the effectiveness of the BCMS.

**Risks and opportunities can arise from:**

- A lack of leadership and commitment from top management.
- Insufficient funding of the BCMS leading to an ineffective response.
- Poorly documented information.
- A lack of people with demonstrated competence.
- An inadequate management review process.
- An inability to break into new markets where business continuity is a requirement.

**You should plan the actions needed address these risks and opportunities in a manner that:**

- Prevents unintended outcomes.
- Takes advantage of any opportunities to improve the BCMS.
- Achieves integration into the BCMS process.
- Ensures that documented information will be available to evaluate if the actions have been effective.

### 6.2 Business continuity objectives and planning to achieve them

You should establish objectives for the implementation and maintenance of business continuity management. These should be in line with your overall objectives and

should include identifying responsibilities and setting appropriate and realistic targets for completion.

Planning should be communicated throughout the organization. Progress on its implementation should be monitored and documented.

As the BCMS evolves, this plan should be reviewed regularly and, where appropriate, updated.

When determining your business continuity objectives, you should ensure that they specify clearly as to:

- What will be done.
- The resources that will be needed.
- Who will be responsible.
- Completion dates.
- How results will be evaluated.

### 6.3 Planning changes to the business continuity management system

Changes to the BCMS should be carefully planned to ensure that the intended purpose is fully investigated and understood. This should include contemplation of the consequences of the changes proposed, ensuring that both anticipated and unintended consequences are considered, and making sure that the integrity of the BCMS is preserved.

# Clause 7

## Resources

### 7.1 Resources

You should determine and ensure availability of the resources needed for the BCMS that will:

- Achieve its business continuity policy and objectives.
- Meet the changing requirements of the organisation.
- Enable effective communication on BCMS matters, internally and externally.
- Provide for the on-going operation and continual improvement of the BCMS.

Resources should be available in a timely and efficient manner.

When identifying the resources required for the BCMS, the organization should make adequate provision for:

- People and people-related resources, including:
  - The time necessary to fulfil BCMS roles and responsibilities.
  - Training, education, awareness and exercising.
  - Management of BCMS personnel.
- Facilities, including appropriate work locations and infrastructure
- Information and communications technology (ICT) systems, including applications that support effective and efficient programme management
- Management and control of all forms of documented information
- Communication with interested parties
- Finance and funding

### 7.2 Competence

The organisation should establish an appropriate and effective system for managing competence of persons undertaking BCMS work under its control.

Your management team should determine the competences required for all BCMS roles and responsibilities and the awareness, knowledge, understanding, skills and experience needed to fulfil them.

All persons assigned roles within your organisation should demonstrate the competencies required and be provided with training, education, development and other support needed to do so.

You should have a process for identifying and delivering the business continuity training requirements of all participants and evaluating the effectiveness of its delivery.

### 7.3 Awareness

You should ensure that all persons working under your control (e.g. staff, contractors, suppliers) are aware of the business continuity policy your business continuity objectives.

You should build, promote and embed business continuity management within the culture of your organisation.

## 7.4 Communication

You should determine the communications relevant to the BCMS, this enables you to respond to the needs and expectations of interested parties.

For communication to be effective, you should determine and, where appropriate, establish criteria for determining the following:

**On what it will communicate:**

Communication regarding the BCMS can be needed depending on the nature of your organisation and situation, for example, have legal or regulatory obligations to communicate.

**When communication should take place:**

There can be thresholds beyond which it becomes imperative for you to communicate, and your context can dictate how frequently communication should take place.

**With whom it will communicate:**

All interested parties will require communication from time to time, so it is important to determine for each interested party, the circumstances in which communication will be needed and the communication priorities.

**The means of communication:**

Determining in advance the methods, tools and channels of communication, including alternatives, will enable you to communicate effectively.

**The persons to execute the communication:**

You should identify spokespersons to represent your organisation and designate specific people to be points of contact for communication.

## 7.5 Documented information

The purpose of controlling documentation is to ensure that your organisation creates, maintains and protects documents in a manner that is appropriate and sufficient to implement and operate the BCMS.

The primary focus should be on this purpose rather than establishing a complex document control system.



# Clause 8

## Operation

### 8.1 Operational planning and control

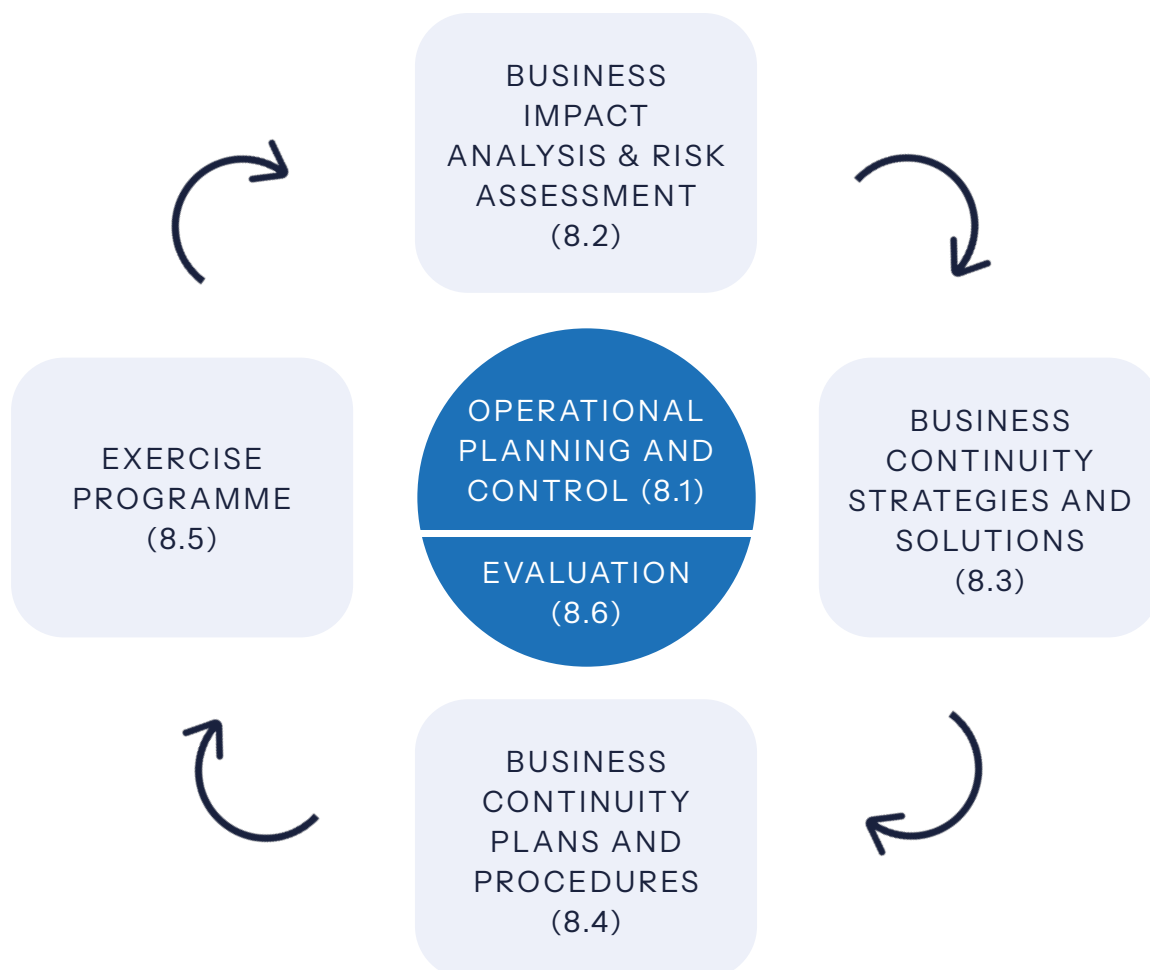
You should determine, plan, implement and control the processes needed to establish and maintain business continuity management that meets applicable requirements based on the determined risks.

These processes should be integrated into your business processes to ensure that they are managed appropriately and their effectiveness maintained.

The elements of business continuity management, shown as follows:

Effective operational planning and control is at the heart of business continuity management. It should be led by a responsible person nominated by top management.

Each component of your business continuity arrangements, including documentation, should be regularly reviewed, exercised and updated. These arrangements should also be reviewed and updated whenever there is a significant change in your operational environment, structure, locations, personnel, processes or technology, or when an exercise or incident highlights deficiencies.



## 8.2 Business impact analysis and risk assessment:

Conducting a Business Impact Analysis enables you to assess the impact that disruption of activities would have on delivery of your products and services. This enables you to prioritize the resumption of activities.

Understanding the risks of disruption to these prioritized activities enables you to manage them.

The outcome of the business impact analysis and risk assessment enables you to determine appropriate parameters for business continuity strategies and solutions.

The analysis should cover all activities within the scope of the BCMS. It is acceptable to perform the analysis on groups of activities, for example, relating to specific products and services.

When conducting the analysis of business impacts, the terminology used should reflect the way you describe your own operations.

The process should include defining evaluation criteria for the analysis of business impact, including the types of impact and time frames to be considered.

A methodology should be established for the evaluation of risks with the thresholds of impact that are unacceptable to your organisation. The time it would take for impacts to become unacceptable can be referred to as “maximum tolerable period of disruption (MTPD)”, “maximum tolerable period” or “maximum acceptable outage”. The minimum level of product or service that is acceptable to you can be expressed as the “minimum business continuity objective (MBCO)”.

The business impact analysis should also include identifying dependencies of prioritized activities, which will enable the organization to ensure that they are included in the risk assessment and available for determination of business continuity strategy and solutions.

## 8.3 Business continuity strategies and solutions:

The identification and evaluation of a range of business continuity strategies enables you to identify solutions for reducing the risk and mitigating the impact of disrupting your prioritized activities and deal with any disruptions that occur.

Selected business continuity solutions will provide for the resumption of deliveries of products and services at an acceptable capacity and within agreed time frames.

The identification of business continuity strategies and the selection of business continuity solutions should be based on the business impact analysis and the risk assessment, taking into consideration the associated costs.

## 8.4 Business continuity plans and procedures:

Business continuity plans and procedures enable you to manage a disruption and continue activities based on its business continuity requirements.

There should be a defined response structure that identifies the teams responsible for responding to disruptions. You should establish and implement plans and procedures for warning and communication, responding to incidents, and recovery, returning to business as usual.

## 8.5 Exercise programme:

An exercise programme enables you to validate the effectiveness of solutions, plans and procedures that you have put in place.

Can you say your business continuity procedures and arrangements are considered reliable until exercised and their currency is maintained.

Exercising develops teamwork, competency, confidence and knowledge, and should include those who could be required to use the procedures.

An exercise programme also provides opportunities for you to:

- Promote personnel awareness and competency development.
- Ensure that your business continuity plans and procedures are complete, current and appropriate.
- Improve your business continuity.

## 8.6 Evaluation of business continuity documentation and capabilities:

You should evaluate your business continuity management to ensure that it is effective and enables your organisation to achieve its business continuity objectives.

The evaluations should address the possible need for changes to the policy, objectives and other elements of the BCMS based on, for example, the exercise results, post-incident reviews and changing organisational circumstances.

Measuring the effectiveness of business continuity plans, procedures and capabilities could include the business continuity arrangements for outsourced activities and the business continuity of suppliers and partners that prioritized activities depend on.



# Clause 9

## Performance Evaluation

### 9.1 Monitoring, Measurement, Analysis and Evaluation

You should use performance indicators to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the BCMS and its outcomes in order to identify successes and areas requiring correction or improvement. The data obtained can be used to identify patterns and to enable you to obtain information regarding the performance of your BCMS.

Review of the implementation and outcomes of the BCMS by top management should be regularly scheduled and evaluated. While ongoing system review is advisable, formal review should be structured and appropriately documented and scheduled on a suitable basis.

Persons who are involved in implementing the BCMS and allocating its resources should be involved in the management review.

### 9.2 Internal Audit

Internal audits of the BCMS provide a mechanism for measuring the extent to which the BCMS is achieving its objectives, conforms to its planned arrangements, and has been properly implemented and maintained, and for identifying opportunities for improvement.

Internal audits of the BCMS should be conducted at planned intervals to determine and provide information to top management on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the BCMS as well as to provide a basis for setting objectives for continual improvement of BCMS performance.

Internal audit programmes should be based on the full scope of the BCMS, however, each audit need not cover the entire system all at once. Audits may be divided into smaller parts, so long as the audit programme ensures that all organisational units, functions, activities, system elements and the full scope of the BCMS are audited in the audit programme within the auditing period designated by the organisation.

In addition to the regularly scheduled management system reviews, the following factors may trigger a review and should otherwise be examined once a review is scheduled:

- **Sector/industry trends:** Major sector/industry initiatives should initiate a BCMS review.
- **Regulatory requirements:** New regulatory requirements can require a review of the BCMS.
- **Incident experience:** A review should be performed following a response to a disruption, even if the response procedure was not activated. If activated, the review should consider the history of the response procedure, how it worked and why it was activated. If the response procedure was not activated, the review should examine why it wasn't and whether this was the correct decision.

It may also be beneficial to review disruptions affecting other organisations in the same sector and similar industries.

### 9.3 Management review

Management review provides top management with the opportunity to evaluate the continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the management system.

The management review should cover the scope of the BCMS and any exclusions, although it is not necessary to review all elements at once and the review process may take place over a period of time.

# Clause 10

## Improvement

### 10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action

You should identify nonconformities, take action to control, contain and correct them, deal with their consequences and evaluate the need for action to eliminate their causes.

Once identified and BCP containment is in place an investigation into its root cause should be conducted and a corrective action plan developed for immediately addressing the problem.

The action plan should be designed to mitigate any consequences and identify changes to be made to correct the situation, restore normal operations and eliminate the cause(s) in order to prevent the problem from recurring. The nature and timing of actions should be appropriate to the scale and nature of the nonconformity and its potential consequences.

You should look to improve the performance and effectiveness of the BCMS even when there is no evidence of nonconformity. Improvements can include correction, corrective action, innovation and re-organization.

### 10.2 Continual improvement

Continual improvement, in terms of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the BCMS, operates at all levels within the PDCA cycle and should be driven by the business continuity policy and objectives, audit results, analysis of disruptions, management review, ambitions and the desired maturity level.

Continual improvement requires a process that identifies opportunities and a process to manage them.

## About Alcumus ISOQAR

We help organisations create better workplaces through a huge range of common and sector-specific standards and compliance assessments, allowing them to demonstrate to their customers, competitors, suppliers and staff, that they are committed to being the best that they can by minimising risk, delivering change, driving improvement and winning more work.

As one of the UK's largest UKAS accredited certification bodies we can audit, certify and train organisations across multiple sectors.

We work worldwide, so we can help businesses gain a competitive edge anywhere they need us.

## About Alcumus

Alcumus is a leading provider of software-led risk management solutions providing clients with advice, expertise and support to help them identify and mitigate risks, navigate compliance and keep people safe. It supports both UK and International clients – many of whom are on the FTSE 100 index – with a wide range of risk management services. This includes products across Supply Chain Management, EHSQ Software, UKAS Accredited Certification and HR and H&S support services.

Our people are at the heart of our business, building strong relationships with our clients to understand their needs, minimise risks and navigate compliance through our in-depth knowledge of your sector, regulations and challenges.

E: [info@alcumus.com](mailto:info@alcumus.com)  
T: 0333 920 8824  
W: [isoqar.com](http://isoqar.com)

