



Security Newsletter

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Welcome to the fourth edition of the OMNIRISC Security Newsletter.

In the last two issues we examined risks, hazards and getting ready to deal with various types of emergencies. In this issue we will complete this theme of disaster preparedness by examining Crises and Business Resilience.

In the New Year

...we will examine issues such as security surveys and audits as well as topics relating to security processes and ways to effectively provide security services. If you have any areas that you would like to see covered, please let us know and we will try to include them in later issues.

About the Author

James Langton is an advisor to "OMNIRISC" with over 40 years of experience in the security and law enforcement agency.

CRISIS & BUSINESS RESILIENCE

Crisis Management

At some time all organizations will either face a crisis. The questions are, are you ready and are you prepared?

CRISIS:

An abnormal or unstable situation that threatens the organizations strategic objectives, reputation or viability.

British Standard 11200:2014

Crises are events that we didn't fully anticipate or prepare for in our emergency planning processes or they can occur if we mismanage our planned emergency responses. Thankfully, a large proportion of potential crises are averted by our incident or emergency plans and never reach crisis levels. However, some are not and therefore we must be prepared to deal effectively with them.

A crisis can build up and occur slowly or it can appear instantaneously. Often a slow building crisis goes unrecognized until it is almost on top of us. Because of this shortage of warning, organizations need to have an effective crisis management process ready for quick an effective activation.

A good crisis management process contains the following elements:

- A Crisis Management Plan
- A Crisis Management Team
- A Crisis Control Space
- A Crisis Communications Strategy
- Good Crisis Management Training
- Crisis Management Process Evaluation

The Crisis Management Plan:

Your organization needs to create a crisis management plan outlining individual responsibilities during a crisis. Who does what, when and where? Organizations that are required to have plans by corporate regulators tend to have large complicated documents. These need to be distilled to a shorter more user-friendly version. Placing your plans on smart phones and other electronic devices ensures more effective access when required. The plan should cater for predictable crises identifiable by your organization but should be flexible enough to deal with the unpredictable.

The Crisis Management Team [CMT]:

A CMT made up of key personnel needs to be formed before any crisis event occurs. This team can then be immediately activated when a crisis appears. Activation of the CMT needs to be fast and seamless. Loss of time in activation, [the should we - shouldn't we argument] is loss of time in controlling the situation.

The Crisis Control Space:

The management of crises is intense, manpower heavy and time consuming. It requires a dedicated space to operate from. This can be a permanent control area or conference room/office. However it must be cleared of all other users and have already been set-up for the increase in TV monitors, computers, telephones, printers, whiteboards and other equipment. It also needs to be securable to prevent access to non-essential personnel.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

The overall direction of an organizations response to a disruptive event, in an effective, timely manner, with the goal of avoiding or minimizing damage to the organizations profitability, reputation and ability to operate

British Standard 11200

Crisis Communication

In addition to dealing with the incident management issues involved in a crisis there are very serious reputational issues that must be dealt with speedily and effectively. Crisis events move very quickly and the usual organizational PR practices are too slow to keep pace with them. The speed of social media, the internet and current news cycles means that special media responses must be incorporated into the crisis management process in order for your organization to get ahead of the media avalanche. The plan therefore must contain prepared press releases and responses in order to speed up the media reaction process.

Crisis Management Training

Dealing with crises normally requires a much faster and more efficient response than for emergencies. It's emergency management on steroids. The process, the plan, the team, the crisis control arrangements and the crisis communication procedures must work

It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that you'll do things differently

Warren Buffett

fast and seamlessly. This can only be achieved if all relevant staff are familiar with the process, understand the plan and their roles within it. They must be well trained in their responsibilities. In addition once trained, the plan must be tested and tested again. Is it watertight? Does it work? Are you confident in it? That testing will prepare the crisis management team to deal with the unexpected.

Crisis Management Process Evaluation

Finally, each time the plan is exercised and activated the organization needs to conduct a rigorous postmortem to gather the lessons learned and identify any weaknesses identified, to enable a better response next time.

It's not whether or not you will face a crisis it's how, when and why

Business Continuity

In the final segment of this series we will briefly examine Resilience and Business Continuity. We have looked at hazards, preparing for emergencies and dealing with crises. We now focus on business resilience.



What happens if your building is destroyed by fire or flood or you are affected by a typhoon? Can your business survive the disruption? This is where Business Continuity Planning comes to the rescue, your B Plan.

What are your most critical products and services? From the point of view of your key stakeholders what is it they can't do without? What do you need to supply, to keep your most important customers happy? How long can you operate with a disruption to service before clients are lost?

Your business continuity planning will examine these issues, identify your key areas, identify vulnerabilities and create contingency plans to solve them.

The process includes:

- Conducting an analysis of your business processes to identify your key functions.
- Designing your BC strategy
- Developing your BC Plan
- Training and testing the Plan
- Reviewing and maintaining the plans and processes

With the use of effective business continuity planning the disruptions to your business and its profitability caused by emergencies and disasters will be minimized and you will be able to recover quickly from such catastrophic events.

Business Continuity is about having a plan to deal with difficult situations so your organization can continue to function with as little disruption as possible

BCI Institute

What we can do to help you

We believe that by being risk conscious and developing a culture of security awareness, we can provide better protection for an organization's people, assets and key infrastructure. To effectively address this issue, OMNIRISC has invested in developing its people in Security Risk Management culture as a focus for operational strategy and risk interventions.