Unit 5: Developing Continuity Plans & Procedures
Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain the purpose of a Continuity Plan.
2. Propose an outline for a Continuity Plan.
3. Identify procedures that can support a continuity program effectively.

Scope

- Unit Overview and Objectives
- Continuity Planning
- Continuity Program Management
- Tests, Training, and Exercises (TT&E)
- Evaluations, After-Action Reports, and Lessons Learned
- Corrective Action Plans
- Continuity Plan Organization
- Summary and Transition
## Time Plan

The suggested time plan for this unit is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Overview and Objectives</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Planning</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity Program Management</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tests, Training, and Exercises (TT&amp;E)</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluations, After-Action Reports, and Lessons Learned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrective Action Plans</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity Plan Organization</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary and Transition</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
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**Total Time** 2 hours 30 minutes
Developing thorough and effective continuity plans and procedures enables organizations to implement their plans successfully in a continuity situation. Unit 5 will address the development of continuity plans and procedures. The topics covered in this unit are:

- The Continuity Program Management Cycle.
- Continuity Plan organization.
Unit Objectives

- Explain the purpose of a Continuity Plan.
- Propose an outline for a Continuity Plan.
- Identify procedures that can support a continuity program effectively.
Continuity Planning

The Continuity Plan is:

- A roadmap for implementing and managing the continuity program.
- A living document requiring regular review and revision as the continuity program evolves.
- The most important of all the documents that support the continuity program.
Continuity Plan Objectives

To ensure:

- Continued operation of the organization's essential functions during continuity operations.
- A rapid response to any emergency situation requiring Continuity Plan implementation.
Continuity Plan Scope

The Continuity Plan documents:

- What to expect in a continuity situation.
- How and how quickly continuity actions will occur.
- Who will participate in continuity operations.
- Where continuity operations will occur.
Continuity capability is determined by the continuation of essential functions. The performance of essential functions rests upon these four pillars.

1. **Leadership** is critical to provide support to continuity planning and ensure continuity of essential functions.

2. **Staff** must be sufficiently trained and cross-trained to perform their duties in a continuity environment.

3. **Facilities** must be adequate, separate locations to ensure the execution of essential functions.

4. **Communications systems** and technology must be interoperable, robust, and reliable.
Continuity Program Management Cycle

- Planning
- Training
- Evaluating
- Developing a Corrective Action Plan
The steps involved in developing Continuity Plans and procedures include:

- Appointing the Continuity Program Manager.
- Selecting the planning team.
- Determining essential functions.
- Applying risk management principles to assess potential hazards.
- Identifying resources required for continuity planning.
- Establishing objectives and milestones.
- Determining procedures for information gathering and decisionmaking.
The Continuity Program Manager:

- Has responsibility for managing day-to-day continuity planning.
- Keeps the agency head informed throughout the continuity planning process.
Selecting the Planning Team

Should:

- Consist of knowledgeable personnel from each functional area in the organization.
- Focus on those responsible for essential functions and:
  - Information Technology.
  - Human Resources.
  - Accounting/Finance.
  - The Office of General Counsel or equivalent.
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Activity: Selecting the Planning Team

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to give you an opportunity to identify key personnel for the continuity planning team.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to complete this activity.

1. Work in your table group to complete this activity.

2. Consider functions that you know are essential for your agency.

3. Based on those functions, identify key personnel (by position) who should be on the continuity planning team.

4. You will have 15 minutes to complete this activity.

5. Be prepared to present and discuss your personnel choices for the continuity planning team.
In a continuity situation, everything will hinge on the agency’s ability to perform its essential functions. The continuity planning team should use a system to ensure that all essential functions are identified.

Some essential functions are identified by the agency head. Others are determined to be essential because they:

- Are directed by the President.
- Are critical to the performance of identified essential functions.
- Support other agencies’ performance of essential functions.
A risk analysis is the process for identifying and prioritizing hazards in a jurisdiction. Hazards can then be ranked according to the overall risk that each poses.
Why should you complete a risk analysis?
**Risk Analysis**

A risk analysis:

- Is the process for identifying and prioritizing the hazards that pose a threat to the jurisdiction.
- Allows the agency to identify and prioritize the risks posed.
- Provides planning direction toward higher priorities first.

**Risk = Vulnerability!**
Many resources are available to help when identifying potential hazards. Begin the risk analysis by:

- Contacting the local Emergency Management Agency. Using the local hazard analysis is a good starting point for identifying hazards that are specific to the local area.

- Checking historical information. The National Weather Service and local newspapers can identify the impact of natural hazards that have occurred in the area.

- Contacting local law enforcement or the FBI Field Office. Law enforcement agencies can provide information regarding human-caused threats.

- Reviewing directives. All agencies are required to prepare for some types of emergencies (e.g., terrorist attack) by Presidential or other directive.
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Vulnerability Analysis

Do you know how vulnerable your agency is to natural, technological, and human-caused hazards?
Conducting a Vulnerability Analysis

Identify and prioritize hazards through a vulnerability analysis to identify hazards that are:

- Inherent to the agency’s location.
- Inherent to the facility.
- Most critical for agency personnel.

After the process of identifying and prioritizing hazards is completed, a vulnerability analysis, which will identify how vulnerable your agency is to the hazards identified, should be conducted. For example, some hazards are:

- Inherent to the agency’s location. Is the agency near a rail line that carries hazardous materials? Is it downwind from a chemical plant? Is it—or is it close to—a known terrorist target?

- Inherent to the facility. Is the facility itself of such significance that it could be a terrorist target? Does the facility have an underground parking garage or subway running underneath it?

- Most critical for agency personnel. What types of hazards have the highest potential impact? What hazards frequently occur without warning?

Refer to the Vulnerability Analysis Process on the following page.
The vulnerability analysis process involves four steps:

1. **Develop a hazard profile.** Include frequency, magnitude and intensity, location, probable spatial extent, speed of onset, and availability of warning.

2. **Check assumptions.** Consider the nature of the hazard, the facility’s construction, and the surrounding area.

3. **Develop an area profile.** Identify locations of known hazards, major structures, and geographic features that could affect vulnerability.

4. **Identify vulnerabilities.** Circle highly vulnerable areas on the area profile. Account for conditions, such as the prevailing wind pattern and typical temperatures.
For each potential hazard, consider the impact to the organization by conducting an impact analysis. The results of the impact analysis will determine the overall risk that the organization faces from each type of hazard.

4 = Catastrophic
The organization could not function from its facility. The continuity plan would definitely be implemented.

3 = Major
The organization’s operations would be disrupted for more than 12 hours. The continuity plan would definitely be implemented.

2 = Moderate
Some functions may be interrupted but the organization could be operations within 12 hours. The continuity plan might be implemented.

1 = Minor
Organization operations could continue with little or no interruption.

The continuity plan should address the highest-risk, highest-impact hazards first.
The next planning task is to identify the resources required for continuity planning. Resource funds for continuity planning must come from the organization’s budget. Budget items to consider include:

- Photocopying.
- Supplies for the planning team (discs, etc.).
- Facility costs.
- Training rooms, materials, and instructors.
- Meeting rooms.
- Other program needs.

Remember that the time commitment for team members is a resource—and, therefore, a cost. Be realistic about the amount of time continuity planning will take. Work with senior managers to ensure that the team members will be able to devote the time necessary to the continuity planning process.
Establishing Objectives and Milestones

Objectives and milestones keep planning on schedule and help develop a viable plan. All objectives should be measurable (quantifiable) so that team members will know:

- When the objective has been met.
- Whether the objective is acceptable in:
  - Quality.
  - Timeliness.
  - Other established criteria.
Information Needs and Decisionmaking

Develop procedures for:
- Gathering information to minimize time and effort.
- Decisionmaking, including who will make final decisions.
The next step in the Continuity Program Management Cycle is tests, training, and exercises (TT&E).

Because TT&E was covered in detail in Unit 4, it will be touched upon only briefly in this unit.
TT&E

- Tests confirm whether or not systems function as intended.
- Training ensures that all personnel know what to do, how to do it, and when it should be done.
- Exercises provide practice and verification of whether the plan works as intended.

Note that:

- Tests confirm whether or not procedures, processes, and systems function as intended.
- Training ensures that all personnel know what to do, how to do it, and when it should be done.
- Exercises provide practice and verification of whether the plan works as intended. Sometimes exercises focus on parts of the plan. In other instances, exercises are conducted to test the entire plan.

Note that all aspects of a TT&E program should be progressive, beginning at a low level and proceeding to high-level, more complex tests, training, and exercises. For example:

- Tests should begin with single systems and progress to system interaction.
- Training should begin with lecture and discussion and progress to hands-on training.
- Exercises should begin with orientations and proceed through full-scale exercises.
The next phase in the Continuity Program Management Cycle is evaluations, after-action reports (AARs), and lessons learned.

Feedback from TT&E, as well as from actual continuity events, provide a great deal of information about whether or not the Continuity Plan is viable. They should be analyzed and used as a basis for evaluations, after-action reports, and lessons learned.
After-Action Reports

- Feedback is gathered best through a “hot wash.”
- A full review meeting should be held within several weeks of the event.
- The AAR is developed based on the information collected and evaluated.

Documentation from exercises and actual incidents is the basis of the evaluation process. You should review the documentation to:

- Develop an accurate picture of what happened.
- Identify key players.

Note that documentation developed during continuity planning provides valuable information for:

- Identifying lessons learned.
- Improving the continuity process.

It is essential that the continuity plan includes clear documentation procedures and requirements.
The after-action report captures feedback received from the “hot wash” and evaluation team, and presents an evaluation of the feedback.

- The hot wash should be conducted immediately after the exercise or event and should include as many exercise participants or members of the ERG as possible. Hot washes should be part of the formal feedback process. To ensure that the hot wash participants are as honest with their feedback as possible, nonattribution should be agreed to before the hot wash and observed during the hot wash.

- A full review meeting with all exercise evaluators and/or key personnel should be held within several weeks of the event. The evaluation team’s job is to review the information gathered in the hot wash, add their own observations or evaluative comments, and analyze the comments in the context of the Continuity Plan.

- Using the analysis and evaluation data, the evaluation team (or other personnel assigned) should develop the after-action report, which captures lessons learned. The after-action report should be reviewed by all stakeholders in the continuity planning process, especially the Planning Coordinator and the Continuity Manager. Others also may review the after-action report, depending on agency policy.

The approved after-action report will be used as the basis for the agency’s Corrective Action Program.
The last phase of the Continuity Program Management Cycle is to Develop the Corrective Action Plan. Corrective Action Plans are an integral part of an agency’s Corrective Action Program (CAP).
Corrective Action Planning

The Corrective Action Plan should be fully documented and based on:
- Issues raised in the AAR and their recommended resolutions.
- Work assignments for each issue.
- Timeframes for completion.

The last phase of the Continuity Program Management Cycle is to develop a Corrective Action Plan. The purpose of a Corrective Action Plan is to improve procedures based on lessons learned from TT&E and actual incidents.

The Corrective Action Plan should be fully documented and should include:
- Issues raised in the after-action report and their recommended resolutions.
- Work assignments for each issue or cluster of issues.
- Timeframes for review and completion.
- A TT&E plan with milestones for implementing and documenting the solutions.
A continuity plan begins with an Executive Summary and has four main sections:

- Part I: Introduction
- Part II: Planning Basis
- Part III: Procedures for Plan Implementation
- Part IV: Maintaining Continuity Readiness

The continuity plan also may require one or more appendixes, such as an acronym list, a glossary, or maps showing the location of the continuity facility or facilities. Note that specific procedures for completing a job (e.g., job aids or SOPs) should not be included in the plan document or appendixes.

Note that there is no specified format for continuity plans. Agencies may use any format that works for them. FEMA guidance includes a standard format as an approach to plan development and to ensure that all continuity issues are covered.

Refer to the Continuity Plan Concept of Operations on the following page.
# Continuity Plan Concept of Operations

## Executive Summary
- Purpose and goals of the continuity plan
- Authorities on which the plan is based
- Scope

## Part I: Introduction
- Plan purpose
- Applicability and scope
- Authorities and references
- Planning assumptions
- Concept of Operations

## Part II: Planning Basis
- Identification and prioritization of essential functions
- Identification of personnel necessary to perform essential functions, orders of succession, and delegations of authority
- Description of vital records and databases and how they will be protected and made available to ERG personnel
- Identification, layout, and critical information about the continuity facility
- Specifications for go kits

## Part III: Procedures for Plan Implementation
- Procedures for each continuity phase (i.e., the Concept of Operations)

## Part IV: Maintaining Continuity Readiness
- Test, training, and exercise (TT&E) plan and schedule

## Appendixes (optional)
- Acronym list
- Glossary
- Location maps of the continuity facility or facilities
Continuity Plan Concept of Operations

The Concept of Operations section describes the procedures for plan implementation in four phases:

- Phase I: Readiness and Preparedness
- Phase II: Activation and Relocation (0–12 hours)
- Phase III: Continuity Operations (12 hours–30 days or until resumption of normal operations)
- Phase IV: Reconstitution (recovery, mitigation, and termination)
## Phase I: Readiness and Preparedness

Readiness and Preparedness involves:
- Completing all elements for a viable continuity program.
- Developing the agency’s continuity plan.
- Identifying all resources for continuity operations.
- Conducting and evaluating TT&E events.
Phase II: Activation and Relocation

Activation and Relocation involves:

- The activation of the continuity plan.
- Relocation of the ERG to the continuity facility.

Devolution also must be addressed.
Activation Procedures

Activation procedures must identify:

- How and how quickly personnel should respond.
- How personnel will participate in the call-down.
- Where to get go kits.
- How continuity activation relates to the OEP.
- What personnel should do to deploy.
Alert and Notification Procedures

Protocols should describe the entire alert/notification process, including:

- Roles and responsibilities.
- Means of contacting employees.
- Timeframe to complete the calldown.
- Procedures to be tested.
- Drills to be conducted.
Relocation Procedures

Relocation procedures ensure that continuity personnel know where and when to report.
All relocation procedures should include:
- Relocation instructions.
- A map and directions to the facility.
- A description of the go kits and instructions for their use.
- Administrative and logistics information for the continuity facility.
Phase III: Continuity Operations

Continuity Operations describes onsite operations at the continuity facility.

- Reception, in-processing, and accounting for ERG personnel
- How operations will transition to the ERG
- Guidance for nondeployed personnel
- Identification of replacement personnel and augmentees, as necessary
Phase III: Continuity Operations

Additional planning requirements for Phase III include:

- Execution of all essential functions at the continuity facility.
- Processes and procedures to order, acquire, receive, and pay for resources.
- Notification of customers, suppliers, and others of plan activation.
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Activity: Notification of Continuity Activation

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to give you an opportunity to consider all of the individuals and entities requiring notification of continuity plan activation.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below to complete this activity.

1. Work in your table group to complete this activity.

2. Using the space below, develop a list of internal and external customers, suppliers, stakeholders, and other involved individuals and organizations needing notification of continuity plan activation.

3. You will have 15 minutes to complete this activity.

4. Be prepared to present and discuss your list with the class.
Why should procedures be incorporated by reference in the continuity plan?
Vital Records Procedures

Continuity procedures need to describe how vital records will be:

- Identified.
- Updated.
- Protected.

Vital records are essential for continuity operations to be successful. Continuity planners need to develop procedures that describe the process for identifying, updating, and protecting vital records.

The procedures also should identify who or which office is responsible for vital records and who is authorized to access them.
Vital Records Procedures

What should procedures for electronic records include?
Topic: Vital Records Procedures (Continued)

Electronic Vital Records Procedures

Procedures for electronic vital records should include:
- How the server can be accessed.
- How/when passwords will be assigned.
- How/how often the files will be updated and maintained.
- How the files will be transferred.

The bullets on this visual represent minimum procedures. Procedures may need additional content, depending on factors such as the:

- Server capability at the alternate facility or devolution site.
- Security requirements for the records.

Work closely with the office(s) that use the records, and the IT office, to ensure that vital records procedures are consistent with user requirements, security requirements, and IT constraints.
Personnel accountability procedures address:

- Determining and documenting the safety of all personnel.
- How attendance will be tracked and who will track it.
- Where and how ERG personnel will report when they arrive onsite.
- Who will prepare the attendance report.
- How the report will be forwarded to senior management.
Status Reporting Procedures

Procedures developed for the status reporting process need to include information about:

- The purpose of the report.
- Information that must be included.
- The format of the report.
- Who receives copies of the report.
- How the reports are submitted.
- How often reports should be prepared.

The procedures should describe, clearly and fully, all responsibilities for status reporting. Each organization or individual involved in the development, approval, or submission of the report should receive a copy of the procedures.
Communications/Information Technology Procedures

Communications assets are needed to establish and maintain an operational posture at the continuity facility.

Communications and IT equipment must be installed at the continuity facility before procedures can be developed.
Communications Considerations

Consider:

- Providing internal/external calling capability.
- Setting up and changing passwords.
- Accessing voice mail.
- Forwarding and transferring calls.
- Conducting conference calls.
- Using cryptographic ignition keys, if applicable.

Communications systems must be redundant and interoperable. Analysis of communications needs for backup systems should include consideration of the system specifications to determine alternate system requirements.
Phase IV: Reconstitution

Reconstitution:
- Includes recovery, mitigation, and termination.
- Describes how the organization will restore its essential functions to its primary facility.

After employees are relocated, normal operations can be resumed, and continuity operations can be terminated.
Personnel Notifications

Notifying personnel to return to work mirrors the process of activation notifications. Principal differences involve timeframes and means.

Notifications can cover a longer period of time and use different means, such as:

- Public media outlets.
- Commercial, high-speed notification services.
During continuity operations, the Reconstitution Manager will have the responsibility for developing detailed procedures for the transfer of operations back to the original building or to another facility. For the Continuity Plan, identify baseline procedures so that more detailed procedures can be developed during continuity operations.

The baseline procedures should document the tasks that continuity personnel will need to complete, such as:

- Saving and transferring information and materials.
- Tracking files, documents, and other materials developed during continuity operations for transfer back to the reconstituted organization.
- Saving files to a specified server and identifying how often the files should be saved.
Continuity Plan Template Instructions

The Continuity Plan Template Instructions are available as a guide for developing the plan. The Template and Instructions are based on FCD 1 and are found in Appendix B.
Summary and Transition

This unit:

- Covered the scope and content of Continuity Plans and procedures.

Unit 6:

- Will address operating in a continuity environment.
Summary and Transition

Questions?