

**Government of Alberta
Business Continuity Planning Process**

"Vital Records Coordinator" Role: Potential Responsibilities

Introduction

Coordinating "Vital Records" is an integral part of a department or agency's Business Continuity Planning (BCP) process. This document describes the set of tasks that a "Vital Records Coordinator" might be asked to coordinate or participate in as a member of a BCP Coordinating Team.

NOTE: The 12 steps in this document are the steps in the Government of Alberta Business Continuity Plan. The Vital Records Coordinator (VRC) would not necessarily coordinate all the tasks on this list. Each organization will assign responsibilities based on the resources available and the skills and experience they have. VRCs will work with other functional coordinators, business units, and cross-government programs throughout this process.

Vital Records – General Background

To work effectively, any government staff member who is assigned responsibility to coordinate or participate in the business continuity planning for Vital Records should be aware of:

- Common types of threats to records in various media: Fire, Water, Weather, Earthquakes, Explosions, Power Failure, Conflict, and Infestation.
- Phases of Business Continuity Planning for Vital Records:
 - Before an interruption – Prevention, [Protection], Preparedness
 - During an interruption – Response
 - After an interruption – Recovery, Rehabilitation, Post-disaster planning
- The 12 steps of the Government of Alberta's Business Continuity Planning process and the role of Vital Records coordination as part of a BCP Team in an organization (see the [Alberta Emergency Management Agency website](#) for more information).
- How to assess:
 - which records are Vital Records for the organization.
 - the risks related to specific sets of records and their locations.
 - alternative methods to protect Vital Records in various media.
- The GoA emergency response and business continuity processes.
- How to set-up records operations at alternate sites, how to assess initial damage to Vital Records.
- How to determine and initiate appropriate recovery processes for damaged records.

Government of Alberta – Business Continuity Planning Process

Step 1 - Gain concurrence of department executive management.

Step 2 - Develop a department business continuity policy.

Step 3 - Promote department awareness and communicate a policy statement.

Step 4 - Assemble a BCP team and planning structure.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential General Responsibilities with the BCP Team:

- *In Preparation for an Interruption* - Compile and maintain a list of all vital records that might have to be moved, or pre-positioned if threatened by the aftermath of an incident.
- *During an Interruption* -
 - Ensure that *records* operations, in accordance with the established priority list, carry on at the temporary location.
 - Communicate about the status of restoration at the normal site.
- *After an interruption* - Organize the move of any files that were used at the alternate site.

Vital Records Coordinator – Specific Responsibilities:

- Identify and prioritize all electronic and paper vital records.
- Pre-positioning and transfer (if necessary) vital records to alternate locations.
- Maintain a list of essential personnel involved in vital records control.
- Participate in the initial damage assessment and salvage team, focusing on damage to records.

Other Potential Responsibilities to consider:

- *Working with other Coordinators and cross-government programs to maintain:*
 - a list of agencies that can supply temporary staff, including *records* personnel (HR coordination)
 - a list of current *records* assets for insurance purposes (F&A coordination)
 - a list of local suppliers and alternate suppliers outside the region that can provide vital *records* equipment and supplies (E&S coordination)
 - lists of minimum material requirements for all critical and vital *records* (E&S coordination)
 - tags for Incident Response Kit to identify *records* by damage status (DA&S coordination)
 - a list of resources / contractors who specialize in *records* damage assessment and salvage. (DA&S coordination)

Step 5 - Establish a planning timetable.

Step 6 - Identify, categorize and prioritize department services.

Services Categories:

Critical - Must resume within 24 hours.

Vital - Must resume within 3 days.

Necessary - Must resume within 2 weeks.

Desired - Required, but could be delayed for 2 weeks or longer.

Vital Records Coordinator:

Identify, categorize and prioritize Vital Records needed:

- to deliver *Critical, Vital, Necessary* and *Desired* Services.
- to activate and continue business continuity procedures after an interruption
- to comply with legislation and regulation
- to preserve rights and obligations of government, stakeholders and citizens
- to recreate legal and financial status
- to provide evidence of ownership
- to establish operations (e.g. policy, procedures)
- Other (?) – significant work in progress, intellectual property.....

Step 7 - Conduct a Risk Assessment.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Risk Assessment for vital records for each records location and business program.

The conclusions of the Risk Assessment should lead to setting priorities for protection of Vital Records. Vital Records Coordinators should expect to work with their business units and with cross-government programs to:

- **recommend records protection alternatives for priority groups of records, and**
- **implement decisions on protection of priority vital records.**

Step 8 - Design and write the Business Continuity Plan.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Work with team to ensure protection of records containing BCP "vital information" (*what is considered "vital information"?*).
- "Business Impact Analysis Services Worksheet" (Form F) - "*Information Resources (what does this mean?- role of VRC?)*" (2.4)
- Vital Records Policy - clear guidelines for the management of information (*what does this mean??*) (3.1)
- Vital Records Summary Sheet (Form G)
- Work with Facilities Coordinator (?) on records requirements at alternate business

site (3.3).

- Work with Coordinators on records implications for Prioritization of Resumption Activities (3.4)
- Work with other information sources

Step 9 - Confirm management protocols (in conjunction with Step 8).

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Contribute to development of business continuity plan activation protocols.
- Ensure records containing information required for activation are secure and accessible.
- Participate in resumption activities such as: Initial Briefing, Damage Assessment and Salvage Activities, External Government Coordination.

Step 10 - Design and implement a department training program.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Contribute to development of department training as required.
- Participate in Business Continuity Team training.
- Participate in delivery of training as required.

Step 11 - Design and implement BCP maintenance protocols.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Ongoing process to update identification of Vital Records.
- Updating priorities to implement protection Vital Records (e.g. duplication, dispersion, microfilming, directory design, backups, etc.)
- Continuing assurance that records related to business continuity activation are secure and accessible.

Step 12 - Design, coordinate and implement an exercise and validation process.

Vital Records Coordinator – Potential Responsibilities

- Contribute to development of department exercise as required.
- Participate in business continuity exercise.
- Work with business continuity team and business units to implement lessons learned related to Vital Records.