



State of Oregon's Enterprise Business Continuity Planning Program

Category: Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

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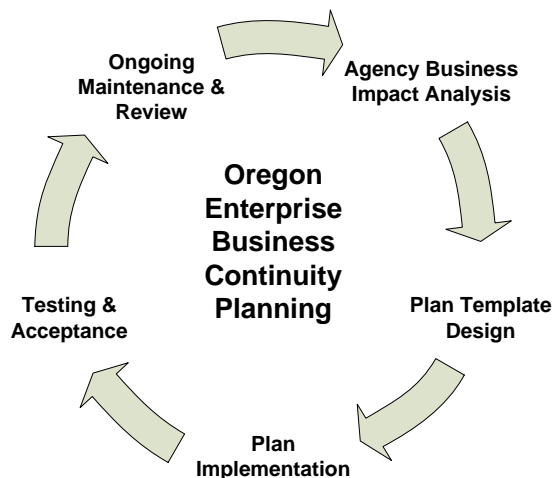
<http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/EISPD/BCP>

Executive Summary

The Enterprise Business Continuity Planning (BCP) Program was created to assist Oregon state agencies to develop and test business continuity plans. Established in 2005, this program has benefited the citizens of Oregon by ensuring state agencies are capable of continuing to provide essential services in the event of a disaster. This innovative, enterprise approach has produced a comprehensive, coordinated effort involving seventy-two (72) state agencies, boards, and commissions.

Without this program, each state agency would be responsible for developing a business continuity plan and it is likely that most agencies would not have a plan. The Enterprise BCP Program has provided agencies with direction, guidance, resources, and oversight. Without this coordination, these plans would have varied significantly in scope, content, and quality.

The adoption of a Statewide BCP Policy in 2006 set the requirements of the program and helped ensure strong quality and content. In addition to providing a consistent, statewide approach, developing templates and guidance centrally has also helped to reduce individual agency costs. Instead of having to design the planning approach and documents individually, agencies have been able to take advantage of documents authored by the program. These materials lead them through the process of developing a business continuity plan and conducting a business impact analysis, by providing them with a template, and then guiding them through the testing process.



The Enterprise BCP Program established a comprehensive BCP website, offered multiple training opportunities, and managed a contract for a single web-based application that can be purchased collectively by agencies as a tool for cataloging and tracking business continuity information.

A key component of this program involved providing direct assistance to agencies. During quarterly meetings, and in one-on-one meetings, the program staff provided information on a variety of business continuity topics and helped agencies address individual concerns and issues.

Finally, the Enterprise BCP Program worked with agencies to ensure deadlines were met for developing and testing business continuity plans. To measure progress, the program developed an “agency scorecard” that uses color coding to enable a quick assessment of the status of all agencies.

Description

It is imperative that Oregon state agencies continue to provide essential services to the public in the event of a disruption to normal business activities. However, the State of Oregon has not had a consistent, statewide business continuity approach. Although the state had an emergency plan to help address immediate life, health, and safety issues, almost no agencies had business continuity plans, making it much more difficult to ensure that critical services to the public could be quickly restored following a disruption. This was a serious problem given issues such as a high reliance on technology infrastructures, increased vulnerability from cyber attacks, and increased cross-dependencies among state agencies.

To ensure a comprehensive approach, the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) established the Enterprise Business Continuity Planning Program in July of 2005.

One of the challenges of implementing the program was the large, statewide scope of the effort. To address this, the program was located in DAS, as this agency has the authority to direct and coordinate statewide efforts. However, to ensure agency support and to develop a program that specifically met the needs of multiple agencies, the first step taken by the Enterprise BCP Program was to convene a working group comprised of staff from multiple state agencies. This working group recommended that a statewide BCP policy be developed and selected a specific business continuity software application for the state.

The Statewide BCP Policy was adopted in March 2006, turning this project into a fully-implemented statewide program. This policy required state agencies to develop and test business continuity plans by June 2009, and contained a list of mandatory components for all agencies to include in their plans. The policy also required each agency to designate a “BCP Coordinator” to provide a point of contact and accountability for each agency.

To assist agencies in developing business continuity plans by the deadline, the Enterprise BCP Program focused on the following eight tasks:

- Developed a plan template and BCP testing manual
- Created and maintained a BCP website
- Developed a statewide contract so agencies could purchase the business continuity software application (“eBRP Toolkit”)
- Provided numerous training opportunities
- Addressed specific issues important to multiple agencies
- Communicated information at quarterly meetings and through the website
- Met one-on-one with agencies to provide individualized assistance
- Identified a timeline for agencies to meet stated deadlines and developed a quarterly “scorecard” to measure on-going performance of all agencies

Another challenge in implementing this program was a very limited budget. Like many other areas within DAS, the Enterprise BCP Program was funded by assessments from other agencies. In the last two biennia, this assessment of approximately \$500,000 per biennium paid for the program expenses and two full-time staff.

This was an unfunded mandate for state agencies. To ensure consistency, this lack of budget was another reason the Enterprise BCP Program developed templates, guidance documents, and examples for agencies, in addition to providing training opportunities. By outlining the process to use and providing the forms, each agency did not have to do this work individually, helping cut their costs dramatically.

DAS quickly discovered there are not many business continuity templates for state agencies. So, another challenge was to research models used by private business and then develop a plan template more suitable to state government. This template, along with a manual for testing agency plans, was developed by the program specifically for Oregon state agencies. Although the Statewide BCP Policy contains mandatory elements all agency business continuity plans must have, agencies can choose the approach and the forms they want to use. In addition, agencies also requested that DAS develop a BCP template. Although this template is not mandatory, most agencies have used it, which has resulted in the added benefit of a consistent plan format for most agencies.

A website was created as a repository for the template and testing manual, as well as other guides, forms, and example plans for all state agency BCP Coordinators. On the website, agency coordinators can find documents that lead them through the process of developing a business continuity plan, teach them to conduct a business impact analysis, provide them with a plan template, and guide them through the testing process.

The Enterprise BCP Program also uses the website to maintain a library of completed plans. As agencies finalize their business continuity plans, some of the plans have been posted on the website as examples for other agencies. Agency coordinators can identify and network with other coordinators from the website, and find all the agendas, meeting minutes, and handouts from the quarterly meetings and workshops.

The website also includes guidance about specific business continuity topics, such as pandemic flu and disaster recovery planning efforts, and includes forms that can help prepare an agency for a disaster. For example, all the forms required to request emergency office space through the state's centralized leasing office are online. Agencies are directed to complete these forms in advance of an emergency to hasten business recovery. As the website is accessible on the Internet, the program often receives questions and requests for information from local governments and other states about Oregon's business continuity planning initiative.

The program coordinates the efforts of all agencies using the eBRP Toolkit, the business continuity software application purchased by the state. The eBRP Toolkit is

proving very useful for large agencies that have a great deal of information to catalog and track. Since Oregon was the first state to purchase this software for multiple agencies to use, the vendor has worked with the state to modify the toolkit to suit the needs of the agencies. However, to cut costs and also to ensure a consistent approach, Oregon purchased the toolkit as a “one size fits all;” all changes apply to every agency and agencies can not have the toolkit modified individually.

Several training opportunities have been provided to agencies. A “BCP Academy” was provided for approximately fifty (50) individuals from thirty (30) agencies in 2006. This comprehensive training opportunity was offered two days a month, for six months. Upon completion of the academy, the participants had a good understanding of all of the elements involved in developing a business continuity plan.

In addition, workshops have been held periodically to allow agencies that have completed their plan to present their process and final plan to other agencies. This peer-to-peer learning is particularly effective; agencies appreciate being able to ask questions of other agencies with similar issues and agency processes. Given that agencies, boards, and commissions come in all shapes and sizes, the Enterprise BCP Program has focused on presenting examples from a variety of agencies, to ensure that agencies can see examples of plans from organizations providing similar services.

Training for the eBRP users also has been provided on eight occasions. In addition to having the vendor present information in a formal training environment, Enterprise BCP Program staff has met individually with agencies to provide one-on-one training assistance.

The Enterprise BCP Program also has addressed several issues of interest to multiple agencies. This has frequently involved working with other DAS staff to ensure DAS programs can provide consistent guidance on business continuity issues such as alternate sites, payroll, emergency procurement, and disaster recovery planning. This information has been presented at eleven quarterly BCP Coordinator meetings and posted on the web. In addition to presenting information, these meetings have also provided an on-going opportunity for agencies to raise questions, and network with other agencies. Topics addressed at meetings included issues such as:

- Emergency communications
- Alternate site planning
- Emergency procurement
- BCP and overall security planning
- Planning for pandemic flu
- Coordination of disaster recovery efforts with the State Data Center
- Real life examples (lessons learned from 2005 arson in Marion County Courthouse, 2007 floods in NW Oregon, 2008 Labor Day Fire in the Capitol Building)

The Enterprise BCP Program developed an “Agency Scorecard” to measure progress on a quarterly basis. Using color coding, this scorecard allows DAS to quickly assess the current progress of each agency, board, and commission and provide assistance to those requiring additional support.

Significance

Most state agencies now have business continuity plans in place. There also is consistency among these plans, given that most agencies chose to use the DAS plan template. If this centralized program had not been created, very few Oregon state agencies would have developed business continuity plans. For most agencies, planning for a potential event in the future had taken a back seat to dealing with very immediate and tangible problems facing agencies each day. By creating a statewide policy and setting deadlines for meeting goals, the enterprise program ensured plans were developed and tested.

This program has worked primarily with the BCP Coordinators Group, as the target audience. This has resulted in two-way communication; the coordinators are the staff responsible for developing business continuity plans within each agency and are the recipients of the training and materials provided by the Enterprise BCP Program. This also is the stakeholder group that gave suggestions and feedback to ensure the program was tailored to meet their needs, and delivered the materials and guidance agencies found most useful.

Purchasing a single software application for organizing business continuity information also has helped ensure consistency, and will allow the state to access this information more easily during a disruption in service.

Preparing for disasters has been a priority for Oregon’s current governor. Governor Kulongoski created the “Governor’s Recovery Cabinet” to coordinate agency activities following a major disaster and to provide services to local governments. Since state agencies now have business continuity plans, state services can be quickly restored following a disaster, assisting the efforts of the Recovery Cabinet.

Benefit of the Project

The Enterprise Business Continuity Planning Program has benefited the citizens of Oregon by ensuring their government is more resilient and capable of continuing to provide essential state services in the event of a disaster. As a result of this program, seventy-two (72) state agencies, boards, and commissions have either completed business continuity plans, or are well on their way to completion. These business continuity plans will ensure agencies are able to continue serving the citizens Oregon during and after any potential disaster. State agencies have identified their mission critical business functions and developed plans to restore essential services.

State agencies have received direction, guidance, resources, and oversight from this program. Without this program, state agencies would have been independently responsible for the development of business continuity plans. Without direct

coordination, these plans would have varied in scope, content, and quality. The Enterprise BCP Program, and the subsequent statewide policy, has helped ensure strong quality and content. Agencies are required to ensure their plan is tested and updated, at a minimum, on an annual basis.

The Enterprise Business Continuity Planning Program has measured progress and success with an agency “scorecard.” This scorecard was developed to track progress by agency. The scorecard uses a color-coded scale to communicate progress on each phase of plan development: red indicates unsatisfactory progress, yellow indicates substantial progress, and green indicates exceptional progress or completion.

The following chart is an example of the scorecard used to evaluate agency progress toward meeting the June 2009 deadline. Of the 72 participating agencies:

- 79% will have plans completed and tested or are exempt¹
- 18% will have partially completed plans
- 3% will have not met planning goals

EXAMPLE: BCP AGENCY SCORECARD										
Planning Stage:		1	2	3	4	5	6			
AGENCY	Overall % of plan completed	Phase 1 2 day RTO	Phase 2 1 week RTO	Phase 3 2 week RTO	Phase 4 1 month RTO	Call tree test completed	Tabletop testing completed			
Agency 1	100%	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green			
Agency 2	90%	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			
Board A	Exempt ¹	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue			
Agency 3	70%	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red			
Board B	100%	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green			
During each 6 month planning stage, agencies completed specific tasks. For example, during Planning Stage 1, agencies identified Phase 1 business functions, those functions that must be restored within 2 days. During planning stage 6, agencies conducted tabletop testing.					KEY					
					Green			>75% done		
					Yellow			50% - 75% done		
					Red			<50% done		
					Blue			No functions in this phase		

The quantitative benefits of these planning efforts can never fully be known. However, it can be assumed that the financial costs of restoring state operations with a business continuity plan would be far less than without a plan.

The non-financial return on this investment is peace of mind for the citizens of Oregon. This program has pushed, and sometimes pulled, state agencies along the path to developing comprehensive and complete business continuity plans.

¹ Exempt agencies are those that do not need to recover any critical business functions within one month.