Business Continuity Management Program

Communications Policy

*Project ID: FSEP / E&Y BCM Audit Response*

Prepared by: Jill Frater, Steve Goldfarb

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<td>Version:</td>
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<td>Version Date:</td>
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1 DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

This section describes the changes that have been made to this document following its initial development.

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2 PROJECT CHANGE SUMMARY

This section describes the changes that have been made to this project following its initial acceptance by the stakeholders and approval for implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose
The purpose of the Communication Policy is to document how planned and periodic communications will be managed between all of the Business Continuity Management Project stakeholders throughout its project life cycle.

1.2 Scope
The Communication Policy outlines communication goals, communication expectations of all stakeholders. The Communication Plan will be used to provide guidance to the Business Continuity Management Project. Open, ongoing communication between stakeholders is critical to the success of the Business Continuity Management Project.

1.3 Goals
1.3.1 The goal of this Communications Policy is to ensure that all stakeholders maintain awareness of their responsibilities for maintaining timely and effective communications relative to the development, maintenance, training, and testing of BC/DR plans and other program deliverables, and to ensure BCP executives are kept informed of plan progress.

1.4 Document Maintenance
This document will be reviewed annually and updated as needed, as the project proceeds through each phase of the Business Continuity Management Project life cycle.

This document contains a revision history log. When changes occur, the document’s revision history log will reflect an updated version number as well as the date, the owner making the change, and change description will be recorded in the revision history log of the document.

2. KEY STAKEHOLDERS
This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the Business Continuity Management stakeholders with regard to the Communication Plan. Listed below are the key stakeholders:

- Crisis Management Team
- BCM Steering Committee
- Executive business sponsor (Dave Wright)
- Program Administrator (FSEP)
- School/Department Coordinator (Team Planner)
- Program owner (Team Leader)
- IT Disaster Recovery Program Coordinator (School/Dept. IT Admin)
- USC Medical Enterprise Program Coordinator (Robert Vance)
- USC Medical Enterprise Program Owner (Paul Craig)
- USC Central ITS CIO (Doug Shook)

2.1 Communication Responsibilities
Crisis Management Team
- The team will communicate and provide direction through the Executive Business Sponsor.
BCM Steering Committee
- The BCP will provide recommendations about communications and serve as a liaison between the Program Administrators and Crisis Management Team.

Executive Business Sponsor
- Communicate BCM expectations and accountabilities relating to plan development, maintenance, training and testing of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans.

Program Administrator
- Ensure the executive business sponsor is kept informed of the status of planning and other program components.
- Communicate the need to perform plan maintenance, training, and exercise to the recovery team planners and team leaders.
- Provide regular training to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the BCM program and their responsibilities. See training policy document for details.
- Provide informational content for steering committee and crisis management team meetings.
- Stay apprised of and communicate BCM industry trends and best practices.

IT Disaster Recovery Program Planner/Coordinator
- Communicate with the Program Administrator and central Information Technology Services to ensure compliance with plan updates and testing.
- Communicate any issues relating to the recoverability of IT systems that do not align with business needs.

School/Department Program Leader/Owner & USC Medical Enterprise Program Leader/Owner
- Communicate with the recovery team planner and recovery team members to ensure program compliance, expectations and accountabilities for business continuity and disaster recovery deliverables, including Business Impact Analyses, plan development and maintenance, testing and training.

School/Department Program Planner/Coordinator & USC Medical Enterprise Program Planner/Coordinator
- Communicate with recovery teams and the team leader to ensure key deadlines are met. Other communications will include the scheduling of meetings, training and exercises.
- Communicate plan development, maintenance and status to the recovery leader, program administrator, and other internal stakeholders.
- Ensure recovery team members are aware of their roles and responsibilities and that staff and faculty members are aware of the business continuity plan.

USC Central ITS CIO
- Communicate with recovery team planners, leaders, and recovery team members to ensure program compliance, expectations and accountabilities for business continuity/disaster recovery plans.
- Communicate with the decentralized school/department IT administrators relative to IT Disaster Recovery inquiries and guidelines.
- Serve as a subject matter expert to approve or recommend IT disaster recovery strategies that meet university standards.
- Ensure executive level support by communicating with key staff faculty staff and researchers to ensure cooperation and collaborations with all aspects of the business continuity management program.
- Communicate with schools and departments the information gathering and review protocols for reviewing third party vendors.
3. **COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

3.1 **Informal and Formal**

Informal communications consist of e-mail, conversations, or phone calls and serve to supplement and enhance formal communications. The Business Continuity Management Project will engage in various types of formal communication. The general types include email, memos, training (see BCP Training Plan), meetings, and other written forms. The information provided will contain enough detail to allow stakeholders to make informed decisions and maintain oversight of the project.

3.1.1 **Status Communications**

Project status meetings will be facilitated to ensure all stakeholders are kept up to date on the progress of planning, training, and testing. Reference the BCP Communication Plan for details. A variety of status reports will be produced during the project. The status reports will be produced on regular intervals to stakeholders with information on the status and progress of the Business Continuity Management program deliverables. The information provided will contain enough detail to allow stakeholders to make informed decisions and maintain oversight of the project.

3.1.2 **Training and Testing**

A separate BCP/DR Training Policy and Plan document references how stakeholders will be made aware of BCP/DR plans including updates. A separate BCP/DR Testing Policy and Plan document references how tests and exercises will be communicated. Reference documents for details.

4. **COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT**

4.1 **Communication Distribution Channels**

Various methods will be used to distribute information and communicate with stakeholders. The primary method to distribute information will be through the university email system.

Whatever method is used to distribute information or communicate, the proper precautions and procedures will be followed to ensure safe and protected delivery of information. Any confidential information must be sent through the proper procedures as established by the appropriate policies.

4.2 **Communication Frequencies**

The frequency of communications will be based on the content and target audience. The Communication Plan document outlines the specific frequency for each category of information.

5. **REQUIRED ANNUAL COMMUNICATIONS**

The kick off to begin the annual plan update and testing process will take place in September. The following are the key communications that will take place during an update cycle. For more details please see the BCP Communications Plan document.

- Annual DR/BC Policy Memo – From the Senior Vice President of Administration and Provost.
- BCM Expectations & Accountabilities
- The need to perform plan maintenance, training, and exercising.
- Compliance Reinforcement
- Request for Updates, Deadline reminders, Meetings, Training and Exercises
- Plan Status Updates
- Program and Communication Recommendations
- Progress Scorecard
- Program Administrator Status Meeting
- Crisis Management Team Meeting (Status Update)
- Steering Committee Meeting (Status Update and Guidance)
- Escalations (as needed)