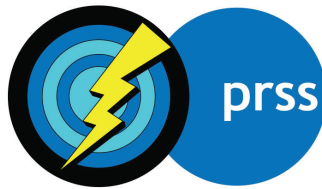


# Developing a Business Continuity Plan

- Background
- Introduction
- The Benefits
- The Process
  1. Build a Team
  2. Define Scenarios
  3. Make Decisions
  4. Document Your Plan
  5. Get the Word Out
  6. Maintain Your Plan



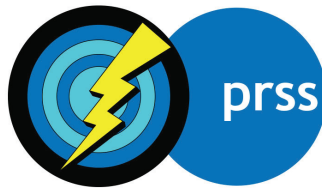
## Background

The PRSS provides this module as a resource to help station managers, engineers and technical personnel, and other station staff determine whether their organizations would benefit from a business continuity plan. In this module, you will learn:

- what a business continuity plan is;
- why it's important;
- who to include on the team that develops your plan;
- what to include in your plan;
- why you should document your plan;
- how to get started creating a local plan; and
- how to maintain your plan's effectiveness long-term.

The PRSS has a systemwide plan in place (the [PRSS Emergency Procedures](#)), but that won't cover your station operations in a local emergency like equipment failure or flood. For this reason, this module shows you—step-by-step—how to create and maintain a local plan.

You can do as much or as little formal planning as you choose, based on your perceived needs and available resources. But there are benefits to formal planning, and we encourage you to explore the information presented in this module.



## Introduction

No matter how carefully you plan, there will always be surprises. A lightning strike may damage sensitive equipment, or snow may fill the dish. There is only so much your station can do to prevent these things from happening, but with careful planning you can minimize the damage that results.

Business continuity planning (sometimes called disaster planning) helps make sure that your operation—delivering audio to your listeners—continues, or recovers as quickly as possible, in extraordinary circumstances.

A business continuity plan (BCP) is a document that contains all the information you need to get back on track in the event of a problem. Most plans address two sets of concerns:

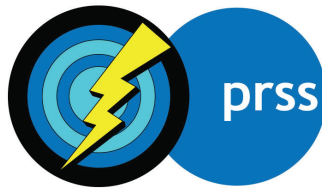
- **Technical backup:** How can you recover smoothly from technical glitches?
- **Communications:** What communication will facilitate this recovery?

## Benefits of a BCP

How will your organization benefit from a business continuity plan?

A plan can help you:

- **Respond quickly** to problems, even in the absence of key staff;
- **Communicate** quickly and clearly, within your organization, with PRSS, and with your listeners; and
- **Minimize service disruptions** that might drive listeners away.



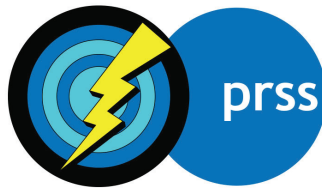
## The Process

Now that you understand what business continuity planning is and how it can help your station, you're ready to learn the nuts and bolts of creating a local plan.

Described in the simplest possible terms, developing a business continuity plan is a six-step process:

1. **Build a Team**
2. **Define Scenarios**
3. **Make Decisions**
4. **Document Your Plan**
5. **Get the Word Out**
6. **Maintain Your Plan**

When you complete these steps in this order, subsequent steps benefit from the information gathered in the previous ones. This means that the cornerstone supporting the whole process is (Step 1) **Build a Team**.



## Step 1: Build a Team

### Who to Include

If your station is a large one, there may be several staff members who can provide valuable input at all stages of this process. At a smaller station, fewer staff members are each likely to be responsible for several areas. To get the most from your business continuity planning team, make sure it includes people who can provide the expertise of

- Management, including finance staff if you have them;
- Technical/Operations/IT staff; and
- Communicators, such as communications, media relations and community relations staff.

**TIP:** Consider partnering with other stations (even television stations) or other community organizations. In certain situations, you may really need outside support.

### Roles for Each Group

#### Management's role is to:

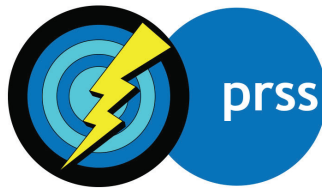
- Set priorities;
- Allocate resources (time, people, and money); and
- Make decisions based on recommendations from Engineering/Operations/IT staff and Communicators.

#### The Technical/Operations/IT staff's role is to:

- Identify staff who need access to the finished plan;
- Suggest scenarios that your organization should be prepared for;
- Recommend backup plans for each scenario; and
- Indicate the chain of command and emergency call order for personnel.

#### The Communicators' role is to:

- Determine communication needs (internal AND external) for each scenario;
- Recommend plans for meeting communication needs; and
- Anticipate the information needs of internal and external customers.
- Benefits of Careful Teambuilding



## Benefits of Careful Teambuilding

What do you gain by including all these groups?

- **Management** is aware of any problems that arise with respect to priorities or resources.
- **Technical staff** can intervene early if technical backup suggestions are not viable.
- **Communicators** can identify gaps in the chain of “who needs to know.”

## Step 2: Develop Scenarios

Once you have established a well-rounded team, you are ready to begin the next step: developing scenarios.

What do we mean by scenarios? Broadly stated, a scenario is a detailed answer to the question “what will we do to keep operations going if ...,” as in “What will we do to keep operations going if we need to evacuate the building?”

Most commonly, a station’s main concern is about staying on the air (or getting back on the air). For this reason, we recommend that you begin by developing technical backup scenarios and then use those as the basis for your communication scenarios.

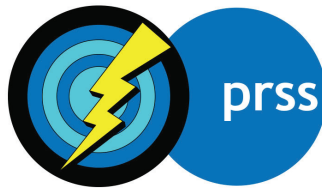
### Technical Backup Scenarios

What kinds of technical backup scenarios does your organization need? Start by thinking about what can go wrong. Some obvious possibilities include:

- Missed deliveries of national programs;
- Local equipment failure;
- Local building evacuation; and
- Failure of the ContentDepot, either at a national or local level.

Each scenario should:

- Describe the problem situation; and
- Suggest at least one solution that prevents the outage or restores service.



When you provide more than one possible solution, make a recommendation about which one looks like the best choice.

**TIP:** In developing scenarios, refer to roles (e.g. Engineer, Board Operator, Station Manager), not people. Naturally, you will need to review your plan regularly, to make sure it's still current, but you **can** minimize the need for updates!

### Communication Scenarios

**Communication scenarios** address the question "Who needs to know or to take action to get this problem solved?" For each technical backup scenario, consider:

- Internal Communication (with staff);
- Communication with local emergency services;
- Communication with PRSS;
- Communication with listeners.

Each of your scenarios should address issues relating to all of these audiences that are relevant for a particular situation.

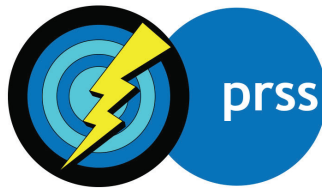
### Internal Communication issues to consider:

- Under what circumstances do staff members need to communicate with one another?
- What do the various groups need to know?

### Issues to consider relating to **Communications with PRSS:**

- When do staff members need to contact the NOC? The Satellite Equipment Maintenance and Repair Depot?
- What information do they need to provide when they call?
- What tools (forms, etc.) are available to help with this?

**TIP:** Bring all necessary information together. Certain communications may need to be merged in with your technical backup scenarios. If a staff person needs to call the Satellite Equipment Maintenance and Repair Depot in cases of equipment failure, for example, make sure the depot phone number is right there, under "Equipment Failure," along with a checklist of any information the depot needs to help solve the problem.



### **Controlling communication:**

Station management almost certainly wants to control the information about a crisis that goes out to listeners. To help achieve this, answer these questions when planning communications with listeners in your Business Continuity Plan:

1. Do your listeners need to know about this problem?
2. If so, what do we want to tell them and how will we let them know?
3. Who is responsible for informing them?

These questions let you determine, for each scenario, exactly what your staff should (or should not) communicate to listeners. Be sure to make it explicit in your plan if management prefers that only authorized staff members speak with listeners about station problems.

## **Step 3: Make Decisions**

Once you put together your technical backup and communications scenarios, get the team together to review them. The team needs to make some decisions based on the scenarios presented. You need to decide:

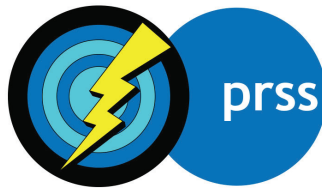
- Which scenarios belong in your final plan?
- Which solution do you want to implement in each scenario?
- Who needs to know about the plan?

The team leadership also needs to assign responsibility for the last two development tasks:

- Documenting the plan; and
- Making sure everyone affected knows about the plan.

When these decisions are made, you're ready to start documenting your plan.





## Step 4: Document Your Plan

Documentation is key to developing an effective business continuity plan. A well-documented plan provides these important benefits:

- **24/7 preparedness:** Good documentation gives overnight or backup staff the information they need to carry on in an emergency.
- **Institutional memory:** If your plan is carefully documented, it is still available even after the staff members who developed it leave your organization.

There is a worksheet on page 11 to support you in documenting your plan. Check it out if you want some help getting started.

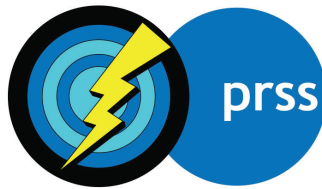
Once your plan is thoroughly documented, there's only one step left: getting the word out!

## Step 5: Get the Word Out

All the documentation in the world won't help if it's locked away in an office instead being made of available to the people who need it. To make sure the plan serves its purpose:

- Store copies of the plan in accessible places (in both electronic and in non-electronic formats!).
- Make sure staff members who need access know where the copies are.
- Provide an option to access the plan from off-site.

**TIP:** A good method for training staff and testing your plan is the disaster drill. Like a fire drill, a disaster drill is a practice run through the procedures you will follow in a specific emergency. All staff who could be involved in the emergency should participate. We recommend drills for each scenario at least twice a year.

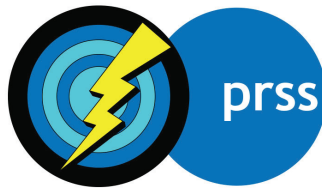


## Step 6: Maintain Your Plan

Once you've documented your plan, distributed it, and trained staff to use it, you might think you're finished. For your plan to be really effective when things go wrong, however, you need to maintain it, and you need to keep staff aware of procedures.

Maintenance is fairly straightforward. Repeat the following process every six months or so:

1. Have members of the team representing management, technical staff, and communicators review the plan. Is anything out of date? Have your procedures changed? Have responsibilities changed?
2. Document any changes.
3. Distribute your updated plan as described in *Get the Word Out*.



# Business Continuity Plan Worksheet

(Use this format to document specific scenarios for which your station is preparing.)

Description of Problem:

Technical Backup Required: (Who is responsible for fixing it? What do they need to do?)

Communications Required: (Who needs to know? What should they be told? Who needs to tell them?)

Resources: (What documents, tools, or other resources will help solve the problem?)