



Organisational Resilience in a Crisis – Opportunities to make a difference

Organisational responses to the COVID 19 pandemic have become a clear area of focus across the Australian public and private sectors.

Organisational resilience, that is the ability to adapt and survive in a crisis, has really been tested. As organisations transition from response to management and recovery, it is important to reflect on the lessons learned. Lessons learned from how we responded can inform how resilient we are in the future. It is also a time to start looking forward to position and plan for recovery. So, how do you incorporate lessons learned? Select the lessons learned button.

Lessons learned process

While a crisis can be all consuming, it is important to reflect on lessons learned early on. If left too long, lessons learned can be forgotten and people can reimagine what actually took place. Take some time to undertake a structured post incident review process including staff debriefs to examine how your organisation was able to respond:

- Did you get the right early warning information and how did you respond to it?
- How did your business continuity and emergency management planning work?
- How well were staff mobilised?
- Did your IT infrastructure cope?

This process should not just be about looking for gaps in the business continuity planning, although this is important. It should instead be used to shift thinking towards overall organisational resilience and how effectively your organisation adapted to new challenges. We can then use that thinking to build resilience into design as we move forward.

A big part of resilience is agility. For example, how quickly can we pivot our workforce to work remotely and how quickly can we respond to rapidly changing circumstances. Any future design of systems and processes needs to factor in agility.

Remember, resilience is about preparation, design and adaptability.

Now, let's consider positioning for recovery. Select the Positioning for Recovery button to continue.

Positioning for recovery

As we move from the response phase, we need to start positioning ourselves for a successful recovery. Planning for recovery, similar to planning for the response, requires its own unique thought process. This is especially important given the current uncertainty.

One useful way of identifying recovery approaches can be through scenario planning.

Focus on what it will take to recover critical functions as well as how to thrive in the new normal on the other side of this crisis.



One way to approach scenario planning is to imagine three scenarios:

1. a future we would hope for
2. a future we plan for
3. a future we plan to avoid.

Think about each with different time frames and what that may mean for the operations of your organisation.

Now, to complete this learning microbite select the Closing button.

Now is a critical time for risk managers and business continuity managers to act as trusted advisors. Decisions are being made rapidly out of necessity and without consideration of the risks these decisions could create their own, second order risks or the next business disruption.

Thank you for listening and please feel free to share this microbite with anyone you think may benefit from using it. Before closing down please complete the short survey below.