

## **Business Continuity Impact**

A fire in a building can severely impact business continuity, causing both immediate and long-term effects. Immediate impacts include the evacuation of the building, suspension of operations, and potential damage to critical infrastructure, equipment, and other critical assets. Long-term effects may include the need to find alternative workspaces, repair or replace damaged assets, and address potential reputation damage with clients, employees, and stakeholders.

### **Tabletop Exercise: Fire Response and Recovery**

**Step 1:** Initial Response - Begin the exercise by discussing the initial response to a fire. Consider the following questions:

1. How will your team communicate the emergency situation to building occupants?
2. What is the evacuation plan for the building, and how will it be executed?
3. How will you account for all occupants during and after the evacuation?
4. What is the role of floor wardens and safety officers in assisting the evacuation process?
5. How will you coordinate with first responders, such as the fire department and emergency medical services?

**Step 2:** Life Safety Planning - Discuss the life safety aspects of the scenario and identify strategies to ensure the well-being of building occupants. Consider the following questions:

1. How will you manage potential injuries or casualties during the event?
2. What training and resources do your team and building occupants have to address fire-related emergencies?
3. How will you ensure that occupants with disabilities or mobility challenges can evacuate safely?
4. How will you monitor and control potential hazards, such as smoke, heat, and structural damage during and after the event?

**Step 3:** Business Continuity Planning - Discuss the potential business continuity impacts and identify strategies to minimize disruption to building operations. Address the following questions:

1. What is your plan for relocating employees and building occupants to alternative workspaces during and after the event?
2. How will you ensure that essential business functions continue during the recovery process?
3. What is your plan for addressing potential damage to critical infrastructure, equipment, and documents?

4. How will you communicate with clients, employees, and stakeholders about the event and the steps taken to address it?

**Step 4:** Recovery and Lessons Learned - Finally, discuss the recovery process and identify lessons learned from the exercise. Address the following questions:

1. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of your response plan and identify areas for improvement?
2. What resources will be needed to repair or replace damaged assets?
3. How will you address potential reputation damage and rebuild stakeholder trust?
4. What additional training or resources might be needed to better prepare for future fire-related emergencies?
5. How will you develop and maintain relationships with external partners, such as first responders, insurance providers, and local government agencies, to ensure a coordinated and efficient recovery process?

**Step 5:** Implementing Changes and Improvements - Based on the lessons learned and identified gaps in your EAP / response plans, discuss the changes and improvements that should be made. Consider the following questions:

1. What modifications should be made to the building's evacuation plan to improve its effectiveness and efficiency?
2. How can you enhance communication and coordination with first responders and other stakeholders during an emergency?
3. What additional training or resources should be provided to your team, floor wardens, safety officers, and building occupants to better prepare for fire-related emergencies?
4. Are there any modifications that can be made to the building's design, systems, or equipment to minimize the risk of fire and improve life safety?
5. How can you improve your business continuity plan to minimize disruptions and expedite the recovery process after a fire event?