



DND/CF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

ANNEX I

DND/CF BCP COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

January 2010

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References: A. Policy on Government Security, July 2009
B. 3120-1 (SJS CANUS Plans) DM/CDS Initiating Directive – DND/CF Continuity of Critical Operations and Services (Business Continuity Plan) 5 January 2007
C. Communications Policy of the Government of Canada August 1, 2006
D. TBS Public Service Readiness Plan 2008
E. DAOD 2008-0 Public Affairs Policy
F. DAOD 2008-3 Issues and Crisis Management
G. DAOD 1003-0 Business Continuity Planning
H. DAOD 1003-BCPP Business Continuity Planning Program

CONTEXT

Issue

1. The Canadian populace depends on its Government and government agencies to provide a wide range of services and assistance in times of emergency and crises. These emergencies and crises can run the gamut from short-term interruptions in services caused by natural events i.e. the Ice Storm, to the potential longer-term disruption caused by a larger scale natural calamity such as a pandemic. In addition, human induced events, such as terrorist attacks, also have the potential to reduce the ability of government agencies to perform their core functions. To mitigate the effects of these events, all government agencies, including DND and the CF, have been directed through the Policy on Government Security, Reference A, to prepare Business Continuity Plans (BCPs).
2. The DND/CF primary critical operational role within the Government of Canada response to an emergency or crisis is simple; it is to “protect Canadians at home.” For this reason the capability of DND/CF to support the efficient functioning of government must be continuously maintained.
3. The aim of this Annex is to describe the strategic communications approach that will be used to inform various audiences of the DND/CF Business Continuity Planning Program. It is critical that communications with both the public and with the internal audience support and maintain the perception that the organization behaved in a competent and responsible manner throughout the disruptive event.

Communications Challenges

4. The BCP Program and the many individual BCPs within the organization have little profile within DND and the CF. The communications strategy therefore will be to focus on the internal audience to raise both awareness and confidence in the Program across both organizations. Given the Program’s top-down development and implementation approach, internal staff at the National Defence Headquarters level

must be the initial focus of messaging, to be subsequently pushed out to regional and local levels concurrent with the Program expansion.

5. Given the wide variety of existing programs within and across DND/CF all competing for attention from the internal audience, it will be challenging to draw attention to the BCP Program. In addition, the focus of the Program on maintaining critical operations and services through a crisis, and the very limited number of mission critical staff that will be implicated in the maintenance of those critical operations and services, could potentially limit the level of interest among the wider internal audience.

Communications Demands

6. The Canadian Public has a keen interest in government-wide response to any emergency or crisis event. DND/CF is likely to play a significant role in assisting members of the public in such an event. There will be a demand from the public for clarity and reassurance of any and all actions being taken by DND/CF to assist the government in ensuring uninterrupted availability of critical services and assets.

7. The Central Agencies (PMO, PCO, TBS, etc.) of the Government of Canada will also expect DND/CF to ensure government themes and priorities are clearly and consistently reflected in the information and messages communicated to Canadians at home and abroad.

Institution Partners

8. In the event of an emergency or crisis event, depending on the extent, DND/CF could have the requirement to work with a variety of partners at the Federal/Provincial/Municipal levels. Public Safety Canada is the lead agency for Business Continuity within the Government of Canada and will play a key role in coordinating common messages regarding the government-wide response to an incident. Specifically, Public Safety Canada (PS) has established a Continuity of Government Program to ensure federal departments are able to:

- a. Protect the safety and health of employees in disruptions;
- b. Manage the risks of disruptions;
- c. Deal with critical infrastructure failures and slow-downs;
- d. Deliver critical services at acceptable levels in a disruption; and
- e. Minimize the impacts of disruptions on operations.

9. DND/CF key messages will be aimed at reassuring both the internal and external audiences that the BCP Program ensures minimal or not interruption to the availability of critical services and assets of the organization.

Key Audiences

10. Internal. The internal audience of DND employees and CF members is the key audience for the BCP Program. ADM(PA) will play a lead role in coordinating communications activities with Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) across the organization to ensure the wide and consistent distribution of information regarding the Program.
11. External. The Canadian public will also have a keen interest in government's response to any event requiring activation of the BCP. In the case of a large scale event, DND/CF as both a planning and force generation organization, could play a significant role in assisting Canadians.

Coordinated Approach

12. The DND/CF BCP Coordinators must ensure open, two-way communications between the organization and the Centre that emphasizes a mutual understanding of the organization's role in emergency planning and response activities.
13. Similarly, Level 1 BCP Coordinators must ensure that employees' roles in the event of activation of the Business Continuity Plan are clearly explained to and understood by those employees. In particular, employees who have been identified in call-out lists as potentially having a critical role to play upon enactment of the BCP should be formally advised of this role. ADM(HR Civ) has recommended that the formal advisory to personnel identified as critical to operations should be made by means of a letter to individual employees. In due time, work descriptions and letters of offer for new employees should also identify when they are expected to play a critical role under the business continuity plan.
14. As an aspect of the education and awareness aspects of the Program, a generic presentation explaining BCP is available to be used by Level 1 BCP coordinators and customized to include organization-specific details on the BCP Program.

Strategic Considerations

15. The DND/CF is an organization that spreads across the entire country and which has elements on duty at all times. The CF serves as a force of last resort for the Government when local and regional resources are overwhelmed by an incident of such intensity or size that augmentation is required as it has the ability to call out well trained, disciplined and specially equipped troops on extremely short notice.
16. As a key element of the Canadian National Security program, the DND/CF cannot be perceived at any time as lacking in capacity to respond as the Government's force and support of last resort.

17. Given the special role of DND/CF with regard to maintenance of national security, there can be specific operational security considerations that must be taken into account when considering the release of information about the BCP. A significant portion of general information about the BCP is unclassified and can be made available to target audiences to increase awareness. Where operational security concerns arise, audiences may be informed of such. As the dissemination of information is one of the key objectives of the Program, public affairs officers should ensure that generic examples of why the release of more specific information could prove harmful are prepared and available to spokespersons.

18. The release of or restriction on the release of personal information is covered under the *Privacy Act*.

Objectives

19. The objective of the Communications Strategy is to ensure a harmonized DND/CF response to any incident affecting one or more elements of the organization. The intent is to reassure both the general public as well as DND employees and CF members that a business continuity plan is in place and activated to ensure minimal or no interruption to the availability of critical services and assets. The following master messages provide guidance for the development of supporting messages as applicable:

- a. In the event of a significant disruption to normal operation procedures, the DND/CF has developed comprehensive plans to ensure the continuity of critical operations and the continued availability of critical services and associated assets;
- b. These plans, formulated across DND/CF, allow for the effective functioning of the Department to assist in the governments' objectives of protecting the health, safety, security, and economic well-being of all Canadians; and
- c. The BCP complements existing emergency preparedness plans and provides the framework for a common management structure under which all emergencies and disruptive events can be managed.

Spokespersons

20. The MND, DM and the CDS maintain their responsibilities as spokespersons for the Department and Canadian Forces at the strategic level.

21. ADM(PA) shall advise the DM, CDS and appropriate Level 1 Advisor on any issue or crisis deemed to be of a DND, CF or national nature.

22. BCP Action Team, consisting of representatives from ADM(Fin CS) and DOS SJS, will respond to queries and provide technical advice to ADM(PA) representatives regarding activation of Business Continuity Plans.

23. Each Level 1 organization has its own Public Affairs advisor who will be called upon to advise and assist the management team on communications means and messages to be implemented in the event of activation of the BCP.

FIRST RESPONSE AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION MATERIAL

24. The BCP Program is currently promoted primarily through websites on both the unclassified and the secret level networks within DND/CF. The BCP websites have thus far been used primarily to provide information of use to BCP coordinators at various levels throughout the organization.

25. The awareness campaign to spread understanding of the Program to members and employees throughout the organization will be based on taking advantage of appropriate opportunities to address the topic with the internal audience. Existing publications such as the Maple Leaf, the bilingual weekly newspaper of the CF and DND, and Base newspapers across the country will be used to promote awareness of the BCP Program. Similarly, existing awareness campaigns such as Security Awareness Week, Emergency Preparedness Week and potentially the implementation of a new Business Continuity Awareness Week event will be utilized to promote awareness and understanding of the BCP Program.

Under The Authority Of

26. The VCDS, under direction of the Minister, CDS and DM, will be the authority for the activation and eventual termination of the BCP communications plan in the event the BCP is activated.

Internal Communication Protocol

27. In the event of the Level 0 BCP activation, the Level 1 BCP Coordinators will be informed and will advise the members of the appropriate BCP Response Teams. BCP Response Teams will be activated as required; including communications plans integral to the BCP. ADM(PA) staff will be available to provide advice and guidance on communications activities.

Budgetary Concerns

28. Funding for appropriate communications costs (i.e. for promotional items, media press conferences and the like) will be identified within the overall costing activity associated with the BCP program