



Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman

Internal Audit 2024-25

Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery
November 2024

Overall Conclusion

Satisfactory

Summary of recommendations

Grading of recommendations				
	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Total
Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery	0	3	2	5

As can be seen from the above table there were no recommendations made which we have given a grading of Priority 1.

	Recommendation	Grade	Management response
1.	<p>We recommend that the organisation develop a formal Disaster Recover Plan as a supplement to the Business Continuity Plan and that this plan should include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A step-by-step informative guide of what to do in the event of a disaster scenario including roles and responsibilities.- An acceptable and realistic downtime for systems with expected recovery times for each system.- A scheduled and frequent review date to ensure the documents remain up to date.	Priority 2	Accepted
2.	<p>We recommend that the organisation conduct a formal Business Impact Analysis to identify and assess the potential impact of business disruptions. This analysis should be documented and incorporated into the BC Plan, ensuring that the most critical business processes are prioritised for recovery. We also suggest periodic reviews and updates of the BIA to keep it aligned with evolving business needs and external factors.</p>	Priority 2	Accepted

3.	We recommend that the Organisation implement a formal testing schedule for the BC Plan, with the DR Plan included once it has been developed and approved. Each test should be thoroughly documented, capturing any lessons learned and corrective actions identified. This schedule should include regular tests and post-incident reviews to identify and address any issues.	Priority 2	Accepted
4.	We recommend that the Organisation provide bespoke BC training for all BC Team members. This training should cover key aspects of the BC Plan, specific roles and responsibilities, and scenario-based exercises to reinforce procedures. Once the DR Plan is developed and approved, DR-specific training should be included alongside BC training to ensure that both business and recovery actions are well-coordinated. Regularly updating both BC and DR training after significant changes to either plan, will ensure that team members remain prepared and proficient in their roles, supporting the Organisation's resilience and recovery capabilities.	Priority 3	Accepted
5.	We recommend that the Organisation ensure that up-to-date contact details for the Director of Governance and Support Services, along with other key members of the BC Team, are readily accessible to staff. These details should be securely stored and enable easy access during an incident. Additionally, the title in the BC Team Summary of Roles section should be updated to reflect the current role designation.	Priority 3	Accepted

Assurance	Classification
Satisfactory	Overall, there is a satisfactory system of governance, risk management and control. While there may be some residual risk identified, this should not significantly impact on the achievement of system objectives.
Limited	There are significant weaknesses within the governance, risk management and control framework which, if not addressed could lead to the system objectives not being achieved.
Unacceptable	The system of governance, risk management and control has failed or there is a real and substantial risk that the system will fail to meet its objectives.

Grading	Classification
Priority 1	Failure to implement the recommendation is likely to result in a major failure of a key organisational objective, significant damage to the reputation of the Organisation and the misuse of public funds.
Priority 2	Failure to implement the recommendation could result in the failure of an important organisational objective or could have some impact on a key organisational objective.
Priority 3	Failure to implement the recommendation could lead to an increased risk exposure.