

Risk 3: Business Continuity



Risk Definition

There is a risk that the Department's key operations will not recover from an emergency event in an adequate or timely manner.

The focus of this risk is on DFAIT's ability to recover from an emergency event, not on the event itself. As such, this risk includes the adequacy of existing plans and practices to enable a timely and adequate response to an unanticipated event.

This risk has the potential to obstruct the organization from achieving all of its strategic outcomes.

Sources of Risk

Business Continuity Planning Inadequacy

In general, the current state of business continuity planning in the Department is inadequate and inconsistent. In some cases, the missions in sensitive locations tend to be better prepared than headquarters. DFAIT does not have a single Departmental Business Continuity Plan (BCP) or authority in place. Although some BCP components do exist they are in need of updating.

Lessons learned are not consistently integrated into corporate operations, thus, potential efficiencies are not realized to improve response to future events. As an example, lessons learned from dealing with the Tsunami aftermath exist, but were not translated into best-practices at the corporate level which could have aided in subsequent responses (e.g. for the Lebanon crisis). Certain areas are integrating lessons learned; however, it is not being done holistically across the Department.

The recent flood in Tower C of 125 Sussex Drive highlighted the need for better emergency communications planning and temporary re-location plans for workers when their workstations are not available.

In the situations where business continuity information is in place, it is felt that the information may be cumbersome. There is a need for a more streamlined approach. As an example, there are 5 binders for BCPs at the Washington mission.