VERITAS ASSURANCE



ISO 22301 Made Practical: A Handbook for Understanding and Awareness

Business Continuity Management Systems - Practical Explanations, Disruption Examples and Illustrative Evidence

Standard edition: ISO 22301:2019, including Amendment 1:2024
Handbook version: 1.0
Prepared by: Veritas Assurance

Contact Veritas Assurance

Contents

A clause-by-clause guide to the handbook

WELCOME FROM VERITAS ASSURANCE 3
ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK 3
UNDERSTANDING ISO 22301 4
UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE: HLS AND HS 6
THE PROCESS APPROACH AND PDCA 8
CLAUSES 1 TO 3: SCOPE, REFERENCES AND TERMINOLOGY 10
CLAUSE 4 BUSINESS CONTEXT, REQUIREMENTS AND BCMS BOUNDARIES 11
CLAUSE 5 LEADERSHIP, POLICY AND DECISION AUTHORITY 12
CLAUSE 6 BCMS RISKS, OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED CHANGES 13
CLAUSE 7 RESOURCES, COMPETENCE AND ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION 14
CLAUSE 8 BUSINESS IMPACT ANALYSIS AND DISRUPTION RISK 15
CLAUSE 8 CONTINUITY STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS 16
CLAUSE 8 RESPONSE STRUCTURE, PLANS AND RECOVERY 17
CLAUSE 8 EXERCISES AND CAPABILITY EVALUATION 18
CLAUSE 9 MONITORING, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION 19
CLAUSE 9 INTERNAL AUDIT AND MANAGEMENT REVIEW 20
CLAUSE 10 CORRECTIVE ACTION AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT 21
YOUR ROLE IN THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM 21
PUTTING THE SYSTEM TOGETHER: LOSS OF A DISTRIBUTION FACILITY 22
QUICK REFERENCE AND GLOSSARY 23
CLOSING MESSAGE FROM VERITAS ASSURANCE 23
FURTHER READING AND DOCUMENT INFORMATION 23
DISCLAIMER 24

Welcome from Veritas Assurance

When a workplace becomes unavailable or a supplier stops delivering, the immediate questions are practical: what must continue, who can make decisions and what arrangements are ready to use?

ISO 22301 brings those questions into a Business Continuity Management System, or BCMS.

This ISO 22301 handbook explains how business impact analysis, continuity strategies, response plans and exercises work together. Its examples show the connection between what an organisation needs to deliver and the capability it has prepared.

Veritas Assurance has prepared it for readers who want to understand the standard in the context of everyday business responsibilities.

The aim is practical awareness: understanding your role, recognising important dependencies and knowing why continuity arrangements need to be evaluated before a disruption occurs.

About This Handbook

This handbook is intended for business owners, managers, continuity coordinators, process owners, employees, IT personnel, supplier coordinators and internal auditors.

You can read it in sequence or refer directly to a relevant clause.

Each main clause includes:

- A brief explanation of its purpose.
- Plain-language subclause summaries.
- A specific business situation.
- Illustrative implementation and evidence.
- A key takeaway.

The examples address disruption to premises, people, technology, suppliers and supporting services.

All scenarios are hypothetical. Suggested methods, records, targets and recovery arrangements are illustrative rather than universally mandatory.

Use the examples to discuss your own activities and dependencies. Local legal, regulatory, contractual and emergency-management requirements need separate consideration.

This is an awareness resource. It does not replace formal training, demonstrate response competence or provide a qualification. Read the disclaimer at the end before using it.

The technical basis is ISO 22301:2019, together with its 2024 climate-action amendment.

Understanding ISO 22301

ISO 22301 is an internationally recognized standard for Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS), designed to help organizations prepare for, respond to, and recover from disruptive incidents that may affect their business operations. ISO 22301:2019 provides a structured framework for identifying potential threats, assessing business continuity risks, analyzing critical business activities, and developing effective strategies to maintain essential operations during disruptions. The standard enables organizations of all sizes and industries to strengthen resilience, minimize downtime, and ensure continuity of critical products and services.

Implementing ISO 22301 helps organizations reduce the impact of unexpected disruptions, protect critical resources, improve emergency preparedness, and enhance recovery capabilities. It supports effective business continuity planning, crisis management, testing, and continual improvement while strengthening stakeholder confidence and customer trust. By adopting ISO 22301:2019, organizations can improve operational resilience, safeguard their reputation, reduce potential financial losses, and demonstrate their commitment to maintaining reliable business operations even during challenging circumstances.

Relevant dependencies may include:

- People and specialist knowledge.
- Premises and equipment.
- Information and technology.
- Suppliers and outsourced services.
- Utilities and communications.
- Transport and distribution.
- Funding, approvals and decision authority.

Related subjects and their different purposes

Subject	Practical meaning
Business continuity	Preparing to continue or resume products and services at an acceptable predefined capacity during disruption.
Emergency response	Addressing immediate emergency needs, including protection of people and other relevant priorities.
IT disaster recovery	Restoring technology and information capabilities that support the business.
Crisis management	Managing significant situations requiring strategic judgement, coordination and communication.
BCMS certification	Independent assessment and a certification decision within an agreed scope.

These arrangements can support each other. A BCMS does not replace specialist emergency procedures or guarantee uninterrupted operation.

ISO develops standards. Certification bodies conduct certification activities. The organisation remains responsible for its operations and continuity arrangements.

Core Business Continuity Concepts

The following concepts introduce the handbook. They are an explanatory framework, not a separate official list of ISO 22301 principles.

Concept	Practical meaning	Business illustration
Impact over time	Understand how consequences increase as disruption continues.	Missed deliveries become more serious as customers exhaust their stocks.
Prioritisation	Decide what needs to resume first and at what capacity.	Urgent service requests are processed before routine administration.
Dependencies	Identify resources and relationships needed for delivery.	A booking service depends on staff, customer records and telecommunications.
Practical capability	Establish arrangements that can meet continuity needs.	An alternative workplace has sufficient capacity and appropriate access.
Clear authority	Define who can activate plans and make relevant decisions.	A designated incident lead can authorise relocation.
Coordinated communication	Provide accurate information to the right people.	Customers receive approved updates through an agreed channel.
Learning through exercises	Evaluate arrangements before relying on them during disruption.	An exercise reveals that an alternate supplier cannot meet the required volume.

Key takeaway: A continuity plan needs people, resources and workable arrangements behind it.

Understanding the Structure: HLS and HS

The High-Level Structure, or HLS, is the earlier term commonly associated with the shared management-system framework now generally described as the Harmonized Structure, or HS.

ISO 22301 follows the common management-system structure while retaining its business-continuity requirements.

Clause	Main subject	Business question
1	Scope	What does the standard address?
2	Normative references	Which referenced publication supports its application?
3	Terms and definitions	What do the relevant terms mean?
4	Context	What affects the BCMS, and what does it cover?
5	Leadership	Who directs the system and takes responsibility?
6	Planning	What could affect the system, and what should it achieve?
7	Support	What resources, competence and information are needed?
8	Operation	How are continuity requirements and capabilities established?
9	Performance evaluation	How are performance and effectiveness evaluated?
10	Improvement	How are weaknesses addressed and capability improved?

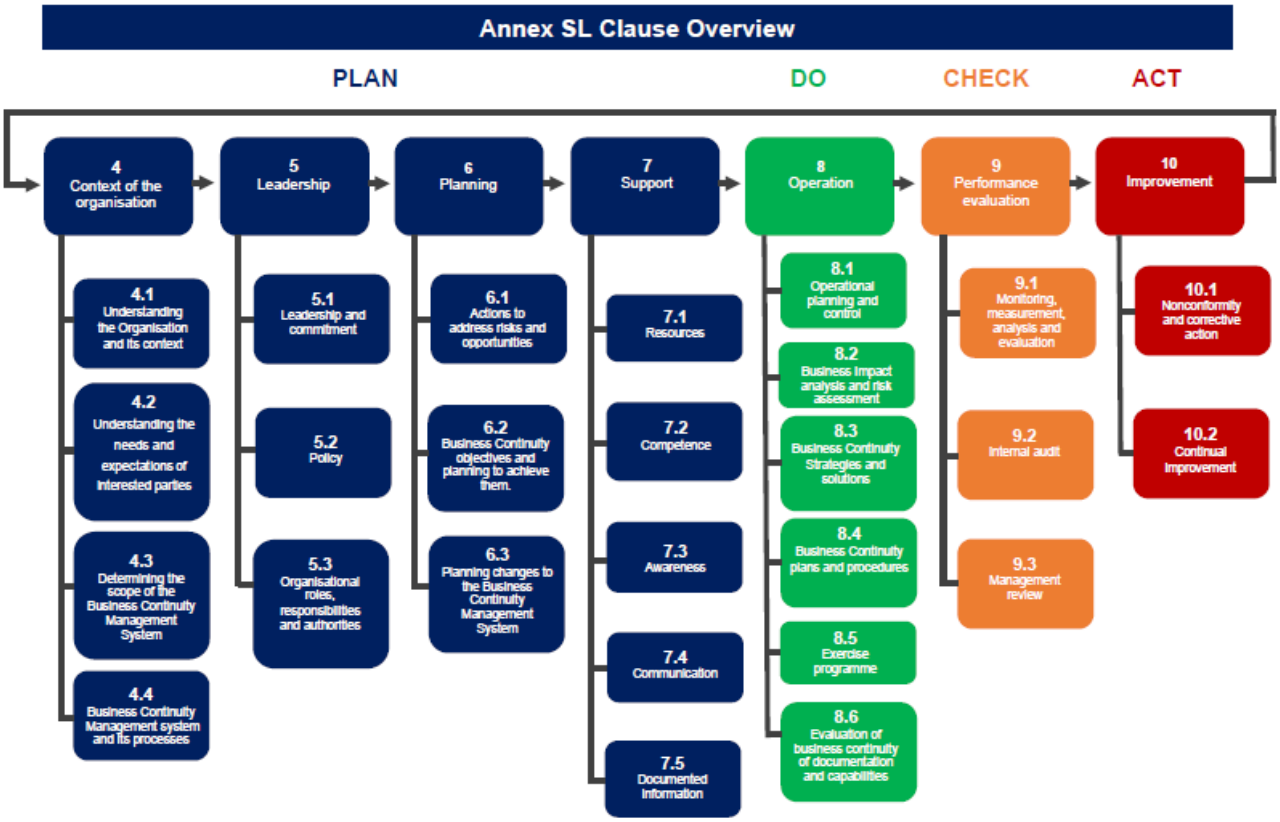


Illustration of integration

An organisation may coordinate document control, management reviews and internal-audit planning across business continuity, information security and quality management.

However, protecting information, controlling product quality and determining continuity priorities require different technical evaluations.

Further information is available in ISO's management-system structure guidance.

The Process Approach and PDCA

The process approach

Continuity outcomes depend on connected activities.

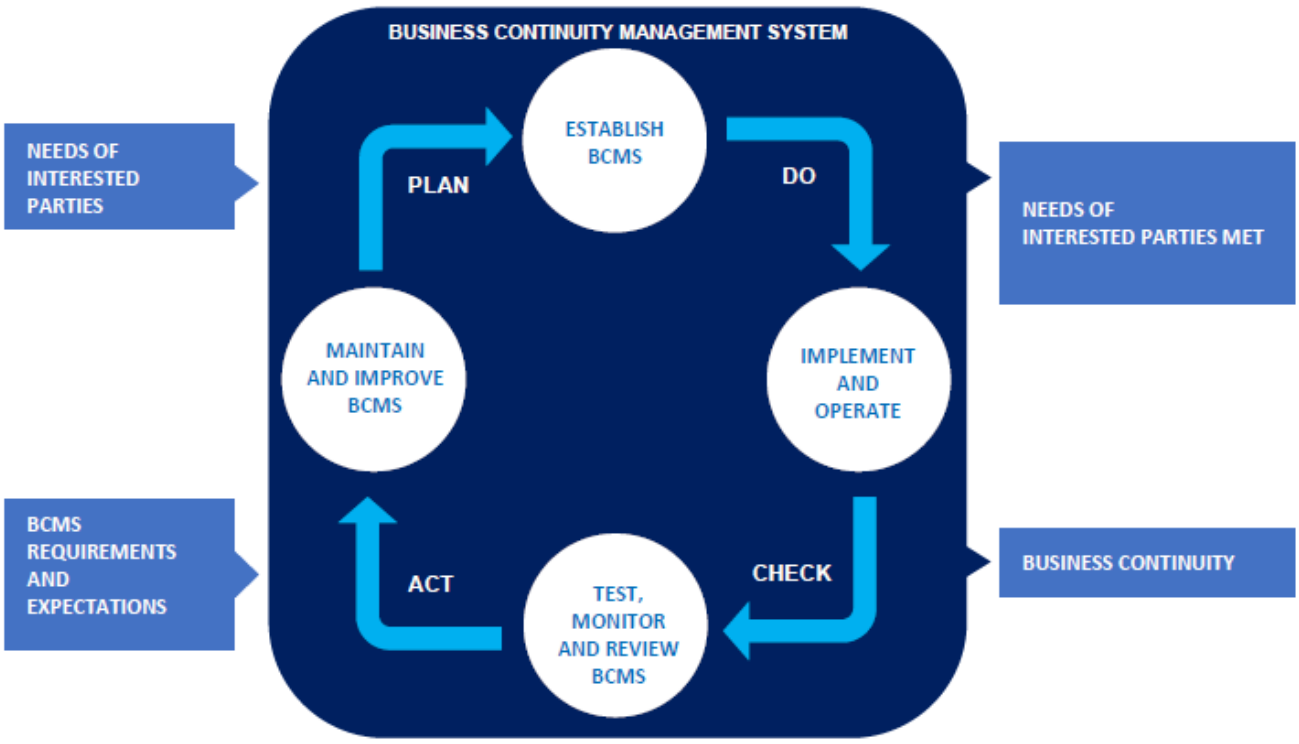
For example:

Customer requirement → service delivery → supporting activities → dependencies → continuity arrangements → evaluation

An alternative office may be available, but the business still cannot operate if staff cannot access records or obtain necessary approvals.

For relevant processes, understand:

- Which products or services they support.
- How disruption affects delivery over time.
- What resources and dependencies they need.
- What minimum capacity is acceptable.
- Who makes decisions.
- How continuity arrangements will be evaluated.



The PDCA cycle

Plan–Do–Check–Act connects continuity planning with implementation, evaluation and improvement.

Illustration: A customer-support company prepares for loss of access to its main office

Stage	What the company does	Possible evidence
Plan	Establishes service priorities and evaluates suitable alternative working arrangements.	Impact analysis, strategy decisions and an implementation plan.
Do	Provides required access, equipment, responsibilities and instructions.	Implemented arrangements and prepared personnel.
Check	Exercises the arrangements using a scenario in which the main office is unavailable.	Exercise results, timings and identified gaps.
Act	Addresses weaknesses and evaluates the revised arrangements.	Improvement actions and follow-up results.

An alternative-working policy does not establish that the organisation can maintain the required service capacity.

Key takeaway: Evaluate whether the capability meets the business need, not simply whether a plan exists.

Clauses 1 to 3: Scope, References and Terminology

Clause 1 Scope

ISO 22301 addresses the management system used to prepare for, respond to and recover from disruption.

The organisation defines its BCMS boundaries and the products and services covered, taking relevant circumstances and requirements into account.

Example: A company includes its customer-order and distribution service within the BCMS. It considers supporting activities and dependencies even where another team or external provider performs them.

Clause 2 Normative references

ISO 22300 is the normative reference supporting the standard's security and resilience terminology.

Consult the authorised ISO 22301 publication for its reference provisions.

ISO 22313 provides guidance on applying ISO 22301. Its guidance role differs from the requirements established by ISO 22301.

Clause 3 Terms and definitions

Term	Practical explanation	Illustration
Disruption	An event or situation that interrupts the delivery of products or services.	A facility becomes unavailable.
Business impact analysis - BIA	Evaluation of how disruption consequences develop over time.	Examining the effects of delayed order processing.
Prioritised activity	An activity requiring particular attention for continuity purposes.	Processing urgent customer orders.
Recovery time objective - RTO	A target timeframe for resuming a relevant activity or capability.	An organisation-selected target for restarting order processing.
Minimum acceptable capacity	The level of delivery needed during the relevant period of disruption.	Handling a defined volume of urgent requests.
Continuity solution	An implemented arrangement supporting continuity requirements.	A prepared alternative fulfilment arrangement.
Exercise	A planned activity used to evaluate or develop relevant capability.	Simulating loss of a distribution facility.

These are simplified explanations rather than formal definitions.

Clause 4 Business Context, Requirements and BCMS Boundaries

Why it matters

The BCMS needs to reflect the organisation's products, services, obligations and operating environment.

Illustrative business: A regional distributor supplies business customers from a central warehouse.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
4.1 Organisational context	Understand relevant internal and external matters, including climate-change relevance. The distributor considers concentrated operations, transport dependencies and potential weather-related access disruption.	Context evaluation and resulting decisions.
4.2.1 Interested-party requirements	Determine relevant parties and their requirements. The company reviews customer delivery commitments and important supplier dependencies.	Reviewed requirements and relevant agreements.
4.2.2 Legal and regulatory requirements	Identify applicable requirements relevant to continuity and keep the information current.	Applicable requirement information and review arrangements.
4.3.1 Scope considerations	Consider organisational circumstances, requirements and boundaries when determining coverage.	Scope decisions and supporting information.
4.3.2 BCMS scope	Define the products, services and organisational coverage, with appropriate justification for exclusions.	Documented scope and rationale.
4.4 BCMS processes	Establish connected processes for analysis, planning, exercising and improvement.	Process arrangements and implementation records.

For an already certified organisation adding activities or locations, our ISO certification scope-extension guide explains the certification considerations.

Key takeaway: Scope needs to reflect the service being protected and the dependencies supporting it.

Clause 5 Leadership, Policy and Decision Authority

Why it matters

Continuity decisions often cross departmental boundaries. Management needs to agree priorities and provide the resources to support them.

Illustrative business: A professional-services company has several teams competing for limited alternative-workplace capacity.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
5.1 Leadership commitment	Integrate continuity into organisational management and provide support. Management agrees priorities rather than allowing departments to make conflicting assumptions.	Priority decisions and resource commitments.
5.2.1 Establishing the policy	Set appropriate direction and commitments for the BCMS. The policy supports continuity objectives and improvement.	Approved policy.
5.2.2 Communicating the policy	Make the policy available and understood where relevant. Managers explain how continuity responsibilities affect their teams.	Communication and understanding.
5.3 Roles and authorities	Assign responsibilities and decision authority. Named personnel can activate arrangements and escalate unresolved issues.	Defined roles, deputies and approval arrangements.

Key takeaway: Agree priorities before a disruption creates competing demands.

Clause 6 BCMS Risks, Objectives and Planned Changes

Why it matters

The management system itself needs planning, resources and clear objectives.

Illustrative business: A growing services company finds that continuity activities depend on one coordinator.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
6.1.1 Determining risks and opportunities	Identify matters affecting BCMS results. The company recognises dependence on one person and inconsistent departmental participation.	System-level evaluations.
6.1.2 Addressing risks and opportunities	Plan responses and evaluate effectiveness. Departmental ownership and deputy arrangements are established.	Action plans and evaluated results.
6.2.1 Establishing objectives	Set suitable continuity objectives consistent with the policy and relevant requirements.	Defined objectives and measures.
6.2.2 Planning objective achievement	Determine actions, resources, responsibilities, timing and evaluation.	Assigned plans and progress results.
6.3 Planning BCMS changes	Introduce changes in a planned manner. Acquiring another business triggers review of coverage, responsibilities and resources.	Change planning and updated arrangements.

Clause 6 addresses planning for the BCMS.

Clause 8 develops the organisation’s operational continuity requirements and capabilities.

Key takeaway: The continuity programme needs dependable management arrangements of its own.

Clause 7 Resources, Competence and Accessible Information

Why it matters

People need preparation and accessible information before they can carry out continuity responsibilities.

Illustrative business: A manufacturer establishes a response team covering different shifts.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
7.1 Resources	Provide resources needed for the BCMS. The manufacturer evaluates staffing, communication facilities and exercise capacity.	Resource decisions and implemented arrangements.
7.2 Competence	Determine competence needs and evaluate actions taken. Response-team members demonstrate their assigned responsibilities.	Competence evaluations.
7.3 Awareness	Explain relevant policy, contributions, consequences and disruption responsibilities. Workers understand how to report an event and obtain instructions.	Understanding and awareness activities.
7.4 Communication	Determine relevant internal and external communication arrangements. Responsibilities for employee and customer updates are clear.	Communication arrangements and responsibilities.
7.5.1 Necessary documented information	Establish information required by the standard and needed for an effective BCMS.	Suitable methods, plans and records.
7.5.2 Creating and updating information	Identify, review and approve information appropriately. Revised contact and response information is checked before issue.	Approval and revision records.
7.5.3 Information control	Manage availability, protection, changes and retention. Relevant personnel can access plans when normal systems are unavailable.	Controlled copies and access checks.

Key takeaway: Check access to plans under disruption conditions, not only during normal working hours.

Clause 8 Business Impact Analysis and Disruption Risk

Why it matters

The organisation needs to understand disruption consequences before deciding which capabilities to prepare.

Illustrative business: A wholesaler processes customer orders and dispatches goods.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
8.1 Operational planning and control	Establish and control processes for delivering the required continuity capabilities.	Operating arrangements and relevant records.
8.2.1 Analysis and assessment processes	Establish and maintain suitable BIA and disruption-risk assessment arrangements, including review following relevant changes.	Methods and review results.
8.2.2 Business impact analysis	Evaluate impacts over time and determine continuity priorities, timeframes, capacity and dependencies.	BIA results and approved priorities.
8.2.3 Risk assessment	Identify and evaluate disruption risks affecting prioritised activities and required resources.	Risk assessment and treatment decisions.

Understanding the distinction

Question	Relevant activity
What happens if order processing stops for different periods?	Business impact analysis.
What could disrupt order processing or its dependencies?	Disruption-risk assessment.
What capability is needed to meet the resulting requirements?	Strategy and solution selection.

Illustrative BIA decisions

The following values are fictional business decisions, not ISO-prescribed targets.

Decision	Illustrative result
Point at which disruption consequences become unacceptable.	Eight hours without the prioritised order-processing activity.
Target for resuming that activity.	Within four hours.
Required initial capacity.	Twenty urgent orders per hour.
Important dependencies.	Trained staff, current order information, communication and a fulfilment route.

These decisions need supporting analysis. Choosing “four hours” because it sounds desirable is different from establishing a justified requirement.

Key takeaway: BIA examines consequences and priorities; risk assessment examines potential disruption.

Clause 8 Continuity Strategies and Solutions

Why it matters

A recovery requirement needs a feasible solution, suitable resources and implementation.

Illustrative business: The wholesaler evaluates how to maintain urgent order fulfilment if its primary warehouse is unavailable.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
8.3.1 Strategy and solution development	Use BIA and risk-assessment results to establish suitable approaches.	Strategy evaluation.
8.3.2 Identifying options	Consider solutions addressing relevant continuity needs. Options may include alternative premises, stock arrangements or external fulfilment.	Evaluated options and dependencies.
8.3.3 Selecting solutions	Select approaches capable of meeting requirements, considering relevant constraints and consequences.	Approved decisions and justification.
8.3.4 Resource requirements	Determine necessary people, information, facilities, equipment, suppliers and other resources.	Resource requirements and commitments.
8.3.5 Implementing solutions	Put selected arrangements into operation and maintain them.	Agreements, prepared resources and implementation records.

An alternative warehouse agreement is insufficient if the space, staff, information access or dispatch capacity cannot support the required service level.

Key takeaway: A strategy becomes useful through an implemented and evaluated capability.

Clause 8 Response Structure, Plans and Recovery

Why it matters

During disruption, people need clear authority, coordinated communication and usable instructions.

Illustrative business: A payroll company loses access to its normal processing facility near a customer deadline.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
8.4.1 Plans and procedures generally	Establish documented arrangements supporting response, continuity and recovery.	Coordinated procedures and plans.
8.4.2 Response structure	Define teams, responsibilities, authority and escalation. A designated lead coordinates operational and customer decisions.	Response roles and activation arrangements.
8.4.3 Warning and communication	Establish suitable detection, notification and communication arrangements. Relevant parties receive accurate, authorised updates.	Contact arrangements and communication records.
8.4.4 Business continuity plans	Provide usable information for responding and continuing prioritised activities.	Activation criteria, responsibilities and operational arrangements.
8.4.5 Recovery	Establish arrangements for returning from temporary measures to suitable ongoing operations.	Recovery criteria and transition decisions.

A plan should help people answer:

- What situation requires activation?
- Who decides and who acts?
- Which activities take priority?
- What resources and dependencies are needed?
- Who receives updates?
- How is recovery coordinated?

Continuity measures must respect safety, information security and applicable obligations. Disruption does not automatically justify bypassing them.

Key takeaway: Plans should help people make decisions and coordinate action under difficult conditions.

Clause 8 Exercises and Capability Evaluation

Why it matters

Exercises reveal whether assumptions, resources and procedures work together.

Illustrative business: A customer-contact centre exercises the loss of its primary telecommunications service.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
8.5 Exercise programme	Plan exercises that develop and evaluate relevant capabilities against suitable objectives.	Programme, scenarios, results and improvement actions.
8.6 Documentation and capability evaluation	Evaluate whether analysis, solutions, plans and capabilities remain suitable and effective.	Evaluations following exercises, disruptions and relevant changes.

Illustrating useful exercise results

Exercise finding	What it reveals
Alternate communications work, but only part of the required team can connect.	Capacity may not meet the continuity requirement.
The nominated decision-maker is unavailable and no deputy is understood.	Authority and succession arrangements need attention.
Customer messages contain conflicting recovery estimates.	Communication coordination needs improvement.
The solution works only because participants use undocumented personal knowledge.	Plans or knowledge arrangements may need revision.

A discussion-based exercise, technical test and operational simulation can provide different evidence. Select activities suited to the capability being evaluated.

Key takeaway: An exercise should produce learning and decisions, not simply attendance records.

Clause 9 Monitoring, Measurement and Evaluation

Why it matters

The organisation needs to know whether its BCMS and continuity capabilities achieve intended results.

Illustrative business: A service organisation reviews its annual continuity programme.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
9.1 Performance evaluation	Determine suitable measures, methods, responsibilities and timing, then evaluate the results.	Performance information and conclusions.

Examples of useful evaluation

Information collected	Question it helps answer
BIAs reviewed.	Do they reflect current services and dependencies?
Plans updated.	Are the arrangements accurate and usable?
Exercises completed.	Were the intended capabilities evaluated?
Recovery targets achieved during evaluation.	Was the required capacity achieved under relevant conditions?
Improvement actions closed.	Did the changes resolve the identified weakness?

Key takeaway: Completion counts need support from evidence of quality and effectiveness.

Clause 9 Internal Audit and Management Review

Internal audits examine conformity and implementation. Management review considers the BCMS's continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
9.2.1 Internal-audit purpose	Evaluate the BCMS against applicable criteria. An auditor follows a selected service from BIA through solution and exercise evidence.	Objective evidence and audit conclusions.
9.2.2 Audit programme	Establish suitable planning, scope, criteria, objectivity, reporting and follow-up.	Programme, reports and follow-up results.
9.3.1 Management review generally	Review the BCMS at planned intervals.	Review evidence.
9.3.2 Review inputs	Consider required information, including relevant changes, feedback, performance, exercises, risks and previous actions.	Complete review inputs.
9.3.3 Review outputs	Establish decisions concerning improvements, changes and resources.	Decisions, responsibilities and follow-up.

Key takeaway: Evaluation should influence priorities, resources and capability improvements.

Clause 10 Corrective Action and Continual Improvement

Why it matters

The organisation needs to address failures and improve its arrangements using evidence.

Illustrative business: An exercise finds that a supposedly available alternative supplier cannot provide the agreed minimum capacity.

Subclause	Meaning and specific application	Possible evidence
10.1 Response and correction	Address the nonconformity and relevant consequences. The organisation reassesses the affected continuity arrangement.	Finding and response records.
10.1 Cause evaluation and corrective action	Determine why the failure occurred and whether similar issues exist. Investigation identifies that supplier capacity was assumed rather than confirmed.	Cause evaluation and implemented changes.
10.1 Effectiveness evaluation	Check whether the revised arrangement meets the requirement.	Follow-up evaluation and results.
10.2 Continual improvement	Improve BCMS suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Lessons influence other supplier-dependent solutions.	Broader improvements and evaluated outcomes.

For further explanation, read managing nonconformities in ISO management systems.

Key takeaway: Revising the plan achieves little unless the underlying capability is also corrected.

Your Role in the Business Continuity Management System

Role	Practical contribution
Top management	Agree direction, priorities, responsibilities and resources.
Continuity coordinator	Coordinate analysis, planning, exercises and improvement.
Process owners	Explain impacts, dependencies and continuity requirements.
Response teams	Carry out assigned coordination and response responsibilities.
Employees	Understand relevant instructions and reporting arrangements.
IT personnel	Provide technology recovery aligned with business needs.
Human resources	Support people-related continuity arrangements.
Purchasing and supplier coordinators	Evaluate continuity dependencies and external commitments.
Communications personnel	Coordinate accurate and authorised updates.
Internal auditors	Evaluate evidence objectively and communicate conclusions.

Roles may be combined in smaller organisations. Responsibilities, deputies and decision authority should remain clear.

Putting the System Together: Loss of a Distribution Facility

A distributor prepares for a situation in which its main fulfilment facility becomes unavailable.

Stage	What the company does	Relevant connection
Understand requirements	Reviews customer commitments and operating dependencies.	Clause 4: Context and scope.
Agree priorities	Management approves continuity direction and responsibility.	Clause 5: Leadership.
Plan the programme	Establishes objectives, ownership and resources.	Clause 6: Planning.
Prepare people and information	Establishes competence, communication and accessible plans.	Clause 7: Support.
Analyse impacts	Determines priority activities, timeframes and capacity.	Clause 8: BIA.
Establish a solution	Implements suitable alternative fulfilment arrangements.	Clause 8: Strategies and solutions.
Coordinate response	Defines activation, decisions, communication and recovery.	Clause 8: Plans.
Exercise capability	Evaluates whether the arrangement meets requirements.	Clause 8: Exercises.
Evaluate the system	Reviews performance, audits and management decisions.	Clause 9: Evaluation.
Improve	Addresses weaknesses and checks results.	Clause 10: Improvement.

The value lies in the connection between the requirement and the demonstrated capability.

Organisations preparing for independent assessment can also consult our ISO certification audit-preparation checklist.

Quick Reference and Glossary

Expression	Meaning in this handbook
BCMS	Business Continuity Management System.
BIA	Business impact analysis.
RTO	Recovery time objective.
Maximum tolerable period of disruption	The period beyond which disruption consequences become unacceptable.
Minimum acceptable capacity	The delivery level required during the relevant disruption period.
Dependency	A resource or relationship needed to perform an activity.
Activation criteria	Conditions used to decide whether to initiate arrangements.
Exercise	A planned activity evaluating or developing capability.
Recovery	Activities supporting restoration to suitable ongoing operations.
Corrective action	Action addressing a nonconformity's cause to prevent recurrence.

Clause reminder

4: Understand → 5: Lead → 6: Plan → 7: Support → 8: Build and exercise capability → 9: Evaluate → 10: Improve

These activities interact continuously.

Closing Message from Veritas Assurance

A useful BCMS connects business priorities with the capability to respond, continue and recover.

Use this handbook to discuss responsibilities, dependencies and assumptions. Adapt the examples to your products, services, people and operating conditions.

Consult the authorised standard for the complete requirements.

To discuss independent certification assessment, contact Veritas Assurance with your services, operating locations, proposed BCMS scope and relevant external dependencies.

Further Reading and Document Information

- ISO 22301 Official standard information
- ISO 22301:2019 / Amd 1:2024 Climate-action changes
- ISO 22313 Guidance on applying ISO 22301
- ISO/TS 22317 Business impact analysis guidance

Document purpose: Understanding and awareness.
Technical basis: ISO 22301:2019, including Amendment 1:2024.
Examples: Hypothetical and illustrative; no universal recovery targets, legal conditions or mandatory templates are implied.

Disclaimer

This handbook is independently prepared by Veritas Assurance for general understanding and awareness of ISO 22301. It is not an ISO publication, an official interpretation or a substitute for the authorised standard.

Clause descriptions are explanatory summaries and do not cover every requirement. Consult the applicable authorised publications when establishing requirements or evaluating conformity. ISO publications remain subject to their respective copyright protections.

All scenarios, evidence examples, recovery targets and suggested methods are hypothetical and illustrative. Their suitability depends on the organisation's products, services, impacts, dependencies, responsibilities and applicable requirements.

This handbook does not provide site-specific emergency instructions, technical recovery procedures or legal advice. Obtain appropriate expertise and coordinate continuity measures with relevant safety, security and legal arrangements.

Using this handbook does not establish conformity, guarantee certification, demonstrate complete legal compliance or guarantee uninterrupted operations or recovery within a particular time. Certification decisions depend on applicable assessment, review and decision arrangements.