

GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

OBJECTIVE:

The scope of work as specified by the client specified a requirement for a gap analysis to be performed against the COOP/COG Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The purpose, as understood from the client, was three fold:

1. To provide a document which would assist the client and contractor in discovering all missing information (reveal gaps) in the current BCP with specific reference to the current COOP/COG report scores.
2. To provide a document which would assess the current BCP maturity level and provide the necessary foundational requirements for future development under a long range Business Continuity Management (BCM) project plan (2+ years).
3. To provide through the validation and maturity assessments the necessary tools to begin prioritizing current requirements and formulating next steps for the current contract project plan.

ASSUMPTIONS:

The gap analysis was limited to the information available, specifically the contents of the COOP/COG plan.

SUMMARY:

The gap analysis was created with two goals in mind, a plan validation and plan maturity level rating. The plan validation process was performed using three primary points of assessment; policy, design, and procedures. The maturity level rating was performed using five levels of assessment; failing, incomplete, low, medium, and high.

A list of the specific validation checks and maturity level ratings can be found in the Gap Analysis Outline document with the results of the gap analysis being categorized in a chart along with a set of notes relative to the findings.

GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

RESULTS:

Policy (Control & Authorization)

(SUMMARIZE POLICY FINDINGS...

Example: *Many elements of a policy were found to be missing. The plan did not reference specific policies governing and/or enforcing the plan which added to the general confusion of ownership, authorization and executing authority. This made it difficult to discern the plan element criteria for compliance, what the primary goals and objectives were, how the goals and objectives could be achieved, and how unsuccessful results or non-compliance should be addressed.)*

Scope & Control

Elements which define the scope and control of a policy are used to limit the influence of the policy on other policies, and to set specific goals for the policy adoption. By setting the scope and control of a policy you eliminate potential conflict of interest and create separation of duty.

Compliance Criteria

Elements which define the compliance criteria of a policy are used to “state” the required objectives and how it will assist in meeting specific statutory mandates. Compliance criteria should always reference the stated mandate as the basis for the policy authorizing authority.

Reporting Criteria

Elements which define the reporting criteria of a policy are used to provide oversight for policy enforcement and assist in identifying and controlling non-compliance.

Authorizing Authority

Elements which define authorizing authority of a policy are used to provide the power to control it’s validation, enforcement, management, and reporting. Authorizing authority is the basis for providing the identification of policy ownership.

GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

RESULTS: (cont.)

Design (Scope & Requirements)

(SUMMARIZE POLICY FINDINGS...)

Example: *Much of the design concepts have been laid out for a business continuity plan; however, many design requirements were found to be missing critical elements. Many elements of review and change control processes for the plan were not apparent. While many design concepts were laid out, the success criteria of the design objectives were not easily discernable.)*

Quantify & Qualify Plan Scope

Elements which quantify and qualify the specific plan scope are used to define who, where, what, when, and how of the plan, and provides focus to the plan objective. The plan scope is the primary basis for establishing boundaries and identifying uncontrollable limitations.

Plan Requirements

Elements which define the requirements are used to identify co-dependencies between objectives, with relationship to the necessary and/or available scaling of time, resources, and materials. The plan requirements, in conjunction with the plan scope, is the primary prerequisite for developing a plan design concept and alternate plan options.

Review & Change Controls

Elements which define the review process requirements and change control process requirements of the plan design are used to define the plan design management. Review and Change Controls are used to provide feedback from testing and exercises as well as isolated functional reviews, and assist in the plan design qualification process.

Success Criteria & Approval Requirements

Elements which define the success criteria are used to set a minimum standard of acceptance. The plan success criteria is used to determine if the proposed plan can be made enforceable and whether the plan policy objectives will be realized. The approval requirements by the authorizing authority of the plan policy holder is dependant upon the plan success criteria being realized.

GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

RESULTS: (cont.)

Procedures (Logical & Executable)

(SUMMARIZE POLICY FINDINGS...)

Example: *Many of the design concepts laid out for the business continuity plan referenced tables or charts which eluded to a decision making process or that steps were needed to be taken.; however, most plan elements did not provide logical step-by-step procedures. Where instructions were provided in the plan essential decision making processes, or checks for the user to ensure that the prescribed procedures were achieving the expected results, were not provided. Many procedures were mixed within plan concepts or scenarios, making it difficult to discern where the instructions began and the concepts left off, which added to the overall challenge to determine a distinct set of instructions and desired results.)*

Logical Steps

Elements which define a procedure should include step-by-step instructions that are logical, concise, and easily discernable for the user placed in “crisis mode” of operation. The procedures portion of the plan should be logically ordered, easily obtainable (indexed), referenced from the policy, and easily distinguished from plan design concepts or scenarios.

Decision Making Processes

Elements which define a procedure should include decision making processes that assist the user placed in “crisis mode” by removing fear, uncertainty and doubt. The decision making process of the procedure should include a priority driven and concise set of options, with aids to assist the user in making the next logical step.

Supportable, Executable, and Repeatable

Elements which define a procedure should be supportable in theory and executable in reality. The procedure should also be repeatable and based upon proven and reliable support methods and not conditional or seasonal support methods.

User Review Checks & Expected Results

Elements which define a procedure should include a checklist for review by the user placed in “crisis mode” to assist them in ensuring that critical steps are not bypassed or overlooked. The review checks of the procedure should also include expected results at each step so that the user can in a quick and certain manner determine the success of each executed step of the procedure.

GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

CONCLUSION:

(SUMMARIZE OVERALL GAP ANALYSIS FINDINGS...)

Example: *The gap analysis findings seem to suggest that the current COOP/COG plan has some elements of a BCM design concept. While some sections of the document lack full requirement definitions, many of the requirements for developing a BCM program can be found. The weakest areas of the plan are found in pervasive lack of policy and procedures throughout the document.*

Those procedures that are found within the plan seem to be embedded within documented design concepts, or potential scenarios, leaving the reader uncertain where the concepts leave off and the instructions begin. The procedures themselves lack an overall decisive and logical approach assuring the reader of essential steps, and where necessary, controlled decision (enumerated variables with aides in selecting the most appropriate choice) points required to accomplish the plan objectives.

The lack of prevailing policy controls (scope, compliance, reporting, authorization) makes it difficult to determine governance and who has authorization authority of the plan and ownership for its compliance and execution (i.e. what is the agency policy on “lines of succession”, who authorizes its design and use, under what conditions, and who ensures it is compliant, with what regulatory/criteria, and who is authorized to execute it?). The lack of stated compliance criteria also makes it difficult to determine if the plan objectives are designed to align with appropriate requirements.)