

Transport Operator's Business Disaster Recovery Planning



TruckSure

By Philip Toohill

Should a disaster strike – how would your business fare?

Most of our articles and newsletters have been for the benefit of transport operators in general but more specifically directed towards drivers and owner operators.

Recent New Zealand and worldwide disasters and our involvement directly through our MultiSure clients and their experiences in Christchurch has prompted us to suggest a new business strategy – Business Disaster Recovery Planning

Well it is not exactly a new strategy but of course when disaster strikes then we all sit up and take note.

Hurricane Sandy's devastation in North America is just the latest reminder!!

Business Disaster Recovery Planning is something you SHOULDN'T ignore.

A disaster like the Christchurch earthquake can happen at any time, day or night. Our nation sits precariously on islands that straddle fault lines, and volcanic vents and eruptions from Mount Ruapehu have at times disrupted businesses, roads and airports. These 'acts of God' send a very real warning to both businesses and private citizens to remind us that business disaster recovery planning is something you shouldn't ignore. A pre-emptive strike can positively influence your recovery. There are many aspects to review when it comes to your business recovery plan with no 'one size fits all' model available. Below are some important basics that you can implement readily.

1. Check your internal safety.

Internal safety - Have you reviewed your premises to be sure the fit-out is safe and items are secured? Do you have the regulatory fire equipment? Do you have food and water stocks on-site? First Aid? Do you have a clear and documented evacuation plan? Review and cement your plans as a team. Impose regular reviews and discussions of the plan, keeping new team members up to speed.

2. Store important documentation 'in the cloud'

Evolving cloud technology and the virtual workplace have had a hugely positive effect on the recovery process. Important documentation can now easily be stored offsite 'in the cloud' as well as there being a definite trend towards web-based software. At the very least, review (and test!) your current backup procedures.

3. Can your staff work remotely?

Which of your staff could work remotely with minimal disruption? Why not investigate remote computer connections

in the short term rather than as a reaction to a disaster? There can be positives to having the right staff work remotely. It's also easier than it seems and for some industries it's becoming the way of the future.

4. Review your paperless possibilities.

Have you reviewed your paperless possibilities? What do you currently store in hard copy that should be scanned and sucked into your server or a 'cloud' based backup solution?

5. Store vital business documents in a safe location.

What about your most vital business documents? Do you have the originals stored in a safe location as well as 'soft' copies (stored in your computer server with adequate backup of course)? Examples include: insurance policies, key client and staff contracts.

6. Do you have adequate insurance cover?

Insurances - Do you have cover for site and equipment, vehicles, electronics, furniture and fittings, stock, wages and salaries, loss of profit, additional/increased cost of operating your business, claim preparation costs (accountant, solicitor, and insurance advisor fees), reinstatement of records? And the list goes on.

7. Store team members' contact details on your mobile phone

Finally and most importantly, do you have the names, mobile and home phone numbers and personal email addresses of all your team members stored in your mobile phone or in a safe place off site? This is extremely important in the immediate aftermath to coordinate your team remotely in the following weeks.

We would also recommend that you also have a record of your key suppliers and customers as you will want to keep them immediately informed of your situation and establish what you can do to assist each other.

We recommend you do your research and establish risk management that best fits your business. The NZ civil defence website www.civildefence.govt.nz is a great starting point and a TruckSure broker is always available to give specialty advice www.trucksure.co.nz.



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