

Trends in Audit Findings Regarding Disaster Recovery Preparations

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Why do we care?

What are examples of disasters?

What should disaster recovery plans address?

- Failure of equipment or applications
- Loss of data or data integrity
- Unavailable staff
- Environmental impact – Destruction of building or supporting utilities

What is audit looking for?

- Backup of data and application files
- Formal testing of reliability of backup files
- Formal and complete disaster recovery plans
- Periodic testing of disaster recovery plans
- Mechanisms to limit downtime if systems are mission critical or many people depend on the system/application

What backup file problems has internal audit seen?

- Limited/incomplete backup of data and application files
- Backup equipment or files located in insecure locations
- Backup files not being moved offsite
- Backup files stored in people's homes
- Failure to formally test reliability of backup files

What disaster recovery plan problems has internal audit seen?

- Missing, incomplete, or out-of-date plans
- Plans that were not formally tested
- Plans that did not involve the businesses owners

What is internal audit looking for in a disaster recovery plan?

- Definition of critical recovery times
- Identification of key staff responsible for:
 - directing the recovery process,
 - performing the recovery process, and
 - testing recovery results
- Documentation of critical equipment needed in the recovery process and where the equipment can be obtained
- Documentation of the recovery process

What internal audit is looking for in a disaster recovery plans (continued)

- Identification of key reports needed to validate the success of the recovery process
- Documentation of the process for testing the success of the recovery process

Note: These last items need to involve the business owners

What is internal audit expecting in terms of the documentation for the recovery process?

Instructions so skilled technical staff not in the unit could successfully complete the recovery process

A good test - Ask one of the folks here that doesn't work in your unit, if they could recover your system with only the documentation in your plan

**If systems are mission critical
or many rely on the system
internal audit will be looking for
single point of failure risks**

Disaster Recovery Planning may not be the only thing your unit needs to enhance

As your unit considers disaster recovery planning it should also consider:

- Crisis Management Planning
- Continuity Planning

Questions?

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