

Risk Management & Emergency Preparedness

A toolkit for Small and Medium Enterprises

WESG

West End
Security Group



City of Westminster

Introduction

If there is anything that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted to us, it is that risk assessment, business continuity and preparedness is something that needs to be considered as a priority.

Becoming individually and collectively more resilient means that a business can reduce the likelihood and impact of known risks and increase its chances to respond and recover from an unforeseen incident.

No single business is the same, and each business is responsible for understanding the risks they face as an organisation, identifying critical points of failure and taking proportionate steps to manage and mitigate them.

Within this toolkit, we have outlined five key readiness criteria to help you understand how prepared your business is.

Risk Assessment – identifying and assessing the risks

Crisis Response – being able to respond quickly to an emergency

Planning – having a simple business continuity plan in place

Informed Staff – staff are trained and understand the risks and the business' plans

Collaboration – Together we are stronger

How to use this toolkit

While larger organisations employ staff and dedicated resources to ensure they have robust risk plans in place, this guide is intended for small and medium sized enterprises. It contains some Readiness Criteria to help you assess how prepared you are.

Within each criterion, you will find some 'core' steps that are applicable to almost all businesses, and others that are 'leading practice' which may be relevant to a business, depending on its type or size.

Alongside the Readiness Criteria is a toolkit with some resources to help you understand your risks and take some low or no cost steps to be better prepared.

Readiness Criteria

1. Risk Assessment – identifying and assessing the risk to your business

Target Outcome

Your business has an understanding of the most significant risks applicable to it, based on how likely they are to happen and what their impacts might be. This information is used to inform risk management decisions, including the development of a proportionate emergency plan.

Minimum Standards

- Risk Assessment template completed
- Awareness of national and local terrorism threat levels
- Prepare for absence of key staff and/or interruption of core suppliers
- Consideration is given to the risk of crime to staff and customers

Leading Practice

- Collaborating with neighbouring businesses and landlords to understand the risks in your neighbourhood
- Consideration is given to the business' reputational risk
- Specific terrorism threat assessment has been undertaken

Guidance and Supporting Documentation

- Risk assessment toolkit. Complete the Risk Assessment Template ([please see page 6](#))
- National Terrorism Threat level
mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels
- National Counter-terrorism Security Office Crowded Places Guidance
gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance
- National Cyber Security Action Plan for SMEs (takes 3-5 minutes to complete)
ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/actionplan

2. Crisis Response – being able to respond quickly to an emergency

Target Outcome

Procedures are in place and are tested regularly so that your staff are able to respond quickly to an emergency to minimise harm to staff and customers as well as minimise damage to your business.

Minimum Standards

- Emergency evacuation procedures, including a choice of emergency exits in place
- Emergency exits clearly marked and unobstructed
- An appointed person to make decisions and take charge in an emergency (and a deputy)
- An ability to communicate with others and stay updated in a crisis
- An ability to lock down the premises quickly, including managing any customers outside
- One or more staff are signed up to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Twitter feed and a reliable news outlet
- Evacuation and lock down procedures regularly tested involving all staff

Leading Practice

- An emergency 'grab-bag'
- Trained first-aiders who might be able to assist any injured persons
- Evacuation and lock-down procedures shared with neighbouring properties
- Joint tests undertaken with neighbouring businesses

Guidance and Supporting Documentation

- MPS Twitter feed
twitter.com/metpoliceuk
- MPS Events Twitter Feed
twitter.com/MetPoliceEvents
- MPS Westminster Twitter Feed
twitter.com/MPSWestminster
- Cross-sector Safety & Security Communications Information
[thecssc.com](https://www.thecssc.com)
- Sources of First Aid advice
[citizenaid.org](https://www.citizenaid.org)
[redcross.org.uk](https://www.redcross.org.uk)
[sja.org.uk](https://www.sja.org.uk)
- Crisis Response Check List
[gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/evacuation-invacuation-lockdown-protected-spaces](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crowded-places-guidance/evacuation-invacuation-lockdown-protected-spaces)

3. Planning – having a simple business continuity plan in place

Target Outcome

Your business has a simple business continuity plan that will enable it to respond to an incident in order to minimise the impact on critical services and processes.

Minimum Standards

- A list of business emergency contacts is available to all key staff
- A list of key suppliers and their contact details is easily to hand and available away from the premises
- A list of key customers and clients and their contact details is available easily and away from the premises, such as a cloud hosting platform
- A floorplan for your premises can be accessed remotely
- Mains switches and valves (ie for electricity, gas and water) are clearly labelled for emergency services, and all staff know their location
- Up to date contact information is held for all your staff and can be accessed remotely
- Insurance cover is in place to cover your business for business disruption (including terrorist attacks)

Leading Practice

- Alternative sources for key supplies have been identified
- Understanding the risks of landlords or neighbours that might impact your business
- Access to an alternative workspace for use, if applicable
- Specific terrorism threat assessment has been undertaken
- Plans are in place to recover IT systems
- Plans are in place to cater for the loss/failure of key equipment
- Plans are in place to cover staff with critical/unique skills
- All staff are aware of the business continuity plan and it is tested once a year

Guidance and Supporting Documentation

- Introduction to business continuity
[westminster.gov.uk/businesses/preparing-your-business-emergencies](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/businesses/preparing-your-business-emergencies)
- Ten Minute Business Continuity Plan
[westminster.gov.uk/businesses/preparing-your-business-emergencies/creating-business-continuity-plan](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/businesses/preparing-your-business-emergencies/creating-business-continuity-plan)
- National Cyber Security Centre – Cyber Aware
[ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home)
- National Cyber Security Centre – Information for small and medium sized organisations
[ncsc.gov.uk/section/information-for-small-medium-sized-organisations](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/information-for-small-medium-sized-organisations)

4. Informed staff – staff are trained and understand the risks and the business' plans

Target Outcome

Your business has staff who are informed and practiced in order to respond quickly and professionally.

Minimum Standards

- Staff have been given specific roles to do in the event of an emergency and understand what they are responsible for
- Deputies are in place for any key roles
- Key staff and all security staff have undertaken online terrorism awareness training
- Staff are aware of the business continuity and emergency plans

Leading Practice

- All staff have completed online terrorism awareness training
- Details of emergency plans are included in staff induction processes
- Plans are regularly tested and all staff have participated in these tests

Guidance and Supporting Documentation

- ACT Awareness eLearning ct.highfieldelearning.com/
- ACT App gov.uk/government/news/new-act-app-launched
- MPS Protective Security Operations Shield App play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.app.psoshield&hl=en_GB
apps.apple.com/us/app/pso-london-shield/id1482303493
- Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) See Check and Notify (SCaN) Training cpni.gov.uk/Scan
- MPS Staying Safe from Terrorism met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/terrorism-in-the-uk/staying-safe-from-terrorism/

5. Collaboration – together we are stronger

Target Outcome

Businesses in a street, square or neighbourhood work together to support each other and achieve a more resilient neighbourhood.

Minimum Standards

- Contact details are shared across neighbouring businesses to allow for communication in the event of an emergency
- Risks and plans are shared between businesses in order to identify gaps and overlaps through peer challenge
- Businesses in a small area have evacuation and lock-down plans that are co-ordinated and complement each other
- Regular communication with neighbouring businesses is encouraged, so it is easier to work together during an incident
- Information is shared between businesses and security teams

Leading Practice

- Crisis response plans are occasionally tested with neighbouring businesses
- Professional advice and briefings are arranged for groups of businesses
- The area promotes a positive security stance in order to deter hostiles and promote public safety
- Street-briefings are arranged for security staff in the area
- Work with Business Improvement Districts or landowners to establish a local network to build resilience
- Information is shared with the local policing team and any relevant business networks

Toolkit

Business Risk Assessment Template

Understanding the different risks that you face as a business is key to deciding what, if any, proportionate steps you might want to take to mitigate them. The likelihood of many of these risks will be outside of your control, however there are still steps that can be taken to help reduce the impact on your business, your staff and your customers. By working with neighbouring premises, you will likely be able to achieve more.

The National Risk Register sets out the assessment of the likelihood and potential impacts of a range of different risks that may directly affect the UK. The publication of information on these risks is intended to encourage public debate on security and help organisations, individuals, families and communities, who want to do so, to prepare for emergencies. This informs the London Community Risk Register, and the council and its partners localise it to produce the Westminster Borough Risk Register.

These have been summarised below and presented in a way that will help you understand the risks your business may typically face, as well as some of the local context.

Risk		Westminster Context	Business Risk Assessment			
Risk Area	Example Hazard		How likely is this to impact your business?	What would the impact be?	Do you have existing control measures?	Do you need to do more?
Failure of utility infrastructure	This might be a failure, in the gas, electricity, water or telecommunications supply to your building or business gas supply.	In 2019 there were 30 occasions where the council was notified of utilities failures impacting multiple premises. Many of these are short-lived, e.g. 4-8 hours. However, the Kingsway fire in 2015 resulted in many hundreds of premises being without gas or electricity for three days.				
Denial of Access to the Premises	There are many events that might not directly impact your premises but might prevent you from accessing your premises – e.g. a nearby crime scene, fire or gas leak.	In 2019 there were 18 occasions where the Council were notified of incidents that resulted in evacuations or reduced access to properties. Many of these are short-lived, e.g. 4-8 hours. In 2020, an unexploded WW2 bomb caused the evacuation of a part of Soho for 24 hours.				
Transport Disruption	There are many events, ranging from road traffic collisions, protests or floods that can cause transport disruption.	Transport disruption is commonplace in Westminster. It has a greater impact on businesses that are more reliant on deliveries or vehicular access or that are near sites that attract regular disruption. Large scale protests, e.g. Extinction Rebellion, can cause disruption over an extended period.				
Disease Hazards	Pandemic disease, or influenza is infrequent but, as 2020 showed, can have a very significant impact resulting in staff absence; changed working practices and changed legislative frameworks.	There is no greater risk to Westminster than there is anywhere else in London of an outbreak originating within the city.				

Business Risk Assessment Template (continued)

Risk		Westminster Context	Business Risk Assessment			
Risk Area	Example Hazard		How likely is this to impact your business?	What would the impact be?	Do you have existing control measures?	Do you need to do more?
Environmental Health Risks	<p>There are a range of environmental or public health risks caused by hazardous materials.</p> <p>For most businesses, food supply contamination and legionella are the most relevant.</p>	<p>The most likely to impact businesses relate to food supply contamination or a legionella outbreak. However, a disease may spread more rapidly and be more difficult to contain due to the high density of population.</p>				
Major Events/ Protests	<p>There are regular major events, protests, marches and rallies across the borough which reach 100,000+ attendees.</p>	<p>While the council and police work hard to plan for events and seek to manage the impact of protests on businesses – they can be significant. Businesses near locations that might be a focus for a protest, e.g. embassies or government departments, or on regular routes for marches are liable to be impacted to a much greater extent.</p>				
Public Disorder	<p>Public disorder can be a threat to the safety of staff and customers; cause damage to property and vehicles and/or increase fear and anxiety.</p>	<p>There are regular protests, marches and rallies across the borough - these are generally peaceful but do have the potential for public disorder.</p> <p>Other violent incidents, such as between gangs, can have a similar impact.</p>				
Industrial action	<p>While industrial action can impact on a wide range of industries and services, the biggest impact arises from those that impact on critical infrastructure upon which many people rely.</p>	<p>Over recent years industrial action on the transport network, has been the most common scenario where industrial action has had an impact on Westminster.</p> <p>For example, in 2016-2018 industrial action on rail networks caused significant disruption over many months.</p>				

<p>Natural Hazards</p>	<p>Natural hazards include weather events, such as high winds and snow, and also groundwater or surface flooding.</p> <p>They can give rise to transport disruption or damage infrastructure but can also directly impact your premises and property or prevent access for staff or customers.</p>	<p>Storm Ciara. Feb 2020</p> <p>Staff may experience transport difficulties and roads may be closed.</p> <p>The council manages the gritting of core roads via the Westminster winter service plan.</p> <p>Much of Westminster is heavily urbanised with effective drainage systems, however significant prolonged rainfall across the city could cause localised surface water flooding.</p>				
<p>Terrorist threat</p>	<p>The national threat level is set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre.</p> <p>Terrorist attacks cause harm to people and/or damage to property. They will also give rise to crime scenes and disruption.</p> <p>An attack could directly impact your staff, customers or premises or occur nearby.</p>	<p>There are numerous high-profile buildings or crowded places in Westminster, that may prove attractive to a terrorist. There have been a number of successful and attempted terrorist attacks in Westminster.</p> <p>Many factors impact on the risk to a premises, including the nature of the business, its clientele, its location and its surroundings. Being well prepared and having effective protective security measures can help reduce this.</p>				
<p>Cyber Security (Infrastructure)</p>	<p>Cyber attacks can disrupt systems and result in the theft or loss of data, and damage consumer trust.</p> <p>A cyber attack might also impact on financial, transport or utility networks.</p>	<p>There is no greater risk to Westminster than there is anywhere else in London. There is no specific physical location a cyber-attack would be more likely to take place and such an attack is not constrained to physical borders.</p>				

Preparedness Checklist

The checklist below has been put together to help you track your progress against the five Preparedness Criteria.

Preparedness Criteria		Yes	No	N/A
Risk Assessment – “I know and understand the risks my business faces”				
Understanding overall risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessment completed Key risks shared with landlord and neighbours 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware of the national and local Terrorism Threat Level is and what this means for the business Specific terrorism threat assessment has been undertaken 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime (i.e., burglary, violent crime, theft, fraud – including cyber crime)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of the risks to staff from crime undertaken Assessment of the risks to customers from crime undertaken Crime prevention advice received from local police team Assessment of the risk from cyber crime 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crisis Response – “My business is able to respond quickly to an emergency”				
Evacuation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency evacuation procedures in place for the building (e.g. fire and bombs) including a choice of evacuation points? Emergency exits clearly marked and unobstructed Plan includes any queues, outside or al fresco areas or special events Procedures are regularly tested Procedures are shared with neighbouring properties 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lockdown Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic Lockdown plan in place for the building Plan includes any queues, outside or al fresco areas or special events Procedures are regularly tested Procedures are shared with neighbouring properties 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an appointed person, and a deputy, to make decisions and take charge in an emergency Staff are able to communicate with others and stay updated in a crisis Key staff are signed up to the MPS Twitter Feed and a reliable news outlet An emergency ‘grab-bag’ is in place There are trained first-aiders who might be able to assist any injured persons 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Planning – “My business has a continuity plan in place and has taken sensible steps to make sure we are prepared”

Business continuity plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Minute Business Continuity Plan in place • Staff are trained and aware of the plan • A list of key business emergency contacts is available and can be accessed remotely • The business continuity plan has been tested 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contingencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mains switches and valves are clearly labelled and staff are familiar with their locations • Staff have access to an alternative workspace or to work from home • Up to date contact information for all your staff available and can be accessed remotely • Plans in place to cover staff with critical/unique skills • A floor plan for the premises is available and can be accessed remotely • Key customers/clients have been identified and an up to date contact list for them is available and can be accessed remotely • Key suppliers have been identified and a up to date contact list for them is available and can be accessed remotely • Plans in place to cater for the loss/failure of key equipment • Alternative sources for key supplies are in place 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Informed staff – “We have staff who are trained and understand the risks and how to respond”

Staff Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of the business continuity and emergency plans • Staff have been given specific roles to do in the event of an emergency • Deputies are in place for any key roles • Staff have completed ACT counter-terrorism awareness e-learning • Security staff have completed ACT counter-terrorism awareness e-learning • The right number of staff are trained in first aid procedures • Details of emergency plans are included in staff induction processes • Plans are regularly tested and all staff have participated in these tests 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Collaboration – “We work with our neighbours so we can support each other and co-ordinate our responses”

Working in Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact details for your neighbouring businesses are held in case of an emergency • Neighbouring businesses have key contact details for your business • Evacuation and Lockdown plans are shared with nearby businesses and co-ordinate and complement each other, e.g. evacuation points are co-ordinated • Response plans are occasionally tested with neighbouring businesses • Risks and plans are shared between businesses in order to identify gaps and overlaps through peer challenge • Professional advice and briefings are arranged for groups of businesses • The area promotes its positive security stance in order to deter hostiles and promote public safety • Street-briefings are arranged for security staff in the area • Neighbouring businesses share details of promotions or events that may impact others 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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