



Annual Awards 2011 Entry Form

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Please tick the relevant box below to indicate which category you wish to enter

Risk Manager of the Year	<input type="checkbox"/>	People Risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Risk	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational Risk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk Management Young Achiever of the Year*	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Applicants for Risk Management Young Achiever of the Year should indicate their date of birth here:

N.B. If you wish to enter more than one category, a separate entry form is required for each category.

Please type your executive summary here. The summary should be no more than 500 words. Please use Arial font, size 11, at 1.5 line spacing. Use additional spacing between paragraphs.

IT disruptions are the second most common disruption affecting organisations and in 2009/10 equated to 65% of the total number of disruptions at Essex County Council (ECC). IT disruptions not only have the potential to disrupt a large number of key services, but can also extend beyond geographic boundaries and impact multiple sites. During 2009/10, ECC experienced 58 IT disruptions.

Careful monitoring and analysis of IT disruptions prompted the RMCS Business Continuity Team to research global best practice in mitigation. This led to the implementation of Business Continuity (BC) software; which has seen a rise in use by organisations to address emergencies or business disruptions.

After exploring products, ECC invested in the software Shadow-Planner, which offered a resilient internet based business continuity planning tool capable of enabling key service delivery across the whole authority during IT disruptions. Shadow-Planner (SP) was rolled out across ECC during 2010 and now has all 20 service group and 160 service areas BC plans uploaded. Staff with BC roles have also been trained from each service group and service area, which has led to an increase in knowledge across the authority on how to respond and manage disruptions.

SP not only provides staff with access to key documents for manual workarounds via the internet; but excellent training delivery by the RMCS Business Continuity Team has facilitated discussions between service groups which continues to lead to better planning. Development by RMCS Business Continuity Team on the functionality and flexibility of the tool has more than halved the time taken to manage plans and has freed managers from low value maintenance tasks, ensuring a smooth running and efficient Business Continuity Management (BCM) programme.

The importance of SP was evidenced on 31st January 2011, when it was used to manage a building disruption requiring the relocation of 60 staff. The Incident Management Team were able to access plans, enabling Champions to cross check resources and coordinate response. This not only enabled the delivery of key services from Adult Social Care and Schools, Children & Families but contributed to saving the Council £10,450 as staff were



Executive Summary

able to continue working.

ECC must comply with the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA); however the RMCS Business Continuity Team not only meet these requirements but strive towards industry best practice to enable service delivery in the most efficient and effective manner. Since implementing SP, ECC Corporate Leadership Team has realised the power of analysing incident data and have now established a pioneering and innovative team by bringing together the RMCS Business Continuity Team , Strategic and Operational Risk Management, Health & Safety, Insurance and ISIS under the umbrella *Risk Management Consultancy Services* (RMCS). Monthly statistics are now collated into the Risk Report to provide an even more effective resource for analysing incidents/issues likely to cause service disruption so scarce resources may be better targeted. Our vision is for an effective Risk Management framework which provides continuity of knowledge and information management processes, improved compliance and most importantly improved customer service delivery.

Word Count 498

Please write your main submission here. The submission should be no more than 1500 words. Please use Arial font, size 11, at 1.5 line spacing. Use additional spacing between paragraphs.

Revolutionising Resilience

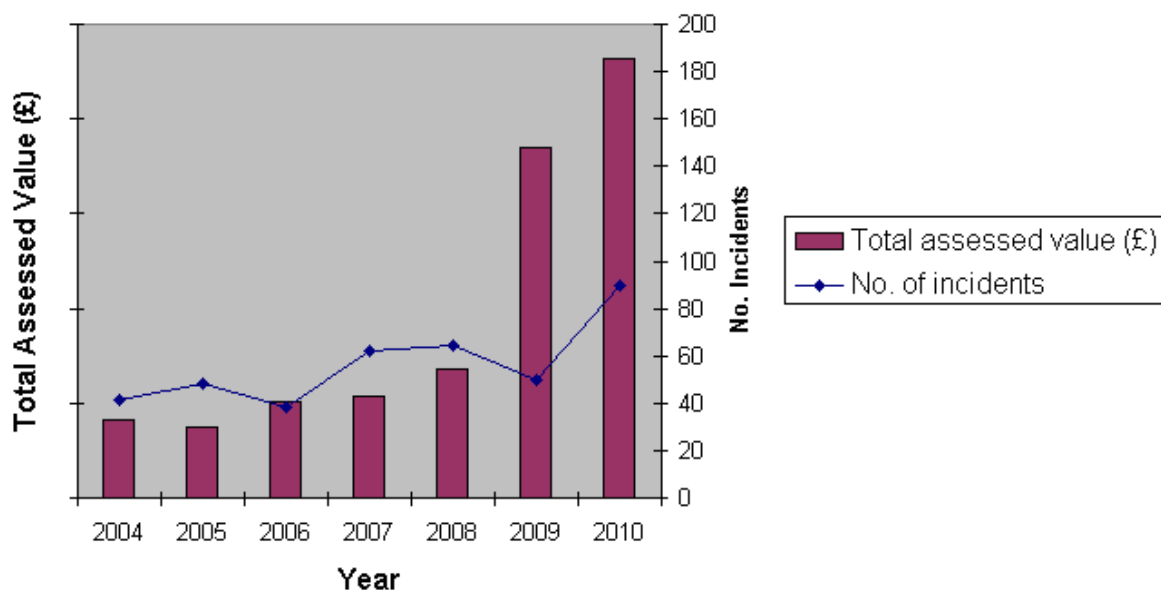
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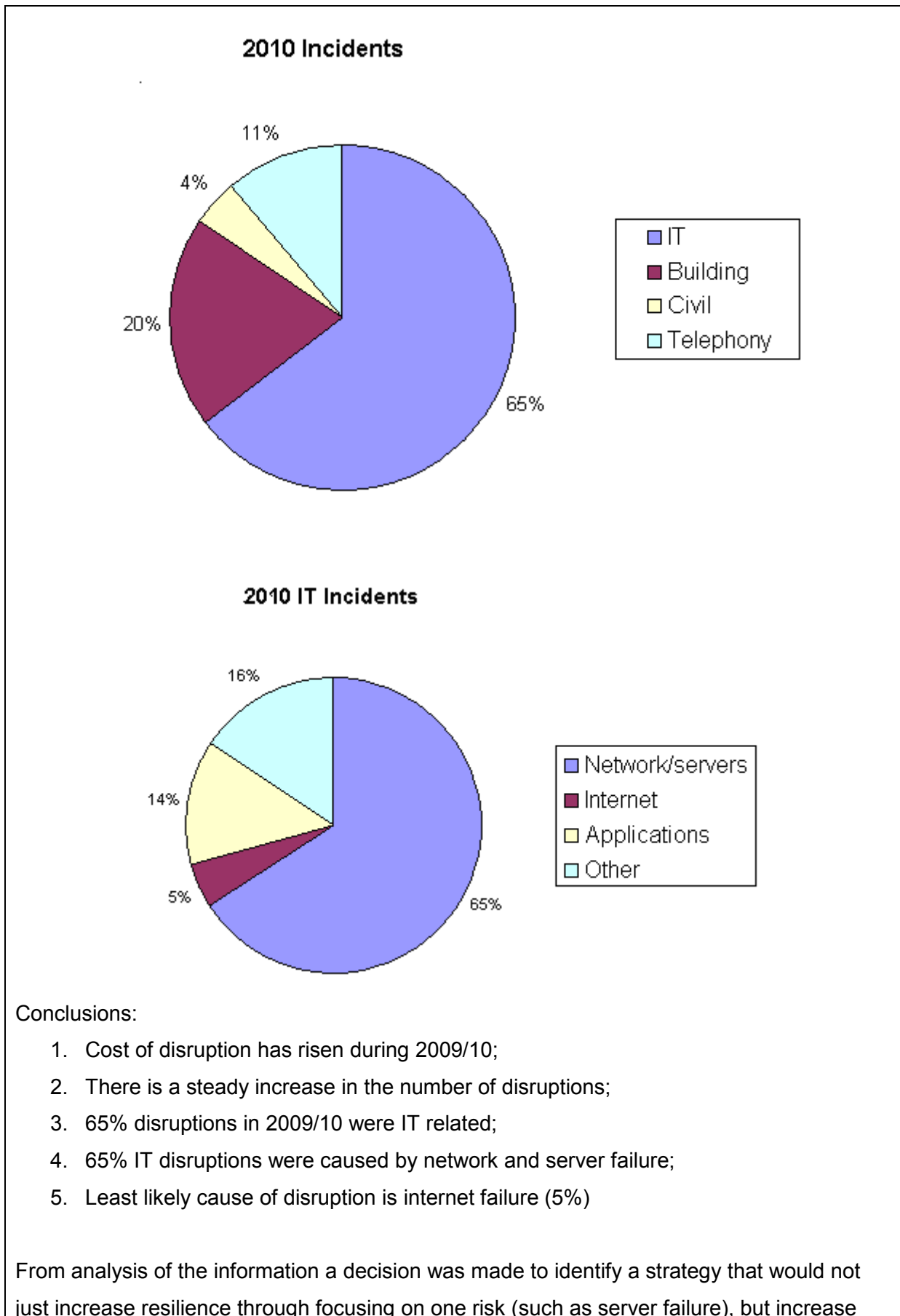
Loss of IT has a detrimental effect on Essex County Council (ECC) and can disrupt a great number of key services across multiple locations. The Chartered Management Institute's survey (March 2011) found a loss of IT was the second most common disruption affecting 34% of organisations (with extreme weather as the first). Often the two are interlinked. When extreme weather occurs, large numbers of staff work remotely putting pressure on specific IT applications causing them to fail. In 2010, IT failures at ECC equated to 65% of the total number of disruptions and 89% of the estimated cost of disruption (taking into account lost staff time).

Targeting Resilience Initiatives

Working together with services and partners carefully monitoring disruptions allowed us to analyse the causes and frequency of disruption for the purpose of identifying the most effective strategy for increasing resilience. 2010 findings:

Total Assessed Value vs Number of Incidents





operational resilience across the whole authority regardless of the cause of disruption.

Innovation

Research into surveys from sources such as Continuity Central and SunGard showed an emerging trend towards the use of specialist BC software. Further investigations into the benefits of internet based planning software, highlighted a vast array of opportunities which had the potential to realise our vision for increasing operational resilience.

From attending forums on available software packages on the market, the RMCS Business Continuity Team were able to find one that suited the culture of ECC. Discussions with the company regarding their future plans for continuous improvement presented even more opportunities for increasing resilience over time.

The business case for contracting Shadow-Planner documented the irrefutable benefits for increasing resilience and the potential for future development. ECC Corporate Leadership Team realised Shadow-Planner (SP) would not only increase operational resilience, but also improve the smooth-running and efficiency of BC across the council and agreed to the modernisation of the BC management programme.

Approach

The initial target for project SP was to setup a secure technical environment which met data protection standards and mirrored the structure of ECC. Once met, a pilot study was conducted whereby one service group was trained on the system; allowing the RMCS Business Continuity Team to test procedures for uploading plans and collate feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of training documentation and improve training delivery.

The training programme was rolled out across the authority and by December 2010 the RMCS Business Continuity Team had uploaded all 181 BC plans on the system. Two BC Champions have since been trained from each service group, with two plan managers from each service area. This training created numerous benefits; such as:

- More staff aware of BC and the process of planning and exercising;
- Each service area has two trained staff that can manage disruptions and support continuity of service;
- Training sessions continue to facilitate discussion between staff throughout ECC, opening a wealth of knowledge and expertise which is being applied to advance

coordinated planning and further increase operational resilience.

20 service groups and 160 service areas across ECC had uploaded key documents (including forms and procedures for manual workarounds) which can be used to continue service during IT disruptions and for disruptions resulting in a loss of access to site (e.g. due to weather or severed cables) and loss of building. This is increasing resilience for over 400 key services; including those that protect vulnerable adults and children and other services which the people of Essex have come to depend on.

Impact

Below are just a few examples of how SP has helped ensure a smooth running, efficient BC programme and increased operational resilience across ECC:

Smooth Running & Efficiency

Before	After
Feedback found staff not engaged with BC.	More staff engaged. User friendly software and effective training has resulted in a drastic improvement in the quality of planning. Easier to access information
Some BCPs contained out of date information which was key to service delivery during a disruption.	Automatic email review reminders keep plans up-to-date and free up time for managers as they do not have to ask staff for information.
Templates inserted into every BCP manually.	ECC Library on SP offers templates which can be shared to all service areas through a checkbox. Plan control, section heading and table of contents automatically update.
Managers spent time maintaining basic information.	The use of <i>Plan Support</i> (training Administrators on the system) has freed managers from low value maintenance tasks.
Contact changes (e.g. mobile), meant managers had to read through whole plan and update every contact number.	Contacts only have to be created once and dragged and dropped into appropriate areas (when contact updates details; automatically updates all areas of system).

Plans stored in various locations. Lots of time spent finding documents. Risk of staff finding wrong copy and working on old document.	Plans centralised with the most up-to-date version. Quick to access.
Organisational restructuring resulted in days of work (reflecting in BCPs and cross-checking).	When a service moves, able to drag and drop BCP which automatically updates.
BCP ownership heavily focused on Champions with little involvement from Plan Managers.	Empowers individuals to take responsibility & creates embedded ownership.

System benchmarking tools such as *Task Health Check* and audit reports including *Last Logged In* are also being utilised to ensure information is maintained and to monitor staff engagement.

Increase Operational Resilience

Before	After
During disruptions, staff occasionally forgot to print hard copy BCP, leaving them without information needed to continue service delivery.	Plans accessible wherever there is an internet connection. When relocated to alternate premises, staff do not have to carry lots of hard copy documents but download them from the internet at the alternate site.
Server failure left staff without forms and procedures for manual workarounds (as stored on shared drive).	SP used as a tool for backing up key documents. When servers fail, key documents are quickly downloaded and used accordingly.
Best practice difficult to implement; left gaps.	Best practice action plans are monitored by RMCS Business Continuity Team and shared to all service areas through ECC Library on SP. This has increased resilience beyond what ECC had imagined, speeding response and supporting continuity during a disruption.
Staff identified IT recovery time objectives	Effective tool for Business Impact Analysis

<p>(RTO), but often these did not correlate with achievable recovery time (ART) from IT. This created a risk as staff did not plan for application failures and expected IT to resolve issues quicker than they actually could.</p>	<p>and resource consolidation. Automatic cross analysis (specifically IT ART and service RTOs). When RTO is less than the ART, SP highlights this red, allowing it to be clearly visible and addressed. Better plans for application disruptions.</p>
<p>Service groups using best practice at ECC alone.</p>	<p>Discussion with ICM has given us insight into how their clients use the system, providing access to global best practice.</p>

Information on SP is stored on a separate virtual server which is backed up at 3am every morning on two servers with access to the *Yesterdays* server at any given time, providing resilience to ECC's key data.

A New Partnership

The success of SP is due to the collective information sharing and collaborative working between all services, partnerships and levels of management across ECC who continue to support one another rather than work in isolation.

Internal Partnership

Adult Social Care, Adult Community Learning & Libraries, Contact Essex, Emergency Planning, Highways, Operational Delivery, Strategy Management, Support Services, Finance, Legal, Registration, Procurement, Transformation, Policy, Community Planning & Regeneration, Information Services, External Communications, Essex Shared Services, Schools, Children & Families, Youth Offending Services.

External Partnership

ICM

Schedule of Evidence

- Case study. 31st January 2011, implementation of BC and use of SP during a building disruption provided continuity for key services delivered by Adult Social Care and Schools, Children and Families, while also saving the council £10,450 as staff were able to work from alternate premises.
- Effective monitoring. March 2011 promotion and delivery of Exercise Watermark

(which also promoted BC) saw an increase of 152% of users logged into SP compared with the previous month.

- 2010 SP feedback forms:
 - 89% staff have a better understanding of BCM. 2011 feedback forms indicates this has risen to 95%.
 - 85% staff understand the information to add to SP (to increase operational resilience). 2011 feedback forms indicate this has risen to 87%.

Word count 1459



Main Submission



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