

# Business Continuity

Only the Leadership Team and Communications and Engagement Manager may comment to the media when the Incident Response Plan is activated.

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Author</i>
1.0	Published on SPSO website	2010 Feb	Corporate Services Manager
1.1	Audited	2012 Jul	Internal Auditor
2.0	Published on SPSO website	2012 Aug	Senior Personal Assistant
2.1	Reviewed	2013 Jun	Senior Personal Assistant
3.0	Reviewed and published on SPSO website.	2015 May	Senior Personal Assistant
3.1	Audited	2015 Aug	Internal Auditor
4.0	Reviewed and published on SPSO website	2016 Nov	Corporate Services Manager
4.1	Updated and published on SPSO website	2017 May	Corporate Services Manager
5.0	Reviewed, audited and published on SPSO website	2019 Aug	Corporate Services Manager

## **Contents: Business Continuity**

 Business Continuity Policy

 Incident Response Plan

 Disruption to work

# Business Continuity Policy

## Contents

<b>The Scope of the Policy .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Risk Assessment .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Assumptions .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Resources .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Incident Response Team (IRT) .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Testing and Maintaining the Plan.....</b>	<b>5</b>

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## The Scope of the Policy

---

1. This policy outlines the SPSO approach to ensuring our business continuity to meet our [Strategic Aims](#) in the event of a major disruption to service affecting the normal business activities undertaken by the SPSO in the delivery of our statutory functions.
2. It is acknowledged that there is very little that the SPSO does, with the exception of Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant reviews, which is so critical that public life would be severely disrupted if that activity could not be undertaken for a prolonged period.
3. The policy references the [Incident Response Plan \(IRP\)](#), which outlines what procedures will be followed to ensure the health and safety of staff and to protect the public; and secure prompt and efficient recovery of critical business operations to minimise the disruption to service users and restore business as usual activities as soon as possible.
4. The policy and the plan have been approved by the SPSO Leadership Team (LT) and is owned by the Ombudsman as Accountable Officer.
5. The Incident Response Team (IRT) have their own electronic or paper copy of the full handbook available to them outwith the business premises. A further copy is deposited electronically with the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB). A redacted version is published on the SPSO website.

## Risk Assessment

---

6. The SPSO's ability to respond flexibly to an critical incident and continue to carry out its statutory function due to the following mitigating arrangements ensures the impact to the organisation of a critical incident remains low. Any change to these arrangements may be reflected in a change to this assessment.

- 6.1. Our voice-over-internet-protocol telephony (VOIP) allows us to divert our phone numbers quickly and easily to any alternative handset as required, as long as there is an internet connection. Should our VOIP system fail, then we will revert to our contractor's business continuity plans.



GBT Disaster  
Recovery Agreement



GB TECHNOLOGIES  
LTD BCP.docx

- 6.2. Corporate Management Information Systems (CMIS) can be accessed on any network solution through website portals include the Human Resources application, the banking application and SPSO external website.

- 6.3. Our casework management system (CMS) is located on a secure cloud-based hosting platform that could be accessed from any network solution via VPN. Following a critical incident that affected access via the current network arrangements, individual VPN accounts could be in place within four working hours for the minimum required number of users to access Workpro. Medium-term arrangements could include site-to-site or site-to-cloud secure connections as agreed.

If the cloud or other infrastructure that supported the CMS failed, the contractor has given assurance that service could be resumed within eight hours through their own BCP. We are on the standard package for restoration.

Recovery Point Objective - This would be the previous night's backup. Potentially, worst case would be if there were an issue at the end of a working day requiring a restore from the previous night's backup, then that day's effort would be lost.

- 6.4. We currently have 29 Scottish Government secure laptops, providing the facility to work on the secure network from an alternative location. Many of these laptops are used on a regular basis by staff for working from home. The SPSO ICT policy is to move to a laptop workstation environment for all staff by 2022, increasing our ability to work flexibly.
- 6.5. The most wide-spread impact on the organisation's ability to meet its statutory functions would be the loss of our secure network hosted by the Scottish Government. This would be due to the loss of access to all non-casework information and our general email functionality.

The iTECS Business Continuity Plan (BCP) may be invoked in the event of an incident affecting delivery of SCOTS Connect services. This BCP provides for the restoration of the business functions and services provided by iTECS, with appropriate recovery actions depending on the nature and impact of the incident. iTECS involvement would be limited to best endeavours in the restoration of SCOTS Connect services for that customer. iTECS can make no specific commitment to restore customers' SCOTS and other IT Services, nor to the level of prioritisation that would be applied to organisations in the event of an incident. The level of prioritisation would be assessed in line with the incident and business requirements. Support for iTECS customers' own BCPs is outwith the scope of the iTECS plan.



- 6.6. An office risk assessment is undertaken annually to reduce the likelihood of downtime of more than one week from the loss of the property. In the event that the office environment is compromised and alternative office space with SCOTS Connect service is required, options would be identified through the Scottish Government Help Desk Facilities Services line on 0131 244 8500 (option 3). It is understood that this office space is at a premium, may require laptops to access, and may be prioritised to other departments evaluated to have more urgent requirements.

## Assumptions

---

7. The following assumptions have been applied to this plan to measure how critical the major disruption is to the business:
  - 7.1. one working day without CMS access may have serious implications for Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) review process that may result in unnecessary discomfort for vulnerable citizens;
  - 7.2. two working days without CMS access may have serious implications for the performance measures of the complaints handling process;
  - 7.3. two working days without SCOTS Connect service may have serious implications for corporate services;
  - 7.4. two weeks without CMS and SCOTS Connect service would be a very serious position for all parts of the organisation with potential long-term effects; and
  - 7.5. One month without CMS and SCOTS Connect service would be a critical position threatening the SPSO's ability to carry out its statutory function and meet financial obligations.

## Resources

---

8. The basis of any resource decisions would include consideration of the following:
  - 8.1. In the event of a critical incident, IRT members must have first priority.
  - 8.2. SWF team will be prioritised for resources.
  - 8.3. Leadership Team and senior managers are likely to have their laptop off-site with them when out of the office and some of the staff who work from home on a regular basis may also have a laptop with them at the time of an incident.

- 8.4. If there is forewarning, such as an extreme weather warning, staff will be requested to take available laptops home with them, distributed on a needs basis as assessed by the management team.
- 8.5. In addition to the IRT members, the minimum number of staff that would be required to ensure the SPSO continued statutory operations while recovering from a critical incident are assessed as follows:
  - 8.5.1. one Leadership Team member
  - 8.5.2. Scottish Welfare Fund members
  - 8.5.3. two Assessment and Guidance members
  - 8.5.4. six Complaints Reviewers
  - 8.5.5. one Corporate Service member
  - 8.5.6. one Improvement, Standards and Engagement member
  - 8.5.7. with management provided by two line managers who may be included in the above numbers.

## Incident Response Team (IRT)

---

9. The IRT is responsible for providing overall direction of the incident recovery operations. It must ascertain the extent of the problem or damage, activate the Plan if required, monitor and report recovery progress. Specific responsibilities include:
  - 9.1. evaluation of the extent of the problem and the potential consequences;
  - 9.2. initiating business continuity procedures;
  - 9.3. activation and deactivation of the Plan;
  - 9.4. liaising with emergency services;
  - 9.5. maintaining external public relations;
  - 9.6. monitoring recovery and assuring achievement of the Plan;
  - 9.7. ensuring maintenance of security; and
  - 9.8. monitoring control of emergency expenditure.

## Testing and Maintaining the Plan

---



Business Continuity  
Annual Checklist.doc

10. The IRT will meet annually to review their roles in the plan, talk through the possible scenarios, test elements of the Plan, and complete the Business Continuity Checklist.
11. The checklist will be used to ensure important elements of the Incident Response Plan are current and correct. This includes:

- 11.1. testing the Call Chain Procedure annually
  - 11.2. ensuring critical staff access home-working opportunities at least annually to ensure network and VOIP connections are easily and readily implemented
  - 11.3. testing written procedures to re-establish ICT systems, such as the phone system after a power-cut, by non-trained staff
  - 11.4. reviewing phone lists each year and updating where necessary.
12. Test results will be documented and reported to the Leadership Team annually through the Corporate Services Assurance paper.
  13. The alternative accommodation arrangement with Scottish Government would be required for a minimum number of staff. It is understood that SG office space is at a premium, may require laptops to access, and may be prioritised to other departments evaluated to have more urgent requirements.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)



# Incident Response Plan

## Contents

<b>Roles and Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic Business Impact Assessment .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Activation of the Plan .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Staff Notification of Critical Incident.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Responsibilities .....	9
Procedure.....	9
<b>IRT Specific Responsibilities during a Critical Incident .....</b>	<b>10</b>
IRT Manager (Corporate Services Manager) .....	10
Deputy IRT Manager (Building Coordinator) .....	11
Communications and Engagement Manager .....	11
HR Officer.....	11
Casework Manager A.....	12
<b>Critical Incident Log .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Example log information.....	13
<b>Critical Incident Communications arrangements .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Key points.....	13
Communication Principles .....	13
Media Communications Considerations .....	14
Draft Outline Initial Press Statement .....	15
<b>Specific Disaster and Failure Scenarios.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Reduced staff numbers .....	16
Reduced facilities .....	17
Security threat .....	19
<b>Annex 1: IRT Critical Contact Details (Confidential not for publishing) .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Incident Response Team.....	20
Leadership Team .....	20
Main key holder contact details .....	20
Emergency business contacts - Priority A .....	21
Emergency business contacts - Priority B .....	21
Media Contacts .....	22

**Annex 2: Bridgeside House Floor Plans.....24**  
**Annex 3: ICT System Document.....26**

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## Roles and Responsibilities

1. When responding to a critical incident the SPSO has adopted the same command and control structure as the UK emergency services to embrace the full staff structure:

Level	Role	Members	Description	Areas of Responsibility
<b>Gold Strategic</b>	<b>Leadership Team (LT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ombudsman</li> <li>• Director</li> <li>• Head of Improvement, Standards and Engagement</li> </ul>	<b>Hand off</b> – overall view of the incident, provide leadership, commitment and resources as part of governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall aims, objectives and strategy for the incident</li> <li>• Media strategy and handling the reputation risks</li> <li>• Decisions affecting the whole organisation</li> <li>• Financial and resourcing considerations</li> <li>• Medium-term planning</li> </ul>
<b>Silver Tactical</b>	<b>Incident Response Team (IRT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Services Manager (IRT Manager)</li> <li>• Building Coordinator (Deputy IRT Manager)</li> <li>• Communications and Engagement Manager</li> <li>• HR Officer</li> <li>• Casework Manager</li> </ul>	<b>Hands in</b> – respond to incident, how to coordinate the response. Directing the operations level and working towards the strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver an effective business continuity plan, including facilitating training and testing essential points of the plan</li> <li>• Responsible for activation and management of the Plan</li> <li>• Buildings and administration - finding alternative accommodation, establishing a replacement telecommunications network and IT service, emergency financial payments</li> <li>• Media and External Communications - communicating with local and national media and for establishing a response centre</li> </ul>

Level	Role	Members	Description	Areas of Responsibility
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources and Internal Communications - staff welfare</li> <li>• Management of casework related actions to retain minimum activity to meet statutory requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Bronze Operational</b>	<b>All staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Services Team members</li> <li>• Comms Team members</li> <li>• Managers and Team Assistants</li> <li>• Other staff members as required</li> </ul>	<b>Hands on</b> – doing the response on the ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand relevant plans and associated roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Recognise an incident and alert IRT/manager - escalate as appropriate</li> <li>• Respond to instructions and perform tasks as instructed by IRT, LT or line manager</li> </ul>

Strategic Business Impact Assessment

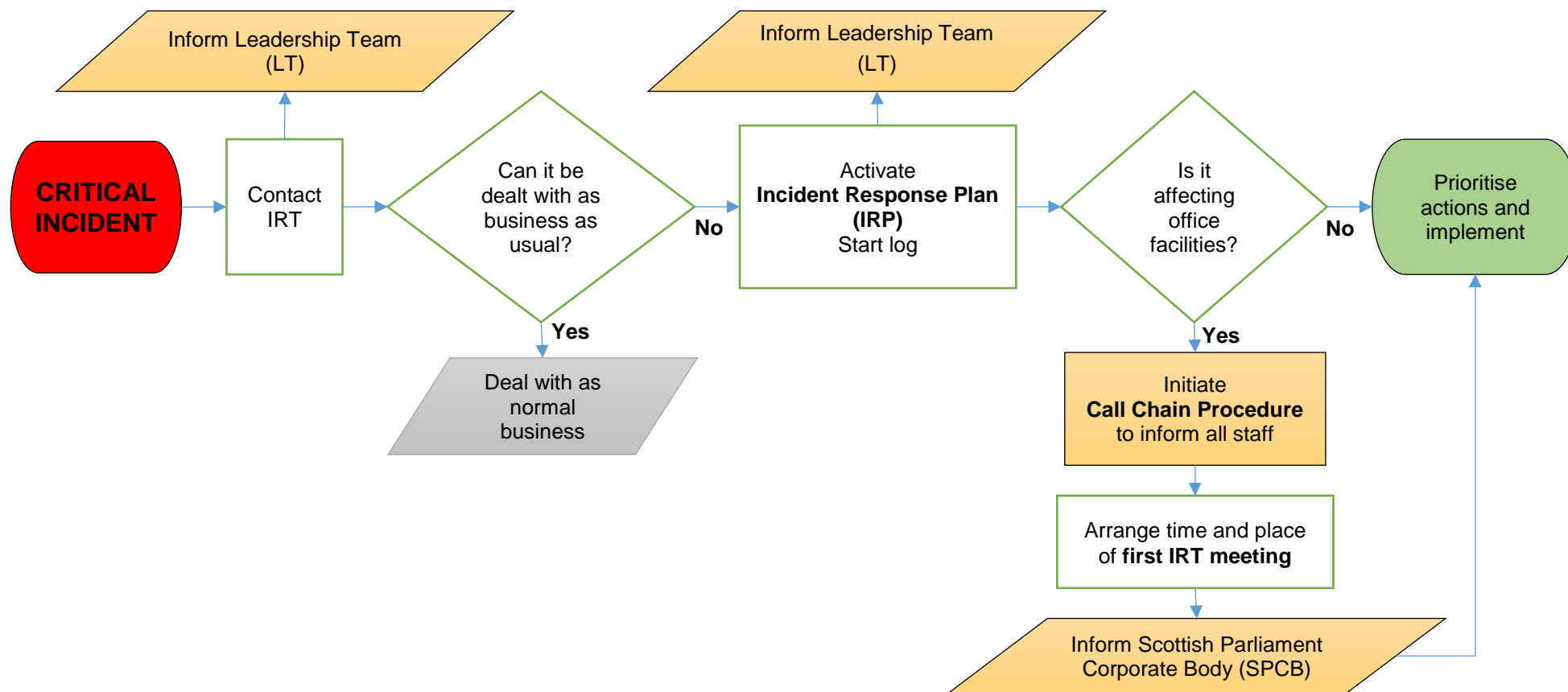
Critical Business Activity	Description	Critical?	Resources needed	Impact if not maintained	Time recovery objective.
Emergency repairs and maintenance	Priority contractor contacts to provide emergency repairs and restore services	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor contact numbers and email addresses</li> </ul>	Response to incident may be slowed, potentially dangerous situations may not be remedied	Less than one hour
Emergency communications	Staff and contractor contact centre	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call Chain Procedure arrangements</li> <li>VOIP connection or emergency call centre</li> </ul>	May not be able to sustain contact with staff for updates and instructions	Less than one hour
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Systems	Access to essential ICT applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VOIP system</li> <li>SCOTS Connect service</li> <li>CMS</li> </ul>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor contact numbers and email addresses, as well as out of hours contacts (GBT; iTECS; CAS)</li> </ul>	Ability to return to business as usual activities will be severely impeded	Within four hours
SWF reviews	Respond to crisis grants reviews within 24 hrs	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum of two available staff</li> <li>Internet access</li> </ul>	Severe discomfort for members of the public	24 hours

Critical Business Activity	Description	Critical?	Resources needed	Impact if not maintained	Time recovery objective.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOIP connection with 0800 number working</li> <li>• CMS application</li> </ul>		
Finance	Ability to pay for large emergency bills that need immediate payment and could not be invoiced or paid for on a personal credit card	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ombudsman/Director business credit cards</li> <li>• Corporate Services Manager for access to bank account or cheque book</li> </ul>	May delay payment for some emergency goods and services, and may not be able to support staff who may be caught in difficult situations due to incident	Within 24 hours
Governance	Provide medium-term recovery strategy, consider financial implications, manage external communication message	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One member of LT</li> <li>• Mobile telephone coverage</li> <li>• Internet access</li> <li>• SCOTS Connect service for email and non-casework information</li> </ul>	Disjointed response, reputational damage	Within 24 hours
First Contact Complaints Handling response	Respond to urgent enquiries, provide sign-posting services and response	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of two available staff</li> <li>• Internet access</li> </ul>	Serious implications for the performance measures of the complaints handling process.	48 hours

Critical Business Activity	Description	Critical?	Resources needed	Impact if not maintained	Time recovery objective.
	manage the receipt of mail and email		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOIP connection with 0800 number working</li> <li>• CMS application</li> </ul>	Minor annoyance for members of the public	
Minimum business as usual activities	Meet statutory requirements	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum staff across all areas of the business</li> <li>• Internet access</li> <li>• VOIP connection with 0800 number working</li> <li>• CMS application</li> <li>• SCOTS Connect service for email and non-casework information</li> </ul>	Implications for the performance measures of the business plan and annoyance for members of the public	One week

## Activation of the Plan

2. Any two members of the IRT can agree to activate the Plan. They will confirm activation to all other IRT and Leadership team members. Once the Plan is in operation, the IRT will follow the procedures contained in the Plan. The IRT Manager will confirm when the Plan is deactivated.
3. During the period when the Plan is in operation, all staff must follow the instructions of the IRT and must avoid taking any unilateral action that may hamper or jeopardise recovery.





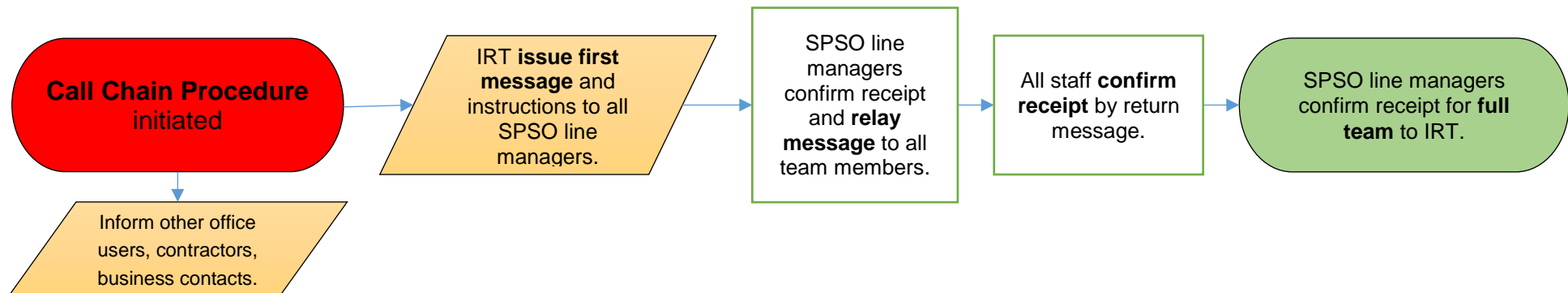
## Staff Notification of Critical Incident

### Responsibilities

4. Responsibilities are:
  - 4.1. this procedure will be tested annually by the IRT and the results reported to the Leadership Team;
  - 4.2. line managers are responsible to maintain current contact details for all member of their team, and regularly test these contact details remain the most effective method of contact;
  - 4.3. line managers must be able to contact their team at any time. When this is not possible, alternative arrangements must be put in place; and
  - 4.4. LT must ensure one member is contactable at all times.

### Procedure

5. The Call Chain Procedure will be initiated by a member of the IRT.



6. If required, any further information or instructions will be issued to line managers by the Human Resources officer, including an emergency contact number for staff and their relatives.

## IRT Specific Responsibilities during a Critical Incident

---

7. The IRT is responsible for providing overall direction of the incident recovery operations. It must ascertain the extent of the problem or damage, activate the Plan if required, monitor and report recovery progress.

### **IRT Manager (Corporate Services Manager)**

*Deputy: Building Coordinator*

8. Take overall responsibility for management, control and activation of the Plan.
9. Establish a replacement telecommunications network and IT service by liaising with IT services providers to
  - 9.1. provide standby IT facilities to the agreed level of service to business-critical users;
  - 9.2. reinstate normal IT services with the predetermined timescale; and
  - 9.3. configure new hardware, software and communications facilities and ensure that the integrity of data is safeguarded.
10. Ensure emergency financial payments can be made, including setting up and maintaining budgetary control procedures for emergency costs and maintaining records of expenditure for subsequent insurance claims.
11. Actions are:
  - 11.1. Initiating the call chain procedure
  - 11.2. Ensuring messages are applied to telephone lines, website, building, etc.
  - 11.3. Identifying support staff to assist with incident response
  - 11.4. Contacting contractors
  - 11.5. Make arrangements for the reinstatement of IT and Telephony services - ensuring ICT Service providers do the following:
    - 11.5.1. establish procedures and schedules for the operation of standby facilities;
    - 11.5.2. install operating systems, application software and data on standby and replacement IT facilities;
    - 11.5.3. retrieve documentation and media from backup storage;
    - 11.5.4. implement interim processing and backup procedures;
    - 11.5.5. enforce logical security at the standby site;
    - 11.5.6. initialise and test standby hardware, operating systems and communications;

- 11.5.7. contact suppliers and order and configure replacement facilities; damage evaluation, identification of salvage, removal of re-usable equipment;
- 11.5.8. provide information and support for interim IT facilities; and
- 11.5.9. reconfigure the communications network as required and monitor performance.

### **Deputy IRT Manager (Building Coordinator)**

*Deputy: Corporate Services Officer*

- 12. Responsibility for buildings and general administration including the reinstatement of normal building services within the predetermined timescale, and finding alternative accommodation facilities to the agreed level of service for business-critical users.
- 13. Actions are:
  - 13.1. arranging transport and accommodation for staff,
  - 13.2. contacting the appropriate authorities to ensure that the affected site is made secure to prevent unauthorised access by staff or the public;
  - 13.3. setting up and maintaining all administrative support services such as secretarial, telephone, fax, office equipment, stationery etc.; and
  - 13.4. organising for documentation and equipment to be transported securely.

### **Communications and Engagement Manager**

*Deputy: Ombudsman*

- 14. Media and External Communications - responsible for the implementation of the Critical Incident Communications arrangements, including communicating with local and national media, and for establishing a response centre.
- 15. Actions are:
  - 15.1. ensuring a response centre telephone facilities are set up;
  - 15.2. drafting press statement and communicating with media;
  - 15.3. updating SPSO website and social media with statement;
  - 15.4. monitoring media and social media;
  - 15.5. logging all media calls; and
  - 15.6. ensuring staff know that media enquiries are directed to C&E Manager.

### **HR Officer**

*Deputy: Director*

16. Human Resources and Internal Communications - responsible for staff welfare
17. Actions are:
  - 17.1. dealing with any staff problems caused by the disaster and handling front-line communications with staff and their relatives.

### **Casework Manager A**

*Deputy: Casework Manager B*

18. Management of casework related actions and distribution of resources to retain minimum activity to meet statutory requirements.
19. Actions are:
  - 19.1. ensuring critical identified CR resource work from home at least once a year;
  - 19.2. ensuring the least amount of disruption to casework functions caused by the disaster;
  - 19.3. coordinating staff and available resources to maintain maximum effectiveness with available resources; and
  - 19.4. arranging for the secure transportation of hardcopy casefiles to the available case reviewers as appropriate.

### **Critical Incident Log**

---

20. For critical incidents, when a normal incident log is not appropriate, a real-time Critical Incident Log should be adopted and maintained by a nominated staff member, who is not part of the IRT, to record all decisions and actions taken during the incident. The completed logs will provide a source of data for subsequent analysis and management information.
21. The log will be used:
  - 21.1. as an accurate record of who, what, when, where and how;
  - 21.2. to record in real time key information, including timings, contacts, and details of key decisions;
  - 21.3. to handover to the emergency response teams, or others, if required;
  - 21.4. to debrief an incident;
  - 21.5. as a record of a major incident for future reference; and
  - 21.6. for reference by major stakeholders and legal bodies.

**Example log information**

Loggist Name:

Sheet No.x - Title

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event (meeting, call, activity)</i>	<i>Action / Decision Taken</i>	<i>Who</i>

**Critical Incident Communications arrangements**

---

22. A serious incident affecting the SPSO may attract interest from local and national media. This section of the plan outlines how it would be handled by the Communications and Engagement Manager who will assemble an appropriate team to assist.

**Key points**

- 23. Only the Leadership Team and Communications and Engagement Manager may liaise with the media when the Incident Response Plan is activated.
- 24. All staff are required to refer media interest to the nominated media co-ordinators.
- 25. The Communications and Engagement Manager must be kept informed at all times of actions being taken by other IRT members.
- 26. Telephone facilities to establish a response centre will be made available through our contracted telephony provider.
- 27. A draft outline initial press statement is outlined [below](#).
- 28. A list of key media contacts is [here](#).

**Communication Principles**

- 29. If the critical incident involves an accident or other risk to health, staff and the concerns of their relatives will take priority. Local media can play a valuable role in providing reassuring information.
- 30. During the period that the IRP is activated, the Communications and Engagement Manager will:

- 30.1. keep all lines of communication clear and ensure all personnel dealing with the media have the same information;
- 30.2. refuse to comment on what has happened until the information has been verified by the emergency services;
- 30.3. be positive and available when dealing with press and media enquiries;
- 30.4. log all media calls; and
- 30.5. give all the media the same information and tell them when new information will be available.

### **Media Communications Considerations**

31. The considerations are:

- 31.1. ABC – Acknowledge, Bridge, Comment;
- 31.2. PPP – Praise, Pity, Pledge;
- 31.3. develop in three stages to match journalist's style: what has happened, the context and a look forward;
- 31.4. speed of reply is essential as false information can spread very quickly through social media;
- 31.5. the public want information that is of benefit to them and allows them to take control – they will only do this if they trust the person who is providing that information;
- 31.6. openness and honesty are essential ingredients for building trust and empathy. It is vital to maintain that trust;
- 31.7. tell people what is known and then tell them what you are doing to find out what is not known; and
- 31.8. provide proof points and evidence to support arguments: pictures can help this process, especially for foreign audiences where English is not their first language.

32. Typical media questions may include:

- 32.1. What happened?
- 32.2. Why did it happen?
- 32.3. Who is to blame?
- 32.4. Was this an accident waiting to happen?
- 32.5. How many people are affected?
- 32.6. Are the public at risk?
- 32.7. When was it discovered?
- 32.8. What are you doing about it?

## **Draft Outline Initial Press Statement**

33. The following draft is to ensure each topic is addressed and will be updated in the light of the specific circumstances.

### *Statement following incident at the SPSO Edinburgh on (Date/Time)*

34. At (time) today (date) (emergency appliances) attended an incident at the office of the SPSO at 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh.
35. We are working to restore services to the public and other stakeholders as soon as possible at the organisation's alternative site (address).
36. The following statement provides up-to-date information on the circumstances.

### *Personal Safety*

37. SPSO staff and relatives seeking information should contact our emergency helpline on (xxx).
38. Staff not currently involved in implementing our Incident Response Plan have been sent home.
39. The site is currently only accessible by emergency services.

### *Damage to property*

40. We anticipate that access to the building should be possible from (date) to obtain records and full work will be possible from (date).

### *Effect on business*

41. We are working to ensure that service will be restored as soon as possible.
42. Our Incident Response Plan involves key staff using the organisation's alternative location in Edinburgh.
43. Most services will be unaffected by the incident, although outside contact may be limited today.
44. A helpline for the public is available on the main reception telephone line at [enter location and number].

### *Further Information*

45. For further information, contact: xx Communications and Engagement Manager (cover - Ombudsman)

## Specific Disaster and Failure Scenarios

---

46. Assumption: In the event of an incident, those staff with the facility to work from an alternative location (for example., home), could do so with management approval.
47. The three types of scenarios outlined below are:
  - 47.1. Reduced staff numbers:
    - 47.1.1. extreme weather conditions;
    - 47.1.2. fifty percent staff reduction (pandemic or other impact); and / or
    - 47.1.3. loss of key staff.
  - 47.2. Reduced facilities:
    - 47.2.1. loss of access to network and systems for more than one day;
    - 47.2.2. general arrangements when alternative accommodation is required;
    - 47.2.3. loss of utilities (water, electricity, gas) to part or the whole office; and / or
    - 47.2.4. evacuation followed by denial of access to building.
  - 47.3. Security threat
    - 47.3.1. threatening behaviour or terrorist threat.

### **Reduced staff numbers**

#### *Extreme Weather Conditions*

48. This scenario would cover severe winter conditions and extreme weather warnings issued by the Scottish Government. Please also refer to the [SPSO Disruption to Work policy](#) and [Annex 1: Weather warnings guide](#).
  - 48.1. Red weather warning: If the Met office issues a red weather warning for Edinburgh and the Scottish Government advice is to avoid travel, the office will be automatically closed.
  - 48.2. Amber weather warning: If an amber weather warning is issued for Edinburgh those staff without home-working facilities that could safely make it to the Edinburgh office, or available SCOTS Connect workstations within reasonable distance to their location in the Central Belt, would be expected to do so.



- 48.3. If the minimum number of staff were available to maintain normal operating conditions the office would be open for business as usual. If not, the Ombudsman would announce that the office was closed.
- 48.4. If unexpected extreme weather warnings are issued after staff have undertaken travel to the office and are unable to make it home safely, the Ombudsman would approve the provision of accommodation and essential provisions for those staff members. If an opportunity arose for colleagues to spend the night with a fellow colleague who resides in the Edinburgh area, this would be open as an alternative option.
- 48.5. Expenditure authorised by the Leadership Team or IRT, directly resulting from implementation of emergency procedures, that could not be invoiced to SPSO or paid for using personal cards and claimed back through expenses, would be met using the Ombudsman or Director's corporate credit cards. If this was not possible, the alternative would be cheque or BACS payment.

*Fifty percent staff reduction (pandemic or other impact)*

- 49. If more than 50 percent of staff are not available and minimum cover arrangements cannot be met for more than one week, the Ombudsman will approve the reduction in performance and the appropriate stakeholder announcements will be made to this effect.

*Loss of key staff*

- 50. If persons listed on the [Scheme of Delegation](#) were no longer available, the SPCB would be notified immediately to provide emergency Accountable Officer cover.

**Reduced facilities**

*Loss of access to network and systems for more than one day*

- 51. If the network provider confirmed that a reported problem with the network connection or IT system was isolated to the building, but the problem would not be fixed within two working days, the general arrangements for alternative accommodation would be put in place.
- 52. If the problem was widespread across the network, the Ombudsman would request staff to work off-line to the best of their ability until the problem was rectified.

53. iTECS mitigating plans and BCP arrangements.



*General arrangements when alternative accommodation is required*

54. At any time the office is closed due to an incident, the following arrangements would be put in place:
- 54.1. 0800 telephone lines would be diverted to an alternative telephone;
  - 54.2. the general email inboxes would be monitored from a laptop at an alternative worksite;
  - 54.3. the usual closure announcements would be placed on the website, ask@ inbox replies and the telephone messaging service;
  - 54.4. signage would be added to the building and a note on the website explaining the problem;
  - 54.5. Royal Mail would be notified to ensure mail delivery was held or redirected;
  - 54.6. contractors would be informed of the change of arrangements where required; and
  - 54.7. all staff would be responsible for ensuring their direct dial phone numbers were to diverted to an alternative line, or to voicemail with an appropriate message recorded.
55. The IRT would identify with Scottish Government what alternative workstations with access to the SCOTS Connect service would be available for SPSO use in the Scottish Central Belt region and how many staff could be accommodated.
- 55.1. Those staff without home-working facilities would be notified of alternative arrangements prior to arriving at the office. If this was not possible, staff would be met at the SPSO office to be transported to the alternative accommodation.
  - 55.2. If possible, the required hardcopy case files would be packed securely into archive boxes and transported to the alternative worksite.

*Loss of Utilities (water, electricity, gas) to part or the whole office*

56. In the case of electricity, if initial enquiries identify that the problem could be rectified within an hour, staff would be asked to take a break away from the office and return after an allotted period.
57. If the problem persisted in these circumstances:
- 57.1. loss of electricity supply for more than one hour;

- 57.2. loss of water supply to the whole SPSO location for more than four hours;  
and
- 57.3. loss of gas to the building for more than three days in wintery conditions;

the Ombudsman would announce that the office was closed, and those staff without homeworking facilities or off-line work to take home would be accommodated in alternative office space where possible.

*Evacuation followed by denial of access to building*

- 58. The Ombudsman would approve the IRT to ensure the provision of essential provisions to maintain the health and safety of all staff, provide communications channels for staff to contact friends or family and arrange transport home where required. Selected members of staff have corporate credit cards to facilitate this.

**Security threat**

*Threatening behaviour or terrorist threat*

- 59. When a threat is received, the Leadership Team should be notified immediately. The Leadership Team member will inform all staff of the risk and the appropriate action to take. Please refer to the Bridgeside House Personal Safety document contained in the [Bridgeside House Health, Safety and Security Handbook](#).

## Annex 1: IRT Critical Contact Details (Confidential not for publishing)

### Incident Response Team

<i>Title</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Blackberry</i>	<i>Personal Mobile</i>	<i>Home</i>
Corporate Services Manager (IRT Manager)				
BH Building Coordinator ( IRT Deputy Manager)				
Communications and Engagement Manager				
HR Officer				
Casework Manager				
Corporate Services Officer (Deputy)				

### Leadership Team

Ombudsman				
Director				
Head of ISE				

### Main key holder contact details

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Blackberry</i>	<i>Personal Mobile</i>	<i>Home</i>
Mitie Security Key holder	Services01908 671317			
Corporate Services Manager				

**Emergency business contacts - Priority A**

<i>Service</i>	<i>Company / Contact</i>	<i>Telephone No</i>	<i>Contract / Account Number</i>
Alarm system	JL Com	<b>0844 259 6600</b>	SPSO – Bridgeside House
Building Contents Insurance	Arthur Gallagher Insurance (Broker) Hiscocks (Provider)	0131 225 7777	<b>Policy: HU PI6 128 7044 (140)</b>
Casework Application	CAS – WorkPro	0131 449 7071	SPSO
Key holder	Mitie Security	01908 671317	SPSO – Bridgeside House
<b>Landlord</b>	<b>C&amp;W Assets</b>	<b>0131 336 2181</b>	<b>Bridgeside House</b>
IT Network provider	SCOTS – IT Server and Hardware	0131 244 8500 (day time)	SPSO
Telephony provider	GB Technologies	01896 752 607	GBT 00831
Scottish Parliament Corporate Body	SPCB office-holder	0131 348 6851	
H&S Competent Person	Law At Work (UK) Ltd	0141 271 5555 0844 288 4781 (24hr advice line) 07738 166 914	

**Emergency business contacts - Priority B**

<i>Service</i>	<i>Company / Contact</i>	<i>Telephone No</i>	<i>Contract / Account Number</i>
Cleaners	Mitie Cleaning	07823524359	SPSO
Stationery suppliers	Caley Office	0141 951 1500	SPS10
Waste & Recycling management	ChangeWorks	0800 694 0158 / 0131 555 4010	PC 10430
	Paper Shredding Services	0141 440 1515	SPSO
Milk Deliveries	Muller Wiseman	07884 021 371	SPSO
Mail collection and delivery services	Eagle Couriers	0845 123 1230	PS 6408
	Franking Machine – Lease	0800 756 0827	C203193/W
	CF corporate	01355 241 333	S504
	Franking Machine – Northern Services	08444 992 992	14037931
	Franking Machine – Pitney Bowes		
	Royal Mail – Collection Service	0131 458 8644	
	Royal Mail – Deliveries	03457 740 740 customer service	
Utilities	Clear Business - Water	08456 028 855	2392938
	Total Gas and Power	01737 275 501	3001130231

## Media Contacts

The media co-ordinator should consider contacting the following with any media statement.

Outlet	First name	Last name	Position	Email	Office telephone / mobile
BBC TV Scotland			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:scottish.planning@bbc.co.uk">scottish.planning@bbc.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 338 2760 / 0131 557 5888
STV			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:scotlandtoday@stv.tv">scotlandtoday@stv.tv</a>	S/b 0141 300 3000
BBC Radio Scotland			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:scottish.planning@bbc.co.uk">scottish.planning@bbc.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 338 2760
Forth 1			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:forth-news@radioforth.com">forth-news@radioforth.com</a>	S/b 0131 557 1005
Real Radio			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:realnews@realradiofm.com">realnews@realradiofm.com</a>	S/b 0141 781 2206
The Herald			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:news@theherald.co.uk">news@theherald.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 302 7000
The Scotsman			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:newsdesk_ts@scotsman.com">newsdesk_ts@scotsman.com</a>	S/b 0131 620 8620
Scottish Press Association			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:news@scottishpressassociation.co.uk">news@scottishpressassociation.co.uk</a>	0870 124 4188
Edinburgh Evening News			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:news_en@scotsman.com">news_en@scotsman.com</a>	S/b 0131 620 8620
The Daily Mail in Scotland			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:scotland@dailymail.co.uk">scotland@dailymail.co.uk</a>	Sb 0141 331 4700
Scottish Daily Record			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:reporters@dailyrecord.co.uk">reporters@dailyrecord.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 309 3000
Metro			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:editorial@metroscot.co.uk">editorial@metroscot.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 225 3336
The Daily Telegraph (Edinburgh office)			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:auslan.cramb@telegraph.co.uk">auslan.cramb@telegraph.co.uk</a>	0131 620 4214
The Herald	Brian	Donnelly	Politics	<a href="mailto:brian.donnelly@theherald.co.uk">brian.donnelly@theherald.co.uk</a>	0131 718 6457 / 07803 970 113
The Scotsman	Hamish	MacDonell	Politics	<a href="mailto:hmacdonell@scotsman.com">hmacdonell@scotsman.com</a>	via S/b 0131 620 8620
Holyrood Magazine	Mandy	Rhodes	Editor	<a href="mailto:Mandy@holyrood.com">Mandy@holyrood.com</a>	0131 272 2114 / 07968 049267
Sunday Herald			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:news@sundayherald.com">news@sundayherald.com</a>	S/b 0141 302 7800
Scotland on Sunday			Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:newssos@scotlandonsunday.com">newssos@scotlandonsunday.com</a>	S/b 0131 620 8620
Sunday Times Scotland			Newsdesk	N/A	S/b 0141 420 5100

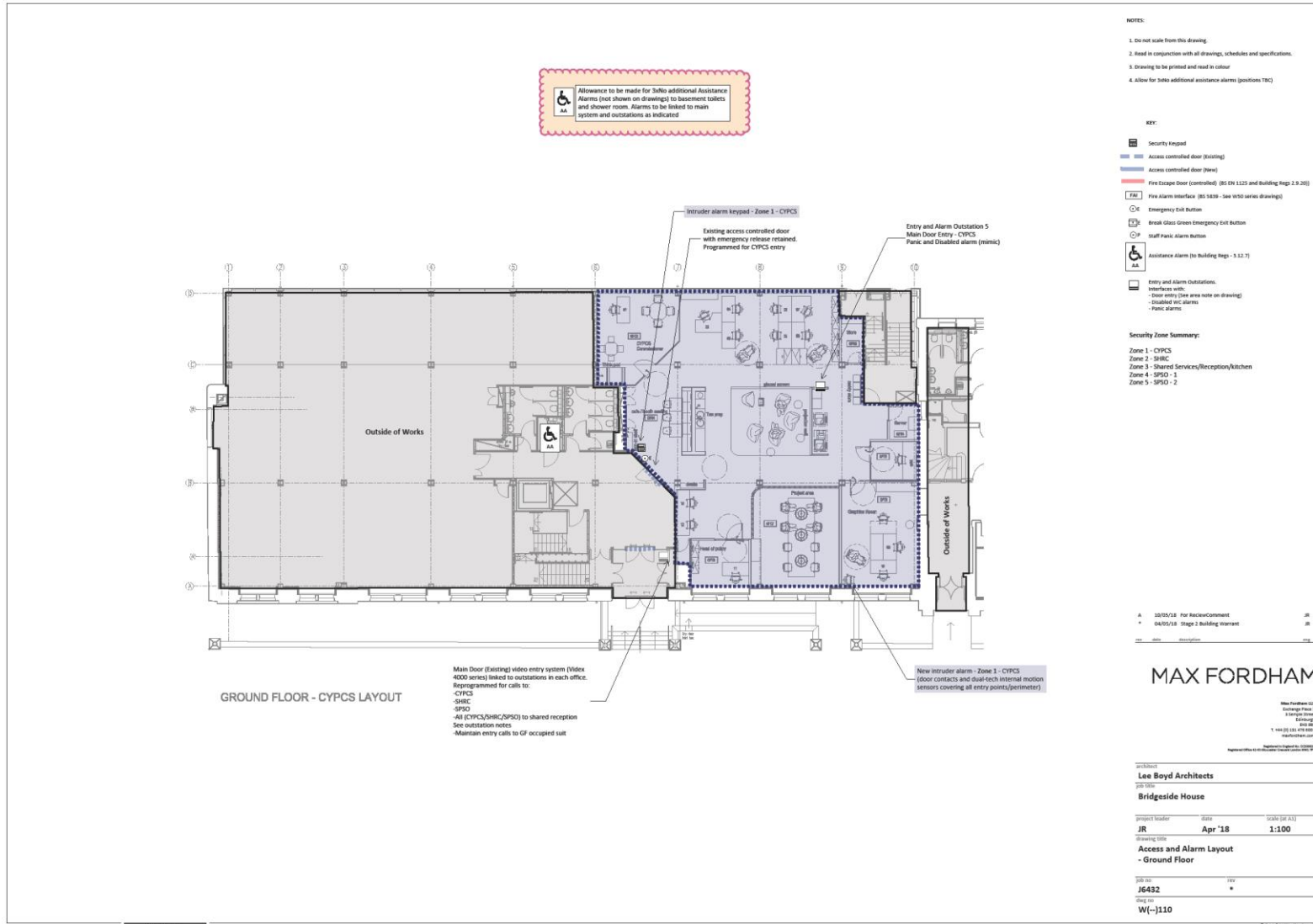
Sunday Mail		Newsdesk	<a href="mailto:mailbox@sundaymail.co.uk">mailbox@sundaymail.co.uk</a>	S/b 0141 309 3000
-------------	--	----------	--	-------------------

Annex 2: Bridgeside House Floor Plans





Business Continuity Plan



Link to SPSO seating plan: [FloorPlanMASTER.xlsx](#) (confidential - not for publishing)

## Annex 3: ICT System Document

---

Link to document: [CAS Workpro ICT System Documentation v2.0 \(06 Oct 2014\)](#)

Link to document: [CAS Workpro Escrow Agreement \(June 2016\)](#)

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## Disruption to work

### Contents

<b>How we manage disruption to work</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Childcare and caring responsibilities</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>How our leave policies apply</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Annual leave, flexi leave, other leave .....	3
Absence .....	4
<b>Official travel</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Travel to or from work</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Unable to travel to work.....	4
Severe transport disruption whilst at work .....	5
<b>Working from home or another building</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Working from home .....	5
Workplace access and closure .....	6
Office closure .....	6
<b>Planning ahead</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Annex 1: Weather warnings guide</b> .....	<b>8</b>
What do the colours mean?.....	8
Additional advice and information from the Met Office .....	9
How can I access Met Office weather warnings? .....	9

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

1. This policy is for all SPSO staff and contractors who are based in the office.

## How we manage disruption to work

---

2. How disruptions to work are managed will depend on whether they are known about in advance and reasonable action can be taken to manage their impact.
  - 2.1. Planned disruptions include, for example, severe weather forecast(s) or severely disruptive transport works.
  - 2.2. Unplanned, or exceptional disruption, could include extreme weather warnings, severe travel disruption, a security breach, severe property damage, IT, health and safety or an external incident, for example an incident in the vicinity of a building.
3. Disruptions can also impact on the community as a whole, causing issues such as school closures or withdrawal of caring services, which may affect staff member's ability to attend work.
4. Where the disruption is known in advance, planning ahead can help manage the impact of exceptional disruption on individual's work commitments and their team. Staff members should be familiar with the Incident Response Plan in the event of exceptional disruption.
5. Please note, if the Met office issues a red weather warning for Edinburgh and the Scottish Government advice is to avoid travel, the office will be automatically closed.

## Childcare and caring responsibilities

---

6. Exceptional disruption sometimes causes school closures or withdrawal of caring services. This may disrupt childcare or other caring responsibilities for some staff. It is expected that staff members will make every effort to arrange alternative care for a dependant, as in any emergency. The line manager should be informed if it is not possible to make alternative arrangements straightaway.
7. There may be [other leave](#) available to deal with a short-term emergency. This will last as long as is reasonably necessary to put in place suitable alternative care arrangements.
8. Other forms of leave can be used if you need a longer period away from work.

## How our leave policies apply

---

9. For planned disruption you should have had time to put in place suitable alternative plans and paid special leave and flexi adjustments will not be made. The following guidance applies in event of exceptional disruptions only.

### **Annual leave, flexi leave, other leave**

10. Link to the [Leave handbook](#).
11. Normal rules for requesting and taking all forms of leave continue to apply where there is an unplanned exceptional disruption to work. Your manager may be able to grant you other leave if:
  - 11.1. your childcare or other caring responsibilities are affected; and / or
  - 11.2. travel disruption means you cannot get to the office and you cannot work from home.
12. This should last as long as is reasonably necessary to make suitable alternative arrangements. You should use other forms of leave if this takes longer than expected.
13. Managers should approve other leave only if they are satisfied:
  - 13.1. you have been unable to attend work because of the disruption; and / or
  - 13.2. a suitable alternative is not possible
14. If increased travel time due to severe transport disruption means you cannot work your full hours, you should ask your manager about alternative working arrangements. If no alternative is suitable, you may be given flexi credit to make up your standard working day.
15. Where a flexi credit is appropriate, managers will be responsible for authorising them. When deciding on the flexi credit amount, managers should take into account:
  - 15.1. availability of public transport;
  - 15.2. ability to work from home; and
  - 15.3. safety advice issued by the police and other experts.
16. You should get flexi credit for all authorised hours worked if you are able to work from home. You will also be given flexi credit in the event of office closure.

## Absence

17. Your absence will not be treated as absence if it is as a direct result of exceptional disruption and caused by either your:
  - 17.1. caring responsibilities; and / or
  - 17.2. inability to travel to work.

## Official travel

---

18. You are encouraged to use alternatives like video/telephone conferencing, instead of travelling for meetings whether or not there is transport disruption. If there is severe transport disruption you should make use of these facilities and only plan official travel if essential.
19. Check the conditions along your route in advance and again immediately before you are due to begin your journey. You can get useful information from:
  - 19.1. [Traveline Scotland](#); and
  - 19.2. [Traffic Scotland](#).

## Travel to or from work

---

20. You are expected to make all reasonable efforts to get to work during exceptional disruption, including considering alternative transport, even if this takes longer. You should regularly check your travel plans and may need to leave the office early if exceptional disruption starts to be forecast, for example adverse weather.

## Unable to travel to work

21. If you cannot get to the office, or have concerns that travel would put you at risk, you should consider working from home.
22. You must report to your manager in line with usual absence management procedures if the exceptional disruption means you cannot get to work. If your manager is unavailable, you should speak to another manager (following the Call Chain procedure).
23. If no manager is available, leave a message to:
  - 23.1. say that you have called; and
  - 23.2. ask a manager to telephone you at home.

## **Severe transport disruption whilst at work**

24. You should consider all reasonable alternatives if:
  - 24.1. you are unable to travel home as you usually would;
  - 24.2. all public transport has been severely affected;
  - 24.3. options may include:
    - 24.4. travelling in a colleague's car
    - 24.5. staying with nearby family or friends
25. In very exceptional circumstances, you may be able to claim for additional travel expenses that you incur, or be reimbursed for the cost of overnight accommodation and/or other reasonable costs.
26. Managers must be satisfied that you had first exhausted all other reasonable alternatives and options to get home safely.
  - 26.1. any additional travel expense payment is taxable, and will be made through payroll;
  - 26.2. you must talk to your manager about claiming overnight accommodation costs; and
  - 26.3. hotel rooms should be booked via Corporate Services Team, or if they are unavailable, a representative from the Incident Response Team.

## **Working from home or another building**

---

27. In adverse weather or when there is an exceptional disruption, for example severe transport disruption, it may be safer and more practical for you to work from home. While there may be occasions where the Leadership Team decide to close the office to staff and/ or the public, generally it will be your personal responsibility to raise matters with your manager who will sign-off and agree arrangements with you based on your specific circumstances.
28. This recognises that you and your line manager have a role to play in assessing the risk to your personal safety, and that it requires understanding on behalf of both parties. Concerns or disagreements should be raised with a member of the Leadership Team.

## **Working from home**

29. You should discuss this with your manager.

30. If you intend to use your own or a colleague's SCOTS laptop, you will need to sign on to the laptop in the office before taking it home for the first time.
31. If you plan to work from home you should be familiar with:
  - 31.1. [Records Management and Security Guidance: sharing information off-network and out-of-office](#), and
  - 31.2. [Working From Home Policy](#).

### **Workplace access and closure**

32. Where disruption affects our office, the SPSO Corporate Services Manager [or appropriate other person], following consultation with the Office-holders and tenants, will make the decision on whether and to what extent, to restrict access to the building, and whether that is to staff, the public or both.
33. You should be familiar with this Incident Response Plan in the event of workplace closures.
34. If you notice anything potentially hazardous, you should contact the Building Coordinator immediately on 211 to log any building or cleaning faults.
35. You should also be familiar with what you should do in the [event of a fire](#) or where there is a security threat.

### **Office closure**

36. You will receive a flexi credit to make up your standard working hours for each day that the office is closed (or closes early) and you are unable to work from home.

### **Planning ahead**

---

37. Everyone should:
  - 37.1. plan ahead and prepare for the potential impact of any exceptional disruption such as adverse weather or severe transport disruption;
  - 37.2. make every effort to attend work as usual;
  - 37.3. take responsibility for their own health and safety when travelling to and from work;
  - 37.4. report to their manager as per usual if they think it is unsafe to travel;
  - 37.5. think ahead about any alternative plans they may need to make, for example to meet their childcare and caring responsibilities;
  - 37.6. think ahead about any alternative plans they may need to make if they cannot reach their usual workplace, for example work from home; and



37.7. consider taking work home if an exceptional disruption is forecast, bearing in mind security policies and procedures.

38. Managers should:

38.1. ensure that contingency plans are up-to-date;

38.2. communicate plans to deal with any exceptional disruption event and the support available within their teams; and

38.3. take individual circumstances into account, seeking advice from HR where necessary and apply our policies appropriately.

## Annex 1: Weather warnings guide

---

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/guide/weather/warnings>

39. As the UK's official weather service, the Met Office is responsible for issuing weather warnings, which warn of impacts caused by severe weather. Our warnings are designed to let people, businesses, emergency responders and governments know what weather is in store and what the impacts of that weather may be. The Met Office operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year so warnings can be issued at any time, day or night.

### **What do the colours mean?**

40. The Met Office issues weather warnings, through the National Severe Weather Warning Service, when severe weather has the potential to bring impacts to the UK. These warnings are given a colour (yellow, amber or red) depending on a combination of both the impact the weather may have and the likelihood of those impacts occurring.

#### *Yellow Warning*

41. Yellow warnings can be issued for a range of weather situations. Many are issued when it is likely that the weather will cause some low level impacts, including some disruption to travel in a few places. Many people may be able to continue with their daily routine, but there will be some that will be directly impacted and so it is important to assess if you could be affected. Other yellow warnings are issued when the weather could bring much more severe impacts to the majority of people but the certainty of those impacts occurring is much lower. It is important to read the content of yellow warnings to determine which weather situation is being covered by the yellow warning.

#### *Amber Warning*

42. There is an increased likelihood of impacts from severe weather, which could potentially disrupt your plans. This means there is the possibility of travel delays, road and rail closures, power cuts and the potential risk to life and property. You should think about changing your plans and taking action to protect yourself and your property. You may want to consider the impact of the weather on your family and your community and whether there is anything you need to do ahead of the severe weather to minimise the impact.

### *Red Warning*

43. Dangerous weather is expected and, if you have not already done so, you should take action now to keep yourself and others safe from the impact of the severe weather. It is very likely that there will be a risk to life, with substantial disruption to travel, energy supplies and possibly widespread damage to property and infrastructure. You should avoid travelling, where possible, and follow the advice of the emergency services and local authorities.

### **Additional advice and information from the Met Office**

44. [What impacts should I expect in severe weather?](#); and
45. [Severe weather information and advice](#) from the Met Office and our partners.

### **How can I access Met Office weather warnings?**

46. Met Office weather warnings are available in a number of ways, which make it easy to get the very latest information wherever you are. These include the Met Office app and website, social media, email alerts, TV, radio and RSS.
47. Severe weather warning information is displayed across our website, keeping you up to date with the latest details, including:
  - 47.1. homepage when warnings are in force
  - 47.2. weather Warnings page
  - 47.3. location warnings
  - 47.4. regional warnings
  - 47.5. dual warnings