



Audit and Assurance Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 20 th August 2024
Subject	Business Resilience Annual Update
Agenda No.	
Paper No.	
Purpose	Note

1. Background

- 1.1. The Business Resilience Team within Social Security Scotland are responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the business continuity and incident management systems in the organisation.
- 1.2. This paper is the second business resilience annual update to the Audit and Assurance Committee. The purpose is to provide an overview of activities of the Business Resilience team from the last 12 months, and a summary of findings from the recent annual review of the Business Continuity Management System.

2. Business Resilience Readiness

- 2.1. The Business Resilience Lead attended Executive Team meeting to agree the overall business continuity priorities for the agency. The newly agreed overarching priorities will contribute to the organisation achieving our business continuity objectives, and are as follows:
 1. Protect the health, safety and welfare of our colleagues and clients.
 2. Maintain payments of benefits to our clients.
 3. Maintain communication with colleagues, ministers, partners, and other key stakeholders.
 4. Provide a means for clients to communicate with us.
 5. Maintain redetermination and appeals.
 6. Maintain timely payments to suppliers.
- 2.2. Business Resilience team conduct routine horizon-scanning activities to proactively identify potential threats to the organisation and to develop contingencies, as necessary. This involves collaboration with colleagues from Scottish Government Security and Business Continuity Team, and in alignment with the National Risk Register
- 2.3. Details of business continuity planning activity are on [Annex 1](#). In summary:
 - All teams have received business continuity training, and the majority of business continuity plans are now in place.

- The Business Resilience team continue to facilitate exercises every 6 months to validate business continuity plans against a series of questions and scenarios, with an aim of increasing plan familiarisation and to identify improvements. Exercises have resulted in improvements to plans such as more detailed and robust recovery strategies, improved accuracy, and increased resilience through the addition of offline or clerical processes.
 - In addition to exercising, all completed business continuity plans are required to be reviewed bi-annually due to the rate of change within the organisation. This is co-ordinated by the Business Resilience Team with the relevant teams/branches. Reviews ensure data and information contained in plans is accurate, and supports organisational resilience.
- 2.4. **Upcoming priority:** Continuous improvement of our Business Continuity Management System and Incident Management System is ongoing. Work was commissioned to support with continuous improvement of IT-related incident management. A Project Lead has been assigned to progress the agreed recommendations, and exploratory work with relevant stakeholders is underway.

3. Incident Management

- 3.1. Disruptions and incidents across the organisation are routinely documented by the Business Resilience team, with a summary provided in [Annex 2](#).
- 3.2. The Business Resilience Team capture data on the number of Social Security Scotland colleagues signed up to the Scottish Government's emergency text messaging service, Groupcall. See [Annex 3](#) for this data.
- 3.3. A new colleague emergency information line has been formally launched. Commissioned by the Business Resilience Lead, this emergency line is available for colleagues to call during large incidents where other communication channels are unavailable. The line provides colleagues with a recorded update relating to known incidents and comes at no financial cost to the organisation.
- 3.4. The Business Resilience team have formed an incident management working group to bring key stakeholders together to enable a joined-up and collaborative approach to incident response within our buildings.
- 3.5. **Upcoming priority:** Business Resilience continue to work with Communications colleagues on an incident communications and management plan to outline how the organisation will respond in a crisis. The Communications team is currently in the process of finalising this plan for approval.



4. Governance

- 4.1. As per the Business Continuity Institute good practice requirements, an annual review of our Business Continuity Management System has taken place with senior leaders. Outputs are being progressed and can be viewed in [Annex 4](#).
- 4.2. Following discussions with the Governance Team, it was agreed that Business Resilience should report annually in person to Executive Team and Audit & Assurance Committee.
- 4.3. **Upcoming priority:** We have been closely collaborating with Data Protection colleagues to conduct a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to ensure that our processes comply with data protection legislation.
- 4.4. **Upcoming priority:** An internal audit of the business resilience function is scheduled for Quarter 3 of this financial year.

5. Partnership Working

- 5.1. The Business Resilience team work closely with internal and external stakeholders such as DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) and Scottish Government. Our collaborations support in preparation for transition, and provide assurance that our procedures are aligned with partners.
- 5.2. The Business Resilience Lead is an active member of the Scottish Government Security and Business Continuity team advisory group and culture and awareness project, demonstrating credibility with stakeholders, and further strengthens working relationships between our organisations.

6. Education and Awareness

- 6.1. The Business Resilience Team deliver and/or organise various education and awareness pieces to colleagues across Social Security Scotland, with the aim of increasing knowledge of business continuity and incident management.
- 6.2. Education and awareness highlights for 2023-2024 are:

Activity	Scottish Government Cyber Co-ordination Centre Exercises
Audience	Executive Team, and key stakeholders from the organisation
Description	These cyber exercises were designed to test strategic level response and co-ordination structures in responding to a cyber incident.



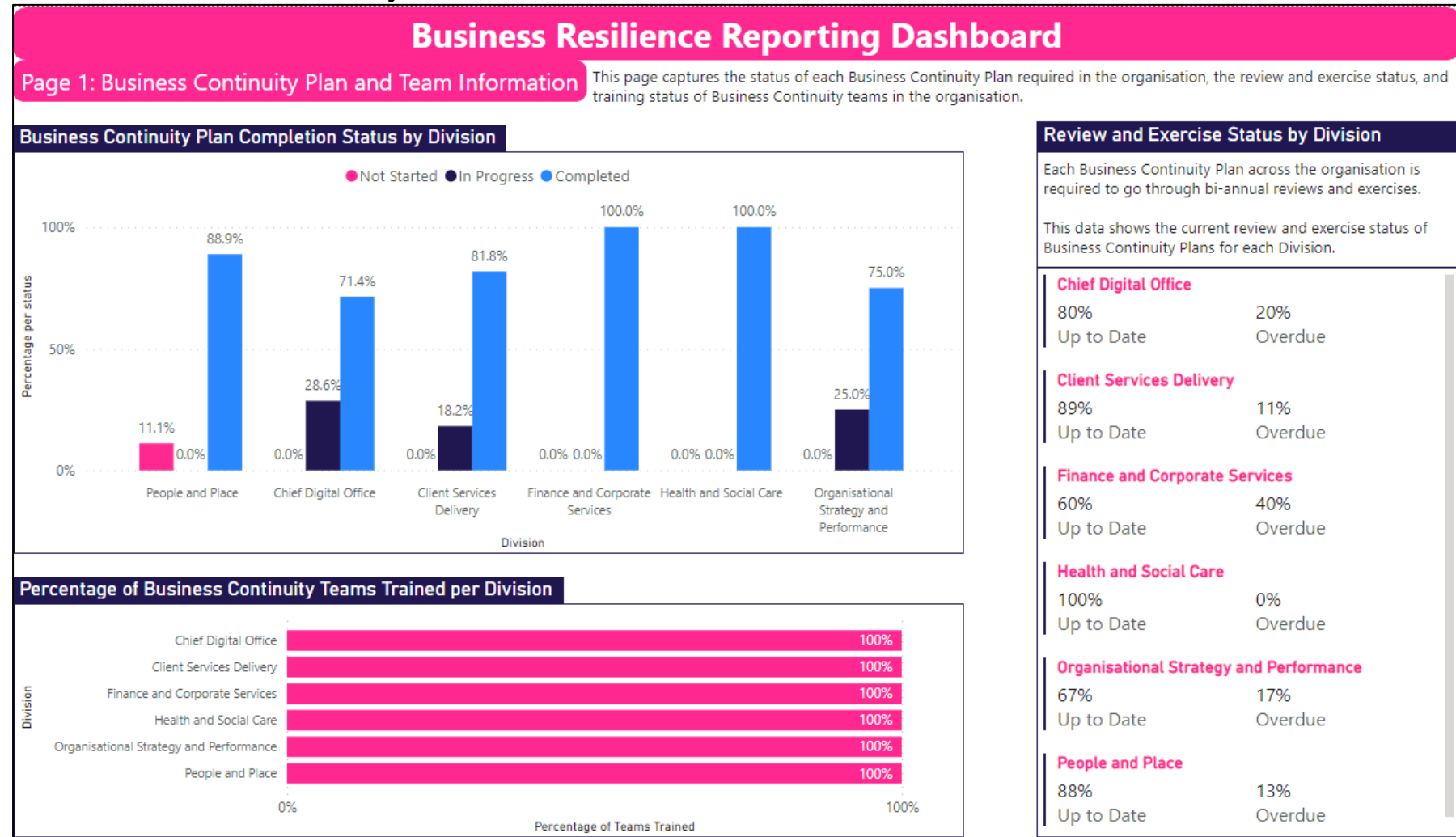
Activity	Business Continuity and Resilience Awareness Week 2024
Audience	Over 300 colleagues from across the organisation
Description	<p>The Business Resilience Team arranged a week of educational events to celebrate this annual, global event.</p> <p>Working with internal and external stakeholders, sessions were dedicated to raising awareness and enhancing understanding of business continuity and resilience. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and will help shape how we plan events for next year.</p>

Activity	Media Training
Audience	Senior leadership teams
Description	<p>The Corporate Communications team has designed media training around handling major incidents for the senior leadership team. This was recently rolled out with Miriam Craven and Ally MacPhail being the first two participants.</p>

7. Conclusion

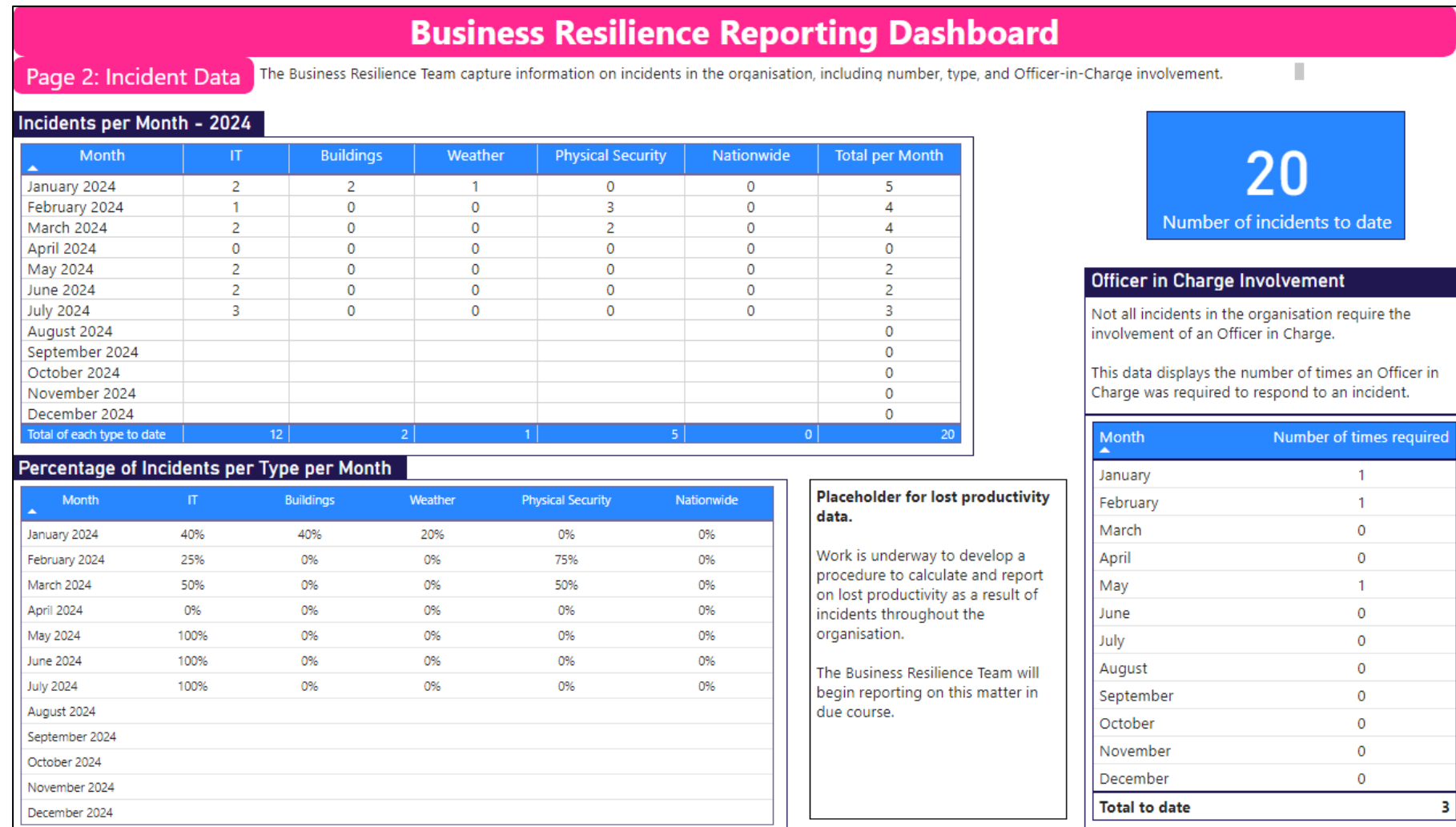
- 7.1. The Audit and Assurance Committee are asked to note this update. Any comments on the content and format of this paper are welcomed.

ANNEX 1 – Business Continuity Plan and Team information.



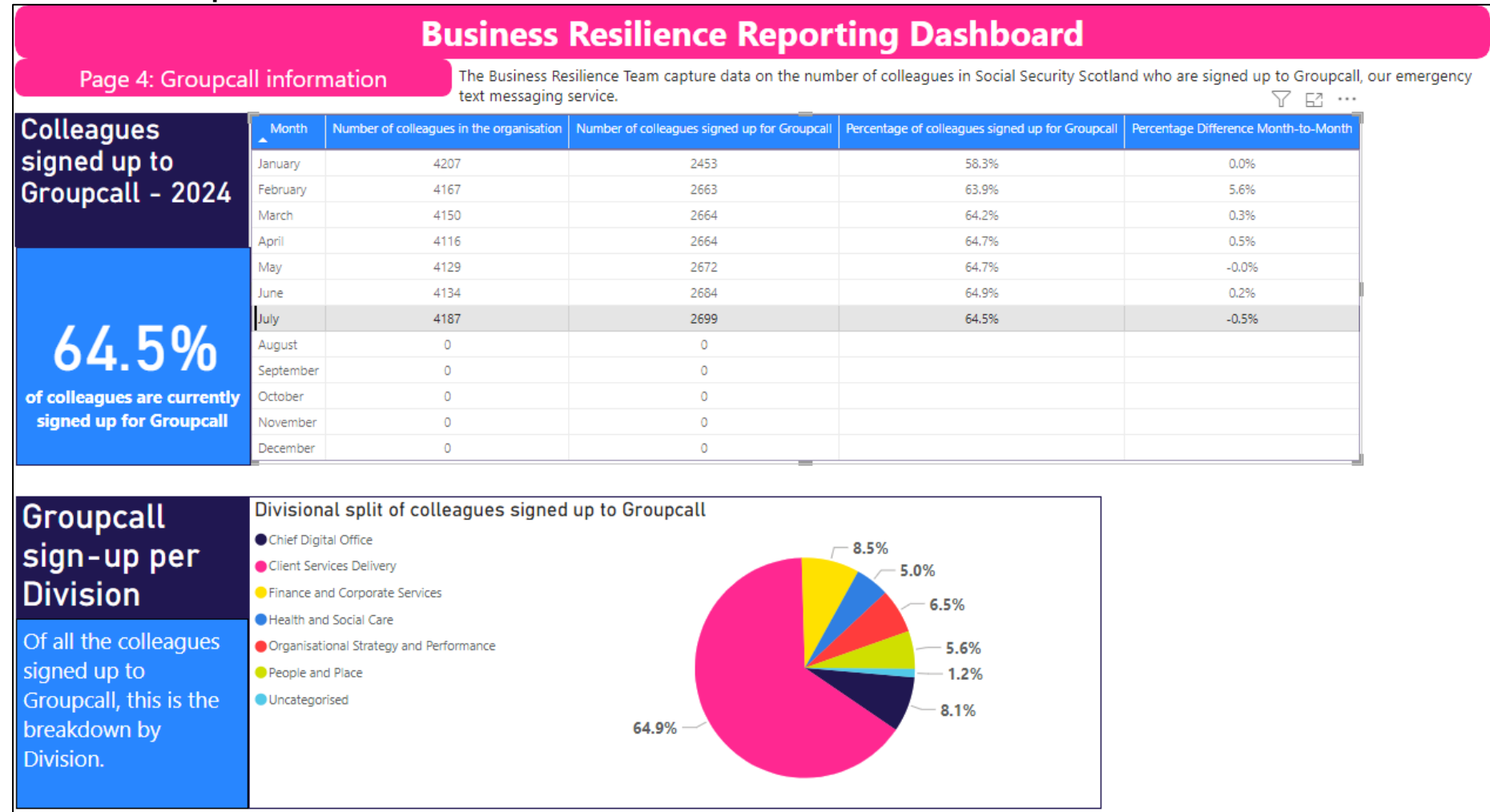
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ANNEX 2 - Business Continuity Incidents Data.



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ANNEX 3 – Groupcall information



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ANNEX 4 – Business Continuity Management System Annual Review

Business Continuity Management System Review

Date: 26 April 2024

In attendance: [Redacted]

	Area of Discussion	Comments
1	Review of actions from previous management reviews.	Only action was to amend this checklist
2	Review business continuity outcomes and objectives. Do these need to be updated/amended?	Draft outcomes and objectives have been written into framework – see notes
3	Is there any requirement to change the business continuity policy or framework, including the scope? This could be due to internal or external changes such as alteration to budget or resources, a result of emerging industry good practice, or changes to legislative or statutory requirements.	Draft policy ready, draft BC/MI frameworks approaching completion (GPG changed, so took much longer than anticipated) plus service design work ongoing.
4	How many incidents has there been since the last meeting? Review outages log.	Please refer to reporting dashboard.
5	Has there been a post incident report written and any lessons identified for each incident?	No post incident reports required, but lessons identified logged. Change to centralised tracker for visibility.
6	Discuss status of new or existing audit recommendations.	Internal Audit Advisory presentation/recommendations – see notes. Also, business resilience audit due Q3 this year.
7	Review testing and exercise schedule. Are all Business Continuity plans reviewed and exercised biannually	Please refer to reporting dashboard.

	(including updates to the business impact analysis and business continuity strategies?)	
8	Have the results of exercising and testing been shared with all relevant parties?	Yes
9	Have any items for continual improvement been identified, opportunities for improvement or techniques, products, or procedures, which could be used to improve the performance and effectiveness of the business continuity management system?	BC/MI frameworks/Good Practice Guidelines Lessons identified governance Service design project OIC process Emergency colleague information line and OIC/Chair numbers Change to templates Chair rota process
10	Has the business continuity risk assessment been regularly updated, to identify any new risks to the organisation?	Heatmap under development
11	Has the business continuity risk register been updated to identify any emerging risks or issues to the business continuity management system?	Divisional risks
12	Have any risks or issues from previous risk assessments not been adequately addressed/lessons identified?	Any concerns have been raised and addressed by Risk Review Group as appropriate.
13	Is there any feedback from interested parties?	Feedback on templates to be updated. Feedback within lessons identified on potential improvement activity (e.g. service design).
14	Are current governance and reporting mechanisms appropriate?	Quarterly P&P/ET below the line only. Annually AAC/ET in person.

15	Should we have defined Key Performance Indicators for the Business Continuity Management System?	Under consideration.
16	Is there appropriate resource and capability within the Business Resilience Team?	Depends on expectations on our team. No B3 role for succession planning.

	Action	Who by	Comments
2.	Outcomes to be reviewed as part of overall BC Framework review	[Redacted]	
3.	<p>BC and MI Frameworks both under review due to changes in Good Practice Guidelines and work on ongoing Service Design recommendations.</p> <p>Consideration also needs to be given to end of Programme/transition and what this may mean to current ways of working and future landscape for resilience.</p> <p>Consideration to be given by Business Resilience Lead on how to streamline processes and make further efficiencies – particularly in incident management space.</p>	[Redacted]	
5.	Discuss lessons learned governance with Change Team – now that lessons are on centralised log	[Redacted]	
6.	Discuss internal audit advisory actions	[Redacted]	



14.	Current governance and reporting mechanisms to be reviewed	[Redacted]	Advantage that Business Resilience now sits alongside risk, where updates on horizon scanning and preparedness can be shared with the appropriate forums.
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8. GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST

Please ensure that you detail which Corporate Plan Strategic Objective the paper contributes to. These strategic considerations should be used to assist you with the content of your paper.

Strategic Objective	Contribution
Helping to deliver a social security system with dignity, fairness, and respect.	Not Applicable
Supporting people in Scotland to access devolved benefits that they are entitled to.	Update paper demonstrates how business resilience is helping to ensure continued delivery of our prioritised activities through business continuity management, ensuring people in Scotland can access the benefits they are entitled to.
Running our service in a responsible way.	This update paper demonstrates how business resilience is helping to run our service in a responsible way using business continuity management, ensuring continued delivery of our services to our clients.

State here how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency. Only complete the section(s) relevant to your paper.

Strategic consideration	Impact
Environment	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Governance	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Data	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.

Strategic consideration	Impact
Finance	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Staff	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Equalities	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Estates	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.
Communications and Presentation	Not Applicable – Please delete if applicable and state how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency.

An Impact Assessment must be carried out during the development of all new Agency policies and services and when making significant changes to policies and services. The Corporate Assurance team should be involved from an early stage to provide guidance and advice relating to completing impact assessments.

[Impact Assessment Saltire Page](#)

General Impact Assessment Queries: Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot

Equality Impact Assessment Queries: Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot

Please complete the below table.

Type of Impact Assessment	Required (Y/N)	If No - briefly state reason e.g. Not relevant/Not eligible – agreed with Deputy Director	If yes – briefly state progress to date, highlight any significant issues.
Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)	N	Not relevant	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	N	Not relevant	
Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	N	Not relevant	
Fairer Scotland Duty assessment	N	Not relevant	



Type of Impact Assessment	Required (Y/N)	If No - briefly state reason e.g. Not relevant/Not eligible – agreed with Deputy Director	If yes – briefly state progress to date, highlight any significant issues.
Future proofing legislation	N	Not relevant	
Human rights in policy making	N	Not relevant	
Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)	N	Not relevant	
Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)	N	Not relevant	