



BS 25999 Business Continuity

CASE STUDY SEMBCORP UK

Summary

Needs

- Effective business continuity plans to ensure resilience
- Credibility as business continuity practitioners

Benefits

- Improved relationships with core suppliers and key customers
- Improved relationships between departments within the organisation
- Reduction in costs
- Improved reputation for reliability

Background

Sembcorp UK is a dynamic, innovative and responsive industrial utilities and services company based in the north east of England. The company is an important supplier of essential utilities such as steam and power to major international companies at Wilton International – one of the UK's largest and most important manufacturing sites. It is also actively looking to expand its business to other major sites in the UK and throughout Europe.

Sembcorp offers a wide range of support services to its customers including the UK's largest privately owned industrial fire



fighting and chemical spill protection team, electrical power expertise, infrastructure maintenance and accredited analytical and environmental services specialists.

As well as providing power, steam and support services, Sembcorp owns and markets much of the available development land on the internationally renowned Wilton International site to companies looking to bring investment and jobs to the area.

Customer Needs

Sembcorp wanted to be the first in its sector to gain certification to BS 25999. BS 25999 provides a basis for understanding, developing and implementing business continuity within an organisation and inspires confidence in business-to-business and business-to-customer dealings. It also contains a comprehensive set of requirements based on best practice.

By implementing BS 25999, businesses such as Sembcorp can put measures in place so that potential disruptions are experienced at a rehearsal stage, thereby ensuring that they will be better prepared in the event of a real disaster.

David Guy, senior vice-president of finance, explains that, "There are schedules within contracts with our customers which refer to our ability to continue to provide our services in the event of organisational or departmental disruption. We needed to satisfy not only ourselves but our customers that we could indeed fulfill our obligations under contract.

We decided that if we were going for certification, we would cover our whole organisation and not limit it to one key area. Limiting the scope of the BCM would not have provided a true reflection of

Sembcorp's business continuity capability. Our core and support functions are intrinsically linked to the extent that we could not write exclusions into the scope and remain confident that we had implemented a complete system."

Benefits

Sembcorp achieved BS 25999 certification in August 2008 and as a result has now put in place robust and effective plans to ensure its resilience in the case of unplanned disruption.

"The benefits of certification to BS 25999 include reductions in our insurance premiums and a commercial advantage. We now benefit from strengthened relationships with key suppliers and customers and have improved internal relationships between our departments. We also have an improved reputation for reliability," said Guy.

The implementation process gave Sembcorp a much clearer understanding of the interdependencies within business areas.

Guy explains that, "by analysing core service definitions as part of our activity analysis we were directly linking in with the requirements of our customers and our contractual obligations. There was also a need to look at outsourced partners and their own resilience and our procurement dept are now asking suppliers about their business continuity arrangements and setting this as a requirement in tender processes."

BSI's Role

Sembcorp worked closely with BSI to determine the requirements and understand the interpretation of various aspects of the standard.

Julian Thrussell, UK product manager for BSI comments, "The increasing number of registrations for BS 25999 certification is reassuring and confirms that organisations are realising the importance of a comprehensive business continuity management strategy.

Business continuity should be seen as a necessity, especially in a tough economic climate. It can help prepare a business to deal with any kind of disaster and prove to the outside world that they have a tested process in place."

BS 25999 has been very influential in helping to safeguard businesses against possible risks which may affect their overall functioning. "Business continuity should no longer be viewed as a luxury for select organisations," continues Thrussell.

"Certification should be considered a necessity in order to ensure organisations are fully compliant with the standard and equipped to deal with any unforeseen disaster. By doing so, the overall risk for the organisation will be reduced and ultimately customer satisfaction will be improved."

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