

ISO Standard for Business Continuity Gets the Green Light

ISO 22301 took one step closer to becoming reality recently when the DIS (Draft International Standard) received a 91% vote of confidence from the ISO Technical Committee responsible for its creation. Whilst there will be some further changes made to the document based on feedback received from member countries, the majority felt that it was adequate to vote through to the next stage. The FDIS (final draft) will be available by August and it will be then that we can see what the ultimate standard will look like. Publication now looks likely to be at the end of 2011 or early 2012.

So what does this mean to users of business continuity standards? An International Standard offers the gravitas required in the eyes of many corporate businesses, to be the accepted and approved method of working. It will be globally recognisable and portable across different business hubs. Of course, there will be some countries that will prefer to stick with their own regional standards and this is fine too. Ultimately, it will come down to what works best for an organisation and the needs and demands of its stakeholders.

Management System standards are going through a change of their own. They are set to become more formulaic which means if an organisation has already implemented a management system and chooses to adopt another management system standard, this will make life easier in maintaining the key requirements across all standards.

So, if talk of the new ISO for business continuity is getting you thinking, here are some reasons why your organisation might wish to consider implementing ISO 22301:

- Implementing a business continuity management system will ensure a greater understanding of how you may be affected by a disruption.
- A business continuity management system will encourage prompt actions and help prevent internal and external threats from turning into real incidents.
- A business continuity management system will improve working relationships with stakeholders. This will result in mutual understanding of each others' business needs, and in return better results will be achieved.
- A culture of "continual improvement" will evolve within the organisation and staff will adopt a more proactive approach to business improvements.

For organisations which are already certified to BS 25999-2, Certification Bodies will announce how to transition to ISO 22301, once the standard is published.

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