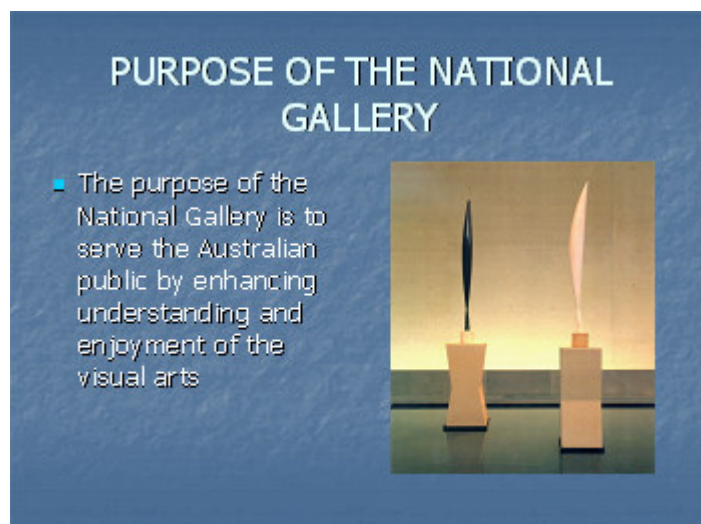


BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA

Erica Persak

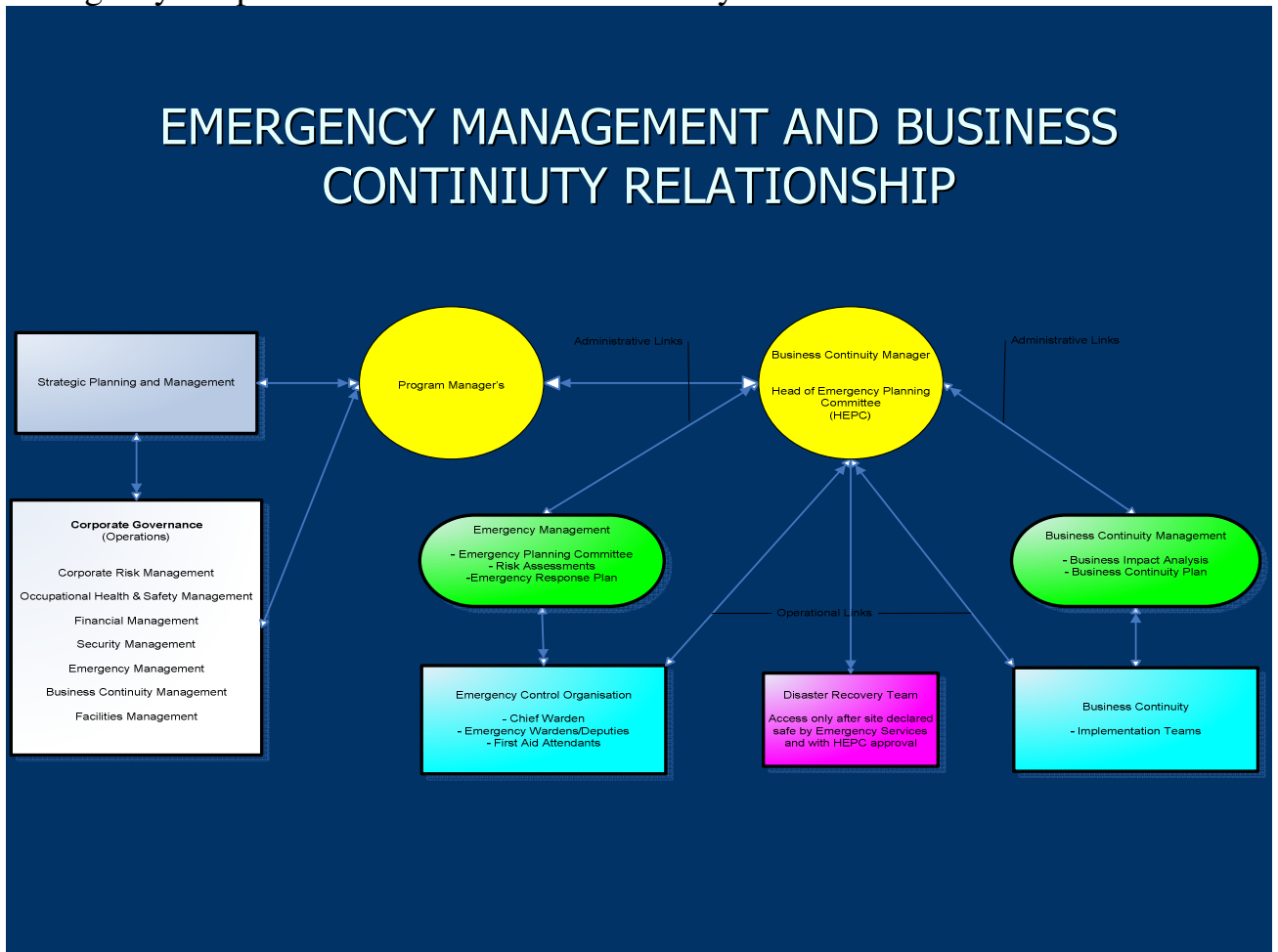


Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the National Gallery on the subject of business continuity planning and how we have addressed the question of risks to the collection as part of our BCP.

Not all events are emergencies, and not all emergencies become disasters. A hasty decision to declare a disaster can be more disruptive than the event itself. A timely and appropriate response, however, is necessary to protect the safety of employees and reduce the risk to property. (Chubb Loss Control Services)

While often thought of as being one and the same, there is a critical distinction between disaster recovery and business continuity. A disaster recovery plan should be just one component of a broader business continuity strategy to keep business operations continuing as usual, no matter what kind of disruption occurs – planned or unplanned.

The following chart illustrates how the National Gallery relates BCP with our Emergency Response Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan.



The National Gallery has a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan for collections which is regularly tested. This Plan incorporates initial response to events threatening the collection and works of art on loan and in the care of the Gallery, as well as detailing salvage measures if and where required.

Business continuity planning is an essential part of our strategic business and the following information taken from last year's annual report highlights why we regularly test our plan.



The valuation of our collection and the large number of inward loans, which themselves can amount to over one billion dollars, provides a very substantial risk management task for us.

Over the past ten years there has been more emphasis on business continuity planning. Business continuity planners of the 21st century face a variety of critical issues that must be tackled. At the same time, they are facing obstacles not known a decade ago. Some of the greatest challenges include:

1. The reduction in recovery time which continues to grow shorter for most organisations. The window of time that can elapse before the lack of a business function severely impacts on a business entity has diminished.
2. The decrease in staffing and budgets. Even with the increased awareness that has occurred and the improved management support, many organisations still have limited resources to devote to contingency planning.
3. The increase in risks, vulnerabilities and threats. Continuity planners of today face a tremendous number of potential risks. Terrorism is certainly the most dominant threat to arise in the past few years, but there are many more. In today's environment, risks can include technology failures, viruses, media relations, natural disasters and a variety of human resource concerns.

After a series of meetings with senior staff across the Gallery, nine enterprise risks were identified and it was agreed that the preservation of the collection and works of art on loan and in the care of the National Gallery, is a major mission critical activity. To a large extent it is acknowledged that a number of our collection issues are addressed through the Disaster Recovery Plan.

Our Business Continuity Plan continues to assess the business continuity preparedness of each department. It puts in place measures to ensure that the operations of the Gallery will continue to function in the aftermath of a disaster and it calls upon the Gallery's existing Disaster Recovery Plan to respond to collection based disasters whether natural or man made.

The Plan is designed to meet the following objectives:

- To establish what we term as a Command Centre, an off-site facility, for the Command Team.
- To immediately activate a Standby Site Activation Team and relocate to a standby site which for us is our Hume off site store.
- To activate and relocate to the Standby Site the Information and Communication Teams.
- To ensure all necessary facilities are available at the standby location for the agreed number of users.
- To relocate remaining key teams to the Standby facility.
- To implement the Gallery's IT systems.
- To establish effective communication mechanisms.
- To commence assessment of restoration requirements and initiatives.
- To document all recovery actions taken to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

In developing its Business Continuity Plan the Gallery established eight Command Teams, and each is assigned specific objectives and responsibilities.



Each team has a Team Leader who is a senior member of staff with an alternate. There is a Deputy Team Leader, again with an alternate, and the Team

Members. Depending on the responsibilities of the Team, the number of Team Members vary from three to in some cases, six members.

The Works of Art Relocation Team, headed by myself, liaises closely with the Disaster Recovery Team and has clear strategic responsibilities outside those belonging to the Disaster Recovery Team. Given that the National Gallery is a significant borrower of works of art a major responsibility of the Team is to work with the Client Communications/Marketing Team to ensure that our clients and stakeholders are kept advised of the situation and to work with our insurers.

As part of the on going work of the Works of Art Relocation Team we are developing a comprehensive long-term approach to the recovery of collections in the event of a disaster. The main tasks are divided into two groups.

1. Collection analysis

- determine the risks of damage to collections from specific events (structural, water, fire, hazardous materials, etc)
- based on the risk assessment, set priorities for the collections and records relating to those collections.

2. Response procedures and techniques

- We are currently working through the issues associated with establishing a list of potential safe areas and outside storage space, and updating our list of emergency supplies and equipment.

Recently the Command team leaders worked closely with Les Whittet in running a desk top scenario test to evaluate our plans and identify where there were gaps and where further work was required. The scenario presented to us was a fire in the air conditioning system in the Gallery's Parkes building which was expected to be disabled for a week. The Director was overseas and could not be contacted for 24 hours, it was a busy Monday morning with several busloads of visitors and there was a collection from the Louvre on display in the Gallery's exhibition wing. The various command teams worked through the issues with the aid of our BCP and formulated a stepwise response.

One of the first things the Works of Art Relocation Team had to do was to work with both the Gallery's Command and Client Communications/Marketing Teams to ensure that the Minister and the Louvre were kept informed of the situation. We also had to ensure that a copy of our collections management system was available and operating at our Hume site to allow us to confirm the

names of lenders who had works on loan and vendors who had works in the building on approval for possible acquisition. As with most collections management systems the Gallery's system records the full name and all the contact details for lenders and vendors.

After this scenario test the Works of Art Relocation Team met to discuss some of the issues associated with the scenario and the lessons learnt. We also worked through different disasters and identified what resources we required to affect the Gallery's Business Continuity Plan. We realised that we needed to ensure that the Gallery had electronic versions of its condition reports on the permanent collection as well as works on loan. We currently enter condition report information into the Gallery's collections management system, but there are a significant number of paper records that are awaiting transfer into an electronic format. This transfer is a priority program to allow ready electronic access to all condition reporting from the Hume site.

We were reassured that our Collections Management system could provide us with the information we required to contact our clients, which for the Gallery is an important part of our ongoing relationship with lenders and essential for the maintenance of our good reputation. The conditions under which works of art are loaned to the Gallery stipulate that conservation treatment of those works must not be undertaken without prior consent of the Lender and they must be kept informed of any outcomes or follow up actions concerning the work of art. The same condition applies to indemnified loans, however contractual obligations state that in an emergency the Gallery is permitted to remove indemnified works of art to a place of safekeeping. The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts must be advised if an indemnified work of art is removed from display or damaged as a result of a disaster or incident.

An actual case, involving two serious incidents, where these issues were critical was in 2001 during the Monet in Japan exhibition. The first was related to a change in the environmental conditions in the main display gallery. There were strictly specified loan conditions regarding the display of Japanese screens. Environmental conditions could not be maintained to the standard required. It was necessary to contact the lender immediately; the difference in time zones was the first impediment. The documentation did not provide after hours contact details so the best that could be done was to send email alerts and voice mail messages. When contact was finally made the lender was concerned about the conditions however the works could not be moved without the presence of the lender's courier. Fortunately the environment was stabilised and the lender advised.

The second incident involved the scheduling for return of the exhibition items around the September 11th disaster in New York. Monet in Japan was in the final

week of its final venue in Perth. Couriers' bookings had been well planned and coordinated however the New York attacks grounded all air traffic from the USA. Fortunately, loans from other countries were unaffected and returns were successful. The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, the portfolio department, called a crisis meeting since this was a major indemnified show, in excess of one billion dollars. Plans had to be submitted to the Department to satisfy them that the storage, care and security needs could be satisfied and that a communication plan was organised to keep the lenders advised. This was in an extremely uncertain environment. The Gallery learnt a great deal from these two incidents.

The Works of Art Relocation Team agreed that it is critical for curatorial staff to continue to develop a priority recovery list for the NGA's permanent collection and works of art on loan to the Gallery. Although this is a requirement of our Disaster Recovery Plan further work is needed in maintaining the currency of these lists; new works are generally acquired every two months and loans are ongoing. In the case of indemnified exhibitions a priority recovery list is established before the opening of the exhibition. This practice is well bedded in and includes the identification of the ten most important works (a highly confidential list). An inspection of these priority works is normally done during the briefing for the Disaster Recovery Team (Collection) team on the morning of the media preview of the indemnified exhibition.

The Team identified three potential disasters and workshopped what resources were required to deal with a power outage in our Parkes facility, a fire in the main building and a flood. The Team also identified that it was necessary to reconsider existing security procedures in relation to the transport of works of art between Parkes and Hume. The scenario exercise also clearly showed up the high importance for the maintenance of the recovery priority list. The priority lists of the Gallery's own collections involve curatorial input to identify the top fifty works in each curatorial sub-section. This is a difficult task since such a narrowed list involves a curator in painful decision making. Of the nominated works, curators are then asked to identify the top ten items, those which will receive priority attention in a disaster. The exercise further highlighted the security risks in such a list; technological solutions are being explored to ensure the confidentiality of all such lists on the collection management system. Given the nature of most art thefts from institutions, the internal risks need to be considered and managed with special access arrangements.

The Team also realised that further work was required to maintain an emergency site for the treatment of damaged works and further refine its procedure for the management of works of art during the event of a disaster.

For the National Gallery, Business Continuity Planning is essential to protect our people, our collection and our reputation. As noted earlier, terrorism is the most dominant threat to emerge for us over the past few years. Along with the devastating loss of life, there are businesses that suffer as a result of terrorist acts.

It is interesting to note that a complete inventory of the numerous corporate art collections lost on September 11 may be impossible to compile because it is believed many art inventories were destroyed along with the Trade Center itself. AXA Art Insurance Corporation has estimated the value of artwork lost at \$100 million. The results of a survey conducted in the months immediately following September 11 of 122 museums, libraries, archives and other collecting institutions in Lower Manhattan revealed:

- Only 46% of the institutions surveyed had a written emergency plan, and only 42% had staff trained in disaster response procedures.
- Only 60% of respondents had a current collections catalogue or inventory and more than half did not keep an off-site record of their inventory.

Business Continuity Planning requires that you take a moment to look around you. What defines your organisation? What is contained within its corridors, on its walls, which like the data residing within countless information systems is priceless, valuable, and worth recovering in the event of a disaster. Are these items, their descriptions, values, photographic records, owners names (if on loan) etc. documented and stored in a location removed from the primary place of business?

The loss of cultural heritage can never be accurately measured or evaluated in financial terms nor can the loss of human life. Yes, the price or market value of a specific item can be established, but a price can never be placed on the cultural loss to the people of a nation or society.

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Since 1998 Erica has been the Assistant Director Collection Services, at the National Gallery of Australia where she is responsible for the management of the conservation, registration, and the research library at the Gallery. She has an

Arts Honours Graduate (History) from the Australian National University, Canberra (1977); a Graduate of Librarianship (1979), a Graduate Certificate in Management Studies (1996) from the University of Canberra and is currently undertaking studies for a Masters degree at the ANU.

Erica has been involved in the cultural sector for over twenty years, working in the area of collections management. She has been Registrar at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, the National Museum of Australia and the National Gallery of Australia.