How to Prepare a Balanced BIA

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Session 9222
Balanced BIA

What is it?

How does it go wrong?

What is the impact?

How to do it right?
BIA: What is it?

BIA Focuses Effort and Investment on most critical processes for BC Planning and function/process risk assessment.
BIA: What is it?

- Org Chart
- Sites & LOBs
- Business Functions

RTO
- Duration of business interruption that can be tolerated

RPO
- Number of hours or days of data loss that can be tolerated
BIA: What is it?

How much data can you lose before it becomes irrecoverable, or can’t be recovered in time to support the process RTO?

How quickly do your critical processes and data need to be made operational to avoid significant business impact?
BIA: How does it go wrong?
BIA: How does it go wrong?

- Assume the event is physically localized
- Assume only IT services are impacted
- Assume that only your BIA subject is impacted

Fatal Assumptions

This is right. (good)
This is wrong. (bad)
BIA: How does it go wrong?

1. Assume the event is physically localized
2. Assume only IT services are impacted
3. Assume that only your BIA subject is impacted

If you ask any business manager, out of context, how important their work is, you will get a consistent answer.
**BIA: What is the impact?**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Tier 1 | $$$$$| • High Availability (Non-stop or near non-stop)  
          • Solution intensive with automated failover  
          • Planning level is light |
| Tier 2 | $$$  | • Rapid Availability (within 3 business days)  
          • Solution intensive with manual failover  
          • Planning level is moderate |
| Tier 3 | $$   | • Standard availability (3 to 5 business days)  
          • Hot site solution tier  
          • Planning level is high |
| Tier 4 | $    | • Full Recovery  
          • Waiting for total business recovery  
          • Planning is light, but must suspend business or manually track business transactions |
BIA: What is the impact?

- Poor RTO Distribution
- High Availability
- Standard Availability
- Full Recovery
BIA: How to do it right?

Change one little thing.
BIA: How to do it right?

Change one little thing.

Put a broad context around your BIA questions and questionnaire.

A catastrophic regional disaster that completely interrupts all business and operations at the site, disrupts public infrastructure and transportation, physical damage, and may include human impact.
BIA: When its wrong!

- High Availability
- Standard Availability
- Full Recovery
BIA: When its right!
BIA: How to do it right?

Case in point!

Case Study: A BIA must be conducted at least in the context of a location-wide disaster. A major retailer had internally conducted a standard BIA focusing on individual business units. Out of over 30 business units analyzed, results were skewed to high-cost, high-availability RTOs (27). We revisited those business units and questioned their criticality in the context of a site-wide disaster. RTOs were revised to 1 High Availability, 2 Rapid Availability, 12 Standard Availability, and the rest at “Best Efforts” or Full Recovery, saving the company significant Business Continuity investment.

Case Study: The Treasury Department of a company emerged from the BIA with a high-availability requirements. When we revisited with the broader catastrophe scenario, the Treasurer’s response: “Good grief! In that context, our functions are not very important. We should focus on our core business services. All I need for several weeks is a phone, bank account information, and a laptop PC.
The Expert Team approach to BIA is qualitative and relies on experienced knowledge workers who understand the business to identify critical business functions and their level of criticality in a catastrophic disaster at a specific corporate site.

The Expert Team is a core “ad hoc” group, but may need to reach out to specific business departments for more information where their knowledge may fall short.

**Leverage a team of knowledge workers to gain a high-level understanding and set expectations.**
BIA: Summary - How to do it right?

Set Expectations

Evaluate in context

Validate results against expectations

Adjust as needed
How to fix it if it’s broke

Case Study: For a major insurance and wealth management company, the IT department was handed a corporate BIA result that was skewed to high availability. They knew it was broken, but did not believe they were empowered to push back on the Corporate team to fix it. Yet, they did not want to move forward because they recognized the cost implications.

Enter a new CISO. One of the first things he looked at was the BIA status. He realized immediately that it was broken. This guy did not mess around, did not play politics. He simply looked at the raw data and fixed it, explaining that it was inappropriately skewed to high availability and high cost, and needed to be adjusted. Practically overnight!

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