IT Disaster Recovery

Earlier this year the results of the 2008 Chartered Management Institute Business Continuity Survey was published and this showed that although organisations are taking steps to improve their business continuity , there is much more to be done. For more information on the survey including some recommendations that will help companies start the process of mitigating the impact of a disaster on them, visit www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk

There are many other resources available to help companies and just a couple concerning IT disaster prevention are considered below.

There is a new ISO standard that aims to help companies mitigate risks and respond to crises. ISO/IEC 24762:2008, Information technology – security techniques – Guidelines for information and communications technology disaster recover services offers guidance on the information and communication technologies and services necessary for disaster recovery as part of business continuity management. This new standard aims to help organisations build resilience into their information and communications technology infrastructure critical to their key business activities. Mr Sy, project editor of the standard has said, "This next generation standard takes into account today's technological developments to minimise damage in a crisis situation from an information security and communication standpoint. The fallback arrangements included in the standard will help out both during periods of minor outages and, more importantly, will play an essential role in ensuring information and service availability during a disaster or failure, and for a long-term recovery of activities".

Guidance is provided on:
- Implementing, operating and maintaining the necessary facilities and services necessary for disaster recovery
- Fallback and recovery support for the organisation's ICT systems
- The capabilities which outsourced ICT disaster recovery service providers should possess and the practice they should follow, so as to provide basic secure operating environments and facilitate the organisations' recovery efforts
- The selection of a recovery site
- Requirements for ICT disaster recovery service providers to continuously improve their ICT DR services.

To find out more about the standard please visit www.iso.ch

The Institute of Directors have also produced a briefing on IT disaster prevention. The briefing covers assessing the risks faced, pre-empting potential problems and making contingency plans. It is in seven sections:
- Assessing risks
- Sensible purchasing (hardware, software and support)
- Setting up your system (designing and installing)
- Maintenance
- Procedures
- Backing up
- Planning for the worst

If you would further details and a copy of the briefing visit www.iod.com

SI Guide

Do you know your know your candela from your mole or even the katal? All are fundamental SI units; the candela is the unit for luminous intensity, the mole is the unit for the amount of a substance and the katal is

the new SI derived unit for the quantity of catalytic activity and is essentially used in chemistry.

The ISO have recently published a new version of the SI Guide – a manual for the use of the SI, the International System of Units. The guide covers: The historical background

- The principle of the SI
- The base units
- The derived units
- Multiples and sub-multiples
- Additional units
- Quantities and units
- Printing rules
- Space and time
- Periodic phenomenon
- Mechanics
- Heat
- Electromagnetism
- Light
- Acoustics
- Physical chemistry
- Atomic and nuclear physics
- Ionising radiation
- Characteristic numbers
- Information technology
- Conversion factors

For further information visit www.iso.ch

After WEEE come batteries

The WEEE directive on recovering electronic and electrical devices is already in force in the UK and will soon be followed by regulations that relate to the EU Batteries Directive. The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform has published recently a consultative document concerning the implementation of the Directive. The draft Regulations covers restrictions on the use of specific hazardous substances in the manufacture of new batteries and accumulators as well as labelling and marking requirements. Some batteries will also need to be readily removable from appliances, unless safety or certain other considerations apply. The Energy Minister, Malcolm Wicks, said "all businesses and persons involved in placing new batteries on the EU market need to be aware of these forthcoming charges. A broad range of interested parties responded to our

previous consultation on the approach to implementing the Directive, and we are keen to hear from them again on this draft legislation".

New batteries and accumulators that do not meet the requirements cannot be placed on the EU market on or after 26th September 2008. For further information, visit www.berr.gov.uk/consultations/index.html

Emissions Trading

The UK results for the first phase of the EU Emissions Trading System show that carbon trading can work. The first phase ran from 2005-2007 and the second phase will run from 2008-2012 to coincide with the first Kyoto Commitment Period.
In 2007 the UK had a shortfall of 27.6 million allowances, meaning permits had to be purchased from elsewhere in the EU. The Environment Minister Phil Woolas has praised the performance of the system through its first phase, he said "Carbon trading is already playing a crucial role in the fight against climate change, and I am pleased that the UK is taking a lead within Europe in developing this market."

The full results can be found at www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/trading/eu/operators/compliance.htm

How long will a DVD last?

A new ISO/IEC standard for estimating the useful life of DVDs has been released recently. ISO/IEC 10995:2008 specified an accelerated aging test method for estimating the life expectancy for the retrievability of information stored on recordable or rewritable optical disks. The standard covers the following aspects:

- Stress conditions
- Assumptions
- Ambient conditions
- Evaluation system description
- Specimen preparation
- Data acquisition procedure
- Data interpretation.

The methodology includes the effects of temperature and relative humidity. It does not attempt to model the degradation due to complex failure mechanism kinetics, nor does it test for exposure to light, corrosive gases, contaminants, handling, and variations in playback subsystems.

For further information on the standard, please visit www.iso.ch

Time to Train

In the UK government's recently released draft legislative programme are radical moves to increase the number of people who can gain new skills. For the first time, employees will be given the legal right to request time to train from their employers. The Government will consult on how workers can be legally empowered to request time to undertake training that will benefit them and their employers. The practical arrangements which employers would follow would be modelled on the existing right to request flexible working.

Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, John Denham said, "If the job prospects of our workforce are to improve and the country is to succeed internationally, we have to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to rise as far as their abilities can take them. It will allow millions of employees to start a conversation with their employer about how they can become a more productive member of staff and in turn will encourage employers to better tap into some of the major Government supported training programmes available to them".

The new Education and Skills Bill will also set out measures to further establish apprenticeships as a key route to unlocking talent and improving the national skills base.

Further there has been an expansion of the National Skills Academy network with the approval of three new national skills academies, Sport and Active Leisure, Creative and Cultural and Hospitality. The new Skills Academies will provide for more than 20,000 learners in their first year alone.
To find out what is going on in your region visit

www.CommonsLeader.gov.uk/regionalactivity

Plastic people speak the same language

A new ISO standard has been released to aid consistent communication about plastics in building and construction. ISO 19712-1:2008 – Decorative solid surfacing materials – Part 1: Classification and specifications, will help manufacturers, fabricators, installers and specifiers around the world use the same terminology, performance indicators and requirements when working with solid surfacing materials made from plastic.

The new ISO standard uses a classification system for solid surfacing materials based on performance. It also specifies property requirements for the various types of solid surface materials, including water resistance, thermal shock resistance, impact resistance, stain and chemical resistance, cigarette burn resistance, colour stability, hardness, bacterial and fungal resistances, cleanability hygiene, seamability and renewability.

For further information, visit www.iso.ch

Standards Bodies get closer

The ISO (International Standards Organisation) and the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers) have signed an agreement to increase their cooperation in developing international standards. The agreement initially focuses on the subjects of information technology, intelligent transport systems and health informatics. The cooperation agreement between the two organisations aims to optimise stakeholder resources in the development of standards where both the ISO and IEEE have expertise, and to shorten time-to-market. Alan Bryden, ISO secretary general said, "Strengthening partnerships with standards development organisations having a global reach is one of ISO's strategic objectives and this agreement with IEEE will help to optimise resources, shorten timeframes and reinforce the collection of ISO standards in a coherent and consistent manner".

For further information, visit www.iso.ch