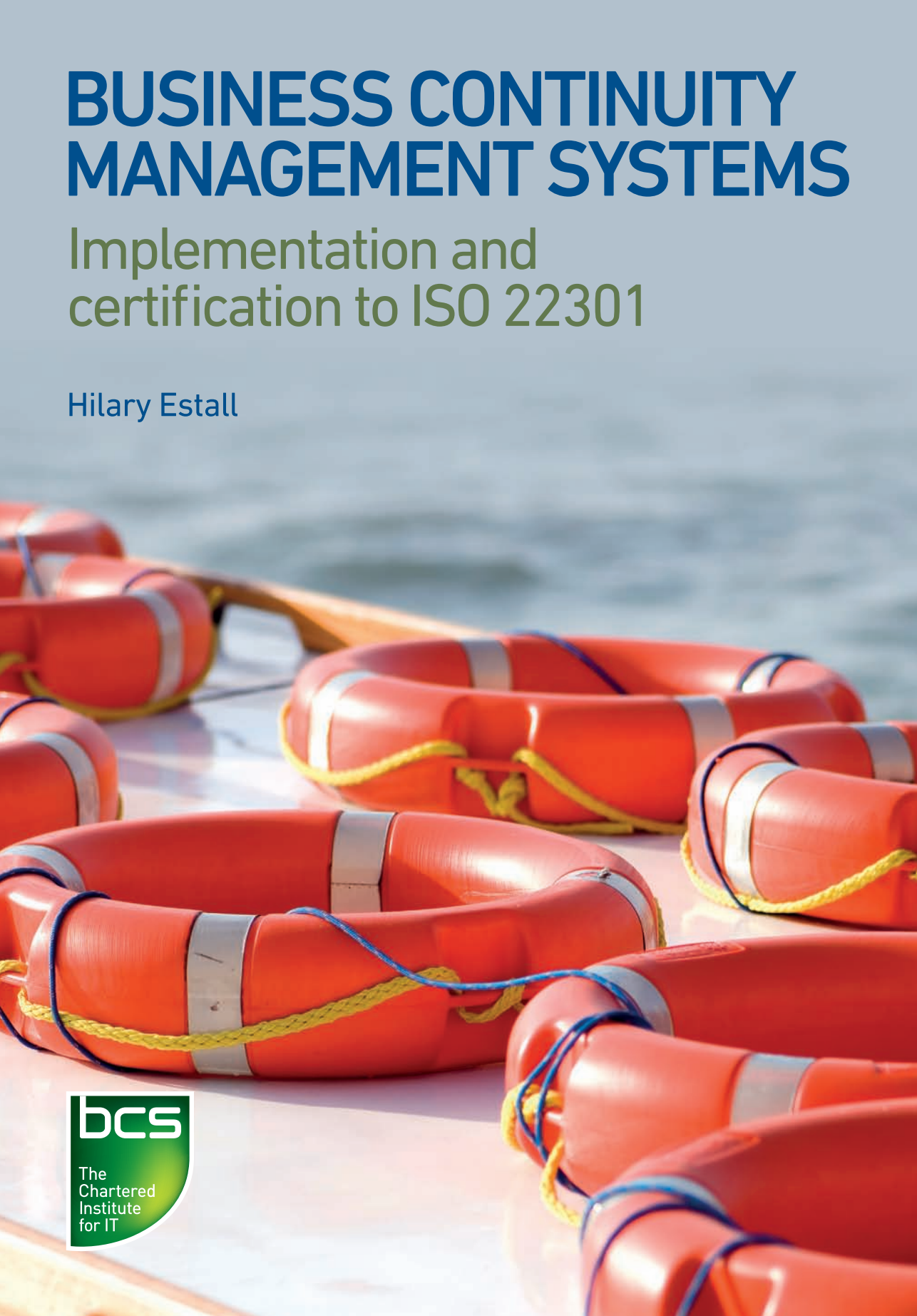
BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Implementation and certification to ISO 22301

Hilary Estall



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BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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AUTHOR

Hilary Estall SBCI is a respected authority on management system standards. Working for a leading certification body for more than 11 years and directly responsible for the development of its business continuity management system auditing scheme, Hilary has amassed extensive experience since the publication of BS 25999-2 in 2007.

Hilary is a member of the British Standards Institution (BSI) Technical Standards Committee BCM/1 and plays an active part in the ongoing maintenance of BS 25999 Parts 1 and 2. In addition, as part of this committee, Hilary has reviewed and commented on ISO 22301 and ISO 22313 during the course of their respective development stages.

Now running her own successful business continuity consultancy firm, Perpetual Solutions Limited (www.pslinfo.co.uk), Hilary works with a variety of clients supporting them through the different stages of business continuity management system implementation, certification and maintenance. Hilary is an IRCA (International Register of Certificated Auditors) registered BCMS (business continuity management system) Lead Auditor and also continues to provide auditing services on behalf of a number of certification bodies, thus enabling her to maintain her professional qualification with the International Register of Certificated Auditors.

FOREWORD

The International Standard for Business Continuity – ISO 22301 – is now officially released and it comes at a time when the need for good BCM (business continuity management) practice has never been greater.

The new standard has been developed in collaboration with experts from around the world to ensure its international relevance and applicability, and to ensure it meets the needs of global organisations. It is hoped that the new standard will create a path for greater international consistency, and encourage worldwide adoption of good BCM practice by organisations of all sizes and in all sectors. Building on the existing work of National Standard bodies in a number of countries, most significantly the work done in the UK by the British Standards Institution, ISO 22301 provides an improved framework of good practice and a common language to help organisations with operational activities in multiple countries to better compare business continuity (BC) needs and capabilities globally.

Furthermore, ISO 22301 offers new clarity about the responsibilities of senior management in BC as well as on the role of BC in risk mitigation and disaster avoidance. It demonstrates the need for a balanced relationship between risk management and BC.

Because BC is spread across an entire organisation, it is particularly suitable for a formal management systems approach. This provides a consistent means of measuring the effectiveness of an organisation's BCM programme and how well it is embedded into its culture and business priorities. Certification against ISO 22301 will demonstrate the importance placed on BC by senior management.

Similar management systems are used for other disciplines, such as information security (ISO 27001) and quality (ISO 9001), so this allows organisations to converge around the common framework known as 'Plan, Do, Check, Act'. ISO 22301 is also spearheading the drive towards a consistent documentation framework for ISO Management Systems standards as defined in ISO Guide 83.

We have come a long way since the first mention of BC in a management systems standard, in its debut as a single section in the Information Security standard BS 7799 (which rapidly became ISO 17799), nearly two decades ago. The growing BC community was less than satisfied with that positioning and actively promoted the idea of a BCM standard in its own right. The early attempt at this was PAS 56, which was released to mixed reaction but nevertheless did encourage professionals around the world to give serious thought to what BCM really was and how it

could be properly described and codified. The period from 2005 onwards has been a productive one for those wishing to construct BCM standards with much work undertaken at both national and international levels.

Although a positive development for the growth of the subject, it has had a downside in terms of the take-up of formal standards by organisations that were becoming increasingly confused by the myriad of terms and standards that were circulating. ISO 22301 has been a long time coming and we all hope that it will end the uncertainty felt in recent years by many practitioners about the future role and positioning of BCM in their organisations. One of the most important factors of its success will be its take-up by organisations, and that will largely depend upon the clarity in which its purpose and practical value is communicated. It is in this context that the book by Hilary Estall is very important. I have known Hilary since the early years of developing BS 25999 when she was directly responsible for how the emerging standard should be audited. We did not always agree, practitioners and auditors do not necessarily see things from the same standpoint, but I always respected her views and hopefully that was mutual. In fact, she must have found the subject as interesting as I do because she now runs a highly respected professional BCM consultancy firm herself.

Reflecting on this book, it seemed to me that Hilary has an almost unique set of skills which enabled her to write it. She understands audit, she understands business continuity and she knows how to put the two together, thus maximising the value of the discipline to an organisation. I was particularly struck by her observation that 'when implementing a BCMS, management system requirements and BCM requirements are equally important'. This is great advice. BCM is not just compliance or a tick-box exercise but neither is it a free for all for BCM practitioners to indulge their theories. Curiously enough, nearly 20 years ago my (and now Hilary's) institute, The Business Continuity Institute, coined the term The Art and Science of BCM. Little did we know then how well that phrase describes the conflicting needs for imaginative BCM solutions to be balanced within a measurable consistent process and framework.

If you just want to know more about ISO 22301, I suggest this is the first (and perhaps only) book you need to read. If you are going further and want to become an ISO 22301 certified company then it gives you the route, the dangers, the tips and the confidence to succeed. Enjoy reading it, even if you previously thought BCMS was a dry subject, you might well be very surprised.

Lyndon Bird *FBCI*
Technical Development Director at the Business Continuity Institute (www.thebci.org).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing articles for various business continuity journals and websites gave me the courage to develop my writing skills so when asked if I had ever thought of writing a book the idea was slightly less daunting than it might otherwise have been. Nevertheless, I would not have been able to complete this book without the input and support of Simon, Emma and David, all of whom have used their practical knowledge of business continuity management systems to provide steerage when I might otherwise have run off course.

Finally, I could not have written this book without the love and encouragement of my husband, Clive. His belief in me has kept me focused and committed to see it through to the end.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Business continuity
BCI	Business Continuity Institute
BCM	Business continuity management
BCMS	Business continuity management system
BIA	Business impact analysis
BSI	The British Standards Institution
IRCA	International Register of Certificated Auditors
MTPD	Maximum tolerable period of disruption
PDCA	Plan Do Check Act
RTO	Recovery time objective
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service

1 INTRODUCTION

WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

Implementing a business continuity management system (BCMS) requires commitment, time, resourcefulness and plenty of support from your management team. Whatever the drivers behind the journey you are about to embark on, you need to be well equipped to survive the ups and downs that will occur along the way. If you can answer 'yes' to any of the following statements, this book is written with you in mind and will provide you with practical and straight forward advice:

- Your organisation is seeking formal certification to ISO 22301.
- Your organisation is seeking alignment to ISO 22301.
- Your organisation is considering whether to become certified and wishes to understand what is involved before committing resource.
- Your organisation is working towards, or has already achieved, certification to BS 25999-2 and wishes to understand what is involved in moving from one standard to another.
- You wish to develop your own understanding of what is required to implement an effective BCMS.
- You are looking for a practical support mechanism to guide you through the implementation stages of your BCMS.

The need for this handbook became clear to me during my own personal journey through BCMSs. Auditing numerous BS 25999 management systems has shown me time and time again that there are three independent factions:

(1) Those who are existing BC professionals and are implementing a management system for the first time.

(2) Those who already have experience with implementing other management systems, but are new to BCM.

(3) Those who have no prior experience in either aspect.

I concluded that missing from the raft of technical publications already available is a practical guide that bridges the two subject areas and helps manage expectations along the way.

To emphasise the importance of particular BCMS requirements you will notice a degree of repetition in the book. This is intentional and will hopefully reinforce the messages!

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS BOOK

Management systems, if not implemented properly, can be seen as the proverbial millstone around an organisation's neck. This book aims to focus on what is significant about management systems and how best to achieve intended results. By concentrating on what is most important, the organisation will enjoy the benefits of a management system which has been developed to meet **its** specific needs.

READER BEWARE!

This handbook is not aimed at providing you with detailed instructions on how to implement BCM. There are several publications that will offer you advice, for example, on how to undertake a business impact analysis, carry out a risk assessment or write a BC plan and you should refer to those if you are seeking that level of support.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The aim of this handbook is that it becomes your BCMS best friend! It is a tool that should be used when required rather than read from cover to cover and then set aside.

It is set out in four parts. Two focus on management systems themselves and the certification process, and the remaining two look at BCM and the requirements of ISO 22301, translating them into user friendly guidance notes.

Checklists are available for you to self assess your progress with a particular requirement, and action sheets are included to encourage you to develop your BCMS as you progress through the handbook. **Do not be afraid to write in the space provided**. As you read, thoughts will come into your head. These initial thoughts will often prove to be the most important and you should capture them before they are lost. Additional action sheets have been provided to you at the end of the book if you need them.

You will find 'Top Tips' throughout the book, which may prove useful to you during your BCMS journey. These tips have been gathered from my own experience and individuals who have been involved in the audit process in some way. My thanks to all those who have contributed their great ideas. You know who you are!

I wish you well with your journey into business continuity management systems and hope this handbook provides the support and guidance that you are looking for in order to achieve your BCMS objectives.

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ACTION SHEET

To help support your organisation's decision to implement a BCMS, create a summary of the benefits of adopting ISO 22301 in order to help focus peoples' minds and management commitment.

ACTION SHEET

Taking into consideration what you have read about scoping a BCMS in this chapter, write down here the key considerations for your organisation's BCMS scope.

ACTION SHEET

As your BCMS develops and you undertake more of the control requirements (audits, reviews, exercises etc.) make a note here of possible improvements to the system.

ACTION SHEET

Use this space to write down some ideas for what you want your BCMS objectives to achieve.

ACTION SHEET

Consider the BCMS roles you expect to create and, against each one, write down the competency requirements you consider appropriate.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note here of what you consider are the over arching objectives of your BCMS and what you expect to see as evidence that it is working effectively.

ACTION SHEET

Has your organisation made its decision about whether to seek alignment or certification to ISO 22301?

Either way, based on the information provided in this chapter (and any other relevant factors), list what considerations you believe your organisation should take into account when reaching its decision.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about BCM programme management.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about how to understand the organisation.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about BCM strategies.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about developing and implementing a BCM response.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about exercising, maintaining and reviewing BCM.

ACTION SHEET

Make a note of any actions that you have thought of whilst reading about embedding BCM in the organisation's culture.

ACTION SHEET

Consider how you will use performance metrics to demonstrate the effectiveness of your BCMS. Be selective in what you measure and ensure a clear link back to the business strategy.

ACTION SHEET

Consider the human aspects of your continuity strategies. Taking into account the findings of your BIA and risk assessment, list below what you need to include when preparing a strategy for the organisation's most important resource, its staff.

You may find it helpful to refer to PD 25111:2010 *Business Continuity Management Guidance on Human Aspects of Business Continuity.*

ACTION SHEET

Take time to review your existing BC plans and compare the existing format and contents to the requirements of ISO 22301. List below what you need to change or add to them.

ACTION SHEET

Write down here any actions that your organisation needs to take if it is considering the transition to ISO 22301. Add suggested time lines against each action and discuss them with your certification body as well as your BC sponsor.

ACTION SHEET

Having reviewed the suggested evidence list and undertaken your self assessment, make a list of the evidence that you will draw upon to demonstrate the effectiveness of your BCMS to the auditor.

ACTION SHEET

Having reviewed the suggested evidence list and undertaken your self assessment, make a list of the evidence that you will draw upon to demonstrate the effectiveness of your BCMS to the auditor.

ACTION SHEET

Note down here how you might maintain the momentum of your BCM arrangements.

Method	Participants

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Implementation and certification to ISO 22301

Hilary Estall

This practical guide is for people and organisations who are implementing a business continuity management system and certification in line with ISO 22301. The development of a BCMS requires commitment, time, resourcefulness and management support. This book will fully equip those new to business continuity management or to management systems with survival skills for the ups and downs of the journey. The advice given is ideal for organisations seeking certification to ISO 22301 as well as those who want to align to it.

It is divided into four parts; the first two focus on the management system aspects and the other two look at the requirements of the standard and translate them into user-friendly guidance notes.

- **Hands-on guide to the new standard**
- **Includes similarities and differences between ISO 22301 and its predecessor BS 25999**
- **The only 'working tool' on the market**
- **Includes self-assessment checklists and worksheets to support progress**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hilary Estall has lengthy practical experience in auditing and implementing management systems. She is currently the only IRCA-registered BCMS Lead Auditor in the UK and has 'Specialist' membership status with the Business Continuity Institute (BCI). Hilary runs her own business continuity consultancy company Perpetual Solutions Limited.

You might also be interested in:

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT: In practice
Stuart Hotchkiss

If you want to know more about ISO 22301 this is the first (and perhaps only) book you need to read. If you thought BCMS was a dry subject, you might well be very surprised!

Lyndon Bird FBCI,
Business Continuity Institute

An essential read for anyone considering implementation or certification to ISO 22301; practical and insightful.

Russell Price,
Chairman, Continuity Forum

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