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*Technical Paper*

## **Continuity of Business**

*“SAS’ Continuity of Business initiative reflects our commitment to our employees, to our customers, and to all of the stakeholders in our global business community to be a responsible and reliable business partner.”*

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## Continuity of Business

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“At SAS we develop enterprise-class analytics software that guides our customers’ decisions about their business operations, their products and their customers. We also make an extraordinary investment in our employees, making us one of the top-ranked workplaces around the world. We extend this same vision and planning to manage risk in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic business environment. SAS’ Continuity of Business initiative reflects our commitment to our employees, to our customers, and to all of the stakeholders in our global business community to be a responsible and reliable business partner.”

Jim Goodnight, CEO of SAS

Continuity of Business (COB) refers to an organization’s plans and procedures aimed at protecting its key assets and continuing its critical business functions in the event of anticipated and unanticipated threats. COB takes into consideration corporate governance, information security, and corporate social responsibility, the primary factors that customers consider when selecting the strategic vendors to which they entrust their business. SAS’ global COB program evolved from its longtime disaster recovery and crisis management procedures. Applying an all-hazards planning approach, SAS’ event preparedness and response is focused on protecting and recovering core business operations from threat impacts. Response and recovery teams from Security, Facilities, IT, Communications, and the business units work together proactively to develop resilience and mitigation strategies, and, in an event, coordinate to execute recovery plans. Under SAS’ pandemic plan, cross-functional taskforce members are engaged to coordinate proactive response activities in accordance with public sector guidance.

The main focal points for SAS’ COB program are:

- Protecting employees (life safety)
- Providing customer support
- Restoring the services upon which critical business functions depend.

### Core program components

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SAS’ COB program continues to develop in alignment with industry best practices and standards for business continuity. Key components of the program include:

- Executive oversight in risk management and program development
- Risk assessment and Business Impact Analysis (BIA)
- Impact mitigation and business resumption strategy development
- Business resumption and IT recovery plans to support recovery of critical business functions

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- Emergency Operations Command (EOC) for response and event management
- Annual plan maintenance, exercise, and staff training.

### Plan contents

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Typical COB plans include:

- Disaster notification/escalation process
- Roles and responsibilities of response and recovery staff
- Internal and external call lists
- Alternative site information
- Application and system dependencies
- Critical third-party supplier information
- Recovery strategies (for example, where appropriate, critical functions will use manual workarounds, staff can work from alternate locations, critical function services can be provided from staff in other geographic locations).

### A global approach to planning

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SAS' Continuity of Business initiative extends to all SAS offices. Its COB methodology is applied corporate-wide, using standardized templates and processes for response and recovery planning, and using knowledge and resources at the local, regional, and headquarter-office levels. Each SAS office is responsible for developing and implementing continuity planning in accordance with corporate standards to ensure a minimal level of planning required to meet business drivers while mitigating risks. A global collaborative approach to planning also supports the identification, development, and implementation of backup strategies for critical business processes and IT dependencies. This approach ensures a sustained minimum level of care for local and global customers so that if required, support may be provided from another office or from SAS Headquarters. As was used for crises such as the 2010 Santiago Chile earthquake and Pune India bombing, global communication protocols are in place to support event assessment and activation of local crisis management response teams and SAS' corporate Emergency Operations Command.

### Enhanced company resilience

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In addition to supporting event preparedness, the COB program is also a catalyst for the ongoing improvement and increased resilience of SAS' operations. In the short term, key business processes are documented, internal and external dependencies are assessed, and employees are cross-trained for key roles within the organization. However, a long-term result of SAS' COB program is the improvement of business processes and enhanced company resilience because the ability to quickly recover from unforeseen events is closely tied to more efficient and effective day-to-day operations.

## Customer support

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In the event of an emergency, SAS wants its customers to have the support they need to continue using SAS software. As such, SAS' business recovery plans are focused on services that must continue after an event occurs. SAS' global recovery strategies for several key customer-facing functions are summarized below:

- **Communications** - During an event, SAS may communicate with customers through company phone messaging, the corporate Web site, social media, personal contact with account managers, and other staff, and through business partners and the media.
- **Contracts** – SAS designed (and put into place) measures to ensure that customer and software license key support will continue. This support can be provided through multiple channels that can include recovery staff equipped to work from alternate locations or identified back-up staff from other SAS offices.
- **SAS Solutions OnDemand** - SAS Solutions OnDemand, SAS' hosted solutions, reside in secure world-class data centers which are resilient to many types of potential disaster. Regular off-site rotation of data backups ensures that customers' vital data can be protected during an emergency, and that their services can be restored following the crisis. For customers with more specific requirements, additional options such as off-site recovery offerings and recovery time guarantees are available. Our Disaster Recover Requirements Planning process is designed to help customers arrive at a solution which is cost-effective for their needs.
- **Source code** - Copies of the SAS source code for all production product, as well as for the current R&D environment, are kept on-site and off-site to expedite recovery. On-site copies are stored in a below-ground, fire-resistant vault. Source code and distributed media for major SAS software releases are archived.
- **Technical support** - In daily operations, SAS uses a "follow-the-sun" rotation, routing calls to technical support staff in SAS offices around the world to provide support to customers on an around-the-clock basis. This also provides a baseline strategy for global support during an event. In addition, if SAS headquarters becomes inoperable due to inclement weather or other circumstances, business resumption strategies include local staff working remotely and staff in U.S. SAS regional offices providing support. On-call staff at SAS' headquarters are always available for global customer technical support and infrastructure needs.

## IT recovery

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SAS has a robust IT infrastructure housed in hardened, secure enterprise data centers. When an unforeseen event occurs, there are plans in place to assess, restore, and resume normal operations for affected IT infrastructure.

Recovery procedures include restoring facilities (for example, buildings and electricity) and support services (for example, telephone service and computer infrastructure) to facilitate the recovery of critical business functions. Critical systems are supported in data centers in separate locations, providing redundancy for critical IT infrastructure. The data centers are equipped with uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), diesel generators, multiple power feeds, and redundant switch gear for maximum reliability. They are staffed 24 hours a day and systems are monitored and alerted automatically. SAS uses Wide Area Network (WAN) network infrastructures that avoid the use of dedicated network paths, minimizing the impact of satellite, terrestrial, and undersea cable outages.

Many components of the IT recovery plan are exercised regularly, as they are the same procedures used in maintaining a complex infrastructure for daily operations. Recovering from system failures and restoring data subsystems are handled by on-call staff.

For more information about SAS' COB initiative, send e-mail to [cob@sas.com](mailto:cob@sas.com).



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