
1. Introduction

- 1.1. This brief paper outlines our arrangements for business continuity, for preparing and managing our activity in the event of loss of staff, information technology support, office accommodation.
- 1.2. The HFEA has Business Continuity Plan and a Pandemic Response Plan in place and named staff have responsibilities. Business continuity has a dedicated site in Office 365 where an up to date copy of the Business Continuity Plan and other key documents are made available. All HFEA staff have access to this facility, using their usual id and password, from any device, anywhere – and which also contains a newsfeed and a “Yammer” channel for communicating updates.

2. Effectiveness

- 2.1. We undertook a test of our emergency alert system, which sends text messages to all members of staff on 1 March 2017.
- 2.2. It is the case this met with limited success with just fewer than 50% responding to the message. We are currently reviewing the reasons for this limited engagement.
- 2.3. In any event, this indicates a need for reinforced awareness of business continuity arrangements for staff; the need for staff to advise the HFEA of changes in mobile phone number and a need for further training - all of which is being, or will be, addressed.
- 2.4. We are currently evaluating some new technology options with a view to being able to restore critical on premise systems on to a cloud environment in the event of Spring Gardens being unavailable for any length of time.
- 2.5. Since the last report to AGC there have been one significant BC related incident when power failed to Spring Gardens for three days – December 2016. The majority of staff were able to work from home as the move to Office 365 left email services unaffected.
- 2.6. It highlighted the need to migrate our records management system into the cloud. The BCP was updated with lessons learned from the outage.

3. Recommendation:

- 3.1. The Audit and Governance Committee is asked to:
 - Note that business continuity arrangements are in place
 - Note the poor response to the test emergency alert system.

4. Annexes:

- None