COVID-19 Incident Response Plan

1. Introduction

On 23 March 2020, the New Zealand Government announced that all non-essential New Zealand businesses will need to close, or work from home by midnight 25 March, for at least four weeks. As the response continues to develop, organisations have and will continue to face significant technology challenges. We hope that this plan provides you with some guidance.

2. General considerations

Action Item
Activate your crisis committee, including representation from all key areas of the organisation.
Adhere to decision making processes and agree on critical priorities.
Determine possible scenarios and factor these into updated current business continuity plans.
Source information for decision making from official, reliable sources - https://covid19.govt.nz
Communicate regularly to staff and stakeholders with integrity, allowing for feedback.
Maintain organisational purpose and values.

3. Incident response team

Action Item
Set up a technical incident response team to coordinate your response.
Ensure the team is equipped with the necessary resources.
Allocate backup team members for each role within the team.
Set regular meeting times and ensure there are backup communication channels.
Activate an incident management system. Obtain a free module for the period of the pandemic here.
Adhere to remote working best practices. Resources are available here.
Confirm and test your technology supply chain availability and resilience.
Plan in the near future for security assessments and cyber security improvement activities.

4. Cyber security considerations

Action Item
Determine how the IT team can continue to perform critical administration functions.
Remain vigilant to the threat of cyber scams and attacks by increasing your detection capabilities.
Maintain a register of information assets to ensure company data remains under control at all times.
Maintain or increase cyber security awareness and training initiatives.
Implement additional email security to block phishing attacks.
Remain alert to the risks arising from disgruntled users.

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5. External Resources

- The Computer Emergency Response Team New Zealand (CERT NZ) works to support organisations who are affected by cyber security incidents. CERT NZ provides information and advice, while also collating a profile of the threat landscape in New Zealand. CERT NZ allows you to report any cyber security issue that you're experiencing. Report an incident to CERT NZ by clicking on the following link:
  https://www.cert.govt.nz/it-specialists/report-an-incident/
  CERT NZ – COVID-19: supporting people to work from home

- The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) responds to threats to nationally significant organisations and high-impact cyber incidents at national level. Report an incident to NCSC by clicking on the following link:
  https://www.ncsc.govt.nz/incidents/
  NCSC NZ – Working Remotely: Advice for Organisations and Staff

- The Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC) recommend that while it's not compulsory to report a data breach, it's a good idea to be open about what's happened and the steps you're taking to fix it. Further, upcoming changes to privacy law may make it compulsory to report data breaches that are harmful, or likely to be harmful. Report a privacy breach to the OPC by clicking on the following link:
  https://www.privacy.org.nz/about-us/contact/enquiry-form/

- Legal professionals have additional notification requirements, and should at the least follow the guidance on the following link:
  https://www.lawsociety.org.nz/about-nzls/information-handling-policy

- The New Zealand Police enforce the Crimes Act which includes criminal activity that involves the Internet, a computer, smartphone or other electronic devices. Reporting cybercrime is just like reporting any other offence. Call 111 in an emergency. For example, if you've received an electronic message with an immediate and believable threat such as "I'm coming around now and I'm going to kill you", that would be an emergency. For non-emergency incidents or crimes, you can still report by phone using 105, or in person at your local Police station.
  https://105.police.govt.nz/home

6. About the COVID-19 Incident Response Plan

This document has been prepared for general guidance and does not constitute formal advice. This information should not be relied on without obtaining specific formal advice. Incident Response Solutions Limited does not accept any liability, responsibility or duty of care for any consequences of you or anyone else acting, or refraining to act, when relying on the information contained in this plan or for any decision based on it.

For additional assistance, contact us on:

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