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Lessons Learnt and Public Private Partnership in Business Continuity

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Significant events such as 9/11, the earthquakes at Kobe and Latur and the Tsunami of 2004 have taught us that no single party, be it the government or NGOs or Corporates or society, can by itself engineer an effective response at the time of calamitous events.

Corporates, especially those in the financial sector, are usually more prepared internally to respond to emergencies. However, their solutions usually do not address staff's families and vendors. Educating staff's families and ensuring preparedness is necessary to ensure employees respond to calls from the organization. Vendors must be asked to ensure similar preparedness, which should be ascertained through periodic and surprise audits.

Typical response of Corporates that are a little advanced is to provide in-depth education to their staff and encourage them to share it with family. However, this is only a small step which often does not deliver all expected results. Complications such as attrition, recruitment, linguistic challenges limit how much is achieved. Corporates also have limited resources at their command and it is unfair to expect them to do much more.

Even where Corporates are ready to share their experience, they may be unable to do so as they could be seen as interfering in other organizations. Also, it is impossible to expect any one corporate to address all such needs. Inquiry will reveal that partnership between these various entities is not just beneficial but absolutely essential for an effective response.

The best plans are the ones where the government, Corporates and NGOs are prepared and know how to interact during an emergency effectively and this requires an effective Public Private Partnership framework. A quasi-legal framework for PPP will help remove impacts of individual priorities for the collective good. The focus would be on effective response to disasters and business continuity.

Disaster Management in Indian Aviation Sector: A Bangalore Greenfield Airport Model

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During the last decade, Indian Civil Aviation has witnessed an unprecedented growth in terms of number of airports and air travelers, with the introduction of low cost carrier models and no frill air travel. On one side if the air travel has become popular and affordable, the other side is too grim that not only aviation disasters multiplied, but also air safety has been compromised to a greater extent for larger commercial interest. If air tragedies were once-in-a-decade event earlier, now it has become frequent with colossal lose of human beings and property. In addition, along with increase of the number of airports and aircraft operators, threat to civil aviation has also been two-fold now. However, the safety and emergency management system existing in most of our airports are still the same.

Opening of the Indian sky to private players and the Indian Airports to Corporate Promoters have initiated a revolutionary change in approach to aviation safety and disaster management. The most advanced technologies and approaches in aviation emergency management, which was a product of the western world once, has been brought to India by the first Greenfield Private Airport of the country, Bangalore International Airport.

This paper is intended to present the pioneering effort and the role model that Bangalore international airport has instituted for managing civil aviation disasters and to ensure Business Continuity Management. Sticking to the national and international air safety guidelines and imbibing the real spirit of National Disaster Management Act, Bangalore International Airport has developed a state-of-the-art, but foolproof airport disaster management system, the only one of that sort in the civil aviation sector in India, which has also been projected as role model to many airports in India and abroad.

Government policy and guidelines on Corporate Business Continuity Planning

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Abstract

Corporate Business Continuity Plans frequently result in identification of alternate sites as a recovery strategy to enable business continuity during a disaster. An alternate site may be facility that simply houses infrastructure or a fully operational site with people as well as infrastructure. Timely relocation and resumption of critical functions from alternate site within the Recovery Time Objective (RTO) is critical. This is more important for the services sector which provides real time services like voice based support where there could be contractual implications in addition to loss of revenue.

Presently, plans for setting up alternate locations are largely constrained by regulatory guidelines that either do not permit such a setup or in some cases do not provide clarity on contingency matters. A typical Export Oriented Unit (EOU) today requires approvals from DOT (Dept of Telecommunications), STPI (Software Technology Parks of India) and Tax authorities to set up an alternate location. It is critical to obtain such approvals proactively in order to execute Business Continuity Plans effectively during a disaster. This would also help organizations and its Business Continuity Planners to test the readiness of the alternate location during their scheduled BC test drills.

Today, there is a growing awareness among businesses in India on the need for business continuity as well as an increase in the number of threats which could possibly disrupt business operations. A well defined government policy or guidelines specific to business continuity would immensely benefit the corporate sector to setup and execute realistic business continuity plans. Some countries already have such policies in place and promote their implementation actively with their government bodies.

Disclaimer

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BCM in a disaster affected area

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There were unprecedented floods in Bihar state during August 2008, due to breach in river Kosi embankment in Nepal. Normally, these areas in Bihar are not prone to floods. But, Nepal had deliberately breached the embankment facing India to save their nation from floods and people living in these areas were caught unaware by the sudden floods. There was a heavy loss of life and property. The main areas which suffered loss were in the districts of Madhepura, Supaul, Sajarsa and Purnea and as many as 28 branches of State Bank of India serving in that were marooned. Thus the banking services including ATMs, in the aforementioned areas were totally affected.

When the Govt. of Bihar relocated the affected people, they did not have enough time to gather their life saving ration including cash available at their homes. Though the people had money in their accounts they were not able to draw money for their daily requirements during that period as banks were inaccessible in these areas. The matter was reported to State Bank of India, Local Administrative Office, Patna which escalated to Corporate Centre, Mumbai. The Corporate Centre had reviewed the entire scenario prevailing over there and started its Business Continuity operations to support people in refugee camps for their cash requirements. A procedure for offering minimum banking services like cash withdrawal, which was the need of the hour, was devised to cater to our stranded customers effectively without compromising the security.

Building a maturing business continuity management system

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Very often than not, Business Continuity Management is mistook by many as a single step exercise. However, this is anything but the truth. Anchored on Risk Management Principles, it has inherited the intrinsic challenges of implementation of Risk Management within a system, namely

- Cultural change management within the organization,
- Integration with extant business frameworks and processes and
- Last but not the least, the ownership by business owners.

This makes the subject a multi step journey than a one step activity.

Faced with the task of building an effective Business Continuity Management System for a financial institution, the authors with more than their three decades of combined operational and consulting experience in risk management, decided to effectively address the challenges for building and sustaining such a system.

The paper addresses, how the authors were jointly involved from a consultative and operational standpoint in addressing the threefold challenges of culture, ownership and integration for a financial institution.

- Section 1 addresses the author's realization and action to ensure that journey is multi step for assimilating the continuity culture into the organizational fabric and that the process matures over time within the organization
- Section 2 addresses the steps the authors undertook to integrating the Business Continuity Management within extant organizational frameworks and processes. This also ensured a standard level of evaluation of all business processes
- Section 3 details the ways and means by which the authors created a participatory environment for the business owners to take ownership of their plans

Building Mature Emergency Command Centers using partnerships

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Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and tornadoes do occur and when large scale incidents such as these strikes it is essential in the best interests of the country that their people and organizations on their home turf are protected and are allowed to recoup. It is not possible for every organization to setup an emergency response center due to constraints. As people and organization from sectors such as these should also be protected for economic stability , governments can along with their minimal support and initiative involve people across all sectors such as academia, large corporate, Small and Medium Businesses' to setup emergency command centers to which people and organizations can fall back . This is the best approach to resilience. An emergency command centre is essential to address serious as well as wide scale disasters and can be used by organizations and people alike. Building an effective emergency command centre takes time and should be constructed with focus and effort. Organizations, Academic institutions of higher learning and people with expertise can feel happy by contributing something back to the community from which they have got a lot. This paper would discuss and propose effective solutions to setup and maintain an emergency Command/Response Centre.

Business Unusual: Getting Business Continuity on Boards Agenda

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An event that threatens an organization's continuity of business is generally characterized by its relative rarity and potential for a very high impact. The low probability of the event allows most organizations to ignore it and carry on 'business as usual'. This problem is not new, it was faced earlier by seafarers as they carried out their activities until the losses mounted and business were wiped out and they formed a consortium which could pool in resources for a potential loss suffered by any of their fellow members and the Insurance industry was born. The problem of business continuity in many ways has similar characteristics except that insurance alone is not an answer to Business Continuity, an organization must 'assure' itself that it has taken steps to reduce both the likelihood and the potential for the impact. Fortunately, a number of risks can be mitigated by meticulous planning, testing and the use of technology. However, the problem of justifying the spend remains and most often fails to reach the board rooms.

The paper takes these challenges and presents how these challenges were met in a particular case study of a large Bank in the region. The objective of the presentation would be to provide insights into specific methods developed to create a business case for the Board room to approve a business continuity investment. It also discusses specific techniques that can be used for impact analysis and measure difficult to quantify losses.

Corporate Sector in Disaster Management

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Disaster recovery planning is catching up like wild fire in the banking industry in the gulf region. The threats which were not imaginable 5 years ago are no more taken lightly. The regulatory bodies for banks in the gulf region have recently started considering DRP as a mandatory requirement. Banks have started investing in the Disaster recovery planning and Business continuity management. There is cut throat competition between the banks in the gulf region and most of the big banks have gone global with international branch across the globe. In such a scenario, banks cannot afford to have downtime of services to their valuable clients, who would definitely opt for other banks if the bank they are dealing do not have a efficient Disaster recovery plan or Business continuity plan to ensure its business is up and running with minimum downtime. Information security is also taken very seriously in the banking sector in the gulf ensuring that they have a security culture built within the bank which will ensure the confidentiality, safety, security, integrity and availability of customer information.

Prior to beginning the plan development process, it is important to know how your organization would be affected by a disaster. This process is known as a Business Impact Analysis. It facilitates your assessing the potential impacts to your organization resulting from a disaster.

Disaster mitigation of flash floods at Dahanu TPS during 2002

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Disaster management is an important aspect of any large project, It is a difficult task to consider every aspect of the project from the inception to installation and operation of large power project. In the present day context of increased awareness and latest modern technologies, it is possible to reduced losses largely by mitigating all possible disastrous conditions.

A good disaster management plan, can excel not only at the time of disaster, but also simultaneously leads to excellence in the operation of the plant. Dahanu Thermal Power Plant has achieved highest standards with respect to operation, quality, HSE, emergency, disaster management etc. with continual improvement on the performance of the system through implementation of appropriate procedures using ISO and other standards.

Reliance Energy, Dahanu plant has certain problems like slushy saline land, abandoned salt pans and wet marshy land, tidal creeks surrounding the plant with large areas just above high tide level. Torrential rains for four months a year, with rain fall around 2300 mm. On June 26th 2002 due to high tide and heavy rain fall around 900 mm, led to flooding of the plant and colony area with a water level of above 7 meters in the creek and high water level lasted for 16 hours.

Since all the disaster/ emergency aspects were considered and the plan was widely circulated, mitigation effects with out loosing time and the teams were put on action and the plant was brought back with in seven days of the disaster. Most of the myths and apprehensions expressed by locals have been wiped off with the efficient disaster mitigation procedures and adherence to the well laid out procedures of emergency and disaster plan. With the help of local self help group first efforts were made to help local tribal in the essential commodities like food shelter and medical aids etc., in spite of problems of reviving the plant and scarcity of essential commodities and services.

Effective Crisis management

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Disaster preparedness and recovery planning are essential components of an organization's business continuity during an emergency. Disasters and other disruptive events can affect every facet of a business, Taking a proactive approach to business continuity planning is the best way to minimize the impact of disasters on employees and customers. It also minimizes losses in customer confidence, market share, and revenue. The more an organization prepares for disruption ahead of time, the less likely it will suffer catastrophic impact from a disruptive event.

For a business continuity plan to work well, it needs enthusiastic support from Top management. Failure to prepare for emergencies can be very costly.

A crisis or disaster, however caused, can strike an organization at any time. It is most devastating when it is sudden. At such times, there needs to be a well rehearsed Crisis Management plan to ensure there is a positive, focused and effective response. The principles of good crisis management are straightforward but many companies frequently fail to apply them correctly. As it may be difficult to identify a crisis, good crisis management procedures include triggers for the early identification of incidents and the invocation of an appropriate response. As with casualty response, there is a critical time period following the identification of a crisis when the immediate response must be as professional as the crisis is potentially devastating. If this response is considered and coordinated, the subsequent crisis management action is far more likely to be effective. Therefore there is a need to ensure your crisis management plan identifies crucial immediate actions, is fit for purpose and reflects best practice from your own experience and organizations with similar profiles to your own This white paper provides business continuity guidance in Crisis Management Program and suggests measures that can help organizations improve their preparedness.

Nation-building through Business Continuity Management

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Business Continuity Management (BCM) is a domain devoted to ensuring that the Business Continues. Effectively, BCM seeks to instill in the organization's customers and key stakeholders the trust, faith and confidence that the organization has the commitment to do whatever necessary to ensure that it meets customer and stakeholder expectations, come what may.

Over the last decade, India has made huge progress, and now is well accepted as an emerging global powerhouse. In the early days of this revolution Indian organizations competed on price, and later on quality. In the increasingly risky global environment, Indian organizations now need to compete on risk, and convince their overseas customers that they are "safe" organizations to deal with – that they deliver per their commitments and service levels, and will not let down their customers, come what may. Only then will India truly be able to maximize its potential as a global powerhouse

A number of governments across the world (such the governments of the UK, US, Singapore, UAE, just to name a few) are pushing organizations across all sectors to adopt BCM – private sector, government sector, NGOs. The rationale is that any time any organization in the country defaults on its delivery commitments, the image of the entire country takes a beating, and this results in a temporary slowdown in further business/orders, till the confidence is restored. Thus, BCM directly support nation-building. The author firmly believes that the Government of India must actively mandate for each and every Indian company to implement robust Business Continuity Management.

Having said that, here is no reason for BCM to be focused on the export sector only. Even domestic consumers have a right to expect their India service providers to meet their commitments. This is part of character-building in the nations. Whichever way you look at it, Business Continuity Management should be used to support and promote nation-building.

Role of business continuity management in sustained growth of service industry – a proactive perspective

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Abstract

India's large service industry accounts for 54% of the country's GDP and the Industry that accounts for 27.6% of the GDP include textiles, chemicals, food processing, petroleum, Information Technology (IT) enabled services, software and so on. The business services that constitute IT, IT enabled services and business process outsourcing, are among the fastest growing sectors contributing a large share to the total output of services. Contribution of India's IT Industry itself to GDP has increased significantly in the last couple of years which reinforces the need for focused attention to facilitate sustenance. Higher targets for growth can be achieved if service continuity can be assured.

There could be several factors that influence the sustained growth of IT-service industry and its contribution in-turn to Indian economy. Some of these factors could be, the width and depth of service offerings; healthy competition; repeat business through enhanced customer satisfaction; meeting customer expectations in totality through unique value proposition; contractual & regulatory requirements; social responsibility; outsourcing / offshoring paradigm to reduce operational cost; and many more. With the inherent and unique support interdependencies to manage, success of a service industry depends on meeting one of the key expectations of on time / every-time delivery; failure of meeting this expectation can lead to significant impact on business growth and organizational reputation. Therefore the overall objective of ensuring timely and sustained delivery of services can be achieved through effective continuity management that considers preventive measures to avoid failure and recovery measures to manage them in time; and since it relates to the business, Business Continuity Management is key to service continuity and sustained growth.

Sound Crisis Management System –Need of the hour and a big challenge

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Petroleum Industries process, store and distribute large quantities of flammable and toxic materials. An incident may lead to serious consequences resulting in loss of lives, property, environment, business and reputation. Emergencies do not make appointments; they can occur any time and under most unfavorable circumstances and take their toll on industries.

We can not ignore the consequences of incidents like Bhopal Disaster(3rd December 1984), where 42 Tonnes of deadly toxic gas Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) gas was released exposing 520,000 personnel, killed estimated between 10,000 to 20,000 people and injured around 200,000 and a penalty of more than \$470 millions and closure of the plant.

PEMEX LPG Terminal, Mexico (19th November 1984), where a gas pipe got ruptured releasing approx 6000 Tonnes of LPG gas causing fire; resulting in to 500 fatalities, 39,000 people homeless and an estimated loss of \$300 million in addition to the tremendous damage to the terminal.

Piper Alpha Oil Platform, North Sea (6th July, 1988) where high pressure LPG leak from compressor (under maintenance) ignited and exploded leading to 165 fatalities, 61 survivors injured, resulting total loss of about \$3.4 billion. Entire platform melted down in the sea within a span of 3 hours.

We have many case histories, but the questions to be answered are -

“Why big lists of recommendations emerge only after the incidents?” (And not before the incident so that the incident would have been prevented)

“why such incidents occurred and lead to serious consequences although the organizations had robust systems, well trained and experienced employees and were tested and witnessed in the audits, drills and real time incidents?”

Hence the need of the hour and the big challenge is to focus and establish a well defined and Sound Crisis Management System with dedicated resources. Organizations should identify the Indicators for the assessment of crisis management for WORST CASE SCENARIOS and measure the effectiveness and compliance to every indicator. Leadership of the organizations should give due importance to crisis management, otherwise they may end up with a big list of recommendations and action items after every incident, which normally occurs after most unfortunate incidents.

This paper outlines the approach to Sound Crisis Management Program to ensure that organizations identify the worst case scenarios and prepare to face and overcome such incidents.

Collective BCM in the Bandra Kurla Complex

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Any major eventuality leads to a lot of retrospection on “what went wrong” and “who is responsible”. Mumbai has over the past few years been challenged by some major outages, be it the floods or the terrorist attacks. So much so, that the media terminology for the undying spirit of the average Mumbaikar has changed. Instead of referring to it as robustness or hardiness it is now being portrayed as fatalism.

The news print after an outage would show the start of yet another blame game which would with the passage of time die down and normalcy (or what we in Mumbai have accepted as normalcy) would set in. There would be a lot of talk in the interim about responsible citizenship and public private partnership. Some corporate have actually translated the talk into action. The arrangement may not be formally announced but the benefits of information and resource pooling has worked out for the common good.

One of the major business hubs in Mumbai (Bandra Kurla Complex - BKC) sets an example which can be adopted by other companies. During the floods in July 2005, the low-lying area faced a major crisis. As if the natural disasters were not enough, the high visibility of the organizations operating from the complex led to it being considered as a visible and soft target for terrorist activities.

ICICI Bank has always considered the continuity of business to be of paramount importance. The team at the Bank understood its commitment as a responsible organization both towards its employees (safety) and towards its customers (continuity). An initiative to pool the strengths of the various organizations operating out of Bandra Kurla Complex was undertaken and has grown to include inter-organization partnership and public-private partnership.

Battling disasters through partnering

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With the rapidly changing threat environment, stand alone disaster management systems can't provide a complete and effective solution. Firstly, disasters are seldom atomic in nature i.e. affecting only one entity and secondly an effective plan for prompt response and effective combat involves multiple agencies. Cooperation and co-ordination amongst them determines effectiveness of the plan. Hence, to build a structure that is robust enough to fight complexities, it is crucial that we partner with various authorities both public and private domains. Traditionally it has been observed that the impact of disasters could have been curtailed if the authorities that provide services during & after disasters were well acquainted & interlinked. Many times the resources and information that was required to combat the disaster was not reliable or not from the appropriate source. Unfortunately, in India public authorities are not looked upon with great reverence due to a historically built perception. In spite of the fact that they are the ones who are best equipped to fight major disasters. The private firms are not always well equipped with all the resources and information required to respond to disasters. Win – Win situation for partnering organizations. The relationship helps all the partners associated. The private firms are benefited by getting speedy assistance of services, sharing of resources and authentic news directly from the sources. Also the public authorities are benefited with the support received through private firms. Thus this symbiotic relationship amongst different bodies will help construct a better disaster management framework to counter various threats. Also this partnership will be loaded with a stronger armory to grind difficult challenges.

Corporate Sector in Disaster Management

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Disaster Management remains an area which has immense scope for improvisations and that, in the context of distinct practices and methodologies adopted across different areas, regions, countries, etc, gains significance. Each type of disaster has its own set of inherent characteristics, however, on a broad level, the critical strategies for its management remain more or less similar and hence therein lies the scope for a standardized solution approach: A quasi-intelligent approach that builds more upon the management aspects rather than the usually adopted technological ones and that is also adaptive in nature of business with respect to any type of disaster. The corporate sector can play a big role in disaster management. The issue will be dealt with extensively in this research paper. During past calamities, the corporate sector came into the picture only after calamity had occurred despite the fact that the corporate sector makes up for nearly 70 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. “While all top corporate implement Corporate Social Responsibilities very effectively, their role in disaster management is almost negligible. For disasters to get averted or reduced, their involvement is a must before its occurrence,” Disasters can affect anyone within a society and all key stakeholders must be involved in reducing risks for which the corporate sector must protect its own staff, property and its businesses. Business Continuity is a management process that provides a framework to ensure the resilience of the business to any eventuality, to help ensure continuity of service to key customers and the protection of the brand and its reputation. This provides a basis for ensuring long-term survival following a disruptive event. Business Continuity Plans need to be clear, concise and tailored to the needs of the business. Unplanned events can have catastrophic effects and the disruptive incidents can come from accidents, criminal activity or natural disasters. The subject of Business Continuity Management is not much heard of as both the private and public sectors in India are remotely aware of the potential damage made by human and natural disruption.

Key Words: methodologies, inherent, disaster, key customers, business continuity plans

A comparative analysis of major global Disaster risk management standards

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A comparative analysis of global Disaster risk management standards such as AS/NZS 4360:1999; CAN/CSA- Q850-97; PD 6668:2000; JIS Q 2001; NFPA 1600 on the basis of different parameters like Role for the civil society; Public-Private Partner; DRM Structure; Sectoral Risk Reduction Programs; Budget & staff allocation; Compliance/ enforcement; Codes and standards; Risk Reduction in Development Plans; Risk Reduction Strategy; early warning dissemination; Risk scenarios in use; early warning forecast quality; Hazards recorded and mapped are analysed and presented. In order to promote international trade, ISO has already started to consider creating international standards as a means of removing obstacles to trade activities. It was agreed to start with the preparation of documents on risk management terminology, and Japan took the lead in the compilation of “ISO/IEC Guide73: Risk management - Vocabulary - Guidelines for use in standards.”

Disaster risk management standards Provides specifications on risk management, consisting of the following components:

- A system that executes risk management,
- Background to the introduction of a risk management system,
- Identification of risks that can be significant for an organization,
- Analysis and assessment of identified risks,
- Deliberations on measures for risks,
- A mechanism for monitoring risks,
- A mechanism for reviewing risk management programs, and
- Measures for raising awareness among members of the organization, education and training, and enhancement of risk management capabilities.

The global trend in risk management is summarized below:

AS/NZS 4360:1999 (Australia & New Zealand): The world’s first risk management system developed in 1995. Revised in 1999. Regarded as indispensable for risk management in strategic planning by organizations and enterprise management. There is a move to globalize this standard.

CAN/CSA- Q850-97 (Canada) - : A risk management system developed in 1997 .These guidelines defines the purpose of risk management as “identifying great risks and taking appropriate measures to minimize the risks to the reasonably achievable extent.

PD 6668:2000 (United Kingdom) - : Developed by British Standard Institution in 2000. Regarded as a preliminary standard used during the development of a full-fledged risk management system.

JIS Q 2001 (Japan) - : Established as a JIS standard in 2001. Applicable not only to private enterprises, but also to public and private organizations. Helps to construct risk management systems on the basis of the same management system as ISO 9000 and ISO 14000

Research Methodology

It is a research paper based on secondary data. Secondary data would be collected through journals, internet and research papers. After that the secondary data would be analysed on the above mentioned parameters

Results

A comparative matrix would be prepared for the analysis having all the parameters mentioned vs. Global disaster risk management standards, to analyse the effective standard among these.