

Committees at the London Chamber of Commerce

THE LCCI runs a series of successful policy-forming committees and forums on specialist subjects, with most groups meeting four times per year. High-level guest experts are often invited to speak to meetings. These committee meetings also enable members to have a direct influence on the policy-making process at local and national Government levels.

In addition, committees help devise and guide events covering their special area for the wider LCCI membership. The press and public affairs team also arrange a series of briefing throughout the year with Ministers, Opposition front bench MPs, MEPs and officials where members can voice their opinions directly to the policymakers. Members can view a summary of the minutes of the committees listed below by logging in to the members' zone and clicking in the committees & forums section under press & public affairs. This year:

- **The Asian Business Association** are focussing upon issues of serious crime within the Asian community, as well as diversity matters in relation to the Olympics.

- **The aviation committee** have been very active in areas such as surface access and the many issues facing the aviation industry, including expansion of airports and runways.

- **The crime & business risk forum** are producing regular material updating members on how they can best protect themselves against fraud and other crimes directed against businesses.

- **The defence & security committee** are looking to further their work in contingency planning and security in the UK, as well as ensuring the defence events are once again a success in 2007.

- **The pensions committee** are furthering their work in relation to the pension's debate in the UK.

- **The property & construction committee** are looking to help members better understand commercial property matters.

- **The taxation committee** responded to the spring Budget and will do the same for the pre-Budget report this month.

- **The transport forum** have been active in relation to congestion charging and the many other issues facing London and its transport infrastructure.

- **The skills and employment forum** are shaping LCCI policy on training, education and the London skills gap. They will also be focussing on ensuring that Londoners receive the skills they need to benefit from the opportunities presented by the London 2012 Games.

For further information on the work of the committees and forums, or if you wish to be considered for one of the committees, please contact 020 7203 1971 or spatel@londonchamber.co.uk.

Ensure your business can respond in a crisis

Prepare for the unexpected

Vic Jaryczewski of Crown Weston Associates looks at the key steps companies should take in order to limit surprises and get back to business as soon as possible after disaster has struck

RUNNING and managing any business in today's hectic commercial environment requires persistence, tenacity and resilience. But have you ever taken the time to consider how resilient your business may be in coping with an unforeseen incident – be that an incident involving your own premises or suffering the resulting consequences and impact from an incident from a premises in the vicinity?

Have you considered how your organisation would cope with an interruption to its services and those it provides? The risks which your organisation may face and the impact that a business critical incident may have, not only on your own business but on other businesses that you rely upon or who rely upon your business?

Disasters

Incidents can include fire or water damage, disruptions to utility services and IT, severe weather, accidents, natural disasters or even terrorist attacks, all of which can cause massive disruptions to the supply chain and to customers.

Having a business continuity plan may be the difference between keeping or losing your business in the event of

an incident. Failing to plan is planning to fail and could result in exposing your business to unnecessary risks.

Whatever the risks, having effective contingency arrangements in place will reduce the impact of an incident.

Formalising what you need to do – who does what and when, communication methods, resource requirements and where you would relocate to if necessary – will reduce the effect of an incident.

With some simple planning, you could lay the foundations which may enable your business to survive and continue to operate and flourish, while others around you may not. Any business that undertakes a logical and structured view of the threats facing it and then works out how to respond to them has already reduced the impact if an incident occurs.

The following five steps taken from the Business Continuity Institute may assist you in being prepared:

1. Recognise how your business functions and what its core/key processes are; this will assist in identifying those areas that are at greatest risk.

2. Carry out a formal assessment of the threats, likelihood, duration and impact of the risks; this will help the organisation to be better placed to reduce the impact.

3. Develop a simple but robust plan including details of the scope of the plan, declaration and implementation methods of the plan, resources, contacts numbers (staff and suppliers), relocation arrangements, procedures, critical systems and documents and access to finance in the event of an incident.

4. Create a culture whereby business continuity becomes second nature and is developed into a culture of 'this is how we do business round here'.

5. Regularly update the plan, and test and train your staff in using the plan. By doing this, businesses have an excellent chance of surviving. Such activities also assist in identifying weaknesses in the plan and in its implementation, so strengthening the process.

For more information contact www.crownwestonassociates.org.uk

“Having a business continuity plan may be the difference between keeping or losing your business”

Firefighters clean up after a fire. But is your business ready to recover after an accident?

