

20 Questions To Ask Yourself

How Ready Are You for Business Interruption(s)

- 1 Does your office have a working fire alarm or smoke detectors or water sprinklers? ☐
- 2 Does your office have working fire extinguishers? ☐
- 3 Do you have in mind an alternative site from which your law firm can operate from in the event your principal worksite is unavailable? ☐
- 4 Do you keep minimal office supplies, stationery (e.g. firm letterhead) offsite? ☐
- 5 Do you store blank cheques in a secure, offsite location?⁶ ☐
- 6 Do you have an up-to-date inventory of your office and everything in it?⁷ ☐
 - * *This inventory is essential to your business continuity plans and for insurance purposes.*
- 7 If a partner or any member of staff died or left suddenly, what critical information is likely to go with them? ☐
 - * *Would other staff able to take over or close their files, and ensure your client's interests are protected in that time the file is being transferred?*⁸
- 8 Does your firm have staff that are in sole possession of critical information (important dates, passwords, file and document locations, etc), vendor information, combination or keys to the safe, accounting information?⁹ ☐
 - * *Everything entrusted solely to one person can simply vanish!*
 - * *Therefore, when such staff depart, obtain all keys, computer disks and other proprietary or confidential documents that may have been taken home or offsite.*¹⁰
 - * *Sharing information, formalising certain procedures, and centralising systems like calendars and billing may help mitigate loss.*¹¹
- 9 Do you have at least one portable computer with a spare battery?¹² ☐
- 10 Can you continue to service your clients without your computers?¹³ ☐
- 11 Have you ever considered installing a computer program that will be able to *undelete/reclaim* files that are inadvertently or *intentionally* erased? ☐
- 12 Have you ever tried restoring your backup data? Does it work? ☐
- 13 Ever considered a "buddy system" with another lawyer wherein you keep a copy of their critical information and they keep a copy of your critical information?¹⁴ ☐
- 14 Are your client records, critical client documents (e.g. wills, powers of attorney), critical business papers, etc kept in fire/flood proof cabinets or storage vaults? ☐
- 15 Is it common for all staff to leave client files or documents of active matters on their desks or the floor whereas mostly old files/matters are stored safely in (fire/flood proof) cabinets? ☐
 - * *The greater the amount of critical files/documents (e.g. land titles, wills) you have left in the open, the greater your exposure to liability in the event of a disaster.*
- 16 Does your firm have a copy of your master diary? If it is an electronic diary, do you back it up daily and store it offsite? ☐
- 17 Do you have a list of court contacts, vendors, banks, opposing counsel, insurance agents, etc to notify of your situation, in the event of an emergency? ☐
 - * *It is important that a copy of this list is kept offsite and accessible at all times.*
- 18 Have you considered taking photos of your office, equipment or furnishing? ☐
 - * *Such pictures would come in handy for insurance purposes.*
 - * *Don't forget to take 'aftermath' photos in the event your firm suffers damage.*
- 19 Do you maintain a 'rainy-day' fund? ☐
 - * *Such monies would be essential in helping your firm survive the aftermath of a disaster.*
- 20 Does your firm have insurance coverage? If so, what types of insurance has your firm purchased? ☐
 - * *It is important that you have insurance to cover property loss, loss of revenue, reconstruction of records and configuration of computer systems.*
 - * *Where possible, your insurance should cover restoration of valuable papers, laptops, etc. as well.*
 - * *General liability insurance would cover instances of personal injury that may be the fault of your firm.*
 - * *Fidelity bond insurance to cover employee theft is also another type of insurance worth considering.*