Your Problem
Responsibility for continuity of functioning at airports is not just an organisational imperative; it is also partially defined by legislation. In addition to requirements from the Civil Aviation Authority (CASA) for Emergency Response Plans and the Office for Transport Security for Transport Security Plans, airport management must provide services that meet the requirements of border security agencies, and keep the travelling public moving smoothly onto and off planes.

The central purpose of continuity planning is to reduce vulnerability in critical systems – those that deliver normal functionality - to a range of likely disturbances and to assist in rapid operational recovery if these systems are disrupted. A challenge for Airports is how to implement continuity planning effectively and efficiently. To better understand this challenge the following questions could be asked about the airport you are associated with:

- What key processes/systems are critical to full airport functionality?
- What threats or vulnerabilities might impact these processes/systems?
- What are the consequences of losing some or all of these processes/systems?
- How do you respond to disturbances affecting some or all of the key processes?
- How do you manage such situations in order to get back to normal operations?
- What are the time-frames for recovery?

Answers to these questions are not simple or easy. While international standards exist on what should be included in a continuity plan, such advice is generic, and may not actually fit the needs of airport operators in practice.

Our Solution
While airports differ with respect to scale and tempo of operations, core operations are similar. The AoTF Project is developing material for use in a flexible ‘Guide on applying Business Continuity practices’ specifically for use by airports. There are three common stages in activation of a continuity plan: emergency response, continuity of operations (albeit at some fraction of normal), and recovery.
A key assumption is as functionality drops off managerial activity increases in response to in order to begin the recovery process. Such a response can escalate from a tactical (localised) effort, to a wider operational level (with activation of an emergency centre), up to a full strategic response with suitable engagement at CEO and potentially Board-level (See Figure 1). A comprehensive continuity planning approach caters for all three levels of response and also includes preventive activities supportive of compliance with CASA and OTS regulatory requirements.

Because airports are not all the same our intent is to develop business continuity planning (BCP) guidelines to allow common practices to be applied widely with specialised ‘add-on’ elements to be adopted on an as needs basis by various airport partners.

What next?
The AoTF has briefed representatives of the Australian Airports Association on recent development work for the Guide. Based on feedback we are refining approaches to a range of standard BCP steps to better fit aviation end-user needs.

These approaches will include adapting regular BCP stages such as:

**Risk & Vulnerability Assessment**
- Examining likelihood and consequence of disruption.
- Understanding scale and degree of disruption that an incident can create
- Awareness of wide range of potential consequences.

**Business Impact Assessment (BIA)**
- Examining criticality of key processes and business functions in the context of loss of functionality over time.

**Plan Activation:**
- **Response:** Concerned with the initial response to an incident, with the aim of protecting life and property. Once an incident is contained, the second aim is to prevent further loss of functionality of critical business function or key processes affected.
- **Continuity:** Once loss of functionality has been halted (response stage), the continuity phase is concerned with continuing some level of functionality, albeit less than business as usual levels. This may involve a continuity measure, such as a workaround or backup to ensure this occurs.
- **Recovery:** Aims to restore reduced functionality. A key component involves standing down continuity plans and returning to normal operations.
- **Training Needs Assessments & Specification.**