COVIDSafe transition plan: QLD staff (& VAN, COST, ADF Support, FROST under previous org structure)

Why is it important to have a COVIDSafe plan?

COVID-19 has caused unprecedented change to the way DVA operates, to our client's needs and to our providers. We will use this opportunity to retain what's working and harness opportunities for innovation and reform, while keeping our clients and staff safe.

This plan guides DVA's senior executives in:

- Showing the areas of focus DVA has prioritised as we transition, and a clear plan guiding decisions and actions

- Providing information for individuals and functional leaders regarding their responsibilities and accountabilities

- Highlighting opportunities for adapting our business to new ways of working

- Offering important links to supporting information resources.

About this plan

The **DVA COVIDSafe Transition Blueprint** critically guides DVA's early actions in response to re-emergence, in line with Federal, State and Territory Government plans. The **DVA COVIDSafe Transition Plan** takes a longer and broader view, incorporating the actions that will keep DVA COVIDSafe, and identifying new ways of working through to January 2021.

The Transition Plan supports the workplace health and safety requirements as mandated in the *Work Health and Safety Act* 2011 and associated regulations. This may include observing guidance from local state/territory authorities.
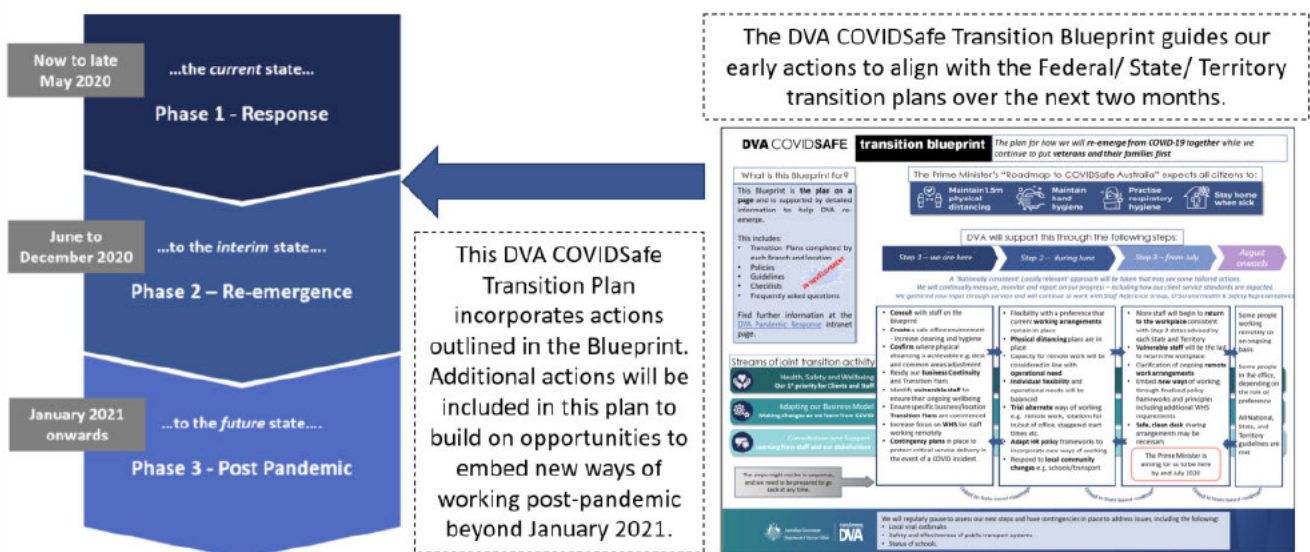
This plan is **aligned** to Australia's National COVID-19 Safe Work Principles and will **continue to adapt** as we respond to viral outbreaks and the emerging needs of our clients and business operations.

This plan outlines **DVA's national response** to transitioning our business operations from the current state to our post-pandemic future. Accountable functional leaders (such as HR, ICT), site leaders, and other experts will contribute to DVA's **Transition Plan** to ensure a complete organisational view. This will help align our approach to enterprise risk mitigation and develop new ways of working.

Every Assistant Secretary will use this plan as a basis for guiding branch transition planning, by **adding actions** specific to their geographic location or business unit need.

Transition plan structure

The plan outlined below is split into three key parts:

A

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- Understand how WHS risks have changed, for clients and staff
- How to make your workplace COVID-19 safe
- How to respond to a COVID-19 infection

B

Adapting our Business Model

- Create new ways of working and delivering outcomes for veterans and their families
- Adapt to a new operating environment

C

Consultation and Support

- How we will collaborate and consult across DVA to understand issues and inform decision making
- Important contacts and information

DVA's Pandemic Response principles for Transition from COVID-19

DVA will remain aligned with the Pandemic Response principles developed in March 2020.

1. We will **reform** our business - not to return to pre-pandemic ways of working
2. We prioritise **services for our veterans and their families and** our **staff's wellbeing** in our decision making
3. We will take an **enterprise approach** while **remaining responsive** at a functional and locational level
4. We are **guided** by government pandemic advice, aligned with state and territory direction and respond to broader APS directions
5. To **maximise** our adaptability, we **minimise** red tape, **clarify** accountability and **mitigate** risks
6. We are focused on moving toward pandemic recovery and **equally prepared to return** to social isolation if required
7. We trust the **knowledge within our business** teams and the **voices of our staff** to inform decision making

Part A - Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Prepare and Prevent: making sure our workplace is safe and clean

All actions in this plan will ensure DVA's compliance with the regulations and guidelines that support the health and safety of veterans and their families, and our staff. Repeated non-compliance will be referred to People Services.

Keeping our workplace safe and clean is likely to be one of the most important elements of managing COVID-19. Key things to remember during and after the COVID-19 pandemic are:

Maintain Good Hygiene	Stay Physically Distant	Follow Advice

Most importantly for managers and leaders, **if any members of your staff are unwell with symptoms of fever or a respiratory tract infection** (such as sore throat, cold, cough, aches, or shortness of breath) **tell them not to come into work and encourage them to get tested** for COVID-19.

Maintain good hygiene and cleaning

To maintain good hygiene and cleaning practices, we are committed to the following actions:

Requirements:

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Undertake appropriate hand hygiene routine by utilising handwashing and/or hand sanitiser stations	Upon entering/leaving the workplace	Frequently through the day	All Staff
Ensure all common areas are clean and tidy. Dishes are washed, dried and put away	Clean up after using kitchens and break rooms	After I use it	All Staff
Set up alcohol-based hand sanitiser stations at entry and exit points	CSC staff (or nominated site representative) to monitor and refill stations	Ensure the stations are checked every day and requests to refill are actioned within 1 hour	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property - in conjunction with site leadership
Ensure bathrooms are well stocked with soap and paper towel	Engage additional services through contract cleaners	4 times per day	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property
Ensure all frequently touched areas and surfaces are cleaned several times a day	Identify high use areas and contract cleaners to disinfect surfaces	4 times per day	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property - in conjunction with site leadership
Put up hand washing and personal hygiene posters for staff to follow	Stick in a clear and obvious place	Already complete. Monitor for visibility	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property - in conjunction with site leadership

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Place signage on work stations designated for 'desk sharing' explaining hygiene protocol and furnish with cleaning supplies	Secure supply of disinfectant supplies. Create nationally consistent signage	Before 15 June	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property - in conjunction with site leadership
Ensure all staff in QLD offices are aware of their obligations in this plan	Share the plan with QLD staff	Week commencing 1 July	Tara Hatzismalis – Deputy Commissioner QLD
Ensure DVA clients and their representatives are aware of social distancing and hygiene requirements in DVA offices and shopfronts	Create and display nationally consistent signage Communicate alternative service delivery arrangements via DVA website and other communication products Keep a record of all client face to face interactions during the COVID period	Before 15 June	Communication Team and local CSC or Office Manager Communication Team DVA VAN Managers
Ensure ADF personnel meeting with Veteran Support Officers (VSO) on ADF bases are aware of social distancing and hygiene requirements	Create and display nationally consistent signage Communicate alternative service delivery arrangements via DVA website and other communication products Keep a record of all client face to face interactions during the COVID period	Before 15 June	Communication Team and local CSC or Office Manager Communication Team DVA VSOs

Have you made some updates for your business?

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Stay Physically Distant

To ensure we have appropriate physical distancing we will commit to the following actions.

Requirements:

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Use remote work options where appropriate	Work in a safe place outside the workplace	Currently occurring for most staff	All Staff - in line with manager approval and PSB policy
If working remotely, ensure you comply with WHS requirements	Review/implement actions in guidelines outlined on the COVID Intranet page	Immediately	All Staff - in line with PSB policy
If returning to the workplace, ensure you complete the COVIDSafe checklist	Access the checklist (Attachment A)	Complete before returning to the workplace	All Staff – in consultation with your manager
If unwell, stay at home	Any COVID-like symptoms require isolation and testing	As soon as you experience symptoms	All Staff – advise your manager who can then follow departmental guidelines
Comply with all physical distancing requirements	Monitor behaviours and review published advice and posters	Consistently	All Staff – if you are having difficulty in maintaining physical distance, speak with your manager. Managers who experience repeat non-compliance by staff should seek PSB guidance
Ensure any visitors to the workplace understand and adhere to the health and safety measures	Place posters in entry ways, undertake briefings upon arrival including guiding visitors to sanitiser stations	As required	Any staff member greeting a visitor (e.g. client or tradesperson)
Support alternate working arrangements	Staggered starts, rotate staff between in/out of workplace etc. Ensure regular check-ins for remote workers are conducted	Before any return to the workplace	Managers
Follow new meeting /large gathering advice	Utilise teleconference, Skype or GovTeams. Physical gatherings must comply with physical distancing and room limitations	Before undertaking meetings/large gatherings	Managers
Provide information and guidance supporting COVIDSafe work practices	Review and update DVA's COVID intranet site	As required	Pandemic Response Management Team in collaboration with functional leaders
Put up physical distancing posters in plain sight, including restrictions for staff in meetings rooms	Stick up in places that staff can easily see	Already complete. Monitor for visibility	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property - in conjunction with each Deputy Commissioner

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Adjust kitchens and communal areas to encourage physical distancing	Display signage in places that staff can easily see and ensure constant messaging at all levels	Upon nationally consistent decision (before re-opening)	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property
Set new national standards for partial occupation of DVA offices that support ongoing remote work practices	Consultation and trial systems to support higher volumes remote work	By end of step two (July)	Graeme Rochow – AS Finance & Property, in conjunction with each Deputy Commissioner
Ensure all staff in the branch are aware of their obligations in this plan	Share the plan with QLD staff	Week commencing 1 July	Tara Hatzismalis – Deputy Commissioner QLD
Know where staff are working on given days	Monitor through regular reporting	Ongoing	EL2 Leaders
Run all meetings online (MS Teams, or Skype) or by teleconference. For staff attending in person ensure room occupancy limits are observed	Supported by EA

Reinforce through Directors | Ongoing | Tara Hatzismalis – Deputy Commissioner QLD

EL2 Leaders |
| Identity floorplans for all QLD sites with available work stations, factoring in available equipment, accessibility requirements and system access e.g. desktop or docking station | Visible inspection of floor and indication of available work stations on floorplans provided | Floor plans already completed | Tara Hatzismalis – Deputy Commissioner QLD

QLD CSC & Property Team |

Follow Advice

The Department will take an organisational approach to ensure we meet the standards required by key bodies, while remaining responsive to our operational and locational circumstances. Think about what makes your business area and/or location unique.

You must consider where you have priority deliverables and/or critical staff that have increased COVID-19 related risks e.g. a small or specialist team that may need changed workplace attendance patterns to reduce risk of possible infection spread.

Considerations include how we keep our staff and clients safe, and how we communicate changes to circumstances.

Requirements:

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Follow advice applicable to local viral outbreaks	When a local viral outbreak is identified, report upwards, consult the Flow Chart for Pandemic Infection Breakout and act on it as appropriate	When a viral outbreak is identified	All staff
Monitor the health of yourself and your colleagues for COVID symptoms	Do not attend work if you experience symptoms. If you notice symptoms in others, immediately alert the relevant manager	Always	All staff – talk to your manager. They will liaise with the PRMT who will guide them on how to best handle the situation
Comply with COVIDSafe Work related travel advice	Review advice published by the DVA Travel Team	Before undertaking any work related travel	All Staff
Manage own COVIDSafe travel to/from work (e.g. public/private transport; bike storage; car parking options)	Review and comply with relevant advice (for example public transport providers, building management etc.), ensuring you practice hand hygiene	Before undertaking any travel to/from work	All Staff
Return DVA equipment no longer required for remote work	Review the guidelines *(to be drafted)* regarding returning equipment	Upon return to the workplace	All Staff Coordinated via PRMT by CSC (or nominated site representative) in each location
Protect highly critical deliverables through the Contingency Plan (CONPLAN)	Ensure you have nominated and trained reliefs for staff who may be infected and a CONPLAN to enact	Now	Managers
Monitor local health advice and news relating to outbreaks	Monitor State and Territory health advice	At least daily	Local site leadership e.g. Deputy Commissioner, in conjunction with Pandemic Response Management Team
Stock vehicles with in-car cleaning or sanitising agents for workers to use if they are off-site	Order additional travel-sized cleaning agents	prior to re-opening	Dave s47E – Director, CSC & Property

What do you need to do?	How will you do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Ensure compliance with guidance provided by Department of Health, Comcare, and Safe Work Australia	Identify and communicate critical and important advice to all staff as required.	As required	Roger Winzenberg – AS PSB All staff to maintain a current understanding of advice and demonstrate appropriate behaviours
Ensure the physical and mental health of DVA staff	Regular risk assessments, application of policy, incident reporting, communication, consultation and education. Promotion of EAP and other support services	Ongoing monitoring and follow through.	Roger Winzenberg – AS PSB All staff to monitor their own physical and mental health, as well as their colleagues' to comply with the WHS Act
Ensure our vulnerable workers are identified and supported	Managers and staff to discuss personal circumstances regarding vulnerability. Managers to consult with PSB regarding additional support and reasonable adjustments as required	As required	Roger Winzenberg – AS PSB Managers of vulnerable employees
Communicate to clients via website/social platforms about changes to face-to-face services	Make a plan outlining all key messages	Now	Leanne Cameron – FAS CESS & Stephanie Hodson – ND Open Arms
Keep up to date list of staff contact details (personal mobile, and email addresses) to make contact if required out of business hours.	Encourage ESS update Branch list updated by EA	Ongoing	Tara Hatzismalis Deputy Commissioner QLD EL2 Leaders Branch EA

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Part B - Adapting our business model, now and in the future

The way we operate and deliver services has already changed because of COVID-19. The circumstances of the Veteran community, service providers and Ex-Service Organisations have also gone through significant change. We have seen many examples of staff innovation and a willingness to work together to put us in a better position than we were before COVID.

The Pandemic Response Management (planning) team will regularly review this plan to incorporate innovations and lessons learned, referencing any metrics available such as staff survey results and client service trends.

This section of the plan guides how we will:

- Create new ways of working and delivering outcomes for Veterans and their Families

- Incorporate remote work into 'business as usual'

- Adapt to a new operating environment

Some core actions have been identified through our pandemic response so far and through our early understanding of the issues and opportunities we have available to us.

Requirements:

What do we need to do?	How will we do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Plan staff leave to maintain staff wellbeing and critical productivity	Develop staff leave plans; use staff surveys; maintain staff connectivity activities	From Step 2	All Business Units and all levels of management. PSB will provide advice as needed.
Assess opportunities for continued improved data analysis and reporting on vulnerable client cohorts	Continue to enhance client dashboard reports	From now on	Dr Paul Nicolarakis - AS D&I
Redefine manager capability to effectively manage dispersed teams	Define updated capability requirements and provide professional development options for managers	Ongoing	Roger Winzenberg – AS PSB
Assess opportunities to continue remote Veterans' Review Board (VRB) and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) events using secure and confidential video hearings	Review learnings and experiences to plan VRB services in post-pandemic environment.	From Step 2	VRB
Safeguard client contact through the promotion of digital and telephony based service channels	Retain current approach to client contact. Assess viable and safe options for future service delivery	Now – to be reviewed and monitored	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS
Assess the circumstances of service providers post-pandemic to ensure they remain viable to deliver ongoing, relevant service	Continue to communicate with providers; survey providers	As we emerge to post pandemic	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS
Assess the opportunity for continued use of telehealth by our service providers (and Open Arms)	Explore with service providers; watch government decisions	From Step 2	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS

What do we need to do?	How will we do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Adapt critical staff support infrastructure needed in response to sensitive and high risk interactions	Client and staff feedback	Now and until further notice	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS Stephanie Hodson – ND Open Arms
Review contingency arrangements and plans and decide how much can be turned into BAU	Deliberate review of contingency arrangements and plans and make explicit decisions	From Step 2	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS and Natasha Cole - FAS CBD but all
Workload management strategy in response to increasing resources to deliver client-facing priorities or to respond to outbreaks	Use existing and new workload tools (e.g. Genysis) and adjust workforce as resources provided	Now and until further notice	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS and Natasha Cole - FAS CBD primarily Stephanie Hodson - ND Open Arms
Assess the opportunity for greater use of electronic communication in lieu of letters (e.g. decision advises)	Trial and test	Now	Leanne Cameron - FAS CESS/ Natasha Cole - FAS CBD/ Rachel Goddard – FAS TOP leading with all relevant SES contributing
Adjust training delivery methods to support remote learning, prioritising delegate training and upskilling	Trial and test new training; consider Defence proposal for new L&D platform	Now and until further notice	Natasha Cole - FAS CBD
Identify measures for productivity tracking and to identify trends as we adapt	Use surveys and existing productivity measures	Now and until further notice	All FAS
Fully support and examine the possibility of remote work arrangements for critical client service roles	Identify critical roles and the barriers to flexible work, including ICT, training, security, privacy, support and wellbeing considerations	By end of step two (July)	Mark Fraser – FAS BSSD with Leanne Cameron – FAS CESS/ Natasha Cole – FAS CBD/ Stephanie Hodson – ND Open Arms
Assess the opportunities for continued use of e-communication tools (e.g. Zoom, GovTeams, Skype) for meetings, both internal and with external parties	Continue to roll out new tools or enhance existing functionality to encourage usage	From now until further notice	Mark Fraser - FAS BSSD
Assess the changing client needs in response to pandemic	Survey of clients; consultation forums; feedback mechanisms, CFMS	Ongoing	Rachel Goddard - FAS TOP/ Leanne Cameron – FAS CESS
Assess the circumstances of ESOs post-pandemic for critical changes to their operations that effect Veteran support infrastructure	Listen to ESOs, ask at consultation forums; survey ESOs?	As we move to post pandemic	Don Spinks - Commissioner with Kate Pope - FAS VSD and all Deputy Commissioners

What do we need to do?	How will we do this?	When will it happen?	Who will lead this?
Continue the current rotating roster system for Processing and DHOAS teams in Brisbane.	Continue current roster system.	Already occurring	EL Processing and DHOAS staff.
Monitor work output against set KPIs	Through current reporting arrangements	Already occurring	EL Processing and DHOAS staff.
Continue to use non face to face communication methods for staff interactions, preferably phone, skype or GovTeams	Through ensuring staff are on the My Teams Platform and can utilize this from the office and home environment	Already occurring	Tara Hatzismalis Deputy Commissioner QLD EL2 Leaders Branch EA
Maintain service level standards in the telephony environment	Ensure all staff rostered in the office environment are logged into and available on the rehab call queues	Already occurring	Kim s47E and Julie s47E
Provide sufficient First Aid Officers and Fire Wardens in the office to WHS requirements	Identify current First Aid Officers and Fire Wardens and factor in their attendance in the office, or requirement for more qualified staff	By 1 July	QLD WH&S Group

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Part C - Consultation and Support

We will seek out the views of staff (leading with the Staff Reference Group), functional leaders, and analyse supporting data to guide our decisions around transition and opportunities to change the way we work.

This section of the plan guides how we will:

- Collaborate and consult across DVA to understand issues and inform decision making
- Identify important contacts and exchange information

DVA will remain aligned to advice from:

- The Federal Government
- State and Territory Governments
- Safe Work Australia
- Comcare
- The Australian Public Service Commission
- Department of Health and Chief Health Officers

We will create and maintain relationships at all levels to understand, respond and disseminate advice, to inform and influence direction, and to align to existing work and subject matter experts.

Requirements:

What do we need to do?	How will we do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Consult with staff stakeholder groups about transition plan	Engage with DVA staff through surveys, direct engagement with WHS Committees, HSRs and the Staff Reference Group	Regular meetings and online survey platform Ongoing email inbox (engagement@dva.gov.au)	Catherine McDonald - AS Communications with Heather MacDonald, Director TED
Engage with Labour Hire agencies regarding COVIDSafe work practices and requirements	Update currently engaged labour hire agencies of changed engagement circumstances. Ensure new engagements include relevant COVIDSafe information.	As required to ensure our labour-hire staff are fully supported as DVA transitions.	Roger Winzenberg – AS, PSB
Collaborate with CPSU on DVA's COVIDSafe work practices and requirements	Remain in regular contact with CPSU representatives. Engage representatives in early considerations to inform changes to work practices	As required.	Roger Winzenberg – AS, PSB
Consult with COO and functional leads to ensure industry and government standards are monitored and maintained	Engage with COO group through COO Committee meetings Engage with functional leads through the SEMB Advisory Group	At regular intervals and through existing meeting cadence	Pandemic Response Management Team with Mark Harrigan – Dep. Sec T&ES/COO

What do we need to do?	How will we do this?	When will it happen?	Who is accountable?
Consult with providers and ex-service organisations to understand their circumstances	Distribute provider surveys or hold consults by nomination	At regular intervals. Insights to be captured and shared to inform next steps to address service-critical issues.	Liane Pettitt - AS Parliamentary & Governance Karen Pickering - AS Provider Engagement All Deputy Commissioners
Maintain regular executive reporting cadence and governance structures while streamlining pandemic decision making for the new normal	Establish SEMB for A3 sheet decision making Maintain regular meeting cadences to ensure strategic agenda generally in mind	Ongoing	Liane Pettitt - AS Parliamentary & Governance Kylie Perrin - Pandemic Response Management Team

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Attachment A

COVIDSafe Guidelines and Checklists

Overview

Additional COVIDSafe guidelines and checklists will be developed to support staff and managers in their understanding of changed advice and options to inform safe, consistent and fair decisions.

Checklists and guidelines will be developed for the following priority areas:

- Responding to suspected presence of COVID-19 in the workplace – guiding immediate action to clear the workplace of staff and initiate cleaning protocols as indicated on the intranet

- Identifying and supporting vulnerable people – ensuring safety and wellbeing

- A new approach to flexible work – guiding work practices that might include staggered starts and part-time attendance at DVA offices, in line with security requirements

- Remote work environments – ensuring staff have a safe and appropriately equipped workspace at home.

- Add the Pandemic Infection Flow Chart

Part 1 – Risk Identification

This section is under construction

Risk Ref.	Objective	Risk Event	Source(s)	Impacts(s)	Uncontrolled Risk		
					Likelihood	Consequence	Rating
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

Risk Matrix

	Opportunity				Likelihood	Threat			
Risk level	Very high	Very high	High	Medium	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Very high	Very high
	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Likely	Low	Medium	High	Very high
	High	High	Medium	Low	Possible	Low	Medium	High	High
	High	Medium	Low	Low	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High
	Outstanding	Major	Moderate	Minor		Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
	Positive consequences					Negative consequences			

Unlikely	Consequence may only occur in exceptional circumstances, or may occur 1%–10% of the time.	The event is not expected to occur.
Possible	Consequence could occur at some time but only rarely, or may occur 11%–40% of the time.	The event may occur.
Likely	Consequence is likely to occur occasionally, or may occur 41%–90% of the time.	The event will probably occur in most circumstances.
Almost certain	Consequence is expected to occur, or may occur 91%–100% of the time.	From historical experience this event is most likely to occur.