

# COVID-19 Aruba Newsbulletin #2



***Due to the current situation as to the COVID-19 pandemic, we feel it is important to keep you well informed regarding all announcements, changes and information made available during this time.***

***How to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on your business.***

Globally we are seeing the effects of COVID-19, as known as the Coronavirus, on businesses. When the Chinese government put containment measures in place after the Wuhan outbreak, the global supply chains were thrown into disarray. This led to a dramatic slump in the movement of global shipping vessels leading to product shortages including medicines, medical equipment, hand sanitizer and toilet paper. In Aruba we have been assured by the wholesalers that there is no shortage in products and produce and that we will be receiving containers every week with supplies. Hence, no need to panic, no need to buy in bulk for months. There should be enough for everyone.

***“No perde cabes”***

In whatever type of business you are in it is important to “keep your head cool” – “No perde cabes”. Since last Friday when the news hit with the first two cases of Coronavirus on the island, things went from global to local very fast. It is no longer at a safe distance from us, but it is right here on island. How could you not go into panic mode? However, it is important to keep the risks in perspective and make sure you have a plan. Adjust your plan according to accurate information from reliable sources. Try not to be swayed by social media.

Keep things in perspective and understand the *real risk levels*, otherwise you have people sitting on stockpiles and other people shut down, which just serves to make the whole situation worse.

You shouldn't go out and place a double or triple order – your suppliers will probably reject it anyway.

By maintaining your head cool, working in line with your *business continuity plan* and *communicating clearly* to your employees and customers, you can give your team confidence and help ensure the organization's ongoing success.

***Where is that business continuity plan when you need one ...?***

Business continuity planning is one of those “*necessary evil*” activities that doesn't feel important or urgent... until it is. If you don't have a plan, you're

going to be in a much worse position when disaster strikes.

Traditionally, business continuity plans and crisis management plans describe the steps that you should take in case of an emergency or disaster. These plans are usually focused on buildings and IT-systems and they don't contain or to a much lesser extent tell you what you have to do when something happens that has a direct impact on the *people* working with these systems and in the buildings.

If we look at the Coronavirus from a risk management perspective, we must first describe the core of the risk. The risks related to the Coronavirus are for example:

- not being able to deploy employees on critical business processes;
- no longer being able to receive raw materials and/or semi-finished products;
- the lack of demand for products and services.

This results into not being able to deliver products and services and that customers will no longer purchase the products or services. Hence, the scope of your business continuity plans, and crisis management plans should be expanded. You should know what key components of your business are most likely to be affected; think about what could go wrong and include them in your plans.

***What can you do on a short-term?***

- Install a project or crisis team  
This will help with the centralization of knowledge and information regarding the Coronavirus and the impact on your business. You can appoint a designated employee that should follow the latest developments and provides advise to the team including management.
- Define your critical business processes  
As mentioned above it is important to define or identify your critical business processes in order to have an insight on the impact of the Coronavirus. This insight should include what would happen if employees are no longer available to conduct these processes and what are the alternatives to handle this issue.
- Have an insight into your suppliers and customers  
The lockdown of several countries around the world might have an impact on your suppliers. Therefore, it is important to gain insight in the

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impact on your own supply chain. In addition, you can also identify alternatives to ensure a continuous delivery from suppliers or different suppliers.

- Communicate internal and external  
Communication to employees, customers and suppliers is essential in times of crisis. Employees should be timely informed about management decisions regarding business continuity, amended policies and procedures.

In addition, you should keep your costumers informed regarding your decisions that might have an impact on them as well, no matter the industry you are operating from.

- Make it possible for employees to work from home  
Depending on your business delivery model it is essential to make it possible for employees to work from home, if so required due to measures taken by government. This is a vital part of modern business continuity; trying to ensure that some work can continue even in a crisis.

## *In conclusion*

The above mentioned are certain measures that you can take to minimize the impact of the Coronavirus, or any disaster, on your business. In addition, preparation is the key to minimize the impact of any disaster on your business operations. This starts with having a solid and robust business contingency plan in place that should periodically be evaluated and adjusted.

Lastly, follow the guidelines of the authorities and be safe!

## *How can we support you?*

We are available for any questions you might have regarding the above-mentioned topics. As Grant Thornton we have a toolkit available to support you in these challenging times.

If you have any questions regarding business continuity and crisis management plans, feel free to contact us.

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