

DR Readiness Checklist

An evidence-led self-assessment for one critical service.

Record what the evidence supports. Keep uncertainty visible.



SIX ASSESSMENT AREAS

01 Critical services and scope

02 Recovery targets

03 Backup and recoverability

04 Dependencies

05 People and runbooks

06 Testing and evidence

Use the checklist with evidence in view

Start with one important service. Work through each prompt with the people who own the service, the infrastructure and the recovery process. Record the evidence behind each answer rather than relying on confidence or memory.

Assessment details

SERVICE

ASSESSMENT DATE

BUSINESS OWNER

TECHNICAL OWNER

REVIEWER

RECOVERY SCENARIO / SCOPE

Evidence status

E Evidenced

P Partly evidenced

N Not evidenced

NA Not assessed

A practical sequence

1

Agree the scope

Name the service, scenario, owners, dependencies and exclusions before assessing it.

2

Review the evidence

Use plans, architecture, backup records, test output and runbooks. Note what is missing.

3

Turn gaps into actions

Prioritise material issues, assign owners and set a realistic point for review or retest.

A NOTE ON SCORES

This checklist does not produce a percentage readiness score. A simple score can hide weak evidence, unsuitable targets or one critical dependency. Use the record to support judgement, not replace it.

01

Critical services and scope

Define the service that must return, who owns it and what recovery really includes.

01 The service has a named business owner and a named technical owner.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

02 The recovery scope includes every component required to provide a usable service.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

03 Recovery priorities are agreed where services share constrained infrastructure or people.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

04 Exclusions, assumptions and known limitations are explicit.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____

Next action _____

Owner / review date _____

02

Recovery targets

Test whether recovery expectations are owned, credible and supported by evidence.

01 RTO and RPO expectations are documented and have an accountable owner.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

02 Targets reflect business impact rather than technology defaults.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

03 The recovery design can plausibly meet the stated targets.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

04 Exercise evidence shows whether the targets have actually been achieved.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____

Next action _____

Owner / review date _____

03

Backup and recoverability

Look beyond successful backup jobs to the practical ability to restore what matters.

01 Backup coverage has been reconciled against the agreed recovery scope.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

02 Retention, immutability and administrative access have been reviewed.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

03 Restore paths have been tested using representative data or workloads.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

04 Encryption keys, credentials and recovery media remain available during the scenario.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____

Next action _____

Owner / review date _____

04

Dependencies

Make the hidden technical and external dependencies part of the recovery sequence.

01 Identity and privileged-access dependencies are documented.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

02 DNS, network, firewall and load-balancer changes are understood.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

03 Application, database, storage and external-service dependencies are sequenced.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

04 Service accounts, secrets and certificates have a recovery path.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____
Next action _____
Owner / review date _____

05

People and runbooks

Check that recovery can be coordinated and followed under pressure.

01 Recovery roles, decisions and escalation paths are assigned.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

02 Runbooks identify prerequisites, validation steps and rollback points.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

03 Procedures can be followed by someone other than the original author.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

04 Business or user validation is included before the service is returned.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____

Next action _____

Owner / review date _____

06

Testing and evidence

Record what an exercise proved, what it excluded and what changed afterwards.

01 The recovery scenario and success criteria are agreed before the exercise.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

02 Tests include realistic dependencies, not only isolated component restores.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

03 Timestamps, results, exceptions and decisions are recorded.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

04 Findings have owners, priorities and target dates.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

05 Retesting confirms that important remediation has worked.

STATUS ☐ E ☐ P ☐ N ☐ NA

EVIDENCE / NOTES _____

SECTION FOLLOW-UP

Most important gap _____

Next action _____

Owner / review date _____

Turn material gaps into owned actions

Capture the issues that could materially affect recovery. Keep the action specific enough to complete and the evidence requirement clear enough to verify.

PRIORITY GUIDE

Critical: prevents credible recovery | High: likely to affect targets | Medium: weakens control | Low: improvement

REF	ISSUE / ACTION	EVIDENCE REQUIRED	OWNER	DUE	PRIORITY
A1					
A2					
A3					
A4					
A5					
A6					

REVIEW POINT Date: _____ Participants: _____

What must be retested or re-evidenced? _____

Keep the evidence trail usable

List the material used during the assessment so another person can find it, understand its age and see which conclusions it supports.

REF	DOCUMENT / EVIDENCE	OWNER / LOCATION	DATE / VERSION
E1			
E2			
E3			
E4			
E5			
E6			
E7			
E8			

INTERPRETING THE RESULT

This checklist is a starting point, not an assurance conclusion. Concentrate on important services where targets are unsupported, dependencies are unclear, or recovery evidence is old or incomplete. The absence of a finding is not proof of recoverability.

Overall assessment note

NEED AN INDEPENDENT VIEW?

Cygnus DR Readiness Review

cygnustech.co.uk | connect@cygnustech.co.uk