



Western Cape
Government



MEDIA POLICY: FIRE SERVICES AND PARTNERS

Incident Command System Summit

Goodwood Auditorium

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Why Media Policy And Communications Plan?

Examples of miscommunication during crises

'GuptaGate'



'1Time Airlines Closure'



Crisis Communications

- Every organisation is vulnerable to crises. If you don't prepare, you WILL do more damage.
- Without adequate communications:
 - ✓ Operational response will break down
 - ✓ Stakeholders (internal and external) will not know what is happening and quickly be confused, angry and negatively reactive
 - ✓ The organisation will be perceived as inept, at best and criminally negligent, at worst

Best Practice

Guidelines when working with multiple stakeholders in crises

- Identify Crisis Communication Team (PIOs and key agencies involved)
- Discuss the plan of action (who drafts media release, TV interviews etc.)
- Decide who key spokesperson should be + KEY MESSAGES
- Regular information: decide amount of releases per day, as incident progresses
- Decide if regular media briefings is necessary
- Once you're in crisis mode, if you don't communicate immediately, you lose your greatest opportunity to control events
- Work quick and fast!

Best Practice

Preparation:

● Anticipate Crises

- Every potential crisis should if possible- be logged on a Media Issues and Risk register
- If you're being proactive and preparing for crises, gather your Crisis Comms Team for brainstorming sessions on all the potential crises which can occur in the organisation/service

● Media holding statements can be designed in advance:

- ✓ Think of your end product, how does it impact the public (think about the how)
- ✓ Decide what is most important (e.g. Five patients injured, deceased, evacuation, hectares of land).

Building Relationships

Relationship management is key and is very important when working with different agencies

- Face to face interaction is ideal
- Delegate tasks as a team
- Not about egos, be cordial
- Build trust relationships
- Keep information flowing
- Trust your colleague
- Get to know the organisations you work with.



Way Forward

Developing media policy and building stakeholder relations

- Need for integrated media policy that will guide all fire services and stakeholders during an incident (doesn't work if only on paper)
- Must be flexible, dynamic as an incident never goes to 'plan'
- **Process:**
 - ✓ Workshop with focus groups/stakeholders (PIOs and media spokespersons of fire service and agencies)
 - ✓ Plan and do exercises (scenarios)

Thank you

Contact Us



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BETTER TOGETHER.

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