SOUTHGATE TERMINAL

Port Operations Security Documentation

Crisis Communications SOP

Document Information

Document Type: Standard Operating Procedure **Intended Users:** Media Team, Executive Team, Legal Team, Incident Coordinators **Usage Context:** During crisis situations requiring external communications **Related Scenarios:** Cyber incidents, safety emergencies, operational disruptions, regulatory compliance

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Purpose

This SOP provides standardized procedures for managing external communications during crisis situations, ensuring consistent messaging, regulatory compliance, and reputation protection.

When to Use This SOP

- Incidents requiring public disclosure or media response
- Regulatory notification requirements
- Stakeholder communication needs during emergencies
- Social media management during crisis situations
- Customer and vendor communications during operational disruptions

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Communication Authority and Approval

Communication Approval Hierarchy

Level 1: Standard Response Messages - Authority: Media Team Lead - Approval: None required - Scope: Pre-approved holding statements, basic factual updates - Timeline: Immediate implementation

Level 2: Incident-Specific Communications - Authority: Media Team Lead - Approval: Incident Coordinator review - Scope: Tailored responses to specific incident details - Timeline: 30 minutes maximum

Level 3: Strategic Communications - Authority: Executive Team - Approval: CEO and Legal review required - Scope: Policy statements, major announcements, crisis response - Timeline: 1 hour maximum

Level 4: Legal/Regulatory Communications - Authority: Legal Team - Approval: CEO and external legal counsel - Scope: Regulatory filings, legal proceedings, compliance statements - Timeline: As required by regulation

Message Approval Process

1. **Draft Preparation:** Media team prepares initial message draft
2. **Legal Review:** Legal team reviews for compliance and liability issues
3. **Executive Review:** Appropriate executive approves message content
4. **Final Approval:** CEO or designated authority provides final approval
5. **Distribution:** Approved message distributed through appropriate channels

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External Communication Channels

Primary Communication Channels

Press Releases: Formal announcements for media distribution - Use for: Major incidents, policy announcements, resolution updates - Approval: Level 3 (Executive + Legal) - Distribution: Regional and industry media contacts - Timeline: 2-4 hours for preparation and approval

Media Statements: Direct responses to media inquiries - Use for: Specific media questions, interview preparation - Approval: Level 2 or 3 depending on scope - Distribution: Specific media outlet requesting information - Timeline: 1-2 hours maximum response time

Website Updates: Official information on company website - Use for: Ongoing status updates, general public information - Approval: Level 2 (Incident Coordinator review) - Distribution: Public access via company website - Timeline: 30 minutes for standard updates

Social Media: Real-time updates and engagement - Use for: Brief status updates, rumor control, stakeholder engagement - Approval: Level 1 for standard messages, Level 2 for incident-specific - Distribution: Company social media accounts - Timeline: 15 minutes for approved message types

Secondary Communication Channels

Industry Publications: Trade and industry-specific communications - Use for: Technical explanations, industry impact assessments - Approval: Level 3 (Executive review required) - Distribution: Relevant industry publications and associations - Timeline: 2-4 hours depending on complexity

Direct Stakeholder Communication: Targeted communications to specific groups - Use for: Customer notifications, vendor updates, regulatory communications - Approval: Level 2 or 3 depending on stakeholder and content -

Distribution: Specific stakeholder groups via email, letters, calls - Timeline: 1-3 hours depending on scope and approval level

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Message Templates and Standards

Holding Statement Template

"We are currently managing a [technical/operational/safety] issue affecting [general description]. The safety of our personnel and the security of our operations remain our top priorities. We are working diligently to resolve the situation and will provide updates as more information becomes available. For specific inquiries, please contact [contact information]."

Incident Acknowledgment Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Organization Name] Addresses [Incident Type] at [Location]

[CITY, Date] - [Organization Name] is currently managing a [incident description] that occurred at [time] today at our [location] facility.

Current Status: [Brief factual description of current situation]

Safety Measures: [Description of safety measures in place]

Operational Impact: [Brief description of operational impact]

Response Actions: [Summary of response actions being taken]

Timeline: [Expected timeline for resolution or next update]

We are working closely with [relevant authorities/agencies] and will continue to provide updates as the situation develops.

For more information, contact: [Media contact information]

Incident Resolution Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Organization Name] Resolves [Incident Type] at [Location]

[CITY, Date] - [Organization Name] has successfully resolved the [incident description] that occurred on [date] at our [location] facility.

Resolution Summary: [Description of how incident was resolved]

Lessons Learned: [Key improvements implemented]

Prevention Measures: [Steps taken to prevent recurrence]

Operations Status: [Current operational status]

Stakeholder Impact: [Summary of impact and recovery measures]

We thank [stakeholders/authorities] for their cooperation during our response efforts.

For more information, contact: [Media contact information]

Stakeholder-Specific Communications

Regulatory Communications

Regulatory Notification Requirements: - Immediate notifications: Safety incidents, environmental releases, security breaches - 24-hour notifications: Operational disruptions, compliance issues - Periodic reporting: Ongoing incidents, resolution progress

Regulatory Communication Template: TO: [Regulatory Agency] **FROM:** [Legal/Compliance Team] **RE:** [Regulation Reference] - Incident Notification

INCIDENT SUMMARY: [Factual description of incident] **REGULATORY RELEVANCE:** [Specific regulations that apply] **COMPLIANCE STATUS:** [Current compliance status] **CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:** [Actions taken and planned] **TIMELINE:** [Timeline for resolution and compliance] **CONTACT:** [Regulatory liaison contact information]

Customer Communications

Customer Impact Assessment: - Service disruptions and expected duration - Alternative service arrangements - Compensation or adjustment policies - Contact information for customer service

Customer Communication Template: SUBJECT: Service Update - [Brief Description]

Dear Valued Customer,

We are writing to inform you of a [brief incident description] that may affect our services to you.

Current Impact: [Specific impact on customer's services] **Expected Duration:** [Timeline for resolution] **Alternative Arrangements:** [What we're doing to minimize impact] **Updates:** [How and when we'll provide updates] **Contact:** [Customer service contact for questions]

We apologize for any inconvenience and appreciate your patience as we work to resolve this matter.

Vendor and Partner Communications

Vendor Coordination Requirements: - Impact on vendor operations and deliveries - Modified procedures or requirements - Communication protocols during incident - Coordination of vendor support resources

Vendor Communication Template: TO: [Vendor/Partner] **FROM:** [Operations/Procurement] **RE:** Operational Status Update

We are currently managing [brief incident description] that may affect our operations and your services.

Operational Changes: [Changes affecting vendor operations] **Coordination Needs:** [Specific coordination requirements] **Communication Protocol:** [How we'll maintain communication] **Support Needs:** [Any support we may need from vendor] **Timeline:** [Expected duration and milestones]

We will keep you informed of developments and coordinate closely on any adjustments needed.

Media Management Procedures

Media Inquiry Response Process

1. **Initial Response (Within 1 hour):**

- Acknowledge receipt of inquiry
- Provide timeline for substantive response
- Offer holding statement if appropriate
- Gather details about specific information requested

2. **Information Gathering (Within 2 hours):**

- Collect relevant facts from incident response teams
- Verify accuracy of information
- Identify sensitive or confidential information
- Prepare response options and recommendations

3. **Response Approval (Within 3 hours):**

- Submit response for appropriate approval level
- Incorporate legal and executive feedback
- Finalize approved response
- Coordinate timing of response delivery

4. **Response Delivery:**

- Deliver response via appropriate channel
- Document response and media outlet information
- Monitor for follow-up questions
- Coordinate with other media inquiries on same topic

Press Conference Management

Decision Criteria for Press Conference: - High public interest or media attention - Complex situation requiring detailed explanation - Need for executive visibility and leadership - Regulatory or legal requirements for public disclosure

Press Conference Preparation: 1. **Executive Briefing:** Prepare spokesperson with key messages and Q&A 2. **Message Development:** Develop opening statement and key talking points 3. **Logistics Coordination:** Arrange venue, timing, and media notification 4. **Support Team:** Assign technical experts and legal counsel for support 5. **Follow-up Planning:** Plan for post-conference follow-up and materials

Social Media Management

Social Media Monitoring: - Monitor company mentions and relevant keywords - Track sentiment and misinformation - Identify influential voices and stakeholders - Escalate significant issues to media team lead

Social Media Response Guidelines: - Respond to direct questions with approved messaging - Correct factual misinformation promptly - Avoid engaging in arguments or debates - Escalate complex issues to appropriate channels - Maintain professional tone and company voice

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Crisis Communication Timeline

Hour 1: Initial Response

- ☐ Activate crisis communication team
- ☐ Issue holding statement if media interest
- ☐ Begin stakeholder notification process
- ☐ Monitor media and social media coverage
- ☐ Coordinate with incident response team

Hours 2-4: Substantive Communication

- ☐ Develop incident-specific messaging
- ☐ Complete regulatory notifications
- ☐ Respond to media inquiries
- ☐ Update website and social media
- ☐ Coordinate with key stakeholders

Hours 4-8: Ongoing Management

- ☐ Monitor media coverage and public reaction
- ☐ Provide operational updates
- ☐ Coordinate with external authorities

☐ Manage ongoing stakeholder communication
☐ Plan for longer-term communication strategy

Day 2-7: Resolution Communication

☐ Provide regular progress updates
☐ Coordinate resolution announcement
☐ Conduct lessons learned communication
☐ Manage relationship recovery efforts
☐ Document communication effectiveness

Legal and Compliance Considerations

Legal Review Requirements

Mandatory Legal Review: - All regulatory communications - Media statements involving liability - Communications about criminal activity - Statements about ongoing investigations - Policy or procedural announcements

Legal Review Process: 1. **Risk Assessment:** Legal team assesses communication risks 2. **Content Review:** Review for accuracy and legal compliance 3. **Liability Evaluation:** Assess potential liability implications 4. **Privilege Protection:** Ensure attorney-client privilege protection 5. **Approval Decision:** Approve, modify, or reject proposed communication

Regulatory Compliance

Communication Compliance Requirements: - Timely notification to regulatory agencies - Accurate and complete information disclosure - Protection of sensitive or classified information - Coordination with law enforcement when required - Documentation of all regulatory communications

Information Security

Sensitive Information Protection: - Classify information before communication - Protect operational security details - Avoid disclosure of investigation details - Coordinate with technical teams on technical accuracy - Maintain confidentiality of privileged information

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Post-Crisis Communication

Reputation Recovery Communication

Recovery Communication Strategy: - Acknowledge lessons learned and improvements - Demonstrate commitment to prevention - Highlight positive

organizational attributes - Rebuild stakeholder confidence - Invest in relationship restoration

Communication Effectiveness Assessment

Evaluation Criteria: - Timeliness of communications - Accuracy of information provided - Stakeholder satisfaction with communication - Media coverage tone and accuracy - Regulatory compliance achieved

Improvement Planning: - Identify communication gaps or failures - Update templates and procedures - Enhance team training and preparation - Improve stakeholder relationship management - Strengthen crisis communication capabilities

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Success Criteria

- Timely and accurate external communication during crisis
- Effective management of media relations and public perception
- Full regulatory compliance with notification requirements
- Maintained stakeholder relationships and confidence
- Protected organizational reputation and legal interests

Social Media Crisis Management

Purpose

This section provides detailed procedures for monitoring, managing, and responding to social media content during crisis situations, ensuring coordinated response between social media and traditional media communications.

When to Use

- Crisis-related content appearing on social media platforms
- Leaked internal information spreading on social platforms
- Misinformation or rumors circulating online
- Employee social media posts about incidents
- Coordinated social media campaigns against organization

Social Media Monitoring Framework

Real-Time Monitoring Requirements   Primary Platforms to Monitor:
- Twitter/X: Real-time discussions, breaking news shares - LinkedIn: Professional discussions, industry commentary - Facebook: Community discussions, public group conversations - Instagram: Visual content, hashtag monitoring - YouTube:

Video content, comment sections - Reddit: Technical discussions, community forums

Monitoring Tools and Keywords   Crisis-Related Keywords: - Organization name + "incident," "breach," "failure," "problem" - Technical terms: "AIS," "CCTV," "container," "crane," "blackout" - Location-based: Port name, terminal references, geographic identifiers - Operational terms: "ship," "vessel," "cargo," "delay," "shutdown"

Alert Thresholds: - **Level 1:** 1-5 mentions per hour (routine monitoring) - **Level 2:** 6-15 mentions per hour (enhanced monitoring) - **Level 3:** 16-50 mentions per hour (active response required) - **Level 4:** 50+ mentions per hour (crisis response mode)

Social Media Response Protocols

Immediate Response (0-15 minutes)

1. **Content Assessment:**

☐ Identify source of social media content
☐ Assess accuracy of information being shared
☐ Determine reach and engagement levels
☐ Evaluate potential for viral spread

2. **Response Decision Matrix:**

- **Ignore:** Minor mentions, accurate information, positive content
- **Monitor:** Moderate mentions, mixed accuracy, contained spread
- **Engage:** High visibility, inaccurate information, significant reach
- **Escalate:** Viral content, major inaccuracies, coordinated attacks

Active Response Procedures (15-30 minutes)

Direct Engagement Strategy   When to Engage Directly: - Factual inaccuracies that can be corrected - Questions from legitimate news sources - Safety concerns expressed by public - Direct mentions requiring response

Engagement Templates:

```
Thank you for your concern. We are currently managing [brief description].
Safety remains our top priority. We will provide updates as information
becomes available. For official information: [website link]
```

Indirect Response Strategy   When to Use Indirect Response: - Negative sentiment without specific inaccuracies - Emotional reactions to incident - Speculation about causes or impacts - Employee commentary about workplace

Indirect Response Methods: - Official statement posts on company accounts - Updated website information - Proactive information sharing - Influencer/partner amplification

Content Strategy During Crisis

Proactive Content Framework

1. **Information Posts:**

- Factual updates about incident status
- Safety measures being implemented
- Timeline for next updates
- Links to official information sources

2. **Engagement Posts:**

- Responses to direct questions
- Corrections of misinformation
- Appreciation for community support
- Coordination with local authorities

3. **Behind-the-Scenes Content:**

- Safety measures in action (if appropriate)
- Team response efforts (if appropriate)
- Community partnerships during response
- Recovery progress updates

Message Consistency Framework   Core Messages for Social Media: - Safety is the top priority - Incident is being managed professionally - Regular updates will be provided - Community/customer safety is assured - Professional response team is handling situation

Tone Guidelines: - Professional but human - Empathetic to concerns - Confident but not dismissive - Transparent within legal limits - Respectful of all stakeholders

Platform-Specific Response Strategies

Twitter/X Management   Rapid Response Protocol: - Monitor trending hashtags related to incident - Respond to direct mentions within 30 minutes - Use threads for detailed explanations - Pin important updates to profile - Coordinate with official news accounts

Twitter-Specific Templates:

```
We're aware of reports about [incident]. We're managing the situation
and will provide updates here. Safety is our priority.
Official info: [link] 1/3
```

LinkedIn Professional Response   Professional Network Strategy: - Share detailed incident updates - Engage with industry professionals - Address business impact concerns - Coordinate with employee advocacy - Share recovery progress

Facebook Community Management   Community Engagement: - Respond to comments on official posts - Share updates in relevant community groups - Address local community concerns - Coordinate with local government pages - Manage community group discussions

Visual Platform Strategy (Instagram/YouTube)   Visual Content Guidelines: - Share appropriate incident response visuals - Avoid sensationalizing imagery - Focus on safety and professionalism - Coordinate with video statements - Manage comment sections actively

Employee Social Media Coordination

Employee Guidelines During Crisis   Do's for Employees: - Refer questions to official communications team - Share official company posts (optional) - Focus on safety and professionalism - Support official messaging when appropriate

Don'ts for Employees: - Share internal information or speculation - Engage in debates about incident - Post unauthorized photos or videos - Comment on legal or technical details - Express personal opinions about company response

Employee Advocacy Activation   When Appropriate: - After official response strategy established - For positive safety messages - To amplify official communications - During recovery phase communications

Coordination with Traditional Media

Social Media-Traditional Media Integration

1. **Information Sharing:**

- Social media mentions inform traditional media strategy
- Traditional media responses adapted for social platforms
- Coordinated timing of announcements
- Consistent messaging across all channels

2. **Response Coordination:**

- Social media team briefs traditional media team on online sentiment
- Traditional media statements adapted for social platforms
- Interview content coordinated with social media posts
- Crisis messaging unified across all platforms

Influencer and Stakeholder Management

Key Stakeholder Engagement Industry Influencers: - Maritime industry professionals - Local business leaders - Safety and environmental advocates - Technical experts and analysts

Engagement Strategy: - Proactive briefing on incident facts - Coordination of supportive messaging - Response to influencer concerns - Partnership in accurate information sharing

Community Leader Coordination Local Community Engagement: - City officials and local government - Business association leaders - Community organization heads - Local media personalities

Crisis Escalation on Social Media

Viral Content Management When Content Goes Viral: 1. **Immediate Assessment (0-30 minutes):** - Assess content accuracy and impact - Determine response strategy - Coordinate with legal team - Prepare rapid response content

2. **Rapid Response (30-60 minutes):**

- Deploy prepared response content
- Engage with high-reach shares
- Coordinate with traditional media
- Monitor for further escalation

Coordinated Attack Response Signs of Coordinated Social Media Attacks: - Synchronized posting across multiple accounts - Use of identical or similar language - Rapid amplification of negative content - Targeting of specific hashtags or keywords

Response to Coordinated Attacks: - Document evidence of coordination - Report to platform abuse teams - Focus on factual counter-messaging - Avoid direct engagement with attack accounts - Coordinate with legal team on potential actions

Measurement and Analysis

Social Media Metrics During Crisis Key Metrics to Track: - Mention volume and sentiment - Reach and engagement of crisis-related content - Share velocity of negative vs. positive content - Response time to mentions and questions - Effectiveness of counter-messaging

Post-Crisis Analysis Social Media Performance Review: - Response time effectiveness - Message resonance and clarity - Platform-specific performance - Stakeholder engagement success - Areas for improvement identification

Success Criteria

- Rapid identification and response to crisis-related social media content
- Effective coordination between social media and traditional media responses
- Successful management of social media sentiment during crisis
- Clear, consistent messaging across all social platforms
- Maintained stakeholder relationships through professional social media engagement

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Related Documents

- Legal Risk Escalation Flowchart
- Executive Briefing Template and Schedule
- Crisis Decision Authority Matrix
- Inter-Team Communication Protocol
- Emergency Response Procedures