SAFE-COMMS

The Terrorism Crisis Communication Manual for Public Authorities

Imprint

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Special thanks go to the project's Advisory Board members for their valuable guidance and expertise on the project.

In total, the project interviewed over one hundred people who had experience of terrorist incidents. Each contributor reflected upon the difficult situations they had experienced during a particular terrorist attack. Their insightful and detailed comments provided the research team with a rich source of data for analysis. The success of this project and the production of this manual would not have been possible without them. In particular, we would like to thank the victims, victims' family members and professionals who participated in this study, ambulance services, fire and rescue services, police services, security professionals and analysts, members of Legislative Assemblies, ministries and local councillors, employees of public authorities, church leaders, press officers and journalists from Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Israel, Northern Ireland, and Spain.

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We express our deepest respect and memory for all those who have suffered as a result of the scourge of terrorism.

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PART 1

1 <u>Introduction</u>

1.1 Foreword

In recent years, global terrorism has turned from a political fringe issue to a major security threat affecting public authorities all over Europe. Recent waves of terrorist attacks indiscriminately hit targets in countries all over the world, from the World Trade Center in New York to nightclubs in Bali, from underground trains and buses in London, commuter trains in Madrid and tourist groups in Djerba to suicide bombings of banks and offices in Istanbul.

Many public officials tend to underestimate the effect of an attack, the potential damage to communication which results from the attack, and the role of effective communications in recovery, damage limitation and return to normality. Even when relatively few people or facilities are directly affected by an attack, terrorism is a topic that receives instant media attention at both national and global level. Terrorists use violent attacks to attract public attention. Increasingly, the impact of an attack is extended through the world of communication. Terrorists employ the shock wave that passes through the media as a deliberate means of amplifying and propagating fear and insecurity throughout the population. In this way they undermine the social and political systems they have attacked.

Every public authority affected by a terrorist attack is suddenly faced with huge media interest, stimulated by the visual violence and the association with the phenomenon of global terrorism. Even when a public authority is not the direct intended victim, difficult questions are instantly raised in the media about its level of preparedness, its security procedures, its commitment to the welfare of citizens, and the effects of the attack on its core functions. In order to effectively deal with the aftermath of terrorist attacks, public authorities need a counter-terrorism communication strategy that is designed to give the population security and reassurance. The task requires a high degree of confidence, sensitivity and decisiveness of action. Professional and credible communication can be critical in reducing the impact of an attack and preventing loss of confidence and image for public authorities. The way in which communication strategies deal with terrorism becomes an integral part of the fight against terrorism. The research on which this manual is based has shown that the knowledge of this theme exists in a wide variety of ways in national, but primarily in regional and local institutions. While excellent strategies and structures already exist in individual states and municipalities which have had experience in dealing with terrorism, other countries have little or no expertise in this field.

A special crisis communication strategy needs to be prepared, rehearsed and aligned before an attack occurs, and forms an inherent part of crisis management and continuity plans. Crisis communication skills that need to be established include good communication, mandatory processes and joint preparation involving communication staff and security departments within a public authority. Co-ordination of the various institutions and authorities and training of communication personnel is critical in providing them with an enhanced understanding of the dynamics of terrorism media coverage and the challenges they may face if confronted with a terrorist incident.

1.2 The purpose of this manual

Professional, strategic crisis communication can not only play a key role in mitigating the consequences of a terrorist attack; it is already among the fundamental demands made of institutions, public authorities and companies. Crisis communication, like crisis management

itself, requires clarity throughout its structures, definitions of tasks and responsibilities, and co-ordination processes.

A terrorist attack imposes exceptional demands on institutions and authorities – both external and internal. Public authorities are often part of highly complex structures, each with its own range of duties and spheres of action; in the event of an attack, they may be defined in different terms from non-politically motivated acts of damage. However, this is precisely why a wide range of levels, departments, subordinate and superior authorities, ministries and police, security and emergency forces must work closely together and ensure not only that crisis management actions function smoothly, but also - and primarily - that a continuous flow of information is provided. More than in any other kind of crisis, it is vital that co-ordination processes function flawlessly. In an acute situation there is no time to establish or co-ordinate this collaboration and these processes; this work can only, and must, be completed in advance.

This manual is designed as a guideline for responsible persons in public institutions and authorities and in companies throughout Europe.

- It aims to provide assistance in communication issues related to terrorism.

- It contains no "ready-to-use" solutions, but it shows basic rules and procedures for an effective counter-terrorism crisis communication.

- In particular, it offers advice on the development or optimisation of crisis communication plans and expert reports, and makes suggestions for their integration into existing crisis plans.

The manual describes fundamental requirements, provides examples of procedures and tools and gives specific advice on their implementation. However, it has been produced in the awareness that it can only represent a manual of guidance, encouraging users to act independently in aligning treatment of the topic with overall national, political, social and cultural conditions.

1.2.1 Structure of the manual

The manual is divided into three parts:

- The first part describes the specific features of terrorist attacks and the special challenges they pose for communication. Recommendations for crisis communication management provide assistance for specific emergency response.

- The second part deals with the establishment of an integrated crisis communication management system, and presents scenarios and training units designed for preparation of content-based and organisational issues.

- The third part contains practical checklists for direct use in emergency response or in the establishment of the crisis communication management system.

PART 1

1. Introduction	Analysis of specific situation and requirements
2. Characteristics of terrorist attacks	Aim and function of the manual
3. Counter Strategies 4. Crisis Communication Management	Basic strategies, organisation, instruments, tools and skills
5. Action Plans	Recommendations, Templates for practical crisis communication

PART 2

6. Crisis Preparedness	How to prepare organisation, instruments, tools and skills
7. Network building and co-ordination	
8. Training modules	Training for crisis communication
9. Scenarios	

PART 3

| 10. Checklists | Helpful tools for practical crisis communication |

Fig. 1.1 The structure of the manual

1.3 The SAFE-COMMS project

This guide is the result of the SAFE-COMMS project, supported by the European Union as part of the Seventh Framework Programme. It is based on analysis and evaluation of communication-related aspects of 25 case studies examining terrorist attacks in Israel, Greece, Spain, Northern Ireland, Turkey and the Arab states over the past 20 years. The goal of the project was to deepen understanding of the communications challenges and problems faced by public authorities in Europe after terrorist attacks, and to help them respond more effectively by providing targeted communication strategies for the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

The case studies selected for analysis of counterterrorist communication in Europe included a range of scenarios, perpetrators, objectives and modi operandi that provide a representative overview of the advanced experience gained in the combating of terrorism in Europe. Research was based on evaluation of documentary material and interviews with the crisis managers involved. In addition, concrete communication needs of public authorities were determined in interviews with representatives of authorities and emergency services, victims and their families and with journalists.

Information on SAFE-COMMS

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2   Characteristics of terrorist attacks

Although terrorist attacks spread fear and panic throughout the population, their actual goal is to destroy public safety and order and to undermine confidence in those responsible for political, religious or social systems. Terrorist groups make use of attacks as a strategy of both violence and of communication, since their attacks require a high degree of public attention to develop their full destructive power and impact.

While the type and extent of attacks cannot be predicted, our study shows that they are increasingly reaching new, unimaginable levels. However, terrorist attacks have specific characteristics which can be prepared for.

2.1   Characteristics

The main characters of terrorist attacks are threefold:

- They come as a surprise and without advance warning, often targeting unexpected places.
- They are designed to cause the maximum possible damage to human life, facilities and to attract the highest public attention.
- They are aimed at targets that often have no direct connection with the political aims of the terrorists.

From the viewpoint of communication strategy, the selection of targets for attack is made on the basis of symbolic, ideological or purely media-related considerations. The more spectacular the attack, the higher it's public impact.

This is not the only characteristic that shows that terrorist groups and organisations can be communication professionals who can make use of simple mechanisms of media attention. The communication impact of attacks is extended by letters, videos or e-mails claiming responsibility which are issued after a delay, thus triggering more news updates. Even warnings issued shortly before actual terrorist attacks serve to ensure that the media are on the spot as a building is evacuated or a car explodes. Terrorist groups use their own or sympathetic television stations or organisations and, increasingly, the Internet to spread panic internationally and to persistently feed this panic over a long period.

The systematic use of violence and communication represents the difference between terrorist attacks and disasters or 'normal' acts of violence – however spectacular and designed for media attention the latter may be, such as acts by spree killers. The distinction of terrorists' mode of operation is their systematic propagation of fear, anxiety over repeat attacks, helplessness, and the feeling of being under threat – throughout as wide an area as possible.

2.2 Types of attacks

2.2.1 Attacks against citizens

The attacks on rush-hour public transport in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 left deep scars on the collective psyche. Several hundred people were killed and thousands were injured. Television stations all over the world interrupted their scheduled programming to show special programmes, and for many days the attacks were the dominant subject in the media, accompanied by horrific pictures of the events.

Although places with high concentrations of people such as railway stations and trains, airports, shopping centres, fairgrounds, sports events, discos and restaurants do not have symbolic character, they are among terrorists' preferred targets because attacks on citizens, including those targeting children and young people, generate enormous public attention and are in themselves events that have an impact on the mass media, maximising the shock wave. The primary result of these attacks is to trigger fear among the population that they could themselves become victims.

On the other hand, other targets selected have included the symbolic buildings, religious institutions such as churches, mosques and synagogues, and private companies. These attacks simultaneously communicate a message of destruction of cultural, religious, social, philosophical and commercial values. The message translates as being "we're out to get all of you".

Particular attention must be given to the collective fear and insecurity of the population in the communication and handling of the consequences of the attack.

2.2.2 Attacks against security forces

Terrorist attacks against security forces carry a communication message directed at the destruction of the government and public security. Here too, the symbolic power of the act is often more important than any actual weakening of state power. This is particularly clear in the case of attacks on individual police officers or security force members.

2.2.3 Attacks against prominent persons

Attacks against prominent persons are frequently directed at leaders in politics, jurisprudence or economy and are likewise generally of a symbolic nature. The prominent status of the victim amplifies the media attention focused on the person involved and his or her family. The features of the public shock wave are shaped by factors including the status, fame and popularity of the victim.

2.2.4 Kidnapping or hostage-taking of citizens or prominent persons

Kidnapping or hostage-taking of citizens or prominent persons in the victim's own country or abroad take on special status in communication terms. Investigations are directed at releasing the kidnapped person alive and well. This often imposes restrictions on communication which may extend to a gagging order or news embargo, which may under certain circumstances perhaps over a long period. However, the terrorist kidnappers communicate their messages and demands over the Internet or via the media, thus continuously updating news reports which in turn feed public attention for long periods. The persons responsible for negotiations with the kidnappers are under constant critical monitoring by the public. There is the danger of controversial discussions arising in the media or among the population concerning the fulfilment of the kidnappers' demands.

2.3 Media agenda

Media-related potential is defined according to the following factors:

- Personalities
- Circumstances
- Proximity / potential of involvement
- Impact of image

The power exerted by news in the media is normally related to the damage caused. Terrorist attacks are counted as hot media topics in the category of "the power of nightmares". Terrorist groups make targeted use of this mechanism to propagate frightening messages, and the exertion of violence and brutality against innocent bystanders is an almost unrivalled method of gaining public attention.

The media play a complex role in this. No TV or radio station and no print publication can afford to ignore such an attack. Many newsrooms still operate on the maxim 'if it bleeds, it leads'. A terrorist attack is simultaneously a hot political topic focusing directly on not only local authorities, but also the government itself – to which all eyes are turned in the anticipation of action.

The media all over the world deal with terrorist attacks in different ways, depending on the moment when they take place and on the experience that a country already has in terms of terrorism. There is a very fine line between information and sensation (which is more saleable). In recent years, high competition pressure in the media market has resulted in the "brutalisation" of journalists' methods and many media sources.

The media are not only tellers of tales - recounting events with greater or lesser ideological content; they also use a large part of their space to illustrate the events with images and videos. Visual display of the scenario of a terrorist attack to the public is probably the media's

most important instrument in causing impact. These images are precisely those that most effectively summarise the events in the collective memory.

2.3.1   How the media work

Today's 'fast' media are no longer television and radio alone, but are primarily the new forms of media spawned by the Internet. After a terrorist attack, conventional media – including TV, radio and daily newspapers and their news reporters are the primary sources of reporting. Working under time pressure, they require rapid information and images to meet their editorial deadlines. Reports in weekly newspapers and news magazines follow later but are generally researched in more detail.

However, the media are no longer the only force shaping the public agenda. The Internet has become the largest pool of information, a mass of serious, credible news and information jostled by reports, comments and opinions from individuals which can be disseminated around the world unchecked in seconds.

Print media
• Reporting with time delay
• Reports, commentaries, personal opinions
• Photo reports
• Print readers' letters expressing opinions of the population

TV and radio
• Reporting immediately after the event
• Primarily factual
• Focus on images, sound, eye-witness reports
• Closely spaced updates

Online media
• Rapid, broad propagation of information at international level
• Source for other journalists and general public

TV / print magazines, special programmes, weekly newspapers
• Background reporting
• In-depth research
• TV / radio documentaries even years later

Media Landscape

Social media
• Primarily amateur sources
• Rapid propagation of amateur videos, images and eye-witness reports
• Rapid method of exchanging opinions, extensive propagation
• Mingling of facts and subjective opinion, with subjective opinion dominating
• High proportion of rumours
• Willingness to generate scandal and make rapid accusations of blame

Local media
• Focus on local connection
• Familiar with region
• Key communicator of rules of behaviour to population or other calls to action
• Use wide range of informal locally-based sources

Tabloid media
• Primarily emotional reporting
• Focus on "human story", scandal, sensation
• Focus on victims, families, eye-witnesses

Fig. 2.1 The media landscape

Reporting after a terrorist attack is not restricted to news per se, but is shaped by commentaries, eye-witness reports, comparisons of statements, human stories, background information – and often by speculation and sensation.

Media draw their information from both 'official' and informal sources. The more defensive the official information policy, the more journalists will conduct their own research and receive information from unchecked sources and from persons following their own – possibly contradictory – agenda.

Journalists process information in a different way from experts. They think from the reader's point of view, which includes the need to process facts to make them easy to understand and "saleable". As a result, experts often feel themselves to be misunderstood.
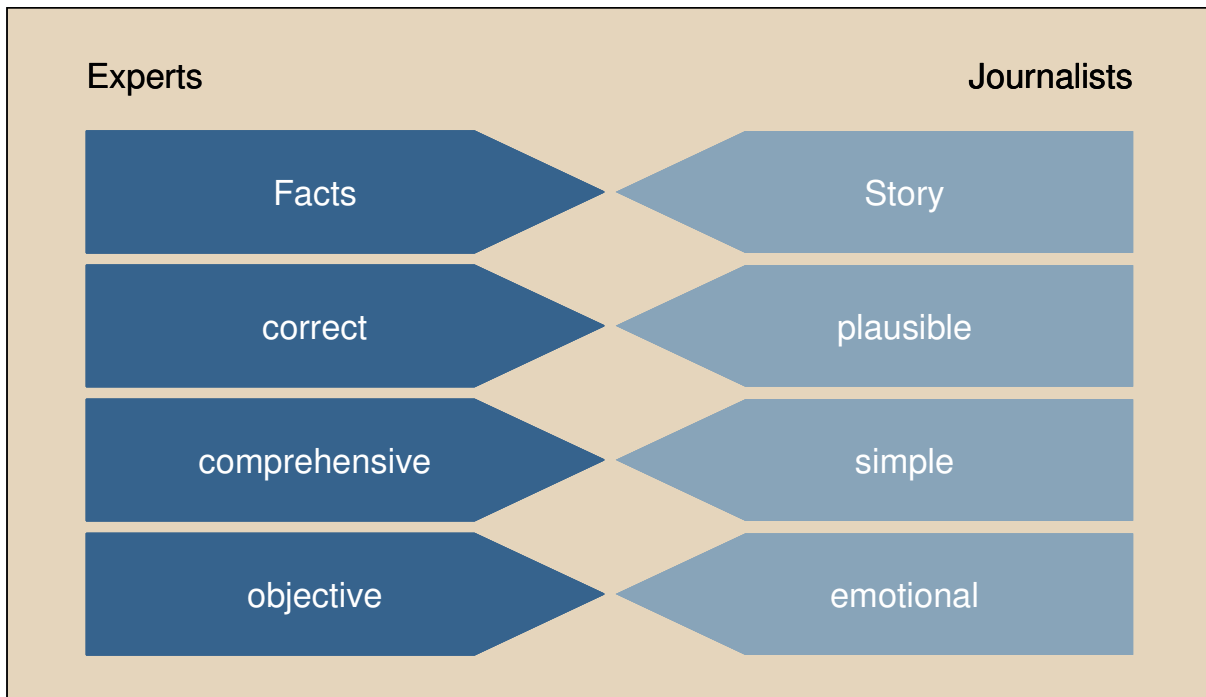
Fig. 2.2 Different points of view from journalists and experts

2.3.2   How to deal with the media

Unlike 'normal' crises, the media are not fundamentally critical of persons and institutions in responsible positions, but most certainly address them with critical attention.

All too often the media are perceived as 'opponents'. But the institutions and the media need each other, and provide mutual feedback. To ensure the government has a favourable reception in terms of communication in a crisis situation, the media must be involved on a mutual basis. If not, the media will increasingly use informal sources. In small communities, these informal sources and rumours could become critically important. Communication aimed at combating the media shock wave thrown up by a terrorist attack must note that the serious media, at least, face a critical conflict of interest – caught between their task of providing objective investigative journalism on the one hand, and the interests of the state and its institutions in minimising the public impact of the terrorist attack on the other. Strategic and intelligent treatment of this conflict of interests is an essential aspect of any preventive programme of anti-terrorist communication.

It is important to maintain a balance under media pressure. Credible information should be provided at brief intervals. It is not advisable to provide information more frequently. Confirmed information from an investigation that has been authorised for release must be communicated at the earliest opportunity. If the information is provided in later appearances, this reduces transparency of the official sources and contributes to a perception of hidden intentions.

It is advisable to end the information process at a certain point. After providing all the available information at official press conferences and after responding to the journalists'

questions, all further declarations should only happen in extraordinary circumstances. From then on, press releases will be the usual channel of communication.

Good contacts with journalists are an essential element of crisis communication management. To achieve this, contacts that may become useful in the case of terrorist attack must be established and maintained in advance. Round-table talks with journalists could be helpful in raising awareness of how to deal with terrorist attacks.

By providing more information, a wide variety of training courses and highly factual news coverage, media and authorities could contribute to lessening the impacts of terrorist attacks. The more 'ever-present' and 'normal' the risk, the higher the chances are that reactions will be more rational in the event of an attack.

2.4   Social media

Today, classic journalist-driven media compete with new forms of social media on the Internet over the status of opinion and interpretation leaders.

Social media achieve particularly high credibility in the target group of young people, where they are often perceived to be more credible than the classic media formats. But social media are no longer a domain restricted to the younger generation – the 'digital natives' - but are also used practically across the board as a source of information or platforms for opinion-building.

The Internet and social media in particular, have become an independent public space characterised by complexity, diversity, anonymity, rapidity and ephemeral. Consequently they are predestined to be hotbeds of rumours and platforms which shape public opinion.

Forms of social media on the Internet such as twitter, YouTube, blogs and forums function like a vast marketplace, where private observations, opinions and rumours expressed in words or pictures spread throughout the Web community like wildfire. The propagation of news spreads via a mechanism fuelled by internet links. These links can trigger an avalanche of rumours, scandal and escalation in Web communities. The more inadequate or inconsistent the official information provided, the broader the impact of these unofficial mechanisms. Restrictive communication policies are undermined by news, observations and comments posted by users, and social media platforms often adopt the function of news services.

In addition, extremists often shape Internet communication, particularly in times of crisis, and they are extremely prone to outrage. The main issue is not to inform the public, but to maintain solidarity among the Web community, to call for boycotts and protests. The dynamism and intensity of the Internet are dominant in shaping the progress of tides of rumours, waves of scandal and the formation of opinions.

Communication networks follow their own rules; while not everything is new, many things function in a completely different way from conventional communication networks. The classic and familiar communication or legal intervention strategies do not work in these contexts, or may even bring about the opposite effect. Crisis communication in the new forms of social media imposes new challenges of early identification, analysis, treatment, intervention and communication tools.

2.5   Target groups

In addition to press and media work, direct and targeted communication with further target groups plays a key role in mitigating the consequences of terrorist attacks. This can only be

effective if the content and measures used in communication are precisely tailored to the needs of these target groups.

2.5.1   Victims and their families

The primary need of victims and their families is support. Although they are in shock, they still need to be taken into consideration and consulted. This support should first and foremost involve psychological help and practical assistance, often organised by the crisis management team. Yet the victims and their families are the focus of public and media interest, so that they should also receive advice and assistance in dealing with journalists and possible public appearances. The decision whether they appear or speak in public must, however, be theirs and theirs alone. During funeral ceremonies it is essential to attempt to control and maintain the distance separating the journalists from the families. This is to prevent the families from feeling hounded and to prevent the media from having access to areas that are especially private.

Traditionally, the victims have not been invited to decide on the issues at hand: the kind of tribute to be held and its location, the message of condemnation to be communicated, the information or images that need to be highlighted, etc. It is increasingly realised that victims have the right to be involved in plans for public events and to take part in these events if they wish. Their wishes should always be respected. The main objective of public institutions is to protect these victims in their most intimate moments of grief and to accompany them in processes of public mourning and administrative management. The emotions and proximity of political representatives on these occasions is an element that the victims normally value as precious. The institution's communication policy should place them at the focal point of the statements. The victims should be the first ones to be highlighted in an official message.

An essential point is that the families of the victims must be informed personally as fast as possible after the attack, to avoid the danger of them finding out from news reports in the media.

2.5.2   Victims' associations

In some European countries, victims' associations have become a reference point from which to support and advise victims. These associations have become very important in the years following events, by specifically focusing the attention of the public on cases from the past.

2.5.3   The population

Institutions, communication agencies and journalists no longer have the monopoly on information. New technologies have allowed the public not only to gain access to multiple versions of reports on the same incident via the Internet, but also themselves to become a source that is capable of competing with the Government's official version.

The role that the public plays in a crisis situation such as a terrorist attack should not be undervalued. Attacks in public places in particular not only trigger shock and horror, but also incite insecurity and fears of new attacks, resulting in highly emotional reactions. The ability of the population to mobilise in response to certain events has been the most precious contribution to expanding an awareness of democratic values. However, the role of the population has also been an underestimated contribution that has actually destabilised governmental communication policy. The expressions of pacifism that are manifested on

Internet platforms, at mass rallies and public mourning rituals are an appropriate response to desolation. This emotion is felt by the group as a consequence of the incident. Governmental communication policy cannot ignore the fact that the government has a responsibility to the public in its communication policy and that it must prove to the public that it has the ability to manage the situation. The public are relatively tolerant of mistakes made, if those mistakes are accepted and rectified, but they are especially sensitive and will react negatively if they feel that they are being deceived.

'Mass rage' can become one of the most difficult problems for responsible persons to solve in a crisis situation. Human beings can be unpredictable by nature, and individuals react differently in a given situation. However the 'infection effect', which takes over in moments of extreme social tension (such as in the case of a terrorist attack), takes place in scenarios where the feelings of one person converge with the feelings of many in a single space and time. Polarisation is usually the direct consequence of this phenomenon, such as public opinion against the government, democratic society versus non-democratic society, non-Muslim citizens against the Muslim community, etc. One of the most dangerous consequences of these situations is that those involved resort may themselves to violence.

In the short term, the use of violence by a group of members of the public against another group should be counteracted as soon as possible so that this does not result in social fracture of irreparable consequences. Public institutions should be prepared to react in this type of case. Political spokespeople should also try to demonstrate exemplary attitudes by communicating messages of tolerance, democratic values and political unity to all the members of the social and political community. For example, it may be important to protect headquarters that are being attacked by the crowd and to highlight the qualities of the people that have perished despite their ideological differences, etc.

2.5.4   Political parties and other spokespeople

The control of spokespeople who do not belong to a public institution is a complex task, since it restricts freedom of speech and participation in democracy. It would be desirable if the political parties were to restrict themselves to coherent, transparent and credible speech. The emergence of contrary opinions and ideological postures by oppositional political parties should not obstruct the possibility of sharing moments of tribute and condemnation.

Later debates on the responsibility of public institutions in the management of the crisis should not take priority over the responsibility of the terrorist group members. Public institutions can and should be self-critical, in the same way as they should be when they aim to improve the management of any situation for the benefit of the public.

The phase of examination and analysis after terrorist attacks is particularly beset with controversial discussions of investigative procedures and preventive measures to protect against attacks and terrorist activities. These discussions often have the potential to spark controversial public debate over themes such as relaxation of data protection and imposition of restrictions on the public. Attacks and accusations of blame directed at the crisis management system must be anticipated. Here the aim is to use targeted communication as a means of deescalating and restoring a factual basis. In any case, this phase should start after mourning.

2.5.5   Internal communication: employees

Employees of an organisation are viewed by the public as part of the crisis management system, even if not all of them are actively involved. They have the function of disseminators and must thus be provided with specific information. Employees must be informed at regular

intervals of the status of crisis management activities and crisis communication. This should take place at the very least in parallel with communication produced for the press. Any asynchrony between public and in-house information may develop into a serious problem of communication dynamics. Codes of practice for dealing with press and public enquiries are helpful in presenting a professional image of the organisation to the outside world and providing employees with security. The prerequisite in this situation is to establish close, co-ordinated communication between national and regional authorities and the responsible members of major companies and business organisations.

2.6   Stages of communication response

Each individual terrorist attack is different, and imposes a specific set of requirements on crisis management systems. The force and duration of the shock wave triggered by an attack may vary considerably depending on the seriousness of the injuries involved, the number of fatalities, the type and extent of the damage. Current political and social situations also shape the progress of events.

Communication responses to a terrorist attack basically occur in distinct stages. The time data shall give a basic impression, but they can vary depending on each attack:

Stage 1   Confusion
(x+ 1h)   - Rumours, news alerts -

Stage 2   Rescue operations and investigations
(x+ 2-3h) - Initial information, condemnation and reports -

Stage 3   Institutional statements
(x+ 3-4h) - Reports focusing on details and eye-witness accounts -

Stage 4   Start of normalisation at the scene
(x+ 4h <) - Full media coverage focusing on damage, victims, perpetrators -

Stage 5   Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence
(x+ 1d <)   - High media coverage: "human story", backgrounds, crisis management -

Stage 6   Lessons learned and return to normality
(x+ 3d <)   - Declining media interest focusing on impacts and backgrounds -

Fig. 2.3 The six stages of communication response

The first day (stages 1 – 4) is taken up by collecting initial information on the actual attack, what happened where and when, who got hurt and what damage was done to facilities. The media interest is very strong, with hundreds of calls and e-mails directed at the communications staff. Media inquiries concentrate on the circumstances of the attack itself.

Stage 1 – Confusion

In the first hour after a terrorist attack, confusion prevails. The first rumours about a possible attack spread. The exact situation is unknown, and the first information coming in

generally stems from either the police or the emergency services. They have to act with great caution, a requirement which protracts the flow of information on the incident. A prime task is to inform the families as soon as possible and try to make sure they receive the information from a public institution first.

Public pressure is high. The media interrupt their scheduled programmes and want to broadcast confirmed facts. It is imperative at this moment to act with caution, prudence, and responsibility, to confirm only those facts that are watertight, and to disclaim rumours and wrong information - albeit without interfering with the work of the media. The message should signal calmness.

Media representatives are ready to approach any person or organisation involved. The journalists' main sources of information are frequently 'first responders' such as individual police officers, fire-fighters or members of the emergency services whom the journalists know from previous reports. It is therefore crucially important that all information is transmitted through one single channel and that every person involved knows to whom the information must be forwarded.

Stage 2 – Rescue operations and investigations

The following 2 to 3 hours. This is the stage in which the work of the emergency services and the investigations of the police are crucial. It is important not to disturb the work of these professionals, and to let them do their job. If possible, political office-holders should be kept away from the scene until the end of this stage.

Two types of information are generated at this stage: first, information directly related to the incident, and second, statements of condemnation by various political institutions.

TV and radio stations and online media broadcast pictures from the scene, facts and initial information about events.

Stage 3 – Institutional statements

3rd or 4th hour after the attack. Usually at this stage, a large number of official statements at all levels are disseminated and covered by the media. The media themselves ask for this kind of communiqué.

TV and radio stations and online media reports spread more and more details about the attack and the victims, adding photos or footage from the scene and eyewitness accounts. Public interest grows at national and international level.

Stage 4 – Start of normalisation at the scene

From the 4th or 5th hour onwards – up to the few days after the attack. At this stage the process of normalisation at the scene starts. Depending on the level of the atrocity this process of normalisation may take much longer. This is the stage when the local council or responsible authority has a major role to play, as its duties include cleaning up the scene.

Stage 5 – Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence

Up to 3 days after the attack. The next morning after the attack, the print media publishes widespread reports - a summary of the first day. The media attention in the days following the attack is still high, however it moves from details of the actual attack to its effects. Questions might be asked in relation to the assistance provided to victims, security measures, closing of businesses or staff evacuation, future official operations both in that location and in the region as a whole, financial losses and long-term effects on communities

and business. The victims' issue becomes a 'human touch' story as the media focus on a small number of individuals with interesting backgrounds or rescues.

During the stage of recovery, the responsible communications team has the ear of the media and can concentrate on rebuilding confidence. Messages communicated include, "We are back to business and will not allow terrorists to rule over us. We are doing our best for the victims and their families. We had security arrangements in place but nobody could have foreseen/prevented this."

The stage of confidence communication is also the time for statements regarding victims' welfare and commemoration of casualties. The communication staff have a limited media window in which to announce the establishment of relief funds, memorial services, victim family support and other activities designed to help those hurt in the attack.

The timing and meaning of funerals can vary across cultures. Funerals are an important and emotional act which will be carefully watched by the public. However, they also have a symbolic function of closing a first chapter after the attack.

Stage 6 - Lessons learned and return to normality

From day 4 after the attack and later. At this stage, international news media interest declines significantly and the story returns to being mainly a national or even local media story. Media interest becomes more investigative and focuses on issues such as '"What are you doing now to prevent such a disaster in the future? What lessons have been learned and how will they be implemented? What are you doing for the victims, their families and for the affected community at large? Are further attacks likely?"

The public often expects a certain 'lesson' to be learned from such terrorist attacks. Official messages can now concentrate on announcing improvements, lessons and implementation of new measures and ways in which such future tragedies could be better prevented. The final crisis message is that of a return to normality. The return-to-normality message also affects citizens, workers and businesses. If made too early, it can be perceived as callous or ignoring the victims. Such a message should therefore ideally come after a memorial service or similar event which signals the closing of a chapter regarding the terrorist attack.

Special features of cases of kidnapping and hostage-taking

The stages of response listed above may vary in cases of kidnapping or hostage-taking. In general, the durations of stages 5 and 6 are longer as kidnapping or hostage-taking is a longer-term process. News updates are ongoing as the terrorist group issues demands or statements, perhaps on the Internet or in the media, or as new information comes in from investigations. The event generates a succession of peaks in media and public attention.

In addition, the longer duration of cases of kidnapping or hostage-taking offers more extended time and space for discussions, political statements and speculations. Crisis management moves into the focus of public attention and is monitored critically. Accusations of blame are often directed at the persons responsible for taking action.

3   **Counter-strategies**

The most effective strategy against the consequences of terrorist attacks is preparation. Preparation means the establishment of fundamental principles of organisation – but also the awareness that destruction is caused not only by the acts of violence themselves, but also by their communication impact. They trigger not only shock and horror, but also an ongoing insecurity among the population and loss of confidence in both the persons responsible for taking action and the democratic system itself. Public security and order are thus undermined, and the effect may be amplified by panic and chaos, poor co-ordination and uncertain or irrational behaviour on the part of the persons responsible for taking action.

Given this, the fundamental strategy must focus on restoring security as soon as possible and resuming daily life. This can be achieved most successfully by calmly competent, yet sensitive and trust-building behaviour by the persons responsible. Anything which helps to curtail insecurity and fear is also a contribution towards mitigating the intended consequences of an attack.

Each attack is different; each country, each state and each city has its own special features. There is thus no 'one size fits all' solution or simple recipe for success in designing a communication strategy. However, there are some basic principles which apply today to all countries:

- Rapid restoration of confidence and security;

- Transparent, trust-building information policy;

- Calmly competent, yet sensitive treatment of all those directly and indirectly involved;

- Leadership with integrity and credibility;

- Decisiveness of action.

An integral element of the fight against terrorism is an open, effective communication strategy. The challenge is to demonstrate strength and certainty and to instil confidence in the population.

The common strategies of the past, involving total silence or control of the media, are no longer viable: freedom of the press is one of the major pillars of democracy, and given the competition which exists among the media and the Internet it is impossible to suppress or control news. Censorship and manipulation are rapidly uncovered, resulting in deep-seated loss of trust and credibility. If the media do not spread reports, individuals step up to fulfil this role. Public institutions and the media now share communication spaces with the population. A third and highly unpredictable factor in communication are the social networks which operate via the Internet. The authorities that are responsible for managing the crisis can do little or nothing to remove this new actor from the scene. They can only maintain a prudent and transparent communication policy.

A far more effective strategy is not to work against the media and the public but to view them as partners and meet them openly. Although it is not possible to suppress the images of horror, they can gradually be replaced by positive messages of confidence.

The primary aim is to establish and communicate trust. The core message must be "We will not allow terrorists to spread fear and horror and gain the upper hand". The second message must be, "We know what we are doing", showing decisiveness of action and thus moral, religious and social strength. The third message must be addressed to the victims, that they will achieve all the support that they need.

The victims of terrorist attacks and their families must be treated with attention, sympathy and respect. Focusing on them without leaving them stranded and condemning the

perpetrators are not only actions of humanity and decency: they also reveal the inhumanity of terrorist groups and underpin the moral condemnation of these groups.

A further positive factor can be a credible leadership personality with visible integrity. It is still a valid phenomenon that strong individual personalities will have a more powerful impact on people than a group or organisation will. The factors of success here are honesty, decisiveness of action, respect, trust and strong leadership.

In a sense, the saying "do good and tell the world" can also be applied to crisis communication. Crisis management must be addressed in communication and must continuously deliver new and positive messages. The aim is to highlight the actions performed by those in responsible positions to protect the population and restore order. This is a vital factor in making the shock wave after a terrorist attack ebb away. If mistakes occur, it is better to admit them and explain why they happened and what remedial actions are being taken than it is to clam up or play them down. It has been proved on many occasions that an open, honest approach to mistakes is a more effective way to create confidence than trying to hush them up.

4 Crisis communication management

Crisis communication management in the event of a terrorist attack involves:

- Acting extremely fast under enormous time pressure;
- Managing the situation with available resources and under high pressure;
- Making key decisions, often on the basis of inadequate or confusing information;
- Maintaining a rational and strategic approach while being bombarded with emotional reactions, fear and grief:
- Dealing with public discussions, accusations of blame and criticism of one's own actions.

Authorities should be the official sources that inform the public, in good time, of the events that have occurred during the terrorist attack and of the results of the investigations that are being conducted. They should also be able to communicate messages of condemnation and compassion that the tragedy has occurred. The Government has an obligation to keep in touch with public opinion. They need to provide information and enhance the perception of credibility for themselves, even if public opinion does not agree with the Government's decisions. An appropriate institutional communication policy is the key element to managing a crisis.

It is therefore all the more important to manage and implement communication with the same degree of professionalism as the emergency rescue forces bring to their work.

4.1 Crisis communication organisation

Effective crisis communication management is based on solid organisation which 'takes the strain' for the persons responsible for taking action, allowing them to concentrate on the demands of the situation without wasting energy on organisational concerns.

To maximise the effectiveness of actions, the key basic elements such as crisis teams and individual processes for working in a crisis must be established and defined both within individual institutions or organisations and between the responsible persons involved. Smaller organisations and authorities should take advance precautions to ensure that in the event of an incident they have adequate staff for crisis communication, perhaps by taking over staff from other departments or from external institutions and companies (see part 2 section 6).

4.1.1 Co-ordination of communication

Close co-ordination both in crisis management and in crisis communication between the authorities involved is essential to:

- Ensure continuous flow of information. Everyone involved must have the same level of knowledge to make the right decisions.
- Guarantee smooth processes in which the division of responsibilities between the organisations is clearly defined and known to all those involved.

- 'Speak with a single voice' to avoid discrepancies and contradictory statements and avoid loss of credibility.

- Appear as a single unit, to generate confidence and trust.

Crisis management and procedures need to be simple and transparent. Responsibilities and tasks should clearly established – before an attack occurs. In the event of a terrorist attack, a multitude of rescue organisations, local, regional and national authorities, national crisis committees, hospitals, security forces and sometimes private companies are involved in crisis management. In addition, co-ordination of communication among the various institutions and organisations is essential to avoid confusion and contradictory information.

Previous experience in other types of crisis, not necessarily terrorism, and the experience gained from emergency drills can be garnered to create an environment where relationships are more familiar. Local institutions are usually responsible for emergency services and assistance to victims; regional institutions are usually responsible for health care; government institutions are usually responsible for the security forces, etc. It is not unusual to manage crises within a delicate structure of relationships between institutions. Collaboration and co-ordination among services should prevail over corporatism.

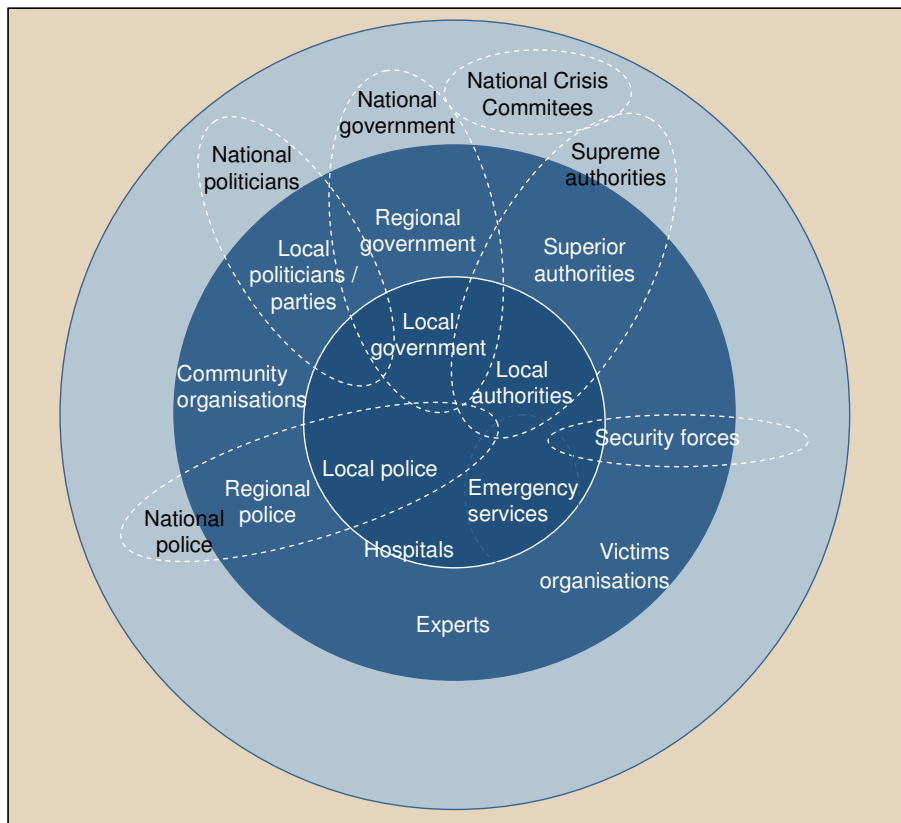Fig. 4.1: Authorities and organisations that could be involved in crisis management

Who takes the lead?

First it is important to clarify who is in charge of crisis communication and who will take the lead:

- Governmental departments and security forces are always involved. In some European countries they will have exclusive leadership of crisis communication in the event of a terrorist attack.

- In other countries, leadership rests with local authorities such as city halls or regional governments.
- If a private company is affected, its paths of communication will include its employees and clients, but also the media and other stakeholders.

All communication activities such as communication strategy, action plans and messages must be co-ordinated with, and approved by the crisis management teams.

Consistent information flow

In a crisis it is vital to provide information rapidly. In order to achieve this it is helpful to agree on co-ordination processes and information flows between the leading communication team, the crisis management team, internal departments and any other institutions involved.

For example it is necessary to:

- Define co-ordinating officers in your team;
- Define channels (e.g. telephone calls) and cycles of information flow – or establish a shared information channel;
- Add the other institutions or departments to your information contact lists and vice versa.

To ensure the right information is available at all times, it is presumed that decisions and statements must be made and issued without adequate information, especially in the first few hours after the event.

4.1.2 The crisis communication team

The crisis communication team is responsible for all communication activities.

The **core team** should consist of the

- **Crisis Manager:** who holds the leadership function and is responsible for taking all necessary decisions. The Crisis Manager is also a member of the crisis management team with responsibility for overseeing co-ordination of all activities.
- **Crisis Co-ordinator:** responsible for co-ordination and the correct flow of information. The primary contact point for interchange of information with other departments or teams, and assesses the situation. Also responsible for preparing the action plan, statements and wordings.
- **Authorised Spokesperson:** makes official statements and answers media questions. Only authorised spokespersons should give statements or interviews to the media.
- **Crisis Team Assistant:** is responsible for organisational tasks, e.g. distribution lists and channels such as internet, telephone, e-mail, hotline.

Extended team

- The crisis communication team could also be extended by adding other members of the crisis management team and experts who may serve as advisors for professional details. They could include technicians, doctors, psychologists and security and traffic professionals.

Support team

Public attention is usually extremely high, with hundreds of requests coming in by phone, fax and e-mail. Answering all the requests from media and other stakeholders is too much work for a single member of staff. To deal with this, it is necessary to build a support team made up of internal or external personnel that:

- Support the crisis co-ordinator by developing action plans or phrasing statements and Q&As;

- Collect questions from journalists;

- Co-ordinate interview requests with spokespersons;

- Answer media requests with approved standard information (by phone or by sending press releases);

- Update website information;

- Brief the hotline.

The support team should also be extended to include computer specialists and technicians who assure the functions of all technical communication equipment and internet access (see section 6.2).

The support team reports to the core team and has to assure a continuous flow of information.
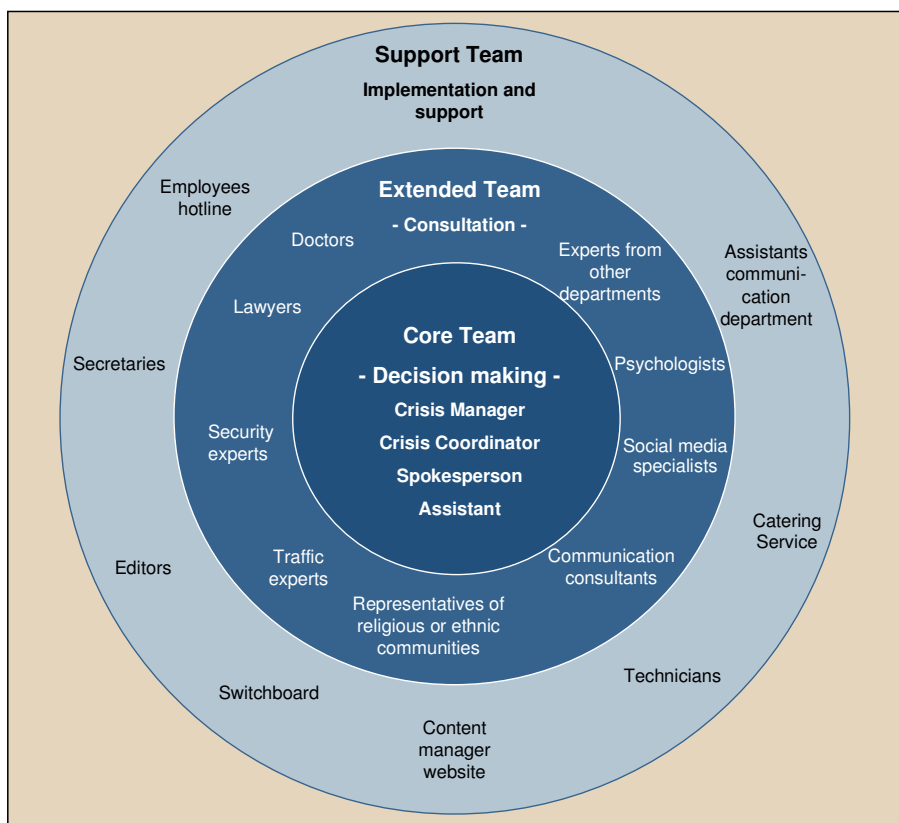

Fig. 4.2: Possible structure of a crisis communication team

4.1.3 Spokespersons

The spokesperson is the public face of crisis management operations, and has a prominent role. Spokespersons are usually political representatives or the heads of the organisations or companies impacted by the attack. Spokespersons should rapidly establish themselves as authoritative sources and take the initiative in their appearances, providing information and communicating messages of condemnation to reinforce their transparency and credibility.

Persons responsible for communicating the official version of the events should be identified promptly by the population and the media. The population needs a leader to provide information on events and to recommend actions (donating blood, staying calm, avoiding travelling in certain areas of the city, attending convened rallies, etc.). If this does not happen in the vital initial moments, an obvious result is that a delay occurs in the leadership and decision-making process. Political representatives are aware that taking the lead in a crisis with an uncertain outcome may damage their images and their political careers. For this reason we may see delayed leadership.

Statements from outside the institutional network may be made that contradict or damage the stance of the official spokesperson. When this happens, the official spokespeople should be in a position to reconfirm the statement to restore their authority and credibility. Essential factors in this are not only implementation of an effective communication policy, but also the ability to communicate and provide a prompt response to immediate issues raised by the public's spokespeople or by journalists.

The spokesperson should immediately appear at the scene to give initial responses to the media. If the spokesperson is missing, another person from the group of 'first responders' often unintentionally becomes the 'face' of crisis management after appearing in interviews.

4.2   Crisis communication

4.2.1   Key principles in a crisis

Four simple key principles apply in crisis communication:

- **Act fast:** An essential element is rapid flow of information at both internal and external level, with the goal of bridging the initial phase in which the cause of the attack is generally still under investigation.

- **Keep it short and simple:** Information should be communicated in short, clear sentences. Complex issues should be described in easily visualised terms or simplified in everyday language.

- **Speak with one voice:** Credibility can only be generated when all spokespersons make consistent statements.

- **Tell only the truth:** Only facts reflecting the truth should be communicated. Even if not all the facts have been determined, false information or speculation should be avoided at all costs.

4.2.2   Situation analysis

The basis and key management tool for all communication actions is an in-depth analysis of the situation and the issues at stake. This analysis is the foundation of the communication strategy, action plan and communication content. Make sure that all the important information is gathered in relation to the facts of the matter and the stakeholders involved in the crisis

A situation analysis is an ongoing process, in which information must be updated and evaluated at regular intervals while communication actions and content are aligned to the new events if necessary.

The main questions of the situation analysis:

- What has happened?

- What are the issues?

- How many people have been injured / killed?

- What damage has been caused?

- What are the effects of the attack on the population?

- Is there still a security risk for the population? Should people be informed about special rules of behaviour or actions (e.g. donating blood, security measures, traffic)?

- What are crisis managers, security or emergency forces doing?

- Who are the potential players that will also be involved in communication, and with whom should communication be co-ordinated?

- Who are the target groups? First of all: families of the victims, the media, the population. Do other authorities, hospitals, politicians or organisations need to be informed? What do your employees / colleagues need to know?

In the hours immediately after an attack, an incomplete picture of facts and information is inevitable. However, even in this situation it is important to be in a position to make statements without spreading incorrect information that would later have to be qualified or retracted.

4.2.3   Monitoring

Systematic monitoring is the basic instrument for communication. Monitoring is a continuous process to ensure that the team knows what the media is reporting, which new issues are cropping up, or which questions are being asked by journalists, victims or their families, colleagues, the population, the authorities and politicians.

Monitoring should start immediately after the attack.

The following should be monitored:

- Media reports at international, national and local level, both online and print editions, plus TV and radio broadcasts;

- Social networking sites (e.g. Twitter and YouTube), especially pictures and mobile phone videos;

- Activities by interest groups such as NGOs, political activists, citizens' and victims' associations;

- Enquiries and reactions by members of the population;

- Reactions from ministers and opinion-shapers;

- Feedback from staff at the authorities and institutions involved;

- Communication activities of perpetrators and their supporters / apologists.

After collecting all important information, monitoring results are analysed and classified according to their negative, neutral or positive tone. They are also assessed according to their communicative impact on their impact on future crisis communication. This analysis is incorporated into the regular situation analysis.
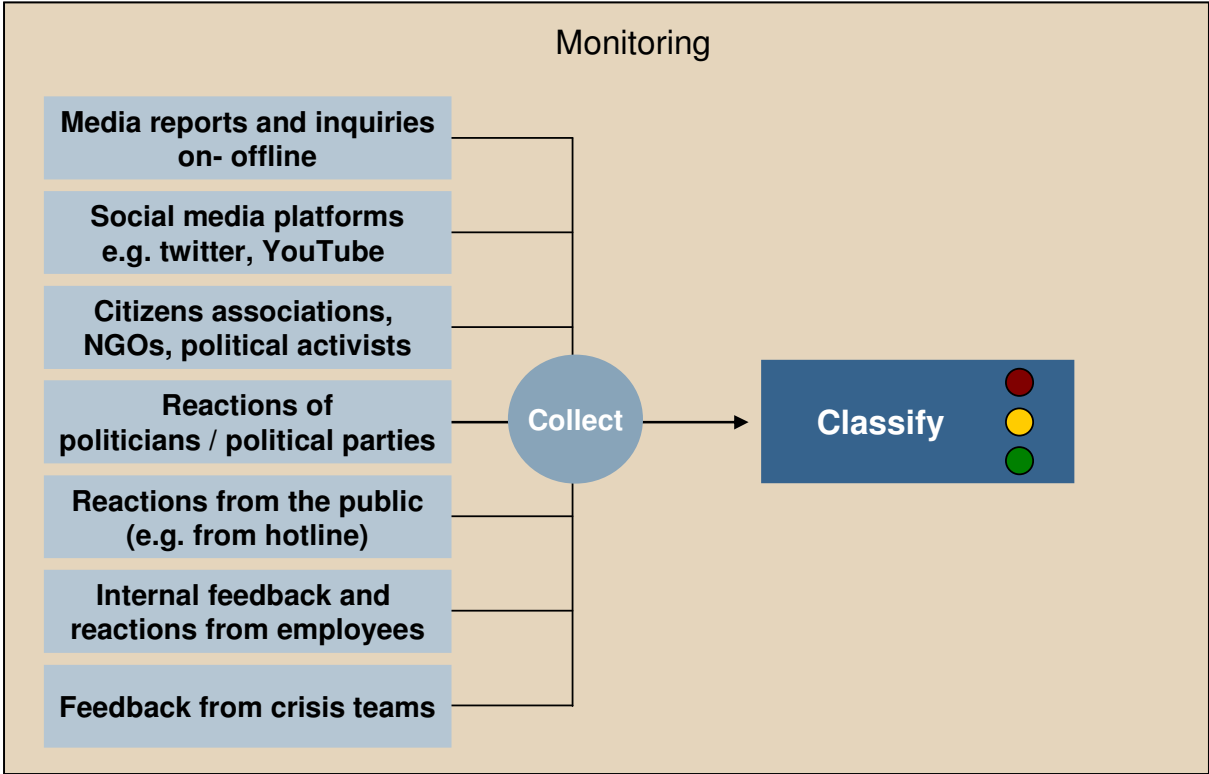
Monitoring

| Media reports and inquiries on- offline |
| Social media platforms e.g. twitter, YouTube |
| Citizens associations, NGOs, political activists |
| Reactions of politicians / political parties | → Collect → | **Classify** ● ● ● |
| Reactions from the public (e.g. from hotline) |
| Internal feedback and reactions from employees |
| Feedback from crisis teams |

Fig. 4.3 Schematic diagram of a monitoring system

4.2.4   Behavioural rules

Victims, members of the population, emergency forces and the organisation's own team are all in a greater or lesser state of shock. It is essential to act with expertise and tact – objectively, but with sympathy and respect, particularly for the victims and their families, but also for others involved. The cultural aspects of the country in question must also be considered – specifically with respect to treatment of those involved, but also in communication as a whole.

It is important to take the need for information by the population and the media seriously. However it is also important to strike a balance between the confidentiality required by the investigations and the need to inform the public.

Public accusations of blame directed at the crisis management team should be treated in a factual way designed to de-escalate the situation. Squabbling over roles and responsibilities on the parts of the institutions involved or public criticism of an organisation involved are inappropriate in this situation, and undermine confidence and trust in the competence of the crisis management team.

A requirement which according to available scientific analyses is not always carried out satisfactorily is that the psychological expert appraisals and recommended rules of behaviour which are part of many crisis and emergency plans and scenarios should be translated into supporting communication which provides assistance to the persons responsible for taking action.

4.2.5 Content of communication

The media demand immediate information and figures that may simply be unknown to the investigators. If facts are unknown, no information should be provided even when the media applies pressure. To avoid further pressure from the media, hypotheses and data that have not been verified should not be provided. In this case, it is useful to issue an on-hold statement (see section 4.2.6). An investigation can be a long-drawn-out process and sensitive information should not be provided if it could damage the investigation.

It is important to differentiate between:

- Descriptive information of the events that have occurred;

- Political assessments focusing on condemnation of the events;

- Party-political opinion on issues such as an assessment of how the competent institutions have managed the crisis, or necessary actions to be taken in fighting terrorism.

Each message has its originator, and each message has its moment to be released - and these should not be confused. Debates and political opinions should be expressed in areas and at times that are appropriate. During the first days, management of communication should be kept as ideologically neutral as possible, to facilitate an image of consensus and unity among the politicians. These are moments of grief and emotion that should not be motivated by party-political issues.

Official declarations held during the first few hours and days after an attack should prioritise the victims. The values of the individuals and families involved should have priority over political or professional interests. The victim is, above all, a human being and a member of the population. A terrorist attack is an attack on human rights. All political parties should show unity in the crisis scenario in condemning the attack and refraining from airing differences between political parties that could cause confrontation.

Message content

All statements and comments should be kept in an appropriately factual and extremely clear style. In particular, terms used to describe events or perpetrators should be selected with care and caution. While clear condemnation is appropriate, an emotional or political rallying-cry should be considered very carefully. Once used, a term or phrase is difficult to retract and will determine the later course of communication.

The selection of words must bear in mind the social and cultural context, the form in which a statement is made to a particular target group and the expectations involved. Certain messages with the same informative content may be perceived in very different ways. Identical information can be expressed in such different ways that it may appear positive in one context and negative in another - the best-known example being the glass which is half-full or half-empty. Especially after such a tragic event as a terrorist attack, the psychological impact of the words used and statements made must be taken into consideration.

Images

"A picture says more than a thousand words." Pictures impress themselves on the memory and convey messages far more powerfully than words. However, in an act of violence the key question is what to show and what not to show: to show blood, or opt for less direct

captions that give an idea of the events but do not display the most intimate side of the victims.

The selection of images published by the press in order to present the consequences of a terrorist attack depend on factors including the historical moment, the experience of the country in question with respect to terrorism, the informal negotiations between the media and the political institutions, and the particular image that each media company wishes to capture for that moment. To provide the press directly with photographs and recordings could be a way to influence the publication of images. However, these items need to be attractive to the media, yet not harrowing. The press is not the only form of media to publish images. The revolution caused by new technologies has now made it possible for all individuals to disseminate images that they have captured themselves,

Symbols

Non-verbal communication can play just as important a role as written and verbal messages. National or cultural symbols have special significance here. They have the ability to strengthen identity and generate solidarity to encourage proper conduct, order and confidence. Symbols may be cultural emblems such as flags, logos, places or buildings, or events and performances such as rituals of mourning, candlelit demonstrations, wreath-laying ceremonies, memorial processions etc. However, in order to maximise their full impact the use of symbols must be carefully selected and be clearly appropriate to the culture and situation.

4.2.6 One-voice communication

Co-ordination among different institutions involved in crisis management also includes co-ordination of information that is going to be provided as official information. A streamlined 'one-voice strategy' is an essential basis for the credibility of the persons responsible for taking action. Contradictory statements make an unreliable impression, eroding credibility and causing doubts to arise over the professionalism and decisiveness of the authorities. In the worst case, they may cause the situation to escalate out of control. It is equally essential for all persons involved to maintain strict confidentiality and avoid escalation by refraining from communicating any further facts or opinions. Propagation of unconfirmed partial information and suppositions bring with them the likelihood of uncontrolled communication in the form of rumours. These generally lead to escalation which is difficult to control.

To avoid this, a set of content guidelines must be produced for all aspects of communication and they must be regularly updated. The guidelines must be checked and co-ordinated with the persons and institutions responsible and issued to all spokespersons as binding rules for communication.

- **Core messages** are short, precise sentences that clearly explain the events, the action taken in response and the attitude of the spokesperson issuing the message. They form the basis of all other communication content.

- **Q&A / wording guidelines:** A Q&A list is the basis of content for all communication. We recommend drawing up a master Q&A list of all questions for all target groups and all subjects. Extracts from this list can be used for individual communication functions, e.g. hotline staff.

- **Background information** serves as a key research tool for journalists. Information is edited and made available on a website or as a press pack. By providing their own information, organisations or authorities can prevent wrong information from being used in journalists' research.

4.2.7 Communication tools

On-hold statement

An on-hold statement is primarily used in the initial stages when the facts of the situation are still unclear. An initial statement should communicate any facts that have been confirmed but must not speculate about unconfirmed details. It is completely legitimate to report that not all facts are available, and this can be expressed in so many words: "We are currently investigating / examining this." At the same time, the statement announces the intention of informing the media and the public as soon as new information is available. In addition, on-hold statements contain information on actions taken by the crisis management team and, if applicable, for the protection of the population. On-hold statements can also be issued to the press in writing, as initial press releases.

Press information

Press information is used when more detailed information is available. In addition, to information on the type of attack, the damage and the actions taken by the crisis management team, they may include quotes from the persons responsible for taking action.

Press conference

Press conferences are particularly important for TV and radio, since broadcasting stations use TV images and original sound or may even broadcast the whole conference. Before a press conference is held, comprehensive information should be available to ensure that any follow-up questions can be answered. The decision to call a press conference should be made with the awareness that the event has a special impact; it is the stage where the responsible persons give answers, show presence and face up to critical questioning.

Statements and interviews

There are two basic types of interviews: the classic interview in which spokespersons field questions from journalists, and an interview in which brief statements are made. Statements should primarily be used in the initial phase before the facts are confirmed.

Background talks

Background talks offer the opportunity to clarify complex facts and classify methods of action. They are best suited for the phase of analysis and examination, in which events are evaluated.

Individual meetings and letters

Communication with victims and their families should primarily take place at a personal level, thus in the form of individual meetings and, where applicable, personalised letters.

Hotline

A hotline is the most important tool for direct communication with the population. Existing help lines can be used. The finalised Q&A list serves as the basis for answering enquiries. The hotline also provides important information for communication management, since it gives a clear picture of the population's information needs.

Website or dark site

The Internet is the predominant tool used by the population and media in research. All relevant information must be posed immediately on the website of the institution in question or on a 'dark site' – a pre-prepared crisis website - and updated regularly. Important content are:

- Up-to-date information on the facts of the situation;
- The main issues from the Q&A list (including continuous updating);
- All relevant contact details;
- If applicable, a video message to the population;
- A press area containing all press information and pictures.

All communication, from press information to hotline staff, must refer to the website. Targeted registration of key words with search engines is essential to ensure the website can be located on the Internet and is posted among the first hits of a search.

(How to prepare a dark site see section 6.3)

Flyers

Flyers are fast methods of communication for important messages to the population– e.g. where specific rules of behaviour with respect to the place of attack must be communicated to all households and businesses in the vicinity.

4.2.8 Technical aspects of crisis communication management

One of the most important tasks is to ensure the crisis communication team can be reached by journalists and the general public. In the first stages hundreds of calls, e-mails and faxes will flood in. Sufficient technical preparation is required to manage this and the necessary service technicians must be available at all times. Key infrastructure includes:

- Adequate numbers of telephone lines and staff to man the hotline;
- Recording of on-hold messages;
- Press hotline with separate number and sufficient telephone lines;
- Central e-mail account for press enquiries, to which the entire communication team has access;

- Rapid access to the website to update information at regular intervals and contingency plans for extended website access capacity;

- Mobile phones, spare batteries, chargers;

- Laptops with WLAN access;

- Badges or clothes to identify members of the crisis communication team at the location of the attack.

4.2.9 At the scene

The fact that spokespeople have to travel to a scene makes it necessary to allocate a building or area in which to hold the statements and press conferences. Journalists demand strategic locations that capture the scene in the background. This can only be achieved if it does not highlight harrowing scenes or images that invade people's privacy. For this reason, press premises should be set up at a neutral location (e.g. a hotel, nearby public building or marquee).

Furthermore, the official spokesperson's escorts should be limited. There are differing opinions with regard to this issue: for some, it is important that a politician is supported by the people responsible for the emergency and police services, and for others the politician alone is sufficient to satisfy the objective of communication.

On-the-spot presence may also involve danger for the crisis communication team, depending on the type of attack and the type and extent of the damage. For this reason, where possible any necessary security and safety measures should be discussed with the crisis management team members involved and must be followed.

The victims need to be protected from the camera lens as much as possible. Physical barriers, cordons of police and sheets are some of the resources used to avoid showing the dead. Open and vertical scenarios make this task very difficult.

Civilians want to help as a goodwill gesture, but instead may hinder the performance of the emergency services. Civilians can even place other people at risk. Therefore, the public have to be educated to understand that they should not get involved in a rescue operation unless they are asked to do so.

4.2.10 Social media strategy

To be able to respond rapidly, key forms of social media must be identified in advance and – particularly after an attack – must be continuously monitored and incorporated into situation analyses. Monitoring should focus not on the information, but on observing and evaluating opinions.

Monitoring tools from service providers may be helpful in identifying the platforms and collecting the themes and issues in social media. However, these results only form the basis of qualitative analysis, which must focus on the impact on opinion-building among the relevant stakeholders.
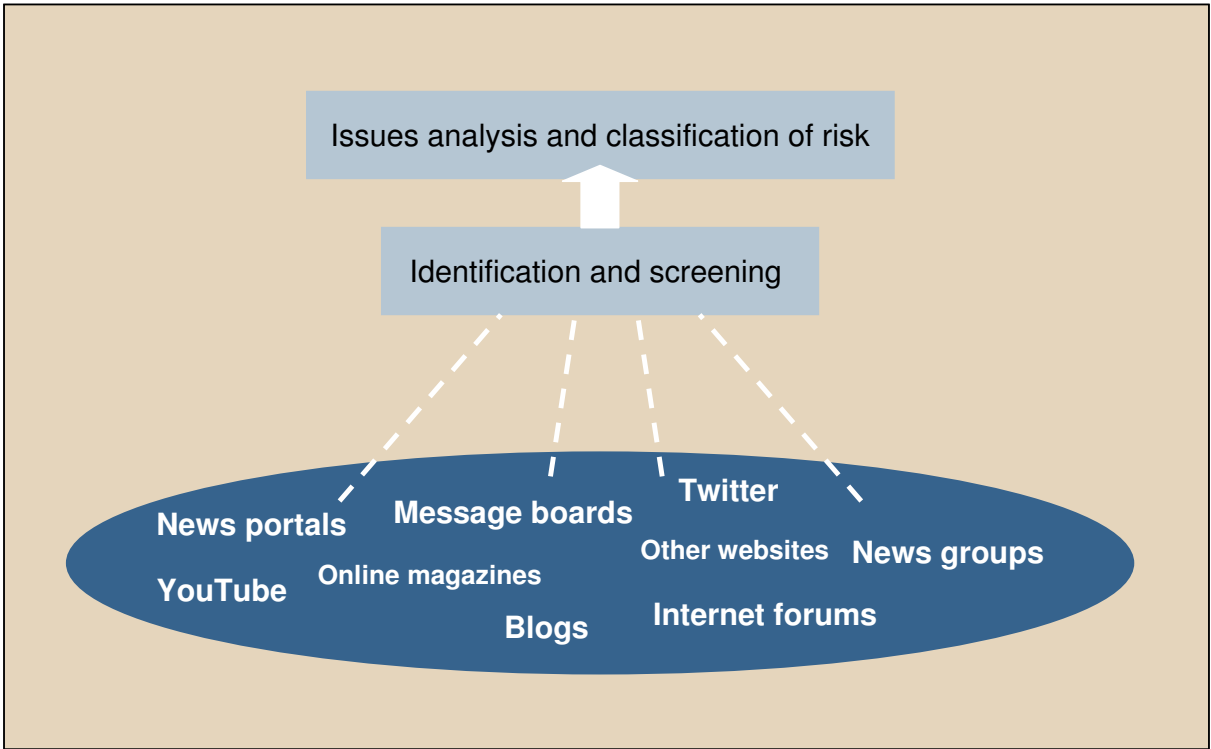

Fig. 4.4: Social web monitoring

Communication in social media communities may be assisted by support from experts who operate authentically within the social Web. They can target specific areas of content as active observers, both monitoring and evaluating the dynamics of debate, and also by cautiously participating in discussions. It is important that classic communication activities are very closely linked to the monitoring or communication of the social Web. Journalists use social media as a source – and vice versa, users also use other media sources.

It is crucial that all the communication messages and content reach the social media communities. The basic aim is to feed online channels, such as individual websites or online newspapers and news portals, with press releases and information for the public. The spread of messages can be assured by using e.g. AdWords campaigns, with specific terms entered in search engines and returned at the top of search results. Also, actively spreading messages from own accounts at e.g. Twitter or Facebook is important. Establishment or activation of these accounts cannot be postponed until an ad-hoc crisis occurs after a terrorist attack. Communication in social media channels must be a part of the complete 'normal' communication strategy if it is to reach acceptance within these communities.

Classic legal and communication intervention strategies have little impact on the social Web and may even add to escalation. Participation in or use of social media platforms, e.g. local or memorial platforms, may be meaningful. However, this should be undertaken with careful attention and only after a detailed analysis of the situation. Involvement is also dependent on the levels of concern, relevance and effectiveness and on how far the stakeholders could be reached through other communication channels.

However, it is important to know the basic rules of social media:

- **Transparency:** appear with a clear, unambiguous signature, take up clear positions.

- **Authenticity:** credible, clear and succinctly worded opinions and arguments, no fawning and no undercover activities.

- **Continuity:** stay on the ball and become an integral part of the debate, no gung-ho activities.

- **Speed:** immediate response.

Given the popularity of social media sites, it is important that authorities and institutions produce guidelines which inform employees and colleagues about their appropriate use. Guidance is especially important in crisis situations. Today many people communicate using social media platforms; however, not everyone has the sensitivity to identify what should be made public and what not.

The process of communication in social networks will always be difficult to control. However, these forms of media can no longer be ignored. As a result, social media strategies and the required expertise are now unavoidable elements of modern crisis management.

5   Action plans

The preceding sections describe the specific needs and requirements of communication response after terrorist attacks. The following schematic action plans summarise these needs and show possible actions.

The diagrams are developed as a helpful tool for the crisis team to achieve a fast overview of what to do. Together with the checklists at part 3, section 10; they build the basis of a crisis communication plan.

However, every terrorist attack is different. Therefore, the diagrams are only a template. Concrete, individual action plans must be developed for the specific crisis team and the local situation.

5.1   The first steps

When a terrorist attack occurs, the first steps should be activating the prepared crisis team. This team should analyse the situation and organise the first crisis communication actions.
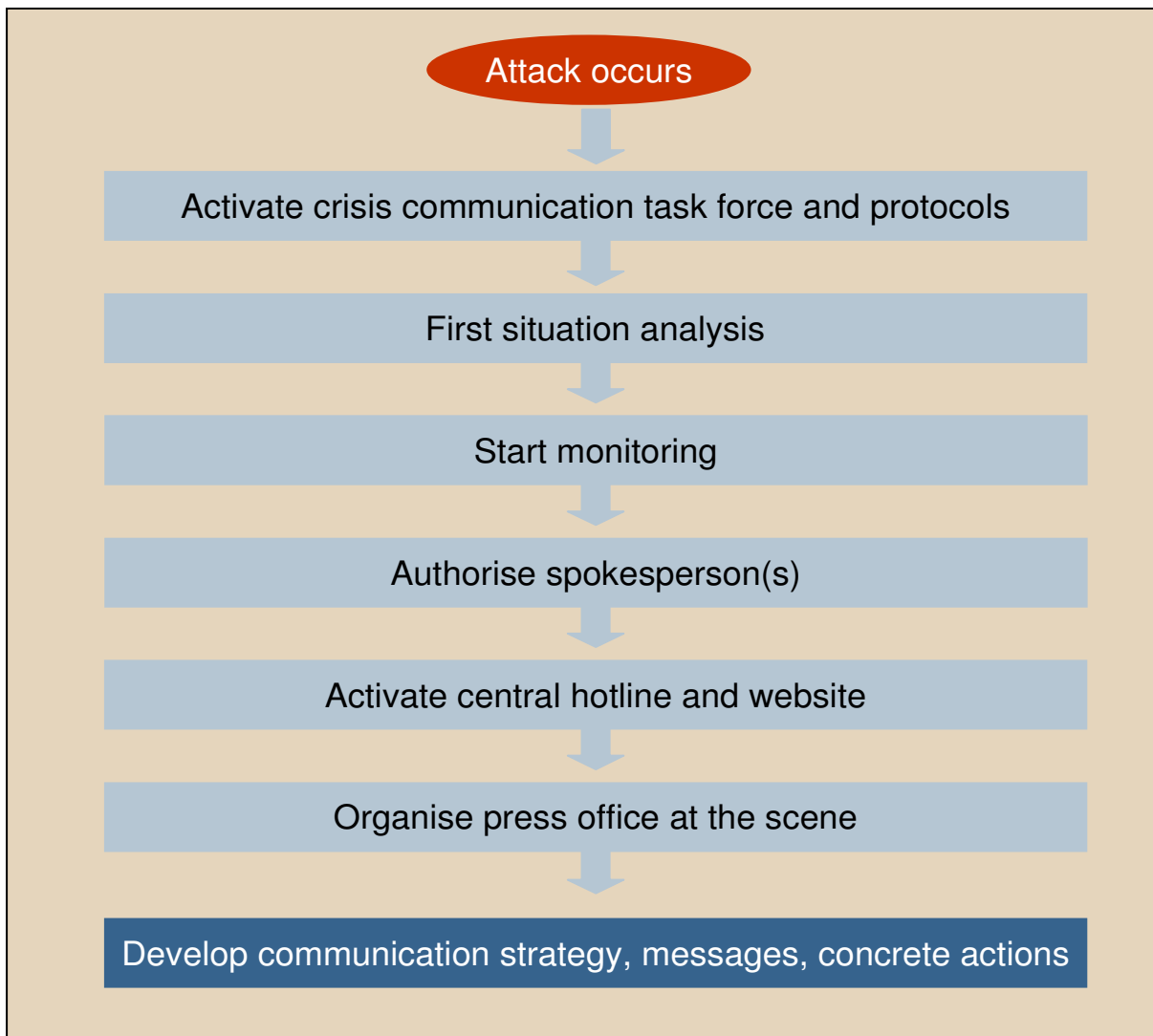

Fig. 5.1 The first steps

5.2 Basis of action plans

The overall communication strategy and the binding one-voice wording are the basis of the concrete action plans. In this respect, it is crucial to define the specific target groups carefully.

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐ │
│  │                  Communication strategy                  │ │
│  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘ │
│  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐ │
│  │     One-voice wording – binding for all spokespersons    │ │
│  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘ │
│  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐ │
│  │                       Action plan                        │ │
│  │  Stakeholders, actions, communication and response       │ │
│  │  channels, timing                                        │ │
│  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘ │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │         Victims and their families        │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │          Local to national media          │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │            International media             │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │           Citizens / population            │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │       Politicians and political parties    │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
│          ┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐         │
│          │                 Employees                  │         │
│          └──────────────────────────────────────────┘         │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Fig. 5.2 Elements of an action plan

5.3   Action plans for different stages of communication response

5.3.1   Stage 1 – Confusion

Stage 1 is characterised by confusion and incomplete, partly contradictory information.

The aim of communication is to calm down the situation by providing fast, reputable information. A prime task is to inform the families of the victims as soon as possible. It could also be necessary to hand out behavioural rules and contact addresses of places where continuous information is available.
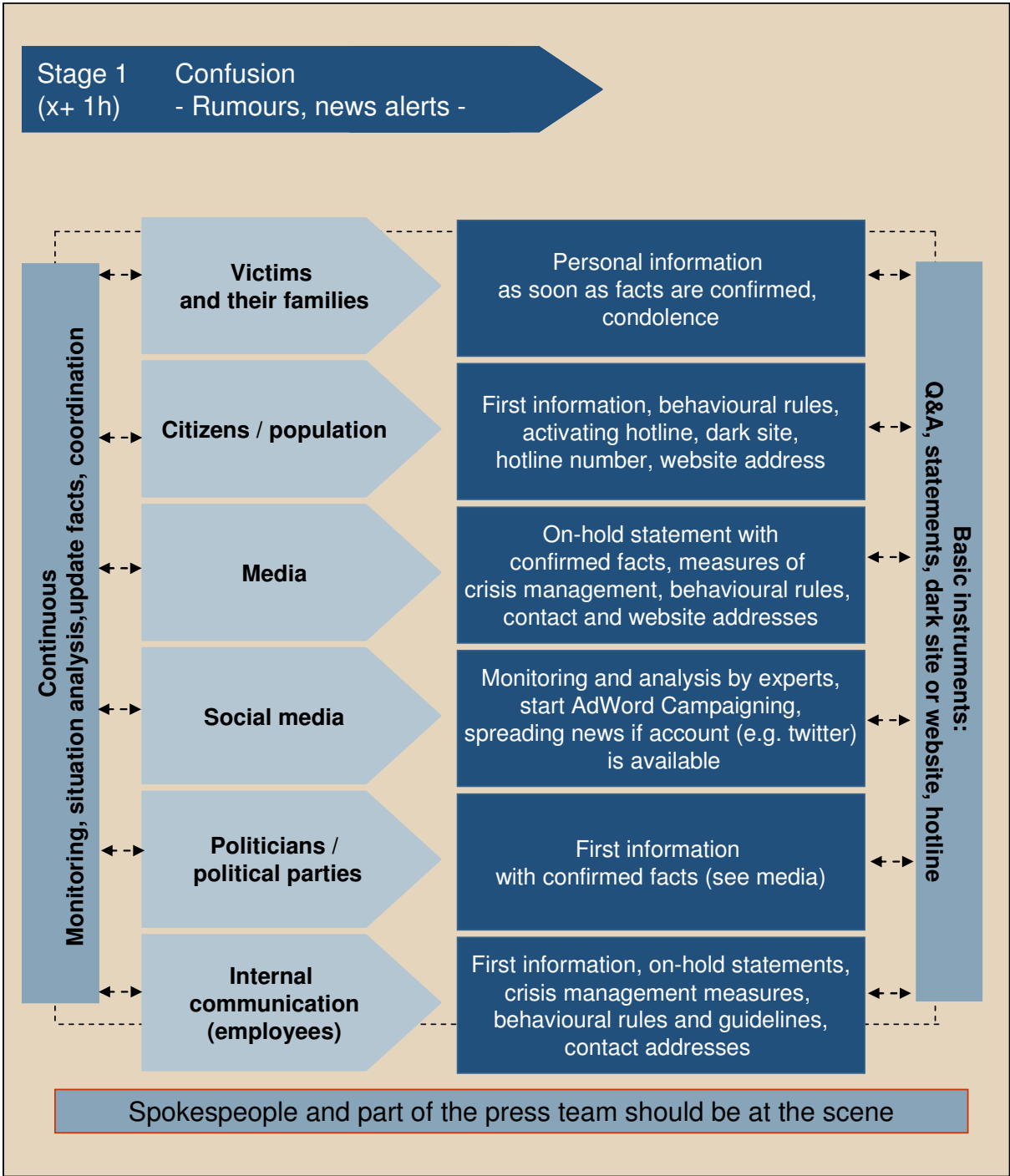

Fig. 5.3 Schematic action plan stage 1

5.3.2 Stage 2 – Rescue operations and investigations

Stage 2 is characterised by the work of emergency services and investigations by police. Two types of information are generated. Updated and more detailed information about the incident and messages of condemnation.
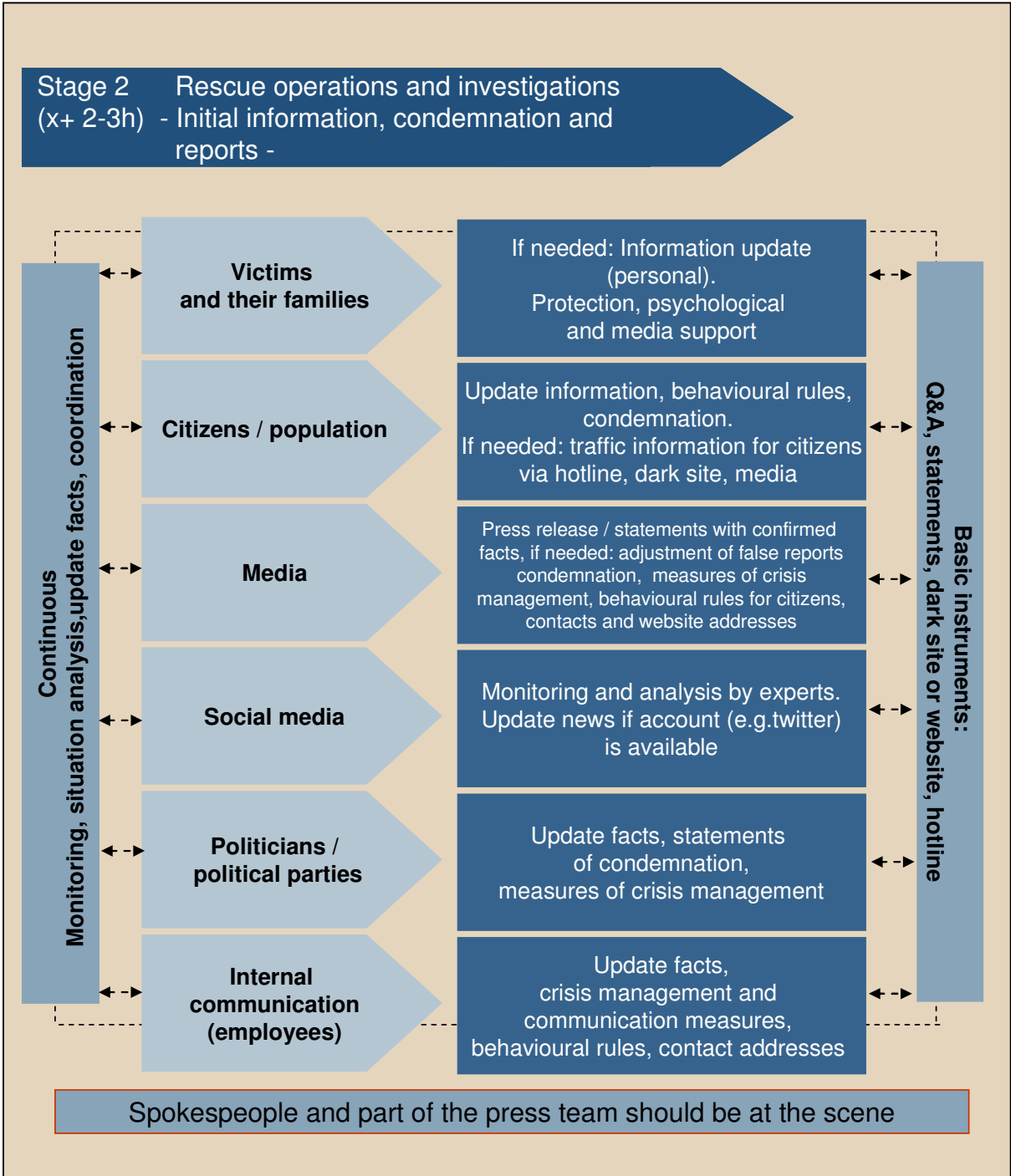
Stage 2
(x+ 2-3h) Rescue operations and investigations
- Initial information, condemnation and reports -

Continuous
Monitoring, situation analysis, update facts, coordination

Victims and their families
If needed: Information update (personal).
Protection, psychological and media support

Citizens / population
Update information, behavioural rules, condemnation.
If needed: traffic information for citizens via hotline, dark site, media

Media
Press release / statements with confirmed facts, if needed: adjustment of false reports condemnation, measures of crisis management, behavioural rules for citizens, contacts and website addresses

Social media
Monitoring and analysis by experts.
Update news if account (e.g.twitter) is available

Politicians / political parties
Update facts, statements of condemnation, measures of crisis management

Internal communication (employees)
Update facts, crisis management and communication measures, behavioural rules, contact addresses

Q&A, statements, dark site or website, hotline
Basic instruments:

Spokespeople and part of the press team should be at the scene

Fig. 5.4 Schematic action plan stage 2

5.3.3 Stage 3 – Institutional statements

At this stage the media are asking for institutional statements. Usually more detailed information about the impact and damage is available. Therefore, a first press conference to condemn the attack and to inform people about the situation and the measures of protection are useful at this stage.
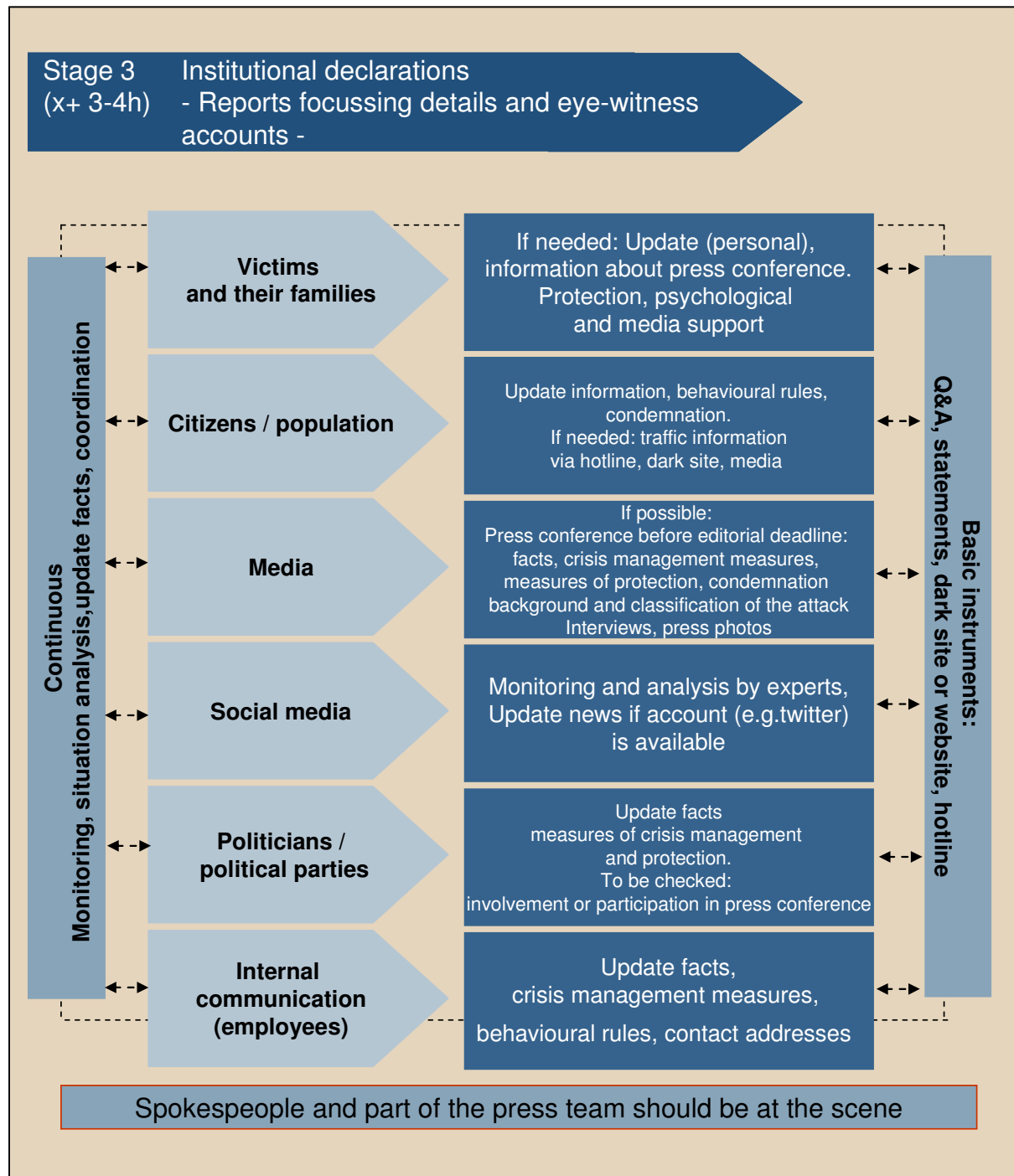
Stage 3 (x+ 3-4h)	Institutional declarations - Reports focussing details and eye-witness accounts -

	Target group	Action
Continuous Monitoring, situation analysis,update facts, coordination	**Victims and their families**	If needed: Update (personal), information about press conference. Protection, psychological and media support
	Citizens / population	Update information, behavioural rules, condemnation. If needed: traffic information via hotline, dark site, media
	Media	If possible: Press conference before editorial deadline: facts, crisis management measures, measures of protection, condemnation background and classification of the attack Interviews, press photos
	Social media	Monitoring and analysis by experts, Update news if account (e.g.twitter) is available
	Politicians / political parties	Update facts measures of crisis management and protection. To be checked: involvement or participation in press conference
	Internal communication (employees)	Update facts, crisis management measures, behavioural rules, contact addresses

(Right column spanning all rows:) **Basic instruments:** Q&A, statements, dark site or website, hotline

Spokespeople and part of the press team should be at the scene

Fig. 5.5 Schematic action plan stage 3

5.3.4 Stage 4 – Start of normalisation at the scene

At this stage messages stating that the situation is normalising and a continuous update of information are needed.
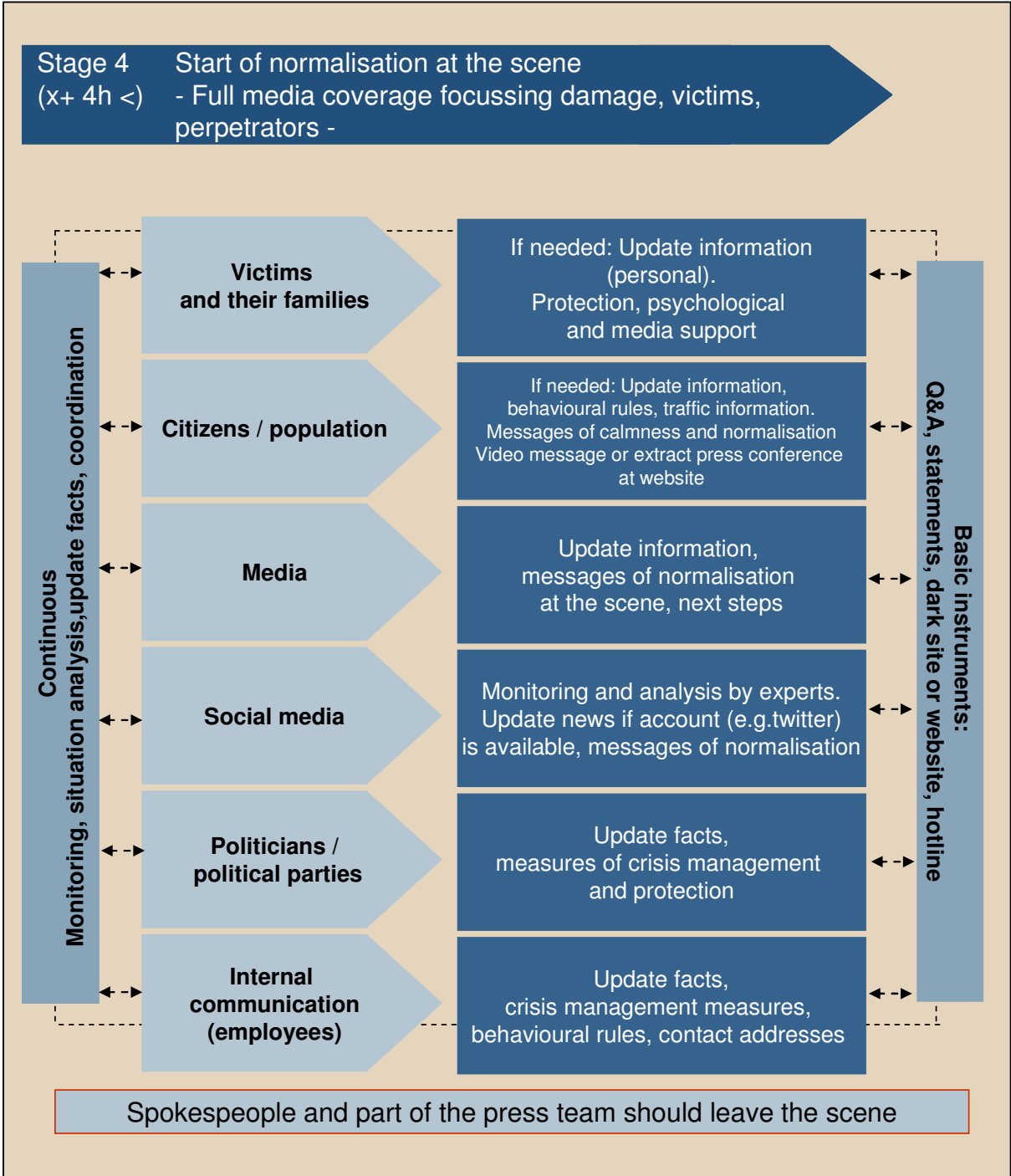
Fig. 5.6 Schematic action plan stage 4

5.3.5 Stage 5 - Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence

During the stage of recovery, the responsible communications team has the ear of the media and can concentrate on rebuilding confidence. The stage of confidence communication is also the time for statements regarding victims' welfare and commemoration of casualties.

In addition, a second press conference with a summary of the first day can offer the possibility to respond to false or critical media reports.

Stage 5
(x+ 1d <)

Core functions recovery and rebuilding confidence
- High media coverage: "human story", backgrounds, crisis management -

Victims and their families	Establishment of memorial or welfare measures , e.g. memorial services, relief funds. On going: protection, support and comprehension	
Citizens / population	Message of core functions recovery Update and conclusion of the first day, investigation results, report about crisis management, announcement memorial measures	
Media	Message of core functions recovery Update and conclusion of the first day, investigation results, report about crisis management, announcement memorial measures	
Social media	Monitoring and analysis by experts Update news if account (e.g.twitter) is available. After analysis: participation or using platforms	
Politicians / political parties	Message of core functions recovery. Update and conclusion of the first day, investigation results, positive messages about crisis management announcement memorial measures	
Internal communication (employees)	Message of core functions recovery, positive messages about crisis management announcement memorial measures	

Continuous
Monitoring, situation analysis, update facts, coordination

Basic instruments:
Q&A, statements, dark site or website, hotline

Fig. 5.7 Schematic action plan stage 5

5.3.6 Stage 6 - Lessons learned and return to normality

The media and public interest is declining. Official messages can now concentrate on announcing improvements, lessons and implementation of new measures and ways in which such future tragedies could be better prevented. The final crisis message is that of a return to normality.
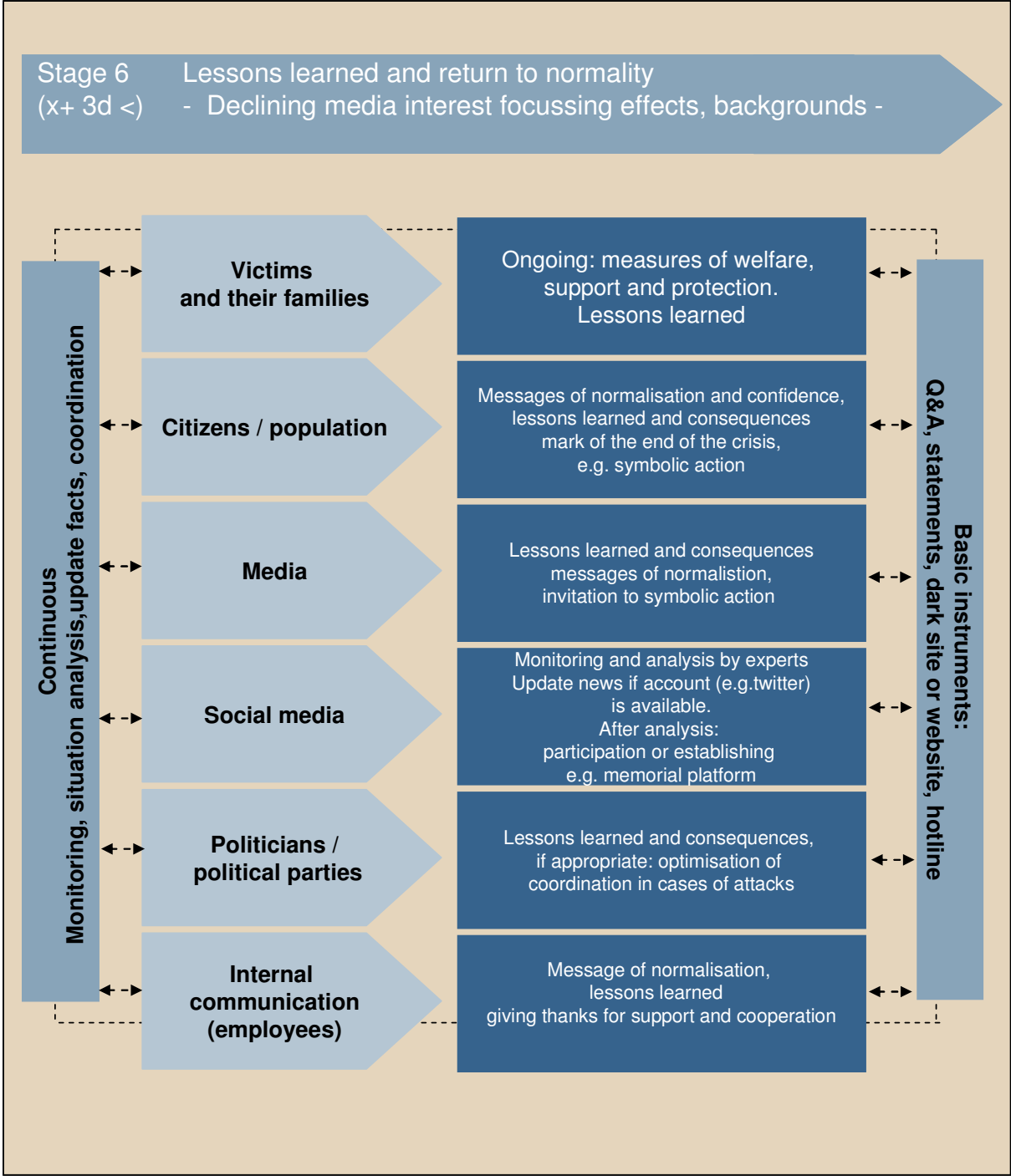
Fig. 5.8 Schematic action plan stage 6

PART 2

6   <u>Crisis preparedness</u>

The key factors in effective crisis communication after a terrorist attack are responsiveness and decisiveness of action. The period after an attack is dominated by insecurity and chaos. Even the crisis managers responsible for taking decisions do not escape this shock unless they have been prepared for such a situation. Its consequences are paralysis, uncertainty, the wrong responses or none at all – which only serve to emphasise the chaos and public impact of the attack.

The most critical factors in crisis management after terrorist attacks are the delegation of tasks, the identification of roles and responsibilities and the establishment of co-ordination structures. All those involved must be familiar in advance with what they have to do and with the identity of the chief decision makers. They should also be aware of what pieces of information need to be passed on and to whom. This applies not only within their own organisation, but also with other institutions and official bodies involved in the response. Co-ordination between organisations often poses particular challenges. Responses to a crisis require both successful internal co-ordination between the often complex hierarchies of an institution's own echelons and smooth external co-ordination between an institution and the police, security forces, emergency teams, hospitals and in many cases private companies. Co-ordinated crisis communication plans provide those involved with firm guidelines for action and help to save valuable time in a crisis. However, in preparing for terrorist attacks it is not sufficient to draw up crisis plans on paper alone; they are of little value unless regularly practised – where possible, by the entire crisis management team.

The following recommendations should be viewed as suggestions as to how crisis communication management can be established and / or optimised.

6.1   Crisis Communication plan

All of the preparations should be incorporated into a crisis communication plan which covers the organisational, technical and content-related principles of crisis management.

All information should be set forth in a crisis manual which is used both in rehearsals and in actual events. A manual with a modular structure, such as a loose-leaf binder, can easily be updated and permits information to be tailored according to need – e.g. for members of the inner crisis management team on the one hand, and members of the support team on the other. The manual should be available both as hard copy and electronically, e.g. on the Intranet.
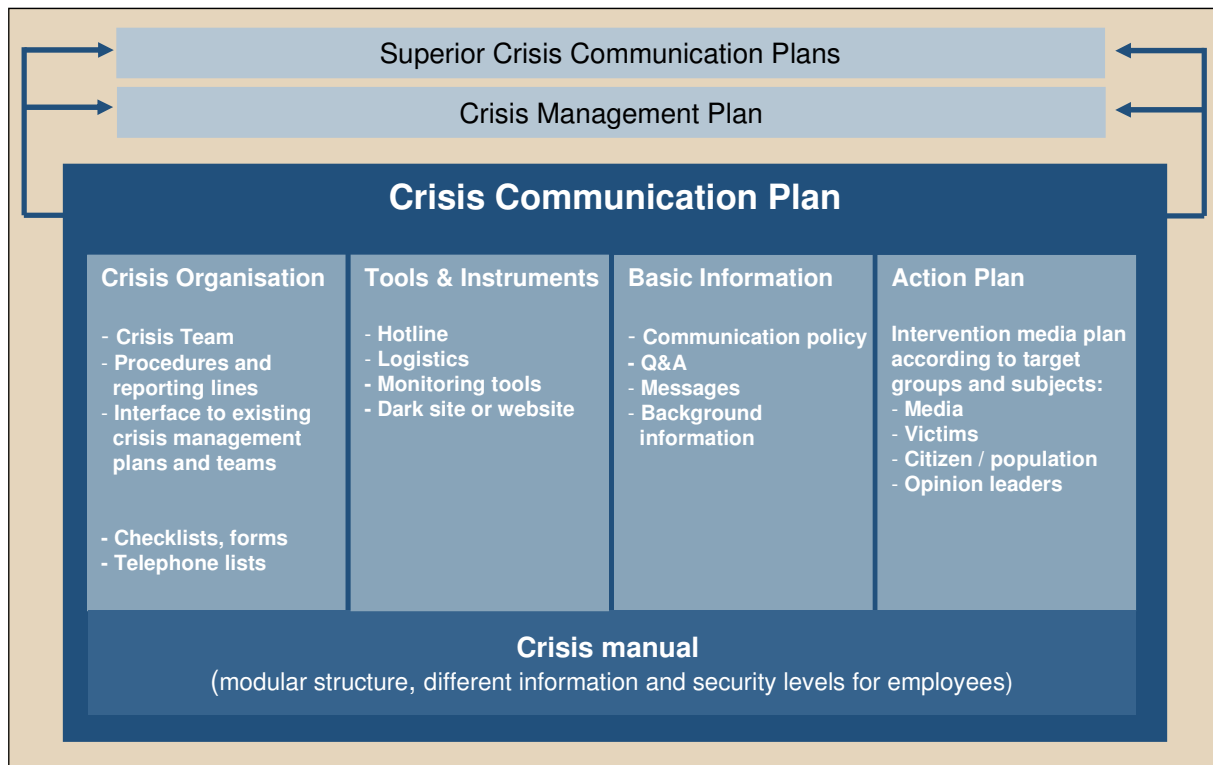
Fig. 6.1 Example of a Crisis Communication Plan

6.2 Crisis organisation

6.2.1 Crisis communication team

Successful crisis communication management requires a well-practised, experienced team. The core team in particular should include experienced communication professionals such as press spokespeople, as well as heads of official bodies and institutions with the authority to make decisions. This line-up enables decisions to be discussed and implemented rapidly.

Team members should ideally have specific skills in addition to their own specialist expertise. For example, they should:

- Have excellent networking contacts within their own and other organisations;
- Possess the management skills necessary to cope with extreme situations;
- Be able to withstand stress and show resilience under pressure;
- Be self-assured, with a confident personality;
- Have experience in dealing with the media, the public and politicians;
- Have the ability to establish high levels of co-operation within and between organisations;
- Be articulate and have high integrity, to assist in direct contact with target groups.

Under the extreme conditions of a crisis, it is particularly important that the members of the crisis team work closely, provide mutual support for each other and are able to put aside hierarchical mindsets.

A crisis team is composed of various levels:

- The core team, with key decision-making and co-ordination tasks;

- The extended team, members of which provide valuable support by providing specialist expertise and which is assembled on an ad-hoc need-driven basis;

- The support team, which implements the communication measures.

(See also section 4.1.2)

Members of the crisis team should be defined in advance.

A deputy should also be designated for each position, to ensure that all team members are available 24/7 in the event of an incident. Deputies should be familiarised with all aspects of the crisis communication management process and participate in training courses.

Potential members of the extended and support crisis teams should also be identified in advance. Even though these teams are often assembled on an ad-hoc basis when an incident occurs, the members of the core team should be familiar with potential contact persons for specific themes and tasks. The members of both teams should be familiarised with the procedures, processes and tasks which become necessary in the event of a crisis.

All contact details of core team members, their deputies and potential members of the extended support teams should be available and up-to-date at all times (see also checklist 10.1).

6.2.2 Procedures and reporting lines

The core of a crisis communication plan is the establishment of the flow of information, including reporting lines and procedures. However, this part of the plan must also be tailored precisely to the organisation involved and to the concrete crisis management and co-ordination tasks which the organisation requires. For this reason, this manual can only offer ideas and guidelines on this subject.

Successful crisis communication management processes rely on:

1. Establishment of a fast, reliable flow of information at internal and external level;

2. Required reporting lines to ensure smooth co-ordination.

Fast and reliable flow of information is an essential prerequisite for rapid response. In an incident, the crisis team will be fighting a losing battle unless vital information on the situation and its current development is available from a reliable source. Neither internal nor external communication can function without internal information.

To safeguard the integrity of the information and actions, these procedures must be internally reviewed, co-ordinated with the responsible decision-makers and approved.

The information flow and reporting lines form a continuous workflow in which reliability and speed are paramount. A crisis generally forces many people to work together who would meet only rarely during a normal working day, and who have thus had no opportunity to develop common working routines. Smooth collaboration with other organisations and official bodies is a particularly important factor in crisis communication after terrorist attacks. This can only be achieved by means of predefined processes tailored to the organisation in question – and thorough familiarisation with and practice of these processes.

It is helpful to orient reporting lines to existing hierarchies, procedures or crisis plans. To develop the right steps, a scenario-based team-building training course such as that described in section 8 could be used. Step-by-step simulation of scenarios helps to define the actions, responsibilities and reporting lines necessary.

Planning of processes and workflows is determined by the following questions:

- How is the crisis team alerted? By whom, and via what channels?

- Who calls a meeting of the crisis team and assigns tasks with respect to concrete requirements? Should further department heads (for example) be summoned to access the necessary resources?

- Who else must be informed to provide support for crisis communication management and the organisational hierarchy?

- Who provides the crisis team with ongoing information on the current situation at the attack site and the emergency actions which have been implemented? What channels are used?

- Who develops the communication strategy, concrete actions and texts?

- Who subjects the texts to content-based and technical review, and who else must be involved in this process?

- Who gives final approval of the strategy, actions and texts?

- Who reports to whom concerning the actions implemented and the responses experienced to them (feedback routines)?

(See also checklist 10.3)

Similarly, checklists for the implementation of individual actions must be drawn up. These should include all necessary co-ordination pathways and organisational details, to ensure that all processes function smoothly.

Fig 6.2 Example of workflow and structure
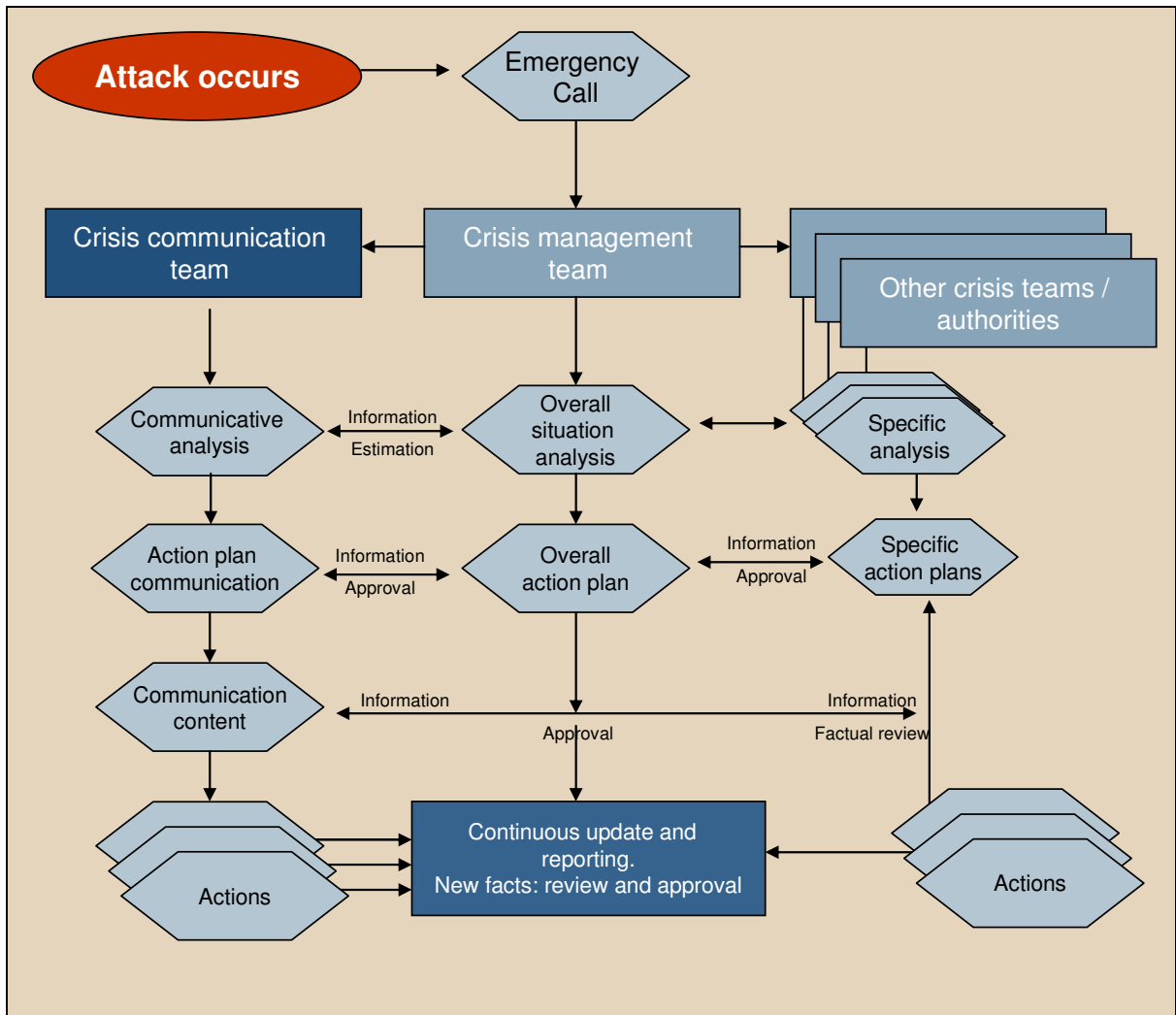
Fig 6.3 Example of reporting lines between crisis communication team and crisis management teams
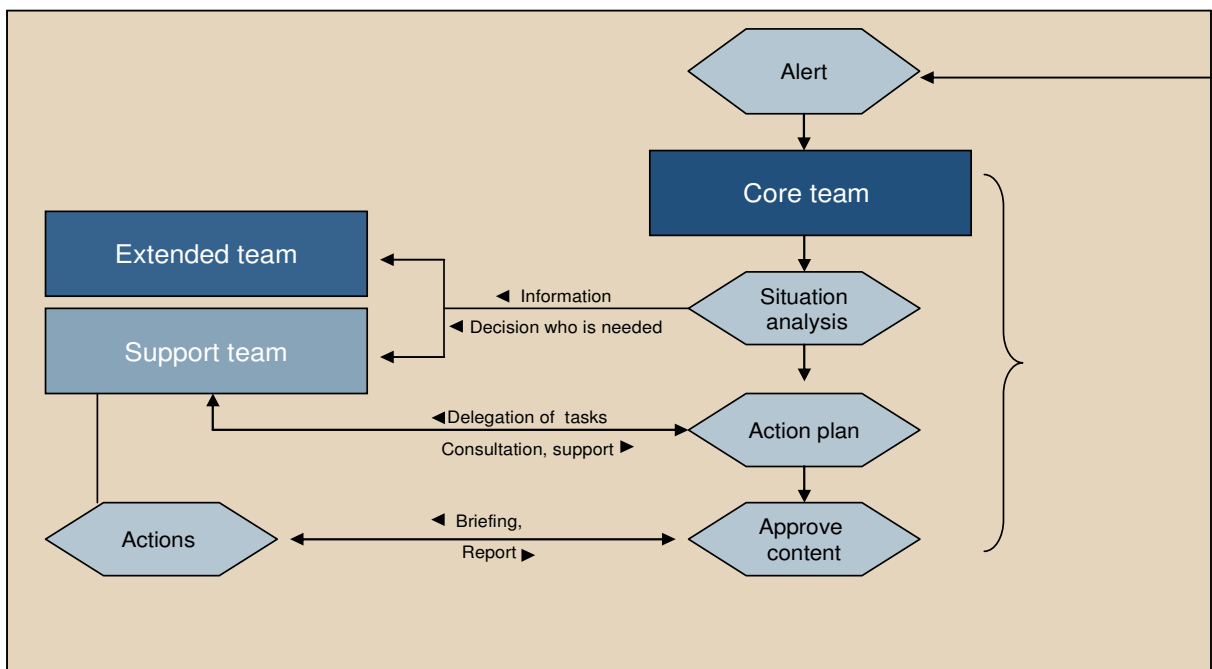
Fig 6.4 Example of reporting lines within the crisis communication team

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6.2.3   Interface to existing crisis management plans

A terrorism crisis communication plan cannot exist in isolation, but must be an integral part of the overall crisis management plan. To be truly effective, responsibilities and processes must be aligned. This is particularly vital for the flow of information and for the smooth co-ordination of both plans.

After a terrorist attack, a multitude of organisations – from local authorities up to national crisis committees - are generally involved in crisis management. For this reason, interfaces to other organisations, e.g. official bodies with superior status, must be identified. Roles, responsibilities, information flows and reporting lines which are to be followed in the event of a crisis should be established in advance. This is not only important to ensure that crisis management runs smoothly, but also plays a role in public perception. The public does not distinguish between individual official bodies and institutions, but views them as a whole and as representatives of the democratic system. The consequences of contradictory statements or unco-ordinated actions can thus be all the more damaging; they not only undermine the credibility of the players, but also extend the negative impact of a terrorist attack.

6.3   Tools and instruments

The tools and instruments section contains all technical and content-related groundwork for the provision of the information channels. These primarily comprise:

- A central hotline for public information: this can generally be an existing public hotline. In a crisis, however, additional capacities, resource plans and technical requirements must be defined.

- Communication logistics: comprises all technical and organisational preparations for communication. For example: technical equipment of the crisis team; a central e-mail box for the press to which multiple members of the crisis team have access; premises for the crisis team and for press conferences; possibilities (such as e-mail) to distribute press information, etc.

- Internal and/or external monitoring services. It should be noted that a terrorist attack will provoke extensive media response and the crisis team will not be able to read all articles or hotline protocols in detail. It is therefore necessary to appoint and train staff to produce summaries and analyses of key issues and distribute them to the crisis team at regular intervals.

Website / dark site

The Internet is a primary research source for journalists and the public. The first news of an attack is spread directly via the Internet, often before it appears on TV or radio. The public and journalists also use the Internet to track the progress of the event.

A dedicated website or dark site can ensure that all relevant information is provided in full and in an unfiltered state.

For crisis communication, preparation of a dedicated 'ready-to-use' dark site is recommended. This site is only activated – i.e. visible to users - if an incident occurs. The dark site is linked to the main site and is generally operated with a content management system as a direct and straightforward method of feeding the site with current information.

The primary advantage offered by a dark site is speed. Valuable information and content can be entered in advance; in the event of a crisis, all that needs to be done is the addition of up-to-date information in the pre-prepared areas to transform the dark site into a key information tool.

Here is a simplified example of a dark site structure with pre-prepared and new information content:
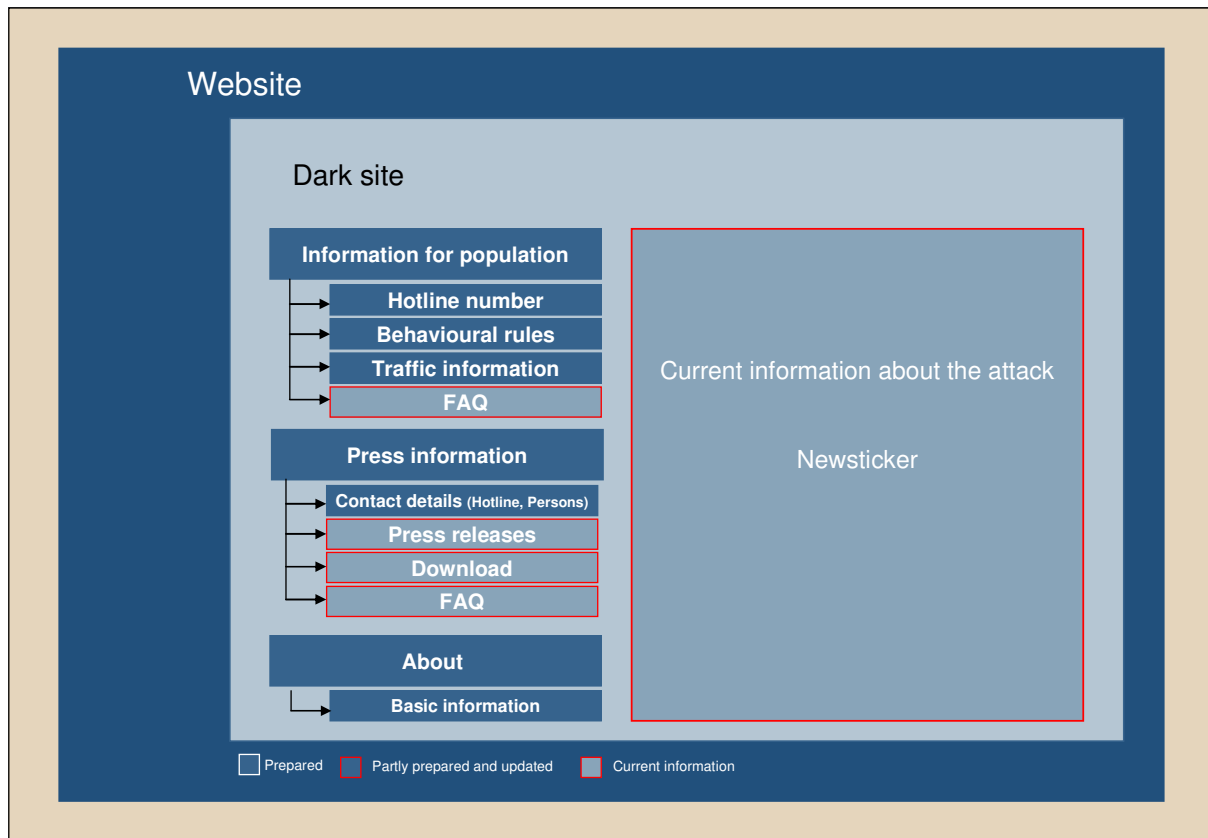

Fig. 6.5 Schematic diagram of a dark site

In order to be returned in user searches, the dark site must be actively tagged in search engines. This ensures that the site is high on the list of results and can be found quickly. This can also be prepared in advance by opening a corresponding account in the search engine and entering a list of keywords. In a crisis, the appropriate terms are then selected and tagged.

6.4   Basic information

To save valuable time, the crisis communication plan should include initial information and core messages that have already been approved.

These may include:

- The communication policy describing the basic principles governing communication (openness, transparency, protection and responsibility for the population, condemnation of terrorist activities);

- Basic information and Q&As about the organisation, the city, and general safety measures etc. which are frequently requested as background for press articles.

Similarly, this area should contain all Q&As, lines of arguments and texts from:

- Action plans prepared within the scope of prevention and drills;

- Crisis communication terrorist attacks which have already taken place.

6.5   Action plans

Basic versions of the action plans described in section 5 can be prepared in advance. To do this, scenarios are developed (see section 9) and played out as exercises. In this situation, all potential communication measures for a terrorist attack are developed in a realistic manner and stored as templates for concrete action in the event of a crisis.

7   Network building and co-ordination

7.1   Personal networks for crisis management

In addition to all organisational and content-related preparations, the establishment of networks plays an extremely significant role in the preparation for terrorist attacks. Experience has shown that many things run faster, more simply and more smoothly when personal contacts are involved. In that situation, shorter routes in collaboration can be chosen and time-consuming research is unnecessary. Finally, people's willingness to collaborate increases when personal contacts are in place.

They primarily include:

- Internal networking within the organisation;

- Networking with other organisations and institutions;

- Establishment and management of contacts with journalists, editors-in-chief and publishers;

- Identification of, and establishment of contacts with, experts that could serve as consultants.

Regular meetings, talks, joint 'round table exercises' at which a potential attack is talked through and joint training courses all help to maintain and manage contacts, generate mutual understanding and intensify collaboration.

7.2   Network building in social media

In the event of a crisis, social networks on the Internet can be accessed and used for communication. However, these networks are subject to their own rules that must be observed (see section 4.2.9).

Today many institutions and official bodies maintain their own accounts and profiles on the major platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. In a crisis, these accounts are an excellent method of rapidly disseminating information and linking to an organisation's own source of information, such as a dark site. However, this presupposes that an organisation has already set up such profiles and networks and makes use of them in routine communication. Efficient

use of social media in a crisis situation requires organisations to build their own network before they need it.

As part of the prevention process, all tools and measures used in routine communication should also be reviewed for their suitability in crisis communication. However, it is far more important to examine how everyday communication with key target groups can be used to enhance credibility and trust and thus generate a positive image that may prove an invaluable asset in limiting the consequences of a terrorist attack.

8   Crisis preparedness training

Crisis communication preparations will only be effective if:

- All persons involved know at all times what their tasks and responsibilities are in the event of an incident;

- Processes and team collaboration have been rehearsed in advance in practical drills;

- Spokespersons have been trained to deal with the special demands of their position.

This practical experience can be gained in specialist training courses. The best results are achieved in types of training where a realistic scenario is played out (see section 9 for basic scenarios). Courses can be tailored to a variety of goals and needs which include:

- Crisis preparedness workshop: Kick-off format for the prevention process, establishing structures, defining concrete to-dos.

- Crisis training / crisis simulation: Rehearsal of processes, procedures, tasks, co-ordination.

- Crisis media training: Targeted media training on dealing with the public and the media.

Crisis training scenarios are often also rehearsed by the crisis management team. They may be tailored to the specific case of a terrorist attack, or take the form of a disaster preparedness drill or simple fire drill; in any case, communication must be included in these drills to ensure that co-ordination tasks are well rehearsed.

8.1   Crisis preparedness workshop

The crisis preparedness workshop is a kick-off event where all those with responsibility for communication and crisis management meet at the start of the preparation process.

Goals:

- Sensitisation to the specific requirements of communication in potential terrorist attacks;

- Identification of concrete requirements, structures, processes, roles and responsibilities;

- Definition of crisis organisation and processes in individual situations;

- Identification of potential areas of change and prevention.

To establish a clear picture of what is needed and what concrete actions must be taken, workshop attendees meet in a round-table situation and discuss one or several scenarios step by step. The main issues are: "What responsibilities would we be expected to fulfil in this situation? What actions would we undertake in order to fulfil these responsibilities? What structures are already in place, and which need to be optimised or expanded?" The procedure enables individual profiles of requirements to be identified as a basis for further action.

A useful procedure may be to repeat the crisis preparedness workshop for a variety of detailed goals and targets, e.g.

- Concrete definition of tasks, roles and responsibilities, information flow and reporting lines;

- Analysis of the structures and interfaces with crisis management and other organisations involved that are already in place;

- Presentation of newly established or optimised processes and structures.

8.2   Crisis training / crisis simulation

The goal of crisis training and crisis simulation is to rehearse strategic and operational crisis communication management. It is primarily directed at the permanent members of the crisis communication team and the spokespersons.

The training courses are designed as role-plays based on the scenario and the crisis communication plans that have already been drawn up. It may be useful to call in professional external communication trainers who can provide support in the arrangement of the course. They can serve as impartial observer, enable participants to gain a more accurate picture of their own abilities and identify areas of optimisation.

8.2.1   Crisis training courses

Crisis training courses involve the practical rehearsal of various tasks such as designing core messages, statements, interviews, press conferences etc. The trainers should adopt the roles of journalists and various stakeholders to create as realistic a situation as possible. Each task is followed by in-depth feedback sessions in which potential mistakes and faults are identified and proposals for improvement are given. The individual tasks are then repeated or continued in response to the feedback.
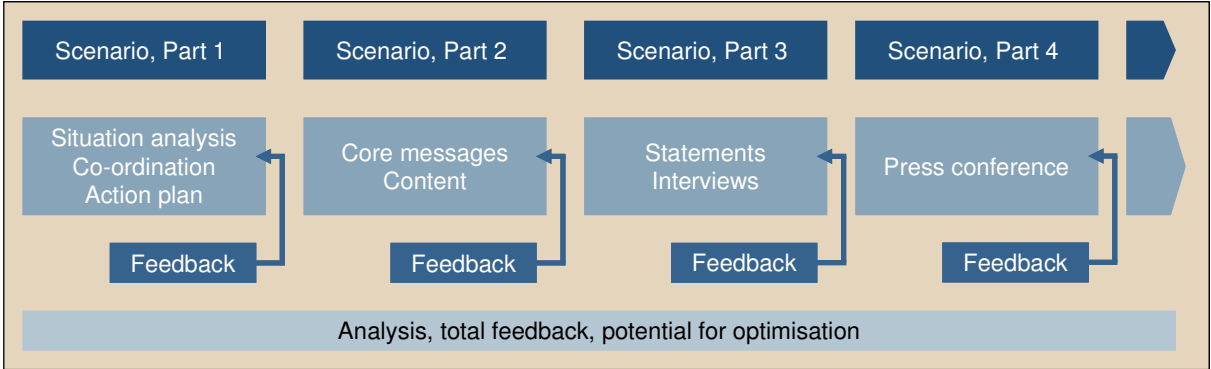
Fig. 8.1 Schematic diagram of a crisis training course

8.2.2 Crisis simulation

One or two training days are taken up by the simulation of an 'event' under realistic and real-time conditions. The more realistic the simulation, the more effective the rehearsal will be.

Key tasks are:

- Ad-hoc management of the incident;
- Initiation of crisis team and co-ordination;
- Establishment of core messages, drawing up Q&A, language conventions, publications;
- Drawing up a concrete action plan;
- Communicating with a range of formats (interviews, statements, press releases) on different channels;
- Staff communication and management;
- Inclusion of consultants (legal and technical experts etc.);
- Evaluation and analysis.

This form of training must be carried out with professional trainers who adopt the roles of journalists and various target groups. They ask questions and respond realistically to actions of the course participants, e.g. with ad-hoc messages or online reactions.

This real-time drill is primarily useful for identifying potential areas of optimisation in the following areas:

- Decision-making;
- Assignment of roles;
- Time and organisational management / response time;
- Content quality of drills (messages, Q&A, alignment to various target groups etc.);
- Form-related quality of drills (form and wording of press releases, behaviour in front of the camera etc.);
- Individual performance of participants (one-on-one meetings).

This type of training should also include a wider circle of participants such as the crisis management team and support team.
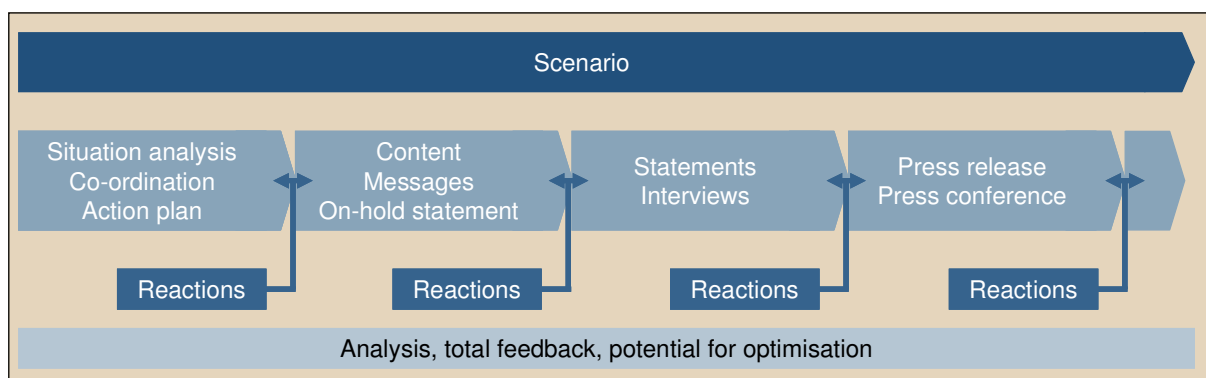
Fig. 8.2 Schematic diagram of a crisis simulation

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8.3   Crisis media training

Crisis media training focuses on the tasks and responsibilities of the spokespersons. It is designed to practise assurance in dealing with the public and the media, specifically in extreme situations.

Targeted crisis media training thus focuses on practising communication skills such as:

- Persuasive communication of core messages;
- Credible performance;
- Techniques of delivering statements and giving interviews in different situations (Live-interviews, TV, radio, telephone);
- Dealing with critical questions and unexpected situations;
- Linguistic style, elocution;
- Vocalics (tone of voice, projection, speed of delivery, emphasis, etc.);
- Nonverbal communication (gestures, posture, facial expressions, body movements, etc.);
- Preparation of interviews (organisation).

These training courses should include not only media-based contacts, but also for example talks with the victims families or emotionally affected members of the public.

9   Scenarios for training courses and crisis preparedness

For training purposes, this manual includes three specimen scenarios:

- Attack against members of the public;
- Attack against prominent persons;
- Kidnapping of a prominent person.

The scenarios are based on the research findings from the SAFE-COMMS project. They describe the communication requirements after a terrorist attack on the basis of a fictitious, but realistic situation and its development.

The scenarios can be used as a foundation for establishing crisis communication. They can also form a direct basis for training or act as a starting-point for the development of customised scenarios. For the best results, scenarios should be adapted to the local conditions and situation.

The specimen scenarios are structured as follows:

Column 1 describes a fictitious attack and the potential development of events. Column 2 shows organisational and co-ordination tasks. Column 3 depicts communication requirements. Column 4 presents ideas for training courses, which can be personalised and customised as required.

9.1   Scenario 1: Attack against citizens and infrastructure

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 1 – x + 1 h - Confusion			
• On Friday afternoon a bomb explodes in the multi-storey car park of a city shopping centre. • The responsible security officer at the shopping centre alerts fire fighters and police. • Almost simultaneously, the editor-in chief of the local newspaper informs the emergency control centre that an anonymous caller has announced that a bomb will go off. • Panic breaks out in the shopping centre; as people flee the building, one child is seriously injured and five people receive minor injuries.	• Placing an emergency call to the emergency control centre. • Informing the crisis management department of the call. • Alerting the crisis communication team.		Checking alert procedures: • Who informs the crisis communication team? • Who initiates / forms the core communications team? • Which other crisis teams are involved? • Who passes on the necessary information to the crisis team? Activate necessary support.
• Police, fire fighters and ambulances arrive a few minutes later. • Access to the car park is hindered by heavy smoke. • It is still unknown how many people were in the car park at the time of the explosion; however, the shopping centre is crowded.	• Informing the crisis manager. • Assembling a crisis team. • Collecting information and drawing up an action list (to-do list). • Situation analysis.		Analysing the situation: • Facts and issues • Rescue actions • Target groups • Reactions.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• The shopping centre is evacuated and the surrounding area is cordoned off. • The first reporters from local media arrive. • Almost simultaneously, police headquarters and emergency services receive press enquiries.	• Activating a hotline. • Implementing initial communication actions. • Co-ordinating communication for the emergency services / superior official bodies / the management of the shopping centre.	On-hold statement: • Traffic information • Initial information to staff, political representatives, other official bodies.	Drawing up a communication plan: • Ad-hoc actions • Actions for target groups • Communication channels / distribution. Content of communication: • Core messages; • On-hold statement; • Behavioural rules.
• The local newspaper uses twitter to spread the news of the bomb explosion and of the bomb threat call. • Speculations about the perpetrators emerge, focusing on a terrorist group which has been known for some time. • On twitter a user writes about the panic in the shopping centre. • Soon afterwards further press enquiries from regional / national media are received.	• Evaluate how the situation is being monitored (online, TV / AV, social media).	• Update information. • Correct false information and rumours.	Tracking the situation: • Monitoring • Issues analysis.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 2 – x + 2-3h Rescue operations and investigations			
• Rescue services have brought the fire in the car park under control. 19 bodies have been recovered and 22 casualties have been taken to hospitals in the area. Not all of the bodies and casualties have been identified; a total of 13 missing persons are reported. • Further television crews arrive together with a local radio reporter. They interview the manager of the shopping centre. • Family members of the shopping centre staff and other people want to know whether there have been casualties or even fatalities. • Doctors and victims with minor injuries give statements to media	• Situation analysis. • Setting up an on-site press centre. • Co-ordinating the communication with the shopping centre management. • Close co-ordination with the rescue services on the type of rescue actions, number of deaths and casualties and the cause of death.	• Contacting families of the victims and the missing persons. • Press information with previously obtained and confirmed information, condolences and condemnation of the attack. • Interviews / statements on the spot. • Update hotline/ staff information	Communicating with victims and families: • Messages • Actions • Care, protection, support measurements. Making a press statement.
• The local newspaper receives a statement from a terrorist organisation claiming responsibility and decrying "capitalist exploitation". • The publisher informs the crisis team of the statement and his intention to publish it.	• Co-ordination of communication: information. Progress of official investigations	• Co-ordinating official statement	

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 3 - x + 3- 4h Institutional statements			
• A national TV station broadcasts a live special from the site of the attack, interviewing eye-witnesses and reporting on the first bomb threat call. They raise the question of why the police did not react promptly and evacuate the shopping centre. • Local political representatives arrive. The mayor, the chief of police and the new mayoral candidate make statements, focusing on condemning the attack. All pledge a thorough investigation. • The mayoral candidate also emphasises that security measures will be examined and clarification will be sought as to why no response was made to the bomb threat call.	• Situation analysis. • Clarify how the bomb threat call was handled.	• Update all information for political representatives before their interview.	Check your co-ordination: • Interfaces • Responsibilities • Common actions.
• A press conference is held and broadcast live by national TV stations.		Press conference: • Condolences and condemnation of the attack • Evidence • Categorisation of information • Adjustment of false information.	Simulate a Press conference: • Participants and roles • Messages / statements • Q&A • Interviews with journalists.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 4 – x + from 4h – normalisation at the scene			
• The rescue services have cleared the scene and cleanup activities are completed the same day. An extra security guard is deployed for the night and the centre stays closed the following day. • Visitors to the shopping centre ask when they may collect their cars from the car park and raise the question of compensation for damage. • All radio and TV stations report on the attack, focusing on the extent of the damage to the shopping centre, the number of victims and the question of adequate security.	• Evaluating media reporting. • Defining further communication.	• Update information: the scene is cleared, the shopping centre is still under surveillance but there is no further danger.	
Stage 5 – x + 1 day Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence			
• All major national and international daily newspapers report on background information on the attack, print eye-witness reports and statements from the shopping centre spokesperson and from political representatives, and report on the victims. • Reports frequently mention the inadequate security in the shopping centre. • A major national newspaper interviews two family members of a woman murdered in the	• Evaluating media reporting. • Internal investigation of security measures at the shopping centre.	• Announcement of further investigations into security management and the procedure in handling threat calls.	

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
attack. They blame the officials for failing to inspect the shopping centre's security system which might have prevented the panic and perhaps even the attack itself. • People lay flowers and light candles in front of the shopping centre. • The mayor and other politicians visit the site and also lay flowers. • Tenants of the shopping centre ask when they may reopen their stores. • National and international media still send press requests, asking about the current situation and whether the accusations are true.	• Planning a memorial service as a symbolic act for the victims. • Discussion between crisis team and emergency services, primarily repair and restoration teams, about how long the shopping centre is likely to have to remain closed.	• Announce memorial service, invite press. • Give an update on new information and facts.	Discuss symbols and actions of public mourning and memorial: • Co-ordination / inclusion of families of victims in plans.
Stage 6 - x + 3 days Lessons learned and return to normality			
• On Sunday a memorial service is held for the victims. The head of state and other high-ranking politicians attend. • It is announced that a fund for the victims and their families will be established. • The shopping centre reopens the following Monday. At the same time, people demand the closure to be extended out of respect for the victims. • In the following days visitor numbers at the shopping centre plummet. The tenants of the shopping centre see themselves as victims of the attack, too, and feel abandoned by politicians.	• Organising support and protection for the victims' families. • Evaluating internal investigations, procedures for dealing with bomb threat calls, e.g. guidelines requiring all such calls to be reported to the police immediately.	• Press information on memorial service and fund for the victims. • Talking to tenants and the management of the shopping centre.	Analysis and lessons learned: • Crisis communication management • Tools and skills • Preparation measures.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• Media reports analyse the course of events. The issue is still open as to whether the attack could have been prevented, or the number of fatalities or casualties reduced, by more effective security systems.	• Implementing further security measures in the shopping centre and similar buildings. • Internal debriefing: potential areas of improvement.	• Closing press information or press conference: summary of events, status of investigations in the hunt for the perpetrators, security measures implemented and guidelines for dealing with threat calls.	

9.2   Scenario 2: Attack against prominent person

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 1 – x + 1 h - Confusion			
• It is early evening. The opposition party celebrates the New Year's reception at the local opera house. • Near the entrance to the opera house journalists with cameras and bystanders are watching the arrival of the guests. • The leader of the opposition party and his wife, a well known actress, arrive and gunshots are fired out of a passing car. • Immediately following the shots panic and confusion break out at the scene. Nobody knows who or how many people were killed.	• Placing an emergency call to the emergency control centre. • Informing the crisis management department of the call. • Alerting the crisis communication team.		Checking alert procedures: • Who informs the crisis communication team? • Who initiates / forms the core communications team? • Which other crisis teams are involved? • Who passes on the necessary information to the crisis team?
• Ambulances and police arrive at the crime scene. • The leader of the opposition party dies a few minutes later at the crime scene. • Several injured people are taken to the hospital.	• Informing the crisis manager. • Assembling a crisis team. • Collecting information and drawing up an action list (to-do list). • Situation analysis. • Close co-ordination with the rescue services on the type of rescue actions, number of deaths and casualties and the cause of death.		Analysing the situation: • Facts and issues • Rescue actions • Target groups • Reactions. Activate necessary support: • Check your co-ordination: • Interfaces • Responsibilities • Common actions.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• First tweets on twitter report that the leader of the opposition party and his wife have been shot and died. • Radio and TV-stations broadcast the first news of the attack. • On Facebook first eye-witnesses report on the attack – the reports vary considerably. • Speculations are made about the perpetrator – and whether the attack was directed against the politician or his wife. • The deputy leader of the opposition party gives a statement and confirms that the leader of the party was killed.	• Evaluating how the situation is being monitored (online, TV / radio, social media). • Implementing initial communication actions, hotline. • Co-ordinating communication with the emergency services / higher-level official bodies / political party. • Setting up an on-site press centre.	• Correcting false information and rumours. • Preparing on-hold statement.	Tracking the situation: • Monitoring • Issues analysis. Drawing up a communication plan: • Ad-hoc actions • Actions for target groups • Communication channels / distribution • Content.
• Soon afterwards press enquiries from regional/national media arrive.		• On-hold statement. • Initial information to staff, political representatives, other official bodies.	Phrasing an on-hold-statement.
Stage 2 – x + 2-3h Rescue operations and investigations			
• The rescue services have sealed off the scene. The covered body of the killed politician is still there. The police interrogate eye-witnesses. • The rescue operations are watched by camera teams and bystanders.	• Getting information, that confirms one bystander was killed and two others are injured.	• Contacting families of the victims.	Communicating with victims and families: • Messages • Actions. • Care, protection, support measurements.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• The attack is the main topic on the media; the national broadcast station announces a TV-special later that evening. • The news of the attack and speculations about the reasons spread like wildfire on the media and the internet. • In the guestbooks of the websites of the political party and the actress people post messages of condolence. On other social networking sites this news is the main topic	• Updating information, situation analysis, monitoring results.	• Update hotline/ staff information.	
• An unknown terror group claims responsibility for the murder of the politician. They announce that this attack was just a start and that they will kill more politicians and other persons as well.	• Co-ordination of communication: information vs. progress of official investigations.	• Co-ordinating official statement.	
A first press conference is held: • The police confirm that it was a terror attack and that the politician was killed. • His wife survived, but is in a state of shock. • One bystander was killed. • Two other persons were injured – but not critically.		• Update all information, also for political representatives before the press conference. Press conference: • Evidence • Categorisation of information; • Adjustment of false information.	Simulate a press conference: • Participants and roles • Messages / statements • Q&A • Interviews with journalists.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 3 - x + 3- 4h Institutional statements			
• Several TV stations broadcast a special with images from the scene after the attack. • The deputy leader of the opposition party, the head of the state and other politicians are interviewed, expressing condolences and condemning the attack. • Statements from the press conference are shown. • Doctors are interviewed on how many people were killed or injured. • They show an obituary on the murdered politician.	• Evaluating media reporting. • Defining further communication.	• Update all information.	
• During the night, a tabloid paper publishes an amateur video on its website. One can see the muzzle flashes from the shots and close ups from the injured people. • Within hours the video is linked on all social media platforms. • The brother of the murdered bystander posts on Facebook that his brother was killed during the attack – but that nobody cares about it because all just focus on the dead "V.I.P." politician.		• Update all information. • Communicating with victims and families.	Discussions about images: • from the scene, • from injured people, • from hospitals.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 4 – x + from 4h – normalisation at the scene			
• Police and rescue services have cleared the scene. • People start to lay down flowers and messages of condolence at the scene and at the house of the killed politician. • Camera teams and journalists besiege the house of the killed bystander's brother who is giving interviews.	• Evaluating media reporting. • Defining further communication and actions.	• Update information.	
Stage 5 – x + 1 day Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence			
• All major national and international daily newspapers report on background information on the attack, print eye-witness reports and statements from political representatives and prominent friends of the politician's family. • Newspapers are full of obituary notes from different political parties and institutions. • One tabloid paper also reports on the killed bystander and his family, asking why this innocent victim is ignored.	• Planning a memorial service as a symbolic act for the victims.	• Update information. • Announce memorial service, invite press.	Discuss symbols and actions of public mourning and memorial: • Modalities and symbols, • Co-ordination / inclusion of families of victims in plans.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• The following day TV stations carry live reports on the attack and the victims. On the internet forums the attack is the main topic. There are discussions and speculations about the forthcoming investigations, the danger of follow-up attacks, the anti-terror-measures of the government and the politician's succession. • 24 hours after the attack a commemorative procession takes place through the city.			
Stage 6 - x + 3 days Lessons learned and return to normality			
• A memorial service is held for the murdered politician and bystander. It is attended by the head of state and other high-ranking politicians and celebrities. • One day later the funerals are announced. • Media reports analyse the course of events, the security measures for politicians and the anti-terror-policy of the government.	• Evaluating internal investigations and procedures. • Internal debriefing: potential areas of improvement.	• Closing press information or press conference: summary of events, status of investigations in the hunt for the perpetrators, security measures implemented.	• Analysis and lessons learned: • Crisis communication management • Tools and skills • Preparation measures.

9.3   Scenario 3: Kidnapping of a prominent person

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 1: x+ 1 – 2h Confusion **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• In the early morning a well-known professor of economics is kidnapped by a terrorist group while jogging. • One hour later an anonymous source announces the kidnapping to a TV station. The kidnappers demand the release of 5 imprisoned members of the terrorist group within 3 days. • The TV station informs the police / security services. Investigation and verification of the kidnapping starts.	• Initiating the crisis team and crisis communication team. • Close co-ordination with all involved authorities.	• Informing the family of the professor. Protection measures. • Setting up a press-centre.	Checking alert procedures: • Who informs the crisis communication team? • Who initiates / forms the core communications team? • Which other crisis teams are involved? • Who passes on the necessary information to the crisis team?
• The TV station receives a film where the abductee repeats, under duress the demand of the kidnappers.	• Situation analysis. • Co-ordination of communication: information vs. progress of official investigations.	• Informing the family of the professor. Protection measures. Information about and involvement in planned communication actions. • Situation analysis. • Communication strategy and action plan.	Analysing the situation: • Facts and issues • Investigations • Target groups • Reactions.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 2 – x + 2-3h Rescue operations and investigations **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• The kidnapping is confirmed in the press conference. The authorities deny accommodating the demands of the kidnappers.		• Update all information for political representatives before the press conference. • Press conference: Confirmation of the kidnapping, investigations, condemnation.	• Defining core messages, content of communication and communication channels.
• Radio and TV-stations broadcast the first news of the kidnapping. • On twitter and other internet sites the news spread like a wildfire. • More and more journalists and press enquiries arrive at the press-centre.	• Evaluating media reporting and forthcoming investigations.	• Correcting false information and rumours. • Continuous updating of information.	Tracking the situation: • Monitoring • Issues analysis.
• The film with the message from the abductee appears on the internet and is linked widely. • People are discussing on the internet if it is proper to deny the kidnappers demands or not. • Via hotline and e-mail the investigators receive information about the alleged whereabouts of the abductee.	• Evaluating media reporting and forthcoming investigations.	• Correcting false information and rumours. • Explaining the motives of denying the kidnappers demands.	Check access to and possibilities for social media intervention.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 3 (Here: x +4 h – 3 d) Institutional statements **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• During the afternoon all political parties express their solidarity with the Government and their rejection and condemnation of the terrorists and their actions. • TV, radio and internet are filled with reports about the kidnapping. Security experts, politicians and scientist are all make detailed comments on the situation. • Sympathising groups campaign against the government's course further their own demands and ideologies • The investigating authorities are under intensive scrutiny by the public.	• Evaluating media reporting and forthcoming investigations. • Defining further communication.	• Update all information. • Report about the forthcoming investigations.	• Discuss possible actions and symbols of solidarity and building confidence and involvement of the public.
• The next day the parliament holds a special session about the kidnapping. The political parties demand the abductee's immediate release.	• Close co-ordination with all involved authorities / political parties. • Evaluating media reporting and forthcoming investigations. • Defining follow-up communication.	• Update all information. • Report about the forthcoming investigations.	

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• While the deadline of the 3-day ultimatum is expiring, every day a new message with images of the suffering abductee from the kidnappers is distributed on the internet and media. • The family of the professor appeals urgently to the kidnappers to release the abductee via TV and internet. • Students organise silent vigils – more and more citizens join these events.	• Close co-ordination with all involved authorities and family.	• Update all information. • Report about the forthcoming investigations.	Communication with / protection and involvement of the victim's family.
Interstage: Re-arising of confusion and shock			
• Four hours after the expiry of the ultimatum the dead body of the professor is discovered in a small wood outside the town. • Radio and TV-stations broadcast the news. • On twitter and other internet sites the news spreads like wildfire. The discussion about whether the course of action taken by the government was the right one now becomes a central topic. • More and more journalists and press enquiries arrive at the press-centre. A Press conference is held.	• Close co-ordination with all involved authorities and family.	• Information and support of the victim's family. Press conference: • Confirmation of the death, condolences, condemnation, forthcoming investigations, messages of confidence.	Simulate a press conference: • Messages • Statements • Interviews.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
Stage 4 – (Here x + 4 - 5 d) – normalisation **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• All major national and international daily newspapers report on the death of the victim. • Media contain many obituaries and reports. • The parliament assembles for an hour of commemoration. • A large number of people join students for silent vigils.	• Evaluating media reporting. • Defining further communication and actions.	• Update information. • Announcement of memorial. Co-ordination / inclusion of families of victims in plans.	Discuss symbols and actions of public mourning and memorial.
Stage 5 – (Here: x + 5 - 6d) Core functions of recovery and rebuilding confidence **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• A memorial service is held that is attended by high-ranking politicians. • One day later the funeral is held. It is restricted to family members only but camera teams try to get close to the graveyard. • A virtual book of condolence is opened on the internet. • Media report on the memorial service and summarise the course of the events of the last days. • The family of the victim demands the urgent capture and prosecution of the perpetrators.	• Evaluating media reporting. • Co-ordination of follow-ups.	• Update information, announcement of memorial service.	Plan follow-up communication actions for rebuilding confidence.

Sequence of events	Co-ordination	Communication	Training tasks
• Two perpetrators are caught.	• Co-ordination about who has the lead in communicating investigation results.	• Information to family, media and public. • Press conference.	
Stage 6 - (Here: x + 7 d <) Lessons learned and return to normality **Please note: Timing and duration of stages vary in case of hostage taking / kidnapping**			
• The media attention and discussions about the incident decline. • It is announced, that the prosecution of the perpetrators will take place within the next month.	• Evaluating internal investigations and procedures. • Internal debriefing: potential areas of improvement.	• Closing press information or press conference: summary of events, status of investigations in the hunt for the perpetrators, security measures implemented.	Analysis and lessons learned: • Crisis communication management • Tools and skills • Preparation measures.

10 <u>Checklists for crisis communication and crisis preparedness</u>

The following checklists give a condensed overview of the most important actions, tools and preparations for crisis communication after terrorist attacks.

Like all descriptions, notes and advice given in this manual, these checklists are not "ready-to-use" solutions, because each organisation has its own special procedures and preconditions.

Instead, the checklists should be used as an aide memoire for preparing effective crisis communication and could be used as practical templates for crisis preparedness and crisis communication.

10.1 Analysis of terrorism crisis communication preparedness

Checklist crisis preparedness analysis		
	Yes	No
Do you have a professional communication team?		
Is this team prepared and well-staffed for high-level crisis communication?		
Does the communication team have experience in online communication / social media?		
Do you have an appointed spokespeople?		
Are other employees defined and prepared to build a support team?		
Are the members of the crisis communication team and spokespeople available24/7? How fast could you join your team in case of holidays, weekend or night? Are the contact lists complete and up-to-date?		
Do you have a crisis communication plan with procedures, defined responsibilities and reporting lines for high-level crisis communication?		
Are these procedures up-to-date and well-known within the communication team and the extended / support functions?		
Is the capacity of your communication channels and instruments sufficient for high-level crises?		
Do you have procedures, action plans or scenarios for: • High-level crises? • Crisis communication after terrorist attacks?		
Do you conduct regular training and meetings: Within the communication team? With the crisis management team? With other crisis teams (e.g. emergency response drills locally or nationally)?		
Do you have close contacts to the persons who are responsible for crisis management within your organisation?		
Do you know the persons who are responsible for crisis management / crisis communication: • In superior authorities, national crisis committees and government? • In other organisations (e.g. rescue and security services, hospitals)? In addition, do they know who is responsible for crisis communication in your organisation		

Checklist crisis preparedness analysis		
	Yes	No
Are responsibilities, reporting lines and procedures for co-ordinated crisis communication between these teams defined?		
Do you know the role and tasks of your organisation in national crisis plans regarding crisis management and crisis communication after terrorist attacks?		
Do you have close contacts to: • Journalists? • Experts of different areas? • Political parties? • Victims' organisations or other citizen's organisations? • _____? (Complete as appropriate)		

10.2 Checklist crisis communication team and tasks

Crisis communication team – core team (decision making)		
	Person Responsible	**Deputy**
Crisis Manager • Leadership of crisis communication • Decision making • Should also be a member of the crisis management team		
Crisis Coordinator • Co-ordination and interchange of actions and information • Project management • Responsible for content and action plans		
Spokesperson • Official statements and interviews • Answering media requests		
Assistant • Organisational tasks (could be more than one person)		
Crisis communication team – support team (implementation and support)		
Monitoring and issues analysis		
Social media		
Proposals - texts		
Proposals - action plans		
Distribution lists (continuous updating)		
Press hotline / E-mail • Briefing of hotline team (Q&A, updates) • Collecting and / or answering requests		
Public hotline • Briefing hotline team (Q&A, updates) • Collecting and evaluating feedback		

Crisis communication team – core team (decision making)		
	Person Responsible	**Deputy**
Technical • Extension of hotline capacities (public and press) • Central E-Mail accounts • Website access • Technical equipment: Mobile phones, laptops with mobile internet / data access, spare batteries, chargers, cameras, recorder, conference call systems • Recorded messages with website contacts and hotline numbers for waiting loops • Precautionary measures to ensure communication if the usual communication infrastructure is damaged • Badges / clothes		
Facilities • Working room for crisis communication team • Press-centre at head office • Press-centre at the scene • Room for press conferences		
Crisis communication – extended team (consultation)		
Identifying departments and areas of possible experts such as: • Psychologists • Doctors • Lawyers • Representatives of religious or ethnical communities • Communication consultants (extended staff) • _____		
Briefing and involvement of experts in training or workshops		

10.3   Checklist alert procedures and reporting lines

Alert procedures and reporting lines - determining directives		
	Person Responsible	**Channel**
What directives for reporting / information lines does your organisation have in general?		
Who is responsible for alerting the crisis communication team? How is this achieved?		
Who else must be informed / alerted by the crisis communication team (Alerting extended / support team)?		
From whom does the crisis communication team get the initial and the ongoing information about what happened and what actions are planned?		
To whom does the crisis communication team report? Who has the overall lead of crisis management?		
Who approves the communication strategy and the action plans?		
Who examines the content of communication (Quality check)?		
Who approves the content of communication?		

10.4 Checklist situation analysis

Checklist situation analysis
What has happened?
How many people have been injured / killed?
Who are the perpetrators?
What damage has been caused?
Is there still a security risk?
Have there been pre-warnings or security defects?
What are the effects of the attack on • Population • Individual people • Prominent persons • Infrastructure • Security
Which rescue operations have been initialised?
Should citizens be informed about special rules of behaviour or actions (e.g. donating blood, security measures, traffic)?
Who are the target groups and what are their communication requirements? • Victims / families of victims • Media (local, national, international, newswires) • Population • Other authorities • Politicians and political parties • Organisations (e.g. victims', religious, political) • Employees/colleagues • Other_____
What are the main communicative issues of the attack?
Who else is involved in the crisis management and / or crisis communication?
Who are the potential players that will also be involved in communication, and with whom should communication be coordinated?

10.5 Checklist monitoring

Monitoring and issues analysis		
Overall responsibility: _____ **[Fill in name]**	**Person Responsible**	**Channel**
External monitoring services: _____ [Fill in contact details, prepare briefing and keep the assignment form available]		
Print media		
Radio / TV		
Online		
Political and governmental topics		
NGO/ citizen organisations		
Perpetrators and their supporters		
Internal feedbacks		
Other_____		
Social media		
Issues analysis and summaries		
Distribution of summaries to Crisis communication team Crisis management team Other involved authorities / crisis team Other_____		

10.6 Checklist one-voice communication

Checklist one-voice communication and tools			
	Responsible		
	Draft	Review	Approval
Core messages			
On-hold statement			
Press information			
Q&A • Master Q&A • Excerpt for public hotline • Excerpt for press hotline			
Background information			
Website / Dark site			
Press release			
Statements			
Radio / TV / online messages and videos			
Prescribed terminology and contact details for employees at • Switchboard • Employees with contact to citizens			
Images			
Symbols			

10.7 Checklist crisis communication with victims and their families

Crisis communication with victims and their families			
		Responsible	
	Tools / channels	**Implementation**	**Involved**
Identification and contact details (only for internal use)			
Initial information, condolences	Personal		
Protection measures (psychological, if required media support and training)			
Updating information about • Situation • Investigation results • Communication measures			
Involvement into actions, e.g. memorial services			
Other_____			

10.8 Checklist crisis communication with other target groups (template)

Crisis communication with _____[Fill in target group]			
		Responsible	
	Tools / channels	**Implementation**	**Involved**
Distribution lists / channels			
Core messages			
Basic information			
Messages of condemnation			
Contact details hotlines, website, press-centre			
Safety instructions			
Behavioural instructions			
Traffic instructions			
Update information / messages forthcoming about • Investigations • Rescue actions • Recovering core functions • Consequences			
Invitation press conference			
Information / invitation memorial services			
Lessons learned, analysis			

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