Dover Air Force Base 436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs
Crisis Communications Plan

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Purpose Of A Communications Plan

The purpose of this communications plan stands to prepare the Public Affairs team of the 436th Airlift Wing for any and all possible crises, and inform its members on how to properly execute crisis communications protocol. Each member should be well versed in these protocols in order to maintain a transparent and safe environment on base.

Mission Statement

This plan aims to educate the team on the proper methods necessary to deescalate a situation and provide assurance to the members of the community and the Airmen on base. The job of the Public Affairs office includes keeping both the public community and the community of Airmen stationed at the DAFB informed and aware. While public relations issues arise in the media, it is our job to address these issues in a quick and calm manner, providing assurance and truth to those affected (See Identify The Audiences). Timeliness is of the utmost importance in a crisis, as a delay in response time allows from misinformation and doubt to spread. This is the purpose of the Crisis Communications Plan.

The goal of the 436th Airlift Wing in a crisis is to reassure members of Team Dover that the crisis is under control and being managed. This must be done swiftly and concisely to ensure everyone affected is able to perform their duties as usual. Additionally It is the PA office's responsibility to keep the reputation of the DAFB positive, in the public's eyes. While Team Dover members are our first priority, the public is our second.

Communications Chain of Command

The chain of command in the Public Affairs Wing of the 436th Airlift Wing is congruent with military ranking. The purpose of this chain of command is to ensure every necessary party is informed on the crisis. Additionally, following this chain of command ensures a crisis de escalation operates smoothly, and only the correct information is released to the public.

In the presence of a crisis, first the CHIEF OFFICER must be alerted. They will then assess the issue and delegate to the following officers/airmen. Once a response has been drafted it must be approved before being published.

Assess The Crisis

In order to properly confront and resolve a crisis, an analysis of the crisis must first be done.

1. Identify Potential Crisis Scenarios: Brainstorm potential crises that could affect the DAFB and its public, considering both internal and external factors.

2. Assess highest risks: Assess the likelihood and effects of each possible crisis, and prioritize them based on severity.

3. Define Crisis Management Personnel: Gather appropriate Personnel and define roles within the 436th AW Public Affairs Team and prepare for crisis response.

4. Gather Information: Collect data on past incidents, who was affected, and how they were dealt with in the past.

5. Conduct Risk Assessments: Evaluate any possible vulnerabilities within the base or Team Dover that could worsen the situation

6. Engage Commanding Officers: Keep all required commanding officers informed of ongoing crisis and plan to resolve it.

7. Evaluate Communication Channels: Review communication channels (see "Communication Channels) for misinformation being spread to better understand the crisis, prepare accordingly.

8. Develop Response Protocols: Create detailed protocols for responding to each crisis scenario, including escalation pathways and communication plans.

9. MARE Practice: (See "MARE") Conduct frequent MARE exercises to ensure the team is prepared for every scenario

10. Maintain Relationships with Media: Keep in communication with local media outlets to increase de escalation measures.

11. Develop Key Messages: Evaluate what message needs to be shared with the affected audience and public, prepare multiple messages to release.

12. Rehearse Crisis Responses: Rehearse different crises and responses to ensure personnel are prepped and capable of managing crisis.

13. Prepare Crisis Communication Materials: Develop press releases, social media posts, and website updates tailored for each crisis scenario.

14. Establish a Crisis Communication Center: Crisis Communications center is the Public Affairs Office on base, with the exception of any extreme measures prohibiting access to the office.

15. Update Plans: Regularly review and update the crisis communications plans based on experience and information gained/ change in personnel.

16. Conduct Post-Crisis Reviews: Post-Crisis evaluation of de escalation and response times/ messaging should be done regularly.

17. Commanding Officer Feedback: Request feedback on performance from Commanding Officers to ensure the PA team is accomplishing its goals.

18. Maintain Transparency: Communicate openly and transparently with affected parties, public, and Commanding Officers throughout the crisis management process.

19. Stay Informed: It is important to keep up to date with crisis response trends in order to remain as effective as possible.

Hazard Assessment

1. Identify and characterize the hazards.
    Identify types of natural disasters the installation is susceptible to (i.e., hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.) Identify types of major accidents possible (i.e., aircraft, munitions, fuel storage, etc.) What additional hazards do they project?

2. Evaluate each hazard for severity and frequency.
    Review historical data to determine frequency.
 What actions may help reduce the severity of these hazards?

3. Estimate the risk.
    Identify and quantify what missions or areas are potentially affected by these hazards.

4. Determine the operational implications and costs of the direct and indirect effects of the identified hazards.

5. Determine the acceptable risks.
    What level of damage or mission loss can be accepted?

6. Identify risk reduction opportunities.
　　This step takes mitigation actions to reduce the threat or impact of the hazard.

Identifying Audiences

　　Identifying the affected audience is of the utmost importance in a crisis. First define who/what group is affected, and establish clear communications with said group. Be prepared before establishing communications, a basic statement assuring the audience that the crisis is being handled may be enough to begin reducing rumors and/or misinformation.
Find the affected audience and communicate with them ASAP, use this chart of contact information.

677-BASE - (302) 677-2273
AAFES Exchange - (302) 678-2515
AAFES Express & Gas Station - (302) 744-8049
AAFES Theater - (302) 677-6890
Aero Club - (302) 677-6365
Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations (AFMAO) - (302) 677-2275
AFMES (Armed Forces Medical Examiner System) - (302) 346-8648
Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Det. 306 (AFOSI) - (302) 677-2852
Air Mobility Command (AMC) Museum - (302) 677-5938
Airman's Attic - (302) 677-3731
Arts & Crafts Center - (302) 677-3242
Auto Hobby Shop - (302) 677-3249
Barber Shop - (302) 734-1747
Base Operator - (302) 677-3000
Base Pool - (302) 677-3558
Bedrock - (302) 677-4807
Burger King - (302) 734-7464
Child Development Center (CDC) - (302) 677-3716
Command Post - (302) 677-4201
Commissary - (302) 677-4189 / (302) 677-3919
Dental Clinic - (302) 677-2846
Dining Facility - (302) 677-3926
Dorm 401 Management - (302) 677-4517
Dorm 402 Management - (302) 677-4585
Dorm 414 Management - (302) 677-3113
Dorm 430 Management - (302) 677-2107
Dorm 435 Management - (302) 677-2074

Dorm 445 Management - (302) 677-4517
Dover Federal Credit Union - (302) 678-8000
Eagle Creek Golf Course - (302) 677-2988
Eagle Lanes Bowling Center - (302) 677-3950
Eagle's Rest Inn - (302) 677-2840 / (302) 677-2841
Education and Training Center - (302) 677-4630
Family Child Care - (302) 677-6115
Finance Office - (302) 677-4486
Fitness Center - (302) 677-3962
FREDS - (302) 677-5323
Military Housing Office - (302) 677-6969
ID Card Section/RAPIDS - (302) 677-4585 / (302) 677-5050
Information, Tickets & Travel (ITT) - (302) 677-6772
In-Service Guard Recruiter - (302) 677-5024
In-Service Reserve Recruiter - (302) 677-6983 / (302) 382-9469
Legal - (302) 677-3300
Major George S. Welch Elementary School - (302) 674-9080
Medical Appointment Line - (302) 730-4633
Military and Family Life Counselor - (302) 898-4126
Military & Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) - (302) 677-6930
Military Clothing Store - (302) 674-3512
Mugs Coffee Bar - (302) 677-4879
Newspaper - (302) 677-3372
Optical Center - (302) 730-8784
Outdoor Recreation - (302) 677-3959
Passenger Terminal (Space-A Travel) - (302) 677-4088
Post Office - (302) 677-6196
Retiree Services - (302) 677-4612
Shoppette - (302) 674-3551
Subway - (302) 857-3885
The Cleaners - (302) 736-5171
The Grill at Eagle Creek (302) 677-6024
The Landings - (302) 677-6024
Traffic Management Office Personal Property - (302) 677-4386
USO Delaware - (302) 677-2491
Veterinary Treatment Facility - (302) 677-5252
Visitor Control Center (Pass and Registration) - (302) 677-3645
Youth Center - (302) 677-6376

Communication Channels

There are various ways to spread information and updates about a crisis, all of them must be used in the case of a crisis. The communication channels in order or importance are as follows:

- 436th Airlift Wing Newsletter
- Social media pages
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
- On Base Electronic Signage

Additionally, prioritize the contact list provided above in order to confirm communications with the affected parties.

Lockdown

In the event of a lockdown, procedure must be followed. Every individual on base, including guests, must restrict their movement. Included in this is entrance and exit gates. All gates must close, and no personnel is allowed to enter or exit the base until an all clear is broadcasted over the base. Lockdown includes staying in the area each individual is currently located, unless required to remove oneself from a dangerous location or situation.

Actions:

- Secure buildings
- (lock doors) and secure inner offices to afford protection to

Personnel.

Personal Actions:

- Lock inner doors,
- turn off lights,
- Close Blinds,
- turn off radio's/TV's
- restrict movement and have a plan to securely block doors from inside offices

Per AFD 120406-006

Shelter In Place

Shelter in place is a command used to protect individuals on base from weather related conditions, terrorist activity, or aerosol biohazards. Shelter in place requires all individuals remain or move to a safe indoor location until the all clear is broadcasted.

Possible Announcement Broadcasts

As outlined in the AF1 publication: https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/eglinafb/publication/eglinafbva10-2501/eglinafbva10-2501.pdf
"FPCON DELTA: Applies in the immediate area where a terrorist attack has occurred or when intelligence has been received that terrorist action against a specific location or person is imminent. DELTA is usually declared as a localized condition. DELTA measures are not intended to be sustained for an extended duration.

FPCON CHARLIE: Applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist action or targeting against personnel or facilities is likely. Prolonged implementation of CHARLIE measures may create hardship and affect the activities of the unit and its personnel.

FPCON BRAVO: Applies when an increased or more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. Sustaining BRAVO measures for a prolonged period may affect operational capability/relations with local authorities.

FPCON ALPHA: Applies when there is an increased general threat of possible terrorist activity against personnel or facilities, the nature and extent of which are unpredictable, and circumstances do not justify full implementation of FPCON BRAVO measures. However, it may be necessary to implement certain measures from higher FPCON measures resulting from intelligence received or as a deterrent."

MARE (Major Accident Response Exercises)

In the event of an extreme crisis, it is important to be prepared. In order to be fully prepared for any crisis, a Major Accident Response Exercise should be performed quarterly. The MARE allows the team to prepare for the worst case scenario.

Preparation Phase:
a. Planning and Coordination: Establish an exercise planning team comprising representatives from various base units, emergency services, and external agencies if necessary.
b. Risk Assessment: Identify potential hazards and risks associated with the exercise scenario.
c. Exercise Objectives: Define clear, measurable objectives aligned with the base's emergency response goals.

d. Scenario Development: Develop a realistic exercise scenario that simulates a major accident or disaster, considering factors such as type of incident, location, magnitude, and impact.
e. Logistics and Resources: Ensure availability of necessary equipment, personnel, and facilities for the exercise.
f. Communication Plan: Establish communication protocols and procedures for coordinating response efforts during the exercise.

Training and Briefing Phase:
a. Training Sessions: Conduct training sessions to familiarize participants with their roles and responsibilities during the exercise.
b. Briefings: Provide comprehensive briefings to all participants, including exercise objectives, scenario details, safety protocols, and rules of engagement.

Execution Phase:
a. Activation: Initiate the exercise by simulating the occurrence of the major accident or disaster.
b. Response Actions: Execute emergency response procedures according to established protocols, including notification, assessment, containment, mitigation, and recovery.
c. Coordination: Ensure effective coordination among all involved units and agencies, including Air Force personnel, local emergency services, law enforcement, medical teams, and support agencies.
d. Decision Making: Make timely and informed decisions based on the evolving situation and available resources.
e. Communication: Maintain clear and constant communication channels to facilitate information sharing and coordination of response efforts.

Evaluation Phase:
a. Debriefing: Conduct debriefing sessions immediately after the exercise to gather feedback and lessons learned from participants.
b. After-Action Review (AAR): Analyze the exercise performance against established objectives, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
c. Documentation: Document exercise outcomes, observations, and recommendations for future enhancements to emergency response capabilities.
d. Reporting: Prepare and submit exercise reports to appropriate authorities for review and follow-up actions.

Follow-up Actions:
a. Corrective Actions: Implement corrective actions based on lessons learned and recommendations from the exercise evaluation.
b. Training and Drills: Schedule regular training sessions and drills to maintain readiness and improve response capabilities.

c. Continual Improvement: Continuously review and update emergency response plans, procedures, and resources to adapt to evolving threats and lessons learned from real-world incidents and exercises.

Post Crisis Evaluation

Revisit all affected parties frequently in order to continue to build trust. Additionally, maintain frequent updates via communication channels to increase trust and reduce uncertainty. Frequently check in with the community, affected audiences, and Commanding Officers. Meet with Team Dover to evaluate what went well and areas for improvement. Outline the main issues or problems that occurred and create plans to resolve them in the future.

Sources

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Lockdown vs. shelter in place force protection ... (2014, June 5). https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/eglinafb/publication/eglinafbva10-2501/eglinafbva10-2501.pdf