

THE ROLE OF RISK AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION IN MANAGING DELIBERATE RELEASE INCIDENTS

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Background: The objective of WP7 of JA TERROR is to promote the implementation of Risk and Crisis Communication at all stages of risk management, on both national and EU level.

During a crisis or emergency, communication to the public may include media releases, website content, talking points for spokespersons, interviews, social media posts, public service announcements and advertising. It is important to determine which populations are at greater risk and use the most appropriate methods to reach both them and the public.

In addition to providing accurate and timely information, informative material for the public must also address and deal with misconceptions, misinformation and rumours.

Communication planning must be an integral part of Generic Plans, including the development of country-level technical guidance as well as public information and training.

Methods and Objectives: The main objective of the document is to provide practical information on how to manage the flow of risk and crisis communication among stakeholders and the public in the event of a biological or chemical terror attack. The guidance tool is evidence-based as it based on best practices and after-action reviews from the COVID-19 pandemic

Results: The recommendations derived in this guideline are given from a health sector perspective but should be applicable to all sectors with the responsibility to public health in the event of a biological or chemical terror attack, for example, both for the health, security, and civil protection sectors. They have been defined, grouped and presented per each phase in the emergency management cycle and should be considered in developing, updating, or revising the national, sector, and facility emergency management plans.

Conclusions:

- Rapid, open, and coordinated communication with the public can determine to what degree terrorists will succeed with their intentions. Therefore, risk communication should be considered as a foundation for national security.
- Social media is a leading channel for communication that should be used in a dialogical way
- Disinformation should be monitored and handled

Keywords: Risk, Crisis, Communication, Terrorist incident