



BMW Car Club of America, Inc.

Crisis Response &  
Communication Planning  
Workbook

Prepared for the Chapters of the BMW Car Club of America, Inc.

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# **Crisis Response & Communication Planning Workbook**

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# Crisis Response & Communications PLAN – Workbook

Your Chapter has already received the Crisis Communications Procedures for the club (available from the National Office or on the [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org) website). This is the workbook section of the BMW CCA’s crisis communications plan --- designed to walk you through the development of your chapter’s crisis communications plan. This section includes worksheets and checklists to facilitate the process.

## 1. Identify the crisis planning team

A crisis-planning team is composed of a core group of managers from all sectors of your chapter. It is important to note that these individuals may or may not serve later on as your on-going crisis response team. At this point, their purpose is to give you the perspectives of all the key issues you may face: quality control, safety, transportation, legal, and communications.

Crisis Planning Team Members (List as many as applicable):

<b>Crisis Planning Team Members</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>CHAPTER POSITION</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION (TEL./FAX. NOS., EMAIL, ETC.)</b>

## 2. The Crisis Audit

Assess your chapter’s present situation by conducting a "crisis audit." This means taking a very close look at your chapter operations and identifying potential vulnerabilities and possible crisis scenarios. It also means documenting current procedures and policies of your chapter —especially those regarding good practices and minimum standards, including those to reduce risks related to driving events; and, what mechanisms are in place for communicating externally and internally.

### 2.1 Evaluating Crisis Potential

#### a) Size/Scope of your chapter

Information related to size is important because the bigger and more diverse your chapter, the greater the possibility for problems to occur. By taking a hard look at the size and complexity of your chapter, you will get a better sense of how a crisis would affect your operations. The information can also be used as a part of a fact sheet for dissemination to media and other key audiences.

#### Chapter Information

Number of Members:	
Chapter Financial Status:	
Locations of Meetings:	
Locations of Events (tracks, parks, autocross courses):	
Number of Attendees:	
Years the Chapter has been in existence:	
Track Safety record:	

**b) Public profile**

Information on perceptions of your chapter can help determine how big a "target" you may be in a crisis. If formal research on consumer perception of your club/chapter has been conducted on this area, include it here and use it in the team discussion. Assess the following:

- visibility among members and potential members
- relations with special-interest groups (list those you work with)
- relations with event venues (list all venues you work with)
- relations with other clubs (list all of your national, regional, and local affiliations)
- relations with vendors/sponsors (list all of your national, regional, and local vendors/sponsors)

Documenting this information will help you identify resources for information and support during a crisis. Make sure your contacts are current.

**c) Potential vulnerabilities and possible crisis scenarios**

Identify potential vulnerabilities and possible crisis scenarios (e.g. a chapter related accident resulting in significant property damage, the death or serious illness or injury of a chapter volunteer, or contractor at a chapter event, sudden death or incapacitation of a key chapter volunteer, any natural disaster that disrupts a chapter event or endangers chapter members, violence involving chapter members or contractors etc.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

**d) Establish Monitoring (Early Warning) Systems**

In many crisis situations, there are warning signs. If detected early enough, they can help the crisis team better prepare for and manage crises, minimizing the impact on the organization.

The crisis audit should provide a good list of the key issues to monitor. Some may be internal, such as member-relations problems, and operational procedures. Others will be external -- the actions of public interest groups, or media coverage of related events. Each member of the crisis response team can be assigned a key issue to monitor in the following ways:

- subscribe to and track publications and newsletters specific to the issue.
- monitor special-interest groups pertinent to the issue.
- establish contacts within regulatory agencies, state health departments, trade associations, and other organizations who can provide "intelligence" on emerging issues and serve as resource in times of crisis.
- ask the public relations director or outside public relations counsel to provide additional monitoring through major media, wire services, and the Internet.

A system should be established for keeping the crisis team up to date on each issue. It is up to the members of the organization to decide how updates should be handled.

e) **Assessing the severity of a Sudden Crisis**

<p><b>Sudden Level 1</b> Can be handled by on-duty chapter volunteers responsible for responding to and managing this kind of situation.</p>	<p><b>Example</b> A careless student leaves oily rags in the garage area at a driving school. Spontaneous combustion occurs. Luckily the fire is discovered and extinguished quickly by one of the building maintenance men.</p>
<p><b>Sudden Level 2</b> Can be handled by the chapter volunteers who respond, with support from other volunteers on duty or chapter principals who may have to be called in from their homes.</p>	<p><b>Example</b> The fire is out but heat and smoke damaged tables and other items belonging to the venue in the garage area. The track managers are irate and threaten to sue.</p>
<p><b>Sudden Level 3</b> Requires additional resources and people beyond the regular chapter volunteers. This requires the chapter spokesperson or the National Office consultants.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> The fire was not discovered in time and spreads outside the stall into other stalls nearby. The fire department is called and puts out the blaze but it has severely damaged three vehicles. Two TV news stations cover the story and report that the fire was thought to have been caused by arson.</p>
<p><b>Sudden Level 4</b> The situation is out of control and will impact an extended area and numerous people indefinitely. Business will have to be curtailed or discontinued and employees diverted from their normal duties until it is resolved. Other employees may have to be furloughed, vendors ordered not to make deliveries, etc.  Requires additional resources and people beyond the regular chapter volunteers. This requires the chapter spokesperson, the National Office and the club's Risk Manager, and will be supplemented by the club's law firm.  Note: Local emergency response agencies will be actively involved. State and federal agencies also may be called in.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> The fire spreads throughout the entire garage. High winds send cinders into the paddock area causing additional fires and forcing the evacuation of the track and residents in the area. The fire department calls in all available equipment from the city and surrounding areas to control the numerous fires.  Local TV stations feed the story to their networks and it is carried on the evening news programs, with the suspected cause of the fire (arson) mentioned in the reports.</p>

**f) Assessing the Severity of a Smoldering Crisis**

The following crisis classifications have been established to ensure consistency in assessment of any smoldering crisis situation so that the proper response can be developed to minimize the potential of the crisis going "public" or to reduce the damage to our club if public disclosure cannot be avoided.

<p><b>Smoldering Level 1</b> An internal chapter problem or disruption that can be dealt with and resolved by chapter management responsible for responding to this kind of situation.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> A disgruntled volunteer who has been producing the chapter newsletter for some time has become more and more disgruntled and threatens to disclose internal policies which he feels are illegal or unethical to “the proper authorities” unless his grievances are resolved and he receives compensation for his ‘volunteer’ efforts.</p>
<p><b>Smoldering Level 2</b> An internal problem that can be managed by those who are responsible for this area of chapter business, with support from other chapter management or national staff who may have to be brought in to assess the situation and help resolve it.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> The disgruntled volunteer files a complaint with the National Board, which contacts the chapter for a response to the allegations. He calls the chapter President to say that he has documents the chapter certainly would not want National or the news media to see because they will show that the chapter board has compromised the not-for-profit standing of the club through for-profit activities that have ultimately accrued to the personal financial benefit of the chapter president and his cronies.</p>
<p><b>Smoldering Level 3</b> An internal problem that has the potential of going “public” via the news media and generating negative reactions from government officials, plaintiff’s attorneys, competitors, investors consumer activists, labor unions, etc.  The crisis can still be contained but will require specialized assistance beyond the management capabilities in place to deal with normal business problems. This assistance may be from corporate headquarters, outside legal counsel, and/or consultants who specialize in resolving this kind of problem.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> An attorney for the disgruntled volunteer indicates his client has documents that are highly damaging to the club since they represent illegal or unethical actions. He is willing to settle the dispute for a specified, highly exorbitant, fee. If they are forced to file suit, the documents will be disclosed to the news media.  A copy of one of the documents is provided to the attorneys for the chapter. The chapter attorneys conclude they were illegally copied by the volunteer and therefore represent stolen information.</p>
<p><b>Smoldering Level 4</b> The situation is very serious and is likely to be disclosed publicly in the very near future. The public reaction will have a significant adverse impact on the club for a period of weeks or months and top management along with numerous volunteers and outside consultants will have to be diverted from their normal activities to resolve this situation. The financial impact on both the national organization and the chapter may be substantial and will have a direct and indirect effect on operating results.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> The dispute and financial settlement cannot be resolved and the Newsletter Editor’s attorneys are preparing to file suit, which will be at any time.  A producer for a network television news magazine contacts the club seeking general background information on its business and ethical standards for a story they are developing. No mention is made of the disgruntled volunteer.</p>

**g) Documenting current procedures and policies**

Documenting current procedures and policies of your chapter -- especially those regarding good practices, including those to reduce risk of driving incidents; and, what mechanisms are in place for communicating externally and internally.

List of current procedures and policies that need to be examined and documented:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared club policies and statements regarding the following may be appropriate (check all that apply):

- Critical Control Points (CCPs)
- Quality and/or safety control systems
- Ethical Standards
- Others (Include any others not mentioned here)

It is also prudent to:

- Evaluate and analyze the probability of certain threats occurring
- Define the problems such events would present
- Establish actions and measures to take to reduce the risks that such events would pose; and
- Protect chapter assets, members and others if such events were to occur

**3. Identification and Location of Resources**

Identify all communications resources that would be needed during a crisis and document where they are located and/or how to obtain them (e.g. extra phone lines, fax machines, computer(s) for emailing and web updates, telephones, web master, government resources, etc.)

COMMUNICATION RESOURCES		
RESOURCE	LOCATION	HOW TO OBTAIN IT

#### 4. Crisis response team members and responsibilities

(Note: It may be necessary to do this on a case-by-case basis.) There are two important matters to consider in this section:

##### a) Selecting the crisis team members and spokesperson:

###### i. Qualifications for crisis management team members

The people selected for the Crisis Management Team should generally have the same qualities that make good managers in any situation. The team should include people who are:

- Perceptive Intuitive
- Knowledgeable in one or more functional area of club procedures and standards
- Able to accept additional responsibility
- Clear thinkers
- Decisive
- Calm under stress
- Capable problem solvers

List candidates:

##### b) Qualifications for and identification of spokesperson(s)

Selecting the right crisis communications spokesperson is essential. How your chapter handles all aspects of the communications necessary during a crisis will either make or break this association in the eyes of the public. As well, having one spokesperson for all media communications is best to ensure the consistency of messages and response communications. But it is also prudent to identify a back-up person in the event that the main, or delegated, spokesperson is unavailable or is implicated in the crisis.

To be effective, a crisis communication spokesperson must:

- be someone of sufficient authority to be accepted as speaking for the chapter; possess relevant technical knowledge about the crisis;
- be able to express technical knowledge in a way that can be understood by the news - media and the average person;
- be able to respond to sensitive questions;
- be resourceful and a quick learner;
- be able to make decisions;
- possess excellent communication skills
- be able to work well under pressure
- be perceived as highly credible by the news media and the public; be able to learn from mistakes

Other Deciding Factors:

- resources for identifying and training chapter spokespersons
- severity of the crisis
- liabilities, for the person or for the chapter
- conflicts with other crisis management responsibilities
- anticipated legal issues
- expected level of media interest
- expected level of public interest
- expected level of government involvement

Candidates \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Outline the team members and their responsibilities. The crisis team members may include other key volunteers and outside volunteers. Your chapter's team will need to be customized to fit your needs. See appendix A for an example of a chapter crisis team with the responsibilities of each member outlined.

<b>CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TEAM</b>	
<b>TEAM MEMBER</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>

**c) Decide on response levels/Teams**

**Level I: Plan implementation**

Outline all parties involved in deciding to activate the response plan.

<b>Response Level I -- Plan Activation</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>CHAPTER POSITION</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION (TEL./FAX. NOS., EMAIL, ETC.)</b>

**Level II: Rapid response**

The response is to be managed by a team responsible for coordinating the chapter's response. List all level II members and contact numbers/email. Also list resources (PR firms, etc) for the level II team. The team should be in constant contact throughout the crisis period.

<b>RESPONSE LEVEL II – RAPID RESPONSE</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>CHAPTER POSITION</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION (TEL./FAX. NOS., EMAIL, ETC.)</b>

### Level III: Crisis communications

This group is responsible for carrying out communications with key audiences (List audience/responsibility). The level III team should meet as often as necessary and be provided with information sources and materials for distribution. The team can meet by conference call, and meetings should probably be at least daily in the first few days.

RESPONSE LEVEL III – CRISIS COMMUNICATION			
NAME	CHAPTER POSITION	CONTACT INFORMATION (TEL./FAX. NOS., EMAIL, ETC.)	AUDIENCE/ RESPONSIBILITY

### 5. Contact Lists

Create Emergency telephone lists and contact information for the following communication channels/information sources:

#### a) Key chapter members list

These people are those who need to be contacted in the event of a crisis – this list should be current and will reflect the contact information that will be placed on the chapter contact cards.

KEY CHAPTER MEMBERS				
NAME	RANK	LOCATION	PHONE/FAX	EMAIL ADDRESS
	President			
	Treasurer			
	Driving Events			
	Chapter Contact			
	Spokesperson			

#### b) National list

Not all of these people will need to be contacted for each crisis, but their contact information will be available if the crisis affects them. This information is always contained on the VIP page of Roundel magazine.

NATIONAL CONTACT LIST				
NAME	RANK	LOCATION	PHONE/FAX	EMAIL ADDRESS
Bruce Hazard	President	Denver, CO	(303) 324-6541	president@bmwcca.org
Mark Jon Calabrese	Vice-president	Germantown, TN	(901) 759 9085	evp@bmwcca.org
Louis Goldsman	Treasurer	Newbury Park, CA	(805) 499-3849	treasurer@bmwcca.org
JR Schneider	Secretary	Oklahoma City, OK	(405) 552-5256	secretary@bmwcca.org
	Regional VP			
	RAC			
Frank Patek	Executive Director	Greenville, SC	(864) 250-0022	Frank_patek@bmwcca.org

**c) Federal government/regional government/public health officer checklist**

This checklist will ensure the necessary officials are contacted and are aware of the situation. This list should be updated every six months to ensure accuracy.

<b>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT/REGIONAL GOVERNMENT/ PUBLIC HEALTH</b>		
<b>OFFICERS</b>	<b>BRANCH/OFFICE</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>

**d) Template of other organizations and stakeholders**

This will be an exhaustive list of like organizations and stakeholders. Not all of these will need to be contacted for each issue, but their name; their contact person and phone/fax will be readily available.

<b>COMMODITY/OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS</b>		
<b>ORGANIZATION/ STAKEHOLDER</b>	<b>CONTACT NAME</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>

**e) Members list**

This will be a complete listing of members that the organization represents. This type of list will prove to be useful in event that important information regarding actions needs to be disseminated to the producers themselves.

<b>MEMBERS CONTACT LIST</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION</b>

The communication/notification section should also include:

For each scenario, outline to whom and where information relevant to the crisis situation will be disseminated and through which channels e.g.

- add an update/info page on web site specifically for the crisis situation
- broadcast FAX to association leaders, member organizations, and stakeholder organizations
- broadcast FAX to retail partners
- news releases/statements to consumer media and trade media
- networking resources employed by level III staff (telephone, email, listserv, Fax)

Vehicles for notifying key audiences include:

- internal mechanisms for reaching consumers, employees, sales force, etc.
- customer hotline
- mailing lists/fax numbers for local, regional, and federal government offices
- mailing lists/fax numbers for customers, suppliers, distributors, unions, interest groups, trade associations, etc.

## 6. Developing Crisis Scenario Modules

### Initial Action Steps

- 1) **Assess the situation**, if necessary call for rescue or law enforcement, and communicate facts only to attendees and members.
- 2) **Deploy chapter staff to cover critical areas.**
  - Assign liaison with the venue.
  - Reach out to meet the immediate needs of affected members and other victims (relatives, onlookers), both on-site and one-on-one.
  - Cover phones and provide volunteers answering them with current, accurate information.
  - Jumpstart correspondence and communication to members.
- 3) **Ensure provisions are in place to notify all club volunteers and answer their primary information needs**, which include:
  - what happened and when,
  - who's OK and who's not, and
  - how to get help and how to provide help.
- 4) **Educate members and others about signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and advocate for support in dealing with it.**
- 5) **Manage the media and the message.** Focus on constructive, healing messages.
- 6) **Advocate for and communicate member needs** to the venue, the media and the community.

### Take Action at Critical Stages

Although crises vary dramatically, crisis response experts have identified key stages that evolve in a crisis. Following is a description of significant time periods. Critical time frames will vary for every situation, so they should not be considered "the rule" for all situations. Although arbitrary, they can provide insight into the impact of time on crisis response and will help crisis responders anticipate needs.

The chronology outlined in the following pages:

- looks at the action typically taken in a defined time period,
- examines the challenges encountered, and
- provides suggested responses.

It's important that the chapter's crisis response plan **includes specific action and direction for each stage of a crisis and designates volunteers responsible for delivering that action.** The plan should provide a structure for action through flowcharts and/or checklists.

The chapter plan should also allocate time and resources for team crisis response practice drills to make this action and assuming of roles second nature. Practice and preparedness is critical to the club's performance and effectiveness in the first three days. The team must carry out roles with the kind of organization, confidence and authority that can only be accomplished through practice.

### Anatomy of a Crisis

**Immediate Needs** (the first 72 hours).

The immediate need for individuals who experience tragedy at an event is to be together. They need first-hand knowledge of each other's location and condition. There is a deep need to come together and experience the physical presence of all fellow attendees. A verbal report or printed list of those in attendance at the event is not adequate. These **reunion meetings** should take place before leaving the venue on the day of the tragedy or as soon as practical.

The reunion meetings also allow unstructured time for everyone to "put the pieces together" with their colleagues - to tell what they had experienced and hear from others about their experience. Outside counselors or psychologists are generally not welcomed in a structured role at this point, unless they only act as observers or gentle facilitators. Chapter leaders can use these gathering places to glean information about member needs to effectively advocate for them. (Questions will begin to emerge about "what happens now", etc.)

This is also a good time to **talk to others** outside the local area who have been through a similar crisis. The team and attendees from one chapter tragedy should be urged to contact those who have gone through similar crises at other club or chapter events.

Aside from some information that will be common to all issues, there will be key procedures specific to each priority issue. Common information that should appear at the front of each scenario in the crisis response plan are:

- Crisis team organizational chart and prescribed roles for each team member, and
- Names and phone/fax numbers (including home) of crisis team members to contact

Specific modules for each issue should be developed and include:

- a holding statement for media inquiries (e.g. the organization is aware of the situation, is investigating the details, and will inform the public as soon as the details are known). key external audiences to contact, their phone/fax numbers (e.g. customers, suppliers, distributors, health officials, growers-shippers, sales force, employees, government agencies, trade organizations, media: media contact list can be tailored to the issue, may include key reporters covering particular issue).
- designated organization spokesperson (this is critical for dealing with media). If possible use only one spokesperson to provide consistency and avoid media confusion about whom to contact. This spokesperson should be at a level within the organization that is senior enough to
  - speak with authority.
  - organization position on the issue
  - key messages
  - anticipated questions/responses
  - third-party experts (and contact information)
  - background information on topics that might be relevant to the issue (e.g. newspaper/magazine articles, copies of speeches delivered by government officials and food safety specialists, and statements/position papers issued by government agencies).

*Position Statement,/Messages Example: The ideal position on an issue is one that mutually benefits the club, the affected audiences , and the greater public good. Messages are then crafted to communicate the position, resulting in the perceptions you want to create about the club and your chapter.*

- Draft media releases and statements
- Draft news releases and statements for a few possible scenarios. These will need to be adjusted for a specific issue, but the template will be available with key message information
- Draft stakeholder letters
- A letter template (for each issue) should be included to notify and reassure stakeholders if a crisis appears.
- Media release/statement checklist

This checklist will make sure the release or statement follows a standard format, including heading, content and tone.

\*\*\* See worksheet A. Duplicate as necessary for number of scenarios.



Key external audiences to contact, their phone/fax numbers (see lists created in step 4):

<b>KEY EXTERNAL AUDIENCES</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION (Tel./Fax. Nos., Email, etc.)</b>

Third-Party Experts (and contact information):

<b>THIRD-PARTY EXPERTS</b>		
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>	<b>CONTACT INFORMATION (Tel./Fax. Nos., Email, etc.)</b>

**Question & Answer list:**

Includes as many anticipated questions as possible that a reporter or consumer may ask. The responses should be modeled after the key messages (see above)

Question 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Question 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Question 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_







**7. Crisis Documentation**

- A log of timeline and events that presented themselves during the crisis

Include a time-line/or table of response and action/reaction over the time.

<b>EVENTS AND RESOURCE LOG</b>			
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME (use 24 hour clock)</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>RESOURCES NEEDED</b>

- Log of who contacted the association

Media contacts (total number of contacts, who the contacts were, what information was requested)

<b>MEDIA CONTACTLOG</b>		
<b>DATE/TIME</b>	<b>NAME/AFFILIATION</b>	<b>INFORMATION REQUEST</b>

Consumer contacts (total number of contacts, who the contacts were, what information was requested (if possible))

<b>CONSUMER LOCONTACT LOG</b>		
<b>DATE/TIME</b>	<b>NAME/AFFILIATION</b>	<b>INFORMATION REQUEST</b>

Assess efficiency and effectiveness of response once it has been released to the appropriate audience. Rate the response effectiveness on a scale of 1 to 5, where:

- 1) not effective
- 2) effective (adequate)
- 3) very effective

<b>RESPONSE EFFECTIVENESS AUDIT</b>				
<b>EVENT</b>	<b>INFORMATION RELEASED</b>	<b>DATE/TIME OF RELEASE</b>	<b>TARGET AUDIENCE</b>	<b>RESPONSE EFFECT RATING (scale of 1-3)</b>

**8. Test out the Crisis Response Plan**

It is of utmost importance that the manual be tested—by running mock incidences—to try and work out any potential barriers to its implementation during a real crisis. An untested plan is a paper plan and is effectively an unworkable one. It is of no consequence if the incident that initiates the crisis response process is real or fabricated. It is necessary to analyze the effectiveness of the plan and to find out what works and what does not. It is not necessary to test all sections of the plan at once, which would be ideal. But ensure that all sections are assessed within six (6) months of the plan's existence.

## APPENDIX A:

Sample of a crisis management team and each individual's responsibilities (PMA, 1997).

**Senior crisis manager**—serves as the team leader, responsible for coordinating the activities of the team. Reports directly to the chapter president.

**Public relations director**—coordinates all communication activities to internal and external audiences. Prepares all media materials and memoranda; coordinates all media announcements

**Legal Representative\*** -- handles issues relating to liability

After identifying your crisis team members and crisis potential, assign each member of the crisis team or an appropriate staff person the responsibility of monitoring the issues.

## APPENDIX B:

Other Checklists

The following are checklists that may prove to be useful in developing your manual. Potential Affected Audience Checklist:

- Club Headquarters
- Local News Media
- Local Regulatory Agencies
- Emergency Responders (e.g., Fire, Police, Hospitals) General Public
- Contractors/Venues
- Shareholders
- Local SIGs and Like Organizations
- Others

Knowledge Needed Checklist:

- Concerns
- History of Relationship
- Attitudes
- Positions of Various Issues
- Levels of Knowledge
- Levels of Interest
- Levels of Involvement
- Types of Involvement

Biases

Are they: potential supporters? (Yes/No) potential adversaries? (Yes/No)

Categories of Concern Checklist:

- Health Economics
- Safety Legalities
- Environment
- Fairness

## QUESTIONS COMMONLY ASKED BY THE MEDIA IN A CRISIS

The spokesperson should have answers to these questions prepared and change/update as necessary throughout the duration of the crisis

- What is your (spokesperson's) name and title?
- What happened? (Examples: How many people were injured or killed? How much property damage occurred?) When did it happen? Where did it happen? What do you do there? Who was involved?
- Why did it happen? What was the cause?
- What are you going to do about it?
- Was anyone hurt or killed? What are their names?
- How much damage was caused?
- What effect will it have on production and employment?
- What safety measures were taken?
- Who is to blame?
- Do you accept responsibility?
- Has this ever happened before?
- What do you have to say to the victims?
- Is there danger now?
- Will there be inconvenience to the public?
- How much will it cost the organization?
- When will we find out more?

## CRISIS COMMUNICATION: SPOKESPERSON CHECKLIST

- Did you mobilize resources and volunteers quickly? Were top chapter management involved and visible? Did you go immediately to the scene?
- Did you recognize that public perceptions matter more than facts?
- Did you express and show concern, empathy, compassion consistently for damages, injuries, and any inconvenience?
- Did you emphasize dedication, commitment, and social responsibility?
- Did you provide an early or immediate apology, a list of facts, and an action plan?
- Were you open and honest about capabilities, needs, and problems?
- Did you seek outside help, including volunteers?
- Did you coordinate efforts with other emergency response organizations?
- Did you avoid the use of technical and legal jargon? Did you avoid providing too much technical detail?
- Did you know exactly what you wanted to say to the media and did you use two key messages? Did you acknowledge responsibility but avoid placing blame? Did you indicate that investigations are under way to determine the cause?
- Did you avoid conjecture and speculation ("What if" questions)?
- Did you tell the truth as best you knew it?
- Did you enlist support from credible third parties?
- Did you use examples, human interest stories, and concrete analogies to establish a common understanding?
- Did you avoid statements that imply that cost is more important than public safety, health, or environment?
- Did you stay calm? Did you ever lose your temper?
- Were you sensitive to the non-verbal messages you were communicating?
- Did you monitor and listen closely to what the news media, public officials, and other important players were saying and the questions they are asking? Did you avoid statements that appeared to be evading or shifting responsibility?
- Did you use simple visuals and graphics as much as possible? Did you ever say "no comment?"
- Did you ever go off the record?
- Were you easily accessible to the media?
- Did you control the flow of information?
- Did you withhold names of injured or deceased until next-of-kin were properly notified?
- Did you indicate that you would get back by a specific time with an answer if you did not know an answer to a question?
- Did you practice what you planned to say to the media out loud and did you test it?

## WEB SITE COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

List the resources that will be needed for updating/creating web site pages devoted to the crisis and where they are located. Such resources include computer, scanner, internet connection and phone line, web master, etc.

WEB SITE COMMUNICATION RESOURCES	
RESOURCE	LOCATION/AVAILABILITY
www.bmwcca.org	National website webmaster webmaster@bmwcca.org Executive Director frank_patek@bmwcca.org