Deanship of Information Technology

Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University Riyadh

Business Continuity Management

System Communication Procedure

Document Control

Version History

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University recognizes and acknowledges that the protection of its assets, business operations, and services is a major responsibility to safeguard the interests of its stakeholders. As part of a national initiative to automate and provide accessible services to its students, faculty, and employees, the University seeks to establish a viable plan for the recovery and continuity of its electronic services (e-services) in case of disasters.

Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University is committed to supporting resumption and recovery efforts at alternate facilities, if required. The University and its management are responsible for developing and maintaining a viable continuity & recovery plan that conforms to acceptable insurance and ethical practices, and is consistent with the provisions and direction of the University's strategic and tactical plans. The plan will also support the philosophy of providing and maintaining the highest quality of services to its students, faculty, and staff.

The Deanship of Information Technology has been established in 1430 to manage the technology and e-services at the university.

The vision of the Deanship of IT is "to enable Al Imam University to be the pioneer in the field of electronic services through the creation of a distinct integrated environment for information technology"

The mission statement is "Improving the services offered by the University and provide an environment of high-quality electronic services that are based on information and communication technology in line with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia strategies to operationalize the concept of e-government in all public universities deanships"

The main objectives of the Deanship of information technology:
- Hire the best global practices and information systems and IT tools to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the administration and regulation, as well as alignment with the e-government.
- Promote the use of information technology solutions to support the policies, processes and procedures that increase the accountability, transparency and responsibility in all functions within the university.
- Enhance the Infrastructure and IT tools that support the faculty for excellence in teaching and research development.
- Enhance the Infrastructure and IT tools that support students to develop academic success.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the "Warning and Communication Procedure & Media Response Framework" is to provide Mass Communication Officer with direction, information and resources when responding to the emergency information needs of the "Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University Riyadh – Deanship of Information Technology (IMSIU IT)". This is done so that a standardized, efficient and coordinated communications response occurs both internally and externally.

3. Scope

The scope of this Plan is intended to support communication activities from initial response through to the recovery phase of a major emergency. This plan applies to the Deanship of Information Technology (IMSIU IT).

4. Definitions

Media Material	Brochures, pamphlets or other resource tools that can be used to attract positive response.
Fact Sheet	A one page sheet that covers the five "w's" (what, who, when, why, where) and how of an event and/or provides a detailed overview that provides readily available information at a glance.
Media Kit	An information package that includes relevant materials that the media will need to develop a story.
Media Release	See News Release.
News Conference	A planned gathering of media representing all mediums, with announcements made by the IMSIU IT. Media kits are usually handed out.
News Release	A one-page story, written by a media relations specialist, which contains information about an event/emergency.
Press Conference	See news conference.

5. Communication principles

Communication principles are designed to strategically guide the way in which IMSIU IT communicates with staff, the community and media during a disaster by addressing questions such as:

- What is the commitment to the staff, community and media?
- Generally what are the top priorities in a disaster? IMSIU IT's top priority is the safety and well-being of our employees and the community and this principles guides all decisions and actions regarding communications
- How to communicate with stakeholders?

6. Initiation and activation steps

As soon as the message of activating the emergency response plan is received by the mass communication officer, he /she will start implementing the following steps.

6.1 Critical steps – the first hours

	COLLECTING INFORMATION	Done
1	Identify initial threat/ risk information.	
2	Identify what information the community already has; what information is already in stream to come out.	
	ACTIVATION and COORDINATION	
1	Activate this warning & communication procedure and media framework.	
2	Set-up and equip physical workspace (in alternative site or temporary location)	
3	Confirm operational status of communication systems with Logistics Section (i.e., phone, cellular, fax, email, internet…)	
4	Confirm internal communication/information processes with incident response team leader.	
5	Confirm communication protocols with supporting agencies/organizations.	
	SITUATION ASSESSMENT	
1	Gather and confirm facts: • What happened? What was done to prevent/mitigate the situation? What can be done to prevent it from getting worse? Is there any investigation? If so, who is involved? How has the IMSIU IT been directly impacted? Is the IMSIU IT's workforce impacted? What level of damage has been reported?	
2	Determine who is being affected by the event: • What do they want/need to know? What are their perceptions? What should the public be doing?	
3	Start media and internet monitoring: • What is being said about the event/incident? Is it accurate?	
4	Consult with technical/subject matter expertise, as required.	
	ESTABLISH INITIAL PRIORITIES and KEY MESSAGING	**Done**
1	Determine initial information/communication priorities and strategies.	
2	Initiate development of key messages (i.e., objectives, audiences, content…).	
3	Determine anticipated staffing needs for (call center, media center, shifts, etc.).	
	MEDIA RELATIONS	**Done**
1	Confirm and brief the media contact person(s).	
2	Prepare and coordinate initial media briefing/news release.	
3	Prepare media packages (fact sheets, FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS", etc.).	
4	Organize media interview timings.	

5	Record/track all media enquiries (please refer to section 5.2 here-under for "reporter enquiry tracking sheet"	
6	Provide regular updates for media including briefings, conferences and releases.	
7	Monitor media for accuracy and advise on corrections as needed.	
PUBLIC INFORMATION		**Done**
1	Develop and release precautionary and life-safety or threat information.	
2	Establish call center/hotline to provide information and respond to public questions.	
3	Start public call monitoring to catch trends; identify rumors and build "Frequently Asked Questions".	
4	Consider developing and release multi-lingual messaging as necessary.	
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS		Done
1	Establish and coordinate briefings to IMSIU IT Dean.	
2	Provide employees with up-to-date event/incident information.	
3	Establish employee information messages if necessary.	
4	Develop/provide public messaging sheets for frontline personnel (i.e., operators, switchboard, reception, call Centre, managers).	
5	Advise employees that no one is authorized to responding to media enquiries.	
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS		**Done**
1	Advise partners and stakeholders of current situation.	
2	Maintain close communications with relevant external government departments.	
3	Establish protocols for release of information including processes for ensuring messages are consistent.	
7	Monitor news releases, "Frequently Asked Questions" FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" and other external documents from outside agencies.	

6.2 Reporter enquiry tracking sheet

No.	Date	Time	Agency name	Reporter's name	Reporter's number	Question / Request
1						
2						
3						

6.3 Expanding the Mass Communication Officer function

Depending on the size or complexity of an event, the role of the Mass Communication Officer may be

expanded by dividing it into various functional areas. The specific responsibilities of each function and the number of personnel assigned will need to be clearly defined when the actual needs of the event are known. The following list provides a general overview of the functions and related responsibilities:

6.3.1   Media Monitoring/Research (may be outsourced)

− Monitors media coverage and seeks to correct inaccuracies
− Provides summaries of coverage from all outlets, as well as actual, specific examples of coverage to be corrected
− Maintains related research files

6.3.2   Clerical Support

− Oversees distribution systems, including e-mail and fax for external and internal audiences
− Establishes routine procedure for ensuring appropriate proofreading, sign-off and quick delivery of information products
− Assign and coordinates copying jobs, and may distribute fact sheets to media and other external and internal audiences

6.3.3   VIP and Special Events

− Ensures elected officials, VIP's and community group leaders are informed of applicable IMSIU IT's communication activity
− Coordinates VIP roles in tours, public events, and other special events
− Provides a communication channel between elected leaders and organization's senior administration
− Needs to be sensitive to the perceptions/reality of action that could be considered political

6.3.4   Call Centre

− Provides the community with event-specific information; monitors and responds to their questions and concerns
− Directs/coordinates a team of call center operators
− Monitors out-going messages and correct inaccuracies
− Monitors enquiries to support FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" development and rumor control measures

7. Roles and responsibilities

This section provides a high-level overview of roles and responsibilities of the designated positions as it relates to emergency information communication

7.1   Mass Communication Officer

- Serve as the coordination point for all public information, media relations and internal information sources for the IMSIU IT.
- Coordinate and supervise all staff assigned as Assistant/Field Mass Communication Officer and their activities.

Public Information:

- Ensure that the public within the affected area receives complete, accurate, and consistent information about life safety procedures, public health advisories, relief and assistance programs and other vital information.
- Ensure that a Toll-Free Public Information Service (hotline or call centre) is established for the public to access helpful information and advice. Provide the call takers with timely and accurate messaging sheets so that they offer only confirmed and approved information.

Media Relations:

- Serve as the coordination point for all media releases for the IMSIU IT.
- Coordinate media releases with officials representing other affected emergency response agencies.
- Develop the format for press conferences and briefings in conjunction with the IMSIU IT Dean.
- Maintain a positive relationship with the media representatives, monitoring all broadcasts and written articles for accuracy.

Internal Information:

- In consultation with IMSIU IT Dean and public relations department, coordinate VIP and visitor tours of the IMSIU IT facility.
- Develop helpful messaging sheets and/or FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" sheets (frequently asked questions and answers) to ensure consistent and accurate information sharing amongst IMSIU IT staff.
- Maintain a website established for IMSIU IT information, as appropriate.

7.2   Senior Management

The role of Senior Management will depend upon the specific roles that are assigned to them.

In general, with respect to the provision of information, the responsibility of the Senior Management is to support the IMSIU IT Dean and Mass Communication Officer by:

- Advising them on any public information or media issues that are brought to their attention

- Providing timely and accurate operational information pertaining to their assigned areas of responsibility
- Ensuring that the personnel they oversee are familiar with the organization's expectation around the release of public information and media statements

7.3 Senior Response Personnel

As part of the overall management of the incident site, the Senior Response Personnel (i.e., health and safety officer, security officer) are responsible for addressing the information issues at the site.

- Providing information on any media relations, communications or public information requirements or issues
- Determining and communicating any restrictions on the release of information to the IMSIU IT or other agencies
- Supporting with the media or VIP tours of the response sites and activities, as suitable

7.4 Spokesperson

The IMSIU IT Dean could decide to be the spokesperson or designates an official spokesperson.

The spokesperson is responsible for:

- Being involved in the development of the message to strengthen confidence and ownership when speaking
- Understanding the events requirements around the release of information
- Staying within the scope of his responsibilities, unless authorized to speak for others
- Telling the truth and being as open as possible

7.5 Internal Information Verification and Approval Procedures

During the activation of the emergency response plan, all public releases of information must be reviewed and approved by the IMSIU IT Dean or his nominee; depending on the nature of the information, the IMSIU IT Dean may also require that this information be reviewed and approved by higher authority.

The IMSIU IT Dean will expect that all response-related information is first verified through the mass communication officer.

No information should be released to the public without first being reviewed and approved.

8. External communication roles

The emergency communications role of the Government entities includes:

- Release of information about impacted government departments/ services;

- Release of information about the governments support to the Saudi Arabia and disaster assistance.

The government entities could be involved in an emergency in the following circumstances:

- The requests to government entities for support or resources;
- Government assets have been or may be impacted by the emergency in which business recovery/continuity efforts need to be implemented.

9. Methods of communication and media response

9.1 Media

9.1.1 Media/News Releases

If it is important enough to say, it is important enough to put in down on paper. The media/news releases shall be written like an article with an account of the situation in one or two pages. It should tell who, what, where, when, why, and how in the first paragraph.

All media/news release shall follow the IMSIU IT's standard format as per the following media release template:

IMSIU IT
Riyadh,
Phone:

Media News Release
[Insert release date]

[HEADLINE – Insert primary message to the public.]

[Describe the current situation in two or three sentences.]

[Insert a quote from an official spokesperson demonstrating leadership and concern for those impacted.]

[Identify actions being taken.]

[List actions that will be taken.]

[List information on possible reactions of the public and ways public can help.]

[Insert a quote from an official spokesperson providing reassurance.]

[Provide reference/contact information/website address so that the public can access more information.]

[Name/Position (Mass communication Officer or spokesperson)]
Telephone:
Fax:
Email:

News releases may be distributed by various forms including, fax, email, face-to-face, Internet and commercial press services. In case more than one release goes out each day, always place the time and a sequence number on all releases.

Once media news release revised and approved it is sent to the Local and Federal Media Contact List here-under.

Local and Federal Media Contact List

Media Type	Agency name	Contact	Email	Fax	Telephone

Depending upon the target audience, it may also be important to include ethnic and/or multi-lingual media outlets in order to get your message to the appropriate audiences.

9.1.2   News Conference/Media Briefings

Regular or ideally daily conferences or briefings held with community leaders and/or experts related to the event will provide the media with much needed copy and footage.

News Conferences are generally considered more formal in nature with advanced notice and media kits being prepared. Media Briefings and opportunities are usually less formal in nature and may be held in a meeting room or out in the field.

REFER to News Conference/ Media Briefing Planning Checklist found in Section 2.7, for further information.

Depending upon the location, additional equipment may be required to set-up for a news conference. This could include staging, sound systems, lights, backdrops and podiums. As necessary, equipment is available from the following suppliers:

[Identify the suppliers that have been selected to provide news conference equipment.]

9.2 Public Information

Communication with the public is a critical element in response and recovery. Establishing and maintaining effective communication channels is critical to a successful response. During a crisis period everyone wants information immediately. It is vital to plan mechanisms to foster communication in ways that people can ask questions as well as receive information.

The following are tools to effectively establish and maintain meaningful emergency communication with the public:

9.2.1 Call Centre

The following phone number has been pre-designated:

Call Centre Phone Number: [Internal Extension # 300] AND [External Extension # 0112580862]

Important considerations:

− Call takers/operators with multiple languages should are available
− Common and consistent, scripts/information sheets and FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" must always be used by call takers
− As a tool in rumor control and FAQ "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" development, call takers should be making a note of all public question types

9.2.2 Internet/Website

The IMSIU IT's website is a great tool in providing information to the public, either directly or through the media. In order for this to be effective, the information shall always remain current and relevant. A prominent link shall be created on the main website page (not buried several pages down) and updates shall be posted daily with disaster-specific information.

This activity should be supported through the IMSIU IT IT Section.

9.2.3 Meetings/Public Forums (Face-to-Face)

A public meeting will allow the community to express concerns, ask questions, share comments and the IMSIU IT to provide event specific information. A clear purpose, agenda and process for the meeting should be outlined and communicated in advance to all.

9.2.4 Flyers/Newsletters

A printed document provides the public with a source of information that can be kept and referred to at a later date. It should contain a brief summarization of current or proposed activities, explain the role of the IMSIU IT, announce new findings, provide precautionary information, and outline other information relevant to the response or recovery.

9.3   Internal Communication

Keeping employees and other internal stakeholders informed about the emergency event is an important part of the overall communications plan. There are many formal and informal channels where information is exchanged between response workers, regular employee and the public or other external partners.

Many of the methods used to inform the public can also be used within the IMSIU IT to advise employees or volunteers. The following methods shall be deployed;

9.3.1 "Frequently Asked Questions"/Fact Sheets

Frequently Asked Questions ("Frequently Asked Questions") and/or facts sheets shall be maintained throughout the event and distributed to key internal stakeholders such as operators, call takers and frontline personnel. An appropriate version of these documents should also be made available to all employees and volunteers even if they are not directly involved in the response or recovery efforts.

9.3.2 Intranet

The IMSIU IT's intranet should be utilized to provide response and recovery information to employees. The posted information must be easily accessible and kept current in order for it to be utilized effectively.

9.3.3 Employee Information Line

Following events that disrupt regular business of the IMSIU IT, an employee information line shall be activated. This phone line shall provide employees with current event information, precautions, employee expectations, response directions and update on the business functions of the organization. The phone line can be staffed or provide a prerecorded message. When leaving a pre-recorded message always start off with "This is update number…", so that employees can tell if the message has changed without having to listen to the full information.

9.3.4 Email and Text Messaging

With so many personnel having cell phones/personal digital assistants (PDAs) and personal/home access to email, the use of email and/or text messaging is be an effective tool to communicate with internal stakeholders.

9.4   External Communication

There are many external people or organizations with a special connection to the IMSIU IT and the response efforts. Some of these groups will vary depending upon the specific nature of the event, but there are some core stakeholders that will remain constant.

9.4.1 Government Departments

In addition to the legislated responsibilities to communicate with the government and some of their agencies, the IMSIU IT shall also maintain a solid working relationship with associated jurisdiction and key response and recovery agencies and organizations.

When these agencies have a response or supporting role in the emergency, communication protocols are established.

9.4.2 Other Stakeholders

Many non-response external stakeholders may be interested in how the emergency event will impact them.

These stakeholders may be relying on messaging coming from the IMSIU IT Mass Communication Officer. Many of the methods described earlier can be used to communicate with these stakeholders.

10.   Invocation and stand down

Once the message is received regarding ending of emergency, the mass communication officer shall.

1. Close out logs.
2. Complete all required forms, reports, and other documentation, as appropriate, prior to your departure.
3. Return any communications equipment or other materials specifically issued for the emergency
4. Leave a forwarding phone number where you can be reached.
5. Participate in formal post-operational debriefs upon request,