

## COMMUNICATION DURING CRISIS SITUATIONS

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***Abstract:** Crisis communication is necessary assume in area of crisis management and in emergency planning. If we don't start to solve crisis as soon as possible let us say that communication process failed it is hard to eliminate loses and after - effect. In condition of this article, we can applied this model like to communicate emergency units between each other, like to communicate with media and like to communicate to external environment.*

***Keywords:** communication, crisis communication, emergency planning.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Crisis communication include like communicate organization with their employee, like organization communicate with external and like to communicate with media. For good operation in emergency system is necessary to have an excellent communication system.

We can characterize crisis communication like „renewal of information between responsible authorities, organizations, media, individuals and groups before special incident, during the special incident and after it” (Vymětal, 2009).

### 2. COMMUNICATION AND CRISIS

Communication is term which is used in many sciences. There are many views on it. We can define communication like process of transmission from one person (group) to another person (group).

It is instrument which people use on communication. This instrument exists from the beginning of evolution.

Communication content giving and receiving information like influence on communicate persons. Communication is instrument, which has target. We can communicate by speech, by script, by picture, by dress, by custom, but silence too.

Communication process like process of change information has own regularity, instruments and conditions. Matulčíková (2002) present that communication process has following three conditions:

- Process includes minimum two people;
- We must to have information, which is object of communication;
- We must to do transmission of information.

Except this view are many other scales of approaches from many authors to communication conditions, too.

Communication during the crisis is different from casual communication. In crisis situation we have to take in many fast resolutions and in this time we need information from communication process. This type of communication is irreplaceable.

Crisis communication is irreplaceable aspect in area of crisis management. If we don't have arrangements on the time to solve crisis, let us say if communication process abort it is hard to eliminate effect.

Crisis communication include how communicate organization with employee, like organization communicate out of organization and like communicate with environment and like organization communicate with media.

We can characterize like “change of information between responsible authorities, organizations, media, individuals and groups before special incident, during the special

incident and after special incident” (Vymětal, 2009).

In these days of information technologies we don't have problem in few minutes give information to media, which consequently distribute information to public. In the case of crisis communication we have to have any plan of activities, because in crisis situation we don't have time for human error and not always we have second chance to rectify a mistake.

Nowadays crisis communication in democratic society respect following main principle (OECD, in Vymětal, 2009):

- Accept public like legal partner;
- Make plans and evaluation of communication process;
- Hear what the people say;
- Coordinate all activities and cooperation with other trustworthy people;
- Get along with necessary of media;
- Talking clear, comprehensible and with empathy.

**Chosen theoretical models of crisis situation** (Vymětal, 2009):

1. **Risk perception theory** - this approach identifies 15 factors which have straight relationship to crisis communication. It include following factors: spontaneity, controllability, knowing, right rule during distribution, profit, understanding, unsoundness, terribleness, trust in institution, reversibility of consequence, personal treat, ethical and moral disposition, environment or human origin, identity of victims, catastrophic potential.

2. **Negative dominance theory** - interpret process of making negative and positive information in crisis situation. This theory predict that people give more value to loses (negative result) like addition (positive result). We can use this in praxis when we want to tell something during the crisis in the following way: Every negative report we have to balance by positive report.

3. **Mental noise theory** - this approach identifies like people under pressure and in stress use information. If the people are in phase of high anxiety for known high risk their effect of use information is very low. If the people are under the stress their perception is

bad and 80 % of information is ignored, forgotten or bad interpreted.

4. **Trust determination theory** - it is the base of crisis communication. It is result of subject activity and communication skills. If the people are dishabile, in many way don't trust in that the other people hear, what they said, help them, they don't believe they are empathic, trustfully, open – mind, competent, hands – on and cheerful for help to each other. In this case is very important to strengthen these 4 factors: empathy (50%), competencies (science, qualification, organization skills, - 15-20%), free – heartedness (sincerity and fair negotiation – 15-20%), responsibility (involvement – 15-20%).

During the crisis communication is very important only few clearly formulated information and is recommended so-called **layered model** – every information have very short (10 seconds or 3 – 12 words). And information has to be repeat – Triple T – model.

**Triple T model** characterized by Vymětal (2009):

1. Tell what we are going to say;
2. Tell information;
3. Tell what we said.

This models included only verbal information but Welzant and Kolosová (2007) made **STARCC principle**, which said that information have to be simple, timely, accurate, relevant, credible and consistent.

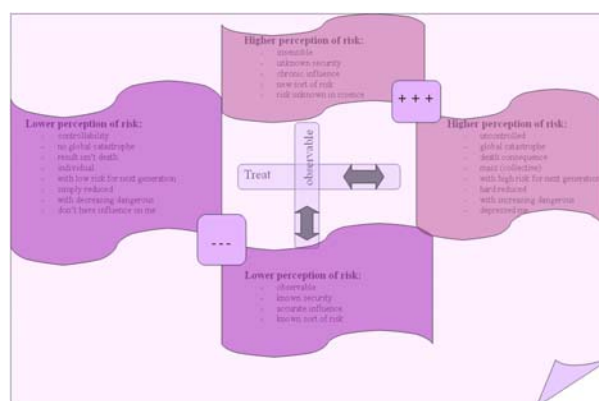


Fig. 1 Model of risk perception [10]

In nowadays world of information technologies is no problem between few second send information to media, which follow distribution this information to public.

In the case of crisis communication have to exist some plan of activities. It exists because we don't have time for errors and we don't have always second change to retrieve.

### **3. INTEGRATED RESCUE SYSTEM IN CONDITION OF SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

The part of integrated rescue system are Police forces of Slovak republic, Fire and rescue brigade of Slovak republic, Rescue ambulance service of Slovak republic and Armed forces of Slovak republic. There are main parts of integrated rescue system.

Integrated rescue system is coordinating action his parts (rescue component), as in provision their readiness like in making activities and measure with giving help in emergency.

Štěpán Vymětal (2009) characterize integrated rescue system like "coordinate way of component of integrated rescue system in prepare to special incident and in realization rescue and liquidating work including manage their interactivity."

The term "integrated rescue system" according to law 129/2002 Z.z. IRS ensures:

- Fast information, activation and effective using and coordination forces and resources of rescue subjects;
- IRS gives first aid, if life is in treat, health and property or environment;
- IRS ensures if it is dangerous of special incident or during special incident.

Integrated rescue system in Slovak republic includes:

- Department of Home Affairs;
- Department of Health;
- Regional authority;
- Emergency components.

Department of Home Affairs manages and coordinate filling task on the sector of Integrated rescue system (IRS). Department of Home Affairs makes conception of organization and development of IRS with cooperation by Department of Health. Cover special preparation of person, which is integrated to coordinating and operational centre of SOS and dispatch section in cooperation with Department of Health. Cooperate with state administration on prepare

and creation of automatic support system of manage and information processing. Cover to send IRS to give help in SOS between district, like send emergency components within international help and humanitarian operation. Ensure voice and data process of information by telecommunication network and telecommunication equipment or by radio net and sending IRS in area of international and humanitarian help. Consequently give technical and operative condition to support manage and coordinate IRS and to communication and information infrastructure activity support, if the individual by –law inordinate something other.

Ministry of Health coordinate prepare of traumatology plans. The plans are made by institution of health care to support task which pertinent to SOS. These plans are used in special situation with high count stricken in life treat or with injury of health and included plans of first aid, which are made by district. Ministry of Health cooperates with concept of organization and development of IRS.

District manage by methodical way fulfill task on IRS. To fulfill these tasks were made coordinate centre, which make technical support, decide of reimbursement of expenses and allowance and cooperate on concept of organization and development of IRS.

The base emergency parts of IRS on the base aforesaid law are:

- Fire and rescue brigade of Slovak republic and Town Fire and rescue brigade of capital city of Slovak Republic;
- Rescue ambulance service of Slovak Republic;
- Police forces and air force of ministry;
- Military safety force of civil safety and control chemical laboratory of civil guard;
- Mine rescue service.

Others emergency parts are:

- Army of Slovak Republic;
- Council fire brigade;
- Factory fire brigade;
- Place of work which make state inspection or other activities;
- Mountain service;
- Unit of civil guard;
- Town police;
- Railroad police;

- Slovak red cross;
- Another legal person and natural persons, who subject of activity is giving help in safe life, health and property.

I think that is good idea make programs for crisis preparedness and information materials which help to component of integrated rescue system. This program is made for example by public health co. in USA. It is made for children crisis preparedness for earthquake in area of Los Angeles and they made it in 12 language variations. In our country we have some of these programs but we don't have good propagation between children. The treat by earthquake is in our country low, but we have other treats like floods, fires, and so on.



Fig. 2 10 essentials items for an emergency kit [15]

In nowadays technical and modern world is needed to evaluate external influence of environment to start crisis situation. From the reason of using inflammable, explosive or toxic materials is necessary to undertake measure in crisis prevention. Potential source of crisis is nuclear energetic, too.

Following risk area, which is needed to know, is transport. Modernization in area of car industry, railway industry acquiesces to fast tempo of life with faster ride. The result of make transport faster is higher accident rate on freeway or area of railway transport.

In respect of global warming we have more frequently disaster damage.

If we have special incident (situation) we have system which support inhabitants security which have to respect following principle (Šimák, 2001):

- principle of subordinates (crisis have to be solving in lower level of state administration);
- principle of centralization (during solving crisis is for lower levels of state administration and executive units of emergency systems absolutely binding proposal of higher level);
- principle of maintenance competencies (operation, organization and competencies whole organs of public administration is the same like in period before crisis, variance is only in conditions which is made in and in tools which is used);
- principle of support prevent measures (every organ of public administration have to be prepare during the crisis and before crisis and make prevent measures);
- principle assurance of control (make good system of control and preparedness of solve crisis situations and efficiency of prevent measure);
- principle of complex readiness (appropriate organ of public administration will be ready to solve crisis effect when will be ready all his parts and on the other side when will be able to activate crisis manage mechanism of institution like whole);
- principle of statutory deputy responsibility (for crisis preparedness and for manage during crisis is responsible statutory deputy appropriate institution);
- principle of make individual organizational unit (for ensure discharge individual activities in prevention and solving crisis effect is created manage branch and executive branch of crisis management);
- principle of adequacy (organization of special schedule in area of crisis effect, operation of adequate count of employee and technical instrument, recall of crisis steps as soon as it possible);
- principle of observance rules in every situation (always respect and apply law progress, basic human rights and liberty and limit only in measure of list of basic human rights and liberty).

#### 4. COORDINATE CENTRE OF EMERGENCY SYSTEM

Coordinate centre of emergency system has following tasks:

- ensure transmission of information between participant in emergency system;
- shape plan of first aid;
- making database of emergency participants and save documentation;
- make special preparing of emergency unit;
- need help from another participant in emergency system.

**Authority:**

- give signal to basic emergency unit to make intervention;
- call another emergency unit to make intervention,
- redirect SOS to appropriate call centre,
- demand data about operating forces and resources.

**System of support manage integrated answer on incident**

Organizational view:

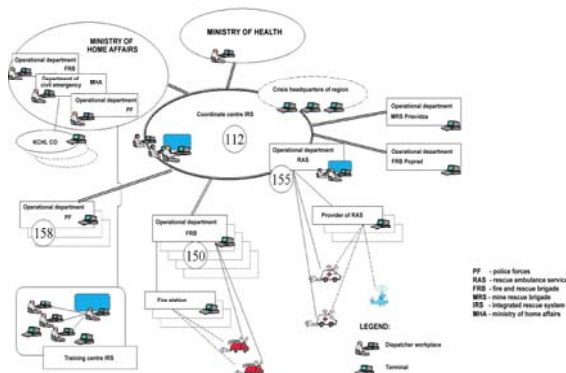


Fig. 3 Organizational view of coordinate centre of emergency planning [9]

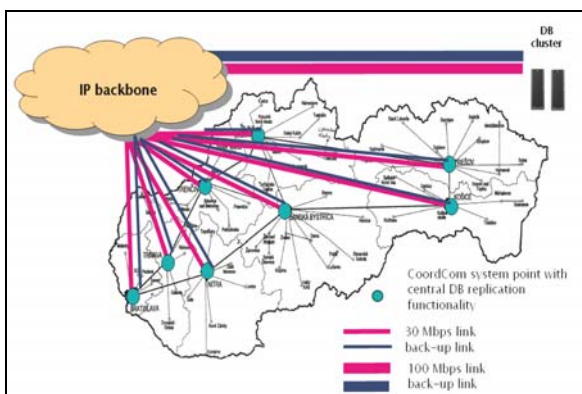


Fig. 4 Two self-contained communication links between network node and centre [9]

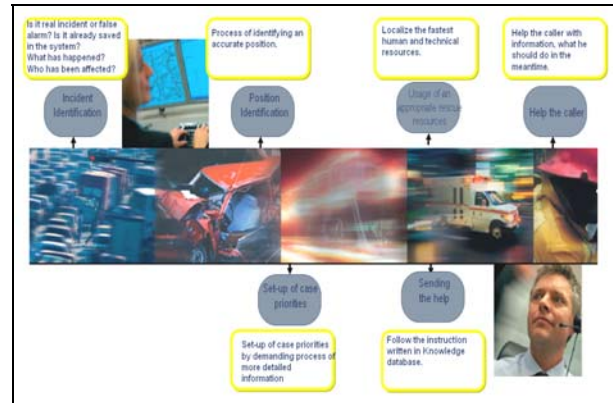


Fig. 5 Software functionality [9]

**Services by SW functionality:**

- Integrated communication – telephone, radio and data;
- Integrated receiving calling;
- Integration between existing and new infrastructure;
- Maximal support of operators in critical phases of solving incident;
- Interchange information between external sources.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Problem of crisis communication is very wide problematic, which need to solve. It is very important to unify crisis communication plans, solve problem of crisis communication, evaluate operation communication process and unify behavior of IRS during the crisis situations.

Necessary premise of IRS operation is higher technical services like develop each worker on education courses. It is needed that each part of IRS has to have knowledge from theory and they confront with praxis.

I think it is important to make new study program which will be calling “operator of emergency number 112”. It is important to have experienced and well – educated people like operators, because they are first who communicate with people who are in crisis situation and need help immediately.

In these days of fast tempo of life changes and work responsibilities we can not eliminate crisis from our life and it is needed be facing with it. Necessary is cooperation with international institutions in result of

globalization and terrorism. Slovak republic is member of European Union and NATO. On this base is needed cooperation with political security committee, OSN, OBSE like cooperation with Red Cross, WHO and other organization.

For effective system activity like whole is needed to watch new trends in this area and apply new trends in praxis.

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