JOINT OECD/IRGC EXPERT WORKSHOP

Risk and Crisis Communication:

Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media

Meeting agenda

29 June 2012
Geneva, Switzerland

Policy context

The advent of social media has changed the way that people receive and disseminate information, and how they communicate with one another. Discussions at the High Level Risk Forum began to touch on some new applications of social media in risk and crisis communication, as well as some of the challenges. Governments are in the beginning phases of refining their communication strategies to take advantage of the benefits and to mitigate the risks associated with these new media platforms. This workshop will explore how governments can use, influence and shape social media and social networking for effective and reliable two-way communication in times of crisis. It is both about how social media shape modern communications and how governments can use them for the purpose of improving crisis management. Among the topics for discussion will be:

1. How to *use social media* and social networks for risk and crisis communication, e.g.:
  − Use as an awareness tool (e.g. monitoring social media sites and compiling relevant information);
  − Use as a one-way communications tool (e.g. dissemination of public safety and crisis information; sending out information about upcoming events or campaigns);
  − Use as a two-way communications tool (e.g. engaging with the online community by taking part in conversations via social media tools);
  − Use as a tool to leverage networks as a resource in response efforts, adding functions as time goes on, such as: situational awareness and crisis mapping via crowd-sourcing; receiving requests for assistance; and mobilising citizens to achieve communal goals.

Participants will be invited to submit examples of relevant *practices* in their country.

2. How to *manage social media* in such a way that it contributes to effective risk and crisis management. Here, participants will be invited to submit examples of relevant *policies* in their country.

Expert presentations and policy oriented discussions during the workshop will focus on enabling participants to identify opportunities and constraints and ways to remedy to them.

Agenda

Welcome cocktail - Thursday, 28 June, 18:00-19:30, Villa La Pastorale

Morning, 29 June 2012

9:00-9:15 **Welcome**

Marie-Valentine Florin, IRGC

Pierre-Alain Schieb, OECD Secretariat

9:15-9:45 **Plenary Session I**
Key note introduction:
Robert A. Farmer, Director, Operations Division, Response Directorate, FEMA, USA

Governments need to adapt policies and practices in risk and crisis communication for more effective crisis management of large-scale, transboundary and complex risks. The workshop's focus will be the advantages and challenges associated with the use of new social media to achieve risk and crisis communication objectives rapidly and transparently, while ensuring reliability and efficiency. Rapid uptake of its use amongst certain demographics and their expectations for two-way communication with emergency services implies the need for monitoring and training, which will entail costs but also stands to improve situation awareness.

The purpose of the workshop is to contribute specific conclusions to support the development of OECD principles on country risk management.

9:45-11:00 **Breakout sessions: Lessons learned from how social media shaped the communication space during crisis**

The two breakout sessions will focus on the following questions:
− What tools does an effective crisis communications strategy use to communicate sophisticated information to the general public?

− When social networks are actively involved in a crisis communication, what can government crisis managers do to keep public confidence in the official information that they provide?

- To meet higher standards of expectation (from foreign governments, media, academics, and private sector) is there a need to establish scientific standards for quality information?

- How can social and traditional media be integrated as channels for information distribution?

Breakout Session 1 - Eyjafjallajökull eruption crisis (Iceland, 2010)

The view from Eurocontrol: Ms Kyla Evans, Head of Corporate Communications and Stakeholder Relations Management

Discussant: Dr. Bernice Lee and Mr. Felix Preston, Chatham House

The European organisation for the safety of air navigation was caught in the crossfire between stranded travellers, grounded airlines and national authorities responsible for the safety of air travellers. The ash cloud event showed how social media enhances distribution and aggregation of scientific information compared to traditional media, which can be leveraged to better inform the decisions of policy makers, businesses and the public.

Breakout Session 2 - Great East Japan Earthquake (Japan, 2011)

A view from Japan: Yoshimitsu Kaji, Counselor, Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Public Relations Office

A view from Korea: Mr. Seong- Ju Kang, Ministry of Public Administration and Security, Korea

The triple disaster was rendered more complex by difficulties in crisis communications pertaining to the risks of radiation exposure to the population, food safety and environment. The events also raised concerns that false rumours had adverse economic impacts on Japan's food exports and underlined the need for strategies to counteract disinformation.

11:00-11:30   *Coffee Break*

11:30-12:15   **Risk and crisis communication and the social media: identifying areas for action**

Moderator: Pierre-Alain Schieb, OECD

This session will offer an opportunity to reflect on the salient points from the breakout sessions, highlighting practices and policies of interest, as well as identifying areas where action is needed to maintain trust.

12:15-13:30   **LUNCH (served on premises)**

Afternoon, 29 June 2012

13:30-14:45   **Plenary Session II:**
Improving national risk and crisis communication strategies by working with the social media: conditions for success

Setting the scene: Tim Tinker, Booz, Allen Hamilton

Discussants:
Dr. Jeff Boyczuk, Public Safety Canada, Canada
Ms. Anita Friend, Cabinet Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat, United Kingdom
Mr. Juan Carlos ORANTES, Ministry of the Interior, Mexico

- How can governments use social media effectively to complement the use of traditional media outlets to inform the public and to manage a crisis?

- How can public authorities progress from passive to dynamic use of social media for risk and crisis communications and management?

- How can public authorities verify/ validate information that is crowd sourced or gathered through social media, to avoid reliance on outdated, inaccurate or false information, in order to use social media effectively?

- What policies could dissuade the use of social media to intentionally provide inaccurate information to confuse, disrupt or otherwise hinder emergency services? Vice-versa, what policies could encourage social networking and the use of social media to actively provide relevant, reliable and useful information to support the work of emergency services?

14:45-15:45   **Plenary Session III:**

Communicating at times of catastrophic events: sharing practices across the public and private sectors

Setting the scene: Stephane Koch

Mr. Paul Conneally, Head, Communications and Partnership Promotion Division, ITU

Mr. Marc Schaedeli, Nestlé

Mr. Richard Stronkman, Twitcident, Delft University of Technology

- What effective practices with social media does the private sector use that could be transferred to public authorities in times of crisis?

- Are there successful experiences in cooperative partnerships for crisis communication between public and private sectors?

- Can social media be useful in information gathering when private sector is reluctant to share information with the public authorities and/or other stakeholders? And vice versa?

- Is the private sector really better placed than public authorities to communicate about crises, because of a "single voice"? To what extent, in which cases?

15:45-16:15   *Coffee Break*

16:15-17:15   **Policy round table**

Risk and Crisis Communication and the new social media: Opportunities for international cooperation

Mr. Daniel Stauffacher, Chairman ICT4 Peace

Mr. Stefan Brem, Head of Risk Analysis and Research Coordination, Federal Office for Civil Protection, Switzerland (TBC)

Mr. Ulf Bjurman, Senior advisor

Moderator: Mr. Stephane Jacobzone, OECD Secretariat

- How can the experience of tools such as crowd sourced crisis mapping help to improve the reliability of information sources? What policy challenges might this raise?

- Are crisis communication strategies losing some degrees of freedom because of pre-emption by social media, either domestic or international?

- Is there a benefit to be gained by establishing a national crisis communication platform to coordinate messaging when risks involve the competence of multiple public authorities and other actors? How should such platforms be coordinated with regional, international partners?

17:15-17:30   **Adjourn and next steps**