

# Press Office Crisis Checklist

When a crisis goes live, with media consequences, it's essential that the Press Office team act swiftly and systematically:

- Brief switchboard and security staff. Agree clear communication protocols and routes.
- Ensure all relevant “frontliners” (customer and/or consumer-facing employees) know where to direct media inquiries.
- Distribute Media Inquiry forms and ensure they are being used.
- Allocate roles – ideally, at least two people in the press office and one liaising with crisis team, plus administration support.
- Notify and plan rehearsals of spokesperson(s).
- Confirm precise details of the incident.
- Liaise with other manufacturers and trade associations, as necessary; consider especially the need to harmonise media statements and get a consensus on facts and figures.
- Consider whether to notify communications functions on other sites or countries or higher/lower in the business structure, eg Regional Communications teams, Head Office team.
- Agree key messages.
- Consider need for proactive:
  - holding statements
  - press releases
  - interviews
  - press conferencesand discuss their nature and timing, or what exactly would trigger a need for them.
- Make sure you have the answers to the media's three basic questions:
  - What happened?
  - How did it happen?
  - What are you going to do about it?
- Prepare a full Q&A tailored to the key audiences.

## **MONITORING THE CRISIS**

There are patterns to crises, but no reliable blueprints available that will tell you how long your particular crisis will last. Regular monitoring and market information are essential to be able to assess the momentum of the situation. This will include:

- Media monitoring – print and electronic news.
- Monitoring of calls received to 0800 lines or by main switchboards.
- Specialist bulletins issued by groups such as the Consumers Association and Which? magazine, which detail product recalls (only relevant to consumer-facing product).

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