



CRISIS PREVENTION & COMMUNICATION MANUAL

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SECTION ONE

PURPOSE

PURPOSE

The basic Crisis Prevention & Communication Procedures and Messages (CP&CM) outlined in this manual aim at enhancing a Timely, Transparent, Trustworthy & Proactive communication with all parties, namely:

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Alumni
- Stakeholders
- Media

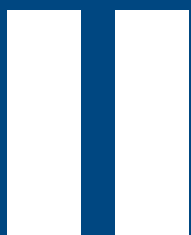
Existing procedures

AUBG HAS THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES AND PLANS:

- Contacts and Emergency Phones
- Access Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy
- Fire Orders
- Fire Safety Report/Fire Statistics
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Safety Tips
- Security Training
- Fire Safety
- Fire Drills
- AUBG Emergency Plan
- IT procedures

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

- [Security Department Biological Threat](#)
- [Security Department Chemical Threat](#)
- [Security Department Explosion Threat](#)
- [Security Department Nuclear Blast Threat](#)
- [Security Department Radiation Threat](#)
- [Bomb and Bomb Threats](#)
- [Mail Bomb Information](#)
- [Fire Safety](#)



SECTION TWO

SCOPE

SCOPE

The current Crisis Communication Manual mainly relates to the ways & procedures on how issues and crises are COMMUNICATED to the audiences. In terms of action procedures, AUBG has well-placed Emergency Procedures that are valid accordingly to and together with the current Manual (CP&CM)

The messages & procedures described hereinafter apply to all personnel, students and buildings and grounds owned and operated by AUBG.

The messages & procedures aim at five main goals:

- Timely identification of crises/issues
- Definition of Lead Responsible Person (LRP)
- Definition of parties concerned
- A timely reaction / or decision not to respond
- Consistency of messaging

The five goals of the CP & CM are reinforced by a framework of four fundamental phases:

1. **Preparedness** – planning for an emergency
2. **Response** – the planned response to an emergency or a disaster
3. **Recovery** – the process of returning to normal operations
4. **Precaution** – steps taken to prevent the effects of an emergency or a disaster

These four phases, when used together, will soften the impact of an emergency and its latent effects that could disrupt AUBG's operations more than the actual emergency or disaster itself.



SECTION THREE

TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

A The types of emergencies (emergency communication) covered by this manual are:

Specific type

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Media relations, including Right of Reply _____ | Minor |
| 2. Management, staff & donors assignment / dismissal / actions / _____ | Major |
| 3. Violent or criminal behavior _____ | Minor / Major |
| 4. Utility failure _____ | Minor |
| 5. Psychological crisis, death and suicidal incidents _____ | Major |
| 6. Sexual assault _____ | Major |
| 7. Civil disturbances or demonstrations _____ | Minor |
| 8. Active shooter incidents _____ | Major |
| 9. Bomb threats _____ | Major |
| 10. Chemical or radiation spills _____ | Disaster |
| 11. Explosion, downed aircraft (crash) on campus _____ | Disaster |
| 12. Fire, flood, earthquake _____ | Disaster |

For most of the emergencies (grouped by type), the present CP&CM provides a reaction model (template consisting of the main messages) – see ANNEXES

B DEFINITIONS OF EMERGENCY

The University President serves as an overall Emergency Director during any major emergency or disaster. The following definitions of an emergency are provided as guidelines to assist the building and area coordinators in determining the appropriate response / Lead Responsible Persons:

Minor emergency: Any incident, potential or actual, that would not seriously affect the overall functional capacity of the University.

EX:

Media relations/publications
Utility failure, civil disturbance
Disorder, violent or aggressive
(but not criminal) behavior

Major emergency: Any incident, potential or actual, that affects an entire building or buildings, and that disrupts the overall operations of the University. Outside services will probably be required, as well as major efforts from campus support services. Reporting such incidents immediately to the Local Authorities of Public Safety is highly recommended.

EX:

Management, staff or donor activity /
assignments & dismissals
Psychological crisis, death
and suicidal incidents
Sexual assault, civil disturbances or
demonstrations
Active shooter incidents, bomb threats

Disaster: Any event or occurrence that has taken place and has seriously impaired or halted the operations of AUBG. In some cases, mass personnel casualties and severe property damage may be sustained. A coordinated effort of all campus-wide resources is required to effectively control the situation. Outside emergency services will be indispensable. In all cases of disaster, an Emergency Control Center will be activated and appropriate support and operational plans will be executed. Report incidents immediately to the Authorities.

EX:

Active shooter incidents
Bomb threats, chemical or radiation spills
Explosion, downed aircraft (crash)
on campus
Fire, flood, earthquake

IV

SECTION FOUR

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A General communication principles

The following communication principles apply during emergency or disaster:

Only the President, the Provost and the Head of Communications & Marketing have the authority to disseminate information to media, professors, students and staff.

The Head of Communications & Marketing prepares draft communication that is approved by the President of AUBG.

In his/her absence, the next in line from the Crisis Management Team (CMT) (appointed by the President) approves the information.

Depending on the situation, the CMT can authorize any or all of his members to speak to the press or to professors, students and staff. The Head of Communications & Marketing has the overall responsibility for the communication process – managing internal and external communication channels and providing all members of the CMT with information in order to communicate a consistent message to all relevant stakeholders.

In all cases where the CMT decides on a reaction, it has to be communicated:

- **TIMELY** (at the start of a crisis of any type)
- **REGULARLY** (interim info to stakeholders, if CMT decides that it is required)
- **WRAP UP** (about the consequences of the crisis in all cases where UPDATE has been provided)

B Setting up a crisis management team – CMT

The Crisis Management Team should consist of the following people:

President of AUBG, Provost of AUBG, CFO, Head of Communications and Marketing, Head of Security, Head of IT, Student representative (optional, depending on the case)

The CMT can be expanded with additional members, depending on the nature of the crisis. All members of the CMT appoint a second/third in command in case they are absent.

C Crisis Management Team agenda and main actions

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) first status meeting

First CMT meeting must include the following:

- Confirm roles and responsibilities
- Analyze the situation- what has happened, what is known and what is not known
- Set objectives and priorities: people, environment, reputation, business continuity
- Initiate care for the students, staff and professors
- Identify legal implications
- Decide on media strategy
- Define target groups
- Prepare first public statement
- Secure resources to support CMT

Focus and actions

Based on worst scenario, CMT should outline the actions to be taken in order to minimize consequences for (in order of priority):

- Damage to people
- Assets
- Reputation

Business continuity

CMT should secure business continuity and necessary resources in affected areas to maintain “business as usual” if possible.

External communication

CMT should monitor media coverage and constantly update statements/ press releases. Evaluate if the spokesperson should be sent to the place of the incident to handle information enquiries from media.

Ensure effective communication with students, parents of students, professors and staff and their family members, alumni, important partners, etc.

One of the first decisions during crisis is what and to whom to communicate. The general rule is that internal stakeholders (Students, Parents, Professors, Staff, Board, Alumni) should be the first to know.

They should get the information at least a few minutes before any external stakeholders.

The goal always should be to manage the communication with minimum distortion of facts.

D Communication channels and responsible parties (CMT members)

In the case of a crisis, the Communication Team meets in a dedicated room in AUBG. If the building is not accessible, the team meets in another building.

The Head of Communications and Marketing manages a chat room on Viber / WhatsApp where team members exchange information in case of a crisis. This channel will serve as back up in cases when email is unavailable.

The Head of Communications and Marketing creates a list with all existing phones and social media profiles of the members of the Crisis Management Team. In case of crisis the team uses the following communication channels:

- Email
- Website
- Phone
- Student app
- Screens
- Facebook
- Twitter
- News media

List of responsible people for communication with relevant stakeholders during crisis

STAKEHOLDER	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Board of Trustees	President of AUBG / Provost
Professors	President of AUBG / Provost / Dean of Faculty
Students	President of AUBG / Provost / Dean of Students / Head of Security
Parents	President of AUBG / Provost / Dean of Students
Alumni	President of AUBG / Provost / Development Director
Donors	President of AUBG / Provost / Development Director
Media	Head of Communications and Marketing
ER, Hospital, Psychologists, Police, Civic Defense, Fire brigade, Municipality, Water utility, Electricity utility	Provost / Dean of Students / Head of Security
Suppliers	CFO / Provost
IT support and Telecom services providers	Head of IT
External legal support	CFO / Provost

* All parties will be provided and should comply with messages and statements from the Head of Communications & Marketing.

E Response plan for cases with either INTERNAL or EXTERNAL sources of information

1. Media relations, including Right of Reply	external
2. Management, staff & donors assignment / dismissal / actions	external / internal
3. Violent or criminal behavior	external / internal
4. Utility failure	external / internal
5. Psychological crisis, death and suicidal incidents	external / internal
6. Sexual assault	external / internal
7. Civil disturbances or demonstrations	external / internal
8. Active shooter incidents	external / internal
9. Bomb threats	internal
10. Chemical or radiation spills	external / internal
11. Explosion, downed aircraft (crash) on campus	internal
12. Fire, flood, earthquake	external / internal

Reaction in case the source is internal (Minor & major crisis)

If any student, professor or staff member is aware that any of the issues described in the manual as minor / major emergency or disaster have happened, **they need to report the facts to at least one of the following people:**

**President/Provost, Head of Security,
Head of Communications & Marketing**

NB Whoever the first recipient of information might be, he/she should immediately share the information with the Head of Communications & Marketing. The latter appoints a spokesperson.

Option 1

**Head of
Communications &
Marketing**

Option 2

Any member of the CMT (to be appointed by President/Provost)

The Head of Communications & Marketing reports the information to the President and the CMT members. The President has the right to approve any internal information or to call for a CMT meeting and discuss the communication strategy.

Reaction in case the source is external (minor & major crisis)

All questions coming from external sources / third parties / media, should be handled by the **Head of Communications & Marketing**.

If any student, professor or staff member is aware or has been contacted by an external source of information, **they need to report the facts to:**

Head of Communications & Marketing

The Head of Communications & Marketing reports the information to the President and the CMT members. The President has the right to approve any internal information or to call for a CMT meeting and discuss the communication strategy.

Reaction in case of disasters

EARTHQUAKE/FLOOD/STORM

The AUBG Crisis Team should create a web-based functionality that will allow all students, professors and staff members to declare themselves safe. All parents of students should receive an e-mail saying that their child is safe; the same applies for families of faculty and staff. In case of death or students/staff members that need medical care, a designated member of the Crisis Management Team should make a phone call. The Crisis team asks for support from ER, police, fire brigade, civic defense. Updates on the status are sent also to alumni and the Board. The Head of Security follows the weather forecast and in case of a storm alert issues a warning to all students, professors and staff.

FIRE

Head of Security calls 112 and supports the fire fighters. Information is sent to all students, professors, staff and the Board. In case of a significant fire AUBG issues a press release or provides answers to media questions.

TERRORISM

In case of a terrorist attack AUBG coordinates all the communication with the relevant authorities.



SECTION FIVE

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Risk categories

Strategic	Risk to image & reputation
Operational	Risk affecting services provided to staff / students
Regulatory	Risk to not meet legal requirements
Financial	Risk affecting revenues or investments

Consequence and likelihood ratings

CONSEQUENCE	CONSEQUENCE RATING	LIKELIHOOD	LIKELIHOOD RATING
Insignificant	1	Highly likely	A
Minor	2	Probable	B
Moderate	3	Possible	C
Major	4	Unlikely	D
Excessive	5	Remote	E

Consequence and likelihood ratings

	RISK	CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD
Earthquake	Operational / Financial	5	A
Storm	Operational / Financial	2	B
Fire	Operational / Financial	4	B
Terrorism	Operational	5	B
Medical emergency	Operational	3	C
Maintenance emergency	Operational	2	D
Security issues	Operational	3	C
Lack of IT or telecom services	Operational	3	D
Data privacy	Strategic / Regulatory	5	B
Personal student issues	Strategic	2	C
Marketing and PR campaign quality	Strategic	3	C
Firing professors	Strategic	2	B
Expelling students	Strategic	2	B
Board decisions	Strategic	4	B
Vetting suppliers	Operational / Financial	3	C

	RISK	CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD
Vetting donors	Operational / Financial	3	C
Alumni relations	Strategic	3	C
Use of alcohol and drugs	Operational	3	D
IT problems	Operational	3	D
Quality of food and drinks	Operational	2	B
PR crisis	Strategic	4	C
Contact with parents	Strategic	4	B
Issues while traveling / living abroad	Operational	4	B
Admission issues	Strategic	4	B
Lower revenues caused by bad reputation	Strategic / Financial	4	D
Losing academic accreditation	Regulatory	4	A

VI

SECTION SIX

GUIDELINES ON THE USAGE OF THE AUBG CRISIS PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATES

GENERAL GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ALL PRESS RELEASES

- The information reported must always be true, confirmed and subject to future checks.
- Avoid reporting false data or rumors, but if it has to be spread, it should be emphasized that it is not confirmed to be true.
- In case the information is insufficient, call for patience until the details of the particular case are clarified.
- Messages must be concise, accurate, clear, and must not give rise to interpretations or speculations.
- Report only the information that the relevant audience needs and takes interest in, without any unnecessary details.

Death of a professor/employee

Title and subtitle

Make the title brief and simple – avoid the use of strong adjectives. At the outset, offer condolences to relatives and friends.

First paragraph (Lead)

Explain briefly the cause of death. Condolences should be offered and some words said on his/her academic work. For example: active, devoted, ambitious, tireless, engaged in diverse activities, responsive, competent, and so on.

Second paragraph

Say a bit more about his/her work at the university. Bring biographical reference, as well as reference to his or her AUBG career, as well as personal information such as: birthplace, marital status, personal skills and competences, including in arts and/or sports.

Third paragraph (Quote)

Extend condolences on behalf of a university representative.

Fourth paragraph

Supply additional information regarding date and place of service/funeral.
Other details in case of violent/unusual death.

Death of a student

Title and subtitle

Make the title brief and simple – avoid the use of strong adjectives. At the outset, offer condolences to relatives and friends.

First paragraph

Provide information on the circumstances and causes of the tragic event. If the reasons have not been clarified yet, this should be stated briefly and accurately. Say what AUBG has done so far and what will be done.

Second paragraph

Say more about the deceased student (with sympathy and regret for the loss of a young life). A particular issue here is that the student may not have been so popular among the academic community, and it may be that the management cannot gather information from his/her friends – how they would describe him/her. The options are two – this can already have been done by a news reporter or you can write a few general words that do not get in much detail as demonstrated in the template.

Third paragraph (quote)

Share a few personal words about the deceased student and the circumstances surrounding his/her death. Once again, express condolences with a personal message.

Fourth paragraph

Bring a statement that AUBG will keep the public informed about the case: especially if the death has attracted the attention of media with national/international coverage or if it was violent/surrounded by unusual circumstances.

Call on media to remain calm until all the details of the death have been clarified. Media interest may be so great that some journalists may become aggressive about the case and those affected by it, in a bid to raise their ratings.

Disasters:

**Fire,
earthquakes,
floods,
etc.**

Title and subtitle

Clarify what has happened to AUBG and add the phrase: Measures taken against / after ... / Rapid action since ... / AUBG is doing everything to deal with ... / Victims and / or injured after ... / (Serious) material damage to AUBG due to ... etc. Give further information regarding the measures that have been taken, specifying what the damage is. If there are victims say more about them.

First paragraph

Provide more details on what has happened, how and to what extent AUBG was affected by the disaster.

Report on the safety of the students and employees: Are they under threat? Have their relatives been informed?

Inform the audience that the local and national institutions are aware of and work with the AUBG management on minimizing damage and the number of victims / wounded / sufferers.

Second paragraph

Report on the university's response. Explain that AUBG has previously developed crisis plans/measures/policies/codes of conduct.

Stress on the fact that they have been put into action by those responsible (state who they are). Bring more details on the way the evacuation took place – what the first actions were after the disaster.

Third paragraph

Ask for patience until the causes of/the ones responsible for the disaster have been clarified. Inform that any relevant information that becomes available will be distributed immediately to the public.

Fourth paragraph (Quote)

Write an address by a university representative. He or she may call for solidarity, good coordination and patience. Thank all rescuers, those responsible for the rapid response and the lack of victims or for minimizing losses. Assure the audience that everything will be fine, things will return to normal and the disaster will be overcome.

Order and security

Title and subtitle

Explain that AUBG is considering the security measures, making adjustments to them if necessary or remaining in compliance with them. Specify the reason for writing the press release.

First paragraph

Bring more details about the reasons for the security measures – what, where, when? If new rules are being introduced, make a point that they meet AUBG's goals and values, do not harm students and employees rights, and have gone through a standard changing procedure, including a discussion with all stakeholders.

Second paragraph

Description of the measures/changes.

If there are too many changes, outline the most important ones in not more than two additional paragraphs. Specify how the stakeholders can get acquainted with the full and accurate text of the measures and to whom they can address their questions and suggestions.

Third paragraph (Quote)

Comment on the need to comply with generally accepted norms and rules and on their irrevocability and comprehensiveness with regards to order and security. Indicate the connection between compliance with norms/rules and AUBG values and the need for a healthy academic environment.

Right of reply to a communication campaign

Title and subtitle

It should express in a straightforward way AUBG's position with regard to the values of liberal democracy. Preferably, the press release should specify that it is a Right of Reply. This shows that there is a dispute / discussion on a given issue and attracts the attention of the reader. It should not exceed two lines, including the full name of the university.
A subtitle may be included to express a complementary position.

First paragraph (Lead)

Describe briefly the case, responding as accurately as possible to the questions: what, when, where, how and why. Working with the press release template, skip redundant words and replace others with words that provide more information on the specific information campaign / message. Define clearly the main message and / or the objectives of the information campaign in order to respond to those who have felt offended / indignant.

Second paragraph

Confirm clearly and unequivocally AUBG's views on the fundamental values of the university and express disagreement with certain actions and practices. Anything redundant, that was listed as bullets in the template should be removed and other points can be added and edited according to the situation.

Third paragraph

Provide additional information to clarify the above. Express gratitude and show that the university is open to relevant views and positions.
Do not apologize or declare there has been a mistake. The purpose of the press release is to clarify and not to apologize.

Fourth paragraph (Quote)

In several short sentences quote the opinion of an authoritative representative of the university with a direct relation to the specific situation. The statement should reconfirm the message of the press release. It must also show personal commitment and attitude.

New professor/ employee

Title and subtitle

Answer at least two of the three questions:
Who is the new AUBG employee/professor?
What is the position he/she will be appointed to?
Who has held the position so far? / If the position is new, it should be specified.

First paragraph

Who, when and where (a particular department, for example) will work at AUBG? Who has held the position until now? Express gratitude to him/her; if possible, say what is the next step for them.

Second paragraph

Biographical and/or interesting information about the professor/employee. For example: "Prof. John Ivanov has worked for many years in Harvard where he teaches social anthropology. He decided, however, that it would be useful for his research if he made a little change in his life. Thanks to the Fulbright program, he learned about AUBG and thus arrived in sunny Blagoevgrad." Use some tips from the guidelines outlined in the external audience message.

Third paragraph (Quote)

A welcome address from the President or the direct superior, expressing satisfaction, happiness, joy, pride of the fact that the person will work for AUBG. Extend wishes for success for the new employee. Express gratitude to the person who held the position so far.

Fourth paragraph

Describe the job in brief. Who, what for and how should contact the new professor/ employee.

Utility service issue

Title and subtitle

Explain what has caused the lack of service/utility failure. Make a point that the companies/service providers in charge are currently working to resolve the issue. Give a deadline for resuming of services or say that the problem is serious and will require more time and patience of those affected.

First paragraph

Provide additional information about the problem / For instance: Where did it happen (where is/are the team/s working)? How it happened, how serious the damage is? What is the approximate number of people affected? What needs to be changed / repaired? How long is it expected to last? What are the alternatives that can be used? (For example, the lack of Internet access in dormitories can be temporarily resolved for those who need it if they go to the library).

Second paragraph

If available, bring more technical information. Some examples: Central heating failure – how many radiators or kilometer tubes are used in the university, the area being heated, how many rooms are heated; Internet access failure – how many computers are available at AUBG, how fast is the Internet, how many are the free wireless zones on campus; Water supply failure – how many kilometers of water and sewer pipes are used, what quantity is used monthly/yearly; how many sinks are available at the university.

Third paragraph (Quote)

The main message of the quote is to call for patience. Remind the audience that such failures/breaks/repairs happen. Keep a positive voice.

Hooliganism

Title and subtitle

The title should explain what has happened and the actions AUBG has taken. You may report on the victims, their condition or the property damage incurred after the act. Assure that AUBG is aware of the problem, does not conceal it, and works to resolve it. It is not necessary to say that explicitly, but the message should be precisely this.

First paragraph

Explain the facts that are clear at the time of writing about what, where, when, and who was involved / injured / suffered damage. What has the university done so far, including in co-operation with the competent authorities?

Second paragraph

What additional measures would AUBG take to prevent hooliganism in the long term? Clarify that the AUBG management is taking responsibility for everything that happens with the students and takes the necessary measures for prevention, information and control.

Third paragraph

What are the policies and rules adopted by AUBG in case of such incidents? This paragraph should be supplemented with more information according to the details applicable in the specific case.

Fourth paragraph (Quote)

A representative of the university should express concerns and disagreement with this behavior. Such representative could be: the President, the Vice President, someone responsible for the order and security at AUBG, etc. Do not use a reproving tone of voice! Emphasize the AUBG values and the fact that they are not subject to compromise, change or annulment. AUBG students must comply with the norms of campus and society.

Fifth paragraph

Demonstrate the commitment of AUBG to the public once again. Provide more information to all stakeholders. If an investigation is still underway – call for patience until the facts are clarified.