



Training in Risk and Crisis Communication (TRACC) is a social science-based curriculum developed and presented by The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) and funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Through three training modules, TRACC helps organizations plan effective communication before, during and after a crisis. TRACC is a unique curriculum that is research-based and covers the entire life-cycle of a crisis including preparation, response and recovery.

Module 1: Audience Analysis and Engagement

Time: 4-6 hours*

Risk and crisis messages are delivered best when communicators consider the diverse needs of their audiences. When audiences feel they are valued and respected, organizations can simultaneously build trust and increase stakeholder efficacy. This module discusses how to conduct an audience analysis as well as the benefits of effective audience engagement. Specifically, this training will cover:

- Identifying audience(s) during all crisis life-cycle phases of preparedness, response and recovery
- Conducting audience analysis and engagement
- Analyzing and engaging audiences online

Identifying Audiences

Participants will learn how audience analysis can help achieve communication goals during the crisis life-cycle phases of preparedness, response and recovery. Content specifically discusses several ways to conduct audience analysis with limited budgets and resources. Participants will describe and identify special-needs populations and how to effectively communicate with these unique populations.

* Times can be adjusted to meet organizational needs. Training is offered online, in person or in a blended format.

Call 301.405.6600 or e-mail infostart@start.umd.edu for more information and to schedule TRACC today.

Why Analyze Your Audience?

- *Reassess current assumptions*
- *Create a foundation for accurate planning*
- *Build trust among stakeholders*
- *Empower communities*

Conducting Audience Analysis and Engagement

Conducting an effective audience analysis through stakeholder engagement is essential to risk and crisis communication planning. Communicators will learn ways to recruit, conduct, and analyze key informant interviews and focus groups. Participants will also discuss START's Communities Advancing Resilience Toolkit (CART), highlighting best research practices.

Analyzing and Engaging Audiences Online

Social media play a significant role in today's crisis communications. Participants will discuss the importance of conducting online audience analysis. In addition, they will gain a basic understanding of the various free and low-cost tools available to analyze and engage audiences online, such as Hootsuite, tweetchat, boardreader, and more.

Three TRACC Training Modules

1. Audience Analysis and Engagement

2. Media Relations

3. Crisis Communication Simulation

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is supported in part by the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through a Center of Excellence program based at the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics and social and psychological impacts of terrorism.

The development of this training was initially funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate's Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency through Award Number HSHQDC-10-A-BOA36 made to START.

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What people are saying about TRACC:

"This training highlights and provides the tools for organizations to think and to develop a systemic process for communicating with the public and various stakeholders through engagement, relationship building, and continual monitoring of their environment for communication challenges."

—Ji Sun Lee
Director, Risk Communication Staff at the
U.S. Food and Drug Administration

"Thank you again for including me in this training. It was very well done and the material was both interesting and beneficial to the nonprofit community."

—Pascalis Papouras
Special Assistant to the Executive Office at the
International Orthodox Christian Charities

"I enjoyed learning how to raise awareness on emerging crisis communication needs with linguistically diverse populations."

—Dr. Joseph O. Prewitt Diaz
Humanitarian Psychologist at the
Recipient APA International Humanitarian Award



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Module 2: Media Relations

Time: 4-6 hours*

Developing meaningful relationships with the media and staying up-to-date with new technologies are constant challenges for communicators. These challenges are compounded during a crisis, when media consumption increases, journalists are poised for interviewing and reporting, and the social media realm becomes a hub for discussion and potential rumors. TRACC media training helps participants leverage both new and traditional media to reach key audiences. The training will cover:

- Evaluating the media landscape and implications for risk communication
- Analyzing media tools for risk communication
- Creating messages for and leveraging traditional and social media

Evaluating the Media Landscape and Implications for Risk Communication

Participants begin the training by discussing current trends in traditional and social media. They will describe key features of popular media and discuss examples of each. They will also cover shifting demographic trends in media and learn several reasons why audiences do and do not use traditional and social media. Finally, they will identify how to select media channels for communicating risk and crisis messages initiatives to audiences.

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Why Media Relations Training?

< one hour: *time you have to respond in a crisis*

10 seconds: *the time it takes for a social media user to forward a message, whether true or false*

Analyzing Media Tools for Risk Communication

This section examines message objectives, creating clear and concise statements, and disseminating messages. It also provides examples of how an organization can conduct real-time analysis during a crisis to realign communication to meet present demand.

Creating Messages For and Leveraging Traditional and Social Media

Participants will learn the 77 most asked questions by the media in a crisis and the 33 most often used bridging statements by spokespersons. They will discuss how to interact with journalists and social media content creators including how to build effective relationships and pitch news story ideas. In addition, participants will learn how and why to use a technique called "message mapping". Finally, they will construct a message map and adapt it to traditional and social media channels.

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What people are saying about TRACC:

"The simulation was extremely important, as it allowed us to apply what we had covered to an on-going incident, reinforcing the material. The scenario was realistic and helped put the entire program into context."

—Captain Bob Mueck at the
University of Maryland Police

"I think the most outstanding aspects of TRACC were in the areas of social media research/best practices and the chance to put them into practice. That dovetails with what I see as the biggest missing component nationally in the risk communications field—social media training."

—Edward J. McDonough
Public Information Officer at the
Maryland Emergency Management Agency

"TRACC provides communication practitioners and government agencies with the tools and knowledge to make informed decisions based on a greater understanding of their audience, communication objectives, and deliberate message development."

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Module 3: Crisis Communication Simulation

Time: 4-6 hours*

Put your crisis communication skills to the test by participating in a multi-party simulated crisis scenario. Using an online platform, the crisis simulation allows participants to apply knowledge from earlier TRACC modules in risk and crisis communication planning, audience analysis and engagement, and media relations during a realistic crisis scenario.

This simulation involves both following organizational protocol and adapting to a specific crisis situation. Additionally, this simulation is an opportunity to try new communication approaches in a safe environment.

During the simulation, participants will work in teams of two to six, with each team representing one of six organizations responding to a public safety incident in the fictional city of Bookerville, Va. The simulation asks participants to create and deliver communications through several media outlets. It requires them to analyze situations, identify audiences and deliver communications materials (press releases, social media posts, etc.) within time limits that could occur in the event of a real emergency.

Participants will receive feedback during the simulation based on the choices they make. In addition, the simulation includes a debriefing session to pinpoint what went right and what went wrong.

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The crisis communication simulation enables participants to practice their skills in an environment that simulates some of the complexity, pressure, and confusion of a real crisis. The simulation will reinforce the following concepts from other TRACC modules:

- Sending clear and concise messages
- Communicating with a variety of audiences
- Overcoming communication barriers such as mistrust and mixed signals caused by incomplete or inaccurate social and traditional media reporting
- Preparing and executing an effective press conference

TRACC's crisis simulation puts you in charge of responding to a realistic threat. Are you ready?

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