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Contingency Planning

How to respond to risks that actualise and manage the lessons

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Deepwater Horizon



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Emerging new features



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Responses to incidents in early hours made more critical by continuous news and social networks

Higher expectations of individuals getting information and support

History of incidents leading to disproportionate regulation

Government and Companies need to show they are handling incidents well - or they will be outpaced in the public information space

How Bad Regulation happens



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Two routes from poor crisis management to bad regulation or excessive supervision:

- ★ **Early errors in political/public handling lead to loss of public confidence**
- ★ **Follow-up inquiries lack independence or are given too wide a scope, combining investigation with remedies**

Both are avoidable

Foot and mouth outbreak



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Common early errors



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Hoping incident will solve itself - waiting to mobilise crisis machinery

Allowing subject experts to exhaust themselves: they are best safeguard against a disproportionate reaction

Responding to lobbying/media stories rather than getting data and holding to your strategic aim

Contingency Response : Quick Guide



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If an unexpected event occurs in an area where you are responsible for the Government/Company's strategic objectives or reputation, ask the following:

Is this event potentially threatening to those objectives or reputation (or just a minor issue or a flurry in the networks)?

If yes, which is the right body to lead –Central Government, Local Government, International Organisation, a company or an non-Governmental organisation

If you are not engaging say so and why (and settle a media line cleared by a Minister/CEO)

Checklist for early hours/days

Immediate focus on affected individuals

Start collecting data for a “Common Recognised Information Picture”; don’t quote unchecked figures publicly

Assemble a team including a Minister/CEO, subject expert, crisis people (communications, lawyer, sceptic); and representatives for affected individuals – and back-ups for 24/7 operation

Think about wider context and desired strategic outcome - to get risks in proportion

Neither blame anyone nor give anyone immunity

Chilean Mine Rescue 2010



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Follow-up to a right outcome



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Rapid initial investigation, confined to facts and causes, by a visibly independent expert

Keep separate:

- ★ **Taking responsibility – legal proceedings (criminal or civil), complaints/discipline processes, Parliamentary scrutiny of executive**
- ★ **Managing future risk by policy analysis which balances the costs and benefit of more regulation or supervision**

Aircraft failure



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Conclusions



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Make contingency plans for handling Incidents and to avoid their leading to disproportionate regulation

The key moments are:

- ★ **handling the early hours/days**
- ★ **how follow-up is organised**

A Government or Board must create space and time for itself to get the right answers.

Train for generic responses.

Next Steps

After today's discussion and further comment

- **Draft generic component for model**
- **Test on group and with International Standards bodies**
- **Further comments please to Simon Webb at**
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Flooding



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More common errors

Publicly:

- ★ quoting unchecked figures
- ★ attributing blame or legal responsibility
- ★ Minister/CEO at the scene with nothing to say

Forgetting stakeholders:

- ★ local government
- ★ international organisations
- ★ social networks
- ★ small businesses
- ★ above all, the individuals affected and their families