

Crisis Consulting International:

Model Policy Recommendations

Introduction

Crisis Consulting International (CCI) has identified the need for a core set of twelve policy guidelines addressing four critical areas of crisis management. Although the circumstances of specific organizations may create the need for additional policy guidelines, these twelve core areas are considered the foundation necessary for adequate crisis management preparation.

CCI has developed a set of “model policy” recommendations for each of these twelve circumstances. We are making these model policy recommendations available to interested Christian organizations. However, we emphasize that these model policies should serve as a starting point for consideration and evaluation, and should not just be adopted as presented.

Characteristics of Policies

- Policies should be consistent with and reflect the organization’s core values and standards.
- Policies should be value-driven.
- Policies should apply throughout the organization.
- Policies describe what you will do, not how you will do it.
- Compliance should be mandatory throughout the organization.

Using this material

CCI authorizes any non-profit organization to use this material as necessary, including reproducing and distributing it within the organization.

Model Policy: Payment of Ransom, Yielding to Extortion

This organization recognizes that payment of ransom, acquiescing to other demands in kidnapping and hostage-taking cases, and making concessions in the face of extortion are all actions that contribute to the probability that similar future events will occur. Put another way, we understand that payment of ransom or similar actions that make the underlying event a “success” in the minds of the perpetrators will create incentives to encourage the same perpetrators, or others, to commit similar acts in the future.

This organization also places a high value on the safety of its members, staff and families, and in cases of kidnapping or hostage-taking desires to take all reasonable steps to secure the safe release of the hostage(s).

It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping, hostage-taking or other extortion, no ransom or concession that is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to the probability that future similar events will occur shall be paid (or made).

In specific cases, it shall be the responsibility of the Crisis Management Team to determine whether or not a proposed payment or concession complies with both the letter and spirit of this policy. If the Crisis Management Team cannot reach a consensus on this policy as it applies to a specific proposed concession, or if a proposed concession would likely be viewed by the broad Christian community as violating the spirit of this policy, the proposed payment or conces-

sion shall be reviewed by the authority that convened the Crisis Management Team prior to the proposed payment of concession being agreed to or made.

Model Policy: Negotiation with kidnapers and hostage-takers

This organization recognizes the distinction between negotiations and payments or concessions in cases of kidnapping and hostage-taking. We understand that negotiations

can be conducted without necessarily obligating the organization to make pay-

ments or concessions that violate our values and policies. We also understand that negotiations, if they can be effectively and competently conducted, are the strategy of first choice in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking.

This organization also recognizes that hostage negotiations are a very specialized and a potentially dangerous activity.

It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking of our members, our staff or members of their families, their safe return shall be a priority of the organization. All reasonable efforts consistent with our policies and core values will be made to achieve their safe return. These efforts include hostage negotiation as a strategy of first choice. In cases where this organization has the opportunity to negotiate for the safe return of hostages, we will seek assistance from professional hostage negotiators.

A source of hostage negotiation consultation and assistance is the non-profit organi-

Crisis Consulting International

zation providing support to international Christian organizations:

Crisis Consulting International
PMB 223, 9452 Telephone Road
Ventura, CA 93004
U.S.A.

Tel (+) 805-642-2549
Fax (+) 805-642-1748
Email: info@CriCon.org
Internet: www.CriCon.org

Model Policy: Family relocation

Experience has shown that in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, rapid relocation of family members away from the area of the event is strongly advised. Having such a policy is a significant comfort to hostages, who report that uncertainty about the location and status of their families was the primary worry and source of anxiety during their captivity. Experience has also clearly demonstrated that such an action is in the best interest of these families (especially ones with younger children). Lastly, experience has shown that the presence of family members at the immediate site of crisis management and hostage negotiation efforts can create distractions and situations that divert the attention and energy of those responsible for resolution of the event away from that primary responsibility.

It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, family members will be relocated from the country of occurrence as soon as possible. This relocation will normally take place to the home country of the family. In specific cases, the Crisis Management Team may waive this policy if doing so is in the best interests of the crisis management effort.

In cases where this policy is invoked, this organization will make ongoing support and assistance to the family a priority. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to, support in finding appropriate housing, school transfers, ongoing financial support and similar matters. This will also include establishing a regular system of providing timely and accurate information to the family on the status of the case and the work of the Crisis Management Team. This support will

also include insuring that adequate pastoral, emotional and psychological support, including that of trained professionals, is provided as indicated.

Model Policy: Notifications to governments in kidnapping and hostage taking

In cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, this organization understands that the local (host) government has authority and responsibility for such crimes that occur within the country. We are also aware that the home government (government of citizenship) of the hostage(s) has a legitimate interest, and perhaps even legal jurisdiction, in these foreign kidnappings or hostage takings of their citizens. However, we recognize that in some of these cases in some countries, the involvement of governments may create a conflict with our objectives and values.

It is the policy of this organization to cooperate with legitimate government inquiries and activities in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, when doing so is judged to be in the best interest of the hostage(s) and the organization. The decisions of when and how to make these notifications to government agencies shall be made by the Crisis Management Team.

Model Policy: Risk assessment

Accurately and adequately understanding risk is the essential foundation for all contingency planning and security preparation and management. A commitment to understanding risk is an essential component of our overall member care and security management efforts. Such a commitment requires the use of a disciplined and structured protocol of risk assessment.

We also recognize that it is important that measures or descriptions of risk and danger be in a form that is as objective and quantifiable as possible, and that the descriptive criteria used be as standardized as possible (so the same term or description applied to one situation or country means essentially the same thing in another situation or country).

Finally, we realize that there are two distinct types of risk assessment: Tactical assessment, which analyzes the present situation and

identifies threats and vulnerabilities that are here and now; and strategic risk forecasting which forecasts future risks and predicts both the probability and consequences of unwanted events occurring. We appreciate that both types of risk assessment are necessary for the most comprehensive and accurate understanding of risks and dangers facing the organization.

It is the policy of this organization to require all field entities to conduct and maintain adequate and timely tactical and strategic risk assessments. Strategic risk assessments are to follow CCI's "Strategic Risk Forecasting" protocol, and are to be conducted at least every two years (see next paragraph). Field Vulnerability Assessments are to follow CCI's "Tactical Risk Assessment" protocol, and are to be conducted at the beginning of a new project and at least every two years thereafter (see next paragraph).

The frequency of both strategic and tactical risk assessments are to be increased if:

- *There is a significant change in the environment (change of government, substantial political shift, threat or outbreak of war, etc.)*
- *The assessed risk/threat level is such that field, regional or headquarters leadership determines that a more frequent risk assessment schedule is appropriate.*

Model Policy: Contingency Plans

This organization recognizes the need for contingency planning as a major component of security and crisis management. Contingency plans assist the organization not only in responding to events that have occurred, but also assist the organization identify and implement proactive steps that seek to reduce both the probability of unwanted events occurring and the consequences and impact of those events should they in fact occur.

Risk assessments done by local entities will determine specific threats and situations requiring advance contingency planning. However, there are some areas that are sufficiently common and foreseeable that all entities need corresponding contingency plans.

Finally, there is significant benefit in the

use of contingency plan formats that are consistent throughout the organization.

It is the policy of this organization that each entity prepare and maintain current contingency plans for threats and dangers that are reasonably foreseeable and potentially threaten the safety of staff or the disruption of our work. As much as possible, given local conditions and circumstances, contingency plans shall be written in CCI's recommended format and shall identify proactive measures to reduce both probability and consequences (if possible) as well as response protocols.

All entities shall complete and maintain current contingency plans for the following situations:

- *Evacuation of staff (both local and country-wide)*
- *Establishing and operating an entity Crisis Management Team*
- *Information management during a Crisis*

In addition, each entity shall complete and maintain current contingency plans for any event for which a Tactical Risk Assessment results in a "critical" or "high" rating; and for any event for which a Strategic Risk Assessment results in a forecast rating of "critical" or "high".

"Current" contingency plans are those that remain consistent with the threat, environment and organizational conditions and resources. Contingency plans are to be reviewed at least every two years and either modified as necessary or certified as still current. Increased risk and dynamic local conditions may require more frequent review and modification.

Model Policy: Training

The most effective security and crisis management activities are those that prevent unwanted occurrences, or reduce the impact/consequences of unpreventable events. Training of personnel is one of the most valuable and effective proactive steps an organization can take. Trained personnel are the most successful at minimizing their own exposure to danger, and trained personnel assist the organization avoid dangerous, disruptive and compromising situations.

It is the policy of this organization to provide security and crisis management training to all personnel. The type and degree of training shall be commensurate with the assessed risks and dangers the member is exposed to, and also commensurate with the member's organizational responsibility for the safety and security of other staff and organizational assets.

All personnel shall receive training in (at least) the following areas:

- *The organization's policies*
- *Evacuation procedures*
- *Basic personal safety and security*

Model Policy: Crisis Management Team

Experience teaches that in the event of a crisis or emergency, the existence of a predetermined and structured response speeds resolution and recovery, and also minimizes the overall disruption to the organization. Experience also teaches that the absence of such a plan not only hinders the organization's ability to resolve the crisis, but also may create new and additional crises that can ultimately be more disruptive than the original event.

We also recognize that even in the face of a significant crisis or major emergency, the primary objective of the organization is to continue its work, and to be as productive as possible in accomplishment of its objectives.

For these reasons, we acknowledge the importance and need of a predetermined organizational response plan for crises and emergencies.

It is the policy of this organization that in the event of a crisis (or emergency), a Crisis Management Team (CMT) will be formed to manage that event through resolution and recovery. The CMT will be formed and structured on models consistent with those described in the literature and in professional training for corporate and government entities (such as the model taught by Crisis Consulting International).

For purposes of this policy, a "crisis" is understood to include events that threaten the organization, that present a danger to the safety of staff or the potential for significant organizational disruption, that are likely to be

extended in time and are likely to require an abnormal commitment of resources.

A CMT can be established by field leadership for any event within that field, and by regional or headquarters leadership for any event whose foreseeable organizational impact is likely to extend beyond the local entity.

When a CMT is established, it is to be the only component of the organization "working" on that crisis. All other components and members of the organization shall refer all information and suggestions to the CMT. No action related to the crisis is to be taken without the authorization of the CMT. No public statements related to the crisis are to be made without the authorization of the CMT.

Model Policy: Information Management

It is the intention of this policy that information flow during a crisis be carefully and strictly directed and controlled. Incoming information such as background information, suggestions about resources and assistance, ideas for resolution, etc. need to be received by the Crisis Management Team. Outgoing information must be monitored and controlled to prevent the release of confidential information, to prevent exacerbation of the situation or the creation of secondary crises and to control the spread of rumors.

It is the policy of this organization that all information, intelligence, ideas, suggestions, etc. relating to a crisis be directed to the Crisis Management Team at the earliest possible time. Any member of the organization with such information or with suggestions for the Crisis Management Team shall forward the information or suggestions immediately to the CMT.

It is further the policy of this organization that during a crisis all information released, and all public statements about the crisis be made by (or with the specific approval of) the Crisis Management Team. No member of the organization outside the CMT is authorized to make any statement that relates in any way to an ongoing crisis. This includes statements to internal constituencies (other members, families, etc.) as well as external constituencies (the media, extended family, home churches, government agencies, etc.).

Model Policy: Member Care

It is the intention of this policy to recognize that individuals who undergo traumatic events, and others associated with these events, can suffer emotional reactions that may become destructive if untreated. It is the intention of this policy that those involved in traumatic events receive evaluation and, if necessary, intervention from mental health professionals.

It also is the intention of this policy that this evaluation and intervention be conducted confidentially with the objective being the treatment of existing trauma and the prevention of future trauma associated with the crisis.

It is the policy of this organization that those personnel who are directly involved in a crisis receive an initial and follow-up evaluation from a qualified Christian mental health professional. These evaluations shall occur as soon as possible following a crisis and again six to twelve months following the crisis (unless otherwise specified by the mental health professional).

These evaluations and any treatment are confidential between the member of the organization and the mental health professional. Costs associated with this policy shall be paid by the organization. Although the individuals who should receive evaluation as described herein may vary from incident to incident, in each case at least the victim, the immediate family, and the Crisis Management Team shall receive this evaluation.

In situations involving large numbers of members, such as group evacuations, the use of a supervised Critical Incident Stress Debriefing may fulfill the requirements of this policy (providing the C.I.S.D. incorporates a mechanism for recognition of the need, and provision for accomplishing, followup counseling or therapy as needed).

Model Policy: Evacuation Authority

The intention of this policy is to address those components of evacuation planning and decision making that can be identified before a crisis occurs. One of the most critical (and potentially divisive) elements of

evacuation decision-making is determining who has the authority to mandate an evacuation. Experience has demonstrated that those on the field and close to the situation will have perspectives that tend to prioritize different factors than those in leadership roles and more geographically removed from the events. Experience has also shown that in some cases, those closest to the scene will have access to the best information to support an evacuation decision, but in other cases this information will be denied to them and will only be available to those more removed from the event.

It is the policy of this organization that decision-making authority regarding evacuation exists at the individual or family level, at the local entity level and at the headquarters leadership level. In different circumstances, each of these levels may have access to information that makes evacuation an appropriate decision; so, each is authorized to act on such information and make a decision. The remainder of the organization will respect such a decision. This policy is multi-lateral: Just as headquarters will support an individual family's decision to evacuate, so will individuals and families support a directive from local leadership or regional or headquarters authority to do so.

Model Policy: Evacuation Criteria

The intention of this policy is to address those components of evacuation planning and decision making that can be identified before a crisis occurs. Experience shows that training and contingency planning ahead of time will often times make the difference between successful and safe evacuations and those that endanger members and result in unnecessary organizational disruption.

It is the policy of this organization that each local entity will prepare evacuation plans for all personnel serving under its jurisdiction. Copies of these plans shall be submitted to headquarters leadership where a reference copy will be maintained. These plans shall be reviewed, and updated and revised as needed, at least every two years. At a minimum, these plans shall include:

- *A description of how the local entity will determine whether an evacuation is ne-*

cessary; specifically identifying the decision making authority and criteria to be used to make such a decision.

- *A description of the notification system that insures all personnel receive necessary information before and during an evacuation.*
- *A description of the procedures the local entity will use; such as, means of transportation, evacuation routes and alternates, staging and destination sites, and communications procedures.*

Each member or member and family shall prepare for two types of evacuation scenarios by identifying what would be taken with them and how they would accomplish an evacuation (e.g., method of transportation, routes, staging areas and destination) for each of these circumstances:

- *An evacuation with at least 24 hour's advance notice and in which a carload (persons and belongings) could be taken.*
- *An evacuation with one hour's notice and in which only those items that could be hand-carried could be taken.*

Each member/family's plan will be submitted to the local entity and maintained as an annex to that entity's evacuation plan. <<