

WHAT IS CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Crisis management is the process which deals with a major event that poses a threat to the organisation, its stakeholders, and/or the reputation of the business in the eyes of the general public. A Crisis Management Plan should be developed to ensure these kinds of events can be smoothly navigated with limited impact.

There is often confusion of the terminology relating to the various types of crisis management plans/procedures that may be required for any particular event.

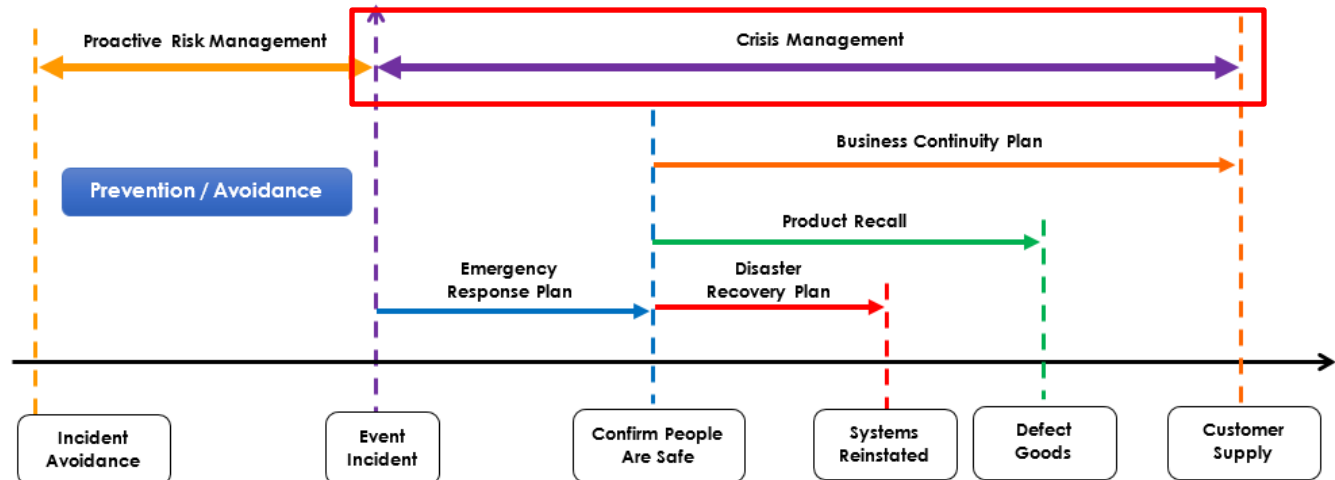


Figure 1 Crisis Management Diagram

Response Type	Description	References
Crisis Management Plan	Crisis management plan over sees the response types listed below. It is how stakeholder communication is managed. It is a key element in the activation stage. More information is provided in the next section.	BS 11200
Emergency Response Plan	Emergency planning is focused on ensuring building occupants are safe in the event of any incident. The emergency plan may also manage the effects of consequences to the environment.	AS3745-2010 SafeWorkAustralia
Disaster Recovery Plan	A disaster recovery plan (DRP) is a set of procedures to recover any business information systems in the event of a disaster. It involves the processes around back up of hardware, software and data and the time taken to reinstate.	AS27002:2015
Product Recall	Product recall plans are focused on recovering defective product that is unsafe (mandatory recall) or is not to specification (voluntary recall).	ISO 10393 FSANZ
Business Continuity Plan	The business continuity plans are focused on reinstating supply to customers in the quickest possible fashion. It includes both recovery of the operation and continuity of supply using alternate means.	AS/NZS 5050:2010 HB 292-2006

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following is a high level guide for the key elements of a crisis management plan. Plans have a preparation and an activation phase.

Preparation



Activation

PREPARATION

It is important to be prepared for a crisis. Where possible of course prevention is preferred, but there are many examples of crisis being well managed and conversely poorly managed, and preparation is key. Acknowledging that there are other detailed plans for ensuring people are safe, reinstating production, recovering systems, etc. (refer previous page), the focus of the crisis management plan is stakeholder engagement and communication; and support for recovery efforts.

It is an essential part of preparation to know who your key stakeholders are, developing a stakeholder map and to consider how you will communicate with them in the event of a crisis. Stakeholder engagement is vital and should be given priority and focus to minimise the reputational impacts of any particular event.

The following provides some key elements of a crisis management plan:

1. Identify the Crisis Management Team (CMT);
2. Identify the CMT leader, who has authority to activate the Crisis Management Plan;
3. Assigning roles and responsibilities for the purpose of controlling a crisis event. This includes:
 - a. Spokesperson,
 - b. Back-up spokesperson (if company spokesperson is not available),
 - c. Approval process for communications,
 - d. Liaising with the business recovery/response efforts,
 - e. Other resources such as 3rd party consultants, e.g. Public Relations, Social Media, Customer Complaints Hotlines, etc.,
4. Training for spokesperson;
5. Stakeholder contact details and communication processes;
6. Resource required for recovery of any product (if applicable);
7. Consider responses to particular crisis scenarios, and;
8. Standard communication templates.

ACTIVATION



In the event of an incident, the nominated CMT Leader will assess the situation and make the decision to activate the plan. If appropriately prepared, CMT members will be aware of their roles and the procedures to be implemented. Once the plan is activated, the stakeholder communication will be a primary focus of the CMT.

Communications during the activation period must be managed with speed ensuring a positive message in relation to the crisis. The business should express sympathy for those who have been affected and ensuring that the business does not avoid the responsibility – natural default position.

An appropriate review and debrief once the crisis is over to learn from any event would be beneficial to the business and the team members involved in the crisis management team.