

Crisis communications: first hours checklist

The communications steps for the first hours of an incident. General information, not legal advice.

STRAIGHT AWAY

- ☐ Establish what you know, what you do not, and who is affected
- ☐ Convene the crisis team and name one owner for communications
- ☐ Start a single log of decisions, facts and times
- ☐ Check which notification clocks have started: ICO, FCA, Charity Commission, HSE, NIS

BEFORE ANYTHING GOES PUBLIC

- ☐ Brief staff, so they hear it from you first
- ☐ Notify the regulators the law requires you to tell
- ☐ If you are FCA-regulated, speak to the FCA before making external commitments
- ☐ Agree who signs off statements, and how quickly
- ☐ Choose your spokesperson

YOUR FIRST STATEMENT

- ☐ Say what happened, as far as you know it
- ☐ Say what you are doing about it
- ☐ Show concern for the people affected
- ☐ Tell people what they should do, if anything
- ☐ Say when you will update next

KEEP GOING

- ☐ Update regularly, even when there is little new to say
- ☐ Keep one version of the facts across every channel
- ☐ Correct misinformation without repeating it in the headline
- ☐ Monitor news and social media, and log what is being said

AFTERWARDS

- ☐ Review what happened and what you would change
- ☐ Update the plan, then rehearse it