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**CRISIS MANAGEMENT  
EXERCISE**

*January 2004*

# *CRISIS MANAGEMENT*

## Disaster exercise

In devising a disaster exercise one of the most important things to do is to understand clearly what are the entities involved, apart of the airline itself. Those may include:

### Authorities:

- National/Federal
- State
- Local
- Foreign (if the incident happens in another country)

### Responders:

- Volunteers
- Professionals for example Kenyon International.
  
- Media
- Families
- Public
- Insurers
- Clergy for example missionaries
- Family Association
- Survivors' etc.

For the airline itself, business continuity is the main issue which will always concern them, and from this, it raises questions like; what are the chances of surviving after a major disruption to their company? how long can they exist in case of a crisis? Etc.

To overcome the above issues, an airline should have a good business continuity plan which will enable them to have higher chances of surviving

after major disruption, and this would make their customers to feel confident in them and would always put trust to them.

In a disaster exercise, the following points would help in analysing and assessing what to expect any time in case of an incident:

- Pre-planning for disaster
- Organised resource management
- Organisation use their expertise for example Kenyon International
- Multiple actions occur simultaneously
- Seamless response to the families/Victims

Before devising a disaster exercise, the airline company should focus in the following issues; in order to build up a strong team of different professionals in case of an incident occurs:

### **Management process:**

-The management team of the airline has to plan the overall process i.e. which department is involved and who is involved.

-Also how to split management team into different department e.g. cabin crew, human resources, flight operations, media representative, sales, finance etc.

-In splitting the management team, those in charge should have leadership characteristic e.g. ethics to set the tone for the successful running of an emergency team, team-worker, carer etc. And from the above points, it decides how its' staff are going to achieve in responding in an incident.

-Management should also look for volunteers in the company who are willing and able to participate in the process.

-The management team ensures that training and procedures are being conducted, a disaster exercise is being practiced and the standard way of doing is met.

As the management team needs to ensure that the team participating in the disaster exercise does not fall into a routine, for this purpose new exercises need to be simulated with different scenarios. This procedure will make the team aware that all incidents are not the same and be ready for facing any type of incident and this will also motivate and challenge the team to work for a better solution.

### **Special Assistant team**

In case of an airline accident, the airline company should have in mind what this may result in an experience that will impact individuals for the rest of their lives e.g. smell, sight, sound, physiological, psychological, impersonally etc.

So the airline company should be prepared in the kind of care process that would be needed by them. Also make sure, if the airline is going to achieve this assistance on their own or use an agency like Kenyon International or Independent Counselling Advisory Services (ECAS).

### **Call Centre**

This provides a calling point for enquires about relatives for friends and also link for information for the incident and all involved.

The airline company should make sure about the kind of call centre they are going to need and consequently decide if using their own or use external Emergency provider information Centre (EPIC).

If choosing to use the company's call centre, the airline needs to have trained staff who are ready and able to handle 50 to 200 calls lines at the same time and has also to be able to process incoming calls and to provide notification services like family Assistance team (FAST).

In the processing of notification, a Family Assistance Team (FAST) agent may be used.

## **Media**

It is about the way the world views you as an airline in case of an accident.

Therefore, the airline company should be prepared who should handle the media i.e. either employ external agencies like Kenyon International or use internal staff as this enhances ability to produce an executive decision how the airline itself is going to put it out to the world.

To ensure that this part is handled properly, the airline company needs to set certain amount of staff to training and exercise it by practicing. Also its management team should be able to put out in a dark site the right information.

This training applies also to sales and handling agents in order to educate them in what to respond if outside media comes to ask them about an incident happened in their company.

## **Handling Agent**

In an incident, the handling agent of the airline has the connection with the airport where the sales and tickets being issued including boarding passes and passenger manifest. These documents have essential importance for the investigation process.

## **THE EXERCISE**

For this exercise, the assumption is:

We are XYZ Airline Company, which is one of the leading charter airlines in Europe. We own 8 Boeing 767 and 5 B737 aircraft and operating long haul and short-haul flights in different routes around the world. Our company is still growing up with around 3000 staff.

### **Aircraft crash scenario:**

A Boeing 737 has in-flight engine problems en route from Glasgow to London Gatwick; it will need to make an emergency landing at a large airport (that is Manchester airport) along the route. The latest communication with the commercial aircraft is that the plane has lost engine power and is losing altitude too quickly to reach the Manchester airport and the only hope to save any of the 150 crew and passengers is to attempt a landing.

Conditions at this airport are clear but the surrounding area is wet due to a sustained long rainy period along the week. A cool, wet wind is also a factor.

The main runway is cleared; however, the likelihood of the pilot being able to control the aircraft to stay within the landing space is slim. The landing approach passes over the fences of the airport and got out of populated housing development areas nearby.

The airport control tower alerts its own Crash/Fire Rescue units and requests that the local emergency services provide backup rescue assistance in fire, police, medical, welfare, and search and rescue capabilities and informing also the airline company in crisis.

The airline company alerts all the team members' and starts to deal with the problem.

As first thing the airline tries to get the most accurate information from the operation department of the airline. Securing the documentation and whom to give is taken into consideration and the person who was going to take responsibility informed, suspension of all the computer records and system log sheet is performed after all the important information has been taken, this secure the passenger manifest from possible appropriation from media.

- Following actions will be:
- Call out for everyone in the team
- Contact People Care like SAT agency
- Fill out the forms regarding the plane and all those on board
- If traditional service by Kenyon International is needed, they have to be contacted for their services.

The verification from the authority was: the aircraft has landed without one engine and there was a fire explosion. The fire/rescue team was on the site trying to set off the fire. Following this report from the Authority, the emergency response manager called an emergency meeting.

During the meeting the discussion was chaired by emergency response manager with all managers on duty for the involved departments attending.

The discussion was done and responsibilities were given to each department and the following tasks were conducted:

## **Sales**

-They contacted the tour operator/code share/alliance partners informing the incident and what help was needed and prepared to encounter business continuity in combating the situation.

-They updated their customers by informing what happened and who to contact and also gave confidence for airline to client.

-They present confidence building in where they are situated and ensure to answer any query related to the incident.

## **Flight operations**

- They provided -through personnel dept.- crew records required by authority and medical staff in the presence of emergency response manager authorities.

-They ensured that all the next of kin or relatives (of people involved in the incident) were contacted and a 24-hour telephone line was provided in case of any information were needed by them.

-They assist in the preparation of investigation team.

-They liase with local accident authority and also with human resources department in crew care.

## **Maintenance**

-They provided records to the authority and investigation team, including all data about the aircraft,

-They sent one of their representatives with the go team.

-They were involved with investigation team in the aircraft recovery procedure.

## **Media**

- They used Emergency Provider Information Centre (EPIC) agency to handle the media crisis.
- They provided all the information needed to EPIC and help in the process of releasing all the statements.
- They updated their dark site and ensure continual updating of the site is conducted.
- They also helped in preparation of media conferences and liaison with outside media through EPIC.

## **Communication**

- They provided the running of all the technical aspect in communicating including assistance with computer log, as in securing paper with computer log.
- Also installation of other equipment like back system in case of failure of one system the other can serve the purpose.
- They provided assistance in repairing and functioning of power cables in power transmission.

## **Conclusion**

The exercise has to be followed by a long de-briefing, in order to analyse the results. A detailed report with the conclusions and recommendations has to be filed and distributed to the people concerned.

The feedback process will be used to devise the possible next disaster exercise.