



## Disaster Communications in a Changing Media World (Butterworth-Heinemann Homeland Security)

By Kim S Haddow, George Haddow

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### Disaster Communications in a Changing Media World (Butterworth-Heinemann Homeland Security) By Kim S Haddow, George Haddow

Communications is key to the success of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Accurate information disseminated to the general public, to elected officials and community leaders, and to the media reduces risk, saves lives and property, and speeds recovery. The ability to communicate is no longer an afterthought or a luxury; timely communication is now as important as logistics or the pre-deployment of materials. Planning and controlling the flow of information before, during and after a disaster will define your organization's credibility, trustworthiness, authority, and effectiveness.

The emergence of new media like the internet, e-mail, blogs, text messaging, cell phone photos, and the increasing role played by "first informers"-- witnesses who now have the ability to transmit information immediately from the event--are redefining the roles of government and media.

The government's historical role as gatekeeper is now an anachronism. Traditional media's role as the sole conduit of reliable and officially-sanctioned information has been eclipsed by the advent of new media. The tools and rules of communications are evolving and disaster communications must evolve to capitalize on these changes and exploit the opportunities they provide. Bloggers have the potential either to add to the chaos during a crisis, or to help convey accurate data and report on local conditions. Disaster communications must incorporate a way to manage their impact and if possible use them for the common good.

Finally, even though the means to the end are evolving, the goals, the values, and the underlying principles of effective disaster communication-- the need for transparency, increased accessibility, trustworthiness and reliability, and to create partnerships with the media--have not changed and need to be embraced along with the practical ability to convey information effectively.

\* Applies the principles of emergency management to communications during a disaster

- \* Covers terrorist incidents, accidents, and natural disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes
- \* Shows how to use blogs, text messages, and cell phone cameras as well as government channels and traditional media to communicate during a crisis

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

*"This book defines the key elements of disaster communications with a focus on methods to achieve successful communications along with the principles that should carry the communications along."-- Shannon Parker, St Louis University Institute for Biosecurity*

*"Although written for a government audience, this volume contains excellent, useful information readily adaptable to many of the media situations that frequently confront security practitioners... The authors write clearly and use checklists to facilitate understanding. In addition to the obvious crisis situations, the information provided is eminently useful in the development of a security supportive culture and awareness campaigns within an organization. Communicating the security message to our various audiences and earning their willing support and participation is essential to the success of a security organization. Given that most security professionals and police would rather walk into a dark alley searching for an armed felon than spend a minute in front of a camera and a microphone, this text is both necessary and timely."--Haddow Disaster Communications in a Changing Media World review in Security Management.com*

#### About the Author

Kim Haddow is the president of Haddow Communications in New Orleans - a company specializing in strategic media planning, messaging, and developing research-driven media content, branding and advertising materials for non-profits. Clients have included: the Rockefeller Family Fund, Sierra Club, Make It Right Foundation, U.S. State Department, Public Campaign, and the Trust for America's Health. Haddow also worked for eight years at Greer, Margolis, Mitchell, Burns (GMMB), a Washington, DC- based media consulting firm, advising political campaigns and non-profits. Haddow began her career at WWL-AM in New Orleans where she managed the news department

George Haddow currently serves as an Adjunct Professor at the Homeland Security Studies program at Tulane University in New Orleans, LA. Prior to joining academia, Mr. Haddow worked for eight years in the Office of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the White House Liaison and the deputy Chief of Staff. He is a founding partner of Bullock and Haddow LLC, a disaster management consulting firm.

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