



Crisis Communication Policy

Purpose:

To effectively manage communications through a formal, clearly defined channel in order to mitigate crisis, or serious negative repercussions for Sierra Nevada Swimming, Inc. or the Sport of Competitive Swimming in general, and maintain a reputation of leadership and transparency on vital issues and breaking news.

In speaking with the media and public, Sierra Nevada Swimming will provide factual information and messages most beneficial to the organization and to the sport of swimming. We will help the media by providing information that enables them to do their jobs and positions while making Sierra Nevada Swimming a reliable resource and leader.

In all communications, Sierra Nevada Swimming will create a positive opportunity for the public positioning of the sport of swimming as a whole. Messages should be responsive and solution/action oriented, reinforcing the organization's position of leadership.

Policy:

- A. All crises should be reported to the Executive Director and the General Chair immediately.
- B. Only the chief spokesperson and back-up spokesperson are authorized to release information to the media and to the public. All other staff, board, and committee members should be professional and helpful to the media by connecting them with the spokespeople, but will neither speak to the media, nor provide any information.
- C. There should be one designated crisis management lead person, directing and coordinating all aspects of the organization's response including managing the messages and the media. There should also be one designated spokesperson that actually interacts with the media and other inquirers. In some cases, particularly in the event of a "small crisis," the two may be the same person. In others, the jobs may be divided to facilitate efficient handling of the situation. Most likely, but not limited to, the two roles will be filled by the Executive Director and the General Chair, respectively.
- D. All comments should be guided by professionalism and transparency, and serve to mitigate the crisis while reinforcing the leadership role of Sierra Nevada Swimming, Inc.
- E. "No comment" is never an acceptable response. If an answer is unknown or cannot be immediately answered, make note of the question, tell the inquirer you will get back with him/her and do so. If the question cannot be answered due to a policy (such as sharing personnel information, etc.) inform the inquirer of just that.





F. Personnel matters are to remain confidential. When possible, responses should be proactive, responsive, and action-oriented.

G. Sierra Nevada Swimming recognizes the importance of media relation to public trust. In times of crisis, maintaining effective media relationships will be particularly critical in bolstering public confidence in the sector as a whole.

Crisis Communication Plan (CCP):

PROCESS:

1. Notification: The Executive Director or General Chair should be immediately notified of any impending or existing crisis by staff and/or board members of Sierra Nevada Swimming.
2. Assessment of the Situation: Upon receiving information of an impending or existing crisis, the Executive Director or General Chair will either activate an intervention/mediation plan and could appoint other approved Information Officers to initiate an investigation., thus forming a Crisis Communication Team.
3. Based on information gathered, the crisis communication team will assess the situation, determine the facts, and begin planning.
4. The crisis communications team will formulate an appropriate response to the crisis by using the following guideline:
 - Determine what can and cannot be said.
 - Develop a factual, responsive message.
 - Construct an appropriate script to be used by the office, voice mail system, board members, etc.
5. The crisis management team will construct a plan/process and timetable that appropriately addresses the crisis.
 - Determine if the desired approach should be proactive or reactive.
 - Determine who will deliver the response.
 - Determine how the response should be communicated; statement on the website, email to membership, and/or distribute to the media, holding a press conference, or conducting an interview.
 - Decide to whom the response should be communicated.
 - Develop a timeline for communicating the response.
 - Create an action plan for internal and external communication.
6. Post-crisis action plan:
 - Continually evaluate the effectiveness of the message as the situation progresses.
 - Distribute post-crisis communications to appropriate audiences.





2015-2016 Key Positions

1. Spokesperson(s):

- Executive Director, Denna Culpepper 916-208-5751 dennac@snswimming.org
- General Chair, Kirk Johansen 916-803-2954 kirkj@snswimming.org

2. Information Officers:

- TBA
- TBA

3. Crisis Communication Team:

- Primary Team
 - a. Spokesperson; Denna Culpepper
 - b. Back-up Spokesperson; Kirk Johansen
 - c. Information Officers:
 - d. USA Swimming Representative: Pat Hogan or Designee; 719-866-4578
phogan@usaswimming.org
 - e. Legal Counsel: Glenn Peterson: Millstone, Peterson & Watts, LLP
916-780-8222; GPeterson@mpwlaw.net

Policy	Crisis Communication Policy	
Total Pages	3	
Approved by BOD	Date:	
Writer of policy	Denna Culpepper	September 7, 2015

