



# CRISIS COMMUNICATION

GUIDE



# INTRODUCTION

VINCI must be in a position to respond to crises that may jeopardise its image and reputation and adversely impact its economic performance. The unique positioning of its business activity makes communication responsibilities incumbent on the Group, since the legitimacy of a leader resides primarily in the image it conveys to all of its stakeholders (customers, public authorities, suppliers, employees, partners, shareholders, journalists, etc.).

VINCI's highly decentralised management model based on 4,000 business units in more than 120 countries may be a major advantage in crisis management (local presence/responsiveness), but can also be a drawback in terms of reporting information.

The ability to respond quickly and locally is a success factor in managing a crisis against a backdrop of accelerating information flows.

If we are to provide a coordinated and targeted response, control our communication, make our voice heard and support the interests of the Group and its subsidiaries, we need a shared crisis communication and crisis management policy that is understood and taken on board at all levels of the Group.

This guide, which provides an overall procedure, presents the general framework with which every business line and every subsidiary must comply while respecting the Group's diversity. The procedure is not designed to replace existing business line and subsidiary crisis procedures but rather to supplement them, offering a common baseline and specifies the situations in which VINCI's Communications Department must be alerted.

The objectives of the VINCI crisis procedure are the following.

- **Determine** the level of involvement in managing crises within VINCI: who should be alerted and when?
- **Describe** the way in which VINCI and the business line work together in a crisis: how is crisis management organised between the local office/subsidiary, the business line and VINCI?
- **Explain** the operation of the crisis unit: who does what within the unit?
- **Share** the rules and principles to be followed by all: what is the common language for all VINCI entities?

This procedure is made up of practical tools and advice for effective crisis management, particularly in the first few hours - which we all know are crucial to the success of a crisis management operation.

# 1.

## ASSESS AND REPORT

### What is the principle underpinning VINCI's crisis communications system?

**A crisis occurring in a VINCI company is generally managed locally, as close as possible to the event, by the subsidiary concerned and its network of communicators.**

Two types of events may require crisis management.


#### An "operational" crisis situation

That is to say a serious, localised, sudden event for which the crisis unit should immediately be activated (e.g. workplace accidents with victims, pollution, labour conflict, etc.). Each business line has drawn up its own definition of this type of crisis.

#### An "institutional" crisis situation

That is to say a situation involving the name of the company or its top managers. Such situations can either arise without warning or develop over a long period time with periods of greater and lesser acuity.

For this type of crisis, two types of action are needed:

 [setting up a monitoring system](#) (press and web) and an analysis of the weak signals that may emerge within the media landscape.

### When should VINCI be involved?

Some crisis cannot be managed locally and the **VINCI head office must be alerted immediately**. These are situations arising from an event that:

- is emotionally charged (fatality on a worksite);
- adversely affects or threatens to affect VINCI's image and reputation (environmental damage, legal risks);
- prompts strong stakeholder opposition;
- involves the Group's commitments  
(*The Code of Ethics and Conduct, Anti-corruption Code of Conduct, Guide on Human Rights, VINCI Manifesto, etc.*);
- involves the VINCI brand in the media or on the web (X(ex-Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.);
- may therefore impact the share price.


An indicative list of events requiring immediate alert of the VINCI head office and the management of the business line involved is shown below:

- serious or fatal accident involving our employees or outsiders present on one of our worksites;
- serious or fatal accident involving Group employees outside our worksites that may be associated with VINCI (e.g. suicide);
- environmental degradation/damage;
- exceptional natural event affecting a Group site;
- demonstration against the activities of the company, acts of sabotage, attacks on employees;
- labour conflict leading to work stoppage, strike, demonstration;
- judicial investigation involving an entity/senior manager/employee;
- complex legal challenge to projects;
- polemics or negative rumours against the VINCI brand or a VINCI entity;
- accusation of corruption or wrongdoing;
- act of terrorism (or attempted acts of terrorism) against Group employees or property;
- presence of Group employees in an area considered risky (geopolitical unrest, exposure to toxic substances, etc.);
- conflict with a public figure or elected official;
- media attention to any of the events listed above.

**A single rule applies: immediately inform the business line concerned and VINCI (Communications Department),** by means of a mailing list (to be defined by each business line).

The use of a generic e-mail, e.g. "crisis@company.com" is recommended. You should contact your entity's IT support team.

 [See appendix 5](#)  
How to implement a media monitoring

 [See appendix 1](#)  
List of useful contacts


## ALERT FLOWCHART



\* VINCI Press Relations Department

### What is the reporting procedure?

Reporting is a crucial step in crisis management. It must be carried out without delay to the entity and then the business line management. After informing the VINCI Communications Department, a written report must be sent within the first few hours. Sharing the facts makes it possible to immediately take appropriate action and provide the necessary resources.

 **See appendix 4**  
Fill in and send the  
warning sheet

# 2.

## THE CRISIS UNIT

### At what level should the crisis unit be set up?

#### AT LOCAL LEVEL (SITE, ENTITY)

A crisis unit is set up immediately. The business line is immediately informed.

#### AT BUSINESS LINE LEVEL

- 1 The situation calls for the activation of a crisis unit. The unit provides support to the local level.
- 2 The situation does not call for the activation of a crisis unit. The local level keeps the business unit regularly informed as the situation unfolds.

#### AT VINCI LEVEL

- 1 The situation calls for the activation of a crisis unit at VINCI level.\*
- 2 The situation calls for the participation of VINCI representatives in the crisis unit set up by the business line.\*
- 3 The situation does not call for the activation of a crisis unit; the business line keeps VINCI regularly informed.\*

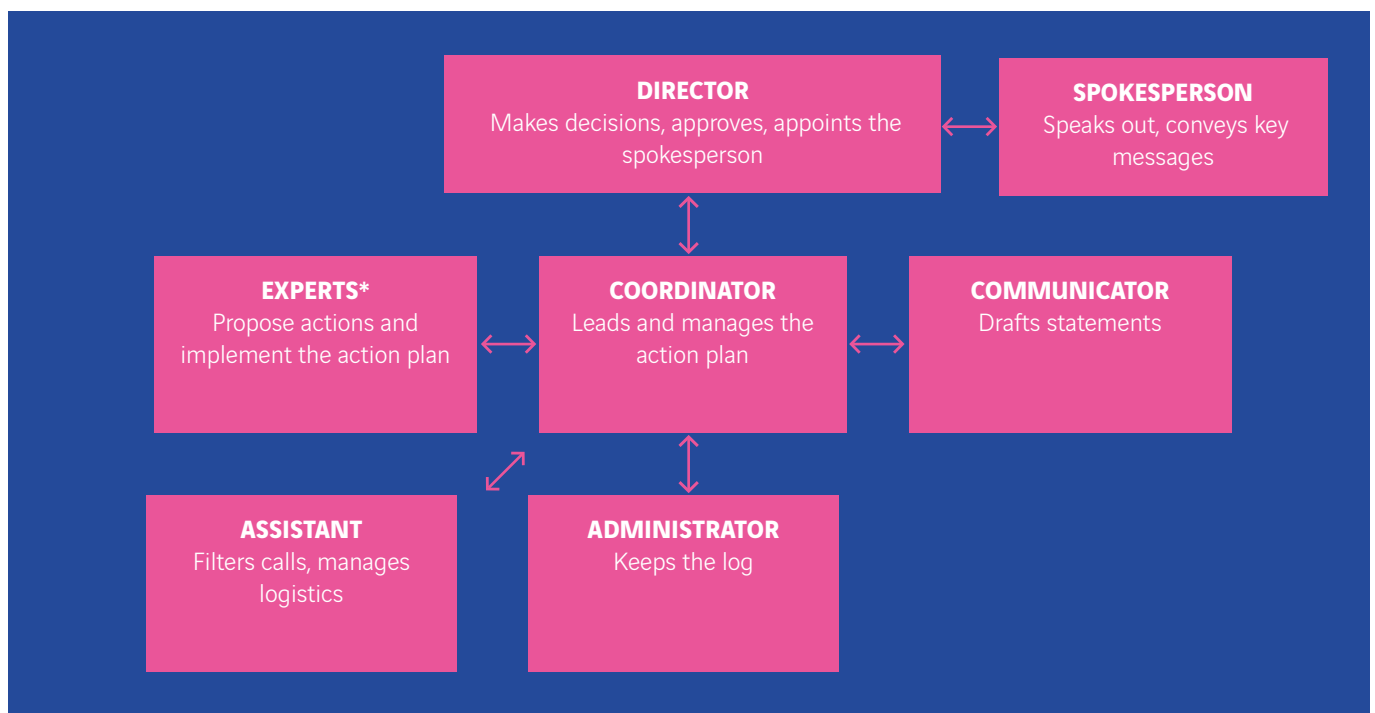
\* VINCI's Press Relations Department is either part of the crisis unit or is kept regularly informed by one of the unit's members.

### What are the basic functions of a crisis unit at VINCI?

A crisis unit can operate in degraded mode with a minimum of three persons. There are three key positions:

Positions	Main responsibilities
Director	<b>Acts as the crisis management strategist</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Decides on the action plan and anticipates the scenario.</li><li>→ Takes final decisions.</li><li>→ Acts as spokesperson if necessary.</li></ul>
Coordinator	<b>Orchestrates crisis management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Coordinates the activities of the members of the crisis unit.</li><li>→ Centralises information.</li><li>→ Chairs meetings of the crisis unit.</li></ul>
Administrator	<b>Serves as the memory of the crisis unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Keeps the log, which is essential to crisis follow-up.</li><li>→ Reminds the coordinator of actions in progress and deadlines.</li></ul>

## CRISIS UNIT ORGANISATIONAL CHART



\* The experts may cover the following functions: legal, insurance, finance, technical, prevention, environment, information systems, etc.

### What are the first steps taken by the crisis unit?


Once a decision has been made to activate the crisis unit, the first steps taken by the coordinator or the director (the two people with authority to activate a crisis unit) are the following:

- notify members of the crisis unit and convene a first (physical or virtual) meeting;
- brief the front line people: switchboard operators, assistants and managers;
- call on external resources if necessary (press relations agencies if appropriate);
- set up a media and social network monitoring (see the Social Networks Guide available on the VINCI intranet).

### The virtual crisis unit

In some cases, it is necessary (due to the geographical distance from the head office) and effective to organise crisis units in virtual mode, by means of a telephone or videoconference conference number.

A telephone conference system (with call number, participant code and organiser code) must be set up for this purpose and activated immediately, in advance, within each centre.

 [See appendix 2](#)  
Responsibilities of the  
crisis unit members

# 3.

## CRISIS COMMUNICATION

### THE THREE STAGES OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

#### 1 Compassion

Express voice suffering generated by the event, speaking from the point of view of the victims | Show the human side of the company | Defer the debate about responsibility.


#### 2 Transparency

Show a determination to understand what happened | Announce that a system has been set up to investigate | Assert willingness to support the requirements of the justice system or the authorities | Prove that the company is open to the truth.

#### 3 Action

Go to the spot | Be visible | Prove that the company is able to cope with the most difficult situations | Be accountable.

### The golden rules of crisis communication

- Understand very quickly and precisely the cause of the crisis
- Have a position
- **Communicate proactively** 
- Uphold the image of a responsible company
- Provide consistent information to all audiences
- Adopt a targeted approach according to the audience
- Anticipate journalists' questions about the crisis
- Write down your response to the crisis (key messages)
- Brief the spokesperson prior to every statement to the media (media training)

**It is better to notify others than to try to cope with the situation alone.**

**It is better to provide little information early on than to provide full information too late.**

### Communication tools

#### Key messages?

- Key messages are the foundation of all communication, whatever the target audience (internal or external), form (written or verbal) and method employed (interview, speech, press release, correspondence, social network, etc.).

It is imperative that the key messages be consistent across all target audiences.

- The messages must be supplemented by questions and answers (see below: preparation of the questions and answers document).
- A key message is simple and concrete (possibly illustrated by an example).
- Key messages must be presented in written form and approved by the crisis unit director.
- Key messages are used as the basis for statements made by the VINCI spokesperson.

### What can you say when you can't say anything?

#### → Set a waiting message

— "We have not yet received all the particulars that would enable us to give you verified factual information. Collecting these particulars is a priority and we will keep you informed as soon as possible."

— "An investigation is currently under way to determine the exact causes of the incident."

— "An investigation is under way and we will not comment at this stage."

### How to write key messages bases on the information collected?

#### Message 1

If appropriate: after briefly presenting the incident, begin with a message of compassion and empathy with the people directly or indirectly affected by the incident (families of victims, neighbours, populations affected by an environmental incident, etc.). Thank the people who have provided/are providing support.

#### Message 2

Show that VINCI is acting responsibly in managing the situation and coping with an exceptional situation.

#### Message 3

Provide reassurance that VINCI will be able to find the causes of the incident and work with the stakeholders (authorities, police, fire brigade, etc.).

 **See appendix 9**  
Define the communication plan

## What is the questions and answers document (Q&A)?

The questions and answers document is an important document that supplements key messages. The questions and answers anticipate sensitive issues and provide answers to questions that may be asked. They can also offer answers that make it possible to return to the approved key messages and thus enable the spokesperson to stay on message.

Here are a number of phrases to help you get back to key messages:

- *"the main thing is..."*
- *"the important thing is..."*
- *"what we learn from this incident is..."*
- *"let me put this in perspective..."*
- *"before we leave this issue, let me add..."*
- *"what you say reminds me that..."*
- *"this is an important point, and another one is..."*

## For long-term crisis management, the same machinery is set up

- The crisis unit is maintained and meets regularly to continue to set the course and provide guidance for action to be taken.
- The questions and answers document includes the substantive messages and is expanded by input from the crisis unit's work.
- A more systematic media monitoring is organised.
- Reporting continues on a regular basis, according to a schedule agreed between the level concerned and the business unit, and then VINCI.

**Fatigue on the part of the members of the unit and periods of relative calm that can occur in this type of crisis are pitfalls to be aware of. Regular reporting or short meetings of the crisis unit make it possible to remain watchful and foster the right responses.**



## Identifying a spokesperson

The communication posture must be represented by one or two people appointed as spokespersons within the crisis unit of each business line at the level (local, regional, division, business line, Group) appropriate to the nature of the crisis.

This can be a member of operational staff, an expert, the director of the site or also, if appropriate, a VINCI spokesperson, depending on the analysis of the situation that is drawn up prior to the appointment of the spokesperson.

The spokesperson is regularly trained by means of fictitious situations, media training, etc. Before making a statement, the spokesperson is systematically briefed by the director of communications of the business line based on the key messages, to enable him or her to master its speech.

## Issuing statements

It is imperative to return the calls of all persons contacting the company, even if the message to be given consists in deferring the answer or refusing to answer.

The opportunities and risks of each statement issued must be analysed ahead of time according to the person requesting information and the institution that person represents (elected officials, media, NGOs, etc.).


It will be validated by the Communications Department of the entity concerned.

# 4.

## CLOSING THE CRISIS

Each crisis must enable to company to make progress on managing the sensitive situations it faces. There is no single right way to manage a crisis. It is therefore important, in the days following the crisis, to hold a meeting to discuss it, share information, and provide feedback.

### How does one determine that the crisis has ended?

- The situation is under control and/or will not worsen. 
- The number of incoming calls have declined or dropped to zero.
- There is no further action to be taken (technical action, communication documents to be produced, etc.).
- The media monitoring is identifying few or no articles on the subjects.

 [See appendix 10](#)  
Ending the crisis

# APPENDICES

## YOUR TOOLS FOR EFFICIENTLY MANAGING A CRISIS



# APPENDIX 1

## List of useful contacts

**1** Contact details of persons to be included in the event of a serious crisis.

**Pierre Duprat**

Vice-President, Corporate Communications  
+33 6 03 34 83 48  
pierre.duprat@vinci.com

**Stéphanie Malek**

Public Relations Director  
+33 6 23 58 36 38  
stephanie.malek@vinci.com

**Laurène Chanquoy**

Media Relations Officer  
+33 6 58 46 33 46  
laurene.chanquoy@vinci.com

**Director of Communications for the division**

(to be completed)

**2** You can contact VINCI's switchboard, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

**VINCI head office switchboard**

+33 1 57 98 61 00

# APPENDIX 2

## Responsibilities of the crisis unit members

Person	Responsibility	Task
<b>Director of the crisis unit</b>	<b>Supervision Decision Representation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Decides to convene the crisis unit and determines its membership.</li><li>→ Approves the analysis of the situation.</li><li>→ Defines priority action to be taken and crisis management strategy.</li><li>→ Oversees identification of persons involved, possible adverse scenarios and potential allies.</li><li>→ Approves communication documents (key messages, press releases, questions and answers, etc.).</li><li>→ Maintains perspective as the situation unfolds.</li><li>→ Handles relations with the authorities, elected officials, customers and civic associations.</li><li>→ Can act as a spokesperson.</li></ul>
<b>Crisis unit coordinator</b>	<b>Responsible for managing the unit and overseeing the method.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Acts as the interface between the event location(s) (site or other) and the VINCI unit (head office).</li><li>→ Ensures that tasks are properly assigned to the various members of the unit and if necessary reinforces certain functions by adding in-house or outside expertise.</li><li>→ Identifies and activates the required resources.</li><li>→ Oversees coordination and application of methods and deadlines.</li><li>→ Schedules and chairs meetings.</li></ul>
<b>Experts</b>	<b>Technical managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>→ Provide expertise.</li><li>→ Collect detailed and reliable information from the "field".</li><li>→ Transmit questions from the crisis unit to the site(s).</li><li>→ Assess critical points and any assistance required.</li><li>→ Provide the communicator with elements needed to draft key messages/questions and answers.</li><li>→ Assess the strategy adopted by the crisis unit in light of the situation in the field.</li></ul>

Person	Responsibility	Task
<b>Communicator</b>	<b>Manages communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Briefs the front line staff and gives instructions concerning communications.</li> <li>→ Assigns communication levels (local/national authorities, local/national media, etc.).</li> <li>→ Drafts communication documents (key messages, questions and answers, press releases, etc.).</li> <li>→ Defines the communication plan.</li> <li>→ Ensures that the media monitoring is set up.</li> <li>→ Ensures that families are kept informed and provides them with assistance.</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator</b>	<b>"Memory of the crisis unit"</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Collects all incoming information.</li> <li>→ Drafts the timeline and situation updates.</li> <li>→ Circulates incoming and outgoing information in real time.</li> <li>→ Verifies initiation and implementation of action decided on.</li> </ul>
<b>Spokesperson</b>	<b>Conveys key messages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Takes the floor and conveys the key messages that need to be approved by the Communications Department.</li> </ul>
<b>Assistant</b>	<b>Handles logistics of action to be taken</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Filters and manages incoming calls.</li> <li>→ Provides an equipped crisis room (telephone conference, Internet access, video-conferencing system, etc.).</li> <li>→ Manages resources for action decided (travel, victims' families, etc.).</li> <li>→ Provides the resources needed for the "comfort" of the members of the unit (food, etc.).</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 3

## Emergency action taken by the crisis unit

### **Brief front line staff: telephone switchboard and assistants.**

- Hand-deliver/e-mail call distribution instructions and the call recording sheets (who is calling/what question/what answer?).

### **Ensure that urgent action has been implemented to control the situation.**

- Ensure that the appropriate emergency plan (for example, building evacuation plan) has been put in place.
- Ensure the safety of people and the building (for example, that people have been gathered at the meeting point, that a roll call has been made).
- Call in outside assistance (fire brigade, police, medical emergency services, etc.) if required.

### **Draw up the action plan.**

- List the issues to be addressed.
- Reporting action to be taken.
- Technical action.
- Communication action (key messages, media monitoring, keeping stakeholders informed, etc.).

### **Open the log and list all events.**

### **Adjust action and strategy as the situation unfolds.**



# APPENDIX 4

## Warning sheet

### Information regarding the event

Date and time: .....

#### Type of event

Worksite/project involved: .....

Event and impact: .....

.....

#### Victims if any

Number known: .....

Condition known: .....

Age: .....

#### Parties involved

Administrations .....

Press .....

Client .....

Other .....

### Preliminary findings

#### Initial action taken

Information provided to victims: .....

Information provided to employees: .....

Information provided to the elected officials: .....

Information provided to the client/partner: .....

#### Have you already been asked for information?

By the authorities .....

By associations .....

By local residents .....

By the press .....

Document completed by: .....

Members of management informed: .....

VINCI Communications Department informed: .....

# APPENDIX 5

## Media monitoring and social networks

It is recommended to set up a monitoring system in advance of a crisis, covering both the print and digital media, as well as social networks. This media monitoring must cover sensitive issues and it must immediately be reinforced when a crisis occurs.

To set up your media monitoring, there are two possibilities:

- Through its Communications Department, the company already has a monitoring system. It will then be up to them to pass on to the members of the crisis unit all the articles relating to the subject.

- The company does not have a monitoring system.

A lightweight monitoring system can be introduced:

- for the local print press (generally difficult to monitor in real time), an employee can purchase the local press daily;
- for the digital press, web alerts can also be created (see details below);

- for monitoring social networks, monitoring can be carried out using tools such as Hootsuite or Talkwalker Alerts (see the Social Networks Guide available on the VINCI intranet).

### How to set up a media monitoring

→ Example: Google Alerts

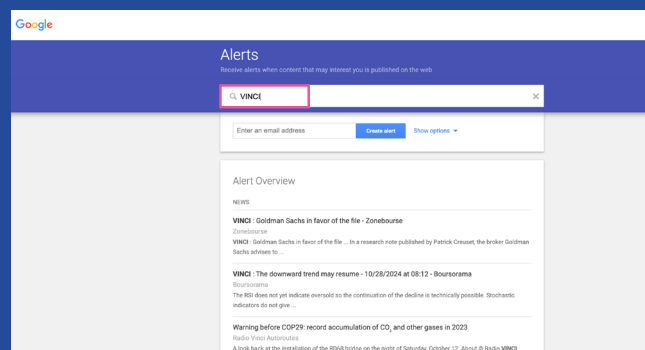
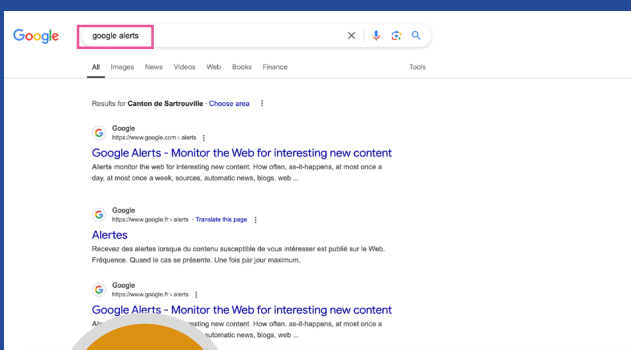
## GOOGLE ALERTS

### STEP 1

Go to the Google Alerts website and sign in to your Google Account.

### STEP 2

Enter your request, set the options and create an e-mail alert by clicking on "Create alert".



# APPENDIX 6

## Brief the front line staff

**Distribute instructions to front-line staff (assistants, switchboard, reception, site wardens, etc.).**

### **Required conduct**

- Do not provide the caller with any information.
- Always remain friendly and courteous, let the person talk as much as possible.
- Fill out the incoming call record and note the questions asked.
- Do not make any promises or commitments.
- Approach to be taken: "I take note of your request and will ask a knowledgeable person to call you back as soon as possible."
- Do not let any outside visitor enter the premises unless accompanied by an authorised company employee.

- Ask visitors and journalists (who do not have an appointment) to wait in the waiting area provided.

**Only the Communications Department or the designated spokesperson is authorised to reply to journalists.**

# APPENDIX 7

## Log template

Date: ..... page .....

Drafted by: .....

Date/time	Decisions/actions/ questions asked	Person in charge	Time provided/next steps	Status

# APPENDIX 8

## Incoming telephone call record

### Instructions for the person in charge of filtering calls

- Do not attempt to answer questions. Say that you do not have full information and that the easiest way to provide an answer is for the spokesperson to call back. Offer to write down the message and the questions so that the spokesperson can return the call.

- Do not make a commitment as to when and how the answer will be provided but do show that you are willing to process the request as quickly as possible.
- Remain calm and courteous at all times.
- Carefully fill out this call record, with special attention to the caller's requests.
- Do not make any comments that could compromise the company.

Name of the caller: .....

Institution/media: .....

Title: .....

Telephone number: .....

E-mail address: .....

Subject of the call: *(carefully note words and expressions used by the caller). Carefully take down full information provided by the caller. This information is useful in assessing the caller's level of knowledge of the situation.*

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Answer requested by (time): .....

If the caller is a journalist, date of publication of the article: .....

Message received by: .....

Telephone: .....

Date and time of call: .....

Site: .....

# APPENDIX 9

## Define the communication plan

Based on audiences identified, draw up the communication plan using the model shown below:

Communication plan				
Audiences	Key messages	Actions	Who is in charge?	When?
<b>External audiences</b>				
Media				
Authorities/ elected officials				
Local residents				
Other (please specify)				
<b>Internal audiences</b>				
Employees				
Other (please specify)				

# APPENDIX 10

## Crisis conclusion

N°	Actions	Person in charge
<b>Crisis follow up and conclusion</b>		
1	<p><b>Process ongoing communications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Call every journalist or authority that at some point requested information concerning your situation or requested an interview.</li> <li>→ Ensure that your department has directly informed each audience, using the appropriate tools: press, conference, correspondence, advertising campaigns to offer explanations, express gratitude, etc.</li> </ul>	Members of the crisis unit overseen by the director
2	<p><b>Officially conclude the crisis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Announce the return to normal to all crisis management participants (internal and external).</li> <li>→ Thank outsiders for their support: letters or message thanking outside experts, partners and providers who gave you their support while you were managing the crisis.</li> </ul>	Director of the crisis unit
<b>Debriefing and evaluation</b> <i>Bring together the members of the crisis unit and ask them for their off-the-cuff impressions of the crisis as they experienced it, to support an ex-post analysis.</i>		
3	<p><b>Analyse the various impacts of the crisis on VINCI's business activity and image:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Perceptions of internal and external audiences.</li> <li>→ Image of the company and its crisis management.</li> <li>→ Potential medium and long-term legal and regulatory impact.</li> <li>→ Inform the VINCI Press Relations Department.</li> </ul>	Members of the crisis unit, overseen by the unit director
4	<p><b>Assess VINCI's preparedness and establish a corrective action plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ List all steps taken that worked well during the crisis as well as areas for improvement at each step: alert, activation of the crisis unit, organisation and coordination, decision-making and communication.</li> <li>→ Update the crisis manual after each crisis as appropriate.</li> <li>→ Identify requirements in terms of additional crisis communication tools and training.</li> </ul>	Members of the crisis unit, overseen by the director of the unit and the coordinator
5	<p><b>Draw up a financial statement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Draw up a comprehensive statement of all costs incurred by the crisis and its management.</li> <li>→ Submit it to insurers as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Administrative and Financial coordinator + expert
6	<p><b>Capitalise on and share experience, expand and consolidate networks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Learn to share experience with the various internal and external partners.</li> <li>→ Maintain contacts initiated or strengthened during the crisis (experts, authorities, journalists, associations, local elected officials, etc.).</li> <li>→ Restore the confidence of the various stakeholders (authorities, local residents, associations, elected officials, media, etc).</li> <li>→ Inform the VINCI Press Relations Department.</li> </ul>	Director of the crisis unit and coordinator
7	<p><b>Continue monitoring:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ If the subject is likely to be raised again or could serve as a precedent, set up a monitoring on the subject to check that it does not come back to the fore.</li> <li>→ Inform the VINCI Press Relations Department.</li> </ul>	Members of the crisis unit, overseen by the unit director

