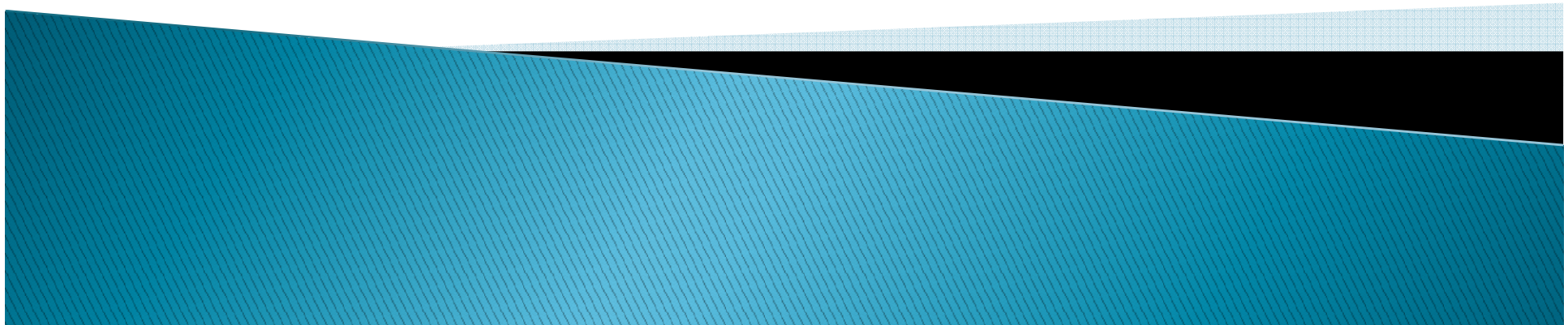


# Use of social media in crisis communication

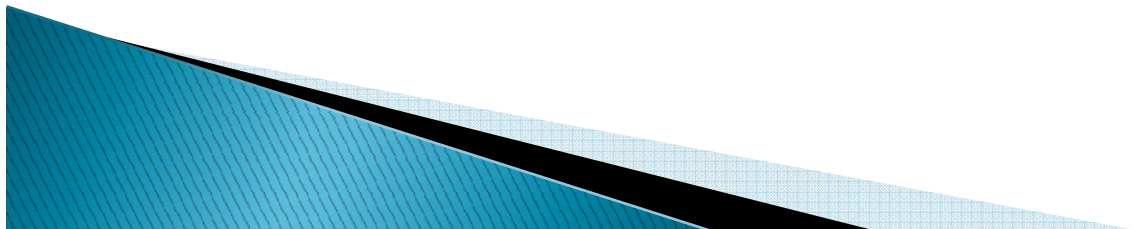
Julie Clément  
President Kortom vzw  
Communications manager Province of East Flanders

PSCEurope Forum – 31 May 2012



# Kortom

- ▶ Non-profit organization for public communications
- ▶ Founded in 2000
- ▶ Members in 2012: 835- communication officers/managers from non-profit organizations in Flanders (Belgium)
- ▶ Activities: professionalize sector of public communications through education, formation, networking, organize conferences...

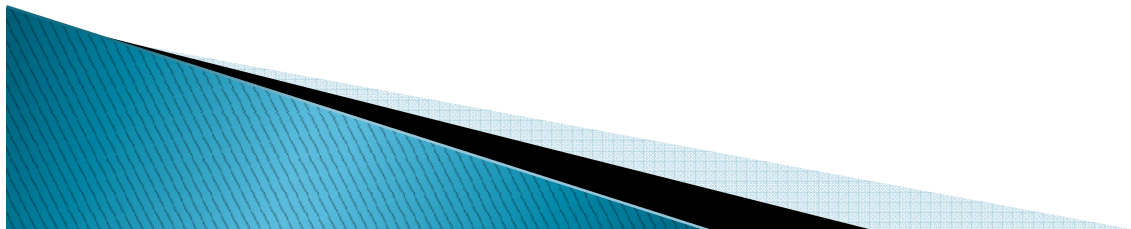


# Introduction

- 18 th august: disaster at Pukkelpop (music festival–40.000 people), Hasselt (Belgium): stormy weather, 4 people dead
- massive use of social media for several purposes but not by the official authorities and/or organizations
- analysis and insights about the use of social media in the days and weeks afterwards

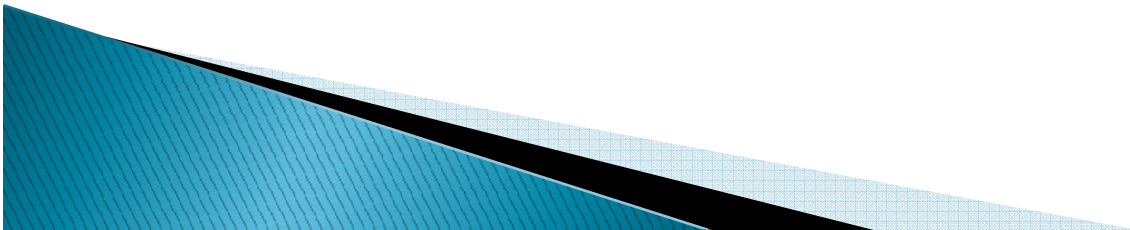
#PP11

#PPOK

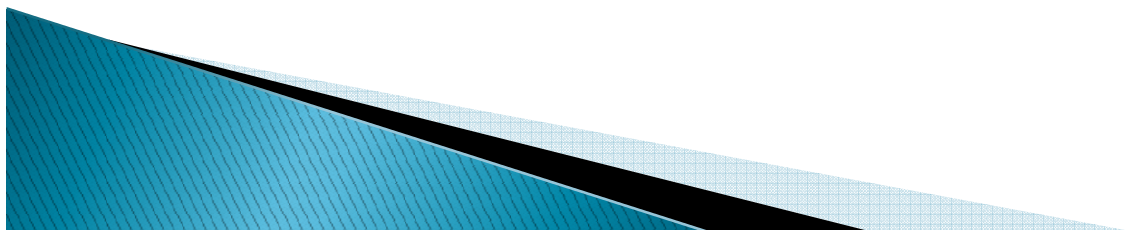


# Introduction

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=NY6M362iwNU&feature-youtube.be>



- ▶ **A case study of Twitter disaster reponse – Pukkelpop (“If your country is under attack – don’t count on Twitter – just yet”)**
- ▶ <http://dahawkeyecaller.tumblr.com/post/9111077769>
  
- ▶ **Online solidarity asks for rules . Twitter helped the victims of Pukkelpop less than we think**
- ▶ DS sat 20th august 2011, Autor: Sarah Vankersschaever
- ▶ *There was wrong information circulating on Twitter and a lot of offered help stayed unused. ‘Disaster plans will contain more and more guidelines on social media.’*
  
- ▶ **The night of #hasselhelpt (hasselt helps)**
- ▶ DS zaterdag 20 augustus 2011, Auteur: Wouter Van Driessche
- ▶ *@DirtyJos: Twitter stond vol hulpaanbiedingen en vragen die mekaar nooit vonden. Spijtig.’ Twitter werd na de dramatische gebeurtenissen op Pukkelpop overspoeld door een golf van solidariteit. Onder de hashtag #HasseltHelpt probeerden twitteraars slachtoffers te helpen door logies en transport aan te bieden.*
  
- ▶ **Wich role kan play Twitter in crisiscommunication?**
- ▶ Na de dramatische gebeurtenissen op Pukkelpop werd de inzet van en de informatiedoorstroming via Twitter en Facebook door de meeste waarnemers [als positief ervaren](#), hoewel er ook negatieve commentaren waren.
- ▶ <http://paulscommunicatieblog.blogspot.com/2011/08/kan-twitter-een-rol-spelen-in.html?spref=tw>
  
- ▶ **The amazing power of Twitter #PP11**
- ▶ <http://nielvanmeeuwen.be/?p=337>



# Introduction

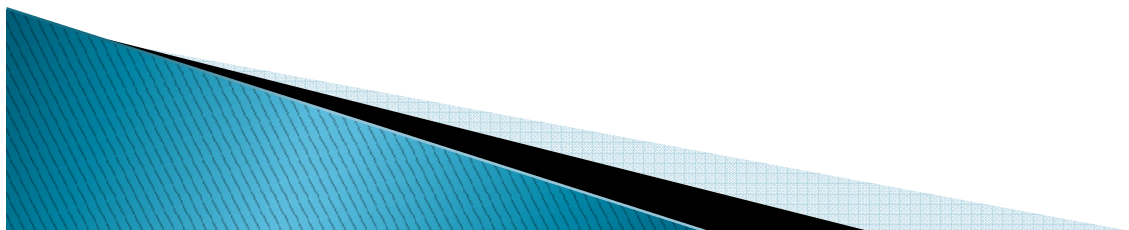
Kortom took on the task of doing something with these information.

- ▶ Purpose: policy proposal for the use of social media in crises(communication)
- ▶ Target: communication officers (discipline5 / D5–Information) & all aid organizations
- ▶ How: expert group (43 members), multidisciplinary, divided into 4 workgroups

## Result published in november 2011

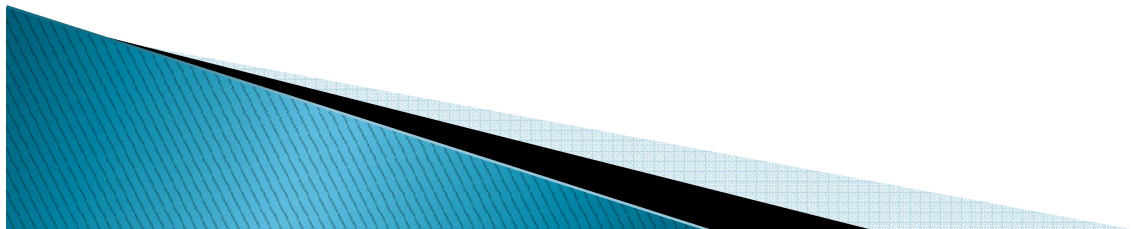
There are five disciplines in emergency planning as determined by the federal government:

- ▶ – D1: Fire Service
- ▶ – D2: Medical Assistance
- ▶ – D3: Police
- ▶ – D4: Logistical aid (Civil Protection)
- ▶ – D5: Information for the population



# Content

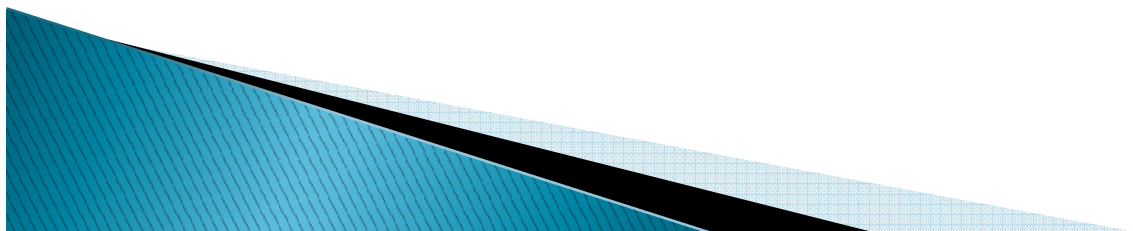
- ▶ 1. How to implement and use social media in crisis communication ?
- ▶ 2. Recommendations to the organizers
- ▶ 3. Recommendations to individuals in crisis communication



# 1. How to implement and use social media in crisis communication ?

- ▶ **What accounts are to be used?**

Expert group doesn't mention 'brands' but advises to choose for the social media that are most used or that has the greatest impact





- **What accounts are to be used?**

- **Authority account**

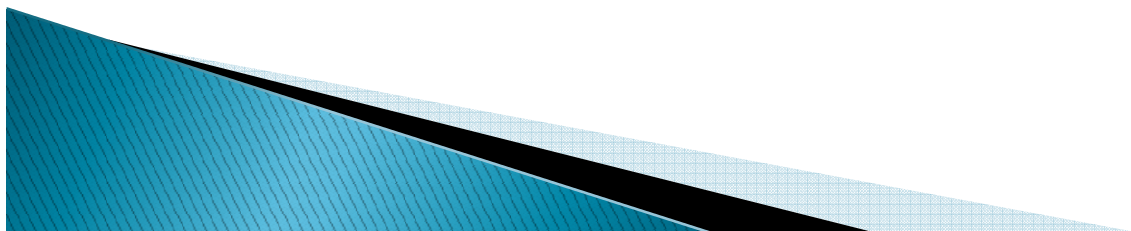
In crisis situations 2 options:


1: Existing official account (preference)

2: Specific crisis account

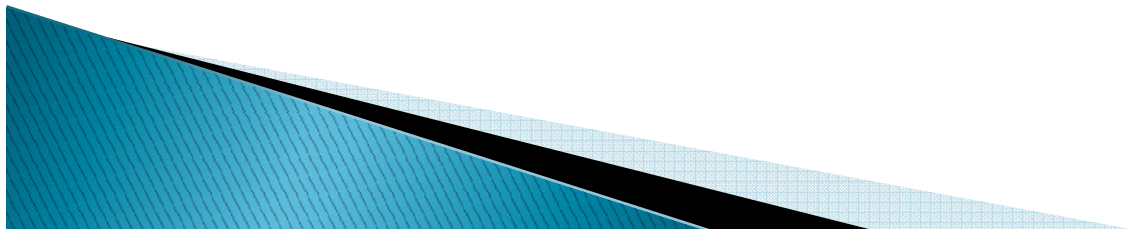
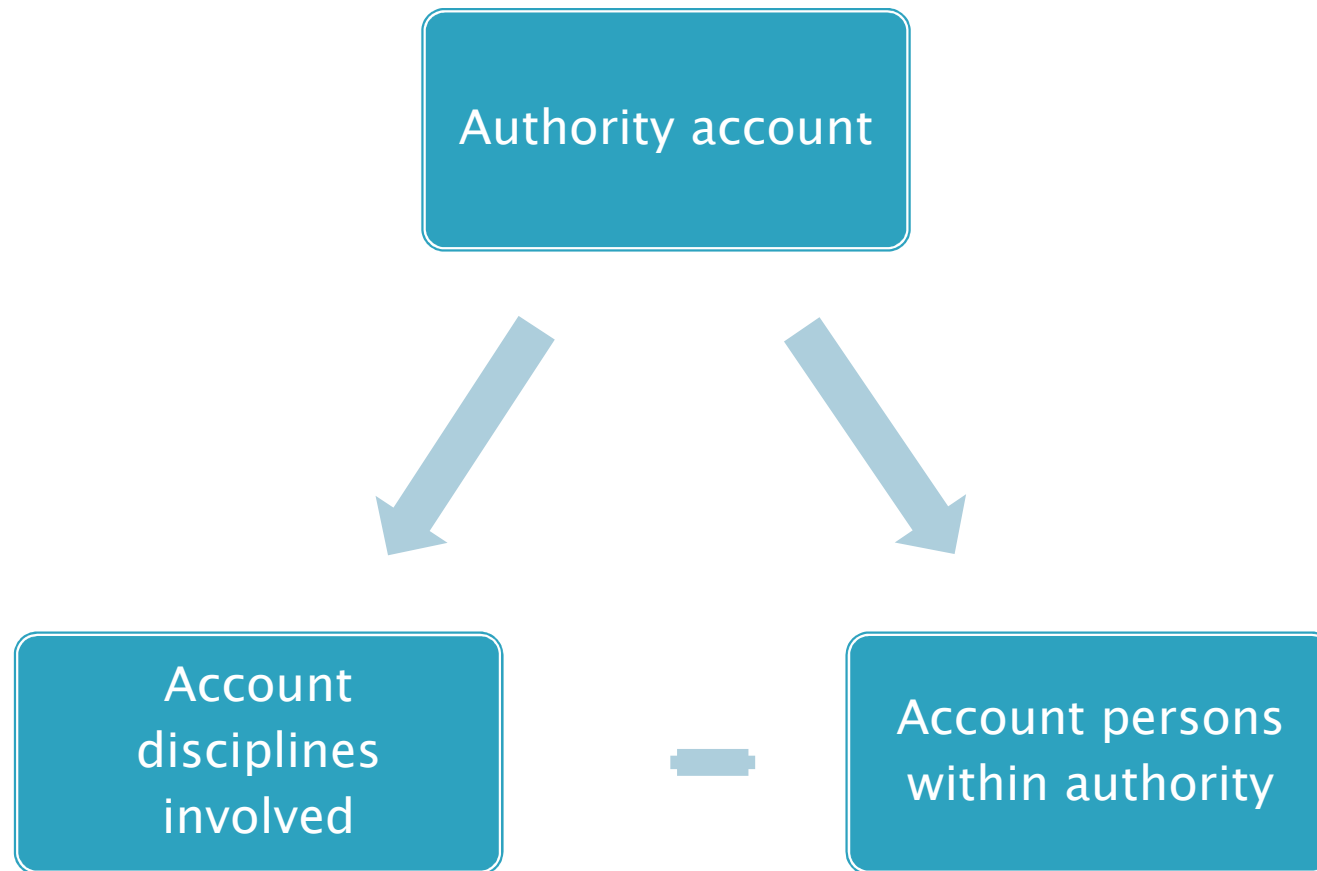
- Official account has great credibility
- Authority must promote it amongst the population
- Gain as many as possible ‘followers’, ‘friends’ and ‘subscribers’.
- The number of followers is not only important but also who your followers are (influencers).

▪



- Account of the disciplines involved (fire service, police...)
    - Accounts of police, fire service = great credibility
    - ideal to reflect process information and are a good choice in a short crisis (rapid development and quick end)
    - if official phase of crisis management: follow the official account of the authority and support the account of the authority through the further dissemination of messages
  - Accounts of people within the authority
    - In some authorities there are well-known personalities (the Mayor, the police commissioner, the fire chief or the communications officer) who may or may not act as spokesperson and active in social media. But the information they disseminate is not official.
    - The use of these accounts is a good choice in a short crisis or a crisis in which a high level of citizen participation is required. They can support the official account from the authority and help spread official messages.
- 

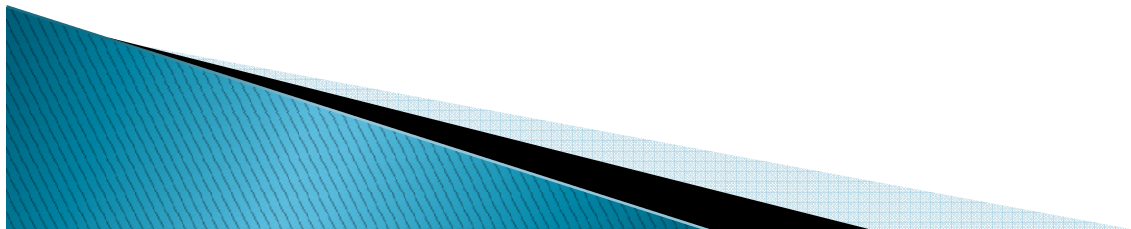
- What accounts are to be used?



- **Management of accounts**

Who manages the account in 'peacetime' is not so important. By using social media, the authority enters into communication with the citizen.

In crises this account must be management by a representative of discipline 5. If the account manager is another person in peacetime, then the necessary conclusive agreements must be made about this.

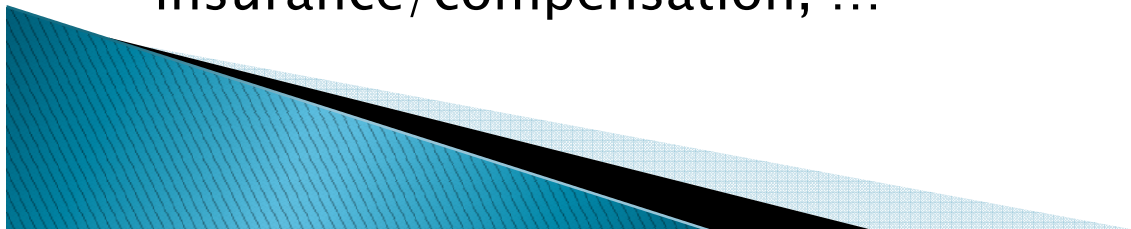


- **Organization D5**  
**preparation is everything!**

**Before the crisis** the representant of D5 should: create the required profiles/accounts in advance, make sure it is widely publicised, view which media are the most important social networks (also with a view to monitoring), set up a crisis website, make agreements on procedures with the mayor (=responsible)

**During the crisis** the representant of D5 should organise and manage the different communication tools, inclusive the management of the accounts.

**After the incident is over** the communication must continue for a while. Social media may be used to provide information on: salvage, recovery, victim care, insurance/compensation, ...

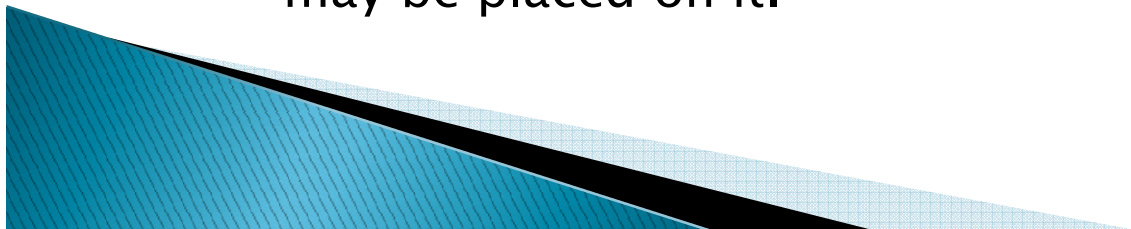


## • Overview and use of resources

Important to use as many channels as possible

### Social media like twitter & facebook

- interesting complement to the range of communication; but no blind trust in social media
- channels are managed by commercial companies. They can appear and disappear on the market from one day to the next. Furthermore their server may also be overloaded which will make the platform temporarily unavailable.
- no organization may remain blind to these additional channels of communication
- However the government may consider protecting their own profiles from external input (comments, panic, ...). Controlling one's own social media is legitimate in an emergency. For that reason, the privacy settings of a number of social media should be changed in an emergency so that only desirable messages may be placed on it.



## ➤ SMS

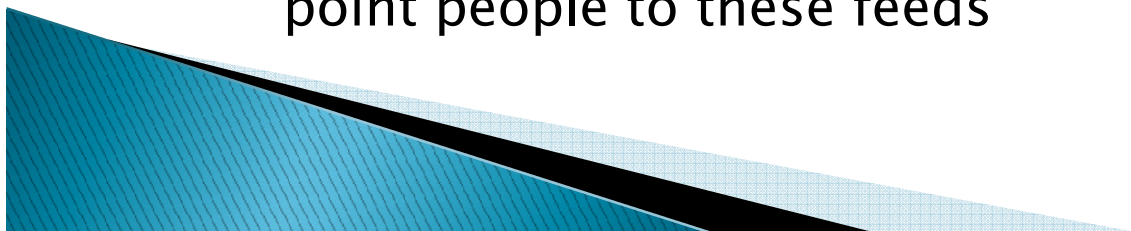
- a popular way for young people to communicate with each other
- cheaper than phone and also available on ordinary mobile phones
- certain authorities have agreements with providers about the use of sms in crisis situations

## ➤ E-newsletter

- build a list of e-mail address; people who have subscribed to this e-mail list receive a regular update about news about the crisis from the moment they subscribe
- people who bought a ticket to an event and have to give their e-mail address for this may also be included in this mailing list

## ➤ RSS (Really Simple Sydication)


- updating the RSS feed is important in emergencies and to point people to these feeds



## ➤ Location based services (LBS)

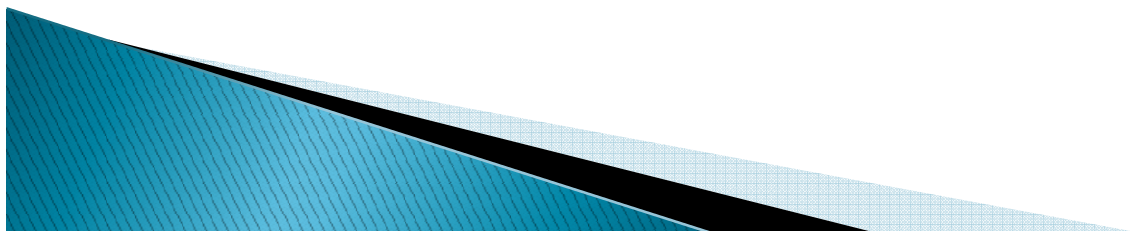
- D5 must have the possibility automatically to send an SMS to people with a mobile phone who are within range of a specific mast
- clear message to people involved in the crisis and should not create panic among people who are not involved in the crisis.

## ➤ Website / dark site

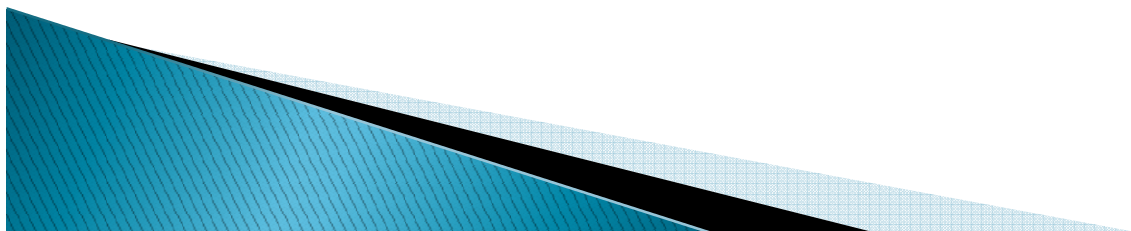
- website of the authority is the most important tool and should play a central role in crisis
  - starting up a type of dark site on the authority's website is advisable
  - dark site contains a number of pre-programmed pages offline that may be published immediately in the case of crisis communication
  - dark site is a userfriendly blogsystem; it functions as an axis from where all communication leaves and arrives making full use of RSS
- 

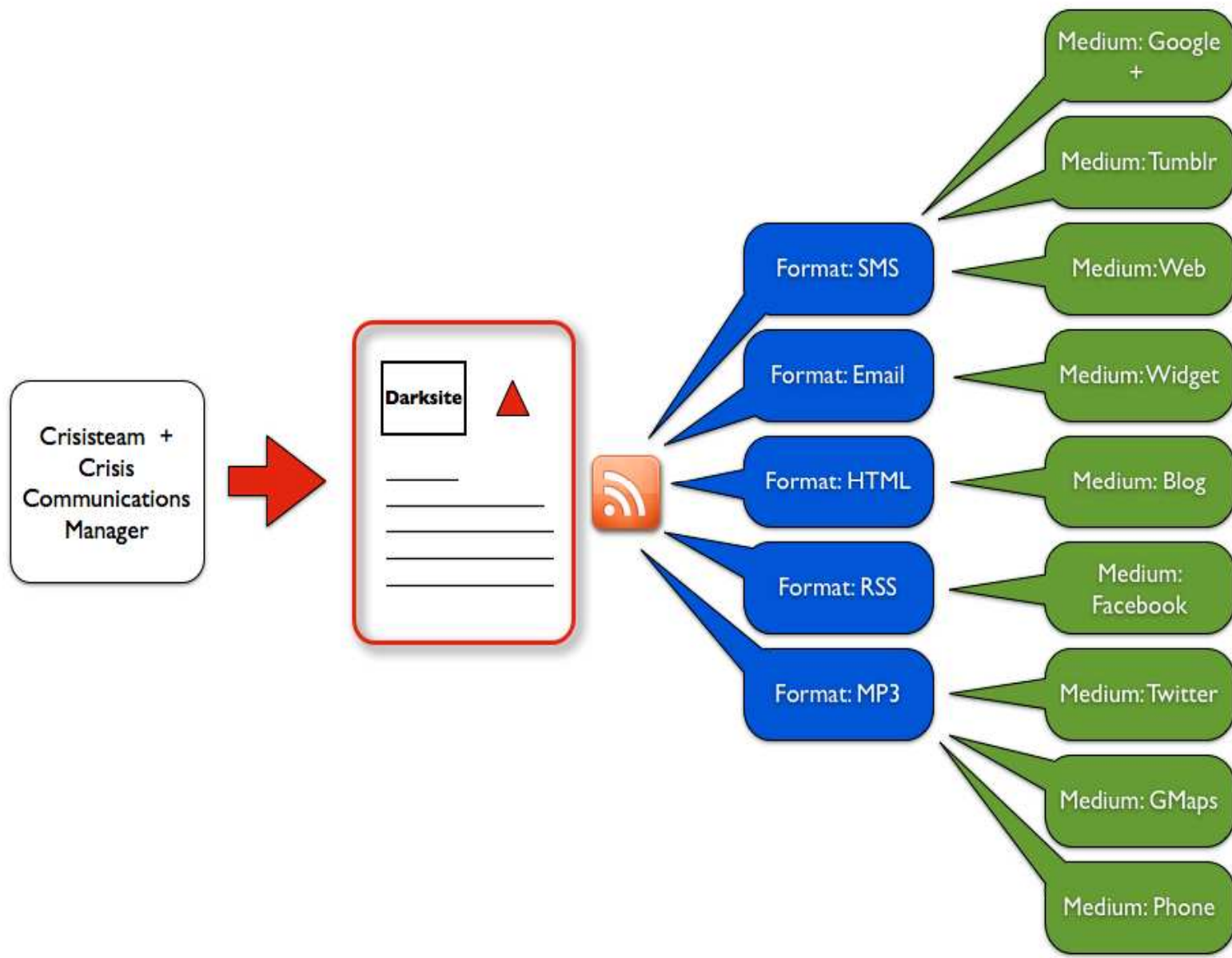


- how: blogsystem free tool (bv. wordpress) or build an own crisis communication centre with text, video, audio, etc. en kan via twitter, facebook en ander sociale media updates integreren
- this should be the central crisis communication centre
- status updates, press releases, official reactions, interactive maps, images may be posted here throughout the crisis
- this blog will (may) also become a central collection point for updates and information from third parties (filter, moderate and double-check are then required).

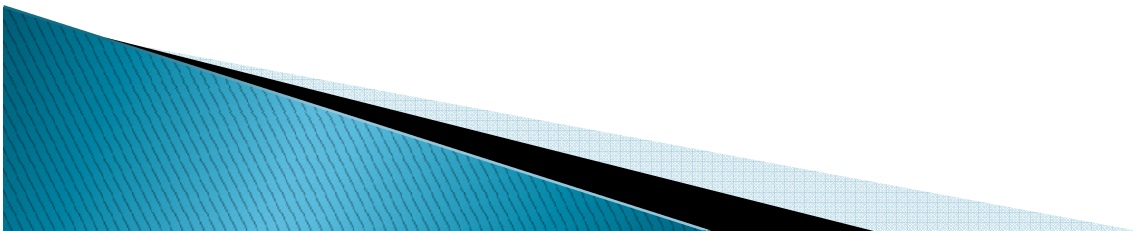


- an RSS feed (or a number per category, type of updates, etc.) is present as standard on the majority of blog platforms. The feed then automatically notifies the web that new content has been published
- If the communications officer publishes a message of any kind during a crisis (text, picture, audio, or a combination of these), this content will automatically appear on the web; this update does not only appear on the website but also automatically and in the right format on the authority's social media account.
- You can also 'draw in' other information from the web using RSS. This can be practical in order to give an overview of the information and updates from other sites and social media. But double check stays necessary.



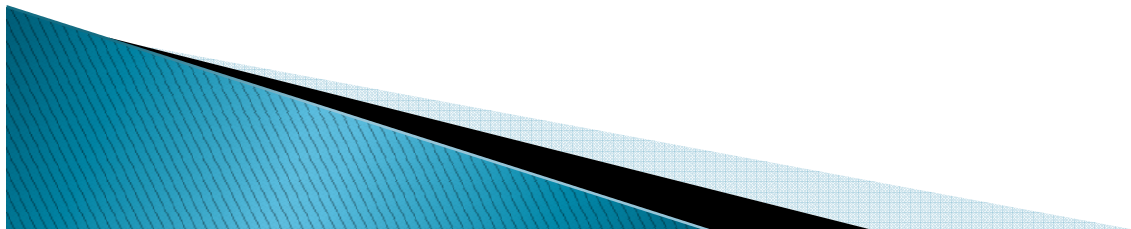


<http://oostvlaanderen.posterous.com/>



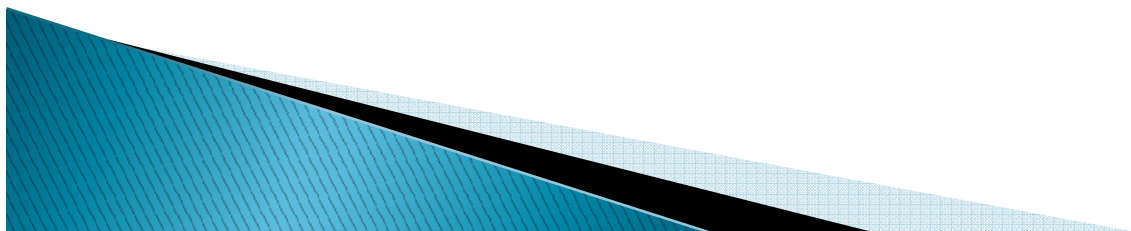
- **monitoring**

- good monitoring is an extensive and important task; means good listening and observing what online is being told
- purposes: 1: receiving information whereby relevant actions can be taken 2: sending information to direct the emergency and inform the people involved
- before, during and after a planned event and an unplanned event (emergency)

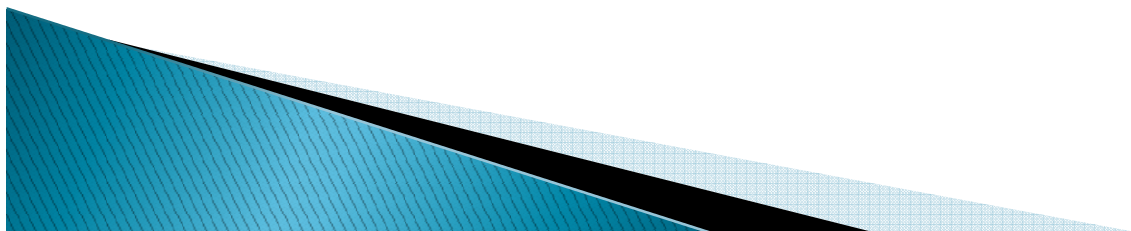


## ➤ Before a crisis

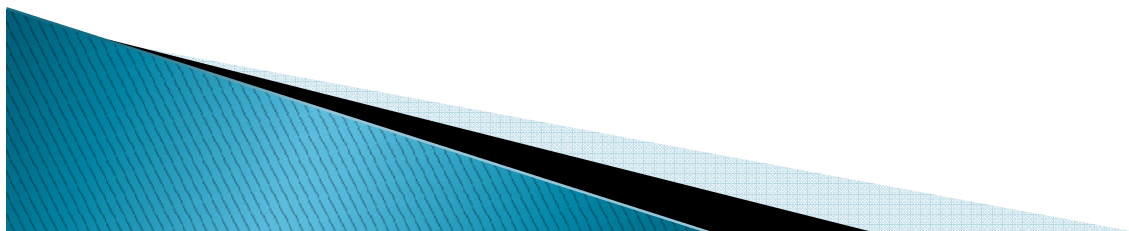
- the authority determines what things it wants to monitor online (Tweetdeck, Hootsuite, etc...).
- set-up a monitoring team; determine what hashtags (#) will be used and what for
- the hashtags that are used officially must also be included with minor variations when monitoring. (e.g. #EV11save => #saveEV11 or #EVsave).
- what do you want to monitor: key words, hashtags, mood, interpretation, trends ...
- inform the major social networks of the coming event and what hashtags are used. This should prevent Twitter from seeing a flow of messages as spam and blocking everything
- testing; everything must be tested well in advance



- ▶ **During the emergency**
  - The monitoring team will forward the monitoring data to the crisis team (organisation). This crisis team will disseminate the correct crisis information via the right platforms. The monitoring team follows whether this is also actually happening and how this is dealt with by people.
  - The task of the monitoring team is then to observe, analyse, and provide the right information to the crisis team. The monitoring team does not put any messages on the social media itself.



- **After the emergency**
- is realised on a diverse range of data that can be summarised in two data flows
- first data flow: the flow that comes in live during the crisis (an agreed period, a few days, before and a period after the crisis)
- second data flow: data from afterwards looking back over the same period
- two flows must be compared to check whether the correct information was received during the crisis, what the effects were, what the strengths and weaknesses were and what could be done better another time
- the summary of these results can be placed somewhere centrally so that people who want to organise an event can get their basic information from here





Compose message... Search Twitter...

oost\_vlaanderen (Twitter) x Facebook pages x Foursquare x oost-vlaanderen x regio's x provincie x provincie oost-vlaanderen x staatshervorming x urbis x lists x More...

+ Add Stream

### Home Feed

**Vdsteenesteven**  
9:18am via Twitter for BlackBerry®  
"@vincentvq: Zaterdag rijden 6 gedetineerden de #rw op rollen vr h goededoel samen met @johanmuseeuw. Steun hen: bit.ly/HssTvm #rw"

**KatrijnHooge**  
9:18am via Web  
@marcvandaele Haha, klopt :-)  
Show Conversation

**kristoframon**  
9:18am via TweetDeck  
Completed the 3 Days of De Panne -photoset last night, tried some new ways to capture TT-cyclists on a few. bit.ly/H0ewBv #ddp

**regio15**  
9:18am via TweetDeck  
Beeld van de berging van de vrachtwaggeel yfrog.com/oc13usuJ yfrog.com/h8t2tyj Het lukt niet, dus poging weer gestaakt #CS

**zomermaantje**  
9:18am via Web  
RT @Endimi Trouwens, is er een tof iemand die #decollega wilt komen vervangen? We're hiring!

**Matty\_\_**  
9:17am via Twitter for iPhone  
Aaaaaaaaaaaaaarghl #headache

**MarcFauconnier**  
9:17am via Instagram  
Klaar voor mijn battle of Flanders. Met welwillend lentesonnetje. Een persoonlijke soigneur. [instagr.am/p/lyA-sCPzKQ/](http://instagr.am/p/lyA-sCPzKQ/)

**RSchollaert**  
9:17am via Web

### Mentions

**zilvertoon**  
Mar 26, 5:52pm via Buffer  
@oost\_vlaanderen Waarom niet de beide? "Windturbines langs E40 of op bedrijventerreinen (Aalst) bit.ly/Hlqj91"

**jeroenpersyn**  
Mar 26, 8:50pm via HootSuite  
RT @oost\_vlaanderen: Je hoge energiefactuur beu? Schrijf nu in voor de groepsaankoop 100 % groene stroom [ow.ly/9LzYb](http://ow.ly/9LzYb)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Mar 25, 8:36pm via HootSuite  
Video groepsaankoop 100 % groene energie provincie @oost\_vlaanderen [goo.gl/7PUVh](http://goo.gl/7PUVh) #pinterest

**pvdj446**  
Mar 24, 4:23pm via Echofon  
@ansoone @oost\_vlaanderen vorig jaar meegedaan en alles heel vlot verlopen.  
Show Conversation

**DeFlik**  
Mar 24, 12:32pm via Twitter for iPad  
RT @oost\_vlaanderen: Provinciale fase noodplan incident #E40Wetteren opgeheven; gouv @denysandre dankt iedereen #yam #socialemediawerk  
2 retweets

**jeroenpersyn**  
Mar 24, 11:51am via HootSuite  
RT @oost\_vlaanderen: Snelweg vrij - incident #E40Wetteren [post.ly/6DWB5](http://post.ly/6DWB5)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Mar 24, 11:30am via HootSuite  
RT @ic\_lulie: Vlna @oost\_vlaanderen vr nieuws

### Direct Message (Inbox)

**GeertNaessens**  
Mar 20, 10:41pm  
Blij dat je me volgt! Ik hoop dat je iets hebt aan mijn tweets. Zo niet: laat het me weten! Heb je weerinfo voor mij? Tweet mij ook gerust.

**bogaert\_nele**  
Mar 12, 4:20pm  
de recitals? het is zonder reservatie, dus allen welkom! op zondag is er nu het meeste volk, maar we zijn bezig met een publieksbevraging

**TinekeDePauw**  
Feb 09, 11:04pm  
Volgen ok, maar ik tweet nu nog niet actief hier, wèl professioneel @wd\_ugent dialectwoord vd dag (Oost-, West-, Zeeuws-, Frans-Vlaanderen)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Jan 10, 5:26pm  
Andere die ik al tegenkwam, wel geen ervaring mee [Docs.com](http://Docs.com) [cx.com](http://cx.com) en [minus.com](http://minus.com)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Jan 10, 5:16pm  
Over zoho hoor ik ook veel positieve zaken mss ook even kijken op de site [cloudtools.nl/online-sofwar...](http://cloudtools.nl/online-sofwar...)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Jan 10, 5:10pm  
Over dropbox hoor ik veel positieve verhalen maar ik gebruik het niet zelf. Ik gebruik google docs (google apps)

**jeroenpersyn**  
Jan 10, 3:19pm  
bedankt voor de hulp

**jeroenpersyn**  
Jan 10, 2:51pm

### Sent Tweets

**oost\_vlaanderen**  
Mar 29, 2:10pm via HootSuite  
Wielersupporters, bezoek onze promostand in Oudenaarde en maak kans op een mooie prijs [ow.ly/9X3ig](http://ow.ly/9X3ig) #weekendtip #rw  
3 retweets

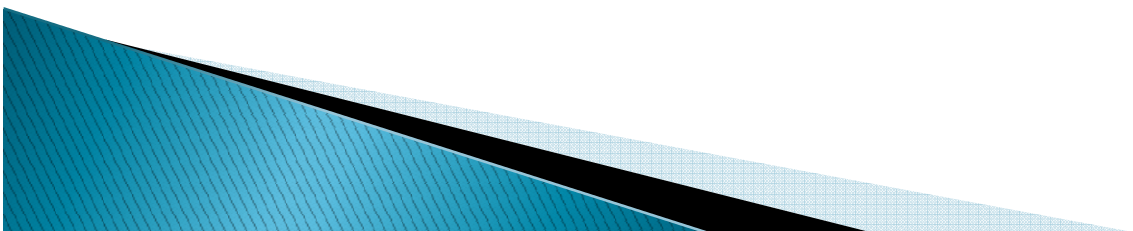
**oost\_vlaanderen**  
Mar 24, 11:59am via HootSuite  
Provinciale fase van het noodplan vr incident #E40Wetteren is opgeheven; gouverneur @denysandre dankt iedereen voor de medewerking.  
6 retweets

**oost\_vlaanderen**  
Mar 24, 11:57am via HootSuite  
Provinciale fase van het noodplan vr incident #E40Wetteren is opgeheven; gouverneur @denysandre dankt iedereen voor de medewerking.  
2 retweets

**oost\_vlaanderen**  
Mar 24, 11:36am via Tweet Button  
Snelweg vrij - incident #E40Wetteren [post.ly/6DWB5](http://post.ly/6DWB5)  
9 retweets

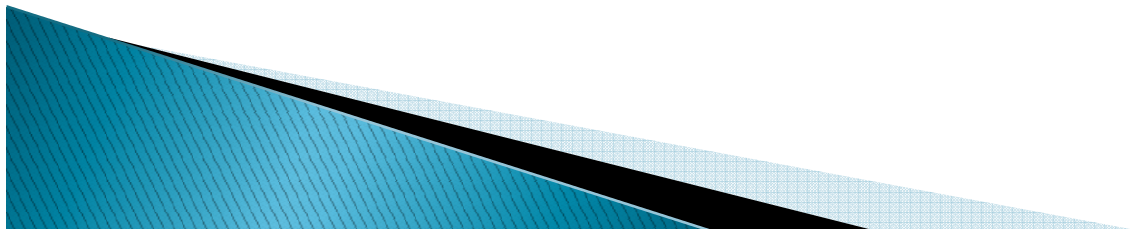
**hajobeeckman**  
Mar 24, 11:13am via Web  
#E40Wetteren: lokale omleidingswegen compleet verzadigd. Gebruik omleidingen over de lange afstand, check details op [verkeerscentrum.be/verkeersinfo/b...](http://verkeerscentrum.be/verkeersinfo/b...)  
Retweeted by oost\_vlaanderen

**oost\_vlaanderen**  
Mar 24, 10:08am via HootSuite



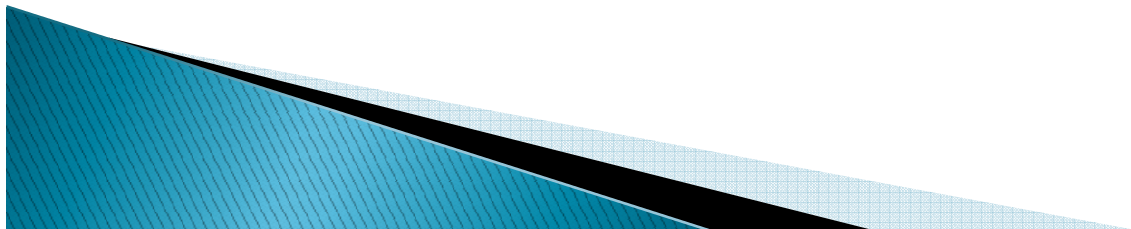
## 2. Recommendations to organizers

- ▶ formulate a media independent crisis communications plan, including every single communication tool (scrolling information display system and PA system)
- ▶ ensure a minimal presence on social media. This must be disclosed to visitors and used in the event of a crisis
- ▶ communicate the official account, #, url ... for the event
- ▶ the organiser can print the url, and an emergency number if applicable, # and QR-code on wristbands
- ▶ use e-mail addresses for a digital crisis newsletter
- ▶ consult with telecom operators regarding mobile phone coverage, LBS and Wi-Fi hotspots



# 3. Recommendations to individuals in crisis communication

- ▶ follow accounts from official bodies for correct information
- ▶ insofar as possible subscribe to the proposals of the authority or the organisers to keep informed in emergencies
- ▶ ensure that everyone can notify the home. Save the network by not sending any large data files
- ▶ when retweeting messages, remove the official #; otherwise you will overload the flow of information
- ▶ check whether there is already a # / safehouse before creating one
- ▶ use the official #
- ▶ indicate whether you are ok on your own Facebook status
- ▶ use apps that promote self-reliance

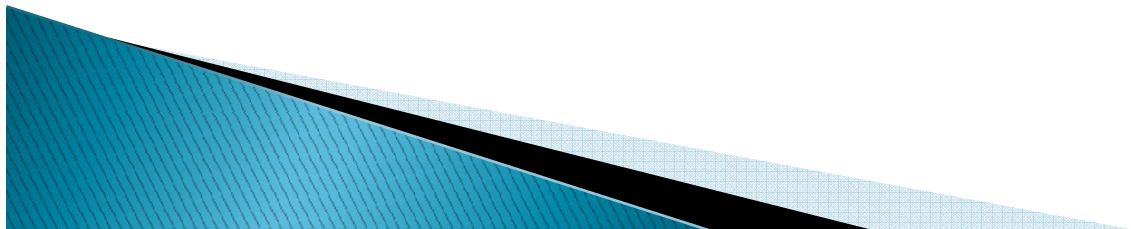


# learning about social media in crisis communication through social media

#smem

[emergency20wiki.org](http://emergency20wiki.org)  
[idaster.wordpress.com](http://idaster.wordpress.com)

global disaster relief (Facebook)



## Use of social media in crisis communication



[www.kortom.be](http://www.kortom.be)  
[@kortomvzw](mailto:@kortomvzw)

[@jc-julie](mailto:@jc-julie)  
[julie.clement@oost-vlaanderen.be](mailto:julie.clement@oost-vlaanderen.be)