



**TOURISM
TROPICAL NORTH
QUEENSLAND**

**TOURISM OPERATOR
CRISIS COMMUNICATION &
RESILIENCE TOOLKIT**

CRISIS RESPONSE & COMMUNICATION

TO HELP COUNTER NEGATIVE MEDIA REPORTING AND VISITOR PERCEPTIONS FOLLOWING A WEATHER OR CRISIS EVENT, TOURISM OPERATORS SHOULD USE THESE STEPS, COMMUNICATION TIPS AND MESSAGES TO HELP REDUCE VISITOR CANCELLATIONS AND TO ENCOURAGE TOURISTS BACK TO THE REGION FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT.

CRISIS RESPONSE STEPS

Check the facts and verify incident information and ensure staff and guests are safe.

Assess the impact of the event via social media and media coverage and check your upcoming posts

Contact your Local Tourism Organisation (LTO) or Regional Tourism organisation (RTO) for advice on how to handle the incident.

Agree messaging and how to respond with your RTO/LTO. Review small business disaster hub tourism and hospitality checklists.

Update social media to advise on operational impacts.

Suspend advertising or scheduled posts.

Log media queries and respond once messaging prepared.

Monitor impact and media coverage.

Regroup with LTO/RTO to determine recovery steps

Agree messaging with tourism organisations so the industry has a unified voice and message

Use photos and videos to show when open for business – pictures are worth 1000 words.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION TIPS



REMEMBER PEOPLE ALWAYS COME FIRST
EMPHASISE YOUR CONCERN FOR PEOPLE FIRST BEFORE PROPERTY AND PROFITS.



WHEN IN DOUBT DON'T GUESS
TELL THE TRUTH AND ONLY DISCUSS FACTS AND RELIABLE INFORMATION. REFER NON-TOURISM RELATED QUERIES TO THE EXPERTS.



KNOW WHEN TO RESPOND
AVOID PRESSURE TO RESPOND IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU SHOULD SAY. BUT DON'T LEAVE IT TOO LONG OR THE MEDIA WILL TELL THE STORY FOR YOU MAKING IT HARDER TO CORRECT THE FACTS LATER.



SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE
CHECK WITH YOUR LTO OR RTO FIRST TO ENSURE A UNITED VOICE TO AVOID MEDIA DIVIDING AND CONQUERING.



THE MEDIA LOVES A HERO OR A VILLAIN
PROMOTE THE POSITIVE ACTIONS OF EMERGENCY SERVICES OR THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN A CRISIS TO SHIFT THE FOCUS AWAY FROM 'WHO IS TO BLAME'.



STAY CALM
TAKE A DEEP BREATH, STAY CALM AND MEASURED TO CONVEY A SENSE OF CONTROL AND READINESS.



DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Responding to media queries:

- Before you jump into an interview, get the journalist's name, media channel, phone number, email and deadline and ask what questions they have. Tell them you'll come back to them with a response.
- Check in with your LTO to seek advice on what you should or shouldn't say publicly and to provide a united message for the tourism industry.
- Only respond to tourism related media queries and refer other questions to the appropriate agency.
- Stick to the points you want to make when answering questions. You don't have to say what they want you to say.
- Avoid saying 'no comment' and instead use:
 - "I don't have that information to confirm right now".
 - "What I can tell you is..."
 - "You're asking me to speculate, which I won't do".
 - "That's private information and we respect people's privacy".
 - Provide written responses to journalists if they are confrontational.
- Consider doing a meet and greet with local journalists so they are more likely to contact you direct to hear your side of the story in a crisis. They are also more likely to cover positive stories about your business.

EXAMPLE VIDEO SCRIPT CUES

- "As you can see, we're absolutely open for business..."
- "Here's a taste of what to expect..."
- "Report from the ground: we're open, it's sunny, and there's plenty to do..."
- "Now's as good a time as any to visit us at XX..."
- "We may have had a bit of rain, but that won't stop the adventures..."
- "There's never been a better time to see the tropics".



VIDEO & VLOG TIPS

Follow the below steps from Tourism and Events Queensland to shoot a vlog encouraging visitors to return to your region following a weather event or other crisis.



SCRIPT

WRITE A SCRIPT BEFORE YOU START AND PRACTICE BEFORE YOU FILM. THINK ABOUT MAKING IT WARM, AUTHENTIC AND ENERGETIC.



HOW TO FILM IT

USE YOUR SMARTPHONE – SET YOUR CAMERA TO THE HIGHEST RESOLUTION POSSIBLE. BE SURE TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE FILM THE VIDEO FOR YOU OR USE A TRIPOD, NO SELFIES.



FRAMING

CHOOSE A LOCATION THAT LOOKS APPEALING AND INTERACT WITH WHAT MAKES THE LOCATION/ EXPERIENCE SPECIAL. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU'RE AT THE BEACH, GO ON THE SAND, OR IF IT'S IN A RAINFOREST, SHOW A VIEW OF THE TREES. SHOWCASE THE UNIQUE FACTOR!



ORIENTATION

STAND ONE TO TWO METRES AWAY FROM THE CAMERA AND FRAME THE PERSON SO YOU CAPTURE THE BACKGROUND. USE EITHER LANDSCAPE OR PORTRAIT DEPENDING ON WHAT WORKS BEST.



LIGHTING

THE BEST TIME TO SHOOT YOUR VIDEO MAY BE EITHER EARLY MORNING OR LATE AFTERNOON, WHEN THE SUN IS LOW AND THE LIGHT IS DRAMATIC. ENSURE YOUR VIDEO IS NOT BACKLIT OR OVEREXPOSED AND AVOID FILMING IN SHADOWS.



BRANDING

IF YOU CAN, CAPTURE YOUR BRAND OR SIGNAGE IN THE FRAME, EVEN IT'S JUST ON YOUR SHIRT.



SOUND

KEEP BACKGROUND NOISE TO A MINIMUM.



TOPE

BE HONEST AND INFORMATIVE, HEARTFELT AND FUN. REMEMBER, YOU'RE PERSONALLY INVITING VISITORS TO SEE YOUR PART OF TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND!



PROMOTE

SHARE YOUR VIDEO ON YOUR SOCIALS AND WITH YOUR LTOS & RTOS AND ENCOURAGE YOUR FOLLOWERS TO SHARE IT.



CRISIS COMMUNICATION MESSAGING

WEATHER EVENTS

LOW IMPACT WEATHER EVENT MESSAGING

- “Tropical storms are a part of life in Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef. We’re still open for business and there’s plenty to see and do”.
- “We’re great in the rain – the waterfalls are flowing in Tropical North Queensland”.
- “We’re a big region – even with a tropical storm in one area, there’s always sunshine elsewhere”.

MEDIUM IMPACT WEATHER EVENT MESSAGING

- “Our region is quick to respond after a cyclone”.
- “We’re closed temporarily, but we’ll be up and running again soon. We are taking bookings for...”
- “In the meantime, the rest of TNQ is still open for business and there’s plenty to do”.

HIGH IMPACT WEATHER EVENT MESSAGING

UNIMPACTED AREAS

- “Our thoughts go out to XXX in their recovery efforts. They’ll be back on their feet in no time”.
- “In the meantime, come and visit us in XXX”.
- “Tropical North Queensland is a big area, in fact we’re 350,000 square km which is twice the size of the UK. A cyclone in one area can have no impact on the rest of the region”.

IMPACTED AREAS

- “We’re quick to recover from cyclones”.
- “The skies are now blue, and we’re working hard to get back on our feet”.

PANDEMIC – COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

TNQ LOCKDOWN MESSAGING

- “The safety, health and wellbeing of our visitors and staff is our number one priority. We are doing our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by following all Queensland Health directives”.
- “We’ll be back up and running as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, please be patient in contacting us to manage current bookings that may be impacted by the lockdown”.

VISITORS FROM COVID-19 HOTSPOTS MESSAGING

- “It is a Queensland Health directive that anyone who has been in a COVID-19 hotspot in the last xx days will be required to go into 14 days mandatory hotel quarantine in either Cairns or Brisbane”.
- “If you have any questions about this directive please contact Queensland Health on 13 42 68 or visit the COVID-19 website to find more information”.

VISITOR ACCIDENT OR DEATH

- “We are saddened to confirm that a (staff member/ visitor/ client/ guest) was (injured/ killed) in an incident today”.
- “Our thoughts are with them, their families and those who witnessed the incident”.
- “We are working closely with authorities and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to assist in any way we can”.
- “We have suspended our operations/tours and will work with authorities to determine when we will re-open”.
- “We would like to thank emergency services for their immediate response”.
- “This has never happened before (or is very unusual) and we take the safety of our staff/guests very seriously”.
- “We take safety very seriously and we have a strong safety record”.

REPUTATIONAL INCIDENT

NEGATIVE CUSTOMER COMPLAINT

- “We’re sorry to hear about your experience with (include details). We take pride in our (services/ products) and take feedback from customers seriously. Please message us directly so we can help you resolve this issue”.

RUMOUR DRIVEN INCIDENT

- “Rumours that our business is experiencing financial difficulties (or other rumours) are completely unfounded and incorrect”.
- “We are open for business as usual”.
- “If customers or clients have any concerns, please feel free to contact us directly.”

BULLYING OR HARASSMENT INCIDENT

- “We take this matter very seriously and have a zero-tolerance policy towards workplace (bullying/ harassment)”.
- “The person involved has been suspended (or placed on leave) pending the outcome of the investigation”.
- “We are cooperating with authorities and have launched an independent investigation into the matter”.
- “Due to privacy considerations we cannot discuss the investigation publicly at this stage”.
- “As an initial step, we have put in place additional procedures for all staff members to provide appropriate information so this doesn’t happen again”.
- “We will also review our policies and procedures to introduce mandatory ethics and workplace culture training as part of our staff inductions”.

WHO TO CALL IN A CRISIS

LTOs and Local Tourism Associations (LTAs) are ready to support operators to prepare for, respond to and recover from a crisis. Assistance includes:

- Helping to manage the media and communication with stakeholders during a crisis.
- Advice on crisis response and recovery steps.
- Liaising with Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) and TEQ to help manage media and wider communications.

LOCAL TOURISM ORGANISATIONS INCLUDE

Tourism Port Douglas Daintree
visitportdouglasdaintree.com

Tropical Coast Tourism
tropicalcoasttourism.com.au

Tourism Atherton Tablelands
athertontablelands.com.au

Savannah Way
savannahway.com.au

LOCAL TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS INCLUDE

Tourism Palm Cove
tourismpalmcove.com

Tourism Trinity Beach
trinitybeachholiday.com

TTNQ & TEQ

Tourism Tropical North Queensland
tourism.tropicalnorthqueensland.org.au

Tourism Queensland
teq.queensland.com





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 Tropical North Queensland

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