

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

CRISIS RESPONSE TEMPLATES

Purpose:

Give teams the exact words to use, fast, when a crisis hits. These templates prioritise empathy, transparency, and clarity, and are built to respond within hours of an incident.

Note:

- Use real names of the horse's groom, vet, or trainer to humanise your response.
- Post early and often, even short updates help fill the vacuum.
- Get the horse's connections to share updates.
- Pair official statements with subject matter experts (vet, steward, track manager).
- If your main social media channel isn't appropriate for challenging topics, use a secondary account or partner page.
- Stay calm, clear, and consistent - facts first.



1. INITIAL WRITTEN STATEMENT TEMPLATE

Use when: Issuing a formal written statement within hours of an incident.

[Organisation Name] is deeply saddened by the incident that occurred during [Event Name] on [Date].

Our hearts go out to [affected parties: owners, trainers, grooms, riders, etc.] and to all who cared deeply for [Horse Name].

At [Time/Event], [brief factual description of incident]. [Horse Name] was attended to immediately by our veterinary team and transferred to [Clinic Name] for further treatment.

We are conducting a full review of [describe what's being investigated]. Our priority is the safety and wellbeing of all horses and humans involved in our sport.

Further updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

[Name]
[Title]
[Organisation]

2. POST-INCIDENT SOCIAL MEDIA STATEMENT TEMPLATE

Use when: A quick, empathetic post is needed within the first few hours. Can be used on X, Facebook or Instagram. Example caption:

We are heartbroken by the loss of [Horse Name] at [Event Name]. Our thoughts are with [Trainer], [Owner], and especially [Groom's Name] who loved her deeply.

She suffered a [veterinary term injury] and received immediate medical attention, but was euthanized on humane grounds.

More information on what happened and what steps are being taken will follow.

[Organisation Name]

3. INTERNAL COMMS MEMO TEMPLATE

Use when: Informing staff, stakeholders, or board members before a public release.

Subject: Internal Notification – Incident at **[Event Name]**

Dear Team,

We wanted to inform you ahead of any public statement that an incident occurred today involving **[Horse Name]** during **[Event Name]**.

[Brief factual summary – what happened, when, outcome.]

Our communications team is preparing a statement, which will go out shortly. Please do not post publicly or comment until the official message is released.

If you receive any media inquiries or spot any posts of note on social media, please direct them to **[Comms Lead Name / Email / Phone]**.

Thank you for your professionalism and support during this time.

[Name]

[Role]

4. SPOKESPERSON HOLDING STATEMENT

Use when: A media outlet contacts you before you're ready with a full statement.

"We're aware of the incident and are currently gathering all the relevant information. Out of respect for those involved and to ensure accuracy, we'll provide a full update shortly. In the meantime, our thoughts are with everyone affected."