



Crisis Communications Plan for TAM Airlines
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Purpose

This document outlines a crisis management plan that will serve as a guide in the case of a plane crash due to an aging fleet that would potentially cause a negative impact to a company's reputation. We intend to outline the necessary steps to take that effectively demonstrate what to do when such crises arise and how to respond.

Objectives

- Promote the safety of our airlines and our commitment to our customers.
- Protect the company's corporate reputation throughout safety crisis.
- Preserve consumers trust in our airlines and limit the number of customers affected by plane crashes and respond with rapid action and preventive measures.
- Publicize key communication tactics to reassure consumers on the safety of our airplanes and implement steps to protect the safety of our customers, employees, flight crew, and sponsors.
- Prosper as a company that is safe, reliable, credible, concerned, and effective as it pertains to dealing with crises.

Key Publics

- Passengers on the crashed flight and their families
- Customers
- The public
- Flight crew and pilot
- Employees
- Leadership/Executive team
- Engineers
- External partners / Funders
- Sponsors

Crisis Overview

Flight #666 left Los Angeles, California on Monday, April 18, 2018 at 2:00 pm PT. At 3:57 pm PT, while attempting to land the 737-300 jet with over 250 passengers aboard, the plane crashed resulting in 5 fatalities and over 120 injuries. This incident was not a reflection of our flight staff. In fact, our pilot and crew members on board were able to save the lives of many by utilizing the emergency procedures and safety trainings implemented within our organization.

In earlier weeks, a competing airline experienced an incident in which the roof of a 737-300 was torn off mid-flight and resulted in an emergency landing. The 737-300 planes are the same models in our fleet, which is aging. NTSB is investigating the cause of the crash and will most likely determine it was due to the older model of plane. The plane used for Flight #666 was set to be retired on May 5, 2018.



Key Messages

	Empathy	Action	Customer priority
Key Messages	On behalf of the entire crew and TAM Airlines, we send our deepest sympathies to the individuals who lost their life to this tragic incident on flight #666.	The NTSB and local authorities are currently investigating this incident, and we are fully cooperating with them.	Our customers' safety is our number one priority, and we are dedicated to ensuring that an incident like this does not happen again.
Sub-Messages	We are unexplainably heartbroken by today's tragic incident, and our hearts grieve alongside the families who lost loved ones. Today is truly a sad day for the entire TAM Airlines family.	We are committed to determining the cause of this crash and will run our own investigation internally in addition to the NTSB investigation to determine the exact cause of the crash.	We are deeply thankful for our flight crew, who made it their priority to take care of passengers and worked together to help save the lives of many.
Sub-Messages	To help the many individuals affected by this tragedy, we are offering grief counseling to all passengers on Flight #666, their families and TAM Airlines employees. Our hope is that the TAM family can begin to heal together.	All our aircrafts are compliant with FAA safety regulations, which includes receiving the standard FAA-required safety inspections.	For over 50 years, TAM Airlines has provided exceptional service and safety to customers. Today's tragedy was entirely unprecedented in our airline's history, and we're dedicated to restoring an even better level of customer service and safety to our record.



Q&A

1. What happened?

- a. On Monday, April 18, at approximately 2:00 pm PT, Flight #666 left Los Angeles, California on its way to Denver, Colorado. At 3:57 pm PT, while attempting to land, the jet underwent malfunctions causing the plane to crash.

2. How did this happen?

- a. This incident is currently under investigation. We are working tirelessly with NTSB as well as local Denver authorities to determine the cause.

3. How many people were killed or severely injured in the accident?

- a. Firstly, I'd like to acknowledge the five passengers who lost their lives today aboard Flight #666. We are unexplainably heartbroken by today's tragic incident, and our hearts grieve alongside the families who lost loved ones. Today is truly a sad day for the entire TAM Airlines family. As a result of the quick actions taken by our flight crew, the lives of 245 passengers were saved and rapid medical assistance was given to the 120 injured immediately upon landing.

4. Who is in charge of the investigation?

- a. Further details about this incident are ongoing. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and local authorities are currently investigating this case. We are cooperating with all necessary investigations to discover the details of the crash and ensure something like this does not happen again.

5. Are there current rules set in place to ensure the safety of passengers and flight crew in the event of a crash?

- a. At TAM Airlines, we follow rules set in place by the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) which reduce risk, set the standards for pilot testing and training, and review aircraft design and technology. In addition, all of our aircrafts are compliant with FAA safety regulations, which includes receiving the standard FAA-required safety inspections. Finally, we cannot say how deeply thankful for our flight crew, who make it their priority to take care of passengers and worked together to help save the lives of many.

6. What have you done for the families who lost loved ones?

- a. We are reaching out to the families of loved ones to apologize directly to them for what has happened. We will be doing everything in our power to help the families through this tragedy. We have set up grief counseling for our passengers, families, and our flight crew and we are working on providing compensation to everyone affected by this tragic incident.

7. How long until we find out what happened with Flight #666?



- a. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation could take anywhere from 9 – 12 months. The on-scene investigation has already begun. The information gathered will be synthesized and will be used in a final report. The investigation will be exhaustive and will provide definitive answers as to what happened, but this process will take time. For more details we would ask you to contact the NTSB directly.
- 8. What measures is TAM Airlines taking to prevent this from happening again?**
- a. We are fully cooperating with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation to determine the exact causes of this accident. Once the cause is determined, we will make appropriate changes to our policy in order prevent such an accident from ever happening again.
- 9. When was the last safety inspection of this aircraft? When was the last safety inspection of TAM Airlines fleet?**
- a. All of our planes undergo rigorous maintenance checks conducted by licensed aircraft maintenance technicians throughout their operational period as outlined by the FAA. Checks are performed every 400 – 600 flight hours, B checks every 6 – 8 months, C checks every 20 – 24 months, and D checks every 6 – 10 years. All of our aircraft undergo the appropriate maintenance checks at the appropriate times including the plane used for flight #666.
- 10. What would have happened if the plane had not crashed?**
- a. We cannot speculate on what would have happened had the plane not crashed.
- 11. Does TAM Airlines take passenger safety seriously?**
- a. Yes. Our customers' safety is our number one priority, and we are dedicated to ensuring that an incident like this does not happen again.
- 12. Was the pilot and flight crew at fault?**
- a. No. Our pilot and flight crew continued to act in the best interest of the customers, and ultimately saved lives by using FAA-approved emergency and safety procedures that we require.
- 13. Has this happened before? If so, when and what steps were taken at that time for prevention?**
- a. No. In over 50 years of safely landed flights, a tragedy like this is unprecedented, but we're working closely with the NTSB to investigate the crash and determine the necessary actions to prevent a tragedy like this from ever happening again.
- 14. Do you think this will happen again given the company's aging airplanes?**
- a. No. We're working alongside the NTSB and fully cooperating with the investigation to investigate the crash, and from this investigation we're hoping to determine the necessary actions for us to take in order to prevent a tragedy like this from ever happening again.
- 15. If the airplane was compliant with FAA regulations, then do you think the FAA needs to revise its regulations?**

- a. As noted, our aircrafts are fully compliant with FAA regulations, but we're currently working with the NTSB and the FAA to determine the cause of the crash and to prevent a tragedy like this from ever happening again.

16. What went wrong in this situation?

- a. Currently, we're cooperating fully with the NTSB investigation to determine the details of the crash, which will give us insight into the necessary actions to take as a means of ensuring that a tragedy like today's never happens again.

Media List

- Top-tier national media
- Aviation trade media
- Travel trade media
- Mechanic/mechanical technology trade media
- Local media at/near the site of the crash
- Travel experience bloggers (specifically those who focus on the physical travel transportation elements or bloggers who currently have partnerships with TAM Airlines)
- TAM Airlines website/blog and TAM Airlines Customer Loyalty Website
- TAM Airlines Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Reddit)
- Newswire websites for press release or media alert distribution

Related Information

Spokesperson(s)

- **National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Official** (Could provide perspective that the airline is cooperating with all necessary investigations and is working with the NTSB to discover the details of the crash)
- **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Official** (Could provide perspective on airline/airplanes complying with all necessary safety inspections)
- **Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) Union Official** (Could provide perspective on credibility of the mechanics inspection and offer insight into the flights latest maintenance/safety checks)
- **Aircraft Manufacturers (Boeing or Airbus)** (Could provide perspective on the technical elements of the aircraft and talk through specifics of the plane that caused the crash)

Related URLs

- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Website: <https://www.nts.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Website: <https://www.faa.gov/>
- Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) Website: <http://www.amfanational.org/>
- TAM Airlines Website (ideally a page that outlines the company's dedication to safety and its passengers or noting the company's clean bill on crashes)



Pre-Gathered List of Needed Items

- Safety Procedures
- Pilot Training Procedures
- Annual Reports
- Previous Incidents
- Photos
- Company Backgrounders
- Executive Bios
- Operational Airport Locations
- Plane manufacturer Contacts and Standards
- Company Fact Sheet
 - Number of Employees
 - Number of Planes
 - Number of Operational Airports
 - CSR Initiatives
- Airline Brief History
- Mission and Value Statements
- Maintenance Schedule and Procedures
- FAA Fact Sheet

Prodromes of a Possible Crisis

- Aging Fleet Indicators
 - Aluminum Fractures
 - Steel Fatigue
 - Poor Cosmetic Conditions
 - Increased Flight Hours
 - Improper Plane Storage
 - Prolonged High Humidity Exposure
 - Lack of Regular Maintenance
 - Small Mechanical Failures
- Staff or Community Indicators
 - Pilot Concerns
 - Maintenance Worker Concerns
 - Passenger Concerns
 - Manufacturer concerns
 - FAA Concerns
 - Another Airline Crisis
 - Manufacturer concerns



Incident Information Sheet

- What time did the incident occur?
- What flight crashed?
- What was the planes departure location and destination?
- What caused the plane to crash?
- How many people were on the plane?
- How many people were killed?
- How many people were injured?
- Who is investigating the incident?
- How long will the investigation take?
- What safety measures are in place to protect passengers and flight crew?
- Were these measures followed?
- Who was flying the plane?
- Was there contact with air traffic control?
- Was the crash a result of crewmember's actions?
- What are we doing for the families of loved ones?
- What measures is TAM taking to prevent future incidents?
- When was the last safety inspection for this plane, the fleet?
- Does the plane comply with FAA regulations?
- Have there been any past incidents?

Evaluation Forms

The following steps will be evaluated to ensure that TAM Airlines is better prepared for communicating during a potential future crisis. These steps ensure that both methods that were successful and unsuccessful throughout our communication efforts are reviewed and improved upon.

1. Media Relations - Compile media coverage of the event. Use this information to determine how our messaging was viewed. Were some pieces viewed more positively than others. Were certain media outlets more effective than others? How were media relationships leveraged during the crisis?
2. Community Relations - Using media coverage and social media measurements, did the public respond favorably to our communication efforts? What, if any, were the major public grievances regarding our communication efforts? Did the public react favorably to our spokesperson?
3. External Organization Communication - Compile ingoing and outgoing messages to third party organizations that were related to the crisis. How did the team manage to communicate with organizations such as the FAA, NTSB, AMFA, and emergency personnel? Were these channels effective? Were the messages coming from these



organizations accurately passed to our audience? Did these organizations help or hinder our efforts?

4. Crisis Management Team - How well did the team perform throughout the crisis? Was the team dynamic functional, or do changes need to be made? Did the crisis plan function as intended or do sections need to be changed, added, or deleted? Did the team notice anything throughout the crisis that could prevent harm in the future?

Crisis Inventory

- Forceful removal of passengers from aircraft due to overbooking or priority passengers (i.e. government officials are one example)
 - Likelihood: 4
 - Impact: 3
 - Total: 7
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - Due to the number of flights booked and flown every day, overbooking flights is a highly likely issue within this industry. Under that rationale, it is not unusual to have to ask passengers to wait for another flight, or to ask passengers to volunteer to take another flight, and as many customers do not want to take later flights, sometimes flight crews must choose individuals at random who will be taking another flight.
 - The impact of this incident could result in some news coverage depending on the “intensity” of the forceful removal from the aircraft, but typically passengers being removed from flights is a common practice, if everyone cooperates and acts as trained to do so (this includes both passengers and flight crew).
- #1 Crisis: Plane crash resulting from aging aircraft fleet (737-300s) with previous incidents such as roofs tearing off in flight resulting in emergency landings
 - Likelihood: 5
 - Impact: 5
 - Total: 10
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - This crisis when compared to the others in the inventory has the highest likelihood due to the circumstances of the airline because the airline has an aging fleet, and the same aircraft models at other companies have experienced multiple emergency landings resulting from torn off roofs or other more mechanical failures.
 - This crisis when compared to the others in the inventory has the highest impact as there is a potential, or in the case of the specific crisis outlined in this plan, a certainty that there will be loss of life. Death and injury are the worst outcomes that can result from a crisis, and with death and



injury typically comes large scale investigations. All of this is highly newsworthy and will be covered by the media.

- Union mechanic strikes resulting in delayed safety checks or grounded aircrafts
 - Likelihood: 3
 - Impact: 3
 - Total: 6
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - Union mechanic strikes are a possibility in any industry where unions are an integral part of an organization's processes. However, as unions are a key stakeholder group in the airline industry dealing with plane maintenance, airlines regularly communicate and negotiate contracts with union officials meaning that unless something goes astray in the negotiations, then unions will most likely not strike.
 - As union relations are common with airlines, and they likely end peacefully, the impact of this crisis would be moderate depending on what exactly the unions are striking about, or how long the strike lasts. If the unions are striking about long overtime hours or unsafe working conditions for example, then the strike may merit more coverage. Additionally, if the strike lasts for weeks or months, then there also may be more coverage.
- #2 Crisis: Computer outage or data breach resulting in flight delays and cancellations in addition to millions of customers' data at risk
 - Likelihood: 4
 - Impact: 5
 - Total: 9
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - With the rapidly growing threat of data breaches across industries, airlines are no exception to potential breaches, especially since airlines harbor large amounts of personal data about passengers, including name, birthdate, billing addresses, credit card numbers and other sensitive information, such as passport information. Ultimately, the plethora of data airlines are tasked with protecting is a gold mine for hackers.
 - As far as impact goes, a data breach would be highly impactful for an airline because of all of the sensitive passenger data that could be compromised. Additionally, a data breach affecting a company as massive as an airline would likely not be able to be announced to customers as quickly as customers might be deem necessary in order to allow the authorities to investigate. Hence, additional customer ill will be stemming from the delayed notification of the breach.

- #3 Crisis: Racial profiling as it relates to a phoned-in hijacking threat, which could be a hoax (ex. Middle Eastern couple removed from plane and detained for hours of questioning)
 - Likelihood: 4
 - Impact: 4
 - Total: 8
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - Race is currently at the forefront of society with a number of incidents affecting companies like Starbucks and industries like law enforcement. As race continues to be an important issue, customers or employees of any organization will be quick to report any mistreatment resulting from racism. That said, this crisis is a very real possibility. As for the phoned-in hijacking part of this crisis, that too is very likely as post-9/11 people are increasingly sensitive to threats like this. Additionally, 9/11 gave malicious actors the idea of hijacking a plane, so the plane hijacking threats likely rose after that event.
 - The impact of racial profiling could be crippling to an organization's reputation because race is so prominent in society today. While no one may be physically harmed in this crisis, the emotional repercussions individuals may have towards the brand and its reputation could be awful. Lastly, because of the prominence of race relations today, media would likely cover this crisis heavily.
- Medical emergency onboard aircraft resulting in an emergency landing
 - Likelihood: 4
 - Impact: 2
 - Total: 6
 - Ranking Rationale:
 - Medical emergencies are unpredictable events, but the primary service that airlines offer is getting people from location to location. In other words, this industry is people-centric and seeing that everyone has "health" (good or bad), a medical emergency on board is pretty likely.
 - However, medical emergencies onboard are not high impact events so long as the flight crew is well-trained to handle the situation. If a medical emergency is handled in the ideal fashion by the flight crew, then regardless of the life or death of the passenger, the impact will most likely be lower. If no one dies and the flight crew does what it needs to do, then little to no news coverage may stem from this news.
- Mechanical failure onboard aircraft resulting in an emergency landing
 - Likelihood: 3
 - Impact: 2
 - Total: 5

- Ranking Rationale:
 - Mechanical failures can be unpredictable and relatively common especially as the aircrafts in the TAM fleet are aging. However, most mechanical failures are non-threatening to the passengers because in most cases planes can be landed safely despite a mechanical failure.
 - As mechanical failures are common and typically result in no injuries or live lost of passengers, the impact of this crisis is lower. A commonplace mechanical failure where all passengers and crew remained unharmed would garner little media coverage.

Second Priority Crisis: Computer Outage/Data Breach

Crisis Inventory Ratings

- Likelihood: 4
- Impact: 5
- Total: 9

Crisis Specifics:

- Between November 2017 and February 2018, TAM Airlines systems were breached, affecting over 50 million customers who'd booked flights using the TAM website during that time. Of note, this time frame incorporates peak holiday travel season.
- Due to the ongoing FBI investigation attempting to preserve the hacker's digital tracks, TAM Airlines needed to wait until the investigation was partly completed to notify customers that their data was compromised. Of note, the FBI gave the go ahead to notify customers in early April 2018. TAM Airlines did not notify customers until mid-May 2018, claiming that it was conducting an internal investigation to see what the company could do better to prevent a breach from happening again.
- The compromised information included names, birthdates, addresses, credit card numbers used to book flights, and passport and other ID numbers. Additionally, all Loyalty Club members who booked flights during the breached time frame had their frequent flyer miles wiped.
- In October 2017, TAM Airlines suffered from a computer outage that resulted in hundreds of delayed and cancelled flights. Part of the investigation relates to if this computer outage was related to the data breach, and if the breach time frame occurred earlier than the currently identified timeline. (i.e. Did the breach actually start in October 2017, and was it a result of the computer outage? The answer to this question is yes per the current details stemming from the investigation.)

Key Messages:

- We stand in grave shock alongside our customers in the wake of this malicious data breach. Criminal activity is not acceptable, and while we cannot change the realities of the data breach that already happened, our promise to customers is to continue to



protect their data at the highest standards possible to prevent an incident like this from ever happening again.

- We're working alongside the FBI to investigate the details of this incident as we're committed to ensuring that this never happens again.
- With over 50 years of flight experience under our belt, a data breach is unprecedented. We treat our customers and their data with the highest level of care and protection as they are a part of the TAM family. Our customer data protection policies are compliant with U.S. federal regulations, and international regulations, such as GDPR if the customer data regards international travel.

Sub-Messages:

- We urge anyone who booked a flight through TAM Airlines website between November 2017 and February 2018 to report any unusual activity on their credit card statements. Additionally, we urge our customers to change their passwords for the TAM Airlines website as a step in helping prevent any further issues stemming from this breach.
- Safety is our number one priority when it comes to our customers, and we will work around-the-clock to ensure that we protect your information at all cost.
- We apologize for the inconvenience that this matter has caused our TAM family. We are taking immediate action to develop corrective measures intended to restore customer confidence in our business and in turn regain their trust.

Media Questions

1. How did this happen?
2. How many TAM Airlines customers were affected by this breach?
3. How long have you known about this breach for?
4. Why was there a delay in disclosing the breach to the public?
5. Does TAM Airlines care about the privacy of its customers?
6. What is TAM Airlines doing to prevent this from happening again?
7. Is this the first data breach TAM Airlines experienced? Has this happened before?
8. What security measures does TAM Airlines currently have in place to prevent this from happening?
9. What is the company's policy on reporting data breaches?
10. What is TAM Airlines doing to help customers cope with stolen data?
11. What would have happened if TAM Airlines had reported the data breach sooner?
12. Is there compensation or data protection services available for affected customers?
13. What would have happened if more customers were affected?
14. How many flights were cancelled as a result of this outage?
15. How many flights were delayed as a result of this outage?
16. What is TAM Airlines offering customers whose flights were delayed or cancelled resulting from this outage?
17. How many more customers would have been affected if this outage had lasted longer?



Third Priority Crisis: Racial Profiling Resulting From Hijacking Threat

Crisis Inventory Ratings

- Likelihood: 4
- Impact: 4
- Total: 8

Crisis Specifics:

- On Tuesday, April 19, 2018 at 9:52 am PT, TAM Airlines received a phone-in hijacking threat.
- Upon receiving the call, TAM notified local authorities and airport security.
- Airport security and local authorities put the airport on high-alert
- Security within the TAM terminal was increased, but passengers were not notified as we did not want to start a panic.
- At 11:05 am PT, The Smith family, a Pakistani couple, boarded flight #981 headed to Phoenix, Arizona.
- Fifteen minutes after the Smith family took their seats on flight #981, they were approached by airport security and questioned on their whereabouts.
- Airport security then forcibly removed the passengers and detained the passengers for 10 hours for additional questioning.
- TAM Airlines continued to investigate the call-in threat.
- At 9:00pm PT, local authorities and the TAM investigative team were able to determine that the call-in was in fact a hoax and the Smith family was released.

Key Messages:

- We express our deepest apologies to the Smith family for this inexcusable incident. The Smiths are part of the larger TAM family where everyone is welcomed and loved. Our promise to the Smiths and greater TAM family is to take the necessary steps to right the wrongs of this incident and ensure that equality and trust persevere.
- We're working with airport security and the local authorities to investigate the facts of this reprehensible incident, and we're committed to making any necessary changes to our practices that would help prevent an incident like this from ever happening again.
- TAM Airlines places the highest value on diversity and inclusion, and we have policies in place to enable our employees to act with the utmost respect when interacting with each other and with customers.

Sub-Messages:

- Here at TAM Airlines, we believe it's never too late to do the right thing, and we would like to extend our sincerest apologies to the Smith family. We will right our wrongs and ensure that a situation like this never happens again.



- TAM Airlines is committed to our customers and employees are we are working to fix whatever is broken within our system so something like this never happens again.
- We will perform a thorough review of our policies, how we handle passenger situations, and take a closer look at the relationship our staff has with airport authorities and local law enforcement.

Media Questions

1. How did this happen?
2. What is TAM Airlines diversity and inclusion policy?
3. What is TAM Airlines doing to make sure this never happens again?
4. Have the employees responsible for the racial profiling been fired?
5. Do you think TAM Airlines is dedicated to equality?
6. Is this the first-time racial profiling has happened within your organization?
7. Has this type of incident happened before?
8. Will TAM Airlines be holding training on race and the importance of avoiding racial profiling?
9. What does diversity inside TAM Airlines look like? What percent of TAM Airlines staff is Middle Eastern?
10. What are TAM Airlines hiring practices? Do you hire diverse staff?
11. If TAM Airlines had a more diverse staff, would this have happened?
12. Does TAM Airlines have racist policies?
13. Was the hijacking threat real?
14. Who do you think is behind the hijacking threat?
15. Were the passengers on the aircraft in danger at any point?
16. Why did airline officials remove a Middle Eastern couple from the aircraft?
17. How often do you receive hijacking threats? What is the policy for dealing with these threats and identifying if they are legitimate?

