

HOW TO COMMUNICATE RISK WITH THE SWEDISH CITIZENS IN A WILDFIRE PRONE AREA? -- AUDIENCES, MESSAGES AND CHANNELS

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Abstract

There are 3000-4000 fires occurring every year in Sweden, and the risk will increase by the end of the century. Wildfire can cause adverse health effect by high heat and complicated smoke, especially to the young/elder, pregnant women or someone with respiratory or cardiovascular disease. The essay reflects some requirements and considerations for making an efficient risk communication strategy, focusing on audiences, messages, and channels.

The essay shows how to conduct target audience analysis with collecting information from literatures and local government fact sheets with example of Karlskrona kommun. It demonstrates the Swedish municipalities population scales are relatively small, which requires corresponding communication strategy. Moreover, the population structure, education level, ethnicity and religions, household and living preference, the public understanding should be taken into account. The baseline, midline and comprehensive audience analysis offers systematic and comprehensive understanding and creates an overall portrait of the audience.

The essay shows key messages identification, content displaying with message mapping and template analysis. It demonstrates key messages of common concerns: A) what does the public most need to know? B) What happened? C) How to prepare? D) How to protect themselves and their loved ones? Template analysis could guide to prepare notices and website pages, e.g., to be concise/focus, to integrate maps/images/graphics/hyperlink, to clarify contact. Some considerations are recognized with literature study, e.g., language type/level, vision/hearing capabilities, visual design, and pitfalls/suggestions.

SWOT analysis is very useful to recognize advantages and disadvantages of different channels. Facebook, SVT, mass mailing and poster could be used in different scenario with the aspects of time efficiency, credibility, investment, limitation of the tools, requirements of preparation and materials.

Keywords: Wildfire, Sweden, Risk communication, Public, Audience, Message, Channel