

INTRODUCTION

The Corporate Communications Policy of the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT) sets out the policies and guidelines governing how information is disseminated and how communication is managed with internal and external parties. These include: employees, customers, stakeholders/agencies, the media, and the general public. The policy applies to all managers, employees and persons contracted by PATT. Breach of any policy guidelines will be handled by the Head of the Human Resources Department.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

PATT encourages and welcomes feedback, interaction and communication with its employees. It is also expected that employees communicate with their colleagues and external parties with an acceptable level of professionalism.

- (i) Any form of communication within the organization, and among/between employees, must be of acceptable language and tone. Communication must be factual and shall not contain abusive, obscene, insulting or demeaning terminology.
- (ii) Official internal correspondence must be sent either via PATT's email intranet platform; or if hard copy - such as memos, reports, presentations and other correspondence - must bear the official logo.
- (iii) Employees are to communicate any work-related concerns to their immediate supervisor or manager. If this is not the appropriate person, the employee can bring the matter to the HR Manager and/or the CEO or GM/CEO.
- (iv) Employees communicating with external parties on behalf of the organization, must use the organization's official email platform or the official letterhead stationery - with the employee's name, position, contact and department included in the signature. The communication, using

professional business language, must be done with the approval of their supervisor/manager.

- (v) Presentations and materials for internal use – such as flyers, leaflets, handouts, bulletins, and information at group sessions/meetings - must be reviewed by the GM/CEO and Public Relations Manager prior to sharing with employees to ensure accuracy and appropriateness of information.

CONFIDENTIALITY

PATT managers and employees shall keep the confidentiality of any company information with which they are entrusted. This includes information about colleagues and customers, as well as work-related information and the company's strategic and business plans. The two exceptions are when the organization is legally obliged to provide information, or when the sharing of information is authorized.

- (i) Employees are to ensure that confidential material is not left in open or unsecured places where others may have access to it.
- (ii) Employees shall not discuss or share confidential information with other colleagues who should not be privy to such information; or outside the work place, or with the media.
- (iii) Employees are not to share the *personal* contact information of other employees without their permission.

COMMUNICATION WITH EXTERNAL PARTIES

As part of its customer service initiatives, PATT has open and ongoing communication with stakeholders in order to build mutually beneficial business relationships. Communication with stakeholders is critical to the long term success and profitability of the organization, and should also promote overall knowledge and awareness of the brand and services offered.

- (i) Notices and advertisements must be approved by the Office of the GM/CEO or CEO of the SBU prior to being disseminated through the Public Relations Office.
- (ii) Presentations and materials for external use – such as flyers, leaflets, handouts, and bulletins - must be reviewed by the GM/CEO, or SBU CEO, and Public Relations Manager prior to sharing such documents with stakeholders to ensure brand compliance and accuracy of information. This also includes presentations to external stakeholders at meetings, seminars, conferences, forums and any materials to be uploaded to the website.

COMMUNICATION WITH MINISTRIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

As a state agency, communication with Ministries and Government Agencies is done through the offices of the GM/CEO and Port Secretary.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION

PATT aims to build and maintain positive relationships with all media houses – in order to promote fair, balanced, and accurate reporting of news regarding the organization. PATT's objective at all times is to convey an image of credibility, transparency, trustworthiness, confidence and authority in media communications.

All communication with the media is done through the Office of the GM/CEO and/or the Public Relations Department which is responsible for corporate communications.

- (i) Any requests for information from media houses must be directed to the Public Relations Manager who is responsible for setting up interviews or news conferences – as well as sending out news releases, responses and notices.
- (ii) On occasion, the appropriate manager – who is the subject matter expert in the area of the news item - will be authorized/designated to speak by the

Public Relations Manager or GM/CEO, if the need arises. Managers must receive authorization to speak with the media.

- (iii) Whenever a matter or event occurs that could potentially be newsworthy, whether negative or positive, the relevant manager/supervisor will immediately inform the GM/CEO and the Public Relations Manager, providing details and for any communication action required.
- (iv) Any manager receiving authorization to speak with the media will do so after a briefing session is held with the Public Relations Manager and/or GM/CEO, to strategize the appropriate message and media channels to be used to disseminate the information.
- (v) Employees are not authorized to respond or comment in the media on behalf of the organization, or about the organization. One message and voice must emanate through the Public Relations Department.
- (vi) All requests for permission to take photos/videos on the PATT's facilities must be directed to the Public Relations Manager for approval.

Using the Services of the Media – For Image and Brand Enhancement, and Information Sharing

In its efforts regarding awareness and information sharing, brand and image enhancement - from time to time, PATT may wish to utilize the services of the media. This may include giving updates and information to the public regarding its business and operations, such as its initiatives and achievements.

Under those circumstances, it might be necessary for certain officers to be authorized to speak to the media. This will be undertaken after consultation with the General Manager and the Public Relations Manager. The specific mode of communication will be determined – such as interview, news conference, or media release. This process will be managed by the Public Relations Manager. At all times, the officers speaking with the media will do so under the guidance and with the support of the Public Relations Manager.

Advertisements and notices emanating from all departments must be sent to the Public Relations office for booking in the media, and to ensure uniformity in the visuals, image and branding.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

PATT uses social media as part of its modern communication initiatives. PATT's official social media sites are: Website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The use of the social media platform is intended primarily to enhance communication with stakeholders and the public, while improving customer service, information sharing and awareness, image and brand efforts. Any official broadcasts or postings to the organization's sites are done through the Public Relations Department, which has the responsibility to manage and oversee the sites.

- (i) The social media sites are to be used solely for posting information and photos about the organization's operations, services, achievements, highlights, notices, and news.
- (ii) The Public Relations department will monitor the sites, and will respond to any queries or comments posted within a 48-hour period.
- (iii) Postings must be accurate (fact checked), up-to-date, timely and relevant to the business.
- (iv) Any postings, by persons visiting the sites, which are considered inappropriate such as comments that are: false, inaccurate, gossip, misleading, speculative, libelous, threatening, obscene/vulgar or personal attacks - will be removed. Persons making such postings may be blocked from accessing the sites.
- (v) Employees are not authorized to post/comment on the PATT sites, or any external social media sites, on behalf of the organization.
- (vi) Employees are not to post negative, derogatory, false, or any remarks/comments/opinions that may bring the PATT into disrepute or cause the organization to be seen in a poor light.

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Introduction

Crisis communication initiatives are important in the PATT organization, which has various business and operational units. Quick decision making and decisive action are required when a crisis takes place, and this is especially imperative in the area of crisis communication in order to safeguard the organization's professional reputation and financial bottom line.

PATT's main communication objectives in a crisis situation are to: preserve the reputation of the organization by sharing accurate information in a responsible, proactive and confident manner; pre-empting false news, speculation and damaging gossip; keeping employees and stakeholders informed and updated. This will be achieved through quick, effective, reliable and wide-reaching information and communication efforts to all stakeholders.

Decision Making and Strategy

- (i) All crisis communication meetings take place at the designated Control Center, with the Public Relations Manager guiding the communication.
- (ii) A core group is responsible for the decisions and strategies for all communication with internal and external stakeholders. The members of the core group comprise: the GM/CEO, CEO's of the Business Units, and Manager/Supervisor of the area where the crisis occurred.
- (iii) As the individual situation warrants, the input of other persons will be required such as: HSE Manager, Security Superintendent, Legal Officer, Human Resource Manager, Industrial Relations Manager, and others as deemed appropriate.
- (iv) Any spokesperson other than the GM/CEO and Public Relations Manager must be authorized. Their name and position are to be shared in the media for transparency.

- (v) Managers and employees are not authorized to comment in the media using the term “Port Official” or “Port Contact” or any other such anonymous designations.
- (vi) Holding statements are prepared beforehand, covering various possible crisis scenarios. These will be used as templates for quick information sharing, to take control and ensure accurate information is shared immediately.
- (vii) Employees are not authorized to comment on the situation to the media.

Information Sharing With Employees;

Internal communication will take place quickly to ensure employees receive accurate information in order to avoid panic, chaos, rumors and miscommunication. Updates will be given at intervals agreed upon by the core group.

Employees will be kept abreast of the crisis situation until normal operations resume.

Information Sharing With External Stakeholders and the Public

Depending on the nature of the crisis, it may be necessary to communicate directly with stakeholders to ensure that they are informed of the events and any resulting setbacks that may impact them.

The message would include the following:

- The nature of the incident, and when it happened.
- How it will impact the stakeholders.
- What is being done to address the situation.
- When the operation/service is expected to return to normalcy.

The approved notice must be sent out in a timely manner, to ensure stakeholders are kept informed, thus avoiding the spread of speculation, rumor, false news and panic.

Information Sharing With the Media

When a crisis occurs, it is very likely that the media will call and PATT must be prepared to respond factually and confidently. The objective is to provide accurate reporting to the public via the media channels.

- Only designated persons are to speak with the media to share the information authorized by the core team.
- The media is not to be avoided or ignored as this can be viewed as arrogant, insensitive or having something to hide.
- If the information has not yet been received or prepared, the reporter would be contacted as soon as the communication is ready.
- The PATT spokesperson would not respond to or engage in speculation or rumour in order to avoid undue confusion, pain or fear by the public.
- As soon as the full facts are known and a notice or release is completed, it will be sent out to the media houses using official means.

Use of IT and Social Media for Crisis Communication

PATT will make full use of information technology and its social media platforms to enable effective sharing of information to its internal and external stakeholders. This will provide real-time information sharing and interactive communication, as well as afford a wide reach of stakeholders via their phones, tablets and computers.

The information technology and social media platforms to be used to enhance PATT’s communication during a crisis are listed in the table below.

| STAKEHOLDERS | IT AND SOCIAL MEDIA |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Core Communication Team | What’s App Group |
| Internal Stakeholders: | What’s App Group (s) |
| Employees | SMS Text Messaging PATT Email Intranet Website, Facebook, Instagram |
| External Stakeholders: | What’s App Group |
| Customers | SMS Text Messaging |
| Suppliers | Twitter |
| Government Agencies | Email – with Bulletins, notices, information, updates. Website, Facebook, Instagram |
| Media: | |
| Print Media – Newspapers | What’s App Group |
| Broadcast Media – TV and Radio | Email – with News Releases, notices, advertisements |
| Public | Twitter Website, Facebook, Instagram |

WHISTLEBLOWING

Policy Statement

The Whistleblower policy aims to address and deter improper conduct in the organization. It therefore provides an avenue and guidelines for employees and stakeholders to report/disclose illegal, unethical or other unacceptable behaviour or wrongdoing within the organization that they may be aware of – with the assurance of strictest confidentiality. It also gives the assurance that the whistleblower will not be

subjected to reprisals or victimization from the organization or representatives of the organization for making such reports.

The Whistleblower policy communicates to employees and stakeholders that PATT views any wrongdoing very seriously, and also emphasizes the organization's commitment to identifying, addressing and remedying such wrongdoing in a fair and confidential manner.

PATT's Commitment to Whistleblowers

All employees of PATT have the opportunity and responsibility to disclose any wrongdoing that they may be aware of. Former employees, stakeholders and customers may also report wrongdoing. PATT in turn makes the following commitments:

- All information received will be protected and treated with strict confidentiality.
- The whistleblower's identity will be protected and/or remain anonymous, and will only be revealed if the informant chooses to do so.
- PATT will respond and all reports will be investigated. As the situation warrants, appropriate action will be taken.
- PATT assures that whistleblowers will not be subjected to victimization or affected negatively for reasons related to whistleblowing.

Matters That May be Reported:

Wrongdoing of any nature may be reported under the PATT Whistleblower Policy. The matters reported may include, but are not limited to:

- Theft and fraud
- Soliciting or accepting bribes, gifts or payment for special treatment or favours.
- Doing special favours for others – for example, that gives an advantage in tenders or procurement etc.
- Sexual harassment or assault – physical, verbal or otherwise.
- Bullying, fighting, abusive behavior or harm to another.
- Discrimination: based on race, religion, social class, age, gender, sexual orientation, political opinions or affiliations.
- Drug or alcohol use and abuse – and being under the influence at work.

- Unauthorized removal and/or use of the Authority's property.
- Other matters that are deemed illegal, criminal or professionally unethical.

Guidelines for Making a Report:

Employees, former employees, stakeholders and customers may report wrongdoing:

- Via a dedicated telephone hotline at 627-4945; and via the external email reportpatt@gmail.com. Both channels are confidential and are not connected to the authority's server. Reports can also be made via traditional mail to the Committee.
- Reports can be made anonymously. All information will be treated in strictest confidence.
- The identity of whistleblowers will be kept confidential and anonymous. If it becomes necessary to reveal the identity of the informant to progress the matter, the identity of whistleblowers will only be revealed if they choose to do so.
- Responses, updates and results of their matters will be given to whistleblowers

Whistleblower Committee and Process

A small team of three or four persons, and two alternates, approved by the GM/CEO, will form the whistleblower committee. They will be required to sign confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements. Any breach of confidentiality will have sanctions and expulsion from the committee.

In the event that a report is received about a member of the committee, that member will be replaced by one of the alternates to proceed with the matter.

Process – Requirements for Whistleblowers When Making a Report

All efforts will be made to discourage inaccurate or false information *deliberately* being reported. It is very likely that false reports would negatively impact, defame, discredit or slander innocent persons and bring their reputations into disrepute. Whistleblowers will therefore be guided by the following requirements:

1. Be able to provide specific documentation in support of the allegation, or
2. Be able to point to necessary witnesses, where applicable, or
3. Be able to specify dates and times of the wrongdoing, or other particulars.

In Instances of False Reporting

Instances of false reporting will be strongly discouraged, and will carry serious sanctions - as false reports can result in slander, defamation or discrediting the character of innocent individuals. Therefore, persons who are found to have made false reports, intentionally and knowingly, will be subject to disciplinary actions which may include dismissal.

Regarding false reports from external persons, the appropriate action by PATT (depending on the severity of claims) will be determined and may include: issuing of a letter or warning and/or suspension of any PATT pass, or reporting to the national police, or legal action.

In Instances of Reprisal and Victimization towards Whistleblowers

In instances where persons (PATT managers or employees) are found to have taken reprisal actions towards whistleblowers, such persons will face disciplinary action which may include dismissal. The Authority views any reprisal actions or victimization in a very grave light and sanctions will be enforced accordingly.

When a Whistleblower Makes a Report

- The committee will receive, respond to and address all whistleblower reports.
- An investigation will be conducted to *determine the veracity and facts* of the reports.
- At times, depending on the nature of the reported matter, it may be necessary to seek input from certain managers or outside sources/experts in the area.
- Reports of sexual harassment may be referred to the GM or HR Manager; and a report of fraud may be referred to the Legal Officer, Auditor and Security Superintendent.
- At the completion of the investigation, if the report proves to be valid, a determination and recommendation will be made on the matter, which may include: a warning, suspension, termination of employment, reporting to the national police, or other action deemed appropriate.
- If the report proves to be false, a recommendation will also be made - as false reporting will be discouraged with appropriate serious sanctions.

All information will be treated with strictest confidence to ensure the safety, privacy and protection of whistleblowers as well as committee members.

Change Control Record

| Approval Date | Amendment Made | Approved By |
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