CRISIS MANAGEMENT PREPAREDNESS FOR MILITARY BASE GUN VIOLENCE

A CREATIVE PROJECT

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**Introduction**

The number of gun related incidents and their severity is rising in the United States. Violence is one of the leading causes of death and injury, resulting in an estimated 50,000 deaths per year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2013), and death by firearm is one of the main sources of such violence (Appelbaum & Swanson, 2010). There are approximately 30 firearm-related homicides and 53 suicides committed daily (CDC, 2013). According to the CDC (2013), the rate of firearm-related deaths in the United States is significantly higher than that of 25 other industrialized countries. An example would be 1.66 deaths per 100,000 people each year versus 0.14 deaths per 100,000 people in other countries. Even though some firearm-related deaths can be preventable it can still be very challenging to manage. According to Cramer, Pirelli and Wechsler (2015), having a firearm in the home is associated with an increased risk of firearm-related homicide and suicide, but the relationship between mental illness, violence, and suicide is complex. Mental illness and suicide are often looked into after a highly publicized tragic event (Cramer, Pirelli & Wechsler, 2015).

With the growing complexity of technology, organizations that are experiencing a crisis use different strategies to deliver messages explaining the situation (Stephens, Malone, & Bailey, 2005). Communication is essential in today's society for any organization. The organization's choice of message strategy affects both how people perceive the crisis and the image of the organization experiencing the crisis (Stephens, Malone, & Bailey, 2005). Therefore, it has become more important for organizations to have a strategic approach when it comes to the content that is being put out to their target audiences, especially in the event of gun violence. Gun violence in the United States has enormous detrimental impacts on public health, and firearm availability plays a vital role in explaining why United States homicide rates are greater

than other high-income nations (Webster, 2015). Gun crimes in the United States in the year 2015 totaled to about 353 mass shootings and 62 shootings at schools (BBC News, 2015). About 12,223 people were killed in gun related incidents by the end of that year, and 24,722 people were injured (BBC News, 2015). Over the years, there have been shootings that have occurred on military bases. It is important that all military bases are prepared to handle this type situation if it were to happen to them. Stressful conditions from being in the military can lead to accidental shootings.

Recently, the military base Fort Hood, located in Texas, experienced a mass shooting. According to CNN (2014), Specialist Ivan Lopez killed three people and injured 16 before committing suicide on April 7, 2014. After serving in Iraq, it was reported that he had behavioral and mental health issues (CNN, 2014). The military base was still on edge after a mass shooting that took place there leaving 13 dead in 2009 where Maj. Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist, was the named suspect (Brown, 2014). He had been ranked outstanding in officer performance despite a poor record of medical performance and inappropriate discussion of his Muslim faith at work, according to government documents quoted by the Associated Press (Brown, 2014). At the time of the shootings, he was scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan. These two mass shootings are an example that gun violence can happen anywhere and that is why crisis management is vital.

Crisis management is one of the most important aspects of public relations. It is designed to protect an individual, company, or organization facing a public challenge to its reputation (Granville, 2002).  Failure to handle a crisis efficiently can result in serious harm to stakeholders, losses for an organization, or end its very existence (Coombs, 2011).  That is why it is vital to always have a crisis management plans in case of an unexpected emergency, such as gun violence.

The goal of this research is to understand gun violence response strategies on military bases and to build a crisis plan book. First, using the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), this creative project will analyze different crisis types and response strategies. According to Coombs (1998), the more responsibility that is attributed to the organization with respect to the crisis, the more negative the impact on the organization's reputation. SCCT focuses on how to match crisis responses to crisis situations. This topic is important because it will help the military come up with better methods of dealing with mass shootings on all of their military bases. There is not much research regarding military gun violence and this research aims to bring more specific yet applicable knowledge to crisis communication preparedness research. A content analysis and textual analysis was conducted to compare two military base shootings at Fort Hood. The Fort Hood shootings between 2009 and 2014 are the most recent and notable shootings on military bases. Next, a background research of Fort Hood's current gun crisis plan was analyzed to see if they have included any specific response strategies. This is important for military bases to have because the crisis management plan will provide them with an evidence-based framework to handle gun violence better.

## Literature Review

### Gun Policy of Military Bases

The U.S. government began regulating firearms in the early 20th century (Cramer, Pirelli & Wechsler, 2015). The Gun Control Act of 1968 prohibits certain groups of people from purchasing firearms (Gostin & Record, 2011). Restricted categories include individuals addicted to controlled substances, those involuntarily committed to a mental institution, those adjudicated as incompetent or dangerous, and insanity acquittees (Cramer, Pirelli & Wechsler 2015). In 1996, President Clinton signed the Lautenberg Amendment law that prohibited individuals

convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence assaults from accessing guns (Cramer, Pirelli &

Wechsler 2015).

At the national level, gun control policy has remained essentially unchanged for the past

20 years following the 1993 passage of both the Brady Handgun Prevention Act and Federal

Assault Weapon Restrictions; the 1994 Republican congressional victories marked the end of

any momentum for additional federal legislation (Vizzard, 2015). According to Military Times

(2015), ever since the mass shooting that killed five service members in Chattanooga, Tennessee,

lawmakers have wanted to loosen up rules for service members to be able to carry weapons

statewide for personal protection, but their efforts seem unlikely to put more guns in troops'

hands. Negotiators working on the fiscal 2016 Defense Authorization Bill included language to

give military installation commanders more leeway over who can carry "an appropriate firearm"

including personal weapons (Shane, 2015). The provision requires the Secretary of Defense to

establish a new policy by the end of the year, even though a promised presidential veto of the

broader Defense Policy Bill on related budget matters could delay that (Shane, 2015).

While Congress is all astir trying to argue whether troops should be allowed to carry

weapons on domestic military bases, lawmakers are asking if troops are allowed to carry

firearms to defend themselves in combat zones then why not at home where they might be able

to stop shooters (Guns Galore, 2014). According to USA Today's article "Guns Galore Won't

Make Military Bases Safer Places" (2014), the critics are blaming President Clinton for the

current policy. But the policy really originated in 1992 under George H.W. Bush, when the

Secretary of Defense was anti-gun liberal Dick Cheney. The policy was continued in 1993, two

months into the Clinton administration (Guns Galore, 2014).

Lawmakers said the issue is a matter of force protection and safety because they remain concerned about the response times to active shooter attacks on U.S. military bases (Shane, 2014). They believe that commanders should take steps to arm additional personnel "if" arming those personnel will contribute to the goal (Shane, 2014). The superseding concern of the lawmakers who wrote the rule was safety. They feel the idea of ubiquitous guns, mixed with young soldiers in stressful conditions, could lead not just to accidental shootings but also to fistfights escalating to gunfire, or to more suicides, which already plague the military (Shane, 2014). The president is frustrated with a lack of response to mass killings, and many lawmakers feel that he could speak to the commander in-chief about making some changes (Hoar, 2015).

The National Rifle Association and several Republican presidential candidates have pushed for looser gun rules for troops recently, arguing that "gun-free zones" increase the danger for law-abiding citizens by preventing them from defending themselves (Shane, 2014). They feel that allowing military personnel to protect themselves is more than justified after looking at the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which included an attack upon the Pentagon, and events related to other military facilities thereafter (Hoar, 2015). But gun control advocates and the Defense Department have argued the complete opposite. Pentagon spokesman Air Force Lt. Col. Thomas Crosson said the department does not support arming all personnel, a position strengthened after several safety reviews following the 2009 mass shooting at Fort Hood, Texas, and mass shooting at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. in 2013 (Shane, 2014).

As stated by the Guns Galore article (2014), military commanders weighed changing the policy but decided that the 24/7 safety risk of keeping loaded guns on base wasn't worth the risk and they left protection to military police who get special training. As horrific as mass shootings are at military installations, they're rare (Guns Galore, 2014). According to Shane (2014),

Lawmakers emphasized that the policy changes would not supersede any state or local firearms law and the gun-control activists see the new provision as representing only minor changes. Whether the new gun provisions survive to become law remains uncertain (Shane, 2014). Military gun policy might have an impact on the way the military deals with gun violence crisis communication because a ban on guns would keep at least some people who pose a danger to themselves or others from having access to a gun.

**Importance of Crisis Management with Gun Violence**

The impact that gun violence has on public safety and American life can cultivate pessimism about the nation's ability to reduce gun violence (Webster, 2015). If an organization is a victim of gun violence they are in desperate need of crisis management. In order to understand crisis management it is also important to understand the meaning of "crisis". There are a range of academic efforts to define crisis. But from all of the diverse definitions of crisis, Hermann's (1972) definition has been widely accepted as a conceptual ground for understanding crisis. A crisis is a situation that incorporates the following three conditions: (a) a surprise to decision makers, (b) a threat to high-priority goals, and (c) a restricted amount of time available for response (Choi, 2010).

A crisis can create problems for any organization such as public safety, financial loss, and reputation loss (Coombs, 2007). The key to handling a crisis is controlling what happens the first few hours after the news breaks. There are a few steps one can take to ensure everything runs smoothly: make sure to follow the institution's protocol (must be established beforehand), take charge of the situation by gathering all the facts and prepare a script before talking to anyone else, and be clear about the facts surrounding the crisis and present them consistently to others (Power, 2004). Communication during the time of a crisis is very important. Organizations

experiencing a crisis use different strategies to deliver messages explaining the situation (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005). The organization's choice of message strategy affects both how people perceive the crisis and the image of the organization experiencing the crisis (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005).

Coombs (2007) explains that crisis management is a process designed to prevent or lessen the damage a crisis can inflict on an organization and its stakeholders. There are many aspects involved in a crisis management plan. The process can actually be divided into three different phases: (1) pre-crisis, (2) crisis response, and (3) post-crisis (Coombs, 2007). Each of the three phases determines whether or not the organization handled the crisis efficiently.

During the Pre-crisis phase it is important that an organization creates a crisis management plan, selects and train the crisis management team, and conducts exercises in order to test the plan and team (Coombs, 2007).  Research regarding crisis management plans says that organizations will be better equipped to handle crises when they  have a crisis management plan that is updated annually, and have pre-draft crisis messages at hand (Coombs, 2007). Bruce and Tini (2008, p. 111) state, "Without the advantage of planning ahead, an organization will scramble to come up with a response. This will suggest that there might be a lack of command and can result in wrong or incomplete messages, which will only add to the damage the crisis has already caused."

According to McConnell and Drennan (2006), organizations should be engaged in continuous efforts for preparation. This should include continuously learning from experience, running tests and simulations to prepare for threatening surprises, providing training, promoting learning within and across networks, involving organizational leaders in preparation, scheduling

preparatory efforts, and ensuring that crisis management processes are embedded in core

organizational processes (McConnell & Drennan, 2006).

Crisis response is just as important as the pre-crisis phase. The crisis response is what

management does and says after the crisis hits. There has been plethora of research done

regarding testing and applying the situational crisis communication theory findings. Lastly, there

is the post-crisis. According to Coombs (2007) during this phase the organization is returning to

business as usual.  Although the crisis is no longer a focal point of the organization's attention it

still requires some consideration (Coombs, 2007).  Research shows that it is important to have

follow-up communication. Coombs (2007) explains that crisis managers often promise to

provide additional information during the crisis phase so they must deliver on those

promises.  The amount of follow-up communication required depends on the amount of

information promised during the crisis and the length of time it takes to complete the recovery

process (Coombs, 2007).

**Situational Crisis Communication Theory and Crisis Response Strategies**

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) was developed to investigate

which crisis response strategy organizations should apply in specific crisis situations to restore

an organization's reputation in the best possible way (Coombs, 2007). Using SCCT this creative

project will ask the following question **RQ1:** What is the most often used response strategies

military bases use in the event of gun violence? As said by Coombs (1998), the more

responsibility that is attributed to the organization with respect to the crisis, the more negative

the impact on the organizational reputation. As stated by Claeys (2010), this is essential because

no organization is spared having to go through crises during its lifetime. Crises challenge

organizational reputations and credibility.

According to Hansen-Horn and Neff (2008), SCCT is interested in how crisis response strategies can be used to protect reputational assets after they figure out the type of crisis the organization is facing, which is the first communication priority in a crisis. Instructing information tells stakeholders what to do to protect themselves from crises, the basics of what happened, and what the organization is doing to fix and prevent the crisis from happening again (Bergman, 1994). In response to a crisis, organizations need to recognize that a broad number of their stakeholders, including customers, competitors, and other members of their environment, can be affected (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005).

SCCT argues that the crisis situation determines which crisis response strategies will be the most useful in protecting the organization's reputation (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). But in order to know which crisis response strategy is appropriate it's important to know the crisis situation. According to Botan and Hazeleton (2006) the match between the situation and the response is based on the attribution theory. Research shows that the attribution theory is used to explain how people attribute causes and events (Hansen- Horn & Neff, 2008). The focus tends to be on negative, unexpected events. To categorize crisis communication message strategies Coombs developed a model that explains the general strategy choices that organizations in crisis have at their disposal (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005).  It is imperative that crisis mangers assess the amount of responsibility a crisis will generate as part of a threat assessment process (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). Coombs (2002) explains that there are three factors in the crisis situation that shape the reputational threat: (1) initial crisis responsibility, (2) crisis history and (3) prior relational reputation. According to the research, initial crisis responsibility is a function of stakeholder attributions of personal control for the crisis by the organization and how much stakeholders believe organizational actions caused the crisis (Coombs, 1995).

Studies have shown that the level of crisis responsibility is a primary indicator of how much of a threat the crisis is to the organization's reputation and what response strategies are needed to address that threat (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). In keeping with Coombs (2002), there are thirteen crisis types which are divided into three clusters: (1) Attributions of crisis responsibility, high: Preventable cluster (e.g. human error, organizational misdeed), (2) attributions of crisis responsibility, moderate: accidental cluster (e.g. challenges, technical accident), and (3) attribution of crisis responsibility, low: victim cluster (e.g. natural disaster, rumors).

After an organization determines the crisis type and the level of crisis responsibility they can then choose the crisis response strategy. SCCT works from a list of 10 crisis response strategies that are put into three postures just as the crisis responsibility level (Hansen-horn & Neff, 2008). Each posture represents a set of strategies that share similar communicative goals focusing on protecting crisis victims and taking responsibility for the crisis (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008).

The first the SCCT theory explains the deny posture. This posture represents a set of strategies that claim that no crisis occurred or that the accused organization had no responsibility (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). The second posture is the diminish posture. This posture reflects a set of strategies that attempt to alter stakeholder attributions by reframing how stakeholder should interpret the crisis (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). Finally, Hansen-Horn and Neff (2008) explain the last posture, deal. Deal posture represents a set of strategies that seek to improve the organization's reputation in some way (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). H1: Military bases will use more 'rebuild response strategies' when they have a preventable cluster type of gun crisis. H2: Military bases will use more 'deny strategies' when they have a victim cluster type of gun crisis.

Coombs (2007) talks about how SCCT demands for there to be a theoretical link between crisis situations and crisis response strategies. But there should also be a theoretical link to determine how different groups are affected by the crisis, such as stakeholders.

A stakeholder is defined as any group or public affected by the organization's operation (Ray, 1999). A stakeholder can also be defined as any person, group or organization that can affect an organization's performance or goals (Bland, 1998). The nature of the relationship between the stakeholder and the organization is very important when it comes to shaping the response to stakeholder pressures (Stephens, Malone, & Bailey, 2005). Depending on the situation or crisis, organizations may need to identify all stakeholders involved especially in the event of a gun crisis (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2000).

Types of stakeholders include enabling publics, functional publics, normative publics, and diffused publics (Ray, 1991). Enabling publics provide the authority and control the resources that allow the organization to exist (ex. shareholders or boards of directors) (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005). Functional publics on the other hand, give inputs to the organization and take outputs in return (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005). This would be employees, unions, suppliers, and customers. According to Stephens, Malone and Bailey (2005), normative publics are those who share similar values or have similar problems (unions, political groups and professional societies). Finally, there are the diffused publics that emerge when organizational activities result in external consequences (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2005). This group would comprise of the media, the community, residents, and the public at large.

**Military Emergency Plans**

The U.S. military carries on various traditions that run counter to the customs of civilian life (Teeter-Baker, 2008). According to Hill (1984), people forget the basic differences that make

comparisons between the military and civilian life moot. The military is the only organization

that has the responsibility to carry out the U.S. martial mission (Teeter-Baker, 2008). This

mission demands an authoritarian leadership style (Hill, 1984). According to Hill (1984), the

authoritarian nature of the military produced the following practices: chain-of-command, rapid

decision-making, and uncritical acceptance of orders.

The Army has a comprehensive, integrated Emergency Management Program (EMP) for

planning, execution and management of response efforts. EMP is designed to mitigate the effect

of all-hazard incidents, including natural and manmade disasters on or affecting Army

installations (Military Operations, 2009). The program provides protection of the Army facilities,

assigned soldiers, civilians, and family members from the impact of an emergency using the all-

hazards framework (Army Emergency Management Plan, 2009).

According to Army Emergency Management Plan (2009), army policy requires

installations to incorporate command guidance for the coordination and integration of emergency

response capabilities and preparedness activities into a single program. Also, installations must

be prepared to provide or receive external support in an all-hazards EM incident, including

mitigating the potential effects of, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters,

both natural and manmade (Military Operations, 2009). To retain this effectiveness, the military

leadership must employ the authoritarian leadership style (Teeter-Baker, 2008). This is

especially vital during war. The authoritarian leadership style also introduces the concept of

command responsibility, meaning the commanding officer has the responsibility of dispensing

lawful orders to subordinates (Teeter-Bake, 2008). The leader is accountable for the orders being

given and is consequently responsible for the actions of the subordinates (Teeter-Baker, 2008).

The Military offers many resources that soldiers and their families have access to that provide

general information in case of emergencies. There are links on their website for army suicide

prevention, the sexual harassment/assault response and prevention program (SHARP), and the

Performance Triad (Lifespace): Sleep, Nutrition, and Activity. Although there is all this

information regarding emergency there still is not any information on the website regarding what

to do in the event of a mass shooting.

## Methodology

A brief content analysis accompanied by textual analysis was conducted to compare

response strategies used during two military base shootings at Fort Hood, Texas and if they

changed over time. The Fort Hood shootings between 2009 and 2014 are the most recent and

notable shootings on military bases. News releases from the Fort Hood military base were

analyzed to determine the answer to the research question. The unit of analysis that was used is

each news release. Manifest content focuses on what you actually count and may be the number

of times specific figures are given in an annual report, the number of times the active voice is

used in a series of press releases, or the number of times a client is mentioned in the mass media

(Stacks, 2011).

### Cases

The primary goal of this research is to understand gun violence response strategies on

military bases. Scholars have shown that different crisis communication strategies should be

used with diverse types of crises (Coombs, 1999). An example would be if a crisis happened but

the organization is not at fault, stakeholders would place less blame on the organization than if

the organization was to blame (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2008).

The first step in assessing the reputational threat is to determine the initial crisis

responsibility attached to a crisis (Coombs, 2007). The initial crisis responsibility is a function of

stakeholder attributions of personal control for the crisis by the organization (how much

stakeholders believe organizational actions caused the crisis) (Coombs, 1995). To that end, two

cases were looked at in order to create a content analysis. A total of 85 news releases were

analyzed to compare the two military base shootings at Fort Hood that required translation and

fell into two of Coombs' crisis type clusters.

On November 5, 2009 an army psychiatrist, identified as Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan opened

fire at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 12 people and wounding 31 others (Gunman kills, 2009). The

massacre lasted approximately 10 minutes before Hasan was shot by civilian police and taken

into custody (Army Major Kills, 2009). The 2009 case was categorized under the victim cluster

crisis type because it was seen as workplace violence that the military base could not control.

Hasan graduated from Virginia Tech University and completed his psychiatry training at the

Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland, in 2003 (Army Major

Kills, 2009). He then went on to work at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C.,

treating soldiers returning from war with post-traumatic stress disorder and was promoted to the

rank of major in the Army in May 2009 (Army Major Kills, 2009). According to military

records, Hasan was transferred to Fort Hood that July, where he was seen having inappropriate

discussions of his Muslim faith at work (Brown, 2009). The afternoon of the shooting, Hasan

was armed with a semi-automatic pistol and shouted "Allahu Akbar" (Arabic for "God is great")

before he opened fire at a crowd inside a Fort Hood's processing center where soldiers who were

about to be deployed overseas or were returning from deployment received medical screenings

(Brown, 2009).

The 2014 case was categorized as a preventable cluster because there were signs that the

shooter was unstable. The crisis is seen as an organizational misdeed involving injuries. On April

7, 2014 Specialist Ivan Lopez killed three people and injured 16 before committing suicide (Ford, 2014). Lopez was a soldier who had served in Iraq, suffering from "behavioral health and mental health" issues (Ford, 2014). Lopez was examined by a psychiatrist and found to show no violent or suicidal tendencies (Brown, 2014). In fact, it was reported that Lopez had been prescribed Ambien for a sleeping problem and was being evaluated for post-traumatic stress disorder but had not been diagnosed with the illness (Brown, 2014). On the day of the shooting, Lopez was armed with a .45-caliber Smith and Wesson handgun when he was engaged by military police before he fatally shot himself in the head (Ford, 2014).

**Coding Framework**

Content coding is uniquely qualified as a methodology to translate observations into a quantifiable form (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 2008). In this study, the content coding focused on three categories (1) Crisis type. (2) Response Strategies, and (3) Stakeholders, by obtaining frequency counts for messages within the news releases pertaining to both cases on the Fort Hood press center website. The message strategies chosen for coding were based on Coombs's situational crisis communication theory. Some news releases included multiple response strategies. So in order to maintain reliability, the news releases were coded for the dominant strategy, which was defined as the one discussed the most in the news release, not always the response strategy discussed first.  The response strategies were also coded for the type of stakeholders targeted in the news release. For a complete listing of the codes strategies used, see the table below.

| Crisis Types | Crisis Response Strategies | Stakeholder Category |
|---|---|---|
| *Victim Cluster*<br>Natural disaster<br>Rumor<br>Workplace violence<br>Product tampering | *Deny Strategies*<br>Attack the accuser<br>Denial<br>Scapegoat | *Diffused*<br>Public<br>Media |
| *Accidental Cluster*<br>Challenges<br>Technical-error accidents<br>Technical-error product harm | *Diminish Strategies*<br>Excuse<br>Justification | *Functional*<br>Customers<br>Victims<br>Employees<br>Suppliers |
| *Preventable Cluster*<br>Human-error accidents<br>Human-error product harm<br>Organizational misdeed with no injuries<br>Organizational misdeed management misconduct<br>Organizational misdeed with injuries | *Rebuild Strategies*<br>Compensation<br>Apology | *Enabling*<br>Shareholders<br>Regulatory agencies |
|  | *Nonexistent (category)*<br>Clarification<br>Intimidation | *Normative*<br>Professional societies<br>Political groups |

**Results**

Since the goal of this study was to understand gun violence response strategies on military bases using the SCCT, the findings reflect frequency counts of categorical data. The research question wanted to know the most often used response strategies military bases used in the event of gun violence crisis and the stakeholders targeted. Analyzing a total of 47 news releases between November 2009 and March 2015 the findings suggest that in the 2009 shooting, the top response strategy was the nonexistent category. It accounted for nearly 64% of the total data. Within the nonexistent category there were two sub categories, clarification and intimidation. The subcategory, clarification accounted for 100% of the nonexistent category (See Table 1). When analyzing the news releases it seemed as though the military addressed the fact that there was a shooting and were giving updates about the investigation. Also, the news

releases were offering updates on how the injured soldiers were doing over time with healing and grieving.

**-Table 1 Here-**

The second most frequent category was the rebuild strategy making up 36% of the total data. Within the rebuild category, the subcategories were compensation and apology accounting for 76% and 24% of the category. None of the new releases analyzed fell under the last two categories diminish and deny.  Even though the military base was a victim of gun violence, they did not use SCCT's deny posture. They offered counseling and grieving hotlines for people who were affected by the shooting and held a memorial run for victims gathering donations. Also in several of the news releases the military base conveyed its condolences to family members and friends of the deceased.

**-Table 2 Here-**

Table 2 shows that the top two stakeholder categories targeted in majority of the news releases were diffused and functional. The diffused category made up 77% of the total data and functional made up 23%. Within the diffused category, the subcategories of public and media accounted for 36% and 64% of the category respectively. Most of Fort Hood's news releases addressed the media. It seemed as though they wanted to get their messages to the appropriate channels in order to reach their target audience and to let the world know that they were taking the necessary precautions to rectify the crisis.

It can also be seen in table 2 that the military base addressed stakeholders within the functional category as well. The subcategories customers, victims, employees, and suppliers make up this category. Victims and employees made up 82% and 18% of the functional category. Stakeholders were categorized as victims if they were people who were injured during

the shooting or family members of the deceased.  While they were categorized as employees if the were soldiers or civilians who worked on the military base.

**-Table 3 Here-**

The findings from the 2014 case were pretty consistent to the 2009 case when it comes to the both response strategies used and the distributions to stakeholders (See Table 3). A total of 38 news releases analyzed between April 2014 and February 2015. The findings suggest that in the 2014 shooting, the top response strategy was the nonexistent category just like the 2009 case. The nonexistent category made up for 63% of the total data. The two sub categories, clarification and intimidation accounted for 96% and 4% of the main category. Like the 2009 case the news releases in 2014 were basically letting the public know that the military base was investigating the crisis and updating information as it was gathered. The key difference between the 2014 and 2009 shooting was the fact that intimidation strategy tactic was used in one of the new releases in 2014. In July of 2014 there was a news release about fireworks being prohibited on military base during the Fourth of July holiday. Anyone who had fireworks entering the base would be asked to either place fireworks with gate security or leave the base. Since the shooting happened three months prior to the holiday and the base was still on edge.

The rebuild category accounted for 37% of the total data. Within the rebuild category, subcategories compensation made up 79% and apology made up 21%. Just as before Fort Hood offered a grief hotline and chaplains for those who needed emotional healing. As well as having a tree planting memorial to remember those you loss their lives. After further analyzing the military offered their apology by honoring those who died with memorials. One news release discussed how there was a private memorial on base for just family member (invite only).

**-Table 4 Here-**

Table 4 illustrates that diffused and functional categories were the top two stakeholders targeted in majority of the news releases just like the 2009 case. The diffused category accounts for 63% of the total data. The diffused category has two subcategories, public and media which made 38% and 63% of the whole category. Just as before most of the news releases addressed the media. The functional category makes up 37% of the total data when it came to the distribution to stakeholders. The subcategories victims and employees the only two used in this category. Victims and employees were both 50% of the functional category.

**Discussion**

Overall, this study of crisis types and response strategies uncovered two main findings. First, it was established that the military base in this study did not follow SCCT's diagram for matching the appropriate response strategy to its crisis type. A majority of the response strategies used fell under the added crisis response strategy, nonexistent (category). Two of the main response strategy postures, diminish and deny were not used at all. Due to these findings my second hypothesis was not supported. It was predicted that H2: Military bases will use more 'deny strategies' when they have victim cluster type of gun crisis. It is possible that Fort Hood's military base treated this case differently from the SCCT victim cluster model because of increased demand on transparency from the public. Also, the nature of this case is highly emotional. But the findings in this study did determine that my first hypothesis was close. It was hypothesized that military bases would use more 'rebuild response strategies' when they have preventable cluster type of gun crisis. Fort Hood used more 'rebuild strategies than any of the other response strategies Coombs categorized.

Secondly, it was discovered that the military base in this study used different response strategies tailored to the specific stakeholder that their messages targeted. In both cases Fort Hood's main concern was informing their target audience about what was happening. Nearly 60% of all the data collected in both cases used the nonexistent/clarification strategy when distributing messages to stakeholders and 45% of that data targeted the media specifically. This is noteworthy because the nonexistent category had two subcategories, clarification and intimidation. In most cases people tend to associate the military with intimidation. But, in this study the most prevalent subcategory in the entire data was clarification. Fort Hood wanted to keep the public informed by showing that the shootings were of high importance.

The link between crisis type and response strategies plays a significant role in how an organization will be perceive by the public, especially the military. After close examination of the findings from the research and information gathered from my content analysis, a gun violence crisis management plan book was able to be created. In order to better prepare military bases in the event of a mass shooting the plan book was designed to follow the theoretical framework from SCCT.

# Gun Violence Crisis Management Plan Book

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## Introduction

Fort Hood shootings between 2009 and 2014 are the most recent and notable shootings on military bases that have happened. The 2009 mass shooting that took place leaving 12 people dead and wounding 31 others. Later, the 2014 shooting left three people dead and injured 16. It is important that all military bases are prepared to handle this type situation because it could happen to them. Guns can lead to accidental shootings due to the stressful conditions from being in the military. Based on the best practices and theoretical lessons of the Situational Crisis Communication Theory, this crisis plan book aims to provide guidelines and protocols for military bases to follow in the event of a mass shooting.

The primary goal of this crisis plan book is to assure the safety and health of soldiers, residents, staff and the public; to protect military base property and resources; to communicate accurately and thoroughly to the media; and to maintain the reputation of the organization. This crisis plan book is a working document that will be continually updated annually by the Public Affairs Office.

The key to handling a crisis is controlling what happens the first few hours after the news breaks and there are a few steps one can take to ensure everything runs smoothly: make sure to follow the institution's protocol (must be established beforehand); take charge of the situation by gathering all the facts and prepare a script before talking to anyone else; be clear about the facts surrounding the crisis and present them consistently to others (Power, 2004). Communication during the time of a crisis is very critical.

**Crisis Response Communication Guidelines**

Using the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) the gun violence crises have been divided into three major crisis types: "Victim Cluster" "Accidental Cluster" and "Preventable Cluster." SCCT is interested in how crisis response strategies can be used to protect an organization's reputation after figuring out the type of crisis the organization is facing. This is vital because it tells the organization what to do to protect themselves from a crisis, the basics of what happened and what the organization is doing to fix and prevent the crisis from happening again (Bergman, 1994).

It is important to keep in mind that the crisis situation determines which crisis response strategies will be the most useful in protecting the organization's reputation (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). The match between the situation and the response is based on the attribution theory (Coombs, 2007). Research shows that the attribution theory is used to explain how people attribute causes and events. The attribution theory explains that more responsibility that is attributed to the organization with respect to the crisis, the more negative is the impact on the organizational reputation. Coombs (2007) divided thirteen crisis types into three clusters: victim, accidental, and preventable. Each crisis type represents the organization's level of responsibility. See table 1.

**Table 1. Situational Crisis Communication Theory**

| Crisis Types | Crisis Responsibility | Crisis Response Strategies |
|---|---|---|
| *Victim Cluster* <br> **Natural disaster** <br> **Rumor** <br> **Workplace violence** <br> **Product tampering** | *Low Attribution* | *Deny Strategies* <br> **Attack the accuser** <br> -confront person/group claiming something is wrong w/organization <br><br> **Denial** <br> -stress that there is no crisis <br><br> **Scapegoat** <br> -blame person/group outside the organization for the crisis |
| *Accidental Cluster* <br> **Challenges** <br> **Technical-error accidents** <br> **Technical-error product harm** | *Moderate Attribution* | *Diminish Strategies* <br> **Excuse** <br> -minimize organizational responsibility by denying intent to do harm <br><br> **Justification** <br> - minimize the perceived damage caused by the crisis |
| *Preventable Cluster* <br> **Human-error accidents** <br> **Human-error product harm** <br> **Organizational misdeed with no injuries** <br> **Organizational misdeed management misconduct** <br> **Organizational misdeed with injuries** | *High Attribution* | *Rebuild Strategies* <br> **Compensation** <br> -offers money or other gifts to victims <br><br> **Apology** <br> -indicates the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks stakeholders for forgiveness |

After determining the crisis type and the level of crisis responsibility organizations are able to choose the crisis response strategy. Within the SCCT works there is a list of 10 crisis response strategies that are put also divided into three postures just as the crisis responsibility level (Deny, Diminish and Rebuild).  Each posture represents a set of strategies that share similar communicative goals focusing on protecting crisis victims and taking responsibility for the crisis (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008).

**Preparing Crisis Responses**

Once the crisis type has been identified there should be specific responses prepared for each of them. In 2000 the NTA's Market Development Council developed a check list to consider when drafting position statements that might be helpful in any crisis situation. See list below.

- Know the scope of the crisis (local, regional, national, or international).

- Develop a unified response. There should be one spokesperson, one representative to distribute messages to the media, etc.

- Always keep the message simple, clear, consistent and relatable to target audience.

It is critical to keep in mind that the media and the public want to know three main things: What happened, why did it happen, and what are you going to do to make sure it never happens again (NTA Market Development, 2000). That is why it is vital that each member of the response team knows their role and is always prepared. Developing response strategies and key messages to use for the media after facing a mass shooting on the military base can be very difficult. The following will provide some ideas and guidelines to follow for specific crisis types.

**Victim of gun violence**

According to Coombs's SCCT Theory if the crisis type fall under the victim level of crisis responsibility then the organization should use the deny posture. This posture represents a set of strategies that claim that there no crisis occurred or that the accused organization has no responsibility (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008). But even if the military base's crisis responsibility level is victim during a gun violence crisis they cannot just say they had no part in the shooting. The base needs to accept some form of responsibility because the shooting has occurred on the military base. It is now their responsibility to take the necessary steps to rectify the situation.

**Example Crisis Reponses**

- If the military base finds itself a victim of a mass shooting then it is important to express its knowledge of the situation and its concern. "We have recently learned that there has been an incident on the base this afternoon. There has there was an active shooter on base. The incident is currently being handled and we are very concerned whenever we hear about any incident like this. On behalf of military, we send our regards and best wishes for a speedy recovery to those who have injured."

- Always be up front with information that you do know, unless it involves names of victims and shooters if their next to kin has not been contacted.  In the case that details are not available, report that complete information is not known but that you understand the situation is being investigated further by the proper authorities (NTA Market Development, 2000). "At this time we are still in the middle of contacting family members of the injured, so we are unable to identify the names at this time. We do understand the severity the situation and will provide more information as the investigation continues to unfold. Thank you for your patience."

**Accidental Gun Violence**

If the crisis type falls under the accidental level of crisis responsibility then the organization should use the diminish posture. This posture reflects a set of strategies that attempt to alter stakeholder attributions by reframing how stakeholder should interpret the crisis (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008).  So if the shooting is an accidental shooting the military base needs to clarify and explain what happened to the public.

**Example Crisis Reponses**

- If the military base has an accidental shooting on the base where no one is harmed

  and the firearm had a malfunction then it is important to still acknowledge of the

  situation. The PAO can write up a small new release expressing that it was an

  accident and there were no deaths or injuries. "The safety of our soldiers and all

  residents on our base is our main concern. There was an incident that occurred today

  involving a malfunction of a firearm. There were no injuries and the accident was

  handled efficiently. Our soldiers are provided the necessary training to handle

  situations like this if they were to occur to ensure that our base is and will remain

  safe."

**Preventable Gun Violence**

If the crisis type falls under the preventable level of crisis responsibility then the

organization should use the deal or rebuild posture. This posture represents a set of strategies that

seek to improve the organization's reputation in some way (Hansen-Horn & Neff, 2008).  So if

the gun violence could have been prevented then it is important that the military bass takes full

responsibility for incident and offers some kind of compensation and apology.

**Example Crisis Reponses**

- First and foremost it is always important to have a honest response to the media

  regarding the details of any act of gun violence that has taken place on the military

  base, especially when the shooting could have been prevented. You can also point out

  the fact that is very rare that an incident like this happens on military bases due to the

  fact that there is security everywhere. "We deeply regret to inform you that there has

  been a shooting on our base this morning. So far we can tell you that there are

___injured and the shooter has been captured. Our base has been around for __ years

and this has never happened here before (if true). We would like to offer grief

counseling serves for all soldiers and residents who need emotional healing."

## Action Plan

**Response Team**

Establishing a crisis team is the first step when it comes to the development and

implementation of a crisis plan book. Having the appropriate team is very important when it

comes to handling a crisis effectively, especially in the event of gun violence.  The team will

meet regularly to update and test the gun violence plan that way they will all be prepared and in

control during the crisis.

Normally, a crisis team would include top management, operations personnel, public

relations experts, legal assistance and insurance carriers (NTA Market Development, 2000). In

the case of an army military base, the public affairs office would be the ones in charge of

forming the crisis team. The response team will be made up of the Director of Public Affairs,

PAO, Plans/Operations, Media Relations Branch Chief, Community Relations Chief, and the

Social Media Manager.  Each team member will have a designated backup and other

administrators may be called to work with the team depending on how large the crisis is.

Role of Response Team Members:

- Director of Public Affairs- organizes scheduled and emergency team meetings,
  oversees team functions, and makes sure that all required resources are available to
  each team member.

- PAO, Plans/Operations- gathers all the facts about the shooting and assembles information in order to prepare position statements.

- Media Relations Branch Chief- this team member is in charge of being the point of contact with all media outlets and maintains ongoing contact with police and hospital that way is information always current. Never reveal private information.

- Community Relations Chief- develops and implements plans for crowd management during crises. This member is also responsible for helping to reach out to affected family members and soldiers to help resolve any emotional issues created by the shooting.

- Social Media Manager- like the media manger, it is the job of this team member to make sure all information on the social media networks are current and up to date during and after the crisis.

The diagram below is the structure of how the crisis response team should look. It is organized according to function and reporting to the military commander.
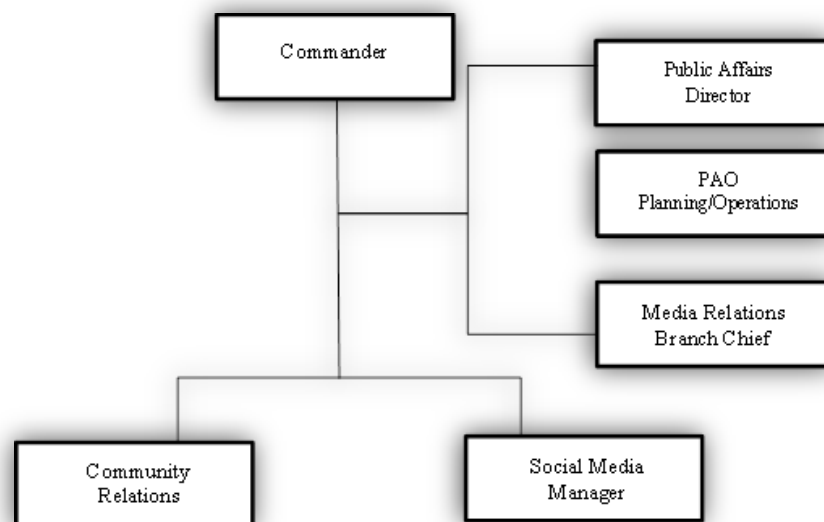
**Initial Assessment/Action:**

- Whoever is first to arrive on the scene of a gun violence incident should access the situation before acting. If there is indeed a shooting happening on the military base, contact military police immediately.

- After the situation is under control, or as soon as possible, the Director of Public Affairs will notify the response team implement the crisis plan.

- The response team will coordinate information gathering from outside authorities.

- The Media Relations Branch Chief will determine if an official statement needs be prepared and released to the media and other publics.

- A news release should be written and given to proper channel within one-hour of notification of the shooting. If media arrives before the release, don't delay providing basic information until the release is completed. If there was an accident, state that, and tell the media more information will be provided soon.

**Military Base Welfare**

- The entire military base should be place on a lock down to ensure the safety of all soldiers, staff and residents.

- The Community Relations Manager will brief all military personnel who are assigned to answer the phone on what to say to people who call in.

- Initial on-base distribution will be to all offices located on the military base. Those administrators will be charged with forwarding statements to staff, soldiers, and on-base residents. (If there are employee or soldier injuries or deaths, families will be notified by appropriate personnel before the information is released to the public.)

- After the on-base distribution of key messages the Media Relations Manager and Social Media Manager will coordinate off-base distribution of information through a variety of outlets that may include the media interviews, news releases, and the internet.

- The Commander will be briefed on the incident by the PAO representative and will address the media. Make sure to set up an assigned area for media to have control over the situation.

- Media Relations Branch Chief will notify all gate security to contact them when media arrives.  Also tell gates security to redirect any media to designated location.

- The commander should use appropriate response strategies depending on the crisis type when informing the public about the incident. If the shooting is just a rumor the commander will address it as a rumor and deny that there is an active shooter on the base.

- But if there is in fact a shooting incident on base the commander inform the public that here was an active shooter on base and give as much details as possible.

**Injury or Death**

- First to arrive on the scene should contact authorities immediately.

- In the event of injury or death the commander and public affairs office should be immediately notified.

- The designated response team will notify the next of kin and should assess the impact on soldiers, faculty and residents closest to the injured or deceased to determine how and when to notify them.

- The commander and response team will determine how and when to communicate the tragedy to public.

- The Community Relations Manager will notify residents not to speak with the media unless they first consult with the appropriate chain of command.

**Military Base Welfare & Recovery**

- Members of the response team will establish emotional coping outlets for soldiers, faculty, and residents.

- Depending on the severity of the shooting it may become necessary to shut down the military base to the public or to delay the normal work schedule. If this is the case the local media will be notified, the information will be recorded on the all military phone lines, and the information will be posted on the webpage.

**Non-Working Hours**

There is good chance that a shooting may occur before or after regular military office hours. While the structure of this plan will remain the same, its implementation maybe a little different depending on, available personnel until proper officials can be notified. Until that time, officials with highest rank, who are available at the time, will assume the most responsibility will be. These officials need to follow as nearly as possible the guidelines discussed in the plan and notify the Director of Public Affairs as soon as possible so he/she can contact all members of the response team.

**Ongoing Safety Preparedness**

**Post Crisis Actions**

Once a few days have passed since the crisis there is still work to be done. The crisis response team still needs to continue its responsibility until all crisis-related obligations are fulfilled (Coombs, 2015). There are a number of post crisis task that still need to be handled. Coombs (2015) says that these tasks can be divided in to three groups: cooperation with investigations, follow-up communication, and crisis tracking. Even though the military base is back up and running normal operations, sometimes police still need to gather information for the ongoing investigation. So the response team needs to make sure they are upfront and honest with their knowledge of the crisis.

Follow-up communication plays a big role in the rebuilding of the military's reputation with stakeholder. Crisis managers are able to maintain positive organization-stakeholder relationships by keeping stakeholders informed about the crisis even when it is over by continuing to answer new inquires (Coombs, 2015). The Media Relations Branch Chief and Social Media Manger will be able to share this job by keeping the public informed on detail of the investigation. Follow-up communication can also help soldiers, residents, and family members who were affected by the shooting to be able to grieve properly because it shows the military cares. It might be wise to tell inform stakeholders that changes are being made to prevent future gun violence crises.

Lastly, there is crisis tracking. With any crisis it is imperative that the response team monitors the crisis once it is over. Crisis tracking monitors the factors that produced the crisis to see if there will be another threat may arise (Coombs, 2015). This also helps the response team with crisis preparedness when it comes to updating the plan book in the future. As stated before

this plan book is a working document that should be continually updated annually by the Public

Affairs Office. There needs to be proper training and drills done to ensure that all member of the

response team are equipped to handle gun violence at all times. Below is a check list that all

members of the response team should follow in the event of a mass shooting on base within the

first two hours of the crisis.

**Response Team Check-list:**

- ✓ Determine the crisis type (what happened, when, and where it happened, and who is

  involved).

- ✓ Verify the current status of the site.

- ✓ Develop appropriate crisis response strategies base upon SCCT's diagram. Always keep

  message simple, clear, and consistent.

- ✓ Brief the Commander (spokesperson) on key messages. Always anticipate media

  questions.

- ✓ Advise all other military personnel on how to route calls.

- ✓ Setup a location where media will gather. Make sure reporters understand all safety

  procedures before going on base. Violations to these procedures may lead to removal

- ✓ Advise media on the time and place for further updates pending the ongoing

  investigation.

- ✓ Once gun crisis is averted begin media tracking. Track all media coverage (social media,

  local and national news outlets).

- ✓ Establish stress and grief counseling for those who have witnessed the incident or lost

  family members.

✓ The military base should also keep emergency supplies in various locations such as face

masks, disposable rubber gloves, and first aid kits. A representative from the response

team should be in charge of making sure each station always has enough supplies.

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**Limitations and Further Research**

Although, the main goal of this research was accomplished, this study also had its limitations. First, the archives were examined from the Fort Hood press center data base and the Fort Hood Sentinel to gather news releases for a small content analysis. This research focused on SCCT's three crisis types and response strategies.  Perhaps future research can do a more in-depth content analysis that expands on Coombs theory and uses a larger sample size. Future research can look at more than just these two cases at Fort Hood.  Researchers should focus on two or more military bases located in multiple states and crisis response strategies. The suggestion to focus on more than one military base shooting will allow researchers to have a larger amount of news releases to examine.

Even though, this study looks at various response strategies used to target certain stakeholder groups during gun violence, future research can focus on examining the effectiveness of response strategy used for each crisis type. A good way to do this is to develop small focus groups to determine the participants' opinions on the organization and how the organization handled the crisis.

**Outside Evaluations of the Project**

Christopher J. Haug Sr.
Chief of Media Relations
Fort Hood, Texas

I.      I've served as the Chief of Media Relations for Fort Hood, Texas, since Nov. 2, 2009. I
        have twenty-nine years of managing communication challenges. I have experience in
        executive-level communication planning, marketing, internal/employee communication,
        news media relations, crisis communication and community relations. I spent more than
        20 years in Air Force active-duty public affairs and now have nine years as a civil servant
        for the Army.

II.     A colleague, George Wright, Army Public Affairs, is a friend of Karissa Boozer and
        connected me for support on her project.

III.    The approach to crisis communications research here is solid in its endeavor to tailor
        responses to each crisis. While there are established across-the-board response strategies,
        each situation is different and the approach to each should be weighed as such.

IV.     Karissa's approach to content analysis from news releases and media content are a valid
        measure of success. The military is checklist oriented and the basic response to a crisis is
        the same. Response, Assessment, Consequence Management, and Return to Normal
        Operations are the established phases of our response. Karrissa used pre-crisis, crisis
        response and post-crisis. She brings up a very important aspect of a successful response
        and that is pre-planning and exercising. Prior to the 05 NOV 2009, Fort Hood public
        affairs had not regularly participated in mass casualty exercises. The response to that
        crisis was haphazard in the beginning. Its success was due to the level of experience the
        PAO office had on hand. The least amount of public affairs experience was 15 years with
        40 years at the highest level. Using what we learned from that experience, the 02 APR
        2014 shooting incident went much smoother and was met with a completely different
        media response.

V.      Karissa does a good job of surrounding the issue with many facts that helped make her
        findings relevant and on point. She covered content both from our PAO shop and how it
        was reported on in the press. At the end of the day, the goal is to release as much
        information as is relevant to the general public. Our motto in the military is "Maximum
        disclosure with minimum delay." She was able to use what she learned in class and what
        she researched to her advantage in developing a crisis response plan. It is thorough and
        right on point. The only area I did not see was that Community Relations connects
        immediately with key stakeholder groups to ensure they are aware and informed so if
        approach they sound knowledgeable of the situation and can add their perspective.

VI.     The research and crisis plan is solid and can be used by any organization as a starting
        point for developing their tailored crisis response plan. The best approach is to be open
        and transparent and to be authentic and caring for all involved.

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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CREATIVE PROJECT

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Ms. Karissa Boozer asked me to review her creative project, "Crisis Management Preparedness for Military Base Gun Violence." I know Ms. Boozer from her work as an intern at the US Army ROTC Cadet Summer Training Program in 2015, where I worked as the Public Affairs Officer until my return to Army Public Affairs at the Pentagon last summer. From 2006, until 2015, I served in the Media Relations Department at the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs for the Army, with the last three years as the deputy director. In that capacity, I dealt with every major issue that the Army faced, and was often quoted by the Pentagon Press Corps on matters routine, to crisis.

As I stated above, Ms. Boozer was on the staff of the Cadet Command ROTC Summer Camp Public Affairs staff, working primarily on social media issues, communicating news and features to internal and external audiences. She was one of the top five interns during this period, and I could always count on her to produce accurate and timely content for this important program for the Army.

Ms. Boozer's choice of Military Gun Base Violence is an apt topic, as gun violence overall is a matter of major concern in our society, and the relationship with the Armed Forces (particularly Fort Hood) highlights a systemic, established look at the issue – that has application to general society.

The paper is easy to digest and offers the reader – whether academic, law enforcement, or general communicator – a deliberate study of the problem. The review is well-researched and cited, is comprehensive and thorough, and provides the reader with a solid look at two incidents at Fort Hood, Texas, worthy of study and review. In particular, the 2009 incident garnered extensive press coverage, and Ms. Boozer has adroitly woven communication theory and crisis management techniques in to her review of the incident.

Her work is of excellent quality and is worth of study by other students, and communicators in both the public and private sector.

Please feel free to contact me for additional comments.

Mr. George Wright
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        122542

**Appendix**

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of 2009 Crisis Response Strategies**

| Type of Strategy | Subcategory n | Category n | % of Total in Each Category | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Nonexistent | | 30 | | 64 |
| a. Clarification | 30 | | 100 | |
| b. Intimidation | 0 | | 0 | |
| 2. Rebuild | | 17 | | 36 |
| a. Compensation | 13 | | 76 | |
| b. Apology | 4 | | 24 | |
| 3. Diminish | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Excuse | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Justification | 0 | | 0 | |
| 4. Deny | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Attack | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Denial | 0 | | 0 | |
| c. Scapegoat | 0 | | 0 | |
| **Total:** | 47 | | 100 | |

**Table 2. 2009 Frequency Distribution of Stakeholder Categories**

| Category Name | Subcategory n | Category n | % of Total in Each Category | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Diffused | | 36 | | 77 |
| a. Public | 13 | | 36 | |
| b. Media | 23 | | 64 | |
| 2. Functional | | 11 | | 23 |
| a. Customers | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Victims | 9 | | 82 | |
| c. Employees | 2 | | 18 | |
| d. Suppliers | 0 | | 0 | |
| 3. Enabling | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Shareholders | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Regulatory agencies | 0 | | 0 | |
| 4. Normative | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Professional societies | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Political groups | 0 | | | |
| **Total:** | 47 | | 100 | |

**Table 3. Frequency Distribution of 2014 Crisis Response Strategies**

| Type of Strategy | Subcategory n | Category n | % of Total in Each Category | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Nonexistent | | 24 | | 63 |
| a. Clarification | 23 | | 96 | |
| b. Intimidation | 1 | | 4 | |
| 2. Rebuild | | 14 | | 37 |
| a. Compensation | 11 | | 79 | |
| b. Apology | 3 | | 21 | |
| 3. Diminish | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Excuse | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Justification | 0 | | 0 | |
| 4. Deny | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Attack | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Denial | 0 | | 0 | |
| c. Scapegoat | 0 | | 0 | |
| | | | | |
| **Total:** | 38 | | 100 | |

**Table 4. 2014 Frequency Distribution of Stakeholder Categories**

| Category Name | Subcategory n | Category n | % of Total in Each Category | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Diffused | | 24 | | 63 |
| a. Public | 9 | | 38 | |
| b. Media | 15 | | 63 | |
| 2. Functional | | 14 | | 37 |
| a. Customers | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Victims | 7 | | 50 | |
| c. Employees | 7 | | 50 | |
| d. Suppliers | 0 | | 0 | |
| 3. Enabling | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Shareholders | 0 | | 0 | |
| b. Regulatory agencies | 0 | | 0 | |
| 4. Normative | | 0 | | 0 |
| a. Professional societies | 0 | | 0 | |
| | | | 0 | |
| b. Political groups | 0 | | | |
| **Total:** | 38 | | 100 | |

**Appendix**

Content Analysis Code Book

A content analysis will be conducted to compare two military base shootings at Fort Hood. Fort Hood shooting between 2009 and 2014 are the most recent and notable shootings on military bases happened. The Washington Post and New York Times were selected to see how the media reported on the shootings as both news outlets are two of the most trusted news sources in America and have a national influence (Engel, 2014). For the current content analysis crisis types and response strategies will be compared across two crises using Chi-square analysis for statistical examination.

**RQ1:** What is the most often used response strategies military bases in the event of gun violence?

**Part 1: Getting Started**

1) Coder will look at New releases from the 2009 Fort Hood Shooting and New releases from the 2014 Fort Hood Shooting
2) Read each article.
3) Try to categorize the crisis types and response strategies presented below.

**Part 2: Entering Data**

Time: Nov. 5, 2009- April 2, 2014

Crisis Type: 1=Victim Cluster, 2=Accidental Cluster, 3=Preventable Cluster

Response Strategies: 1= Deny, 2=Diminish, 3=Rebuild 4= Clarification

Stakeholder Category: 1= Media, 2= Public, 3= Victims 4= Employees

## Appendix

| November 2009 Fort Hood Shooting | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Date** | **Title** | **Crisis Type** | **Response Strategy** | **Stakeholder** |
| 5-Nov-09 | Confirmed Shooting at Fort | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 19-Nov-09 | Black Jack Brigade mourns | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 7-Jan-10 | Snapshots of 2009; 2009 m | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 14-Jan-10 | Security, behavioral health a | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |
| 28-Jan-10 | Army Secretary directs For | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 5-Aug-10 | USO celebrates, thanks vol | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 19-Aug-10 | Fort Hood Fire tops in Arm | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Diffused/ media |
| 7-Oct-10 | Fort Hood host Run to Rem | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Diffused/ public |
| 12-Oct-10 | Fort Hood Garrison PAO S | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 13-Oct-10 | Fort Hood Garrison PAO S | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 14-Oct-10 | PUBLIC SERVICE ANN( | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 14-Oct-10 | Article 32 hearing underway | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 15-Oct-10 | Day 3 Summary of Maj Ha | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 15-Oct-10 | Day 4 Summary of Maj. Ha | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 18-Oct-10 | Day 5 of Summary of Maj. | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 19-Oct-10 | Day 6 of Summary of Maj. | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 20-Oct-10 | Day 7 of Summary of Maj. | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 21-Oct-10 | Day 8 of Summary of Maj. | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 28-Oct-10 | Healing continues: Ceremor | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 4-Nov-10 | shootings here. Why do you | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |
| 4-Nov-10 | Survey set for November 9 | Victim | Rebuild/ Apology | Functional/ Victims |
| 11-Nov-10 | nbers last year's tragic shoot | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 11-Nov-10 | Remembering fallen, Rock t | Victim | Rebuild/ Apology | Functional/ Victims |
| 11-Nov-10 | A year later, Army family fir | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 11-Nov-10 | Dead, wounded remembere | Victim | Rebuild/ Apology | Functional/ Victims |
| 11-Nov-10 | Nov 5 lessons promotes be | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 18-Nov-10 | Article 32 hearing over | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 9-Dec-10 | Community Needs: Survey | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |
| 6-Jan-11 | Military community moves t | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 28-Apr-11 | 5, 2009, continues rehabilitat | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 26-May-11 | Retired Chief Warrant Offic | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Diffused/ media |
| 3-Nov-11 | Soldier runs to help wounde | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 3-Nov-11 | Military judge hears pre-tria | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Nov-11 | Lumberjacks transitioning N | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 1-Dec-11 | Judge rules on pre-trial mot | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 9-Feb-12 | Judge rules at hearing: Hasa | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 5-Apr-12 | Military judge rules on pre-t | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 8-Nov-12 | Soldier runs to remember N | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 8-Aug-13 | Hasan court-martial underw | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 22-Aug-13 | Prosecution, defense rests i | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 5-Sep-13 | Fort Hood shooting survivo | Victim | Nonexistent/ Clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 24-Jul-14 | Memorial groundbreaking | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |
| 5-Feb-15 | Tree planting represents res | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |
| 12-Feb-15 | Criteria expanded; Nov. 5, | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Diffused/ media |
| 16-Apr-15 | Nov 5 Purple Hearts, Defer | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Diffused/ media |
| 7-May-15 | Ceremony honors mother o | Victim | Rebuild/ Apology | Diffused/ media |
| 17-Mar-16 | Killeen Nov 5 memorial ded | Victim | Rebuild/ Compensation | Functional/ Victims |

## Appendix

| April 2014 Fort Hood Shooting | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Date** | **Title** | **Crisis Type** | **Response Strategy** | **Stakeholder Category** |
| 4-Apr-14 | Time Correction: Shooting incident April 4 Pre | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 5-Apr-14 | Overhead View of Fort Hood Crime Scene | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 5-Apr-14 | Photo Addition: Death of Fort Hood Soldiers | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 6-Apr-14 | April 7 shooting incident press conference at F | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 7-Apr-14 | UPDATE: Fort Hood Memorial Ceremony he | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 7-Apr-14 | Updated map of the April 2 crime scene | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 8-Apr-14 | April 7 Press Conference on the Fort Hood sh | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 10-Apr-14 | Obama: Soldiers were American patriots | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Army mourning loss of Soldiers at Fort Hood | preventable | rebuild/ apology | Functional/ victims |
| 10-Apr-14 | Hood finds strength as lives honored | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Fort Hood grieves losses | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Fort Hood medical teams spring into action…. | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Elledge: 'We offer our thoughts and prayers' | preventable | rebuild/ apology | Functional/ victims |
| 10-Apr-14 | Outreach assistance | preventable | rebuild/ compensation | Funcitonal/ victims |
| 10-Apr-14 | Chaplains provide support, care during crisis.. | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Functional/ victims |
| 10-Apr-14 | Fort Hood medical teams spring into action… | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Army secretary notes challenges of detecting.. | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Hood finds strength as lives honored | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 10-Apr-14 | Fort Hood grieves losses | preventable | rebuild/ apology | Functional/ victims |
| 10-Apr-14 | Army mourning loss of Soldiers at Fort Hood | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/media |
| 14-Apr-14 | The National Compassion Fund Opens for Do | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Diffused/ public |
| 14-Apr-14 | UPDATE: Hotline established for the public se | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 17-Apr-14 | NEWS BRIEFS | preventable | rebuild/ compensation | Diffused/ public |
| 24-Apr-14 | 89th MP BDE assists in healing process | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 1-May-14 | Leaders work to 'connect the dots,' share info | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffued/ public |
| 1-May-14 | Fort Hood ministry teams counsel Soldiers, Fa | preventable | rebuild/ compensation | Functional/ victims |
| 29-May-14 | Fort Hood recognizes military, civilian heroes | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 12-Jun-14 | Survey looks at community behavioral health | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 12-Jun-14 | Gold Star mother of April 2 fallen NCO thanks | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 1-Jul-14 | Consumer fireworks prohibited on Fort Hood | preventable | nonexistent/ intimidation | Functional/ employees |
| 24-Jul-14 | Civilians receive recognition for actions taken A | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 25-Jul-14 | Death of a Fort Hood Soldier | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ public |
| 16-Oct-14 | First responders test their skills, build rapport c | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 11-Dec-14 | NEWS BRIEFS | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 1-Jan-15 | NEWS BRIEFS | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ employees |
| 22-Jan-15 | Shooting victim seeks to inspire others | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 29-Jan-15 | Army releases investigation results of April 201 | preventable | nonexistent/ clarification | Diffused/ media |
| 5-Feb-15 | Tree planting represents resilience | preventable | rebuild/compensation | Functional/ victims |