

ZiF-Research Group *Communicating Disaster***Closing Conference “Dealing with the Disasters of Others”**

26-28 January 2012

**Presentation:*****White-Collar Crisis Communication. Strategic Exercises and Top-Level Media Management Training in Germany***

Norbert Reez, Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe (Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance), Bonn

Date & Time: Saturday, 28 January 2012, 09:45

Location: Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld, Germany; Room 222 “Plenarsaal”

**Abstract:**

The speech will give a German perspective on exercise and training efforts in the field of crisis communication. Specific attention will be paid to crisis leadership at strategic level. Crisis communication which basically means communicating appropriately a disaster or extreme crisis situation to the public represents a core function of top-level crisis committees. Whereas communicating disasters at operational-tactical level e. g. by first responders, police and operational security managers (“Blue-collar crisis communication”) is part of disaster and emergency management concepts and a number of training initiatives, communicating adequately a crisis at strategic level (“White-collar crisis communication”) remains a tremendous challenge to political-administrative actors at the scene. Very often, however, a “secondary media crisis” is caused by cacophonies, ill-prepared decision takers or simply wrongful symbolic acting of top-level staff, no matter whether the public or the private sector is affected.

Shifting the perspective to top-level media management the speech will outline the multiple experiences made with a new exercise type called “strategic exercise”. Lessons learned of the national “LÜKEX-Exercise Series” in Germany will be presented as well as the design and implementation of strategic exercises cycles including media simulation and the methodology of scenario writing. In this context the enormous and strongly increasing importance of “New (Social) Media” and psychosocial aspects for strategic crisis management in reality as well as in “fictitious simulated worlds” will be touched on, too.

For further questions on the conference or the research group,  
please contact the research group assistant:

Marén Schorch

Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF)

Tel.: +49 (0)521 106-2776

communicating\_disaster@uni-bielefeld.de