

# Information to the public and Major Accident Hazards - Discussion Document -

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# Introduction

- Why provide information to the public?
  - Legal requirement
  - Individuals, members of the public have a right to know about potential impacts (risks) in their neighbourhood
  - In the event of a major accident the public should be able to respond in the appropriate manner
  
- Structure of the Discussion Document
  - Requirements of the Seveso III Directive
  - Discussion of some aspects of risk communication

# Requirements of the Seveso III Directive

## Article 14

*1. Member States shall ensure that the information referred to in Annex V is permanently available to the public, including electronically. The information shall be kept updated, where necessary, including in the event of modifications covered by Article 11.*

- permanently available
- including electronically (this indicates that non-electronically is also required)
- kept updated

# Requirements of the Seveso III Directive

## Article 14

*1. Member States shall ensure that the information referred to in Annex V is permanently available to the public, including electronically. The information shall be kept updated, where necessary, including in the event of modifications covered by Article 11.*

Questions:

- How is this done?
- How does the public know that this information exists?
- If the public needs to know;
  - that a site is a Seveso establishment,
  - that the operator has made information available,
  - where this information is made available (internet or elsewhere),

Have they been effectively informed?

# Requirements of the Seveso III Directive Annex V

*PART 1 - For all establishments*

*PART 2 - For upper-tier establishments, in addition to the information referred to in Part 1*

Questions:

- Does the information provided comply with these requirements?
- The directive uses:
  - “explanation in **simple terms**”
  - “**General information** about how the public will be **warned**”
  - “**adequate information** about the **appropriate behaviours**”
- Is the information really suitable for the general public?

# Requirements of the Seveso III Directive

## Article 14

2. *For upper-tier establishments, Member States shall also ensure that:*
- (a) all persons likely to be affected by a major accident receive regularly and in the most appropriate form, without having to request it, clear and intelligible information on safety measures and requisite behaviour in the event of a major accident;*

*The information to be supplied under point (a) of the first subparagraph of this paragraph shall include at least the information referred to in Annex V. That information shall likewise be supplied to all buildings and areas of public use, including schools and hospitals, and to all neighbouring establishments in the case of establishments covered by Article 9. Member States shall ensure that the information is supplied at least every five years and periodically reviewed and where necessary, updated, including in the event of modifications covered by Article 11.*

# Requirements of the Seveso III Directive

## Article 14

The Directive uses the terms:

- all persons likely to be affected by a major accident
- regularly
  - at least every five years
  - periodically reviewed and updated
- in the most appropriate form
- clear and intelligible

How well are these requirements understood and fulfilled?

# Other Communication with the Public

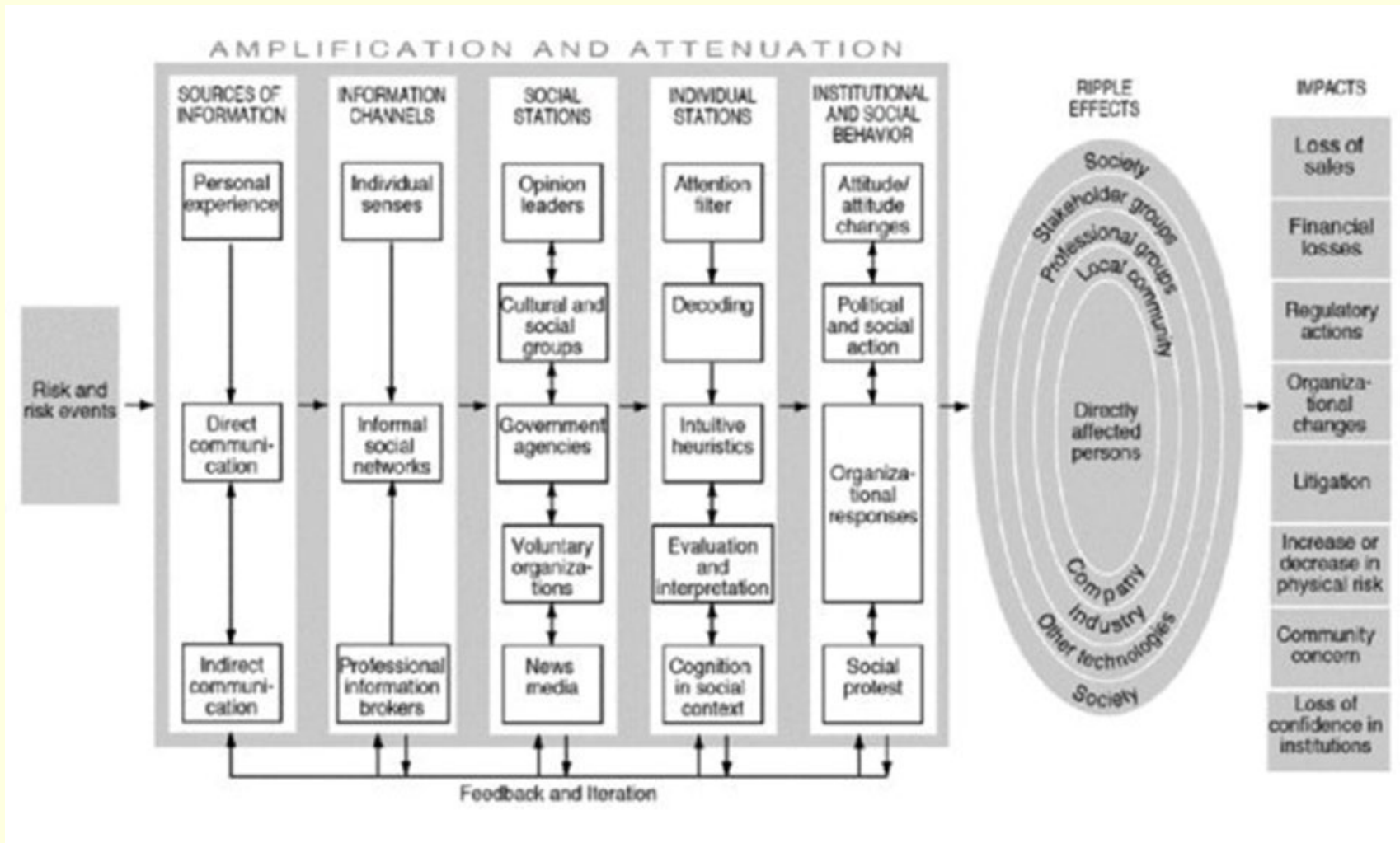
- **Article 15 - Public consultation and participation in decision-making**
- **Article 12 – Emergency Plans**
- **Article 17 - Action to be taken by the competent authority following a major accident**
  - Taking account of **Article 16 Operator**



# Some aspects of risk communication related to major accident hazards

- Information to the public is an aspect of risk communication
- “You cannot not communicate” - *Paul Watzlawick*
- Communication is often described as “transmitter” – “receiver”  
It is actually much more complex and complicated.
- If fulfilling the legal requirements is understood to be achieved by producing the documents and carrying out the required activities, then effective, adequate communication in an appropriate manner is not guaranteed.

# Social Amplification of Risk Framework (SARF)



# Trust

*“No matter how well planned or applied, risk communication interventions will fail to enable people at risk to make informed decisions to act to protect their lives, their health, their families and communities against threats if they do not trust the information source.”*

*Source: Communicating risk in public health emergencies, A WHO guideline for emergency risk communication (ERC) policy and practice (2017) – Recommendations A*

- It is not sufficient to provide more information or better information.
- What are the public’s concerns?
- How are the “messengers” perceived?

# Outrage

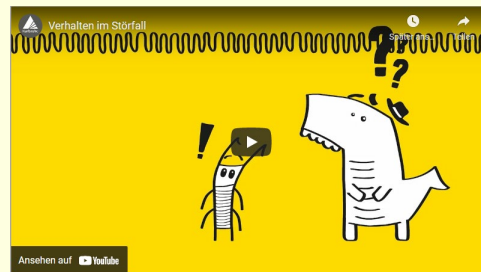
- Outrage has been defined as the sum of all those aspects that lead to the public's perception of risk being greater than the risk, which scientific or technical experts would assign to a particular situation.
- When outrage exists, there is a real grievance.
- This means that in dealing with outrage efforts must be made to address what leads to the grievances. This needs to include risk reduction and improved risk management, but it is insufficient to provide risks in very small numbers or charts and graphs and technical explanations.

# Outrage (2)

- Outrage may be brought about by (excerpt from Sandman, 2012):
  - exposure to the risk is not voluntary
  - industrial not natural
  - exotic, not familiar
  - past failures
  - high level of dread, e.g. towards cancer
  - catastrophe is a real possibility
  - benefits are not distributed fairly
  - lack of trust
  - secrecy, lack of apologies for past failings, lack of courtesy
  - technocratic response instead of compassion.

# You can never do enough

- Information to the public should not be seen as a single event.
- Information to the public is not merely a legal compliance requirement
- The partners, i.e. industry, public authorities and public need to develop and maintain channels of communication which function in both directions.
- Look for opportunities to improve the communication process
- Be innovative: <https://youtu.be/5z7Q7pW9Xz8>



Vielen Dank für Ihre  
Aufmerksamkeit !



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