

# *Crisis Management: The Case of Tacurong City*

Ariesha Faith M. Dimaano

Dennis John F. Sumaylo

University of the Philippines-Mindanao, Philippines

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**ABSTRACT:** Crisis management is a process that organizations must undergo whenever any action or event may threaten them, their stakeholders, or the people they protect. This paper describes the crisis management strategies of the Tacurong City Peace and Order Council in dealing with the Maguindanao Massacre and the Tacurong City Roadside Car Bombing. Using Coombs's Three-Phase Crisis Management Model and Poole's Adaptive Structuration Theory, it analyzes these strategies. The paper shows that these crisis management strategies differed in proximity, established degree of danger, and organizational role during the incidents. It also shows that despite having a standard operating procedure for crisis responses, the Tacurong City Peace and Order Council may have to adjust its approach in dealing with a situation depending on the following: Degree of risk, structure, and context of the crisis at hand. Finally, the paper argues that communication plays a vital role for an effective crisis management.

**KEYWORDS:** Crisis management, peace and order, Maguindanao Massacre, communications, roadside car bombing

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## **Introduction**

**T**he reliability and credibility of an organization is heavily shaped by its ability to respond to a crisis situation. The latter is called crisis management which is defined as a process involving preventive measures, crisis management plans, and post crisis evaluation, all of which are important to combat the crisis and minimize actual damage (Coombs

and Holladay 2010). As such, an effective crisis management should consider the consequences brought about by the incident, as well as the impact of such response to its stakeholders.

One type of crisis that can threaten an organization is the crisis of malevolence which is defined as a criminal and strategic means of antagonists to express their hostility or anger toward an opponent or organization with the aim of destabilizing, destroying, or seeking gain from the situation.

Such type of crisis is evident in the Province of Sultan Kudarat in South Central Mindanao, Philippines. Situated in between two congressional districts of Maguindanao, its geographical location is a vital consideration for the occurrence of such crises. In particular, Tacurong, the only city in the entire province, has been subjected to several bombings and other crises that affected many of its city administrators and constituents. As a developing city, it envisions progress in terms of economy and tourism. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to keep a secure and safe place for potential investors, tourists, and more importantly, its people. Rodrigo Jamorabon, chairman of Sangguniang Panlungsod Committee on Peace and Order, said in an interview:

Considering that we are in the middle of two Maguindanao districts, there would always be that fear of retaliation through the outside towns and cities when conflicts arise between them. We cannot get away with terrorist attacks when they are suspected to root from these towns, and on other highland areas surrounding us—where terrorist groups reside.

In order to formulate plans for the city's overall security and to deal with the probable crises that may occur, the Tacurong City Peace and Order Council (TCPOC) was created. TCPOC is a local special body headed by City Mayor Lina O. Montilla. It has a multisectoral membership composed of the *Sangguniang Panlungsod* (SP) Committee on Peace and Order, the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (CDRRMC), Tacurong City Police Office (TCPO), Philippine Army (PA), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

This paper aims to discuss the crisis management strategies employed by the TCPOC during two separate crisis events—the Maguindanao Massacre in 2009 and the Tacurong City Roadside Car Bombing (TCRCB) in 2011. It analyzes the crisis responses of the TCPOC using Coombs's Three-Phase Crisis Management Model. This model classifies each crisis situation into three categories: Pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis, examining significant changes in the crisis management plan during these incidents.

In order to define the organization responsible for crisis management, as well as the crisis responses they made for the events, the Poole's Adaptive Structuration Theory was utilized. This theory rests on the fundamental concept that task groups intentionally adopt rules and resources to arrive at decisions highlighting individual situations and ways of adaptations in crisis management. After which, the kind of decisions and goals obtained from the task group's interaction will be discussed.

### The Crisis Responses of Tacurong City

Tacurong City was once a barangay in the Buluan area under the province of Cotabato. In August 2000, it became a city through Republic Act (RA) No. 8805, "An Act Converting the Municipality of Tacurong into a Component City of Sultan Kudarat to be known as the "City of Tacurong" signed by then President Joseph E. Estrada.

Located at south central Mindanao, Tacurong City is situated at the crossroads of General Santos (GenSan) City, Davao City, Cotabato City, and Cagayan de Oro City routes. It has a land area of 15,340 hectares, and has a population of approximately 90,000 (as of 2010). The city serves as the center of commerce, trade, finance, and agriculture in the province, therefore depicting progress.

Tacurong has been dubbed as the "City of Goodwill." However, its constituents also call it the "City of Bombs" due to the bombings that took place in the city. The city is strategically located between two districts of

Maguindanao governed by two allegedly rival families—the Ampatuan and the Mangudadatu. When there is a hint of tension between these families, Tacurong City is directly affected. Retaliation and threats are possibly experienced, posing fear among the people of Tacurong.

In the structure of the City Government of Tacurong, the TCPOC, as a local special body, is responsible for formulating appropriate programs to enhance peace and order and public safety. At the same time, it is tasked to respond to emergency situations, requiring immediate attention and decision. Based on its current organizational structure, the City Government and the PA constitute the “Joint Task Force Talakudong” (JTFT). The TCPOC takes over and handles cases of criminality with other sectors (see Figure 1).

The TCPOC along with other sectors take charge of all crisis responses. Under the umbrella of the TCPOC are sectors that are given appropriate directions and assignments depending on the demand of the situation. As TCPOC emphasizes, there is no constant and standard way in responding to a crisis. The CDRRMC, the TCPO, the PDEA, *Barangay Tanods* and all security and service units are contingent upon the instructions given by the TCPOC.

The TCPOC serves as the leader for crisis responses and strategies. It functions as the supervisor for planning appropriate actions in crises, assigning sector/subgroup for specific tasks, and conducting assignments in cases requiring crisis response. All agencies/sectors under TCPOC can only operate when the council gives them the sanction to do so.

Moreover, the TCPOC can also be designated under the JTF Talakudong for terrorism and insurgency upon the order of the vice-chairperson.

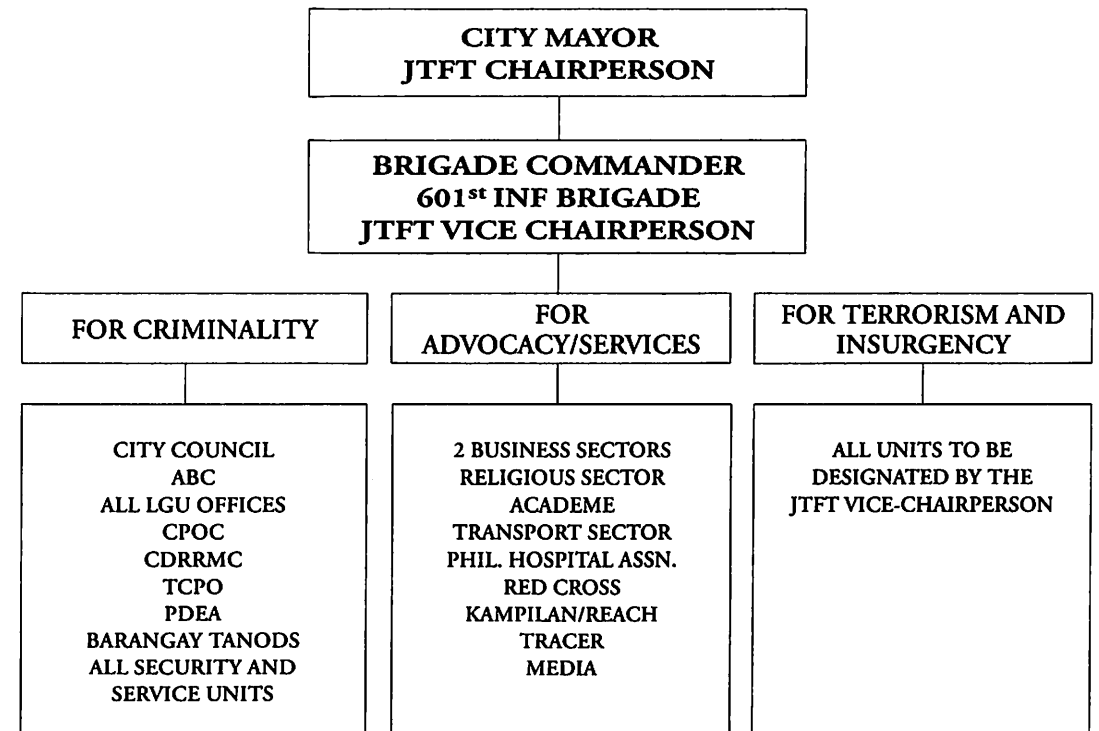


FIGURE 1. Organizational Structure of the Joint Task Force Talakudong

## 2009 Maguindanao Massacre

The Maguindanao Massacre happened on 23 November 2009 and killed at least fifty-eight people. Members of the Mangudadatu political clan, together with journalists, lawyers and civilians were in a convoy on their way to the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to file a Certificate of Candidacy when a number of heavily armed men, allegedly led by the Ampatuan clan, brutally killed the passengers, including the wife of then Vice Mayor Datu Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu.

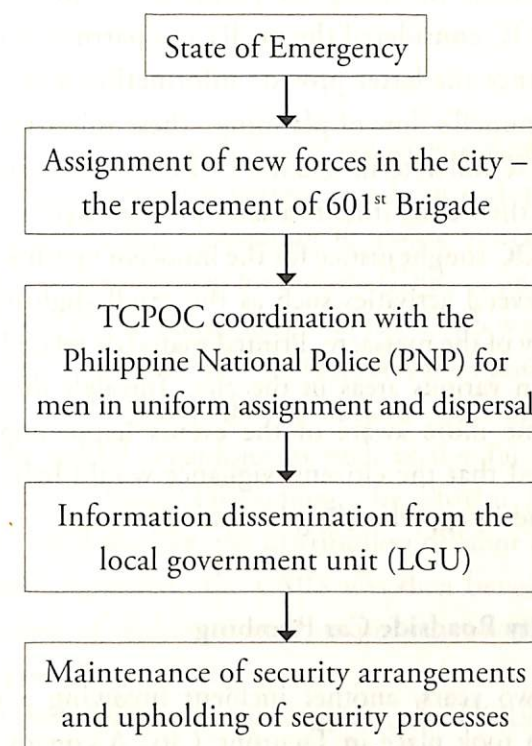
Five city staff members were killed during the massacre, namely: Eduardo Lechonsito, Cecille Lechonsito, Mercy Palabrica, Daryll delos Reyes, and Wilhem Palabrica. They were on a red Toyota Vios when the massacre took place, which was mistakenly assumed to be part of the convoy. Journalists from the city were also killed: Romeo Jimmy Cabillo (Midland Review), Jhoy Duhay (Gold Star Daily), Andres Teodoro (Central Mindanao Inquirer), and Reynaldo Momay (Midland Review).

The clans allegedly involved in the massacre have been familiar to the constituents not only of Tacurong City, but of nearby areas as well. The said massacre occurred at the onset of 2010 elections, when Esmael Mangudadatu decided to run for the gubernatorial seat in the Province of Maguindanao.

### *Pre-crisis*

Part of TCPOC's preparation included the monitoring of recent events through the media. The local media worked to the TCPOC's advantage since it gave the council an idea on how to prepare based on released news updates and news coverage. One example given during the interview was the news report released through AM broadcast saying that each of the rival families has representatives running for a local position in the government. The realization of such fact provided sufficient alert warnings among the members of the council. The TCPOC was able to identify the exact checkpoint locations in order to monitor the people going in and out of the city.

### *Crisis*



### *Post-crisis*

Security arrangements remained tight and stiff even after the massacre. Aside from the army forces, PNP, Task Force Talakudong, K9 units of the PA, and the Barangay Tanods, there were civilians who volunteered to help in sustaining the city's peace and order. Soldiers and policemen conducted the usual round-the-clock security inspections.

Upholding the security assures that any retaliation and other attacks are still monitored and that the city's defense is not loose. The TCPOC believes that for as long as the infamous case is not yet given verdict, Tacurong City will not be safe. The constituents themselves stand to protect their city, and with their participation, the TCPOC's task became lighter.

The TCPOC also managed to balance negative publicity through media interviews and articles, informing the public of its efforts in safeguarding the city. The TCPOC considered the media as a partner in monitoring and managing peace since the latter provide information and updates that are beneficial to the council's flow of planning. These initiatives and strategies showed how positive and determined the TCPOC and the local government were in providing their constituents a safer place to live in.

Also, the TCPOC sought justice for the innocent victims of the massacre. They conducted several activities such as the candle-lighting ceremony on the first anniversary of the massacre. Printed materials related to the massacre were also posted in various areas in the city. Through these activities, the constituents became more aware of the events happening around them. The TCPOC hoped that the citizens' vigilance would help in maintaining peace and order and in apprehending lawless elements.

### **2011 Tacurong City Roadside Car Bombing**

In less than two years, another incident involving a member of the Mangudadatu clan took place in Tacurong City. A convoy of ten vehicles was on their way to the venue of Maguindanao Gov. Mangudadatu's 43<sup>rd</sup> birthday celebration when a bomb exploded along the highway of Tacurong going to Koronadal City. One person died and seven others were injured.

Gov. Mangudadatu said in the article "Death on the way to the governor's birthday feast" (MindaNews 2011) that he was in the lead car and was approximately fifteen meters away from the explosion site when the bomb blasted. The bomb was a 105 howitzer and was said to be intended for his assassination.

Furthermore, the article "1 killed as Bomb hits Mangudadatu Convoy" (GMA News 2011) emphasized:

Police Director Felicisimo Khu, chief of the directorate for integrated police operations in Western Mindanao, said the explosion hit a black Toyota Fortuner (LGU 933), which was owned by one Datu Russman Sinsuat and

part of Mangudadatu's convoy. "Five passengers on board were wounded. One tricycle driver and a bystander were also hit," Khu said, citing field reports.

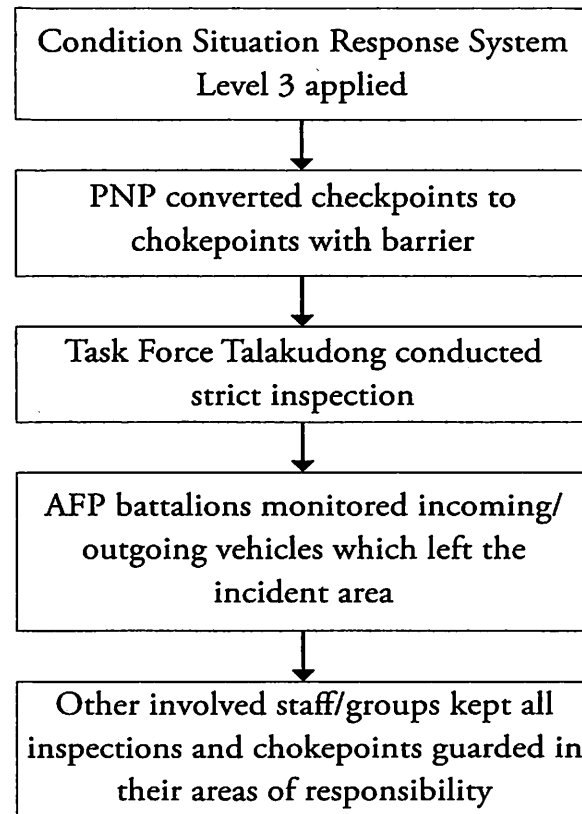
### ***Pre-crisis***

With less than two years interval after the Maguindanao Massacre, level one security, or under "normal situation," has been maintained throughout Tacurong City. The Condition Situation Response System (CSRS) defines this level as normal with no kidnap for ransom (KFR) or improvised explosive device (IED) threats. The implementation of the CSRS was one of the major pre-crisis adjustments made by the TCPOC after the massacre.

By specifically identifying the condition, situation, and activities to be exercised by several organizations such as the Tacurong City Police Station (TCPS), Task Force Talakudong, the Provincial Police Security Company (PPSC), and the like, the distribution of labor and responsibility became clearer and organized. The CSRS was then beneficial for it carries out detailed courses of action as well as prevents overlapping of duties among different groups.

Aside from intensifying security measures, the CSRS concentrated on probable locations for external attacks and other points of entry that might cause threat to safety and life. Checkpoints were dispersed in more barangays since its implementation.

They also put less attention to possible media sensationalism and issues that include religion. Jamorabon believed that these crises are not directed at the city, but rather a product of the circumstance of the vicinity. Tacurong is a neutral and open city. It is not impossible for other people to plot crimes and threats to politicians as proven by the convoy bombing. It is not necessary for the council to dwell on other factors for they have gained enough knowledge regarding these types of crises before, especially the Maguindanao Massacre.

**Crisis****Post-crisis**

After the bombing, the TCPOC formulated and intensified many programs for the betterment of peace and order in Tacurong. It was on 3 February 2012 when Executive Order (EO) No. 1 was implemented and signed by City Mayor Montilla. This mandate was made to “take charge of the internal security for the suppression of insurgency and other serious threats to local as well as national security.” Based on this order, the local government needed to take measures which included the support of both public and private sectors to achieve peace and order.

Jamorabon believed that it is important to seek all means of support for security purposes. This way, it would not be difficult to tap manpower as well as immediate response whenever a crisis occurs.

Aside from increasing safety measures, the TCPOC’s next line of action after this crisis was the operation and development of a number of information and education campaigns and mechanisms in the communities of Tacurong City. These include the setting up of strategic checkpoints, Community Police Assistance Centers (COMPACs), and police and military detachments around the city.

Checkpoints were set up in specific areas depending on the alert status. Considering that it was mobile, appropriate signage was put in place to inform the public about the operations. COMPACs were established in four barangays: Upper Katungal, New Lagao, New Carmen, and New Isabela. COMPACs increased police visibility in these barangays that were far from the city proper.

Eight detachments were also dispersed around the city and barangays, creating several chokepoints. The PA operated the six detachments while two were managed by the PNP. During red alert status, these detachments were intensified.

Monitoring was the main purpose of these operations. The Barangay Police Auxiliary Teams (BPATs) oversaw these strategic areas per barangay whenever flash alarms from PNP/AFP sources were carried out. Through handheld radio, they gave situational reports on their respective chokepoints.

On the other hand, Beat Patrol was the daily operation conducted by PNP personnel in public places such as department stores, markets, terminals, and other commercial centers. This was to inspect the areas for possible threats and potential danger especially in crowded places. This also served as a crime deterrent maneuver due to the visibility of authorized forces and law enforcement agencies.

Moreover, REPAZO, an acronym for three activities that occur in one setting, was institutionalized. REPAZO included: 1) REcorida which means a public address system for public information dissemination; 2) PAneling which uses K9 units of the PNP and AFP for clearing out areas where crowds can often be seen; and 3) ZOning which includes the inspection of bags, motorbikes, vehicles, and identity of individuals by the security forces.

Other post-crisis programs included (1) *Oplan Bitag Sasakyan*, (2) *Kap-Kap Bakal*, (3) Intel-Fusion Meetings, and (4) Mobile Patrol.

**Basic Elements of Crisis Management Plans**

Nikolaev’s (2010) 30 Common Basic Elements of Crisis Management Plans checklist provides foundation for the similarities, differences, leadership styles, and maturity level of the TCPOC on the crises that occurred both in 2009 and in 2011. This checklist (see Table 1) also shows significant remarks on both the 2009 Maguindanao Massacre and 2011 Roadside Car Bombing highlighting proximity of the crises, the established degree of danger and the TCPOC’s role in the crisis management process.

The Maguindanao Massacre took place in a remote area located at Ampatuan, Maguindanao. The roadside bombing of Gov. Mangudadatu’s convoy, on the other hand, took place in a national highway of Tacurong City going to Koronadal. Given such circumstances, it is noticeable in the checklist that more internal relations were exercised during the 2011 roadside bombing. This is because the crisis took place inside the vicinity of the city such that an immediate communication was directed to the forces in the nearby location of the bombing to monitor the situation as well as control the present condition.

TABLE 1. Nikolaev’s 30 Common Basic Elements of Crisis Management Plans

CHECKLIST	2009 Maguindanao Massacre Crisis	2011 Tacurong City Roadside Car Bombing
1. Contact the top company’s official ( Chief Executive Officer [CEO] or president) as soon as possible to either notify them about the crisis or receive information and instructions.	✓	✓
2. Collect information by calling: a) the manager of the unit where the emergency is taking place; b) the manager who is responsible for the territory where the emergency is taking place.		✓
3. Call one or two members of the emergency team and give them instructions to convene all the other team members in the designated place immediately and to start establishing the public relations center of operations at or near the company’s headquarters or media center/room at the crisis site, depending on the nature and location of the crisis.	✓	✓
11. Notify or instruct one of the emergency team members to notify families of people affected by the crisis.	✓	
16. At the same time, arrange as many personal or phone media interviews with the designated company’s spokespeople (one-voice principle) as you can.	✓	✓
25. In the afternoon, arrange for TV journalists and photographers to visit the site of the emergency, if it is safe. It will give them the first-hand experience of the disaster zone.	✓	✓
29. Monitor media content.	✓	✓
30. If there were people killed, after a week or so, hold a memorial service.	✓	

As observed, the probability of people to panic in a crisis situation increases as the crisis becomes closer to them. Therefore, the act of response carried out by the TCPOC during the roadside bombing was more prompt and immediate since it was nearer and within the vicinity of the city. Though the Maguindanao Massacre posed bigger issues and life-threatening scenarios, its recognizable distance from Tacurong provided a certain degree of comfort for the residents of the city, and time to prepare and plan out strategies for the TCPOC.

However, Tacurong is still located between two congressional districts of Maguindanao, making the city prone and vulnerable to retaliation risks. This is why the TCPOC did not adjust its security levels and execution of strategies for protection all over the city. The Tacurongnons are used to bombings, but the massacre brought in a new concept of danger among them. At any rate, the existence and exposure of police and army forces all over the city at the onset of the massacre provided a sense of comfort and security.

Maguindanao, for one, is already a stereotyped province. Tacurongnons have a prevalent mindset that Maguindanao is an unsafe place wherein strong political disagreements and crimes are rampant. There will always be concerns as to the safety of Tacurong City whenever untoward incidences occur in the said province.

The bombing of Gov. Mangudadatu's convoy may be less dangerous compared to the massacre in terms of the degree of danger, but the undeniable relationship of these two events seem to be a concern for security and protection. Although the context of knowledge and information regarding the crises were differently managed, the TCPOC has served as the main organization to protect the city from all forms of threats and hazards brought about by external issues and disputes. It is their main concern to perform immediate responses whenever crises occur.

The Tacurong City PNP is constantly guided by the Crime Scene Response Procedures under Rule 18 of the PNP Operational Procedures. This manual serves as the basis for responding to crises that threatened the safety of the city and its people. Different sorts of reports such as spot, progress, investigative, and special written reports are their methods of documentation for every crisis.

### *Standardization of structure*

Recognizing the previous hangups and shortcomings of the council through the years, the actualization of their goals is geared toward the development and sustainability of the city's peace and order situation. This awareness brought the council to decision-making processes that may improve the performance and execution of the security measures—thus the augmentation of the JTFT.

Before JTFT was approved, the system was simple: All commands come from the local chief executive or the city mayor. The mayor directs the action to any organization to which the situation should be addressed. For peace and order, the TCPOC is the responsible organization.

With JTFT, the local government unit (LGU) works hand in hand with the PA represented by the 601<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade. By having this structure, different sectors of the city are classified together with their corresponding groups and organizations. The TCPOC is categorized under criminality with other organizations under its umbrella. This restructuring of the security and protection of the city has a definite and clear system to which certain directives must now be addressed.

In the same way, the JTFT organizational structure provided a clearer picture for the TCPOC's concentration and line of work. It provided a standard flow of communication, making coordination among the organizations involved easier.

Through the years, the improvement of the crisis management responses and strategies were observed in the council. In each major crisis that the city faced, it is noticeable that the measures done and the processes it went through have advanced and expanded for the betterment of the community.

Meanwhile, using Poole's theory of adaptive structuration (Griffin 2008), it is evident that the TCPOC responded in a flexible way as demanded both by the 2009 Maguindanao Massacre and the 2011 Roadside Car Bombing. The rules (how things ought to be done) and resources (materials/attributes that can be used to influence the actions of the group and its members)

are the primary considerations in group decision-making. In the case of the two crises, the rules are basically the same but it is the resources that show differences. No crisis is the same; in the same manner, no crisis response is also the same. The nature of these crises has been proven to be similar and different in several ways as discussed above.

In both crises, the duality of structure is observed. Duality of structure according to Poole is the "idea that rules and resources are both the medium and the outcome of interaction" (Griffin 2008, 234). The crisis responses served as the medium in order for the TCPOC to communicate properly with the right people and groups, above all the constituents of the city. In the same way, the crises responses are the outcomes for whatever decisions and goals set up, and this is because the two crises reflect upon the post-crises phase.

Therefore, the ideal roles of communication are divided into four: Linking force, accuracy in information sharing, managing of messages, and neutralizing tension.

As an organization responsible for security and peace and order, it is important that the TCPOC considers communication as a linking force to accumulate assistance and to command its subordinate groups. Linkages to different sectors and groups may help the council gain strong ties for better security arrangements. Pre-crisis-wise, sources of information and research can best be gathered and conducted when resources and manpower are available.

During a crisis situation, it is important that the council is ready to communicate with backup organizations, groups, or sectors whenever the settled plans do not operate efficiently. Also, the council must take into account that there are other groups involved in their internal operations, and that each must be interconnected to one another. It is the responsibility of the council to harmonize the operations to come up with a well-handled crisis. Investigative functions after the crisis also entails relating to the right people and the forces designated for the job.

The TCPOC must organize the entire crisis response team in a manner that each subgroup is harmoniously related to the rest in order to achieve a smooth-sailing management. Also, the TCPOC must also be resourceful in

identifying beneficial organizations, groups, and sectors that may help in attaining peace and order in Tacurong City.

Moreover, the success of any crisis management plan relies upon the precision of information shared by the people involved in the response team. Communication, in this sense, must be utilized to send and receive messages through the right channel or medium. The composition of the TCPOC constitutes a common field of experience, which is the crisis at hand. The basic concept of Berlo's Source-Message-Channel-Receiver must be seen in the council's operation (Ongkiko and Flor 1998).

Considering that the TCPOC had many subgroups in its composition, there is always a need to express the exact message the other must perceive; here, information should be conveyed directly. One must be aware that in a crisis situation, there is no room for mistakes or else the whole strategy will be at risk. One must also be alert as to whom certain messages must be sent. The most convenient medium to communicate with must also be appropriately identified. This way, the whole crisis management process would work simultaneously from one task to another.

Like accurate information sharing, the management of messages enables the public to discern the current situation the way the TCPOC wants to deliver the message. Communication plays an essential role in relaying both verbal and nonverbal messages to its public—in this context, the constituents of Tacurong City.

Managing messages regarding the current situation and providing a sense of comfort and assurance must always be packaged appropriately so as not to cause panic and bring further problems. It is important to always anticipate the public's reaction toward any crisis so that the information may be delivered in a way that would convey relief. It must also be the goal of the message to instill participation by means of following the council's instructions.

These messages must also be backed with parallel actions in order to firmly encourage the public that the crisis situation is controllable and that there are operations conducted to address it. This will strengthen the communication between the TCPOC and the constituents of Tacurong City.

Incorporating the three roles of communication in the crisis situations will minimize tension brought about by the incidents. Proper use of communication—verbal or nonverbal—shapes the outcome of any crisis management strategy. Therefore, it is necessary to put emphasis and priority to the actions and messages carried out by the council in order to develop internal strength and community involvement.

## Implications

### *Appreciating resources*

Through the reinforcement of a new set of brigades and other army forces, the city was assured of a powerful defense team for a crisis such as the Maguindanao Massacre. Most of these forces were deployed both by the regional and national government. In the local setup, assigned army, PNP, Task Force Talakudong, K9 units, and Barangay Tanods were responsive in handling the crisis. Aside from this, the TCPOC has also found the participation of the constituents beneficial, lessening the crisis management dilemmas.

The help of higher agencies such as the PA and the PNP have been sufficient forces that aided not only the security measures, but also pacified the people who panicked during the crisis. It is in some way beneficial for both the TCPOC and the constituents because the reduction of panic among the people may help in achieving the strategies and even gain the people's participation.

Other private stakeholders were also ready to give their support and resources to keep the situation in control. Organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, Rotary Club, and private hospitals and even individuals came to the council and immediately offered help. The people's sense of volunteerism was also a major factor in handling the crisis. Besides additional manpower and reinforcements, it also proved that the TCPOC managed to encourage its people to participate by making them feel safe in the first place. In order to achieve a multitude's trust, the organization must be able to keep the security system satisfying.

### *Keeping the epithet: City of Goodwill*

The implementation of the CSRS, the authorization of the JTFT and the conduct of various post-crisis education drive activities all lead to one vision: To make Tacurong City an economically stable city united toward sustainable development.

According to Jamorabon, because of Tacurong's effective crisis management and the visible security maintenance dispersed all throughout the city, more people are interested in buying lands and putting up businesses in Tacurong. This will not only result to financial benefits but an increase of the city's economic status, gaining exposure to more stakeholders and potential investors.

Most importantly, all the efforts are for the constituents' welfare. The TCPOC is slowly trying to eradicate the tag "City of Bombs," and is now aggressively building up the city's reputation as the "City of Goodwill." It is in this behavior that the city's vision for economy and stability will be achieved. When the people and the government work hand in hand toward one goal, it is not impossible for Tacurong City to be progressive.

### *Media as a source, not a strategy*

As illustrated in Nikolaev's checklist (Table 1), only a few out of the thirty steps in crisis management were applied in both the 2009 and the 2011 crises. It was also emphasized in the interview with Jamorabon that the media seemed to be of minimal concern in their organization. This means that besides the organization's main duty—that is to keep Tacurong City as safe and as secure as possible—they do not prioritize other factors such as the media practitioners.

The TCPOC always believed that media are not much of a consideration in a crisis situation. This is because, in the context of Tacurong City, media arrangements are not yet influential and powerful. There are no local television channels and only few print and radio sources exist. However, in crises as dangerous and substantial as the Maguindanao Massacre and the Mangudadatu convoy roadside bombing, there was too much media attention in the regional and national levels. But since the TCPOC is more focused on the city and its people, they have missed out these strategies.

Another consideration may be the fact that the TCPOC is not a profit-oriented organization and has a sole purpose that carries a big responsibility. Public image is not as important as keeping the people protected from any harm. As emphasized by the council, so long as the crises are handled well and the people remain out of danger, everything else will fall into place.

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## Key Informant Interview

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