Risk communication options

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Parameters of risk
Options for risk based inspection, management and communication

- **Smart monitoring**
  - Serious contaminations,
  - Incidents (NVWA, risk management, inspections, law making)

- **Active enforcement and inspection**
  - Fraude / illicit actions

- **System control**
  - (sector – companies – NGOs)

- **Focus on risk communication**
Risk analysis, management and risk communication
History of risk communication (Leiss 1996)

In the beginning:

Objective: ‘Educate’ the people
Content: facts
Focus on: information
Attitude: expert think to know what people want/need to know
History of risk communication (Leiss 1996)

Later on ‘70-’80s:

• Objective: Persuade audience and manage public relations *rather than* ‘educate’ the people

• Content: facts

• Focus on: change behaviour

• Attitude: experts think they know it
History of risk communication (Leiss 1996)

More recent (since late 80’s):

• Objective: ‘engage’ the people
• Content: Two way communication - but ..
• Focus on: Decision making – based on cognitive interaction
• Attitude: experts think they know it, and want to overcome ‘perception’
Common risk communication: based on single simple risk (i.e. Ebola) – crisis communication – protocols based on:

- Urgency
- Shared perception of risk
- Overall need for information
- (large) scale
EFSA’s classical principles guiding good communication

- Openness
- Transparency
- Independence
- Responsiveness/timeliness

- ... same principles as all the others
But...

It does not work in many risk cases
Future of risk communication (Geijskes/Opperhuizen 2014)
Near future:

• Objective: ‘engage’ the people and other network stakeholders
• Content: Pluriform way communication – based on cognitive and affective interaction
• Focus on: decision making and enforcement
• Attitude: Cooperation – experts and non-experts contribute to what people want/need to know and debate
Perception (of individuals and groups) is not a static phenomenon
Judgement of threats and resilience

• Can I influence the risk, the effect, the chance

• Can a company influence...

• Can the government influence by laws...

• Can the government influence by enforcement...
Risk assessment, risk profiling, risk communication

- A) effect
- B) chance (probability)

*Is risk influenced by:*

- C) laws and regulations
- D) inspections
- E) companies
- F) other stakeholders
- G) general public/individual
Perception Behaviour Theory

judgement of

Perceived Threat Hazard Risk

Can I/we handle it

Vlek et all
Risk acceptance

- 1. hazard – lethality
- 2. scale – environmental
- 3. society – effects
- 4. possibility to delay effect
- 5. can it be controlled?
Risk acceptance

5. Chance  
6. Known risk/imagined  
7. Voluntarily  
8. Hazardous intention (fraude)  
9. Benefits  
10. Distribution of risk/benefits in society
Selecting risk communication strategies: an example

- Euromonitor – or questionnaires – none experts
- Expert questionnaires
- Risk profiles

- *Experts: high risk marine biotoxins, low risk pesticides*
- *None-experts: low risk marine biotoxins, very high risk pesticides*
options for risk communication

Awareness raising – marine biotoxines

Explain – trust raising – pesticides

expert judgement risk
one-expert judgement risk
Ambrosia Smartphone App

The Ambrosia Smartphone App:
- Is developed as part of an awareness raising campaign
- Helps volunteers to identify and report Ambrosia observations
- Integrates validation of the observation in the process; each reported observation is followed-up by an experts validation. The validation result is send to the reporter and a central database
- Helps us to get a better picture of Ambrosia development in the NL
- Is a free downloadable app at: https://itunes.apple.com/nl/app/ambrosia-melder/id545430441?mt=8
Awareness raising strategy: more than cognitive messages– use also affective tools

- Educate
- Persuade
- Engage
- ‘create arousal’
- Networking

- Including Twitter, Facebook, internet, blogs, calls, panels, traditional media
- This may be a lot of work !!!
Conclusion:

Use different risk communication strategies

- Always: transparent, open, timely, independent

- Awareness raising: (full blown) strategy focus on target group – high arousal raising

- Trust raising: low profile - low arousal

- But don’t mix it: when you initiate arousal, you no longer have ‘control’ in the network of risk communication stakeholders (good example from South Africa yesterday)
You are never the only communicator

Be aware and use the network
Thank you for your attention