

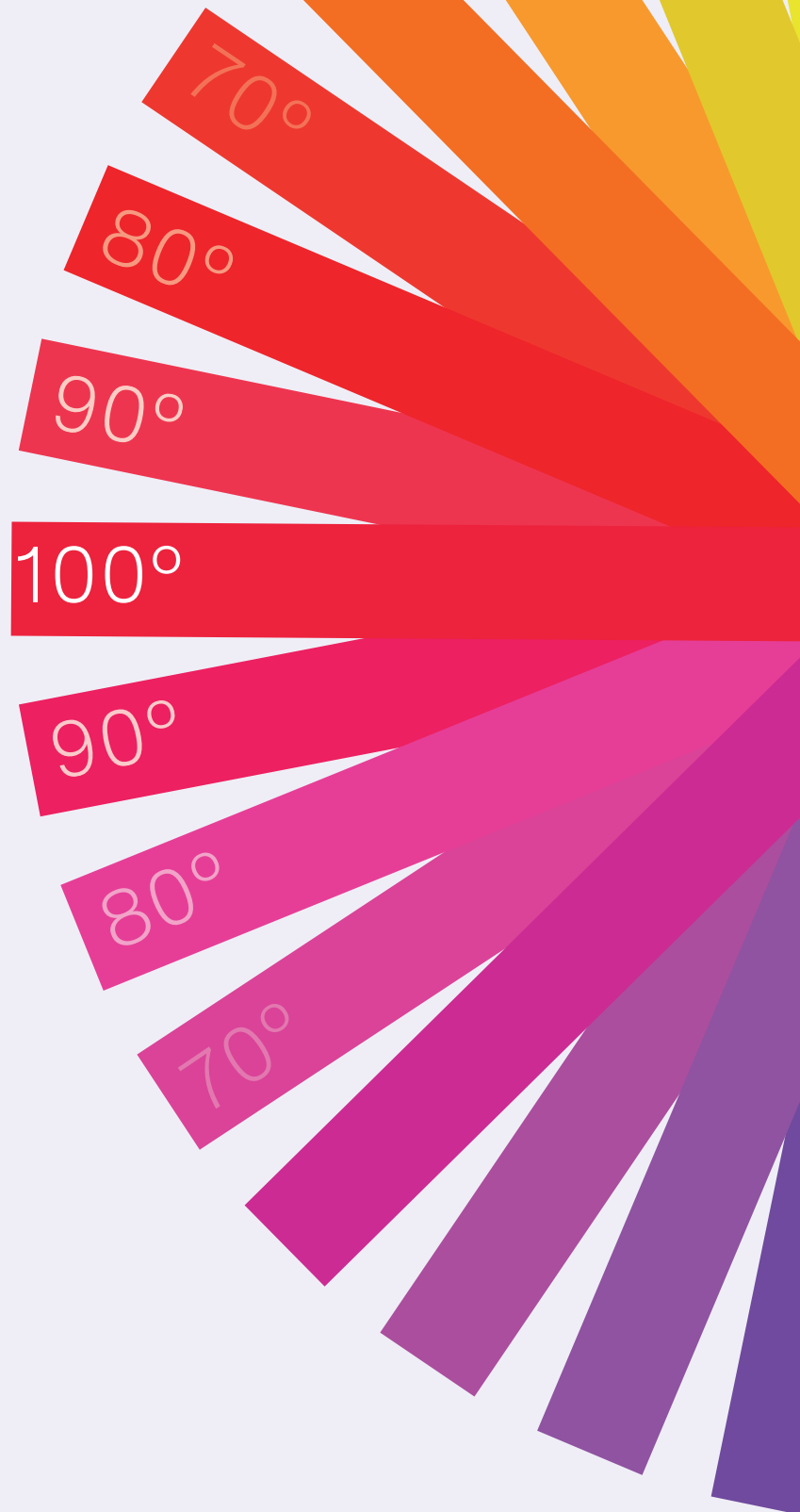
CRISIS ▶ RESPONSE

VOL:16 | ISSUE:1 | MARCH 2021

WWW.CRISIS-RESPONSE.COM

JOURNAL

Protection Prevention Preparedness Response Resilience Recovery



FLASHPOINTS

Volatility in Trust, Climate, Society

Editor in Chief

Emily Hough
emily@crisis-response.com

Editorial Assistant

Claire Sanders
claire@crisis-response.com

Design & Production

Chris Pettican
chris@layoutdesigner.co.uk

News and Blog research

Lina Kolesnikova

Subscriptions

Crisis Response Journal is published quarterly; it is available by subscription in hard copy or digital.
hello@crisis-response.com

Published by Crisis Management Limited, Sodes Place Farm, Westcott Road, Dorking RH4 3EB, UK

© Crisis Management Limited 2021.

Articles published may not be reproduced in any form without prior written permission.

Printed in England by The Manson Group, UK ISSN 1745-8633

www.crisis-response.com

join the CRJ LinkedIn group

follow us on twitter @editorialcrj

contents

News 4

Succession planning.....30
Rob Fagan suggests that a comprehensive leadership succession plan builds resilience

Comment

Keeping an eye out for crises 8
Lord Toby Harris explains the rationale behind the establishment of the UK's National Preparedness Commission

Risk governance.....12
Mami Mizutori says that lessons from past emergencies can be applied to avoid future catastrophes, but countries must collaborate

BCM & leadership

Get it right the first time.....14
Andy Blackwell questions why it often takes a crisis to strike before we start to look at better ways of doing things

Time to stop ignoring the past18
Philip Trendall laments the fact that inquiries and lessons identified are still being ignored

Cognitive biases in crisis cells20
Raphael De Vittoris explores why we must seek to overcome our cognitive biases, particularly in crisis management

Diversity shortfalls.....22
David Kennedy-Pitt asks whether an absence of diversity could cause too many blind spots for effective resilience to be achieved

Proactive resilience.....24
Proactive resilience and leadership must be developed further in the light of the mega-shocks that are threatening our societies, say Patrick Lagadec and Matthieu Langlois

Communication and confidence28
Julia Goodman says techniques for enhancing performance energy that she learned in the theatre and on screen can be applied to communicating during a crisis or major event

Proactive leadership: p24



Otto Detmer | Ikon Images

Vaccination roll out: p36



Valero Doval | Ikon Images

The economics of biodiversity58
A fundamental change in how we think about and approach economics is needed, reports Claire Sanders

Flood resilience in a changing climate 60
Phil Emonson outlines how flooding is an ever-increasing risk and why it is vital to act, prepare and adapt

The plight of the humble bee.....62
Claire Sanders analyses the consequences of human activity on bee species

The sky's the limit..... 65
Perhaps the crowning glory of drones will be their potential to help reduce the effects of climate change, says Andrew Staniforth

Frontline responders

Police mediation in pandemics68
Antonio Berlanga-Sánchez and Virginia Pardo-Iranzo discuss police mediation

The trust gap.....70
Jennifer Hesterman explores how societal changes are partly responsible for the attacks on police following the violence at the Capitol Building in Washington, DC

Conflict, Covid-19 and Yemen73
Emergency and disaster medics are often left vulnerable on the frontline, say Mohammed Alsabri, Jennifer Cole, Ayman Alhadheri and Luai M Alsakkaf

Societal division & information

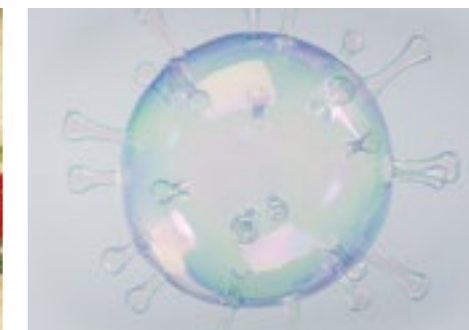
Overcoming toxic polarisation 76
Emily Hough speaks to Peter T Coleman, a social-organisational psychologist and researcher in conflict resolution and sustainable peace, best known for his work on intractable conflicts and applying complexity science to conflict and division

Plight of the humble bee: p62



RTN Studio | 123rf

The disinformation bubble: p84



Armor Production | 123rf

Cover story: Rising temperatures
Cover image: Gracie Broom

comment

This edition's cover is a representation of the increasing volatility and temperature of opinions, discourse and beliefs. An 'addiction to outrage' is heating up (p76) and red hot rhetoric is dwarfing calmer, pragmatic and measured reasoning, like a rampant infection burning through communities and the world.



Our feature on society and polarisation unpicks this phenomenon, because to treat the symptoms, we must first understand the causes, recognising how a complex online ecosystem inflames predispositions to the point where they boil over into real world consequences.

But the cover is also a more literal depiction of climbing temperatures and a far less stable world environment. CRJ has covered climate issues for many years, homing in on how they affect frontline responders, societies and individuals. More than climate and rising temperatures – the tipping points to calamity are manifold and include biodiversity and ecosystems. Humanity's complex interaction with nature means we treat the world's resources as if they are an infinite commodity, squandering and polluting without considering the repercussions (p54 and p58).

The Covid-19 pandemic is far from over, but the small glimmers of hope have become more concrete. As Mami Mizutori of the UNDRR says on p50, we must seize the opportunity of crisis and: "Use it to understand better what is going on around us. We mustn't see a disaster or crisis purely as a threat... If we prevent better, the recovery process can be a wonderful opportunity, or it can be a catastrophe." Governments, the public, private and third sectors can apply valuable lessons and build back better. Part of this lies in succession planning, diversity, proactive leadership resilience and continuous improvement, as covered by our feature (from p14 onwards).

Because as we keep our feet firmly planted in the present, while remembering and drawing upon what has been learnt from the past, we have to keep both eyes firmly fixed on the horizon to anticipate the future, and make sure that in solving current problems, we do not unintentionally create new risks, or exacerbate latent threats.

Get it right the first time

Andy Blackwell explores the challenges organisations face as they recover from the effects of the global pandemic and questions why it often takes a crisis to strike before we start to look at better ways of doing things

The term ‘build back better’, dismissed by some as a buzzword or political spin, is fast becoming a new mantra. But the slogan has a good pedigree and was first used to describe the official *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, adopted on March 18, 2015 at the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan.

The framework aims to: “Guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk in development at all levels as well as across all sectors.” The primary focus of the framework is on prevention and reduction of disaster risk, but it also covers planning for disaster response and recovery.

The UK Government adopted the slogan for its Build Back Better Council, which was established to ensure government and businesses continue to work closely together. The council aims to provide an important forum for frank feedback on the government’s recovery plans to help ensure the steps being taken are the right ones.

The aviation sector has been one of the hardest hit by the pandemic and in December 2020, at a virtual open briefing of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee focusing on the terrorist threat to civil aviation (and the progress of *Special Resolutions 2309 and 2396*), the UK Department for Transport representative outlined the significant effects that Covid-19 has had on the sector. Global passenger flights were down 61 per cent compared to 2019 and aviation now faces huge resource challenges.

On a positive note, the representative said that there were opportunities to embed better security practices, an approach that aligns with the build back better theme.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has also designated 2021 as a year of security culture to raise security awareness in aviation. This is a timely move as there has been little change in the threat posed to civil aviation by malicious actors at a time when Covid-19 has created new vulnerabilities, including a displacement of focus from security to health protection. Refocusing on getting the security culture right will help to redress the balance.

The concept of building back better is a sound one, but why do some organisations wait for a crisis to strike before thinking about better ways of doing things? Missed warning signals; inadequate spending on security and resilience; failing to prepare for the perfectly probable; and not wanting to hear bad news are just some of the symptoms that can lead to ‘organisational denial’,

considered by many to be the biggest threat to crisis management. The ‘it could never happen here’ mindset prevails, and when the adverse event happens, the organisation is thrown into chaos, owing to inadequate emergency planning, the absence of appropriate systems and platforms and insufficient resources, particularly trained and ‘battle-hardened’ managers. This slide into denial can be stopped, but it requires affirmative action, which will become more and more radical the further entities move into the denial phase.

Organisational denial

Rather than having to build back better, which is a reactive approach, embedding continuous improvement as a business-as-usual activity puts the organisation on the front foot, building things right first time round.

The term continuous improvement is often misunderstood; it is not about having to meet ever increasing targets, but more about how the organisation learns from its own mistakes and those of others, and constantly looks at ways to improve its performance and act on warning signals before they become crises.

To do this effectively, a clear understanding of what ‘good’ looks like is needed, together with the capability to measure performance robustly, and adapt security and resilience measures as necessary.

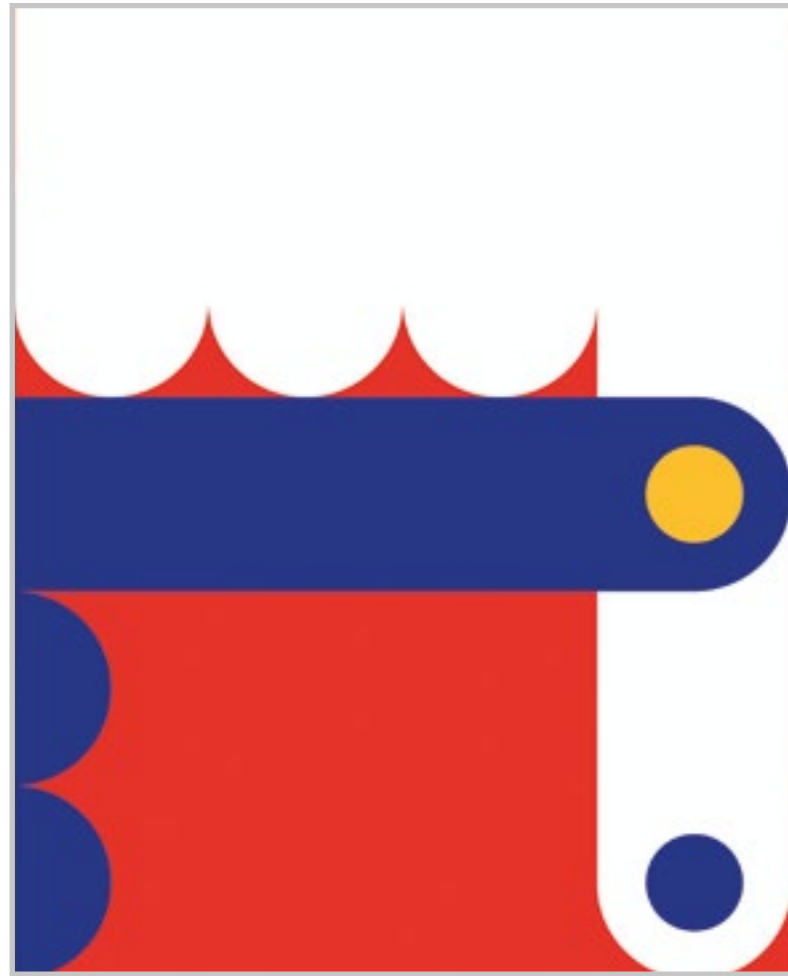
Building back better from a security and resilience perspective is not all about creating something new or reinventing the wheel, but building on existing good practices, such as the UK CAA’s *CAP1223 Framework for an Aviation Security Management System (SeMS)*. This was developed for aviation, but its straightforward methodology is easily transferable to other sectors.

Likewise, the *Sendai Framework*, developed for DRR, has relevance in a much wider context, particularly in building organisational resilience.

Its four priority areas for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks have been abbreviated here to demonstrate the point, and the words in brackets form part of the original text: Understanding (disaster) risk; strengthening (disaster) risk governance to manage (disaster) risk; investing in (disaster) risk reduction for resilience; and enhancing (disaster) preparedness for effective response and ‘building back better’ in recovery.

Remove the words in brackets and you have a skeleton for a high level action plan for other organisations seeking to look at ways of enhancing their business resilience.

Continuous improvement is about how the organisation learns from its mistakes and those of others, and constantly looks at ways to improve its performance and act on warning signals



Grundini | Ikon Images

What some might disregard as old guidance material can still provide valuable insights. For example, *Managing Crises Before They Happen*, by Professor Ian Mitroff with Gus Anagnos (2001), focuses on the philosophy that crisis management begins with mechanisms long before crises occur, and that only continuous, proactive measures can prevent or limit their impact.

Quality is Free by Philip B Crosby (1980), informs organisations how to do things right in the first place to avoid having to pay to fix them or do them again.

Another book, *Predictable Surprises*, written by Max Bazerman and Michael D Watkins (2004), explores the disasters you should have seen coming and how to prevent them. It provides insights on the failure of individuals and organisations to act on what they know.

Many of the modern management systems and methodologies are based on the sound principles in these publications. The guidance they contain has certainly stood the test of time.

Getting things right first time can be challenging for us humans, as most learning comes from making mistakes. To improve continuously, organisations must ensure that lessons identified become lessons implemented, and that these lessons convert into actual

A blame culture is a serious impediment to becoming a learning organisation

practice. It is not just about their own lessons, but those identified as relevant by other organisations and sectors.

Continuous improvement is key to success, but difficult to achieve. There are two interconnected strands to continuous improvement: the organisation's processes, products and services, and the capabilities of its people.

Research reveals that although business leaders understand that continuous improvement is the key to success, it is difficult to achieve as the leadership teams are focused on success rather than failure. This non-exhaustive list shows just how challenging it can be to become a learning organisation:

- Poor culture, ie the existence of a blame culture, or a culture of concealment. The latter was said to have existed at Boeing and contributed to two deadly crashes involving the Boeing 737 MAX;
- Lack of employee engagement;
- Reward schemes that clash with required behaviours – aggressive production targets linked to financial reward may encourage staff to take shortcuts that could compromise safety;
- Stifling employees with the change repelling mindset: 'We've always done things this way';
- Employees not understanding how they contribute to the overall game plan owing to poor communication;
- Silo working mindset – creates difficulties fostering collaboration between multiple stakeholders, resulting in risks or opportunities being missed;
- Not knowing what 'good' performance looks like – not having the right performance measures in place, and not understanding how to select the most appropriate key performance indicators;
- Weak warning signal identification and/or failure to act on warning signals – the inability to pick up or act on signs that something is amiss. This can become a personal liability for board directors if they breach their fiduciary duties to shareholders. A shareholder lawsuit filed in November 2019 by the Kirby Family Partnership cited this allegation against Boeing Co's board directors following the two fatal 737 MAX crashes that killed 346 people; and
- Loss of corporate knowledge – vast numbers of staff have been made redundant owing to the pandemic, and this can lead to impaired corporate knowledge.

Last year, when examining how aviation businesses responded to the pandemic – particularly how quickly they recognised it as a risk and managed their response

to it – three groupings emerged: victims, survivors and thrivers. The key group here is the thrivers, those highly resilient organisations that proactively identify things that could go wrong, such

as the pandemic and other incidents with similar impact, plan for them and rapidly identify the warning signals.

The thrivers are swift and robust in managing the impacts to their businesses and understand how they need to adapt going forward. They do not wait for disaster to strike before acting and their culture is such that they are constantly looking at better ways of doing things.

The pandemic has reaped havoc, not only in terms of the tragic loss of life its left in its wake and which it continues to inflict, but also the

unparalleled economic damage it has caused.

Unfortunately, the thrivers were in the minority. For many businesses, survival has been the key concern and thinking about moving to a position where they can thrive is simply a pipe dream. Sadly, numerous organisations have become victims and already gone out of business, with many others teetering on the edge.

There is much to learn from the thrivers, though; mirroring their *modus operandi* and organisational behaviour may help to bring back some organisations from the brink before it is too late.

Key features of thriving organisations not only include their continuous improvement culture, but their recognition of business resilience as a strategic capability. They have robust levels of crisis management, and while not immune from adverse events and crises, they are quick to learn from them. They manage risk sensibly while understanding that it can create danger as well as opportunity.

Most of all they are agile, pioneering and comfortable with taking brave decisions.

While the effects of the pandemic have forced many businesses to become more innovative just to survive, there are disrupters who are always striving to make their products and services better, and who don't wait for a crisis to strike before taking action.

Agile behaviour

Anne Bowden's organisation, Starling Bank, is one such example of how an entrepreneur and her team disrupted the highly regulated banking sector by creating a digital bank that is shaking up the entire system for good. Starling Bank was built to withstand difficulties, and while it has indeed built back better, this was a deliberate and proactive move as a business start-up, rather than a reactive response to a crisis.

Starling built things right the first time round and its strength and resilience come from its ability to adapt and change for the better – continuous improvement.

One example of this agile behaviour is that customers can have a second card connected to their accounts via a dedicated section of Starling's app. The customer can hand over the card and a personal identification number to a trusted shopper who is authorised to spend the money that has been added there. This 'innovation' took just ten days to complete.


The mindset and behaviours of business disruptors can certainly provide us with much useful learning.

The following non-exhaustive measures are intended to help businesses understand how they can become a more resilient learning organisation that improves continuously:

- Promote a 'just' culture that encourages employee engagement, organisational learning and continuous improvement;
- Establish learning as a key driver of business strategies;
- Ensure the organisation's drive for efficiency and profit growth is appropriately balanced to avoid compromising business resilience;
- Anticipate problems before they occur and focus on what could happen in the future, without ignoring the enduring threats your organisation faces;
- Implement mechanisms to identify and respond quickly to warning signals and lessons identified to prevent or minimise the impacts of adverse events and crises;

- Explore tools to increase organisational efficiency, minimise the impact of adverse events and help protect your people, assets and reputation;
- Ensure performance monitoring and linked key performance indicators (KPIs) are fit for purpose;
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to business resilience and 'protective' activities such as safety, security, risk management, medical services, and business continuity, and ensure that the skills and experience of the personnel taking up specialist roles within these business areas are sufficient;
- Consider merging the aforementioned 'protective' functions within the organisation to break silo working, create efficiencies and encourage collaboration and innovation; and
- Make use of existing best practice frameworks and publications.

The term build back better hints at missed opportunities to get things right first time. With the right mindset, people, frameworks and systems, we can prevent or minimise the impacts of many crises, and prepare better for those we have little control over, such as natural hazards or human-induced disasters. If we acknowledge that build back better is a reactive response, then our proactive slogan should be 'right first time' in the pursuit of continuous improvement.

Rather than closing the stable door after the horse has bolted, we will have secured the stables by design, to prevent the adverse event occurring in the first place. 

References

- *Mitroff I I, Anagnos G, (2001): Managing Crises Before They Happen, AMACOM;*
- *Crosby P B, (1980): Quality is Free – The Art of Making Quality Certain, Penguin Books;*
- *Boden A, (2020): Banking On It – How I disrupted an Industry, Penguin Business;*
- *Bazerman M H, Watkins D (2004): Predictable Surprises – The Disasters You Should Have Seen Coming And How To Prevent Them, Harvard Business School Press*

Web resources

- *UNDRR (2015): Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; undrr.org*
- *Counter-terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (2020): Virtual Open Briefing of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee – Terrorist Threat to Civil Aviation and the Progress of Special Resolutions 2309 and 2396; un.org*
- *UK Prime Minister's Office (2021): PM and Chancellor launch new Business Council; gov.uk*
- *ICAO (2021): ICAO 2021 Year of Security Culture; icao.int*
- *Civil Aviation Authority, (2018): CAP 1223 UK CAA Framework for an Aviation Security Management System (SeMS); publicapps.caa.co.uk*
- *Feeley J, (2019): Boeing Directors Sued Over Missed Warning Signs; bloomberg.com*
- *O'Keefe D, Saenz H, Schwedel A, Devlin T, (2021): Getting Business Resilience Right; bain.com*

Author



ANDY BLACKWELL is the former Head of Security and Resilience at Virgin Atlantic and is now an independent security and resilience consultant. He is a Member of the CRJ's Advisory Panel

CRISIS▶RESPONSE

JOURNAL | WEBSITE | EVENTS | SOCIAL MEDIA | NETWORKING | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



MULTIPLY

the force of your business

Open doors to the people you really want to meet. Influence your market and build your brand awareness, across the global crisis and emergency response fields.

Key Network Partnership:

We call them Key Network Partnerships. Because you're not just becoming a partner of ours - but leveraging access to our entire global network. It's about connecting you with the right decision-makers. We open doors and introduce you to the right people, with the power to transform the next phase of your business development. And it's about intelligently marketing your business, to your target audience, across our global platforms. Extending your reach, increasing your exposure and driving your brand awareness.

Call CRJ today about becoming a Key Network Partner on **+44 (0)203 488 2654**

PROTECTION | PREVENTION | PREPAREDNESS | RESPONSE | RESILIENCE | RECOVERY

www.crisis-response.com

CRISIS▶RESPONSE

JOURNAL

PROTECTION | PREVENTION | PREPAREDNESS | RESPONSE | RESILIENCE | RECOVERY



SUBSCRIBE NOW

visit www.crisis-response.com for rates and special offers



Authoritative global coverage of all aspects of security, risk, crisis management, humanitarian response, business continuity planning, resilience, management, leadership, technology and emerging trends

PRINT | DIGITAL