Turning crisis in to success
Stakeholder communication within the Hallandsås Project
The Hallandsås project

Where On the West coast between Båstad and Förslöv.

What Two 8.7-kilometre long, parallel railway tunnels through Hallandsås.

Why Increases the capacity over Hallandsås from 4 trains per hour to 24 and doubles the possible weight of goods transported.

Currently The tunnels have been completed and work with railway installations soon completed.

Open to traffic 2015.

Cost Approximately SEK 10.5 billion (2008 price levels).
West Coast line
with the Hallandsås Tunnel
Capacity without tunnel

Capacity with tunnel
Co-financed by the European Union
Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)
Technical challenges

- Varied rock conditions
- High water pressure
- High water content
- Water flow restrictions from the environmental court
1992 – 1995 – First attempt

• A highly acclaimed start soon turns into problem
• Technical failure, delays and cost overruns
• Fractions, disputes and change of contractor

• Technology-oriented information
• Poor dialogue with local residents
• Negative attitude to the media
1996 – 1997 – Second attempt

• New contractor
• Traditional technical solution
1997

- High inleakage of ground water
- Strained budget and schedule
- Full scale test with a chemical sealing agent – Rhoca Gil
- Poisonous substances leaking out with the ground water
- The project is stopped in October 1997
- The decision of the future is handed over to the government
The crisis turns into a national scandal

• Head line news in national media during 3 weeks

• 6000 people was demonstrating outside the project office

• Market reacts

• 30 000 media clips
Results of the crisis

- The public was very upset and worried
- The media picture was not correct
- Strong opinion against the project
- The problem with railway capacity still not solved
- One third of the tunnels was completed
Communication goals

• Re-establish the confidence
• Take responsibility for the situation
• Balance media picture
• Get an objective and fact-based decision about the future of the project
• Creating dialogue with key stakeholders
Communication after the crisis

• Personal dialogue with the most important stakeholders
• Building relations with the key stakeholders
• Responsible
• Listen
• Show good-will
• Be open and honest
• Be pro-active
• High availability
Loss of time, money and reputation

- 100 millions sek in damage compensation and environmental measures
- 7 years stop of construction
- Heavily damage of reputation
- Legal measures
Three steps to create trust

1. Create arenas for dialogue
2. Build trust
3. Maintain
Communicate when trust is at the bottom

- Show empathy and understanding
- Personal communication
- Find spokespersons outside your own organization
- Respond on peoples worries
- Use your ”brand”
Prerequisites to re-start the project

• New Government decision
• New water permit from the environmental court
• New organization
• New contractor
2005 - construction re-start

- New contractor
- New organization
- New construction method
- 650 people on site
- 15 nationalities
- Work 24-7
Tunnel boring machine and lining
Communication after the re-start

- Communication in the contract
- New common communications guidelines
- New visitor center
- 4 communications officers on site
It starts with our own organization

– The most important communication resource

• Induction for all project members
• Media training/education for all co-workers.
• Spokes persons in all levels of the organization
• High transparency
• Adequat internal communication channels
• Set goals and measure them
Communication channels

• Public meetings
• Open houses
• Newsletter
• Websites
• Construction information
• Media relations
• Induction for all project members
• Websites
• Social media
• Internal communication
What we say and what we do must go hand by hand.
Communication milestones

- First breakthrough
- First tunnel completed
- Hole tunnel completed
- Start of operations
Focus your resources!
Switch your angle

How ▶ Why
Reactive ◀ Proactive
Subjective ▶ Objective
Closed ◀ Open
The turning point – first tunnel completed

- 250 000 live viewers on the web.
- 250 articles/spots
- 97% positive/neutral media
- Main pages on the all major newspapers in Sweden.
- Estimated PR-value approximately 1,5 million euro.
What is your opinion about to complete the West Coast Line with tunnels through Hallandsås
78% thinks that availability of information is good or very good. Only 6% thinks that there is a lack of information.

68% of the citizens in Båstad municipality follows the project.

73% of the citizens in Båstad are not afraid of any negative environmental effects.
Crucial success criterias

- Get to know your stakeholders
- Communication issues in contracts
- Common communication guidelines
- Communication a natural part of the management system
- Education in communication for all co-workers
- Communication resources on site
- Induction for all project members
• High preparedness for crisis.
• Exhibition – personal meetings
• Active work with media relations
• Long-term communication with stakeholders
• High availability
• Media training/education for project members
• Persistent measurements
• Start your communication early
Good and systematic communication

• Builds trust for the business/organization
• Provides greater flexibility for the business when questionable.
• Reduce the “fall” during crisis
• Increases organizations pride.
• The organization becomes a more attractive employer

= Saves time and money
But remember...

“A monkey is still a monkey even if it wears a tie”
Communication can never replace a good and viable business and organization.

But good communication can support it!
Thank you and welcome to the opening of the Hallandsås tunnel

8th of December 2015