



UNIVERSITY
of York

Emergency Communications Policy (IT Services)

This document describes the systems to be used during major incidents, and the policy and procedures to be followed. It is not intended to be a comprehensive checklist of emergency incident procedures, but can form part of a larger document.

An emergency incident can be defined as an unplanned interruption to, or reduction of quality of, an IT service.

1. Policy

1.1 It is expected that all IT staff within the Directorate will report and escalate any incident as soon as they become aware of it by:

- a. contacting IT Support Office (ITSO)
- b. contacting the Communications Team
- c. escalating to a manager

1.2 It is expected that staff must be prepared to leave what they are currently working on in order to help to resolve an emergency incident, including being called out of meetings.

2. Procedures

2.1 IT Services are using a hosted communications tool called Slack. Instructions on its use are included in this document.

2.2 It is expected that staff should log into the “Slack Emergency Comms” room during the working day, but especially so during incidents. It is expected that all managers should be logged into Slack.

2.3 During an incident, a member of SMT will coordinate the incident through Slack, in addition to

the usual methods (phone, email where available, etc).

2.3.1 The responsibility of the incident coordinator will be to ensure that appropriate people are working on the problem, to arrange and chair any meetings required, to liaise with the Communication team to ensure that regular communications are maintained (within the department and to the University), and to arrange and chair the post-incident review.

2.4 Note that Slack is a hosted service - sharing of personal information and passwords is not allowed. Chat should be focused on the incident at hand, and must not broaden out into more general chitchat.

2.5 During incidents affecting the network, ITS0 and the Communications Team should connect a laptop to the internet via their MiFi device, staff in X Block should do the same using work 3G phones. This will enable communications channels to remain open, and access to off-site resources such as Google Mail and Docs.

2.6 Work 3G phones are available in X Block for use by staff during major incidents affecting the network.

2.6.1 The IT Support Office and the Communications team have 3G mobile phones for emergency use. The IT Support Office also has a MyFi device.

3. Slack

3.1 Slack is a hosted group-chat service

3.2 To create an account, contact the IT Support Office

3.3 Note that this account is purposely not linked to your IT account

3.4 Once logged in, you enter the Lobby. Click on the "IT Emergency Comms" room to join it

3.5 Note that everything is logged, and the logs will be used in post-incident review meetings

3.6 Personal details, and passwords should not be discussed in the chat room

3.7 Bear in mind that anything discussed on Slack could be subject to a FOI request

3.8 Slack provide both a desktop app and a web interface.

3.9 Slack also provide mobile apps.

4. User Communications

4.1 During working hours, the Communications Team, with backup from the IT Support Office team leader, will handle comms using appropriate mailing lists (typically IT Services staff, DCOs, admin forum), York Extra, Facebook, Twitter and display screens.

4.1.1 In the event that neither the Communications Team nor the IT Support Office Team Leader are available, a member of SMT will take responsibility for communication.

4.2 The Communications Team will ensure that Library Help Desk staff are aware if necessary, as

users may approach them with enquiries.

4.2.1 Out of hours, the member of SMT on duty will need to take on these communications. They should also co-ordinate letting their equivalent in the Library know that the situation is known and being handled. SMT can also update the Twitter feed - contact comms team for the current password.

4.3 The communication policy for emergencies within working hours will be as follows:

4.3.1 The incident manager will handle communications, or will designate a named person to do so. All communications should be posted via Slack, when it's available, and should meet the following criteria:

4.3.2 Initial confirmation of problem and possibly impact within 15 minutes

4.3.3 Further details and time to fix within one hour

4.3.4 Beyond that, updates to communications team and IT Support Office should be hourly, or as agreed between the three parties (Comms team, ITSO, incident manager).