

Strategic Communications Advisory: Inquiries, inquests and investigations

Public inquiries, inquests and investigations put your organisation's leadership, decision-making processes, and trustworthiness under intense scrutiny. Any misstep can undermine confidence in your organisation and damage essential stakeholder relationships.

In such emotionally sensitive situations, every communication needs a clear purpose, particularly as it will be subject to intense scrutiny and can have a profound impact. It is imperative your communications strategy aligns with

the objectives and ambitions of the legal process and works to clearly demonstrate the actions your organisation has taken to address issues, implement meaningful changes and rebuild trust effectively.

At FleishmanHillard, we have extensive experience advising organisations through these challenging events, providing strategic counsel and hands-on support and working in partnership with legal and specialist partners.

Our four-stage advisory model

PREPAREDNESS

Scenario and reputation risk mapping workshops

Detailed analysis of communications landscape

Messaging stress test sessions

Playbooks covering

- Stakeholder mapping
- Template messaging, other communications assets, and action plans
- Process/protocols for managing communications before, during and after the inquiry, inquest or investigation
- Media and social media engagement approach

TRAINING

Scenario simulation exercises

- Communications teams
- Executive/leadership teams
- Crisis management teams

Media interview training

Considerations for handling media escalation (such as 'doorstepping')

LIVE 24/7 SUPPORT

Real-time advisory and crisis counsel

Corporate reputation senior counsel

Stakeholder mapping and live engagement

Message, content and FAQ development

Full-service, scalable press office

Real time media/social monitoring

On-site media handling

REBUILD

Reputation audit & recovery plan

Stakeholder relations campaigns

Reputation rebuild strategies

Workplace culture changes

Our experience



**Jud
Moore**

Managing
Director, Head of
Crisis, EMEA

Jud has advised a number of clients through legal-related issues including a global manufacturer through a High Court case; a matter involving a highly sensitive and tragic inquest relating to an employee's child; and a Core Participant in the Manchester Arena Public Inquiry.



**Hannah
Cambridge**

Partner &
Co-head, Crisis &
Issues UK

Hannah has worked alongside legal teams her whole career. Amongst other matters, she has represented a core participant in the Manchester Arena Public Inquiry; an FMCG client through a coroner's inquest; social housing organisations under investigation and through inquests.



**Nic
Daley**

Partner &
Co-head, Crisis &
Issues UK

Nic has handled many investigations, often involving regulatory bodies / government agencies, including the European Commission, UK CMA and US DoJ. He works alongside legal partners to determine and deploy strategy under scrutiny. His work also includes the Grenfell Tower tragedy.



**Ella
Cahoon**

Senior
Counsellor,
Crisis & Issues

Ella has extensive experience dealing with prominent crises that impact local government and the emergency services. She has supported clients under intense media scrutiny in high-profile public inquiries including the London Bridge terror attack and the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

Case Study: Core Participant

We supported a core participant in the Public Inquiry into the Manchester Arena terror attack. We worked into the EMEA General Counsel on day to day, and in lock step with external legal counsel including the leading Counsel at the time.

Given the tragic loss of life, sensitivities around communications were exceptionally high, and FH led on developing all internal and external communications for the Core Participant.

We mapped scenarios across multiple phases of the Inquiry – before, during, and at the release of the formal report-ensuring our client was prepared.

We were also responsible for advising on and handling all media requests received.

Case Study: Coroner's Inquest

We supported our client through a high-profile coroner's inquest following the tragic death of a child who accidentally consumed their inedible product. FH led on the media response - ensuring key message penetration to avoid an impact on sales and consumer trust. We also provided recommendations for our client's formal communications to the coroner.

Case Study: Regulatory Investigation

We have worked on several matters involving the European Commission investigating possible violations of EU antitrust laws that prohibit cartels. This involves substantive reputation management work, comprehensive stakeholder engagement, and close alignment with external legal counsel. These included "dawn raids" and subsequent inspections.