

Official ARRL Field Organization Appointment Description

Public Information Coordinator (PIC):

The ARRL Public Information Coordinator (PIC) is a section-level official appointed by and reports to the Section Manager (SM) as the section's expert on public information and public relations matters. The PIC is responsible for organizing, training, guiding, and coordinating the activities of the Public Information Officers (PIOs) within the section.

The Public Information Coordinator must be a Full member of the ARRL and, preferably, have professional public relations or journalism experience or a significantly related background in dealing with the public media.

The purpose of public relations goes beyond column inches and minutes of air time. Those are a means to an end generally, telling a specific story about hams, ham radio, or ham-related activities for a specific purpose. Goals may range from recruiting potential hams for a licensing course to improving public awareness of amateurs' service to the community. Likewise, success is measured not in column inches or air time, but in how well that story gets across and how effectively it generates the desired results.

For this reason, public relations are not conducted in a vacuum. Even the best PR is wasted without effective follow-up. To do this best, PR activities must be well-timed and well-coordinated within the amateur community, so that clubs, mentors, instructors, and so on are prepared to deal with the interest the PR generates. Effective PICs will convey this goal-oriented perspective and attitude to their PIOs and help them coordinate public relations efforts with others in their sections.

Specific Duties of the Public Information Coordinator:

1. Advises the Section Manager on building and maintaining a positive public image for Amateur Radio in the section; keeps the SM informed of all significant events that would benefit from the SM's involvement and report regularly to the SM on activities.
2. Counsels the SM in dealing with the media and with government officials, particularly when representing the ARRL and/or Amateur Radio in a public forum.
3. Maintains contact with other section level League officials, particularly the Section Manager and others such as the State Government Liaison, Section Emergency Coordinator, and Affiliated Club Coordinator on matters appropriate for their attention and to otherwise help to assure and promote a coordinated and cohesive ARRL Field Organization.
4. Works closely with the section Affiliated Club Coordinator and ARRL-affiliated clubs in the section to recruit and train a team of Public Information Officers (PIOs). With the approval of the Section Manager, recommends PIO appointments within the section.
5. Works with the SM and other PICs in the division to develop regional training programs for PIOs and club publicity chairpersons.

6. Coordinates public relations efforts for events and activities that may involve more than one section and provides input on matters before the League's Public Relations Committee for discussion or action.
7. Establishes and coordinates a section-wide Speakers Bureau to provide knowledgeable and effective speakers who are available to address community groups about Amateur Radio, and works with PIOs to promote interest among those groups.
8. Helps local PIOs to recognize and publicize newsworthy stories in their areas. Monitors news releases sent out by the PIOs for stories of broader interest and offers constructive comments for possible improvement. Helps local PIOs in learning to deal with, and attempt to minimize, any negative publicity about Amateur Radio or to correct negative stories incorrectly ascribed to Amateur Radio operators.
9. Working with the PIOs develops and maintains a comprehensive list of media outlets and contacts in the section for use in section-wide or nationwide mailings.
10. Helps local PIOs prepare emergency response PR kits containing general information on Amateur Radio and on local clubs, which may be distributed in advance to local Emergency Coordinators and District Emergency Coordinators for use in dealing with the media during emergencies.
11. Works with PIOs, SM, and ARRL staff to identify and publicize League-related stories of local or regional interest, including election or appointment of ARRL leadership officials, scholarship winners/award winners, *QST* articles by local authors, or local achievements noted or featured in *QST*.
12. Familiarizes self with ARRL Public Service Announcements (PSAs), brochures, and audiovisual materials; assists PIOs in arranging airtime for PSAs; helps PIOs and speakers choose and secure appropriate brochures and audiovisual materials for events or presentations.
13. At the request of the Section Manager or Division Director, may assist with the preparation of a section or division newsletter.
14. Encourages, organizes, and conducts public information/public relations sessions at ARRL hamfests and conventions.
15. Works with PIOs to encourage activities that place Amateur Radio in the public eye, including demonstrations, Field Day activities, etc., and assures that sponsoring organizations are prepared to follow up on the interest generated by these activities.

Addendum:

Most public relations activities are conducted on a local level by affiliated clubs, which generally are established community organizations. PICs should encourage clubs to make public relations a permanent part of their activities.

With the Section Manager's approval, the PIC may appoint club publicity chairpersons or other individuals recommended by affiliated clubs as PIOs. Where the responsibility cannot or will not be assumed by a club, the PIC is encouraged to seek qualified League members who are willing to accept the responsibility of PIO appointments.

Recruitment of new hams and ARRL members is an integral part of the job of every ARRL appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.