

Getting Our Word Out

Managing the Media

During a Crisis

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Media Experiences

- **How many of you have been interviewed by the media during a crisis**
- **How many of you thought it was a positive experience?**



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Media's Reputation

THE GRIEF PROCESS, STAGE ONE:

THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER
©1999 KEVIN LARS



SHOCK



DENIAL



DESPAIR



CNN



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Media Technology

- **The business of gathering news is evolving**
- **Less staff + Less time = Less Understanding**
- **Technology is allowing reporters to:**
 - **Gather information quickly**
 - **Edit their story in the field**
 - **Send the completed story to their station for broadcast**
 - **Broadcast live, breaking news instantaneously**



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Media Technology keeps changing

- **Newspaper**
- **TV**
- **Radio**
- **Web sites**
- **iPod**
- **Blogs**

• **What's next?**



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The 24 hours news cycle

- If you don't get the story out

NOW

It's not going out at all.



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Where's the story ?

- **We are NOT the story 95% of the time**
- **But it can be done**



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The Media is a Tool

- **As a PIO you have a duty to communicate the ham radio story to the public**
- **There are many ways to do this, but none as quick and far reaching as the media**
- **Learn to use the media to your**



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Hurricane Katrina Lessons



- **Everyone grabbed a radio**
- **Few spoke to the press**
- **Media had a hard time finding ham radio people**
- **There was no consistent message given**
- **Media wanted to talk to people “on scene”**
- **No one took timely pictures**



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Crisis Communication Plan

- Have a written section plan outlining what should happen
- Designate who is going to speak for ARES groups
- Include provisions for regular news briefings
- Go to an on-site physical location to facilitate communications with the media



Public Information Defined

-Our wants and theirs-

- What **we** want is for people to know:
 - We're useful; we are doing important things
 - We're friendly volunteers who care
 - We make it possible for others to be the heroes



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- What the public wants to know during an emergency:

- Protective actions taken
- Scope of the emergency
- Response activities
- Community status



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What to share

- **NOT Tech-speak!**
- **It's not about you – it's about the victims**
- **Have correct and updated info at hand**
- **The 5 W's**
- **Have three more contacts ready to go**
 - **national (ARRL HQ)**
 - **area (PIC)**
 - **individual with an anecdote**



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**Be sure brain is engaged before
putting mouth into motion.**



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What To Say

- **Know what you want to say**
- **Know what you don't want to say**
- **What are your Three Key Message Points**
- **Express empathy**
- **It's okay to say, "I don't know."**
- **Never lie.**



The PIO as seen by ARES...

- **Must be trusted to do the job**
 - so let them do it
- **Must have access to information**
- **Acts as a gatekeeper between ARES volunteers and the media, allowing operational people to do their job**
- **Cannot dictate what media will do**
- **Should be trained in EmComm Ops**
- **Coordinates with other PIOs**



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• **Fits in a strategic location in ICS**

Where will YOU be ??

- You are of no use if you are not in the right place!

-so where's that ??



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The JIS: What is it?

- **Joint Information System**

The **(JIS)** is a network of PIOs from multiple agencies sharing and coordinating public information, whether formally or informally, to ensure delivery of accurate and timely information the public needs and wants.



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How is JIS done?



- **JOINT information is info we receive – and share**
- **Who is your counterpart in the served agency?**
- **Coordinate with them and expect the same back**



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A JIS Example

- **Reporter wants a good story**
- **You tell what ARES is doing and about a message ARES had**
- **You share with the served agency's PIO**
- **Reporter gets to meet those involved if possible**



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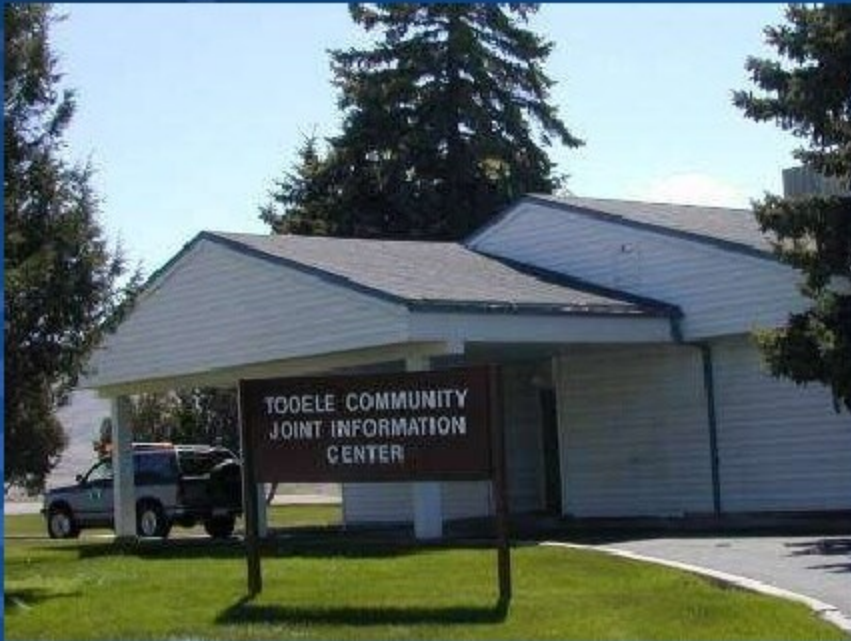
Benefits of Working in a Joint Information System

- **Sharing information to ensure that what is released is accurate**
- **Keeps messages consistent**
- **Avoids releasing conflicting information**
- **Sharing resources**



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Where is this JIS ?



National Incident Management System (NIMS) says,

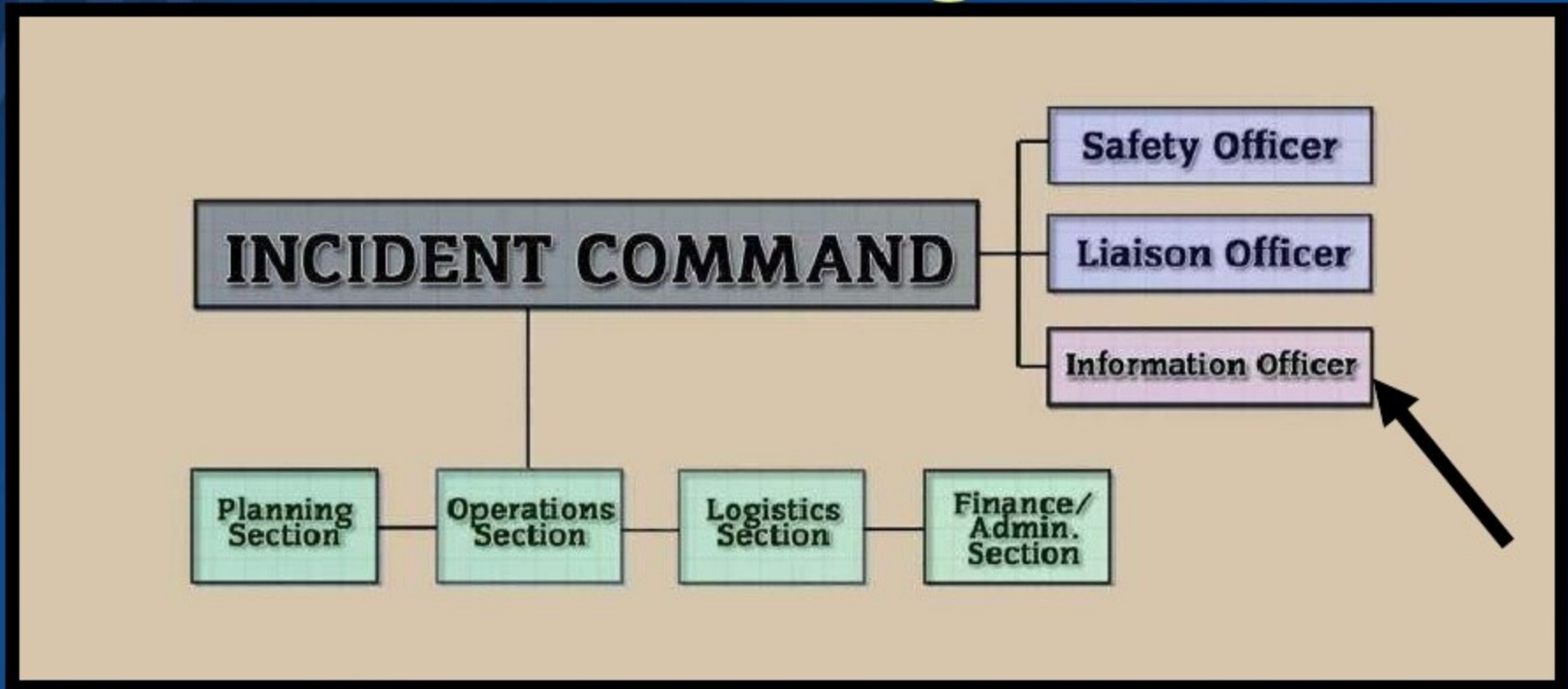
One way to ensure the coordination of public information is by establishing a

Joint Information Center



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Where you fit in the ICS/NIMS Org Chart



ICS/NIMS Org Chart

INFORMATION OFFICER

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER



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JIC: What is it?

- **Joint Information Center (JIC):**

“A physical location where PIOs from multiple agencies participate in JIS.”



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Benefits of the JIC

- **A central working facility where PIOs can gather**
- **Tools to enhance the flow of public information**
- **Avoid being overwhelmed by media**
- **Provides for extended operations**
- **Can provide “one-stop shopping” for the media**



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JIC – What do you need to get in?



- **No consistent credentialing**
- **Need contacts ahead of time**
- **Approval will depend on the scope of the incident**
- **There may be**



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What does this mean to you?

- **Have your own PIO “go kit” ready**
clothes, camera, handouts, laptop...
- **Find out what you need to get in BEFORE**
you need it
- **Recruit & train volunteers to staff a JIC**
- **Know who are your counterparts in served agencies**
- **Be on your SEC’s “hot list” to call up**



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Join or Form a PIO Association

- **Build relationships with other PIOs**
- **Training opportunities**
- ✂ **ICS 700 (Basic NIMS)**
- ✂ **ARECC level 1 at minimum**



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FEMA Emergency Management Institute

COURSE: IS-702 - NIMS Public Information Systems

- **basic responsibilities of the PIO include the following:**
- **Respond to inquiries from the news media and the public;**
- **Monitor the news media to detect and correct misinformation and to identify emerging trends or issues;**
- **Advise Incident Command on public information issues and advocate for the community to ensure its public information needs are addressed;**
- **Manage the release of emergency public information and warnings; and**
- **Coordinate, clear with appropriate authorities, and disseminate accurate and timely information related to the incident.**



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State JIC

- **PIC should be checking on state level JIC protocols**
- **Credentialing – find out and **get it****
- **Who has authority to speak to media on behalf of ARRL and ARES?**
 - and who should not!
- **Establish training programs for PIOs**
- **Assure coverage and timely response**



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Promoting Amateur Radio

- **No matter how good your organization is at responding to a disaster or emergency, if you don't convey that through the media the public won't ever know**



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Remember:

**In a disaster,
you don't rise to the
occasion, you sink to
your lowest level of
preparedness.**



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