



Public Information Emergency Response Team Roles & Responsibilities

I. Communication Objectives

- A. Provide accurate, honest, consistent, useful and timely information to the public and the campus.
- B. Convey that the college is properly managing the emergency/incident and is appropriately caring for students and employees.

II. Communication Rules

- A. All public communications regarding the emergency will be handled by the PIO/Public Information Officer (Wendy Hall) or designee.*
- B. Information will be released only after authorization from the Incident Response Commander.
- C. Factual information on injuries or casualties will be provided to the public by law enforcement, not LCC.
- D. Facts about the emergency will be provided in a timely way, but not before the information is thoroughly verified.
- E. DO NOT SPECULATE about any aspect of the incident.
- F. Initial release of information SHOULD include brief description of what happened, immediate impact on college operations, and measures being taken to control the situation.
- G. Information release SHOULD NOT include speculation of any kind, liability for incident, injuries or fatalities involved, underlying cause of incident, estimates of damage expressed in dollar amounts, estimates of time required to clean up or repair damage, repair or cleanup costs, promises that property or anything else will be restored to "normal," statements about the appropriateness or effectiveness of other agencies' response to the incident, or any statement whatsoever that is "off the record."

III. Action Steps for Public Information Officer

A. Assess the situation.

- 1. Confer with the Incident Response Commander.
- 2. Determine answers to key questions:
 - i. What happened?
 - ii. Is there any ongoing danger to people on campus or in adjacent areas?
 - iii. What is/will be done to respond to situation?
 - iv. How are campus operations being affected?

*PIO designation order: 1) Wendy Hall, 2) Marie Wise; 3) Angie Rogers; 4) Eli Hayes.

- v. Any injuries or fatalities? If yes, who? Have families been notified?
 - vi. Where, when, and how did it happen?
 - vii. What is the extent of the property damage?
3. Assess whether there any special communication needs or challenges.
4. Consult with Incident Commander re: public relations including:
 - i. How should media enter the campus?
 - ii. Where should they park?
 - iii. What are the boundaries re: access to the emergency site?
5. Establish a schedule for ongoing consultation with Incident Commander.
6. Appoint 3-4 PIO assistants to answer phones, carry messages, etc. and provide names to Incident Commander. Options: Marie Wise, Tiffany Stewart, Eli Hayes, Angie Rogers, Maya Muller.
7. Assign a public information liaison (Linda Clark) to be with President Bailey at all times.

B. Release Initial Statement

1. Release a statement to the media (FlashNews.net) and campus as soon as basic facts can be confirmed, including:
 - i. Date, time, location of incident.
 - ii. Basic scope of emergency.
 - iii. College's immediate actions and/or plans to control or resolve situation.
 - iv. Actions required of faculty, staff.
 - v. Promise of regular updates (even if no new information to report).
 - vi. Include links to relevant webpages.
2. Coordinate messages with phone operators, web content managers.
3. Inform press of restrooms and other physical facilities available.
4. Ask media if they have any special needs.

C. Establish communications headquarters

1. Staff: if not already done, appoint 3-4 PIO assistants.
2. Location: if the Effectiveness & College Relations Office (AAR) cannot be used, determine location that is near Incident Command and has sufficient telecommunications resources (phones, computers, printers).
3. Phone: Public Information team should transfer their office phones to communication headquarters.
4. Media: If media converge on campus for an extended period, media room should be provided near communication headquarters. The media room should have adequate phones and computers. Food (snacks) and water should be provided to media.

D. Chronicle the chain of events before, during and after the incident.

E. Continue to provide updates to media and the campus.

1. Determine and maintain list of media contacts to be notified.
2. Prepare fact sheets, news releases and other materials as needed to provide consistent information simultaneously to media and campus.

3. Call media to determine best individuals and numbers to contact. Use all channels identified in "Crisis Communication Procedures."
4. Provide media updates at regular intervals, even if no new information to report.
5. Maintain log of media contacts, content of interviews or conversations.
6. Review news clippings and TV/radio recordings and provide Incident Commander with timely summaries of media coverage, including story angles, concerns and unanswered questions.

F. Contact and respond to non-media audiences, as appropriate.

1. Identify interested agencies, organizations and other audiences, which may include: student government, other students, government agencies, environmental groups, employee unions, elected officials, LCC Board and LCC Foundation Board members, SBCTC, OSPI, other community college PIO's, donors.
2. Call these groups as needed to provide updates.
3. Facilitate communication between these groups, Incident Command and LCC leadership team as needed, summarizing identified concerns and attitudes.

G. Essential Preparation

1. The PIO should maintain the following in an accessible location at all times:
 - i. Cell phone.
 - ii. Emergency cell phone charger with flashlight (2).
 - iii. Badges (6) that identify the Public Information Response Team as part of the overall college emergency response team.
 - iv. LCC logo podium sign.
 - v. Pens, notepads (6).
 - vi. Bottled water.
 - vii. Copies of the emergency contacts phone list (6).
 - viii. Copies of this document (6).
 - ix. Copies of the "Crisis Communication Procedure" (6).
 - x. Login/access information for "Crisis Communication Procedure" channels.
2. Members of the Public Information Response Team should have online training in the following (available for free through FEMA), with periodic updates:
 - i. National Incident Command System
 - ii. National Incident Command System for Higher Education
 - iii. Public Information Officer Awareness
3. The PIO should lead a quarterly update and test of the channels identified in the "Crisis Communications Procedure" with the exception of the FlashNews.net service.