



**ARCADIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
(PIO)**

Number: 132
Revision Date: 08/10/2012
File Name: PIO

Review Date: 03/25/2017

Approved: _____
Michael E. Lang, Fire Chief

PURPOSE

To serve as the dissemination point for all media releases related to major incidents within the City of Arcadia when the Fire Department is the lead agency.

POLICY

The Arcadia Fire Department shall ensure that information is provided on request; that information released is consistent, accurate and timely and that appropriate information is provided to the public all required agencies, departments and City officials.

PROCEDURE

A. Start-Up Actions

1. Check in upon arrival at the EOC.
2. Report to the EOC Director.
3. Obtain a briefing on the situation.
4. Determine your personal operating location and get set up.
5. Review your position responsibilities.
6. Identify yourself as the PIO by putting on the vest with your title. Print your name on the EOC organization chart next to your assignment.
7. Clarify any issues regarding your authority and assignment and what others in the organization do.
8. Open and maintain a position log.
9. Determine 24-hour staffing requirements and request additional support as required.
10. Determine the need for group or unit establishment. Make required personnel assignments as staff arrives at the EOC.
11. Request additional resources through the appropriate Logistics Section Unit.

12. Based upon the situation as known or forecast determine likely future Branch/Unit needs.
13. Think ahead and anticipate situations and problems before they occur.
14. Using activity log, maintain all required records and documentation to support the After-Action Report and the history of the emergency/disaster. Document:
 - Messages received
 - Actions taken
 - Decision justification and documentation
 - Requests filled
 - EOC personnel, time on duty and assignments

B. General Operational Duties

1. Keep up to date on the situation and resources associated with your Branch/Unit/Position. Maintain current status reports and displays.
2. Keep EOC Director advised of your status and activity and on any problem areas that now need or will require solutions.
3. Establish operating procedure with the Information Systems Branch of the Logistics Section for use of telephone, radio, and data systems. Make any priorities or special requests known.
4. Review situation reports as they are received. Verify information where questions exist.
5. Anticipate potential situation changes, such as severe aftershocks, in all planning. Develop a backup plan for all plans and procedures requiring off-site communications.
6. Determine and anticipate support requirements and forward to your Section Coordinator.
7. Monitor your position activities and adjust staffing and organization to meet current needs.
8. Use face-to-face communication in the EOC whenever possible and document decisions and policy.
9. Ensure that your personnel and equipment time records and a record of expendable materials used are provided to your Section Coordinator at the end of each operational period.
10. Brief your relief at shift-change time. Ensure that in-progress activities are identified and follow-up requirements are known.

C. Position Operational Duties

1. Secure guidance from the EOC Director regarding the release of available information.
2. Keep the EOC Director advised of all unusual requests for information and of all major critical or unfavorable media comments. Provide an estimate of the impact and severity and make recommendations as appropriate.
3. Coordinate all media events with the EOC Director.
4. Schedule and post times and locations of news briefings in the EOC, Media Information Center and other appropriate areas.
5. Prepare and provide approved information to the media. Post news releases in the EOC, Media Information Center and other appropriate areas.
6. Develop an information release program.
7. Interact with other branches/groups/units to provide and obtain information relative to public information operations.
8. Coordinate with the Situation Status Unit of the Planning/Intelligence Section and define areas of special interest for public information action. Identify means for securing the information as it is developed.
9. Maintain an up-to-date picture of the situation for presentation to media.
10. Obtain, process, and summarize information for presentations.
11. Provide periodic briefings and press releases about the disaster situation throughout the affected areas. Refer media representatives to incident level PIOs for specific information.
12. As required, periodically prepare briefings for the jurisdiction executives or elected officials.
13. Respond to information requests from the EOC Director and EOC Management Team.
14. Ensure that a rumor control function is established as necessary, and has the means for identifying false or erroneous information. Develop procedure to be used to squelch such information.
15. Provide sufficient staffing and telephones to efficiently handle incoming media and public calls and to gather status information.

16. Consider establishing and staffing a hot-line to answer inquiries from the public.
17. Prepare, update, and distribute to the public a Disaster Assistance Information Directory containing locations to obtain food, shelter, supplies, health services, etc.
18. Prepare a briefing sheet to be distributed to all employees at the beginning of each shift so they can answer questions from the public, such as shelter locations, water distribution sites, DACs, etc.
19. Broadcast emergency information/updates on local cable channel either through the message board or live taping of Mayor, EOC Director, etc.
20. Arrange for meetings between media and City officials or incident personnel.
21. Provide escort service to the media and VIPs; arrange for tours and photo opportunities when available staff and time permit. Coordinate VIP tours with Liaison.
22. Assist in making arrangements with adjacent jurisdictions for media visits.
23. Determine which radio and TV stations are operational.
24. Determine requirements for support to the emergency public information function at other EOC levels.
25. Monitor broadcast media, and use information to develop follow-up news releases and rumor control.
26. When federal emergency response teams respond, coordinate activities through the Los Angeles County Operational Area to ensure coordination of local, state and federal public information activities.
27. Ensure that announcements, information and materials are translated and prepared for special populations (non-English speaking; non-readers; elderly; the hearing, sight and mobility impaired; etc.)
28. Prepare materials that describe the health risks associated with each hazard, the appropriate self-help or first aid actions and other appropriate survival measures.
29. Prepare instructions for people who must evacuate from a high-risk area, including the following information for each threat: evacuation routes; suggestions on types and quantities of clothing, food, medical items, etc. the evacuees should bring; location of shelters.

30. During periods of increased national readiness, or in time of need, prepare materials that address national security survival tips.
31. Issue timely and consistent advisories and instructions for life safety, health and assistance.
 - What to do and why.
 - What not to do and why not.
 - Hazardous areas and structures to avoid.
 - Evacuation routes, instructions and arrangements for persons without transportation or special needs (non-ambulatory, sight impaired, etc.).
 - Location of mass care shelters, first aid stations, food and water distribution points, etc.
 - Location where volunteers can register and be given assignments.
 - Street and freeway overpass conditions, congested areas to avoid and alternate routes to take.
 - Instructions from the coroner and public health officials pertaining to dead bodies, potable water, human waste and spoiled food disposal.
 - Weather hazards when appropriate.
 - Public information hotline numbers.
 - Status of Local Proclamation, Governor's Proclamation or Presidential Declaration.
 - Local, state and federal assistance available; locations and times to apply.
 - Disaster Application Center (DAC) locations, opening dates and times.
 - How and where people can obtain information about relatives/friends in the emergency/disaster area. (Coordinate with the Red Cross on the release of this information.)
32. Issue other information pertaining to the emergency/disaster (acts of heroism, historical property damaged or destroyed, prominence of those injured or killed, other human interest stories).
33. Through the Los Angeles County Operational Area, coordinate with state, federal or private sector agencies to get technical information (health risks, weather, etc.) for release to the public and media.
34. Ensure file copies are maintained for all information released.
35. Provide copies of all releases to the EOC Director.
36. Prepare final news releases and advise media representatives of points-of-contact for follow up stories.

D. Deactivation

1. Ensure that all required forms or reports are completed prior to your release and departure.
2. Be prepared to provide input to the After-Action Report.
3. Determine what follow-up to your assignment might be required before you leave.

Number: 132
Revision Date: 08/10/2012
File Name: PIO

4. Deactivate the Emergency Public Information position and close out logs when authorized by the EOC Director.
5. Leave forwarding phone number where you can be reached.