Unit 1:
Welcome and Overview

Topic: Welcome

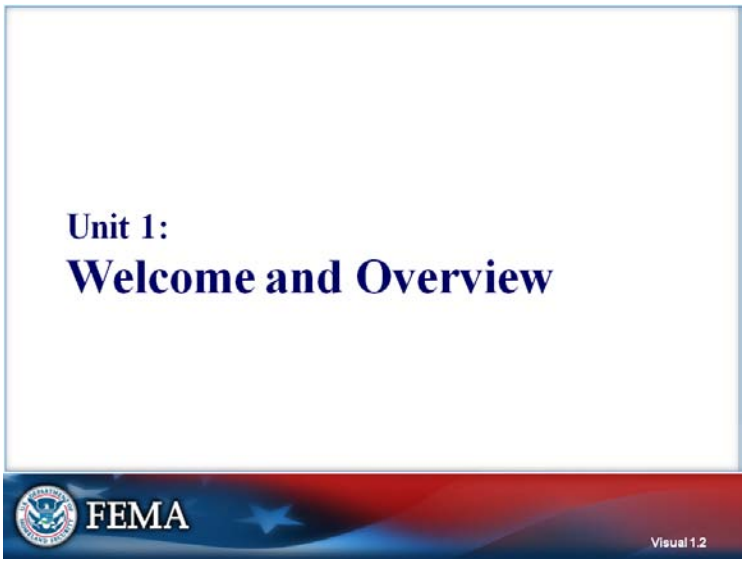
Visual 1.1

Visual Description: Course Title Slide

Key Points

Topic	Welcome

Visual 1.2



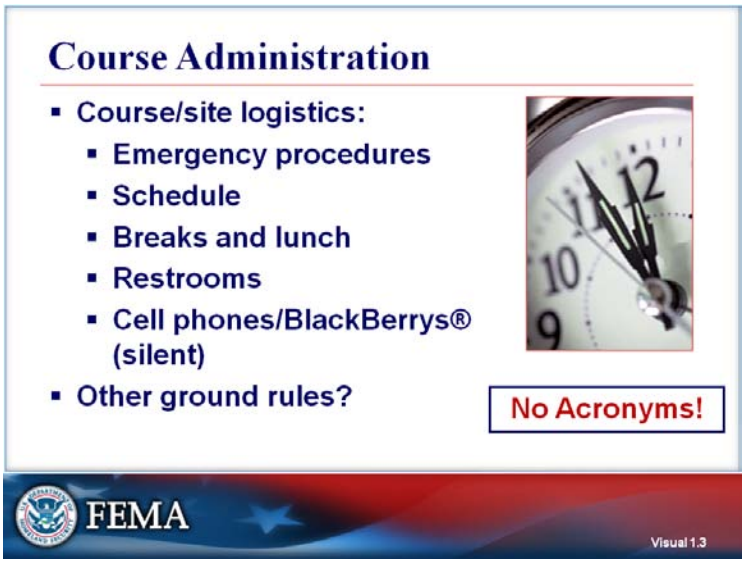
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit will provide an overview of the 2-day Basic Public Information Officer course.

Topic	Course Administration

Visual 1.3



Visual Description: Course Administration

Key Points

Ground rules:

- Cell phones and BlackBerrys® should be turned off or turned to silent.
- Acronyms will not be used in class with a few exceptions. Acronyms are not helpful if you are trying to communicate with reporters or members of the public who are not familiar with the acronyms that may be common to us.

Allowable acronyms in this class:

- AP (Associated Press)
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- ICS (Incident Command System)
- NIMS (National Incident Management System)
- PIO

Refer to the Appendix (page A-1) in your Student Manuals for a course-related glossary and acronym list.

Topic: Tiered Training Approach

Visual 1.4

Visual Description: Tiered Training Approach

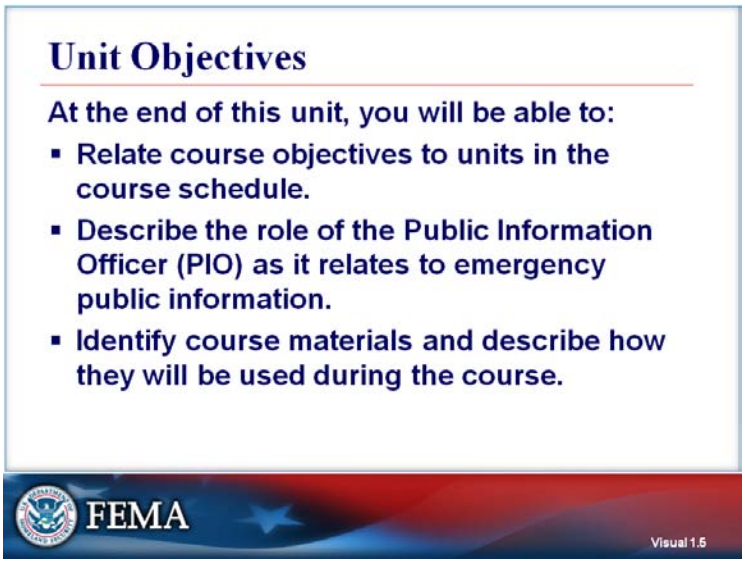
Key Points

This course is part of a tiered training approach in that it provides the foundation for more advanced training that takes participants from the awareness level to the mastery level in their public information careers. Development of this curriculum has been a joint effort involving the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), the National Information Officers Association (NIOA), and FEMA.

This course builds on the Public Information Officer Awareness Course (G289) and is a prerequisite for the JIS/JIC Planning for Tribal, State, and Local PIOs (G291) and Advanced PIO courses.

Topic: Unit Objectives

Visual 1.5



Visual Description: Unit Objectives

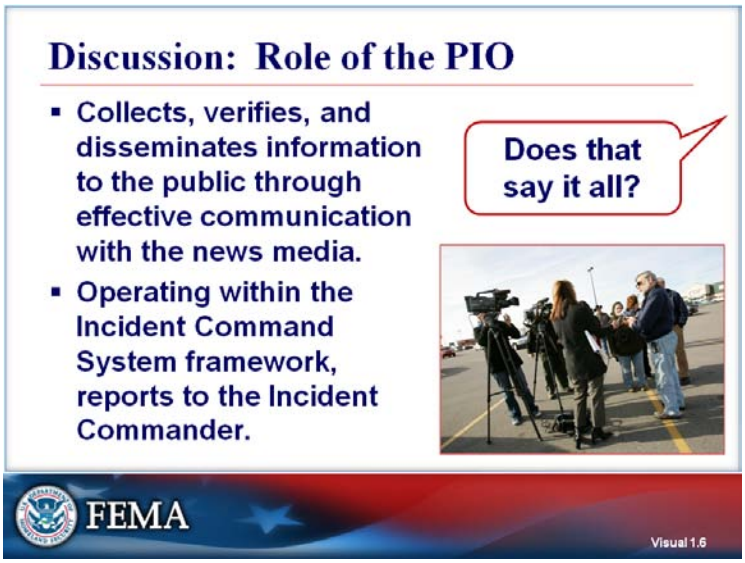
Key Points

The objectives of this unit are to:

- Relate course objectives to units in the course schedule.
- Describe the role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) as it relates to emergency public information.
- Identify course materials and describe how they will be used during the course.

Topic	Role of the PIO

Visual 1.6



Visual Description: Discussion: Role of the PIO

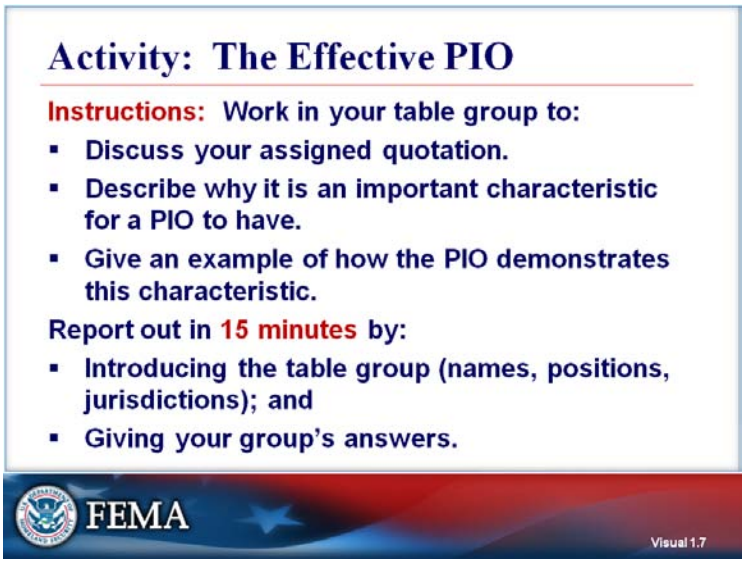
Key Points

These two statements describe the role of the PIO.

	As you think about the things that PIOs do, what would you add to these "job" descriptions?

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.7



Visual Description: Activity: The Effective PIO

Key Points

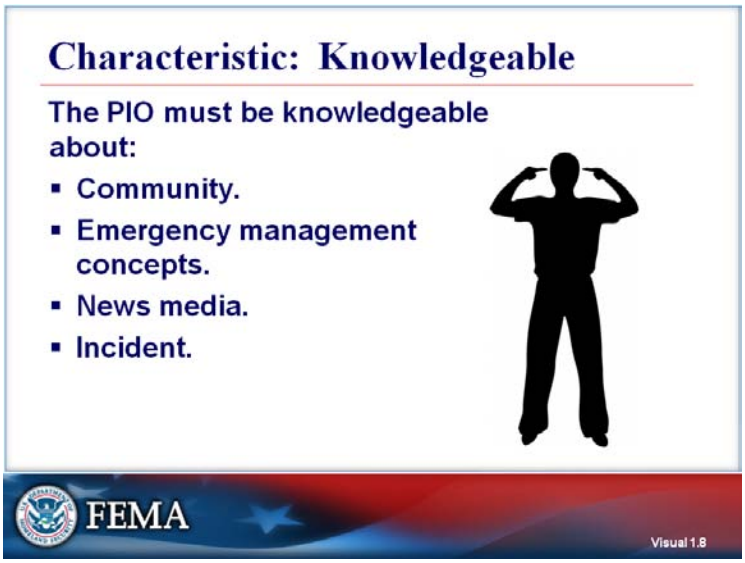
Purpose of the Activity: To give the participants an opportunity to get to know each other and to discuss characteristics that are important for success as a PIO.

Activity Instructions:

- As part of this activity, you will introduce yourselves to each other in your table groups, providing your name, position, and jurisdiction. When you report out at the end of this activity, you also will introduce everyone at the table to the rest of the class.
- With the characteristic/quotation you are assigned:
  - Discuss the assigned quotation;
  - Describe why it is an important characteristic for a PIO to have; and
  - Give an example of how the PIO demonstrates this characteristic.
- Record your answers on chart paper, select a reporter, and be prepared to report out in 15 minutes.

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.8



Visual Description: Characteristic: Knowledgeable

Key Points

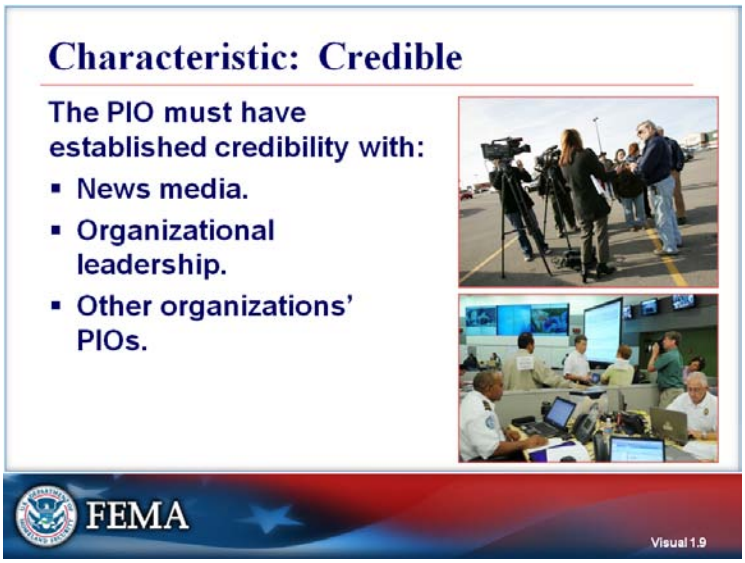
What is your familiarity with your local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)?

What is your familiarity with the Incident Command System (ICS)?

What is your familiarity with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)?

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.9



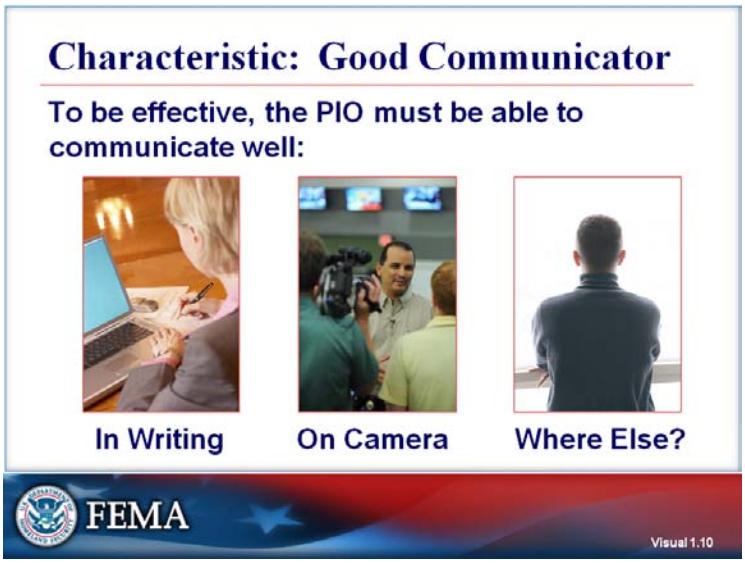
Visual Description: Characteristic: Credible

Key Points

	What does it mean to be credible? **How do you establish credibility?**

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.10



Visual Description: Characteristic: Good Communicator

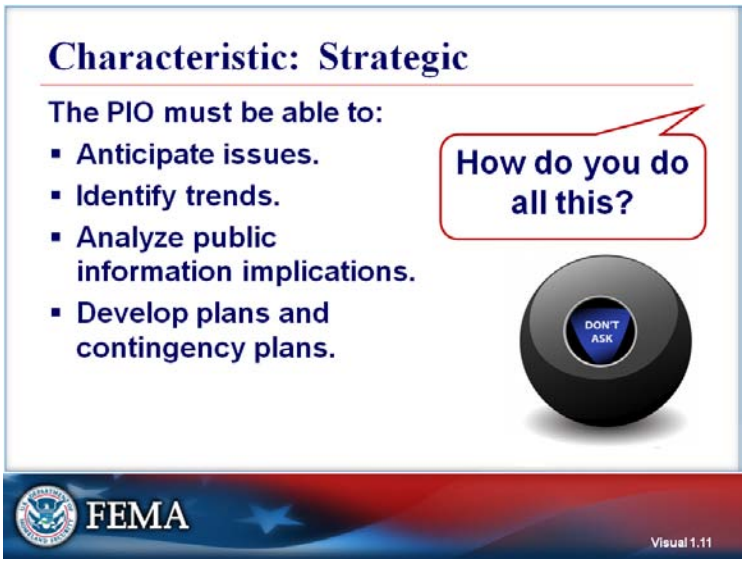
Key Points

Being a good communicator in writing and on camera is particularly important for the PIO.

	Where else must the PIO demonstrate effective communication skills?

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.11



Visual Description: Characteristic: Strategic

Key Points

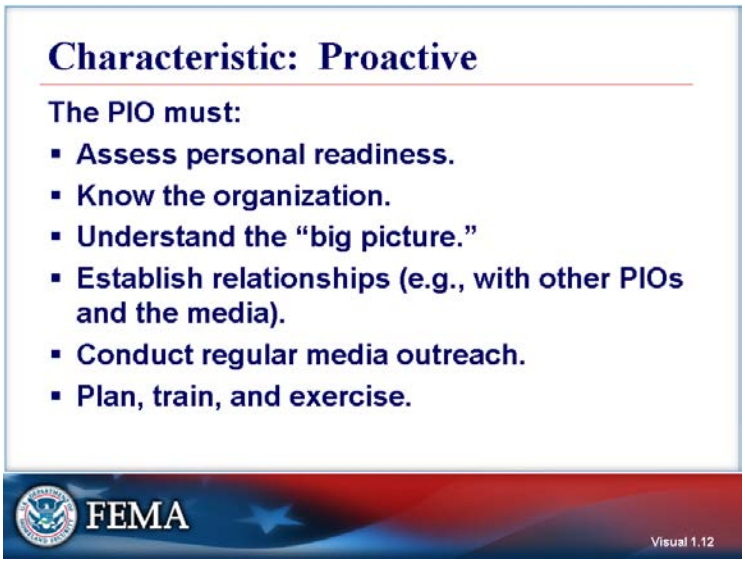
The PIO demonstrates strategic thinking by:

- Anticipating issues (e.g., negative public response to expansion of a homeless shelter).
- Identifying trends (e.g., increasing public contributions (photos, blogging) on news Web sites).
- Analyzing public information implications of incidents (e.g., failure of a sprinkler system and resulting increased public concern over fire safety).
- Developing plans and contingency plans (e.g., plan that includes media outreach, public education/awareness activities, incident response, and backup plans).

	How do you do all this?

Topic	Characteristics of the Effective PIO

Visual 1.12



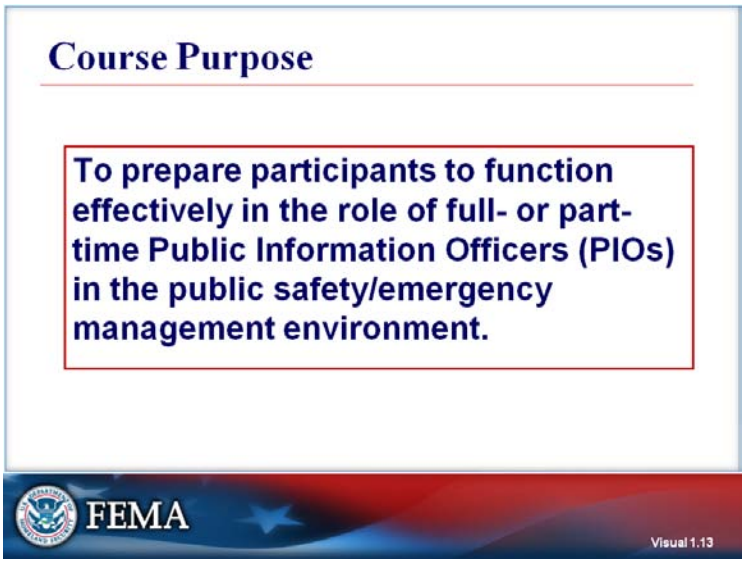
Visual Description: Characteristic: Proactive

Key Points

What does it mean to be proactive?

Topic	Course Overview

Visual 1.13



Visual Description: Course Purpose

Key Points

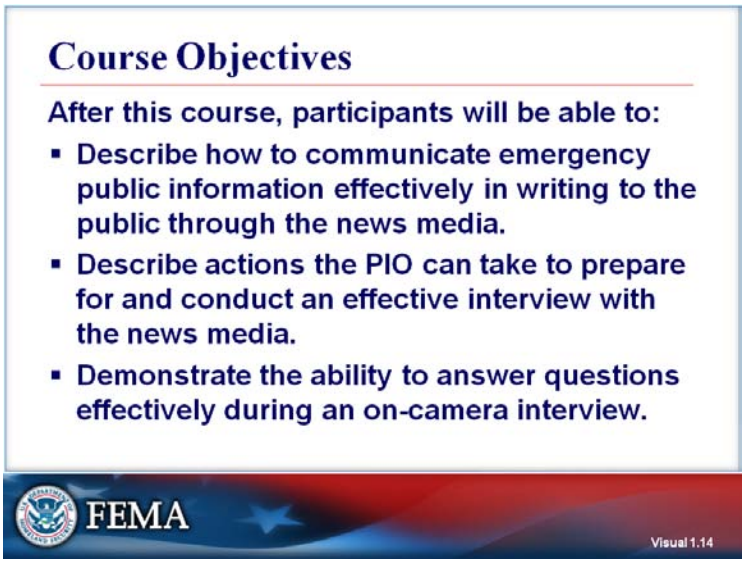
This training has been designed to prepare you to function in the role of full- or part-time Public Information Officers in the public safety and emergency management environment.

Key points:

- PIOs in public safety and emergency management organizations are responsible for ensuring that the affected public receives accurate and timely information during an emergency. Armed with good information, people are better able to make good decisions and, by doing so, contribute to the overall response goal of saving lives and protecting property.
- After this training, you may decide that you need further development on one or more of the topics addressed. Your instructors and fellow class members may have recommendations for courses or reference materials that can help you. Please use this opportunity to think about your continued development in the field of public information and ask for help and advice as needed.

Topic	Course Overview

Visual 1.14

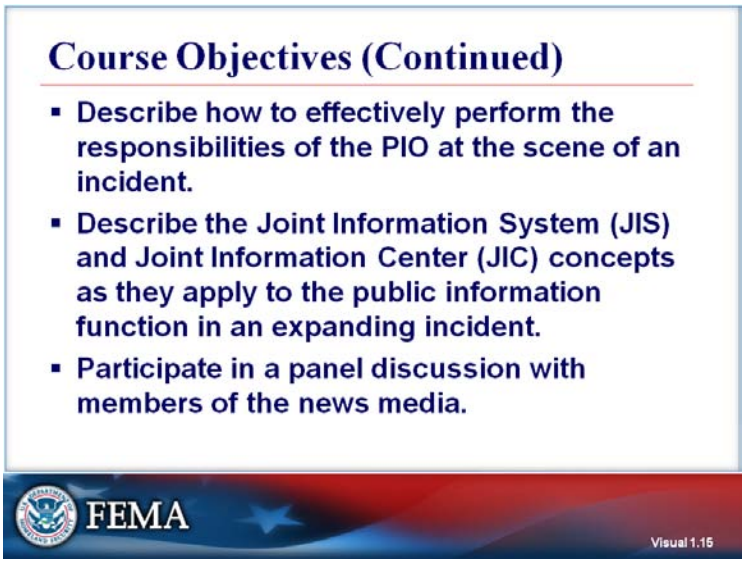


Visual Description: Course Objectives

Key Points

Topic	Course Overview

Visual 1.15



Visual Description: Course Objectives (Continued)

Key Points

Topic: Course Overview

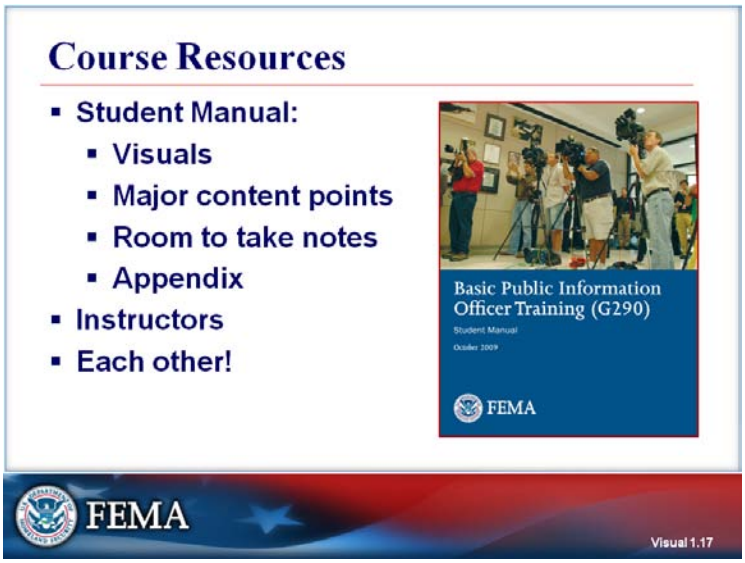
Visual 1.16

Visual Description: Course Agenda

Key Points

Topic	Course Overview

Visual 1.17



Visual Description: Course Resources

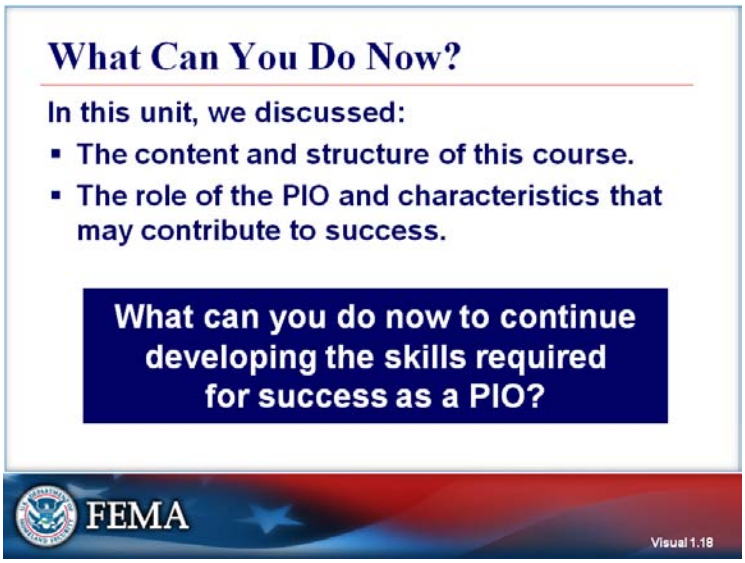
Key Points

Review the course resources:

- The Student Manual includes the visuals they will see in class and major content points, as well as room to take notes. The Appendix includes tips and tools they will use in this course and back on the job.
- The instructors are available to answer questions during class and at breaks.
- The collective experience and expertise of the group is an important resource for this training. Please participate fully and share your ideas.

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 1.18



Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

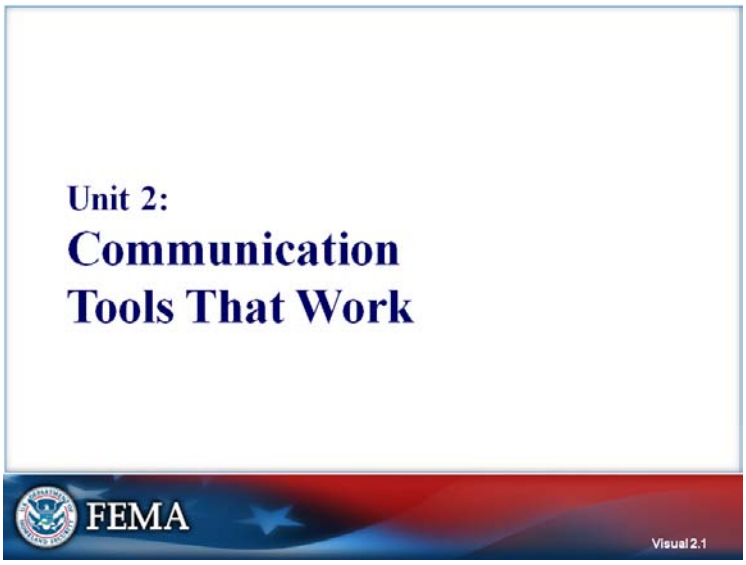
Key Points

What can you do now to continue developing the skills required for success as a PIO?

Unit 2:
Communication Tools That Work

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 2.1



Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

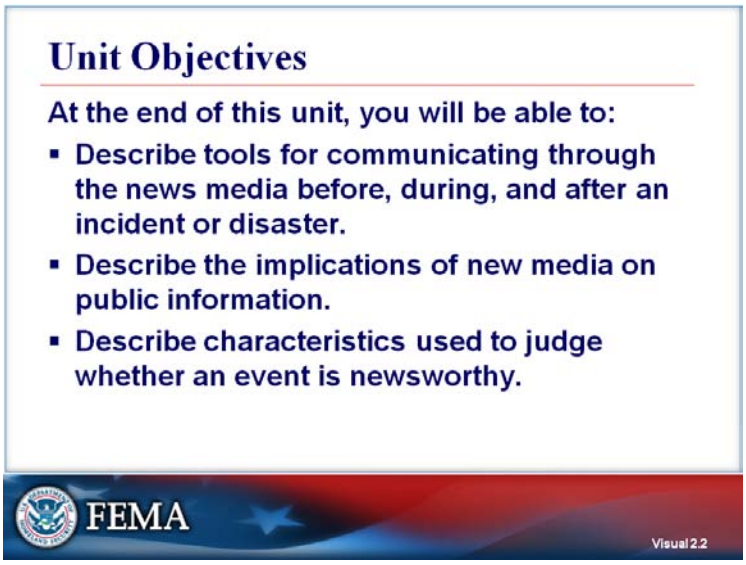
Key Points

Unit 2 will discuss:

- The role of written communication before, during, and after an incident;
- How to write an effective news release; and
- The processes that can help you get the right information to the right people at the right time.

Topic: Unit Objectives

Visual 2.2

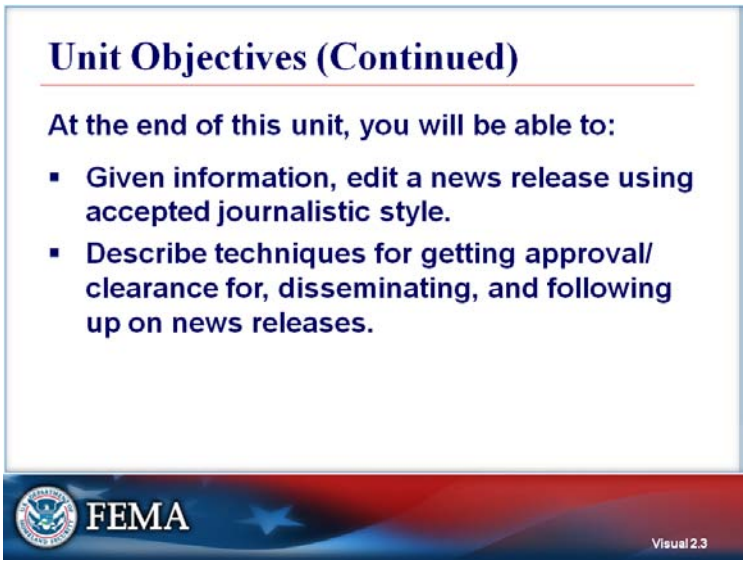


Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic	Unit Objectives

Visual 2.3

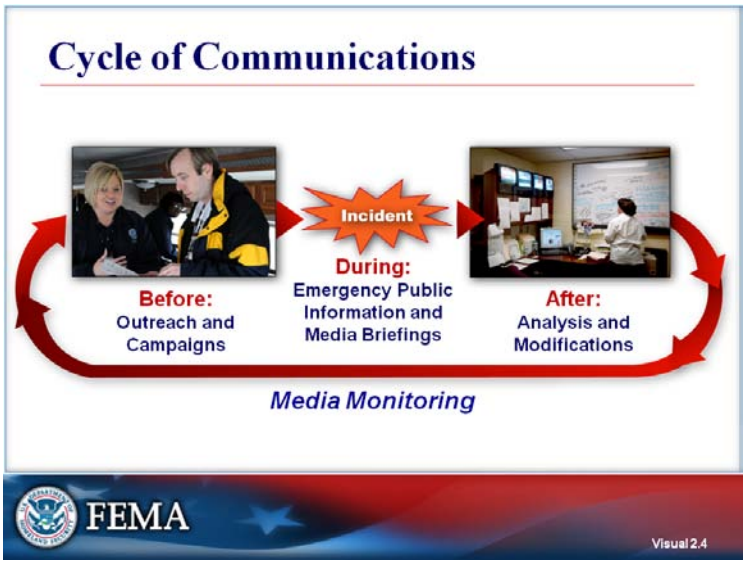


Visual Description: Unit Objectives (Continued)

Key Points

Topic: Cycle of Communications

Visual 2.4



Visual Description: Cycle of Communications

Key Points

- **Public Information:** Collected, assembled, or maintained by an organization in connection with **the transaction of official business and available for dissemination to the public.**
- **Emergency Public Information:** Developed and disseminated in anticipation of, during, or after an emergency to provide specific life- and health-saving information, including the severity of the situation and any action steps that individuals and communities should take.

While much of this training focuses on emergency public information, one of the most important "take aways" from this training should be the concept of a **cycle of communications** that includes:

- Outreach activities and public awareness campaigns before an incident;
- Emergency public information—such as briefings for the news media—during an incident; and
- Analysis of communications efforts after an incident.

Media monitoring takes place throughout the cycle and is used to continually evaluate and adjust public information efforts.

Refer to the Appendix in your Student Manual for the job aid titled News Media's Role/How To Build Effective Relationships with the Media (page A-21).

Topic	Cycle of Communications

Visual 2.5

Visual Description: Outreach and Campaigns

Key Points

Public information activities undertaken before an incident can include:

- Outreach to the news media; and
- Public awareness campaigns.

Outreach to the media can educate reporters unfamiliar with your organization or program and can build relationships.

Examples of outreach to the news media include:

- Regular contact through phone calls or news releases (as long is there is a newsworthy reason behind the call or news release); and
- Facility tours or ride-alongs (especially for reporters new to your beat).

What do you currently do to educate and build relationships with the news media?

Topic	Cycle of Communications

Public awareness campaigns are a way to reach out to the public.

Examples of public awareness campaigns include:

- Smoke detector campaigns (get smoke detectors, replace batteries, etc.);
- Home preparedness plans;
- Weather-related messages (hurricane, tornado, and earthquake preparedness, etc.);
- Home swimming pool safety;
- Food safety; and
- Health-related issues (e.g., cold and flu prevention, child immunization).

What public awareness campaigns have been successful in your community?

Topic Cycle of Communications

Visual 2.6

Visual Description: Incident Communication

Key Points

The goal of public information during an incident is getting the right information to the right people at the right time so they can make good decisions.

Communication tools during an incident include news releases, interviews, news conferences, and briefings.

What is the difference between a news conference and a news briefing?

In what situation would you want to hold a news conference or briefing?

Topic Cycle of Communications

Visual 2.7

Visual Description: Incident Communications Analysis

Key Points

Evaluating public information efforts may be required as part of an after-action report post-incident. In any case, it pays to consider what went well and what could have gone better in terms of public information.

Where would you go for information to evaluate your public information efforts?

What information do you look at?

How do you use the information?

Topic: Tools of the Trade

Visual 2.8

Visual Description: Tools of the Trade

Key Points

- **News release:** Used when there is a factual report of an activity or incident of news value.
- **Statement:** Used in lieu of a news release. Issued in print; less detailed than a press release. Good to use when you've received multiple media calls on the same topic.
- **Fact sheet:** Used when you need to provide more detail than possible in a news release.
- **Media advisory:** Used to invite the media to an event or news conference. Provides basic information (what, where, when, and why); provides directions.
- **Talking points:** Used to prepare yourself or someone else for a telephone or broadcast interview. Written as sound bites—concise, simple to understand. For internal use only—not for distribution to the news media.
- **Web products:** An increasingly important avenue; includes Web pages, Blogs, and Tweets.
- **Public service announcements (PSAs):** Used when you want to enlist the cooperation of the electronic media in promoting an important message.
- **Newsletter articles:** Used to communicate within the organization or may be a feature in a newsletter that reaches another audience.
- **Brochures, fliers, and other handouts:** Used to provide background information to supplement a news release, provide photos or graphics, etc. Remember not to overwhelm the reporter with too much or extraneous information. Sometimes "less is more."

Topic: Tools of the Trade

Visual 2.9

Visual Description: Managing Information—New Tools

Key Points

Importance of information flow during a crisis:

- PIOs need to be able to gather information from multiple sources and disseminate information through multiple channels. Distribution of crisis messages is especially challenging today because of the difficulty in reaching everyone with the same message.
- The average American family is far more fragmented in their activities and information sources than they were just a few years ago. Online activities, mobile entertainment and computing, and media on demand have fragmented our attention and made us difficult to reach with the same message.
- Additionally, people are developing preferences and expectations for how and when they want information delivered. A good PIO will work to fill those expectations.
- Working with the new media tools available today does not mean that PIOs have to become "techies." But it is important that they are aware of the tools they have available and how to use them to gather and disseminate information effectively.
- The basic concepts of good information management still apply.

Topic	Tools of the Trade

Visual 2.10

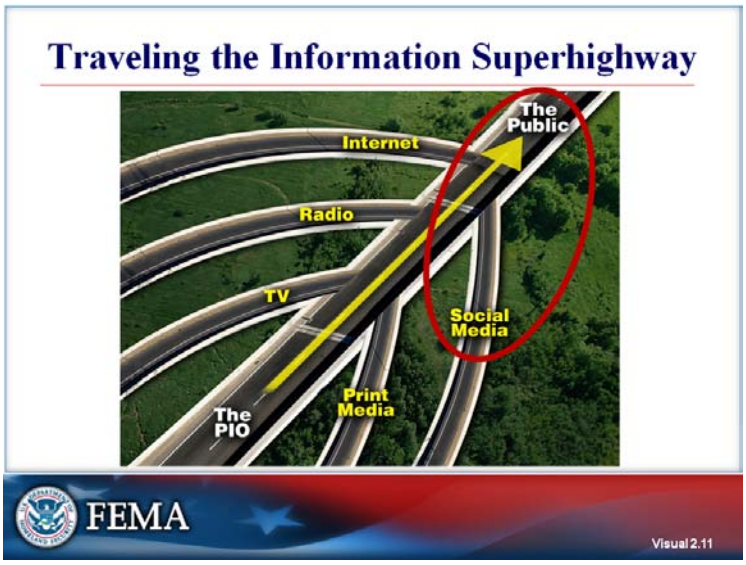
Visual Description: Coming to Terms With New Media

Key Points

Refer to the New Media Glossary in the Appendix (page A-5) in your Student Manuals.

Topic	Tools of the Trade

Visual 2.11



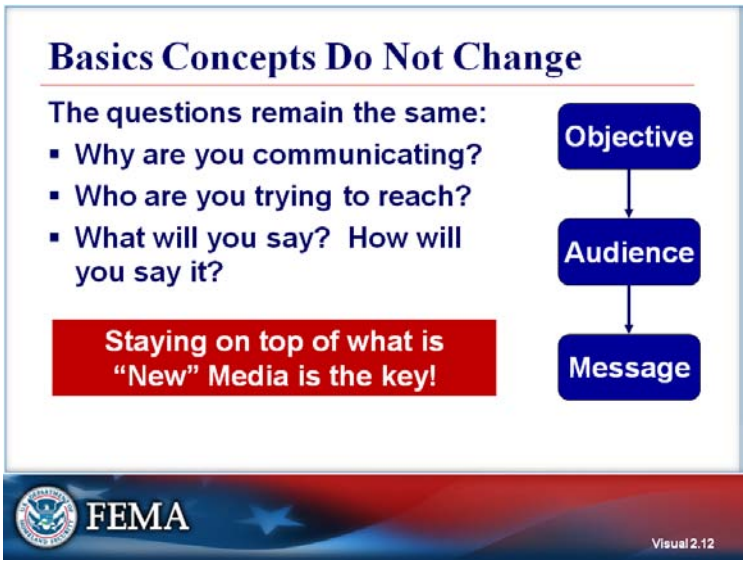
Visual Description: Traveling the Information Superhighway

Key Points

- The "information superhighway" between the PIO and the public has several media "on-ramps."
- Some of these on-ramps are "older" than others—for example, print, TV, and radio—but even traditional media have new features or ways of operating. For instance, most every newspaper or electronic media outlet now has a Web site.
- One thing is certain: Yesterday's news media are not today's news media and certainly won't be tomorrow's. You only need to look at the role of new media today—including social media—to appreciate that change.
- With new media, the public is no longer only the audience. Every member of the public is a potential reporter!
- We've seen individuals with mobile devices using blogs, video, and Twitter to spread information in real time during an emergency. New media can both aid and detract from emergency response and is proving to be both a tool and a challenge for PIOs.

Topic **Tools of the Trade**

Visual 2.12



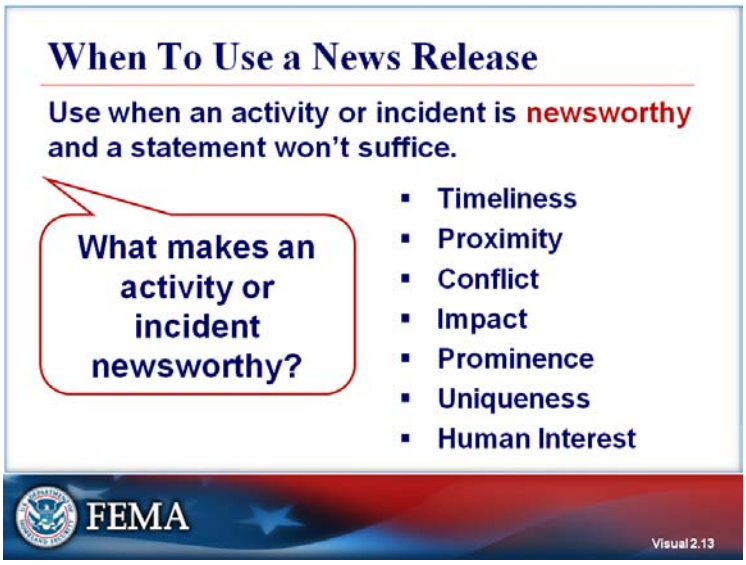
Visual Description: Basic Concepts Do Not Change

Key Points

- Basic concepts in information management do not change with the inclusion of new media tools. You still need to answer the basic questions:
  - Why are you communicating? (Your objective)
  - Who are you trying to reach? (Your audience)
  - What will you say and how will you say it? (Your medium)
- Ultimately, new communication technology is all about speed. There is an expectation from the public that their government agencies will not only be transparent and responsive, but that the response must be customized to the incident and as rapid as the flow of electrons.
- People have an expectation of being engaged and involved and they don't want to wait for it. By establishing a presence in the Web 2.0 world and knowing how to use the tools to communicate official information from your agency, you can help to shape the perception of the event along with possibly providing important life-saving information to those who need it.
- Remember: It's all about getting the right information to the right people at the right time so they can make the right decisions.
- The key is also staying on top of what is out there, because "new" media is a relative term and technology doesn't slow down for anyone.

Topic | **News Releases**

Visual 2.13



Visual Description: When To Use a News Release

Key Points

What makes an activity or incident newsworthy?

- **Timeliness:** Self-explanatory. News is NOW.
- **Proximity:** Events that happen near us have more significance and are more newsworthy to us.
- **Conflict:** Controversy or struggle between opposing sides makes news. (NOTE: The struggle doesn't have to be between people; it can be between people and the elements.)
- **Impact:** How will this affect me and to what degree?
- **Prominence:** Who is involved—the more "known" they are affects newsworthiness.
- **Uniqueness:** "Different" can be news.
- **Human interest:** Human interest stories can be of interest even if they don't exemplify some of these other characteristics of newsworthiness. Human interest stories appeal to emotion and enable the audience to identify with the subject.

Topic News Releases

Visual 2.14

Visual Description: Characteristics of a Good News Release

Key Points

A good news release:

- Says: Who, what, when, where, why, and how; using accurate, factual information with attribution. Sometimes quotes can add value when used appropriately.
- And, says it using:
  - Clear, concise, easy-to-understand language.
  - Simple sentences.
  - Short paragraphs.
  - The third person.
  - No jargon and acronyms.

Jargon and acronyms can help us communicate internally, but can be real barriers to communicating with the public.

Topic: News Releases

Visual 2.15

Visual Description: Writing the News Release

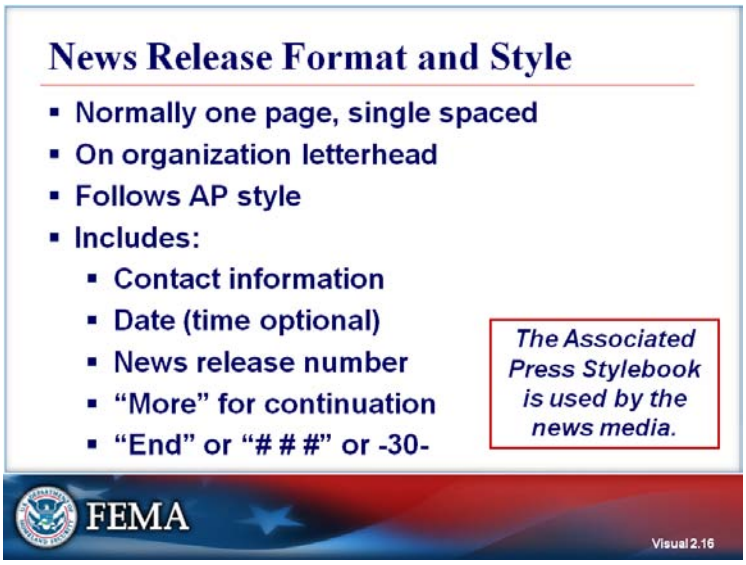
Key Points

Steps for writing a news release:

1. Gather your facts.
2. Organize. A simple outline works for some, but not for others. Whatever tool you use, time spent organizing may seem like an extra step but will save time in the long run and produce a better product.
3. Develop your lead (strong opening sentence).
4. Identify the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
5. Put the most important information first: Use the inverted pyramid writing structure.
   - The lead sentence should summarize the key information you want to present.
   - The second sentence supports the lead, and includes any information you could not fit in the lead.
   - Prioritize each additional sentence and paragraph and write in declining order of importance. Include less important material near the end; this way, this information can be cut without impacting the story when column space or airtime is lacking.

Topic | **News Releases**

Visual 2.16



Visual Description: News Release Format and Style

Key Points

Review the recommended format and style for news releases:

- Write in accepted journalistic style.
- Each sentence should be a declarative statement containing a fact in a subject-verb-object form.
- Attribute information. If the statement is coming from your organization, say so. If you are conveying information from another source—for example, the National Weather Service—use words such as: "According to the National Weather Service."
- Follow Associated Press (AP) style. *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* is available in university bookstores or online.
- Most reporters will rewrite your material, which is all the more reason it should be clear and concise and focus on facts.

Refer to your Student Manual for the sample news releases. The first release is one that might be used in an emerging event and the second might be part of a public awareness campaign. .

The third and fourth news releases are examples of a bulleted format and one that is particularly useful when updating previously released information.

STATE OF COLUMBIA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
JAMES SMITH
GOVERNOR
WWW.GOVERNOR.STATE.CL.US

NEWS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT
EILEEN WILLS (555) 123-4567(O)
(555) 123-6789(H)
EWILLS@CLGOV.STATE.CL.US

Organizational letterhead with contact and personal information

Headline

Governor declares emergency for Liberty County

Dateline

CAPITAL CITY – June 18, 20xx, 2 p.m.

Body of release in inverted pyramid

Governor James Smith today declared a state of emergency in the Great A&P fire rapidly spreading west. The fire started near Harvest Junction on the railroad and the fumes from the burning hazardous materials in the cars threaten a number of nearby communities, according to local authorities.

The governor declared the emergency following a similar declaration by Liberty County. The governor's declaration allows the use of state resources in paying the costs of fighting the fire.

Smith also activated the State Emergency Operations Center, which coordinates state firefighting efforts in these situations. The governor is continuing to monitor the situation.

"Once again, we see a fire threatening our citizens and their homes. I know our superb team of firefighters will do all they can, but the conditions on the railroad are particularly difficult," Smith said.

The governor repeated his request that everyone use caution and heed warning messages on TV and radio, or in their newspapers.

"Unfortunately, these hazardous materials are creating a dangerous situation for all of us. I would urge you to be careful whenever you travel," Smith said.

End

# # #

CAPITAL CITY, COLUMBIA
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
JAN DOE
MAYOR
WWW.MAYOR.CAPCITY.CL.US

NEWS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT
TOM HOOK (555) 765-4321(O)
(555) 765-4231(H)
THOOK@CITYGOV.CAPCITY.CL.US

Organizational letterhead with contact and personal information

Headline

Nominations open for city's transportation safety awards

Dateline

CAPITAL CITY – February 18, 20xx, 2 p.m.

Body of release in inverted pyramid

Traffic accidents in Capital City have dropped nearly 10 percent over the past calendar year, according to city transportation officials, and Mayor Jan Doe wants to know why so she can encourage more of the same.

"If you've noticed repaired potholes, cleared bike paths, easy-to-see traffic signs and the safe driving of your bus driver, I urge you to nominate the people responsible for recognition," said Mayor Doe.

The Mayor's Transportation Safety Awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made contributions to transportation safety in Capital City. The awards recognize accomplishments in the public and private sectors by individuals and organizations that promote transportation safety.

"The efforts of these organizations and individuals have made Capital City a safer place for all of us who live, work or visit here," said Mayor Doe. "I look forward to honoring this year's award recipients."

Award categories include public transportation safety, rail safety, and general traffic safety. For nomination forms, go to www.cctransafety.org.

To be eligible for consideration, activities and programs must have taken place during calendar year 20XX. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 15, 20XX, and mailed to The Mayor's Transportation Safety Awards, Room 405, Post Office Box 27412, Capital City, Columbia 03269-0001.

Winners of the Mayor's Transportation Safety Awards will be notified in April and honored in May at the Columbia Conference on Transportation Safety.

End

# # #

Jesusita Fire Information Center

May 10, 20XX / 7:00 am

Contact: Jesusita Fire Information Call Center (805) 681-5197

JESUSITA FIRE Update: SUNDAY, MAY 10, 20XX

Santa Barbara, Cal. - The Unified Command Team has developed a plan for the safe, structured return of residents to their homes and businesses. The current mandatory evacuation order has been downgraded to an evacuation warning for the following areas:

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY – All residences within the following area: Garden and Micheltorena, Micheltorena East extending to Alameda Padre Serra (APS), Alameda Padre Serra to Sycamore canon Road (Hwy 144) to Stanwood Drive (Hwy 192), Stanwood Drive (Hwy 192) to Foothill Road (Hwy 192), Foothill Road (Hwy 192) to Mission Canyon Road, Mission Canyon Road to Los Olivos, Los Olivos to Garden Street, Garden Street South to Micheltorena.

As a result of this revision, all areas south of Foothill Road / Stanwood / Hwy 192 are now within an evacuation warning area.

Residents OF THE ABOVE LOCATIONS may return to their homes and businesses. Please remember that an Evacuation Warning stills exists in the area. Returning residents and business owners are cautioned to remain aware of the potential for an evacuation order on short notice.

All other existing mandatory evacuation orders and evacuation warnings remain in effect.

Foothill Road (Hwy 192) remains closed except for emergency vehicle traffic only.

The Unified Command is constantly evaluating the situation to repopulate affected areas.

FIRE STATUS

- Acres burned: **8,733**
- Current Containment: **55%**
- Expected full containment: **05/13/XX**
- Damage assessment (in progress): **31** residences destroyed, **2** outbuildings destroyed, **47** residences damaged.
- Residences threatened (various levels of threat with respect to location): **3,500**
- Commercial properties threatened (various levels of threat with respect to location): **100**
- Personnel currently assigned to the incident: **4,543**
- Engines: **509**
- Crews: **110**
- Dozers: **37**
- Water Tenders: **45**
- Air Tankers: **9**
- Helicopters: **14**
- Firefighter injuries to date: **18**
- Cause: Under investigation
- Tip line: **805-686-5074**
- Estimated costs to date: $**7.4** million

- more -

ROAD CLOSURES
Highway 154 is closed at US Highway 101
Road Closure Hotline - 805-568-3006
www.countyofsb.org/pwd/roads/closure.htm

EVACUATION SHELTER LOCATIONS
- Dos Pueblos High School (at capacity)
  7266 Alameda Avenue, Goleta 687-1331
- University of California, Santa Barbara
  Multi-Activity Center
  Mesa and Ocean Road

ANIMAL SHELTER LOCATIONS
- Large animals: Earl Warren Showgrounds, 3400 Calle Real - Santa Barbara
- Small animals: Call the Animal Services Hotline - 805-681-4332
- Animals now in shelter as a result of the fire are estimated to be 975. (These are estimates based on reports from 4 - 9 pm May 8.)
  - Santa Barbara Humane Society - 529 animals (239 cats, 127 dogs, 146 birds, 6 livestock, and 18 miscellaneous)
  - Animal Services - 259 animals (22 birds, 195 cats, 16 dogs, and 25 rabbits or rodents)
  - Equine Evac - 187 total (116 horses, 3 pigs, 1 llama, 15 goats, 10 opossums, 10 mules and donkeys, 20 rabbits, and 12 chickens)

CONTACT NUMBERS
- County Jesusita Fire Call Center - 805-681-5197
- Evacuation Shelter (Red Cross) - 687-1331
- Animal Services Hotline - 805-681-4332

PUBLIC INFORMATION KIOSKS
Santa Barbara
- Paseo Nuevo (State and De La Guerra)
- Loreto Plaza (State and Las Positas)
- Scolari's Food Co. (222 North Milpas)
- Lazy Acres (302 Meigs Road)

Montecito
- 1400 Block of East Valley Road (Lower Village)

Goleta
- Starbucks (7030 Camino Real Marketplace)

INTERNET
- City of Santa Barbara Web site at **http://www.santabarbaraca.gov**
- County of Santa Barbara Web site at **http://www.countyofsb.org**

TELEVISION
- CityTV Channel 18
- County of Santa Barbara TV Channel 20
- KEYT-TV Channel 3

RADIO
- FM: KCSB-91.9, KSYV-96.7, KTYD-99.9, KSBL-101.7, KRAZ-105.9
- AM: KTMS-990, KZSB-1290, KUHL-1410, KINF-1440
- Spanish language FM stations KSPE-94.5 and KIST-107.7

# # #

EXERCISE – EXERCISE – EXERCISE – EXERCISE – EXERCISE -- EXECISE

UMATILLA / MORROW COUNTIES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency News Release

September 18, 20XX / 10:00 a.m. Pacific
Contact: Cheryl Seigal Layman, Public Information Officer
(541) 310-8136 cell Cheryl.seigal@gmail.com www.csepp.net/jic

Chemical Emergency Update: 10 a.m. Pacific

Pendleton, Ore. – Umatilla and Morrow Counties continue to aggressively respond to the event in process at the Umatilla Chemical Depot.

NEW Information

- **WEB SITE:** Information about the emergency, news releases, and maps is available online at www.csepp.net/jic.

- **HOSPITALS:** Area hospitals have been notified and are on standby to receive patients.
  - St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton
  - Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Heppner
  - Good Shepherd Medical Center (hospital), Hermiston, is currently Sheltered in Place using their over-pressurization system and not receiving patients.

- **RESPONSE**
  - Umatilla and Morrow County Commissioners have declared a State of Emergency. This is the first step necessary to activate state and federal resources that may be needed to support this response.

PREVIOUSLY reported – still in effect

- **WHAT THE PUBLIC SHOULD DO**
  - Emergency management officials continue to advise people in Oregon who are within 20 miles of the Umatilla Chemical Depot to shelter in place in the residence or nearest building. This includes areas in and around six cities (**Hermiston, Stanfield, Echo, Umatilla, Boardman,** and **Irrigon**). To shelter in place, make the building as air tight as possible, close all doors and windows, and turn off heating or air conditioning systems.
  - Information on when it is time to stop sheltering and what to do next will be broadcast over Tone Alert Radios and KUMA 107.7 FM.

- **ROADS:** Major roads into the potentially affected area have been closed:
  - I-84 (*East*) at Exit 165 Port of Morrow
  - I-84 (*West*) at Exit 202, Barnhart Road
  - Hwy 207 (*North*) at Bombing Range Road
  - Hwy 730 (*West*) at Hwy 37, Holdman Road

- **ASSISTANCE CENTERS** are located at **Wildhorse Casino Resort**, I-84 exit 216 in Pendleton and the **Kinzua Building**, Hwy 207 Heppner. Assistance centers are the check-in location for persons who evacuated rather than sheltering in place.

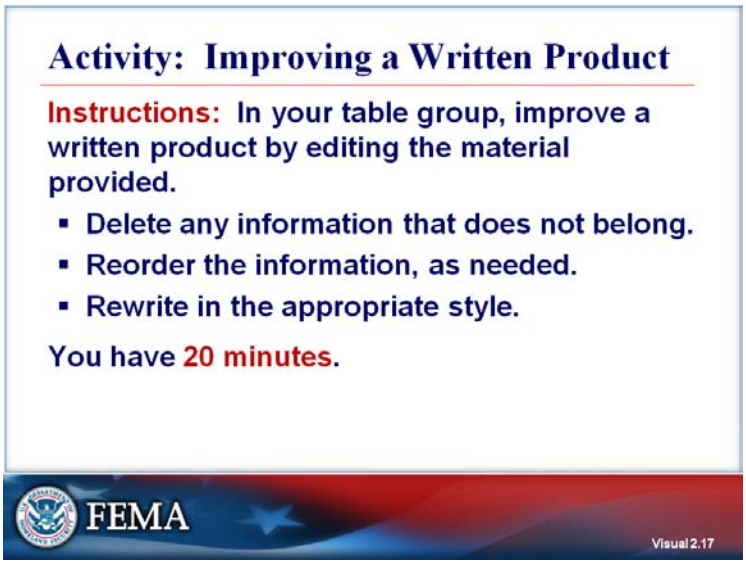
- more -

- **RESPONSE**
  - Pat Hart, Hermiston Fire Chief, is the Incident Commander for the joint Umatilla/Morrow County response. He is directing response by area fire, police, and emergency medical services (EMS) departments from the Incident Command Post in Hermiston.
  - The Umatilla County Emergency Operations Center in Pendleton and the Morrow County Emergency Operations Center in Heppner were activated shortly after 9 a.m. They are coordinating response activities with the American Red Cross, Umatilla & Morrow County Health Departments, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Oregon Department of Transportation, schools, ARES/RACES, and Oregon Emergency Management.

# # #

Topic	Activity: Improving a Written Product

Visual 2.17



Visual Description: Activity: Improving a Written Product

Key Points

Purpose of the Activity: To reinforce content presented in this unit by providing the participants with the opportunity to apply what they have learned to editing a written product.

Activity Instructions:

- Turn to the sample written products in your Student Manual.
- Work in your table groups to edit your assigned news releases by:
  - Deleting any information that does not belong in the written product;
  - Reordering the information, as needed; and
  - Rewriting in the appropriate style.
- Be prepared to report out in 20 minutes.

Written Product 1

Contact: J. R. Jordan
Department of Emergency Mgmt.
(800) 555-0321

NR #3
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 2, 2009

STATE NOTIFIED OF ALERT AT NUCLEAR POWER STATION

CAPITAL CITY – The Columbia Department of Emergency Management has been notified by Municipal Power that an Alert was declared at a Nuclear Power Station today. The Alert notification ensures that emergency response personnel are available and on standby should the situation worsen.

As designated in the Columbia Radiological Emergency Response Plan, Annex Q, sections 15.a to 15.j (rev) and pursuant to State law, the Columbia Emergency Operations Center is being augmented with additional personnel trained in emergency response and local governments surrounding the plant have been notified and are on standby.

The affected power station—named Norton Station after the renowned physicist, Karl Norton—is located in the Smythson County.

Should the situation worsen, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) will be activated and people residing or working in Protective Action Zone 1 will be advised to stay indoors, with all doors and windows closed and air conditioners and fans turned off until otherwise notified. Information to help citizens determine the Protective Action Zone in which they reside or work can be found in the yellow pages section of area telephone directories.

At this time, there is no danger or cause for concern for people living near the nuclear facility or in other areas of the County, according to state officials.

# # #

Written Product 2

Contact: Pat Kelly

#31
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 21, 2009

Homestead Police Announce Holiday Program

The Homestead Police Department's mission is to protect and serve the people of Homestead. To that end, this year the department is reaching out to those in need to make the holidays a little brighter. This includes working with Project Head Start to bring Santa to the classroom and the popular "Shop With A Cop" program.

Shop With A Cop pairs police personnel with Head Start students for a holiday shopping trip. Merchants provide a selection of discounted gifts, which are paid for through the Police Community Association (PCA). Each child gets to pick up to five gifts for their friends and family members.

Members of the news media can take advantage of photo opportunities by calling 800-555-9887.

# # #

Written Product 3

Contact: Mr. Matson
CDEM Public Affairs
(800) 555-6793 Saturday, December 12, 2009

Stay safe from chemical spills and terrorist attacks

CAPITAL CITY – The Columbia Department of Emergency Management (CDEM) urges citizens to stay away from exit 9b on the cross-state Turnpike to avoid injury or death from a potentially dangerous chemical spill. Chemical agents can include poisonous gases, liquids, or solids that have toxic and lethal effects on victims. Do not attempt to rescue a victim of a chemical attack—you may become a victim yourself, say experts.

If you are **at home** when officials indicate **evacuation** is necessary:

- Gather emergency supplies of food, clothing and water.
- If you are instructed to do so by local authorities, turn off all utilities at the main switch and close the main gas valve.
- Secure your dwelling by closing and locking windows and doors.
- Make arrangements for your pets. Public shelters may not allow pets.
- As soon as you are ordered to evacuate, do so promptly.
- Tell someone outside of the area where you are going.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes—shortcuts may be blocked.

If you are **at work** when officials indicate **evacuation** is necessary:

- Listen to your radio for guidance on protective actions.
- Follow your employer's instructions to shelter in place or evacuate.

Written Product 4

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Dana Jordan (800) 555-0321 October 9, 2009

Dinwoody Police Officers Discover Marijuana

Dinwoody Police Officers looking for a lost child in the ten-mile area surrounding Wood Lake discovered marijuana plants growing in the St. John Botanical Gardens.

The plants were well disguised by thick plantings of bamboo and other Asian plants. The child had been separated from its parents who were visiting the Botanical Gardens. They were reunited at the visitor center.

The Officers and agents from DEA eradicated over 200 marijuana plants with an estimated street value of $65,000. The discovery is one of the largest seizures of live marijuana plants in the State this year.

The parents of the lost child were not available for comment.

-30-

Written Product 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
News Release #5-2009

Contact: Jay Moore, PIO, NPEM
24/7: 800-555-9966

Volunteer Sandbaggers Needed

NORTH PLAINVIEW, Columbia—Volunteers have started a sandbagging operation in North Plainview in an attempt to seal off the water from flowing under the railroad tracks that run parallel along Highway 97 between Main and Cherry Streets in North Plainview. Emergency Management needs about 2,000 sandbags for the levees in Plainview County should the water begin to overflow.

Due to mudslides, several roads have been closed in Plainview and traffic is being diverted. The City of North Plainview experienced extremely heavy rains over the past 5 days, resulting in flash flooding on the East side of town.

Currently, we are asking for volunteers to fill sandbags in anticipation of the rising Columbia River.

###

News Release 6

Contact: Jan Morrison

(800) 555-1234

NR #18
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 19, 2009

Media Advisory

(Not for Publication)

MEDIA BRIEFING SCHEDULED

GREENVILLE, Columbia – State Coordinator Casey Morton will hold a news conference at 6 p.m., Sunday, September 24, at the Greenville Emergency Operations Center to brief the media on the latest developments in the ongoing response to Hurricane Horatio. CDOT, CDH, and ARC will also attend the briefing.

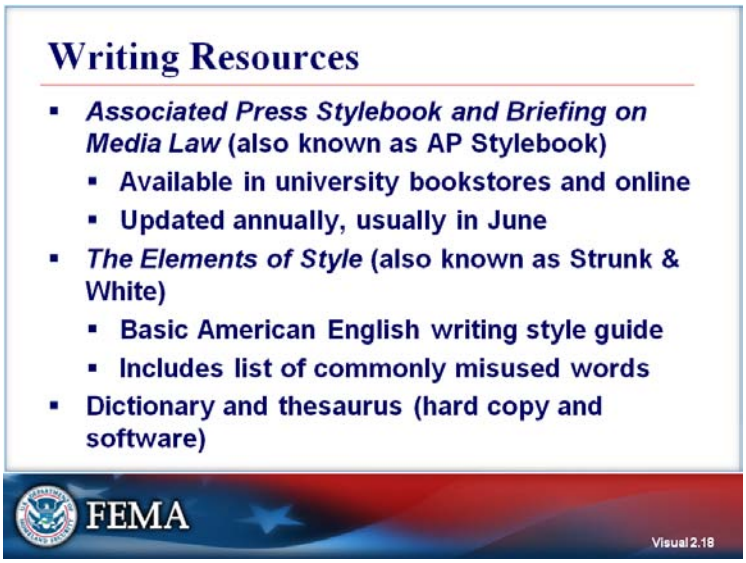
The Columbia Department of Emergency Management (CDEM) has opened the Joint Information Center to provide people with updates on the hurricane response and information on disaster assistance. The phone number is (800) 555-1234.

CDEM requests that media representatives present identification at the entrance to the briefing.

Future briefings will be announced on a timely basis and as conditions warrant.

# # #

Visual 2.18

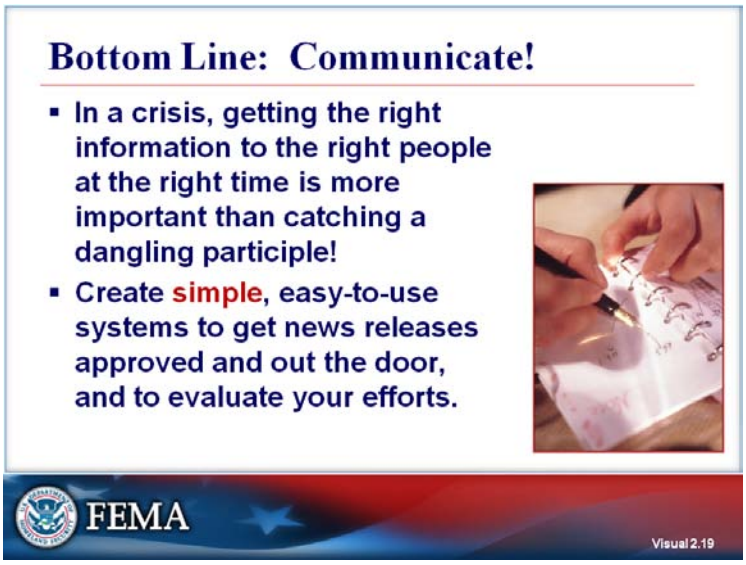


Visual Description: Writing Resources

Key Points

Topic **Processes That Facilitate Communication**

Visual 2.19



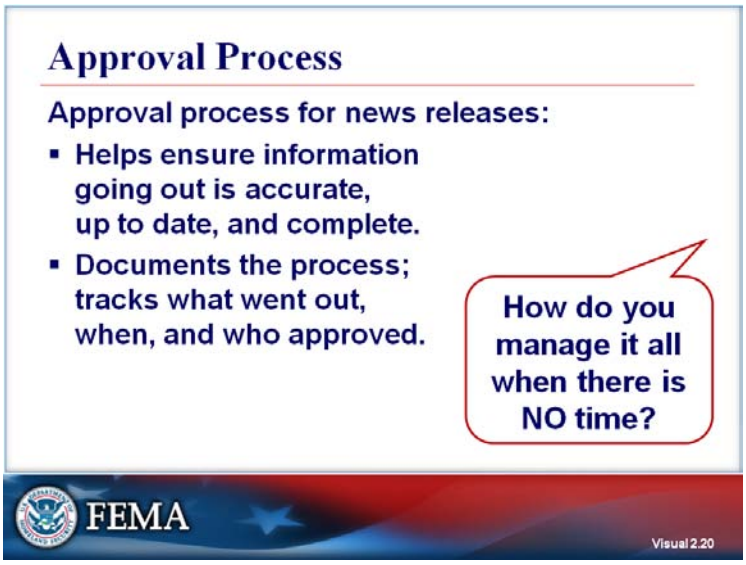
Visual Description: Bottom Line: Communicate!

Key Points

Why do we care about using accepted format and following AP style?

Topic **Processes That Facilitate Communication**

Visual 2.20



Visual Description: Approval Process

Key Points

Approval processes for news releases will vary depending upon the organization and the incident, but the purposes remain the same:

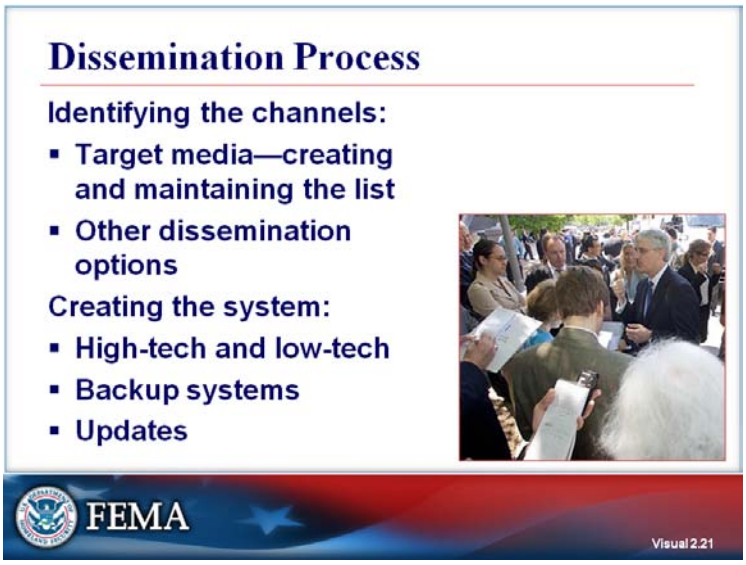
- To ensure the information going out is accurate, up to date, and complete;
- To facilitate coordination with other response agencies; and
- To document and track what has gone out.

	How do you manage the approval process when you are at the scene, in the midst of an evolving incident, and there is no time or access to key people?

	What tools and techniques have you used to facilitate the approval process for news releases?

Topic **Processes That Facilitate Communication**

Visual 2.21



Visual Description: Dissemination Process

Key Points

The next process is dissemination—getting the message out—and the first step is identifying the channels you will use.

How do you decide what channels you will use to get a message out?

How do you develop your media list?

Where do new media fit in?

What are other dissemination methods you should consider?

Topic	Processes That Facilitate Communication

Visual 2.22

Visual Description: Tracking Process

Key Points

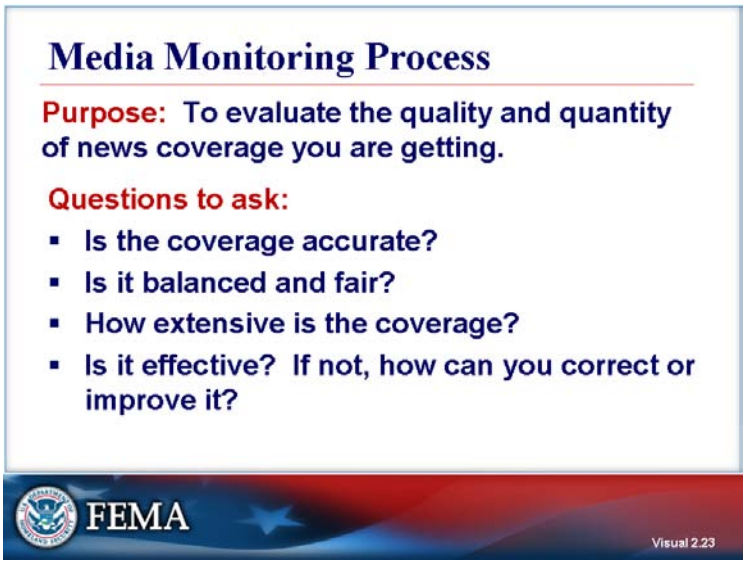
Most PIOs will want to track or document—at a minimum—both news releases going out and media calls coming in.

	Why should you track?

	How can you track efficiently?

Topic	Processes That Facilitate Communication

Visual 2.23



Visual Description: Media Monitoring Process

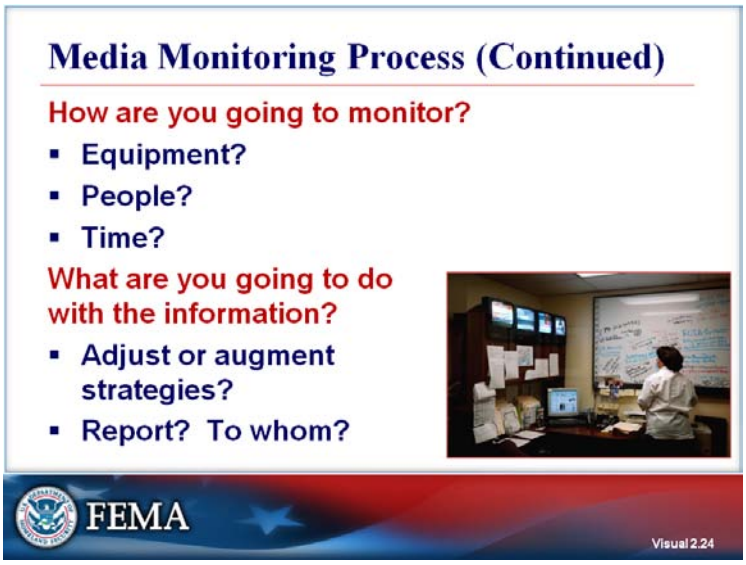
Key Points

What do we mean by "media monitoring"?

Why do we monitor the media?

Topic **Processes That Facilitate Communication**

Visual 2.24



Visual Description: Media Monitoring Process (Continued)

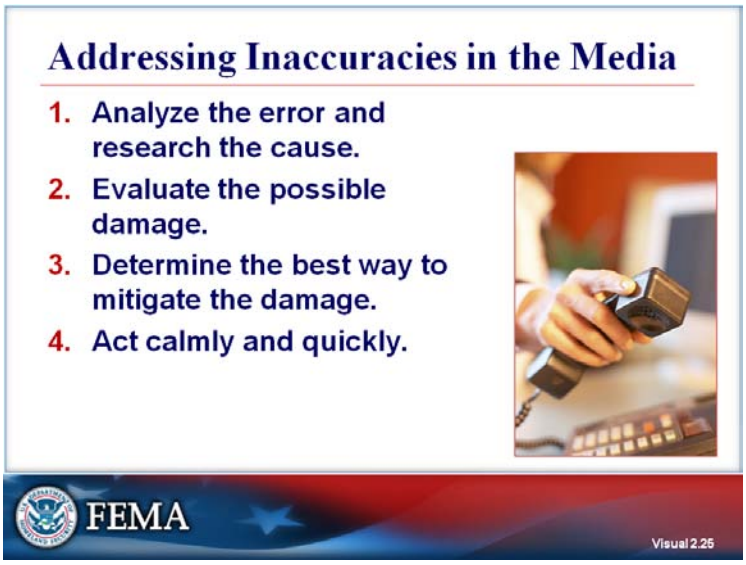
Key Points

	How are you going to monitor the media?

	What are you going to do with the information?

Topic	Addressing Inaccuracies in the Media

Visual 2.25



Visual Description: Addressing Inaccuracies in the Media

Key Points

	So what do you do if you find a mistake in the media?

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 2.26

Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

Key Points

What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

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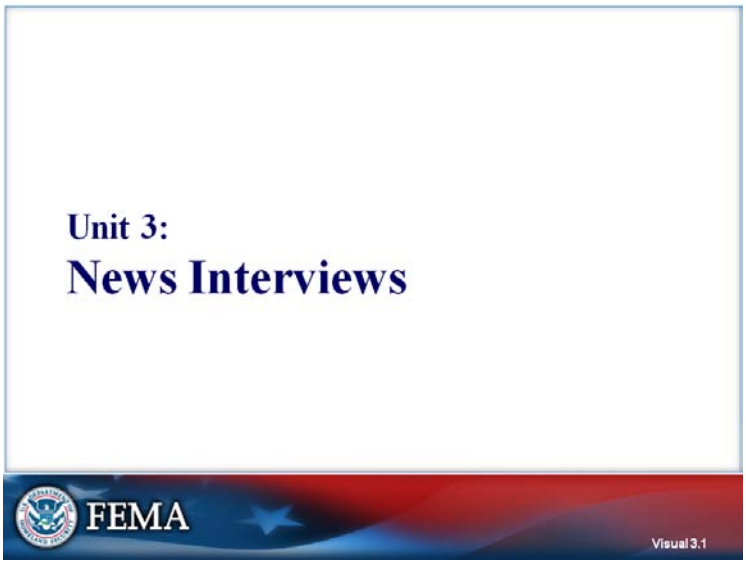
Unit 3:
News Interviews

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 3.1



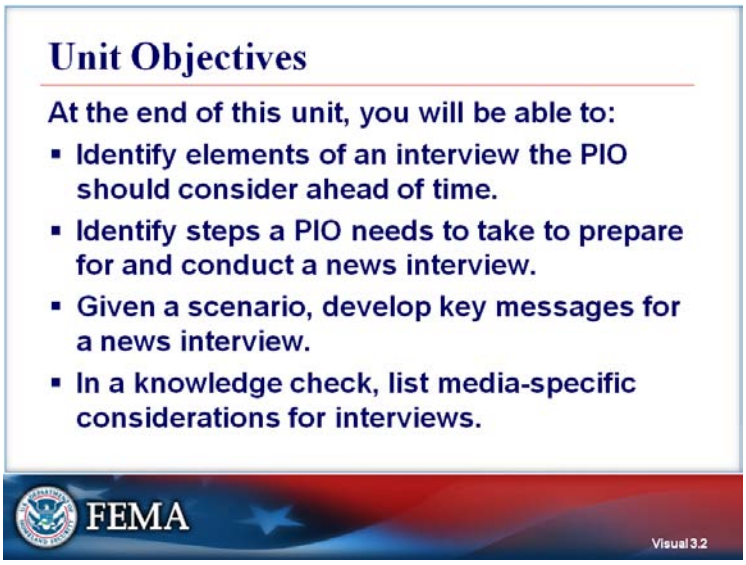
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit will focus on what you should do in preparation for a media interview.

Topic: Unit Objectives

Visual 3.2

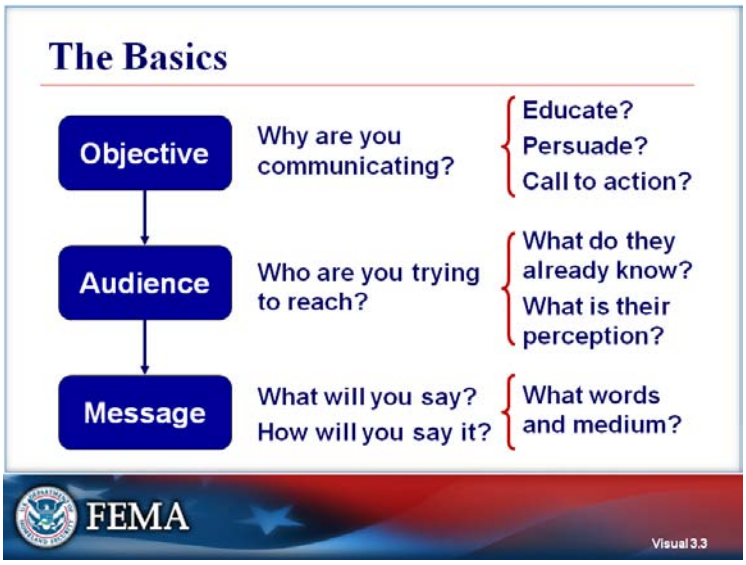


Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic	The Basics

Visual 3.3



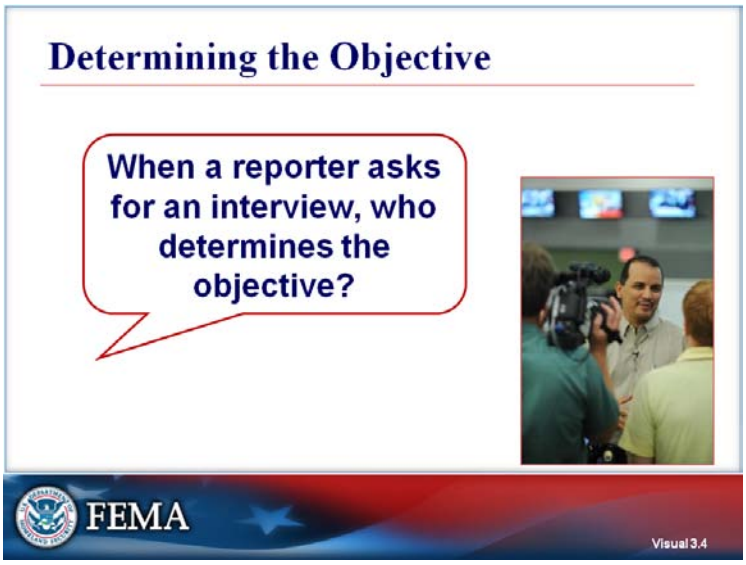
Visual Description: The Basics

Key Points

Who speaks to the news media on behalf of your organization?

Topic	The Basics

Visual 3.4



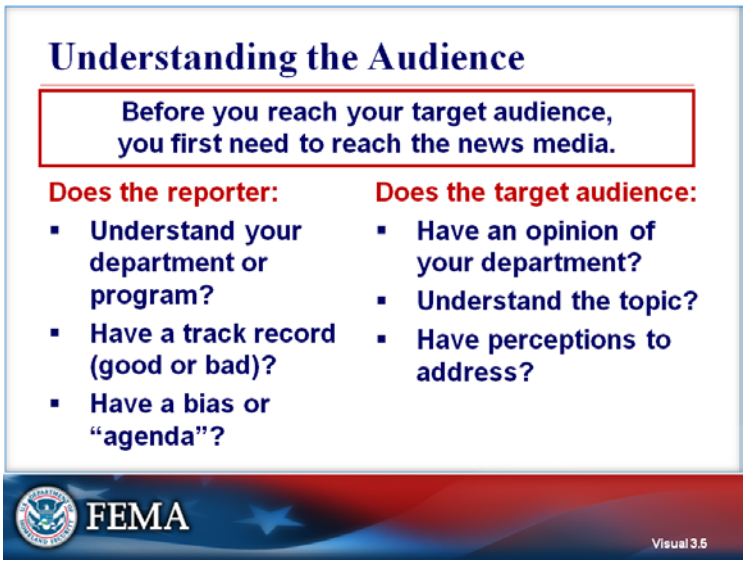
Visual Description: Determining the Objective

Key Points

	When a reporter asks for an interview, who determines the objective?

Topic	The Basics

Visual 3.5



Visual Description: Understanding the Audience

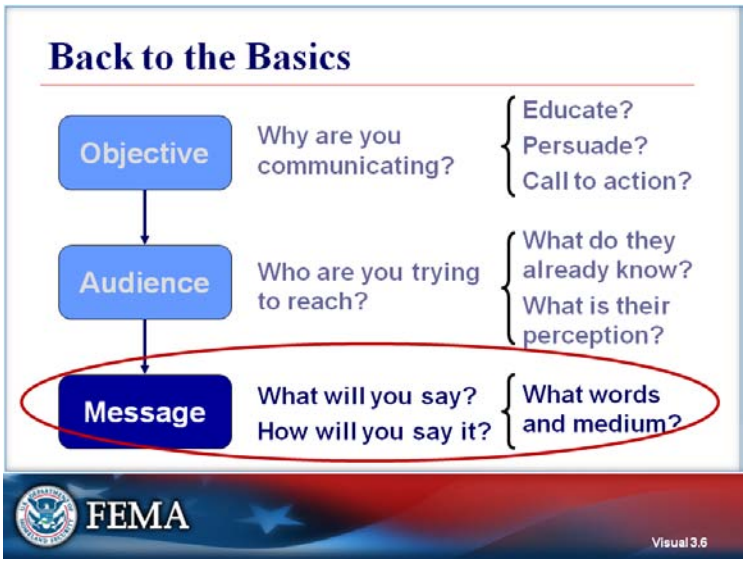
Key Points

	What are the basic questions you should ask about the audience?

	Why should you care whether the reporter is knowledgeable about your topic?

Topic	The Basics

Visual 3.6



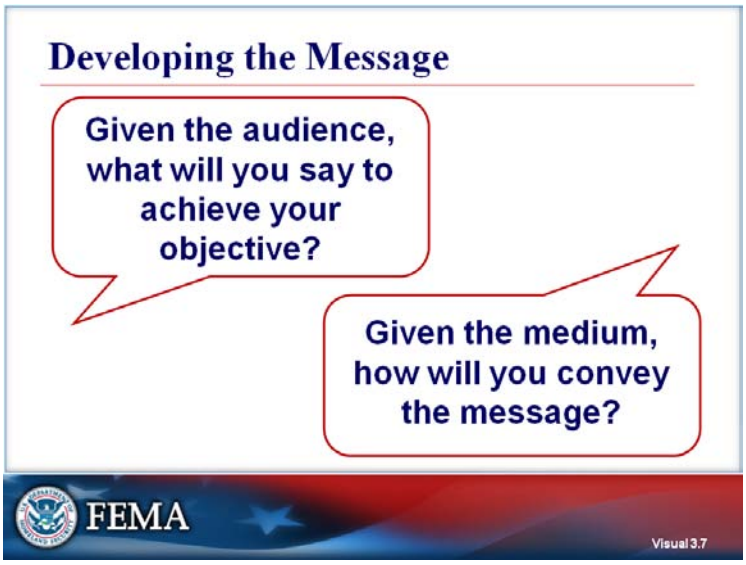
Visual Description: Back to the Basics

Key Points

Now that you have defined your objective and your audience, the next step is to define the **message.**

Topic	The Basics

Visual 3.7



Visual Description: Developing the Message

Key Points

There are two questions that should be considered when developing the message.

- Given the audience, **what will you say** to achieve your objective?

  and

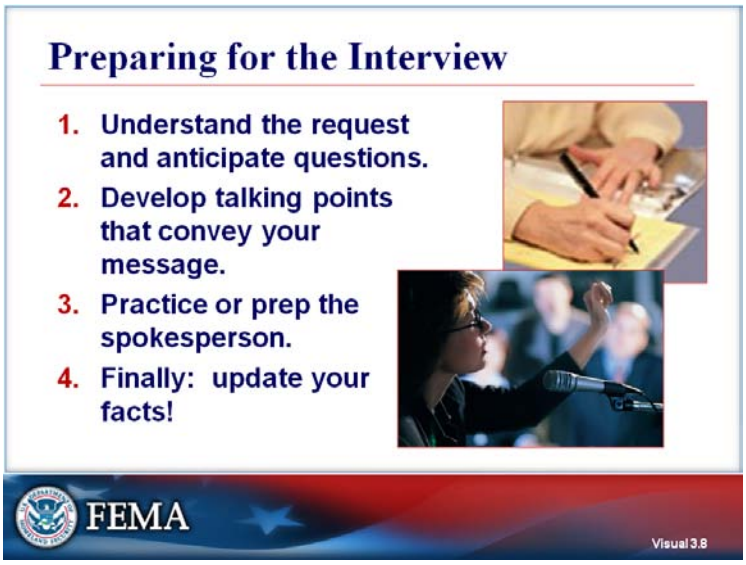
- Given the medium, **how will you convey** the message?

Key points:

- The words you choose should be based on what you are trying to achieve and the level of understanding of the audience.
- Make sure you take advantage of the opportunities offered by the medium as well. For example, if the interview is with TV, think about what you can do to add visual impact.

Topic: Preparing for the Interview

Visual 3.8



Visual Description: Preparing for the Interview

Key Points

Now that you've taken care of the basics—objective, audience, and message, you are ready to prepare for the interview using the following steps:

STEP 1: Understand the request and anticipate questions.

- This may seem obvious, but sometimes a request is slightly off-target or the reporter doesn't have enough data to know what to ask for. The better you understand his or her interest, the better the interview for you and the reporter. If you are unsure, ask for clarification.
- There is a difference between asking "What are you going to ask me?" and "Tell me what your interest is so I can have the right person participate in the interview." Don't ask the former; **do** ask the latter.
- Also, think about what questions you should expect and be prepared to answer them.

STEP 2: Develop talking points that convey your message.

- Once you know what you want to say, how can you express it in a sound bite that is clear, concise, and memorable?
- Get in the habit of writing down the sound bite; practice saying it out loud.
- Keep it simple. Write down a few ways of emphasizing the main message without sounding like you are repeating.

Topic | Preparing for the Interview

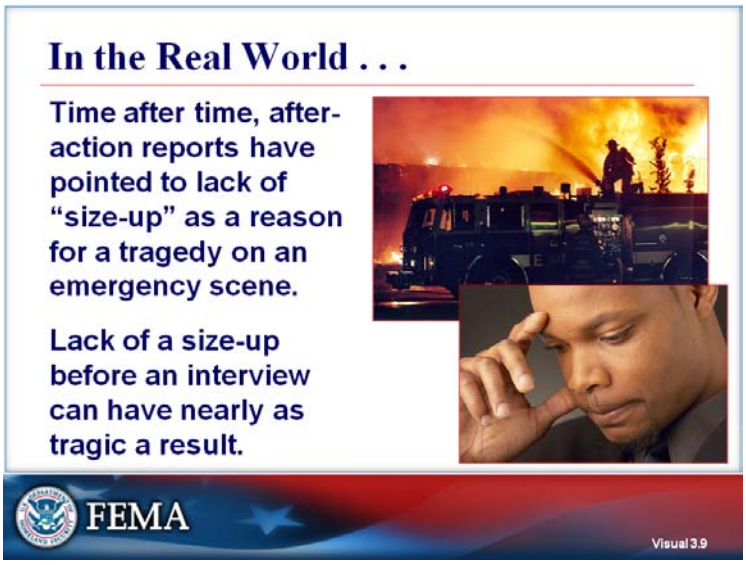
STEP 3: Practice or—if you are not the person who is going to speak for the organization—prep the spokesperson.

- Even a few minutes of practice can make a big difference in how well you do in an interview.
- When you practice, make sure you are thinking and talking in 10- to 15-second sound bites.
- If you are not the spokesperson, prep the spokesperson by providing talking points and perhaps playing the role of the reporter in a practice interview.

STEP 4: Last, but not least: Update your facts! Make sure you have the latest information.

Topic	In the Real World . . .

Visual 3.9



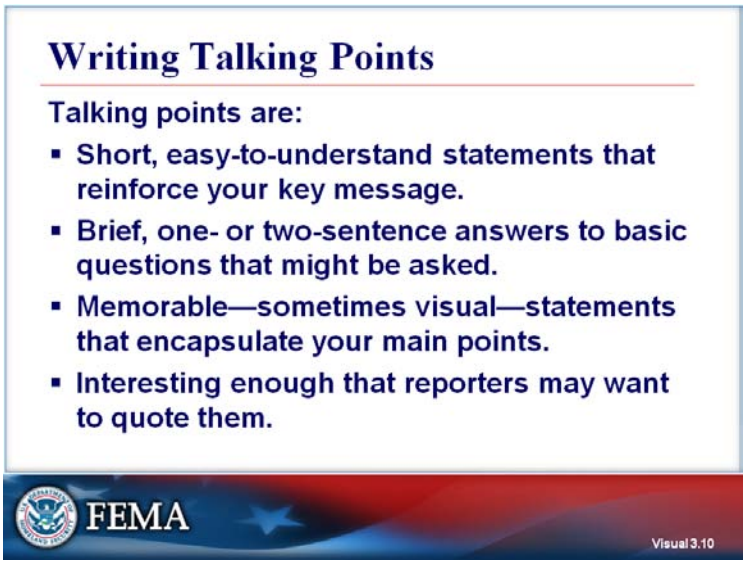
Visual Description: In the Real World . . .

Key Points

- Time after time, after-action reports have pointed to lack of "size-up" as a reason for a tragedy on an emergency scene.
- Lack of a size-up before an interview can have nearly as tragic a result.

Topic	Writing Talking Points

Visual 3.10

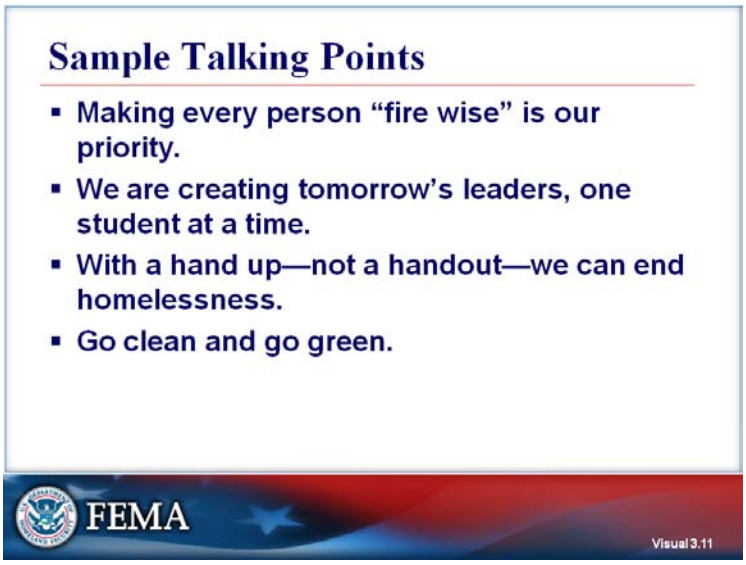


Visual Description: Writing Talking Points

Key Points

Topic | **Writing Talking Points**

Visual 3.11

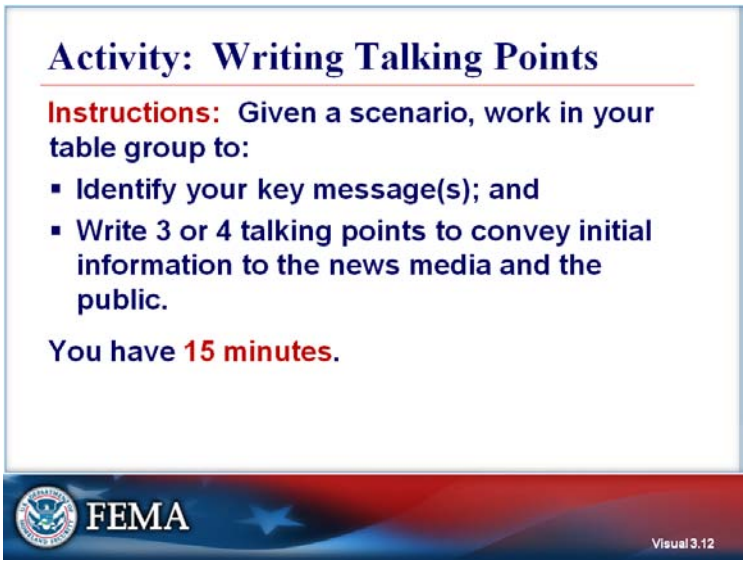


Visual Description: Sample Talking Points

Key Points

Topic	Activity: Writing Talking Points

Visual 3.12



Visual Description: Activity: Writing Talking Points

Key Points

Purpose of the Activity: To give the participants an opportunity to apply what they have learned in this unit by identifying a key message and writing talking points.

Activity Instructions:

- The Incident Briefing form (ICS 201) provides the Incident Commander (and the Command and General Staffs) with basic information regarding the incident situation and resources allocated to the incident.
- Working in your table groups, your task is to:
  - Identify the key message(s) (no more than two).
  - Write 3-4 talking points appropriate to communicate their initial information to the news media and the public.
  - Write your talking points on chart paper, and select a recorder/reporter.
  - You have 15 minutes.

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 3.13

Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

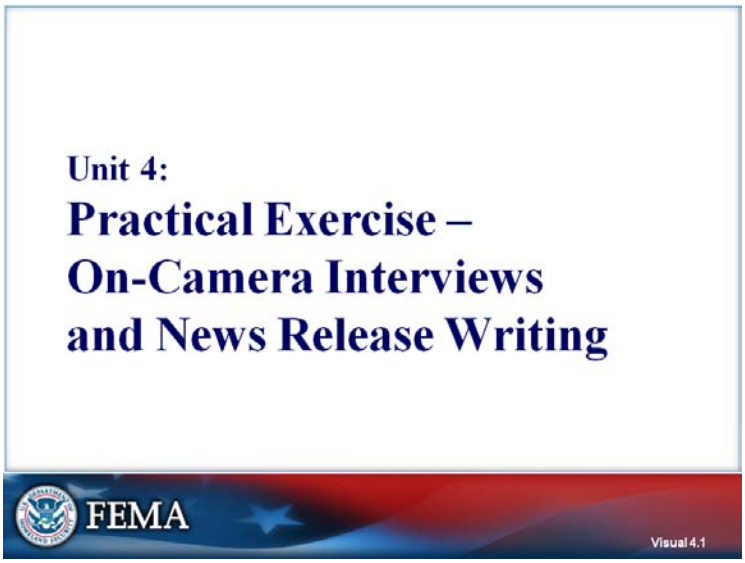
Key Points

What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

Unit 4:
Practical Exercise – On-Camera Interviews and News Release Writing

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 4.1



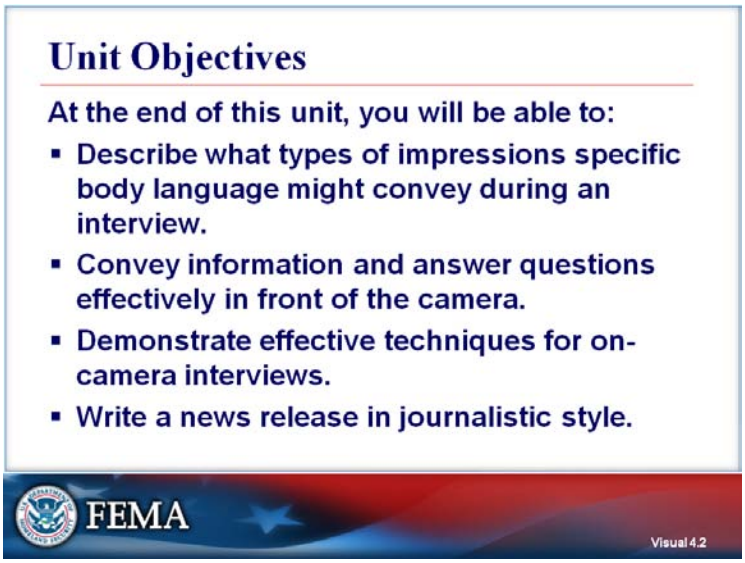
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit will focus on how to perform effectively during on-camera interviews.

Topic | **Unit Objectives**

Visual 4.2



Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic	Nonverbal Communication

Visual 4.3

Visual Description: "Your Actions Speak So Loud . . . I cannot hear what you are saying."

Key Points

Read the quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson:

"Your actions speak so loud I cannot hear what you are saying."

	What is this quotation saying?

	Why is nonverbal behavior an important consideration for on-camera interviews?

Topic **Nonverbal Communication**

Visual 4.4

Visual Description: Nonverbal Communication Tips

Key Points

Any interview can be improved by paying attention to nonverbal communication:

- **Eye contact:** Look at the reporter, not the camera. Avoid looking down. Avoid rolling your eyes or looking up (a habit some people have when thinking or trying to remember something).
- **Voice:** Speak clearly and modulate your voice by varying tone and volume. Slow down for emphasis when making important points. Pause to gather your thoughts rather than use fillers like “er,” “um,” or “you know.”
- **Expression:** Appear attentive. Show emotion as appropriate (sincerity). Remember what we discussed earlier—assume that the camera is always on. Even if your words are not being taped, your facial expression will be conveying a message. Make sure it is the message you want to convey.
- **Body position:** Stand straight and align your body with the interviewer. In some instances the camera operator may align you for the shot.
- **Gestures:** Use natural, but not “big” gestures. Keep your hands away from your face; do not cross your arms, raise your eyebrows, or shrug your shoulders. Avoid jerky or sudden movements.
- **Movement:** If standing, do not lock your knees, but don’t sway or bounce either. Don’t jingle jewelry or change in pockets. If sitting, don’t jiggle legs, or spin or rock in the chair. Sit on your coat tail to keep your jacket from riding up.

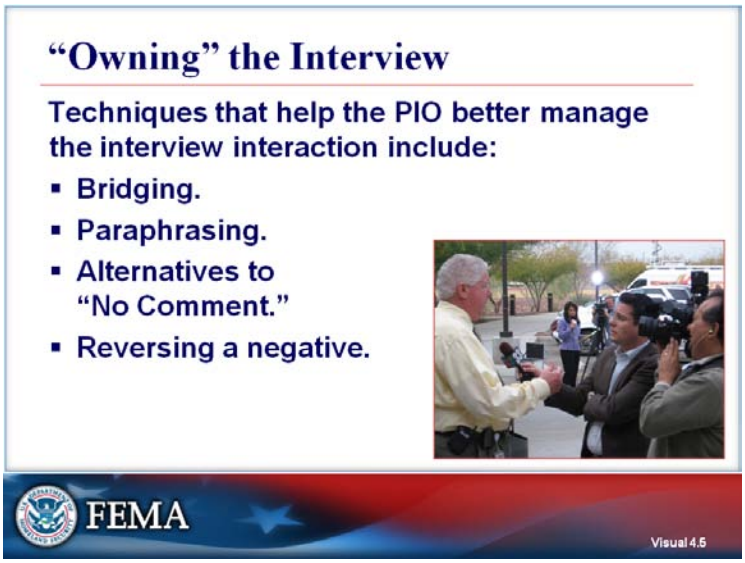
Topic	Nonverbal Communication

- **Attire/Dress:** Wear your uniform or neat, conservative attire if nonuniformed. Avoid bright whites, stripes, plaids, and complicated patterns. Remove dark glasses/sunglasses! Also:
  - Digital and HD television is high quality and not only shows imperfections in clothing, but also has problems with certain colors (e.g., bright colors may cause problems with color balance and/or appear too vivid on some broadcasts). As another example, transportation workers typically wear yellow ANSI (American National Standard for High Visibility) vests, which are not good for digital TV.
  - Conversely, Web broadcasts are low quality and brighter colors may make the image more appealing. The message is: Dress for your market!

Refer to Tips for Improving Your On-Camera Performance in the Appendix on page A-29 for more techniques to enhance your on-camera skills.

Topic **"Owning" the Interview**

Visual 4.5



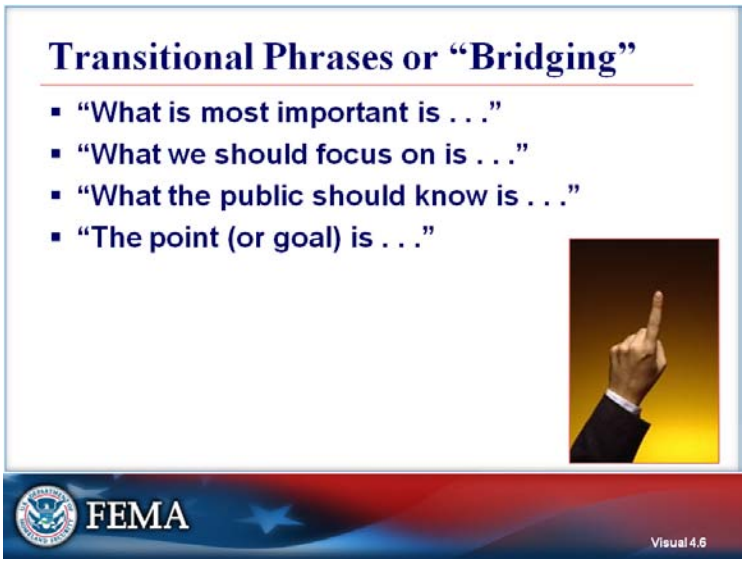
Visual Description: "Owning" the Interview

Key Points

How would you define: "Owning" the interview?

Topic **"Owning" the Interview**

Visual 4.6



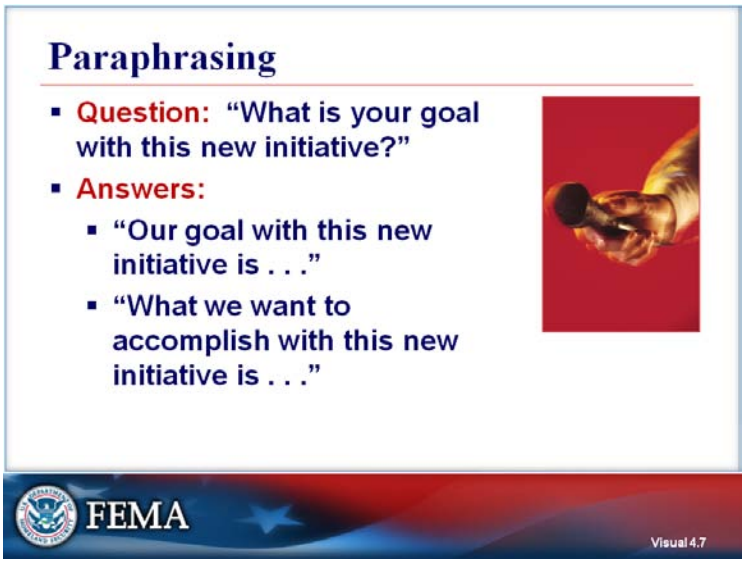
Visual Description: Transitional Phrases or "Bridging"

Key Points

- In some interviews you may find that you are not provided with the right question to present your message. You can bring the focus back by building a bridge between the question and your message.
- Transitional phrases are tools that help you build such a bridge, and put the interview back on track.

Topic	"Owning" the Interview

Visual 4.7



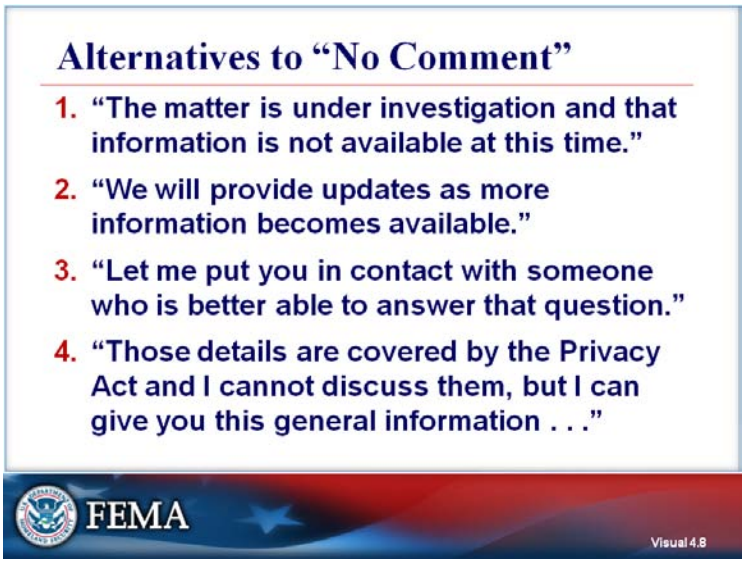
Visual Description: Paraphrasing

Key Points

Why would you use paraphrasing in an interview?

Topic **"Owning" the Interview**

Visual 4.8



Visual Description: Alternatives to "No Comment"

Key Points

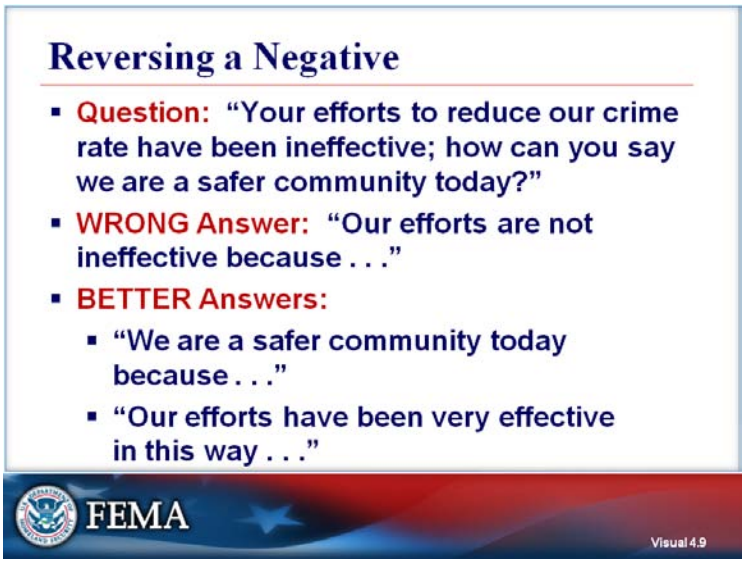
- Never say "No comment."
- It implies you are:
  - Hiding something;
  - Unprepared; or
  - Uninformed.
- When you can't answer a question, make sure the response you give is suited to the situation, is truthful, and is as forthcoming as possible.

Refer to the visual:

- The first two options are suitable when you are dealing with an unfolding situation. Do not promise updates, however, unless you plan to provide them.
- If you cannot answer a question but someone else can, the third response is appropriate. Make sure you follow up and connect the reporter with the appropriate spokesperson or say that you are unable to do so.
- The fourth response is a good option when you are restricted from providing some information but you can offer general information that conveys your key message.

Topic **"Owning" the Interview**

Visual 4.9



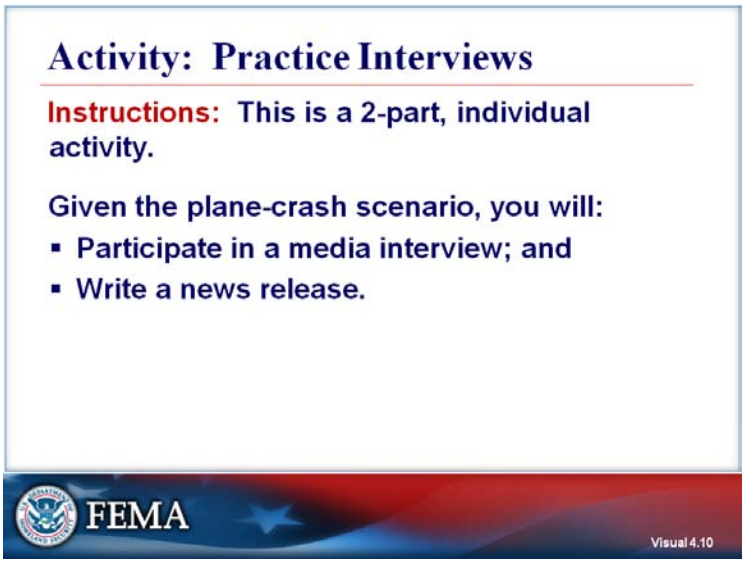
Visual Description: Reversing a Negative

Key Points

- Never start an answer by repeating a reporter's negative question. If you do, they will have you on tape reinforcing the statement, even if you clarify your message immediately afterwards (they may edit your clarification out of the final piece and show only the negative statement).
- Remember, if you don't say it, they don't have it on tape.
- Try to stay positive in your response. You have a message. Use it.

Topic **Activity: Practice Interviews**

Visual 4.10



Visual Description: Activity: Practice Interviews

Key Points

Purpose of the Activity: To give you an opportunity to:

- Practice on-camera interview skills, and
- Write a news release.

Instructions:

- There are two parts to this activity and you will be using the plane-crash scenario from the previous unit.
- One part of this activity is an individual, on-camera interview.
- The other part of this activity is an individual assignment to write a news release.
- You will have 10 minutes to prepare before the interviews begin.
- You will be working on your news releases during “down time” (either before or after their on-camera interview).
- News releases will be due at the end of the day. You will receive feedback tomorrow (news release checklist follows these instructions).

Interview Feedback Form

Presenter's Name: _____

Competencies	Demonstrated? Yes	Demonstrated? No	Not Applicable
Nonverbal Behaviors:			
▪ Appropriate eye contact.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Lack of nervous gestures.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Open body language/attentive posture.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Lack of fillers.	☐	☐	☐

Competencies	Demonstrated? Yes	Demonstrated? No	Not Applicable
Message and Skills:			
▪ Addressed key messages.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Used easy-to-understand language.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Gave short, concise answers.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Provided accurate information.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Avoided unnecessary details.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Knew when NOT to answer a question.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Knew how to handle a question when he/she didn't know the answer.	☐	☐	☐
▪ Used appropriate interviewing techniques (bridging, reversing a negative, etc.).	☐	☐	☐

Overall Comments:

Interviewer's Name: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

Topic **Activity: Practice Interviews**

News Release Checklist

Writer: _____

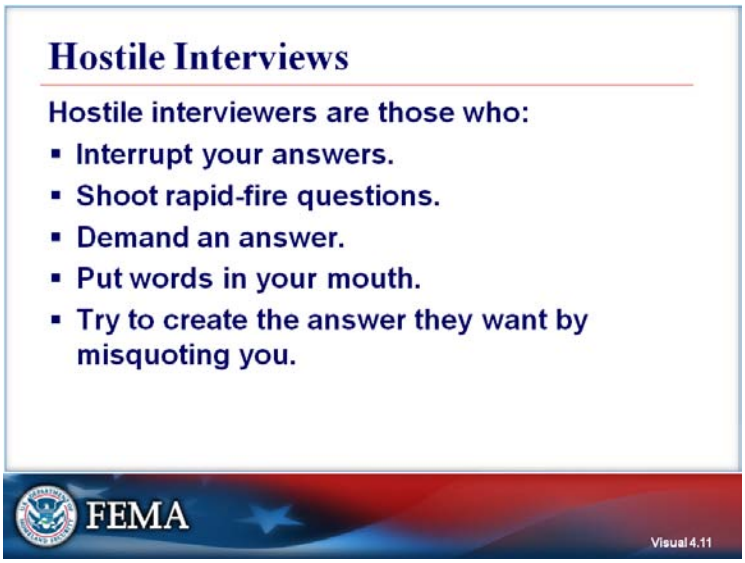
Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Use the following checklist to evaluate the writing sample.

Style:	
▪ States the main message up front.	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Contains easy-to-understand language (i.e., reader friendly).	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Is free of jargon and acronyms, not bureaucratic.	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Follows AP style.	❑ Yes ❑ No
Format:	
▪ Header includes necessary information (e.g., contact information, date, news release number, etc.).	❑ Yes ❑ No
Content:	
Basics	
▪ Uses correct grammar.	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Has correct spelling (including proper nouns).	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Answers five W's + H.	❑ Yes ❑ No
– Who	❑ Yes ❑ No
– What	❑ Yes ❑ No
– Where	❑ Yes ❑ No
– When	❑ Yes ❑ No
– Why	❑ Yes ❑ No
– How	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ If quotations are used, they are attributed.	❑ Yes ❑ No
Facts	
▪ Contains facts that support the main message.	❑ Yes ❑ No
▪ Facts organized logically.	❑ Yes ❑ No
Overall Comments	
_____	
_____	

Topic **Hostile Interviews**

Visual 4.11



Visual Description: Hostile Interviews

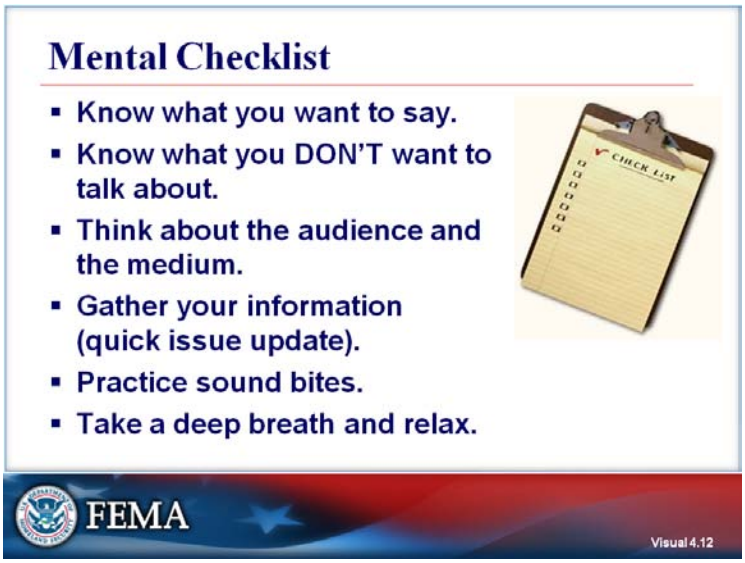
Key Points

No matter how hostile the interview turns, you should never lose your cool.

- If a reporter:
  - Interrupts you: Be polite but assertive; you may also finish your point in the next question by bridging.
  - Misquotes you or puts words in your mouth: Restate your answer or message and correct the mistakes.
  - Shoots rapid-fire questions: Pick one or two questions you feel comfortable with, answer them, and ignore the rest. Emphasize your message.
  - Demands an answer to something you don't know: Stick to your response, for example: "That information is not available at this time." or "Let me get back to you with more information."

Topic **Mental Checklist**

Visual 4.12



Visual Description: Mental Checklist

Key Points

This is a quick review—a mental checklist to use prior to any on-camera interview.

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 4.13

Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

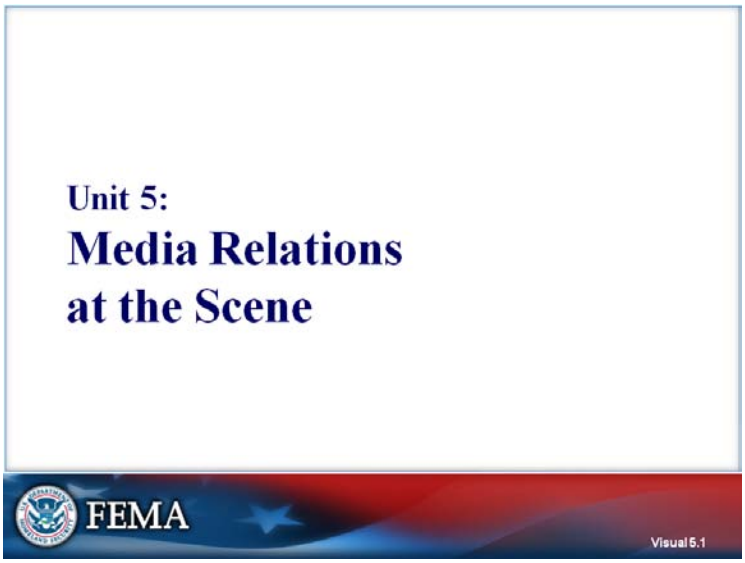
Key Points

	What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

Unit 5:
Media Relations at the Scene

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 5.1



Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit focuses on the role of the PIO at the scene of an incident.

Topic: Unit Objectives

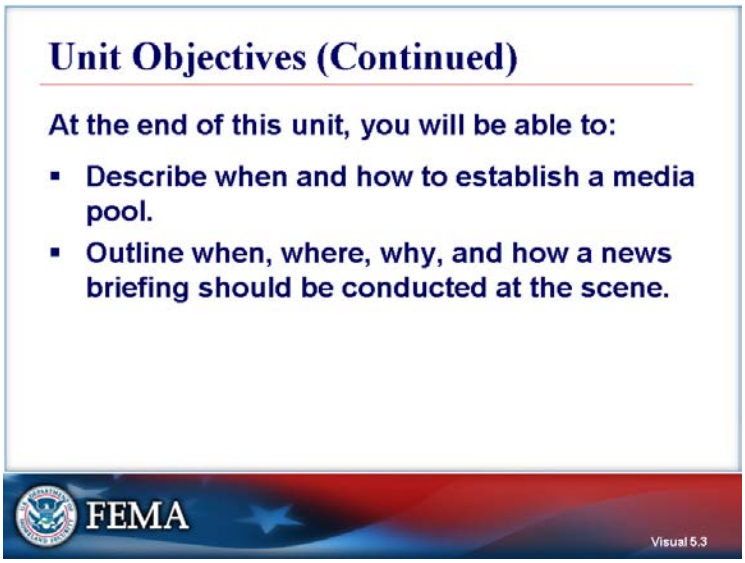
Visual 5.2

Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic **Unit Objectives**

Visual 5.3

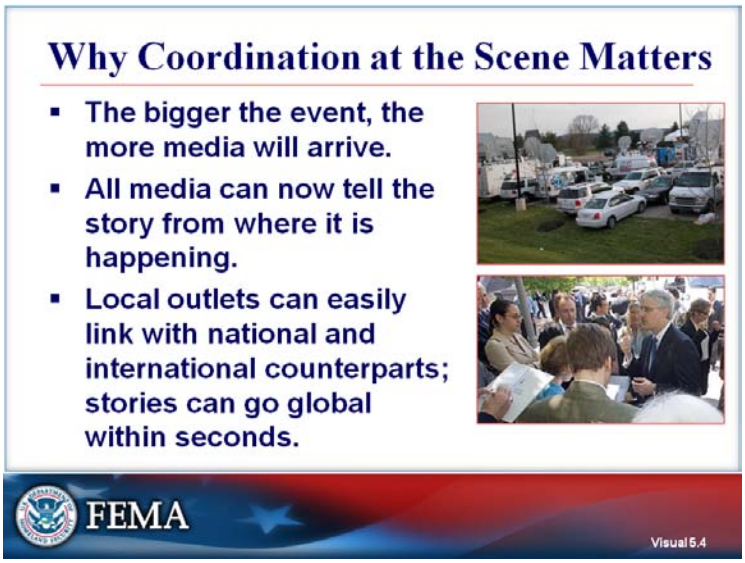


Visual Description: Unit Objectives (Continued)

Key Points

Topic: Why Coordination at the Scene Matters

Visual 5.4



Visual Description: Why Coordination at the Scene Matters

Key Points

Advances in technology and growing competition between news outlets are pushing reporters to try and cover any incident from “the scene”—or as close to the scene as they can get.

Note the following information:

- Why the media WILL arrive at the scene:
  - To get the most current information.
  - To capture any images they can use in telling the story.
  - To add a sense of excitement and immediacy to the story.
- All media now have the ability to tell the story from where it is happening.
  - Remote broadcast equipment makes “live updates” possible from almost anywhere.
  - Access to freeway cameras, weather cameras, etc., provides additional on-scene information.
  - Many television stations have helicopters.
  - Print/Web/wire service reporters can digitally transmit stories and photographs and video instantly.
- Understand that media outlets can link with their national and international counterparts to transmit a story globally within seconds. Also understand that the bigger the event, the more media that will arrive.

Topic	Why Coordination at the Scene Matters

Visual 5.5

Visual Description: And, To Make It More Interesting . . .

Key Points

Amateur "journalists" are everywhere. The images, sound, and information they capture can be used by more traditional news organizations and broadcast globally.

Refer to the article: "Amateur Hour – the nonprofessional 'journalist'" on the next page.

What can you do to help ensure good media relations at the scene?

Amateur Hour – the nonprofessional "journalist"

One of the growing challenges facing PIOs is the increasing number of "amateur journalists" pervading any incident scene. From victims, to responders, to interested passers by, the number of people with image and sound recording equipment has skyrocketed in recent years.

People gleefully record every event and post it on such places as personal Web pages, photo sharing sites, and social networking sites, and upload it for professional news organizations to use. Everyone wants to cover the story, everyone wants to be part of the story, and everyone wants their "15 minutes of fame."

Mainstream news media have tapped into this vast reservoir of expansive and inexpensive data and now regularly show the clips captured by nonprofessionals, with CNN boasting they now use thousands of such stories each year.

Treat nonprofessional "reporters" the same as you would any other reporter—with courtesy and respect

SPECIAL REPORT

Friday, July 8, 2005

NEW YORK (AP) -- The video was grainy, shaky but undeniably compelling: Passengers standing in the aisle of a subway car, its windows shattered following one of the coordinated explosions in London.

It was the first time several U.S. television executives could recall using video taken from a cellular phone during coverage of a major story, no doubt a harbinger of things to come.

"It was a clip that we used no more than two, three thousand times," joked John Moody, Fox News Channel senior vice president. The video taken by a commuter first aired on Britain's Sky News, a Fox sister station.

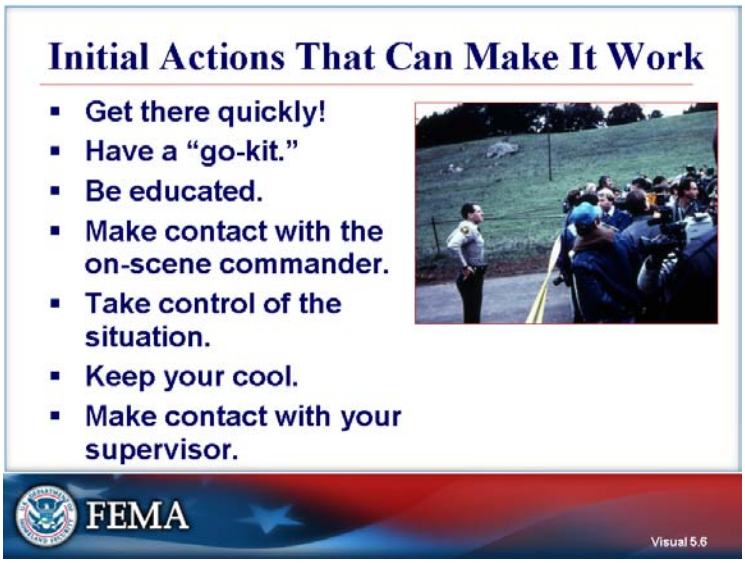
What's Newsiest?

The "newsiest" iReports are sorted in lists at the top of each section on the homepage and in other places around the site. Newsiest is a calculation that combines freshness, popularity, activity, and ratings. The idea behind newsiest is that all the contributions the iReport.com community of users make to the site—stories, comments, ratings, pageviews—and what CNN producers pick for their own stories could add up to tell us something new about what people think is newsworthy.

From ireport.com (January 2009)

Topic: Initial Actions that Can Make It Work

Visual 5.6



Visual Description: Initial Actions That Can Make It Work

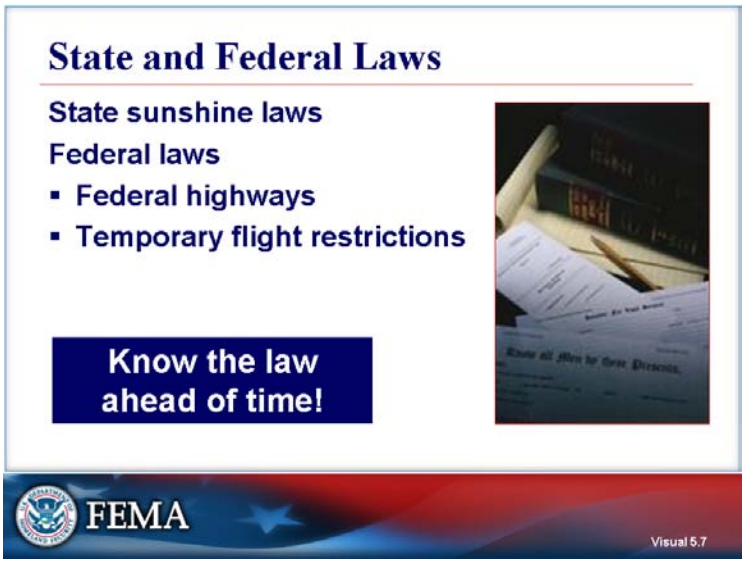
Key Points

Actions by PIOs that contribute to on-scene successes include:

- Most importantly, get to the scene as quickly as possible (and bring additional PIOs if the situation warrants).
- Be prepared ahead of time—have a "go-kit" or "crash kit" filled with the tools you will need to succeed (phone, tape recorder, business cards, etc.). Have plans, contact information, and other vital documents with you at all times (these can be stored digitally in a data phone, notebook computer, etc.—make sure you have battery power or a way to recharge in the field).
- Be educated ahead of time—know who does what job, whom to talk to about what issues, what the law is concerning access, sunshine laws, etc.
- Make contact with the on-scene commander to gather information—prior to making any statement to the media.
- Take control of the situation—don't let the media call the shots.
- Always keep your cool. A crisis can be a stressful situation and can lead people to sometimes act before they think. Remember, if you lose your temper on camera you become the story.
- If the event is large enough, begin considering where to stage the media.
- Don't be afraid to make the media wait for ACCURATE information (but not too long).
- Establish contact with your supervisors—let them know what the media are doing, what they are asking, what they might be reporting, and any issues they should be aware of (good for job security).

Topic	State and Federal Laws

Visual 5.7



Visual Description: State and Federal Laws

Key Points

State laws vary concerning access to a public safety scene:

- Media access is an important issue. If you do not have a media relations/access policy, you should involve your agency leadership, legal counsel, and local media in the development of a policy beneficial to all.
- For agencies whose work involves Federal highways, be aware that news media who are working within the boundaries of a highway must wear high visibility safety vests when covering incidents on public highways (see 23 C.F.R. §634).
- Other Federal laws involving media at the scene include temporary flight restrictions (TFRs). (Refer to the information on TFRs on the next page.)

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs)

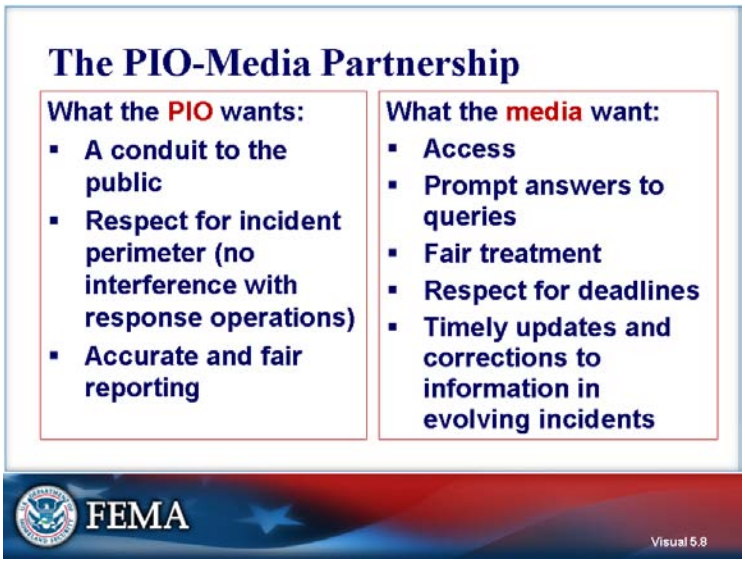
At the request of various entities, including military commands, civil authorities and law enforcement agencies, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) can temporarily close down a volume of airspace, including a defined ceiling. A TFR may be issued for the following reasons:

- Toxic gas leaks or fumes from flammable agents that could endanger persons or property on the surface or in other aircraft;
- Hijacking incidents that could endanger persons or property on the surface, or airborne aircraft and occupants;
- Aircraft accident/incident sites;
- Aviation or ground resources engaged in wildfire suppression;
- Aircraft relief activities at a disaster;
- Aerial demonstrations or major sporting events; or
- National security.

Exemption to a TFR may be granted to aircraft carrying "properly accredited news representatives" if a flight plan is filed and the aircraft flies above the altitude used by disaster relief aircraft. This exemption can be removed at the discretion of the official in charge of on-scene emergency response activities (the on-scene commander). Permanent flight restrictions are in place over many military installations. For more information see FAA AC #91-63C.

Topic: The PIO-Media Partnership

Visual 5.8



Visual Description: The PIO-Media Partnership

Key Points

The PIO and the media both have jobs to do and they need each other to do those jobs. They also have specific needs at the scene of an incident:

The **basic needs** of the PIO and the media are described below.

The **PIO** wants:

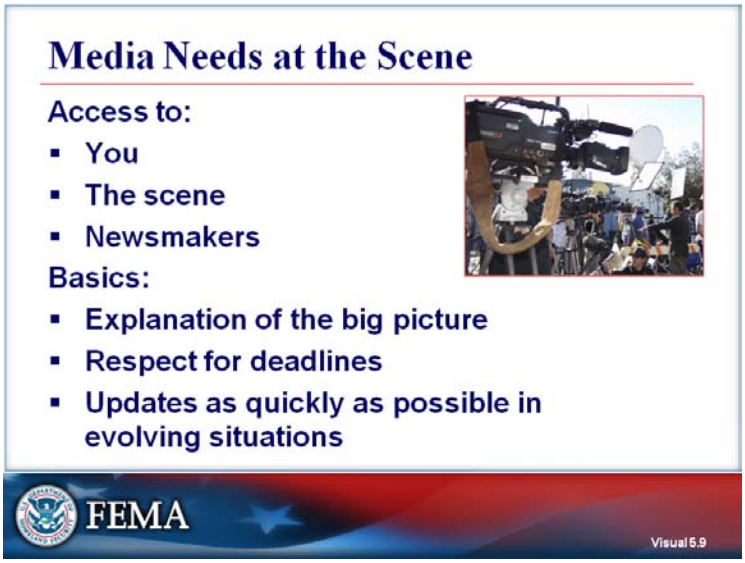
- A conduit to the public.
- Respect for incident perimeter (no interference with response operations).
- Accurate and fair reporting.

The **media** want:

- Access.
- Prompt answers to queries.
- Fair treatment.
- Respect for deadlines.
- Timely updates and corrections to information in evolving incidents.

Topic: The PIO-Media Partnership

Visual 5.9



Visual Description: Media Needs at the Scene

Key Points

The following points discuss needs at the scene:

- The media's most basic needs at the scene are access to information and images. If you anticipate what they will want, you will have a better chance to control the scene and help guide the story.
- The media will want:
  - Access to the scene (for reporters and photographers or video journalists).
  - Access to YOU (where you are located and how can they get in contact with you).
  - Access to newsmakers or persons in charge of the scene or centrally involved in the story.
  - An explanation of the big picture.
  - Respect for deadlines.
  - Updates as quick as possible in evolving situations.

Topic	The PIO-Media Partnership

Visual 5.10

Visual Description: Media Needs at the Scene (Continued)

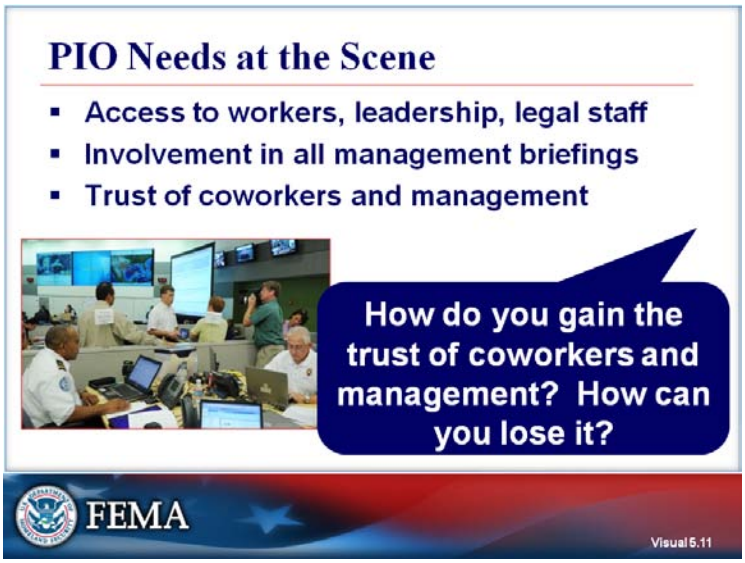
Key Points

Continue to review media needs at the scene:

- Where they can park and set up microwave or live satellite trucks. (Satellite trucks need unrestricted southern skyward view for satellite uplink.)
- Location of nearest telephones, food, lodging, and gas stations.

Topic **The PIO-Media Partnership**

Visual 5.11



Visual Description: PIO Needs at the Scene

Key Points

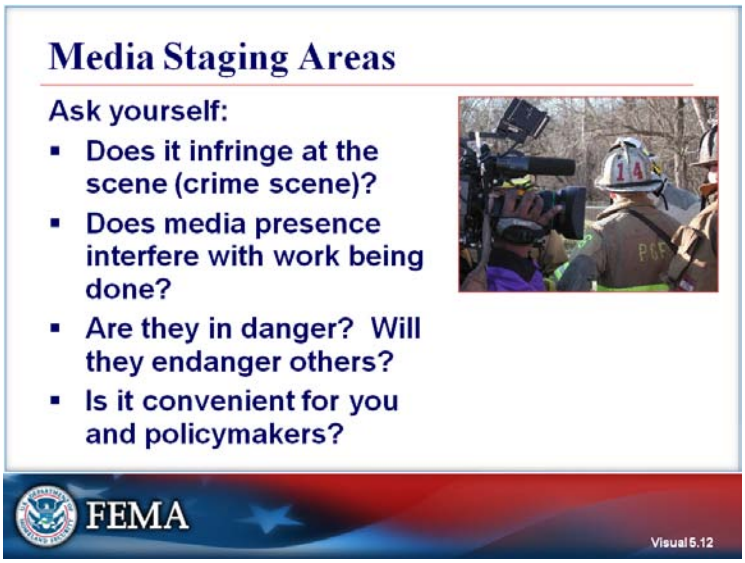
- What PIOs need at the scene is complete access.
  - PIOs need to be able to talk to workers, leadership, and legal staff.
  - PIOs should be involved in all management briefings so they can answer questions and anticipate potential issues involving the media.
  - The trust of their coworkers and administration. PIOs work for their agency, not for the media.

How do you gain the trust of coworkers and management?

How can you lose it?

Topic: Media Staging Areas

Visual 5.12



Visual Description: Media Staging Areas

Key Points

Many times at the scene of an incident a staging area can be set up to facilitate the enhanced flow of information between the PIO and the media. Prior to establishing the location for this staging area, there are several factors to consider:

Does it infringe at the scene (crime scene)?

- Many times the site of a crisis or disaster may be considered a crime scene and need to be processed by forensic units. In order to keep the "integrity" of the scene and enhance the possibility for a successful investigation and subsequent prosecution, the scene must be kept clear of all nonessential personnel.

Does media presence interfere with work being done?

- The ultimate goal of all public safety endeavors is to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment—and almost all reporters would agree that their needs will come after these important tasks. Members of the media do not want to interfere with these important tasks, but if they can get close enough to observe/photograph they will be happy.

Topic: Media Staging Areas

Continue to review considerations for a media staging area:

Are they in danger? Will they endanger others?

- In their zeal to "get the story" reporters may not always recognize the potential for danger to themselves. Work to keep them out of danger as you would any member of the public. Also, it may be necessary to explain to them the danger, and how if they fail to heed the warnings and become injured they may endanger others who would have to then go in to rescue them (e.g., passing into the plume of a Hazmat area, traveling over an unsafe structure that may collapse, or moving into the line of fire of an armed suspect).

Is it convenient for you and policymakers?

- In order to keep a consistent two-way flow of information with the media at the scene, it is important to make it relatively easy to communicate with them face to face.

Topic	Media Staging Areas

Visual 5.13

Visual Description: Media Staging Areas (Continued)

Key Points

Continue to review considerations for a media staging area:

Are they too close to sensitive information?

- Zoom lenses, parabolic microphones, and just plain observant reporters may be able to discover sensitive or protected information from your incident command post (e.g., zoom shots of maps, recorded conversations, etc.). Make sure the staging area is far enough away or your workspaces are shielded from prying cameras, microphones, and eyes.

Do they have a clear line of sight to satellite or microwave towers?

- Depending on where the staging area is, the media will need to be able to connect with their microwave towers or uplink with a satellite. Check with them to see if the location selected for a staging area will allow them to accomplish this.

Can they get the images they want?

- The media will want to get as close as possible to get pictures/audio/interviews.
- If there is a reason that the media cannot be allowed access to the scene, consider using a media pool to restrict access while allowing them to get the images and interviews they desire.
- If a media pool is not an option, consider providing professional quality images to the media in the form of video and stills.

Topic: Media Staging Areas

Continue to review considerations for a media staging area:

Are there "convenience" facilities available?

- While it is not the responsibility of the PIO to provide food or facilities for the media, a little kindness in this area can go far in building a positive relationship with the media—especially if the incident occurs in a remote area where few if any comfort facilities exist (e.g., if the incident is in a remote field, a porta-john will go a long way in making friends!).

How can you keep them at the staging area?

- You can't—and don't expect them to stay there all of the time. They will go other places to get other information (local citizen reactions, sidebar stories, etc.).
- You can entice them to stay by giving them regular "official" updates and letting them know that if they are absent they may miss something important or interesting.

Topic	Media Pools

Visual 5.14

Visual Description: Media Pools

Key Points

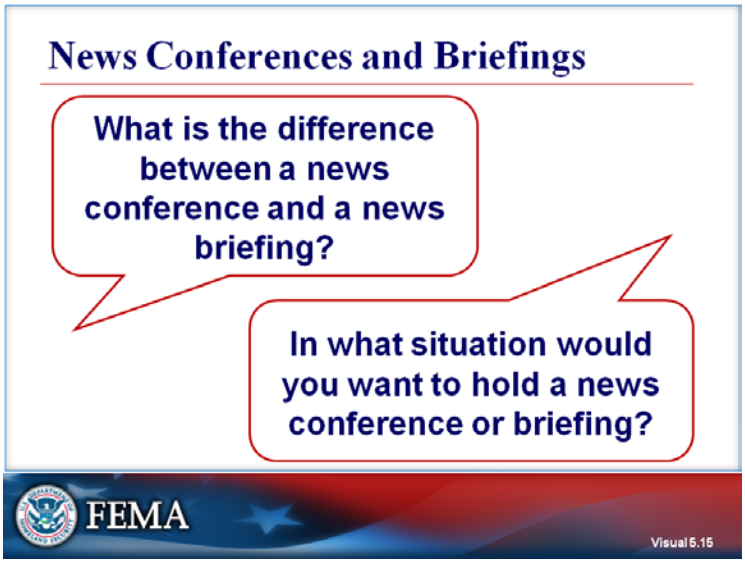
Occasionally it is necessary to restrict access to an area from the multitude of members of the media, but you still want to provide access under a more controlled system. When this occurs you have the option of using a "media pool."

What is a "media pool"?

Who determines which reporters/photographers will be allowed in the media pool?

Topic News Conferences and Briefings

Visual 5.15



Visual Description: News Conferences and Briefings

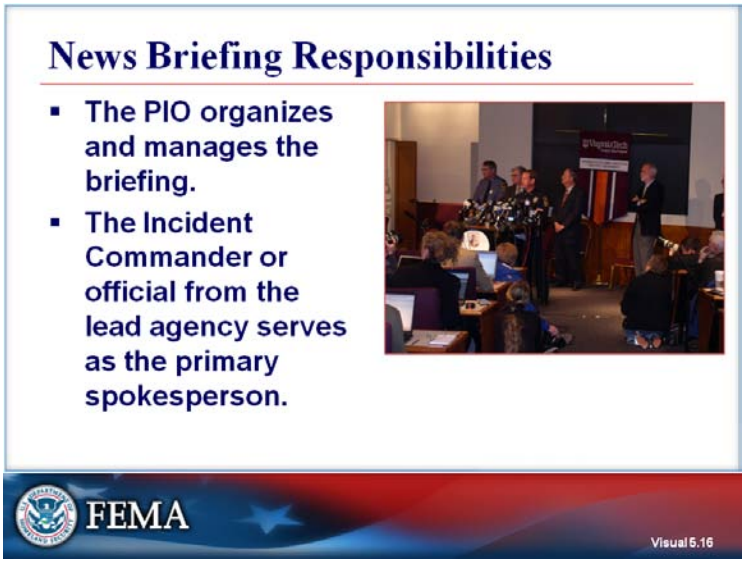
Key Points

	What is the difference between a news conference and a news briefing?

	In what situation would you want to hold a news conference or briefing?

Topic: News Conferences and Briefings

Visual 5.16



Visual Description: News Briefing Responsibilities

Key Points

News briefing responsibilities include:

- The PIO is responsible for organizing and managing a news briefing. Others should assist the PIO in facilitating the briefing/conference.
- The Incident Commander and/or most senior official of the lead organization should be the primary spokesperson. If multiple agencies/organizations are involved under unified command, the official from the agency with primary responsibility in the event should be the primary speaker. All speakers should be briefed on anticipated questions, relevant issues, and stagecraft immediately prior to the start of the news briefing.
- Elected officials can often act in a calming capacity, assuring the public that everything is being done to resolve the situation and get things back to normal. Other participants should only talk about their agencies and their areas of expertise and responsibility.
- Try not to have a long parade of speakers with long statements—this only detracts from what your critical key messages are and often leads media covering the news briefing live to cut back to regularly scheduled programming. Better to have these individuals on hand to answer questions if they arise. Two to three primary speakers should suffice for most incidents.

Topic | **News Conferences and Briefings**

Visual 5.17

Visual Description: Location, Location, Location

Key Points

You may not have many choices when it comes to the location for a news briefing, but when you do you should consider the following:

(Refer to the Tips for Managing Briefing Logistics in the Appendix (page A-31) as you review the following.)

- Will it be covered "live"?
  - Most TV media carry from 500 to 1,000 feet of cable. Satellite or "live" trucks will need an unobstructed area to park in. Satellite trucks need a clear southern exposure to access their satellite. Live trucks will need to access their station repeater—find out where it is and try to plan for where the trucks may park.
- What can you control in the environment?
  - Rain, snow, wind, and other environmental conditions can detract from what the speaker is saying.
  - An indoor, controlled environment is usually the best option.
  - Pick a place with a clean backdrop.
    - Keep the area behind the briefing free from distractions (e.g., people milling about, vehicles moving, smoke or flames, etc.).
    - Make sure cameras cannot move behind the speakers for a "reverse shot" of the news conference.

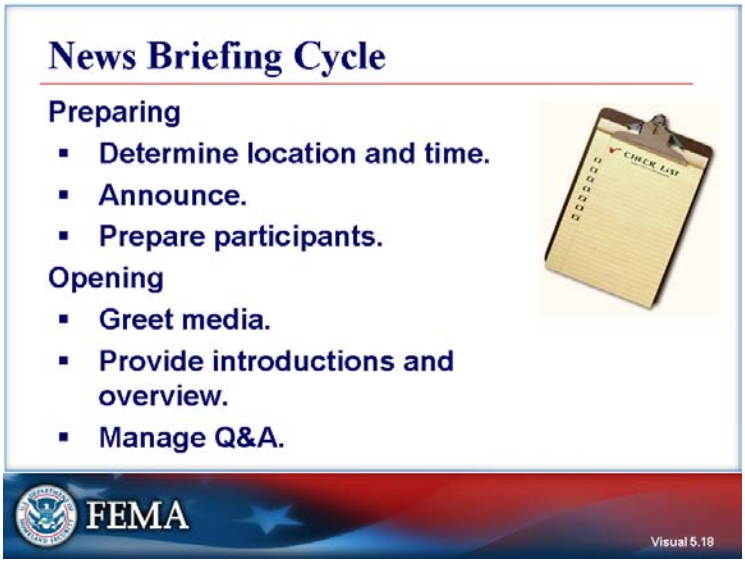
- Provide speakers clear access and egress without having to pass through reporters. (If speakers do not have a clear exit, the media will continue to ask questions.)
- Think about potential "sound" issues.
  - Try to minimize background noise so speakers can be heard clearly. If at all possible, select a place for your news conferences where external noise can be reduced or eliminated. Sounds from heavy machinery, airplanes, trains, or other sources can be distracting to the public who may need to hear the information you are sending out.
  - Occasionally these noises can be so loud as to drown out what is being said by the speaker entirely.
  - If you are inside a building, consider the "echo" factor.
  - Have an audio "mult box." This box allows just one microphone to be placed in front of the speaker, eliminating a microphone "tree" and providing clearer audio.
  - Make sure you get your own recording of the news conference for transcription and possible legal issues.

- What do you need to do to facilitate the cameras?
  - Make sure that the cameras have a clear line of sight to the speakers.
  - Try to set up in an area where the cameras will be at the same level as the speakers.
  - When the camera is shooting down from a position of higher elevation, the image tends to diminish the speaker and the message being presented.
  - When the camera is shooting up from a position of lower elevation, the image tends to place the speaker in a position of greater authority—which is not recommended.
- What do you need in terms of security?
  - A location filled with cameras and various officials about to make a statement can be an opportunity for someone who may want to cause a disturbance or promote an "alternative" viewpoint. Also, media satellite/live trucks contain a considerable amount of high-value equipment. Security should be provided both for members of the media and for the news briefing participants.
  - Security staffing should be visible but not intrusive, and can be stationed near where the news briefing will take place or possibly out by the news media satellite/live trucks.
  - Often local law enforcement may offer to assist in providing security.

It is important to have a backup plan in case weather or other events make the briefing location impractical!

Topic	News Conferences and Briefings

Visual 5.18



Visual Description: News Briefing Cycle

Key Points

Think of news briefing activities as a cycle that includes:

- Preparing
- Opening
- Closing
- Following Up

The PIO's role in **preparing** includes:

1. Determine location and time, which we have already discussed.
2. Announce the briefing to internal and external entities.
   - If a Joint Information Center (JIC) is active, make sure **all** members of the JIC team are aware of the news briefing and know what their responsibilities will be in relation to it.
   - Invite all media outlets, including:
     - Local, regional, and national TV, radio, and print outlets
     - Non-English news outlets
     - Wire services

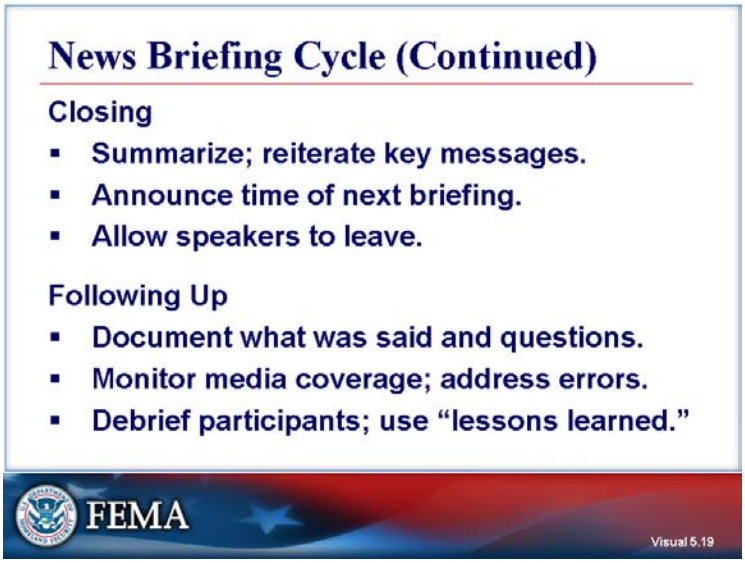
3. Prepare the participants.
   - Determine who speaks about what. Make sure speakers stick to their areas of expertise and responsibility.
   - Develop and rehearse key messages and "sound bite" comments.
   - Rehearse stagecraft and "handoffs." Show speakers how to leave the microphone and allow another speaker to step up in a smooth fashion. Remind speakers not to touch the microphone or tap on the podium. Remind them not to "hunch" down if the microphone is low.
   - Brief elected officials, policy makers, and technical experts on their roles. (Inform the participants of any anticipated issues or questions from the media. Let them know what information has already been provided and any "spin" the media have been placing on the event.)
   - If more than one person is on "stage" for the news briefing, make sure they all know to focus their attention on the person speaking. News briefing participants could be on camera at any time—even if they are not the one speaking. Participants should not be looking at the crowd, talking among themselves, or doing anything that might distract from the message being delivered. While speaking, do not touch the microphone, tap on the lectern, or hunch down to the microphone. Never leave the microphone unattended.
   - Let speakers know what media are present and if any of them have prior issues or agendas.

The PIO's role in **opening** the briefing includes:

- Greet media—thank them for coming.
- Provide introductions with names, titles, and agencies represented.
- Tell how the news briefing will proceed.
- Introduce speakers.
- Deliver brief situation update.
- Facilitate the question-and-answer portion; when it is time to close the session, call for one more question.
- Remain calm, in control, helpful.

Topic	News Conferences and Briefings

Visual 5.19



Visual Description: News Briefing Cycle (Continued)

Key Points

The PIO's role in **closing** the news briefing includes:

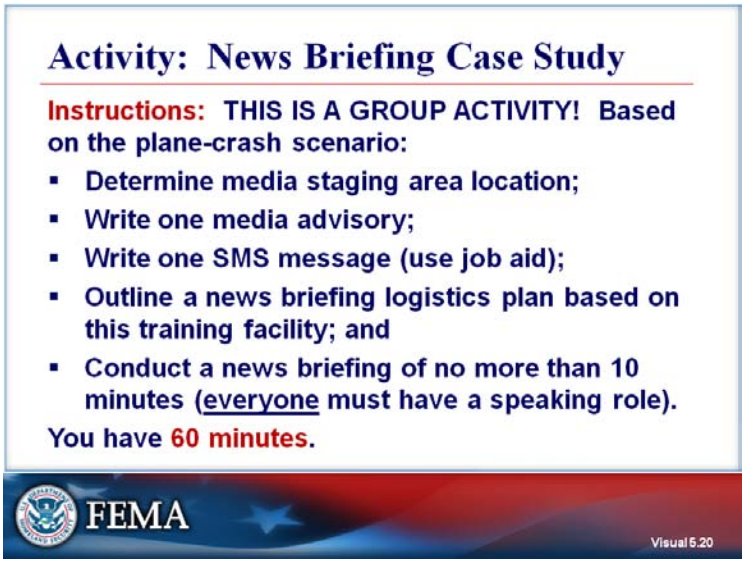
- Summarize, reiterate key points.
- Acknowledge action you now will take.
- Advise time of next news briefing.
- Close and leave.
- Use your PIO/moderator as barrier.

Following the briefing, the PIO needs to:

- Document what was said and media questions.
- Monitor media coverage.
- Actively correct any media inaccuracies.
- Debrief all participants afterward.

Topic **Activity: News Briefing Case Study**

Visual 5.20



Visual Description: Activity: News Briefing Case Study

Key Points

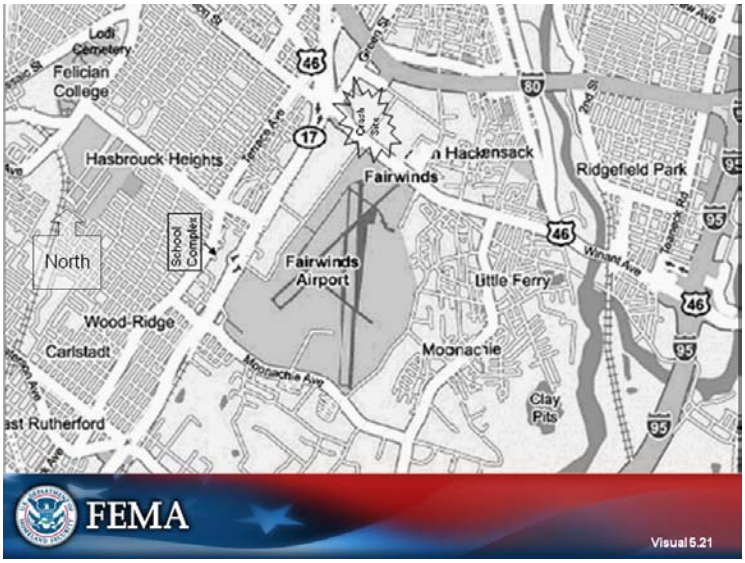
Purpose of the Activity: To give you an opportunity to apply what you have learned in this unit about news briefings.

Instructions:

- You will be preparing for and conducting a news briefing.
- This is a GROUP ACTIVITY, and based on the plane-crash scenario, your group will:
  - **Prepare** for the news briefing by:
    - Determining the best media staging areas.
    - Identifying the key message(s).
    - Identifying the organizations and spokesperson(s) to be included. (EVERYONE IN THE GROUP MUST HAVE A SPEAKING ROLE.)
    - Writing one media advisory.
    - Writing one 140-character Short Message Service—or SMS—message (use job aid).
    - Outlining a news briefing logistics plan based on this training facility.
    - Describing where you would place the staging area, the location of the briefing area, and a task-oriented timeline leading up to the briefing.
  - **Your** group will **present** the news briefing. Everyone must speak. The total time for each table group's news briefing may not exceed 10 minutes.
- You have 60 minutes to prepare.

Topic **Activity: News Briefing Case Study**

Visual 5.21



Visual Description: Map

Key Points

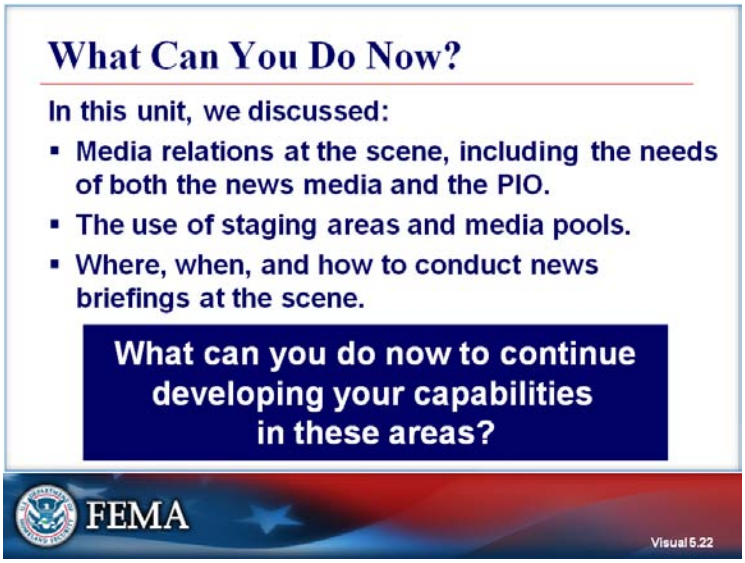
The map to be displayed during the activity.

Topic | **Activity: News Briefing Case Study**

SMS Message Worksheet

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 5.22



Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

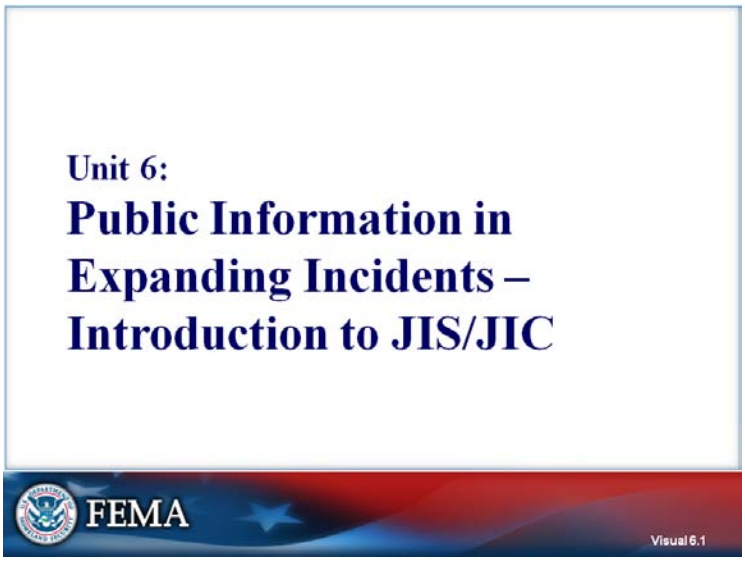
Key Points

	What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

Unit 6:
Public Information in Expanding Incidents – Introduction to JIS/JIC

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 6.1



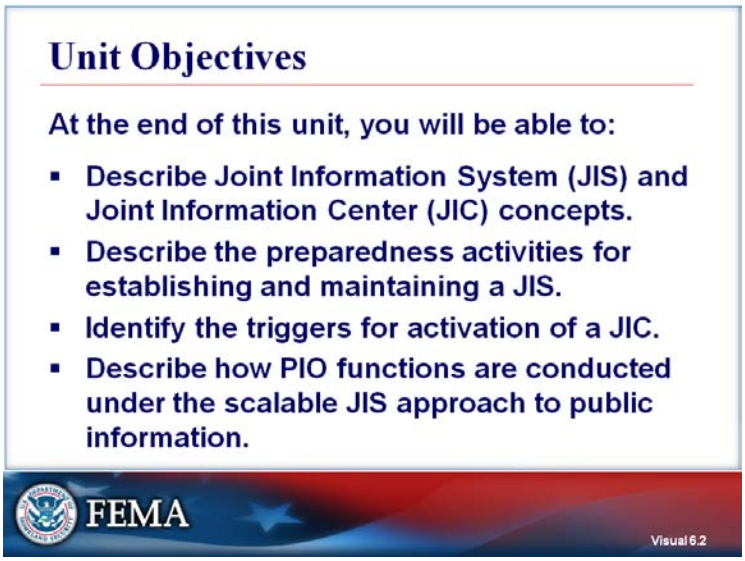
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit will focus on public information activities in larger incidents or those that begin small but quickly evolve to become more complex.

Topic | **Unit Objectives**

Visual 6.2

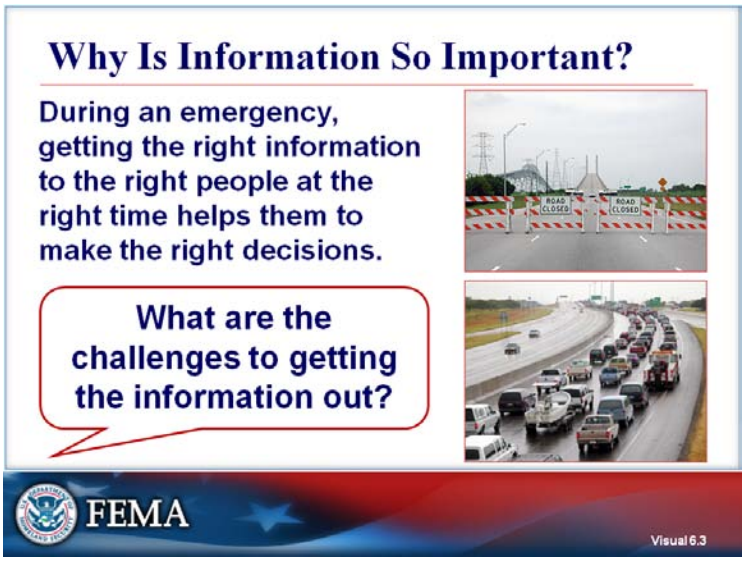


Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic: Why Is Information So Important?

Visual 6.3



Visual Description: Why Is Information So Important?

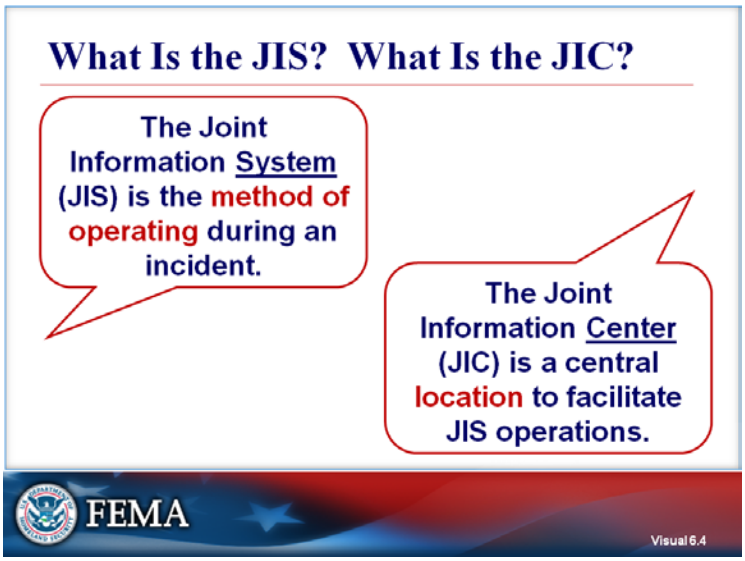
Key Points

- During any type of crisis the public needs information in order to make informed and rational decisions.
- Whether the information involves saving lives, protecting property, or calming fears, the public must have accurate, easy-to-understand information delivered to them in a rapid fashion.

What are the challenges to getting the information out?

Topic: What Is the JIS? What Is the JIC?

Visual 6.4



Visual Description: What Is the JIS? What Is the JIC?

Key Points

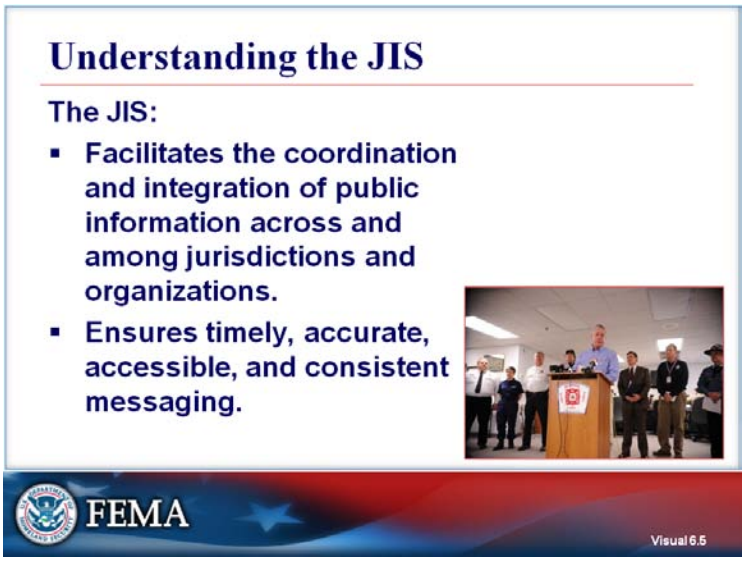
- Like all aspects of an emergency response, the goal of emergency public information is to protect public health and safety.
- Reaching the public in time with accurate, clear, and precise information that will enable them to protect themselves and their loved ones is always the top priority.
- The Joint Information System (JIS) and the Joint Information Center (JIC) are components of emergency public information operations that function together to keep the public informed—on a 24-hour basis if need be—about the specifics and overall progress of the situation, from the onset of the emergency through the recovery period.

Note that:

- The **JIS** is the method of operating that allows multiple sources to coordinate efficiently and consistently. The JIS can be as simple as two PIOs talking across the hood of a truck or a multilocation operation with many PIOs from many agencies.
- The **JIC** is the central location that supports the operation. The JIC enhances information coordination, reduces misinformation, and maximizes resources by collocating PIOs as much as possible.

Topic	Understanding the JIS

Visual 6.5



Visual Description: Understanding the JIS

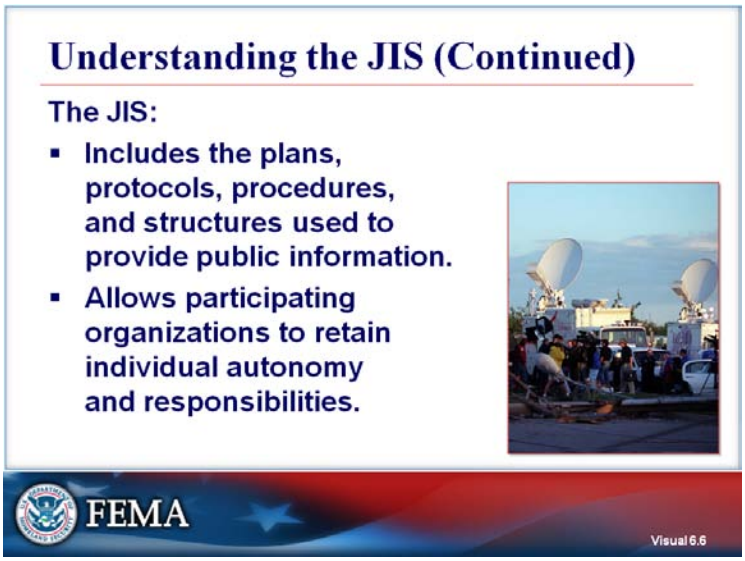
Key Points

The JIS:

- Facilitates the coordination and integration of public information among the entities involved in an incident;
- Integrates incident information to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely, and complete information during crisis or incident operations; and
- Is an information network of PIOs working together to deliver accurate and timely information the public needs and wants.

Topic | **Understanding the JIS**

Visual 6.6



Visual Description: Understanding the JIS (Continued)

Key Points

A JIS:

- Provides a structure and system for:
  - Developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages;
  - Developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies;
  - Advising the Incident Commander concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and
  - Controlling inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the incident response effort.

The following will further describe JIS:

- The JIS can be as simple as two PIOs talking to each other on the phone about a news story that involves both of their agencies.
- The JIS can be one PIO talking by phone to an “on-scene” PIO to confirm the number of responders at the scene prior to an initial news release.
- The JIS can be three PIOs on the scene of a crisis “huddling” prior to making a statement to the media.
- The JIS can be as complex as 150 PIOs working a major disaster, many times from different locations—all to ensure clear and accurate information is being delivered amid the confusion of a disaster response.

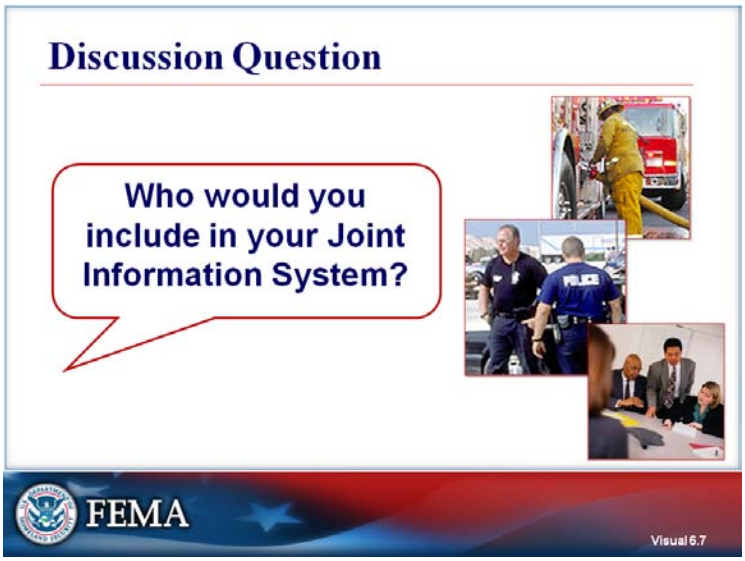
Topic: Understanding the JIS

How a JIS works:

- The components of a JIS must be put into place **before** an emergency occurs. This includes the plans, protocols, and structures used to provide information during incident operations, and encompasses all public information efforts related to an incident, including those undertaken at Federal, State, tribal, and local levels of government, as well as by private organizations involved in the incident.
- The best first steps in forming a JIS are to start a dialog with other PIOs in your area. A bit of "face time" with your counterpart PIOs now will greatly enhance the ability to work together during a crisis later!
- A frequent question from those unfamiliar with the JIS concept is: **Who's in charge?**
- Ultimately all PIOs are responsible for their own department/jurisdiction and what information they release. But a JIS is a cooperative effort and it benefits everyone to release consistent messages that don't contradict. Also, knowing what other departments or jurisdictions are saying lessens the chance that you will be surprised by reporters' questions in the field. Finally, with the JIS approach if one agency or jurisdiction is busy or overwhelmed, other PIOs can help out by supporting them.
- The JIS does mirror the Incident Command System (ICS) so the primary responding agency will most likely take the lead in releasing information. But each agency involved in a JIS retains their autonomy and continues to speak for itself.
- No one will tell you what you can or cannot say—all PIOs in a JIS work together to support each other in disseminating and gathering information. And working with other PIOs in a JIS can only have beneficial results.

Topic **Discussion: Who would you include in your JIS?**

Visual 6.7



Visual Description: Discussion: Who would you include in your Joint Information System?

Key Points

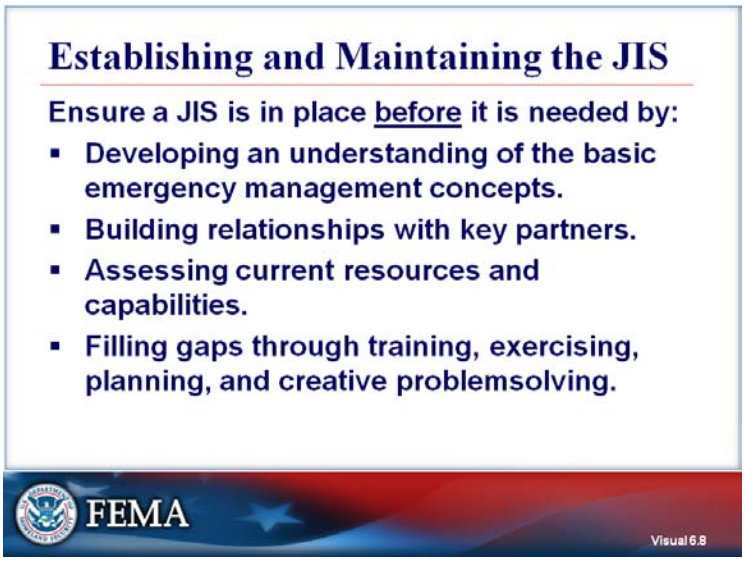
Understanding the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) is only one step in establishing and maintaining the JIS.

- Another key step is identifying and building relationships with key partners in the JIS.

Who would you include in your Joint Information System?

Topic **Establishing and Maintaining the JIS**

Visual 6.8



Visual Description: Establishing and Maintaining the JIS

Key Points

In order to establish and maintain a JIS, you should:

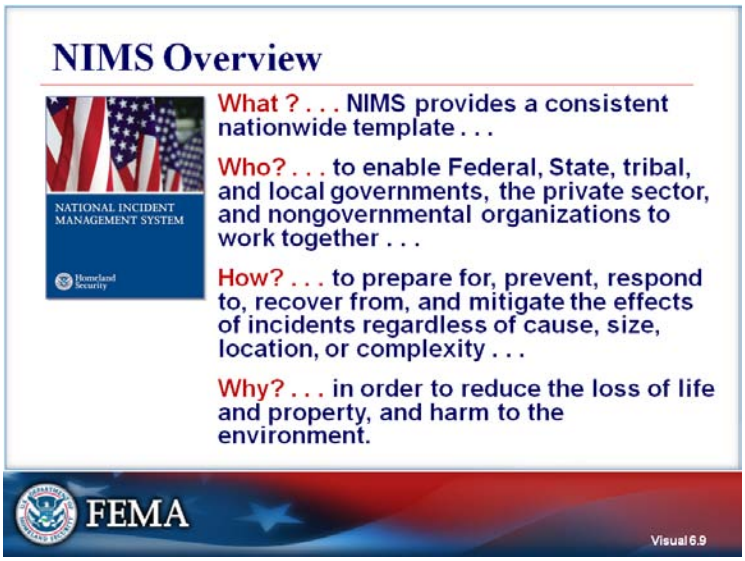
1. Develop an understanding of basic emergency management concepts, including:
   - Local and State Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) and where your organization and role fits in;
   - The National Incident Management System (NIMS); and
   - The Incident Command System (ICS).
2. Build relationships with key partners in the JIS.
3. Assess current resources and capabilities.
4. Fill gaps through training and planning.

NIMS requires emergency personnel to take training appropriate to their level of responsibility; most likely, you would benefit by taking:

- FEMA IS-700: NIMS, An Introduction; and
- ICS-100: Introduction to ICS or equivalent.

Topic NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.9



Visual Description: NIMS Overview

Key Points

The next few slides will provide a very brief refresher of information from IS 700.A – Understanding NIMS.

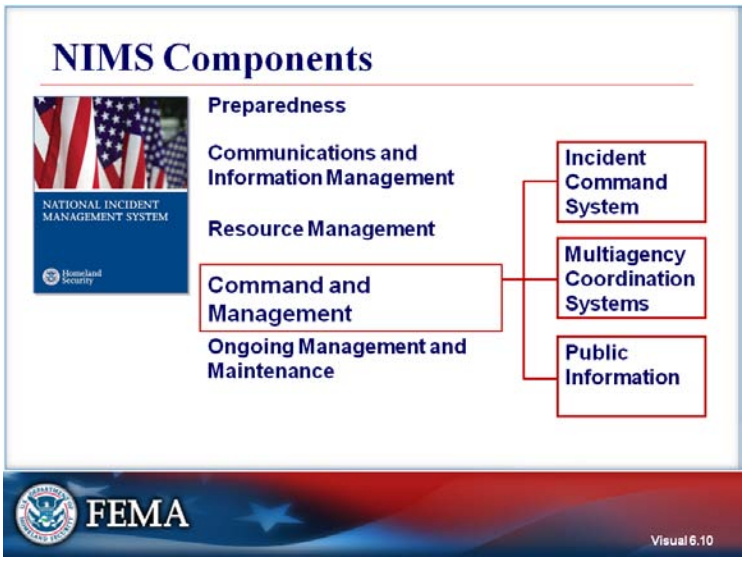
The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident. NIMS is not an operational incident management or resource allocation plan.

The NIMS document was developed through a collaborative intergovernmental partnership with significant input from the incident management functional disciplines, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

Originally published on March 1, 2004, the NIMS document was revised in 2008 to reflect contributions from stakeholders and lessons learned during recent incidents.

Topic	NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.10



Visual Description: NIMS Components

Key Points

Public Information is part of the Command and Management component of NIMS.

Refer to the description of all NIMS components on the next page.

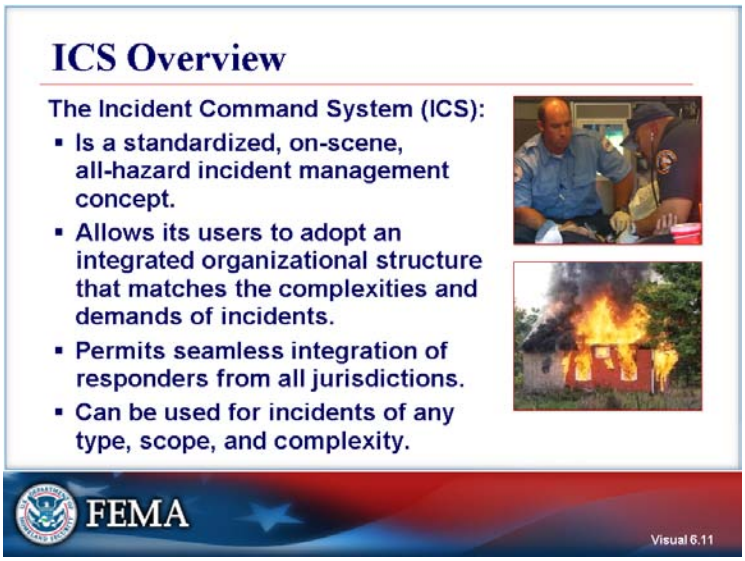
NIMS Components

NIMS is much more than just using the Incident Command System or an organization chart. Following is a synopsis of each major component of NIMS.

- **Preparedness.** Effective incident management and incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted on an ongoing basis, in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualification and certification, and equipment certification.
- **Communications and Information Management.** Emergency management and incident response activities rely on communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. NIMS describes the requirements necessary for a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture. NIMS is based on the concepts of interoperability, reliability, scalability, portability, and the resiliency and redundancy of communications and information systems.
- **Resource Management.** Resources (such as personnel, equipment, and/or supplies) are needed to support critical incident objectives. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to the requirements of the incident. NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes the resource management process to: identify requirements for, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse for, and inventory resources.
- **Command and Management.** The Command and Management component within NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing flexible, standardized incident management structures. The structure is based on three key organizational constructs: the **Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination Systems, and Public Information.**

Topic NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.11



Visual Description: ICS Overview

Key Points

ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that:

- Allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a **common organizational structure.**
- Enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private.
- Establishes common processes for planning and managing resources.

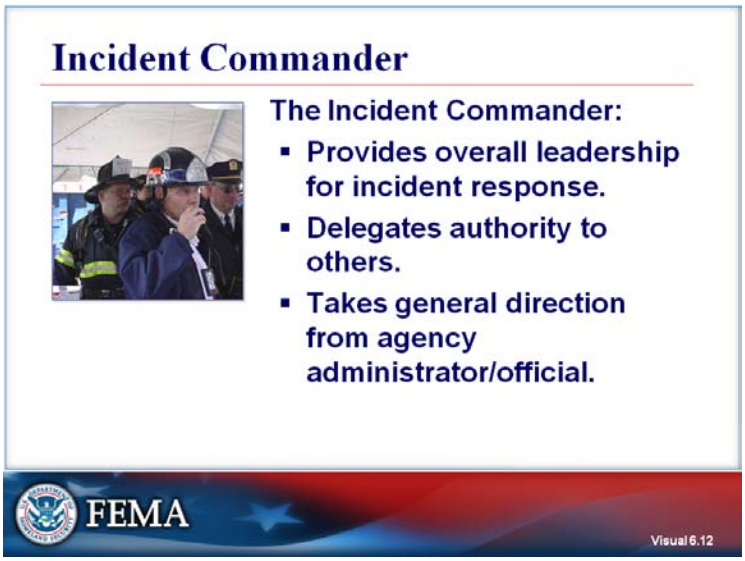
By using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:

- The safety of responders and others.
- The achievement of tactical objectives.
- The efficient use of resources.

NIMS prompts the use of ICS for every incident or scheduled event. Using ICS on all incidents helps hone and maintain skills needed for the large-scale incidents.

Topic	NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.12



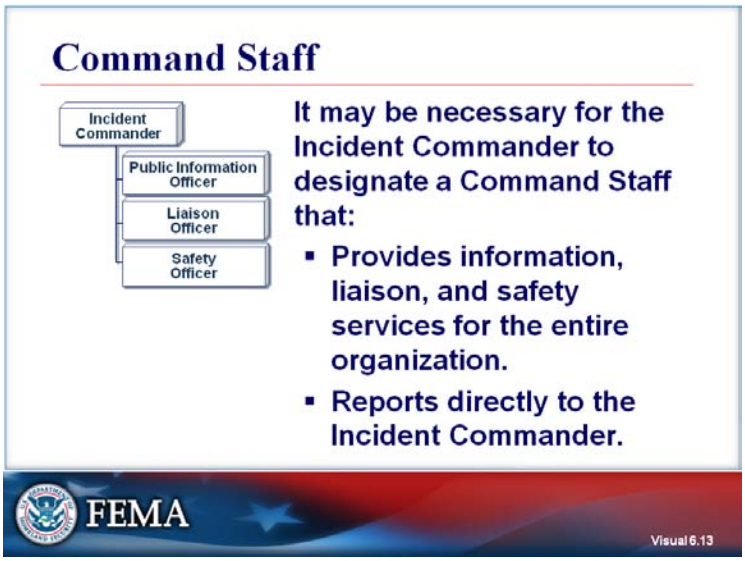
Visual Description: Incident Commander

Key Points

- When an incident occurs within a single jurisdiction and there is no jurisdictional or functional agency overlap, a single **Incident Commander** is designated with overall incident management responsibility by the appropriate jurisdictional authority. The designated Incident Commander develops the incident objectives that direct all subsequent incident action planning.
- The Incident Commander has overall responsibility for managing the incident by establishing objectives, planning strategies, and implementing tactics.
- The **Incident Commander is the only position that is always staffed in ICS applications.** On small incidents and events, one person, the Incident Commander, may accomplish all management functions.

Topic	NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.13



Visual Description: Command Staff

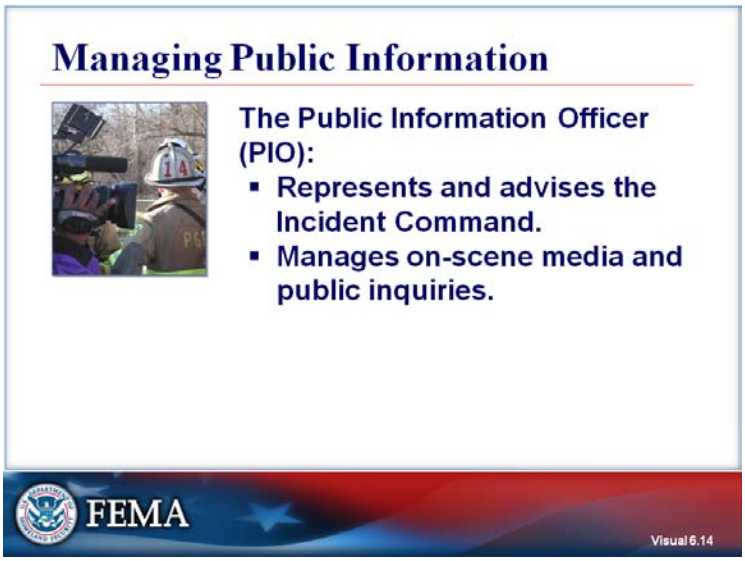
Key Points

In an Incident Command organization, the Command Staff typically includes the following positions:

- The **Public Information Officer** is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.
- The **Safety Officer** monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander/Unified Command on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel.
- The **Liaison Officer** is the point of contact for representatives of other governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.

Topic NIMS and ICS Basics

Visual 6.14



Visual Description: Managing Public Information

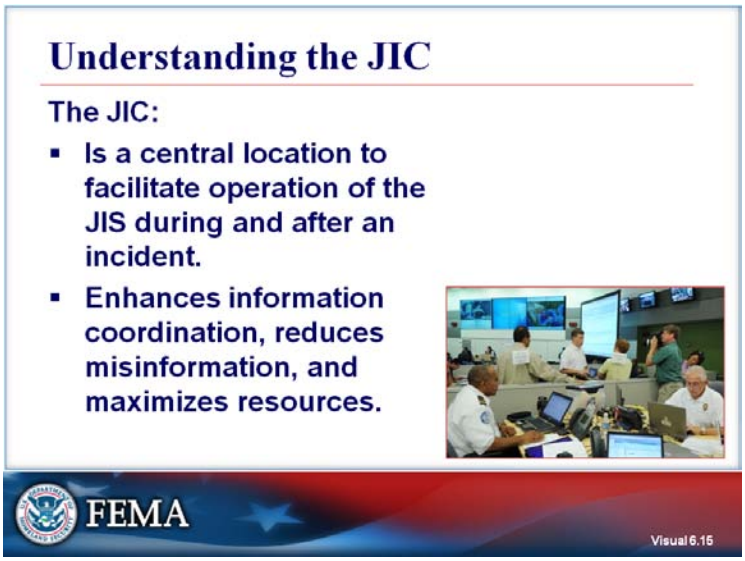
Key Points

The **Public Information Officer (PIO)** supports the Incident Command structure as a member of the Command Staff.

- The PIO advises the Incident Commander on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
- The PIO handles inquiries from the media, the public, and elected officials; emergency public information and warnings; rumor monitoring and response; media monitoring; and other functions required to gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate accurate, accessible, and timely information related to the incident, particularly regarding information on public health, safety, and protection.

Topic | **Understanding the JIC**

Visual 6.15



Visual Description: Understanding the JIC

Key Points

The Joint Information Center (JIC) is a central location designed to facilitate operation of the JIS. The JIC:

- Is a physical location with tools to enhance the flow of public information.
- Provides a central working facility where PIOs can gather.
- Allows PIOs to handle increased information needs by the media and the public during and after a crisis.
- Maximizes communication between different PIOs while minimizing conflicting or inaccurate information being sent to the media and the public.
- Can provide “one-stop shopping” for the media—this makes it more enticing for the media to focus on “official” information rather than scatter for other parts of the story.
- It is important to remember that the JIC is simply a tool to facilitate the JIS. The JIS—or the sharing of information—is the key to any crisis communication efforts.
- Through the collocation of public information professionals the JIC speeds information release time, enhances information coordination and analysis, reduces misinformation, maximizes resources, and helps build public confidence in response efforts.
- If possible, it is advised to have location(s) identified that could be used as a JIC before an incident occurs, ideally in close proximity to the EOC. It is important that these locations meet the working needs of the PIO function and allow easy access for the media.

Topic: Understanding the JIC

- Once a JIC has been identified, it is recommended to have appropriate equipment and other resources available and operational. The PIO should develop standard operating procedures on the actual use of the JIC and the equipment and staff that may be needed.

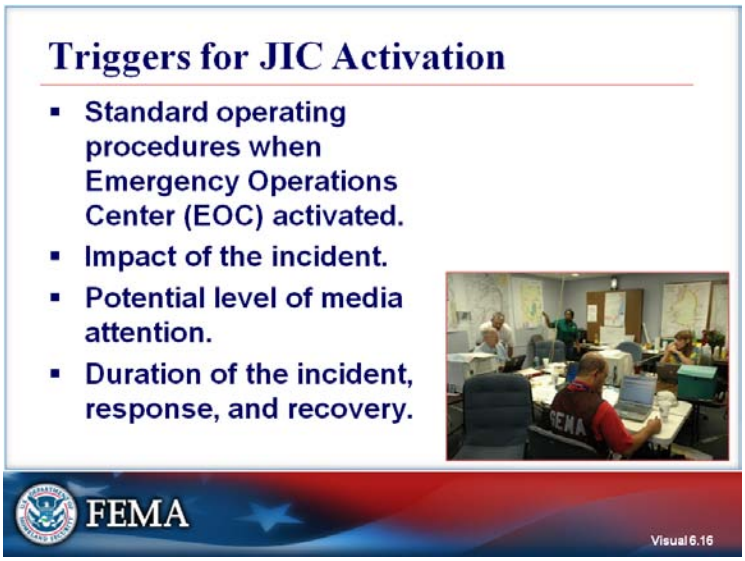
- The concept of using a JIC to facilitate the dissemination of emergency public information is not new. The idea initially emerged in the late 1970s after unsuccessful attempts to communicate crisis information to the media and public during the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant incident. Since that time the concept and structure of JICs have grown and evolved—often taking a shape necessary to accomplish the task and necessitated by various local emergency plans, politics, and the resources that are available.

While a single JIC location is preferable, the system is flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate virtual or multiple JIC locations, as required.

Refer to the Types of JICs in the Appendix (page A-35).

Topic: Triggers for JIC Activation

Visual 6.16



Visual Description: Triggers for JIC Activation

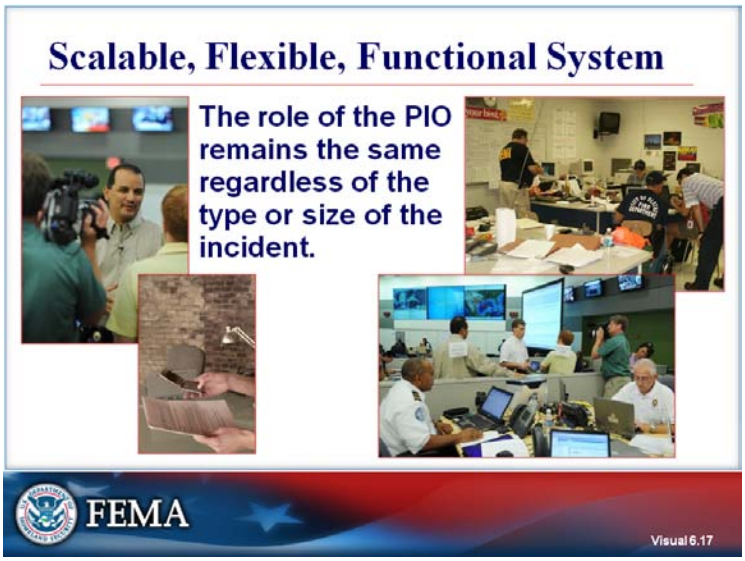
Key Points

A JIC may be activated when:

- It is the protocol that the JIC is opened when the EOC is activated;
- The impact of the incident is large or broad enough to require the response of multiple organizations and PIOs;
- Media interest will be considerable (e.g., statewide, national, international, and/or long-lasting interest); or
- The incident response and recovery will be lengthy.

Topic | **Scalable, Flexible, Functional System**

Visual 6.17



Visual Description: Scalable, Flexible, Functional System

Key Points

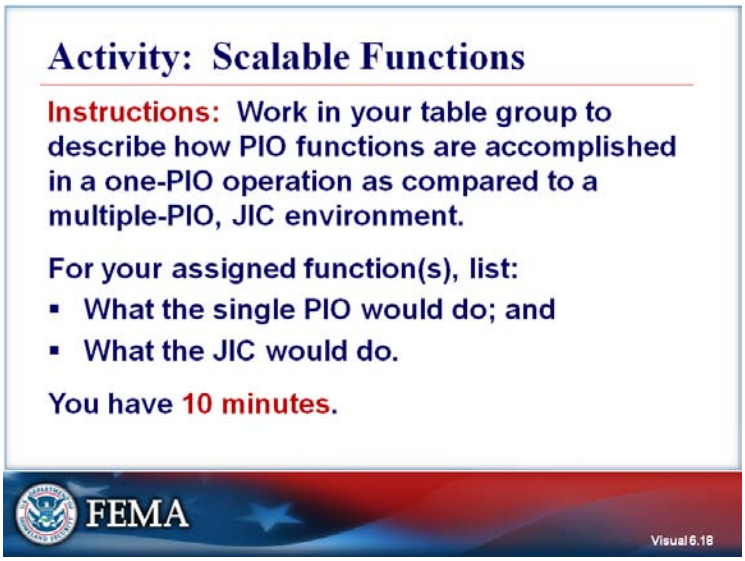
The PIO's role during an incident is to:

- 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.

The role of the PIO remains basically the same, regardless of the type and size of the event. The system allows for flexibility and scalability to meet the needs of the incident.

Topic **Activity: Scalable Functions**

Visual 6.18



Visual Description: Activity: Scalable Functions

Key Points

Purpose of the Activity: To give you the opportunity to discuss how the PIO functions described by the information management cycle are conducted in single- and multiple-PIO situations.

Instructions:

- Your table group will be assigned one or more functions from the Information Management Cycle as follows:
  - Monitoring/Information Gathering
  - Analysis and Verification
  - Message Development/Approval
  - Dissemination
  - Tracking and Documentation

- For your table group's assigned function(s) you should create two lists:
  - What the single PIO would do to accomplish the function; and
  - What the JIC—with multiple PIOs—would do to accomplish the same function.

- Be specific and record your lists on chart paper.

- Your group will have 10 minutes.

Topic	Activity: Scalable Functions

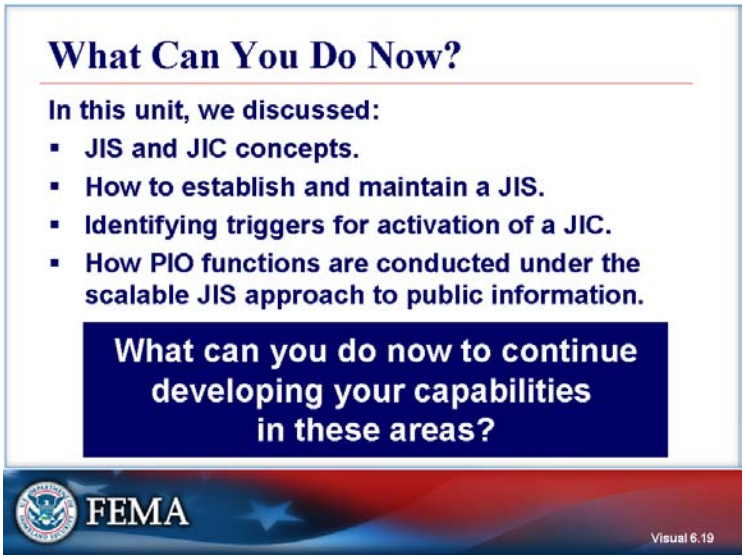
	What is the primary benefit of working in a multi-PIO JIC?

	What is the primary challenge?

After the activity, refer to PIO and JIC Activities in Response to an Evolving Incident in the Appendix (page A-37).

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 6.19



Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

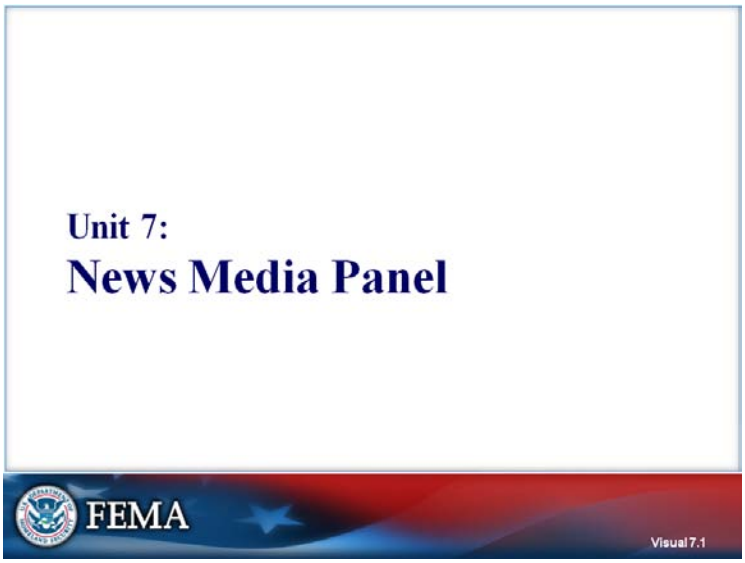
Key Points

What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

Unit 7:
News Media Panel

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 7.1



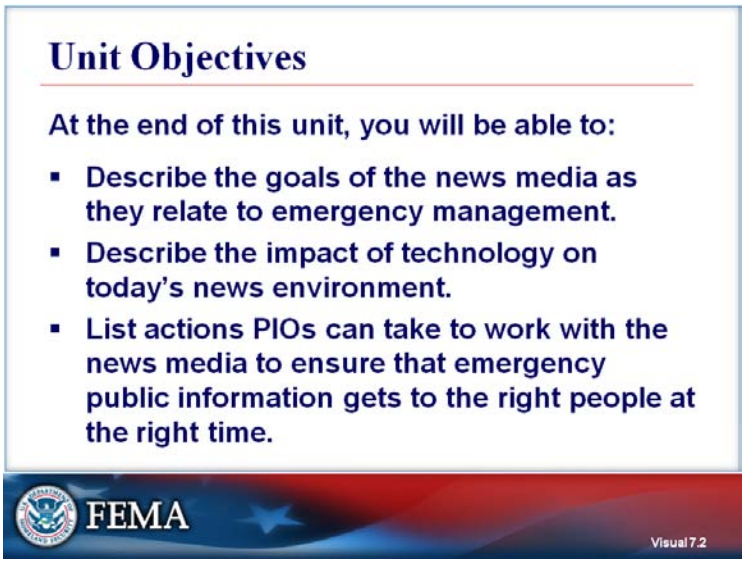
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit will give you an opportunity to hear from—and ask questions of—members of the news media.

Topic: Unit Objectives

Visual 7.2



Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic: Introductions

Visual 7.3

Visual Description: Introductions

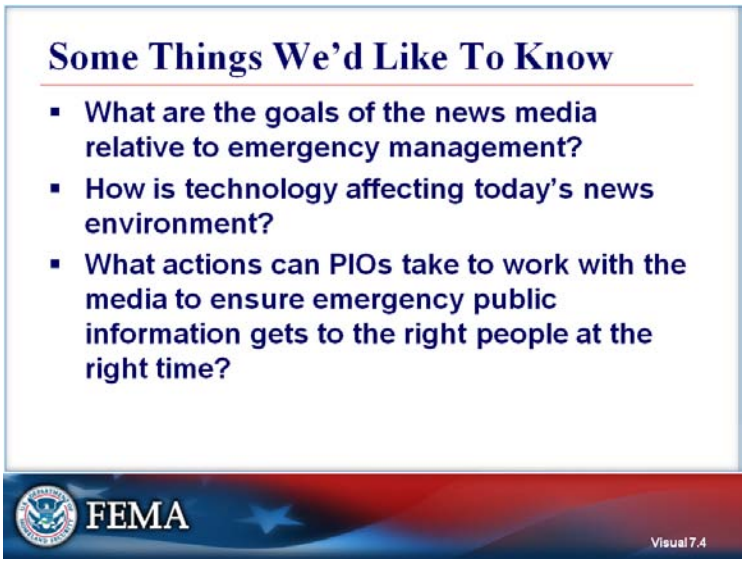
Key Points

The news media panel will introduce themselves by:

- Telling their name and media outlet; and
- Briefly describing their most memorable reporting experience related to public safety.

Topic: Some Things We'd Like To Know

Visual 7.4



Visual Description: Some Things We'd Like To Know

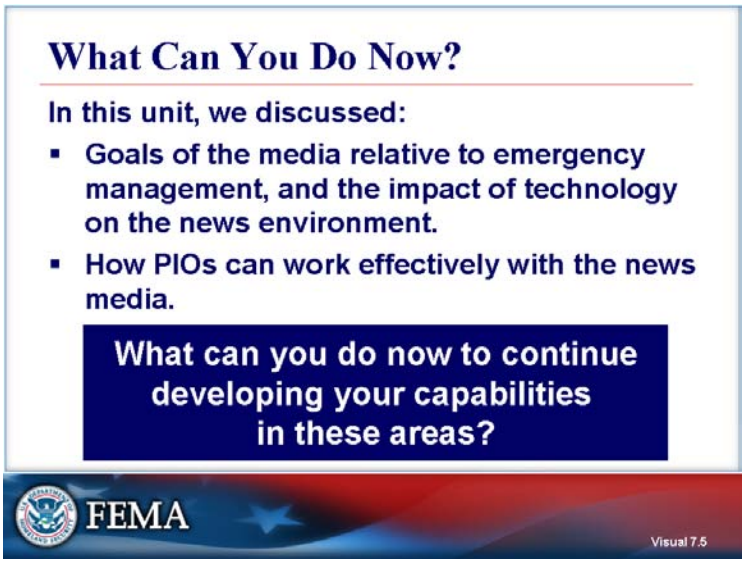
Key Points

The remainder of this unit will be a question-and-answer session.

The questions on the visual are starting points, but you should ask any other questions you may have.

Topic	Unit Summary/What Can You Do Now?

Visual 7.5



Visual Description: What Can You Do Now?

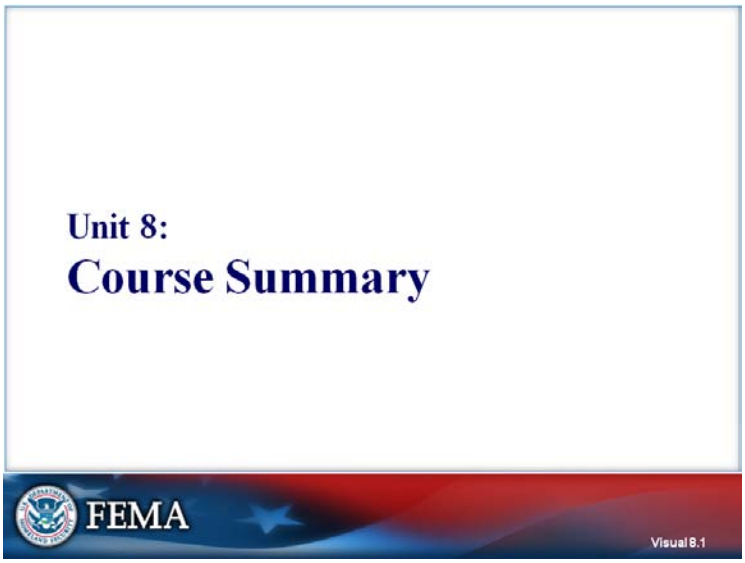
Key Points

What can you do now to continue developing your capabilities in these areas?

Unit 8:
Course Summary

Topic: Unit Introduction

Visual 8.1



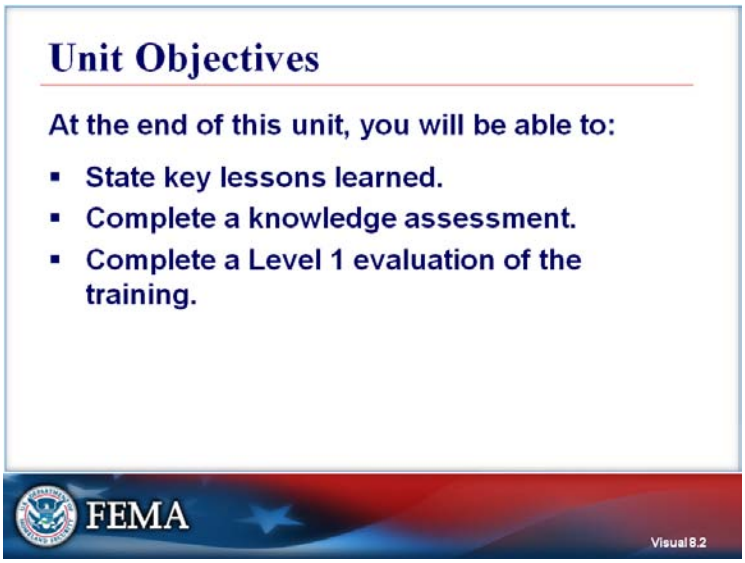
Visual Description: Unit Title Slide

Key Points

This unit summarizes the course and gives you an opportunity to provide feedback.

Topic: Unit Objectives

Visual 8.2

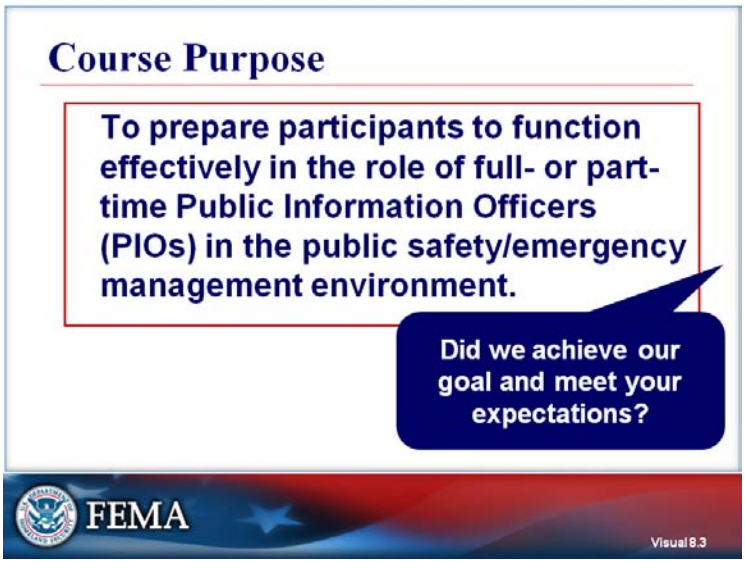


Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

Topic	Course Purpose

Visual 8.3



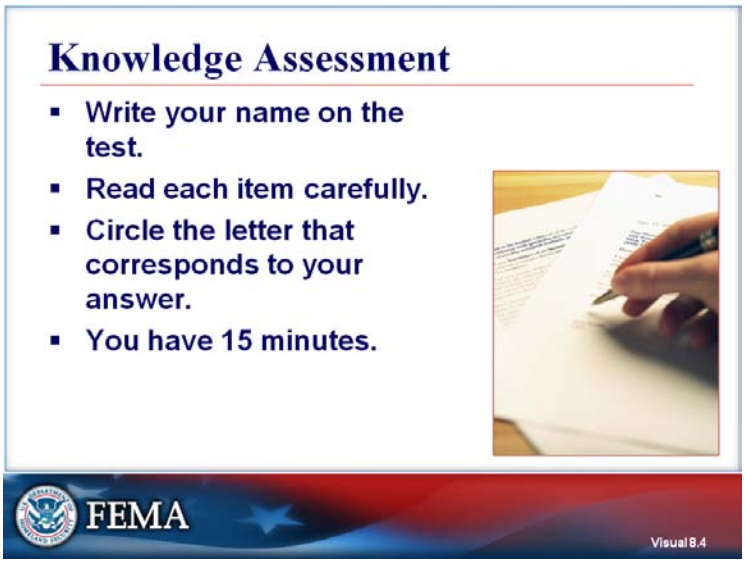
Visual Description: Course Purpose

Key Points

	Did we achieve our goal and meet your expectations?

Topic: Knowledge Assessment

Visual 8.4



Visual Description: Knowledge Assessment

Key Points

Please complete the Knowledge Assessment.

Topic	Continuing Your Development

Visual 8.5

Visual Description: Continuing Your Development

Key Points

You can continue your professional development by progressing through the PIO curriculum.

Topic	Feedback

Visual 8.6

Visual Description: Feedback

Key Points

Please complete the course evaluation form. Your comments are important!

Thank you for your attendance and participation.

Appendix

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms A-1

New Media Glossary A-5

Writing It Right A-11

Go-Kit Checklist A-17

Tips for Managing Media Staging Areas A-19

News Media's Role/How To Build Effective Relationships With the Media A-21

Processes and Tools That Facilitate Communication

- Approval Sheet A-23
- Tips for Creating and Maintaining a Media List A-25
- Do's and Don'ts for Online Media Rooms A-27

Tips for Improving Your On-Camera Performance A-29

Tips for Managing Briefing Logistics A-31

Media Relations at the Scene – On-Scene Nightmares A-33

Types of JICs A-35

PIO and JIC Activities in Response to an Evolving Incident A-37

JIC Readiness Assessment A-39

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet A-43

Topic Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Following are some terms and acronyms used in this course or in emergency management activities.

Term	Meaning
Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law	Stylebook used by most news media and schools of journalism (see Stylebook).
Crisis	A major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting an organization, company, or industry, as well as its publics, products, services, and/or good name. A crisis occurs unexpectedly, might not be in the organization's control, and, if left unaddressed, might threaten life, safety, property, or cause irreparable harm to an organization's reputation or viability. A crisis lasts a finite period of time.
Crisis communication	The dissemination of messages in response to a crisis, which explain the severity of the situation and action steps to take.
Emergency	A subcategory of crisis that is characterized by an immediate threat to the health or safety of an individual, group, or community. An emergency requires those at risk to make the best possible decisions about their well-being within extreme time constraints and often with imperfect or incomplete information. In an emergency, the organization is usually not overtly judged as a possible participant in the creation of the event, although it may have an important role to play in mitigating its effects. The process of communicating about emergencies is addressed by emergency public information.
Emergency public information	Developed and disseminated in anticipation of, during, or after an emergency to provide specific life- and health-saving information, including the severity of the situation and any action steps that individuals and communities should take.
Freedom of Information Act	The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1966. This act allows for the full or partial disclosure of information and documents of the U.S. Government, defines Federal agency records subject to disclosure, and outlines mandatory disclosure procedures. Similar legislation—generally called Sunshine Laws—provides access to State and local documents. Information on State freedom of information laws may be found at www.nfoic.org/foi-center.
Go-Kit	A go-kit is what a PIO might need when functioning away from the normal place of operation (e.g., incident site) for an initial period of 12-24 hours. What is in a go-kit will vary from situation to situation and from person to person, but might include such things as a cell phone and charger, laptop computer, paper/pens/pencils, media and agency contact lists, basic personal care items, etc.
Incident Command System	The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard approach to incident management. It provides a common framework within which people can work together effectively, even when they are drawn from multiple agencies that do not routinely work together. ICS has been called a “first-on-scene” structure, where the first responder on the scene has charge of the scene until the incident has been declared resolved, a superior-ranking responder arrives on scene and seizes command, or the Incident Commander appoints another individual Incident Commander.

Term	Meaning
Inverted pyramid	The inverted pyramid illustrates how information should be arranged in a news release. The pyramid's broad base is at the top, representing the most important information. Other information follows in order of diminishing importance.
Joint Information Center	The Joint Information Center—or JIC—is a physical location with tools to enhance the flow of public information. By collocating PIOs, the JIC speeds information release time, enhances information coordination and analysis, reduces misinformation, maximizes resources, and helps build public confidence in response efforts.
Joint Information System	The Joint Information System—or JIS—is an information network of PIOs working together to deliver accurate and timely information to the public. The JIS provides a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; and for developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies. The JIS can be as simple as two PIOs talking to each other on the phone about a news story that involves both of their agencies, or as complex as 150 PIOs working a major disaster.
Marketing	Identifying audience needs and communicating about/delivering products and services to fill those needs. Emphasis is on the sale of products or services (hence the term: market).
Media pool	A media pool is one representative from each of the types of media (television, radio, print, Web) who will be allowed access to a restricted area. These representatives are allowed access with the understanding that any video, audio, or interviews they acquire will be shared with all of the rest of the media.
National Incident Management System	The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a systematic, proactive approach to guide departments and agencies at all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to work seamlessly to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life and property and harm to the environment. NIMS works hand in hand with the National Response Framework (NRF). NIMS provides the template for the management of incidents, while the NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for national-level policy for incident management.
National Response Framework	The National Response Framework (NRF) presents the guiding principles enabling all levels of domestic response partners to prepare for and provide a unified national response to disasters and emergencies. The NRF's coordinating structures are always in effect for implementation at any level and at any time for local, State, and national emergency or disaster response.
News briefing	An exchange of information on a single topic to include a question-and-answer session.
News conference	A gathering at which media representatives expect to be able to ask questions on a variety of topics.
Public awareness	Also called "public education," public awareness campaigns focus on informing the public about services that typically are not for sale. Public awareness campaigns are typically conducted by government and nongovernmental organizations.
Public information	Collected, assembled, or maintained by an organization in connection with the transaction of official business and available for dissemination to the public.

Term	Meaning
Public relations	Managing the flow of information between an organization and its audiences, often to build rapport or positive public image.
Risk	The probability that a natural, technological, or civil threat to people, property, and the environment will occur.
Risk communication	The design and delivery of information about a risk so the public can take appropriate action. Risk communication is an opportunity when we can deliver our messages and establish credibility and trust.
Sound bite	A short, striking, quotable statement well suited to a television news program.
Stylebook	A stylebook (also called a style guide or style manual) is a set of standards for design and writing of documents for a specific publication, organization, or group. The AP Stylebook contains the guidelines for punctuation, capitalization, professional titles, etc. used by most news media.
Sunshine Laws	Most States have legislation—generally referred to as Sunshine Laws—that provides access to State and local documents, much as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides access to Federal documents. Information on State freedom of information laws may be found at www.nfoic.org/foi-center.
Talking points	Talking points are used to prepare yourself or someone else for a telephone or broadcast interview. Written as sound bites, they should be concise, memorable, and easy to understand.

Acronym	Meaning
AP	Associated Press
ARC	American Red Cross
CBO	Community-Based Organization
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FCO	Federal Coordinating Officer
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GAR	Governor's Authorized Representative
HM	Hazard Mitigation
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
IA	Individual Assistance
IAFC	International Association of Fire Chiefs
IAFF	International Association of Fire Fighters
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICS	Incident Command System

Acronym	Meaning
IHP	Individuals and Households Program
JFO	Joint Field Office
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEMA	National Emergency Management Association
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NIOA	National Information Officers Association
NRCC	National Response Coordination Center
NRF	National Response Framework
NWS	National Weather Service
PA	Public Assistance
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment
PIO	Public Information Officer
PNP	Private Nonprofit
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RRCC	Regional Response Coordination Center
SCO	State Coordinating Officer
SITREP	Situation Report
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
VOLAG	Voluntary Agency

Topic New Media Glossary

While not all-inclusive, this glossary offers definitions and examples of many components of today's "New Media." The following content was compiled in March of 2009. Due to the rapidly changing landscape of communication technology and trends, it is important to frequently review, update, and add new information to maintain the value of this glossary.

Blog

A blog (a contraction of the term weblog) is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function more as personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.

Citizen journalism

Citizen journalism is the act of nonprofessionals "playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information," according to the seminal report *We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information,* by Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis. They say, "The intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires."

According to Mark Glasser, a longtime freelance journalist who frequently writes on new media issues, "The idea behind citizen journalism is that people without professional journalism training can use the tools of modern technology and the global distribution of the Internet to create, augment or fact-check media on their own or in collaboration with others."

Digital Emergency Alert System

The Digital Emergency Alert System (DEAS) is a system designed to alert first responders and civilians in the event of a national emergency. It is based upon and supplements the Emergency Alert System (EAS) by sending out text, voice, video, and other digital messages to mobile phones, pagers, radios, and televisions.

The system, managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is in development.

Facebook (see Social network service)

Topic New Media Glossary

Mashup (Web application hybrid)

In Web development, a mashup is a Web application that combines data from one or more sources into a single integrated tool. The term Mashup implies easy, fast integration, frequently done by access to open data sources to produce results that were not the original goal of the data owners. An example of a mashup is the use of cartographic data from Google Maps to add location information to real estate data, thereby creating a new and distinct Web service that was not originally provided by either source.

Micro-blogging

Micro-blogging is a form of multimedia blogging that allows users to send brief text updates (say, 140 characters or fewer) or micromedia (such as photos or audio clips) and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group that can be chosen by the user. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, e-mail, digital audio, or the Web.

For example, Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates known as *tweets*. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters that are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as *followers*). Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow anybody to access them.

MySpace (see Social network service)

New Media

New media is a term meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies in the later part of the 20th century. Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being manipulable, networkable, dense, compressible, and impartial.

Photo sharing

Photo sharing is the publishing or transfer of a user's digital photos online through both Web sites and applications that facilitate the upload and display of images. The term can also be loosely applied to the use of online photo galleries that are set up and managed by individual users, including photoblogs.

Podcast

A podcast is a series of visual or sound files that are distributed over the computer by syndicated download, through Web feeds, to portable media players and personal computers. Though the same content may also be made available by direct download or streaming, a podcast is distinguished from most other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added. Like the term broadcast, podcast can refer either to the series of content itself or to the method by which it is syndicated; the latter is also called podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster.

Topic **New Media Glossary**

Really Simple Syndication (RSS)

RSS (abbreviation for Really Simple Syndication) is a family of Web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works—such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video—in a standardized format. An RSS document (which is called a "feed," "Web feed," or "channel") includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship. Web feeds benefit publishers by letting them syndicate content automatically. They benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favored Web sites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place. The user subscribes to a feed by clicking an RSS icon in a browser that initiates the subscription process. The RSS reader checks the user's subscribed feeds regularly for new work, downloads any updates that it finds, and provides a user interface to monitor and read the feeds.

Short Message Service (SMS)

Short Message Service (SMS) is a communication service standardized in mobile communication systems, using standardized communications protocols allowing the interchange of short text messages between mobile communication devices. SMS text messaging is the most widely used data application on the planet, with 2.4 billion active users, or 74 percent of all mobile phone subscribers sending and receiving text messages on their phones. The SMS technology has facilitated the development and growth of text messaging. The connection between the phenomenon of text messaging and the underlying technology is so great that in parts of the world the term "SMS" is used as a synonym for a text message or the act of sending a text message, even when a different protocol is being used.

Smartphone

A smartphone is a mobile phone offering advanced capabilities beyond a typical mobile phone, often with PC-like functionality. There is no industry standard definition of a smartphone. For some, a smartphone is a phone that runs complete operating system software providing a standardized interface and platform for application developers. For others, a smartphone is simply a phone with advanced features like e-mail and Internet capabilities, and/or a built-in full keyboard or external USB keyboard and VGA connector.

Social media

Social media are primarily Internet- and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. The term most often refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction; and the construction of words, pictures, videos, and audio. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and "building" of shared meaning among communities, as people share their stories and experiences. Businesses also refer to social media as user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media (CGM).

Topic **New Media Glossary**

Social network service

A social network service focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others. Most social network services are Web-based and provide a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging services.

The main types of social networking services are those that contain directories of some categories (such as former classmates), means to connect with friends (usually with self-description pages), and recommender systems linked to trust.

For example, Facebook is a free-access social network service that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc. Another example is MySpace, which is owned by News Corporation.

Twitter (see Micro-blogging)

User-generated content (UGC) (see Social media)

Video blogging

Video blogging, sometimes shortened to vlogging or vidblogging, is a form of blogging for which the medium is video. Entries are made regularly and often combine embedded video or a video link with supporting text, images, and other metadata. Video logs (vlogs) also often take advantage of Web syndication to allow for the distribution of video over the Internet using either the RSS or Atom syndication formats, for automatic aggregation and playback on mobile devices and personal computers

Video hosting service

A video hosting service allows individuals to upload video clips to an Internet Web site. The video host will then store the video on its server, and show the individual different types of code to allow others to view this video. The Web site, mainly used as the video hosting Web site, is usually called the video sharing Web site.

For example, YouTube is a video sharing Web site where users can upload, view, and share video clips. YouTube is a subsidiary of Google.

Web 2.0

The term “Web 2.0” refers to a perceived second generation of Web development and design that aims to facilitate communication, secure information sharing, interoperability, and collaboration on the World Wide Web. Although the term suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to any technical specifications, but rather to changes in the ways software developers and end-users utilize the Web.

Web 2.0 concepts have led to the development and evolution of Web-based communities, hosted services, and applications such as social networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis, and blogs.

Topic **New Media Glossary**

Webcast

A Webcast is a media file distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology. A Webcast may either be distributed live or on demand. Essentially, Webcasting is "broadcasting" over the Internet. A Webcast uses streaming media technology to take a single content source and distribute it to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. The largest "Webcasters" include existing radio and TV stations that "simulcast" their output, as well as a multitude of Internet only "stations."

Web mapping

Web mapping is the process of designing, implementing, generating, and delivering maps on the World Wide Web. Although the terms Web GIS and Web mapping are used synonymously, they don't mean exactly the same thing. Web maps are often a presentation media in Web GIS, and Web maps are increasingly gaining analytical capabilities. A special case of Web maps are mobile maps, displayed on mobile computing devices, such as mobile phones, smart phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), global positioning system (GPS) units, and other devices. If the maps on these devices are displayed by a mobile Web browser or Web user agent, they can be regarded as mobile Web maps. If the mobile Web maps also display context- and location-sensitive information, such as points of interest, the term location-based services is frequently used. Customizable Web maps are usually more complex Web mapping systems that offer application programming interfaces (APIs) for reuse in other people's Web pages and products. Examples of such a system are Yahoo! Maps and Google Maps.

Wiki

A wiki is a page or collection of Web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified markup language. Wikis are often used to create collaborative Web sites and to power community Web sites. The collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia is one of the best-known wikis.

A defining characteristic of wiki technology is the ease with which pages can be created and updated. Generally, there is no review before modifications are accepted. Many wikis are open to alteration by the general public without requiring them to register user accounts. Sometimes logging in for a session is recommended, to create a "wiki-signature" cookie for signing edits automatically. Many edits, however, can be made in real-time and appear almost instantly online. This can facilitate abuse of the system. Private wiki servers require user authentication to edit pages, and sometimes even to read them.

YouTube (see Video hosting service)

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Writing It Right

Effective writing is an essential part of any job, but it is particularly important in emergency public information. Getting the right information to the right people at the right time is the goal of emergency public information, whether the message is conveyed through talking points, a news release, or a fact sheet. The following pages include tips for avoiding some common mistakes and producing written material that is clear, simple, and concise for the public to understand.

Topic **Writing It Right**

Arranging Information in Logical Order

Written information is easier to understand and remember when it is arranged in logical order. Use the method below that is most compatible with the information you are trying to convey.

Relative Importance	
▪ Most important first ▪ Inverted pyramid	**Details:** When arranging information by relative importance, the most important data come first, followed by supporting information. This is sometimes referred to as an inverted pyramid because the base—the most significant information—is at the top. Journalists were taught to write this way so editors could literally trim the typeset pages from the bottom to get them to fit the space available without losing the most important parts of the story. Arranging information by relative importance is well suited to reports and much of the other writing supervisors produce because they often have to convey key information in a limited number of lines.
Chronological	
▪ What happened first ▪ What happened next ▪ . . . and so on	**Details:** Information is often organized chronologically, or by time. Chronological order is a very comfortable way for most people to review and process information because it follows the natural order of life. It is also helpful because it can convey the relationship between prior and subsequent events.
Spatial	

▪ Paints a picture:
  ▪ Foreground and background
  ▪ Near to far
  ▪ Left to right
 	
▪ Helps reader envision the scene
	Details: Some information is best presented spatially—which describes where things are or where they happened in proximity to each other.
	
	Spatial organization is helpful when it is important for the reader to envision a scene and there isn't the option to include photos or illustrations.

Alphabetical and Numerical	
▪ Alpha: Useful when listing names or data ▪ Numeric: Can indicate sequence of steps or quantifiable relationship (i.e., big to small, most to least)	**Details:** Alphabetical and numerical ordering have a place in many written documents. Alphabetical order is particularly helpful when including long lists of names or other data. Numeric lists can indicate the sequence of steps taken or the relationship among elements (i.e., biggest to smallest item, most to least important, most to least impact).

Topic **Writing It Right**

Avoiding Grammar Pitfalls

Some rules of grammar are more likely than others to trip us up from time to time.

The following chart describes some of the more common problem areas, providing the grammatical rule that applies and examples.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Rule: Subjects and verbs must agree in number.

- Singular *subject* and verb = *She* is buying a car.
- Plural *subject* and verb = *They* are buying a car.
- Compound *subject* and plural verb = *Meat and potatoes* are the basic meal in the dining hall.
- Nouns of quantity, distance, time take a singular verb = *Five hundred dollars* is a lot to pay for ring-side tickets, but *eighty miles* isn't too far to drive to see the fight.
- Collective nouns can be singular or plural, depending on their meaning = The jury were divided on the vote. (The jury as **individuals** were divided.) The jury has completed its deliberations. (The jury as **a whole** has come to a decision.)

Noun-Pronoun Agreement

Rule: Nouns and pronouns must agree in number and gender.

- Compound *noun* and plural pronoun = *Bob and Sue* presented their report to the Chief.
- Single *noun* and single pronoun = *Carlos* played his best game of golf for the tournament. (Pronoun is correct in both number and gender.)

Fragments and Run-On Sentences

Fragments are incomplete thoughts.

- Subject or verb is missing = Heavier suspension, towing package, steel wheels, and over-sized tires all part of the special price. (The verb "are" is missing.)
- A word indicates something is missing = Although Pete was late to work. ("Although" indicates something is missing. Either "Although Pete was late to work today he is usually on time" or "Pete was late to work" would be correct.)

Run-on sentences are two complete thoughts improperly joined.

- We moved from New York we like San Diego. (WRONG)

Punctuation or a connecting word can correct the sentence:

- We moved from New York. We like San Diego. (two sentences)
- We moved from New York; we like San Diego. (complete thoughts joined by semicolon)
- We moved from New York and we like San Diego. (complete thoughts joined by a conjunction)

Topic **Writing It Right**

Spotting Punctuation Problems

Just as with spelling errors, faulty punctuation can undermine your credibility and confuse the reader. There are entire courses taught on punctuation and numerous books devoted to the subject. Some of the more common problem areas appear below:

Apostrophes

Use apostrophes to indicate:

- Letters omitted
  - Don't (for "do not")
  - Let's (for "let us")
- Possession
  - Mary Brown's car (apostrophe + "s" with a singular noun)
  - The Browns' car (apostrophe after the "s" in plural nouns)
- "It" can be tricky! Consider the following:
  - It's going to rain. (indicating letter is omitted); **but**
  - The cat lost its tail. (no apostrophe used to show possession with "it")

Commas

Use commas to:

- Introduce
  - Stopping to smell the roses, Bob was stung by a bee.
- Separate
  - Bob needed tweezers, antiseptic, and a bandage. (separate items in a list)
  - Bob was on his way to work, and the bee's attack was unprovoked. (separate independent clauses joined by a conjunction)
  - Bob said, "I'll never again sniff a flower with my eyes closed." (separate a quotation from the rest of the sentence)

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks to indicate:

- New term
  - "Blogging" can be a source for identifying developing issues.
- Titles of short printed works
  - The magazine article, "Punctuation Tips for Writers," was a big help.
- Direct quotations
  - "I am leaving," said Sue.

Topic **Writing It Right**

Choosing the Right Words

Making your writing clear, concise, and easy-to-understand sounds simple, but it can be a challenge. Consider the following tips:

Use the fewest words that will effectively convey your message.

Instead of saying . . .	Say . . .
At the present time	Now
Due to the fact	Because
Has the ability to	Can
In the event of	If
Is a justification for	Justifies
In the process of making plans	Planning

Use parallel construction.

In other words, express parallel ideas in parallel grammatical forms.

- John enjoys boating, swimming, and to fish. (WRONG)
- John enjoys boating, swimming, and fishing. (RIGHT)

Use active voice.

Consider the following:

- The analyst wrote the report. (ACTIVE)
- The report was written by the analyst. (PASSIVE)

Active voice is clear, direct, and concise. The subject is the **doer** of the action.

Although active voice is preferred and is more interesting, passive voice may be appropriate when the doer is unknown or you want to focus on the receiver of the action. With passive voice, the subject is the **receiver** of the action.

Use easy-to-understand language.

- Write to express, not impress.
- Avoid acronyms. If you use an acronym, make sure your audience understands it. Write out the full term on first usage, as appropriate.
- Use examples and comparisons to help convey unfamiliar information, to paint a picture, or to help the reader relate to the information. (For example: The suspicious package was the size of a laptop computer.)

Topic **Writing It Right**

Tackling Troublesome Words

Two or more words that sound the same (or similar) but have different meanings can trip us all up. Do not let these words give you trouble:

Accept = *verb*: to receive or to agree **Except = *preposition* meaning all but (EXAMPLE: Everyone went to lunch except for Bill.)**
Advise = *verb*: to recommend **Advice = *noun*: an opinion or recommendation**
Affect = *verb*: to influence **Effect = *noun*: consequence OR *verb:* to bring about change (EXAMPLE: Her research effected a modification of the policy to allow for inclement weather closings.)**
Cite = *verb*: to quote **Site = *noun*: place or setting** **Sight = *noun*: ability to see**
Conscious = *adjective*: awake **Conscience = *noun*: awareness of obligation to be good (EXAMPLE: He could not steal because his conscience would not let him.)**
Its = possessive form of pronoun (EXAMPLE: The committee has served its purpose.) **It's = contraction for "it is"**
Lead = *noun* referring to metal **Led = past tense of *verb* "to lead"**
Than = compares things (i.e., "bigger than") **Then = a time other than the present**
Their = possessive pronoun **There = a place other than here** **They're = contraction for "they are"**
To = preposition or first part of the infinitive form of a verb (EXAMPLE: She scheduled time at the range to practice shooting.) **Too = very, also** **Two = the number 2**
Where = location **Were = past tense of verb "to be"** **We're = contraction for "we are"**
Your = possessive pronoun **You're = contraction of "you are"**

Topic Go-Kit Checklist

A go-kit is a mobile response kit that allows PIOs to function in the event that they are working outside of their normal place of operation. Refer to the list below. Check off the things you would plan to include in your go-kit and add other items as you see fit.

	HAVE THIS	NEED THIS	N/A
Equipment			
▪ Computer(s) capable of linking to the Internet/e-mail			
▪ Cell phone(s) or satellite phone(s)			
▪ Pager(s)			
▪ PDA/palm computer with wireless e-mail capability			
▪ Digital camera and batteries			
▪ Other:			
Information			
▪ Flash drives and CDs* containing the elements of the crisis communication plan (including news media contact lists, PIO team contact lists, information materials, etc.) * Redundancy is important in case the computer you are using doesn't have an available or operating USB port or CD drive.			
▪ Manuals and background information necessary to provide needed information to the public and media			
▪ Topic-specific fact sheets, backgrounders, talking points, and news release templates (hard copy and electronic)			
▪ Other:			

Topic **Go-Kit Checklist**

	HAVE THIS	NEED THIS	N/A
Other Resources			
▪ Business cards with 24/7 contact information			
▪ Funding mechanism (i.e., credit card, etc.) that can be used to purchase operational resources as needed			
▪ Other:			
Personal Care and Comfort Items			
▪ Glasses/contacts (spares)			
▪ Prescription medications, basic first-aid supplies			
▪ Weather gear (e.g., rain poncho, gloves, sunscreen)			
▪ Hand sanitizer, “wipes,” paper towels			
▪ Energy and nutrition bars, water			
▪ Other:			

Topic: Tips for Managing Media Staging Areas

At the scene of an incident, the news media's most basic needs are access to information and images. If you anticipate what they will want, you will have a better chance to control the scene and help guide the story.

Many times at the scene of an incident a staging area can be set up to facilitate the enhanced flow of information between the PIO and the media. Prior to establishing the location for this staging area, ask yourself the following questions:

Does the staging area infringe on the scene?

- Many times the site of a crisis or disaster may be considered a crime scene and needs to be processed by forensic units. In order to maintain the "integrity" of the scene and enhance the possibility for a successful investigation and subsequent prosecution, the scene must be kept clear of all nonessential personnel.

Does the news media presence interfere with the work being done (e.g., rescue, cleanup, investigation, etc.)?

- The ultimate goal of all public safety endeavors is to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment—and almost all reporters would agree that their needs will come after these important tasks. Members of the media do not want to interfere with these tasks, but if they can get close enough to observe and/or photograph they will be happy.

Does the location of the staging area place the media in danger or will they be in a position to endanger others?

- In their zeal to "get the story" reporters may not always recognize the potential for danger to themselves. Work to keep them out of danger as you would any member of the public. Also, it may be necessary to explain to them the danger, and how if they fail to heed the warnings and become injured, they may endanger others who would have to then go in to rescue them (e.g., passing into the plume of a Hazmat area, traveling over an unsafe structure that may collapse, or moving into the line of fire of an armed suspect).

Is the staging area convenient for you and policymakers?

- In order to keep a consistent two-way flow of information with the media at the scene, it is important to make it relatively easy to communicate with them face to face.

Will the reporters be too close—will they have access to sensitive/protected information?

- Zoom lenses, parabolic microphones, and just plain observant reporters may be able to discover sensitive or protected information from your incident command post (e.g., zoom shots of maps, recorded conversations, etc.). Make sure the staging area is far enough away and/or your workspaces are shielded from prying cameras, microphones, and eyes.

Topic	Tips for Managing Media Staging Areas

Will the staging area give reporters a clear line of sight to satellite or microwave towers?

- Depending on where the staging area is, the media will need to be able to connect with their microwave towers or uplink with a satellite. Check with them to see if the location selected for a staging area will allow them to accomplish this connection.

Can the media get images they want?

- The media will want to get as close as possible to get pictures/audio/interviews. If there is a reason that the media cannot be allowed access to the scene, consider using a media pool to restrict access while allowing them to get the images and interviews they desire. (A media pool refers to a group of news-gathering organizations pooling their resources in the collection of news.) If a media pool is not an option, consider providing professional quality images to the media in the form of video and stills.

Are there "convenience" facilities available for media (restrooms, food, electrical outlets, etc.)?

- While it is not the responsibility of the PIO to provide food or facilities for the media, a little kindness in this area can go far in building a positive relationship with the media—especially if the incident occurs in a remote area where few if any comfort facilities exist (e.g., if the incident is in a remote field, a porta-john will go a long way in making friends!).

How can you keep them at the staging area?

- You can't—and don't expect them to stay there all of the time. They will go other places to get other information (local citizen reactions, sidebar stories, etc.).
- You can entice them to stay by giving them regular "official" updates and letting them know that if they are absent they may miss something important or interesting.

Topic **News Media's Role/How To Build Effective Relationships With the Media**

The media's role: The traditional news media paint the image of the incident response in the eyes of the public. They create the perception of the agency and their response to the incident, and perception is reality to the public. The news media is your organization's link to the public before, during, and after an incident requiring emergency response.

Why do we want to build relationships with the news media?

- The news media are the PIO's conduit to the public.
- Working better with the news media means developing relationships before an incident occurs.

How can we work better with the news media?

1. Understand that the media wants and needs access:
   - The First Amendment provides for freedom of the press.
   - At the Federal level, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) defines agency records subject to disclosure and outlines mandatory disclosure procedures.
   - Local Sunshine Laws also ensure that the news media have access to information. Information on State freedom of information laws may be found at www.nfoic.org/foi-center.

2. Understand the things you can do to build relationships with the news media:
   - Be accessible and return calls and e-mails promptly. Even if you don't have all the information immediately, being accessible and responsive builds your credibility.
   - Coordinate access to the scene and to policymakers, responders, and victims.
   - Treat all media fairly—meaning you don't play favorites with media or reporters.
   - If the media have set up a pool, be prepared to monitor and mediate, if necessary.
   - If you have breaking news, share it with everyone.
   - Learn and respect deadlines.

3. Understand the types of news media and their needs:

   All print media, especially newspapers:

   - For longer stories, may need more detailed information.
     - Stories can vary from brief to highly detailed. For example, a newspaper will run personnel items such as appointments and promotions when other media may not.
     - For longer stories, print media may need help in collecting long-term statistics, biographies, etc.
   - Need information several hours before going to press, BUT . . . online editions of print media change this limitation as deadlines are reduced or eliminated.

Magazines:

- Are issued on a less frequent basis and require more advance planning.
- Can be a good option for some indepth feature stories.
- May be more targeted to a particular audience you want to reach.

Television:

- Seeks stories with drama or dramatic visual content. One producer described his evening news as "The was and the fuzz," because it focused on deaths and law enforcement.
- Is less likely to want an indepth feature, although it can happen.
- May want a staging area for live broadcasts from the scene of a story.
- May accept your video clips (this is market-dependent; know your market!).

Radio:

- May or may not have a field reporter, so is more likely to rely on you to contact them. Nationally, it is becoming more and more common for local radio stations to have no news staff or even live announcers.
- Usually likes telephone sound clips or telephone interviews.
- Likes to receive recorded public service announcements (PSAs) or to have a PIO record the announcement by phone or in the studio. A variety of voices is important to radio.
- Wants you to pay attention to the station's theme or strong focus, such as news, farm, or youth orientation.

Internet:

- Can add news items very quickly, but may edit its Web site at only certain hours of the day. Be aware of the site's operating procedures.
- Often tied to print or television outlet and prefers to pick up news from that outlet.
- In terms of news releases and content, should be treated like a newspaper.

4. <u>Understand the impact of changing technology</u>:

- Local media of **all formats** now use Web sites and want breaking news fast! They want to be the first with the headline, Tweet, or RSS feed and often seek a quick rundown as the incident breaks. And they post "breaking" news to their Web site long before their newscast takes place.
- They may not wait for validation of information, which means that media monitoring is essential. Fact checking is now ongoing rather than required. Information is published/broadcast first, then "updated" later.
- This local development follows the national trend. Think of CNN's iReport.com, the user-generated site where the stories come from users. CNN marks those stories it has vetted "On CNN" and uses them in CNN's news coverage.

Topic **Processes and Tools That Facilitate Communication**

Insert Organizational Seal or logo	**APPROVAL SHEET** **Office of Public Information**

Keep with original and subsequent drafts at all times.

1. Check one:

- ☐ News Release
- ☐ Media Advisory
- ☐ Talking Points
- ☐ PSA
- ☐ Fact Sheet
- ☐ Other

2. Complete the following:

Number:	Title/Topic:
	Writer:

3. Insert the names/titles of those who need to review/approve content and circulate:

Name/Title	Signature/Initials	Date/Time
Name/Title	Signature/Initials	Date/Time
Name/Title	Signature/Initials	Date/Time

4. Final Approval

- ☐ Okay to release as is.
- ☐ Make changes and release.
- ☐ Make changes and reroute.

Name/Title	Signature/Initials	Date/Time

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Topic **Processes and Tools That Facilitate Communication**

Tips for Creating and Maintaining a Media List

STEP 1: Create the List	▪ Your list should include reporters at the local newspaper, television and radio news outlets, and Internet news media. Include assignment editors, editorial page editors, news managers, producers, and reporters who may cover stories associated with your agency. It is also important to know the photographers from each news outlet because you may be working with them as much as the reporters. ▪ Include news services like the Associated Press, Knight-Ridder, Reuters, and States News Service. News services—also called "wire services"—are news outlets that transmit their stories to subscriber news outlets nationwide (or worldwide). ▪ Also include national news outlets, including the major national newspapers and news magazines, broadcast news, CNN, and NPR. ▪ Ideally, you will be able to sort your list depending on the needs of the situation. For some messages your distribution will be limited to local media only; for other messages you will want broader distribution.
STEP 2: Verify and Refine the List	▪ Once you have your basic media list, you'll still want to make some phone calls to make sure the information is current and complete. You will want: ✓ Names of assignment editors, editorial page editors, news managers, producers, and reporters who may cover stories associated with your agency. (Get correct spellings of first and last names.) ✓ Phone numbers (office, cell, the best number to reach the news room 24/7). ✓ Know how to get into contact with each news outlet during times when they are normally shut down (e.g., you may need to get evacuation or other emergency public information out after they have shut down for the night). ✓ Fax number. ✓ E-mail address. ✓ Accurate mailing address (sometimes a post office box). ✓ Deadlines. ✓ Preferences for receiving news releases. Do they want releases e-mailed to them, and if so, what document format do they prefer? (Do they want it cut and pasted into the body of an e-mail or sent as an attachment? In what format—Word, PDF, or both?) ▪ Asking these questions gives you good information and also helps to develop a positive working relationship with the news media.

Topic **Processes and Tools That Facilitate Communication**

Tips for Creating and Maintaining a Media List

STEP 3: Maintain the List	▪ Media outlets often have high turnover rates. The reporter who covered your last story may no longer be there or may be assigned to a different beat. ▪ If feasible, call each outlet before sending a news release to ensure your contact information is still accurate. (While you may not be able to do this during an emergency, you can do this before sending out nonemergency news releases.) ▪ Plan to update your list at least once a year. ▪ Try to schedule a visit to each local news outlet once a year to meet new news staff and get some “face time” with reporters and news management. This is also a good time to pitch story ideas.

Topic **Processes and Tools That Facilitate Communication**

Do's and Don'ts for Online Media Rooms

Online media rooms can be powerful tools, **if** they are easy to access and are up-to-date. Consider the following when setting up or revamping your online resources for reporters:

DO:	DON'T:
▪ Provide one-click access—a direct link from your home page. ▪ Post an after-hours administrative number for reporters on deadline. ▪ Organize material in a logical manner. Provide bulleted, easy-to-understand fact sheets. ▪ Provide frequently asked questions and base them on actual questions—ones you hear repeatedly from reporters. ▪ Provide downloadable logos. ▪ Group news releases by year. ▪ Offer useful search functions. Reporters want to be able to search your news releases, not merely see a listing. ▪ Offer print-friendly options so reporters don't have to print out unneeded pages. ▪ Keep it fresh—update your material regularly and have a way to highlight what is new. ▪ Link to your Web site in news releases and other materials.	▪ Hide your online media room. Don't make reporters hunt through other sections. ▪ Make your media room a dumping ground for old material or too-lengthy documents (post executive summaries instead). ▪ Post too many PDF documents. In some environments reporters can't launch plug-ins (like Adobe Acrobat); reporters on deadline will move on if they can't easily access your information. ▪ Leave old releases up forever; archive them.

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Topic **Tips for Improving Your On-Camera Performance**

Do's and Don'ts for On-Camera Performance

The following "do's" and "don'ts" are helpful reminders of what works and what doesn't when you are in front of the camera.

DO:

- **Know what you want to say.** It is the best way to control the interview and accomplish your objectives.
- **Know your main point and stick to it.** Too many messages will be confusing to the reporter and the public.
- **Be positive, yet realistic.** Turn a negative question around and answer it in the positive. If asked, "Why didn't the police department use search dogs immediately?" Instead of saying, "We didn't use search dogs earlier because . . .," say: "We have used a full range of search strategies, including search dogs."
- **Show compassion and empathy.**
- **Know when to stop.** Stop talking when you've made your point. Don't speculate and don't feel that you have to fill empty air space.
- **Whenever possible, summarize your key points at the end of the interview.**

DON'T:

- **Speculate.** If you don't know the answer to something, say so. Don't offer your opinion.
- **Answer hypothetical questions.** Hypothetical questions often begin: "What if . . . ." Don't answer questions that require you to make assumptions.
- **Comment on other organizations, unless to thank them for their efforts.**
- **Comment on what others have said,** particularly if you haven't heard or read it yourself. It may cause you to verify something that might not be true.
- **Lose your temper.** You can stand your ground without losing it.
- **Lie. NEVER!**
- **Say anything to a reporter you don't want to see in print or on TV.** Always assume that microphones are turned on.
- **Use "off the record."** Even if you have a long-standing relationship with a reporter consider this: if the information gets out from a source other than you, other reporters may run with the information while the reporter you trusted misses out on the story by respecting your request to keep the information off the record!
- **Say "no comment"!** There is always a better alternative, such as admitting you don't have an answer, but promising to get one.

Topic **Tips for Improving Your On-Camera Performance**

Managing Your Nervousness

Most people experience at least some nervousness in front of the camera, but there are things you can do to reduce those "butterflies."

- **Prepare.** The more prepared you are, the less nervous you will feel.
- **Anticipate questions.** Think like a reporter and anticipate the questions you might be asked. Reducing the "surprise" factor will reduce your nervousness.
- **Do something to relax yourself.** Take a few deep breaths, stretch, or walk around. Find out what technique works best to help you relax.
- **Use your nervousness as positive energy.** Nervousness is not all bad! A bit of nervousness can energize your performance on camera.
- **Realize the reporter wants you to succeed.** In most cases, the reporter is not out to get you and really doesn't want you to stumble over words or misspeak. If the interview is being taped, don't hesitate to say, "I'd like to try that again" if your answer to a question came out tongue-tied.
- **Know it is okay to pause to gather thoughts.** A pause will always seem longer to you than the audience, so don't ramble or use fillers like "um" to take up dead air. Gather your thoughts and give your best answer.

Topic: Tips for Managing Briefing Logistics

When setting up a briefing, you may not have many choices of location or other logistical needs, but for planning purposes you should always consider the following questions:

Will it be covered live?

Most TV media carry from 500 to 1,000 feet of cable. Satellite or "live" trucks will need an unobstructed area to park in. Satellite trucks need a clear southern exposure to access their satellite. Live trucks will need to access their station repeater—find out where it is and try to plan for where the trucks may park.

What can you control in the environment?

- Rain, snow, wind, and other environmental conditions can all serve to detract from what the speaker is saying.
- An indoor, controlled environment is usually the best option if one large enough is available.
- Pick a place with a clean backdrop.
  - Is the area behind where the news conference is to be held free from distractions (e.g., people milling about, vehicles moving, smoke or flames, etc.)?
  - Make sure cameras cannot move behind the speakers for a "reverse shot" of the news conference.
- Make sure speakers have clear access and egress without having to pass through reporters.
  - If speakers do not have a clear exit, the media will continue to ask questions, sometimes even trying to physically position themselves so that the speaker has to stop.
- Think about sound issues.
  - Try to minimize background noise so speakers can be heard clearly. If at all possible, select a place for your news conferences where external noise can be reduced or eliminated. Sounds from heavy machinery, airplanes, trains, or other sources can be distracting to the public who may need to hear the information you are sending out.
  - Occasionally these noises can be so loud as to drown out what is being said by the speaker entirely.
  - If you are inside a building, consider the "echo" factor.
  - Have an audio "mult box"—This allows just one microphone to be placed in front of the speaker, eliminating a microphone "tree" and providing clearer audio.
  - Make sure you get your own recording of the news conference for transcription and possible legal issues.

Topic **Tips for Managing Briefing Logistics**

What do you need to do to facilitate the cameras?

- Make sure that the cameras have a clear line of sight to the speakers.
- Try to set up in an area where the cameras will be at the same level as the speakers.
- When the camera is shooting down from a position of higher elevation, the image tends to diminish the speaker and the message being presented.
- When the camera is shooting up from a position of lower elevation, the image tends to place the speaker in a position of greater authority—which is not recommended.

What do you need in terms of security?

- A location filled with cameras and various officials about to make a statement can be an opportunity for someone who may want to cause a disturbance or promote an “alternative” viewpoint. Also, media satellite/live trucks contain a considerable amount of high-value equipment. Security should be provided both for members of the media and for the news briefing participants.
- Security staffing should be visible but not intrusive, and can be stationed near where the news briefing will take place or possibly out by the news media satellite/live trucks.
- Often local law enforcement may offer to assist in providing security.

Topic **Media Relations at the Scene**

On-Scene Nightmares

At the scene of an incident, things can quickly turn against you and your organization if they are not properly handled.

Providing No Information

- This can lead to the media turning on you and your agency. They will not want to work with you and may begin to portray your agency as incapable of doing its job. If you don't have answers, the media will go elsewhere for a response.

Providing the Wrong Information

- You cannot "take back" statements made to the media. Make sure that what is said is correct if you want to develop and maintain credibility. As Warren Buffett said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it."

Losing Your Cool

- Failure to remain calm and in control will make **you** the story. Not only will you look foolish, but you will lose credibility with your co-workers, the media, and the public.

Playing Favorites

- When the incident is large enough, national media will show up. Sometimes these are very famous people and you may be tempted to "help" them more than other members of the media. Remember that these people leave as soon as the incident is over, but your local media will be there for a long time to come. Treat everyone the same—but make sure that your local professional media are taken care of.

Calm vs. Chaos

- The role of the PIO is to help your organization by working with the news media. If someone is being difficult to work with or does not understand the importance of media relations, try to educate them calmly.

Deadlines vs. Safety

- The ultimate goal of all public safety endeavors is to save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment—and almost all reporters would agree that their needs will come after these important tasks. Members of the media do not want to interfere with these important tasks, but they will always try to get the information or access that they want if it is safe and does not interfere with work at the scene. One caution is that the increase in amateur "reporters" may lead to individuals with more camera gear than sense appearing at the scene. Make sure they know the same rules apply to them as to anyone else there.

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Topic **Types of JICs**

JIC Type	Description
Incident	Typically, an incident-specific JIC is established at a single, on-scene location in coordination with Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies or at the national level, if the situation warrants. It provides easy media access, which is paramount to success. This is a typical JIC.
Virtual	A virtual JIC is established when a physical co-location is not feasible. It connects PIOs through e-mail, cell/land-line phones, faxes, video teleconferencing, Web-based information systems, etc. For a pandemic incident where PIOs at different locations communicate and coordinate public information electronically, it may be appropriate to establish a virtual JIC.
Satellite	A satellite JIC is smaller in scale than other JICs. It is established primarily to support the incident JIC and to operate under its direction. These are subordinate JICs, which are typically located closer to the scene.
Area	An area JIC supports multiple-incident ICS structures that are spread over a wide geographic area. It is typically located near the largest media market and can be established on a local, State, or multistate basis. Multiple States experiencing storm damage may participate in an area JIC.
Support	A support JIC is established to supplement the efforts of several Incident JICs in multiple States. It offers additional staff and resources outside of the disaster area.
National	A national JIC is established when an incident requires Federal coordination and is expected to be of long duration (weeks or months) or when the incident affects a large area of the country. A national JIC is staffed by numerous Federal departments and/or agencies, as well as State agencies and nongovernment organizations (NGOs).

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Topic PIO and JIC Activities in Response to an Evolving Incident

	Initial Response	Situation Expanded; EOC Activated
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 1: Information Gathering	✓ Ask responders on scene, and call other sources as needed. ✓ Observe news media coverage for accuracy of reporting and rumors.	✓ Have access to the scene (Field PIOs and Incident Command). ✓ Ask EOC staff. ✓ Ask Public Inquiry Center staff (if activated). ✓ Attend regular briefings. ✓ Use reports issued by communications and information management. ✓ Observe news media coverage for accuracy of reporting and rumors.
	Initial Response	**Situation Expanded; EOC Activated**
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 2: Analysis and Verification	✓ Consult with Incident Command.	✓ Consult with other PIOs in the JIC. ✓ Consult with other sources in the EOC. ✓ Consult with PIOs in the field. ✓ Consult with other PIOs in the JIS but not working out of the JIC.
	Initial Response	**Situation Expanded; EOC Activated**
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 3: Message Development	✓ Get critical (i.e., life-saving and property protecting) information out.	✓ Consult with other PIOs in the JIS to identify key messages. ✓ Coordinate message development. (PIOs retain authority and responsibility, but work collectively so each knows the other's messages.) ✓ Expand production options with more people and other resources.
	Initial Response	**Situation Expanded; EOC Activated**
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 4: Approval	✓ Get approval of Incident Command (verbal okay).	✓ Coordinate with other PIOs in the JIS. ✓ Use prescribed protocol; use additional review as needed and as time allows. ✓ Document the process.

Topic PIO and JIC Activities in Response to an Evolving Incident

	Initial Response	Situation Expanded; EOC Activated
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 5: Dissemination Information	✓ Primarily respond to reporters' questions and give interviews. ✓ Distribute pre-scripted information such as backgrounders or fact sheets, if possible.	✓ Schedule media briefings. ✓ Give interviews (face-to-face; phone). ✓ Arrange news conferences with multiple spokespersons. ✓ Issue news releases—based on templates and unique to the incident (distributed electronically and by other means). ✓ Use other technology as appropriate.
	Initial Response	**Situation Expanded; EOC Activated**
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 6: Tracking and Documentation	✓ Keep notes; keep copies of information released.	✓ Use prescribed SOP, which will likely include: ✓ Media logs. ✓ News release tracking list. ✓ Other documentation required by ICS. ✓ Use other technology as appropriate.
	Initial Response	**Situation Expanded; EOC Activated**
	PIO will . . .	**JIC will . . .**
STEP 7: Media Monitoring	✓ Review print and electronic media. ✓ Advise leadership of issues as they arise.	✓ Use prescribed SOP. ✓ Have additional staff who will offer greater flexibility and coverage potential. ✓ Formalize media reports to leadership, to some extent.

Topic JIC Readiness Assessment

Instructions: Answering the questions on this checklist will help you determine your capacity for activating a JIC. The questions are arranged in three sections: (1) Plans, (2) People, and (3) Logistics.

PLANS		
Do you have systems and procedures for:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Developing an emergency response or crisis communication plan for public information and media relations?	☐	☐
Does your emergency response or crisis communication plan have systems and procedures for:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Designating and assigning line and staff responsibilities for the public information team?	☐	☐
▪ Identifying and updating current contact numbers for PIO staff and other public information partners in your plan?	☐	☐
▪ Identifying and updating current contact numbers for regional and local news media (including after-hours news desks)?	☐	☐
▪ Establishing the JIC at the Emergency Operations Center (if activated)?	☐	☐
▪ Securing needed resources (space, equipment, people) to conduct the public information operation during an incident 24 hours a day, using such mechanisms as Memorandums of Understanding, contracts, etc.?	☐	☐
▪ Creating messages for the news media and the public under severe time constraints, including methods to clear these messages within the emergency response operations of your organization (including multijurisdiction and/or agency cross-clearance)?	☐	☐
▪ Disseminating information to news media, the public, and partners (e.g., Web site capability 24/7, listservs, broadcast fax, printed news releases, door-to-door leaflets, etc.)?	☐	☐
▪ Verifying and clearing/approving information prior to its release to the news media and the public?	☐	☐
▪ Operating a public inquiry hotline with trained staff available to answer questions from the public and control rumors?	☐	☐
▪ Activating the Emergency Alert System, including the use of pre-scripted messages?	☐	☐
▪ Coordinating your public information systems planning activities with other response organizations?	☐	☐
▪ Coordinating your public information systems planning activities with other sections within the Emergency Operations Center?	☐	☐
▪ Testing the plan through drills and exercises with other response team partners?	☐	☐
▪ Updating the plan as a result of lessons learned through drills, exercises, and incidents?	☐	☐

Topic **JIC Readiness Assessment**

PEOPLE		
Do you have systems and procedures for:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Identifying staffing capabilities needed to maintain public information operations for 24 hours per day for at least several days? (Note: Staff may include regular full- and part-time staff as well as PIOs from other agencies or departments, disaster employees, volunteers, etc.)	☐	☐
▪ Establishing and maintaining agreements for acquiring or borrowing temporary staff? (Note: Such agreements may be mutual aid arrangements or Memorandums of Understanding.)	☐	☐
▪ Granting emergency authority to hire or call up temporary staff or those on loan from other organizations?	☐	☐
▪ Establishing and maintaining job descriptions and qualifications for individuals serving as your organization's PIO and other roles during an incident?	☐	☐
▪ Assigning a staff member and at least one alternate the role and responsibilities of PIO?	☐	☐
▪ Determining if the assigned PIO(s) is qualified? Sample qualifications include: ▪ Experience and skills in providing general and emergency public information. ▪ Ability to represent your organization professionally (can articulate public information messages well when dealing with the media and the public, and can handle on-camera interviews). ▪ Written and technical communication skills (writing/editing, photography, graphics, and Internet/Web design proficiency). ▪ Management and supervision experience and skills needed to run a JIC.	☐	☐
▪ Establishing and maintaining a list of language translators available to assist with public information? (Note: Such network should include sign language interpreters and individuals capable of writing and speaking the non-English language(s) used by individuals in your jurisdiction.)	☐	☐
▪ Establishing and maintaining working relationships with PIO partners from other organizations that you might need to work with during an incident (e.g., PIOs from other jurisdictions, other government agencies or departments, nongovernmental organizations, and private entities)?	☐	☐
▪ Developing and maintaining working relationships with your local and regional media, and established procedures for providing information to those media entities effectively and efficiently during incidents?	☐	☐

Topic **JIC Readiness Assessment**

LOGISTICS		
Do you have a go-kit for PIO use during an incident, including:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Laptop computer capable of linking to the Internet/e-mail?	☐	☐
▪ Cell or satellite phone, pager, and/or PDA/palm computer with wireless e-mail capability?	☐	☐
▪ Digital camera, photo storage media, and charger/backup batteries?	☐	☐
▪ Flash drives, CDs, and/or disks containing the elements of the crisis communication plan (including news media contact lists, PIO contact lists, and information materials such as topic-specific fact sheets, backgrounders, talking points, and news release templates)? REMEMBER: Redundancy is important in case the computer you are using doesn't have a USB port, CD, or floppy drive.	☐	☐
▪ Office supplies such as paper, pens, self-stick notes, etc.?	☐	☐
▪ Manuals and background information necessary to provide information to the media and the public (e.g., your Smart Book)? (Note: A Smart Book is a compilation of factual information assembled about your jurisdiction, such as population, number of schools and hospitals, size and description of geographic or infrastructure features, etc.)	☐	☐
▪ Hard copies of all critical information?	☐	☐
Do you have systems for:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Acquiring and maintaining go-kits with a funding mechanism (e.g., credit card) that can be used to purchase operational resources? (Note: A go-kit is a mobile response kit that allows PIOs to maintain communications in the event that they are working outside of their normal place of operation.)	☐	☐
▪ Ensuring PIOs can access the go-kit when serving at an incident?	☐	☐
▪ Acquiring and maintaining portable communications equipment, critical up-to-date information, and supplies?	☐	☐
▪ Acquiring and maintaining essential media production equipment (cameras, digital storage, laptops, etc.)?	☐	☐
▪ Acquiring and maintaining a Smart Book (or equivalent technologies) to assist PIOs in accurately informing the media and the public during an incident?	☐	☐
▪ Identifying a dedicated location to house the JIC? (Note: The location selected must be wired for telephone, Internet access, cable, etc.)	☐	☐
▪ Securing and maintaining the necessary JIC equipment and supplies to allow information to be disseminated to the media and the public?	☐	☐
▪ Inventorying and restocking the PIO go-kit after an incident?	☐	☐
▪ Inventorying and restocking JIC equipment and supplies after an incident?	☐	☐
▪ Periodically updating your Smart Book with current information?	☐	☐

Topic **JIC Readiness Assessment**

LOGISTICS (Continued)		
Do you have equipment and supplies needed for a JIC, including:	**Yes**	**No**
▪ Computers on LAN with Internet access and e-mail listservs designated for news media and partner entities?	☐	☐
▪ Laptop computers?	☐	☐
▪ Electric and manual typewriter(s) in case power outage or other problems interfere with computer/printer usage?	☐	☐
▪ Fax machine pre-programmed for broadcasting fax releases to news media and partner entities?	☐	☐
▪ Printers and copy machines, with supplies such as toner and paper?	☐	☐
▪ Paper shredder and trash bags?	☐	☐
▪ Televisions with access to cable hookups and VHS VCRs?	☐	☐
▪ Cell or satellite phones, pagers, and/or PDAs/palm computers with wireless e-mail capability?	☐	☐
▪ Digital camera, photo storage media, and charger/backup batteries?	☐	☐
▪ Audio recorder and batteries?	☐	☐
▪ Flash drives, CDs, and/or disks containing the elements of the crisis communication plan (including media contact lists, PIO contact lists, and information materials such as topic-specific fact sheets, backgrounders, talking points, and news release templates)?	☐	☐
▪ Office furniture/accessories such as desks, chairs, file cabinets, bulletin boards, white boards, trash cans, lights, in/out baskets, landline phones, clocks, large calendars, etc.?	☐	☐
▪ Audio equipment and furniture necessary for conducting news conferences (e.g., wireless microphones, lectern, mult box, etc.)?	☐	☐
▪ Office supplies (e.g., white and colored paper, pens, self-stick notes, folders, blank tapes, binders, overnight mail supplies, tape, poster board, erasable and permanent markers, chart paper, easels, staplers and staples, press kit folders, binders, computer disks/CDs, hole punch, organization logo on stickers, letterhead, postage stamps, etc.)?	☐	☐
▪ Manuals, directories, and background information necessary to provide information to the media and the public (e.g., your Smart Book)?	☐	☐
▪ Hard copies of all critical information?	☐	☐

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet

October 2009

Instructions: This worksheet asks you to assess your current situation in four areas and to identify resources you can tap or actions you can take to enhance your capabilities to develop and maintain a strong Joint Information System (JIS)/Joint Information Center (JIC).

PART I: Building a Strong Knowledge Base		
Knowledge of emergency management concepts (e.g., ICS, NIMS)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already quite knowledgeable ☐ Would like to learn more	**How I will enhance knowledge of NIMS and ICS:**
Knowledge of local emergency management (e.g., local EOP and your organization's role)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already quite knowledgeable ☐ Would like to learn more	**How I will enhance knowledge of local emergency management:**
Knowledge of organization's programs, operations, and SOP (e.g., can speak knowledgably; have contact information for key personnel)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already quite knowledgeable ☐ Would like to learn more	**How I will enhance knowledge of my organization:**

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet

October 2009

PART II: Developing Positive Working Relationships With PIOs and the News Media		
Relationships with PIOs within your jurisdiction	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have strong relationships ☐ Would like to further develop relationships	**How I will further develop relationships with PIOs within my jurisdiction:**
Relationships with PIOs from neighboring jurisdictions and at the State level	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have strong relationships ☐ Would like to further develop relationships	**How I will further develop relationships with PIOs from neighboring jurisdictions and the State:**
Relationships with the news media (e.g., conduct regular outreach; have current contact information)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have strong relationships ☐ Would like to further develop relationships	**How I will further develop relationships with the news media:**

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet

October 2009

PART III: Identifying Resources for Organizing and Leading a Local JIC		
JIC staffing from within your own organization (consider all positions that could supplement PIO staff) and from outside your organization (e.g., other agencies, higher education institutions, professional organizations)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have sufficient staffing ☐ Would like to have additional staffing capability	**Potential JIC staffing I have identified for:** ▪ Information gathering and analysis: ▪ Writing: ▪ Graphics: ▪ Photography: ▪ Videography: ▪ Media relations: ▪ Dissemination: ▪ Media monitoring: ▪ Support:

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet

October 2009

PART III: Identifying Resources for Organizing and Leading a Local JIC (Continued)		
Possible JIC location	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have designated location ☐ Would like to identify/secure a location	**Potential JIC location I have identified, or actions I will take to identify a location:**
Possible JIC equipment and supplies (consult the JIC Readiness Assessment checklist in your Student Manual for ideas)	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have sufficient equipment and supplies ☐ Would like to identify/secure equipment and supplies	**Potential source(s) of JIC equipment and supplies I have identified, or actions I will take to identify source(s):**

Building the JIS/JIC Worksheet

October 2009

PART IV: Developing Relationships With State and Federal Partners		
Relationships with State partners	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have strong relationships ☐ Would like to further develop relationships	**How I will further develop relationships with State partners:**
Relationships with Federal partners	**Current Assessment:** ☐ Already have strong relationships ☐ Would like to further develop relationships	**How I will further develop relationships with Federal partners:**