

# *Media Relations*

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*The Media Perspective*

# Course discussion

- Tips to work with and understand your media
- Incident expectations – before the alarm
- Work to be a good speaker
- The people behind the camera
- Prepare the reporter for success
- Media timelines
- Shooting your own photos and video
- Q&A with a local media personality

# Introductions

- Your Name
- Organization
- Position
- Experience as a PIO
- Experience with Media?

Why is a call from the  
Media important?

# Why is that call from the Media outlet so important to you?

- Their media coverage of your event / incident / interview can span the entire Northwest during the initial broadcast and is global within 2-3 hours after that.
- If you get their interest to run your story, you are getting free coverage and typically they ask, “is there anything else you would like to add?”. That is your moment to talk about (Fire Safety, Smoke Alarms, Water hazards, etc.)
- An example for a 30 second TV spot in Portland is roughly \$9,000.00

**How much is a 20 second radio spot worth to your organization?**

**How much is that newspaper story worth to your organization?**

**How much is the 5 and 6 o'clock news worth to your organization?**

# Engage the Media

- Set up a time for either a Media event at your organization or go to them.
- You have expectations, right? The Media has expectations, right? So why not figure it out BEFORE an event or incident?
- One thing to remember, each of us have a job to do, show them your best and they will come to you for questions and answers, even for information outside of your organization.
- If the media asks about an incident that you were not involved in, help them out by getting them to a contact that can help them.



Media coverage with Fire Department's from Yakima to Tri-Cities

# Understanding the person behind the camera

- Realize reporters are people just like you and I. families, kids, attend sporting events, etc.
- Ask questions about their job, offer to buy a coffee and get to know more about who are interacting or working with.
- Show a concern for their safety at incidents, explain what and why you do things, remember these community members have not spent years “overhauling” a fire.



# Radio DJ's?



Even Radio Stations need to do onsite videos and photos to meet the needs of web based media.

# Typical deadlines for a day of stories (Television)

- 07:00 – 13:00 Seeking out a story for the day.
- 14:00 – 16:30 build the story to go for that evening's story board.
- Breaking News – all bets are off, your story can be lost due to a big disaster.
- EXAMPLE: Radio – If you respond to an incident overnight or early morning, call the radio station for a live feed. Otherwise if you wait, by 10 am, that is old news and off the roll for the day.



**Involve local media in your day to day training events**





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NBC 10

# Cold Call for a story

Many times there are events happening around the country that do not affect you.

An example: the Hawaii volcano eruption thousands of miles away. A local reporter may call to ask, “how would we react? are we prepared?”

- Ask questions!!!!
- What are they going to ask you?
- Purpose of the story? The hook?
- Their idea may not be what they are actually looking for?
- Set up a time for the interview – why?
- Handouts
- Statistics



Media days are a great way to meet and greet each other. A preplan for the real incident!



**Capt. Jeff Pfaff**

**Yakima Fire Dept.**

# Early morning fire burns two and claims pet



<http://www.nbcrightnow.com/clip/12715479/early-morning-mobile-home-fire-leaves-a-couple-with-serious-burns>



# On Scene Considerations



**Gather information quickly!**  
**Check with IC and Investigator**  
**Identify areas to do interviews**  
**that will not affect the**  
**investigation**  
**Stay clear of the hot and warm**  
**zone**

## **Media**

- **Create a location to be accessible and visible**
- **Out of the hazard area**
- **Good location with the least amount of noise.**

# The PIO – Media Partnership

## What the PIO wants:

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

## What the Media Wants:

- Access
- Prompt answers to queries
- Fair treatment
- Respect for deadlines
- Timely updates and corrections to information (especially during evolving incidents)

Do you share this photo?



What are some media needs at this Scene / Event?



# Basics of a Press Conference

- What do you need?

- Podium?
- Background?
- Flag(s)?
- Lighting?
- Heat / Shade?
- Who is in the conference?
- Who does the speaking?
- What are your talking points?
- How do you keep the conference on track?

Watch this conference and we will discuss

[Tuscon News Now- Burrow Fire AM Update](#)

[Alamo Fire](#)

[iPhone](#)

# Interviews

If you don't take the time to talk to the media.....

They will find an eye witness or resident expert!

[Casa Linda Apartment Fire](#)

[Dodson Interview](#)

# Media Advisory / News Release

- Do you send media information “Press Release” after every significant fire? MCI? Incident response?
- Do you send media information “Advisory” when you do something? Because you know we are the best at our profession, right?
- Media releases can be used to inform of the big fire last night, to get your recruit graduation, pancake feed, training event, etc. “scheduled” in advance.
- These advisories can be set up to notify your (Board, Council, Commission, Chief’s) along with the media. This gives them a heads up if the reporter calls lets say..... the Mayor or Commissioner.

YFD Media Advisory

# Writing a news release

- You need to answer the Who? What? When? Where? Why?
- Proof read!! Proof! Proof! Proof read!
- Let's ask the expert!

# Questions? Thoughts? Ideas?

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