

Portland Urban Area Regional Emergency Public Information Concept of Operations (ConOps) Plan

**Prepared by the Portland Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)
Public Information Officer (PIO) Working Group**

*Approved by the Portland Urban Area
Points of Contact (POC) – January 2009*

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Adopted – January 2009

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I. Introduction¹

Mission

As public information officers (PIOs) from multiple jurisdictions and agencies, we will contribute to the well-being of the Portland Urban Area following a disaster by communicating with each other, the news media and the public in a consistent, coordinated fashion as we seek to implement incident command's and emergency management's public information objectives.

Purpose

The purpose of the Portland Urban Area Regional Emergency Public Information Concept of Operations (ConOps) Plan is to provide implementing procedures for the operation of a regional joint information system (R-JIS) in the event of a disaster. The plan will be used to conduct and coordinate crisis communications during emergency response and other situations in which multiple organizations need to collaborate to provide timely, useful and accurate information to the public and other stakeholders.

Scope

This plan will guide all city, county and special district crisis communications within the Portland Urban Area comprised of all local jurisdictions within and including Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties. The procedures contained within the plan apply to major disasters that start within the Portland Urban Area as well as disasters that start elsewhere and impact the region to the extent that the coordination of emergency public information is necessary.

¹ For definitions of terms and acronyms, see *Appendix A: Glossary of Terms*.

II. Situation & Assumptions

This section describes general issues for PIOs to consider about the nature of the Portland Urban Area and the regional response to a disaster, as well as assumptions shared by the emergency response agencies around the region regarding media support and the level of public understanding.

Situation

- PIOs from multiple jurisdictions and agencies within and including Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties collaborate to address emergency public information preparedness, response and recovery planning and operational issues.
- PIO collaboration is driven by a regional lead PIO group comprised of PIOs from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland with the active support and involvement of PIOs from special districts, cities, the states of Oregon and Washington, the federal government and other agencies. These additional PIOs may include representatives from public works, transit, port districts, utilities, hospitals, medical organizations, the Red Cross and the private sector.
- The Portland Urban Area is subject to a number of natural and human-made hazards that can threaten public health and safety and create a need to communicate emergency information to the public.
- During a disaster, residents of the Portland Urban Area need timely, accurate information about the situation and protective action they can take to minimize injuries, loss of life and damage to property.
- Language, disability, cultural and other factors affecting the ability of residents to receive and understand emergency messages requires that information be provided in multiple formats and through a variety of means.
- Emergencies may develop slowly (e.g., a severe winter storm or flood) allowing sufficient time to effectively disseminate information to the public. Other emergencies may occur suddenly (e.g., an earthquake or hazardous materials release) hindering the timely delivery of information to the public.
- The Portland Urban Area shares a single broadcast media market.
- A majority of the public will turn to television, radio and the internet for emergency information.
- National and international media may place heavy demands on PIOs organized through a virtual joint information center (virtual JIC) or fixed-site regional joint information center (R-JIC), if activated, requiring additional resources.
- Disasters occurring outside the Portland Urban Area may impact the region itself (e.g. a tsunami on the Oregon Coast resulting in a large number of evacuees) and generate media activity within Portland's media market.

- During some disasters, such as a pandemic event, social distancing (measures to decrease the frequency of contact among people in order to decrease the risk of spreading communicable diseases) may limit the number of PIOs able to effectively respond to the situation.

Assumptions

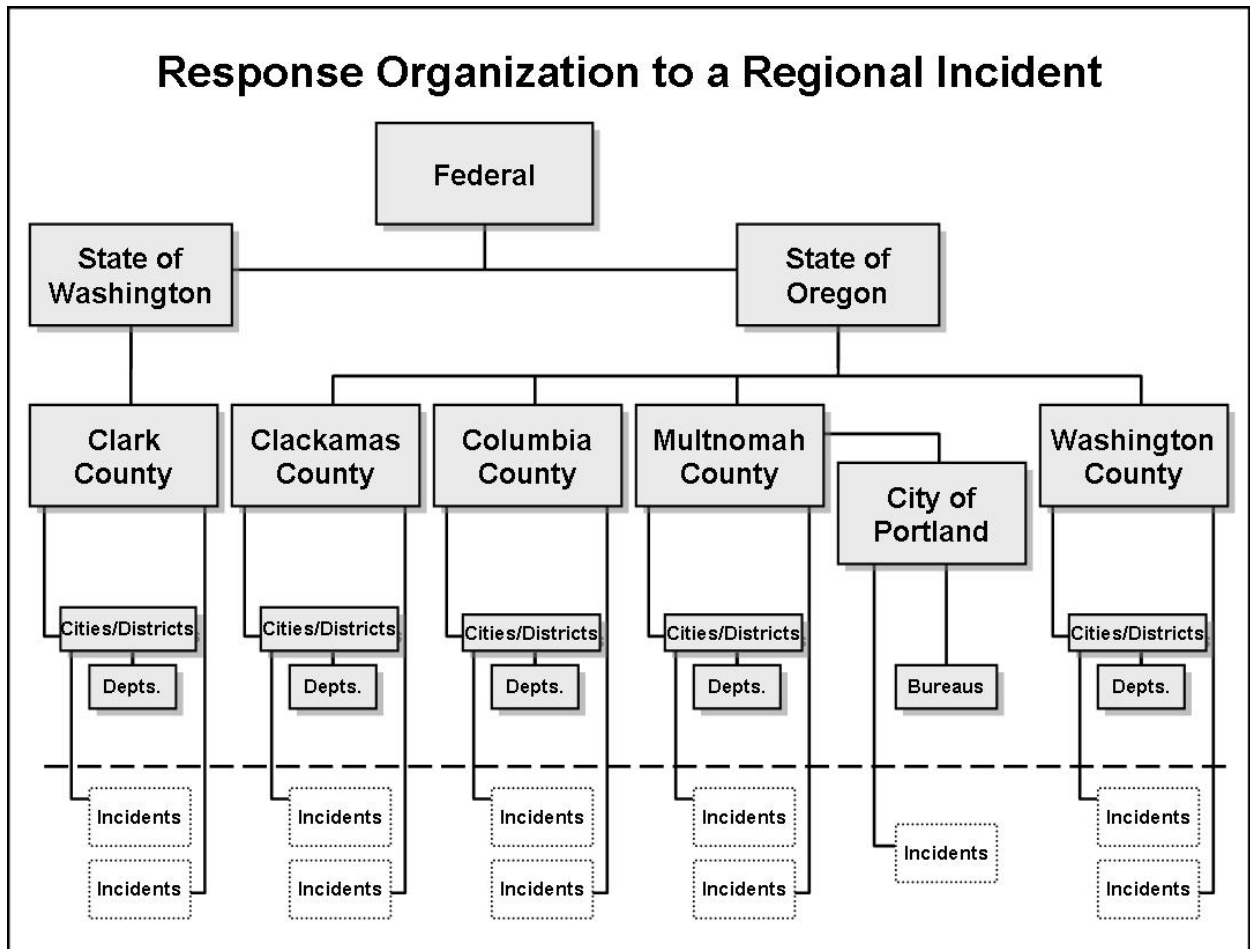
The members of the Portland Urban Area make the following assumptions regarding partner agency/responder support, media support and levels of public understanding or involvement:

- Effective regional coordination will increase public trust in local authorities and increase cooperation and compliance with issued guidance and directives.
- Sufficient communications capability will be available in most, but not all, instances to allow information collection and dissemination.
- Information dissemination resources (including media and local government) will be available in most, but not all, instances to facilitate timely delivery of information to the public.
- Partner agencies will support the ConOps plan by participating in the R-JIS, by contributing PIO resources when possible as mutual aid and by deploying public information resources to operate in an R-JIC (either virtual or fixed-site) in accordance with the phased response described in this plan.
- In seeking to achieve local public information objectives, response entities operating during a regional emergency without coordinating through the R-JIS will be, from a regional perspective, at risk of disseminating conflicting information about situation status, protective actions or other incident-related guidance.
- PIOs will be responsible for developing good relationships, open communication and active coordination among other PIOs operating within their entire jurisdiction/agency and with PIOs from around the region.
- The unique demands of each incident will result in PIOs from various jurisdictions and agencies working together at all levels of the response, from the incident-level to coordinating center-level and upward. For example, a large-scale bio-terrorism incident could involve PIOs from federal, state, county, special district, non-profit and city agencies working together and coordinating public information at incident command posts (ICPs), area commands, city or county coordinating centers and regional, state and federal coordinating centers.
- The non-profit, private-sector, special district and government agency PIOs organized across or with a presence in the six major response entities of Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland will provide support for regional operations.

III. Concept of Operations

Phase One – Activating Local Joint Information Systems (JIS)

During a disaster, incident commanders (ICs) and emergency managers (EMs) at all levels of the response may choose to delegate emergency public information operations to lead PIOs in accordance with existing plans. Public information resources will be activated and deployed to response entities in conjunction with existing local plans and authorities. These response entities will place a high priority on achieving local emergency public information objectives, maintaining cooperative relationships and keeping open channels of communication with all agencies responding to emergency incidents within their respective areas of operation. This communication and information-sharing activity – both before and during the response phase – is what is meant by the local JIS. Sharing information with neighboring cities and counties and with state and federal response entities will also be a priority.



Public information resources will operate in accordance with the Incident Command System (ICS)/National Incident Management System (NIMS). These resources will include single or multiple PIOs attached to ICPs, area commands, multi-agency coordinating centers (MACCs, such as emergency operations centers (EOCs) or emergency coordination centers (ECCs)) within

all jurisdictions and agencies involved in the response. Public information objectives, key messages, strategies, length of operational periods and other aspects of the response will be developed as part of each entity's planning cycle. In some cases, response entities at any level of the response may activate and operate local JICs in pursuit of their emergency public information objectives.

The lead PIO for each response entity will be responsible for coordinating with their PIO counterparts above and below his or her own entity (e.g., a county lead PIO will coordinate with all lead PIOs from cities inside the county and with state PIOs). Coordination will also occur across the response organization – incident-to-incident or coordinating center-to-coordinating center – but local plans and practice will emphasize intra-jurisdictional coordination. A combination of electronic tools (e.g., computers, cell phones, personal digital assistants, pagers, Web sites, etc.) and non-electronic assets (e.g., media briefing rooms, hard copies of press materials, etc.) will be utilized to execute local PIO plans.

Phase Two – Transition to Regional Joint Information System (R-JIS) Operations

Upon recognition of one or more of the following triggers, any member of the regional lead PIO group – comprised of the lead PIOs from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland, and with the help of all other jurisdictions and agencies in the region – may support the R-JIS by convening a conference call/strategy meeting (see *Appendix B* for a sample agenda). These triggers may include, but are not limited to the following:

- The incident is already having or is projected to have a regional impact (may occur in one county but heavily impacts the entire media market);
- Media demands are overwhelming (or are anticipated to overwhelm) local PIO resources;
- There is a need to standardize messaging on a regional basis;
- Activation of a MACC is planned at the regional level;
- An event of national significance (e.g. pandemic, mass evacuation, etc.) impacts the region; or
- Incident commanders/emergency managers in the region request the level of coordination provided by an active, regional joint information system.

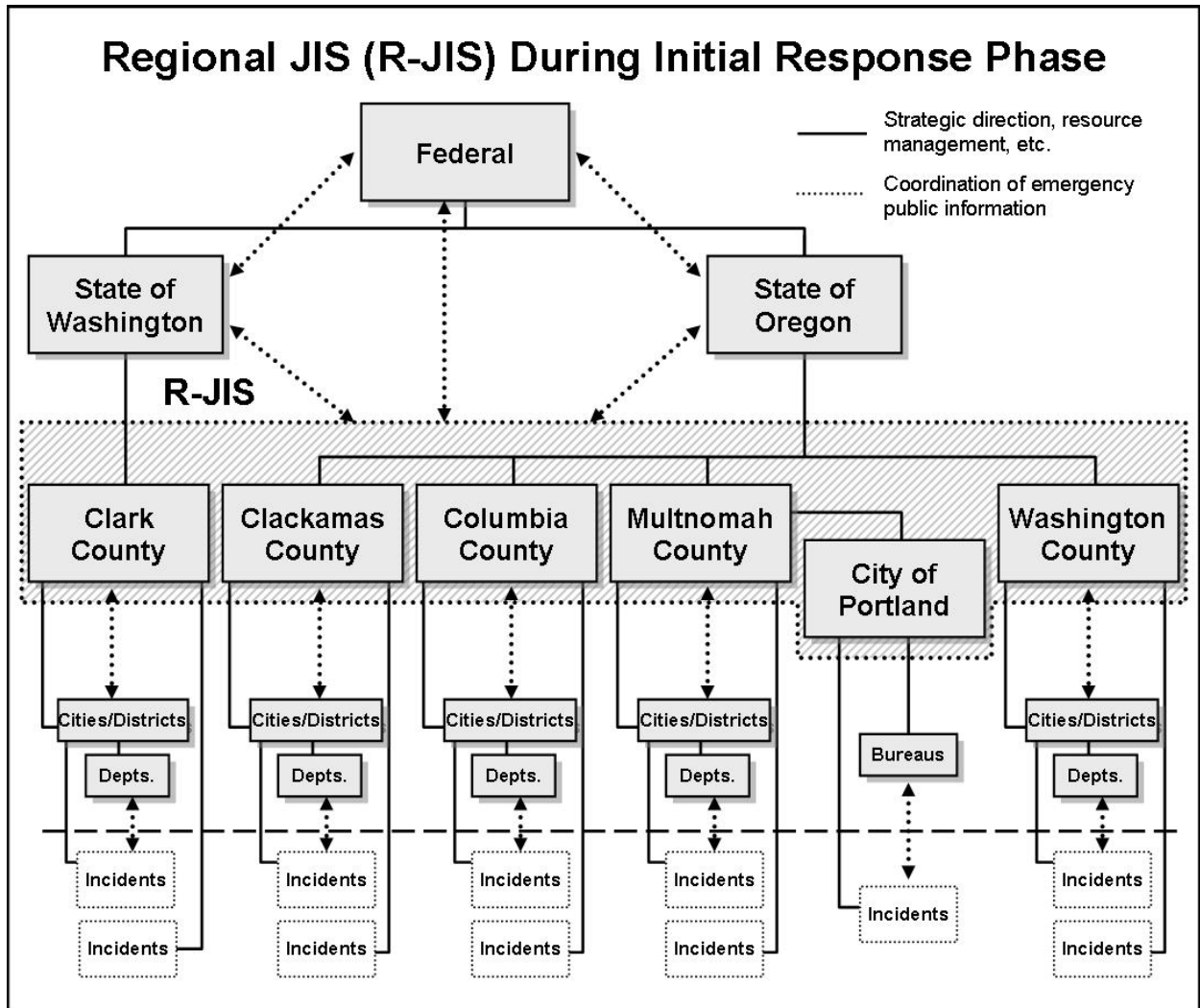
PIOs from other jurisdictions and agencies in the region impacted by the disaster may also be included in the conference call/strategy meeting.

Supporting the R-JIS: Regional Lead PIO Group Conference Call/Strategy Meeting

The discussion during the conference call or meeting will be used to:

- Provide a common operating picture among PIOs;
- Assess current public information response efforts and the need to enhance the R-JIS;
- If appropriate, determine who will take the role of regional lead PIO (pending confirmation by regional incident command/emergency management). If necessary, this discussion may lead to requesting someone to serve as lead PIO from outside the region;
- Propose initial public information objectives or plan supporting a coordinated response to the regional incident; and
- Select one (or a combination) of the following modes of operation as an action step for moving forward and enhancing R-JIS operations:

Mode	What is it?	What are the conditions or triggers?
1. Maintain Status Quo	Continue routine operations, but actively monitor the situation to determine if additional enhancements to the R-JIS are necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incident is primarily impacting one county. • The incident is expected to be short-lived (less than five days). • Public information demands can be met without activating a virtual JIC/establishing a fixed-site JIC at the regional level.
2. Enhanced Mutual Aid	The lead PIO at the primarily affected jurisdiction retains lead role and mutual aid PIOs assume a proactive posture in support; County EOCs/City of Portland ECC (if activated) serve as single coordination points to support mutual aid efforts within their respective jurisdictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as under “maintain status quo,” but the affected jurisdiction needs additional staff support/PIO resources.
3a. Strengthen the Regional JIS: Activate a Virtual JIC for the Region	Coordination/information sharing takes place using electronic means (e.g. Web-based tools, cell phones, e-mail, etc.); PIOs are not co-located at a fixed site; incident command/emergency management formally appoints a regional lead PIO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet and phone service are operational. • The nature of the event discourages physically co-locating PIO operations. • PIOs possess the technical know-how to operate a virtual JIC effectively. • The incident does not require establishing a fixed-site R-JIC. • Incident commanders/emergency managers may be planning to activate MACC at the regional level.
3b. Strengthen the Regional JIS: Activate a Fixed-site Regional JIC	A fixed-site R-JIC provides a centralized “information hub” with PIOs from agencies around the region; the R-JIC could grow or shrink depending on the unique requirements of the incident; incident command/emergency management formally appoints a regional lead PIO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high volume of media interaction necessitates a fixed-site JIC to improve the regional coordination of public information. • The incident is projected to last at least five or more days. • Sufficient resources and funding are available to support a fixed-site R-JIC. • Incident commanders/emergency managers may be planning to activate a MACC at the regional level.



Activation Steps

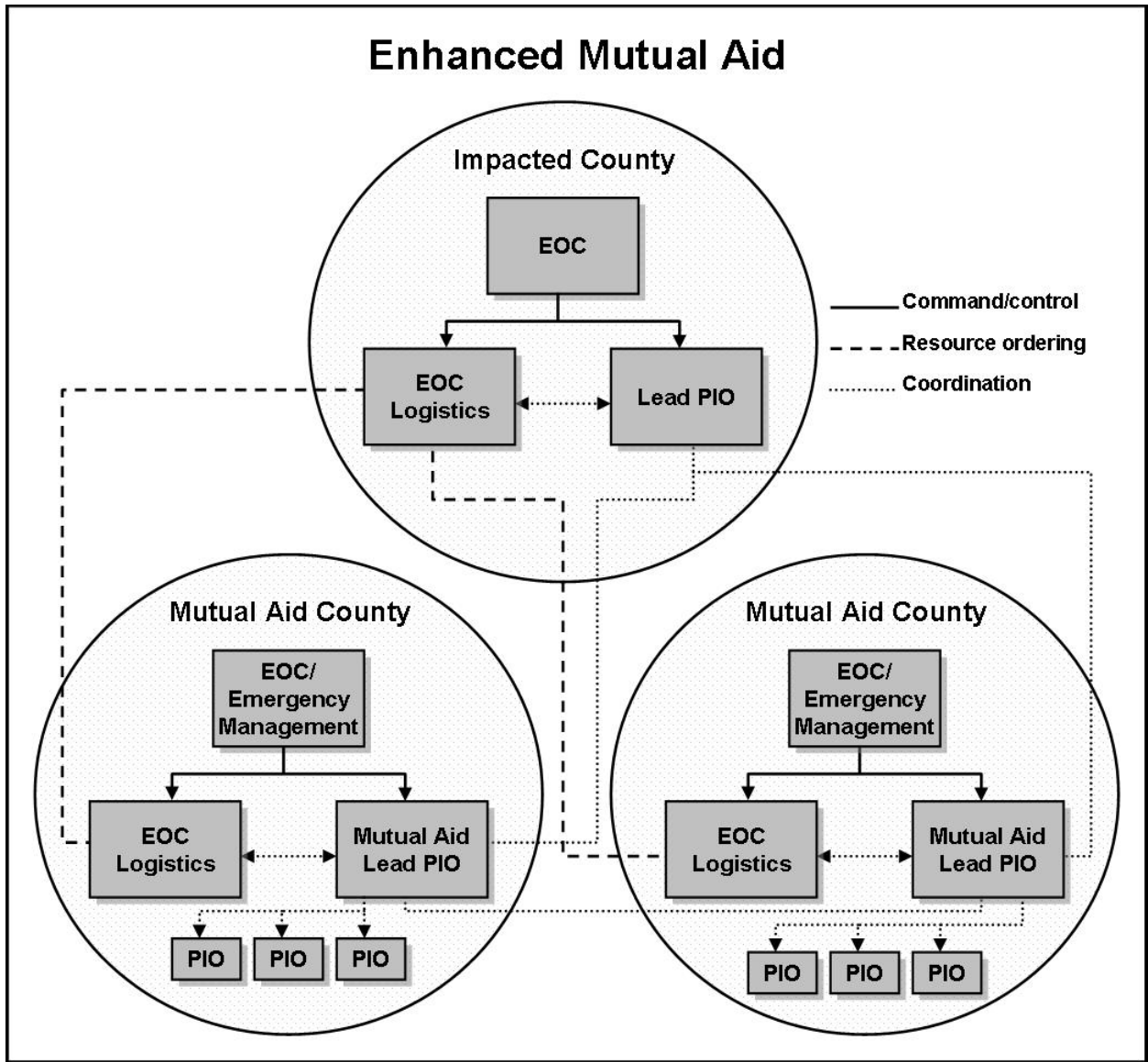
Maintain Status Quo

No action is needed other than continuing routine operations. However, the lead PIO from the jurisdiction primarily impacted by the incident will communicate with the other members of the regional lead PIO group if the situation changes and enhancements to R-JIS operations are required.

Enhanced Mutual Aid Mode

- Request Support – The impacted county’s lead PIO will request mutual aid from regional PIOs and identify the type and kind of resources needed. Although awareness of the request may be shared among regional PIOs, the official request for PIO resources shall be made by the coordinating center of the affected jurisdiction.

- Identify Resources – PIOs from agencies around the region will coordinate with their EOC/ECCs or emergency management agencies (EMAs) on assessing resources available for deployment to the impacted jurisdiction.
- Deploy Resources – PIOs providing mutual aid will either deploy to the impacted jurisdiction or remain in their own jurisdiction, but assume a proactive supporting role.



Strengthen the R-JIS: Virtual JIC and Fixed-site R-JIC Modes

If the regional lead PIO group or incident command/emergency management determines that strengthening the R-JIS is necessary, the following activation steps will be taken for ramping up a virtual JIC and/or setting up a fixed-site R-JIC.

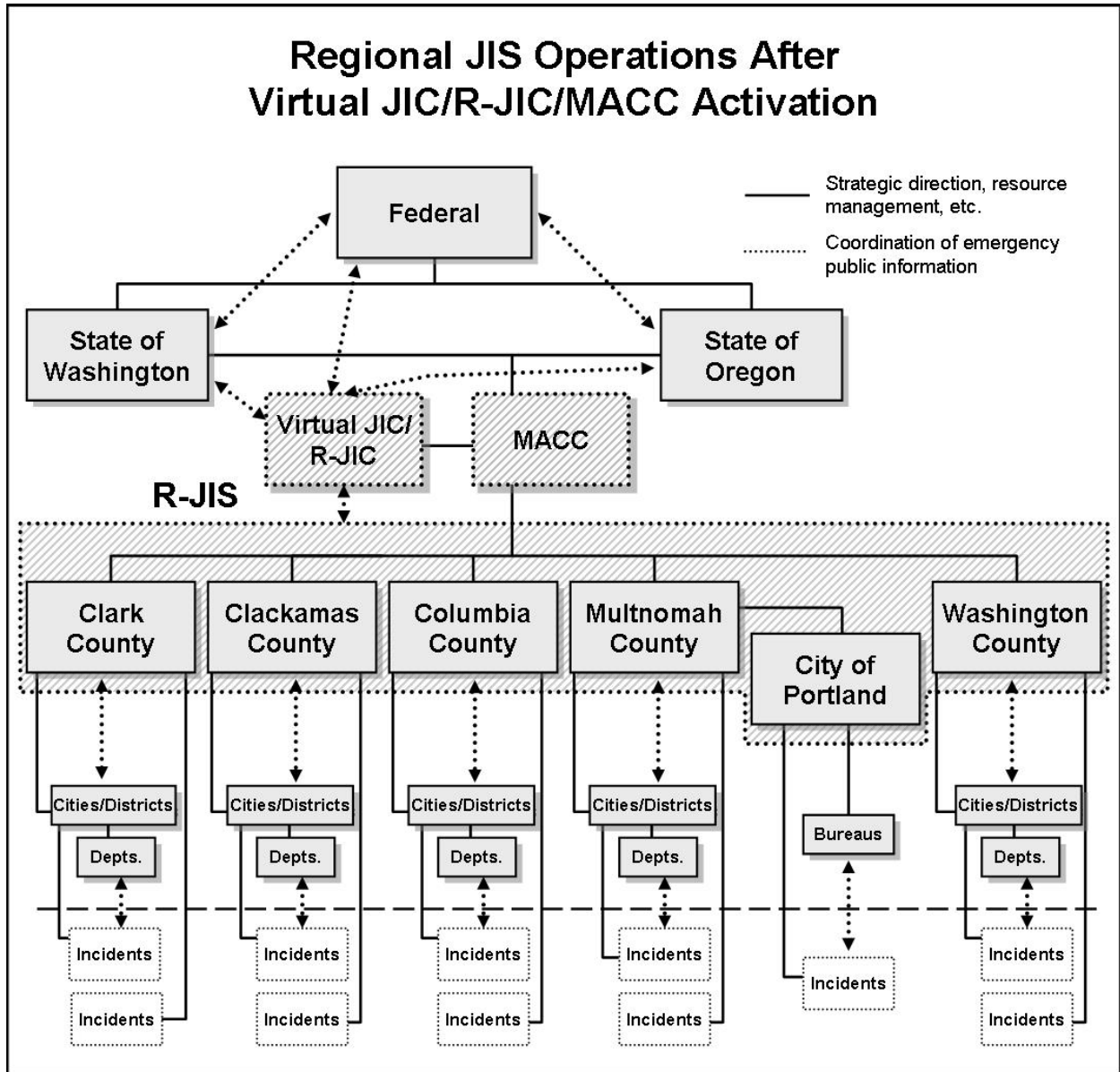
- Activate the virtual JIC – If utilizing the virtual JIC is requested, the regional lead PIO will activate and begin managing virtual JIC operations. The activation of the virtual JIC may bolster the R-JIS enough that a fixed-site R-JIC will not be necessary.
- R-JIC Management – If a fixed-site R-JIC is deemed necessary, the regional incident commander/emergency manager will appoint and/or request a lead regional PIO for the R-JIC for each operational period. A lead PIO from an EOC/ECC involved with the incident may be appointed lead PIO of the R-JIC.
- Identify Available Resources – Lead PIOs will work with their respective EOC/ECC Logistics Sections to assess the availability of PIOs qualified to staff the R-JIC. Lists of regional PIOs will be shared with emergency managers/coordinators and the members of the regional lead PIO group.
- Identify Potential R-JIC Locations – The R-JIC should be located within the same facility as the MACC (if one is established) or in close proximity. Lead PIOs will work with their respective EOC/ECC Logistics Sections to identify potential R-JIC locations and facilities.
- Identify R-JIC Equipment and Supplies – Lead PIOs will work with their respective EOC/ECC Logistics Sections to assess the availability of computers, printers and other resources to deploy to the R-JIC.

The MACC (if activated), in conjunction with local emergency managers, will have the responsibility for evaluating available resources in the affected area – including public information resources – and coordinating the request and deployment of in-region assets. If the incident exceeds the resources available at the regional level, the MACC shall coordinate requests for additional out-of-region resources with local EOCs/ECCs and state coordinating centers.

Phase Three: Strengthened R-JIS Operations

PIOs operating as part of strengthened R-JIS operations – through the virtual JIC and/or R-JIC – will coordinate with PIOs operating at EOCs/ECCs involved in the incident and coordinate messages on behalf of the emergency manager/coordinator of the MACC (if activated). The strengthened R-JIS will provide an organized, integrated and coordinated mechanism to ensure the delivery of understandable, timely, accurate and consistent information to the public. The virtual JIC and/or R-JIC will:

- Coordinate all public information related to a regional disaster, including all federal, state, local, tribal, special district and private organization PIOs, staff and local JICs established to support the incident;
- Receive the most current and accurate information regarding incident management activities at all times.
- Consider establishing a public inquiry center (PIC) and/or coordinate with existing PICs, such as 211info, to help meet the public demand for information.



Virtual JIC Operations

- The appointed regional lead PIO will coordinate information flow and virtual JIC operations via a combination of Web-based, e-mail and telecommunications tools.
- Each PIO participating in the virtual JIC will work out of his/her respective locations utilizing available electronic tools.

Fixed-site R-JIC Operations

- A single R-JIC location is preferable, but the system should be flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate multiple JIC locations if required by the circumstances of an incident.

- Multiple JICs may be needed at different levels of incident management for a complex incident spanning a wide geographic area or multiple jurisdictions.
- The regional lead PIO will identify and work in coordination with other PIOs, including those who may be organized into JICs at the local, state and federal levels. Message coordination, information sharing and mutual support will be essential to the effectiveness of these public information entities and single resources.

Phase Four – Demobilization

The regional lead PIO in conjunction with incident command/emergency management will determine whether or not to demobilize the virtual or physical R-JIC. The occurrence of one or more of the following could trigger demobilization:

- The level of media activity has subsided to the point where strengthened R-JIS operations through a virtual JIC or fixed-site R-JIC are no longer necessary;
- Resource constraints/costs prohibit continued operations;
- The MACC is demobilized; or
- The virtual JIC/R-JIC scales down as state or federal public information operations scale up.

If the decision is made to demobilize, the regional lead PIO will:

- Notify the media;
- Notify local PIOs and jurisdictions associated with the regional JIS;
- Work with EOC/ECC Logistics Sections (and MACC if activated) to release both staff and equipment, ensuring all equipment and personnel are returned to routine conditions/operations;
- Ensure all documents and other data generated by the virtual/R-JIC are captured by the Operations Support Group for archiving; and
- Conduct a post-incident critique on the strengthened R-JIS operations, ideally within 30 days.

Although the R-JIC, in its virtual or fixed-site form, may shut down and demobilize, the open channels of communication and relationships activated as part of the R-JIS should continue well into the recovery phase and beyond.

IV. Organization & Assignment of Responsibilities

Enhanced Mutual Aid

Under enhanced mutual aid, the lead PIO of the primarily impacted jurisdiction will manage PIO operations per existing jurisdiction plans and assign roles, filling section lead, functional and support positions within the impacted jurisdiction. The impacted jurisdiction's lead PIO will evaluate current resources and work through the EOC/ECC Logistics Section within the impacted jurisdiction's command structure to request mutual aid as needed.

Requests for outside assistance will move via the lead PIO's EOC/ECC Logistics Section to mutual aid jurisdictions' EOC/ECC Logistics Sections (or emergency management agency if no mutual aid EOC/ECC is activated). Those mutual aid Logistics Sections/EMAs will then serve as the sole resource management point within their county or city, and reach out to cities, special districts, non-profits and other agencies residing within their jurisdiction.

Lead PIOs within counties providing mutual aid will take a proactive stance in keeping their respective local PIOs informed of the status of and issues with the impacted jurisdiction's public messaging operations. These lead PIOs from agencies providing mutual aid will work with their EOC/ECC Logistics Sections (if activated) or EMAs (if EOCs/ECCs not activated) to identify the availability of local PIOs.

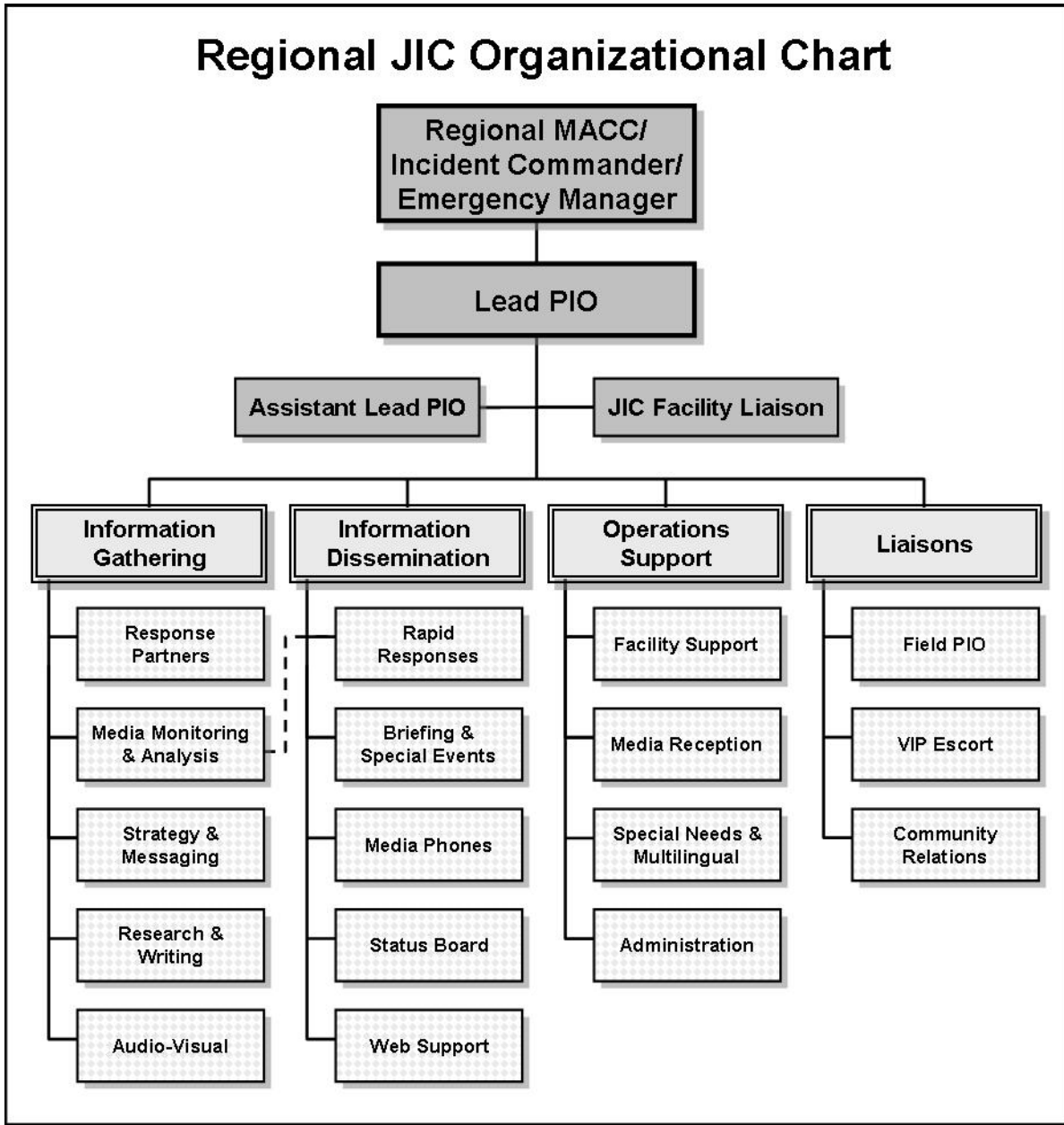
Virtual JIC

Web-based or other communications tools used in the operation of the virtual JIC will correspond with the organizational structure described in the "Regional JIC Organizational Chart" (*see page 16*).

R-JIC Organizational Structure

The following diagram illustrates how the five functions of the R-JIC – leadership, information gathering, information dissemination, operations support and liaison activity – could be organized in response to a disaster with region-wide impact. Scaled-back versions of this structure may be more appropriate for responding to smaller incidents.

Each box represents a function to be performed. One person can perform several functions, or one function may be staffed by many people, depending upon the needs of the incident.



The following roles and functions correspond with the fully scaled R-JIC organization:

Virtual JIC/R-JIC Leadership

Lead PIO:

- Manages the virtual JIC/R-JIC.
- Serves as advisor to incident command/emergency management.
- Provides overall policy direction for emergency public information.
- Recommends and develops strategy for messages, briefings and news releases.
- Obtains approval from incident command/emergency management before releases are issued to the media.

- Conducts briefings (live or virtual) to update PIOs involved in R-JIS operations regarding incident command activities.
- Participates in planning meetings.
- Participates or delegates participation in regional policy group meetings, if convened.

Assistant Lead Public Information Officer:

- Assists the lead PIO as directed.
- Manages virtual JIC/R-JIC operations when the lead PIO is unavailable.

R-JIC Facility Liaison:

- Provides the R-JIC leadership with a single point of contact with the agency or organization that owns or operates the structure hosting the R-JIC.
- Assists the R-JIC leadership with access to electrical power, computer networks and other facility-specific infrastructure necessary to conduct operations.

Information Gathering Group

The Information Gathering Group collects, processes and verifies information from multiple sources including PIOs involved in the response throughout the region, PIOs in the Liaisons Group within the virtual JIC/R-JIC and the groups and units within the MACC (if activated). The Gathering Group also coordinates the development of key messages with the R-JIC's Dissemination Group.

Response Partners:

- Coordinates with response agencies and their PIOs at EOC/ECCs, incident command posts and other locations to gather information on the regional incident.
- Works closely with Operations Section and SitStat Unit in the Planning Section (in the MACC) to gather information.

Media Monitoring:

- Reviews media reports for accuracy, content and possible response.
- Within the virtual JIC/R-JIC, works closely with Rapid Response Unit in the Information Dissemination Group to quickly correct inaccurate media coverage.
- Within the MACC, works closely with the SitStat Unit in Planning and with command to alert the MACC about evolving incident status.

Strategy and Messaging:

- Provides recommendations and options for strategically adjusting virtual JIC/R-JIC content as the incident unfolds and response operations are modified.
- Works closely with other units in the Information Gathering Group to obtain a common operating picture of the incident.
- Works closely with virtual JIC/R-JIC Leadership and the Information Dissemination Group to craft overarching "key messages" in concert with incident-specific public information objectives.

Research and Writing:

- Writes materials such as media releases, fact sheets, flyers, etc.
- Provides graphics support by designing layouts, developing PowerPoint presentations and creating graphics for a range of materials (e.g., newsletters, flyers, etc.).

Audio-Visual:

- Develops video documentation, special productions, remote live interview feeds and logistical support of public meetings and presentations.
- Provides still photography documentation to support print and internet media needs and video documentation to support broadcast media needs.
- Collects materials for agency archives.

Information Dissemination Group

The Information Dissemination Group receives confirmed information approved for release to the public; coordinates the release of information (with lead PIO/incident commander-emergency manager); identifies targeted audiences and utilizes appropriate resources and tools to communicate situation status, response operations and protective actions and other guidance summarized as key messages.

Rapid Response:

- Works closely with Media Monitoring Unit in Information Gathering Group to quickly identify and correct inaccuracies in reporting by the news media.
- Coordinates with virtual JIC/R-JIC leadership and other units in Information Dissemination Group to adjust content as necessary.

Briefing and Special Events:

- Produces events such as news conferences, media briefings, very important person (VIP) visits, community meetings and tours for senior officials of affected areas.
- Works with virtual JIC/R-JIC leadership to establish production schedules and involve subject matter experts and appropriate command and operations staff.

Media and Public Inquiry:

- Serves as the primary point of contact from the virtual JIC/R-JIC to the media.
- Disseminates approved news releases, advisories and newsletters produced by the Information Gathering Group.
- Prepares content for and conducts regular news briefings and conferences.
- Provides content to any activated public inquiry center (PIC) to assist with questions from the public, referrals and maintenance of logs of telephone calls, e-mails, etc., containing names, addresses, the type of calls and any necessary follow up actions.
- Shares news releases, advisories and other approved content with all response partners.

Status Board:

- Maintains up-to-date displays visible within the virtual JIC/R-JIC showing situation status, key messages, maps of the affected areas and other incident-related content that has been approved for dissemination to the media and public.

Web Support:

- Creates and maintains Web pages and blogs containing information about the incident for use by the public and the media.

Operations Support

Works closely with virtual JIC/R-JIC Leadership, Facilities Liaison and the MACC's Logistics Section (if activated) to identify, request and obtain resources, supplies, equipment and facilities for the R-JIC. Collects and archives all public information documents and other content generated for each operational period.

Facility Support:

- Coordinates with the R-JIC Facility Liaison to maintain and support R-JIC operations concerning the facility and resources.

Media Reception:

- Greets and signs in reporters and support personnel arriving for news briefings or media tours.
- Maintains contact with resources sent to the R-JIC's media staging area by news organizations, but does not disseminate content.

Special Needs/Multilingual:

- Works closely with Information Dissemination Group to provide language translation and other services to ensure appropriate and timely information reaches those in the affected areas with special needs.

Administration:

- Assists with ongoing supply and equipment needs.
- Maintains archive file of all documents generated by the virtual JIC/R-JIC during each operational period.

Liaisons

Works closely with virtual JIC/R-JIC Leadership to coordinate communications with key program areas and other entities involved in the response and recovery operation (e.g., elected officials, community leaders, VIPs and other governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies).

Field PIOs:

- Represents the R-JIC to the media and public at appropriate locations such as in rural areas, in cities that request PIO operations from the MACC or in shelters established by NGOs or other organizations.
- If called upon by the lead PIO, represents the R-JIC in regional policy group meetings that may be convened.
- Works with the MACC's Operations Section (if activated) and other PIOs involved in the incident to establish media staging area(s) in a safe location(s) near the incident scene(s).
- Works with the Information Dissemination Group to conduct media interviews, community meetings or tours of incident site(s), shelters or other locations.
- Works with Media and Public Inquiry and Special Needs/Multi-Lingual Units to communicate shelter information to displaced individuals and to provide information on shelter openings to the Information Gathering Group.
- Provides incident updates to the Information Gathering Group.

VIP Escort:

- Conducts and/or assists the incident commander/emergency manager with briefing elected officials, dignitaries and politicians.
- Conducts tours of the incident scene(s).

Community Relations:

- Works with the MACC's Liaison Officer (if activated) to identify and seek representation from organizations that may have a vested interest in the response to and recovery from the regional incident.
- Helps facilitate requests for media interviews.
- Collects information on potential efforts of community organizations and shares with the Information Gathering Group.

IV. Plan Development & Maintenance

The Portland Office of Emergency Management (POEM) will maintain this ConOps plan with the active participation and cooperation of the other members of the Portland Urban Area, including, but not limited to Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties.

The plan will be reviewed by the PIO Working Group on an annual basis and updates will be incorporated on an as-needed basis. Included in the annual review will be an evaluation of communication tools and methods in use to determine if changes need to be made to the ConOps plan based on new technology or changing practices.

The PIO Working Group will establish a training schedule based on plan revisions and new personnel involved in the R-JIS.

V. Authorities & References

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Incident Management System (NIMS) December 2008
- Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- Existing Urban Area Participants Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 517 – Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 – Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning
- The National Response Team, Joint Information Center Model, January 21, 2000
- Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) State Working Group on Domestic Preparedness, Public Information and Joint Information System (JIS) and Joint Information Center (JIC) Protocol, October 12, 2005
- Regional Emergency Management Group (REMG) Information Sharing and Policy Coordination Procedure (Draft), October 7, 2008

VI. Appendices

The appendices to the ConOps plan include the following:

- A. Glossary of Terms
- B. Sample Lead PIO Initial Conference Call Agenda

A. Glossary of Terms

Area Command: An organization overseeing the management of multiple incidents handled individually by separate ICS organizations or to oversee the management of a very large or evolving incident engaging multiple incident commanders and their staffs.

Concept of Operations (ConOps): A broad outline of assumptions or intent in regard to an operation or series of operations. ConOps is designed to give an overall picture of the operation and provide clarity of purpose.

Emergency Alert System (EAS): A federally established network of commercial radio stations that voluntarily provide emergency instructions or directions to the public during an emergency. Priorities for activation and use are: (1) federal government, (2) local government and (3) state government.

Emergency Coordination Center (ECC): The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An ECC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction. ECCs may be organized by major functional disciplines (e.g., fire, law enforcement, medical services), by jurisdiction (e.g., federal, state, regional, tribal, city, county), or by some combination thereof.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction. EOCs may be organized by major functional disciplines (e.g., fire, law enforcement, medical services), by jurisdiction (e.g., federal, state, regional, tribal, city, county), or by some combination thereof.

Emergency Manager: The person who has the day-to-day responsibility for emergency management programs and activities. The role is one of coordinating all aspects of a jurisdiction's mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery capabilities.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA): The agency in which one or more emergency managers are assigned.

First Responder: Local police, fire and emergency medical personnel who first arrive on the scene of an incident and take action to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

Incident Command Post (ICP): The location of the tactical-level, on-scene incident command and management organization. Typically, the ICP is located at or in the immediate vicinity of the incident site and is the locus for the conduct of direct, on-scene control of tactical operations.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents.

Joint Information Center (JIC): A facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media. Public information officials from all participating agencies should co-locate at the JIC.

Joint Information System (JIS): A structure that integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely and complete information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; developing, recommending and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the Incident Commander (IC); advising the IC concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

Lead Public Information Officer (Lead PIO): The lead PIO for a jurisdiction, agency or response entity operating within an ICS structure. At the regional level, the lead PIO would be responsible for providing leadership for the overall mission of the virtual JIC/R-JIC.

Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC): A physical location where agencies and organizations responding to an incident coordinate incident prioritization, critical resource allocation, communications systems integration and information coordination. MACCs are part of a multi-agency coordination system, elements of which include facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications. Emergency operations centers (EOCs) and emergency coordination centers (ECCs) are examples of MACCs.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A set of principles that provides a systematic, proactive approach guiding government agencies at all levels, 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 or property and harm to the environment.

PIO Working Group: Portland Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) working group comprised of public information officers (PIOs) representing jurisdictions within the Portland Urban Area.

Public Inquiry Center (PIC): Emergency public information resources organized to respond directly to questions from the public using trained operators and under the direction of the lead PIO. The PIC serves a dual purpose: it disseminates information by responding to requests from the public, and it gathers information by identifying trends, inaccurate information, misunderstandings or misperceptions reported by the public or reflected by their inquiries.

Public Information Officer (PIO): A member of the incident command/emergency management staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.

Regional Joint Information Center (R-JIC): A regional location attached to a multi-agency coordination center (MACC) where public information officials gather to collaborate on and coordinate the release of emergency public information. The R-JIC serves as an information hub for the media and public to receive emergency information from a regional perspective.

Regional Joint Information System (R-JIS): The public information system coordinating the delivery of information to the public as a single region during the crisis.

Regional Lead PIO Group: During an emergency, the lead PIOs representing the activated response entities for Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland with the active support and involvement of PIOs from special districts, cities, the states of Oregon and Washington, the federal government and other agencies. These additional PIOs may include representatives from public works, transit, port districts, utilities, hospitals, medical organizations, the Red Cross and the private sector.

Virtual JIC: An Internet or other technology-based communications environment established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities when the nature of the incident discourages physical co-location or when such co-location is not feasible. A virtual JIC involves real-time, constant links to other sites, thus creating a central point of contact for all news media. Public information officials from all participating agencies should be fully integrated and linked into the virtual JIC so that it functions as a single-site operation.

B. Sample Regional Lead PIO Group Conference Call Agenda*

1. Introductions.
2. Brief situation status from each county EOC's and the City of Portland ECC's lead PIO.
3. Assess current efforts and the need to strengthen the R-JIS by pursuing one of the following options:
 - a. Maintain status quo;
 - b. Enhanced mutual aid;
 - c. Strengthen the R-JIS – virtual JIC;
 - d. Strengthen the R-JIS – fixed-site R-JIC; or
 - e. A combination of options.
4. Decide on one of these five modes of operation and determine roles.
5. Propose public information objectives or plan to support a coordinated response to the regional incident.
6. Set a date/time of next call/meeting.
7. Other issues.

**The regional lead PIO group is composed of the lead PIOs from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland with the active support and involvement of PIOs from special districts, cities, the states of Oregon and Washington, the federal government and other agencies. These additional PIOs may include representatives from public works, transit, port districts, utilities, hospitals, medical organizations, the Red Cross and the private sector.*