

Portland Metropolitan Region Emergency Public Information Concept of Operations (ConOps) Plan

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(POC) – January 2009***

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Group – March 2016***

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I. Introduction

A. Mission

As public information officers (PIOs), we will contribute to the well-being of the Portland Metropolitan Region following a major emergency or disaster by communicating with each other, the news media, and the public in a consistent, coordinated fashion.

B. Purpose

The purpose of the Portland Metropolitan Region Emergency Public Information Concept of Operations Plan (ConOps) is to provide implementing procedures for the operation of a regional joint information system (R-JIS) in the event of a major emergency or 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.

C. Scope

This plan will guide all city, county, and special district crisis communications within the Portland Metropolitan Region comprised of all local jurisdictions within and including the city of Portland and Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington counties. The procedures contained within the plan apply to major emergencies and disasters, to the extent that the coordination of public information is necessary. These emergencies or disasters could:

- Start within the region;
- Start elsewhere and impact the region; or
- Occur outside the region, but require the support of PIO resources from within the region.

D. Stewardship

This ConOps is overseen by a Regional Lead PIO Group comprised of PIOs responsible for overseeing the local joint information systems within Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington counties and the city of Portland, in addition to the lead PIOs from Metro, the Port of Portland, and TriMet, with the active support of the members of the Regional PIO Work Group. The Regional PIO Work Group includes PIOs from counties, cities, special districts, the states of Oregon and Washington, the federal government, other agencies, and the private sector.

II. Situation & Assumptions

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

A. Situation

- PIOs 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 the Regional Lead PIO Group and Regional PIO Work Group comprised of PIOs from counties, cities, special districts, the states of Oregon and Washington, the federal government, other agencies, and the private sector.
- PIOs organized through the R-JIS are also part of a regional multi-agency coordination system (MACS) – a flexible, scalable system designed to provide sustained support for response, and for incidents of varying complexity and scope.
- The region 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 need timely, accurate information about the situation and protective actions they can take to minimize injuries, loss of life, and damage to property and the environment.
- 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 – including in languages other than English – 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 region shares a single broadcast media market.
- A majority of the public will turn to television, radio, and social media, particularly through mobile devices, for emergency information.
- National and international media may place heavy demands on PIOs organized through the R-JIS.

- The R-JIS may require the use of coordination tools, including – but not limited to – a Virtual Operations Support Team (VOST) and regional joint information center (R-JIC).
- Disasters occurring outside the 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 the media market.
- Incidents within the Pacific Northwest, but outside the area (e.g., major wildfires or a significant law enforcement incident), may result in the mobilization of PIOs from the R-JIS to provide support.
- 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 an R-JIC, if activated.

B. Assumptions

The members of the Regional Lead PIO Group and Regional PIO Work Group make the following assumptions regarding partner agency and responder support, media support, and levels of public understanding or involvement:

General

- Effective regional coordination will increase public trust in local authorities and increase cooperation and compliance with issued guidance and directives.
- Sufficient communications capability (including electrical power, Internet connectivity, and social and traditional media functionality) will be available in most, but not all, instances to allow information collection and dissemination.
- Information dissemination resources and relevant content will be available in most, but not all, instances to facilitate timely delivery of information to the public.
- In seeking to achieve local public information objectives, response entities operating during a regional emergency without coordinating through the R-JIS will be at risk of disseminating conflicting information to the public.

Agency-specific

- The unique demands of each incident will result in PIOs from various jurisdictions and agencies working together at all levels of the response. For example, a major earthquake or 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 coordination centers.

- 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 or as part of a VOST in accordance with the modes of operation described in this plan.
- The Regional Lead PIO Group and other PIOs participating in the R-JIS will provide support to the Multi-agency Coordination Group (MACG) if activated in support of the MACS.
- PIOs will be responsible for developing good working relationships with other PIOs operating within their local agency and jurisdiction – and with PIOs from around the region.
- PIOs associated with local agencies and jurisdictions will tend to have the best sense of the demographics, languages, and cultures represented within their boundaries.
- An effective regional response will be predicated upon each city and county engaging in proactive coordination within their territories. Information should be shared throughout each local JIS, from local agencies with their county, and from county to county through processes described in this regional plan.
- 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, depending on the availability of local PIO resources. Each of these entities is expected to have local emergency public information plans identifying a succession of pre-established lead PIOs, among other positions.
- The agencies represented in the R-JIS will participate in routine tests, drills, and exercises in order to achieve effective response operations.

III. Concept of Operations

A. Role of Regional Lead PIO Group

This ConOps relies on a “forward-leaning” approach of all PIOs acting within their agencies during routine business and emergency operations. Within these two contexts, particular responsibilities will be carried by the members of the Regional Lead PIO Group.

Day-to-Day Responsibilities

During non-emergency times, members of the Regional Lead PIO Group will:

- Champion the R-JIS by providing their agency with a regional perspective on PIO issues.
- Help convene and facilitate the local JIS within his or her territory of responsibility. This may include regularly organizing meetings with PIOs comprising the local JIS.
- Serve as a conduit for information sharing to and from the region.
- Keep the other members of the Regional Lead PIO Group informed about their on-going availability, work schedules, contact information, and other status information.
- When unavailable for an extended period of time, provide an alternate PIO point of contact to work with the Regional Lead PIO Group.

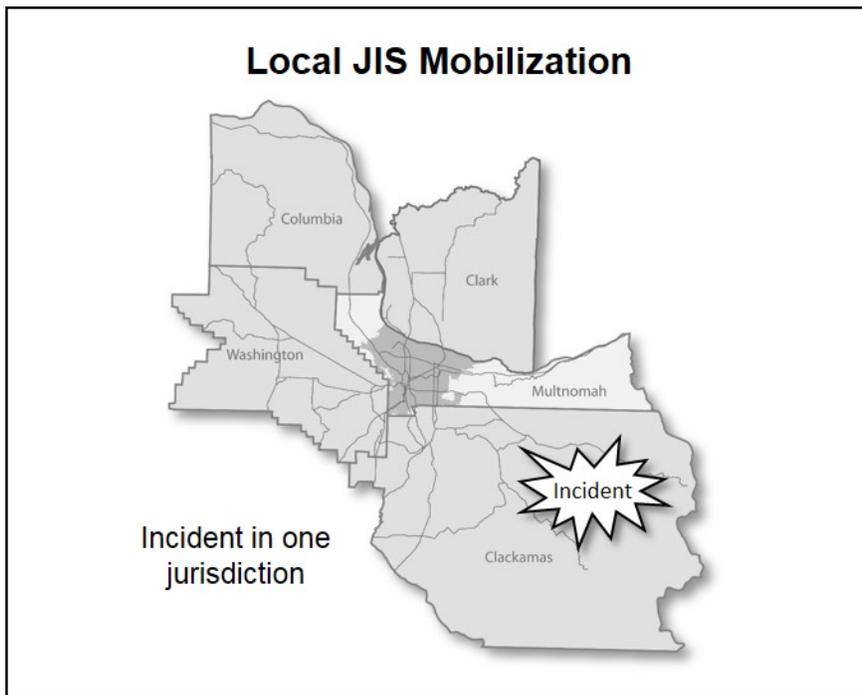
Emergency Responsibilities

During emergencies, members of the Regional Lead PIO Group will work together to coordinate regional messaging and contribute to the building of a region-wide common operating picture. Specifically, members of the Regional Lead PIO Group will:

- Engage each member’s local JIS in the sharing of incident-related information.
- Represent this local perspective to the Regional Lead PIO Group.
- Engage in decision-making to pursue various regional modes of response described in this ConOps.
- Include PIOs from disciplines involved in the incident response to participate in the R-JIS (e.g., transportation PIOs during a winter storm or public health PIOs during a pandemic).

B. Local Joint Information System (JIS) Mobilization

During a disaster, incident commanders (ICs) and emergency managers (EMs) at all levels of the response will likely assign the emergency public information function to lead PIOs and activate public information resources in accordance with existing plans. These response entities will place a high priority on achieving local public information objectives, maintaining cooperative relationships, and keeping open channels of communication with all agencies responding to the incident. 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, emergency operations centers (EOCs), emergency coordination centers (ECCs), or multi-agency coordinating groups (MACGs) 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.

C. Transition to R-JIS Operations

Upon recognition of one or more of the following decision points, any member of the Regional Lead PIO Group – comprised of the lead PIOs from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties, the city of Portland, Metro, the Port of Portland, and TriMet – 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 decision points 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 demand or public concern is overwhelming (or is anticipated to overwhelm) local PIO resources;
- There is a need to coordinate messaging on a regional basis;
- Activation of a MACG 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 R-JIS.

Examples of other agencies participating on the call may include, but aren't limited to, the following:

Disaster type	Agencies to consider adding to the call
Aircraft emergency	Fire
Earthquake	Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM)/Washington Emergency Management Division, public works/transportation, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI)
Flood	National Weather Service, public works/transportation
Hazardous material	Fire, public health, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Heat	National Weather Service, public health, hospitals
Landslide	USGS, DOGAMI, public works/transportation
Law enforcement	Federal Bureau of Investigation, Oregon State Police, Washington State Police, other law enforcement

Pandemic/public health emergency	Public health, hospitals
Phone outage affecting 9-1-1	Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), OEM Enhanced 9-1-1
Power outage	Utilities
Terrorism (physical or cyber)	Federal Bureau of Investigation, Oregon State Police, Washington State Police, other law enforcement
Tsunami	Oregon Emergency Management, Washington Emergency Management Division, public works/transportation
Volcanic activity	U.S. Geological Survey, National Weather Service, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Oregon Emergency Management, Washington Emergency Management Division, public health, public works/transportation
Weather (winter or severe)	National Weather Service, public works/transportation, transit, utilities
Wildfire	Fire, public health

A proactive approach will be taken whenever possible to maximize preparation time in advance of the call.

D. Regional Lead PIO Group Conference Call/Strategy Meeting

Prior to the beginning of the conference call/strategy meeting, the Regional Lead PIO Group should choose from among its members a Regional Lead PIO to facilitate the meeting. In general, this would mean the PIO requesting that a conference call take place should facilitate the phone meeting, unless he or she delegates that role to another member of the Regional Lead PIO Group. The discussion during the conference call or meeting will be used to:

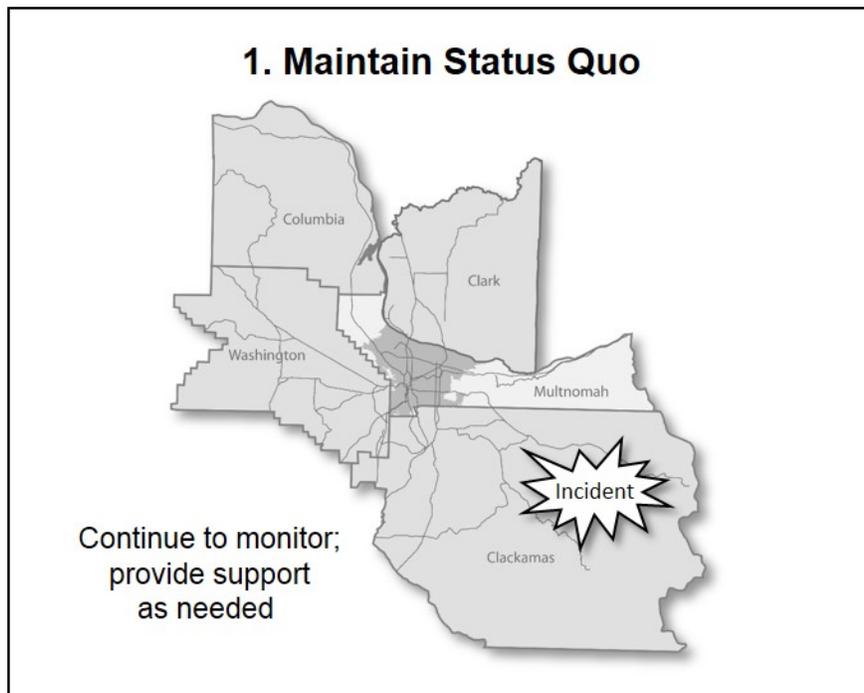
- Provide a common operating picture among PIOs;
- Assess current public information response efforts and the need to enhance the R-JIS;
- If appropriate, determine who will take the role of Regional Lead PIO in subsequent conference calls/strategy meetings. If necessary, this discussion may involve requesting someone to serve as lead PIO from outside the region;
- Propose initial public information objectives 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 decision points?
1. Maintain Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIOs maintain routine operations, but actively monitor the situation to determine if additional enhancements to the R-JIS are necessary. • A time is set for the next Regional Lead PIO Group conference call (if necessary). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incident is expected to be short-lived (less than five days). • Routine channels between PIOs are adequate for providing consistent and coordinated public messaging.
2. Enhanced Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination occurs between PIOs through the R-JIS. • Web-based and other communications tools are utilized as needed (e.g., VOST, WebEOC). • The Regional Lead PIO Group may identify a lead PIO for the incident. • Regular updates are shared with the Regional PIO Work Group. • A schedule is set for Regional Lead PIO Group conference calls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incident does not require establishing an R-JIC, but increased coordination would benefit the regional response. • Internet and phone service are operational. • The high level of social media activity may require the support of a VOST for media monitoring and other tasks. • The nature of the event discourages physically co-locating regional PIO operations (e.g., winter storm, public health emergency).
3. Mutual Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affected jurisdiction requests public information support. • A state agency, such as the emergency management agency for Oregon or the State of Washington, requests public information support for an incident outside of the Portland urban area. • The Regional Lead PIO Group mobilizes members of the Regional PIO Work Group to support the affected jurisdiction, including staffing a local JIC, monitoring social media, or assisting with other public information functions. • PIOs from non-affected jurisdictions proactively prepare to provide support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as under “enhanced coordination,” but the affected jurisdiction needs additional PIO support.
4. Regional JIC (R-JIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An R-JIC supports the R-JIS by providing a centralized “information hub” with PIOs from agencies around the region. • A regional lead PIO is identified. • PIOs are mobilized from the Regional PIO Work Group to staff the R-JIC. • The R-JIC grows or shrinks depending on the public information needs of the incident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high volume of media interaction necessitates a central location to improve the regional coordination of public information. • Sufficient PIO resources are available to support an R-JIC. • ICs/EMs may be planning to activate a MACG at the regional level.

E. Activation Steps

1. Maintain Status Quo

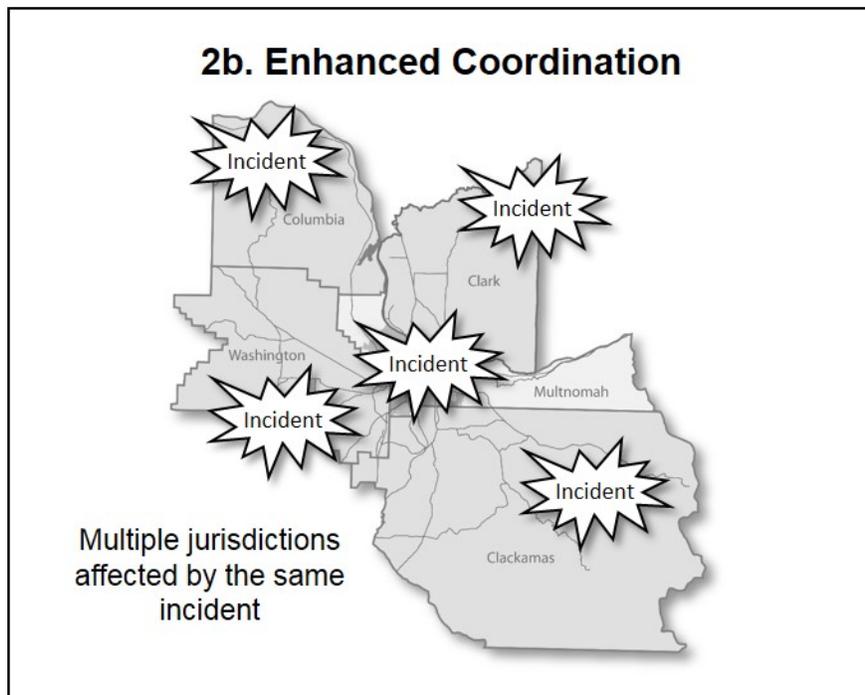
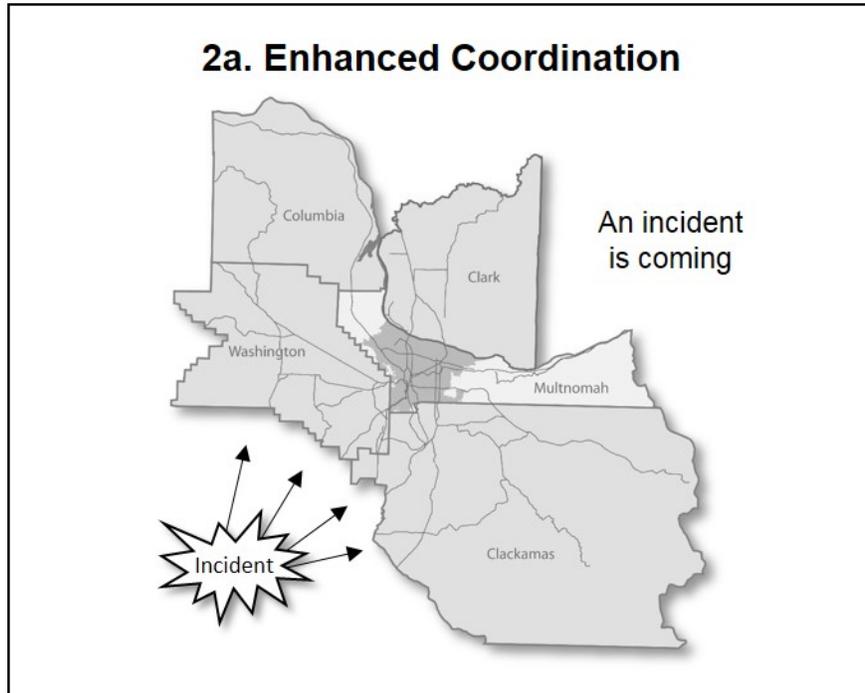
No action is needed other than continuing routine operations. However, the lead PIO from the jurisdiction primarily impacted by the incident will communicate with the other members of the Regional Lead PIO Group if the situation changes and enhancements to R-JIS operations are required. If appropriate, a time will be set for the next Regional Lead PIO Group conference call.



2. Enhanced Coordination

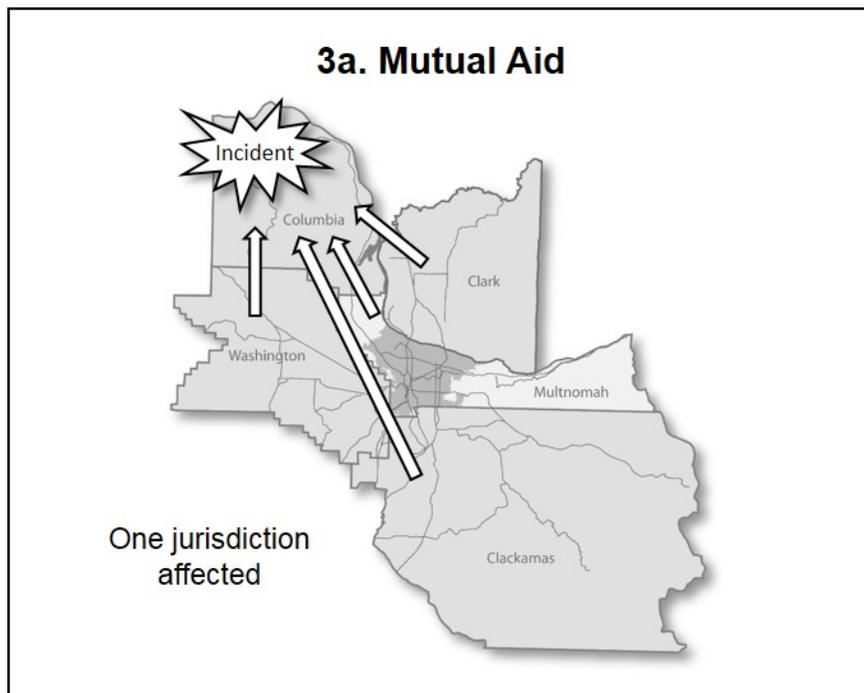
- Lead PIO Identified – a lead PIO may be identified by the Regional Lead PIO Group.
- Conference Calls – a regular conference call schedule is established by the Regional Lead PIO Group. PIOs from affected disciplines (e.g., transportation and utilities for a winter storm) are invited to participate.
- Web-based Tools – a VOST, WebEOC, PublicAlerts.org, and other web-based tools may be activated and utilized to support the R-JIS.
- Role of the Regional PIO Work Group – the Regional Lead PIO Group keeps members of the Regional PIO Work Group informed about coordination efforts and the potential need to mobilize PIOs to support the R-JIS.

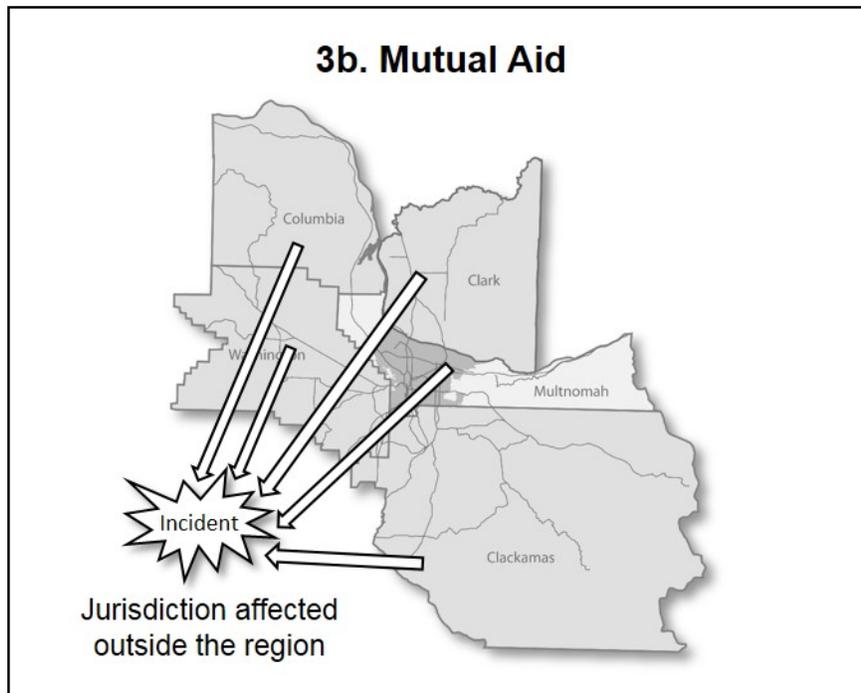
- Public Inquiry Center – a call center, such as 211info, may be mobilized or enhanced with additional staffing to answer questions from the public.



3. Mutual Aid

- **Request Support** – The impacted jurisdiction or a state emergency management agency will request mutual aid from regional PIOs and identify the type and kind of PIO resources needed (e.g., lead PIOs, discipline-specific PIOs, JIC managers, social media support, etc.). Although awareness of the request may be shared among regional PIOs, the official request for PIO resources shall be made by the ECC/EOC of the affected jurisdiction or state coordinating entity. In some cases, existing mutual aid agreements will dictate the rapid deployment of PIO resources.
- **Identify Resources** – PIOs from agencies around the region will coordinate with their emergency management agencies or the MACG (if activated) on assessing resources available for deployment to the impacted jurisdiction. If possible, the requesting agency will name a PIO resource coordinator to receive and fill requests for PIOs in alignment with the Regional Logistics Support Team (RLST), if activated. The email listserv maintained by the Regional PIO Work Group may be used to determine the availability of PIOs to provide mutual aid support.
- **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.





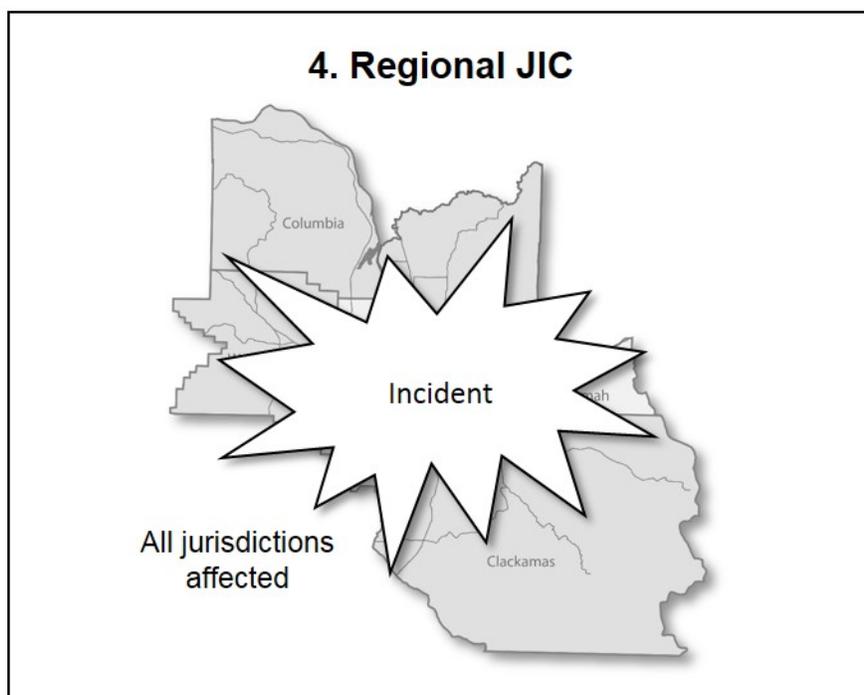
4. Regional JIC (R-JIC)

If the Regional Lead PIO Group or incident command/emergency management determines that establishing an R-JIC is necessary to strengthen the R-JIS, the following activation steps will be taken.

- **R-JIC Management** – The R-JIC Lead PIO may be determined as an outcome of the Regional Lead PIO Group conference call/strategy meeting, with guidance from emergency management. The lead PIO from an EOC/ECC involved with the incident may be appointed as the R-JIC Lead PIO.
- **Identify Available Resources** – The R-JIC Lead PIO will work with the Regional Lead PIO Group and his or her EOC/ECC Logistics Sections to assess the availability of PIOs qualified to staff the R-JIC, and select an R-JIC Manager. Lists of potentially available PIOs will be shared with emergency managers/coordinators and the members of the Regional Lead PIO Group. The email listserv maintained by the Regional PIO Work Group may be used to determine the availability of PIOs to provide mutual aid support.

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

- Identify Potential R-JIC Locations – The R-JIC may co-locate within the same facility as the regional MACG (if one is established) or in close proximity. The Regional PIO Work Group maintains a list of possible R-JIC locations for consideration during a regional incident. If a suitable location cannot easily be found, the R-JIC Lead PIO will work with his or her respective EOC/ECC Logistics Section to identify potential R-JIC locations and facilities.
- Identify R-JIC Equipment and Supplies – The R-JIC Manager will work with his or her respective EOC/ECC Logistics Sections to assess the availability of computers, printers, and other resources for the R-JIC.



The regional MACG (if activated) may identify a PIO to work as a liaison to the R-JIS representing the public information needs of the MACG.

F. R-JIS Operations

PIOs operating as part of R-JIS operations – through mutual aid, enhanced coordination, or an R-JIC – will coordinate with PIOs operating at EOCs/ECCs involved in the incident and the MACG (if activated). The 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 R-JIS 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. Within this coordinated framework, agency PIOs participating in the R-JIS would retain their authority to disseminate incident-related information as approved through their usual procedures.
- Receive the most current and accurate information regarding incident management activities at all times.
- Establish an R-JIC (if necessary), preferably in a single location. But the R-JIS 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.
- Establish a public inquiry center (if necessary) through 211info or other means to help meet the public demand for information.
- Mobilize the Oregon VOST (if necessary) to perform specific social media tasks in support of emergency management and disaster recovery efforts.
- Share information about the incident with the members of the Regional PIO Work Group.

The Regional Lead PIO Group 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.

G. Demobilization

The Regional Lead PIO Group – in conjunction with incident command/emergency management – will determine whether or not to demobilize operations. The occurrence of one or more of the following could prompt demobilization:

- The level of media activity or public concern has subsided to the point where strengthened R-JIS operations – including an R-JIC – are no longer necessary;

- Resource constraints/costs prohibit continued operations; or
- The MACG is demobilized.

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

- Notify local PIOs and jurisdictions associated with the R-JIS;
- Notify the media (if an R-JIC had been established);
- Work with EOC/ECC Logistics Sections (and MACG 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 are captured for archiving; and
- Conduct a post-incident critique on the strengthened R-JIS operations, ideally within 30 days.

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

A. Local

At the local level, the JIS is organized consistent with existing local emergency plans and procedures within each agency.

B. Enhanced Coordination

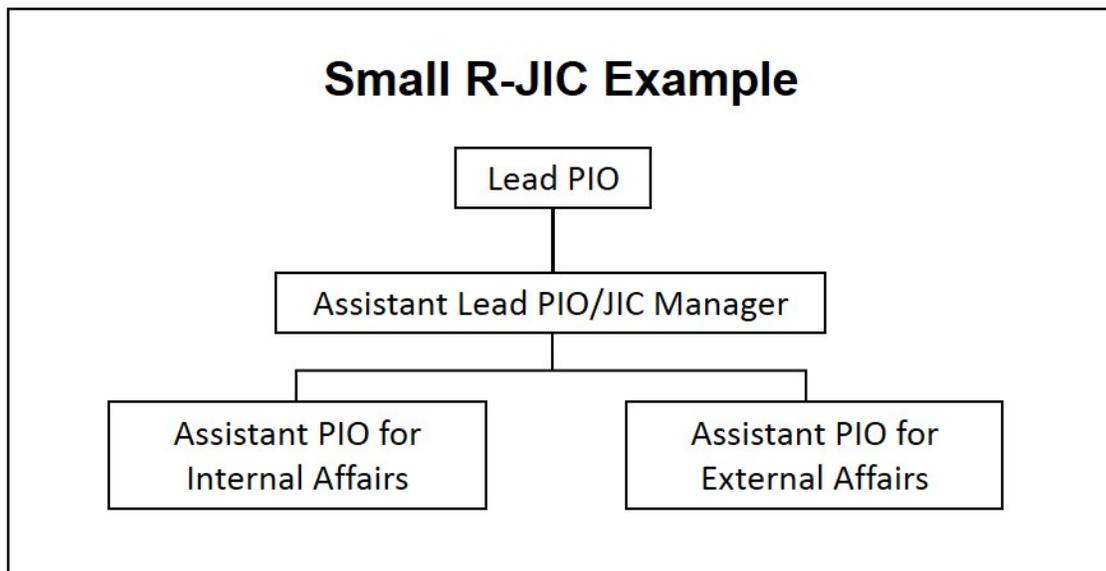
Under enhanced coordination, the R-JIS is led by the Regional Lead PIO Group with the engagement of discipline-specific PIOs involved with the incident. Roles and responsibilities are assigned by a lead PIO.

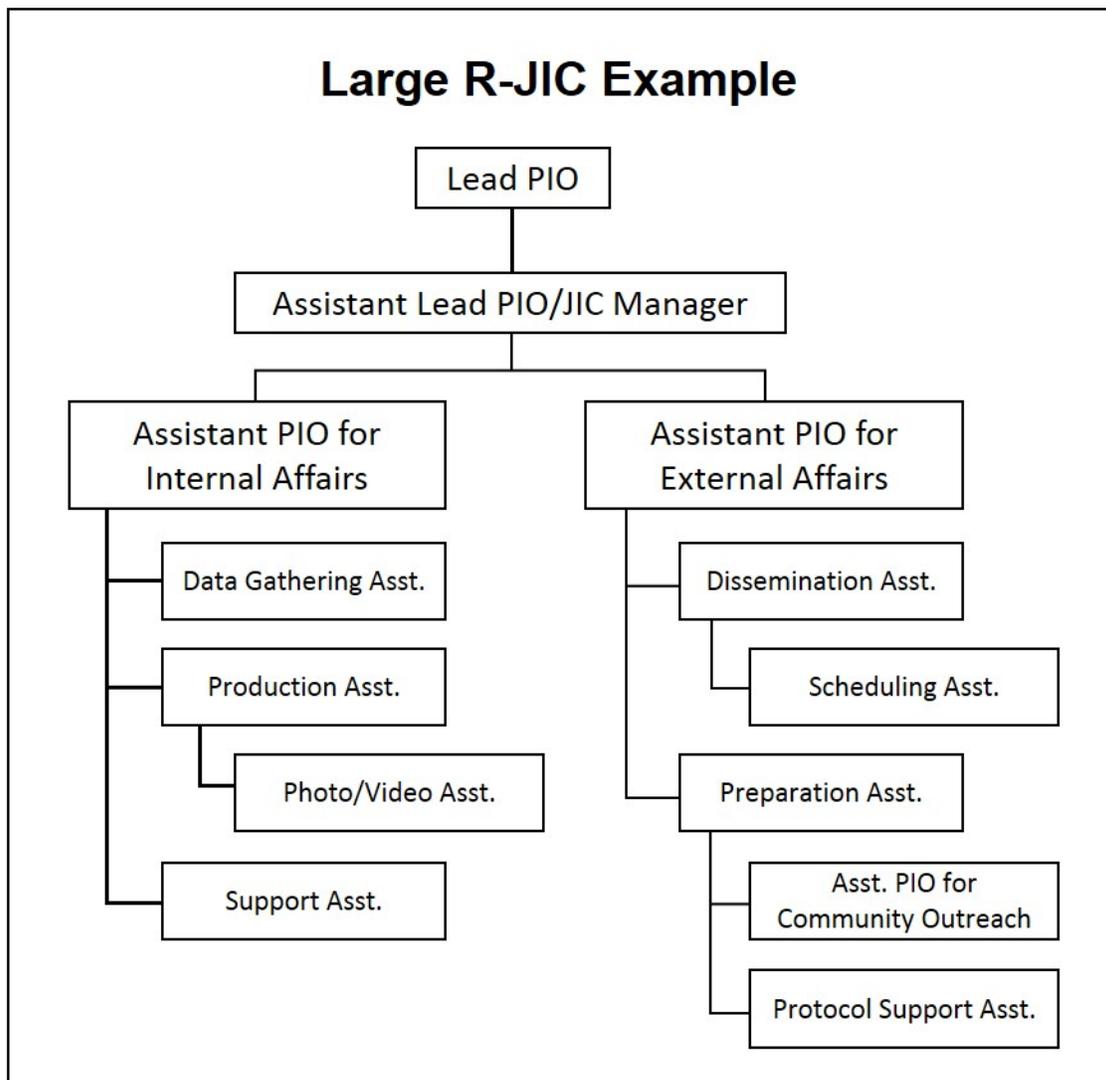
C. Mutual Aid

Under mutual aid, the lead PIO of the primarily impacted jurisdiction will manage public information per existing local plans and assign PIO roles. The lead PIO will evaluate current PIO resources and work through the EOC/ECC Logistics Section to request mutual aid as needed.

D. R-JIC

Refer to the *Portland Urban Area Regional Emergency Public Information Joint Information Center Manual* for a detailed description of positions to consider including within the R-JIC.





The following includes some, but not all, of the positions that may be needed during the activation of an R-JIC:

1. Lead PIO

- Gives leadership to the R-JIC.
- Provides overall guidance for emergency public information.
- May have experience in the discipline most related to response and recovery operations.
- Recommends and develops strategy for messages, briefings, and news releases.
- Serves as advisor to incident command/emergency management.
- Supports the MACG and coordinates directly with the MACG PIO (if activated).

- Helps establish mechanisms for the release of emergency information to the media and public.
- Conducts briefings to update PIOs involved in R-JIS operations regarding response and recovery activities.

2. Assistant Lead PIO/JIC Manager

- Assists the lead PIO as directed.
- Manages R-JIC operations
- May not have experience in the discipline most affected by response and recovery operations.

3. Assistant PIO for Internal Affairs (Information Gathering)

- Oversees the team that collects, processes, and verifies information from multiple sources including PIOs involved in the response throughout the region.
- Coordinates the development of key messages with External Affairs/Information Dissemination.
- Reviews media reports for accuracy, content, and possible response.

4. Assistant PIO for External Affairs (Information Dissemination)

- Oversees the team that receives confirmed information approved for release to the public.
- Coordinates the release of information with PIOs operating within the JIS and with guidance from the Lead PIO/incident commander-emergency managers.
- 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.
- Serves as the primary point of contact to the media.
- Prepares content for and conducts regular news briefings and conferences.
- Provides content to any activated or existing regional public inquiry center (PIC).
- Shares news releases, advisories and other approved content with all response partners.

IV. Plan Development & Maintenance

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) will maintain this ConOps plan with the active participation and cooperation of the other members of the Regional Lead PIO Group, including, but not limited to, Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties, Metro, the Port of Portland, and TriMet.

The plan will be reviewed by the Regional PIO Work Group biennially 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 Regional PIO Work Group will establish a training schedule based on plan revisions and new personnel involved in the R-JIS.

V. Authorities & References

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact
- Existing Urban Area Participants Emergency Operations Plans
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 – Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning
- Federal Emergency Management Agency G291 – JIS/JIC Planning for Tribal, State, and Local PIOs (June 2015)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency 517 – Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers (November 2007)
- Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force State Working Group on Domestic Preparedness, Public Information and Joint Information System and Joint Information Center Protocol (October 12, 2005)
- National Response Team, Joint Information Center Model (January 21, 2000)
- Oregon Emergency Management Emergency Operations Plan
- Oregon Inter-County Mutual Aid Agreement (2010)
- Portland Urban Area Regional Emergency Public Information Joint Information Center Manual (May 2013)
- Regional Emergency Management Group Information Sharing and Policy Coordination Procedure – Draft (October 7, 2008)
- Regional Multi-Agency Coordination System Concept of Operations Plan (June 2014)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Incident Management System (December 2008)
- Virtual Operations Support Group website – vosg.us

VI. Appendices

The appendices to the ConOps plan include the following:

- A. Glossary of Terms
- B. Response Organization to a Regional Incident Diagram
- C. Sample Regional Lead PIO Group Initial Conference Call Agenda
- D. Sample Resource Request Message

A. Glossary of Terms

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

Dark Site: A pre-made, non-visible web site that is activated when a crisis or emergency occurs.

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)/ 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 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 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.

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 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): The central location that supports the JIS. The JIC enhances information coordination, reduces misinformation, and maximizes resources by co-location PIOs as much as possible.

Joint Information System (JIS): 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 multi-location operation with many PIOs from many agencies.

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 R-JIS and R-JIC (if established).

Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS): A flexible, scalable regional coordination system designed to provide sustained support for the response, and for incidents of varying complexity and scope.

Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MACG): Decision-making group overseeing the MACS.

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.

PublicAlerts.org: Website serving as an online connection for residents in the Portland region to real-time emergency information, including alerts and services disruptions, links for residents to sign up for community emergency notification systems, and emergency preparedness resources. In a disaster, PublicAlerts.org may be used as the single web portal for the public to access emergency information.

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. 211info is an example of a PIC within the region.

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 MACG 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.

Regional Logistics Support Team (RLST): A team of individuals that assist the Logistics Section in one or more impacted or supporting county ECCs/EOCs with acquiring regional and state resources during the period with the *Regional Logistics Support Plan* is activated.

Regional PIO Work Group: The Regional PIO Work Group is the backbone of the R-JIS and is comprised of PIOs representing jurisdictions within the Portland metropolitan area.

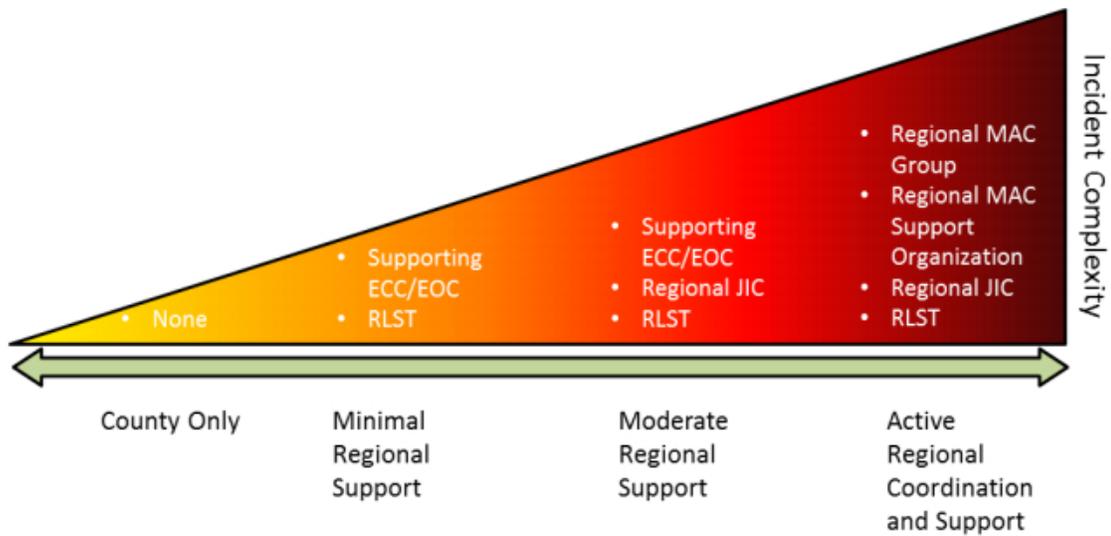
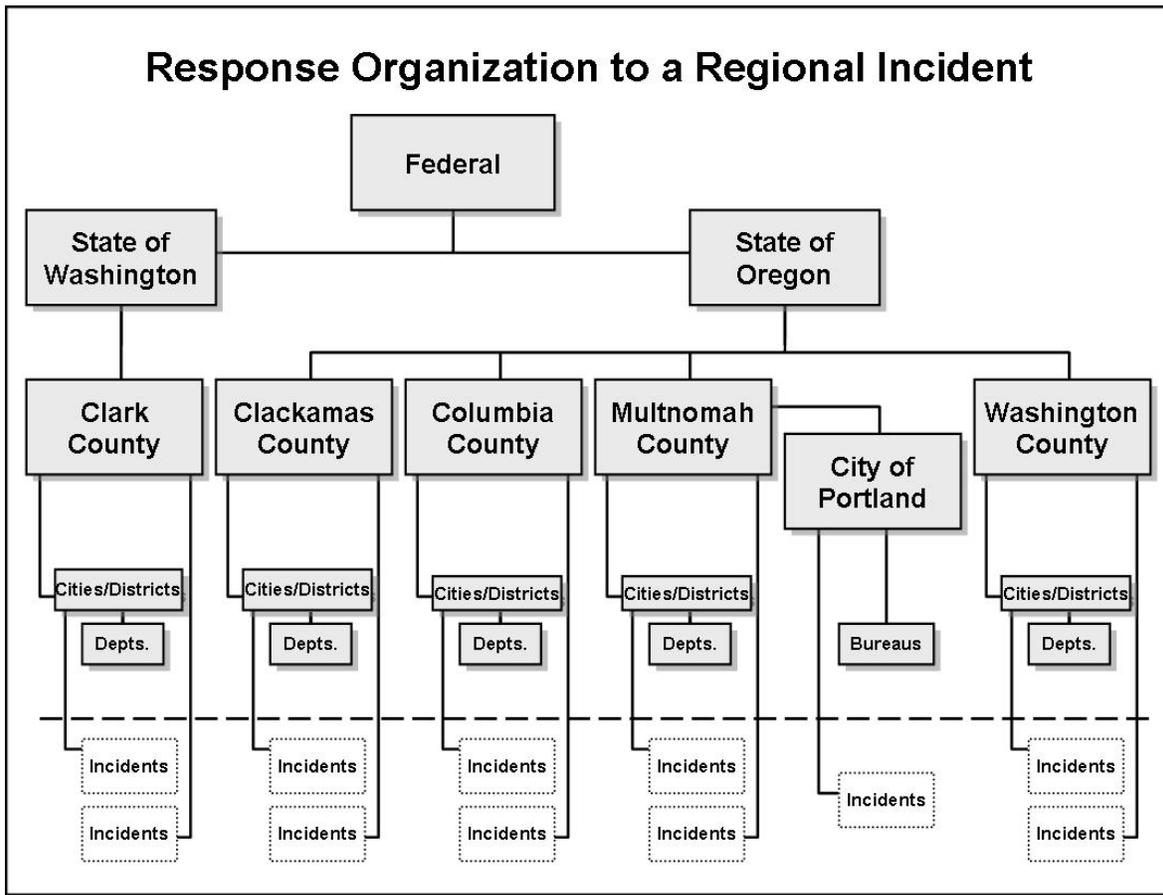
Social Media: Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Examples include, but are not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

Virtual Operations Support Team (VOST): A team of trusted agents locally, nationally, and/or internationally activated to perform specific functions in support of affected organizations and jurisdictions. Each VOST has a team leader that reports directly to the affected organization/jurisdiction.

WebEOC: Crisis management software used to promote situational awareness and connect data sources into a common operating picture.

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA): System able to send geographically targeted text-like alerts to WEA-enabled mobile devices.

B. Response Organization to a Regional Incident



C. Sample Regional Lead PIO Group Conference Call Agenda

1. Introductions (or skip this step on large calls and have PIOs introduce themselves in the order shown in step two below to provide a brief situation status).
2. Brief situation status from each PIO on the call (determine the order – federal to local, or local to federal – based on the needs of the incident).
 - a. Federal
 - b. State
 - c. Regional
 - d. Counties
 1. Clackamas
 2. Clark
 3. Columbia
 4. Multnomah
 5. Washington
 - e. Portland
 - f. Other
3. Assess current efforts and the need to strengthen the R-JIS by pursuing one of the following options:
 - a. Maintain status quo;
 - b. Mutual aid;
 - c. Enhanced operations;
 - d. R-JIC;
 - e. A combination of options.
4. Decide on the mode 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.

D. Sample Resource Request Message

Regional Emergency Managers:

This is a request for public information officer (PIO) resources that your agency or coordinating entity could make available to a Regional Joint Information Center (R-JIC) operating under the direction of a Regional Multi-agency Coordinating Group (MACG). The mission of the R-JIC is to coordinate public information within a five-county region of the Portland area and in cooperation with the states of Oregon and Washington, and with the federal government. Agencies are asked to deploy resources for tours of consecutive days over the next several weeks. These PIOs would operate under one or both of the following categories:

- Assisting Agency PIOs – these PIOs function as representatives of agencies with direct responsibility for response operations to the current incident affecting the Portland urban area. PIOs from these assisting agencies deploy to the R-JIC with full authorization from their home agency to disseminate emergency public information. The R-JIC provides a venue to co-locate, coordinate, and support these Assisting Agency PIO resources.
- Coordinating Agency PIOs – these PIOs function in a support role to R-JIC operations. Agencies under this category have trained PIO resources available to deploy, but their agencies have no direct operations response responsibility or resources with respect to the current incident affecting the urban area. In some cases, these PIOs may have home agencies outside the Portland urban area.

Context for request:

The R-JIC is currently supporting coordination among PIOs in Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in southwestern Washington.

R-JIC operations are guided by the information sharing and resource management activity outlined in the Portland Metropolitan Region Emergency Public Information Concept of Operations Plan (ConOps) and in accord with the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS).

Since no federal emergency is expected at this time for the costs associated with this response operation, agencies should consider this request as a training opportunity for their PIOs. Agencies/response entities that deploy resources to the R-JIC must assume full liability and compensation for their employees.

Location and operational period:

The R-JIC is located in INSERT LOCATION INFORMATION AND PARKING/ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS.

Current operational periods are from XXXX to XXXX hours from Monday through Friday.

Minimum PIO training recommendation:

In some cases, agencies may want to send non-PIO resources when employees have a similar skill set but do not conduct media relations on a day-to-day basis. At a minimum, responding resources are asked to have completed the following on-line training:

<http://www.training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-702.a>

Instructions for responding resources:

Responding PIOs should first gain approval from their supervisors about their availability for tours of XXXX to XXXX consecutive business days over the next several weeks.

PIOs should then make their availability known to their city or county emergency manager and any activated response entity with jurisdiction over their area. Emergency managers are asked to funnel information about the availability of PIO resources to INSERT NAME, in the R-JIC at INSERTEMAIL@AGENCY.GOV or (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Responding resources will be expected to bring their own food. Internet-enabled lap-tops and cell phones are encouraged, but not required.

More information about the activities of the R-JIC can be found at INSERTAGENCY.GOV.

Thank you.