



Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Public Information Officer (PIO) Work Group

I. Background

The Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) is a partnership of government agencies and private and non-profit organizations in the Portland Metropolitan Region (PMR) working together to build and maintain regional all-hazards disaster preparedness capabilities through coordinated planning, training and exercising, and investment in technology and specialized equipment. The PMR encompasses the five counties of Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington in Oregon and Clark in Washington, along with the city of Portland. Membership in the RDPO is open to all government jurisdictions in this region, as well as private and non-profit sector organizations working on disaster preparedness.

The work of the RDPO is conducted and coordinated through a well-defined structure of committees and work groups, including the Policy, Steering, and Program Committees, discipline-specific work groups, and cross-discipline task forces. The Public Information Officer (PIO) Work Group is one of the RDPO's core discipline work groups.

II. Purpose of the PIO Work Group

The PIO Work Group is the backbone of the regional joint information system (R-JIS) and strives to increase the coordination of public information before, during, and after a disaster. A chair/co-chair and Regional Lead PIO Group comprised of PIOs from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties, the City of Portland, Metro, Port of Portland, and TriMet provide strategic oversight to the PIO Work Group.

III. Objectives

1. Maintain a regional public information concept of operations (ConOps) plan and capabilities.
2. Draft public information plans, agreements, and other documents as necessary.
3. Develop a biennial PIO Work Group Work Plan (Work Plan).
4. Establish subcommittees or task forces, when appropriate, to implement the Work Plan.
5. Sponsor, develop, and promote PIO training opportunities.

6. Participate in the PIO component of regional exercises and other RDPO multi-discipline projects/initiatives.
7. Maintain a roster of PIOs and an email listserv for the potential activation of the R-JIS and, in some instances, a regional joint information center (R-JIC).

IV. Roles and Responsibilities

1. Exchange information, anticipate and assess regional capability needs, propose projects, and develop coordinated approaches to public information issues.
2. Provide advice to the RDPO Program Committee (through the chair/co-chair or member of the Regional Lead PIO Group) on regional capabilities, strategic needs and priorities, and recommended approaches, initiatives, and policies.
3. Design, plan, and execute regional priority initiatives within disciplinary or topical areas, as chartered by the RDPO Program Committee in accordance with the Work Plan and associated project budgets.
4. Coordinate efforts on initiatives originating within jurisdictions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and other networks within the region.

V. Membership

Membership is open to currently active PIOs and other personnel with PIO duties in their job description from Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties, the city of Portland, special districts, cities, states of Oregon and Washington, federal government, public works agencies, transit agencies, port districts, utilities, hospitals, medical organizations, non-profits, private sector, and interested agencies. Members represent their managing agencies and are responsible for ensuring coordination of public information-related programs, activities, concepts, and procedures with their respective agencies.

VI. Leadership

1. The PIO Work Group is facilitated by a chair and co-chair with the knowledge, skills, and time to serve in a regional capacity. Candidates for these positions are nominated by members of the PIO Work Group and voted on by all members in attendance at the meeting where a vote occurs, typically in September during odd-numbered years. Candidates are often members of the Regional Lead PIO Group, although this is not a requirement. The candidates receiving the most votes are elected as chair and co-chair.

2. The chair and co-chair serve for a term of two years and may serve consecutive terms. Candidates for these positions must have the authorization and support of their managing agency. The chair and co-chair perform the following duties:
 - a. Serve as the PIO Work Group representative to the RDPO Program Committee.
 - b. Facilitate PIO Work Group and Regional Lead PIO Group meetings, including taking and distributing meeting notes.
 - c. Oversee and monitor PIO Work Group activities, including project management and implementation, budget preparation and cost tracking, and procurement approval.
 - d. Communicate regularly with PIO Work Group and Regional Lead PIO Group members.
 - e. Coordinate with other RDPO discipline work groups as appropriate.
3. The members of the Regional Lead PIO Group support the chair and co-chair and may perform the following duties:
 - a. Serve as the PIO Work Group representative to the RDPO Program Committee on a rotating basis.
 - b. Facilitate PIO Work Group and Regional Lead PIO Group meetings in the absence of the chair or co-chair.
 - c. Oversee assigned project areas as part of the Work Plan.
 - d. Serve as a liaison to the joint information system for their respective county, city, or agency.

VII. Meetings

1. The PIO Work Group meets bimonthly on the second Thursday, or as needed.
2. On the months without a PIO Work Group meeting, the Regional Lead PIO Group will conduct a conference call or in-person meeting on the second Thursday.
3. An attendance list and notes, including meeting outcomes, is created and retained by the chair and co-chair, and distributed to all members of the PIO Work Group.
4. Key decisions are documented in the notes and transmitted to the RDPO Program and Steering Committees.

VIII. Decision-Making

1. The PIO Work Group makes decisions using a consensus model that allows each group member equal weight in the decision-making process. During a discussion on an issue

requiring a decision by the group, all group members participating are entitled to voice an opinion. A decision is reached when all group members accept the outcome.

2. To assist in developing and supporting the consensus model, agencies are encouraged to designate a single PIO Work Group member to represent the interests and concerns of their agency.
3. In addition, members may be designated to represent specialized regional teams, such as providing PIO support to a Regional Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MACG).
4. In some instances, such as selecting a new chair or when consensus cannot be reached on an issue, a vote is required. In these situations, all group members present at the meeting are entitled to vote. The individual, project, course of action, etc. receiving the most votes shall be selected as the group's decision. If an irresolvable issue arises, the chair of the RDPO Program Committee will work with the PIO Work Group to broker an agreement.
5. In some situations, holding a vote at a meeting may not be possible. For example, a grant application issue may require a quick decision to meet a deadline. In these cases, group members may be asked to vote by email or other appropriate electronic means. The chair will share the results of votes by email with the PIO Work Group.
6. The decision whether or not to vote on an issue is generally at the discretion of the chair. However, any member of the group can request a vote.
7. Whenever a vote takes place, the results of the vote will be included in the notes from the meeting.

Adopted: January 14, 2016 (by the Regional PIO Work Group)

Approved: TBD

RDPO Steering Committee Chair:

Printed Name

Signature

Date