**Checklist for Remote Information Officer Support**

*June 2020*

**Purpose**

Incident communication is a dynamic field and traditionally many units require this type of assistance only infrequently. This “cheat sheet” will help prepare before and during an emerging incident prior to help arriving – especially as supervision may not be as in-person as once before. This will ensure a smooth arrival process, get basics hashed out early, and avoid awkward issues down the line.

**Need**

The desire to have PIOs working remotely is becoming more commonplace. So many of the tools now available can be utilized from nearly anywhere in the world. However, incidents occur on the ground and in places where connectivity doesn’t exist or may be unavailable. Some PIOs may work from home, others may be deployed on scene. Incident information will be handled differently than in the past.

**Considerations –** *Suggestion: check off the boxes as you go.*

* Who will the PIO report to: Lead PIO, unit lead, someone else?
* Who will greet them and provide a briefing?
  + *Copies of Incident Action Plan (IAP), ICS 209, burn plan, etc.? Meeting schedule? Conference calls for planning meetings, maps, etc.?*
* Has an order/ request for them through dispatch and/or ROSS?
  + *Read the* [*Name Request Justification Order Form (if needed*](https://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/logistics/docs/name_justification-1.pdf)*)*
  + *This includes an O# (Overhead number), account code, location information, etc.*
  + *Make sure the order lists all needed devices or equipment such as: a computer (unless one is available through the unit), cell phone, camera, portable printer, radio, etc.*
  + *Is a vehicle on the order / request?* 
    - *Do they need a special type? Like an SUV for off-payment use?*
    - *It must be listed on the resource order to be authorized. A vehicle is helpful to post updates in the area, get around the park as needed, etc. Alternatively, unit may provide a government vehicle.*
* Does the PIO need special qualifications / skillsets? Willing to accept a Trainee? Red Card? Spanish language skills? website skills? photography?
* Where is there workspace?
  + *Does it have a desk, network cable or WiiFi, and phone?*
  + *Printer access?*
  + *Are there special building access needs - e.g. keys/codes?*
* What shifts are they going to be working?
  + *Day or Night? 12, 14, or 16-hour shifts?*
* Where are they going to stay?
  + *Home; telework site; incident camp; off-site hotel?*
* Will meals be provided if not at home?
  + *Per-diem or camp food? Will per-diem be reduced?*
* What kind of uniforms and weather gear (e.g. cold weather) should they pack?
  + *Time of year*
  + *Duration of stay*
  + *Job specifics (community meetings vs field operations)*
  + *Fire uniform or something else approved.*
* Is there PPE available for loan for the PIO and/or media?
  + *If so, from whom / where do they get it from?*
* Will they be writing or drafting news releases?
  + *Whom do they need to contact for approval? E.g. IC, PAO, superintendent?*
  + *Is there a local style guide?*
  + *If it’s an interagency incident, is there a pre-approved template?*
  + *Is the PIO going to be sending out news release or is someone from park doing that?*
* Are there contact lists to share?
  + *Local phone list?*
  + *E-mail list?*
  + *Shared e-mail for news release distribution?*
* Are they going to post to the host unit’s digital platforms?
  + *Whom do they need to contact for approval? E.g. IC, PAO, superintendent?*
  + *InciWeb access?*
  + *Social media?*
  + *CMS?*
  + *Who are the contacts and backup contacts in park/region who will provide access?*
* Will pre-existing unit guides be available?
  + *Unit communication strategies/key messages?*
  + [Agency Administrator’s Guide to Critical Incident Management](https://www.nwcg.gov/term/pms-number/agency-administrator%E2%80%99s-guide-critical-incident-management)*?*
  + *Line of Duty Death Handbook?*
* Does the unit have an Employee Alert System?
  + *Will they be using it to get info out?*
  + *Will they need to be added to it?*
  + *Who is the contact for the Employee Alert System?*

**Remote Support**

* *Read this* [*remote support guide*](https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/memos/eb-m-11-013.pdf) *on how to request an agency specific PIO (name request, check the agency only box, etc.)*

**Long-term Considerations**

* Does the unit have a pre-drafted Delegation of Authority letter?
* Does the unit have a pre-drafted transition plan for PIOs?
  + *Ex: Local support for duration of incident (some responsibilities remain with the park -website - alerts, news releases, etc., social media, all-employee / internal updates, updates for concessionaires, researchers, volunteers, etc.? Internal sites, regional newsletters, success stories, etc.).*
* Do you have a physical space for required incident documentation ([NWCG Records Management](https://www.nwcg.gov/records-management)) forms - unit logs, crew time reports (CTRs), general messages, etc.?

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