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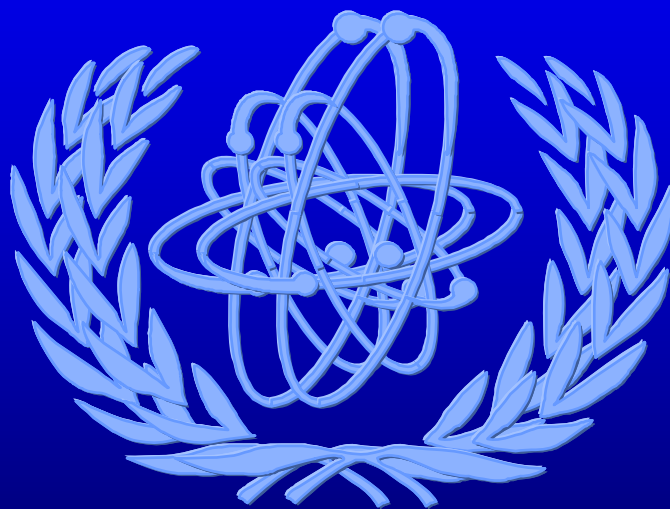
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# Radiation Emergencies – Common Features



**Instructing, Warning and  
Informing the Public**

***Lecture***

# Introduction

- **Communication with the media and the public is an essential part of emergency response preparedness plans**
- **The objectives of this lesson are to present and explain principles and basic ways of communication with the media and the public in an emergency**

# Content

- **Why inform the public?**
- **How to communicate with the public**
- **Basic communication principles**
- **Working with the media**
  - **Media outlets**
  - **Media operations**
  - **The media interview**
  - **Media Briefing/Interview Planning Worksheet**
  - **The press release/news statements**
- **Benefits of good media communications**
- **Summary**

# Background

- **People fear what they don't understand**
- **Few understand radiation, and most distrust authorities**
- **Honest, accurate, and timely information builds trust**

# Effective Communications

- The importance of effective communications with the media cannot be overlooked



- In any significant emergency, media interest will be high
- News is a 24 hour activity

# Why Inform the Public?

- Provide information to public
- Ensure that the public response is consistent with the public protective actions instructions
- Prevent rumor
- Maintain credibility of response organizations
- Allow responders to focus on response
- Reduce the psychological impact



# How to Communicate With the Public

- **Directly**
  - **Through public warning systems**
  - **Through community spokespersons**
  - **Through public audiences**
- **Indirectly**
  - **Through the media**



# Public Warning Systems

- Sirens with loud speakers
  - **Expensive to build and maintain**
  - **Impact on real estate**
- Direct telephone warning systems
  - **Expensive and difficult to maintain**
- Mobile loud hailers (Fire trucks, Police)
  - **Cheap**
  - **Not always effective**



# Fundamental Principles of Communications

- **Effective organizations communicate well**
- **Less can be more**
- **Have trained communications experts at the executive level**
- **Communication must be on-going and predictable**
- **The foundation of trust is openness**
- **Use terms that are simple and easy to understand**
- **Evaluate your communication program and annual budget**



# Golden Rules of Media Relations

- **You cannot control the media... Do not try!!**
- **Integrate the media into the plans**
- **Educate the media**
- **Journalists want facts, not public relations**
- **The media can be a tool to communicate with the public**
- **Bridge the technical gap**
- **Designate a single credible spokesperson for each level**
- **Coordinate media relations through a joint media centre if possible**
- **Monitor the media and correct rumours**



# Working With the Media

**To communicate effectively with the media, you need to understand how the media works!**

# The Media

- Media outlets – Examples

- Broadcast

- ❖ Television
- ❖ Radio

- Print

- ❖ Newspapers
- ❖ Magazines

- Internet Web Sites



# Media Operations

- **Media expectations/needs**
  - **Facts the media wants to know**
    - ❖ Who, what, when, where, why, how?
  - **Access to Emergency Manager and On-scene Controller near the accident site**
  - **Production deadlines**





# Communication With the Media and the Public

- **When and What Form**
  - **On-going media effort as part of preparedness program**
  - **General information leaflets with terms, radiation units, emergency arrangements, and putting risks in perspective**
  - **Background information on radiation uses and emergency plans for use in media briefings**





# Communication With the Media and the Public (Cont'd)

- Identifying/designating individuals authorized as spokespersons



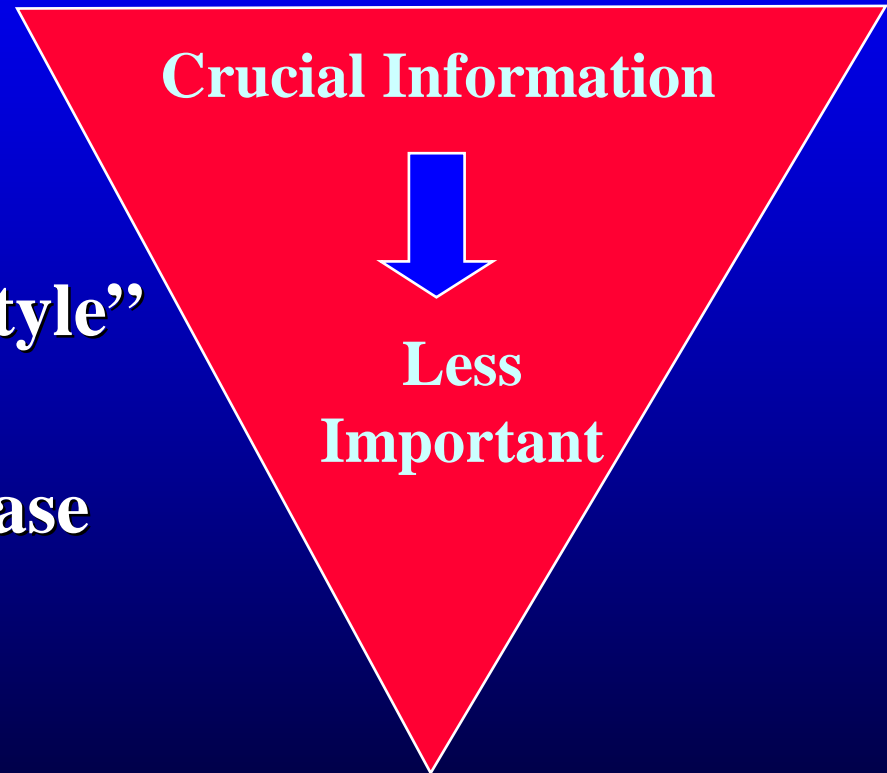
# Communications With the Media and the Public (1)

- **Information must be coordinated and approved before release in briefings, interviews, or press releases**
- **Designated media gathering point**
- **Joint Information Center/Emergency Public Information Center may be required for large scale accidents**



# The Press Release/News Statement

- **Content**
- **Format**
- **“Inverted pyramid style”**
- **When to write a release**



# On-scene Media Operations

- **Must not interfere with response operations**
- **Establish “rules of engagement”**





# On-scene Media Operations (1)

- On-scene Controller must establish media boundaries
- Monitor the media



# On-scene Media Operations (2)

- Access to scene
- Designated media area
- “Pool coverage” arrangement
- Information technology
- Visiting dignitaries/officials



# The Media Interview

- **Types of interviews**
  - **Live vs. taped**
  - **Print**
  - **Broadcast**
  - **General vs. investigative**
  - **Ambush vs. prearranged**
  - **Office vs. on scene**



# The Media Interview (1)

“Unwritten rules”





# Unwritten Rules

- **Every thing you say is on the record**
- **You are entitled to polite behavior**
- **Journalists must identify themselves, their employer, and the subject of the interview.**
- **You can control to a certain extent where the interview takes place**
- **You should know if others will be present, who they are, and if there will be others interviewed, as well as the interview order.**
- **You are entitled to know if the interview will be taped, if it will be edited**
- **If you need an interpreter, bring your own**



# General Interview Guidelines

- **Ten rules of communication during an interview**



# General Guidelines

- **Be yourself**
- **Be comfortable and confident**
- **Be honest**
- **Be brief**
- **Be human**
- **Be personal**
- **Be prepared, positive, and consistent**
- **Be attentive**
- **Be energetic**
- **Be committed and sincere**



# Media Briefing/interview Planner Worksheet

- Date/time/place
- Audience
- Anticipated questions/responses
- Opening statement/introduction

**Be Prepared!**



# Media Briefing / Interview Planner Worksheet

- **Key messages**
- **Supporting facts**
- **Sound bites**
- **Summary statement/conclusion**
- **Visual aids/handouts**

**Be Prepared!**



# Benefits of Good Media Communications

- Response focused on *real* issues as opposed to *perceived* ones
- Better appreciation of the response effort
- Better control over public protective actions
  - **Less overreaction**
- The emergency will be shorter-lived!



# Summary

- **Communicating with the public is an essential part of emergency response**
- **Use the media to communicate with the public**
- **Know the mass media and work with it**
- **Coordinate media relations**
- **Good media communications will enhance your emergency response**



# Where to Get More Information

- **All the references listed in this lecture**
- **Practical exercise – simulation of media briefing/interview**

