



## **The Public Information Officer and Incident Information**

### **TFS Public Information (incident information) is based upon:**

- Being the first and best source of information about the incident
- Working collaboratively with other agencies to frequently gather and exchange information
- Getting the right information to the right people at the right time to better protect lives and property
- Ensuring designated spokespeople speak only to their areas of responsibility

### **Incident information is coordinated among public information officers in the field and the agency's communications office.**

#### **Coordination occurs in different ways depending on the scope of the incident:**

- Regular or specially-called conference calls
- Internal speaking points
- Direct contact between field PIO and communications office
- Summary reports to communications office of media contacts and activity

### **TFS Communications Office serves as the State Public Information Officer, and also the Team PIO when IMT is not stood up**

- Media line 979-458-6606 [newsmedia@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:newsmedia@tfs.tamu.edu)
- News and information from the communications office can be disseminated in the following ways:
- TFS website home page: <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu>
- [Current situation page http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/CurrentSituation/](http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/CurrentSituation/)
- TFS website Newsroom: <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/default.aspx?dept=news>
- TFS eNews subscription [http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/default.aspx?dept=news&news\\_coll=eNews&id=3748](http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/default.aspx?dept=news&news_coll=eNews&id=3748)
- News Releases disseminated to targeted and/or statewide media
- Facebook posts <https://www.facebook.com/texasforestservicetamu>
- Lone Star State Incident Management Team Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/lssimt/>
- Twitter posts <https://twitter.com/TXForestService>, <https://twitter.com/AllHazardsTFS>
- Texas Interagency Coordination Center, TICC, <http://ticc.tamu.edu/>
- InciWeb <http://www.inciweb.org/>
- Wildfire Preparedness information: [www.texasfirewise.org](http://www.texasfirewise.org)

To help ensure that the right spokesperson is speaking to the appropriate area of responsibility, as a general rule, field PIOs provide real-time, on the ground updates about the incident to members of the media, the community, responding parties and to the TFS communications office. Field PIOs refer questions and inquiries about agency policy, interagency issues, finances, fatalities and injuries — and other sensitive subjects — to the TFS communications office.

### **PIO in the field**

Requests for PIOs are generated with concurrence from Branch Assistant Chiefs or Regional Foresters, Communications Office and/or the Incident Commander, if applicable. Requests will be placed through TICC.

Response may use prevention personnel from within own branch to fill the PIO role by coordinating with WUI leadership.

Dispatchers are copied into requests and post PIO deployments and demobilizations in Tracker based on resource orders.

Field PIOs report on scene to TFS Incident Commander (Regional Fire Coordinator, Asst. Chief RFC, and other designated TFS Incident Response staff) and fill the field PIO assignments based on their direction for location, duration and work.

Work with local entities in a unified command to assist as the PIO (Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, EMC, etc.)

Tie in with other Agency/Department PIO (Fire Dept., DPS, TDEM, etc.)

TFS field PIO may operate under unified command and speak as a member of that command.

TFS field PIO must also coordinate with TFS Communications Office on speaking points, incident updates, media relations activity and outreach as a representative of TFS.