

# UPDATING THE MEDIA

**1** Determine whether a press conference will be held

- Assign a coordinator

**2** Determine whether a press statement or press release will be issued

- Assign writer
- Obtain sign-offs from all agencies

**3** Ensure victim coordinators know what is being released to the press

**4** Maintain a log and document media contact for post-incident needs, including court

## TEN TIPS TO PERFECT YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

- 1** Do no harm. Words have consequences. Use the right words.
- 2** Don't babble. Know what to say. Say it, repeat it.
- 3** If you don't know the answer, stop talking.

- 4** Focus on informing the audience. Use common language.
- 5** Expect everything you say to appear in print and the electronic media.

### PRE-PRESS CONFERENCE CHECKLIST

- Identify speaker(s) where they will stand and speaking order
- Identify media person to manage conference (*open, advise media of two-minute warning, spell names of speakers and attendees, end*)
- Coordinate talking points (TPs) with Unified Command
  - TPs must answer questions about who, what, when, where, how, agencies involved, victims, *volatility of situation, where involved family members should go for information, and when next press briefing will occur*
  - Ensure TPs convey and recognize gravity of event, sensitivity to victims
  - Ensure TPs answer what you cannot provide at this time and why
  - Prepare the speaker to respond to rumors and social media reports
- Ensure DA, SA or US Attys is involved, as needed
- Ensure speakers have unobstructed access into and out of press conference area



# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Checklists for chiefs, sheriffs, command staff and public information officers

For questions or additional assistance contact:

Your local FBI Office:

FBI Headquarters  
National Press Office: (202) 324-3691

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20535



### SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE

- Brief speakers on information currently being reported
- Focus TPs on new information available
- Provide timely information
- Clarify facts where errors and rumors persist in media reporting or in social media
- Identify when the next press briefing will occur

# CRISIS COMMUNICATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

## ONSET OF INCIDENT

Individuals who handle crisis communications in response to an active shooter, mass casualty, or other law enforcement incident can establish the tone of future media coverage and the public's perception through their initial actions. More comprehensive guides are available; however, this quick guide can be a valuable resource in the initial, hectic moments. Facts and circumstances of each incident dictate the appropriate crisis communication response.

In today's electronic world you must be prepared for attention from national media, coverage by social media, families, and even the subject, watching your every move.

## PRE-EVENT

### 1 Request additional media assistance

- Staff will answer phones, manage press conferences, maintain a media log,

coordinate with Incident/Unified Command, navigate social media, and write press releases and talking points

Determine what information can be released immediately to assist investigation and allay public concern

### 2 Determine the information can be released in the first minutes by dispatchers in response to calls from other first responders, media, and the public

*Type of incident occurring*

*Agencies responding*

*Location of incident*

*Number of suspect(s)*

*Whether suspect(s) are still at large*

*Cautions and directions to the public*

*Closing or lock-downs of schools or other facilities*

*Road closures, alternative routes*

*Airspace restrictions for media*

*Family reunification location*

*Other details*

*Brief Incident/Unified Command on*

*current information in the media*

*Identify initial staging area for media*

*trucks and camera*

*Determine whether media helicopters*

*will be allowed in airspace*

*Identify traffic limitation/directions for*

*press trucks*

*Identify potential press conference*

*location*

*Request perimeter security to media*

*staging area, if available*

*Identify what information, if any,*

*police/sheriff department dispatchers*

*and personnel can confirm*

*Relay all information to group PIOs*

### 4 Coordinate with Incident/Unified Command

- Identify PIO who will maintain contact with Incident/Unified Command

Identify Incident spokesperson

Determine what information can be released immediately to assist investigation and allay public concern

*to include:*

### 1 Maintain updated contact lists for all area Public Information Officers (PIOs)

- Police, Fire, EMS, FBI
- City officials, schools, public venues, hospitals, morgue, etc.
- Names, titles, all phone and email information

### 2 Pre-identify methods available for joint communications

- Email lists, conference call capabilities at each agency
- Develop MOUs with surrounding LE to assist with media response
- Obtain proper names and titles for all agency chiefs
- Obtain digital seals for each department for press releases

*may...* Release staging area for media trucks

Identify agency assets responding to scene to include types:  
*SWAT, bomb squad, etc.*

Identify lead agency for media calls

*may or may not...* Confirm shots fired or other incident details

*may not...* Answer questions regarding other agency responders

Indicate **numbers** of either shots fired or victims; dead or injured