Communications for an incident in the USA
INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)
MULTIPLE PIOs – LEAD PIO DETERMINED

- Federal agencies (esp. USCG)
- Key state and local environmental agencies
- Emergency responders (e.g. fire departments)
- Etc.

AND

- The responsible party’s PIO – the “RP-PIO”
PIO PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Performed as required

For most incidents:
• Develop material for use in media briefings
• Obtain IC approval of media releases
• Inform the media and conduct media briefings
• Manage media and public enquiries
• Monitor media reporting for accuracy

Less common:
• Arrange for tours, interviews or briefings
• Establish and operate a JIS / JIC
• Provide information on the status of the incident to assigned personnel
• Coordinate emergency public information and warnings
JOINT INFORMATION CENTER (JIC)

- Large incidents
- Incidents likely to attract significant attention

THE SINGLE SOURCE OF ALL PUBLIC INFORMATION:
- Issue press releases
- Respond to journalists
- Organise press briefings
- Feed information back to incident command
USE OTHER CHANNELS?
CREATE THEIR OWN?
PRESS CONFERENCE
MEDIA EVENTS
SMALLER INCIDENTS

- No JIC
- Cooperation still essential
- PIO will work with non-PIO contacts
- All information still approved by incident commander
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR REPUTATION

- Will not set out to harm, but not there to protect

PARTICIPATING DOES SUPPORT REPUTATION

- Credibility with agencies and media
- Demonstrates responsiveness
- Opportunities to participate in "events"

Does not replace the corporate comms role
COrporate comMS for usa response

Should:
- Mobilise
- Maintain close contact with RP-PIO
- Provide background information
- Express gratitude, concern, empathy, etc.
CORPORATE COMMS FOR USA RESPONSE

Should NOT:

- Communicate specifically about the response
- Respond to questions specifically about the response
- Speculate on cause
- Contradict the PIOs / JIC
FOR EFFECTIVE RESPONSE, FILL BOTH ROLES

PIO

Corporate comms

Your chosen media response company should be able to assist with both functions.
15 July: How to communicate with employees during difficult times with Sean Fitzgerald, Managing Director, Witt O'Brien's

22 July: How to build and maintain a strong brand with Nicolle Bloomfield, Account Manager, Navigate PR

29 July: The essential components of an effective crisis communications plan with Dustin Eno and Tom Adams, Crisis Response Managers, Navigate Response