

<b>East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District</b>		
	<i>SOP 702 Public Information Officer and Media Guidelines</i>	
	<b>Implementation Date: 11/2000</b>	<b>Revision Date(s): 07/2004</b>
		<b>Reviewed Date(s):</b>
	<b>Forms or Attachments: None</b>	

**PURPOSE**

To set procedures and guidelines, to establish an information sector at incidents, and/or set guidelines when dealing with the media.

**DISCUSSION**

It is the policy of this Fire Department to cooperate with the media. This guideline is only designed to assist the assigned PIO with requests for comment or incident information from the print, television, radio and other media which directly or indirectly affects this Fire District.

**PROCEDURES**

Command will be responsible for the management of public information at major incidents as soon as practical. Command will establish a Public Information Sector. Prior to the arrival or availability of the Department’s PIO, Command may assign an officer to the Public Information Sector if needed. The Department will operate in accordance with P.C. Operations SOP 600-10 as it relates to the PIO.

A. The PIO will gather and write the information structured on the worksheet. Command will establish the location of the Public Information Sector so as to provide public information access to the Command Post, but not interfere with operations.

B. The PIO designation sector will be “Information”.

C. The Public Information Sector will be responsible for requiring all media representatives to stay in a safe zone away from the incident.

D. Each Sector officer is responsible for the safety of media personnel in their area. If media personnel create a safety problem or hinder operations, they should be requested to move, avoiding confrontation when possible.

E. If any ELFR employee is approached by the media for a statement, the employee shall direct the media to the Public Information Sector, or in its absence, Command.

F. If an employee has been authorized by Command or the Public Information Sector to talk to the media, the employee may request the Department's PIO to be present.

G. The assigned PIO shall keep the Incident Commander informed of all media released.

H. Command may notify the Department's PIO of any incidents, whether large or small, if it appears it may be news worthy.

I. As a courtesy, media contacts and interviews made by administrative officers should be relayed in a timely manner to the PIO in an effort to maintain consistent relations.

## **WRITTEN RELEASES**

Any written public information releases that represent the department or identify the author as a member of the department needs to be approved by the Fire Chief prior to submission.

The information should be provided in a final draft and include what source(s) the information will be sent to and a proposed print date.

The article will be returned to the author as soon as possible.