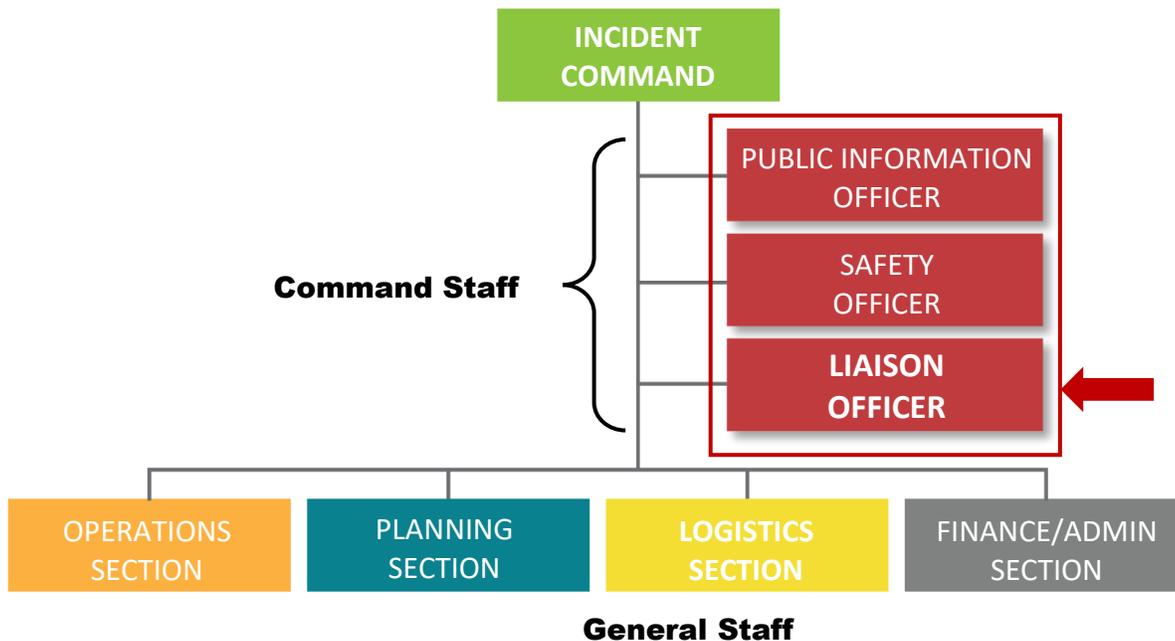




# TOOLBOX MEETING GUIDE

## TOPIC 4: LIAISON OFFICER



The Liaison Officer is a member of the Command Staff within the Incident Command System (ICS) or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Structure. After an initial briefing from the Incident Commander, the Liaison Officer is responsible for initiating and maintaining contact with government agencies, regulatory authorities, and mutual aid partners during an incident.

The Liaison Officer monitors operations and keeps agencies, authorities and mutual aid partners apprised of changes to the level of emergency. The Liaison Officer also works closely with the Public Information Officer and Incident Commander to coordinate media releases and ensure consistency with the messaging released by regulatory authorities (i.e. BC Oil and Gas Commission).

### Activation Priorities

**Use Your Checklists** – All roles should have associated checklists. When fulfilling multiple roles, personnel must remember to use all applicable checklists. Keep in mind, not all tasks on a checklist may need to be completed. Checklists are often divided into incident phases, such as: **Initial Response, Ongoing Response, and Demobilization**. Personnel must respond at the pace dictated by the incident and reference the checklists for the stage of incident they are currently managing. To make a comparison, airline pilots refer to their take-off checklist first before they look at one for the landing process.

**During an incident, the first call made should be to Emergency Management BC (EMBC) at 1-800-663-3456 (phone number on the cover of the ERPs).** EMBC then notifies three authorities: BC Oil and Gas Commission, Ministry of Environment, and Environment Canada. Depending on the scale and nature of the incident, the following authorities or agencies need to be contacted, through the Liaison Officer, as applicable:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Local Health Authority</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>WorkSafe BC</b>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Local Government Authority (i.e. regional districts, municipal districts, First Nations, etc.)</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>RCMP</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>School District</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ministry of Transportation (for road closures – not for PDR or forestry roads)</b> |

Throughout the incident, and after receiving incident updates through status update briefing meetings, the Liaison Officer is responsible for updating the various agencies and authorities. If an incident has had a significant impact on populated areas or the environment, a liaison officer may be assigned to, and work within, a regional or local government EOC to provide a technical assessment of actions underway or planned.

**Incident Action Plan (IAP)** - The Planning Section develops the IAP, while the **Liaison Officer** ensures key actions are coordinated with other agencies, and support requests are communicated. Examples of this might include requesting local government support for a reception centre, or ensuring contracted resources are able to pass through an evacuation zone roadblock.

While input from the Liaison Officer in development of the IAP may be limited, their role in executing portions of the plan is integral.

**Briefing Meetings** – Status briefing meetings should occur at regular intervals (as scheduled by the Planning Section in conjunction with the Incident Commander). The Liaison Officer presents information related to communications with outside agencies. If any questions or concerns are brought forward by these agencies, they should be addressed in briefing meetings. The Liaison Officer may be requested to sit in on emergency operations centre briefings hosted by other agencies. This most commonly occurs around natural disasters such as wildfires or flooding events that may threaten an oil or gas operation.

**Demobilization** – As the incident comes under control, and upon assessment by the Incident Commander, the Liaison Officer contacts the regulatory authority (BC Oil and Gas Commission) to discuss a proposed downgrade or stand-down of the incident. Once a stand-down has been confirmed with the regulatory agency, demobilization can begin. During the demobilization phase, the Liaison Officer must contact each agency to confirm downgrade or stand-down of the emergency.

**Forms:** ICS forms are an integral part of proper documentation processes. All roles should be familiar with the forms applicable to them. Documentation is vital during an incident, as it is evidence of the processes and decisions made while responding to an incident and can be legally admissible in a court of law.

#### **Examples of Liaison Officer Forms:**

ICS 214 – Activity Log