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The Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management Announces Robust Training Program for Public Information Officers

The Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management has in 2016 developed a robust training program designed to provide Public Information Officers (PIOs) with the essential knowledge, skills, procedures and abilities to support proper decision-making at all levels in the event of a disaster.

During disasters public information officers provide the information people need to save lives and protect property. The 2017 training program will provide PIOs with opportunities to learn and practice the tasks of gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating public information at all levels of government.

In 2017 the new PIO training curriculum will include courses delivered at the awareness, basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. These courses were developed by the FEMA Emergency Management Institute and are delivered by state emergency management trainers who teach basic skills and techniques for use during small, localized, single-agency responses; preparedness campaigns; and escalating localized responses. The advanced level course teaches participants additional skills for use during escalating incidents, including strategic communications and incident action planning as they relate to Joint Information Center (JIC) operations.

I'd like to introduce Jon Bakkedahl, the new State Training Officer for the Nevada Division of Emergency Management/Homeland Security (DEM). Jon worked for the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), Radiation Control Program (RCP) for seven years. Jon's responsibilities at DPBH included radiological training and responding to assist emergency responders with all radiological hazards. Jon has participated at local, state and national levels, including radiological training and tabletop exercises with PIOs throughout the state of Nevada.

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Jon joined the DEM team with a plan of developing a training program that utilizes the entire planning, training and exercise information to build our state's capabilities. A crucial capability for the state is communication, specifically for PIO training and development. Jon and I, along with other DEM personnel, have developed and will implement a new, robust PIO training program in 2017.

The four training courses listed below kick off the first series of classes scheduled at the DEM facility, at no charge:

1. G289 – Public Information Officer Awareness – 2/13/2017 (1 day)
2. G290 – Public Information Officer – Basic – 3/1-2/2017 (2 day)
3. G291– Joint Information System/Joint Information Center Planning for Tribal, State and Local PIOs – 4/10/2017 (1 day)
4. PER344 - Social Media Tools and Techniques - 5/10/17 (1 day)

To obtain a full description of each course listed please visit: [Training Calendar](#)

To register for course please visit: [DEM Course Registration Form](#)

Disasters are devastating natural, accidental, and manmade events that suddenly result in severe negative economic and social consequences for the populations they affect, often including physical injury, loss of life, property damage and loss, physical and emotional hardship, destruction of physical infrastructure, and failure of administrative and operational systems.

“Public Information Officers are responsible for intervening through stronger communication efforts before, during and after such events, to minimize the harm disasters cause and to restore order,” said Caleb Cage, DEM Chief. “I believe by identifying persistent challenges during some of our local incidents and developing a comprehensive training and exercise program we will swiftly address the need for additional qualified communicators for all hazards that may someday hit Nevada.”

“I would like to extend an invitation to PIOs at all levels in government to get involved and take advantage of the free courses available for tribal, state and local communicators.”

END