LIAISON OFFICER JOB AID

**Liaison Officer** (LOFR) performs duties under the Incident Command System to ensure effective coordination with participating organizations (assisting and cooperating agencies) and stakeholders involved in the response. The job of liaison during an emergency response is a critical one. It can have a large impact on the efficiency of resource use during the response operations, and on the perception of stakeholders regarding the success or appropriateness of the response activities. Both of these factors are critical to overall response success.

Personnel assigned to this position should have a good liaison/governmental affairs background and experience working with people in other organizations. Since this is a key position in the response organization, assignment should be based on experience level versus rank/title/seniority.

Note 1: The term “stakeholder” as used in this job aid is inclusive of all outside entities with whom the LOFR

may interact, such as assisting and cooperating agencies, coordination facilities, elected officials, public, special interest groups, landowners, and affected parties.

Important: Under one single Incident Command System orgchart, there may only be One person assigned to each title, so there can only be One LOFR, SOFR, PIO, and so on. If the job becomes too much to handle for one person, or if assisting and/or supporting agencies insist on assigning their own member to the existing ICS – Assistants and Deputies may be assigned to the existing title.

* Command Staff positions may have Assistants assigned to each function – Assistant LOFR, Assistant SOFR, Assistant PIO.
* General Staff positions may have Deputies assigned to each function – Deputy OSC, Deputy PSC, Deputy LSC, Deputy FSC.
* The difference between a **Deputy** and **Assistant**:

1. Deputy MUST have all the same qualifications and certifications as the Section Chief they are assigned to assist.
2. Assistant may or may not have all of the qualifications as the General Staff role they are assigned to assist.
3. The role of the Assistant is to channel and relay available information to the General Staff member they are assisting.

**Major Taskings for the LOFR Position:**

MANAGE PEOPLE

* Supervise and manage the Liaison organization and ensure the personnel assigned effectively support the needs of the response organization.
* Provide appropriate information, delegation, authority, and accountability to the Liaison staff in order to enable them to be successful in executing their functional responsibilities.
* Manage the Liaison Staff Organization, including the assignment of Assistants and forming teams where necessary.
* Effectively use Assistant Liaison Officer(s) (ALOFR) to manage work activities in the Incident Command Post (ICP) and assign ALOFRs to other locations where direct linkage to the ICP is necessary, such as Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), Command Centers, and or the Joint Field Office (JFO).

MANAGE STAKEHOLDERS

* Develop and maintain a Stakeholder Coordination or Outreach Plan or process (know who needs to be contacted/informed, how you can contact/inform them, and what do they need to know)
* Serve as primary incident point of contact for Agency Representatives.

1. Agency Representative (AREP) – person(s) assigned by the stakeholder to provide guidance/assistance/information to the Incident Response staff.

* Maintain a list of assisting and cooperating agencies and AREPs including names and contact information.
* Keep stakeholders aware of incident status and progress.
* Serve as primary point of contact for all stakeholders and ensure their concerns, input, objectives, and issues are effectively addressed by the response effort.

SUPPORT PLANNING PROCESS

* Coordinate response resource needs for incident activities with the OSC.
* Effectively channel assisting agency resources and cooperating agency support into the operational planning process in order to have positive effects on the response effort.
* Participate in the Command and General Staff and Planning meetings providing limitations and capability of assisting agency resources.
* Brief Command on liaison issues and concerns.
* Review the Incident Action Plan (IAP) to ensure liaison-oriented objectives, messages, issues, and information are included as appropriate.

Useful Checklist (not all items may apply):

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| **What** kind of an incident is this?   * Cyber? * Natural Disaster? * Man-made? * Mixture? |
| **Who** are the key players (Federal, State, local, pvt sector)?  **Who** are your stakeholders?  As LOFR you need to know who surrounds you. This way you can understand the Critical Information Requirements (CIR) and ensure proper flow of communications. |
| **When** did the incident begin?   * Are there noticeable changes over time?   As the LOFR you need to know if it is stabilized, contained, contracting, or expanding. |
| **Where** did the incident take place?  As LOFR you need to know your Area of Responsibility (AOR). Often there may be a difference between your agency’s AOR vs. the Incident AOR. |
| **Orgchart**:   * What is the Incident Organization?   You must know your reporting chain – who do you report to and who reports up to you. |
| **Resources**:   * It helps to know what resources your organization currently has on the scene, this way you can provide a better idea for your stakeholders about the additional resources they may potentially need to deploy/gather. |
| **Meetings:**   * When is your next meeting?   Check the ICS 230 Form or another method of schedule tracker. Use the attached Planning “P” to get a better idea about the meetings you need to attend. |
| **Jurisdiction:**   * Does the incident involve one or more agencies? * Who else is involved? |
| **Expectations:**   * How often does the command want an update from you? * What are their CIRs? * Do you or your ALOFR(s) have the authority to directly address and resolve issues with the stakeholders? * Are there Constrains and Limitations (union issues, budget issues, jurisdictional boundaries, etc.)? * Have you met with the PIO to “divide and conquer” your duties?   **Remember** – PIO and LOFR will often have similar functions, the best way to separate them is – LOFR deals with the stakeholders and anyone who may need information directly related to the progress of the response, while the PIO deals with press, media, and other aspects of creating/upholding the public image. |
| **Notify:**  Normally, for a cyber/ransomware related incident, there are series of notifications that the victim is suggested to make. It is useful to maintain the list of the entities you may have to talk to.  **CISA:** <https://www.cisa.gov/be-cyber-smart/report-incident>  **FBI Field Office (look up one that covers your locality):** <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices>  **Local Law Enforcement** (determine who your POC is)  **Stakeholders** (determine who your supporting and/or assisting agencies are, maintain the list of POCs for each) |

