

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Policy #:	5.115	Effective Date:	9/18/2012
Title:	Press Releases and PIO Function	# of pages:	2
Category:	Administration	Classification:	Green

1. **PURPOSE:** To identify who is authorized to speak to the press and release information.
2. **POLICY:** Only the Chief or Incident Commander in charge of a specific emergency shall issue, via the Public Information Officer (PIO) any press release or interview on that particular emergency.

Personnel not in command at an incident will not comment to the press or general public about the incident.

Personnel will also refrain from discussing Department general operations, policies & procedures, personnel matters, and other Department business with members of press agencies without authority from the Chief of Department.

The South Portland Fire Department Public Information Officer is a member of the Command Staff and may be requested to an incident scene or if unavailable, at the very least, should be consulted prior to finalizing any press releases.

When possible a prepared statement shall be written by the Public Information Officer or the Incident Commander with a format as follows:

1. Nature of the emergency
2. Address of emergency
3. Time of Call
4. Status of emergency on arrival
5. Extent of damage(s) (*No dollar estimates will be provided*)
6. Mutual aid units that assisted
7. Time emergency under control
8. Any investigatory information if released by investigators for public knowledge

The names of owners of property may be released only if they have already been notified of the damage to their property.

Names of injured or deceased civilians or personnel will not be released, until family has been notified of injuries, and there is no HIPAA violation.

The Communications Center is authorized to release the name & telephone numbers of the incident commander and/or the Public Information Officer to press agencies that have follow

up questions. The Dispatcher should collect contact information and relay it to the incident commander and/or the Public Information Officer.

3. REFERENCES:

- None

By Order Of:

Kevin W Guimond

Kevin W. Guimond
Fire Chief