



DATE:

September 1, 2006

FROM:

Jeff Braun, Emergency Management Coordinator, Fort Bend County
Chuck Wolf, Co-Chair, Houston/Galveston Regional PIO Network

TO:

All Members, Fort Bend County PIO Network
All Members, Houston/Galveston Regional PIO Network

CC:

Mike Harmon, GDEM Southern Region Supervisor
Jenniffer Shields Hawes, GDEM Regional Liaison Officer (Region 2A)

RE:

Basic Public Information Officer's Course (G-290)

The Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management and the Houston/Galveston Regional PIO Network have arranged for the Texas Governor's Division of Emergency Management to offer a free, 24-hour **Basic Public Information Officer** (G-290) course in the Houston area. Normally, this course is only offered in Austin.

The course is scheduled from Monday, October 2, 2006 through Thursday, October 5, 2006. To allow travel for out-of-town students, course hours are 1:00 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday; from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Thursday. You must attend the entire 24-hour course in order to receive credit for course completion.

The course will be conducted in the Grand Hall of the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office at 1410 Ransom Road in Richmond, TX 77469. You can obtain a free map or driving directions online from Mapquest (<http://www.mapquest.com>) or Yahoo Maps (<http://maps.yahoo.com>)

The course will be taught by Harold Martin, GDEM's State Training Officer. CWO Adam Wine from the US Coast Guard's Sector Houston/Galveston Public Affairs Detachment and Chuck Wolf from Media Consultants will serve as Adjunct Instructors.

Please review the Course Description and Prerequisites listed on Page 3. Attendance is limited to a maximum of 30 students, so registrations will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration deadline is Monday, September 18, or two weeks prior to the course.

Developed by FEMA's Emergency Management Institute, topics to be covered include:

- Unit 1: Course Introduction, Objectives, and Overview
- Unit 2: The Media – Who Are These People and What Do They Want?
- Unit 3: Role of the PIO – Responsibilities, Basic Skills, Proactive Public Information
- Unit 4: News Interviews – Before, During, and After; Nonverbal Communication
- Unit 5: Writing News Releases That Work
- Unit 6: Practice Interviews
- Unit 7: Media Relations At the Scene – Media Staging, Pools, On-Scene Briefings
- Unit 8: Emergency Public Information and the Joint Information System
- Unit 9: Group Writing and TV Interview Workshops
- Unit 10: Getting Good News Stories in the Media / Community Awareness Campaigns
- Unit 11: News Media Panel: Radio, TV, Print, and Web reporters/editors
- Unit 12: Course Conclusion - Summary and Evaluation

During Unit 5, students will actually write news releases, so if available, please bring your own laptop computer, USB flash/thumb drive, and portable printer, or you can share a laptop and printer with other students.

There is no tuition cost to attend the 24-hours of free training, but you are responsible for your own meals. See the GDEM Website concerning reimbursement for travel and lodging. Students living 50 miles or less from the class are not eligible for lodging reimbursement. Arrangements have been made with the Comfort Suites in Stafford (281-565-5566) for lodging at a rate of \$69.95 per night plus tax. Ask for GDEM rates when calling for reservations. If you choose to stay at another motel, you will only be reimbursed at the \$69.95 or lower of the two rates.

To apply for the course, you must fill out a DEM-35 Training Application form that is available online at: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem Click on the "Preparedness: Training" link in the left-hand menu, then click on "GDEM Training Application". You can download the application and instructions in either Adobe Acrobat format or a form-fillable Rich Text Format (RTF) using Word for Windows. GDEM has waived the 45-day application requirement, but you must submit your completed application before the September 18th registration deadline.

All DEM Training Applications must be signed by yourself and by your Mayor, County Judge, or city/county Emergency Management Coordinator if you are employed by a city or county government agency. Employees from state or federal agencies, industry, or volunteer organizations should obtain the signature of their supervisor. If you have any questions, please call the DEM Training Registrar at 512-424-2196 or e-mail: DEMtraining@txdps.state.tx.us

You must mail or fax your completed, signed application to the address or fax number listed on the bottom of the application. You cannot e-mail the application. DEM will send you an e-mail or postcard confirming your enrollment, followed by a letter with more course details. For general information about GDEM's attendance and cancellation policies and available credit for this training course, please download the "2006 GDEM Training Calendar" from the "Preparedness: Training" section of the GDEM website listed above. Thanks!



The Governor's Division of Emergency Management
is offering:



G290, Basic PIO Course

Sponsored by:

The Governor's Division of Emergency Management of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Hosted by:

Fort Bend County Office of Emergency Management

When: October 2 – 5, 2006

Hours: 1pm-5pm on Monday; 8am-5pm on Tuesday and Wednesday; 8am-12pm on Thursday

Where: Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, 1410 Ransom Road, Richmond, TX 77469

Cost: There is no cost to attend GDEM sponsored courses.

Length: Twenty-four hours (24 hours) of classroom training

Target Audience: Individuals who will perform full or part-time duties as a Public Information Officer (PIO) for local, state, or federal government agencies, industry, or volunteer organization during emergencies or disasters. This includes PIO's from emergency management, fire, and police departments, plus PIO staff who may work in a Joint Information Center (JIC)

Prerequisites: Participants should be familiar with basic journalism and public affairs practices and skills; no previous experience as a PIO is required but it may be helpful.

Course Description: Focusing upon the unique role of the Public Information Office (PIO) in emergency management, this course will help PIO's or people assigned that role to fine-tune their job skills. Students will explore the role of the PIO in all phases of emergency management. Through individual and group activities, students will develop and practice a series of communication skills and identify ways to integrate all phases of emergency management into a comprehensive public information program. Topics include the role of the PIO in emergency management, conducting awareness campaigns, news release writing, and television interviews.

How To Apply: Download the DEM-35 Training Application and instructions from our website at: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem. You must submit your application by Monday, September 18, 2006.

For more information, contact the GDEM Training Registrar at (512) 424-2196 or email: demtraining@txdps.state.tx.us.

Note: To receive a certificate each participant must provide a social security number. The Division of Emergency Management handles all information as confidential in accordance with the Privacy Act.