

**Berkeley Alert II  
Joint Information Center**

**May 19, 2004 Training Meeting**



Bayer HealthCare

# Formula for Chaos:

$$\text{Chaos} = (\text{com} \times \text{co}) + (\text{mi} \times n) + (\text{ep} \times \text{dfi}) + (\text{x na})$$

Where:

**com** = communications capability

**co** = complexity of operation

**mi** = media interest

**n** = number of media present

**ep** = external pressure

**dfi** = demand for information

**pl** = complexity of plans

**pr** = amount of practice

**na** = number of agencies involved

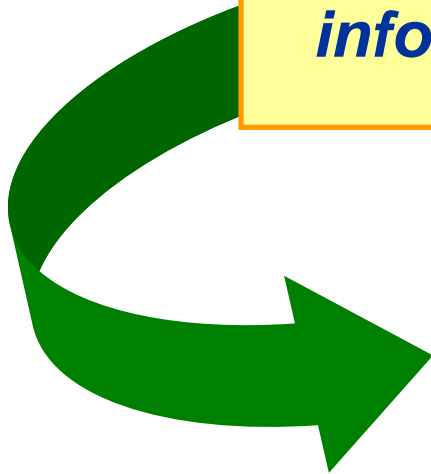
# Crisis Communications is Front Page News

- ◆ A painful process, but many learnings
  - ◆ *Media covering the 911 Commission hearing on Tuesday, May 18, 2004, had this to report:*
  - ◆ “...apparently contradictory evacuation orders...”  
*AFP Coverage*
  - ◆ “...conflicting advice from emergency teams...”  
*Reuters Coverage*
  - ◆ “...communication gaps...lack of coordination...”  
*AP Coverage*

# Berkeley Alert II: Joint Information Center

## **BEFORE:**

*Each agency or organization communicated with the public and the media, using the information they had.*



*Outcome: Great potential for conflicting messages. Possible delays, difficulties, safety hazards.*

# Communications Move Quickly

**There are many  
stakeholders,  
each with their own  
communication needs...**

# Employees...



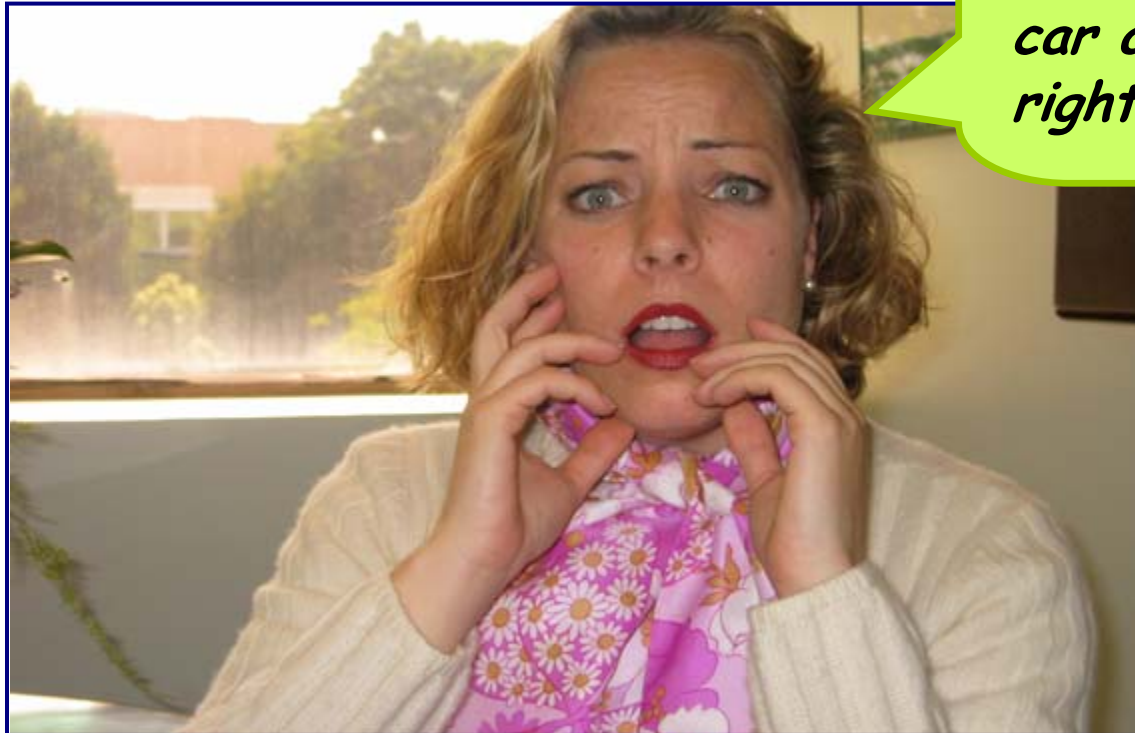
*Hi Harvey, did you hear the news? My guess is we should go in to work anyway.*

# Students...



*Looks like we won't be having lab today. I think I'll go check out all those flashing red lights!*

# Parents of Students...



*My baby's at UC!!  
I'd better get in the  
car and pick her up  
right away!*

# Reporters...



*When did it happen?  
What are your  
plans now?  
Can I get a quote?*

# Public Information Officers...



*Well, it happened  
at 2:30.  
We're telling every-  
one to shelter in place!*

## Other Public Information Officers...



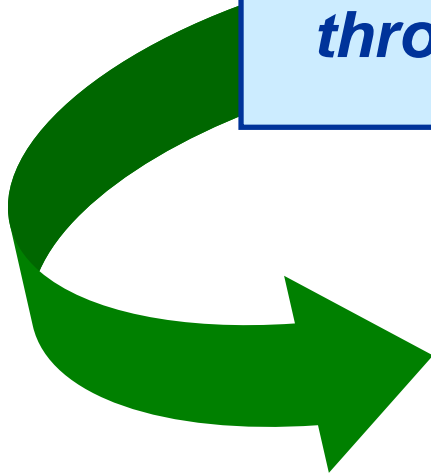
*It happened at 5:00.*

*We're telling everyone  
to evacuate.*

# Berkeley Alert II: Joint Information Center

**AFTER:**

*All public and media communications contain consistent information obtained through JIC collaboration.*



*Outcome: People are clear about what is happening and what to do. The media hears a consistent message.*

# **Better Communication = Smoother Coordination = Improved Results**

- ◆ **JIC: The new standard of quality in crisis communications**
- ◆ **We are in good company**
  - ◆ **Oakland, San Francisco, New York City, Dallas, Chicago, Denver, Orlando...**
- ◆ **Establishing a JIC is a prerequisite for Homeland Security funding support**
  - ◆ **National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidelines**

# NIMS Statement of Principle

***“Public information functions must be coordinated and integrated across jurisdictions and across functional agencies...”***

***“During emergencies, the public may receive information from a variety of sources. The JIC provides **a location for organizations participating in the management of an incident to work together** to ensure the timely, accurate, easy-to-understand, and consistent information is disseminated to the public.”***

# Joint Information Center: Background

- ◆ **Communication Needs and Effects**
  - ◆ *The Health Physics Society makes it clear:*
  - ◆ “Terrorist acts involving toxic agents (especially radiation) are perceived as very threatening.”
  - ◆ “Mass casualty incidents caused by nuclear terrorism will create large numbers of worried people who may not be injured or contaminated.”

*Communications to reassure and inform the “worried well” so medical response stays available to those who need it.*

# Joint Information Center: Background

- ◆ **Communication Needs and Effects**
  - ◆ *Reducing confusion is a serious objective*
  - ◆ Gridlock interferes with emergency response
  - ◆ People entering restricted areas distract emergency responders' attention
  - ◆ Providing employees with correct information reduces negative impact on the community

***Communicating updated instructions quickly to keep people safe and prevent unnecessary stress on emergency response systems***

# Joint Information Center: Background

- ◆ **Communication Needs and Effects**
  - ◆ *Health and safety information - correct and timely*
  - ◆ Hysteria can compound the crisis
  - ◆ People can take the appropriate steps to stay safe and healthy rather than guessing
  - ◆ Orderly, organized use of shelters
  - ◆ Informing on how people can ask for help

***Standardized information sheets exist. These and other information can be proactively distributed, posted on line or broadcast, reducing the risk for everyone.***

# The Joint Information Center

- ◆ **Value of the JIC approach**
  - ◆ All our major organizations should be working together when public safety is at stake
  - ◆ Accurate, timely communications save lives and minimize other negative impacts
  
- ◆ **How JICs are defined**
  - ◆ Varies by regional requirements
    - ◆ Flexibility is designed in
    - ◆ Adapted to meet community needs
    - ◆ Varies by the type of incident

# The Joint Information Center

- ◆ **How Berkeley defines its JIC**
  - ◆ Representatives from all major organizations involved in a crisis
  - ◆ Hosted and coordinated by the City of Berkeley
  - ◆ It can be real, or virtual
- ◆ **Mission of our JIC**
  - ◆ Serve as a conduit for our Berkeley stakeholders as well as neighboring communities
  - ◆ Accurate, timely information IN, and
  - ◆ Accurate, timely information OUT
  - ◆ Pool our resources and share information

# The Joint Information Center

- ◆ **Activating the Berkeley JIC**
  - ◆ The City's lead Public Information Officer (PIO) is notified by the incident commander that joint information functions are needed
  - ◆ The City's PIO activates the JIC and contacts the PIOs of other organizations
  - ◆ All organizations send a person to the JIC location
  - ◆ The media is informed that the JIC is active
  - ◆ Real-time data link: Members maintain phone and data contact with their own organizations

# Controlling the Flow of Information

- ◆ **People need to know. Delivery of information must be consistent, correct, timely and accessible**
- ◆ **Continuous contact, and periodic briefings between City PIO and incident commander**
- ◆ **Continuous exchange of information among JIC organizations**
- ◆ **Media interface - maintaining contact with the JIC to assure an accurate message, regular updates, access to spokespersons**

# Controlling the Flow of Information

## ◆ *Information IN*

- ◆ Continuous contact and periodic briefings between City PIO and incident commander
- ◆ Each organization representative also has continuous contact with their EOC
- ◆ Outcome: Accurate, updated information flowing constantly into ONE LOCATION
- ◆ This information is available to all

# Controlling the Flow of Information

## ◆ *Information OUT*

- ◆ Messages to the general public:
  - ◆ Instructions, medical advisories, updates
  - ◆ Direct communications
    - ◆ Radio & TV messages
    - ◆ Website briefings
    - ◆ Other?
  - ◆ Indirect communications
    - ◆ Media coverage
    - ◆ Reporters can convey messages efficiently!

# Controlling the Flow of Information

## ◆ *Information OUT*

- ◆ Elected officials and government staff
- ◆ Institutions and businesses
- ◆ Regulators
- ◆ Employees
  - ◆ Call-in numbers and phone trees
  - ◆ In-house message networks
  - ◆ During event and post-event messages
- ◆ Other offices and departments
  - ◆ Accurate situational updates
  - ◆ Arranging for back-up support
  - ◆ Planning for restoration of services

# Controlling the Flow of Information

## ◆ *Information OUT*

### ◆ The Media (and Community)

- ◆ Trustworthy information is absolutely vital!
- ◆ The media can help us deliver helpful messages!
- ◆ Advisory text about the incident is verified, approved and issued by the City's Public Information office
- ◆ Press conferences about the incident are managed by the City's lead PIO
- ◆ Other organizations provide support and information
- ◆ Other organizations use this approved in their own communications

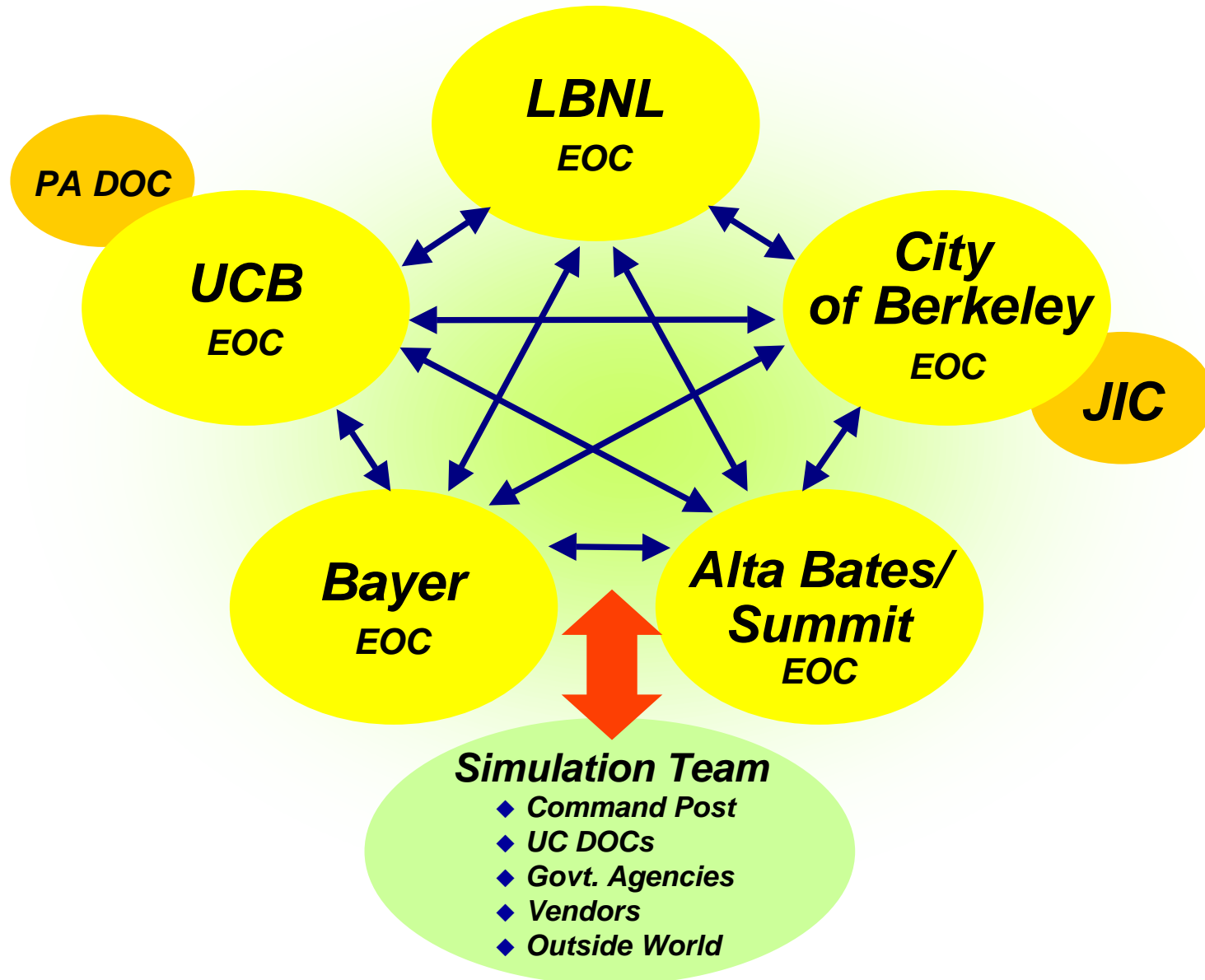
# Controlling the Flow of Information

## ◆ *Information OUT*

### ◆ The Media (and Community)

- ◆ Does this mean the other groups cannot release information to the press?
- ◆ No! Our existing procedures are still in place
- ◆ The **FACTS** of the incident are taken from the City's approved text
- ◆ **INSTRUCTIONS** (shelter in place, evacuate, proceed to a central shelter, medical advice etc.) statements are taken from the City's approved text

# Exercise Process and Logistics



# The Joint Information Center

- ◆ **Progress Steps - The Berkeley JIC Team**
  - ◆ **Berkeley Alert I and Berkeley Alert II**
    - ◆ Learning each other's processes
    - ◆ Getting acquainted with personnel
    - ◆ Understanding areas of responsibility
    - ◆ Understanding capabilities and resources
  - ◆ **Periodic joint updates and exercises**
  - ◆ **Created a contact database**

# The Joint Information Center

- ◆ **Progress Steps - The Berkeley JIC Team**
  - ◆ **Defined a format, location, infrastructure**
  - ◆ **Developed procedures for standby statements, media advisories**
  - ◆ **Identified standardized language for public announcements**
  - ◆ **Set up contact methods and response procedures**

# Berkeley Alert II JIC, June 10

- ◆ **Our Activities on June 10:**
  - ◆ **The JIC will be convened by the City, and the five member organizations will send a person**
  - ◆ **We will be practicing:**
    - ◆ **Working together on centralized messages**
    - ◆ **Staying in constant touch with our home offices**
    - ◆ **Fulfilling our in-house communications needs while participating in the joint effort**
    - ◆ **Using standardized language in our messages**
    - ◆ **Communicating with the media**
      - ◆ **Reporters, press conference**
    - ◆ **Trouble-shooting systems, access, logistics**