

## Public Information Officer Training & Crisis Communications Strategy

This introductory level course builds upon ICS 100, providing participants with an overview of key duties and responsibilities of an Information Officer in an All Hazard Incident Management Team (AHIMT).



This PIO course is designed to familiarize participants with the concepts underlying the PIO role and provide a basic understanding of the PIO function for those new to the position. Additionally, it can offer those in executive-level roles the necessary knowledge of the PIO role and responsibilities during an emergency situation as well as preparation in an organization.

With a view toward validating emergency planning documents and competencies of role players within the Emergency Operations Centre and On-Site Command, realistic tabletop exercises are used to reinforce the teachings of the course curriculum. The course includes a review of real-time interviews and briefings gone wrong and properly handled. Participants will also engage in the preparation of media advisories, releases, and real-time media scenarios.

This is a classroom-based, Instructor facilitated course.

### Course Objectives

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define the importance of emergency public information and of being proactive.
- Describe the role and functions of the PIO.
- Describe the types of written products used in public information activities.
- Recall preparation techniques that contribute to a successful media interview.
- Given a scenario, apply the 8-Step Model for Strategic Communications to a public awareness campaign.

### Course duration

1 day

### Pre-requisites

Pre-requisites: While not required, ICS I-100, Introduction to the Incident Command System or I-402, ICS for Executives are recommended pre-requisites.

## ESI Instructional Team



## **Gary MacDonald**

Gary has 34 years of experience in Broadcast Journalism covering a wide range of events including fires and explosions, standoffs and other threats to public safety, weather related events, political, and human-interest stories. In 2009, he assumed the newly created role of Director of News and Public Affairs for Acadia Broadcasting Limited where he was responsible for the company's 8 newsrooms in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and northwestern Ontario.

He lists the 1986 uptown Saint John explosions sparked by a major gasoline leak as well as the 1998 fatal explosion and fire at the Irving Oil refinery in Saint John as memorable moments in his career. In 2007, Gary was recognized by the Saint John Emergency Management Organization for "his commitment to SJEMO, its agencies, and the citizens of Saint John." In 2016, he was honoured with a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Radio – Television – and Digital News Association of Canada for his contributions to broadcast journalism.

Gary served terms on the Kennebecasis Regional Police Commission, the Rothesay Regional Fire Commission, and the Kennebecasis Valley Ambulance Commission. Gary also served as a director and volunteer at the Saint John Police Museum, a City of Saint John representative on the Harbour Station Commission, and a director of the New Brunswick Chapter of the Canadian Condominium Institute of Canada.

Since beginning his relationship with ESI in 2013, Gary has provided instruction, assessment, and feedback on clients' communications strategies during simulation exercises. He also writes and produces media simulation audio and video pieces for the exercises.



## **Mark Gillan, BBA, CFO, MIFireE**

**Project Lead and Instructor**

**Canadian Security Clearance: Level III Top Secret**

As Director of Emergency Solutions International, Mark leads ESI associates in conducting risk assessments, training, emergency plan reviews, exercise scenario development, digital simulation, exercise facilitation and evaluation as well as compiling final After Action Review documentation and recommendations. Service has been provided for various critical infrastructure, such as Port Saint John, Point Lepreau Generating Station, Canaport Liquefied Natural Gas, Saint John Energy, as well as corporations like Atlantic Potash and the Mosaic Company.

Mark has conducted over 200 industrial exercises and evaluations in Canada, the United States and India. As lead evaluator, Mark has authored reports on behalf of clients for the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and Transport Canada. In 2014, Mark authored the International Hazardous Materials Operations Plan under the International Emergency Management Assistance Compact (IEMAC) on behalf of Defense Research and Development Canada and International Emergency Management Group (IEMG) members. Prior to founding Emergency Solutions International, Mark served the City of Saint John Fire Department as an active fire fighter, Hazardous Materials/CBRN-E technician and member of the rescue squad. Mark finished his 27 year career with the Fire Service in the position of Deputy Chief and Acting Fire Chief of the department.

During his tenure in the Fire Service, Mark worked for over 8 years on the Rescue Squad. The focus of this team at fires was search and rescue of trapped civilians. He was accommodated 5 times for civilian rescues. As a Hazardous Materials Technician, he was chosen as one of the first firefighters in Canada to attend the country's counter-

terrorism program. As Divisional Chief in charge of Training, Mark was instrumental in designing and implementing the Saint John fire Department's "Save Our Own" program and Incident Command System.

Mark has served as Incident Commander, Safety Officer and Emergency Site Manager at a number of serious incidents. On several activations of the Saint John Emergency Management Organization, Mark has fulfilled the roles of Fire Services Representative and Manager of the EOC. In the final year of service with the City of Saint John, he was the Director of Saint John Emergency Management Organization.

In relation to our nation's preparedness: Mark has completed advanced training at CFB Suffield and has served through the Centre for Security Science as a Senior Special Advisor in the area of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive response. In this role Mark has successfully completed projects related to implementing Capability Based Planning within the public sector; specifically, in the areas of conducting Consolidated Risk Assessments through identification of Full Spectrum Threat Scenarios. Further to the Consolidated Risk Assessments, Mark has facilitated and produced Capability Analysis/Gap Analysis within the provinces of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador and Prince Edward Island.

Mark obtained his Bachelor of Business degree in 1998 from the University of New Brunswick and has completed the Dalhousie University, Certificate in Incident Command, the Canadian Association of Fire Chief's "Chief Fire Officer" designation (CFO), and the British: Institute of Fire Engineer's "Member's Level" designation (MIFireE) award. Mark has completed LNG Suppression Training at Texas A&M, has studied Incident Command at the U.S. National Fire Academy and also the Leadership in Crisis program at Harvard University.



### **Troy McQuinn, CEM, ABCP, DBCI, PCP**

Since Troy began his career as a paramedic over 25 years ago, he has worked in many facets of emergency services. His career has extended from work as a front-line Paramedic to his current role as Manager, Emergency Preparedness & Business Continuity for the provincial ambulance system in New Brunswick.

Troy has managed the emergency preparedness program for Medavie Health Services New Brunswick (MHSNB) from the commencement of the provincial ambulance service in 2007. Troy has developed Extra-Mural/Ambulance New Brunswick's emergency plans to enable strong linkages within the public safety and healthcare communities for emergency responses to both planned and unplanned events.

Some major events Troy has coordinated while with MHSNB include:

- Multiple major music concert and mass gathering events,
- Multiple Saint John River system flood events,
- Ebola preparedness activities,
- Tropical Storm Arthur 2014 response,
- Ice Storm January 2017 response,
- Provincial Nuclear Exercise Series - Intrepid 2012/2015 and Synergy Challenge 2018 and,
- COVID-19 Pandemic.

Troy has received the following awards and professional designations:

- 2012 Motorola Award of Excellence in Emergency Preparedness.
- 2013 Governor General's EMS Exemplary Service Award.
- 2013 Certified Emergency Manager with the International Association of Emergency Managers (certified to 2024).
- 2015 Associate Business Continuity Practitioner with DRI Canada.
- 2016 ICS Lead Instructor status through NB-EMO.

Troy has many other skills, qualifications and experiences that he brings to his classroom sessions. Highlights include collaboration with government departments, operational management experience, and providing advice and recommendations to anyone seeking expertise on matters of emergency management, business continuity, risk management, and special events planning.