



The Power of Partnerships

Shattering Silos to Manage a Crisis

California Association of Public Information Officials

2018 Annual Conference

April 10, 2018

WHO WE ARE

Phil Pitchford

Communications Officer

Kaitlin Bilhartz

Marketing Coordinator

Tyler Reynolds

Riverside Fire

Ryan Railsback

Riverside Police



WHAT WE DO

Phil Pitchford

Citywide PIO, also works
1/3 time in Mayor's Office

Kaitlin Bilhartz

Wide range of marketing
responsibilities, including managing
City's social media accounts

Tyler Reynolds

Fire Captain, Training, PIO

Ryan Railsback

Riverside Police Officer, PIO

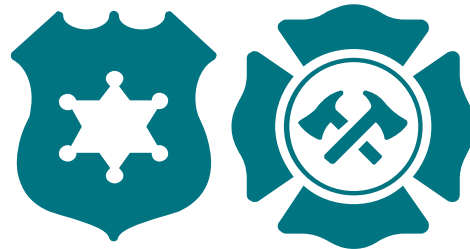


HOW IT USUALLY IS



City/County/ Special District

handles its
communications efforts
(Daily Business of
Government)



Public Safety Agencies (Police, Fire/EMS)

handles their own
communications



Public Safety Agencies
talk to each other
SOMETIMES

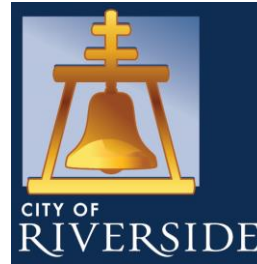


NEITHER talks to
government
EVER

HOW IT CAN BE



Riverside's Crisis
Communications Team
WORKS TOGETHER
on major incidents



ALL ONE TEAM

- Maximizes effectiveness
- Delivers unified message
- Equals trust and accountability



HOW IT HAPPENED

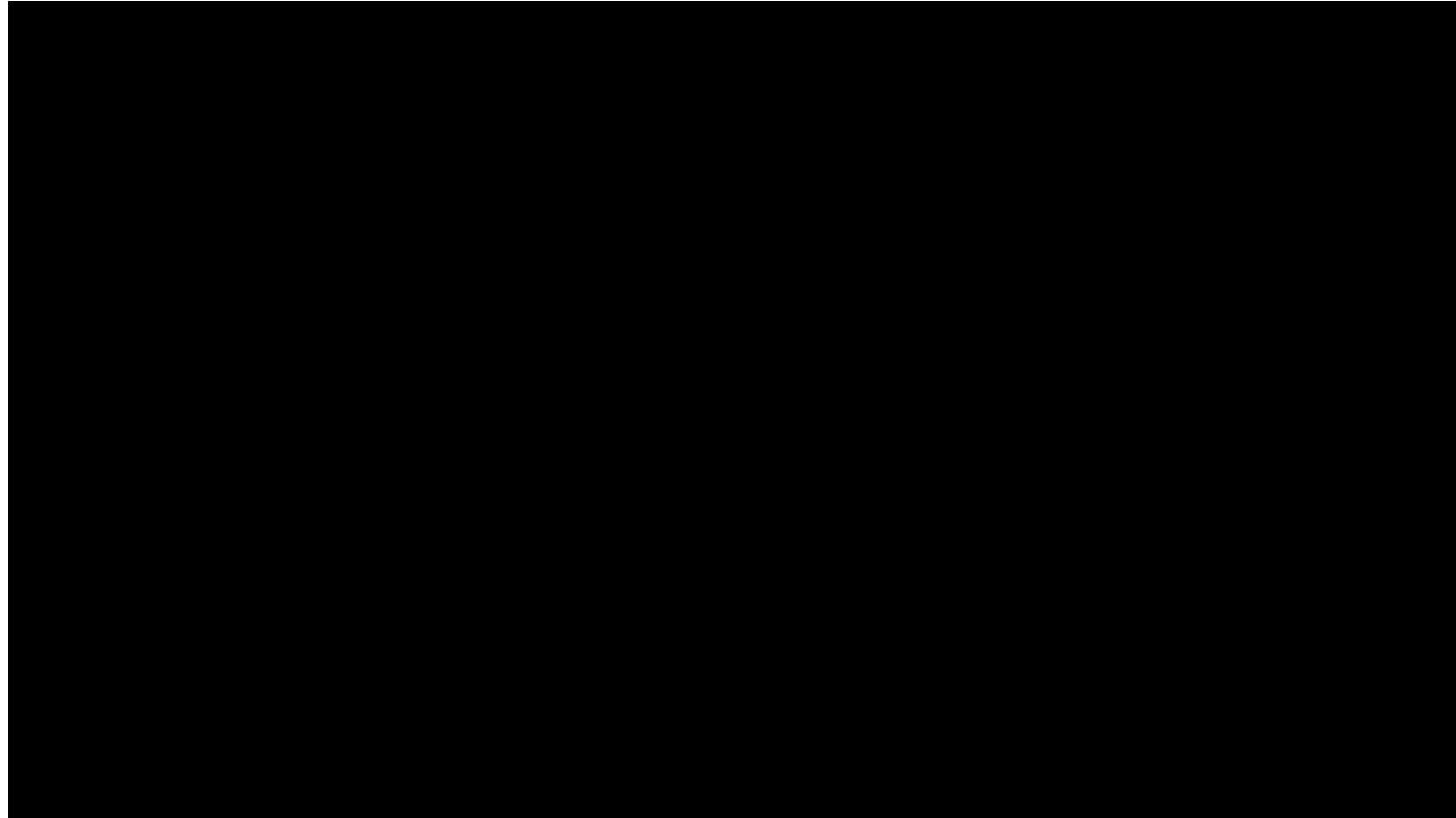


**Senior Management
Opposes Silos**



**Necessity is the
Mother of Invention**
(Rhonda Road
Plane Crash)

RHONDA INCIDENT VIDEO



BRIEF RECAP



Four Houses Affected

One severely damaged;
One destroyed



Five Passengers

Three deceased;
Two initial survivors



MAJOR COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE



116 Personnel

Includes:

Riverside Fire Department,
Riverside Police Department,
American Medical Response (AMR)

A lot of activities,
people, and agencies equals a
POTENTIAL FOR CHAOS

MEDIA RESPONSE



**Immediate
and Substantial**



**One of the Biggest
Stories in the Nation
that Night**
Media inquiries from
coast to coast



Lots of
**User-Created
Content**



Imminent need to
establish basic facts,
knock down rumors
and assure residents

WHAT WE DID



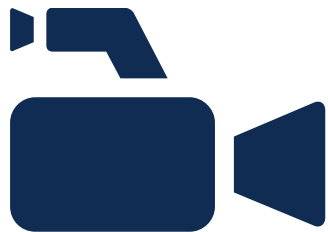
**First Press
Conference**
7:30 PM



Broadcasted Live
to **City's YouTube
Channel**



12,000
Views in First
24 Hours

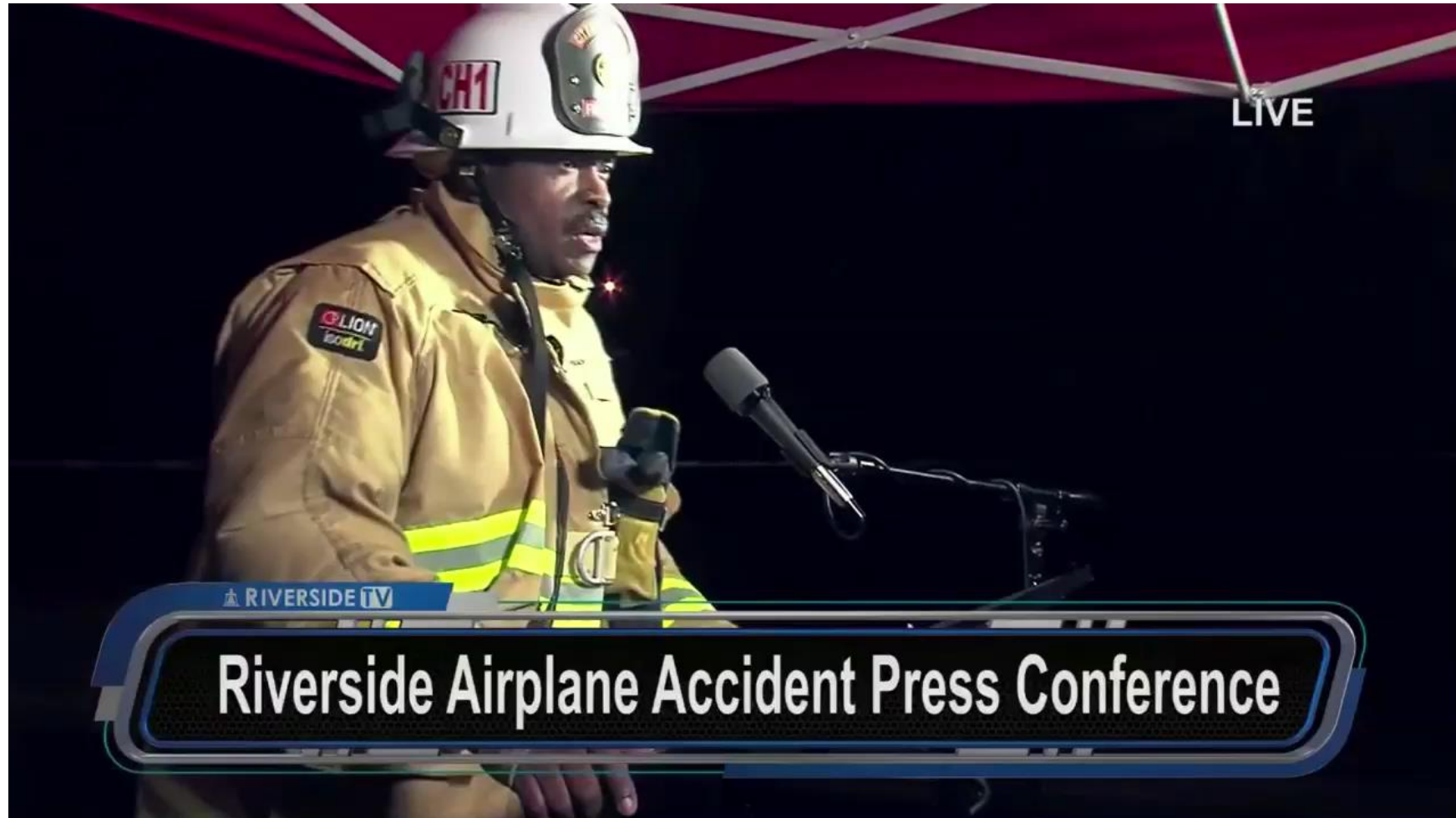


Shot and Provided
B-Roll of Damage Without
Compromising Privacy



**Two Follow-Up
Press Conferences
and Briefings**

END RESULT – TRUSTED SOURCE



HOW WE DID IT



Riverside Fire Department (RFD)

was lead agency, with major support from Riverside Police and EMS

City PIO and Social Media
self-deploy and support RFD

Assess, Begin Prep
for press-conference(s)

RiversideTV
called in, work with City PIO on press conference staging

Fire, City, Police PIO
coordinate messaging



ONE MESSAGE, MULTIPLE AUDIENCES



News Conferences

Livestreamed on YouTube
and Facebook



Media had questions
answered from livestream



Live information directly
from Fire Chief



Riverside residents found
information about their
community

WHY IT WORKS

Years of Experience

Investment in Our Community

Knowledge of Public Information, Social Media

RiversideTV and Strong Technology Presence

No Duplicate Roles

Trust



WHAT WE LEARNED

Police and Fire will accept help if offered

City employees won't try to take leadership for everything

Everyone wants to do **the best job** they can



Mass notification system is very helpful for resources

Necessity for key aspects (Portable toilets, cellphone chargers, Family Assistance Center, etc.)

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

MEDIA IS MORE STRETCHED THAN EVER

If you want coverage, you need to do some work for it.

Your agency's voice may be the only voice.

Hope for the best, prepare for the worst.

GET READY NOW.

There will always be a need for media coverage.



CASTLE VIEW ELEMENTARY INCIDENT

Dominant News Story
from 11 AM – 6 PM

**Hostage Rescue Operation/
Officer-Involved Shooting**



Riverside Police Department
was lead agency

**Established Press Conferences with
Police and RUSD PIOs**

SANTA ANA RIVER BOTTOM FIRE

Fast-Moving Fire in River Bottom

West of Downtown Riverside, adjacent to historic neighborhood

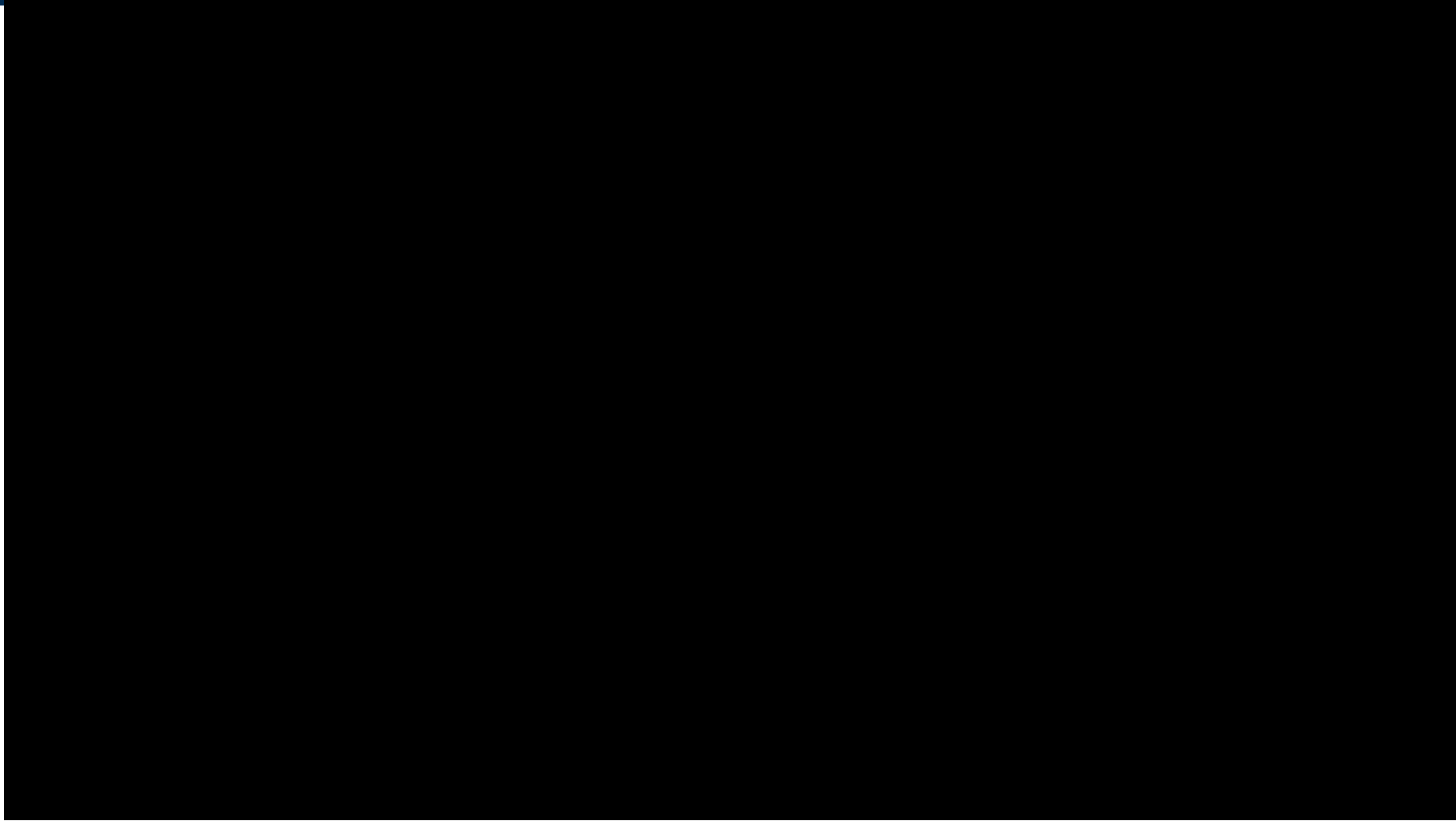
Fire was just off of
Mission Inn Avenue

Social media spread
rumors that the **Mission Inn
Hotel & Spa was on fire**



The City's social media presence **clarified**
with **Fire Department press conference**

CASTLE VIEW/RIVER BOTTOM FIRE VIDEO



NEXT STEPS



**Ensure Spanish
Speakers at All
Press Conferences**



**Continued
Networking with
PIO Community**

Will You Be Ready?

Don't meet your fellow PIOs for the
first time when crisis hits

NEXT STEPS



More accessibility to **DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Evacuations in Santa Ana River Bottom, hard for **deaf** residents to follow

California School for the Deaf, Riverside has **500+** students over 65 years

KEEP IN TOUCH!!!!

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