



Primary Communicator Protocol

The Department of Labor Office of Public Affairs  
and  
The Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration

Section 7 of The Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006 (MINER Act) requires MSHA to serve as the "primary communicator" with the press, the public, the operator and miners' families following a mine tragedy involving multiple deaths. By Department of Labor Secretarial Order 17-2006, the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (OPA) in consultation with the Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health (MSHA) will provide direction to the "primary communicator" following a mine tragedy involving multiple deaths.

Accordingly, OPA and MSHA agree to the following protocol.

1. Upon notification of a mine accident where multiple miners are trapped, unaccounted for, or multiple fatalities have occurred, MSHA will notify OPA and will provide all pertinent information regarding the incident.
2. OPA should dispatch personnel to the accident site as soon as possible to provide support to MSHA's "primary communicator."
3. OPA and MSHA should jointly develop briefing outlines that will serve to brief the press and the public on a scheduled basis.
4. Briefings with the press and public shall be conducted by the "primary communicator" after the family briefings have been conducted.

This Protocol may be modified at any time by mutual agreement of MSHA and OPA.

This Protocol is agreed to this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of December, 2006.

Handwritten signature of Richard Stickler in cursive.

Richard Stickler  
Assistant Secretary for  
Mine Safety and Health

Handwritten signature of Randy Clerihue in cursive.

Randy Clerihue  
Assistant Secretary for  
Office of Public Affairs