

Context Beyond Our nanoEHS Research Focus (i.e. Important but not in our scope)
Broader list of potential questions in response to an incident involving nanomaterials

Even with the best efforts in nanotechnology to anticipate, recognize, evaluate, control, and confirm that all hazards, exposures, and resulting risks are properly managed, there may be situations when untoward events may occur. It is prudent to prepare for effective communication if such situations arise or are perceived to arise. Realistically, some questions that would be asked in a press conference that would be fielded by other groups of experts such as emergency response and city planning officials. Questions for those experts will **NOT** be ones that our community is asked to address in this scrimmage. To set context and contrast with the science-based questions our CORs should anticipate (previous page), the following table summarizes a number of questions that have been asked following past experiences with incidents involving radiation (NRC, 2011), assembled to support effective risk communication messages. The striking practicality of the majority of the questions in the past emphasizes the importance of clearly communicating relevant information in a reliable and trust-building manner. Subsets of these questions dealing with trust, uncertainty, and communicator descriptors, might well be pertinent for the nanoEHS subject matter experts, but since they do not focus on the fundamental goals of the cross-COR interactions to support risk analysis we will not include them in this exercise.

TABLE —Questions frequently asked by journalists in an emergency or disaster, which can inform relevant and reliable responses to incidents (adapted from NRC, 2011, drawn from experience with past incidents involving radiation).

| Question Topics | Example Questions |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Information about the communicator | What is your name and title? What are your job responsibilities? Can you tell us what happened? How do you know what you are telling us? Were you there? |
| Details about the incident | When did it happen? Where did it happen? How many people were harmed? Are those that were harmed getting help? How are those who were harmed getting help? |
| Status of the current situation | Is the situation under control? How certain are you that the situation is under control? What help has been requested or offered from others? What responses have you received? Is there any immediate danger? |
| Expectations for the follow-up | What can we expect next? What are you advising people to do? What can people do to protect themselves and their families – now and in the future – from harm? How long will it be before the situation returns to normal? |
| Details about the cause | What was the cause? How could this have been avoided? What else can go wrong? |
| Legal issues | Which laws are applicable? Has anyone broken the law? |
| Matters of trust | Have you and other organizations been transparent? Who is conducting the investigation? Will the outcome be reported to the public? Are people over-reacting? Why should we trust you? |