

Sequential Model of Media Responses to Disaster

1. The media will hear of an event; try to obtain more information; use its files to add to the story; dispatch reporters to the scene.
2. As information becomes available it will be reported and will spread from medium to medium. The media will attempt to fit the news into a framework.
3. To give the news form and structure the media will demand official news conferences at which official statements can be recorded.
4. The various media—radio, television, and print—will act differently.
5. Despite these differences the foreign press tend to support each other and often antagonize local media.
6. The media will make demands on communications, transportation, and other local resources.
7. The media will operate in cycles focusing on news highs, then searching for less dramatic material to fill in less spectacular periods.
8. In a truly major incident almost all reporters will share what they have.
9. The media—whatever techniques they use to obtain information—will not publish it if they decide it would be harmful.
10. The media will also cooperate with official requests that certain information be withheld.

Source: Adapted from T. Joseph Scanlon and Suzanne Alldred. 1982. "Media Coverage of Disasters: The Same Old Story." *Emergency Planning Digest* 9:14-18.