

---

## Unit 3: ICS Features and Principles

---

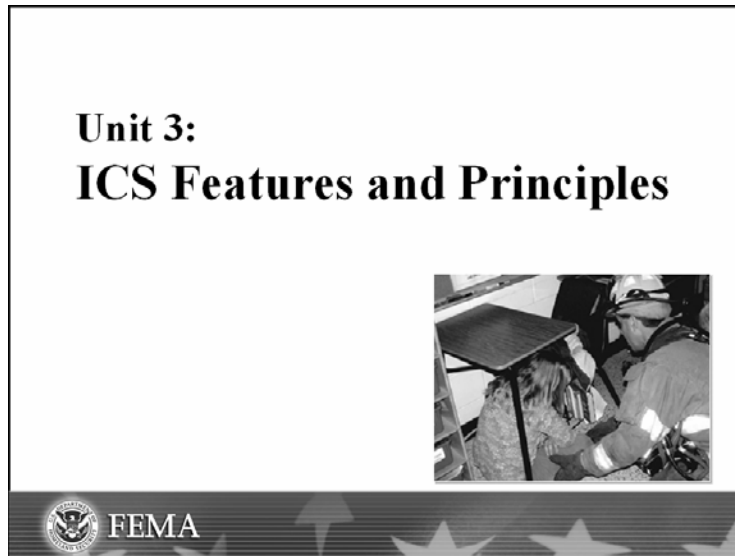
---

---





Visual 3.1



**Visual Description:** Unit Introduction

### Key Points

This unit will provide an overview of the basic features and principles of the Incident Command System:

- ICS management principles
- ICS core system features



Visual 3.2

### Unit Objectives (1 of 2)

Describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Common terminology.
- Modular organization.
- Management by objectives.
- Reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Chain of command and unity of command.
- Manageable span of control.



FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Unit Objectives (1 of 2)

### Key Points

By the end of this unit, you should be able to describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Common terminology.
- Modular organization.
- Management by objectives.
- Reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Chain of command and unity of command.
- Manageable span of control.



Visual 3.3

### Unit Objectives (2 of 2)

Describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Predesignated incident locations and facilities.
- Resource management.
- Information and intelligence management.
- Integrated communications.
- Transfer of command.



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Unit Objectives (2 of 2)

### Key Points

By the end of this unit, you will be able to describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Predesignated incident locations and facilities.
- Resource management.
- Information and intelligence management.
- Integrated communications.
- Transfer of command.



Visual 3.4

### Making ICS Work

- ICS differs from day-to-day school management.
- Effective incident management relies on tight command.
- Strict adherence must be paid to top-down direction.
- Each must commit to following this command and control approach.



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Making ICS Work

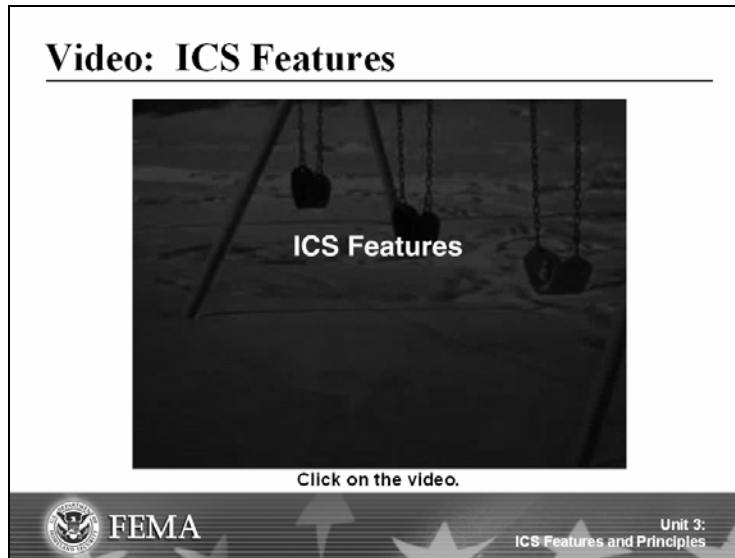
### Key Points

Features and principles used in ICS differ from daily activities.

- The features and principles used to manage an incident differ from day-to-day school management approaches. Effective incident management relies on a tight command and control structure. Although information is exchanged freely through the ICS structure, strict adherence must be paid to top-down direction.
- To make ICS work, each of us must commit to following this command and control approach.



Visual 3.5



**Visual Description:** Video: ICS Features

### Key Points

The following video will introduce this lesson on ICS features and principles.

#### Video Transcript:

As you learned in the previous lesson, ICS is based on proven management principles that contribute to the strength and efficiency of the overall system.

ICS principles are implemented through a wide range of management features including the use of common terminology and clear text, and a modular organizational structure.

ICS emphasizes effective planning, including management by objectives and reliance on an Incident Action Plan. The ICS features related to command structure include chain of command and unity of command.

ICS helps ensure full utilization of all incident resources by:

- Maintaining a manageable span of control.
- Establishing predesignated incident locations and facilities.
- Implementing resource management practices.
- Ensuring integrated communications.

ICS supports responders and decisionmakers through effective information and intelligence management. ICS counts on each of us taking personal accountability for our own actions. And the mobilization process helps ensure that incident objectives can be achieved while responders and students remain safe. This lesson covers each of these ICS features in detail.

The 14 essential ICS features are listed below:

- **Common Terminology:** Using common terminology helps to define organizational functions, incident facilities, resource descriptions, and position titles.
- **Chain of Command and Unity of Command:** Chain of command refers to the orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization. Unity of command means that every individual has a designated supervisor to whom he or she reports at the scene of the incident. These principles clarify reporting relationships and eliminate the confusion caused by multiple, conflicting directives. Incident managers at all levels must be able to control the actions of all personnel under their supervision.
- **Unified Command:** In incidents involving multiple jurisdictions, a single jurisdiction with multiagency involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement, Unified Command allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability. (This topic is covered in a later unit.)
- **Modular Organization:** The Incident Command organizational structure develops in a top-down, modular fashion that is based on the size and complexity of the incident, as well as the specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident.
- **Management by Objectives:** Includes establishing overarching objectives; developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols; establishing specific, measurable objectives for various incident management functional activities; and directing efforts to attain the established objectives.
- **Reliance on an Incident Action Plan:** Incident Action Plans (IAPs) provide a coherent means of communicating the overall incident objectives in the contexts of both operational and support activities.
- **Manageable Span of Control:** Span of control is key to effective and efficient incident management. **Within ICS, the span of control of any individual with incident management supervisory responsibility should range from three to seven subordinates.**
- **Incident Locations and Facilities:** Various types of operational locations and support facilities are established in the vicinity of an incident to accomplish a variety of purposes. Typical predesignated facilities include Incident Command Posts, Bases, Camps, Staging Areas, Mass Casualty Triage Areas, and others as required.
- **Comprehensive Resource Management:** Resource management includes processes for categorizing, ordering, dispatching, tracking, and recovering resources. It also includes processes for reimbursement for resources, as appropriate. Resources are defined as personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment or allocation in support of incident management and emergency response activities.



- **Information and Intelligence Management:** The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.
- **Integrated Communications:** Incident communications are facilitated through the development and use of a common communications plan and interoperable communications processes and architectures.
- **Establishment and Transfer of Command:** The command function must be clearly established from the beginning of an incident. When command is transferred, the process must include a briefing that captures all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations.
- **Accountability:** Effective accountability at all jurisdictional levels and within individual functional areas during incident operations is essential. To that end, the following principles must be adhered to:
  - **Check-In:** All responders, regardless of agency affiliation, must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.
  - **Incident Action Plan:** Response operations must be directed and coordinated as outlined in the IAP.
  - **Unity of Command:** Each individual involved in incident operations will be assigned to only one supervisor.
  - **Span of Control:** Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
  - **Resource Tracking:** Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur. (This topic is covered in a later unit.)
- **Dispatch/Deployment:** Personnel and equipment should respond only when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority.



Visual 3.6

### Common Terminology – No Codes!

Using common terminology helps to define:

- Organizational functions.
- Incident facilities.
- Resource descriptions.
- Position titles.

Common terminology allows school personnel to seamlessly integrate with first responders.



FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Common Terminology – No Codes!

### Key Points

The ability to communicate within the ICS is absolutely critical. An essential method for ensuring the ability to communicate is by using common terminology and clear text.

**If you heard “code red in the cafeteria” which of the following would that mean to you?**

Select what you think this announcement means.

- Fire
- Child choking
- Intruder
- Not sure

A critical part of an effective multiagency incident management system is for all communications to be in plain English. That is, use clear text. Do not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon.

ICS establishes common terminology allowing diverse incident management and support entities to work together. Common terminology helps to define:

- **Organizational Functions.** Major functions and functional units with domestic incident management responsibilities are named and defined. Terminology for the organizational elements involved is standard and consistent.
- **Incident Facilities.** Common terminology is used to designate the facilities in the vicinity of the incident area that will be used in the course of incident management activities.
- **Resource Descriptions.** Major resources—including personnel, facilities, and major equipment and supply items—used to support incident management activities are given common names and are "typed" with respect to their capabilities, to help avoid confusion and to enhance interoperability.
- **Position Titles.** At each level within the ICS organization, individuals with primary responsibility have distinct titles. Titles provide a common standard for all users, and also make it easier to fill ICS positions with qualified personnel. ICS titles often do NOT correspond to the titles used on a daily basis.



Visual 3.7

### Use of Plain English

- Communications should be in plain English or clear text.
- Do not use codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon.

Even if you use codes on a daily basis, why should you use plain English during an incident response?



**Visual Description:** Use of Plain English

### Key Points

Even if you use codes on a daily basis, why should you use plain English during an incident response?

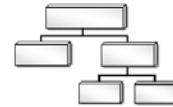


Visual 3.8

## ICS Organization

Differs from the day-to-day, administrative organizational structures and positions.

- Unique ICS position titles and organizational structures are designed to avoid confusion during incident response.
- Rank may change during an incident. For example, a “chief” may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.



**Visual Description:** ICS Organization

### Key Points

The ICS organization is unique but easy to understand. There is no correlation between the ICS organization and the administrative structure of any single agency or jurisdiction. This is deliberate, because confusion over different position titles and organizational structures has been a significant stumbling block to effective incident management in the past.

For example, someone who serves as a Chief every day may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.



Visual 3.9

### Modular Organization

Incident command organizational structure is based on:

- Size, type, and complexity of the incident.
- Specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident.
- Incident planning process and incident objectives.

FEMA Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Modular Organization

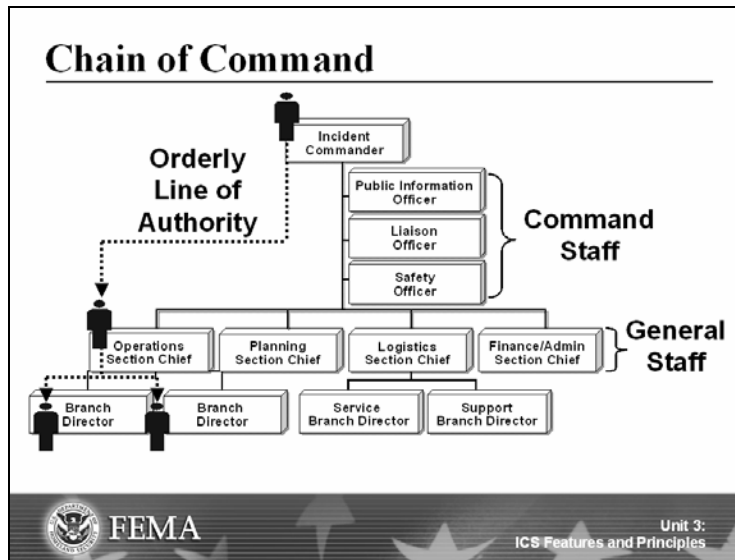
### Key Points

The ICS organizational structure develops in a top-down, modular fashion that is based on the size and complexity of the incident, as well as the specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident. As incident complexity increases, the organization expands from the top down as functional responsibilities are delegated.

The ICS organizational structure is flexible. When needed, separate functional elements can be established and subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination. As the ICS organizational structure expands, the number of management positions also expands to adequately address the requirements of the incident.



Visual 3.10



**Visual Description:** Chain of Command

### Key Points

Chain of command is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization. Chain of command:

- Allows incident managers to direct and control the actions of all personnel under their supervision.
- Avoids confusion by requiring that orders flow from supervisors.

Chain of command does not prevent personnel from directly communicating with each other to ask for or share information.

The features and principles used to manage an incident differ from day-to-day school management approaches. Effective incident management relies on a tight command and control structure. Although information is exchanged freely through the ICS structure, strict adherence must be paid to top-down direction.

**To make ICS work, each of us must commit to following this command and control approach.**



Visual 3.11

## Unity of Command

Under unity of command, personnel during an incident:

- Report to only one incident supervisor.
- Receive work assignments only from the assigned supervisor.



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Unity of Command

### Key Points

Under unity of command, personnel:

- Report to only one ICS supervisor.
- Receive work assignments only from their ICS supervisors.

### Example of Unity of Command

The school nurse is the Incident Commander for a heat stroke incident at a lacrosse match. You are a member of the monitoring team assigned to watching athletes and providing preventative fluids.

The Assistant Principal arrives at the athletic field and asks you to go speak to members of the media about the measures being taken to protect the students. Even though the Assistant Principal may outrank everyone in the ICS organization, she cannot go around the established ICS chain of command and give you an assignment. The correct protocol would be for the Assistant Principal to communicate the need to the Incident Commander. Remember, when you are in an ICS organization, you should:

- Receive work assignments only from your ICS supervisor.
- Report to only one ICS supervisor.

Your supervisor within an ICS organization may not be the same as your day-to-day supervisor.





Visual 3.12

### Incident Management Roles

<p><b>Executive/Senior Official's Role</b> Provide the following to the Incident Commander:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy</li> <li>▪ Mission</li> <li>▪ Direction</li> <li>▪ Authority</li> </ul>	<p><b>Incident Commander's Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manage the incident at the scene.</li> <li>▪ Keep officials informed on all important matters pertaining to the incident.</li> </ul>
---	---

To maintain the unity of command and safety of responders, the chain of command must NOT be bypassed.

FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Incident Management Roles

## Key Points

The Executive/Senior Official (Principal, Superintendent, etc.) is responsible for the incident. Along with this responsibility, by virtue of their position, these individuals have the authority to make decisions, commit resources, obligate funds, and command the resources necessary to protect the students and facilities.

Having the responsibility does not mean that the Executive/Senior Official assumes a command role over the on-scene incident operation. Rather, the Executive/Senior Official:

- Provides policy guidance on priorities and objectives based on situational needs and the Emergency Operations Plan.
- Oversees resource coordination and support to the on-scene command from an Operations Center.

The Incident Commander is the primary person in charge at the incident. In addition to managing the incident scene, he or she must keep the Executive/Senior Official informed and up to date on all important matters pertaining to the incident.


The ICS hierarchy of command must be maintained and not even Executives and Senior Officials can bypass the system.




Visual 3.13

### Scenario

Several minutes ago, a tornado struck the school without warning. You were not injured but are isolated in a damaged part of the building with students and no other school personnel. You have taken command of the response.



**What is the first action that you would take?**

 FEMA Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Scenario: What is the first action that you would take?

### Key Points

Review the following scenario on assuming command and answer the question that follows.

**Scenario:** Several minutes ago, a tornado struck the school without warning. You were not injured but are isolated in a damaged part of the building with students and no other school personnel. You have taken command of the response.

**What is the first action that you would take?**




Visual 3.14

### Incident Objectives

Incident objectives are established based on the following priorities:

- #1: Life Safety
- #2: Incident Stabilization
- #3: Property Preservation

What additional priorities are critical for managing school incidents?



FEMA Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Incident Objectives

### Key Points

As school personnel, you understand the value of learning objectives. Incident objectives are used to ensure that everyone within the ICS organization has a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished.

Incident objectives are established based on the following priorities:

- #1: Life Safety
- #2: Incident Stabilization
- #3: Property Preservation

**What additional priorities are critical for managing school incidents?**



Visual 3.15

### Management by Objectives: Steps

The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

- **Step 1:** Understand agency policy and direction.
- **Step 2:** Assess incident situation.
- **Step 3:** Establish incident objectives.
- **Step 4:** Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.
- **Step 5:** Perform tactical direction.
- **Step 6:** Provide necessary followup.



**Visual Description:** Management by Objectives: Steps

### Key Points

The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

- Step 1: Understand agency policy and direction, such as that of the school district.
- Step 2: Assess incident situation.
- Step 3: Establish incident objectives.
- Step 4: Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.
- Step 5: Perform tactical direction.
- Step 6: Provide necessary followup.




Visual 3.16

### Reliance on an Incident Action Plan

Every incident must have an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that:

- Specifies the incident objectives.
- States the activities to be completed.
- Covers a specified timeframe, called an operational period.
- May be oral or written—except for hazardous materials incidents, which require a written IAP.



FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Reliance on an Incident Action Plan

### Key Points

The Incident Commander must ensure that there is an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that:

- Specifies the incident objectives.
- States the activities to be completed.
- Covers a specified timeframe, called an operational period.
- May be **oral or written**—except for hazardous materials incidents, which require a written IAP.

Even the smallest of incidents are managed by incident objectives and plans. The plan can be as simple as the next steps the Incident Commander plans to do. The steps can be orally communicated to the rest of the ICS organization.




Visual 3.17

### Elements of an Incident Action Plan

Every IAP must have four elements:

- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?



FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Elements of an Incident Action Plan

### Key Points

Every IAP must answer the following four questions:

- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?



Visual 3.18

### Activity: Incident Action Plan

#### Instructions:

- Working as a team, identify four items you would include in an IAP.
- Write these items on chart paper.
- Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 5 minutes.



**Visual Description:** Activity: Incident Action Plan

### Key Points

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how to develop an IAP.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below to participate in this activity:

1. You will be assigned to groups of five or six.
2. Identify four items you would include in an Incident Action Plan.
3. Record the IAP elements on chart paper and select a spokesperson to report back to the group.
4. You will have 5 minutes to complete this activity.

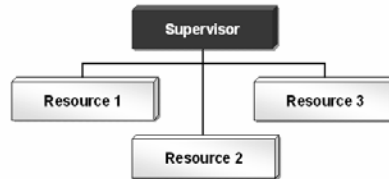


Visual 3.19

## Manageable Span of Control

### Span of control:

- Pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.
- Is key to effective and efficient incident management.

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Manageable Span of Control

## Key Points

Another basic ICS feature concerns the supervisory structure of the organization. Maintaining adequate span of control throughout the ICS organization is very important.

Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.

Maintaining an effective span of control is important at incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority.

Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.





Visual 3.20

### ICS Management: Span of Control

ICS span of control for any supervisor:

- Is between 3 and 7 subordinates.
- Optimally does not exceed 5 subordinates.

FEMA Unit 3: ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** ICS Management: Span of Control

### Key Points

- Another basic ICS feature concerns the supervisory structure of the organization. Maintaining adequate span of control throughout the ICS organization is very important.
- Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.
- The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all influence span of control considerations. **Maintaining an effective span of control is particularly important on incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority.**
- Effective span of control on incidents may vary from three (3) to seven (7), and a ratio of one (1) supervisor to five (5) reporting elements is recommended.

**What types of school incidents warrant a low span-of-control ratio?**



Visual 3.21

## Knowledge Review

**Instructions:** Determine if the span of control is consistent with ICS guidelines.

**Situation:** Heavy rains have caused flash flooding. The East Middle School is isolated and students cannot leave. Resources are provided for student accountability and site security.



**Visual Description:** Knowledge Review

## Key Points

**Review the following situation.**

**Situation:** Heavy rains have caused flash flooding. The East Middle School is isolated and students cannot leave. Resources are provided for student accountability and site security.

**Determine if the span of control is consistent with ICS guidelines.**



Visual 3.22



**Visual Description:** Video: Incident Facilities Virtual Tour

### Key Points

- Incident activities may be accomplished from a variety of operational locations and support facilities.
- The Incident Commander identifies and establishes needed facilities depending on incident needs. Standardized names are used to identify types of facilities.
- In order to integrate with community responders, it is important to be familiar with the standard ICS facilities.
- Some or all of these facilities may be used in some school incidents and in other incidents in their community.

### Video Transcript

This presentation introduces the ICS facilities. In smaller, school-based incidents you most likely will not need many of the standard ICS facilities. However, in large incidents, such as Hurricane Katrina, undamaged schools are often converted into ICS facilities.

The Incident Command Post, or ICP, is the location from which the Incident Commander oversees all incident operations. There is generally only one ICP for each incident, but it may change locations during the event. Every incident must have some form of an Incident Command Post. The ICP may be located outside, in a vehicle, trailer, or tent, or within a building. The ICP will be positioned outside of the present and potential hazard zone but close enough to the incident to maintain command.

**Video Transcript: (Continued)**

Staging Areas are temporary locations at an incident where personnel and equipment wait to be assigned. Staging Areas should be located close enough to the incident for a timely response, but far enough away to be out of the immediate impact zone. In large complex incidents, there may be more than one Staging Area at an incident. Staging Areas can be collocated with other ICS facilities.

A Base is the location from which primary logistics and administrative functions are coordinated and administered.

A Camp is the location where resources may be kept to support incident operations if a Base is not accessible to all resources. Camps are equipped and staffed to provide food, water, sleeping areas, and sanitary services. A school gym or cafeteria could be used as a Camp for a community-wide incident.

A Helibase is the location from which helicopter-centered air operations are conducted. Helibases are generally used on a more long-term basis and include such services as fueling and maintenance.

Helispots are more temporary locations at the incident, where helicopters can safely land and take off. Multiple Helispots may be used. Think about your school environment. Could you use a parking lot or athletic field for a temporary Helispot?

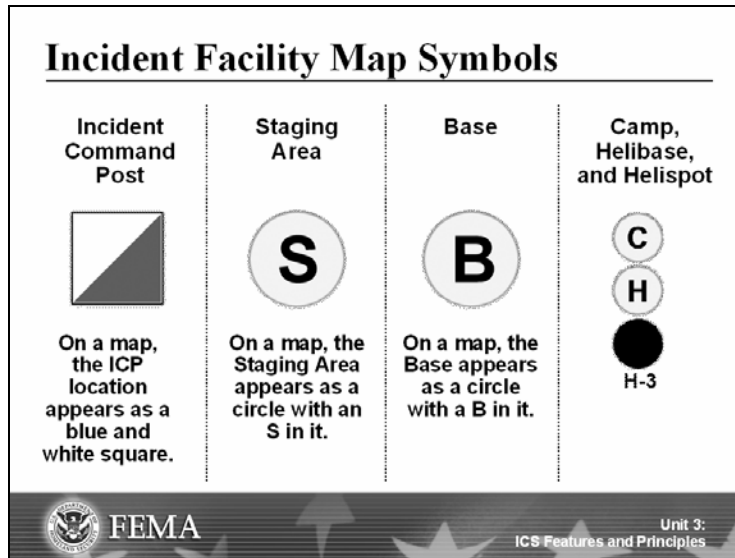
Let's review the different ICS facilities covered in this video:

- The **Incident Command Post** is the location from which the Incident Commander oversees all incident operations.
- **Staging Areas** are where personnel and equipment are gathered while waiting to be assigned.
- A **Base** is the location from which primary logistics and administrative functions are coordinated and administered.
- A **Helibase** is the location from which helicopter-centered air operations are conducted.
- **Helispots** are more temporary locations at the incident, where helicopters can safely land and take off.

[end of transcript]



Visual 3.23



**Visual Description:** Incident Facility Map Symbols

### Key Points

In ICS, it is important to be able to identify the map symbols associated with the basic incident facilities.

The map symbols used to represent each of the six basic ICS facilities are shown in the illustration.

Answer the following question.

**Helicopters were taking off and landing at a high school football field after a tornado severely damaged the school campus. What map symbol would indicate this ICS facility?**



Visual 3.24

### ICS Facilities and Schools: Summary

- A single Incident Command Post should be established on all incidents—even small ones!
- School incidents may require additional facilities (e.g., Student-Parent Reunification Area).



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** ICS Facilities and Schools: Summary

### Key Points

- A single Incident Command Post should be established on all incidents, even on a small incident.
- School incidents may require additional facilities beyond those that are standard ICS facilities.

**Example:** For example, if you need a Student-Parent Reunification Area, add that site to your incident facilities. It is preferable to add needed facilities rather than to use a standard ICS facility, such as a Staging Area, for a school-unique function. A Staging Area is intended only for responders waiting for assignments, not parents waiting for their children.



Visual 3.25

### Knowledge Review (1 of 3)

**Instructions:** Review the following scenario and answer the question that follows.

**Scenario:** Community search and rescue teams have been dispatched to respond to the collapse of a school gymnasium. As teams arrive, they are being held at this location until they receive their assignments.

Which type of incident facility is being described in the scenario above?



**Visual Description:** Knowledge Review (1 of 3)

### Key Points

**Instructions:** Review the scenario and answer the question that follows.

**Scenario:** Community search and rescue teams have been dispatched to respond to the collapse of a school gymnasium. As teams arrive, they are being held at this location until they receive their assignments.

**Question:** Which type of incident facility is being described in the scenario above?



Visual 3.26

### Knowledge Review (2 of 3)

**Instructions:** Review the following scenario and select the optimal strategy.

**Scenario:** Initially in the gymnasium collapse incident, school personnel took command and established an Incident Command Post in the Assistant Principal's office. When the local responders arrived, they established an Incident Command Post in a mobile command van near the operation.

Select the optimal strategy.

- A. Both Incident Command Posts should continue to operate because the personnel in each are managing different aspects of the incident.
- B. The Incident Command Posts should be combined to ensure that school personnel and first responders are coordinating their management of the incident.



FEMA

Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Knowledge Review (2 of 3)

### Key Points

**Instructions:** Review the scenario and select the optimal strategy.

**Scenario:** Initially in the gymnasium collapse incident, school personnel took command and established an Incident Command Post in the Assistant Principal's office. When the local responders arrived, they established an Incident Command Post in a mobile command van near the operation.

**Select the optimal strategy:**

- A. Both Incident Command Posts should continue to operate because the personnel in each are managing different aspects of the incident.
- B. The Incident Command Posts should be combined to ensure that school personnel and first responders are coordinating their management of the incident.





Visual 3.27

### Knowledge Review (3 of 3)

**Instructions:** Review the following scenario and select the correct statement.

**Situation:** Severe weather has created a need to shelter students at the school. You have set up an area with cots and blankets to allow the students to rest.

Which statement is correct?

- A. Because there is no standard ICS facility defined for sheltering students, ICS prohibits one from being established.
- B. This area is part of the response operation but is not considered an ICS facility because it houses students rather than responders.
- C. The standard ICS facility, referred to as a camp, should be used to shelter the students during this incident.



**Visual Description:** Knowledge Review (3 of 3)

### Key Points

**Instructions:** Review the following scenario and select the correct statement.

**Scenario:** Severe weather has created a need to shelter students at the school. You have set up an area with cots and blankets to allow the students to rest.

Which statement is correct?

- A. Because there is no standard ICS facility defined for sheltering students, ICS prohibits one from being established.
- B. This area is part of the response operation but is not considered an ICS facility because it houses students rather than responders.
- C. The standard ICS facility, referred to as a camp, should be used to shelter the students during this incident.



Visual 3.28

## Integrated Communications

Incident communications are facilitated through:

- The development and use of a common communications plan.
- The interoperability of communications equipment, procedures, and systems.

Before an incident, it is critical to develop an integrated voice and data communications system (equipment, systems, and protocols).



**Visual Description:** Integrated Communications

### Key Points

- A common communications plan is essential for ensuring that responders can communicate with one another during an incident.
- The response to the Columbine school shooting incident was hampered by response agencies operating on radios set to different frequencies.
- Prior to an incident, schools must work with local responders to ensure that communications equipment, procedures, and systems can operate together during a response (interoperable).




Visual 3.29

**Information & Intelligence Management**

Information and intelligence are critical to incident response.

What are some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident?

 FEMA Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Information & Intelligence Management: What are some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident?

### Key Points

The analysis and sharing of information and intelligence is an important component of ICS. Incident management must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.

**What are some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident?**



Visual 3.30

### Activity: Incident Management

**Instructions:** Read the scenario below and identify lessons learned from the scenario that you would apply to managing incident information and intelligence.

**Scenario:** At the Columbine school shooting incident, police and emergency response crews arrived within minutes of 911 calls. One of the first functions of a SWAT incident is to acquire intelligence. The SWAT team commander found some students, who quickly sketched a layout of the school. As the situation evolved, officers received a lot of false information including: there were as many as eight gunmen; snipers were on the roof; killers were hiding in ceilings or in heating ducts or trying to mingle with escaping students. The lack of reliable information hampered the operation.



**Visual Description:** Activity: Incident Management

### Key Points

**Instructions:** Read the scenario below and identify lessons learned from the scenario that you would apply to managing incident information and intelligence.

**Scenario:** At the Columbine school shooting incident, police and emergency response crews arrived within minutes of 911 calls. One of the first functions of a SWAT incident is to acquire intelligence. The SWAT team commander found some students, who quickly sketched a layout of the school. As the situation evolved, officers received a lot of false information including: there were as many as eight gunmen; snipers were on the roof; killers were hiding in ceilings or in heating ducts or trying to mingle with escaping students. The lack of reliable information hampered the operation.



Visual 3.31

## Resource Management

Resource management includes processes for:

- Categorizing resources.
- Ordering resources.
- Dispatching resources.
- Tracking resources.
- Recovering resources.



It also includes processes for reimbursement for resources, as appropriate.



**Visual Description:** Resource Management

### Key Points

Remember that resources at an incident must be managed effectively. Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date picture of resource utilization is a critical component of incident management. Resource management includes processes for:

- Categorizing resources.
- Ordering resources.
- Dispatching resources.
- Tracking resources.
- Recovering resources.

In ICS, resources are defined as **personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, and facilities**.

Resource management also includes processes for reimbursement for resources, as appropriate.



Visual 3.32

### Transfer of Command

- Moves the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another.
- Must include a transfer of command briefing (which may be oral, written, or both).



**Visual Description:** Transfer of Command

### Key Points

The next ICS feature is Transfer of Command.

- The process of moving the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another is called transfer of command.
- The transfer of command process always includes a transfer of command briefing, which may be oral, written, or a combination of both.



Visual 3.33

### When Command Is Transferred

A thorough briefing occurs when command is transferred. Command is transferred when:

- A jurisdiction or agency is legally required to take command.
- A more qualified Incident Commander arrives.
- Incident complexity changes.
- The current Incident Commander needs to rest.

**What would you include in a transfer of command briefing?**

FEMA Unit 3: ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** When Command Is Transferred

### Key Points

The process of moving the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another is called transfer of command. Transfer of command may take place when:

- A jurisdiction or agency is legally required to take command.
- A more qualified Incident Commander arrives and assumes command.
- Incident complexity changes.
- The current Incident Commander needs to rest. (There is normally turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents to accommodate work/rest requirements.)

The transfer of command process always includes a transfer of command briefing, which may be oral, written, or a combination of both.

**What would you include in a transfer of command briefing?**

→ **Hint: Refer to the additional information on the next page!**

The process of moving the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another is called “transfer of command.” It should be recognized that transition of command on an expanding incident is to be expected. It does not reflect on the competency of the current Incident Commander.

There are five important steps in effectively assuming command of an incident in progress.

**Step 1:** The incoming Incident Commander should, if at all possible, personally perform an assessment of the incident situation with the existing Incident Commander.

**Step 2:** The incoming Incident Commander must be adequately briefed.

This briefing must be by the current Incident Commander, and take place face-to-face if possible. The briefing must cover the following:

- Incident history (what has happened)
- Priorities and objectives
- Current plan
- Resource assignments
- Incident organization
- Resources ordered/needed
- Facilities established
- Status of communications
- Any constraints or limitations
- Incident potential
- Delegation of authority

**Step 3:** After the incident briefing, the incoming Incident Commander should determine an appropriate time for transfer of command.

**Step 4:** At the appropriate time, notice of a change in incident command should be made to:

- Agency headquarters.
- General Staff members (if designated).
- Command Staff members (if designated).
- All incident personnel.

**Step 5:** The incoming Incident Commander may give the previous Incident Commander another assignment on the incident. There are several advantages to this strategy:

- The initial Incident Commander retains first-hand knowledge at the incident site.
- This strategy allows the initial Incident Commander to observe the progress of the incident and to gain experience.





Visual 3.34

### Summary (1 of 4)

**Instructions:** Answer the questions below.

- Why is it important to use common terminology?
- Who is responsible for the establishment and expansion of the ICS modular organization?
- What 4 items must be included in an IAP?



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Summary (1 of 4)

### Key Points

Answer the questions below.

- Why is it important to use common terminology?
- Who is responsible for the establishment and expansion of the ICS modular organization?
- What four items must be included in an IAP?



Visual 3.35

### Summary (2 of 4)

**Instructions:** Answer the questions below.

- What is unity of command?
- What is the recommended ratio of supervisors to reporting elements?
- Why are incident facilities predesignated?
- What must happen in a transfer of command?



Unit 3:  
ICS Features and Principles

**Visual Description:** Summary (2 of 4)

### Key Points

Answer the questions below.

- What is unity of command?
- What is the recommended ratio of supervisors to reporting elements?
- Why are incident facilities predesignated?
- What must happen in a transfer of command?



Visual 3.36

### Summary (3 of 4)

**ICS:**

- **Utilizes management features including the use of common terminology and a modular organizational structure.**
- **Emphasizes effective planning through the use of management by objectives and Incident Action Plans.**
- **Supports responders by providing data they need through effective information and intelligence management.**



**Visual Description:** Summary (3 of 4)

### Key Points

**ICS:**

- Utilizes management features including the use of common terminology and a modular organizational structure.
- Emphasizes effective planning through the use of management by objectives and Incident Action Plans.
- Supports responders by providing data they need through effective information and intelligence management.



Visual 3.37

### Summary (4 of 4)

**ICS:**

- Utilizes the principles of chain of command, unity of command, and transfer of command.
- Ensures full utilization of incident resources by maintaining a manageable span of control, establishing predesignated incident facilities, implementing resource management practices, and ensuring integrated communications.



**Visual Description:** Summary (4 of 4)

### Key Points

**ICS:**

- Utilizes the principles of chain of command, unity of command, and transfer of command.
- Ensures full utilization of incident resources by maintaining a manageable span of control, establishing predesignated incident facilities, implementing resource management practices, and ensuring integrated communications.

Unit 4 will cover the Incident Commander and Command Staff functions.