

# NIMS *Basic*

FEMA 501-2  
March 27, 2006  
Revision 0

## Command and Management

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- I. Purpose:** This document describes the systems used to facilitate domestic incident command and management operations, including the ICS, multi-agency coordination systems, and the JIS.
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- II. Scope:** Details on incident command and management are contained in NIC Document FEMA 501-8, *NIMS Basic - ICS Requirements*.
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- A. ICS** ICS is a management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by coordinating the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management. It is:
- Widely applicable.
  - Used to organize both near term and long term field-level operations for a broad spectrum of emergencies, from small to complex incidents, both natural and manmade.
  - Used by all levels of government, Federal, State, local, and tribal, as well as many private sector and non-governmental organizations.
  - Applicable across disciplines.
  - Normally structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas.
    - Command
    - Operations
    - Planning
    - Logistics
    - Finance/administration
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- B. Challenges** Acts of biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear terrorism represent particular challenges for the traditional ICS structure.
- Events that are non-site specific, are geographically dispersed, or evolve over longer time periods, will require extraordinary coordination between Federal, State, local, tribal, private sector, and non-governmental organizations.
  - An area command may be established to oversee the management of such incidents.
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C. Extract

This document is extracted from FEMA 501, *National Incident Management System*. Refer to the NIMS in the event of conflicting information.

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#### IV. Definitions:

<i>chain of command</i>	The orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.
<i>command staff</i>	The command staff in an incident management organization consists of the incident commander and the special staff positions of PIO, SO, LNO, their assistants, and other positions as required that report directly to the IC.
<i>DOC</i>	Department Operations Center
<i>general staff</i>	A group of incident management personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organized according to function.</li><li>• Reporting to the incident commander.</li><li>• Normally consisting of the operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration section chiefs.</li></ul>
<i>IAP</i>	Incident Action Plan
<i>ICP</i>	Incident Command Post
<i>ICS</i>	Incident Command System
<i>JIC</i>	The Joint Information Center is a physical location where public affairs professionals from organizations involved in incident management activities can collocate to perform critical emergency information, crisis communications, and public-affairs functions.

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<i>JIS</i>	Joint Information System
<i>LNO</i>	Liaison Officer
<i>NRP</i>	National Response Plan
<i>PIO</i>	Public Information Officer
<i>resources</i>	The personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, and facilities available, or potentially available, for assignment or allocation in support of incident management and emergency response activities.
<i>single resources</i>	Individual personnel and equipment items and the operators associated with them.
<i>SO</i>	Safety Officer
<i>span of control</i>	The ratio of a supervisor to subordinates.
<i>strike teams</i>	A set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established minimum number of personnel.
<i>task forces</i>	Any combination of resources assembled in support of a specific mission or operational need, and having common communications and a designated leader.
<i>UC</i>	Unified Command
<i>unity of command</i>	Every individual reports to a designated supervisor at the scene of the incident.

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## **V. Process:**

### **A. Concepts and Principles**

The NIMS requires that field command and management functions be performed in accordance with a standard set of ICS organizations, doctrine, and procedures. The IC, however, generally has some flexibility to modify procedures or organizational structure.

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#### **1. Safety**

The IC/UC and supervisors at all levels of incident management have the ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations.

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#### **2. Incident Response**

ICS provides a flexible core mechanism for coordinated and collaborative incident management for:

- Incidents in which additional resources are required or are provided from different organizations within a single jurisdiction, or outside the jurisdiction.
  - Complex incidents with national-level implications, such as an emerging infectious disease or a bio-terror attack.
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- A single incident covering a large geographical area requiring multiple “local” ICS organizations.
- Note:** Effective cross-jurisdictional coordination using processes and systems described in the NIMS is absolutely critical in this instance.
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### 3. Modularity and Scalability

ICS is modular, scalable, and is designed to have the following operating characteristics.

- Suitable for operations within a single jurisdiction or single agency, a single jurisdiction with multi-agency involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multi-agency involvement.
  - Applicable and acceptable to users throughout the country.
  - Readily adaptable to new technology.
  - Adaptable to any emergency or incident to which domestic incident management agencies would be expected to respond.
  - Scalable organizational structure based on the size and complexity of the incident.
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### 4. Interactive Management

ICS has interactive management components for effective and efficient incident management and emergency response.

- Common terminology, standards, and procedures that enable diverse organizations to work together effectively.
  - A standard set of pre-designated organizational elements and functions.
  - Common names for resources used to support incident operations
  - Common “typing” for resources to reflect specific capability.
  - Common identifiers for facilities and operational locations used to support incident operations.
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### 5. Measurable Objectives

Measurable objectives ensure fulfillment of incident management goals. Objective setting begins at the top and is communicated throughout the entire organization.

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### 6. Implementation

ICS implementation should have the least possible disruption on existing systems and processes to facilitate its acceptance across a nationwide user community, and ensure continuity in the transition process.

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### 7. Applicability

ICS should be user friendly and be applicable across a wide spectrum of emergency response and incident management disciplines to enable the communication, coordination, and integration critical to an effective and efficient NIMS.

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### B. Management Characteristics

ICS is based on proven management characteristics that contribute to the strength and efficiency of the overall system.

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1. Common Terminology	Common terminology allows diverse incident management and support entities to work together across a wide variety of incident management functions and hazard scenarios. It includes the following items.
a) <i>Organizational Functions</i>	Name and define major functions, and functional units with domestic incident management responsibilities using standard and consistent terminology for the organizational elements involved.
b) <i>Resource Descriptions</i>	Use common names and capability “type” to help avoid confusion and enhance interoperability for major resources such as personnel, facilities, major equipment, and supply items used to support incident management activities.  NIC Document FEMA 501-4, <i>NIMS Basic - Resource Management</i> , specifies the process for accomplishing this task.
c) <i>Incident Facilities</i>	Use common terminology to designate those facilities in the vicinity of the incident area that will be used in the course of incident management activities.
2. Modular Organization	Develop the incident command organizational structure in a top-down, modular fashion based on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Size and complexity of the incident.</li><li>• Specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident.</li></ul> When needed, establish separate functional elements, each of which may be further subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination.
a) <i>Size</i>	The IC has ultimate responsibility for establishing and expanding the ICS modular organization based on the requirements of the situation.
3. Management by Objectives	Communicate this approach throughout the entire ICS organization and include the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish overarching objectives.</li><li>• Develop and issue assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols.</li><li>• Establish specific, measurable objectives for various incident management functional activities, and direct efforts to attain them in support of defined strategic objectives.</li><li>• Document results to measure performance and facilitate corrective action.</li></ul>
4. IAP	The IAP provides a coherent means to communicate the overall incident objectives in the context of both operational and support activities.  See additional details under <i>Organization and Operations</i> .

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5. **Span of Control** A manageable span of control is key to effective and efficient incident management.
- The span of control of any individual with incident management supervisory responsibility should range from three to seven subordinates.
  - The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources influence span of control considerations.
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6. **Pre-designated Incident Locations and Facilities** FEMA 501-4 provides more details on pre-designated facilities, which typically include:
- Incident command posts.
  - Bases.
  - Camps.
  - Staging areas.
  - Mass casualty triage areas.
  - Others as required.
- 
7. **Comprehensive Resource Management** Maintain an accurate and up-to-date picture of resource utilization, a critical component of domestic incident management.
- Resource management includes processes for:
- Categorizing, ordering, dispatching, tracking, and recovering resources.
  - Reimbursement for resources, as appropriate.
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8. **Integrated Communications** Address the equipment, systems, and protocols necessary to achieve integrated voice and data incident management communications in preparedness planning.
- Develop and use a common communications plan and interoperable communications processes and architectures to facilitate incident communications. This integrated approach:
- Links the operational and support units of the various agencies involved.
  - Is necessary to maintain communications connectivity and discipline.
  - Enables common situational awareness and interaction.
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9. **Establishment and Transfer of Command** The agency with primary jurisdictional authority over the incident designates the individual at the scene responsible for establishing command.
- Clearly establish the command function at the beginning of incident operations.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When command is transferred, the process must include a briefing that captures all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations.</li></ul>
a) <i>Command Principles</i>	Chain of command and unity of command 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.
10. Unified Command	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 in incidents involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multiple jurisdictions.</li><li>• A single jurisdiction with multi-agency involvement.</li><li>• Multiple jurisdictions with multi-agency involvement.</li></ul>
11. Accountability	Effective accountability at all jurisdictional levels and within individual functional areas during incident operations is essential, and requires compliance with the following principles.
a) <i>Check-In</i>	All responders, regardless of agency affiliation, must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the IC.
b) <i>IAP</i>	Direct and coordinate response operations as outlined in the IAP.
c) <i>Unity of Command</i>	Assign each individual involved in incident operations to only one supervisor.
d) <i>Span of Control</i>	Supervisors must be able to adequately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supervise and control their subordinates.</li><li>• Communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.</li></ul>
e) <i>Resource Tracking</i>	Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur.
12. Deployment	Personnel and equipment should respond only when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority.
13. Information and Intelligence	The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.

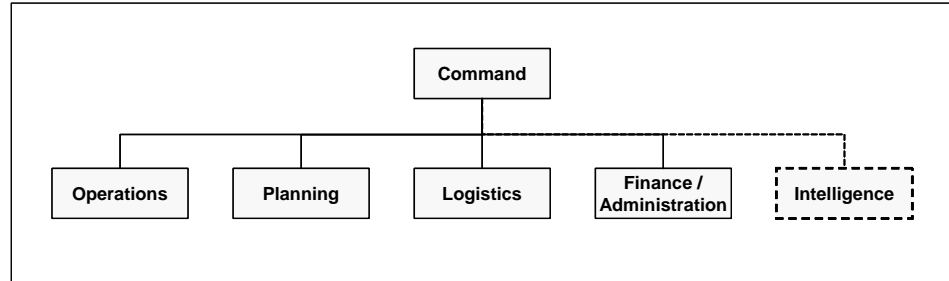
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## C. Organization and Operations

The IC, command staff, and general staff comprise the ICS organization with five major functions as shown in Figure 1. A potential sixth area covers the intelligence function as described in *Information and Intelligence* above.

FEMA 501-8 provides additional information on ICS requirements.



**Figure 1: ICS Command and General Staff**

### 1. Overview

Command staff and general staff must:

- Continually interact.
- Share vital information and estimates of the current and future situation.
- Develop recommended courses of action for consideration by the IC.

#### a) Command

The IC and command staff comprises the command function.

#### b) Command Staff

Command staff is responsible for overall management of the incident, which includes command staff assignments required to support the command function.

Establish command staff positions to assign responsibility for key activities not specifically identified in the general staff functional elements. These positions may include the:

- PIO
- SO
- LNO
- Others as required and assigned by the IC.

#### c) General Staff

Incident management personnel who represent the major functional elements of the ICS comprise the general staff. These include section chiefs for:

- Operations.
- Planning.
- Logistics.
- Finance/Administration.

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- Other as appropriate.

FEMA 501-4 provides additional information on the specific functions and makeup of the individual units within each of these sections.

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d) *Assigned Representatives*

Agency and organizational representatives assigned to an incident must have the authority to speak for their parent agencies or organizations on all matters following appropriate consultations with their agency leadership.

See the *LNO* section for point of contact information.

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2. *Command Function*

This may be a single command or UC. The primary differences are:

- In a single command structure, the IC establishes and ensures accomplishment of incident management objectives and strategies.
  - In a UC structure, the individuals designated by their jurisdictional authorities, or by departments within a single jurisdiction must jointly:
    - Determine objectives, strategies, plans, and priorities.
    - Work together to execute integrated incident operations and maximize the use of assigned resources.
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3. *Single Command*

The appropriate jurisdictional authority designates a single IC with overall incident management responsibility when an incident occurs within a single jurisdiction and there is no jurisdictional or functional agency overlap.

A single IC may be designated in cases where incident management crosses jurisdictional and/or functional agency boundaries if all parties agree to such an option. Jurisdictions should consider pre-designating ICs in their preparedness plans.

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4. *UC*

The UC is an important element in multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency domestic incident management.

As a team effort, it overcomes much of the inefficiency and duplication of effort that can occur when agencies from different functional and geographic jurisdictions, or agencies at different levels of government, operate without a common system or organizational framework.

All agencies with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for any or all aspects of an incident and those able to provide specific resource support participate in and contribute to the UC structure.

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a) *Structure*

The exact UC composition will depend upon the:

- Locations of the incident and which geographical administrative jurisdictions are involved.
  - Type of incident and which functional agencies of the involved
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jurisdictions are required.

**Note:** A single IC may be designated to promote greater unity of effort and efficiency in some multi-jurisdictional incidents.

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*b) Designated Agency Officials*

The designated agency officials participating in the UC:

- Represent different legal authorities and areas of responsibility.
  - Use a collaborative process to establish incident objectives.
  - Designate priorities that accommodate those objectives.
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*c) Jurisdictional Responsibility*

Agencies that lack jurisdictional responsibility, but are heavily involved in the incident:

- Are defined as supporting agencies.
- Are represented in the command structure.
- Effect coordination on behalf of their parent agency through the LNO.

Jurisdictional responsibilities of multiple incident management officials are consolidated into a single planning process as discussed more fully in FEMA 501-8, and include:

- Responsibilities for incident management.
  - Incident objectives.
  - Resource availability and capabilities.
  - Limitations.
  - Areas of agreement and disagreement between agency officials.
- 

*d) Collaborative Management*

Incidents are managed under a single collaborative approach that includes the following.

- Common organizational structure.
  - Single ICP.
  - Unified planning process.
  - Unified resource management.
- 

*e) IAP*

The planning section chief develops the IAP, which is approved by the UC.

The operations section chief:

- Directs the tactical implementation of the IAP.
  - Normally comes from the agency with the greatest jurisdictional involvement.
  - Is an agreed upon designation by the UC participants.
- 

*f) Practices*

UC works best when the participating members of the UC collocate at the ICP and follow the requirements described in the *Responsibilities* section.

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5. Command Staff See additional information in the *Responsibilities* section.

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a) *Positions*

Command staff positions are:

- Specifically designated.
- Report directly to the IC.
- Assigned responsibility for key activities that are not part of the general staff functional elements.
- Typically comprised of PIO, SO, and LNO activities.

Designate additional positions:

- Depending upon the nature, scope, complexity, and locations of the incidents.
  - According to specific requirements established by the IC.
- 

b) *Additional Positions*

Additional command staff positions may also be necessary depending upon the:

- Nature and location of the incident.
- Specific requirements established by the IC.

**Example:** A legal counsel may be assigned directly to the command staff to advise the IC on legal matters such as emergency proclamations, legality of evacuation orders, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access.

Similarly, a medical advisor may be designated and assigned directly to the command staff to provide advice and recommendations to the IC in the context of incidents involving:

- Medical and mental health services.
  - Mass casualty.
  - Acute care.
  - Vector control.
  - Epidemiology.
  - Mass prophylaxis considerations, particularly in the response to a bio-terrorism event.
- 

c) *PIO*

Designate only one incident PIO, whether the command structure is single or unified. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.

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d) *SO*

The SO provides the IC with systems and procedures necessary to assess, coordinate, and implement safety measures for incident operations.

Designate a single SO in a UC structure in spite of the fact that there may be multiple jurisdictions and/or functional agencies involved. Assistants may be required and may be assigned from other agencies or departments comprising the UC.

**Note:** The agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions that contribute to joint safety management efforts do not lose their individual identities or responsibility for their own programs, policies, and personnel. Rather, each entity contributes to the overall effort to protect all responder personnel involved in incident operations.

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e) *LNO*

The LNO is the point of contact for representatives of other governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and/or private entities. In either a single or UC structure, representatives from assisting or cooperating agencies and organizations coordinate through the LNO.

Assistants and personnel from other public or private agencies or organizations involved in incident management activities may be assigned to the LNO to facilitate coordination.

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f) *Members*

Command staff members:

- May need one or more assistants to manage their workloads in the context of large or complex incidents.
  - Should organize their assistants for maximum efficiency.
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6. *General Staff*

The general staff:

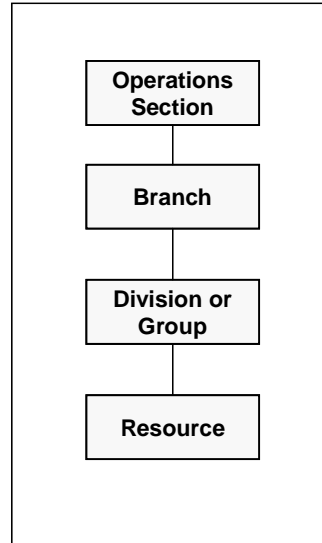
- Represents and is responsible for the functional aspects of the incident command structure.
  - Typically consists of the operations, planning, logistics, and finance and administration functions, which are described below.
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7. *Operations*

Figure 2 depicts the primary organizational structure for the section.

Expand the basic structure according to operational factors and the specific circumstances of the incident at hand. Consider structures based on:

- Jurisdictional boundaries.
  - A strictly functional approach.
  - A mix of functional and geographical considerations.
-



**Figure 2: Operations Section Organizational Elements**

*a) Operations Section Chief*

The operations section chief:

- Is responsible to the IC/UC for all incident-related operational activities.
- Establishes tactical objectives for each operational period with other section chiefs and unit leaders.
- May have one or more deputies assigned, with the assignment of deputies from other agencies encouraged in the case of multi-jurisdictional incidents.
- Should be designated for each operational period.
- Should have direct involvement in the preparation of the IAP for the corresponding period of responsibility.

*b) Branches*

Branches serve several purposes, and may be functional or geographic in nature.

In general, establish branches when the number of divisions or groups exceeds the recommended span of control of 1:3 to 1:7 for the operations section chief.

**Note:** A ratio of 1 supervisor for 5 subordinates is normally recommended, but may vary from 1:8 to 1:10 in larger-scale law enforcement operations.

*c) Divisions and Groups*

Establish divisions and groups when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the IC/operations section chief. There also may be additional levels of supervision below the division or group level.

- Divisions are established to divide an incident into physical or geographical areas of operation.
- Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation.

**Example:** The IC may establish intelligence functions as a functional group in the operations section for certain types of incidents.

*d) Resources*

Resources may be organized and managed in three different ways, depending upon the requirements of the incident.

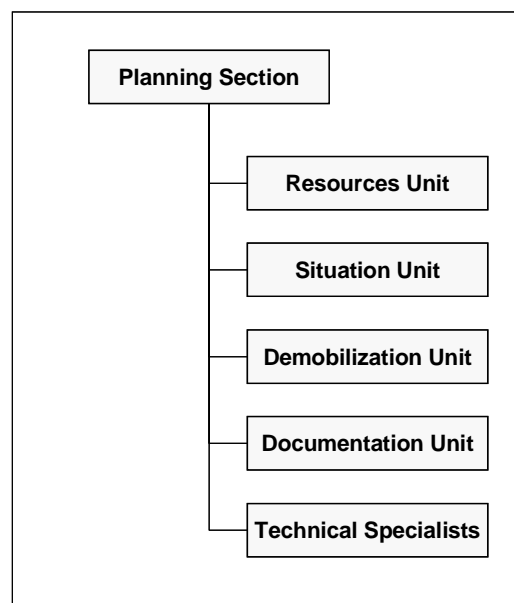
- Single Resources.
- Task Forces.
- Strike Teams.

Use strike teams and task forces wherever possible to:

- Optimize the use of resources.
- Reduce the span of control over a large number of single resources.
- Reduce the complexity of incident management coordination and communications.

**8. Planning**

The section in Figure 3 is comprised of four primary units, as well as a number of technical specialists.



**Figure 3 - Planning Section Organization**

## 9. IAP

The IAP includes the overall incident objectives and strategies established by the IC or UC, and is especially important when:

- Resources from multiple agencies/jurisdictions are involved.
- Multiple jurisdictions are involved.
- The incident will effectively span several operational periods.
- Changes in shifts of personnel and/or equipment are required.
- There is a need to document actions and/or decisions.

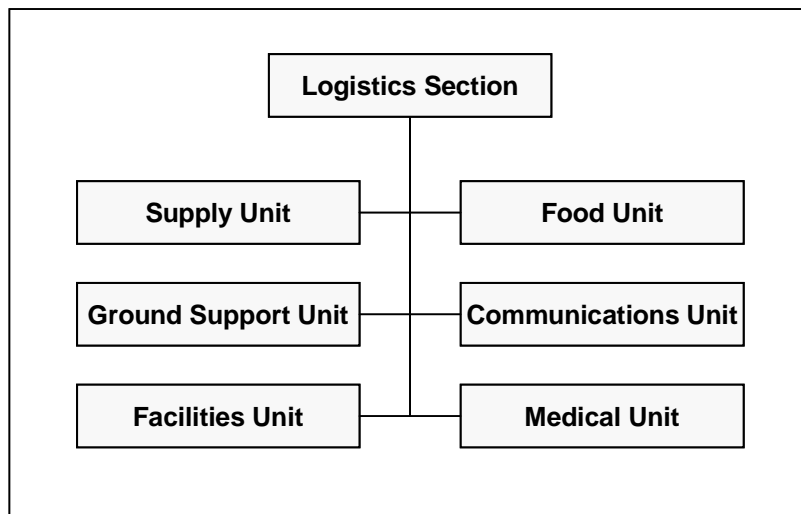
In the case of UC, the IAP must adequately address the:

- Mission and policy needs of each jurisdictional agency, as well as interaction between jurisdictions, functional agencies, and private organizations.
- Tactical objectives and support activities required for one operational period, generally 12 to 24 hours.
- Continuous incorporation of “lessons learned” as incident management activities progress.

The IAP will typically contain a number of components as shown in *Attachment 1, Table 1*.

## 10. Logistics

The section as shown in Figure 4 supports requirements needed to facilitate effective and efficient incident management.



**Figure 4: Logistics Section Organization**

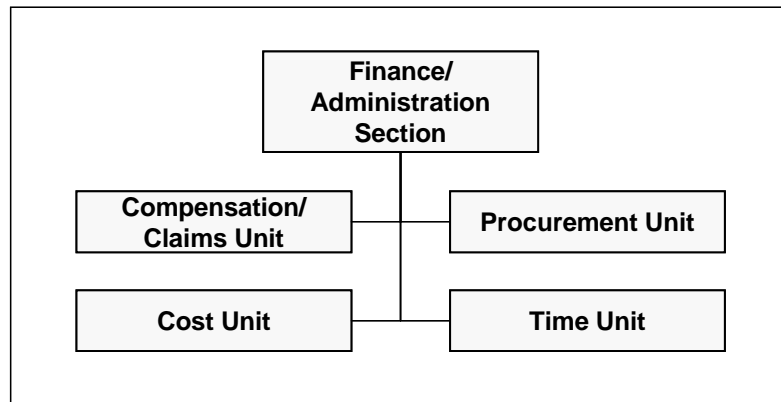


a) Finance and Administration

Establish a finance and administration section when the agencies involved in incident management activities require finance and other administrative support services.

The basic organizational structure is shown in Figure 5. The depicted units may be created as required.

**Note:** Not all incidents will require a separate finance/administration section. In cases requiring only one specific function (e.g., cost analysis), a technical specialist in the planning section may provide this service.



**Figure 5: Finance and Administration Section Organization**

11. Information and Intelligence

The analysis and sharing of information and intelligence are important elements of ICS, and must be appropriately analyzed and shared with personnel designated by the IC, who have proper clearance and a “need-to-know” to ensure that they support decision-making.

In this context, intelligence includes not only national security or other types of classified information but also other operational information that may come from a variety of different sources, such as:

- Risk assessments.
- Medical intelligence (i.e. surveillance).
- Weather information.
- Geospatial data.
- Structural designs.
- Toxic contaminant levels.
- Utilities and public works data.
- Etc.

Other activities directed by the IC can include information security and operational security.

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### a) Organization

Traditionally, information and intelligence functions are located in the planning section. In exceptional situations the IC may need to assign the information and intelligence functions to other parts of the ICS organization.

The intelligence and information function may be most appropriately organized in one of the following ways:

- Within the command staff for incidents with little need for tactical or classified intelligence, and where incident-related intelligence is provided by supporting agency representatives, through real-time reach-back capabilities.
- A branch within the planning section for incidents with some need for tactical intelligence, and where a law enforcement entity is not a member of the UC.
- As a branch within the operations section for incidents with a high need for tactical intelligence (particularly classified intelligence), and where law enforcement is a member of the UC.
- As a separate general staff section when an incident is heavily influenced by intelligence factors, or where there is a need to manage and/or analyze a large volume of classified or highly sensitive intelligence or information. This option is particularly relevant to a terrorism incident, where intelligence plays a crucial role throughout the incident life-cycle.

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## 12. Area Command

An area command is:

- Activated only if necessary, depending upon the complexity of the incident and incident management span-of-control considerations.
- Usually established by an agency administrator or other public official with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident.
- Used when there are a number of incidents in the same area and of the same type, such as two or more hazardous material (HAZMAT) or oil spills, and fires. These incidents may compete for the same resources.
- Established either to oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by a separate ICS organization or to oversee the management of a very large incident that involves multiple ICS organizations, such as would likely be the case for incidents that are non-site specific, geographically dispersed, or evolve over longer periods of time, (e.g. a bio-terror event).

In this sense, acts of biological, chemical, radiological, and/or nuclear terrorism represent particular challenges for the traditional ICS structure, and will require extraordinary coordination between Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

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a) <i>Resource Demands</i>	<p>When incidents do not have similar resource demands, they are usually handled separately and are coordinated through an EOC.</p> <p>Area Command should not be confused with the functions performed by an EOC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area command oversees management of the incident.</li><li>• An EOC coordinates support functions and provides resources support.</li></ul>
b) <i>Unified Area Command</i>	<p>A unified area command should be established to allow each jurisdiction to have representation in the command structure if the incidents under the authority of the area command are multi-jurisdictional.</p>
D. <i>Multi-agency Coordination Systems</i>	<p>This is a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications integrated into a common system with responsibility for coordinating and supporting domestic incident management activities.</p> <p>Multi-agency coordination systems may contain an EOC and, in certain multi-jurisdictional or complex incident management situations, multi-agency coordinating entities.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Direct tactical and operational responsibility for the conduct of incident management activities rests with the IC.</p>
1. <i>Primary Functions</i>	<p>Refer to the <i>Responsibilities</i> section for additional details.</p>
2. <i>EOC</i>	<p>The EOC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May be a permanent organization, facility, or may be established to meet temporary, short-term needs.</li><li>• Physical size, staffing, and equipping will depend on the size of the jurisdiction, resources available, and anticipated incident management workload.</li><li>• May be organized and staffed in a variety of ways.</li><li>• Should include the following core functions regardless of the specific organizational structure used.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Coordination.</li><li>○ Communications.</li><li>○ Resource dispatch and tracking.</li><li>○ Information collection, analysis, and dissemination.</li></ul></li><li>• May also support multi-agency coordination and joint information activities as discussed below.</li><li>• Represents the physical location where the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities normally takes place.</li></ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The ICP located at or in the immediate vicinity of an incident site</p>

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is primarily focused on the tactical on-scene response, but may perform an EOC like function in smaller-scale incidents, or during the initial phase of the response to larger, more complex events.

**Note:** The ICP should be linked to the DOC and EOC to ensure effective and efficient incident management.

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*a) Facilities*

A standing EOC, or those activated to support larger, more complex events is typically established in a more central or permanently established facility, at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.

The DOC facility:

- Normally focuses on internal agency incident management and response and is linked to, and in most cases physically represented in a higher level EOC.
  - Is organized by major functional discipline (fire, law enforcement, medical services, and so on), or by jurisdiction (city, county, region, and so on), or, more likely, some combination thereof.
- 

*b) Staffing*

Personnel representing multiple jurisdictions and functional disciplines and a wide variety of resources may staff the EOC for complex incidents.

**Example:** A local EOC established in response to a bio-terrorism incident would likely include a mix of personnel including:

- Law enforcement.
  - Emergency management.
  - Public health.
  - Medical personnel, including representatives of:
    - Health care facilities.
    - Pre-hospital emergency medical services (EMS/EMT).
    - Patient transportation systems.
    - Pharmaceutical repositories.
    - Laboratories.
    - Etc.
- 

*c) Communications and Coordination*

Upon activation of a local EOC, establish communications and coordination between the:

- IC/UC and the EOC when they are not collocated.
- ICS field organizations and the activated local EOC, either directly or through their parent organizations.

Each EOC, at all levels of government and across functional agencies, must be capable of communicating appropriately with other EOCs during incidents, to include those maintained by private organizations.

Communications between EOCs must be reliable and contain built-in

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redundancies.

Efficient EOC functioning most frequently depends on the existence of mutual aid agreements and joint communications protocols among participating agencies. Such agreements are discussed in NIC Document FEMA 501-3, *NIMS Basic - Preparedness*.

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### 3. Multi-agency Coordination Entities

A multi-agency coordination entity, such as an emergency management agency, may be used to facilitate incident management and policy coordination when an incident:

- Crosses disciplinary or jurisdictional boundaries.
  - Involves complex incident management scenarios.
- 

#### a) Operation and Structure

The situation at hand and the needs of the jurisdictions involved will dictate how multi-agency coordination entities conduct their business and they are structured.

Multi-agency coordination entities typically consist of principals or their designees from organizations and agencies with direct incident management responsibility, or with significant incident management support or resource responsibilities. These entities are sometimes referred to as:

- Crisis action teams.
- Policy committees.
- Incident management groups.
- Executive teams.
- Other similar terms.

**Example:** The wildland fire community has such an entity called the Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC Group).

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#### b) Coordination

In some instances, the EOC may serve a dual function as a multi-agency coordination entity; in others, preparedness organizations discussed in FEMA 501-3 may fulfill this role. Regardless of the term or organizational structure used, these entities typically provide strategic coordination during domestic incidents.

If constituted separately, multi-agency coordination entities, preparedness organizations, and EOCs must coordinate and communicate with one another to provide uniform and consistent guidance to incident management personnel.

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### E. Public Information Systems

Systems and protocols for communicating timely and accurate information to the public are critical during crisis or emergency situations. This section describes the principles, system components, and procedures needed to support effective emergency public information operations.

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## 1. Principles

### a) *PIO*

The PIO supports the IC. Specific activities are detailed in the *Responsibilities* section.

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### b) *Public information*

The JIC coordinates public awareness functions with the information and operational security matters that are the responsibility of the information and intelligence function of the ICS, particularly where public awareness activities may affect information or operations security.

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### c) *Participating Organizations*

Organizations participating in incident management retain their independence.

ICs and multi-agency coordination entities establish and oversee the JIC, to include processes for coordinating and clearing public communications.

In the case of UC, the departments, agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions that contribute to joint public information management do not lose their individual identities, or responsibility for their own programs or policies. Rather, each entity contributes to the overall unified message.

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## 2. Description and Components

### a) *JIS*

Specific actions are detailed in the *Responsibilities* section.

Key elements include:

- Interagency coordination and integration.
  - Developing and delivering coordinated messages.
  - Support for decision-makers.
  - Flexibility, modularity, and adaptability.
- 

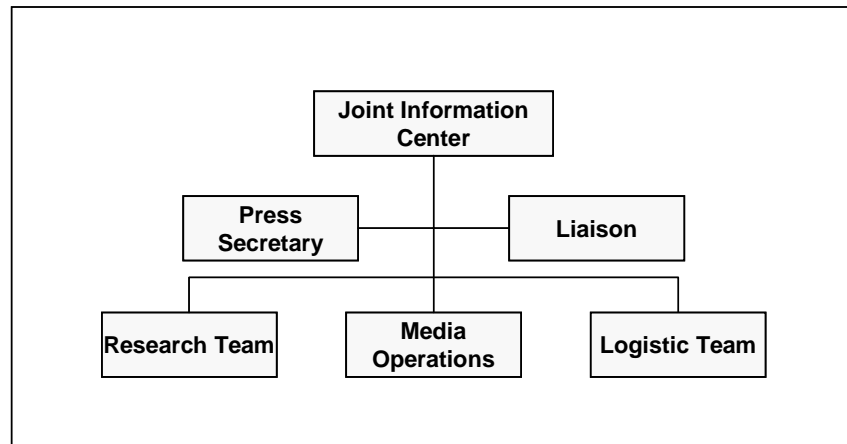
### b) *JIC*

JIC actions are detailed in the *Responsibilities* section.

More than one JIC may be needed for a complex incident spanning a wide geographic area or multiple jurisdictions.

- A single location is preferable, but the system should be flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate multiple JIC locations when the circumstances of an incident require.
- A JIC may be established at various levels of government in large or complex incidents, particularly those involving complex medical and public health information requirements.

An example of typical JIC organization is shown in the Figure 6.



**Figure 6: JIC Organization**

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## VI. Responsibilities:

### *Area Command*

For incidents under its authority:

- Sets overall incident-related priorities.
- Allocates critical resources based on priorities.
- Ensures that incidents are properly managed.
- Ensure that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policy.
- Identifies critical resource needs and reports them to the EOC and multi-agency coordination entities.
- Ensures that short-term emergency recovery is coordinated to assist in the transition to full recovery operations.

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### *IC*

- Establishes incident management objectives and strategies.
  - o Develops incident objectives upon which subsequent incident action planning will be based.
  - o Ensures all functional area activities are directed toward accomplishment of the strategy.
- Modifies procedures or organizational structure to:
  - o Align as necessary with the operating characteristics of their specific jurisdictions.
  - o Accomplish the mission in the context of a particular hazard scenario.
- Approves the IAP.
- Directs the identification and location of facilities based upon the requirements of the situation at hand.
- Approves all requests pertaining to the ordering and releasing of

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incident resources.

- Expands the organization from the top down as incident complexity increases and functional responsibilities are delegated.
- Expands the number of management positions concurrently with structural expansion to adequately address the requirements of the incident.

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*Information and  
intelligence Function*

- Develops, conducts, and manages information-related security plans and operations as directed by the IC.
- Coordinates information and operational security matters with public awareness activities that fall under the responsibility of the PIO, particularly where such public awareness activities may affect information or operations security.
- Handles and safeguards sensitive information of all types.
- Provides sensitive information to those who need access to it in order to effectively and safely conduct their missions.

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*JIC*

- Provides the organizational structure for coordinating and disseminating official information.
  - Coordinates and integrates public information functions:
    - o Across jurisdictions and across functional agencies.
    - o Among Federal, State, local, and tribal partners.
    - o With the private sector and non-governmental organizations.
  - Provides a location for organizations participating in the management of an incident to work together to ensure dissemination of timely, accurate, easy-to-understand, and consistent information to the public.
  - Includes representatives of each jurisdiction, agency, private sector, and non-governmental organization involved in incident management activities.
  - Has the most current and accurate information regarding incident management activities at all times.
  - Is established at each level of incident management as required.
  - Follows procedures and protocols to communicate and coordinate effectively with other JICs, as well as with other appropriate components of the ICS organization on an ongoing basis.
-



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## *JIS*

- Provides the plans, protocols, and structures used to establish an organized, integrated, and coordinated mechanism to deliver understandable, timely, accurate, and consistent information to the public in a crisis.
  - Encompasses all public information operations related to an incident, including:
    - o All Federal, State, local, tribal and private organization PIOs.
    - o Staff.
    - o Each JIC established to support an incident.
  - Provides the mechanism for integrating public information activities:
    - o Among JIC locations.
    - o Across jurisdictions.
    - o With the private sector and non-governmental organizations.
- 

## *Logistics Section*

- Orders resources from off-incident locations.
  - Provides facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance and fuel, food services, communications and information technology support.
  - Provides emergency responder medical services, including inoculations as required.
- 

## *Multi-agency Coordination Entities*

- Ensure each agency involved in incident management activities is providing appropriate situational awareness and resource status information.
  - Establish priorities between incidents and/or area commands in concert with the IC/UC involved.
  - Acquire and allocate resources required by incident management personnel in concert with the priorities established by the IC/UC.
  - Anticipate and identify future resource requirements.
  - Coordinate and resolve policy issues arising from the incident.
  - Provide strategic coordination as required.
  - Following incidents, ensure that improvements in plans, procedures, communications, staffing, and other capabilities necessary for improved incident management are acted upon.
  - Coordinate the above improvements with appropriate preparedness organizations, if they are constituted separately.
-

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*Multi-agency  
Coordination  
Systems*

- Support incident management policies and priorities.
  - Facilitate logistics support and resource tracking.
  - Make informed resource allocation decisions based on incident management priorities.
  - Coordinate incident related information.
  - Coordinate interagency and intergovernmental issues regarding incident management policies, priorities, and strategies.
- 

*Operations Section*

- Reduces the immediate hazard.
  - Saves lives and property.
  - Establishes situational control.
  - Restores normal operations.
- 

*Operations Section  
Chief*

- Directly manages all incident-related operational activities.
  - Establishes tactical objectives for each operational period.
  - Prepares the IAP for the corresponding period of responsibility.
- 

*PIO*

- Supports the IC.
    - Is a key staff member supporting the incident command structure.
    - Represents and advises the IC on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident.
    - Gets IC approval before releasing any incident-related information.
  - Handles media and public inquiries, emergency public information and warnings; rumor monitoring and response, media monitoring, and other functions required to coordinate, clear with appropriate authorities, and disseminate accurate and timely information related to the incident, particularly regarding information on public health and safety and protection.
    - Interfaces with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.
    - Develops accurate and complete information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external consumption.
    - May also perform a key public information-monitoring role.
  - Coordinates public information at or near the incident site and serves as the on-scene link to the JIS.
  - On-scene in a large-scale operation, serves as a field PIO with links to the JIC typically collocated with the Federal, regional, State, local, or tribal EOC tasked with primary incident coordination responsibilities.
-

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### *Planning Section*

- Collects, evaluates, and disseminates incident situation information and intelligence to the IC/UC and incident management personnel, unless the IC places this function elsewhere.
  - Prepares status reports.
  - Displays situation information.
  - Maintains status of resources assigned to the incident.
  - Develops and documents the IAP based upon guidance from the IC or UC.
  - Develops planning options.
  - Forecasts requirements for additional resources.
- 

### *All Responders*

Report in (check-in) to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the IC.

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### *SO*

- Provides the set of systems and procedures to the IC that ensures:
    - o On-going assessment of hazardous environments.
    - o Coordination of multi-agency safety efforts.
    - o Implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety, as well as the general safety of incident operations.
  - Monitors incident operations.
  - Advises the IC on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel.
  - Has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts during incident operations.
  - Coordinates closely with the operations section chief, and planning section chief regarding operational safety and emergency responder health and safety issues.
  - Ensures the coordination of safety management functions and issues across jurisdictions, across functional agencies, and with private sector and non-governmental organizations.
- 

### *Supervisors*

- Supervise and control their subordinates.
  - Communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
  - Record and report resource status changes as they occur.
-

**UC**

- Provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively.
  - o Determines overall incident strategies.
  - o Selects objectives.
  - o Ensures that joint planning for tactical activities is accomplished in accordance with approved incident objectives.
  - o Ensures the integration of tactical operations.
  - o Approves, commits, and makes optimum use of all assigned resources.
- Selects an operations section chief for each operational period.
- Keeps each other informed of specific requirements.
- Establishes consolidated incident objectives, priorities, and strategies.
- Coordinates to establish a single system for ordering resources.
- Develops a consolidated IAP, written or oral, that is evaluated and updated at regular intervals.
- Establishes procedures for joint decision-making and documentation.

**VII. References:**

FEMA 501, *National Incident Management System*  
FEMA 501-3, *NIMS Basic - Preparedness*  
FEMA 501-4, *NIMS Basic - Resource Management*  
FEMA 501-8, *NIMS Basic - ICS Requirements*  
FEMA 510, *National Response Plan*

**VIII. Superseded:** Original

**IX. Attachment 1**

**A. IAP Outline**

**Table 1: Sample IAP Outline**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Normally Prepared By:</b>
<b>Common Components</b>	
Incident Objectives	Incident Commander
Organization List/Chart	Resources Unit
Assignment List	Resources Unit
Communications Plan	Communications Unit
Logistics Plan	Logistics Unit
Responder Medical Plan	Medical Unit
Incident Map	Situation Unit
Health and Safety Plan	Safety Officer
<b>Other Potential Components (Scenario dependent)</b>	
Air Operations Summary	Air Operations
Traffic Plan	Ground Support Unit
Decontamination Plan	Technical Specialist
Waste Management or Disposal Plan	Technical Specialist
Demobilization Plan	Demobilization Unit
Operational Medical Plan	Technical Specialist
Evacuation Plan	Technical Specialist
Site Security Plan	Law Enforcement Specialist
Investigative Plan	Law Enforcement Specialist
Evidence Recovery Plan	Law Enforcement Specialist
Other	As Required