U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

FEMA

May 1, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: NIMS Stakeholders

FROM: Dennis R. Schrader
Deputy Administrator
National Preparedness

SUBJECT: National Comment Period for the Revised National Incident Management System Document

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is coordinating a final review of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in conjunction with the recent release of the National Response Framework (NRF).

During 2006 and 2007, stakeholder workgroups (which included members from all levels of government, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations) worked together to revise the NIMS document. Changes during that time included the following: reorganization of the document to reflect the normal emergency management process (address preparedness before response) and to eliminate the perception that NIMS is only the Incident Command System (ICS); expanded the Preparedness and Resource Management components; and clarified the concepts within Command and Management, including multiagency coordination and public information.

After the conclusion of the 2007 comment periods, further review of the NIMS document was postponed while the revision of the National Response Plan [now known as the National Response Framework] was undertaken. Minor changes were made to the NIMS document to reflect language in the NRF. These changes *did not* significantly alter the 2007 draft version of the document.

As the NRF has now been released, the NIMS will undergo one final national comment period (May 1- June 2, 2008). All comment submissions received must include the agency name and docket ID (FEMA-2008-0008).

The draft NIMS document is available online at www.regulations.gov, in Docket ID FEMA-2008-0008. You may also view hard copies at the Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Room 835, 500 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20472. You may submit comments on the draft NIMS document, identified by Docket ID FEMA-2008-0008, by one of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal**: http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- **E-mail**: FEMA-POLICY@dhs.gov. Include Docket ID FEMA-2008-0008 in the subject line of the message.
- **Fax**: 866-466-5370.
- **Mail/Hand Delivery/Courier**: Regulation & Policy Team, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Room 835, 500 C Street, SW., Washington, DC 20472.

FEMA has also provided a form, available in the docket at www.regulations.gov. Due to the large number of comments that are expected, FEMA asks that comments be submitted using this form. Regardless of the method used for submitting comments or material, all submissions will be posted, without change, to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov, and will include any personal information you provide. Therefore, submitting this information makes it public. You may wish to read the Privacy Act notice that is available on the Privacy and Use Notice link on the Administration Navigation Bar of www.regulations.gov.

Your organization's participation in the NIMS review process is essential to ensure that the Nation can effectively and efficiently prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from and mitigate the effects of any type of incident. Questions regarding the revised NIMS document should be directed to Andrew Slaten at 202-646-8152.

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

FEMA 501/Pre-Decisional Draft April 23, 2008

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NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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The National Incident Management System provides a systematic, proactive approach guiding departments and agencies at all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work seamlessly to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life and property, and the harm to the environment.

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PREFACE

On February 28, 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5 (HSPD–5), *Management of Domestic Incidents*, which directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS). This system provides a consistent nationwide template to enable Federal, State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. This consistency provides the foundation for utilization of NIMS for all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response.

NIMS is not an operational incident management or resource allocation plan. NIMS represents a core set of doctrines, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes that enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management.

HSPD–5 also required the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop the National Response Plan (NRP, which has been superseded by the National Response Framework (NRF)). The NRF is a guide to how the nation conducts all-hazards incident management.

HSPD–5 requires all Federal departments and agencies to adopt NIMS and to use it in their individual incident management programs and activities, as well as in support of all actions taken to assist State, tribal, and local governments. The directive requires Federal departments and agencies to make adoption of NIMS by State, tribal, and local organizations a condition for Federal preparedness assistance (through grants, contracts, and other activities). NIMS also recognizes the role that the private sector and nongovernmental organizations have in preparedness and activities to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents.

Building on the foundation provided by existing emergency management and incident response systems used by jurisdictions, organizations, and functional disciplines at all levels, the NIMS document integrates best practices into a comprehensive framework for use by emergency management/response personnel[1] in an all-hazards context nationwide. These best practices lay the groundwork for the components of NIMS and provide the mechanisms for the further development and refinement of supporting national standards, guidelines, protocols, systems, and technologies. NIMS fosters the development of specialized technologies that facilitate emergency management and incident response activities and allows for the adoption of new approaches that will enable continuous refinement of NIMS over time.

The Secretary of Homeland Security, through the National Integration Center (NIC), Incident Management Systems Division, formerly known as the NIMS Integration Center, publishes the standards, guidelines, and compliance protocols for determining whether a Federal, State, tribal, or local government has adopted the aspects of NIMS. Additionally, the Secretary, through the NIC, publishes standards, guidelines, and compliance procedures and protocols for the aspects of NIMS that are being developed.

[1] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

This document was developed through a collaborative intergovernmental partnership with significant input from the incident management functional disciplines, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations. Originally published on March 1, 2004, the document was revised in 2007 to reflect contributions from stakeholders and lessons learned during recent incidents.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons highlighted the need to focus on improving emergency management, incident response capabilities, and coordination processes across the country. A comprehensive national approach, applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines, improves the effectiveness of emergency management/response personnel[2] across the full spectrum of potential incidents and hazard scenarios (including but not limited to natural hazards, terrorist activities, and other manmade disasters). Such an approach improves coordination and cooperation between public and private agencies/organizations in a variety of emergency management and incident response activities. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) framework sets forth the comprehensive national approach.

Incidents typically begin and end locally and are managed on a daily basis at the lowest possible geographical, organizational, and jurisdictional level. However, there are instances in which successful incident management operations depend on the involvement of multiple jurisdictions, levels of government, functional agencies, and/or emergency responder disciplines. These instances require effective and efficient coordination across this broad spectrum of organizations and activities. NIMS uses a systematic approach to integrate the best existing processes and methods into a unified national framework for incident management. Incident management refers to how incidents are managed across all homeland security activities, including prevention, protection, and response and recovery. This framework forms the basis for interoperability and compatibility that will, in turn, enable a diverse set of public and private organizations to conduct well-integrated and effective emergency management and incident response operations. Emergency management is the coordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other manmade disasters. It does this through a core set of concepts, principles, procedures, organizational processes, terminology, and standards requirements applicable to a broad community of NIMS users.

[2] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

Table 1—Overview of NIMS

What NIMS is:	What NIMS is NOT:
• A comprehensive, nationwide, systematic approach to incident management, including the Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination Systems, and Public Information • A set of preparedness concepts and principles for all hazards • Essential principles for a common operating picture and interoperability of communications and information management • Standardized resource management procedures that enable coordination among different jurisdictions or organizations • Scalable so it may be used for all incidents (from day-to-day to large-scale) • A dynamic system that promotes ongoing management and maintenance	• A response plan • Only used during large-scale incidents • A communications plan • Only applicable to certain emergency management/incident response personnel • Only the Incident Command System or an organizational chart • A static system

B. Concepts and Principles

NIMS is based on the premise that the utilization of a common incident management framework will give emergency management/response personnel a flexible yet standardized system for emergency management and incident response activities. NIMS is flexible because the system components can be utilized to develop plans, processes, procedures, agreements, and roles for all types of incidents and is applicable to any incident regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. Additionally, NIMS provides an organized set of standardized operational structures, which is critical in allowing disparate organizations and agencies to work together in a predictable, coordinated manner.

1. Flexibility

The components of NIMS are adaptable to any situation, from routine, local incidents, to incidents requiring the activation of interstate mutual aid, to those requiring a coordinated Federal response, whether scheduled (e.g., major sporting or community events), notice (e.g., hurricane) or no-notice (e.g., earthquake). This flexibility is essential for NIMS to be applicable across the full spectrum of potential incidents, including those that require multiagency, multijurisdictional (including incidents that occur along international borders), and/or multidisciplinary coordination. Flexibility in the NIMS framework facilitates scalability of emergency management and incident response activities. NIMS also provides for the uniqueness of implementation in specified areas around the Nation. The National Integration Center, as appropriate, will review and support implementation plans, which are designed to reflect these individual requirements and organizational structures, for consistency with NIMS concepts and principles.

2. Standardization

Flexibility to manage incidents of any size requires coordination and standardization among emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations. NIMS provides a set of standardized organizational structures that improve integration and connectivity among jurisdictions and disciplines, starting with a common foundation of preparedness and planning. Personnel and organizations that have adopted the common NIMS framework are able to work together, thereby fostering cohesion among the various organizations involved in all aspects of an incident. NIMS also provides and promotes standard terminology, which fosters more effective communication among agencies and organizations responding together to an incident.

C. Overview of NIMS Components

NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent, nationwide, systematic approach to incident management that is applicable at all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and across functional disciplines in an all-hazards context. Five major components make up this systems approach: Preparedness, Communications and Information Management, Resource Management, Command and Management, and Ongoing Management and Maintenance.

1. NIMS Components

The components of NIMS were not designed to stand alone but rather to work together in a flexible, systematic manner to provide the national framework for incident management. A more detailed discussion of each component is included in subsequent sections of this document.

a. Preparedness

Effective emergency management and incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted on an ongoing basis, in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualifications and certification, and equipment certification.

b. Communications and Information Management

Emergency management and incident response activities rely upon communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. NIMS describes the requirements necessary for a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture. NIMS is based upon the concepts of interoperability, reliability, scalability, portability, and the resiliency and redundancy of communication and information systems.

c. Resource Management

Resources (such as personnel, equipment, and/or supplies) are needed to support critical incident objectives. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to the requirements of the incident. NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes the resource management

process to identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse, and inventory resources.

d. Command and Management

The Command and Management component within NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing flexible, standardized incident management structure. The structure is based on three key organizational constructs: the Incident Command System (ICS), Multiagency Coordination Systems (MACS), and Public Information.

e. Ongoing Management and Maintenance

Within the auspices of Ongoing Management and Maintenance, there are two components: the NIC and Supporting Technologies.

(1) National Integration Center

Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5 (HSPD–5) required the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a mechanism for ensuring the ongoing management and maintenance of NIMS including regular consultation with other Federal departments and agencies; State, tribal, and local stakeholders; and with the private sector and NGOs. The NIC provides strategic direction, oversight, and coordination of NIMS and supports both routine maintenance and the continuous refinement of NIMS and its components. The NIC oversees and coordinates all aspects of NIMS, including the development of compliance criteria and implementation activities at Federal, State, tribal, and local levels. It provides guidance and support to jurisdictions and emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations as they adopt or, consistent with their status, are encouraged to adopt the system. The NIC also oversees and coordinates the publication of NIMS and its related products. This oversight includes the review and certification of training courses and exercise information.

(2) Supporting Technologies

As NIMS and its related emergency management and incident response systems evolve, emergency management/response personnel will increasingly rely upon technology and systems to implement and continuously refine NIMS. The NIC, in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate, oversees and coordinates the ongoing development of incident management–related technology including strategic research and development.

COMPONENT I
PREPAREDNESS

NIMS provides the mechanisms for emergency management/response personnel[3] and their affiliated organizations to work collectively by offering the tools to enhance preparedness. Preparedness is achieved and maintained through a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action. Ongoing preparedness efforts among all those involved in emergency management and incident response activities ensure coordination during times of crisis. Moreover, preparedness facilitates efficient and effective emergency management and incident response activities.

This component describes specific measures and capabilities that emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations should develop and incorporate into their overall preparedness program to enhance operational preparedness necessary for all-hazards emergency management and incident response activities. In developing, refining, and expanding preparedness programs and activities within their jurisdictions and/or organizations, emergency management/response personnel should leverage existing preparedness efforts and collaborative relationships to the greatest extent possible. Individual preparedness for incidents, while an important element of homeland security, is distinct from the operational preparedness of our Nation's emergency management and incident response capabilities and is beyond the scope of NIMS.

A. Concepts and Principles

Within NIMS, preparedness focuses on the following elements: planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualifications and certification, and equipment certification. Effective adoption, implementation, and training of all the components of NIMS in advance of an incident or scheduled event will facilitate collaborative emergency management and incident response activities. Preparedness is a foundational step in emergency management and incident response; therefore, the concepts and principles that form the basis for preparedness are the integration of the concepts and principles of all the components of NIMS.

1. Unified Approach

Preparedness requires a unified approach to emergency management and incident response activities. To achieve this, components of NIMS must be woven together within a jurisdiction's or organization's emergency management and incident response structure. Specifically, preparedness must be integrated into communications and information management, resource

[3] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

management, and command and management to form an effective system. Additionally, the unified approach concept is at the core of the command and management system, as it is based on chain of command, unity of command, unity of effort, and when implemented, unified command. These characteristics allow organizations with different jurisdictional, geographical, and/or functional responsibilities, authorities, and resources to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively in support of a commonly recognized objective.

2. Levels of Capability

Preparedness involves actions to establish and sustain necessary capabilities to execute a full range of emergency management and incident response activities. For NIMS to function effectively, jurisdictions and organizations must set expectations about the capabilities and resources that will be provided before, during, and after an incident. The inventorying and categorizing of resources before an incident or scheduled event is a critical element of preparedness as it helps to establish and verify the level of capability needed. Additionally, the concept of identifying this level of capability is woven throughout the components of NIMS, specifically into the credentialing system, as it is designed to help verify the identity and qualifications of emergency response resources during an incident.

B. Achieving Preparedness

Individual jurisdictions are responsible for preparing in advance of an incident, in coordination with and support from the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as appropriate. In order for successful emergency management and incident response to occur, it is necessary that emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This is essential not only for emergency management/response personnel, but also for those acting in a policy, coordination, or support role.

- *Policy Role*

  Development, revision, signing, and/or formalization of policies, procedures, mutual aid agreements, and assistance agreements, and/or plans relating to emergency management and incident response programs and activities.

- *Coordination Role*

  Resource management or any other necessary coordination efforts required for emergency management and incident response programs and activities.

- *Support Role*

  Provision of assistance for emergency management and incident response programs and activities.

1. Relationship between NIMS and Other Preparedness Efforts

To achieve national preparedness and coordinated response, emergency management and incident response activities must be coordinated at all levels of government and should include the private sector and NGOs, where appropriate. Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5 (HSPD–5) established a single, comprehensive approach to incident management with the

objective of ensuring that all levels of government across the Nation have the capability to work efficiently and effectively together. Several other Homeland Security Presidential Directives are inextricably linked with HSPD–5, as they deal directly with national preparedness and the protection of critical infrastructure. These directives are discussed more fully below.

a. Homeland Security Presidential Directive–7 (HSPD–7), Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection

HSPD–7 directed DHS to establish a national policy for Federal departments and agencies to identify and prioritize critical infrastructure and key resources in order to prevent, deter, and mitigate the effects of deliberate efforts to destroy, incapacitate, or exploit them. Federal departments and agencies are to work with State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and NGOs to accomplish this objective. This effort includes completion and implementation of the National Infrastructure Protection Plan.

b. Homeland Security Presidential Directive–8 (HSPD–8), National Preparedness

HSPD–8 directed Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to lead a national initiative to develop a National Preparedness System—a common and unified approach to "strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters and other emergencies." The requirements of HSPD–8 led to the National Preparedness Guidelines, which was developed to provide the means for the Nation to answer three fundamental questions:

- How prepared do we need to be?
- How prepared are we?
- How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?

HSPD–8 also required DHS to develop mechanisms for the improved delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State, tribal, and local governments and to strengthen the Nation's preparedness capabilities. Fifteen National Planning Scenarios were developed to illustrate the range, scope, magnitude, and complexity of incidents for which the Nation should prepare. Using this wide range of possible scenarios, including terrorism, natural disasters, and health emergencies, helps reduce uncertainty in planning.

After identifying the most important performance needs across the scenarios, DHS then developed the Target Capabilities List (TCL), which is designed to guide efforts to build a national network of capabilities that will be available when and where they are needed. The TCL outlines an all-hazards approach to the development of capabilities that will be needed for natural or manmade disasters or other major incidents, and defines the primary roles that all levels of government, the private sector, NGOs, and individuals have in national preparedness. The capabilities provide the means to accomplish a mission and achieve desired outcomes by performing critical tasks, under specified conditions, to target levels of performance. Capabilities are delivered by appropriate combinations of properly planned, organized, equipped, trained, and exercised personnel.

2. NIMS and Its Relationship to the National Response Framework

NIMS provides the template for the management of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. The National Response Framework (NRF) (which supersedes the National Response Plan) is an all-hazards framework that builds upon the NIMS. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for national-level policy and operational direction for incident management to ensure timely and effective Federal support to State, tribal, and local related activities. The NRF is applicable to all Federal departments and agencies that participate in operations requiring a coordinated Federal response.

The NRF is a guide to how the nation conducts all-hazards incident management.

NIMS and the NRF are designed to improve the Nation's incident management capabilities and overall efficiency. During incidents requiring coordinated Federal support, the NRF provides the guidelines and procedures to integrate capabilities and resources into a cohesive, coordinated, and seamless national framework for incident management.

A basic premise of both NIMS and the NRF is that incidents typically be managed at the local level first. In the vast majority of incidents, local resources and local mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements will provide the first line of emergency management and incident response. If additional or specialized resources or capabilities are needed, Governors may request Federal assistance; however, NIMS is based on the concept that local jurisdictions retain command, control, and authority over response activities for their jurisdictional areas. Adhering to NIMS will allow local agencies to better utilize incoming resources.

NIMS and the NRF are designed to ensure that local jurisdictions retain command, control, and authority over response activities for their jurisdictional areas.

The fundamental role preparedness has in emergency management and incident response is a universal concept incorporated in both NIMS and the NRF. Though the specific elements of preparedness described within each document may vary slightly, the concepts remain complementary. The key elements found within the Preparedness Component of NIMS and the NRF are described and organized in a fashion to best assist stakeholders in the development of efficient and effective emergency management and incident response capabilities. Figure 1 provides an illustrative example of the preparedness cycle described in the NRF.

Figure 1—The Preparedness Cycle

3. Preparedness Roles

Preparedness activities should be coordinated among all appropriate agencies and organizations within the jurisdiction, as well as across jurisdictions. The private sector and NGOs should be involved in these efforts, as they are often used as the mode to deliver incident-related government services, and are the owners and operators of critical infrastructure and key resources that may be involved in emergency management and incident response. Though not integrated directly into NIMS, individuals play a critical role in preparedness and are expected to prepare themselves and their families for all types of potential incidents. Jurisdictions should have outreach programs to promote and support individual and community preparedness (e.g., public education, training sessions, demonstrations), including preparedness of those with special needs.

a. Preparedness Organizations

Preparedness organizations provide coordination for emergency management and incident response activities before an incident or scheduled event. These organizations range from groups of individuals to small committees to large standing organizations that represent a wide variety of committees, planning groups, and other organizations (e.g., Citizen Corps, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), Critical Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Councils). Preparedness organizations should meet regularly and coordinate with one another to ensure an appropriate focus on helping jurisdictions and groups of jurisdictions to meet their preparedness needs. The needs of the jurisdictions involved will dictate how frequently such organizations must conduct their business, as well as how they are structured. When preparedness activities routinely need to be accomplished across jurisdictions, preparedness organizations should be multijurisdictional and/or multiagency and include the private sector, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and NGOs, when relevant. Memorandums or agreements should be

established between necessary parties so that each will be aware of the capabilities, expectations, and roles of the others.

Preparedness organizations may take the following actions, among others:

- establish and coordinate emergency operations plans, protocols, and procedures, including public communications and awareness;
- integrate and coordinate the activities and functions within their purview;
- establish the standards, guidelines, and protocols necessary to promote interoperability;
- adopt standards, guidelines, and procedures for requesting and providing resources;
- identify resources and other requirements and set priorities for their use;
- encourage training, exercises, and evaluation and corrective action programs;
- ensure the establishment and maintenance of necessary mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements and outreach to the private sector and NGOs;
- use Multiagency Coordination System(s) (MACS) as needed for planned events (such as parades, sporting events, etc.) or for specific types of incidents (such as pandemic influenza, hurricanes, etc.);[4]
- plan for operational scientific support, which can be done at each level of government, and contribute ideas to ongoing research and development of new technologies;[5] and
- conduct after action reviews to strengthen future preparedness.

b. Elected and Appointed Officials

Elected and appointed officials must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for successful emergency management and incident response. These officials include administrative and political personnel as well as department/agency administrators who have leadership roles in a jurisdiction, including legislators and chief executives, whether elected (e.g., governors, mayors, tribal leaders, and county executives) or appointed (e.g., county administrators and city managers). At times, their roles may require providing direction and guidance to constituents during an incident, but their day-to-day activities do not necessarily focus on emergency management and incident response.

[4] See page 63, Component IV, Command and Management, *Multiagency Coordination Systems.*
[5] See page 79, Component V, Ongoing Management and Maintenance, *Supporting Technologies.*

To better serve their constituents, elected and appointed officials should do the following:

- understand, commit to, and receive training on NIMS and participate in exercises;
- maintain an understanding of basic emergency management, continuity of operations/continuity of government plans, jurisdictional response capabilities, and how to initiate disaster declarations;
- lead and encourage preparedness efforts within the community, agencies of the jurisdiction, private sector, and NGOs, as appropriate;
- help to establish relationships (including mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements) with other jurisdictions, and as appropriate, with the private sector and NGOs;
- support and encourage participation in mitigation efforts within the jurisdiction, and as appropriate, with the private sector and NGOs;
- provide guidance to their jurisdictions, departments, and/or agencies for NIMS implementation with clearly stated policies;
- understand laws and regulations in their jurisdictions that pertain to emergency management and incident response; and
- maintain awareness of critical infrastructure and key resources within their jurisdictions, potential incident impacts, and restoration priorities.

Elected and appointed officials may also be called upon to help shape and revise laws, policies, and budgets to aid preparedness efforts and to improve emergency management and incident response activities.

An incident may have a mix of political, economic, social, environmental, public health, and financial implications with potentially serious long-term effects. Frequently, incidents require a coordinated response (across agencies, jurisdictions, and/or including the private sector and NGOs), during which elected and appointed officials must make difficult decisions under crisis conditions. Elected and appointed officials must be aware of how NIMS can work to ensure cooperative response efforts, thereby minimizing the potential implications of an incident.

(1) Elected and Appointed Officials During an Incident

Generally, elected and appointed officials are not at the scene of the incident, but must have the ability to communicate and meet with the Incident Commander (IC)/Unified Command (UC), as necessary. Depending on the nature of the incident or level of the overall emergency, elected and appointed officials could function from the following locations:

- the agency or jurisdictional offices;
- an Emergency Operations Center (EOC); or
- a location housing multiagency coordination.

Elected and appointed officials should provide input on policy, direction, and authority to the IC/UC. Proper coordination between elected and appointed officials and the IC/UC can be crucial to the successful management of an incident. Elected and appointed officials must

Major responsibilities of the elected and appointed officials:

- clearly state the agency/jurisdiction's policy
- evaluate effectiveness and correct deficiencies
- support a multiagency approach

clearly communicate views to the IC/UC. As time and agency policy dictate, the following considerations should be clearly communicated, documented, and provided to the IC/UC:

- safety considerations;
- environmental issues;
- legal and policy limitations;
- issues relating to critical infrastructure services or restoration;
- economic, political, and social concerns; and
- cost considerations.

In some circumstances, if information is not delineated in policies or laws, it should be defined through a formal delegation of authority or letter or expectations.

c. Nongovernmental Organizations

Nongovernmental organizations, such as community-based, faith-based, or national organizations (e.g., the Salvation Army, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and the American Red Cross), play vital support roles in emergency management and incident response activities. To fully integrate their efforts, NGOs that have the capacity and desire to be involved should be included in a jurisdiction's preparedness efforts, especially in planning, training, and exercises. Furthermore, memorandums of agreement should be established with NGOs prior to an incident so each organization will be aware of the capabilities, expectations, and roles of others.

It is recommended that key executives and administrators of NGOs use NIMS for planned events or incidents. The use of NIMS improves the ability of the organizations to integrate into incident management. While compliance with NIMS is not mandated for NGOs, adherence to NIMS procedures and terminology, and requiring staff with disaster-related missions to take appropriate training will support the continued integration of the NGOs into a jurisdiction's preparedness efforts.

d. Private Sector

The private sector plays a vital support role in emergency management and incident response and should be incorporated into all aspects of NIMS. Utilities, industries, corporations, businesses, and professional and trade associations typically are involved in critical aspects of emergency response and incident management. These organizations should prepare for all-hazards incidents that may affect their ability to deliver goods and services. It is essential that private sector organizations that are directly involved in emergency management and incident response (e.g., hospitals, utilities, and critical infrastructure owners and operators) be included in a jurisdiction's preparedness efforts, as appropriate.

Governments at all levels should work with the private sector to establish a common set of expectations consistent with Federal, State, tribal, and local roles, responsibilities, and methods of operations. These expectations should be widely disseminated and the necessary training and practical exercises conducted so that they are thoroughly understood in advance of an actual incident. These expectations are particularly important with respect to private sector organizations involved in critical infrastructure and key resources areas. In addition, private sector organizations may wish to consider entering into assistance agreements with governments

or other private sector organizations to clarify the respective capabilities, roles, and/or expectations of the parties involved in preparing for and responding to an incident. Finally, the private sector may be a source for best practices in many areas of preparedness, emergency management, and incident response.

4. Preparedness Elements

Preparedness efforts should validate and maintain plans, policies, and procedures, describing how they will prioritize, coordinate, manage, and support information and resources. The elements described below build the foundation necessary for efficient and effective response and recovery. Ongoing support is provided by the National Integration Center (NIC) in the following areas: training and exercises, personnel qualification and certification, and equipment certification.[6]

a. Preparedness Planning

Plans must be realistic, scalable, and applicable to all types of incidents, from daily occurrences to incidents requiring the activation of interstate mutual aid, and to those requiring a coordinated Federal response. Plans, including emergency operations plans, should form the basis of training and be exercised periodically to ensure that all individuals involved in response are able to execute their assigned tasks. It is essential that plans address training and exercising and allow for the incorporation of after-action reviews, lessons learned, and corrective actions with responsibility agreements following any major incidents or exercises. Plans should be updated periodically to reflect changes in the emergency management and incident response environment, as well as any institutional or organizational changes.

Plans describe how personnel, equipment, and other governmental and nongovernmental resources will be used to support emergency management and incident response requirements. They represent the operational core of preparedness and provide mechanisms for setting priorities, integrating multiple jurisdictions/organizations and functions, establishing collaborative relationships, and ensuring that communications and other systems effectively support the full spectrum of emergency management and incident response activities. Plans should also incorporate strategies for maintaining continuity of government and continuity of operations during and after incidents, provide mechanisms to ensure resiliency of critical infrastructure and economic stability of communities, and incorporate the advance planning associated with resource management, and communications and information management.

Plans should integrate all relevant departments, agencies, and organizations (including the private sector and NGOs, where appropriate) to facilitate coordinated emergency management and incident response activities. Where appropriate, these plans should incorporate a clearly defined process for seeking and requesting assistance from necessary department(s), agency(ies), and/or organizations. The Federal Government has defined plans by which Federal response resources will be deployed prior to or during incidents. Jurisdictions should be aware of these plans in order to accommodate Federal resources when necessary and should integrate them into their plans as appropriate. While it is recognized that jurisdictions and/or organizations will develop multiple types of plans, such as response, mitigation, and recovery plans, it is essential that these plans be coordinated and complement one another.

[6] See page 75 , Component V, Ongoing Management and Maintenance, *National Integration Center.*

Two broad categories of plans are defined as follows:

- Strategic plans define and develop programmatic priorities that address requirements, goals, objectives, milestones, and resources that ensure interoperable and integrated actions among all levels of government, the private sector, and NGOs to manage all-hazard emergency management and incident response activities. Strategic planning involves the adoption of long-range goals and objectives, the setting of priorities, the establishment of budgets and other fiscal decisions, policy development, and the application of measures of performance or effectiveness.
- Operational plans identify and direct the agencies/organizations and resources required to execute the tasks and objectives necessary based on the strategic planning. Operational plans often include (but are not limited to) contingency and tactical plans.

Each jurisdiction, in coordination with appropriate agencies and organizations, should develop plans that define the scope of preparedness, emergency management, and incident response activities necessary for that jurisdiction (e.g., an emergency operations plan). These plans should describe organizational structures, roles and responsibilities, policies, and protocols for providing support and should be flexible enough for use in all incidents and comprehensive enough to meet the wide variety of public needs that may arise. While the preparedness of the public is generally beyond the scope of NIMS, plans should also include public awareness, education, and communications plans and protocols.

(1) Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government

Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) planning, testing and exercising ensure the continuation of essential functions through a wide range of incidents. Recent natural and manmade disasters demonstrated the need for COOP/COG capabilities and plans at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels. Ensuring that these essential functions continue and that infrastructure and resources are available to support a jurisdiction is critical to the success of emergency management and incident response operations.[7]

COOP planning, testing, training, exercising and assessment should be instituted within organizations (including all levels of government), across the private sector and NGOs, as appropriate, to ensure the continued performance of core capabilities and/or critical government operations during any potential incident. It is the capability of maintaining a business' core capabilities and/or government operations under all eventualities. This is accomplished, for example, through the development of plans, procedures, provisions for alternative facilities, personnel, resources, interoperable and redundant communications, and vital records databases. This is further validated through a comprehensive continuity test, training, exercise and assessment program.

While COOP activities serve to support the continuance of business and/or government functions, COG activities address the continuance of constitutional governance. COG planning aims to preserve and/or reconstitute the institution of government and ensure that a department or agency's constitutional, legislative, and/or administrative responsibilities are maintained. This is accomplished through the succession of leadership, the predelegation of emergency authority,

[7] The Federal Government established a comprehensive national policy on the continuity of Federal Government structures and operations in National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 20. The requirements for Federal Executive Branch continuity programs have been identified in Federal Continuity Directives 1 and 2 (February 2008).

and active command and control during response and recovery operations. Governments must ensure that elected officials and all three branches of government are able to function during and after a disaster. In order for COOP and COG plans to be most effective, they must be tightly integrated with all other emergency management and incident response plans.

(2) Mutual Aid Agreements and/or Assistance Agreements

Mutual aid agreements and assistance agreements are written or oral agreements between and among agencies/organizations and/or jurisdictions that provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated services. The primary objective is to facilitate rapid, short-term deployment of emergency support prior to, during, and/or after an incident. A signed agreement does not obligate the provision or receipt of aid, but rather provides a tool for use should the incident dictate a need. There are several types of these kinds of agreements, including but not limited to the following:

- *Automatic Mutual Aid*

  Agreements that permit the automatic dispatch and response of requested resources without incident-specific approvals. These agreements are usually basic contracts; some may be informal accords.

- *Local Mutual Aid*

  Agreements between neighboring jurisdictions or organizations that involve a formal request for assistance and generally cover a larger geographic area than automatic mutual aid.

- *Regional Mutual Aid*

  Substate regional mutual aid agreements between multiple jurisdictions that are often sponsored by a council of governments or a similar regional body.

Agreements should include the following elements or provisions:

- definitions of key terms used in the agreement
- roles and responsibilities of individual parties
- procedures for requesting and providing assistance
- procedures, authorities, and rules for payment, reimbursement, and allocation of costs
- notification procedures
- protocols for interoperable communications
- relationships with other agreements among jurisdictions
- workers' compensation
- treatment of liability and immunity
- recognition of qualifications and certifications
- sharing agreements, as required
- termination clause

- *Statewide/Intrastate Mutual Aid*

  Agreements, often coordinated through the State, that incorporate both State and local governmental and nongovernmental assets in an attempt to increase preparedness statewide.

- *Interstate Agreements*

  Out-of-State assistance through an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or other formal state-to-state agreements that support the response effort.

- *Other Agreements*

  Any agreement, whether formal or informal, used to request and/or provide assistance and/or resources among jurisdictions at any level of government (including foreign), private sector or nongovernmental organizations.

Jurisdictions should be party to agreements with the appropriate jurisdictions and/or organizations (including the private sector and NGOs, where appropriate) from which they expect to receive, or to which they expect to provide, assistance. States should participate in interstate compacts and look to establish intrastate agreements that encompass all local jurisdictions. Authorized officials from each of the participating jurisdictions and/or organizations should collectively approve all mutual aid agreements and assistance agreements.

Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and memorandums of agreement (MOAs) are also needed with the private sector and NGOs—such as community-based and faith-based organizations and national organizations including the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army—to facilitate the timely delivery of assistance during incidents.

b. Procedures and Protocols

Procedures and protocols should detail the specific actions that can be taken to implement a plan or system. All emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations should develop procedures and protocols that translate into specific action-oriented checklists for use during incident response operations, including how the organizations will accomplish their assigned tasks.

Procedures are documented and implemented with: checklists; resource listings; maps, charts, and other pertinent data; mechanisms for notifying staff; processes for obtaining and using equipment, supplies, and vehicles; methods of obtaining mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements; mechanisms for reporting information to Department Operations Centers (DOC) and EOCs; and communications operating instructions, including connectivity among governments, the private sector, and NGOs. There are four standard levels of procedural documents:

- *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or Operations Manual*

  Complete reference document that provides the purpose, authorities, duration, and details for the preferred method of performing a single function or a number of interrelated functions in a uniform manner.

- *Field Operations Guide or Incident Management Handbook*

  Durable pocket or desk guide that contains essential information required to perform specific assignments or functions.

- *Mobilization Guide*

  Reference document used by agencies/organizations outlining agreements, processes, and procedures used by all participating organizations for activating, assembling, and transporting resources.

- *Job Aid*

  Checklist or other visual aid intended to ensure that specific steps of completing a task or assignment are accomplished. Job aids may also serve as training aids to teach how to complete specific job tasks.

Protocols are sets of established guidelines for actions (which may be designated by individuals, teams, functions, or capabilities) under various specified conditions. Establishing protocols provides for the standing orders, authorizations, and delegations necessary to permit the rapid execution of a task, function, or a number of interrelated functions without seeking permission to do so. Based on training and delegation of authority, protocols permit specific personnel to assess the situation presented, take immediate steps to intervene, and escalate their efforts to a specific level before further guidance or authorizations are required.

c. Training and Exercises

Personnel with roles in emergency management and incident response at all levels of government—including persons with leadership positions, such as elected and appointed officials—and within the private sector and NGOs must be appropriately trained to improve all-hazards capabilities nationwide. Standardized NIMS training courses focused on the structure and operational coordination processes and systems together with courses focused on discipline-specific and agency-specific expertise help to ensure that emergency management/response personnel can function together effectively during an incident. Training and exercises should be specifically tailored to the responsibilities of the personnel involved in incident management. Mentoring or shadowing opportunities, to allow less experienced personnel to observe those with more experience during an actual incident, should be incorporated to enhance training and exercising. Additionally, exercises should be designed to allow personnel to simulate multiple command, supervisory and/or leadership roles, whenever possible.

NIMS training levels are dependent upon the individual's/jurisdiction's/organization's level of involvement in emergency management and incident response activities. Training should allow practitioners to:

- use the concepts and principles of NIMS in exercises and actual incidents; and
- become more comfortable using NIMS, including the incident command system.

To improve NIMS performance, emergency management/response personnel must also participate in realistic exercises—including multidisciplinary, multijurisdictional incidents and private sector and NGO interaction—to improve coordination and interoperability. Thorough exercising of NIMS components may be done using a single exercise or a series of exercises, each of which evaluates specific aspects of NIMS and its components. Exercises should be conducted with parties included in strategic and operational plans (e.g., the emergency operations plan), including departments, agencies, and mutual aid agreement and assistance agreement partners, including the private sector and NGOs. Exercises should contain a mechanism for incorporating corrective actions into the planning process. For guidance on exercise design, methodology, and evaluation; refer to the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program or other exercise development tools. Exercises should also cover the following:

Exercises should contain a mechanism for incorporating corrective actions into the planning process.

- all aspects of a plan, particularly the processes and procedures for activating local, intrastate, or interstate mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements; and
- knowledge needed to activate those agreements.

d. Personnel Qualifications and Certification

A critical element of preparedness under NIMS is the use of national standards that allow for the use of common or compatible structures for the qualification and certification of emergency management/response personnel.[8] Standards will help ensure that these personnel possess the minimum knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to execute incident management and emergency response activities safely and effectively. Standards typically include training, experience, credentialing, validation, and physical and medical fitness. Federal, State, tribal, and local certifying agencies, and professional and private organizations with personnel involved in emergency management and incident response are encouraged to credential those individuals for their respective disciplines and/or jurisdictions. The baseline criteria for this voluntary credentialing will be established by the NIC and will detail the standards associated with the minimum thresholds for specific emergency management positions, allowing those credentialed personnel to participate, as needed, in national-level incidents.

e. Equipment Certification

Emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations rely on various types and kinds of equipment to perform essential tasks.[9] A critical component of preparedness is the acquisition of equipment that will perform to certain standards (as designated by organizations such as National Fire Protection Association or National Institute of Standards and Technology), including the capability to be interoperable with equipment used by other jurisdictions and/or participating organizations.[10] Associated with this is the need to have a common understanding of the abilities of distinct types of equipment, to allow for better planning before an incident and rapid scaling and flexibility in meeting the needs of an incident.

5. Mitigation

Mitigation is an important element of emergency management and incident response and provides a critical foundation in the effort to reduce the loss of life and property and minimize damage to the environment from natural and/or manmade disasters by avoiding or lessening the impact of a disaster and providing value to the public by creating safer communities. Mitigation seeks to fix the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. These activities or actions, in most cases, will have a long-term sustained effect. Risk management—the process for measuring or assessing risk and developing strategies to manage it—is an essential aspect of mitigation. Risk management strategies may include avoiding the risk (e.g., removing structures in floodplains), reducing the negative effect of the risk (e.g., hardening buildings by placing barriers around them), or accepting some or all of the consequences of a particular risk.

Examples of mitigation activities include the following:

- ongoing public education and outreach activities designed to reduce loss of life and destruction of property;
- complying with or exceeding floodplain management and land-use regulations;

[8] See page 31, Component III, Resource Management, for more information on credentialing.
[9] See page 31, Component III, Resource Management, for more information on equipment certification.
[10] See page 75, Component V, Ongoing Management and Maintenance, *National Integration Center*.

- enforcing stringent building codes, seismic design standards, and wind-bracing requirements for new construction, or repairing and/or retrofitting existing buildings;
- supporting measures to ensure the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure and key resources designed to ensure continuity of business and the economic stability of communities;
- acquiring damaged homes or businesses in flood-prone areas, relocating the structures, and returning the property to open space, wetlands, or recreational uses;
- identifying, utilizing, and refurbishing shelters and safe rooms to help protect people in their homes, public buildings, and schools in hurricane- and tornado-prone areas;
- implementing a vital records program at all levels of government to prevent loss of crucial documents and records;
- intelligence sharing and linkage leading to other law enforcement activities, such as infiltration of a terrorist cell to prevent an attack;
- periodic remapping of hazard or potential hazard zones, using geospatial techniques; and
- management of data regarding historical incidents to support strategic planning and analysis.

COMPONENT II

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Effective emergency management and incident response activities rely upon flexible communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to emergency management/response personnel[11] and their affiliated organizations. Establishing and maintaining a common operating picture and ensuring accessibility and interoperability are the principal goals of the Communications and Information Management component of NIMS. Properly planned, established, and utilized communications enable the dissemination of information among and between command and support elements, and, as appropriate, cooperating agencies and organizations.

Incident communications are facilitated through the development and use of common communications plans, interoperable communications equipment, processes, standards and architectures. This integrated approach links the operational and support units of the various organizations involved during an incident, which is necessary to maintain communications connectivity and situational awareness. Planning for communications and information management must address the incident-related policies and equipment, systems, standards, and training necessary to achieve integrated communications.

A. Concepts and Principles

The underlying concepts and principles of this component reinforce the use of a flexible communications and information system in which emergency management/response personnel can maintain a constant flow of information throughout an incident. These concepts and principles emphasize the need for and maintenance of a common operating picture; interoperability; reliability, scalability, and portability; and resiliency and redundancy of any system and its components.

1. Common Operating Picture

A common operating picture is established and maintained by the gathering, collating, synthesizing, and disseminating of incident information to all appropriate parties involved in an incident. Achieving a common operating picture allows on-scene and off-scene

Common Operating Picture

Collating and gathering information—such as traffic, weather, actual damage, resource availability—of any type (voice, data, etc.) from agencies/organizations in order to make decisions during an incident.

[11] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

personnel (e.g., those at the Incident Command Post (ICP), an Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and within a Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Group) to have the same information about the incident, including the availability and location of resources, personnel, and the status of requests for assistance. Additionally, a common operating picture offers an overview of an incident thereby providing incident information which enables the Incident Commander (IC), Unified Command (UC), and supporting agencies and organizations to make effective, consistent, and timely decisions. In order to maintain situational awareness, communications and incident information must be updated continually. Having a common operating picture during an incident helps to ensure consistency for all emergency management/response personnel engaged in an incident.

2. Interoperability

Communications interoperability allows emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations to communicate within and across agencies and jurisdictions via voice, data, or video on demand, in real time, when needed, and when authorized. It is essential that these communications systems be capable of interoperability, as successful emergency management and incident response operations require the continuous flow of critical information among jurisdictions, disciplines, organizations, and agencies.

Interoperability planning requires accounting for emergency management and incident response contingencies and challenges. Interoperability plans must include considerations of governance standard operating procedures (SOPs), technology, training and exercises, and usage within the context of the stress and chaos of a major response effort. The steps to ensure coordinated decisionmaking between agencies and jurisdictions are necessary to establish proper and coherent governance. Agreements between these agencies and jurisdictions are critical to achieving interoperability. Agreements and SOPs should clearly articulate the processes, procedures, and protocols necessary to achieve interoperability.

3. Reliability, Scalability, and Portability

Communications and information systems should be designed to be flexible, reliable, and scalable in order to function in any type of incident, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. They should be suitable for operations within a single jurisdiction or agency, a single jurisdiction with multiagency involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement. Communications systems should be applicable and acceptable to users, readily adaptable to new technology, and reliable in the context of any incident to which emergency management/response personnel would be expected to respond.

Portability of radio technologies, protocols, and frequencies among emergency management/response personnel will allow for the successful and efficient integration, transport, and deployment of communications systems when necessary. Portability includes the standardized assignment of radio channels across jurisdictions, which allows responders to participate in an incident outside their jurisdiction and still use familiar equipment. Scalability differs from portability in that scalability allows responders to increase the number of users on a system, while portability facilitates the interaction of systems that are normally distinct.

4. Resiliency and Redundancy

Resiliency is the ability of communications systems to withstand and continue to perform after damage and/or loss of infrastructure. It requires communications systems to avoid relying solely on a sophisticated but vulnerable network of support systems. Prudent resiliency practices could include, for example, hardened dispatch centers and transmission systems or infrastructure that can withstand known risks (e.g., repeater antenna sites are equipped with independent power systems to ensure their continued function during a power failure).

Redundancy is another essential element of a jurisdiction's/organization's communications structure. Although the duplication of identical services is one method of achieving redundancy, it also derives from the ability to communicate through diverse, alternative methods when standard capabilities suffer damage. For example, a public safety agency might have a high-tech voice 400-megahertz system that is used as the primary dispatch system but maintain a redundant very high frequency (VHF) system in its vehicles, which would still be able to reach the dispatch center in the event that the primary system is rendered inoperable. Resiliency and redundancy are critical to ensuring communications flow during an incident.

B. Management Characteristics

Emergency management/response personnel must be able to manage incident communications and information effectively. Regardless of the communications methods being utilized or the information being transmitted, procedures and protocols need to be followed. As technologies change and the methods of exchanging information improve, management procedures need to keep pace.

1. Standardized Communication Types

Successful communications and information management require that emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations utilize standard communications types. The determination of the individual or agency/organization responsible for these communications is discussed in the Command and Management component and in Appendix B. The following is a list of standardized types of communications:[12]

- *Strategic Communications*

  High-level directions, including resource priority decisions, roles and responsibilities determinations, and overall incident response courses of action.

- *Tactical Communications*

  Communications from command to support elements, and as appropriate, cooperating agencies and organizations.

- *Support Communications*

  Coordination in support of strategic and tactical communications including, for example, communications among hospitals concerning resource ordering, dispatching, and tracking from logistics centers; and traffic and public works communications.

[12] See page 69, Component IV, Command and Management, *Public Information*, and page 102, Appendix B, Incident Command System, *Planning Section Chief*.

- *Public Address Communications*

  Emergency alerts and warnings, press conferences, etc.[13]

2. Policy and Planning

Coordinated communications policy and planning provides the basis for effective communications and information management. Although communications and information management is important during routine operations, well-established procedures and protocols become critical during incident response activities. Careful planning should determine what communications systems and platforms will be used, who can use them, what information is essential in different environments, the technical parameters of all equipment and systems, and much more.

Information flow between all stakeholders is crucial, but interoperability presents additional challenges when the private sector, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are taken into consideration. All relevant stakeholders should be involved in meetings and planning sessions in order to formulate more thorough and integrated communications plans and strategies. Technology and equipment standards should also be shared when appropriate, to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to be interoperable and compatible.

Sound communications management policies and plans should include information about the following aspects of communications and information management:

- Information needs should be defined by the jurisdiction/organization. Often these needs are met at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels, in concert with the private sector and NGOs, primarily through preparedness organizations.
- The jurisdiction's/organization's information management system should be defined and should provide guidance, standards, and tools to enable the integration of information needs into a common operating picture when needed.
- Procedures and protocols for the release of warnings, incident notifications and public communications, and other critical information are disseminated through a defined combination of networks used by EOCs. Notifications are made to the appropriate jurisdictional levels and to private sector and NGOs through defined mechanisms specified in emergency operations and incident action plans.
- Agencies must plan in advance for the effective and efficient use of information management technologies (e.g., computers, networks, and information–sharing mechanisms) to integrate all command, coordination, and support functions involved in incident management and to enable the sharing of critical information to and the cataloging of required corrective actions.

3. Agreements

All of the parties identified in the planning process included in a jurisdiction's emergency operations plan need to have agreements in place to ensure that the elements within plans and procedures will be in effect at the time of an incident. The agreements should specify all of the communications systems and platforms through which the parties agree to utilize or share information.

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[13] See page 69, Component IV, Command and Management, *Public Information.*

4. Equipment Standards and Training

Communications equipment utilized by emergency management/response personnel often consists of components and systems that may be connected through common interfaces, many of which rely on the private sector to provide their operational backbone. Public/private communication systems (and associated equipment) should be regularly enhanced and updated, as the maintenance of the systems and equipment is essential to effective emergency management and incident response activities. The wide range of conditions under which communications systems will be utilized should be considered when developing standards associated with the systems and equipment. Training and exercises utilizing the interoperable systems and equipment are necessary for personnel to understand their capabilities and limitations before an incident.

C. Organization and Operations

1. Incident Information

During the course of an incident, information is vital to assist the Incident Commander, Unified Command, and/or supporting agencies and organizations with decisionmaking. Much of the information is used for various and diverse functions within Incident Command System (ICS). For example, the same piece of information may:

- aid in the planning process to develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP);
- be a key point in release of public information;
- assist finance/administration section in determining incident cost;
- determine the need for additional involvement of private sector or NGO resources;
- identify a safety issue; and
- follow up on an information request.

The following are examples of information generated by an incident that can be utilized during the incident for decisionmaking purposes:

a. Incident Notification, Situation and Status Reports

Incident reporting and documentation procedures should be standardized to ensure that situational awareness is maintained and should provide emergency management/response personnel with easy access to critical information. Situation reports offer a snapshot of the past operational period and contain confirmed or verified information regarding the explicit details (who, what, where, and how) relating to the incident. Status reports, which may be contained in situation reports, relay information specifically related to the status of resources (e.g., availability or assignment of resources).

The information/data contained in incident notification, situation and status reports must be standardized in order to facilitate its processing; however, the standardization must not prevent information unique to a reporting organization from being collected or disseminated. Transmission of data in a common format enables the passing of pertinent information to appropriate jurisdictions and organizations and to a national system that can handle data queries and information and intelligence assessments and analysis.

b. Analytical Data

Data, such as information on public health and environmental monitoring, should be collected in a manner that observes standard data collection techniques and definitions. The data should then be transmitted using standardized analysis processes. During incidents that require public health and environmental sampling, multiple organizations at different levels of government often collect data, so the standardization of the collection and analysis of the data is critical. Additionally, standardization of sampling and data collection enables more reliable analysis and improves the quality of assessments provided to decisionmakers.

c. Geospatial Information

Geospatial information is defined as information pertaining to the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed features and boundaries. It is often used to integrate assessments, situation reports, and incident notification into a common operating picture and as a data fusion and analysis tool to synthesize many kinds and sources of data and imagery. The utilization of geospatial data (and the recognition of its intelligence capabilities) is increasingly important during incidents. Geospatial information capabilities (such as nationally consistent earth-referenced grid systems or global positioning systems based on lines of longitude and latitude) should be managed through preparedness efforts and integrated within the command, coordination, and support elements of an incident, including resource management and public information.

The use of geospatial data should be tied to consistent standards because of the potential for geographic coordinates to be transposed incorrectly or otherwise misapplied, causing inconspicuous yet serious errors. Standards covering geospatial information should also enable systems to be used in remote field locations or devastated areas where telecommunications capabilities may not have sufficient bandwidth to handle large images or may be limited in terms of computing hardware.

2. Communications Standards and Formats

Communications and data standards (and related testing) and associated compliance mechanisms are necessary to enable diverse organizations to work together effectively. These include a standard set of predesignated organizational elements and functions, common "typing" for resources to reflect specific capabilities, and common identifiers for facilities and operational locations used to support incident operations.[14] Common terminology, standards, and procedures should be established and detailed in plans and/or agreements, where possible. Jurisdictions may be required to comply with national interoperable communications standards, once developed. Standards appropriate for NIMS users will be designated by the National Integration Center (NIC) in partnership with recognized standards development organizations.

a. Radio Usage Procedures

Procedures and protocols for incident-specific communications and other critical incident information should be set forth in agreements or plans prior to an incident where possible. These procedures and protocols form the foundation for the development of the communications plan

[14] See page 42, Component III, Resource Management, *Identifying and Typing Resources.*

during an incident. The receiving center should be required to acknowledge receipt of the emergency information. Additionally, each agency/organization should be responsible for disseminating this information to its respective personnel.

During incident response activities, radio traffic should be restricted to those messages necessary for the effective execution of emergency management/ response personnel's task.

Each emergency management/response personnel participating in emergency management and incident response activities should follow recognized procedures and protocols for establishing interoperability, coordination, and command and control.

b. Common Terminology, Plain Language (Clear Text), Compatibility

The ability of emergency management/response personnel from different disciplines, jurisdictions, organizations, and agencies to work together depends greatly on their ability to communicate with each other. The use of common terminology is about the ability of emergency management/response personnel to communicate clearly with one another and effectively coordinate activities, no matter what the size, scope, location, or complexity of the incident.

The use of plain language (clear text) in emergency management and incident response is a matter of public safety, especially the safety of emergency management/response personnel and those affected by the incident. It is critical that all those involved with an incident know and utilize commonly established operational structures, terminology, policies, and procedures. This will facilitate the achievement of interoperability across agencies/organizations, jurisdictions, and disciplines, which is exactly what NIMS is seeking to achieve.

All communications, whether oral or written, between organizational elements during an incident should be in plain language in order to ensure that information dissemination is timely, clear, acknowledged, and understood by all intended recipients. Codes should not be used, and all communications should be confined to essential messages. The use of acronyms should be avoided during incidents requiring the participation of multiple agencies or organizations. Policies and procedures that foster compatibility should be defined to allow information sharing among all emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations to the greatest extent possible.

c. Encryption or Tactical Language

When necessary, emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations need to have a methodology and the systems in place to encrypt information so that security can be maintained. Although plain language may be appropriate during response to most incidents, tactical language is occasionally warranted due to the nature of the incident (e.g., during an ongoing terrorist event). The use of specialized encryption and tactical language should be incorporated into any comprehensive IAP or incident management communications plan.

d. Joint Information System and Joint Information Center

The Joint Information System (JIS) and the Joint Information Center (JIC)[15] are designed to foster the use of common information formats. The JIS integrates incident information and public

[15] See pages 69–70, Component IV, Command and Management, *Joint Information Systems* and *Joint Information Center*.

affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, and timely information during crisis or incident operations.

The JIC provides a structure for developing and delivering incident-related coordinated messages; it develops, recommends, and executes public information plans and strategies; advises the Incident Commander, Unified Command, and/or supporting agencies or organizations concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controls rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort. It is the central point of contact for all news media at the scene of an incident. Public information officials from all participating agencies/organizations should co-locate at the JIC.

e. Internet/Web Procedures

The Internet and other Web-based tools can be assets for emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations. These tools, for example, can be used as a mechanism to offer situational awareness during incidents to organizations and agencies involved in the incident and/or to the public, when appropriate. Procedures for the use of these tools during an incident should be established in order to leverage them as valuable communications system resources. Information posted or shared during an incident through these applications should follow planned and standardized methods and generally comport with the overall standards, procedures, and protocols.

The Internet and other Web-based tools can be used, as appropriate, during incidents to help with situational awareness and crisis information management.

f. Operational and Information Security

Procedures and protocols need to be established to ensure operational and information security. Inadequate information security may result in the untimely, inappropriate, and piecemeal release of information, which increases the likelihood of incorrect interpretation and misunderstanding and can compound already complicated public safety issues. The release of inappropriate classified or sensitive public health information or law enforcement information can jeopardize national security, ongoing investigations, or public health. Misinformation can place persons in danger, cause public panic, and disrupt the critical flow of proper information. The effort necessary to correct misinformation wastes the valuable time and effort of incident response personnel.

Individuals and organizations who have access to incident information and, in particular, contribute information to the system (e.g., situation reports) must be properly authenticated and certified for security purposes. This requires a national authentication and security certification standard that is flexible and robust enough to ensure that information can be properly authenticated and protected. Although the NIC is responsible for facilitating development of these standards, all levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector should collaborate to administer the authentication process.

COMPONENT III
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Emergency management and incident response activities require carefully managed resources (personnel, teams, facilities, equipment, and/or supplies) to meet incident needs. Utilization of the standardized resource management concepts such as typing, inventorying, organizing, and tracking will facilitate the dispatch, deployment, and recovery of resources before, during, and after an incident. Resource management should be flexible and scalable in order to support any incident and be adaptable to changes. Efficient and effective deployment of resources requires that resource management concepts and principles be utilized in all phases of emergency management and incident response.

From routine, local incidents to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response, resource management involves the coordination, oversight, and processes that provide timely and appropriate resources during an incident. Resources may support on-scene and command operations through the Incident Command Post (ICP) or function within the Multiagency Coordination Systems (MACS)[16] serving at an Emergency Operations Center or similar site.

As incident priorities are established, needs are identified and resources are ordered, resource management systems are utilized to process the resource requests. In the initial stages of an incident, most of the resources requested are addressed locally or through mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements. As an incident grows in size or complexity, or if it starts on a large scale, resource needs may be met by other sources. In a case of competition for critical resources, MACS may be used to prioritize and coordinate resource allocation and distribution according to resource availability, needs of other incidents, and other constraints and considerations.

For certain kinds of incidents, resource needs may be anticipated well enough to develop a deployment strategy, incorporating all elements of resource management.

- **Preincident assignment:** Assigning personnel and teams to specific tasks in anticipation of incident response
- **"Move-up" or "backfill" strategy:** Moving resources nearest to an incident into the incident area, with more distant resources filling the void by backfilling behind the deploying resources
- **Regional predeployment of resources:** Using predesignated areas for final preparation of resources prior to mobilization and recovery of resources during demobilization

[16] See page 63, Component IV, Command and Management, for more information on MACS.

A. Concepts and Principles

1. Concepts

The underlying concepts of resource management are as follows:

- *Consistency*

  Provision of a consistent method of identifying, acquiring, allocating, and tracking resources

- *Standardization*

  Resource classification to improve the effectiveness of mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements

- *Coordination*

  The facilitation and integration of resources for optimal benefit

- *Inclusion*

  Including available resources from all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), where appropriate, in a jurisdiction's resource management planning efforts

- *Information Management*

  Provisions for the thorough integration of communications and information management elements into resource management decision support and resource management organizations, processes, and technologies

- *Credentialing*

  Use of credentialing criteria that are tied to consistent training and certification standards

2. Principles

The foundations of resource management are based upon the following five interwoven principles.

a. Planning

Coordinated planning, training to common standards, and inclusive exercises provide a foundation for the interoperability and compatibility of resources throughout an incident. Jurisdictions should work together in advance of an incident to develop plans for ordering, managing, and employing resources. The planning process should include identifying resource needs based on the threats and vulnerabilities of the jurisdiction and developing alternative strategies to obtain the needed resources.

Planning may include the creation of new policies to encourage pre-positioned resources. Pre-positioned resources are those that are moved to an area near the expected incident site in response to anticipated resource needs. Plans should anticipate conditions or circumstances that may trigger a specific reaction, such as the restocking of supplies when inventories reach a predetermined minimum. Organizations and/or jurisdictions should continually assess the status

of their resources in order to have an accurate list of resources available at any given time. Additionally, emergency management/response personnel[17] should be familiar with the National Response Framework (NRF) and should be prepared to integrate and/or coordinate with Federal resources, including those that might be pre-positioned.

b. Use of Agreements

Agreements among all parties providing or requesting resources are necessary to enable effective and efficient resource management during incident operations. This includes developing and maintaining standing agreements and contracts for service and/or supplies that may be needed during an incident.

c. Categorizing Resources

Resources are organized by category, kind, and type, including size, capacity, capability, skill, and other characteristics. This makes the resource ordering and dispatch process within and across jurisdictions, between all levels of governments, the private sector, and NGOs, more efficient and is intended to ensure that needed resources are received.

d. Resource Identification and Ordering

The resource management process uses standardized processes and methodologies to identify, order, mobilize, and track the resources required to support incident management activities. Those with resource management responsibilities perform these tasks either at the Incident Commander's (IC's) request or in accordance with planning requirements. Identification and ordering of resources are intertwined. In some cases, the identification and ordering process is compressed, where an IC may know the resources necessary for the task and specify a resource order directly. However, in larger, more complex incidents, the IC may not be fully aware of resources available to meet the incident demands. At this point, the IC may identify needs based on incident objectives and use the resource management process to fill these needs.

e. Effective Management of Resources

Resource management involves acquisition procedures, management information, and redundant systems and protocols for ordering, mobilizing, dispatching, and demobilizing resources.

(1) Acquisition Procedures

These procedures are used to obtain resources to support operational requirements. Examples include mission tasking, contracting, drawing from existing stocks, and making small purchases. A key aspect of the inventorying process is determining whether or not an organization needs to warehouse specific items

Stockpiling vs. Just in time

Resources may be acquired in advance and stored in a warehouse (i.e., "stockpiled") or supplied "just in time," typically using a preincident contract. Planning and resource accounting procedures should accommodate both types of resource supply.

[17] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

prior to an incident. Material resources may be acquired in advance and stockpiled or obtained "just in time" through appropriate preincident contracts. Those with resource management responsibilities make this decision by considering the urgency of the need, whether there are sufficient quantities of required items on hand, and/or whether the required items can be produced quickly enough to meet demand. Another important part of the process is managing inventories with shelf-life or special maintenance considerations. Strict reliance on stockpiling raises issues concerning shelf-life and durability; however, strict reliance on "just in time" resources raises its own concerns related to timely delivery. Those with resource management responsibilities should build sufficient funding into their budgets for periodic replenishments, preventive maintenance, and capital improvements. An integral part of acquisition procedures is developing methods and protocols for the handling and distribution of donated resources.

(2) Management Information Systems

These systems are used to provide decision support information to managers by collecting, updating, and processing data, and tracking resources. They enhance resource status information flow and provide real-time data in a fast-paced environment where different jurisdictions, emergency management/response personnel, and their affiliated organizations are managing different aspects of the incident and must coordinate their efforts. Examples of management information systems include resource tracking, transportation tracking, inventory management, reporting, and geographical information systems. The selection and use of systems for resource management should be based on the identification of the information needs within a jurisdiction.

(3) Redundant Information Systems

Those with resource management responsibilities should be able to identify and activate backup systems to manage resources in the event that the primary resource management information system is disrupted or unavailable. Management information systems should also have sufficiently redundant and diverse power supplies and communication capabilities.

(4) Ordering, Mobilization, and Demobilization Protocols

Protocols are used to request resources, prioritize requests, activate and mobilize resources to incidents, and return resources to normal status. Preparedness organizations develop standard protocols for use within their jurisdictions. Examples include tracking systems that identify the location and status of mobilized or dispatched resources and procedures to demobilize resources and return them to their original locations and status.

B. Managing Resources

Figure 2—Resource Management During an Incident

To implement these concepts and principles in performing the primary tasks of resource management, NIMS includes standardized procedures, methodologies, and functions in its seven-step resource management process. This process reflects functional considerations, geographic factors, and validated practices within and across disciplines and are continually adjusted as new lessons are learned.

Maintenance of resources is important throughout all aspects of resource management. Maintenance prior to deployment ensures their availability and capability. Maintenance during the deployment phase ensures continued capabilities (e.g., ensuring adequate fuel supplies during use). Postoperational inspection and maintenance ensures future availability.

The foundation for resource management provided in this component will be expanded and refined over time in a collaborative cross-jurisdictional, cross-disciplinary effort led by the National Integration Center (NIC).

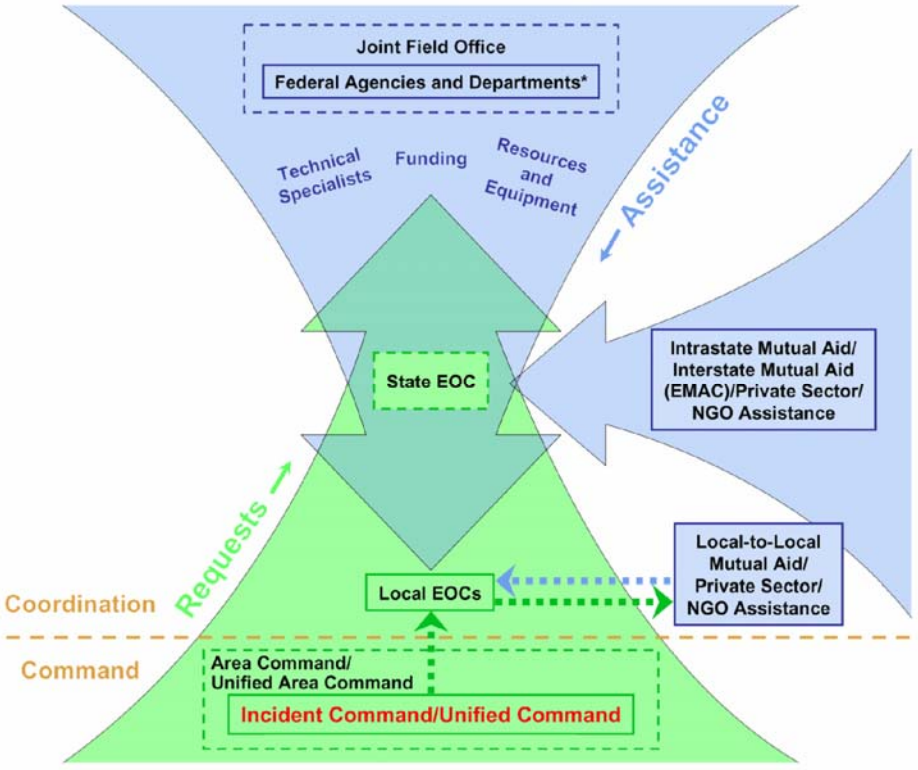
The resource management process can be separated into two parts with the first being resource management activities as an element of preparedness, and the second, managing resources during an incident. The preparedness activities (resource typing, credentialing, and inventory) are conducted on a continual basis to help ensure that resources are ready to be mobilized when called to an incident. Resource management during an incident is a finite process, as Figure 2 indicates, with a distinct beginning and ending specific to the needs of the particular incident.

1. Identify Requirements

When an incident occurs, those with resource management responsibilities should continually identify, refine, and validate resource requirements. This process involves accurately identifying (1) what and how much is needed, (2) where and when it is needed, and (3) who will be receiving or using it. Resources to be identified in this way include equipment, facilities, and personnel and/or emergency response teams. If a requestor is unable to describe an item by resource type or classification system, those with resource management responsibilities should provide technical advice to enable the requirements to be defined and translated into a specification. Specific resources for critical infrastructure/key resources may need to be identified and coordinated through mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements unique to those sectors, and should be accessible through preparedness organizations and/or MACS.

Resource availability and requirements will constantly change as the incident evolves. Consequently, all emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations participating in an operation should coordinate closely in this process. Coordination should begin as early as possible, preferably prior to the need for incident response activities.

In instances when an incident is projected to have catastrophic implications (e.g., a major hurricane or seasonal flooding), States and/or the Federal Government may predeploy assets to the anticipated incident area. In cases where there is time to assess the requirements and plan for a catastrophic incident, the Federal response will be coordinated with State, tribal, and local jurisdictions, and the pre-positioning of Federal assets will be tailored to address the specific situation.



*Some Federal agencies (U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.) have statutory responsibility for response and may coordinate and/or integrate directly with affected jurisdictions.

Figure 3—Flow of Requests and Assistance During Large-Scale Incidents

2. Order and Acquire

Requests for resources that cannot be obtained locally are submitted using standardized resource-ordering procedures. These requests are generally forwarded first to an adjacent locality or substate region and then to the State.

Avoid Bypassing Systems

All of those with responsibilities for managing resources, including public officials, should recognize the inherent limitation in requesting resources by reaching around the official resource coordination process within the multiagency coordination system supporting the incident(s). These requests do not proceed within the context of orderly resource management systems, and typically lead to inefficient use and/or lack of accounting of resources.

The decision cycles for placing and filling resource orders are different for field/incident personnel with resource management responsibilities and resource coordination processes (such as MACS). The IC will develop resource requests based on priorities considering current and successive operational periods. Decisions about resource allocation are based on organization or agency protocol and possibly the resource demands of other incidents. Requested resources will be mobilized only with the consent of the jurisdiction that is being asked to provide the resources. Discrepancies between requested resources and those available for delivery must be communicated to the requestor.

3. Mobilize

Emergency management/response personnel begin mobilizing when notified through established channels. At the time of notification, they are given the date, time, and place of departure; mode of transportation to the incident; estimated date and time of arrival; reporting location (address, contact name, and phone number); anticipated incident assignment; anticipated duration of deployment; resource order number; incident number; and applicable cost and funding codes. The resource tracking and mobilization processes are directly linked. When resources arrive on scene, they must be formally checked in. This starts the on-scene check-in process and validates the order requirements. Notification that the resources have arrived is made through the appropriate channels.

The mobilization process may include planning for deployment based on existing interagency mobilization guidelines; equipping; training; designating assembly points that have facilities suitable for logistical support; and obtaining transportation to deliver resources to the incident most quickly, in line with priorities and budgets. Mobilization plans should also recognize that some resources are fixed facilities, such as laboratories, hospitals, Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), shelters, and waste management systems. These facilities assist operations without moving into the incident area in the way that other resources are mobilized. Plans and systems to monitor the status of resource mobilization should be flexible enough to adapt to both types of mobilization.

Managers should plan and prepare for the demobilization process at the same time as they begin the resource mobilization process. Early planning for demobilization facilitates accountability and makes the transportation of resources as efficient as possible—in terms of both costs and time of delivery.

4. Track and Report

Resource tracking is a standardized, integrated process conducted prior to, during, and after an incident by all emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations, as appropriate. This process provides a clear picture of where resources are located; helps staff

prepare to receive resources; protects the safety and security of equipment, supplies, and personnel; and enables their coordination and movement.

Those with resource management responsibilities use established procedures to track resources continuously from mobilization through demobilization. Managers should follow all procedures for acquiring and managing resources, including reconciliation, accounting, auditing, and inventorying.

5. Recover and Demobilize

Recovery involves the final disposition of all resources, including those located at the incident site and at fixed facilities. During this process, resources are rehabilitated, replenished, disposed of, and/or retrograded.

Demobilization is the orderly, safe, and efficient return of an incident resource to its original location and status. It can begin at any point of an incident, but should begin as soon as possible to facilitate accountability of the resources. The demobilization process should coordinate between incident(s) and multiagency coordination systems for the reassignment of resources if necessary, and to prioritize critical resource needs during demobilization.

The Demobilization Unit in the Planning Section develops an Incident Demobilization Plan, containing specific demobilization instructions, as part of the Incident Action Plan. Demobilization planning and processes should include provisions addressing the safe return of resources to their original location and status, and notification of return. Demobilization should also include processes for tracking resources and for addressing applicable reimbursement. Furthermore, documentation regarding the transportation and travel of resources should be collected and maintained for reimbursement, if applicable. Demobilization provisions may need to meet specific organizational requirements.

a. Nonexpendable Resources

These resources (such as people, fire engines, and other durable equipment) are fully accounted for during the incident and again when they are returned to the organization that issued them. The issuing organization then restores the resources to fully functional capability and readies them for the next mobilization. Broken and/or lost items should be replaced through the appropriate resupply process by the organization with invoicing responsibility for the incident, or as defined in preincident agreements. It is critical that fixed facility resources also be restored to their full functional capability in order to ensure readiness for the next mobilization. In the case of human resources, such as Incident Management Teams (IMTs), adequate rest and recuperation time and facilities should be provided. Important occupational health and mental health issues should also be addressed, including monitoring how such incidents affect emergency management/response personnel over time.

b. Expendable Resources

Expendable resources (such as water, food, fuel, and other one-time-use supplies) must be fully accounted for. The incident management organization bears the costs of expendable resources, as authorized in financial agreements executed by preparedness organizations. Restocking occurs at the point from which a resource was issued. Returned resources that are not in restorable condition (whether expendable or nonexpendable) must be declared as excess according to

established regulations and policies of the controlling jurisdiction, agency, or organization. Waste management is of special note in the process of recovering resources, as resources that require special handling and disposition (e.g., biological waste and contaminated supplies, debris, and equipment) are handled according to established regulations and policies.

6. Reimburse

In many cases, resources rendered may or may not be reimbursed based upon pre-incident agreements. When applicable, reimbursement provides a mechanism to recoup funds expended for incident-specific activities. Reimbursement processes play an important role in establishing and maintaining the readiness of resources and should be in place to ensure that resource providers are reimbursed in a timely manner. They should include mechanisms for collecting bills, validating costs against the scope of the work, ensuring that proper authorities are involved, and accessing reimbursement programs. Reimbursement mechanisms should be included in preparedness plans, mutual aid agreements, and assistance agreements.

7. Inventory

Resource management uses various resource inventory systems to assess the availability of assets provided by jurisdictions. Preparedness organizations should inventory and maintain current data on their available resources. The data are then made available to communications/dispatch centers and EOCs and organizations within MACS. The fact that resources are identified within an inventory system is not an indication of automatic availability. The jurisdiction and/or owner of the resources has the final determination on availability.

Inventory systems for resource management should be adaptable and scalable and should account for the potential of double-counting personnel and/or equipment. In particular, resource summaries should clearly reflect any overlap of personnel across different resource pools. Personnel inventories should reflect single resources with multiple skills, taking care not to overstate the total resources. For example, many firefighters also have credentials as emergency medical technicians (EMTs). A resource summary, then, could count a firefighter as a firefighter or an EMT, but not as both. The total should reflect the number of available personnel, not simply the sum of the firefighter and EMT counts.

Deployable resources have different inventory, ordering, and response profiles depending on their primary use during the response or recovery phases of an incident. Planning for use, inventory, and tracking of resources should recognize the fundamental difference in resource deployment in the response and recovery phases. The response phase relies heavily on mutual aid agreements and/or assistance agreements, while recovery resources are typically acquired through contracts with the private sector and/or NGOs.

a. Credentialing

The credentialing process is an objective evaluation and documentation of a person's current license or degree; training or experience; competence or certification; and the ability to meet nationally accepted minimum standards, to provide particular services and/or functions, or perform particular procedures during an incident.

For the purpose of NIMS, credentialing is the administrative process for validating the qualifications of personnel and assessing their background for authorization and access to an incident involving mutual aid.

Credentialing, which is done as a preparedness activity for resource management, is separate from badging, which takes place at the incident site in order to allow individuals and/or teams access to the scene. To be granted this access by the proper agents (i.e., State, tribal, local, private, NGO), jurisdictions should establish processes that include the verification of the following:

- identity
- qualifications
- deployment authorization

NGOs and, where appropriate, the private sector will coordinate protocols with local jurisdictions for inclusion of volunteers in response efforts to ensure the organizations' ability to provide services are not hindered and are consistent with safety and security considerations of the local jurisdictions. Organizations utilizing volunteers, especially spontaneous volunteers, shall verify member eligibility to participate in response activities based upon criteria established by the agency.

Figure 4 outlines the process, as recommended by the NIC, for determining eligibility for credentialing under NIMS.

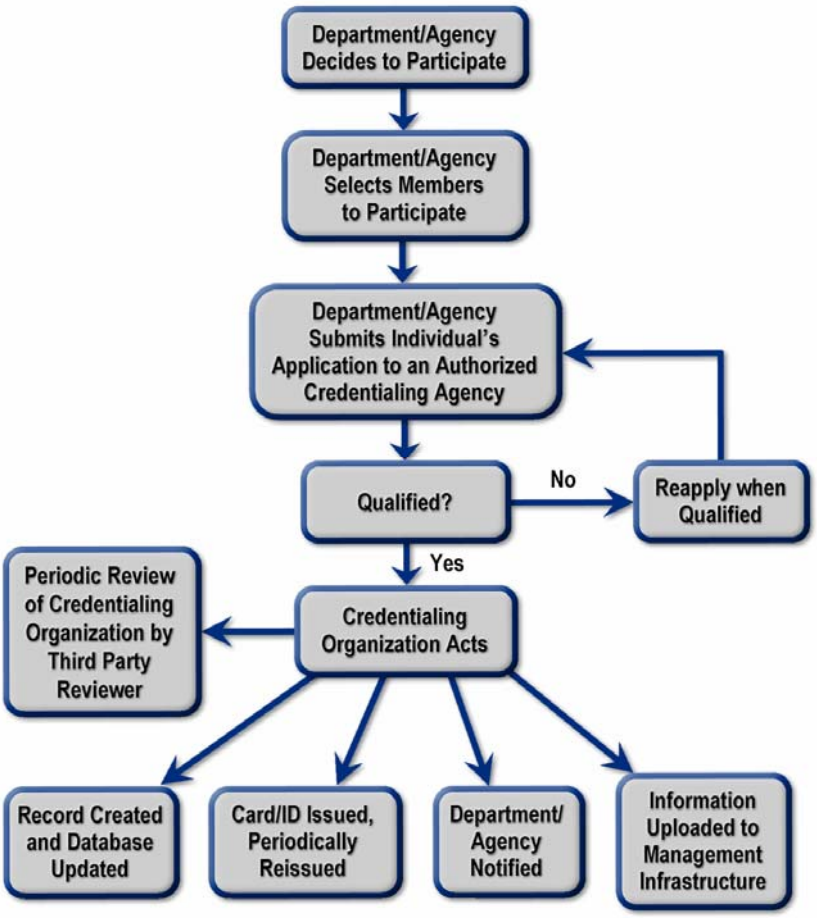


Figure 4—NIMS Personnel Credentialing

b. Identifying and Typing Resources

Resource typing is categorizing, by capability, the resources requested, deployed, and used in incidents.[18] Measurable standards identifying the capabilities and performance levels of resources serve as the basis for categories. Resource users at all levels utilize these standards to identify and inventory resources. Resource kinds may be divided into subcategories to define more precisely the resource capabilities needed to meet specific requirements. Resource typing is a continuous process designed to be as simple as possible to facilitate frequent use and accuracy in obtaining needed resources. To allow resources to be deployed and used on a national basis, the NIC (with input from Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations) is responsible for facilitating the development and issuance of national standards for the typing of resources and ensuring that these typed resources reflect operational capabilities.[19]

(1) Category

This is the function for which a resource would be most useful. Table 2 lists the categories, as of June 2007, used in the national resource typing protocol.

Table 2—Categories Used in National Resource Typing

Category	
• Transportation	• Health and medical
• Communications	• Search and rescue
• Public works and engineering	• Hazardous materials response
• Firefighting	• Food and water
• Information and planning	• Energy
• Law enforcement and security	• Public information
• Mass care	• Animals and agricultural issues
• Resource management	• Volunteers and donations

(2) Kind

Kind refers to broad classes that characterize like resources, such as teams, personnel, equipment, supplies, vehicles, and aircraft.

(a) Components

Resources can comprise multiple components. For example, an engine company may be listed as having the eight components shown in Table 3.

[18] See pages 83–87, Appendix A, for more information on resource typing.
[19] Proposals for additions to the NIMS Typed Resources Definitions may be submitted to the NIC, Incident Management Systems Division, for consideration.

Table 3—Example of a Resource with Multiple Components (Firefighting Engine Company)

(1) Pump	(5) Water tank
(2) Hose 2 ½″	(6) Ladder
(3) Hose 1 ¾″	(7) Master stream
(4) Hand tools	(8) Personnel

As another example, urban search and rescue teams consist of two 31-person teams, four canines, and a comprehensive equipment cache. The cache is divided into five separate color-coded elements and is stored in containers that meet specific requirements.

(b) Measures

Measures are standards. The measures used will depend on the kind of resource being typed. The mission envisioned determines the specific measure selected. The measure must be useful in describing a resource's capability to support the mission. Measures should identify capability and/or capacity. As an example, one measure for a disaster medical assistance team is the number of patients it can care for per day. An appropriate measure for a hose might be the number of gallons of water per hour that can flow through it.

(3) Type

Type refers to the level of resource capability. Assigning the Type 1 label to a resource implies that it has a greater level of capability than a Type 2 of the same resource (for example, due to its power, size, or capacity), and so on to Type 4. Typing provides managers with additional information to aid in the selection and best use of resources. In some cases, a resource may have less than or more than four types; in such cases, either additional types will be identified, or the type will be described as "not applicable." The type assigned to a resource or a component is based on a minimum level of capability described by the identified metric(s) for that resource. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard has typed oil skimmers based on barrels per day, as outlined in Table 4:

Table 4—Example of a Resource with Multiple Types (Coast Guard Oil Skimmer)

Type 1	9,600 bbls/day	Type 3	480 bbls/day
Type 2	2,880 bbls/day	Type 4	N/A

(4) Additional Information

The national resource typing protocol will also provide the capability to use additional information that is pertinent to resource decisionmaking. For example, if a particular set of resources can be released to support an incident only under particular authorities or laws, the protocol should alert responsible parties to such limitations.

COMPONENT IV
COMMAND AND MANAGEMENT

The previous components discussed within NIMS—Preparedness, Communications and Information Management, and Resource Management—provide a framework to facilitate clear response authority, resource acquisition, and effective management during incident response. The Incident Command System (ICS), Multiagency Coordination Systems (MACS), and Public Information are the fundamental elements of incident management. These fundamental elements provide standardization through consistent terminology and established organizational structures. Emergency management and incident response is the broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing effective and efficient operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, using both governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident regardless of cause, size, or complexity. More specifically, incident management includes directing incident operations; acquiring, coordinating, and delivering resources to incident sites; and sharing information about the incident with the public, respectively. Taken together, these elements of Command and Management are the most visible aspects of incident management, typically executed with a sense of urgency. This component describes the systems used to facilitate incident command and management operations.

A. INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

Most incidents are managed locally and are typically handled by local communications/dispatch centers and emergency management/response personnel[20] within a single jurisdiction, and direct supporters of emergency responders. The majority of responses need go no further. In other instances, incidents that begin with a single response within a single jurisdiction may rapidly expand to multidisciplinary, multijurisdictional incidents requiring significant additional resources and operational support. Whether for incidents where additional resources are required or are provided from different organizations within a single jurisdiction or outside the jurisdiction, or for complex incidents with national implications (such as an emerging infectious disease or a bioterrorism attack), the ICS provides a flexible core mechanism for coordinated and collaborative incident management. When a single incident covers a large geographical area, multiple local emergency management and incident response agencies may be required. The responding "agencies" are defined as the governmental organizations in charge of the incident, though in certain circumstances private sector organizations may be included. Effective cross-jurisdictional coordination using processes and systems is absolutely critical in this instance.

The ICS is a widely applicable management system designed to enable effective and efficient incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. ICS is a

[20] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

fundamental form of management established in a standard format, with the purpose of enabling incident managers to identify the key concerns associated with the incident (oftentimes under urgent conditions), without sacrificing attention to any component of the command system.

ICS is used to organize on-scene operations for a broad spectrum of emergencies from small to complex incidents, both natural and manmade. The field response level is where emergency management/response personnel, under the command of an appropriate authority, carry out tactical decisions and activities in direct response to an incident or threat. Resources from the Federal, State, tribal, or local levels, when appropriately deployed, become part of the field ICS as prescribed by the local authority.

As a system, the ICS is extremely useful; not only does it provide an organizational structure for incident management, but it also guides the process for planning, building, and adapting that structure. Using ICS for every incident or scheduled event helps hone and maintain skills needed for the large-scale incidents.

ICS is used by all levels of government—Federal, State, tribal, and local—as well as by many private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). ICS is also applicable across disciplines. It is normally structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. Intelligence/ Investigations is an optional sixth functional area that is activated on a case-by-case basis.

Acts of biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear terrorism may present unique challenges for the traditional ICS structure. Incidents that are not site specific, are geographically dispersed, or evolve over longer periods of time will require extraordinary coordination among all participants, including Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, and NGOs.

1. Management Characteristics

ICS is based on the following 14 proven management characteristics, each of which contributes to the strength and efficiency of the overall system:

a. Common Terminology

ICS establishes common terminology that allows diverse incident management and support organizations to work together across a wide variety of incident management functions and hazard scenarios. This common terminology covers the following:

(1) Organizational Functions

Major functions and functional units with incident management responsibilities are named and defined. Terminology for the organizational elements involved is standard and consistent.

(2) 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.[21]

[21] See page 41, Component III, Resource Management, *Identifying and Typing Resources*.

(3) Incident Facilities

Common terminology is used to designate the facilities in the vicinity of the incident area that will be used during the course of incident management.

b. Modular Organization

The incident command organizational structure develops in a 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. When needed, separate functional elements can be established, each of which may be further subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination. Responsibility for the establishment and expansion of the ICS modular organization ultimately rests with Incident Command, which bases the ICS organization on the requirements of the situation. As incident complexity increases, the organization expands from the top down as functional responsibilities are delegated. Concurrently with structural expansion, the number of management and supervisory positions expands to address the requirements of the incident adequately.

c. Management by Objectives

The management by objectives is communicated throughout the entire ICS organization and includes:

- establishing incident objectives;
- developing strategies based on incident objectives;
- developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols;
- establishing specific, measurable tactics or tasks for various incident management functional activities, and directing efforts to attain them, in support of defined strategies; and
- documenting results to measure performance and facilitate corrective action.

d. Incident Action Planning

Centralized, coordinated incident action planning should guide all response activities. An Incident Action Plan (IAP) provides a concise and coherent means of capturing and communicating the overall incident priorities, objectives, strategies, and tactics in the contexts of both operational and support activities.

Every incident must have an action plan. However, not all incidents require written plans. The need for written plans and attachments is based on the requirements of the incident and the decision of the Incident Commander (IC) or Unified Command (UC). Most initial response operations are not captured with a formal IAP. However, if an

The Incident Action Plan is built on P-O-S-T:

P – Priorities. Regardless of the size or complexity of an event or incident, the fundamental priorities remain constant: life safety, incident stability, and conservation of property and the environment

O – Objectives. Broad descriptions or statements of the desired outcomes or actions to achieve consistent with the priorities

S – Strategies. Action processes by which the objectives are met

T – Tactics (or Tasks). Specific activities that are implemented to achieve the identified strategies

incident is likely to extend beyond one operational period, become more complex, or involve multiple jurisdictions and/or agencies, preparing a written IAP will become increasingly important to maintain effective, efficient, and safe operations.

e. 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, with the optimum being five. The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all influence span-of-control considerations.

f. Incident Facilities and Locations

Various types of operational support facilities are established in the vicinity of an incident, depending on its size and complexity, to accomplish a variety of purposes. The IC will direct the identification and location of facilities based on the requirements of the situation at hand. Typically designated facilities include incident command posts, bases, camps, staging areas, mass casualty triage areas, points-of-distribution sites, and others, as required.

g. Comprehensive Resource Management

Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date picture of resource utilization is a critical component of incident management. 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. Resource management is described in detail in Component III.

h. Integrated Communications

Incident communications are facilitated through the development and use of a common communications plan and interoperable communications processes and architectures. The ICS 205 Form is available to assist in developing a common communications plan. This integrated approach links the operational and support units of the various agencies involved and is necessary to maintain communications connectivity and discipline and enable common situational awareness and interaction. Preparedness planning should address the equipment, systems, and protocols necessary to achieve integrated voice and data incident management communications.

i. Establishment and Transfer of Command

The command function must be clearly established from the beginning of incident operations. The agency with primary jurisdictional authority over the incident designates the individual at the scene responsible for establishing command. When command is transferred, the process must include a briefing that captures all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations.

j. 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 all individuals have a designated supervisor to whom they report 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 direct the actions of all personnel under their supervision.[22]

k. 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.

l. Accountability

Effective accountability of resources at all jurisdictional levels and within individual functional areas during incident operations is essential. To that end, Check-In/Check-Out, Incident Action Plan, Unity of Command, Personal Responsibility, Span of Control, and Resource Tracking are the principles of accountability, which must be adhered to.[23]

m. Dispatch/Deployment

Resources should respond only when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority through established resource management systems. Resources not requested must refrain from spontaneous deployment to avoid overburdening the recipient and compounding accountability challenges.

n. Information and Intelligence Management

The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, analyzing, assessing, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.

2. Incident Command and Command Staff

Incident Command is responsible for overall management of the incident. Overall management includes Command Staff assignments required to support the command function. The Command and General Staff are typically located at the Incident Command Post (ICP).

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[22] Concepts of "command" and "unity of command" have distinct legal and cultural meanings for military forces and operations. For military forces, command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the Commander of the combatant command to the commander of the forces. The "Unified Command" concept utilized by civil authorities is distinct from the military chain of command.

[23] The principles of accountability are individually defined in the glossary.

a. Incident Command

The command function may be conducted in one of two general ways:

(1) Single Incident Commander

When an incident occurs within a single jurisdiction and there is no jurisdictional or functional agency overlap, a single IC should be designated with overall incident management responsibility by the appropriate jurisdictional authority. (In some cases where incident management crosses jurisdictional and/or functional agency boundaries, a single IC may be designated if agreed upon.) Jurisdictions should consider predesignating ICs for preestablished Incident Management Teams (IMTs) in their preparedness plans.

The designated IC will develop the incident objectives on which subsequent incident action planning will be based. The IC will approve the IAP and all requests pertaining to ordering and releasing incident resources.

(2) Unified Command

Unified Command (UC) is an important element in multijurisdictional or multiagency incident management. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively. As a team effort, UC allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for the incident to jointly provide management direction to an incident through a common set of incident objectives and strategies and a single IAP. Each participating agency maintains its authority, responsibility, or accountability.

Advantages of Using Unified Command

- **A single set of objectives is developed for the entire incident.**
- **A collective approach is used to develop strategies to achieve incident objectives.**
- **Information flow and coordination is improved between all jurisdictions and agencies involved in the incident.**
- **All agencies with responsibility for the incident have an understanding of joint priorities and restrictions.**
- **No agency's legal authorities will be compromised or neglected.**
- **The combined efforts of all agencies are optimized as they perform their respective assignments under a single IAP.**

UC functions as a single integrated management organization. This means—

- co-located command at the ICP;
- one Operations Section Chief to direct tactical efforts;
- a coordinated process for resource ordering;
- shared planning, logistical, and finance/administration functions, wherever possible; and
- coordinated approval of information releases.

All agencies in the UC structure contribute to the process of—

- selecting objectives;
- determining overall incident strategies;
- ensuring that joint planning for tactical activities is accomplished in accordance with approved incident objectives;
- ensuring the integration of tactical operations; and
- approving, committing, and making optimum use of all assigned resources.

The exact composition of the UC structure will depend on the location(s) of the incident (i.e., which geographical jurisdictions or organizations are involved) and the type of incident (i.e., which functional agencies of the involved jurisdiction(s) or organization(s) are required). If planned for in advance (e.g., for planned events), the designation of a single IC for some multijurisdictional incidents may be considered in an effort to promote greater unity of effort and efficiency.

The designated agency officials participating in the UC represent different legal authorities and functional areas of responsibility and use a collaborative process to establish, identify, and rank incident priorities and determine appropriate objectives consistent with the priorities. Agencies that are heavily involved in the incident but lack jurisdictional responsibility are defined as supporting and/or assisting agencies. They are represented to the command structure and effect coordination on behalf of their parent agency through the Liaison Officer. Jurisdictional responsibilities of multiple incident management officials are consolidated into a single planning process, including the following:

- responsibilities for incident management;
- incident objectives;
- resource availability and capabilities;
- limitations; and
- areas of agreement and disagreement between agency officials.

Incidents are managed under a single collaborative approach, including the following:

- common organizational structure;
- single incident command post;
- unified planning process; and
- unified resource management.

Under UC, the IAP is assembled by the Planning Section and is approved by the UC. A single individual, the Operations Section Chief, directs the tactical implementation of the IAP. The Operations Section Chief will normally come from the organization with the greatest jurisdictional involvement. UC participants will agree on the designation of the Operations Section Chief.

UC works best when the participating members of the UC co-locate at the ICP and observe the following practices:

- select an Operations Section Chief for each operational period;
- keep each other informed of specific requirements;

- establish consolidated incident objectives, priorities, and strategies;
- establish a single system for ordering resources;
- develop a consolidated written or oral IAP to be evaluated and updated at regular intervals; and
- establish procedures for joint decisionmaking and documentation.

Table 5—Comparison of a Single IC and UC

Single Incident Commander	Unified Command
The IC is solely responsible (within the confines of his or her authority) for establishing incident objectives and strategies. The IC is directly responsible for ensuring that all functional area activities are directed toward accomplishment of the strategy.	The individuals designated by their jurisdictional or organizational authorities (or by departments within a single jurisdiction) must jointly determine objectives, strategies, plans, resource allocations, and priorities and work together to execute integrated incident operations and maximize the use of assigned resources.

b. Command Staff

In an incident command organization, the Command Staff typically includes a Public Information Officer, a Safety Officer, and a Liaison Officer, who report directly to the IC/UC and may have assistants as necessary. Additional positions may be required, depending on the nature, scope, complexity, and location(s) of the incident(s), or according to specific requirements established by the IC/UC.

(1) Public Information Officer

This officer is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The Public Information Officer gathers, verifies, coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible, and timely information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external consumption. The Public Information Officer may also perform a key public information-monitoring role. Whether the command structure is single or unified, only one Public Information Officer should be designated per incident. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies, departments, or organizations involved. The IC/UC must approve the release of all incident-related information.

(2) Safety Officer

This officer monitors incident operations and advises the IC/UC on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel. The ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations rests with the IC/UC and supervisors at all levels of incident management. The Safety Officer is, in turn, responsible to the IC/UC for the systems and procedures necessary to ensure ongoing assessment of hazardous environments, coordination of multiagency safety efforts, and implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety, as well as the general safety of incident operations. The Safety Officer has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts during incident operations. It is important to note that 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 contributes to the overall effort to protect all responder personnel involved in incident operations.

(3) Liaison Officer

This officer is Incident Command's point of contact for representatives of other governmental agencies, NGOs, and/or the private sector (with no jurisdiction or legal authority) to provide input on their agency's policies, resource availability, and other incident-related matters. Under either a single IC or a UC structure, representatives from assisting or cooperating agencies and organizations coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Agency and/or organizational representatives assigned to an incident must have the authority to speak for their parent agencies and/or organizations on all matters, following appropriate consultations with their agency leadership. Assistants and personnel from other agencies or organizations (public or private) involved in incident management activities may be assigned to the Liaison Officer to facilitate coordination.

(4) Additional Command Staff

Other or additional Command Staff positions may also be necessary, depending on the nature and location(s) of the incident and/or specific requirements established by Incident Command. For example, a legal counsel may be assigned to the Planning Section as a technical specialist or directly to the Command Staff to advise Incident Command on legal matters, such as emergency proclamations, the legality of evacuation orders, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access. Similarly, a medical advisor may be designated and assigned to provide advice and recommendations to Incident Command in the context of incidents involving medical and mental health services, mass casualty, acute care, vector control, epidemiology, and/or mass prophylaxis considerations, particularly in the response to a bioterrorism incident. In addition, a special needs advisor may be designated to provide expertise regarding communication, transportation, supervision, and essential services for diverse populations in the affected area.[24]

c. Incident Command Organization

The incident command and management organization is located at the ICP. Incident Command directs operations from the ICP, which is generally located at or in the immediate vicinity of the incident site. Typically, one ICP is established for each incident. As emergency management/response personnel deploy, they must, regardless of agency affiliation, report to and check in at the designated staging area, base, camp, or location and notify the IC/UC to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the IC/UC.

[24] See pages 91–95, Appendix B, for more information on assistants.

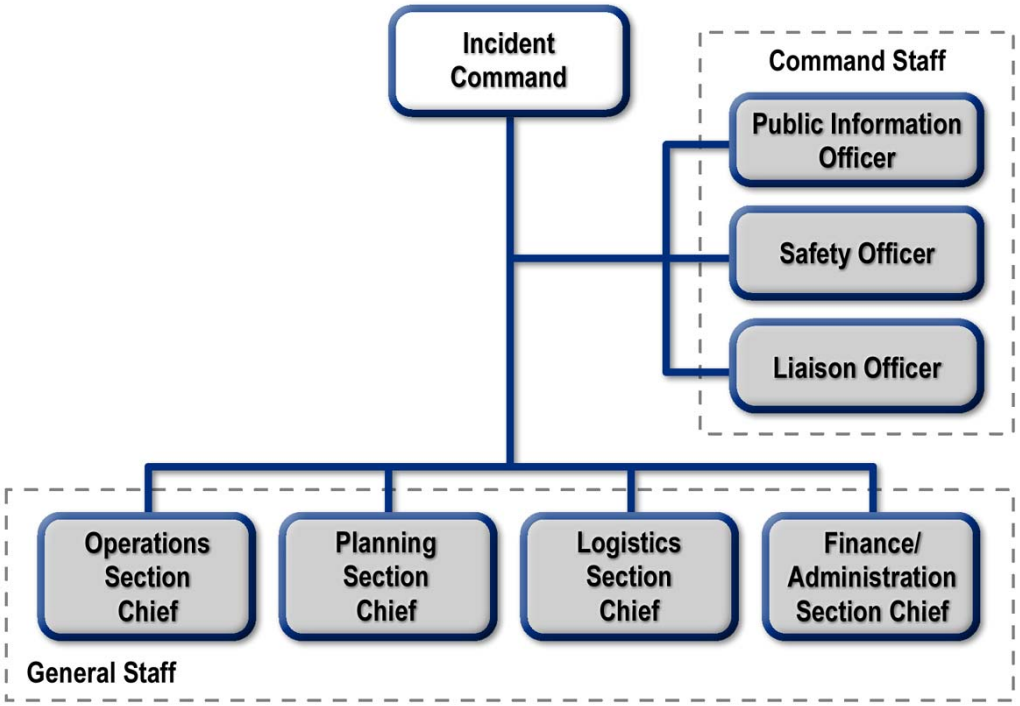


Figure 5—Incident Command System: Command Staff and General Staff

3. General Staff

The General Staff is responsible for the functional aspects of the incident command structure. The General Staff typically consists of the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Section Chiefs. The Section Chiefs may have one or more deputies assigned, with the assignment of deputies from other agencies encouraged in the case of multijurisdictional incidents. The functional Sections are discussed more fully below.

a. Operations Section

This section is responsible for all activities focused on reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoring normal operations. Lifesaving and responder safety will always be the highest priorities and the first objectives in the IAP. Until lifesaving and responder safety operations are concluded or no longer viable, the Operations Section Chief should be assigned from the agency with the primary responsibility for lifesaving operations or from the agency with the greatest expertise and/or competencies in managing the particular incident at hand.

Figure 6 depicts the organizational template for an Operations Section. Expansions of this basic structure may vary according to numerous considerations and operational factors. In some cases, a strictly functional approach may be used. In other cases, the organizational structure will be determined by geographical/jurisdictional boundaries. In still others, a mix of functional and geographical considerations may be appropriate. The ICS offers flexibility in determining the right structural approach for the specific circumstances of the incident at hand.

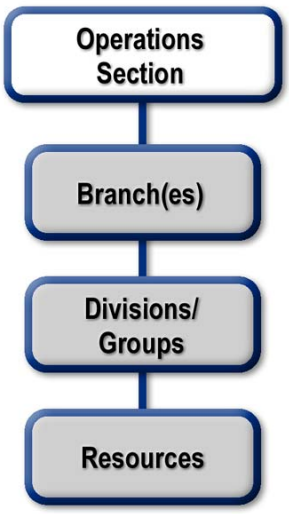


Figure 6—Major Organizational Elements of Operations Section

(1) Operations Section Chief

This Section Chief is responsible to Incident Command or UC for the direct management of all incident-related operational activities. The Operations Section Chief will establish tactics for the assigned operational period. An Operations Section Chief should be designated for each operational period and responsibilities include direct involvement in development of the IAP.

(2) Branches

Branches may be functional, geographic, or both, depending on the circumstances of the incident. In general, Branches are established when the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the recommended span of control. Branches are identified by the use of Roman numerals or by functional area.

(3) Divisions and Groups

Divisions and/or Groups are established when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of Incident Command and the Operations Section Chief. Divisions are established to divide an incident into physical and/or geographical areas of operation. Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. For certain types of incidents, for example, Incident Command may assign evacuation or mass care responsibilities to a functional group in the Operations Section. There also may be additional levels of supervision below the Division or Group level.

(4) Resources

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

- *Single Resources*

  These are individual personnel or equipment and any associated operators.

- *Task Forces*

  These are any combination of resources assembled in support of a specific mission or operational need. All resource elements within a Task Force must have common communications and a designated leader.

- *Strike Teams*

  These are a set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established minimum number of personnel. All resource elements within a Strike Team must have common communications and a designated leader.

The use of Task Forces and Strike Teams is encouraged when appropriate to optimize the use of resources, reduce the span of control over a large number of single resources, and reduce the complexity of incident management coordination and communications.

b. Planning Section

This section collects, evaluates, and disseminates incident situation information and intelligence to IC/UC and incident management personnel. The Planning Section then prepares status reports, displays situation information, maintains the status of resources assigned to the incident, and prepares and documents the IAP, based on Operations Section input and guidance from IC/UC.

As shown in Figure 7, the Planning Section is comprised of four primary units, as well as a number of technical specialists to assist in evaluating the situation, developing planning options, and forecasting requirements for additional resources. These primary units that fulfill functional requirements are:

- *Resource Unit*

  Responsible for recording the status of resources committed to the incident. This unit also evaluates resources currently committed to the incident, the effects additional responding resources will have on the incident, and anticipated resource needs.

- *Situation Unit*

  Responsible for the collection, organization, and analysis of incident status information, and for analysis of the situation as it progresses.

- *Demobilization Unit*

  Responsible for assuring orderly, safe, and efficient demobilization of incident resources.

- *Documentation Unit*

  Responsible for collecting, recording, and safeguarding all documents relevant to the incident.

- *Technical Specialist(s)*

  Personnel with special skills that can be used anywhere within the ICS organization.

The Planning Section is normally responsible for gathering and disseminating information and intelligence critical to the incident, unless IC/UC places this function elsewhere. The Planning Section is also responsible for assembling the IAP. The IAP includes the overall incident objectives and strategies established by Incident Command. 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. The IAP also

addresses tactics and support activities required for the planned operational period, generally 12 to 24 hours.

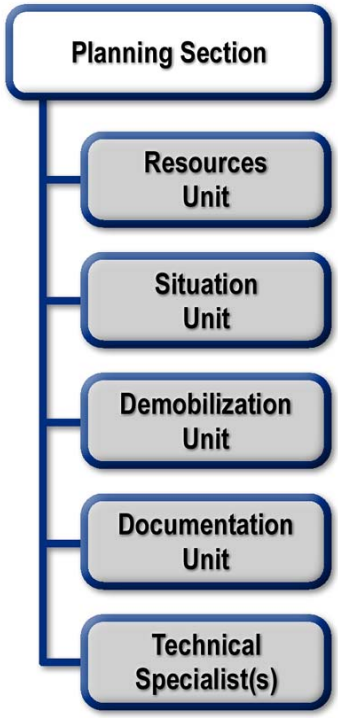


Figure 7—Planning Section Organization

The IAP should incorporate changes in strategies and tactics based on lessons learned during earlier operational periods. A written IAP is especially important when—

- resources from multiple agencies and/or jurisdictions are involved;
- the incident will span several operational periods;
- changes in shifts of personnel and/or equipment are required; or
- there is a need to document actions and/or decisions.

The IAP will typically contain a number of components, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6—Sample IAP Outline

Components	Normally Prepared By
Incident Objectives (Form: ICS 202)	Incident Commander
Organization List or Chart (Form: ICS 203)	Resources Unit
Assignment List (Form: ICS 204)	Resources Unit
Communications Plan (Form: ICS 205)	Communications Unit
Responder Medical Plan (Form: ICS 206)	Medical Unit
Incident Maps	Situation Unit
General Safety Message/Site Safety Plan	Safety Officer
Other Potential Components (Incident dependent)	
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
Site Security Plan	Law Enforcement, Technical Specialist or Security Manager
Investigative Plan	
Evidence Recovery Plan	Law Enforcement
Evacuation Plan	As Required
Sheltering/Mass Care Plan	As Required
Other (as required)	As Required

c. Logistics Section

The Logistics Section (see Figure 8) is responsible for all service support requirements needed to facilitate effective and efficient incident management, including ordering resources from off-incident locations. It also provides facilities, security (of the incident command facilities and personnel), transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance and fuel, food services, communications and information technology support, and emergency responder medical services, including inoculations, as required. Within the Logistics Section there are six primary units that fulfill the functional requirements:

- *Supply Unit*

  Orders, receives, stores, and processes all incident-related resources, personnel, and supplies.

- *Facilities Unit*

  Sets up, maintains, and demobilizes all facilities used in support of incident operations. The unit also provides facility maintenance and security services required to support incident operations.

- *Ground Support Unit*

  Provides all ground transportation during an incident. In conjunction with providing transportation, the unit is also responsible for maintaining and supplying vehicles, keeping records of usage, and developing incident traffic plans.

- *Communications Unit*

  Major responsibilities include effective communications planning as well as acquiring, setting up, maintaining, and accounting for communications equipment.

- *Food Unit*

  Determines food and water requirements, plans menus, orders food, provides cooking facilities, cooks, serves, maintains food service areas, and manages food security and safety concerns.

- *Medical Unit*

  Responsible for the effective and efficient provision of medical services to incident personnel.

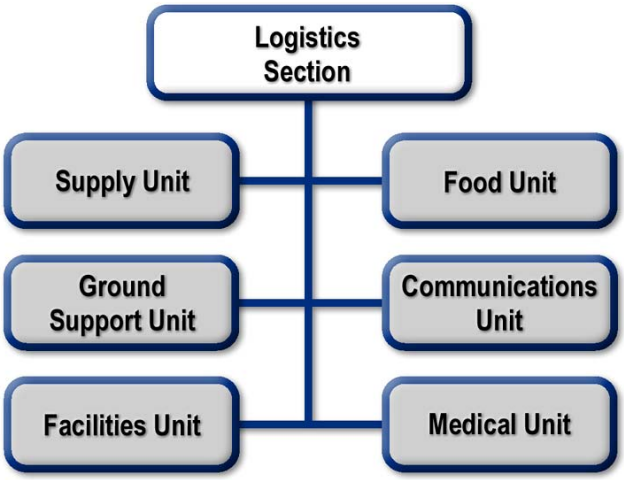


Figure 8—Logistics Section Organization

d. Finance/Administration Section

A Finance/Administration Section is established when the incident management activities require on-scene or incident-specific finance and other administrative support services. Some of the functions that fall within the scope of the section are recording personnel time, maintaining vendor contracts, compensation and claims, and conducting an overall cost analysis for the incident. If a separate section is established, close coordination with the Planning Section and Logistics Section is also essential so that operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

The Finance/Administration Section is a critical part of the ICS, in large, complex incidents involving significant funding originating from multiple sources. In addition to monitoring multiple sources of funds, the Section Chief must track and report to the IC the accrued cost as the incident progresses. This allows the IC to forecast the need for additional funds before operations are affected negatively. The basic organizational structure for a Finance/Administration Section is shown in Figure 9. When such a section is established, the depicted units may be staffed, as required. Within the Finance/Administration Section there are four primary units that fulfill functional requirements:

- *Compensation/Claims Unit*

  Responsible for compensation for injury and claims that are included together within one unit. It is recognized that specific activities are different and may not always be accomplished by the same person.

- *Cost Unit*

  Responsible for tracking, cost, analyzing cost data, making estimates, and recommending cost savings measures.

- *Procurement Unit*

  Responsible for financial matters concerning vendor contracts.

- *Time Unit*

  Responsible for recording time for incident personnel and hired equipment.

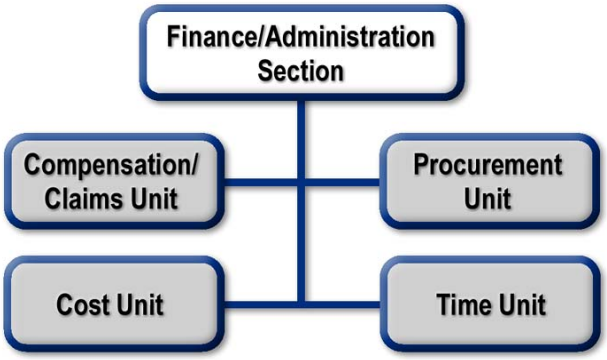


Figure 9—Finance/Administration Section Organization

e. Intelligence/Investigations Function

The collection, analysis, and sharing of incident-related intelligence are important elements of ICS. Normally, operational information and situational intelligence are management functions located in the Planning Section, with a focus on three incident intelligence areas: situation status, resource status, and anticipated incident status or escalation (e.g., weather forecasts, location of supplies, etc.). This information and intelligence is utilized for incident management decisionmaking. In addition, Technical Specialists may be utilized in the Planning Section to provide specific information that may support tactical decisions of an incident.

Incident management organizations must also establish a system for the collection, analysis, and sharing of information developed during intelligence/investigation efforts. Some incidents require the utilization of intelligence and investigative information to support the process. Intelligence and Investigative information is defined as information that either leads to the detection, prevention, apprehension, and prosecution of criminal activities (or the individual(s) involved) including terrorist incidents or information that leads to determination of the cause of a given incident (regardless of the source) such as public health events or fires with unknown origins.

ICS allows for organizational flexibility, so the Intelligence/Investigations Function can be embedded in several different places within the organizational structure:

- *Within the Planning Section*

  This is the traditional placement for this function and is appropriate for incidents with little or no investigative information requirements, nor a significant amount of specialized information.

- *As a Separate General Staff Section*

  This option may be appropriate when there is a significant intelligence/investigations component to the incident for criminal or epidemiological purposes or when multiple investigative agencies are involved. A separate Intelligence/Investigations Section may be needed when highly specialized information requiring technical analysis is both critical and time-sensitive to life saving operations (e.g., chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear incidents) and/or when there is a need for classified intelligence.

- *Within the Operations Section*

  This option may be appropriate for incidents that require a high degree of linkage and coordination between the investigative information and the operational tactics that are being employed.

- *Within the Command Staff*

  This option may be appropriate for incidents with little need for tactical information or classified intelligence and where supporting Agency Representatives are providing real-time information to the Command Element.

The mission of the Intelligence/Investigations Function is to ensure that all investigative and intelligence operations, functions, and activities within the incident response are properly managed, coordinated, and directed in order to—

- prevent/deter additional activity, incidents, and/or attacks;
- collect, process, analyze, and appropriately disseminate intelligence information;
- conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation; and
- identify, process, collect, create a chain of custody for, safeguard, examine/analyze, and store all situational intelligence and/or probative evidence.

The Intelligence/Investigations Function has responsibilities that cross all departments' interests involved during an incident, but there are functions that remain specific to Law Enforcement response and/or mission areas. Two examples of these are to expeditiously identify and apprehend all perpetrators, and to successfully prosecute all the defendants.

Regardless of how the Intelligence/Investigations Function is organized, a close liaison will be maintained and information will be transmitted to Command, Operations, and Planning. However, classified information requiring a security clearance, sensitive information, or specific investigative tactics that would compromise the investigation will be shared only with those who have the appropriate security clearance and/or a need to know.

The Intelligence/Investigations Function can be organized in a variety of ways; the following are examples that may be activated if needed:

- *Investigative Operations Group*

  Responsible for overall investigative effort

- *Intelligence Group*

  Responsible for obtaining unclassified, classified, and open source intelligence

- *Forensic Group*

  Responsible for ensuring the integrity of the crime scene and the forensic evidence

- *Investigative Support Group*

  Responsible for ensuring that required investigative personnel are expeditiously made available and the necessary resources are properly distributed, maintained, safeguarded, stored, and returned, when appropriate

Other groups may be created to handle the following responsibilities: ensuring that missing, or unidentified persons, and human remains are expeditiously investigated and identified and that required notifications are made in a timely manner. This includes the collection of ante mortem information and exemplars in a family assistance center.

4. Incident Management Teams

An Incident Management Team (IMT) is an incident command organization made up of the Command and General Staff members and other appropriate personnel in an ICS organization and can be deployed or activated, as needed. National, State, and some local IMTs have formal certification and qualification, notification, deployment, and operational procedures in place. In other cases, ad hoc IMTs are formed at an incident or for specific events. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the identified formal response requirements and responsibilities of the IMT, are factors in determining the "type," or level, of IMT.

5. Incident Complex—Multiple Incident Management with a Single ICS Organization

a. Description

An Incident Complex refers to two or more individual incidents located in the same general area that are assigned to a single IC or UC. When an Incident Complex is established over several individual incidents, the general guideline is that the previously identified incidents would become Branches within the Operations Section of the IMT. This provides more potential for future expansion if required. The reason for this is that more flexibility is then available within each Branch to later establish Divisions or Groups if required. Also, because Divisions and Groups may already have been established at each of the incidents, the same basic structure can be carried on. If any of the incidents within a complex has potential to become a large-scale incident, it is best to establish it as a separate incident with its own ICS organization.

The following are examples where a complex may be appropriate:

- An earthquake, tornado, flood, or other situation where many separate incidents are occurring in close proximity.
- Several separate fires burning in close proximity to one another.
- One incident underway with an IMT assigned, with other smaller incidents occurring in the same area.

The following are considerations for the use of a complex:

- A complex may be managed under a single command or a UC.

- The incidents are close enough to be managed by the same IMT.
- Some staff and/or logistical support economies could be achieved through a combined management approach.
- The number of overall incidents within the jurisdiction requires consolidations wherever possible to conserve staff and reduce costs.
- Planning, Logistical, and Finance/Administration activities can be adequately provided to the complex from a single management team.

6. Area Command

a. Description

Area Command is an organization 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 or evolving incident that has multiple incident management teams engaged. An agency administrator/executive or other public official with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident usually makes the decision to establish an Area Command. An Area Command is activated only if necessary, depending on the complexity of the incident and incident management span-of-control considerations.

Area Commands are particularly relevant to incidents that are typically not site specific, are not immediately identifiable, are geographically dispersed, and evolve over longer periods of time (e.g., public health emergencies, earthquakes, tornadoes, civil disturbances, and any geographic area where several IMTs are being used and these incidents are all requesting similar resources). Incidents such as these, as well as acts of biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear terrorism, require a coordinated intergovernmental, private sector, and NGO response, with large-scale coordination typically conducted at a higher jurisdictional level. Area command is also used when a number of incidents of the same type in the same area are competing for the same resources, such as multiple hazardous material (HAZMAT) spills or fires.

When incidents are of different types and/or do not have similar resource demands, they are usually handled as separate incidents or are coordinated through an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). If the incidents under the authority of the Area Command span multiple jurisdictions, a Unified Area Command should be established. This allows each jurisdiction involved to have appropriate representation in the Area Command. Area Command should not be confused with the functions performed by a multiagency coordination system element. An Area Command oversees management coordination of the incident(s), while a MACS element, such as a communications/dispatch center, EOC, or MAC Group, coordinates support.

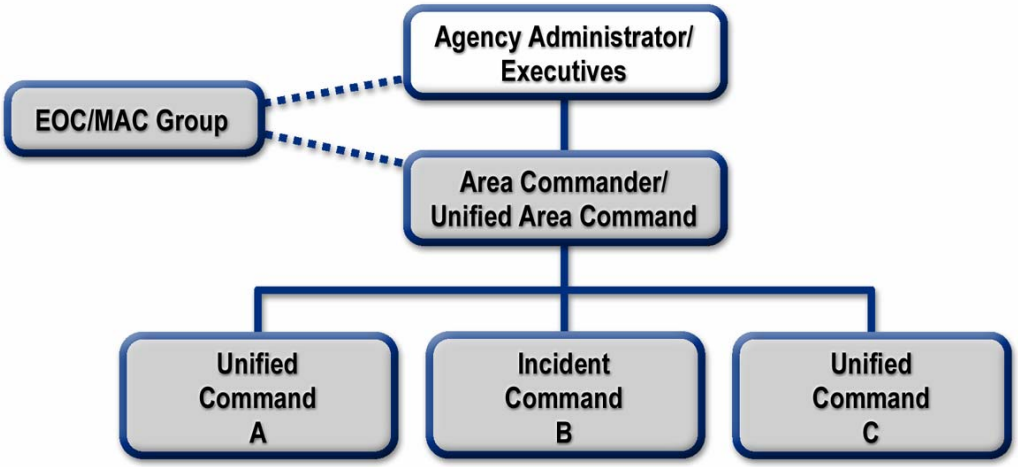


Figure 10—Chain of Command and Reporting Relationships

*The dotted line connecting EOC/MAC Group with the Agency Administrator/Executives and Area Commander/Unified Area Command represents the link between an EOC/MAC Group and the Command structure. This connection is meant to show coordination and communication between the two.

b. Responsibilities

For incidents under its authority, an Area Command has the following responsibilities:

- develop broad objectives for the impacted area(s);
- coordinate the development of individual incident objectives and strategies;
- allocate/reallocate resources as the established priorities change;
- ensure that incidents are properly managed;
- ensure effective communications;
- ensure that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policies;
- identify critical resource needs and report them to the established EOC/MAC Groups; and
- ensure that short-term "emergency" recovery is coordinated to assist in the transition to full recovery operations.

B. Multiagency Coordination Systems

Multiagency coordination is a process that allows all levels of government and all disciplines to work together more efficiently and effectively. Multiagency coordination occurs across the different disciplines involved in incident management, across jurisdictional lines, or across levels of government.

MACS Is a System...
Not SIMPLY a Facility

Multiagency coordination can and does occur on a regular basis whenever personnel from different agencies interact in such activities as preparedness, prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation. Often, cooperating agencies develop a MACS to better define how they will work together; however, multiagency coordination can take place without preestablished protocols. MACS may be put in motion regardless of the location, personnel titles, organizational structure, or when activated. MACS is a system that agencies develop and adopt in order to work together more efficiently. MACS includes planning and coordinating resources and other support for scheduled, notice, or no-notice events. MACS defines business practices, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), processes, and protocols by which participating agencies will coordinate their interactions. Integral elements of MACS are dispatch procedures and protocols, incident command structure, and the coordination and support activities taking place within an activated EOC. Fundamentally, the many functions of MACS provide support, coordination, and assistance of policy-level decisions to the ICS structure managing an incident(s).

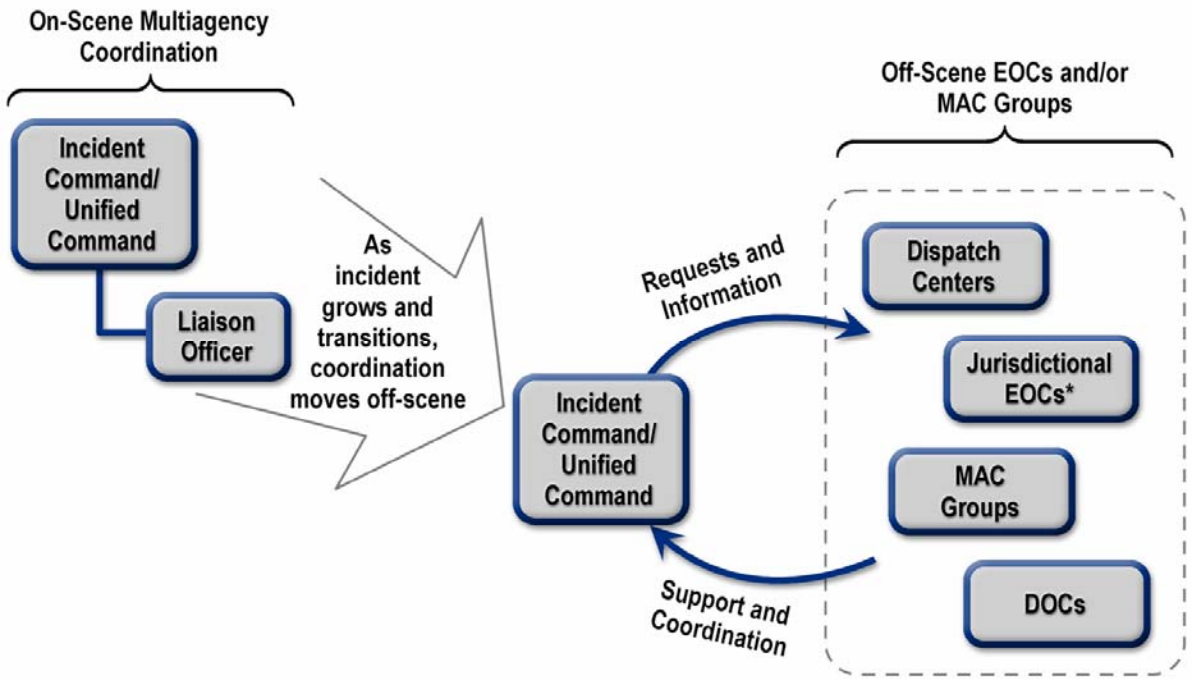
Written agreements allow agencies within MACS to conduct activities using established rules and are often self-defined by the participating organizations. A fully implemented MACS is critical for seamless multiagency coordination activities and is essential to the success and safety of the response whenever more than one jurisdictional agency responds. Moreover, the use of MACS is one of the fundamental components of Command and Management within NIMS, as it promotes scalability and flexibility necessary for a coordinated response.

1. Definition

The primary function of MACS is to coordinate activities above the field level and to prioritize the incident demands for critical or competing resources, thereby assisting the coordination of the operations in the field. MACS consists of a combination of elements: personnel, procedures, protocols, business practices, and communications integrated into a common system. For the purpose of coordinating resources and support between multiple jurisdictions, MACS can be implemented from a fixed facility or by other arrangements outlined within the system.

In some instances, MACS is informal and based on oral agreements between jurisdictions, but usually it is more formalized and supported by written agreements, operational procedures, and protocols. The formal process, where issues are addressed before an incident occurs, is the preferred and recommended approach, as a MACS streamlines the coordination function. While ad hoc arrangements between jurisdictions may result in effective multiagency coordination on relatively minor incidents, coordination on larger, more complex incidents is most successful when it takes place within a planned and well-established MACS.

Figure 11 provides an overview of a multiagency coordination system as it transitions over the course of an incident. The graphic shows how an incident begins, with the on-scene single command and as it grows in size and complexity, potentially developing into a Unified Command, it may require off-scene coordination and support.



*Includes State-level EOCs.

Figure 11—Multiagency Coordination System

2. System Elements

MACS include a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, and procedures integrated into a common system with responsibility for coordination of resources and support to emergency operations.

a. Facilities

The need for a location (e.g., communications/dispatch center, EOC, city hall, virtual location, or others) to house the MACS activities will depend on the anticipated functions the MACS is expected to perform.

b. Equipment

To accomplish MACS activities, equipment (such as computers, phones, etc.) must be identified and procured.

c. Personnel

Typically includes administrators/executives, or their appointed representatives, who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds in a coordinated response effort. They also can be authorized representatives from supporting agencies and the private sector and NGOs, who assist in coordinating activities above the field level.

d. Procedures

The processes, protocols, agreements, and business practices that prescribe the activities, relationships, and functionality of the MACS. Identifying the interactive communications activities and associated implementation plans are critical components of the MACS.

3. Examples of System Elements

The two most commonly used elements of MACS are EOCs and MAC Groups.

a. Emergency Operations Center

EOCs may be organized by major discipline (e.g., fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, etc.); by emergency support functions (e.g., transportation, communications, public works and engineering, resource support, etc.); by jurisdiction (e.g., city, county, region, etc.); or, more likely, by some combination thereof. ICPs need good communication links to EOCs to ensure effective and efficient incident management.

Oftentimes, agencies within a political jurisdiction may establish coordination, communications, control, logistics, etc., at the departmental levels for conducting overall emergency management of their assigned resources for local incidents. Department Operations Centers (DOCs) normally focus on internal agency incident management and response and are linked to and, in most cases, are physically represented in a combined agency EOC by authorized agent(s) for the department or agency.

EOCs may be staffed by personnel representing multiple jurisdictions and functional disciplines and a wide variety of resources. For example, a local EOC established in response to a bioterrorism incident would likely include a mix of law enforcement, emergency management, public health, and medical personnel

EOC is activated:

- To support the on-scene response during an escalating incident by relieving the burden of external coordination and securing additional resources

EOC is:

- A physical location
- Staffed with personnel trained for and authorized to represent their agency/discipline
- Equipped with mechanisms for two-way communications with the incident site and to alert and obtain resources and potential resources
- Managed through protocols
- Applicable at different levels of government

EOC consists of:

- Personnel and equipment appropriate for the level of incident

EOC is used:

- In varying ways within all levels of government and the private sector
- To provide coordination, direction, and support during emergencies

EOC may:

- Facilitate MACS functions and may be needed to support Area Command, IC, or UC when resource needs exceed local capabilities

EOC does not:

- Command the on-scene level of the incident

(representatives of health care facilities, prehospital emergency medical services, patient transportation systems, pharmaceutical repositories, laboratories, etc.).

The physical size, staffing, and equipping of an EOC will depend on the size of the jurisdiction, resources available, and anticipated incident management workload. EOCs may be organized and staffed in a variety of ways. Regardless of the specific organizational structure used, EOCs should include the following core functions: coordination; communications; resource allocation and tracking; and information collection, analysis, and dissemination.

On activation of a local EOC, communications and coordination must be established between Incident Command and the EOC. ICS field organizations must also establish communications with the activated local EOC, either directly or through their parent organizations. Additionally, EOCs at all levels of government and across functional agencies must be capable of communicating appropriately during incidents with other EOCs, including those maintained by private organizations. Communications between EOCs must be reliable and contain built-in redundancies. The efficient functioning of EOCs most frequently depends on the existence of mutual aid agreements and joint communications protocols among participating agencies.

b. MAC Group

Typically, administrators/executives, or their appointed representatives, who are authorized to represent or commit agency resources and funds are brought together and form MAC Groups. MAC Groups may also be known as multiagency committees, emergency management committees, or as otherwise defined by the MACS. Personnel assigned to the EOC who meet the criteria for participation in a MAC Group may be asked to fulfill that role.

A MAC Group does not have any direct incident involvement and will often be located some distance from the incident site(s). In many cases a MAC Group can function virtually to accomplish its assigned tasks.

A MAC Group may require a support organization for their own logistics and documentation needs; to manage incident-related decision support information such as tracking critical resources, situation status, and intelligence or investigative information; and to provide public information to the news media and public. Number and skills of personnel will vary by incident complexity, activity levels, the needs of the MAC Group, and other factors identified through agreements or related preparedness organizations. A MAC Group may be established at any level (e.g., national, State, local, area) or within any discipline (e.g., emergency management, public health, critical infrastructure, private sector, etc.).

4. Primary Functions of Multiagency Coordination Systems

MACS should be both flexible and scalable to be efficient and effective. There are common functions that MACS will generally perform during an incident. Consistent with the concepts of flexibility and scalability, though, not all MACS functions will be performed during every incident and may not occur in any particular order.

a. Situation Assessment

This is the collection, processing, and display of all information needed. It may take the form of consolidating agency/jurisdiction situation reports, obtaining supplemental information, and preparing maps and status boards.

b. Incident Priority Determination

Establishing the priorities among ongoing incidents within the defined area of responsibility is another component of MACS. Typically, a process or procedure is established to coordinate with Area and/or Incident Commands to prioritize the incident demands for critical resources. Additional considerations determining priorities include the following:

- life-threatening situations;
- threat to property;
- high damage potential;
- incident complexity;
- environmental impact;
- economic impact; and
- other criteria established by the multiagency coordination system.

c. Critical Resource Acquisition and Allocation

Designated critical resources will be acquired if possible from the involved agencies or jurisdictions. Agencies or jurisdictions may shift resources internally to match priority needs as a result of incident priority decisions. Resources available from incidents in the process of demobilization may be shifted, for example, to higher priority incidents.

Resources may also be acquired from outside the affected area. Procedures for acquiring outside resources will vary depending upon such things as the agencies involved and preexisting written agreements.

d. Support Relevant Incident Management Policies and Interagency Activities

A primary function of MACS is to coordinate, support, and assist with policy level decisions and interagency activities relevant to incident management activities, policies, priorities, and strategies.

e. Coordination with Other MACS

A critical part of MACS is outlining how each system will communicate and coordinate with other MACS at the same level, the level above, and the level below. Following incidents, those involved in multiagency coordination functions may be responsible for incorporating lessons learned into their procedures, protocols, business practices, and communications strategies. These improvements may need to be coordinated with other appropriate preparedness organizations.

f. Coordination with Elected and Appointed Officials

Another primary function outlined in MACS is a process or procedure to keep elected and appointed officials at all levels of government informed. Maintaining the awareness and support of elected and appointed officials of jurisdictions within the affected area is extremely important, as scarce resources may need to move from one agency or jurisdictions' incident(s) to another of higher priority.

g. Coordination of Summary Information

By virtue of the situation assessment function, personnel implementing the multiagency coordination procedures may provide summary information on incidents within their area of responsibility, and provide agency/jurisdictional contacts for media and other interested agencies.

5. Differences Between a Multiagency Coordination Group and Area Command

Often MAC Groups are confused with Area Command (as defined earlier in this Component). Table 7 below highlights some of the primary differences between the two.

Table 7—Differences Between a Multiagency Coordination Group and Area Command

Multiagency Coordination Group	Area Command
Off-scene coordination and support organization with no direct incident authority or responsibility.	On-scene command function of the Incident Command System with oversight responsibility and authority of IMTs assigned. Area command may be established as Unified Area Command.
Members are Agency Administrators/Executives or designees from the agencies involved or heavily committed to the incident.	Members are the most highly skilled incident management personnel.
Organization generally consists of multiagency coordination personnel (including Agency Administrators/Executives), MAC Coordinator, and an intelligence and information support staff.	Organization generally consists of an Area Commander, Assistant Area Commander—Planning, and Assistant Area Commander—Logistics.
Is the Agency Administrator/Executive or designee.	Delegated authority for specific incident(s) from the Agency Administrator/Executive.
Allocate and reallocate critical resources through the communications/dispatch system by setting incident priorities.	Assign and reassign critical resources allocated to them by MACS or the normal communications/dispatch system organization.
Make coordinated Agency Administrator/Executive–level decisions on issues that affect multiple agencies.	Ensure that incident objectives and strategies are complementary between Incident Management Teams.

C. Public Information

1. Introduction

Public Information consists of the processes, procedures, and systems to communicate timely, accurate, and accessible information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation to the public, responders, and additional stakeholders (both directly affected and indirectly affected). Public information must be coordinated and integrated across jurisdictions and across agencies/organizations; among Federal, State, tribal, and local governments; and with the private sector and NGOs. Well-developed public information, education strategies, and communications plans help to ensure that lifesaving measures, evacuation routes, threat and alert systems, and other public safety information is coordinated and communicated to numerous audiences in a timely, consistent manner. Public Information includes processes, procedures, and organizational structures required to gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate information.

Roles of Public Information Officers

The Public Information Officer gathers, verifies, coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible, and timely information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external use.

2. System Description and Components

a. Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) supports the IC structure as a member of the Command staff. The PIO advises IC on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident. The PIO handles inquiries from the media, the public, and elected officials, emergency public information and warnings, rumor monitoring and response, media monitoring, and other functions required to gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate accurate, accessible, and timely information related to the incident, particularly regarding information on public health, safety, and protection.

PIOs are able to create coordinated and consistent messages by collaborating to:

- identify key information that needs to be communicated to the public;
- craft messages that convey key information and are clear and easily understood by all, including those with special needs;
- prioritize messages to ensure timely delivery of information without overwhelming the audience;
- verify accuracy of information through appropriate channels; and
- disseminate messages using the most effective means available.

b. Joint Information System

The Joint Information System (JIS) provides the mechanism to organize, integrate, and coordinate information to ensure timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent messaging activities

across multiple jurisdictions and/or disciplines with the private sector and NGOs. It includes the plans, protocols, procedures, and structures used to provide public information. Federal, State, tribal, territorial, regional, local, and private sector Public Information Officers and established Joint Information Centers (JICs) are critical supporting elements of the JIS. Key elements include the following:

- interagency coordination and integration;
- gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating consistent messages;
- support for decisionmakers; and
- flexibility, modularity, and adaptability.

c. Joint Information Center

The Joint Information Center (JIC) is a central location that facilitates operation of the JIS. It is a location where personnel with public information responsibilities perform critical emergency information functions, crisis communications, and public affairs functions. JICs may be established at various levels of government, at incident sites, or can be components of Federal, State, tribal, territorial, regional, or local MACS (e.g., MAC Groups or EOCs). Typically, an incident-specific JIC is established at a single, on-scene location in coordination with Federal, State, and local agencies (depending on the requirements of the incident) or at the national level, if the situation warrants. Informational releases are cleared through IC/UC, the EOC/MAC Group, and/or Federal officials in the case of Federally coordinated incidents to ensure consistent messages, avoid release of conflicting information, and prevent negative impact on operations. This formal process for informational releases ensures the protection of incident-sensitive information. Agencies may issue their own releases related to their policies, procedures, programs, and capabilities; however, these should be coordinated with the incident-specific JIC(s).

Possibility of a Virtual JIC

A JIC may involve real-time, constant links to other sites, thus creating a virtual JIC. All participants should be fully integrated and linked into the JIC so that it functions as a single-site operation.

Advantages include:

- **rapid establishment of the JIC functions**
- **access to expanded resources**
- **build relationships**

A single JIC location is preferable, but the system is flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate virtual or multiple JIC locations, as required. For example, multiple JICs may be needed for a complex incident spanning a wide geographic area or multiple jurisdictions. In instances when multiple JICs are activated, information must be coordinated among all appropriate JICs; each JIC must have procedures and protocols to communicate and coordinate effectively with one another. Whenever there are multiple JICs, the final release authority must be the senior command, whether using Unified or Area Command structures. A national JIC may be used when an incident requires Federal coordination and is expected to be of long duration (e.g., weeks or months) or when the incident affects a large area of the country.

The JIC facility should be located close to the best sources of information, such as an Incident Command Post or Emergency Operations Center, without compromising safety or security.

In light of the need for real-time communications, JICs can be organized in many ways, depending on the nature of the incident. Table 8 identifies several types of JICs.

Table 8—Types of Joint Information Centers

Incident	• optimal physical location for local and IC-assigned Public Information Officers to co-locate • easy media access is paramount to success
Virtual	• established when physical co-location is not feasible • incorporates technology and communication protocols
Satellite	• smaller in scale than other JICs • established primarily to support the Incident JIC • operates under the control of the primary JIC for that incident • is not independent of that direction
Area	• supports wide-area multiple-incident ICS structures • media access is paramount • could be established on a local or Statewide basis
Support	• established to support several incident JICs in multiple states • offers supplemental staff and resources outside of the disaster area
National	• established for long-duration incidents • established to support Federal response activities • staffed by numerous Federal departments and/or agencies • media access is paramount

d. Organizational Independence

Organizations participating in incident management retain their independence. IC and MACS are responsible for establishing and overseeing JICs, including 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 agency/organization contributes to the overall unified message.

e. Getting Information to the Public and Additional Stakeholders

The process of getting information to the public and additional stakeholders during an incident is an ongoing cycle that involves four steps:

(1) Gathering Information

The first step in the process of getting information to the public and additional stakeholders during an incident is information gathering. Information is collected from:

- *On-scene Command*

  A source of ongoing, official information on the response effort.

- *On-scene PIOs*

  Report to the JIC what they are observing and hearing at the incident from the news media, elected officials and their staff, and the public.

- *Media monitoring*

  Used to assess the accuracy and content of news media reports. It also helps to identify trends and breaking issues.

- *News media*

  A valuable source of developing information and current issues.

- *Public and Elected Officials*

  Inquiries from elected officials, community leaders, and the general public point to the specific concerns of those in the affected areas.

(2) Verifying Information

The next step in the process is to verify the accuracy of the information that has been collected, by consulting:

- *Other PIOs in the JIC*

  Comparing notes—especially with the lead PIO and PIOs who are liaisons to the various assistance programs or response/recovery partners—is one way to verify the accuracy of information.

- *EOC sources*

  Including program leads, who should be asked to confirm information.

- *On-scene PIOs*

  A valuable source for checking the accuracy of information reported to the EOC with reports from the news media, the offices of elected officials, and people on the scene.

(3) Coordinating Information

The next step in the process is to coordinate with other PIOs who are part of the JIS. These PIOs include both those represented in the JIC and those working from another location who are part of the JIS. Coordinating information involves:

- *Establishing key message(s)*

  After gathering information from all sources, unified messages are crafted that address all informational needs and are prioritized based on the overall Federal, State, tribal, and local response/recovery strategy. The overall mission includes getting accurate, consistent information to the right people at the right time so they can make informed decisions.

- *Obtaining approval/clearance from those in authority*

  Ensuring that the information is consistent, accurate, and accessible. The approval process should be streamlined, however, to ensure that the information is released in a timely manner.

(4) Disseminating Information

The next step in the process is to disseminate the information to the public and additional stakeholders. This step involves:

- *Using multiple methods*

  In an emergency, there may not be many options. Phone calls and interviews might be the primary means of getting information to the news media. Personal visits or town meetings may be most effective with the public, elected officials, or other stakeholders. These outreach efforts can be supported by providing talking points and flyers to on-scene PIOs.

- *Monitoring the media*

  Media monitoring is invaluable for ensuring that the message was understood by the news media and reported accurately and completely to the public and other stakeholders. Important inaccuracies should be addressed before they are reported incorrectly a second time.

3. Public Information Communications Planning

Information communications strategies and planning are essential to all aspects of public information. Plans should include processes, protocols, and procedures that require the development of draft news releases, media lists, contact information of elected officials, community leaders, private sector organizations, and leads for public service organizations to facilitate the dissemination of accurate, consistent, accessible, and timely public information to numerous audiences. Training and exercising should incorporate public information as a critical component.

D. Relationships Among Command and Management Elements

The ICS, MACS, and Public Information have been described here as separate elements of command and management within NIMS. However, NIMS relies on the relationships among these elements along with the elements themselves.

Some relationships are specifically defined. For example, an Area Command or Incident Command coordinates with Public Information on incident-specific public information by placing an incident PIO within the JIS, typically located at a JIC. The relationship between Area Command or Incident Command and MACS is primarily defined by a communications link between Command and/or incident-site parties with resource management responsibilities and a particular staff position within multiagency coordination.

These relationships—along with other relationships among command and management elements that are not as clearly defined in advance—must be clearly defined and documented as each element evolves during an incident.

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COMPONENT V

ONGOING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The Ongoing Management and Maintenance Component of NIMS contains two subsections: National Integration Center (NIC) and Supporting Technologies. The National Integration Center section sets forth the responsibilities of the NIC. The Supporting Technologies section discusses principles necessary to leverage science and technology to improve capabilities and lower costs.

A. National Integration Center

Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5 (HSPD–5) required the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a mechanism for ensuring the ongoing management and maintenance of NIMS including regular consultation with other Federal departments and agencies, State, tribal, and local stakeholders, and with the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). To this end, the Secretary established the NIC, to serve as an asset for government agencies at all levels, the private sector, and NGOs that are implementing NIMS. The NIC provides strategic direction for and oversight of NIMS, supporting both routine maintenance and continuous refinement of the system and its components over the long term. The NIC solicits participation from Federal departments and agencies; State, tribal, and local governments; and emergency management/response personnel,[25] including those from the private sector and NGOs. Revisions to NIMS and other issues can be proposed by all NIMS users (including Federal, State, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, as well as the private sector, voluntary organizations, academia, nonprofit organizations, and other NIMS-related professional associations).

Additionally, the NIC administers NIMS compliance requirements, facilitates the development of guidance standards typing and credentialing, supports NIMS training and exercises, and manages the publication of various NIMS-related materials.

1. Concepts and Principles

The process for managing and maintaining NIMS ensures that all users and stakeholders—including various levels of government, functional disciplines, NGOs, and the private sector—are given the opportunity to participate in NIC activities. The NIMS management and maintenance process relies heavily on lessons learned from actual incidents and incident management training and exercises, as well as recognized best practices across jurisdictions and functional disciplines.

[25] Emergency management/response personnel include Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental organizations, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role.

2. NIMS Revision Process

Proposed changes to NIMS will be submitted to the NIC for consideration, approval, and publication. The Secretary has ultimate authority and responsibility for publishing revisions and modifications to NIMS-related documents, including supplementary standards, procedures, and other materials, in coordination with other Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, and NGOs with emergency management and incident response responsibilities, expertise, and experience. The NIC will periodically release revised versions of NIMS documents, following coordination with and input from all NIMS users.

3. NIC Responsibilities

a. Administration and Compliance

To manage ongoing administration and implementation of NIMS, including specification of compliance measures, the NIC is responsible for working toward the following:

- developing a national program for NIMS education and awareness, including specific instruction on the purpose and content of this document and NIMS in general;
- promoting compatibility between national-level standards for NIMS and those developed by other public, private, and/or professional groups;
- facilitating the establishment and maintenance of a documentation and database system related to qualification, certification, and credentialing of emergency management/response personnel and organizations, including reviewing and approving discipline-specific requirements (with input from Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations as appropriate);
- developing assessment criteria for the various components of NIMS, as well as compliance requirements and timelines for Federal, State, tribal, and local governments regarding NIMS standards and guidelines; and
- integrating into the national research and development (R&D) agenda (in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Under Secretary for Science and Technology) the NIMS-related science and technology needs of departments, agencies, disciplines, the private sector, and NGOs operating within NIMS.

b. Standards and Credentialing

The NIC will work with appropriate standards development organizations (SDOs) to ensure the adoption of common national standards and credentialing systems that are compatible and aligned with the implementation of NIMS. Identification, adoption, and development of common standards and credentialing programs includes the following:

- facilitating the development and publication of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for the qualification and certification of emergency management/response personnel, as appropriate;
- reviewing and approving discipline-specific qualification and certification requirements (with input from Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations as appropriate);

- establishing a data maintenance system to provide incident managers with the detailed qualification, experience, and training information needed to credential personnel for prescribed "national" incident management positions;
- coordinating minimum professional certification standards and facilitation of the design and implementation of a credentialing system that can be used nationwide;
- facilitating (with input from Federal, State, tribal, local, private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations) the establishment of standards for the performance, compatibility, and interoperability of incident management equipment and communications systems, including the following:
  - facilitating the development and publication of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for equipment certification (including the incorporation of standards and certification programs already in existence and used by incident management and emergency response organizations nationwide);
  - reviewing and approving lists of equipment that meet these established equipment certification requirements; and
  - collaborating with organizations responsible for emergency responder equipment evaluation and testing;
- facilitating the development and issuance of national standards for the typing of resources;
- facilitating the definition and maintenance of the information framework required to guide the development of NIMS information systems, including the development of data standards; and
- coordinating the establishment of technical and technology standards for NIMS users in concert with the DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology and recognized SDOs.

The NIC recommends that State and local governments voluntarily adopt the following National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards: NFPA 1600: "Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs," 2007 Edition; and NFPA 1561: "Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System," 2005 Edition. These standards, if adopted by the jurisdiction, can assist in the implementation of NIMS. For more information about these standards, please visit the NIMS guidance section of the NIC Web site. Other standards may be issued periodically by the NIC and recommended for voluntary adoption.

c. Training and Exercise Support

To lead the development of training and exercises that further appropriate agencies' and organizations' knowledge, adoption, and implementation of NIMS, the NIC will coordinate with them to do the following:

- facilitate the definition of general training requirements and the development of national-level training standards and course curriculums associated with NIMS, including the following:
  - the use of modeling and simulation capabilities for training and exercise programs;
  - field-based training, specification of mission-essential tasks, requirements for specialized instruction and instructor training, and course completion documentation for all NIMS users;
  - the review and recommendation (in coordination with Federal, State, tribal, and local governments as well as the private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations) of discipline-specific NIMS training courses;

- facilitate the development of national standards, guidelines, and protocols for incident management training and exercises, including consideration of existing exercise and training programs at all jurisdictional levels;
- facilitate the development of training necessary to support the incorporation of NIMS across all jurisdictional levels; and
- establish and maintain a repository for reports and lessons learned from actual incidents, training, and exercises, as well as for best practices, model structures, and processes for NIMS-related functions.

d. Publication Management

Publication management for NIMS includes the development of naming and numbering conventions, the review and certification of publications, methods for publications control, identification of sources and suppliers for publications and related services, and management of publication distribution and assurance of accessibility of products.[26]

NIMS publication management includes the following types of products:

- qualifications information;
- training course and exercise information;
- task books;
- Incident Command System (ICS) training, forms, and templates (and other necessary forms);
- job aids and guides;
- computer programs;
- audio and video resources; and
- "best practices" manuals/models/recommendations.

To manage publications related to NIMS, the NIC will coordinate with appropriate agencies and organizations and take the lead on the following:

- facilitating the establishment and maintenance of a publication management system for documents supporting NIMS and other NIMS-related publications and materials, including the development or coordination of general publications for all NIMS users;
- issuing documents or information via the NIMS publication management system;
- facilitating the development and publication of materials (such as supplementary documentation and desk guides) and standardized templates to support the implementation and continuous refinement of NIMS; and
- reviewing discipline-specific publication management requirements (with input from Federal, State, tribal, and local governments as well as the private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations).

[26] 47 U.S.C. § 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

B. Supporting Technologies

Ongoing development of science and technology is integral to the continual improvement and refinement of NIMS. Strategic R&D ensures that this development takes place. NIMS also relies on scientifically based technical standards that support the Nation's ability to manage incidents. Maintaining an appropriate focus on science and technology solutions as they relate to incident management will involve a necessary long-term collaborative effort among NIMS partners.

To ensure the effective development of incident management science and technology solutions, the NIC must work in coordination with the DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology to assess the needs of emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations.

1. Concepts and Principles

NIMS leverages science and technology to improve capabilities and lower costs. It observes the five key principles defined below.

a. Interoperability and Compatibility

Systems operating in an incident management environment must be able to work together (across disciplines and jurisdictions) and not interfere with one another. Interoperability and compatibility are achieved through the use of tools such as common communications and data standards, digital data formats, equipment standards, and design standards.

b. Technology Support

Technology support is the use and incorporation of new and existing technologies to improve efficiency and effectiveness in all aspects of incident management. Technology support permits organizations using NIMS to enhance all aspects of emergency management and incident response. Technology support facilitates incident operations and sustains the R&D programs that underpin the long-term investment in the Nation's future incident management capabilities.

c. Technology Standards

Supporting systems and technologies are based on requirements developed in collaboration with Federal, State, tribal, and local governments, as well as the private sector, NGOs, and national professional organizations. National standards may be required to facilitate the interoperability and compatibility of key systems across jurisdictions and/or disciplines.

d. Broad-Based Requirements

Needs for new technologies, procedures, protocols, and standards to facilitate incident management are identified before, during, and after an incident. As these needs could exceed available resources, NIMS provides a mechanism for aggregating and prioritizing needs and resources. These needs will be met by coordinating basic, applied, developmental, and demonstration research, testing, and evaluation activities.

e. Strategic Planning for R&D

Strategic R&D planning identifies future technologies that can improve or lower the cost of existing incident management capabilities. To ensure effective R&D, the NIC, in coordination with the DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology, will integrate into the national R&D agenda the incident management science and technology needs of all emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations.

2. Supporting Incident Management with Science and Technology

Supporting technologies enhance incident management capabilities or lower costs through three principal activities which are more fully defined below.

a. Operational Scientific Support

Operational scientific support identifies and, on request, mobilizes scientific and technical assets that can be used to support incident management activities. Operational scientific support draws on the scientific and technological expertise of other agencies and other organizations. Planning for this category of support is done at each level of government through the NIMS preparedness organizations.[27] Operational scientific support is requested and provided through various programs coordinated by DHS and other organizations and agencies.

b. Technical Standards Support

Technical standards support efforts enable the development and coordination of technology standards for NIMS to ensure that personnel, organizations, communications and information systems, and other equipment coordinate and perform consistently, effectively, and reliably without disrupting one another. In coordination with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate, the NIC will coordinate the establishment of technical standards for NIMS users. The following principles will be used in defining these standards:

(1) Performance Measurement

Performance measurement (the collection of "hard" data) is the most reliable basis for standards that ensure the safety and mission effectiveness of emergency responders and incident managers. Within the technology standards process, a performance measurement infrastructure develops guidelines, performance standards, testing protocols, personnel certification, reassessment, and training procedures to help incident management organizations use equipment systems effectively.

(2) Consensus-Based Performance

A consensus-based approach to developing and modifying standards takes advantage of existing SDOs with longstanding interest and expertise in incident management. These SDOs include the National Institute of Justice, National Institute for Standards and Technology, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, American National Standards Institute, ASTM International, and NFPA. NIMS, through the NIC, establishes working relationships among these SDOs and incident management organizations to develop performance standards for incident management technology.

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[27] See page 12, Component I, Preparedness, *Preparedness Organizations*.

(3) Testing and Evaluation

NIMS technology criteria will rely on private and public sector testing laboratories to evaluate equipment against NIMS technical standards. These organizations will be selected in accordance with guidelines that ensure that testing organizations are both technically proficient and objective (free from conflicting interests) in their testing. The NIC will issue appropriate guidelines as part of its standards development and facilitation responsibilities.

(4) Technical Guidelines for Training Emergency Responders on Equipment Use

Inputs from vulnerability analysts, equipment developers, users, and standards experts are employed to develop scientifically based technical guidelines for training emergency management/response personnel on how to use equipment properly. Based on incident management protocols, instruments, and instrument systems, these training guidelines reflect threat and vulnerability information, equipment and systems capabilities, and a range of expected operating conditions. In addition, performance measures and testing protocols developed from these training guidelines provide a repeatable method of measuring the effectiveness of equipment and systems.

c. Research and Development Support

R&D planning will be based on the operational needs of the entire range of NIMS users. These needs represent key inputs as the Nation formulates its R&D agenda for developing new and improved incident management capabilities. Since operational needs may exceed the resources available for research to address them, these needs must be validated, integrated, and prioritized. DHS is responsible for integrating user needs at all levels into the national R&D agenda.

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APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE OF RESOURCES FOR WHICH TYPING HAS BEEN COMPLETED

As an illustration of how national resource typing is used, Table A-1 is an example of a single resource that has been completely typed, a Track Dozer. Table A-2 is an example of a team resource that has been completely typed, a Swiftwater/Flood and Rescue Team.

Table A-1—Illustrates a Single Resource that Has Been Typed, a Track Dozer

Resource: Track Dozer						
Category:	Public Works and Engineering (ESF #3)			Kind:	Equipment	
Minimum Capabilities:		Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Other
Component	Measures					
Equipment	Example	D10R – Cat 3412E Turbo Charged Diesel	D6N – Cat 3126B Diesel	D3G – Cat 3046 Diesel		D10R WHA (Waste Handling) – Cat 3412E Turbo Charged Diesel
Gross Power	RPM	1,900	2,100	2,400		1,900
Gross Power	kw/hp	457/613	127/170	57/77		457/613
Operating Weight	lbs	144,191	34,209	16,193		144,986
Blade Capacity	yd^3	24.2	5.6	1.88		63.9
Digging Depth	in	26.5	20.5	21.8		26.5
Height	ft/in	6′11″	4′1″	3′.8″		10′5″
Ground Clearance	ft/in	4′11″	3′2.7″			4′10″
Total Tilt	ft/in	3′3″	2′2.2″	1′2.5″		3′6.3″
Width Over End Bits	ft/in	15′11″	10′6″	8′.9″		17′3″
Blade Lift Height	in			27.1		
Digging Depth	in			21.8		
Multishanks Arrangements		1 to 3	3			1 to 3
Ground Clearance Under Tip	in	35	19.9	16.2		35
Machine Ground Clearance	in			14.7		
Max Penetration	in		14.2			37
Max Reach at Ground Line	in		29.1	29.1		
Width	ft/in	9′7″	7′2.7″	8′.9″		9′7″
Winch-Drum Capacity	ft	226	371	371		226
Fuel Capacity	gal	293	79	43.6		293

1 **Table A-1—Illustrates a Single Resource that Has Been Typed, a Track Dozer, continued**

Resource: Track Dozer						
Category:	Public Works and Engineering (ESF #3)			Kind:	Equipment	
Minimum Capabilities:		Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Other
Component	Measures					
Equipment	Example	D10R – Cat 3412E Turbo Charged Diesel	D6N – Cat 3126B Diesel	D3G – Cat 3046 Diesel		D10R WHA (Waste Handling) – Cat 3412E Turbo Charged Diesel
Max Line Pull Bare Drum	lbs			40,000		
Full Drum	lbs			25,000		
Equipment	Example	 D10R	 D6N	 D3G		 D10R WH
Comments:	Caterpillar is used as an example only. The major difference for D10R WHA (Waste Handling) – Cat 3412E Turbo Charged Diesel is that it contains a larger blade and protection guards to prevent landfill type debris from tangling its drives.  General Example					

2

Table A-2—Illustrates a Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team that Has Been Typed

Resource:	**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team**				
Category:	Search and Rescue			Kind:	Team
Minimum Capabilities:		Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Component	Measure				
Personnel	Team Composition	14-member team 2 managers 2 squad leaders 10 personnel	6-member team 1 squad leader 5 personnel	4-member team 1 squad leader 3 personnel	3-member team 1 squad leader 2 personnel
Personnel	Minimum number: Technical Animal Rescue	2	1	1	
Personnel	Minimum number: ALS Certified	2			
Personnel	Minimum number: Helicopter/Aquatic Rescue Operations	4	2		
Personnel	Minimum number: Powered Boat Operators	4	2		
Personnel	Minimum number: SCUBA-trained Support Personnel with Equipment	4	2	2	
Personnel	Number and level EMTs	14 EMTs – B 2 EMTs – P	Same as Type III	Same as Type IV	1 EMT - B
Team	Sustained operations	Same as Type II	24-hour operations	Same as Type IV	18-hour operations
Team	Capabilities	Manage search operations Power vessel operations Helicopter rescue operational Animal rescue HAZMAT ALS Communications Logistics	Manage search operations Power vessel operations Helicopter rescue operational Animal rescue HAZMAT BLS	Assist in search operations Nonpowered watercraft Animal rescue HAZMAT BLS	Low-risk operations Land-based HAZMAT BLS
Team	Specialty S&R Capabilities	Same as Type II	Same as Type III plus: Technical rope systems	In-water contact rescue Dive rescue	

1 **Table A-2—Illustrates a Swiftwater/Flood and Rescue Team that Has Been Typed, continued**

Resource:	**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team**				
Category:	Search and Rescue			Kind:	Team
Minimum Capabilities:		Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Component	Measure				
Team	Training	Same as Type II except: Divers to have 80 hours of formal public safety diver training	Same as Type III plus: Helicopter operations awareness Technical rope rescue	Same as Type IV plus: Divers to have 60 hours of formal public safety diver training	Class 3 paddle skills Contact and self-rescue skills HAZMAT ICS Swiftwater rescue technician
Team	Certifications	ALS Advanced First Aid & CPR	Same as Type IV	Same as Type IV	BLS Advanced First Aid & CPR
Equipment	Transportation Resources	Equipment trailer, personnel support vehicle			
Personnel	Team Composition	14-member team 2 managers 2 squad leaders 10 personnel	6-member team 1 squad leader 5 personnel	4-member team 1 squad leader 3 personnel	3-member team 1 squad leader 2 personnel
Equipment	Communication	Same as Type II	Same as Type III plus: Aircraft radio	Same as Type IV plus: Headset	Batteries Portable radios Cell phone
Equipment	Medical	ALS medical kit Blankets Spineboard Litter	Same as Type III plus: Spineboard	Same as Type IV plus: Litter	BLS medical kit Blankets
Equipment	Personal	Same as Type II	Same as Type III plus: Life vests HEED except: PFD Type V	Same as Type IV plus: Fins Lamps	Light sticks; Flares; Markers; Flashlight; Bags; Helmets; Gloves; Knives; PFD Type III/IV; Shoes; Whistles

2

Table A-2—Illustrates a Swiftwater/Flood and Rescue Team that Has Been Typed, continued

Resource:	**Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue Team**				
Category:	Search and Rescue			Kind:	Team
Minimum Capabilities:		Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Component	Measure				
Equipment	SCUBA	Same as Type III	Same as Type III	SCUBA cylinder Buoyancy compensator Weight belt 2 cutting tools Chest harness & snap shackle Full face mask Underwater communication Dry suit Search line Spare SCUBA cylinder	
Vehicle	Rescue Boat	2 - Fueled	1 - Fueled	1 - Nonpowered 4-person	
Comments:	Conduct search and rescue operations in all water environments, including swiftwater and flood conditions. Water rescue teams come with all team equipment required to conduct operations safely and effectively. For a complete list of recommended training, skills, and equipment, please refer to the FIRESCOPE Swiftwater/Flood Search and Rescue definition at http://www.firescope.org/ics-usar/ICS-SF-SAR-020-1.pdf.				

Note: ALS = advanced life support; EMT = emergency medical technician; BLS = basic life support; CPR = cardiopulmonary resuscitation; HEED = helicopter emergency egress device; PFD = personal flotation device

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APPENDIX B

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this appendix is to provide additional explanation and examples relating to the Incident Command System (ICS); however, this appendix is not a substitute for ICS training.

The ICS is used for a broad spectrum of incidents, from routine to complex, both naturally occurring and manmade. The ICS is used by all levels of government—Federal, State, tribal, and local—as well as the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in incident management activities.

Some of the more important "transitional steps" that are necessary to apply ICS in a field incident environment include the following:

- recognizing and anticipating the requirement that organizational elements will be activated and taking the necessary steps to delegate authority as appropriate;
- establishing incident facilities as needed, located to support field operations;
- establishing the use of common terminology for organizational functional elements, position titles, facilities, and resources; and
- rapidly evolving from oral direction to the development of a written Incident Action Plan (IAP).

B. ORGANIZATION OF THIS APPENDIX

The major elements of ICS, which are discussed in this appendix, have been organized into 10 Tabs. These tabs are as follows:

- Tab 1—ICS Organization
- Tab 2—The Operations Section
- Tab 3—The Planning Section
- Tab 4—The Logistics Section
- Tab 5—The Finance/Administration Section
- Tab 6—Establishing an Area Command
- Tab 7—Facilities and Locations

- Tab 8—The Planning Process [Incident Action Plan (IAP)]
- Tab 9—Examples of ICS Forms
- Tab 10—Summary of Major ICS Positions

TAB 1—ICS ORGANIZATION

A. FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

The Incident Command System (ICS) organization includes five major functional areas: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.[28] (A sixth functional area, Intelligence/Investigations, may be established if required.)

B. MODULAR EXPANSION

The ICS organizational structure is modular, extending to incorporate all elements necessary for the type, size, scope, and complexity of a given incident. The Incident Command structural organization builds from the top down; responsibility and performance begin with the incident command element and the Incident Commander (IC). When the need arises, four separate sections can be used to organize the General Staff. Each of these sections may have several subordinate units, or Branches, depending on the management requirements of the incident. If one individual can simultaneously manage all major functional areas, no further organization is required. If one or more of the functions requires independent management, an individual is assigned responsibility for that function.

The initial responding IC may determine that it is necessary to delegate functional management to one or more Section Chiefs to maintain a manageable span of control. The Section Chiefs may further delegate management authority for their areas as required. A Section Chief may establish Branches or units, depending on the Section. Similarly, each functional Unit Leader will further assign individual tasks within the unit as needed.

The use of deputies and assistants is a vital part of both the ICS organizational structure and the modular concept. The IC may have one or more deputies, who may be from the same agency or from an assisting agency. Deputies may also be used at Section and Branch levels of the ICS organization. A deputy, whether at the IC, Section, or Branch level, must be fully qualified to assume the position.

There are three primary reasons to designate a deputy IC:

1. To perform specific tasks as requested by the IC.
2. To perform the incident command function in a relief capacity (e.g., to take over the next operational period). (In this case, the deputy will then assume the primary role.)
3. To represent an assisting agency that may share jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

[28] See page 144, Appendix B, Tab 10, for summary information on the major components of ICS.

Assistants are used as subordinates for the Command Staff positions, Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They have a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions.

The modular concept described above is based on the following considerations:

- developing the form of the organization to match the function or task to be performed;
- staffing only the functional elements that are required to perform the task;
- observing recommended span-of-control guidelines;
- performing the function of any nonactivated organizational element at the next highest level; and
- deactivating organizational elements no longer required.

For reference, Table B-1 describes the distinctive title assigned to each element of the ICS organization at each corresponding level, as well as the leadership title corresponding to each individual element.

Table B-1—ICS Organization

Organizational Element	Leadership Position Titles	Support Positions
Incident Command	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff	Officer	Assistant
Section	Section Chief	Deputy
Branch	Branch Director	Deputy
Divisions and Groups*	Supervisors	N/A
Unit**	Unit Leader	Manager, Coordinator
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	Single Resource Boss, Companies/Crews
Single Resource Boss	Boss	N/A
Technical Specialist	Specialist	N/A

*The hierarchical term *supervisor* is used only in the Operations Section.

**Unit Leader designations apply to the subunits of the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections.

1. Command Staff

In an ICS organization, the Incident Command consists of the Incident Commander and various Command staff positions. The Command staff positions are specifically designated, report directly to Incident Commander, and are assigned responsibility for key activities that are not a part of the ICS General Staff functional elements. Three staff positions are typically identified in ICS: Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. Additional positions may be required (such as technical specialists), depending on the nature, scope, complexity, and location(s) of the incident(s), or according to specific requirements established by the IC.

a. Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The PIO assembles accurate, accessible, and complete information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; the resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external consumption. The PIO may also perform a key public information–monitoring role. Whether the command structure is single or unified, only one PIO should be designated per incident. Assistants may be assigned from other departments or agencies involved. The IC must approve the release of all incident-related information.

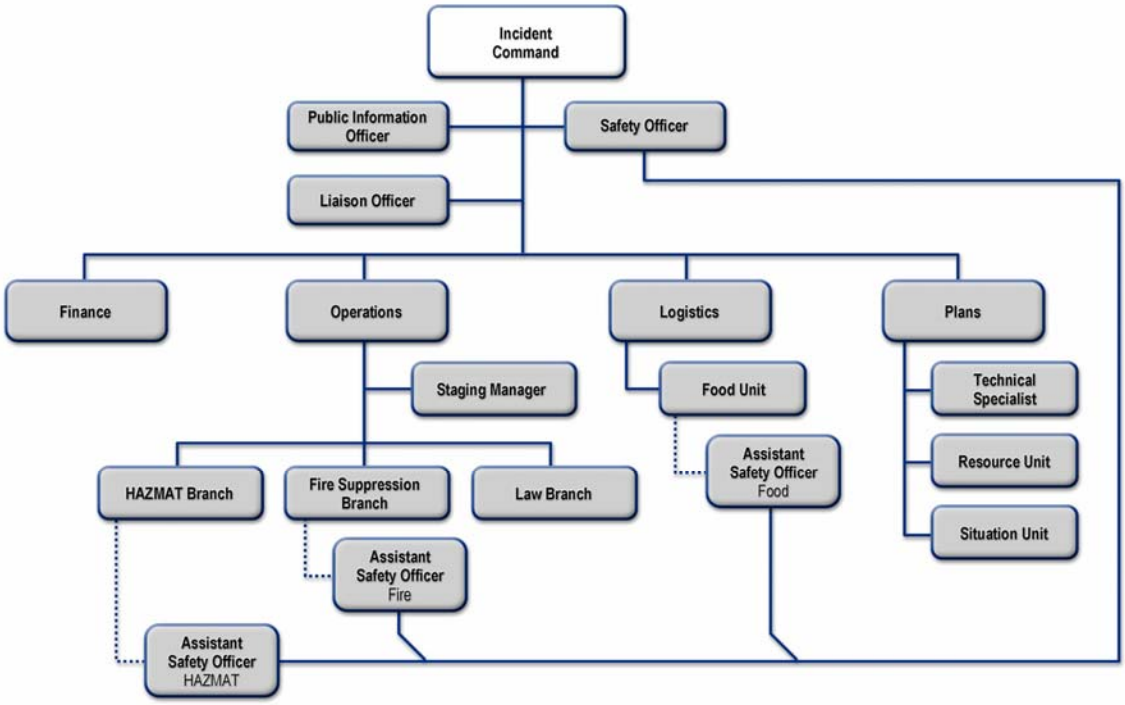
b. Safety Officer

The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises Incident Command on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel. The ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations rests with the IC or Unified Command (UC) and supervisors at all levels of incident management. In turn, the Safety Officer is responsible to Incident Command for the set of systems and procedures necessary to ensure ongoing assessment of hazardous environments, coordination of multiagency safety efforts, and implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety as well as the general safety of incident operations. The Safety Officer has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts during incident operations.

In a UC structure, a single Safety Officer should be designated regardless of the involvement of multiple jurisdictions and/or functional agencies. The Safety Officer, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, and Logistics Section Chief must coordinate closely regarding operational safety and emergency responder health and safety issues. The Safety Officer must also ensure the coordination of safety management functions and issues across jurisdictions, across functional agencies, and with the private sector and NGOs.

It is important to note that 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 contributes to the overall effort to protect all responder personnel involved in incident operations.

Assistant Safety Officers may be assigned from departments or agencies constituting the UC. Some types of incidents, such as a hazardous materials incident, require Assistant Safety Officers to have special skill sets. Figure B-1 is an illustrative example of how the Safety Officer and the respective Assistant Safety Officers could be positioned in an incident.



*The dotted line connection represents coordination and communication between the two points, not necessarily a direct link within the chain of command.

Figure B-1—Illustrative Example of the Role of Safety Officer and Assistant Safety Officer in ICS in a Multibranch Incident

- The Assistant Safety Officer for hazardous materials (HAZMAT) would be assigned to carry out the functions outlined in 29-CFR-1910.120 (HAZMAT Operations). This person should have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide oversight for specific hazardous material operations at field level.
- The Assistant Safety Officer for fire would be assigned to assist the Branch director providing oversight for specific fire operations. This person would have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide this function.
- The Assistant Safety Officer for food would be assigned to the Food Unit to provide oversight of food handling and distribution. This person would have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide this function. An example would be a food specialist from a local health department.

c. Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer is Incident Command's point of contact for representatives of other governmental departments and agencies, NGOs, and/or private entities (with no jurisdiction or legal authority) to provide input on their organization's policies, resource availability, and other incident-related matters. In either a single Incident Command or UC structure, representatives from assisting or cooperating organizations coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Organizational representatives assigned to an incident must have the authority to speak for their parent agencies and/or organizations on all matters, following appropriate consultations with

their agency leadership. Assistants and personnel from other organizations (public or private) involved in incident management activities may be assigned to the Liaison Officer to facilitate coordination.

d. Additional Command Staff

Additional Command Staff positions may also be necessary depending on the nature and location(s) of the incident, and/or specific requirements established by Incident Command. For example, a legal counsel may be assigned to the Planning Section as a technical specialist or directly to the Command Staff to advise Incident Command on legal matters, such as emergency proclamations, the 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 Incident Command in the context of incidents involving medical and mental health services, mass casualty response, acute care, vector control, epidemiology, and/or mass prophylaxis considerations, particularly in the response to a bioterrorism incident.

TAB 2—THE OPERATIONS SECTION

The Operations Section is responsible for managing operations at the incident site directed toward reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situation control, and restoring normal conditions. Incidents can include acts of terrorism, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous material spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other incidents requiring an emergency response.

Because of its functional management structure, the ICS is applicable across a spectrum of incidents differing in size, scope, and complexity. The types of agencies that could be included in the Operations Section include fire, law enforcement, public health, public works, and emergency services. Depending on the situation, these agencies may work together as a unit or in various combinations. Many incidents may involve private individuals, companies, or NGOs as partners in the Operations Section.

Incident operations can be organized and executed in many ways. The specific method selected will depend on the type of incident, the agencies involved, and the objectives and strategies of the incident management effort. The following discussion presents several different methods of organizing tactical operations in response to an incident. In some cases, the approach will be strictly functional. In other cases, a method will be selected to accommodate jurisdictional boundaries. In still others, a mix of functional and geographical approaches may be appropriate. While ICS organizational management is directly correlated with the size and complexity of the incident, the need to maintain a manageable span of control for all resources means that the number of subordinate units or single resources is what drives the functions of the ICS. The ICS offers extensive flexibility in determining the appropriate approach using the factors described above.

A. Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief directly manages all incident tactical activities and implements the IAP. The Operations Section Chief may have one or more deputies, preferably from other agencies in multijurisdictional incidents. An Operations Section Chief should be designated for each operational period and will have direct involvement in the development of the IAP for the next operational period of responsibility.

B. Branches

Branches may be established to meet several challenges:

1. The Numbers of Divisions and/or Groups Exceed the Recommended Span of Control for the Operations Section Chief

The recommended span of control for the Operations Section Chief (as for all managers and supervisory personnel) is three to seven, with the optimum being five. When this ratio is exceeded, the Operations Section Chief establishes Branches, Divisions, and/or Groups to maintain the desired span of control (see Figure B-2). For example, if one Group and four Divisions are reporting to the Operations Section Chief, and two Divisions and one Group are to be added, a two-Branch organization may be formed.

The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all have an influence on span-of-control considerations.

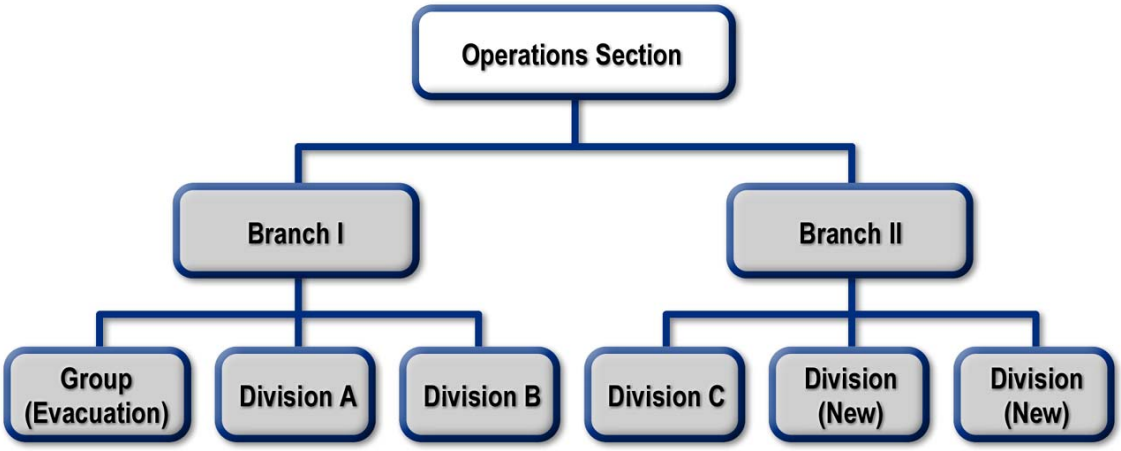


Figure B-2—Geographic Branch Organization

2. The Nature of the Incident Calls for a Functional Branch Structure

For example, if a large aircraft crashes in a city, various departments within the city (including police, fire, emergency services, and public health services) might each have a functional Branch operating under the direction of a single Operations Section Chief. In this example (see Figure B-3), the Operations Section Chief is from the fire department, with deputies from police and emergency medical services (EMS). Other alignments could be made, depending on the city plan and type of emergency. Note that, in this situation, the Incident Command could be either a single command or UC, depending on the jurisdiction.

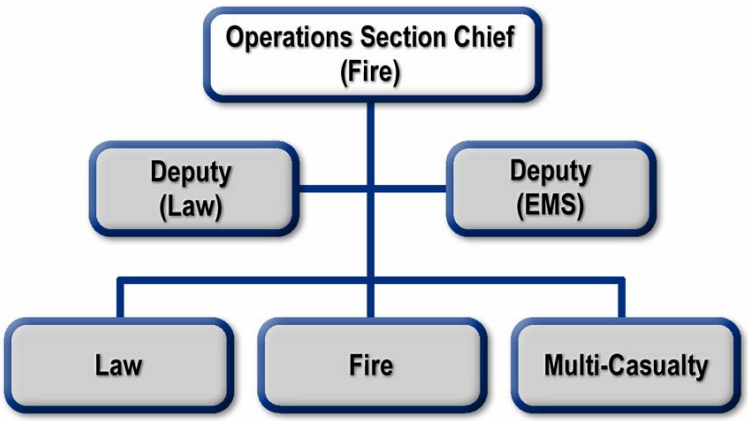


Figure B-3—Deputy Operations with Functional Branch Structure

3. The Nature of the Incident Calls for a Multijurisdictional Branch Structure

In this case, resources are best managed under the agencies that normally control them (see Figure B-4). For example, the response to a major flood might require combining Federal, State, regional, tribal, and local resources.

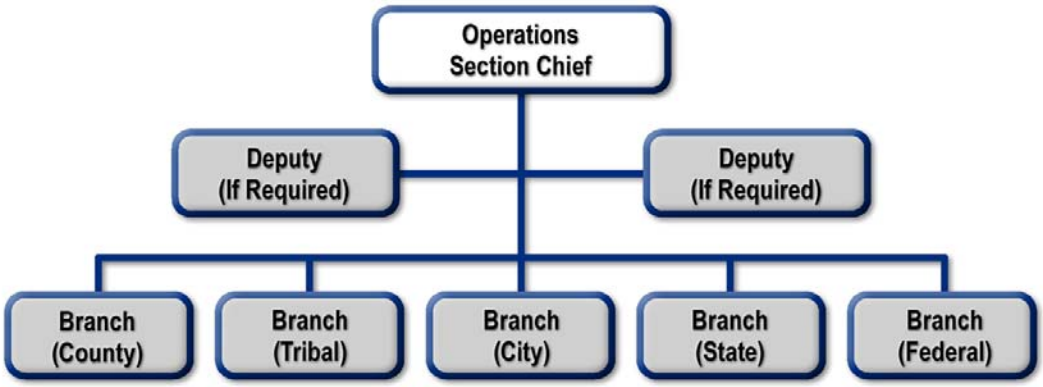


Figure B-4—Multijurisdictional Incident

C. Divisions and Groups

Divisions and Groups are established when the number of resources exceeds the Operations Section Chief's manageable span of control. Divisions demarcate physical or geographical areas of operation within the incident area. Groups demarcate functional areas of operation for the incident.

The use of the two terms is necessary, because *Division* always refers to a geographical assignment and *Group* always refers to a functional assignment. Divisions and Groups may be used in a single incident. Maintaining proper coordination is vital to the success of these operations.

As additional types of resources are added to the organization, resources should be assigned into a division structure.

1. Geographical Divisions

One way to create geographical divisions is to divide an area according to natural separations of terrain or other prominent geographical features, such as rivers. When geographical features are used for determining boundaries, the size of the division should correspond to appropriate span-of-control guidelines. (See Figure B-5.)

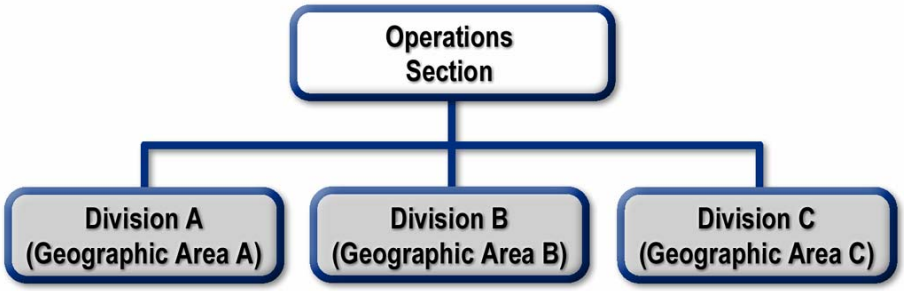


Figure B-5—Use of Geographical Divisions

2. Functional Groups

Functional groups can best be used to describe areas of like activity (e.g., rescue, evacuation, medical). (See Figure B-6.)

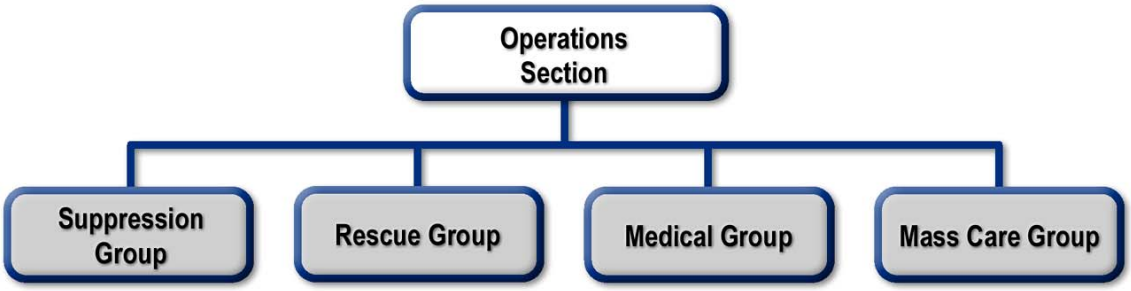


Figure B-6—Use of Functional Groups

3. Combined Geographical Divisions and Functional Groups

It is also possible to have both Divisions and Groups within the Operations Section. For example, Divisions A, B, and C (based on geographical locations) may work in conjunction with functional groups assigned to specific tasks (e.g., traffic control, smoke ventilation) in those locations. Alternatively, Groups may be assigned throughout the entire incident and may work independently or in conjunction with Divisions. Organizationally, the supervisors of Divisions and Groups have the same level of authority.

D. Resource Organization

Initially, in any incident, responding individual resources (single resources, strike teams, and task forces) will report directly to the IC. As the incident grows in size or complexity, these individual resources may be assigned within Divisions and/or Groups. Task Forces and Strike Teams are an effective way to reduce the span of control over a large number of single resources.

1. Single Resources

Resources may be employed on an single basis. These are individual personnel or equipment and any associated operators. This is typically the case in the context of the initial response to the incident.

2. Task Forces

Task Forces are any combination of resources put together to accomplish a specific mission. Task Forces can be ad hoc or planned resources. They include a designated leader and operate with common communications. Combining resources into Task Forces allows several key resource elements to be managed under one individual's supervision, thus aiding in span of control. As an example, during a flood incident, where a public works Task Force is established with the mission of opening storm drains, it could consist of a dump truck, backhoe, front loader, a five-person crew with shovels and transportation, and a Task Force Leader (public works foreman with vehicle and communications).

3. Strike Teams

A Strike Team consists of a set number of resources of the same kind and type operating under a designated leader with common communications between them. Strike Teams represent known capability, and are highly effective management units. An example of a Strike Team, for a fire response, could consist of five Type I engines and a Strike Team Leader. The Strike Team Leader is required to have a vehicle with communication capabilities to communicate with his or her team.

E. Air Operations Branch

The Operations Section Chief may establish an Air Operations Branch, and designate its director, when the complexity of air operations requires additional support and effort or when the incident requires mixing tactical and logistical utilization of helicopters and other aircraft. Aviation safety is a paramount concern in complex operations, and a designated Air Operations Branch ensures the safe and efficient use of aviation assets. Figure B-7 shows a typical organizational structure for air operations.

Whenever both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft must operate simultaneously within the incident air space, an Air Tactical Group Supervisor should be designated. This individual coordinates all airborne activity with the assistance of a helicopter coordinator and a fixed-wing coordinator. When only one helicopter is used, however, the helicopter may be directly under the control of the Operations Section Chief.

The Air Support Group establishes and operates bases for rotary-wing air assets and maintains required liaison with off-incident fixed-wing bases. The Air Support Group is responsible for all timekeeping for aviation assets assigned to the incident.

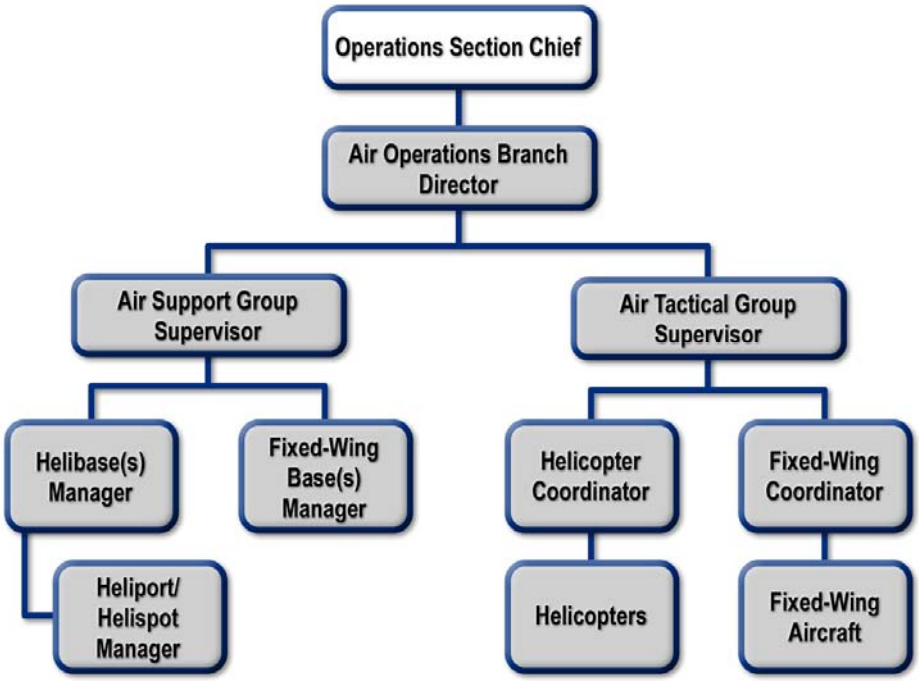


Figure B-7—Air Operations Organization

TAB 3—THE PLANNING SECTION

The Planning Section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating operational information pertaining to the incident. This section maintains information and intelligence on the current and forecasted situation, as well as the status of resources assigned to the incident. The Planning Section prepares and documents IAPs and incident maps, and gathers and disseminates information and intelligence critical to the incident. The Planning Section has four primary units and may also include technical specialists to assist in evaluating the situation and forecasting requirements for additional personnel and equipment.

A. PLANNING SECTION CHIEF

The Planning Section Chief oversees all incident-related data gathering and analysis regarding incident operations and assigned resources, conducts planning meetings, and prepares the IAP for each operational period. This individual will normally come from the jurisdiction with primary incident responsibility and may have one or more deputies from other participating jurisdictions.

B. RESOURCES UNIT

1. Responsibilities

Resources consist of personnel, teams, crews, aircraft, and equipment available for assignment to or employment during incidents. The Resources Unit makes certain that all assigned personnel and resources have checked in at the incident. This unit maintains a system for keeping track of the current location and status of all assigned resources and maintains a master list of all resources committed to incident operations.

2. Resource Status

Resources must be categorized by kind and type (capability and capacity), and resource status must be tracked continuously to manage resources effectively during an incident. The following status conditions and procedures are used for maintaining an up-to-date and accurate picture of resource status:

a. Status Conditions

Tactical resources at an incident can have one of three status conditions:

- *Assigned*

  Resources checked in and assigned to work on an incident.

- *Available resources*

  Personnel, teams, equipment, or facilities that have been assigned to an incident and are ready for a specific work detail or function.

- *Out-of-service*

  Assigned resources that are unable to function for mechanical, rest, or personal reasons.

b. Changes in Status

Typically, when the status of a resource has changed (e.g., a unit that was previously listed as "out-of-service" is reclassified as "available"), the Unit Leader or the supervisor who approved the status change should immediately notify the Resource Unit Leader, who, in turn, will make the appropriate status classifications.

C. Situation Unit

The Situation Unit collects, processes, and organizes ongoing situation information; prepares situation summaries; and develops projections and forecasts of future events related to the incident. The Situation Unit prepares maps and also gathers and disseminates information and intelligence for use in the IAP. This unit should be prepared to provide situation reports in a timely manner as scheduled or at the request of the Planning Section Chief or IC. This unit may also require the expertise of technical specialists.

D. Documentation Unit

The Documentation Unit maintains accurate and complete incident files, including a complete record of the major steps taken to resolve the incident; provides duplication services to incident personnel; and files, maintains, and stores incident files for legal, analytical, and historical purposes. This unit compiles and publishes the IAP and maintains the files and records that are developed as part of the overall IAP and planning function.

E. Demobilization Unit

The Demobilization Unit develops an Incident Demobilization Plan that includes specific instructions for all personnel and resources that will require demobilization. This unit should begin its work early in the incident, creating rosters of personnel and resources, and obtaining any missing information as check-in proceeds.

Note that many city- and county-provided resources are local, and as such do not require specific demobilization instructions. Once the Incident Demobilization Plan has been approved, the

Demobilization Unit ensures that it is distributed both at the incident and elsewhere as necessary.

F. TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

The ICS is designed to function in a wide variety of incident scenarios that require the use of technical specialists. These personnel have special skills and are activated only when needed. Specialists may serve anywhere within the organization, including the Command Staff. No specific incident qualifications are prescribed or required, as technical specialists normally perform the same duties during an incident that they perform in their everyday jobs, and they are typically certified in their fields or professions.

Technical specialists are most often assigned to the specific area (Section, Unit, Branch, Division, etc.) where their services are needed and performed. In some situations they may be assigned to a separate unit within the Planning Section, much like a talent pool, and assigned out to various jobs on a temporary basis. For example, a tactical specialist may be sent to the Operations Section to assist with tactical matters, a financial specialist may be sent to the Finance/Administration Section to assist with fiscal matters, or a legal specialist or 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. Generally, if the expertise is needed for only a short period and normally involves only one individual, that individual should be assigned to the Situation Unit. If the expertise will be required on a long-term basis and may require several personnel, it is advisable to establish a separate Technical Unit in the Planning Section.

The incident itself will primarily dictate the needs for technical specialists. Below are representative examples of the kinds of specialists that may be required:

- meteorologist;
- environmental impact specialist;
- resource use and cost specialists;
- flood control specialist;
- water-use specialist;
- explosives specialist;
- structural engineering specialist;
- firefighter specialist;
- medical and/or public health specialist;
- emergency medical services specialist;
- medical intelligence specialist;
- pharmaceutical specialist;
- veterinarian;
- agricultural specialist;
- toxicologist;

- radiation health physicist;
- intelligence specialist;
- infectious disease specialist;
- chemical or radiological decontamination specialist;
- law enforcement specialist;
- legal counsel;
- industrial hygienist;
- transportation specialist;
- Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC);
- mass care specialist;
- numerical modeler;
- records management specialist;
- data management specialist;
- special needs advisor;
- faith community representative;
- mortuary affairs specialist;
- communication specialist;
- waste management specialist;
- public relations specialist;
- cultural resource specialist;
- forensic pathologist;
- homeland security specialist; and
- military specialist.

A specific example of the need to establish a distinct Technical Unit within the General Staff is the requirement to coordinate and manage large volumes of environmental sampling and/or analytical data from multiple sources in the context of certain complex incidents, particularly those involving biological, chemical, and radiological hazards. To meet this requirement, an Environmental Unit could be established within the Planning Section to facilitate interagency environmental data managing, monitoring, sampling, analyzing, and assessing. The Environmental Unit would prepare environmental data for the Situation Unit and work in close coordination with other units and Sections within the ICS structure to enable effective decision support to the IC or Unified Command (UC)UC. Technical specialists assigned to the Environmental Unit might include an SSC and sampling, response technologies, weather forecast, resources at risk, cleanup assessment, and disposal technical specialists. Example tasks accomplished by the Environmental Unit would include the following:

- identifying sensitive areas and recommending response priorities;
- developing a plan for collecting, transporting, and analyzing samples;
- providing input on wildlife protection strategies;

- determining the extent and effects of site contamination;
- developing site cleanup and hazardous material disposal plans; and
- identifying the need for and obtaining permits and other authorizations.

TAB 4—THE LOGISTICS SECTION

The Logistics Section provides all the support needs for the incident, such as ordering resources and providing facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance and fuel, food service, communications, and medical services for incident personnel (see Figure B-8).

The Logistics Section is led by a Section Chief, who may also have one or more deputies. Having a deputy is encouraged when all designated units are established at an incident site. When the incident is very large or requires a number of facilities with large numbers of equipment, the Logistics Section can be divided into Branches. This helps with span of control by providing more effective supervision and coordination among the individual units. Conversely, in smaller incidents or when fewer resources are needed, a Branch configuration may be used to combine the task assignments of individual units with a Branch structure. (Figure B-8 provides an example of the Logistics Section organized with Service and Support Branches.)

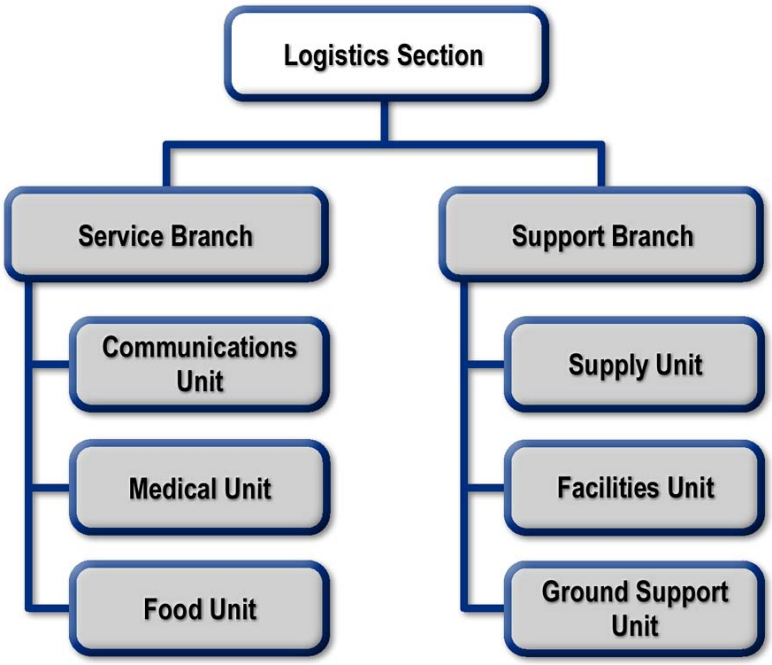


Figure B-8—Logistics Section: Branch Organizational Structure

A. SUPPLY UNIT

The Supply Unit orders, receives, stores, maintains adequate inventories, and distributes all incident-related resources.

Once established, the Supply Unit also has the basic responsibility for all off-incident ordering, including the following:

- all tactical and support resources (including personnel); and
- all expendable and nonexpendable supplies required for incident support.

The Supply Unit provides the support required to receive, process, store, and distribute all supply orders. The unit also handles tool operations, which includes storing, disbursing, and servicing of tools and portable, nonexpendable equipment. Additionally, the Supply Unit assists in projecting resource needs based upon information provided from the IAP.

B. FACILITIES UNIT

The Facilities Unit sets up, maintains, and demobilizes all facilities used in support of incident operations. The unit also provides facility maintenance and Law Enforcement/security services required for incident support.

The Facilities Unit sets up the Incident Command Post (ICP), incident base, and camps (including trailers and/or other forms of shelter for use in and around the incident area), as well as provides the services associated with maintaining those functions. The incident base and camps may often be established in areas having existing structures, which may be used in whole or in part. The Facilities Unit also provides and sets up necessary personnel support facilities, including areas for the following:

- food and hydration service;
- sleeping;
- sanitation and showers; and
- staging.

Providing shelter for victims is a critical operational activity, which will be incorporated into the IAP. Sheltering will normally be conducted by appropriate nongovernmental organization staff, such as the American Red Cross or other similar entities.

This unit also orders, through supply, such additional support items as portable toilets, shower facilities, and lighting units.

C. Ground Support Unit

The Ground Support Unit:

- maintains and repairs primary tactical vehicles and mobile ground support equipment;
- records usage time for all ground equipment (including contract equipment) assigned to the incident;
- supplies fuel for all mobile equipment;
- provides transportation in support of incident operations (except aircraft); and
- develops and implements the Incident Traffic Plan.

In addition to its primary functions of maintaining and servicing vehicles and mobile equipment, the Ground Support Unit maintains a transportation pool for major incidents. This pool consists of vehicles (e.g., staff cars, buses, pickups) that are suitable for transporting personnel. The Ground Support Unit also provides to the Resources Unit up-to-date information on the location and status of transportation vehicles assigned to the Ground Support Unit.

D. Communications Unit

The Communications Unit develops the Communications Plan (ICS 205) to make the most effective use of the communications equipment and facilities assigned to the incident, installs and tests all communications equipment, supervises and operates the incident communications center, distributes and recovers communications equipment assigned to incident personnel, and maintains and repairs communications equipment on site.

The Communications Unit is responsible for effective incident communications planning, especially in the context of a multiagency incident. All communications between organizational elements during an incident should be in plain language (clear text) in order to ensure that information dissemination is clear and understood by all intended recipients. Planning is critical for determining required radio nets, establishing interagency frequency assignments, and ensuring the interoperability and the optimal use of all assigned communications capabilities.

The Communications Unit Leader should attend all incident-planning meetings to ensure that the communication systems available for the incident can support tactical operations planned for the next operational period.

Incident communications are managed through the use of an incident communications plan and a communications center established solely for the use of tactical and support resources assigned to the incident.

Advance planning is required to ensure that an appropriate communications system is available to support incident operations requirements. This planning includes the development of frequency inventories, frequency-use agreements, and interagency radio caches.

Most complex incidents will require a Communications Plan. The Communications Unit is responsible for planning the use of radio frequencies; establishing networks for command, tactical, support, and air units; setting up on-scene telephone and public address equipment; and providing any required off-incident communication links. Codes should not be used for radio communication. A clear spoken message—based on common terminology that avoids

misunderstanding in complex and noisy situations—reduces the chances for error. The use of common terminology allows emergency management/response personnel to communicate clearly with one another and effectively coordinate activities, no matter the size, scope, location, or complexity of the incident.

Radio networks for large incidents may be organized as follows:

1. Command Net

The command net links together Incident Command, Command Staff, Section Chiefs, Branch Directors, and Division and Group supervisors.

2. Tactical Nets

Several tactical nets may be established to connect departments, agencies, geographical areas, or specific functional units. The determination of how nets are set up should be a joint function designed by planning, operations, and logistics.

3. Support Net

A support net may be established primarily to handle changes in resource status but also to handle logistical requests and other nontactical functions.

4. Air-to-Ground Net

To coordinate air-to-ground traffic, either a specific tactical frequency may be designated, or regular tactical nets may be used.

5. Air-to-Air Nets

Air-to-air nets will normally be designated and assigned for use at the incident. An air-to-air net is designed to be used by airborne assets; ground units should not utilize this net.

E. FOOD UNIT

The Food Unit determines food and hydration requirements, and has the responsibility for planning menus, ordering food, providing cooking facilities, cooking and serving food, maintaining food service areas, and managing food security and safety concerns.

Efficient food service is important, but it is especially important for any extended incident. The Food Unit must be able to anticipate incident needs, such as the number of people who will need to be fed and whether the type, location, or complexity of the incident indicates that there may be special food requirements. The unit must supply food needs for the entire incident, including all remote locations (e.g., camps and staging areas), and also supply food service to operations personnel who are unable to leave operational assignments. The Food Unit must interact closely with the following elements:

- Planning Section, to determine the number of personnel who must be fed;
- Facilities Unit, to arrange food-service areas;
- Supply Unit, to order food, unless provided under contract or agreement;
- Ground Support Unit, to obtain ground transportation; and
- Air Operations Branch Director, to deliver food to remote locations.

Feeding affected nonresponse persons (e.g., victims, evacuees, persons at shelters) is a critical operational activity that will normally be incorporated into the IAP. Feeding activities will normally be conducted by members of appropriate NGOs, such as the American Red Cross or similar entities. Services provided by appropriate NGOs would not fall within the Food Unit but in a separate functional assignment that should be communicated and coordinated with the IC and Operations Section Chief to ensure operational continuity.

Careful planning and monitoring is required to ensure food safety before and during food service operations, including the assignment, as indicated, of public health professionals with expertise in environmental health and food safety.

F. MEDICAL UNIT

The primary responsibilities of the Medical Unit include the following:

- develop procedures for handling any major medical emergency involving incident personnel;
- develop the Incident Medical Plan (*for incident personnel*);
- provide continuity of medical care, including vaccinations, vector control, occupational health, prophylaxis, and mental health services for incident personnel;
- provide transportation for injured incident personnel;
- coordinate, establish, and/or staff the routine rest and rehabilitation of incident responders;

Patient care and medical services for those who are not emergency management/response personnel (e.g., incident victims) are critical operational activities. These activities are incorporated into the IAP as key considerations and should be staffed accordingly with appropriate professional personnel, as required.

- ensure that injured incident personnel are tracked as they move from their origin to a care facility and from there to final disposition;
- assist in processing all paperwork related to injuries or deaths of incident assigned personnel; and
- coordinate personnel and mortuary affairs for incident personnel fatalities.

The Medical Unit is responsible for the effective and efficient provision of medical services to incident personnel, and reports directly to the Logistics Section Chief. The Medical Unit Leader will develop a Medical Plan, which will, in turn, form part of the IAP. The Medical Plan should provide specific information on medical assistance capabilities at incident locations, potential hazardous areas or conditions, and off-incident medical assistance facilities and procedures for handling complex medical emergencies. The Medical Unit will also assist the Finance/Administration Section with the administrative requirements related to injury compensation, including obtaining written authorizations, billing forms, witness statements, administrative medical documents, and reimbursement as required. The Medical Unit will ensure patient privacy to the fullest extent possible.

TAB 5—THE FINANCE/ ADMINISTRATION SECTION

A Finance/Administration Section is established when there is a specific need for financial and/or administrative services to support incident management activities. Large or evolving scenarios involve significant funding that originates from multiple sources. In addition to monitoring multiple sources of funds, the Section Chief must track and report to the IC the accrued cost as the incident progresses. This allows the IC to forecast the need for additional funds before operations are affected negatively. This is particularly important if significant operational assets are under contract from the private sector. The Section Chief may also need to monitor cost expenditures to ensure that applicable statutory rules are met. Close coordination with the Planning and Logistics Sections is also essential so that operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

The Finance/Administration Section Chief will determine, given current and anticipated future requirements, the need for establishing specific subordinate units. Because of the specialized nature of finance functions, the Section Chief should come from the agency that has the greatest requirement for this support. The Finance/Administration Section Chief may also have one or more deputies.

While the functions of Finance/Administration are critical components of effective command and management, in some incidents, components of the Finance/Administration Section may not be staffed on-scene. Modern (wireless) communications systems enable some of the Finance/Administration functions to be performed away from the incident scene, typically in the normal workstations where these functions would customarily be performed.

A. TIME UNIT

The Time Unit is primarily responsible for ensuring proper daily recording of personnel time, in accordance with the policies of the relevant agencies. The Time Unit also ensures that the Logistics Section records or captures equipment-use time.

If applicable (depending on the agencies involved), personnel time records will be collected and processed for each operational period. The Time Unit Leader may require the assistance of personnel familiar with the relevant policies of any affected agencies. These records must be verified, checked for accuracy, and posted according to existing policies. Excess hours worked must also be determined, for which separate logs must be maintained.

B. PROCUREMENT UNIT

The Procurement Unit administers all financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts. This unit coordinates with local jurisdictions to identify sources for equipment, prepares and signs

equipment rental agreements, and processes all administrative requirements associated with equipment rental and supply contracts. In some cases, the Supply Unit in the Logistics Section will be responsible for certain procurement activities. The Procurement Unit will also work closely with local cost authorities.

C. Compensation and Claims Unit

Under ICS, a single unit handles injury compensation and claims. Depending on the incident, the specific activities are varied and may not always be accomplished by the same person. The individual handling injury compensation ensures that all forms required by workers' compensation programs and local agencies are completed. This individual also maintains files on injuries and illnesses associated with the incident, and ensures that all witness statements are obtained in writing. Since the Medical Unit may also perform some of these tasks, close coordination between the Medical and Compensation and Claims Units is essential. The claims function handles investigations of all civil tort claims involving property associated with or involved in the incident. The Compensation and Claims Unit maintains logs on the claims, obtains witness statements, and documents investigations and agency follow-up requirements.

D. Cost Unit

The Cost Unit provides cost analysis data for the incident. This unit must ensure that equipment and personnel for which payment is required are properly identified, obtain and record all cost data, and analyze and prepare estimates of incident costs. The Cost Unit also provides input on cost estimates for resource use to the Planning Section. The Cost Unit must maintain accurate information on the actual costs of all assigned resources.

TAB 6—ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND

As described in the Command and Management Component, on page 63, the purpose of an Area Command is 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 has multiple incident management teams engaged.

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Area Command does not have operational responsibilities. For the incidents under its authority, the Area Command:

- develops broad objectives for the impacted area(s);
- coordinates the development of individual incident objectives and strategies;
- allocates/reallocates resources as the established priorities change;
- ensures that incidents are properly managed;
- ensures effective communications;
- ensures that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policies;
- identifies critical resource needs and reports them to the established Emergency Operations Center (EOC)/Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups; and
- ensures that short-term "emergency" recovery is coordinated to assist in the transition to full recovery operations.

The function of Area Command is to develop broad objectives for the impacted area and coordinate the development of individual incident objectives and strategies. Additionally, the Area Commander will set priorities for the use of critical resources allocated to the incident.

B. ORGANIZATION

The Area Command organization operates under the same basic principles as ICS. Typically, an Area Command will comprise the following key personnel, all of whom must possess appropriate qualifications and certifications:

1. Area Commander (Unified Area Command)

The Area Commander is responsible for the overall direction of the incident management teams assigned. This responsibility includes ensuring that conflicts are resolved, that incident objectives are established, and that strategies are selected for the use of critical resources. The Area Commander is also responsible for coordinating with Federal, State, regional, tribal, local, and participating private organizations and NGOs.

2. Assistant Area Commander—Logistics

The Area Command Logistics Chief provides facilities, services, and materials at the Area Command level and ensures the effective allocation of critical resources and supplies among the incident management teams.

3. Assistant Area Commander—Planning

The Area Command Planning Chief collects information from various incident management teams to assess and evaluate potential conflicts in establishing incident objectives, strategies, and priorities for allocating critical resources.

4. Area Command Aviation Coordinator

An Aviation Coordinator is assigned when aviation resources are competing for common airspace and critical resources, and works in coordination with incident aviation organizations to evaluate potential conflicts, develop common airspace management procedures, ensure aviation safety, and allocate critical resources in accordance with Area Command priorities.

5. Area Command Support Positions

The following Area Command positions are activated as necessary:

- *Resources Unit Leader*

  Tracks and maintains the status and availability of critical resources assigned to each incident under the Area Commander—Planning.

- *Situation Unit Leader*

  Monitors the status of objectives for each incident or Incident Management Team (IMT) assigned to the Area Commander—Planning.

- *Public Information Officer*

  Provides coordination between incident locations and serves as the point of contact for media requests to the Area Command.

- *Liaison Officer*

  Helps maintain off-incident interagency contacts and coordination.

C. Location

The following guidelines should be followed in locating an Area Command:

- To the extent possible, the Area Command should be established in close proximity to the incidents under its authority. This makes it easier for the Area Commander and the Incident Commanders (ICs) to meet and otherwise interact.
- It is, however, best not to co-locate an Area Command with any individual ICP. Doing so might cause confusion with the command and management activities associated with that particular incident.
- Area Commands must establish effective, efficient communications and coordination processes and protocols with subordinate ICs, as well as with other incident management organizations involved in incident operations.
- The facility used to house the organization should be large enough to accommodate a full Area Command staff. It should also be able to accommodate meetings between the Area Command staff, the ICs, and agency executive(s), as well as news media representatives.

D. Reporting Relationships

When an Area Command is involved in coordinating multiple incident management activities, the following reporting relationships will apply:

- The ICs for the incidents under the Area Command's authority report to the Area Commander.
- The Area Commander is accountable to the agency(s) or to the jurisdictional executive(s) or administrator(s).
- If one or more incidents within the Area Command are multijurisdictional, a Unified Area Command should be established.

TAB 7—FACILITIES AND LOCATIONS

Several kinds and types of facilities may be established in and around the incident area. The requirements of the incident and the desires of the IC/ UC will determine the specific kinds of facilities used and their locations and may consist of the following designated facilities, among various others:

A. Incident Command Post

The ICP signifies the location of the tactical-level, on-scene incident command organization. It typically comprises the IC and the Command and General Staff, but may include other designated incident personnel from Federal, State, tribal, and local departments and agencies, as well as the private sector and NGOs. Typically, the ICP is located at or in the immediate vicinity of the incident site and is the location for the conduct of direct, on-scene control of tactical operations. Incident planning is conducted at the ICP; an incident communications center also would normally be established at this location. The ICP may be co-located with the incident base, if the communications requirements can be met.

B. Incident Base

An Incident Base is the location at which primary support activities are conducted. A single Incident Base is established to house equipment and personnel support operations. The Incident Base should be designed to be able to support operations at multiple incident sites.

C. Camps

Camps are separate from the Incident Base and are located in satellite fashion from the Incident Base where they can best support incident operations. Camps provide support, such as food, sleeping areas, and sanitation. Camps may also provide minor maintenance and servicing of equipment. Camps may be relocated to meet changing operational requirements.

D. Staging Areas

Staging Areas are established for the temporary location of available resources. Staging Areas will be established by the Operations Section Chief to enable positioning of and accounting for resources not immediately assigned. A Staging Area can be any location in which personnel, supplies, and equipment can be temporarily housed or parked while awaiting operational

assignment. Staging Areas may include temporary feeding, fueling, and sanitation services. The Operations Section Chief assigns a manager for each Staging Area, who checks in all incoming resources, dispatches resources at the Operations Section Chief's request, and requests Logistics Section support, as necessary, for resources located in the Staging Area.

TAB 8—THE PLANNING PROCESS [THE INCIDENT ACTION PLAN (IAP)]

A. OVERVIEW

Sound, timely planning provides the foundation for effective incident management. The NIMS planning process described below represents a template for strategic, operational, and tactical planning that includes all steps that an IC and other members of the Command and General Staffs should take to develop and disseminate an IAP. The planning process may begin with the scheduling of a planned event, the identification of a credible threat, or the initial response to an actual or impending event. The process continues with the implementation of the formalized steps and the staffing required to develop a written IAP.

A clear, concise IAP template is essential to guide the initial incident management decision process and the continuing collective planning activities of incident management teams. The planning process should provide the following:

- current information that accurately describes the incident situation and resource status;
- predictions of the probable course of events;
- alternative strategies to attain critical incident objectives; and
- an accurate, realistic IAP for the next operational period.

Five primary phases should be followed in sequence to ensure a comprehensive IAP. These phases are designed to enable the accomplishment of incident objectives within a specified time. The IAP must provide clear strategic direction and include a comprehensive listing of the tactics, resources, reserves, and support required to accomplish each overarching incident objective. The comprehensive IAP will state the sequence of events in a coordinated way for achieving multiple incident objectives. However, the IAP is a living document prepared based on the best available information at the time of the Planning Meeting. Planning Meetings should not be delayed in anticipation of future information.

The primary phases of the planning process are essentially the same for the IC who develops the initial plan, for the IC and Operations Section Chief revising the initial plan for extended operations, and for the incident management team developing a formal IAP. During the initial stages of incident management, planners should develop a simple plan that can be communicated through concise oral briefings.

The five primary phases in the planning process are to understand the situation; establish incident objectives and strategy; develop the plan; prepare and disseminate the plan; and execute, evaluate, and revise the plan.

Frequently, this plan must be developed very quickly and with incomplete situation information. As the incident management effort evolves over time, additional lead time, staff, information systems, and technologies enable more detailed planning and cataloging of events and "lessons learned." The five primary phases in the planning process are:

1. Understand the Situation

The first phase includes gathering, recording, analyzing, and displaying situation, resource, and incident potential information in a manner that will facilitate:

- increased situational awareness of the magnitude, complexity, and potential impact of the incident; and
- the ability to determine the resources required to develop and implement an effective IAP.

2. Establish Incident Objectives and Strategy

The second phase includes formulating and prioritizing measurable incident objectives and identifying an appropriate strategy. The incident objectives and strategy must conform to the legal obligations and management objectives of all affected agencies. These may also need to include specific issues relevant to critical infrastructure.

Reasonable alternative strategies that will accomplish overall incident objectives are identified, analyzed, and evaluated to determine the most appropriate strategy for the situation at hand. Evaluation criteria include public health and safety factors; estimated costs; and various environmental, legal, and political considerations.

3. Develop the Plan

The third phase involves determining the tactical direction and the specific resource, reserves, and support requirements for implementing the selected strategies and tactics for the operational period.

Before the formal Planning Meetings, each member of the Command and General Staff is responsible for gathering certain information to support the proposed plan.

4. Prepare and Disseminate the Plan

The fourth phase involves preparing the plan in a format that is appropriate for the level of complexity of the incident. For the initial response, the format is a well-prepared outline for an oral briefing. For most incidents that will span multiple operational periods, the plan will be developed in writing according to ICS procedures.

5. Execute, Evaluate, and Revise the Plan

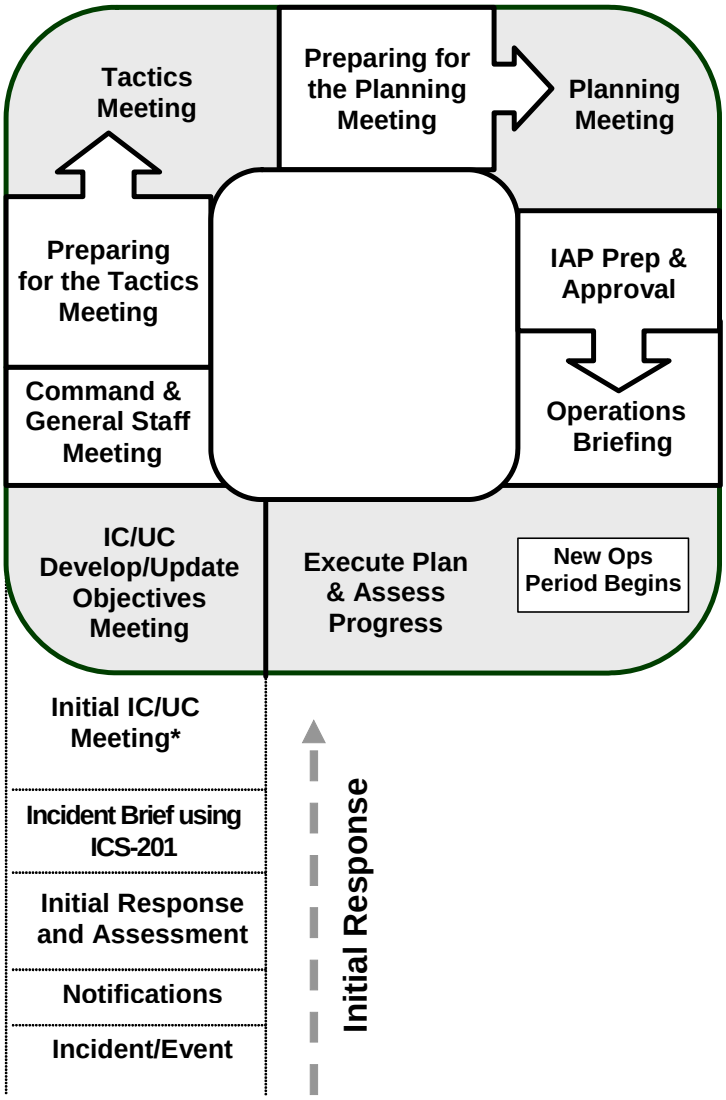
The planning process includes the requirement to execute and evaluate planned activities and check the accuracy of information to be used in planning for subsequent operational periods. The General Staff should regularly compare planned progress with actual progress. When deviations occur and when new information emerges, that information should be included in the first step of

the process used for modifying the current plan or developing the plan for the subsequent operational period.

B. Responsibilities and Specific Planning Activities

1. Operational Period Planning Cycle

Figure B-9 is a graphical representation of the planning cycle.



*During this timeframe a meeting with the Agency Administrator/Executive can occur.

Figure B-9—Operational Period Planning Cycle

2. Planning Steps: Understanding the Situation and Establishing Objectives and Strategy

The Planning Section Chief should take the following actions prior to the initial Planning Meeting (if possible, obtain a completed Incident Briefing Form – ICS 201):

- Evaluate the current situation and decide whether the current planning is adequate for the remainder of the operational period (i.e., until the next plan takes effect).
- Advise the IC and the Operations Section Chief of any suggested revisions to the current plan, as necessary.
- Establish a planning cycle for the incident.
- Determine Planning Meeting attendees in consultation with the IC. For major incidents, attendees should include the following:
  - Incident Commander;
  - Command Staff members;
  - General Staff members;
  - Resources Unit Leader;
  - Situation Unit Leader;
  - Air Operations Branch Director (if established);
  - Communications Unit Leader;
  - Technical specialists (as required); and
  - Agency representatives (as required).
- Establish the location and time for the Planning Meeting.
- Ensure that planning boards and forms are available.
- Notify necessary support staff about the meeting and their assignments.
- Ensure that a current situation and resource briefing will be available for the meeting.
- Obtain an estimate of resource availability for use in planning for the next operational period.
- Obtain necessary agency policy, legal, or fiscal constraints for use in the Planning Meeting.

3. Conducting the Planning Meeting

The Planning Meeting is normally conducted by the Planning Section Chief. The checklist that follows is intended to provide a basic sequence of steps to aid the Planning Section Chief in developing the IAP. The planning checklist is used with the ICS Planning Matrix Board and/or ICS 215—*Operational Planning Worksheet*.[29] (The worksheet is laid out in the same manner as the Planning Matrix Board.) The Planning Meeting checklist is as follows:

[28] See page 128, Appendix B, Tab 9, for examples of ICS forms.

a. Give briefing on situation, resource status, and incident potential (Planning Section)

The Planning Section Chief and/or Resources and Situation Unit Leaders should provide an up-to-date briefing on the situation. Information for this briefing may come from any or all of the following sources:

- Initial Incident Commander;
- Incident Briefing Form (ICS 201);
- field observations;
- operations reports; and
- regional resources and situation reports.

b. Set/Review established objectives (IC)

This step is accomplished by the IC. The incident objectives are not limited to any single operational period but will consider the total incident situation. The IC will establish the general strategy to be used, will state any major constraints (policy, legal, or fiscal) on accomplishing the objectives, and will offer appropriate contingency considerations.

c. Plot operational lines, establish Branch/Division boundaries, and identify Group assignments (Operations Section)

This step is normally accomplished by the Operations Section Chief (for the next operational period) in conjunction with the Planning Section Chief, who will establish Division and Branch boundaries for geographical divisions, and determine the need for functional group assignments for the next operational period. The operational boundaries will be plotted on the map.

d. Specify tactics for each Division/Group (Operations Section)

After determining Division geographical assignments, or Group functions, the Operations Section Chief will establish the specific work assignments to be performed for the next operational period. Tactics (work assignments) should be specific and within the boundaries set by the IC's general objectives and established strategies. These work assignments should be recorded on the planning matrix. The IC, Operations Section Chief, and Planning Section Chief should also at this time consider the need for any alternative strategies or tactics and ensure that these are properly noted on the planning matrix.

e. Specify resources needed by Division/Group (Operations Section, Planning Section)

After specifying tactics for each Division/Group, the Operations Section Chief, in conjunction with the Planning Section Chief, will determine the resource needs to accomplish the work assignments. Resource needs will be recorded on the planning matrix. Resource needs should be considered on basis of the type of resources required to accomplish the assignment.

f. Specify operations facilities and reporting locations and plot on map (Operations Section, Planning Section, Logistics Section)

The Operations Section Chief, in conjunction with the Planning and Logistics Section Chiefs, should designate and make available the facilities and reporting locations required to accomplish Operations Section work assignments. The Operations Section Chief should indicate the reporting time requirements for the resources and any special resource assignments.

g. Develop resource and personnel order (Logistics Section)

The Planning Section Chief should assess resource needs based on the needs indicated by the Operations Section Chief and resources data available from the Resources Unit. The Planning Matrix (ICS 215), when properly completed, will show resource requirements and the resources available to meet those requirements. Subtracting the resources available from those required will indicate any additional resource needs. From this assessment, a new resource order can be developed and provided to the IC for approval and then placed through normal dispatch channels by the Logistics Section.

h. Consider communications, medical, and traffic plan requirements (Planning Section, Logistics Section)

The IAP will normally consist of the Incident Objectives (ICS 202), Organization Chart (ICS 203), Assignment List (ICS 204), and a map of the incident area. Larger incidents may require additional supporting attachments, such as a separate Communications Plan (ICS 205), a Medical Plan (ICS 206), and possibly a Traffic Plan. (For examples of ICS forms, see Appendix B, Tab 9.) The Planning Section Chief should determine the need for these attachments and ensure that the appropriate units prepare such attachments. The IAP and attachments will normally include the items listed in Table B-2.

Table B-2—The IAP and Typical Attachments

Components	Normally Prepared By
Incident Objectives (Form: ICS 202)	Incident Commander
Organization List or Chart (Form: ICS 203)	Resources Unit
Assignment List (Form: ICS 204)	Resources Unit
Communications Plan (Form: ICS 205)	Communications Unit
Responder Medical Plan (Form: ICS 206)	Medical Unit
Incident Map	Situation Unit
General Safety Message/Site Safety Plan	Safety Officer
Other Potential Components (Incident dependent)	
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
Site Security Plan	Law Enforcement, Technical Specialist, or Security Manager
Investigative Plan	
Evidence Recovery Plan	Law Enforcement
Evacuation Plan	As Required
Sheltering/Mass Care Plan	As Required
Other (as required)	As Required

i. Finalize, approve, and implement the Incident Action Plan (Planning Section, IC, Operations Section)

The Planning Section, in conjunction with the Operations Section, is responsible for seeing that the IAP is completed, reviewed, and distributed. The following is the sequence of steps for accomplishing this:

- Set the deadline for completing IAP attachments.
- Obtain plan attachments and review them for completeness and approvals.
  - Before completing the plan, the Planning Section Chief should review the Division and Group tactical work assignments for any changes due to lack of resource availability. The Resource Unit may then transfer Division/Group assignment information, including alternatives from the planning matrix board or form, onto the Division Assignment Lists (ICS 204).
- Determine the number of IAPs required.
- Arrange with the Documentation Unit to reproduce the IAP.
- Review the IAP to ensure it is up to date and complete prior to the operations briefing and plan distribution.
- Provide the IAP briefing plan, as required, and distribute the plan prior to beginning of the new operational period.

Table B-3—ICS Forms that Can Aid the Planning Process*

Number	Purpose
ICS 201 (p.1)**	Incident Briefing Map
ICS 201 (p.2)**	Summary of Current Actions
ICS 201 (p.3)**	Current Organization
ICS 201 (p.4)**	Resources Summary
ICS 202	Incident Objectives
ICS 203	Organization Assignment List
ICS 204	Assignment List
ICS 205	Incident Radio Communications Plan
ICS 206	Medical Plan
ICS 207	Organizational Chart (wall mounted)
ICS 209	Incident Status Summary, with Instructions
ICS 210	Status Change Card
ICS 211	Check-In List
ICS 213	General Message
ICS 215	Operational Planning Worksheet
ICS 215a	Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis

*ICS forms are guidance documents to assist in writing an agency's IAP. Some modification to the forms can be made to better suit an agency's need more effectively as long as the nature of each form or numbering is not altered.

**The ICS 201 Forms are the initial summary forms provided at the start of an incident. The information they provide can help craft an IAP but the ICS 201 Forms may not be included in the formal written IAP.

TAB 9—EXAMPLES OF ICS FORMS

The following pages contain examples of the ICS Forms that are discussed in this document. These examples have been drawn from the National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); other emergency management organizations also provide hardcopy ICS forms and software packages to generate ICS forms that may be used for incident management purposes. The forms below provide examples of the general format and identify the purpose of each form. The individual forms depicted may not provide boxes/slots necessary for every position or incident, but they may be tailored to meet an agency's needs. More importantly, even though the format is flexible, the form number and purpose of the specific type of form (e.g., Form 204 defines the assignments for a Division or Group) must remain intact in order to maintain consistency and to facilitate immediate identification and interoperability, and for ease of use.

Table B-4—Examples of ICS Forms Included in This Tab*

Number	Purpose
ICS 201 (p. 1)	Incident Briefing Map
ICS 201 (p. 2)	Summary of Current Actions
ICS 201 (p. 3)	Current Organization
ICS 201 (p. 4)	Resources Summary
ICS 202	Incident Objectives
ICS 203	Organization Assignment List
ICS 204	Assignment List
ICS 205	Incident Radio Communications Plan
ICS 206	Medical Plan
ICS 209	Incident Status Summary
ICS 211	Check-In List
ICS 215	Operational Planning Worksheet
ICS 215a	Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis

*The examples listed are based on original NWCG forms.

A. ICS FORMS

The following is a detailed listing of ICS forms referenced in Table B-4. There are other ICS forms that can be used during the planning process but may not be presented as examples within this

section. These forms are available online, commercially, and in a variety of formats; however, all the examples listed are based on the original forms.[30]

1. ICS 201 – Incident Briefing

The ICS 201 – Most often used by the initial IC, this four-section document (often produced as four pages) allows for the capture of vital incident information prior to the implementation of the formal planning process. This form allows for a concise and complete transition of Command briefing to an incoming new IC. In addition, this form may serve as the full extent of incident command and control documentation if the situation is resolved by the initial response resources and organization. This form is designed to be transferred easily to the members of the Command and General Staff as they arrive and begin work. It is not included as a part of the formal written IAP.

2. ICS 202 – Incident Objectives

The ICS 202 – Serves as the first page of a written IAP. It includes incident information, a listing of the IC's objectives for the Operational Period, pertinent weather information, a general safety message, and a table of contents for the plan. Signature Blocks are provided.

3. ICS 203 – Organization Assignment List

The ICS 203 – Typically the second page of the IAP. Provides a full accounting of incident management and supervisory staff for that operational period.

4. ICS 204 – Division/Group Assignment List

The ICS 204 – Included in multiples based on the organizational structure of the Operations Section for the operational period. Each Division/Group will have its own page, listing the supervisor for the Division/Group (including Branch Director if assigned) and the specific assigned resources with leader name and number of personnel assigned to each resource. This document then describes in detail the specific actions the Division or Group will be taking in support of the overall incident objectives. Any special instructions will be included as well as the elements of the Communications Plan that apply to that Division or Group.

5. ICS 205 – Radio Communications Plan

The ICS 205 – Depicts the entire communications plan for the incident.

6. ICS 206 – Medical Plan

The ICS 206 – Presents the incident's medical plan to care for responder medical emergencies.

[29] The ICS forms are undergoing an updating process; the new forms will be available online on the national integration center Web site after completion.

7. ICS 209 – Incident Status Summary

The ICS 209 – Collects basic incident decision support information and is the primary mechanism for reporting this situational information to incident coordination and support organizations and the agency administrators/executives.

8. ICS 211 – Check-In List

The ICS 211 – Used to document the check-in process. Check-in recorders report check-in information to the Resources Unit.

9. ICS 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet

The ICS 215 – Intended as an Operational Planning Worksheet to be used in the incident planning meeting to develop tactical assignments and resources needed to achieve incident objectives and strategies.

10. ICS 215a – Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis

The ICS 215a – Communicates to the Operations and Planning Section Chiefs the safety and health issues identified by the Safety Officer. The ICS 215a form identifies mitigation measures to address the identified safety issues.

INCIDENT BRIEFING	1. INCIDENT NAME	2. DATE PREPARED	3. TIME PREPARED
4. MAP SKETCH			
ICS 201 (12/93) NFES 1325	PAGE 1	5. PREPARED BY (NAME AND POSITION)	

Figure B-10—ICS 201, p. 1

6. SUMMARY OF CURRENT ACTIONS		
ICS 201 (12/93) **NFES 1325**	PAGE 2	

Figure B-11—ICS 201, p. 2

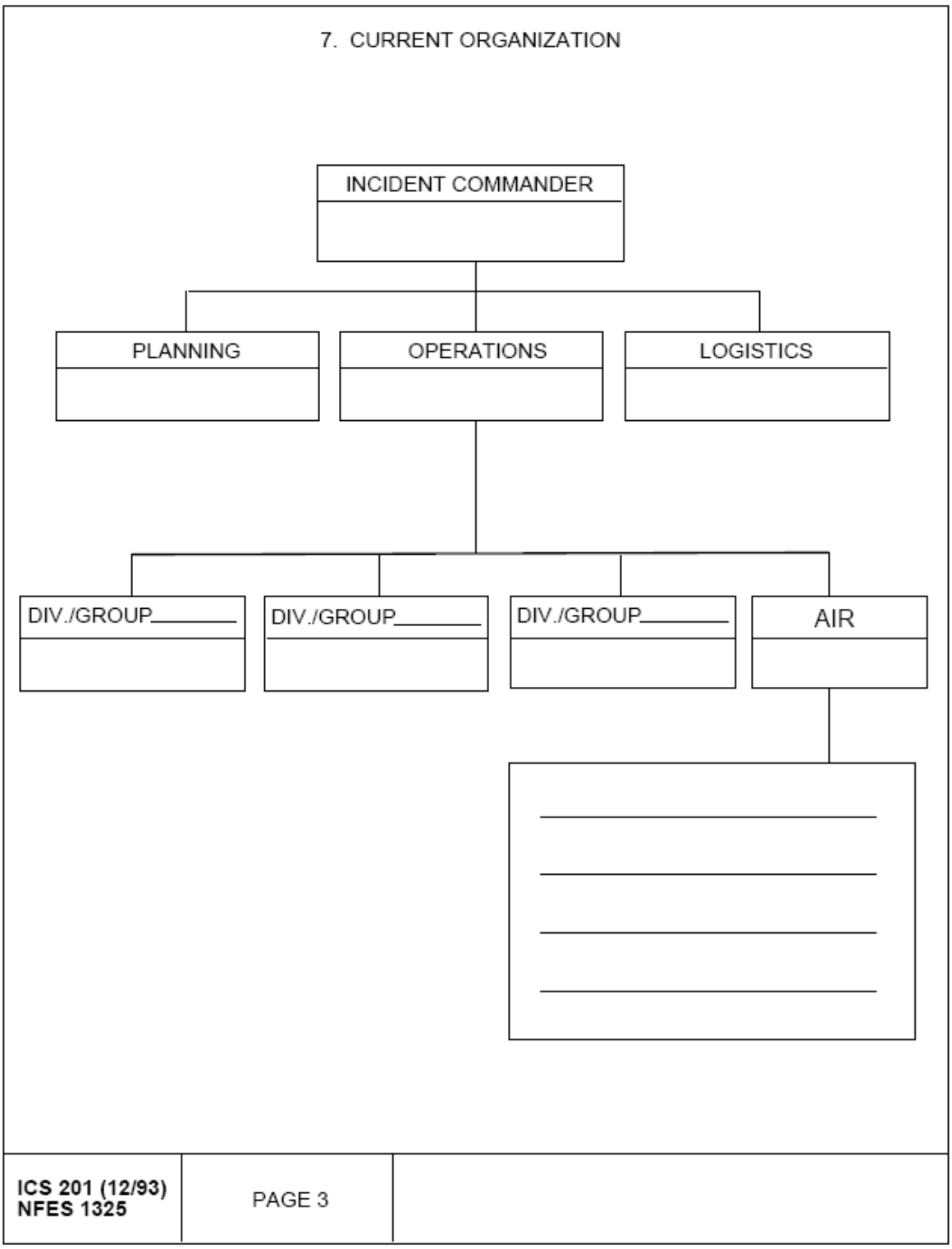


Figure B-12—ICS 201, p. 3

8. RESOURCES SUMMARY				
RESOURCES ORDERED	RESOURCES IDENTIFICATION	ETA	ON SCENE √	LOCATION/ASSIGNMENT
ICS 201 (12/93) NFES 1325	PAGE 4			

Figure B-13—ICS 201, p. 4

INCIDENT OBJECTIVES	1. INCIDENT NAME	2. DATE PREPARED	3. TIME PREPARED

4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD (DATE/TIME)

5. GENERAL CONTROL OBJECTIVES FOR THE INCIDENT (INCLUDE ALTERNATIVES)

6. WEATHER FORECAST FOR OPERATIONAL PERIOD

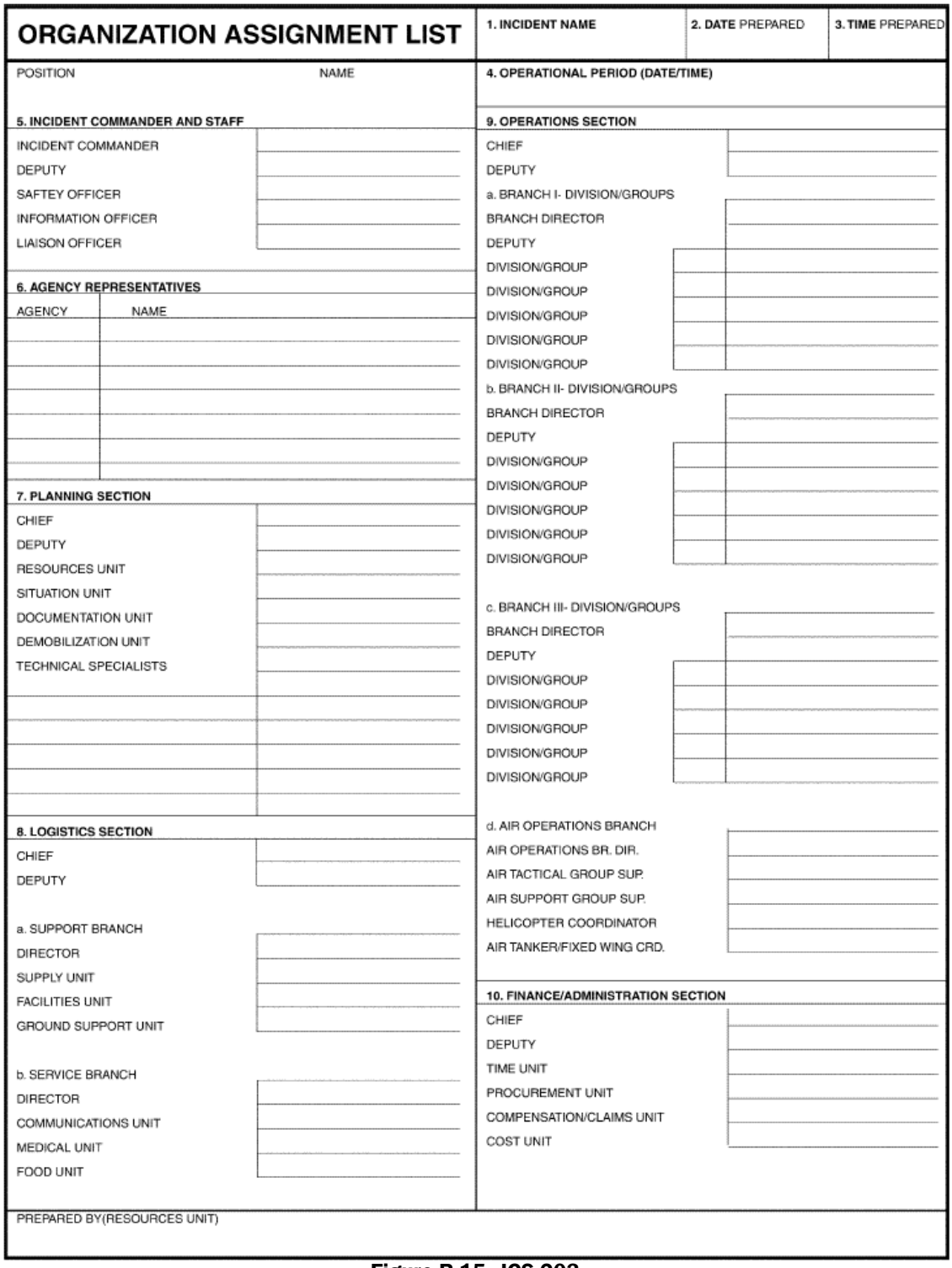
7. GENERAL SAFETY MESSAGE

8. ATTACHMENTS (✓ IF ATTACHED)

- ☐ ORGANIZATION LIST (ICS 203)
- ☐ ASSIGNMENT LIST (ICS 204)
- ☐ COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (ICS 205)
- ☐ MEDICAL PLAN (ICS 206)
- ☐ INCIDENT MAP
- ☐ TRAFFIC PLAN
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

9. PREPARED BY (PLANNING SECTION CHIEF)	10. APPROVED BY (INCIDENT COMMANDER)

Figure B-14—ICS 202



ORGANIZATION ASSIGNMENT LIST

1. INCIDENT NAME	2. DATE PREPARED	3. TIME PREPARED

POSITION NAME

4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD (DATE/TIME)

5. INCIDENT COMMANDER AND STAFF

INCIDENT COMMANDER
DEPUTY
SAFTEY OFFICER
INFORMATION OFFICER
LIAISON OFFICER

6. AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

AGENCY	NAME

7. PLANNING SECTION

CHIEF
DEPUTY
RESOURCES UNIT
SITUATION UNIT
DOCUMENTATION UNIT
DEMOBILIZATION UNIT
TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

8. LOGISTICS SECTION

CHIEF
DEPUTY

a. SUPPORT BRANCH
DIRECTOR
SUPPLY UNIT
FACILITIES UNIT
GROUND SUPPORT UNIT

b. SERVICE BRANCH
DIRECTOR
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT
MEDICAL UNIT
FOOD UNIT

9. OPERATIONS SECTION

CHIEF
DEPUTY

a. BRANCH I- DIVISION/GROUPS
BRANCH DIRECTOR
DEPUTY
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP

b. BRANCH II- DIVISION/GROUPS
BRANCH DIRECTOR
DEPUTY
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP

c. BRANCH III- DIVISION/GROUPS
BRANCH DIRECTOR
DEPUTY
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP
DIVISION/GROUP

d. AIR OPERATIONS BRANCH
AIR OPERATIONS BR. DIR.
AIR TACTICAL GROUP SUP.
AIR SUPPORT GROUP SUP.
HELICOPTER COORDINATOR
AIR TANKER/FIXED WING CRD.

10. FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION

CHIEF
DEPUTY
TIME UNIT
PROCUREMENT UNIT
COMPENSATION/CLAIMS UNIT
COST UNIT

PREPARED BY(RESOURCES UNIT)

Figure B-15—ICS 203

1. BRANCH	2. DIVISION/GROUP	**ASSIGNMENT LIST**
3. INCIDENT NAME	4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD DATE _____ TIME _____	

5. OPERATIONAL PERSONNEL

OPERATIONS CHIEF _____ DIVISION/GROUP SUPERVISOR _____

BRANCH DIRECTOR _____ AIR TACTICAL GROUP SUPERVISOR _____

6. RESOURCES ASSIGNED THIS PERIOD

STRIKE TEAM/TASK FORCE/ RESOURCE DESIGNATOR	EMT	LEADER	NUMBER PERSONS	TRANS. NEEDED	PICKUP PT./TIME	DROP OFF PT./TIME

7. CONTROL OPERATIONS

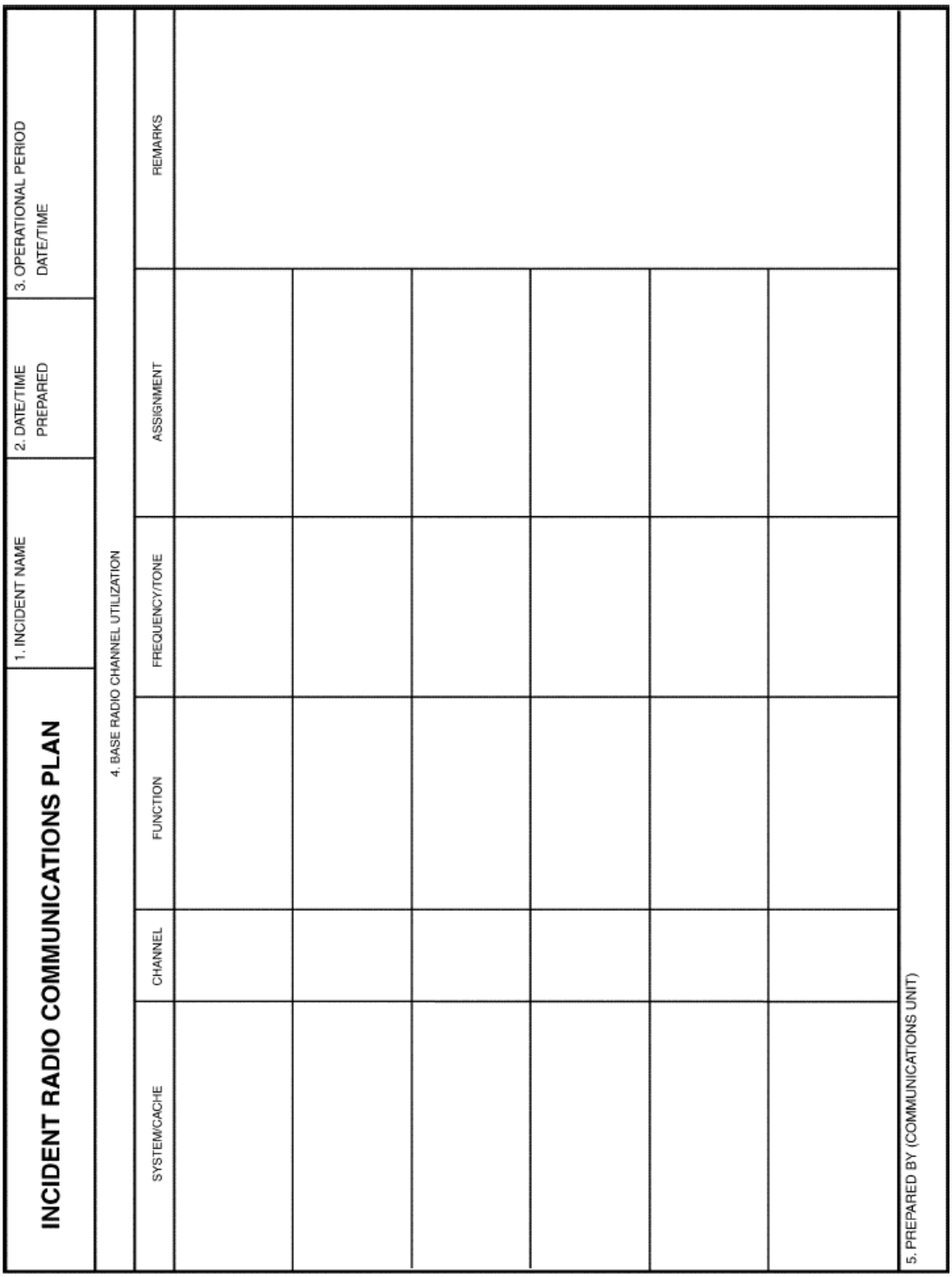
8. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

9. DIVISION/GROUP COMMUNICATIONS SUMMARY

FUNCTION		FREQ.	SYSTEM	CHAN.	FUNCTION		FREQ.	SYSTEM	CHAN.
COMMAND	LOCAL				SUPPORT	LOCAL			
	REPEAT					REPEAT			
DIV./GROUP TACTICAL					GROUND TO AIR				

PREPARED BY (RESOURCE UNIT LEADER)	APPROVED BY (PLANNING SECT. CH.)	DATE	TIME

Figure B-16—ICS 204



INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

1. INCIDENT NAME
2. DATE/TIME PREPARED
3. OPERATIONAL PERIOD DATE/TIME

4. BASE RADIO CHANNEL UTILIZATION

SYSTEM/CACHE	CHANNEL	FUNCTION	FREQUENCY/TONE	ASSIGNMENT	REMARKS

5. PREPARED BY (COMMUNICATIONS UNIT)

Figure B-17—ICS 205

MEDICAL PLAN	1. Incident Name	2. Date Prepared	3. Time Prepared	4. Operational Period

5. Incident Medical Aid Station

Medical Aid Stations	Location	Paramedics Yes	Paramedics No

6. Transportation

A. Ambulance Services

Name	Address	Phone	Paramedics Yes	Paramedics No

B. Incident Ambulances

Name	Location	Paramedics Yes	Paramedics No

7. Hospitals

Name	Address	Travel Time Air	Travel Time Ground	Phone	Helipad Yes	Helipad No	Burn Center Yes	Burn Center No

8. Medical Emergency Procedures

Prepared by (Medical Unit Leader)	10. Reviewed by (Safety Officer)

Figure B-18—ICS 206

INCIDENT STATUS SUMMARY
FS-5100-11

1. Date/Time	2. Initial ☐ Update ☐ Final ☐	3. Incident Name	4. Incident Number

5. Incident Commander	6. Jurisdiction	7. County	8. Type Incident	9. Location	10. Started Date/Time

11. Cause	12. Area Involved	13. % Controlled	14. Expected Containment Date/Time	15. Estimated Controlled Date/Time	16. Declared Controlled Date/Time

17. Current Threat	18. Control Problems

19. Est. Loss	20. Est Savings	21. Injuries	Deaths	22. Line Built	23. Line to Build

24. Current Weather	25. Predicted Weather	26. Cost to Date	27. Est. Total Cost
WS Temp WD RH	WS Temp WD RH		

28. Agencies

29. Resources																						TOTALS	
Kind of Resource	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST	SR	ST
ENGINES																								
DOZERS																								
CREWS Number of Crews:																								
Number of Crew Personnel:																								
HELICOPTERS																								
AIR TANKERS																								
TRUCK COS.																								
RESCUE/MED.																								
WATER TENDERS																								
OVERHEAD PERSONNL																								
TOTAL PERSONNEL																								

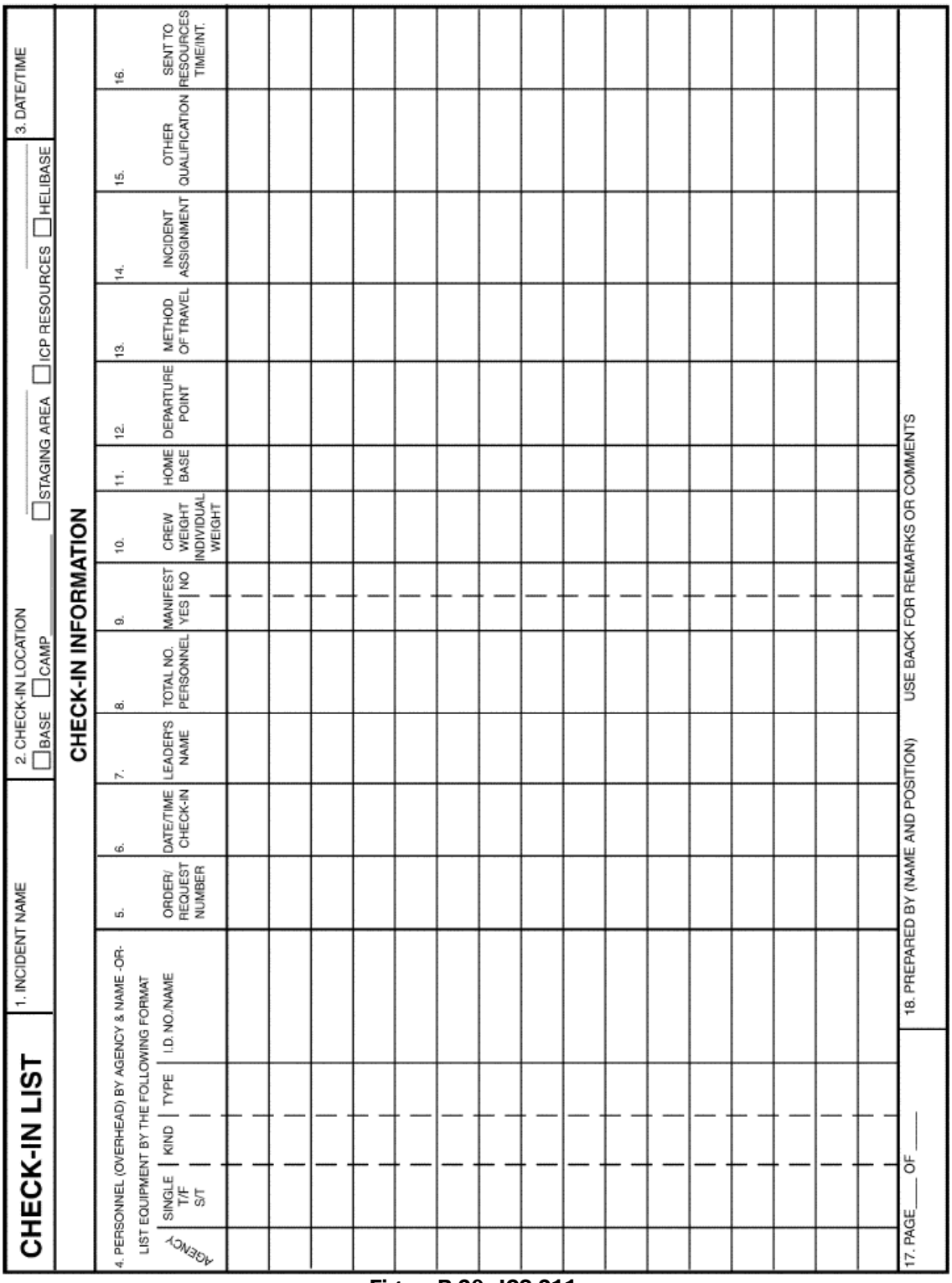
30. Cooperating Agencies

31. Remarks

32. Prepared by	33. Approved by	34. Sent to: Date Time By

1

Figure B-19—ICS 209



CHECK-IN LIST

1. INCIDENT NAME

2. CHECK-IN LOCATION ☐BASE ☐CAMP_____ ☐STAGING AREA_____ ☐ICP RESOURCES ☐HELIBASE

3. DATE/TIME

CHECK-IN INFORMATION

4. PERSONNEL (OVERHEAD) BY AGENCY & NAME -OR- LIST EQUIPMENT BY THE FOLLOWING FORMAT: AGENCY / SINGLE T/F S/T / KIND / TYPE / I.D. NO./NAME	5. ORDER/ REQUEST NUMBER	6. DATE/TIME CHECK-IN	7. LEADER'S NAME	8. TOTAL NO. PERSONNEL	9. MANIFEST YES / NO	10. CREW WEIGHT INDIVIDUAL WEIGHT	11. HOME BASE	12. DEPARTURE POINT	13. METHOD OF TRAVEL	14. INCIDENT ASSIGNMENT	15. OTHER QUALIFICATION	16. SENT TO RESOURCES TIME/INT.

17. PAGE___ OF ____

18. PREPARED BY (NAME AND POSITION)

USE BACK FOR REMARKS OR COMMENTS

Figure B-20—ICS 211

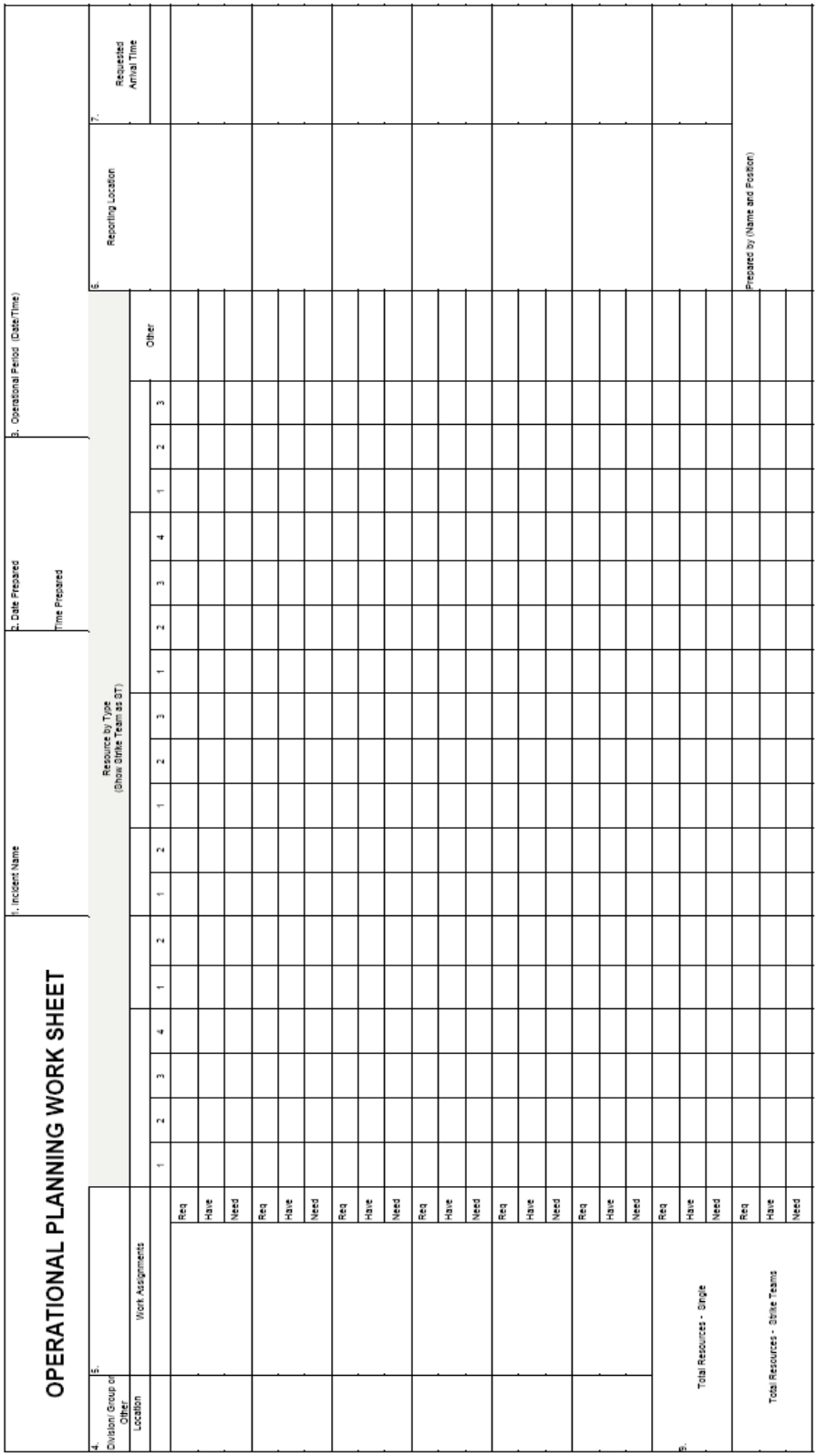


Figure B-21—ICS 215

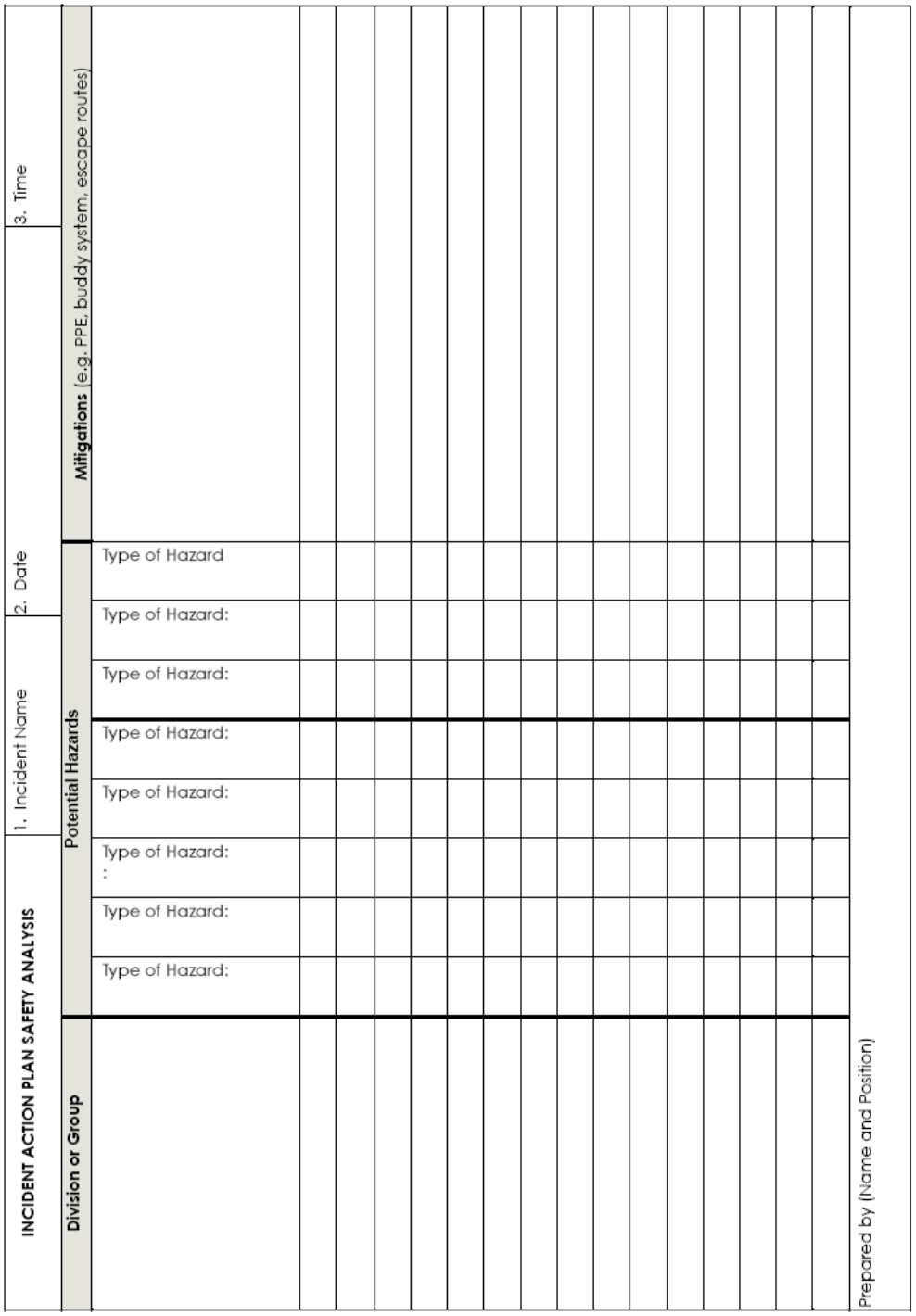


Figure B-22—ICS 215a

TAB 10—SUMMARY OF MAJOR ICS POSITIONS

Summary Table of Major ICS Positions*

Major ICS Positions	Primary functions
Incident Commander (IC) or Unified Command (UC)	• Have clear authority and know agency policy • Ensure incident safety • Establish Incident Command Post • Set priorities, determine incident objectives and strategies to be followed • Establish Incident Command System organization needed to manage the incident • Approve Incident Action Plan • Coordinate Command and General Staff activities • Approve resource requests and use of volunteers and auxiliary personnel • Order demobilization as needed • Ensure after-action reports are completed • Authorize information release to the media
Public Information Officer	• Determine, according to direction from the IC, any limits on information release • Develop accurate, accessible, and timely information for use in press/media briefings • Obtain IC's approval of news releases • Conduct periodic media briefings • Arrange for tours and other interviews or briefings that may be required • Monitor and forward media information that may be useful to incident planning • Maintain current information summaries and/or displays on the incident • Make information about the incident available to incident personnel • Participate in the Planning Meetings
Safety Officer	• Identify and mitigate hazardous situations • Ensure safety messages and briefings are made • Exercise emergency authority to stop and prevent unsafe acts • Review the Incident Action Plan for safety implications • Assign assistants qualified to evaluate special hazards • Initiate preliminary investigation of accidents within the incident area • Review and approve the Medical Plan • Participate in Planning Meetings

Major ICS Positions	Primary functions
Liaison Officer	• Act as a point of contact for agency representatives • Maintain a list of assisting and cooperating agencies and agency representatives • Assist in setting up and coordinating interagency contacts • Monitor incident operations to identify current or potential interorganizational problems • Participate in planning meetings, providing current resource status, including limitations and capabilities of agency resources • Provide agency-specific demobilization information and requirements
Operations Section Chief	• Ensure safety of tactical operations • Manage tactical operations • Develop the operations portions of the Incident Action Plan • Supervise execution of operations portions of Incident Action Plan • Request additional resources to support tactical operations • Approve release of resources from active operational assignments • Make or approve expedient changes to the Incident Action Plan • Maintain close contact with IC, subordinate Operations personnel, and other agencies involved in the incident
Planning Section Chief	• Collect and manage all incident-relevant operational data • Supervise preparation of the Incident Action Plan • Provide input to the IC and Operations in preparing Incident Action Plan • Incorporate Traffic, Medical, and Communications Plans and other supporting material into the Incident Action Plan • Conduct/Facilitate Planning Meetings • Reassign out-of-service personnel within Incident Command System organization already on-scene as appropriate • Compile and display incident status information • Establish information requirements and reporting schedules for Units (e.g., Resources, Situation Units) • Determine need for specialized resources • Assemble and disassemble Task Forces And Strike Teams not assigned to Operations • Establish specialized data collection systems as necessary (e.g., weather) • Assemble information on alternative strategies • Provide periodic predictions on incident potential • Report significant changes in incident status • Oversee preparation of the Demobilization Plan

Major ICS Positions	Primary functions
Logistics Section Chief	• Provide all facilities, transportation, communications, supplies, equipment maintenance and fueling, food, and medical services for incident personnel, and all off-incident resources • Manage all incident logistics • Provide logistics input to the Incident Action Plan • Brief Logistics Staff as needed • Identify anticipated and known incident service and support requirements • Request additional resources as needed • Ensure and oversee the development of the Communications, Medical, And Traffic Plans as required • Oversee demobilization of Logistics Section and associated resources
Finance/Administration Section Chief	• Manage all financial aspects of an incident • Provide financial and cost analysis information as requested • Ensure compensation and claims functions are being addressed relative to the incident • Gather pertinent information from briefings with responsible agencies • Develop an operation plan for the Finance/Administration Section and fill Section supply and support needs • Determine the need to set up and operate an incident commissary • Meet with assisting and cooperating agency representatives as needed • Maintain daily contact with agency(s) headquarters on finance matters • Ensure that personnel time records are completed accurately and transmitted to home agencies • Ensure that all obligation documents initiated at the incident are properly prepared and completed • Brief agency administrative personnel on all incident-related financial issues needing attention or follow-up • Provide input to the IAP

*Intelligence/Investigations Function may be under the direction of a separate General Staff position, Intelligence/Investigations Section Chief.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

For the purposes of NIMS, the following terms and definitions apply.

Accessible: Having the legally required features and/or qualities that ensure easy entrance, participation, and usability of places, programs, services, and activities by individuals with a wide variety of disabilities.

Acquisition Procedures: Used to obtain resources to support operational requirements.

Agency: A division of government with a specific function offering a particular kind of assistance. In the Incident Command System (ICS), agencies are defined either as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility for incident management) or as assisting or cooperating (providing resources or other assistance). Governmental organizations are most often in charge of an incident, though in certain circumstances private sector organizations may be included. Additionally, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) may be included to provide support.

Agency Administrator/Executive: The official responsible for administering policy for an agency or jurisdiction, having full authority for making decisions and providing direction to the management organization for an incident.

Agency Dispatch: The agency or jurisdictional facility from which resources are sent to incidents.

Agency Representative: A person assigned by a primary, assisting, or cooperating Federal, State, tribal, or local government agency or private organization that has been delegated authority to make decisions affecting that agency's or organization's participation in incident management activities following appropriate consultation with the leadership of that agency.

All-Hazards: Any incident, natural or manmade, that warrants action to protect life, property, environment, public health or safety, and minimize disruptions of government, social, or economic activities.

Allocated Resources: Resources dispatched to an incident.

Area Command: An organization established 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 or evolving incident that has multiple incident management teams engaged. An agency administrator/executive or other public official with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident usually makes the decision to establish an Area Command. An Area Command is activated only if necessary, depending on the complexity of the incident and incident management span-of-control considerations.

Assessment: The evaluation and interpretation of measurements and other information to provide a basis for decisionmaking.

Assigned Resources: Resources checked in and assigned work tasks on an incident.

Assignments: Tasks given to resources to perform within a given operational period that are based on operational objectives defined in the Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Assistant: Title for subordinates of principal Command Staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be assigned to unit leaders.

Assisting Agency: An agency or organization providing personnel, services, or other resources to the agency with direct responsibility for incident management. See **Supporting Agency**.

Available Resources: Resources assigned to an incident, checked in, and available for a mission assignment, normally located in a Staging Area.

Badging: Based on credentialing and resource ordering, provides incident-specific credentials and can be used to limit access to various incident sites.

Base: The location at which primary Logistics functions for an incident are coordinated and administered. There is only one Base per incident. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term Base.) The Incident Command Post may be co-located with the Base.

Branch: The organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility for major aspects of incident operations. A Branch is organizationally situated between the Section Chief and the Division or Group in the Operations Section, and between the Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of roman numerals or by functional area.

Cache: A predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and/or supplies stored in a designated location, available for incident use.

Camp: A geographical site within the general incident area (separate from the Incident Base) that is equipped and staffed to provide sleeping, food, water, and sanitary services to incident personnel.

Categorizing Resources: Resources are organized by category, kind, and type, including size, capacity, capability, skill, and other characteristics. This makes the resource ordering and dispatch process within and across organizations and agencies, and between governmental and nongovernmental entities, more efficient, and ensures that the resources received are appropriate to their needs.

Certifying Personnel: Personnel certification entails authoritatively attesting that individuals meet professional standards for the training, experience, and performance required for key incident management functions.

Chain of Command: The orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.

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 (IC).

Chief: The ICS title for individuals responsible for management of functional Sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration, and Intelligence/Investigations (if established as a separate Section).

Command: The act of directing, ordering, or controlling by virtue of explicit statutory, regulatory, or delegated authority.

Command Staff: Consists of Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer, and other positions as required, who report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have an assistant or assistants, as needed.

Common Operating Picture: Offers an overview of an incident thereby providing incident information enabling the IC/Unified Command (UC) and any supporting agencies and organizations to make effective, consistent, and timely decisions.

Common Terminology: Normally used words and phrases—avoids the use of different words/phrases for same concepts, consistency, to allow diverse incident management and support organizations to work together across a wide variety of incident management functions and hazard scenarios.

Communications: Process of transmission of information through verbal, written, or symbolic means.

Communications/Dispatch Center: Agency or interagency dispatcher centers, 911 call centers, emergency control or command dispatch centers, or any naming convention given to the facility and staff that handles emergency calls from the public and communication with emergency management/response personnel. Center can serve as a primary coordination and support element of the Multiagency Coordination System(s) (MACS) for an incident until other elements of MACS are formally established.

Complex: Two or more individual incidents located in the same general area and assigned to a single Incident Commander or to Unified Command.

Continuity of Government (COG): Activities that address the continuance of constitutional governance. COG planning aims to preserve and/or reconstitute the institution of government and ensure that a department or agency's constitutional, legislative, and/or administrative responsibilities are maintained. This is accomplished through succession of leadership, the predelegation of emergency authority, and active command and control during response and recovery operations.

Continuity of Operations (COOP): Planning should be instituted (including all levels of government) across the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as appropriate, to ensure the continued performance of core capabilities and/or critical government operations during any potential incident.

Cooperating Agency: An agency supplying assistance other than direct operational or support functions or resources to the incident management effort.

Coordinate: To advance systematically an analysis and exchange of information among principals who have or may have a need to know certain information to carry out specific incident management responsibilities.

Corrective Actions: Implementing procedures that are based on lessons learned from actual incidents or from training and exercises.

Credentialing: Providing documentation that can authenticate and verify the certification and identity of designated incident managers and emergency responders.

Critical Infrastructure: Systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating

impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.

Delegation of Authority: A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Agency Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Many agencies require written Delegation of Authority to be given to Incident Commanders prior to their assuming command on larger incidents. Same as the Letter of Expectation.

Demobilization: The orderly, safe, and efficient return of an incident resource to its original location and status.

Department Operations Center: An Emergency Operations Center (EOC), specific to a single department or agency. Their focus is on internal agency incident management and response. They are often linked to and, in most cases, are physically represented in a combined agency EOC by authorized agent(s) for the department or agency.

Deputy: A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases a deputy can act as relief for a superior, and therefore must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies generally can be assigned to the IC, General Staffs, and Branch Directors.

Director: The ICS title for individuals responsible for supervision of a Branch.

Dispatch: The ordered movement of a resource or resources to an assigned operational mission or an administrative move from one location to another.

Division: The partition of an incident into geographical areas of operation. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the Operations Chief. A Division is located within the ICS organization between the Branch and resources in the Operations Section.

Emergency: Any incident(s), whether natural or manmade, that requires responsive action to protect life or property. Under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, an emergency means any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement State and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC): A congressionally ratified organization that provides form and structure to interstate mutual aid. Through EMAC, a disaster-affected State can request and receive assistance from other member States quickly and efficiently, resolving two key issues upfront: liability and reimbursement.

Emergency Management/Response Personnel: Includes Federal, State, territorial, tribal, substate regional, and local governments, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, NGOs, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role. Also known as Emergency Responder.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.

EOCs may be organized by major functional disciplines (e.g., fire, law enforcement, and medical services), by jurisdiction (e.g., Federal, State, regional, tribal, city, county), or some combination thereof.

Emergency Operations Plan: The ongoing plan maintained by various jurisdictional levels for responding to a wide variety of potential hazards.

Emergency Public Information: Information that is disseminated primarily in anticipation of an emergency or during an emergency. In addition to providing situational information to the public, it also frequently provides directive actions required to be taken by the general public.

Evacuation: Organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.

Event: See **Planned Event**.

Federal: Of or pertaining to the Federal Government of the United States of America.

Field Operations Guide: Durable pocket or desk guides that contain essential information required to perform specific assignments or functions.

Finance/Administration Section: The Section responsible for all administrative and financial considerations surrounding an incident.

Function: Function refers to the five major activities in ICS: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The term function is also used when describing the activity involved, e.g., the planning function. A sixth function, Intelligence/Investigations, may be established, if required, to meet incident management needs.

General Staff: A group of incident management personnel organized according to function and reporting to the Incident Commander. The General Staff normally consists of the Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief. An Intelligence/Investigations Chief may be established, if required, to meet incident management needs.

Group: Established to divide the incident management structure into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. Groups, when activated, are located between Branches and resources in the Operations Section. See **Division**.

Hazard: Something that is potentially dangerous or harmful, often the root cause of an unwanted outcome.

Identification and Authentication: Individuals and organizations that access the NIMS information management system and, in particular, those that contribute information to the system (e.g., situation reports), must be properly authenticated and certified for security purposes.

Incident: An occurrence or event, natural or manmade, that requires a response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, civil unrest, wild-land and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, tsunamis, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

Incident Action Plan (IAP): An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. It may include the identification of operational resources and assignments. It may also include attachments that provide direction and important information for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.

Incident Command: Responsible for overall management of the incident and consists of the Incident Commander, either single or unified command, and any assigned supporting staff.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

Incident Command Post (ICP): The field location where the primary functions are performed. The ICP may be co-located with the incident base or other incident facilities.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

Incident Management: The broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing effective and efficient operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, utilizing both governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

Incident Management Team (IMT): An IC and the appropriate Command and General Staff personnel assigned to an incident. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the identified formal response requirements and responsibilities of the IMT, are factors in determining "type," or level, of IMT.

Incident Objectives: Statements of guidance and direction needed to select appropriate strategy(s) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow strategic and tactical alternatives.

Information Management: The collection, organization, and control over the structure, processing, and delivery of information from one or more sources and distribution to one or more audiences who have a stake in that information.

Initial Action: The actions taken by those responders first to arrive at an incident site.

Initial Response: Resources initially committed to an incident.

Intelligence/Investigations: Intelligence gathered within the Intelligence/Investigations function is information that either leads to the detection, prevention, apprehension, and prosecution of criminal activities (or the individual(s) involved) including terrorist incidents or information that leads to determination of the cause of a given incident (regardless of the source) such as public

health events or fires with unknown origins. This is different from the normal operational and situational intelligence gathered and reported by the Planning Section.

Interoperability: Allows emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations to communicate within and across agencies and jurisdictions via voice, data, or video-on-demand, in real-time, when needed, and when authorized.

Job Aid: Checklist or other visual aid intended to ensure that specific steps of completing a task or assignment are accomplished.

Joint Information Center (JIC): A facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media. Public information officials from all participating agencies should co-locate at the JIC.

Joint Information System (JIS): Integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely, and complete information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the IC; advising the IC concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

Jurisdiction: A range or sphere of authority. Public agencies have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be political or geographical (e.g., Federal, State, tribal, and local boundary lines) or functional (e.g., law enforcement, public health).

Jurisdictional Agency: The agency having jurisdiction and responsibility for a specific geographical area, or a mandated function.

Key Resources: Any publicly or privately controlled resources essential to the minimal operations of the economy and government.

Letter of Expectation: See **Delegation of Authority.**

Liaison: A form of communication for establishing and maintaining mutual understanding and cooperation.

Liaison Officer: A member of the Command Staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies or organizations.

Local Government: A county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; an Indian tribe or authorized tribal entity, or in Alaska a Native village or Alaska Regional Native Corporation; a rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity. See Section 2 (10), Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002).

Logistics: Providing resources and other services to support incident management.

Logistics Section: The Section responsible for providing facilities, services, and material support for the incident.

Management by Objectives: A management approach that involves a five-step process for achieving the incident goal. The Management by Objectives approach includes the following: establishing overarching incidents objectives; developing strategies based on overarching incidents objectives; developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols; establishing specific, measurable tactics or tasks for various incident management, functional activities, and directing efforts to attain them, in support of defined strategies; and documenting results to measure performance and facilitate corrective action.

Managers: Individuals within ICS organizational units that are assigned specific managerial responsibilities (e.g., Staging Area Manager or Camp Manager).

Metrics: Measurable standards that are useful in describing a resource's capability.

Mitigation: Provides a critical foundation in the effort to reduce the loss of life and property from natural and/or manmade disasters by avoiding or lessening the impact of a disaster and providing value to the public by creating safer communities. Mitigation seeks to fix the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. These activities or actions, in most cases, will have a long-term sustained effect.

Mobilization: The process and procedures used by all organizations—Federal, State, tribal, and local—for activating, assembling, and transporting all resources that have been requested to respond to or support an incident.

Mobilization Guide: Reference document used by organizations outlining agreements, processes, and procedures used by all participating agencies/organizations for activating, assembling, and transporting resources.

Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Group: Typically, administrators/executives, or their appointed representatives, who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds, are brought together and form MAC Groups. MAC Groups may also be known as multiagency committees, emergency management committees, or as otherwise defined by the System. It can provide coordinated decisionmaking and resource allocation among cooperating agencies, and may establish the priorities among incidents, harmonize agency policies, and provide strategic guidance and direction to support incident management activities.

Multiagency Coordination System(s) (MACS): Multiagency coordination systems provide the architecture to support coordination for incident prioritization, critical resource allocation, communications systems integration, and information coordination. The elements of multiagency coordination systems include facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications. Two of the most commonly used elements are EOCs and MAC Groups. These systems assist agencies and organizations responding to an incident.

Multijurisdictional Incident: An incident requiring action from multiple agencies that each have jurisdiction to manage certain aspects of an incident. In ICS, these incidents will be managed under Unified Command.

Mutual Aid Agreements and/or Assistance Agreements: Written or oral agreements between and among agencies/organizations and/or jurisdictions that provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated services. The primary objective is to facilitate rapid, short-term deployment of emergency support prior to, during, and/or after an incident.

National: Of a nationwide character, including the Federal, State, tribal, and local aspects of governance and policy.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): Provides a systematic, proactive approach guiding government agencies at all levels, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work seamlessly to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life or property and harm to the environment.

National Response Framework: A guide to how the nation conducts all-hazards incident management.

Nongovernmental Organization (NGO): An entity with an association that is based on **the** interests of its members, individuals, or institutions. It is not created by a government, but it may work cooperatively with the government. Such organizations serve a public purpose, not a private benefit. Examples of NGOs include faith-based charity organizations and the American Red Cross.

Officers: The ICS title for the personnel responsible for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Public Information.

Operational Period: The time scheduled for executing a given set of operation actions, as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational periods can be of various lengths, although usually they last 12–24 hours.

Operations Section: The Section responsible for all tactical incident operations and implementation of the Incident Action Plan. In ICS, it normally includes subordinate Branches, Divisions, and/or Groups.

Organization: Any association or group of persons with like objectives. Examples include, but are not limited to, governmental departments and agencies, private sector, and/or nongovernmental organizations.

Personal Responsibility: All responders are expected to use good judgment and be accountable for their actions.

Personnel Accountability: The ability to account for the location and welfare of incident personnel. It is accomplished when supervisors ensure that ICS principles and processes are functional and that personnel are working within established incident management guidelines.

Plain Language: Communication that can be understood by the intended audience and meets the purpose of the communicator. For the purpose of NIMS, plain language is designed to eliminate or limit the use of codes and acronyms, as appropriate, during incident response involving more than a single agency.

Planned Event: A planned, nonemergency activity (e.g., sporting events, concerts, parades, etc.).

Planning Meeting: A meeting held as needed before and throughout the duration of an incident to select specific strategies and tactics for incident control operations and for service and support planning. For larger incidents, the Planning Meeting is a major element in the development of the Incident Action Plan.

Planning Section: The Section responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of the

IAP. This Section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on the status of resources assigned to the incident.

Portability: Facilitates the interaction of systems that are normally distinct. Portability of radio technologies, protocols, and frequencies among emergency management/response personnel will allow for the successful and efficient integration, transport, and deployment of communications systems when necessary. Portability includes the standardized assignment of radio channels across jurisdictions, which allows responders to participate in an incident outside their jurisdiction and still use familiar equipment.

Pre-positioned Resources: Resources moved to an area near the expected incident site in response to anticipated resource needs.

Preparedness: A continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response. Within NIMS, preparedness focuses on the following elements: planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualification and certification, and equipment certification.

Preparedness Organizations: Provides coordination for emergency management and incident response activities before a potential incident. These organizations range from groups of individuals to small committees to large standing organizations that represent a wide variety of committees, planning groups, and other organizations (e.g., Citizen Corps, Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), Critical Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Councils).

Prevention: Actions to avoid an incident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring. Prevention involves actions to protect lives and property. It involves applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities that may include such countermeasures as deterrence operations; heightened inspections; improved surveillance and security operations; investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat; public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and, as appropriate, specific law enforcement operations aimed at deterring, preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity and apprehending potential perpetrators and bringing them to justice.

Private Sector: Organizations and entities that are not part of any governmental structure. The private sector includes for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, formal and informal structures, commerce, and industry.

Protocols: Sets of established guidelines for actions (which may be designated by individuals, teams, functions, or capabilities) under various specified conditions.

Public Information: Processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely, accurate, and accessible information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest to the public, responders, and additional stakeholders (both directly affected and indirectly affected).

Public Information Officer: A member of the Command Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.

Publications Management: The development, publication control, publication supply, and distribution of NIMS materials are managed through this subsystem.

Recovery: The development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans; the reconstitution of government operations and services; individual, private–sector,

nongovernmental, and public assistance programs to provide housing and to promote restoration; long-term care and treatment of affected persons; additional measures for social, political, environmental, and economic restoration; evaluation of the incident to identify lessons learned; postincident reporting; and development of initiatives to mitigate the effects of future incidents.

Recovery Plan: A plan developed to restore the affected area or community.

Reimbursement: Provides a mechanism to recoup funds expended for incident-specific activities.

Resource Management: Efficient emergency management and incident response requires a system for identifying available resources at all jurisdictional levels to enable timely and unimpeded access to resources needed to prepare for, respond to, or recover from an incident. Resource management under NIMS includes mutual aid agreements and assistance agreements; the use of special Federal, State, tribal, and local teams; and resource mobilization protocols.

Resource Tracking: A standardized, integrated process conducted prior to, during, and after an incident by all emergency management/response personnel and their associated organizations.

Resources: Personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is maintained. Resources are described by kind and type and may be used in operational support or supervisory capacities at an incident or at an EOC.

Response: Activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. Response also includes the execution of emergency operations plans and of mitigation activities designed to limit the loss of life, personal injury, property damage, and other unfavorable outcomes. As indicated by the situation, response activities include applying intelligence and other information to lessen the effects or consequences of an incident; increased security operations; continuing investigations into nature and source of the threat; ongoing public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and specific law enforcement operations aimed at preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity, and apprehending actual perpetrators and bringing them to justice.

Retrograde: To return resources back to their original location.

Safety Officer: A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring incident operations and advising the IC on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel.

Section: The organizational level having responsibility for a major functional area of incident management, e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration, and Intelligence/ Investigations (if established). The Section is organizationally situated between the Branch and the Incident Command.

Single Resource: An individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew/team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used on an incident.

Situation Report: Often contain confirmed or verified information regarding the specific details relating to the incident.

Span of Control: The number of resources for which a supervisor is responsible, usually expressed as the ratio of supervisors to individuals. (Under NIMS, an appropriate span of control is between 1:3 and 1:7, with optimal being 1:5.)

Special Needs Population: Pertaining to a population whose members may have additional needs before, during, and after an incident in one or more of the following functional areas: maintaining independence, communication, transportation, supervision, and medical care. Individuals in need of additional response assistance may include those who have disabilities; who live in institutionalized settings; who are elderly; who are children; who are from diverse cultures, who have limited English proficiency, or who are non-English speaking; or who are transportation disadvantaged.

Staging Area: Established for the temporary location of available resources. A Staging Area can be any location in which personnel, supplies, and equipment can be temporarily housed or parked while awaiting operational assignment.

Standard Operating Guidelines: A set of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Complete reference document or an operations manual that provides the purpose, authorities, duration, and details for the preferred method of performing a single function or a number of interrelated functions in a uniform manner.

State: When capitalized, refers to any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any possession of the United States. See Section 2 (14), Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002).

Status Reports: Relay information specifically related to the status of resources (e.g., the availability or assignment of resources).

Strategy: The general plan or direction selected to accomplish incident objectives.

Strike Team: A set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established minimum number of personnel, common communications, and a leader.

Substate Region: A grouping of jurisdictions, counties, and/or localities within a State brought together for specified purposes (e.g., homeland security, education, public health), usually containing a governance structure.

Supervisor: The ICS title for an individual responsible for a Division or Group.

Supporting Agency: An agency that provides support and/or resource assistance to another agency. See **Assisting Agency**.

Supporting Technologies: Any technology that may be used to support NIMS. These technologies include orthophoto mapping, remote automatic weather stations, infrared technology, and communications.

System: An integrated combination of people, equipment, and processes that work in a coordinated manner to achieve a specific desired output under specific conditions.

Tactics: Deploying and directing resources on an incident to accomplish the objectives designated by strategy.

Task Force: Any combination of resources assembled to support a specific mission or operational need. All resource elements within a Task Force must have common communications and a designated leader.

Technical Assistance: Support provided to State, tribal, and local jurisdictions when they have the resources but lack the complete knowledge and skills needed to perform a required activity (such as mobile-home park design or hazardous material assessments).

Technical Specialists: Personnel with special skills that can be used anywhere within the ICS organization. No minimum qualifications are prescribed, as technical specialists normally perform the same duties during an incident that they perform in their everyday jobs, and they are typically certified in their fields or professions.

Technology Standards: Standards for key systems may be required to facilitate the interoperability and compatibility of major systems across jurisdictional, geographic, and functional lines.

Technology Support: Facilitates incident operations and sustains the research and development programs that underpin the long-term investment in the Nation's future incident management capabilities.

Terrorism: Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, terrorism is defined as activity that involves an act dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State or other subdivision of the United States in which it occurs; and is intended to intimidate or coerce the civilian population, or influence or affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping. See Section 2 (15), Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002).

Threat: An indication of possible violence, harm, or danger.

Tools: Those instruments and capabilities that allow for the professional performance of tasks, such as information systems, agreements, doctrine, capabilities, and legislative authorities.

Tracking and Reporting Resources: A standardized, integrated process conducted throughout the duration of an incident. This process provides incident managers with a clear picture of where resources are located, helps staff prepare to receive resources, protects the safety of personnel and security of supplies and equipment, and enables the coordination of movement of personnel, equipment, and supplies.

Tribal: Any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaskan Native Village as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act (85 stat. 688) [43 U.S.C.A. and 1601 et seq.], that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Type: An ICS resource classification that refers to capability. Type 1 is generally considered to be more capable than Types 2, 3, or 4, respectively, because of size, power, capacity, or (in the case of incident management teams) experience and qualifications.

Unified Approach: A major objective of preparedness efforts is to ensure mission integration and interoperability when responding to emerging crises that cross functional and jurisdictional lines, as well as between public and private organizations.

Unified Area Command: A Unified Area Command is established when incidents under an Area Command are multijurisdictional. See **Area Command**.

Unified Command: An ICS application used when more than one agency has incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through the designated members of the UC, often the senior person from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the UC, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single IAP.

Unit: The organizational element with functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistics, or finance/administration activity.

Unit Leader: The individual in charge of managing Units within an ICS functional section. The Unit can be staffed by a number of support personnel providing a wide range of services. Some of the support positions are pre-established within ICS (e.g. Base Camp Manager), but many others will be assigned as technical specialists.

Unity of Command: Each individual involved in incident operations will be assigned to only one supervisor.

Vital Records: The essential agency records that are needed to meet operational responsibilities under national security emergencies or other emergency or disaster conditions (emergency operating records), or to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and those affected by Government activities (legal and financial rights records).

Volunteer: For purposes of NIMS, a volunteer is any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency (which has authority to accept volunteer services) when the individual performs services without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services performed. See 16 U.S.C. 742f(c) and 29 CFR 553.101.

ACRONYMS

ALS	Advanced Life Support
BLS	Basic Life Support
COG	Continuity of Government
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOC	Department Operations Center
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HAZMAT	Hazardous Material
HEED	Helicopter Emergency Egress Device
HSPD–5	Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5, Management of Domestic Incidents
HSPD–7	Homeland Security Presidential Directive–7, Critical Infrastructure, Identification, Prioritization, and Protection
HSPD–8	Homeland Security Presidential Directive–8, National Preparedness
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committee
MAC	Multiagency Coordination
MACS	Multiagency Coordination System(s)
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Integration Center
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRF	National Response Framework
NWCG	National Wildfire Coordination Group
PFD	Personal Flotation Device
PIO	Public Information Officer
R&D	Research and Development
SSC	Scientific Support Coordinator

SDO	Standards Development Organizations
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TCL	Target Capabilities List
UC	Unified Command

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