

# ICS 100 – Lesson 3: ICS Organization: Part II

## Lesson Overview

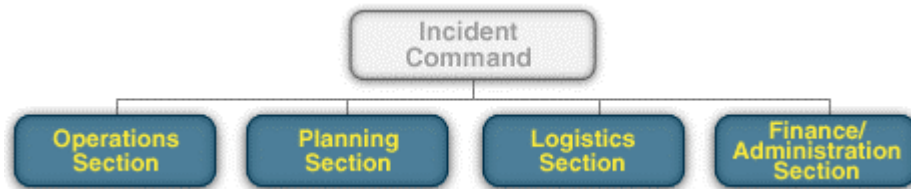
The **ICS Organization: Part II** lesson introduces you to the:

- Roles and responsibilities of the General Staff.
- Expansion and contraction of the ICS organization.

This lesson should take approximately **30 minutes** to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

## General Staff

Expansion of the incident may also require the delegation of authority for the performance of the other management functions. The people who perform the other four management functions are designated as the **General Staff**. The General Staff is made up of four **sections**: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.



## ICS Section Chiefs and Deputies

As mentioned previously, the person in charge of each section is designated as a **Chief**. Section Chiefs have the ability to expand their section to meet the needs of the situation. Each of the Section Chiefs may have a Deputy, or more than one, if necessary. The Deputy:

- May assume responsibility for a specific portion of the primary position, work as relief, or be assigned other tasks.
- Should always be as proficient as the person for whom he or she works.

In large incidents, especially where multiple disciplines or jurisdictions are involved, the use of Deputies from other organizations can greatly increase interagency coordination.

## Operations Section

Until Operations is established as a separate Section, the Incident Commander has direct control of tactical resources. The Incident Commander will determine the need for a separate Operations Section at an incident or event. When the Incident Commander activates an Operations Section, he or she will assign an individual as the Operations Section Chief.

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### Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief will develop and manage the Operations Section to accomplish the incident objectives set by the Incident Commander. The Operations Section Chief is normally the person with the greatest technical and tactical expertise in dealing with the problem at hand.

### Operations Section Chief

"I'm responsible for developing and implementing strategy and tactics to carry out the Incident Objectives. This means that I organize, assign, and supervise all of the tactical field resources assigned to an incident, including air operations and those resources in a staging area.

I work very closely and coordinate my activities with the other members of the Command and General Staff."

### Operations Section: Maintaining Span of Control

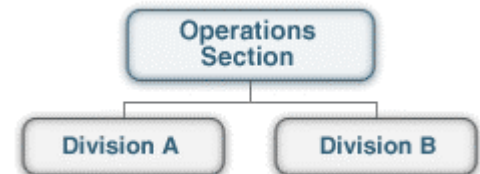
The Operations function is where the tactical fieldwork is done. Therefore, most incident resources are assigned to the Operations Section. Often the most hazardous activities are carried out there. Because of this, it is necessary to monitor carefully the number of resources that report to any one supervisor. The following supervisory levels can be added to help manage span of control:

- **Divisions** are used to divide an incident **geographically**.
- **Groups** are used to describe **functional** areas of operation.
- **Branches** are used when the number of Divisions or Groups extends the span of control and can be either geographical or functional.

### Operations Section: Divisions

Divisions are used to divide an incident **geographically**. The person in charge of each Division is designated as a **Supervisor**. How the area is divided is determined by the needs of the incident.

The most common way to identify Divisions is by using alphabet characters (A, B, C, etc.). Other identifiers may be used as long as Division identifiers are known by assigned responders.



The important thing to remember about ICS Divisions is that they are established **to divide an incident into geographical areas of operation**.

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### Operations Section: Groups

Groups are used to describe **functional** areas of operation. The person in charge of each Group is designated as a **Supervisor**.

The kind of Group to be established will also be determined by the needs of an incident. Groups are normally labeled according to the job that they are assigned (e.g., Sampling Group, Disposal Group, etc.). Groups will work wherever their assigned task is needed and are not limited geographically.



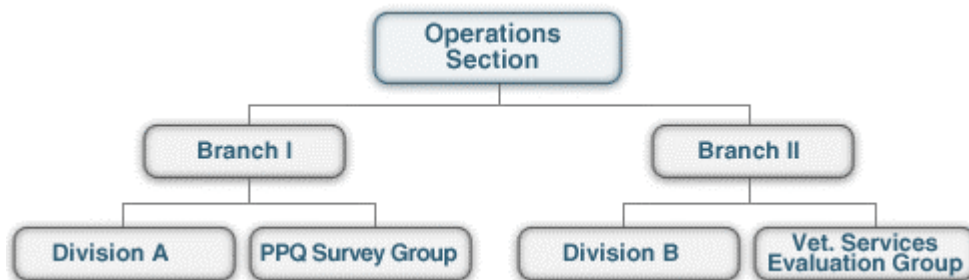
### Operations Section: Divisions and Groups

Divisions and Groups can be used together on an incident. Divisions and Groups are at an equal level in the organization. One does not supervise the other. When a Group is working within a Division on a special assignment, Division and Group Supervisors must closely coordinate their activities.



### Operations Section: Establishing Branches

If the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control, it may be necessary to establish another level of organization within the Operations Section, called **Branches**. The person in charge of each Branch is designated as a Director. Deputies may also be used at the Branch level.

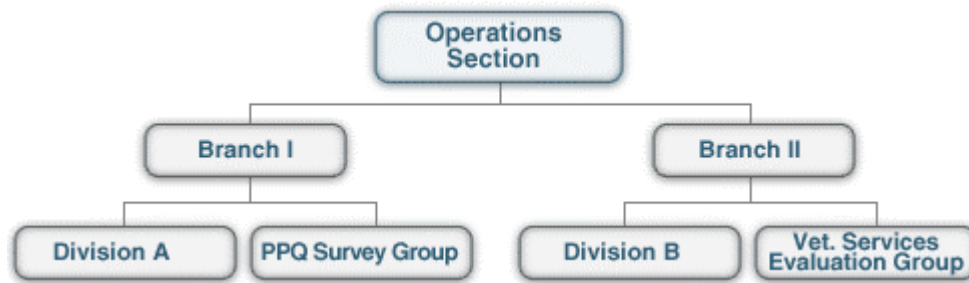


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### Operations Section: Branches, Other Factors

While span of control is a common reason to establish Branches, additional considerations may also indicate the need to use these Branches, including:

- **Multidiscipline Incidents.** Some incidents have multiple disciplines involved (e.g., Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), Veterinary Services, Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS), etc.) that may create the need to set up incident operations around a functional Branch structure.
- **Multijurisdiction Incidents.** In some incidents it may be better to organize the incident around jurisdictional lines. In these situations, Branches may be set up to reflect jurisdictional boundaries.
- **Very Large Incidents.** Very large incidents may organize using geographic or functional branches.



### Managing the Operations Section

#### Operations Section Chief

“In a recent incident, there were hundreds of resources deployed to the Operations Section. I couldn’t possibly manage them all directly. Trying to do so would result in inefficient resource management at best, and personal injury at worst. While there are any number of ways to organize field resources, I might decide to use Branches for each agency, as well as Groups, to organize resources and maintain the recommended span of control of one supervisor to five resources.

It can be a big job and with all of the tactics often needed in an incident, I have to depend on my Branch Directors to help me. For complex incidents, I may also have a Deputy. I also depend on the rest of the General Staff to support me. I can’t develop detailed situation analyses—or worry about where the sandwiches are coming from or who’s paying for them—and still do my job.”

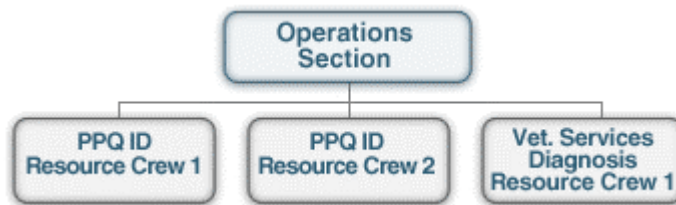
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### Operations Section: Expanding and Contracting

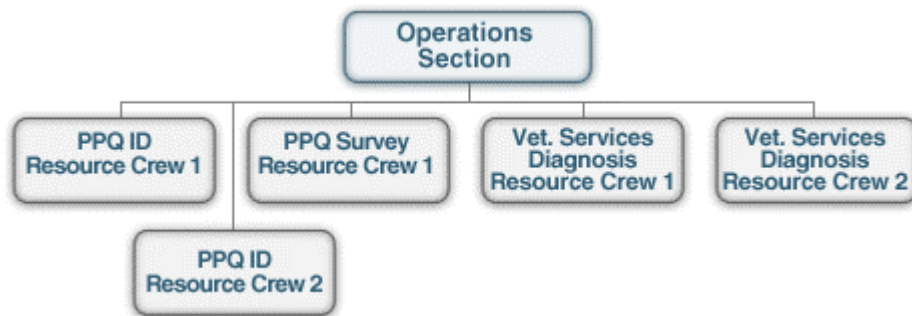
The organization within the Operations Section reflects the objectives established by the Incident Commander. The Operations organization usually develops from the bottom up and may include:

- **Task Forces:** A combination of mixed resources with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Task Force Leader.
- **Strike Teams:** A set number of resources of the same kind and type with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Strike Team Leader.
- **Single Resources:** May be individuals, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified supervisor.

The Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief at an incident may work initially with only a few single resources or staff members.



The Operations Section usually develops from the bottom up. The organization will expand to include needed levels of supervision as more and more resources are deployed.



Task Forces are a combination of mixed resources with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Leader. Task Forces can be versatile combinations of resources and their use is encouraged. The combining of resources into Task Forces allows for several resource elements to be managed under one individual's supervision, thus lessening the span of control of the Division/Group Supervisor.



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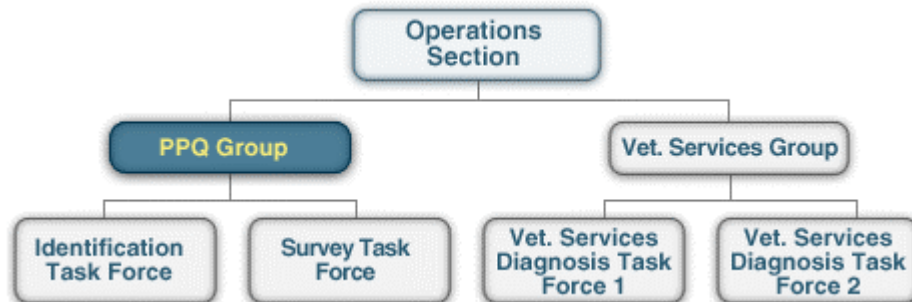
Strike Teams are a set number of resources of the same kind and type with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Strike Team Leader. Strike Teams are highly effective management units. The foreknowledge that all elements have the same capability and the knowledge of how many will be applied allows for better planning, ordering, utilization and management.



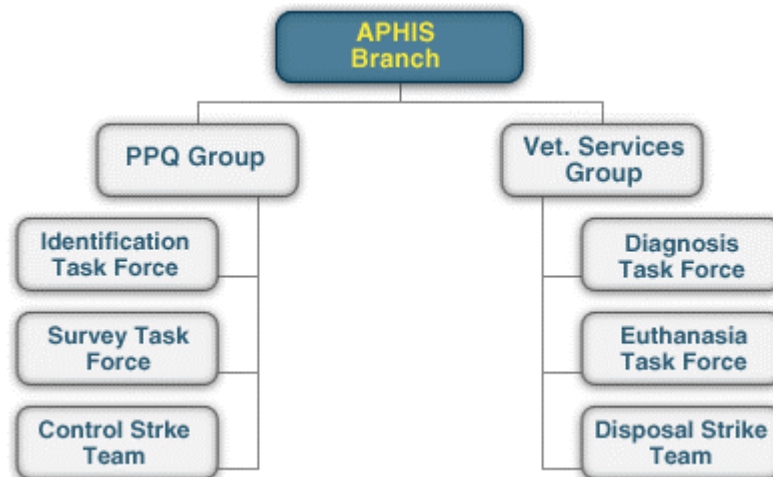
Single Resources may be individuals, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified supervisor that can be used at an incident.



As we covered earlier, it is important to maintain an effective span of control. Maintaining span of control can be done easily by grouping resources into Divisions or Groups.

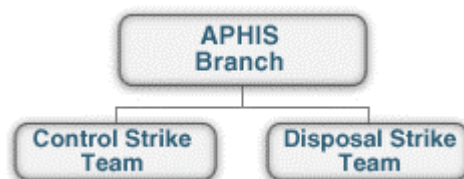


Another way to add supervision levels is to create Branches within the Operations Section.



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At some point, the Operations Section and the rest of the ICS organization will contract. The decision to contract will be based on the achievement of tactical objectives. Demobilization planning begins upon activation of the first personnel and continues until the ICS organization ceases operation.



### Planning Section

The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Planning Section and designate a Planning Section Chief. If no Planning Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all planning functions. It is up to the Planning Section Chief to activate any needed additional staffing.

#### Planning Section Chief

“My job is to gather and analyze information so that we’ll be ready for tomorrow and the next day. I’m responsible for intelligence and information gathering, analysis, and dissemination. Also, our section manages the planning process and compiles the Incident Action Plan using input from the rest of the organization.

For large incidents, and when the Incident Commander has directed, we will develop a written Incident Action Plan. I also may be responsible for managing the activities of Technical Specialists who can be anyone, from anywhere, who knows anything that may be useful in responding to this incident.

I work closely with the Incident Commander and other members of the General Staff to be sure that information is shared effectively and results in an efficient planning process to meet the needs of the Incident Commander and Operations.”

### Incident Action Plan

Every incident must have a verbal or written Incident Action Plan. The purpose of this plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with direction for actions to be implemented during the operational period identified in the plan.

Incident Action Plans include the measurable tactical operations to be achieved and are prepared around a timeframe called an **Operational Period**. At the simplest level, all Incident Action Plans must have four elements:

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

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### Planning Section: Major Activities

The major activities of the Planning Section may include:

- Collecting, evaluating, and displaying incident intelligence and information.
- Preparing and documenting Incident Action Plans.
- Conducting long-range and/or contingency planning.
- Developing plans for demobilization as the incident winds down.
- Maintaining incident documentation.
- Tracking resources assigned to the incident.

### Planning Section: Units

The Planning Section can be further staffed with four Units:

- Resources Unit
- Situation Unit
- Documentation Unit
- Demobilization Unit

In addition, Technical Specialists who provide special expertise useful in incident management and response may also be assigned to work in the Planning Section. Depending on the needs, Technical Specialists may also be assigned to other Sections in the organization.



### Logistics Section

The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Logistics Section at the incident, and designate an individual to fill the position of the Logistics Section Chief. If no Logistics Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all logistical functions. The size of the incident, complexity of support needs, and the incident length will determine whether a separate Logistics Section is established. Additional staffing is the responsibility of the Logistics Section Chief.



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### Logistics Section Chief

"Logistics can make or break an incident response. I assist the Incident Commander by providing the resources and services required to support incident activities. I coordinate my activities very closely with the other members of the Command and General Staff.

The Logistics Section develops several portions of the written Incident Action Plan and forwards them to the Planning Section. Logistics and Finance have to work closely to contract for and purchase goods and services needed at the incident. I may have up to six Unit Leaders who report to me. When an incident becomes highly complex, I need them all. So, I would have to reduce my span of control by ordering Service and Support Branch Directors to supervise the Unit Leaders."

### Logistics Section: Major Activities

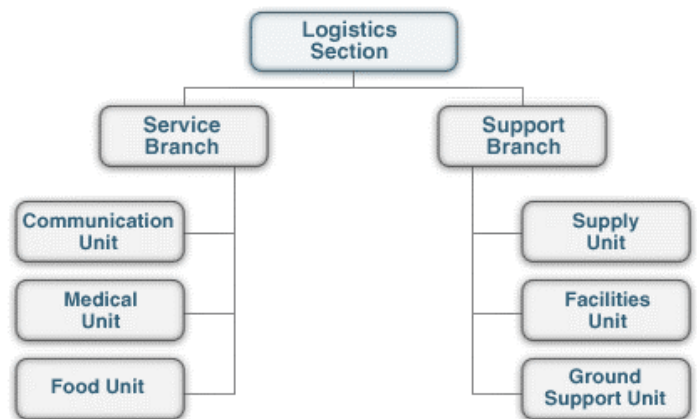
The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs, including:

- Obtaining and maintaining essential personnel, equipment, and supplies.
- Providing communication planning and resources.
- Setting up food services.
- Setting up and maintaining incident facilities.
- Providing transportation.
- Providing medical services to incident personnel.

### Logistics Section: Branches and Units

The Logistics Section can be further staffed by two Branches and six Units. Not all of the Units may be required; they will be established based on need. The titles of the Units are descriptive of their responsibilities:

- Service Branch:
  - Communication Unit
  - Medical Unit
  - Food Unit
- Support Branch:
  - Supply Unit
  - Facilities Unit
  - Ground Support Unit



### Finance/Administration Section

The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Finance/Administration Section at the incident and designate an individual to fill the position of the Finance/Administration Section Chief.

If no Finance/Administration Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all finance functions.

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### **Finance/Administration Section Chief**

"I'm the one who worries about paying for the response efforts. I'm responsible for all of the financial and cost analysis aspects of an incident. These include contract negotiation, tracking personnel and equipment time, documenting and processing claims for accidents and injuries occurring at the incident, and keeping a running tally of the costs associated with the incident. Sometimes I wish I had financial veto authority, but I don't.

Because of the large scope of some incidents, the number of agencies involved, and the amount of financial activity it will generate, I might need to activate all four units that report to me. These include the Time, Cost, Compensation and Claims, and Procurement Units. I coordinate with all members of the Command and General Staff, but I work most closely with Logistics to be sure that we are able to contract for and procure the resources necessary to manage an incident."

### **Finance/Administration Section: Major Activities**

The Finance/Administration Section is set up for any incident that requires incident-specific financial management. The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:

- Contract negotiation and monitoring.
- Timekeeping.
- Cost analysis.
- Compensation for injury or damage to property.

### **Finance/Administration Section: Increasing Use**

More and more larger incidents are using a Finance/Administration Section to monitor costs. Smaller incidents may also require certain Finance/Administration support.

For example, the Incident Commander may establish one or more Units of the Finance/Administration Section for such things as procuring special equipment, contracting with a vendor, or making cost estimates for alternative response strategies.

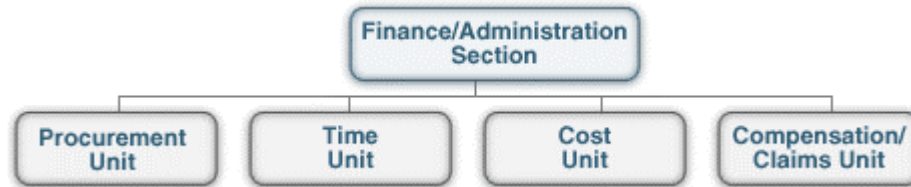
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### Finance/Administration Section: Units

The Finance/Administration Section may staff four Units:

- Procurement Unit
- Time Unit
- Cost Unit
- Compensation/Claims Unit

Not all Units may be required; they will be established based on need.



### Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Organization: Part II** lesson. This lesson addressed the:

- Roles and responsibilities of the General Staff.
- Expansion and contraction of the ICS organization.

The next lesson will provide an overview of the features and principles of ICS.