

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Lesson 1: ICS Overview

Lesson Overview

The **ICS Overview** lesson introduces you to:

- The background and development of ICS.
- ICS as the standard for emergency management across the country.
- ICS as interdisciplinary and organizationally flexible.
- Applications of ICS.

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

The Incident Command System (ICS)

An incident is an occurrence, either human caused or by natural phenomena that requires action by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.

Examples of incidents include:

- Fire, both structural and wildfire
- Hazardous material situations
- Search and rescue
- Oil spills
- Pest eradication
- Control of animal diseases
- Planned events, such as parades or political rallies just to name a few.

Because of today's budget constraints, limited staffing of local, State, and Federal agencies, it's not possible for any one agency to handle all the management and resource needs for the increasing numbers of incidents nationwide. Local, State, and Federal agencies must work together in a smooth, coordinated effort under the same management system.

The Incident Command System or ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-risk incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

ICS has considerable internal flexibility. It can grow or shrink to meet different needs. This flexibility makes it a very cost effective and efficient management approach for both small and large situations.

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History of the Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System (ICS) was developed in the 1970s following a series of catastrophic fires in California's urban interface. Property damage ran into the millions, and many people died or were injured. The personnel assigned to determine the causes of this disaster studied the case histories and discovered that incident failures could rarely be attributed to lack of resources or failure of tactics.

What were the lessons learned? Surprisingly, studies found was that incident failures were far more likely to result from inadequate management than from any other single reason.

Weaknesses in incident management were often due to:

- Lack of personnel accountability, including unclear chains of command and supervision.
- Poor communication due to both inefficient uses of available communications systems and conflicting codes and terminology.
- Lack of an orderly, systematic planning process.
- No common, flexible, predesigned management structure that enables commanders to delegate responsibilities and manage workloads efficiently.
- No predefined methods to integrate interagency requirements into the management structure and planning process effectively.

A poorly managed incident response can be devastating to our economy, the food supply, and our health and safety. With so much at stake, we must effectively manage our response efforts. The Incident Command System, or ICS, allows us to do so. ICS is a proven management system based on successful business practices. This course introduces you to ICS and the vital role that you can play.

ICS Built on Best Practices

ICS is:

- A proven management system based on successful business practices.
- The result of decades of lessons learned in the organization and management of emergency incidents.

This system represents organizational "best practices," and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.

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What ICS Is Designed To Do

Designers of the system recognized early that ICS must be interdisciplinary and organizationally **flexible** to meet the following management challenges:

- Meet the needs of incidents of any kind or size.
- Be usable for routine or planned events such as conferences, as well as large and complex emergency incidents.
- Allow personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Provide logistical and administrative support to ensure that operational staff, such as entomologists or veterinarians, can meet tactical objectives.
- Be cost effective by avoiding duplication of efforts.

ICS has been tested in more than 30 years of emergency and nonemergency applications, by all levels of government and in the private sector.

Activity

Scenario: The Texas counties bordering Mexico have suffered an outbreak of bloody water disease (a.k.a. Texas Cattle Fever) carried by cattle crossing the border. The disease, which is carried by ticks, is readily transferred from infested cattle to herds that have not been dipped in pesticide. U.S. cattle lack immunity to the disease, and U.S. ranchers do not ordinarily dip their herds because of cost. Because of the ease and rapidity with which this disease spreads, and the fact that there is no cost-effective cure, prevention through dipping is the only viable control alternative. All herds within a 25-mile distance of the border have been ordered dipped. It is estimated that 40 herds ranging from several hundred to more than 1,000 cattle will need to be treated in the next 10 days. The process will be repeated 14 days later to break the lifecycle of the tick. Until this has been accomplished, cattle cannot be shipped off their ranges for any reason.

What management challenges does this scenario present that could be addressed by using ICS?

Using ICS to manage this response could help to:

- Manage multiagency and multijurisdictional resources (including Federal, State, and local personnel as well as Mexican resources) assigned over a widespread geographic area.
- Meet incident objectives including the rapid assessment of herds that are at risk of contracting Texas Cattle Fever.
- Handle logistics such as the purchase of the pesticide dip.
- Provide logistical support so that qualified personnel are freed up to oversee the treatment.

Remember, ICS:

- Allows personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Is cost effective and ensures that resources are deployed where most needed.
- Provides the logistical and administrative support to ensure that operational staff can meet incident objectives.

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Applications for the Use of ICS

Applications for the use of ICS have included:

- Routine or planned events (e.g., celebrations, parades, and concerts).
- Fires, hazardous materials, and multicasualty incidents.
- Multijurisdiction and multiagency disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and winter storms.
- Search and rescue missions.
- Biological pest eradication programs.
- Biological outbreaks and disease containment.
- Acts of terrorism.

ICS and USDA

Dr. Bill Smith USDA, Veterinary Services

“The first time I really used ICS was in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in response to a low path influenza outbreak.

The ICS allows us to organize and plan to make sure all the major tasks that need to be done are identified and someone is charged to make sure it’s done and then with that, with the hierarchy with the organization structures, who you report to is done and we can organize it. So, it’s flexible in that you can use them for small outbreaks, big outbreaks. It has a self contained organizational system built into it, can be used for any, any type of animal health event, it doesn’t have to be disease of magnitude. It could be as simple as moving an area office if you will or a Federal office or moving people, so on and so forth. One disease outbreak or a huge disease outbreak, it doesn’t matter, that’s how I would define the beauty of the flexibility of it.”

Dr. Carey Floyd Oklahoma Department of Agriculture

“We first started with our training with ICS during the time that the foot and mouth outbreak was going on in England because it was apparent that an outbreak like that would be too big for us to handle as we’d always handled disease outbreaks here in the United States and so we did training, we put together a team here in Oklahoma that has both State and Federal employees on it and we were able to use our training when we had a herd of elk that had chronic wasting disease so we used our ICS training to plan the depopulation of those animals.

The best thing is it’s very clear who is in charge of each part of the response. There’s not any doubt about the responsibilities of each individual in each of those positions and what they are supposed to do. So it’s very clear who does which part of the response.”

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Van Bateman
USDA, Forest Service

“The way the system is built it is very good at gathering the information that you need to do the job. The problem they had at the World Trade Center is a long campaign for FDNY is, they are on the fire 24 hours, 36 hours. When we got there they had no way to gather information or plan and that’s basically what we did for them. It took us a while to get our foot in the door but once we got our foot in the door and showed them that we could plan out the next 24 hours, the next 36 hours, if something happened out there, they would know who’s working in that area, what equipment they had, what equipment they didn’t have, what they needed and once they saw that what became a reluctant partnership became a very strong partnership.

Since the World Trade Center there’s been a group of us last year that went back and we’re training the entire Fire Department of New York in it. Also we did do some training with the Department of Agriculture from Oklahoma, not the Federal but the State. That’s when hoof-and-mouth disease was big and they were thinking maybe they were going to have to use it in hoof-and-mouth disease.”

ICS Features

In this course, you will learn about the following ICS features:

- ICS organization
- Incident facilities
- Incident action Plan
- Span of control
- Common responsibilities

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Overview** lesson. This lesson addressed how:

- ICS is a standardized management tool designed to allow its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure flexible enough to meet the demands of small or large emergency or nonemergency situations.
- Identification of areas of management weakness resulted in the development of ICS.
- ICS represents organizational “best practices,” and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.
- Designers of ICS recognized early that it must be interdisciplinary and organizationally flexible.
- Applications of ICS have included planned events, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism.

The next lesson will provide an overview of the ICS organization and introduce the Incident Commander and Command Staff.

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Lesson 2: ICS Organization: Part I

Lesson Overview

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

- Organizational structure of ICS.
- Five major management functions.
- Principle of span of control.
- Use of position titles.
- Roles and responsibilities of the Incident Commander and Command Staff.

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

ICS Organization

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

For example, the Department of Agriculture has an Office of Communication. This office has no relationship to the position of Communication Unit Leader in ICS, which is responsible for the hardware that the ICS organization uses to communicate.

Performance of Management Functions

Every incident or event requires that certain management functions be performed. The problem must be identified and assessed, a plan to deal with it developed and implemented, and the necessary resources procured and paid for.

Even if an incident is very small, and only one or two people are involved, these management functions still will apply to some degree.

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Five Major Management Functions

There are five major management functions that are the foundation upon which the ICS organization develops. These functions apply whether you are handling a routine emergency, organizing for a major nonemergency event, or managing a response to a major disaster. The five major management functions are:

- Incident Command
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance/Administration



Management Function Descriptions

Below is a brief description of each ICS function:

- **Command:** Sets incident objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
- **Operations:** Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan. Develops the tactical assignments and organization, and directs all tactical resources.
- **Planning:** Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the incident objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.
- **Logistics:** Provides support, resources, and all other services needed to meet the incident objectives.
- **Finance/Administration:** Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

Activity

The ICS Management Functions can be applied to something as common as planning a vacation. For each ICS Management Function, list the vacation activities that you would perform.

Management Function	Vacation Activity
Command	Establish a budget and select the destination.
Operations	Select the method of travel, determine the route to the destination, and operate the vehicle.
Planning	Find the most expedient route to the destination, determine whether there is any current road construction or other obstacles, and determine how many miles will be traveled.
Logistics	Arrange for vehicle, fuel, lodging, and food.
Finance/Administration	Pay for the trip.

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Organizational Structure – Incident Commander

On small incidents and events, one person, the Incident Commander, may accomplish all five management functions. In fact, the Incident Commander is the only position that is always staffed in ICS applications. However, large incidents or events may require that these functions be set up as separate **Sections** within the organization.

Organizational Structure—ICS Sections

Each of the primary ICS Sections may be subdivided as needed. The ICS organization has the capability to expand or contract to meet the needs of the incident.

A basic ICS operating guideline is that the person at the top of the organization is responsible until the authority is delegated to another person. Thus, on smaller incidents when these additional persons are not required, the Incident Commander will personally accomplish or manage all aspects of the incident organization.

ICS Span of Control

Another basic operating guideline concerns the supervisory structure of the organization.

Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively on emergency response incidents. Maintaining an effective span of control is particularly important on incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority.

Maintaining Span of Control

Maintaining adequate span of control throughout the ICS organization is very important.

Effective span of control on incidents may vary from three to seven, and **a ratio of one supervisor to five reporting elements is recommended.**

If the number of reporting elements falls outside of these ranges, expansion or consolidation of the organization may be necessary. There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.

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ICS Position Titles

To maintain span of control, the ICS organization can be divided into many levels of supervision. At each level, individuals with primary responsibility positions have distinct titles. Using specific ICS position titles serves three important purposes:

- Titles provide a common standard all users. For example, if one agency uses the title Branch Chief, another Branch Manager, etc., this lack of consistency can cause confusion at the incident.
- The use of distinct titles for ICS positions allows for filling ICS positions with the most qualified individuals rather than by rank.
- Standardized position titles is useful when requesting qualified personnel. For example, in ordering personnel, it is important to know if the positions needed are Unit Leaders, clerks, etc.

Supervisory Position Titles

The titles for all supervisory levels of the organization are shown in the table below.

Organizational Level	Title	Support Position
Incident Command	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff	Officer	Assistant
General Staff (Section)	Chief	Deputy
Branch	Director	Deputy
Division/Group	Supervisor	N/A
Unit	Leader	Manager
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	Single Resource Boss

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ICS Organizational Components

Sections: The organizational levels with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident (e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration). The person in charge of each Section is designated as a Chief.

Divisions: Used to divide an incident geographically. The person in charge of each Division is designated as a Supervisor.

Groups: Used to describe functional areas of operations. The person in charge of each Group is designated as a Supervisor.

Branches: Used when the number of Divisions or Groups extends the span of control. Can be either geographical or functional. The person in charge of each Branch is designated as a Director.

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 that can be used at an incident.

Roles and Responsibilities

You should now be familiar with the basic ICS organizational structure, the five major management functions, and the principle of span of control.

In this section, you'll learn about the expansion of the ICS organization and the roles and responsibilities of the **Incident Commander and Command Staff**.

Incident Commander's Overall Role

The Incident Commander has overall responsibility for managing the incident. The Incident Commander must be fully briefed and should have a written delegation of authority. Initially, assigning tactical resources and overseeing operations will be under the direct supervision of the Incident Commander.

Incident Commander

"My job is to provide the overall leadership for incident response. I am able to delegate my authority to others to manage the ICS organization. Like any other organization, I have bosses too. I take general direction and receive my delegation of authority from the responsible agency or jurisdiction administrator or administrators, and I am accountable to them. It's important to note that these agency or jurisdiction administrators may or may not include my real-life boss. For example, the jurisdiction administrators for an incident might include Department of Agriculture agency heads as well as representatives from State and local government.

It's also important that my staff knows that they have the authority of their positions, even if it's not the same authority that they have at home."

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Incident Commander Responsibilities

In addition to having overall responsibility for managing the entire incident, the Incident Commander:

- Has responsibility for ensuring incident safety, providing information services to internal and external stakeholders, and establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident.
- May have one or more Deputies from the same agency or from other agencies or jurisdictions. Deputy Incident Commanders must be as qualified as the Incident Commander.

Incident Commander

“As the Incident Commander, I am responsible for all activities and functions until I staff them. So, one of the first things I do is assess my need for staff. I know that for an incident that is both complex and long-term, I will need more staff. In addition, I may decide that I need a Deputy.

Also, I establish incident objectives for the organization based on the direction given by agency directors. The type of plan depends on the magnitude of the incident. During a complex incident, I’ll direct my staff to develop a written Incident Action Plan. The beauty of ICS is that you can tailor your organization to match the need.”

Selecting and Changing Incident Commanders

As incidents expand in size, change in jurisdiction or discipline, or become more complex, command may change to a more experienced Incident Commander.

Rank, grade, and seniority are not the factors used to select the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander is always a highly qualified individual trained to lead the incident response.

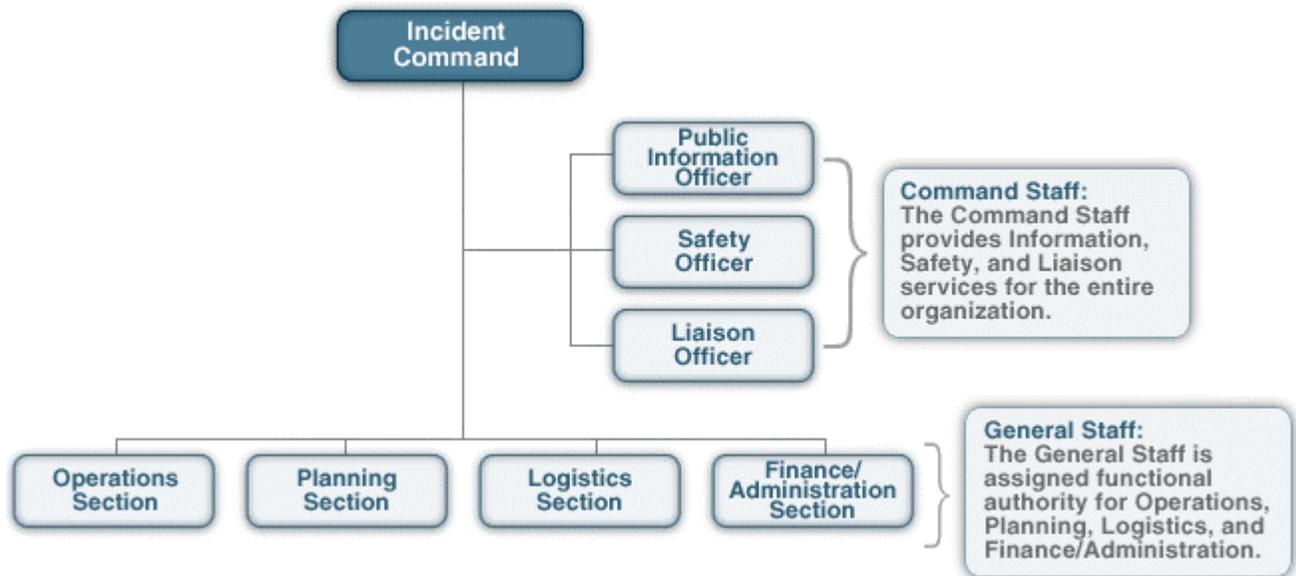
Transfer of command at an incident always requires that there be a full briefing for the incoming Incident Commander and notification to all personnel that a change in command is taking place.

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Expanding the Organization

As incidents grow, the Incident Commander may delegate authority for performance of certain activities to the Command Staff and the General Staff.

- **Command Staff:** The Command Staff provide information, safety, and liaison services for the entire organization.
- **General Staff:** The General Staff are assigned functional authority for Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.



Command Staff

Depending upon the size and type of incident or event, it may be necessary for the Incident Commander to designate personnel to provide information, safety, and liaison services for the entire organization. In ICS, these personnel make up the Command Staff and consist of the:

- **Public Information Officer**, who serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders, including the media or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event.
- **Safety Officer**, who monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel.
- **Liaison Officer**, who serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assigned to an incident.

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Meet the Command Staff

Public Information Officer

“I report directly to the Incident Commander and advise him or her on issues related to information dissemination and media relations. I am the primary contact for anyone who wants information about the incident and our response to it. I serve both an external audience through the media, and an internal audience including both incident staff and agency personnel. It’s very important for me to coordinate with other information staff to ensure that we do not issue confusing or conflicting information. Since the Planning Section is gathering intelligence and other information pertinent to the incident, I get a lot of my information from them. Accurate information is essential. In the end, the Incident Commander will approve all information that I release. During a complex incident, I will probably need several Assistant Public Information Officers to help me.”

Safety Officer

“My job is to make sure everyone does the job safely and gets home in one piece. I advise the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety, but I would like to emphasize that safety is everyone’s responsibility. I work very closely with Operations to make sure that our people in the field are as safe as possible under the circumstances, including wearing appropriate protective equipment and implementing the safest tactical options. I conduct risk analyses and implement hazard mitigation measures. I normally do this through the planning process, but I do have the authority to stop any unsafe activity that I observe. While a lot of my attention is focused on Operations, I am also concerned about safety for the rest of the organization. I minimize other employee risk by promoting safe driving habits, eliminating tripping hazards, ensuring safe food handling, things like that. I spend a lot of time out of the command post looking at what’s going on. During a complex incident, I will need quite a few assistants to be my eyes and ears.”

Liaison Officer

“I’m the go between. I assist the Incident Commander by gathering information about agencies that are supporting our efforts on this incident. The Incident Commander’s time is devoted to managing the incident, so my job is to serve as a facilitator for cooperating and assisting agencies if they are not represented in the command. I provide briefings to agency representatives and work with them to address their questions and concerns about the operation. I ask agency representatives about restrictions on their resources that may impact how we can use them or special support requirements that they might have. I also ask about availability of any other specialized resources they might have that may prove useful. What I don’t do is try to coordinate their tactical activities. Operations needs to do that. During a complex incident, I may have a lot of agency representatives, but I can usually handle the job myself.”

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Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Organization: Part I** lesson. The lesson addressed the:

- Organizational structure of ICS.
- Five major management functions.
- Principle of span of control.
- Use of position titles.
- Roles and responsibilities of the Incident Commander and Command Staff.
- Selection and transfer of Incident Commanders.

The next lesson will provide an introduction to the General Staff and the expansion and contraction of the ICS organization.

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Lesson 3: ICS Organization: Part II

Lesson Overview

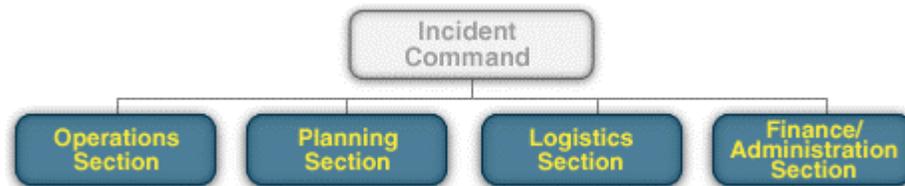
The **ICS Organization: Part II** lesson introduces you to the:

- 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

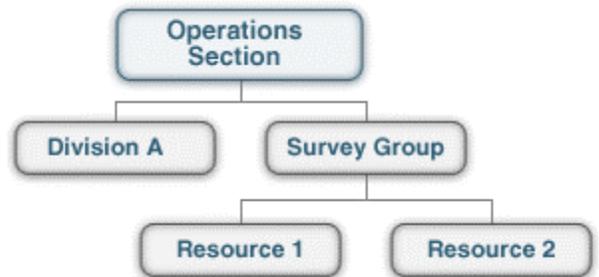
Groups are used to describe **functional** areas of operation. The person in charge of each Group is designated as a **Supervisor**.

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.



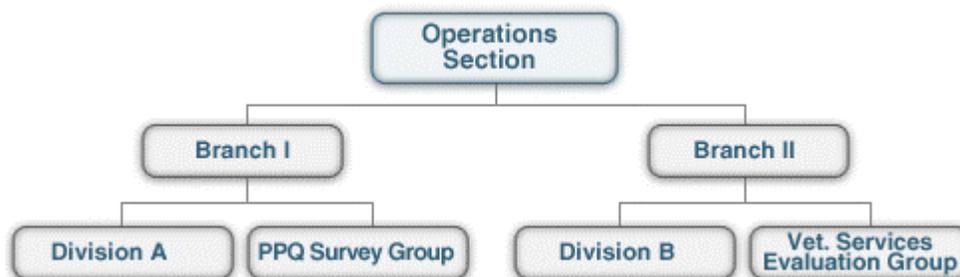
Operations Section: Divisions and Groups

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.

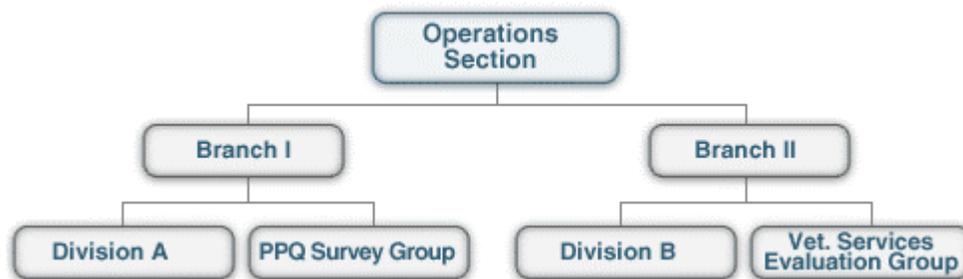


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Operations Section: Branches, Other Factors

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.”

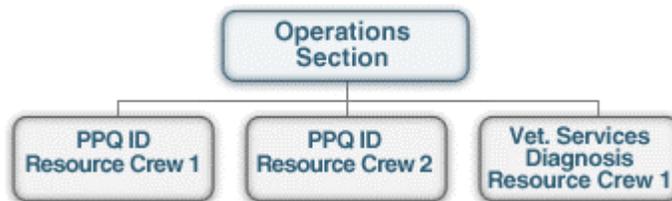
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Operations Section: Expanding and Contracting

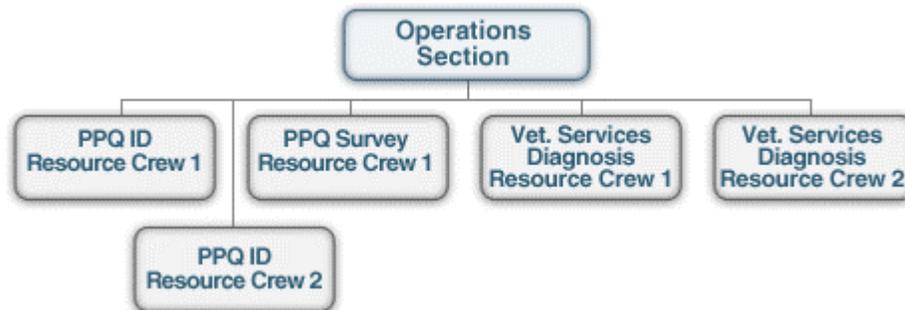
The organization within the Operations Section reflects the objectives established by the Incident Commander. The Operations organization usually develops from the bottom up and may include:

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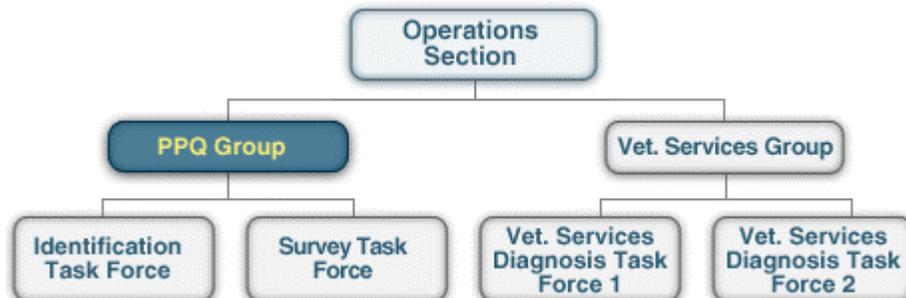
Strike Teams are a set number of resources of the same kind and type with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Strike Team Leader. Strike Teams are highly effective management units. The foreknowledge that all elements have the same capability and the knowledge of how many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



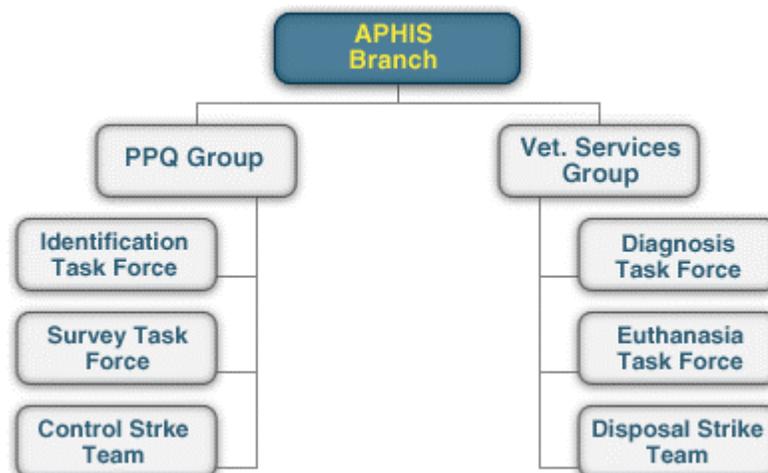
Single Resources may be individuals, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified supervisor that can be used at an incident.



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.

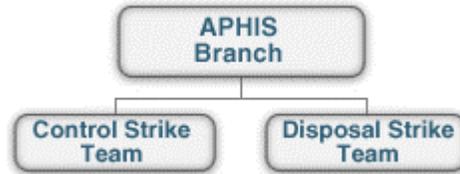


Another way to add supervision levels is to create Branches within the Operations Section.



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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.

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.”

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Logistics Section: Major Activities

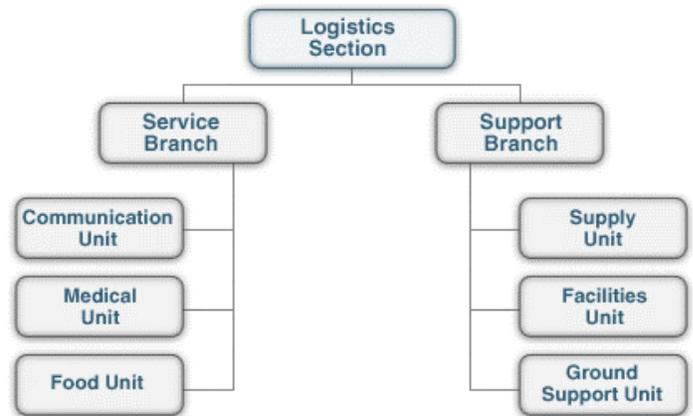
The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs, including:

- 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.

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."

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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.

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.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Lesson 4: ICS Features and Principles

Lesson Overview

The **ICS Features and Principles** lesson introduces you to:

- Use of Common Terminology.
- Incident Facilities.
- Common ICS Responsibilities.

This lesson should take approximately **20 minutes** to complete. **Remember, you must complete the entire lesson to receive credit.**

Common Terminology

The ability to communicate within ICS is absolutely critical. Using standard or common terminology is essential to ensuring efficient, clear communication. ICS requires the use of common terminology, meaning standard titles for facilities and positions within the organization.

Common terminology also includes the use of “clear text”—that is, communication without the use of agency-specific codes or jargon. **In other words, use plain English.**

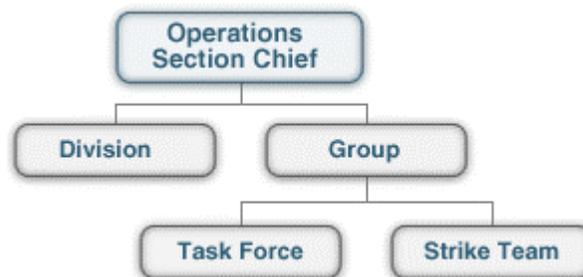
Uncommon Terminology: “APHIS Branch, this is PPQ ID 1, we are 10-24.”

Common Terminology: “APHIS Branch, this is PPQ ID 1, we have completed our assignment.”

Organizational Elements and Resources

As you learned earlier, organizational elements require a consistent pattern for designating each level within the ICS organization.

Resources are also assigned common designations. Many kinds of resources may also be classified by type, which will indicate their capabilities (e.g., types of helicopters, sprayers, etc.).



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Organizational Facilities

Common terminology is also used to define incident facilities, help clarify the activities that take place at a specific facility, and identify what members of the organization can be found there.

Incident facilities will be addressed in greater detail later in this lesson.

Use of Position Titles

As mentioned previously, ICS Command and General Staff positions have distinct titles.

- Only the Incident Commander is called Commander.
- Only the heads of the Sections in the General Staff are called Chiefs.

Learning and using this standard terminology helps reduce confusion between the day-to-day position occupied by an individual and his or her position at the incident.

The following are standardized titles used in ICS:

Organizational Level	Title	Support Position
Incident Command	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff	Officer	Assistant
General Staff (Section)	Chief	Deputy
Branch	Director	Deputy
Division/Group	Supervisor	N/A
Unit	Leader	Manager
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	Single Resource Boss

Integrated Communications

Every incident requires a Communications Plan. Communications includes:

- The “hardware” systems that transfer information.
- Planning for the use of all available communications frequencies and resources.
- The procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.

Communications needs for large incidents may exceed available radio frequencies. Some incidents are conducted entirely without radio support. In such situations, other communications resources (cell phones, alpha pagers, email, and secure phone lines) may be the only communication methods used to coordinate communication and to transfer large amounts of data efficiently.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Incident Facilities

Incident activities may be accomplished from a variety of facilities. Facilities will be established depending on the kind and complexity of the incident or event. It is important to know and understand the names and functions of the principal ICS facilities.

Only those facilities needed for any given incident will be activated. Some incidents may require facilities not included in the standard list.

Incident Facilities Virtual Tour

The standard ICS incident facilities include:

- **Incident Command Post (ICP):** Where the Incident Commander oversees the incident. Every incident or event will have an ICP.
- **Staging Areas:** Where resources are kept while waiting to be assigned.
- **Base:** Where primary service and support activities take place.
- **Camps:** Where resources may be kept.
- **Helibase/Helispot:** The area from which helicopter operations are conducted.

Only those facilities needed for any given incident will be activated.

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

Staging Areas are temporary locations at an incident where personnel and equipment are kept while waiting for tactical assignments. Staging Areas should be located close enough to the incident for a timely response, but far enough away to be out of the immediate impact zone. There may be more than one Staging Area at an incident. Each Staging Area will have a Staging Area Manager who reports to the Operations Section Chief or to the Incident Commander if an Operations Section has not been established.

A **Base** is the location from which primary service and support activities, such as feeding and resupply, are performed. Not all incidents will have a Base. There will be no more than one Base per incident.

A **Camp** is the location where resources may be kept to support incident operations if a Base is not accessible to all resources. Not all incidents will have Camps.

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

Helispots are more temporary facilities used for loading and unloading personnel and cargo. Large incidents may require more than one Helibase and several Helispots.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Common Responsibilities

You should now be familiar with the use of common terminology and the various types of incident facilities. In this section, you'll learn about your responsibilities.

The next screens review the **common responsibilities associated with ICS assignments**. You will receive additional training and guidance on your specific duties.

Your First ICS Deployment

Wondering what your first deployment will be like?

Dr. Bill Smith
USDA, Veterinary Services

"My tips would be follow, don't reinvent. Work within the ICS structure because it's proven to be successful and let it work for you. Don't get in there and say well, we don't do it this way, try it their way, you'll be surprised."

Dr. Carey Floyd
Oklahoma Department of Agriculture

"I would say be sure and, and take your notebook because you are going to want to take notes. Go with some questions in mind but be willing to spend some time to just sit back and watch what's going on."

Van Bateman
USDA, Forest Service

"Make sure you know exactly what your responsibility is, exactly what's expected of you. Make sure that whoever you are working for on that given day sits down and gives you a very complete briefing on what to expect that day and what you are going to be doing and where you are going to be doing it at."

General Guidelines – Lengthy Assignments

Many incidents last only a short time, and may not require travel. Other deployments may require a lengthy assignment away from home. Below are general guidelines for incidents requiring extended stays or travel:

- Assemble a travel kit containing any special technical information (e.g., maps, manuals, contact lists, and reference materials).
- Prepare personal items needed for your estimated length of stay, including medications, cash, credit cards, etc.
- Ensure that family members know your destination and how to contact you.
- Determine appropriate travel authorizations.
- Familiarize yourself with travel and pickup arrangements.
- Determine your return mode of transportation (if possible).
- Determine payroll procedures (at incident or through home agency).

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

General Guidelines—Roles and Authorities

In addition to preparing for your travel arrangements, it is important to understand your role and authorities.

- Review your emergency assignment. Know to whom you will report and what your responsibilities will be.
- Establish a clear understanding of your decisionmaking authority.
- Determine communications procedures for contacting your headquarters or home office (if necessary).
- Identify purchasing authority and procedures.
- Determine how food and lodging will be provided (incident, personal, and agency).

Actions Prior to Departure

Upon receiving an incident assignment, your deployment briefing should include, but may not be limited to, the following information:

- Incident type and name or designation
- Incident check-in location
- Specific assignment
- Reporting date and time
- Travel instructions
- Communications instructions
- Resource order number or request number (if applicable)
- Special support requirements (facilities, equipment transportation and off-loading, etc.)
- Travel authorization for air, rental car, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses

Check-In at the Incident: Activities

Check-in officially logs you in at the incident. The check-in process and information helps to:

- Ensure personnel accountability.
- Track resources.
- Prepare personnel for assignments and reassignments.
- Locate personnel in case of an emergency.
- Establish personnel time records and payroll documentation.
- Plan for releasing personnel.
- Organize the demobilization process.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Check-In at the Incident: Locations

Check in only once. Check-in locations may be found at several incident facilities, including:

- Incident Command Post (Resources Unit).
- Base or Camp(s).
- Staging Areas.
- Helibase.

Note that these locations may not all be activated at every incident. Check-in information is usually recorded on the ICS Form 211, Check-In List.

Common Responsibilities at the Incident

After check-in, locate your incident supervisor, and obtain your initial briefing. The briefing information helps you plan your tasks and communicate with others. Briefings received and given should include:

- Current situation assessment.
- Identification of your specific job responsibilities.
- Identification of coworkers.
- Location of work area.
- Identification of eating and sleeping arrangements, as appropriate.
- Procedural instructions for obtaining additional supplies, services, and personnel.
- Operational periods/work shifts.
- Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety procedures.

Incident Recordkeeping

All incidents require some form of recordkeeping. Requirements vary depending upon the agencies involved and the nature of the incident. Detailed information on using ICS forms will be covered in other training sessions, or may be found in the Forms Manual.

Below are general guidelines for incident recordkeeping:

- Print or type all entries.
- Enter dates by month/day/year format.
- Enter date and time on all forms and records.
- Fill in all blanks. Use N/A as appropriate.
- Use military 24-hour time.

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Communications Discipline

Important considerations related to communications include:

- Observing strict radio/telephone procedures.
- Using plain English in all communications. Codes should not be used in radio transmissions. Limit the use of discipline-specific jargon, especially on interdisciplinary incidents.
- Limiting radio and telephone traffic to essential information only. Plan what you are going to say.
- Following procedures for secure communications as required.

Incident Demobilization

Agency requirements for demobilization may vary considerably. General demobilization guidelines for all personnel are to:

- Complete all work assignments and required forms/reports.
- Brief replacements, subordinates, and supervisor.
- Follow incident and agency check-out procedures.
- Provide adequate followup contact information.
- Return any incident-issued equipment or other nonexpendable supplies.
- Complete postincident reports, critiques, and medical followup.
- Complete all payment and/or payroll issues or obligations.
- Report to assigned departure points on time or slightly ahead of schedule.
- Stay with your group until you arrive at your final destination (as appropriate).

Lesson Summary

You have completed the **ICS Features & Principles** lesson. This lesson addressed that:

- The ability to communicate within ICS is absolutely critical. Using standard or common terminology (clear text) is essential to ensuring efficient, clear communication.
- Incident facilities will be established depending on the kind and complexity of the incident or event. Only those facilities needed for any given incident will be activated.
- Common ICS responsibilities include preparing travel arrangements, understanding your role and authorities, the check-in process, incident recordkeeping, and preparing for demobilization.

You have now completed all of the ICS content lessons! When you are ready, you should proceed to the Course Summary and Posttest. To receive credit for the course, you must complete the posttest.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Lesson 5: Summary and Posttest

Summary and Posttest: Overview

This lesson provides a brief summary of the ICS 100 Course contents. After reviewing the summary information, you will then take the course posttest.

Completing this summary and the posttest should take approximately **25 minutes** to complete. **Remember, you must complete the posttest to receive credit for this course.**

The Incident Command System: Summary

ICS is:

- A proven management system based on successful business practices.
- The result of decades of lessons learned in the organization and management of emergency incidents.

This system represents organizational “best practices,” and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.

Goals of ICS

Designers of the system recognized early that ICS must be interdisciplinary and organizationally **flexible** to meet the following management challenges:

- Meet the needs of incidents of any kind or size.
- Be usable for routine or planned events such as conferences, as well as large and complex emergency incidents.
- Allow personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Provide logistical and administrative support to ensure that operational staff, such as entomologists or veterinarians, can meet tactical objectives.
- Be cost effective by avoiding duplication of efforts.

ICS has been tested in more than 30 years of emergency and nonemergency applications, by all levels of government and in the private sector.

ICS Applications

Applications for the use of ICS have included:

- Routine or planned events (e.g., celebrations, parades, and concerts).
- Fires, hazardous materials, and multicasualty incidents.
- Multijurisdiction and multiagency disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and winter storms.
- Search and rescue missions.
- Biological pest eradication programs.
- Biological outbreaks and disease containment.
- Acts of terrorism.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Five Major Management Functions: Summary

The five major management functions are:

- **Command:** Sets incident objectives and priorities and has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
- **Operations:** Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan. Develops the tactical assignments and organization, and directs all tactical resources.
- **Planning:** Prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan to accomplish the incident objectives, collects and evaluates information, maintains resource status, and maintains documentation for incident records.
- **Logistics:** Provides support to meet incident needs. Provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident.
- **Finance/Administration:** Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

Maintaining Span of Control: Summary

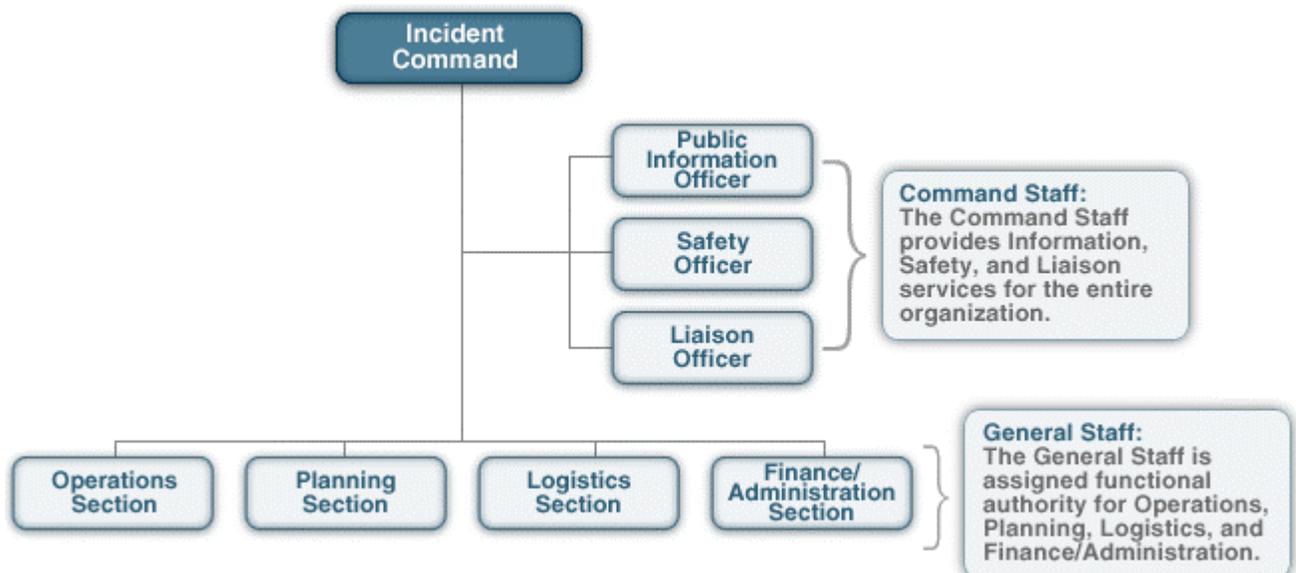
Maintaining adequate span of control throughout the ICS organization is very important.

Effective span of control on incidents may vary from three to seven, and **a ratio of one supervisor to five reporting elements is recommended.**

If the number of reporting elements falls outside of these ranges, expansion or consolidation of the organization may be necessary. There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.

Expanding the Organization: Summary

As incidents grow, the Incident Commander may delegate authority for performance of certain activities to the Command Staff and General Staff.



ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Expanding the Organization: Summary

The Command Staff include:

- **Public Information Officer:** Serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders including the media, or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event.
- **Safety Officer:** Monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel.
- **Liaison Officer:** Serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assigned to an incident.

The General Staff include:

Operations Section Chief

The Operations function is where the tactical fieldwork is done, and most incident resources are assigned to it. 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.

Planning Section Chief

The major activities of the Planning Section may include:

- Collecting, evaluating, and displaying intelligence and information about the incident.
- 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.

Logistics Section Chief

The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs of an incident, 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.

Finance/Administration Section Chief

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.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Communications: Summary

Every incident requires a Communications Plan.

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

Common Terminology

ICS requires the use of common terminology, meaning standard titles for facilities and positions within the organization. Common terminology also includes the use of “clear text”—that is, communication without the use of agency-specific codes or jargon. **In other words, use plain English.**

- Common Terminology: “APHIS Branch, this is PPQ ID 1, we have completed our assignment.”
- Uncommon Terminology: “APHIS Branch, this is PPQ ID 1, we are 10-24.”

Integrated Communications

Every incident requires a Communications Plan. Communications includes:

- The “hardware” systems that transfer information.
- Planning for the use of all available communications frequencies and resources.
- The procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.

Standard Incident Facilities: Summary

The standard ICS incident facilities include:

- **Incident Command Post:** Where the Incident Commander oversees the incident response.
- **Staging Areas:** Where resources are kept while waiting to be assigned.
- **Base:** Where primary service and support activities take place.
- **Camps:** Where resources may be kept.
- **Helibase/Helispot:** The area from which helicopter operations are conducted.

Common Responsibilities: Summary

Common responsibilities associated with Incident Command System assignments include:

- Preparing for extended stay or out-of-jurisdiction travel.
- Understanding your role and authorities.
- Checking in at the incident.
- Locating your incident supervisor and obtaining your initial briefing.
- Keeping appropriate records.
- Following procedures for secure communications as required.
- Understanding your requirements for demobilization.

ICS 100 – Incident Command System

Taking the Posttest

You should now be ready to take the ICS 100 posttest. The purpose of the test is to make sure that you have learned the course content. The posttest includes 25 multiple-choice items. To receive credit for this course, you must correctly answer 70% of the questions.

Tips for Taking the Posttest

- Review the printable version of this course. You may refer to your notes and materials printed from this course.
- When you are ready, begin the test by reading the directions carefully.
- Read each question and then review ALL possible answers before selecting one. Do **NOT** click on the first answer that looks good! Click on the single best answer from the options presented.
- Answer every test item. If you do not know the answer, review your reference materials.
- Review your work. Before clicking on the Submit button, check your answers.