

## **ICS-200: Applying ICS to Healthcare Organizations**

### **Lesson 2: ICS and the Emergency Management Program**

#### **Lesson Overview**

The **ICS and Emergency Management Program** lesson explains how ICS is incorporated within the overall emergency management program.

#### **Lesson 2 Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe what is meant by the term comprehensive emergency management program.
- Explain the relationship of ICS to the overall emergency management program.
- Provide an overview of the ICS implementation process.
- Describe how ICS uses management by objectives.

#### **Comprehensive Emergency Management**

The concept, Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM), was developed by the National Governor's Association and was a founding principle for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) when it was created in 1979. CEM defined four phases that apply to all hazards: mitigation (including prevention), preparedness, response, and recovery. Mitigation activities are those that eliminate or reduce the impact of hazards; preparedness activities build the capabilities of an organization or a jurisdiction to respond and recover from the impacts of those hazards; response activities gain control over the on-going negative effects of the hazards; and, recovery activities return the organization or jurisdiction back to its pre-disaster condition.

ICS is used to manage the response and recovery activities.

#### **The Integrated Emergency Management System**

The Integrated Emergency Management System, or IEMS, was created by FEMA in 1983 to explain how comprehensive emergency management programs are developed. IEMS provided two key directions:

- Emergency management program development occurs through a multi-year development process.
- Emergency Operations Plans should be based on functions, not hazards or agencies.

IEMS articulated a framework of steps that can be used to develop emergency management programs. They are:

- Hazards Vulnerability Analysis.

- Capability Assessment.
- Emergency Operations Planning.
- Capability Maintenance.
- Mitigation Efforts.
- Emergency Operations or Exercises.
- Evaluation.
- Capability Shortfall or Gap Analysis.
- Multi-year Development Planning.
- Annual Development Increment and Work Plan (which leads back to Capability Assessment).

## Emergency Operations Plans

IEMS called for Emergency Operations Plans based on functions, not hazards or agencies. This was a significant shift in thinking and is a practice still in use today. The National Response Plan, as well as most State and local jurisdiction emergency plans, are written in this “all hazards” format. There are at least three sections to an Emergency Operations Plan:

- **Basic Plan.** The Basic Plan provides an overview of how the organization or jurisdiction will organize and coordinate response and recovery activities. The use of the Incident Command System would be discussed in this document.
- **Functional Annexes.** The Functional Annexes, also known as Emergency Support Functions, explain how particular functions will be organized and implemented. Some organizations use the functional areas of the Incident Command System (Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration) as the basis for the functional annexes.
- **Incident-Specific Appendices.** These documents include short, concise guidance on how to recognize and initiate a response to the priority hazards identified through the organization's Hazards Vulnerability Analysis. This guidance would include initiating an ICS organization and the incident action planning process.

## Emergency Management Programs for Healthcare Organizations

In January 2001, the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) updated the emergency management standards for hospitals and since then, has extended them to all care settings. Other standards organizations, including the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) have advocated the use of an all-hazards, comprehensive emergency management approach and have advocated use of an Incident Command System consistent with that used by the local community.

## ICS Management Process

The organization's Emergency Operations Plan, with ICS incorporated, is used to manage the demands generated by the threat or impact of a hazard, such as severe weather, a violent criminal act, or an unintentional accident. Disaster researchers have identified two separate sets of demands that occur during emergencies:

- Agent-generated demands, or those caused by the particular hazard, such as deaths and injuries, evacuation, and mass care.
- Response-generated demands, or those created within and between the organizations as they respond to the impacts of the hazard. Response-generated demands include coordination, exercise of authority, and communications.

In almost every After Action Report, you will see problems with response-generated demands. Broader application of the Incident Command System by all of the organizations involved in emergency response should help resolve these problems.

The “lifecycle” of an Incident includes a number of stages, such as:

- **Event recognition**, or the point in time when the organization becomes aware of a significant event occurring.
- **Notifications** of key staff and the decision to activate the Emergency Operations Plan / Incident Command System.
- **Mobilization** and assignment of staff for the initial ICS organization.
- **Incident operations**, managed through the ICS organization and incident action planning process.
- **Demobilization** of some or all of the ICS organization to meet the existing and projected requirements.
- **Transition to long-term recovery** activities, and returning to the day-to-day organizational structure.
- **Return-to-readiness** activities including post-incident critique, debriefing, after action review, and corrective action.

During the mobilization stage of incident response, the initial ICS organization takes shape, based on the type of incident. For many healthcare organizations, this is a pre-designated level of staffing derived from the **Incident-Specific Guidance** that was developed for that particular hazard. At this point, the organization is reacting to the incident.

The main focus of the ICS management process is to get in a position to proactively manage the incident response and recovery. This is accomplished through the incident action planning process.

### **Initial Response: Conduct a Situation Assessment**

One of the first tasks for the initial Incident Commander is to conduct a situation assessment. This is necessary in order to set objectives for the immediate time period. An initial assessment would include:

- The type of incident, its location, magnitude, and expected duration.
- Any on-going hazards and safety concerns, including entrance and exit routes for responders.
- Determining the initial priorities, categorized as follows:
  - **First Priority:** Life Saving.
  - **Second Priority:** Incident Stabilization.

- **Third Priority:** Property Preservation.
- A location for the Incident Command Post.

### ICS Uses “Management by Objectives”

The initial Incident Commander sets **objectives** for the immediate period of time (e.g. first several hours). If it appears that the incident will last longer than this, the initial Incident Commander will establish the future **operational period**.

**Operational periods** are timeframes within which objectives are established that guide response and recovery activities. Operational periods are not always associated with shift length, and can be 8-, 12-, or 24-hours in length.

The incident action planning process uses management by objectives. This process includes:

- Setting the operational period.
- Determining overall priorities.
- Establishing specific, measurable, and attainable objectives.
- Selecting the most effective strategies and tactics to accomplish the objectives.
- Identifying the resource requirements needed to carry out the tactics.
- Developing and issuing assignments.
- Directing, monitoring, and evaluating response efforts in order to adjust strategies, objectives, and assignments for the next operational period.
- Documenting results to facilitate corrective action.

### Effective Incident Objectives

For full effectiveness, incident objectives must be:

- Specific and state what is to be accomplished.
- Measurable and include a standard and timeframe.
- Attainable and reasonable.
- In accordance with the Incident Commander's authorities.
- Evaluated to determine effectiveness of strategies and tactics.

### Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Incident Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics are three fundamental pieces of a successful incident response.

- **Incident Objectives** state what will be accomplished.
- **Strategies** establish the general plan or direction for accomplishing the incident objectives.
- **Tactics** specify how the strategies will be executed.

The Incident Commander is responsible for establishing objectives and selecting strategies. The Operations Section, if it is established, is responsible for determining appropriate tactics for an incident.

### **Elements of an Incident Action Plan**

An IAP covers an operational period and includes:

- What must be done.
- Who is responsible.
- How information will be communicated.
- What should be done if someone is injured.

The operational period is the period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of tactical actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. The exact length of an operational period is set by the Incident Commander, based on the incident.

### **Lesson Review**

You have completed the **ICS and the Emergency Management Program** lesson. You should now be able to understand:

- The relationship of ICS to the organization's emergency management program.
- How ICS is integrated into the structure of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).
- The lifecycle of incident response and recovery.
- The incident action planning process.
- How ICS is implemented during the initial response.

The next lesson will discuss functional areas and positions.