# APPENDIX B: INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

## A. PURPOSE

Appendix B provides additional explanation and examples relating to the Incident Command System (ICS); this appendix, however, is not a substitute for ICS training.

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

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

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

## B. ORGANIZATION OF THIS APPENDIX

The major elements of ICS are organized into the following 10 tabs:

- Tab 1—ICS Organization
- Tab 2—The Operations Section
- Tab 3—The Planning Section
- Tab 4—The Logistics Section
- Tab 5—The Finance/Administration Section
- Tab 6—Establishing an Area Command
- Tab 7—Facilities and Locations
- Tab 8—The Planning Process and the IAP
- Tab 9—ICS Forms
- Tab 10—Summary of Major ICS Positions

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# TAB 1—ICS ORGANIZATION

## A. FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

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

## B. MODULAR EXPANSION

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

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

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

The primary reasons to designate a Deputy IC are:

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

Assistants are used as subordinates to the Command Staff, which includes the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They have a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions.
The modular concept described above is based on the following considerations:

- Developing the organization's structure to match the function or task to be performed.
- Staffing only the functional elements required to perform the task.
- Implementing recommended span-of-control guidelines.

- Performing the function of any nonactivated organizational element at the next highest level.
- Deactivating organizational elements no longer required.

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

**Table B-1. ICS Organization**

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

## 1. COMMAND STAFF

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

### a. Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The Public Information Officer assembles accurate, accessible, and complete information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; the resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external audiences. The Public Information Officer may also perform a key public information-monitoring role, such as implementing measures for rumor control. Whether the command structure is single or unified, only one Public Information Officer should be designated per incident. Assistants may be assigned from other involved departments or agencies. The IC must approve the release of all incident-related information. In large-scale incidents or where multiple command posts are established, the

Public Information Officer should participate in or lead the Joint Information Center in order to ensure consistency in the provision of information to the public.

## b. Safety Officer

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

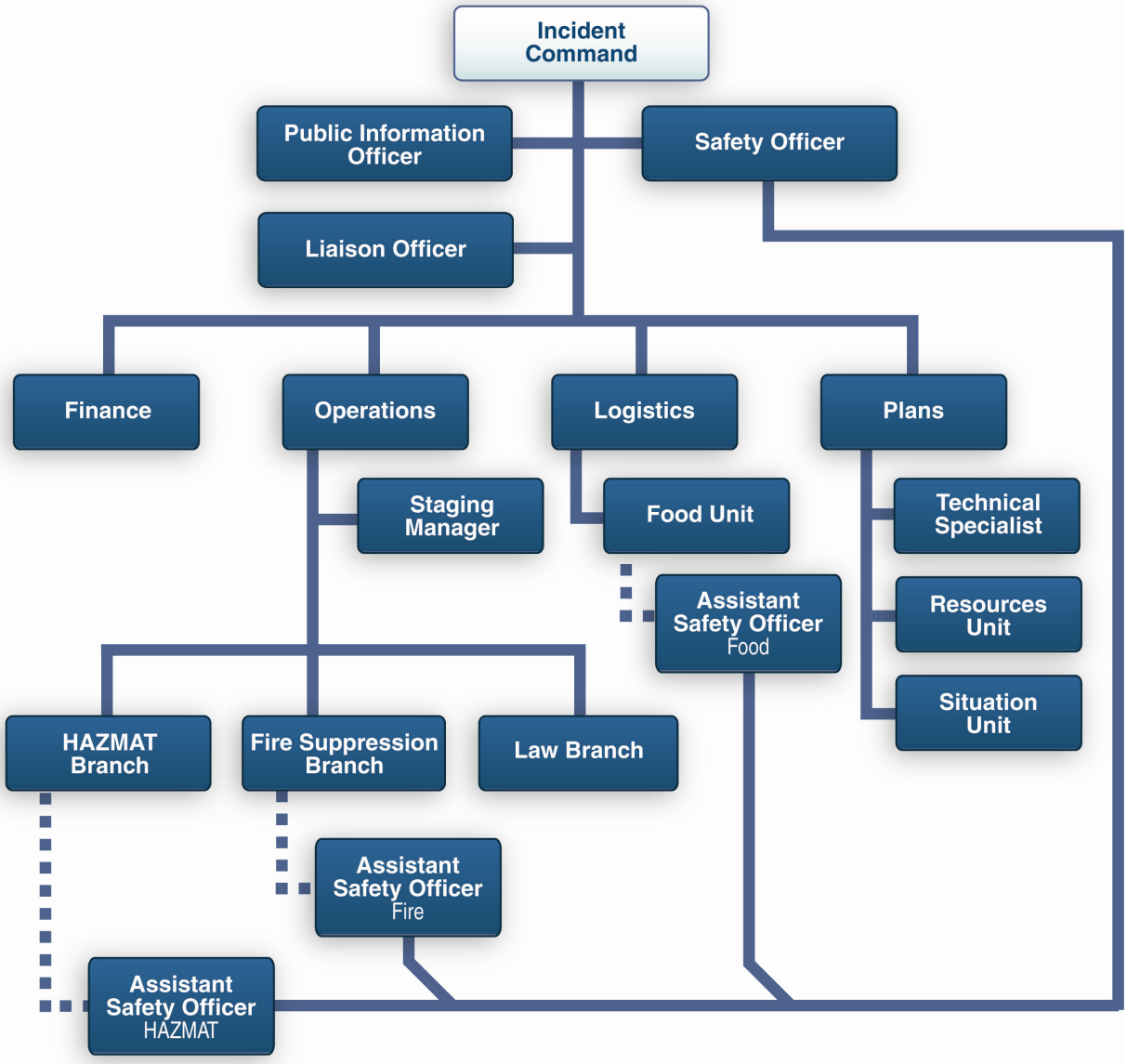
In a UC structure, a single Safety Officer should be designated regardless of the involvement of multiple jurisdictions or functional agencies. The Safety Officer, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, and Logistics Section Chief must coordinate closely regarding operational safety and emergency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

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

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

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

**Figure B-1. Example of the Role of Safety Officer and Assistant Safety Officers in ICS in a Multibranch Incident**




The dotted-line connections represent coordination and communication between the two points, not necessarily a direct link within the chain of command.

## c. Liaison Officer

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

## d. Additional Command Staff

Additional Command Staff positions may also be necessary depending on the nature and location(s) of the incident, or specific requirements established by Incident Command. For example, a legal counsel may be assigned to the Planning Section as a technical specialist or directly to the Command Staff to advise Incident Command on legal matters, such as emergency proclamations, legality of evacuation orders, isolation and quarantine, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access. Similarly, a medical advisor may be designated and assigned directly to the Command Staff to provide advice and recommendations to Incident Command in the context of incidents involving medical and mental health services, mass casualty response, acute care, vector control, epidemiology, or mass prophylaxis considerations, particularly in the response to a bioterrorism incident.

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# TAB 2—THE OPERATIONS SECTION

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

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

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

## A. OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF

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

## B. BRANCHES

Branches may be established to meet several challenges:

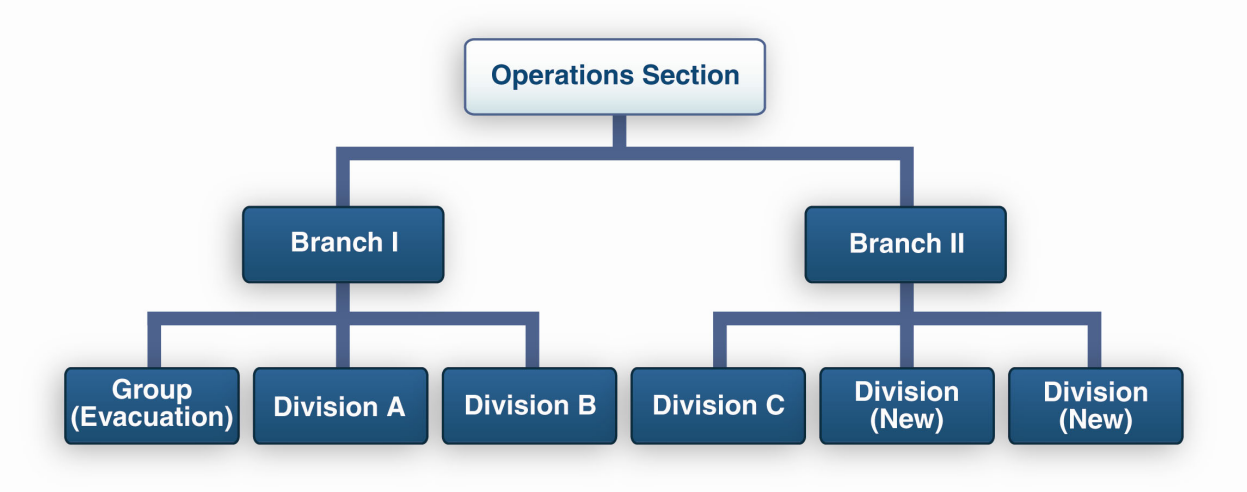
### 1. Maintaining Recommended Span of Control for the Operations Section Chief

The recommended span of control for the Operations Section Chief is 1:5—as for all managers and supervisory personnel—or as high as 1:10 for larger scale law enforcement operations. When this is exceeded, the Operations Section Chief should set up two Branches (see Figure B-2), allocating the Divisions and Groups between them. For

example, if one Group and four Divisions are reporting to the Operations Section Chief, and two Divisions and one Group are to be added, a two-Branch organization may be formed.

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

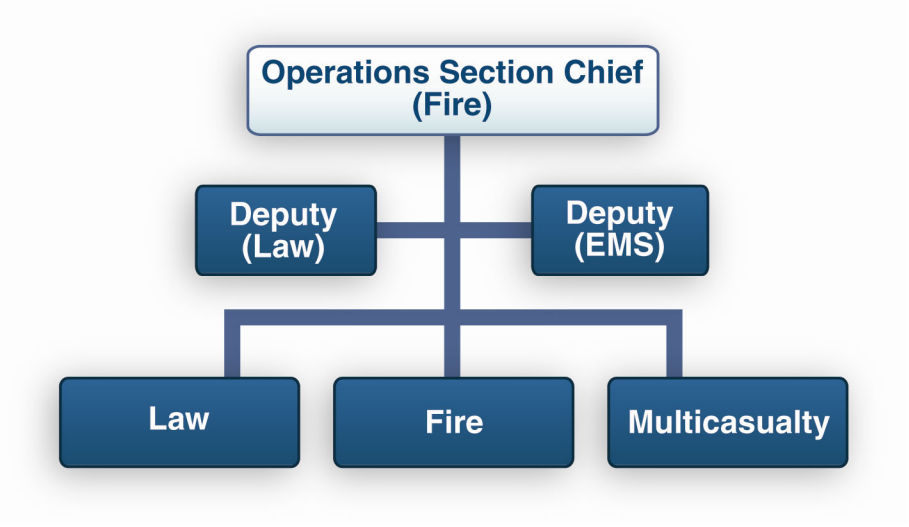
**Figure B-2. Geographic Branch Organization**




## 2. Incident Calls for a Functional Branch Structure

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

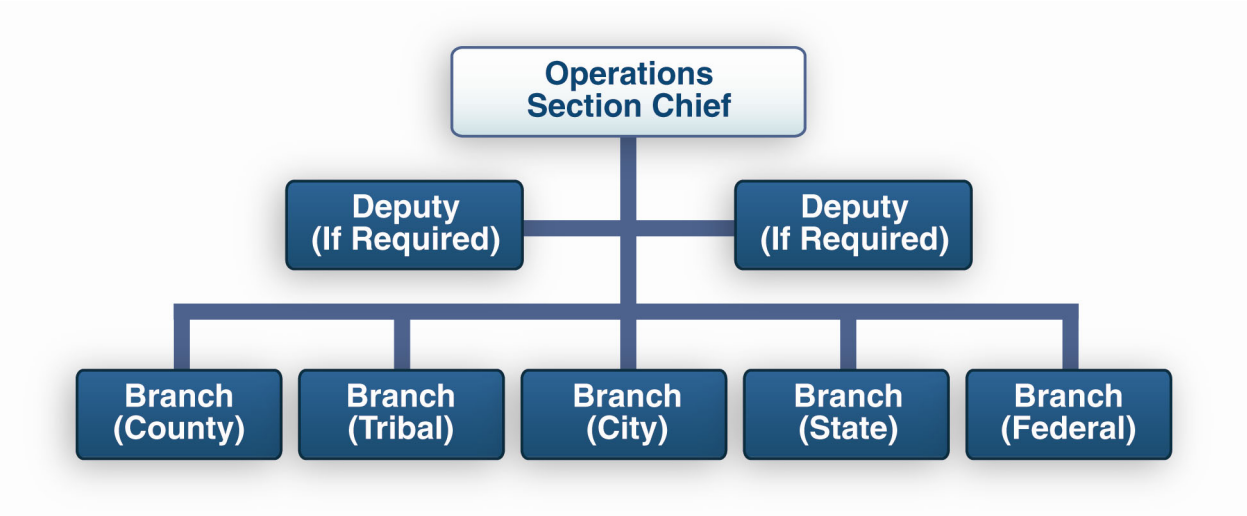
**Figure B-3. Deputy Operations With Functional Branch Structure**




### 3. Incident Calls for a Multijurisdictional Branch Structure

The response to a major flood might require combining Federal, State, tribal, and local resources. In this case, resources are best managed under the agencies that normally control them, creating a multijurisdictional Branch structure, as illustrated in Figure B-4.

**Figure B-4. Multijurisdictional Incident**




## C. Divisions and Groups

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

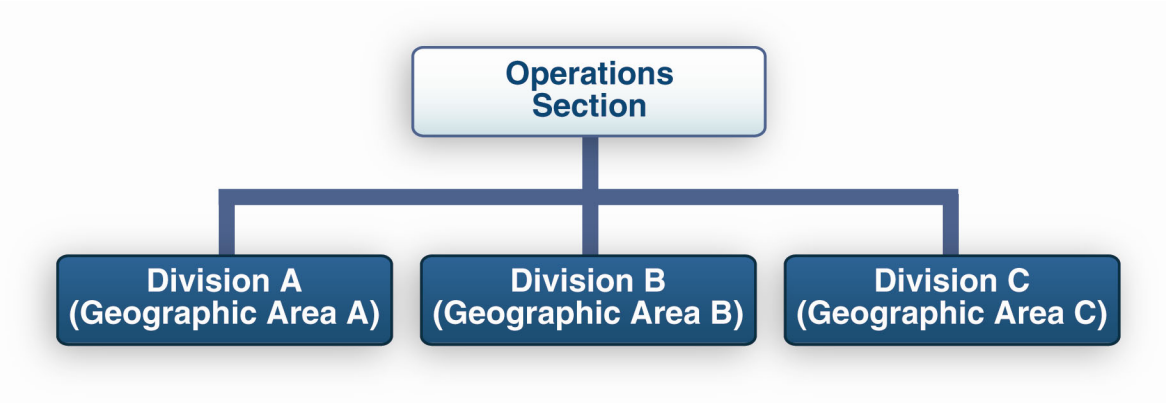
The use of the two terms is necessary, because *Division* always refers to a geographical assignment and *Group* always refers to a functional assignment. Both Divisions and Groups may be used in a single incident. Maintaining proper coordination is vital to the success of these operations.

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

## 1. Geographical Divisions

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

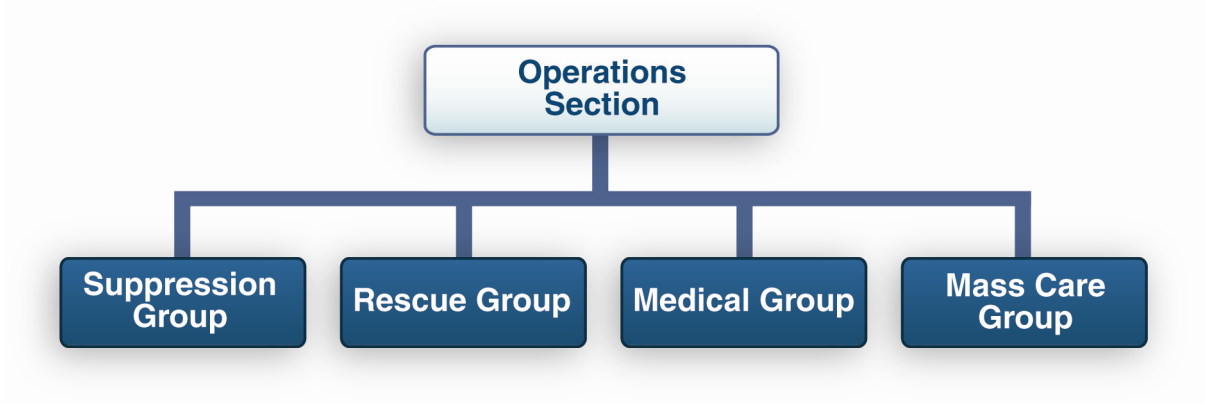
**Figure B-5. Use of Geographical Divisions**




## 2. Functional Groups

Functional Groups can be used to describe areas of like activity (e.g., rescue, evacuation, or medical), as shown in Figure B-6.

**Figure B-6. Use of Functional Groups**



### 3. Combined Geographical Divisions and Functional Groups

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

## D. Resource Organization

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

### 1. Single Resources

Resources may be employed on a single basis, such as individual personnel, equipment, and any associated operators. This is typically the case in the context of the initial response to the incident.

### 2. Task Forces

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

### 3. Strike Teams

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

## E. Air Operations Branch

The Operations Section Chief may establish an Air Operations Branch and designate its director, when the complexity of air operations requires additional support and effort or when the incident requires mixing tactical and logistical utilization of helicopters and other

aircraft. Aviation safety is a paramount concern in complex operations, and a designated Air Operations Branch ensures the safe and efficient use of aviation resources. Figure B-7 shows a typical organizational structure for air operations.

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

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

**Figure B-7. Air Operations Organization**

# TAB 3—THE PLANNING SECTION

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

## A. PLANNING SECTION CHIEF

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

## B. RESOURCES UNIT

### 1. Responsibilities

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

### 2. Resource Status

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

#### a. Status Conditions

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

- ***Assigned:*** Resources that are checked in and are cleared to work on an incident.
- ***Available:*** Personnel, teams, equipment, or facilities that have been assigned to an incident and are ready for a specific work detail or function.
- ***Out of Service:*** Assigned resources that are unable to function for mechanical, personal, or health reasons.

### b. Changes in Status

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

## C. Situation Unit

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

## D. Documentation Unit

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

## E. Demobilization Unit

The Demobilization Unit develops an Incident Demobilization Plan that includes specific instructions for all personnel and resources that will require demobilization. This Unit should begin its work early in the incident, creating rosters of personnel and resources, and obtaining any missing information as check-in proceeds. Note that many city- and county-provided resources are local, and as such do not require specific demobilization instructions. Once the Incident Demobilization Plan has been approved, the Demobilization Unit ensures that it is distributed both at the incident and elsewhere as necessary.

# F. Technical Specialists

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

Technical specialists are most often assigned to the specific area (Section, Branch, Unit, Division, etc.) where their services are needed and performed. In some situations they may be assigned to a separate Unit within the Planning Section, much like a talent pool, and assigned out to various jobs on a temporary basis. For example, a tactical specialist may be sent to the Operations Section to assist with tactical matters, a financial specialist may be sent to the Finance/Administration Section to assist with fiscal matters, or a legal specialist or legal counsel may be assigned directly to the Command Staff to advise the IC/UC on legal matters, such as emergency proclamations, legality of evacuation orders, isolation and quarantine, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access. Generally, if the expertise is needed for only a short period and involves only one individual, that individual should be assigned to the Situation Unit. If the expertise will be required on a long-term basis and requires several persons, it is advisable to establish a separate Technical Unit in the Planning Section.

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

**Examples of Technical Specialists**

- Agricultural specialist
- Chemical or radiological decontamination specialist
- Communication specialist
- Cultural resource specialist
- Data management specialist
- Emergency medical services specialist
- Environmental impact specialist
- Epidemiologist
- Explosives specialist
- Faith community representative
- Firefighter specialist
- Flood control specialist
- Forensic pathologist
- Hazardous materials technician
- Homeland security specialist
- Industrial hygienist
- Intelligence specialist
- Law enforcement specialist
- Legal counsel
- Mass care specialist
- Meteorologist
- Military specialist
- Mortuary affairs specialist
- Numerical modeler
- Occupational safety and health specialist
- Pharmacist
- Public health specialist
- Public relations specialist
- Radiation health specialist
- Records management specialist
- Resource/cost specialist
- Scientific support coordinator
- Special needs advisor
- Structural engineering specialist
- Toxicologist
- Transportation specialist
- Veterinarian
- Waste management specialist
- Water-use specialist

Tasks accomplished by the Environmental Unit might include the following:

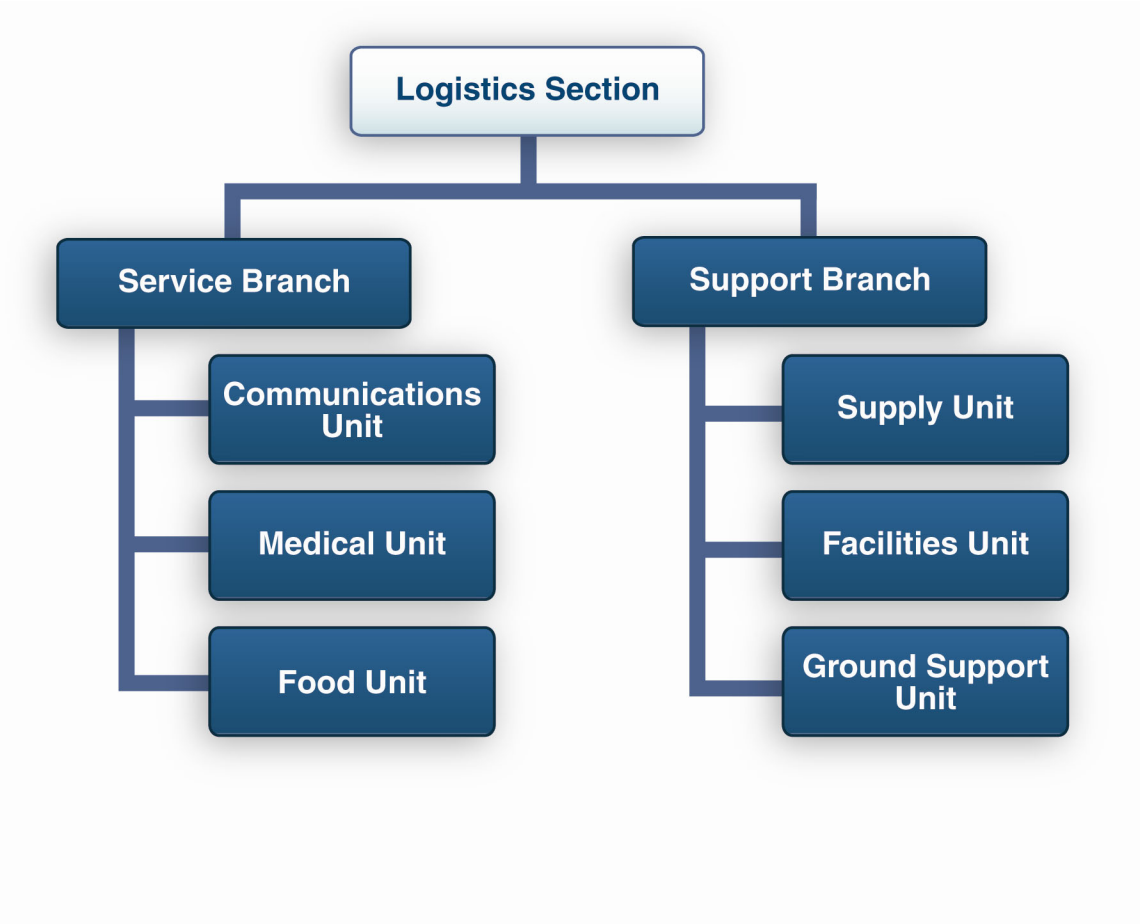
- Identifying sensitive areas and recommending response priorities.
- Developing a plan for collecting, transporting, and analyzing samples.
- Providing input on wildlife protection strategies.
- Determining the extent and effects of site contamination.
- Developing site cleanup and hazardous material disposal plans.
- Identifying the need for and obtaining permits and other authorizations.

# TAB 4—THE LOGISTICS SECTION

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

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

**Figure B-8. Logistics Section With Branch Organizational Structure**



## A. Supply Unit

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

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

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

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

## B. Facilities Unit

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

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

- Food and hydration service.
- Sleeping.
- Sanitation and showers.
- Staging.

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

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

## C. Ground Support Unit

The Ground Support Unit:

- Maintains and repairs primary tactical vehicles and mobile ground support equipment.
- Records usage time for all ground equipment (including contract equipment) assigned to the incident.
- Supplies fuel for all mobile equipment.
- Provides transportation in support of incident operations (except aircraft).
- Develops and implements the incident Traffic Plan.

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

## D. COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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

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

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

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

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

Most complex incidents will require a Communications Plan. The Communications Unit is responsible for planning the use of radio frequencies; establishing networks for command, tactical, support, and air units; setting up on-scene telephone and public address equipment; and providing any required off-incident communication links. Codes should not be used for radio communication. A clear spoken message—based on common terminology that avoids misunderstanding in complex and noisy situations—reduces the chances for error. The use of common terminology allows emergency management/response personnel to communicate clearly with one another and effectively coordinate activities, no matter the size, scope, location, or complexity of the incident.

Radio networks for large incidents may be organized as follows:

### 1. Command Net

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

### 2. Tactical Nets

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

### 3. Support Net

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

### 4. Air-to-Ground Net

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

### 5. Air-to-Air Nets

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

## E. Food Unit

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

Efficient food service is important, but it is especially important for any extended incident. The Food Unit must be able to anticipate incident needs, such as the number of people who will need to be fed and whether the type, location, or complexity of the incident predicates special food requirements. The Unit must supply food needs for the entire incident, including all remote locations (e.g., Camps and Staging Areas), and also supply food service to operations personnel who are unable to leave their assignments.

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

The Food Unit must interact closely with the following elements:

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

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

## F. Medical Unit

The Medical Unit is responsible for the effective and efficient provision of medical services to incident personnel, and reports directly to the Logistics Section Chief. The primary responsibilities of the Medical Unit include the following:

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

- Develop procedures for handling any major medical emergency involving incident personnel.
- Develop the Incident Medical Plan (for incident personnel).
- Provide continuity of medical care, including vaccinations, vector control, occupational health, prophylaxis, and mental health services for incident personnel.
- Provide transportation for injured incident personnel.
- Coordinate and establish the routine rest and rehabilitation of incident responders.
- Ensure that injured incident personnel are tracked as they move from their origin to a care facility and from there to final disposition.
- Assist in processing all paperwork related to injuries or deaths of incident-assigned personnel.
- Coordinate personnel and mortuary affairs for incident personnel fatalities.

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

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# TAB 5—THE FINANCE/ ADMINISTRATION SECTION

A Finance/Administration Section is established when there is a specific need for financial and/or administrative services to support incident management activities. Large or evolving scenarios involve significant funding originating from multiple sources. In addition to monitoring multiple sources of funds, the Section Chief must track and report to the IC/UC the accrued cost as the incident progresses. This allows the IC/UC to forecast the need for additional funds before operations are affected negatively, and it is particularly important if significant operational resources are under contract from the private sector.

**While the functions of Finance/Administration are critical components of effective command and management, components of the Finance/Administration Section are not necessarily staffed on the incident scene. Wireless communications systems enable some of the Finance/Administration functions to be performed away from the incident scene, typically in the workstations where these functions would customarily be performed.**

The Section Chief may also need to monitor expenditures to ensure that applicable statutory rules are met. Close coordination with the Planning and Logistics Sections is essential so that operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

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

## A. TIME UNIT

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

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

## B. PROCUREMENT UNIT

The Procurement Unit administers all financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts. This Unit coordinates with local jurisdictions to identify sources for equipment, prepares and signs equipment rental agreements, and processes all administrative requirements associated with equipment rental and supply contracts. In some cases, the Supply Unit in

the Logistics Section will be responsible for certain procurement activities. The Procurement Unit will also work closely with local cost authorities.

## C. Compensation and Claims Unit

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

## D. Cost Unit

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

# TAB 6—ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND

As described in the Command and Management component, the purpose of an Area Command is either to oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by a separate ICS organization or to oversee the management of a very large or evolving incident that has multiple Incident Management Teams (IMTs) engaged.

## A. RESPONSIBILITIES

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

- Develops broad objectives for the impacted area(s).
- Coordinates the development of individual incident objectives and strategies.
- (Re)allocates resources as the established priorities change.
- Ensures that incidents are properly managed.
- Ensures effective communications.
- Ensures that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policies.
- Identifies critical resource needs and reports them to the established EOCs/Multiagency Coordination Groups.
- Ensures that short-term "emergency" recovery is coordinated to assist in the transition to full recovery operations.

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

## B. ORGANIZATION

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

### 1. Area Commander (Unified Area Command)

The Area Commander is responsible for the overall direction of the IMTs assigned. This responsibility includes ensuring that conflicts are resolved, incident objectives established, and strategies selected for the use of critical resources. The Area Commander is also responsible for coordinating with Federal, State, tribal, and local departments and agencies, as well as NGOs and the private sector.

### 2. Assistant Area Commander–Logistics

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

### 3. Assistant Area Commander–Planning

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

### 4. Area Command Aviation Coordinator

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

### 5. Area Command Support Positions

The following Area Command positions are activated as necessary:

- ***Resources Unit Leader:*** Tracks and maintains the status and availability of critical resources assigned to each incident under the Assistant Area Commander–Planning.
- ***Situation Unit Leader:*** Monitors the status of objectives for each incident or IMT assigned to the Assistant Area Commander–Planning.
- ***Public Information Officer:*** Provides coordination between incident locations and serves as the point of contact for media requests to the Area Command.
- ***Liaison Officer:*** Helps maintain off-incident interagency contacts and coordination.

## C. Location

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

- To the extent possible, the Area Command should be established in close proximity to the incidents under its authority. This makes it easier for the Area Commander and the ICs to meet and otherwise interact.

- It is, however, best not to co-locate an Area Command with any individual ICP. Doing so might cause confusion with the Command and Management activities associated with that particular incident.

- Area Commands must establish effective, efficient communications, coordination processes, and protocols with subordinate ICs, as well as with other incident management organizations involved in incident operations.

- The facility used to house the organization should be large enough to accommodate a full Area Command staff. It should also be able to accommodate meetings

between the Area Command staff, the ICs, and Agency Administrators/Executives as well as news media representatives.

## D. Reporting Relationships

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

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

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# TAB 7—FACILITIES AND LOCATIONS

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

## A. INCIDENT COMMAND POST

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

## B. INCIDENT BASE

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

## C. CAMPS

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

## D. STAGING AREAS

Staging Areas are established for the temporary location of available resources. Staging Areas will be established by the Operations Section Chief to enable positioning of and accounting for resources not immediately assigned. A Staging Area can be any location in which personnel, supplies, and equipment can be temporarily housed or parked while awaiting operational assignment. Staging Areas may include temporary feeding, fueling, and sanitation services. The Operations Section Chief assigns a manager for each Staging Area, who checks in all incoming resources, dispatches resources at the Operations Section Chief's request, and requests Logistics Section support, as necessary, for resources located in the Staging Area.

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# TAB 8—THE PLANNING PROCESS AND THE IAP

## A. OVERVIEW

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

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

- Current information that accurately describes the incident situation and resource status.
- Predictions of the probable course of events.
- Alternative strategies to attain critical incident objectives.
- An accurate, realistic IAP for the next operational period.

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

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

The primary phases of the planning process are essentially the same for the IC who develops the initial plan, for the IC and Operations Section Chief revising the initial plan for extended operations, and for the IMT developing a formal IAP. During the initial stages of incident management, planners should develop a simple plan that can be communicated through concise oral briefings. Frequently, this plan must be developed very quickly and with incomplete situation information. As the incident management effort evolves, additional lead time, staff, information systems, and technologies enable more detailed planning and cataloging of events and lessons learned.

The five primary phases in the planning process are:

## 1. Understand the Situation

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

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

## 2. Establish Incident Objectives and Strategy

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

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

## 3. Develop the Plan

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

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

## 4. Prepare and Disseminate the Plan

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

## 5. Execute, Evaluate, and Revise the Plan

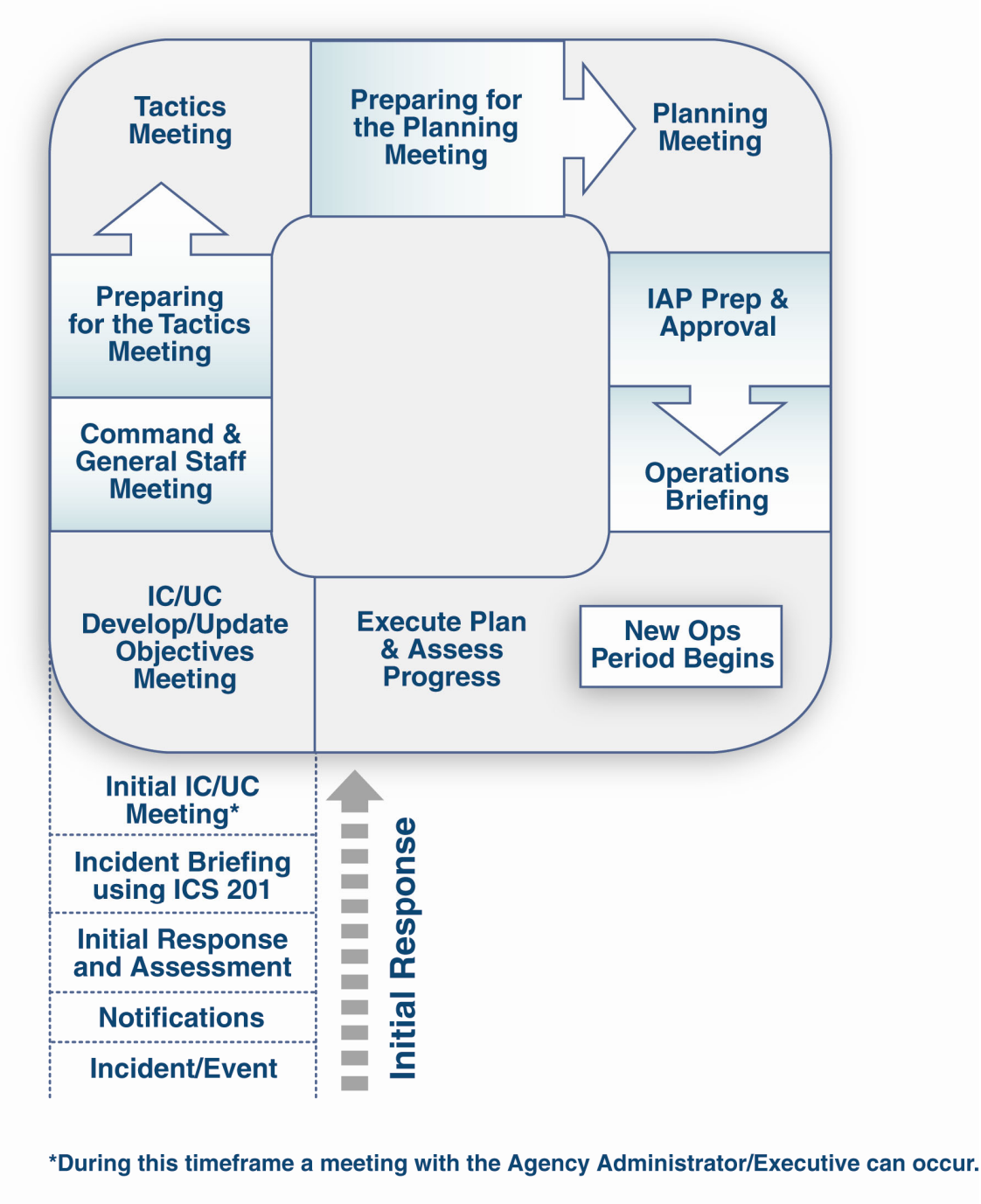
The planning process includes the requirement to execute and evaluate planned activities and check the accuracy of information to be used in planning for subsequent operational periods. The General Staff should regularly compare planned progress with actual progress. When deviations occur and when new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

# B. Responsibilities and Specific Planning Activities

## 1. Operational Period Planning Cycle

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

**Figure B-9. Operational Period Planning Cycle**



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

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

- Evaluate the current situation and decide whether the current planning is adequate for the remainder of the operational period (i.e., until the next plan takes effect).
- Advise the IC and the Operations Section Chief of any suggested revisions to the current plan, as necessary.
- Establish a planning cycle for the incident.
- When requested, participate in the Objectives Meeting to contribute to the development/update of incident objectives and strategies. The task of developing incident objectives and strategies is often the sole responsibility of the IC/UC.
- Participate in the Tactics Meeting, if held, to review the tactics developed by the Operations Section Chief.
- Determine Planning Meeting attendees in consultation with the IC. For major incidents, attendees should include the following:
  - Incident Commander.
  - Command Staff members.
  - General Staff members.
  - Resources Unit Leader.
  - Situation Unit Leader.
  - Air Operations Branch Director (if established).
  - Communications Unit Leader.
  - Technical specialists (as required).
  - Agency Representatives (as required).
- Establish the location and time for the Planning Meeting.
- Ensure that planning boards and forms are available.
- Notify necessary support staff about the meeting and their assignments.
- Ensure that a current situation and resource briefing will be available for the meeting.
- Obtain an estimate of resource availability for use in planning for the next operational period.
- Obtain necessary agency policy, legal, or fiscal constraints for use in the Planning Meeting.

## 3. Conducting the Planning Meeting

The Planning Meeting is normally conducted by the Planning Section Chief. The sequence of steps that follows is intended to aid the Planning Section Chief in developing the IAP. The planning steps are used with the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215).

### a. Give a briefing on situation, resource status, and incident potential

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

- Initial Incident Commander.
- Incident Briefing (ICS 201).
- Field observations.
- Operations reports.
- Regional resources and situation reports.

### b. Set/Review established objectives

The IC/UC is responsible for this step. The incident objectives are not limited to any single operational period but will consider the total incident situation. The IC/UC establishes the general strategy to be used, states any major constraints (policy, legal, or fiscal) on accomplishing the objectives, and offers appropriate contingency considerations.

### c. Plot operational lines, establish Branch/Division boundaries, and identify Group assignments

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

### d. Specify tactics for each Division/Group

After determining Division geographical assignments or Group functions, the Operations Section Chief will establish the specific work assignments to be performed for the next operational period. Tactics (work assignments) should be specific and within the boundaries set by the IC/UC general objectives and established strategies. These work assignments should be recorded on the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215). At this time, the IC/UC, Operations Section Chief, and Planning Section Chief should also consider the need for any alternative strategies or tactics and ensure that these are properly noted on the Operational Planning Worksheet .

### e. Specify resources needed by Division/Group

After specifying tactics for each Division/Group, the Operations Section Chief, in conjunction with the Planning Section Chief, will determine the resource needs to accomplish the work assignments. Resource needs will be recorded on the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS

215). Resource needs should be considered on the basis of the type of resources required to accomplish the assignment.

## f. Specify operations facilities and reporting locations and plot on map

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

## g. Develop resource order

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

## h. Consider Communications, Medical, and Traffic Plan requirements

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

**Table B-2. The IAP and Typical Attachments**

| Component | Normally Prepared By |
|---|---|
| Incident Objectives (ICS 202) | Incident Commander |
| Organization Assignment List or Chart (ICS 203) | Resources Unit |
| Assignment List (ICS 204) | Resources Unit |
| Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS 205) | Communications Unit |
| Medical Plan (ICS 206) | Medical Unit |
| Incident Maps | Situation Unit |
| Safety Message Plan (ICS 208) | Safety Officer |

| Other Potential Components (incident dependent) | |
|---|---|
| Air Operations Summary (ICS 220) | Air Operations |
| Traffic Plan | Ground Support Unit |
| Decontamination Plan | Technical Specialist |
| Waste Management or Disposal Plan | Technical Specialist |
| Demobilization Checkout (ICS 221) | Demobilization Unit |
| Site Security Plan | Law Enforcement, Technical Specialist, or Security Manager |
| Investigative Plan | Law Enforcement |
| Evidence Recovery Plan | Law Enforcement |
| Evacuation Plan | As required |
| Sheltering/Mass Care Plan | As required |
| Other (as required) | As required |

## i. Finalize, approve, and implement the Incident Action Plan

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

- Set the deadline for completing IAP attachments (see Table B-3).
- Obtain plan attachments and review them for completeness and approvals. Before completing the plan, the Planning Section Chief should review the Division and Group tactical work assignments for any changes due to lack of resource availability. The Resources Unit may then transfer Division/Group assignment information, including alternatives from the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215), onto the Division Assignment Lists (ICS 204).
- Determine the number of IAPs required.
- Arrange with the Documentation Unit to reproduce the IAP.
- Review the IAP to ensure it is up to date and complete prior to the operations briefing and plan distribution.
- Provide the IAP briefing plan, as required, and distribute the plan prior to beginning of the new operational period.

**Table B-3. ICS Forms That Can Aid the Planning Process***

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

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

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

# TAB 9—ICS FORMS

This section describes some common ICS Forms. The individual forms may be tailored to meet an agency's needs. More importantly, even though the format is flexible, the form number and purpose of the specific type of form (e.g., Assignment List (ICS 204) defines the assignments for a Division or Group) must remain intact in order to maintain consistency and facilitate immediate identification and interoperability, and for ease of use.

## A. ICS FORMS

The following provides brief descriptions of selected ICS Forms. This list is not all inclusive; other forms are available online, commercially, and in a variety of formats.

### 1. ICS 201 – Incident Briefing

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

### 2. ICS 202 – Incident Objectives

ICS 202 serves as the first page of a written IAP. It includes incident information, a listing of the IC's objectives for the operational period, pertinent weather information, a general safety message, and a table of contents for the plan. Signature blocks are provided.

### 3. ICS 203 – Organization Assignment List

ICS 203 is typically the second page of the IAP. It provides a full accounting of incident management and supervisory staff for that operational period.

### 4. ICS 204 – Assignment List

ICS 204 is included in multiples, based on the organizational structure of the Operations Section for the operational period. Each Division/Group will have its own page, listing the Supervisor for the Division/Group (including Branch Director if assigned) and the specific assigned resources with leader name and number of personnel assigned to each resource. This document then describes in detail the specific actions the Division or Group will be taking in support of the overall incident objectives. Any special instructions will be included as well as the elements of the Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS 205) that apply to that Division or Group.

## 5. ICS 205 – Incident Radio Communications Plan

ICS 205 is used to provide information on all radio frequency assignments down to the Division/Group level.

## 6. ICS 206 – Medical Plan

ICS 206 presents the incident's Medical Plan to care for responder medical emergencies.

## 7. ICS 209 – Incident Status Summary

ICS 209 collects basic incident decision support information and is the primary mechanism for reporting this situational information to incident coordination and support organizations and the Agency Administrators/Executives.

## 8. ICS 211 – Incident Check-In List

ICS 211 documents the check-in process. Check-in recorders report check-in information to the Resources Unit.

## 9. ICS 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet

ICS 215 is used in the incident Planning Meeting to develop tactical assignments and resources needed to achieve incident objectives and strategies.

## 10. ICS 215A – Hazard Risk Analysis

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

# TAB 10—SUMMARY OF MAJOR ICS POSITIONS

This section lists the primary functions of each major ICS position.

**Table B-4. Summary Table of Major ICS Positions***

| Major ICS Position | Primary Functions |
|---|---|
| **Incident Commander or Unified Command** | • Have clear authority and know agency policy.<br>• Ensure incident safety.<br>• Establish the ICP.<br>• Set priorities, and determine incident objectives and strategies to be followed.<br>• Establish ICS organization needed to manage the incident.<br>• Approve the IAP.<br>• Coordinate Command and General Staff activities.<br>• Approve resource requests and use of volunteers and auxiliary personnel.<br>• Order demobilization as needed.<br>• Ensure after-action reports are completed.<br>• Authorize information release to the media. |
| **Public Information Officer** | • Determine, according to direction from IC, any limits on information release.<br>• Develop accurate, accessible, and timely information for use in press/media briefings.<br>• Obtain the IC's approval of news releases.<br>• Conduct periodic media briefings.<br>• Arrange for tours and other interviews or briefings that may be required.<br>• Monitor and forward media information that may be useful to incident planning.<br>• Maintain current information summaries and/or displays on the incident.<br>• Make information about the incident available to incident personnel.<br>• Participate in Planning Meetings.<br>• Implement methods to monitor rumor control. |

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

| Major ICS Position | Primary Functions |
|---|---|
| **Safety Officer** | • Identify and mitigate hazardous situations.<br>• Create a Safety Plan.<br>• Ensure safety messages and briefings are made.<br>• Exercise emergency authority to stop and prevent unsafe acts .<br>• Review the IAP for safety implications.<br>• Assign assistants qualified to evaluate special hazards.<br>• Initiate preliminary investigation of accidents within the incident area.<br>• Review and approve the Medical Plan.<br>• Participate in Planning Meetings to address anticipated hazards associated with future operations. |
| **Liaison Officer** | • Act as a point of contact for Agency Representatives.<br>• Maintain a list of assisting and cooperating agencies and Agency Representatives.<br>• Assist in setting up and coordinating interagency contacts.<br>• Monitor incident operations to identify current or potential interorganizational problems.<br>• Participate in Planning Meetings, providing current resource status, including limitations and capabilities of agency resources.<br>• Provide agency-specific demobilization information and requirements. |
| **Operations Section Chief** | • Ensure safety of tactical operations.<br>• Manage tactical operations.<br>• Develop operations portions of the IAP.<br>• Supervise execution of operations portions of the IAP.<br>• Request additional resources to support tactical operations.<br>• Approve release of resources from active operational assignments.<br>• Make or approve expedient changes to the IAP.<br>• Maintain close contact with the IC, subordinate Operations personnel, and other agencies involved in the incident. |

| Major ICS Position | Primary Functions |
|---|---|
| **Planning Section Chief** | • Collect and manage all incident-relevant operational data.<br>• Supervise preparation of the IAP.<br>• Provide input to the IC and Operations in preparing the IAP.<br>• Incorporate Traffic, Medical, and Communications Plans and other supporting material into the IAP.<br>• Conduct/facilitate Planning Meetings.<br>• Reassign out-of-service personnel within the ICS organization already on scene, as appropriate.<br>• Compile and display incident status information.<br>• Establish information requirements and reporting schedules for Units (e.g., Resources Unit, Situation Unit).<br>• Determine need for specialized resources.<br>• Assemble and disassemble Task Forces and Strike Teams not assigned to Operations.<br>• Establish specialized data collection systems as necessary (e.g., weather).<br>• Assemble information on alternative strategies.<br>• Provide periodic predictions on incident potential.<br>• Report significant changes in incident status.<br>• Oversee preparation of the Demobilization Plan. |
| **Logistics Section Chief** | • Provide all facilities, transportation, communications, supplies, equipment maintenance and fueling, food, and medical services for incident personnel, and all off-incident resources.<br>• Manage all incident logistics.<br>• Provide logistics input to the IAP.<br>• Brief Logistics staff as needed.<br>• Identify anticipated and known incident service and support requirements.<br>• Request additional resources as needed.<br>• Ensure and oversee development of Traffic, Medical, and Communications Plans as required.<br>• Oversee demobilization of Logistics Section and associated resources. |

| Major ICS Position | Primary Functions |
|---|---|
| **Finance/Administration Section Chief** | • Manage all financial aspects of an incident.<br>• Provide financial and cost analysis information as requested.<br>• Ensure compensation and claims functions are being addressed relative to the incident.<br>• Gather pertinent information from briefings with responsible agencies.<br>• Develop an operational plan for the Finance/Administration Section and fill Section supply and support needs.<br>• Determine the need to set up and operate an incident commissary.<br>• Meet with assisting and cooperating Agency Representatives as needed.<br>• Maintain daily contact with agency(s) headquarters on finance matters.<br>• Ensure that personnel time records are completed accurately and transmitted to home agencies.<br>• Ensure that all obligation documents initiated at the incident are properly prepared and completed.<br>• Brief agency administrative personnel on all incident-related financial issues needing attention or followup.<br>• Provide input to the IAP. |