

**WORKING DRAFT**

**NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REFRESH**

**REVIEW PACKAGE**

Attached for your review is the working draft of the *National Incident Management System* (NIMS) refresh.

This refresh retains key concepts and principles from earlier NIMS versions while incorporating new Presidential directives, legislative changes, and lessons learned from exercises, actual incidents, and planned events. The draft NIMS refresh:

- **Reiterates concepts and principles of the original 2004 version and the updated 2008 version;**
- **Reflects and incorporates lessons learned from exercises, real world incidents, and policy updates**, such as the National Preparedness System, and NIMS-related guidance, including the 2013 NIMS Intelligence/Investigation Function Guidance and Field Operations Guide;
- **Reflects progress in resource typing and mutual aid** and builds a foundation for the development of a national qualification system;
- **Clarifies that NIMS is more than just the Incident Command System (ICS) and that it applies to all stakeholders with roles in incident management** across all five mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery);
- **Explains the relationship among ICS, the Center Management System (CMS) for operations centers and coordination centers, and Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups); and**
- **Enhances information management processes** to improve data collection plans, social media integration, and the use of geographic information systems (GIS).

The enclosed working draft represents input and ideas from a range of stakeholders from across the whole community who have been involved through working groups and targeted engagement efforts. In order to further expand our engagement efforts in updating NIMS we are seeking your ideas and input on this working draft. FEMA has released the draft NIMS for a 30-day National Engagement Period to collect feedback from interested parties and ensure the updated content reflects the collective expertise and experience of the whole community.

To ensure all feedback is properly handled, reviewers are expected to use the provided feedback submission form. All feedback should be submitted, using the submission form, to [FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov) by the following deadline: **Monday, May 9th, 2016 at 5:00 PM EDT.**

We look forward to receiving your feedback and working in partnership with you on this important endeavor. For further information on NIMS national engagement, visit <https://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system/national-engagement> or send an e-mail to [FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-NIMS@fema.dhs.gov).

# Contents

- I. Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS ..... 1**
  - A. Introduction ..... 1**
  - B. Applicability and Scope..... 2**
  - C. NIMS Guiding Principles..... 3**
    - Flexibility ..... 3
    - Standardization..... 3
    - Unity of Effort..... 3
  - D. Background..... 3**
  - E. Supersession ..... 4**
- II. Resource Management ..... 5**
  - A. Key Resource Management Activities ..... 5**
    - Resource Typing ..... 5
    - Credentialing ..... 6
    - Planning..... 7
    - Inventorizing ..... 8
    - Resource Identification and Ordering ..... 9
  - B. Implementing Resource Management ..... 10**
    - Identify Requirements ..... 10
    - Order and Acquire..... 10
    - Mobilize ..... 11
    - Track and Report..... 11
    - Recover and Demobilize ..... 12
    - Reimburse ..... 12
  - C. Effective Management of Resources ..... 12**
    - Acquisition Procedures ..... 12
    - Information Management Systems for Resource Management ..... 12
  - D. Incident Assignment and Unrequested Resources..... 13**
    - Incident Assignments ..... 13
    - Unrequested Resources ..... 13
  - E. Mutual Aid ..... 14**
    - National Mutual Aid..... 14
    - Mutual Aid Agreements and Compacts ..... 14
    - Mutual Aid Process ..... 15
- III. Management and Coordination ..... 16**
  - NIMS Management and Coordination Characteristics..... 16
  - A. Incident Command System (ICS) ..... 20**
    - Incident Command ..... 20
    - Command Staff ..... 23
    - General Staff ..... 24

Common Types of ICS Facilities .....	27
Incident Management Teams .....	28
Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT) .....	28
Incident Complex: Multiple Incident Management within a Single ICS Organization .....	29
Area Command .....	29
<b>B. Center Management System (CMS) .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Common Types of Operations/Coordination Centers .....	31
Configuration of CMS.....	33
Activation and Deactivation of Center Management Systems.....	38
<b>C. MAC Group .....</b>	<b>40</b>
Examples of MAC Groups.....	40
<b>D. Joint Information Systems .....</b>	<b>43</b>
System Description and Components.....	43
Public Information Communications Planning .....	47
<b>E. Interconnectivity of NIMS Management and Coordination Structures.....</b>	<b>48</b>
Federal Support to Response Activities .....	48
<b>IV. Communications and Information Management .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>A. Management Characteristics.....</b>	<b>51</b>
Standardized Communication Types .....	51
Policy and Planning.....	51
Agreements .....	52
Equipment Standards and Training.....	52
<b>B. Incident Information .....</b>	<b>52</b>
Incident Notification, Situation, and Status Reports .....	53
Data Collection and Processing.....	53
<b>C. Communications Standards and Formats.....</b>	<b>55</b>
Common Terminology, Plain Language, Compatibility .....	55
Technology Use and Procedures .....	56
Information Security/Operational Security (OPSEC) .....	57
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Resources .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>NIMS Supporting Documents .....</b>	<b>75</b>
NIMS Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers.....	75
NIMS Intelligence and Investigations Function Guidance and Field Operations Guide .....	75
NIMS Training Program .....	75
Guidelines for the Credentialing of Personnel .....	76
ICS Forms Booklet.....	76
Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101: Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans, Version 2 .....	76
CPG 201, Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Guide, Second Edition.....	76

**Additional Supporting Materials ..... 76**

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ..... 76
- Homeland Security Act of 2002 ..... 77
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006 ..... 77
- National Preparedness Goal ..... 77
- National Preparedness System ..... 77
- National Planning Frameworks ..... 77
- Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 ..... 77
- National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) ..... 78
- Resource Management ..... 78
- Resource Typing Library Tool (RTL) ..... 78
- Incident Resource Inventory System (IRIS) ..... 78
- Emergency Management Assistance Compact ..... 78
- National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) ..... 78

**Appendix A: Incident Command System ..... 80**

- A. Purpose ..... 80**
- B. Organization of This Appendix ..... 80**
- Tab 1—ICS Organization ..... 81**
  - Functional Structure ..... 81
  - Modular Expansion ..... 81
- Tab 2—The Operations Section ..... 86**
  - Operations Section Chief ..... 86
  - Branches ..... 87
  - Divisions and Groups ..... 88
  - Resource Organization ..... 89
  - Air Operations Branch ..... 90
- Tab 3—The Intelligence/Investigations Section ..... 91**
  - Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief ..... 92
  - Investigative Operations Group ..... 92
  - Intelligence Group ..... 92
  - Forensic Group ..... 92
  - Missing Persons Group ..... 93
  - Mass Fatality Management Group ..... 93
  - Investigative Support Group ..... 93
- Tab 4—The Planning Section ..... 94**
  - Planning Section Chief ..... 94
  - Resources Unit ..... 94
  - Situation Unit ..... 95
  - Documentation Unit ..... 95
  - Demobilization Unit ..... 95
  - Technical Specialists ..... 96
- Tab 5—The Logistics Section ..... 99**
  - Logistics Section Chief ..... 99
  - Supply Unit ..... 99
  - Facilities Unit ..... 100
  - Ground Support Unit ..... 100

Communications Unit .....	100
Food Unit .....	101
Medical Unit.....	101
<b>Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section .....</b>	<b>102</b>
Finance/Administration Section Chief .....	102
Compensation and Claims Unit.....	102
Cost Unit .....	103
Procurement Unit .....	103
Time Unit .....	103
<b>Tab 7—Consolidating the Management of Multiple Incidents or IMTs.....</b>	<b>104</b>
Incident Complex: Multiple Incidents Managed within a Single ICS Organization.....	104
Area Command .....	104
<b>Tab 8—The Planning Process and the IAP.....</b>	<b>107</b>
Overview .....	107
Steps of the Planning Process.....	107
The Planning “P”.....	109
Operational Period Planning Cycle .....	110
<b>Tab 9—ICS Forms .....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Tab 10—Primary Functions of Command and General Staff Positions.....</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Appendix B: Center Management System .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>A. Purpose .....</b>	<b>119</b>
Functional Structure .....	120
Modular Expansion .....	120
<b>B. Organization of This Appendix .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Tab 1—Center Director and Command Staff .....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Tab 2—The Strategic Operations Section.....</b>	<b>124</b>
Strategic Operations Section Chief .....	125
Groups and Divisions .....	125
Branches .....	126
<b>Tab 3—The Intelligence/Investigations Section.....</b>	<b>131</b>
Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief .....	132
Investigative Operations Group .....	132
Intelligence Group.....	132
Forensic Group.....	132
Missing Persons Group .....	133
Mass Fatality Management Group .....	133
Investigative Support Group .....	133
<b>Tab 4—The Information and Planning Section.....</b>	<b>134</b>
Information and Planning Section Chief .....	135
Situational Awareness Unit.....	135
Current Planning Unit .....	136
Future Planning Unit .....	136
Documentation Unit.....	136
<b>Tab 5—The Resource and Center Logistics Section .....</b>	<b>137</b>

Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief (RCLSC)..... 138  
Resource Ordering Unit ..... 138  
Mutual Aid Unit ..... 138  
IT and Communications Unit..... 139  
Transportation Unit ..... 139  
Center Support Unit ..... 139

**Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section ..... 140**  
Finance/Administration Section Chief ..... 140  
Compensation/Claims Unit ..... 140  
Cost Unit ..... 141  
Procurement Unit ..... 141  
Time Unit ..... 141

**Tab 7—Implementing CMS in Small EOCs ..... 142**

DRAFT

# I. Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS

## A. Introduction

Communities across the Nation experience a diverse set of threats, hazards, and events. The size, frequency, complexity, and scope of these incidents<sup>1</sup> vary, but all require incident managers within and across jurisdictions and organizations to coordinate efforts to save lives and protect property and the environment. Every day, incidents across the U.S. require jurisdictions and organizations to work together to share resources, integrate tactics, and take actions to meet the needs of communities before, during, and after incidents. Whether these jurisdictions share borders or are supporting each other from across the country, their success depends on a common, interoperable approach for sharing resources, coordinating and managing the incident, and communicating information. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a systematic, proactive approach to guide all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with the shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in National Preparedness System.<sup>2</sup> NIMS guides a consistent foundation for all incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response.

The various jurisdictions and organizations involved in the management of incidents vary in their authorities, management structures, communication capabilities and protocols, and many other factors. The components of NIMS provide a common framework to integrate these diverse capabilities and achieve common goals. The guidance contained in this document integrates solutions developed over decades of experience by incident managers across the Nation, and enables actors from across the whole community<sup>3</sup> to integrate their efforts. The document is organized into three major components:

1. **Resource Management** describes standard mechanisms to identify requirements and to order, acquire, mobilize, activate, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse for, and inventory resources such as personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this document, the word incident includes pre-planned events as well as emergencies and/or disasters of all kinds and sizes.

<sup>2</sup> The National Preparedness System outlines an organized process to help the whole community achieve the National Preparedness Goal. It comprises and builds on existing policies, programs, and guidance to include the National Planning Frameworks, Federal Interagency Operational Plans, and the National Preparedness Report.

<sup>3</sup> Whole community is an approach to emergency management that reinforces that individuals and communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all governments (local, regional/metropolitan, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal) are instrumental in preparing for, protecting against, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating against all hazards; and that collectively we strive to meet the needs of the entire community in each of these areas.

30 2. **Management and Coordination** describes leadership roles, processes, and recommended  
 31 organizational structures for incident management at the tactical and incident support levels  
 32 and explains how these structures interact to manage incidents effectively and efficiently.

33 3. **Communications and Information Management** systems ensure that incident managers  
 34 and decision makers have the information needed to make and implement decisions.

35 Together, the components of NIMS enable nationwide unity of effort. While the varied  
 36 capabilities and resources of diverse organizations across the Nation are a tremendous asset,  
 37 applying these capabilities in a coordinated manner can be challenging. NIMS concepts,  
 38 principles, procedures, structures, and processes link the Nation’s responders together, enabling  
 39 them to meet challenges beyond the capacity of any single jurisdiction or organization.

## 40 B. Applicability and Scope

41 NIMS is applicable to all stakeholders with incident management responsibilities within their  
 42 jurisdiction or organization. The audience for NIMS includes first responders and other  
 43 emergency management personnel; it also includes NGOs (i.e., faith-based and humanitarian  
 44 groups), the private sector, and elected and appointed officials responsible for making decisions  
 45 regarding incidents.

46 The scope of NIMS includes all incidents across the Nation, regardless of size, complexity, or  
 47 scope. NIMS guidance can also be applied to various types of incidents—whether with warning  
 48 or no-notice, planned events (e.g., sporting events), or exercises. Table 1 describes the utility of  
 49 NIMS as all-hazard incident management doctrine for a broad range of individuals and  
 50 disciplines, across all mission areas, for incidents of all sizes, to alleviate a variety of challenges.

51 **Table 1: Overview of NIMS**

What NIMS Is	What NIMS Is Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive, nationwide, systematic approach to incident management, including the management and coordination of incidents, resource management, and information management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only the Incident Command System or an organization chart</li> <li>Only applicable to certain emergency /incident response personnel</li> <li>A static system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A set of concepts and principles for all threats, hazards, and events across all mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A response plan</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scalable, flexible, and adaptable; used for all incidents, from day-to-day to large-scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used only during large-scale incidents</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard resource management procedures that enable coordination among different jurisdictions or organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resource ordering system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essential principles for communication and information management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A communications plan</li> </ul>



## 52 C. NIMS Guiding Principles

53 Incident management priorities include stabilizing the incident, saving lives, and protecting  
54 property and the environment. To achieve these priorities, incident management personnel across  
55 the Nation apply and implement NIMS components in accordance with the following principles,  
56 rooted in the history of incident management: (1) flexibility, (2) standardization, and (3) unity of  
57 effort.

### 58 **Flexibility**

59 NIMS components are adaptable to any situation, from planned special events to routine, local  
60 incidents, to incidents requiring the activation of interstate mutual aid, to those requiring  
61 coordinated Federal assistance. Some incidents require multiagency, multijurisdictional, and/or  
62 multidisciplinary coordination. Flexibility in NIMS allows it to be scalable and, therefore,  
63 applicable for incidents that vary widely in terms of geography, demographics, climate, and  
64 culture.

### 65 **Standardization**

66 Coordination and standardization are essential to effective incident management. NIMS contains  
67 standard organizational structures that improve integration and connectivity among jurisdictions  
68 and organizations. NIMS presents standard practices that allow incident managers to work  
69 together more effectively and foster cohesion among the various organizations involved in an  
70 incident. NIMS also includes common terminology, which fosters effective communication  
71 among jurisdictions and organizations involved in managing an incident.

### 72 **Unity of Effort**

73 Unity of effort means coordinating activities among various organizational representatives to  
74 achieve common objectives. Unity of effort enables organizations with jurisdictional authority or  
75 functional responsibilities to support each other while allowing each participating agency to  
76 maintain its own authority and accountability.

## 77 D. Background

78 NIMS is the culmination of more than forty years of efforts to improve interoperability and the  
79 coordination of organizations responding to incidents. This work began in the 1970s with a  
80 collaborative effort by local, state, and Federal agencies to create a system called Firefighting  
81 Resources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies (FIREScope). FIREScope  
82 included the Incident Command System (ICS) and the Multiagency Coordination System  
83 (MACS). In 1982, the agencies that developed FIREScope and the National Wildfire  
84 Coordination Group created the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS) to  
85 make ICS and MACS guidance applicable to all types of incidents and all hazards. Recognizing  
86 the value of these systems, communities across the Nation voluntarily adopted ICS and MACS,  
87 but adoption of these systems was not universal.

88 In the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks, the need for an integrated nationwide incident  
89 management system with standard structures, terminology, processes, and resources became  
90 clear. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) facilitated a national effort to consolidate,

91 expand, and enhance the previous efforts of FIREScope, NIIMS, and others to form the basis  
92 for NIMS.

93 DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published the first NIMS document in  
94 2004 and revised it in 2008. This 2016 version reflects progress since 2008, including lessons  
95 learned, best practices, and changes in national policy, including updates to the National  
96 Preparedness System. This version

- 97 • Reiterates concepts and principles of the original 2004 version and the updated 2008 version;
- 98 • Reflects and incorporates lessons learned from exercises and real world incidents;
- 99 • Reflects progress in resource typing and mutual aid;
- 100 • Clarifies that NIMS is more than just ICS, and that it applies to all stakeholders with roles in  
101 incident management across the five mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation,  
102 Response, and Recovery);
- 103 • Explains the relationship among the ICS, the Center Management System (CMS) for  
104 operations centers and coordination centers, and Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC  
105 Groups); and
- 106 • Enhances guidance on information management processes to improve data collection plans,  
107 social media integration, and the use of geographic information systems (GIS).

## 108 E. Supersession

109 This document supersedes the NIMS document issued in December 2008 and NIMS Guides 001  
110 002 (both issued March 2006).

## 111 II. Resource Management

112 Effective resource management involves collaboration and coordination by many elements to  
113 systematically manage resources including personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities. No single  
114 jurisdiction or community can own and maintain all the resources needed to address all potential  
115 threats and hazards. Resource management includes leveraging each jurisdiction's resources,  
116 engaging private sector resources, involving volunteer organizations, and encouraging the further  
117 development of mutual aid agreements to ensure needs are met.

### 118 A. Key Resource Management Activities

119 Resource management involves five key activities: resource typing, credentialing, planning,  
120 inventorying, and resource identification and ordering.

#### 121 Resource Typing

122 Resource typing is defining and categorizing incident resources by capability. Resource typing  
123 definitions establish a common language for discussing resources by defining minimum  
124 capabilities (for personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities). Resource typing enables  
125 communities to plan for, request, and have confidence in the capabilities of resources received  
126 from other jurisdictions and organizations.

127 FEMA leads the development and maintenance of resource typing definitions for resources  
128 shared on an interstate, regional, or national scale. Jurisdictions can use these definitions to  
129 categorize local assets. When identifying which resources to type at the national level, FEMA  
130 selects resources that

- 131 • Are already defined, or readily organized, and sharable;
- 132 • Can be shared and/or deployed across jurisdictional boundaries through mutual aid  
133 agreements or compacts during incidents;
- 134 • Have performance capability levels that can be identifiable as *Capability*, *Category*, *Kind*,  
135 and *Type*:
  - 136 – **Capability**: the core capability for which the resource is most useful;
  - 137 – **Category**: the function for which a resource would be most useful (e.g., firefighting, law  
138 enforcement, health and medical);
  - 139 – **Kind**: a broad characterization, such as personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities.  
140 Metrics exist for each kind and indicate capability or capacity. The specific metrics used  
141 depend on the kind of resource being typed and the mission envisioned; and
  - 142 – **Type**: a resource's level of minimum capability to perform its function. Type 1 is a higher  
143 capability than Types 2, 3, or 4, respectively. The higher level of capability is based on  
144 size, power, capacity (equipment), or experience and qualifications (e.g., teams, such as  
145 Incident Management Teams [IMT]);

- 146 • Can be identified, inventoried, and tracked to determine availability status to provide support  
147 of one or more of the five mission areas by the jurisdiction;
- 148 • Are used for incident management, support, and/or coordination under the ICS or in an  
149 incident support capacity; and
- 150 • Are sufficiently interoperable or compatible to allow for deployment through commonly used  
151 systems for resource ordering, managing, and tracking as authorized under intrastate as well  
152 as interstate mutual aid agreements, compacts, and appropriate contracting mechanisms.
- 153 Measurable standards identifying resource capabilities and performance levels serve as the basis  
154 for categories. Resource users at all levels apply these standards to identify and inventory  
155 resources. Resource kind subcategories more precisely define the capabilities needed to meet  
156 specific requirements.

#### Example: Resource Typing Library Tool

157 The Resource Typing Library Tool (RTL) is an online catalog of NIMS resource typing definitions and job  
158 titles/position qualifications. The RTL is accessible at [http://www.fema.gov/resource-management-](http://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid)  
159 [mutual-aid](http://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid). From the RTL home page, users can search using the resource type, discipline, core  
160 capability, or other key words. The user can view the selected resource or job title/position qualification in  
161 either a web or PDF view.  
162

## 163 **Credentialing**

164 Credentialing is the administrative process through which organizations validate personnel  
165 qualifications and assess experience. The credentialing process standardizes the authorization to  
166 perform specific functions and allows authorized responders appropriate access to an incident.

### 167 *Personnel Qualifications*

168 Personnel qualifications are typically position-specific. The credentialing process involves the  
169 evaluation and documentation of an individual's certification, license, or degree; training and  
170 experience; and competence. This evaluation determines whether an individual meets nationally  
171 accepted standards and can provide particular services, perform certain functions, or serve in  
172 predefined roles under specific conditions.

173 FEMA leads the development and maintenance of a national list of job titles and position  
174 qualifications that serves as a common language for describing jobs and the basis of a national  
175 qualification system. Nationally standardized criteria and minimum qualifications for positions  
176 provide a consistent baseline for qualifying and credentialing the Nation's disaster workforce. A  
177 national system enables communities to plan for, request, and have confidence in personnel  
178 received from other entities through mutual aid agreements and compacts. The qualifying and  
179 credentialing process is voluntary and applies only to personnel or positions that could be  
180 deployed across boundaries through mutual aid agreements or compacts. It is up to individual  
181 jurisdictions or agencies to apply job titles and position qualifications defined in the national  
182 qualifications system when credentialing their personnel.

### 183 *Applying the Credentialing Process*

184 The NIMS credentialing process builds upon existing certification processes at all levels of  
185 government. Personnel who choose to pursue credentialing for a position obtain a Position Task  
186 Book (PTB) from the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for that position. PTBs outline

187 position-specific competencies, behaviors, and tasks that personnel demonstrate to be fully  
188 qualified in that position.

### 189 **Authority Having Jurisdiction**

190 The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) has the authority and responsibility for the development,  
191 implementation, maintenance, and oversight of the qualifications process within its organization or  
192 jurisdiction. This may be a state or Federal agency, a training commission, or a local agency such as a  
193 police or fire department. In some cases the AHJ may provide support to multiple disciplines that  
194 collaborate as a part of a team (e.g., an Incident Management Team).

195 As the individual demonstrates the requisite competencies, behaviors, and tasks, an individual  
196 already qualified in that position signs them off in the PTB. The individual submits the  
197 completed PTB, along with certification of training, to the approving official in his or her home  
198 organization to verify its completion. The approving official reviews the application, and if the  
199 application is approved, submits the approval to the AHJ. The AHJ creates a record of the  
200 approval for ongoing oversight and issues the appropriate identification credentials.

201 While credentialing includes the issuing of identification cards or credentials, it is separate and  
202 distinct from an incident-specific badging process. When access to a site is controlled through  
203 special badging, the badging process includes verification of identity, qualifications, and  
204 deployment authorization.

### 205 **Planning**

206 Coordinated planning, training to common standards, exercises, and joint operations provide a  
207 foundation for the interoperability and compatibility of resources. Jurisdictions and organizations  
208 work together before incidents to develop plans for identifying, managing, estimating, allocating,  
209 ordering, deploying, and demobilizing resources. The planning process includes identifying  
210 resource requirements based on the threats to and vulnerabilities of the jurisdiction or  
211 organization as well as developing alternative strategies to obtain the needed resources.

#### 212 **Example: Capability Estimation**

213 A key aspect of the resource planning process is estimating resource needs. Through capability  
214 estimation, jurisdictions assess their ability to take a course of action. The resulting capability estimate  
215 feeds into the resource section of the plan or annex. Capability estimation helps to answer to the following  
216 questions:

- 217 • What do we need to prepare for?
- 218 • What resources do we have that allow us to achieve our targets?
- 219 • What resources can we obtain through mutual aid in order to be prepared to meet our targets?

220 The outputs of this process inform a variety of preparedness efforts, including strategic, operational  
221 and/or tactical planning; development of mutual aid agreements and compacts; and hazard mitigation  
222 planning.

223 For activities that need surge capacity, planning often includes pre-positioning of resources in  
224 support of anticipated needs. Plans should anticipate conditions or circumstances that trigger a  
225 predetermined reaction, such as the restocking of supplies when inventories reach a  
226 predetermined minimum. In addition, incident management personnel should be familiar with  
227 the five National Planning Frameworks (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and  
228 Recovery) and should be prepared to integrate and/or coordinate with all resource providers.

## 229 **Inventorying**

230 Effective resource management requires establishing a resource inventory and maintaining the  
231 currency and accuracy of the information. While a resource inventory can be as simple as a paper  
232 or electronic spreadsheet, many resource providers use information technology-based inventory  
233 systems to track the status of their resources and maintain an accurate list of available resources.

234 An effective resource inventory supports resource management by including information about a  
235 given resource, such as the following:

- 236 • **Name:** The unique name by which the resource is officially known.
- 237 • **Aliases:** Any other names by which the resource is known, whether formally or informally.  
238 These can be radio call signs, license numbers, nicknames, or anything else that helps users  
239 identify the resource.
- 240 • **Status:** The resource's current status or readiness state.
- 241 • **Resource Typing Definition or Job Title:** This can be either a standard NIMS resource  
242 typing definition or job title/position qualification or a state or local definition.
- 243 • **Mutual Aid Readiness:** The status of whether the resource is available and ready for  
244 deployment under mutual aid.
- 245 • **Home Location:** The resource's permanent storage location, base, or office. This should also  
246 include the home location's associated latitude/longitude and U.S. National Grid coordinates  
247 to ensure interoperability with mapping and decision support tools.
- 248 • **Present Location:** The resource's current storage location, base, office, or deployment  
249 assignment. This should also include the present location's associated latitude/longitude and  
250 U.S. National Grid coordinates to ensure interoperability with mapping and decision support  
251 tools.
- 252 • **Point of Contact:** Individuals who are able to provide information and communicate essential  
253 information related to the resource.
- 254 • **Owner:** The agency, company, person, or other entity that owns the resource.
- 255 • **Manufacturer/Model (Equipment Only):** The entity that built the resource and the  
256 resource's model name/number. This section also includes the serial number, the resource's  
257 unique identifying number. This is a real-world inventory control number or other value used  
258 in official records.
- 259 • **Contracts:** Purchase, lease, rental, maintenance agreements, or other financial agreements  
260 associated with the resource.
- 261 • **Certifications:** Documentation that validates the official qualifications, certifications, or  
262 licenses associated with the resource.
- 263 • **Deployment Information:** Information needed to request a resource includes:
  - 264 – **Minimum Lead Time (in hours):** The minimum amount of time a resource needs to  
265 prepare for deployment to the incident or mutual aid response.
  - 266 – **Maximum Deployment Time (in days):** The maximum amount of time a resource can be  
267 deployed or involved before it needs to be pulled back for maintenance, recovery, or  
268 resupply.

- 269       – **Restrictions:** Any restrictions placed on the resource use, capabilities, etc.
- 270       – **Reimbursement Process:** Any information regarding the reimbursement process.
- 271       – **Release and Return Instructions:** Any information regarding the release and return of
- 272       the resource.
- 273       – **Sustainability Needs:** Any information regarding sustainability needs.
- 274       – **Custom Attributes:** A customized field that an agency can add to resource records. This
- 275       can contain whatever information is necessary that standard fields do not already cover.

276 Resource inventories also account for (and mitigate) the potential for double-counting personnel  
277 and/or equipment. In particular, resource summaries should clearly reflect any overlap of  
278 personnel across different resource pools in order to avoid overstating the total resources.

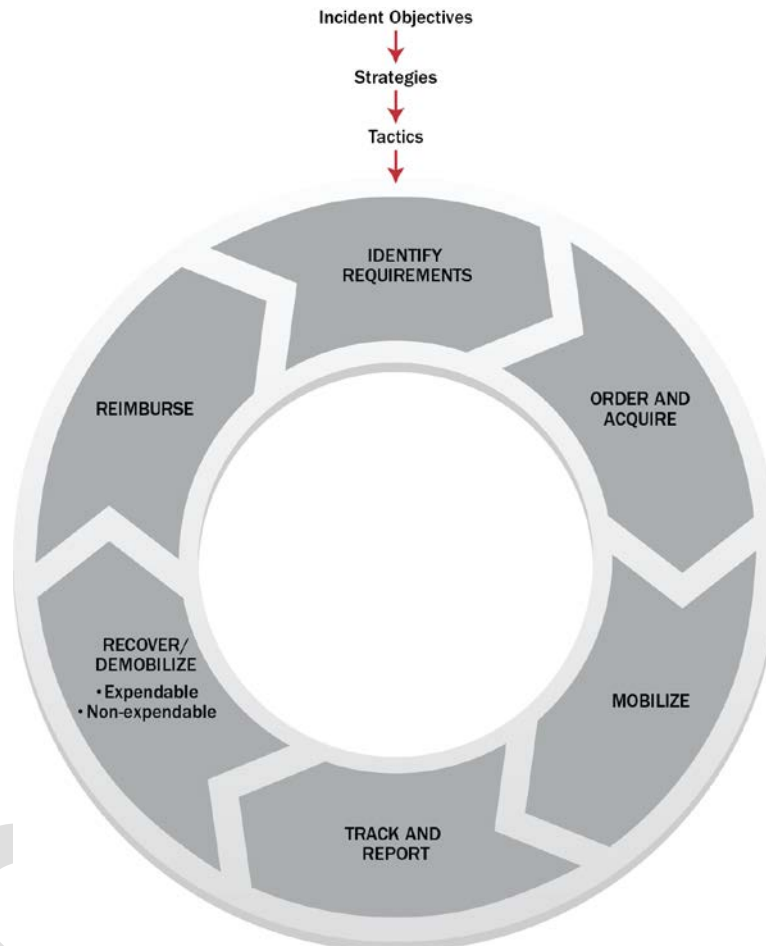
### 279 **Resource Identification and Ordering**

280 The resource management process includes standard methods to identify, order, mobilize, and  
281 track the resources required to support incident management. Resource managers perform these  
282 tasks either at the request of Incident Command or in accordance with planning needs. In some  
283 cases, the identification and ordering process is compressed, such as when an Incident  
284 Commander (IC) identifies the specific resources necessary for the task and orders them directly.  
285 However, in larger, more complex incidents, the IC may not be fully aware of resources  
286 available. At this point, the IC uses the resource management process to fill resource needs based  
287 on the incident objectives.

## 288 B. Implementing Resource Management

289 Figure 1 depicts a six-step process demonstrating the primary tasks of resource management.

290



291

292

**Figure 1: Resource Management Process**

### 293 **Identify Requirements**

294 Personnel with resource management responsibilities continually identify, refine, and validate  
 295 resource needs. This process involves identifying the type and quantity of resources needed, the  
 296 location where resources should be sent, and names of personnel who will be receiving and using  
 297 the resources.

298 Resource availability and needs constantly change as an incident evolves. Consequently, all  
 299 incident management personnel and their affiliated organizations should coordinate as closely  
 300 and as early as possible, both in advance of and during incidents.

### 301 **Order and Acquire**

302 The IC and/or operations/coordination center staff make initial and ongoing assessments of  
 303 resource requirements and request resources that cannot be obtained locally through standard



304 resource ordering procedures. Additional resources can be ordered through executing contracts,  
305 implementing mutual aid agreements, or requesting assistance from another level of government  
306 (e.g., a local government to a state or a state to the Federal government). Requestors use NIMS  
307 resource typing (as available) when ordering resources to ensure the capability being provided  
308 meets the mission needs.

309 The decision cycles for placing and filling resource orders differ for field/incident personnel and  
310 higher-level coordination structures. The IC requests resources based on incident management  
311 priorities and objectives. He/she bases decisions about resource allocation on jurisdictional or  
312 organization protocol (e.g., minimum staffing levels) and possibly the resource demands of other  
313 incidents. The jurisdiction providing resources consents to the request and communicates any  
314 discrepancies between requested resources and those available for delivery before mobilization  
315 occurs.

### 316 **Mobilize**

317 Incident management personnel and resources begin mobilizing when notified by the requesting  
318 jurisdiction or by an intermediary acting on their behalf, such as the state EMAC coordinator. At  
319 the time of notification, deploying personnel receive the date, time, and place of departure; mode  
320 of transportation to the incident; estimated date and time of arrival; reporting location (address,  
321 contact name, and phone number); anticipated incident assignment; anticipated duration of  
322 deployment; resource order number; incident number; and applicable cost and funding codes.  
323 Resource tracking directly links to the mobilization process. Resources arriving on scene check-  
324 in according to the receiving organization's check-in process.

325 The mobilization process includes

- 326 • Conducting incident-specific deployment planning;
- 327 • Equipping;
- 328 • Providing just-in-time training;
- 329 • Designating assembly points suitable for logistical support; and
- 330 • Delivering resources to the incident on schedule and in line with priorities and budgets.

331 The mobilization of fixed facility resources—such as laboratories, hospitals,  
332 operations/coordination centers, shelters, and waste management systems—involve activation  
333 rather than deployment. Plans and systems to monitor resource mobilization status should be  
334 flexible enough to adapt to both types of mobilization. Managers plan and prepare for the  
335 demobilization process at the same time that they begin mobilizing resources.

### 336 **Track and Report**

337 Resource tracking occurs prior to, during, and after an incident. This process tracks the location  
338 of resources; helps staff prepare to receive and use resources; protects the safety and security of  
339 personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities; and enables resource coordination and movement.  
340 Incident managers use established procedures to continuously track resources from mobilization  
341 through demobilization during an incident as well as during day to day resource management  
342 activities such as reconciliation, accounting, auditing, and inventorying.

### 343 **Recover and Demobilize**

344 Recovery involves the final disposition of all resources, including those located at both the  
345 incident site and fixed facilities. During this process, resources are rehabilitated, replenished,  
346 disposed of, and/or retrograded so they can be put back into operation, or disposed of, if  
347 necessary.

348 The goal of demobilization is the orderly, safe, and efficient return of a resource to its original  
349 location and status. Demobilization of a resource can begin at any point in time, but should begin  
350 as soon as possible to facilitate accountability. The resource requestor and provider may agree to  
351 reassign a resource rather than demobilize it. Prior to demobilization, staff in the Planning and  
352 Logistics Sections collaborate to plan how resources are rehabilitated, replenished, disposed of,  
353 and/or retrograded.

### 354 **Reimburse**

355 Reimbursement is the recuperating of funds expended for specific activities. Reimbursement  
356 processes play an important role in establishing and maintaining the readiness of resources and  
357 help to ensure providers are reimbursed in a timely manner. Processes include mechanisms for  
358 collecting bills, validating costs against the scope of the work, and accessing reimbursement  
359 programs. Reimbursement procedures are often part of mutual aid and assistance agreements.

## 360 **C. Effective Management of Resources**

361 Effective resource management includes acquisition procedures and information management  
362 systems.

### 363 **Acquisition Procedures**

364 Those with resource management responsibilities use acquisition procedures to obtain resources  
365 to support incident needs (e.g., mission tasking, contracting, drawing from existing stocks, and  
366 making purchases). Organizations may acquire material resources in advance or obtain them just  
367 in time through appropriate pre-incident contracts. Personnel with resource management  
368 responsibilities consider the urgency of needs, whether sufficient quantities of items are on hand,  
369 and whether the items can be produced quickly enough to meet demand.

370 Stockpiling raises issues concerning shelf life and durability; however, strict reliance on just-in-  
371 time resources has its own potential pitfalls. Planners need to ensure that multiple jurisdictions  
372 are not relying on the same assets. Those with resource management responsibilities should build  
373 sufficient funding into their budgets for periodic replenishments, preventive maintenance, and  
374 capital improvements. Jurisdictions should also incorporate protocols for the handling and  
375 distribution of donated resources as an integral part of acquisition procedures.

### 376 **Information Management Systems for Resource Management**

377 Information management systems aid in collecting, updating, and processing resource-related  
378 data and in tracking resources. These systems enhance resource status information flow by  
379 providing real-time data to different jurisdictions, incident management personnel, and their  
380 affiliated organizations. Information management systems used to support resource management

381 include location-enabled situational awareness and decision support tools that include resource  
382 tracking that links to the entity's resource inventory(s).

## 383 D. Incident Assignment and Unrequested Resources

### 384 Incident Assignments

385 Effective and safe incident management depends on all personnel executing their responsibilities  
386 according to established guidelines. Incident managers should be prepared to deploy to incidents  
387 at the request of the appropriate authority. Individuals can remain deployment-ready by  
388 maintaining the skills, knowledge, certifications, and other requirements that their organization  
389 requires or recommends.

390 Upon notification of deployment, individuals should consider the following initial actions:

- 391 • Review the most recent situation summary to establish situational awareness (if available);
- 392 • Identify assignment, deployment location, and travel arrangements;
- 393 • Identify assigned supervisor and associated contact information;
- 394 • Request a copy of assignment paperwork;
- 395 • Review any briefings on worksite security or access procedures and any special  
396 environmental or health concerns for the deployment area (if available); and
- 397 • Ensure/verify coverage for day-to-day job responsibilities to focus on incident management  
398 operations while deployed.

399 When personnel reach their designated incident worksite, they should adhere to accountability  
400 procedures including:

- 401 • **Check-In:** Check-in at their assigned location and verify their assignments.
- 402 • **Record Keeping:** Follow local procedures for documenting their activities. The completeness  
403 and accuracy of incident records are critical to documenting the need for state and/or Federal  
404 assistance and also may be critical in the event of future litigation.
- 405 • **Communication:** Observe strict radio and/or telephone procedures, and use clear text (i.e.,  
406 plain English), not codes. Personnel should not use radios or telephones assigned to the  
407 incident unless authorized to do so and should limit radio and telephone communication to  
408 essential information only.
- 409 • **Checkout:** When notified of their demobilization, follow the local checkout procedures  
410 before leaving the incident area. Personnel should complete all work in progress (unless  
411 otherwise directed); ensure all records and files are up to date; return or transfer any  
412 equipment received in support of the incident; and brief incoming personnel, if applicable, on  
413 work status and assignments.

### 414 Unrequested Resources

415 During incidents, emergency responders and volunteers sometimes come to an incident area  
416 without being officially requested by the on scene command. Despite their good intentions, such

417 resources converging on a site interferes with incident management activities and places an extra  
418 logistical and management burden on an already stressed system by

- 419 • Creating additional supervisory, logistical, and safety requirements;
- 420 • Depleting the resources needed to provide continued services to their home community;
- 421 • Complicating resource tracking and accountability; and/or
- 422 • Limiting the access of formally requested resources.

423 In emergency situations, individuals who want to help should affiliate with a recognized  
424 volunteer organization or other organized group to participate in relief efforts.

## 425 E. Mutual Aid

426 Mutual aid is the reciprocated sharing of resources and services between jurisdictions or  
427 organizations. Mutual aid occurs routinely and is based on the resource needs identified by the  
428 requesting organization. This assistance ranges from the daily dispatch of law enforcement,  
429 emergency medical services (EMS), and fire service resources between local communities, to the  
430 movement of local resources within a state or across state lines when larger-scale incidents  
431 occur. During incidents and events of varying sizes and complexity, mutual aid can provide  
432 essential assistance to fill mission needs.

### 433 National Mutual Aid

434 An integrated nationwide network of mutual aid systems enhances the overall preparedness and  
435 readiness of the Nation by allowing jurisdictions and organizations efficiently and effectively  
436 account for, order, and mobilize outside resources. In support of these networks, NIMS includes  
437 guidance for the ongoing development and sustainment of mutual aid efforts nationwide.

438 The mutual aid network includes all types of mutual aid organizations and agreements, which  
439 jurisdictions and organizations typically establish according to geopolitical boundaries including  
440 local, regional, intrastate, tribal, territorial, and insular area jurisdictions and organizations.  
441 Mutual aid typically involves preplanning, training, response, mitigation, recovery, and  
442 restoration before, during, or after an incident or event. Mutual aid supplements traditional  
443 resource streams. The integration and management of mutual aid efforts nationwide enable  
444 effective resource management before, during, and after an incident.

### 445 Mutual Aid Agreements and Compacts

446 Formal agreements or compacts among all parties sharing, providing, or requesting resources  
447 enable effective and efficient resource management.

448 Mutual aid agreements already exist in various forms among and between all levels of  
449 government. These agreements authorize mutual aid between two or more neighboring  
450 communities, between all jurisdictions within a state, between states, and/or between Federal  
451 agencies. Mutual aid also exists through formal and informal arrangements developed by NGOs,  
452 by tribal governments, and in various forms within the private sector. Mutual aid agreements can  
453 support both emergency incidents and pre-planned events.

454 Mutual aid agreements establish the legal basis for two or more entities to share resources. These  
455 types of agreements often address participating entities' liability, compensation, and procedures,  
456 and often include the following:

- 457 • **Reimbursement:** If expected between the entities conducting mutual aid, the agreement can  
458 specify the parameters for reimbursement.
- 459 • **Recognition of Licensure and Certification:** Mutual aid agreements can be structured to  
460 ensure recognition of the licensure across geopolitical boundaries.
- 461 • **Procedures for Mobilization (Request, Dispatch, and Response):** Specific procedures to  
462 request and dispatch resources through mutual aid can be defined in the agreement.
- 463 • **Protocols for Voice and Data Interoperability:** Agreements often include protocols that  
464 specify how different communications and information technology systems share  
465 information.
- 466 • **Protocols for Resource Management:** Agreements often include standard templates for  
467 packaging resources based on NIMS resource typing definitions and/or local inventory  
468 systems.

### 469 **Mutual Aid Process**

470 Upon receipt of a request for mutual aid, the supporting jurisdiction evaluates the request against  
471 its capacity to accommodate the temporary loss of the resource(s).

#### 472 **Example: Mutual Aid Considerations**

473 Can a fire department deploy 20 percent of its equipment and personnel to another jurisdiction for 30  
474 days and still meet its own community's needs?

475 If the providing jurisdiction determines it can accommodate the requested deployment of  
476 resources, it identifies specific resources and arranges their deployment in accordance with the  
477 terms of the mutual aid agreement. The receiving jurisdiction can decline resources if they do not  
478 meet its needs.

## 479 III. Management and Coordination

480 Most incidents are managed locally, typically handled by the communications systems, dispatch  
481 centers, and emergency management and operations personnel within a single jurisdiction.  
482 Larger and more complex incidents, however, may begin with a single jurisdiction, but rapidly  
483 expand to multidisciplinary, multijurisdictional levels requiring outside resources and support.  
484 Standard incident management and coordination systems allow for the seamless integration of  
485 these outside resources, and enable assisting personnel from anywhere in the Nation to  
486 understand where they fit within the overall incident management structure. The Management  
487 and Coordination component describes the systems, principles, and structures that provide a  
488 standard, national framework for incident management.

489 Regardless of the size, complexity, or scope of the incident, effective management and  
490 coordination—using flexible and standard processes and systems—are critical to save lives and  
491 stabilize the situation. Incident management and coordination occur across the whole community  
492 and consist of four areas of responsibility:

- 493 1. Direct tactical response to stabilize the incident, save lives, and protect property and the  
494 environment;
- 495 2. Incident support through strategic coordination, resource acquisition, and information  
496 gathering;
- 497 3. Policy guidance and senior level decision making; and
- 498 4. Outreach and communication with the media and public to keep them informed about the  
499 incident.

500 This work is accomplished through the use of ICS, CMS, MAC Groups, and Joint Information  
501 Systems (JIS), respectively. The Management and Coordination component defines these  
502 structures and explains how various elements operating at different levels of incident  
503 management interface to achieve the maximum effect through a shared understanding. By  
504 describing unified doctrine with common terminology, organizational structures, and operational  
505 protocols, NIMS enables all those involved in an incident—from the IC at the scene to national  
506 leaders in a major disaster—to harmonize and maximize the effects of their efforts.

### 507 **NIMS Management and Coordination Characteristics**

508 Incident management and coordination under NIMS is based on the following characteristics,  
509 which contribute to the strength and efficiency of the overall system:

- 510 • Common Terminology
- 511 • Modular Organization
- 512 • Management by Objectives
- 513 • Incident Action Planning
- 514 • Manageable Span of Control
- 515 • Incident Facilities and Locations
- 516 • Comprehensive Resource Management
- 517 • Integrated Communications
- 518 • Establishment and Transfer of Command
- 519 • Unified Command
- 520 • Chain of Command and Unity of Command
- 521 • Accountability
- 522 • Dispatch/Deployment
- 523 • Information and Intelligence Management

## 524 *Common Terminology*

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

- 528 • **Organizational Functions:** Major functions and functional units with incident management  
529 responsibilities are named and defined. Terminology for the organizational elements is  
530 standard and consistent.
- 531 • **Resource Descriptions:** Major resources—including personnel, equipment, teams and  
532 facilities—are given common names and are typed with respect to their capabilities to help  
533 avoid confusion and to enhance interoperability.
- 534 • **Incident Facilities:** Common terminology is used to designate the facilities in the vicinity of  
535 the incident area that are used during the course of the incident.

## 536 *Modular Organization*

537 The ICS and CMS organizational structures develop in a modular fashion based on an incident's  
538 size, complexity, and hazard environment. The Incident Commander (IC) and Center Director  
539 (CD) can establish additional functional elements as needed, each of which may be further  
540 subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination.  
541 Responsibility for the establishment and expansion of the ICS and CMS modular organizations  
542 ultimately rests with the IC and CD, respectively, who base their organizations on the needs of  
543 the situation. As incident complexity increases, the organizations expand as functional  
544 responsibilities are delegated. The number of management, supervisory, and support positions  
545 expands to adequately address the needs of the incident.

## 546 *Management by Objectives*

547 The IC or Unified Commanders establish incident objectives that drive incident operations in the  
548 field. Likewise, the CD, often with direction from a Policy Group, establishes center objectives  
549 that drive incident activities in an operations/coordination center. Management by objectives  
550 includes the following:

- 551 • Establishing response priorities and incident objectives—statements of guidance and  
552 direction used to select strategies and the tactical direction of resources;
- 553 • Establishing specific, measurable, and realistic tactics, tasks, or activities in support of  
554 defined strategies;
- 555 • Developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols for various incident  
556 management functional units to accomplish identified tasks; and
- 557 • Documenting results against the objectives to measure performance, facilitate corrective  
558 actions, and inform development of incident objectives for the subsequent operational period.

## 559 *Incident Action Planning*

560 Centralized, coordinated incident action planning guides incident management activities.  
561 Incident Action Plans (IAP) and Center Action Plans (CAP) represent concise, coherent means  
562 of capturing and communicating overall incident objectives, tactics, and assignments for

563 operational and support activities in the field (IAPs) and at operations/coordination centers  
564 (CAPs).

565 Every incident should have an action plan. However, not all incidents require written plans. The  
566 need for written plans and attachments depends on the incident's needs, the decisions of  
567 command, and certain legal requirements. Formal IAPs or CAPs are rarely developed for most  
568 initial response operations or center activations. However, if an incident or activation is likely to  
569 extend beyond one operational period, becomes more complex, or involves multiple jurisdictions  
570 and/or agencies, preparing a written IAP or CAP becomes increasingly important to maintain  
571 effective, efficient, and safe operations.

### 572 *Manageable Span of Control*

573 Maintaining an appropriate span of control helps to ensure an effective and efficient incident  
574 management operation and enables supervisors to supervise and control their subordinates, as  
575 well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision. The type of  
576 incident, nature of the task, existing hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel  
577 and resources all influence span of control considerations.

#### 578 **Manageable Span of Control**

579 The span of control of any individual with incident management supervisory responsibility should range  
580 from three to seven subordinates, with five being optimal. Supervisors request and assign subordinate  
581 supervisors as necessary to maintain this ratio.

### 582 *Incident Facilities and Locations*

583 Depending on the incident size and complexity, Incident Command establishes various types of  
584 support facilities to accomplish a variety of purposes, and directs their identification and location  
585 based on the requirements of the situation. Typically, designated facilities include the Incident  
586 Command Post (ICP), bases, camps, staging areas, mass casualty triage areas, point-of-  
587 distribution sites, and others as needed.

### 588 *Comprehensive Resource Management*

589 Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date inventory of resources is a critical component of incident  
590 management and emergency response. Resources include personnel, equipment, teams, and  
591 facilities available or potentially available for assignment or allocation. The Resource  
592 Management component of this document describes this in more detail.

### 593 *Integrated Communications*

594 Incident managers facilitate communications through the development and use of a common  
595 communications plan, interoperable communications processes, and systems. This integrated  
596 approach links tactical and support units of the various agencies involved. Integrated  
597 communications are necessary to maintain connectivity, achieve situational awareness, and  
598 facilitate information sharing. Planning, both in advance of and during an incident, addresses  
599 equipment, systems, and protocols necessary to achieve integrated voice and data  
600 communications. ICS Forms 205 and 205A assist managers in developing an effective  
601 communications plan.



602 *Establishment and Transfer of Command*

603 The IC/Unified Command (UC) should clearly establish the command function at the beginning  
604 of an incident. The jurisdiction or organization with primary responsibility for the incident  
605 designates the individual at the scene responsible for establishing command and protocol for  
606 transferring command. When command is transferred, the process includes a briefing that  
607 captures all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations.

608 *Unified Command*

609 UC is typically executed during incidents involving multiple jurisdictions, a single jurisdiction  
610 with multiagency involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement. This  
611 may include the integration of neighboring geographical jurisdictions or the inclusion of  
612 overlapping local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal jurisdictions. UC allows agencies with  
613 different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together  
614 effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

615 *Chain of Command and Unity of Command*

616 Chain of command refers to the orderly line of hierarchy within the ranks of the incident  
617 management organization. Unity of command means that all individuals, whether assigned to an  
618 ICP or an operations/coordination center, have a single designated supervisor to whom they  
619 report. These principles clarify reporting relationships and eliminate confusion caused by  
620 multiple, conflicting directives, enabling incident managers at all levels to direct the actions of  
621 all personnel under their supervision.

622 *Accountability*

623 Effective accountability for all resources during an incident is essential. Incident management  
624 personnel should adhere to certain principles of accountability, including check-in/checkout,  
625 incident action planning, unity of command, personal responsibility, span of control, and  
626 resource tracking.

627 *Dispatch/Deployment*

628 Resources deploy only when appropriate authorities request and dispatch them through  
629 established resource management systems. Resources that authorities do not request should  
630 refrain from spontaneous deployment to avoid overburdening the recipient and compounding  
631 accountability challenges.

632 *Information and Intelligence Management*

633 The incident management organization establishes a process for gathering, analyzing, assessing,  
634 sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence. Information and  
635 intelligence management includes identifying essential elements of information (EEI) to ensure  
636 incident personnel gather the most accurate and appropriate data, translate it into useful  
637 information, and communicate it with appropriate personnel.

## 638 A. Incident Command System (ICS)

639 ICS specifies an organizational structure for incident management that integrates and coordinates  
 640 a combination of personnel, equipment, facilities, procedures, and communications. Using ICS  
 641 for every incident or event helps hone and maintain skills needed to coordinate efforts  
 642 effectively. ICS is used by all levels of government as well as by many NGOs and private sector  
 643 organizations. ICS is applicable across disciplines and enables incident managers from different  
 644 organizations to work together seamlessly. This system includes six major functional areas,  
 645 staffed as needed, for a given incident or event: Command, Operations,  
 646 Intelligence/Investigation, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

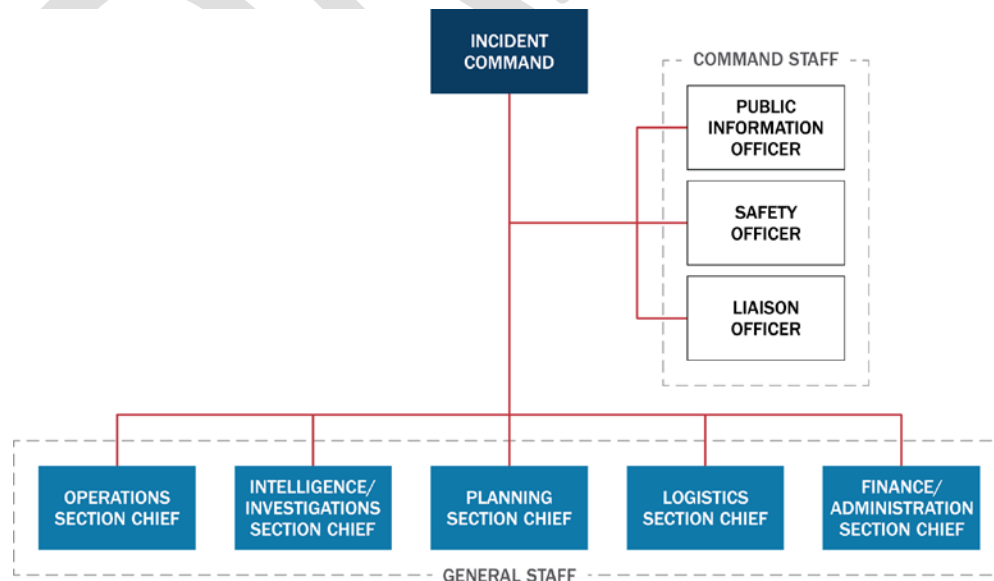
### 647 Incident Command

648 Incident Command is responsible for the overall management of the incident. Command and  
 649 General Staff support the Incident Command as required by the needs of the incident. The  
 650 command function is conducted in two general ways: a single IC or UC.

#### 651 *Single IC*

652 When an incident occurs within a single jurisdiction and without jurisdictional or functional  
 653 agency overlap, the appropriate authority designates a single IC who will have overall incident  
 654 management responsibility. In some cases where incident management crosses jurisdictional  
 655 and/or functional agency boundaries, the various jurisdictions and organizations may still agree  
 656 to designate a single IC. Jurisdictional officials should consider pre-designating ICs for  
 657 established IMTs.

658 The IC establishes the incident objectives that are the foundation for incident action planning.  
 659 The IC maintains responsibility for all incident activities, approves the IAP, and oversees all  
 660 requests pertaining to ordering and releasing incident resources. Figure 2 shows a sample  
 661 command staff structure with single designated IC.



662

663

Figure 2: ICS Command Staff and General Staff

664 *Unified Command*

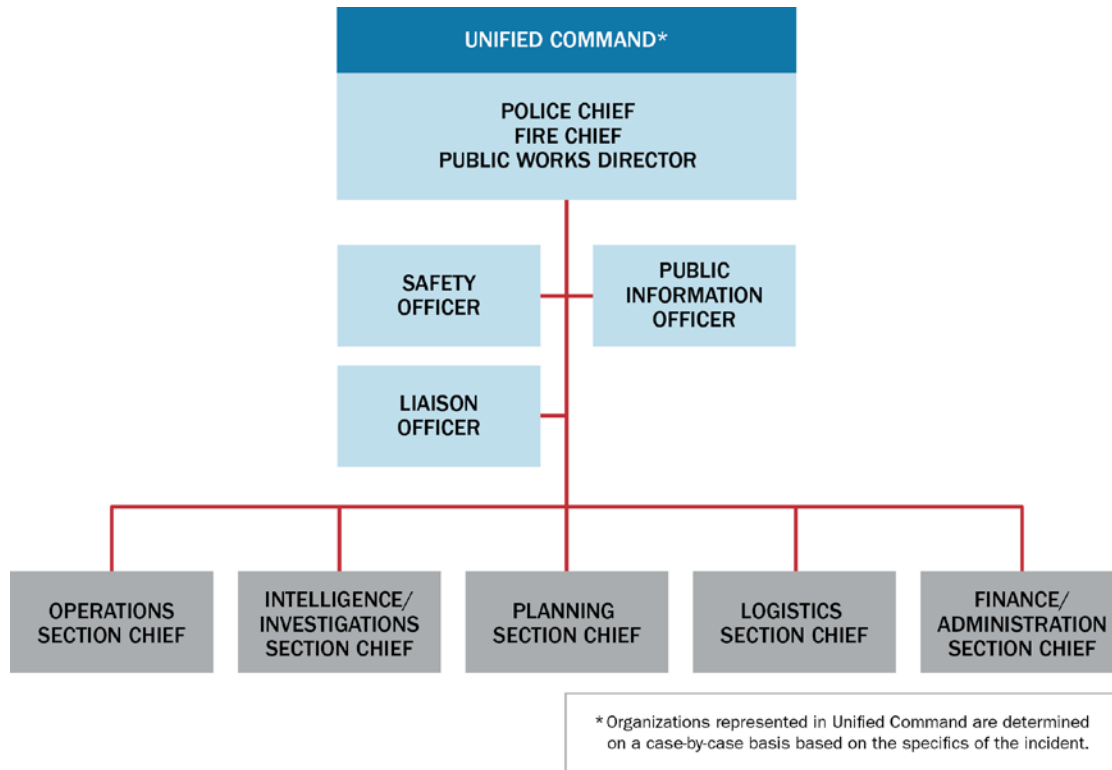
665 UC is an important element in multijurisdictional or multiagency incident management and  
666 enables jurisdictions and organizations with different legal, geographic, and functional  
667 responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively.

668 The use of UC enables jurisdictions and those with authority or functional responsibility for the  
669 incident to provide management and direction jointly through the establishment of a common set  
670 of incident objectives and strategies and a single IAP. However, each participating partner  
671 maintains authority, responsibility, and accountability for its resources and personnel.

672 UC functions as a single integrated management organization and involves the following:

- 673 • Establishing a single ICP for the incident;
- 674 • Establishing consolidated incident objectives, priorities, and strategies, and updating them  
675 every operational period;
- 676 • Selecting a single Operations Section Chief (OSC) based on current incident priorities, and  
677 other Command and General Staff as necessary;
- 678 • Keeping each other informed of specific needs;
- 679 • Establishing a single system for ordering resources;
- 680 • Approving a consolidated written or oral IAP to be evaluated and updated at regular intervals  
681 (an operational period);
- 682 • Establishing procedures for joint decision making and documentation; and
- 683 • Capturing lessons learned.

684 The exact composition of the UC structure depends on the location of the incident (i.e., which  
685 jurisdictions or organizations are involved) and the type of incident (i.e., which functional  
686 agencies of the involved jurisdiction or organization are needed). The organizations participating  
687 in the UC use a collaborative process to establish, identify, and rank incident priorities and to  
688 determine incident objectives. Life safety, of both responders and the public, is always the  
689 highest priority reflected in the incident objectives. Figure 3 depicts a UC structure.



690

691

**Figure 3: Sample ICS: Unified Command**

692

### Selecting an OSC

693 The OSC usually comes from the organization with the greatest jurisdictional or organizational  
 694 involvement, as determined by the typical order of incident priorities: first, life safety of responders and  
 695 the public, then stabilizing the incident, and then protecting property and the environment. The resource  
 696 requirements of these priorities shift over time as the incident evolves, and the designation of the OSC  
 697 shifts accordingly.

698 Agencies or organizations involved in the incident that lack jurisdictional responsibility or  
 699 authorities are supporting and/or assisting agencies. Whether represented in UC or through the  
 700 Liaison Officer, every jurisdiction, organization, and/or agency representative is responsible for  
 701 communicating agency-specific information, including

- 702 • Responsibilities for incident management;
- 703 • Incident concerns;
- 704 • Resource availability and capabilities;
- 705 • Limitations; and
- 706 • Areas of agreement and disagreement between agency officials.

## 707 Comparison of Single IC and UC

### 708 Single IC

709 The IC is solely responsible (within the confines of his or her authority) for establishing incident objectives  
710 and strategies and is directly responsible for ensuring that all functional area activities are directed toward  
711 accomplishment of the objectives.

### 712 UC

713 The individuals designated by their jurisdictional or organizational authorities (or by departments within a  
714 single jurisdiction) jointly determine objectives, strategies, plans, resource allocations, and priorities and  
715 work together to execute integrated incident operations and maximize the use of assigned resources.

## 716 Command Staff

717 Incident Command assigns Command Staff as needed to support the command function. In an  
718 incident command organization, the Command Staff typically includes a Public Information  
719 Officer (PIO), a Safety Officer, and a Liaison Officer, who report directly to the IC/UC and have  
720 assistants as necessary. Additional positions may be needed, depending on the nature, scope,  
721 complexity, and location of the incident, or according to specific requirements established by the  
722 IC/UC. For example, the IC may need to assign a Deputy IC to maintain span of control if all  
723 Command and General Staff positions are filled.

## 724 Typing and Qualifications of ICS positions

725 Typing ICS personnel allows jurisdictions and organizations to ensure personnel requested through  
726 mutual aid or otherwise deployed to the incident have the knowledge, training, skills and experience to  
727 perform the responsibilities required of their position. The development of a national qualification system  
728 enhances the interoperability and exchange of personnel regardless of the size, type or complexity of an  
729 incident.

### 730 Public Information Officer

731 The PIO interfaces with the public, media, and/or with other agencies with incident-related  
732 information needs. The PIO gathers, verifies, coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible,  
733 and timely information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed;  
734 and other matters of interest for both internal and external audiences. The PIO also performs a  
735 key public information monitoring role. Whether the command structure is single or unified,  
736 there should be only one PIO within the ICS structure per incident. The PIO might have  
737 assistants from other involved agencies, departments, or organizations. The IC/UC approves the  
738 release of incident-related information. In large-scale incidents or when multiple command posts  
739 are established, the PIO participates in or leads the Joint Information Center (JIC) in order to  
740 ensure consistency in providing information to the public.

### 741 Safety Officer

742 The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the IC/UC on all matters relating to  
743 safety, including the health and safety of incident management personnel. The ultimate  
744 responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management rests with the IC/UC and supervisors  
745 at all levels. The Safety Officer is, in turn, responsible to the IC/UC for establishing and  
746 communicating the systems and procedures necessary to ensure ongoing assessment of  
747 hazardous environments. These responsibilities include developing and maintaining the incident  
748 Safety Plan, coordinating multiagency safety efforts, and implementing measures to promote the

749 safety of emergency responders and of incident sites. The Safety Officer has authority to stop  
750 and/or prevent unsafe acts during the incident. Agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions that  
751 contribute to joint safety management efforts do not lose their individual identities or  
752 responsibility for their own programs, policies, and personnel. Rather, each contributes to the  
753 overall effort to protect all personnel involved in the incident.

#### 754 *Liaison Officer*

755 The Liaison Officer serves as the Incident Command's point of contact for representatives of  
756 governmental agencies, jurisdictions, NGOs, and private sector organizations not included in  
757 UC. Through the Liaison Officer, these representatives provide input on their agency,  
758 organization, or jurisdiction's policies, resource availability, and other incident-related matters.  
759 Under either a single-IC or a UC structure, representatives from assisting or cooperating  
760 jurisdictions and organizations coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Liaison representatives  
761 assigned to an incident should have the authority to speak for their parent jurisdictions or  
762 organizations on all matters, following appropriate consultations with their agency leadership.  
763 The Liaison Officer may have assistants from other public or private jurisdictions or  
764 organizations involved in incident management activities to facilitate coordination.

#### 765 *Additional Command Advisors*

766 Additional Command Staff positions may be necessary, depending on the nature of the incident  
767 and specific requirements established by Incident Command.

#### 768 **Additional Command Advisors Examples**

- 769 • Legal counsel advises Incident Command on legal matters, such as emergency proclamations, the  
770 legality of evacuation and quarantine orders, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media  
771 access.
- 772 • A medical advisor provides advice and recommendations to Incident Command about medical and  
773 mental health services, mass casualty, acute care, vector control, epidemiology, or mass prophylaxis  
774 considerations, particularly in response to a bioterrorism incident.
- 775 • An access and functional needs advisor provides expertise regarding communication, transportation,  
776 supervision, and essential services for diverse populations in the affected area.
- 777 • A science and technology advisor monitors incident operations and advises the IC on the integration of  
778 science and technology into planning and decision-making and may convene a science and technology  
779 advisory group, in order to incorporate additional expertise.

#### 780 **General Staff**

781 The General Staff is responsible for the functional aspects of the incident command structure.  
782 The General Staff consists of the Operations, Intelligence/Investigations, Planning, Logistics,  
783 and Finance/Administration Section Chiefs.

784 The IC/UC activates these sections as needed, depending on the requirements of the incident.<sup>4</sup>  
785 The section chiefs have one or more deputies assigned as necessary, with the assignment of  
786 additional deputies encouraged in the case of multijurisdictional incidents. The sections are  
787 discussed more fully below.

---

<sup>4</sup> These functions are necessary for every response, even if the section is not staffed. The responsibility for each of these major functions defaults to the IC until he or she specifically assigns someone as section chief.

### 788 *Operations Section*

789 Operations Section personnel are responsible for tactical activities focused on saving lives,  
790 stabilizing the incident, reducing the immediate hazard, protecting property and the environment,  
791 establishing situational control, and restoring normal operations. Incident operations can be  
792 organized and executed in many ways. The OSC selects the specific method based on the type  
793 and scope of incident, the jurisdictions and organizations involved, and the priorities, objectives  
794 and strategies of the incident management effort. The IC/UC selects the OSC based on current  
795 incident priorities, and should review that selection periodically as the incident evolves. Key  
796 functions of Operations Section personnel include the following:

- 797 • Directing the management of all tactical activities on behalf of the IC (unless the IC/UC  
798 establishes an Intelligence/Investigation Section to handle intelligence and investigation  
799 related tactics separately);
- 800 • Developing and implementing strategies and tactics to carry out the incident objectives set by  
801 the IC;
- 802 • Organizing the Operations Section, using branches, divisions, groups, task forces, and/or  
803 strike teams, depending on the needs of the incident, to maintain span of control, optimize the  
804 use of resources, and reduce the complexity of incident management and communications;  
805 and
- 806 • Supporting the development of the IAP to ensure it accurately reflects current operations.

### 807 *Intelligence/Investigations Section*

808 When the Intelligence/Investigations (I/I) Section is staffed, personnel from this section are  
809 responsible for the management, coordination, and direction of intelligence and investigation  
810 operations and activities. The IC/UC establishes the Intelligence/Investigations Section as a  
811 General Staff Section when a criminal or terrorist act is involved or suspected and or potentially  
812 for non-law-enforcement purposes such as epidemiological, accident cause, or mass fatality  
813 investigations. The I/I Section Chief uses or modifies the groups of this section as needed to  
814 perform required functions. This may include, for example, the establishment of task force  
815 operations for crime scene processing. The nature of an incident, in addition to legal constraints,  
816 may restrict the type and scope of information that personnel may share. However, I/I Section  
817 staff should share any information that affects or threatens life safety of the responders and/or the  
818 public with appropriate Command and General Staff promptly, while complying with applicable  
819 information sharing laws.

820 Key functions of the I/I Section include

- 821 • Coordinating the investigative effort at the incident site, including the prevention and  
822 deterrence of additional criminal activity, incidents, or attacks;
- 823 • Collecting, processing, analyzing, and appropriately disseminating unclassified, classified,  
824 and open-source intelligence information;
- 825 • Conducting a thorough and comprehensive investigation that leads to the identification,  
826 apprehension, and prosecution of the perpetrators;
- 827 • Identifying, documenting, processing, collecting, creating a chain of custody for,  
828 safeguarding, examining, analyzing, and storing probative evidence;

- 829 • Determining the source or cause of the incident and controlling the spread and impact in the  
830 investigation of emerging incidents (e.g., fire, disease outbreak);
- 831 • Directing missing persons and mass fatality investigations; and
- 832 • Ensuring investigative personnel are available and necessary resources are properly  
833 distributed, maintained, safeguarded, stored, and returned.

#### 834 *Planning Section*

835 Planning Section personnel collect, evaluate, and disseminate incident situation information and  
836 intelligence to the IC/UC and incident managers. The staff within this section prepares status  
837 reports, displays situation information, maintains the status of assigned resources, and prepares  
838 and documents the IAP based on input from the other sections and Command Staff and guidance  
839 from the IC/UC. The IAP defines the overall incident objectives and tactics established by IC. In  
840 the case of a UC, the IAP describes the mission and policy needs of each agency, as well as  
841 interaction between jurisdictions, functional agencies, and private organizations. The IAP also  
842 addresses tactics and support activities for the planned operational period, generally 12 to 24  
843 hours. Additional key functions of Planning Section personnel include

- 844 • Facilitating key incident planning meetings;
- 845 • Recording resources status and anticipated resource needs;
- 846 • Collecting, organizing, displaying, and disseminating incident status information and  
847 analyzing the situation as it changes;
- 848 • Planning for the orderly, safe, and efficient demobilization of incident resources;
- 849 • Collecting, recording, and safeguarding all documents relevant to the incident; and
- 850 • Supporting requirements for technical experts.

#### 851 *Logistics Section*

852 Logistics Section personnel are responsible for all service support needed for effective and  
853 efficient incident management, including ordering resources. Staff in this section also provide  
854 facilities, security (of the incident command facilities and personnel), transportation, supplies,  
855 equipment maintenance and fuel, food services, communications and information technology  
856 support, and emergency responder medical services, including inoculations. Key functions of  
857 Logistics Section personnel include

- 858 • Ordering, receiving, storing/housing, and processing all incident-related resources, personnel,  
859 and supplies;
- 860 • Providing all ground transportation during an incident, maintaining and supplying vehicles,  
861 keeping vehicle usage records, and developing incident traffic plans;
- 862 • Setting up, maintaining, securing, and demobilizing all incident facilities;
- 863 • Determining food and water requirements including ordering food, providing cooking  
864 facilities, maintaining food service areas, and managing food security and safety;
- 865 • Acquiring, setting up, maintaining, and accounting for communications equipment and  
866 maintaining an incident communications plan; and
- 867 • Providing effective and efficient medical services to incident personnel.



### 868 *Finance/Administration Section*

869 The IC/UC establishes a Finance/Administration Section when the incident management  
870 activities require on-scene or incident-specific finance and administrative support services.  
871 Responsibilities of the staff within this section include recording personnel time, maintaining  
872 vendor contracts, administering compensation and claims, and conducting an overall cost  
873 analysis for the incident. If this section is established, close coordination with the Planning and  
874 Logistics Sections is essential so operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

875 The personnel in the Finance/Administration Section support a critical function of ICS in large,  
876 complex incidents involving funding originating from multiple sources. In addition to monitoring  
877 multiple sources of funds, staff in the section track and report the accrued costs as the incident  
878 progresses. This allows the IC/UC to forecast needs and request additional funds before  
879 operations are negatively affected. Key functions of Finance/Administration Section personnel  
880 include

- 881 • Tracking costs, analyzing cost data, making estimates, and recommending cost savings  
882 measures;
- 883 • Analyzing, reporting, and recording financial concerns resulting from property damage,  
884 injuries, or fatalities at the incident;
- 885 • Managing financial matters concerning vendor contracts;
- 886 • Ensuring personnel assignment and travel orders are accurate;
- 887 • Managing administrative databases and spreadsheets used for analysis and decision making;  
888 and
- 889 • Recording time for incident personnel and hired equipment.

### 890 **Common Types of ICS Facilities**

891 The IC/UC may establish several kinds and types of facilities in and around the incident area.  
892 The IC/UC determines the kinds and locations of facilities based on the needs of the incident.  
893 These facilities may include the following designated facilities, among others.

#### 894 *Incident Command Post*

895 The ICP is the location of the tactical-level, on-scene incident command organization. This  
896 location typically comprises the Incident Command and the Command and General Staffs, but  
897 may include other designated incident personnel from local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal  
898 jurisdictions and organizations, as well as NGOs and the private sector. Typically, the ICP is  
899 located at or in the immediate vicinity of the incident site and is the location for the conduct of  
900 direct, on-scene control of tactical operations. Personnel conduct incident planning at the ICP;  
901 the IC/UC would also establish an incident communications center at this location. The ICP may  
902 be co-located with an Incident Base, if the communications requirements can be met.

#### 903 *Staging Areas*

904 The OSC may establish Staging Areas to enable the positioning of and accounting for available  
905 resources. A Staging Area can be any location in which personnel, supplies, and equipment are  
906 temporarily housed or parked while awaiting operational assignment. Staging Areas may include  
907 temporary feeding, fueling, and sanitation services. The OSC assigns a manager for each Staging

908 Area, who checks in all incoming resources, dispatches resources at the OSC's request, and  
909 requests Logistics Section support, as necessary, for resources located in the Staging Area.

### 910 **Incident Base**

911 An Incident Base specifies a location at which personnel conduct primary support activities. An  
912 IC/UC establishes an Incident Base to house equipment and personnel support operations for  
913 multiple incident sites.

### 914 **Camps**

915 Camps are satellites to the Incident Base, established where they can best support incident  
916 operations. Camps provide support, such as food, sleeping areas, and sanitation. Camps may also  
917 provide minor maintenance and servicing of equipment. Camps are relocated as necessary to  
918 meet changing operational requirements.

### 919 **Incident Management Teams**

920 An IMT is a group of individuals trained to serve as the Command and General Staff and other  
921 positions in an ICS organization. Pre-established IMTs exist at national, state, and local levels  
922 and have formal notification, deployment, and operational procedures in place. In other cases, ad  
923 hoc IMTs are formed at an incident or for specific events from available, qualified individuals.  
924 The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the IMT's identified  
925 response capabilities and responsibilities, are factors in determining an IMT's type or level.

### 926 **Delegation of Authority**

927 A statement the official delegating authority provides to the IC that assigns responsibility. The delegation  
928 of authority document typically describes objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other  
929 considerations or guidelines. Many agencies require the delegating authority to provide the IC a written  
930 delegation of authority in order for the IC to assume command.

### 931 **Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT)**

932 FEMA IMATs also use ICS. The primary mission of a FEMA IMAT is to rapidly deploy to an  
933 incident or incident-threatened venue, provide leadership in the identification and provision of  
934 Federal assistance, and coordinate and integrate inter-jurisdictional response in support of an  
935 affected state or territory. FEMA maintains two kinds of IMATs: National IMATs and Regional  
936 IMATs. When deployed to an incident, other personnel from FEMA and/or partner organizations  
937 assist the IMAT. IMATs organize according to ICS and establish a Joint Field Office (JFO). The  
938 IMAT also coordinates with state officials, other key partners, the Regional Response  
939 Coordination Centers (RRCC), and the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) staff at  
940 FEMA Headquarters to share information, plan, deploy Federal resources, and work  
941 collaboratively to help stabilize the incident and meet the needs of survivors.

942 In addition to FEMA IMATs, IMATs exist at various levels of government and within the  
943 private sector. They facilitate information sharing, coordinate resource requests, provide  
944 planning support, help to set up incident facilities, and assist incident managers and elected and  
945 appointed officials to determine immediate needs and coordinate support.

## 946 **Incident Complex: Multiple Incident Management within a Single ICS Organization**

947 An Incident Complex refers to two or more individual incidents located in the same general area  
948 and assigned to a single IC or a UC. When an Incident Complex is established, the previously  
949 identified incident management organizations become branches within the Operations Section of  
950 the incident complex IMT. This approach provides greater potential for future expansion. If any  
951 of the incidents within a complex has the potential to become a large-scale incident, it should be  
952 established as a separate incident with its own ICS organization.

953 Incident Complexes are commonly used in wildfire response, when multiple fires occur within  
954 close proximity to one another. An Incident Complex may be managed by either a single IC or a  
955 UC. The following are additional considerations for the use of an Incident Complex:

- 956 • The incidents are close enough to be managed by the same IMT;
- 957 • A combined management approach could achieve staff or logistical support economies;
- 958 • The number of overall incidents within the jurisdiction requires consolidations wherever  
959 possible to conserve staff and reduce costs; and
- 960 • A single Incident Command can adequately provide planning, logistics, and  
961 finance/administration activities.

## 962 **Area Command**

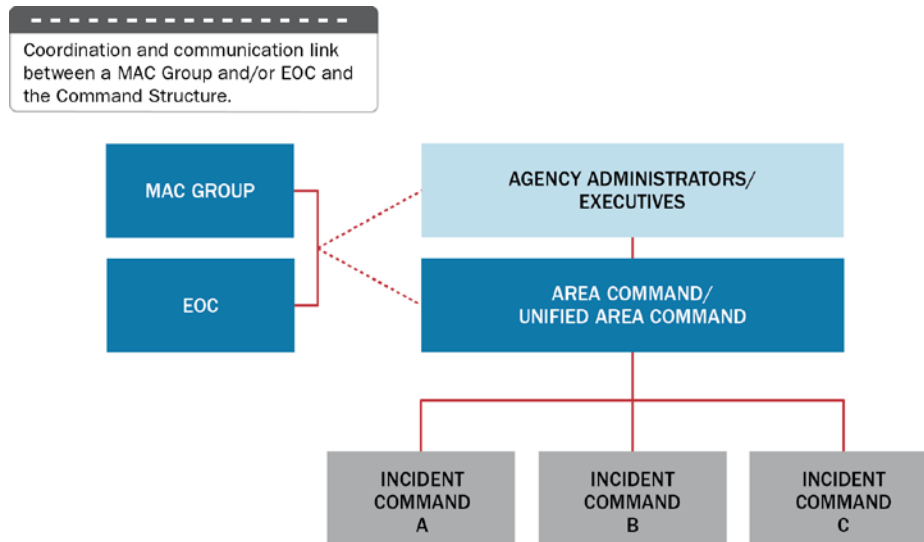
963 The Area Command organization oversees the management of multiple incidents handled  
964 individually by separate ICS organizations or the management of a very large or evolving  
965 incident engaging multiple IMTs. An agency administrator, executive, or other public official  
966 with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident usually makes the decision to establish an Area  
967 Command. An Area Command is activated if necessary, depending on the complexity of the  
968 incident and incident management span-of-control considerations. Due to the scope of incidents  
969 involving Area Commands and the likelihood of cross-jurisdictional operations, Area Commands  
970 are frequently established as Unified Area Commands, working under the same principles as a  
971 UC. Area Command is particularly relevant to incidents that

- 972 • Involve several IMTs that are requesting similar, scarce resources;
- 973 • Are geographically dispersed;
- 974 • Are not site-specific; and/or
- 975 • Evolve over long periods (e.g., public health emergencies).

976 Incidents of different types or without similar resource needs are usually handled as separate  
977 incidents. Additional coordination structures, such as operations/coordination centers or MAC  
978 Groups, assist with coordinating the resource requirements of multiple ongoing incidents as  
979 necessary. The following sections describe these structures. Figure 4 depicts the relationship of  
980 an Area Command with a MAC Group and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

### 981 **Relationship between Area Command, an Operations/Coordination Center, and a MAC Group**

982 An Area Command oversees management coordination of the incident(s), while operations/ coordination  
983 centers, such as EOCs, and MAC Groups coordinate support.



984

985

**Figure 4: Example of Chain of Command and Reporting Relationships**

986

*Responsibilities of an Area Command*

987

- Develop broad objectives for the impacted area;

988

- Coordinate development of individual incident objectives and strategies;

989

- Allocate or reallocate resources as the established priorities change;

990

- Ensure that IC/UCs properly manage incidents;

991

- Ensure effective communications and data coordination;

992

- Ensure that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policies;

993

994

- Identify critical resource needs and report them to the established Agency Administrators directly or through a MAC Group or an operations/coordination center; and

995

996

- Ensure that short-term recovery is coordinated with the EOC to assist in the transition to long-term recovery operations.

997

998

## 999 B. Center Management System (CMS)

1000 Operations and coordination centers exist across the Nation, at all levels of government and  
1001 within jurisdictions and organizations of all sizes (including nongovernmental and private sector  
1002 entities). Operations/coordination centers are locations from which staff provide centralized and  
1003 coordinated support to Incident Command, on-scene personnel, and/or other  
1004 operations/coordination centers beyond what can be provided at the scene, and in many cases,  
1005 on-scene coordination and/or policy direction. Primary functions of staff in  
1006 operations/coordination centers include (1) sharing, collecting, and disseminating information;  
1007 (2) supporting resource needs and requests, including allocation and tracking; and (3)  
1008 coordinating plans and determining the current and future needs of the various jurisdictions and  
1009 organizations involved in an incident. Additionally, operations/coordination center personnel  
1010 support public and incident-specific communications, liaise with partners as needed, and support  
1011 the policy and legal needs of the IC and other decision makers.

1012 Staff in operations/coordination centers, regardless of their location, the type of incident they are  
1013 supporting, or their specific mission, share information and resources via interoperable, standard  
1014 procedures and processes. CMS identifies common functions; describes a standard management  
1015 and organizational structure; and defines standard activation levels to enhance the sharing of  
1016 personnel, equipment, and teams across centers and across jurisdictional boundaries.

### 1017 ICS and CMS Interface

1018 ICS is used to manage the on-scene/tactical-level efforts aimed at stabilizing the situation, saving lives,  
1019 and protecting property and the environment by directly applying resources. If necessary, an  
1020 operations/coordination center is activated to provide an increased level of support and to facilitate  
1021 coordination among organizations, senior leaders and elected officials, and jurisdictions.

1022 The CMS structure is compatible with the positions and titles defined in the ICS structure. The sections  
1023 and positions outlined in ICS and CMS are carefully designed to enable personnel working within both  
1024 structures to perform their duties in coordination with one another. However, the sections and positions  
1025 are distinct in order to reflect the different roles and responsibilities of ICS vs. CMS personnel and prevent  
1026 redundancies and confusion in training, typing, and qualifications. ICS and CMS personnel coordinate  
1027 with one another to meet the needs of the incident and fulfill resource and information requests.

1028 Together, ICS and CMS describe a comprehensive approach to structuring incident management  
1029 personnel— from the tactical responders on the scene to personnel providing coordination and support in  
1030 an operations/coordination center.

### 1031 Common Types of Operations/Coordination Centers

1032 All types of organizations use operation/coordination centers. These centers are common at the  
1033 various levels of government (e.g., a local EOC, a State Command Readiness Center, and a  
1034 Regional Operations Center), as well as with public and private infrastructure owners and  
1035 operators (e.g., public mass transit organizations, public utility companies, and health care  
1036 facilities) and NGOs (e.g., private businesses and nonprofit organizations). CMS describes a  
1037 common organizational structure for staff in these centers.

#### 1038 *Emergency Operations Centers*

1039 EOCs are the most common type of operations/coordination center. An EOC is a facility  
1040 established by a jurisdiction or organization from which to provide centralized and coordinated  
1041 multi-agency support to tactical incident management. EOC staff consolidate and exchange

1042 information, support decision making, and coordinate resources. The EOC staff support  
1043 personnel and other incident management organizations that are engaged in managing the  
1044 incident (i.e., closer to the incident). EOC personnel may provide support to staff at an ICP, other  
1045 field personnel not affiliated with an ICP (e.g., personnel conducting debris removal or managing  
1046 a shelter), or staff in another, more locally managed EOC (i.e., the relationship between a state  
1047 and a local EOC). EOCs exist at all levels of government (i.e., local [including town, county, and  
1048 city], state, tribal, territorial, and Federal) and in various NGOs.

#### 1049 *Business Emergency Operation Centers (BEOC)*

1050 Staff in BEOCs coordinate with businesses to improve their disaster preparedness; improve  
1051 communication with business and industry before, during, and after disasters; facilitate public-  
1052 private information exchange; engage key stakeholders with the ability to supply resources,  
1053 capabilities and expertise to help manage specific incidents; and help coordinate post-disaster  
1054 economic recovery.

#### 1055 *Departmental Operations Centers (DOC)*

1056 A DOC is specific to a single department, agency, or organization. DOC personnel focus on  
1057 coordinating resources for incidents, helping to ensure continuity of operations, and facilitating  
1058 information flow with departmental response personnel. DOC staffs are often linked to and, in  
1059 some cases, have liaisons present in multiagency EOCs. When no ICP is established, DOC staff  
1060 may direct resources on the ground, such as a public works operations center directing snow  
1061 removal operations or a local public health operations center overseeing the distribution of  
1062 medical countermeasures within their jurisdiction.

#### 1063 *Regional Communications/Dispatch Centers*

1064 Regional communications or dispatch centers exist to coordinate resources within and across  
1065 regions. For example, the ten wildfire Geographic Area Coordination Centers serve Federal and  
1066 state wildland fire agencies through logistical coordination and mobilization of resources  
1067 (people, aircraft, and ground equipment) throughout the geographical area, and with other  
1068 geographic areas, as necessary.

#### 1069 *Regional Response Coordination Center*

1070 The RRCC is a multiagency center that FEMA operates in each of the ten regional offices. Each  
1071 region supports specific states and tribes within its area of responsibility as they prepare for,  
1072 respond to, recover from, mitigate, and protect against disasters. RRCC personnel provide  
1073 overall emergency management coordination, coordinate Federal regional incident management  
1074 and support efforts, conduct planning, deploy regional-level resources, collect and disseminate  
1075 incident information, and maintain connectivity with staff in other Federal and state  
1076 operations/coordination centers. The personnel in RRCCs build and maintain situational  
1077 awareness of incidents at the regional level and coordinate regional incident support efforts.

#### 1078 *National Response Coordination Center*

1079 The NRCC is the facility where the National Response Coordination Staff (NRCS) coordinates  
1080 national-level resources and supports the ten FEMA regions and incidents in those regions.  
1081 FEMA activates the NRCS as needed to support the efforts of regional and field-level  
1082 components. It provides enhanced emergency management coordination, deploys national-level

1083 resources, and collects and disseminates incident information as it builds and maintains  
 1084 situational awareness. The NRCS includes representatives from FEMA as well as other Federal  
 1085 agencies identified in the National Response Framework and the Nation Disaster Recovery  
 1086 Framework. Representatives from the private sector and non-profit agencies may also support  
 1087 the NRCC to enhance information exchange and cooperation between these entities and the  
 1088 Federal Government.

1089 **United States Department of Transportation Crisis Management Center**

1090 The Crisis Management Center (CMC) serves as the focal point for the U.S. Department of  
 1091 Transportation’s (USDOT) actions during crises. The CMC monitors the Nation’s transportation  
 1092 systems and infrastructure 24-hours a day, seven days a week. It also hosts the Secretary’s  
 1093 Emergency Response Team and other personnel who provide the Secretary of Transportation  
 1094 with time-sensitive information during crises; support the Secretary with secure video  
 1095 teleconferencing and around-the-clock communications for unclassified and classified  
 1096 information; and, provide information to other Federal agencies, the White House, and USDOT  
 1097 headquarters and field staff. Additionally, the CMC is the central point for the USDOT’s  
 1098 interagency liaison and coordination with the NRCC at FEMA.

1099 **Configuration of CMS**

1100 Effective incident management requires close coordination between the staff at the incident  
 1101 level, organized by ICS, and the staff within operations and coordination centers, organized by  
 1102 CMS. As with ICS, CMS follows the NIMS Management and Coordination Characteristics and  
 1103 the positions (described below) closely align with the ICS structure and positions. However, the  
 1104 roles and responsibilities of operations/coordination centers are distinct from those of incident  
 1105 command, and the center organization and responsibilities of the individual sections and units  
 1106 reflect those differences. A CD leads the CMS organization and engages with other leadership to  
 1107 support the incident. Command Staff support the CD and may include a PIO, Liaison Officer,  
 1108 and Safety Officer. The General Staff sections consist of Strategic Operations, Information and  
 1109 Planning, Resource and Center Logistics, and Finance/Administration. As with ICS, the structure  
 1110 of CMS is flexible and adaptable to the needs of an incident or jurisdiction. The CD activates  
 1111 individual sections as needed. Figure 5 shows the Command and General Staff positions within  
 1112 CMS.



1113

1114

**Figure 5: CMS Command and General Staff**

1115 **Command Staff**

1116 **Center Director**

1117 The CD guides and oversees the activities of the sections and staff within CMS. Communication  
1118 between the CD, other senior officials (from supporting agencies or other jurisdictions), and  
1119 Incident Command (if established) is essential to the successful functioning of CMS.

1120 **Public Information Officer**

1121 The PIO advises the CD and center personnel on public information matters relating to the  
1122 incident. The center PIO coordinates and maintains close communication with the PIO assigned  
1123 to the ICP to coordinate messaging and information. The PIO also manages inquiries from the  
1124 media, the public, and elected officials; emergency public information and warnings; rumor  
1125 monitoring; and media relations. The PIO also coordinates other functions needed to obtain,  
1126 verify, and disseminate public information related to the incident. Information on public health,  
1127 safety, and protection is of particular importance for this role. The PIO is responsible for  
1128 coordinating with other organizational PIOs through the JIS and, if necessary, establishing or  
1129 otherwise supporting the JIC.

1130 **Liaison Officer**

1131 The Liaison Officer serves as the CD's point of contact for representatives of organizations not  
1132 otherwise represented in the center organization. Based on the needs of the incident, this may  
1133 include external governmental agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, NGOs, and/or private sector  
1134 representatives. These representatives coordinate through the Liaison Officer to advise the CD  
1135 and elected and appointed officials on matters related to the agency, jurisdiction, or organization  
1136 that they represent. In this role, Liaison Officers provide accurate and timely information  
1137 regarding the operational plan and other activities of their jurisdiction or organization and ensure  
1138 the requirements, resources, objectives, and information of the various participating  
1139 organizations are known and addressed.

1140 **Safety Officer**

1141 The Safety Officer monitors center operations and advises the CD on matters relating to the  
1142 health and safety of center personnel. The Safety Officer is responsible to the CD for the ongoing  
1143 assessment and communication of hazardous conditions to center staff. These responsibilities  
1144 include developing and maintaining the center Safety Plan, monitoring hazardous weather  
1145 conditions that may impact center personnel, ensuring proper risk management practices are  
1146 applied within the center, and recommending interventions as necessary to support the physical  
1147 and mental well-being of center staff.

1148 **Additional Command Advisors**

1149 Additional Command Staff positions may be necessary, depending on the nature of the incident  
1150 and specific requirements established by the CD.



- 1151 **Additional Command Advisors Examples**
- 1152 • The CD might assign a Legal Advisor to assist with legal compliance. This advisor recommends  
1153 alternative actions, researches waivers and exceptions, and coordinates with other involved attorneys.
  - 1154 • In the event of an industrial accident, or other technical hazard event, the CD may request  
1155 representatives from key industries to advise on technical issues, public/private resource coordination,  
1156 and potential cost share concerns.
  - 1157 • Elected officials and other executives often require regular updates during incidents that impact their  
1158 constituents. Intergovernmental Affairs Liaisons ensure smooth and proactive information flow with  
1159 these officials.
  - 1160 • A Liaison Officer serves as the CD's point of contact for representatives of organizations not otherwise  
1161 represented in the center organization. These representatives coordinate through the Liaison Officer to  
1162 advise the CD and elected and appointed officials on matters related to the agency, jurisdiction, or  
1163 organization that they represent.
  - 1164 • A Science and Technology Advisor advises the CD on the integration of science and technology into  
1165 incident planning and decision-making and may convene a science and technology advisory group, in  
1166 order to incorporate additional expertise.

1167 *The CMS General Staff*

1168 *Strategic Operations Section*

1169 The Strategic Operations Section helps to ensure that on-scene incident management personnel  
1170 have the resources and operational support necessary to achieve incident objectives and address  
1171 leadership priorities. The staff in this section are organized functionally by Emergency Support  
1172 Functions (ESFs) and/or Recovery Support Functions (RSFs), but may also include a geographic  
1173 branch to facilitate information flow during a widespread incident.

1174 Strategic Operations Section staff serve as the primary points of contact for on-scene response  
1175 personnel within their respective functions. They coordinate closely with personnel at the  
1176 incident to identify and address unmet resource needs. When necessary for geographically  
1177 widespread or complex incidents or when establishing a local ICP is not possible, staff in the  
1178 section can also support operational activity directly from the center.

1179 Strategic Operations Section personnel typically perform the following key functions:

- 1180 • Coordinate with on-scene responders to identify and meet needs related to mass care,  
1181 emergency services, infrastructure, and operations management, among other capabilities;
- 1182 • Coordinate with internal and external organizations to clarify resource requirements, deploy  
1183 available resources, and identify gaps in resource availability;
- 1184 • Provide the Information and Planning Section with updates from on-scene contacts;
- 1185 • Prepare descriptions of tasks/statements of work for task orders, contracts, mission  
1186 assignments, and purchase orders;
- 1187 • Coordinate with staff in the Resource and Center Logistics Section to implement mutual aid  
1188 or purchasing agreements when internal resources cannot meet a requirement;
- 1189 • Coordinate with internal and external organizations and stakeholders to identify long-term  
1190 incident impacts and recovery requirements;
- 1191 • Serve as conduits of information between center staff and operational personnel on the  
1192 ground or at other operations/coordination centers;
- 1193 • Coordinate the process for initial and ongoing assessment of incident-related damage;

- 1194 • Coordinate with the Information and Planning Section staff to develop incident-specific  
1195 recovery plans; and
- 1196 • Integrate hazard mitigation into recovery activities.

1197 ***Intelligence/Investigations Section***

1198 When the I/I Section is staffed in an operations/coordination center, personnel from this section  
1199 share incident-related intelligence and investigation information necessary for incident  
1200 management. The nature of an incident, in addition to legal constraints, may restrict the type and  
1201 scope of information that may be shared. However, the I/I Section staff facilitate the timely  
1202 exchange, coordination, and/or deconfliction of information and promptly share any information  
1203 that affects or threatens life safety of the responders and/or the public with appropriate  
1204 responders and center staff.

1205 The I/I Section may be established for a response to a suspected or verified criminal or terrorist  
1206 act or for non-law-enforcement purposes such as epidemiological, accident cause, or mass  
1207 fatality investigations. Staff in this section are often located offsite, such as at a Joint Terrorism  
1208 Task Force facility, a state fusion center, or a Federal Bureau of Investigation Joint Operations  
1209 Center.

1210 Key functions of the I/I Section include

- 1211 • Collecting, processing, analyzing, and appropriately disseminating unclassified and open-  
1212 source intelligence information;
- 1213 • Determining the source or cause of the incident and controlling the spread and impact in the  
1214 investigation of emerging incidents (e.g., fire, disease outbreak);
- 1215 • Supporting missing persons and mass fatality investigations;
- 1216 • Supporting multidisciplinary, proactive, risk-based, and community-focused problem  
1217 solving;
- 1218 • Providing a continuous flow of intelligence to officials to assist in developing a depiction of  
1219 evolving threats or hazards; and
- 1220 • Ensuring investigative personnel are available and necessary resources are properly  
1221 distributed, maintained, safeguarded, stored, and returned.

1222 The I/I Section at a center may be established in addition to or instead of an I/I Section at an ICP.

1223 ***Information and Planning Section***

1224 The Information and Planning Section has two functions: managing situational awareness efforts  
1225 related to the reason for the activation and developing incident-related plans, including the CAP.

1226 The Information and Planning Section staff collects, analyzes, and disseminates incident and  
1227 incident-related information. Staff in this section process requests for information; integrate  
1228 geospatial and technical information; and develop reports, briefings, and presentation products  
1229 for a variety of stakeholders including leadership, operations/coordination center personnel, and  
1230 other internal and external stakeholders. Staff in this section coordinate closely with fusion  
1231 centers, watch centers, or other sources of intelligence or incident-related information.

1232 Information and Planning Section personnel facilitate a standard planning process to achieve the  
1233 objectives of the operations/coordination center leadership. The Information and Planning

1234 Section staff provide a range of current and future planning services to address current  
1235 requirements and to anticipate and devise the means to deal with future needs. The Information  
1236 and Planning Section staff also focuses on contingency or alternative planning and  
1237 demobilization planning. Personnel in this section assist in the development of recovery plans  
1238 and coordinate closely with the Planning Section of an ICP and the Information and Planning  
1239 Sections at other operations/coordination centers.

1240 Information and Planning Section personnel typically perform the following key functions:

- 1241 • Assist the CD in developing objectives and ensuring objectives are achievable;
- 1242 • Facilitate the center action planning process and develop and distribute the CAP;
- 1243 • Anticipate long-term impacts and possible cascading effects, including potential resource  
1244 requests and policy issues, and conduct contingency planning as needed, in conjunction with  
1245 Strategic Operations Section staff;
- 1246 • Collate data from initial and ongoing assessment of incident-related damage and needs,  
1247 conduct impact analyses, and inform plans and resource decisions with assessment results;
- 1248 • Facilitate information sharing across various centers and jurisdictions involved in an incident  
1249 and with senior leadership;
- 1250 • Support incident modeling and mapping requests; and
- 1251 • Meet information requirements to support decisions.

#### 1252 *Resource and Center Logistics Section*

1253 The Resource and Center Logistics Section staff provides advanced resource support to the  
1254 incident. They work closely with staff in the Strategic Operations Section to source and procure  
1255 resources through implementing emergency contracts or mutual aid agreements or compacts.  
1256 Staff in this section also provide resources and services to support the needs of staff in the  
1257 operations/coordination center. This includes providing information technology support, resource  
1258 tracking and acquisition, and arranging for food, lodging, and other support services as needed.

1259 Staff in the Resource and Center Logistics Section typically perform the following key functions:

- 1260 • Order and track arrival of commodities, teams, and personnel ordered or arranged by CMS  
1261 staff to support on-scene incident management operations;
- 1262 • Activate mutual aid agreements and existing contracts as necessary to obtain required  
1263 resources and services;
- 1264 • Develop mission assignments and draft statements of work for new contracts using  
1265 requirements provided by the Strategic Operations Section staff;
- 1266 • Draft and submit EMAC requests, implement mutual aid resource ordering processes, and  
1267 coordinate logistics for receiving the resulting resources;
- 1268 • Oversee information security efforts;
- 1269 • Provide support and maintenance for all technology used during the activation; and
- 1270 • Plan, prepare, implement, and evaluate all logistics functions needed to support the center  
1271 and center staff.

**1272 Finance/Administration Section**

1273 The Finance/Administration Section staff manage all financial, administrative, and cost analysis  
1274 aspects of the emergency. The staff in the Finance/Administration Section provides  
1275 administrative support to other CMS sections. Initially, this work may be done in the  
1276 operations/coordination center, but in later stages of the emergency, this function is often  
1277 accomplished at other locations. Staff also work closely with personnel in the  
1278 Finance/Administration Section of IMT(s) managing the incident(s) on-scene. The  
1279 responsibilities of the CMS Finance/Administration Section closely align with those of the ICS  
1280 Finance/Administration Section and in some cases, the CMS Finance/Administration Section  
1281 staff assume responsibilities of their IMT counterparts and perform functions on their behalf.

1282 Staff in the Finance/Administration track all expenditures associated with the activation  
1283 including monitoring funds from multiple sources. Reporting on costs as they accrue enables  
1284 center leadership to estimate requirements accurately and request additional funds if needed.

1285 The Finance/Administration Section staff perform the following key functions:

- 1286 • Track costs, analyze cost data, make estimates, and recommend cost savings measures;
- 1287 • Collect data concerning emerging issues, corrective actions, and lessons learned during  
1288 activations;
- 1289 • Provide human-resources support, including advising on travel policies and regulations and  
1290 managing related documents, forms, procedures and lodging agreements;
- 1291 • Track worker injuries, manage workers compensation and/or Equal Employment Opportunity  
1292 (EEO) claims, and coordinate with on-scene safety officers;
- 1293 • Track purchases and manage purchase cards, leases, and fiscal agreements, ensuring  
1294 procurement policies are followed; and
- 1295 • Execute contracts and procurements required for incident and center support.

**1296 Activation and Deactivation of Center Management Systems**

1297 Centers are activated for various reasons based on support requirements of a jurisdiction or  
1298 organization, the requirements of an IC, the context of a threat, the anticipation of events, or in  
1299 response to an incident. Circumstances that might trigger activation include

- 1300 • More than one jurisdiction becomes involved in an incident and/or the incident involves  
1301 multiple agencies;
- 1302 • The IC indicates an incident could expand rapidly or involve cascading events;
- 1303 • A similar incident in the past required center activation;
- 1304 • An appointed or elected official directs that the center should be activated;
- 1305 • An emergency is imminent (e.g., hurricane warnings, slow river flooding, predictions of  
1306 hazardous weather, elevated threat levels);
- 1307 • Threshold events described in the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) occur;
- 1308 • Significant impacts to the population are anticipated; and/or
- 1309 • The IC anticipates the need for support acquiring additional resources.

1310 Operations and coordination centers have multiple actual levels to allow for a scaled response,  
 1311 delivery of the exact resources needed, and a level of coordination appropriate to support the  
 1312 incident.

### 1313 *Normal Operations or Steady State*

1314 During normal operations or steady state, operational readiness is maintained through monitoring  
 1315 and assessing potential threats and hazards; ongoing interagency coordination; developing and  
 1316 executing plans, training, and exercise programs; and facility and equipment maintenance.

### 1317 *Activation*

1318 The level of activity within a center grows in size, scope, and complexity in concert with that of  
 1319 the incident. If the incident requires additional support and coordination, the CD may activate  
 1320 additional staff to involve more disciplines, mobilize additional resources, inform the public,  
 1321 address media inquiries, involve senior elected and appointed officials, and request outside  
 1322 assistance. Table 2 lists the scale of activation levels along with criteria for determining the  
 1323 appropriate level. Any of these levels can involve both in-person and off-site personnel  
 1324 coordinating virtually.

1325

**Table 2: CMS Activation Levels**

Activation Level		Description	Staffing
4	Normal Operations/ Steady State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routine monitoring of situation</li> <li>No event or incident anticipated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center not staffed; possibly not configured for operations</li> </ul>
3	Enhanced Steady-State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A situation or threat has developed that requires enhanced monitoring and coordination between jurisdictions and agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center is staffed with a few personnel focused on situational awareness</li> </ul>
2	Partial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A situation or threat has developed that requires coordination extending beyond the normal workday and that requires 24/7 monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center is partially staffed; limited or partial liaison support (based on the needs of the incident)</li> </ul>
1	Full	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident of such magnitude that it requires or may require extensive response and recovery efforts and significant resources</li> <li>A situation or threat has developed that requires 24/7 coordination, monitoring, and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All General Staff positions activated; including applicable liaison positions</li> <li>Operations being conducted on a 24 hour basis</li> </ul>

### 1326 *Deactivation*

1327 The CD deactivates center staff as circumstances allow and the center returns to its normal  
 1328 operations/steady state condition. Deactivation occurs when the incident no longer requires the  
 1329 support and coordination functions provided by the center staff or those functions can be  
 1330 effectively managed by individual organizations or by using steady state coordination  
 1331 mechanisms. All resource demobilization and ongoing incident support/recovery responsibilities  
 1332 are completed or transferred prior to deactivation. Normally, after-action review and  
 1333 improvement planning is arranged as part of deactivation planning.

## 1334 C. MAC Group

1335 MAC Groups typically consist of agency administrators, executives, or their designees. It is  
1336 important that designees be authorized to represent or commit agency resources and funds in  
1337 support of incident activities. A MAC Group acts as a policy-level body during incidents,  
1338 supporting resource prioritization and allocation, and enabling decision making among elected  
1339 and appointed officials and those responsible for managing the incident (e.g., the IC).

1340 A MAC Group may need a support organization. In some instances, staff in EOCs or other  
1341 operations/coordination centers provide this support. In other instances, separate organizations  
1342 are established to support the MAC Group by meeting its logistics and documentation needs;  
1343 managing incident-related decision support information such as tracking critical resources, the  
1344 situation status, and intelligence or investigative information; and providing public information  
1345 to the news media and public. The number and skills of personnel vary by incident complexity,  
1346 activity level, needs of the MAC Group, and other factors identified by participating  
1347 organizations.

1348 A MAC Group may be established by organizations at any level (e.g., local, state, or national) or  
1349 within any discipline (e.g., emergency management, public health, critical infrastructure, or  
1350 private sector). In many cases, a MAC Group can function virtually to accomplish its assigned  
1351 tasks. MAC Group decisions are typically based on a consensus of the members.

1352 MAC Groups do not function as Incident Command nor do they conflict with or replace the role  
1353 of operations/coordination centers. However, in some communities and jurisdictions, local  
1354 statutes or delegations of authority limit a center staff's functions and actions, and MAC Group  
1355 authorization may be required to access additional resources and/or provide guidance to EOC  
1356 staff.

1357 The composition of MAC Groups is very important. Sometimes membership is obvious.  
1358 Organizations directly impacted and whose resources are committed to the incident should be  
1359 represented. Sometimes, however, organizations that should be members of a MAC Group are  
1360 less obvious. These include business organizations such as local chambers of commerce,  
1361 volunteer organizations such as the American Red Cross, or other organizations with special  
1362 expertise or knowledge. While these agencies may not have tangible resources or funds to  
1363 contribute, their contacts, political influence, or technical expertise can be key to the success of  
1364 the MAC Group in supporting incident response and recovery.

### 1365 **Examples of MAC Groups**

#### 1366 *EOC Policy Group*

1367 When statutory or executive guidance includes monetary thresholds, a Policy Group may  
1368 authorize additional resources and/or provide operational guidance for an EOC staff. A Policy  
1369 Group commonly consists of elected and appointed officials, other senior officials, and subject  
1370 matter experts.

#### 1371 *White House Interagency Policy Committees*

1372 White House Interagency Policy Committees are Federal policy coordination committees  
1373 consisting of senior representatives from Federal departments and agencies that have roles in  
1374 emergency preparedness and response. Interagency Policy Committees convene on a regular

1375 basis to develop and coordinate implementation of Federal preparedness and response policy.  
1376 Some Interagency Policy Committees also convene in anticipation of or during crises such as  
1377 natural disasters and terrorist incidents to address issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels  
1378 within the Federal Government and to provide strategic policy direction for the Federal incident  
1379 response.

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1380  
1381**Table 3: Comparison between Incident Command, Operations/Coordination Center, and MAC Group**

	<b>Incident Command</b>	<b>Operation / Coordination Center</b>	<b>MAC Group</b>
<b>Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A local or tactical incident management organization established to enable timely, effective, and coordinated operations by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, services, procedures, and communications to achieve incident objectives</li> <li>Organized by ICS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A central location for interagency coordination and decision making in support of incident management</li> <li>Organized by CMS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A group of senior officials organized to coordinate support for incident management through their collective resources, information sharing, strategy development, and policy implementation</li> </ul>
<b>Typical Functions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Command (including Public Information, Safety, Liaison)</li> <li>Operations</li> <li>Intelligence/ Investigations</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Logistics</li> <li>Finance/Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Command (including Public Information, Safety, Liaison)</li> <li>Strategic Operations</li> <li>Intelligence and Investigations</li> <li>Information and Planning</li> <li>Resource and Center Logistics</li> <li>Finance/Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocate resources in support of operations/ coordination centers and Incident Command structures</li> <li>Establish decision coordination between jurisdictions and/or organizations</li> <li>Develop strategies and contingency plans</li> </ul>
<b>Personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IC (either single or UC structure) and any assigned supporting staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director and staff plus authorized agency representatives, senior policy makers, and elected and appointed officials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency administrators/ executives or personnel that have been delegated authority regarding allocation of resources</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IC is responsible for overall management of the incident in either a single commander or UC structure</li> <li>Area Command may be established to oversee the management of multiple incidents that are being handled by separate ICS organizations or the management of a very large or evolving incident that has many IMTs engaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be co-located with dispatch, fusion center and public warning services</li> <li>In some circumstances may perform Incident Command role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May establish the priorities for resources among incidents</li> <li>Harmonize agency policies, and provide strategic guidance and direction to support incident management activities</li> </ul>



## 1382 D. Joint Information Systems

1383 Dissemination of timely and accurate information to the public is important at all phases of  
1384 incident management. Developing and sharing public information is a responsibility of many  
1385 agencies and organizations at all levels of government. Jurisdictions and organizations across the  
1386 whole community coordinate and integrate communication efforts to ensure that the public  
1387 receives a consistent, accurate, accessible, and comprehensive message. Well developed and  
1388 coordinated public information, education, and communications plans and strategies help ensure  
1389 public safety information, including lifesaving measures, evacuation routes, threat and alert  
1390 systems, and other public safety information is coordinated and communicated in a timely,  
1391 consistent, accurate, and accessible manner. JISs consist of the processes, procedures, and  
1392 systems to enable this communication to the public, responders, the media, and additional  
1393 stakeholders (both directly and indirectly affected).

### 1394 **System Description and Components**

1395 Public information processes are coordinated before an incident and include the plans, protocols,  
1396 procedures, and structures used to provide public information. Local, regional, state, tribal,  
1397 territorial, or Federal PIOs and JICs are important supporting elements of the JIS. Key elements  
1398 include the following:

- 1399 • Interagency coordination and integration;
- 1400 • Gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating consistent messages;
- 1401 • Support for decision makers; and
- 1402 • Flexibility, modularity, and adaptability.

### 1403 *Public Information Officer*

1404 PIOs are key members of the Command Staff in both the ICS and CMS structure. If the PIO  
1405 position is staffed at both the ICP and a supporting operations center, the PIOs maintain close  
1406 contact through pre-established JIS protocols. PIOs advise the IC, UC, or CD on all public  
1407 information matters relating to the management of the incident. PIOs also handle inquiries from  
1408 the media, the public, and elected officials; emergency public information and warnings; rumor  
1409 monitoring and response; media relations; and other functions needed to gather, verify,  
1410 coordinate, and disseminate accurate, accessible, and timely information related to the incident.  
1411 Information on public health, safety, and protection is of particular importance. PIOs create  
1412 coordinated and consistent messages by collaborating to

- 1413 • Identify key information that needs to be communicated to the public;
- 1414 • Craft messages that are clear and easily understood by all, including individuals with  
1415 disabilities and other access and functional needs;
- 1416 • Prioritize messages to ensure timely delivery of information without overwhelming the  
1417 audience;
- 1418 • Verify accuracy of information through appropriate channels; and
- 1419 • Disseminate messages using the most effective means available.

**1420 *Joint Information Center***

1421 The JIC is a central location that facilitates operation of the JIS, where personnel with public  
1422 information responsibilities perform essential emergency information, crisis communications,  
1423 and public affairs functions. JICs may be established as standalone coordination entities, at  
1424 incident sites, or as components of operations/coordination centers. Depending on the needs of  
1425 the incident, an incident-specific JIC may be established at a single, on-scene location in  
1426 coordination with local, state, and Federal agencies, or at the national level if the situation  
1427 warrants. Releases are cleared through the IC/UC, CD, and MAC Group to ensure consistent  
1428 messages, avoid release of conflicting information, and prevent negative impact on operations.  
1429 This formal process for releasing information ensures the protection of incident-sensitive  
1430 information. Jurisdictions and organizations may issue releases related to their policies,  
1431 procedures, programs, and capabilities; however, these are coordinated with the incident-specific  
1432 JIC(s).

1433 A single JIC location is preferable, but the system is flexible and adaptable enough to  
1434 accommodate multiple physical or virtual JIC locations. For example, multiple JICs may be  
1435 needed for a complex incident spanning a wide geographic area or multiple jurisdictions. In  
1436 instances when multiple JICs are activated, information is coordinated among all appropriate  
1437 JICs; each JIC has procedures and protocols to communicate and coordinate effectively with the  
1438 others. When multiple JICs are activated, they should coordinate to determine the final release  
1439 authority. A national JIC may be used when an incident necessitates Federal coordination and is  
1440 expected to be of long duration (e.g., weeks or months) or when the incident affects a large area  
1441 of the country. In light of the need for real-time communications, JICs can be organized in many  
1442 ways, depending on the nature of the incident. Table 4 identifies types of JICs.

**Virtual JIC**

1443  
1444 A JIC may need to maintain constant links to other sites, or physical co-location at a JIC may not be  
1445 feasible, necessitating a virtual JIC. All participants are integrated and linked into the JIC so that it  
1446 functions as a single-site operation. Advantages of this approach include rapid establishment of the JIC  
1447 functions, access to expanded resources, and relationship building.

1448

**Table 4: Types of JICs**

Type	Characteristics
Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimal physical location for local and IC or CD-assigned PIOs to co-locate</li> <li>• Easy media access is paramount to success</li> <li>• May be located at an operations/coordination center</li> </ul>
Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established when physical co-location is not feasible</li> <li>• Incorporates technology and communication protocols</li> </ul>
Satellite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller in scale than other JICs</li> <li>• Established to support the primary JIC</li> <li>• Operates under the control of the primary JIC for that incident</li> </ul>
Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports wide-area multiple-incident ICS structures</li> <li>• Could be established locally or statewide</li> <li>• Media access is paramount</li> </ul>
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established to support several JICs in multiple states</li> <li>• Offers supplemental staff and resources outside of the disaster area</li> </ul>
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established for long-duration incidents</li> <li>• Established to support Federal incident management</li> <li>• Staffed by numerous Federal departments and/or agencies</li> <li>• Media access is paramount</li> </ul>

#### 1449 *Organizational Independence*

1450 Organizations participating in incident management retain their independence while  
 1451 collaborating through the JIS to generate common public information. Incident Command is  
 1452 responsible for establishing and overseeing JICs, including processes for coordinating and  
 1453 clearing public communications. In UC, the departments, agencies, organizations, or  
 1454 jurisdictions that contribute to joint public information do not lose their individual identities or  
 1455 responsibility for their own programs or policies. Rather, each agency or organization contributes  
 1456 to the overall unified message.

#### 1457 *Getting Information to the Public and Stakeholders*

1458 Getting information to the public and stakeholders during an incident is an ongoing cycle that  
 1459 involves four steps, gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating information:

#### 1460 *Gathering Information*

1461 Gathering information begins the process of getting information to the public and additional  
 1462 stakeholders. Information is collected from various sources, as follows:

- 1463 • On-scene command provides a source of ongoing, official information on the incident  
 1464 management effort;
- 1465 • The on-scene PIO reports to the JIC what they are observing and hearing at the incident from  
 1466 the news media, elected officials and their staff, and the public;

- 1467 • Media monitoring assesses the accuracy and content of news and social media reports and  
1468 helps to identify trends and breaking issues from social media and other sources;
- 1469 • News media provides a valuable source of developing information and current issues;
- 1470 • Elected and appointed official and general public inquiries can point to the specific concerns  
1471 of those in the affected areas; and
- 1472 • Staff in operations/coordination centers generate information relating to the situation status  
1473 and/or mass care, recovery, or assistance available to the public.

#### 1474 ***Verifying Information***

1475 The next step in the process is to verify the accuracy of the information that has been collected.  
1476 PIOs representing different agencies have access to different information sources, including the  
1477 news media, the offices of elected officials, and people on the scene of an incident. In addition to  
1478 verifying their information through standard means, participation in the JIC provides PIOs from  
1479 different agencies the opportunity to compare notes and information gathered from their varied  
1480 sources.

#### 1481 ***Coordinating Information***

1482 The third step is to coordinate with other public information personnel who are part of the JIS.  
1483 This includes both those represented in the JIC and those working from another location that is  
1484 part of the JIS. Coordinating information involves the following:

- 1485 • ***Establishing key message(s)***. After gathering information from all sources, unified messages  
1486 are crafted that address informational needs and are prioritized according to the overall local,  
1487 state, tribal, territorial, and Federal incident management strategy. The mission includes  
1488 getting accurate, consistent information to the right people at the right time so they can make  
1489 informed decisions.
- 1490 • ***Obtaining approval or clearance from those with authority***. This ensures that the  
1491 information is consistent, accurate, and accessible; however, the approval process should be  
1492 streamlined to ensure that the information is released in a timely manner. Ensuring  
1493 appropriate security for sensitive information should be balanced with the value of the  
1494 information being shared with the public so critical information is not unnecessarily  
1495 restricted or delayed.

#### 1496 ***Disseminating Information***

1497 The final step in the process is to disseminate information to the public and stakeholders. In  
1498 some emergencies, there may not be many available modes of communication. Phone calls and  
1499 interviews might be the primary means of getting information to the news media. Personal visits  
1500 or town meetings may be the most effective avenue for the public, elected and appointed  
1501 officials, or other stakeholders. Local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal systems such as the  
1502 Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and  
1503 the National Terrorism Advisory System may be leveraged to communicate with the public.  
1504 Social media outlets are an important method of reaching the public directly and provide  
1505 flexibility for targeting specific audiences or communicating when traditional media is  
1506 unavailable, as in a power outage. These outreach efforts can be supported by providing talking  
1507 points and fliers to the PIO and other community leaders. Critical messages should be released in  
1508 ways that support community members with disabilities and other access and functional needs.

1509 Monitoring the media ensures that the message is being understood by the media and reported  
1510 accurately and completely. News and social media outlets should be monitored to identify  
1511 rumors, inaccuracies, or information gaps. Important inaccuracies should be addressed before  
1512 being reported incorrectly a second time.

### 1513 **Public Information Communications Planning**

1514 Information communication strategies and planning are essential to all aspects of public  
1515 information. Plans include processes, protocols, and procedures for the development of draft  
1516 news releases; media lists; and contact information for elected/appointed officials, community  
1517 leaders, private sector organizations, and public service organizations. Information  
1518 communication plans facilitate the dissemination of accurate, consistent, accessible, and timely  
1519 public information. Public information communications should also be included in training and  
1520 exercises.

DRAFT

## 1521 E. Interconnectivity of NIMS Management and 1522 Coordination Structures

1523 NIMS structures enable incident managers across the Nation—from the IC in the field to the  
1524 NRCC—to manage the effects of an incident in a unified, consistent manner. Interconnectivity of  
1525 NIMS structures is important to allow personnel in diverse geographic areas, with differing roles  
1526 and responsibilities, and operating within various functions of ICS and/or the CMS to seamlessly  
1527 integrate their efforts through a common set of organizational structures, terminology, and  
1528 processes.

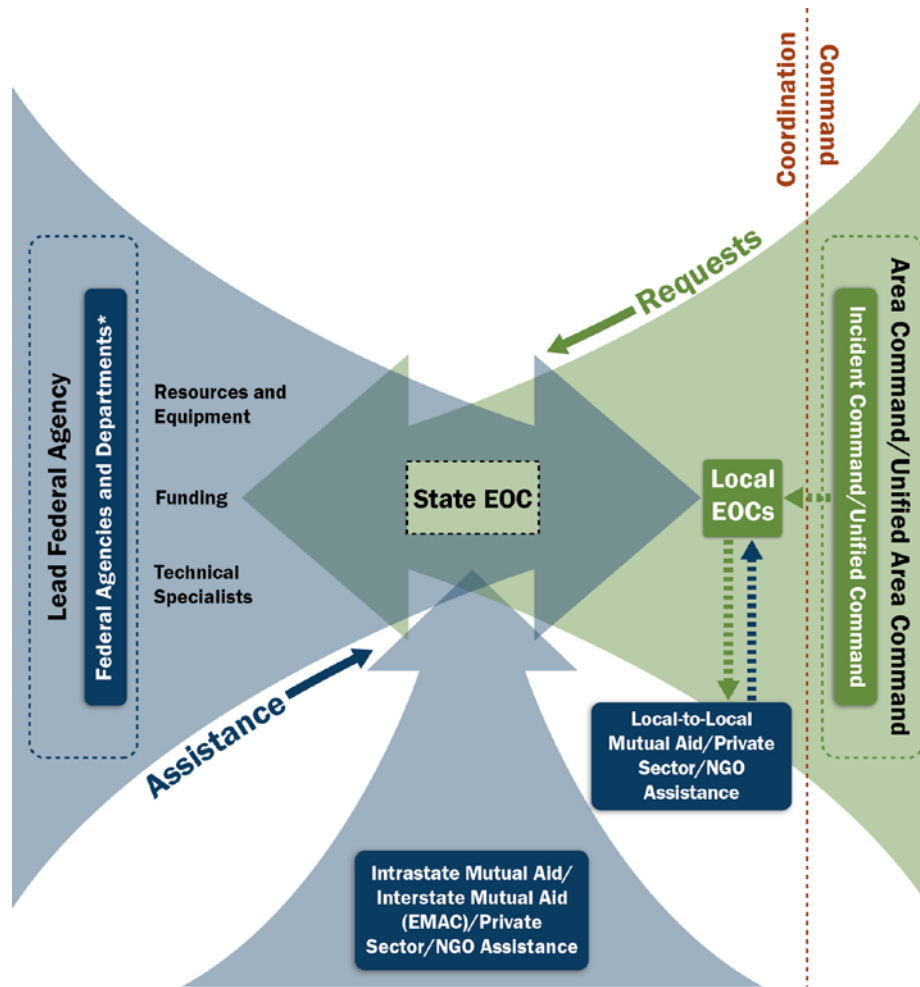
1529 When an incident occurs or threatens, local emergency personnel respond, using the principles  
1530 and structures of ICS to frame their activities. If the incident is or becomes large or complex,  
1531 local EOCs or other operation/coordination centers activate. The teams working in the various  
1532 local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal operations and coordination centers are organized and  
1533 function consistently based on NIMS CMS. The staff implementing CMS receives senior level  
1534 guidance from MAC Groups to organize support for the incident. Establishing a JIC will ensure  
1535 coordinated and accurate messaging with the public.

1536 If required resources are not available locally, the resources may be obtained under mutual aid  
1537 agreements from neighboring jurisdictions or from state, tribal, territorial, or interstate sources.  
1538 The state EOC may activate to support incident management and resource needs. When the  
1539 resources (personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities) reach the incident, incident management  
1540 personnel can incorporate them seamlessly due to the use of common, standard systems (e.g.,  
1541 ICS, CMS, JIS). Resources, including ICS and CMS personnel, are also typed and qualified in  
1542 support of a national qualification system that promotes interoperability and the exchange of  
1543 personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities.

### 1544 **Federal Support to Response Activities**

1545 The majority of incidents are resolved using only the above coordination mechanisms. However,  
1546 some major incidents may require the capabilities of the Federal Government. The Federal  
1547 Government maintains a wide range of capabilities and resources that may be needed to deal  
1548 with domestic incidents in order to save lives, protect property and the environment, and ensure  
1549 the protection of civil rights and civil liberties. NIMS coordinating structures enable Federal  
1550 departments and agencies to cooperate with one another, and with local, state, tribal, territorial,  
1551 and insular area governments, community members, and the private sector.

1552 The Federal Government becomes involved with a response when state, local, or tribal  
1553 governments need assistance and the governor or chief tribal executive requests Federal support  
1554 assets; when Federal interests are involved; or as statute or regulation authorizes or requires.  
1555 Accordingly, in some instances, the Federal Government plays a supporting role to state, local,  
1556 tribal, or territorial governments by providing Federal assistance to the affected jurisdictions. For  
1557 example, the Federal Government provides assistance to state, local, and tribal governments  
1558 when the President declares a major disaster or emergency under the Stafford Act. In other  
1559 instances, the Federal Government plays a leading role in the response, such as when the Federal  
1560 Government has primary jurisdiction or when incidents occur on Federal property (e.g., National  
1561 Parks, military bases). Figure 6 describes the integration of Federal support as part of NIMS.



\*Some Federal agencies (U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.) have statutory responsibility for response and may coordinate and/or integrate directly with affected jurisdictions. During responses conducted under Stafford Act declarations, FEMA establishes a Joint Field Office (JFO) to coordinate Federal response activities.

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**Figure 6: Federal Support to Response Activities**

1564

Different Federal departments or agencies lead coordination of the Federal Government’s response depending on the type and magnitude of the incident. They are supported by other agencies who bring their relevant capabilities to bear to support those affected. For example, FEMA leads and coordinates Federal response and assistance when the President declares a major disaster or emergency under the Stafford Act. Similarly, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) leads all Federal public health and medical response to public health emergencies and incidents. The location of a major hazardous material (HazMat) incident or spill determines whether the Environmental Protection Agency or the United States Coast Guard coordinates Federal assistance.

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## IV. Communications and

1574

## Information Management

1575 Effective incident management relies on flexible communications and information systems that  
1576 provide accurate and timely information to incident management personnel. Establishing and  
1577 maintaining situational awareness and ensuring accessibility and interoperability are the principle  
1578 goals of the Communications and Information Management component. Properly planned,  
1579 established, and applied communications enable the dissemination of information among  
1580 command and support elements and, as appropriate, cooperating jurisdictions and organizations.

1581 In order to maintain situational awareness, incident managers update incident information  
1582 continually, gathering, collating, synthesizing, and disseminating incident information to and  
1583 from all appropriate parties. This information flow is facilitated through the development and use  
1584 of common plans and interoperable equipment, processes, standards, and architectures. During  
1585 an incident, this integrated approach links all incident managers, whether on-scene, in an  
1586 operations/coordination center, or in another support location, to maintain communications  
1587 connectivity and situational awareness. Communications and information management planning  
1588 address the incident-related policies, equipment, data architecture, systems, standards, and  
1589 training necessary to achieve integrated communications.

1590 The following communications and information systems characteristics support the ability of  
1591 incident managers to maintain a constant flow of information during an incident. The key  
1592 characteristics are (1) Interoperability; (2) Reliability, Scalability, and Portability; and (3)  
1593 Resilience and Redundancy.

1594 **Interoperability:** Interoperable communications systems enable personnel and organizations to  
1595 communicate within and across jurisdictions and organizations via voice, data, and video  
1596 systems in real time. Interoperability plans address governance, standard operating procedures  
1597 (SOP), technology, training and exercises, and usage within the context of the stress and chaos of  
1598 a major incident. Agreements and SOPs articulate the processes, procedures, and protocols  
1599 necessary to achieve interoperability.

1600 **Reliability, Scalability, and Portability:** Communications and information systems should be  
1601 reliable and scalable in order to function in any type of incident. This means they should be  
1602 suitable for use within a single jurisdiction or agency, a single jurisdiction with multiagency  
1603 involvement, or multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement. Regular use of  
1604 communications and information systems ensures they are familiar, applicable, and acceptable to  
1605 users; readily adaptable to new technology; and reliable in any situation in which they are used.

1606 Scalability means that systems can be expanded to support any situation—including a major  
1607 incident, or several incidents that involve numerous responders and support personnel from  
1608 multiple jurisdictions and organizations—and it allows the number of users on a system to be  
1609 readily increased.

1610 Portable technologies and equipment ensure the effective integration, transport, and deployment  
1611 of communications systems when necessary. Portability includes the standardized assignment of



1612 radio channels across jurisdictions, which allows incident managers to participate in an incident  
1613 outside their jurisdiction and still use familiar equipment.

1614 **Resilience and Redundancy:** Resilience and redundancy in communications help to ensure the  
1615 uninterrupted flow of information. Resilience is the ability of systems to withstand and continue  
1616 to perform after damage or loss of infrastructure. Redundancy is achieved through the  
1617 duplication of services; it also enables the continuity of communication through having diverse,  
1618 alternative methods when primary communication capabilities suffer damage.

## 1619 A. Management Characteristics

1620 Personnel should be able to manage incident communications and information effectively and  
1621 should follow procedures and protocols regardless of the communications method or the  
1622 information being transmitted. As technologies change and the methods of exchanging  
1623 information improve, management procedures should also evolve.

### 1624 **Standardized Communication Types**

1625 Successful communications and information management requires emergency  
1626 management/incident management personnel and their affiliated organizations to use standard  
1627 communications types. The following list identifies standard communication types:

- 1628 • **Strategic Communications:** High-level directions, including resource priority decisions,  
1629 roles and responsibilities determinations, and overall incident management courses of action.
- 1630 • **Tactical Communications:** Communications between command and support elements and,  
1631 as appropriate, cooperating agencies and organizations.
- 1632 • **Support Communications:** Coordination in support of strategic and tactical communications  
1633 (for example, communications among hospitals concerning resource ordering, dispatching,  
1634 and tracking from logistics centers; traffic and public works communications).
- 1635 • **Public Address Communications:** Emergency alerts and warnings, press conferences.

### 1636 **Policy and Planning**

1637 Coordinated communications policy and planning provides the basis for effective communication  
1638 and information management. Careful planning determines what communications systems and  
1639 platforms personnel will use, who can use them, what information is essential in different  
1640 environments, the technical parameters of all equipment and systems, and other relevant  
1641 considerations.

1642 All relevant stakeholders, including appropriate NGOs and private sector and critical  
1643 infrastructure owners, should be involved in planning in order to formulate thorough, integrated,  
1644 and interoperable communications plans and strategies. Technology and equipment standards  
1645 also are shared, when appropriate, to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to be  
1646 interoperable and compatible.

1647 Sound communication management policies and plans include information about the following  
1648 aspects of communication and information management:

- 1649 • Jurisdictions/organizations define information needs, and these needs are often met at the  
1650 local, state, tribal, and territorial levels, in concert with NGOs and the private sector, and  
1651 primarily through preparedness organizations;
- 1652 • The jurisdiction's or organization's information management system provides guidance,  
1653 standards, and tools to enable the integration of information needs;
- 1654 • Procedures and protocols for the release of warnings, incident notifications, public  
1655 communications, and other critical information are disseminated through a defined  
1656 combination of networks specified in EOPs;
- 1657 • Notifications are made to the appropriate jurisdictional levels and to NGOs and the private  
1658 sector through mechanisms specified in EOPs; and
- 1659 • Agencies at all levels plan in advance for the effective and efficient use of information  
1660 management technologies (e.g., computers, networks, and information-sharing mechanisms)  
1661 to integrate all command, coordination, and support functions.

## 1662 **Agreements**

1663 All parties identified in a jurisdiction's EOP should have agreements in place to ensure that the  
1664 elements within plans and procedures are in effect at the time of an incident. The agreements  
1665 should specify all of the communication systems and platforms that the parties agree to use or  
1666 through which they intend to share information.

## 1667 **Equipment Standards and Training**

1668 Communication equipment used during incident management often consists of components and  
1669 systems connected through common interfaces, many of which rely on the private sector to  
1670 provide their operational backbone. Public/private communication systems and associated  
1671 equipment should be regularly enhanced and updated, as their maintenance is essential to  
1672 effective emergency management and incident management activities. Jurisdictional personnel  
1673 should consider the wide range of conditions under which personnel will use communications  
1674 systems when developing standards associated with the systems and equipment. Training and  
1675 exercises that employ interoperable systems and equipment are necessary for personnel to  
1676 understand their capabilities and limitations before an incident. In addition, the communications  
1677 plan should consider the need for durable equipment, such as hardened laptops, phones, or  
1678 tablets.

## 1679 **B. Incident Information**

1680 During the course of an incident, timely and accurate information is vital to assist personnel at all  
1681 levels in making decisions. Information is used for many functions within ICS, CMS, MAC  
1682 Groups, and JIS, including:

- 1683 • Aiding in planning;
- 1684 • Communicating with the public;
- 1685 • Assisting the Finance/Administration Section in determining incident cost;
- 1686 • Determining the need for additional involvement of NGO or private sector resources;

- 1687 • Identifying safety issues; and  
1688 • Following up on information requests.

### 1689 **Incident Notification, Situation, and Status Reports**

1690 Standard incident reporting and documentation procedures ensure that situational awareness is  
1691 maintained and that personnel have easy access to critical information. Examples of reports that  
1692 provide essential information regarding the incident or event include

- 1693 • **Flash Reports:** Reports that include vital and/or time sensitive information outside regularly  
1694 scheduled situation and status reports.
- 1695 • **Status Reports:** Reports that relay information specifically related to the status of resources  
1696 (e.g., availability or assignment of resources). Status reports may be contained in Situation  
1697 Reports (SITREPs) or exist as standalone documents.
- 1698 • **SITREPs:** Reports, typically produced and distributed on a regular and recurring basis, that  
1699 contain information regarding incident details. SITREPs offer a snapshot of the incident  
1700 status during the past operational period and contain confirmed or verified information  
1701 regarding the explicit details (who, what, when, where, and how) relating to the incident.

1702 The information contained in incident notification, situation, and status reports should be  
1703 standardized in order to facilitate its processing; however, the standardization should not prevent  
1704 the collection or dissemination of information unique to a reporting organization. Transmission  
1705 of data in a common format enables the passing of pertinent information to appropriate  
1706 jurisdictions and organizations and to a national system that can handle data queries and  
1707 information/intelligence assessments and analysis.

1708 In addition to incident reports, personnel can also improve situational awareness and better  
1709 understand the objectives and tactics of the incident management by referring to incident-specific  
1710 plans such as the following:

- 1711 • **IAPs:** Plans containing incident objectives reflecting the resource assignments for a given  
1712 operational period.
- 1713 • **CAPs:** Plans focused on jurisdiction-wide issues. These plans typically include overall  
1714 objectives for the jurisdiction as determined by the CD and/or MAC Group. Such plans also  
1715 address additional items, such as mission assignments to departments, policy and cost  
1716 constraints, and other interagency considerations.

### 1717 **Data Collection and Processing**

1718 Personnel should collect data in a manner that observes standard data collection techniques and  
1719 definitions and transmit it using standard analysis processes. Personnel should also work with  
1720 their respective legal counsel to ensure compliance with data collection laws and policies.  
1721 Standardized sampling and data collection enables reliable analysis and improves the quality of  
1722 assessments.

1723 ICS, CMS, MAC Groups, and JIS all rely on the collection, organization, and presentation of  
1724 information. To support situational awareness and decision making, data collection and  
1725 processing includes the following standard elements:

1726 *Initial/Rapid Assessment*

1727 The first arriving official conducts this assessment at the onset of a threat or incident and  
1728 provides the findings to emergency dispatch organizations or other incident support  
1729 organizations for their use in requesting resources and supporting other decision making.

1730 *Data Collection Plan*

1731 A data collection plan typically employs a matrix that describes what EEI personnel will collect.  
1732 The data collection plan lists sources, methods, units of measure, and schedules for collecting  
1733 various items. Defining the EEI pre-incident is critical to the development of a data collection  
1734 plan. EEIs may include

- 1735 • Disaster area boundaries/access points;
- 1736 • Jurisdictional boundaries;
- 1737 • Social/economic/political impacts;
- 1738 • Transportation system status;
- 1739 • Communication system status;
- 1740 • Key facility status;
- 1741 • Hazard-specific information;
- 1742 • Significant weather;
- 1743 • Seismic or other geophysical data;
- 1744 • Critical facility status;
- 1745 • Aerial reconnaissance activity status;
- 1746 • Key official status;
- 1747 • Disaster/emergency declaration status;
- 1748 • Planned or upcoming activities; and
- 1749 • Donations.

1750 Personnel accomplish data gathering using a wide variety of methods:

- 1751 • Obtaining data from 911 calls from public safety telecommunicators or from dispatch  
1752 systems;
- 1753 • Providing information specialists to the Operations Section (in ICS) and/or Strategic  
1754 Operations Section (in CMS) to monitor actions and reporting systems (e.g., incident  
1755 management software) and to create and disseminate spot reports from that information;
- 1756 • Monitoring radio or data communications among responders;
- 1757 • Reading state and local SITREPs;
- 1758 • Deploying or using technical specialists such as National Weather Service representatives;
- 1759 • Receiving reports from field observers and ICPs;
- 1760 • Deploying information specialists to other facilities and operational field offices;
- 1761 • Analyzing relevant geospatial products; and

- 1762 • Gathering eyewitness reports from social media.

1763 *Validation*

1764 Situational awareness staff validate data to determine if it is incomplete, inaccurate, embellished,  
1765 outdated, or misleading. Using a variety of sources to verify data improves confidence in the  
1766 validity of the resultant information.

1767 *Analysis*

1768 Situational awareness staff analyze validated data to determine its implications for incident  
1769 management and to turn raw data into information that is useful for decision making. Analysis  
1770 addresses the information requirements established for the incident by breaking information  
1771 needs into smaller, more manageable elements, and then addressing those elements. Information  
1772 analysis requires a thorough understanding of the problems and the situation. To be most  
1773 effective, analysis should be timely, objective, and cognizant of missing or unknown data.

1774 *Dissemination*

1775 Once personnel have collected and validated the incident data, they share it with others, in  
1776 alignment with applicable data dissemination laws and policies. Dissemination of pertinent  
1777 incident information is essential to shared situational awareness. Timely sharing of accurate  
1778 information provides the foundation for effective coordination.

1779 *Maintenance and Updating*

1780 The accuracy and completeness of the information are fundamental to the quality of incident  
1781 decisions. Developing situational awareness entails continual monitoring, verifying, integrating,  
1782 and analyzing relevant elements of data and information.

1783 **C. Communications Standards and Formats**

1784 **Common Terminology, Plain Language, Compatibility**

1785 *Common Terminology*

1786 The ability of incident management personnel from different disciplines, jurisdictions,  
1787 organizations, and agencies to work together depends on their ability to communicate with each  
1788 other. The use of common terminology helps incident management personnel to communicate  
1789 and effectively coordinate activities.

1790 *Plain Language*

1791 The use of plain language (clear text) in incident management is a matter of public safety,  
1792 especially the safety of personnel and those affected by the incident.

1793 All communications between organizational elements during an incident, whether oral or written,  
1794 should be in plain language; this ensures that information dissemination is timely, clear,  
1795 acknowledged, and understood by all intended recipients. Personnel should not use codes, and  
1796 should confine all communications to essential messages. Personnel should avoid using  
1797 acronyms during incidents that involve multiple jurisdictions or organizations.

1798 **Compatibility**

1799 Properly planned, established, and applied communications protocols enable the dissemination of  
1800 information among management, command, and support elements and, as appropriate,  
1801 cooperating jurisdictions and organizations. Elements of compatible information management  
1802 include

- 1803 • **Data Communication Protocols:** Includes procedures and protocols for communications (to  
1804 include voice, data, geospatial information, Internet use, and data encryption) to use or share  
1805 information. This includes the structuring and sharing information consistently with the  
1806 National Information Exchange Model ([www.niem.gov](http://www.niem.gov)).
- 1807 • **Data Collection Protocols:** Establishing multidisciplinary and/or multijurisdictional  
1808 procedures and protocols before an incident allows for standardized data collection and  
1809 analysis.
- 1810 • **Encryption or Tactical Language:** When necessary, incident management personnel and  
1811 their affiliated organizations should have a methodology and the systems in place to encrypt  
1812 information to maintain security. Although plain language is appropriate during most  
1813 incidents, tactical language is occasionally warranted due to the nature of the incident (e.g.,  
1814 during an ongoing terrorist event). In such instances, guidance on the appropriate use of  
1815 specialized encryption and tactical language should be incorporated an incident-specific  
1816 communications plan.

1817 **Technology Use and Procedures**

1818 Technology and other tools can be resources for incident management personnel and their  
1819 affiliated organizations. Personnel can use these technology tools before, during, and after  
1820 incidents as a mechanism to offer increased situational awareness to jurisdictions/organizations  
1821 involved in the incident or to the public, when appropriate.

1822 As new technologies increase the efficiency with which personnel manage incidents, incident  
1823 managers at all levels seek to integrate technology into their operations. Examples of these  
1824 technologies include

- 1825 • State-of-the-art radio and telephone systems;
- 1826 • Public warning and notification systems;
- 1827 • Internet and related computing systems (e.g., GIS); and
- 1828 • Incident management software and social media.

1829 Incident managers should establish procedures for the use of technology and other tools during  
1830 an incident to benefit from these valuable communications system resources. Information gained  
1831 or shared during an incident through these applications should follow planned and standardized  
1832 methods and generally conform to the overall standards, procedures, and protocols.

1833 **Social Media**

1834 Social media<sup>5</sup> presents unique considerations for incident management at all levels. Increasingly,  
1835 the public expects incident management organizations to access social media to provide  
1836 recommendations and to collect information on incidents.

1837 Social media provides incident managers with a tool that can facilitate

- 1838 • Monitoring and gathering information and firsthand accounts of incident impacts;  
1839 • Distributing emergency public information and warning;  
1840 • Producing maps and incident visualizations; and  
1841 • Matching available information, services, and resources to identified needs.

1842 Social media provides an essential tool for gathering data to achieve situational awareness;  
1843 however, as with all data, incident managers develop data validation processes to filter and  
1844 determine the accuracy of information gained via social media.

1845 When using social media to disseminate information, considerations for incident managers  
1846 include identifying the intended audiences and what types of information to share, and  
1847 determining if feedback or responses are solicited. These decisions help incident managers  
1848 determine which social media platforms they should use, the frequency and configuration of  
1849 messages, and assignments and staffing needs. As with other public information, personnel  
1850 should follow standard release protocols.

1851 **Information Security/Operational Security (OPSEC)**

1852 The need for confidentiality sometimes complicates sharing information. This can be particularly  
1853 pronounced with sharing intelligence within the law enforcement community and the need to  
1854 share that information with the emergency management, fire, public health, and other  
1855 communities. Access to certain restricted or classified information depends on an individual's  
1856 security clearance and need to know.

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<sup>5</sup> Examples include blogs, chat rooms, discussion forums, wikis, microblogging sites, peer-to-peer social networking, and media sharing sites.

1857

# Conclusion

1858 The Nation faces complex and evolving threats and hazards, requiring partners from across the  
1859 whole community work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover  
1860 from incidents of all types and sizes. Using NIMS enables incident managers from across the  
1861 whole community to work together through shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to deliver  
1862 the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. Incident management  
1863 stakeholders will continue to build upon this foundation by developing supporting tools,  
1864 guidance, education, training, and other resources.

1865 NIMS is a living document that will evolve to capitalize on new opportunities and meet  
1866 emerging challenges. FEMA will continue to collect stakeholder feedback, best practices, and  
1867 lessons learned to drive revisions to NIMS. This includes reviewing after action reports from  
1868 real-world incidents and exercises, technical assistance interactions, online feedback submission,  
1869 and focused data collection efforts. In addition to this ongoing feedback, FEMA will conduct  
1870 quadrennial reviews in order to evaluate NIMS's consistency with existing and new policies,  
1871 evolving conditions, and experience gained from its use.

1872 America's preparedness work is never finished. While the Nation is safer, stronger, and better  
1873 prepared than it was a decade ago, the commitment to safeguard the Nation against its greatest  
1874 risks, now and for decades to come, remains resolute. By bringing the whole community together  
1875 now to address future needs, the Nation will continue to improve its preparedness to face  
1876 whatever challenges unfold.



# 1877 Glossary

1878 For the purpose of NIMS, the following terms and definitions apply:

1879 **Acquisition Procedure:** A process used to obtain resources to support operational needs.

1880 **Activation Level:** Operations and coordination centers are activated for various reasons based  
1881 on standing support requirements of a jurisdiction or organization (e.g., managing daily  
1882 operations from a dispatch center or a traffic control center), the requirements of an IC, the  
1883 context of a threat, the anticipation of events, or in response to an incident.

1884 **Agency:** A division of government with a specific function offering a particular kind of  
1885 assistance. In the ICS, agencies are defined either as jurisdictional (having statutory  
1886 responsibility for incident management) or as assisting or cooperating (providing resources or  
1887 other assistance). Governmental organizations are most often in charge of an incident, though in  
1888 certain circumstances private sector organizations are included. Additionally, NGOs may be  
1889 included to provide support.

1890 **Agency Administrator/Executive:** The official responsible for administering policy for an  
1891 agency or jurisdiction. An agency administrator/executive (or other public official with  
1892 jurisdictional responsibility for the incident) usually makes the decision to establish an Area  
1893 Command.

1894 **Agency Dispatch:** The agency or jurisdictional facility from which resources are sent to  
1895 incidents.

1896 **Agency Representative:** A person assigned by a primary, assisting, or cooperating local, state,  
1897 tribal, territorial, or Federal government agency, or nongovernmental or private organization,  
1898 who has been delegated authority to make decisions affecting that agency's or organization's  
1899 participation in incident management activities following appropriate consultation with the  
1900 leadership of that agency.

1901 **All-Hazard:** Describing an incident, natural or manmade, that warrants action to protect life,  
1902 property, the environment, and public health or safety, and to minimize disruptions of  
1903 government, social, or economic activities.

1904 **Allocated Resource:** A resource dispatched to an incident.

1905 **Area Command:** An organization established to oversee the management of multiple incidents  
1906 that are each being handled by a separate ICS organization or to oversee the management of a  
1907 very large or evolving incident that has multiple IMTs engaged. An agency  
1908 administrator/executive or other public official with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident  
1909 usually makes the decision to establish an Area Command.

1910 **Assessment:** The process of acquiring, collecting, processing, examining, analyzing, evaluating,  
1911 monitoring, and interpreting the data (information, evidence, objects, measurements, images,  
1912 sound, etc.), whether tangible or intangible, to provide a basis for decision making.

1913 **Assigned Resource:** A resource that has been checked in and assigned work tasks on an  
1914 incident.

- 1915 **Assignment:** A task given to a personnel resource to perform within a given operational period  
1916 based on operational objectives defined in the IAP or CAP.
- 1917 **Assistant:** A title for subordinates of principal Command Staff positions. The title indicates a  
1918 level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary  
1919 positions. Assistants may also be assigned to unit leaders.
- 1920 **Assisting Agency:** An agency or organization providing personnel, services, or other resources  
1921 to the agency with direct responsibility for incident management. See *Supporting Agency*.
- 1922 **Available Resource:** A resource assigned to an incident, checked in, and available for a mission  
1923 assignment, normally located in a staging area.
- 1924 **Badging:** The assignment of physical incident-specific credentials to establish legitimacy and  
1925 limit access to various incident sites.
- 1926 **Branch:** The organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility for major  
1927 aspects of incident operations. A branch is organizationally situated between the Section Chief  
1928 and the division or group in the Operations, Strategic Operations, and Intelligence /Investigations  
1929 Sections, and between the section and units in the Logistics and Resource and Center Logistics  
1930 Sections. Branches are identified by the use of Roman numerals or by functional area.
- 1931 **Cache:** A predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and/or supplies stored in a designated  
1932 location and available for incident use.
- 1933 **Camp:** A geographical site within the general incident area (separate from the Incident Base)  
1934 that is equipped and staffed to provide sleeping, food, water, and sanitary services to incident  
1935 personnel.
- 1936 **Categorizing Resources:** The process of organizing resources by category, kind, and type,  
1937 including size, capacity, capability, skill, and other characteristics. Categorizing resources makes  
1938 the ordering and dispatch processes within and across organizations and agencies, and between  
1939 governmental and nongovernmental entities, more efficient and ensures that the resources  
1940 received are appropriate to their needs.
- 1941 **Center Action Plan:** A written plan containing objectives and work assignments for CMS  
1942 personnel managing an incident. The CAP provides strategic direction and important information  
1943 for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.
- 1944 **Center Management System:** Describes the organization, functional responsibilities, and  
1945 activation levels of operations/coordination centers, and remains scalable and flexible.
- 1946 **Certifying Personnel:** The process of authoritatively attesting that individuals meet professional  
1947 standards for the training, experience, and performance needed for key incident management  
1948 functions.
- 1949 **Chain of Command:** The orderly line of authority within the ranks of incident management  
1950 organizations.
- 1951 **Check-In:** The process through which resources first report to an incident. All responders,  
1952 regardless of agency affiliation, report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the  
1953 IC/UC's established procedures.

- 1954 **Chief:** The ICS and CMS title for individuals responsible for the management of functional  
1955 sections: Operations, Strategic Operations, Intelligence /Investigations, Planning, Information  
1956 and Planning, Logistics, Resource and Center Logistics, and Finance/Administration.
- 1957 **Command Staff:** A group of incident management personnel the Incident Commander or Center  
1958 Director assigns to support the command function at an ICP or operations/coordination center,  
1959 respectively. Command Staff often includes a Public Information Officer (PIO), a Safety Officer,  
1960 and a Liaison Officer, who have assistants as necessary. Additional positions may be needed,  
1961 depending on the nature, scope, complexity, and location of the incident, or according to specific  
1962 requirements the IC/UC or CD establishes.
- 1963 **Credentialing:** The authentication and verification of the certification and identity of designated  
1964 incident managers and emergency responders.
- 1965 **Critical Infrastructure:** Assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, so vital to  
1966 the United States that the incapacitation or destruction of such assets, systems, or networks  
1967 would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health  
1968 or safety, or any combination of those matters.
- 1969 **Delegation of Authority:** A statement the agency executive delegating authority and assigning  
1970 responsibility provides to the IC. The delegation of authority can include objectives, priorities,  
1971 expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines, as needed. Many agencies  
1972 require written delegation of authority to be given to the IC prior to assuming command on larger  
1973 incidents. (This is also known as a *Letter of Expectation*).
- 1974 **Demobilization:** The orderly, safe, and efficient return of an incident resource to its original  
1975 location and status.
- 1976 **Departmental Operations Center:** An operations/coordination center dedicated to a single,  
1977 specific department or agency. The focus of a DOC is on internal agency incident management  
1978 and response. DOCs are often linked to and/or physically represented in a combined agency  
1979 EOC by an authorized agent(s) for the department or agency.
- 1980 **Deputy:** A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the  
1981 authority to manage a functional operation or to perform a specific task. In some cases a deputy  
1982 can act as relief for a superior, and, therefore, should be fully qualified in the position. Deputies  
1983 generally can be assigned to the IC, CD, General Staff, and Branch Directors.
- 1984 **Director:** The ICS title for individuals responsible for supervision of a branch. Also an  
1985 organizational title for an individual responsible for managing and directing an EOC (EOC  
1986 Director).
- 1987 **Dispatch:** The ordered movement of a resource or resources to an assigned operational mission,  
1988 or an administrative move from one location to another.
- 1989 **Division:** The organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined  
1990 geographic area. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the  
1991 manageable span of control of the Section Chief. See *Group*.
- 1992 **Emergency:** Any incident, whether natural or manmade, that necessitates responsive action to  
1993 protect life or property. Under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance  
1994 Act, an emergency means any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the  
1995 President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement local and state efforts and capabilities to

- 1996 save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a  
1997 catastrophe in any part of the United States.
- 1998 **Emergency Management Assistance Compact:** A congressionally ratified agreement that  
1999 provides form and structure to interstate mutual aid. Through EMAC, a disaster-affected state  
2000 can request and receive assistance from other member states quickly and efficiently, resolving  
2001 two key issues up front: liability and reimbursement.
- 2002 **Emergency Management/Response Personnel:** Includes local, sub-state regional, state, tribal,  
2003 territorial, and Federal governments, NGOs, private sector organizations, critical infrastructure  
2004 owners and operators, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency  
2005 management role. (This is also known as emergency responder).
- 2006 **Emergency Operations Center:** The physical location at which the coordination of information  
2007 and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes  
2008 place. An EOC is a common type of operations/coordination center and may be a temporary  
2009 facility or located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level  
2010 of organization within a jurisdiction.
- 2011 **Emergency Operations Plan:** An ongoing plan for responding to a wide variety of potential  
2012 hazards.
- 2013 **Emergency Public Information:** Information disseminated primarily in anticipation of or  
2014 during an emergency. In addition to providing situational information to the public, it frequently  
2015 provides directive actions to be taken by the general public.
- 2016 **Emergency Support Function:** The grouping of governmental and certain private sector  
2017 capabilities into an organizational structure to provide support, resources, program  
2018 implementation, and services most likely needed to save lives, protect property and the  
2019 environment, restore essential services and critical infrastructure, and help survivors and  
2020 communities return to normal following domestic incidents.
- 2021 **Enhanced Steady State:** Describes the activation level in place when a situation or threat has  
2022 developed and requires monitoring and coordination between jurisdictions and agencies resulting  
2023 in a partially staffed center.
- 2024 **Evacuation:** The organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of  
2025 civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe  
2026 areas.
- 2027 **Event:** See *Planned Event*.
- 2028 **Federal:** Of or pertaining to the Federal Government of the United States of America.
- 2029 **Federal Interagency Operations Plan (FIOP):** FIOPs are the Federal Government concept of  
2030 operations for preventing, protecting from, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering  
2031 from all hazards.
- 2032 **Field Operations Guide:** Durable pocket or desk guides that contain essential information  
2033 needed to perform specific assignments or functions.
- 2034 **Finance/Administration Section:** The ICS and CMS Section responsible for all administrative  
2035 and financial considerations surrounding an incident.

2036 **Full Activation:** Describes the activation level for an incident of such magnitude that it requires  
2037 or may require extensive response and recovery efforts and very significant resources or threat  
2038 that has developed, requiring 24/7 coordination, monitoring, and support.

2039 **General Staff:** A group of incident management personnel organized according to function and  
2040 reporting to the IC or CD. The General Staff in ICS normally consists of the Operations Section  
2041 Chief, Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief,  
2042 and Finance/Administration Section Chief. The General Staff in CMS normally consists of the  
2043 Strategic Operations Section Chief, Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief, Information and  
2044 Planning Section Chief, Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief, and  
2045 Finance/Administration Section Chief.

2046 **Group:** An organizational subdivision established to divide the incident management structure  
2047 into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a  
2048 special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. See *Division*.

2049 **Hazard:** Something potentially dangerous or harmful, often the root cause of an unwanted  
2050 outcome.

2051 **Incident:** An occurrence, natural or manmade, that necessitates a response to protect life or  
2052 property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks,  
2053 terrorist threats, civil unrest, wildland and urban fires, floods, HazMat spills, nuclear accidents,  
2054 aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, tsunamis, war-related  
2055 disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences needing an emergency  
2056 response.

2057 **Incident Action Plan:** An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the  
2058 overall strategy for incident-level management of an incident. The IAP includes the  
2059 identification of ICS operational resources and assignments and provides direction and important  
2060 information for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.

2061 **Incident Base:** A location at which primary Logistics functions for an incident are coordinated  
2062 and administered. There is typically only one Base per incident. (An incident name or other  
2063 designator is added to the term *Base*.) The ICP may be co-located with the Incident Base.

2064 **Incident Command:** The ICS organizational element responsible for overall management of the  
2065 incident and consisting of the IC (either single or UC structure) and any assigned supporting  
2066 staff.

2067 **Incident Command Post:** The field location where the primary functions of incident command  
2068 are performed. The ICP may be co-located with the Incident Base or other incident facilities.

2069 **Incident Command System:** A standard on-scene emergency management construct that  
2070 provides an integrated, organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of  
2071 single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the  
2072 combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating  
2073 within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources  
2074 during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small, as well as  
2075 large and complex, incidents.

2076 **Incident Commander:** The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the  
2077 development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has

2078 overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the  
2079 management of all incident operations at the incident site.

2080 **Incident Management:** The broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing effective  
2081 and efficient operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, using both  
2082 governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an  
2083 incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

2084 **Incident Management Assistance Team:** FEMA IMATs rapidly deploy to an incident or  
2085 incident-threatened venue, provide leadership in the identification and provision of Federal  
2086 assistance, and coordinate and integrate inter-jurisdictional response in support of an affected  
2087 state, tribe, or territory.

2088 **Incident Management Team:** An IC and the appropriate Command and General Staff personnel  
2089 assigned to an incident. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with  
2090 the identified formal response needs and responsibilities of the IMT, support determination of the  
2091 “type” or level, of IMT.

2092 **Incident Objectives:** Statements of guidance and direction needed to select the appropriate  
2093 strategy(s) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic  
2094 expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively  
2095 deployed. Incident objectives should be achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow  
2096 strategic and tactical alternatives.

2097 **Information Management:** The collection, organization, and control over the structure,  
2098 processing, and delivery of information from one or more sources and distribution to one or more  
2099 audiences who have a stake in that information.

2100 **Information and Planning Section:** This section’s personnel manage situational awareness  
2101 efforts and facilitate the incident strategic planning process for an operations/coordination center.

2102 **Integrated Planning System:** A system designed to provide common processes for developing  
2103 and integrating plans for the Federal Government to establish a comprehensive approach to  
2104 national planning in accordance with the Homeland Security Management System as outlined in  
2105 the National Strategy for Homeland Security.

2106 **Intelligence and Investigations:** The ICS and CMS Section responsible for all intelligence and  
2107 investigations considerations surrounding an incident. Intelligence gathered within the  
2108 Intelligence and Investigations function is information that either leads to the detection,  
2109 prevention, apprehension, and prosecution of criminal activities—or the individual(s) involved—  
2110 including terrorist incidents; or that leads to determination of the cause of a given incident  
2111 (regardless of the source), such as public health events or fires with unknown origins.

2112 **Interoperability:** The ability of systems, personnel, and equipment to provide and receive  
2113 functionality, data, information, and/or services to and from other systems, personnel, and  
2114 equipment, between both public and private agencies, departments, and other organizations, in a  
2115 manner enabling them to operate effectively together. Interoperability allows emergency  
2116 management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations to communicate within and  
2117 across agencies and jurisdictions via voice, data, or video-on-demand in real time, when needed,  
2118 and when authorized.

- 2119 **Job Aid:** A checklist or other visual aid intended to ensure that specific steps of completing a  
2120 task or assignment are accomplished.
- 2121 **Joint Field Office:** The primary Federal incident management field structure. The JFO is a  
2122 temporary Federal facility that provides a central location for the coordination of local, state,  
2123 tribal, territorial, and Federal governments and private sector and NGOs with primary  
2124 responsibility for response and recovery.
- 2125 **Joint Information Center:** A facility established to coordinate all incident-related public  
2126 information activities. The JIC serves as the central point of contact for all news media. Public  
2127 information officials from all participating agencies co-locate at, or virtually coordinate through,  
2128 the JIC.
- 2129 **Joint Information System:** A structure that integrates overarching incident information and  
2130 public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate,  
2131 accessible, timely, and complete information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of  
2132 the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated  
2133 interagency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and  
2134 strategies on behalf of the IC or CD; advising the IC and CD concerning public affairs issues that  
2135 could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could  
2136 undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.
- 2137 **Jurisdiction:** A range or sphere of authority. Public agencies have jurisdiction at an incident  
2138 related to their legal responsibilities and authority. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be  
2139 political or geographical (e.g., local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal boundary lines) or  
2140 functional (e.g., law enforcement, public health).
- 2141 **Jurisdictional Agency:** The agency having jurisdiction and responsibility for a specific  
2142 geographical area, or a mandated function.
- 2143 **Key Resource:** Any publicly or privately controlled resource essential to the minimal operations  
2144 of the economy and government.
- 2145 **Legal Advisor:** Advises operations/coordination center personnel regarding compliance with  
2146 applicable law and policy. This advisor also recommends alternatives/waivers/exceptions to  
2147 accomplish the mission.
- 2148 **Letter of Expectation:** See *Delegation of Authority*.
- 2149 **Liaison:** Communication to establish and maintain mutual understanding and cooperation.
- 2150 **Liaison Officer:** A member of the Command Staff, responsible for coordinating with  
2151 representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies or organizations.
- 2152 **Local Government:** Public entities responsible for the security and welfare of a designated area  
2153 as established by law. A county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority,  
2154 school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether  
2155 the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under state law), regional  
2156 or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; a tribe or  
2157 authorized tribal entity, or in Alaska, a Native Village or Alaska Regional Native Corporation; a  
2158 rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity.

- 2159 **Logistics:** The process and procedure for providing resources and other services to support  
2160 incident management.
- 2161 **Logistics Section:** The ICS Section responsible for providing facilities, services, and material  
2162 support for the incident.
- 2163 **Management by Objectives:** A management approach that involves a five-step process for  
2164 achieving the incident goal. The Management by Objectives approach includes the following:  
2165 establishing overarching incident objectives; developing strategies based on overarching incident  
2166 objectives; developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols; establishing  
2167 specific, measurable tactics or tasks for various incident-management functional activities and  
2168 directing efforts to attain them, in support of defined strategies; and documenting results to  
2169 measure performance and facilitate corrective action.
- 2170 **Manager:** The individual within an ICS organizational unit assigned specific managerial  
2171 responsibilities (e.g., Staging Area Manager or Camp Manager).
- 2172 **Mission Area:** The National Preparedness Goal identified five mission areas (Prevention,  
2173 Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery), in which it groups the 32 core capabilities (the  
2174 distinct critical elements needed to achieve the goal).
- 2175 **Mitigation:** Activities providing a critical foundation within the mission areas in the effort to  
2176 reduce the loss of life and property from natural and/or manmade disasters by avoiding or  
2177 lessening the impact of a disaster and providing value to the public by creating safer  
2178 communities. Mitigation seeks to fix the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated  
2179 damage. These activities or actions, in most cases, have a long-term sustained effect.
- 2180 **Mobilization:** The processes and procedures used by all organizations—local, state, tribal,  
2181 territorial, and Federal—for activating, assembling, and transporting all resources that have been  
2182 requested to respond to or support an incident.
- 2183 **Mobilization Guide:** A reference document used by organizations outlining agreements,  
2184 processes, and procedures used by all participating agencies/organizations for activating,  
2185 assembling, and transporting resources.
- 2186 **Multijurisdictional Incident:** An incident needing action from multiple agencies that each have  
2187 jurisdiction to manage certain aspects of an incident. In the ICS, these incidents are managed  
2188 under a UC.
- 2189 **Mutual Aid Agreement or Assistance Agreement:** A written or oral agreement between and  
2190 among agencies/organizations and/or jurisdictions that provides a mechanism to quickly obtain  
2191 emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated  
2192 services. The primary objective is to facilitate the rapid, short-term deployment of emergency  
2193 support prior to, during, and/or after an incident.
- 2194 **National:** Of a nationwide character, including the local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal  
2195 aspects of governance and policy.
- 2196 **National Incident Management System:** A set of principles and systems that provides a  
2197 systematic, proactive approach to guide government agencies at all levels, NGOs, and the private  
2198 sector to work seamlessly to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and  
2199 recover from incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, to reduce the loss of  
2200 life or property and harm to the environment.



- 2201 **National Planning Frameworks:** The National Planning Frameworks, one for each  
2202 preparedness mission area, describe how the whole community works together to achieve the  
2203 National Preparedness Goal. The Frameworks foster a shared understanding of our roles and  
2204 responsibilities from the fire house to the White House and help us understand how we, as a  
2205 Nation, coordinate, share information and work together—which ultimately results in a more  
2206 secure and resilient Nation.
- 2207 **National Preparedness System:** The National Preparedness System outlines an organized  
2208 process for everyone in the whole community to move forward with their preparedness activities  
2209 and achieve the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient Nation.
- 2210 **National Preparedness Goal:** The National Preparedness Goal, Second edition, released in  
2211 October 2105, defines what it means for the whole community to be prepared for all types of  
2212 disasters and emergencies. The goal itself is succinct: “A secure and resilient Nation with the  
2213 capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond  
2214 to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”
- 2215 **Nongovernmental Organization:** An entity with an association that is based on the interests of  
2216 its members, individuals, or institutions. An NGO is not created by a government, but it may  
2217 work cooperatively with government. Such organizations serve a public purpose, not a private  
2218 benefit. Examples of NGOs include faith-based charity organizations and the American Red  
2219 Cross. NGOs, including voluntary and faith-based groups, provide relief services to sustain life,  
2220 reduce physical and emotional distress, and promote the recovery of disaster survivors.
- 2221 **Normal Operations/Steady State:** The activation level that describes routine monitoring of  
2222 jurisdictional situation (no event or incident anticipated).
- 2223 **Officer:** The ICS and CMS title for a person responsible for one of the Command Staff positions  
2224 of Safety, Liaison, and Public Information.
- 2225 **Operational Period:** The time scheduled for executing a given set of operation actions, as  
2226 specified in the IAP or CAP. Operational periods can be of various lengths, although usually  
2227 spanning 12 to 24 hours.
- 2228 **Operations Section:** The ICS Section responsible for all non-I/I tactical incident operations and  
2229 implementation of the IAP. In ICS, the Operations Section normally includes subordinate  
2230 branches, divisions, and/or groups.
- 2231 **Organization:** Any association or group of persons with like objectives. Examples include, but  
2232 are not limited to, governmental departments and agencies, NGOs, and the private sector.
- 2233 **Partial Activation:** The activation level describing the response where a situation or threat has  
2234 developed requiring coordination beyond the normal workday and that requires 24/7 monitoring.
- 2235 **Personal Responsibility:** The obligation to be accountable for one’s actions.
- 2236 **Personnel Accountability:** The ability to account for the location and welfare of incident  
2237 personnel.
- 2238 **Plain Language:** Communication that can be understood by the intended audience and meets the  
2239 purpose of the communicator. For the purpose of NIMS, plain language is designed to eliminate  
2240 or limit the use of codes and abbreviations, as appropriate, during incident response involving  
2241 more than a single agency.

- 2242 **Planned Event:** A scheduled non-emergency activity (e.g., sporting event, concert, parade).
- 2243 **Planning Meeting:** A meeting held, as needed, before and throughout the duration of an incident  
2244 to select specific strategies and tactics for incident control operations and for service and support  
2245 planning.
- 2246 **Planning Section:** The ICS Section responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination  
2247 of operational information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of  
2248 the IAP. This section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on  
2249 the status of resources assigned to the incident.
- 2250 **Portability:** An approach that facilitates the interaction of systems that are normally distinct. The  
2251 portability of radio technologies, protocols, and frequencies among emergency  
2252 management/response personnel allows for successful and efficient integration, transport, and  
2253 deployment of communications systems when necessary. Portability includes the standardized  
2254 assignment of radio channels across jurisdictions, which allows responders to participate in an  
2255 incident outside their jurisdiction and still use familiar equipment.
- 2256 **Pre-Positioned Resource:** A resource moved to an area near the expected incident site in  
2257 anticipation of resource needs.
- 2258 **Preparedness:** A continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising,  
2259 evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during  
2260 incident response. Within NIMS, preparedness focuses on the following elements: planning;  
2261 procedures and protocols; training and exercises; personnel qualification and certification; and  
2262 equipment certification.
- 2263 **Preparedness Organization:** An organization that provides coordination for emergency  
2264 management and incident response activities before a potential incident. These organizations  
2265 range from groups of individuals to small committees to large standing organizations that  
2266 represent a wide variety of committees, planning groups, and other organizations (e.g., Citizen  
2267 Corps, Local Emergency Planning Committees, and Critical Infrastructure Sector Coordinating  
2268 Councils).
- 2269 **Prevention:** Actions to avoid an incident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring.  
2270 Prevention is one of the five mission areas and involves actions to protect lives and property. It  
2271 also involves applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities that includes  
2272 countermeasures such as deterrence operations; heightened inspections; improved surveillance  
2273 and security operations; investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat;  
2274 public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or  
2275 quarantine; and, as appropriate, specific law enforcement operations aimed at deterring,  
2276 preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity and apprehending potential perpetrators  
2277 and bringing them to justice.
- 2278 **Private Sector:** Organizations and individuals that are not part of any governmental structure.  
2279 The private sector includes for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, formal and informal  
2280 structures, commerce, and industry.
- 2281 **Protection:** Capabilities to safeguard the homeland against acts of terrorism and man-made or  
2282 natural disasters. This mission area focuses on actions to protect the citizens, residents, visitors,  
2283 and critical assets, systems, and networks against the greatest risks to our Nation in a manner that  
2284 allows our interests, aspirations, and way of life to thrive.

2285 **Protocol:** A set of established guidelines for actions (which are designated by individuals, teams,  
2286 functions, or capabilities) under various specified conditions.

2287 **Public Information:** Processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely, accurate,  
2288 and accessible information on an incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources  
2289 committed; and other matters of general interest to the public, responders, and additional  
2290 stakeholders (both directly affected and indirectly affected).

2291 **Public Information Officer:** A member of the Command Staff in ICS and CMS, responsible for  
2292 interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related  
2293 information needs.

2294 **Publications Management:** A subsystem that manages the development, publication control,  
2295 publication supply, and distribution of NIMS materials.

2296 **Recovery:** The development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans;  
2297 the reconstitution of government operations and services; individual, private sector,  
2298 nongovernmental, and public assistance programs to provide housing and to promote restoration;  
2299 long-term care and treatment of affected persons; additional measures for social, political,  
2300 environmental, and economic restoration; evaluation of the incident to identify lessons learned;  
2301 post-incident reporting; and development of initiatives to mitigate the effects of future incidents.

2302 **Recovery Plan:** A plan developed to restore an affected area or community.

2303 **Reimbursement:** A mechanism to recoup funds expended for incident-specific activities.

2304 **Resource and Center Logistics Section:** The Resource and Center Logistics Section in CMS  
2305 provides resource support to the incident, through executing contracts and implementing mutual  
2306 aid agreements, and to operations/coordination centers.

2307 **Resource Management:** A system for identifying available resources at all jurisdictional levels  
2308 to enable timely, efficient, and unimpeded access to resources needed to prepare for, respond to,  
2309 or recover from an incident. Resource management under NIMS includes mutual aid agreements  
2310 and assistance agreements; the use of special local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal teams;  
2311 and resource mobilization protocols.

2312 **Resource Tracking:** A standard, integrated process conducted prior to, during, and after an  
2313 incident by all emergency management/response personnel and their associated organizations.

2314 **Resources:** Personnel and major items of equipment, teams, and facilities available or potentially  
2315 available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is maintained. Resources are  
2316 described by kind and type and may be used in operational support or supervisory capacities at  
2317 an incident or at an EOC.

2318 **Response:** Activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. Response includes  
2319 immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. Response also  
2320 includes the execution of EOPs and of mitigation activities designed to limit the loss of life,  
2321 personal injury, property damage, and other unfavorable outcomes.

2322 **Retrograde:** To return resources to their original location.

2323 **Safety Officer:** A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring incident operations  
2324 and advising the IC on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety  
2325 of emergency responder personnel.

- 2326 **Section:** The ICS/CMS organizational element having responsibility for a major functional area  
2327 of incident management (e.g., Operations or Strategic Operations, Intelligence/Investigations,  
2328 Planning or Information and Planning, Logistics or Resource and Center Logistics, and  
2329 Finance/Administration).
- 2330 **Single Resource:** An individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a  
2331 crew/team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used on an incident.
- 2332 **Situation Report:** Confirmed or verified information regarding the specific details relating to an  
2333 incident.
- 2334 **Span of Control:** The number of resources for which a supervisor is responsible, usually  
2335 expressed as the ratio of supervisors to individuals. Under NIMS, an appropriate span of control  
2336 is between 1:3 and 1:7, with optimal being 1:5, or between 1:8 and 1:10 for many large-scale law  
2337 enforcement operations.
- 2338 **Staging Area:** A temporary location for available resources. A staging area can be any location  
2339 in which personnel, supplies, and equipment can be temporarily housed or parked while awaiting  
2340 operational assignment.
- 2341 **Standard Operating Guidelines:** A set of instructions covering those features of operations that  
2342 lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.
- 2343 **Standard Operating Procedure:** A complete reference document or an operations manual that  
2344 provides the purpose, authorities, duration, and details for the preferred method of performing a  
2345 single function or a number of interrelated functions in a uniform manner.
- 2346 **State:** Any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto  
2347 Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana  
2348 Islands, and any possession of the United States.
- 2349 **Status Report:** Information specifically related to the status of resources (e.g., the availability or  
2350 assignment of resources).
- 2351 **Strategic Operations Section:** The CMS section responsible for ensuring that on-scene incident  
2352 management personnel have the resources and operational support necessary to meet incident  
2353 objectives and leadership priorities.
- 2354 **Strategy:** The general plan or direction to accomplish incident objectives.
- 2355 **Strike Team:** A set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established  
2356 minimum number of personnel, common communications, and a leader.
- 2357 **Sub-state Region:** A grouping of jurisdictions, counties, and/or localities within a state brought  
2358 together for specified purposes (e.g., homeland security, education, public health), usually  
2359 containing a governance structure.
- 2360 **Supervisor:** The ICS title for an individual responsible for a division or group.
- 2361 **Supporting Agency:** An agency that provides support and/or resource assistance to another  
2362 agency. See *Assisting Agency*.
- 2363 **Supporting Technology:** Any technology that is used to support NIMS, such as orthophoto  
2364 mapping, remote automatic weather stations, infrared technology, or communications.

- 2365 **System:** Any combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, processes, procedures, and  
2366 communications integrated for a specific purpose.
- 2367 **Tactics:** The deployment and directing of resources on an incident to accomplish the objectives  
2368 designated by strategy.
- 2369 **Task Force:** Any combination of resources assembled to support a specific mission or  
2370 operational need.
- 2371 **Technical Specialist:** A person with special skills that can be used anywhere within the ICS  
2372 organization.
- 2373 **Technology Standards:** The conditions, guidelines, or characteristics needed to facilitate the  
2374 interoperability and compatibility of major systems across jurisdictional, geographic, and  
2375 functional lines.
- 2376 **Technology Support:** Assistance that facilitates incident operations and sustains the research  
2377 and development programs that underpin the long-term investment in the Nation's future  
2378 incident management capabilities.
- 2379 **Terrorism:** Activity that involves an act dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of  
2380 critical infrastructure or key resources; violates the criminal laws of the United States or of any  
2381 state or other subdivision of the United States; and appears to be intended to intimidate or coerce  
2382 a civilian population, to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or to  
2383 affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.
- 2384 **Threat:** A natural or manmade occurrence, an individual, an entity, or an action having or  
2385 indicating the potential to harm life, information, operations, the environment, and/or property.
- 2386 **Tools:** Those instruments and capabilities that allow for the professional performance of tasks,  
2387 such as information systems, agreements, doctrine, capabilities, and legislative authorities.
- 2388 **Type:** An ICS resource classification that refers to capability. Type 1 is more capable than Types  
2389 2, 3, or 4, respectively, because of size, power, capacity, or (in the case of IMTs) experience and  
2390 qualifications.
- 2391 **Unified Area Command:** A version of Command established when incidents under an Area  
2392 Command are multijurisdictional. See *Area Command*.
- 2393 **Unified Command:** An ICS application used when more than one agency has incident  
2394 jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions.
- 2395 **Unit:** The organizational element with functional responsibility for a specific incident planning,  
2396 logistics, or finance/administration activity.
- 2397 **Unit Leader:** The individual in charge of managing Units within an ICS functional section.
- 2398 **Unity of Command:** A NIMS management and coordination principle stating that each  
2399 individual involved in incident operations is assigned to only one supervisor.
- 2400 **Unity of Effort:** A NIMS guiding principle that provides coordination through cooperation and  
2401 common interests and does not interfere with Federal departments' and agencies' supervisory,  
2402 command, or statutory authorities.
- 2403 **Vital Records:** The essential agency records needed to meet operational responsibilities under  
2404 national security emergencies or other emergency or disaster conditions (emergency operating

2405 records), or to protect the legal and financial rights of the government and those affected by  
2406 government activities (legal and financial rights records).

2407 **Volunteer:** Any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency (which has authority  
2408 to accept volunteer services) when the individual performs services without promise,  
2409 expectation, or receipt of compensation for services performed.

2410 **Whole Community:** A focus on enabling the participation in incident management activities of  
2411 a wider range of players from the private and nonprofit sectors, including NGOs and the general  
2412 public, in conjunction with the participation of all levels of government in order to foster better  
2413 coordination and working relationships.

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# 2414 List of Abbreviations

2415	AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
2416	BEOC	Business Emergency Operations Center
2417	CAP	Center Action Plan
2418	CD	Center Director
2419	CMS	Center Management System
2420	COOP	Continuity of Operations
2421	CPG	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide
2422	DOC	Department Operations Center
2423	EAS	Emergency Alert System
2424	EEI	Essential Elements of Information
2425	EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
2426	EMS	Emergency Medical Services
2427	EOC	Emergency Operations Center
2428	EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
2429	ESF	Emergency Support Function
2430	FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
2431	FERO	Federal Emergency Response Official
2432	FIOP	Federal Interagency Operations Plan
2433	GIS	Geographic Information Systems
2434	HazMat	Hazardous Material
2435	HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
2436	I/I	Intelligence/Investigations
2437	I/I FFOG	Intelligence and Investigations Function Field Operations Guide
2438	IAP	Incident Action Plan
2439	IC	Incident Commander
2440	ICP	Incident Command Post
2441	ICS	Incident Command System
2442	IMAT	Incident Management Assistance Team
2443	IMT	Incident Management Team
2444	IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System

2445	IPSC	Information and Planning Section Chief
2446	IRIS	Incident Resource Inventory System
2447	JFO	Joint Field Office
2448	JIC	Joint Information Center
2449	JIS	Joint Information System
2450	MAC Group	Multiagency Coordination Group
2451	NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
2452	NIC	National Integration Center
2453	NIEM	National Information Exchange Model
2454	NIMS	National Incident Management System
2455	NRCC	National Response Coordination Center
2456	NRCS	National Response Coordination Staff
2457	NWCG	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
2458	OPSEC	Operational Security
2459	OSC	Operations Section Chief
2460	PIO	Public Information Officer
2461	PKEMRA	Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006
2462	PPD	Presidential Policy Directive
2463	PSC	Planning Section Chief
2464	PTB	Position Task Book
2465	RCLSC	Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief
2466	RRCC	Regional Response Coordination Center
2467	RTL	Resource Typing Library Tool
2468	SITREP	Situation Report
2469	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
2470	SOSC	Strategic Operations Section Chief
2471	UC	Unified Command



# 2472 Resources

2473 A variety of documents and resources exist or are in development by the NIC to support  
2474 implementation of NIMS. The hub for all information is <http://www.fema.gov/national-incident->  
2475 [management-system](http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system).

## 2476 NIMS Supporting Documents

### 2477 **NIMS Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers**

- 2478 • Published November 2007
- 2479 • This publication provides operational practices for performing PIO duties within the ICS. It  
2480 offers basic procedures to operate an effective JIS. The guidance also addresses actions for  
2481 preparedness, incident response, JICs, incident recovery, and Federal public information  
2482 support. The guidance material is adaptable to individual jurisdictions and specific incident  
2483 conditions.
- 2484 • <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/25463>

### 2485 **NIMS Intelligence and Investigations Function Guidance and Field Operations** 2486 **Guide**

- 2487 • Published October 2013
- 2488 • This document includes guidance on how various disciplines can use and integrate the I/I  
2489 Function while adhering to NIMS concepts and principles. It includes information intended  
2490 for the NIMS practitioner (including the IC/UC) that assists in the placement of the I/I  
2491 Function within the command structure; provides guidance for implementing the I/I  
2492 Function; and has an accompanying Intelligence and Investigations Function Field  
2493 Operations Guide (I/I FFOG).
- 2494 • <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/84807>

### 2495 **NIMS Training Program**

- 2496 • Published September 2011
- 2497 • Superseded the previous training guidance, the *Five-Year NIMS Training Program*.
- 2498 • The NIMS Training Program defines the NIMS Training Program as it relates to the NIMS  
2499 components of Preparedness, Communications and Information Management, Resource  
2500 Management, and Command and Management. It specifies the NIC and stakeholder  
2501 responsibilities and activities for developing, maintaining, and sustaining NIMS training. The  
2502 NIMS Training Program outlines responsibilities and activities that are consistent with the  
2503 National Training Program, as mandated by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management  
2504 Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006.
- 2505 • [http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims\\_training\\_program.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_training_program.pdf)

## 2506 **Guidelines for the Credentialing of Personnel**

- 2507 • Published August 2011
- 2508 • The NIMS Guideline for the Credentialing of Personnel describes the national credentialing
- 2509 standards and provides written guidance regarding the use of those standards. This document
- 2510 describes credentialing and typing processes and identifies tools that Federal Emergency
- 2511 Response Officials (FERO) and emergency managers at all levels of government use, both
- 2512 routinely and to facilitate multijurisdictional coordinated responses.
- 2513 • [http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims\\_cred\\_guidelines\\_report.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_cred_guidelines_report.pdf)

## 2514 **ICS Forms Booklet**

- 2515 • Published September 2007
- 2516 • The NIMS ICS Forms Booklet, FEMA 502-2, assists emergency response personnel in the
- 2517 use of ICS and corresponding documentation during incident operations.
- 2518 • <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/33584>

## 2519 **Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101: Developing and Maintaining**

### 2520 **Emergency Operations Plans, Version 2**

- 2521 • Published November 2010
- 2522 • FEMA's Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 Version 2.0 provides guidance on
- 2523 the fundamentals of planning and development of EOPs. CPG 101 Version 2.0 encourages
- 2524 emergency and homeland security managers to engage the whole community in addressing
- 2525 all of the risks that potentially impact their jurisdictions.
- 2526 • <http://www.fema.gov/plan>.

## 2527 **CPG 201, Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Guide, Second**

### 2528 **Edition**

- 2529 • Published August 2013
- 2530 • Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 201, Second Edition, provides communities
- 2531 guidance for conducting a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA).
- 2532 This guide describes a standard process for identifying community-specific threats and
- 2533 hazards, setting capability targets for each core capability identified in the National
- 2534 Preparedness Goal, and estimating resource requirements, as required in Presidential Policy
- 2535 Directive (PPD) 8: National Preparedness.
- 2536 • <http://www.fema.gov/threat-and-hazard-identification-and-risk-assessment>

## 2537 **Additional Supporting Materials**

### 2538 **Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act**

- 2539 • Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law (PL) 100-707,
- 2540 signed into law November 23, 1988; amended the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, PL 93-288.

2541 This Act constitutes the statutory authority for most Federal disaster response activities,  
2542 especially as they pertain to FEMA and FEMA programs.

2543 • [http://www.fema.gov/robert-t-stafford-disaster-relief-and-emergency-assistance-act-public-](http://www.fema.gov/robert-t-stafford-disaster-relief-and-emergency-assistance-act-public-law-93-288-amended)  
2544 [law-93-288-amended](http://www.fema.gov/robert-t-stafford-disaster-relief-and-emergency-assistance-act-public-law-93-288-amended)

### 2545 **Homeland Security Act of 2002**

2546 • The Homeland Security Act of 2002, PL 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135, enacted November 25,  
2547 2002, established the Department of Homeland Security.

2548 • <http://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-act-2002>

### 2549 **Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) of 2006**

2550 • The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA) amended the  
2551 Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make extensive revisions to emergency response  
2552 provisions while keeping FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security. PKEMRA  
2553 significantly reorganized FEMA, provided it substantial new authority to remedy gaps in  
2554 response, and included a more robust preparedness mission for FEMA.

2555 • <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-109publ295/pdf/PLAW-109publ295.pdf>

### 2556 **National Preparedness Goal**

2557 • The National Preparedness Goal, released in September 2011, defines what it means for the  
2558 whole community to be prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies. The goal itself is  
2559 succinct: “A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole  
2560 community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and  
2561 hazards that pose the greatest risk.”

2562 • <http://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-goal>

### 2563 **National Preparedness System**

2564 • The National Preparedness System outlines an organized process for everyone in the whole  
2565 community to move forward with their preparedness activities and achieve the National  
2566 Preparedness Goal.

2567 • <http://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness-system>

### 2568 **National Planning Frameworks**

2569 • The National Planning Frameworks, one for each mission area, describe how the whole  
2570 community works together to achieve the National Preparedness Goal.

2571 • <http://www.fema.gov/national-planning-frameworks>

### 2572 **Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013**

2573 • The Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 became law on January 29, 2013 and amends  
2574 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. This act authorizes  
2575 changes to the way FEMA delivers Federal disaster assistance with the goal of (1) reducing  
2576 the costs to the Federal Government of providing such assistance; (2) increasing flexibility in

2577 the administration of assistance; (3) expediting the provision of assistance to a state, tribal or  
2578 local government, or owner or operator of a private nonprofit facility; and (4) providing  
2579 financial incentives and disincentives for the timely and cost-effective completion of  
2580 projects.

- 2581 • <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr219/BILLS-113hr219rds.pdf>

### 2582 **National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)**

2583 • NIEM is a community-driven, standards-based approach to exchanging information. Diverse  
2584 communities can collectively leverage NIEM to increase efficiencies and improve decision  
2585 making.

- 2586 • <https://www.niem.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

### 2587 **Resource Management**

2588 • Resource Management guidance and tools support the use of consistent resource  
2589 management concepts such as typing, inventorying, organizing, and tracking to facilitate the  
2590 dispatch, deployment, and recovery of resources before, during, and after an incident.

- 2591 • <http://www.fema.gov/resource-management>

### 2592 **Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLTL)**

2593 • The RTLTL is an online catalog of national resource typing definitions and job titles/position  
2594 qualifications. Definitions and job titles/position qualifications are easily searchable and  
2595 discoverable through the RTLTL.

- 2596 • <https://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid>

### 2597 **Incident Resource Inventory System (IRIS)**

2598 • IRIS is a distributed software tool provided by FEMA. IRIS is available for use by all  
2599 agencies, jurisdictions, and communities to serve as a consistent tool to inventory resources  
2600 into their own database and to search/identify their specific resources for incident operations  
2601 and mutual aid purposes.

- 2602 • <https://nimstools.preptoolkit.org/>

### 2603 **Emergency Management Assistance Compact**

2604 • EMAC became law in 1996 (Public Law 104-321) and offers assistance during governor-  
2605 declared states of emergency through a responsive, straightforward system that allows states  
2606 to send personnel, equipment, and commodities to help disaster relief efforts in other states.  
2607 Through EMAC, states can also transfer services, such as shipping newborn blood from a  
2608 disaster-impacted lab to a lab in another state.

- 2609 • <http://www.emacweb.org/>

### 2610 **National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)**

2611 • The NWCG provides national leadership to develop, maintain, and communicate interagency  
2612 standards, guidelines, qualifications, training, and other capabilities that enable interoperable

2613 operations among federal and non-federal entities. NWCG standards are interagency by  
2614 design. The individual member entities independently decide whether to adopt and use them,  
2615 and communicate them through their respective directives systems.

2616 • <http://www.nwcg.gov/>

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# Appendix A: Incident Command System

## A. Purpose

Appendix A provides additional explanation and examples relating to ICS; however, this appendix is not a substitute for ICS training.

ICS is used for a broad spectrum of incidents, from routine to complex, both naturally occurring and human-caused, by all levels of government—local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal—as well as NGOs and the private sector. ICS integrates a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications involved with on-scene incident management activities.

The important steps in applying ICS to an incident are

- Identifying and activating the organizational elements that are needed;
- Delegating authority as appropriate;
- Establishing incident facilities as needed to support field operations;
- Using ICS common terminology in establishing organizational elements, position titles, facilities, and resources; and
- Initiating the incident action planning process and transitioning from oral initial plans to a written 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 Intelligence/Investigations Section
- Tab 4—The Planning Section
- Tab 5—The Logistics Section
- Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section
- Tab 7—Consolidating the Management of Multiple Incidents or IMTs
- Tab 8—The Planning Process and the IAP
- Tab 9—ICS Forms
- Tab 10—Primary Functions of Command and General Staff Positions

## 2648 Tab 1—ICS Organization

### 2649 **Functional Structure**

2650 ICS consists of six major functional areas which are staffed as needed according to the  
2651 requirements of the incident. They include Command, Operations, Intelligence/Investigations,  
2652 Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

### 2653 **Modular Expansion**

2654 The ICS organizational structure is modular, extending to incorporate all elements necessary for  
2655 the type, size, scope, and complexity of an incident. The ICS structure builds from the top down;  
2656 responsibility and performance begin with Incident Command. If one individual can  
2657 simultaneously manage all major functional areas, no further organization is needed. If one or  
2658 more of the functions needs independent management, an individual is assigned responsibility  
2659 for that function.

2660 To maintain a manageable span of control, the initial responding IC determines if it is necessary  
2661 to delegate functional management to one or more General Staff Positions. When the need arises,  
2662 an IC can activate three Officers (Public Information, Safety, and Liaison) and five Section  
2663 Chiefs (Operations, Intelligence/Investigations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration)  
2664 to organize the incident. As needed, these positions further delegate management authority for  
2665 their areas. The Command Staff may assign assistants to support them in carrying out their  
2666 responsibilities. Section Chiefs may assign deputies and assistants and establish branches,  
2667 groups, divisions, or units, depending on the section. Each functional Unit Leader assigns tasks  
2668 within the unit, as needed.

2669 Modular expansion at an incident is based on the following considerations:

- 2670 • Developing the organization's structure to match the function or task to be performed;
- 2671 • Staffing only the organizational elements required to perform the task;
- 2672 • Complying with span-of-control guidelines;
- 2673 • Performing the function of any non-activated organizational element at the next higher level;  
2674 and
- 2675 • Deactivating organizational elements no longer required.

2676 The use of deputies and assistants is a vital part of both the organizational structure and the  
2677 modular concept. The IC may have one or more deputies who may be from the same or an  
2678 assisting jurisdiction/organization. The primary reasons to designate a Deputy IC are

- 2679 • To perform specific tasks as requested by the IC;
- 2680 • To perform the Incident Command function in a relief capacity (e.g., to take over the next  
2681 operational period; in this case, the deputy then assumes the primary role); and
- 2682 • To represent an assisting agency that may share jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

2683 Deputies are used at section and branch levels of the incident organization. A deputy, whether at  
2684 the command, section, or branch level, is qualified to assume the position.

2685 Assistants, unlike deputies, have a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility  
 2686 subordinate to the primary positions and may not be fully qualified to assume the position.  
 2687 For reference, Table A-1 describes the distinctive title assigned to each element of the ICS  
 2688 organization, as well as the titles of corresponding leadership and support positions.

2689 **Table A-1: ICS Organization**

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

2690 **Command Staff**

2691 In an ICS organization, Incident Command consists of the IC and various Command Staff  
 2692 positions. The Command Staff are specifically designated, report directly to the IC, and are  
 2693 assigned responsibility for key activities that are not a part of the General Staff functional  
 2694 elements. Three Command Staff positions are typically identified in ICS: PIO, Safety Officer,  
 2695 and Liaison Officer. Additional positions, such as technical specialists, are used depending on  
 2696 the nature, scope, complexity, and location(s) of the incident(s), or according to specific needs  
 2697 established by the IC.

2698 **Public Information Officer**

2699 The PIO is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and with other  
 2700 jurisdictions/organizations with incident-related information needs. The PIO gathers, verifies,  
 2701 coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible, and timely information on the incident. The  
 2702 information may include the incident's cause, size, and current situation; what resources are  
 2703 committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external audiences. The IC  
 2704 or UC approves the release of incident-related information. The PIO serves as the primary on-  
 2705 scene connection to other ongoing JIS activities and participates in or leads the JIC in order to  
 2706 ensure consistency in the provision of information to the public.

2707 The PIO performs a key public information-monitoring role, such as implementing measures for  
 2708 rumor control, and monitoring/updating incident-related social media posts.

2709 Only one PIO is designated per incident regardless of whether the command structure is single or  
 2710 unified. The PIO may have assistants as necessary assigned from other involved agencies,  
 2711 departments, or organizations.



2712 *Safety Officer*

2713 The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the IC or UC on all matters relating  
2714 to operational safety, including the health and safety of incident personnel. The ultimate  
2715 responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations rests with the IC or UC  
2716 and supervisors at all levels of incident management. The Safety Officer is, in turn, responsible  
2717 to the IC or UC for the systems and procedures necessary to ensure the ongoing assessment of  
2718 hazardous environments, including the incident safety plan, coordination of multiagency safety  
2719 efforts, and implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety, as well as the  
2720 general safety of incident operations. In order to carry out these responsibilities, the Safety  
2721 Officer has the authority to modify or stop the work duties of all response personnel to prevent  
2722 unsafe acts.

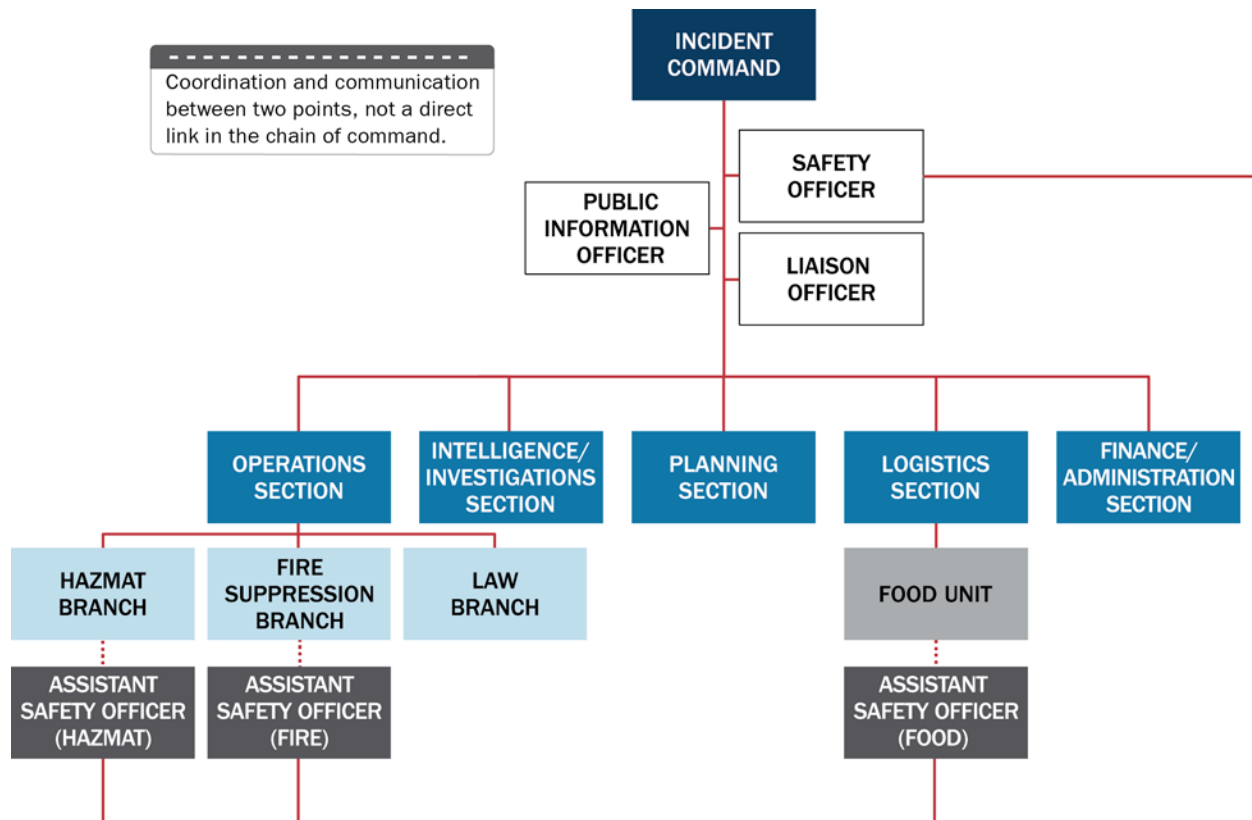
2723 In a UC structure, a single Safety Officer is designated regardless of the involvement of multiple  
2724 jurisdictions or organizations. The Safety Officer, OSC, Planning Section Chief (PSC), and  
2725 Logistics Section Chief coordinate closely regarding operational safety and emergency responder  
2726 health and safety issues. The Safety Officer ensures the coordination of safety management  
2727 functions and issues across jurisdictions, across functional agencies, and with NGOs and the  
2728 private sector. The agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions that contribute to joint safety  
2729 management efforts do not lose their individual identities or responsibility for their own  
2730 programs, policies, and personnel. Rather, each entity contributes to the overall effort to protect  
2731 all personnel involved in incident operations.

2732 For more complex incidents, the Safety Officer may have one or more assistants, who may be  
2733 from the same or an assisting agency as appointed/approved by the IC. The Safety Officer may  
2734 designate an Assistant Safety Officer to perform specific tasks and/or manage day-to-day  
2735 functions on a more complex incident, or to represent an assisting agency that may share  
2736 jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

2737 The Safety Officer may also designate assistants in order to bring specific skill sets or expertise  
2738 relevant to the incident. The following examples describe Assistant Safety Officers that a Safety  
2739 Officer might request:

- 2740 • The Assistant Safety Officer for Hazmat is assigned to carry out the functions outlined in 29  
2741 CFR 1910.120 (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response). This person should  
2742 have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide oversight for Hazmat operations at the  
2743 field level.
- 2744 • The Assistant Safety Officer for Fire is assigned to assist the Branch Director in providing  
2745 oversight for fire suppression operations. This person should have the knowledge, skills, and  
2746 abilities to provide this function.
- 2747 • The Assistant Safety Officer for Food is assigned to the Food Unit to provide oversight of  
2748 food handling and distribution. This person should have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to  
2749 provide this function. An example is a food specialist from a local health department.

2750 Figure A-1 is an example of Assistant Safety Officers for HazMat, Fire, and Food  
2751 organizationally positioned in an incident.



2752

2753 **Figure A-1: Example of the Role of Safety Officer and Assistant Safety Officers in ICS in**  
 2754 **an Incident with Multiple Branches**

### 2755 *Liaison Officer*

2756 The Liaison Officer is a conduit of information and assistance between Incident Command and  
 2757 organizations that are assisting or cooperating with the response. Through the Liaison Officer,  
 2758 agencies lacking jurisdiction or legal authority for the management of the incident, such as other  
 2759 governmental organizations, NGOs, and the private sector, provide input on their agency's  
 2760 policies, resource availability, and other incident-related matters. These organizations appoint  
 2761 agency representatives, who coordinate directly with the Liaison Officer.

2762 Whether a single IC or UC structure is in place, representatives from assisting or cooperating  
 2763 agencies and organizations coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Agency and organizational  
 2764 representatives assigned to an incident have the authority to speak for their parent agencies or  
 2765 organizations on matters, following appropriate consultations with their agency leadership.  
 2766 Personnel from other agencies or organizations—public or private—involved in incident  
 2767 management activities are assigned to the Liaison Officer to facilitate coordination.

2768 For more complex incidents, the Liaison Officer may have one or more assistants, who may be  
 2769 from the same or an assisting agency as appointed/approved by the IC.

### 2770 *Additional Command Staff*

2771 Additional Command Staff positions may be necessary depending on the nature and location(s)  
 2772 of the incident or specific needs established by Incident Command. For example, a legal counsel  
 2773 may be assigned to the Planning Section as a technical specialist or directly to the Command

2774 Staff to advise Incident Command on legal matters, such as emergency declarations, the legality  
2775 of evacuation and quarantine orders, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access.  
2776 A medical advisor may be designated to provide advice and recommendations to Incident  
2777 Command about medical and mental health services, mass casualties, acute care, vector control,  
2778 epidemiology, or mass prophylaxis, particularly in response to a bioterrorism incident. Similarly,  
2779 a science and technology advisor may be designated to ensure the best available scientific advice  
2780 becomes actionable information upon which the IC/UC can base emergency management  
2781 decision making. In addition, an advisor for individuals with disabilities and others with access  
2782 and functional needs may be designated to provide expertise regarding communication,  
2783 transportation, supervision, and essential services for diverse populations in the affected area.

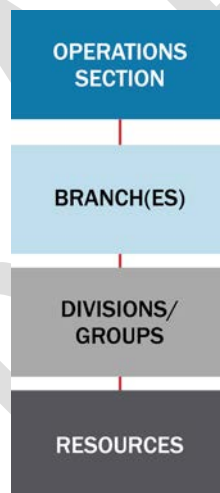
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## 2784 Tab 2—The Operations Section

2785 The staff in the Operations Section are responsible for tactical activities focused on reducing the  
 2786 immediate hazard, saving lives and property, reducing harm to the environment, establishing  
 2787 situational control, and restoring normal operations. Lifesaving and responder safety are always  
 2788 the highest priorities.

2789 Because of its flexible, functional management structure, ICS is applicable for all incidents  
 2790 regardless of cause, size, scope, or complexity, as well as planned events. The responsibility and  
 2791 composition of the Operations Section changes according to the incident type and complexity.  
 2792 The types of agencies that may be included in the Operations Section include fire, law  
 2793 enforcement, public health, public works, EMS, NGOs, and the private sector. Depending on the  
 2794 situation, these agencies may work together in branches, divisions, groups, and units or in  
 2795 various other combinations.

2796 Figure A-2 depicts the organizational template for an Operations Section, though the structure's  
 2797 expansion and configuration on any given incident vary according to the type of incident, the  
 2798 jurisdictions/organizations involved, and the objectives and strategies of the incident  
 2799 management effort. The following discussion presents several different methods of organizing  
 2800 tactical operations on an incident.



2801

2802 **Figure A-2: Major Organizational Elements of the Operations Section**

### 2803 **Operations Section Chief**

2804 The OSC manages tactical incident activities and oversees implementation of the IAP. When an  
 2805 I/I Section is established, the I/I Section Chief manages the tactical activities directly related to  
 2806 incident intelligence and investigation. The OSC may have one or more deputies, preferably  
 2807 from other organizations in multijurisdictional incidents. The OSC for each operational period  
 2808 has direct involvement in the development of the IAP for the next operational period.

2809 Staff in the Operations Section may be organized in several ways to meet different challenges. In  
 2810 some cases, a strictly functional approach is used. In other cases, the organizational structure is  
 2811 determined by geographical or jurisdictional boundaries. In still others, a mix of functional and

2812 geographical considerations is appropriate. ICS offers flexibility in determining the right  
 2813 structural approach for the specific circumstances of the incident at hand.

### 2814 *Maintaining Recommended Span of Control for the Operations Section*

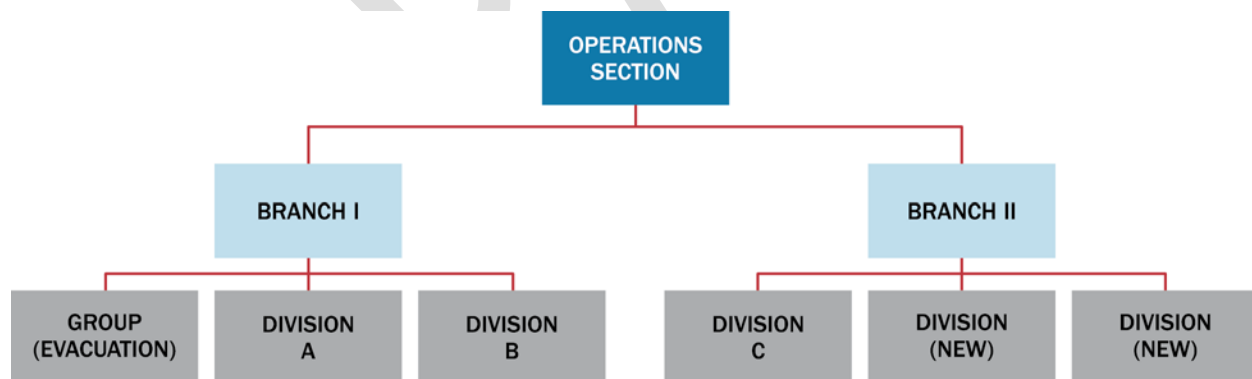
2815 The optimal span of control for ICS is 1:5. The OSC assigns subordinate supervisors as  
 2816 necessary to maintain this ratio. This can be done in a number of ways, according to the needs of  
 2817 the incident and the supervisory needs of the OSC. The type of incident, nature of the task,  
 2818 hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all have an influence  
 2819 on span-of-control considerations. Three different options are presented below for organizing the  
 2820 Operations Section. It can be organized according to geography, function, or a combination of  
 2821 the two, according to the needs of the incident.

### 2822 **Branches**

2823 Branches are created under the OSC to accommodate span of control requirements by overseeing  
 2824 and supervising multiple geographic divisions or specific functions or groups, as described  
 2825 below.

### 2826 *Geographic Branch Structure*

2827 Geographic branch structures are a common way of maintaining a manageable span of control in  
 2828 the Operations Section. Geographical branches can be divided according to natural terrain  
 2829 boundaries or according to political boundaries. Regardless of their basis, geographic branch  
 2830 boundaries should be depicted on incident maps and clearly communicated to incident personnel.  
 2831 The size of divisions correspond to span-of-control guidelines. For example, if one group and  
 2832 four divisions are reporting to the OSC, and an additional two divisions and one group are  
 2833 needed, a two-branch organization is formed (see Figure A-3).



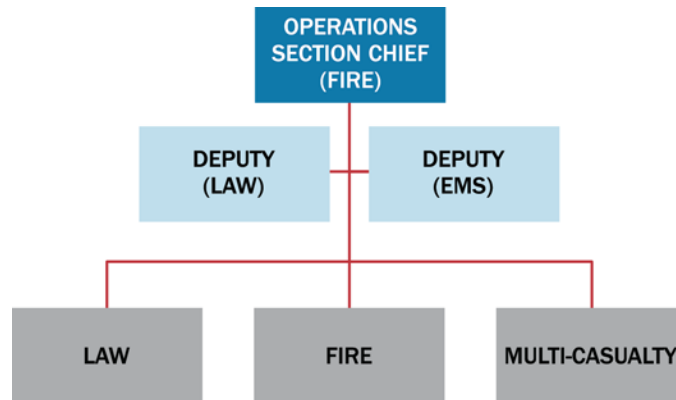
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2835

**Figure A-3: Geographic Branch Organization**

### 2836 *Functional Branch Structure*

2837 A functional branch structure can best be illustrated through an example: If a large aircraft  
 2838 crashes in a local jurisdiction, various departments (including law enforcement, fire, EMS, and  
 2839 public health) may each have a functional branch operating under the direction of a single OSC.  
 2840 In this example (shown in Figure A-4), the OSC is from the fire department, with deputies from  
 2841 law enforcement and EMS. Other organizational alignments may be made depending on the  
 2842 jurisdiction's plan and the type of emergency.



2843

2844

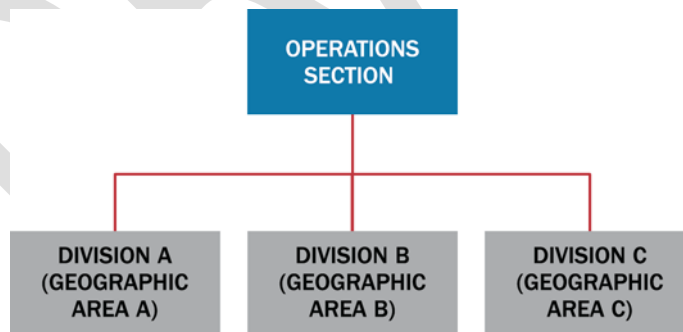
**Figure A-4: Deputy Operations with a Functional Branch Structure**

### 2845 **Divisions and Groups**

2846 The OSC establishes divisions and groups when the number of resources exceeds his or her  
 2847 manageable span of control. Divisions always refer to geographical assignments and groups  
 2848 always refer to functional assignments. Both divisions and groups may be used in a single  
 2849 incident. Maintaining proper coordination is vital to the success of these operations.

#### 2850 *Geographical Divisions*

2851 Divisions separate physical or geographical areas of operation within the incident area. Similar to  
 2852 branches, geographic divisions can be established according to political or natural terrain  
 2853 boundaries or other prominent geographical features, such as rivers, major roadways, or floors in  
 2854 a multistory building response. As with branch boundaries, division boundaries should be  
 2855 depicted on incident maps, clearly communicated to incident personnel, and correspond to span-  
 2856 of-control guidelines (see Figure A-5).



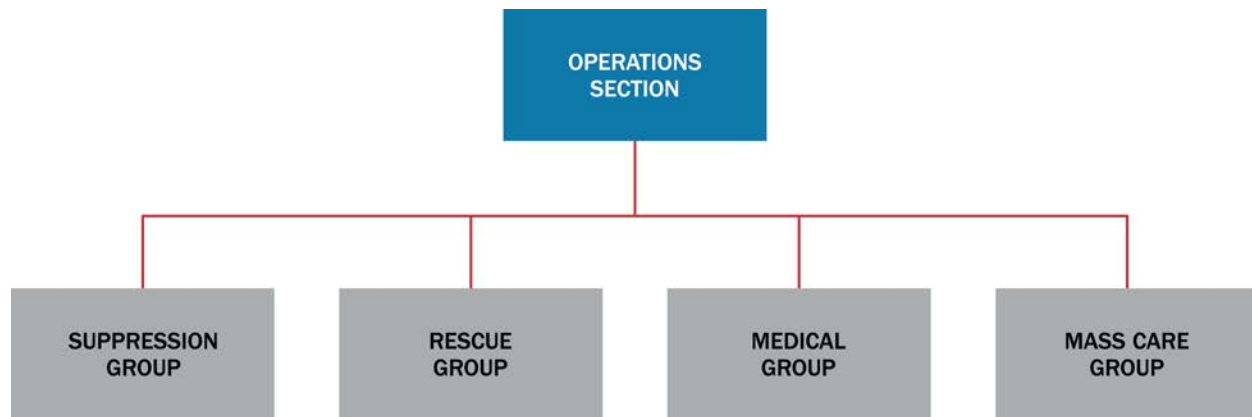
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2858

**Figure A-5: Use of Geographical Divisions**

#### 2859 *Functional Groups*

2860 Functional Groups may be used to describe areas of similar activity (e.g., rescue, evacuation, law  
 2861 enforcement, or medical), as shown in Figure A-6.



2862

2863

**Figure A-6: Use of Functional Groups**

### 2864 *Combined Geographical Divisions and Functional Groups*

2865 It is possible to have both divisions and groups within the Operations Section. For example,  
 2866 Divisions A, B, and C (based on geographical locations) may work in conjunction with  
 2867 functional groups assigned to specific tasks (e.g., traffic control and smoke ventilation) in those  
 2868 locations. Alternatively, groups may be assigned throughout the entire incident and may work  
 2869 independently or in conjunction with divisions. Supervisors of divisions and groups have the  
 2870 same level of authority.

### 2871 **Resource Organization**

2872 Consolidating individual assets into complex single resources—through the use of task forces  
 2873 and strike teams—effectively reduces the span of control. As the incident grows in size or  
 2874 complexity, these individual resources may operate within divisions and/or groups.

### 2875 *Single Resources*

2876 Resources may be employed on a single basis, such as an individual person or an individual  
 2877 piece of equipment with its associated operators. This is typically the case in the context of the  
 2878 initial response to the incident.

### 2879 *Task Forces*

2880 Task Forces combine resources of different kind and type, convened to accomplish a specific  
 2881 mission, operating under a designated leader with common communications. Several key  
 2882 resource elements can be managed under one individual's supervision, thus aiding in span of  
 2883 control. As an example, during a flood incident, a public works Task Force may be established  
 2884 with the mission of opening storm drains. It may consist of a dump truck, a backhoe, a five-  
 2885 person crew with shovels and transportation, and a Task Force Leader (e.g., public works  
 2886 supervisor with vehicle and communications).

### 2887 *Strike Teams*

2888 A Strike Team consists of a set number of resources of the same kind and type operating under a  
 2889 designated leader with common communications. Strike Teams represent a known capability and  
 2890 are highly effective management units. As an example, for a fire response, a Strike Team could  
 2891 consist of five Type I engines and a Strike Team Leader.

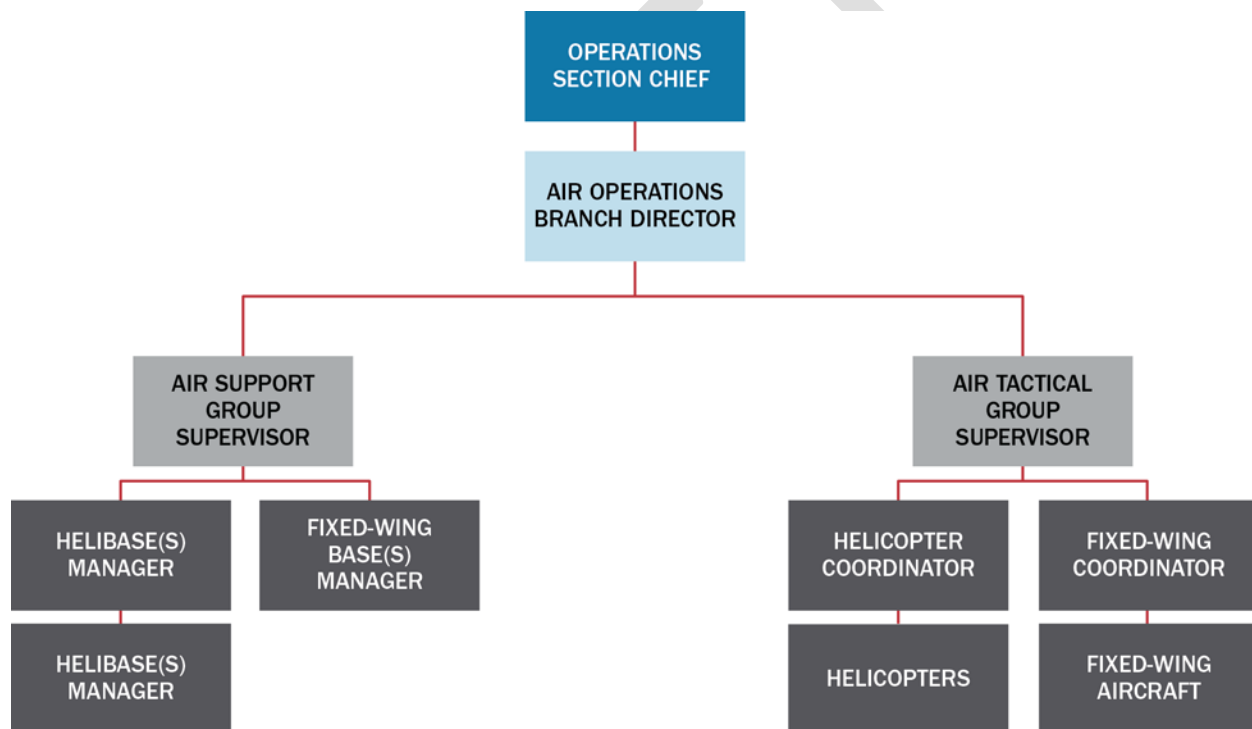
## 2892 **Air Operations Branch**

2893 When a single helicopter is the only air asset on an incident, it may be directly under the control  
 2894 of the OSC. However, when the complexity of air operations requires additional support, air  
 2895 space control, and effort, (including mixing tactical and support use of helicopters and other  
 2896 aircraft), the OSC establishes an Air Operations Branch. Aviation safety is a paramount concern,  
 2897 and a designated Air Operations Branch helps ensure the safe and efficient use of aviation  
 2898 resources. Figure A-7 shows a typical organizational structure for air operations.

2899 Whenever helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft operate simultaneously within the incident  
 2900 airspace, the OSC designates an Air Tactical Group Supervisor. This individual coordinates all  
 2901 airborne activity with the assistance of a Helicopter Coordinator and a Fixed-Wing Coordinator.

2902 Staff in the Air Support Group establish and operate bases for helicopters and maintain a liaison  
 2903 with off-incident fixed-wing bases. Staff in the Air Support Group are responsible for all  
 2904 timekeeping for aviation resources assigned to the incident.

2905



2906

2907

Figure A-7: Air Operations Organization

2908



## 2909 Tab 3—The Intelligence/Investigations Section

2910 Some incidents involve intelligence and investigative information, which is gathered, analyzed,  
2911 and disseminated for different purposes. Life safety and life-saving is always the first priority.  
2912 The establishment of the I/I Section does not diminish or alter this primary priority in any way;  
2913 rather it enhances the primacy of life safety and life-saving efforts by preventing future attacks or  
2914 escalated impacts. The mission of the I/I Section is to ensure that all intelligence and  
2915 investigative operations, functions, and activities within the incident response are properly  
2916 managed, coordinated, and directed in order to

- 2917 • Prevent and/or deter potential unlawful activity, incidents, and/or attacks;
- 2918 • Collect, process, analyze, secure, and appropriately disseminate information and intelligence;
- 2919 • Conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation that leads to the identification,  
2920 apprehension, and prosecution of the perpetrators;
- 2921 • Serve as a conduit to provide situational awareness (local and national) pertaining to an  
2922 incident;
- 2923 • Inform and support life safety operations, including the safety and security of all response  
2924 personnel;
- 2925 • Identify, document, process, collect, create a chain of custody for, safeguard, examine and  
2926 analyze, and store evidence; and
- 2927 • Determine the source or cause, and control the spread and impact, in the investigation of  
2928 emerging incidents (e.g., fire, disease outbreak).

2929 The I/I Section is established as a General Staff Section when the incident involves a criminal or  
2930 terrorist act or when significant investigative resources are required, such as for an  
2931 epidemiological investigation. National information security protocols dictate that sensitive  
2932 information, and information on specific investigative tactics that would compromise the  
2933 investigation if disclosed, are shared only with those who have the appropriate security  
2934 clearances and need to know. The staff in the I/I Section maintain a close liaison with the IC/UC  
2935 as well as the Command and General Staff and share information necessary for the safe conduct  
2936 of incident activities. The I/I Section is led by the I/I Section Chief and has six primary groups  
2937 (shown in Figure A-8). When the intelligence/investigation requirements of an incident are very  
2938 large, the I/I Section is divided into branches (not pictured) to maintain span of control.

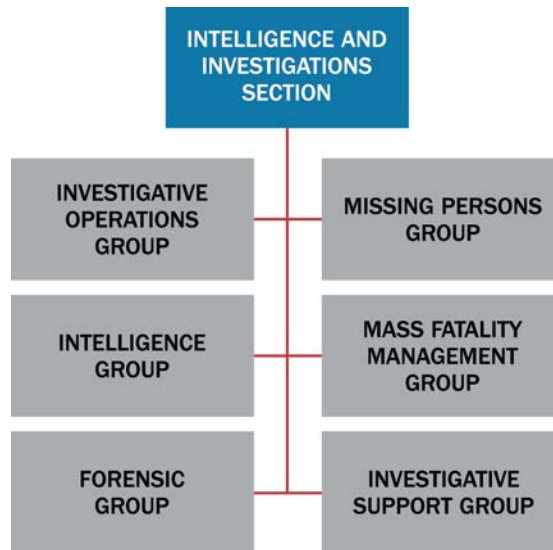


Figure A-8: Intelligence/Investigations Section Organization

2939

2940

### 2941 **Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief**

2942 The I/I Section Chief oversees all incident-related intelligence and investigative operations and  
 2943 may have one or more deputies. Jurisdictional or geographic responsibilities for the intelligence  
 2944 or investigative aspects of the incident may benefit by appointing Deputy Section Chiefs from  
 2945 agencies differing from the I/I Section Chief.

### 2946 **Investigative Operations Group**

2947 The Investigative Operations Group is the primary group in the I/I Section. Staff in this group  
 2948 manage and direct the overall investigative effort. Staff in the Investigative Operations Group  
 2949 use the information that all of the other groups produce to accomplish the mission of the I/I  
 2950 Section. The primary case investigator and primary supervisor are assigned to the Investigative  
 2951 Operations Group.

### 2952 **Intelligence Group**

2953 The Intelligence Group is responsible for three major functions: (1) information intake and  
 2954 assessment; (2) operations security, operational security, and information security; and (3)  
 2955 information/intelligence management.

### 2956 **Forensic Group**

2957 The Forensic Group is responsible for managing crime scenes and directing the processing of the  
 2958 forensic evidence, digital and multimedia evidence, and decedents. The staff in the Forensic  
 2959 Group ensure that the proper types of examinations, analyses, comparisons, and enhancements  
 2960 are performed on the forensic evidence, digital and multimedia evidence, and decedents in the  
 2961 proper sequence by the appropriate laboratories, analytical service providers, and morgues. The  
 2962 Forensic Group staff coordinate with the Mass Fatality Management Group and the medical  
 2963 examiner/coroner on matters related to the examination, recovery, and movement of decedents.

2964 **Missing Persons Group**

2965 Staff in the Missing Persons Group direct missing persons operations and activities, as well as  
2966 Family Assistance Center activities involving missing persons.

2967 **Mass Fatality Management Group**

2968 Staff in the Mass Fatality Management Group direct intelligence/investigations activities  
2969 involving mass fatality management operations. This includes the intelligence/investigations-  
2970 related Family Assistance Center activities involving decedents and unidentified persons.

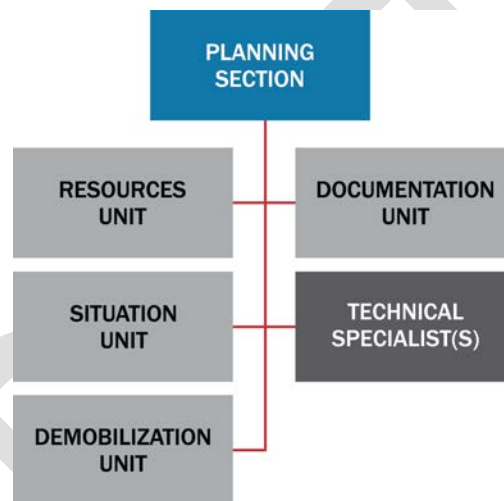
2971 **Investigative Support Group**

2972 The I/I Section may require the use of specialized operational and support resources. The staff in  
2973 the Investigative Support Group are responsible for ensuring that needed investigative personnel  
2974 are deployed expeditiously and that the necessary resources are properly distributed, maintained,  
2975 safeguarded, stored, and returned, when appropriate. The Investigative Support Group staff work  
2976 closely with the Command and General Staffs, particularly the Logistics Section and Planning  
2977 Section, to ensure that necessary resources, services and support are obtained.

## 2978 Tab 4—The Planning Section

2979 The Planning Section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating operational  
 2980 information pertaining to the incident. This section maintains information on the current and  
 2981 forecasted situation, as well as the status of resources assigned to the incident. The staff in the  
 2982 Planning Section prepare and document IAPs and incident maps, as well as gather and  
 2983 disseminate information important to the incident. The IAP includes the overall incident  
 2984 objectives and strategies established by Incident Command/UC. The IAP also provides essential  
 2985 information regarding incident organization, resource allocation, work assignments, safety, and  
 2986 weather for the planned operational period, generally 12 to 24 hours.

2987 The PSC leads the Planning Section, which has four primary Units (as shown in Figure A-9) and  
 2988 may include technical specialists who assist in evaluating the situation and forecasting  
 2989 requirements for additional personnel and equipment.



2990  
 2991 **Figure A-9: Planning Section Organization**

### 2992 **Planning Section Chief**

2993 The PSC oversees all incident-related data gathering and analysis regarding incident operations  
 2994 and assigned resources, facilitates incident action planning meetings, and prepares the IAP for  
 2995 each operational period. This individual normally comes from the jurisdiction or organization  
 2996 with primary incident responsibility and may have one or more deputies who may come from  
 2997 other participating jurisdictions or organizations.

### 2998 **Resources Unit**

#### 2999 *Responsibilities*

3000 Staff in the Resources Unit track the location and status of all resources assigned to an incident.  
 3001 They make certain that all assigned resources have checked in at the incident. Resources consist  
 3002 of personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially  
 3003 available for assignment to incident operations.

### 3004 **Resource Status**

3005 Resources are categorized by kind and type (capability and capacity), and resource status is  
3006 tracked continuously to manage resources effectively during an incident. The following status  
3007 conditions and procedures are used for maintaining an up-to-date and accurate picture of  
3008 resource status.

### 3009 **Status Conditions**

3010 Tactical resources at an incident have one of three status conditions:

- 3011 • **Assigned:** Resources that are checked in and are cleared to work on an incident.
- 3012 • **Available:** Personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, or facilities that have been assigned to an  
3013 incident and are ready for a specific work detail or function.
- 3014 • **Out of Service:** Assigned resources that are unable to function for mechanical, personal, or  
3015 health reasons.

### 3016 **Changes in Status**

3017 When the status of a resource has changed (e.g., a unit that was previously listed as “out of  
3018 service” is reclassified as “available”), the Unit Leader or the supervisor who approved the status  
3019 change immediately notifies the Resources Unit Leader, who makes the appropriate status  
3020 reclassification.

### 3021 **Situation Unit**

3022 Staff in the Situation Unit collect, process, and organize ongoing situation information, prepare  
3023 situation summaries, and develop projections and forecasts of future events related to the  
3024 incident. They prepare maps and gather and disseminate information and intelligence for use in  
3025 the IAP. This unit provides SITREPs as scheduled or at the request of the PSC or IC. The  
3026 Situation Unit frequently includes GIS Specialists who produce maps, and other technical  
3027 specialists. The Situation Unit may also include Field Observers to gather information on the  
3028 incident and/or response.

### 3029 **Documentation Unit**

3030 Staff in the Documentation Unit maintain accurate and complete incident files and data,  
3031 including a complete record of the major steps taken to resolve the incident; provide duplication  
3032 services to incident personnel; and file, maintain, and store incident files and data for legal,  
3033 analytical, and historical purposes. The staff in this unit compile, reproduce, and distribute the  
3034 IAP and maintain the files and records that are developed as part of the overall IAP and planning  
3035 function.

### 3036 **Demobilization Unit**

3037 Staff in the Demobilization Unit develop an Incident Demobilization Plan that includes specific  
3038 instructions for all personnel and resources that need demobilization. They begin their work early  
3039 in the incident, creating rosters of personnel and resources, and obtaining any missing  
3040 information as check-in proceeds. Once the Incident Demobilization Plan has been approved,  
3041 staff in the Demobilization Unit ensure that it is distributed to users located both at the incident  
3042 and elsewhere, as necessary.

### 3043 **Technical Specialists**

3044 ICS is designed to function in a wide variety of incident scenarios that need technical specialists.  
 3045 These personnel have special skills; they are activated only when needed. Specialists may serve  
 3046 anywhere within the organization including the Command Staff. No specific qualifications are  
 3047 prescribed, as technical specialists normally perform the same duties during an incident that they  
 3048 perform in their everyday jobs, and they are typically certified in their fields or professions.

3049 Technical specialists are most often assigned to the specific area (section, branch, division,  
 3050 group, or unit) where their services are needed and performed. In some situations, they are  
 3051 assigned to a separate unit within the Planning Section, much like a talent pool, and assigned out  
 3052 to various jobs on a temporary basis. For example,

- 3053 • A tactical specialist assists the Operations Section with tactical matters;
- 3054 • A financial specialist helps the Finance/Administration Section with fiscal matters; or
- 3055 • A legal specialist or legal counsel assigned directly to the Command Staff advises the IC or  
 3056 UC on legal matters, such as emergency declarations, evacuation orders, isolation and  
 3057 quarantine, and legal rights and restrictions pertaining to media access.

3058 Generally, if the expertise is needed for only a short time and involves only one individual, that  
 3059 individual is assigned to the Situation Unit. If the expertise is needed on a long-term basis and  
 3060 necessitates several persons, a separate Technical Unit in the Planning Section is established.

### 3061 *Examples of Technical Specialists*

- 3062 • Agricultural specialist
- 3063 • Biologist
- 3064 • Chemical or radiological decontamination  
3065 specialist
- 3066 • Communication specialist
- 3067 • Cultural resource specialist
- 3068 • Data management specialist
- 3069 • EMS specialist
- 3070 • Environmental impact specialist
- 3071 • Epidemiologist
- 3072 • Explosives specialist
- 3073 • Faith community representative
- 3074 • Fire Behavior Analyst
- 3075 • Flood control specialist
- 3076 • Forensic pathologist
- 3077 • HazMat technician
- 3078 • Homeland security specialist
- 3079 • Industrial hygienist
- 3080 • Individuals with disabilities and others  
3081 with access and functional needs
- 3082 • Intelligence specialist
- 3083 • Law enforcement specialist
- 3084 • Legal counsel
- 3085 • Mass care specialist
- 3086 • Meteorologist
- 3087 • Military specialist
- 3088 • Mortuary affairs specialist
- 3089 • Numerical modeler
- 3090 • Occupational safety and health specialist
- 3091 • Pharmacist
- 3092 • Public health specialist
- 3093 • Public relations specialist
- 3094 • Radiation health specialist
- 3095 • Records management specialist
- 3096 • Resource/cost specialist
- 3097 • Scientific support coordinator

3098 • Structural engineering specialist

3099 • Toxicologist

3100 • Transportation specialist

3101 • Veterinarian

3102 • Waste management specialist

3103 • Water-use specialist

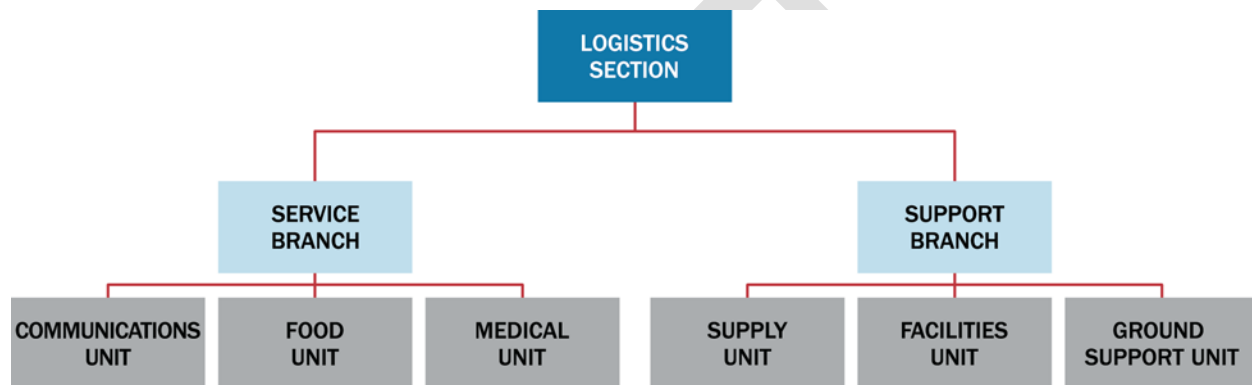
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## 3105 Tab 5—The Logistics Section

3106 Staff in the Logistics Section provide for all the support needs for the incident, such as ordering  
3107 resources and providing facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance and fuel,  
3108 communications, and food and medical services for incident personnel.

3109 The Logistics Section is led by a Section Chief, who may have one or more deputies. When the  
3110 incident is very large or needs a number of facilities with large numbers of equipment, the  
3111 Logistics Section may be divided into branches. This helps maintain span of control by providing  
3112 more effective supervision and coordination among the individual units. On smaller incidents or  
3113 when fewer resources are needed, a branch configuration may be used to combine the tasks of  
3114 individual units.

3115 Figure A-10 provides an example of the Logistics Section organized with Service and Support  
3116 Branches.



3117

3118 **Figure A-10: Logistics Section with Branch Organizational Structure**

### 3119 **Logistics Section Chief**

3120 The Logistics Section Chief is responsible for providing facilities, services, people, and material  
3121 in support of the incident. The Logistics Section Chief participates in the development of the IAP  
3122 and supervises the branches and units of the Logistics Section.

### 3123 **Supply Unit**

3124 Staff in the Supply Unit order, receive, process, store, inventory, and distribute all incident-  
3125 related resources and supplies.

3126 The Supply Unit has the responsibility for all off-incident ordering, including the following:

- 3127 • All tactical and support resources (including personnel); and
- 3128 • All expendable and nonexpendable supplies required for incident support.

3129 The Supply Unit staff provides support to receive, process, store, and distribute all supply orders.  
3130 This staff handles tool operations, which includes storing, distributing, and servicing tools and  
3131 portable, nonexpendable equipment. Additionally, the Supply Unit staff assists in projecting  
3132 resource needs.



**3133 Facilities Unit**

3134 The Facilities Unit staff sets up, maintains, and demobilizes all facilities used in support of  
3135 incident operations. This staff provides facility maintenance and law enforcement/security  
3136 services needed for incident support.

3137 Staff in the Facilities Unit set up the ICP, Incident Base, and Camps (including trailers or other  
3138 forms of shelter for use in and around the incident area), and they provide the services associated  
3139 with maintaining those facilities. This staff provides and maintains necessary personnel support  
3140 facilities, including areas for food and hydration service, sleeping, sanitation and showers, and  
3141 staging.

3142 Staff in this unit order additional support items such as portable toilets, shower facilities, and  
3143 lighting units through the Supply Unit.

**3144 Facilities Unit**

3145 The Facilities Unit provides facilities that support incident personnel. Providing shelter for survivors is a  
3146 tactical activity that is typically performed by resources in the Operations Section, such as the American  
3147 Red Cross.

**3148 Ground Support Unit**

3149 Staff in the Ground Support Unit provide ground transportation in support of incident operations.  
3150 The staff in this unit maintain and repair tactical vehicles and mobile ground support equipment  
3151 and record usage time for all ground equipment (including contract equipment) assigned to the  
3152 incident. The staff supply fuel for all incident mobile equipment and develop and implement the  
3153 incident traffic plan.

3154 In addition to their primary functions of maintaining and servicing vehicles and mobile  
3155 equipment, during major incidents the Ground Support Unit staff maintain a transportation pool.  
3156 This pool consists of vehicles (e.g., staff cars, buses, pickup trucks) that are suitable for  
3157 transporting personnel. Staff in the Ground Support Unit also provide information to the  
3158 Resources Unit on the location and status of transportation vehicles assigned to the Ground  
3159 Support Unit.

**3160 Communications Unit**

3161 Staff in the Communications Unit develop the Incident Communications Plan (ICS Form 205) to  
3162 make the most effective use of communications equipment and facilities assigned to the incident.  
3163 This staff install and test all communications equipment, supervise and operate the incident  
3164 communications center, distribute and recover communications equipment assigned to incident  
3165 personnel, and maintain and repair communications equipment onsite.

3166 Most complex incidents need an Incident Communications Plan. The staff in the  
3167 Communications Unit are responsible for planning the use of radio frequencies and data  
3168 networks; establishing networks for command, tactical, support, and air units; setting up on-  
3169 scene telephone and public address equipment; and providing any necessary off-incident  
3170 communication links.

**3171 Food Unit**

3172 The Food Unit staff determines the food and hydration needs of personnel assigned to the  
3173 incident and has the responsibility for planning menus, ordering food, providing cooking  
3174 facilities, cooking and serving food, maintaining food service areas, and managing food security  
3175 and safety.

3176 Efficient food service is important and is especially important for an extended incident. Staff in  
3177 the Food Unit anticipate incident needs, such as the number of people who will need to be fed  
3178 and whether the type, location, or complexity of the incident predicates special food needs. The  
3179 unit staff supply food to meet the nutritional needs for the entire incident, including all remote  
3180 locations (e.g., camps and staging areas), and supply food service to operations personnel who  
3181 are unable to leave their assignments.

3182 Careful planning and monitoring is needed to ensure food safety before and during food service  
3183 operations, including the assignment, as needed, of public health professionals with expertise in  
3184 environmental health and food safety.

**3185 Food Unit**

3186 The Food Unit only provides food for incident workers. The feeding of people affected by the incident  
3187 (e.g., evacuees and persons at shelters) is a tactical activity for which the Operations Section, not the  
3188 Logistics Section, is responsible.

**3189 Medical Unit**

3190 Staff in the Medical Unit provide health and medical services for incident personnel. This  
3191 includes providing inoculations, emergency medical care, mental health care, occupational health  
3192 support, and transportation of ill or injured incident personnel. The Medical Unit staff assist in  
3193 controlling the transmission of disease associated with the incident, by animals (mammals, birds,  
3194 and insects).

3195 The Medical Unit Leader develops a Medical Plan, which is part of the IAP. The Medical Plan  
3196 provides specific information on medical assistance capabilities at incident locations, potentially  
3197 hazardous areas or conditions, off-site medical assistance facilities, and procedures for handling  
3198 complex medical emergencies.

3199 Staff in the Medical Unit assist the Finance/Administration Section with the administrative needs  
3200 related to injury compensation including obtaining written authorizations, billing forms, witness  
3201 statements, administrative medical documents, and reimbursement as needed. The Medical  
3202 Unit's members comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)  
3203 and other applicable laws.

**3204 Medical Unit**

3205 Patient care and medical services for those who are not emergency management/response personnel  
3206 (e.g., incident survivors) are essential operational activities. These activities are reflected in the IAP as  
3207 tactical functions and staffed accordingly.

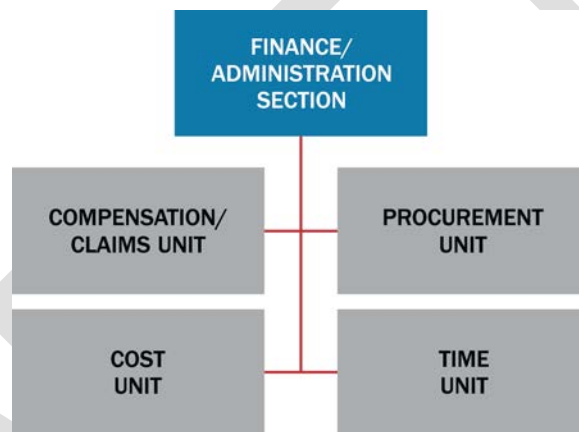
## 3208 Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section

3209 A Finance/Administration Section is established when on-site financial and/or administrative  
 3210 services are needed to support incident management activities. Large or evolving scenarios  
 3211 generally involve significant funding from multiple sources. In addition to monitoring multiple  
 3212 sources of funds, the Finance/Administration Section Chief tracks and reports to the IC or UC  
 3213 the accrued costs as the incident progresses, allowing the IC or UC to forecast the need for  
 3214 additional funds before operations are negatively affected. This is particularly important if  
 3215 significant operational resources are under contract from the private sector.

### 3216 Finance/Administration Section

3217 While the functions of finance/administration are important to effective command and management,  
 3218 Finance/Administration Section activities may be performed away from the incident scene, typically in the  
 3219 locations where the functions are routinely performed.

3220 Figure A-11 illustrates the basic organizational structure for a Finance/Administration Section.  
 3221 When such a section is established, these units are staffed as needed.



3222

3223 **Figure A-11: Finance/Administration Section Organization**

### 3224 Finance/Administration Section Chief

3225 The Finance/Administration Section Chief monitors expenditures to ensure compliance with  
 3226 applicable laws. Close coordination with the Planning and Logistics Sections is essential so that  
 3227 operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

3228 The Finance/Administration Section Chief determines—given current and anticipated future  
 3229 requirements—the need for establishing specific subordinate units. Because of the specialized  
 3230 nature of finance functions, the Section Chief comes from the jurisdiction/organization that has  
 3231 the greatest need for this support. The Finance/Administration Section Chief may have one or  
 3232 more deputies.

### 3233 Compensation and Claims Unit

3234 Staff in the Compensation and Claims Unit are responsible for financial concerns resulting from  
 3235 property damage, injuries, or fatalities at the incident. The specific activities vary depending on  
 3236 the incident. The individual handling injury compensation ensures that all forms needed by

3237 workers' compensation programs and local agencies are completed. This individual typically  
3238 also maintains files on injuries and illnesses associated with the incident and ensures that all  
3239 witness statements are obtained in writing. Since members of the Medical Unit may also perform  
3240 some of these tasks, close coordination between the Medical and the Compensation and Claims  
3241 Units is essential. Staff in the Compensation and Claims Unit may assist with civil tort claims  
3242 investigations involving incident property. This staff maintains logs on the claims, obtains  
3243 witness statements, and documents investigations and agency follow up activities.

#### 3244 **Cost Unit**

3245 Members of the Cost Unit are responsible for tracking costs, analyzing cost data, making  
3246 estimates, and recommending cost-saving measures. They ensure that equipment and personnel  
3247 —for which payment is expected— are properly identified, obtain and record all cost data, and  
3248 analyze and prepare estimates of incident costs. Staff in the Cost Unit provide input to the  
3249 Planning Section staff on cost estimates for resource use. The Cost Unit staff maintains accurate  
3250 information on the actual costs of all assigned resources.

#### 3251 **Procurement Unit**

3252 The Procurement Unit staff administers all financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts. This  
3253 staff coordinates with local jurisdictions to identify sources for equipment, prepares and signs  
3254 equipment rental agreements, and processes all administrative documentation associated with  
3255 equipment rental and supply contracts. In some cases, the Supply Unit in the Logistics Section  
3256 will be responsible for certain procurement activities.

#### 3257 **Time Unit**

3258 Staff in the Time Unit are responsible for ensuring proper daily recording of incident personnel  
3259 and equipment time in accordance with the policies of the relevant agencies. The Time Unit  
3260 Leader may need assistance from personnel familiar with the relevant policies of any affected  
3261 agencies. Staff in the Time Unit verify these records, check them for accuracy, and post them  
3262 according to existing policies. Staff in the Time Unit document overtime hours worked by all  
3263 incident personnel.

## 3264 Tab 7—Consolidating the Management of Multiple 3265 Incidents or IMTs

3266 Large disasters or multiple different disasters occurring quickly in the same area may result in  
3267 the establishment of multiple incident command organizations operating more-or-less  
3268 independently. ICS provides several options for consolidating the management of separate  
3269 incidents or IMTs. These options can enhance coordination and improve the efficient use of  
3270 resources. The various options are described below along with information on when and how  
3271 they should be employed.

### 3272 **Incident Complex: Multiple Incidents Managed within a Single ICS Organization**

3273 An incident complex refers to an organizational structure when two or more individual incidents  
3274 located in the same general area are assigned to a single IC or UC. When an incident complex is  
3275 established over several individual incidents, the previously identified incidents become  
3276 branches within the Operations Section of the incident complex IMT. This provides greater  
3277 potential for future expansion. Each branch thus has the increased flexibility to establish  
3278 divisions or groups. In addition, when divisions and groups have already been established at each  
3279 of the incidents, the same basic structure can be propagated. If any of the incidents within an  
3280 incident complex has the potential to become a large-scale incident, it is best to establish it as a  
3281 separate incident with its own ICS organization.

3282 The following are examples of when an incident complex may be appropriate:

- 3283 • Disasters such as wildfires, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, or other situations where many  
3284 separate incidents are occurring in proximity;
- 3285 • Several similar incidents occurring in proximity to one another; and
- 3286 • One incident underway with an IMT assigned, with other smaller incidents occurring in the  
3287 same area.

3288 The following are additional considerations for the use of an incident complex:

- 3289 • The incidents are close enough to be managed by a single IMT;
- 3290 • A combined management approach could achieve staff or logistical support economies;
- 3291 • Consolidating incidents conserves staff and reduces costs; and
- 3292 • A single Incident Command can adequately provide planning, logistics, and finance and  
3293 administration activities to the incidents that comprise the incident complex.

### 3294 **Area Command**

3295 The purpose of an Area Command is either to oversee the management of multiple incidents that  
3296 are each being handled by separate ICS organizations or to oversee the management of a very  
3297 large or evolving incident that has multiple IMTs engaged.

### 3298 **Area Command Responsibilities**

3299 The Area Command does not have operational responsibilities, but prioritizes the use of critical  
3300 resources among the incidents. Additionally, the Area Command

- 3301 • Develops broad objectives for the impacted area(s);
- 3302 • Coordinates the development of individual incident objectives and strategies;
- 3303 • Allocates resources as the established priorities change;
- 3304 • Ensures that incidents are properly managed;
- 3305 • Ensures effective communications;
- 3306 • Ensures that incident management objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or
- 3307 with agency policies;
- 3308 • Identifies critical resource needs and reports them to the established EOCs/MAC Groups; and
- 3309 • Ensures that short-term recovery is coordinated to assist in the transition to full recovery
- 3310 operations.

### 3311 *Area Command Organization*

3312 The Area Command organization operates under the same basic principles as ICS. Typically, an  
3313 Area Command comprises the following key personnel, all of whom possess appropriate  
3314 qualifications and certifications:

- 3315 • **Area Commander (Unified Area Command):** The Area Commander is responsible for the  
3316 overall direction of the IMTs assigned. This responsibility includes ensuring that conflicts are  
3317 resolved, incident objectives established, and strategies selected for the use of critical  
3318 resources. The Area Commander is responsible for coordinating with local, state, tribal,  
3319 territorial, and Federal departments and agencies, as well as NGOs and the private sector.
- 3320 • **Assistant Area Commander–Logistics:** The Assistant Area Commander–Logistics provides  
3321 facilities, services, and materials at the Area Command level and ensures the effective  
3322 allocation of critical resources and supplies among the IMTs.
- 3323 • **Assistant Area Commander–Planning:** The Assistant Area Commander–Planning collects  
3324 information from various IMTs to assess and evaluate potential conflicts in establishing  
3325 incident objectives, strategies, and priorities for allocating critical resources.
- 3326 • **Area Command Aviation Coordinator:** An Aviation Coordinator is assigned when aviation  
3327 resources are competing for common airspace and critical resources. This role works in  
3328 coordination with incident aviation organizations to evaluate potential conflicts, develop  
3329 common airspace management procedures, ensure aviation safety, and allocate critical  
3330 resources in accordance with Area Command priorities.
- 3331 • **Area Command Support Positions:** The following Area Command positions are activated as  
3332 necessary:
  - 3333 – **Resources Unit Leader:** Tracks and maintains the status and availability of critical  
3334 resources assigned to each incident under the Assistant Area Commander–Planning.
  - 3335 – **Situation Unit Leader:** Monitors the status of objectives for each incident or IMT  
3336 assigned to the Assistant Area Commander–Planning.
  - 3337 – **Public Information Officer:** Provides coordination between incident locations and serves  
3338 as the point of contact for media requests to the Area Command.
  - 3339 – **Liaison Officer:** Helps maintain off-incident interagency contacts and coordination.

3340 *Area Command Location*

3341 The following are guidelines for locating an Area Command:

- 3342 • The Area Command is established as close to the incidents as possible. This makes it easier  
3343 for the Area Commander and ICs to meet and otherwise interact;
- 3344 • Area Command should not be co-located with any individual ICP to avoid confusion with the  
3345 ICS activities;
- 3346 • Area Commands establish effective, efficient communications, coordination processes, and  
3347 protocols with subordinate ICs, as well as with other incident management organizations  
3348 involved in incident operations; and
- 3349 • The facility used to house the organization should be large enough to accommodate a full  
3350 Area Command staff. It should also be able to accommodate meetings between the Area  
3351 Command staff, the ICs, and agency administrators/executives as well as news media  
3352 representatives.

3353 *Area Command Reporting Relationships*3354 When an Area Command is involved in coordinating multiple incident management activities,  
3355 the following reporting relationships apply:

- 3356 • The ICs for the incidents under the Area Command report to the Area Commander;
- 3357 • The Area Commander is accountable to the agency or agencies or to the jurisdictional  
3358 executive(s) or administrator(s); and
- 3359 • If one or more incidents within the Area Command are multijurisdictional, a Unified Area  
3360 Command is established.

3361

## 3362 Tab 8—The Planning Process and the IAP

### 3363 **Overview**

3364 Sound, timely planning provides the foundation for effective incident management. The incident  
3365 action planning process described below represents a template for strategic, operational, and  
3366 tactical planning that includes all steps that an IC or UC and members of the Command and  
3367 General Staffs take to develop and disseminate an IAP. The planning process may begin with the  
3368 scheduling of a planned event, the identification of a credible threat, or the initial response to an  
3369 actual or impending incident. The process continues with the implementation of the formalized  
3370 steps and the staffing of positions needed to develop a written IAP.

3371 A clear, concise IAP template is essential to guide the initial incident management decision  
3372 process and the continuing collective planning activities of IMTs. The planning process provides  
3373 the following:

- 3374 • Current information that accurately describes the incident situation and resource status;
- 3375 • Predictions of the probable course of events;
- 3376 • Alternative strategies to attain critical incident objectives; and
- 3377 • An accurate, realistic IAP for the next operational period.

### 3378 **Steps of the Planning Process**

3379 The IAP provides clear strategic direction and includes a comprehensive listing of the tactics,  
3380 resources, and support required to accomplish each overarching incident objective. The IAP  
3381 states the resources and tactical assignments for achieving multiple incident objectives in a  
3382 coordinated way. Six planning steps executed in sequence ensure a comprehensive IAP. These  
3383 steps enable the accomplishment of incident objectives within a specified time. The development  
3384 of IAPs is a cyclical process, and the IMT repeats the planning steps every operational period.  
3385 Each operational period, the IAP is updated with the best available information at the time of the  
3386 Planning Meeting. Planning Meetings should not be delayed in anticipation of future  
3387 information.

3388 The steps of the planning process are essentially the same for the first responder on scene  
3389 determining initial tactics, for the IC/UC and OSC revising the initial plan for extended  
3390 operations, and for the IMT developing a formal IAP. During the initial stage of incident  
3391 management, the IC typically develops a simple plan that can be communicated through concise  
3392 oral briefings. This initial plan is often developed very quickly and with incomplete situation  
3393 information. As the incident management effort evolves, additional lead time, staff, information  
3394 systems, and technologies enable more detailed planning and cataloging of events and lessons  
3395 learned.

3396 The six steps in the planning process are

- 3397 1. Form a collaborative planning team
- 3398 2. Understand the situation;
- 3399 3. Determine goals and objectives;
- 3400 4. Plan development;



- 3401 5. Plan preparation, review and approval; and  
3402 6. Plan implementation and maintenance.

3403 *Form a Collaborative Planning Team*

3404 IMTs form the core of the IAP planning team. Additional non-IMT personnel, such as agency  
3405 executives or subject matter experts may participate in IAP development, according to the needs  
3406 of the incident.

3407 *Understand the Situation*

3408 Understanding the situation and accurately identifying the problem build the foundation for  
3409 incident action planning and are critical for the success of the remaining steps of the process.  
3410 Actions taken during this step focus on gathering, recording, analyzing, and displaying situation,  
3411 resource, and incident-potential information in a manner that facilitates

- 3412 • Increased situational awareness of the magnitude, complexity, and potential impact of the  
3413 incident;
- 3414 • The creation and maintenance of a common operating picture; and
- 3415 • The ability to determine the resources needed to develop and implement an effective IAP.

3416 *Determine Goals and Objectives*

3417 The second step includes formulating and prioritizing measurable incident objectives and  
3418 identifying an appropriate strategy. The incident objectives and strategy must conform to the  
3419 legal requirements and should conform to the management objectives of all affected agencies.

3420 Incident management staff identify, analyze, and evaluate reasonable alternative strategies that  
3421 accomplish incident objectives to determine the most appropriate strategy for the situation at  
3422 hand. Evaluation criteria include public health and safety factors, estimated costs, and various  
3423 environmental, legal, and political considerations.

3424 *Plan Development*

3425 The third step involves determining the tactical direction and the specific resources, reserves, and  
3426 support needs for implementing the selected strategies and tactics for the operational period.

3427 Before the formal Planning Meetings, each member of the Command and General Staffs is  
3428 responsible for gathering certain information to support the proposed plan.

3429 *Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval*

3430 The fourth step involves preparing the plan in a format that is appropriate for the level of  
3431 complexity of the incident. For the initial response, the format is a well-prepared outline for an  
3432 oral briefing. For most incidents that spans multiple operational periods, staff in the Planning  
3433 Section develop the plan in writing according to ICS procedures. The IC/UC is responsible for  
3434 approving the plan.

3435 *Plan Implementation and Maintenance*

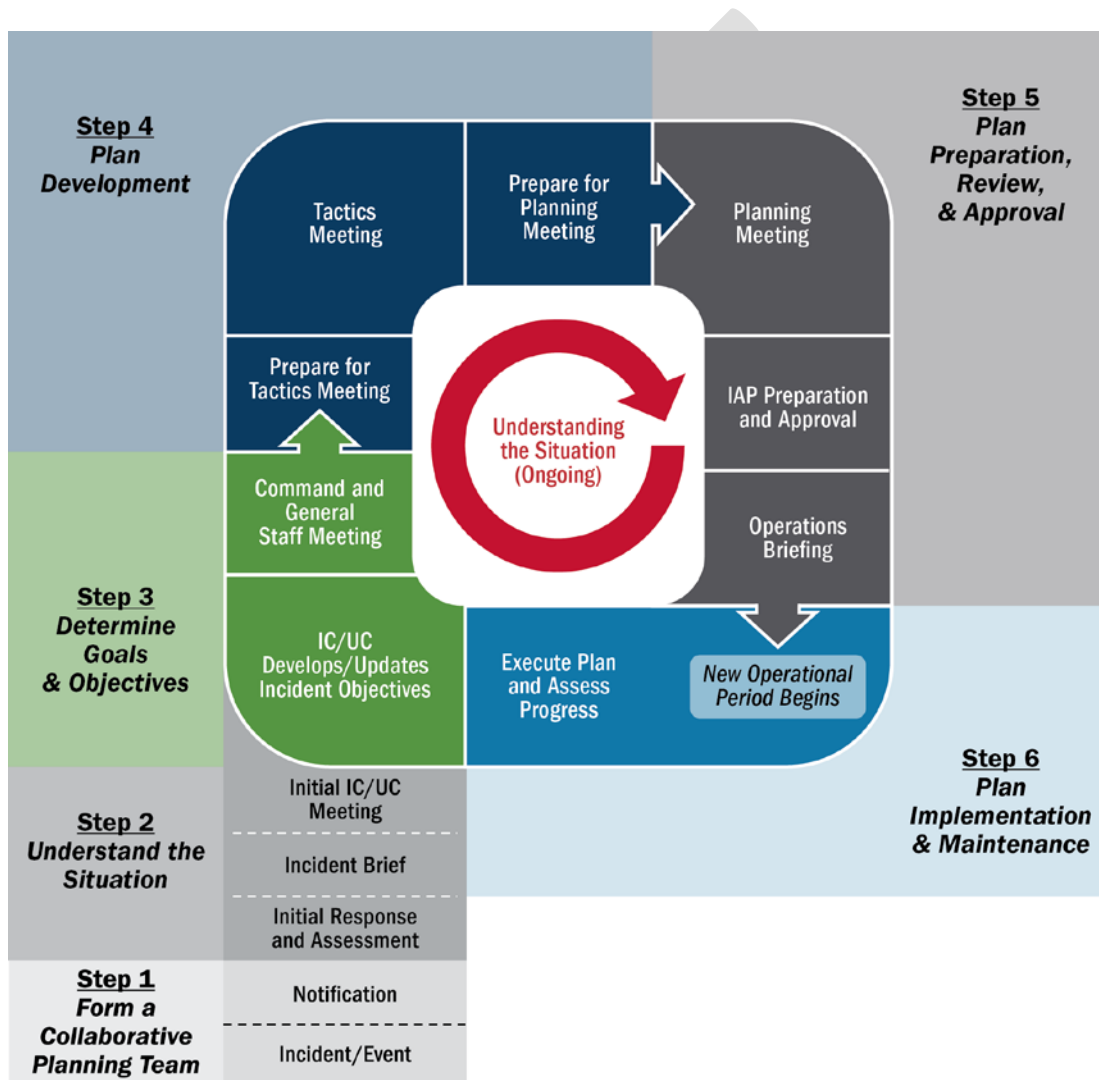
3436 The planning process includes executing and evaluating planned activities and checking the  
3437 accuracy of information to be used in planning for subsequent operational periods. The General  
3438 Staff regularly compare planned progress with actual progress. When deviations occur and when

3439 new information emerges, that information is used to develop the plan for the subsequent  
 3440 operational period.

3441 **The Planning “P”**

3442 Many incident management organizations use a formal planning cycle with established meetings  
 3443 and deliverables to mark their progress through the planning process and enable coordination of  
 3444 the entire team. The Planning “P” is commonly used to depict ICS planning meetings and work  
 3445 periods. Figure A-12 illustrates how the meetings and milestones of the Planning “P” integrate  
 3446 with the six steps of the planning process. For pre-established IMTs, Step 1: Form a  
 3447 Collaborative Planning Team, occurs prior to the incident.

3448



3449

3450 **Figure A-12: Operational Period Planning Cycle**

3451 The leg of the “P” includes the initial stages to gain awareness of the situation and establish the  
 3452 organization for incident management. Although maintaining situational awareness is essential  
 3453 throughout the life cycle of the incident, the steps in the leg of the “P” are performed only one

3454 time, led by the initial IC. Once they are accomplished, incident management shifts into a cycle  
3455 of planning and operations, informed by ongoing situational awareness, and repeated each  
3456 operational period.

### 3457 **Operational Period Planning Cycle**

3458 The ICS Operational Planning Cycle is a coordinated effort during which each function of the  
3459 incident management organization participates and contributes according to their role and  
3460 responsibilities. The following are key milestones toward the development of a well-conceived  
3461 and actionable IAP.

#### 3462 *Initial Assessment*

3463 The initial or rapid assessment is critical to information management, as well as gaining and  
3464 maintaining situational awareness. The first arriving responder(s) to the incident conducts the  
3465 initial assessment. The initial assessment allows the initial IC to request additional resources  
3466 and/or support and develop/implement initial tactics.

#### 3467 *Initial Incident Briefing*

3468 The initial incident briefing marks the transition from reactive to proactive incident management.  
3469 This briefing is typically delivered by the initial IC to the IC/UC of an incoming incident  
3470 management organization. ICS Form 201: Incident Briefing facilitates the necessary transfer of  
3471 information by capturing key incident information, initial response objectives, and currently  
3472 allocated resources. This meeting enables the incoming IC to initiate proactive response planning  
3473 for the next operational period.

#### 3474 *IC/UC Develops/Updates Objectives*

3475 The IC/UC develops objectives based on incident priorities. Clearly communicated priorities  
3476 establish unity of effort among all incident personnel. When the members of the team clearly  
3477 understand the intent behind instructions, they are equipped to act decisively and make better  
3478 decisions. The IC or UC reviews the incident priorities and objectives every operational period  
3479 and updates them according to the evolving conditions of the incident.

#### 3480 *Command and General Staff Meeting*

3481 After developing/revising the objectives, the Incident Command/UC meets with the Command  
3482 and General Staff to provide direction, which enables the team to begin developing the plan.

#### 3483 *Conduct the Tactics Meeting*

3484 The OSC develops strategies and tactics based on the incident objectives. The Tactics Meeting is  
3485 a forum to review the strategies developed by the Operations Section, and conduct planning for  
3486 strategy accomplishment, and resource assignments. OSC leads the Tactics Meeting, and key  
3487 participants include the Safety Officer, Logistics Section Chief, Resources Unit Leader, and  
3488 other personnel invited by the OSC. The team uses ICS Forms 215 and 215A, the Operational  
3489 Planning Worksheet and the Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis, to facilitate and document  
3490 decisions made during the Tactics Meeting.

3491 *Conduct the Planning Meeting*

3492 Following the Tactics Meeting, preparations begin for the Planning Meeting. The Planning  
 3493 Meeting serves as a final review and approval of operational plans and resource requirements  
 3494 developed during and after the Tactics Meeting. Team members collaborate extensively between  
 3495 the Tactics Meeting and the Planning Meeting to identify support requirements for the  
 3496 operational plan. Ideally, the Planning Meeting involves no surprises and serves simply as a  
 3497 review of a plan that the Command and General Staff have collaboratively developed.

3498 At the end of the Planning Meeting, all of the Command and General Staff, and any necessary  
 3499 agency officials, confirm that they can support the plan, and the IC/UC gives final approval.  
 3500 After this final approval, the PSC indicates when all elements of the IAP and support documents  
 3501 are due so the plan can be prepared for the Operational Period Briefing.

3502 Table A-2 lists the elements responsible for completing each form for inclusion in the IAP.

3503 **Table A-2: The IAP and Typical Attachments**

Component	Normally Prepared By
Incident Objectives (ICS Form 202)	IC
Organization Assignment List or Chart (ICS Form 203)	Resources Unit
Assignment List (ICS Form 204)	Resources Unit
Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205)	Communications Unit
Medical Plan (ICS Form 206)	Medical Unit
Incident Maps	Situation Unit
General Safety Message/Site Safety Plan (ICS Form 208)	Safety Officer
Other Potential Components (Incident Dependent)	
Air Operations Summary	Air Operations
Traffic Plan	Ground Support Unit
Decontamination Plan	Technical Specialist
Waste Management or Disposal Plan	Technical Specialist
Demobilization Plan	Demobilization Unit
Site Security Plan	Law Enforcement, Technical Specialist, or Security Manager
Investigative Plan	Law Enforcement
Evidence Recovery Plan	Law Enforcement
Evacuation Plan	As needed
Sheltering/Mass Care Plan	As needed
Other (as needed)	As needed

3504 *Prepare and Approve the IAP*

3505 A written IAP is composed of a series of standard forms and supporting documents that convey  
 3506 the intent of the IC/UC and the Operations Section for the operational period. The IC/UC  
 3507 determines which ICS forms and attachments are included in the IAP; the Planning Section Chief

3508 ensures that the appropriate section/branch/unit prepares the forms and attachments. The IC/UC  
3509 gives final approval of the written IAP before it is reproduced or disseminated.

3510 IAPs can be distributed electronically, in hard copy, or a combination thereof. Responders in the  
3511 field and senior officials often require hard copies. After determining the number of hard copies  
3512 required, the PSC arranges with the Documentation Unit to reproduce the printed copies and to  
3513 disseminate the plan electronically.

3514 *Operations Briefing*

3515 Each operational period starts with an Operations Briefing, also known as the Operational Period  
3516 Briefing or Shift Briefing. All supervisors of tactical resources receive the IAP during the  
3517 briefing. During this briefing, the Command and General Staff present the incident objectives,  
3518 review the current situation, brief field personnel, and share any concerns related to  
3519 communications or safety. Following the Operations Meeting, supervisors meet with their  
3520 assigned resources to provide a more detailed briefing on their respective assignments.

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## 3521 Tab 9—ICS Forms

3522 This section describes many common ICS Forms. Agencies may tailor the individual forms to  
 3523 meet a particular need. While the format and content is flexible, however, the form number and  
 3524 purpose (e.g., Assignment List, ICS Form 204, defines the assignments for a division or group)  
 3525 should remain intact in order to maintain consistency and facilitate immediate identification and  
 3526 interoperability and for ease of use.<sup>6</sup>

3527 Not all ICS forms are included in the IAP; some support the planning process in other ways. The  
 3528 IAP normally consists of the Incident Objectives (ICS Form 202), Organization Assignment List  
 3529 (ICS Form 203), Assignment List (ICS Form 204), and a map of the incident area. Larger  
 3530 incidents necessitate additional supporting attachments, such as a separate Incident Radio  
 3531 Communications Plan (ICS Form 205), a Medical Plan (ICS Form 206), and possibly a Traffic  
 3532 Plan. Table A-3 lists common ICS forms, including those that are not included in the IAP.

3533 **Table A-3: ICS Forms That Can Aid the Planning Process**

Form	Purpose
ICS Form 201 (p. 1)	Incident Briefing Map
ICS Form 201 (p. 2)	Summary of Current Actions
ICS Form 201 (p. 3)	Current Organization
ICS Form 201 (p. 4)	Resources Summary
ICS Form 202	Incident Objectives
ICS Form 203	Organization Assignment List
ICS Form 204	Assignment List
ICS Form 205	Incident Radio Communications Plan
ICS Form 205A	Communications List
ICS Form 206	Medical Plan
ICS Form 207	Incident Organization Chart
ICS Form 208	Safety Message/Plan
ICS Form 209	Incident Status Summary
ICS Form 210	Resource Status Change
ICS Form 211	Incident Check-In List
ICS Form 213	General Message
ICS Form 215	Operational Planning Worksheet
ICS Form 215A	IAP Safety Analysis

3534 The following section provides brief descriptions of selected ICS forms. This list is not all-  
 3535 inclusive; other forms are available online, commercially, and in a variety of formats.  
 3536

- 3537 • **ICS Form 201—Incident Briefing:** Most often used by the initial IC, this four-section  
 3538 document (often produced as four pages) allows for the capture of vital incident information

<sup>6</sup> The NIMS ICS Forms Booklet can be found on the FEMA website.

- 3539 prior to the implementation of the formal planning process. Use of ICS Form 201 allows for  
3540 a concise and complete transition of command briefing to an incoming new IC. In addition,  
3541 this form may serve as the full extent of incident command and control documentation if the  
3542 situation is resolved by the initial response resources and organization. This form simplifies  
3543 and supports the transfer of situational information to the members of the Command and  
3544 General Staffs as they arrive and begin work and is not included as a part of a written IAP.
- 3545 • **ICS Form 202—Incident Objectives:** ICS Form 202 serves as opening section of a written  
3546 IAP and includes incident information, a listing of the IC's objectives for the operational  
3547 period, pertinent weather information, a general safety message, and a table of contents for  
3548 the plan. Signature blocks are provided.
  - 3549 • **ICS Form 203—Organization Assignment List:** ICS Form 203 is typically the second  
3550 section of the IAP and provides a full accounting of incident management and supervisory  
3551 staff for that operational period.
  - 3552 • **ICS Form 204—Assignment List:** ICS Form 204 is included in multiples, based on the  
3553 organizational structure of the Operations Section for the operational period. Each  
3554 division/group has its own page, listing the supervisor for the division/group (including the  
3555 Branch Director if assigned) and the specific assigned resources with the leader's name and  
3556 the number of personnel assigned to each resource. This document then describes in detail  
3557 the specific actions assigned to that division or group in support of the overall incident  
3558 objectives. Any special instructions are included, as well as the elements of the Incident  
3559 Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205) that apply to that division or group.
  - 3560 • **ICS Form 205—Incident Radio Communications Plan:** ICS Form 205 is used to provide  
3561 information on all radio frequency assignments down to the division/group level.
  - 3562 • **ICS Form 205A—Communications List:** ICS Form 205A is used to record non-radio  
3563 contact information for incident personnel, including telephone numbers and/or email  
3564 addresses.
  - 3565 • **ICS Form 206—Medical Plan:** ICS Form 206 presents the incident's plan to care for  
3566 responder medical emergencies.
  - 3567 • **ICS Form 207—Incident Organization Chart:** ICS Form 208 is an optional form that  
3568 depicts an organization chart of the major elements and key staff in the ICS organization.
  - 3569 • **ICS Form 208—Safety Message/Plan:** ICS 208 is an optional form for IAPs; it typically  
3570 contains safety message, expanded safety message, safety plan, and site safety plan.
  - 3571 • **ICS Form 209—Incident Status Summary:** ICS Form 209 contains basic incident decision  
3572 support information and is the primary mechanism for reporting this situational information  
3573 to incident coordination and support organizations and the agency administrators/executives.
  - 3574 • **ICS Form 210—Resource Status Change:** ICS Form 210 is used to record changes in the  
3575 status of resources assigned to the incident; it is also be used as a worksheet to track resource  
3576 arrival and departure.
  - 3577 • **ICS Form 211—Incident Check-In List:** ICS Form 211 documents the check-in process.  
3578 Check-in recorders report check-in information to the Resources Unit.

- 3579
- 3580
- 3581
- **ICS Form 213—General Message Form:** ICS Form 213 is a general use form to communicate information among members of the IMT, with other IMTs, or with other echelons of incident management.
- 3582
- 3583
- 3584
- **ICS Form 215—Operational Planning Worksheet:** ICS Form 215 is used in the incident planning meeting to develop tactical assignments and resources needed to achieve incident objectives and strategies.
- 3585
- 3586
- 3587
- **ICS Form 215A—IAP Safety Analysis:** ICS Form 215A communicates the safety and health issues identified by the Safety Officer. ICS Form 215A form identifies mitigation measures to address the identified safety issues.

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3588 **Tab 10—Primary Functions of Command and General**  
 3589 **Staff Positions**

3590 Table A-4 lists the primary functions of each major ICS position.

3591 **Table A-4: Summary Table of Major ICS Positions**

Major ICS Position	Primary Functions
<b>IC or UC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have clear authority and know agency policy</li> <li>• Ensure incident safety</li> <li>• Establish the ICP</li> <li>• Set priorities and determine incident objectives and strategies to be followed</li> <li>• Establish the ICS organization needed to manage the incident</li> <li>• Approve the IAP</li> <li>• Coordinate Command and General Staff activities</li> <li>• Approve resource requests and use of volunteers and auxiliary personnel</li> <li>• Order demobilization as needed</li> <li>• Ensure after action reports are completed</li> <li>• Authorize information release to the media</li> </ul>
<b>Public Information Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine, according to direction from the IC, any limits on information release</li> <li>• Develop accurate, accessible, and timely information for use in press/media briefings or dissemination via social media</li> <li>• Obtain the IC's approval of news releases</li> <li>• Conduct periodic media briefings</li> <li>• Arrange for tours and other interviews or briefings</li> <li>• Monitor and forward traditional and social media information useful to incident planning</li> <li>• Maintain current information summaries and/or displays on the incident</li> <li>• Make information about the incident available to incident personnel</li> <li>• Participate in Planning Meetings</li> <li>• Identify and implement rumor control methods</li> </ul>
<b>Safety Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and mitigate hazardous situations</li> <li>• Create a Safety Plan</li> <li>• Ensure safety messages and briefings are made</li> <li>• Stop and prevent unsafe acts</li> <li>• Review the IAP for safety implications</li> <li>• Assign assistants qualified to evaluate special hazards</li> <li>• Initiate preliminary investigation of accidents within the incident area</li> <li>• Review and approve the Medical Plan</li> <li>• Participate in Planning Meetings to address anticipated hazards associated with future operations</li> </ul>

Major ICS Position	Primary Functions
<b>Liaison Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as a point of contact for agency representatives</li> <li>• Maintain a list of assisting and cooperating agencies and agency representatives</li> <li>• Assist in setting up and coordinating interagency contacts</li> <li>• Monitor incident operations to identify current or potential inter-organizational problems</li> <li>• Participate in Planning Meetings and provide current resource status, including limitations and capabilities of agency resources</li> <li>• Provide agency-specific demobilization information and needs</li> </ul>
<b>OSC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure safety of tactical operations</li> <li>• Manage tactical operations</li> <li>• Develop operations portions of the IAP</li> <li>• Supervise execution of operations portions of the IAP</li> <li>• Request additional resources to support tactical operations</li> <li>• Approve release of resources from active operational assignments</li> <li>• Make or approve expedient changes to the IAP</li> <li>• Maintain close contact with the IC, subordinate Operations personnel, and other agencies involved in the incident</li> </ul>
<b>I/I Section Chief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect and analyze incident-related information and data</li> <li>• Oversee I/I-related activities, resources, services, support, and reserves</li> <li>• Communicate and coordinate with all crime scenes, investigative scenes, and off-incident facilities regarding the investigation of the incident</li> <li>• Establish/activate an “off-incident” I/I Operations Center facility or site</li> <li>• Confer with other Command and General Staff regarding force protection, security, health, and safety issues</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Section Chief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect and manage all incident-relevant operational data</li> <li>• Supervise preparation of the IAP</li> <li>• Provide input to the IC and Operations in preparing the IAP</li> <li>• Incorporate Traffic, Medical, and Communications Plans and other supporting material into the IAP</li> <li>• Conduct/facilitate Planning Meetings</li> <li>• Reassign out-of-service personnel within the ICS organization already on scene, as appropriate</li> <li>• Compile and display incident status information</li> <li>• Establish information needed and reporting schedules for units (e.g., Resources Unit, Situation Unit)</li> <li>• Determine need for specialized resources</li> <li>• Assemble and disassemble task forces and strike teams not assigned to Operations</li> <li>• Establish specialized data collection systems as necessary (e.g., weather)</li> <li>• Assemble information on alternative strategies</li> <li>• Provide periodic predictions on incident potential</li> <li>• Report significant changes in incident status</li> <li>• Oversee preparation of the Demobilization Plan</li> </ul>

Major ICS Position	Primary Functions
<b>Logistics Section Chief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide all facilities, transportation, communications, supplies, equipment maintenance and fueling, food, and medical services for incident personnel, and all off-incident resources</li> <li>• Manage all incident logistics</li> <li>• Provide logistics input to the IAP</li> <li>• Brief Logistics staff as needed</li> <li>• Identify anticipated and known incident service and support needs</li> <li>• Request additional resources as needed</li> <li>• Ensure and oversee development of Traffic, Medical, and Communications Plans as needed</li> <li>• Oversee demobilization of Logistics Section and associated resources</li> </ul>
<b>Finance/ Administration Section Chief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage all financial aspects of an incident</li> <li>• Provide financial and cost analysis information as requested</li> <li>• Ensure compensation and claims functions are being addressed relative to the incident</li> <li>• Gather pertinent information from briefings with responsible agencies</li> <li>• Develop an operational plan for the Finance/Administration Section and fill section supply and support needs</li> <li>• Determine the need to set up and operate an incident commissary</li> <li>• Meet with assisting and cooperating agency representatives as needed</li> <li>• Maintain daily contact with agency's(ies') headquarters on finance matters</li> <li>• Ensure that personnel time records are completed accurately and transmitted to home agencies</li> <li>• Ensure that all obligation documents initiated at the incident are properly prepared and completed</li> <li>• Brief agency administrative personnel on all incident-related financial issues needing attention or follow up</li> <li>• Provide input to the IAP</li> </ul>

3592

# 3593 Appendix B: Center Management 3594 System

## 3595 A. Purpose

3596 Appendix B provides additional explanation and examples relating to CMS.

3597 Operations and coordination centers exist at all levels of government and within the private  
3598 sector and various NGOs. Generally, they are predesignated, fixed facilities, though their specific  
3599 purpose, authorities, and composition vary widely. Many major cities, states, or Federal  
3600 departments have elaborate centers that can deploy extensive resources, while other communities  
3601 rely on single-room centers and on neighboring communities or organizations for support when  
3602 additional resources are required. The representation of various stakeholders and partners within  
3603 these centers enables the collection, analysis, and sharing of information in order to facilitate  
3604 coordinated and informed decisions, provide legal and policy guidance to on-scene personnel,  
3605 plan for a wide range of contingencies, deploy resources, and provide other support for the  
3606 incident as required.

3607 Operations and coordination centers use CMS to integrate the resources and requirements of  
3608 diverse organizations brought together to support incident response, community recovery, and  
3609 senior leader decision making. The system is flexible according to the needs of an incident and  
3610 the resources of the implementing organization. CMS guidance applies equally to all  
3611 operations/coordination centers, from Federal agency DOCs to EOCs in rural communities. The  
3612 organizations and resources represented in an operations/coordination center will vary according  
3613 to the mission of the center and the type of incident.

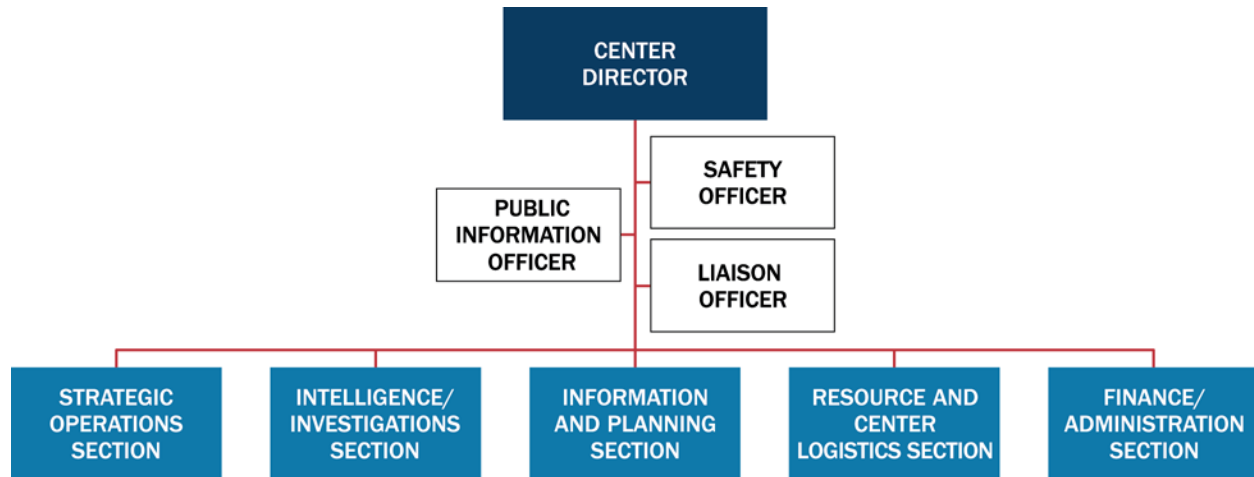
3614 Additionally, the relationship between an operations/coordination center and on-scene  
3615 responders varies from organization/jurisdiction to organization/jurisdiction and from response  
3616 to response. A center may be activated in purely a support role to on-scene IMT(s), it may have  
3617 operational control over certain incident activities (e.g., sheltering, or managing points of  
3618 distribution), or it may play a strong geographic coordination role for many disparate incidents or  
3619 activities. CMS provides a standard foundation upon which center leadership can build their  
3620 organization according to their specific needs and resources.

3621 The NIMS management and coordination principles apply to CMS as well as ICS. Just as ICS  
3622 provides guidance for teams managing incidents at the incident level, CMS provides the  
3623 consistent and authoritative guidance for the staff in EOCs and other incident support  
3624 organizations. As with ICS, the organizational structure defined in CMS is modular, flexible, and  
3625 adaptable. At the same time, CMS is sufficiently specific to facilitate mutual aid and  
3626 interoperability among operations/coordination centers.

3627 The CMS structure generally reflects the ICS structure but with varying nuances and title  
3628 changes to emphasize the coordination and support mission of centers, as opposed to the tactical  
3629 and logistics management role of on-scene responders.

## 3630 Functional Structure

3631 CMS consists of five major functional areas that are staffed as needed according to the  
 3632 requirements of the incident. They are Command, Strategic Operations,  
 3633 Intelligence/Investigations, Information and Planning, Resource and Center Logistics, and  
 3634 Finance/Administration. Figure B-1 depicts the major functional elements of CMS.



3635

3636

**Figure B-1: CMS Command and General Staff**

## 3637 Modular Expansion

3638 The number of personnel assigned to each section in CMS varies depending on the size of the  
 3639 incident and the phase of incident management. Organizational elements and staff positions are  
 3640 activated only as required based on the needs of the jurisdiction/organization and the nature of  
 3641 the incident. For example, when an incident is very large, a section may be divided into branches  
 3642 in order to maintain span of control over many resources.

## 3643 B. Organization of This Appendix

3644 The major elements of CMS are organized into the following seven tabs:

- 3645 • Tab 1—Center Director and Command Staff
- 3646 • Tab 2—The Strategic Operations Section
- 3647 • Tab 3—The Intelligence/Investigation Section
- 3648 • Tab 4—The Information and Planning Section
- 3649 • Tab 5—The Resource and Center Logistics Section
- 3650 • Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section
- 3651 • Tab 7—Implementing CMS in Small EOCs

3652

## 3653 Tab 1—Center Director and Command Staff

3654 A Center Director and Command Staff lead the CMS organization.

### 3655 *Center Director*

3656 The CD oversees the overall coordination of activities and organizations within an  
3657 operations/coordination center. The CD is responsible for activating the center, ensuring that it  
3658 has the appropriate organizational representatives to successfully support the incident, and  
3659 adjusting the organization to meet the requirements of the incident with the resources available.  
3660 The CD provides information updates to the MAC Group and works with the MAC Group to  
3661 establish priorities to guide the actions of operations/coordination center staff. Additionally, the  
3662 CD ensures information sharing with other levels of government, with neighboring jurisdictions,  
3663 and with the public.

### 3664 *Command Staff*

3665 The CD leads the CMS organization with the support and guidance of various Command Staff  
3666 positions. The Command Staff report directly to the CD and conduct key activities or provide  
3667 guidance for critical decisions related to the incident. The CMS Command Staff positions are the  
3668 PIO, Liaison Officer, and Safety Officer, though the CD may add additional technical advisors to  
3669 meet the needs of the incident or to represent organizational priorities.

### 3670 *Public Information Officer*

3671 The PIO is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and with other  
3672 jurisdictions/organizations with incident-related information needs. The PIO gathers, verifies,  
3673 coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible, and timely information on the incident. The  
3674 information may include the incident's current situation, recommended protective measures, how  
3675 to access assistance, current response and recovery actions, and other matters of general interest  
3676 for both internal and external audiences.

3677 The PIO in an operations/coordination center has similar responsibilities to the PIO at an ICP.  
3678 When there is more than one PIO staffed, no matter where they are located, it is critical that they  
3679 coordinate closely to ensure consistent messaging. Pre-established JIS protocols can facilitate the  
3680 coordination of information between on-scene and center-based PIOs. ESF #15—External  
3681 Affairs, supports the PIO, either in the center or offsite at a JIC. The PIO also performs a key  
3682 public information-monitoring role, such as implementing measures for rumor control, and  
3683 updating incident-related social media posts.

### 3684 *Liaison Officer*

3685 The Liaison Officer is a point of contact for outside organizations and a conduit of information  
3686 between the CD and organizations that are assisting or cooperating with the response but not  
3687 otherwise represented in the center staff. This could include neighboring jurisdictions or other  
3688 levels of government, private sector or NGO representatives, and/or leaders of community  
3689 groups. Through the Liaison Officer, these organizations can be kept informed of response and  
3690 recovery activities and can keep the staff in the center informed of their priorities, concerns and  
3691 available resources.

3692 The Liaison Officer is typically the first point of contact for outside organizations wanting to  
3693 share information with an operations/coordination center, but the CD might decide to incorporate

3694 that organization elsewhere in the CMS structure in order to simplify information and resource  
3695 flow. For example, organizations that that control key resources might be given a position in the  
3696 Strategic Operation Section. Alternately, if an organization has access to information critical to a  
3697 specific incident, the CD might choose to give them a seat in the Information and Planning  
3698 Section. The CD makes these decisions according to the needs of the incident and the phase of  
3699 the response/recovery. Thus, the specific organizations that the Liaison Officer coordinates with  
3700 vary significantly from one incident to the next, as well as over the course of a single incident.

#### 3701 *Safety Officer*

3702 The Safety Officer is responsible to the CD for the ongoing assessment and communication of  
3703 hazardous conditions to center staff. The Safety Officer analyzes work area hazards, hazardous  
3704 weather, and working conditions in the center and determines and communicates appropriate  
3705 interventions. The Safety Officer conducts inspections of the center to ensure compliance with  
3706 applicable safety codes, regulations, and guidelines. He or she notifies the CD of violations of  
3707 safety regulations and codes, recommends and/or implements corrections, and follows-up to  
3708 ensure that violations have been corrected.

3709 The Safety Officer for the center is similar to that of a Safety Officer at an ICP in that he or she  
3710 prepares a site-specific Safety and Health Plan and publishes a Safety Message. He or she takes  
3711 appropriate actions to mitigate or eliminate unsafe conditions, operations, or hazards. The Safety  
3712 Officer participates in planning meetings, reviews the Incident Strategic (CAP) for safety  
3713 implications, and ensures there is a medical plan for center personnel.

#### 3714 *Additional Command Staff*

3715 The CD has the flexibility to staff additional Command Staff positions, either as a standard  
3716 practice within a center, or on an ad hoc basis according to the nature and needs of an incident.  
3717 For example, the SOPs guiding one center may dictate that the Legal Advisor position be filled  
3718 whenever their center is fully activated, while another center may only choose to do so for  
3719 incidents with particularly murky legal precedent. If an incident disproportionately impacts a  
3720 specific community or population, the CD may opt to have a representative from that community  
3721 to provide guidance regarding communication, transportation, supervision, and essential services  
3722 for the populations in the affected area. The CD may choose to have a direct link with a  
3723 representative from a key industry for a specific response and assign an Industry Advisor if an  
3724 incident occurs on company property or if the response otherwise requires a close partnership  
3725 between a single industry and the resources coordinated through the operations/coordination  
3726 center. Similarly, the CD may appoint a Science and Technology Advisor to ensure the best  
3727 available science and technology is available to center staff to inform their decision making.  
3728 Operations/coordination centers are often responsible for providing incident information to  
3729 elected officials at multiple levels of government, and the CD might choose to appoint an  
3730 Intergovernmental Affairs Liaison to ensure that elected officials are kept appropriately informed  
3731 of the incident status and possible impacts on their constituents throughout response and  
3732 recovery efforts.

3733

3734

**Additional Command Staff Considerations**3735  
3736  
3737  
3738  
3739

Additional Command Staff positions are only filled if the CD determines that he or she requires direct and ongoing strategic communication with a particular sector, specialty, or interest group. If direct and ongoing communication is not required, representatives of those organizations coordinate through a Liaison Officer. If ongoing coordination is required, but of a tactical rather than strategic nature, the position is incorporated into the appropriate CMS Section.

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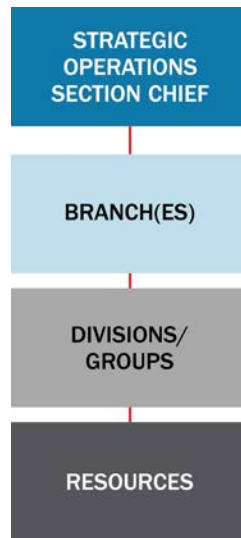
## 3740 Tab 2—The Strategic Operations Section

3741 The staff in the Strategic Operations Section are responsible for providing resource support and  
3742 strategic coordination to activities focused on reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and  
3743 property, reducing harm to the environment, establishing situational control, and restoring  
3744 normal operations. When operations/coordination centers are activated in support of IMTs or  
3745 other centers, the Strategic Operations Section staff coordinate with field personnel to identify  
3746 and deploy required resources so that IMT Operations Section staff can apply them to achieve  
3747 incident objectives. If necessary resources are not available from local supplies, staff in the  
3748 Strategic Operations Section develop descriptions of tasks/requirements so that the Resource and  
3749 Center Logistics Section staff can implement the appropriate resource ordering process (e.g.,  
3750 activating an emergency contract or implementing a mutual aid agreement) to meet the need.  
3751 Strategic Operations Section staff gather function-specific damage assessment and other incident  
3752 information and share it with the Information and Planning Section staff for dissemination  
3753 among center staff and incorporation into situation reports.

3754 The Strategic Operations Section is often responsible for supporting activities occurring in  
3755 multiple locations with varying degrees of on-scene command and resource support available. If  
3756 the operations/coordination center is managing aspects of the response or recovery directly, such  
3757 as coordinating damage assessments or snow removal, then the Strategic Operations Section may  
3758 directly apply resources to perform the tasks and tactics assigned in the CAP.

3759 The flexible nature of CMS enables the Strategic Operations Section Chief (SOSC) to configure  
3760 the Strategic Operations Section to support or manage all types of incidents and events. The  
3761 responsibilities and composition of the Strategic Operations Section change according to the  
3762 incident type and complexity and based on the operations/coordination center staff's role in  
3763 either supporting incident command or managing response and/or recovery operations. The  
3764 organizations represented in the Strategic Operations Section typically include fire, law  
3765 enforcement, public health, public works, EMS, NGOs, and the private sector. Depending on the  
3766 situation, the SOSC configures representatives from these organizations into branches, groups,  
3767 and/or divisions.

3768 Figure B-2 depicts potential organizational elements of a Strategic Operations Section. The  
3769 following paragraphs describe several different methods of organizing the Strategic Operations  
3770 Section.



3771

3772 **Figure B-2: Major Organizational Elements of the Strategic Operations Section**

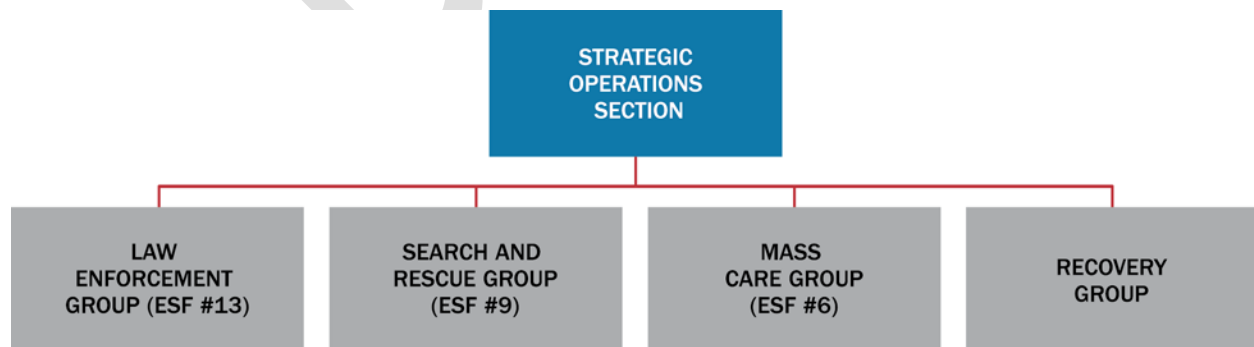
3773 **Strategic Operations Section Chief**

3774 The SOSC oversees the identification of resource needs and deployment of resources to support  
 3775 incident response efforts. The SOSC may have one or more deputies. Staff in the Strategic  
 3776 Operations Section may be organized in several ways based on incident requirements. In many  
 3777 cases, a strictly functional approach is used. In other cases, the organizational structure may be  
 3778 designed to address operations in specific geographical areas with a mix of functional and  
 3779 geographical elements comprising the Strategic Operations Section. The SOSC is responsible for  
 3780 reviewing current and future plans, identifying needed resources, and coordinating with the  
 3781 Resource and Center Logistics Section as needed for their acquisition.

3782 **Groups and Divisions**

3783 The SOSC establishes functional groups, and may also establish geographic divisions when  
 3784 required. As with ICS, groups always refer to functional capabilities and resources, while  
 3785 divisions always refer to geographic assignments.

3786



3787

3788 **Figure B-3: Example Use of Functional Groups**

3789 **Functional Groups**

3790 Groups are used to organize resources with similar capabilities or working on similar activities  
3791 (e.g., law enforcement, search and rescue, or mass care), as shown in the example configuration  
3792 in Figure B-3. In CMS, ESFs provide a standard foundation for organizing and training center  
3793 Strategic Operations Section staff. These functional groups are activated and staffed according to  
3794 the needs of an incident.

3795 **Geographic Divisions**

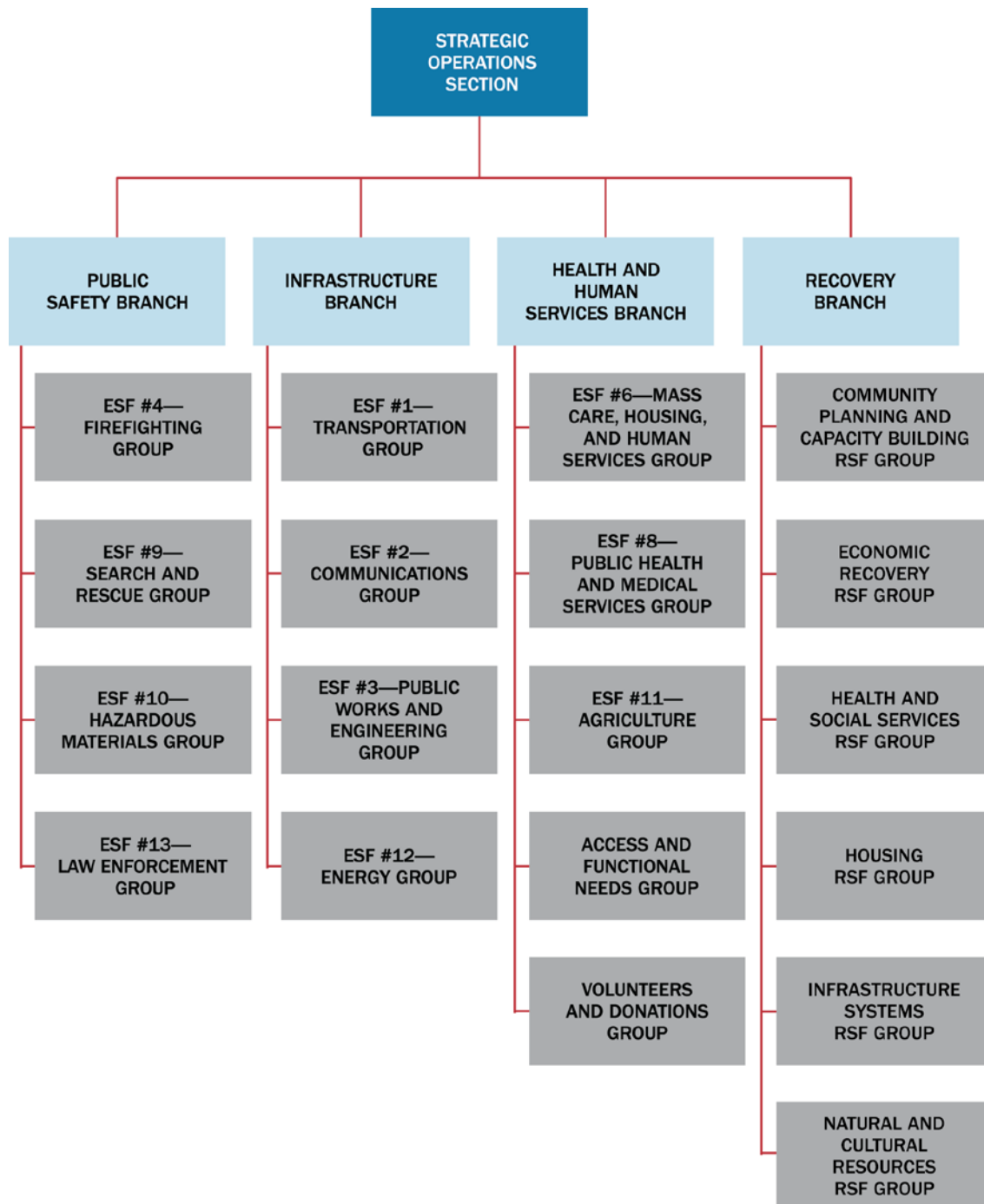
3796 Divisions are used to address response efforts in specific physical or geographical areas within  
3797 the incident area. Divisions may be established according to political (e.g., counties) or natural  
3798 terrain boundaries or other prominent geographical features, such as rivers, roadways, or floors  
3799 in a multistory building response. State EOCs commonly use geographic divisions in order to  
3800 organize information and resource flow with impacted jurisdictions across the state.

3801 **Branches**

3802 The SOSC establishes branches to accommodate span of control requirements. Branch Directors  
3803 oversee and supervise multiple functional groups or geographic divisions.

3804 **Functional Branch Structure**

3805 A functional branch structure simplifies span-of-control requirements by consolidating various  
3806 capabilities that support a particular functional area. When the number of activated ESFs exceeds  
3807 span of control for a single supervisor, the SOSC activates functional branches to consolidate  
3808 oversight, as depicted in Figure B-4. Functional branches also include non-ESF functional  
3809 groups that address assistance for survivors with access and functional needs, and volunteers and  
3810 donations.



3811

3812

**Figure B-4: Functional Branch Structure**

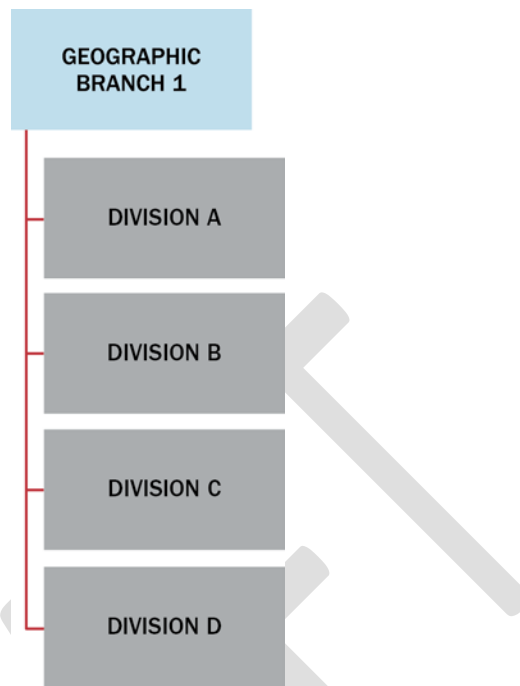
3813 The SOSC might also establish task forces for tactical assignments that cross-cut departmental or  
 3814 ESF responsibilities, such as establishing a Damage Assessment Task Force.

3815 *Geographic Branches*

3816 As with ICS Operations Sections, geographic branches are inserted above divisions in the  
 3817 Strategic Operations Section when required to maintain a manageable span of control (see Figure

3818 B-5). As with divisions, geographic branches may be established according to natural terrain  
3819 boundaries or jurisdictional boundaries.

3820



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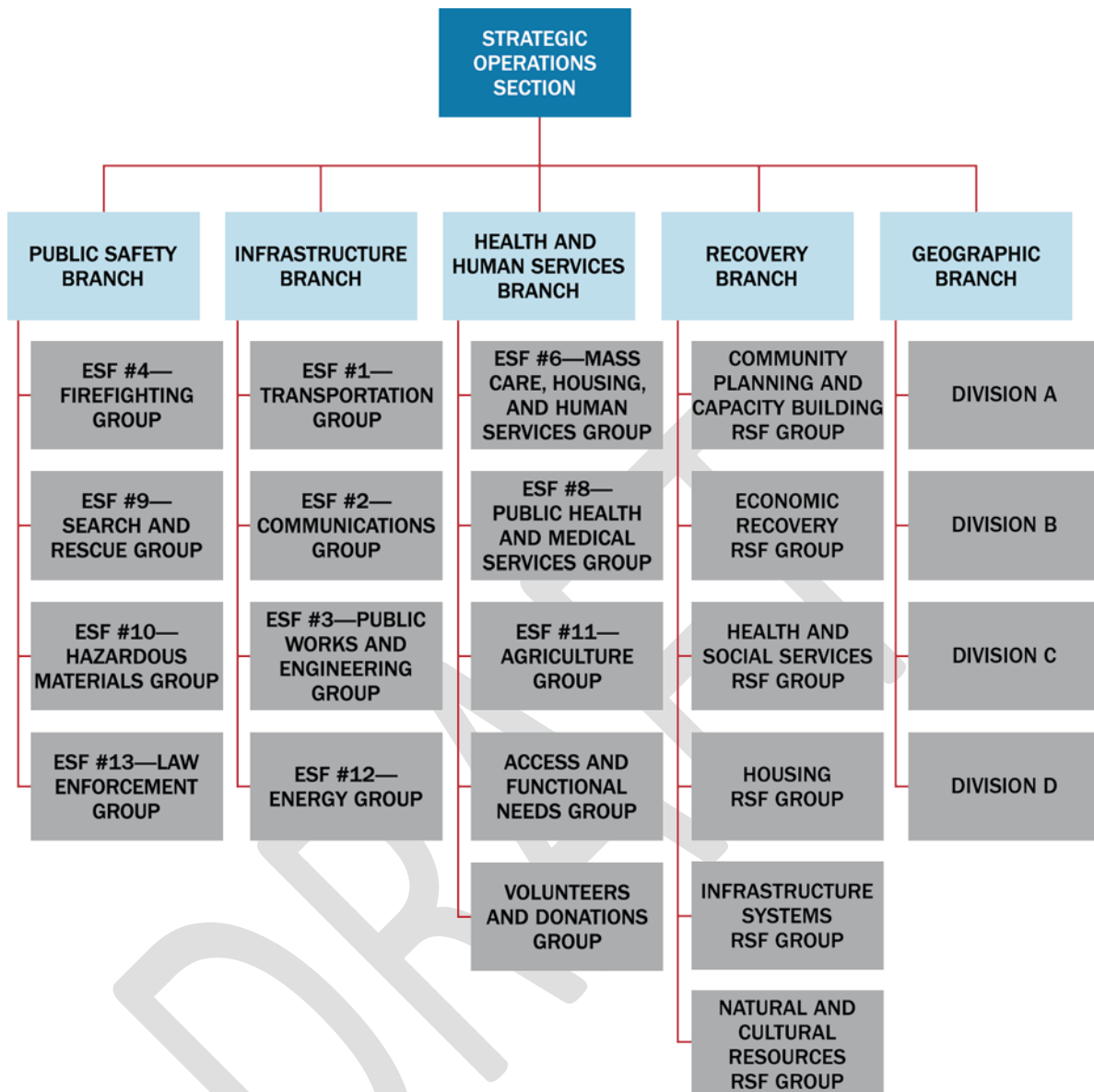
3822

**Figure B-5: Geographic Branch Organization**

3823 *Combined Functional Branches and Geographic Branches*

3824 It is possible to have a hybrid functional and geographic organization where geographic divisions or branches supplement functional structures within the Strategic Operations Section. These  
3825 geographic structures enable Strategic Operations Section staff to apply resources from various  
3826 functional groups to accomplish tasks in specific geographic areas.  
3827

3828 Figure B-6 depicts an example of a consolidated functional/geographic organization of the  
3829 Strategic Operations Section. This complex approach requires cooperation and coordination  
3830 among those responsible for the various functional capabilities and the geographic areas to  
3831 achieve the required level of support. However, it can be an effective way to coordinate the  
3832 efforts of many organizations supporting a large incident or for a state EOC to operationally  
3833 incorporate points of contact for local EOCs or regional representatives.



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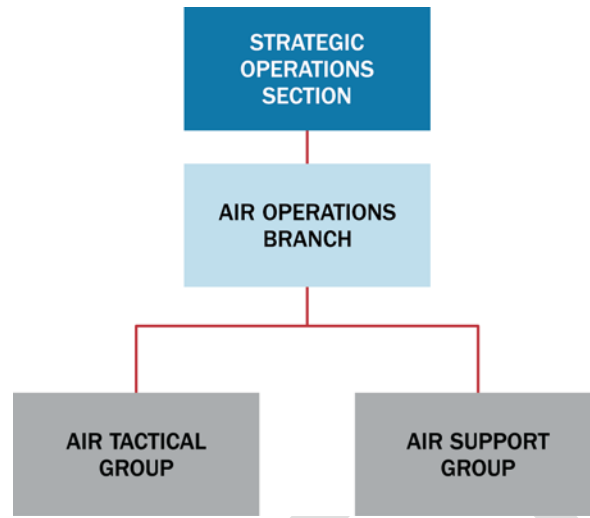
**Figure B-6: Example Combined Functional/Geographic Structure for a large Strategic Operations Section**

3837 *Air Operations Branch*

3838 Incidents may require significant aviation resources. Operations/coordination centers may play a  
3839 role in coordinating air assets in order to relieve the burden on incident management teams or  
3840 when personnel at the center are responsible for prioritizing air assets among multiple incidents.

3841 Air operations staff in operations/coordination centers report directly to the Strategic Operations  
3842 Section Chief. When the air mission and resources are significant, the operations/coordination  
3843 center leadership establish an Air Operations Branch in the Strategic Operations Section. The Air  
3844 Operations Branch in CMS has the same functions as an Air Operations Branch in ICS. This  
3845 includes both tactical and logistical support for air operations, and the Air Operations Branch  
3846 Director typically establishes two functional groups as depicted in Figure B-7. The Air Tactical

3847 Group coordinates airborne activity. The Air Support Group provides incident ground-based  
3848 support to aviation resources.



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Figure B-7: Air Operations Branch

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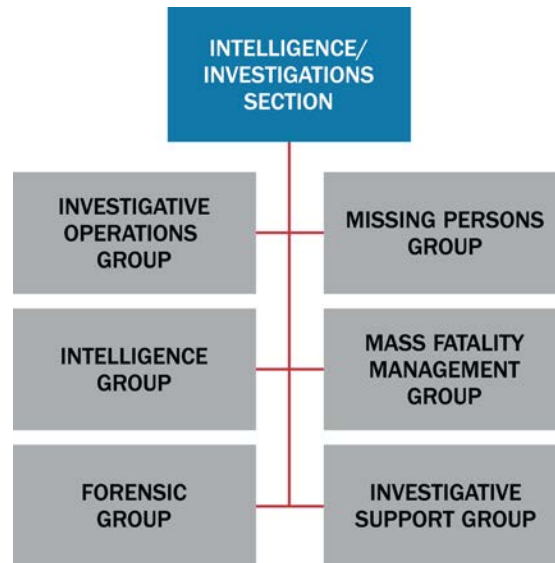
## 3851 Tab 3—The Intelligence/Investigations Section

3852 Incidents with a strong intelligence and investigative component may require the activation of an  
3853 Intelligence/Investigation Section within an operations/coordination center. As with the I/I  
3854 Section in ICS, the mission of the I/I Section in an operations/coordination center is to ensure  
3855 that all intelligence and investigative operations, functions, and activities within the incident  
3856 response are properly managed, coordinated, and directed in order to

- 3857 • Collect, process, analyze, secure, and appropriately disseminate information and intelligence;
- 3858 • Serve as a conduit to provide situational awareness (local and national) pertaining to an  
3859 incident;
- 3860 • Support missing persons and mass fatality investigations;
- 3861 • Inform and support life safety operations, including the safety and security of all response  
3862 personnel;
- 3863 • Provide appropriate intelligence to officials to assist in developing a depiction of evolving  
3864 threats or hazards;
- 3865 • Identify, document, process, collect, create a chain of custody for, safeguard, examine and  
3866 analyze, and store evidence; and
- 3867 • Determine the source or cause, and control the spread and impact, in the investigation of  
3868 emerging incidents (e.g., fire, disease outbreak).

3869 The I/I Section is established as a General Staff Section in a center when the incident involves a  
3870 criminal or terrorist act or when the event necessitates significant investigative resources, such as  
3871 for an epidemiological investigation. The I/I Section may be physically located outside of the  
3872 center, such as in a state Fusion Center, in order to accommodate the handling of sensitive  
3873 information. The staff in the I/I Section maintain a close liaison with the CD, other Command  
3874 and General Staff, and the I/I Section at the ICP, if established, and share information necessary  
3875 for the safe conduct of incident activities. The I/I Section Chief leads the I/I Section, which has  
3876 six primary groups (shown in Figure B-8). When the intelligence/investigation requirements of  
3877 an incident are very large, the I/I Section Chief divides the section into branches (not pictured) to  
3878 maintain span of control.





3879  
3880 **Figure B-8: Intelligence/Investigations Section Organization**

3881 **Intelligence/Investigation Section Chief**

3882 The I/I Section Chief oversees incident-related intelligence and investigative operations and may  
3883 have one or more deputies. Jurisdictional or geographic responsibilities for the intelligence or  
3884 investigative aspects of the incident may benefit from appointing Deputy Section Chiefs from  
3885 agencies differing from the I/I Section Chief.

3886 **Investigative Operations Group**

3887 Staff in the Investigation Operations Group work closely with the Investigation Operations  
3888 Group at an ICP, if established, to manage the overall investigative effort. Staff in the  
3889 Investigative Operations Group use the information that all of the other groups produce to  
3890 accomplish the mission of the I/I Section.

3891 **Intelligence Group**

3892 The Intelligence Group is responsible for three major functions: (1) information intake and  
3893 assessment; (2) operations security, operational security, and information security; and (3)  
3894 information/intelligence management.

3895 **Forensic Group**

3896 The Forensic Group supports the management of crime scenes and the processing of forensic  
3897 evidence, digital and multimedia evidence, and decedents. The staff in the Forensic Group ensure  
3898 that the appropriate laboratories, analytical service providers, and morgues perform the proper  
3899 types of examinations, analyses, comparisons, and enhancements on the forensic evidence,  
3900 digital and multimedia evidence, and decedents in the proper sequence. The Forensic Group staff  
3901 coordinate with the Mass Fatality Management Group and the medical examiner/coroner on  
3902 matters related to the examination, recovery and movement of decedents.

**3903 Missing Persons Group**

3904 Staff in the Missing Persons Group coordinate missing persons operations and activities. They  
3905 work with the ESF #6 group to coordinate Family Assistance Center activities involving missing  
3906 persons.

**3907 Mass Fatality Management Group**

3908 Staff in the Mass Fatality Management Group coordinate intelligence/investigations activities  
3909 involving mass fatality management operations. This includes the intelligence/investigations-  
3910 related Family Assistance Center activities involving decedents and unidentified persons.

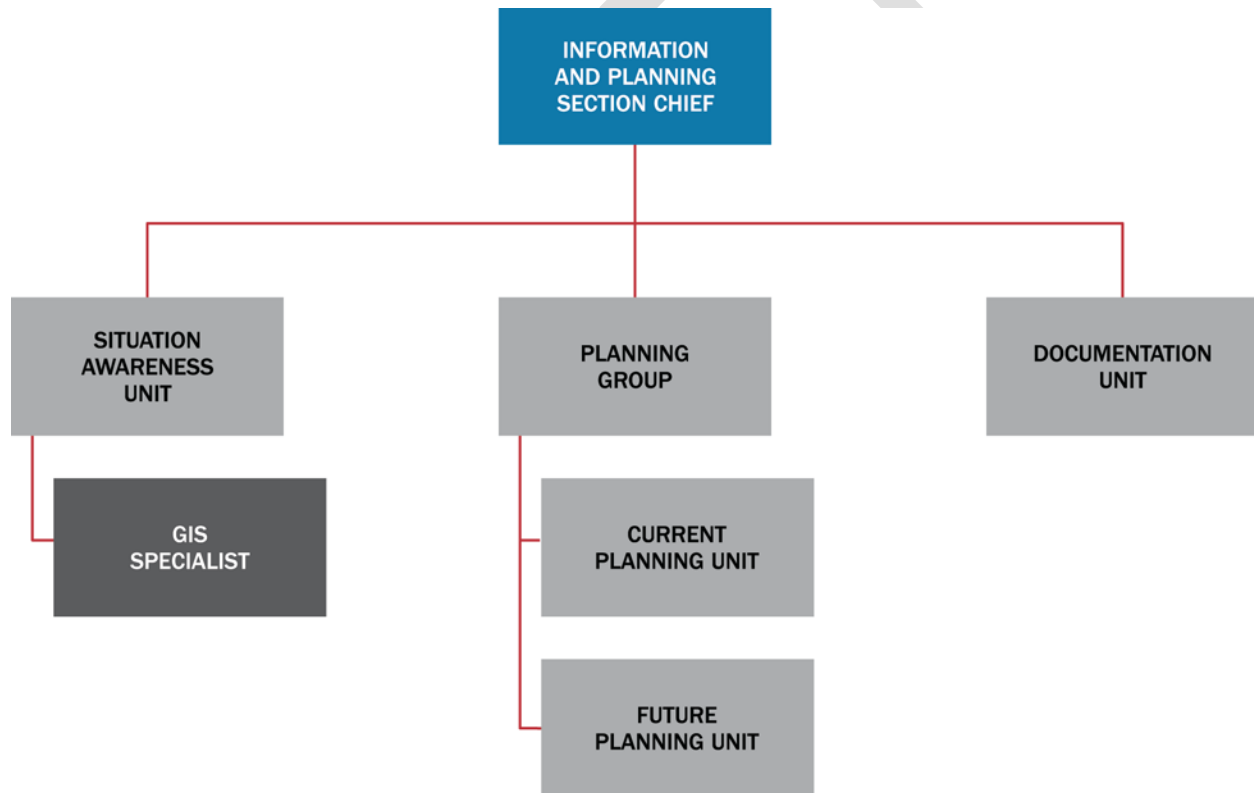
**3911 Investigative Support Group**

3912 The I/I Section may require the use of specialized operational and support resources. The staff in  
3913 the Investigative Support Group are responsible for ensuring that needed investigative personnel  
3914 are deployed expeditiously and that the necessary resources are properly distributed, maintained,  
3915 safeguarded, stored, and returned when appropriate. The Investigative Support Group staff work  
3916 closely with the other center personnel, particularly the Resource and Center Logistics Section  
3917 and Information and Planning Section, to ensure they obtain the necessary resources, services  
3918 and support.

## 3919 Tab 4—The Information and Planning Section

3920 The Information and Planning Section is responsible for collecting, evaluating and disseminating  
 3921 information about the status of the incident(s) and ongoing incident activities. Staff in the  
 3922 Information and Planning Section facilitate the center planning process and produce the CAP.  
 3923 The CAP includes the center objectives validated by the CD and provides essential information  
 3924 regarding the organization and work assignments of center personnel and resources for the  
 3925 planned operational period. Information and Planning Section staff also develop and disseminate  
 3926 contingency and long-term plans. They collate damage assessment information, gather pertinent  
 3927 incident information, and analyze data. They produce and submit situation reports and prepare  
 3928 other documentation to meet relevant reporting requirements and support senior-level decision  
 3929 making.

3930 The Information and Planning Section Chief (IPSC) leads the Information and Planning Section,  
 3931 which is organized as shown in Figure B-9. The units within the Information and Planning  
 3932 Section are the Situational Awareness Unit, Current Planning Unit, Future Planning Unit, and  
 3933 Documentation Unit.



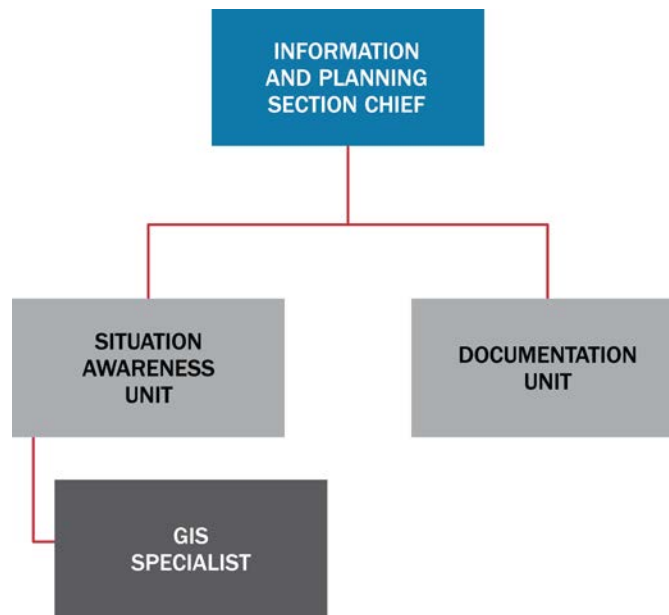
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3935

**Figure B-9: Information and Planning Section Organization**

3936 Groups can be used to ease span of control on large incidents. Figure B-10 illustrates an  
 3937 example, on a smaller incident, in which four management personnel oversee all of the activities  
 3938 of the Information and Planning Section. In this example, the Information and Planning Section  
 3939 Chief retains the responsibilities of the Planning Group Supervisor, the Current Planning Unit  
 3940 Leader and the Future Planning Unit Leader. The Situational Awareness Unit Leader, GIS  
 3941 Specialist, and Documentation Unit Leaders perform their normal roles.

3942



3943

3944 **Figure B-10: Example Information and Planning Section Organization for a Smaller**  
 3945 **Response**

### 3946 **Information and Planning Section Chief**

3947 The IPSC facilitates the center incident strategic planning process and oversees incident-related  
 3948 data gathering and analysis, which includes producing situation reports, incident maps and  
 3949 displays. They also supervise the production of incident-related contingency, recovery, COOP,  
 3950 and demobilization plans.

### 3951 **Situational Awareness Unit**

3952 The Situational Awareness Unit gathers information from all available sources, including other  
 3953 elements within the CMS organization, and produces incident-related displays, situation reports,  
 3954 and predictions. They coordinate closely with Strategic Operations Section personnel to obtain  
 3955 information from personnel on scene. They also monitor both incident-specific data sources (e.g.,  
 3956 Situation Reports from the on-scene response, or center-specific information sharing portals) and  
 3957 publicly available data sources (such as social media). Situational Awareness Unit staff verify  
 3958 the accuracy of information received and prepare and disseminate up-to-date information. They  
 3959 produce reports to facilitate situational awareness among incident personnel and senior  
 3960 leadership decision making. They support the PIO in producing displays or other reports for  
 3961 public consumption.

3962 Situational Awareness Unit personnel consolidate information from damage assessment teams  
 3963 and provide updates to center personnel. They coordinate with other center personnel to update  
 3964 damage assessment maps and situation reports. They also ensure that damage assessment  
 3965 information is integrated into reporting, including paperwork required to support the  
 3966 emergency/disaster declaration process, if applicable.

3967 The Situational Awareness Unit often includes a GIS Specialist responsible for producing  
 3968 incident-related maps or other mapping products to support response and/or recovery operations.

3969 The center GIS Specialist may provide direct support to the ICS Planning Section if limited or no  
3970 mapping capabilities are available on-scene.

3971 **Current Planning Unit**

3972 Current Planning Unit personnel facilitate the ongoing center planning process to develop  
3973 actionable incident-related plans to achieve center objectives. They support planning process  
3974 meetings and compile and distribute the CAP for every operational period. If requested, they also  
3975 support the ESFs in developing function-specific plans based on current operational needs.

3976 **Future Planning Unit**

3977 Staff in the Future Planning Unit utilize incident projections to develop future plans for center  
3978 response and recovery activities. They anticipate operational needs for the duration of the  
3979 incident and, along with recovery personnel within the Strategic Operations Section and whole  
3980 community stakeholders, develop long-term recovery strategies and plans. Staff in this unit are  
3981 also responsible for developing any incident-specific contingency plans.

3982 **Documentation Unit**

3983 Staff in the Documentation Unit maintain accurate incident files and data for legal, analytical,  
3984 and historical purposes. They catalogue and store incident information, including CAPs and  
3985 other documents that were developed to facilitate the planning process. They also keep a record  
3986 of incidents and issues to revisit when the After Action Report for the incident is being  
3987 developed.

3988

## Tab 5—The Resource and Center Logistics Section

3989

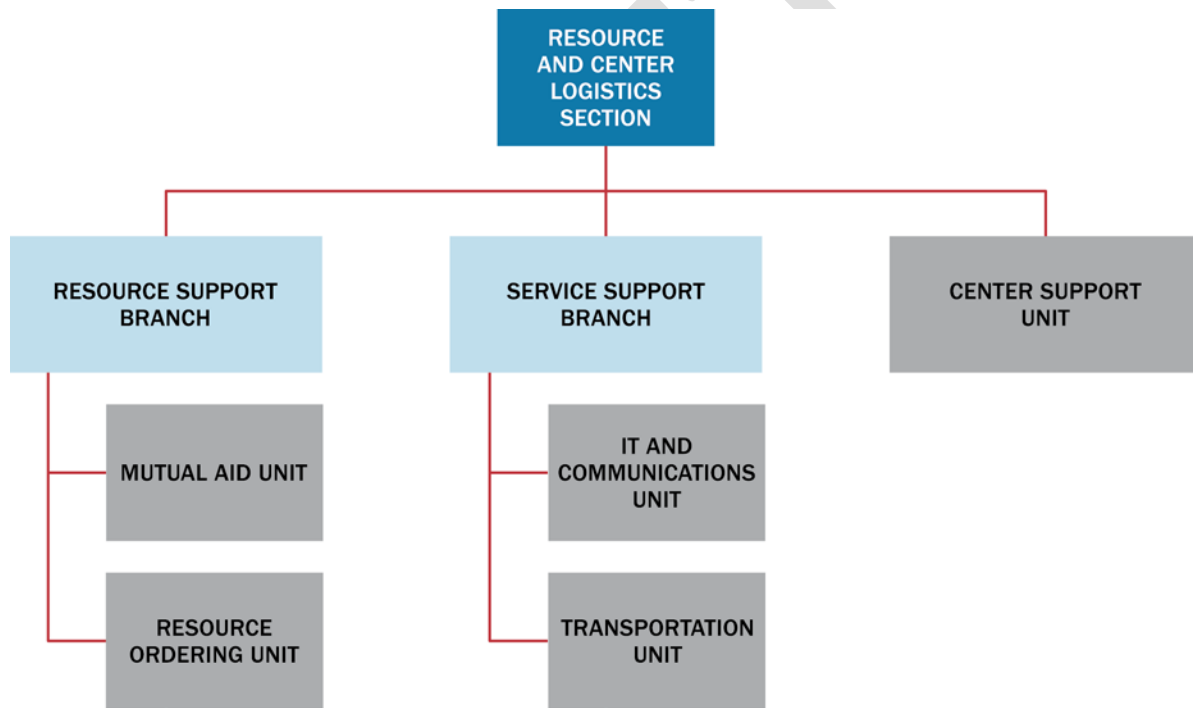
Staff in the Resource and Center Logistics Section provide advanced resource support for the incident and resource and service support for the EOC. The organizations represented in operations/coordination centers often have their own resources to draw from. These resources are deployed directly by staff in the Strategic Operations Section. Should additional resources be required, the Resource and Center Logistics Section staff work to fill any remaining resource gaps. They coordinate closely with the ICS Logistics Section and/or the Resource and Center Logistics Sections at other operations/coordination centers to ensure that resources are not being duplicated, and to acquire resources through more complex mechanisms, such as mutual aid agreements, than can readily be implemented in the field.

3998

The Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief (RCLSC) leads the Resource and Center Logistics Section, which has five primary units, organized into two branches and one functional unit, as shown in Figure B-11.

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**Figure B-11: Resource and Center Logistics Section**

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Figure B-12 illustrates an example in which two management personnel, a Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief and an IT and Communications Leader, oversee all of the activities and functions of the Resource and Center Logistics Section. In this example, the IT and Communications Unit Leader and his/her staff fulfill their normal functions, while the Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief retains responsibility for all the responsibilities of the unstaffed Resource Support Branch, the Center Support Unit, and the Transportation Unit.

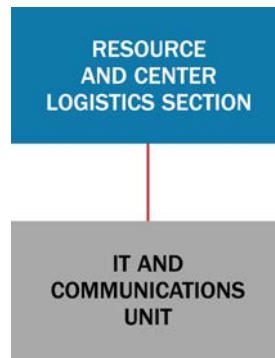
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4010 **Figure B-12: Resource and Center Logistics Section for a Smaller Response**4011 **Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief (RCLSC)**

4012 The RCLSC is responsible for providing facilities, services, people, and material in support of  
 4013 the center and the incident. The RCLSC supervises the branches and units of the Resource and  
 4014 Center Logistics Section to ensure resource, service and facility support requests are addressed.  
 4015 He or she coordinates with the CD and Strategic Operations Center staff to establish priorities for  
 4016 resource allocation should any potential conflicts or shortfalls arise.

4017 **Resource Ordering Unit**

4018 Staff in the Resource Ordering Unit order and track the delivery of incident-related resources and  
 4019 supplies. If an IMT is managing the incident on-scene, the IMT may have its own resource  
 4020 ordering capability, in which case staff in the Resource Ordering Unit at the center support the  
 4021 IMT by ordering scarce or hard-to-acquire resources and/or concentrating on ordering resources  
 4022 in support of the center, its personnel, and any ancillary facilities.

4023 **Strategic Operations and Resource and Center Logistics Coordination**

4024 The various departments and agencies represented in the Strategic Operations Section may have access  
 4025 to internal departmental resources that can be ordered without going through the Resource and Center  
 4026 Logistics Section. The Resource and Center Logistics Section still maintains responsibility for maintaining  
 4027 tracking these resources. Each center establishes protocols on how to coordinate and track the resource  
 4028 ordering functions of the Strategic Operations Section, the Resource and Center Logistics Section, and/or  
 4029 the IMT Logistics Section.

4030 **Mutual Aid Unit**

4031 Staff in the Mutual Aid Unit coordinate the execution of mutual aid agreements with other  
 4032 jurisdictions or organizations across the country. This can include implementing standing  
 4033 agreements with neighboring jurisdictions or organizations, acquiring resources from statewide  
 4034 mutual aid systems, or accessing interstate assistance through protocols such as the EMAC or the  
 4035 American Public Power Association-National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (APPA-  
 4036 NRECA) Mutual Aid Agreement. The Mutual Aid Unit staff, in partnership with  
 4037 Finance/Administration Section staff, prepare requests and reimbursement documents, as needed,  
 4038 for mutual aid resources.

**4039 IT and Communications Unit**

4040 Staff in the Information Technology and Communications Unit maintain and repair center  
4041 information technology and communications equipment. They install, distribute, and test facility  
4042 information technology and communications equipment and liaise with vendors to request  
4043 service on inoperable or marginal equipment. The staff in this unit provide training and technical  
4044 support to center personnel. They may also research and provide specifications for additional  
4045 information technology and communications equipment purchases and manage amateur radio  
4046 assets. They contribute to the development of the Center Communications Plan for inclusion in  
4047 the CAP.

**4048 Transportation Unit**

4049 Staff in the Transportation Unit, in collaboration with any on-scene Logistics Section staff,  
4050 provide for the transportation of resources and personnel supporting the incident. The  
4051 Transportation Unit is activated when it is either not feasible or not cost effective to acquire  
4052 transportation services through standard commercial providers. Functions such as purchasing  
4053 airfare, reserving rental cars, or providing taxi fare reimbursement, if applicable for an incident,  
4054 are performed by the Finance/Administration Section.

**4055 Center Support Unit**

4056 Staff in the Center Support Unit maintain and demobilize the center facility and ensure its  
4057 ongoing security and maintenance. They receive requests for EOC facility support from other  
4058 center staff, and provide for facility security, maintenance, sanitation, lighting, and other  
4059 functions. Center Support Unit personnel determine food and water requirements for center  
4060 personnel and obtain the necessary services, equipment, and supplies. They coordinate with the  
4061 Safety Officer to maintain food service areas, ensuring that all health and safety measures are  
4062 being followed.



## 4063 Tab 6—The Finance/Administration Section

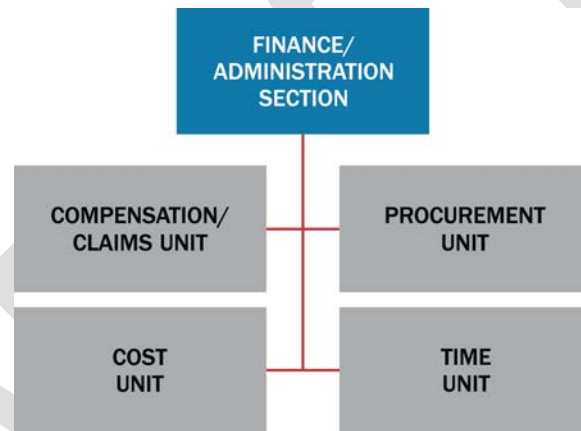
4064 Staff in the Finance/Administration Section provide human resource, financial, and  
 4065 administrative support to center personnel and the activities they oversee. They track incident  
 4066 costs and maintain records needed for reimbursement or reporting. Staff in the  
 4067 Finance/Administration Section implement procurement processes to execute contracts and  
 4068 obligate funds for center-supported activities.

### 4069 Coordination Among Finance/Administration Sections

4070 The responsibilities of the CMS Finance/Administration Section directly correlate to the responsibilities of  
 4071 the ICS Finance/Administration Section. This enables the center Finance/Administration Section to  
 4072 directly support an ICP if no ICS Finance/Administration Section has been activated. When both sections  
 4073 are activated, Finance/Administration Section on the IMT and the Finance/Administration Section in the  
 4074 center should agree regarding who will track which costs to ensure no gaps or duplication of effort.

4075 Figure B-13 illustrates the basic organizational structure for a Finance/Administration Section.  
 4076 These units are activated and staffed as needed, according to the level of effort required.

4077



4078

4079 **Figure B-13: Finance/Administration Section Organization**

### 4080 Finance/Administration Section Chief

4081 The Finance/Administration Section Chief ensures compliance with applicable guidance  
 4082 regarding the financial and administrative activities of the center. The Finance/Administration  
 4083 coordinates closely with the center command and General Staff to ensure financial  
 4084 accountability, documentation of expenditures, and that all center personnel are receiving the  
 4085 human resources-related support they require.

4086 The Finance/Administration Section Chief ensures that costs and expenditures are tracked, and  
 4087 reports information regarding accrued costs to the CD. The Finance/Administration Section  
 4088 Chief ensures that center staff keep records necessary for potential disaster declaration and/or  
 4089 reimbursement requests and supports the completion/submission of these requests.

### 4090 Compensation/Claims Unit

4091 When the Compensation/Claims Unit is established in the operations/coordination center, staff in  
 4092 this unit manage paperwork and financial requirements resulting from property damage, injuries,

4093 or fatalities associated with incident response and/or activities managed by the center. The  
4094 specific activities vary depending on the incident and the assistance required by the IMT.

#### 4095 **Cost Unit**

4096 Cost Unit staff track costs, analyze cost data, make cost estimates, and recommend cost-saving  
4097 measures for center activities. They maintain records of overall incident costs and routinely  
4098 provide cost and resource use information to the Information and Planning Section and the CD.  
4099 Documenting costs provides the basis for requests for additional funding, as well as potential  
4100 reimbursement of costs from state or Federal disaster assistance grants or parties found liable for  
4101 response/recovery expenses.

#### 4102 **Procurement Unit**

4103 The Procurement Unit staff sources, awards, and administers vendor contracts for goods and  
4104 services required for the operation of the center and any ancillary activities that the center is  
4105 financially managing. Procurement Unit staff work closely with staff in the Resource Ordering  
4106 Unit of the Resource and Center Logistics Section.

#### 4107 **Time Unit**

4108 Staff in the Time Unit are responsible for ensuring proper daily recording of personnel and  
4109 equipment time in accordance with the policies of the relevant agencies. The Time Unit Leader  
4110 may need assistance from personnel familiar with the relevant policies of any affected agencies.  
4111 Staff in the Time Unit verify these records, check them for accuracy, and post them according to  
4112 existing policies. Staff in the Time Unit document overtime hours worked by all center personnel  
4113 and may assist the IMT with timekeeping for personnel and equipment assigned to the incident.

## 4114 Tab 7—Implementing CMS in Small EOCs

4115 In smaller jurisdictions or organizations, operations/coordination center resources are frequently  
 4116 limited. Personnel and space considerations may preclude staffing the full CMS Command and  
 4117 General Staffs (CD, Command Staff, Information and Planning Section, Strategic Operations  
 4118 Section, Resource and Center Logistics Section, and Finance/Administration Section). Because  
 4119 CMS is flexible and modular, it can still be implemented in such situations.

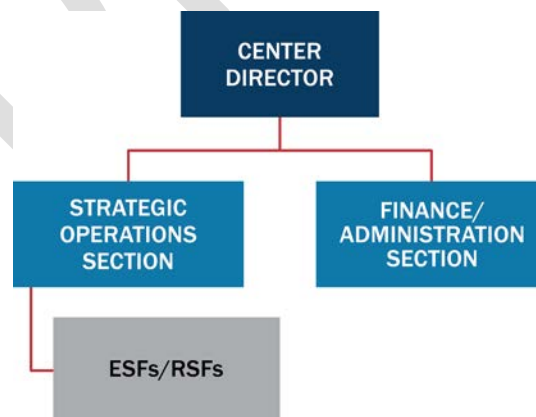
4120 The longstanding and fundamental NIMS management characteristic of *modular organization*  
 4121 indicates that leaders retain responsibility for subordinate positions until and unless the  
 4122 subordinate positions are staffed. In ICS, the senior qualified member of the first emergency  
 4123 response unit arriving at the scene of an incident assumes the role of Incident Commander. Until  
 4124 others arrive and are assigned to subordinate positions, the Incident Commander is also  
 4125 responsible for Planning, Operations, Logistics, and Finance/Administration as well as the roles  
 4126 of Public Information Officer and Safety Officer.

4127 This management characteristic also applies to CMS. Thus, in the EOC of a small jurisdiction  
 4128 where staffing and space are limited, the local Emergency Manager, while serving as the EOC  
 4129 Director, may also fulfill the responsibilities of the Information and Planning Section Chief by  
 4130 personally developing the Center Action Plan each operational period and producing the  
 4131 incident's daily situation report. The Emergency Manager may also be responsible for the office  
 4132 equipment, phones, radios, and/or computers in the EOC and ensuring food is available for the  
 4133 staff, thus performing the role of the Resource and Center Logistics Section Chief.

4134 The Emergency Manager may designate his/her deputy to serve as the Strategic Operations  
 4135 Section Chief, coordinating the jurisdiction's support agencies, nongovernmental organizations,  
 4136 and other resources.

4137 The jurisdiction's Comptroller, though she remains located in her normal office, may coordinate  
 4138 with the Emergency Manager and the Deputy Emergency Manager to virtually fulfill the  
 4139 responsibilities of the Finance/Administration Section. Unless a Public Information Officer and a  
 4140 Safety Officer are assigned, the Emergency Manager/CD also retains those responsibilities.

4141



4142

4143 **Figure B-14: Example CMS Staffing in a Small EOC**

4144 This example, depicted in Figure B-14, illustrates how a jurisdictional EOC with a Command  
4145 and General Staff of just two Office of Emergency Management personnel—with assistance  
4146 from other agencies/ESFs—can manage an operations/coordination center that is fully consistent  
4147 with CMS.

4148 Even jurisdictions where staffing is not limited, this conservative staffing approach may be  
4149 adequate to meet requirements when an EOC is partially activated to deal with smaller incidents.

DRAFT