
Unit 3: Basic Features of ICS



Unit 3: Basic Features of ICS



Visual Description: Unit Introduction

Key Points

This unit provides an overview of the basic features of the Incident Command System.



Unit Objectives (1 of 2)

Describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Common terminology.
- Modular organization.
- Management by objectives.
- Reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Chain of command and unity of command.
- Unified Command.
- Manageable span of control.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.2

Visual Description: Unit Objectives (1 of 2)

Key Points

By the end of this unit, you should be able to describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Common terminology.
- Modular organization.
- Management by objectives.
- Reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Chain of command and unity of command.
- Unified Command.
- Manageable span of control.

The objectives for this unit continue on the next page.



Unit Objectives (2 of 2)

Describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Predesignated incident locations and facilities.
- Resource management.
- Information and intelligence management.
- Integrated communications.
- Transfer of command.
- Accountability.
- Mobilization.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.3

Visual Description: Unit Objectives (2 of 2)

Key Points

By the end of this unit, you should be able to describe the basic features of the Incident Command System (ICS), including:

- Predesignated incident locations and facilities.
- Resource management.
- Information and intelligence management.
- Integrated communications.
- Transfer of command.
- Accountability.
- Mobilization.



Common Terminology

Using common terminology helps to define:

- Organizational functions.
- Incident facilities.
- Resource descriptions.
- Position titles.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.4

Visual Description: Common Terminology

Key Points

Using common terminology helps to define:

- Organizational functions.
- Incident facilities.
- Resource descriptions.
- Position titles.



Use of Plain English

- Communications should be in plain English or clear text.
- Do not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon.

Even if you use radio codes on a daily basis, why should you use plain English during an incident response?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.5

Visual Description: Use of Plain English

Key Points

Using common terminology means that communications should be in plain English or clear text. It also means that you should not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon.



List some reasons why you should use plain English during an incident response even if you use radio codes on a daily basis.



Why Plain English?

EMT = Emergency Medical Treatment
EMT = Emergency Medical Technician
EMT = Emergency Management Team
EMT = Eastern Mediterranean Time (GMT+0200)
EMT = Effective Methods Team
EMT = Effects Management Tool
EMT = El Monte, CA (airport code)
EMT = Electron Microscope Tomography
EMT = Email Money Transfer

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.6

Visual Description: Why Plain English?

Key Points

The following examples provide different meanings of a common acronym.

EMT = Emergency Medical Treatment
EMT = Emergency Medical Technician
EMT = Emergency Management Team
EMT = Eastern Mediterranean Time (GMT+0200)
EMT = Effective Methods Team
EMT = Effects Management Tool
EMT = El Monte, CA (airport code)
EMT = Electron Microscope Tomography
EMT = Email Money Transfer



Common Terminology: Example

Which is the example of common terminology?

A.
This is Unit 1, we
have a 10-37, Code 2.

B.
Unit 1, the flood waters
are rising and we need
additional resources for
sandbagging.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.7

Visual Description: Which is the example of common terminology? (A) This is Unit 1, we have a 10-37, Code 2. OR (B) Unit 1, the flood waters are rising and we need additional resources for sandbagging.

Key Points



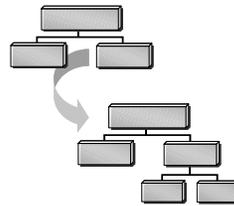
Which example below uses common terminology?

- A. This is Unit 1, we have a 10-37, Code 2.
- B. Unit 1, the flood waters are rising and we need additional resources for sandbagging.



Modular Organization (1 of 2)

- Develops in a top-down, modular fashion.
- Is based on the size and complexity of the incident.
- Is based on the hazard environment created by the incident.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.8

Visual Description: Modular Organization (1 of 2)

Key Points

Another important ICS feature is modular organization, which means that the Incident Command System:

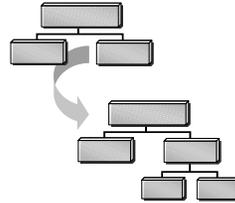
- Develops in a top-down, modular fashion.
- Is based on the size and complexity of the incident
- Is based on the hazard environment created by the incident.

When needed, separate functional elements can be established, each of which may be further subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination.



Modular Organization (2 of 2)

- Incident objectives determine the organizational size.
- Only functions/positions that are necessary will be filled.
- Each element must have a person in charge.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.9

Visual Description: Modular Organization (2 of 2)

Key Points

Employing a modular organization means that:

- Incident objectives determine the organizational size.
- Only functions/positions that are necessary will be filled.
- Each element must have a person in charge.



Management by Objectives

- ICS is managed by objectives.
- Objectives are communicated throughout the entire ICS organization through the incident planning process.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.10

Visual Description: Management by Objectives

Key Points

Management by objectives is another key ICS feature.

- ICS is managed by objectives.
- Objectives are communicated throughout the entire ICS organization through the incident planning process.



Management by Objectives: Steps

The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

- **Step 1:** Understand agency policy and direction.
- **Step 2:** Assess incident situation.
- **Step 3:** Establish incident objectives.
- **Step 4:** Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.
- **Step 5:** Perform tactical direction.
- **Step 6:** Provide necessary followup.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.11

Visual Description: Management by Objectives: Steps

Key Points

The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

- Step 1: Understand agency policy and direction.
- Step 2: Assess incident situation.
- Step 3: Establish incident objectives.
- Step 4: Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.
- Step 5: Perform tactical direction.
- Step 6: Provide necessary followup.



Overall Priorities

Incident objectives are established based on the following priorities:

#1: Life Saving

#2: Incident Stabilization

#3: Property Preservation



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.12

Visual Description: Overall Priorities

Key Points

Incident objectives are established based on the following priorities:

First Priority: Life Saving

Second Priority: Incident Stabilization

Third Priority: Property Preservation



Activity: Objectives (1 of 2)

Instructions:

- Working as a team, review the scenario presented on the next visual.
- Based on the information provided, identify the top three incident management objectives. Write these objectives on chart paper.
- Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 5 minutes.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.13

Visual Description: Activity: Objectives (1 of 2)

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how to develop incident management objectives.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to complete this activity:

1. Work as a team to review the scenario (located on the next page).
2. Identify the top three incident management objectives and record these objectives on chart paper.
3. Select a spokesperson for your group and be prepared to present in 5 minutes.



Activity: Objectives (2 of 2)

Scenario: An unexpected flash flood has struck a small community. As a result:

- Homes, schools, and the business district have been evacuated.
- Critical infrastructure has been damaged including contamination of the water supply, downed power lines, and damaged roads.
- Perimeter control and security in the business district are needed.
- Mutual aid is arriving from several surrounding communities.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.14

Visual Description: Activity: Objectives (2 of 2)

Key Points

Review the following scenario:

An unexpected flash flood has struck a small community. As a result:

- Homes, schools, and the business district have been evacuated.
- Critical infrastructure has been damaged including contamination of the water supply, downed power lines, and damaged roads.
- Perimeter control and security in the business district are needed.
- Mutual aid is arriving from several surrounding communities.



List the top three incident management objectives that your group developed. (Write these on chart paper.)



Reliance on an Incident Action Plan

Every incident must have an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that:

- **Specifies the incident objectives.**
- **States the activities to be completed.**
- **Covers a specified timeframe, called an operational period.**
- **May be oral or written—except for hazardous materials incidents, which require a written IAP.**



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.15

Visual Description: Reliance on an Incident Action Plan

Key Points

The next ICS feature covered in this unit is the reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP). Every incident must have an IAP that:

- Specifies the incident objectives.
- States the activities to be completed.
- Covers a specified timeframe, called an operational period.
- May be oral or written—except for hazardous materials incidents, which require a written IAP.



Elements of an Incident Action Plan

Every IAP must have four elements:

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



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.16

Visual Description: Elements of an Incident Action Plan

Key Points

Every IAP must answer the following four questions:

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



Activity: Incident Action Plan

Instructions:

- Working as a team, identify four items you would include in the IAP, based on the incident objectives identified earlier.
- Write these items on chart paper.
- Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 5 minutes.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.17

Visual Description: Activity: Incident Action Plan

Key Points

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how to develop an IAP.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to complete this activity:

1. Working as a team, identify four items to include in the Incident Action Plan, based on the incident objectives identified earlier.
2. Write these items on chart paper.
3. Select a spokesperson for your group and be prepared to present in 5 minutes.



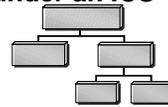
List the four items that your group determined would be included in the Incident Action Plan. (Write these on chart paper.)



ICS Organization

In the ICS organization:

- There is no correlation with the administrative structure of any other agency or jurisdiction. This organization's uniqueness helps to avoid confusion over different position titles and organizational structures.
- Someone who serves as a chief every day may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.18

Visual Description: ICS Organization

Key Points

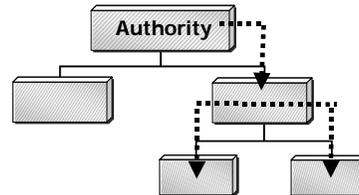
In the ICS organization:

- There is no correlation with the administrative structure of any other agency or jurisdiction. This organization's uniqueness helps to avoid confusion over different position titles and organizational structures.
- Someone who serves as a chief every day may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.



Chain of Command

Chain of command is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.19

Visual Description: Chain of Command with a visual that illustrates the orderly line of authority within the incident management organization.

Key Points

The next ICS feature covered in this unit is chain of command.

Chain of command is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.



Unity of Command

Under unity of command, personnel:

- Report to only one supervisor.
- Receive work assignments only from their supervisors.



Don't confuse unity of command with Unified Command!

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.20

Visual Description: Unity of Command

Key Points

Under unity of command, another key ICS feature, personnel:

- Report to only one supervisor.
- Maintain formal communication relationships only with that supervisor.

Unity of command means that every individual has a designated supervisor to whom they report at the scene of the incident.

The principles of chain of command and unity of command help to clarify reporting relationships and eliminate the confusion caused by multiple, conflicting directives. Incident managers at all levels must be able to control the actions of all personnel under their supervision.

Note: It is important not to confuse unity of command with Unified Command. The next page will explain the concept of Unified Command and clarify the differences between unity of command and Unified Command.



Unified Command

- Enables all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.
- Allows Incident Commanders to make joint decisions by establishing a single command structure.
- Maintains unity of command. Each employee only reports to one supervisor.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.21

Visual Description: Unified Command with a graphic that shows that all three agencies and their respective Incident Commanders operate from the same Incident Command Post.

Key Points

Unified Command:

- Enables all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.
- Allows Incident Commanders to make joint decisions by establishing a single command structure.
- Maintains unity of command. Each employee only reports to one supervisor.

Read the following key points about Unified Command:

- Unified Command is an important element in multijurisdictional or multiagency domestic incident management. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively.
- As a team effort, the Unified Command overcomes much of the inefficiency and duplication of effort that can occur when agencies from different functional and geographic jurisdictions, or agencies at different levels of government, operate without a common system or organizational framework.
- All agencies with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibility for any or all aspects of an incident and those able to provide specific resource support participate in the Unified Command structure and contribute to the process of determining overall incident strategies; selecting objectives; and ensuring that joint tactical planning occurs.
- No agency's legal authorities will be compromised or neglected.



Example: Unified Command

A football team is returning home from a State tournament. Their bus is involved in an accident on the bridge that marks the county line.

- Most of the bus is in Franklin County.
- A small part of the bus is in Revere County (their home county).

Why might a Unified Command be used to manage this incident?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.22

Visual Description: Example: Unified Command – Why might a Unified Command be used to manage this incident?

Key Points

Read the following example:

A football team is returning home from a State tournament. Their bus is involved in an accident on the bridge that marks the county line.

- Most of the bus is in Franklin County.
- A small part of the bus is in Revere County (their home county).



Jot down reasons why a Unified Command might be used to manage this type of incident.



Knowledge Review (1 of 4)

Instructions: Decide whether the following statement is True or False.

Under ICS, accountability is maintained as long as an employee reports his/her actions to a supervisor.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.23

Visual Description: Decide whether the following statement is True or False. Under ICS, accountability is maintained as long as an employee reports his/her actions to a supervisor.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



Under ICS, accountability is maintained as long as an employee reports his/her actions to a supervisor.



Knowledge Review (2 of 4)

Instructions: Fill in the blank.

_____ allows all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.24

Visual Description: Fill in the blank. “[Blank] allows all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.”

Key Points

Insert the correct word or words that accurately completes the sentence below.



_____ allows all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.



Knowledge Review (3 of 4)

Instructions: Answer the question below.

Who has complete
responsibility for
incident management?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.25

Visual Description: Answer the question below. “Who has complete responsibility for incident management?”

Key Points

Answer the question below:



Who has complete responsibility for incident management?



Knowledge Review (4 of 4)

Instructions: Fill in the blank.

_____ is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization, with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.26

Visual Description: Fill in the blank. “[Blank] is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization, with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.”

Key Points

Insert the correct word or words that accurately completes the sentence below.



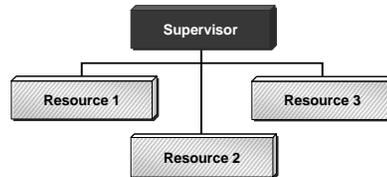
_____ is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization, with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.



Manageable Span of Control

Span of control:

- Pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.
- Is key to effective and efficient incident management.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.27

Visual Description: Manageable Span of Control

Key Points

The next ICS feature covered in this unit is manageable span of control. Span of control:

- Pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.
- Is key to effective and efficient incident management.

Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.



Span of Control Considerations

Span of control considerations are influenced by the:

- Type of incident.
- Nature of the task.
- Hazards and safety factors.
- Distances between personnel and resources.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.28

Visual Description: Span of Control Considerations

Key Points

Span of control considerations are influenced by the:

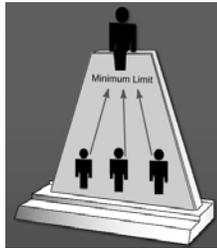
- Type of incident.
- Nature of the task.
- Hazards and safety factors.
- Distances between personnel and resources.



ICS Management: Span of Control

ICS span of control for any supervisor:

- Is between 3 and 7 subordinates.
- Optimally does not exceed 5 subordinates.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.29

Visual Description: ICS Management: Span of Control

Key Points

ICS span of control for any supervisor:

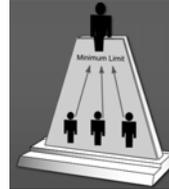
- Is between 3 and 7 subordinates.
- Optimally does not exceed 5 subordinates.

The ICS modular organization can be expanded or contracted to maintain an optimal span of control.



Discussion Question

What types of situations or factors would warrant a span of control of 1:3 or 1:4?



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.30

Visual Description: What types of situations or factors would warrant a span of control of 1:3 or 1:4?

Key Points



List the types of situations or factors that would warrant a span of control of 1:3 or 1:4.



Knowledge Review

Instructions: Determine if the span of control is consistent with ICS guidelines.

Situation: Flash flooding has occurred throughout the municipality. Response actions have begun, with 8 resources reporting to the Operations Section Chief.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.31

Visual Description: Determine if the span of control is consistent with ICS guidelines. Situation: Flash flooding has occurred throughout the municipality. Response actions have begun, with eight resources reporting to the Operations Section Chief.

Key Points

Review the situation on the visual.

Situation: Flash flooding has occurred throughout the municipality. Response actions have begun, with eight resources reporting to the Operations Section Chief.

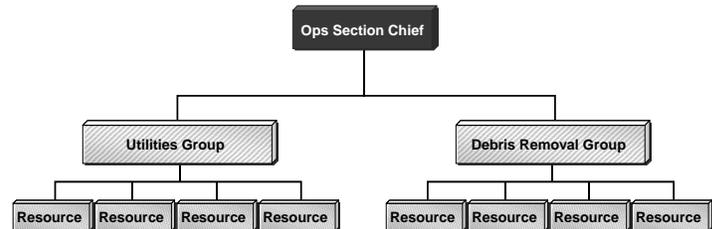


Determine if the span of control is consistent with ICS guidelines.



Remember . . . Modular Organization!

Use the ICS feature of modular organization to maintain the optimal span of control!



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

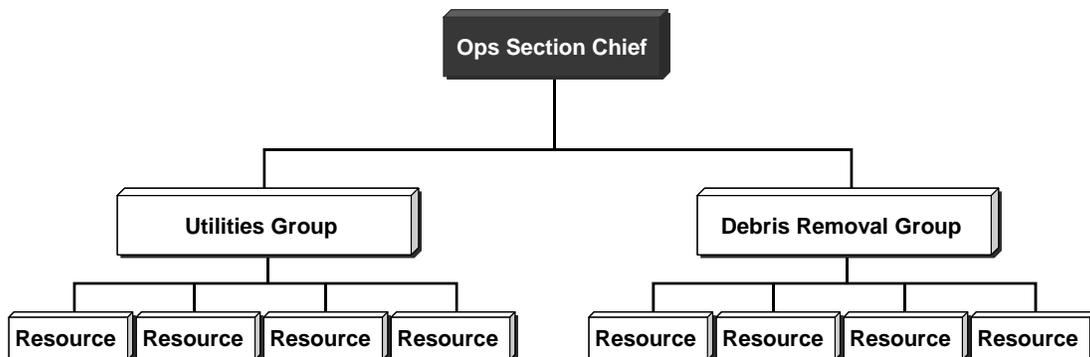
Visual 3.32

Visual Description: Use the ICS feature of modular organization to maintain the optimal span of control.

Key Points

Use the ICS feature of modular organization to maintain the optimal span of control.

The Operations Section Chief has two groups reporting to him or her, and each group has only four resources under it.



Because the ICS organization develops in a top-down modular fashion, you can add positions as the needs of the incident grow and still maintain an optimal span of control.



Predesignated Incident Facilities

Established by the Incident Commander based on the requirements and complexity of the incident.



Incident
Command
Post



Base



Staging
Area



Camp

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.33

Visual Description: Predesignated Incident Facilities

Key Points

Various types of operational locations and support facilities are established in the vicinity of an incident to accomplish a variety of purposes, such as decontamination, donated goods processing, mass care, and evacuation. ICS uses predesignated incident facilities. The Incident Commander establishes these facilities based on the requirements and complexity of the incident. Facilities may include:

- **Incident Command Post (ICP):** The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. The ICP may be collocated with the incident base or other incident facilities and is normally identified by a green rotating or flashing light.
- **Base:** The location at which primary Logistics functions for an incident are coordinated and administered. There is only one Base per incident. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term Base.) The Incident Command Post may be collocated with the Base.
- **Staging Area:** Location established where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment.
- **Camp:** A geographical site, within the general incident area, separate from the Incident Base, equipped and staffed to provide sleeping, food, water, and sanitary services to incident personnel.



Resource Management

Resource management includes processes for:

- Categorizing resources.
- Ordering resources.
- Dispatching resources.
- Tracking resources.
- Recovering resources.



It also includes processes for reimbursement for resources, as appropriate.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.34

Visual Description: Resource Management

Key Points

As mentioned in the previous unit, resources at an incident must be managed effectively. Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date picture of resource utilization is a critical component of incident management. Resource management includes processes for:

- Categorizing resources.
- Ordering resources.
- Dispatching resources.
- Tracking resources.
- Recovering resources.

In ICS, resources are defined as personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, and facilities.

Resource management also includes processes for reimbursement for resources, as appropriate.



Resources: Tactical & Support

ICS resources include:

- **Tactical Resources:** Personnel and major items of equipment used in the operation
- **Support Resources:** All other resources required to support the incident (e.g., food, communications equipment, or supplies)



Operations Section Chief



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.35

Visual Description: Resources: Tactical & Support

Key Points

ICS identifies resources as tactical or support resources. Review the following definitions:

- **Tactical Resources:** Personnel and major items of equipment used in the operation.
- **Support Resources:** All other resources required to support the incident (e.g., food, communications equipment, or supplies).



Tactical Resources Classifications



Assigned
Currently working on an assignment under the direction of a supervisor

Available
Ready for immediate assignment and has been issued all required equipment

Out-of-Service
Not available or ready to be assigned (e.g., maintenance issues, rest periods)

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.36

Visual Description: Tactical Resources Classifications

Key Points

ICS classifies tactical resources into one of three categories. These categories include:

- **Assigned** - Currently working on an assignment under the direction of a supervisor
- **Available** - Ready for immediate assignment and has been issued all required equipment
- **Out-of-Service** - Not available or ready to be assigned (e.g., maintenance issues, rest periods)



Knowledge Review

Instructions: Review the photos below. What do they have in common?



Engineering Specialist

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.37

Visual Description: Review the photos of radios, an engineering specialist, and an ambulance. What do they have in common?

Key Points

Review the photos on the visual.



What do they have in common?



Information & Intelligence Management

Information and intelligence are critical to incident response.

What are some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.38

Visual Description: Information and Intelligence Management – What are some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident?

Key Points

Another important ICS feature is the management of information and intelligence. It is important that the incident management organization establishes a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.



List some examples of information and intelligence used to manage an incident.



Integrated Communications

Incident communications are facilitated through:

- The development and use of a common communications plan.
- The interoperability of communication equipment, procedures, and systems.

Before an incident, it is critical to develop an integrated voice and data communications system (equipment, systems, and protocols).



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.39

Visual Description: Integrated Communications

Key Points

Another important feature of ICS is the use of integrated communications. Incident communications are facilitated through:

- The development and use of a common communications plan.
- The interoperability of communication equipment, procedures, and systems.

Note: It is critical to develop an integrated voice and data communications system (equipment, systems, and protocols) before an incident.



Interoperability Saves Lives

Jan. 13, 1982: Air Florida Flight 90 crashed into the 14th St. Bridge in Washington, DC, during a snowstorm. More than 70 people lost their lives. Police, fire, and EMS crews responded quickly to the scene but discovered that they couldn't coordinate their efforts because they couldn't talk to each other by radio.

Sept. 11, 2001: When American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, 900 users from 50 different agencies were able to communicate with one another. Response agencies had learned an invaluable lesson from the Air Florida tragedy.

Interoperability makes sense. It's a cost-saver, a resource saver, and a lifesaver.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.40

Visual Description: Interoperability Saves Lives

Key Points

The following incidents provide information showing the importance of interoperability:

- Jan. 13, 1982: Air Florida Flight 90 crashed into the 14th St. Bridge in Washington, DC, during a snowstorm. More than 70 people lost their lives. Police, fire and EMS crews responded quickly to the scene but discovered that they couldn't coordinate their efforts because they couldn't talk to each other by radio.
- Sept. 11, 2001: When American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, 900 users from 50 different agencies were able to communicate with one another. Response agencies had learned an invaluable lesson from the Air Florida tragedy. Washington-area agencies had instituted a formal Incident Command System for large emergencies before the attack, so the chain of command was clear.

The Public Safety Wireless Network Program, a joint effort sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Justice and the Treasury, issued a report titled, "Answering the Call: Communications Lessons Learned from the Pentagon Attack." The report noted that:

"During the initial response, the majority of local public safety responders experienced no difficulty in establishing interoperable communications on the scene. This was because of the high level of regional coordination and agreements previously established. However, as the number of state and federal agencies (secondary responders) increased at the site, interoperability presented new challenges. No means of direct interoperability was immediately available to these secondary response agencies."



Integrated Communications Elements

- **Modes:** The "hardware" systems that transfer information.
- **Planning:** Planning for the use of all available communications resources.
- **Networks:** The procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.41

Visual Description: Integrated Communications Elements

Key Points

Effective ICS communications include the following three elements:

- **Modes:** The "hardware" systems that transfer information.
- **Planning:** Planning for the use of all available communications resources.
- **Networks:** The procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally.



List the types of communications resources that are available to you during an incident.



Transfer of Command (1 of 2)

- Moves the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another.
- Must include a transfer of command briefing (which may be oral, written, or both).



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.42

Visual Description: Transfer of Command (1 of 2)

Key Points

The process of moving responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another is called transfer of command.

Transfer of command must include a transfer of command briefing – which may be oral, written, or a combination of both.



Transfer of Command (2 of 2)

Transfer of command occurs when:

- A more qualified person assumes command.
- The incident situation changes over time, resulting in a legal requirement to change command.
- There is normal turnover of personnel on extended incidents.
- The incident response is concluded and responsibility is transferred to the home agency.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.43

Visual Description: Transfer of Command (2 of 2)

Key Points

A transfer of command occurs when:

- A more qualified person assumes command.
- The incident situation changes over time, resulting in a legal requirement to change command.
- There is normal turnover of personnel on extended incidents.
- The incident response is concluded and responsibility is transferred to the home agency.



Knowledge Review

Instructions: Answer the question below.

A more qualified responder arrives on the scene and will assume command. What should happen?



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.44

Visual Description: Answer the question: A more qualified responder arrives on the scene and will assume command. What should happen?

Key Points



Describe what should happen when a more qualified responder arrives on the scene and is assuming command of the incident.



Accountability (1 of 2)

The following principles must be adhered to:

- **Check-In.** All responders must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.
- **Incident Action Plan.** Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the IAP.
- **Unity of Command.** Each individual will be assigned to only one supervisor.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.45

Visual Description: Accountability (1 of 2)

Key Points

Effective accountability during incident operations is essential. Individuals must abide by their agency policies and guidelines and any applicable local, State, or Federal rules and regulations.

The following principles must be adhered to:

- **Check-In.** All responders must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.
- **Incident Action Plan.** Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the IAP.
- **Unity of Command.** Each individual will be assigned to only one supervisor.



Accountability (2 of 2)

- **Span of Control.** Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
- **Resource Tracking.** Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.46

Visual Description: Accountability (2 of 2)

Key Points

The following principles must be adhered to:

- **Span of Control.** Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
- **Resource Tracking.** Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur.



Mobilization

At any incident:

- The situation must be assessed and the response planned.
- Managing resources safely and effectively is the most important consideration.
- Personnel and equipment should respond only when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority.



Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.47

Visual Description: Mobilization

Key Points

Another key feature of ICS is the importance of managing resources to adjust to changing conditions.

Emphasize that at any incident:

- The situation must be assessed and the response planned.
- Managing resources safely and effectively is the most important consideration.
- Personnel and equipment should respond only when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority.



Discussion Question

What's the issue with having personnel arrive at an incident without being requested or dispatched?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.48

Visual Description: What's the issue with having personnel arrive at an incident without being requested or dispatched?

Key Points



List some issues that can occur when personnel arrive at an incident without being requested or dispatched.



Knowledge Review (1 of 4)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

Accountability means that individuals must abide by their agency policies and guidelines and any applicable local, tribal, State, or Federal rules and regulations.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.49

Visual Description: Decide if the statement is true or false. Accountability means that individuals must abide by their agency policies and guidelines and any applicable local, tribal, State, or Federal rules and regulations.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



Accountability means that individuals must abide by their agency policies and guidelines and any applicable local, tribal, State, or Federal rules and regulations.



Knowledge Review (2 of 4)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

In a major incident, willing and able personnel and equipment should respond even without being requested.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.50

Visual Description: Decide if the statement is true or false. In a major incident, willing and able personnel and equipment should respond even without being requested.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



In a major incident, willing and able personnel and equipment should respond even without being requested.



Knowledge Review (3 of 4)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

Response operations are directed and coordinated using an Incident Action Plan.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.51

Visual Description: Decide if the statement is true or false. Response operations are directed and coordinated using an Incident Action Plan.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



Response operations are directed and coordinated using an Incident Action Plan.



Knowledge Review (4 of 4)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.52

Visual Description: Decide if the statement is true or false. The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



The incident management organization must establish a process for gathering, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence.



Summary (1 of 4)

Instructions: Answer the questions below.

- Why is it important to use common terminology?
- Who is responsible for the establishment and expansion of the ICS modular organization?
- What 4 items must be included in an IAP?
- What is unity of command?
- Under a Unified Command, who is in charge?
- What is the recommended ratio of supervisors to reporting elements?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.53

Visual Description: Summary (1 of 4)

Key Points

The following questions serve as a review of the material covered in this unit.



Answer the questions below.

- Why is it important to use common terminology?
- Who is responsible for the establishment and expansion of the ICS modular organization?
- What four items must be included in an IAP?
- What is unity of command?
- Under a Unified Command, who is in charge?
- What is the recommended ratio of supervisors to reporting elements?



Summary (2 of 4)

Instructions: Answer the questions below.

- Why are incident facilities pre-designated?
- How are tactical resources classified?
- What 3 elements are included in effective ICS communications?
- What must happen in a transfer of command?
- Why is accountability critical?
- During an incident, when should personnel and equipment respond?

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.54

Visual Description: Summary (2 of 4)

Key Points



Answer the questions below.

- Why are incident facilities pre-designated?
- How are tactical resources classified?
- What three elements are included in effective ICS communications?
- What must happen in a transfer of command?
- Why is accountability critical?
- During an incident, when should personnel and equipment respond?



Summary (3 of 4)

ICS:

- **Utilizes management features** including the use of common terminology and a modular organizational structure.
- **Emphasizes effective planning** through the use of management by objectives and Incident Action Plans.
- **Supports responders by providing data** they need through effective information and intelligence management.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.55

Visual Description: Summary (3 of 4)

Key Points

Review the following key points.

ICS:

- Utilizes management features including the use of common terminology and a modular organizational structure.
- Emphasizes effective planning through the use of management by objectives and Incident Action Plans.
- Supports responders by providing data they need through effective information and intelligence management.



Summary (4 of 4)

ICS:

- Utilizes the principles of chain of command, unity of command, Unified Command, and transfer of command.
- Helps ensure that resources are ready through accountability and mobilization.
- Ensures full utilization of incident resources by maintaining a manageable span of control, establishing predesignated incident facilities, implementing resource management practices, and ensuring integrated communications.

Unit 3:
Basic Features of ICS

Visual 3.56

Visual Description: Summary (4 of 4)

Key Points

Review the following key points.

ICS:

- Utilizes the principles of chain of command, unity of command, Unified Command, and transfer of command.
- Helps ensure that resources are ready through accountability and mobilization.
- Ensures full utilization of incident resources by maintaining a manageable span of control, establishing predesignated incident facilities, implementing resource management practices, and ensuring integrated communications.

The next unit will cover the Incident Commander and Command Staff functions.