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**NIMS ICS All-Hazards  
Public Information Officer Course  
EMI Course Number: E-952**

**INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**

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## Purpose

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The purpose of this professional development course, E-952 Public Information Officer (PIO), is to provide local and State-level emergency responders with an overview of key duties and responsibilities of a Public Information Officer Type III in a Type III All Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT).

The prerequisites to this course include:

- IS/ICS 100, 200, 700, and 800
- ICS 300
- ICS 400 is recommended<sup>1</sup>

## Who Should Attend

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The intended audience(s) are local- or State-level emergency responders who may be designated as Public Information Officers on their local or state Incident Management Team. The materials were developed with the assumption that audience members may have little or no actual experience as a member of an AHIMT.

The audience may include students from a variety of agencies and functional disciplines, including fire service, law enforcement, emergency management, public works departments, as well as public health organizations, medical emergency teams, and hospitals.

NIMS ICS specific training should be completed by personnel who are regularly assigned to function, support, or unit leader positions on USFA or other Type III or IV AHIMT or by those persons who desire to seek credentials/certification in those positions.

## Course Objectives

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By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate, through exercises and a final exam, an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Public Information Officer on an AHIMT.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective October 1, 2013, ICS 400 will be required for attendance in any of the (8) Command and General Staff courses; it will remain as a recommended class for Unit Leader courses.

- Identify course objective and position-specific resource materials for the position of Public Information Officer.
- Describe the role and importance of the Public Information Officer position in incident operations, especially as it pertains to initial incident operations.
- Describe the fundamentals of information operations during incident management.
- Develop a Communications Strategy for disseminating incident information.
- Describe the importance of effective media relations and the role of the Public Information Officer in developing and maintaining such relationships.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of Assistant Public Information Officers.
- Describe how the Public Information Officer may establish and leverage effective community relations.
- Describe the role of the Public Information Officer as it pertains to handling special situations within incidents.
- Describe how the Public Information Officer can keep her or himself and those they escort and work with alive and well in the incident environment.
- Define the Public Information Officers roles and responsibilities during incident transition and demobilization.

## Course Schedule

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This course is scheduled to be 5 days, or 40 hours (8 hours/day), in length. The schedule also includes the following (left to the Instructors' discretion):

- Lunch breaks (1 hour each day)
- Regular breaks (schedule adheres to a 50/10 break timetable: for every 50 minutes of instruction, there should be a 10 minute break)
- Daily expectations review (Instructors may take 10 minutes at the end of each day to review students' expectations for the course)

The table below presents the recommended training agenda.

Day	Unit of Instruction	Time
1	Unit 1: Course Introduction	2 hours
	Unit 2: Roles and Responsibilities	3 hours and 30 minutes
	Unit 3: Incident Information Operations	30 minutes
	Expectations Review	10 minutes
2	Unit 3: Incident Information Operations (cont.)	1 hour
	Unit 4: Developing a Communications Strategy	2 hours
	Unit 5: Effective Media Relations	3 hours
	Expectations Review	10 minutes
3	Unit 5: Effective Media Relations (cont.)	5 hours
	Unit 6: Assistant Public Information Officer Tasks and Assignments	1 hour and 30 minutes
	Expectations Review	10 minutes
4	Unit 7: Effective Community Relations	3 hours and 30 minutes
	Unit 8: Special Situations	2 hours and 30 minutes
	Expectations Review	10 minutes

Day	Unit of Instruction	Time
5	Unit 8: Special Situations	2 hours and 30 minutes
	Unit 9: Creating a Safe Environment	1 hour
	Unit 10: Transition and Demobilization	30 minutes
	Expectations Review	1 hour
	Final Exam	30 minutes
	Review of Final Exam and Certifications	30 minutes
<b>Total Time</b>		<b>32 hours</b>

### Notes on Instructor Guide

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The Instructor Guide and Student Guide are identical, except where the Instructor Guide provides additional administrative or instructional details.

### Course Materials

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The following is a list of all materials necessary for the facilitation and delivery of the course. Ensure that these materials have been secured prior to the delivery of the course.

- An Instructor Guide (hard-copy and CD) for each Instructor
- Electronic files of all Unit PowerPoint presentations
- Projector, computer, screen, and other equipment as necessary for PowerPoint presentations
- A Student Guide (hard-copy) for each Student
- Easel Pads and stands (one set for every break-out group and one each for the Instructor)
- Easel Markers
- Wall-sized poster of Planning P (optional)
- Table Tents
- Field Operations Guides (FOGs)—one for each student, optional

- Although wildfire-centric, the FIRESCOPE FOGs are highly useful and provide the critical ICS and Planning Section summary information needed for this course (regardless of type of incident); they can be downloaded and printed from the FIRESCOPE Web site
- Final Exam Copies
  - A copy of the Instructor version of the final exam, with an answer key, can be found in the Instructor Guide, Instructor Exam tab
  - A copy of the student version can be found in the “Student Schoolbook Solutions and Exams” tab
  - Prior to course delivery, make enough copies for all students enrolled in course
- Course Evaluation Forms
  - Make sure that you have one copy of the course evaluation form for each person attending the training.
- Blank ICS Form 214—Activity Logs
  - Each student will be expected to fill out a 214 each day of the course
  - The Instructor should therefore ensure enough copies of the blank ICS Form 214 (found in Appendix I: Blank ICS Forms) for each student to have one each day of the course
- Blank ICS Form 211—Check-In List
  - Students will be expected to check-in through the ICS Form 211 each day of the course
  - Each day, before the students arrive, Instructors should post ICS Form 211 so students may check-in as they arrive
  - A copy of ICS Form 211 (found in Appendix I: Blank ICS Forms) will be needed for each day of the course
- All-Hazards Position Task Book Copies
  - A copy of the Position Task Book for this course is included in Unit 1, Supplemental Material
- Handout/Exercise copies
  - Answers for exercise activities that are to be provided by the Instructors are available in the Instructor Guide, “Student Schoolbook Solutions” tab

- For example, if an activity involves students completing an ICS form, then the Instructor must present student with answers, this schoolbook answer is available in this tab of the Instructor Guide
- Unit 1: Introduction
  - Exercise 1
  - Handout 1-1: Example Completed ICS 214—Activity Log
- Unit 2: Supplemental Materials
  - Exercise 2
  - Handout 2-1: Expectations of IMT Members
  - Handout 2-2: Incident Management Teams
  - Handout 2-3: Sample Public Information Officer Go-Kit Contents List
- Unit 3: Supplemental Materials
  - Handout 3-1: When a Dignitary Visits
  - Handout 3-2: Planning P
  - Handout 3-3: JIC Operating Guide
- Unit 4: Supplemental Materials
  - Exercise 3
  - Exercise 3- IG ( includes school solutions)
  - Handout 4-1: Sawtooth Information Plan
- Unit 5: Supplemental Materials
  - Exercise 4
  - Handout 5-1: Fortune’s 14 Ways to Deal with the Press
  - Handout 5-2: 13 Ways to Make Enemies in the Press
  - Handout 5-3: Writing a Press Release
- Unit 6: Supplemental Materials
  - Handout 6-1: Emergency Supply Kit List

- Unit 7: Supplemental Materials
  - Exercise 5
  - Handout 7-1: Coordinating a News Conference for Elected Official
- Unit 8: Supplemental Materials
  - Exercise 6
  - Handout 8-1: Special Situations and the Public Information Officer
  - Handout 8-2 Agency Administrators Guide to Critical Incidents
- Unit 9: Supplemental Materials
  - None
- Unit 10: Supplemental Materials
  - Handout 10-1: Sample Demobilization Plans
- Appendix I Blank ICS Forms
  - Contains a link to the Web site where blank ICS forms are maintained
- Appendix II Glossary
- Appendix III—Optional Exercise Scenarios
  - Appendix III of the Instructor Guide contains 13 all-hazards incident scenarios for customizing key exercises in the units
  - The advantage of the availability of these different exercise scenarios is to provide the Instructors/jurisdictions the option to choose a scenario that is closer to the type of hazard or incident that students attending this course may encounter in their jurisdiction
  - If the Instructor chooses to use one or more of these exercise scenarios, this will require the Instructor to have sufficient lead-time to prepare the exercise-specific documentation (For example, if the Instructor is replacing an existing scenario in an exercise that contains completed ICS forms (Central City Train Derailment), the Instructor is responsible for developing the necessary information such as the completed ICS Forms to meet the exercise objectives)
  - Instructors are responsible for providing the scenario and other ICS Forms necessary for completion of the exercise. Students will not have these in their binders.

- Please note that instructional methods and learning objectives are to remain the same for the unit, the only changes allowed are the scenario and associated information in ICS forms and other documentation.
- Exercise Materials— Additional materials are required for the facilitation of the course exercises and are listed below:
  - Easel pad and markers (one set for every break-out group)
  - Copies of forms and handouts as directed in Instructor Guide Supplemental Materials

### Course Logistics

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Listed below are the files that you will need in order to conduct this course:

#### PowerPoint Files CD

The course visuals are stored on a CD. **Transfer the course visuals from the CD to the hard drive of a computer.** The visuals will operate more effectively if they are accessed from the computer's hard drive instead of the CD. Complete the following steps for copying the folders and files from the CD:

1. Insert the Visuals CD in your CD drive.
2. Using Windows Explorer, access the list of folders and files on your CD drive.
3. Highlight the folder on the CD titled "Visuals."
4. With the visuals folder highlighted, select the Edit pull-down menu and then select Copy.
5. Select a location on your computer's hard drive. When you are in that drive (and folder), select the Edit pull-down menu and then select Paste.
6. All of the visuals should now be copied onto your hard drive. Test the visuals to make sure that everything transferred correctly.

#### Video Files CD/DVD

The course video files are stored on a CD/DVD. As with the PowerPoint files, transfer the video files from the CD/DVD to the hard drive of a computer. The video files will play more smoothly if they are accessed from the computer's hard drive. Complete the following steps for copying the files from the CD/DVD:

1. Insert the Video CD/DVD in your CD/DVD drive.

2. Using Windows Explorer, access the list of folders and files on your CD/DVD drive.
3. Highlight the folder on the CD/DVD titled “Videos.”
4. With the Videos folder highlighted, select the Edit pull-down menu and then select Copy.
5. Select a location on your computer’s hard drive. When you are in that drive (and folder), select the Edit pull-down menu and then select Paste. (Note this download will likely take some time to complete.)
6. All of the videos should now be copied onto your hard drive. Test the videos to make sure that (1) everything transferred correctly, and (2) the computer has sufficient hardware and software to play the videos successfully. Microsoft Media Player is recommended for video playback.

### **Course Equipment**

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The following equipment is required for conducting this course:

#### **Computer and Projection Device**

Make arrangements to have a computer with a PowerPoint slide projector and external speakers for video playback. Be sure to try out the projector and speakers in advance of the training, in case you need help getting it to work properly. Make sure all equipment is functioning as intended. Test the PowerPoint projector and the lights.

If you do not have equipment for projection, plan to refer students to their Student Guide. The visuals are reproduced in the Student Guide, but the training is more effective with the projection of the visuals. Arrange for technical assistance to be available during training in the event of equipment malfunction.

#### **Classroom Layout**

A suitable classroom should be selected with adequate lighting and ventilation. Seating should be arranged at tables with adequate work space for each small group; tables and chairs should be moveable. Four to six tables capable of seating four to seven students are necessary for the group activities. All learning activities can be completed in one training room provided ample space is available so that small group discussions and activities do not interfere with one another. Breakout rooms are desirable but not necessary.