IS-0700.b An Introduction to the National Incident Management System

Student Manual

Date Released: 06/2020

FEMA

Contents

Course Introduction: IS-700.b An Introduction to the National Incident Management System

Visual 1: Overall Course Objectives

This course provides an introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS). At the end of the course, you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and a basic understanding of NIMS concepts, principles and components.

More specifically, you will be able to:

- Describe and identify the key concepts, principles, scope, and applicability underlying NIMS.
- Describe activities and methods for managing resources.
- Describe the NIMS Management Characteristics.
- Identify and describe Incident Command System (ICS) organizational structures.
- Explain Emergency Operations Center (EOC) functions, common models for staff organization, and activation levels.
- Explain the interconnectivity within the NIMS Command and Coordination structures: ICS, EOC, Joint Information System (JIS), and Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups).
- Identify and describe the characteristics of communications and information systems, effective communication, incident information, and communication standards and formats.

Note: This course provides a basic introduction to NIMS. It is not designed to replace Incident Command System and position-specific training.

Visual 2: Student Introductions

Introduce yourself by providing:

- Your name.
- Your job title.
- Your organization.
- A brief statement of your overall experience with emergency or incident response.

Visual 3: Student Expectations

What do you expect to gain from this course?

Easel Chart

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

What do you expect to gain from this course?

Record your responses on chart paper.

Visual 4: Instructor Expectations

- Cooperate with the group.
- Be open minded to new ideas.
- Participate actively in all of the training activities.
- Return to class at the stated time.
- Use what you learn in the course to perform effectively within an ICS organization.

Visual 5: Course Structure

The course is divided into the following eight units, plus the Course Introduction:

- Course Introduction
- Unit 1: Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS
- Unit 2: NIMS Resource Management
- Unit 3: NIMS Management Characteristics
- Unit 4: Incident Command System (ICS)
- Unit 5: Emergency Operations Centers (EOC)
- Unit 6: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity
- Unit 7: Communications and Information Management
- Unit 8: Course Summary

Visual 6: Course Logistics

- Course agenda
- Sign-in sheet
- Breaks
- Message and telephone location
- Cell phone policy
- Facilities
- Other concerns

Visual 7: Agenda

Morning Session

- Course Introduction (30 minutes)
- Unit 1: Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS (45 minutes)
- Unit 2: NIMS Resource Management (1 hour)
- Unit 3: NIMS Management Characteristics (35 minutes)

Afternoon Session

- Unit 4: Incident Command System (ICS) (45 minutes)
- Unit 5: Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) (45 minutes)
- Unit 6: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity (45 minutes)
- Unit 7: Communications and Information Management (1 hour 15 minutes)
- Unit 8: Course Summary and Final Exam (1 hour 15 minutes)

Visual 8: Course Completion

In order to successfully complete this course, you must:

- Participate in unit activities.
- Achieve 75% or higher on the final exam.
- Complete the end-of-course evaluation.

Lesson 1: Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS

Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS), October 2017.

Visual 1: Lesson 1: Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS

We'll now begin with the content of the first lesson. This lesson presents key concepts and principles underlying NIMS.

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

- Describe applicability and scope of NIMS.
- Describe the key concepts and principles underlying NIMS.

Visual 2: What is NIMS? Video

Transcript - What is NIMS?

Each day communities respond to numerous emergencies. Most often, these incidents are managed effectively at the local level. However, there are some incidents that may require a collaborative approach includes personnel from:

- Multiple jurisdictions
- A combination of specialties or disciplines
- Several levels of government
- Nongovernmental organizations
- The private sector

The National Incident Management System, or NIMS, provides the foundation needed to ensure that we can work together when our communities and the Nation need us the most.

NIMS integrates best practices into a comprehensive, standardized framework that is flexible enough to be applicable across the full spectrum of potential incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity.

Using NIMS allows us to work together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents.

This course introduces you to the NIMS concepts, principles, and components.

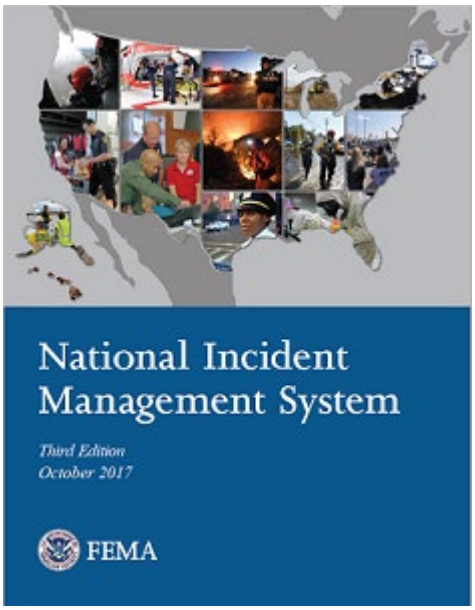
Visual 3: NIMS Overview

WHAT? The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines the comprehensive approach guiding…

WHO? …the whole community - solutions that serve the entire community are implemented while simultaneously making sure that the resources the different members of the community bring to the table are leveraged across all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and private sector organizations to work together seamlessly

WHY? …to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents.

WHEN? NIMS applies to all incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, from planned events to traffic accidents and to major disasters.



Visual 4: Voices of Experience: NIMS Benefits

Voices of Experience: NIMS Benefits

Steve Grainer, Former Chief, Incident Management Programs, VA Dept. of Fire Programs

NIMS is a national initiative to standardize the fundamental processes that are necessary for effectively managing significant emergencies, and it's applicable in all size and scale and scope emergencies.

Having been involved at the local, State, and Federal level in a number of different venues during my career, I'm truly and honestly pleased to say that this is an opportunity for us all to better establish a baseline of competencies for not only emergencies, obviously that would be the primary focus, but also to utilize a nationally vetted process that will work given A) participation and B) commitment. So I'm all for the idea of establishing a national systems approach as is pretty much formatted through the concepts of NIMS in their entirety. It's a good thing, that's about the best I can say.

Curry Mayer, Former Training & Exercise Chief, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA)

NIMS is the national structure that includes roles and responsibilities for responding to an incident that would require the Federal Government to be involved, a catastrophic or large-scale incident. It's also a system that provides common terminology, roles, and responsibilities so that everyone in the country can basically plug into the national system of response.

Kristy Plourde, Emergency Management Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard

NIMS has helped us be better structured, have less duplication, be more organized and more efficient and it covers the whole gambit of organization, communications, preparedness, it's the whole, it's everything.

Roberta Runge, National NIMS Coordinator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

NIMS is a system that allows us to plan and prepare and execute a response more effectively with our response partners.

The biggest benefit to us as an agency is to be able to understand how our response partners are also going to be executing the response. EPA is a fairly large organization but we hardly ever respond to something very large and very complicated without other Federal and State and local partners. If everyone is operating the response using different terminology or a different management structure, it becomes very difficult, very fast.

Visual 5: NIMS Applicability and Scope

NIMS is a common framework for emergency management and incident response that is applicable to all stakeholders with incident related responsibilities.

The audience for NIMS includes:

- Emergency responders
- Other incident personnel
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as faith-based and community-based groups
- The private sector
- Elected and appointed officials
- People with disabilities or access and functional needs

The scope of NIMS includes:

- All incidents, regardless of size, complexity, or scope
- Planned events such as sporting events

Visual 6: Overview of NIMS

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines the comprehensive approach guiding the whole community - all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and the private sector - to work together seamlessly to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents.

NIMS Is	NIMS Is Not
• A comprehensive, nationwide, systematic approach to incident management, including the command and coordination of incidents, resource management, and information management	• Only the Incident Command System • Only applicable to certain emergency/incident response personnel • A static system
• A set of concepts and principles for all threats, hazards, and events across all mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery)	• A response plan
• Scalable, flexible, and adaptable; used for all incidents, from day-to-day to large-scale	• Used only during large-scale incidents
• Standard resource management procedures that enable coordination among different jurisdictions or organizations	• A resource ordering system
• Essential principles for communications and information management	• A communications plan

Visual 7: Discussion Question

What are some common features of NIMS?

Visual 8: NIMS Guiding Principles

Incident management is the application of resources by organizations to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident.

Priorities for incident management in planning, response, and recovery efforts include saving lives, stabilizing the incident, and protecting property and the environment.

To achieve these priorities, incident management personnel use NIMS components in accordance with three NIMS guiding principles:

- Flexibility
- Standardization
- Unity of Effort

Visual 9: Flexibility

The NIMS guiding principle of flexibility allows NIMS to be scalable from routine, local incidents through those requiring interstate mutual aid up to those requiring Federal assistance.

Flexibility enables NIMS to be applicable to incidents that vary widely in terms of hazard, geography, demographics, climate, cultural, and organizational authorities.

NIMS components are adaptable to any type of event or incident.

Visual 10: Standardization

The NIMS guiding principle of standardization supports interoperability among multiple organizations in incident response.

NIMS defines **standard organizational structures** that improve integration and connectivity among organizations.

NIMS defines **standard practices** that allow incident personnel and organizations to work together effectively.

NIMS includes **common terminology**, which enables effective communication.

Visual 11: Unity of Effort

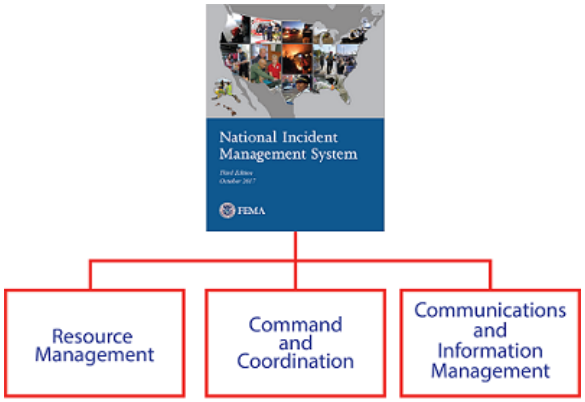
The NIMS guiding principle of Unity of Effort means coordinating activities among various organizational representatives to achieve common objectives. Unity of effort enables organizations with jurisdictional authority or functional responsibilities to support each other while allowing each participating agency to maintain its own authority and accountability.

Visual 12: NIMS Framework - Major Components

Jurisdictions and organizations involved in the management of incidents vary in their authorities, management structures, communication capabilities and protocols, and many other factors. The major Components of NIMS provide a common framework to integrate these diverse capabilities and achieve common goals.

- Resource Management
- Command and Coordination
- Communications and Information Management

The application of all three components is vital to successful NIMS implementation.



Note

Following is a synopsis of each major component of NIMS:

- **Resource Management**. Resources (such as personnel, equipment, and/or supplies) are needed to support critical incident objectives. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to the requirements of the incident. NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes the resource management process to: identify requirements for, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse for, and inventory resources.
- **Command and Coordination.** The Command and Management component within NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing flexible, standardized incident management structures. The structure is based on three key organizational constructs: the Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination Systems, and Public Information.
- **Communications and Information Management.** Emergency management and incident response activities rely on communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. NIMS describes the requirements necessary for a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture. NIMS is based on the concepts of interoperability, reliability, scalability, portability, and the resiliency and redundancy of

communications and information systems.

Visual 13: Discussion Question

What actions does your organization take that exemplify NIMS best practices?

Visual 14: Lesson 1: Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS Summary

This lesson presented an overview of the Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS.

The lesson specifically discussed:

- An Introduction and Background to NIMS
- NIMS Applicability and Scope
- NIMS Guiding Principles
- An Overview of the NIMS components

The next lesson will introduce you to NIMS Resource Management.

Lesson 2: NIMS Resource Management

Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS), October 2017.

Visual 1: Lesson 2: NIMS Resource Management

This lesson presents an overview of NIMS Resource Management.

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe the four key activities of NIMS Resource Management Preparedness.
- Identify the methods for Managing Resources during an Incident.
- Describe features of Mutual Aid.

(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/148019

Visual 2: What is NIMS Resource Management? Video

During an incident, getting the right resources, to the right place, at the right time, can be a matter of life and death.

Transcript - What is NIMS Resource Management?

During an incident, getting the right resources, to the right place, at the right time, can be a matter of life and death.

Resource management involves collaboration and coordination across jurisdictions and organizations to systematically manage resources—including personnel, equipment, teams, supplies and facilities.

Since most jurisdictions or organizations cannot own and maintain all of the resources necessary to address all potential threats and hazards, effective resource management includes leveraging each jurisdiction's resources and encouraging the further development of mutual aid agreements.

Resource management preparedness involves four key activities: identifying and typing resources; qualifying, certifying, and credentialing personnel; planning for resources; and acquiring, storing, and inventorying resources.

Prior to an incident, resources are inventoried and categorized based on the characteristics of capability, category, kind and type.

Mutual aid partners exchange information about resource assets and needs. Resource readiness and credentialing are maintained through periodic training and exercises.

When an incident occurs, standardized procedures are used to:

- Identify resource requirements,
- Order and acquire resources, and
- Mobilize resources.

The purpose of tracking and reporting is accountability. Resource accountability helps ensure responder safety and effective use of incident resources. As incident objectives are reached, resources may no longer be necessary. At this point, the demobilization process begins.

Demobilization is the orderly, safe, and efficient return of an incident resource to its original location and status. Finally, reimbursement and restocking activities ensure that resource providers are paid for their expenses and resources that have been depleted are replenished.

When disaster strikes, we must be able to take full advantage of all available and qualified resources. In this lesson you will learn how NIMS provides the mechanisms for ensuring that we can be inclusive and integrate resources from all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations.

Visual 3: Resource Management Key Activities Overview

Resource management preparedness involves four key activities:

- Identifying and typing resources
- Qualifying, certifying, and credentialing personnel
- Planning for resources
- Acquiring, storing, and inventorying resources

Visual 4: Typing Resources

Resource typing defines and categorizes incident resources by capability.

Resource typing establishes common definitions for capabilities of personnel, equipment, teams, supplies, and facilities.

Typing definitions include the following information:

Capability: the resource's capability to perform its function in one or more of the five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.

Category: the function for which a resource would be most useful (e.g., firefighting, law enforcement, health and medical).

Kind: a broad characterization, such as personnel, equipment, teams, and facilities.

Type: a resource's level of capability to perform its function based on size, power, capacity (for equipment), or experience and qualifications; Type 1 has greater capacity than Type 2, 3, or 4.

The current FEMA Resource Management and Mutual Aid link contains information on NIMS Resource Typing and Credentialing: http://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid

The NIMS Resource Typing Library Tool, also available at the link above, is an online catalog of all NIMS resource typing definitions and job titles/position qualifications that have been released by FEMA.

Visual 5: Discussion Question

What are the benefits of typing resources?

Visual 6: Qualifying, Certifying and Credentialing Personnel

The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) has the authority and responsibility for qualification, certification, and credentialing within its organization or jurisdiction.

The establishment of national standards provide common, compatible structures for the qualification and certification of emergency management personnel.

Qualification, certification, and credentialing are the essential steps to help ensure that personnel deploying under mutual aid agreements can perform their assigned roles.

- **Qualifying:** Personnel meet the minimum established standards (including training, experience, physical and medical fitness) to fill specific positions.
- **Certification:** recognition from an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or a third party that an individual has completed qualification for a position (one example of a third party is an accredited body such as a state licensure board for medical professionals).
- **Credentialing**: documentation – typically an identification card or badge – that identifies personnel and verifies their qualifications for a particular position.

NIMS Overview of Supporting Tools and Aids: www.fema.gov/nims-doctrine-supporting-guides-tools

NIMS Guidelines for Credentialing Personnel are in PDF at:
http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_cred_guidelines_report.pdf

Note

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

Definition: An entity that has the authority and responsibility for developing, implementing, maintaining, and overseeing the qualification process within its organization or jurisdiction. This may be a state or Federal agency, training commission, NGO, private sector company, or a tribal or local agency such as a police, fire, or public works department. In some cases, the AHJ may provide support to multiple disciplines that collaborate as a part of a team (e.g., an IMT).

Visual 7: Discussion Question

What is your organization's process for credentialing personnel?

Visual 8: Planning for Resources

Coordinated planning provides a foundation for interoperability and compatibility of resources.

Jurisdictions and organizations work together before incidents to develop plans that identify, manage, estimate, allocate, order, deploy and demobilize resources.

The planning process includes identifying resource requirements to meet anticipated threats and vulnerabilities.

Resource management planning should consider resources needed to support all mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery.

Resource management strategies for planners to consider include:

- Stockpiling resources
- Establishing mutual aid agreements to obtain resources from neighboring jurisdictions
- Determining how and where to reassign resources performing non-essential tasks
- Developing contracts to acquire resources from vendors

Estimating resource needs is a key activity in resource planning that enables jurisdictions to assess their ability to take a course of action.

Visual 9: Acquiring, Storing and Inventorying Resources

Organizations acquire, store, and inventory resources for both normal operations and incidents.

Effective resource management requires a current, accurate resource inventory to track resource status and availability.

This inventory can be as simple as a paper spreadsheet or as advanced as computer-based inventory systems.

Accurate resource inventories:

- Enable organizations to resource incidents promptly when needed
- Support day-to-day resource management

In NIMS, resource inventorying refers to preparedness activities conducted outside of incident response; resource tracking occurs during an incident.

Visual 10: Voices of Experience:

Resource Management Words of Advice

Kristy Plourde, Emergency Management Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard

"With standardized resource management of type and kind you know, when I order a type 2 law enforcement vessel and I've standardized that vessel, I know what capability I'm getting and because I've standardized it before the incident, I know exactly what I am getting and it is, it is very cool."

Visual 11: Voices of Experience:

Resource Management Words of Advice

Daryl Lee Spiewak, Former Emergency Programs Manager, Brazos River Authority, TX

"Resource management is certainly important. We know each jurisdiction is going to have to have some resources available but they're never going to have enough, there is always going to be shortfalls, and part of resource management is to manage those gaps in the availability of the resources. So, resource management under NIMS gives us a structure and a process to be able to do that. Part of it was the resource typing, so it streamlines the requesting of equipment, particularly among different jurisdictions and agencies. If I ask for a particular type of vehicle with certain equipment and with the right number of people, then I only need to make one request and I'll get all of that. If there is something else, I ask for a different type of equipment. So the typing is going to help us tremendously under resource management. It also requires that we do inventories. Inventories let us know what equipment we have on hand. We compare that to what we think we're going to need based on our planning and our exercising, we identified some of the gaps, and then we start looking for ways of filling those shortfalls. Mutual aid is one of those activities under resource management that is important in helping us use resources across levels, among different agencies, helps the taxpayers, helps the responders, helps the whole Nation."

Visual 12: Voices of Experience:

Resource Management Words of Advice

Ron Britton, Former NIMS Coordinator, FEMA, Region 10

"Resource management is much bigger than just identifying and moving vehicles or planes or so forth, that really, really involves the entire credentialing process of knowing all of our personnel resources capabilities and training background and so forth, that all needs to be done in a prior preparation event, so that we really know that when those folks arrive on scene, they're capable of doing the job we're asking them to do. So it starts with those folks, their credentialing, their qualifications, and then as well knowing the types of equipment that we would need to have on scene. So the equipment and the things that need to be there, and that would go under the communications as well because resource typing would involve the radios, the satellite phones, and all of the kinds of support communications that we would need for something to respond. So resource management is huge, and it really has to be done prior to the event."

Visual 13: Discussion Question

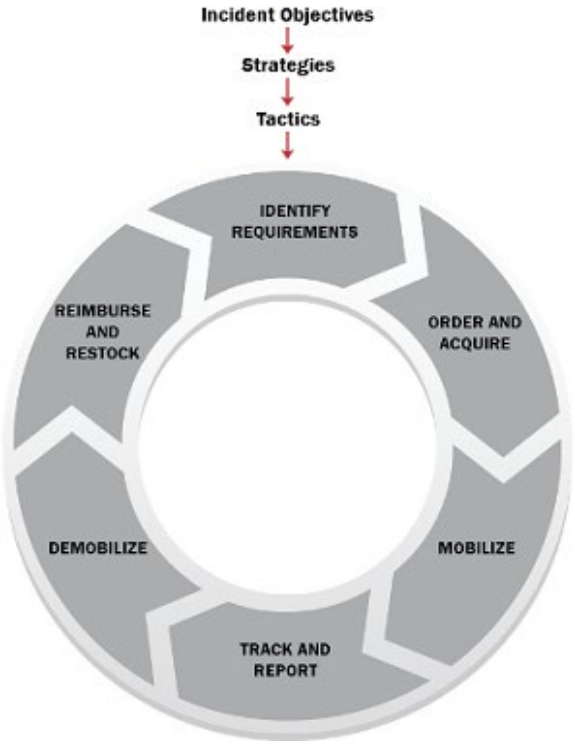
Has anyone been involved in any of these key activities? What are some of the challenges you experienced?

Visual 14: Resource Management During an Incident Overview

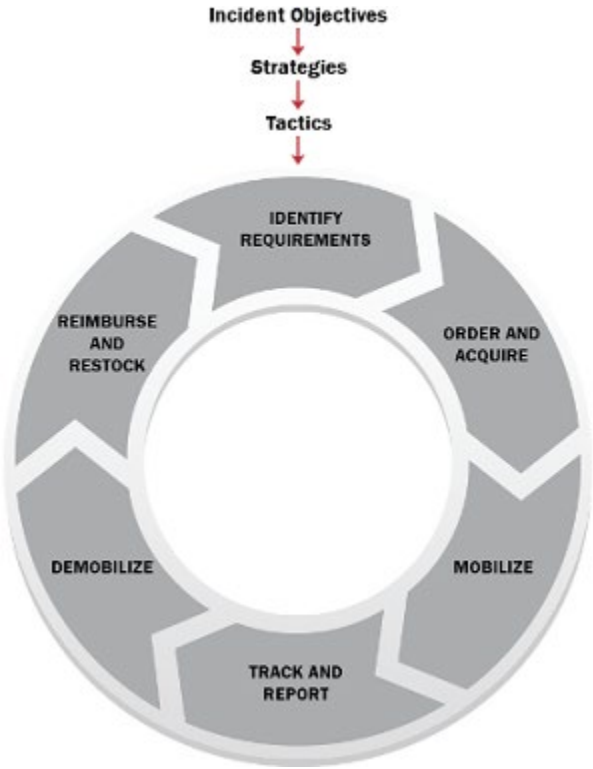
The graphic depicts the resource management process during an incident; this process describes the six resource management tasks performed in an incident.

The resource management process includes methods to identify, order, mobilize, track, demobilize, and reimburse and restock resources during an incident.

While in a small incident the Incident Commander may order resources directly, in more complex incidents the Incident Commander relies on the resource management process and personnel to identify and meet resource needs.



Resource Management During an Incident Overview

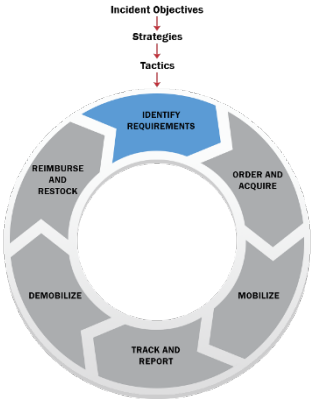

Incident Objectives
Strategies
Tactics
IDENTIFY REQUIREMENTS
ORDER AND ACQUIRE
MOBILIZE
TRACK AND REPORT
DEMOBILIZE
REIMBURSE AND RESTOCK

Visual 15: Identify Requirements

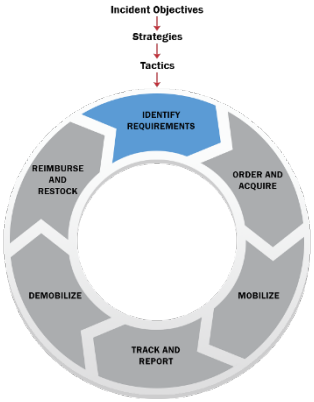
During an incident, personnel continually identify, validate, and refine resource needs. The process involves identifying:

- Type and quantity of resources needed
- Location where resources should be sent
- Who will receive and use the resources

Because the type and quantity of resources required and their availability changes as an incident progresses, incident management personnel and organizations should identify and coordinate as closely and as early as possible, both in advance of and during incidents.



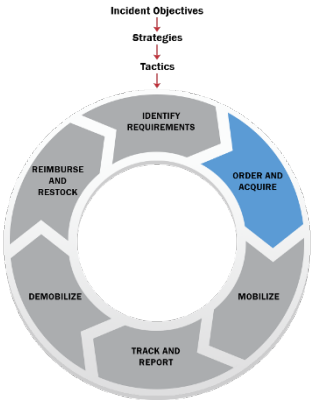
Identify Requirements



Visual 16: Order & Acquire

Both incident command and emergency operations center staffs make initial and ongoing assessments of resource requirements based on incident priorities and objectives.

If identified resource requirements are available locally they will be activated or ordered.

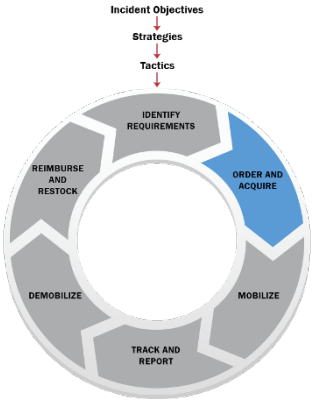


Resources that are not available locally can be ordered by executing contracts, implementing mutual aid agreements, or requesting assistance from another level of government (local government to a State, State to the Federal Government).

An external jurisdiction or organization that is requested to provide resources must consent to the request.

NIMS resource typing (discussed previously) is designed for use when ordering resources to ensure the resource provided meets the mission needs. A jurisdiction can use these resource type definitions to clearly define their resource requirements.

Order & Acquire

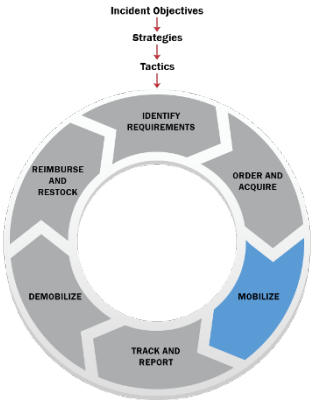


Visual 17: Mobilize

Personnel and other resources begin mobilizing when notified through established channels.

Upon notification, deploying personnel receive information to include:

- Date, time, and place of departure
- Mode of transportation to the incident
- Estimated date and time of arrival
- Reporting location and assigned supervisor
- Anticipated incident assignment
- Anticipated duration of deployment
- Resource order number
- Incident number
- Applicable cost and funding codes

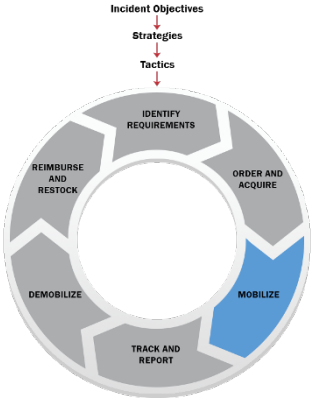


Resource tracking directly links to the mobilization process.

Resources arriving on scene check in according to the receiving organization's check-in process.

The mobilization of fixed facility resources is referred to as activation rather than deployment.

Mobilize



Visual 18: Mobilize

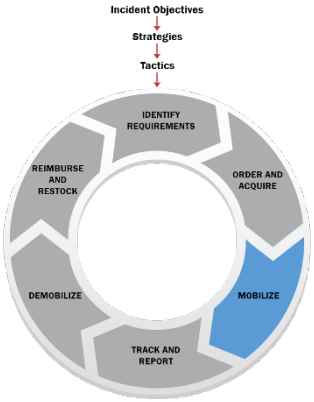
Unrequested Resources

During incidents responders sometimes arrive at the incident site without being requested.

This can interfere with incident management by:

- Creating additional supervisory, logistical and safety needs
- Depleting available resources
- Complicating resource tracking and accountability
- Interfering with access to the site by formally requested resources

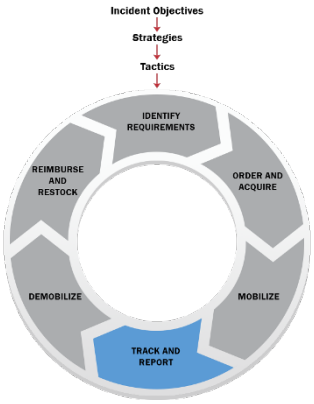
Responders should wait for official deployment notification rather than self-deploying to an incident.



Visual 19:

Track and Report

Incident personnel track resources from mobilization through demobilization using established resource tracking procedures.

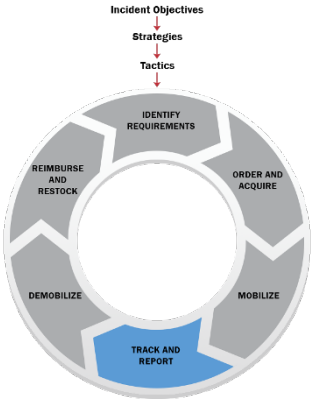


This process:

- Tracks the location of resources
- Helps staff prepare to receive and use resources
- Protects the safety and security of personnel, equipment, teams and facilities
- Enables resource coordination and movement

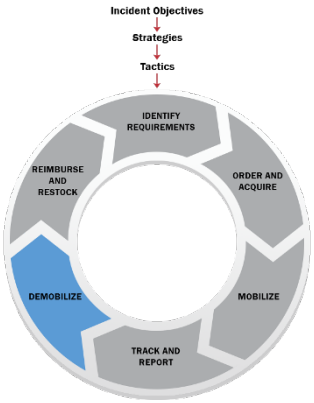
Information management systems can aid in collecting, updating, and processing resource-related data and in real-time tracking of resources.

Track and Report



Visual 20: Demobilize

Managers begin planning and preparation for the demobilization process at the same time they begin mobilizing resources.

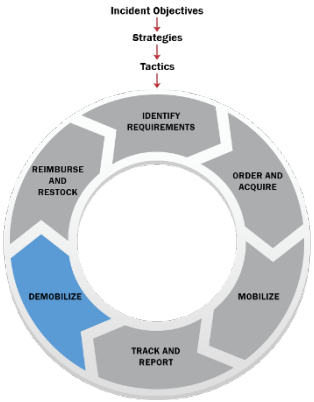


Those responsible for resources in an incident should either reassign or demobilize resources as soon as they are no longer needed.

Prior to demobilization, incident planning and logistics personnel plan for rehabilitation, replenishment, disposal of, and/ or return or restoration to operational condition for incident resources.

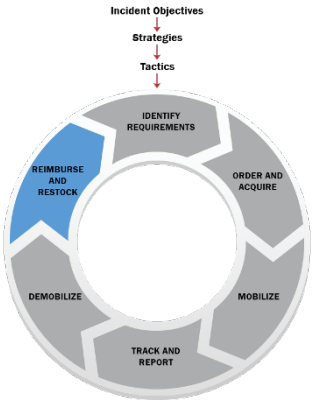
The goal of demobilization is the orderly, safe, and efficient return of a resource to its original location and status.

Demobilize

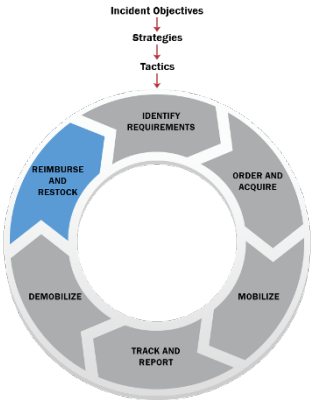


Visual 21: Reimburse and Restock

Reimbursement provides for payment of expenses incurred by resource providers.



Reimburse and Restock



Visual 22: Discussion Question

Where have you seen this process used before?

Visual 23: Discussion Question

Why is it important to begin demobilization planning as soon as feasible?

Visual 24: Mutual Aid Overview

Mutual aid is the sharing of resources and services between jurisdictions or organizations.

Mutual aid occurs routinely and is based on the resource needs identified by the requesting organization.

This assistance can range from routine dispatch of resources between local communities up to movement of resources across state lines for large-scale incidents.

Visual 25: Voices of Experience:

Mutual Aid Agreements and Assistance Agreements

Bill Bullock, Retired Battalion Chief, Fairfax County Fire Department, VA

"Traditionally we've always considered mutual aid between fire departments, EMS agencies, or law enforcement agencies. In today's world it is expanded to virtually every emergency function identified in either the national, State, or local response plan. It includes communications assets, public health assets. Some cases may include military affairs, may include animal refuge, may include search and rescue assets, and a host of others."

Visual 26: Voices of Experience:

Mutual Aid Agreements and Assistance Agreements

Bill Metcalf, Former Fire Chief, North County Fire Protection District, CA

"At its simplest level, mutual aid is neighbor helping neighbor. It is adjoining fire departments sharing resources to suppress a fire that's bigger than one agency can handle. It's adjoining water companies helping each other replace a broken pipeline in an emergency because they don't have sufficient manpower or equipment to do it. It's anytime that neighboring agencies leave their jurisdictions to help each other."

Visual 27: Voices of Experience:

Mutual Aid Agreements and Assistance Agreements

Leon Shaifer, Senior EMAC Advisor, National Emergency Management Association

"NIMS has proposed a number of solutions that could be applied very readily to mutual aid. One of the problems with mutual aid in the past has been a common terminology, a common nomenclature, speaking the same language. One term to one particular level of government doesn't necessarily mean the same thing to another, and NIMS addresses those particular types of issues. We all try to speak in a common language, plain English. The other real benefit that NIMS can bring is resource typing. We all know that when you need something that is not readily available within your jurisdiction, you need it fast. It speeds up the process when a person that has an asset can understand very quickly what you are asking for, and if those resources are typed, the benefit to one of the NIMS requirements is that a person requesting something and asks for it knows what they are going to get when they follow a typing scheme."

Visual 28: Mutual Aid Agreements and Compacts

Mutual aid agreements establish the legal basis for two or more entities to share resources.

Various forms of mutual aid agreements and compacts exist among and between all levels of government in the United States.

These agreements may authorize mutual aid:

- Between two or more neighboring communities
- Among all jurisdictions within an state
- Between States, Territories and Tribal Governments
- Between Federal agencies
- Internationally
- Between government and NGOs and/or the private sector
- Among NGOs and/or private sector entities

Note

Mutual Aid Agreements and Compacts (Continued)

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC)

EMAC is a congressionally ratified mutual aid compact that defines a non-Federal, state-to-state system for sharing resources across state lines during an emergency or disaster. Signatories include all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. EMAC enables the movement of a wide variety of resources to meet the needs of impacted jurisdictions.

Visual 29: Mutual Aid Process

Upon receipt of a mutual aid request, the supporting jurisdiction evaluates the request against its capacity.

The supporting jurisdiction determines if it is able to meet its own requirements during the temporary loss of the resource(s).

If the providing jurisdiction determines it can accommodate the deployment of resources, it will identify and arrange the deployment of these resources in accordance with the mutual aid agreement.

The receiving jurisdiction can decline resources if they do not meet its needs.

Visual 30: Discussion Question

What are some examples of Mutual Aid in your community?

What actions has your organization taken to strengthen those agreements?

Visual 31: Lesson 2: NIMS Resource Management Summary

This lesson presented an overview of NIMS Resource Management.

The lesson specifically discussed:

- Resource Management Preparedness
- Resource Management During an Incident
- Mutual Aid

The next lesson will introduce you to NIMS Management Characteristics.

Lesson 3: NIMS Management Characteristics

Visual 1: Lesson 3: NIMS Management Characteristics

This lesson presents an overview of the NIMS Management Characteristics.

Objective:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Differentiate among the fourteen NIMS Management Characteristics

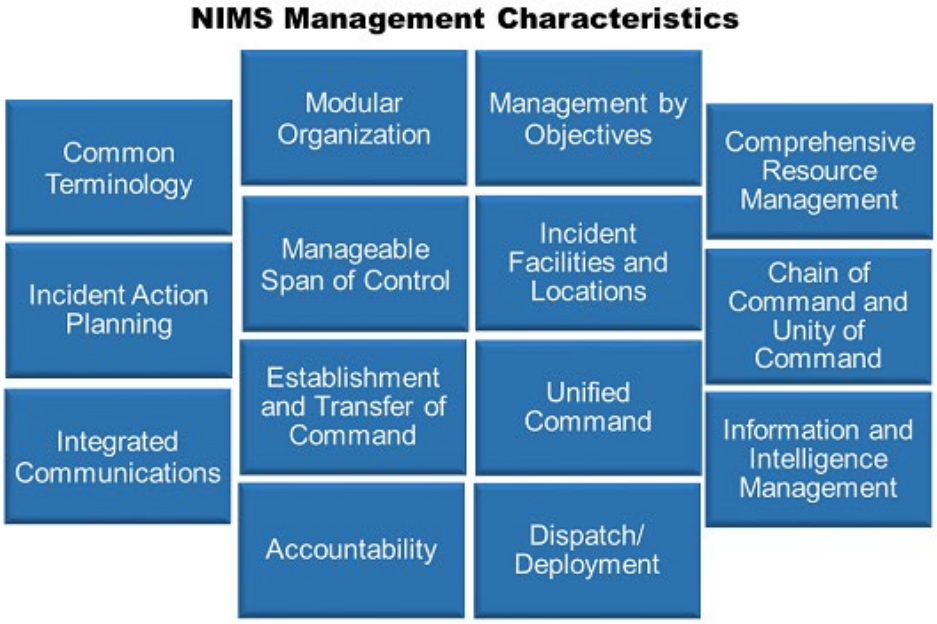
(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

Visual 2: NIMS Management Characteristics

NIMS bases incident command and coordination on fourteen NIMS Management Characteristics. These fourteen characteristics are building blocks that contribute strength and efficiency to the National Incident Management System.



Visual 3: NIMS Management Characteristic: Common Terminology

NIMS establishes common terminology that allows different organizations to work together in a wide variety of emergency functions and hazard scenarios.

Common terminology helps by reducing confusion and enhancing interoperability.

This common terminology covers:

- **Organizational Functions**: Major functions and units are named and defined using standardized terms
- **Resource Descriptions**: Resources (personnel, equipment, teams and facilities) have common naming based on their type and capabilities
- **Incident Facilities**: Facilities in an incident area are designated using common terms

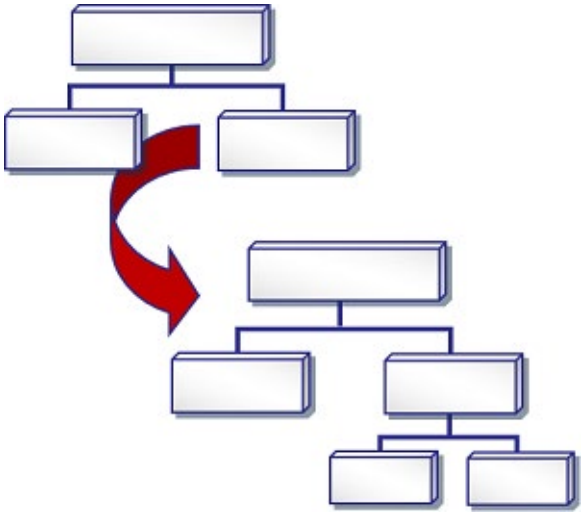
Visual 4: NIMS Management Characteristic: Modular Organization

Organizational structures for incident management (ICS and EOCs) are modular, meaning that they are each building blocks that are put in place as needed based on an incident's size, complexity and hazards.

The ICS Commander and EOC director are responsible for the establishment and expansion of the modular organization based on the specific requirements for their incident.

As incident complexity increases, the organizational structure expands and management responsibilities are further divided.

The number of management, supervisory, and support positions expand as needed to meet the needs of the incident.



Visual 5: NIMS Management Characteristic: Management by Objectives

In an incident, all activities are directed to accomplish defined objectives. This is called Management by Objectives.

Under ICS the Incident Commander (or Unified Command) establishes incident objectives.

Management by objectives includes:

- Establishing specific, measurable objectives
- Identifying strategies, tactics, tasks, and activities to achieve the objectives
- Developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures and protocols to accomplish tasks
- Documenting results against objectives to measure performance, facilitate corrective actions, and inform development of objectives for the next operational period

Visual 6: NIMS Management Characteristic: Incident Action Planning

Incident action planning guides incident management activities.

Incident Action Plans:

- Record and communicate incident objectives, tactics, and assignments for operations and support
- Are recommended for all incidents
- Are not always written, but a written IAP is increasingly important when an incident or activation:
  - Is likely to extend beyond one operational period
  - Becomes more complex
  - Involves multiple jurisdictions or agencies

Visual 7: NIMS Management Characteristic: Manageable Span of Control

Span of control refers to the number of subordinates that directly report to a supervisor.

Maintaining an appropriate span of control ensures effective incident management by enabling supervisors to:

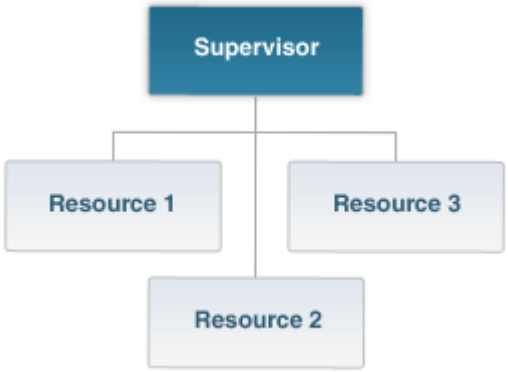
- Direct and supervise subordinates
- Communicate with and manage resources

The optimal span of control for incident management is one supervisor to five subordinates; however, the 1:5 ratio is only a guideline and effective incident management often calls for different ratios.

When a supervisor's span of control becomes unmanageable, they can assign subordinate supervisors or redistribute subordinates to manage portions of the organization in order to regain a manageable span of control.

Span of control can change based on:

- Type of incident
- Nature of the task
- Existing hazards and safety factors
- Distances between personnel and resources



Visual 8: NIMS Management Characteristic: Incident Facilities and Locations

The Incident Commander, Unified Command or EOC director establishes incident support facilities for specific purposes.

These facilities are identified and located based on the requirements of the situation.

Incident size and complexity will influence the designation of facilities and locations.

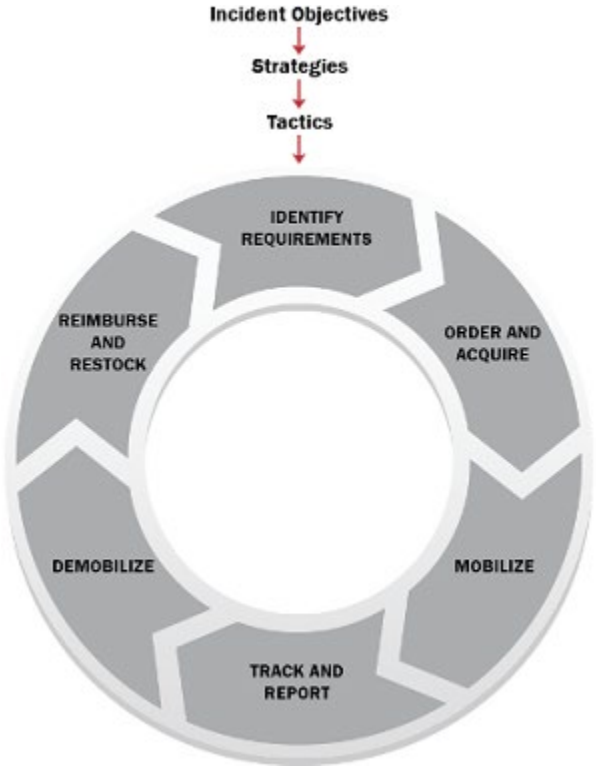
Typical designated facilities include:

- Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Incident base
- Staging Areas
- Camps
- Mass casualty triage areas
- Points-of-distribution
- Emergency shelters

Visual 9: NIMS Management Characteristic: Comprehensive Resource Management

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date resource inventories and resource tracking are essential components of incident management.

Resources include personnel, equipment, teams, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment or allocation.



Visual 10: NIMS Management Characteristic: Integrated Communications

Integrated communications allow units from diverse agencies to connect, share information and achieve situational awareness.

Incident managers facilitate communications through the development and use of:

- A common communications plan
- Interoperable communications processes and systems
- Systems that include both voice and data links

Integrated Communications Planning occurs both before and during an incident to provide equipment, systems, and protocols needed to achieve integrated voice and data communications.

Visual 11: NIMS Management Characteristic: Establishment and Transfer of Command

When an incident is anticipated or occurs the organization with primary responsibility for the incident establishes command by designating the Incident Commander (IC) or Unified Command (UC). Command may need to be transferred to a different IC/UC one or more times over the course of a long duration or increasingly complex incident.

The current command determines the protocol for transferring command. This transfer process should always include a briefing for the incoming IC/UC on all essential information for continuing safe and effective operations. The transfer of command should also be communicated to all incident personnel.

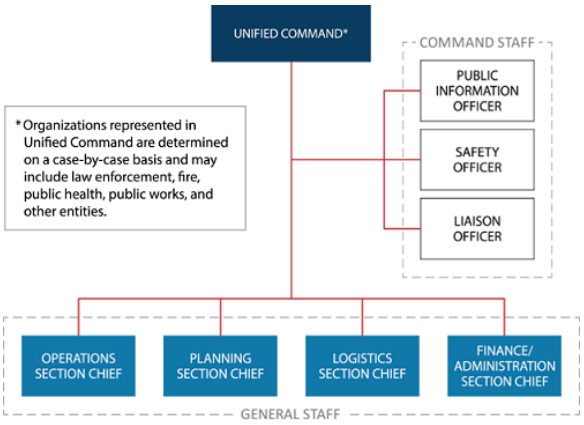
Visual 12: NIMS Management Characteristic: Unified Command

In some incidents the Incident Command function is performed by a Unified Command (UC).

UC is typically used for incidents involving:

- Multiple jurisdictions
- A single jurisdiction with multiagency involvement
- Multiple jurisdictions with multiagency involvement

UC allows agencies with different authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.



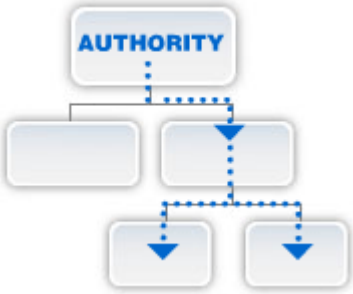
Visual 13: NIMS Management Characteristic: Chain of Command and Unity of Command

Chain of command refers to the orderly command hierarchy within an incident management organization.

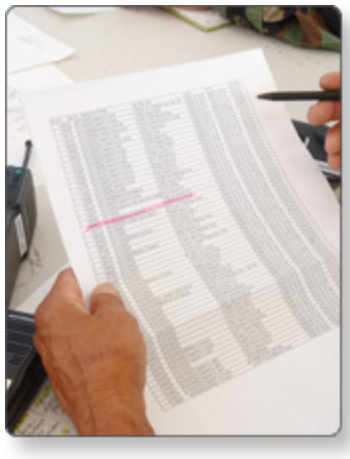
Unity of command means that each individual reports to only one designated supervisor.

These principles:

- Clarify reporting relationships
- Eliminate confusion caused by conflicting instructions
- Enable incident managers at all levels to direct the actions of all personnel under their supervision



Visual 14: NIMS Management Characteristic: Accountability



Accountability for all resources during an incident is essential.

Incident management personnel should adhere to principles of accountability, including:

- Check-in/checkout
- Incident action planning
- Unity of command
- Personal responsibility
- Span of control
- Resource tracking

Visual 15: NIMS Management Characteristic: Dispatch/Deployment

Resources should deploy only when requested and dispatched through established procedures by appropriate authorities.

Resources that authorities do not request should not deploy spontaneously - unrequested resources can overburden the IC/UC and increase accountability challenges.

Visual 16: NIMS Management Characteristic: Information and Intelligence Management

Incident-related information and intelligence is managed by the incident management organization through established processes for:

- Gathering
- Analyzing
- Assessing
- Sharing
- Managing

Information and intelligence management includes identifying essential elements of information (EEI). EEI ensures incident personnel gather the most accurate and appropriate data, translate it into useful information, and communicate it with appropriate personnel.

Instructor Note

The collection, analysis, and sharing of incident-related information are important activities for all incidents. Typically, staff in the Planning Section are responsible for gathering and analyzing operational information and sharing situational awareness, and staff in the Operations Section are responsible for executing tactical activities. However, some incidents involve intensive intelligence gathering and investigative activity, and for such incidents, the Incident Commander or Unified Command may opt to reconfigure intelligence/investigations responsibilities to meet the needs of the incident. This may occur when the incident involves a criminal or terrorist act and/or other non-law-enforcement intelligence/investigations efforts such as epidemiological investigations.

For additional information see the following website: https://www.fema.gov/nims-doctrine-supporting-guides-tools.

Note

In NIMS, "intelligence" refers exclusively to threat-related information developed by law enforcement, medical surveillance, and other investigative organizations.

Visual 17: Activity 2.1: NIMS Management Characteristics

Instructions:

1. Work within your group to further explain your assigned NIMS Management Characteristics and give an example for each
2. Select a spokesperson and be prepared in 15 minutes.

Activity

Activity 2.1 NIMS Management Characteristics

Instructions:

1. Work within your group to further explain your assigned NIMS Management Characteristics and give an example for each.
2. Select a spokesperson and be prepared in 15 minutes.

Visual 18: Lesson 3: NIMS Management Characteristics Summary

This lesson presented an overview of NIMS Management Characteristics. The lesson specifically discussed:

- Common Terminology
- Modular Organization
- Management by Objectives
- Incident Action Planning
- Manageable Span of Control
- Incident Facilities and Locations
- Comprehensive Resource Management
- Integrated Communications
- Establishment and Transfer of Command
- Unified Command
- Chain of Command and Unity of Command
- Accountability
- Dispatch/ Deployment
- Information and Intelligence Management

The next lesson will introduce you to the Incident Command System.

Lesson 4: Incident Command System (ICS)

Visual 1: Lesson 4: Incident Command System (ICS)

This lesson presents an overview of the Incident Command System (ICS).

Objective:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe the Incident Command System (ICS) Organizational Structure

(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

Visual 2: What Is NIMS Command and Coordination?

This lesson is about the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is one of the four NIMS structures. Before we explore ICS, let's briefly look at all four NIMS structures.

"NIMS is a system to provide a framework for all of the team to work together towards common goals." Craig Fugate, former FEMA Administrator (and past Director, FL Division of Emergency Management).

What is NIMS Command and Coordination?

There are three major components of the NIMS framework:

- Resource Management
- Command and Coordination
- Communications and Information Management

Together these NIMS components provide a framework for effective management during incident response.

You have already explored Resource Management and the 14 NIMS Management Characteristics. Next, we'll cover the NIMS structures that enable incident managers to manage and coordinate incident response in a unified, consistent manner.

The four NIMS Structures are: the Incident Command System, Emergency Operations Centers, the Multi-Agency Coordination Group, and the Joint Information System. Together, these four elements comprise the NIMS Command and Coordination structures.

Multiagency Coordination Systems, or MACS, is an overarching term for the four NIMS Command and Coordination systems: ICS, EOCs, MAC Group and JIS.

The Incident Command System, or ICS, is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of incidents.

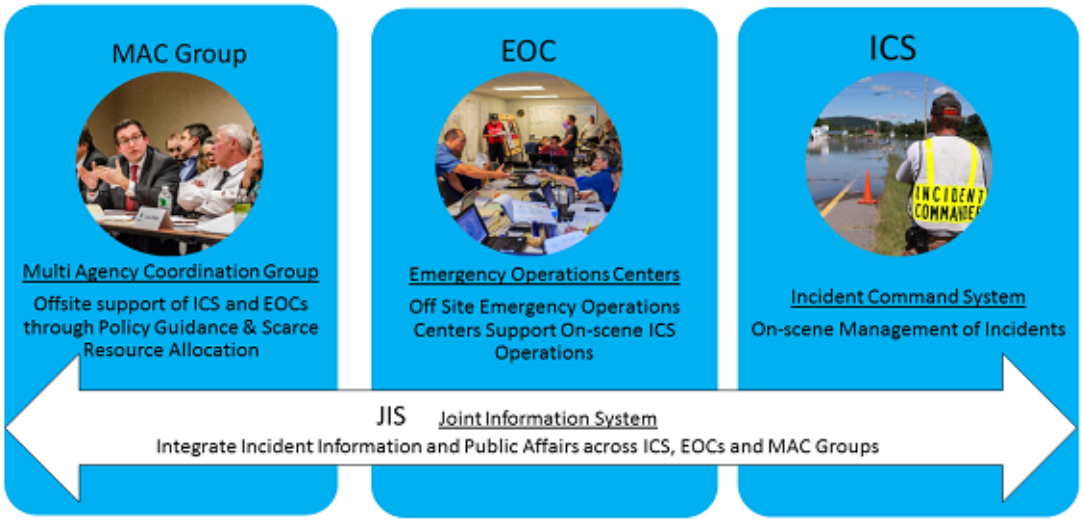
As an incident becomes more complex, multiagency coordination and the need for additional resources becomes increasingly important. Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) support on-scene incident command from off-site through multiagency coordination and resources.

MAC Groups are high level multiagency coordination bodies that support ICS and EOCs through policy and scarce resource allocation.

The final Command and Coordination element is the Joint Information System (JIS). The Joint Information System ensures coordinated and accurate public messaging among the ICS, EOCs and MAC Group.

NIMS is summed up by former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate: [". . .when we fail to work as a team, we fail our citizens … NIMS is a system to provide a framework for all of the team to work together towards common goals."]

Visual 3: NIMS Command and Coordination Structures



Visual 4: NIMS Command and Coordination Structures (Continued)

NIMS structures enable incident managers to manage incidents in a unified, consistent manner.

When an incident occurs or threatens, local emergency personnel manage response using **ICS**.

If the incident is large or complex, off-site **EOCs** activate to support on-scene operations.

The incident personnel in the field and in EOCs receive policy guidance from **MAC Groups**.

A Joint Information Center manages the Joint Information System **(JIS)** to ensure coordinated and accurate public messaging among all levels: ICS, EOC and MAC Group.

The first NIMS structure we will examine is ICS.

Visual 5: Voices of Experience: Incident Command System

"ICS is a system to allow responders to be able to organize and respond to an incident. It is specifically useful during on-scene response. It is a format, a system of tools that allow police, fire, and other personnel to respond to that incident in a systematic way to facilitate the response but also meet the needs of those impacted."

Voices of Experience: Incident Command System

George Nuñez, Emergency Management, George Washington University

"ICS is a system to allow responders to be able to organize and respond to an incident. It is specifically useful during on-scene response. It is a format, a system of tools that allow police, fire, and other personnel to respond to that incident in a systematic way to facilitate the response but also meet the needs of those impacted."

Visual 6: Voices of Experience: Incident Command System

Kristy Plourde, Emergency Management Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard

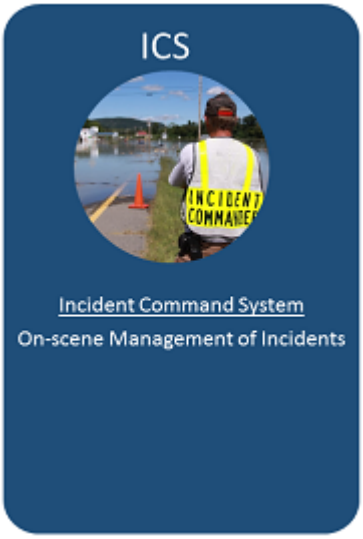
"You use NIMS and ICS and you organize yourself around this structure. It's got the common language, its common command structure. You work out who is in the Unified Command, you know, and you work this all out, and so that's what they did, and it was, you know, it's not perfect because we're not there yet, we're getting there with how we organize ourselves, but the key is, is that: is it better than when we did it before? And that's the bottom-line answer of that is that NIMS has helped us be better structured, have less duplication, be more organized and more efficient."

Visual 7: Voices of Experience: Incident Command System

Steve Grainer, Former Chief, Incident Management Programs, VA Dept. of Fire Programs

"The basic functional elements of ICS are the way everything is managed. What ICS has done has provided a template, a flexible yet standardized template that is available on a moment's notice and is constructed in such a manner that you just basically open the book or pull the template off the shelf and identify which component parts of command or management, if you will, are needed at any moment in time. It just provides you a fill-in-the-blanks format for what is necessary, and the good thing about it is you use what you need and you don't use what you don't need."

Visual 8: ICS Introduction



The Incident Command System (ICS) provides:

- A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of on-scene emergency management
- A common structure within which personnel from different organizations can work together
- A structure for incident management that integrates and coordinates procedures, personnel, equipment, facilities, and communications

ICS is used by all levels of government and many NGOs and private sector organizations.

This system includes five major functional areas: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

Visual 9: Discussion Question

What are examples of incidents or planned events where you have used ICS?

What were the benefits of using ICS?

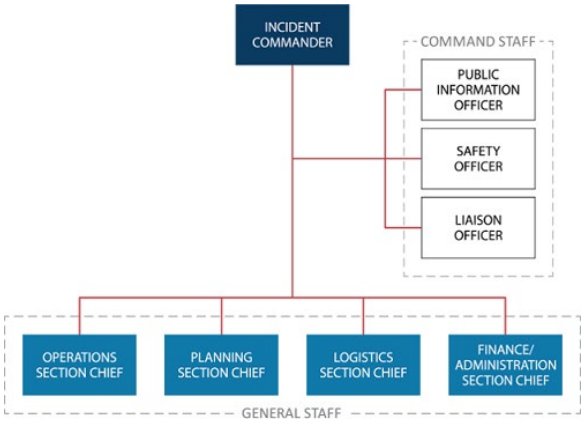
Visual 10: Incident Command Concept

The ICS term Incident Command refers to the person or group responsible for overall on-scene management of an incident.

There are two general forms of the incident command function:

- A single Incident Commander
- A Unified Command

Command and General Staff support the incident command in management of the incident.



Visual 11: Incident Commander

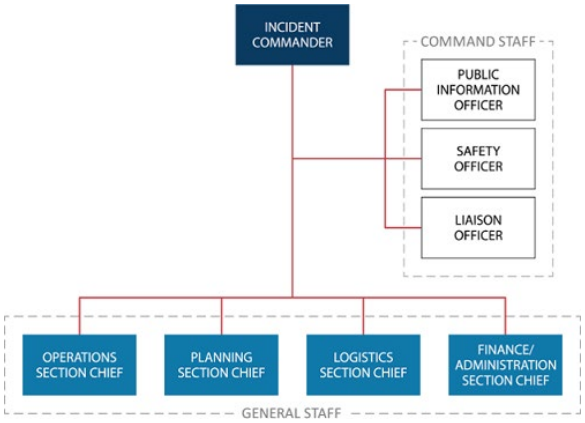
When an incident occurs within a single jurisdiction and there is no overlapping responsibility, the appropriate authority designates a single Incident Commander who has overall incident management responsibility.

When incident management crosses jurisdictional and/or functional agency boundaries, the various jurisdictions and organizations may still agree to designate a single Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander establishes the incident objectives that guide incident action planning and operations.

When there is a single Incident Commander, he or she is solely responsible (within limits of authority) for:

- Establishing incident objectives, and
- Ensuring that incident activities work to accomplish objectives.



Visual 12: Unified Command

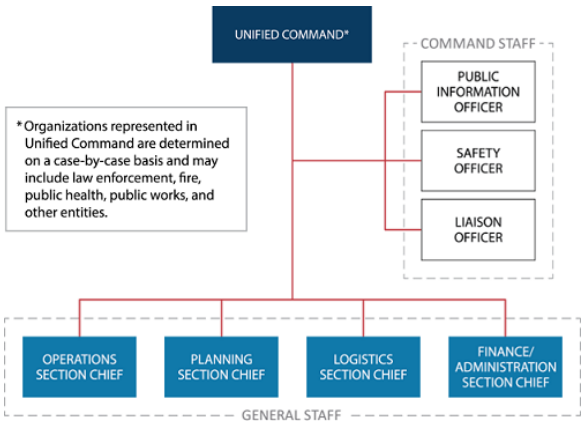
Unified Command is used for improved unity of effort in multijurisdictional or multiagency incident management.

Unified Command enables different jurisdictions and organizations to jointly manage and direct incident activities through a common set of incident objectives, strategies and a single incident action plan.

Each partner in the Unified Command maintains authority, responsibility and accountability for its own personnel and other resources, but the members of the Unified Command work together to:

- Determine objectives, priorities and strategic guidance
- Establish a single system for ordering resources
- Execute integrated incident operations
- Maximize the use of assigned resources

Because requirements vary based on the location and type of incident, the composition of the Unified Command structure adapts to fit the specific incident.



Visual 13: Command Staff

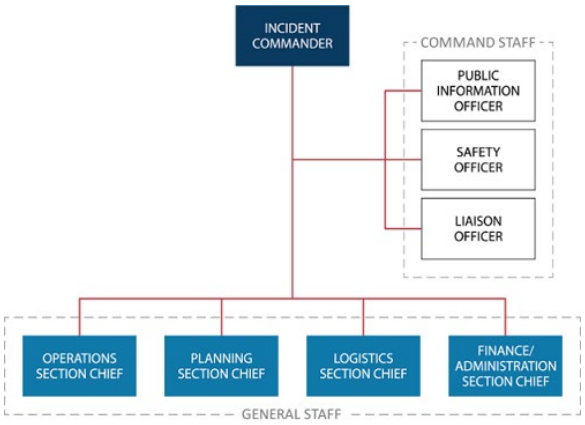
The Command Staff are incident management personnel that the Incident Commander or Unified Command assign to directly support the command function.

Command Staff positions are established by the Incident Commander or Unified Command as needed to support the management of an incident.

Command staff report directly to the Incident Commander or Unified Command and are assigned assistants as necessary to perform their duties.

The ICS Command Staff typically includes:

- The **Public Information Officer (PIO)** who interfaces with the public, media, and others needing incident information
- The **Safety Officer** who monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander or Unified Command on matters relating to health and safety
- The **Liaison Officer** who serves as the incident command's point of contact for organizations not included in the Incident Command or Unified Command



Note

Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The Public Information Officer gathers, verifies, coordinates, and disseminates accurate, accessible, and timely information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external audiences. The Public Information Officer may also perform a key public information-monitoring role. Whether the command structure is single or unified, only one Public Information Officer should be designated per incident. Assistants may be assigned from other involved agencies, departments, or organizations. The Incident Commander/Unified Command must approve the

release of all incident-related information. In large-scale incidents or where multiple command posts are established, the Public Information Officer should participate in or lead the Joint Information Center in order to ensure consistency in the provision of information to the public.

Note

Safety Officer

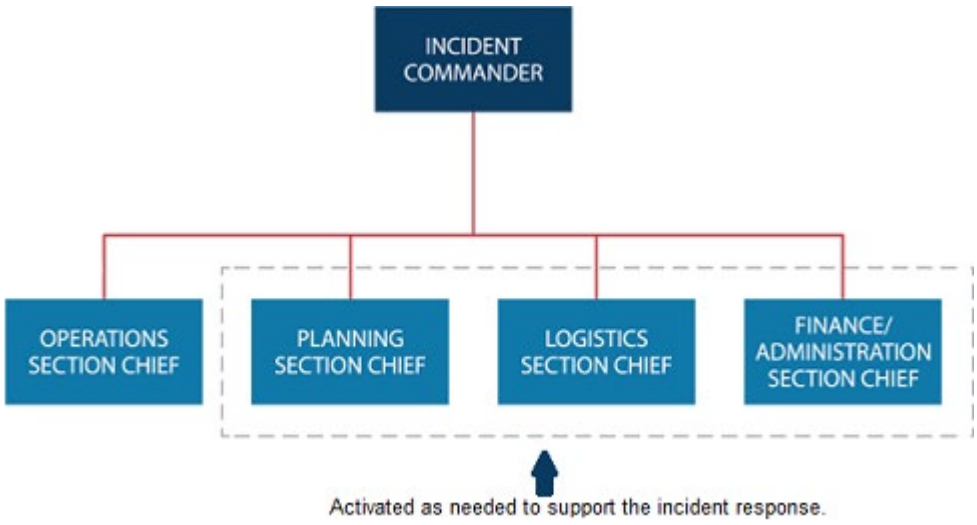
The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander/Unified Command on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel. The ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations rests with the Incident Commander/Unified Command and supervisors at all levels of incident management. The Safety Officer is, in turn, responsible to the Incident Commander/Unified Command for the systems and procedures necessary to ensure ongoing assessment of hazardous environments, including the incident Safety Plan, coordination of multiagency safety efforts, and implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety, as well as the general safety of incident operations. The Safety Officer has immediate authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts during incident operations. It is important to note that the agencies, organizations, or jurisdictions that contribute to joint safety management efforts do not lose their individual identities or responsibility for their own programs, policies, and personnel. Rather, each contributes to the overall effort to protect all responder personnel involved in incident operations.

Note

Liaison Officer

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

Visual 14: General Staff Overview



Note

The General Staff is a group of incident management personnel organized according to function.

The ICS General Staff consists of 4 Sections:

- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance/Administration

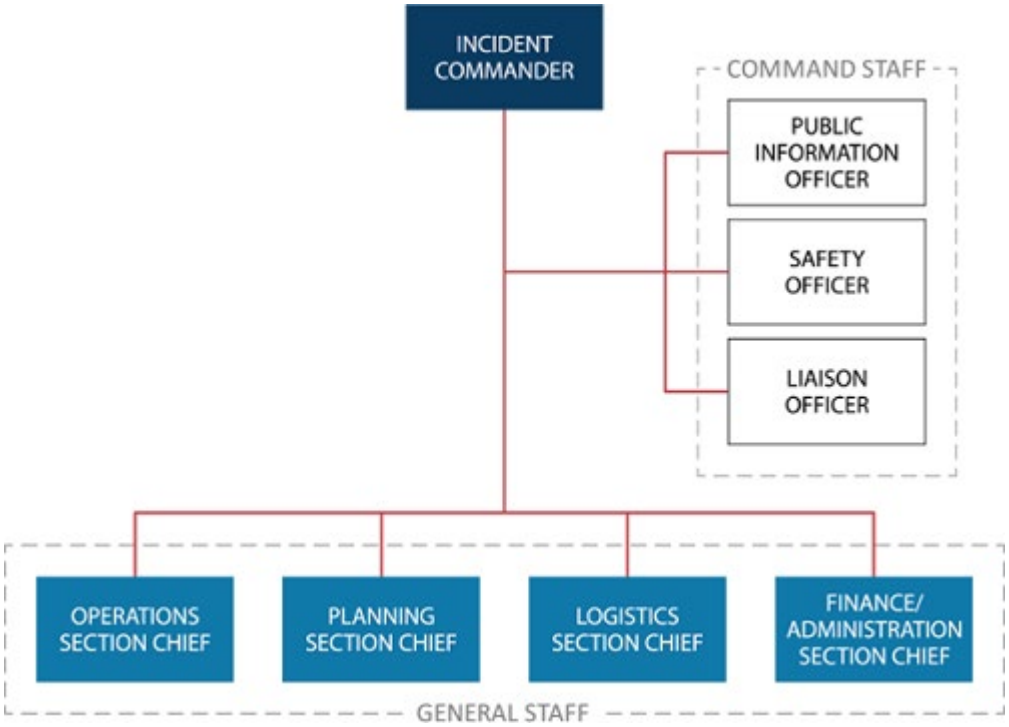
Each ICS General Staff Section is led by a Section Chief who reports directly to the Incident Commander or Unified Command.

These individuals are responsible for managing tasks within their functional area.

The Incident Commander or Unified Command activates these section chiefs as needed.

The Incident Commander or Unified Command is responsible to perform each General Staff function until a section chief is assigned to manage that function.

Visual 15: General Staff Sections



Note

General Staff Sections

Operations Section

The Operations Section plans and performs tactical activities to achieve the incident objectives established by the IC/UC.

Incident objectives typically focus on:

- Saving lives
- Reducing the immediate hazard
- Protecting property and the environment
- Establishing situational control
- Restoring normal operations

Planning Section

Planning Section personnel collect, evaluate, and disseminate incident information to the Incident Commander/Unified Command and other incident personnel.

Planning Section staff:

- Prepare status reports

- Display situation information
- Maintain the status of assigned resources
- Facilitate the incident action planning process
- Prepare the Incident Action Plan (IAP) based on input from the General Staff, Command Staff and Incident Commander/Unified Command guidance.

Logistics Section

Logistics Section personnel are responsible for providing services and support for the incident.

Logistics Section staff provide:

- Facilities Security (of the incident command facilities and personnel)
- Transportation
- Supplies
- Equipment maintenance and fuel
- Food services
- Communications and information technology support
- Medical services for incident personnel

Finance/Administration Section

The Incident Commander/Unified Command establishes a Finance/Administration Section when the incident management activities require on-scene or incident-specific finance and administrative support services.

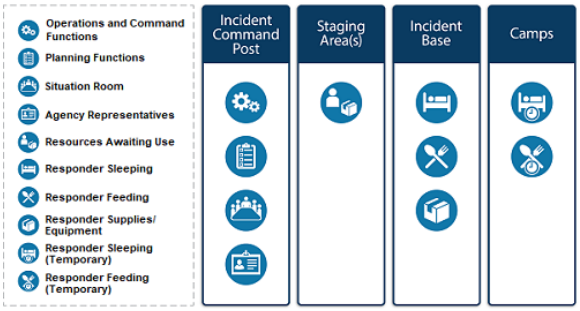
Finance/Administration Section Staff:

- Record personnel time
- Negotiate leases
- Maintain vendor contracts
- Administer claims
- Track and analyze incident costs

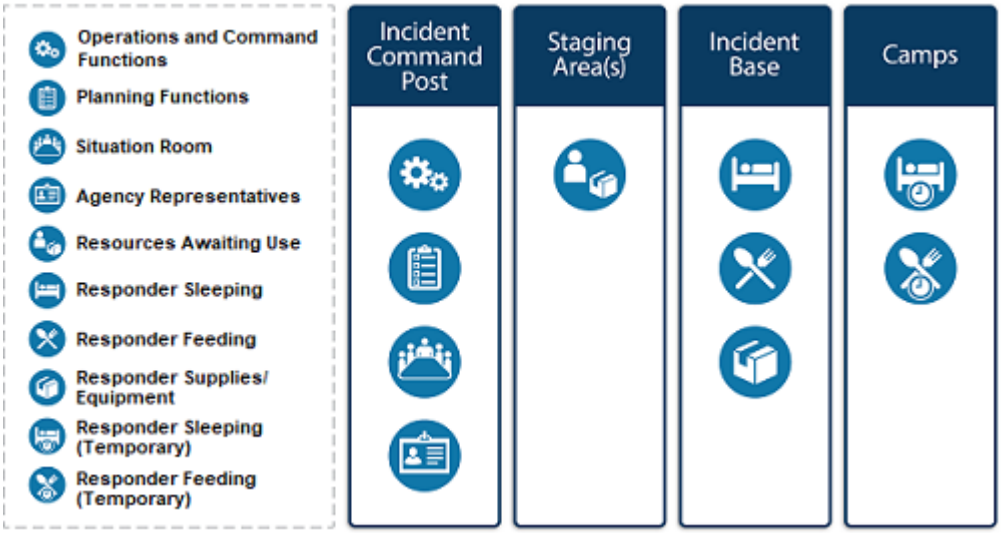
Visual 16: Common Types of ICS Facilities

The Incident Commander or Unified Command determines the kinds and locations of ICS facilities based on what is required to support the incident.

The Incident Commander or Unified Command may establish several different kinds of facilities in and around the incident area.



Common Types of ICS Facilities (Continued)



Note

Common ICS facilities:

- The Incident Command Post (ICP) - location of the tactical-level, on-scene incident management (Incident Commander or Unified Command and Staff)
- Staging Areas - temporarily position and account for personnel, supplies, and equipment awaiting assignment
- Incident Base - location at which personnel conduct primary support activities (may be co-located with the ICP)
- Camps - satellites to an Incident Base, established where they can best support incident operations by providing food, sleeping areas, sanitation and minor maintenance and servicing of equipment

Visual 17: Discussion Question

Who interfaces with the public media needing incident information?

Who monitors incident operations advises the IC/UC on matters relating to health and safety?

Who serves as the incident command's point of contact for organizations not included in the UC?

Who plans and performs tactical activities to achieve the incident objectives established by the IC/UC?

Who supports the incident action planning process by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation?

Who sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities, and has overall responsibility for the incident?

Who ensures that all intelligence/investigations operations and activities are properly managed, coordinated, and directed?

Who monitors costs related to the incident, provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses?

Who arranges for resources and needed services to support achievement of the incident objectives?

Visual 18: Incident Management Teams

Incident Management Teams (IMT) are a rostered group of ICS-qualified personnel composed of an Incident Commander, other incident leadership, and personnel qualified for other key ICS positions.

IMTs are:

- Established at local, regional, state, tribal, and national levels with formal notification, deployment, and operational procedures in place.
- Typed based on the team member qualifications.
- Assigned to manage incidents or to accomplish supporting incident-related tasks or functions.

When assigned to an incident, IMTs are typically delegated the authority to act on behalf of the affected jurisdiction or organization.

Visual 19: Incident Management Assistance Teams

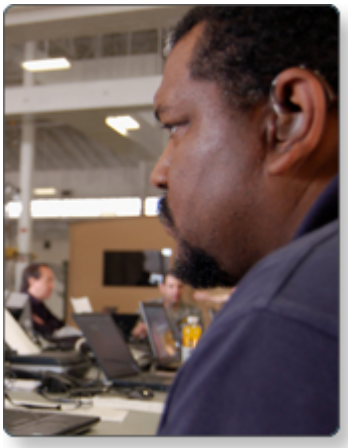
Some IMTs are referred to as Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT) to clarify that they **support** on-scene personnel and/or the affected jurisdiction(s).

IMATs ensure that federal activities align with local priorities through participation in Unified Command or a Unified Coordination Group with representatives from local, state, and/or tribal government.

IMATs exist at various levels of government and within the private sector.

Regardless of who owns particular IMATs or their specific missions, IMATs operate using the principles and practices of ICS.

Example: FEMA IMATs deploy to an incident or venue to assist in the identification and provision of Federal assistance, and coordinate and integrate inter-jurisdictional response in support of an affected state or tribe.

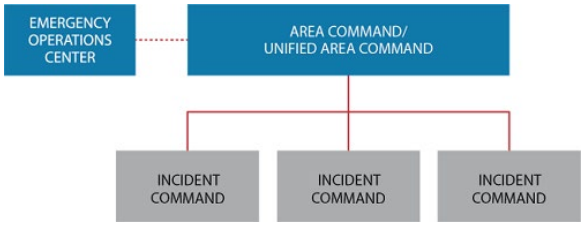


Visual 20: Area Command

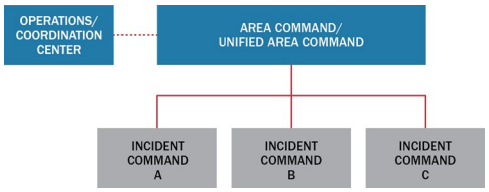
An Area Command organization oversees the management of multiple incidents or a very complex incident through establishing multiple ICS organizations.

- An Area Command is activated only if necessary based on the complexity of the incident and span-of-control considerations.
- Area Command is particularly relevant to situations with several ICPs requesting similar, scarce resources.
- Area Commands are frequently established as Unified Area Commands and use the same principles as a Unified Command.

Additional coordination structures, such as EOCs or MAC Groups, may assist with coordinating the resource needs of multiple incidents.



Area Command



Note

- Area Command is used when there are a number of incidents generally in the same area and often of the same kind. Examples include two or more hazardous materials spills, fires, etc. Often these kinds of incidents will vie for the same resources.
- When an incident expands to a large geographic area, the agency officials may choose to divide the incident into smaller pieces, called zones, each of which will be managed by an Incident Management Team (IMT).
- When incidents are of different kinds and/or do not have similar resource demands, they will usually be handled as separate incidents

or will be coordinated through an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The use of an Area Command makes the jobs of Incident Commanders and agency officials easier for the following reasons:

- Much of the cross-incident coordination typically performed by each Incident Commander is accomplished at the Area Command level. Using an Area Command allows the Incident Commanders and their IMTs to focus attention on their incident objectives, strategies, and tactics.
- Area Command sets priorities between incidents and ensures efficient resource use. Critical resources are allocated by the overall priorities established by the agency officials. Competition among incidents for critical resources is avoided. Often, agency dispatchers will recognize cross-incident coordination problems first.
- Area Command ensures that agency policies, priorities, constraints, and guidance are being made known to the Incident Commanders and implemented consistently across incidents.
- Area Command also reduces the workload of Executives/Senior Officials, especially if there are multiple incidents going on at the same time.

Visual 21: Discussion Question

What are some examples when Area Commands have been established?

Visual 22: Discussion Question

What are the commonalities between Area Command and Unified Command? What are the differences?

Visual 23: Lesson 4: Knowledge Review 2 Web Only

Discussion Question

Unit 4: Knowledge Review 2

Which of the following statements are accurate about an Area Command? More than one may be correct.

- Area Commands are frequently established as Unified Area Commands and use the same principles as a Unified Command.
- An Area Command is generally activated during all incidents and is solely based on the complexity of the incident.
- An Area Command organization oversees the management of multiple incidents or a very large or evolving situation.
- Area Command is particularly relevant to situations with several Incident Command Posts (ICPs) requesting similar, scarce resources.

Visual 24: Lesson 4: Incident Command System (ICS) Summary

This lesson presented an overview of the Incident Command System (ICS).

The lesson specifically discussed:

- Incident Command
- Command Staff
- General Staff
- Incident Management Teams
- Incident Management Assistance Teams
- Area Command

The next lesson will introduce you to Emergency Operations Centers.

Lesson 5: Emergency Operations Centers (EOC)

Visual 1: Lesson 5: Emergency Operations Centers (EOC)

This lesson presents an overview of Emergency Operations Centers.

Objective:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to describe basic:

- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Functions
- EOC Staff Organization Models
- EOC Activation Levels

(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

Reference

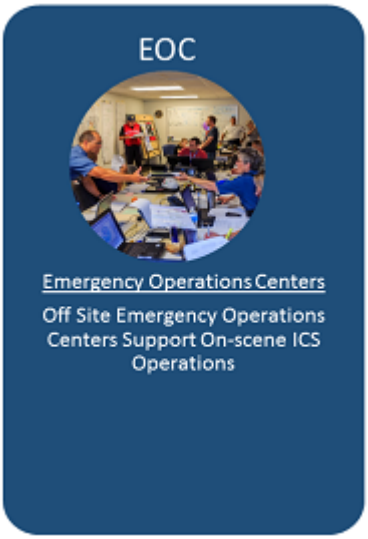
National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

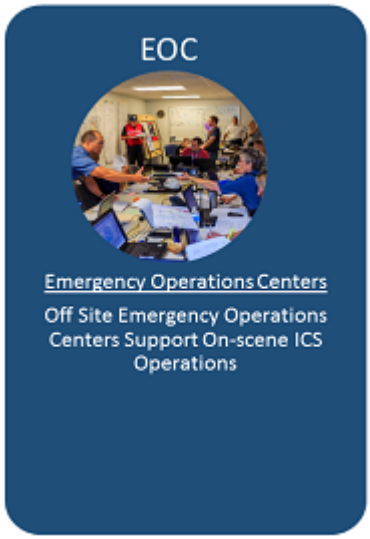
Visual 2: Introduction

Emergency Operations Centers are one of four NIMS Command and Coordination structures.

ICS is used to manage on-scene, tactical-level response; EOCs are off site locations where staff from multiple agencies come together to:

- Address imminent threats and hazards
- Provide coordinated support to incident command, on-scene personnel and/or other EOCs





Note

The purpose, authorities, and composition of EOCs vary widely, but EOCs generally perform the following primary functions:

- •Collecting, analyzing and sharing information
- •Supporting resource needs and requests, including allocation and tracking
- •Coordinating plans and determining current and future needs

- •In some cases providing coordination and policy direction

Some agencies and departments utilize operations centers. EOCs are multidisciplinary and in this aspect are different from operations centers employed by a single organization.

EOCs can be fixed locations, temporary facilities or virtual structures with staff participating remotely.

Visual 3: Configuration of Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)

EOC teams vary widely. Organization of the EOC staff can vary based on:

- Jurisdictional/organizational authorities
- Staffing
- Partner and stakeholder agencies represented
- EOC facilities
- EOC communications capabilities
- Political considerations
- The mission

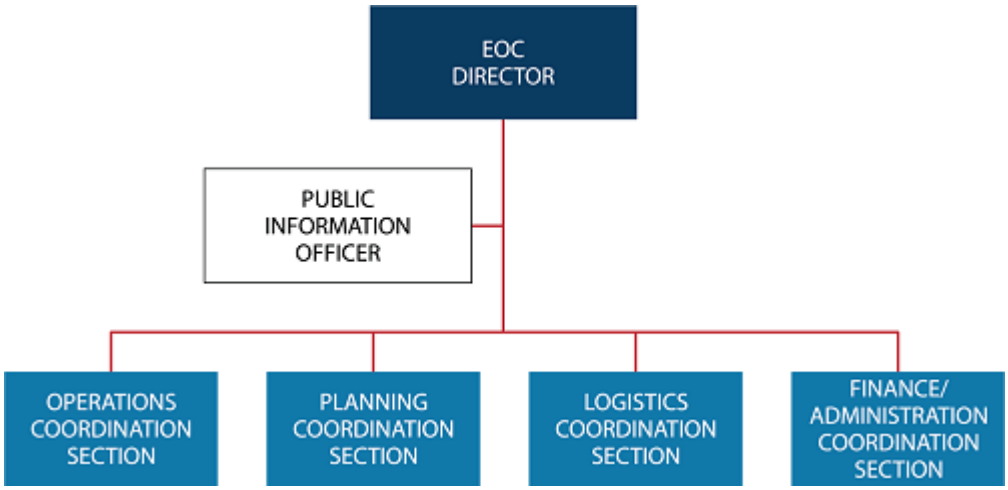
NIMS identifies three common ways of organizing EOC Teams:

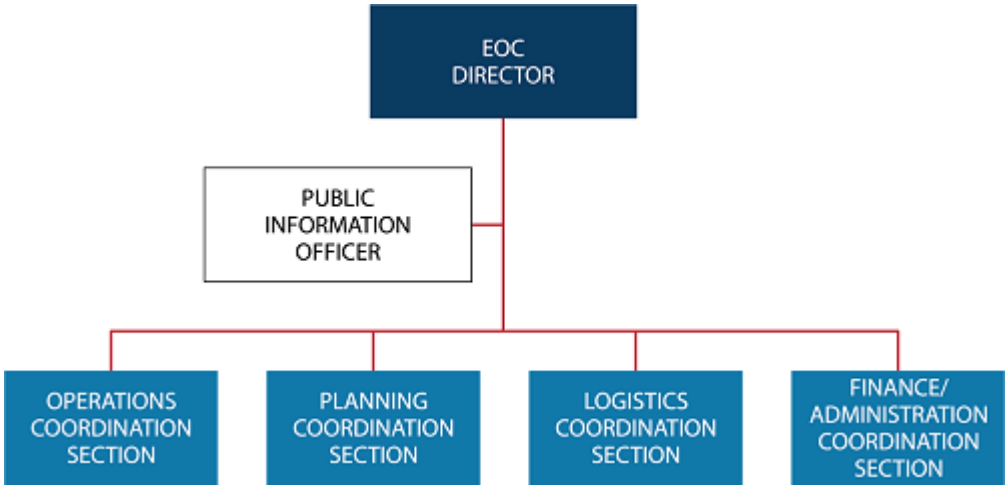
1. ICS or ICS-like structure
2. Incident Support Model structure
3. Departmental structure

Like ICS, EOCs utilize the NIMS management characteristic **modular organization**.

Visual 4: ICS or ICS-like EOC Structure

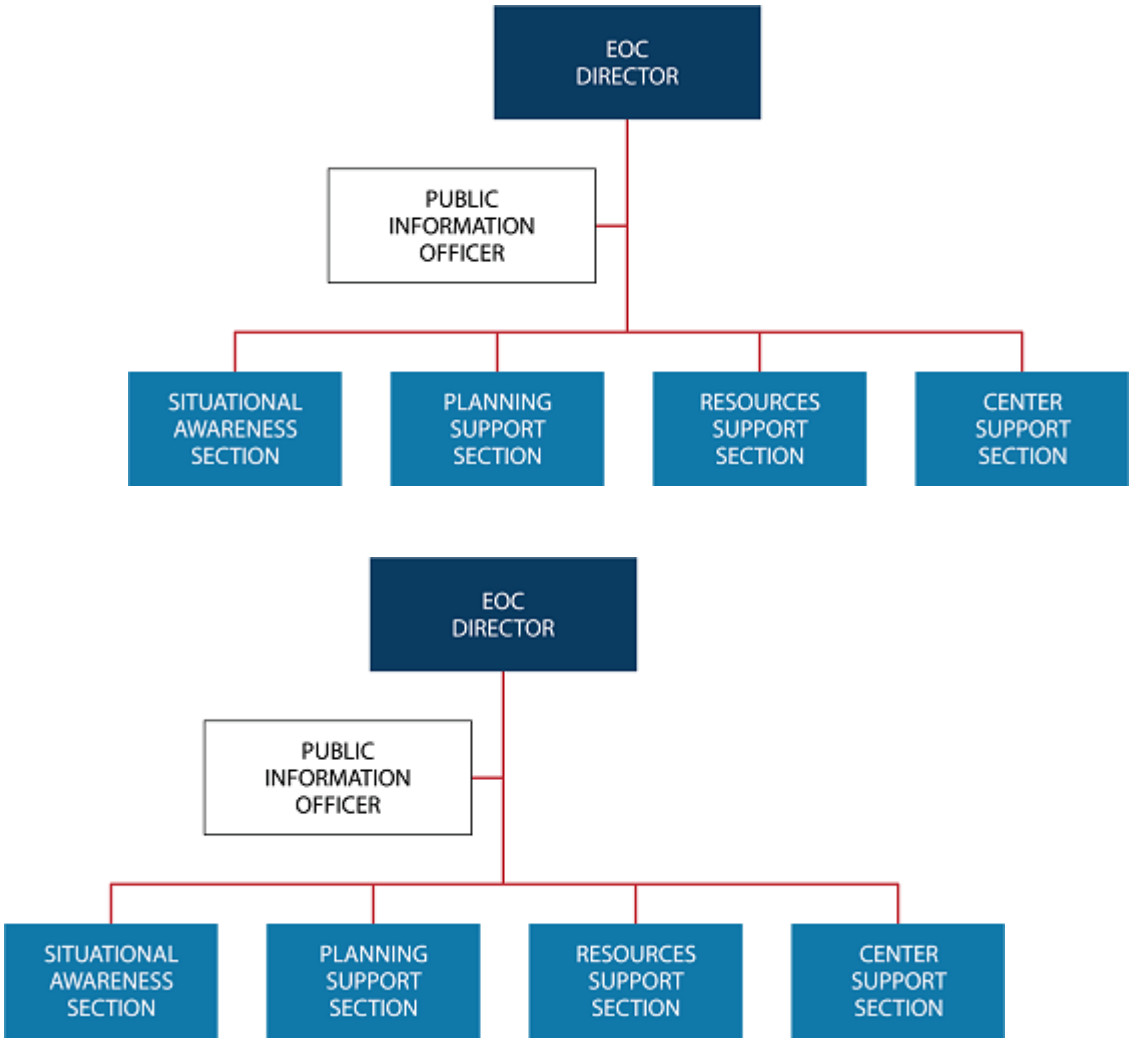
Many jurisdictions/organizations configure their EOCs using the standard ICS organizational structure, either exactly as it is performed in the field or with slight modifications. The structure is familiar and it aligns with the on-scene incident organization.





Visual 5: Incident Support Model (ISM) EOC Structure

Jurisdictions/organizations that focus their EOC team's efforts on information, planning, and resource support may choose to separate the situational awareness function from planning and combine operations and logistics functions into an incident support structure.



Visual 6: Departmental EOC Structure

Jurisdictions/organizations may opt instead to use their day-to-day departmental/agency structure and relationships in their EOC. By operating in the context of their normal relationships, department/agency representatives can function in the EOC with minimal preparation or startup time.

Visual 7: Discussion Question

What type of EOC configuration is used in your organization?

Visual 8: EOC Activation and Deactivation

Emergency Operations Centers are activated for a variety of incidents, threats and events.

Some circumstances that might trigger center activation include:

- Multiple jurisdictions or agencies involved in an incident.
- The Incident Commander or Unified Command indicates an incident could expand rapidly, involve cascading effects or require additional resources.
- A similar incident in the past led to EOC activation.
- The EOC Director or an appointed or elected official directs EOC activation.
- An incident is imminent such as predicted hurricane, flooding, hazardous weather, or elevated threat levels.
- Threshold events described in an emergency operations plan occur.
- Significant impacts to the population are anticipated.

Visual 9: EOC Activation Levels

Emergency Operations Centers frequently have multiple activation levels to allow for:

- Response scaled to the incident
- Delivery of the exact resources needed
- A level of coordination appropriate to the incident

The level of activity within a center often increases as the size, scope, and complexity of the incident grow. If the incident requires additional support and coordination, the EOC director may activate additional staff to involve more disciplines, mobilize additional resources, inform the public, address media inquiries, involve senior elected and appointed officials, and request outside assistance.

	Activation Level	Description
3	Normal Operations/Steady State	• Activities that are normal for the EOC when no incident or specific risk or hazard has been identified • Routine watch and warning activities if the EOC normally houses this function
2	Enhanced Steady-State/Partial Activation	• Certain EOC team members/organizations are activated to monitor a credible threat, risk, or hazard and/or to support the response to a new and potentially evolving incident
1	Full Activation	• EOC team is activated, including personnel from all assisting agencies, to support the response to a major incident or credible threat

Visual 10: Discussion Question

What is an example of an incident that would cause an Enhanced Stead-State/Partial Activation?

What is an example of an incident that would cause a Full Activation?

Visual 11: Lesson 5: Emergency Operations Centers Summary

The lesson presented an overview of NIMS Emergency Operations Centers.

The lesson specifically discussed Emergency Operations Center:

- EOC Functions
- EOC Staff Organization Models
- EOC Activation Levels

The next lesson will introduce you to other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity.

Lesson 6: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity

Visual 1: Lesson 6: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity

This lesson presents an overview of the Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity.

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the Multiagency Coordination Group (MAC Group)
- Describe the Joint Information System (JIS)
- Describe Interconnectivity of NIMS Command and Coordination Structures

(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

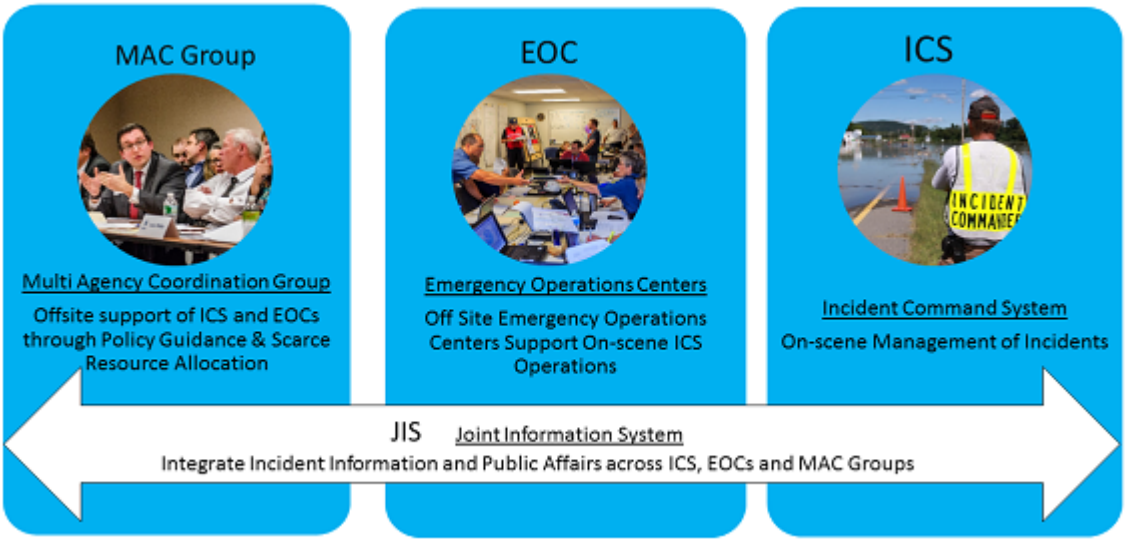
Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

Visual 2: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity Introduction

The Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Operations Centers (EOC), which were discussed in the prior lessons of this course, are two of the four NIMS Command and Coordination structures.

In this lesson, we will learn about Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups and the Joint Information System (JIS), and discuss the interconnectivity between the NIMS Command and Coordination structures.



Visual 3: MAC Group Definition and Composition - ILT ONLY

Note

During incidents, MAC Groups:

- Act as a policy-level body
- Support resource prioritization and allocation
- Make cooperative multi-agency decisions
- Enable decision making among elected and appointed officials and the Incident Commander responsible for managing the incident.

The MAC Group does not perform incident command functions, nor does it replace the primary functions of EOCs or other operations, coordination, or dispatch organizations.

MAC Group Definition and Composition

Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Group) are part of the off-site incident management structure of NIMS.

MAC Groups are also sometimes referred to as policy groups.

MAC Group members are typically agency administrators, executives or their designees from stakeholder agencies or organizations impacted by and with resources committed to the incident. The MAC Group may also include representatives from non-governmental organizations such as businesses and volunteer organizations.

During incidents, MAC Groups:
• Act as a policy-level body
• Support resource prioritization and allocation
• Make cooperative multi-agency decisions
• Enable decision making among elected and appointed officials and the Incident Commander responsible for managing the incident.

The MAC Group does not perform incident command functions, nor does it replace the primary functions of EOCs or other operations, coordination, or dispatch organizations.

Visual 4: Discussion Question

What are some examples of how a MAC Group or policy group can help during an incident?

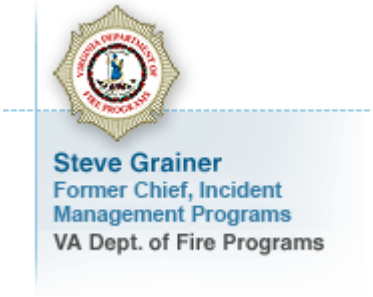
Visual 5: Elected and Appointed Officials

Elected and appointed officials such as governors, tribal leaders, mayors, city managers and county commissioners are key players in incident management because they are responsible for:

- The safety and welfare of their constituents
- The overall effectiveness of incident management efforts within their jurisdiction

Elected and appointed officials operate at the policy level of incident management. The MAC Group provides a way for these policy-level officials to work together, enhancing unity of effort at the senior level.

Visual 6: Voices of Experience: Elected and Appointed Officials



Steve Grainer, Former Chief, Incident Management Programs, VA Dept. of Fire Programs

"Our elected and senior appointed officials have first a moral obligation to do whatever is possible to provide for the well-being, the welfare if you will, of the citizens that elected them and entrusted them with their well-being. On that count my feeling is that elected officials should at a minimum be familiar enough with the core reasoning behind NIMS and the primary components of NIMS, the concepts on which NIMS is built."

Visual 7: Voices of Experience: Elected and Appointed Officials - Continued

"Our elected and senior appointed officials have first a moral obligation to do whatever is possible to provide for the well-being, the welfare if you will, of the citizens that elected them and entrusted them with their well-being. On that count my feeling is that elected officials should at a minimum be familiar enough with the core reasoning behind NIMS and the primary components of NIMS, the concepts on which NIMS is built."

Visual 8: Voices of Experience: Elected and Appointed Officials

Curry Mayer, Former Training & Exercise Chief, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA)

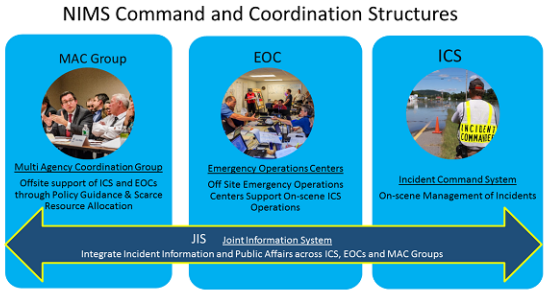
"NIMS has let people know that everyone who is responsible for public welfare really should have at least an understanding of what the NIMS is about, what are the important pieces of it, what do you have to know to be able to plug into it, and how does it facilitate all of those levels of government working together. So I think the important piece is that appointed officials and our elected officials are those that, they really have two roles. One is that they are charged with protecting the public, and then from their point of view, how do they know that they will be able to do that, and NIMS provides a system that is workable anywhere in the country so that any government entity or any response agency that is needed can plug into the system. And there is the requirement that not only do you, are you aware of what the system is but that you practice it, that you have some training in it so you're not only, so it's not just a check the box but that you are actually able to perform a role in the system and ensure that the public is secured for in a large event."

Visual 9: Joint Information System (JIS) Purpose

The Joint Information System (JIS) is the fourth NIMS Command and Coordination structure.

JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a unified organization that provides consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely and complete information to the public and stakeholders during incident operations.

JIS operates across and supports the other NIMS Command and Coordination structures: ICS, EOC and MAC Group.



Joint Information System (JIS) Purpose - Continued - ILT ONLY

Note

Joint Information System (JIS) Purpose (Continued)

JIS activities include:

- Developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages
- Developing, recommending and executing public information plans and strategies
- Advise on public affairs issues that could affect the incident management effort
- Addressing and managing rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence

The JIS performs these activities in support of the Incident Commander or Unified Command, the EOC Director, and the MAC Group.

Visual 10: JIS Description and Components: PIO and JIC

The Public Information Officer (PIO) and Joint Information Center (JIC) are two supporting elements of the JIS.

The PIO is a key member of ICS and EOC organizations, though they might go by a different title in EOCs. PIO functions include:

- Advising the Incident Commander, Unified Command or EOC director on public information matters
- Gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating accurate, accessible, and timely information
- Handling inquiries from the media, public and elected officials
- Providing emergency public information and warnings
- Conducting rumor monitoring and response

The JIC is a central location that houses JIS operations and where public information staff perform essential information and public affairs functions.

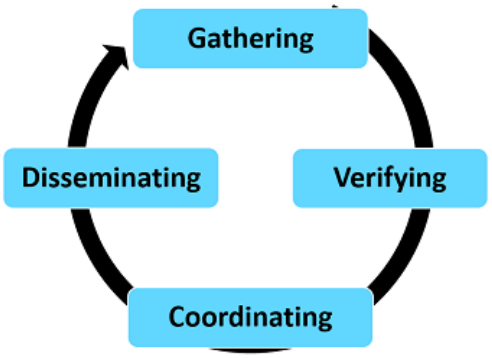
Normally, an incident should have a single JIC, but the JIS is flexible and can accommodate multiple JICs if necessary.

Visual 11: JIS Description and Components: Information

In some cases, lives will depend on getting information to the public quickly and those responsible take necessary steps to alert the public.

Getting information to the public and stakeholders during an incident requires an ongoing information cycle:

- **Gathering** complete information for the public and other stakeholders
- **Verifying** information to ensure accuracy
- **Coordinating** information with other public information personnel who are part of the JIS to ensure consistency
- **Disseminating** consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely and complete information to the public and stakeholders



Visual 12: Public Information Communications Planning

Well-developed and coordinated public information, education and communications plans enable the sharing of public safety information.

This can include information such as lifesaving measures or evacuation routes.

The information communications plan can include:

- Draft news releases
- Media lists
- Contact information for elected/appointed officials, community leaders, private sector organizations, and public service organizations

Public information communications plans should be included in training and exercises in order to prepare for actual incidents.

Visual 13: Voices of Experience: Public Information

Voices of Experience: Public Information

Curry Mayer, Former Training & Exercise Chief, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA)

Public information is of course important in any event, and NIMS emphasizes that public information in a large event be coordinated so that all those entities—either jurisdictions, agencies, or levels of government—those Public Information Officers come together and have a joint message. So different agencies that, it might be that you have, you know, transportation and food and agriculture that are involved in the event so what are, what those public, the public information message, although one coordinated message needs to include the elements from those different agencies that are involved, and who are the stakeholders, who are the people that have been impacted, and ensuring that your message is coordinated so that everyone that needs to have some kind of information about the event gets what they need from that. The new thing for NIMS is that each level of government and each agency involved has a public information responsibility, but they come together and have one, one message that comes out.

Bill Campbell, Former Director of Training, NY State Emergency Management Office

Public information is number one, it's one of the command staff positions within the ICS structures so that tells you right up front that in the incident command system we place a lot of emphasis on public information and information in general. I think the importance and significance of public information is higher and greater now than it's ever been in our history. You've got to have a coordinated way to get a consistent message out. We've got to be very

clear and concise in our message to the public as to what we want them to do. Public information is more than just the public, it's also the response community too.

Daryl Lee Spiewak, Former Emergency Programs Manager, Brazos River Authority, TX

We need to have a single point of contact for the media so that we can get our information out to the general public. We use the media to get our message out. The citizens of our jurisdiction expect information from us. They want to know what we're doing, want to know why we are doing things, and more important they want to know what they should be doing. We also found out that if the media isn't kept in the loop, they are going to go out and start finding stories themselves, finding out information themselves, that means then that we are losing control of the message. The message is being developed by the individual reporters in the media and that's going to start confusing our citizens and get the wrong message to them. We need a coordinated effort for public information for the safety of the public and the security of the public and that's what public information allows us to do.

Ron Britton, Former NIMS Coordinator, FEMA, Region 10

Public information is for public safety. We really want that information for people in the environs as well as people who are part of the response community to know what the situation is. They need to know that to stay safe and to perform best. It can also be used to establish information exchanged with the local public to know evacuation routes, where the hospitals they should go to—any number of things that would be of safety interest to the public. One of the reasons it was developed was to provide a consistent message so that different people in different parts of the organization aren't reporting just what they are seeing, but that there is a centralized system that allows that information to be one-stop shopping and one message that goes out to the public to keep everyone informed, and that's all very, very safety related, and I think that's a real key point.

Visual 14: Discussion Question

Why is it important that the JIS operates across and support the other NIMS Command and Coordination structures?

Who would you include in your Joint Information System?

What are the supporting elements of the JIS?

Visual 15: Interconnectivity of NIMS Command and Coordination Structures

NIMS structures enable incident managers to manage incidents in a unified, consistent manner.

Interconnectivity of NIMS structures is important to allow personnel in diverse geographic areas, with differing roles and responsibilities, and operating within various functions of ICS and/or EOCs to integrate their efforts through common organizational structures, terminology, and processes.

Note

If required resources are not available locally, they can be obtained under mutual aid agreements from neighboring jurisdictions, or State, tribal, territorial, and interstate sources and assigned to the control of the Incident Commander or Unified Command.

Visual 16: Interconnectivity of NIMS Command and Coordination Structures (Continued)

- When an incident occurs or threatens, local emergency personnel manage response using NIMS principles and ICS.
- If the incident is or becomes large or complex, local EOCs activate.
- EOCs receive senior level guidance from MAC Groups.
- A Joint Information Center (JIC) manages the Joint Information System (JIS) operations to ensure coordinated and accurate public messaging among all levels: ICS, EOC and MAC Group. NIMS structures enable incident managers to manage incidents in a unified, consistent manner.

Visual 17: Federal Support to Response Activities

The Federal Government has a variety of capabilities and resources to support domestic incidents.

Most incidents are resolved using capabilities available from the local jurisdiction.

Larger incidents are resolved with support from by neighboring jurisdictions, or State, tribal, territorial, and interstate sources.

The Federal Government only becomes involved with a response:

- When state governors or tribal leaders request Federal assistance and their requests are approved
- When Federal interests are involved
- As statute or regulation authorizes or requires

In most cases the Federal Government plays a supporting role to state, tribal, or territorial governments by providing Federal assistance to the affected jurisdictions.

For example, the Federal Government provides assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) when the President declares an emergency or major disaster.

In some cases the Federal Government may play a leading role in response, such as when an incident occurs on Federal property or when the Federal Government has primary jurisdiction (such as in a terrorist attack or a major oil spill).

Visual 18: Federal Support to Response Activities

The Federal Government has a variety of capabilities and resources to support domestic incidents.

Most incidents are resolved using capabilities available from the local jurisdiction.

Larger incidents are resolved with support from by neighboring jurisdictions, or State, tribal, territorial, and interstate sources.

The Federal Government only becomes involved with a response:

- When state governors or tribal leaders request Federal assistance and their requests are approved
- When Federal interests are involved
- As statute or regulation authorizes or requires

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Visual 19: Discussion Question

What are some examples of how the NIMS Command and Coordination Structures Interconnected?

Visual 20: Lesson 6: Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity Summary

The lesson presented other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity.

The lesson specifically discussed the :

- Multiagency Coordination Group (MAC Group)
- Joint Information System (JIS)
- Interconnectivity of NIMS Command and Coordination Structures

The next lesson will introduce you to Communications and Information Management.

Lesson 7: Communications and Information Management

Visual 1: Lesson 7: Communications and Information Management

This lesson presents an overview of Communications and Information Management.

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify the four key principles of communications and information management.
- Describe the communications management practices and considerations.
- Identify how incident information is used.
- Identify the three concepts related to Communications Standards and Formats.

(National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017)

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Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

Visual 2: What Is NIMS Communications and Information Management?

Effective emergency response depends on communication—the ability to maintain situational awareness through the constant flow of information.

What is NIMS Communications and Information Management? - Video Transcript

Effective emergency response depends on communication—the ability to maintain situational awareness through the constant flow of information.

During and after Hurricane Katrina, communications systems failed, severely hampering information flow and response operations. In New Orleans, most of the city was flooded. The combined effects of wind, rain, storm surge, breached levees, and flooding knocked out virtually the entire infrastructure—electrical power, roads, water supply and sewage, and communications systems.

[Thomas Stone, Fire Chief, St. Bernard Parish: "We lost our communications system, and when you are not able to communicate, you can't coordinate your response. You never think that you will lose your entire infrastructure."]

Communications problems are not limited to systems being destroyed or not functioning. Similar problems arise when agencies cannot exchange needed information because of incompatible systems. NIMS identifies several important features of public safety communications and information systems.

Communications systems need to be . . .

Interoperable—able to communicate within and across agencies and jurisdictions.

Reliable—able to function in the context of any kind of emergency.

Scalable—suitable for use on a small or large scale as the needs of the incident dictate.

Portable—built on standardized radio technologies, protocols, and frequencies.

Resilient—able to perform despite damaged or lost infrastructure.

Redundant—able to use alternate communications methods when primary systems go out.

Secure—able to protect sensitive or classified information from those without a need to know.

Regardless of the communications hardware being used, standardized procedures, protocols, and formats are necessary to gather, collate, synthesize, and disseminate incident information. And in a crisis, life-and-death decisions depend on the information we receive.

This lesson introduces you to the NIMS Communications and Information Management component.

Visual 3: Communications and Information Management Introduction

In order to maintain situational awareness, incident personnel update incident information continually.

Effective incident management relies on flexible communications and information systems that provide accurate, timely, and relevant information.

During an incident, this integrated approach:

- Links all incident personnel, whether on-scene, in an EOC, or in another support location
- Maintains communications connectivity and situational awareness

Four key communications and information systems principles support the ability of incident managers to maintain this constant flow of information during an incident:

- Interoperability
- Reliability, Scalability, and Portability
- Resilience and Redundancy
- Security

Visual 4: Interoperability

Interoperability is the capacity for emergency management and response personnel to interact and work well together.

Interoperable communications systems enable personnel and organizations to communicate:

- Within and across jurisdictions and organizations
- Via voice, data, and video systems
- In real time

Visual 5: Reliability, Portability and Scalability

Communications and information systems should be designed to be:

Reliable - familiar to users, adaptable to new technology and dependable in any situation

Portable - can effectively be transported, deployed, and integrated to enable support of incidents across jurisdictions

Scalable - able to expand to support situations, from small to large scale, and support the rapid increase in the number of system users

Visual 6: Resiliency and Redundancy

Resilient and redundant communications ensure the uninterrupted flow of information.

Resiliency - systems can withstand and continue to perform after damage or loss of infrastructure

Redundancy - when primary communication methods fail, duplicate systems enable continuity through alternate communication methods

Visual 7: Security

Because some incident information is sensitive, voice, data, networks, and systems should be secure to the appropriate level to control access to sensitive or restricted information.

For example, law-enforcement may discuss sensitive, personally identifiable or classified information and must ensure this information is shielded in accordance with applicable laws.

Additionally, incident communications and information sharing should comply with data protection and privacy laws.

Visual 8: Discussion Question

What happens if one of these four key communication and information systems principles are not addressed or fail?

Visual 9: Communications Management Characteristics

Incident management personnel must manage incident communications and information effectively using a variety of communications methods.

Management procedures should change to use new technologies and improved methods of exchanging information.

Visual 10: Standardized Communications Types

Successful communications and information management requires the use of standard communications types:

- **Strategic Communications**: High-level directions, including resource priority decisions, roles and responsibilities determinations, and overall incident management courses of action.
- **Tactical Communications**: Communications among and between on-scene command and tactical personnel and cooperating agencies and organizations.
- **Support Communications**: Coordination of support of strategic and tactical communications (e.g., communications among hospitals concerning resource ordering, dispatching, and tracking; traffic and public works communications).
- **Public Communications**: Alerts and warnings, press conferences.

Visual 11: Policy and Planning

All stakeholders should be involved in communications planning to formulate integrated and interoperable communications plans, technology and equipment standards.

Coordinated communications policy and planning supports effective communications and management of information.

Communications planning determines:

- What communications systems and platforms are used
- Who can use the communications systems
- What information is essential
- What the technical requirements are for communications equipment and systems

Visual 12: Agreements

Agreements should be in place between all parties in a jurisdiction's emergency operations plan to ensure that the communications elements within plans and procedures are in effect at the time of an incident.

Agreements typically specify the communication systems and platforms that the parties will use to share information.

Agreements also typically include connection of networks, data format standards, and cybersecurity agreements.

Visual 13: Equipment Standards

Communications equipment standards are designed to produce unified communications systems.

When developing communications systems, personnel should consider:

- The range of conditions under which personnel will use the systems.
- The range of potential system users.
- The current nationally recognized communications standards.
- The need for durable equipment.

Visual 14: Training

Training and exercises that employ interoperable communications systems and equipment enable personnel to understand their capabilities and limitations before an incident.

Visual 15: Discussion Question

Which of the following are Strategic Communications?

•Communications between on-scene command and tactical personnel and cooperating agencies and organizations.

•High-level directions, resource priority decisions, roles and responsibilities determinations, and incident management courses of action.

•Coordination of support of strategic and tactical communications.

•Emergency alerts and warnings; press conferences.

Visual 16: Incident Information

During an incident, timely and accurate information assists decision making at all levels.

Information is used for many functions within ICS, EOCs, MAC Groups, and JIS, including:

- Aiding in planning
- Communicating with the public, including emergency protective measures
- Determining incident cost
- Assessing the need for additional involvement of non-governmental organizations or private sector resources
- Identifying safety issues
- Resolving information requests

Refer to your Student Manual for more information about Incident Reports, Incident Action Plans, and Data Collection and Processing.

Visual 17: Incident Reports

Incident reports enhance situational awareness and ensure that personnel can access needed information.

Types of incident reports include:

- **Situation Report (SITREP):** Regular reports that contain information regarding the incident status during the past operational period and the specific details for an incident.
- **Status Report:** Reports, such as spot reports, that include vital and/or time-sensitive information. Status reports are typically function-specific and less formal than SITREPS.

Incident reports should use a common format to enable other jurisdictions and organizations to easily access incident information.

Visual 18: Incident Action Plans

Incident-specific plans improve situational awareness and describe the objectives and tactics of the incident management.

Incident-specific plans include:

- **Incident Action Plan (IAP):** Plans containing the incident objectives established by the Incident Commander or Unified Command and addressing tactics and support activities for the planned operational period (generally 12 to 24 hours).

Visual 19: Data Collection and Processing

ICS, EOCs, MAC Groups, and JIS all rely on accurate and timely information to support decision making.

When collecting data, personnel should:

- Follow data collection techniques and definitions
- Conduct analysis of data
- Transmit data through appropriate channels

Data collection and processing include the following standard elements:

1. Initial size up/ rapid assessment
2. Data collection plans
3. Validation
4. Analysis
5. Dissemination
6. Updating

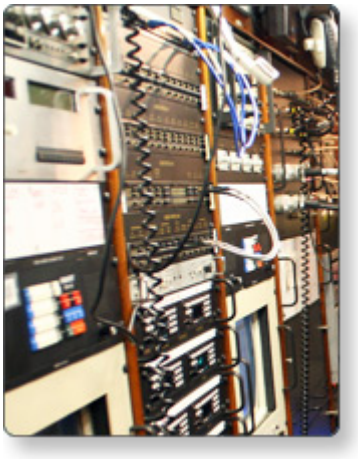
Visual 20: Discussion Question

What challenges has your organization faced in incident communications?

Visual 21: Communications Standards and Formats

During an incident, all incident personnel are linked by common communications standards and formats:

- Common Terminology, Plain Language, and Compatibility
- Technology Use and Procedures
- Information Security/Operational Security

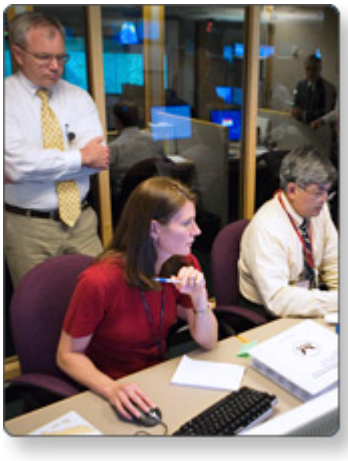


Visual 22: Common Terminology, Plain Language, Compatibility

Common Terminology: The use of common terminology helps incident management personnel communicate and coordinate.

Plain Language: Personnel should use plain language and clear text; avoid using organizational acronyms or jargon such as "10-codes" during incidents involving multiple organizations.

Data Interoperability: Common communications protocols enable the dissemination of information among all incident management elements.



Visual 23: Technology Use and Procedures

Technology provides many resources for incident management.

Personnel use technology tools to increase situational awareness for both incident management and the public.

Examples of communications technologies include:

- Radio and telephone systems
- Public warning and notification systems
- Hardware, software and internet-based systems and applications such as Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) and incident management software
- Social media

Information transmitted through communications technologies should follow planned and standardized methods and conform to information sharing standards, procedures, and protocols.

Social media provides unique considerations and tools for incident management that can support activities such as information monitoring and gathering, distributing public information and warning, producing maps and incident visualizations, and matching information resources to identified needs.

Visual 24: Information Security/Operational Security (OPSEC)

Access to some types of restricted or classified information depends on applicable law as well as an individuals security clearance and need to know.

The need for confidentiality can complicate information sharing and create challenges that must be resolved.

For example, intelligence information that is normally restricted to use within the law enforcement community might need to be shared with emergency management, fire or public health in order to protect lives.

Visual 25: Voices of Experience: Prompting Effective Communications

Kristy Plourde, Emergency Management Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard

"We have HF, UHF, and VHF, all these different frequencies and radios and radio frequencies and what's neat about NIMS is NIMS is helping push everyone to change and establish better intercommunications. In the past we just kind of said, well, too bad they don't have the right radio with us so we'll just do this little inefficient method of communication by calling ashore and having the guy talk to the other guy and then have him radio back to have the boat come over and pick us up. That's very inefficient and it's very wrong, and we just kind of wave our arms and go, oh, it's just too bad. What NIMS is doing is pushing it and saying, hey, change, have this good intercommunications, have systems, electronic systems that support, you know, interfrequency variations, and establishing common frequencies that everyone can use."

Visual 26: Voices of Experience: Prompting Effective Communications

Daryl Lee Spiewak, Former Emergency Programs Manager, Brazos River Authority, TX

"One of the difficulties that we've had in coordinating response is the different radio systems and the different pieces of equipment—whether it is part of the Internet, computer programs, telephones, cell phones, satellite phones, whatever. If you can't talk to each other, you are not going to be able to work together. So, part of the interoperability is making sure that our equipment is compatible. We can talk. The second part of equipment compatibility is that the equipment works together. You can't take a fire truck that has a 6-inch hose and try to put it to a fire hydrant that operates with a 4-inch connector. So if I take my truck from my facility and I bring it out to help you, if I can't get the water pumped in, if I can't hook our systems together, we're not going to be able to work in a coordinated effort. Second thing is interoperability between people and organizations. Part of that is the verbal communications where I say something, use a particular term, and it means the same thing to you. If the terms that I use mean different things to different people, we're going to have a hard time communicating and doing what needs to be done to accomplish our mission. So, it's a little bit of both. The equipment, the people, and then how do people work together within the organization to accomplish those objectives and get the mission done."

Visual 27: Lesson 7: Communications and Information Management Summary

The lesson presented an overview of Communications and Information Management.

The lesson specifically discussed the:

- Key Principles of Communications and Information management
- Communications and Information Management Characteristics
- Elements of Incident Information
- Communication Standards and Format

The next lesson will provide a summary of the information introduced in this course along with additional resources.

Lesson 8: Course Summary

Visual 1: Lesson 8: Course Summary

Congratulations! You should now be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of NIMS concepts, principles, and components.

The course specifically discussed:

- NIMS Overview
- Fundamentals and Concepts of NIMS
- NIMS Resource Management
- NIMS Management Characteristics
- Incident Command System (ICS)
- Emergency Operations Centers (EOC)
- Other NIMS Structures and Interconnectivity
- Communications and Information Management

The next few visuals will describe additional documents and resources that can provide assistance with understanding NIMS and its components.

Reference

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Doctrine.

Visual 2: Related NIMS Documents and Resources

FEMA has developed a variety of documents and resources to support NIMS implementation.

The hub for all NIMS information is http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system.

Links related to this course material include:

- FEMA's Emergency Management Institute: https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx

NIMS Training Program: http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_training_program.pdf

- NIMS Intelligence and Investigations Function Guidance and Field Operations Guide: http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/84807

Guidelines for the Credentialing of Personnel: http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_cred_guidelines_report.pdf

- ICS Forms Booklet: http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/33584

FEMA's NIMS Web site (https://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system) provides guidance on NIMS implementation.

FEMA's Independent Study Program (https://training.fema.gov/is/) offers numerous courses related to the NIMS components.

The ICS Resource Center (https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/index.htm) includes a summary of ICS principles, job aids, position checklists, forms, and reference materials.

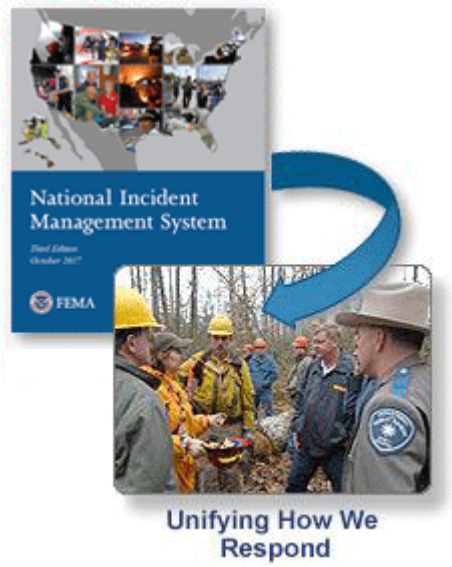
The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) (https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/documents/1269813/1269861/HSEEP_Revision_Apr13_Final.pdf/65bc7843-1d10-47b7-bc0d-45118a4d21da) provides a standardized policy, methodology, and language for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating all exercises.

The SAFECOM Web site (https://www.dhs.gov/safecom) provides the emergency response community with information, best practices, and resources for meeting communications and interoperability needs.

Visual 3: NIMS Summary

NIMS is a comprehensive nationwide framework developed through a consensus process based on incident management best practices proven by thousands of responders.

NIMS is about unifying how we respond. In time of crisis, our communities and country count on us to be able to work together as a team. We all must commit to a common way of doing business. And that way of doing business is NIMS.



"As NIMS continues to mature, its purpose remains the same: to enhance unity of effort by providing a common approach for managing incidents." Brock Long, FEMA Administrator

Visual 4: Certificate of Completion

To receive a certificate of completion, students must take the multiple-choice Final Exam, and score 75 percent on the test.

To take the exam:

- Students must submit their tests online, and upon successful completion receive an e-mail message with a link to their electronic certification.
  - Go to https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b.
  - Click on "Take Final Exam."

Visual 5: Course Evaluation

Completing the course evaluation form is important. Your comments will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of this course and make changes for future versions.

Please use the course evaluation forms provided by the organization sponsoring the course.