Nursing Home Incident Command System

Module 2

Introduction to the Incident Command System

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This program has been produced by the Center for HICS Education and Training with funding from the California Association of Health Facilities. The materials contained within are provided for Nursing Homes and other Long Term Care Facilities in development of emergency preparedness and response programs.

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What is ICS?

- A standardized, all-hazard approach to incident management; usable to manage all types of emergencies, routine or planned events, by establishing a clear chain of command

- ICS ensures
  - Safety of responders and others
  - Achievement of tactical objectives
  - Effective use of resources

NHICS
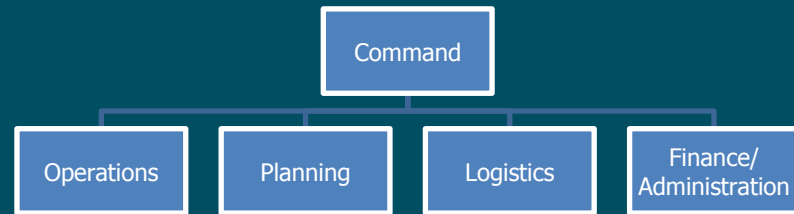NURSING HOME INCIDENT
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Fundamental Features of ICS

- Common terminology
- Modular organization
- Management by objectives
- Reliance on an Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- Manageable span of control
- Pre-designated incident locations/facilities
- Resource management
- Integrated communications
- Common command structure

Management Functions

- Command

- Operations (Doers)

- Planning (Planners)

- Logistics (Getters)

- Finance/Administration (Payers)

Command

- Only position always activated in an incident regardless of its nature

- Sets the objectives, devises strategies and priorities

- Maintains overall responsibility for managing the incident

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Operations

- Conducts the tactical ("doing") operations
- Carries out the plan using defined objectives
- Directs all needed resources

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Planning

- Collects and evaluates information for decision support

- Maintains resource status

- Prepares documents such as the Incident Action Plan

- Maintains documentation for incident reports

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Logistics and Finance/Administration

- Logistics
  - Provides support, resources, and other essential services to meet the operational objectives

- Finance/Administration
  - Monitors costs related to the incident
  - Providing accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses

Common Terminology

- Provides for a clear message and sharing of information

- Avoids use of codes, slang, and/or discipline specific nomenclature

- Defines the common organizational structure

- Facilitates the ability to share resources

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Modular Organization

- ICS structure begins from the top and expands as needed by the event

- Positions within the structure are activated as dictated by the incident size and complexity

- Only those functions or positions necessary for the incident are activated
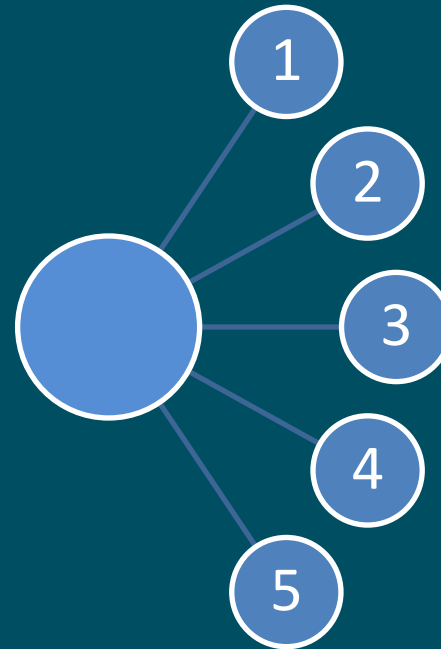
Management by Objectives

- Incident Commander initiates the response and sets the overall command and control objectives

- Objectives are established after an assessment of the incident and resource needs are completed

- Clearly defined objectives allow staff to focus on the response and avoid duplication of effort

Incident Action Planning

- Development of objectives is documented in the Incident Action Plan (IAP)

- Reflects the overall strategy for incident management

- Forms tailored for nursing homes to support the IAP process
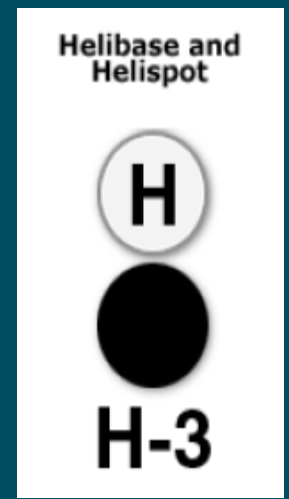
Manageable Span of Control

- Maintains a span of control which is effective and manageable

- Optimum span of control is 1 supervisor to 5 reporting personnel
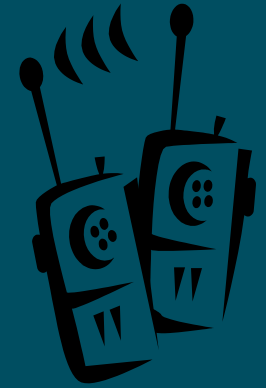
Pre-designated Incident Locations/Facilities

- Location of response and coordination sites should be pre-planned

- Planners within the nursing home should identify sites for ICS management, staging areas for the receipt of supplies and equipment, and evacuation sites if required

Staging Area

S

On a map, the Staging Area appears as a circle with an S in it.

Helibase and Helispot

H

H-3

Incident Command Post

On a map, the ICP location appears as a green and white square.

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Resource Management

- Resources used are categorized as tactical and support
  - Tactical; includes personnel, major equipment available or potentially available
  - Support; those items which support the incident, such as food, equipment, communications, supplies, vehicles
  - Knowledge of the available tactical and support resources is critical to the success of the response

Integrated Communication

- Three elements within integrated communications:

  – Modes: hardware systems that transfer information, i.e. radios, cell phones, pagers, etc.

  – Plans: should be developed in advance on how to best use the available resources

  – Networks: should be identified internal and external to the nursing home

    - This will determine the procedures and processes for transferring information internally and externally

Common Command Structure

- Structure that identifies the core principles for an efficient chain of command
    - Unity of Command states that each person within the response reports to only one supervisor
    - Single Command exists when only a single agency or discipline responds

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Six Steps to the Incident Planning Process

- Understand the policy and direction
- Assessing the situation
- Establishing incident objectives
- Determining appropriate strategies to achieve the objectives
- Providing tactical direction and ensuring that it is followed
  – Example: The correct resources assigned to complete a task and their performance monitored
- Providing necessary back-up
  – Assigning more or fewer resources
  – Changing tactics

Key Points Review

- Benefits of ICS are:
  - Manages routine or planned events
  - Establishes a clear chain of command
  - Provides a common structure and common terminology
  - Ensures key functions are covered and eliminates duplication
  - Manageable and scalable to the scope and magnitude of the incident
    - Incident Commander - always activated
    - Other positions - activated as needed

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Module 2 - Self Evaluation Questions

1. The Incident Command Structure _____

    a. is only applicable in governmental settings.
    b. is a standardized, all-hazard approach to incident management.
    c. can only be used in large facilities and institutions.
    d. is only used on large events

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Module 2 - Questions

2. Which of the following is NOT a purpose of ICS?

    a. Safety of responders and others

    b. Achievement of tactical objectives

    c. Effective use of resources

    d. A way to learn a new job

Module 2 - Questions

3. Fundamental features of ICS include:

a. Common terminology, management by objectives, common command structure

b. Common terminology, management by objectives, staff function in normal daily roles

c. Management by objectives, common command structure, large organizational chart where all roles must be filled

d. Short phrases, small number of positions

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Module 2 - Questions

4. The five management functions of ICS are:

a. Administrator, DON, Admitting, Dietary, Environmental

b. Fire Chief, EMS Chief, DOH, Mayor, Hospital Administrator

c. Command, Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Finance/ Administration

d. Command, Operations, DON, Planning, Finance

Module 2 - Questions

5. Which is not part of the six-step incident planning process?

   a. Assessing the situation

   b. Establishing incident objectives

   c. Determining appropriate strategies to achieve the objectives

   d. Determining which restaurant delivers after hours

   e. Providing tactical direction

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