

ICS Communication Exercise

Overview

When assigned a position in an Incident Command System (ICS), the exchange of information up and down the command structure is vital to your success in fulfilling that role. This exercise is an opportunity to practice ICS communication.

Objectives

When completed, you will be better able to:

- Describe the responsibilities of the ICS roles
- Identify the roles needed for a particular emergency/event
- Describe the flow of information up and down the ICS
- Identify potential overloads/bottlenecks in the ICS
- Identify resource(s) for ICS planning

Group Activity

1. Read the scenario below (or alternate scenario provided by your facilitator)

Background: A large construction project is underway at the wastewater treatment plant, involving a Primary Contractor (PC) and many subs. During construction, the PC has control of the project/site.

Time: Monday, July 13, 9:00 am

Weather: 75 F, SW wind, 2-5 mph, sunny forecast

Situation/Event: A call comes to the Friendship Water Treatment Plant operator, per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), that a large section of scaffolding has collapsed. 3 contract workers are injured/trapped and another one has obviously expired due to injury. One maintenance employee and one engineer from the Friendship crew were injured in the collapse, condition unknown. The 911 dispatcher has been called.

The treatment plant operator calls the IC and relays the info. The IC calls the Chief Executive who assigns it a Level 1 rating (worst case situation, potentially requiring a fully staffed ICS).

In 5 minutes, all required IC positions, or back-ups, are notified by phone, radio, or PA to report to the designated IC Post in the Administration Building.

2. Using the ICS Chart provided:

- Identify roles/positions the lead person will assume (may have various job titles— Incident Commander, Superintendent, Mayor, Fire Chief)
- Identify roles/positions not needed for this scenario
- Participants assume other roles/positions on the ICS Chart, as assigned by the facilitator

Getting information in the ICS

1. For your role/position, write 1-5 questions on the worksheet below that you need to have answered to fulfill your duties/responsibilities. Identify who you think will answer your questions.
2. Have an open discussion with other participants regarding who will answer your questions, updating any of your initial choices, as needed.
3. Prioritize your questions from most important to less important and write your top 3 questions on Sticky Notes.
4. You will use the Sticky Notes to show where the needed information can be obtained during the response. Do this by placing each Sticky Note on the ICS Chart on the position/role where you think the answer can be obtained. If a role/position is the 'go to' for several questions, place Sticky Notes on top of each other.
5. When all Sticky Notes have been placed, the Facilitator will lead a group discussion. Make any necessary updates to your worksheet to align duties and information needed. Are there information needs that cannot be met?
6. Are there any positions that will become a bottleneck for getting or providing information? Do the duties of this position allow delegating? Is delegating an option for handling the information need?

ICS Communication Activity Worksheet

My ICS role: _____

Questions I need answered:

1. _____

Who will answer this question? _____

2. _____

Who will answer this question? _____

3. _____

Who will answer this question? _____

4. _____

Who will answer this question? _____

5. _____

Who will answer this question? _____

Discuss

1. Review the Objectives – Were they achieved?
2. Going forward, how has the exercise made you more aware of the ICS at your organization?

A resource for the overall development/responsibilities of ICS has been developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is posted here:

<https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/>

Because there are many terms and acronyms used by responders, this glossary developed by FEMA may be a useful resource:

<https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/assets/glossary%20of%20related%20terms.pdf>

3. Please ask any remaining questions

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