Familiarity with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) is essential to us as members of Congregational Disaster Readiness. NIMS and ICS are field-proven techniques for managing incidents or disasters. They draw from decades of experience in managing disasters. Teams from your Congregation will likely be serving with agencies that will be using the ICS/NIMS approach. It will benefit you, as a DRC, to understand the ICS/NIMS approach to incident management.

Incident Command System (ICS)

The **Incident Command System (ICS)** is a standardized approach to incident management. The ICS approach can be used to manage any incident, emergency, or planned event, regardless of their size, complexity, scope, or cause. The ICS standard approach enables coordinated responses between multiple jurisdictions or agencies by establishing a common process for incident-level planning and resource management. The ICS allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel within a common organizational structure.

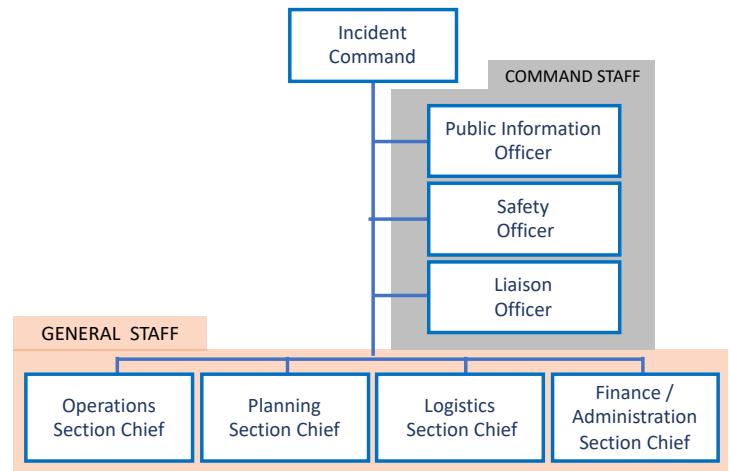## National Incident Management System (NIMS)

ICS is a component of the **National Incident Management System (NIMS).** NIMS is a systematic and proactive approach to guide government, non-government organizations, and the private sector to work together to respond to and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS includes three major components for…..

- Resource management,
- Command and control – including ICS, and
- Communications and information management.

ICS clarifies the chain of command and improves accountability. The ICS approach provides for an orderly and systematic planning process with a common, flexible, and predesigned management structure. ICS also helps ensure the safety of all parties, the efficient use of resources, and the achievement of incident objectives.

NIMS Management Characteristics Reflected in ICS

- The ICS establishes **common terminology** for organizational functions, resource descriptions, and incident facilities that allows diverse groups to work together. The use of common terms promotes efficient and clear communication among all parties involved in managing an incident.

- The ICS features a **modular organization structure** that can be expanded or collapsed by the incident commander based on the complexity of the incident. The only position that is always staffed in every incident is the Incident Commander. The organization might consist of one person, the Incident Commander, if the Incident Commander can handle all the roles. For more complex incidents, each section chief or officer might be staffed with multiple individuals.

```
                          Incident
                          Command
                                      COMMAND STAFF
                              Public Information
                                    Officer
                                   Safety
                                   Officer
                                   Liaison
                                   Officer
         GENERAL  STAFF

  Operations      Planning       Logistics      Finance /
  Section Chief   Section Chief  Section Chief  Administration
                                                Section Chief
```

- The Incident Commander (or Unified Commander) establishes incident objectives that drive incident operations. **Management by Objectives** includes:
    - setting specific, measurable incident objectives
    - identifying strategies, tactics, tasks, and activities to achieve the objectives
    - developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols to accomplish defined tasks; and
    - documenting results for the incident objectives.
    - Smart goals:
        - Specific (simple, sensible, significant) – answers the who, what, why, when, where, which resources questions
        - Measurable (meaningful, motivating) – Important for determining when the job has been completed.
        - Actionable (agreed, attainable, achievable) – the goal has to be reasonable given the resources and time available.
        - Relevant (reasonable, realistic, resourced, results-based) – Is the objective relative to the incident's goal.
        - Time-Bound (time-based, time-limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)

NIMS/ICS   16 AUG 2020

- An ***Incident Action Plan (IAP)*** is a concise, coherent means of capturing and communicating overall incident operational and support activities. The IAP includes incident priorities, objectives, strategies, tactics, and assignments. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander sets the IAP.

- A key to Incident Command Systems (ICS) effectivity is the number of individuals or resources a supervisor manages during an incident. The optimal ***span of control*** is one supervisor to five subordinates (1:5). However, effective incident management may require ratios significantly different from this. A manageable span of control on incidents may vary depending upon the type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander is responsible for setting the organizational structure.

- Depending upon the incident size and complexity, the need for various types of ***incident facilities*** may be established by the Incident Commander. Necessary incident facilities could include Incident Command Posts (ICP), incident bases, staging areas, and camps, mass casualty triage areas, points-of-distribution, and emergency shelters.

- ***Comprehensive Resource Management*** describes standard mechanisms to identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, demobilize, and reimburse and restock resources such as personnel, teams, facilities, equipment, and supplies. Activities include:
  - resource identification and typing
  - qualifying, certifying, and credentialing personnel
  - planning for resources; and
  - acquiring, storing and inventorying resources

- ***Integrated communications*** are facilitated through the development and use of a common communications plan and interoperable communication processes and systems that include voice and data links. The objective of integrated communication is to achieve situational awareness and to facilitate information sharing. The Congregational Disaster Readiness approach to integrated communication includes a heavy reliance on AlertMedia.

The next three characteristics deal with command. Command is the directing, ordering, or controlling by virtue of explicit statutory, regulatory, or delegated authority.

- The ICS (Incident Command System) allows for the ***establishment and transfer of command.*** The command function should be established at the beginning of an

16 AUG 2020

incident. The jurisdiction or organization with primary responsibility for the incident designates the Incident Commander and the process for transferring command. When incident command is transferred, the outgoing Incident Commander briefs the Incoming Incident Commander.

- In a **_Unified Command_**, there is no single "Commander." Instead, the unified command manages the incident through jointly approved objectives. Unified Command allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

- A **_chain of command_** is an orderly description of how authority flows through the hierarchy of the incident management organization. The chain of command allows an Incident Commander to direct and control the actions of all personnel on the incident. It requires that orders flow from supervisors to avoid confusion. Informal information sharing occurs throughout the ICS (Incident Command System) structure.

- Effective **_accountability_** during incident operations is essential. There are several principles everyone will need to adhere to:
  - Check-In/Check-Out. All responders must report in to receive an assignment. Checking out is just as critical as checking in.
  - Incident Action Planning. Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.
  - Unity of Command. Each individual will be assigned to only one supervisor.
  - Personal Responsibility. ICS relies on each individual taking personal accountability for their own actions.

- **_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 Response Teams and increase accountability challenges.

- An **_information and intelligence management_** process for gathering, analyzing, assessing, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence is essential to the response effort. One example might be gathering, analyzing, and evaluating information from the weather service. Another example might be damage assessment.

Major Functional Areas of ICS (Incident Command System)
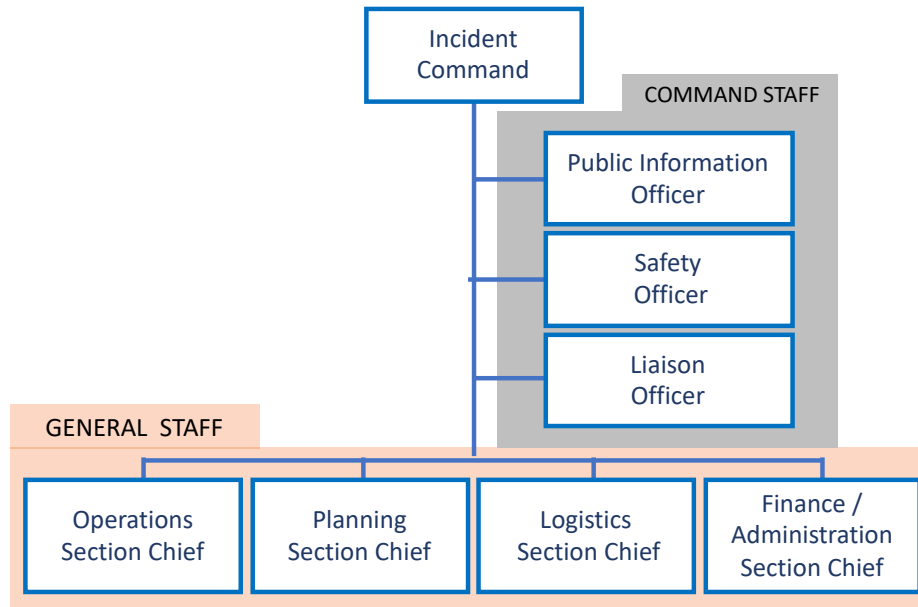
ICS is usually structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas. Regardless of the size of the incident, these functional areas are all required. These five are collectively referred to as the General Staff.

Incident Command

Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities, and has overall responsibility for managing the on-scene incident. Every ICS organization has an Incident Commander. The Incident Commander is appointed by the jurisdiction or organization with primary responsibility for the incident. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander sets the modular organization.

Operations

Conducts operations to reach the incident objectives. The Operations Section Chief establishes tactics and directs all operational resources. Operations organizes, assigns, and supervises all tactical response resources and directs them to achieve the incident objectives.

Planning

Supports the incident action planning process by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation. Planning should establish an orderly and systematic planning process.

Logistics

Arranges for resources and needed services to support the achievement of the incident objectives. Resources can include volunteers, equipment, teams, supplies, finances, and facilities. Logistics is responsible for ensuring that assigned incident personnel are fed and have communications and medical support and transportation as needed to meet operational objectives.

Finance/Administration

Monitors costs related to the incident. The Finance/Administration Section Chief is responsible for accounting, procurement, negotiating and monitoring contracts, maintaining documents for reimbursement, time recording, capturing volunteer hours, and cost analyses.

Command Staff Functions

In addition to the five general staff functions, there are three command staff functions:

Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) interfaces with the public and media and with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The PIO handles all media inquiries at the scene.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander on all matters relating to safety, including the health and safety of incident management personnel.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer serves as the Incident Commander's point of contact for representatives of governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private-sector organizations. The Liaison Officer interfaces with other agencies to meet incident-related information requirements

16 AUG 2020

Scalability of ICS

Your first impression of the Incident Command System (ICS) may be that it is a complicated approach.

Yet it is entirely scalable for any incident. In smaller incidents, you may find yourself playing virtually all the roles. If you lead a team to muck and gut a home, you may serve as the incident commander, and you may delegate some of these roles.

As a Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC), you may find yourself as the incident commander leading and delegating to a more extensive and more diverse team. You can and should use the ICS approach to manage these incidents even if you only run through these roles in your head.

Significantly, when Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) is engaged, you are unlikely to be the incident commander. Still, it helps to know how the process works, recognize that you have a specific role to play, and prepare yourself to play that role to the best of your ability.

Recommended free, online courses from FEMA:

ICS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System

IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction

https://training.fema.gov/nims/

NIMS/ICS

16 AUG 2020

The Congregation Leader reached out to you today. There is a single mom in the Congregation who has 20 feet of fence that blew over in a storm last night. She is very upset because she already has a note on her door from the HOA, giving her a deadline of this weekend to fix the fence without a fine, and her dogs have nowhere to go. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- o How many leaders do you need?
- o How many volunteers do you need?
- o How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- o What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- o Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- o What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowner?
- o Does the homeowner have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed, write team leader name online, and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:

_____

_____

_____

_____

CDR (Congregational Disaster Readiness) reached out to you today. There is a subdivision in your community that has 25 homes with fences that blew over in a storm last night. This subdivision is an older subdivision with many residents who are elderly or low income. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowners?
- Do the homeowners have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:

_____

_____

_____

_____

CDR (Congregational Disaster Readiness) reached out to you today. A widespread storm hit within 1 mile of your Congregation. The initial report is that there are as many as 200 residents with downed fences that blew over in a storm last night. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowners?
- Do the homeowners have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Incident _____ Date _____

Describe the incident below (what happened, how many impacted, etc.):

_____

_____

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowner(s)?
- Do the homeowner(s) have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

NIMS/ICS   16 AUG 2020

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:

_____

_____

_____

_____