



Incident Action Planning Guide

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Regional Administrators
Regional Response Division Directors
Federal Coordinating Officers
Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinators

FROM: Elizabeth A. Zimmerman 
Associate Administrator
Office of Response & Recovery

SUBJECT: Revised Incident Action Planning Guide

Forwarded for your immediate use is the revised *FEMA Incident Action Planning (IAP) Guide* which incorporates incident management methodologies and best practices.

The *IAP Guide* explains how to plan and execute operations during any incident. This document, based on the Incident Management Handbook (IMH), explains the Incident Command System (ICS) incident action planning process, defines roles and responsibilities, and establishes standards for incident action planning during FEMA incidents. Accurate, consistent, and complete application of the guidance outlined in this document is essential to successful incident operations.

This revision of the *IAP Guide* has been updated to align the IAP process with the FEMA Operational Planning Manual, the National Preparedness Goal, and the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act. This version of the *IAP Guide* includes the following changes:

- Working with Tribal governments
- Use of deliberate plans as initial Incident Action Plans
- Linking National and Regional support plans
- Resolution of inconsistencies between multiple Incident Action Plans
- Clarification of Priorities, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics
- Additional guidance on when to end the Incident Action Planning process
- Objective development
- U.S. National Grid

All FEMA staff should review the IAP Guide and provide full support to its implementation. If you have any questions or comments regarding this publication please contact the FEMA Response Doctrine Unit at FEMA-Doctrine@fema.dhs.gov.

Attachments: *Incident Action Planning Guide*

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Purpose	1
Applicability and Scope	1
Supersession	1
Authorities and Foundational Documents	1
Chapter 2: What is An Incident Action Plan?	3
Incident Action Planning	5
Incident Action Plan Considerations	6
Resolving Inconsistencies between FEMA and State, Tribal, or Territorial Incident Action Plan Guidance	7
Multiple Incident Action Plans	7
Incident Action Planning with Tribal Governments	7
Planning Process Phases	8
IAP Forms during the Process	9
Initial IAP	11
Deliberate Plans	11
Using a FEMA Deliberate Plan to Develop an IAP	12
Linking National/Regional Support Plans to Incident Action Planning	12
Chapter 3: Phase 1—Understand The Situation	13
Gaining Initial Situational Awareness	13
Collection	13
Analysis	13
Dissemination	14
Ongoing Assessment/Situational Awareness	14
Establishing Initial Incident Priorities	14
Developing the Action Planning Team	16
Initiating Incident Action Planning	16
Conducting Incident Action Planning Meetings and Briefings	16
Chapter 4: Phase 2—Establish Incident Objectives	21

Responsibilities	21
Priorities	21
Incident Objectives.....	22
Unified Coordination Group Develops and Updates Objectives	24
The Command & General Staff Meeting	24
Chapter 5: Phase 3 - Develop the Plan.....	26
Strategies	26
Determining Strategies.....	27
Determining Tactics.....	27
Assigning Resources and Describing Work Assignments.....	28
Identify the Reporting Location.....	30
Determine Logistical Support Needs to Complete the Assignment	30
Using the Operational Planning Worksheet.....	30
The Operations Tactics Meeting	32
Chapter 6: Phase 4 - Prepare and Disseminate the Plan	34
Planning Section Responsibilities	35
Planning Section Chief	35
Resource Unit.....	36
Situation Unit.....	38
Planning Support Unit.....	39
Command/General Staff	39
Logistics Section.....	41
Air Operations Branch (Operations Section).....	41
Additional Items to the IAP	41
The Planning Meeting.....	41
Printing and Distributing the IAP	42
Chapter 7: Phase 5 - Execute, Evaluate, and Revise the Plan.....	43
Operations Briefing.....	43
Assess Progress and Effectiveness.....	44
Ending Incident Action Planning.....	45
Annex 1: Acronyms	46

Annex 2: Glossary.....	48
Appendix A: How to Develop Incident Objectives	51
Appendix B: Incident Command System Map Symbols	56
Appendix C: Job Aids for Staff Preparing FEMA ICS Forms for the IAP	57
Appendix D: Final Quality Assurance Checklist.....	65
Appendix E: Maintaining Situational Awareness Throughout the Life Cycle of the Incident.....	66
Incorporating Deliberate Plans into Initial Situation Assessment.....	66
Post Initial Situation Awareness	68
Information Collection Plan	68
Situational Awareness Products	68
Situation Reports.....	69
Spot Reports.....	69
Situation Update Briefing.....	69
Responsibilities	70
Summary	70

Table of Figures

Figure 1: IAPs Developed Across All Echelons of an Incident.....	4
Figure 2: The Planning “P” – The Incident Action Planning Process	8
Figure 3: The Operations “O” – The Operational Period Cycle of the Incident Action Planning Process	9
Figure 4: Where ICS Forms are executed during the Incident Action Planning Process	11
Figure 5: Phase 1 of the Incident Action Planning Process	16
Figure 6: Phase 2 of the Incident Action Planning Process	21
Figure 7: Phase 3 of the Incident Action Planning Process	26
Figure 8: Phase 4 of the Incident Action Planning Process	34
Figure 9: Phase 5 in the Incident Action Planning Process	43
Figure 10: Incident Command Map and Symbols	56
Figure 11: Understanding the Situation	68

Table of Tables

Table 1: ICS Forms and Description	10
Table 2: Linkage between Incident Action Planning Process and Deliberate Plans	12
Table 3: Core Capabilities by Mission Area (from <i>National Preparedness Goal</i>)	15
Table 4: Priorities—Objectives—Strategies—Tactics, Tasks, Work Assignments	23
Table 5: Sample Agenda for the C&GS meeting.....	25
Table 6: Sample Agenda for the Operations Tactics Meeting	33

Table 7: IAP Components and Sequence of Assembly	35
Table 8: Assignment Lists Dos and Don'ts	36
Table 9: Sample Agenda Items for the Planning Meeting	42
Table 10: Sample Agenda for Operations Briefing	43
Table 11: Relating Incident Objectives to Incident Priorities.....	51
Table 12: Suggestions for Writing Incident Objectives.....	52
Table 13: Examples of Good Incident Objectives	54
Table 14: Deliberate Plan Elements and their Application in IAPs.....	66

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This guide is intended to promote the effectiveness of incident operations by standardizing the incident action planning process. The guide describes how the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) applies the Incident Command System (ICS) incident action planning process. It also defines the specific roles and responsibilities of the various organizations, and establishes standards for incident action planning on FEMA incidents. This guide also communicates to partners the details of how the Agency conducts the incident action planning process. In addition, it serves as a reference for incident management personnel and provides the basis for incident action planning staffing and exercising. Finally, this guide informs required training, position task books, and development of courses in alignment with the FEMA Qualification System.

Applicability and Scope

The guidance contained in this *Incident Action Planning Guide* applies to all applicable incidents, including those involving Stafford Act declarations, as well as Federal response coordination to non-Stafford Act incidents. This guidance applies to Unified Coordination Staff (UCS) during incident management. Finally, this guide is designed to promote cooperation and interoperability among all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector by communicating FEMA's commitment to incident action planning to FEMA's partners and sharing the details of how FEMA implements the process.

Supersession

This document supersedes the Incident Action Planning Guide (January 2012).

Authorities and Foundational Documents

A number of foundational documents provide statutory, regulatory, and executive guidance for FEMA incident action planning. Some key foundational documents are as follows:

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207), November 1988
- Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Emergency Management and Assistance, December 1991
- Homeland Security Act (Public Law 107-296, as amended, 6 U.S.C. §§ 101 et seq.), November 2002
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, "Management of Domestic Incidents," February 2003

- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295, 6 U.S.C. § 701), October 4, 2006
- National Response Framework, May 2013
- National Mitigation Framework, May 2013
- National Disaster Recovery Framework, September 2011
- National Incident Management System, December 2008
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency Publication 1, November 2010
- Incident Management and Support Keystone, January 2011
- Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 - Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans, Version 2.0, November 2010
- Presidential Policy Directive 8, “National Preparedness,” March 2011
- National Preparedness Goal, September 2011
- *FEMA Incident Management Handbook* (FEMA B-761/Interim Change 1), expires January 1, 2013
- FEMA Operational Planning Keystone, February 2014
- FEMA Operational Planning Manual, February 2014

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS AN INCIDENT ACTION PLAN?

Effective incident management helps to ensure that the efforts of all players are coordinated and synchronized to achieve the best results. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a systematic, proactive approach to guide departments and agencies at all levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector to work together seamlessly and manage incidents.

For FEMA, the Incident Action Plan (IAP)¹ is a plan that is central to managing the response to an incident using ICS. The team that is managing an incident develops an IAP each operational period, the time scheduled for executing a given set of actions as specified in the IAP, using the standard ICS incident action planning process. The IAP itself communicates the incident objectives and the tactics that will be used to manage the incident during the operational period that the plan covers.

Incident

The NIMS glossary defines *incident* as “an occurrence, natural or manmade, that requires a response to protect life or property.” For the purposes of this guide, the term incident is used to refer to incidents in which FEMA is involved, generally in support of and in partnership with State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) governments.

The incident action planning process provides a tool to synchronize operations at the incident level and ensure that incident operations are conducted in support of incident objectives. A disciplined system of planning phases and meetings fosters collaboration and partnerships, and focuses incident operations.

Over many years of managing all types and sizes of incidents, ICS practitioners have developed and refined the incident action planning process as a way to plan and execute operations on any incident. Incident action planning is more than producing an IAP. It is a set of activities, repeated each operational period, that provides a consistent rhythm and structure to incident management.

ICS practitioners have developed and refined a set of forms that assist incident personnel in completing the incident action planning process. Incident leaders must ensure that the plan meets the needs of the incident and that form completion does not become the primary focus of the planning process. FEMA has modified some standard ICS forms to address the implementation of assistance programs and the requirements for assigning Federal resources.

The Operations Section has the primary responsibility for incident action planning and execution of the IAP. The Planning Section is responsible for producing the IAP and informing operations decision making through situational analysis, and adopting and executing applicable deliberate plans. This supports the tasks per the *Incident Management Handbook (IMH)*. Furthermore, all

¹ NIMS defines an IAP as an oral or written plan containing the general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. FEMA requires a written plan.

members of the Unified Coordinating Group (UCG) and the Command and General Staff (C&GS) play specific and essential roles in the process. When incidents are complex, applying the incident action planning process accurately, consistently, and completely is essential to the success of incident operations. When each member plays his or her part correctly, the process can bring order to the often chaotic world of managing complex incidents, and it enables incident management personnel to address problems that seem insurmountable.

Determining the Operational Period

The UCG determines the length of the operational period, which is typically 24 hours at the beginning of incident. The UCG subsequently reviews and may adjust the length of subsequent operational periods as incident response activities progress.

While the process described in this guide outlines how FEMA, as a part of the whole community, executes incident action planning, those involved must recognize that other incident action planning processes may also be executed (as illustrated in figure 1). For example, local and municipal organizations may develop IAPs to guide the actions of first responders. For a catastrophic incident, there may be hundreds of concurrent incident action planning efforts taking place simultaneously. The joint IAP that State, Tribal, and Territorial (STT) and Federal incident management personnel develop must support all local IAPs and synchronize activities at the STT and Federal level.

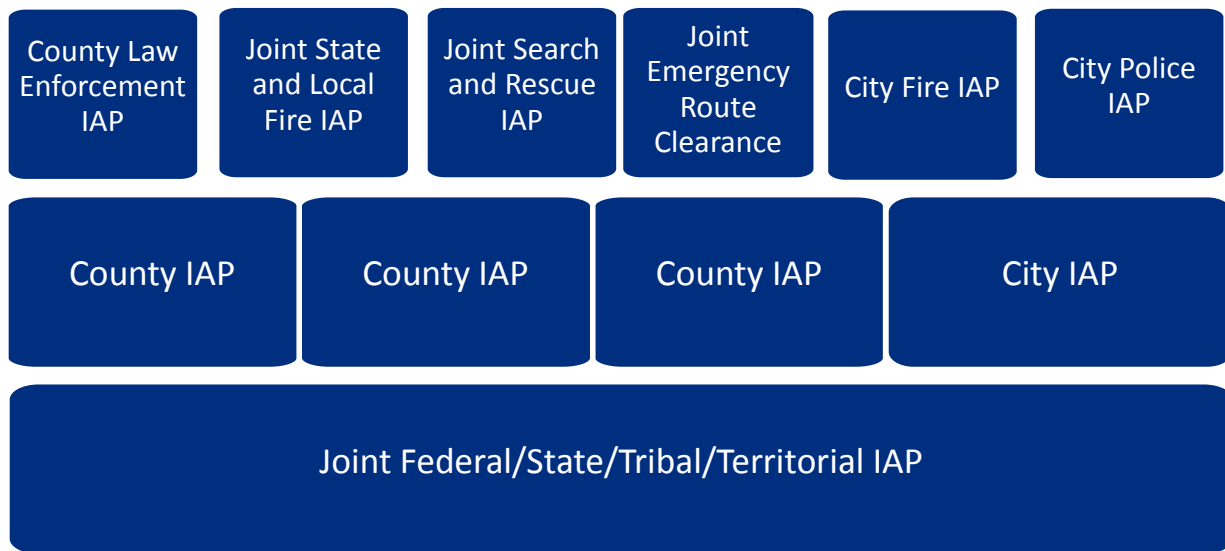


Figure 1: IAPs Developed Across All Echelons of an Incident²

² The State may create its own IAP prior to forming a joint IAP.

Incident Action Planning

The IAP is the vehicle by which the senior leaders of an incident—the Governor of an affected State, through the State Coordinating Officer (SCO); the Tribal/Territorial Chair/Council through the Tribal Coordinating Officer (TCO); and the President, through the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO)—communicate their expectations and provide clear guidance to those managing an incident. The incident action planning process requires collaboration and participation among all incident partners involved in the incident (Emergency Support Functions [ESFs], NGOs/private sector, STT, etc.) to achieve unity of effort through the disciplined incident action planning process.

The incident action planning process is built on the following phases:

1. Understand the situation
2. Establish incident objectives
3. Develop the plan
4. Prepare and disseminate the plan
5. Execute, evaluate, and revise the plan

The IAP identifies incident objectives and provides essential information regarding incident organization, resource allocation, work assignments, safety, and weather. A well-conceived, complete IAP facilitates successful incident operations and provides a basis for evaluating performance in achieving incident objectives.

ICS is used on all incidents in which FEMA coordinates Federal response efforts—both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act. IAPs and the incident action planning process are used for all Level I and II incidents and for some Level III incidents.³

³ Consult the FEMA Incident Management and Support Keystone and Incident Management Manual for more detail about incident level classifications.

Why is an IAP useful to incident personnel?

- Gives staff the clear objectives of STT and Federal leaders. Staff validate that their actions are in support of those objectives and tailor their efforts to support them.
- Shows how individuals fit in the organization.
- Provides a road map of all operations during an operational period to help individuals understand how their efforts affect the success of the operation.
- Clearly identifies work assignments to be accomplished.
- Provides a tool to communicate what *your* organization is doing to ensure that it is properly supported.
- Provides a tool for staff so they can best synchronize and de-conflict their efforts by showing what the entire operation is doing.
- Provides a schedule of the key events during operational periods.
- Provides information about safety and phone numbers of key staff, and graphically represents the incident area.
- Informs partners at other echelons (FEMA regional and national levels) of the objectives at the incident level for the next operational period and the specific resources and actions that will be applied to achieving those objectives.

Incident Action Plan Considerations

Because the IAP and the incident action planning process are inherently operational, the UCG may determine that an IAP is not needed for certain incidents (i.e., Level III). This is most likely to occur on incidents where no Federal response operations are required or anticipated and where FEMA activities are focusing exclusively on delivery of Public Assistance (PA) and Hazard Mitigation (HM) programs. Typically, such incidents are the result of Stafford Act declarations that are made days or even weeks after the actual disaster or emergency and after State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) officials have completed response operations. In non-Stafford Act incidents, incidents that involve a multi-agency response the IAP process and forms may be used in order to ensure an organized effort.

In the absence of an IAP, the UCG should consider utilizing an Incident Strategic Plan and/or other established planning products (Situation Report, etc.) and refer to those appropriate guidance documents for additional information.

Resolving Inconsistencies between FEMA and State, Tribal, or Territorial Incident Action Plan Guidance

Some STT agencies have protocols for incident action planning that vary from FEMA's process. In such cases and in the interests of achieving unity of effort, the UCG may make adjustments to the IAP and to the incident action planning process. To resolve the conflict, the UCG may agree to refer to the Federal/State (or tribal/territorial) joint IAP by other names such as the Incident Coordination Plan.

Multiple Incident Action Plans

ICS doctrine states there is one IAP per incident. FEMA aligns incidents to the Joint Field Office (JFO) or FCO identified in the declaration. FEMA may, therefore, have multiple incidents aligned with a single JFO or FCO. A single IAP will suffice for multiple FEMA incidents resulting from the same disaster or emergency. For example, the hurricane that has a pre-landfall emergency declaration and then a post-landfall major disaster declaration would have a single IAP. A single IAP may also suffice for multiple unrelated incidents if activities and timing significantly overlap. When one IAP is used for multiple declarations, each declaration number shall be listed on the cover page.

Incident Action Planning with Tribal Governments

Federally recognized tribal governments may request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration independently of a State. The tribal government may also seek assistance under a State declaration request. In either case, if the incident involves a federally recognized Indian tribe, then incident action planning shall involve the appropriate tribal officials.

A FEMA Tribal Affairs Specialist (TBSP) may be assigned to facilitate and coordinate communication with tribal officials. When collaborating with tribal partners, it is important to understand the culture of the particular tribe(s). The TBSP may provide important background and cultural information to the UCG, and Planning/Operations Section personnel.

It is important that the Planning Section Chief (PSC) works with the TBSP during the incident action planning process to:

- gain tribal cultural awareness and training, as applicable
- ensure meetings and discussions adhere to tribal customs
- identify appropriate tribal titles and positions

Managing More Than One Incident

A UCS may begin managing one incident and be required to take on another disaster in the same geographic area—which will likely increase the size and complexity of the incident management organization. The UCG may decide to include all incidents assigned to the UCS in a single IAP. The Planning Cycle and operational periods for all of the disasters will be the same, allowing for efficient and effective use of the staff's time. The UCG will be developing priorities for each disaster as it develops the incident objectives in coordination with the Operations Section Chief.

Planning Process Phases

The Planning “P” (figure 2) depicts the phases and activities in the incident action planning process. The leg of the “P” includes the initial steps to gain awareness of the situation and establish the organization for incident management. Although maintaining situational awareness is essential throughout the life cycle of the incident, the steps in Phase 1 are done only one time.

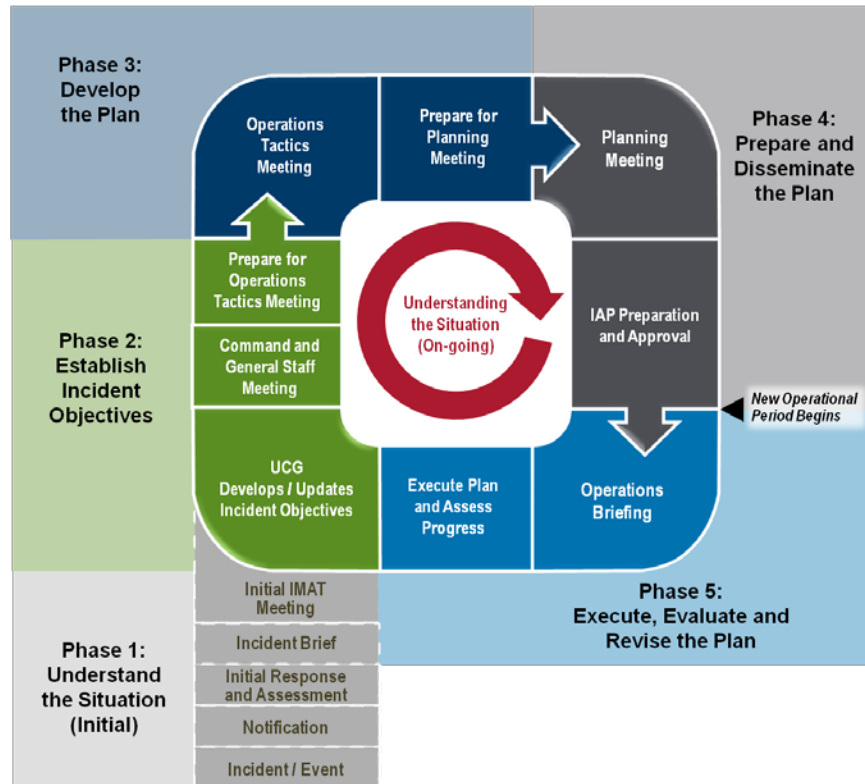


Figure 2: The Planning “P” – The Incident Action Planning Process

Once Phase 1 steps have been accomplished, incident management shifts into a cycle of planning and operations, informed by ongoing situational awareness, which continues and is repeated each operational period. This cycle, which is depicted in the barrel of the “P,” becomes the Operations “O” (figure 3).

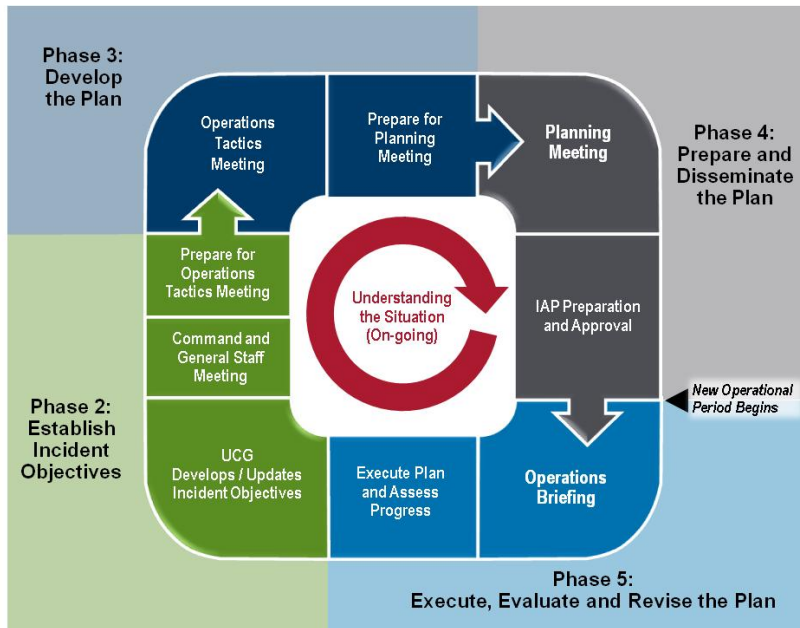


Figure 3: The Operations “O” – The Operational Period Cycle of the Incident Action Planning Process

IAP Forms during the Process

The IAP process requires the completion of nine primary forms with the option of additional forms to be utilized as needed. These forms are tools used to document final decisions and provide an organized means of documenting and conveying tasks and resource needs for meetings. Form input and completion of the forms is a joint UCS responsibility. However, the Planning Section is responsible for the final product and publication of the IAP. A complete IAP always includes at least the seven forms highlighted in table 1; additional forms may be used dependent on the incident. (See appendix C for more information on additional forms.)

Some forms used in the IAP process are not contained in the published IAP. The FEMA ICS Form 201 (Incident Briefing Form) is not included in the IAP but may be used to conduct the incident briefing. While not included in the published IAP, the Operational Planning Worksheet (FEMA ICS Form 215) is an important form. FEMA ICS Form 215 is used to document key tasks and resource needs of the Operations Section. These forms are initially populated prior to the Operations Tactics meeting, and refined following the meeting. FEMA ICS Form 215s are finalized in the planning meeting to determine which tasks will occur during the next operational period. Tasks approved by the Operations Section Chief (OSC) are transferred to the Assignment List (FEMA ICS Form 204).

Table 1: ICS Forms and Description

Form	Description
FEMA ICS Form 200 (Cover Sheet)	Provides the plan number, incident name, declaration numbers, initial operating facility (IOF)/JFO address, approval blocks
FEMA ICS Form 201 (Incident Briefing) ⁴	Description of current situation
FEMA ICS Form 202 (Incident Objectives)	Describes the UCG's incident objectives, also provides weather and safety considerations for use during the next operational period
FEMA ICS Form 204 (Assignment List)	Informs field staff about their assignments, duties, responsibilities, and key personnel contact information for an operational period
FEMA ICS Form 205 A (Incident Telephone Communications Plan)	Lists positions, names, and phone numbers of UCS
FEMA ICS Form 206 (Medical Plan)	Provides important information on medical emergency procedures and the locations and phone numbers of medical aid facilities, emergency medical transportation, and hospitals in the incident area
FEMA ICS Form 207 (Incident Organization Chart)	Shows how incident is organized, what positions are filled, what the reporting structures are, and who is filling these positions. On Level I and II incidents, the organization charts include unit leaders, group/division supervisors positions, and above. Organizations will be configured according to incident needs and current accepted program structure. These charts will accurately reflect the organization.
FEMA ICS Form 215 (Operational Planning Worksheet) ⁵	Aids Operations personnel in capturing their tactics and in identifying resource assignments prior to the Operations Tactics Meeting
FEMA ICS Form 230 (Meeting Schedule)	Schedule of all incident action planning process meetings

⁴ The ICS Form 201 is used in the process but is not included in the final IAP.

⁵ The ICS Form 215 is used in the process but is not included in the final IAP.

These forms are completed in the five phases of the Planning “P” as shown in figure 4.

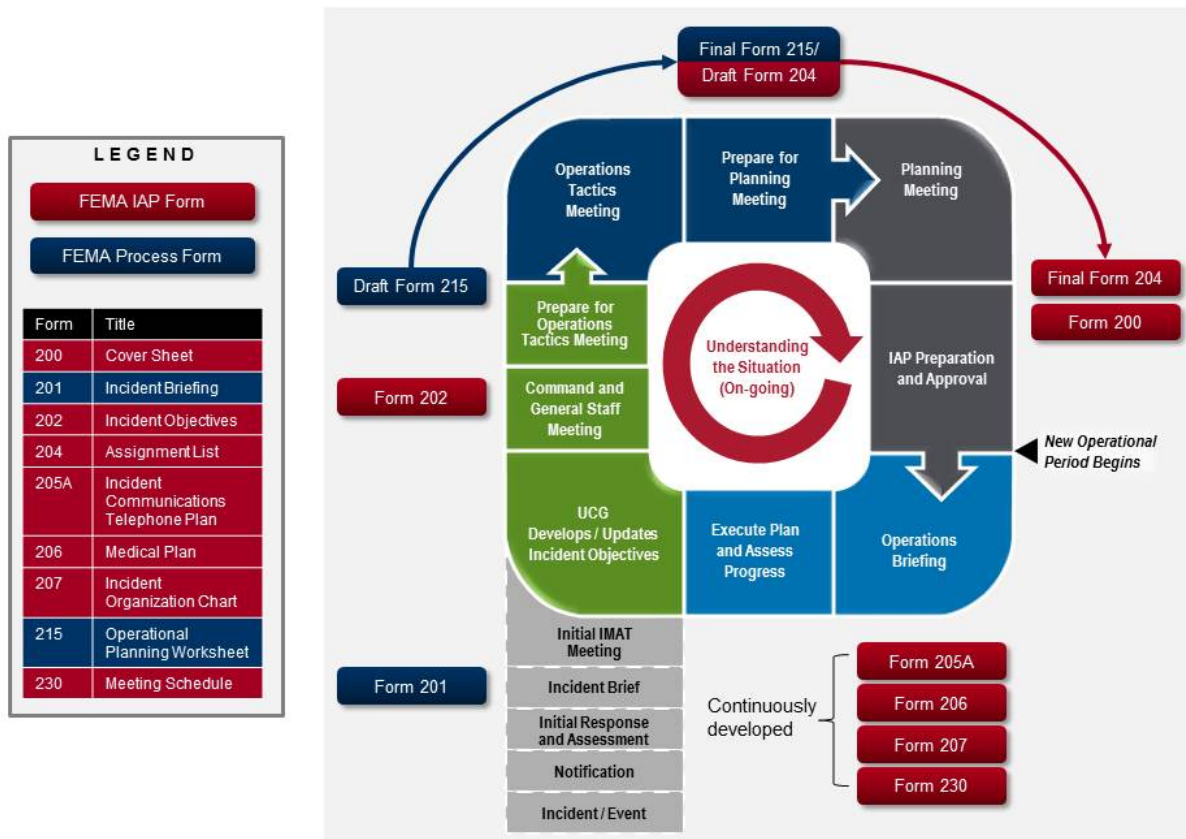


Figure 4: Where ICS Forms are executed during the Incident Action Planning Process

Initial IAP

In the beginning of an incident, the situation can be chaotic and situational awareness hard to obtain, especially in no-notice incidents. Regional deliberate plans and the first Regional Support Plans (RSPs) may be used to determine priorities and objectives for the initial IAP when situational awareness and other sources of information are limited. Thereafter, the IAP should continue to reference and adapt the objectives and tasks in deliberate plans.

Deliberate Plans

Deliberate plans can provide a common starting point for the incident, regional, and national levels. This ensures that there is a common understanding of the actions that need to occur and what resources are necessary to ensure an efficient stand up of operations in the initial operational period of an incident. Deliberate plans are an important starting point in the absence of information. Planners and operators must determine the most current situational awareness to understand the points of departure from the plan.

Using a FEMA Deliberate Plan to Develop an IAP

FEMA develops deliberate plans in conjunction with SLTT planners to ensure that the Agency’s actions during an incident are in support of SLTT response (table 2). These plans are often excellent tools to initiate the development of an initial IAP, particularly for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the IAP process. Knowing how to read and extract pertinent information from a FEMA deliberate plan to support IAP development is not a difficult process. The base plan contains the primary information on which the operation will be based. The plan contains information on the situation, mission, execution, finance and administration, and oversight and coordination. The annexes contain more information in the same format. Annexes are used to provide more detailed information than is found in the base plan.

Table 2: Linkage between Incident Action Planning Process and Deliberate Plans

Incident Action Planning Process	Deliberate Plan
<i>Initial</i> Situational Awareness	Annex B: Critical Information Requirements (CIRs)/Information Collection Plan (ICP)/Essential Elements of Information (EIs)
<i>Initial</i> Incident Briefing (Form 201)	Annex B: Intelligence
<i>Initial</i> Priorities	3.0 Execution: Phase 2a Priorities
<i>Initial</i> Incident Objectives (Form 202)	3.0 Execution: Phase 2a Operational Objectives Annex C: Critical Considerations/Critical Assumptions/End State
<i>Initial</i> Operational Planning Worksheets (Form 215)	3.0 Execution: Concept of Operations
	Annex D: Logistics/Phase 2A resources

Linking National/Regional Support Plans to Incident Action Planning

National Support Plans (NSPs) and RSPs can vary in terms of scope, content, and granularity but may contain some specific components that can inform the IAP process. The UCG and C&GS components will review the NSP/RSP appropriately throughout the incident action planning process and incorporate information as applicable. Some examples of aspects of NSPs and RSPs that may be pertinent include:

- resource ordering/mission assignment of future assets to meet current or unmet requests for resources
- future establishment of critical logistics supply chain facilities
- identification of resource gaps
- key decisions and CIRs
- status of national or regionally controlled capabilities

CHAPTER 3: PHASE 1—UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION

Effective actions during Phase 1 may mean the difference between a successfully managed incident and one in which effective incident management is achieved slowly or not at all. Phase 1 is accomplished only once, at the beginning of incident action planning for any incident. Phase 1 activities focus on the actions that take place before joint incident action planning begins as team members work to understand the situation and establish initial incident priorities.

Gaining Initial Situational Awareness

Gaining an understanding of the situation includes gathering, recording, analyzing, and displaying information regarding the scale, scope, complexity, and potential incident impacts. Comprehensive situational awareness is essential to developing and implementing an effective IAP. Obtaining accurate, reliable situational awareness during the initial hours of an incident is often challenging. Situational awareness is further complicated by the urgency of collecting, analyzing, and disseminating situational information. Initial situational awareness involves the gathering of information from as many sources as possible, as quickly as possible, to ensure that decision makers have the knowledge they need to make the best possible decisions.

Collection

Information collection is based on established EEIs and CIRs.

- **EEIs** are important and standard information items that incident managers need to make timely and informed decisions. EEIs also provide context and contribute to analysis. EEIs are included in situation reports.
- **CIRs** are particular elements of information that incident leaders specifically requested. These items are of such importance that leaders are notified immediately when the Planning Section receives updates on a CIR item.

Analysis

Analysis breaks down problems and issues into manageable smaller elements. In this way, complex problems that appear to be daunting may have achievable fixes. Analysis also allows

Crisis Management System

A crisis management system is an All-Hazards emergency preparedness software application to securely share critical information that incident personnel and first responders use to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency.

The crisis management system used by FEMA, WebEOC®, is an example of a crisis management system that is a web-enabled incident management collaboration tool used to create and share information across FEMA and with external emergency managers at the SLTT levels.

for the identification of sub-issues and problem areas that can be solved through effective decision making and planning.

Information analysis begins during Phase 1 and continues throughout the incident. This analysis consists of correlating, comparing, and filtering the available information to determine the critical issues and the potential for changes in the situation. This analysis allows leaders to understand what is going on for each operational period as well as the impacts of those issues both currently and in the future.

Dissemination

Information shall be disseminated in a timely manner and provided in a readable format that the audience can easily understand. Doing this effectively during Phase 1, and throughout the incident, minimizes confusion, reduces duplication of effort, and facilitates effective and efficient management of incident resources.

Ongoing Assessment/Situational Awareness

Accurate situational awareness is essential throughout the life cycle of an incident. After the initial efforts to gain situational awareness, the iterative information collection process continues to inform all aspects of incident action planning. This process includes the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information to assist operations and support functions in planning for the provision of support and resources to disaster survivors during each operational period. Appendix E provides details on this continuous assessment process.

Establishing Initial Incident Priorities

Initial incident priorities are generally established by higher-level authorities such as the Governor of the affected State, tribal and territorial officials, and the Regional Administrator (RA). As indicated previously, priorities may be understood prior to an incident and could be found in resources such as deliberate plans.

When senior officials establish priorities for the incident, a recommended approach is to articulate priorities based on the core capabilities described in the National Preparedness Goal (see table 3). The core capabilities provide a standard list of the essential prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery activities to properly execute disaster operations. Framing incident priorities in terms of the core capabilities improves understanding through consistent titles, ensures that all the mission areas are considered, and helps to keep priorities focused strategically on desired outcomes.

Table 3: Core Capabilities by Mission Area (from *National Preparedness Goal*)

Prevention	Protection	Mitigation	Response	Recovery
Planning				
Public Information and Warning				
Operational Coordination				
Forensics and Attribution	Access Control and Identity Verification	Community Resilience	Critical Transportation	Economic Recovery
Intelligence and Information Sharing	Cybersecurity	Long-term Vulnerability Reduction	Environmental Response/Health and Safety	Health and Social Services
Interdiction and Disruption	Intelligence and Information Sharing	Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment	Fatality Management Services	Housing
Screening, Search, and Detection	Interdiction and Disruption	Threats and Hazard Identification	Infrastructure Systems	Infrastructure Systems
	Physical Protective Measures		Mass Care Services	Natural and Cultural Resources
	Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities		Mass Search and Rescue Operations	
	Screening, Search, and Detection		Fire Management and Suppression	
	Supply Chain Integrity and Security		On-scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement	
			Operational Communications	
			Logistics and Supply Chain Management	
			Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services	
			Situational Assessment	

Federal and SLTT deliberate plans may identify or suggest incident response priorities. Clear initial priorities are important to establishing unity of effort early in the incident response process. When the members of the team clearly understand the priorities, they are equipped to act decisively and make better decisions. While many things vie for attention, especially in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, not everything can be a priority. The axiom that “if everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority” clearly applies to incident management.

Developing the Action Planning Team

Incident action planning requires a collaborative effort by all members of the UCS and State partners. This collaboration must also include other key Federal, tribal, local, NGOs, and private-sector partners. The incident action planning process fosters teamwork and unity of effort by promoting communication, cooperation, and coordination. While staff in the Planning Section is responsible for facilitating the incident action planning process and producing the final plan, the section primarily responsible for incident action planning and executing the IAP is the Operations Section. All elements of the UCS support and participate in the process, and the UCG provides the leadership to ensure success.

Initiating Incident Action Planning

The following sections describe actions for initiating a successful incident action planning process. A successful incident action planning process involves specific actions based on situational awareness and operational needs. Figure 5 depicts the steps for initial actions during an incident.

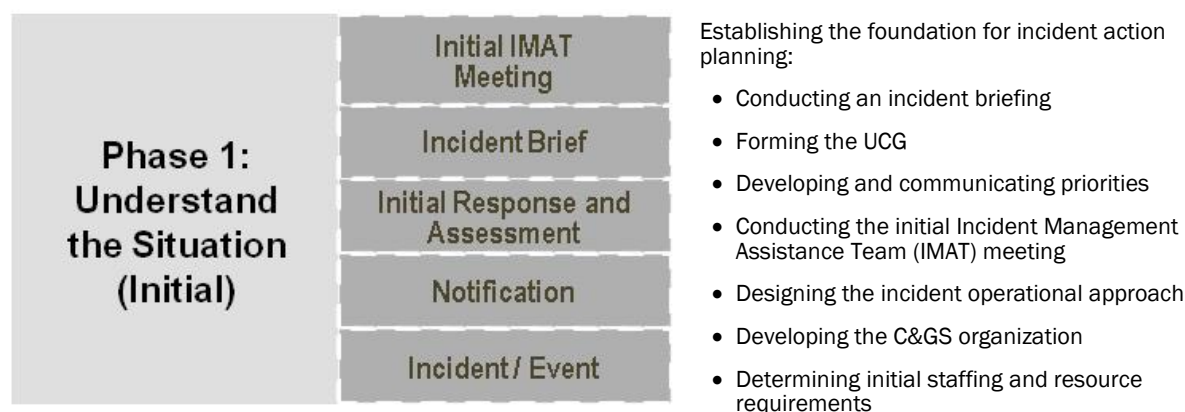


Figure 5: Phase 1 of the Incident Action Planning Process

Conducting Incident Action Planning Meetings and Briefings

Collaboration and coordination are the keys to incident action planning, and it is important that the meetings and briefings are conducted effectively and efficiently. Guidance for conducting these meetings and briefings is provided in the FEMA IMH.

Initial Incident Briefing

The RA (or designee) is responsible for providing the initial incident briefing to the FCO and the IMAT to prepare them for assuming control of the incident. An Incident Briefing Form (FEMA ICS Form 201) can be used to present the information for this brief. The head of the National Response Coordination Staff or Regional Response Coordination Staff (RRCS) is typically responsible for assisting the RA with the initial briefing by collecting and presenting situational information to the FCO and C&GS. IMATs should have ICPs, which include information such as:

- boundaries and scope of the incident
- number of displaced survivors
- sheltering information
- critical infrastructure damage assessment, locations, and types
- status of communications and other utilities
- incident facilities, types, and location
- resources on hand, en route, and on order
- STT (if applicable) emergency management organization and facilities
- location of the IOF
- health-related concerns, including fatalities and injuries
- life-saving operations
- arrangements for use of military resources (i.e., joint force command)

Some of the situation information for use in the initial incident briefing can be found in the following documentation:

- Stafford Act declaration (indicates counties/jurisdictions designation, categories of assistance authorized, and cost share), interagency agreement or interagency memorandum of understanding for non-Stafford Act incidents
- pertinent deliberate plans
- maps of the incident area and geospatial information systems (GIS) products and satellite imagery
- preliminary damage assessment
- telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for RRCS, STT officials, and STT emergency operations center (EOC) and other incident facilities
- NSPs/RSPs

The work product from this briefing is the RA delegating the authority for incident management and the control of assigned Federal resources to the FCO in writing. The delegation of authority document includes detailed instructions (leader's intent) for the conduct of the incident management and the RA's priorities. This initial briefing will include the transition procedures from the region to the incident operational level. The initial incident briefing also gives the FCO and C&GS situational information, including constraints and limitations, to make informed decisions.

Forming the Unified Coordination Group

Following the initial incident briefing, the FCO typically begins efforts to establish the UCG, including contacting the SCO/TCO and jointly determining the need for other UCG members. Once the UCG is formed, members discuss:⁶

- priorities
- issues and concerns
- integration of Federal, STT, and other stakeholders in a single incident management organization
- joint incident action planning
- logistical processes and resource ordering
- joint information center requirements
- roles and authorities

Developing and Communicating Priorities

In forming the UCG, members jointly establish initial incident priorities based on priorities of the Governor, Tribal Chair/Council, the RA, and other authorities as appropriate. Incident priorities inform the C&GS's actions and serve as focus items in the initial UCS meeting. When communicating incident priorities to the staff, the UCG gives the necessary guidance to ensure that the staff understands the intent and context of the priorities.

As indicated above, incident priorities should be developed based on the National Preparedness Goal. These priorities help to establish the order of importance for incident objectives developed during Phase 2 of the incident action planning process.

Initial Command & General Staff meeting

The purpose of the initial C&GS meeting is to ensure that incident management personnel understand UCG expectations. The PSC facilitates the initial C&GS meeting; however, as the leader of Federal response efforts, the FCO is the primary presenter, explaining the UCG's intent and articulating expectations regarding team interaction, information sharing, and team processes for planning, decision making, coordination, and communication. The FCO describes the composition of the UCG and his or her plans for integrating other UCG members into the C&GS. The FCO outlines assumptions that the team will use if actual information is not available, as well as direction regarding the development of the organizational structure for the incident. Furthermore, the FCO reiterates the expectation for communication and collaboration with Federal and SLTT government partners, as well as NGOs and the private sector.

⁶ See the IMH for further guidance on the UCG discussion/meeting.

Next, the FCO, OSC, or PSC describes the initial strategies proposed to address the initial priorities and how the initial strategies are to be accomplished. The PSC or FCO then announces the start time, duration of, and incident action planning meeting schedule for the first operational period.

The results from the initial C&GS meeting are as follows: (1) all UCS members understand UCG expectations, guidance, and direction (leader's intent) for the incident and initial strategies; (2) the C&GS has a clear understanding of direction and guidance to begin developing the organization; and (3) agreement is reached regarding the time and duration of the initial operational period and the incident action planning meeting schedule.

The work products from the initial C&GS meeting are as follows:

- a list of UCG priorities and strategies (for distribution to the C&GS and to be displayed in the C&GS meeting room)
- the meeting schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230) for the first operational period or initial incident action planning cycle (typically published and displayed in the IOF or the JFO)

Importance of Providing Clear Guidance

Providing clear operational guidance is an essential element of command at all levels within the incident organization. It provides subordinates with information that defines, refines, and/or places into context assignments or directives. It addresses constraints and limitations, establishes parameters, and assists in better identifying an expected outcome.

Establishing the Organizational Structure

Before an organizational structure can be implemented, the incident area must be considered and a decision made as to whether to establish a functional or a geographic organization for FEMA/State incident activities. That decision dictates the operational approach to the incident. FEMA and State OSCs work together to decide on the organizational structure.

The OSCs' goal is to design an ICS-compliant organization that meets the leader's intent, the Agency's mission, and the incident's needs. This decision has a significant effect on operational outcomes and the achievability of IAPs. It also impacts the Logistics Section, Planning Section, Finance/Administration Section, and Safety. The OSCs design the incident carefully, because once the organization is established it is difficult to change. For further information on organizational structure, refer to the Incident Management Manual.

Develop Command & General Staff Organizations

The C&GS and their STT counterparts jointly develop their organizations based on leader's intent, the situation, and the needs of the incident.

To do this, they validate current situational information and analyze it regarding current conditions, damage assessment, scale of the incident, and resource status (i.e., availability of personnel, equipment supplies, and facilities). They also review any pertinent deliberate plans.

The C&GS and their STT counterparts then coordinate closely with the OSCs to determine whether the proposed geographic or functional incident design will affect how other organizational elements are structured.

Ultimately, the OSC determines what facilities (disaster recovery centers [DRCs], staging areas, operations field offices, aviation facilities, camps, fueling stations, etc.) are required to meet incident needs. The OSC then discusses these findings and recommendations with the FCO and SCO/TCO, or designee, for approval.

Once approved, information regarding C&GS organizations is provided to the Planning Section for the GIS Unit to build the initial incident map and to the Resource Unit to develop the initial Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207).

Develop Staffing and Resources Requirements

After developing incident design and organizational structures, the C&GS identify the resources needed to staff and support their organization, and meet UCG priorities.

To determine resource requirements the C&GS and STT counterparts consult with the Planning Section Resources Unit to identify resources currently assigned. The consultation also yields such details as the kind and type of each resource, current location and status, identifier if assigned, and supervisor's contact information. If a required resource is not currently available, the C&GS members and STT counterparts contact the Logistics Section Ordering Unit to determine what resources have been ordered. Finally, if a required resource is neither currently available nor on order, the appropriate C&GS members and STT counterparts order them through the established ordering processes. More detailed information on the resource ordering process can be found in Phase 3.

CHAPTER 4: PHASE 2—ESTABLISH INCIDENT OBJECTIVES

During Phase 2, the UCG establishes incident objectives and provides the guidance necessary to achieve these objectives (figure 6).

Incident objectives drive the incident organization as it conducts response, recovery, and mitigation activities. The UCG establishes these objectives based on incident priorities, which are informed by situational awareness, leader’s intent, and delegations of authority.

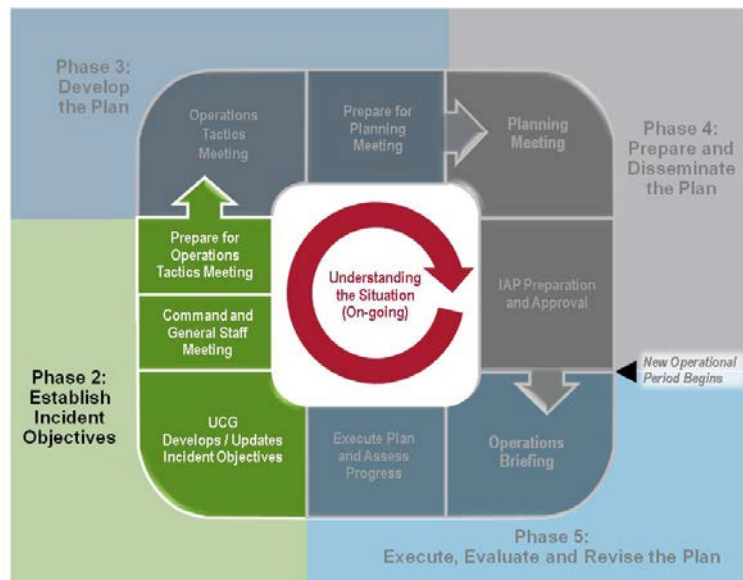


Figure 6: Phase 2 of the Incident Action Planning Process

Responsibilities

The UCG develops incident objectives and provides the guidance necessary for developing, resourcing, implementing, and evaluating the results of incident objectives. As the leader of Federal response efforts, the FCO is personally responsible for the development of incident objectives for FEMA. The C&GS often provide input to the UCG/FCO regarding incident status and operational requirements to support the development of incident objectives and the guidance to achieve them. Planning Section staff document the incident objectives on the IAP Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202).

Priorities

Incident priorities initially established by leadership during Phase 1 are reviewed and modified as required during each operational period and help to clarify the order and importance of incident objectives (table 4). While incident objectives are based on requirements, priorities guide the allocation of resources to objectives. Although priorities help determine incident

objectives, they are **not listed** on the 202. Senior leaders sometimes include non-operational priorities in their guidance. When this happens, these non-operational priorities are generally not addressed in the incident action planning process.

Incident Objectives

Management by objective is a key characteristic of NIMS and one that FEMA follows. Incident objectives, per NIMS, are “statements of guidance and direction needed to select appropriate strategy(s) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed.”

Incident objectives must be flexible enough to allow for strategic and tactical alternatives. Incident objectives set guidance and strategic direction but do not specify tactics. Incident objectives drive response and recovery activities. Simply stated, incident objectives answer the question of what must be accomplished. For example, *Complete debris clearance from critical transportation corridors within 72 hours.*

In the initial stages of an incident response, objectives will often be quite general. For example, *Conduct registrations and outreach in all affected counties with major damage* is an acceptable incident objective in the immediate aftermath of a storm. As response work progresses, situational awareness improves, and resources status becomes clearer, objectives can become more specific, for example, *Register individuals in shelters in designated counties.*

Good Incident Objectives:

- are concise and stated in the form of a command
- begin with an action verb (but not “continue” or “maintain”)
- provide “actionable guidance” for the Operations Section
- address incident operations, not administrative and internal support activities

Incident objectives can be distinguished from tasks or work assignments by the fact that objectives do not answer specific questions. Tasks and work assignments identify specific resources and specific locations, and must be accomplished within the operational period. Incident objectives, on the other hand, do not specify who will accomplish the action and are not necessarily to be achieved in the current operational period. Appendix A provides more information on how to develop incident objectives.

The UCG formulates incident objectives based on several factors: incident priorities and other direction from a higher authority, the situation, and members’ professional judgment and experience. Incident objectives should be clear, measurable, achievable, and flexible. They include sufficient detail to ensure understanding, but are not so prescriptive as to preclude innovation.

Table 4: Priorities—Objectives—Strategies—Tactics, Tasks, Work Assignments

Guidance Element	Description	Developer	Examples
Priorities	Define the intent of leaders, in general terms, with regard to the most important things that must be accomplished. They are generally expressed in terms of the core capabilities defined in the National Preparedness Goal.	Initially established by the competent authorities, e.g., Governor, Tribal Chair/Council, FEMA Administrator, FEMA RA; subsequently reviewed and adjusted throughout the life cycle of an incident by the UCG	Search and rescue operations
Objectives	Define what must be accomplished to achieve the priorities and based on best knowledge of the current situation and the resources available	UCG	Complete all search and rescue operations by 12 March
Strategies	Carefully devised plans of action to achieve one or more objectives. Strategies describe what actions and resources are required in working to achieve the specific objective.	OSC	Deploy FEMA Urban Search and Rescue teams, Emergency Management Assistance Compact search and rescue assets from Kentucky and Indiana, and Canadian search and rescue teams to work in a unified operation under the tactical control of Memphis Fire Services.
Tactics/ Tasks	Define how specific actions will be performed to achieve a planned outcome. Tactics specify who, what, where, and when in describing the deployment and direction of resources for implementing strategies to achieve incident objectives. Tactics/tasks/ work assignments are initially recorded on Form 215 and subsequently reflected on the Form 204 and included in the IAP for the given operational period.	OSC	California Task Force-3 will report to Memphis Fire Station 19 at the corner of Chelsea and Boxwood Street at 0600 [of the operational period] with all equipment and support personnel to deploy and operate under the direction of Memphis Fire Services until 1800. Specific direction for the team will be provided by Memphis Fire Service officials.

FEMA has established guidelines to ensure that incident objectives are handled consistently:

- Incident objectives are displayed on the 202. They are numbered sequentially from the beginning of the incident to its conclusion and are not renumbered for each operational period.
 - Either cross out or remove incident objectives that have been achieved.
 - Incident objectives can be modified and maintain the same tracking number as long as the intent of the objective does not change.
 - If an objective is modified, it is assigned a new sub-letter under the same objective number, and the old objective is retired. For example, if objective 2 is modified, it becomes 2a, and objective 2 is retired. If this objective is modified again, it becomes 2b, and 2a is retired.
- The UCG prioritizes incident objectives as operational period requirements dictate. Incident objectives are listed on the 202 in order of priority, regardless of their tracking number. The first listed objective is therefore the highest priority. The last listed objective is the lowest priority.

Unified Coordination Group Develops and Updates Objectives

The UCG will meet before the C&GS meeting to review and, if necessary, revise incident priorities and determine the incident objectives for the next operational period. This meeting is often conducted informally and frequently includes the OSC and PSC.

The expected results of this meeting are:

- a common understanding among the UCG of the incident's issues and the key requirements of the response and recovery
- agreement regarding incident priorities and objectives for the next operational period
- recognition of constraints and limitations affecting accomplishment of incident objectives, and operational guidance (for accomplishing incident objectives) that accounts for and mitigates identified limitations

The work product from this meeting is a documented list of incident objectives (i.e., a FEMA ICS Form 202) in preparation for the C&GS Meeting.

The Command & General Staff Meeting

The C&GS meeting is the opportunity for the UCG to meet with the staff to gather input or to provide immediate direction. It is also the opportunity for the UCG to articulate and approve incident objectives for the next operational period and to share important information regarding incident management.

The PSC facilitates this meeting. The UCG presents the priorities and incident objectives and articulates guidance on how incident operations will proceed. The participants review the

incident objectives and discuss strategies for accomplishing the objectives. Table 5 provides a sample agenda.

Table 5: Sample Agenda for the C&GS meeting

Agenda Topic	Briefed By
Roll call and introduction of new participants and guests	PSC
Opening remarks	UCG
Describe/update current situation	Situation Unit Leader (SITL)
Open discussion, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current status and issues • Constraints, limitations, and shortfalls • Input needed to finalize the incident objectives and strategies 	OSC Others – as needed
Present incident objectives for the upcoming operational period	PSC
Establish precedence of incident objectives based on incident priorities	PSC
Outline of guidance to achieve objectives	UCG
Open discussion (optional)	PSC
Closing remarks	UCG

CHAPTER 5: PHASE 3 - DEVELOP THE PLAN

Operational planning is a continuous process, but time-specific operational planning begins immediately following the C&GS meeting. The Operations Section develops strategies to meet incident objectives and tactics to accomplish the strategies (figure 7). Operations Section staff match the work required to execute the tactics to resources to create work assignments, which are documented on the Form 215. As work assignments are developed, the Safety Officer, Logistics Section Chief, Security Manager, and others review the work assignments and provide input.

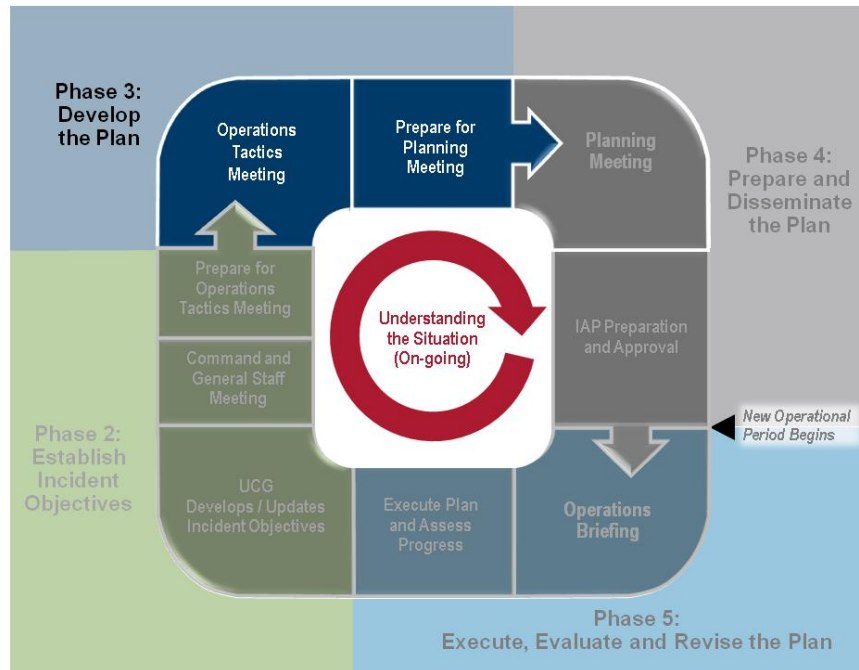


Figure 7: Phase 3 of the Incident Action Planning Process

Strategies

Strategies are ways to achieve incident objectives. Strategies may be developed during all phases of an operation and by all elements involved in the operation and are not restricted to specific, short- or long-term operational periods. Strategies describe what actions and resources are required to achieve specific objectives and are distinct from tactics, which address the conduct of specific operations. A strategy describes how things work; tactics describe what must be done.

For example:

- **Strategy:** Establish a mix of fixed and mobile DRCs to provide easy access to FEMA programs for survivors at the following locations: [list of locations follow]
- **Tactics:** Identify when, where, and the type of DRC to be established.

Determining Strategies

The process of developing strategies does not occur during a formal meeting. It is accomplished in the period between the C&GS Meeting and the Operations Tactics Meeting.

The Operations Section staff begins the process of developing strategies immediately when they receive the incident objectives for an operational period. The OSC develops strategies collaboratively with section staff and in consultation with others such as Logistics, Safety, and Security personnel to ensure that the strategies are fully supportable. All strategies must be weighed against available resources, time, and the probability of achieving the desired outcomes.

Strategy Development Tips

OSCs often hold an informal meeting with Operations Section staff members, who have operations planning responsibilities, to develop the operations strategies and to:

- solicit broad input
- ensure that staff understand and agree on the strategies developed
- adjust strategies in consultation with branch directors and group supervisors

Good strategies:

- are feasible, practical, suitable, and likely to achieve the desired outcome
- meet acceptable safety norms
- are cost effective
- reflect sound environmental practices
- consider political implications
- address core capabilities

Strategies Inform the Development of Sound Tactics

Strategies are developed to accomplish the UCG's incident objectives and frame the development of tactics. Strategies must be complementary and able to be integrated into a single coordinated course of action. Effective strategies restrict the pool of possible tactics and help to ensure that tactical decisions do not conflict. Sound strategic planning takes into account dynamic situations, as well as constraints and limitations, in incidents.

Determining Tactics

Tactics define specific actions to be performed to achieve a planned outcome. Tactics specify who, what, where, and when for implementing strategies to achieve incident objectives. Tactics describe the deployment and direction of resources, based on the strategy to accomplish the incident objectives. Once the strategies have been developed, Operations personnel are responsible for developing the tactics to implement the strategies taking into account constraints, limitations, and other considerations. Examples of considerations for determining resource requirements include what resources are available for the next operational period and whether any road closures or hazardous conditions may affect tactical implementation. Once the kind, type, and qualification of available resources are known and any constraints or limitations are identified, a course of action (COA) can be developed.

The following activities are used to develop COAs:

1. Determine what has to be done to implement a strategy and what method(s) are likely to achieve success.

2. Develop a list of resources (personnel, teams, equipment, supplies, and facilities) that are required.
3. Provide a list of resources available (done by the Resource Unit).
4. Compare the resources *required* with resources *available* and discuss the findings with the OSC prior to the Operations Tactics Meeting.
5. Draft the COA based on this analysis.

Additional personnel, supplies, services, and equipment required to implement the COA are requested. This is done with the understanding that resources will usually not arrive in time to be applied in the next operational period.

Once that COA has been developed and the requisite resources identified, Operations Section personnel select specific resources to perform specific work assignments. They then write work assignments for each resource and identify reporting locations.

Assigning Resources and Describing Work Assignments

Work assignments for resources that are not in direct support of incident objectives and/or field-related are not included in the COA unless the OSC determines that there is a compelling reason to do so. Planning, administration, data entry, and report writing are examples of such resources and activities not included in the IAP. Work assignments are also not typically included for the following operations leaders unless they are non-administrative in nature: OSCs, geographic and functional branch directors, and division and group supervisors.

Assign Resources to Operations Organizations According to Geographic Area or Functional Group

On FEMA incidents, functional operations resources and ESFs are initially assigned to a specific functional branch/group (Individual Assistance [IA], PA, HM, and ESF). Operations Section personnel consider requirements for each task and select the best resource. Representatives from the functional branches/groups and the primary agencies of the ESFs control their assigned resources when the incident is organized functionally.

On incidents that are organized geographically, functional branches/groups assign their resources to geographic operations branches/divisions where the resources will be employed during the operational period. While assigned to a geographical operations branch/division, these resources are under the supervision of the Operations Branch Director-Geographic (OPBD). Resources assigned to the division are directly supervised by other personnel outside of the division, such as an OPBD, functional branch director/group supervisor, or ESFs/other Federal agencies/Recovery Support Functions. The functional branches/groups plan the tactical activities and assign their resources through the IAP to operations branches or divisions to perform designated work assignments during the operational period. While assigned to a division, these resources are under the management of the division supervisor (DIVS). However, the DIVS does not have

“direct supervisory authority” for any of the “resources assigned to the division.” Resources that are not so assigned remain under the supervision of the appropriate functional branch/group.

Those resources assigned to a geographic branch/division are under the supervision of the assigned OPBD/DIVS. That DIVS ensures that the work assignments prepared by the functional branches, groups, and ESFs are carried out as prescribed in the work assignment. Functional branches, groups, and ESFs may modify work assignments in coordination with the appropriate geographic OPBD/DIVS. Conversely, if changes are needed to meet SLTT officials’ concerns that affect functional resources assigned and their work assignments, the DIVS consults with the OPBD, the appropriate functional branch director, the group supervisor, and the ESF lead.

If a resource will be assigned to more than one branch or division during a single operational period, a work assignment is prepared for each. If a particular resource will be doing multiple tasks in a single division, Operations Section personnel combine the work assignments on a single line on the FEMA ICS Form 215 and the appropriate FEMA ICS Form 204.

Also, when determining a reporting location, Operations Section personnel in a geographic organization refer to the incident map to determine to which operations branch and/or division the resource will be assigned. The incident map depicts the geographical boundaries of branches and divisions—boundaries that remain in effect throughout the life cycle of the incident. Operations branches and divisions can be combined when appropriate as workload diminishes. Combining operations branches and divisions means that multiple branches may be assigned under a single branch director or multiple divisions are assigned under a single division supervisor. The branch/division boundaries and designators remain the same. For example, combining Divisions A, B, and C under a single DIVS would look the same on the map but would identify the division as Division A, B, and C on the FEMA ICS Form 204.

Write a Specific Work Assignment for Each Assigned Resource

The supervisor or person responsible for the implementation and completion of the work assignment should receive a sufficient amount of information for the implementation and completion of the assignment. This information must be clear and concise and include the following:

- task to be accomplished
- objective being supported
- reporting time and location
- level of effort required to accomplish the task
- any special equipment required
- logistical support needs
- any contact information
- any constraints or limitations

Identify the Reporting Location

The reporting location is where the assigned resource reports at the beginning of the operational period. This is not the branch, division, group, or ESF but the physical location to which the resource must report. Examples of reporting locations are:

- address of the DRC
- address or number of points of distribution for the delivery of commodities
- location within a geographic and/or jurisdictional area for disaster survivor assistance activities
- address and time for the PA applicants briefing
- street address by the U.S. National Grid (USNG) Reference System
- rallying point

Sometimes a specific time for arrival may also be necessary as part of the work location. This could be a direction to not arrive before or after a certain time, or a period in which the work assignment needs to be initiated. This information should be included with the reporting location when relevant.

Determine Logistical Support Needs to Complete the Assignment

Work assignments often require specific logistical support—requirements that the functional branches and groups are responsible for identifying. The Logistics Section receives these requirements and acts to meet them. Examples of such requirements are as follows:

- Needs for IA mobile DRC #3:
 - shade tent approximately 10x10 feet
 - water for 200 people
 - 25 folding chairs
- Needs for HM Community, Education, and Outreach Crew #1:
 - 1 folding table, 6 feet long
 - 5 folding chairs
- Needs for point of distribution #15:
 - 5 truckloads of water
 - 1 truckload of tarps
 - 2 truckloads of meals-ready-to-eat

Using the Operational Planning Worksheet (FEMA ICS Form 215)

Developing the Operational Planning Worksheets (FEMA ICS Form 215) is an essential part of the incident action planning process. The worksheets are particularly important tools for the success of response and recovery operations on larger incidents. FEMA ICS Form 215 aids Operations personnel in capturing their tactics and in identifying resource assignments prior to

the Operations Tactics Meeting. Reviewing these worksheets during the Operations Tactics Meeting facilitates discussion and focuses on the review of tactics and resource assignments.

Functional operations branches/groups, ESFs, and geographic branches/divisions use the Form 215 to document the assignment of resources and supporting information as determined above. The worksheet is designed to capture work assignment information and to aid in both the operations review process and preparation of the FEMA ICS Form 204.

For each assigned resource, the following general guidelines must be entered on the FEMA ICS Form 215:

1. In the “Objective” column, indicate the number of the incident objective or objectives that the task supports. This will help inform the UCG of activities associated with each objective. If a task is not associated with any objective, the UCG may need to adjust the objectives or the task should be reconsidered.
2. Include only resources that are either on hand or that the Ordering Unit verifies have been ordered and will be on hand for the assignment.
3. Enter the incident name.
4. Enter the date and time the form was prepared.
5. Enter the date and time for the operational period.
6. Enter the geographic branch number.
 - a. If the resource is being assigned to a functional group, leave blank.
7. Indicate a geographic or functional operations organization assignment, citing the following according to the level of the incident:
 - a. Where applicable, for Level I and II incidents involving a geographic branch, show the branch number (I, II, III, etc.) and division letter (A, B, C, etc.).
 - b. For Level I and II incidents involving a functional branch, cite the branch (IA, PA, HM, etc.) and any operational branches/groups such as air operations, staging, and disaster emergency communications.
 - c. For Level III incidents, cite the functional group (IA, PA, HM, etc.) and any operational groups such as air operations, staging, and disaster emergency communications.
8. Enter the resource identifier for the assigned resource.
 - a. Consult with the Planning Section’s Resource Unit for resource identification information.
 - b. When there are multiple resources of the same kind and type ensure each resource has an individual resource identifier assigned (i.e. Mobile DRC #3, Disaster Survivor Assistance Crew #3, etc.).
9. Enter the contact name and phone number for the resource.
 - a. Consult with the Planning Section’s Resource Unit to identify the resource contact name and number.
10. Enter the number of people or the quantity of the resource.

- a. the number of people assigned to the resource (i.e. Crews, Task Force, etc.) or
 - b. the quantity of the resource (liters of water, number of meals ready to eat, number of tarps, etc.)
11. Enter the work assignment.
 12. Enter the reporting location and time (as needed).
 - a. For operational periods longer than one day, the date must be added if needed.
 13. Logistical needs should include what is on hand, what is required and the delta (if any).
 - a. This will be helpful to stimulate discussion with Logistics Section personnel during the Operations Tactics Meeting. It may also necessitate a change in strategies to address shortfalls.
 14. Under “Additional information,” list safety issues, security concerns, etc. that may affect the associated task.

Once the draft worksheet is completed, it is transmitted electronically to the Resources Unit prior to the Operations Tactics Meeting. The PSC and OSC negotiate the actual deadline for the FEMA ICS Form 215, and the OSC is responsible for ensuring that the deadline is met.

The Resources Unit captures all FEMA ICS Form 215s and prepares them for display, review, and editing at the Operations Tactics Meeting.

The Operations Tactics Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to review and finalize the draft FEMA ICS Form 215s. To accomplish this, the OSC leads participants in reviewing the work assignment drafts to determine whether they are complete and whether they support the incident objectives and strategies. Participants also identify gaps and duplication in work assignments and resolve any conflicts or coordination issues. Participants must also ensure that resources are identified correctly (resource identifier) and that when there are multiple resources of the same kind and type, an individual identifier is assigned. Participants also consider resource and logistical issues and identify shortfalls, excesses, safety issues, and the accuracy of the incident map.

Participants in the Operations Tactics Meeting include functional branch directors (or designee for branch planning); functional group supervisors (when no branch director is assigned); ESF leads; the geographic branch director (operations branch directors) and division supervisors (if requested by the OSC); the Resource Unit Leader (RESL); the Logistics Section Chief (LSC); and the Safety Officer and Liaison Officer, and others as invited by the OSC.

Informational items available at the Operations Tactics Meeting, supplied by the Planning Section, include the list of current incident objectives, a large incident map, a list of operational resources (including the unassigned resources available for assignment), and displays of any other information pertinent to the meeting. Table 6 provides an example agenda of an Operations Tactics Meeting; the actual agenda should be tailored as applicable.

Table 6: Sample Agenda for the Operations Tactics Meeting

Agenda Topic	Briefed By
Review established incident objectives	OSC
Review, discuss, and concur on draft work assignments	OSC
Ensure Resources Identifiers are correctly assigned	OSC
Identify resource shortfalls and excesses	RESL
Identify the logistical needs of the work assignments	LSC
Discuss and address the safety issues of the work assignments	Safety Officer
Consider the limitations and needs of ESF support	Liaison Officer
Approve the FEMA ICS Form 215	OSC
Update the incident map	OSC & LSC
Discuss other topics as needed	OSC

During the meeting, the OSC may determine the following options for a submitted work assignment:

- Approve FEMA ICS Form 204 conversion into the final IAP
- Disapprove for not supporting an objective, not field-based, no longer applicable, etc.
- Retain for a future operational period
- Capture the information in another format (i.e. FEMA ICS Form 213 General Message, Action Tracker, etc.)

At the conclusion of the meeting, copies of the approved FEMA ICS Form 215s are made available to the Resource Unit either electronically or uploaded to a web-based application. It is important that the Operations entities provide the FEMA ICS Form 215s in a timely manner so that the Planning Section has adequate time to prepare and conduct quality assurance on the required information for the IAP meetings.

CHAPTER 6: PHASE 4 - PREPARE AND DISSEMINATE THE PLAN

Phase 4 (figure 8) begins when the Planning Section receives the approved FEMA ICS Form 215s from the Operations Section at the conclusion of the Operations Tactics Meeting. It ends with the IAP being approved at the planning meeting and signed by the UCG. The Planning Section (Planning Support Unit Leader) is responsible for completing the appropriate IAP forms and assembling the IAP. Other sections contribute key information and supporting documents.

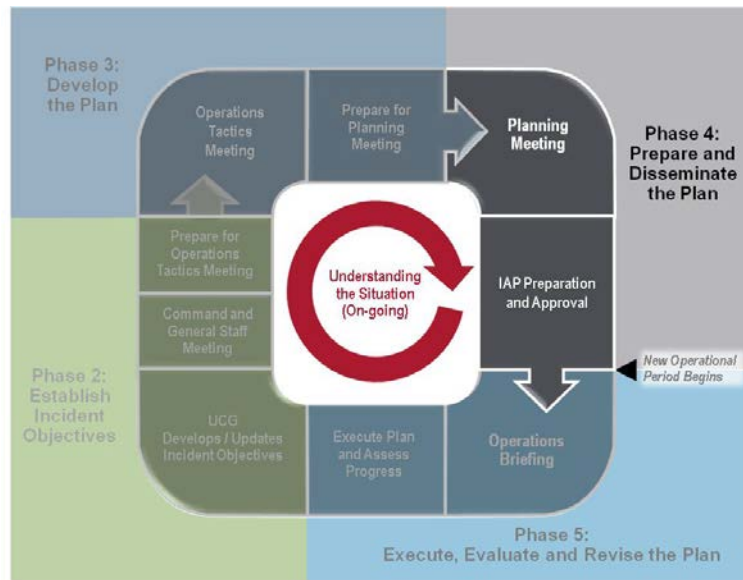


Figure 8: Phase 4 of the Incident Action Planning Process

At the end of this phase, a draft IAP has been approved by the UCG. The items that make up the IAP are listed in table 7, along with pertinent information on each item.

Table 7: IAP Components and Sequence of Assembly

Order	FEMA ICS Form	Title	Required	Prepared by
1	200	Cover Sheet	Always	SITL
2	202	Incident Objectives	Always	SITL
3	205	Incident Radio Communications Plan	As the incident requires – Radio Use	Communications Unit Leader (COML)/Disaster Emergency Communications Group Supervisor/Mobile Emergency Response Support Coordinator
4	205 A	Incident Telephone Communications Plan	Always	RESL
5	207	Incident Organization Chart	Always	RESL
6		Incident Map	Always	SITL/GIS Unit Leader
7	204	Assignment List	Always	RESL
8	220	Air Operations Summary	As the incident requires - Air Ops	OSC/Air Operations Branch Director
9	206	Medical Plan	Always	Safety Officer
10	230	Meeting Schedule	Always	SITL
11	208	Safety Message	Optional	Safety Officer
12	213	General Message	Optional	Any Message Originator
13	Other components as needed		Optional	Planning Support Unit Leader

Planning Section Responsibilities

This section is responsible for collecting the various components of the IAP and compiling them during the time between the Operations Tactics Meeting and the Planning Meeting.

Planning Section Chief

The PSC is responsible for producing the draft IAP. He or she will also track any changes made to the draft IAP during the final review and approval process.

- **Overseeing the IAP’s Preparation**—The PSC oversees the preparation and assembling of the draft IAP to ensure that it is completed in time to be presented at the planning meeting. The PSC ensures the quality and completeness of the IAP, which includes coordinating with other sections and functions. The PSC adjudicates requests to add items to the IAP.
- **Reviewing the Assembled Draft**—The PSC schedules time with the OSC to review the IAP prior to the Planning Meeting.
- **Facilitating the Planning Meeting**—The PSC is responsible for scheduling, managing, and facilitating the Planning Meeting. (See the planning meeting section below.)

- Ensuring the IAP is approved—While all players in the incident action planning process contribute to the success of the plan, the PSC is responsible for obtaining the UCG’s approval for the IAP.

Resource Unit

The Resource Unit is responsible for preparing a number of forms that are key to the IAP. Those forms include the following:

Assignment List (FEMA ICS Form 204)

The Planning Section prepares the Assignment Lists (FEMA ICS 204) using information the Operations Section provided on the FEMA ICS Form 215s. It is the heart of the IAP and must be organized in a way that enables staff to understand clearly their work assignments. The Assignment List is prepared in accordance with the guidance in table 8.

Table 8: Assignment Lists Dos and Don'ts

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence FEMA ICS Form 204 according to the organization chart for the Operations Section (e.g., Branch I and Divisions A through G, followed by Branch II and Divisions H through N, followed by IA Branch and Groups, PA Branch and Groups, HM Branch and Groups, etc.) • If the incident is organized geographically, organize the FEMA ICS Form 204s geographically; if the incident is organized functionally, organize the FEMA ICS Form 204s functionally. • List all resources working in a particular division on that division’s FEMA ICS Form 204. • Specify exactly which resource (individual, task force, team, crew, or squad with a designation number or other specific nomenclature) is responsible for each work assignment. • Ensure that names, contact numbers, and resource identifiers are correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not modify the form or use a modified form. • Do not include work assignments that are not in direct support of incident objectives. • Do not include work assignments for OSCs, branch directors, division or group supervisors, and managers assigned in the JFO on the FEMA ICS Form 204 if they are administrative in nature or relate to personnel management. • Do not include more than one work assignment line for an individual, task force, team or crew on the FEMA ICS Form 204 for any particular division. Combine multiple work assignments and display them on one assignment line. A particular individual, task force, team, or crew may, however, be assigned to more than one division on FEMA ICS Form 204 when assigned to work locations in other divisions. • Do not leave blocks blank. Where information for a block is not available, use placeholders (“TBD,” “N/A,” or “UNK”) to indicate that the topic of the block has been addressed.

Incident Telephone Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205 A)

The Incident Telephone Communications Plan (FEMA ICS 205 A) is a telephone contact list of key staff and staff agencies (FEMA, State, other Federal agencies, etc.). The Resource Unit prepares and maintains this plan.

Important considerations when preparing the FEMA ICS Form 205 A are as follows:

- Include only positions at (i.e., personnel assigned to) the division/group supervisor and unit leaders levels and above.
- Ensure that the information on the plan is consistent with the information on the Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207).
- Once the JFO is established, ensure that contact numbers listed for FCO, SCO, TCO, and other key staff are desk phone numbers for their administrative assistants. Do not list personal cell phone numbers for any staff members. Include government-issued cell phone numbers, if available.
- Include the USNG coordinates with the incident facility location/address. If the address is not known, specify only the USNG coordinates.

Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207)

Organization charts are important to inform staff of not only how the staff is organized, but also what positions are filled and who is assigned to key positions. The Incident Organization Charts include positions/personnel assigned as unit leaders, group/division supervisors, managers (where appropriate), and above. The IMH provides guidance for displaying appropriate incident organizations. The Incident Organization Chart will accurately reflect the organization.

The Planning Section Resource Unit prepares and maintains the Incident Organization Chart, using the following important considerations:

- Include geographic branch director(s) and/or division supervisors on incidents that are organized geographically. Use program branches (IA, PA, and HM), Air Operations Branch, etc. when applicable. (See IMH, Chapter 5, Operations Section).
- Include the major components of the C&GS organization on the organization chart. Also, include FEMA program areas when they are assigned, which are typically organized and displayed as branches but may be displayed as groups on smaller incidents.
- Display the organization on the organization chart according to the general incident organization structure in the IMH.
- Show deputy positions box in the same box as the primary position. Deputies do not have separate organizations under them. If there is a need for additional positions to accommodate span of control, assign assistants.
- Ensure that position titles and names on the organization chart are consistent with the position titles and names on the Form 205 A and throughout the IAP.
- Include only division/group supervisor and unit leader positions and above on general staff organization charts. Include only managers/advisors and above on command staff organization charts.
- Include no more than two organization charts in the IAP (typically one for C&GS organization and one for the Operations Section).

Situation Unit

The Situation Unit is responsible for the preparing the Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202), Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230), and coordinating the development of the Incident Map with the GIS Unit. The SITL also delivers the situation briefings at the C&GS meeting and the Planning Meeting and may brief at the operations briefing. The SITL also develops and maintains other key information items, including maps and situational displays that are typically posted in the Planning Meeting room.

Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202)

The first page of the IAP (after the cover sheet) is the Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202). In addition to the objectives, this page also provides weather and safety information.

Important considerations when preparing the Form 202 include the following:

- Include only incident objectives in Block 5.
- Number objectives sequentially from the beginning of the incident; do not renumber objectives for each operational period.
- List the incident objectives in order of priority regardless of their tracking number.
- Remove incident objectives that have been achieved.
- Do not include items of guidance labeled “goals,” “priorities,” or “incident priorities.”
- Focus the weather message on weather forecasted for the operational period that may affect operations.
- In collaboration with the Safety Officer, focus the safety message on information that is relevant and actionable for field personnel.

Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230)

The Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230) describes the important incident meetings that will take place during the operational period and indicates where and when they will be held. The schedule also describes the purpose of the meetings. There is some discretion with regard to what meetings are listed on the schedule; incident action planning meetings and briefings are always included. The meeting schedule helps to ensure that other meetings do not conflict with incident action planning meetings.

Important considerations when preparing the Form 230 include the following:

- List and conduct the following for each operational period: C&GS Meeting, Operations Tactics Meeting, Planning Meeting, and Operations Briefing.
- Use common terminology, as identified in the IMH, to describe all meetings and briefings. (Refer to IMH chapter 9 for further guidance.)
- Do not include items on the schedule that are not meetings or briefings.

Incident Map

The incident map is an essential IAP component that identifies key incident facilities and operational boundaries. The Situation Unit provides information and coordinates with the GIS Unit to produce the map.

Important considerations when preparing the incident map include the following:

- Include the following on the incident map:
 - scale
 - true north
 - date and time
 - legend
 - incident organization boundaries (branches and/or divisions, etc.)
 - key facilities
 - camps
- Use naming conventions and map symbols as shown in appendix B.
- Produce the map in black and white to facilitate reproduction.
- Additional, special purpose maps may also be attached to the IAP (e.g., DRC map).

IAP Cover Sheet (FEMA ICS Form 200)

The IAP cover sheet provides specific information about the IAP. The incident IAP cover sheets must be consistent with and reflect FEMA standards. Logos for FEMA, the State, Tribe, and other UCG member organizations may be used on cover sheets and must be produced in black and white. IAP cover sheets must contain the following information:

- title (e.g., Joint Incident Action Plan)
- plan number (the first IAP completed is 01; subsequent IAPs are numbered sequentially)
- incident name that identifies the nature of the disaster (e.g., severe storms)
- declaration numbers for Stafford Act incidents and for any State or other UCG organization declarations
- JFO/IOF address with USNG coordinates
- operational period (date and time)
- signature blocks for the SCO, TCO, FCO, and any other UCG members

Planning Support Unit

The Planning Support Unit compiles the completed ICS forms for the IAP, prepares the IAP cover sheet, and performs a quality control check on the IAP.

Command/General Staff

The Safety Officer, Logistics Section, and the Operations Section's Air Operation Branch are also responsible for preparing and maintaining certain components of the IAP.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is responsible for identifying any risks or threats for incident personnel and developing the general safety message on the FEMA ICS Form 202, Safety Analysis (FEMA ICS Form 215 A), and the Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206).

General Safety Message on FEMA ICS Form 202

The Safety Officer prepares the general safety message to be included on the Form 202 for each IAP. The message focuses on information that is relevant and actionable to field personnel for operations during the operational period. The message may be changed for each operational period based on conditions.

Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206)

The Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206) is key to the welfare of incident personnel and is included in all IAPs. The FEMA ICS Form 206 provides important information on medical emergency procedures and the locations and phone numbers of medical aid facilities, emergency medical transportation, and hospitals in the incident area. The Medical Plan includes how to contact Emergency Services, local urgent care centers, and hospitals in the applicable areas.

Important considerations when preparing the FEMA ICS Form 206 are as follows:

- List urgent care and hospital emergency rooms as well as incident aid stations established at the JFO and incident camps in block 5, “Incident Medical Aid Stations.”
- Indicate the emergency phone number in block 6, “Transportation.”
- If any ambulances are assigned to the incident, include the locations and phone numbers in block 6.
- In block 7, “Hospitals,” list not only the facility that normally services the main JFO but also the hospitals located throughout the incident area. (Typically, those selected have emergency room capability.)
- Include sufficient information in block 8, “Emergency Medical Procedures,” to enable incident employees to know what to do and whom to notify in the case of a medical emergency.

Safety Analysis (FEMA ICS Form 215a)

The Safety Officer reviews the Form 215 and develops the Safety Analysis (FEMA ICS Form 215 A) in coordination with Operations Section staff as they develop the worksheets. The FEMA ICS Form 215 A contains the results of a systematic analysis of risks associated with each work

The Safety Officer is responsible for creating the following:

- FEMA ICS Form 202: General Safety Message
- FEMA ICS Form 206: Medical Plan
- FEMA ICS Form 208: Site Safety Plan (as applicable)
- FEMA ICS Form 215A: IAP Safety Analysis

The Safety Officer, or designee, attends and provides a high-level safety briefing at the Operations Tactics meeting when Command Staff support is required.

assignment. This analysis assists Operations Section personnel in altering tactics, if necessary, to promote the safety of the field personnel. If this alters the work assignments or the resources required, the Safety Officer confers with the OSC and the PSC so that the Form 204 can be adjusted.

Logistics Section

On incidents where radio communications are used, this section is responsible for preparing the Incident Radio Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205) and the traffic plan.

Incident Radio Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205)

The COML/Disaster Emergency Communications Group Supervisor/Mobile Emergency Response Support Coordinator prepares the FEMA ICS Form 205 when radios are a significant part of operational communications to provide specific incident radio frequency assignments for the operational period. The plan shall identify all assigned radio frequencies, trunked radio systems, and talk group assignments for the operation elements identified on the FEMA ICS Form 207 and the FEMA ICS Form 203.

Traffic Plan

The traffic plan is included in the IAP, when required, but does not have an ICS Form number. The Ground Support Unit prepares the traffic plan when incident personnel must be informed of special traffic requirements, including required routes of travel, missing directional signage on incident transportation routes, and special driving conditions.

Air Operations Branch (Operations Section)

Air Operations Summary (FEMA ICS Form 220)

When the Air Operations Branch is activated, it prepares the Air Operations Summary (FEMA ICS Form 220) to be included in the IAP.

Additional Items to the IAP

Additional items (i.e., FEMA ICS Form 208) may be attached to the IAP on a case-by-case basis with the concurrence of the OSC and PSC.

The Planning Meeting

The Planning Meeting is facilitated by the PSC. The purpose of the meeting is to gain concurrence of all participating sections for the next operational period. The meeting provides the opportunity for the C&GS, as well as other incident management personnel, agency officials, and cooperating/assisting agencies and organizations to discuss and resolve any outstanding issues before assembling the IAP. After the review has been completed and updates have been made, C&GS affirm their commitment to support the plan. Table 9 provides a sample of potential topics to be included in the agenda; the actual agenda should be tailored as applicable.

Table 9: Sample Agenda Items for the Planning Meeting

Agenda Topic	Briefed By
Review agenda	PSC
Provide opening remarks	UCG
Provide briefing on current situation and national implications	SITL
Review incident objectives	PSC
Present and review the draft Form 204	OSC
Ensure that the draft operational plan meets incident objectives	PSC
Review any open actions/tasks	PSC
Solicit feedback from the C&GS	PSC
Obtain commitment from the C&GS to support the plan	PSC
Obtain the UCG's approval of the IAP	PSC
Final comments and direction	UCG

In the planning meeting, the OSC elaborates, as necessary, on the strategy and tactics to be employed during the operational period.

After the Planning Meeting

The PSC is responsible for ensuring changes are made to the IAP that were agreed upon during the Planning Meeting. The PSC does this by directing the Planning Support Unit to make all necessary changes. The PSC also ensures that the final IAP is signed by the appropriate members of the UCG.

Printing and Distributing the IAP

Once the IAP has been approved by the UCG, it is ready to be printed and distributed. This is the responsibility of the PSC. The Planning Support Unit reproduces hard copies of the IAP for members of the C&GS. Furthermore, it distributes the IAP electronically by posting it to the JFO Reports section of FEMA Crisis Management System (WebEOC).

The target audience for the IAP is branch directors, division and group supervisors, task force leaders, team leaders, crew leaders, squad leaders, and incident support staff. Field supervisors are responsible for ensuring their staff can access the IAP. When optional ICS forms are included in the IAP, they must be available to all recipients as part of the IAP. The Planning Section Documentation Unit collects and archives all original IAP forms.

CHAPTER 7: PHASE 5 - EXECUTE, EVALUATE, AND REVISE THE PLAN

Phase 5 (figure 9) begins with the operations briefing and continues as the IAP is executed and evaluated in preparation for it to be revised during the next operational period.

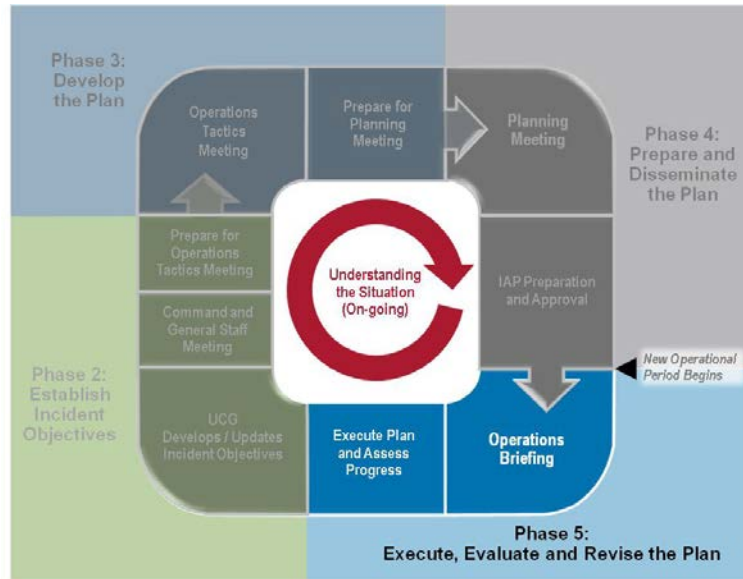


Figure 9: Phase 5 in the Incident Action Planning Process

Operations Briefing

The OSC conducts the operations briefing before each operational period begins, ensuring that those who need the information have access to it. The purpose is to roll out the IAP for the upcoming operational period. The OSC may adjust work assignments or resource allocations during the briefing. Table 10 lists topics that are typically addressed in the operations briefing; the actual agenda should be tailored as applicable.

Table 10: Sample Agenda for Operations Briefing

Agenda Topic	Briefed By
Review incident objectives	OSC
Review weather conditions and forecast	SITL
Present the current situation	OSC/SITL
Brief operations field personnel	OSC
Communications	COML
Logistics	LSC
Safety	Safety Officer
Finance	Finance Section Chief
Other items	Specialists

C&GS members receive the briefing if they are supporting field personnel identified in the IAP. Attendees also include branch directors, division/group supervisors, and others as needed.

Once the IAP has been distributed and the operations briefing has been held, the IAP is executed. As field personnel perform their work assignments, supervisors assess the progress and the effectiveness of the work. This assessment often requires field visits to observe progress. Individuals, crews, and task forces inform their supervisors of the status of assignments.

Changes are often required to reassign resources or modify work assignments during the operational period. The changes can come from the field level, in which case changes are communicated up to the OSC through the branch directors, division supervisors, and group supervisors. The OSC, in turn, communicates the changes to the Planning Section. Changes can also come from other sources and would be communicated from the OSC down to the branch directors, division supervisors, and group supervisors.

Assess Progress and Effectiveness

Determining the effectiveness of the work accomplished during each operational period is essential to drive activities for the following operational period. Determining items such as the extent to which objectives were achieved, the rate at which consumable resources were depleted, anticipated resource shortfalls and surpluses for the next operational period, and significant changes in the conditions such as weather; will drive planning during the next operational period's Operations Tactics Meeting.

Information required to evaluate the work conducted based on the last IAP is collected in a number of ways. An essential source is reports from field personnel. During supervisory visits, field personnel provide assessments of their effectiveness during the operational period. Supervisors pass information to the Planning Section Situation Unit. If field personnel do not provide input on their work during each operational period—and the Situation Unit does not provide a method to gather field input—then the effectiveness of the subsequent IAP may be compromised.

Ending Incident Action Planning

As an incident progresses and a steady operational tempo is achieved, the UCG will consider ending incident action planning. No set rules exist on when to stop developing IAPs. This decision lies with the FCO and the UCG. The following criteria may be helpful.

Consider halting incident action planning when:

- Response activities have ended
- There is no remaining threat to life or property
- Work occurring in the JFO is primarily programmatic
- All ESF resources except staff have been demobilized
- Operations are being conducted under a Recovery Support Function organization
- The operational period is longer than six days
- Most Planning Section efforts are focused on reporting rather than planning
- A Recovery Support Strategy is in place and being executed
- The transition from a JFO and a standard ICS structure to a National Disaster Recovery Framework structure is underway or complete

Examples of Post-IAP products used by JFO personnel can include:

- Incident Strategic Plan
- SITREP

ANNEX 1: ACRONYMS

C&GS	Command and General Staff
CIR	Critical Information Requirement
COA	Course of Action
COML	Communications Unit Leader
DIVS	Division Supervisor
DRC	Disaster Recovery Center
EEI	Essential Element of Information
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FCO	Federal Coordinating Officer
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GIS	Geospatial Information Systems
HM	Hazard Mitigation
IA	Individual Assistance
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICP	Information Collection Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
IMAT	Incident Management Assistance Team
IMH	Incident Management Handbook
IOF	Initial Operating Facility
JFO	Joint Field Office
LSC	Logistics Section Chief
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIMS	National Incident Management System

NSP	National Support Plan
OPBD	Operations Branch Director-Geographic
OSC	Operations Section Chief
PA	Public Assistance
PSC	Planning Section Chief
RA	Regional Administrator
RESL	Resource Unit Leader
RRCS	Regional Response Coordination Staff
RSP	Regional Support Plan
SCO	State Coordinating Officer
SITL	Situation Unit Leader
SLTT	State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial
STT	State, Tribal, and Territorial
TBSP	Tribal Affairs Specialist
TCO	Tribal Coordinating Officer
UCG	Unified Coordination Group
UCS	Unified Coordination Staff
USNG	U.S. National Grid

ANNEX 2: GLOSSARY

Assistant: the title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants except for subordinates of principal Command Staff positions (External Affairs, Safety, Chief of Staff, and Liaison Officers) are not FEMA Qualification System positions and will not have position task books. Assistants must be qualified at the next lower level to the principal position. Assistants may be used to alleviate span of control issues or assigned technical responsibilities.

Branch: the organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility for major aspects of incident operations. A branch is organizationally situated between the section chief and the division or group in the Operations Section, and between the section and units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified either by the use of Roman numerals or by functional area.

Chain of Command: the orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.

Critical Information Requirement: particular elements of information specifically requested by incident leaders. These items are of such importance that leaders are notified immediately when the Planning Section receives updates on a CIR item.

Constraint: requirement that dictates or prohibits an action, thus restricting freedom of action.

Deliberate Planning: proactive planning process to address a potential situation or risk.

Deputy: a fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or to perform a specific task. In some cases, a deputy can act as relief for a superior and therefore must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies must be fully qualified in the position for which they are assigned. Deputies are used to share position responsibilities and serve as acting during the absence of the primary superior. Deputies are not used to alleviate span-of-control issues. An FCO can assign a deputy to perform specific tasks.

Division: the organizational level responsible for operations within a defined geographic area. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the Section Chief. See *Group*.

Essential Element of Information: important and standard information items that incident managers need to make timely and informed decisions. EEIs also provide context and contribute to analysis. EEIs are also included in situation reports.

Functional Planning: planning conducted, as required, to address particular operational issues, such as interim housing, power restoration, demobilization, and continuity of operations.

Group: an organizational subdivision established to divide the incident management structure into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. See *Division*.

Incident Objective: statement of guidance and direction needed to select the appropriate strategy (or strategies) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be clear, achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow strategic and tactical alternatives.

Incident Planning: planning associated with an actual or potential incident, likely under emergency conditions, that involves developing procedures for responding to actual or projected effects.

Joint Field Office: a temporary Federal facility established to provide a central point for Federal and SLTT governments and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations with responsibility for incident oversight, direction, and/or assistance to effectively coordinate and direct prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery actions. Typically, the JFO is located at or near the incident area of operations. The JFO may be co-located with the State EOC.

Limitation: a factor or condition that, either temporarily or permanently, impedes mission accomplishment.

Operational Period: the time scheduled for executing a given set of operation actions as specified in the IAP. Operational periods can be of various lengths, although usually they last 12 to 24 hours immediately after an incident and longer as more time passes.

Priority: Incident priorities identify the most important needs and the core capabilities needed to address those needs. Priorities facilitate the development of incident objectives and establish their order of importance. Developed by the UCG, priorities also guide the employment and allocation of resources.

Span of Control: the number of resources for which a supervisor is responsible, usually expressed as the ratio of supervisors to individuals. Under NIMS, an appropriate span of control is between 1:3 and 1:7, with optimal being 1:5, or between 1:8 and 1:10 for many large-scale law enforcement operations.

Strategy: statement of course of action(s) to be taken in order to execute task(s), achieve objective(s) or goal(s), fulfill mission(s), or realize end state(s) based on existing or expected resources.

Tactic: the deployment and directing of resources on an incident to accomplish the objectives designated by a strategy.

Task Force: any combination (number and mixture) of resources assembled to support a specific mission or operational need. All resource elements within a task force must have common communications and a designated leader. A task force may be pre-established and sent to an incident, or formed at an incident.

Unified Coordination Group: the structure that executes unified command and leads incident activities at the field level to achieve unity of effort. Its purpose is to establish and achieve shared objectives. The UCG is comprised of senior leaders representing State and Federal interests and, in certain circumstances, tribal governments, local jurisdictions, or the private sector. The FCO is responsible for establishing the UCG.

Work Assignments: an assignment to be accomplished that leads to meeting an incident objective(s). A tactical action supporting an incident objective(s) assigned to a specific resource (individual, team, task force, crew etc.) and identified on Form 204 in the IAP.

APPENDIX A: HOW TO DEVELOP INCIDENT OBJECTIVES

Incident objectives are the focal point for conducting response and recovery activities. They represent the UCG’s intent for the conduct of the incident. Writing good incident objectives can be as challenging as it is important. The following basic rules may be helpful.

Incident objectives are based on incident priorities

Incident priorities define senior leaders’ perspective regarding overarching requirements and reflect the core capabilities outlined in the National Preparedness Goal. Incident objectives are based on incident priorities and provide the basis for operational guidance, strategies, tactics, and work assignments. Table 11 shows this relationship.

Table 11: Relating Incident Objectives to Incident Priorities

	Based On	Answers...				Documented in IAP
		Who?	What?	Where?	When?	
Incident Priorities	Governor, Regional Administrator guidance		●			
Incident Objectives	Incident priorities, situation, resources		●	○	○	●
Tasks/Work Assignments	Incident objectives	●	●	●	●	●

Note: A black dot means *always*, open circle means *sometimes*, blank means *never*.

Incident objectives:

- Are concise statements of what needs to be done or attained; they are not descriptions of specific tasks.
- May include details on where and when; they do not indicate how or why.
- Should not address normal, inherent incident management activities, e.g., “Initiate incident action planning,” “Gain situational awareness,” “Deploy liaisons to the State EOC.”⁷
- Are established for every operational period but need not be accomplished or accomplishable in that single operational period; they frequently carry over from one operational period to the next.

⁷ Such activities are important and should be tracked by the appropriate elements of the UCS but should not be included in the IAP.

- Are the exclusive responsibility of the UCG and are generally developed with input and assistance from the command staff and general staff.
- Are typically general during the initial operational periods of an incident and become more specific, in terms of where and by when, as awareness of the situation improves.
- Must be measurable to make it possible to determine when a given objective has been accomplished, achieved, or attained.
- Should address outcomes rather than outputs or program specifics whenever possible.
- Are specifically intended to guide incident operations and are not the appropriate place to highlight the concerns of specific constituencies.

Incident Objectives should:

- Begin with a verb that describes a measurable/observable action (e.g., “provide [something],” “deploy [something],” “conduct [something]”) and not soft verbs such as “support,” “ensure,” “reinforce.”
- Not describe or include language on how the objective is to be accomplished. Incident objectives should contain no adverbs (e.g., do not include “safely,” “quickly,” “completely,” “especially”) and avoid the use of adjectives (e.g., “prompt,” “thorough,” “compassionate”).

Table 12 provides more suggestions for words to use and avoid when writing incident objectives. It also suggests the functional areas that are typically the focus of incident objectives.

Table 12: Suggestions for Writing Incident Objectives

What are good verbs to use when writing incident objectives?		
Augment	Implement	Dispose of
Determine	Complete	Provide
Finalize	Devise	Deliver
Carry out	Pre-stage	Execute
Develop	Conduct	
What verbs should be avoided?		
Assess	Continue	Coordinate
Monitor	Work with	Support
Ensure	Reinforce	
What modifiers should be avoided?		
Quickly	Safely	Completely
Prompt	Accessible	Compassionate
Reliable	Thorough	
What functional areas do incident objectives typically focus on?		
Communication	Fuel resupply	Mortuary affairs
Public messaging	Search and rescue	Decontamination
Law enforcement	Planning support	Public safety and health
Emergency medical services	Mass care	Power
Mitigation support	Public assistance support	Route clearance
Transportation	Infrastructure	Debris removal

In the IAP, on FEMA ICS Form 202:

- Display only incident objectives—do not include priorities, strategies, or other extraneous information.
- Assign individual tracking numbers to incident objectives serially from the beginning of the incident to its conclusion.
- Do not renumber incident objectives. Each objective retains its original tracking number until the objective is accomplished or achieved at which point the objective and its tracking number are retired.
- Once an incident objective has been retired, do not include it on the ICS Form 202.
- If an objective is modified but retains its original intent, assign its tracking number a new sub-letter and retire the original objective. For example, if objective 2 is modified, its tracking number becomes 2a, and objective 2 is retired. If that objective is subsequently modified again, the objective becomes 2b, and 2a is retired.
- If an incident objective is modified in a way that changes its original intent, retire the original objective and assign revised objective a new tracking number.
- Prioritize incident objectives based on urgency, operational period requirements, and guidance from the UCG.
 - List the incident objectives on the ICS Form 202 in order of their priority, regardless of their tracking number. The first objective listed is the highest priority. The last listed objective is the lowest priority.
 - Let incident priorities guide the prioritization of objectives. “While objectives must be based on requirements,” the Incident Management and Support Keystone states, “the status in which they must be addressed is guided by priorities.”

Examples of Incident Objectives

Table 13 provides examples of good objectives from IAPs. This list is not exhaustive and only meant to illustrate the rules above.

Table 13: Examples of Good Incident Objectives

Example Incident Objectives	
1	Identify specialty rescue assets for urban, swift water, and air search and rescue
2	Execute urban search and rescue and air search and rescue missions
3	Conduct medical evacuation from specified flood areas
4	Evacuate survivors from specified areas
5	Provide commodities and staffing to sustain shelter operations
6	Provide sheltering and life-sustaining commodities to survivors
7	Operate points of distribution
8	Provide life-sustaining commodities and supplies to survivors located in isolated communities
9	Restore power, water, wastewater disposal, and telecommunications to survivors in the affected area
10	Establish and initiate operations at five Disaster Recovery Centers by DD Month YYYY and an additional two Disaster Recovery Centers by DD Month YYYY
11	Establish and initiate operations at five Disaster Recovery Centers in counties of [County Name], [County Name], [County Name], and [County Name] by DD Month YYYY
12	Open 18 Disaster Recovery Centers in the most impacted communities by DD Month YYYY
13	Clear routes to provide ingress for emergency personnel and equipment and egress for survivors and victims
14	Initiate turn-key debris removal operation by US Army Corps of Engineers in [City] on DD Month YYYY; execute debris removal operations throughout the remainder of impacted area as requested
15	Provide specific guidance [to whom] regarding the proper collection, sorting, and disposal of debris
16	Provide public health services in impacted areas, to include health inspections, restaurant inspections, and food safety and environmental assessments
17	Provide medical care to survivors located in areas without power in Division B and Division D
18	Provide mental health services including crisis counseling to survivors in conjunction with the State Department of Health
19	Conduct damage assessments in specified counties
20	Complete Preliminary Damage Assessments for specified counties within Branch III by DD Month YYYY
21	Execute hazardous materials clean-up and pollution control operations
22	Execute hazardous materials and pollution control operations to collect household hazardous materials
23	Reopen ports and navigable waterways
24	Operate Disaster Recovery Centers within impacted areas
25	Increase the number of Disaster Recovery Centers in operation to 28 by DD Month YYYY
26	Conduct refueling operations for incident personnel and specified non- incident personnel
27	Provide housing for displaced survivors
29	Provide temporary power and emergency repairs to enable residents to shelter in place in their homes in [County], [County], and [County]
31	Assess specified beaches to provide alternative courses of action to state and county governments for protection of life and improved property until permanent solutions are developed

Example Incident Objectives	
32	Schedule and conduct applicant briefings
33	Conduct applicant briefings focused on expedited Immediate Needs Funding and categories A and B relief
34	Conduct 14 Applicant Briefings by DD Month YYYY
35	Focus and execute Housing Inspections in coastal areas that are without power
36	Conduct registration operations
37	Transition 90% of the current sheltered population into a better housing solution by DD Month YYYY
38	Contact applicants to determine their needs for expedited category A and B projects
39	Contact applicants to identify needs for expedited categories A and B project worksheets; schedule kick-off meetings within 21 days of Request for Public Assistance approval
40	Conduct 200 Public Assistance exploratory calls to set-up kick-off meetings by DD Month YYYY
41	Provide feeding and other life-sustaining commodities to survivors
42	Restore power, feed survivors, and provide Individual Assistance registration, and housing inspection services
43	Provide technical assistance to [City], [County], and [County] Hazard Mitigation Programs to expedite and enable municipalities to meet their obligations under the Hazard Mitigation Grants Program
44	Identify and address unmet needs and integrate long-term recovery planning with daily operations in the most severely impacted areas
45	Conduct initial community assessments for expedited recovery
46	Raise awareness of the new Advisory Base Flood Elevation data by reaching out to affected communities and using that data to support reconstruction efforts
47	Implement Personalized Applicant Assistant Services to address the remaining temporary sheltered hotel population and assist other eligible applicants in identifying interim housing solutions
48	Identify the scope of the mold issue in disaster housing, determine assets available to address the problem, and provide courses of actions to state and local government partners
49	Determine the need and validate the capacity of communities to engage in Community Planning and Capacity Building
50	Provide commodities to designated points of distribution and isolated communities
51	Provide technical assistance to local building inspectors for the assessment and determination of substantially damaged structures located within the floodplain
52	Provide building code and mitigation technique information to minimize damage from future events
53	Increase flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program
54	Identify housing resources for applicants impacted by the severe storms
55	Execute Housing Mission: identify housing resources for applicants; install temporary housing units for applicant occupancy
56	Execute Housing Mission: identify housing resources for applicants; place 26 applicants in temporary housing units by DD Month YYYY
57	Install 20 temporary housing units and make 18 units ready for occupancy by COB DD Month YYYY
58	Assist 12 communities to develop their long-term community recovery plans and/or strategies
59	Conduct Disaster Case Management in support of [State] in 14 counties; transition to State ownership by DD Month YYYY
60	Provide technical assistance to [State] in developing strategies to retain major employers affected by [Incident]

APPENDIX B: INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM MAP SYMBOLS














SYMBOL	FEATURE REPRESENTED
	Joint Field Office
	Camp (identify by name)
	Helispot (identifier)
	Helibase (include name if more than one)
	Fixed Wing Base (include name if more than one)
	Branches (use Roman numerals)
	Branch Office
	Divisions (use upper case alphabetical characters)
	Division Office
	Incident Support Base (identify by name)
	Staging Areas (identify by name)
	Disaster Recovery Center (use identifier)
	Hazard/Incident Origin

Figure 10: Incident Command Map and Symbols

APPENDIX C: JOB AIDS FOR STAFF PREPARING FEMA ICS FORMS FOR THE IAP

Using these job aid checklists will enhance the consistency of and provide standardization among all IAPs, with the goal of improving the execution of incident-level operations. Standardized IAPs are necessary for FEMA employees and all interagency, SLTT, and private-sector partners—to have a common expectation of how IAPs will be developed, formatted, and compiled. IAPs are critical to incident field personnel in facilitating their situational awareness and understanding work assignments. The individual checklists below can be provided to the staff members responsible for assembling each piece of the IAP.

Cover Sheet (FEMA ICS Form 200)	
Information displayed on IAP Cover Sheets (FEMA ICS Form 200) should be consistent. IAPs are not strictly FEMA documents, and their cover sheets will typically reflect UCG members’ participation. IAPs are also national-level documents that must have a professional appearance fitting for audiences at the FEMA Headquarters, Department of Homeland Security, and the White House levels.	
The Cover Sheet (FEMA ICS Form 200) will include the following:	Situation Unit Leader
Title: Joint Incident Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan number (the first IAP developed is #1: subsequent IAPs are numbered sequentially)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incident name that describes the nature of the disaster (severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
FEMA Declaration Number (e.g. FEMA-XXXX-XX (EM/DR)-XX(State/Tribe/Territory))	<input type="checkbox"/>
State and other participating UCG members’ declaration numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Field Office (or initial operating facility) address and USNG	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational period date and time	<input type="checkbox"/>
IAP approval signature blocks for the SCO/TCO, FCO, and any other UCG member(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Logos (black and white only) may be used for FEMA, the State, and any other UCG member organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>
IAP approval signature blocks for the SCO/TCO, FCO and any other UCG member	<input type="checkbox"/>

Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202)	
The Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202) is the first page of the IAP. This form not only describes the UCG's incident objectives but also provides weather and safety considerations for use during the next operational period.	
Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS 202) will include the following:	Situation Unit Leader
In Block 5, only incident objectives will be displayed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number the incident objectives:	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Sequentially from the beginning of the incident to its conclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Do not renumber them for each operational period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
List the incident objectives in order of priority, regardless of their tracking number.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The objective listed first is the highest priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The objective listed last is the lowest priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remove numbered incident objectives that have been achieved. <i>Note: Archive completed FEMA ICS Form 202 for future reference.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modify an incident objective if necessary and maintain the same tracking number as long as the original intent of the objective does not change.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write out the incident objectives so that they provide actionable guidance for Operations.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not focus incident objectives so tightly that they become essentially similar to work assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not list "priorities" or "incident priorities" on the Form 202.	<input type="checkbox"/>
In Block 6, focus the weather message on weather that incident personnel can expect for the operational period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
In Block 7, focus the safety message on information that is relevant and actionable to field personnel.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Incident Telephone Communication Plans (FEMA ICS Form 205 A)

The purpose of this form is to inform incident personnel regarding which radio communications channels are in use and which specific purpose each has been assigned. It is acceptable for Planning Sections to replace the Incident Radio Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205) in the IAP, where appropriate, with a modified version, entitled the Incident Telephone Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205 A). The plan is a combined Organization Assignment List (FEMA ICS Form 203) and Form 205 that includes professional contact telephone/cell phone numbers and professional email address (optional) for each person listed. It also identifies if they are FEMA, State, or from other federal agencies. The inclusion of both the Form 203 and Form 205 A in the IAP is unnecessarily duplicative and therefore confusing—adding to the length of the IAP without providing additional needed information.

The Incident Telephone Communication Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205A) will include the following:	Resource Unit Leader
Only those positions and personnel assigned to division/group supervisors, unit leaders and above. <i>Note: The exception to this is a Level III, event and the Form 205 A is no longer than one page in the IAP.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that this plan does not become the incident phone directory.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that this plan corresponds with the incident organization chart with correct names assigned to specific positions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact numbers listed for FCO, SCO/TCO, and other key staff are the desk numbers for their administrative assistants.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not show personal cell phones numbers or personal email addresses for any incident staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207)	
Incident Organization Charts (FEMA ICS 207) are important for incident personnel to understand how the incident is organized, what positions are filled, what the reporting structures are, and who is filling these positions. On Level I and II incidents, the organization charts include unit leaders, group/division supervisors positions, and above. Organizations will be configured according to incident needs and current accepted program structure. These charts should accurately reflect the organization.	
Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207) will include the following:	Resource Unit Leader
Chart displayed in way that is consistent with examples provided in the <i>Incident Management Handbook</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Position naming conventions that conform to the position names in the IMH.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deputy positions shown in the same box as the primary position.	
Deputies will not be shown with separate organization structures.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is a need for another position to manage the span of control then the use of assistants is appropriate. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
The names on the chart are consistent with the names on the Form 205 A.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that on Level I and II incidents, the following occurs:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Command staff includes only managers/advisors and above. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization charts include unit leaders/group and division supervisors positions and above only 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organizations are configured according to incident needs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Operations Section organization is organized geographically, unless there is a compelling reason to organize functionally. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
For a Level III incident, the following occurs:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization is arranged functionally. (In rare situations, it can also be organized geographically.) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include, as necessary, all the positions/names of the whole organization on the chart. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
On incidents that are organized geographically, the organization chart will include the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic branch director(s) and division supervisors 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program branch directors, group supervisors, task force leaders, managers, and crew leaders (IA, PA, and HM) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Operations Branch 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Incident Map

The incident map is an important IAP component for incident field personnel, which enables them to locate critical incident facilities and operational geographic boundaries, and other critical information such as declared counties. On Level I and II incidents, the incident map is extremely important for those doing incident action planning. FEMA program branches in Operations and others (e.g., ESFs) need to know where the geographic branches and divisions boundaries are located within the incident area so they can assign their resources to the correct branch and division on the Operational Planning Worksheet (FEMA ICS Form 215). The incident map is the responsibility of the Planning Section's Situation Unit, however, the updating and viability is the responsibility of the Operations Section Chief. Incident maps should be produced in black and white using standardized fill patterns (i.e., vertical horizontal, and diagonal) to indicate IA, PA, IA/PA, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program if declared.

The incident map will include the following:	Situation Unit Leader
Incident geographic branches and division boundaries	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical operational facilities such as the following:	
• Staging Areas, both Federal and State	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Operations field offices	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Helibases, fixed wing bases	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Disaster Recovery Centers	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Incident camps or other support facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Designated counties	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that the naming and identification map symbols, are all in accordance with IMH Chapters 9 through 30 and appendix B of this document.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that incident map legends use black and white patterns, not color.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Assignment List (FEMA ICS Form 204)	
<p>Assignment Lists (FEMA ICS Form 204) are critical for informing field staff about their assignments, duties, responsibilities, and key personnel contact information for an operational period. As a result, Form 204 should be complete, accurate, and organized in a manner that facilitates staff's understanding of operational work assignment details. Using the Operational Planning Worksheets (FEMA ICS Form 215), the Operations Section develops the FEMA ICS Form 204. Once Operations approves them, the FEMA ICS Form 215s are given to the Planning Section to prepare the FEMA ICS Form 204s. Once the UCG's members affirm that the general staff can support the plan at the Planning Meeting, and the UCG then approves the operational plan, the FEMA ICS Form 204s are included in the IAP for duplication and distribution.</p>	
The Assignment List (FEMA ICS Form 204) will include the following:	Resource Unit Leader
Do not use a modified FEMA ICS Form 204.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not include work assignments that are not in direct support of incident objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not include for work assignments OSCs, geographic and program branch directors, division supervisors, and managers assigned in the JFO if they are administrative in nature or relate to personnel management.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sequence the list according to the Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207) for Operations. <i>Example: Branch I and Divisions A through G, Branch II and Divisions H through N, IA Branch and Groups, PA Branch and Groups, HM Branch and Groups etc.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete the list in a way that is clear and provides information for field staff to understand their task, reporting location, reporting time, and key personnel contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not include objective numbers on the work assignment. <i>Note: It is the responsibility of the OSC to ensure work assignments are consistent with the FEMA ICS Form 202 during the Objectives Strategies Meeting.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that all resources are listed on the appropriate FEMA ICS Form 204.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that division or functional forms include no more than one work assignment line for an individual, crew, or task force.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A particular individual, crew, or task force may be assigned to more than one division form when assigned to work locations in other divisions. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple work assignments are combined and displayed on one assignment line. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
No blank blocks on the list. <i>Note: Where information for a block is not available, use placeholders whenever possible to indicate that the topic of the block has been addressed (TBD, N/A, UNK, etc.).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The following are detailed appropriately:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistical needs 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety considerations 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination requirements 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical support information 	<input type="checkbox"/>
In Block 11, any special communication requirements, if different than those identified in the FEMA ICS Form 205 A, are fully described	<input type="checkbox"/>

Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206)	
<p>The Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206) is critical for the safety of incident personnel when a medical emergency occurs. FEMA ICS Form 206 provides important information to incident personnel such as the following: medical emergency procedures, the locations of medical aid facilities within the incident area, emergency medical transportation locations with contact numbers—including those of hospitals located in or near the incident area. The responsibility for the development of the FEMA ICS Form 206 is the Safety Officer.</p>	
Medical Plan (FEMA ICS 206) will include the following:	
The form being used is the official FEMA ICS Form 206 and has not been modified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include in Block 3 (incident medical aid stations), both urgent care and hospital emergency rooms located within the incident area, and incident aid stations that may be established at the JFO and incident camps.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include in Block 4, whether 911 is the contact number for all emergency transportation needs in all affected areas of the incident.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 911 is not the contact for all emergency transportation needs, then the IAP must reflect the information for each municipality. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an ambulance is assigned to the incident then the correct location and contact numbers must be included. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include in Block 7, (hospitals) not only the hospital that would service the JFO, but also selected hospitals with emergency room capability located throughout the incident area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fill Block 6, correctly and with enough information so an incident employee will know what to do and who to notify in the case of an accident or other medical emergency.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Daily Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230)

The Daily Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230) provides incident staff with the information regarding what, where and when critical incident meetings will take place during the operational cycle. The schedule also lays out the purpose of the meetings. Incident action planning meetings and briefings will always be included in this schedule. The meeting schedule also ensures that other meetings do not conflict with incident action planning meetings (i.e., Command and General Staff Meeting, Objectives Strategies Meeting, Planning Meeting, and the Operations Briefing). The meeting schedule should reflect the incident action planning cycle for the operational period, and include other critical incident meetings as needed.

The Daily Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230) will include the following:	Situation Unit Leader
A C&GS meeting consisting of the UCG (FCO, SCO/TCO, and any other UCG Coordinator) and staff will be conducted and listed on the meeting schedule for each operational period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Objective Strategies Meeting will be conducted and listed on the meeting schedule for each operational period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Operations Briefing will be held every operational period and listed on the meetings schedule for each operational period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Meeting will be conducted and listed on the meeting schedule for each operational period. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All incident action planning meetings and briefings will have IMH compliant names 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Items that are not <i>meetings</i> are not included.	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX D: FINAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

CHECKLIST

The checklist below is intended to serve as a tool that the PSC uses before granting final approval to the IAP.

- Do the tasks listed on the Assignment List(s) (FEMA ICS Form 204) support the Incident Objectives (FEMA ICS Form 202)?
- Does the incident map reflect the operation elements identified on the Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207) or the FEMA ICS Form 204?
- Does the Incident Telephone Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205 A) provide information on the operation elements identified on the FEMA ICS Form 207 or the FEMA ICS Form 204?
- Are all assigned radio frequencies, trunked radio systems, and talk group assignments identified on the Incident Radio Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205), and does the information reflect the operation elements identified on the FEMA ICS Form 207 or the FEMA ICS Form 204?
- Does information on the Medical Plan (FEMA ICS Form 206) identify the closest medical facility to each operation element identified on the incident map, the FEMA ICS Form 207, or the FEMA ICS Form 204? Does it identify what should be done if someone is injured or is seriously ill?
- Does the IAP use common Incident Command System terminology throughout the document?
- Does the Meeting Schedule (FEMA ICS Form 230) contain at a minimum, the following?
 - appropriate incident action planning meetings
 - strategy meetings
 - team meetings
 - public meetings

APPENDIX E: MAINTAINING SITUATIONAL AWARENESS THROUGHOUT THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE INCIDENT

It is necessary for FEMA to have an understanding of what is going on when, where, how, by whom, and with what throughout the life cycle of an incident. This type of information provides situational awareness. Initial situational awareness typically comes via the initial situation assessment which is facilitated by deliberate plans. Subsequent situational awareness comes through the information collection process. This appendix provides further information regarding both of these processes.

Incorporating Deliberate Plans into Initial Situation Assessment

FEMA has many deliberate plans at the national and regional level, including All-Hazards Plans and Incident Specific Catastrophic Plans. The contents of these plans often provide strategic and tactical information that has been agreed-upon between the State and FEMA. Table 14 lists potential plan content items that may inform the Incident Action Planning Process.

Table 14: Deliberate Plan Elements and their Application in IAPs

Deliberate Plan Element	Description	Application	Examples
Assumptions	Provides baseline expectations for the content of the rest of the plan, including magnitude, impacts, location(s), and operational capabilities	Allows IMAT to identify potentiality for plan use and applicability of operational requirements	Earthquake Magnitude Hurricane Strength Regional Response Coordination Center Capability Resource Availability
Risk Analysis	Provides construct for considering where potential risk exists	Provides IMAT with initial framework for understanding the potential impacts, including those that may not be typically considered	Demographics Climate Geology Cascading Impacts

Deliberate Plan Element	Description	Application	Examples
Projected Timelines	Incorporates risk analysis and assumptions into currently understood timelines to give framework for expected timelines for delivery of resources, capabilities, and program delivery	Informs process for determining delivery of resources, allows for expectations to be managed between State and FEMA	Transportation Impacts & Associated Timeline Delays Facility Availability and Stand-up Times
Personnel & Resource Requirements	Provides specific, agreed-upon resource requirements based on the assumed, modeled impacts	Gives IMAT baseline for Mission Assignment scope, personnel ordering requirements, JFO size needs, and logistics footprint requirements	Personnel Needs Anticipated Shortfalls & Federal Resource Requirements Commodity Shortfalls & Federal Requirements
Operational Checklists	Detailed list of actions required to bring forth personnel and resources required. May provide tactical assignment and anticipated force laydown.	Gives guidelines for a time-phased approach to coordinate provision of required resources to the State. Helps to manage tasks within specific operational periods.	Resource Request Times Logistics Footprint Establishment Timeframes Anticipated Timeline for Resource Delivery
EELs/CIRs	EEL: Important and standard information items that incident managers need to make timely and informed decisions CIR: Particular elements of information specifically requested by incident leaders	Provides initial input into the Planning Section-derived ICP.	Pre-Approved EEL List Pre-Approved CIR List
Existing Facilities	Listing of preapproved facilities and their anticipated use given the plan scenario	Gives parameters for Logistics and Operations to identify resource allocation and logistics capabilities/limitations	Incident Support Base List Mobilization Center List Pre-Approved JFO Sites Points of Distribution Plan State/Federal Staging Area List
Incident Priorities & Objectives	Pre-determined list of joint State/FEMA initial priorities and supporting objectives for the specific incident	Gives baseline to IMAT for initial objectives development	Pre-Approved Priorities List Pre-Approved Objectives List

Post Initial Situation Awareness

After the initial efforts to gain situational awareness (Phase 1), the iterative information collection process begins during Phase 2 and continues to inform all aspects of incident action planning throughout the life cycle of the incident. This process includes the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information to assist operations and support functions in planning for providing support and resources to survivors during each operational period.

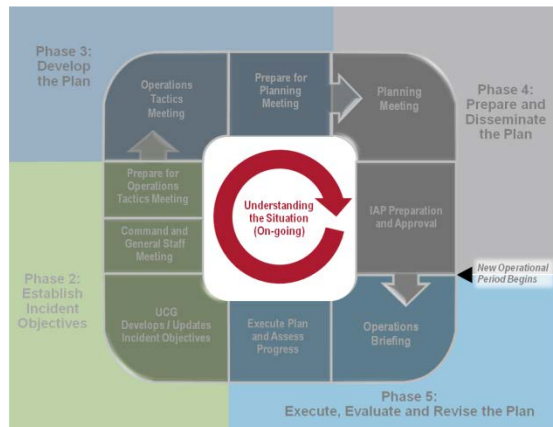


Figure 11: Understanding the Situation

Good situational awareness must be available to incident management personnel throughout the life cycle of an incident to support timely and effective decision making (figure 11). The quality of decisions is directly related to the accuracy and completeness of the information on which decisions are based. Situational awareness is gained from many sources. Site inspections, official reports, media broadcasts, maps, and formal and informal assessments all contribute to the base of knowledge about the incident.

Developing situational awareness requires continual monitoring, verifying, integrating, and analyzing relevant elements of information and developing hazards. At its best, situational awareness provides up-to-date information on the status of people, critical facilities, infrastructure, resources, and the environment.

Information Collection Plan

A well-designed ICP is an important tool for incident management.⁸ The ICP is a matrix of information requirements that is keyed to the incident. This plan also lists sources, units of measure, and schedules for collecting various items. Information gathered based on an ICP can aid in the development of incident objectives.

Situational Awareness Products

Many products and reports provide situational awareness to incident personnel. Several are key to assessing the progress of incident operations and the effectiveness of the incident action planning process. Below are some examples of products that, while not part of the IAP, inform staff on environment and effectiveness of operations.

⁸ Refer to the Incident Management Manual.

Situation Reports

The Planning Section produces Situation Reports, which are the primary summary of information of the immediately completed operational period. Situation reports address EEIs, as well as other pertinent information for the last operational period. Situation reports are also tied directly to IAPs; reports should reflect the results of IAP work assignments. By reporting on the results of work assignments the Situation Report can inform adjustments to objectives, strategies, or priorities of the coming operational period.

Spot Reports

Information for Spot Reports may be generated by any element at the incident level. These reports provide information on occurrences and/or conditions that may have an immediate and significant effect on current operations. Spot Reports can provide information that is important to incident objectives and tactics (e.g., severe weather or hazmat spills). Spot Reports often add value to incident action planning efforts by providing timely information on significant aspects of the incident. In the early stages of a response, Spot Reports may be the only source of Situational Awareness until the planning cycle begins and the Situation Report is generated.

Situation Update Briefing

This briefing—based on the content of the Situation Report—updates leadership on the current situation. The Situation Unit provides situation updates during the C&GS, tactics, and planning meetings.

Gathering Information

Gathering and reporting situational awareness is accomplished using a wide variety of methods, including:

- Providing planning specialist(s) to the STT Planning Section to monitor STT reporting systems (WebEOC®, etc.) and to create/disseminate spot reports from that information
- Reading STT situation reports
- Developing or using a good ICP
- Maintaining direct communications with the Planning Sections of the RRCS and the National Response Coordination Staff
- Deploying or using technical specialists such as National Weather Service representatives
- Deploying and receiving reports from planning specialists
- Embedding planning specialists (liaisons) in the Operations, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections
- Deploying information specialists to other facilities and operation field offices
- Analyzing and disseminating relevant geospatial products

Responsibilities

The **Command Staff and the Operations, Logistics, and Finance and Administration Sections** are responsible for regularly providing the Planning Section with clear, timely, and accurate information.

The **Planning Section** is responsible for providing the Operations Section with information products needed for effective decision making. Two units within the Planning Section are principally responsible for providing these information products: the *Situation* and *Resource* units.

The **Situation Unit** processes requests for information; develops reports, briefings, and presentations; collects and analyzes information; and integrates geospatial and technical information for situational awareness. This unit is the primary organization responsible for maintaining situational awareness within the incident organization. The unit works with the GIS Unit to prepare and maintain incident maps.

The **Resources Unit** develops and maintains the Incident Organization Chart (FEMA ICS Form 207) depicting the C&GS, as well as an organizational chart depicting only the Operations Section. The unit also develops the Incident Telephone Communications Plan (FEMA ICS Form 205 A) for each operational period detailing key staff and their contact information.

Summary

Applying accurate and timely situational awareness in each operational period includes:

- reviewing and analyzing information that may affect incident-level operations
- reexamining the actual or potential effects of the incident
- providing important real-time information to the Operations Section that could modify one or more incident objectives
- assessing the effectiveness of efforts undertaken during the previous operational period
- assessing measures of effectiveness (i.e., performance metrics)

Effective situational awareness is supported by Situation Reports, Spot Reports, and briefings, which in turn, support the development of incident objectives, tactics, and work assignments.



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