

IMS-100

Introduction to the Incident Management System (IMS) for Ontario

December 2008

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Contents

Preface.....	4
Purpose of this Course	7
General.....	7
Vision	7
Goal.....	7
Course Objectives.....	8
Using this course	8
What is the Incident Management System (IMS)?.....	10
How did IMS develop?.....	12
Scenario, Stage I – Simple incident, verbal Incident Action Plan.....	15
Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario I.....	23
Map of the incident in scenario I.....	25
Organization Chart of IMS Structure in scenario I.	26
Self-directed Test One	27
Scenario, Stage II – Complex incident, verbal Incident Action Plan.....	30
Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario II.....	42
Map of the incident in scenario II.....	44
Organization Chart of the IMS structure used in scenario II.	45
Self-directed Test Two.....	47
Scenario, Stage III – Complex incident, written Incident Action Plan	50
Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario III.....	63
Map of the incident in scenario III.....	65
Organization Chart of IMS Structure in scenario III.	66
Self-directed Test Three	67
Where to go from here	71
Self-Test Answers.....	73
Answers - Test One.....	74
Answers - Test Two.....	76
Answers - Test Three.....	78

Preface

Welcome to **IMS-100: Introduction to IMS in Ontario**. This Self-Directed course is designed to teach you the basic functions, concepts, and principles of the Incident Management System (IMS). At the end of this course you will be aware of the major functions within IMS, and be able to assume limited roles within an incident management team for simple incidents. This course is the first in the series of training courses on IMS in Ontario. It comprises a downloadable reading package with self-tests and an online exam.

The training strategy for IMS was developed by a Working Group established in support of the development of the IMS doctrine for Ontario. The training strategy includes four levels of IMS training:

- IMS-100: Introduction to IMS
- IMS-200: Basic IMS
- IMS-300: Intermediate IMS
- IMS-400: Advanced IMS

The training curriculum for these courses is shown on the next page. Other details are shown in the section “Where to go from here”. An IMS Instructor course (IMS-910) will be run to provide instructions on how to teach the IMS-200.

The training strategy supports the implementation of the IMS doctrine for Ontario. The IMS doctrine for Ontario was developed by a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee, chaired by Emergency Management Ontario. This doctrine was developed to provide a single, province-wide IMS that is capable of ensuring the effective, coordinated response to all incidents by Ontario's various response organizations. Lessons from previous emergencies demonstrated the need for such a standardized IMS to avoid confusion and enhance response.

The doctrine is recommended reading in conjunction with this training package. It may be found at www.ontario.ca/emo.

IMS Training Curriculum Overview: This curriculum overview is applicable to all emergency response organizations and teaches the general principles of IMS. It does not replace the need for organization-specific IMS training.

Crises	IMS-100: Introduction	IMS-200: Basic	IMS-300: Intermediate	IMS-400: Advanced
Outcomes	Function within the Ontario IMS	Initiate IMS structures and concepts for simple incidents or during the early phases of a complex incident	Perform leadership roles within an expanded IMS structure during a complex incident involving multiple organization response	Command complex incidents
Audience	All	Individuals potentially involved in implementing IMS at simple incidents or during the early phases of a complex incident	Individuals potentially performing leadership roles within an expanded IMS structure during a complex incident involving multiple-organization response	Individuals potentially performing the command function at complex incidents.
Prerequisite	Nil	IMS-100	IMS-200 <u>and</u> knowledge of the operations of represented organization <u>and</u> may be assigned to a Command or General Staff position during an incident	IMS-300 <u>and</u> may be designated to perform the Command function during a complex incident
Duration	4 hours (self-directed); 4-8 hours (classroom)	8-16 hours	3-4 days	2-4 days
Delivery	Self-Directed or Classroom	Classroom (modular)	Classroom	Classroom
Evaluation	Multiple choice Test	Written Test	Written and Performance-based Testing	Written and Performance-based Testing

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

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Purpose of this Course

General

The purpose of this module is to familiarize you with the structure, key functions and terminology used in the Incident Management System (IMS). Upon completion of this course you will be able to function as a responder within Ontario's IMS. Although IMS can be used for planned events, such as concerts or parades, the explanations and examples in this module are focused on incidents, i.e. occurrences or events that require an emergency response to protect life, property, and/or the environment.

This course is based on the Ontario IMS doctrine developed by the IMS Steering Committee. Committee membership includes approximately 30 organizations representing municipalities, responder and emergency services associations, provincial ministries, NGOs, the private sector, and federal departments. The IMS Steering Committee established the vision and goals for IMS.

Vision

Ontario will have a standardized incident management system that provides functional interoperability at all levels of emergency management.

Goal

The goal of the Incident Management System is to provide an efficacious, flexible, and consistent structure and process that is scalable to manage incidents by all levels of government, emergency response organizations, communities, ministries, non-government organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the entire course package you will be able to:

- Give an outline summary of the history of IMS in North America, and the development of the IMS doctrine for Ontario.
- Define the purpose and scope of IMS, including what led to the current vision for IMS in Ontario.
- Explain the core concepts & principles of IMS in Ontario.
- Explain how IMS is implemented in simple and complex incidents.
- Explain the key terms, acronyms and symbols used in IMS.
- Explain the structure and key functions within IMS, including being able to name and define the basic organizational terms and titles used in IMS.
- Describe the basic incident facilities used in IMS.
- Explain how resources are managed in IMS.
- Describe how information is managed and the different audiences that must be served.
- Explain the types of command models and why, where and how each may be utilized.
- Explain the differences between command and support.
- Explain some common accountability responsibilities of individuals deployed to incidents.

Using this course

This course is based on the Ontario IMS doctrine that should be read and consulted as a reference tool for further clarification of the concepts in this course.

There is one scenario with three stages in this course, and the stages evolve from a simple to a complex incident. The scenarios are entirely fictitious. They are provided for training purposes to help explain the basic concepts, terms and functions of IMS to people who may be unfamiliar with how emergency

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

management operates in practice or how the system as a whole operates in both simple and complex incidents. The scenarios are not based on any real-life incident, location or personnel.

Terminologies, responsibilities and important concepts of IMS are explained in text boxes throughout the narrative. Key principles of IMS are implicit throughout; explicit summaries are provided at the end of each section. In addition, a map using IMS symbols and an organization chart showing how IMS is organized at each stage of the fictional incident are included with each section.

You are encouraged to fully grasp the concepts from each scenario prior to moving on to the next. The focus should be placed on the concepts. The scenarios, fictitious as they are, are used only as a tool to highlight IMS concepts.

At the end of each scenario there is a self-directed test. Each test is based on the IMS concepts embedded in each scenario, **and not on the scenario** itself. The self-directed tests are intended not only to allow you to check your knowledge of IMS but also to stimulate you to think how IMS could be implemented in other types of incidents. Answers to each test are provided in the back of the course.

There is an overall IMS glossary that is available to support the course package as a reference for the concepts & principles, terminologies and acronyms used, not only in this course, but also for IMS in general. You are encouraged to use the glossary as an additional learning tool to reinforce your familiarity and understanding of IMS.

What is the Incident Management System (IMS)?

The **Incident Management System (IMS)** is a standardized approach to emergency management encompassing personnel, facilities, equipment, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. IMS is predicated on the understanding that in any and every incident, there are certain management functions that must be carried out regardless of the number of persons who are available or involved in the emergency response. Although this course is concerned with incident response, IMS may also be used for managing planned events, such as a concert or parade.

An incident is an occurrence or event that requires an emergency response to protect life, property or the environment.

A simple incident may involve few resources, be located within a small geographical area and last for only a short period of time. For example, a single house fire, a water main break, a call for medical assistance, or non-routine snow clearance.

A complex incident may involve the coordination of vast resources from many organizations and from municipal, provincial and federal governments, for example in the event of a major nuclear incident. The geographic location may be diffuse as, for example, in a major computer virus alert wherein vulnerable equipment may be located throughout the province. A complex incident may persist for weeks, for example, in extensive flooding; or even months, for example, in a medical epidemic.

Organizations with vast resources may nevertheless be able to handle some complex incidents single-handedly.

Some complex incidents may be declared as emergencies under Ontario's *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. Ontario defines an emergency as a situation or impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise. The Head of Council of a municipality, the Premier, or the Lieutenant Governor in Council (Cabinet), may declare emergencies.

First Nations Chiefs may also declare emergencies within their communities.

IMS is highly flexible and adaptable because it provides a standardized approach to the management of personnel, equipment and other resources, procedures, and communications within a common organizational structure. IMS can be quickly expanded or contracted according to changing circumstances and needs. It is predicated on the understanding that in any and every incident there are certain management functions - command, operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration - that must be carried out, regardless of the scale or complexity of the incident.

How did IMS develop?

The Incident Management System developed out of the need for the emergency services and other government and non-government resources to work together to tackle large-scale incidents.

In the early 1970's, southern California experienced devastating wildland fires that destroyed many hundreds of square kilometres of forest, over 800 homes and killed eight people. The fires cost more than \$18 million per day in total expenses and damages. Many services and levels of government were involved in tackling the fires and this created an impetus for the development of an improved inter-agency management system. The result was the development of the Incident Command System (ICS), based on command and control procedures developed by the military.

Because ICS is flexible and highly adaptable, the system was introduced to tackle other types of emergencies and by jurisdictions outside the United States. In Canada, ICS was adopted in the management of forest fires. Since then, it has been modified to incorporate common business principles and has gradually developed into a mature system for incident management.

Most emergency situations are handled locally using ICS. However, managing a major incident may require assistance from other jurisdictions and disciplines. The Incident Management System (IMS) was developed so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines can

ICS is primarily a command and control system delineating job responsibilities and organizational structure for the purpose of managing day-to-day operations for all types of emergency incidents.

IMS incorporates ICS, and provides a more comprehensive system for multiple jurisdictions to work together.

work together better to respond to incidents. While ICS, with its standardized command structures remains the platform of Ontario's IMS, other benefits of

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

IMS include a unified approach to incident management, emphasis on preparedness including standardized training, mutual aid, information, and resource management.

In 1998, the Ice Storm prompted a revised approach to emergency management in Ontario after the collapse of 1,000 steel pylons and 35,000 wooden utility poles that left more than 700,000 people in Ontario and Quebec without electrical power for more than three weeks. Damage totalled more than \$4 billion in all affected regions. The immense social and economic dislocation caused by the storm emphasized the need for an incident management system in which the many government and non-government organizations that might be involved in a complex emergency could work together effectively.

Since the Ice Storm, the development and improvement of emergency management capabilities within Ontario has been an ongoing process. Significant amendments to legislation have been made. A Deputy Minister for Emergency Planning and Management now has overall responsibility for Emergency Management throughout the province. Ontario's *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* reflects some of the strongest pieces of emergency management legislation in North America and sets out formal program standards as contained in Ontario Regulation 380/04.

In the aftermath of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks, the strategic aim has been to ensure that Ontario has a proactive, coordinated and comprehensive approach to managing emergencies to reduce the risks faced by communities whether from fires, diseases, terrorism, toxic materials, weather-related or other threats to people, property, economic stability or critical infrastructure. Within emergency management, the tragedy of 9/11 clearly

demonstrated the need for common tools to manage large-scale/complex incidents.

Other major public emergencies in North America have reinforced the need for effective planning, procedures and preparedness.

Other major incidents include:

- The 2003 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that killed 43 people in the Greater Toronto Area and had a widespread impact on tourism and travel.
- The failure of electrical power on August 14th, 2003 which knocked out supplies to more than 50 million people in eastern Canada and the USA, including 10 million people in Ontario.
- The 2003 summer of fires in British Columbia burned over 260,000 hectares of forest, and destroyed 334 homes and many businesses at an overall estimated cost of 700 million dollars. More than 45,000 people had to be evacuated. At its height, more than 7,000 personnel were deployed daily on the fires, requiring multi-organizational coordination.
- Hurricane Katrina that devastated New Orleans in August 2005 and led to the largest evacuation of people in the history of North America. A total of 1,836 people lost their lives and the hurricane caused more than \$81.2 billion worth of damage.

Although not all of these incidents occurred within Ontario, the lessons learned from them emphasized the need for Ontario to have a robust and standardized system of emergency response applicable to all levels of government and at every scale of response. The current Incident Management System (IMS) is a new tool to help us meet these challenges.

Scenario, Stage I – Simple incident, verbal Incident Action Plan

Learning objectives:

- o Functions/structures: Command; Support; Emergency Control Group (ECG); Strike Teams
- o The planning process: The Incident Action Plan
- o Concepts and principles: Unity of Command; Modular & Scalable; Simplicity & Flexibility; Accountability
- o Facilities: Incident Command Post (ICP); Staging Area

Scenario:

The summer has been hot and dry across much of North America, including Ontario. Major forest fires in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, the Yukon and the western United States have stretched fire-fighting resources to the limit.

On a hot Saturday afternoon in August, two hikers see thick smoke drifting through the trees. When they investigate, they discover a wild fire inside a small clearing. They immediately call the local Fire Department on their cell-phone and return to the road to await the arrival of the fire trucks. As thick smoke begins to drift between the trees, carried by the breeze, they decide to retreat down the road towards the town.

Three pumpers soon arrive. A fire captain establishes **Incident Command**

What is Command? Command is the act of directing, ordering or controlling by virtue of explicit statutory, regulatory or delegated authority.

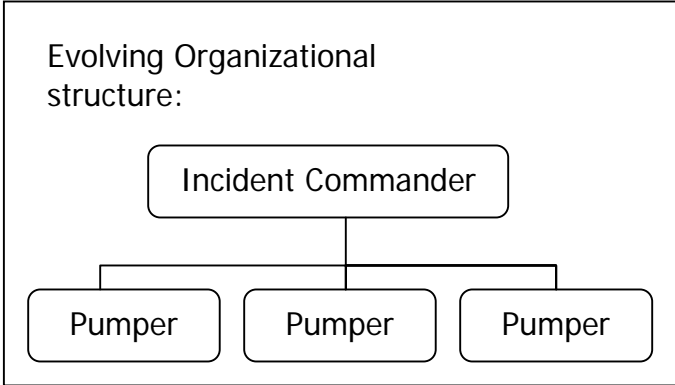
Incident Command is responsible for managing all responses to an incident. It may consist of a single person or a team. It is the first and primary organizational component of IMS, to which all other functions report. Responsibility for establishing Incident Command is not restricted to any organization or jurisdiction and may include emergency services, First Nations, municipal, provincial or federal governments, or the private sector. Generally, the first organization to respond establishes Incident Command. However, responsibility for Incident Command may change from one organization or jurisdiction to another, based on required expertise or the scale of the incident.

immediately and directs the crews into position. The Fire Captain orders the hikers to leave the area.

Aided by the dry condition of the undergrowth and the breeze, the fire spreads beyond the clearing. The fire captain, now called the **Incident Commander (IC)**, decides to call for additional support.

Responsibilities of the Incident Commander include:

- * establish communications
- * ensuring the safety of all responders,
- * assessing and reassessing the situation,
- * determining objectives, strategies, tactics and priorities appropriate to the level of response,
- * establishing an appropriate command structure and necessary facilities,
- * approving an Incident Action Plan (see later),
- * coordinating all activities to manage an incident,
- * authorizing the release of information to the public,
- * authorizing demobilization (see later).



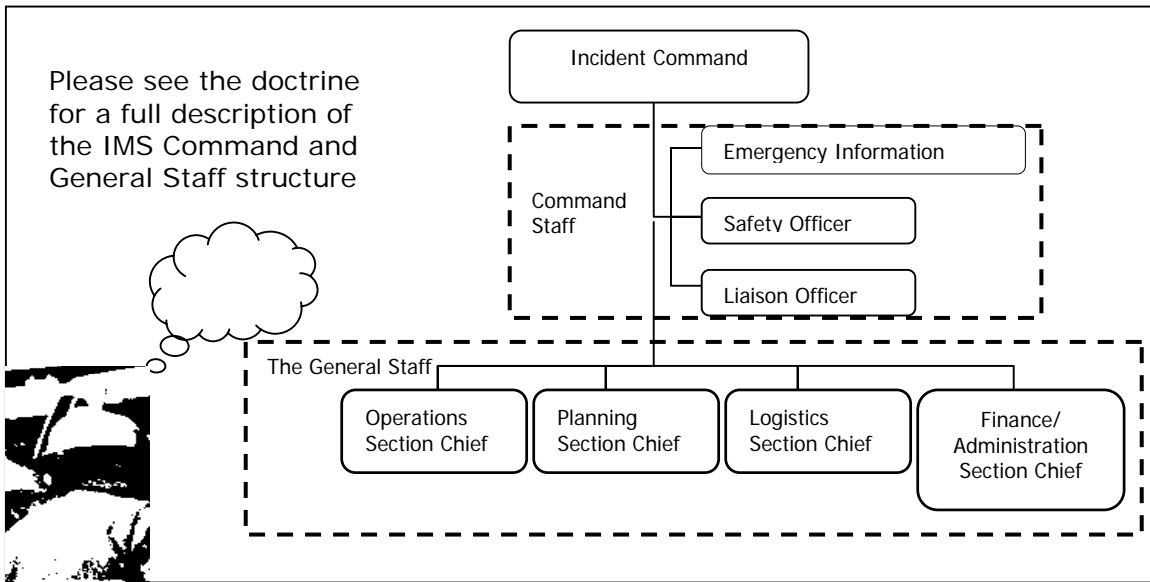
From personal knowledge of the area, the IC knows two isolated cottages stand by the lake at the top of the road. The IC quickly determines objectives, strategy and a tactical plan to safeguard the properties and the people who may be in them and to contain

the fire. The IC verbally explains this course of action, called the **Incident Action Plan** to the fire crews.

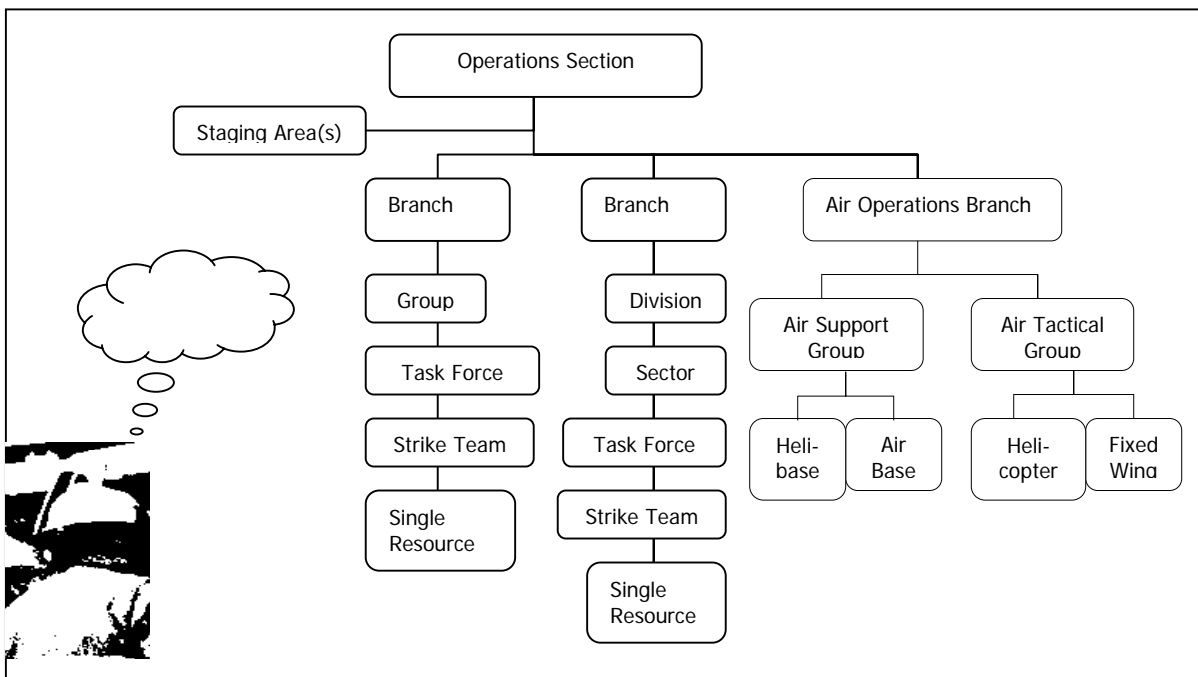
Incident Action Plan (IAP)

Every incident must have an IAP that may be spoken or written. It provides all incident supervisory personnel with objectives and the strategies, tactics, and directions for achieving them. It may also include (among others) resources, structures, as well as safety, medical and telecommunications instructions.

The IC takes a moment to reflect on the potential IMS organizational structure based on the doctrine. At this stage of the incident there is not enough to suggest the need to establish a Command and General Staff.



Nor are there enough indicators to suggest that any of the Sections (for example the Operations Section) would need to be staffed from a small to a full-blown structure (Please see Chapter 2 of the doctrine for a full description of the structure of IMS Sections).



Knowing that only those components that are required for the task at hand

need be established

(Modular & Scalable),

and knowing that the

structure should be kept

as simple as possible, yet

able to react to a

changing scenario (Simplicity

& Flexibility), the IC decides

to follow IMS doctrine and

build the incident

management structure from

the bottom up.

Modular and Scalable Organization

The IMS framework is modular and scalable in terms of structure and processes, with discrete but interrelated functional components. Components may expand or contract without losing their distinct functions. This makes it scalable to match the size and complexity of any incident.

Simplicity and Flexibility

The simplicity and flexibility of the IMS structure make it suitable to expand and contract. This flexibility means that only the required components need be activated to provide the functions needed as the situation unfolds. This keeps the IMS structure as uncomplicated and minimalist as possible.

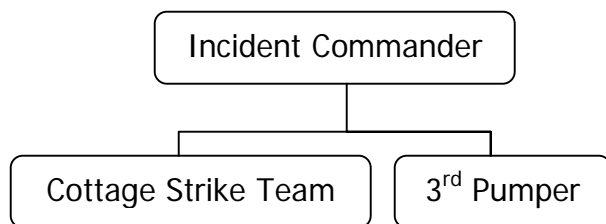
To get operations underway, two of the pumpers are designated as the

Cottage Strike Team to move up the road to try to get ahead of the fire. The third pumper stays in position adjacent to the small clearing.

Two members of the Cottage Strike Team check to see if the cottages are inhabited and to evacuate anyone who might be in them.

A Strike Team is a functional component within Operations, composed of the same kind and type of resources, assembled to accomplish a particular purpose. A Strike Team is headed by a **Leader**.

Evolving Organizational structure:



As the smoke rises in the clear sky, people arrive to gaze at the flames shooting above the trees. The IC requests emergency medical services (EMS) to stand by in case of

responder or civilian injuries. The IC also notifies Ontario's Ministry of Natural

Resources (MNR) through an MNR Representative in the town about the extent of the fire and its location adjacent to Crown Lands. Thinking about the incident's logistics requirements, the IC fears that people will block the only access road and that they will be in danger if the fire changed direction. Police assistance is requested to direct onlookers away from the area and to close the road and a section of the highway.

With the arrival of the police, and recognizing that incident response is quickly expanding, the Incident Commander decides to move the **Incident Command Post** from the cab of his fire truck, where he has been directing operations, to

Incident Command Post (ICP)

Location from which the Incident Commander oversees incident management. It is the headquarters of Incident Command only.

There is only one ICP per incident.

A vehicle, trailer, tent or a building may serve as the ICP, according to what is available and appropriate.

an unused office in a small strip mall at the junction of the dirt road and the local highway. It is located

away from the immediate dangers of the flames and smoke but close enough to the area to maintain contact with all personnel and resources.

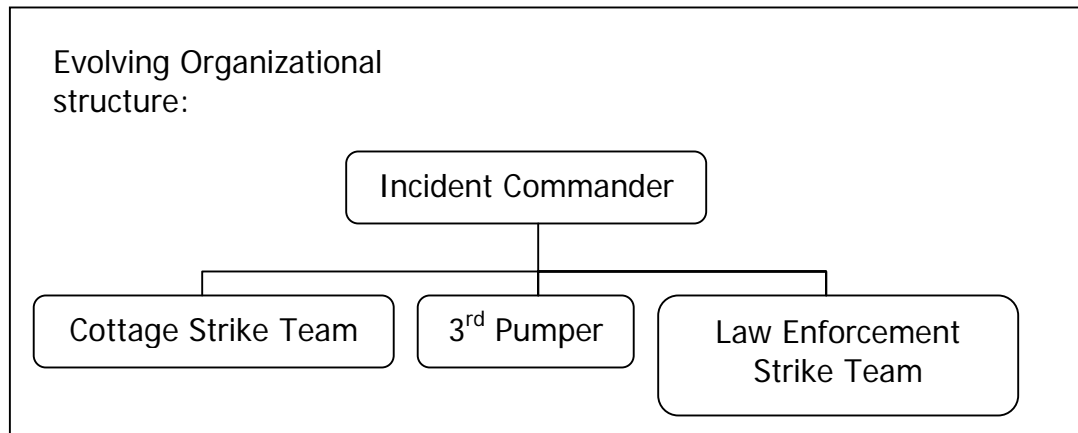
Four police officers, in two vehicles, **check-in** to the ICP and, after a short briefing, are assigned to control traffic and the crowd of onlookers.

Check-In

All operational resources must check in on arrival at an incident. This may be as simple as announcing a unit's arrival by radio, approaching the Incident Commander or completing a sign-in sheet.

At complex incidents, check-in staff may be assigned and a variety of check-in locations may be established.

They are designated as the Law Enforcement Strike Team.



Even with the arrival of the police, the Incident Commander is able to handle the decision-making by himself and so continues to maintain the **Single Command model**. (Note: For a fuller discussion on command models, see Chapter 3 of the doctrine)

Single Command

This is the most common model of command. It exists when incident decision-making in relation to directing, ordering or controlling the response to an incident is straightforward and independent. A Single Command model is usually followed when:

- a) only one organization or jurisdiction is involved,
- b) multiple jurisdictions or organizations involved in decision-making agree to follow this model
- c) if the responsibility is legally that of one jurisdiction or organization.

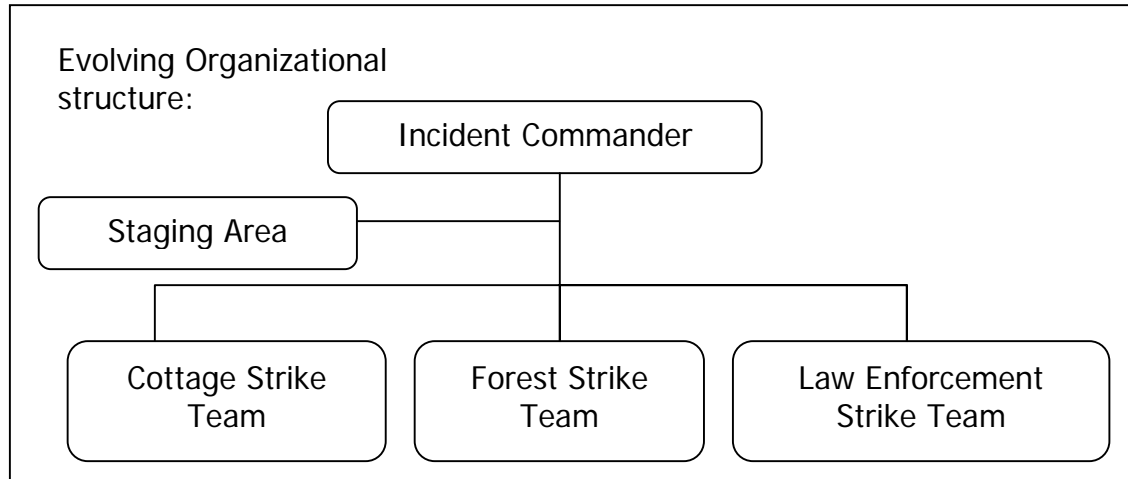
When two additional fire trucks arrive, they check in with Incident Command and wait at a **Staging Area** at the junction of the dirt road and highway, ready to be deployed.

The Leader of the Cottage Strike Team reports that the fire is fanning out as it moves up the hill, aided by the wind.

Staging Area

A temporary location where "available" personnel and equipment wait to be assigned. It avoids "freelancing". A Staging Area may include feeding, fuelling and sanitation services.

More than one Staging Area can be set up to meet specific functions, such as for EMS, fire, public works, etc. Each Staging Area should have a **Manager**.



The Incident Commander directs the newly arrived fire crews to move from the Staging Area to join the single pumper truck near the clearing. He designates these three units as the Forest Strike Team.

Before the Cottage Strike Team can contain the fire, it reaches the isolated cottages by the lake. The old buildings, their roofs covered in dry pine needles, are soon ablaze. Minutes later a propane tank inside a secluded locker at the back of one of the cottages, explodes. Three fire fighters are injured. Flames are blown through the air in a dozen fireballs setting spot fires in all directions. The cottages are destroyed. Two residents escape unharmed. The IC immediately calls for paramedics and additional crews and apparatus. The Fire Chief arrives and **Incident Command is transferred** to the Fire Chief, as the more experienced and senior officer. The outgoing IC fully briefs the new IC on the situation and on the current Incident Action Plan.

Incident Command may be transferred for several reasons:

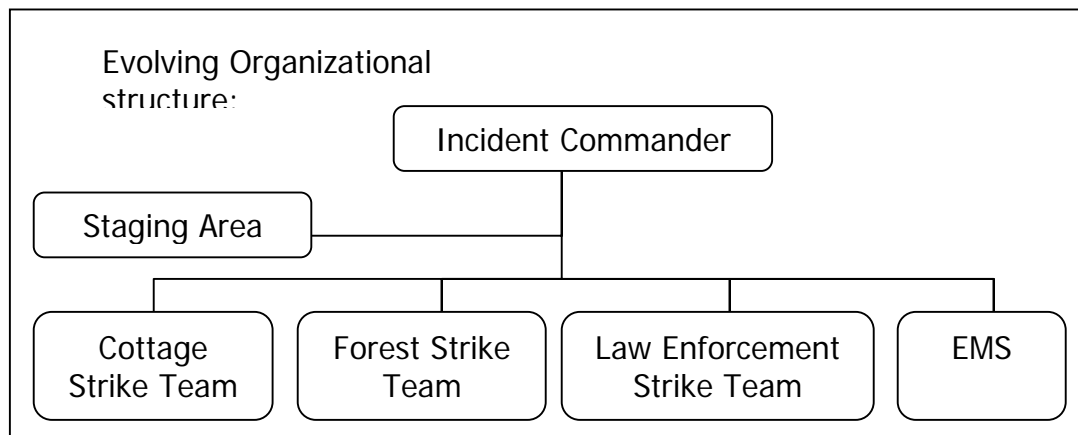
The type or scale of an incident has expanded beyond the authority or training of the in-place person, team or level.

The type or scale of an incident has contracted within the capability of another person, team or level.

On direction from a senior person with the requisite organizational, municipal, provincial or federal authority.

Crews are able to extinguish most of the new fires before they can catch hold, but two of the spot fires are farther away in an inaccessible ravine. By the time crews reach them, the fires are well established in the crowns of trees and spreading rapidly. The Leader of the Forest Strike Team reports the situation to the IC by radio and estimates the Team's position as less than 1 KM from a small, light industrial facility on the edge of the town.

The incident is escalating into a more complicated one. Police and EMS, and the fire service of the neighbouring municipalities are now being involved through existing Mutual-Aid/Assistance Agreements (see Glossary).



The new IC wants to get ahead of the incident and ensure that additional resources, which take time to arrive, will be available when needed. The IC decides to brief the Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC), and Head of Council (by phone) on the situation and to suggest alerting the town's **Emergency Control Group** (ECG).

Emergency Control Group (ECG)

The ECG directs a community's overall strategic response to an emergency. Each municipality and many First Nations communities have an ECG.

The ECG does not typically exercise Command functions and instead oversees this delegated authority and acts to support Incident Command from its own Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). The coordinating and supporting roles of an ECG is critical when there are multiple, related incidents, or when an incident is diffuse.

Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario I

This scenario illustrates several key concepts and principles of IMS. Because of the 'tool box' approach to utilizing IMS, some of the examples are dependent on the nature of an incident. There are also standardized concepts that are always applied, whether an incident is of short or long duration and involves only one service (such as EMS or public works) or many jurisdictions (such as municipalities, First Nations, and/or the province).

In this scenario:

- o Incident Command
- o The Single Command model
- o Unity of Command
- o Incident Management Functions
- o Incident Action Plan
- o The use of standardized Terminology
- o IMS is Modular and Scalable
- o Simplicity and Flexibility

Incident Command – is the first and primary organizational component of the IMS structure. Only one person, the *Incident Commander (IC)*, will exercise that function at any one time, for a given incident. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations.

Single Command - exists when incident decision-making in relation to directing, ordering or controlling the response to an incident is straightforward and independent.

Unity of Command – Each person, at every level, reports to only one clearly designated supervisor, who may or may not come from the same service or

jurisdiction. This provides orderly lines of command and accountability from individual responders up through supervisory personnel to the Incident Commander

Incident Management Functions -- A key principle of IMS is that the five key management functions - Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration - always must be addressed at any incident. In a simple incident, such as this one, or in the very early stages of a complex incident, one person, e.g. the Incident Commander, may carry out all five functions. In a complex incident, four separate sections (Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration) may be set up to support the Incident Commander. Functions not specifically delegated remain the direct responsibility of the Incident Commander.

Incident Action Plan (IAP) – Incident Command always works from a verbal or written plan based on specific objectives to be achieved. In a simple incident, such as this scenario, the plan may remain verbal. An IAP is for a specified time period and may be modified within an operational period as necessary.

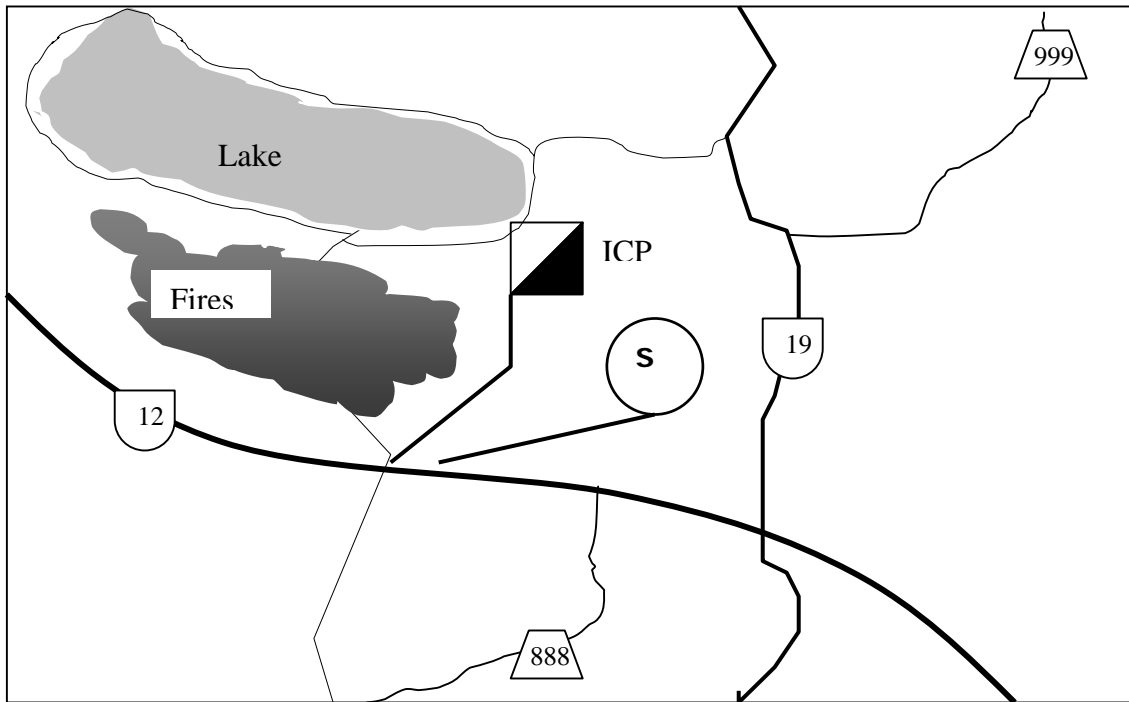
Modular and Scalable

The IMS framework is modular and scalable in terms of structure and processes. It may be established to match the size and complexity of any incident.

Simplicity and Flexibility

The simplicity and flexibility of the IMS structure make it suitable to expand and contract. This flexibility means that only the required components need be activated to provide the functions needed as the situation unfolds. This keeps the IMS structure as uncomplicated and minimalist as possible.

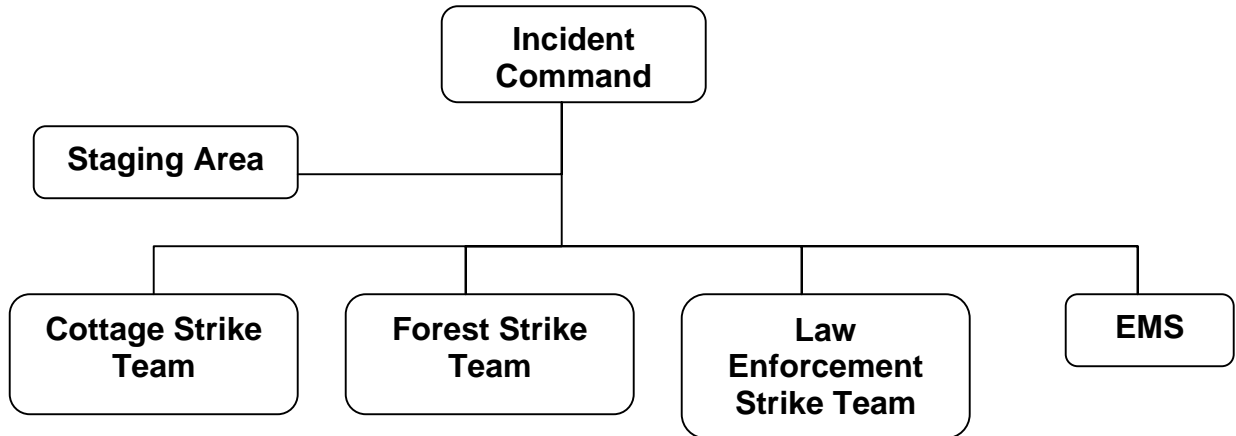
Map of the incident in scenario, stage I



Symbols incorporated:

- Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Staging Area (S)

Organization Chart of IMS Structure in scenario, stage I.



Incident Management:

<u>Function</u>	<u>Person currently responsible</u>
1. Command	Incident Commander
2. Operations	Incident Commander
▪ Cottage Strike Team	Leader
▪ Forest Strike Team	Leader
▪ Law Enforcement Strike Team	Leader
▪ Emergency Medical Service (EMS)	Leader
▪ Staging Area	Incident Commander
3. Planning	Incident Commander
4. Logistics	Incident Commander
5. Finance/Administration	Incident Commander

Self-directed Test One

Select the best answer to each question. An explanation is given with each answer towards the end of this manual.

1. Which statement is TRUE?

- A. The Incident Command System (ICS) was first developed to tackle fires and was designed based on command and control procedures developed by the military.
- B. The 1998 ice storm prompted the need to revise Ontario's approach to emergency management.
- C. The Incident Management System can be used to manage a planned event such as a concert or parade.
- D. All of the above.

2. The five functions in IMS are:

- A. Command; Operations; Logistics; Planning/Administration; Finance.
- B. Incident Commander, Operations, Logistics, Liaison; Finance/Administration.
- C. Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration.
- D. Command, Operations, Finance, Administration, Liaison.

3. How many Incident Commanders are there per incident?

- A. Depends on the number of agencies and jurisdictions involved.
- B. It depends on whether it is a complex or a simple emergency.
- C. It depends on how geographically dispersed the incident is.
- D. There is only one Incident Commander per incident.

4. What is an incident?

- A. A natural disaster.
- B. An event that requires an emergency response to protect life, property or the environment.
- C. A threat to emergency management.
- D. One of the pillars of emergency management.

5. Simple Incidents typically differ from Complex Incidents in terms of:

- A. The type of incident.
- B. The number of emergency management functions.

- C. The number of responders and resources involved, and the length of time (duration) of the incident.
- D. The type of equipment.

6. "Unity of Command" means:

- A. There is only one Incident Command per agency involved.
- B. Each person reports to only one clearly designated supervisor, who may or may not come from the same service or jurisdiction.
- C. In cases where a person must do more than one function, he/she may have to report to more than one designated supervisor.
- D. Jurisdiction, organization and rank determine unity of command.

7. Functions not specifically delegated remain the direct responsibility of:

- A. Incoming responders.
- B. Back-ups must be called to take on the management functions because one person is not physically able to carry out all five functions.
- C. Other than Command, other functions not specifically delegated need not be done.
- D. The Incident Commander.

8. Which of the following statements is FALSE?

- A. The Incident Command Post is the location from which the Incident Commander oversees incident management.
- B. In a complex incident there may be more than one Incident Command Post.
- C. The Incident Command Post can be a tent.
- D. An Incident Command Post may change location during an incident.

9. Choose the **most** correct definition for "Command".

- A. Coordinating every task and activity to manage an incident.
- B. Directing, ordering or controlling by virtue of explicit authority.
- C. The role maintained by the first organization to arrive on the scene of an emergency.
- D. The person or group that creates the Incident Action Plan.

10. Which of the following is FALSE?

- A. Every incident must have an Incident Action Plan.
- B. An Incident Action Plan provides all incident supervisory personnel with objectives for actions to be implemented.

- C. An Incident Action Plan must always be in writing.
- D. An Incident Action Plan can be modified.

11. Single Command exists when:

- A. Incident decision-making is straightforward and independent.
- B. The responsibility for decision-making is legally that of one jurisdiction.
- C. Multiple jurisdictions involved in decision-making agree to allow one jurisdiction to undertake decision-making in relation to directing, ordering or controlling the response to an incident.
- D. All of the above.

12. In general, the role of a municipality's Emergency Control Group (ECG) is to:

- A. Take over the functional management role of Incident Command.
- B. Listen to recommendations and provide strategic advice and support as needed.
- C. Send the most senior municipal official (usually the Head of council) to the Incident Command Post.
- D. Prepare an Incident Action Plan.

Scenario, Stage II – Complex incident, verbal Incident Action Plan

Learning objectives:

- o Unified Command
- o The Planning Process including the Operational Period
- o Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance & Administration
- o Span of Control
- o Command and General Staff
- o IMS Facilities
- o Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)
- o Task Force

Scenario:

The spread of the fires endangers people along several sections of the local highways and threatens to jump the roads into thousands of acres of Crown Lands that spread into adjoining communities. Alerted to the threat by the Incident Commander, an MNR representative responsible for fire fighting on Crown Land arrives to join Incident Command. In addition, the Incident Commander wants to close all the roads and to be prepared in case widespread evacuations of residents become necessary. Unsure of the best way to do this, and also considering the potential impact on adjoining communities, he calls for additional planning resources and works with two senior police officers, one from an adjoining community, to decide how best to divert traffic and relocate evacuees, if necessary. With these changes, Command switches from Single

Characteristics of a Unified Command

Unified Command enables decisions to be made jointly by two or more jurisdictions that have legal responsibilities regarding an incident.

The members of the Unified Command team are the designated representatives of the jurisdictions involved in the unified decision-making.

Command to **Unified Command**. Incident Command does not automatically switch because of the

involvement of more than one jurisdiction. Rather, the distinction between Single and Unified Command is made when incident management requires decision-making to come from more than one jurisdiction. Once joint decisions have been made, one member is identified to speak for the Unified Command team.

After consulting with the Head of Council and Emergency Medical Services, the Unified Command team devises a new Incident Action Plan based on key objectives to be achieved and sets a new **Operational Period** for the IAP.

Fire crews will focus on bringing the fires under control and creating additional firebreaks to prevent the fires reaching the Crown Lands. All of the town's Public Works road graders will be deployed to work with fire crews to create firebreaks near the light industrial facility.

The **Operational Period** is the period of time assigned to achieve the objectives of an Incident Action Plan.

It can be of varied length, though usually would not be longer than 24 hours.

An Operational Period may be modified or revised if the IAP is altered as circumstances change.

Through the regional fire coordinator and the Ontario Fire Marshal, additional fire crews will be mobilized from adjacent municipalities. In addition, an MNR initial attack crew will arrive by helicopter. Police will close the highway and connected roads in the area of the fires and advise people inside the closed area to evacuate immediately. Having taken the injured fire fighters to the local hospital, available Emergency Medical Service (EMS) resources will return to Staging Area 1 (S1) to be available in case of further casualties.

The duty officer at the **Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC)** (having

Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC)

The PEOC is managed by Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) and actively monitors the level of emergencies and incidents throughout Ontario 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The PEOC alerts ministries and senior levels of government and coordinates provincial responses to incidents

been alerted, in this case by MNR) calls to check on the status of the incident and to enquire about what additional resources may be required.

The MNR representative confirms that more crews and bombers will arrive as soon as they can, but that several fires are raging in the hot, dry conditions across the province and that the Emergency Operations Centre of the Ministry of Natural Resources in Sault Ste. Marie is working with the PEOC to prioritize resources based on risk to life and property.

An Incident Action Plan (IAP) may also require supporting plans. Two common supporting plans are the Incident Medical Plan, ensuring adequate medical arrangements for responders, and the Incident Telecommunications Plan, detailing the methods to be used for telecommunications (e.g. specific radio channels and phone numbers). In simple incidents these plans may be verbal.

In this more complex situation, involving many more resources, the Unified Command decides to delegate responsibility for Operations to an **Operations Section Chief** responsible for coordinating the deployment of the personnel and other resources to tackle the emergency, according to the objectives in the IAP.

Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section implements the Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief include:

- developing and managing the Operations Section to achieve the incident objectives set out by Command,
- organizing, assigning and supervising all resources assigned to an incident, including air operations and those resources in staging areas.

This allows the Unified Command team and the Operations Section Chief to maintain proper **span of control** over personnel and equipment for which they are responsible.

Span of Control

Experience shows that one person can effectively supervise between 3 and 7 components, with 5 being the optimal number. One component might be a single individual (such as technical specialist) or a complex resource (such as a helicopter with several crew members).

When an incident either expands or contracts, span of control must be maintained by either combining resources within larger components (such as a Strike Team or Group) or by eliminating such components.

The Head of Council and other members of the Emergency Control Group (ECG)

participate in a conference call

to be fully briefed on the situation by the Fire Chief, acting as the spokesperson for the Unified Command team in the Incident

Command Post. Members of

the ECG include the senior community officials, in this case the Head of Council, chief administrative officer, medical officer of health, emergency social services director, public works director, OPP detachment commander, regional EMS director, the deputy fire chief and the municipal solicitor.

A full briefing may include the following:

- present status of the incident,
- latest Incident Action Plan,
- progress towards objectives,
- resources already committed,
- resources requested,
- forecasts,
- recommendations.

Members of the Emergency Control Group decide to activate their **Emergency Operations Centre** (EOC) in the town offices. This facility has a back-up generator, multiple phone lines, high-speed Internet, and meeting and office-space. From the EOC, the Head of Council and the ECG will be able to plan and coordinate resources to support Incident Command at the ICP.

What is an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)?

An EOC is the facility from which management support to Incident Command is organized and coordinated.

An EOC may be established at various levels of response and by various levels of government, including: municipal or First Nations governments or their departments (including emergency response departments/organizations), non-government organizations, private sector entities, hospitals, provincial ministries and the provincial and federal governments overall.

An EOC must have appropriate technological and telecommunications systems to ensure effective communications in an emergency.

The Operations Section Chief reports the strong breeze is fanning the flames. Two spot fires are converging and moving towards the light industrial area on the edge of the town. The Operations Section Chief reorganizes the Forest Strike Team into the Firebreak **Task Force** by adding the town's two road graders to help firefighters create firebreaks along the side road in an attempt to stop the blaze. The two police vehicles are put into a Law Enforcement **Group**. In this way, the Operation Section Chief maintains span of control by supervising the actions of only four units (Cottage Strike Team, Firebreak Task Force, Law Enforcement Group and an EMS Strike Team).

Task Force

An organizational component of mixed resources assembled for a particular purpose under the supervision of a Leader. All resources within a Task Force must have common communications (i.e. be able to use the same radio frequencies).

Group

An organizational component within the Operations Section organized by function under the leadership of a Supervisor.

Sensing the situation is going to get more complex before the fires are under control, the Unified Command team now decides to appoint **Command Staff** to assist them.

Command Staff

The Command Staff usually consists of an Emergency Information Officer, Safety Officer and Liaison Officer.

Other experts or subject specialists may be appointed as required.

If no Command Staff are appointed, these responsibilities remain with the Incident Commander.

They ask for a member of the town's Clerk's Department to become the site **Emergency Information Officer**, the fire chief from an adjoining municipality to become the **Safety Officer**, and a senior police officer to become the **Liaison Officer**.

In this scenario, with the activation of the town's Emergency Control Group, an Emergency Information Officer also works at the Emergency Operations Centre. Approval for all releases of information come either from Incident Command or, when an EOC is set up, from the Head of Council or the Clerk/Chief Administrative Officer/City Manager. Coordination between the site and

EOC about the release of Emergency Information is crucial to ensure consistency. The existence of a pre-written Emergency Information Plan (or Communications Plan) helps the EIO organize and provide information about the emergency as well as background information to the media and to the public. This may include generic templates of news releases and fact sheets

Emergency Information Officer (EIO)

The EIO is responsible for the development and release of emergency information to the public and the media regarding an incident.

Approval for all releases of information come either from Incident Command or, when an EOC is set up, from the Head of Council or chief administrative officer.

Responsibilities of the EIO include:

- advising Command about media/public emergency information and media relations,
- ensuring people who want information about the incident can get it,
- consulting with Command and Planning regarding any restraints on the release of information,
- providing information to Command about the emergency from the public and media,
- establishing key messages and media products for spokespersons,
- broadcasting emergency instructions (such as evacuations) to the public via the media,
- establishing a public inquiry hotline,
- arranging media tours of incident sites.

about the town that have been prepared in advance as part of the Emergency Information Plan.

The local radio station already has a reporter broadcasting live from beside the Staging Area and the station manager is asking for a phone number to give out for people wanting more information about the fires and road closures. The EIO assigns personnel to staff a local inquiry hotline. In addition, the local newspaper has called out a freelance photographer who wants to be escorted to the hotspots.

Safety Officer (SO)

The Safety Officer is tasked with creating systems and procedures for the overall health and safety of all responders.

Specific responsibilities include:

- monitoring safety conditions and developing safety measures,
- working closely with Operations to ensure responders are as safe as possible, wear appropriate safety equipment and implement the safest operational options,
- advising Command on safety issues,
- conducting risk analysis, normally through the planning process,
- assisting in the review of the Incident Action Plan,
- assisting with writing the Incident Medical Plan.

The Safety Officer is concerned that fire crews may become surrounded and trapped by the fires in the unpredictable wind conditions; he wants a person designated at each location specifically to monitor the safety of crews who are focused on fighting the fire.

Although the closest fire

is still some distance away, he is also concerned with trying to ascertain which

Liaison Officer (LO)

The Liaison Officer serves as the primary contact for organizations cooperating with or supporting the incident response. The LO advises Incident Command related to outside assistance, including current or potential inter-organization needs.

Specific responsibilities include:

- gathering information about organizations involved in the incident. This includes information about representatives, standards and specialized resources or special support they might need,
- serving as a coordinator for organizations not represented in Incident Command,
- providing briefings to organization representatives about the operation,
- maintaining a list of supporting and cooperating organizations, and keeping it updated as the incident evolves.

chemicals may be in storage in the town's light industrial area. He arranges for the municipality's Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) to be brought to the ICP for him to review so that he can alert the Unified Command team to potential dangers.

The Liaison Officer acts as the link between organizations, such as local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private industry groups and Command. Several local NGOs, including St. John Ambulance, Red Cross and Salvation Army call offering to help. The Liaison Officer notes what equipment and personnel each organization can provide on short notice on a summer weekend when many members are unreachable. He asks two organizations to be ready to provide volunteers, if necessary.

The Operations Section Chief reports that the fire breaks along the side road have been finished. Underbrush has been cleared from the adjacent forest. The crews who were first on the scene have been working intensely and continuously for several hours and need relieving. The Operations Section Chief wants to designate the hall of a local church as the **Base** where crews can eat and relax. The Unified Command team is still handling logistics and calls the Liaison Officer to make arrangements with church officials, food companies, and NGOs (Red Cross, Salvation Army, St John Ambulance).

Base

The location from which primary logistical and administrative functions are coordinated. This may include essential auxiliary support, such as food, sleeping and repair facilities.

There is only one Base per incident. Personnel and equipment at the Base are always "Out of Service" and unavailable for assignment.

The local weather forecast calls for continued hot weather with possible moderate to strong NW winds. No rain is forecast. Families are enjoying an idyllic summer weekend without a care in the world. For the Unified Command team, the hot dry wind and the presence of many visitors are two factors

already complicating a serious situation; the team decides to staff all the remaining functions of Incident Command and to create a full **General Staff** for the incident.

General Staff

The General Staff supports Incident Command by overseeing and carrying out the key management functions of Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance & Administration.

Each of these key functions is organized into a Section, each headed by a Chief. The Section Chiefs comprise the General Staff.

The function of each Section is to coordinate and carry out the incident objectives as set out in the current Incident Action Plan.

Anticipating a major evacuation, the Unified Command team appoints a senior police officer as **Planning Section Chief**, assigned to coordinate the drafting of a new IAP for the next operational period, based on the incident lasting more than 12 hours. The new Planning Section Chief begins drafting a new IAP to take account of the additional resources now deployed, the additional sites (Base and EOC) and the possible future contingencies of the incident. One key question is, what actions and resources might be necessary if the wind does not die down?

Planning Section Chief

The Planning Section coordinates the development of each Incident Action Plan and ensures information is shared effectively with all Incident Command and General Staff in an efficient planning process.

Major responsibilities of the Planning Section Chief include:

- collecting, collating, evaluating, analyzing and disseminating incident information,
- managing the planning process, including preparing and documenting the IAP for each operational period,
- conducting long range and/or contingency planning,
- maintaining incident documentation,
- tracking resources assigned to the incident,
- managing the activities of technical specialists,
- developing plans for demobilization.

A Public Works official is appointed **Logistics Section Chief**. The Logistics Section Chief works closely with the Planning chief to prepare the next Incident Action Plan. Though the Planning Section is responsible for tracking all resources, the Logistics Section Chief's particular concern is to ensure resources are ordered, arrive when expected, and are fed, housed or fuelled as required, and to anticipate likely future needs to support Operations. He or she is also responsible for setting up the Base in the church hall, ordering food from local vendors and organizing volunteers from the NGOs. In addition, the Emergency Information Officer is requesting transportation for a TV camera crew and two reporters to interview resting firefighters.

Logistics Section Chief

The Logistics Section provides all supporting resources, except aviation, to implement the IAP. These may include facilities, transportation, supplies, fuel, maintenance equipment, food service, communications, medical services for responders and support personnel.

Logistics and Finance/Administration Sections work together closely to contract for and purchase required goods and services. The Logistics Section also develops several portions of the written IAP and forwards them to the Planning Section.

Major activities include:

- ordering, obtaining, maintaining, distributing and accounting for essential personnel, equipment and supplies, beyond those immediately accessible to Operations,
- developing the telecommunications plan,
- providing telecommunications/IT services and resources,
- setting up food services,
- setting up and maintaining incident facilities,
- providing support transportation,
- providing medical services to incident personnel.

A member of the town's Treasury Department is appointed **Finance & Administration Section Chief**. Immediate priorities for the Finance/Administration Section Chief include paying for food to be supplied to the ICP, EOC, Staging Rea and Base, and ensuring time sheets are being kept for all the personnel and equipment involved in the incident.

Finance/Administration Section Chief

This Section provides the financial and cost analysis support to an incident. In smaller incidents, a specialist within the Planning Section may perform this function.

Major activities of the Finance/Administration Section include:

- tracking timesheets for incident personnel and equipment,
- contract negotiation and monitoring,
- reimbursing expenses (individual and organization/department),
- making cost estimates for alternative response strategies,
- monitoring sources of funding,
- tracking and reporting of the financial usage rate.

All five functions of IMS – command, operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration - are now under the responsibility of individual Section Chiefs.

The Unified Command team calls for a written IAP so that at the next **Operational Briefing** the operational heads of the organizational components (such as Group, Task Force etc.) can be given a printed copy of the IAP in which their specific tasks are detailed for the next operational period.

Operational Briefing

A meeting attended by all supervisory personnel, at which the IAP is distributed, tasks are formally assigned, and questions are answered.

The Safety Officer reviews the municipality's Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and is concerned with how many potentially dangerous chemicals are listed as being on site in the town's industrial/commercial area. He informs the Unified Command team and the Operations Section Chief that the light

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

industrial facility is a medical supplies company with a quantity of ethylene oxide stored on site.

The Emergency Information Officer recommends holding a news conference in the gym of the local high school. She calls the Incident Commander to be updated on the latest situation, numbers of personnel involved and what key messages need to be communicated to the public. The Incident Commander agrees to attend the news conference as the spokesperson for the Unified Command team.

Soon after the Incident Commander gets off the phone with the EIO, the Operations Section Chief radios to report that, carried by strong gusts of wind, the fire has jumped the fire breaks on the side road and set light to storage containers inside the compound of the small medical supplies facility. Thick and potentially toxic smoke is billowing into the sky.

Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario II

This scenario illustrates several important concepts and principles of IMS that are fundamental to its rationale and structure.

In this scenario:

- o Unified Command
- o Interoperability
- o Designated Incident Facilities
- o Accountability
- o The 'toolbox approach'

Unified Command - Enables decisions to be made jointly by two or more jurisdictions that each has legal responsibilities regarding an incident. Incident Command does not automatically become Unified because of the involvement of more than one jurisdiction. Rather, Unified Command is required when incident management requires decision-making to come from more than one jurisdiction. Once joint decisions have been made, one member is identified to speak for the Unified Command team.

Interoperability – The ability of responders from different organizations and jurisdictions to interact and work well together. For example in this scenario, public works employees, fire, police, EMS, and NGO volunteers are all working together. Interoperability is accomplished through two separate but related initiatives:

- o Functional – standardized terms, structures and procedures used by responders allow people in different organizations and jurisdictions to understand each other's jobs and requirements and to cooperate and work well together.

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

- o Technological – the equipment used must enable people from different organizations to be able to easily communicate and share data together.

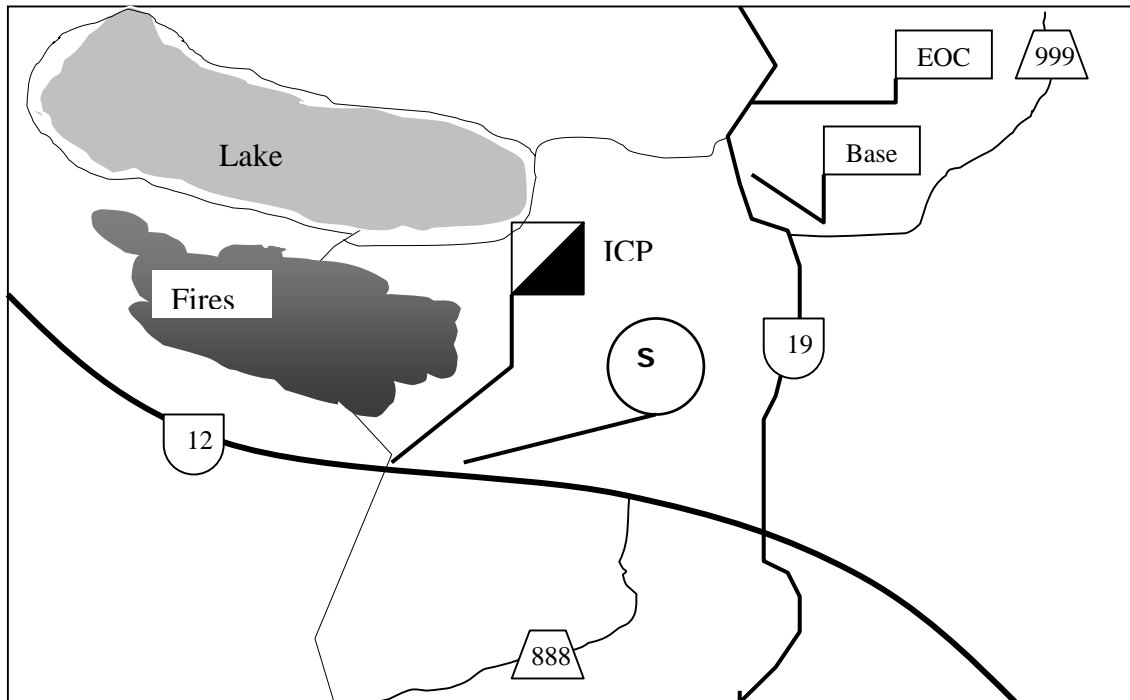
Designated Incident Facilities – IMS requires certain facilities to accommodate the carrying out of its various functions. Those illustrated in this scenario include the Incident Command Post (ICP), Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), Emergency Information Centre (EIC), Staging Area and Base. Using specific and standard terms, with standard symbols on maps, ensures that all personnel involved in an incident immediately understand the functions of each facility and thereby aid interoperability and collaboration between all parties.

Accountability – Incident Command needs to know at all times how resources are being deployed and that they are being used effectively. Accountability helps ensure safety and security; promotes effective resource management, including personnel, equipment, information and finances; and aids prompt and effective decision-making and tactical operations.

Personal responsibility is also an important aspect of accountability. Individuals need to know what they are assigned to do, carry out their tasks as effectively as possible and report back for a new assignment. They should report to only one person and they always need to know who that person is.

The 'toolbox approach' – The "toolbox" approach enables responders to choose from a variety of options according to what is most appropriate in varying situations. In this scenario, the Incident Commander at first only establishes a separate Operations Section. Sections chiefs for Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration were added only as they became necessary. The command structure can be easily scaled up or down according to the size and/or complexity of an incident.

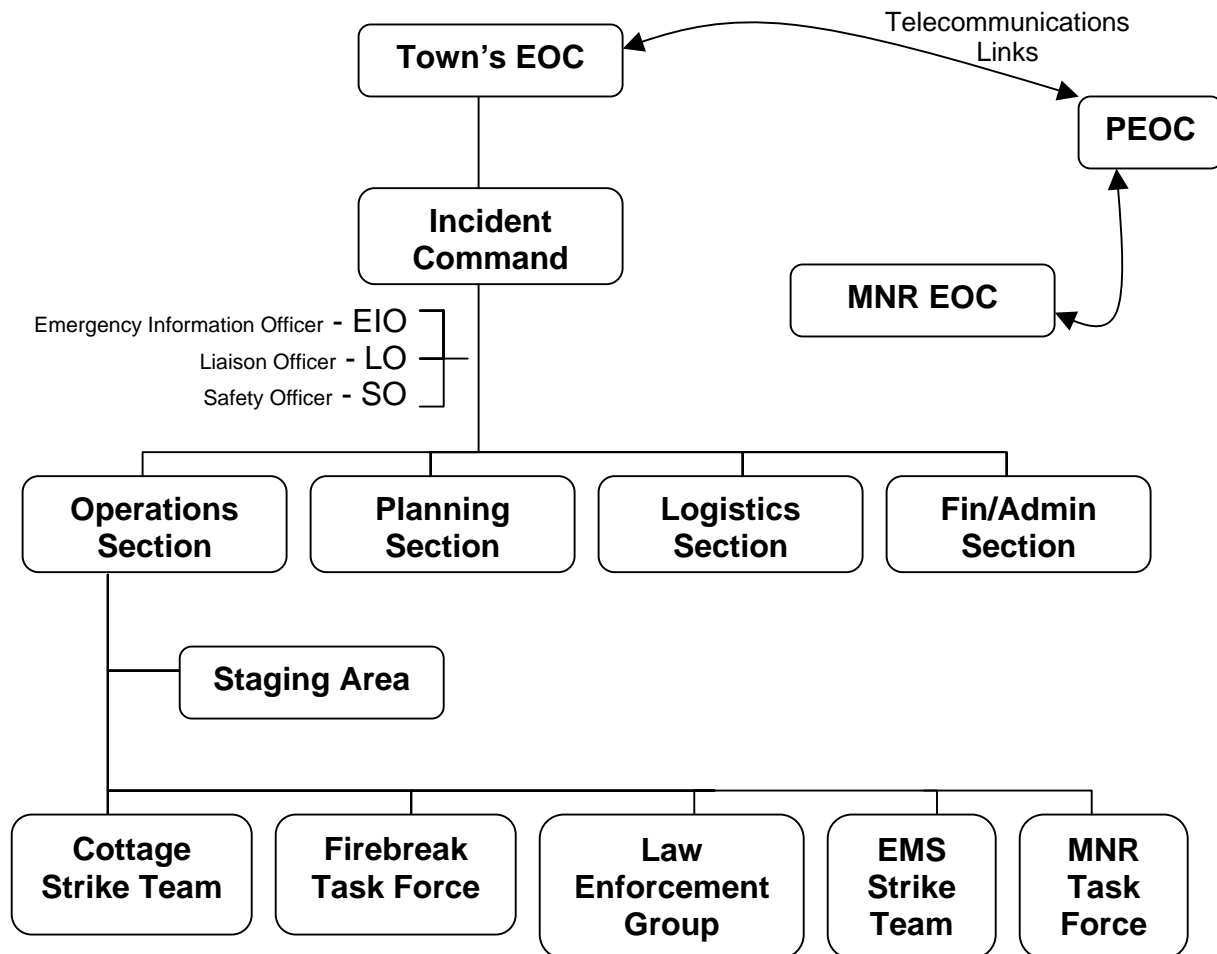
Map of the incident in scenario, stage II



Symbols incorporated:

- Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)
- Staging Area (S)
- Base

Organization Chart of the IMS structure used in scenario, stage II.



Incident Management:

Function

Person responsible

1. Command

Incident Commander within Unified Command

- Command Staff:

- Emergency Information Officer (EIO)

- Safety Officer

- Liaison Officer

2. Operations

Operations Section Chief

- Law Enforcement Group

Supervisor

- EMS Strike Team

Leader

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

- Firebreak Task Force Leader
 - Cottage Strike Team Leader
 - MNR Task Force Leader
 - Staging Area Manager
 - Base Manager
3. Planning Planning Section Chief
 4. Logistics Logistics Section Chief
 5. Finance & Administration Finance & Administration Section Chief

EOC – Operating in support

1. Town's EOC:
 - Emergency Control Group (ECG):
 - Head of Council
 - Municipal officials
 - Municipal employees
2. MNR EOC
3. PEOC

Self-directed Test Two

1. Unified Command is required when:

- A. There are several Incident Commanders (as many as there are services or jurisdictions involved in the decision making).
- B. The Incident Commander will be the Head of council.
- C. In a specific scenario, incident management requires joint, inter-dependent decision-making from more than one jurisdiction.
- D. There will be several Incident Action Plans (as many as there are services or jurisdictions involved in the decision-making).

2. The Operational Period refers to:

- A. From the beginning of the emergency until de-mobilization.
- B. The period of time in which the Operations Section is involved.
- C. The period of time assigned to achieve the objectives of the Incident Action Plan.
- D. The time at end of operations, period.

3. Experience shows that the appropriate span of control is:

- A. 24 - 36 hours.
- B. 1 supervisor to between 3 and 7 components (5 being optimal), where a component might be an individual or a complex resource (e.g. helicopter with crew)
- C. A function of whether the incident is expanding or contracting.
- D. 1 - 2 IMS functions.

4. When resources from public works, police, fire are put together as a team for a specific task, and communicating on the same radio frequency, this is an example of an organizational component known as:

- A. A Strike Team.
- B. A Task Force.
- C. Liaison.
- D. Unified Command.

5. Who writes AND approves the Incident Action Plan?

- A. Command.
- B. Operations.
- C. Planning.
- D. All of the above may be involved in writing it; Command approves it.

6. Which of these statements is TRUE? Designated Incident Facilities:

- A. Have standard symbols for use on maps.
- B. Have standard names that assist all personnel to understand the functions of each facility.
- C. Different incidents may require different facilities.
- D. All of the above.

7. "General Staff" refers to:

- A. The Section Chiefs who oversee and carry out the four key management functions of Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance & Administration.
- B. Those who carry out the five management functions including Command.
- C. Those who report directly to the Incident Commander in matters of safety, liaison and emergency information.
- D. The whole of Operations – including Strike Teams, Task Forces and Groups.

8. Command Staff include:

- A. Section Chiefs of the four management functions plus the Incident Commander.
- B. Those who report directly to the Incident Commander in matters of safety, liaison and emergency information and other subject specialists who are appointed as required.
- C. Members of the Unified Command Team.
- D. The Head of council, the Town Clerk and the town's Emergency Information Officer (if there is one).

9. The general responsibilities of an Emergency Information Officer (site and EOC) are:

- A. Providing information to Incident Command about the emergency from the public and the media.
- B. Developing and releasing emergency information to the Section Chiefs.
- C. Developing and releasing information to the public and the media.
- D. A and C.

10. A Safety Officer is responsible for:

- A. Creating systems and procedures for the overall health and safety of all responders.
- B. Advising the Incident Commanders on safety issues.
- C. A and B.
- D. Assuring the safety of the public and issuing orders for evacuations.

11. Who is responsible for accountability?

- A. Every responder is responsible to check-in at an incident.
- B. The Planning Section shares responsibility for accountability because it tracks resources assigned to the incident, and develops plans for demobilization of resources.
- C. The Logistics Section because it obtains, and accounts for essential resources beyond those immediately accessible to Operations.
- D. All of the above.

12. What is an EOC?

- A. The facility from which management support to Incident Command is organized and coordinated.
- B. An EOC manages impacts that are off-site/outside the scope of the IC.
- C. An EOC must have appropriate technological and telecommunications systems to ensure effective communications in an emergency.
- D. All of the above.

Scenario, Stage III – Complex incident, written Incident Action Plan

Learning objectives:

- o Structure and functions - Division; Branch
- o Command vs. support - Ministry Action Groups (MAG)
- o Internal Information Management
- o Incident facilities - Airbase, Heli-base; Heli-spot
- o Emergency (Public) Information management
- o Resource Management
- o Demobilization

Scenario:

Word that the fire has jumped the fire breaks and is now inside the compound of the medical supplies company is passed up the chain of command; from the Leader of the Fire Break Task Force to the Operations Section Chief and the Unified Command who then informs the EOC of this major development. Each level of response quickly takes the actions appropriate to their level within IMS.

The Leader of the Firebreak Task Force checks that there are no casualties before repositioning his resources to tackle the blaze and to make new firebreaks. He also warns the Operations Section Chief that the fire is approaching a building where warning placards indicate ethylene oxide is being stored.

Based on information in the Emergency Response Guidebook, the Operations Section Chief quickly decides to evacuate all civilians within 250 metres of the facility because of the danger of the fire spreading and the possibility of toxic fumes. He reassigns the task to three units of police and public works officials within a South **Division** to handle all operations with their area. They work

separately from the officers in the Law Enforcement Group who are supervising road closures and crowd control. The Operations Section Chief

also requests the Logistics Section to provide more personnel, apparatus and equipment to increase the firefighting effort and to relieve exhausted crews.

After being briefed by the Operations Section Chief and by the Safety Officer, the Unified Command team reports on the situation to the Emergency Control Group at the EOC and alerts them to the possibility that various hazardous materials may be stored in buildings close to the fire.

Based on information from the Planning and Operations Section Chiefs, the Unified Command soon realizes that many more outside resources will be required to deal with the expanded incident and the new potential threat to the town. The Head of Council decides to declare an emergency and directs the ECG to do everything possible to support the Unified Command in obtaining the required resources.

The duty officer at the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) notifies the Ministry Emergency Management Coordinators (MEMC) of both the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of the Environment of the developing situation. Each is a member of their respective

Ministry Action Groups (MAG). They will be able to provide appropriate resources, such as specially trained personnel or equipment and specialized knowledge, to support Incident Command through the municipal EOC.

Division

An organizational component assigned to a specific geographical area. The head of a Division is called a Supervisor.

Ministry Action Group (MAG)

Every Ontario ministry is required to have a MAG that operates from a ministry EOC to manage that ministry's response to an incident.

Normally, a MAG will operate in support of the responses to a municipal emergency. In rare instances, the MAG may assume Incident Command. For example, in a province-wide health emergency, the Ministry of Health might assume Incident Command.

The PEOC duty officer maintains close contact with MNR and is updated when additional MNR crews are enroute into the municipal airport. The PEOC dispatches a Field Officer together with a small provincial liaison team to the EOC to coordinate the provincial response to the municipality and to provide the Head of Council and ECG with any needed advice.

The Unified Command team adapts the objectives of the current IAP to take into account the changed situation and calls for the Planning Section to prepare a new IAP to include the contingency of a general evacuation, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, and Social Services Department. In a complex incident, such as this one, the development of the IAP may follow a formal process involving pre-planning meetings between Unified Command, the Command Staff and General Staff to establish various tactics that could meet the strategic objectives. These tactics would take into account such factors as personnel and equipment resources, logistical constraints and implications, and known and possible hazards.

At every level of command, accurate, timely and relevant information is key to good decision-making and effective execution of the Incident Action Plan.

The task of **Internal Information Management** (collecting, collating and

Internal Information Management

The two main purposes of information management within IMS are to:

- 1) enable incident personnel to share a common operating picture,
- 2) ensure people have access to the information necessary for good decision-making.

A common operating picture among incident personnel allows a common and shared:

- understanding of the status of the incident, including past, current and likely evolution,
- understanding of the status of resources, current and future,
- understanding of the plan of action about the existing incident, past achievements, current and future goals and objectives.

disseminating information to responders involved in an incident) is broadly the responsibility of the Planning Section. Information may come from many sources and be about many different aspects of an incident.

Where there is a lot of information about many different aspects of the emergency, the Planning Section may be expanded into several Units, such as the Resources Unit, responsible for maintaining the status of all assigned resources, and the Documentation Unit – responsible for maintaining incident files that may be used for legal, analytical and historical purposes.

The manager of the medical supplies company is contacted by the Operations Section Chief and confirms the presence of ethylene oxide on the premises. This hazardous chemical is extremely flammable, highly reactive and toxic. It must be handled with the greatest caution at all times. At the medical supplies company, the ethylene oxide is housed in a pressure tank in a specially built storage building at the rear of the facility. The company uses the chemical to sterilize medical supplies. The company has an Emergency Response Plan and some employees with basic emergency response training. The manager agrees to place these resources under the direction of Incident Command. The Operations Section Chief is able to incorporate these resources to work alongside public officials.

The immediate danger is that the blazing storage containers in the compound will heat up the nearby pressure tank of ethylene oxide. The chemical could ignite spontaneously, or be released from the safety valve and explode in the air. If released into the air, the ethylene oxide could also react with the moisture on people's skin to cause chemical burns.

Concerned about the potential danger to responders and civilians, the Unified Command team makes a request through the EOC for support from the Ontario

Fire Marshal (OFM) to be deployed (provincial CBRNE¹ teams). These specialized teams have the equipment and training to deal with chemicals and other hazardous materials. However, the Logistics Section Chief reports that the nearest provincial team is located 150 kilometers away and that summer traffic and a major traffic accident are blocking highways into the area. It may take more than two hours for the team to arrive. The Logistics Section Chief advises that the rail company has a smaller hazardous materials team at its regional depot, as part of their own emergency response preparedness. It can be on the scene within 25 minutes. Unified Command authorizes the calling in of the rail team and also the hiring of a helicopter to bring in key personnel from the OFM's provincial team. The Logistics Section Chief organizes the flight in consultation with the helicopter company and designates the local airstrip as the **Airbase** for the incident, where the helicopter can land and refuel.

Airbase

Location from which both fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft operate. Airbases are usually permanent facilities (airports or aerodromes) that already operate for normal air traffic purposes. These may be required to provide air operations and air operations support to an incident, including fuelling and maintenance services.

Helibase

Location where helicopter-centred operations are conducted. Though temporary, helibases may be used for refueling and maintenance.

Helispots

Temporary land and take-off facilities for loading and unloading personnel and cargo.

In the event that air support is needed as part of the response to an incident, a separate Air Operations **Branch** could be set up and would report directly to the Operations Section Chief.

Branch

An organizational component immediately below the level of Section, comprising Groups within Operations or Units within Logistics.

Branches can be organized according to either function or geography.

¹ CBRNE – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives.

With the involvement of members of the Emergency Control Groups for the town and the neighbouring townships, the Regional Chair (Upper Tier) activated its Emergency Control Group (ECG). A meeting is called with the members of the lower tier communities involved to assess the overall situation. They decide that the priority of incident management has shifted from fighting the fires to making sure people in the Region are safe and that damage to property is minimized. Putting out the fires without an explosion or leak is still the main objective but until this is achieved, the main strategic focus should be to ensure public health and safety. They also acknowledged that the Unified Command team is functioning well, and no interference is warranted, save for the issuing of strategic directions, as necessary.

After being briefed on the strategic directions decided on by the Regional ECG, the Unified Command team calls for a planning meeting with all the Command Staff and the General Staff to decide the tactical objectives of a new Incident Action Plan for the next operational period, based on a draft IAP prepared by the Planning Section.

Reminder:

General Staff consists of:
Operations Section Chief,
Logistics Section Chief,
Planning Section Chief,
Finance/Administration Section Chief.

Command Staff consists of:
Safety Officer,
Emergency Information Officer,
Liaison Officer.

The Safety Officer and the Planning and Logistics Section Chiefs propose pumping out the storage tank and removing the ethylene oxide to a safe location in case the fire in the storage containers cannot be contained. However, to pump out and transport the hazardous material will require specialized equipment that may take several hours to arrive.

The Unified Command team agrees and makes this a key objective of the new IAP. The team also decides to plan for an expanded evacuation of the town to a one-kilometre radius around the facility. Based on evaluation that the Planning Section, in consultation with the OFM has made about the hazards associated with ethylene oxide, the Unified Command team, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, decides that the risk of contamination for people outside the 1 kilometre radius is very low but that people should be advised to close windows and stay indoors.

The Incident Command Post, the Staging Areas, and the Emergency Operations Centre all will have to be relocated outside the evacuation area. The Logistics Section Chief establishes a Facilities Unit to accomplish this in co-operation with the Operations Section, responsible for the Staging Area, and with local officials at the Regional EOC.

At the end of the Planning Meeting, the Incident Action Plan and the Operational Period for the plan are agreed. The new, written IAP is then distributed to Command, all Command Staff, all Chiefs and Supervisors and Leaders at an Operational Briefing and assignments are formally given to those who will implement the plan.

An ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the IAP starts as soon as the operational period begins and resources are deployed. This may lead to the plan being altered if circumstances change or if initial tactics are not sufficiently effective. Once an IAP is adopted, the planning cycle begins again to develop a new IAP if another operational period is contemplated.

The decision to evacuate heightens media interest in the incident and the Emergency Information Officer (EIO) and the Unified Command team decide to establish an **Emergency Information Centre** in the nearest town outside the

evacuation area where facilities for the numerous reporters and camera people can be properly provided.

Health concerns are paramount and when Emergency Information personnel arrive, sent by the Ministry of Health MAG in consultation with the

Medical Officer of Health, the EIO decides to make the EIC a joint centre to make use of the advantages it offers.

The Emergency Information Officer (EIO) and the Unified Command team agree that two key and distinct

messages need to be communicated to the public: People inside the one kilometre radius of the evacuation area need to leave their homes as a precaution. People outside the evacuation zone should stay in-doors with the

Emergency Information Centre (EIC)

Activities at an EIC may include:

- media check-in and accreditation,
- handling media inquiries,
- news conferences,
- monitoring of what the media is reporting to ensure inaccurate or misleading information is corrected,
- arranging site and facility tours,
- updating website information.

Advantages of a joint EIC include:

- central facility makes coordination easier,
- access to pooled resources,
- opportunity to apportion and focus on areas of expertise, rather than one person trying to "do it all",
- greater authenticity than "speaking with one voice",
- media representatives are located in one place.

Emergency Information Tools

There are many different ways to disseminate information to the public and to the media.

Information may be provided directly to the public through an easily updated website, a public inquiry phone line and special information sessions intended for people with special needs, such as family and friends of the missing or dead. A public information briefing provides information and instructions primarily to people who turn up at or near an incident.

Some information may be intended to inform the media directly; for example, a media advisory gives details of an upcoming news conference, and a fact sheet may outline the background information and important statistics relevant to an incident.

A news conference is a formal, moderated meeting between key officials/spokespersons and the media. There is usually a question and answer period. A media scrum is an informal opportunity for the media to question key spokespersons.

doors and windows closed (shelter in-place).

Accurate and straightforward information about an emergency is important during any incident. Without trust and confidence in what they are being told, people are unable to make informed choices about what they should do and are unlikely to follow instructions issued for their safety and protection.

Tackling the fires and evacuating a part of the town and areas of the neighbouring townships requires many varied **resources** to be ordered, deployed and coordinated.

Having the right resources in the right place at the right time is key to effective incident management. IMS provides principles and processes for the efficient management of resources to ensure that enough resources are made available to manage an incident and that money is not wasted by ordering too many or the wrong types of resources.

In addition to tracking resources, it is also important to maintain accurate paperwork and financial accounts for resources used and monies spent. The **Finance and Administration Section** does this work. This helps to reduce unnecessary expenses and allows different services and jurisdictions to account for equipment and personnel on loan.

What are Resources?

Resources include: personnel, equipment, apparatus, supplies and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident tasks.

Resources are defined by:

Kind – refers to the nature of the resource, e.g. generator, ambulance, decontamination tent, etc.

Type – describes the capacity or performance capability of the resource. Type 1 has the greatest capacity. Higher numbers, e.g. Type 4, represent a lower capability.

All resources will have one of three possible status indicators:

Assigned – already being used,
Available – ready to be assigned,
Out of Service – not available.

The Resources Unit of the Planning Section tracks the status of all resources involved in an incident.

Finance and Administration Section Units

Procurement Unit – responsible for the financial side of contracts, lease and fiscal agreements. The Unit also manages all rental agreements.

Time Unit – ensures accuracy of daily personnel time and managing commissary operations if established.

Cost Unit – provides all incident cost analyses, records cost data and prepares estimates of incident costs and maintains records of costs.

Compensation/Claims Unit – processes Compensation-for-Injury on behalf of responders and manages all claims-related activities (other than injury) for an incident.

The Incident Command Post, Emergency Operations Centre, Staging Area, and the Base, all within the evacuation zone, need to be removed to

suitable facilities outside the area with the minimum of delay. In addition, evacuation centres need to be opened outside the affected area.

Personnel from several local non-governmental organizations, with expertise in evacuations and shelter operations, and who have prior agreements with the Region's Social Services, join with the Operations and Logistics Sections to discuss activating five evacuation centres (using selected community centres and sports arenas). The Operations Section will coordinate the evacuation, but the ECG will coordinate the activation of the evacuation centres.

Facilities are also required in order to provide services for the personnel and equipment involved in the incident response, including public works and social service employees, members of NGOs, drivers of the evacuation buses, and police, medical and fire crews. Initially, these services have been provided at the incident Base, but as the size of incident response expands beyond the capability of the Base, **Camps** are established in the two neighbouring townships, under the

Camp

A temporary facility where food, sanitation and rest facilities and other services are provided to responders. Located away from the Base, it may also have limited equipment maintenance and repair capability.

Personnel and equipment maintain the status of "out of service" while in a camp.

municipalities' Mutual Assistance Agreements, to provide this support to responders. The Logistics Section organizes camps.

An Evacuation **Branch** is established within the Operations Section to handle the aspects of the evacuation dealing with the coordination of traffic into and out of the area, assisting with the transportation of people who require it, and law enforcement to ensure evacuated homes and

Branch
An organizational component immediately below the level of Section, comprising Groups within Operations or Units within Logistics.

Branches can be organized according to either function or geography.

businesses are secure. To maintain span of control within the Branch, it is divided geographically into two Divisions with identical functions.

In order to maintain appropriate span of control for the Operations Section Chief; in addition to the Evacuation Branch, all resources tackling the blaze and potential leak at the medical supplies facility are organized into a Hazmat Branch, with the OFM designating its Director; all the resources tackling the

How may the Operations Section be subdivided?

To maintain span of control, the Operations Section may be expanded into several organizational levels as resources are added:
Single Resource – one person or one piece of equipment with crew. **Strike Team** – resources of the same kind and type, under a Leader.
Task Force – combination of mixed resources assembled for a particular purpose, under a Leader.
Sector – below Group or Division, established in large incidents to maintain span of control.
Division – organized according to geography. Reports to Branch Director, if appointed, or to Incident Commander.
Group – organized according to function. Reports to Branch Director, if appointed, or to Incident Commander.
Branch – reports to Section Chief (if appointed) or to Incident Commander and may be based on function or geography.

forest fires are organized into a Forest Branch.

After tackling the forest fires throughout the afternoon and early evening, the fire crews who first responded to the blazes are now being replaced by fresh teams from two regional towns.

The outgoing personnel are debriefed and demobilized and the incoming resources are checked-in. This allows the availability of personnel and equipment to be properly tracked so that resources can be fully utilized. And it ensures that, when necessary, Incident Command can sustain the functions of incident response for many hours or days.

Demobilization

Demobilization of personnel, equipment or facilities includes the return of resources to their condition prior to service in an incident.

A Demobilization Unit may be set up, within the Planning Section, to accomplish this.

The sequence of demobilization may involve releasing resources in the order in which they came to the incident, ensuring exhausted personnel are demobilized first, and giving priority to releasing the most expensive resources.

Timely demobilization of resources from one incident may enable the same resources to be available for other incidents.

As darkness falls, the Forest Branch manages to extinguish the two forest fires outside the town. The fire crews who replaced the earlier crews are no longer required and they can be debriefed and demobilized. And, because the function of the Cottage Strike Team is no longer required, the organizational unit is eliminated. This brings a contraction of the IMS structure.

Crews are still tackling the blaze at the medical supplies facility and are fighting to prevent excess heat building up inside the storage building that might cause the ethylene oxide to ignite or escape from the safety vent. The special equipment needed to safely pump out the chemical from the storage tank arrives during the evening and the Hazmat Branch makes final preparations.

Contraction

When an organizational unit is no longer required, it is eliminated from the organizational structure.

Contraction refers to function within an incident response. Demobilization refers to personnel and equipment.

The two Group Supervisors coordinating the evacuation confirm to the Director of the Evacuation Branch that all the residents have left the affected areas of the town and neighbouring townships. Before pumping begins, law enforcement patrols are withdrawn from the area as a precaution. Two hours later, the Director of the Hazmat Branch reports to the Operations Section Chief that the ethylene oxide has been removed without leakage and is being transported to a safe site.

The Hazmat Team is debriefed and demobilized. After discussion between the police, Head of Council and senior officials, the Unified Command team lifts the evacuation order and people are allowed to return to their homes. Transport is provided from the evacuation centres.

The Emergency Information Officer at the Joint Information Center puts out a news release announcing the successful removal of the hazardous chemical and the terminating of the evacuation order. A news conference is scheduled for the morning. During the night, the fire in the storage containers is extinguished. Members of the Forest Branch are demobilized and this Branch is eliminated. After the news conference, the joint EIC is closed and the staff debriefed and demobilized.

The last action, before the final termination of the incident, is a full debriefing and evaluation by the Unified Command team. From this, the Incident Command drafts a formal **After-Action Report**. Then, with the agreement of members of the Emergency Control Group, the Unified Command team formally terminates incident response.

The After-Action Report (AAR) documents the performance of tasks and might recommendations for improvements and lessons learned. It is completed as part of demobilization.

Key Concepts and Principles of IMS illustrated in Scenario III

This scenario illustrates several additional key concepts and principles of IMS.

In this scenario:

- o Standardization
- o Simplicity and Flexibility
- o Sustainability
- o Resource Management
- o Information Management

Standardization – Standardized management structures and terminology allow different organizations and jurisdictions to use a common approach when working together. In this scenario, everyone from the drivers of the road graders to those at the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) understands their assigned responsibilities and capabilities.

Simplicity and Flexibility– IMS is flexible enough to respond quickly and appropriately to all emergencies. The aim is to keep the IMS structure as uncomplicated and minimalist as possible, while remaining fully effective. In this scenario, local officials who know the area and local organizations fill key roles.

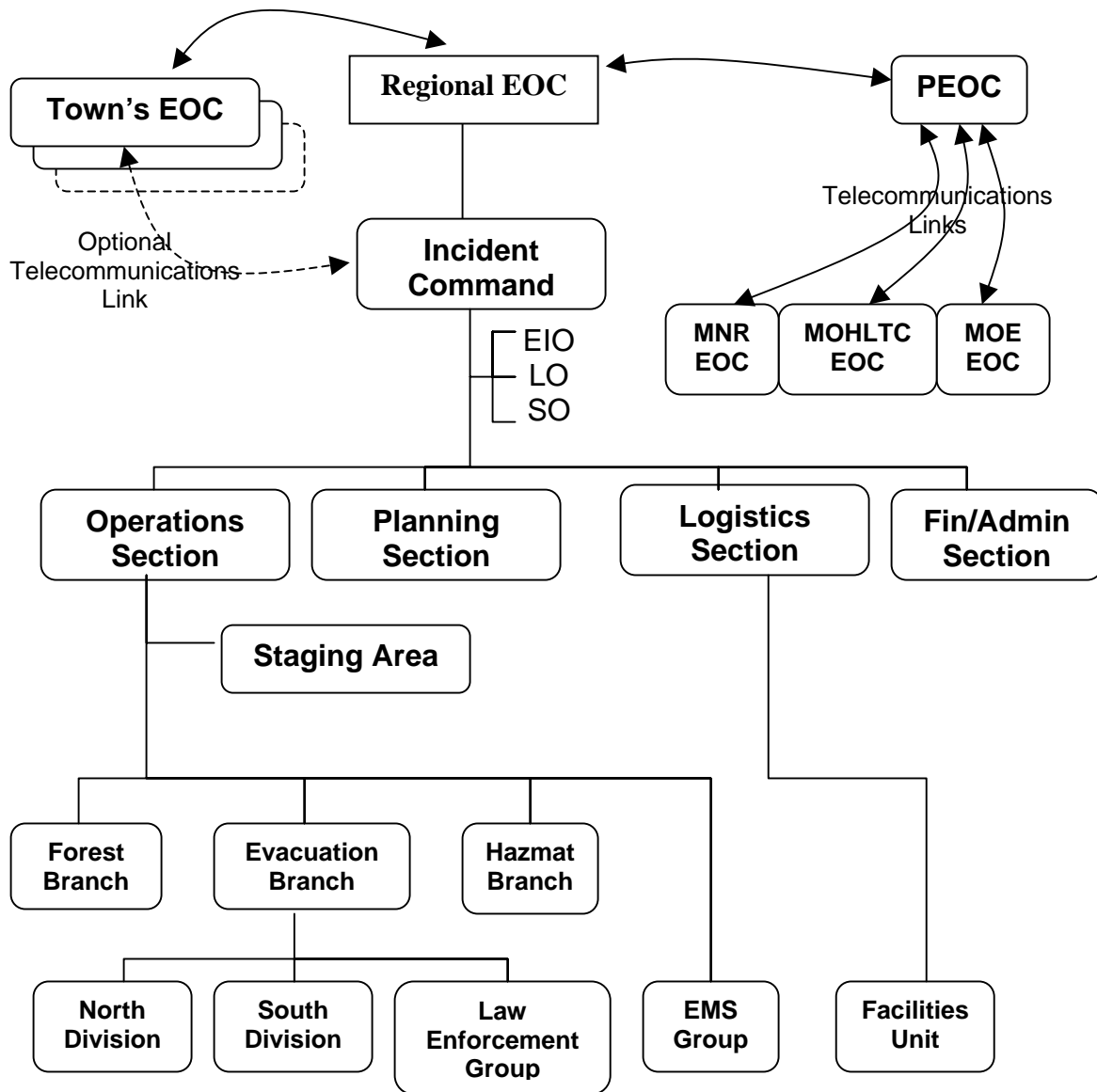
Sustainability – Incident management must be able to sustain response activities until either a pre-determined end point or the end of the incident. The level of sustainability will depend on the capacity of each organization or jurisdiction to provide the appropriate amounts and types of resources required. This may involve maintaining 24/7 staffing and conducting 24/7 operations. Measures to ensure sustainability include deliberately maintaining excess

capacity or designating alternates who possess the same level of authority and qualifications as those whom they will replace or relieve.

Resource Management – Having the right resources in the right place at the right time is key to effective incident management. IMS provides a detailed process for categorizing, ordering, dispatching, tracking and recovering resources. In order to ensure readiness, there should be in place, prior to an incident, a standardized, comprehensive resource database as well as protocols to access, utilize and demobilize such resources.

Information Management – Accurate, relevant and timely information is important to both internal and external audiences. Internal information is needed in order to maintain a common operational picture and to formulate broad incident strategies, incident action plans and field decisions. External audiences, such as the media and the public, also need information about an emergency. IMS requires that there should be processes to acquire, analyze and disseminate information in a timely manner at all levels.

Organization Chart of IMS Structure in scenario, stage III.



Self-directed Test Three

1. In a complex incident, the task of collecting, collating and disseminating information to responders involved in an incident is the responsibility of:

- A. Planning.
- B. Operations.
- C. Emergency Information.
- D. The Unified Command Team.

2. In addition to tracking resources, it is also important to maintain accurate paperwork and financial accounts for resources used and monies spent. This is the work of:

- A. The Finance and Administration Section.
- B. That part of the General Staff responsible for developing the Incident Action Plan.
- C. That part of the Command Team responsible for Liaison.
- D. Operations.

3. In IMS, how are resources described?

- A. **Kind** (e.g. generator); and **Type** (e.g. Type 2)
- B. **Human Resources, Physical Resources** and **Other**.
- C. **Time** and **Cost**.
- D. **Internal Resources** and **External Resources**.

4. In order to maintain span of control, Operations may be organized into several components. The Operations Section may be organized:

- A. Into Divisions based on geography.
- B. Into Branches based on functions or geography.
- C. Based on the application of resources.
- D. A and B above.

5. Interoperability denotes:

- A. The ability of different organizations and jurisdictions to interact and work together.
- B. Technological compatibility allowing organizations to communicate and share data.
- C. Functional standardization of terms structures and procedures.
- D. All of the above.

6. Which of the following is TRUE?

- A. When one team replaces another team, the outgoing team is demobilized.
- B. Demobilization of equipment includes cleaning and servicing them so they are returned to their condition prior to service in the incident.
- C. When an incident involves many resources, it may be necessary to set up a Demobilization Unit within the Planning Section.
- D. All of the above.

7. In a municipal emergency, the normal role of a Ministry Action Group (MAG) would be to:

- A. Activate its EOC and take over.
- B. Activate its EOC to provide support to Incident Command through the municipal EOC.
- C. Tell the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) to activate itself.
- D. A and B.

8. The main differences between a Heli-spot and an Airbase are:

- A. A Heli-spot is for helicopters only and has maintenance facilities, while an Airbase is for all aircraft but does not offer maintenance facilities.
- B. A Heli-spot is for helicopters only and provides fuel, while an Airbase is for all kinds of aircraft but does not offer fuel.
- C. A Heli-spot is for helicopters use only but has no maintenance or fuel facilities, while an Airbase is for all kinds of aircraft and offers maintenance and fuel services.
- D. All of the above.

9. Emergency Information about an incident may be provided in many ways, such as:

- A. By establishing an Emergency Information Centre (EIC).
- B. By providing information to the public via electronic, hard copy, or verbal briefings.
- C. By having special information sessions for those with special needs.
- D. All of the above.

10. IMS resources will have a status indicator of:

- A. 'Assigned', 'Available', or 'Out-of-Service'.
- B. 'Signed', 'Available', or 'Out-of-Order'.
- C. 'Assessed', 'Acceptable', or 'Out-of-gas'.
- D. None of the above

11. If operational resources threaten to exceed the appropriate span of control, the Operations Section Chief:

- A. Should demobilize those unmanageable ones.
- B. Should organize the Operations Section into an appropriate IMS structure, e.g. with Strike Teams, Task Forces, Groups, etc. each under an appropriate lead.
- C. Should continue to manage all resources directly.
- D. Should ask the IC to take back some resources.

12. The last action by an IC before final termination of the incident response is to organize:

- A. A Hog wash.
- B. An instigation of work-to-rule.
- C. A full debriefing and evaluation.
- D. Extra work to try and accumulate over-time.

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Where to go from here

Additional modules teaching the practical implementation of IMS in Ontario are being developed. These will cover (subject to modifications):

IMS 200: Basic IMS

Training to initiate and establish appropriate IMS structures for simple incidents or during the early phases of a complex incident.

The module is intended for individuals potentially involved in implementing IMS at simple incidents or during the early phases of a complex incident.

Training is classroom-based for 8-16 hours; the prerequisite to participate is successful completion of IMS 100. Evaluation is by written test.

IMS 910: Instructor

Training to prepare participants to deliver and administer the IMS 200 course in their jurisdiction/organization.

This module is intended for potential instructors for the IMS 200. Those completing the program will be registered as provincial IMS 200 instructors and be eligible to receive course training aides and booklets free of charge through Emergency Management Ontario.

Training is classroom-based for 8-16 hours. Evaluation is by written test. There are two prerequisite:

- 1) Successful completion of IMS 200 (Note - IMS 200 will be bundled with IMS 910 during at least the first year of its offering to allow this prerequisite to be easily met), and
- 2) Previous successful instructor training.

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

IMS 300: Intermediate IMS

Leadership training within expanded IMS structures during complex incidents involving multi-organizational responses.

The module is intended for individuals potentially performing leadership roles within an expanded IMS structure during a complex incident involving multiple-organization response.

Training is classroom-based for 2-4 days; the prerequisite to participate is successful completion of IMS 200, a working knowledge of the operations of the organization represented, and a potential candidate to assume a Command or General Staff position during an incident. Evaluation is by written and performance-based testing.

IMS 400: Advanced IMS

Training to assume Command of complex incidents

The module is intended for experienced individuals potentially performing the command function at complex incidents.

Training is classroom-based for 2-4 days; the prerequisite to participate is successful completion of IMS 300 and be designated to assume the Command function during complex incidents. Evaluation is by written and performance-based testing.

Additional Information:

You may look for updates from your respective organization, associated stakeholders, or via the website of Emergency Management Ontario:

www.ontario.ca/emo

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

Self-Test Answers

Answers - Test One

1. Which statement is TRUE?

Answer: D. All of the above.

2. The five functions in IMS are:

Answer: C. Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration.

3. How many Incident Commanders are there per incident?

Answer: D. There is only ever one Incident Commander per incident.

4. What is an incident I?

Answer: B. An event that requires an emergency response to protect life, property or the environment.

5. Simple Incidents typically differ from Complex Incidents in terms of:

Answer: C. The number of responders and resources involved, and the length of time (duration) of the incident.

6. "Unity of Command" means:

Answer: B. Each person reports to only one clearly designated supervisor, who may or may not come from the same service or jurisdiction.

7. Functions not specifically delegated remain the direct responsibility of:

Answer: D. The Incident Commander.

8. Which of the following statements is FALSE?

Answer: B.

Note: There is only one Incident Commander, and hence one Incident Command Post per incident.

9. Choose the **most** correct definition for "Command".

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS

Answer: B. Incident Command directs, orders and controls all aspects of an incident response; this may involve delegating many tasks and activities, including creating the Incident Action Plan.

10. Which of the following is FALSE?

Answer: C.

Note: In a simple incident the IAP is likely to be verbal.

11. Single Incident Command exists when:

Answer: D. These are all situations in which Single Incident Command is the appropriate command structure.

12. In general, the role of a municipality's Emergency Control Group (ECG) is to:

Answer: B. Listen to recommendations and provide strategic advice and support as needed.

Answers - Test Two

1. Unified Command is required when:

Answer: C. In a specific scenario, incident management requires joint, inter-dependent decision-making from more than one jurisdiction.

2. The Operational Period refers to:

Answer: C. The period of time assigned to achieve the objectives of the Incident Action Plan.

However, note that the Incident Action Plan remains flexible, even after adoption, and the Operational Period may also be changed if circumstances change.

3. Experience shows that the appropriate span of control is:

Answer: B. 1 supervisor to between 3 and 7 components (5 being optimal), where a component might be an individual or a complex resource (e.g. helicopter with crew).

Note that an appropriate span of control must be maintained at all times, matching, as necessary, an incident response structure that expands or contracts.

4. When resources from public works, police, fire are put together as a team for a specific task, and communicating on the same radio frequency, this is an example of an organizational component known as:

Answer: B. A Task Force. This is composed of the mixed resources assembled for a particular purpose, in contrast to a Strike Team that is composed of the same kind and type of resources.

5. Who writes AND approves the Incident Action Plan?

Answer: D. All sections of Incident Management team may have input into the IAP. The plan must be approved by the Incident Commander.

6. Designated Incident Facilities. Which of these statements is TRUE?

Answer: D. Standard names and symbols assist all personnel to understand the functions of each facility. Note: Different incidents may require different facilities.

7. "General Staff" refers to:

Answer: A. The Section Chiefs who oversee and carry out the four key management functions of Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance & Administration.

8. Command Staff include:

Answer: B. The Command Staff, if appointed, is composed of "subject specialists" such as safety, liaison, emergency information or technical specialists depending on the type of incident.

9. The general responsibilities of an Emergency Information Officer (site and EOC) are:

Answer: D. In any incident there is a two-way flow of information about the incident: to the media and the public and from the media and the public to Incident Command.

10. A Safety Officer is responsible for:

Answer: C.

Note: If a Safety Officer is not appointed, responsibility for the overall health and safety of all persons involved in the incident remains with the Incident Commander.

11. Who is responsible for accountability?

Answer: D. All of the above.

12. What is an EOC?

Answer: D. All of the above.

Answers - Test Three

1. In a complex incident, the task of collecting, collating and disseminating information to responders involved in an incident is the responsibility of:

Answer: A. Planning

Note: Relevant, reliable and timely information is essential to good planning, and effective decision-making and incident management.

2. In addition to tracking resources, it is also important to maintain accurate paperwork and financial accounts for resources used and monies spent. This is the work of:

Answer: A. The Finance and Administration Section.

3. In IMS, how are resources described?

Answer: A. **Kind** (e.g. generator); and **Type** (e.g. Type 2).

4. In order to maintain span of control, Operations may be organized into several components. The Operations Section may be organized:

Answer: D. A and B above - Into Divisions based on geography, as well as into Branches based on functions or geography.

5. Interoperability denotes:

Answer: D.

Note: Interaction between organizations and jurisdictions, technological compatibility and functional standardization are all aspects of interoperability.

6. Which of the following is TRUE?

Answer: D. All of the above.

Note: Demobilization is a key aspect of managing incidents, and planning for it begins as soon as the first deployments are being planned.

7. In a municipal emergency, the normal role of a Ministry Action Group (MAG) would be to:

Answer: B.

Note: A MAG would not take over from a municipality. The MAG's main role would be to provide support to the municipality.

8. The main differences between a Heli-spot and an Airbase are:

Answer: C.

Note: Although air resources are not common in many incidents, it is important to be aware of the roles these resources can perform.

9. Emergency Information about an incident may be provided in many ways, such as:

Answer: D.

Note: The important point is that Emergency Information should be provided via any and all available means in order to publicize the most accurate information as quickly as possible.

10. IMS resources will have a status indicator of:

Answer: A.

Note: A resource will have only one status at any one time.

11. If operational resources threaten to exceed the appropriate span of control, the Operations Section Chief:

Answer: B.

Note: IMS is scalable and modular to allow an organization that best suits the situation.

12. The last action by an IC before final termination of the incident response is to organize:

Answer: C.

Note: The importance of a full debriefing and evaluation cannot be over-emphasized.

END OF COURSE

IMS-100: Introduction to IMS