Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM)

Training Course

Unit 1: The Communications Unit and Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

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Terminal Learning Objective
Enabling Learning Objectives

TLO: Confirm knowledge of responsibilities, roles, and functions within the Communications Unit, including roles and functions of the Auxiliary Communications Manager (ACM) and Auxiliary Communicators.

ELO A: Identify positions within the Communications Unit.

ELO B: Describe responsibilities of positions within the Communications Unit, including Auxiliary Communicators.

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Terminal Learning Objective
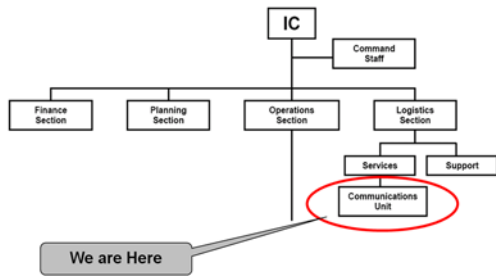## Enabling Learning Objectives (Cont'd)

ELO C: Describe the Planning Cycle.

ELO D: Identify other agencies/organizations responsible for coordination and providing assets.

ELO E: Describe the functions of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
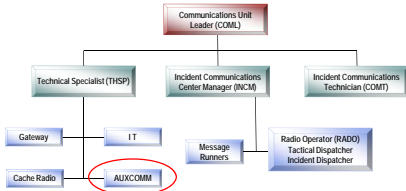
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National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Communications System (ICS)

Communications Unit Personnel

Communications Coordinator (COMC)

- COMC coordinates communications across multiple incidents when there are multiple requests for communications resources
- COMLs work with the COMC to coordinate communications/notifications
- Locally, dispatch supervisors can act as the COMC
- Different at the field, local, regional, state, and federal levels

Communications Unit Leader (COML)

Duties:

Plans and manages the <u>technical</u> and <u>operational</u> aspects of the communications function during an incident.

COML (Cont'd)

Duties:

- Prepares Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205)

- Establishes Incident Communications Center (ICC)

- Orders and manages personnel, equipment

- Establishes needed capabilities

- Participates in incident action planning

COML (Cont'd)

Duties:

As with any ICS position, the COML is responsible for the duties of organizationally subordinate positions (COMT, INCM, RADO and THSP) until delegated.

Incident Communications Technician (COMT)

The COMT assists the COML with the design, ordering, installation, operation, and ongoing maintenance of incident communications systems.

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COMT (Cont'd)

COMT also supports:

- Other incident functions to assist in accomplishing the overall goals and objectives

- Maintenance and accountability of assigned communications equipment

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Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM)

Duties:

- Assist the COML

- Establish and Maintain the Incident Communications Center (ICC)

- Manage the operational aspects of the ICC

- Supervise Radio Operators (RADOs)/Runners

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Radio Operator (RADO)

- Staffs a radio position at the ICC and is responsible for documenting all radio and telephone messages

- May also staff a data position responsible for operating data communications equipment

Incident Dispatchers and Tactical Dispatchers

Some local agencies have trained public safety dispatchers as Incident or Tactical Dispatchers who can bring additional training and experience to an ICC.

- "Incident Dispatcher" is generally an Emergency Medical Service (EMS)/Fire term
- "Tactical Dispatcher" is generally a law enforcement term

Technical Specialists (THSP)

THSP is a "catch-all" position that allows for the formal incorporation of personnel who may not be "qualified" in a specific NIMS/ICS position, such as:

- Audio Gateway Specialist
- Auxiliary Communicators
- Cache Radio Specialist
- Geographical Information System (GIS) Specialist

Technical Specialists (THSP) (Cont'd)

- Local Agency Radio Technicians (not qualified as a COMT)

- Mobile Communications Unit (MCU) Specialist

- Telephone/Computer Technicians

Auxiliary Communications Manager (ACM)

- Manages the operational and technical aspects for the Auxiliary Communicators and resources
- Establishes and maintains the AUXCOMM network
- Establishes and/or staffs the Auxiliary Communications area of operations

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Auxiliary Communications Manager (Cont'd)

- Supervises AUXCOMM personnel:
  - Auxiliary Communicators serving as:
    - Radio Operators
    - Technicians
    - Other support personnel
- Serves as a single point of contact and conduit for information flow between AUXCOMM personnel and the COML or other designated incident supervisor

Auxiliary Communicators

- Supports the operational and technical aspects of the Auxiliary Communications Unit

- Maintains and/or operates the AUXCOMM network

- Staffs the AUXCOMM positions

- Has the knowledge to perform AUXCOMM assigned functions

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Auxiliary Communicators (Cont'd)

- Performs AUXCOMM duties:
  - Radio Operator
  - Technician
  - Other Technical Specialist (THSP) duties as required and/or assigned depending on their training, experience and qualifications
- Operate on voice, digital, satellite, VoIP, RoIP and numerous other modes if equipment is available

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Planning Cycle

- Command and General Staff Meeting

- Tactics/Planning Meeting

- Operations Briefing

- Assertive participation by the COML
  - The ACM and other volunteers do not typically get invited to these meetings, so it is critical that any AUXCOMM requirements be carried to/from these meetings by the COML
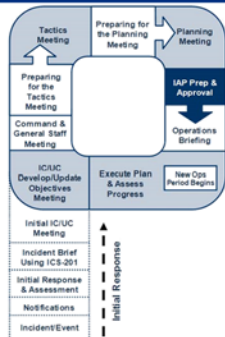
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Incident Action Planning Cycle

Declared Emergency Coordination

- JFO: Joint Field Offices

- ESF2: Emergency Support Function (Communications)

- EOC: Emergency Operations Centers

- MERS: Mobile Emergency Response Systems

Other "Potential" Jurisdiction Communications Assets

- CERT: Community Emergency Response Team

- CST: National Guard Civil Support Teams

- IMT: Regional, state, and National Incident Management Teams (Type 3, 2 or 1 IMTs)

- FEMA USAR/SUSAR: Federal Emergency Management Agency Urban Search and Rescue Teams/State Urban Search and Rescue Teams

Other "Potential" Jurisdiction Communications Assets

- IST: Incident Support Team

- FCC FedTech

- Other communications response groups

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

- What is an EOC?

- How is it different from ICS?

- How do they interface?

EOC (Cont'd)

The purpose of an EOC is to establish a central location where government at any level can provide interagency coordination and execute decision making to support incident response.

EOC (Cont'd)

The EOC does not command or control the on-scene response. The EOC carries out the coordination and support function through:

- Information collection and evaluation
- Priority setting
- Resource management

Communications is the key to effective operations and interface

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EOC (Cont'd)

- Decision making at the EOC affects the incident response as well as the public response. The decisions made at the EOC are not tactical decisions. The EOC operates in the strategic realm.
- Tactical decisions are made by the Incident Commander and the Command & General Staff at the incident scene

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EOC (Cont'd)

EOC (Cont'd)

- EOCs coordinate with on-scene incident managers and other agencies and organizations to:
  - Acquire, allocate, and track resources
  - Manage and share information
  - Establish response priorities among incidents
  - Provide legal and financial support
  - Liaison with other jurisdictions and other levels of government

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EOC (Cont'd)

- An EOC may be organized according to the ICS model, commonly organized based on Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)

- EOC organization can be modified as needed based on the nature of the emergency or local considerations

- AUXCOMM can play a significant part in supporting the communications link between the EOC and the incident

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EOC (Cont'd)

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Unit 1: Summary

1) Described the responsibilities, roles, and functions within the Communications Unit, as well as roles and functions of the Auxiliary Communications Manager (ACM) and Auxiliary Communicators.

2) Identified positions within the Communications Unit.

3) Described the responsibilities of positions within the Communications Unit, including Auxiliary Communicators.

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AUXCOMM UNIT 1 – THE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

Unit 1: Summary

4) Described the Planning Cycle.

5) Identified other agencies/organizations responsible for coordination and providing assets.

6) Described the functions of an EOC.

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