
STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

APPROVED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

FIELD COURSE

INCIDENT FACILITIES

MODULE 4

I-200

**PARTICIPANT
REFERENCE
MANUAL
2003**

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PARTICIPANT REFERENCE MANUAL

Table of Contents

	Page #
Contents	i
Objectives	1
I. Introduction	2
II. Incident Command System Facilities	2
Incident Command Post.....	2
Staging Areas	4
Incident Base	6
Camps	7
Helibase	7
Helispots	8

Subjects covered in this module include:

- Incident Command Post
- Staging Areas
- Incident Base
- Camps
- Helibase
- Helispots

Objectives:

1. Name each of the principal facilities used in conjunction with ICS, and explain the purpose and use of each.
2. Identify which facilities may be located together at an incident or event.
3. Describe how the various incident facilities are used and managed to support an incident or event.
4. Identify appropriate map symbols associated with incident facilities.

I. Introduction

This module will describe different kinds of facilities that can be established at an incident:

- Incident Command Post
- Staging Areas
- Base
- Camps
- Helibase
- Helispots

Each facility has a unique purpose on an incident. These six facilities should be able to fulfill almost all incident facility requirements. Not all incidents, however, will use all facilities. Base, Camps, Helibase, and Helispots are primarily used on larger incidents. Moreover, specific applications may make use of other facilities, e.g., triage center, temporary morgue, etc.

II. Incident Command System Facilities

What are some of the factors to take into consideration when establishing incident facilities?

- First priority is the needs of the incident
- Length of time the facility will be used
- Cost to establish it
- Environmental considerations.

A. Incident Command Post

1. Background

The Incident Command Post (ICP) is the location at which the primary command functions are performed. The Incident Commander will be located at the ICP.

All incidents must have a designated location for the Incident Command Post (ICP). There will only be one ICP for each incident.

This also applies on multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional incidents operating under a single or a unified command.

The ICP can be located with other incident facilities.

Initial location for the ICP should consider the nature of the incident, whether it is growing or moving, and whether the ICP location will be suitable in size and safe for the expected duration of the incident.

The ICP may be located in a vehicle, trailer, tent, or within a building, to name just a few examples. On long-term incidents, it is desirable to provide an ICP facility which will provide adequate lighting and/or protection from the weather.

Larger and more complex incidents will often require larger ICP facilities. Examples of incidents that usually require an expanded ICP facility include:

- Multi-agency incidents run under a Unified Command.
- Long-term incidents.
- Incidents requiring an on-scene communications center.
- Incidents requiring a separate planning function.
- Incidents requiring the use of Command Staff and Agency Representative positions.

ICPs will be designated by the name of the incident, e.g., Woodstock ICP.

Some incidents may be large enough to have an on-site communications center to dispatch assigned resources and communicate with other off incident sites, such as Department Operations Centers (DOCs) and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs). The communications center is often associated with or adjacent to the ICP. Also, some incidents will require space at the ICP to allow for various Command Staff and Planning/Intelligence Section functions.

2. Characteristics of the ICP

The following are some general characteristics of the ICP that should be known and understood:

- There is only one ICP per incident, even if the incident is multi-jurisdictional.
- The incident communications center, if established at an incident, is often located with or adjacent to the ICP.
- The Incident Command function is carried out at the ICP.
- The ICP may be located with other incident facilities such as the Incident Base.
- The planning function is normally done at the ICP.
- The ICP should be large enough to provide adequate working room for assigned personnel.
- The ICP should contain situation and resource status displays necessary for the incident, and other information necessary for planning purposes.

- Agency Representatives are normally located at the ICP.
- Once established, the ICP will normally not be relocated.

NOTE: On expanding incidents it may be appropriate to move the ICP if an improved location is required or would facilitate command operations.

3. Establishing the ICP

The following are general guidelines to be used in establishing the ICP:

- Position away from the general noise and confusion associated with the incident.
- Position outside of the present and potential hazard zone.
- Position within view of the incident (when appropriate).
- Have the ability to expand as the incident grows.
- Have the ability to provide security, and to control access to the ICP as necessary.
- Identify location with distinctive banner or sign.
- Announce ICP activation and location via radio or other communication so all appropriate personnel are notified.

B. Staging Areas

1. Background

A Staging Area is a temporary location at an incident where personnel and equipment are kept while awaiting tactical assignments.

Whenever possible Staging Areas should be located within five minutes travel time to the area of expected need.

An incident may have more than one Staging Area.

Staging Areas can be set up to meet specific functional needs. For example: for ambulances, fire equipment, police cars, public works equipment, etc.

In locations where major incidents are known to occur frequently, it is advisable to designate possible Staging Area locations, and to plan their layouts in advance.

Resources in a Staging Area are always in or on an available status, which means they are ready for assignment within three minutes.

This is an important consideration for resource use planning and should be closely adhered to.

Staging Areas may include temporary fueling and sanitation facilities.

All Staging Areas will have a Staging Area Manager.

Staging Areas will be given a name which describes their general location, e.g., Webster Park Staging Area.

The Staging Area Manager reports to the Operations Section Chief, or to the Incident Commander if an Operations Section has not been established.

A Functional or Geographic Branch may have its own staging area, for example; Utility Branch. The Branch Director would have control of utility resources in the staging area. Establishment and use of staging areas at the Branch level must be coordinated with the Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander.

In some disciplines the staging function is located in the Logistics Section, resulting in the Staging Area Manager reporting to the Logistics Section Chief.

A Staging Area may be in the same general area or adjacent to other incident facilities; however, it should have its own separate location and name.

Some incidents may use the Staging Area(s) for only certain kinds of resources. For example, all police vehicles or all ambulances may be located in one Staging Area. A Staging Area could be established in a harbor location for boats used in water incidents such as oil spills and vessel salvage operations.

2. General Characteristics of Staging Areas

Staging Areas should:

- Be close to the location of tactical assignments (within five minutes).
- Be located out of any possible line of direct hazard effects to minimize risk.
- Be relocated if necessary.
- Have different access routes for incoming and outgoing resources.
- Be large enough to accommodate available resources and have room for growth.
- Be clearly marked.
- Be located to minimize environmental damage.
- Have necessary security controls.

3. Benefits of Using Staging Areas

Listed below are several benefits from the use of Staging Areas at an incident. Participants may be able to add additional benefits.

Staging Areas:

- Provide locations for immediately available resources to await active assignments.
- Provide locations to allow resources to be formed into operational units such as task forces and strike teams.
- Provide for greater accountability by having available personnel and resources together in one location.
- Provide safe locations for personnel and equipment to await assignments.
- Prevent resources from freelancing or "doing their own thing."
- Minimize excessive communications of resources calling for assignments.
- Control and assist the check-in of personnel who arrive at the incident via privately owned vehicles or other private means.
- Allow the Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander to properly plan for resource use, and to provide for contingencies.

C. Incident Base

An Incident Base will be established on some incidents.

All primary services and support activity for the incident are usually located and performed at the Base.

The Logistics Section will be located at the Base.

Normally, the Incident Base is the location where all uncommitted (out-of-service) equipment and personnel support operations are located. Tactical resources assigned to the Incident Base will normally be out-of-service.

There should be only one Base established for each incident, and normally the Base will not be relocated.

The Base will be designated by incident name, e.g., Midway Base.

In locations where major incidents are known to occur frequently, it is advisable to pre-designate possible Base locations, and to plan their layouts in advance.

The management of the Base comes under the Logistics Section. If an Incident Base is established, a Base Manager will be designated. The Base Manager in a fully activated ICS organization will be in the Facilities Unit of the Logistics Section.

D. Camps

Camps are temporary locations within the general incident area which are equipped and staffed to provide sleeping, food, water, and sanitary services to incident personnel.

Camps are separate facilities, and are not located at the Incident Base.

Camps may be in place for several days, and they may be moved depending upon incident needs.

Very large incidents may have one or more Camps located in strategic areas. For example, in a major oil spill incident along the coastline or water way there may be several camps designated where crews and equipment are temporarily located.

All ICS functional unit activities performed at the Base may also be performed at Camps.

Each Camp will have a Camp Manager assigned.

Camp Managers are responsible for managing the camp, and for providing non-technical coordination of all organizational units operating within the Camp.

Camp Managers will report to the Facilities Unit Leader in the Logistics Section. If that position has not been activated, the Camp Manager would report to the Logistics Section Chief.

Initially, personnel requirements for Logistics Section units located at Camps will be determined by the Incident General Staff, based on the kind and size of the incident and expected duration of Camp operations.

After a camp is established, additional personnel and support needs would normally be determined and ordered by the Camp Manager.

If logistics units are established at Camps, they would be managed by assistants.

Camps are designated by a geographic name or by a number. For example the 44th St. Camp, Presidio Camp, or Camp #3.

E. Helibase

Helibases and Helispots serve somewhat different purposes at an incident.

A Helibase is the main location within the general incident area for parking, fueling, maintenance, and loading of helicopters.

The Helibase is often located at or near the incident base. However, an incident Helibase can also be located at a nearby airport, or at another off-incident location.

A Helibase will be used to load helicopters with personnel, equipment, and supplies necessary for incident operations.

The incident Helibase will be designated by the name of the incident, e.g., Presidio Helibase.

Large incidents could have more than one Helibase. For example, a second Helibase would be called Presidio Helibase #2. Helibases will normally not be moved.

The Helibase will be managed by a Helibase Manager. The Helibase Manager will report to the Air Support Group Supervisor in the Air Operations organization if that position has been activated.

If not, the Helibase Manager reports to either the Air Operations Branch Director (if activated) or to the Operations Section Chief.

F. Helispots

Helispots are temporary locations in the incident area where helicopters can safely land and take off.

Helispots can be used to load or off-load personnel, equipment, supplies, water, etc.

Helispots will be managed by Helispot Managers who will function on the ground at the Helispot. The Helispot Manager will report to the Helibase Manager.

If an incident has no established air operations organization but does have one or more Helispots designated, the Helispot Managers will report to the Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander.