
Communications Unit Leader EMI Course Number: E/L-969

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

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Unit 1: Course Introduction

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

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Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Communications Unit Leader (COML).
- Describe the course objective.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Incident Command System (ICS).

Methodology

The purpose of this unit is to introduce students to the structure of the course, the course prerequisites, and gauge students' previous coursework and on-the-job experience.

This unit uses lecture, discussion based activities, an exercise and quiz.

Content from the Course Introduction will not specifically be tested through a quiz or the final exam; however, before Unit 2, an ICS pretest will be given at the end of this unit to assist in evaluating level of practical ICS knowledge the students possess.

The purpose of Exercise 1 is to provide the participants with an opportunity to interact with other students at their tables and collectively identify their expectations for the course.

Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Lesson	30 minutes
Exercise 1	30 minutes
ICS Pretest	30 minutes
Total Time	1 hour, 30 minutes

Reference Materials

- Projector & other equipment as necessary for PowerPoint presentation
- Easel chart/Easel pad
- Marking pens
- Name cards/table tents
- Student notebooks and pens/pencils (optional)
- Course Schedule
- Exercise 1: Expectations
- ICS Pretest
- Blank ICS Form 211
- Blank ICS Form 214s for the entire class
- ICS 420-1, Field Operations Guide
 - The Field Operations Guide (FOG) is optional and is available from FIRESCOPE

TopicAll-Hazards Communications Unit Leader

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Scope Statement

Through this unit, students will learn the objectives of the course. Additionally, students will confirm their knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Communications Unit Leader (COML).

Course Title Slide

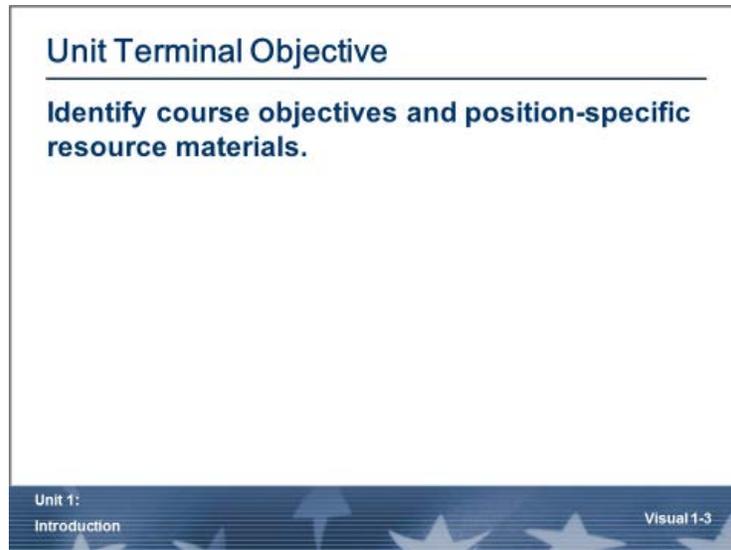
Project the Course Title Slide well before beginning of class so students will know they have found the correct classroom. Distribute student binders, notebooks and pens (optional), and name tents. Once all students have arrived, welcome everyone and introduce the course. Be sure to verify that arriving students intend to take this course and not another course.

TopicUnit Title Slide

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Announce unit and move quickly to next slide.

Topic Unit Terminal Objective

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Explain the Unit Terminal Objective to the class.

The Unit Enabling Objectives, which are in the Student Guide notes, are included to support the Unit Terminal Objective. They are the specific objectives to be met as the class progresses through the unit; ultimately, by satisfying the Unit Enabling Objectives, the students will meet the Unit Terminal Objective.

The final exam (to be discussed in upcoming slide) will be composed of questions based on the Unit Enabling Objectives from each unit. However, students will not be tested on content from Unit 1.

Unit Terminal Objective

At the end of this unit, the student will be able to identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Communications Unit Leader.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe the course objectives
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Incident Command System (ICS)

Introduction

- Discuss administrative requirements of the course
- Cover SWIC's request for Google mapping of COMLs
- Introduce instructors, course coordinator, and students
- Present course objectives
- Explain course process and develop expectations



Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-4

Explain the Following Key Points

Provide a general overview of the topics to be covered in the unit. Each corresponds to the Terminal and Enabling Objectives.

Scope Statement

Through this unit, students will learn the objectives of the course, be instructed on the use and purpose of PTBs, and receive a Communications Unit Leader version of this resource.



Explain the Following Key Points

Discuss the administration notes for the course.

Ground Rules

- Break
- Starting and ending time
- Lunch
- Smoking policy
- Cell phones and PDAs

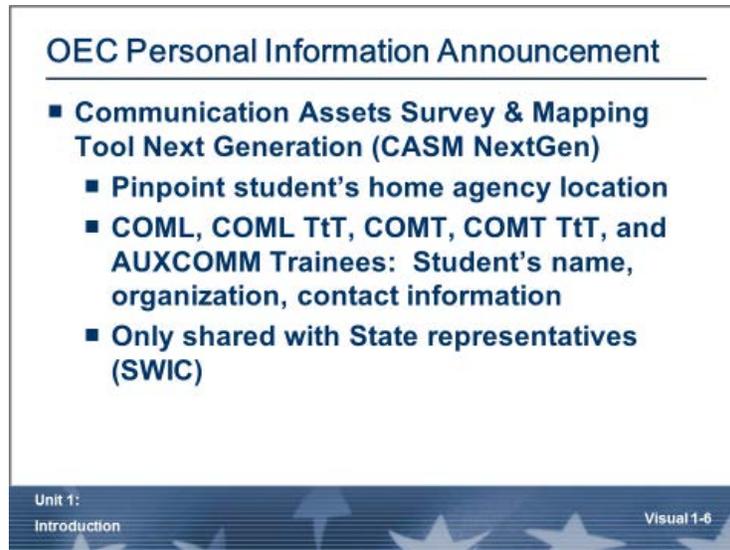
Facilities

- Restrooms and drinking fountains
- Break area
- Messages
- Telephone, pagers, and computer use, etc.

Other As Applicable

- Lodging
- Transportation
- Message location and available telephones
- Other local information

Topic OEC Personal Information Announcement



Explain the Following Key Points

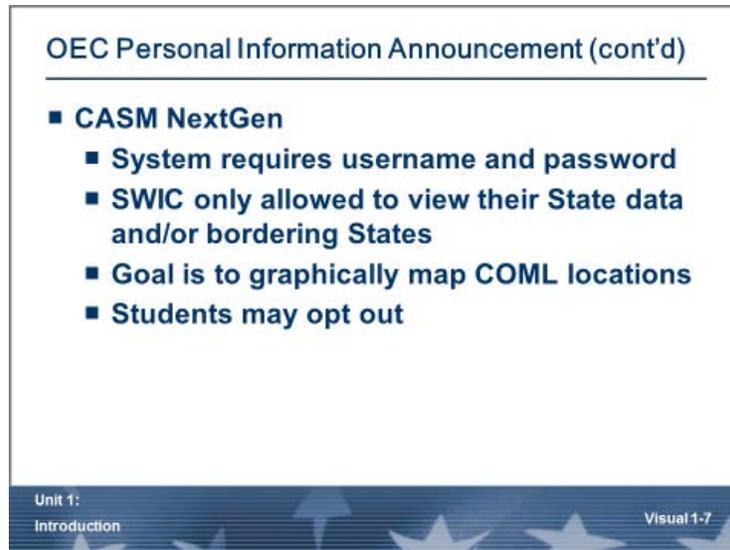
Discuss the Office of Emergency Communications Personal Information Announcement.

Office of Emergency Communications Personal Information Announcement

The following is directed at all Communications Unit Leader, COMT and AuxComm instructors.

The Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs) have expressed an interest in knowing where all of their trained communications experts are once this course is completed. In support of that interest, OEC has developed a Google map database that will actually pinpoint the students' home agency location on a map based off the information obtained from the sign-in roster. The information that will be provided for this project's database will be the students' name, organization and the organization contact information. In the case of Auxiliary Communicators, the name, zip code and email address will be listed. Only information you provide for this purpose will be shared with the state representatives. The system will require a user name and password to access the map and agency information. Each SWIC will be allowed to view only their data for his/her state or those of bordering states (if the SWIC allows). The goal of the database is to graphically map the locations of those students who have satisfactorily completed an OEC developed course, allowing the SWIC to better assess the location of its communications subject matter expertise.

Topic OEC Personal Information Announcement



Explain the Following Key Points

Continue to discuss the Office of Emergency Communications Personal Information Announcement.

Office of Emergency Communications Personal Information Announcement

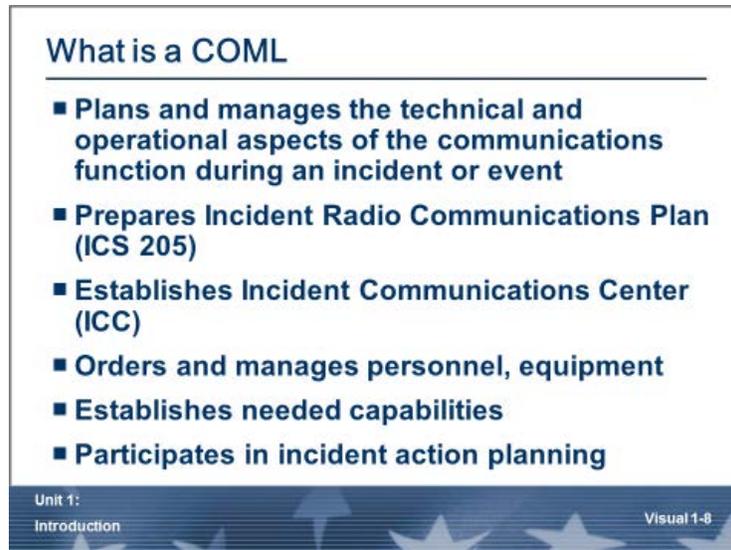
The following is directed at all Communications Unit Leader, COMT and AuxComm instructors.

We understand that some students may choose not to be part of this database. If that is so, they have the option of asking that their information not be part of the database. Please let your students know should they decide to opt out that they will need to let you (the instructors) know prior to the end of this course so their information will not be submitted. OEC respects everyone's right to privacy.

Please brief this information to all students at the very beginning of each class. Make sure they understand what the information is going to be used for and that they have the right to opt out. Please notify OEC/ICTAP COMU Coordinator should any student decide to opt out.

Should you have any questions regarding this announcement, please feel free to contact John E. Peterson at john.e.peterson@dhs.gov or via phone at 703-235-4089.

Topic What is a Communications Unit Leader?



Explain the Following Key Points

Provide a very brief overview of the Communications Unit Leader position.

The Communications Unit Leader is responsible for tasks that include creating a communications plan, identifying and ordering the resources needed to implement the plan, setting-up and managing a center for communications, properly documenting all unit activities, and collaborating with the IMT for incident planning.

This is a very brief overview to bring the students to a collective understanding of what the position is and clarify that although a certain level of technology knowledge is needed, the Communications Unit Leader is more of a management role.

The Communications Unit Leader is responsible for a number of tasks, including:

- Planning and managing the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an incident or event
- Preparing an Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS 205)
 - An example ICS 205 is on the next slide
 - Review the slide, but advise the students more detailed instructions on how to fill out the ICS 205 will come later in the course
- Establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC)
- Ordering and managing personnel, equipment
- Establishing needed capabilities
- Participating in incident action planning

Topic ICS 205 Example

ICS 205 Example

INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (ICS205)

1. Incident Name: COML COURSE		2. Date/Time Prepared: Date: 09/06/2011 Time: 0737		3. Operational Period: Date From: 09/06/2011 Time From: 0738		Date To: 09/07/2011 Time To: 0738				
4. Basic Radio Channel Use:										
Zone Grp	Ch #	Function	Channel Name/Trunked Radio System/Talkgroup	Assignment	RX Freq M or W	RX Tone NAC	TX Freq M or W	TX Tone NAC	Mode (A, D, or H)	Remarks
1	1	COMMAND	CPD-TAC1	COMMAND	151.3550 N	136.5	159.5950 N	136.5	A	UNIFIED COMMAND
3	2	TACTICAL	VTAC11	OPERATIONS	151.1375 N	CSQ	151.1375 N	156.7	A	ARPS - May need radio programming
1	3	TACTICAL	VTAC12	FIRE	154.4525 N	CAD	154.4525 N	156.7	A	Will need additional tactical channels for special operations
1	4	TACTICAL	VTAC14	LE	159.4725 N	CSQ	159.4725 N	156.7	A	Will need additional tactical channels for special operations
1	5	AIR	AIR TO GROUND	AIR TO GROUND	170.0000 N	CSQ	170.0000 N	NONE	A	To support EMS operations
1	6	TACTICAL	VTAC13	EMS	158.7375 N	CSQ	158.7375 N	156.7	A	Will need additional channel for transportation
5. Special Instructions:										
Contact the Incident Communications Center (ICC) for additional tactical channels and communication support needs. COML will coordinate with the COMC for additional channels as needed. Advise the ICC of any communication issues.										
6. Prepared by (Communications Unit Leader): Name: <u>S. Johnson, COML</u>								Signature: <u>S. Johnson</u>		
ICS 205		IAP Page: _____		Date/Time: 09/06/2011 / 0737						

Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-9

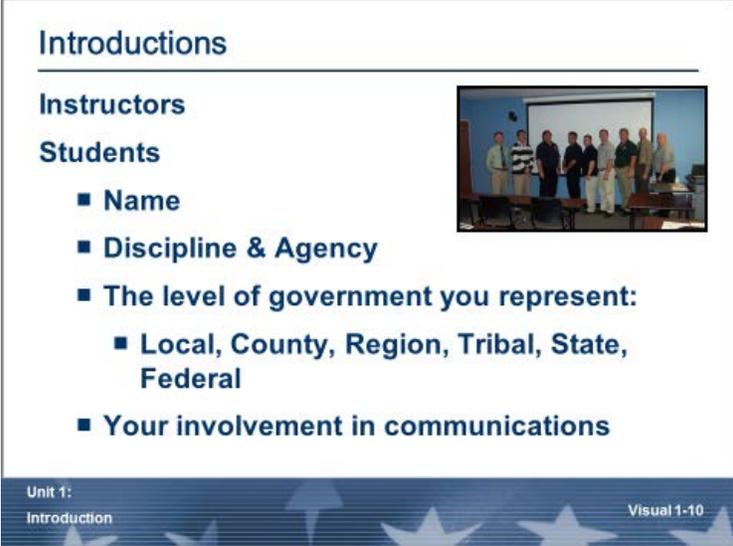
Explain the Following Key Points

Provide a snapshot of the ICS 205.

This is a very brief overview of the ICS 205 to bring the students to a collective understanding of what information is needed in an ICS 205.

One of the primary responsibilities of a Communications Unit Leader is drafting the ICS 205 and submitting it for review and approval.

Review the slide, but advise the students more detailed instructions on how to fill out the ICS 205 will come later in the course.



Introductions

Instructors

Students

- Name
- Discipline & Agency
- The level of government you represent:
 - Local, County, Region, Tribal, State, Federal
- Your involvement in communications

Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-10

The slide features a photograph of a group of approximately ten people standing in a classroom or meeting room. They are dressed in professional attire, and some are holding papers. A whiteboard is visible in the background.

Explain the Following Key Points

Introduce the instructor cadre, including the course coordinator, students, and any guests.

Instructor Introduction

Give a brief personal introduction and provide:

- An overview of your personal experience as a Communications Unit Leader;
- Agencies you have worked for.

Student Introduction

Ask students to introduce themselves and provide:

- An overview of their incident response experiences and ICS background;
- Their reasons for being a Communications Unit Leader.
- Name; Agency; Title; Communications experience

Administrative Concerns

This may be the appropriate time to address any administrative issues, such as the following:

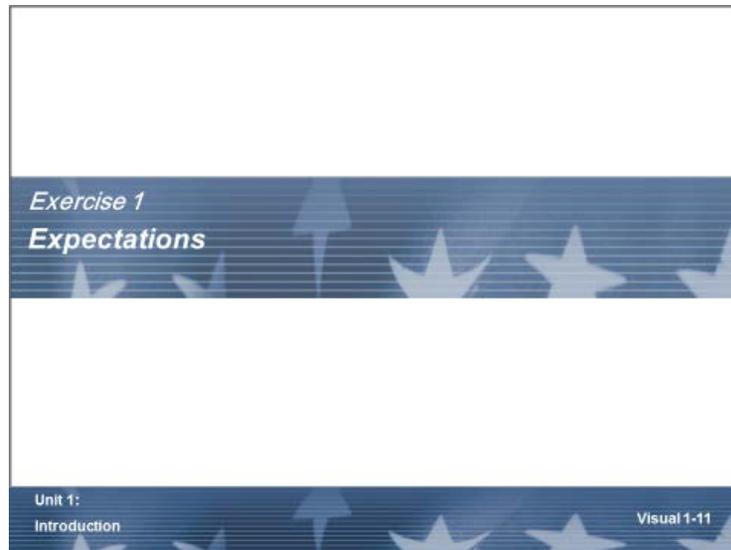
- Lodging
- Transportation
- Smoking policy
- Message location and available telephones
- Restrooms and drinking fountains

- Other local information

Student expectations for the course will be addressed on the next slide.

Topic

Expectations

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Refer to Exercise 1: Expectations

This exercise is scheduled to last approximately 30 minutes. Students will list their expectations on an easel pad. After groups have completed their lists, each group will share their expectations with the rest of the class. The lists are saved so they may be reviewed throughout the course to ensure the course is meeting expectations.

This exercise is on all other All-Hazards courses which adds continuity to the courses.

Course Objectives

- Identify the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the COML
- Arrive at an all-hazards incident properly equipped, gather information to assess the assignment, and begin initial planning
- Plan, staff, manage and demobilize the Communications Unit in a safe and effective manner



Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-12

Explain the Following Key Points

Introduce the objectives for this course.

Course is designed to meet the needs of an all-hazards incident Communications Unit Leader within the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The following objectives provide the framework for what will be taught throughout the course. As a Communications Unit Leader, you will need to continually evaluate, supervise, coordinate, document, etc.

At the completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify the functions of the Communications Unit and the duties and responsibilities of the Communications Unit Leader
- Arrive at an all-hazards incident properly equipped, gather information to assess the assignment, and begin initial planning activities of a Communications Unit Leader
- Plan, staff, manage, and demobilize the Communications Unit in a safe and effective manner to meet the needs of the incident

The All-Hazards Communications Unit Leader Course is a 24-hour course designed to meet the training needs of an all-hazards incident Communications Unit Leader. This Communications Unit Leader will be qualified under the training to execute Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICP).

Topic Course Objectives (cont'd)

Course Objectives (cont'd)

- **Coordinate with incident sections, communications personnel, and other agencies to accomplish incident objectives**
- **Design, order, and provide for the installation and maintenance of all communications systems**
- **Maintain accountability of assigned personnel and communications equipment**
- **Developed to qualify the COML to execute Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs) and other regional communications plans**

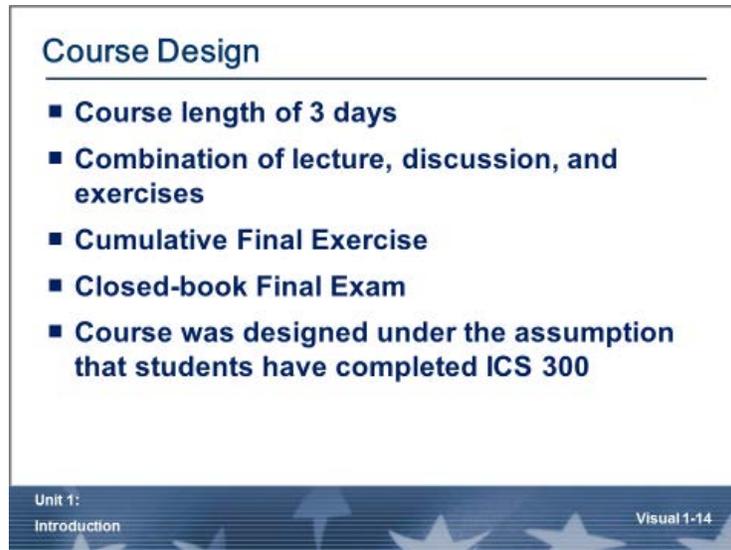
Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-13

Explain the Following Key Points

Continue introducing the objectives for this course.

- Coordinate with the incident sections, appropriate communications personnel (e.g., communications coordinators), and other agencies to assist in accomplishing the overall incident objectives
- Design, order, and ensure the installation and maintenance of all communications systems
- Maintain accountability of assigned communications equipment
- Developed to qualify the Communications Unit Leader to execute Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs) and other regional communications plans



Explain the Following Key Points

Explain the course design to students.

Course Length

The course is scheduled to be three (3) days in length. Direct students to the Course Schedule and point out the units to be covered throughout the course period.

As the students are being familiarized with the Course Schedule and the topics to be covered, take a moment to explain the structure of the Student Manual. Point out the unit tabs and the Supplementary Materials tabs. Explain that the handouts and exercises are included behind the Supplementary Materials tabs. Also point out the Appendixes, which each contain additional course material.

Course Methodology

Through a combination of lecture, discussion, and exercises, students, upon course completion, will be provided the knowledge to meet the objectives of the course. Student interaction and participation will be integral to this process.

The purpose of this training is to develop “over-learned skills.” You “over-learn” skills by practicing them again and again until you can perform them reflexively, without thinking. (Think tying shoelaces.) Your goal is to make “process” skills (like filling out forms) second nature, so that you do not have to spend time thinking about the process during the incident.

Closed-Book Final Exam

In order to receive a certificate of completion for the course, students must obtain a 70% or higher on the Final Exam. The Final Exam will be closed-book; 1 hour will be allotted

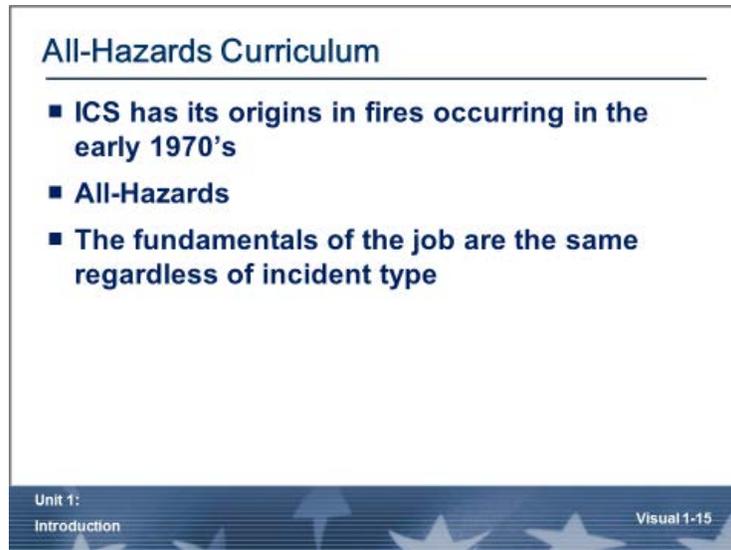
for its completion, and the Final Exam's questions will be based on the Unit Enabling Objectives.

If students are able to meet the Unit Enabling Objectives for each unit in the course, they should be able to pass the Final Exam. As it is a closed-book Final Exam, students should be encouraged to study the course materials during their time away from training.

The course was designed under the assumption that students would have completed ICS 300. The course material was not developed to substantively delve into the topics covered in those courses; rather, this is a position-specific course focusing on the duties and responsibilities of a Communications Unit Leader in an all-hazards context.

Again, content from Unit 1 will not be tested in the Final Exam.

Topic All-Hazards Curriculum

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Explain the background of the All-Hazards curriculum.

Before the 9/11 attacks, ICS was exercised nearly exclusively on fire-based incidents. Recognizing the applicability and need for ICS principles across incident-response disciplines, FEMA has embraced an All-Hazards approach to incident response and management.

As ICS and IMTs transition from a fire-specific context, it will be important to remember where the concepts originated. At this time, many examples, personal stories, discussions, etc. will be fire-based, and will continue to be until ICS is truly integrated into an All-Hazards perspective.

Discussion

Ask students to list all the various types of hazards/incidents (fire, law enforcement, EMS, etc.). Write them down on an easel pad at the front of the classroom.

Key Point

Given our personal incident experiences, each of us, instructors included, have a limited perspective (by no means *All-Hazards*). In other words, all our personal stories and examples will most likely come from the one discipline with which we have worked most. Hopefully, however, after this activity (and also through the introductions), it has been demonstrated that there is a diverse set of experience and knowledge in the classroom. Students should be encouraged to actively participate and offer any applicable personal examples to supplement the course material. While the course material will provide several examples of hazards through the exercises and lecture, the All-Hazards application will be most facilitated through this type of discussion.

A Communications Unit Leader needs to fundamentally possess the same core knowledge, skills, and abilities whether they are responding to a fire, an oil spill, a mass-casualty incident, etc. In other words, regardless of the hazard/discipline/incident, the essential job of a Communications Unit Leader is the same.

Therefore, students should not be deterred if one hazard from the list is spoken to more than another. Students can still obtain critical insight to the position and should add examples from their own disciplines to the discourse.

Pre-Planning Activities

FAMILY

Preparation is required for your family before you mobilize:

- Prepare family disaster plan so your family will be safe
- Home emergency supplies - water, food, first aid kit, flashlight, medications/prescriptions
- Evacuation – Routes and Locations
- Go Bag/Survival Kit - Ready on short notice
- POC (out of state) & phone number to notify & update status

Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-16

Explain the Following Key Points

Explain pre-planning activities.

Topic ICS Forms 211 and 214

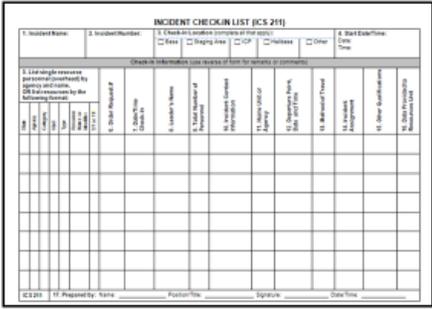
ICS Forms 211 and 214

**ICS Form 214:
Activity Log**



ICS Form 214 is a grid-based form for recording activities. It includes fields for Incident Name, Date, Location, and a large grid for recording activities with columns for Date, Time, and Description.

ICS Form 211: Check-In List



ICS Form 211 is a check-in list form. It includes fields for Incident Name, Incident Number, and Start/End Time. It features a grid for recording check-ins with columns for Name, Position, and a grid for recording check-in status (Present, Absent, etc.).

Unit 1: Introduction Visual 1-17

Explain the Following Key Points

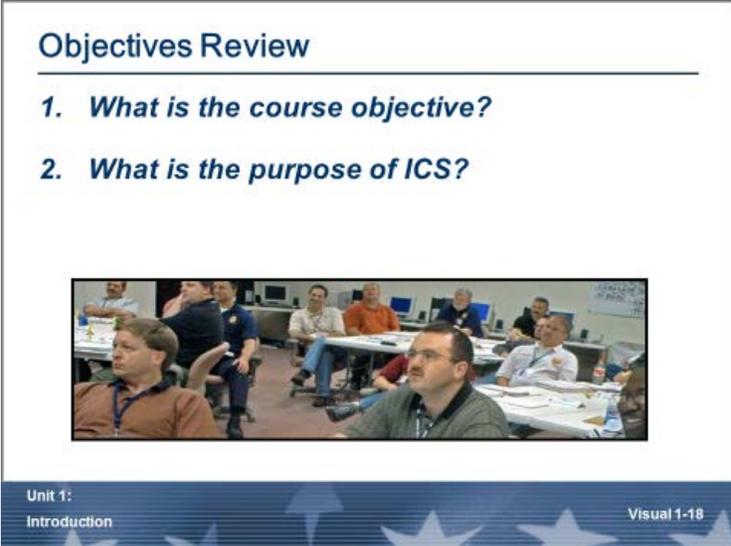
Introduce students to ICS Form 211 - Check-in List and ICS Form 214 - Activity Log. Through the duration of the course, these forms will be utilized to give the students an opportunity to practice filling them out and to become accustomed to using them on a daily basis.

Pass around a blank ICS Form 211 - Check-In List and have the class sign-in for the first day. If possible, fill in the 211 with the information specific to the class (date, name of course, etc.). At the beginning of each class through the duration of the week, display a blank 211 so students can sign-in when they arrive. Explain to students that it is their responsibility to check-in each day.

As with the 211, students will be expected to fill in a 214 each day. Hand out a blank 214 to each student and instruct them on how to fill it in each day. Make a stack of blank 214s available to the students (preferably close to where the 211 will be displayed) so that they can obtain a new 214 each day.

Collect the completed 214s at the end of each day. For each unit in the course, students should list the three most important things that they learned in that unit.

Topic Objectives Review



Objectives Review

- 1. What is the course objective?*
- 2. What is the purpose of ICS?*

Unit 1:
Introduction

Visual 1-18

Explain the Following Key Points

Review the Enabling Objectives for this unit to ensure that the class has obtained the knowledge necessary to successfully meet the Unit Terminal Objective.

Pose the Unit Enabling Objectives as questions. Ask the group to give a brief example/short explanation to answer each question. Try to call on a different student for each objective.

This is not intended to be an inclusive discussion of all material covered in Unit 1, but rather a quick and engaging way to wrap up the unit, and reconnect the students to the material before moving on to Unit 2.

Ask the students to write down the top 3-5 things they learned in this unit on their ICS Form 214.

Leave the Objectives Review slide up so that students can think about what they learned in relation to the objectives.

At the end of the day collect their ICS Form 214s. This will help identify what the students have learned and what areas may be especially important to highlight throughout the rest of the course.

Collect ICS Form 214 at the end of each day.

Unit Terminal Objective

At the end of this unit, the student will be able to identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Communications Unit Leader.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe the course objectives
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Incident Command System (ICS)

Topic

Questions

**Explain the Following Key Points**

Provide students with an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on presented material in this unit and introduce the ICS Pretest.

Even though students may have taken the pre-requisites for this course, there are commonly significant differences in the amount of practical experience and knowledge the students possess regarding ICS.

Students can grade their own pretests. You do not have to collect and grade the pretests individually. However, it essential to review and take note of the results of the ICS pretest so that you know how much time to dedicate to the review of the tenants of ICS in the next unit.