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# Unit 8: Incident Communications Centers (ICC)

STUDENT GUIDE

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## **Objectives**

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

- Identify Communications Unit Leader responsibilities in establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC) as well as manage all incident communications needs, personnel, and the ICC
- Discuss working relationships within the Communications Unit
- Discuss methods of organizing unit personnel
- Discuss important considerations in laying out the Communications Unit area
- Identify and discuss the interactions between the Communications Unit Leader and key individuals and sub-organizations
- Identify responsibilities of the Communications Unit positions
- Describe Communications Unit Leader responsibilities at the ICC

## **Methodology**

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This unit features lecture, discussion based activities, and an exercise.

Knowledge of unit content will be evaluated through the administration of the final exam (to be administered upon completion of the course). Instructors will evaluate students' initial understanding through facilitation of Exercise 8.

Utilizing ICS Form - 217A Communications Resources Availability Worksheet created in Exercise 7, the purpose of Exercise 8 is to design a communications system, taking into consideration the needs of the agencies that students may consider as likely responders. The exercise is scheduled to last approximately 45 minutes, involving the instructor reading from a script from the City of Central City scenario. Based on this information, the students will discuss the significance of the information received and what conclusions to draw as they create a communications system.

The purpose of this unit is to provide students information needed to identify Communications Unit Leader responsibilities in establishing an ICC as well as an idea of how to effectively manage themselves and others in the Communications Unit during an incident, including staffing and supplying of the ICC.

**Time Plan**

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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.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Time</b>
Lesson	1 hour
Exercise 8	45 minutes
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>1 hour, and 45 minutes</b>

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**Topic**

Unit Title Slide

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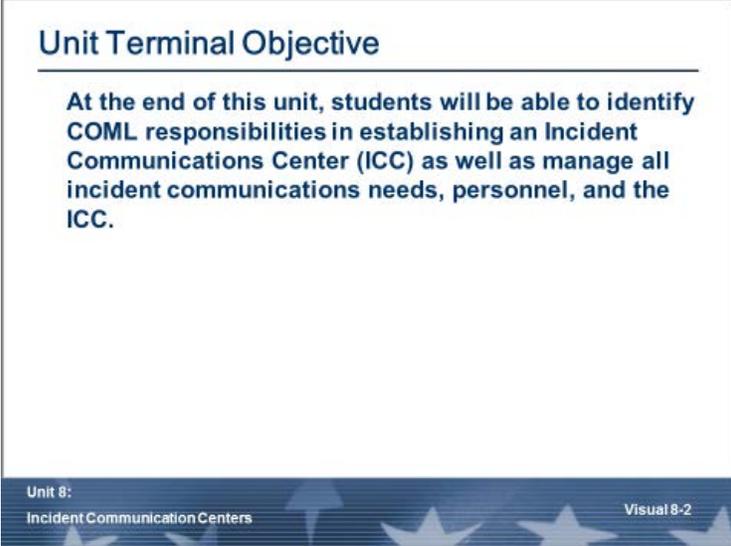


**Key Points**

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**Topic** Unit Terminal Objective

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A slide titled "Unit Terminal Objective" with a blue header and footer. The main text is in blue and reads: "At the end of this unit, students will be able to identify COML responsibilities in establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC) as well as manage all incident communications needs, personnel, and the ICC." The footer contains "Unit 8: Incident Communication Centers" on the left and "Visual 8-2" on the right.

**Unit Terminal Objective**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to identify COML responsibilities in establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC) as well as manage all incident communications needs, personnel, and the ICC.

Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-2

**Key Points**

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**Unit Terminal Objective**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to identify Communications Unit Leader responsibilities in establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC) as well as manage all incident communications needs, personnel, and the ICC.

**Unit Enabling Objectives**

- Discuss working relationships within the Communications Unit
- Discuss methods of organizing unit personnel
- Discuss important considerations in laying out the Communications Unit area
- Identify and discuss the interactions between the Communications Unit Leader and key individuals and sub-organizations
- Identify responsibilities of the Communications Unit positions

**Topic** Location of an ICC

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### Location of an ICC

**Urban considerations:**

- **Manage the incident from the dispatch center or an ICC?**
- **Locate away from high traffic areas and noise**
- **Locate away from radio frequency and electronic noise**
- **Locate close to Incident Command Post**



Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-3

**Key Points**

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Consider safe and proper environment for staff.

There are a number of considerations and concerns when establishing an ICC, including the following:

- The location must be safe, first of all, so as not to distract resources from the actual incident response in the event of an emergency
- The site must be large enough that individual workstations do not interfere with one another and it can accommodate the potential growth of the incident
- The area must be located away from radio frequency and electronic noise, such as communication towers, refrigeration trucks, and electrical generators
- The ICC should also be close to the ICP and the Medical Unit to relay orders such as Medevac requests quickly
- The Incident Command Post (ICP) will have significant electrical power requirements, of course, and should be located close to a source of power

**Topic**            ICC Facilities

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### ICC Facilities

- **Mobile Communications Center**
- **Tent**
- **School or Commercial Building (hotel room)**
- **Mobile Command or Communications Vehicle**
- **Physical Configuration**
  - **Workstations-Radio, telephone, computer**
  - **Resources -Office Supplies, ICS forms, IAP, Maps**



Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-4

**Key Points**

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A Mobile Communications Center is a large, RV-like vehicle with a variety of communications equipment already installed, and capable of numerous other connections such as data links, cell reception, and satellite feeds.

A Mobile Command Vehicle is similar to a Mobile Communications vehicle, though specifically designed to support command functions. It often has a dedicated communications area; however, that may be suitable for a Communications Unit Leader's needs.

A tent may be the most a Communications Unit Leader can expect in certain rural environments, though these have the advantage of being relatively cheap and mobile.

School or commercial building may also be used as a communications facility.

**Topic** Mobile Communications Centers

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**Mobile Communication Centers**

- Technical and Operational Resources
- Mobile Communications Centers



Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-5

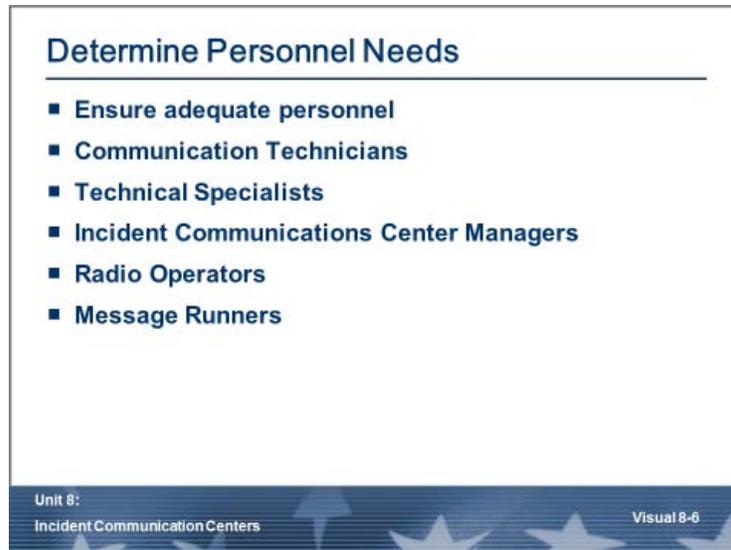
### Key Points

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National typing of these resources is still in development.

**Topic** Determine Personnel Needs

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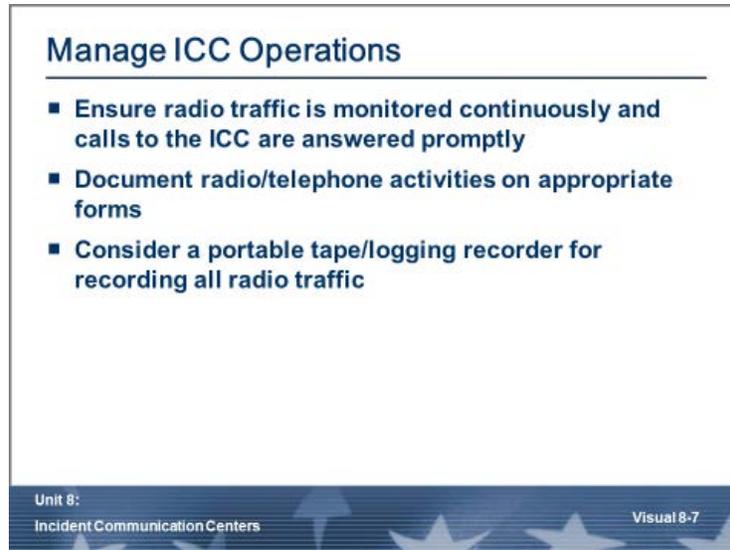
**Key Points**

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- Runners can be useful to assist in distributing general messages; they are agents of spectrum efficiency
- Ensure you have adequate personnel to staff the ICC
- Allow for response time of personnel
- Have sufficient communications and Technical Specialists to make the ICC operational
- The ICC Manager will supervise the radio operators and runners

**Topic** Manage ICC Operations

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**Key Points**

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Ensure all radio traffic is monitored.

Document radio/phone activities on the appropriate form Communications Log (Form 309). Use the General Message (ICS Form 213) to communicate messages to the appropriate party and relay information back to the field.

Maintain contact with the local dispatch center.

Be prepared for the “incident within the incident”:

- Firefighters suffering from heat exhaustion
- SWAT Officer is the victim of a gunshot wound
- The scheduled or unscheduled arrival of visiting dignitaries
- Ensure that Communication staff are briefed on the Medical Plan (ICS Form 206)



### Local Dispatch Center

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- **Maintain contact with the local dispatch center through an interoperability channel or talk group**
  - **Phone Line**
  - **Internet Connection**
  - **Fax**
  - **E-mail/Scan**



### Key Points

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**Topic** Incident Within the Incident

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### Incident Within the Incident

- Prepare incident-within-an-incident response plans prior to their need. Include national medical incident protocol in response plans.
  - Auto accident with injuries involving responders
  - Firefighter suffering heat exhaustion
  - SWAT Officer is a victim of a gunshot wound
  - Dignitaries' (un) scheduled site visit

Handout 8-1: Communications Center Protocol  
Handout 8-2: Medical Emergency Procedure Plan  
Handout 8-3: Expanded ICS 206 Medical Plan



Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-10

**Key Points**

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- The Communications Unit must have specific protocols in place on dealing with an incident within the incident
- The protocol should consider what information should be released over the radio if an incident within the incident occurs
- Dedicate appropriate air time to an incident within the incident, but don't stop primary incident response; consider your ability to move this incident to a tactical channel
- Situations may occur where providing care to responders in contrast to the victims of the incident becomes the priority
- Be familiar with the Medical Plan in the Incident Action Plan

Topic Determine Supply Needs

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**Determine Supply Needs**

- Maintain quantities of supplies at a level to prevent shortage of any basic needed items
- Maintain supplies according to:
  - Current resource orders
  - Projected growth of the incident
  - Projected number of personnel in the ICC
- General Guideline: When placing initial supply order, plan for approximately three days

Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-11

### Key Points

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- Take inventory
  - In the urban environment, portable battery chargers and a reliable power source are critical
- Maintain supplies according to:
  - Current resource orders
  - Projected growth of the incident
  - Projected number of personnel in the ICC
- Make sure that you have ordered well in advance and in sufficient quantities

**Topic**Maintain Quantity

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**Maintain Quantity**

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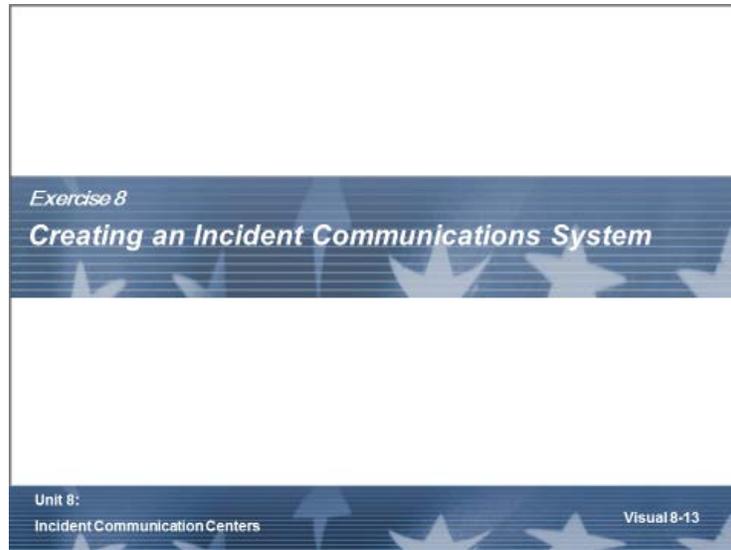
- **Take inventory**
- **Determine battery needs**
- **Portable battery chargers in an urban environment**
- **Consider the need for cell phone chargers and other portable electronic devices**
- **General Guideline: Order 2 changes of batteries per radio, per operational period**

Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-12

**Key Points**

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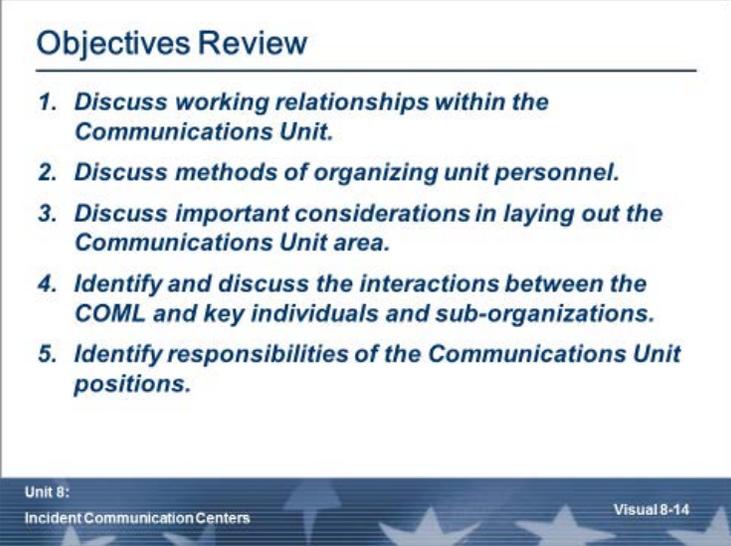
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**Key Points**

The purpose of Exercise 8 is to design a communications system, taking into consideration the needs of the agencies that students may consider as likely responders. The exercise is scheduled to last approximately 45 minutes, involving the instructor reading updates regarding Central City. Based on this information, students will discuss the significance of the information received and what conclusions to draw as they create a communications system.

**Topic** Objectives Review

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A slide titled "Objectives Review" with a list of five objectives. The slide has a blue footer with the text "Unit 8: Incident Communication Centers" and "Visual 8-14".

**Objectives Review**

1. *Discuss working relationships within the Communications Unit.*
2. *Discuss methods of organizing unit personnel.*
3. *Discuss important considerations in laying out the Communications Unit area.*
4. *Identify and discuss the interactions between the COML and key individuals and sub-organizations.*
5. *Identify responsibilities of the Communications Unit positions.*

Unit 8:  
Incident Communication Centers

Visual 8-14

**Key Points**

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**Unit Terminal Objective**

At the end of this unit, students will be able to identify Communications Unit Leader responsibilities in establishing an Incident Communications Center (ICC) as well as manage all incident communications needs, personnel, and the ICC.

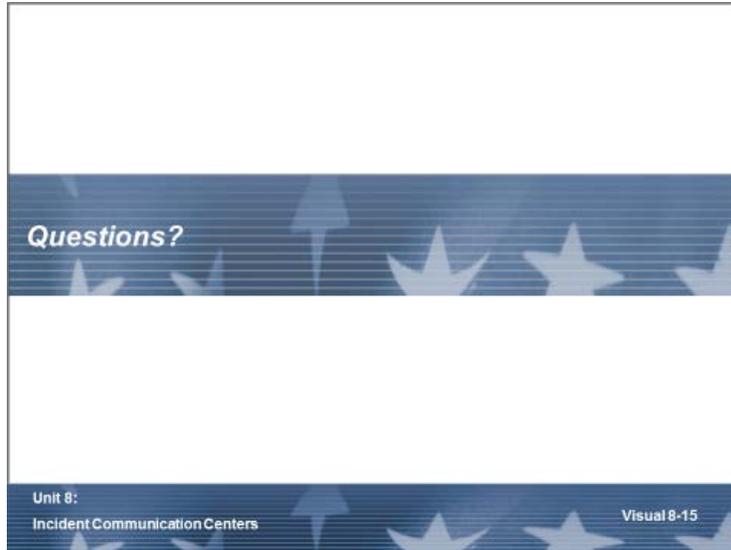
**Unit Enabling Objectives**

- Discuss working relationships within the Communications Unit
- Discuss methods of organizing unit personnel
- Discuss important considerations in laying out the Communications Unit area
- Identify and discuss the interactions between the Communications Unit Leader and key individuals and sub-organizations
- Identify responsibilities of the Communications Unit positions

Topic

Questions?

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Key Points

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