Unit 3: Major and/or Complex Incident/Event Management
Unit Objectives

- List the principal factors often found in or related to major and/or complex incidents/events.
- List the four expansion options for incident/event organization and describe the conditions under which they would be applied.
- Demonstrate, through an activity, how to apply the various options related to major or complex incident management.
Complex Incident Management

What are the characteristics of a complex incident?

How does major or complex incident management differ?
What Are Major/Complex Incidents? (1 of 2)

Major/complex incidents:

- Involve more than one agency and/or political jurisdiction.
- Involve complex management and communication issues.
- Require experienced, highly qualified supervisory personnel.
- Require numerous tactical and support resources.
- May involve multiple victims with injuries, fatalities, or illnesses.
What Are Major/Complex Incidents? (2 of 2)

Major/complex incidents:

- Include widespread damage to property/environment/economy.
- Result in psychological threat/trauma.
- Span multiple operational periods (weeks, months, years).
- Are costly to control and mitigate.
- Require extensive post-incident recovery efforts.
- Draw national media interest.
- May require a coordinated Federal response.
Factors for Determining Size & Structure

- Administrative and jurisdictional complexity
- Geographic area involved
- Consideration of the span of control
- Functional specialties required
- Logistics, planning, and other support needs
- Potential for growth
Characteristics: Organization (1 of 3)

Most Command and General Staff positions are filled.
Divisions and Groups are used to organize tactical resources. Branches may be required to reduce span of control.
Characteristics: Organization (3 of 3)

Most support units are needed.
Characteristics: Resources & Planning

- Large number of tactical and support resources will need to be ordered, tracked, and managed.
- Multiple operational periods are required.
- Written Incident Action Plans are produced.
- Transfer of command is likely.
- The use of an Incident Management Team may be required.
ICS Organizational Options

- Combine Several Incidents Into an Incident Complex
- Divide an Incident Into Two or More Single Incidents
- Expand the Planning Capability
- Add a Second Operations or Logistics Section
Incident Complex: Definition

An Incident Complex is two or more individual incidents located in the same general proximity that are assigned to a single Incident Commander or Unified Command to facilitate management.
What are some examples of when it might be advantageous to establish an Incident Complex?
Incident Complex: Structure

- Incident Commander
  - Operations Section
    - Branch I (Incident 1)
  - Planning Section
    - Branch II (Incident 2)
  - Logistics Section
    - Branch III (Incident 3)
  - Finance/Admin. Section

Typically, each separate incident is organized as a Branch, allowing for future expansion if required.
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Dividing a Single Incident (1 of 2)

A single incident may be divided when it:

- Spreads into other jurisdiction(s) and Unified Command is not feasible.
- Is difficult to manage from one location due to terrain and access.
- Has objectives that are naturally separating into two operations.
Dividing a Single Incident (2 of 2)

Incidents may be divided when:

- The Planning and/or Logistics Section can no longer adequately provide support services.
- The Operations Section cannot manage the number of resources required without exceeding span of control.
Dividing an Incident

- **Step 1:** Determine how best to divide the incident.
- **Step 2:** Assign Incident Commanders and Command and General Staffs for each incident.
- **Step 3:** Designate additional supporting organizational facilities, locations, etc.
- **Step 4:** Designate an appropriate time for establishing two separate incidents (each with a unique name).
- **Step 5:** Coordinate planning strategies and use of critical resources for at least the next operational period.
- **Step 6:** Consider the need for Area Command. (Area Command is covered in the next unit.)
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Branch Tactical Planning

Branch Tactical Planning means that:

- Detailed action plans are developed within the Operations Section at the Branch level.
- The Planning Section provides support.
Branch Tactical Planning: Examples

- In a mass fatalities incident, the Medical Examiner/Morgue Operations Branch may be best suited to establish its own incident tactical plans.

- In a structural collapse, the Search and Rescue Branch typically will include its own planning component.
Accomplishing Branch Planning

When Branch Tactical Planning is used, the Planning Section provides:

- General incident objectives.
- Strategy for the Branch for the next operational period.
- Branch resource summary for the next operational period.
- Weather and safety information.
- Changes to logistical support.
- Personnel to support planning.
Discussion Questions

Why is advanced planning critical during a complex incident?

What are the challenges to ensuring that advanced planning occurs?
Separate Advanced Incident Planning

To ensure that advanced planning occurs, the Planning Section Chief may:

- Assign a Deputy Planning Section Chief to manage advanced planning.
- Assign technical specialists to perform advanced planning.
- Establish a special unit within the Planning Section.
Advanced Planning Considerations

Advanced planning should project ahead at least 36 to 72 hours, and consider:

- Overall goal and incident objectives.
- Adequacy of previous and present plans.
- Future resource availability.
- Strategy assessment and alternatives.
- Environmental factors.
- Organizational assessment and alternatives.
- Political and economic issues.
- Long-term recovery needs.
ICS Organizational Options

- Combine Several Incidents Into an Incident Complex
- Divide an Incident Into Two or More Single Incidents
- Expand the Planning Capability
- Add a Second Operations or Logistics Section
Adding an Operations Section is designed to address issues related to span of control and geography, not function. This is an extremely rare occurrence.
Adding Operations Section: Considerations

- Ensure that Command and General Staffs can support the expansion.
- Ensure adequate incident action planning.
- Ensure adequate logistics support.
- Establish the second Operations Section at the beginning of an operational period.
- Ensure that all incident supervisory personnel are aware of the expanded organization.
- Add a Deputy Incident Commander for Operations, if necessary.
If an incident is so geographically dispersed that it is not feasible for the Incident Base to support the incident logistical needs, it may be necessary to establish another Logistics Section. This is an extremely rare occurrence.
Adding Logistics Section: Considerations

- Ensure that Command and General Staffs can support the expansion.
- Ensure adequate incident action planning.
- Establish the second Logistics Section at the beginning of an operational period.
- Ensure that all incident supervisory personnel are aware of the expanded organization.
- Add a Deputy Incident Commander for Logistics, if necessary.
Follow instructions . . .
- Presented by instructors.
- Outlined on handouts.
Summary

You should now be able to:

- List the principal factors often found in or related to major and/or complex incidents/events.
- List the four expansion options for incident/event organization and describe the conditions under which they would be applied.
- Demonstrate, through an activity, how to apply the various options related to major or complex incident management.