
**UNIT 4: INCIDENT COMMANDER AND
COMMAND STAFF FUNCTIONS**

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UNIT INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.1



Key Points

This unit will provide an overview of the role of the Incident Commander and Command Staff, including these topics:

- Five major management functions
- Incident Commander roles and responsibilities
- Command Staff roles and responsibilities

UNIT INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.2

Unit Objectives

- Identify the five major ICS management functions.
- Identify the position titles associated with the Command Staff.
- Describe the role and function of the Incident Commander.
- Describe the role and function of the Command Staff.

Unit List

- ✓ Course Overview
- ✓ ICS Overview
- ✓ ICS Features & Principles
- Incident Commander & Command Staff Functions
 - General Staff Functions
 - Unified Command
 - Course Summary – Putting It All Together

FEMA
Visual 4.2
Incident Commander and Command Staff Functions

Key Points

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Identify the five major ICS management functions.
- Identify the position titles associated with the Command Staff.
- Describe the role and function of the Incident Commander.
- Describe the role and function of the Command Staff.

UNIT INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.3

Function	Description
Incident Command	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes incident objectives, strategies, and priorities. Assume overall responsibility for the incident.
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determines tactics and resources for achieving objectives. Directs the tactical response.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects and analyzes information. Tracks resources. Maintains documentation.
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides resources and needed services.
Finance/ Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounts for expenditures, claims, and compensation. Procures needed resources.

Key Points

Every incident requires that certain management functions be performed. The problem must be identified and assessed, a plan to deal with it developed and implemented, and the necessary resources procured and paid for. Regardless of the size of the incident, these management functions still will apply.

There are five major management functions that are the foundation upon which the ICS organization develops. These functions are:

Incident Command	Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities and has overall responsibility for the incident.
Operations	Conducts operations to reach the incident objectives. Establishes the tactics and directs all operational resources.
Planning	Supports the incident action planning process by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation.
Logistics	Provides resources and needed services to support the achievement of the incident objectives.
Finance & Administration	Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.4



Key Points

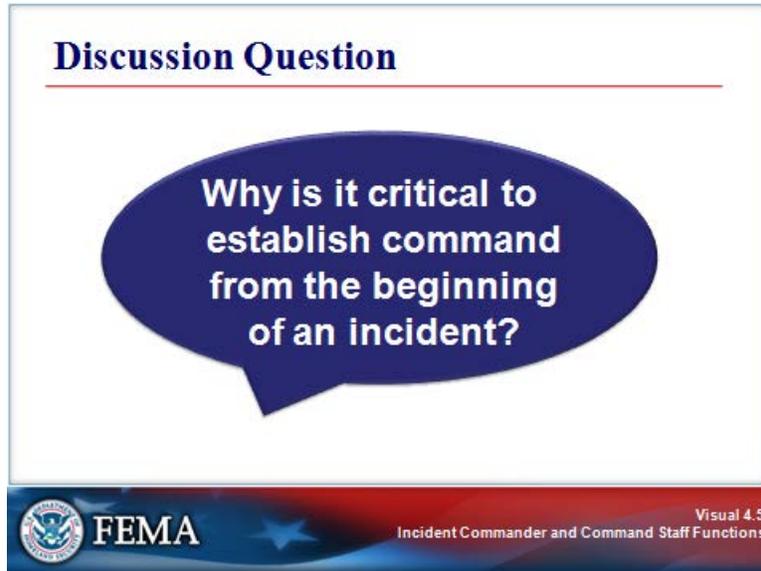
The Incident Commander has overall responsibility for managing the incident by establishing objectives, planning strategies, and implementing tactics.

The Incident Commander is the only position that is always staffed in ICS applications. On small incidents and events, one person, the Incident Commander, may accomplish all management functions.

The Incident Commander is responsible for all ICS management functions until he or she delegates those functions.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.5

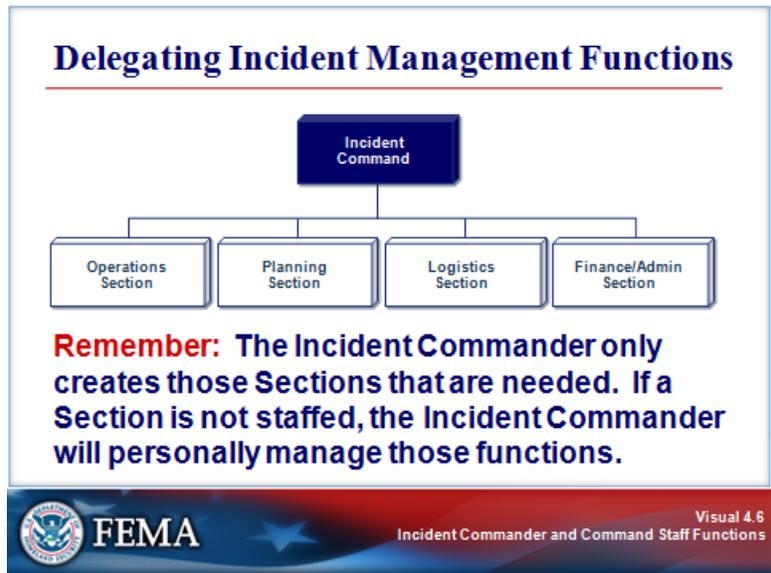


Key Points

Why is it critical to establish command from the beginning of an incident?

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.6



Key Points

The ICS organization is modular and has the capability to expand or contract to meet the needs of the incident. On a larger incident, the Incident Commander may create Sections and delegate the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration functions.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.7

Incident Commander Responsibilities

The Incident Commander is responsible for:

- Ensuring incident safety.
- Providing information to internal and external stakeholders.
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident.



FEMA Visual 4.7 Incident Commander and Command Staff Functions

Key Points

The Incident Commander is specifically responsible for:

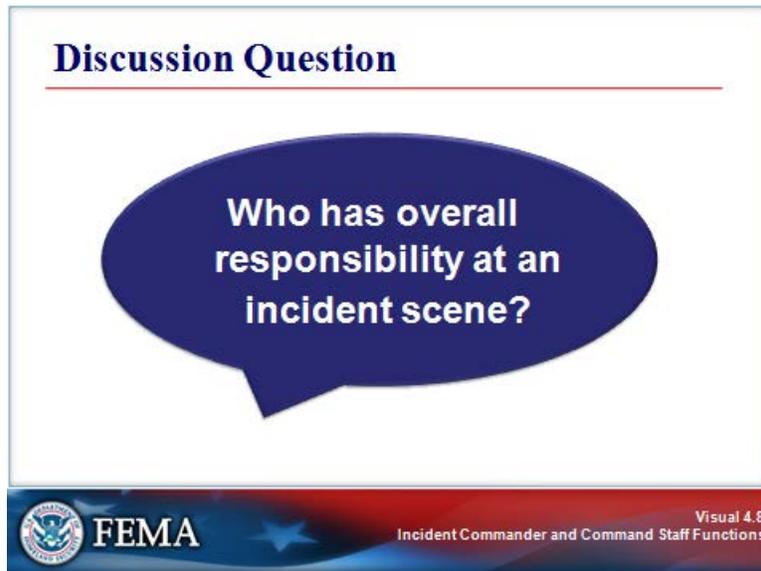
- Ensuring incident safety.
- Providing information to internal and external stakeholders.
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident.

These are critical functions and, until delegated, are the responsibility of the Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander may appoint one or more Deputies. **Deputy Incident Commanders must be as qualified as the Incident Commander.**

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.8



Key Points

Who has overall responsibility at an incident scene?

What is the role of agency executives?

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.9

Deputy Incident Commander

A Deputy Incident Commander may be designated to:

- Perform specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander.
- Perform the incident command function in a relief capacity.
- Represent an assisting agency that shares jurisdiction.



 **FEMA** Visual 4.9
Incident Commander and Command Staff Functions

Key Points

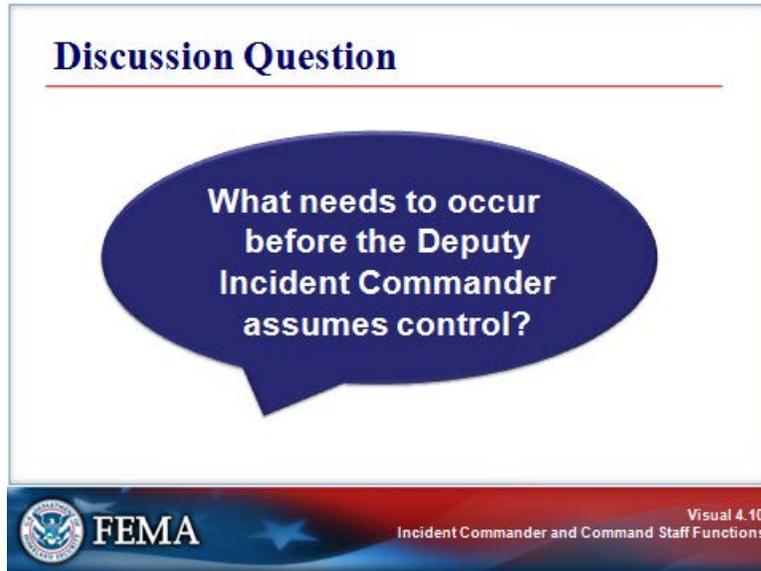
A Deputy Incident Commander may be designated to:

- Perform specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander.
- Perform the incident command function in a relief capacity.
- Represent an assisting agency that shares jurisdiction.

If a Deputy is assigned, he or she must be fully qualified to assume the Incident Commander's position.

INCIDENT COMMANDER

Visual 4.10

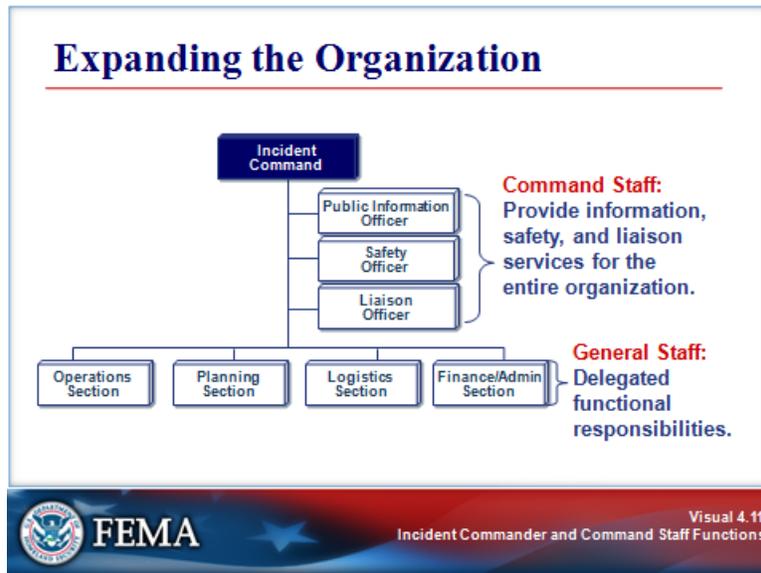


Key Points

What needs to occur before the Deputy Commander can assume control for the next operational period?

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.11



Key Points

As incidents grow, the Incident Commander may delegate authority for performance of certain activities to the Command Staff and the General Staff.

The Incident Commander should add positions only as needed.

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.12



Key Points

The following video will provide an overview of the Command Staff Officers.

Video Transcript:

You've now learned that the Incident Commander has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations. An Incident Commander may assign staff to assist with managing the incident.

The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer, who all report directly to the Incident Commander.

Let's look at the roles of each member of the Command Staff. The Public Information Officer serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders, including the media and the public.

Accurate information is essential. The Public Information Officer serves as the primary contact for anyone who wants information about the incident and the response to it.

Another member of the Command Staff is the Safety Officer, who monitors conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all personnel.

The Safety Officer is responsible for advising the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety, conducting risk analyses, and implementing safety measures.

(Continued on next page.)

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.12 (Continued)

Video Transcript (Continued):

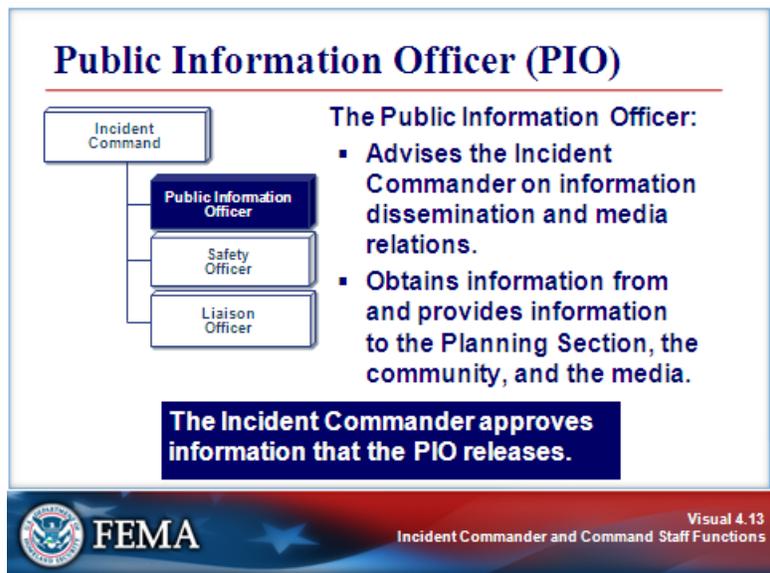
The final member of the Command Staff is the Liaison Officer, who serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assisting at an incident.

Additionally, the Liaison Officer responds to requests from incident personnel for contacts among the assisting and cooperating agencies, and monitors incident operations in order to identify any current or potential problems between response agencies.

A Command Staff may not be necessary at every incident, but every incident requires that certain management functions be performed. An effective Command Staff frees the Incident Commander to assume a leadership role.

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.13



Key Points

The Public Information Officer (PIO):

- Advises the Incident Commander on information dissemination and media relations. Note that the Incident Commander approves information that the PIO releases.
- Obtains information from and provides information to the Planning Section.
- Obtains information from and provides information to the community and media.

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.14



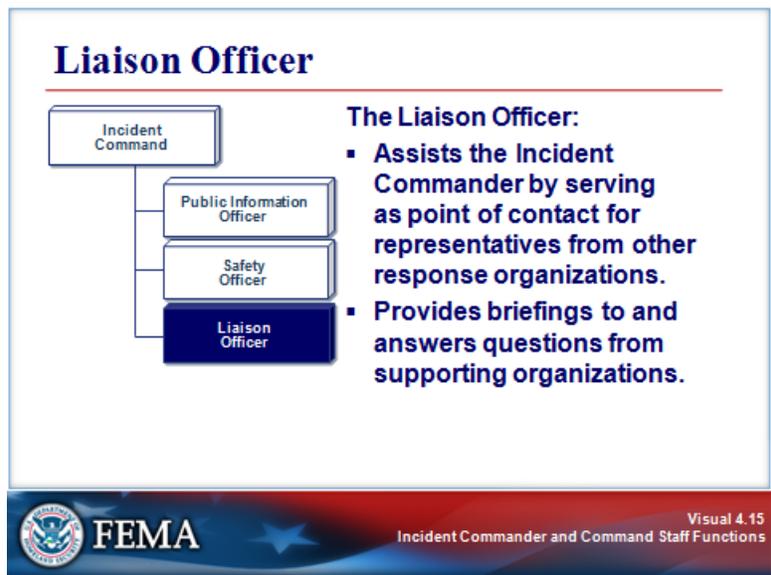
Key Points

The Safety Officer:

- Advises the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety.
- Works with the Operations Section to ensure safety of field personnel.
- Ensures the safety of all incident personnel.

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.15



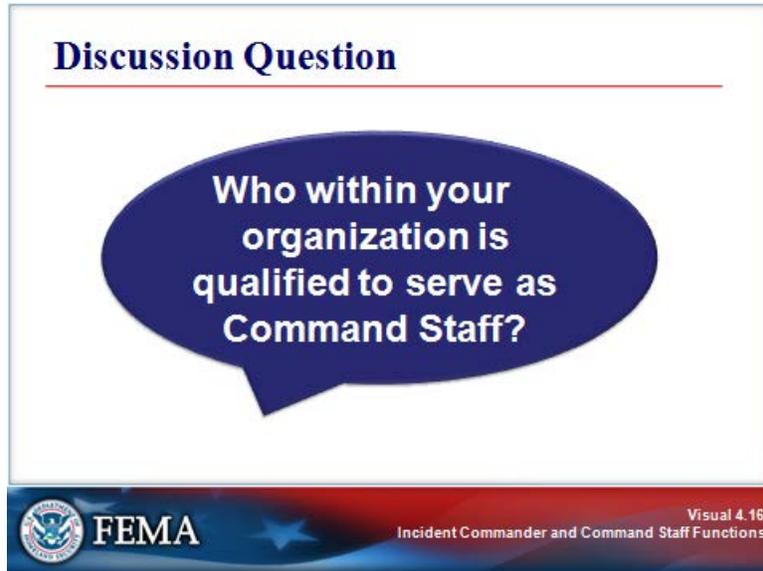
Key Points

The Liaison Officer:

- Assists the Incident Commander by serving as a point of contact for representatives from other response organizations.
- Provides briefings to and answer questions from supporting organizations.

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.16



Key Points

Who within your organization is qualified to serve as Command Staff?

COMMAND STAFF

Visual 4.17

Activity: Command Staff Roles

Instructions: Working as a team . . .

1. Review the case study presented in your Student Manual.
2. Identify which Command Staff positions would be assigned.
3. Next, determine what specific activities the Incident Commander would delegate to each Command Staff member.
4. Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 10 minutes.

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Key Points

Activity Purpose: To illustrate how ICS can be used to address incident management issues.

Instructions: Working as a team:

1. Review the scenario presented on the next page.
2. Identify which Command Staff positions would be assigned.
3. Next, if you were the Incident Commander, what specific activities would you delegate to each Command Staff member?
4. Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 10 minutes.

UNIT SUMMARY

Visual 4.18

Summary

Are you now able to:

- **Identify the five major ICS management functions?**
- **Identify the position titles associated with the Command Staff?**
- **Describe the role and function of the Incident Commander?**
- **Describe the role and function of the Command Staff?**



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Key Points

Are you now able to:

- Identify the five major ICS management functions?
- Identify the position titles associated with the Command Staff?
- Describe the role and function of the Incident Commander?
- Describe the role and function of the Command Staff?

The next unit will discuss the roles and responsibilities of the General Staff.