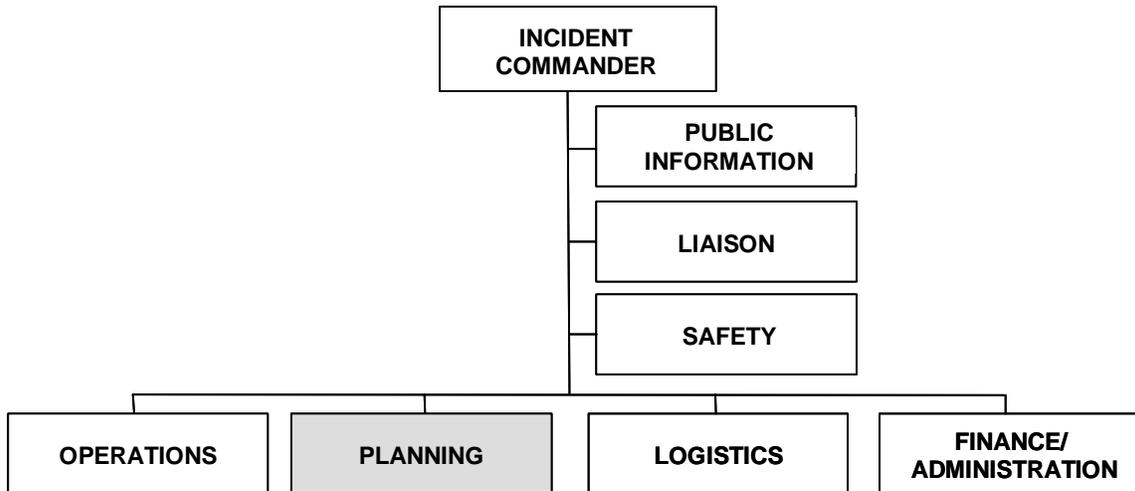


UNIT 4:
PLANNING

OVERVIEW

The Planning Section of the Incident Command System (ICS) is a critical component of managing a large/complex incident. The duties and responsibilities of the Planning Section Chief (PSC) and the subordinate functions in the Planning Section are matters that the Incident Commander and the Planning Section Chief must understand in order to bring control to a major incident effectively. This unit will take you through the duties and responsibilities of the various functions.



UNIT 4 OBJECTIVES

1. Recognize cues in order to determine the need to assign a Planning Section Chief.
2. Identify what knowledge and experience is required of the Planning Section Chief.
3. Recognize the duties and responsibilities of the Planning Section Chief.
4. Describe the ICS Forms that are completed in the Planning Section.

PLANNING SECTION

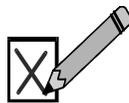
The Planning Section will continue to be called Planning Section under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). It will not be refer to as Planning/Intelligence Section, as in FIRESCOPE 420-1. Under NIMS, the Intelligence function may be organized in one of the following ways:

- officer within the Command Staff;
- Unit within the Planning Section;
- Branch within the Operations Section; and
- separate General Staff section.



The Planning Section Chief, a member of the Incident Commander's General Staff, is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources.

ICS Forms Completed by the Planning Section	
ICS 203	ORGANIZATION ASSIGNMENT LIST
ICS 204	ASSIGNMENT LIST
ICS 207	ORGANIZATION CHART
ICS 209	INCIDENT STATUS SUMMARY
ICS 211	CHECK-IN LIST
ICS 214	UNIT LOG



Activity 4.1

Turn to Appendix C to view examples of completed ICS Forms. View the following forms that are completed in the Planning Section.

1. ICS Form 203--Organization Assignment List.
2. ICS Form 204--Assignment List.
3. ICS Form 207--Organization Chart.
4. ICS Form 209--Incident Status Summary.
5. ICS Form 211--Check-In List.
6. ICS Form 214--Unit Log.

THE CUES TO IMPLEMENT THE PLANNING SECTION CHIEF

Complexity is the key to determining the need for a Planning Section Chief. The Incident Commander must have assistance at the Command Post to gather and analyze the critical cues. It is important that there is a person who understands the current situation and, more importantly, is able to forecast in a timely manner the probable direction the incident may take and develop alternative courses of action. There must be one person to develop incident contingency plans. These plans must outline the actions that may be required under certain conditions. Alternative plans may be developed for worst-case situation, or intermediate strategies depending on the type of incident.

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED FOR THE PLANNING SECTION CHIEF POSITION

A Planning Section Chief must have emergency response experience, and be qualified for the type and magnitude of the incident. Ideally, he/she would have completed the Planning Section Chief course (S-440) successfully.

The person selected for the Planning Section Chief should be able to work under pressure, managing personnel during a dynamic, expanding incident. The Planning Section Chief should have analytical skills and be results-oriented. The Planning Section Chief will serve as the facilitator during planning meetings, dealing with the Command and General Staff as well as Agency Representatives.

The Incident Commander must ensure that the person assigned as the Planning Section Chief is fully qualified to perform in this position.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PLANNING SECTION CHIEF

1. Collect and Process Situation Information About the Incident

The amount of information that needs to be collected and analyzed at large/complex incidents can be overwhelming. In many cases on small incidents, the Incident Commander is able to gather the needed information and analyze it effectively. On the large/complex incident, a Planning Section may require Deputies and/or Unit Leaders to perform the required tasks adequately.

A large/complex incident may last hours, or even days or weeks. This means that a continuous gathering and analysis of information will be required.



2. Supervise Preparation of the Incident Action Plan

The Incident Action Plan (IAP) on a small incident may be verbal and outlined on an ICS 201 or Tactical Work Sheet.

On a large/complex incident, the Incident Action Plan must be in writing in order to communicate critical incident information and direction to all personnel. The Incident Action Plan is developed using standard ICS forms and supplemental information provided by personnel on the incident.

3. Provide Input to the Incident Commander and Operations Section Chief in Preparing the Incident Action Plan

A large/complex incident requires a great deal of coordination and communication to achieve effective control of the situation.

The Planning Section Chief will use all of their training and experience to provide alternative plans to the Incident Commander and Operations Section Chief, to obtain control of the incident.

4. Reassign Out-of-Service Personnel at the Incident to Organizational Positions as Appropriate

Many positions may need to be staffed in a large/complex incident. Qualified personnel from any agency should be assigned to staff the organization.

5. Establish Information Requirements and Reporting Schedules for Planning Section Units

The Planning Section Chief has the responsibility to ensure the information needs of the incident are met. The PSC facilitates all incident meetings and briefings, and maintains an accurate incident resource list.

To accomplish this, the Planning Section Chief must determine the schedule for completion of all reports, forms, and meetings that meet incident needs.

6. Determine the Need for any Specialized Resources in Support of the Incident

Large/Complex incidents often require specialized resources that may not be familiar to fire service personnel.

The Planning Section Chief must determine the availability of all resources, the time required to get them to the scene, and their value in affecting the incident outcomes

7. Assemble and Disassemble Strike Teams and Task Forces Not Assigned to Operations as needed.

8. Establish Special Information Collection Activities as Necessary, e.g., Weather, Environmental, Toxics, etc.

Large/Complex incidents may be very complicated. The Incident Commander must have the most current information available on which to formulate incident objectives, strategies, and tactics.

This information must be provided on a continual basis.

9. Assemble Information on Alternative Strategies

All incidents must have a current operations plan. This is outlined on the ICS Form 201 or Tactical Work Sheet.

It is the responsibility of the Planning Section Chief to develop contingency plans requested by the Incident Commander.

10. Provide Periodic Predictions on Incident Potential

The Planning Section Chief must provide the Incident Commander with information about how the incident is progressing on a periodic basis.

11. Report Any Significant Changes in Incident Status

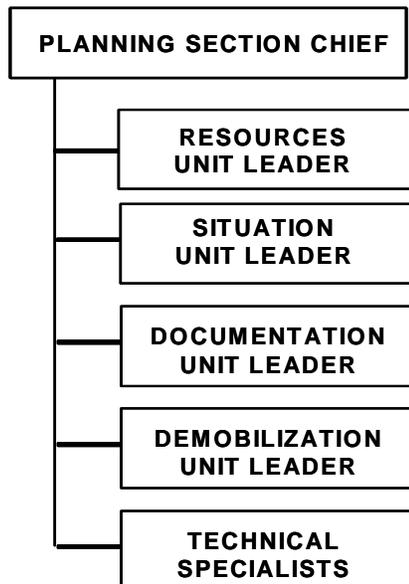
12. Compile and Display Incident Status Information

13. Oversee Preparation and Implementation of Incident Demobilization Plan

14. Incorporate Plans (e.g., Traffic, Medical, Site Safety, Communications) into the Incident Action Plan

15. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214)

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLANNING SECTION CHIEF



The Planning Section has five primary Units: Resources, Situation, Documentation, Demobilization, and Technical Specialists. When these units are staffed the Planning Section Chief will supervise these functions.

Resources Unit

The Resources Unit Leader is responsible for tracking the status of all assigned resources at an incident. This is achieved by overseeing the check-in of all resources, maintaining a status tracking system indicating current location and status of all resources, and maintaining a master list of all resources committed to the incident.

Situation Unit

The Situation Unit Leader may be required to prepare future projections of incident escalation, incident maps, and intelligence information. The collection, analysis, and organization of all incident information takes place in the Situation Unit.

Documentation Unit

The Documentation Unit maintains accurate, up-to-date incident files. These may include any relevant information, from incident reports to injury claims to overtime compensation. The incident files will be stored for legal, analytical, and historical purposes. Duplication services also will be provided by the Documentation Unit.

Demobilization Unit

The Demobilization Unit Leader is responsible for developing the Incident Demobilization Plan. On large/complex incidents, demobilization can be quite complex and detailed, requiring significant coordination. The orderly, safe, and efficient stand-down from an incident requires planning outlined in the Incident Demobilization Plan.

Technical Specialists

Many incidents or events will require the use of Technical Specialists having specialized knowledge and expertise. Technical Specialists may be assigned to the Planning Section or may work wherever their services are required.



Activity 4.2

To learn more about the duties and responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader, Situation Unit Leader, Documentation Unit Leader, Demobilization Unit Leader, and Technical Specialists, read Chapter 7 in your ICS 420-1.

Unit 4: Planning Quiz

Directions

Read each question carefully, and choose the best answers(s) from the four choices. **NOTE: There may be more than one correct answer. You may use the ICS 420-1 as a reference tool.**

1. What are some of the traits of a Planning Section Chief?
 - a. Reasonable amount of experience.
 - b. Analytical/Results-oriented.
 - c. Facilitator.
 - d. All of the above.

2. What are the cues that indicate that the ICS Organization should have a Planning Section Chief?
 - a. Where the gathering and analysis of incident information is time-consuming.
 - b. Where the Incident Commander must be seriously involved in Incident Commander duties and responsibilities and does not have the time to provide alternative control options.
 - c. Both (a) and (b).
 - d. Neither (a) or (b).

3. Which of the following ICS Forms is **not** completed by the Planning Section?
 - a. ICS Form 202--Incident Objectives.
 - b. ICS Form 203--Organization Assignment List.
 - c. ICS Form 204--Assignment List.
 - d. ICS Form 207--Organization Chart.

4. Incident complexity is the key to establishing a Planning Section Chief. All of the following statements are true except one. Which one is the **incorrect** statement?
 - a. The Planning Section Chief determines the need for any specialized resources in support of the incident.
 - b. The Planning Section Chief manages the Communications Unit.
 - c. The Planning Section Chief provides the Incident Commander with periodic reports on the progress of the incident.
 - d. The Planning Section collects special information that might be required for the incident such as weather.

Correct Answers to Unit 4: Planning Quiz

Question 1:

Answer D is the most correct response. All of the traits listed are desirable in a Planning Section Chief.

Question 2:

Answer C is the most correct response. Both items “a” and “b” are valid cues for establishing a Planning Section Chief because accomplishing these tasks would demand too much of the Incident Commander’s time.

Question 3:

Answer A is the most correct response. Incident objectives are determined by the Incident Commander.

Question 4:

Answer B is the most correct response. The Communication Unit is under the supervision of the Logistics Section Chief.