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# Communications Unit Leader

## EMI Course Number: E-969

STUDENT GUIDE

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# Unit 1: Course Introduction

STUDENT GUIDE

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## **Objectives**

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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**

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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**

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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	30 minutes
Exercise 1	30 minutes
ICS Pretest	30 minutes
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>1 hour 30 minutes</b>

**Reference Materials**

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- 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

**Topic** All-Hazards Communications Unit Leader

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**Key Points**

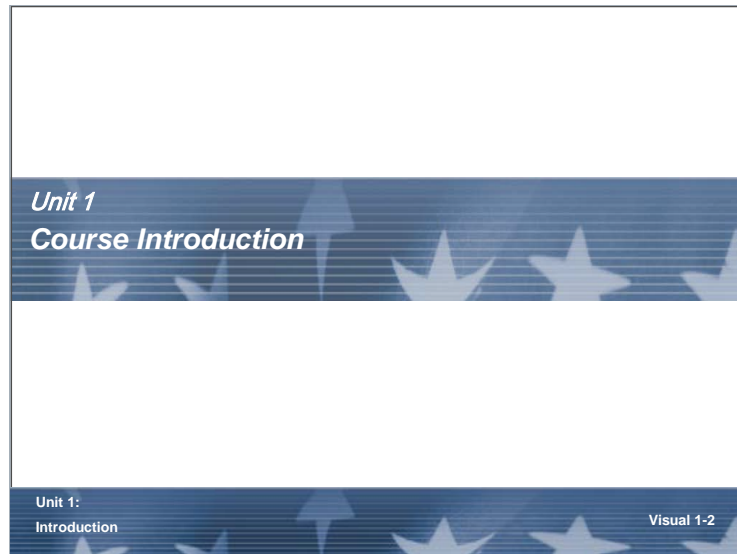
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**Scope Statement:** Through this unit, students will learn the objectives of the course. Additionally, students will confirm their knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Communications Unit Leader (COML).

Topic

Unit Title Slide

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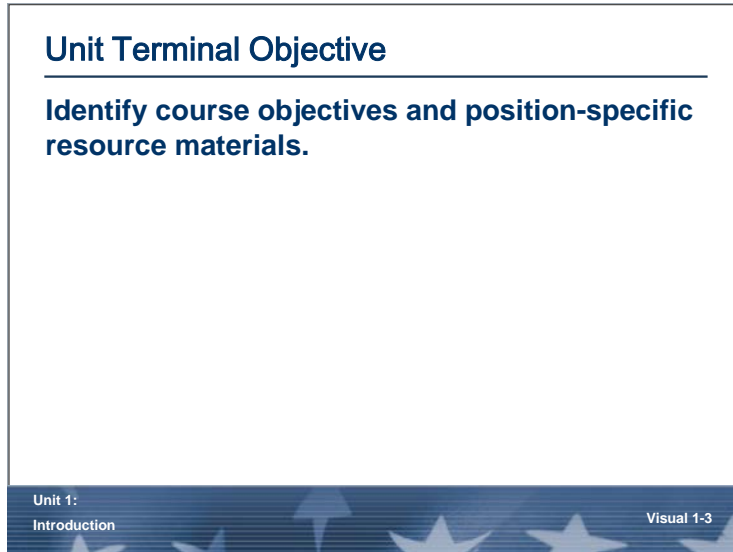
Key Points

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**Topic** Unit Terminal Objective

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**Key Points**

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**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 COML.

**Unit Enabling Objectives**

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

**Topic**Introduction

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**Introduction**

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- 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

**Key Points**

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## Topic

Course Administration

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**Course Administration**

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- Start times
- Breaks
- Facility access procedures
- Restrooms
- Cell phones/pagers
- Emergency procedures



Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-5

**Key Points**

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*Ground Rules:* Break; Starting and ending time; Lunch; Smoking policy; Cell Phones and PDAs

*Facilities:* Restrooms and drinking fountains; Break area; Messages, telephone use, pagers, computer use, etc.

*Other as applicable:* Lodging; Transportation; Message location and available telephones; Other local information

**Topic**                      OEC Personal Information Announcement

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**OEC Personal Information Announcement**

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- **Google Map Database**
  - Pinpoint student's home agency location
  - **COML, COML TtT, COM, COMT TtT, and AuxComm Trainees:** Student's name, organization, contact information
  - Only shared with State representatives (SWIC)

Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-6

**Key Points**

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**Topic**      OEC Personal Information Announcement (con't)

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**OEC Personal Information Announcement**

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- **Google Map Database**
  - **System requires username and password**
  - **SWIC only allowed to view their State data and/or bordering States**
  - **Goal is to graphically map COML locations**
  - **Students may opt out**

Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-7

**Key Points**

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**Topic** What is a COML

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**What is a COML**

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- Plans and manages the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an incident or event
- Prepares Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS 205)
- Establishes Incident Communications Center (ICC)
- Orders and manages personnel, equipment
- Establishes needed capabilities
- Participates in incident action planning

Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-8

**Key Points**

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The COML 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)
- 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**

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**INCIDENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (ICS205)**

1. Incident Name: <b>COML COURSE</b>			2. Date/Time Prepared: Date: 09/06/2011 Time: 0737			3. Operational Period: Date From: 09/06/2011 Time From: 0700			Date To: 09/07/2011 Time To: 0700		
4. Basic Radio Channel Use:											
Zone/Grp. #	Ch #	Function	Channel Name/Trunked Radio System Talkgroup	Assignment	RX Freq N or W	RX Tone /NAC	TX Freq N or W	TX Tone /NAC	Mode (A, D, or M)	Remarks	
3	1	COMMAND	CFD 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	AREPS - May need radio programming	
3	3	TACTICAL	VTAC12	FIRE	154.4525 N	CAQ	154.4525 N	156.7	A	Will need additional tactical channels for special operations	
3	4	TACTICAL	VTAC14	LE	159.4725 N	CSQ	159.4725 N	156.7	A	Will need additional tactical channels for special operations	
3	5	AIR	AIR TO GROUND	AIR TO GROUND	170.0000 N	CSQ	170.0000 N	NONE	A	To support EMS operations	
3	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. Madsen, COML</u> Signature: <u>S. Madsen</u>											
ICS 205				IAP Page		Date/Time: 09/06/2011 / 0737					

Unit 1: Introduction Visual 1-9

## Key Points

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

**Topic** Introductions

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**Introductions**

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**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

**Key Points**

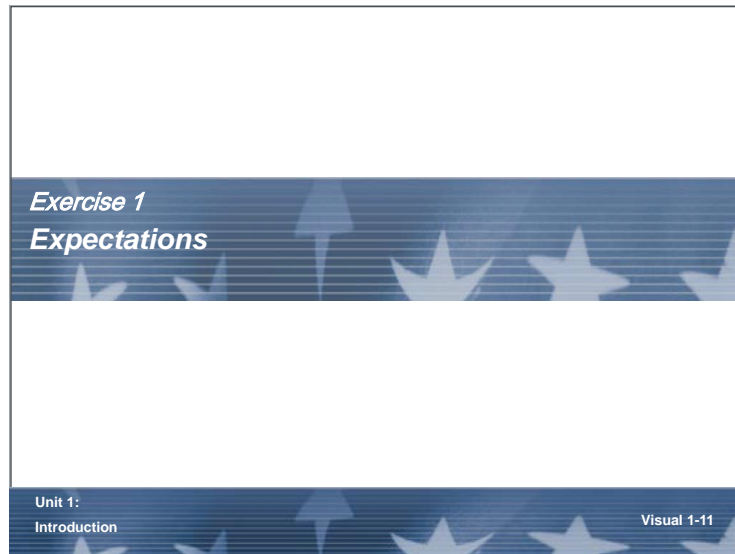
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**Student introductions:** Name; Agency; Title; Communications experience



**Topic** Expectations

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**Key Points**

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**Exercise:** 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.

## Topic

Course Objectives

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**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

**Key Points**

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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 COML.
- Arrive at an all-hazards incident properly equipped, gather information to assess the assignment, and begin initial planning activities of a COML.
- 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 (COML). This COML 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

**Key Points**

- 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 COML to execute Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs) and other regional communications plans.

## Topic

Course Design

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**Course Design**

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- **Course length of 3 days**
- **Combination of lecture, discussion, and exercises**
- **Cumulative Final Exercise**
- **Closed-book Final Exam**
- **Course was designed under the assumption that students have completed ICS 300**

Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-14

**Key Points**

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The course has been designed to be three (3) days in length.

- 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.

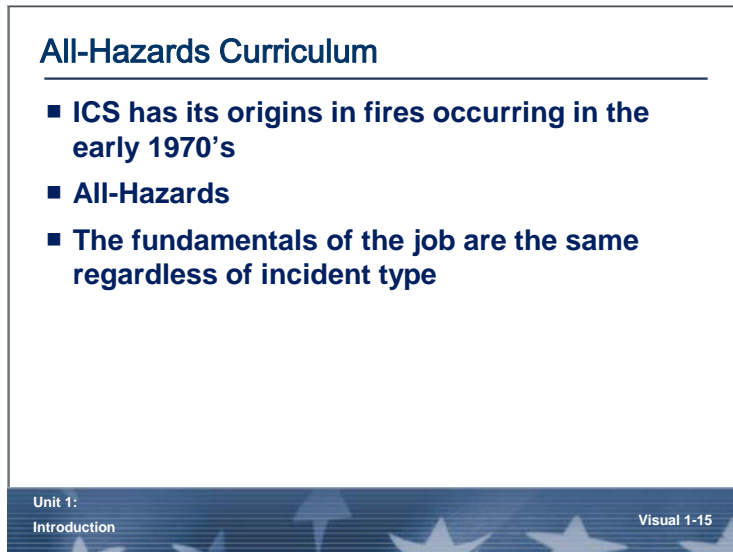
Students are required to successfully complete a closed-book Final Exam in order to obtain a certificate of completion.

- 70% or higher will be required to pass.
- Final Exam questions will be based on the Unit Enabling Objectives.

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 COML in an all-hazards context.

**Topic** All-Hazards Curriculum

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**Key Points**

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Before the 9/11 attacks, ICS was exercised nearly exclusively on fire-based incidents. Recognizing the applicability and sincere 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.

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.

A COML 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 COML is the same.

**Topic** Pre-Planning Activities

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**Pre-Planning Activities**

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**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

**Key Points**

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## ICS Forms 211 and 214

ACTIVITY LOG (C.R. JRG)			
Activity Name	1. Operating Period	2. Date	3. Time
Name	4. Location	5. Name of Agency	6. Title
1. Operating Period	2. Date	3. Time	4. Title
5. Name of Agency	6. Title	7. Name of Agency	8. Title
9. Name of Agency	10. Title	11. Name of Agency	12. Title
13. Name of Agency	14. Title	15. Name of Agency	16. Title
17. Name of Agency	18. Title	19. Name of Agency	20. Title
21. Name of Agency	22. Title	23. Name of Agency	24. Title
25. Name of Agency	26. Title	27. Name of Agency	28. Title
29. Name of Agency	30. Title	31. Name of Agency	32. Title
33. Name of Agency	34. Title	35. Name of Agency	36. Title
37. Name of Agency	38. Title	39. Name of Agency	40. Title
41. Name of Agency	42. Title	43. Name of Agency	44. Title
45. Name of Agency	46. Title	47. Name of Agency	48. Title
49. Name of Agency	50. Title	51. Name of Agency	52. Title
53. Name of Agency	54. Title	55. Name of Agency	56. Title
57. Name of Agency	58. Title	59. Name of Agency	60. Title
61. Name of Agency	62. Title	63. Name of Agency	64. Title
65. Name of Agency	66. Title	67. Name of Agency	68. Title
69. Name of Agency	70. Title	71. Name of Agency	72. Title
73. Name of Agency	74. Title	75. Name of Agency	76. Title
77. Name of Agency	78. Title	79. Name of Agency	80. Title
81. Name of Agency	82. Title	83. Name of Agency	84. Title
85. Name of Agency	86. Title	87. Name of Agency	88. Title
89. Name of Agency	90. Title	91. Name of Agency	92. Title
93. Name of Agency	94. Title	95. Name of Agency	96. Title
97. Name of Agency	98. Title	99. Name of Agency	100. Title

**ICS Form 214:**  
**Activity Log**

## ICS Form 211: Check-In List

[illegible]

## Key Points

## Topic

Objectives Review

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**Objectives Review**

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



Unit 1:  
Introduction

Visual 1-18

**Key Points**

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**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 COML.

**Unit Enabling Objectives:**

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



**Topic****Questions**

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**Key Points**

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