

Unit 3

The Communications Unit

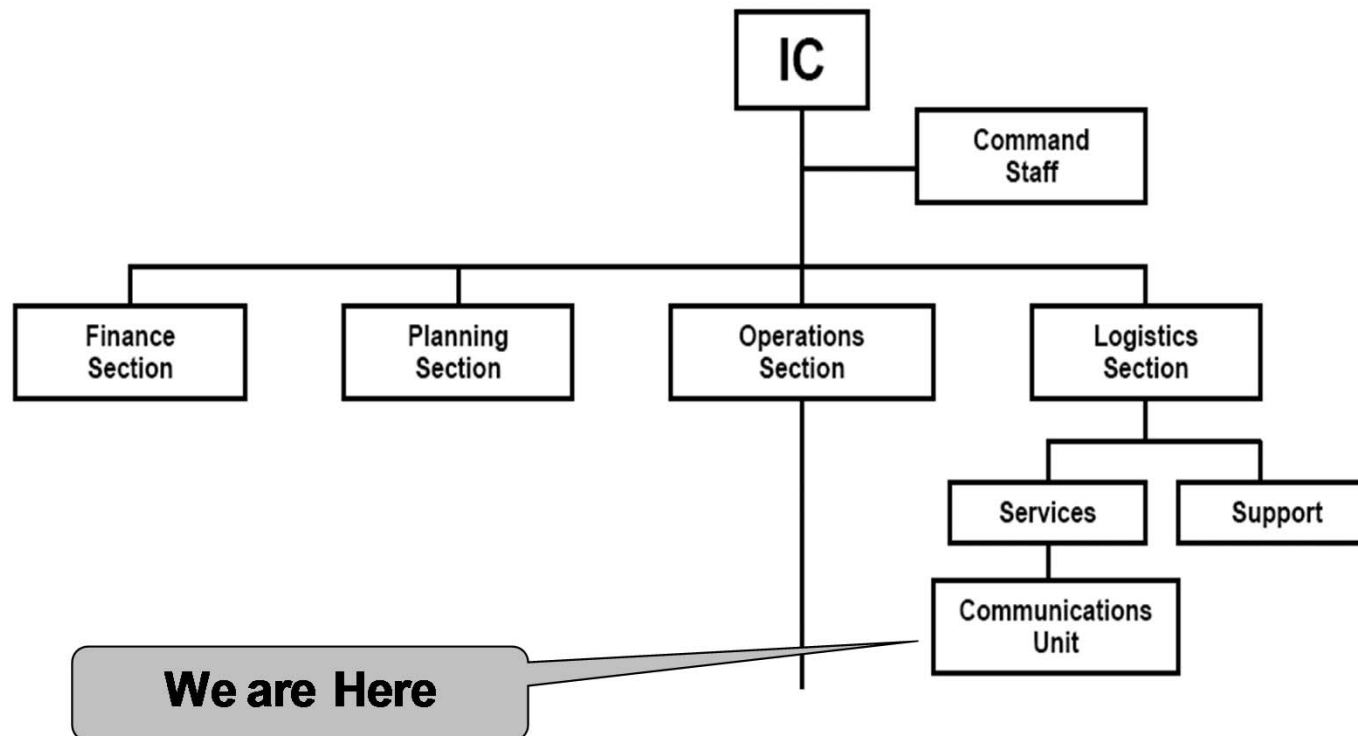
Unit 3:

The Communications Unit

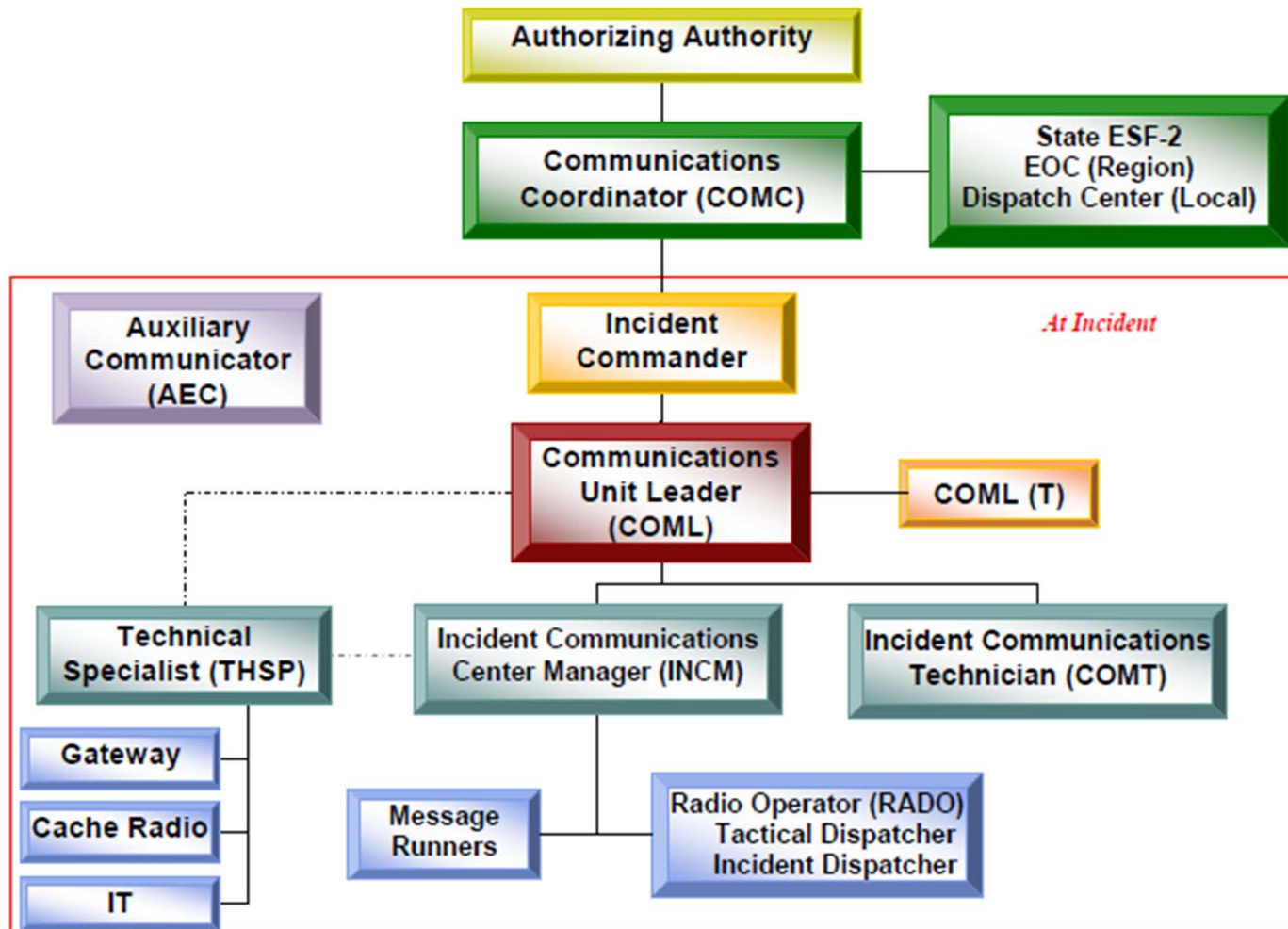
Unit Terminal Objective

Confirm knowledge of the Communications Unit Leader roles, function, and responsibilities within the Communications Unit.

National Incident Management System/Incident Command System



Communications Unit Supporting Resources

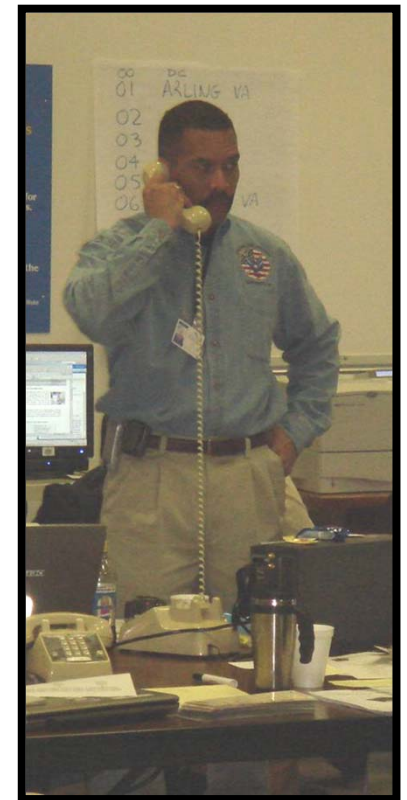


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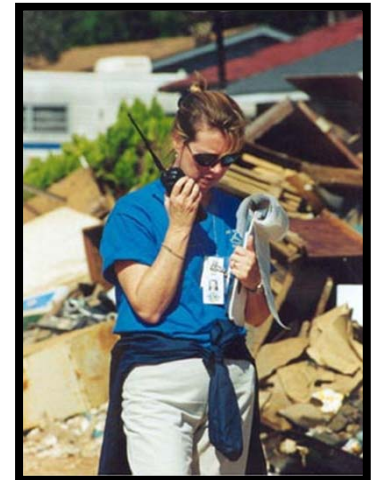
Communications Unit Personnel

- Incident Communications Technician (COMT)
- Incident Communications Manager (INCM)
- Radio Operator (RADO)
- Technical Specialists
- Message Runner
- AuxComm/NGOs



Communications Unit Leader

- 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



Communications Unit Leader (COML)

Duties: As with any ICS position, the COML is responsible for the duties of unfilled subordinate positions (INCM, COMT, THSP, RADO/Tactical Dispatcher) until delegated.



Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM)

Duties:

- **Manage the operational aspects of the Communications Unit**
- **Supervise Radio Operators**
- **Assists the COML in establishing and maintaining the Incident Communications Center (ICC)**



Incident Communications Technician (COMT)

The COMT is responsible for supporting the technical activities of the Communications Unit. For example:

- Radio/system coverage
- Radio programming
- Maintenance and repair
- Gateway management
- Cache management



Incident Communications Technician (COMT)

Duties: Provides for the technical implementation of incident communications systems:

- **Provides for equipment distribution**
- **Tracks equipment**
- **Trains users on use of equipment**
- **Verifies proper programming of equipment for incident**
- **Assist COML in the development of the ICS 205, Incident Radio Communications Plan**

Incident Communications Technician (COMT)

Similarly, an NWCG-qualified COMT is responsible for deploying radio cache assets specifically belonging to the National Interagency Incident Communications Division (NIICD) at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho.

National Incident Radio Support Cache User's Guide

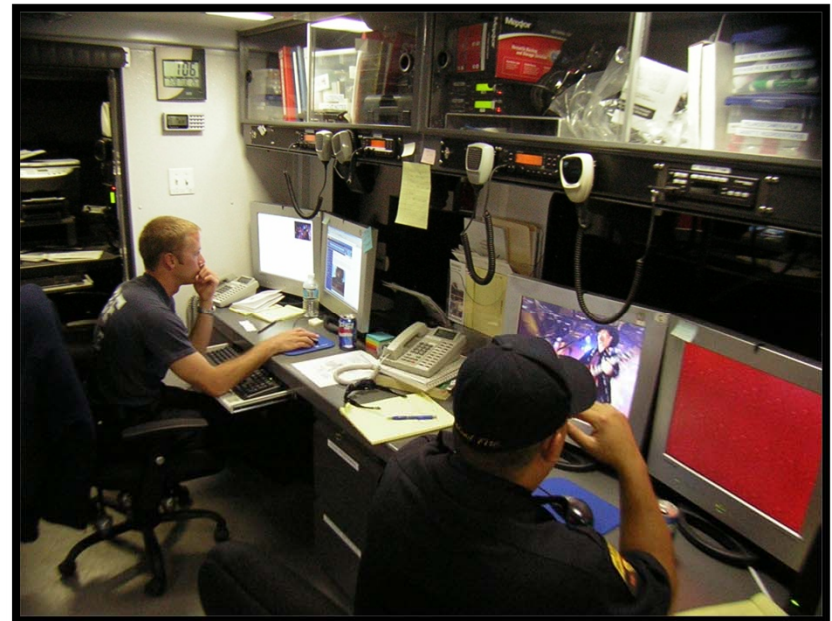


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RADO

A RADO staffs a radio operator's position at the ICC and is responsible for documenting all radio and telephone messages.



Incident Dispatchers and Tactical Dispatchers

Some local agencies have trained public safety dispatchers to work in the field at the incident scene as Incident and/or Tactical Dispatchers who can bring additional training and experience to the ICC.



Technical Specialists (THSP)

THSP is a “catch-all” position that allows for the formal incorporation of personnel who may not be “qualified” in a specific NIMS/ICS position. For example:

- Information Technology (IT) Specialist
- Local Agency Radio Technicians (not qualified as a COMT)
- Telephone Technicians
- Interoperability Gateway Specialist
- Mobile Communications Center Specialist
- Cache Radio Specialist
- GIS Specialist



Auxiliary Emergency Communicator (AEC)

- This unofficial ICS position supports the operational and technical aspects of the Auxiliary Communications Team
- Maintains and/or operates the AEC network
- Staffs the AEC center
- The knowledge to perform this function applies to every AEC position



Auxiliary Emergency Communications (AuxComm)

- **OEC has developed a new course aimed at the volunteer emergency coordinator (i.e. amateur radio, REACT, MARS, ARES, RACES, SATERN)**
- **This is a 2-day (20 hour) course on how volunteer communicators can play an important role in a NIMS/ICS environment**
- **Emphasis is placed on AuxComm's relationship with the COML**
- **Public Safety Professionals and Emergency Managers are encouraged to seek out this free resource...prior to your next event**

AuxComm (cont.)

- **AuxComm volunteers are usually Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on:**
 - **Antennas**
 - **Repeaters**
 - **Propagation**
 - **Station set-up**
 - **HF, VHF, and UHF**

Plain Language

Plain language: Common terms and definitions that can be understood by individuals from all responder disciplines. The intent of plain language is to ensure the clear and accurate communication of information during an incident.

Common Terminology

Common Terminology

- Is an ICS wide fundamental
- Necessary for operations, planning, and standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- A common dialect for describing the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of operations
- Common terminology requires a standardized dictionary of terms and terminology

Common Terminology

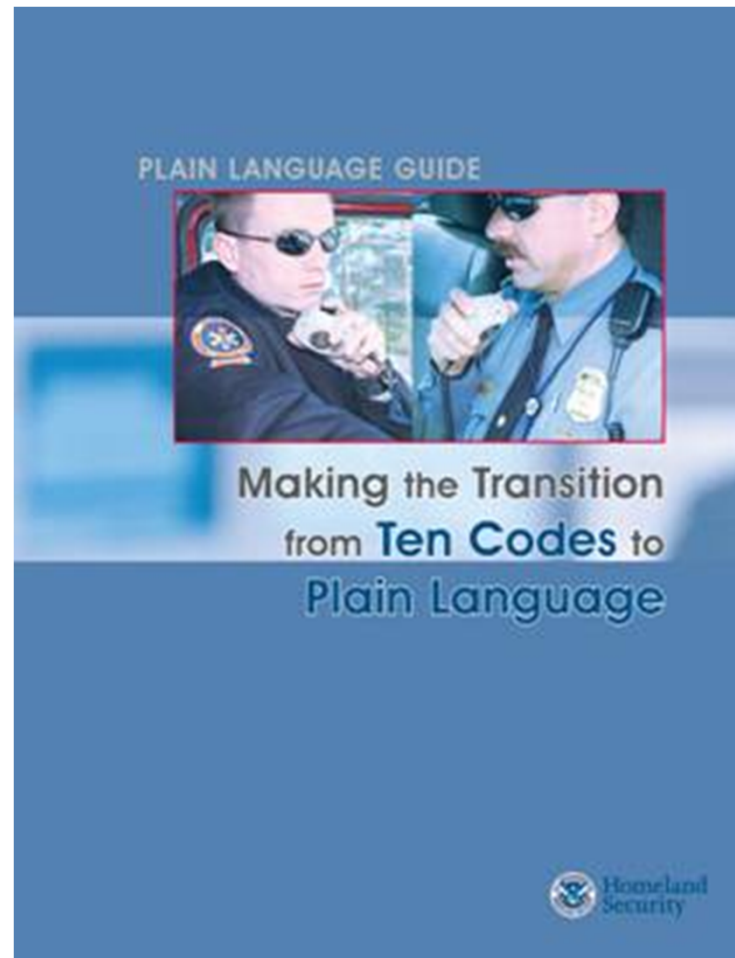
ICS establishes common terminology that allows diverse incident management and support organizations to work together across a wide variety of incident management functions and hazard scenarios.

Common Terminology (cont.)

Not all Common Terminology has the same meaning. For example, the term “cover” has several meanings.

- **If you told a fire fighter to cover they would take their fire engine and go to another station**
- **If you told a police officer to cover they would back up another officer**
- **If you told a Marine to cover they would lay down 50 cal. suppressive gun fire**

SAFECOM Plain Language Guide



Objectives Review

- 1. What are the positions within the Communications Unit?***
- 2. What are the responsibilities of positions within the Communications Unit?***



Questions?

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