

ICS in Action: Using the Incident Command System in Public Health

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ICS In Action

Using the Incident Command System in Public Health

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Objectives

- Briefly review key concepts of the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Use a disease outbreak scenario to illustrate the use of ICS in Public Health

Assumptions

- Participants have completed ICS 100, 200, and 700 or have some familiarity with ICS and NIMS
- Participants have experience with incidents and events of Public Health significance
- Today we will only address ICS in a Public Health incident

Brief History of ICS



In the fall of 1970, a series of devastating forest fires hit southern California:

- 600,000 acres burned
- 772 structures destroyed
- 16 fatalities in 13 days



FIRESCOPE, funded by Congress, created a system to standardize crisis management--ICS

Incident Command System (ICS)

**Is part of the
National Incident
Management System
(NIMS)**

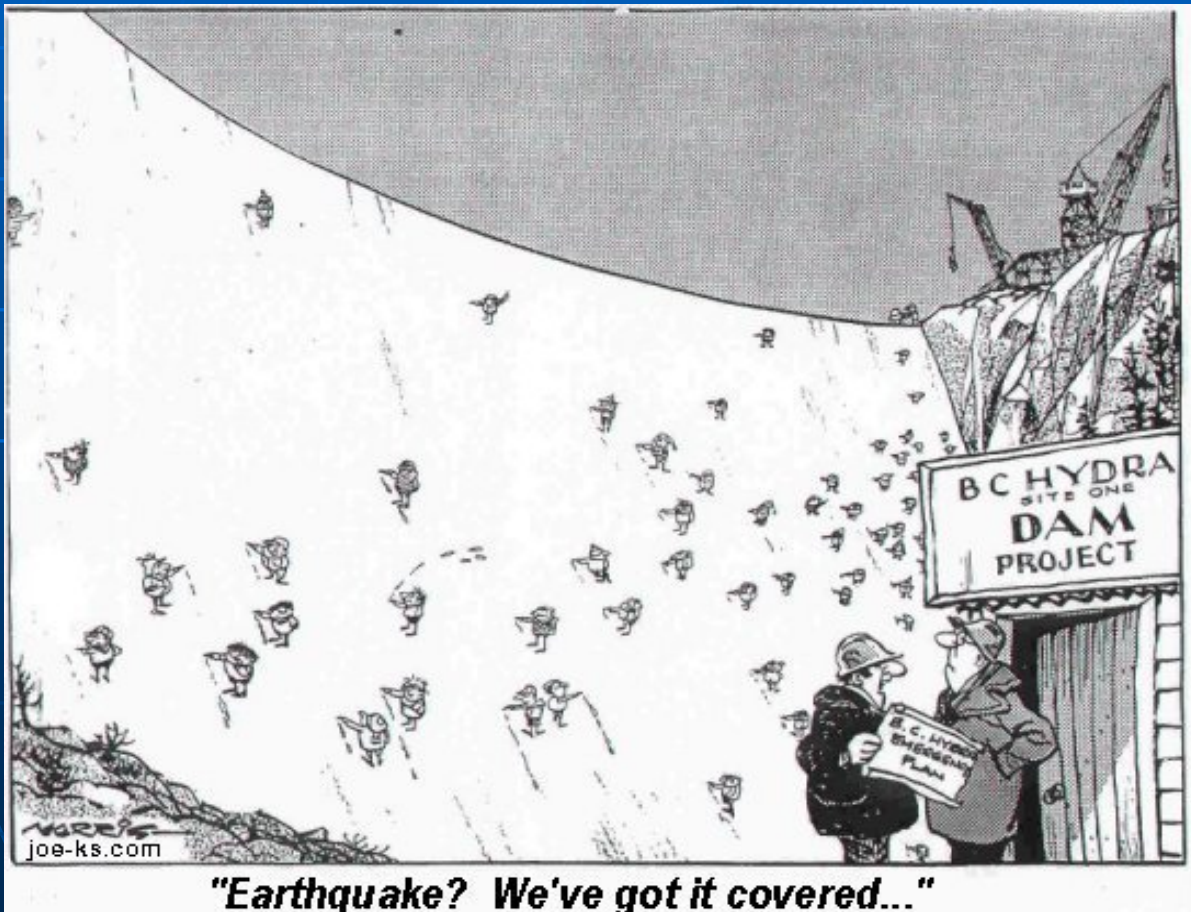
NIMS components

- Command and management



NIMS components

- Preparedness



"Earthquake? We've got it covered..."

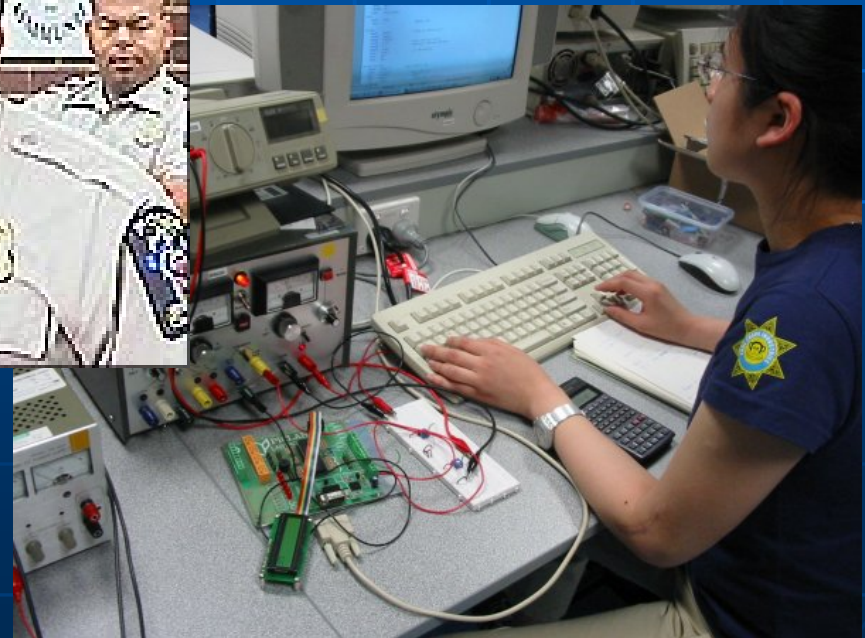
NIMS components

- Resource management



NIMS components

- Communications and information management



NIMS components

- Supporting technologies



NIMS components

- Ongoing management and maintenance



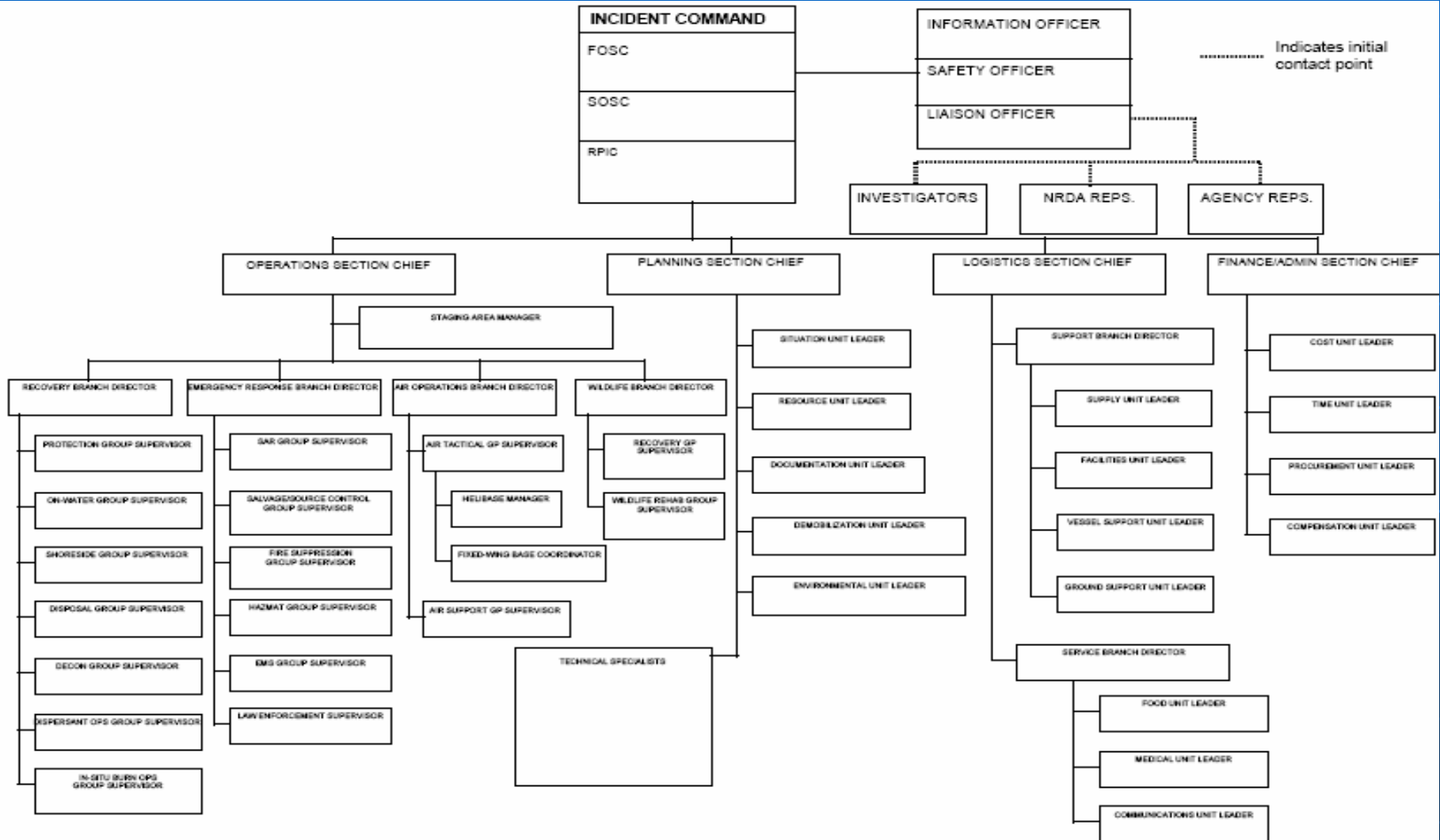
ICS Concepts & Principles

- **Unity of Command/Unified Command Structure**
- **Consolidated Incident Action Plan (IAP)**
- **Manageable span of control**
- **Integrated communications**
- **Common terminology**

ICS Concepts & Principles

- **Modular organization and flexibility**
- **Designated incident facilities**
- **Comprehensive resource management**
- **Prioritized, objective-based decision making and resource allocation**

ICS organization



Scenario

- **4:30 pm, Friday afternoon**
 - You are a Disease Control (DC) Nurse at Generic County Health Department.
 - The phone rings; it is the St. Generica Hospital lab: "We have a positive hepatitis A IgM."

What do you do?

■ Do you

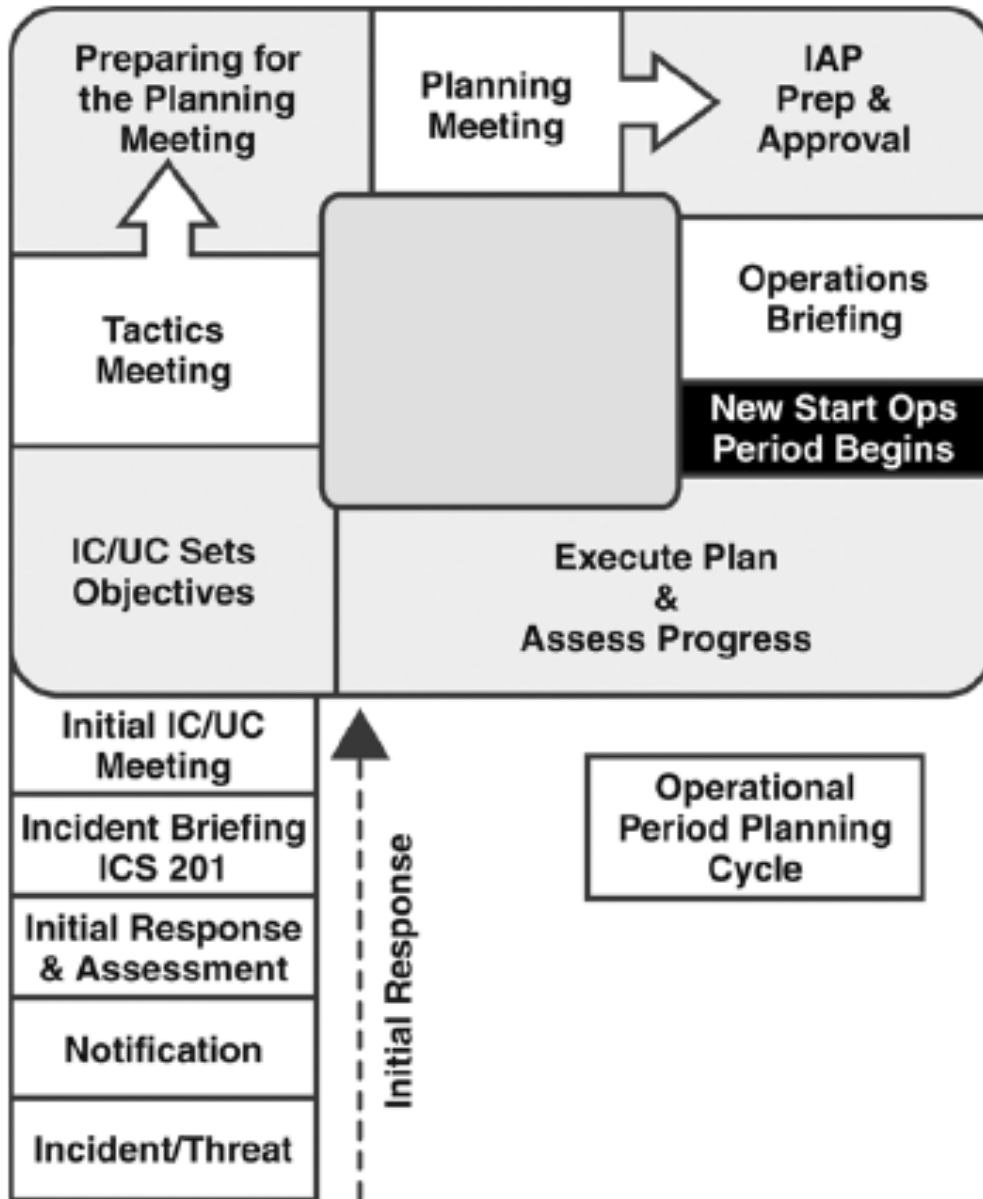
- Write the message on a sticky note and leave it on someone's door for Monday?
- Transfer the call to someone else as quickly as possible?



What do you do?

■ Take command

- First responder on the scene is the Incident Commander (IC)
- That is: first responder on the scene is responsible for incident response until
 - Next IC comes on following shift
 - Relieved of command by superior



The Planning "P"

What do you do?

- **Basic epidemiology**
 - **Confirm the diagnosis (hard copy)**
 - **Determine the existence of an outbreak**
 - **Assemble team and equipment for investigation**

The size-up

- In ICS terms, this is known as incident **SIZE-UP**
- It is necessary to determine:
 - What is the immediate problem?
 - Is there an immediate threat to safety?
 - Are there injuries that require immediate care?
 - Are there measures that need to be taken immediately to prevent further harm?
 - What resources are necessary right now?

Parallel World 1

- **The person with the + IgM**
 - Is visiting here from out of state
 - Just arrived yesterday
 - Was exposed to known hepatitis case about a month ago in home state
 - No close contacts since arrival here
- **Report to their home Health Department, verify no local contacts, go home**

Parallel World 2

- **The person with the + IgM**
 - Has symptoms consistent with HAV
 - Works as a garde manger chef in a very busy local restaurant
 - Has had multiple recent sexual partners
 - Follows the JamBandidos, who have been on tour for the last 2 months, and serves food out of the back of his van on tour
 - Has a child in day care



Now what?

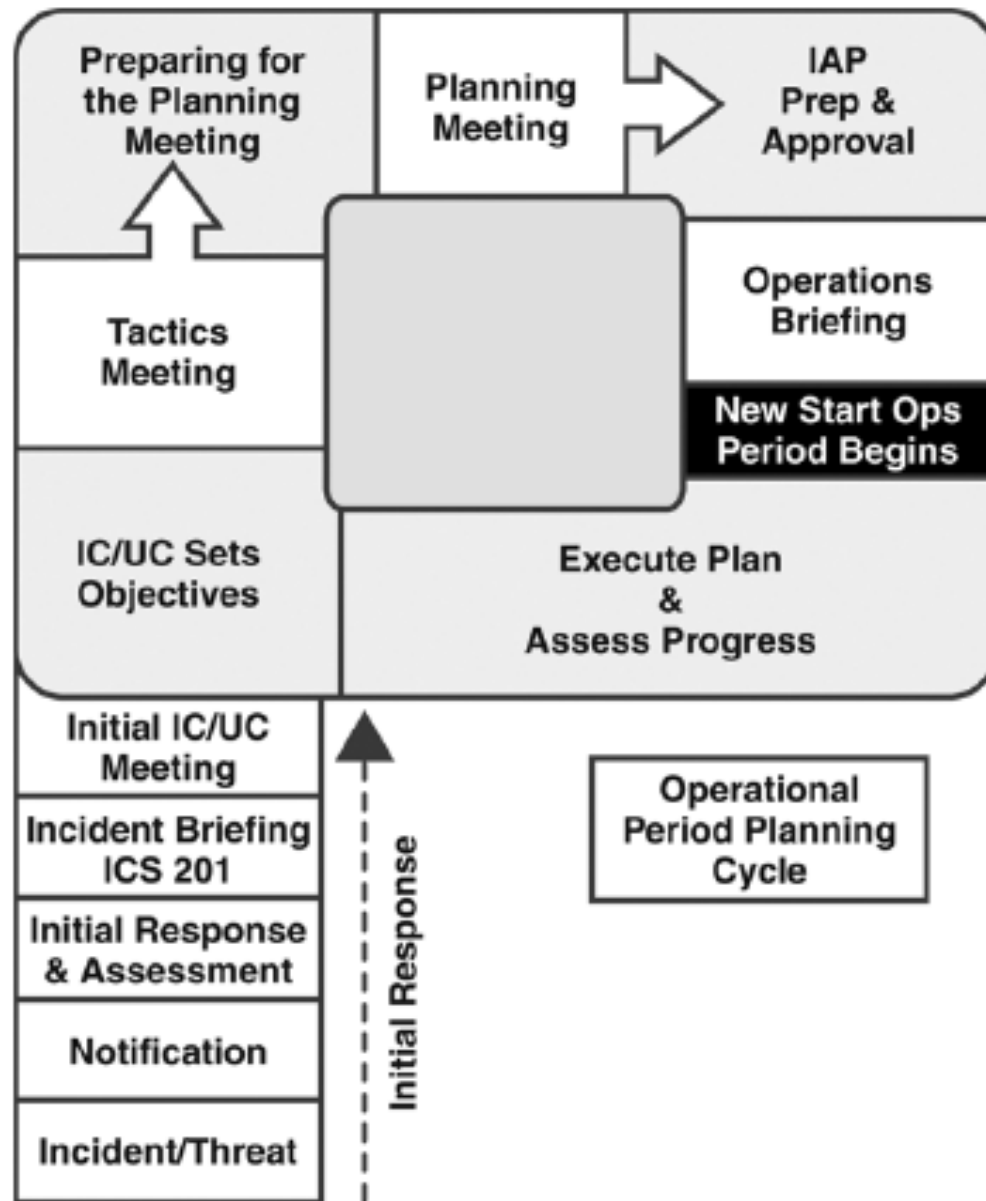
- You've assumed command
- You've sized up the situation
- Are your current resources adequate to handle it?



Transfer of command

- You report to your DC Supervisor, and she assumes command
- You brief her using the 201
- She convenes the team





Management by objectives

- The IC determines the objectives of the response
 - Keep the list short
 - KISS
 - SMART
- The IC determines the time period to achieve the objectives (Operational Period)

Management by objectives

■ Examples

- “Determine the source, cases, and contacts.”
- “Contain the outbreak.”
- “Deliver timely risk communication messages to the public.”

INCIDENT OBJECTIVES

ICS 202

1. INCIDENT NAME

2. DATE PREPARED

3. TIME PREPARED

4. OPERATIONAL PERIOD (DATE/TIME)

5. GENERAL CONTROL OBJECTIVES FOR THE INCIDENT (INCLUDE ALTERNATIVES)

6. WEATHER FORECAST FOR OPERATIONAL PERIOD

7. GENERAL/SAFETY MESSAGE

8. ATTACHMENTS (CHECK IF ATTACHED)

ORGANIZATION LIST (ICS 203)

MEDICAL PLAN (ICS 206)

DIVISION ASSIGNMENT LISTS (ICS 204)

INCIDENT MAP - (2 MAPS)

PHONE DIRECTORY

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (ICS 205)

TRAFFIC PLAN

(SEMS 8/95)

9. PREPARED BY (PLANNING/INTELLIGENCE SECTION CHIEF)

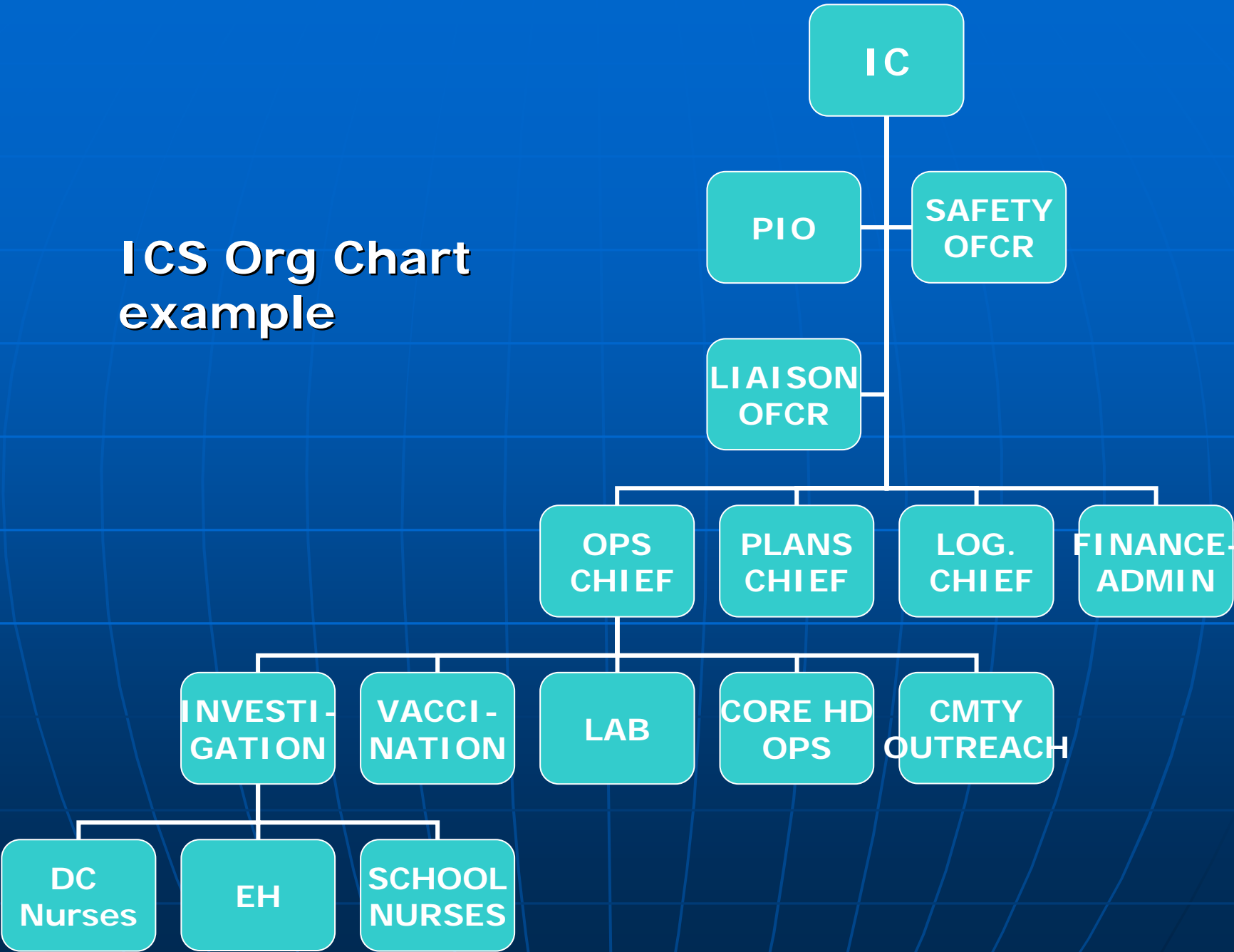
10. APPROVED BY (INCIDENT COMMANDER)

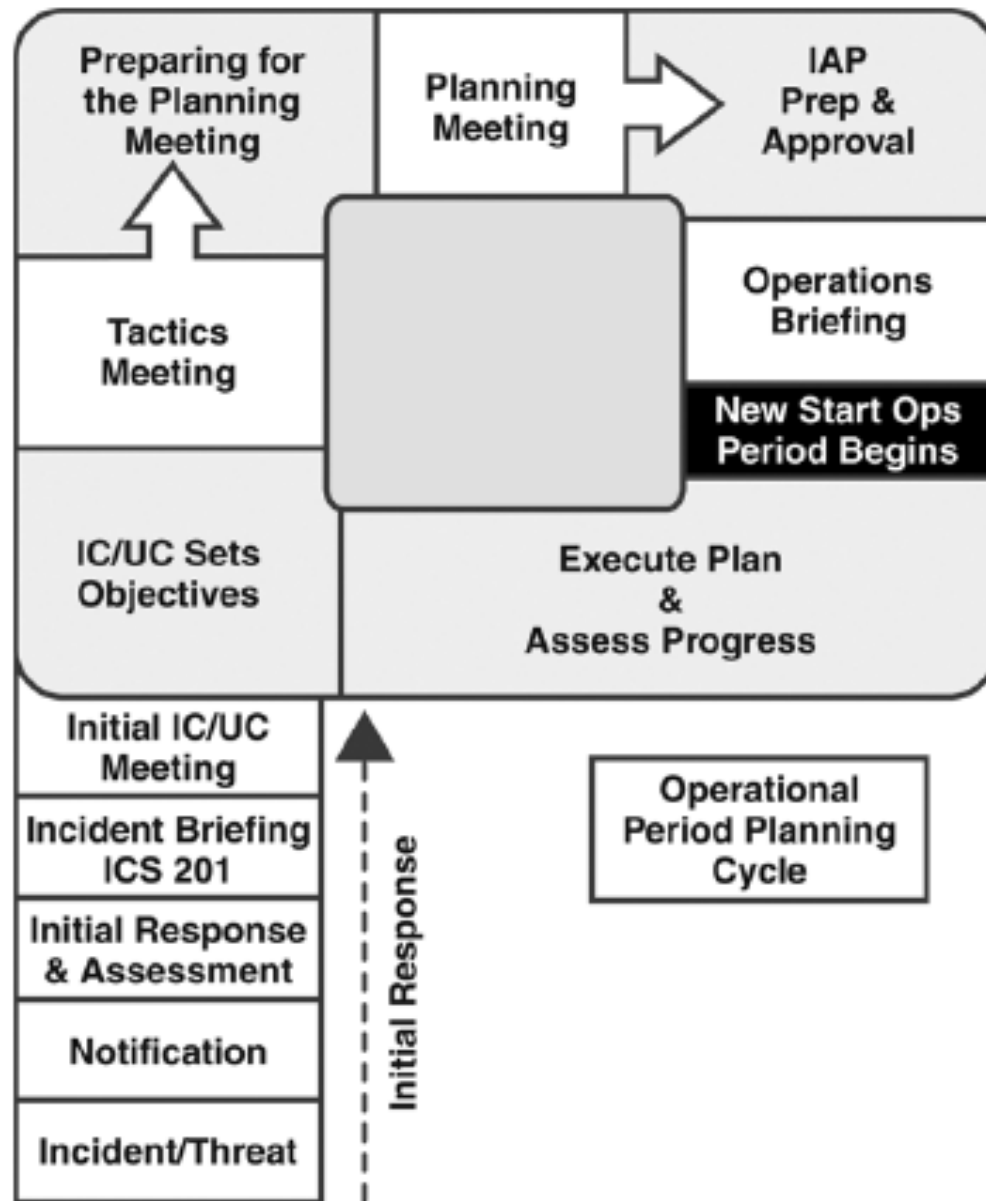
ICS 202

Operations

- **Designate an Ops Chief**
 - Who would be likely candidates?
- **How might the Ops Chief decide how to organize Operations?**
 - Prioritize investigation
 - Example:
 - Investigation Group
 - Interviewers, Environmental Health investigators, contact tracers...
 - Vaccination group (HAV vaccine, Ig)
 - Lab group
 - Continuity of HD core operations group
 - Community outreach

ICS Org Chart example





Strategies

- "By 0800 tomorrow, identify index case's intimate contacts, interview them, and arrange testing."
- "By 2100 tonight, interview restaurant personnel and have environmental health assessment of restaurant done."
- "By 2100 tonight, construct epi curve to determine period of likely exposure and infectiousness."
- "By 2100 tonight, create press release and assemble public information kit for HAV."

Tactics

- **“By 0800 tomorrow, identify index case’s intimate contacts, interview them, and arrange testing.”**
 - **“Call in all CD staff on emergent basis and create teams of 2.”**
 - **“Call in mutual aid CD staff from Neighbor County Health Department.”**
 - **“Create hypothesis-generating questionnaire by 1800 tonight.”**

Organization of resources

■ Single resources

- Epidemiologist (may be Technical Specialist)

■ Strike Teams

- Immunization nurses

■ Task Force

- Environmental Health staff; Disease Control staff; interpreter

Command Staff

- **Public Information Officer**
 - Press releases, FAQs, information sheets, translations
- **Liaison Officer**
 - Coordination of assistance from other agencies (hospitals, other counties, EMS, Emergency Mgmt.)
- **Safety Officer**
 - Assure safe practices (PPE, safer sharps, vehicle use, etc.)

Planning

- **The “What If?” section**
 - **What if things get better? Worse? Stay the same?**
- **Projects ahead to next operational period and assembles Incident Action Plan**

Planning

PLANNING

```
graph TD; A[PLANNING] --- B[SITUATION]; A --- C[RESOURCES]; A --- D[DOCUMENTATION]; A --- E[DEMOBILIZATION];
```

SITUATION

RESOURCES

DOCUMENTATION

DEMOBILIZATION

Planning

- **Maintain situational awareness**
 - Collect and display line list, epi curve, GIS/GPS mapping of cases/ contacts
- **Assemble Incident Action Plan (IAP) for next ops period**
- **Track resources**
 - Check in/out – all staff
 - Location and organization of resources – epidemiologists, EIS, staff from other counties
- **Maintain documentation**
- **Conduct demobilization (if applicable)**
- **Technical specialists**
- **Who would be a candidate for Plans Chief?**

Resource management

- The **Planning Resource Unit** tracks all available resources (personnel & equipment)
- The **Logistics Section** actually orders the required resources
- The **Finance & Admin Section Procurement Unit** negotiates contracts and payment options

Other ICS forms useful to Planning

- **203: Organization Assignment List**
- **204: Division Assignment List**
- **207: Organizational chart**
- **215: Operational Planning Worksheet**
- **215a: Safety Analysis**
- **All these forms and other attachments are compiled into IAP**

LOGISTICS

```
graph LR; LOGISTICS --> SERVICE_BRANCH[SERVICE BRANCH]; LOGISTICS --> SUPPORT_BRANCH[SUPPORT BRANCH]; SERVICE_BRANCH --> COMMUNICATIONS[COMMUNICATIONS]; SERVICE_BRANCH --> MEDICAL[MEDICAL]; SERVICE_BRANCH --> FOOD[FOOD]; SUPPORT_BRANCH --> SUPPLY[SUPPLY]; SUPPORT_BRANCH --> FACILITIES[FACILITIES]; SUPPORT_BRANCH --> GROUND_SUPPORT[GROUND SUPPORT];
```

The diagram is an organizational chart for Logistics. It starts with a root node 'LOGISTICS' at the top left. A vertical line descends from 'LOGISTICS' and then branches horizontally to the right into two main categories: 'SERVICE BRANCH' (top) and 'SUPPORT BRANCH' (bottom). From 'SERVICE BRANCH', a vertical line descends and branches horizontally to the right into three sub-categories: 'COMMUNICATIONS', 'MEDICAL', and 'FOOD'. From 'SUPPORT BRANCH', a vertical line descends and branches horizontally to the right into three sub-categories: 'SUPPLY', 'FACILITIES', and 'GROUND SUPPORT'. All nodes are contained within light blue rounded rectangular boxes with white text. The background is a dark blue grid with a subtle globe pattern.

SERVICE BRANCH

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDICAL

FOOD

SUPPORT BRANCH

SUPPLY

FACILITIES

GROUND SUPPORT

Logistics Chief

- Resource procurement (Ig, HAV, needles, etc.)
- Communications (radios, cell phones, etc.)
- Ground support (vehicles, etc.)
- Supplies (IT, clinical, portable toilets, food, etc.)
- Medical unit *for responders*
- Who would be a good candidate?

Finance & Administration

- Time
- Compensation & claims
- Procurement
- Cost



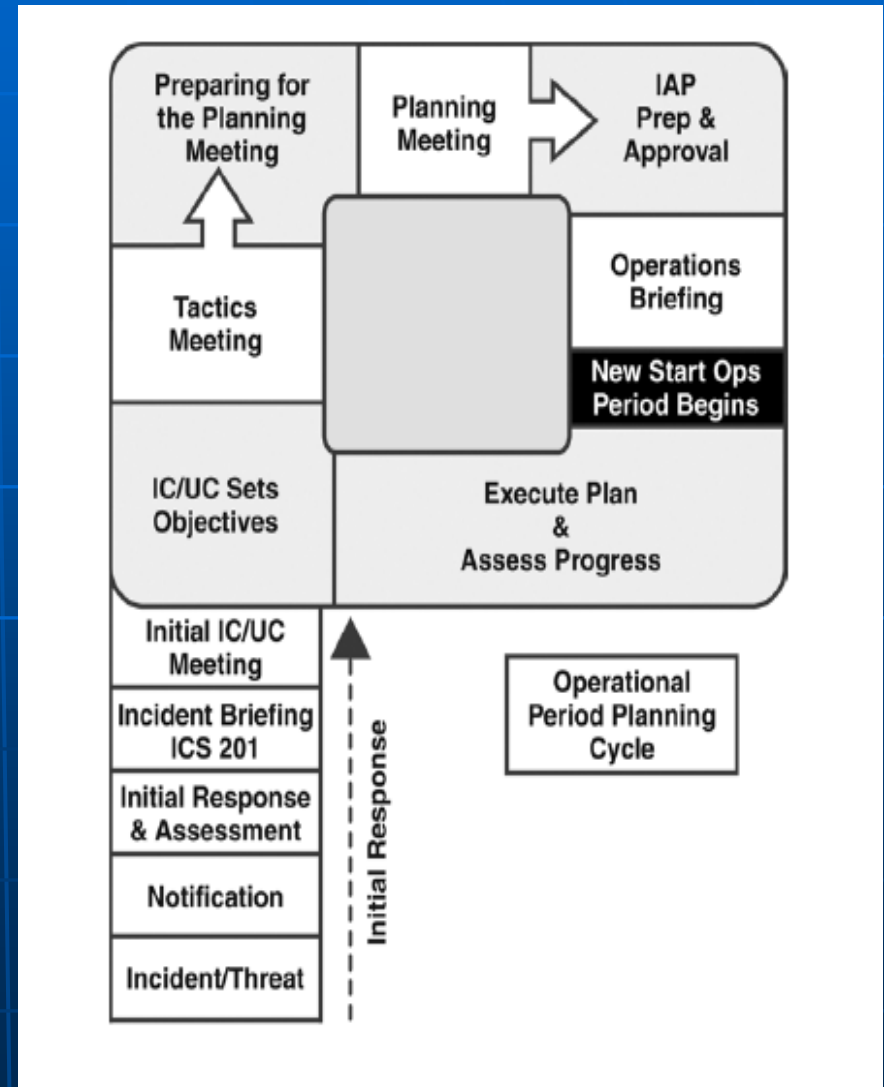
Communication in ICS

- **Formal: chain of command**
 - IC tells Ops Chief to prioritize investigation
 - Communications Unit Leader informs Logistics Chief that cell tower in Generictown is down
- **Informal: across organization**
 - Planning and Ops Chiefs confer on availability of epidemiologists in the region
 - Immunization Unit Leader asks Logistics Chief, "When's lunch??"

Communication in ICS

■ Briefings

- Regular briefings with all pertinent parties are crucial
- There is a cycle of briefings in the "Planning P"



Summary

- This is just a brief snapshot of ICS in a Public Health incident
- If we use ICS in "our" incidents, we will integrate better into multi-jurisdiction incidents



- ICS works! ...and it can make our job easier

Thank you!

Questions?
Comments?

North Carolina Public Health Preparedness & Response
REGIONAL SURVEILLANCE TEAM

RST TEAM
SIX

A few resources

- www.fema.gov
- www.nimsonline.com
- www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/ics/index.html
- www.mchealth.org/emergprep/
- www.naccho.org
- www.asph.org/cphp/documents/incident_command_at_a_glance.pdf