Incident Command for EMS

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This is not ICS 100 and will not cover that material
*This course does not satisfy the NIMS implementation* requirements

Incident Command for EMS

Objectives
This course will discuss
- The role of Emergency Medical Services within the ICS
- Discuss the functional roles of the EMS Branch
- Will focus on command, operations, planning, and logistics, responsibilities of EMS personnel

Modern Management Principle
- Modern disasters can and must be managed
- Management principles used in routine functions must be applied to the non routine emergency
Disasters overwhelm EMS and community responses because critical infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed.

A mass causality incident (MCI) is an event in which the number of patients exceeds the resources available to the initial responders. The ICS system is designed to control duplication of effort and free lancing.
Span of Command
The number of subordinates responsible to a leader is called the "span of command".

Chain of Command
“Chain of command” is linked to unity of command and span of control and is defined as the flow of information from one command level to the next.

EMS Incident Management System (EMS / ICS)
The key components are triage, treatment and transport.

Staging is an additional section in a medical disaster.
Where will EMS usually fall in the IMS Structure?

Tactical activities are coordinated in an EMS Branch

Incident Command System

In a large scale incident an Incident Management System is a must.
A supervisor must assume command. This supervisor should not be touching patients.

There will be a need for a team to begin triage to prioritize patient care.

Incident Commander

- What does the IC do?
- The IC does not command
- The IC coordinates and leads
- Ensures there is a flow of information, personnel and resources between support and operational functions.
- The IC is responsible for the outcome of an MCI

Incident Commander Responsibilities

- Manages the EMS response to the incident
- Establishes the command post
- Works in cooperation with fire and police command officers
- Ensures the safety of all EMS personnel
- Designates sector officers

Command Level Officers

- Incident Commander
- Safety
- Liaison
- Public Information
Safety Officer

• A staff level position appointed as necessary by the EMS Incident Commander
• Reports to the IC
• Needs to have the authority to stop all work if necessary

Safety Issues

• Proper lifting
• Safe operations of tools and equipment
• Use of protective equipment
  – Head gear
  – Proper clothing
• Personnel accountability

Requirement / Qualifications

• The safety officer should be an emergency service professional familiar with disaster operations.

Requirement / Qualifications

• The safety officer should also be familiar with nationally accepted safety standards.
Liaison Officer

- Serves as a link between the management system and other EMS agencies
- The primary function of the LO is to funnel outside agency resources into the appropriate section of the EMS / ICS

Public Information Officer

- This position is not always needed
- Expedites the effective and accurate dissemination of information
- Obtain and communicate accurate information

EMS Operations

- In the EMS Incident Command System the treatment of patients is the mission.
- All of the functions exist to support treatment operations

EMS Operations

- Medical treatment operations involves triaging patients, treating them in a logical order and transporting them to a medical facility.
EMS Branch

- Responsible for all EMS sectors (triage, treatment, transportation) and coordinating with operations

Medical Incident Command

- Branch leader supervises the primary roles of the medical group.
- Responsible for the
  - Triage
  - Treatment
  - Transportation

Triage

- As the number of patients increase the triage rules change.
- At normal incidents the best level of care is possible.
- At large scale incidents we need to do the great good for the greatest amount of people.

Triage

Responsible for receiving patients and utilizing the START triage system to determine triage categories
Triage Officer / Unit

- Ultimately in charge of counting and prioritizing patients.
- The triage unit’s primary duty is to ensure that every person receives initial assessment of his or her condition.
- Treatment should not begin until all patients are triaged or you will compromise your triage efforts.

Triage

- "Greatest good for the greatest number of casualties"
- Psychological impact
- Classification:
  - Red
  - Yellow
  - Green
  - Black
- Limitations:
  - Time consuming
  - User variability
  - Lack of familiarity

Treatment areas must be staffed to adequately handle patient flow.
Treatment must be properly supplied.
**Treatment Officer**
- The treatment officer reports to the EMS Branch Officer and supervises all medical treatment units.
- Responsible for all treatment activities, coordinates with triage, transport and medical supply.
- Do not allow any one area to become overwhelmed.

**Treatment Unit**
- Separate patients by each priority category
- Assign crews to treat patients
- Communicate with transportation officer
- Responsible for safety of all members in area
- Ensure sufficient supplies and personnel
- Provide update to EMS Branch Director

**Morgue**
- The morgue area is for patients with no vital signs and should be segregated from treatment areas and bystanders
- Will need security to control entry
- Rotate personnel to avoid stress
- Every disaster team should have a funeral director as a consultant.

**Transportation**
- Transportation
  - Staging Area
Transportation

• Moves patients from treatment section to ambulances
• Coordinates transportation of patients to medical facilities in priority order.

Staging Officer

• Establishes staging areas for ambulances, maintains record of available units, assigns ambulances based on requests from transport

Logistics

• Obtains EMS resources, supplies, and equipment. Coordinates volunteer operations, communications, and facilities.
• Logistics section should operate at the command post, position requires intense communications.
Management of EMS Supplies

- Maintains inventory and distributes EMS supplies to all sections, coordinates directly, with treatment, coordinates with logistics.

Facilities

- Facilities is responsible for all facilities including rehabilitation, food, water, sanitation and aux. power.

EMS Communications

- Services as a single point of contact. Reports to transport the patients information from transportation to medical control and others.

EMS Mass Casualty Incident Management System

Site Management

- Command and communication
  - Should be in an area to provide overall scene assessment and coordination
  - Provides overall EMS command and control leadership, direction and resource allocation.
  - Provides central location for arriving units.
- Command allocates and assignees resources
- Establishes and maintains security
- Controls information release.

Effective Disaster Assistance

- Careful preplanning
- The ability to quickly implement a plan
- The application of effective triage
- The ability to organize and utilize fully all emergency personnel.
- The ability to adapt the plan to meet special conditions, such as inclement weather or isolated locations.

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