

Disasters and Disruptions

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The Incident Command System (ICS) was introduced to the emergency management community for the purpose of improving management of large-scale disasters that impact communities. Initially, the system was adapted for use in hospitals in the late 1980s and became an important emergency management foundation. Since that time, it has been adapted for use by a wide variety of organizations.

As organizations throughout the world continue to invest time and valuable resources in ensuring adequate emergency plans are in place and personnel are sufficiently trained to respond, it has become more and more apparent that Incident Command systems, such as eICS, should be utilized for all disruptions, not just for disasters.

Versatility

There is a misconception that an Incident Command System is used only to manage disaster situations that impact organizations or communities. In reality, you can use ICS to manage any event, including daily operational disruptions and preplanned events.

Certainly, ICS is designed to help you manage natural disasters, such as earthquakes, fires, and floods. However, it can also be used to respond to internal emergencies, such as utility failure, computer system downtime, child abduction/missing person situations, and workplace violence. ICS is scalable, which allows you to include as many or as few positions as needed to manage any event.

Benefits

There are numerous benefits that come from using your Incident Command System to manage everyday disruptions. Electronic ICS:

- Provides a consistent, organized, and predictable approach to management of the event.
- Serves as a system and approach on which organizational leaders and staff are trained and familiarized.
- Provides easier communication and integration with community agencies, such as law enforcement and the fire department, who use the same language and types of tools.
- Helps your organization impose order on chaos and aids in maintaining that order.
- Provides a mechanism for enhanced accountability and safety.
- Provides a means of addressing or potentially preventing the event from escalating.
- Reinforces training and familiarization through increased use.

Proven Value

Incident Command is more than an organizational chart. It is a set of tools that provide a pre-established, planned management structure for addressing any operational disruption. As a tool set that has a long history of successful use in managing all types and scale of disasters and events, ICS is an invaluable asset.

Helpful Links

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