

IS-315: CERT Supplemental Training: The Incident Command System

Lesson 1: ICS (Incident Command System) Operations

Why Is ICS Important?

First, why is ICS important? In a disaster or major emergency, on-scene management has three primary goals:

1. Maintain the safety of disaster workers
2. Provide clear leadership and organizational structure
3. Improve the effectiveness of rescue efforts

Using ICS during a CERT activation helps achieve these goals. Let's discuss each one in more detail.

Maintaining Safety of Disaster Workers

ICS helps ensure the safety of disaster workers. The CERT Team Leader/ Incident Commander (CERT TL/IC) must continually prioritize response activities based on the team's capability and training and the principle that rescuer safety is the number one concern. In the ICS, team leaders assign activities and account for team members. CERT members work in the buddy system (in Foster City, we work in teams of 3) and respond based on the size-up of the situations they encounter.

Providing Clear Leadership and Organizational Structure

The ICS uses a chain of command and roles that all team members are familiar with. Each CERT member has only one person that he or she takes direction from and responds to.

Improving the Effectiveness of Rescue Efforts

ICS helps improve the effectiveness of rescue efforts. Using ICS, CERTs collect disaster information and prioritize responses based on rescuer safety and doing the greatest good for the greatest number according to the team's capabilities and training.

Objectives for CERT On-scene Management

In a disaster situation, the CERT:

- Identifies the scope of the incident (What is the problem?)
- Determines an overall strategy (What can we do, and how will we do it?)
- Deploys teams and resources (Who is going to do what?)
- Documents actions and results

ICS is Flexible

Disasters create a dynamic, ever-changing environment. The Incident Command System is flexible so that it can expand or contract depending on the ongoing assessment priorities the CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander (TL/IC) determines as well as the people and resources available.

This expansion and contraction helps ensure:

- Rescuer safety
- Doing the greatest good for the greatest number
- A manageable span of control
- Accountability of CERT members

What Happens Where There is No ICS?

Without using ICS during a CERT response, the team can break down because of:

- Poor communication
- No accountability
- Lack of an orderly, systematic planning process
- No common, flexible, predesigned management structure
- No predefined methods to effectively integrate interagency requirements into the management structure and planning process

ICS Principles

When CERTs activate, they become part of the Incident Command System. The ICS adheres to the following principles:

- Common Terminology
- Well-Defined Management Structure
- Manageable Span of Control
- Comprehensive Resource Management
- Integrated Communications
- Consolidated Action Plans
- Accountability

Common Terminology

A core principle of ICS is to use common terminology with everyone involved in managing an incident.

In all communication, you should:

- Use common terms or clear text
- Avoid using radio codes, agency-specific codes, acronyms, or jargon.

Well-Defined Management Structure

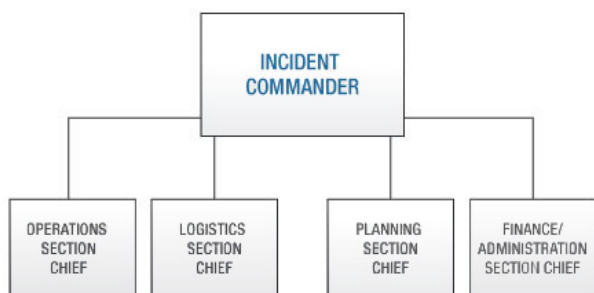
The next ICS principle is a well-defined management structure. All CERTs must establish a management, or command, structure. The CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander (TL/IC) provides overall leadership for incident response and is responsible for all functions until he or she delegates them to someone else. We will discuss the CERT TL/IC's role in more detail in another section of this course.

The first person who arrives at the pre-designated staging area assumes the role of CERT TL/IC. The CERT TL/IC may transfer command to a pre-designated leader when that person arrives.

Chain of Command

All CERT members report through a chain of command to the CERT TL/IC. The CERT TL/IC reports to the first fire or law enforcement official at his or her location and takes direction from that person until otherwise directed or until the CERT is relieved.

The chain of command helps prevent confusion because all orders flow from supervisors. Personnel report to only one CERT supervisor and receive assignments only from that supervisor. It's important to note the chain of command does NOT prevent CERT members from communicating with each other to ask for or share information.



In Foster City, the Incident Commander is actually the Foster City CERT Coordinator, who directs ALL Foster City CERT Activity. At Field Command Posts (where 90% of the CERT Community will be working from), the Division Supervisor is the leader and either reports to the Operations Section Chief or a Branch Director.

Transfer of Command

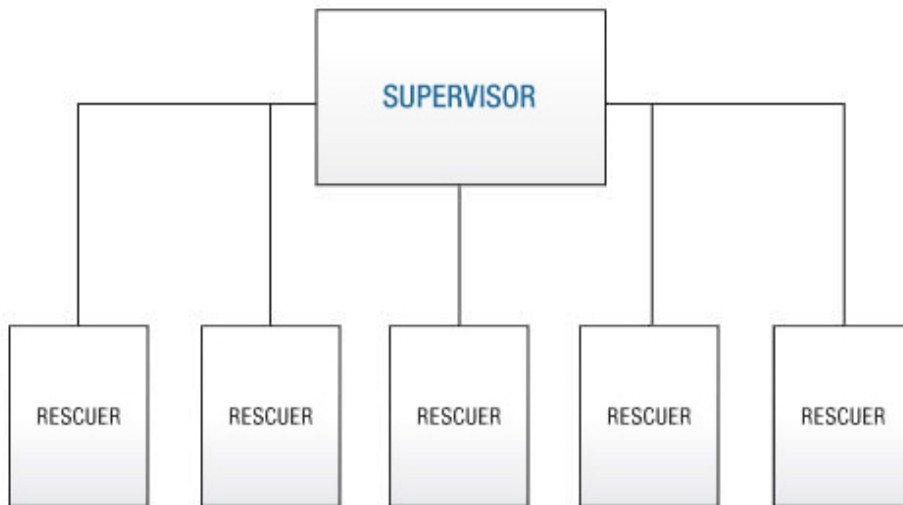
The process of moving the responsibility of incident command from one CERT TL/IC to another is called transfer of command. Transfer of command may take place when:

- A more qualified CERT TL/IC arrives and assumes command
- A jurisdiction or agency assumes command
- The incident changes in complexity

When transferring command, the outgoing CERT TL/IC must give a briefing to the incoming CERT TL/IC. The briefing may be oral, written, or a combination.

Manageable Span of Control

Another ICS principle is span of control. Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident. An effective span of control may vary from three to seven, and a ratio of one supervisor to five subordinates is recommended.



Comprehensive Resource Management

Another principle of ICS is comprehensive resource management that facilitates the application of available resources to the incident in a timely manner. In ICS, “resources” refers to personnel, supplies, and equipment. During an incident, it is critical to know what resources are needed and available and where deployed resources are located.

Integrated Communications

During an incident, it is essential that CERT members and professional responders communicate effectively. Prior to an incident, response partners should work together to create a communications plan. An effective communications plan should include information about communication equipment, procedures, and systems that partners will use together during a response.

Consolidated Action Plans

Every incident must have an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that coordinates strategic goals, tactical objectives, and support activities. Incident action plans may be oral or written.

Accountability

Effective accountability during incident operations is essential. Individuals must abide by their agency policies and guidelines and any applicable local, tribal, State, or Federal rules and regulations. For all responders, including CERT members, the following principles must be adhered to:

- **Check In.** All responders must report in to receive an assignment.

- **Incident Action Plan.** Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.
- **Unity of Command.** Each individual will report to only one ICS supervisor and receive work assignments only from his or her ICS supervisor.
- **Span of Control.** Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.
- **Resource Tracking.** Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur

ICS Roles and Responsibilities

There are five major management functions of the incident command system:

- Incident Team Leader / Incident Commander (TL/IC)
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance & Administration

Team Leader / Incident Commander

As discussed earlier in this module, the CERT TL/IC provides overall leadership for incident response. The CERT TL/IC's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring incident safety
- Establishing incident objectives
- Delegating authority to others
- Providing information to internal and external parties
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with other responders (e.g., fire, law enforcement, public works, other CERTs)
- Taking direction from agency officials

NOTE: In Foster City, this position is filled by the Foster City CERT Coordinator. At field command posts, the Division Supervisor is in charge.

Command Post

As you learned in the previous section, the first person to arrive at the pre-designated staging area must assume the role of CERT TL/IC (called **the Division Supervisor** in Foster City). The location established as the central point for command and control of the incident is called the command post for the CERT. The CERT TL/IC stays in the command post. If he or she has to leave, the responsibility must be delegated to someone in the command post.

Assigning Functions

Initially, the CERT IC/TC (or Division Supervisor) may handle all of the command positions of ICS but as the incident evolves, he or she may assign personnel as needed to the four other command functions: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration (in Foster City these positions will be assigned by the Incident Commander / CERT Coordinator). The section chief for each section reports directly to the CERT Incident Commander.

In all situations, each unit assigned must have an identified leader to supervise tasks being performed, to account for team members, and to report information to his her designated leader. In all situations, a manageable span of control is three to seven team members reporting to their designated leader.

Operations Section Chief

The CERT Operations Section Chief (OC) directs and coordinates all incident tactical operations such as:

- Medical operations
- Search and rescue
- Traffic management

It is typically one of the first functions to be assigned.

Planning Section Chief

The CERT Planning Chief

- Tracks situation status
- Prepares the team's action plan
- Develops alternative strategies
- Provides documentation services

Logistics Section Chief

The CERT Logistics Chief helps make sure that there are adequate resources (personnel, supplies, and equipment) for meeting the incident objectives.

In addition, the CERT Logistics Chief:

- Provides communication
- Provides food and medical support to Team members
- Manages supplies and facilities

Finance/Administration Section Chief

The Finance/Administration Section is set up for any incident that requires incident-specific financial management. The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:

- Contract negotiation and monitoring
- Timekeeping
- Cost analysis
- Compensation for injury or damage to property

While this section is a function in the formal ICS, CERTs will have very limited need for this function. One such need will be tracking the total number of hours served by the members of an individual CERT from the time of activation until CERT operations end.

Knowledge Check - Roles and Responsibilities

Remember, the CERT TL/IC is responsible for all ICS management functions until he or she delegates a function. They TL/IC may decide to manage some functions instead of turning it over to a section chief. For example, the TL/IC might handle any matters relating to Finance/Administration.

*******Scenario Overview*******

A small city has experienced a windstorm with speeds of 50-65 miles per hour for most of the afternoon, with the peak of the storm occurring between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. There have been reports of downed power lines, fallen trees, structural damage to houses and buildings, and injuries.

The winds have died down a bit as the evening rush hour is starting. The temperature is falling as a result of the storm pushing through and continues to decline as night falls over the region. Your CERT has been activated to help with the storm's aftermath.

Decision 1

You are a member of your local neighborhood CERT and receive notice that your CERT has been activated to assist with damage the windstorm created. After ensuring your home, family, and neighbors are secure, you grab your CERT backpack and go to your CERT's pre-designated staging location. When you arrive, you are the first person there. What do you do?

Assume the role of the CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander (CERT TL/IC). ICS protocol instructs that the first person on the scene assumes command. You are now the CERT TL/IC.

Decision 2

You've assigned a CERT LC to sign in team members as they arrive at the staging area when a team member reports structural damage to the command post. You:

Move the team to the back-up command post that your CERTs pre-determined and leave a message for team members who have not yet arrived. Team members at the first location move to the second, more stable location. Because you left a message behind, team members arriving at the first location immediately go to the new command post.

CERT Form #8 - General Message Form

The CERT Form #8, the General Message form is a good form to use to post the messages about the new location and for sending messages between command levels and groups. Your messages should be clear and concise and should focus only on key issues. In this instance, the message should clearly state that you have moved locations and give the address and cross street of the new location.

GENERAL MESSAGE		
TO	POSITION	
FROM	POSITION	
SUBJECT	DAT	TIME
MESSAGE		
SIGNATURE		POSITION
REPLY		
DATE	TIME	SIGNATURE/POSITION

Decision 3

You are now in the CERT TL/IC and CERT members are beginning to arrive at the command post with damage assessment reports. What is your next step?

Appoint a CERT Logistics Chief and assign him or her to sign in team members as they arrive at the command post. To effectively keep track of personnel availability, appoint a CERT Logistics Chief and ask him or her to sign in team members as they arrive at the staging area. You can give the CERT Logistics Chief CERT Form #2 to sign members in. It includes information about:

- *Who is on the site*
- *When they arrived*
- *When they were assigned*
- *Their special skills*

General Message Form

- The General Message form is a good form to use to post messages and to sending messages between command levels and groups.
- Your messages should be clear and concise and should focus only on key issues.

Signing In Members

- The CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander should appoint a CERT Logistics Chief as soon as possible during an activation. The CERT Logistics Chief's first assignment should be to sign in team members and they arrive at the command post.
- CERT Form #2 is an effective sign in sheet. It includes information about:
 - Who is on site
 - When they arrived
 - When they were assigned
 - Their special skills

CERT Operations Chief

- As soon as possible after arriving at the command post, the CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander should appoint a CERT Operations Chief.
- The CERT Operations Chief will help the CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander prioritize incidents and appoint team members for medical, light search and rescue, and safety teams.

Lesson 2: Applying ICS Principles to Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations

In this lesson, you will assume the role as a team leader on a Search and rescue (SAR) team. As you go through the lesson, you will come across scenarios in which you will have to make a decision. Use your knowledge of ICS principles to choose the decision that will result in the most successful outcome.

Decision 6

You are the team leader for a Search and rescue team. Your CERT Operations Chief assigns you and your team to respond to a situation at a local mini-mall that has been damaged in the windstorm. Because the preliminary reports indicate that there are people injured on the scene due to shattered plate glass windows, your search and rescue teams needs to get to the mini-mall as quickly as possible. You immediately:

Review the Briefing Assignment, CERT Form #4a the CERT Operations Section Chief gives to you. You review the Briefing Assignment and realize that 9 team members are assigned to you. This is incorrect span of control in ICS. You bring up the issue to your CERT Operations Chief, and you work together to create a sub-unit on your team, assigning a leader and two team members to the sub-unit. You now have effective span of control on your team. By reviewing the Briefing Assignment before leaving the command post, you were able to save time and help ensure that your team was appropriately staffed.

Decision 7

On the way to the mini-mall, your team comes upon a fallen tree that is arcing a live electrical wire. You:

Contact the CERT Operations Chief about the incident and proceed to your original assignment. The CERT Operations Chief contacts the utility company. You are able to proceed to the mini-mall before the situation there escalates. Before changing your priorities, always contact the CERT Operations Chief who is responsible for coordinating all tactical operations.

Decision 8

You arrive at the mini-mall and are ready to assess the situation. You:

Assign four search teams with two people each to do a 360 inspection around the perimeter of the building. One team member stays with you. The four teams conduct a 360 around the perimeter of the building safely come back to you with their report. Remember that the top priority for CERTs is rescuer safety, and the buddy system helps to promote this. Always assign teams so that each team member has a buddy (in Foster City – teams of 3).

Decision 9

One team discovers a parking lot sign that has fallen onto a car. A woman is inside the car and is bleeding from the head. Please number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 the order of steps the team should take:

- Maintain direct pressure to the wound
- Conduct a head-to-toe assessment of the patient
- Conduct medical triage to determine the status of the injured person
- Report the incident to the search and rescue team leader
- Document all actions taken to assist the injured person

The correct order is: Conduct medical triage to determine the status of the injured person, maintain direct pressure to the wound, report the incident to the search and rescue team leader, conduct a head-to-toe assessment of the patient, document all actions taken to assist the injured person.

Decision 10

After completing their initial 360 check of the mini-mall, the search teams report that there is broken glass at two of the shops – a hair salon and a coffee shop. What is your next step?

Send one person to each store to conduct interior searches. Teams report that there are no injuries at the hair salon. At the coffee shop, some customers sitting near the window were injured. Two of the injuries were minor, and the people have gone to a nearby grocery store to treat themselves. One person has an arterial bleed and is in shock. One of the team members contacts you to contact an ambulance while the other team member helps to maintain direct pressure to the wound.

Because you assigned teams so that every member had a buddy, the team was able to help the patient and promptly get an ambulance called. Always assign teams so that each member has a buddy. Not only does it ensure rescuer safety, but it frees up a person to contact someone else for help while the other team member assists with serious injuries.

Decision 11

All patients with injuries are stabilized and an ambulance for the person with the arterial bleed is on the way. You:

Send a report to the CERT Operations Chief. He tells you to wait until the EMS arrives before returning to the command post. Your team needs to remain at the scene until EMS takes over.

Status Report

Once the EMS arrives on the scene, give the EMTs a status report of the incident. If you've used the damage assessment form or the victim treatment area record, use these forms to easily give the EMTs a status update.

Answer any questions the EMS has about the incident. Once you've answered all questions and the EMS has officially taken control of the scene, you may return to the command post.

Lesson 2 Conclusion

In this lesson, you assumed the role of a Search and Rescue team leader and applied your knowledge of ICS principles to make decisions in this role.

Lesson 2 Overview: Applying ICS Principles to Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations

Assignment Briefing

- Before going to an assignment, always review the Briefing Assignment and address any potential issues, such as span of control, with the CERT Operations Chief.

Prioritizing Incidents

- Before changing priorities, always contact the CERT Operations Chief who is responsible for coordinating all tactical operations.

Buddy System

- The top priority for CERTs is rescuer safety, and the buddy system helps to promote this. Always assign teams so that each team member has a buddy.
- The buddy system also frees up a person to contact someone else for help while the other team member assists with serious injuries.

Leaving an Incident

- Always give a status report and all documentation to officials, such as EMS or the fire department, taking command of incident before the CERT team leaves.

Never leave an incident without approval from the CERT Operations Chief and/or the officials taking control of the incident.

Lesson 3: Dealing with the Media

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Understand protocol for talking with the media
- Identify the types of questions they may or may not answer when talking with the media

Dealing with the Media

It is common for members of the local media to show up on the scene of an incident. This can be an important responsibility of the CERT TL/IC.

If you are not the CERT TL/IC, you should refer any media inquiries to the CERT TL/IC. The TL/IC should then refer the media inquiries to the Public Information Officer (PIO) of your CERT's sponsoring organization (for example, fire department or sheriff's office).

If the PIO authorizes the CERT TL/IC to speak with the media, he or she should

- Refrain from addressing the media until doing so will no longer inhibit or delay the team's ability to do the greatest good for the greatest number in the shortest amount of time
- Establish an area for briefing the media if necessary
- Be careful about the information he or she releases. The CERT TL/IC should make sure it is both accurate and approved for release and also keep in mind victims' right to privacy

Finally, the CERT TL/IC should not feel compelled to answer every question the media asks. The CERT TL/IC should not comment on operations other than those of his or her own team.

Decision 12

You are the CERT TL/IC when a CERT member comes to you with a reporter who has questions.

You:

You contact the EOC Public Information Officer who tells you to only answer questions that relate to your CERT's response to the incident.

Always contact the EOC PIO before talking with the media. Different jurisdictions have different protocols, so it's important to understand what you should and should not report as a representative of your CERT.

Knowledge Check - Dealing with the Media

The EOC PIO tells you that when talking with the media, you may only answer questions that relate directly to your CERT's response to the incident.

In this activity, check the box beside the questions you may answer.

- What is CERT?
- How long have you been out here today?
- How much longer do you think you'll be here?
- How many people are on your neighborhood team?
- How many CERTs are active citywide?
- Who has been injured?
- Have you seen friends who are injured?
- What impact has the windstorm had on the city?
- Where is the fire department? Why aren't they here?
- Do you think it would be good if the fire dept were here?
- What kind of training do you have?
- Who are you reporting to? Who authorized you to be out here?
- What kind of damage have you seen?

You may answer the following questions: What is CERT? How long have you been out here today? How much longer do you think you'll be here? How many people are on your neighborhood team? What kind of training do you have? Who are you reporting to? / Who authorized you to be out here? What kind of damage have you seen?

Lesson 3 Overview: Working With the Media

Communicating with the Media

- If you are not the CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander (CERT TL/IC), you should refer any media inquiries to the CERT TL/IC.
- The CERT TL/IC should then refer the media inquiries to the Public Information Officer (PIO) of your CERT's sponsoring organization (for example, fire department or sheriff's office).
- Different jurisdictions have different protocols, so it's important to understand what you should and should not report as a representative of your CERT.

If the PIO authorizes the CERT TL/IC to speak with the media, he or she should:

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- Establish an area for briefing the media if necessary
- Be careful about the information he or she releases. The CERT TL/IC should make sure it is both accurate and approved for release and also keep in mind victims' right to privacy

The CERT TL/IC should NOT:

- Feel compelled to answer every question the media asks
- Comment on operations other than those of his or her own team

Lesson 4: Transferring Command

In this lesson, you will assume the role of the incoming CERT TL/IC as the current TL/IC steps down. Use your knowledge of ICS principles to make the best decisions.

Lesson 4 Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- Define the protocols for transferring command
- Define steps involved when assuming command

Decision 13

The current CERT TL/IC has a situation at his home that requires attention. He needs to transfer the responsibility. You:

The outgoing CERT TL/IC gives you a status briefing on all of the incidents, resources, and priorities. He answers your questions, and you feel that you have all of the information you need to take over command.

Decision 14

Your first step as the CERT TL/IC is to:

Ask all CERT section chiefs to report current activities and immediate or emerging needs. One of the section chiefs reports that she is concerned about running out of bottled water for rescuers. You talk with the CERT logistics chief, who is able to provide the section chief with sufficient water.

Decision 15

Shortly after you assume the role of CERT TL/IC, a friend approaches you and requests a transfer to a team that better suits her energy level and talents. You:

Tell your friend to talk to her team leader. The team leader discusses your friend's request with the CERT Operations Chief who makes the decision to move her to a different team. Even though the woman is your friend, it is important to always use the correct chain of command during a CERT activation.

Decision 16

Two team members come back from the field with a report of two new incidents. You:

Look at the damage assessment reports and reprioritize all incidents to incorporate new incidents with appropriate priority. You reprioritize incidents and work with the CERT Operations Chief to continue to send teams to the incidents with the highest priority.

You made the right decision. Good communications at the Command Post will make all of your CERT's activities run more smoothly.

Reprioritizing Incidents

Look at the following damage assessment reports and prioritize the order in which your team should respond to each incident.

Collapsed Porch

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FORM		CERT NORTHWEST Neighborhood CERT	DATE July 15												
LOCATION 123 Main Street															
SIZE UP (check if applicable)															
FIRES		HAZARDS		STRUCTURE		PEOPLE		ROADS		ANIMALS					
BURNING	OUT	GAS LEAK	H2O LEAK	ELECTRIC	CHEMICAL	DAMAGED	COLLAPSED	INJURED	TRAPPED	DEAD	ACCESS	NO ACCESS	INJURED	TRAPPED	ROAMING
						X		X			X				
OBSERVATIONS															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front porch of house collapsed due to high winds • Woman inside has injured leg and cannot get out of the house • She is responsive 															
CERT MEMBER Jane Smith										PAGE _1_ OF _1_					

Power out to all residences

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FORM		CERT NORTHWEST Neighborhood CERT	DATE July 15												
LOCATION 200-600 Blocks of NORTHWEST Street															
SIZE UP (check if applicable)															
FIRES		HAZARDS		STRUCTURE		PEOPLE		ROADS		ANIMALS					
BURNING	OUT	GAS LEAK	H2O LEAK	ELECTRIC	CHEMICAL	DAMAGED	COLLAPSED	INJURED	TRAPPED	DEAD	ACCESS	NO ACCESS	INJURED	TRAPPED	ROAMING
											X				
OBSERVATIONS															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power is out in all residences in five square block of neighborhood • No injuries reported 															
CERT MEMBER Veronica Sanchez										PAGE _1_ OF _1_					

Fallen tree in front window of house

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FORM		CERT NORTHWEST Neighborhood CERT	DATE July 15												
LOCATION SW Corner of Fincastle and Pike															
SIZE UP (check if applicable)															
FIRES		HAZARDS		STRUCTURE		PEOPLE		ROADS		ANIMALS					
BURNING	OUT	GAS LEAK	H2O LEAK	ELECTRIC	CHEMICAL	DAMAGED	COLLAPSED	INJURED	TRAPPED	DEAD	ACCESS	NO ACCESS	INJURED	TRAPPED	ROAMING
						X		X			X				
OBSERVATIONS															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind caused tree to fall into side window of house • Man and small child have evacuated to front lawn • Man is bleeding heavily from arm • Child has minor cutson leg • Both victims are responsive 															
CERT MEMBER Jim Johnson										PAGE _1_ OF _1_					

Injured Dog

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FORM		CERT NORTHWEST Neighborhood CERT	DATE July 15												
LOCATION 2500 Cedar Lane															
SIZE UP (check if applicable)															
FIRES		HAZARDS		STRUCTURE		PEOPLE		ROADS		ANIMALS					
BURNING	OUT	GAS LEAK	H2O LEAK	ELECTRIC	CHEMICAL	DAMAGED	COLLAPSED	INJURED	TRAPPED	DEAD	ACCESS	NO ACCESS	INJURED	TRAPPED	ROAMING
											X		X		X
OBSERVATIONS															
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of yellow retriever roaming in neighborhood • Dog is limping on right hind leg • Neighbors cannot find owners • Dog is normally friendly but is now growling when approached • Answers to the name "Buddy" 															
CERT MEMBER Michael Lee										PAGE _1_ OF _1_					

- The CERT Team Leader / Incident Commander should work closely with the CERT Operations Chief to send teams to the incidents with the highest priority

Lesson 5: Effective Communication

In this lesson, you will assume the role of CERT Operations Chief. Make the best decisions to communicate effectively with your team

Lesson 5 Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- Determine the best methods for communicating with all individuals involved during an activation
- Understand the consequences of ineffective communication

Traffic and Crowd Management

You are the CERT Operations Chief. The EOC of your sponsoring organization tells your CERT TL/IC that they need traffic assistance at an intersection where the traffic lights are out due to a power outage. Your CERT is able to respond because all team members have received training in traffic and crowd management.

The CERT TL/IC requests that you assign a team of four people to respond to the incident until traffic officers are able to relieve them at the intersection. You confirm that all four people have their whistle in their backpacks and they've all had the CERT traffic and crowd management training. You also ask the CERT Logistics Chief to ensure that there are traffic cones and flares at the scene.

Decision 19

At the scene, a passerby approaches the responding team and tells them about an incident that involves a live power line on a sidewalk two blocks away. The CERT team leader on site contacts you, the OC, to inform you of the incident. You ask for and receive all the details that the passerby provided about the incident. Based on the report, you:

Tell the team to stay in place. Then you send two people from another team to assess the incident. You report your decision to the CERT TL/IC. Five minutes later, the EOC contacts the CERT TL/IC and issues an urgent request for the team assigned to traffic management to report immediately to a higher priority incident at an assisted living center that has lost power and is in process of evacuating the building.

Because the team was where the EOC directed them, you are able to deliver prompt direction. The team is able to respond to the assisted living facility without delay.

Incident Closure

The fire department arrives at the command post and asks the CERT TL/IC for a status report. The CERT TL/IC asks the CERT Planning Chief to gather documentation from all section chiefs.

You give the CERT Planning Chief all documentation, including Assignment Tracking Logs, Briefing Assignments, and Team Action Logs. The CERT Planning Chief packages everything together and gives all documentation to the CERT TL/IC.

The CERT TL/IC hands the documentation package to the fire department and also gives an oral status report. The fire department officially assumes command, and your CERT is relieved from duty. Excellent work!

