Auxiliary Emergency Communications (AEC)

Training Course

Unit 1: The Communications Unit and Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
Terminal Learning Objective
Enabling Learning Objectives

TLO: Confirm knowledge of responsibilities, roles, and functions within the Communications Unit, as well as roles and functions of the AEC.

ELO A: Identify positions within the Communications Unit.

ELO B: Describe responsibilities of positions within the Communications Unit, including AEC volunteers.
Terminal Learning Objective
Enabling Learning Objectives (Cont)

**ELO C:** Describe the Planning Cycle.

**ELO D:** Identify other agencies/organizations responsible for coordination and providing assets.

**ELO E:** Describe the functions of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Communications System (ICS)

We are Here
Communications Unit Personnel

Diagram showing the hierarchy of communications personnel with roles including Authorizing Authority, Communications Coordinator (COMC), Communications Unit Leader (COML), Technical Specialist (THSP), Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM), Incident Communications Technician (COMT), Radio Operator (RADO), Tactical Dispatcher, and Incident Dispatcher.
Communications Unit Leader (COML)

Duties:

Plans and manages the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an incident.
COML (Cont)

Duties:

- Prepares Incident Radio Communications Plan (ICS Form 205)
- Establishes Incident Communications Center (ICC)
- Orders and manages personnel, equipment
- Establishes needed capabilities
- Participates in incident action planning
Duties:

As with any ICS position, the COML is responsible for the duties of organizationally subordinate positions (COMT, INCM, RADO and THSP) until delegated.
Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM)

Duties:

- Assist the COML
- Manage the operational aspects of the Communications Center
- Supervise Radio Operators (RADOs)/Runners
- Establish and maintain the ICC
Incident Communications Technician (COMT)

The COMT assists the COML with the design, ordering, installation, operation, and ongoing maintenance of incident communications systems.
COMT (Cont)

COMT also supports:

- Other incident functions to assist in accomplishing the overall goals and objectives
- Maintenance and accountability of assigned communications equipment
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, such as:

- Cache Radio Specialist
- Geographical Information System (GIS) Specialist
- Interoperability Gateway Specialist
Technical Specialists (THSP) (Cont)

- Local Agency Radio Technicians (not qualified as a COMT)
- Mobile Communications Unit (MCU) Specialist
- Telephone/Computer Technicians
Radio Operator (RADO)

- Staffs a radio position at the ICC and is responsible for documenting all radio and telephone messages.
- May also staff a data position responsible for operating data communications equipment.
Incident Dispatchers and Tactical Dispatchers

Some local agencies have trained public safety dispatchers as Incident or Tactical Dispatchers who can bring additional training and experience to an ICC.

- Incident Dispatcher is generally an Emergency Medical Service (EMS)/Fire term
- Tactical Dispatcher is generally a law enforcement term
Communications Coordinator (COMC)

- COMC coordinates communications across multiple incidents when there are multiple request for communications resources
- COMLs work with the COMC to coordinate communications/notifications
- Locally, dispatch supervisors can act as the COMC
- Different at the field, regional, state, and federal levels
Auxiliary Emergency Communicator

- This unofficial ICS position supports the operational and technical aspects of the Auxiliary Communications Unit
- Maintains and/or operates the AEC network
- Staffs the AEC Center
- The knowledge to perform this function applies to every AEC position
Auxiliary Emergency Communicator (Cont)

- Performs AEC duties:
  - Radio Operator
  - Technician
  - Other duties as required and/or assigned
AEC Manager

- This individual manages the operational and technical aspects of the Auxiliary Communications Unit
- Establishes and maintains the AEC network
- Establishes and/or staffs the AEC Center
- Supervises AEC personnel:
  - Radio Operators
  - Technicians
  - Other support personnel
Planning Cycle

- Command and General Staff Meeting
- Tactics/Planning Meeting
- Operations Briefing
- Assertive participation by the COML
  - The AEC Manager and other volunteers do not typically get invited to these meetings so it is critical that any AEC requirements be carried to/from these meetings by the COML
Declared Emergency Coordination

- JFO: Joint Field Offices
- ESF2: Emergency Support Function (Communications)
- EOC: Emergency Operations Centers
- MERS: Mobile Emergency Response Systems
Other “Potential” Jurisdiction Communications Assets

- CERT: Community Emergency Response Team
- CST: National Guard Civil Support Teams
- IMT: Regional, state, and National Incident Management Teams (Type 3, 2 or 1 IMTs)
Other “Potential” Jurisdiction Communications Assets

- IST: Incident Support Team
- FCC FedTech
- Other communications response groups
Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

- What is an EOC?
- How is it different from ICS?
- How do they interface?
EOC (Cont)

The EOC does not command or control the on-scene response. The EOC carries out the coordination and support function through:

- Information collection and evaluation
- Priority setting
- Resource management
EOC (Cont)

- Decision making at the EOC affects the incident response as well as the public response. The decisions made at the EOC are not tactical decisions.

- Tactical decisions are made by the Incident Commander and the Command Staff at the incident scene.
EOC (Cont)
EOC (Cont)

- EOCs coordinate with on-scene incident managers and other agencies and organizations to:
  - Acquire, allocate, and track resources
  - Manage and share information
  - Establish response priorities among incidents
  - Provide legal and financial support
  - Liaison with other jurisdictions and other levels of government
EOC (Cont)

- An EOC is generally organized according to the ICS model
- Modified as needed based on nature of emergency or local considerations
- Focus on ESF’s
- AUXCOMM can play a significant part in supporting the communications link between the EOC and the incident
EOC (Cont)
EOC (Cont)

- The purpose of an EOC is to establish a central location where government at any level can provide interagency coordination and execute decision making to support incident response.

- The EOC operates in the strategic realm, not tactical.

- Communications is the key to effective operations and interface.
Unit 1: Summary

1) Described the responsibilities, roles, and functions within the Communications Unit, as well as roles and functions of the AEC.

2) Identified positions within the Communications Unit.

3) Described the responsibilities of positions within the Communications Unit, including AEC volunteers.
Unit 1: Summary

4) Described the Planning Cycle.

5) Identified other agencies/organizations responsible for coordination and providing assets.

6) Described the functions of an EOC.