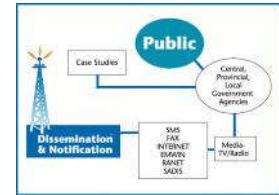
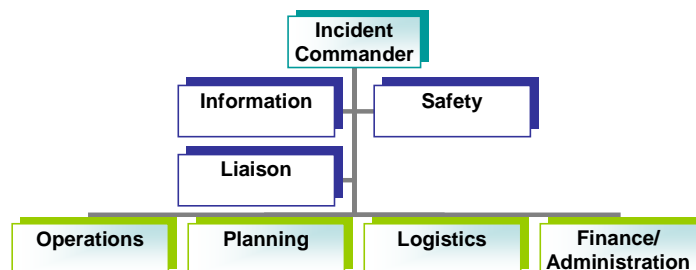

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEMS (ICS)



All emergencies and crisis events are by definition chaotic and highly dynamic, creating physical, emotional, and social disorder. The Incident Command System (ICS) provides a means for government agencies to effectively manage such incidents and restore a modicum of order in a chaotic environment. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service (USDA/FS) developed the management system in the mid-1970s to provide accurate information, strict accountability, planning, and cost-effective operations and logistical support for any incident. ICS is flexible and allows for organizational expansion or contraction in a modular fashion. Thus, as incidents change in complexity or operational focus, the ICS can accommodate it accordingly. The ICS is structured to integrate any type of resource including police, military, technical experts, international resources, and NGOs, and can be used to manage sudden onset disasters, long-term relief efforts, or non-emergency events.

US IOTWS Contribution

Under the US IOTWS Program, USDA/FS worked with countries in the region to implement the disaster management system within the government. USDA/FS supported the Disaster Management Center in Sri Lanka in conducting a series of ICS courses, through which more than 130 professionals in the fields of disaster management, health, and other sectors have been trained. Of these, eight officials are now part of a group of "master trainers" who are further building capacity in every district and at the community level in Sri Lanka. The government has also committed to the implementation of ICS as part of their disaster risk reduction strategy.



ICS can be used to address emergencies of all sizes and complexities

Indonesia's National Coordination Board for Disaster Management (BAKORNAS) has expanded its efforts to implement ICS concepts by assigning Incident Commanders in its provincial and district units and including ICS in the new Disaster Management Law. Other government agencies and NGOs have also committed to building capacity for ICS through a train-the-trainer program covering all major island groups, beginning with Sumatra. Officials from Thailand and the Maldives participated in the Foundational ICS course in September 2007.

Next Steps

USDA/FS will seek to continue to provide technical guidance and support for the further implementation of ICS. The Disaster Management Center and the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration have adapted the curriculum and are now using it in training courses. Indonesia, and Thailand will continue to implement ICS as part of their national disaster management strategies, and international organizations continue to provide ICS training as part of their programming.

For Further Information

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- <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/ics/inci.html>
- http://www.nifc.gov/fireinfo/ics_disc.html
- <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/taskbook/taskbook.htm>