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# Unit 2: Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENT GUIDE

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**Objectives**

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By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe the roles and responsibilities of an Operations Section Chief as they apply to planning, supervision, and coordination
- Contrast the roles and responsibilities of a Division/Group Supervisor to those of the Operations Section Chief
- Provide a general description of the planning responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and relevant forms and protocols (including those related to the IAP)
- Provide a general description of the supervisory responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief as they relate to personnel, resources, and safety
- Provide a general description of the coordination/logistical responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and key players that the Operations Section Chief must direct, support, partner, and communicate with

**Methodology**

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This unit uses lecture and discussion.

Content from this unit will be generally tested though the Final Exam as the unit is meant to serve as an overview of the Operations Section Chief's roles and responsibilities. The specific responsibilities and duties of the position will be covered in greater detail and evaluated in depth in subsequent unit presentations, quizzes, and the Final Exam.

**Time Plan**

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A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required based on the experience level of the group.

| <b>Topic</b>      | <b>Time</b>              |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Lesson            | 1 hour 15 minutes        |
| <b>Total Time</b> | <b>1 hour 15 minutes</b> |

**Topic**Unit Title Slide

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**Key Points**

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**Scope Statement**

Through this unit, students will gain a general understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief. Through the comparison of the Operations Section Chief and Division/Group Supervisor positions and through discussion of the planning, supervision, and coordination responsibilities inherent in the position, students will achieve insight into the key elements of the Operations Section Chief's place on an Incident Management Team.

**Unit Terminal Objective**

Describe the roles and responsibilities of an Operations Section Chief as they apply to planning, supervision, and coordination.

**Key Points**

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**Unit Terminal Objective**

Describe the roles and responsibilities of an Operations Section Chief as they apply to planning, supervision, and coordination.

**Unit Enabling Objectives**

- Contrast the roles and responsibilities of a Division/Group Supervisor to those of the Operations Section Chief
- Provide a general description of the planning responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and relevant forms and protocols (including those related to the IAP)
- Provide a general description of the supervisory responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief as they relate to personnel, resources, and safety
- Provide a general description of the coordination/logistical responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and key players that the Operations Section Chief must direct, support, partner, and communicate with

**Topic**                      Operations Section Chief

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**Operations Section Chief**

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**Must Be:**

- A Planner
- A Supervisor
- A Coordinator
- A Leader



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Visual 2-3

**Key Points**

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The Operations Section Chief is responsible for tactically executing the Incident Action Plan (IAP) in a safe and effective manner. In completing the IAP tactics, the Operations Section Chief mitigates or controls the emergency, which is the primary mission of emergency response. The Operations Section Chief must be a leader, manager, coordinator, and—most importantly—an excellent planner.

Effective and respected leadership of emergency responders is a primary role of the Operations Section Chief. The best Operations Section Chiefs will lead by positive example and be team players; workers will follow and be motivated by an effective Chief. In addition, the Operations Section Chief must manage and coordinate diverse resources, which may number in the hundreds. Finally, the Operations Section Chief must not only lead emergency workers, but plan tactical activities for future operational periods. The job is complex and demanding. All the while, the Operations Section Chief must be a cost-effective manager of taxpayer-supported resources.

**Topic**            OSC's Role Differs From DIVS'

**OSC's Role Differs From DIVS'**

- No longer responsible for a single geographic or functional area
- Now responsible for an entire incident



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Visual 2-4

**Key Points**

The operational focus of a Division/Group Supervisor is “a piece of ground.” In other words, their responsibility is to oversee operations in the bounded area between point A and point B. When you become an Operations Section Chief, your oversight responsibilities are no longer from point A to point B—they’re from point A to point Z. You oversee the whole incident area.

The focus of a Group Supervisor is a functional area (for example, ventilation, or evacuations). Your functional duties, as an Operations Section Chief, are across the board. Your job isn't to oversee just ventilation or evacuation, but all the moving parts of incident management. This may include ventilation and evacuation, as well as human services, demobilization, food distribution, and so forth.

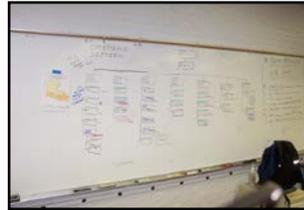
**Topic**                      Operations Section Chief's Responsibilities

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**Operations Section Chief's Responsibilities**

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- Tactics employed on the incident
- Gathering information and formulating the Tactical Plan for each operational period
- Supervision of organization
- Coordination



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Visual 2-5

**Key Points**

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The Operations Section Chief's mission is to convert the Incident Commander's objectives into practical, on-the-ground tactics. The Operations Section Chief is responsible for making tactical choices and is held accountable for the consequences that result from them.

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for:

- Tactics employed on the incident
- Gathering information and formulating the Tactical Plan for the IAP for each operational period
- Supervision of Operations organization
- Coordination

**Topic** Key Elements of the Position

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**Key Elements of the Position**

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- Obtain and assemble information and materials
  - Clipboards, checklist, forms, etc.
  - Management and personal kit



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Visual 2-6

**Key Points**

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Identify, with the aid of the class, the standard information and materials that need to be obtained and assembled:

- Clipboards, checklist, forms, etc.
- Management and personal kit
  - Assembled and prepared prior to receiving an assignment
  - Contains critical items
  - Must be easily transportable
  - Must be within agency weight limitation

Topic

Go-Kit Contents

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Key Points

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**Topic** Key Elements (cont.)

**Key Elements (cont.)**

- Provide for safety/welfare of assigned resources during entire period of supervision
- Establish and maintain positive interpersonal and interagency working relationships



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Visual 2-8

**Key Points**

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for safety because he/she is responsible for redirecting resources. Safety plans may be included on ICS Form 202.

Guidelines to follow to ensure the safety and welfare of assigned resources, including:

- Standard Operating Safety Guidelines (SOSG)
- Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, Safety Zones (LCES)
- Local Agency Policy
- Standard Firefighting Orders
- Watchout Situations

LCES can apply to any type of event. Illustrate this by applying the acronym to office politics.

- Be on the “lookout” for your own welfare and the welfare of your subordinates
- Keep open and honest “communications” with your supervisor
- Have options (“escape routes”) available in case things get negative (for example, have a resume prepared)

- Establish “safety zones,” such as avoiding certain topics that are not conducive to productive relationships

Follow this statement by discussing a few examples from your own incident LCES experiences.

Obtain information from the communications center upon initial activation. Communications centers are valuable sources of information.

**Topic** Key Elements (cont.)

**Key Elements (cont.)**

- Gather information
- Obtain briefing from Agency Administrator or outgoing Incident Commander
- Obtain briefing from your Incident Commander
- Collect information from outgoing Operations Section Chief or other initial attack personnel

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Visual 2-9

**Key Points**

The Operations Section Chief has two management responsibilities: (1) managing the event, and (2) managing the Operations Section. For this reason, your organizational skills must be excellent. In fact, organizational skills may be more important than subject matter knowledge because your job is to organize the response, not provide technical advice.

Your organization of the response team will only be as good as the information you base your plan on. As an Operations Section Chief, it's critical that you know how to vet information for accuracy, as well as how to organize it into a Mitigation Plan. The Operations Section Chief would obtain a briefing from the Agency Administrator as part of an IMT in-briefing. Shortly after your IMT joins the incident response, your IMT should meet with the Agency Administrator and Incident Commander in a Strategy Briefing.

**Topic** Key Elements (cont.)

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**Key Elements (cont.)**

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- Prepare for Planning Meeting
- Evaluate/Monitor current situation
- Observe and review tactics
- Evaluate resource status and tactical needs
- Participate in preparation of Incident Action Plan

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**Key Points**

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After the Operational Briefing, the Operations Section Chief should work with the Resource Unit Leader to organize the T-card rack to accurately reflect the organization that the Operations Section Chief intends for the next operational period.

A T-card rack is a set of cards that represents the structure of the incident response. Different color cards represent different types of personnel, supplies, vehicles, apparatuses, and so forth. T-cards will be explained further in Unit 5, Strategy and Planning.

**Topic** Key Elements (cont.)

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### Key Elements (cont.)

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- Present Operations portion of the Operational Period briefing to incident organization
- Interact/Coordinate with team members/functions
- Supervise/Adjust Operations organization
- Coordinate shift changes with other Operations Section Chiefs

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**Key Points**

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- Present the Operations portion of the briefing, particularly emphasizing any changes from the written Incident Action Plan
  - Review IAP and safety points and highlight any changes
- Interact and coordinate with all team members and functions
- Supervise and adjust Operations organization and tactics as necessary based on changes in incident situation and resource status
  - Consider Contingency Plan
- Coordinate with other Operations Section Chiefs for shift changes and relief

## Topic Key Elements (cont.)

### Key Elements (cont.)

- Evaluate effectiveness of the IAP
- Include Technical Specialist input in planning
- Keep Incident Commander informed
- Maintain an Individual Log
- Ensure all personnel/equipment time records are complete



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Visual 2-12

## Key Points

One example of a Technical Specialist is a local search and rescue team. If your assignment is a search, Search and Rescue Teams can provide your IMT with knowledge of local terrain, the best patterns for search procedures, and so forth.

- Maintain an Activity Log, ICS Form 214
- You need to ensure that all personnel/equipment time records are complete; as the Operations Section Chief, you have financial responsibility for your organization

**Topic** Key Elements (cont.)

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**Key Elements (cont.)**

- Consider demobilization planning early on
- Identify excess resources
- Ensure performance evaluations are completed
- Complete demobilization and check out
- Debrief the Agency Administrator
- Ensure trainees' Position Task Books are completed

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Visual 2-13

**Key Points**

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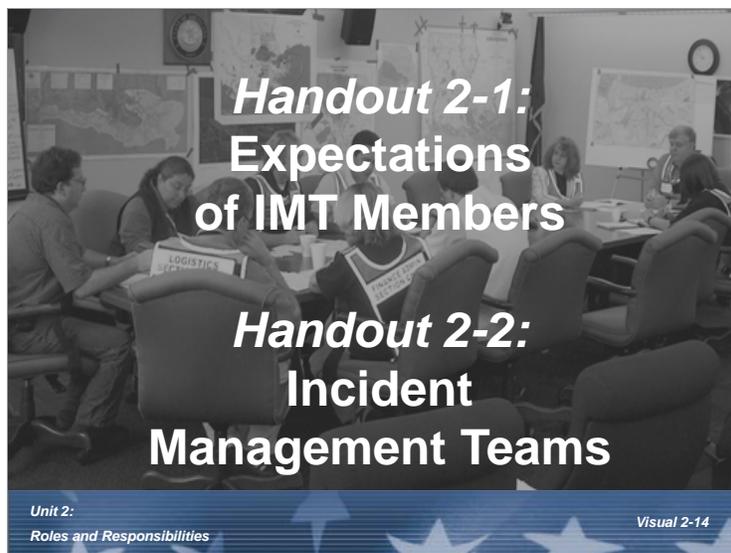
Consider demobilization planning early on.

It's a good idea to demobilize borrowed resources as soon as possible. Local governments may need them back quickly, and it serves the practical purpose of minimizing your confusion. It's a good practice to get rid of resources when they're no longer needed, even if this occurs before mitigation is complete.

Be sure to complete performance evaluations and position task books for trainees (e.g., rising Operations Section Chiefs).

**Topic** Handouts 2-1, 2-2

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**Key Points**

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**Topic** Objectives Review

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**Objectives Review**

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1. *What are the different roles and responsibilities of a Division/Group Supervisor to those of the Operations Section Chief?*
2. *What are the planning responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and what are the relevant forms and protocols (including those relating to the IAP)?*

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Visual 2-15

**Key Points**

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**Unit Terminal Objective**

Describe the roles and responsibilities of an Operations Section Chief as they apply to planning, supervision, and coordination.

Review the Enabling Objectives for this unit to ensure that the class has obtained the knowledge necessary to successfully meet the Unit Terminal Objective.

**Unit Enabling Objectives**

- Contrast the roles and responsibilities of a Division/Group Supervisor with those of the Operations Section Chief
- Provide a general description of the planning responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and relevant forms and protocols (including those related to the IAP)

**Topic** Objectives Review (cont.)

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**Objectives Review (cont.)**

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- 3. What are the supervisory responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief as they relate to personnel, resources, and safety?*
- 4. What are the coordination/logistical responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and who are the key players that the Operations Section Chief must direct, support, partner, and communicate with?*

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Visual 2-16

**Key Points**

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**Unit Enabling Objectives (cont.)**

- Provide a general description of the supervisory responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief as they relate to personnel, resources, and safety
- Provide a general description of the coordination/logistical responsibilities of the Operations Section Chief and key players that the Operations Section Chief must direct, support, partner, and communicate with