Unit 5: Initial Response

STUDENT GUIDE

Objectives

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

- Describe the information gathered from the initial meetings, briefings, and documents

- Describe categories of items to carry in the Planning Section Chief Kit

- Describe items of information that the Planning Section Chief (PSC) may receive from the initial briefings

- List the key documents that the Planning Section Chief should obtain

- List the elements of a Contingency Plan

- List the types of plans the Planning Section Chief might help produce

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, an exercise, and discussion.

Content from Unit 5 will be tested during the final exam. Instructors will evaluate students' initial understanding of the Resources Unit through the facilitation of Exercise 4.

The purpose of this exercise is to provide participants with an opportunity to identify key information needed from an Agency Administrator Briefing in order to perform their role as the Planning Section Chief.

Time Plan

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.

Topic	Time
Lesson	2 hours 15 minutes
Exercise 4	45 minutes
Total Time	**3 hours**

Topic   Unit Title Slide

Unit 5
Initial Response

Visual 5-1

Key Points

Scope Statement

Through this unit, students will understand the importance of the initial response. The focus of the initial response is on gathering incident status information as well as obtaining the many agency requirements. This unit will provide descriptions for each of the meetings that occur as well as the documents that should be obtained during the initial response. Students will learn the significance of information gathering, organizing, and communicating.

Topic   Unit Terminal Objective

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the information gathered from initial meetings, briefings, and documents

Unit 5:
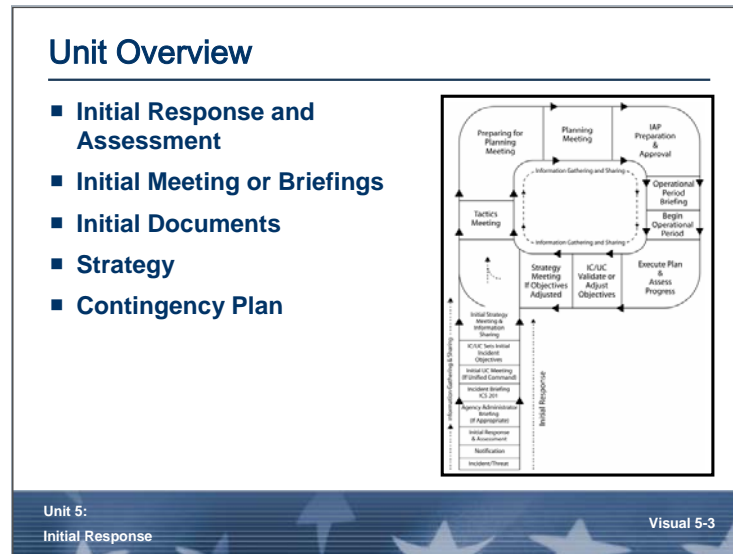Initial Response   Visual 5-2

Key Points

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the information gathered from initial meetings, briefings, and documents.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe categories of items to carry in the Planning Section Chief Kit

- Describe items of information that the Planning Section Chief will receive from the initial briefings

- List the key documents that the Planning Section Chief should obtain

- List the elements of a Contingency Plan

- List the types of plans the Planning Section Chief might help produce

Topic   Unit Overview

Key Points

- Initial Response and Assessment

- Initial Meeting or Briefings

- Initial Documents

- Strategy

- Contingency Plan

Topic Initial Response and Assessment

Initial Response and Assessment

Visual 5-4

Key Points

Topic Personal Plans Kit

Key Points

It is essential that the Planning Section Chief arrive on time with a well-stocked kit. The Planning Section Chief may divide the responsibility for carrying the forms and supplies among the team. The kit should be easily transportable and be within agency weight limitations.

At a minimum, the kit should contain the following:

- Essential ICS forms (these are the forms required to immediately begin preparing the Incident Action Plan and accomplish required reporting)

  ▪ It should contain all the forms, documents, and supplies necessary to conduct the Planning Section for approximately 3 days (or up to six operational periods)

  ▪ ICS Forms 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 211, 213, 214, 215, 215A, and 219

- Other ICS forms

- Sample documents and plans (hard copy or electronic)

  ▪ Sample Delegation of Authority or Letter of Direction Letter

  ▪ Evacuation Plan(s)

  ▪ Transition Plan(s)

  ▪ Demobilization Plan

- References

  ▪ Field Operations Guide

- Mobilization Guides
- ICS forms catalog
- ICS position descriptions
- Individual and team guidelines
- Mnemonics and airport designators
- Phone numbers of people you might need to call for more support

Topic   Supplies and Equipment

Supplies and Equipment

- Basic mapping supplies
- Basic office supplies
- T-card holders
- Laptop
- Projection equipment

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-6

Key Points

The Planning Section Chief is also responsible for bringing basic essential mapping supplies, appropriate office supplies, and T-Card holders.

O t h e r   K i t   I t e m s

- Supplies and equipment:
  - Basic mapping supplies
  - Basic office supplies
  - Ink cartridges
  - T-Card holders
  - An assortment of different colored T-Cards
- Laptop computer with the following software:
  - Word processing
  - Database
  - Spreadsheet
  - Risk analysis
  - Road atlas
  - Resource ordering and status system
- Projection equipment includes:
  - Projector

- Editing software
- Speakers
- Cables
- Spare bulbs

Topic   Notification

Notification

■ **Information gathering begins upon notification**

Where can information be obtained prior to arriving?

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-7

Key Points

Topic   Initial Response

Key Points

A size-up is done to determine the immediate incident objectives. The first responder to arrive must assume command and size up the situation by determining:

- Nature and magnitude of the incident

- Hazards and safety concerns

  ▪ Hazards facing response personnel and the public

  ▪ Evacuation and warnings

  ▪ Injuries and casualties

  ▪ Need to secure and isolate the area

- Initial priorities and immediate resource requirements

- Location of Incident Command Post (ICP) and Staging Area

- Entrance and exit routes for responders

Topic   Initial Response and Assessment

Initial Response and Assessment

- **A clear understanding of an incident is critical**
- **Many factors must be considered when performing this assessment, but the most important are:**
    - **Situational awareness**
    - **Incident complexity**

Unit 5:
Initial Response

Visual 5-9

Key Points

Obtaining a clear understanding of an incident is critical. Many factors must be considered when performing this assessment, but the most important and all-encompassing factors are situational awareness and incident complexity.

Topic   Situational Awareness

Situational Awareness

- **What can assist in our ability to obtain situational awareness?**
  - **Identify problems or potential problems**
  - **Recognize the need for action**
  - **Seek and provide information**
  - **Collect information about the incident and assignments made**
  - **Identify deviations from the expected**
  - **Communicate with team members**

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-10

Key Points

Situational awareness is an awareness of potential incident behavior and the ability to predict where the incident will be in the future.

Situational awareness depends on both individual perception and sharing it with the rest of the team, and involves these actions:

- Identifying problems or potential problems
- Recognizing the need for action
- Not ignoring information discrepancies; rather, analyzing discrepancies before proceeding
- Seeking and providing information before acting
- Continuing to collect information about the incident and assignments made
- Assessing your own task performance
- Identifying deviations from the expected
- Communicating your situational awareness to team members

Topic   Complexity Analysis

Complexity Analysis

- **Factors that affect the probability of control of an incident:**
  - **Impacts to life, property, and the economy**
  - **Community and responder safety**
  - **Potential hazardous materials**
  - **Weather and other environmental influences**
  - **Likelihood of cascading events**

See Handout 5-1: Complexity Analysis

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-11

Key Points

Many factors determine the complexity of an incident, including:

- Impacts to life, property, and the economy
- Community and responder safety
- Potential hazardous materials
- Weather and other environmental influences
- Likelihood of cascading events
- Potential crime scene
- Political sensitivity, external influences, and media relations
- Area involved and jurisdictional boundaries
- Availability of resources

Topic   Initial Meetings and Briefings

Initial Meetings and Briefings

Visual 5-12

Key Points

Topic   Information Gathering and Sharing
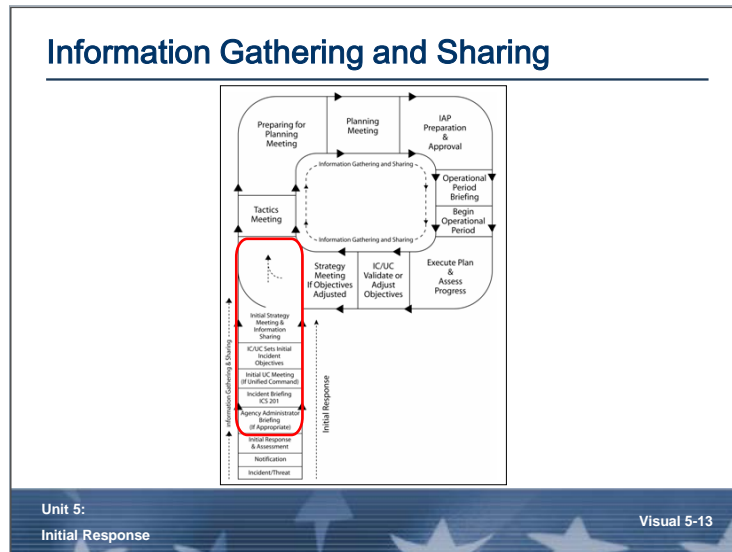
Key Points

Throughout the entire planning process, everyone needs to be gathering information. The first phase of the response is the stem of the Planning P. A significant amount of information is collected during the initial phase of any response.

As the Planning Section Chief you will be responsible for navigating the Planning Cycle and holding people accountable for attending these meetings. During the meeting you will facilitate and potentially take notes (if there is no Documentation Unit Leader).

I n f o r m a t i o n   G a t h e r i n g   a n d   S h a r i n g

• Agency Administrator Briefing

• ICS Form 201 – Incident Briefing

• Initial Unified Command Meeting (if Unified Command)

• Incident Commander (IC) or Unit Commander (UC) sets initial incident objectives

• Initial Strategy Meeting and Information Session

Topic   Information Gathering

Information Gathering

- **Information gathering and sharing is very important during the initial briefings**
  - **Type of incident**
  - **Incident history**
  - **Magnitude**
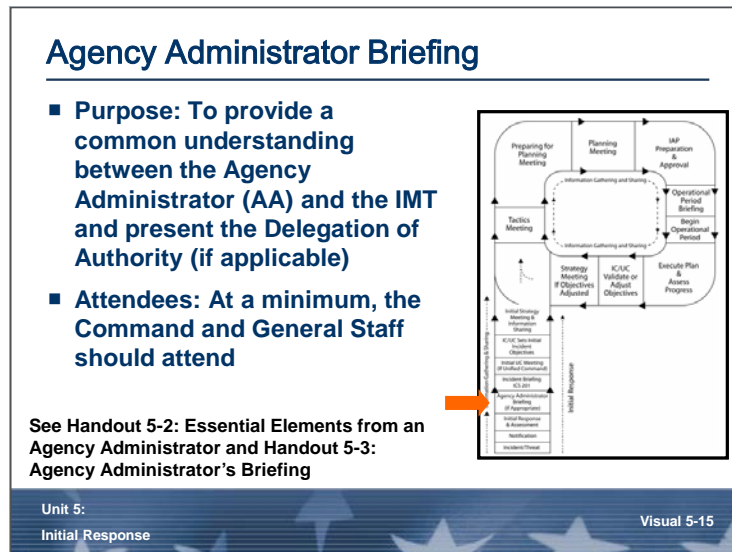 - **Estimated duration**
  - **Constraints**
  - **Current plan**

What other information could potentially be gathered?

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-14

Key Points

Topic   Agency Administrator Briefing

Key Points

Each Incident Management Team (IMT) member must effectively glean the information required for his or her functional area, as well as issues that span more than one function. Not everyone will hear the same thing.

Agency Administrator is the generic title for the Agency Administrator or Executive or Official (or designee) who is responsible for that agency's response to an emergency. This title is used temporarily, regardless of that person's normal position title.

The briefing provides information, guidance, and directions, including constraints necessary for the successful management of the incident. A large amount of information is provided during the briefing that must be sorted, analyzed, prioritized, and shared among the Incident Management Team members. Sometimes the Agency Administrator or Executive allows time for questions, but not always.

The purpose of the Agency Administrator Briefing is to:

- Provide a common understanding between the Agency Administrator or Executive and the Incident Management Team

- Inform the Incident Management Team of the history and current status of the incident, and actions taken to date

- Present the Delegation of Authority (if applicable)

- Present other documents providing intelligence

- Identify key agency personnel who will be involved with the Incident Management Team, such as the Agency Administrator's Representative

- Establish procedures and schedules for communication and resource ordering

- Establish how news media, public information, and important local and political contacts will be handled on the incident

- Identify special safety awareness concerns and expectations

At a minimum, the Command and General Staff should attend. Attendance of other members of the teams should be at the Incident Management Team's discretion. The Agency Administrator's Briefing is not a public meeting; news media should not be invited.

You need to obtain the document that authorizes the Incident Management Team to manage the incident, regardless of what it is called, what form it takes, or who delivers it. An Action Memo often documents verbal approvals.

Either at the time of the Agency Administrator Briefing or at a separate place and time, if necessary, ensure that the Incident Management Team has an opportunity to meet with, be briefed by, and thoroughly transition with the current Incident Commander and members of their organization prior to assuming command of the incident.

Topic   Exercise 4

Exercise 4
Agency Administrator Briefing

Visual 5-16

Key Points

Topic Incident Briefing
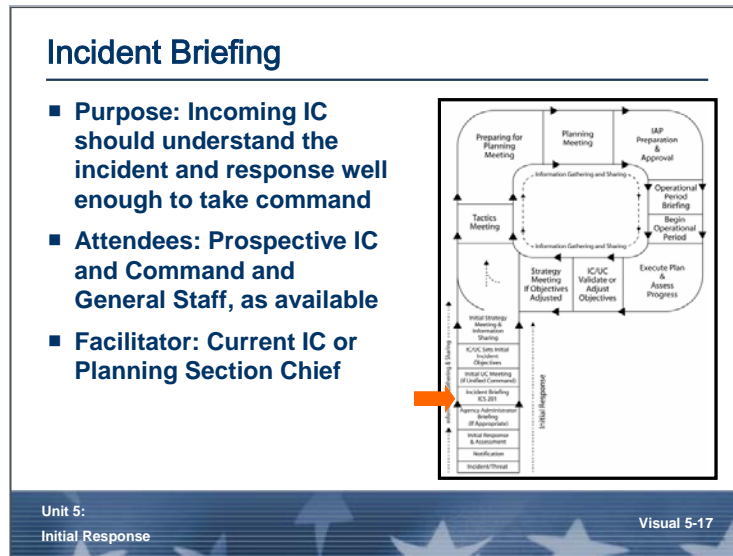
Key Points

The incoming Incident Commander needs to understand the incident and response well enough to take command. For example, he or she should already have knowledge of the incident situation, response organization, deployed and ordered resources, overall goals, initial response objectives or priorities, and developing objectives.

ICS Form 201 – Incident Briefing is updated and used as the initial response Incident Action Plan (IAP) and briefing tool until the response ends or the ICS Form 201 is superseded by a formal Incident Action Plan. ICS Form 201 contains the following information:

• Current situation (note territory, exposures, safety concerns, etc. on maps or charts)

• Initial objectives and priorities

• Current and planned actions

• Current on-scene organization

• Resource assignments

• Resources en route or ordered

• Facilities established

• Incident potential

The facilitator will be the current Incident Commander or Planning Section Chief. The attendees will be the prospective Incident Commander and Command and General Staff, as available.

Take notes, since the briefing may provide the foundation of the strategy.

Topic   Initial Unified Command Meeting
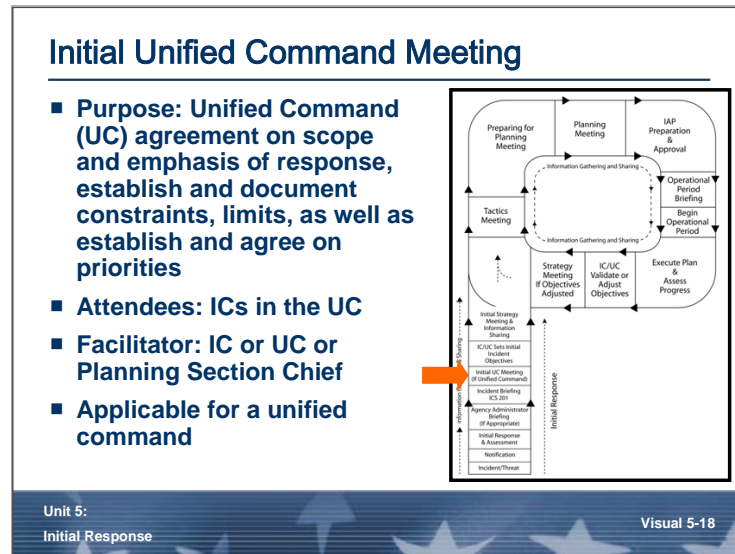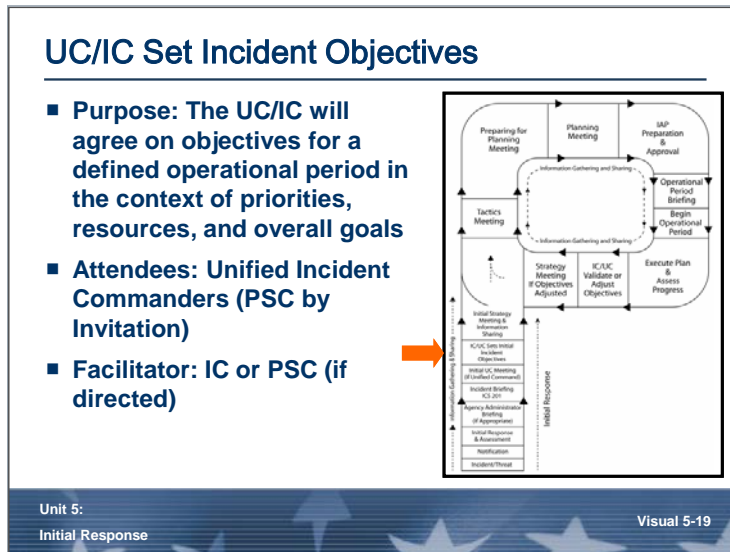

Key Points

The purpose of the Unified Command Meeting is to obtain agreement on important issues prior to the Initial Strategy meeting. These include:

- Considering criteria for Unified Command; validating newly formed Unified Command

- Identifying scope and emphasis of response

- Establishing and documenting constraints and limits

- Establishing and agreeing on priorities

- Agreeing on staff assignments, incident support facilities, locations, resource ordering procedures, cost-sharing procedures and information, intelligence, and information security matters

The facilitator will be an Incident Commander or Unit Command member or Planning Section Chief, if available.

Attendees will include Incident Commanders that will comprise the Unit Commander, Documentation Unit Leader (DOCL) as recorder, and Planning Section Chief as facilitator.

Topic   Set Initial Objectives

Key Points

The Incident Commander will agree on objectives for a defined operational period in the context of priorities, resources, and overall goals. The Initial Unit Command meeting may continue initial objectives or begin to work through this agenda:

• Determine operational period

• Develop or amend objectives

• Develop major tasks for Command and General Staff to accomplish, consider preparing for operations beyond the next operational period

• Prepare for the Initial Strategy Meeting

The facilitator will be an IC (PSC as directed).

Topic   Initial Strategy Meeting

Initial Strategy Meeting

- **Purpose: Command and General Staff understand decisions, overall goals, objectives, expected timeframes, priorities, procedures and functional assignments, specific tasks and safety concerns**
- **Attendees: IC, C & G, SITL, and DOCL, if available**
- **Facilitator: IC or Planning Section Chief**

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Initial Response   Visual 5-20

Key Points

At the Initial Strategy Meeting the Incident Commander briefs the team on:

- The Incident Command's priorities, goals and objectives:
    - Incident Commander will set objectives for ICS Form 202 – Incident Objective
    - Determine control strategies
    - Establish immediate priorities
    - How to handle any operational, logistical, or financial constraint
    - Goals for the team's development
- Initial instructions:
    - Resource ordering procedures
    - Location of Incident Command Post may be set if it hasn't already been done
    - Set situation status reporting requirements
    - Financial accountability procedures
    - Policy for releasing information
- Expected timeframes:
    - Operational periods and planning cycle may be set at this meeting
    - Set the team's meeting schedule
    - Set off-incident reporting requirements

- ▪ Determine agencies' release priorities
- Recognizing and mitigating identified or observed safety concerns

The facilitator will be the Incident Commander or Planning Section Chief. Attendees should include Incident Commander, Command and General Staff, Situation Unit Leader and Documentation Unit Leader.

Topic   Initial Documents

Key Points

Topic Delegation of Authority

Key Points

P u r p o s e

Delegation of Authority identifies the time and limits of the Incident Management Team's authority, including fiscal limitations, and target completion or commitment timeframes.

S o u r c e

It may come from an Area Command, Agency Administrator or Executive, Agency Head or may be verbal.

Copies of the Delegation of Authority should be kept for filing in the Final Incident Package. If no Delegation of Authority has been prepared, the Planning Section Chief should assist the Incident Commander to document what verbal authorities have been conferred and try to get written acceptance by the Agency Administrator.

A release of authority is usually done when the incident is turned back over to the local jurisdiction.

Topic   ICS Form 209 – Incident Status Summary

Key Points

P u r p o s e

ICS Form 209 provides basic information of use in planning for the next operational period.

S o u r c e

ICS Form 209 is typically obtained at the Agency Administrator Briefing (if available).

The Planning Section Chief obtains copies of form for the Situation Unit Leader and Resources Unit Leader.

Make sure information is also shared with other members of the Command and General Staff. It is good information for determining overall scope of the incident.

Topic   Incident Intelligence Data

Key Points

P u r p o s e

GIS data is used to display and analyze current and projected situations. Detailed mapping data and GIS data are used for displaying and analyzing current and projected situations.

Source

GIS data is obtained at the Agency Administrator Briefing. The Situation Unit Leader is responsible for display generation.

Topic   ICS Form 201 – Incident Briefing

ICS Form 201 – Incident Briefing

- **Purpose: Provides basic information regarding the incident status situation and resources**
- **Source: Typically prepared by initial IC and obtained from outgoing personnel at the Initial IC's Briefing**
- **Planning Section Chief Responsibilities: Ensure the form is up-to-date, SITL uses the map and summary of current actions while the RESL uses the organization and resources summary**

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-25

Key Points

P u r p o s e

Used when the incident transitions from Initial Action to an Incident Management Team, ICS Form 201 provides basic information regarding the incident status situation and resources allocated to the incident.

S o u r c e

It is typically prepared by initial Incident Commander and obtained from outgoing personnel at the Initial Incident Commander's Briefing.

S t r u c t u r e

ICS 201 is a four-part form:

- Map
- Summary of current actions
- Current organization
- Resources summary

The form is typically prepared by the initial Incident Commander and obtained from outgoing personnel at the Initial Incident Commander's Briefing. It is the responsibility of the Planning Section Chief to ensure the form is up to date and assist with any necessary updating. The Situation Unit uses the map and summary of current actions while the Resources Unit Leader uses the organization and resources summary.

Topic   Current Incident Action Plan

Key Points

Purpose

The current IAP provides information for the current operational period. It should be available if transitioning from another team.

Sources

The current IAP can be obtained from outgoing IMT.

It is the Planning Section Chief's responsibility to obtain enough copies for Command and General Staff, as well as to obtain corrected copies and background information.

Topic   Strategic and Other Types of Planning

Strategic and Other Types of Planning

Visual 5-27

Key Points

Topic   Strategic Planning

Key Points

The Incident Management Team and Agency Administrator develop a Strategic Plan for the incident that considers overall incident strategy and management. The Strategic Plan can be communicated orally between the Agency Administrator and Incident Management Team.

The Agency Administrator or Executive, the Delegation of Authority Letter or Letter of Direction, and previous Incident Commanders all provide information that may help to determine the best strategy to use.

Topic   Evaluating Strategy

Evaluating Strategy

- Use briefings to help confirm the validity and appropriateness of the strategy
  - Is the information correct and current?
  - Are the assumptions realistic?
  - What alternatives were NOT selected?
  - Why were they not selected?
  - What conditions have changed?

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-29

Key Points

Topic   Changes to Strategy

Changes to Strategy

- **Considerations that would require a change include:**
  - **Incident moves beyond predictions**
  - **Expenses exceed approval**
  - **Resources or materials not available**
  - **New opportunity to change approach**
  - **Change in political climate**
- **Provide other examples…**

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-30

Key Points

The incoming Incident Commander should be in agreement with the current objectives and strategy. This may not always be the case with Federalized incidents.

Topic   Elements of a Contingency Plan

Key Points

Elements of a Contingency Plan include:

- Problem Statement

  - Clearly defines the problem based on current situation

  - Defines the need for additional actions

  - Identifies the point at which the plan would be implemented

  - Example: a multi-casualty situation at this festival, with 10 or more victims

- Objectives

  - Identifies specific objectives this plan will add to the incident

  - Example: provide for pre-hospital care of the injured and care for fatalities

- Resources or Pre-tactical Actions

  - Defines the resources needed to carry out this Contingency Plan

  - Defines the pre-tactical actions needed to be taken before plan is implemented

  - Example: request the following resources: 1 Battalion Chief, 5 Engines, 1 Truck, 5 ALS and 5 BLS Ambulances, EMS Supervisor, 10 Law Enforcement Officers, 2 Law Enforcement Supervisors and a Medical Examiner

Topic   Elements of a Contingency Plan (cont.)

Elements of a Contingency Plan (cont.)

- **Tactical Actions**
  - **Identifies the action point and defines any pre-identified specific tactical actions**
- **Location**
  - **Defines any pre-identified locations for resources to report**
- **Appendix**
  - **Provides contact information for specific people**

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-32

Key Points

Tactical Actions

- Identifies the trigger point (when to implement the plan)

- Defines any pre-identified specific Tactical Actions to be taken in the Contingency Plan

- Example: establish Medical Branch, with Triage, Treatment, Transportation, and Morgue Groups

Location

- Defines any pre-identified locations for resources to report

- Example: resources to respond to Staging at 26th and T St.

Appendix

Appendix provides any needed phone numbers, cell phone numbers, contact information for specific people, resources needed, or any other important information needed to carry out this Contingency Plan.

Topic   Other Types of Plans
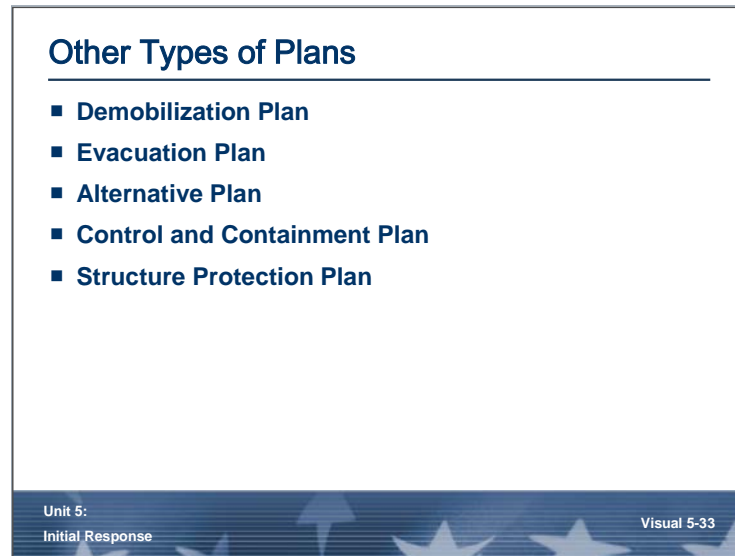
Key Points

The Planning Section gets involved in the development of other types of plans such as:

- Alternative Plans
- Evacuation Plans
- Control and Containment Plans
- Structure Protection Plans
- Demobilization Plans (discussed separately)

Topic   Objectives Review

Objectives Review

1. *What items should be in the Planning Section Chief Kit?*

2. *What kind of information will the Planning Section Chief receive from the initial briefings?*

3. *What key documents should the Planning Section Chief obtain?*

4. *What are the elements of a contingency plan?*

5. *What other types of plans might the Planning Section Chief be involved in?*

Unit 5:
Initial Response   Visual 5-34

Key Points

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the information gathered from initial meetings, briefings, and documents.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe categories of items to carry in the Planning Section Chief Kit

- Describe items of information that the Planning Section Chief will receive from the initial briefings

- List the key documents that the Planning Section Chief should obtain

- List the elements of a Contingency Plan

- List the types of plans the Planning Section Chief might be involved in