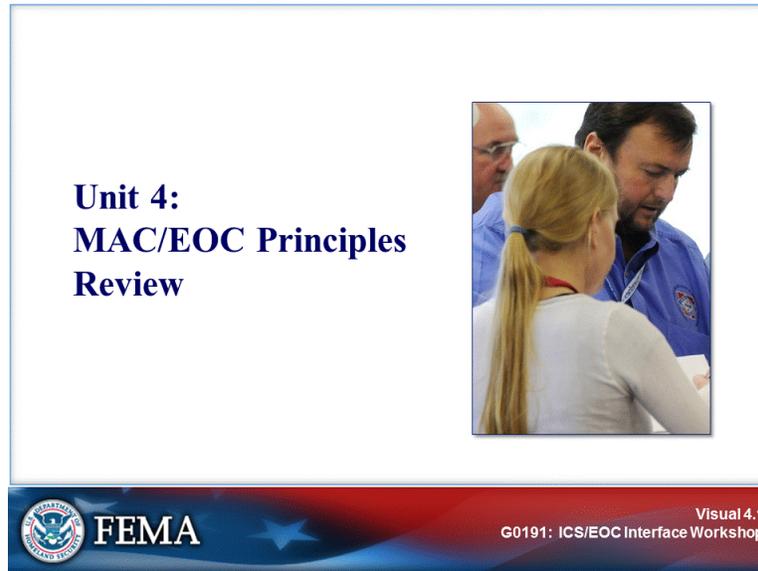# UNIT 4. MAC/EOC PRINCIPLES REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.1

Key Points

This unit reviews Multiagency Coordination (MAC) System/Emergency Operations Center (EOC) principles.

You can obtain additional information in the following Emergency Management Institute courses:

- IS-0701: NIMS Multiagency Coordination Systems
- IS-0702: NIMS Public Information Systems
- IS-0703: NIMS Resource Management
- IS-0775: EOC Management and Operations

INTRODUCTION

Visual 4.2

Key Points

The unit objectives are listed on the visual.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.3
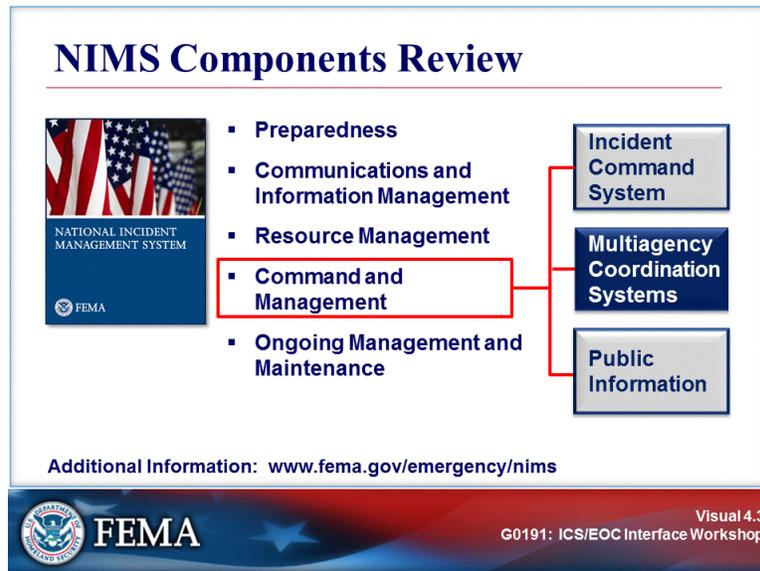
Key Points

To review, NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent, nationwide approach to domestic incident management.

Multiagency Coordination Systems are one component within the NIMS Command and Management element.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.4

Key Points

To understand Multiagency Coordination Systems, it is important to first review the difference between command and coordination.

NIMS defines **command** as:

The act of directing, ordering, or controlling by virtue of **explicit** statutory, regulatory, or delegated authority.

Discussion Question: Who has the explicit authority for the management of all incident operations?

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.5

Key Points

Delegation of Authority

- An Incident Commander's scope of authority is derived:
  - o From existing laws and agency policies and procedures, and/or
  - o Through a delegation of authority from the agency administrator or elected official.

- A delegation of authority:
  - o Grants authority to carry out specific functions.
  - o Is issued by the chief elected official, chief executive officer, or agency administrator in writing or verbally.
  - o Allows the Incident Commander to assume command.
  - o Does NOT relieve the granting authority of the ultimate responsibility for the incident.

- Whether it is granted in writing or verbally, the authorities granted remain with the Incident Commander until such time as the incident is terminated, or a relief shift Incident Commander is appointed, or the Incident Commander is relieved of his or her duties for just cause.

- A delegation of authority may not be required if the Incident Commander is acting within his or her existing authorities or under a pre-established delegation in the Emergency Operations Plan.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.6

Key Points

NIMS defines the role of multiagency coordination as follows:

Multiagency coordination is <u>process</u> that allows all levels of government and all disciplines to work together more efficiently and effectively. Multiagency coordination occurs across the different disciplines involved in incident management, across jurisdictional lines, or across levels of government. MAC Systems may be put in motion regardless of the location, personnel titles, organizational structure, or when activated.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.7

Key Points

Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Systems provide the architecture to support coordination for:

- Incident prioritization.
- Critical resource allocation.
- Communications systems integration.
- Information coordination.

The elements of MAC Systems include:

- Facilities.
- Equipment.
- Personnel.
- Procedures.
- Communications.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.8

MAC Systems: Elements

MAC System elements include:
- Multiagency Coordination Groups.
- Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).
- On-Scene Command Structures.
- Resource Centers.
- Dispatch Centers.

Visual 4.8
G0191: ICS/EOC Interface Workshop

Key Points

MAC System elements include:

- **Multiagency Coordination Groups**—Agencies, such as emergency management agencies, are used to facilitate incident management and policy coordination. MAC Groups are typically used when incidents cross disciplinary or jurisdictional boundaries or involve complex incident management scenarios. Examples include Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups, Departmental Emergency Operations Centers (DEOCs), and Joint Field Offices (JFOs).

- **Emergency Operations Centers**—EOCs are the physical locations at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities normally takes place.

- **On-Scene Command Structures** (e.g., Single and Unified Command, Area Command, and Unified Area Command)—Multiagency coordination takes place at the incident scene through the organizational options of Unified Command and Unified Area Command and the Liaison Officer positions.

- **Resource Centers**—Resource centers at the State and Federal levels reach out to multiple agencies for resources to support incidents.

- **Dispatch Centers**—Dispatch centers have the authority to request resources from immediate mutual-aid agencies to support the concepts of dispatching the closest forces and total mobility.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.9

Key Points

Together, the following entities form a Multiagency Coordination System:

- On-Scene Command
- Resource Coordination Centers
- Emergency Operations Centers/Dispatch
- Coordination Groups

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.10

Key Points

The type, size, complexity, and probable duration of incident operations determine the level of complexity for Multiagency Coordination Systems. MAC Systems:

- May be as simple as a teleconference.
- May require an assembled group and associated support systems.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.11

Key Points

MAC Systems/EOCs may include the following functions:

- **Situation Assessment:** Collection, processing, and display of all information needed including consolidating agency/jurisdiction situation reports, obtaining supplemental information, and preparing maps and status boards.

- **Incident Priority Determination:** Establishing the priorities among ongoing incidents within the defined area of responsibility is another component of MAC system. Typically, a process or procedure is established to coordinate on-scene responders to prioritize the incident demands for critical resources.

- **Critical Resource Acquisition and Allocation:** Managing scarce resources, in line with incident priorities. Resource management includes identifying and acquiring needed resources in addition to allocating existing or known resources.

- **Support of Relevant Incident Management Policies and Interagency Activities:** Coordinating, supporting, and assisting with policy-level decisions and interagency activities relevant to incident management activities, policies, priorities, and strategies.

- **Coordination With Other Operations Centers/MAC Systems:** Establishing systems to communicate and coordinate with other MAC systems at the same level, the level above, and the level below.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.11 (Continued)

- **Coordination With Elected and Appointed Officials:** Keeping elected and appointed officials at all levels of government informed. Maintaining the awareness and support of elected and appointed officials of jurisdictions within the affected area is extremely important, as scarce resources may need to move from one agency's or jurisdiction's incident(s) to another of higher priority.

- **Coordination of Summary Information:** By virtue of the situation assessment function, personnel implementing the multiagency coordination procedures may provide summary information on incidents within their area of responsibility, and provide agency/jurisdictional contacts for media and other interested agencies.

MAC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.12

Key Points

The following operational priorities guide decisionmaking throughout the MAC System:

- Life safety
- Incident stabilization
- Property/environmental conservation

MAC/EOC organizations use these priorities at the policy level. Incident Commanders apply these priorities to the development of incident objectives.

EOC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.13

Key Points

The purpose of the EOC is to provide a central location from which government at any level can provide interagency coordination and executive decisionmaking in support of the incident response.

- **Local Emergency Operations Center:** Coordinates information and resources to support local incident management activities.

- **Incident Command:** Performs primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions. The Incident Commander is located at an Incident Command Post at the incident scene.

EOC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.14

Key Points

The advantages of a single EOC location include:

- Information management and development of a common operating picture.

- Easier verification of information. The EOC staff can compile the information reported from various sources and confirm that it is consistent and accurate. This helps ensure the common operating picture is correct.

- Simplified long-term operation.

- Increased continuity.

- Better access to all available information.

- Easier identification and deployment of available resources.

EOC PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

Visual 4.15

Key Points

EOC organization and staffing are flexible, but should be able to perform the following functions:

- Coordination.
- Communications.
- Resource dispatching and tracking.
- Information collection, analysis, and dissemination.

There are four main ways to organize an EOC:

- By **major management activities**. Includes separate groups for policy, coordination, operations, and resources.
- Using an **ICS structure**. Consists of sections for operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration.
- Using an **ESF structure**. Assigns emergency support functions under the typical ICS staff positions.
- Using the "generic" **MAC Group structure**. Made up of organization, agency, or jurisdiction representatives who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds.

NIMS does not dictate a specific structure for Multiagency Coordination Entities such as EOCs.

MANAGING PUBLIC INFORMATION

Visual 4.16

Key Points

- The **Public Information Officer (PIO)** is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The PIO develops accurate and complete information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external consumption. The PIO may also perform a key public information-monitoring role. Only one incident PIO should be designated. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved. The Incident Commander must approve the release of all incident-related information.

- The PIO coordinates through the **Joint Information Center (JIC)**. The JIC is a facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media at the scene of the incident. Public information officials from all participating agencies should collocate at the JIC.

(Source: NIMS)

MANAGING PUBLIC INFORMATION

Visual 4.17

Key Points

Discussion Questions:

- **Why is the JIC a critical component within the Multiagency Coordination System?**

- **What unique ICS/EOC interface challenges relate to managing public information?**

MANAGING PUBLIC INFORMATION

Visual 4.18

Key Points

A MAC System/EOC must coordinate and integrate messages with on-scene PIOs and other agencies.

The Joint Information System (JIS):

- Is not a single physical location, but rather is a **coordination framework** that incorporates the on-scene Public Information Officer with other PIOs who may be located at the JIC, EOC, or another coordination center.

- Integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, timely information during crisis or incident operations.

- Provides a structure and system for:
  - o Developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages.
  - o Developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the Incident Commander.
  - o Advising the Incident Commander concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort.
  - o Controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

(Source: NIMS)

MANAGING PUBLIC INFORMATION

Visual 4.19
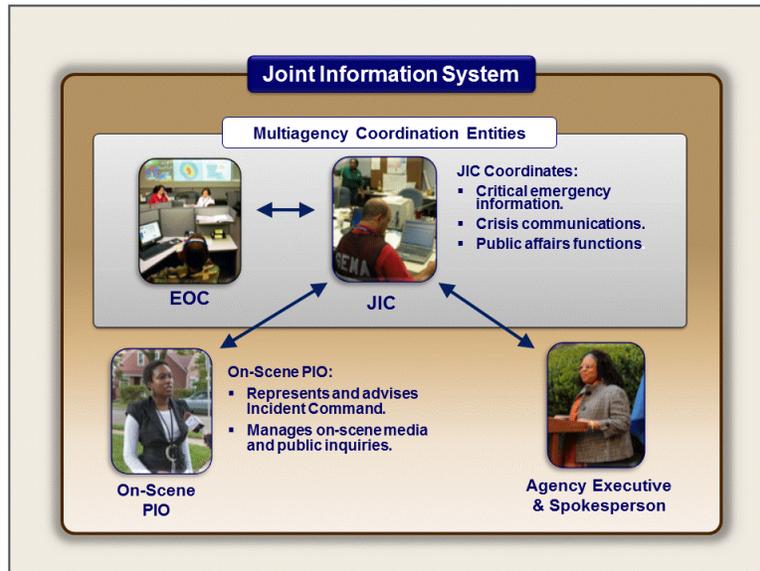
Key Points

The EOC and JIC are entities within the MAC system. The JIC coordinates critical emergency information, crisis communications, and public affairs functions with:

- The EOC.
- The on-scene Public Information Officer.
- Agency executives and spokespersons.

The Joint Information System is a framework that encompasses all of these entities.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Visual 4.20

Key Points

<u>Discussion Question</u>: What agencies may be part of the MAC System?

<u>Discussion Question</u>: What activities are being coordinated?

UNIT SUMMARY

Visual 4.21

Unit Summary

- A MAC System provides the architecture to support coordination for incident prioritization, critical resource allocation, communications systems integration, and information coordination.
- The EOC is the physical location where MAC System actions can be taken to:
  - Establish policies to protect people and property.
  - Support the on-scene Incident Command with information and resources.
  - Plan for the community's return to normalcy.

Visual 4.21
G0191: ICS/EOC Interface Workshop

Key Points

This unit covered the following key points:

- A MAC System provides the architecture to support coordination for incident prioritization, critical resource allocation, communications systems integration, and information coordination.

- The EOC is the physical location where MAC System actions can be taken to:
  - o Establish policies to protect the population and property.
  - o Support the on-scene Incident Command with information and resources.
  - o Plan for the community's return to normalcy.

Do you have any questions or comments about the material covered in this unit?