
Unit 1: Course Introduction

STUDENT GUIDE

Objectives

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

- Identify the course objective and position-specific resource materials for the position of Planning Section Chief (PSC)
- Describe the course objective
- Explain the purpose of Position Task Books (PTBs)

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, handouts, an exercise, and discussion.

Content from the Course Introduction will not specifically be tested though a quiz or the final exam. Instructors will evaluate students' initial understanding of the Planning Section Chief position through the facilitation of Exercise 1.

The purpose of the introductory exercise (Exercise 1) is to identify possible commonalities between the functions of a Planning Section Chief and those of the students' current positions. In break-out groups, students will use the Planning Section Chief Position Task Book to list common responsibilities, roles, and/or duties between their current position and that of a Planning Section Chief. They will then present their findings to the rest of the class. The exercise is intended to not only help the students relate to the position of Planning Section Chief but to provide a brief introduction to the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Section Chief to help them to become more familiar with the Planning Section Chief Position Task Book, and to encourage them to actively participate in the course.

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	1 hour 30 minutes
Exercise 1	30 minutes
Total Time	2 hours

Topic

Course Title Slide



Key Points

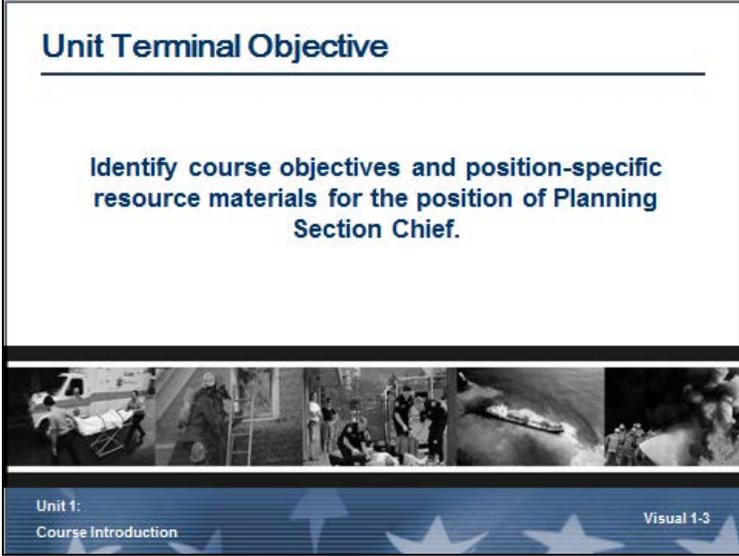
Topic

Unit Title Slide



Key Points

Topic Unit Terminal Objective



Unit Terminal Objective

Identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Planning Section Chief.

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Visual 1-3

The slide features a blue header with the title 'Unit Terminal Objective' and a horizontal line. Below the line is the objective text. At the bottom, there is a blue footer with white stars and the text 'Unit 1: Course Introduction' on the left and 'Visual 1-3' on the right. A row of five small images is positioned above the footer, showing various emergency scenes: a person in a stretcher, a person climbing a ladder, a person in a confined space, a boat on water, and a person in a dark environment.

Key Points

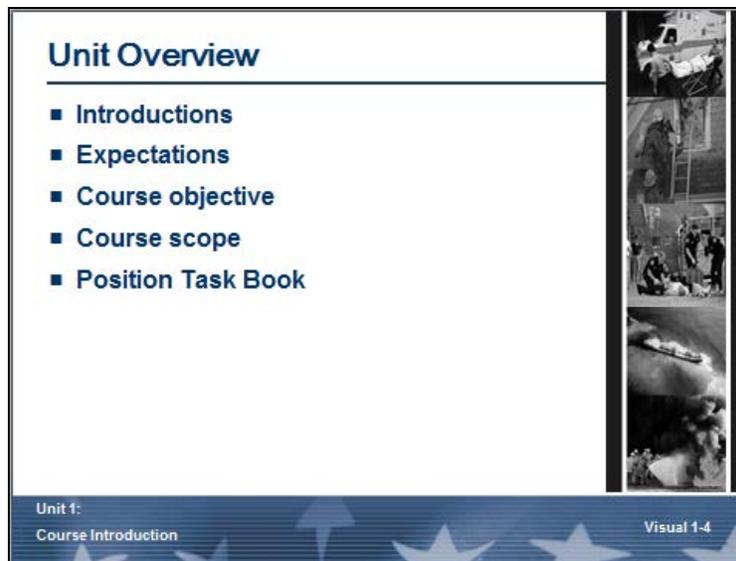
Unit Terminal Objective

Identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Planning Section Chief.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe the course objectives
- Explain the purpose of Position Task Books

Topic Unit Overview

**Key Points**

Scope Statement

Through this unit, students will learn the objectives of the course, be instructed on the use and purpose of Position Task Books and receive Planning Section Chief versions of these resources.

Topic Introductions

Introductions

- Instructor and student introductions
- Incident response experience
- Reasons for becoming a Planning Section Chief



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Visual 1-5

Key Points

Administrative Concerns

This may be the appropriate time to address any administrative issues, such as the following:

- Lodging
- Transportation
- Smoking policy
- Message location and available telephones
- Restrooms and drinking fountains
- Other local information

Topic Expectations



Key Points

Topic

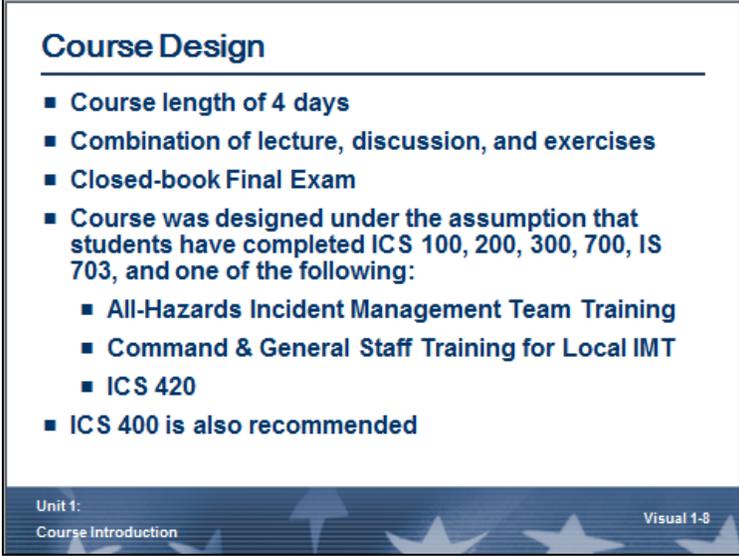
Course Objective

Course Objective

Upon completion of this course, students will demonstrate, through exercises and a final exam, an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and capabilities of an effective Planning Section Chief



Key Points

Topic Course Design

Course Design

- Course length of 4 days
- Combination of lecture, discussion, and exercises
- Closed-book Final Exam
- Course was designed under the assumption that students have completed ICS 100, 200, 300, 700, IS 703, and one of the following:
 - All-Hazards Incident Management Team Training
 - Command & General Staff Training for Local IMT
 - ICS 420
- ICS 400 is also recommended

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Visual 1-8

Key Points**Course Methodology**

Through a combination of lecture, discussion, and exercises, students will be provided the knowledge to meet the objectives of the course. Student interaction and participation will be integral to this process.

Closed-Book Final Exam

In order to receive a certificate of completion for the course, students must obtain a 70% or higher on the final exam. The final exam will be closed-book, 1 hour will be allotted for its completion, and the final exam's questions will be based on the Unit Enabling Objectives.

As it is a closed-book final exam, students should be encouraged to study the course materials during their time away from training. Content from Unit 1 will not be tested in the final exam.

The course was designed under the assumption that students would have completed ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 300, ICS 700, and IS 703. ICS 400 is recommended. Students should also have completed one of the following courses:

- All-Hazards Incident Management Team course
- Command & General Staff Functions for Local Incident Management Teams (IMT)

- ICS 420

The course material was not developed to substantively delve into the topics covered in those courses; rather, this is a position-specific course focusing on the duties and responsibilities of one member of IMT in an all-hazards context.

Topic All-Hazards Curriculum

All-Hazards Curriculum

- ICS origins in fire
- All-Hazards
- The fundamentals of the job are the same regardless of incident type



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Visual 1-9

Key Points

Before the 9/11 attacks, ICS was exercised nearly exclusively on fire-based incidents. Recognizing the applicability and sincere need for ICS principles across incident-response disciplines, an “all-hazards” approach to training has been introduced and embraced.

As ICS and IMTs transition from a fire-specific context, it will be important to remember where the concepts originated. At this time, many examples, stories, discussions, etc. will be fire-based, and will continue to be until ICS is truly integrated into an All-Hazards perspective.

The curriculum was validated by a diverse cadre of course developers with backgrounds as Planning Section Chiefs.

A Planning Section Chief needs to fundamentally possess the same core knowledge, skills, and abilities whether they are responding to a fire, an oil spill, a mass-casualty incident, or other incident. In other words, regardless of the hazard, discipline, or incident, the essential job of a Planning Section Chief is the same.

Therefore, students should not be deterred if one “hazard” from the list is spoken to more than another. Students can still obtain critical insight to the position and should add examples from their own disciplines to the discourse.

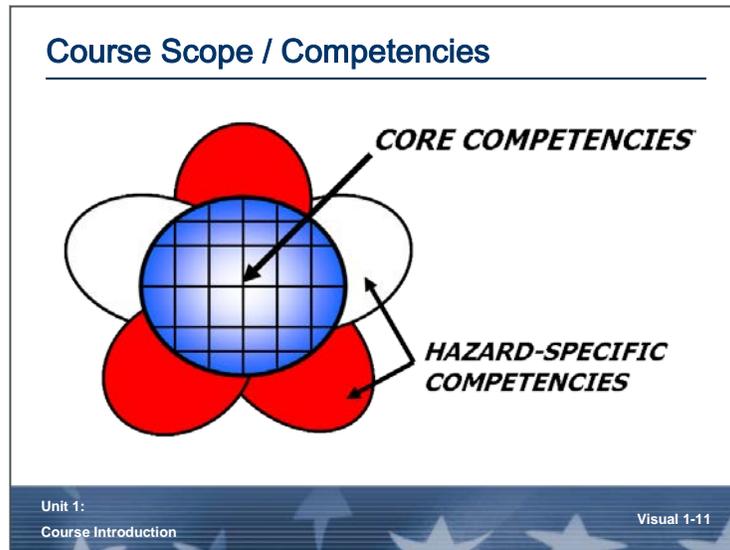
Topic Context of the Training

**Key Points**

This course will focus training at a high-level of application, or what has been referred to as the 1% solution (i.e., management of the incidents that participants and their IMT's most likely handle 1% of the time, such as incidents on the scale of hurricanes, mass-casualty incidents, etc).

Focusing training at this level is not irrelevant, however, even if 99% of the time the incidents you and your IMTs manage are of a much smaller, local type.

Furthermore, in today's reality, there is a strong possibility that a Type III local or State-level team may have to respond to a Type I disaster until a Type I team can respond.

Topic Course Scope and Competencies**Key Points****Competency**

A broad description that groups core behaviors necessary to perform a specific function.

The Flower Diagram

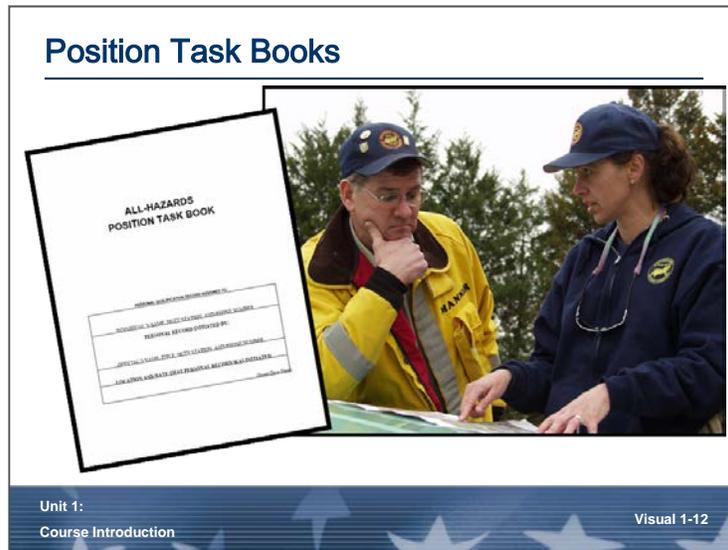
The Flower Diagram illustrates the concept that successful performance of the tasks, duties, activities in any position requires both core and incident-specific competencies.

- Core competencies are the competencies required of a Planning Section Chief regardless of discipline
- Hazard-specific competencies are those required to perform in a particular discipline, such as law enforcement, fire, public health, HAZMAT, EMS, public works, etc.
- The center of the flower represents the core competencies of the position
- The petals represent the hazard-specific competencies associated with specific disciplines
- You cannot be competent as a Planning Section Chief to ensure qualification

This course will help to establish core competencies (center of the flower) for the Planning Section Chief position. The hazard-specific competencies will have to be

developed through additional agency or discipline training, field training, and the completion of the Planning Section Chief Position Task Book, discussed on the next slide.

A different analogy to explain core and hazard-specific competencies is that the core competencies are like a basic driver's license, and hazard-specific competencies are like endorsements to the license. For example, while a basic driver's license qualifies you as a general driver, you would need special endorsements to drive a bus with passengers or an 18-wheel tractor-trailer.

Topic Position Task Books**Key Points**

Position Task Books are the primary tools for observing and evaluating the performance of trainees aspiring to a new position within ICS. PTBs allow documentation of a trainee's ability to perform each task, as prescribed by the position. Successful completion of all tasks is the basis for recommending certification.

The use of PTBs originated in the Federal wildland fire environment. Starting around 2004, the PTBs were updated and improved to reflect the competencies necessary of the ICS positions. These competencies are all-hazards, meaning that they are the same across disciplines, whether you come from a background of HAZMAT, firefighting, law enforcement, etc.

Demonstration of proficiency can be performed:

- On an incident as a trainee
- In a simulation
- In training, depending on the type of task being executed
- The "code" (see the "Code" column in the PTB) assigned to the task indicates in which of these three areas the task must be demonstrated or performed.
- PTBs are organized into a hierarchy of:

- Competencies—A broad description that groups core behaviors necessary to perform a specific function
- Behaviors—A general description of an observable activity or action demonstrated by an individual in a particular context
- Tasks—A specific description of a unit of work activity that is a logical and necessary action in the performance of a behavior; how the behavior is demonstrated or performed in a particular context
- Again, these are signed-off by qualified evaluators

A given agency or department must individually adopt PTBs as its training standard. PTBs are an integral part of the "performance-based" system Federal agencies have adopted for emergency response training. In order to earn a PTB, a trainee must first successfully complete the requisite training courses for that position.



Key Points

Topic Objectives Review

Objectives Review

1. *What is the course objective?*
2. *What is the purpose of Position Task Books?*



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Visual 1-15

Key Points

Unit Terminal Objective

Identify course objectives and position-specific resource materials for the position of Planning Section Chief.

Unit Enabling Objectives

- Describe the course objective
- Explain the purpose of Position Task Books