Unit 3: Overview of Resources Unit

Objectives

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

- Describe the function of the Resources Unit and the roles and responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader (RESL)

- Describe the purpose of the Resources Unit

- List the functions of the Resources Unit

- Describe the main responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader

- List the members of the Incident Management Team (IMT) with whom the Resources Unit Leader interacts most frequently

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, an exercise, and discussion.

Content from Unit 3 will be tested during the final exam. Instructors will evaluate students' initial understanding of the Resources Unit through the facilitation of Exercise 2.

The purpose of this exercise is to provide participants with an opportunity to practice using two of the basic forms of documentation employed in the Resources Unit, ICS Form 211 – Check-in List and ICS Form 219 – T-Card. The focus will be the incident check-in process and using the forms correctly.

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
Exercise 2	1 hour 30 minutes
Total Time	**3 hours 30 minutes**

Topic Unit Title Slide

Unit 3
Overview of Resources Unit

Visual 3-1

Key Points

Scope Statement

Through this unit, students will gain a general understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Resources Unit. Through discussion of the check-in and resources tracking process inherent in the unit, students will gain insight into the key elements of the Resources Unit.

Topic   Unit Terminal Objective

Unit Terminal Objective

Describe the function of the Resources Unit and the roles and responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader (RESL)

Unit 3:
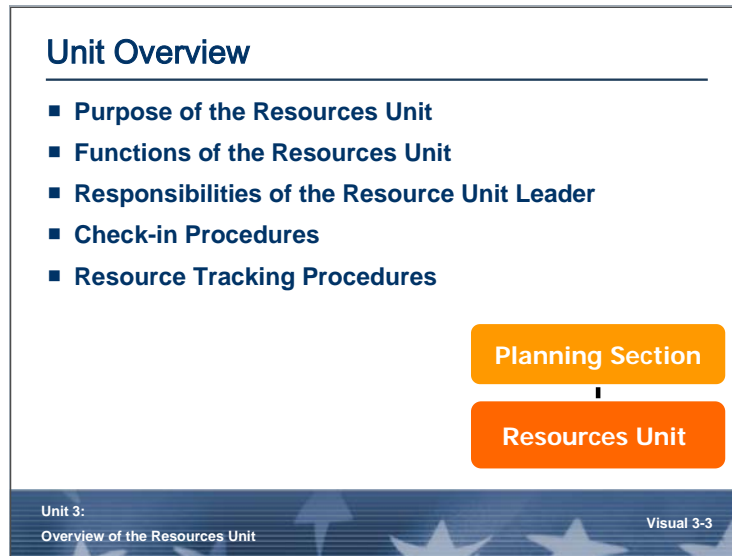Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-2

Key Points

U n i t   T e r m i n a l   O b j e c t i v e

Describe the function of the Resources Unit and the roles and responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader.

U n i t   E n a b l i n g   O b j e c t i v e s

• Describe the purpose of the Resources Unit

• List the functions of the Resources Unit

• Describe the main responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader

• List the members of the Incident Management Team with whom the Resources Unit Leader interacts most frequently

Topic   Unit Overview

Unit Overview

- ■ **Purpose of the Resources Unit**
- ■ **Functions of the Resources Unit**
- ■ **Responsibilities of the Resource Unit Leader**
- ■ **Check-in Procedures**
- ■ **Resource Tracking Procedures**

Planning Section

Resources Unit

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit

Visual 3-3

Key Points

- Purpose of the Resources Unit

- Functions of the Resources Unit

- Responsibilities of the Resource Unit Leader

- Check-in Procedures

- Resource Tracking Procedures

Topic   Purpose of the Resources Unit

Key Points

The Resources Unit makes certain that all personnel and other resources have checked in at the incident.

Resources consist of personnel, crews/teams, and equipment available for assignment during an incident.

The Resources Unit should have a system for keeping track of the current location and status of all assigned resources and should maintain a master list of all resources committed to incident operations.

The Resources Unit and staff maintain the status of resources allocated to the incident. Status should reflect whether these resources are:

• **Assigned:** Checked in and supporting the incident

• **Available:** Checked in and ready for a specific work detail or function

• **Out of Service:** Allocated to an incident but unable to function for mechanical, rest, or personal reasons, or because their condition makes them unusable

Typically, the individual who changes the status of a resource is responsible for promptly informing the Resources Unit.
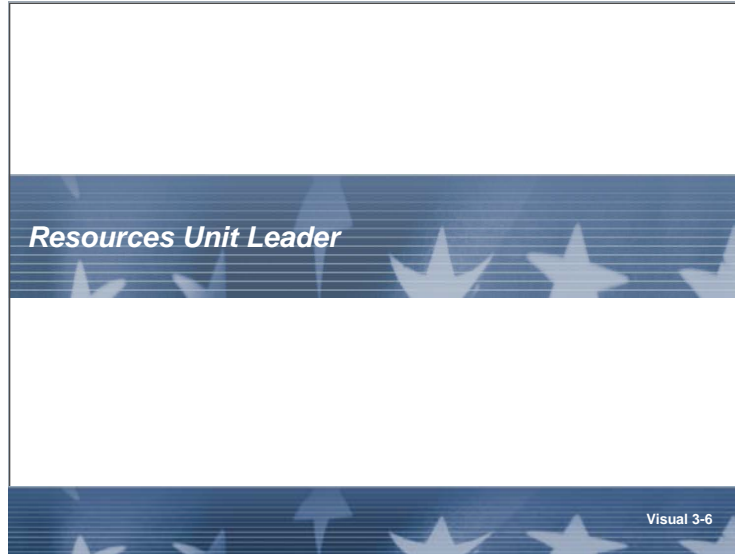
Topic   Resources Unit Functions

Key Points

Functions of the Resources Unit include:

- Overseeing check-in of all resources

- Maintaining status-keeping system of all resources

- Maintaining a master list of all resources

- Assembling the Incident Action Plan

Topic   Resources Unit Leader

Resources Unit Leader

Visual 3-6

Key Points

Topic Resources Unit Leader

Key Points

The Resources Unit Leader is responsible for maintaining the status of all assigned resources at an incident. This is achieved by overseeing the check-in of all resources and maintaining a status-keeping system that indicates the current location and status of all resources (key supervisory personnel, primary and support resources, etc.).

Basic duties of the Resources Unit Leader include:

•   Planning

•   Coordinating

•   Managing

•   Delegating

See Handout 3-1: Resources Unit Leader Checklist.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader

Responsibilities of RESL

Obtain Briefing from Planning Section Chief:

- **Retrieve resource status information**
- **Respond to requests about status and location**
- **Obtain a copy of ICS Form 201**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-8

Key Points

One of the first things the Resources Unit Leader will need to do is obtain an initial briefing from the Planning Section Chief. During the briefing, the Resources Unit Leader will:

- Retrieve resource status information

- Obtain the status of all operational resources

- Respond to requests about status and location

  - Situation Unit Leader (SITL) for ICS Form 209

  - Operations Section Chief (OSC) and Planning Section Chief (PSC) for ICS Form 215

  - Any others for any reason

- Obtain a copy of ICS Form 201

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Key Points

One major responsibility of a Resources Unit Leader is to organize, staff, and supervise the unit. This responsibility includes:

• Ordering and arranging for facilities and equipment

• Requesting staff as necessary

The number of unit personnel depends on:

• The size of the incident

• The complexity of the incident

• The number of resources assigned to the incident

• The kinds of resources assigned to the incident

• The stage of the incident (initial build-up; middle; demobilization)

The number of Status Check-in Recorders (SCKNs) needed is determined by:

• The number of established check-in locations

• The location of established check-in locations

• Operational periods (day or night)

Note that Status Check-in Recorders can help with demobilization.

Topic   Staffing Guidelines

Staffing Guidelines

Unit Position	Size of Incident (# of Divisions or Groups)				
	2	5	10	15	25
Resources Unit Leader	1	1	2	2	4
Status Check-in Recorder	1	2	3	3	5

Per Operational Period

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-10

Key Points

There can only be one Resources Unit Leader; however, there may be a need to have more than one qualified RESL on an incident. Make sure you have unity of command. Within the Resources Unit, only one RESL will lead the unit. For example, you may have incidents so large that one Resources Unit Leader may handle just the resource information needed for ICS Form 209.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Responsibilities of RESL (cont.)

- **Establish and maintain check-in function**
  - **Establish procedures**
  - **Collect and organize completed ICS Form 211-Check-in list**

See Handout 3-2: ICS Form 211 – Check-in List

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-11

Key Points

Another responsibility of the Resources Unit Leader is to establish and maintain the check-in function; this includes:

- Establishing procedures, identifying check-in locations, briefing the Status Check-in Recorder, and determining the reporting method

- Utilizing ICS Form 211 – Check-in List
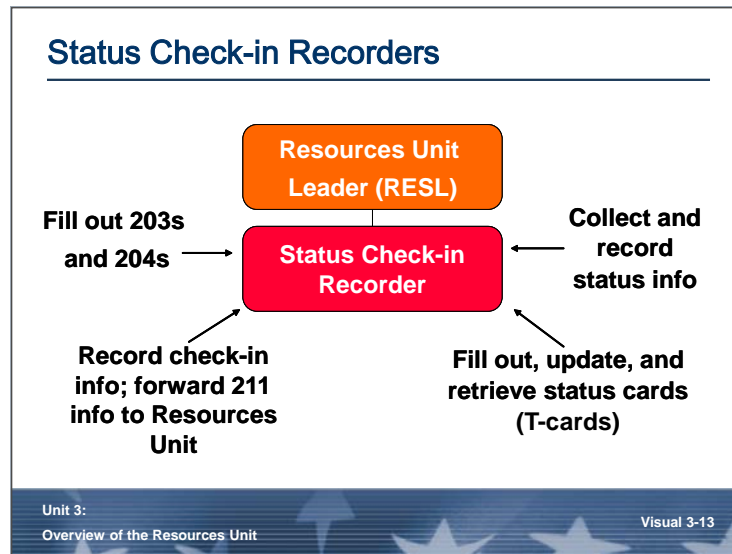
- Collecting and organizing completed Check-in Lists

Topic   Check-in

Key Points

Check-in is critical.

With large numbers of resources moving through the Staging Area, proper check-in may be difficult. If an adequate number of management resources are not assigned to the check-in function, new resources arriving onsite may easily move through the check-in area without actually checking in. Consequently, you may find yourself spending a lot of time catching up and trying to find out what has already taken place.

In order to avoid this, you will need to establish a system to provide order to the check-in process, and you will have to continue to review and refine that system and fill in any gaps.

Topic   Status Check-in Recorders

Status Check-in Recorders

Resources Unit Leader (RESL)

Status Check-in Recorder

Fill out 203s and 204s →

← Collect and record status info

Record check-in info; forward 211 info to Resources Unit

Fill out, update, and retrieve status cards (T-cards)

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit

Visual 3-13

Key Points

A Status Check-in Recorder reports to the Resources Unit Leader and assists with the accounting of all incident-assigned resources.

The basic tasks of a Status Check-in Recorder are to:

- Collect and record information about arriving resources on the ICS Form 211 – Check-in List

- Forward Check-in Lists to the Resources Unit

- Record resource status information on T-Cards

- Retrieve and update status cards

- File and perform other unit tasks as directed by the Resources Unit Leader

Status Check-in Recorders are the ones who collect and record information that needs to get back to the Resources Unit (if they are available); they can also assist in filling out the forms.

Topic   ICS Form 211 – Check-in List

Key Points

Personnel and equipment arriving at the incident check in at various incident locations.
Check-in consists of reporting specific information that is recorded on ICS Form 211 –
Check-in List.

Topic Check-in Locations

Check-In Locations

Where are some key check-in locations?

■ **Check-in may be established at multiple locations**

■ **Status Check-in Recorder should be assigned to each check-in location**

■ **Post signs at all locations so that everyone can find them**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit

Visual 3-15

Key Points

Check-in of resources and preparation of ICS Form 211 – Check-in Lists may be accomplished at various locations at the same time. If available, a Status Check-in Recorder should be assigned to each check-in location. Post signs at all locations so that everyone can find them.

Check-in Lists are provided to both the Resources Unit and the Finance/Administration Section. The Resources Unit maintains a master list of all equipment that has arrived and all personnel who have reported to the incident.

Topic   Check-in Procedures

Check-in Procedures

- **Determine method and frequency of reporting**
- **Monitor check-in activities**
- **Provide for personal and material needs**
- **Be aware of pitfalls, such as:**
  - **Not enough Status Check-in Recorders**
  - **Span-of-control is too large**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-16

Key Points

Some key considerations when developing a check-in procedure include:

- Frequency of reporting

- Transmittal methods

- Ensuring that the span-of-control is adequate

Check-in Reporting Methods

- Determine the frequency of reporting

- Monitor check-in activities

- Provide for personal and material needs

- Use a variety of transmittal methods, which may include:

  - Runner pick-up

  - Radio

  - Telephones or cellular phones

  - Electronics or computers

- ▪ Face-to-face communication

• Be aware of possible pitfalls such as not enough Status Check-in Recorders or the span-of-control growing too large.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Responsibilities of RESL (cont.)

■ **Establish and Maintain a Tracking System**

    ■ **Maintain Resource Status Cards (ICS Form 219) also known as T-Cards**

    ■ **Update status as needed**

    ■ **Add or remove cards as necessary**

See Handout 3-3: ICS Form 219 and Handout 3-4: Sample ICS Form 219

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-17

Key Points

Another responsibility of the Resources Unit Leader is to establish and maintain a tracking system for Resource Status Cards.

• Maintain ICS Form 219 – Resource Status Cards

• Update status, as necessary

• Add or remove cards, as necessary

You'll have to dig for information. To reconcile the current resources and the anticipated resources, go through each Division or Group and identify their resources. The Incident Action Plan is a useful resource for this task.

The Resources Unit Leader needs to consider the downtime of staff for safety reasons.

Topic ICS Form 219 – Resource Status Card

Key Points

Resource Status Cards are used by the Resources Unit to record the status and location of incident resources and personnel. Resource Status Cards provide a visual display of the status and location of resources assigned to the incident.

Resources must be categorized by capability and capacity across disciplines and they must be tracked continuously.

Transfer information from the ICS Form 211 – Check-in List to the ICS Form 219 – Resource Status Card for convenient display.

• Completed Resource Status Cards are filed in a rack called a Resources Locator

• They are color-coded by resource

Topic   ICS Form 219 (T-Card)

ICS Form 219 (T-Card)
──────────────────────────

219-1	GRAY	Header Card
219-2	GREEN	Crew/Team
219-3	ROSE	Engine
219-4	BLUE	Helicopter
219-5	WHITE	Personnel
219-6	ORANGE	Fixed-Wing
219-7	YELLOW	Equipment
219-8	TAN	Misc. Equipment/Task Force
219-10	LT PURPLE	Generic

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-19

Key Points

There are nine different color Resource Status Cards, commonly referred to as T-Cards. Each card is a different color and used for a different purpose. The format and content of information on each card will vary depending upon the purpose of the card.

Topic   T-Card Preparation

Key Points

Information to be placed on the cards may be obtained from several sources including, but not limited to:

• ICS Form 201 – ICS Briefing

• ICS Form 211 – Incident Check-in List

• ICS Form 210 – Status Change Card

• Agency supplied information

The Resource Locator may be used by all incident personnel as a tool for the status and location of incident resources, but the Status Check-in Recorder or Resources Unit Leader need to maintain control over changing information on cards, moving cards, etc.

Topic   T-Card Rack

Key Points

Depending on the incident or response (complexity, size, personnel, Resources Unit Leader, etc.), you may use ICS Form 219 – Resource Status Cards, electronic systems, or a combination of the two. It is beneficial for Resources Unit Leaders to learn both.

Completed Resource Status Cards are filed in a rack called a Resource Locator, sometimes also referred to as a Resource Rack or T-Card Rack.

Many teams are moving toward the digital world and away from the paper trail. This allows for an integrated database used for check-in, resource tracking, Incident Action Plan production, finance accounting, etc. There are variations on how the information can be processed and these depend on how the incident chooses to track the resources.

The advantage of the database is that you can easily sort the information. The manual method can serve as a backup in case any problems arise. If you are going to use the T-Cards, you need to put at least the minimal required information on them. Integrated databases or tables are superior for data integrity.

I-Suite and Conquest are two examples of computer programs that can help with tracking.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Key Points

The Resources Unit Leader also tracks the location and status of all tactical resources. Responsibilities include:

• Documenting changes of incident status and location on ICS Form 219

• Knowing availability and status of all resources

• Initiating order or request for resources

• Assigning incident formed Strike Teams and Task Forces

Topic   Strike Teams and Task Forces

Strike Teams and Task Forces

- **Strike Team**
    - **A set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established minimum number of personnel**
- **Task Force**
    - **A predetermined number of unlike resources working together under a Task Force Leader**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-23

Key Points

Strike Teams and Task Forces can be formed on the incident. When formed on the incident they must be disassembled prior to release from the incident.

The difference between a Strike Team and a Task Force is that a Strike Team is a group of like resources working together under a Strike Team Leader while a Task Force is a group of unlike resources working together under a Task Force Leader.

As the Planning Section Chief, you are likely going to have to remind the Operations Section Chief of span-of-control concerns. There is a reason for the limited number of lines on the ICS Form 204 – Assignment List. Ideally, each Task Force Leader or Strike Team Leader should have no more than three to seven direct reports. Note that law enforcement may have a higher span-of-control ratio, (e.g., 11–12 direct reports to each Strike Team Leader).

Topic   Incident Command System
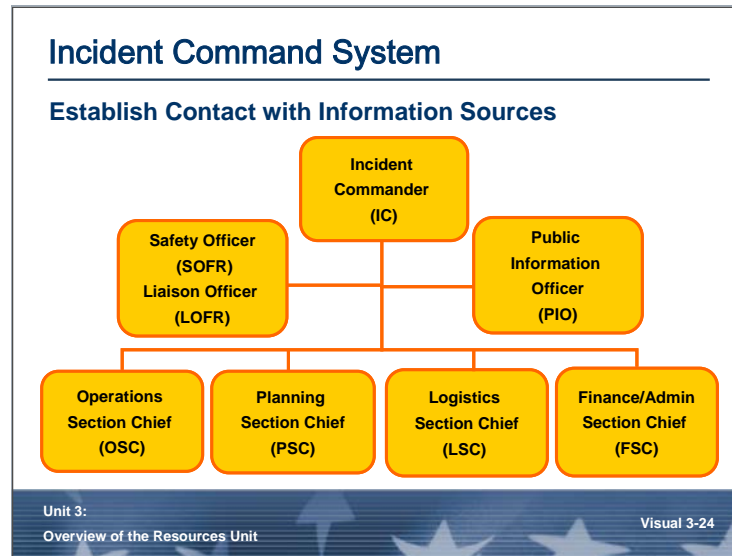
Key Points

The Resources Unit Leader must make direct contact with many positions in the organization. Incident organization and frequency of contacts will vary with the size and complexity of the incident.

- Command Staff

  - Incident Commander (IC)

  - Safety Officer (SOFR)

  - Public Information Officer (PIO)

  - Liaison Officer (LOFR)

- Operations Section

  - Operations Section Chief (OSC)

  - Staging Manager (STAM)

  - Air Operations Branch Director (AOBD)

  - Branch Directors

  - Division or Group Supervisors (DIVS)

- Planning Section

    ▪ Planning Section Chief (PSC)

    ▪ Situation Unit Leader (SITL)

    ▪ Documentation Unit Leader (DOCL)

    ▪ Demobilization Unit Leader (DMOB)

    ▪ Check-in and Status Recorder (Status Check-in Recorder)

    ▪ Technical Specialist (THSP)

- Logistics Section

    ▪ Logistics Section Chief (LSC)

    ▪ Service Branch

        ○ Communications Unit Leader (COML)

        ○ Medical Unit Leader (MEDL)

    ▪ Support Branch

        ○ Supply Unit Leader (SUPL)

        ○ Facilities Unit Leader (FACL)

        ○ Ground Support Unit Leader (GSUL)

        ○ Equipment Manager (EQPM)

- Finance/Administration Section

    ▪ Finance/Administration Section Chief (FSC)

    ▪ Cost Unit Leader (COST)

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Responsibilities of RESL (cont.)

■ **Assist in Preparation of the Incident Action Plan**
  ■ **Prepare ICS Form 203- Organization Assignment List**
    Prepare ICS Form 204- Assignment Lists
  ■ **Prepare ICS Form 207- Organizational Chart**
  ■ **Assist in preparing the ICS Form 215- Operational Planning Worksheet**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-25

Key Points

The Resources Unit Leader will also assist in the preparation of Incident Action Plan by:

• Preparing ICS Form 203 – Organization Assignment List and ICS Form 207 – Incident Organization Chart

  ▪ These forms are used to display the "who" on the incident

• Preparing ICS Form 204 – Assignment Lists

• Assisting in preparing ICS Form 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet

Topic   ICS Form 203 – Organization Assignment List

Key Points

The list provides Incident Command System personnel with information on the units that are currently activated and the names of the personnel staffing each position or unit. It is used to complete ICS Form 207 – Incident Organization Chart, which is posted at the Incident Command Post and in the Incident Action Plan.

The ICS Form 203 – Organization Assignment List is duplicated and included in the Incident Action Plan.

Topic   ICS Form 204 – Assignment List

See Handout 3-7: ICS Form 204

Key Points

The Assignment List is normally prepared by the Resources Unit using the guidance of:

- ICS Form 202 – Incident Objectives

- ICS Form 205 – Incident Radio Communications Plan

- ICS Form 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet

- ICS Form 215A – Incident Action Plan Safety Analysis

- The Operations Section Chief

ICS Form 204 – Assignment List must be approved by the Planning Section Chief. When approved, it is included in the Incident Action Plan.

The Assignment Lists are used to inform Operations Section personnel of incident assignments. Once the assignments are agreed to by the Incident Command and General Staff, the assignment information is given to the appropriate Units and Divisions. Each Division or Group will have its own page. ICS Form 204:

- Identifies supervisors and contacts of given Division or Group for one operational period

- Identifies "TYPE," "KIND," and "NUMBER" of assigned resources for a given Division or Group for one operational period
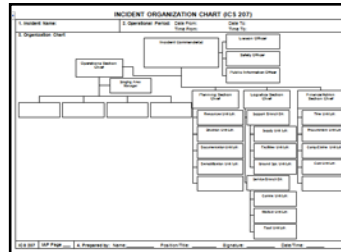
- Identifies transportation method, location, and timing

- Identifies work assignments for given Division or Group for one operational period

- Provides special instructions and additional information (communications) for a given Division or Group for one operational period

The list provides Incident Command System personnel with information on the Units that are currently activated and the names of the personnel staffing each position or Unit. It is used to complete ICS Form 207 – Incident Organization Chart, which is posted on the Incident Command Post.

The ICS Form 203 – Organization Assignment List is duplicated and included in the Incident Action Plan. In some cases, assignments may be communicated via radio.

Topic   ICS Form 207 – Incident Organization Chart

See Handout 3-8: ICS Form 207

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-28

Key Points

ICS Form 207 – Incident Organization Chart is used to indicate which Incident Command System organization elements are currently activated and the names of personnel staffing each element. Personnel responsible for managing organizational positions are listed in each box as appropriate.

ICS Form 207 is prepared by the Resources Unit and posted along with the other displays at the Incident Command Post. A chart is completed for each operational period and updated when organizational changes occur. When completed, the chart is posted on the display board located at the Incident Command Post and in the Incident Action Plan.
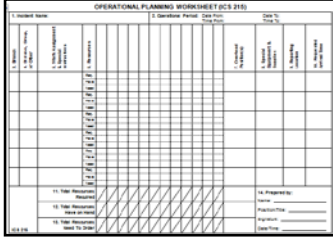
ICS Form 207 WS (wall-sized-chart) is a large chart, used primarily to post on the Incident Command Post display board for better visibility.

Topic   Operational Planning Worksheet

See Handout 3-9: ICS Form 215

Key Points

The purpose of ICS Form 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet is to communicate the decisions made during the Planning Meeting concerning resource assignments. ICS Form 215 is used by the Resources Unit to complete Assignment Lists and by the Logistics Section Chief for ordering resources for the incident.

The ICS Form 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet is initiated by the Operations Section Chief at each Tactics Meeting. It is recommended that a wall-sized version of the worksheet be used.

When the Division/Group work assignments and accompanying resource allocations are approved at the Planning Meeting, the Resources Unit Leader will use this information to develop the required Assignment Lists. The Planning Section will use a copy of this worksheet for preparing requests for resources required for the next operational period.

It is the responsibility of the Resources Unit Leader to keep track of the changes to ICS Form 215. It can be challenging to get the Operations Section Chief to sit down and work on this worksheet. It is imperative that you work with him or her to get the information in their head down on the worksheet.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Responsibilities of RESL (cont.)

- **Participate in Meetings (as appropriate):**
  - **Incident Briefing**
    - **Gather information about resources**
  - **Tactics Meeting**
    - **Help fill out ICS Form 215**
  - **Planning Meeting**
    - **Provide resource status information**
  - **Operational Briefing**
    - **Identify unused or missing resources**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-30

Key Points

The Resources Unit Leader will participate in meetings, as appropriate.

During the Incident Briefing, the Resources Unit Leader may collect information about resource commitment and planning and provide resource status updates. If attendance is impossible, obtain the information when reporting in. Obtain a copy of the ICS Form 201 – Incident Briefing Report, particularly pages 3 and 4, for review of the status of resources already committed to the incident as well as what has been ordered.

During the Tactics Meeting, the Resources Unit Leader will assist in filling out ICS Form 215.

During the Planning Meeting, the Resources Unit Leader may provide resource status information, present ICS Form 215 information, record changes on the ICS Form 215, and identify excesses or shortages of resources.

The Resources Unit Leader may also attend the Operational Briefing to identify any unassigned or missing resources.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Key Points

Another responsibility of the Resources Unit Leader is to maintain an ICS Form 215 – Activity Log.

ICS Form 214 – Activity Log is used to record details of Unit activity, including Strike Team activity. The file of these logs provides a basic reference from which to extract information for inclusion in any after-action reports.

The ICS Form 214 is initiated and maintained by Command Staff members, Division or Group Supervisors, Air Operations Groups, Strike Teams or Task Force Leaders, and Unit Leaders. Completed logs are forwarded to Supervisors who provide copies to the Documentation Unit.

The Documentation Unit maintains a file of all Activity Logs. It is necessary that one copy of each log be submitted to the Documentation Unit.

Topic   Responsibilities of Resources Unit Leader (cont.)

Responsibilities of RESL (cont.)

- **Interact with Demobilization Unit**
  - **Recommend demobilization priorities**
  - **Demobilize Resources Unit**

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-32

Key Points

Another responsibility of the Resources Unit Leader is to interact with Demobilization Unit. Duties include:

- Recommending Demobilization priorities of the Unit to the Planning Section Chief

- Demobilizing the Resources Unit

Topic   Exercise 2

Exercise 2
Check-In and Resource Tracking

Visual 3-33

Key Points

Topic   Objectives Review

Objectives Review

1. *What is the purpose of the Resources Unit?*
2. *What are the functions of the Resources Unit?*
3. *What are the main responsibilities of the RESL?*
4. *Which members of the IMT does the RESL interact with most frequently?*

Unit 3:
Overview of the Resources Unit   Visual 3-34

Key Points

U n i t   T e r m i n a l   O b j e c t i v e

Describe the function of the Resources Unit and the roles and responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader.

U n i t   E n a b l i n g   O b j e c t i v e s

• Describe the purpose of the Resources Unit

• List the functions of the Resources Unit

• Describe the main responsibilities of the Resources Unit Leader

• List the members of the Incident Management Team with whom the Resources Unit Leader interacts most frequently