

# Incident Command System

## Planning Section

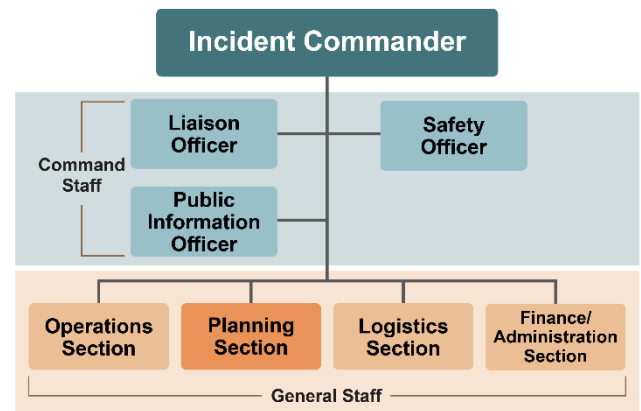


During an animal disease emergency, the Incident Command System (ICS) is utilized to coordinate personnel, tasks, and agencies, ensuring an efficient response. This Just-in-Time handout provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of personnel within the Planning Section of ICS.

### What is the ICS Planning Section?

**The Planning Section is a segment of the ICS General Staff.**

- Personnel assigned to this section will be responsible for collecting, evaluating, processing, and disseminating information pertaining to the incident, as well as tracking resources for the response.
- The Planning Section also prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan.



### Roles and Responsibilities

#### Planning Section Supervision

- The Planning Section is managed and supervised by the **Planning Section Chief (PSC)**, who reports to the Incident Commander.
- Responsibilities of the PSC include:
  - Collect, evaluate, document, and display incident information for situational awareness,
  - Track resources assigned to the response,
  - Attend and facilitate operational planning meetings and prepare and disseminate the approved Incident Action Plan, and
  - Develop plans for demobilization.



#### Planning Section Personnel Structure and Responsibilities

The Planning Section can be divided into four distinct **Units** depending on the size and scale of a response, the required tasks, and the number of personnel involved. Each is led by a Unit Leader who reports to the Planning Section Chief. If a Unit is not staffed, the PSC is responsible for those functions and activities.

- The **Resource Unit** oversees check-in of all resources. This may be an individual responder, a piece of equipment and its operator, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified supervisor (i.e., Strike Team from Operations). Unit personnel track and maintain the location and status (e.g., assigned, available, out of service) of these resources during the incident.
- The **Situation Unit** collects, processes, and organizes all incident information. Unit personnel may prepare situational summaries, maps, displays, or intelligence updates. This may include data on morbidity, mortality, sampling totals, zones, or movement permits. The goal is to provide real-time updates for the Planning Section Chief and the Incident Commander.

- The **Documentation Unit** is responsible for the documentation and recordkeeping for the incident.
  - Accurate, up-to-date incident files are necessary for legal, analytical, and historical purposes. This Unit also compiles, reproduces, and distributes the Incident Action Plan for each operational period.
- The **Demobilization Unit** is responsible for developing the Incident Demobilization Plan.
  - In large incidents, demobilization can be quite complex and require a separate planning activity. Unit personnel develop rosters of personnel and resources to ensure the efficient and safe demobilization.
- The Planning section can also include **Technical Specialists**, personnel with specialized expertise, skills, or knowledge useful for incident management or response.
  - Examples include pathologists, entomologists, animal welfare specialists, wildlife specialists, meteorologists, or environmental impact specialists.
  - Technical Specialists may be assigned to the Planning Section or other sections depending on where their services are required.



## How Animal Industry Stakeholders Can Help

Animal industry stakeholders can provide important support to the Planning Section. Examples include:

- Providing technical information about husbandry and production systems, movement patterns, supply chains, and animal handling and transport.
- Sharing real-time operational information, such as on-farm animal populations, geographic distribution of industry assets, and production cycle information affecting response needs.
- Identifying available resources, such as animal handling equipment, transport vehicles, or veterinary or technical personnel who can assist.

## Key Points

- Personnel within the Planning Section collect, evaluate, process, and disseminate information and track resource status for the incident.
- Animal industry stakeholders can support the Planning Section with technical and real-time information.
- Depending on the size and scale of a response, the Planning Section may be divided into four Units. Understand your assigned role and who your supervisor is.



Additional [Just-In-Time training resources](#) can be found on the **CFSPH website**.

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