

ATTACHMENT B

HOSPITAL INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Introduction

An Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

Background/History

Prior to the events of September 11, 2001, the Incident Command System was primarily used for on-scene incidents by responders in the field. However, in the years since, hospitals have become integrated parts of the events of September 11, the 2005 hurricane seasons, impending Bird Flu epidemic, and daily incidents that produce multiple victims. Internally, hospitals often have events occur that benefit from the use of the Incident Command System. Such events include utility failure, VIP visits or admissions, hostage situations, fires, and patient evacuation, etc. Therefore, it is important that hospitals and health care systems exercise their own hospital policies and procedures that fit into an established incident command structure.

Depending on the size and on-site capabilities of the hospital and healthcare system, the size and scope of the Incident Command System will vary. Hospitals and healthcare systems should implement an Incident Command System that allows for the provision of safe and effective patient care and continuity of hospital operations regardless of the size of the hospital, size and type of incident, and/or limitations of resources, personnel and equipment.

Incident Command System (ICS) Benefits to Healthcare Organizations

- ICS unifies an approach to and collaboration with community response partners.
- ICS improves emergency preparedness and interoperability.
- ICS is applicable regardless of type or size of incident or disaster.
- ICS compliance allows us to continue to receive federal preparedness funding.
- ICS compliance allows us a standard approach to being Joint Commission prepared.

Example of ICS in Action

During the bridge collapse in Minneapolis, hospitals, EMA personnel, fire personnel, rescue personnel, etc. all relied on the NIMS system to react to this disaster situation in a unified, collaborative fashion. The Medical Director from one of the Minneapolis hospital told reporters that they had everything well in hand because they had the NIMS/ICS format to follow. Everyone that needed to have NIMS training had been trained and knew what their job function was.