

**Community Emergency Response Team**



CERT Organization

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**Community Emergency Response Team**

- 👤 Personal safety is **ALWAYS** the number one priority
- 👤 Show up prepared
  - Wear appropriate clothing and footwear, have **WATER**
  - Wear PPE - your personal protective equipment ...gloves, helmet, goggles, mask, boots, etc.
  - Have at least one communications device: cell, radio, etc.
- 👤 Work as a team
- 👤 Size-up - maintain situational awareness
- 👤 The CERT goal is to do the  
**Greatest Good for the Greatest Number**
- 👤 *Hope for the best but plan for the worst!*

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## Unit Objectives & Topics

- 👤 The emergency management structure (Incident Management System)
- 👤 How CERT members can fit into a larger emergency response and recovery structure (CERT Organization)
- 👤 Why, what, and how CERTs document their activities

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## Need for CERT Organization

- 👤 Individual CERT members may operate as part of organized CERT units or as part of a larger emergency response effort
- 👤 Larger emergency responses typically require multi-agency coordinated effort
- 👤 Familiarity with common emergency response organizational structures is necessary and expected

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## Purpose of On-Scene Management

- 👤 Maintain physical safety of disaster workers
- 👤 Maintain mental well being of disaster workers
- 👤 Provide clear leadership and organizational structure
- 👤 Improve effectiveness of rescue efforts



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## Objectives of CERT Organization

- 👤 Identify the scope of the incident
  - *What is the problem?*
- 👤 Determine an overall strategy
  - *What can CERT do, and will they do it?*
- 👤 Deploy resources
  - *Who is going to do what?*
- 👤 Document actions and results
  - *If you didn't write it down, it didn't happen!*




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## Incident Command System

 ICS provides:


- Well-defined management structure
- Manageable span of control
- Common terminology
- Effective communication
- Consolidated action plans
- Comprehensive resource management
- Accountability




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## Incident Command System

 Key Concepts

- Unity of Command – each CERT reports to only one person
- Common terminology and organizational structure
- Manageable Span of Control


 Provides flexibility of resource management

- Positions filled as needed
- Modular units

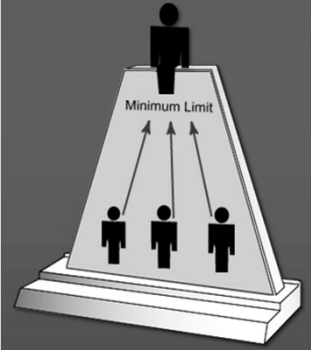
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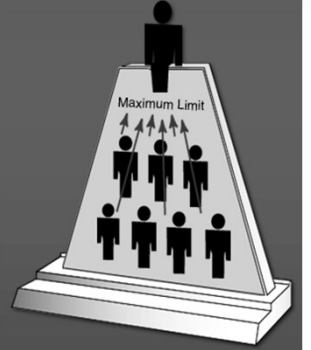
### ICS Management

 **Span of Control**

- Is between 3 and 7 team members
- Optimally does not exceed 5 team members



Minimum Limit




Maximum Limit

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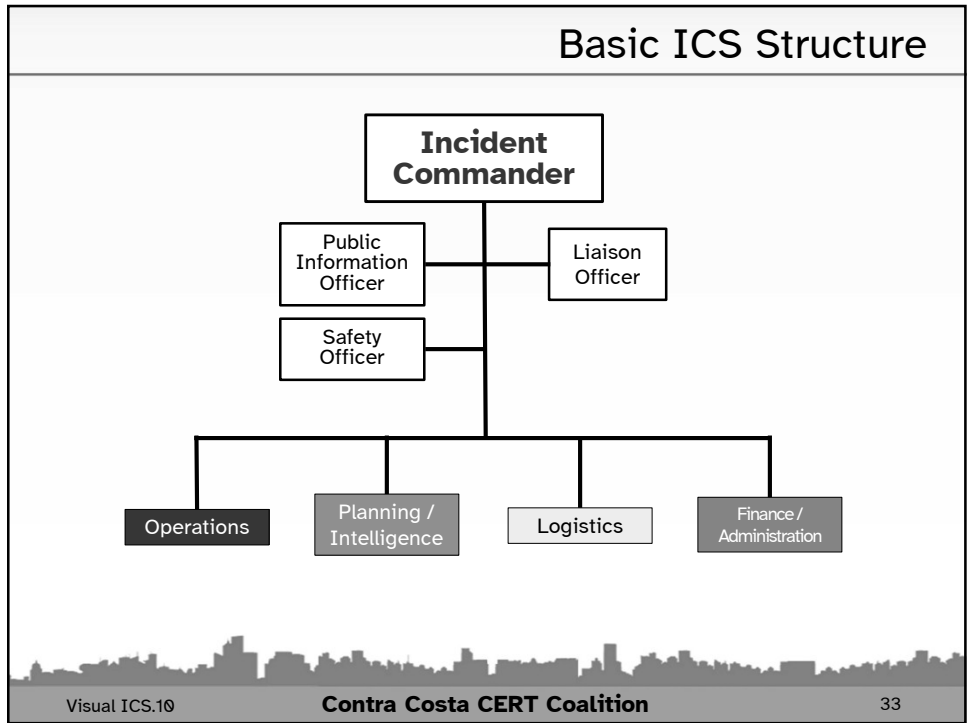
### Incident Command System

 **The five major functional areas of ICS**

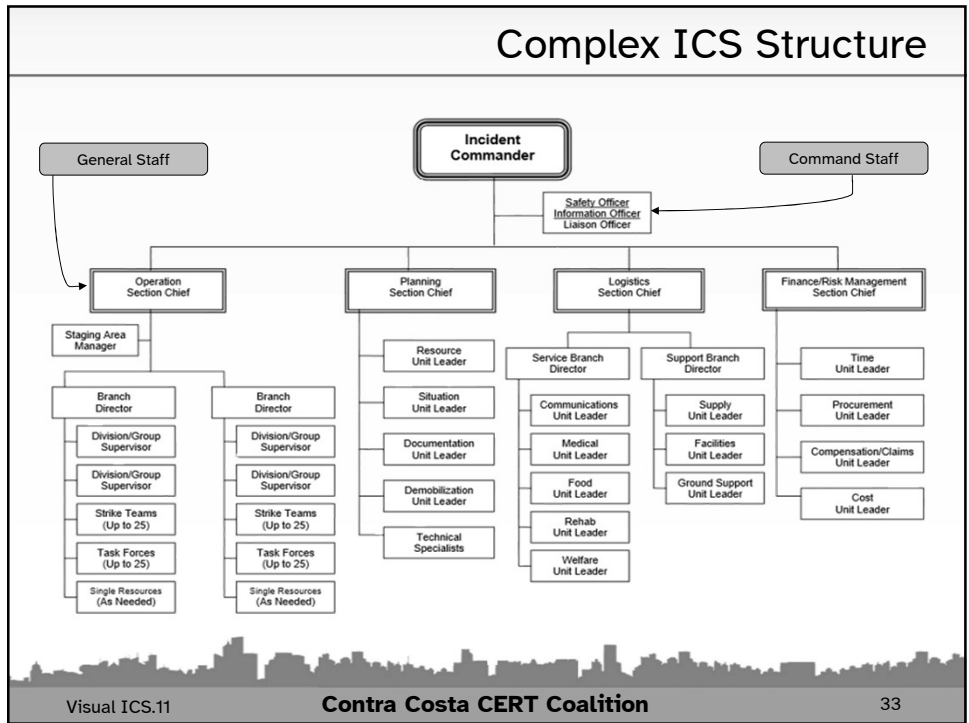
- **Command**
- **Operations**
- **Planning / Intelligence**
- **Logistics**
- **Finance / Administration**

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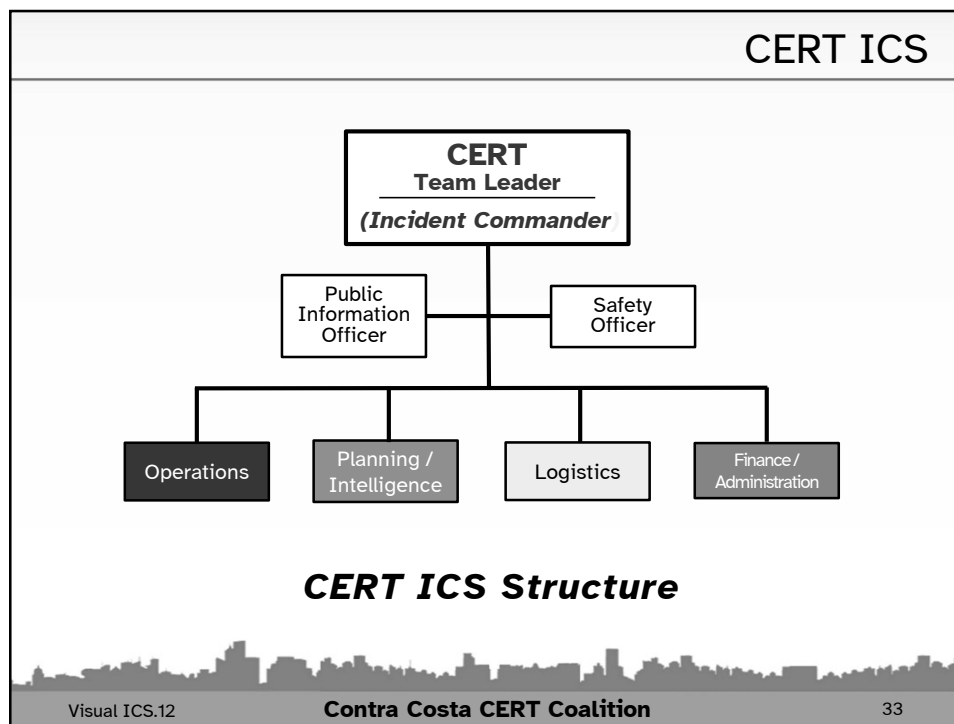
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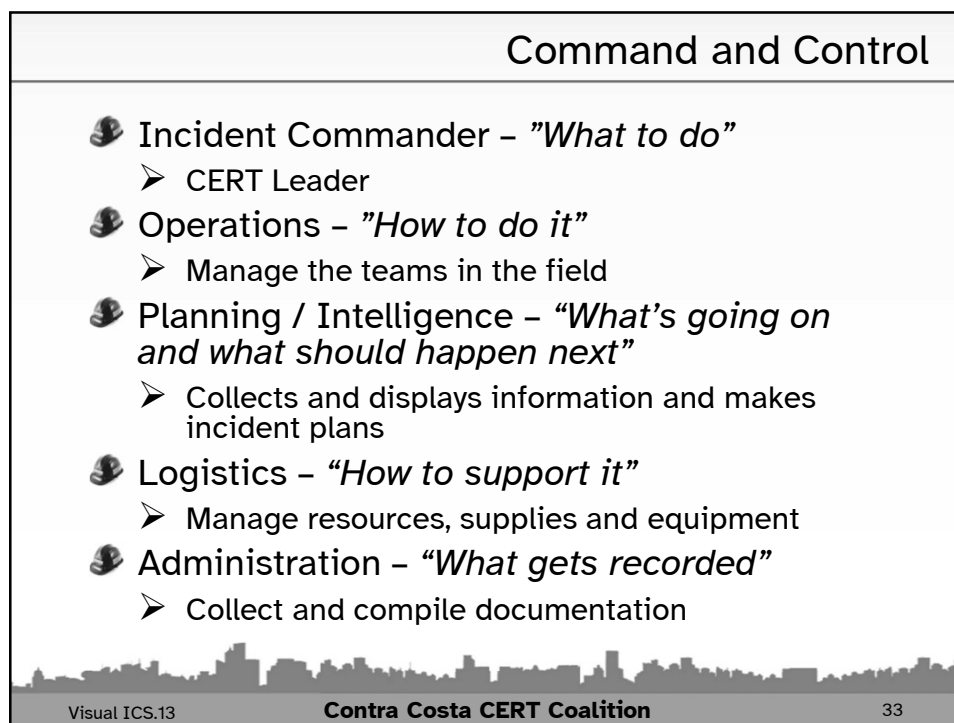
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CERT Leader	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>👤 Normally assumed by the first person on scene</li><li>👤 Incident command post (ICP) location may be pre-established or it may be created by the CERT Leader</li><li>👤 Leadership position may be transferred when a more qualified person arrives</li><li>👤 CERT Leader may appoint CERT members to positions in Operations, Plans, Logistics, Administration, Safety Officer, etc. as incident expands</li></ul>	
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CERT Leader Duties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>👤 Is Incident Commander unless part of a larger ICS structure</li><li>👤 Has overall responsibility for all CERT actions</li><li>👤 Sets objectives and priorities</li><li>👤 Assigns personnel as needed</li><li>👤 Ensures coordination of staff actions and activities</li><li>👤 Communicates with higher authorities (police, fire, EMS, EOC, etc.)</li></ul>	
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CERT Safety Officer		
	Reports to the CERT Leader	
	Assesses and anticipates hazardous and unsafe situations	
	Develops and recommends measures for assuring personnel health and safety	
	May develop a Site Safety Plan	
	Reviews the Incident Action Plan for safety implications	
	<b>Can halt any operation at any time for safety concerns</b>	
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Public Information Officer		
	Reports to the CERT Leader	
	Acts as the spokesperson for CERT under the direction of the CERT Leader	
	Assesses situation and prepares documents for release to the press and public that present a timely, accurate, consistent picture of the event	
	Reviews public social media accounts of the incident to correct any misinformation	
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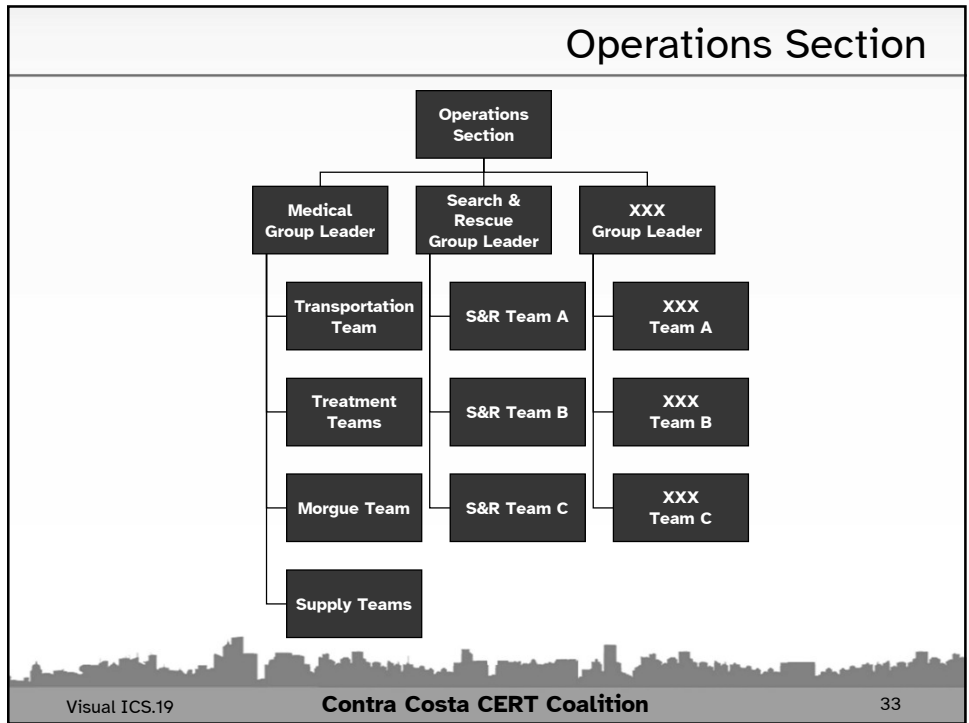
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### Operations Section

-  Develops the operations tactics
-  Develops the Operations Section organizational structure
-  Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan
-  Directs all operational resources deployed

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## Planning / Intelligence Section

### Planning

- Develops the **Incident Action Plan** to accomplish the objectives defined for the event
- Maintains resource status on all deployed personnel and equipment during the event
- Maintains active incident documentation
- May utilize Advance Planning to anticipate future needs

### Intelligence

- Collects and evaluates information
- Validates information into intelligence

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## Logistics Section

### Provides resources and all other services needed to support an incident:

- Personnel
- Food
- Communications
- Facilities
- Transportation
- etc.



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## Finance / Administration Section

- 👤 Responsible for documenting costs related to incident
- 👤 Provides accounting, procurement, time recording and cost analysis
- 👤 Volunteer time is used for Federal matching dollars, and tracking is very important
  - The value in California was **\$38.61** per hour in 2023
- 👤 Retains Documentation at end of event

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## Dealing with the Media

- 👤 You may get questions from the public or from media representatives
- 👤 Refer inquiries to CERT Team Leader, Incident Commander, or **Public Information Officer**
- 👤 Do not let media interfere with CERT activities
- 👤 **Do not** divulge any sensitive information



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## National Incident Management System

- 🧑‍🚒 NIMS provides ability to work together
- 🧑‍🚒 IS-100: Introduction to ICS  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c>
- 🧑‍🚒 IS-700: Introduction to NIMS  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b>



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## CERT Mobilization

- 🧑‍🚒 CERTs take care of themselves, their family, their home, and their neighbors
- 🧑‍🚒 Depending on local CERT protocols, CERT members may respond to pre-designated locations, ready for response
- 🧑‍🚒 CERT organization should have effective communications, a manageable span of control and maintain accountability

***The greatest good for the greatest number  
without placing CERT members in harms way***

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## CERT Mobilization

- 👤 CERT Leader will develop an organization plan
- 👤 Priorities may change as operation continues; CERT Leader needs to stay on top of these shifting priorities
- 👤 Communications must be organized, efficient and effective
- 👤 ICS was developed to assist in the management of major incidents – Use it
- 👤 Goal is always to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people while maintaining CERT safety

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## Documentation

- 👤 Each level of authority is responsible for documentation (CERT Leader, Ops, Plans, Logs, Admin)



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## Documentation

- CERT Teams provide the Command Post with ongoing information and documentation on:
  - Damage assessment
  - Team status
  - Ongoing needs
- Command Post documents:
  - Incident status
  - Incident locations: access routes and identified hazards
  - Support locations: Staging areas, treatment/triage areas and morgue



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## CERT Forms

- Vary by local CERT protocols
  - Damage Assessment
  - Personnel Resources Sign-in (ICS-211)
  - Incident/Assignment Tracking Log (ICS-204)
  - Briefing/Assignment (ICS-201/203)
  - Victim Treatment Area Record
  - Activity Log (ICS-214)
  - Equipment Inventory (ICS-209/210)
  - General Message (ICS-213)

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### In the End, Calm Heads Prevail



Crowds panic as flooding threatens Ireland...

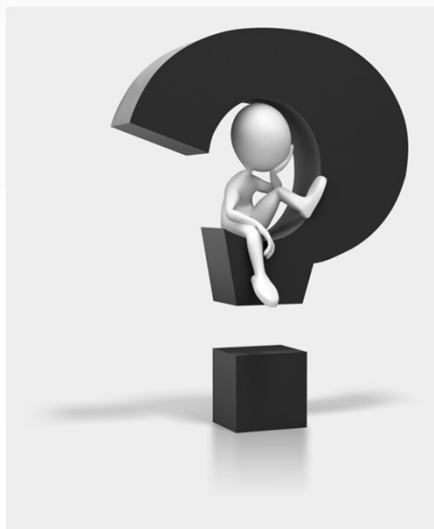
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### Questions?



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## Takeaways

- 🧑‍🚒 CERTs operate using ICS
- 🧑‍🚒 ICS, the Incident Command System:
  - Flexible and Scalable
  - Span of Control
  - Modular Command Structure
  - Common Terminology
- 🧑‍🚒 Document, Document, Document