INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

NATIONAL TRAINING CURRICULUM

MODULE 16

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION

October 1994

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

PREFACE

This module is one of seventeen modules which comprise the Incident Command System (ICS) National Training Curriculum. The entire curriculum has been developed by an interagency steering group and a contract consultant. The curriculum was sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and development was directed and supported by the National Interagency Fire Center, Division of Training. The Steering Group was represented by several application areas (Search & Rescue, Law Enforcement, Structural Fire, Wildfire, etc.) which guided the work of the contractor in the development of this package.

The Steering Group was:

> David P. Anderson - USDA, Forest Service
> Mike Colgan - Orange County Fire Department
> Dave Engle - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
> Dan Francis - California Department of Forestry
> Ken Mallette - New Jersey State Police
> Mike Munkres - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
> Gary Nelson - Los Angeles County Fire Department
> Bill Vargas - State of New Mexico Department of Public Safety

The Contract Consultant was:

> The Terence Haney Company
> Woodland Hills, California

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT INSTRUCTORS OF THIS MODULE READ THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE **INSTRUCTOR CURRICULUM GUIDE** AND MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS DESCRIBED THEREIN.

Detailed Lesson Outline

COURSE: Module 16 - Multi-agency Coordination

SUGGESTED TIME: 4 Hours

TRAINING AIDS: Overhead projector, overhead pens, reference text

SUBJECT: This module describes the major elements associated
                     with developing and implementing an effective Multi-
                     agency Coordination System compatible with the
                     Incident Command System. The module describes
                     essential differences between Area Command, Unified
                     Command, Multi-agency Coordination Systems, and
                     jurisdictional Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).

OBJECTIVES: 1.   Describe the kinds of incident management
                           problems that can occur due to a lack of Multi-
                           agency Coordination.

                     2.   Define essential terms related to Multi-agency
                           Coordination.

                     3.   Identify the levels at which Multi-agency
                           Coordination is commonly accomplished.

                     4.   Identify essential differences between Area
                           Command, Multi-agency Coordination, and
                           Emergency Operations Centers.

                     5.   Identify the primary components of a Multi-
                           agency Coordination System.

                     6.   List the responsibilities of a Multi-agency
                           Coordination Group.

                     7.   Identify the major guidelines for establishing and
                           using Multi-agency Coordination Groups and
                           Systems.

                     8.   Identify principal positions within a Multi-agency
                           Coordination System.

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REVIEW THE INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	16-01-I401-VG Page 1 of 2
ADVISE STUDENTS OF TEST AND EXERCISE AT CONCLUSION OF INSTRUCTION.	Page 2 of 2

I.   Introduction

This module covers the following subjects: 16-02-I401-VG

- Past and current problems necessitating improved Multi-agency Coordination

- Examples of Multi-agency Coordination

- Terminology and relationships

- Defining an intergovernmental Multi-agency Coordination System

- Multi-agency Coordination Groups

- Guidelines for establishing MACS and MAC Groups

- Primary function responsibilities associated with MACS

- Sample position descriptions for a MACS organization

- A MACS development exercise

II.   Problems Necessitating Improved Multi-agency Coordination

A.   Past Problems

The Incident Command System (ICS) and an associated Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS) capability were developed during the 1970s to overcome some very serious

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interagency and interjurisdictional <u>coordination</u> problems.	
The major problems identified which affected the ability of local, state, and federal agencies to work together effectively on major incidents were:	16-03-I401-VG Page 1 of 2
• Different policies and procedures among agencies.	
• Lack of a common interagency organizational structure.	
• Lack of a process for coordinated and collocated incident planning between agencies.	
• Lack of interagency communications including systems, frequencies, and use agreements.	16-03-I401-VG Page 2 of 2
• Differences in terminology for personnel, for assignments, and resources.	
• Lack of valid, timely, and complete information from all available sources.	
• Unfamiliarity with other agency's methods of operation, skills and qualifications, and resource capabilities.	
• Little previous interagency training.	
B. Problems of Today	
Unfortunately, not all of the problems of the past have been removed. Differences in agency policies and procedures still exist and will continue. The advent of more sophisticated	

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communications capabilities continues to create interagency communications problems.

The introduction of ICS and improved Multi-agency Coordination Systems have helved to mitigate many of the past problems.

HAVE STUDENTS PROVIDE WHAT THEY THINK ARE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF TODAY.   LIST AND DISCUSS.

16-04-I401-VG

Problems related to incident management which continue to plague emergency responders are:

- Ever increasing response costs which affect, among other things, the use of mutual aid.

- High property losses associated with many incidents.

- Life, health, and safety issues of responders and citizens.

- Often a deteriorating public view of government effectiveness.

- Intense media scrutiny.

These problems provide added incentive to create effective Multi-agency Coordination functions.

III. Some Examples of How Multi-agency Coordination is Currently Accomplished

The words Multi-agency Coordination are quite self-descriptive and essentially mean just what they say--agencies working together toward some common goal. Multi-agency Coordination related to emergencies can take place at several levels and within various forms of both command and coordination systems. For example:

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HAVE STUDENTS PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF WHERE MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION TAKES PLACE. CLARIFY THAT THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOME OF THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW IS IN COMMAND, AND THAT COORDINATION IS A MAJOR SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY.	16-05-I401-VG

A.   At the Scene of the Incident(s)

Agencies routinely work together and coordinate within an ICS structure at an incident. The intent, design, and structure of ICS incorporates and promotes the concept of Multi-agency Coordination.

B.   At an Area Command

An Area Command (or Unified Area Command) organization, established to have direct management authority for several incidents in the same proximity, recognizes the need to ensure that effective Multi-agency Coordination takes place.

The Area Command should include multijurisdiction/agency representation and be responsible for coordinating interagency matters related to the incidents under the Area Command authority.

C.   At a Jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Multi-agency Coordination is an essential component within jurisdictional Emergency Operations Centers. Assigned representatives from appropriate departments and liaison agencies work together at the EOC facility. Other support and or liaison agencies may also be represented.

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D.   At an Interjurisdictional or Regional Level

Multi-agency Coordination may also take place by bringing together representatives from various <u>political</u> <u>subdivisions</u> and other <u>functional</u> agencies to coordinate in an <u>interjurisdictional regional setting.</u> The requirement for this level of coordination is increasing due to the complexity of incidents, broader legal authorities, and the increasing number of interjurisdictional incident situations. Many states have regions or other subdivisions which bring state and local agencies together when incidents cross jurisdictional boundaries.

E.   At State and Federal Levels

Federal and state emergency management organizations routinely work together to assist the emergency response and disaster recovery efforts of state and federal agencies. This type of coordination takes place at the state's Emergency Operations Center, a FEMA Regional EOC, and/or a Disaster Field Office (DFO).

Also at the federal level, an interagency Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG) can be activated for major disasters. FEMA's Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) concept is based around a philosophy of multilevel coordination.

F.   At International Levels

Every time there is a major international disaster, we see instances of what happens when there is effective international multi-agency cooperation. We also see many instances when that coordination is not yet what it should be.

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All of these are appropriate, legitimate uses of Multi-agency Coordination. However, the level of understanding, and the ways in which they are applied are varied throughout the emergency management community.
 	
ASK STUDENTS FOR INPUT REGARDING THEIR OWN UNDERSTANDING OF THESE.
 	
IV.   Terminology and Relationships
 	
    A.   EOCs and MACS
 	
        There is no common consensus on all of the relationships or terminology related to Multi-agency Coordination.
 	
        In most political subdivisions Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) are the primary facilities for housing emergency management services. This is true for cities, counties, and states. <u>Intra</u>jurisdiction coordination is an essential part of any political subdivision EOC operation.
 	
        The degree of coordination depends on the systems and procedures that are in place.
 	
        EOCs or Department Operating Centers are often used at various levels within some agencies. In many cities and counties, agencies within a political jurisdiction have EOCs at <u>department</u> levels in addition to the primary jurisdictional EOC.
 	
        For example, there could be a State Highway Department EOC or County Medical Department EOC. Also, major industries are developing and equipping EOCs to serve the industry needs during a time of an emergency.
	16-06-I401-VG

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Most agencies designate the facility from which overall emergency management services are conducted as an EOC. However, some agencies may call their primary emergency operating location an Emergency Command Center, an Operations Control and/or Coordination Center, an Expanded Dispatch Center, etc.

ASK FOR EXAMPLES OF OTHER TERMINOLOGY OR USE.

In some locations, and for some kinds of incidents, political subdivision EOCs are not always activated and/or may not meet the total interagency coordinating need related to an incident. For example, consider a wide-scale search activity that covers just parts of the following:

16-07-I401-VG

    A National Park
    County A
    County B
    A coastal area
    A State Recreation Area

THIS SITUATION COULD ALSO BE MULTIPLE INCIDENTS, E.G., TWO OR MORE FIRES, OR INCIDENTS INVOLVING FLOODING, A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL, A VOLCANIC ERUPTION, EARTHQUAKE, ETC.

The agencies that could be directly involved in the search activity at the incident level might consist of:

16-08-I401-VG

    National Park Service
    County A - Fire and Rescue
    County B - Sheriff's Search and Rescue
    Coast Guard
    State Parks Department
    State National Guard

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Volunteer Groups
Private landowners and/or industry

Because of the jurisdictions involved, this incident would be managed using a Unified Command which would function at an Incident Command Post at (or close to) the scene of the incident. The Unified Command would consist of an IC from each agency having search jurisdiction.

If the initial search is unsuccessful and becomes extended in size and scope the various assisting agencies may activate their respective jurisdictional EOC(s) to help coordinate resource requests.

However, there is no single agency with the authority to coordinate the overall regional response of local, state, federal, and private sector agencies that might be involved in an incident of this type.

Because of the multijurisdictional nature of this incident, some type of an off-incident interagency coordination activity should be established to assist in the off-incident coordination of resources and support among the involved agencies

This Multi-agency Coordination activity could be done at one of the facilities, e.g., one of the county EOCs, at the Coast Guard Headquarters, at the local National Park Service headquarters, at the State Parks facility from some other location. It could also be done although perhaps not as effectively as a scheduled conference call linking the local headquarters of the agencies above.

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When such an activity occurs to connect assisting agencies from various jurisdictions and/or levels of government, and is primarily for interagency coordination on a regional basis it becomes a <u>Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS)</u>.

The interagency representatives that work together within the MACS are known as a MAC Group.

Activation of the MACS and MAC Group will be discussed in the next section.

THERE IS POSSIBLE CONFUSION OVER THE USE OF THE TERMS MACS AND MAC GROUPS. BEST TO CLARIFY THAT MACS IS THE <u>SYSTEM</u>, AND THE MAC GROUP IS THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT WORK.

In some cases, the MACS is simply a scheduled telephone conference call between members of the MAC group perhaps done two or more times a day. In other cases, face-to-face coordination must be accomplished, and the MAC Group would assemble at some location.

16-09-I401-VG

In some areas where this kind of interagency and intergovernmental coordination is extensively required due to fires, flooding, storms, etc., the <u>MACS may become a permanent part of the regional emergency environment.</u>

If heavily used, a separate facility may be established, and communications and even a staff would be in place either full or part time.

At least one state has a permanent setup for a MACS.

FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, THAT STATE IS CALIFORNIA, WHERE THE MACS IS FREQUENTLY USED ON MAJOR FIRES.

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B. Comparison of Terms and Concepts Related to MACS	16-10-I401-VG
Essential differences for some of the terms and concepts discussed in this module are described in the table. Definitions of the terms are found in the curriculum glossary.	Reference Text p. 16-27
V. Defining an Intergovernmental Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS)	
The function of Multi-agency Coordination is most effective if it takes place within a preplanned and organized <u>Multi-agency Coordination System</u>. While ad-hoc arrangements among agencies can be made to work, it is far better to establish the MACS and procedures in advance.	
A formal MACS consists of a Multi-agency Coordination Group (MAC Group) made up of jurisdictional/agency representatives. It can also consist of facilities, equipment, procedures, information systems, and internal and external communications systems <u>integrated into a common system</u> that ensures effective interagency and interjurisdictional coordination.	16-11-I401-VG
The functions of the MACS are to provide a basis for regional interagency coordination over:	16-12-I401-VG
• Incident priority determination	
• Critical resource use priorities	
• Communications systems integration	
• Information coordination	
• Intergovernmental decision coordination	

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SEE IF THIS SEEMS TO ADEQUATELY COVER THE PRIMARY ACTIVITIES. SEE IF THERE ARE ANY ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES.	
A MACS can be set up in different places and operated in different ways.	
This will depend on the goals and desires of the agencies involved, the working relationships that are established, and the benefits desired.	16-13-I401-VG
One example of an ongoing MACS includes full-time staff, pre-emergency administrative systems and controls, as well as emergency response systems and procedures.	16-14-I401-VG
A less complex version of a MACS may be simply a procedure to operate within the terms of an existing interagency mutual aid agreement at the time of an emergency.	
It is important to remember that the size and complexity of a MACS <u>will be determined by its mission.</u> That mission may be quite simple or quite complex.	16-15-I401-VG
It is also important to keep in mind that a <u>MACS does not communicate on a direct basis with Incident Commanders</u>.	
The purpose of the MACS is to provide a coordinating service <u>among the agencies</u> involved in the incidents. This is one of the major distinctions between MACS and Area Command. The other distinction is that MACS is a <u>coordinating</u> entity. Area Command has <u>command</u> authority.	
A KEY POINT AND SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED.	
VI. Guidelines for Establishing and Using Multi-agency Coordination Systems and MAC Groups	

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A. Activation of a MACS	16-16-I401-VG
A MACS would normally be activated when an regional emergency situation threatens, significantly impacts, or involves multiple agencies and/or political subdivisions. At this point agency representatives are assembled together at some location (or teleconferenced) and briefed.	
A MACS could also be activated when pre-established threat levels are reached.	
The activation of the MACS assists the dispatch organizations of the agencies or jurisdictions in several ways. These include making key decisions regarding the allocations, sharing and use of critical regional resources, establishing priorities between incident priorities and the coordinating of interagency policies and procedures for the geographic area encompassed by the MACS.	16-17-I401-VG
1. Activating MACS with pre-established guidelines. (Recommended Method)	
Pre-established guidelines for activation are recommended for areas which experience frequent or periodic emergencies such as floods and fires.	16-18-I401-VG
These can take the form of Joint Power Agreements (JPAs), Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), etc., among the jurisdictions comprising the MACS.	
With these agreements in place, the MACS would be activated once a situation reaches a pre-determined level of intensity. One advantage to using pre-established guidelines is that they allow for phased activations, thus not always requiring a full	

complement of staff and resources. More importantly, it allows relationships and a structure to be worked out ahead of time.

2.   Activating MACS without pre-established guidelines. (Possible, but not recommended.)

If there are no pre-established guidelines for MACS activation, an agency or jurisdictional executive(s) should activate a MACS when requests exceed, or will soon exceed, available critical resources, and/or there is an obvious regional interagency need to coordinate policies and procedures. Recognizing this, and then taking immediate action, is a responsibility of emergency managers.

Normally this will occur when a number of jurisdictions within a region are heavily supporting an effort, and are significantly impacted by the commitment of local resources. The political jurisdiction executives would need to confer and reach consensus on activating a regional MACS.

The disadvantage of this approach is that it almost always takes place "after the fact" and requires extraordinary effort to catch up. It also requires that at least one of the agency executives take the lead in activating a MACS.

DETERMINE IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER DISADVANTAGES. DISCUSS

B.   The Decision to Establish a MACS

1.   Agencies within a single political subdivision.

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Within a single political subdivision, (e.g., a city or county), the chief executive or administrative officer could require the establishment of a MACS in response to a multi-agency incident within the jurisdiction.	16-19-I401-VG
This could be done in conjunction with the activation of the jurisdiction Emergency Operations Center. If the jurisdiction's EOC is activated for an emergency it would assume the jurisdiction's MACS functions as a normal part of its coordination activity.	
However, for many incidents, a full activation of an EOC may not be required, even though several agencies may be involved.	
Usually in this case, the incidents are fairly localized and a MACS may be established to cover only a designated geographical area and include only the agencies directly involved.	
The MACS would perform necessary coordinating activities for the agencies involved in incident management within the designated area.	
2. For multiple political subdivisions.	
If an incident such as a flood, fire, or earthquake is large enough to simultaneously affect several political subdivisions, e.g., several counties, a regional MACS may be called for.	
Usually, individual jurisdiction EOCs would also be activated, and would be the	

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primary locations for interaction with the regional MACS. One of the EOCs could even become the location for housing the regional MACS functions.

The decision to activate a MACS in this case rests with pre-established agreements or the leadership of one of the jurisdictions.

MACS CAN TAKE PLACE AT ANY LEVEL. THE REGIONAL MACS WHICH COORDINATES AMONG POLITICAL JURISDICTIONS HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE AN EFFECTIVE SYSTEM.

16-20-I401-VG

    C.   MACS Locations

The need for a location to house the MACS activities will depend on the anticipated functions the MACS is expected to perform. At city and county levels, the MACS functions are normally a part of jurisdiction EOC functions.

At a regional level, MACS may be established at a state facility or in a facility within a political subdivision.

Cost sharing agreements among jurisdictions to operate a regional MACS facility would be required.

The size of the facility should be determined after first identifying the functions to be performed, as well as the staffing levels, equipment, communication support needs, and possible future expansion.

If a state has been organized into regions or districts for emergency services purposes, the regional MACS function would be established at a state facility.

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The state headquarters EOC may not be activated if adequate interjurisdictional coordination is occurring through the regional MACS.

VII.   Multi-agency Coordination Groups

Activation of a MACS improves interagency coordination at top management levels, and provides for allocation and timely commitment of critical multi-agency emergency resources.

MAC Groups are the people that make the MACS function. A MAC Group is made up of an agency or political subdivision representatives who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds.

16-21-I401-VG

DISCUSS THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS, E.G., DELAY, LOSS OF CONFIDENCE, ETC., WHEN ONE OR MORE MEMBERS OF THE MAC GROUP CANNOT COMMIT FOR THEIR AGENCY.

The following organization chart shows the basic framework for the MAC. Administrative or non-emergency positions that may be set up to help administer and operate the MACS are not shown.

16-22-I401-VG

The MAC Group will resolve interagency policy and procedural conflicts, prioritize incidents and allocate critical resources to agencies for their use on incidents.

The MAC Group can be supported by MACS situation assessment, resource status information coordinators who collect and assemble information through normal coordination channels.

Information flow within a MACS consists of various sources of inputs including but not limited to:

16-23-I401-VG

- •   Agency Representatives
- •   Agency Policy and Direction
- •   Other Data Sources

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This information will be processed and will create various possible outputs as shown.

Agency dispatch centers, and/or EOCs provide the MAC Group with much or all of the input needed for their analysis.

A MAC Group can be established to meet a particular need even if a formal Multi-agency Coordination System has not been established. For example, a regional MAC can be set up to operate for incidents occurring within a multi-county area.

All MAC Group level agreements and decisions are disseminated directly to the affected agencies/jurisdictions through established chains of command. In other words, the MAC Group does not interact directly with respective Incident Commanders.

POINT OUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AREA COMMAND THE MAC GROUPS.

Differences Between MAC Groups and Area Command

MAC GROUP	AREA COMMAND
Expansion of the off-site coordination and support system.	Expansion of the on-incident command function of the ICS.
Members are agency administrators or designees from the agencies involved or heavily committed to the incidents.	Members are the most highly skilled incident management personnel.
Organizationation generally consists of the MAC Group (agency administrators), MAC Group Coordinator, and an intelligence and information support staff.	Organization generally consists of an Area Commander, Area Command Planning Chief, and an Area Command Logistics Chief.
Is the agency administrator or designee.	Is delegated authority for specific incident(s) from the agency administrator.
Allocate and reallocate critical resources through the dispatch system by setting incident priorities.	Assign and reassign critical resources allocated to them by MAC or the normal dispatch system organization.
Make coordinated agency administrator level decisions on issues that affect multiple agencies.	Ensure that incident objectives and strategies are complementary between Incident Management Teams under their supervision.

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VIII. Primary Functions of Multi-agency Coordination	

NOTE THAT THESE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE
ONLY POSSIBLE MACS FUNCTIONS. THEY ARE THE
ONES MOST COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH A MACS.

The following are the principal functions that take
place within the response part of a MACS.

<div align="right">16-26-I401-VG</div>

A. Situation Assessment

This is the collection, processing, and display of
all information needed by the MAC Group. This
may take the form of consolidating agency/
jurisdiction situation reports, obtaining
supplemental information, and preparation of
maps and status boards.

B. Critical Resource Acquisition and Allocation

Designated critical resources will be acquired if
possible from the involved agencies or
jurisdictions. Agencies or jurisdictions may shift
resources internally to match priority needs as a
result of MAC Group decisions. Resources
available from incidents in the process of
demobilization may be shifted to higher priority
incidents, etc.

Resources may also be acquired from outside of
the affected area. Procedures for acquiring
outside resources will vary depending upon the
agencies involved, pre-existing agreements, the
involvement of state and federal resources, etc.

C. Local, State, and Federal Disaster Coordination

A situation requiring the activation of a MACS
will most likely require the proclamation of at
least a local emergency. Under state and federal
law, this can open the possibility of additional

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resource allocations, cost sharing, and both emergency and long term disaster relief measures. Major wildland fires, floods, earthquakes, etc., all can cause a local emergency to be declared.

A MACS established within a single political subdivision, e.g., a city or county, will normally be a part of that jurisdiction's overall emergency management organization and will quite likely be established at the jurisdiction's EOC.

A regional MACS that is part of a state system of emergency management could assist in the function of disaster coordination for both response and disaster relief and recovery operations.

D. Coordination With Agency/Jurisdiction Political Establishments

A primary function of the MAC Group will be to assist in coordinating with elected and appointed officials at all levels of government. This is an extremely important part of the MAC Group responsibilities.

The allocation of scarce resources away from one agency's or jurisdiction's incident(s) to another of higher priority will obviously require immediate and close coordination with the affected officials.

E. Coordination of Summary Information Related to Multi-agency/Multijurisdiction Response Efforts

By virtue of its situation assessment function, MACS can provide summary information on incidents within its sphere of responsibility, and

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provide agency/jurisdictional contacts for media and other interested agencies.	
F. Incident Priority Determination	
Establishing the priorities among ongoing incidents within the defined area of responsibility is a primary function of the MAC Group.	
Typically, priorities would be determined by:	16-27-I401-VG
• Life threatening situations	
• Real property threatened	
• High damage potential	
• Incident complexity	
• Environmental impact	
• Other criteria established by the MAC Group	
HAVE STUDENTS IDENTIFY ANY OTHER CRITERIA. DISCUSS.	
IX. ICS as the Model for Use in an EOC or in a MACS	16-28-I401-VG
Most of the features and the five <u>primary</u> functions of ICS are appropriate for use at the EOC or MACS levels. These features include span of control, management by objectives, and action planning.	
Duplication of position titles at the EOC could possibly cause confusion with those used at incidents. This is particularly true for those jurisdictions which may have direct EOC to incident communications and interactions.	

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Sub-functions at the EOC will be based on the operational need, and vary from those used on an incident.

Requirements of the incident dictate the form that the organization should take. The same concept applies to the use of ICS components at an EOC or MACS.

For example, a principal function at an EOC relates to the coordination of personnel and volunteers. There is no corresponding ICS functional element.

THE FOLLOWING ARE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAJOR DUTIES OF EACH MAJOR POSITION AT A MACS. THESE ARE CONTAINED IN THE STUDENT MATERIALS.

YOU MAY WISH TO COVER THESE THROUGH A STUDENT REVIEW AND QUESTION PROCESS RATHER THAN DETAILED INSTRUCTION.

X. Sample Position Descriptions Within a MACS Organization

    A. MAC Group Coordinator

       The MAC Group coordinator serves as a facilitator in organizing and accomplishing the mission, goals, and direction of the MAC Group. The Coordinator will:

       • Facilitate the MAC Group decision process by obtaining, developing and displaying situation information.

       • Fill and supervise necessary unit and support positions within the MAC.

       • Acquire and manage facilities and equipment necessary to carry out the MAC Group functions.

Aids & Cues (for Section X): Reference Text p. 16-19

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- Implement the decisions made by the MAC Group.

B.   MAC Group Agency Representatives

The MAC Group is made up of top management personnel from responsible agencies/jurisdictions, and those heavily supporting the effort and/or are significantly impacted by use of local resources.

Agency representatives involved in a MAC Group must be <u>fully authorized</u> to represent their agency. Their functions can include the following:

- Ensure that current situation and resource status is provided by their agency.

- Prioritize incidents by an agreed upon set of criteria.

- Determine specific resource requirements by agency.

- Determine resource availability for out-of-jurisdiction assignments and the need to provide resources in Mobilization Centers.

- As needed, designate area or regional mobilization and demobilization centers within their jurisdictions.

- Collectively allocate scarce, limited resources to incidents based on priorities.

- Anticipate and identify future resource needs.

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- Review and coordinate policies, procedures and agreements as necessary.

- Consider legal/fiscal implications.

- Review need for participation by other agencies.

- Provide liaison with out-of-the-area facilities and agencies as appropriate.

- Critique and recommend improvements to MACS and MAC Group operations.

- Provide personnel cadre and transition to emergency or disaster recovery as necessary.

C.   Situation Assessment Unit (This is also referred to in some agencies and EOCs as the Intelligence Unit.)

The Situation Assessment Unit in a MACS is responsible for the collection and organization of incident status and situation information. They evaluate, analyze, and display information for use by the MAC Group. Functions include the following:

- Maintain incident situation status including location, type, size, potential for damage, control problems, and any other significant information.

- Maintain information on environmental issues, cultural, and historic resources, or sensitive populations and areas.

- Maintain information on meteorological conditions and forecast conditions that may have an effect on incident operations.

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- Request/obtain resource status information from the Resources Unit or agency dispatch sources.

- Combine, summarize, and display data for all appropriate incidents according to established criteria.

- Collect information on accidents, injuries, deaths, and any other significant occurrences.

- Develop projections of future incident activity.

D. Resources Unit

The Resources Unit, if activated in a MACS, maintains summary information by agency on critical equipment and personnel committed and available within the MACS area of responsibility. Status is kept on the overall numbers of critical resources rather than on individual units.

Functions can include the following:

- Maintain current information on the numbers of personnel and major items of equipment committed to incidents and/or available for assignment.

- Identify both essential and excess resources.

- Provide resource summary information to the Situation Assessment Unit as requested.

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E.   Information Unit

The Information Unit is designed to satisfy the need for regional information gathering. The unit will operate an information center to serve the print and broadcast media and other governmental agencies. It will provide summary information from agency/incident information officers and identify local agency sources for additional information to the media and other government agencies. Functions are to:

- Prepare and release summary information to the news media and participating agencies.

- Assist news media visiting the MACS facility and provide information on its function. Stress joint agency involvement.

- Assist in scheduling media conferences and briefings. Assist in preparing information materials, etc., when requested by the MAC Group coordinator.

- Coordinate all matters related to public affairs (VIP tours, etc.).

- Act as escort for facilitated agency tours of incident areas, as appropriate.

XI.   MACS Small Group Exercise

This is an exercise to provide students with experience in developing a regional MACS and MAC Group organization under conditions where no MACS previously existed.

Student function in the exercise is to design the MACS and the MAC Group organization based on the information provided below.

Reference Text
p. 16-23

Reference Text
p. 16-29

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Students should be divided into groups of five. Each group will be given the scenario and allowed thirty minutes to prepare a briefing on their suggested MACS organization. The groups will reconvene, and each group will give a ten-minute presentation to be followed by five minutes for questions and discussion.	

Scenario for Multi-agency Coordination Exercise

Each year the Murkey River overflows its banks during the spring thaw. This past year has seen a tremendous increase in the snow pack in the north, the largest ever recorded. Damage is high to both industrial and residential developments in a four-county area. (See attached map for additional information.)

County Administrators from the four adjacent counties that are most affected have decided, that in addition to activating their county EOCs, they should establish a regional MACS to assist in intercounty resource coordination efforts.

The counties and cities within the impacted area have agreed to abide by and implement the objectives and recommendations of the regional MACS. One county has offered a well protected, but not well-equipped facility that can be used for a MACS facility.

An interagency team of one person each from the four counties has just been formed Their function is to be the MAC group within the MACS organization. At this point no other representatives have been added to the team. The team has been asked to do the following:

1. Draft three or four interagency priorities related to the emergency.

2. Determine what other agencies or jurisdictions should be added to the MACS planning effort.

3. Develop a MACS organization that will support effective interagency coordination based on the objectives.

4. Determine the positions that should be activated within that organization, and the level of staffing required.

5. Establish the priority for critical resource assignments based on information known at this time.

This information is to be provided in the form of a joint briefing to the four county agency administrators.

Additional Background Information

Population:

Oak County	250,000
Briar County	150,000
Maple County	185,000
Cedar County	175,000
Murkeyville	100,000
Slago City	80,000

The MACS Facility is at an old Air National Guard Base.

Both cities are full service.

The Murkey Nuclear Power Plant has just come on line. It is not subject to direct flooding.

The Murkey River Map is contained in the Reference Text, p.16-26.

REVIEW THE SCENARIO WITH THE ENTIRE GROUP. IF THERE IS ESSENTIAL INFORMATION THAT MUST BE ADDED, DO IT AS A GROUP. DO NOT BE CONCERNED WITH SPECIFIC RESOURCES. REVIEW THE ADEQUACY OF THE TEAM EFFORTS AGAINST THE SIX CRITERIA LISTED ABOVE.
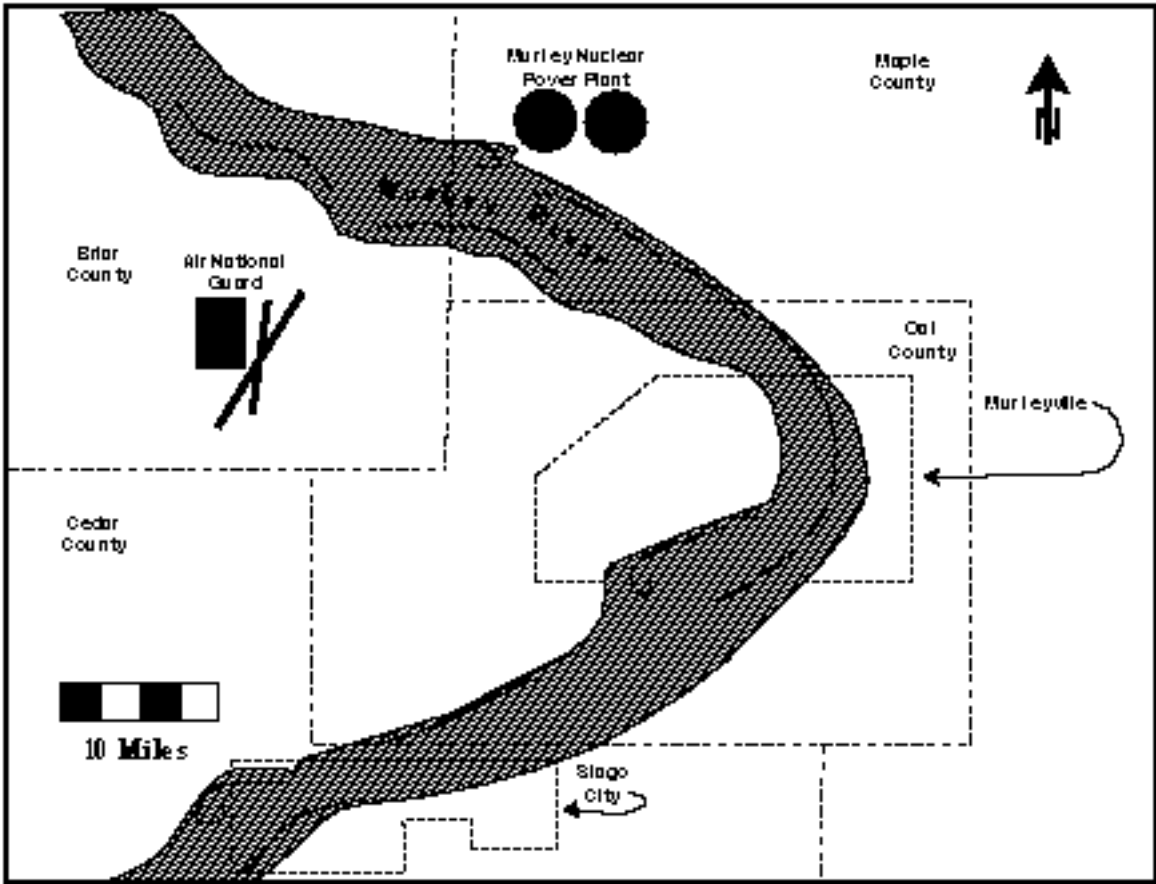
THIS COMPLETES THE INSTRUCTIONAL PHASE OF THIS MODULE.
HAVE STUDENTS PREPARE FOR MODULE TEST WHICH FOLLOWS.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

NATIONAL TRAINING CURRICULUM

MODULE 16

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION

October 1994

REFERENCE TEXT

PREFACE

This module is one of seventeen modules which comprise the Incident Command System (ICS) National Training Curriculum. The entire curriculum has been developed by an interagency steering group and a contract consultant. The curriculum was sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and development was directed and supported by the National Interagency Fire Center, Division of Training. The Steering Group was represented by several application areas (Search & Rescue, Law Enforcement, Structural Fire, Wildfire, etc.) which guided the work of the contractor in the development of this package.

The Steering Group was:

       David P. Anderson - USDA, Forest Service
       Mike Colgan - Orange County Fire Department
       Dave Engle - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
       Dan Francis - California Department of Forestry
       Ken Mallette - New Jersey State Police
       Mike Munkres - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
       Gary Nelson - Los Angeles County Fire Department
       Bill Vargas - State of New Mexico Department of Public Safety

The Contract Consultant was:

       The Terence Haney Company
       Woodland Hills, California

This module describes the major elements associated with developing and implementing an effective Multi-agency Coordination system compatible with the Incident Command System. The module describes essential differences between Area Command, Unified Command, Multi-agency Coordination Systems, and jurisdictional Emergency Operations Centers (EOC).

Objectives:

1.   Describe the kinds of incident management problems that can occur due to a lack of Multi-agency Coordination.

2.   Define essential terms related to Multi-agency Coordination.

3.   Identify the levels at which Multi-agency Coordination is commonly accomplished.

4.   Identify essential differences between Area Command, Multi-agency Coordination, and Emergency Operations Centers.

5.   Identify the primary components of a Multi-agency Coordination System.

6.   List the responsibilities of a Multi-agency Coordination Group.

7.   Identify the major guidelines for establishing and using Multi-agency Coordination Groups and Systems.

8.   Identify principal positions within a Multi-agency Coordination System.

I.   Introduction

This module covers the following subjects:

• Past and current problems necessitating improved Multi-agency Coordination

• Examples of Multi-agency Coordination

• Terminology and relationships

• Defining an intergovernmental Multi-agency Coordination system

• Multi-agency Coordination Groups

• Guidelines for establishing MACS and MAC Groups

• Primary function responsibilities associated with MACS

• Sample position descriptions for a MACS organization

• A MACS development exercise

II.   Problems Necessitating Improved Multi-agency Coordination

A.   Past Problems

The Incident Command System (ICS) and an associated Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS) capability were developed during the 1970s to overcome some very serious interagency and interjurisdictional coordination problems.

The major problems identified which affected the ability of local, state, and federal agencies to work together effectively on major incidents were:

- Different policies and procedures among agencies.

- Lack of a common interagency organizational structure.

- Lack of a process for coordinated and collocated incident planning between agencies.

- Lack of interagency communications including systems, frequencies, and use agreements.

- Differences in terminology for personnel, for assignments, and resources.

- Lack of valid, timely, and complete information from all available sources.

- Unfamiliarity with other agency's methods of operation, skills and qualifications, and resource capabilities.

- Little previous interagency training.

B.   Problems of Today

Unfortunately, not all of the problems of the past have been removed. Differences in agency policies and procedures still exist and will continue. The advent of more sophisticated communications capabilities continues to create interagency communications problems.

The introduction of ICS and improved Multi-agency Coordination systems have helped to mitigate many of the past problems.

Problems related to incident management which continue to plague emergency responders are:

- Ever increasing response costs which affect, among other things, the use of mutual aid.

- High property losses associated with many incidents.

- Life, health, and safety issues of responders and citizens.

- Often a deteriorating public view of government effectiveness.

- Intense media scrutiny.

These problems provide added incentive to create effective Multi-agency Coordination functions.

III. Some Examples of How Multi-agency Coordination is Currently Accomplished

The words Multi-agency Coordination are quite self-descriptive and essentially mean just what they say-- <u>agencies working together toward some common goal.</u> Multi-agency Coordination related to emergencies can take place at several levels and within various forms of both command and coordination systems. For example:

A. At the Scene of the Incident(s)

Agencies routinely work together and coordinate within an ICS structure at an incident. <u>The intent, design, and structure of ICS incorporates and promotes the concept of Multi-agency Coordination.</u>

B. At an Area Command

An Area Command (or Unified Area Command) organization, established to have direct management authority for several incidents in the same proximity, recognizes the need to ensure

that effective Multi-agency Coordination takes place.
The Area Command should include multijurisdiction/agency representation and be responsible for coordinating interagency matters related to the incidents under the Area Command authority.

C.   At a Jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Multi-agency Coordination is an essential component within jurisdictional Emergency Operations Centers. Assigned representatives from appropriate departments and liaison agencies work together at the EOC facility. Other support and or liaison agencies may also be represented.

D.   At an Interjurisdictional or Regional Level

Multi-agency Coordination may also take place by bringing together representatives from various political subdivisions and other functional agencies to coordinate in an interjurisdictional regional setting. The requirement for this level of coordination is increasing due to the complexity of incidents, broader legal authorities, and the increasing number of interjurisdictional incident situations. Many states have regions or other subdivisions which bring state and local agencies together when incidents cross jurisdictional boundaries.

E.   At Sate and Federal Levels

Federal and state emergency management organizations routinely work together to assist the emergency response and disaster recovery efforts of state and federal agencies. This type of coordination takes place at the state's Emergency Operations Center, a FEMA Regional EOC, and/or a Disaster Field Office (DFO).

Also at the federal level, an interagency Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG) can be activated for major disasters. FEMA's Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) concept is based around a philosophy of multilevel coordination.

F. At International Levels

Every time there is a major international disaster, we see instances of what happens when there is effective international multi-agency cooperation. We also see many instances when that coordination is not yet what it should be.

All of these are appropriate, legitimate uses of Multi-agency Coordination. However, the level of understanding, and the ways in which they are applied are varied throughout the emergency management community.

IV. Terminology and Relationships

A. EOCs and MACS

There is no common consensus on all of the relationships or terminology related to Multi-agency Coordination.

In most political subdivisions Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) are the primary facilities for housing emergency management services. This is true for cities, counties and states. Intrajurisdiction coordination is an essential part of any political subdivision EOC operation.

The degree of coordination depends on the systems and procedures that are in place.

EOCs or Department Operating Centers are often used at various levels within some agencies. In

many cities and counties, agencies within a political jurisdiction have EOCs at <u>department</u> levels in addition to the primary jurisdictional EOC.

For example, there could be a State Highway Department EOC or County Medical Department EOC. Also, major industries are developing and equipping EOCs to serve the industry needs during a time of an emergency.

Most agencies designate the facility from which overall emergency management services are conducted as an EOC. However, some agencies may call their primary emergency operating location an Emergency Command Center, an Operations Control and/or Coordination Center, an Expanded Dispatch Center, etc.

In some locations, and for some kinds of incidents, political subdivision EOCs are not always activated and/or may not meet the total <u>interagency</u> coordinating need related to an incident. For example consider a wide-scale search activity that covers just <u>parts</u> of the following:

    A National Park
    County A
    County B
    A coastal area
    A State Recreation Area

The agencies that could be directly involved in the search activity at the incident level might consist of:

    National Park Service
    County A - Fire and Rescue
    County B - Sheriff's Search and Rescue
    Coast Guard
    State Parks Department

State National Guard
Volunteer Groups
Private landowners and/or industry

Because of the jurisdictions involved, this incident would be managed using a Unified Command which would function at an Incident Command Post at (or close to) the scene of the incident. The Unified Command would consist of an IC from each agency having search jurisdiction.

If the initial search is unsuccessful and becomes extended in size and scope the various assisting agencies may activate their respective jurisdictional EOC(s) to help coordinate resource requests.

However, there is no single agency with the authority to coordinate the overall regional response of local, state, federal, and private sector agencies that might be involved in an incident of this type.

Because of the multijurisdictional nature of this incident, some type of an off-incident interagency coordination activity should be established to assist in the off-incident coordination of resources and support among the involved agencies

This Multi-agency Coordination activity could be done at one of the facilities, e.g., one of the county EOCs, at the Coast Guard Headquarters, at the local National Park Service headquarters, at the State Parks facility from some other location. It could also be done although perhaps not as effectively as a scheduled conference call linking the local headquarters of the agencies above.

When such an activity occurs to connect assisting agencies from various jurisdictions and/or levels of government, and is primarily for interagency coordination on a regional basis it becomes a <u>Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS)</u>.

The interagency representatives that work together within the MACS are known as a MAC Group.

Activation of the MACS and MAC Group will be discussed in the next section.

In some cases, the MACS is simply a scheduled telephone conference call between members of the MAC group perhaps done two or more times a day. In other cases, face-to-face coordination must be accomplished, and the MAC Group would assemble at some location.

In some areas where this kind of interagency and intergovernmental coordination is extensively required due to fires, flooding, storms, etc., the <u>MACS may become a permanent part of the regional emergency environment.</u>

If heavily used, a separate facility may be established, and communications and even a staff would be in place either full or part time.

At least one state has a permanent setup for a MACS.

B. Comparison of Terms and Concepts Related to MACS

Essential differences for some of the terms and concepts discussed in this module are described in the table. Definitions of the terms are found in the curriculum glossary.

V.   Defining an Intergovernmental Multi-agency
     Coordination System (MACS)

     The function of Multi-agency Coordination is most
     effective if it takes place within a preplanned and
     organized <u>Multi-agency Coordination system</u>. While ad-
     hoc arrangements among agencies can be made to work,
     it is far better to establish the MACS and procedures in
     advance.

     A formal MACS consists of a Multi-agency
     Coordination Group (MAC Group) made up of
     jurisdictional/agency representatives. It can also consist
     of facilities, equipment, procedures, information
     systems, and internal and external communications
     systems <u>integrated into a common system</u> that ensures
     effective interagency and interjurisdictional
     coordination.

     The functions of the MACS are to provide a basis for
     regional interagency coordination over:

     •   Incident priority determination

     •   Critical resource use priorities

     •   Communications systems integration

     •   Information coordination

     •   Intergovernmental decision coordination

     A MACS can be set up in different places and operated
     in different ways.

     This will depend on the goals and desires of the
     agencies involved, the working relationships that are
     established, and the benefits desired.

One example of an ongoing MACS includes full-time staff, pre-emergency administrative systems and controls, as well as emergency response systems and procedures.

A less complex version of a MACS may be simply a procedure to operate within the terms of an existing interagency mutual aid agreement at the time of an emergency.

It is important to remember that the size and complexity of a MACS <u>will be determined by its mission.</u> That mission may be quite simple or quite complex.

It is also important to keep in mind that a <u>MACS does not communicate on a direct basis with Incident Commanders</u>.

The purpose of the MACS is to provide a coordinating service <u>among the agencies</u> involved in the incidents. This is one of the major distinctions between MACS and Area Command. The other distinction is that MACS is a <u>coordinating</u> entity. Area Command has <u>command</u> authority.

VI. Guidelines for Establishing and Using Multi-agency Coordination Systems and MAC Groups

    A. Activation of a MACS

        A MACS would normally be activated when an regional emergency situation threatens, significantly impacts, or involves multiple agencies and/or political subdivisions. At this point agency representatives are assembled together at some location (or teleconferenced) and briefed.

        A MACS could also be activated when pre-established threat levels are reached.

The activation of the MACS assists the dispatch organizations of the agencies or jurisdictions in several ways. These include making key decisions regarding the allocations, sharing and use of critical regional resources, establishing priorities between incident priorities and the coordinating of interagency policies and procedures for the geographic area encompassed by the MACS.

1.   Activating MACS with pre-established guidelines. (Recommended Method) Pre-established guidelines for activation are recommended for areas which experience frequent or periodic emergencies such as floods and fires.

        These can take the form of Joint Power Agreements (JPAs), Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), etc., among the jurisdictions comprising the MACS.

        With these agreements in place, the MACS would be activated once a situation reaches a pre-determined level of intensity. One advantage to using pre-established guidelines is that they allow for phased activations, thus not always requiring a full complement of staff and resources. More importantly, it allows relationships and a structure to be worked out ahead of time.

2.   Activating MACS without pre-established guidelines. (Possible, but not recommended.)

        If there are no pre-established guidelines for MACS activation, an agency or jurisdictional executive(s) should activate a MACS when requests exceed, or will soon exceed, available critical resources, and/or there is an obvious regional interagency need to coordinate policies and procedures.

Recognizing this, and then taking immediate action, is a responsibility of emergency managers.

Normally this will occur when a number of jurisdictions within a region are heavily supporting an effort, and are significantly impacted by the commitment of local resources. The political jurisdiction executives would need to confer and reach consensus on activating a regional MACS. The disadvantage of this approach is that it almost always takes place "after the fact" and requires extraordinary effort to catch up. It also requires that at least one of the agency executives take the lead in activating a MACS.

B.   The Decision to Establish a MACS

1.   Agencies within a single political subdivision.

Within a single political subdivision, (e.g., a city or county), the chief executive or administrative officer could require the establishment of a MACS in response to a multi-agency incident within the jurisdiction.

This could be done in conjunction with the activation of the jurisdiction Emergency Operations Center. If the jurisdiction's EOC is activated for an emergency it would assume the jurisdiction's MACS functions as a normal part of its coordination activity.

However, for many incidents, a full activation of an EOC may not be required, even though several agencies may be involved.

Usually in this case, the incidents are fairly localized and a MACS may be established to cover only a <u>designated</u> geographical area and include only the agencies directly involved.

The MACS would perform necessary coordinating activities for the agencies involved in incident management within the designated area.

2.   For multiple political subdivisions.

If an incident such as a flood, fire, or earthquake is large enough to simultaneously affect several political subdivisions, e.g., several counties, a <u>regional</u> MACS may be called for.

Usually, individual jurisdiction EOCs would also be activated, <u>and would be the primary locations for interaction with the regional MACS.</u> One of the EOCs could even become the location for housing the regional MACS functions.

The decision to activate a MACS in this case rests with pre-established agreements or the leadership of one of the jurisdictions.

C.   MACS Locations

The need for a location to house the MACS activities will depend on the anticipated functions the MACS is expected to perform. At city and county levels, the MACS functions are normally a part of jurisdiction EOC functions.

At a regional level, MACS may be established at a state facility or in a facility within a political subdivision.

Cost sharing agreements among jurisdictions to operate a regional MACS facility would be required.

The size of the facility should be determined after first identifying the functions to be performed, as well as the staffing levels, equipment, communication support needs, and possible future expansion.

If a state has been organized into regions or districts for emergency services purposes, the regional MACS function would be established at a state facility.

The state headquarters EOC may not be activated if adequate interjurisdictional coordination is occurring through the regional MACS.

VII. Multi-agency Coordination Groups

Activation of a MACS improves interagency coordination at top management levels, and provides for allocation and timely commitment of critical multi-agency emergency resources.

MAC Groups are the people that make the MACS function. A MAC Group is made up of an agency or political subdivision representatives who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds.

The following organization chart shows the basic framework for the MAC. Administrative or non-emergency positions that may be set up to help administer and operate the MACS are not shown.

The MAC Group will resolve interagency policy and procedural conflicts, prioritize incidents and allocate critical resources to agencies for their use on incidents.

The MAC Group can be supported by MACS situation assessment, resource status information coordinators who collect and assemble information through normal coordination channels.

Information flow within a MACS consists of various sources of inputs including but not limited to:

- Agency Representatives
- Agency Policy and Direction
- Other Data Sources

This information will be processed and will create various possible outputs as shown.

Agency dispatch centers, and/or EOCs, provide the MAC Group with much or all of the input needed for their analysis.

A MAC Group can be established to meet a particular need even if a formal Multi-agency Coordination System has not been established. For example, a regional MAC can be set up to operate for incidents occurring within a multi-county area.

All MAC Group level agreements and decisions are disseminated directly to the affected agencies/ jurisdictions through established chains of command. In other words, the MAC Group does not interact directly with respective Incident Commanders.

Differences between MAC Groups and Area Command

MAC GROUP	AREA COMMAND
Expansion of the off-site coordination and support system.	Expansion of the on-incident command function of the ICS.
Members are agency administrators or designees from the agencies involved or heavily committed to the incidents.	Members are the most highly skilled incident management personnel.
Organizationation generally consists of the MAC Group (agency administrators), MAC Group Coordinator, and an intelligence and information support staff.	Organization generally consists of an Area Commander, Area Command Planning Chief, and an Area Command Logistics Chief.
Is the agency administrator or designee.	Is delegated authority for specific incident(s) from the agency administrator.
Allocate and reallocate critical resources through the dispatch system by setting incident priorities.	Assign and reassign critical resources allocated to them by MAC or the normal dispatch system organization.
Make coordinated agency administrator level decisions on issues that affect multiple agencies.	Ensure that incident objectives and strategies are complementary between Incident Management Teams under their supervision.

VIII. Primary Functions of Multi-agency Coordination

The following are the principal functions that take place within the response part of a MACS.

A.   Situation Assessment

This is the collection, processing, and display of all information needed by the MAC Group. This may take the form of consolidating agency/jurisdiction situation reports, obtaining supplemental information, and preparation of maps and status boards.

B.   Critical Resource Acquisition and Allocation

Designated critical resources will be acquired if possible from the involved agencies or jurisdictions. Agencies or jurisdictions may shift resources internally to match priority needs as a result of MAC Group decisions. Resources available from incidents in the process of demobilization may be shifted to higher priority incidents, etc.

Resources may also be acquired from outside of the affected area. Procedures for acquiring outside resources will vary depending upon the agencies involved, pre-existing agreements, the involvement of state and federal resources, etc.

C.   Local, State, and Federal Disaster Coordination

A situation requiring the activation of a MACS will most likely require the proclamation of at least a local emergency. Under state and federal law, this can open the possibility of additional resource allocations, cost sharing, and both emergency and long term disaster relief measures. Major wildland fires, floods, earthquakes, etc., all can cause a local emergency to be declared.

A MACS established within a single political subdivision, e.g., a city or county, will normally be a part of that jurisdiction's overall emergency management organization and will quite likely be established at the jurisdiction's EOC.

A regional MACS that is part of a state system of emergency management could assist in the function of disaster coordination for both response and disaster relief and recovery operations.

D.   Coordination With Agency/Jurisdiction Political Establishments

A primary function of the MAC Group will be to assist in coordinating with elected and appointed officials at all levels of government. This is an extremely important part of the MAC Group responsibilities.

The allocation of scarce resources away from one agency's or jurisdiction's incident(s) to another of higher priority will obviously require immediate and close coordination with the affected officials.

E. Coordination of Summary Information Related to Multi-agency/Multijurisdiction Response Efforts

By virtue of its situation assessment function, MACS can provide summary information on incidents within its sphere of responsibility, and provide agency/jurisdictional contacts for media and other interested agencies.

F. Incident Priority Determination

Establishing the priorities among ongoing incidents within the defined area of responsibility is a primary function of the MAC Group.

Typically, priorities would be determined by:

• Life threatening situations

• Real property threatened

• High damage potential

• Incident complexity

• Environmental impact

• Other criteria established by the MAC Group

IX. ICS as the Model for Use in an EOC or in a MACS

Most of the features and the five primary functions of ICS are appropriate for use at the EOC or MACS levels. These features include span of control, management by objectives, and action planning.

Duplication of position titles at the EOC could possibly cause confusion with those used at incidents. This is particularly true for those jurisdictions which may have direct EOC to incident communications and interactions.

Sub-functions at the EOC will be based on the operational need, and vary from those used on an incident.

Requirements of the incident dictate the form that the organization should take. The same concept applies to the use of ICS components at an EOC or MACS.

For example, a principal function at an EOC relates to the coordination of personnel and volunteers. There is no corresponding ICS functional element.

X.   Sample Position Descriptions Within a MACS Organization

   A.   MAC Group Coordinator

      The MAC Group coordinator serves as a facilitator in organizing and accomplishing the mission, goals, and direction of the MAC Group. The Coordinator will:

      •   Facilitate the MAC Group decision process by obtaining, developing and displaying situation information.

      •   Fill and supervise necessary unit and support positions within the MAC.

      •   Acquire and manage facilities and equipment necessary to carry out the MAC Group functions.

      •   Implement the decisions made by the MAC Group.

   B.   MAC Group Agency Representatives

      The MAC Group is made up of top management personnel from responsible agencies/jurisdictions, and those heavily supporting the effort and/or are significantly impacted by use of local resources.

      Agency representatives involved in a MAC Group must be <u>fully authorized</u> to represent their agency. Their functions can include the following:

- Ensure that current situation and resource status is provided by their agency.

- Prioritize incidents by an agreed upon set of criteria.

- Determine specific resource requirements by agency.

- Determine resource availability for out-of-jurisdiction assignments and the need to provide resources in Mobilization Centers.

- As needed, designate area or regional mobilization and demobilization centers within their jurisdictions.

- Collectively allocate scarce, limited resources to incidents based on priorities.

- Anticipate and identify future resource needs.

- Review and coordinate policies, procedures and agreements as necessary.

- Consider legal/fiscal implications.

- Review need for participation by other agencies.

- Provide liaison with out-of-the-area facilities and agencies as appropriate.

- Critique and recommend improvements to MACS and MAC Group operations.

- Provide personnel cadre and transition to emergency or disaster recovery as necessary.

C.   Situation Assessment Unit (This is also referred to in some agencies and EOCs as the Intelligence Unit.)

The Situation Assessment Unit in a MACS is responsible for the collection and organization of incident status and situation information. They evaluate, analyze, and display information for use by the MAC Group. Functions include the following:

- Maintain incident situation status including location, type, size, potential for damage, control problems, and any other significant information.

- Maintain information on environmental issues, cultural, and historic resources, or sensitive populations and areas.

- Maintain information on meteorological conditions and forecast conditions that may have an effect on incident operations.

- Request/obtain resource status information from the Resources Unit or agency dispatch sources.

- Combine, summarize, and display data for all appropriate incidents according to established criteria.

- Collect information on accidents, injuries, deaths, and any other significant occurrences.

- Develop projections of future incident activity.

D.   Resources Unit

The Resources Unit, if activated in a MACS, maintains summary information by agency on critical equipment and personnel committed and available within the MACS area of responsibility. Status is kept on the overall numbers of critical resources rather than on individual units.

Functions can include the following:

- Maintain current information on the numbers of personnel and major items of equipment committed to incidents and/or available for assignment.

- Identify both essential and excess resources.

- Provide resource summary information to the Situation Assessment Unit as requested.

E. Information Unit

The Information Unit is designed to satisfy the need for regional information gathering. The unit will operate an information center to serve the print and broadcast media and other governmental agencies. It will provide summary information from agency/incident information officers and identify local agency sources for additional information to the media and other government agencies. Functions are to:

- Prepare and release summary information to the news media and participating agencies.

- Assist news media visiting the MACS facility and provide information on its function. Stress joint agency involvement.

- Assist in scheduling media conferences and briefings. Assist in preparing information materials, etc., when requested by the MAC Group coordinator.

- Coordinate all matters related to public affairs (VIP tours, etc.).

- Act as escort for facilitated agency tours of incident areas, as appropriate.

MODULE 16

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION

Comparison Chart for:
Incident Command System
Unified Command
Area Command
Multi-agency Coordination Systems (MACS)
Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)

Exercise Scenario

Reference Text 16-27

XI.   MACS Small Group Exercise

Scenario for Multi-agency Coordination Exercise

Each year the Murkey River overflows its banks during the spring thaw. This
past year has seen a tremendous increase in the snow pack in the north, the largest
ever recorded. Damage is high to both industrial and residential developments in
a four-county area. (See attached map for additional information.)

County Administrators from the four adjacent counties that are most affected
have decided, that in addition to activating their county EOCs, they should
establish a regional MACS to assist in intercounty resource coordination efforts.

The counties and cities within the impacted area have agreed to abide by and
implement the objectives and recommendations of the regional MACS. One
county has offered a well protected, but not well-equipped facility that can be
used for a MACS facility.

An interagency team of one person each from the four counties has just been
formed Their function is to be the MAC group within the MACS organization.
At this point no other representatives have been added to the team. The team has
been asked to do the following:

1.   Draft three or four interagency priorities related to the
emergency.

2.   Determine what other agencies or jurisdictions should be added
to the MACS planning effort.

3.   Develop a MACS organization that will support effective
interagency coordination based on the objectives.

4.   Determine the positions that should be activated within that
organization, and the level of staffing required.

5.   Establish the priority for critical resource assignments based on
information known at this time.

This information is to be provided in the form of a joint briefing to the
four county agency administrators.

Additional Background Information

Population:

Oak County	250,000
Briar County	150,000
Maple County	185,000
Cedar County	175,000
Murkeyville	100,000
Slago City	80,000

The MACS Facility is at an old Air National Guard Base.

Both cities are full service.

The Murkey Nuclear Power Plant has just come on line. It is not subject to direct flooding.

The Murkey River Map is on the next page.

Reference Text 16-31
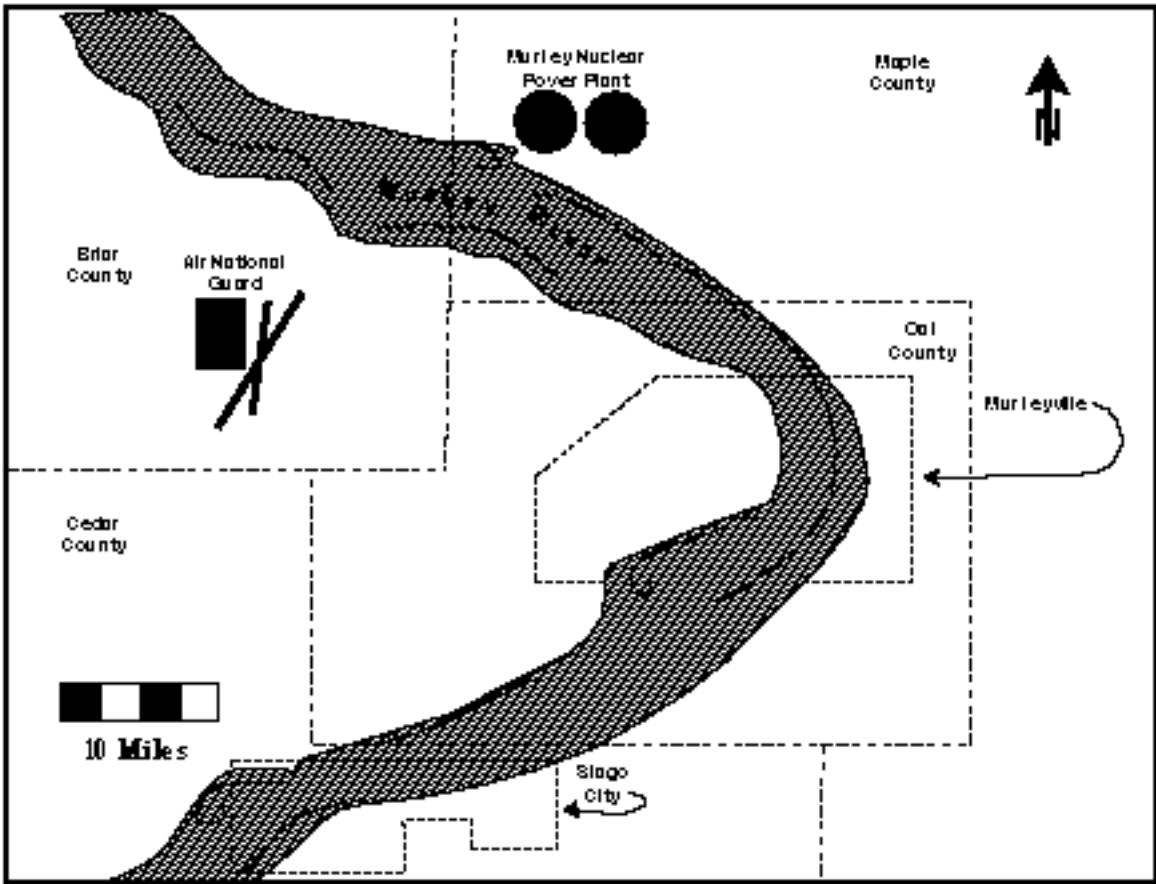
Module 16 Objectives

1. Describe the kinds of incident management problems that can occur due to a lack of multiagency coordination.

2. Define essential terms related to multiagency coordination.

3. Identify the levels at which multiagency coordination is commonly accomplished.

4. Identify essential differences between Unified Command, Area Command, Multiagency coordination and Emergency Operations Centers.

Module 16 Objectives (cont.)

5. Identify the primary components of a Multi-agency Coordination System.

6. List the responsibilities of a Multi-agency Coordination Group.

7. Identify the major guidelines for establishing and using Multi-agency Coordination Groups and Systems.

8. Identify principal positions within a Multi-agency Coordination System.

Multi-agency Coordination

Subjects covered in this module include:

- ☐ Problems necessitating improved Multi-agency Coordination

- ☐ Examples of Multi-agency Coordination

- ☐ Terminology and relationships

- ☐ Defining an intergovernmental Multi-agency Coordination System

- ☐ Multi-agency Coordination Groups

- ☐ Guidelines for establishing MACS and MAC groups

- ☐ Primary function responsibilities associated with MACS

- ☐ Sample position descriptions for a MACS organization

- ☐ A MACS development exercise

16-02-I401-VG

Past Problems Related to Effective Interagency Coordination

☐ Different policies and procedures among agencies.

☐ Lack of a common interagency organizational structure.

☐ Lack of a process for coordinated and collocated incident planning between agencies.

☐ Lack of interagency communications including systems, frequencies, and use agreements.

Past Problems Related to Effective Interagency Coordination (cont.)

☐ Differences in terminology for personnel, for assignments, and resources.

☐ Lack of valid, timely, and complete information from all available sources.

☐ Unfamiliarity with other agency's methods of operation, skills and qualifications, and resource capabilities.

☐ Little previous interagency training.

Problems of Today

Some of the past and...

☐ Ever increasing response costs which affect, among other things, the use of mutual aid.

☐ High property losses associated with many incidents.

☐ Life, health, and safety issues of responders and citizens.

☐ Often a deteriorating public view of government effectiveness.

☐ Intense media scrutiny.

Multi-agency Coordination is Currently Done

A. At the scene of the incident(s).

B. At an Area Command.

C. At a jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

D. At an interjurisdictional or regional level.

E. At state and federal levels.

F. Internationally

16-05-I401-VG

EOCs are Often Used at Various Organizational Levels

```
                         State
                          EOC
                           |
    ┌──────────────┬───────┴───────┬──────────────┐
  Dept.          Dept.           Dept.           Dept.
  EOC            EOC             EOC             EOC
                   |
         ┌─────────┼─────────┐
       Dept.     Dept.     Dept.
     Region 1   Region 2  Region 3
       EOC        EOC       EOC
```
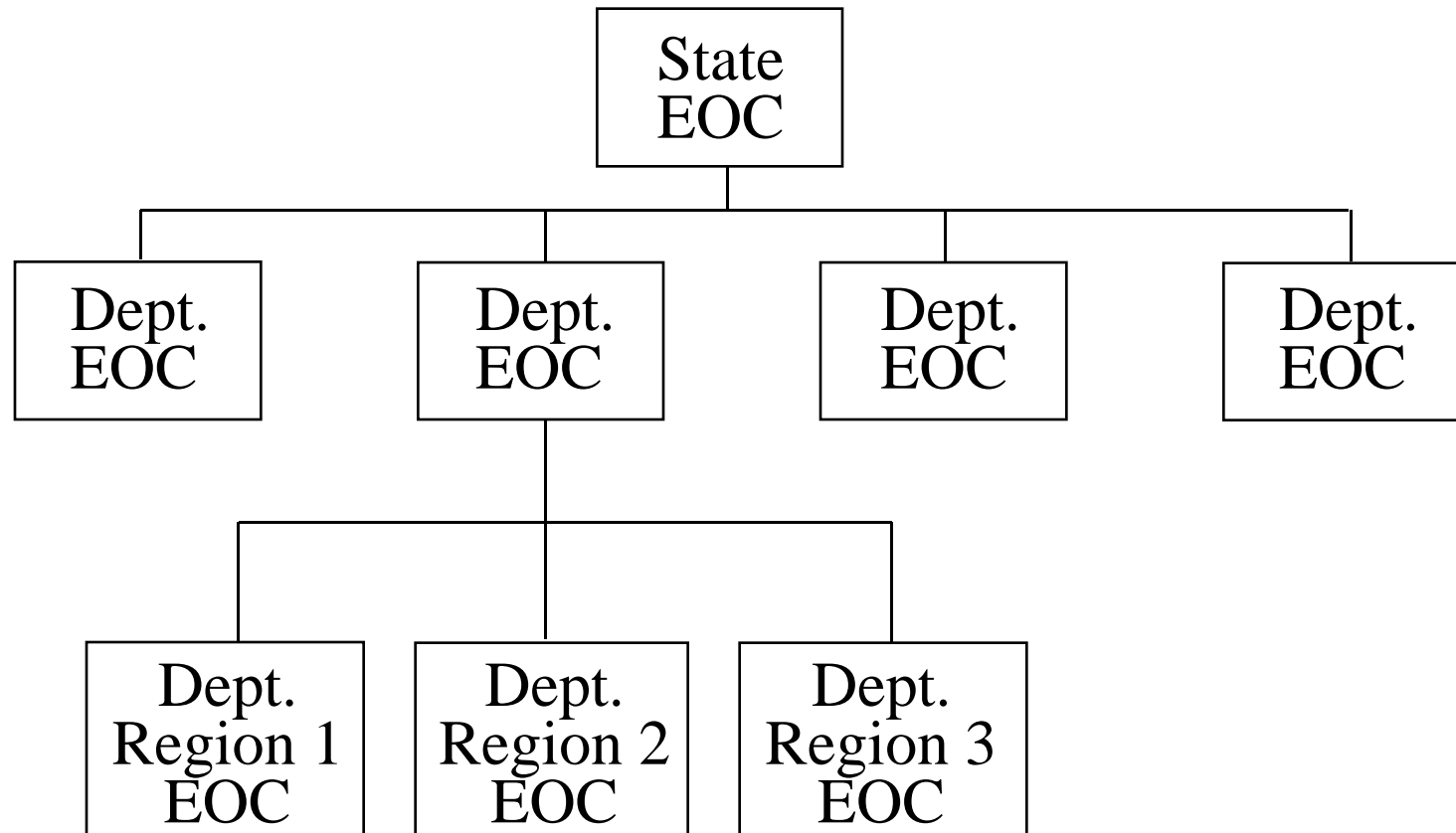
Example of the Jurisdictions Involved in Multi-agency Search

- ❏ A National Park
- ❏ County A
- ❏ County B
- ❏ A coastal area
- ❏ A State Recreation Area

16-07-I401-VG
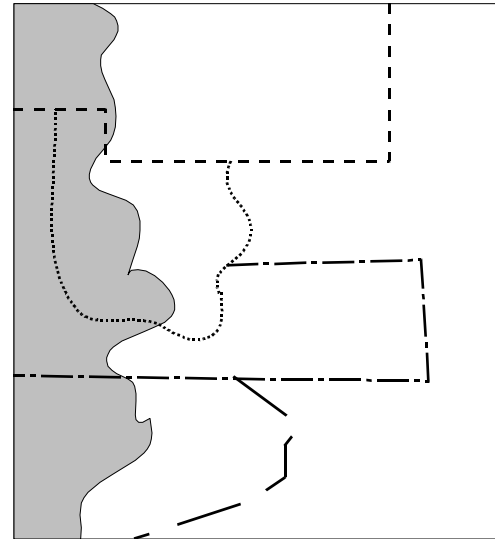
Agencies Involved in Wide Area Search

- ☐ National Park Service

- ☐ County A - Fire and rescue

- ☐ County B - Sheriff's Search and Rescue

- ☐ Coast Guard

- ☐ State Parks Department

- ☐ State National Guard

- ☐ Volunteer groups

- ☐ Private landowners and/or industry

16-08-I401-VG

Types of MACS

❑ MACS could be as simple as a teleconference

OR

❑ It may require an assembled group and associated support systems

16-09-I401-VG

Incident Command System	Unified Command	Area Command (Unified Area Command)	Multiagency Coordination Systems (MACS)	Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)
The management system used to direct all operations at the incident scene. The Incident Commander (IC) is located at an Incident Command Post (ICP) at the incident scene.	An application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction. Agencies work together through their designated Incident Commanders at a single ICP to establish a common set of objectives and strategies, and a single Incident Action Plan.	Established as necessary to provide **command authority** and coordination for two or more incidents in close proximity. Area Command works directly with Incident Commanders. Area Command becomes Unified Area Command when incidents are multijurisdictional. Area Command may be established at an EOC facility or at some other location other than an ICP.	An activity or a formal system used to **coordinate resources and support between agencies or jurisdictions**. A MAC Group functions within the MACS. MACS interact with agencies or jurisdictions not with incidents. MACS are useful for regional situations. A MACS can be established at a jurisdictional EOC or at a separate facility.	Also called Expanded Dispatch, Emergency Command and Control Centers, etc. EOCs are used in varying ways at all levels of government and within private industry to provide coordination, direction, and control during emergencies. EOC facilities can be used to house Area Command and MACS activities as determined by agency or jurisdiction policy.

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A Multi-agency Coordination System (MACS) will Consist of:

❑ Jurisdictional/Agency Representatives

❑ Facilities

❑ Equipment

❑ Procedures

❑ Information Systems

❑ Communications Systems

all integrated into a common system

Primary Functions of a MACS

- ❏ Incident priority determination

- ❏ Critical resource use priorities

- ❏ Communications systems integration

- ❏ Information coordination

- ❏ Intergovernmental decision coordination

16-12-I401-VG

Establishing a MACS will Depend on:

❑ Goals and desires of the agencies

❑ Etablished working relationships

❑ Desired benefits

16-13-I401-VG

MACS Can Include:

☐ Pre-emergency administrative systems and controls

☐ Emergency response systems and procedures

   or simply be:

☐ An agreement to operate within an interagency mutual aid agreement

MACS Size and Complexity

❏ Determined by the mission; may be quite simple or quite complex

Activate MACS

☐ **When an emergency situation:**

- Threatens,

- Significantly impacts the agency, or

- Involves other agencies.

☐ **When pre-established threat levels are reached.**

Activating a MACS assists agency dispatch centers in the following ways:

❑ Assist in making key decisions on the use of critical resources.

❑ Establish priorities between incidents.

❑ Coordinating interagency policies and procedures.

Guidelines for Activating MACS

❑ **With pre-established guidelines (recommended)**

> Joint powers agreements, memorandums of understanding can be used for areas which experience frequent or reoccurring emergencies.

❑ **Without pre-established guidelines (not recommended)**

> When resource requests exceed availability.

> When there is an obvious interagency need to coordinate that is not being met.

Who can Activate MACS

☐ **For agencies within a single political subdivision:**

 • Jurisdiction Chief Executive Officer

☐ **For multiple political subdivisions:**

 • Consensus of involved jurisdictions

MACS Locations

MACS is a system . . . Not a facility

MACS can be set up:

- ❑ At a jurisdictional EOC

- ❑ At a regional facility

- ❑ At a state or federal facility

- ❑ Wherever it is needed

Multi-agency Coordination Groups

❑ MAC Groups are the people that make the MACS function.

❑ Representatives are authorized to commit agency resources and funds.

16-21-I401-VG

MAC Group Organization

```
┌─────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────┐
│   MAC Group     │ - - - - -│   Coordinator   │
│    Agency       │          │                 │
│ Representatives │          └────────┬────────┘
└─────────────────┘                   │
                         ┌────────────┼────────────┐
                   ┌─────┴─────┐┌─────┴─────┐┌──────┴──────┐
                   │ Situation ││ Resource  ││ Information │
                   │   Unit    ││   Unit    ││    Unit     │
                   └───────────┘└───────────┘└─────────────┘
```

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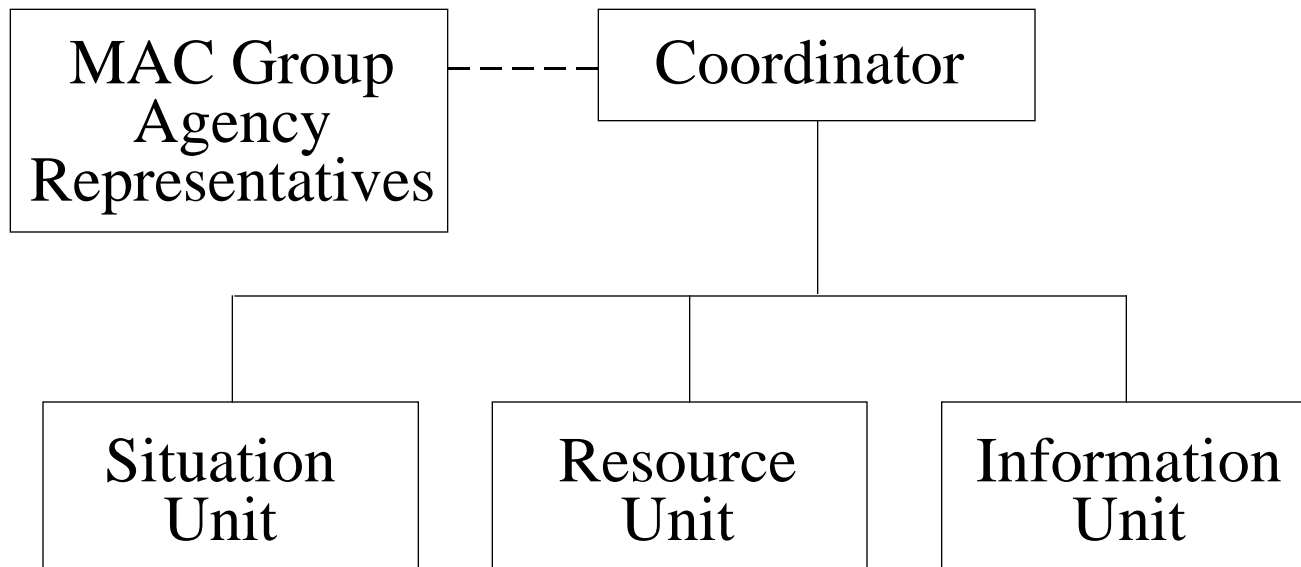
MACS Information Flow

```
┌─────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────┐
│   MAC Group     │   │  Agency Policy  │   │   Other Data    │
│     Agency      │   │  and Direction  │   │    Sources      │
│ Representatives │   │                 │   │                 │
└─────────────────┘   └─────────────────┘   └─────────────────┘
```

```
          ┌──────────────────┐
          │      MACS        │
          │  ─────────────   │
          │   MAC Group      │
          └──────────────────┘
```

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│   Situation & Information       │
│   Interagency Coordination      │
│   Incident Priorities           │
│   Critical Resource Allocation  │
│   OUTPUTS                       │
│   Assessment                    │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

16-23-I401-VG
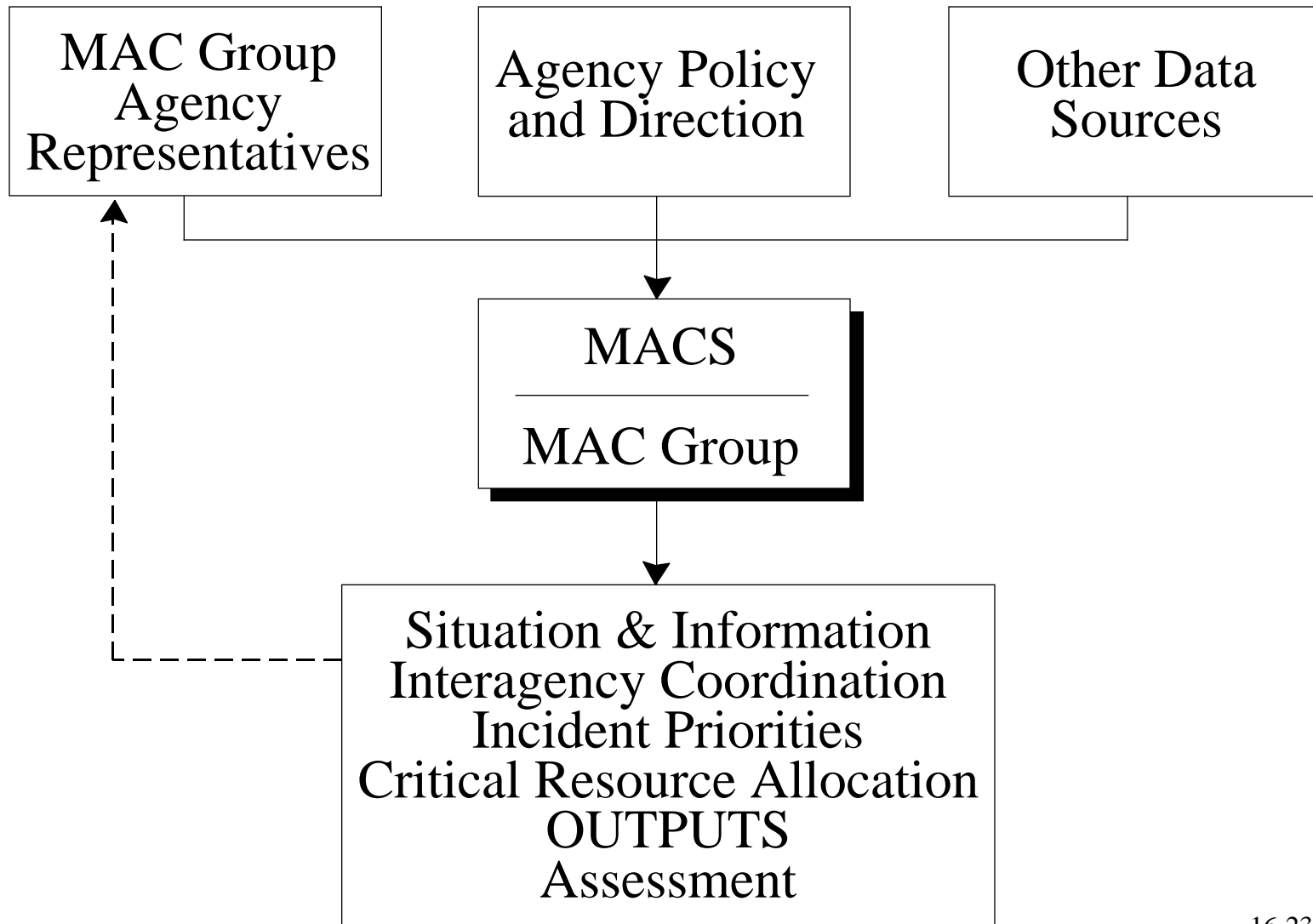
MAC Group Established to Aid in Interjurisdiction Coordination

```
                    ┌ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┐
                    │ Regional  │
                    │   MAC     │
                    │  Group    │
                    └ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┘

    ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐
    │  County  │      │  County  │      │  County  │
    │   EOC    │      │   EOC    │      │   EOC    │
    └──────────┘      └──────────┘      └──────────┘
```

Agencies

Incidents
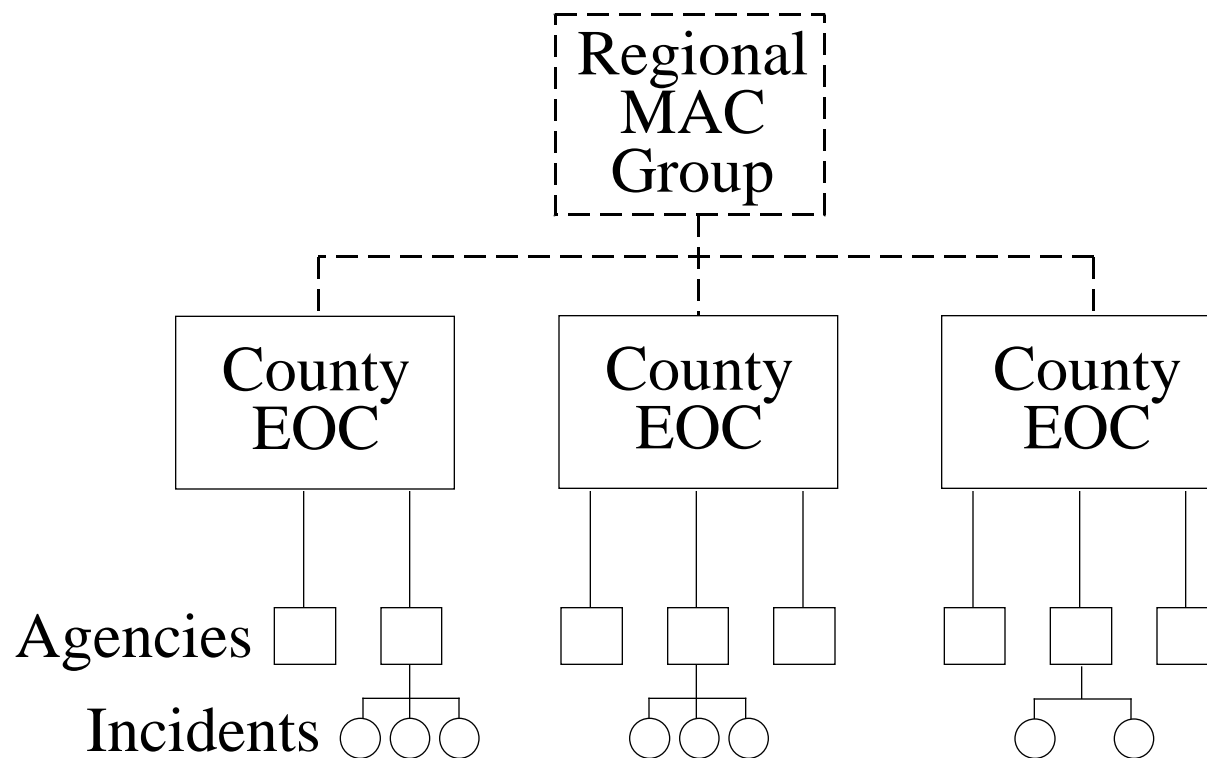
- - - -   MAC Group Coordination & Information Exchange
———   Agency/Jurisdictional Chain of Command

16-24-I401-VG

Difference Between MAC Groups and Area Command

MAC Group	Area Command
Expansion of the off-site coordination and support system.	Expansion of the on-incident command function of the ICS.
Members are agency administrators or designees from the agencies involved or heavily committed to the incidents.	Members are the most highly skilled incident management personnel.
Organization generally consists of the MAC Group (agency administrators), MAC Group Coordinator, and an intelligence and information support staff.	Organization generally consists of an Area Commander, Area Command Planning Chief, and an Area Command Logistics Chief.
Is the agency administrator or designee.	Is delegated authority for specific incident(s) from the agency administrator.
Allocate and reallocate critical resources through the dispatch system by setting incident priorities.	Assign and reassign critical resources allocated to them by MAC or the normal dispatch system organization.
Make coordinated agency administrator level decisions on issues that affect multiple agencies.	Ensure that incident objectives and strategies are complementary between Incident Management Teams under their supervision.

Principal MAC Group Functions

❑ Situation assessment

❑ Critical resources acquisition and allocation

❑ Local, state, and federal disaster coordination

❑ Coordination with agency/jurisdiction political establishments

❑ Coordination of summary information on multi-agency/multijurisdiction response efforts

❑ Incident priority determination

Criteria for Determining Incident Priorities

☐ Life threatening situations

☐ Real property threatened

☐ High damage potential

☐ Incident complexity

☐ Environmental impact

☐ Others as established by the MAC Group

ICS as the EOC or MACS Model

❏ Five primary functions of ICS are appropriate at EOCs.

❏ Duplication of terminology could create confusion.

       Example:

          EOC   Incident Commander
          Incident   Incident Commander

❏ Best to vary the position titles to avoid confusion.

❏ EOC sub-functions should be based on the operational need.