CERT Organization

CERT Basic Training - Unit 6
CERT Organization

2019-08-27
(for online course)

Community Emergency Response Team

- Personal safety is ALWAYS the number one priority
- Work as a team
- Wear personal protective equipment...gloves, helmet, goggles, N95 mask and boots (preferably with steel toe)
- The CERT goal is to do the Greatest Good for the Greatest Number
- Hope for the best but plan for the worst!

Tactical Command Structure

- This training unit describes the Tactical Command Structure for Disaster Response
  - This is called Integrated Command Structure (ICS) and it is defined by FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Walnut Creek CERT uses the ICS for disaster response
  - Many emergency responders use ICS as well
  - ICS is hierarchical with multiple levels of similar command structures at every level
  - Walnut Creek CERT’s place in the hierarchical ICS structure will be illustrated at the end of this presentation
  - Walnut Creek CERT also has a non-tactical command structure for every day operations (non-disaster days)

Appropriate CERT Tasks Based on Structure Damage Levels

- Light Damage Sites
- Moderate Damage Sites
- Heavy Damage Sites

Unit 6 – Class Objectives

- Understand the principles of ICS
- Describe the CERT organization
- Understand how CERT mobilizes in a disaster
- Be aware of documentation requirements

Principles of On-Scene Management

- Maintain physical safety of disaster workers
- Provide clear leadership and organizational structure
- Improve effectiveness of rescue efforts
The Incident Command System (ICS)

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

CERT ICS Structure

- CERT Commander
  - Communications
  - LEADER
- Safety/Security Officer
- Operations Section
  - DO-ERS
- Logistics Section
  - GET-ERS
- Plans Section
  - PLAN-ERS
- Administration Section
- CERT Commander (CC)
  - Has overall responsibility at the incident or event.
  - Organizes the Command Post
  - Prioritizes communications with the City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
  - Assigns & works with Section leaders — initially CC may be responsible for Operations, Plans, Logistics and Administration duties. As event grows the CC will delegate these.
  - Ensures coordination of staff actions and activities
  - Sets objectives and priorities (Incident Action Plan)

Command and Control

- CERT Commander... “What to do”
  - CERT leader
- Operations... “How to do it”
  - Manage the teams in the field
- Logistics... “How to support it”
  - Manage resources, supplies and equipment
- Planning / Intelligence... “What’s going on”
  - Make incident plans, collect and display information
- Administration... “What gets recorded”
  - Collect and compile documentation

CERT Commander at Command Post

The CC is co-located with Plans and Ops at the Command Post (CP)

Incident Commander Also Manages

- Communications Unit — manages communications between CERT teams in the field and the Command Post (CP) and between the CP and the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
  - CERO (CERT Emergency Radio Operators) located near the EOC. Passes CERT messages (neighborhood damage assessments, victim information, etc) to EOC.
- Safety/Security Officer — Optional position. Focuses on and enforces the safety of the CP and people responding to the incident.
ICS: Operations Section at Command Post

- **Operations:**
  - Handles key actions, such as Search and Rescue, Medical Operations
  - Develops the structure to meet the needs of the event (e.g. creating a team to handle displaced animals)
  - Directs all resources deployed to perform the key actions

ICS: Logistics

- **Logistics:**
  - Provides resources and all other services needed to support an incident:
    - Personnel
    - Food
    - Facilities
    - Transportation, etc
  - Maintains resource status during event (NOTE: must work closely with Plans)

Logistics by the Cache at Command Post

ICS: Plans Section

- **Plans:**
  - Gathers information, thinks ahead
  - Works with the Incident Commander to create an Action Plan
  - Maintains situation status boards along with Ops scribe
  - Maintains incident documentation until event ends
  - Works closely with Logistics to track status of resource requests

Field Message Flow Through Plans

CERT Operations Section
Disaster Medical Operations (DMO)

DMO area located at the Command Post

Search and Rescue Team / Transport Team

SAR

Transport

Animal Staging

Animal Staging area located at the Command Post

ICS: Administration

- Administration / Finance:
  - Rarely used in CERT (City manages finance)
  - Walnut Creek CERT check-in/out at the Command Post is handled by Plans using a T-card Board

Area Coordinators - Everyday Management

- Walnut Creek CERT Leadership includes an Area Coordinator (AC) for each of the 8 neighborhood areas.
  - ACs manage their CERT area when the Integrated Command System (ICS) is not activated, i.e., during ‘peacetime’ - not in disaster response mode.
  - ACs maintain their area’s roster, run their monthly area CERT meetings, and notify their area CERT members (called CERTs for short) about planned activities and training.

CERT Chain of Command in Peace Time

- Walnut Creek CERT Chain of Command in Peace Time
- This means that you must direct all reports, questions, & concerns to your next higher level of command.
- Do not break chain of command by going straight to the top level. Everyone has assigned role to play.
CERT Chain of Command for Disaster Response

CERT Chain of Command for Emergency Response

This means that you must direct all reports, questions, & comments to your next higher level of command. Do not break chain of command by going straight to the top level. Everyone has assigned role to play.

Dealing with the Media

- Refer all media inquiries to City’s Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Do not let media inhibit CERT goals
- Do not let media enter Command Post
- Do not release any information

Appropriate CERT Tasks Based on Structure Damage Levels

Class Activity – ICS functions

Instructions:
Using your knowledge about the ICS functions, decide under which function the listed CERT activities would fall. Some activities may involve more than one function to be completed.

Use the following key to fill in the blanks before each activity:

- IC/TL = Incident Commander/Team Leader
- O = Operations
- P = Planning
- L = Logistics

Reference PM 6-12, 13

Appendix – Information Handling Boards in CP

A few key questions may be illustrative of how Command Post (CP) staff keeps informed using tools that are part of Information Handling.

- How many CERT volunteers do we have?
- Where are Field Teams right now?
- What incidents are we working?
- How many victims do we have? How much damage have we observed?
- What has been reported to the EOC?
**Communications Channels Board**

- **Purpose:** Informs CP staff of current communications channels
- **Instructions:** Record the FRS or Ham radio frequency preset numbers for use by the CERT Area. (See the Walnut Creek Band Plan for preset info.)

**CERT Area Statistics Board**

- **Purpose:** Allows Plans to track overall situation and provide status to the IC and City EOC
- **Instructions:** Enter tick marks for Victims Found, Damaged Structures Found, and Situations Beyond CERT as they are reported. At the end of an Operational Period, enter the total # Active CERTs (assigned plus available), Victims on Hand at Med Ops, Animals on Hand, and the Cumulative % of Area Covered.

**Field Team Status Board**

- **Purpose:** Allows Ops to track Field Team location and the time of last communication.
- **Instructions:** Enter Time and Location for each Field Team as messages are received, placing a mark in “New?” that is removed by Ops Scribe once the Map is updated. Ops Scribe updates assignment for each Field Team. Comms may conduct a roll call if status is overdue for one or more Field Teams as radio traffic permits or requested by Ops Chief.

**CERT Area Resources, aka T-Card Board**

- **Purpose:** Accelerate the CERT check-in process; allow leadership to see the CERT resources available, assigned, and resting, as well as team assignments
- **Instructions:** Prepare T-Cards for each CERT and maintain them in the “Not Present” column. Once a CERT checks in, move their T-Card to the position reflecting their status.

**Situations Beyond CERT**

- **Purpose:** Provides CP with list of all incidents beyond CERT capacity to respond
- **Instructions:** Enter items on the Board as Field Team Message Forms are received and the EOC is alerted via CERO Message Forms. Update Board as the EOC reports response, if any. Board may contain non-life-threatening situations requiring a response by non-CERT agencies (e.g., blocked road).

**Map Board**

- **Purpose:** Displays current information so Ops can manage current incidents
- **Instructions:** Add markings as recommended using symbols to reflect the current status and information on incidents being worked. Mark routes / areas covered by Field Teams and windshield surveys on the Map with a marker.
Layout in the CP

Locations of Tents, Boards, Inboxes, and Files