INCIDENT
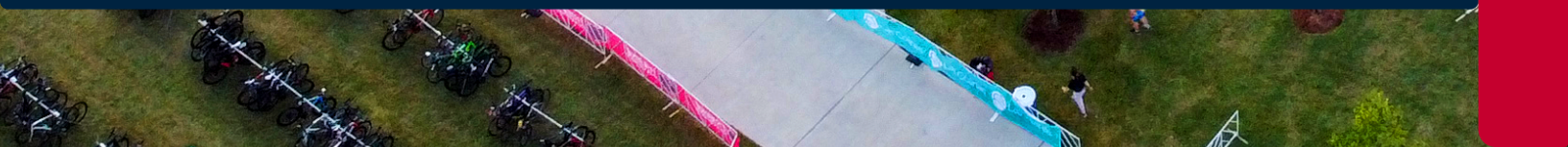# COMMAND
SYSTEM

INCIDENT
COMMAND SYSTEM:

There are many groups involved in ensuring public safety by preparing for, protecting against, and recovering from incidents. When producing an event, you will interact with many municipalities, each with different focuses and objectives. The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized approach that enables multi-jurisdictional agencies and event organizers to speak the same language. It's best practice for event communications plans to adopt ICS principles to help foster efficient planning and response between all involved parties. The use of ICS is applicable to all types of events and incidents, regardless of their size.

DEPT OF BUILDINGS
CITYWIDE SPECIAL EVENTS
PRIVATE SECTOR ORGS
PUBLIC WORKS
EMERGENCY MGMT
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
EVENT ORGANIZER
PARKS DEPT
FIRE DEPT
HEALTH DEPT
FEDERAL AGENCIES
LAW ENFORCEMENT
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

BENEFITS OF ICS:

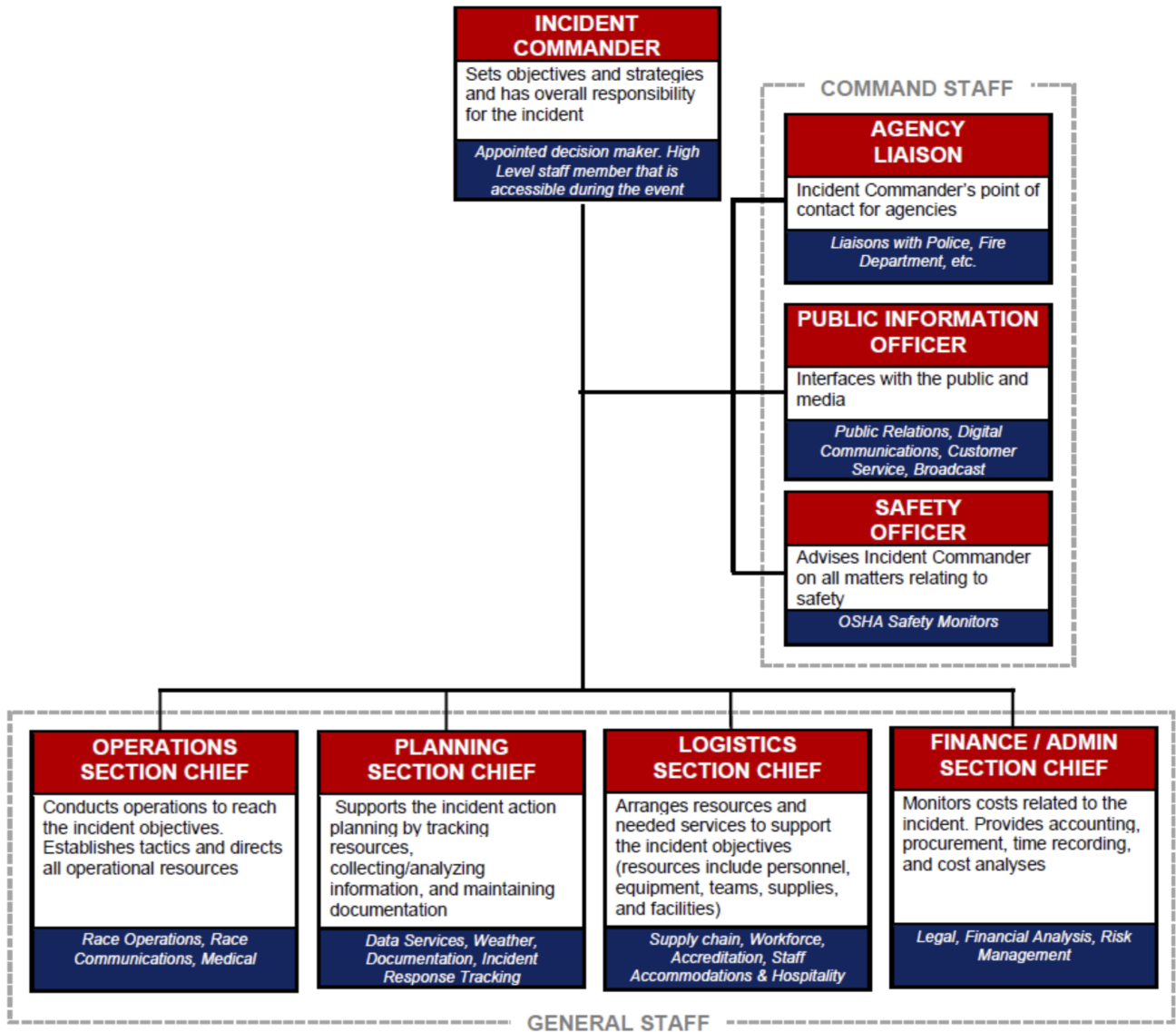The Incident Command System (ICS) helps events function more efficiently:

- Shows municipal agencies that the event values safety planning and has a firm grasp on risk mitigation efforts. This helps to create a sense of trust and respect during preparation and on-site at the event.

- Communicates a clear and established chain of command

- Creates a management structure that is flexible and scalable depending on the size and the needs of the event

- Provides an orderly, systematic planning process

- Establishes a cooperative environment for municipal agencies to work with each other and with the event

USA TRIATHLON

INCIDENT COMMAND STRUCTURE:

Most municipal agencies utilize the Incident Command System (ICS) structure to develop their team hierarchy and issue personnel assignments. Prior to the event, communicate with your agency contacts to learn who from their team will be occupying the different roles on-site.

When the event also utilizes the ICS structure to lay out its chain of command, this creates a scenario where both sides of the communication equation mirror one another. This helps to create efficiency as there is an established information flow and an implicit understanding of who to go to with questions in certain circumstances.

Below is a diagram that outlines the standard ICS roles and their respective duties. The descriptions in blue provide examples of event-specific functions that may fall within each of these areas.
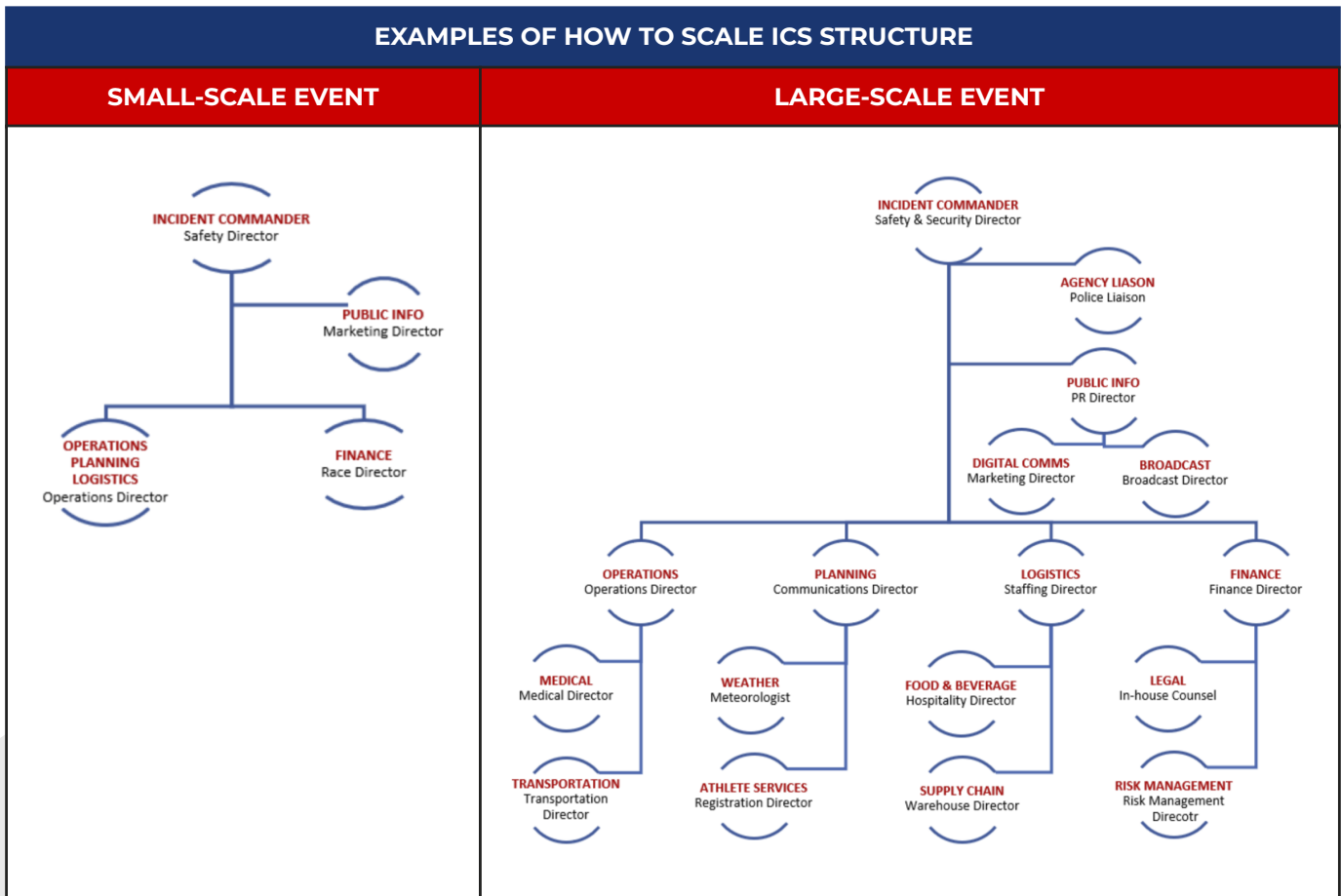
INCIDENT COMMANDER
Sets objectives and strategies and has overall responsibility for the incident

Appointed decision maker. High Level staff member that is accessible during the event

COMMAND STAFF

AGENCY LIAISON
Incident Commander's point of contact for agencies

Liaisons with Police, Fire Department, etc.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
Interfaces with the public and media

Public Relations, Digital Communications, Customer Service, Broadcast

SAFETY OFFICER
Advises Incident Commander on all matters relating to safety

OSHA Safety Monitors

GENERAL STAFF

OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF
Conducts operations to reach the incident objectives. Establishes tactics and directs all operational resources

Race Operations, Race Communications, Medical

PLANNING SECTION CHIEF
Supports the incident action planning by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation

Data Services, Weather, Documentation, Incident Response Tracking

LOGISTICS SECTION CHIEF
Arranges resources and needed services to support the incident objectives (resources include personnel, equipment, teams, supplies, and facilities)

Supply chain, Workforce, Accreditation, Staff Accommodations & Hospitality

FINANCE / ADMIN SECTION CHIEF
Monitors costs related to the incident. Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses

Legal, Financial Analysis, Risk Management

Selecting Your Incident Commander:

It's important to note that key event decision-makers must be accessible and able to focus attention on addressing incidents during the event. Race Directors are typically out in the field overseeing the operation of the event. For this reason, consider appointing a high level team member who may be able to devote their focus to filling this role. This should be someone who has a firm grasp on the event logistics, is comfortable communicating with agency officials, and has been entrusted with authority to make decisions on behalf of the event.

Scalability & Flexibility:

ICS is meant to be a guideline for a chain of command structure, but it can be adjusted to align with your race's organization and personnel structure. For smaller events, multiple roles may be filled by the same person wearing multiple hats. If this is the case, it's important to define exactly which functions each person will be performing prior to the event. For larger events, within each of the sections outlined above there may be additional subdivisions created to be able to better coordinate and communicate with those respective teams in the field. A subdivision would have a designated representative, who would report into the Section Chief. The ICS structure should be clearly defined and communicated to all necessary staff and agency partners prior to the event.

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO SCALE ICS STRUCTURE

SMALL-SCALE EVENT

INCIDENT COMMANDER
Safety Director

PUBLIC INFO
Marketing Director

OPERATIONS PLANNING LOGISTICS
Operations Director

FINANCE
Race Director

LARGE-SCALE EVENT

INCIDENT COMMANDER
Safety & Security Director

AGENCY LIASON
Police Liaison

PUBLIC INFO
PR Director

DIGITAL COMMS
Marketing Director

BROADCAST
Broadcast Director

OPERATIONS
Operations Director

PLANNING
Communications Director

LOGISTICS
Staffing Director

FINANCE
Finance Director

MEDICAL
Medical Director

WEATHER
Meteorologist

FOOD & BEVERAGE
Hospitality Director

LEGAL
In-house Counsel

TRANSPORTATION
Transportation Director

ATHLETE SERVICES
Registration Director

SUPPLY CHAIN
Warehouse Director

RISK MANAGEMENT
Risk Management Direcotr

UNIFIED COMMAND:

At all races, regardless of size, there are multiple agencies working alongside race management to ensure the safety of the event. No one group has all the resources needed to manage an incident on its own —- including your event team! All entities need to work together to identify problems, develop solutions, and allocate resources accordingly. This structure is referred to as a Unified Command, whereby the Incident Commanders of each individual agency work in tandem to make joint decisions. The Unified Command structure creates the following efficiencies:

▪ Enables all entities to manage an incident together by establishing one set of objectives and strategies. Agency efforts are optimized by a single Incident Action Plan.

▪ All entities have an understanding of joint priorities and restrictions.The input of all agencies is considered, so that no one agency's policies or contributions are compromised or neglected.

▪ Information flow and coordination are improved between all entities involved in the incident

▪ The Unified Command makes decisions in the best interest of the Incident Action Plan to deploy a joint resource effort to create a cohesive response.

Below is a simplified depiction of the Unified Command structure. For larger events where the course passes through multiple jurisdictions and/or complexities of the event require the input of many agencies, this web grows larger.
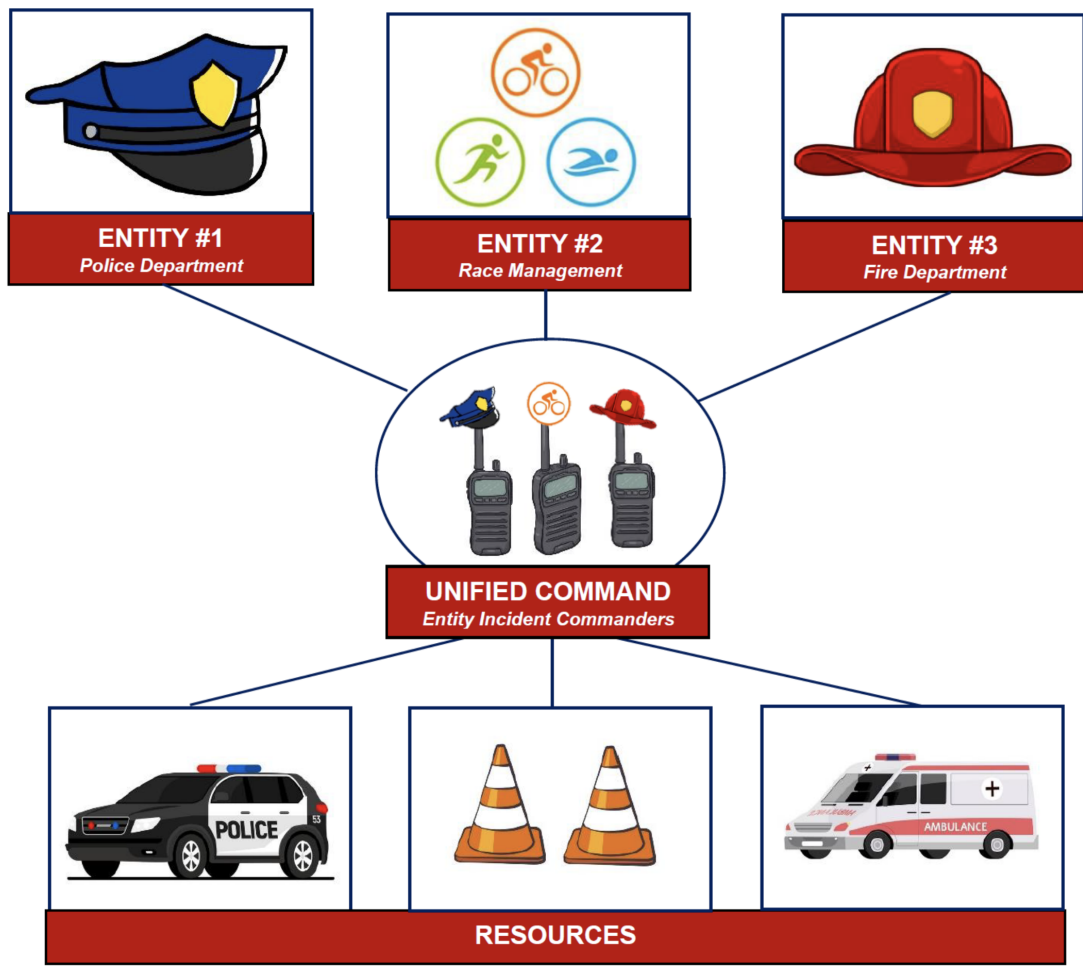
COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT:

To operate effectively, Incident Command personnel need to have access to accurate, timely, and relevant information at all times.
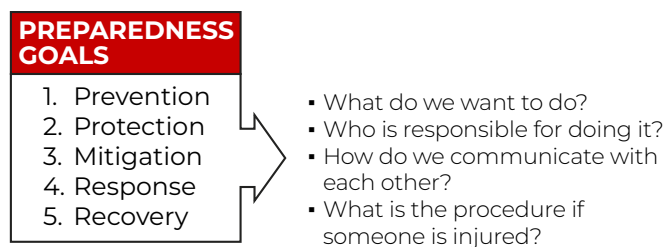
Race Command Center: When mapping out your event communication plan, think through how Incident Command personnel will be able to share information during the event. Consider setting up a Race Command Center on-site at the event that serves as the hub for event communication for event staff as well as city agency representatives.The larger the event, the more necessary a Race Command Center becomes to be able to gather all key decision-makers physically in one place and track the status of incidents as they are developing. Incorporating a Race Command Center in your communications plan creates an environment that encourages connectivity and information sharing between event and agency personnel.

Here are key principles for information sharing that should be considered as you build out your event communications plan:

- **Interoperability:** Communication should be possible within and across jurisdictions in real time. Agencies should be able to communicate with one another and with the event.

- **Reliability:** The system should be familiar to users and dependable in any situation. Technology that is overly complicated or difficult to use creates obstacles during the event.

- **Portable:** The system can be transported, deployed, and easily integrated.

- **Scalable:** The system should be able to expand to support both small and large-scale operations. Plan for the maximum number of users that may utilize the system, as the occurrence of an incident may cause sudden, rapid increases in the number of users.

- **Resiliency:** The system can withstand and continue to perform after damage or loss of infrastructure.

- **Redundancy:** When primary communication methods fail, there should be duplicate systems in place to enable continuity and an uninterrupted flow of information.

INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING:

When producing an event, there are a multitude of different incidents that may arise. Prior to the event, it's important to think through all the potential scenarios and how you plan to respond. Every response has a strategy called an Incident Action Plan (IAP). To be effective, an IAP must address the following for each incident:

PREPAREDNESS GOALS
1. Prevention
2. Protection
3. Mitigation
4. Response
5. Recovery

- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?

It's best practice to have IAPs documented for emergency scenarios to help ensure continuity of operations during van incident. IAPs should be created in collaboration with city agencies prior to the event. Examples of IAPs include: Weather Action Plans, High Wind Action Plans, Evacuation Plans, Security Threat Response Plans, Mass Casualty Incidents etc.

Understanding Local Emergency Response Trigger Points: For Race Directors, the safety and well-being of the event is the primary focus. It's important to keep in mind that while city agencies share in this mission to ensure a safe event, they also have public safety responsibilities for the rest of the community where the race takes place. These agencies have their own Emergency Plans that dictate their response to incidents year-round. When developing event IAPs, it's important that the plans for your one-day race align with their existing plans that guide response the other 364 days of the year.
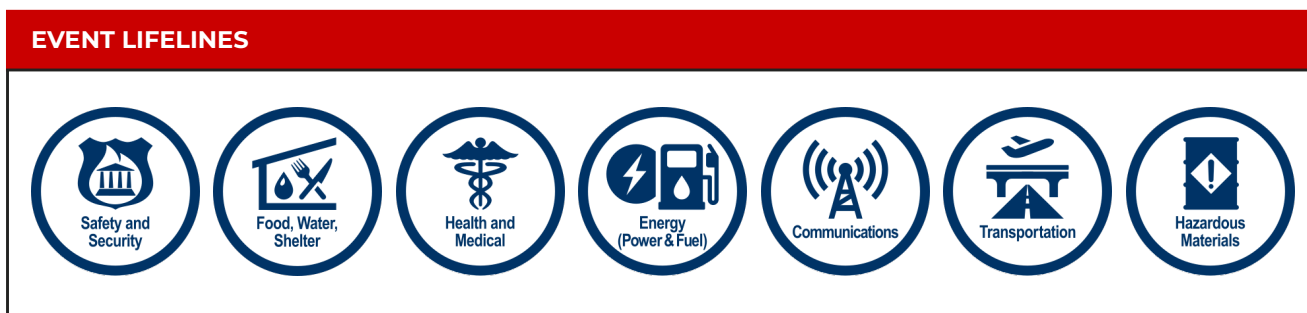
Along these lines, when incidents escalate to emergency situations, there may be instances where agencies mandate certain actions be taken at your event to preserve overall Public Safety. It's important to scenario- plan with city agencies to understand these trigger points where they will step in to assume command.

Examples include:

- There is a hurricane in the weather forecast, which is projected to hit the city where your event is held. The local authorities are encouraging evacuation for all residents and are allocating their resources to life-saving efforts. The Mayor's Office calls for the immediate cancellation of the event.

- A mass casualty incident arises at or near your event site. The Police Department assumes command to dictate appropriate measures for the apprehension of potential suspects and ensuring the safety of bystanders.

- A fire breaks out in a building adjacent to your event site. The Fire Department responds to the incident but are unable to immediately contain the spread of the flames. They dictate an emergency evacuation of all areas surrounding the fire, including your event site.

INCIDENT RESPONSE:

In order to determine the proper response to an incident, the first step is to understand the core components of your event. The National Response Framework outlines (7) "lifelines" which represent the basic services that comprise your event. When stable, these lifelines enable all other activity within the event to occur:

EVENT LIFELINES

Safety and Security | Food, Water, Shelter | Health and Medical | Energy (Power & Fuel) | Communications | Transportation | Hazardous Materials

1. Safety and Security
2. Food, Water, and Shelter
3. Health and Medical
4. Power and Energy
5. Communications
6. Transportation
7. Hazardous Materials (mitigate threats to public health)

The lifelines rely on municipal agencies, race operations, and infrastructure in order to function. Because the lifelines are interdependent, failures in one lifeline will often cascade to others. Lifelines should frequently and consistently be assessed throughout an event, especially when an incident occurs. If any lifelines become unstabilized, response actions need to be put in place until stabilization is achieved.

Response Process:

PRE-INCIDENT → INCIDENT → INCIDENT RESPONSE → STABILIZATION

- Develop plans for all lifelines. Targets are operating at a stable level
- Disruption to critical services
- Assess lifeline status
- Establish incident priorities around unstable lifelines
- Organize response actions to accomplish priorities. Establish logistics and resources needs
- Stabilize all lifelines
- Reassess lifeline status

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Resources such as personnel, equipment, and supplies are needed to support the event lifelines and response to critical incidents. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to meet the needs of the event.

1. Identify the type and quantity of resources, where they should be sent and who they should be used by
2. Source the resources needed
3. Deploy resources to their assigned locations. Coordinate necessary travel / freight
4. Continuous tracking of resources helps prepare staff to receive and use resources. It also allows for agile resource reallocation
5. Orderly, safe, and efficient return of resources to their original location
6. Payment for resources and reconciliation of resource inventories
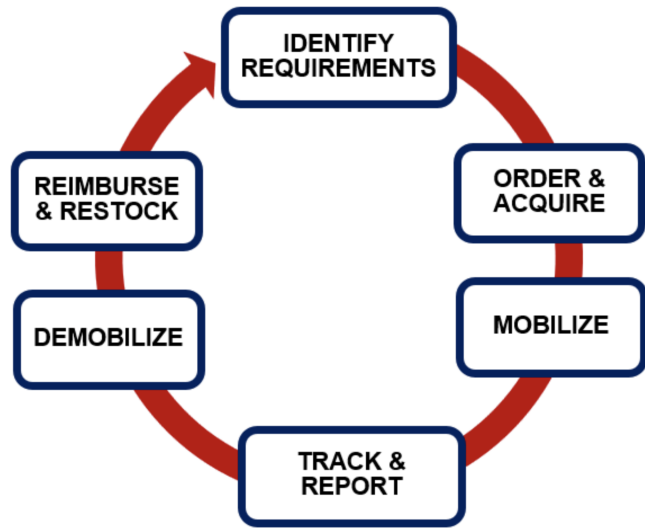
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Pro Tip:
Interested in learning more about the Incident Command System and National Incident Management? FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) offers free online ICS Certification courses: • IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System • IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response • IS-700: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System • IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction