



Medical Group versus Medical Unit

No. EMS-2012-1 January 25, 2012

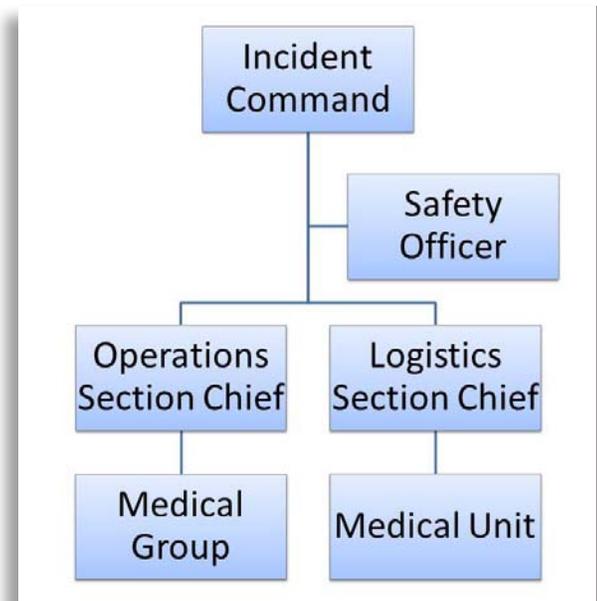
Learning Objective: The student shall identify the difference between the medical group and the medical unit in the Incident Command System (ICS) organizational structure.

In the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS) is an organizational structure that allows responders to match the complexities and demands of each incident while allowing all responders to know their roles and work together across jurisdiction and agencies' boundaries.

The medical components of the ICS organization fill two key roles. One is external; the management of patients generated by responding to the incident/event. The other is internal; the management of responders requiring medical attention.

The Medical Group is responsible for managing patients generated by the incident/event hazard. This includes the Triage Unit, Treatment Unit, and (patient) Transportation Unit. The Minor Treatment Area, Delayed Treatment Area, and Immediate Treatment Area are locations managed within the Treatment Unit for larger patient-count incidents/events. For even larger incidents/events, a Medical Branch may be established to allow for multiple groups or divisions with patient care/management responsibilities. "Larger" may be defined by physical size or by patient-count size of the incident/event.

In incidents or events where response personnel may require medical monitoring, rehabilitation, or treatment, the Medical Unit should be established. As the Medical Unit is part of the care of the responders, it is located under the Logistics Section, specifically the Support Branch. When the incident is not large enough to warrant a Section Chief or Branch Director, the Medical Unit Leader may report directly to the Incident Commander (IC). The Medical Unit is responsible for providing or coordinating medical aid and/or transportation for injured or ill-response personnel and medical monitoring and rehabilitation of incident/event responders.



Organizational Locations of the Medical Group and Medical Unit