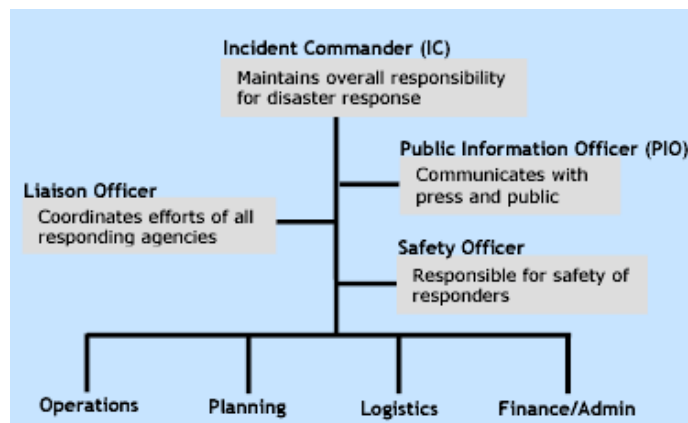


## *How Higher Learning Can Enhance Their Emergency Awareness Plan*

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- **Create a Higher Education Model of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).** NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent, nationwide approach to domestic incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines in an all-hazards context.
- **Train Emergency Decision Makers.** The college administration staff is usually notified first during emergencies. Many have not received training in emergency situations, yet they are the ones making the initial decisions in the first few minutes of a situation. Emergency situation decision makers must be trained and experienced.
- **Create an Incident Command Structure (ICS)** that immediately activates on certain situations. The ICS defines the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and structure of incident management and emergency response organizations engaged throughout the life cycle of an incident. This is what one looks like:



- **Create Multi-Agency Coordination Systems.** These define the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and organizational structure of supporting incident management entities.
- **Create Public Information Systems.** These refer to processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely and accurate information to the public during crisis or emergency situations. Universities are often as big as large towns or small cities, with EMS, Fire and Police. They must have a similar notification infrastructure. Getting people important news as

fast as possible can save lives but it is equally important to get accurate news to those who have the need to know.

Consider notification infrastructure which includes systems like “Giant Voice” and digital display which have the capability to make wide spread audible and visible announcements throughout a campus as well as an electronic notification system. An electronic notification system should have the capability to notify thousands in minutes via landline, cell phone, email, and text message. This system could even be used to require a response to ensure the message has been received and identify the location of the recipient. This system should have limited individuals authorized send out messages. Isolating public notification systems usage to emergencies or testing will ensure attentiveness when utilized.

- **Be Prepared.** Effective incident management begins with a host of preparedness activities conducted on a “steady-state” basis, well in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, training, exercises, personnel qualification and certification standards, equipment acquisition and certification standards, and publication management processes and activities. Personal training and certification in a Higher Ed NIMS and a public notification system would be crucial.

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