Organizing and Implementing an Incident Response Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide and template is to provide an outline of action and reaction steps during a crisis or incident. The utilization of both the template and guide is fluid and to be implemented at the discretion of the company. This plan was can be scaled to fit the needs of larger corporations.

BACKGROUND

All government agencies are mandated to use a standardized, all-hazards approach and organizational structure when responding to incidents. This approach is called the Incident Command System (ICS).

This template and guide was designed by Georgia Tech Research Institute in conjunction with U.S. Poultry & Egg Association and United Egg Producers. Subject matter experts from Georgia Tech Research Institute's Socio-Technical Systems Division (GTRI-STSD) and Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (GEMA/HS) provided technical support. The model was created in Microsoft Excel, a familiar and cost efficient format.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM GUIDE

Although the private sector is not required to use the Incident Command System structure, companies that are at least familiar with the system are in a better position to anticipate and coordinate with responding agencies. It is recommended that companies establish an Incident Management Team (IMT).

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System is organized in five basic sections, with provisions for other positions as the level or complexity of incident warrants. The five basic sections are Command, Planning, Operations, Logistics, and Finance/Administration, and the ICS may also include other positions that deal with Incident Safety and Public Information. The core responsibility of each section is as follows:

- **Command (directs all other sections)**
  - Chain of command; establish duties
- **Planning**
  - Create Incident Action Plan (IAP)

- **Operations**
  - Carry out IAP
- **Logistics**
  - Provide facilities, equipment, personnel, services
- **Finance/Administration**
  - Track and manage expenditures, losses, reimbursement
- **Other Positions**
  - Incident Safety Officer
  - Public Information Officer

Ideally, to parallel the ICS structure, a poultry or egg company Incident Management Team would include:

- Someone with final managerial authority
- Someone to develop and coordinate response plan
- Someone to be primarily available to government agencies and responders
- Someone to be a liaison to suppliers and customers
- Someone to be a liaison to the public
- Someone to direct personnel and safety
- Someone to track losses, incident expenditures and reimbursements

Note: *While a large company with an extensive workforce might be able to assign sufficient personnel to these various roles, a single, smaller company/farm may not. With a much smaller workforce, multiple roles would have to be performed by one person, if at all. Such companies would have to draw upon external or industry resources, recognizing that they are part of an industry with overall interests in common; the single company is not isolated.*

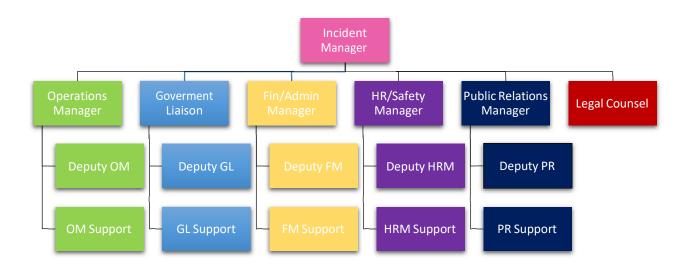**Incident Command System and Incident Management Team Equivalent Positions**

ICS Position	Proposed IMT Equivalent
Incident Commander	Incident Manager
Planning Officer	ALL
Operations Officers	Operations Manager
Logistics Officer	Government Liaison
Financial/Administration Officer	Finance Manager
Incident Safety Officer	HR/Safety Manager
Public Information Officer	Public Relations Manager
	Legal Counsel

The basic organizational chart below shows the Incident Manager as the overall coordinator of a team of six sections: operations, government liaison, finance/administration, HR/safety, public relations, and legal counsel. As previously mentioned, the project team recognizes that only large corporations would likely be able to staff each section independently. Smaller companies/independent farms would necessarily assign multiple roles to some of the same people. That which is reflected below identifies an ideal, in which each section including the

Incident Manager would have a deputy to assume responsibility if the primary section manager were temporarily unavailable/otherwise engaged, and each section would also have at least one administrative support person. It is assumed that legal counsel would be a law firm with its own staff.

Some incidents can be highly complex, with numerous ongoing tasks to reach resolution. Incidents are rarely predictable, and thus it is probable that all members of the IMT will not be on site when an incident first occurs, or the members might be delayed or otherwise out of contact. Thus it is crucial that a company considers what secondary person(s) could step in as needed.

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                            Incident
                            Manager
  ┌──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
Operations  Goverment   Fin/Admin   HR/Safety   Public Relations  Legal Counsel
Manager     Liaison     Manager     Manager     Manager

Deputy OM   Deputy GL   Deputy FM   Deputy HRM  Deputy PR

OM Support  GL Support  FM Support  HRM Support  PR Support
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INCIDENT CATEGORIES AND TYPES

The template itself is generalized to allow breath of application as well as help companies to populate the template in different ways. There are tabs within the template that allow companies to cross-reference contacts and incident types in a matrix. Companies are able to modify the tab to streamline the most common incidents they are likely to face or expand it to include other possible incidents. Six basic, representative categories and sixteen proposed sub-types are listed below.

- **Contamination**
  - Biological
  - Chemical
  - Radiological

- **Disease**
  - Infectious Disease
- **Natural Disaster**
  - Fire
  - Flood
  - Tornado
- **Public Relations**
  - Protest
  - Consumer
  - Customer
- **System Failure**
  - Equipment
  - Utility
  - Information Technology
- **Criminal**
  - Theft
  - Violence
  - Sabotage

When an incident strikes, it is unlikely that all critical personnel would be at or able to get to the incident site. This is especially true of larger corporations with multiple plants or farms in multiple locations, sometimes multiple states. The modern company is heavily reliant on cellular communications and Internet connectivity. Without everyone able to convene in the "war room" of old, other considerations are necessary to keep everyone involved "on the same page" to respond quickly and efficiently.

If all critical personnel are on site, gathering in a "war room" for planning and updates and circulating paper copies of the same is sufficient. For the smaller facility this is the best option.

For more complex incidents involving multiple sites with personnel in various locations, it is recommended that the Incident Management Team(IMT) view/use the planning and management template as follows:

- Establish regular meeting time/place at the onset of incident for team updates
- Work from a single copy of the template that is continuously updated and not forwarded by email with each update; rather:
- Keep the single version on a remote, password protected server into which members of the Incident Management Team can log as needed or at team update times. Google Sheets is a good example of a free mechanism for the same.
- Each IMT section should log its own information and activity or one or two designees should keep the master file updated.
- It is desirable/advisable for all team members to review what each group is doing or has done without having to wait for meeting times.

- Recognize that this isn't realistic for all size companies. For many companies a single paper copy will suffice.
- Recognize that communications lines might be down or go down during the incident, in which case the "war room" model and paper copies are always an acceptable fallback.

GOOGLE SHEETS

Google Sheets is a free online spreadsheet powered by Google. Users can upload, edit and view spreadsheets in real time. Useful to being out in the field is ability to access Google Sheets from a smart phone application. This system can allow the IMT to stay up to date, encourage timeliness and communication. A requirement of using Google Sheets is that a gmail account is required to edit spreadsheets.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE

The Incident Management Template serves to help the companies organize their thoughts, plans, personnel, resources, and actions to address important questions very quickly and efficiently. These questions will include the following:

- What do we need to do? (to keep operating or get back up and running)
- How do we keep it from getting worse?
- What do we need?
- Who do we call?

TEMPLATE TABS

Incident Brief.

This brief functions as a snapshot/executive summary of the incident and identifies core objectives, tasks, and needs. As a summary, it is not meant to go into details of a sensitive nature. As such, it would be a useful page to print off for government responders. As more information is known about the incident, this tab should be updated, i.e. it is a "living" summary.

INCIDENT BRIEF		Note: Use this tab to create an executive summary of the incident to inform incident action plan.						
INCIDENT TYPE		DATE	TIME	STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
				FACILITY NAME		LATITUDE/LONGITUDE		
				PHONE:		FAX:		
(Note: List all types of impact related to the same incident (e.g. a tornado might also cause fire, system failure, bio contam.)								

INCIDENT SUMMARY   Note: Text will begin at bottom of box and fill upwards as additional lines are entered. Expand as necessary.

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES	Note: These objectives constitute the core of the Incident Action Plan; expand as necessary.
Objective 1:	
Objective 2:	
Objective 3:	
Objective 4:	
Objective 5:	
IMMEDIATE TASKS	Note: These tasks should correlate to the objectives and form the core tasks of the IAP; expand as necessary.
Task 1:	
Task 2:	
Task 3:	
Task 4:	
Task 5:	
Task 6:	
Task 7:	
IMMEDIATE NEEDS	Note: Identify crucial equipment, personnel, and other anticipated support needs; expand as necessary.

Incident Management Team

This tab lists the contact information for the IMT members, identifies core roles and responsibilities for each position, and provides space for the Incident Manager to identify any additional roles and responsibilities specific to the incident that he or she deems necessary to assign. As mentioned earlier, a fully-staffed IMT in this proposal would have a deputy and support person for each role, and space is provided within the template for each. When there aren't sufficient personnel to staff each position separately, the same name should be entered for multiple roles as necessary. Each of the roles should be assigned, as each role is necessary to perform in effective incident management.

INIT.	TITLE	NAME	MOBILE	OFFICE	EMAIL	FAX
	INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM	Note: Establish IMT for each affected site/level (e.g. local, corporate)				
IM	INCIDENT MANAGER	John Doe	(000) 000-0000	(000) 000-0000	jdoe@abc.com	(000) 000-0000
DIM	Deputy Incident Manager					
IMS	Incident Management Support					
OM	OPERATIONS MANAGER					
DOM	Deputy Operations Manager					
OMS	Operations Management Support					
GL	GOVERNMENT LIAISON					
DGL	Deputy Government Liaison					
GLS	Government Liaison Support					
FM	FINANCE MANAGER					
DFM	Deputy Finance Manager					
FMS	Finance Management Support					
HR	HR/SAFETY MANAGER					
DHR	Deputy HR/Safety Manager					
HRS	HR/Safety Management Support					
PRM	PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER					
DPRM	Deputy Public Relations Manager					
PRS	Public Relations Support					
LC	LEGAL COUNSEL					

PRIMARY ROLES/FUNCTIONS	Note: IM to expand as needed to add additional roles and responsibilities specific to incident.
INCIDENT MANAGER:	Coordinate IMT; coordinate with other IMTs; assign roles and responsibilities
Additional for this incident:	
OPERATIONS MANAGER:	Coordinate effort to restore or maintain production and production systems.
Additional for this incident:	
GOVERNMENT LIAISON:	Serve as primary contact for all local, state, and federal government agencies.
Additional for this incident:	
FINANCE MANAGER:	Track losse and expenditures; serve as liaison to suppliers and customers.
Additional for this incident:	
HR/SAFETY MANAGER:	Communicate with and ensure safety of employees and contractors; recruit support as needed.
Additional for this incident:	
PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER:	Prepare and present all written and recorded information releases to the public; host briefings
Additional for this incident:	
LEGAL COUNSEL:	Examine and address liability, contractual obligations, insurance, etc.
Additional for this incident:	

Team Update/Meeting Schedule

This tab is a straightforward log of any and all full team, multi-section, or section meetings scheduled during the incident. Most important at the onset of the incident is for the Incident Manager to establish a consistent schedule and location/method (in person, conference call, webinar, etc.) for regular team briefings. Doing so will minimize confusion and the amount of time it would take to notify each member separately of haphazard meetings. The purpose of having every section use the same log is to allow the Incident Manager or any other team member to log in (or check the wall in a "war room") to quickly get a sense of what is going on at any given point in the incident without having to make a lot of inquiries when time is critical. Further, the ongoing log will be an important reference for post-incident debriefing and in informing future planning/response.

TEAM UPDATE/MEETING SCHEDULE   Note: All IMT and Section Meetings should be listed in brief; extend tab as needed.

Regular IMT update meetings will be held from: _____ to _____ AM/PM at _____

Date	Time	Duration	Location	Attendees	Topic(s)	Called by
0/0/00	8:30 AM	15 Min	Exec. Conf. Room	All IMT	Incident brief, stopgap tasks, assignments	IM
0/0/00	11:00 AM	20 Min	Conference Call	PR, IM, OM	Review of press release for tv/social media	PR

Incident Action Plan

The Incident Manager, in consultation with the entire Incident Management Team, will specify objectives and tasks/sub- tasks associated with each objective to address the incident. This constitutes the "marching orders" and is absolutely critical. To the extent possible, the company should pre-plan and pre- populate as much of this as possible based on anticipated scenarios to reduce response time when an actual incident happens. Also, it is expected that circumstances will change frequently during an incident that will require updating and adapting the Incident Action Plan. Thus, it is not firm and fixed. Post-incident, this tab will be an important document for debriefing and informing future planning/response.

The Incident Action Plan tab features a section for each objective and that objectives associated tasks and sub-tasks, a space (far right) to identify to whom each is assigned, and a space (left) to provide a reference code in a system of the company's own choosing/design. The tab can extend indefinitely to be as comprehensive as desired.

INCIDENT ACTION PLAN			Note: Add blocks of objectives, tasks, and sub-tasks as needed and code by following example.		
CODE	OBJECTIVE	TASK	SUB-TASK		ASSIGNED
OB1	OB1: Summarize Objective 1 here.				
OB1AT1		AT1: Summarize Associated Task 1 for Objective 1 here.			
OB1ST1a			ST1a: Summarize Sub-Task A for Associated Task 1 for Objective 1 here.		
OB1ST1b			ST1b: Summarize Sub-Task B for Associated Task 1 for Objective 1 here.		
OB1AT2		AT2: Summarize Associated Task 2 for Objective 1 here.			
OB1ST2a			ST2a: Summarize Sub-Task A for Associated Task 2 for Objective 1 here.		
OB1ST2b			ST2b: Summarize Sub-Task B for Associated Task 2 for Objective 1 here.		
OB1AT3		AT3: Summarize Associated Task 3 for Objective 1 here.			
OB1ST3a			ST3a: Summarize Sub-Task A for Associated Task 3 for Objective 1 here.		
OB1ST3b			ST3b: Summarize Sub-Task B for Associated Task 3 for Objective 1 here.		
INIT.	OBJECTIVE	TASK	SUB-TASK		ASSIGNED
OB2	OB2:				
OB2AT1		AT1:			
OB2ST1a			ST1a:		
OB2ST1b			ST1b:		
OB2AT2		AT2:			
OB2ST2a			ST1a:		
OB2ST2b			ST1b:		
OB2AT3		AT3:			
OB2ST3a			ST1a:		
OB2ST3b			ST1b:		
INIT.	OBJECTIVE	TASK	SUB-TASK		ASSIGNED
OB3	OB3:				
OB3AT1		AT1:			
OB3ST1a			ST1a:		
OB3ST1b			ST1b:		
OB3AT2		AT2:			
OB3ST2a			ST1a:		
OB3ST2b			ST1b:		
OB3AT3		AT3:			
OB3ST3a			ST1a:		
OB3ST3b			ST1b:		
INIT.	OBJECTIVE	TASK	SUB-TASK		ASSIGNED
OB4	OB4:				

Task Tracker

Whereas the previous Incident Action Plan tab functions as a "to-do" list, the Task Tracker is a log of the actions that have taken place. Ideally, to be most effective and efficient, IMT members will log what they have done in real time so that, if the template is kept on a remote server, any IMT member can log on and see, at a glance, what is going on. As the log of activity, this tab will be the most active and frequently updated during an incident. The Task Tracker can be extended indefinitely as needed, and it will also be an important document for post-incident debriefing to show what the company actually did (useful for potential government remuneration and also if there are legal concerns).

This tab provides space to log the time and date of each action, a place to enter a code that references the objective or task in the Incident Action Plan with which the action is associated, the IMT member who performed/oversaw the task, and a space for clarifying notation.

TASK TRACKER			Note: Use this tab to log the status of tasks and sub-tasks from the IAP with corresponding codes.	
DATE	TIME	CODE	ACTION	BY
0/00/00	00:00 a.m.	OB1T1 e.g.	Enter action taken here -- should correspond to IAP task or sub-task	e.g. IM
	Notes:		Enter any clarifying or further action notes here.	
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			
	Notes:			

Contacts/Company, Contacts/Local, Contacts/State, Contacts/Federal

The contacts tabs perform two functions. Along the left side, the company can list the agencies/ organizations/clients it expects to engage in a given incident and provides for a contact number
Next to each entry is also a "notes" space to enter information for a direct contact or other helpful information.

The contact tabs are, in part, a directory. Moreover, they constitute a "communications roadmap," matrices that tell the IMT members WHO to contact for WHAT kind of incident.
Across the top of each matrix are six incident categories: Contamination, Disease, Natural Disaster, Public Relations, System Failure, and Criminal. Under the six categories are fifteen sub-categories: Biological, Chemical, and Radiological Contamination; Foreign Animal Disease; Fire, Flood, Tornado; Protest, Consumer Issue, Customer Issue; Equipment, Utility, or Information Technology failure; and Theft or Violence. Note that these are suggested incident categories, companies can expand, contract, or otherwise modify this list to best suit their needs.

For each kind of incident, the company can use the matrix to check/color in the box next to each listing that should be contacted in the event of that kind of incident. For example, if the incident type were "fire," the box under the fire column and in the "County/Municipal Fire Department" would be checked/colored in. A note or reference code might be typed into the box as well.
When the matrix is filled out for each kind of incident, IMT members will be able to run down the column under the incident type that has occurred and be reminded, at a glance, who they have pre-determined needs to be contacted within the company, its market, and others at the local, state, and federal level.

It is crucial that the IMT take time well in advance of any incident to discuss each kind of incident, determine who they most likely would need to contact for each, and go ahead and pre- populate the matrices.

CONTACTS, COMPANY — Instructions: Modify matrix according to company/site more likely scenarios; fill boxes for call triggers.

(Examples)	CONTAMINATION			DISEASE	NATURAL DISASTER			PUBLIC RELATIONS			SYSTEM FAILURE			CRIMINAL		
	BIOLOGICAL	CHEMICAL	RADIATION	INFECTIOUS DISEASE	FIRE	FLOOD	TORNADO	PROTEST	CONSUMER	CUSTOMER	EQUIPMENT	UTILITY	IT	THEFT	VIOLENCE	SABOTAGE
Industry Association																
(000) 000-0000	Note: e.g. direct contact is John Doe, (000) 000-0000, john.doe@example.com															
Associated Laboratory																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
ABC Public Relations																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
XYZ Attorneys at law																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Cold Storage																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Distributor																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Wholesaler																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Retailer																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Transport																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Export/Import																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Supplier																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
IT Support/Web Host																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
ABC Staffing																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Other																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															

CONTACTS, LOCAL — Instructions: Modify matrix according to company/site more likely scenarios

(Examples)	CONTAMINATION			DISEASE	NATURAL DISASTER			PUBLIC RELATIONS			SYSTEM FAILURE			CRIMINAL		
	BIOLOGICAL	CHEMICAL	RADIATION	INFECTIOUS DISEASE	FIRE	FLOOD	TORNADO	PROTEST	CONSUMER	CUSTOMER	EQUIPMENT	UTILITY	IT	THEFT	VIOLENCE	SABOTAGE
Sheriff's Department																
(000) 000-0000	Note: e.g. direct contact is John Doe, (000) 000-0000, john.doe@example.com															
Police Department																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
LEPC																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
County Fire Department																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
City Fire Department																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Hospital/EMT																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
County Commission																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
City Hall																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Water/Sewer																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Electricity																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Solid Waste																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Media: Newspaper																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Media: Television																
(000) 000-0000	Note:															
Media: Radio																

CONTACTS, STATE Instructions: Modify matrix according to company/site more likely scenarios

(Examples)		CONTAMINATION			DISEASE	NATURAL DISASTER			PUBLIC RELATIONS			SYSTEM FAILURE			CRIMINAL		
		BIOLOGICAL	CHEMICAL	RADIATION	INFECTIOUS DISEASE	FIRE	FLOOD	TORNADO	PROTEST	CONSUMER	CUSTOMER	EQUIPMENT	UTILITY	IT	THEFT	VIOLENCE	SABOTAGE
Dept. of Agriculture																	
(000) 000-0000	Note: e.g. direct contact is John Doe, (000) 000-0000, john.doe@example.com																
Emer. Manag.																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Public Health																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Bureau of Investigat.																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
State Patrol																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Environ. Protection																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Natural Resources																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Poison Center																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Ports Authority																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Newspaper																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Radio																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Television																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Other																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Other																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																

CONTACTS, FEDERAL Instructions: Modify matrix according to company/site more likely scenarios

(Examples)		CONTAMINATION			DISEASE	NATURAL DISASTER			PUBLIC RELATIONS			SYSTEM FAILURE			CRIMINAL		
		BIOLOGICAL	CHEMICAL	RADIATION	INFECTIOUS DISEASE	FIRE	FLOOD	TORNADO	PROTEST	CONSUMER	CUSTOMER	EQUIPMENT	UTILITY	IT	THEFT	VIOLENCE	SABOTAGE
USDA, APHIS																	
(844) 820-2234	Note: e.g. direct contact is John Doe, (000) 000-0000, john.doe@example.com																
USDA, FSIS																	
(202) 720-9113	Note:																
USDA, PPQ																	
(301) 851-2090	Note:																
US DHS																	
(202) 282-8000	Note:																
US EPA																	
(800) 424-8802	Note:																
US FDA																	
(888) 723-3366	Note:																
USDL, OSHA																	
(800) 321-6742	Note:																
US ICS																	
(800) 375-5283	Note:																
US CDC																	
(800) 232-4636	Note:																
US CPB																	
(877) 227-5511	Note:																
FEMA																	
(202) 646-2500	Note:																
FBI																	
(202) 324-3000	Note:																
Other																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																
Other																	
(000) 000-0000	Note:																