

# *Type III Communications Unit Leader Course*

## **Background**

During all-hazards emergency response operations, radio communications among multiple jurisdictions and disciplines—including law enforcement, fire service, and emergency medical service—is essential. Unfortunately, the absence of an on-scene radio communications coordinator often has compromised critical operations. To close this capability gap, the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) funded SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, to develop performance and training standards for Type III Communications Unit Leader (COML) training. OIC worked with emergency responders and Federal partners—including the Office of Emergency Communications and the Incident Management Systems Integration Division (IMSID)—to formulate curriculum recommendations for a comprehensive Type III COML course.

## **Type III COML Training**

The Type III COML course trains emergency responders how to be radio communications unit leaders during all-hazards emergency operations—significantly improving communications across the multiple disciplines and jurisdictions responding to an incident. This COML training will qualify emergency responders as lead radio communications coordinators if they possess the necessary prerequisites, including knowledge of the following: local communications; communications systems; and local, regional, and state communications plans. COML responsibilities include developing plans for the effective use of incident communications equipment and facilities, managing the distribution of communications equipment to incident personnel, and coordinating the installation and testing of communications equipment.

## **Incident Scale**

The COML program categorizes incident response into five groups, according to incident magnitude and complexity. The type of response operation an incident necessitates is determined by the level of resources required to address the incident as well as the incident's duration (e.g., one hour, several weeks). As the most complex incident, a Type I response necessitates a multi-discipline, multi-jurisdiction response for a significant duration, such as recent large-scale natural disasters. As the least complex incident, a Type V response requires limited resources and time, such as a routine traffic stop.

## **NIMS Compliant**

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides a consistent, nationwide approach for agencies to manage emergency response operations. Recognized by the IMSID as supporting NIMS, the Type III COML course is expected to be made available to localities and states in summer 2008.

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