



Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System™ (AIIMS™)

Acronyms:

AIIMS™	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System™
IC	Incident Controller or Commander
IMT	Incident Management Team
IAP	Incident Action Plan

Purpose

After reading these notes you will have developed knowledge about:

1. The purpose of AIIMS and its relationship to State and SAVEM arrangements
2. Have knowledge of the principles and concepts of AIIMS
3. Have knowledge of the role of the IMT

1. Introduction

One common incident management system is used in South Australia (SA) and Australia. This system is the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System™ (AIIMS™). Having one common system ensures a standardised approach to incident management.

SAVEM uses this common system so that we can work seamlessly across agencies. AIIMS is a management system so it can be used in any situation i.e. non-emergency projects/businesses. AIIMS can be applied to any size, type and duration of incident.

It is important to remember that AIIMS is used within the state legislative arrangements for South Australia and that plans, policies and procedures are developed in this context.

2. AIIMS in Emergency Management

I. All hazards approach

This is a key principle of emergency management. A hazard in emergency management is something that can cause harm or damage to humans, property, or the environment. In SA the state arrangements recognise eleven hazards:

- Animal and Plant disease
- Black system event
- Cyber crisis
- Earthquake
- Extreme weather
- Flood
- Hazardous materials
- Human disease
- Rural fire
- Terrorism
- Urban fire

The 'all hazards' approach assumes the functions and activities applied to one hazard can be applied to a range of hazards. The all hazards approach increases efficiency by recognising and integrating common emergency management elements across all hazard types. This means that AIIMS can be used for any incident of any scale or duration. It can be applied to fire, flood and pandemic situations to name a few. The result is that when different agencies come together there is a shared understanding of the system and it results in a more efficient and effective response.

II. Risk Management

AIIMS is underpinned by a risk-based approach. This supports effective decision making, efficient use of resources and allows for a proactive approach towards the

incident.

III. **Applying AIMS at different levels**

Because many incidents involve multiple agencies at different level (i.e. local, regional and state) the system has been designed to be adaptable to all these levels.

IV. **Outcomes of AIMS**

AIMS is a system designed to:

- Minimise the impact of an incident on the community and environment
- Effectively and efficiently control the incident
- Maintain the safety and welfare of the community and responders

3. Principles

AIMS has five fundamental principles which make the system widely applicable. They are:

- Management by Objective
- Span of Control
- Functional Management
- Flexibility
- Unity of Command

I. **Management by Objective**

This is a process where the outcomes are determined and communicated in an Incident Action Plan (IAP) (more about IAPs in later training notes on Information Management). This is so all responders know and understand the aim of the response and how and where they contribute resulting in all responders working towards the same endpoint.

At any point in time the incident can have only one set of objectives and one Incident Action Plan

Management by objective can be described as a process whereby the team leader and members jointly identify common goals, define each individual's areas of responsibility and use these measures as guides for the effectiveness of operations.

Management by objective focuses on the outcomes and does not detail how you must achieve this. During the face to face workshop for Level1 we will give examples of how this works and why it is important in operations.

II. **Span of Control**

Simply, span of control refers to the number of subordinates under the team leader's direct control. As an example, a team leader with five direct reports has a span of control of five.

Span of control is determined by the nature of your work. It has been found over time that in emergency situations the ideal number is FIVE. This can vary from three to seven but five is recommended. It must be a very efficient well-formed team to have seven in it. This is because during incidents the environment can rapidly change and if not effectively managed may become ineffective or dangerous. By having only five report to you, you can maintain the ability to task, monitor and maintain safety.

Where the span of control is exceeded, the team leader must consider re-organising the reporting structure to maintain a span of control at about five.

Span of control range is 1:3 to 1:7 depending on the complexity but ideally will be 1:5

III. **Functional Management**

A function is an activity or group of activities that contribute to the resolution of the incident. By breaking the activities down into functions, it allows for efficient use of resources, reduces duplication of effort and simplifies the chain of command (see below). This type of management means each person reports to only one person.

There are eight functions listed in the current AIIIMS manual. However, the four main functions highlighted below are the key functions that you need to remember. These four key functions are:

- Control (Command) - White
- Planning - Yellow
- Operations - Red
- Logistics - Blue

Each of these functions is associated with a colour as indicated above. In a response the team leader of this function will wear a tabard in the corresponding colour. The other four functions (also listed below) are performed within the main four areas as outlined below.

Function	Definition
Control / Command	Provides overall direction of activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Setting and achieving objectives ● Manages all risks to community and responders ● Approves the Incident Action Plan (IAP) ● Ensures safety is adequately managed for community and responders ● Keeping community informed ● Liaising with external agencies
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preparing and delivering plans and strategies ● Developing a strategic risk assessment ● Managing and disseminating information internally ● Having a resourcing plan ● Monitor the IAP
Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect information on current and forecast situation ● Process the information into intelligence ● Displaying the intelligence
Public Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare information to disseminate to the public ● Issuing timely and accurate warnings ● Liaising with local communities
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managing field operations ● Managing resources delegated to them ● Implement the IAP (strategies and tactics)
Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preserving, examining and managing any scene or evidence
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain, maintain and sustain human and physical resources, facilities, services and materials
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain records of costs for equipment, contracts, materials etc. ● Payment for acquisitions ● Collection, collation and analysis of costs

All members of the response team will be allocated to one of the four main functions. The Incident Commander (Controller) will then create an organisational structure so each person reports to one other with an appropriate chain of command.

The Incident Commander/Controller (IC) will lead an organisation in a response and delegate the other functions to other personnel, as necessary. The IC has overall responsibility and accountability for his/her team.

We will discuss these functions in more detail in the training notes 7 Functional Areas

SAFETY: Note that safety is not named as a function, as this would suggest it is a discrete group of tasks that can be delegated to an individual or team.

Safety is the **responsibility of everyone** in the incident management structure, and while certain activities that support incident safety may be delegated to individuals to manage (e.g. Safety Officer), **safety is more than a function – it is an inherent task of all functions.**

IV. **Flexibility**

This means the system must be adaptable to all situations. That is an all hazards approach that can be applied regardless of the scale, the complexities, number of agencies or the duration.

The system is not rigid and can be modified for any situation.

V. **Unity of Command**

This means that the following standards must be applied:

- Each individual only reports to one supervisor
- One Incident Commander/Controller
- One set of objectives
- One Incident Action Plan

AIIMS is a system not a structure which allows flexibility and adaptability.

4. Underpinning Concepts

As well as the above principles there are a number of concepts that support these principles. It is important you understand these concepts.

Concept	Principle it Supports
<p>Uniform terminology This enables effective communication between agencies. In practical terms it means we use certain words and phrases to have a specific meaning that we all understand.</p>	<p>Management by Objective Flexibility</p>
<p>Adaptability and scalability The size and structure will be built to fit the size and complexity of the response needed.</p>	<p>Span of Control Functional Management Flexibility</p>
<p>Common Operating Picture A shared and consistent understanding of the incident gathered from a variety of sources to support decision making</p>	<p>Management by Objective</p>
<p>Defined management structure In adopting a functional management model, there must be a clearly defined and agreed management structure that can be applied and understood by all. This must be communicated across the response.</p>	<p>Functional Management</p>
<p>Clearly defined information flow To operate effectively, it must be clear what reporting relationships exist, how the sections and units within the structure communicate with each other to ensure the development and maintenance of the Common Operating Picture.</p>	<p>Functional Management Unity of command</p>
<p>Clearly defined roles and responsibilities There must be clearly defined responsibilities for all roles to avoid duplication of effort, reduce confusion and have accountability.</p>	<p>Functional Management Unity of command</p>

Uniform Terminology: Many of the terms used in emergency management have specific meanings that vary from common usage. Consequently, the definitions of terms and phrases are important.

5. Incident Management Team (IMT)

What is the IMT?

The Incident Management Team is the group of personnel who have roles leading sections of Control/Command, Planning, Operations, Logistics and any other the Incident Commander/Controller deems necessary.

The size of the IMT will depend on the scale and complexity of the incident. See Attachment A for some examples of IMTs

What is the role of the IMT?

The IMT helps to ensure the response:

- Is properly planned
- Has adequate resources
- Manages safety and welfare
- Informs and assists the community and environment
- Minimises impacts on environment and community
- Is effective and efficient

What are the tasks of the IMT?

1. Build a picture of what has happened, what is happening and what is likely to happen.
2. Decide what will be done and how it will be done.
3. Prepare a plan that captures these decisions**
4. Gather the resources necessary
5. Implement and monitor the plan
6. Keep people and the organisation informed of actions

** This plan is an Incident Action Plan (IAP). While the overarching incident will have an Incident Action Plan SAVEM will have its own Action Plan (AP) that will be subordinate to the IAP.

6. Leadership and Management

As well as the technical skills personnel need to perform in their roles there is the overall need to have the 'soft' skills of leadership and management. All supervisory roles need to provide leadership. Leaders need to be aware of the need to:

- Make sound and timely decisions
- Understand that safety and welfare of personnel is a primary responsibility
- Provide timely and accurate information
- Effectively communicate
- Maintain a cohesive team
- Recognise limitations and seek assistance
- Set the example

7. Incident Classification

In AIIMS, incidents can be classified into three levels – Levels 1, 2, and 3.

The classification of an incident gives some sense of its potential impacts. It is also a trigger for other actions including notifications, resource activation and organisational readiness levels:

- A level 1 incident can be managed with local resources and is simple
- A level 2 incident requires resources across the region or has an extended timeframe e.g. more than one shift
- A level 3 incident will require resources from across the state and will have a degree of complexity

SAVEM is unlikely to be involved in any of the many level 1 incidents that occur across the state but may be involved in Level 2 incidents (e.g. Kyeema Fire 2015) and will nearly always be involved in Level 3 incidents (e.g. Cudlee Creek Fire 2019)

8. Incident Action Planning

What is an Incident Action Plan (IAP)?

Incident Action Planning is a process that is central to the application of AIIMS. After consideration of all known factors affecting an incident, an Incident Action Plan (IAP) is developed to manage the incident and is used as a tool to communicate the incident objectives. IAPs are used to deliver briefings (More on this later under Training Note 9 Information Management)

An IAP specifies agreed incident objectives, strategies to achieve these objectives, resources required and the timeframes for implementing them.

The IAP is used to manage an incident and communicate the incident objectives to all involved.

Why do we need an IAP?

Incidents can often have multiple and conflicting demands, time constraints, and involve many responders and other organisations. An IAP ensures:

- All involved understand the objectives and strategies
- Roles are clear and personnel are accountable for their tasks
- There is a systematic and coordinated approach to implementing the various activities and tasks, so we use resources efficiently
- Risks are identified and managed.

Does every incident require an IAP?

Every incident requires an Incident Action Plan. These plans can take different forms. Whatever form they take, an assessment of the situation must be undertaken, and objectives must be determined and communicated.

What form could an IAP take?

- IAPs can be a mental plan conveyed in a simple verbal briefing, a written outline, or a detailed document.
- Objectives for the incident must be determined and communicated to all responders.
- A mental plan or verbal briefing would be used for short, routine operations covered by Standard Operating Procedures and pre-existing response plans. Examples of when this might occur are:
 1. SES attending a tree that has collapsed onto the roof of a house
 2. Police attending a minor traffic accident

- At a short-duration Level 1 incident, a verbal plan may be appropriate. Verbal plans may also be used in the early stages of a rapidly escalating incident as it may be challenging to prepare a written plan.
- Where it is apparent that an incident will not be controlled rapidly, it is important to move from a mental plan to a written (outline) plan as soon as practicable. This can simply be notes recorded in your logbook.
- A documented plan makes it easier to track multiple resources, and to confirm that incident objectives and strategies remain current and appropriate. It is also useful for communicating across the response.
- An IAP provides a valuable resource for briefings, transfers of control and post-incident analysis and review.
- Written IAPs also provide continuity for both the next shift, and the ongoing management of the incident

What is the purpose of the IAP?

The purpose of the IAP is to:

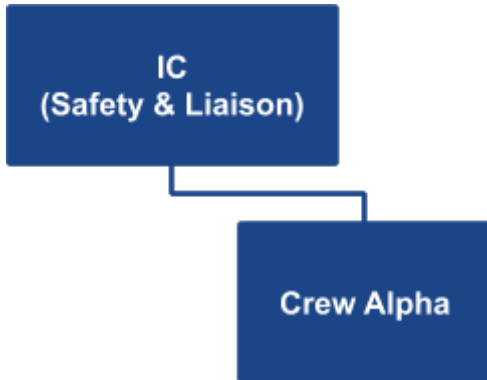
- Describe overall operational objectives and strategy
- Ensure continuity of operations
- Ensure effective use of resources
- Provide the basis of briefings

9. Summary

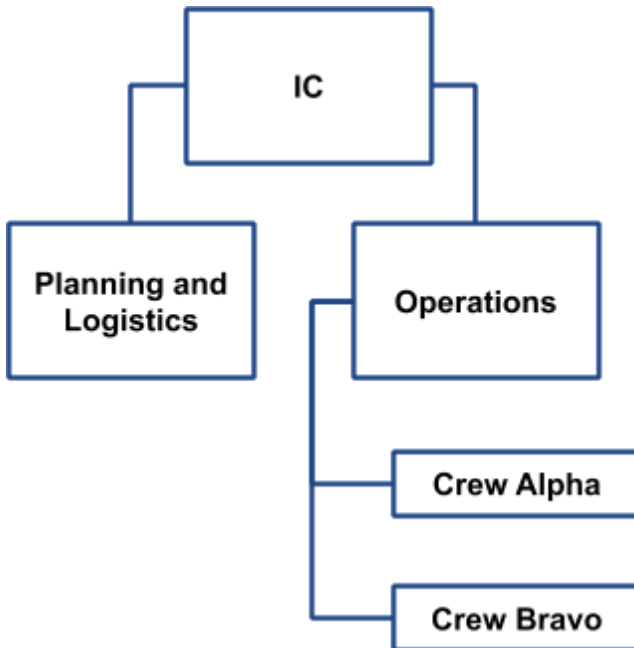
- A. AllIMS is a flexible system that changes with the incident
- B. The five key principles are:
 - a. Management by Objective
 - b. Span of Control
 - c. Functional Management
 - d. Flexibility
 - e. Unity of Command
- C. AllIMS is system that is designed to:
 - a. Minimise the impact of an incident on the community and environment
 - b. Effectively and efficiently control the incident
 - c. Maintain safety and welfare of responders and the community
- D. The Incident Controller/Commander (IC) has overall responsibility
- E. The IMT comprises the IC, Planning Officer, Operations Officer and Logistics Officer as a minimum
- F. Incidents are categorised as Level 1, 2, or 3 depending on the size, complexity, resources deployed and risks
- G. Achieving control requires strong leadership and management by all key supervisory roles
- H. The IAP is central to the management of incidents

11. Attachment A: Examples of IMTs

Level 1 Incident Management Structure



Level 2 Incident Management Structure



Level 3 Incident Management Structure

