CERT Basic Training Guidebook

June 2024

Tweaked Sep 2025

Contents

Actual Emergency Procedures

In the event of an actual emergency, follow these steps:

- Stop all activity in the simulation

- Say "actual emergency, (insert emergency situation)"

- Call 911 to initiate emergency response

- Notify the IC and fire department staff on site

Emergency Dispatch: 911

Ashland Fire & Rescue Battalion Chief: 541-552-2220

Address of training site: 90 N Mountain Ave, Ashland

Roles needing filled

Incident Commander (IC)

Operations Chief (OPS)

Planning Chief (PLANS)

Logistics Chief (LOGS)

Finance/Administration Chief (ADMIN)

Communications Unit (COMS)

Division A Manager

Division A Assistant

Division B Manager

Division B Assistant

Division C Manager

Division C Assistant

Division D Manager

Victim Unit Manager

Moulage Unit

Safety Officer

6 Victims

6 Patients

Trainee Flow

1. Sign in with Admin
2. Receive PPE from LOGS
3. Go to Staging
4. Receive Radio from COMS (1 per team)
5. Receive Assignment from OPS (face to face)
6. Go to first assignment—(via radio:) "En Route"
7. Report to Division manager—"On Scene"
8. Perform division round—"(status report)"
9. Change roles and repeat round—"(status report)"
10. Receive next assignment from OPS via radio
11. Repeat 6–9 for next two divisions
12. Take Exam at Division D
13. Report to OPS (face to face)
14. Return PPE and radio
15. Sign out with Admin

Equipment per team:

☐ PPE (all members)
☐ Map
☐ Activity Log
☐ Clipboard, paper, and pen
☐ Radio (1)

Incident Commander (IC)

The IC oversees the overhead branch and all operations on the training ground. Direct communication will be with OPS, PLANS, LOGS, ADMIN, Victim Manager, and the Division Managers. IC is ultimately responsible to ensure all parts of the training event are working, and all members are operating safely. IC knows when, how, and who to contact in the event of an actual emergency.

Throughout the event, IC is on standby to manage any problems that occur during the training and coordinate the activities of the overhead team.

Equipment:
- IAP, Schedule, map, BT guide, Activity Log, roster
- Radios (1-2)
- Clipboard
- Pens
- Chair

Operations Chief (OPS)

The OPS Chief oversees the trainee teams going through their assignments.

Mobilization:

1. Trainees report to OPS after ADMIN and LOGS
2. Assign team members to initial roles on their team
3. Brief them on their team assignment (below)
4. When ready, tell teams to report to the Manager at their first division and use CERT radio protocols.

Trainee Briefing

1. Here's your clipboard (see Equipment per Team below)
2. Four Divisions of half an hour: Search, Medical, Fire, and Final Exam
3. Exercise, not test: no grades
4. At each division, you'll rotate roles: Team Leader, Radio, Scribe
5. Keep me informed of status and results. Use radio protocols you learned last week:
    a. *What is the first transmission you would make when you leave here?*
6. See your team assignment and map
7. Team member safety is your first priority. Weather: It's hot (or cold). Some areas are less safe by design. Be careful,

use PPE, go slow in the dark. Watch for trip hazards. Stay in exercise areas.

8. If actual emergency, say "actual emergency" to your station staff
9. Two bathroom locations on map
10. First assignments: Team # to Division N...
11. Questions?
12. Deploy - Report to Division Manager.

Radio protocol example (not part of briefing):

Radio dialogue should occur in this fashion:

Team: "OPS from Team #, en route"

OPS: "Copy, Team # en route"

Team: "OPS from Team #, on scene at Division X"

OPS: "Copy, Team # at Division X"

Team: "OPS from Team #"

OPS: "Go ahead, Team #."

Team: "Have Exited/Have Completed ... Status is (#)(Colors) / Fire extinguished." (After 2nd round:) "Team # Ready for next assignment"

OPS: "Your next assignment is Division X."

Team: "Team # en route to Division X."

OPS: "Copy en route"

Team: "OPS from Team #. On-scene at Division X."

Division A, B, and C are rotations occurring at the same time, with all 3 active teams ending in Division D at the same time. Guide teams according to the simulation schedule.

<u>Demobilization</u>: Once all four Divisions have been completed by a trainee, they return to the Incident Command Post and report to OPS to begin demobilization.

<u>Equipment</u>:
- Hand-held tracking board and/or clipboard
- Schedule, map, BT guide, IAP
- Pens
- Dry erase kit
- Radios (2)
- OPS sign
- Chair

Planning Chief (PLANS)

The planning chief is responsible for *all* member accountability and tracking throughout the simulation.

Set up:
- Prepare IAP in advance of training
- Ensure that printed materials and signage are available
- Create trainee passports based on the schedule and roster
- Obtain documents for each overhead role and trainees, ready to distribute

Mobilization:

Receive overhead staff passports from ADMIN as members check in. Organize on board.

Throughout the training, PLANS is responsible for tracking teams and team member location for accountability. When you hear a team rotate Divisions, move their team magnet to their new location and note the time in your log (resource status). When trainees give status reports, record them in your log (situation status).

Demobilization:

Trainees return to OPS, return equipment to LOGS, and sign out with ADMIN. During sign-out, remove them from the board. As overhead team members sign out, return their Passports to them via ADMIN.

Equipment needed:
- PLANS table sign
- Magnetic white board
- Magnetic passport holders
- Blank Passports (50) with Tape
- Clipboard with roster
- Schedule, map, and BT guidebook
- Dry erase kit
- Pens
- Table
- Chair

The tracking board should look something like this:
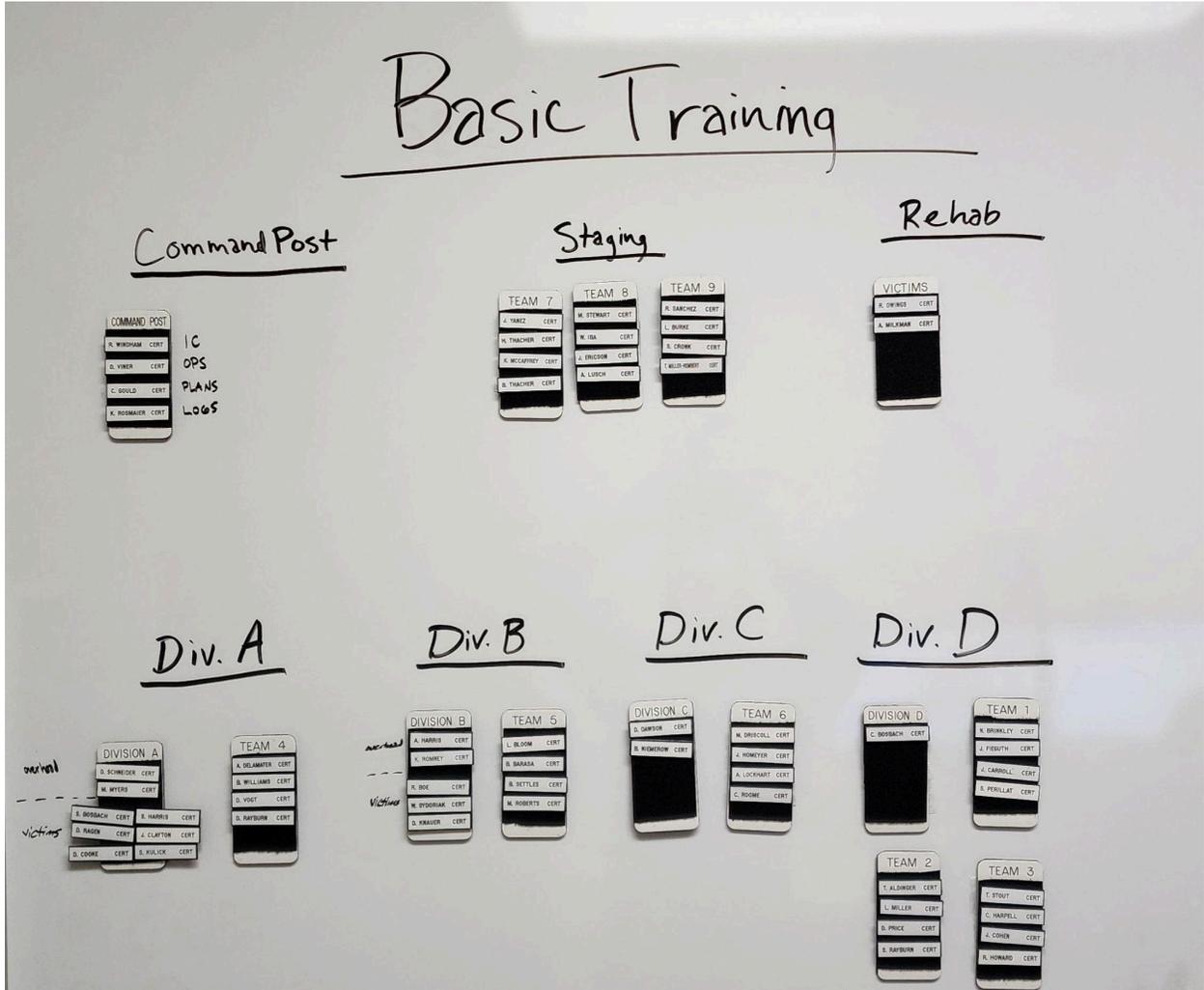
Logistics Chief (LOGS)

The Logistics Chief is responsible for coordinating and delivering needed supplies for the simulation, as well as equipping trainees.

Setup: Ensure that all equipment described throughout this guide is obtained before the training

Mobilization: Checked-in trainees are sent to LOGS from ADMIN. Upon arrival, they are issued a helmet, head lamp, vest, gloves, safety glasses, and knee pads upon request. Document what is given to each trainee on the equipment log, and once they are ready **send them to OPS**. Ensure that COMS assigns a radio to each team on the correct frequency before they activate.

Demobilization: Upon return, trainees are sent by OPS to LOGS. Trainees return all issued equipment, and receipt of equipment shall be recorded on the equipment log form. Send to ADMIN for sign-out.

Equipment:
- *Equipment listed under each role, distributed as needed*
- Clipboard w/ BT guide, map, schedule, equipment log.
- Pens

- 24 Helmets in useable condition
- 24 vests in useable condition
- Bin of Training gloves (several pairs of each size)
- 24 Headlamps
- Safety glasses
- Knee Pads
- Table
- Chair

Administration/Finance Chief (ADMIN)

ADMIN is responsible for signing members in and out of the simulation, providing paperwork, and offering general guidance.

Mobilization: All members, volunteers, and trainees involved must check in at the ADMIN station where they will receive their needed paperwork. Obtain paperwork from Planning Chief on labeled clipboards. Position your station so that entering participants reach you first.

Overhead Team: Per-role clipboard and pen
Trainees: Per-team clipboard and pen
Spontaneous Volunteers: **must sign waiver**

After check-in, send trainees to LOGS (Logistics) to receive equipment, one team at a time. Send volunteer victims to Victim Unit as they arrive. Remind Overhead team members to get a radio from LOGS as needed.

Demobilization: Ensure trainees have reported to OPS and LOGS at the incident command post, then sign out with ADMIN prior to leaving the event.
Overhead staff and volunteers are released by CERT IC and return equipment to LOGS before returning paperwork to

ADMIN and signing out. Make sure PLANS is aware of all participants signing out. Give completed paperwork to PLANS **Every person must sign out before leaving to ensure accountability for all members on the training ground.**

Equipment:
- Clipboard with CERT sign in forms
- Clipboard with non-CERT sign in forms
- Spontaneous Volunteer release forms
- ADMIN sign and Sign-In signs
- Pens
- Role clipboards Overhead Team members (from PLANS)
- Team clipboards trainee teams (from PLANS)
- BT guide (this guide), Admin section
- Name tag stickers
- Chair
- Table

Communications Unit

The communications unit is responsible for **successful use of radio equipment** and tracking all transmissions during the simulation, checking that messages are getting through on both channels, and keeping a radio traffic log. The only time COMMS needs to transmit will be to announce "this is a training" or to relay if needed.

Before using any channels for training or communication, check with the IC or fire department staff to ensure ECSO dispatch has been notified of the training and which channels it will be utilizing. Call the on-duty battalion chief if unsure, or if dispatch needs to be notified: 541-552-2220

Setup: Determine the channel/frequency assignments per IAP. Obtain and configure radios sufficient for overhead staff and trainees.

Mobilization: Issue overhead team radios.
When trainee teams are being mobilized, issue one radio per team, and document it on an equipment log. Broadcast "This is a training exercise" message on training channels periodically.

Equipment:
- Table and chair
- Clipboard with IAP, Communications Logs, pens

Radios:
- Teams: 6 (one each team, enough to equip 2 rounds)
- Divisions: 4 (one each Division)
- Overhead: 7 (IC, OPS(2), PLANS, LOGS, ADMIN, Victim Unit)
- Self (COMS): 2 (Base station on trainee channel, second radio on overhead channel—base station or portable)

During the Event: Track all radio transmissions on the respective radio log for each channel being used. If a unit is struggling to get contact with another, attempt to relay messages. Make any announcements necessary on the operations channels being used.

Demobilization: When trainees return to the LOGS station, collect their radio and document that it was received. When overhead members sign-out, receive and log return of their radios.

Victim Unit

Victim Unit manager prepares a minimum of 6 Victims for Station A and 6 Patients for Station B. Apply light moulage as indicated by cards. If not enough volunteers, dummies are used, and the stations must be given the cards for them.

Station A Victims

Each victim has a symptom card. Trainees will use symptoms to do triage. Victims may act based on their listed symptoms.

Station B Patients

Each patient has a pre-filled-out Patient Exam Card. After all patients have been appropriately triaged, the patients are encouraged to change their condition or try to move to a location other than where they have been placed.

PATIENT EXAM CARD

Name/ID_____

Date		Time	
Age		Sex M F	
Permission to treat: Y N			Respiration
Oriented Disoriented Unconscious			-30 +30
Can Do Can't Do		Cap Refill -2 +2	

Time	Pulse	Cap Refill	Respiration

Chief Complaint

Cause

Notes

Examiner _____

Equipment:
Victim Volunteer Roster

Victim/Symptom list

6 Victim Cards

6 Patient Exam Cards (Pre-filled-out)

Moulage supplies
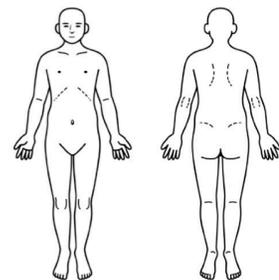
Division A

Division A is the Search and Rescue station.

Set Up:

The search room should be set up with several cardboard obstacles, in a maze-like fashion, and take place in a dark room. A minimum of six (6) victims will be placed randomly throughout the maze to create a search challenge for the trainees. Before the station is started, tape a large paper to the outside door of the building being searched.

Operations:

Station activities should occur in this fashion:

- Equip Trainees with triage belts, and large sharpie
- Give trainees briefing:

  "You are sent out to complete a neighborhood search for victims, and hear calls for help from this house. It looks structurally sound, but the power is out. Your team will now enter and search the entire home to look for victims requiring help, and appropriately triage them, and prepare to evacuate the victims in priority order. Report status, needs, and results to the Operations Chief when appropriate."

- Team shall radio: "OPS from Team #" "Team # is entering the building at 90 N Mountain to search for victims"

- Team goes up to the entry door and marks a diagonal line on the door, denoting that they are entering the building.
- The team will then enter and conduct the victim search, maintaining contact with their team members, triaging victims with the triage tape.
- Team will evacuate the victims based on priority (this may be verbalized).
- Upon searching the entire building (training space), the team will then exit the building the way they entered.
- Upon exit, they will draw another diagonal mark on the door, creating an x to denote their having exited the building.
- Team shall then radio: "OPS from Team #" "Team # has exited the building, reporting _ Red, _ Yellow, _ Green, and _ Black patients."
- After each round, Division Manager debriefs the team on assignment goals met, what went well, what could be improved.
- The station is then repeated with victims moved around and any minor changes that can challenge the trainees. Trainees swap the leadership (and other) role(s).
- After the final debriefing, the team reports to OPS that they are finished at Alpha and ready for assignment. They wait until OPS assigns and dispatches them.

- Hose dummies may be used in place of a living victim, as needed.
-

Equipment:
- Victims (6)
- Hose dummies (as needed)
- Obstacles made from cardboard
- Clipboard w/ BT Guide, map, and schedule
- Pens
- Large sharpies
- Large poster sticky notes
- Triage belts w/ rolls of triage tape (2)
- Radio
- Division A sign
- Chair

Division B

Division B is the medical station where volunteers manage and track patients coming into the station.

Set Up:

Set up of the station consists of the triage tarps lined up in order of green, yellow, and red. Black will be used for the morgue and placed a short distance from the other 3. All tarps should have their own canopy to provide cover. The morgue canopy should have sheets clipped around the sides to provide a cover as it would have in a real-world scenario. There are laminated patient exam cards pre-filled out. Patients will line up wearing their patient exam card lanyard and take turns entering the station.

Operations:

Trainees are to manage the medical station and the patients that arrive there. They will place the first patient on the tarp corresponding to the color they have been triaged as, then track the patient on the medical station log. One trainee can document, while the other leads. Each patient needs to be triaged and documented fully on the "Medical Treatment Area Log". Throughout the rotation, one of the Division managers will be acting as an ambulance coming to pick up the patients one at a time, and time of check out needs to be recorded by the trainee

documenting. Patients are encouraged to change their condition or try to move to a location other than where they have been placed. Once all patients have been placed, documented, and transported, the station can reset. The goal is to maintain accountability of the station, and one ongoing log may be used for all teams throughout the day.

Briefing: "You were sent here to manage a medical station during a disaster. Control the flow of patients coming into the station by placing them one at a time on their corresponding triage tarp. As patients enter, make sure their information is fully documented on the "Medical Treatment Area Log." While managing the patients coming in, you will also need to track the patients going out. Maintain accountability for all patients, and be aware of their condition. If a patient starts to exhibit signs of a worsening condition, re-triage them appropriately."

On debrief, what was achieved, went well, what needs improvement.

Equipment:
- Set of triage tarps (green, yellow, red, black)
- Canopies (4)
- Patients with exam cards (6)
- General first aid supplies
- 2 Chairs

Division B set up should look something like this:

Above view of tarps

Ground view of tarps and canopies

Division C

Division C consists of fire extinguisher practice, hazmat size-up, and structure triage.

Set Up:

Select a location that is non-flammable, and near water supply. Prepare the fire extinguisher prop for use by filling with water and connecting the propane. Hang up the hazmat placards and structural size up images on a nearby building or wall, spaced out a bit to help separate the scenarios.

Fire Extinguisher:

Division C fire extinguisher training shall only be taught by Ashland Fire & Rescue staff. Any firefighters involved with the extinguisher prop shall wear their department issued helmet, turnout coat, and gloves while operating the fire prop.

Start the station with a quick briefing and review of fire extinguisher procedures. Allow the trainees to put out the fire at least 2 times each or until they are comfortable with using an extinguisher.

Hazmat:

Take each trainee one at a time to the hazmat placards and go through each to decide if the scenario is a "go" or "no go" scenario. Any number on the NFPA 704 placard above a 1 is an

automatic "no go" situation for volunteers. Any special hazards listed in the white diamond are also a "no go" situation.

Structural Triage: Take trainees one at a time through the building images, identifying the situational risks and hazards surrounding the building, and whether or not it would be a safe situation to go into as a volunteer.

Equipment:
- Division C sign
- Fire prop
- Fire extinguishers
- Radio
- Hydrant access kit
- Clipboard w/ BT Guide, map, schedule
- Pens
- Hazmat Signs (6)
- Structural triage practice images (6)
- Strong masking tape
- Chairs (2)
- Canopy

Division D

Division D administers the final test, grades them, answers any questions that the trainees have following the simulation, and issues simulation completion certificates.

The test is not timed, and is considered an "open book" test. Trainees should be advised to "use their tools" at the beginning of their test. Do not specify which tools, though they may use anything they have available, including the student guide and fellow trainees.

After they are done, grade the test and provide feedback, then direct them to return to the command post to demobilize.

If there are questions about the exercise, most can be answered by referring to the CERT Basic Training Guide.

Equipment:
- Pens
- BT Tests
- Basic Training Participant Guide
- Test key

Documents

IAP - Incident Action Plan

ACERT-303 - Equipment Form

ACERT-309L - Radio log

ACERT-211 - CERT sign in

ACERT-211b - NonCERT sign in

ICS-214 - Activity Log

ACERT-5 - Medical Area Treatment Log

Map of training site

Victim Volunteer Roster

Victim Symptom List

Victim cards (instructions for victims, may include symptoms)

Patient Exam cards, pre-filled

Triage FlowchartSpontaneous Volunteer release forms

Name tag stickers

Signs: Divisions, Command Post stations, directional

Hazmat placards

Structural triage signs (photos)

Final BT Tests

Google Spreadsheet: (incorporated in IAP)

Trainee Roster

Station Schedule / Team assignments

Overhead schedule