



Arizona Communications Unit Training Coordination Procedure

Developed by Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) NIMS-CU Workgroup

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document describes the procedure for coordinating All-Hazards Communications Unit Training in Arizona. It serves as a guide for offering consistent and timely delivery of Training Courses to qualified individuals statewide.

This procedure defines who appropriate instructors for this training are, how Arizona will develop a group of All-Hazards COML Instructors within the State and how individuals or agencies request Communications Unit Training.

1.2 Definitions

An All-Hazards Communications Unit Leader (COML) is defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a person that plans and manages the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an all-hazards incident or event within the Incident Command System (ICS) organizational structure.

An All-Hazards Communications Unit Technician (COMT) is defined by DHS as a person responsible for managing Strategic Technology Reserve (STR) or other communication assets, such as a radio cache, mobile communications vehicle or other deployable communications assets, during all-hazards operations within the ICS organizational structure.

1.3 Background

The certification of qualified individuals as All-Hazards Communications Unit Leaders and Technicians is directly related to the availability of adequate and approved training offerings. DHS has developed and launched Communications Unit training courses for All-Hazards COMLs and COMTs. DHS has empowered each State to develop their own All-Hazards Communications Unit recognition and training programs and has provided a best practices guide that Arizona has reviewed.

To date, Arizona has developed a formal Arizona Regional All-Hazards COML Recognition Program. The program was developed by the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) Communications Unit working group staffed and supported by the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Office. After a public review period, SIEC approved the recognition procedure for the program on May 18, 2010. The recognition procedure was then approved by the Public Safety Communications Advisory Commission (PSCC) on July 20, 2010. Updates to the recognition procedure may be made as necessary; approval from both SIEC and PSCC is required prior to any changes going into effect.

The body responsible for reviewing Arizona Regional All-Hazards COML Recognition application materials and advising the PSIC Office and SIEC on matters related to Communications Unit training and recognition, the National Incident Management System Communications Unit (NIMS-CU) Workgroup, was formed and its Policies and Procedures ("NIMS-CU Workgroup Policies and Procedures") were approved by SIEC on August 17, 2010. Updates to the NIMS-CU

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Workgroup Policies and Procedures may be made as necessary; approval from SIEC is required prior to any changes going into effect.

Arizona does not yet have a Regional All-Hazards COMT Recognition Program but plans to develop one as the federal program is further established.

1.4 References

Please also refer to the following documents:

Arizona Regional All-Hazards COML Recognition Procedure, available online at:
<http://www.azpsic.gov/library/coml/>.

Arizona NIMS-CU Workgroup Policies and Procedures, available online at:
<http://www.azpsic.gov/library/coml/>.

Federal Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Communications (OEC)'s Communications Unit Leader (COML) Implementation Best Practices Guide, available online at:
http://www.azpsic.gov/library/coml/coml_best_practices.pdf.

1.5 Administration

The PSIC Office, with guidance from the Arizona Division of Emergency Management (ADEM), SIEC and the NIMS-CU Workgroup, is responsible for administering this procedure.

1.6 Document Terminology

The terms "shall," "must," "will," and "required" are used throughout this document to indicate required parameters and to differentiate from recommended parameters. Recommendations are identified by the words "should," "desirably" and "preferably."

1.7 Updates & Revisions

This document will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Those wishing to recommend revisions or additions to this document should send their recommendations electronically to psic@azpsic.gov or in writing to the PSIC Office, c/o Arizona Strategic Enterprise Technology (ASET) Office at 100 N 15th Avenue, Suite 400, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

All recommended revisions to this document will be reviewed by the NIMS-CU Workgroup, which will recommend appropriate changes to SIEC. Revised versions of this document will be effective once approved by SIEC.

2 All-Hazards Course Descriptions

2.1 COML

The All-Hazards COML course provides NIMS compliant instruction to train emergency responders to serve as COMLs during all hazards emergency operations. DHS, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (EMI), currently utilizes a four-day curriculum led by one or two trained and federally recognized Instructors to train qualified emergency responders to lead ICS communications units if they

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possess the necessary prerequisites, including knowledge of: local communications; communications systems; and regional, State, and local communications plans.

Upon completion of formal classroom training, students must complete and obtain sign-off on a comprehensive position-specific All-Hazards COML Task Book before they can be certified as an All-Hazards COML.

2.2 COMT

The All-Hazards COMT course provides NIMS compliant instruction to train emergency responders on practices and procedures common to COMTs during all hazards emergency operations. DHS, through OEC, currently utilizes a five-day curriculum led by two trained and federally recognized Instructors to train qualified emergency responders to work within the ICS organizational structure utilizing standardized operational and technical procedures if they possess the necessary prerequisites, including knowledge of: local communications; communications systems; and local, regional and State communications plans.

Upon completion of formal classroom training, students must complete and obtain sign-off on a comprehensive position-specific All-Hazards COMT Taskbook before they can be certified as an All-Hazards COMT.

2.3 Communications Unit Train the Trainer

Qualified individuals who are eligible to become recognized All-Hazards COML or COMT Instructors must follow the appropriate Communications Unit Train the Trainer Course requirements established by DHS. Interested individuals should contact the PSIC Office for current DHS requirements.

3 All-Hazards Course Documentation

3.1 COML

At the conclusion of each All-Hazards COML Training Course, National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions will log each student who successfully completed the course into the NETC national database and mail a Certificate of Completion to each student.

3.2 COMT

At the conclusion of each All-Hazards COMT Course, OEC or their designee will provide a Certificate of Completion to each student who successfully completed the course and will maintain a national database of those students.

4 Course Instructors

4.1 General Information

All-Hazards Communications Unit Training Instructors must be approved by DHS and listed as All-Hazards Communications Unit Instructors in the appropriate DHS Instructor Database. Further, in order to provide greater local familiarity at the lowest possible cost, Arizona Instructors shall be utilized for training offerings whenever possible.

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Course Instructors are encouraged to participate regularly in exercises, incidents and planned events to keep their skills current, and participation in ongoing public safety communications education is strongly recommended.

4.2 Developing a Group of Arizona Instructors

In an effort to develop a local Arizona group of Instructors, all All-Hazards Communications Unit Courses must be offered with the condition that the lead Instructor will use an Instructor in training on a first come, first served basis. At least one Instructor in training will be used for each All-Hazards Communications Unit Course. The lead Instructor will contact the PSIC Office to identify any eligible Instructor in training candidates. If the PSIC Office states that there are no eligible candidates, this requirement will not apply.

5 Training Requests and Inquiries

5.1 Communications Unit Training Requests

A County or agency interested in sponsoring a Communications Unit Training Course should contact the State Training Officer (STO) at the Arizona Division of Emergency Management (ADEM), who will then notify the PSIC Office. In the event an agency plans to provide its own Communications Unit Training, the agency is required to notify ADEM and the PSIC Office.

The County or agency must provide a training request form to ADEM for the course to be properly registered through the STO and EMI so that the course will be considered valid and students will receive credit. The PSIC Office will work with agencies that provide their own Communications Unit Training to incorporate the use of Instructors in training in those courses.

5.2 Course Notification List

Individuals interested in attending Communications Unit training should sign up on the class notification list, online at <http://www.azpsic.gov/library/coml/training.htm>, to be notified about upcoming All-Hazards COML and COMT Training Courses.

6 Communications Unit Training Coordination

6.1 Course Funding

There are many methods of procuring a Communications Unit Training Course:

- A. A County wishing to use funds administered by ADEM may request any FEMA approved course through ADEM. [Note: Currently the All-Hazards COML Course is FEMA approved; approval of other Communications Unit Courses is planned.]
- B. Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) or other Homeland Security grants may be requested for Communications Unit Courses as these courses are part of Arizona's Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) strategic initiative #10.
- C. The PSIC Office may request a Technical Assistance (TA) offering for a training course through the DHS OEC Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program

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(ICTAP). [Note: States are limited to 5 TA requests annually for all technical assistance (i.e., workshops, assessments, consulting, etc.) of every type.]

- D. An agency can use training funds from any other source to fund the course.

6.2 Training Coordination Using Funds Administered by ADEM

The following steps apply only to All-Hazards COML training requests utilizing grant funds administered by ADEM under section 6.1A above. [Note: The rest of this Document applies to all Communications Unit Training however procured.]:

1. Required documentation shall be submitted to ADEM by the requesting agency for funding approval.
2. The PSIC Office may consult with ADEM and the local requesting agency to determine whether training in that location will be attended at a sufficient level to justify a course offering based on past attendance, expressions of interest for additional courses and other courses planned from other funding sources.
3. ADEM shall complete a call for Instructors using the FEMA Instructor database with preference given to use of Arizona Instructors. The call to Instructors shall specify that the lead Instructor must use an Instructor in training for the course and that individual will be selected from eligible candidates by the PSIC Office.
4. ADEM shall consult with the PSIC Office to review the responses to the call for Instructors to select one or two Course Instructors that have the appropriate skill set for the requested course.
5. If there are eligible candidates, the PSIC Office shall coordinate with ADEM to contact and arrange for the qualified individual(s) to serve as Instructor(s) in training for the course.
6. The Communications Unit Training Course shall be coordinated and scheduled in accordance with availability, course and contract requirements.
7. Course enrollment will be managed through ADEM's Event Registration and Management Application (ERMA).
8. The Training Provider shall conduct the contracted Communications Unit Training Course. A participant list shall be available to the PSIC Office through ERMA.
9. Successful completion by participants shall be recognized and documented (see Course Documentation section 3.1 above).