**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety & Security**
Statewide Interoperability Office

Massachusetts Communications Unit (MA COMU)

Governance
Policy & Procedure

May 2025– Version 1.2

Table of Contents

1. Massachusetts State Communications Unit (COMU) Information

1.1 Background

During emergency response operations, communication among multiple jurisdictions and disciplines, including emergency medical, fire, and law enforcement services, is essential. Unfortunately, the absence of on-scene communications coordination has often compromised critical operations. To close this capability gap, the United States Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Emergency Communications Division (ECD) in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and practitioners from across the country developed performance and training standards for the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Incident Command System (ICS), and Communications Unit (COMU) positions.

The National Qualification System (NQS) supplements the Resource Management component of the National Incident Management System by establishing guidance and tools to assist stakeholders in development processes for qualifying, certifying, and credentialing deployable emergency personnel.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will follow the qualifications set forth in the National Qualification System (NQS) for specific incident-related positions to provide consistency across the Nation and support nationwide interoperability. Using the NQS approach to qualify, certify, and credential incident management and support personnel ensures personnel deploying through mutual aid agreements and compacts have the capabilities to perform the duties of their assigned roles.

1.2 Authority

Authority for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Homeland Security (EOPSS) to develop this policy and procedure is pursuant to Massachusetts Executive Order 493, the SIEC Charter, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Homeland Security Plan, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Statewide Interoperability Plan.

The Statewide Interoperable Coordinator (SWIC), in consultation with the Massachusetts State Communications Unit (COMU), will review, approve/deny and re-certify, if applicable, all COMU credentialing.

Only active credentialed members shall be considered members of the MA COMU and subject to this policy and its related positions. While a member may act in their credentialed role within their own home agency at any time subject to that agencies policy, no member shall "self-deploy" or act as a MA COMU member outside of their organization without prior authorization from the SWIC's Office as part of an Official MA COMU activation / deployment for requested support.

Agencies may contact the SWIC's Office directly to make a MA COMU support request, or via the 24/7 Watch Centers at Mass. Emergency Management Headquarters (508-820-2000, or Mass. State Police General Headquarters (508-820-2121) Who will contact the SWIC or their designee. The SWIC will communicate with the requesting agency directly, review the request, and will either coordinate a necessary response by the MA COMU, or suggest alternative options.

1.3   *National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Position Credentialing*

This policy and procedure meet the position-specific guidance developed by DHS-ECD and FEMA. Those seeking credentialing in similarly titled positions administered by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) may need to complete additional requirements beyond the scope of this policy and procedure.

1.4   *Updates and Revisions*

This document will be reviewed semi-annually or in conjunction with updates the Massachusetts Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP). Revisions will be reviewed by the SWIC and the COMU, in consultation with the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC).

Comments, suggested revisions, or additions/deletions to this policy and procedure should be submitted via email to: MA.SWIC@Mass.Gov

Individuals seeking Massachusetts state credentialing for a COMU position, are responsible for ensuring they have the most current version of this document which can be obtained by contacting the Massachusetts SWIC at MA.SWIC@mass.gov.

1.5 Definitions and Acronyms

AHIMT	All-Hazards Incident Management Team
Applicant	Individual seeking to obtain COMU position credentialing
AUXCOMM	Auxiliary Communications
Certifying Official	Refers to a member home agency's executive and/or designee.
CIWG	Communications Interoperability Working Group
COML	Communications Unit Leader
COMT	Communications Unit Technician
COMU	Communications Unit
COMEX	Communications Unit Exercise
COMLEX	Communications Unit Leader Exercise
DHS	United State Department of Homeland Security
ECD	Emergency Communications Division
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Final Evaluator	Person qualified to evaluate subordinate positions
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
INCM	Incident Communications Center Manager
INTD	Incident Tactical Dispatcher
ITSL	Information Technology Service Unit Leader
NIC	National Integration Center (FEMA)
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NQS	National Qualification System
OIEC	Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications
PTB	Position Task Book
RADO	Radio Operator
SCIP	Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan
STO	State Training Officer
SWIC	Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
Trainee	An individual, preparing to qualify for an ICS position as a credentialed trainee, who has completed their course work, met the training prerequisites, initiated there PTB and is approved by their employing/sponsoring agency.
TERT	Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce
TtT	Train-the-trainer

2. Massachusetts State Communications Unit (COMU) Credentialing

Candidates for NIMS-ICS communications positions must currently serve in similar communications roles / positions in a public safety agency. A public safety communications background with exposure to field operations is critical for the performance of these roles. Personnel who are regularly assigned communications roles may apply for credentialing. In addition, individuals applying for the positions should have supervisory and personnel management skills and have a good working knowledge of local communications systems and communications capabilities.

NIMS provides a consistent, nationwide approach for agencies to manage emergency response operations. COMU training is recognized by the FEMA/NIC as supporting NIMS.

2.1   Credentialing Process

COMU credentialing requires seven (7) steps, listed below in the order they must be taken, to attain credentials in Massachusetts, as follows:

Step 1:   Completion of prerequisites NIMS/ICS courses (Most Recent)

Step 2:   Completion of COMU position course

Step 3:   Completion of COMU position-specific position task book

Step 4:   Completion of MA State COMU Credentialing Forms (Appendix A-C)

Step 5:   Submission of the required paperwork to the MA State COMU

Step 6:   Completion of Final Approval by the Massachusetts SWIC

Step 7:   Credential Renewal, Proficiency, and Performance

2.2 Credentialing Period

Credentials remain valid for three (3) years after the date of issuance. Certifications must be current at the time of renewal. The COMU Instruction course only needs to be successfully completed once, however an instructor must maintain valid credentials for the specific COMU position they are teaching. ***This is subject to change with any FEMA, DHS, or OEC certification changes.***

3. NIMS/ICS Prerequisites (Step 1)

Initial applicants must meet the most current and updated NIMS/ICS training course prerequisites, prior to attending the COMU position training course. Some positions have position specific requirements, but most are as follows:

Required Prerequisites

- IS-100, Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)

- IS-200, Incident Command System (ICS) for Single Resources

- ICS-300, Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents

- ICS-400, Advanced Incident Command System (ICS), Command & General Staff [1]

- IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction

- IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

Recommended, But Not Required

- IS-704, NIMS Communications and Information Management

- IS-802, Emergency Support Functions Communications

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[1] ICS-400 may not be required for all COMU position courses, check course announcement for clarification

3.1 Massachusetts State COMU Requirements

Communications Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) Tool

The Massachusetts state COMU requires all potential COMU position applicants to have and maintain a Communications Assets Survey & Mapping (CASM) user account.

In addition, credentialed COMU personnel are required to ensure that their agency information is always kept current in the CASM system.

3.2 COMU Position Courses (Step 2)

These courses must be taught by a recognized FEMA or Massachusetts state credentialed Instructors. A federally approved COMU classroom course, taken in another state meets the Massachusetts state COMU credentialing requirements.

3.2.1 Communications Unit Leader (COML) Course

Offering Overview

This course is designed for all state/territory, tribal, regional, and local emergency response professionals and for support personnel with a communications background. The course will provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of a COML under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) and offer hands-on exercises to reinforce the lecture materials.

Under the NIMS/ICS structure, a COML is the focal point within the Communications Unit. This course provides DHS-approved and NIMS-compliant instruction to ensure that every state/territory has trained personnel capable of coordinating on-scene emergency communications during a multi-jurisdictional response or planned event.

The course is presented with facilitated lectures, hands-on activities, and extensive interactive discussions. ECD/ICTAP instructors use discussions and activities to explain in detail the processes used to achieve communication operability, interoperability, and the incorporation of additional communications solutions.

Prerequisites for attendance are: Personal Experience

√ A public safety background with experience in field operations
√ A technical communications background
√ Awareness of fundamental public safety communications technology
√ Basic knowledge of applicable communications plans

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: Online course completion

√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

Candidates must have completed the following courses taught in a classroom setting: In-Person classroom instruction

√ ICS-300, Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents. (Required)
√ ICS-400, Advanced ICS Command and General Staff. (Recommended, but not required)

3.2.2 Information Technology Service Unit Leader (ITSL)

Offering Overview

The need to access broadband data with enough bandwidth during incidents or events has increased exponentially in recent years. This has spurred the requirement for personnel with highly specialized knowledge and expertise, such as an Information Technology Service Unit Leader (ITSL). The ITSL provides information management, cybersecurity, and application management for many critical incident/event-related functions, including:

- Incident/Unified Command Post
- Incident Communications Centers
- Various Tactical Operations Centers
- Joint Information Center (JIC)
- Staging Areas
- Field Locations.

To meet this need, ECD has developed the IT Service Unit Leader course. The ITSL course targets federal, state/territory, tribal, urban, local, and emergency response professionals, and support personnel in all disciplines with a communications background and an aptitude for and extensive experience in information technology.

Specifically, the training course provides an overview of the ITSL components including communications/IT help desk or unified help desk, IT infrastructure manager, and network manager. The course covers the roles and responsibilities of these position providing an in-depth overview with exercises covering the ITSLs major functions, including ensuring reliable and timely delivery of IT services to participating agencies and officials.

Prerequisites for attendance are: Personal Experience

√ A public safety background with experience in field operations and/or experience providing information technology solutions to support public safety operations
√ Awareness of fundamental public safety broadband and wireless communications technology

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: Online course completion

√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Candidates must have completed the following courses from the Federal Virtual Training Environment (FedVTE) website: https://fedvte.usalearning.gov/ [2]

√ Network Layer 1 & 2 Troubleshooting

Candidates must have completed the following courses taught in a classroom setting: In-Person classroom instruction

√ ICS-300, Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents. (Required)
√ ICS-400, Advanced ICS Command and General Staff. (Recommended, but not required.)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.3 Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM)

Offering Overview

COMLs and COMTs are not the only communications professionals who manage the communications needs of the incident. For some incidents, the COML establishes an Incident Communications Center staffed with Radio Operators providing communications support for operations. Once radio personnel are on scene, an Incident Communications Center Manager (INCM) is needed to provide coordination and to avoid span-of-control issues.

The All-Hazards Incident Communications Center Manager course is designed to prepare Communication Unit Leaders, dispatch supervisors, and public safety

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[2] To access the FedVTE website students must first be registered as an authorized user on the site. Authorized users include U. S. Government employees, military members, federal contractors, and veterans. Access can be granted through CISA-ECD, and will be reviewed on an individual basis.

communication professionals for managing all functions in the Incident Communications Center. The course is taught by instructors with experience in dispatch operations, COML, and INCM.

Prerequisites for attendance are: <u>Personal Experience</u>

√ Awareness of fundamental public safety communications technology

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: <u>Online course completion</u>

√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-144, Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Basic Course
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Candidates must have completed the following courses taught in a classroom setting:
<u>In-Person classroom instruction</u>

√ ICS-300, Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents. (Recommended, but not required)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.4 Communications Unit Technician (COMT)

<u>Offering Overview</u>

This class provides introductory and refresher training for the NIMS/ICS COMT position. It introduces public safety professionals and support staff to various communications concepts and technologies including interoperable communications solutions. LMR communications, satellite, telephone, data, and computer technologies are used in incident response and planned events. Participants develop the essential core competencies required for performing the duties of the COMT during an all-hazards incident in a local, regional, and state-level all-hazards incident management teams.

The course is instructor-led and supports learning through discussion, lecture, and participation in multiple activities. Lab work is used to demonstrate how technical communications resources are established and operated during an incident or planned event. The course provides a realistic, hands-on approach to mastering the tasks and skills of a COMT. It is designed for state/territory, tribal, urban, and local emergency response professionals and support personnel in all disciplines who have a technical communications background.

This class is taught by ECD/ICTAP instructors who have both practitioner and COMU experience. Prior to the on-site class, ECD/ICTAP will work with the requesting site to incorporate communications technologies used by the participants' agencies.

Prerequisites for attendance are: <u>Personal Experience</u>
√ A public safety background with experience in field operations
√ A technical communications background
√ Awareness of fundamental public safety communications technology
√ Basic knowledge of applicable communications plans

Candidates must have the following courses from the FEMA/EMI website: <u>Online course completion</u>
√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)
√ Familiarity with the pre-course reading materials

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.5 Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Member (TERT)

Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)

A TERT Dispatcher is a specially trained individual who provides mutual aid response in the aftermath of disasters and other special circumstance events. TERT team members are deployed when a PSAP or other communications center needs assistance in responding to a disaster or unusual occurrence. A TERT dispatcher is different than an INTD (Incident Tactical Dispatcher) in that the purpose of TERT is to provide relief and to augment staffing of a communications center that has experienced a significant event. A tactical or incident dispatch team is typically a field deployment, TERT members can respond to a PSAPs building, an EOC, Mobile Command Post, or a backup center.

Prerequisites for the TERT program are: <u>Criteria from APCO/NENA Standard ANS 1.105.2-2015</u>

√ A public safety background with three (3) years of experience in dispatch operations
√ Pass a criminal background check performed by the authority having jurisdiction
√ Follow the vaccination/immunization guidelines outlined in the CDC guidance document titled "Immunization Recommendations for Disaster Responders"
√Have a signed letter from agency director acknowledging/approving participation in TERT on file with TERT State Coordinator (Renewed by January 1 of even numbered years).
√Possess positive interpersonal communication and leadership skills
√Possess an excellent working knowledge of the appropriate public safety emergency response operation and equipment as it relates to the member's role
√ Possess an ability to adapt and be flexible with different policies, procedures, equipment, and geographic areas
√Possess an ability and willingness to work under sparse conditions - no beds, cold meals, no running water – if necessary.
√Possess excellent people and teamwork skills including culturally competent communications skills
√Possess strong writing skills and familiarity with writing reports and documents activities and logs.

Candidates must have the following courses from the FEMA/EMI website:
<u>Online course completion</u>
√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-144, Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Basic Course
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)
√ IS-5-A, An Introduction to Hazardous Materials

Candidates must have the following courses completed:
√Basic Public Safety Telecommunications Class that lasts 40 hours
√Massachusetts E911 course and certification
√CPR certification

Candidates for TERT Team Leader must have completed the following courses in addition to that of a TERT member

√ ICS-300, Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents.
√ ICS-400: Advanced ICS Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents
√ ICS-1200**: TERT Team Leader Course

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.6 Incident Tactical Dispatcher (INTD)

<u>Offering Overview</u>

An Incident Tactical Dispatcher is a specially trained individual qualified to operate in a command post, base camp, or at the incident scene in support of a specific incident or tactical operation. Incident Tactical Dispatchers leverage the multi-tasking, communication, accountability, and documentation skills of successful telecommunicators to provide public safety communications expertise and support at planned events and extended incidents such as hostage situations, multi-alarm fires, search and rescue operations, bombings, and active shooter incidents. Incident Tactical Dispatchers may support the Communications Unit as a single resource or as part of an incident tactical dispatch team. This course provides a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of an incident tactical dispatcher working in a tactical environment.

The course provides a realistic, hands-on approach to mastering the tasks and skills of an Incident Tactical Dispatcher. This course is designed for experienced dispatchers who are familiar with the Incident Command System and dispatch operations. This course is four (4) days long with an end-of-course INTD exercise on the fourth day.

Prerequisites for attendance are: <u>Personal Experience</u>

√ A public safety background with three (3) years of experience in dispatch operations
√ Awareness of fundamental public safety communications technology

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: <u>Online course completion</u>

√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-144, Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Basic Course
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Candidates must have completed the following courses taught in a classroom setting: In-<u>Person classroom instruction</u>

√ ICS-300, Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents. (Recommended, but not required.)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.7 Radio Operator (RADO)

<u>Offering Overview</u>

This class provides hands-on and lecture-based training for the All-Hazards ICS RADO position. It is designed for emergency response professionals and support personnel in all disciplines who have a basic understanding of the All-Hazards ICS Communications Unit. It introduces public safety professionals and support personnel to various Radio Operator concepts including radio etiquette, interoperable communications, dispatch operations, and emergency communications procedures. Participants develop the essential core competencies used during incident response and planned events to perform the duties of the RADO in an all-hazards environment including communications support for public safety, wildfire, marine, aviation, and HF radio communications. The responsibilities of an All-Hazards RADO can include staffing the Incident Communications Center, monitoring radio traffic, and base station operations for emergency operations centers, hospitals, dispatch centers, and non-governmental organizations supporting civil emergency response at the local, regional, and state level.

Prerequisites for attendance are: <u>Personal Experience</u>

√ Awareness of fundamental public safety communications technology

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: <u>Online course completion</u>

√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Recommended, but not required course taught in a classroom setting: <u>In-Person classroom instruction</u>

√ ICS-300, Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents. (Recommended, but not required)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.2.8 Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOMM)

Offering Overview

This class is designed for auxiliary communicators and groups who volunteer to provide backup radio communications support to public safety agencies. Typically, this includes amateur radio and Radio Emergency Associated Communications Team (REACT) communicators and other types of volunteer communicators.

Volunteer communications operators/groups, using amateur radios, have been providing backup communications to public safety for nearly 100 years. Event planners, public safety officials, and emergency managers at all levels of government utilize their services. Often, amateur radio services have been used when other forms of communications have failed or have been disrupted. Today, nearly all of the states/territories have incorporated some level of participation by amateur radio auxiliary communication operators into their TICPs and SCIPs.

This course focuses on auxiliary communications interoperability, the relationship between the COML and the volunteer, emergency operations center (EOC) etiquette, on-the-air etiquette, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations, auxiliary communications training and planning, and emergency communications deployment. It is intended to supplement and standardize an operator's experience and knowledge of emergency amateur radio communications in a public safety context.

Prerequisites for attendance are: Personal Experience
√ An active FCC amateur radio license
√ Past experience in auxiliary emergency communications
√ An affiliation with a public safety agency
√ A desire to work with COMLs in a NIMS/ICS environment

Candidates must have the following on-line courses from the FEMA/EMI website: Online course completion
√ IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
√ IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
√ IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction
√ IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Note: All ICS Courses **should be the most current version**. Contact the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Training and Exercise Unit at MEMA.Training@mass.gov, or at 508-820-2028, or the FEMA website: https://training.fema.gov/nims/

3.3   Position Task Book (PTB) *(Step 3)*

The Position Task Book (PTB) is the standardized means of documenting the performance of a trainee in the designated COMU position. The books identify the requirements that must all be successfully performed to qualify for credentialing under this policy and procedure.

- The COMU position-specific tasks must be performed at multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional and include multi-service (Law Enforcement, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services – EMS) functional or full-scale exercises, (COMLEX and COMEX are acceptable) planned events or actual emergency incidents.

- The person signing off on the tasks performed must be present at the event and personally witness the trainee performing the tasks.

- The approving signatory must provide contact information for verification, if necessary.

- It is not necessary to complete all tasks during a single event, and it is recommended that this not happen. Trainees may participate in multiple events until all tasks have been completed.

3.3.1 Incident Complexity

The below Incident Complexity charts are provided for information purposes only.

Massachusetts COMU Personnel are generally trained as a Type 3 position type, unless otherwise specified during the training process.

The guidance within the NIMS Training Program on federal, state, tribal, and local training is not absolute. Incident and/or event complexity determines emergency and incident response personnel responsibilities as well as the recommended audience for NIMS curriculum coursework delivery. The NIMS Training Program training recommendations reflect the following five levels of complexity identified below:

Incident Complexity Chart

Type 1	• This type of incident is the most complex, requiring national resources for safe and effective management and operation. • All command and general staff positions are filled. • Operations personnel often exceed 500 per operational period and total personnel will usually exceed 1,000. • Branches need to be established. • A written incident action plan (IAP) is required for each operational period. • The agency administrator will have briefings and ensure that the complexity analysis and delegation of authority are updated. • Use of resource advisors at the incident base is recommended. • There is a high impact on the local jurisdiction, requiring additional staff for office administration and support functions.
Type 2	• This type of incident extends beyond the capabilities for local control and is expected to go into multiple operational periods. A Type 2 incident may require the response of resources out of the area, including regional and/or national resources, to effectively manage the operations, command, and general staffing. • Most or all of the command and general staff positions are filled. • A written IAP is required for each operational period. • Many of the functional units are needed and staffed. • Operations personnel normally do not exceed 200 per operational period and total incident personnel does not exceed 500 (guidelines only). • The agency administrator is responsible for the incident complexity analysis, agency administration briefings, and the written delegation of authority.
Type 3	• When incident needs exceed capabilities, the appropriate ICS positions should be added to match the complexity of the incident. • Some or all the command and general staff positions may be activated, as well as division/group supervisor and/or unit leader level positions. • A Type 3 IMT or incident command organization manages initial action incidents with a significant number of resources, an extended attack incident until containment/control is achieved, or an expanding incident until the transition to a Type 1 or 2 IMT. • The incident may extend into multiple operational periods. • A written IAP may be required for each operational period.
Type 4	• Command staff and general staff functions are activated only if needed. • Several resources are required to mitigate the incident, including a task force or strike team. • The incident is usually limited to one operational period in the control phase. • The agency administrator may have briefings and ensure the complexity analysis and delegation of authority is updated. • No written IAP is required but a documented operational briefing will be completed for all incoming resources. • The role of the agency administrator includes operational plans including objectives and priorities.
Type 5	• The incident can be handled with one or two single resources with up to six personnel. • Command and general staff positions (other than the incident commander) are not activated. • No written IAP is required. • The incident is contained within the first operational period and often within an hour to a few hours after resources arrive on the scene. • Examples include a vehicle fire, an injured person, or a police traffic stop.

3.3.2 Agency Certification

The trainee's agency "Certifying Official" is responsible to attest that the trainee has complied with the Massachusetts State credentialing requirements, by signing the applicant's Position Task Book (PTB).

3.3.3 Prior Experience Credit (Historical Recognition)

COMU position activities that were performed within three (3) years prior to the completion of the training course will be admissible as credit for performance, however, performance must be documented in the PTB.

3.3.4 Position Task Book (PTB) Completion Time Frame

Once the trainee completes COMU training course the PTB will be initiated, and the trainee will have up to three (3) years to complete the PTB.

3.3.5 Authorized Evaluators

Persons authorized to document the performance of tasks within the PTB are:

- An individual credentialed in a Massachusetts state COMU position or certified from another state [3] or from NWCG; commensurate with the position being evaluated; OR
- A qualified Logistics Section Chief (LSC) for the exercise, event, or actual incident; OR
- An Incident Commander (IC) for the exercise, event, or actual incident.

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[3] A credentialed COMU position from another State may sign-off as long as they have met that States credentialing requirements. (Note: The MA SWIC has access to the National Database of qualified COMU positions for each State.

3.3.6 Position Task Book Documentation

The Position Task Book (PTB) documentation must be clear and legible and include the following elements:

- Contact information for each evaluator.
- Each numbered task must be initialed by a qualified evaluator.
- Final evaluator's verification attesting that all tasks were performed by the trainee.
- Agency certification, signed by an agency certifying official, confirming that the candidate has met all requirements for qualifications for the COMU position.

3.3.7 Position Task Book Version

The most current PTB can be found on the Massachusetts COMU SharePoint site. Copies may also be obtained by contacting the MA SWIC at MA.SWIC@mass.gov or by U.S. mail at the following address:

Massachusetts Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
Executive Office of Public Safety & Security
One Ashburton Place, Suite 2133
Boston, Ma. 02108

3.4 Massachusetts State COMU Credentialing Paperwork *(Step 4)*

The Massachusetts state COMU requires certain documentation to complete the COMU credentialing process, as follows:

- Application & Submission Checklist (Appendix A)
- Home Agency Certification (Appendix B)
- Performance-Proficiency Documentation (Appendix C)

3.4.1 Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants seeking credentialing based on training completed prior to January 1, 2013, will be reviewed subject to this policy. Applicants seeking credentialing based on training that occurred prior to January 1, 2013, may submit an application that includes other supporting factors. The SWIC will have final determination as to whether the documentation will be sufficient for credentialing.

3.4.2 Initial Applications (First Time Applying)

First-time applicants will have up to three (3) years from the date they finish the specific COMU training to complete <u>all</u> the credentialing requirements, including PTB task signoff.

3.5   Submission of COMU Credentialing Package (Step 5)

The Massachusetts state COMU requires the final submission package to include the following documentation:

- Copies of all NIMS/ICS Training Certificates.

- Copy of COMU position course completion certificates.

- Completed and signed (Original) COMU Position Task Book.

- Completed and signed Appendix A – C.

- All back-up documentation for the Position Task Book, including, but not limited to, Incident Action Plans, Organizational Charts, and Communications Plans; ICS-204, ICS-205, ICS-217A, or other forms. This documentation must clearly identify the actual position that the applicant served in during the event.

   Failure to submit all required documentation will result in a delay in the credentialing process.

All documentation must be submitted electronically to: MA.SWIC@Mass.Gov

Originals may be mailed to:

Massachusetts Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
Executive Office of Public Safety & Security
One Ashburton Place, Suite 2133
Boston, Ma. 02108

3.6 Massachusetts State COMU Approval/Declination Process (Step 6)

Upon receipt of all required documentation, the following procedures will be followed:

3.6.1 Staff Review

All applications submitted will be reviewed by a subcommittee appointed by the SWIC, consisting of four (4) subject matter experts. The subcommittee will submit recommendations on approval or rejection of applications to the SWIC who will make a final determination of the candidates application based on the totality of the submissions and recommendations received.

Subcommittee members shall abstain from acting on their own application or where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

Subcommittee members will consider each candidate's application on its own merits.

Through the SWIC, the subcommittee members may request additional information or clarification from a candidate.

3.6.2 Approval/Denial of Credentialing

The SWIC will make the final determination on issuing credentials. Candidates granted credentials will be issued the appropriate documentation and added to the state and national databases of credentialed COMU personnel.

Applicants denied credentialing will be informed and provided with an explanation of the denial. Recommendations will be provided for any additional training and/or experience that is required before the candidate may re-apply for credentialing.

3.7 *Credential Renewal, Proficiency, and Performance (Step 7)*

To remain in a credentialed position and be eligible for credential renewal an individual must demonstrate successful performance of activities required in this section and document those activities on a Credential Renewal Form (Appendix D). Massachusetts state credentialed COMU personnel will maintain continued education, based on the requirements below.

The Massachusetts state SWIC may renew Massachusetts state COMU personnel, provided that all the requirements have been met.

If requirements are not met, the Massachusetts state COMU credentials will expire for the member three (3) years from the date of issuance.

3.7.1 Continuing Education Requirements

To maintain current and consistent skill set credentialed COMU personnel Massachusetts requires COMU personnel to complete a continuing education program during their three (3) year credentialed period.

3.7.2 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Credits

Credentialed COMU personnel will be required to complete thirty-six (36) hours of CEU, prior to the expiration date of their credentials in the following six (6) categories:

- Job duties as it relates to communications systems (voice, data, IOP planning) **(4 hours minimum)**
- Establish a communications system to meet incident operational needs **(4 hours minimum)**
- Workshops and/or seminars **(6 hours minimum)**
- Exercises (Functional and/or Full Scale) **(12 hours minimum)**
- Communications/ICS Related Training Programs **(6 hours minimum)**
- Communications Presentations/Teaching, including any new hire orientation, field training, and candidate PTB task work assistance. **(4 hours minimum)**

Massachusetts COMU personnel may participate in an approved classroom and/or online training, exercise (Communications Exercise, Functional and/or Full Scale), planned event, or actual incident to receive credit for continuing education.

Participation in an exercise, planned event, or actual incident must be in the role of the COMU credential being renewed to qualify for this credit. Completion of verified continuing education will be adequate for the renewal of COMU credentialing.

EOPSS / SWIC reserves the right to contact certifying agents to verify authenticity.

It is the credentialed COMU member's responsibility to communicate this information to the SWIC in a timely fashion once all requirements have been met.

3.7.3 Application for Renewal of Credentials

Individuals seeking renewal of their COMU credentials must submit a completed packet containing the below documents, prior to their expiration date, to the SWIC.

- Home Agency Certification (Appendix B)
- Credential Renewal Form (Appendix D)
- Updated certifications and/or diplomas received after initial credentialing

This is subject to change with any FEMA, DHS, or OEC certification changes, and all certifications must be current at the time of renewal.

3.7.4 Review of Renewal Paperwork

Completed renewal packets will be evaluated in the same manner as the initial credentialing process. Candidates, whose credentials have been renewed, will be notified by the SWIC.

Credentialed COMU personnel will be notified in writing and provided with updated credentialed documentation.

3.7.5 Failure to meet Renewal Requirements

If the SWIC has not received a completed renewal packet from the credentialed COMU member prior to their expiration date, the credentials will automatically expire, the credentialed COMU member will be removed from Local, State, and Federal databases, including CASM, and they will be considered ineligible for deployment by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts / EOPSS.

4. Massachusetts State Communications Unit (COMU) General

4.1   Agency Responsibility and Affiliation Changes

Credentialed Massachusetts State COMU members remain as members of their own affiliated agency during any incident, event, exercise, or other activity that the member may be involved with or participating in as part of the MA COMU Team, and assumes all responsibility for the actions of the member as their employee during this activity while acting in an on-duty capacity either in their own jurisdiction, or during a mutual aid response when requested, as part of the MA COMU Team.

Individuals issued credentials in a COMU position by EOPSS / SWIC shall notify the SWIC within thirty (30) days of any changes in agency affiliation, including contact information, employment status, or deployment status. Failure to do so may result in loss of credentials.

4.2   Revocation of Credentials

The SWIC reserves the right to revoke an individual's credentials, and will provide notice, in writing, at which time an individual has five (5) business days to return credentials to:

<div align="center">

Massachusetts Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
One Ashburton Place, Suite 2133
Boston, Ma. 02108

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