

## S-260: Interagency Incident Business Management

### UNIT 7 - ACQUISITIONS

This topic is intended to give you a firsthand look at the “who-does-its” and the “how-to-get-its” of acquisition including:

- Authorized procurement officials
- Requests for equipment and supplies
- Detailing resource numbers
- Resource order forms

State and federal agencies manage equipment, supplies, and services and ensure correct procedures are followed. These agencies have specific guidelines for who can buy, rent, or otherwise obtain resources. This is referred to as procurement authority.

The differences between state and federal procurement authorities include:

- State agencies—typically assign procurement authority to a position in that agency. Some state agencies also have the option of delegating the job to federal procurement officers for a state jurisdictional incident.
- Federal agencies—do not delegate procurement authority to other nonfederal agencies. Another difference is that in federal agencies, procurement authority is delegated to an individual, not a position, based on the person’s experience and training. The delegated procurement authority is for a specific amount of money.

It is extremely important to go through the appropriate channels to obtain the resources you need on an incident. That means relying on personnel who have specific procurement authority.

If you don’t obtain the proper authority before acquiring an item or service, you might not be reimbursed for it. You could even be held personally accountable and liable for an unauthorized procurement.

A side note—contracts with government employees, including **casual** hires, are prohibited unless a compelling reason is established. See Chapter 20 in the SIIBM for details.

On the federal level, the following procurement officers may have varying levels of procurement authority, also called **warranted** authority:

- Contracting specialists
- Purchasing agents
- Buying team members
- Procurement unit leaders

#### Contracting Specialists

Contracting specialists have a specific level of warranted procurement authority in the federal system. For example, a contracting specialist might have authority to sign agreements including land use agreements up to a set dollar amount.

## **Purchasing Agents**

Purchasing agents might work at the local level. They may have a limited level of procurement authority. For example, they might use a government purchase card with a certain dollar limit attached to it.

## **Buying Team Members**

A buying team is a cadre of individuals who arrive at an incident agency to help with procurement. Team members could come from local, state, or federal agencies, and they may have different levels of purchasing authority.

Buying teams are often used for large incidents or incidents that are expected to obligate the government for a significant amount of money. They must have a government purchase card issued by their home unit or convenience checks with purchase authority for use at the incident.

## **Procurement Unit Leaders**

A procurement unit leader works for the finance/administration section chief (FSC) at an incident.

A procurement unit leader administers financial matters related to cooperators and vendor contracts and supervises equipment time recorders. Type 1 incidents may have a procurement unit leader, but smaller incidents often do not. Procurement unit leaders may or may not have their own procurement authority.

Match each term with its corresponding description.

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Buying team              | A cadre of individuals helping with procurement   |
| • Contracting specialist   | Has warranted procurement authority in the federal system   |
| • Procurement unit leader  | Reports to the finance/administration section chief and may or may not have procurement authority |
| • Unauthorized procurement | An individual can be held personally accountable  |

All procurement officials must follow certain procedures and make sure the necessary paperwork is in place.

The bottom line is this—written documentation is required for all procurements. The next screens will get into the details.

You may not have procurement authority, but you can request resources. In fact, anyone on an incident can request items necessary to do his or her job.

Here's how:

- Put your request in writing using a General Message form, ICS-213—the form has three pages
- Write legibly, be specific, and sign and date the form
- Keep the middle copy for your records
- Give the other two copies to your supervisor

If the item you requested is not in the supply cache on the incident, your supervisor will submit your request to logistics. The ordering unit within logistics will issue a resource order and resource request number. When you receive the item, you will get back the third copy of your general message form.

Requests for supplies, equipment, and services are compiled on a resource order form. This form is used in lieu of agency requisition forms so that the process will be consistent among cooperating agencies on an incident.

The resource order form is completed by using the automated resource ordering and status system (ROSS). An examples of a resource order is provided in Chapter 20 of the SIIMB.

Each request has its own **resource request number**. Everything ordered for an incident must have a resource request number to provide acquisition authority and to track the item.

The resource order form can be completed in hard copy or by using the

- Resource ordering and status system (ROSS).
- General message acquisition form (GMAF).
- Procurement officer process system (POPS).
- National Wildfire Coordinating Database (NWCD).

Take-away nuggets from this topic include:

- Procurement must be done by an authorized official.
- Requests for equipment and supplies go on a General Message form, ICS-213.
- Everything requested must have a resource request number.
- Resource request numbers are included on a resource order form.

Incident personnel may need dozers and pack animals, dip sites and rental facilities—or numerous other services, supplies, and equipment. In order to have these needs fulfilled, specific acquisition methods have to be followed.

This topic tells you how to have your needs fulfilled. It's called Acquisition Methods, and here's what it covers:

- Purchases
- Emergency equipment rental
- Equipment hiring
- Fire chasing

Purchases are made by authorized personnel using the most efficient method and in accordance with agency procedures.

All property, animals, supplies, and equipment that the government rents, hires, or purchases must be acquired through one of the following methods:

- Government purchase cards or convenience checks
- Established contracts
- Land use and facility rental agreement
- Unique acquisitions

The use of government purchase cards and convenience checks must be specifically authorized by the incident agency.

The authorized purchaser must:

- Obtain a resource request number before purchasing
- Maintain proper records of purchases
- Provide a copy of purchase documentation to finance for the incident record

Authorization for the purchase must be obtained. Agencies may already have agreements established that are used to support incidents in various ways, such as:

- Meals
- Lodging
- Services

Existing agreements for equipment ordered through the resource ordering and status system (ROSS) and arriving from outside the local area should be honored and never renegotiated. Generally, a contractor's cost of doing business is established at the contractor's home base and does not change when the contractor travels to incidents outside its geographic area.

Blanket purchase agreements (BPAs) and other established contracts are found in the service and supply plan.

Incident agencies are to maintain a service and supply plan identifying local resources that can provide support to the incident. The service and supply plan is a compiled list of contact names, existing agreements, and existing contracts.

The plans should be:

- Established preseason

- Coordinated with other agencies in the same geographic area
- Given to incident management teams and incident support units

For detailed information of what the service and supply plan should include, please see Chapter 20 in the SIIBM.

The procurement officer evaluates:

- The availability of goods and services
- Price
- Delivery costs

Necessary information on which to base an evaluation can be found at the:

- National Cache System
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- National contracts

### **National Cache System**

A cache system is a predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and supplies stored in a designated location, available for incident use.

Common and special-purpose incident items, such as shovels, lanterns, and sleeping bags, are stocked as part of the National Cache System.

Orders for items needed for the incident and for immediate stock replenishment should be directed to the appropriate cache using the dispatch coordination system.

### **GSA**

GSA publishes a Wildland Fire Suppression catalog geared to the needs of agencies involved in fire suppression. GSA is the mandatory source of supply for federal agencies where required delivery can be met.

### **National Contracts**

National contracts are established for interagency use and are mandatory for federal wildland fire fighting agencies. See the National Interagency Mobilization Guide for ordering procedures.

Contracts included are:

- Airtanker services
- Type I and II helicopter services
- Aircraft services for transport
- Portable retardant base equipment rental
- Bulk retardant
- Mobile food and shower services

Land use and facility rental agreements are simplified acquisition procedures that should be used to acquire the use of nonfederal property or facilities for emergency incidents.

Emergency incident agreements:

- Do not require special leasing authority
- May be entered by a procurement official with warrant authority

Rental agreements are usually:

- Short term
- Open only during the length of the incident

During an emergency incident, special circumstances may exist requiring the acquisition of unique items such like copy machines and other office equipment, medical providers, and even food and lodging.

Food and lodging are normally provided to incident personnel. However, federal funds cannot pay for food at the personnel's home unit unless the following conditions are met:

- Emergency personnel are in the field engaged in emergency operations.
- The operational period prevents personnel from taking meals at home or in the office.

Supplemental food and drinks are unique and contain their own purchasing restrictions. Any supplemental food provisions require incident command justification AND concurrence from the agency administrator.

You need to review the Subsistence and Lodging Provisions section in the SIIBM, Chapter 20. Because the SIIBM is edited and updated frequently, it's easiest to use the table of contents at the beginning of the chapter to locate information.

Match each term with the MOST appropriate description.

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Service and supply plan established | Contains a list of contacts, contracts, and agreements                       |
| • Land use agreement be               | An established contract allowing nonfederal land to be used during incidents |
| • Established contracts providing     | Previously arranged agreements with vendors support to an incident           |
| • Unique acquisitions food,           | Examples include computers, medical providers, and lodging                   |

If an already established agreement isn't getting you the goods you need, there are other ways to get items by using an Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement (EERA), OF-294.

The EERA:

- Documents the rental of property, animals, or equipment, including no-cost items such as vehicles, heavy equipment, and pack horses
- Is negotiated by a procurement officer
- Is signed by the procurement officer and the contractor
- Contains negotiated rates that can be changed only by the original signing procurement

officer

Unlike "normal" contracts, the contractor is not bound by the EERA until:

- Services are ordered by the incident.
- The contractor agrees to provide the services in terms with the agreement.

The EERA contains terms and conditions that the procurement officer negotiates. On the back of the form, however, are other applicable clauses.

When equipment is furnished to the government, the contractor is bound by the clauses listed. A few of the issues addressed by the clauses include:

- Equipment condition
- Supplies
- Repairs
- Payment
- Subsistence
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Loss, damage, and destruction

Certain hiring methods are applied when an EERA is used. Most equipment should be obtained through a preseason solicitation process. Contractors are also evaluated during incidents.

At the time of sign-up, the procurement officer is responsible for discussing:

- The terms and conditions of the EERA
- Application of federal, state, or local laws
- Current work and rest policies and length of assignment
- Workers' compensation obligations and liability coverage
- Established dispatch procedures
- Incident behavior responsibilities, including conduct and ethics

Fire chasing occurs when unauthorized equipment shows up at an incident. The equipment is not part of an existing agreement, hasn't been ordered through ROSS, and doesn't have an EERA either. Use this equipment only if there is a genuine need and time does not permit ordering through established channels.

In those circumstances, apply the following guidelines:

- Before use, establish a resource order to document the need
- Refer the matter to a warranted contracting officer to establish an agreement
- Perform an inspection
- New agreements are valid for the duration of that incident only
- Point of hire should be the incident
- Compensation for travel to and from the incident is not allowed
- Replace equipment with the most cost-effective resource at the earliest convenience

Negotiated rates on the EERA need to be changed.

Who is authorized to do that?

- The original signing procurement officer
- Any procurement officer at the incident
- The contractor
- Crew boss

Select TWO sources a procurement officer can use to obtain information necessary for evaluating resources for the service and supply plan.

- National contracts, National Cache System
- National Interagency Mobilization Guide, IIBMH
- IIBMH, GSA Web site
- National Cache System, service and supply plan administrator

The big ticket item we want you to recall is that authorization must be obtained for all purchases via a resource order. If existing contracts do not exist—as found in the service and supply plan—then the EERA is used to acquire resources. And, always discourage fire chasing by adhering to the protocol.

To break it down, we covered:

- Purchases
- Emergency equipment rental
- Equipment hiring
- Fire chasing

Incident agencies have established procedures for ordering, inspecting, record keeping, releasing, and paying for resources.

In the Acquisition Methods topic, we covered ordering using an emergency equipment rental agreement (EERA). In this topic, we'll cover:

- Supervisor responsibilities
- Vehicle and heavy equipment inspection
- Emergency equipment shift ticket
- Emergency equipment use invoice
- Additional forms
- Equipment release and payment

Here's a rundown: There's a Type I incident that has requested emergency equipment through the resource ordering and status system (ROSS). Procurement authorities acquire the equipment using an EERA or incident blanket purchase agreement (IBPA), and it arrives at an incident. What now?

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Managing emergency equipment
- Documenting pre-use and post-use equipment inspections
- Documenting the Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF-297

Supervisors are the first managers of ordered emergency equipment.

Incident supervisors manage casuals and regular government firefighters with regard to incident safety briefings and ensuring personnel have proper personal protective equipment (PPE). All of these usual supervisory duties apply to emergency equipment as well.

When a vendor has a contract and is working for the incident, the incident supervisor is responsible for managing the emergency equipment, including all operators who may have been provided in terms of the EERA.

Incident supervisors are (usually) responsible for documenting pre- and post-use (or "release") inspections using the Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Inspection Checklist, OF-296 as required according to the terms of the contractor agreement.

Type I and Type II incidents have logistics personnel (ground support and equipment managers) with some level of inspection training for equipment. So, supervisors are not always performing inspections.

However, the supervisor managing emergency equipment is responsible for ensuring inspection completion.

Last, but not least, the agency representative managing contracted emergency equipment is responsible for documenting equipment time using the Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF-297.

Depending upon the complexity of the incident, the agency representative could include the:

- Incident supervisor
- Operations section chief
- Ground support unit leader
- Dozer boss

The shift ticket has to be documented daily. The daily use of the equipment—whether by the hour or by mileage—is determined by the EERA.

Before we shift gears to the forms used for documentation, let's evaluate what you know about supervisory responsibilities.

Identify **THREE** supervisory responsibilities associated with emergency equipment.

- Managing emergency equipment

- Documenting pre- and post-use inspections
- Documenting equipment time on the shift ticket
- Changing rates on the emergency equipment rental agreement
- Procuring emergency equipment

The Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Inspection Checklist, OF-296, is used to document the overall condition of equipment before and after it is used. This is referred to as pre- and post-use (or release) inspections.

The equipment finance department immediately receives the pre-use copy of the inspection. Upon release, finance immediately receives the release copy as well.

The pre-use inspection is completed by the hiring agency, specifically by any of the following:

- Logistics section chief
- Ground support unit leader
- Equipment manager
- Incident supervisor

Look for these items when you complete or review the vehicle inspection checklist:

For the pre-use inspection:

- Both the contractor and inspector must accept and sign the inspection.
- Finance immediately receives a copy.
- The vendor is given a copy and must bring this copy back for the release inspection.

After the release inspection:

- Retrieve the vendor copy
- Have the vendor and the inspector complete the release inspection and sign it
- Give a copy to finance immediately

The Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF-297, is used to document the daily use of emergency equipment in accordance with EERA terms and conditions. Each different piece of emergency equipment has its own shift ticket.

In order to fill out the shift ticket, two documents are needed from the contractor:

- Resource order (to obtain the resource order number)
- EERA or IBPA

The EERA will specify if the equipment's daily use is recorded by:

- Hours
- Days
- Miles
- Guarantee

### **Hours**

Hours are recorded daily on the shift ticket (in military time) in order to compare service hours and value, even if the EERA specifies to record equipment use by days.

If the equipment is being used for only two hours a day but is getting paid a daily rate, then appropriate agency personnel might consider renegotiating the agreement or releasing that equipment and procuring a new resource.

### **Days**

Daily rates are negotiated by the procurement officer and the vendor. These rates are paid to the vendor regardless of hours or mileage used.

### **Miles**

Miles are recorded using the odometer. They are written in the start and stop columns of the shift ticket. If the numbers are too large to fit in the space provided, record miles in the remarks section. As long as they are recorded, finance will find them.

### **Guarantee**

A guaranteed rate is a minimum flat-rate payment for services rendered. Here are some of the critical details of the shift ticket process:

After copying the resource order number and filling in how use will be recorded, the next steps include:

- Completing the shift ticket after each operational period for each piece of equipment
- Signing the shift ticket
- Obtaining the contractor's signature
- Forwarding the shift ticket to the finance section for posting to the Emergency Equipment Use Invoice, OF-286

Obviously, finance is not out working the fireline, so all they see is the shift ticket once it is turned in. When unusual conditions occur during that operational period, documentation on the shift ticket is required.

Unusual conditions are placed in the remarks section, including:

- Downtime
- Damage
- Release time
- Transport
- Reason for paid meal break

Meal breaks should be taken and documented on the shift ticket. If they do not show up, document why breaks were not taken.

We've covered quite a bit of emergency equipment shift ticket information. Let's take a moment to review the main points.

How often do you fill out a shift ticket for each piece of contracted equipment?

- Daily, after each operational period
- Hourly
- Before release
- Every other shift period

A water tender is under your supervision on the Bad Bear Fire, and you need to document information on the shift ticket.

Where is the information for the work rate and the work unit located for the shift ticket?

- On the EERA or IBPA
- On the GSA Web site
- Provided by the contractor
- On the resource order

For the dates 8/6/XX through 8/8/XX, a dozer is scheduled for work from 0530 to 1800 hours each day in accordance with the incident action plan (IAP).

On 8/6, the dozer worked from 0530 to 1800, and it was down from 1400 to 1500 for washing fans.

Here's another short scenario:

For the dates 8/6/XX through 8/8/XX, a dozer is scheduled for work from 0530 to 1800 hours each day in accordance with the IAP.

Here is the dozer's log for 8/7:

- From 0530 to 1300, the dozer was constructing line.
- From 1300 to 1800, dozer and operator were held on the line.
- At 1800, the operator is off duty.

For the dates 8/6/XX through 8/8/XX, a dozer is scheduled for work from 0530 to 1800 hours each day in accordance with the IAP.

On 8/8 from 0530 to 1000, the dozer was constructing line. It was down after 1000 with a mechanical problem and out of service for the remainder of the operational period.

How would you document the downtime?

- Record the mechanical problem and the off time in the remarks section
- Record only the operational hours in the start and stop columns
- Record the mechanical problem but not the off time in the remarks section

- Record operational hours in the start and stop columns and only off time in remarks

The Emergency Equipment Use Invoice, OF-286, is a payment document created by the finance section.

Three documents are required to complete the use invoice:

- Shift ticket
- EERA or IBPA
- Resource order

Once shift tickets are submitted to finance, they are recorded on the use invoice daily by the equipment time recorder, showing additions or deductions, and calculating the payment due.

Other pertinent information, such as administrative office for payment and hiring/agreement information, is retrieved from the EERA or IBPA.

Possible additions and deductions on the use invoice include:

- Fuel
- Unusual wear and tear
- Commissary
- Parts
- Agency Provided Medical Care (APMC)

At the time of demobilization, the emergency equipment use invoice is:

- Totaled and closed out
- Signed by the appropriate agency official
- Signed by the contractor
- Subject to audit (errors are corrected before the contractor payment is sent)

A copy of the use invoice appears in the SIIBM, Chapter 20, along with detailed instructions.

Additional documents relating to the rental and payment of emergency equipment include the:

- Emergency Equipment Fuel and Oil Issue, OF-304
- Emergency Equipment Rental-Use Envelope, OF-305
- Contract claim documentation
- Performance evaluations

For a complete list of additional documentation, see Chapter 20 of the SIIBM.

### **Fuel and Oil Issue**

The OF-304 (fuel and oil) is a payment document used by fuel tenders when they issue fuel at an incident. More and more, fuel tenders are accepting credit cards on the incident base and therefore reducing the need for this form.

Tender agreements are also incorporating the credit card utility, so vendors need to be set up to accept credit cards.

### **Rental-Use Envelope, OF-305**

The OF-305 consolidates all pertinent documents related to the EERA or IBPA. It is prepared at the time of hire by the hiring official and contains:

- A copy of the EERA or IBPA
- Pre-use inspection
- Emergency equipment shift ticket book

The materials needed for payment are placed inside the envelope.

### **Contract Claim Documentation**

Contract claims information may be submitted to the procurement unit leader, incident agency, or contracting officer. We get into the specifics of contract claims in the Claims module.

### **Performance Evaluations**

Performance evaluations are completed by the supervisor and forwarded to the contracting officer. A copy is given to the contractor, and another copy is retained for the incident documentation package.

The Emergency Equipment Use Invoice, OF-286, is most often completed by the

- equipment time recorder
- procurement unit leader
- finance/administration section chief
- division supervisor

Before emergency equipment is released and paid, the procurement unit leader or the buying team leader ensures the:

- Completion of a release inspection
- Posting of time, additions, and subtractions is correct
- Signing of the demobilization checkout, ICS-221
- Documentation of release time and date
- Obtaining of legible signatures
- Completion of the performance evaluation
- Placement of all payment documentation into the emergency equipment rental-use envelope

Notice that the shift ticket documents release dates, reasons, and post-use condition.

When applicable, the following documents are placed into the emergency equipment rental-use envelope, OF-305. They are submitted to the incident agency for payment of EERAs or IBPAs:

- Resource order number
- Copy of EERA or IBPA
- Original emergency equipment shift tickets
- Original emergency equipment use invoice
- Emergency equipment fuel and oil issue

- Copy of pre-use and post-use vehicle/heavy equipment inspection checklists
- Claims documentation
- Emergency Firefighter Time report, OF-288
- Other pertinent documents indicating additions or deductions to payment

In this topic, we covered:

- Supervisor responsibilities
- Vehicle and heavy equipment inspection
- Emergency equipment shift ticket
- Emergency equipment use invoice
- Additional forms
- Equipment release and payment

Fighting fires or responding to all hazard incidents comes with an inherent set of risks. From dented vehicles to dropped computers—stuff can and will happen. And when it does happen to equipment in terms of damage, claims can be submitted to recuperate the cost.

There are established procedures to be followed, and this topic claims to inform you by addressing:

- Common issues
- Claims investigations

The most common issues resulting in contract claims are:

- Equipment damage, beyond normal wear and tear
- Failure of one of the parties to comply with the terms and conditions of the agreement
- Inadequate documentation of time, number of operators, damage, or accidents
- Poor pre-use inspections
- Lack of communication between the contractor's representative and the government official

Damage to equipment WILL happen. However, other claims can be prevented with adequate communication and documentation.

Incident personnel are not to advise, comment on, or solicit a contractor's claim. It is the contractor's responsibility to initiate a claim and to provide its own witness statements and documentation.

Incident personnel provide documentation on behalf of the government, including:

- Witness statements
- Descriptions and circumstances of damages
- Photographs and diagrams
- Law enforcement investigations

The key background information for claims includes:

- Claims procedures
- Initiated claims

## Claims Procedures

To begin the claims procedure:

- Collecting initial equipment documentation is the responsibility of the person supervising equipment or the government official witnessing the accident.
- The contracting officer forwards collected documentation to the contractor.
- The contractor may or may not initiate a claim.

### Initiated Claims Procedure

If a claim is initiated, then the:

- Provided information is used to negotiate a resolution for the damage
- Contracting officer has the authority to add an amount on to the equipment use invoice compensating for damages

Like most things we describe in this course, the claim needs to be in writing. You can find details of what to include in the claim in Chapter 20 of the SIIBM.

Here's an example of a claims scenario. A hose on a contract engine is used on the fireline and the division supervisor directs the hose to be left in place when the engine is released. Is this a claims situation?

To replace the lost property, the contractor initiates a claim through the contracting officer who then has the authority to bring the claim to resolution.

Some details:

- The government cannot give or sell federal inventory to a contractor.
- Contractors can check out items temporarily from supply.
- Checked out items have to be returned when demobilizing.
- The emergency equipment rental agreement (EERA) or incident blanket purchase agreement (IBPA) ensures that if the government keeps or damages equipment, then the contractor will have another way of providing materials so that it can do its job.

Who is responsible for collecting initial equipment documentation for investigations?

- The person supervising equipment or the government official witnessing the accident
- The contractor
- The contracting officer
- Branch chiefs

While this topic has been short and sweet, remember that adequate documentation and communication can save the government money. But, since accidents happen, it is up to the equipment supervisor to collect documentation for possible investigations.

Once that documentation is given to the contractor, it is up to the contractor to initiate a claim.

In this topic, we covered:

- Common issues
- Claims investigations