

June 6, 2020 WC-ARES Training Net: IC 214 and After Action Reports

Presented by Marida Borromeo

Tonight, training is about ICS 214 and After-Action Reports.

The Activity Log (ICS 214) records details of notable activities at any ICS level, including single resources, equipment, Task Forces, etc. These logs provide basic incident activity documentation and anything worthy to be noted, and a reference for any after action report.

Personnel in any ICS position should document how relevant incident activities are occurring and progressing, or any notable events or communications, such as conversations, actions, disputes, phone calls, requests, mistakes, or even finding a contact information of a contractor that had served an agency during an event and the agency might need to call years later.

Remember: If it is not written, it is like it has never happened.

Another reason for the 214 is to deal with disagreements during an emergency or other event. It is best practice not to argue during an incident, but writing down the dispute will help later, once back home, to revisit the incident with a supervisor and clear the matter, or take actions about it, in a safe and calmer environment.

214s are vital to a served agency if they are audited, even 10-20 years after the event, so that they can give an accurate account of what happened a certain day or period; the more accurate you are, the more accurate the served agency can be to auditors, and the least the chances you are called to clarify.

This is also true in lawsuits. Although we, volunteers, cannot be sued, our served agency can. An accurate 214 can insure that no one will track you down years later asking you to remember what exactly happened a certain day. They can read it in your activity log and leave you alone.

Completed ICS 214s are submitted to supervisors, who forward them to the Documentation Unit within the Planning Section. All completed original forms must be given to the Documentation Unit, which maintains a file of all ICS 214s. It is recommended that you keep a copy of your log as well for your record.

214s are essential to prepare an After Action Report, or AAR.

The After Action Report is a tool used to provide feedback after an incident. The report summarizes what took place during the event, analyzes the actions taken by participants, and provides areas needing improvements.

Writing an After Action Report can really help WC-ARES and /or a served agency to evaluate emergency preparedness and allow for an in depth review of the incident to continually work toward improvements.

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It is exceedingly helpful to review and analyze what went well, what went wrong, and anything in the middle. After Action Report allows us to build better exercises based on the one just concluded or to improve our performance in case of deployment and disaster. If we do not capture data from our event or incident through well done 214s, we might have wasted a good exercise or experience.

The main components on an After Action Report include:

- Incident overview. What happened, when did it happen, how did it happen, etc.
- Analysis. What was observed? What was expected? Was anything unexpected? Who was involved in the incident? What are the strengths? What are the areas of opportunity? The analysis portion of a post-action report should be the longest and most detailed portion of your report.
- Recommendations. In the recommendations section of the report, detail ways to improve performance for future incidences.
- Improvement/action plan. In the improvement plan, you will detail corrective actions to be taken for future incidences. Be sure to include any additional training requirements, equipment needs, or any additional planning that needs to be completed. Be sure to list the party responsible for completing these steps and include a due date.
- Conclusion. The conclusion is a summary of all of the sections of your report.

Whenever you observe area of opportunity and improvement, remember to keep your criticism on the positive and constructive side, and with criticism, to offer solutions.

This is the end of tonight training, This is KD5BJ and please put me down as a short timer for the informal portion of the net.