

Appendix A: Incident Status Summary

Purpose: To support the needs of the incident, the Incident Status Summary (209) collects basic incident decision support information at the incident level. The 209 is the primary mechanism for reporting incident decision support information above the incident level to incident coordination centers, support organizations, and agency/organizational managers and executives. As such, the 209 contains basic information elements needed to support decision-making at all levels above the incident to support the incident. Decision-makers may include not only the agency having jurisdiction, but also all Multiagency Coordination System (MACS) elements and parties, such as cooperating and assisting agencies/organizations, dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, administrators, elected officials, local, tribal, county, State, and Federal agencies. Once 209 information is submitted from the incident, decision-makers and others at all incident support and coordination points may transmit and share the information (based on its sensitivity and appropriateness) for access and use at local, regional, State, and national levels as it is needed to facilitate support.

Accurate and timely completion of the 209 is necessary to identify appropriate resource needs, determine allocation of limited resources when multiple incidents occur, and secure additional capability when there are limited resources due to constraints of time, distance, or other factors. The information included on the 209 influences the priority of the incident, and thus its share of available resources and incident support.

Use the 209 for reporting information about significant incidents. 209 is not intended for reporting every incident, as most incidents are of short duration and do not require scarce resources, significant mutual aid, or additional support and attention.

The 209 is designed to provide a “snapshot in time” to effectively move incident decision support information where it is needed. It should contain the most accurate and up-to-date information available at the time it is prepared. However, readers of the 209 may have access to more up-to-date or real-time information in reference to certain information elements on the 209. Coordination among communications and information management elements within ICS and among MACS should delineate authoritative sources for more up-to-date and/or real-time information when 209 information becomes outdated in a quickly evolving incident.

Reporting Requirements: The 209 is intended to be used when an incident reaches a certain threshold where it becomes significant enough to merit special attention, require additional resource support needs, or cause media attention, increased public safety threat, and so forth. Agencies or organizations may set their own reporting requirements so verify your jurisdiction’s or discipline’s policies, mobilization guide, or preparedness plans. Units should develop consistent 209 reporting parameters used by jurisdictions or disciplines for consistency over time, documentation, efficiency, trend monitoring, incident tracking, and so forth.

For example, an agency or MAC may require the submission of an initial 209 when a new incident has reached a certain pre-designated level of significance, including when a given number of resources are committed to the incident, when a new incident is not completed within a certain timeframe, or when impacts/threats to life and safety reach a given level.

Typically, 209 forms are completed either once daily or for each operational period – in addition to the initial submission. Jurisdictional or organizational guidance may indicate frequency of 209 submission for particular definitions of incidents or for all incidents. This specific guidance may help determine submission timelines when operational periods are extremely short (e.g., 2 hours) and it is not necessary to submit new 209 forms for all operational periods.

Any plans or guidelines should also indicate parameters for when it is appropriate to stop submitting 209s for an incident, based upon incident activity and support levels.

Preparation: When an Incident Management Organization (such as an Incident Management Team) is in place, the Situation Unit Leader or Planning Section Chief prepares the 209 at the incident. On other incidents, the 209 may be completed by a dispatcher in the local communications center, or by another staff person or manager. This form should be completed at the incident or at the closest level to the incident with the best possible, currently available, and verifiable information at the time it is completed and signed.

This form is designed to serve incidents impacting specific geographic areas that can easily be defined. It also has the flexibility for use with ubiquitous events, or those events that cover extremely large areas and that may involve many jurisdictions and ICS organizations. For these incidents, it is useful to clarify on the form exactly which portion of the larger incident the 209 is meant to address. For example, a particular 209 submitted during a statewide outbreak of mumps may be relevant only to mumps-related activities in Story County, Iowa. This can be indicated in both the incident name, Block 1, and in the Incident Location Information section in Blocks 16–26.

While most of the **Incident Location Information** in Blocks 16–26 is optional, the more information that can be submitted, the better. Submission of multiple location indicators increases accuracy, improves interoperability and increases information sharing between disparate systems. Preparers should be certain to follow accepted protocols or standards when entering location information and clearly label all location information. As with other 209 data, geospatial information may be widely shared and utilized, so accuracy is essential.

When electronic data is submitted with the 209, do not attach or send extremely large data files. Incident geospatial data that is distributed with the 209 should be in simple incident geospatial basics, such as the incident perimeter, point of origin, and so forth. Data file sizes should be small enough to be easily transmitted through dial-up connections or other limited communications capabilities when 209 information is transmitted electronically. Any attached data should be clearly labeled as to format content and collection time and should follow existing naming conventions and standards.

Distribution: 209 information should be completed at the closest possible level to the incident (preferably at the incident). Once the 209 is submitted to a dispatch center or MAC group, it may subsequently be transmitted to various incident support and coordination entities based on the support needs and the decisions made within the MAC groups in which the incident occurs.

Coordination with public information system elements and investigative/intelligence information organizations at the incident and within MACS is essential to protect information security and to ensure optimal information sharing and coordination. There may be times in which particular 209s contain sensitive information that should not be released to the public (such as information regarding active investigations, fatalities, etc.). When this occurs, the 209 (or relevant sections of it) should be labeled appropriately, and care should be taken in distributing the information within MACS.

- All completed and signed original 209 forms must be given to the incident's Documentation Unit to be maintained as part of the official incident record.
- To promote flexibility in the application, only a limited number of 209 blocks are typically required, and most of those are required only when applicable.
- For the purposes of the 209, responders are those personnel who are assigned to an incident or who are part of the response community as defined by NIMS. This may include critical infrastructure owners and operators, nongovernmental and nonprofit organization personnel, and contract employees (such as caterers.)