

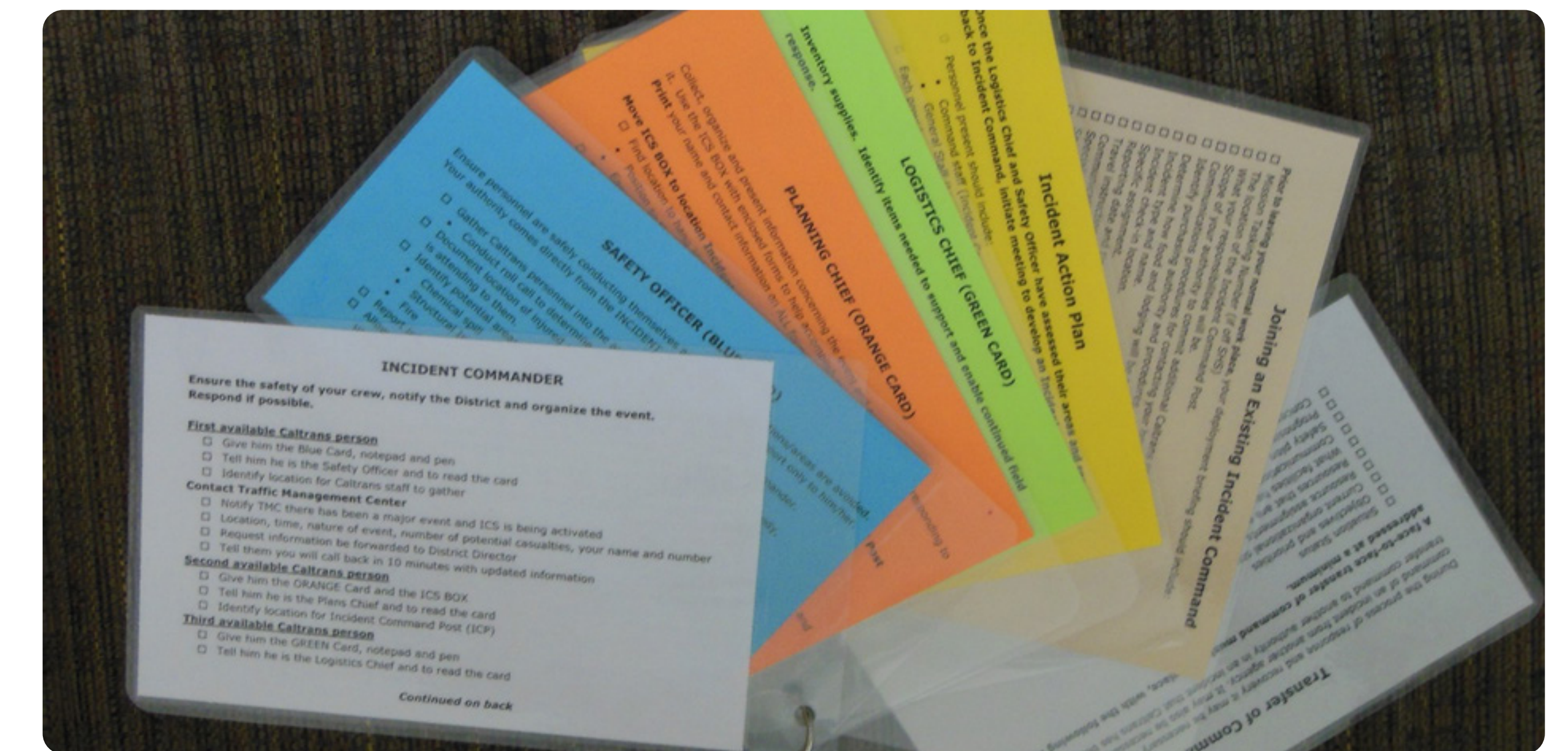
# Sand Table Exercises for Emergency Management Personnel

Poster Showcase  
#iaem25

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Non-Competitive Division



## Research Questions

Can a discussion-based, inexpensive exercise help railroad employees to refresh their knowledge of emergency response plans and incident command system actions?

## Methodology

Literature review, course study, interviews, field testing, pilot testing.

**Rationale: Employees need to refresh their emergency management knowledge, a seldom-used skill.**

- Railroad personnel may need to work with first responders from local communities to resolve disasters like wild fires.
- Sand table exercises allow employees to see and do a response in miniature, enhancing their memory of emergency response actions.

## Strategies

- Practical exercises – “sand table”
- Use of position checklists
- Videos for self-study or group refreshers

## Remembering works best with:

- Good initial training
- Good supporting materials
- Videos to review
- Position checklist cards that describe the steps for the first 15 minutes

## Outreach

- Sand table exercises for field staff training at 12 Caltrans districts and headquarters
- Train-the-trainer courses in five state DOTs
- All materials and videos are available for free at the project's website

## Findings:

- In-person instruction with practical application is most effective method for learning a seldom-used skill
- Periodic refresher exercises maintain emergency management concepts & skills

**Funded by the Federal Railroad Administration**

**IRB exempt – no human subject**