



INTEGRATED CONSORTIUM OF LABORATORY NETWORKS (ICLN)





MISSION

Provide for a federally coordinated and interoperable system of laboratory networks that provide timely, credible, and interpretable data in support of surveillance, early detection and effective consequence management for incidents requiring CBRN laboratory response capabilities.

**FOOD SAFETY
MODERNIZATION ACT**

**Memorandum of
Agreement signed by
all ICLN Member
Agencies**



PARTNERS





SIGNATORY AGENCIES OF THE ICLN MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)	U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)	U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	U.S. Department of Interior (DOI)
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)	U.S. Department of State (DoS)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)



Overview of HSPDs, ESFs, & NSMs supported by the ICLN

Overview of HSPDs, PPDs, ESFs, and NSMs supported by the ICLN		
HSPD-5: Management of Domestic Incidents	HSPD-7: Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection.	NSM-16: National Security Memorandum-16 Strengthen the Security and Resilience of U.S. Food and Agriculture
HSPD-10: Biodefense for the 21st Century	HSPD-21: Public Health and Medical Preparedness	HSPD-22: Domestic Chemical Defense
PPD-8: National Preparedness Goal	2012 National Strategy for Biosurveillance	ESF-5: Emergency Management
ESF-8: Public Health and Medical Services	ESF-10: Oil and Hazardous Materials Response	ESF-13: Public Safety and Security
2022 Security Memorandum-15: National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan for Countering Biological Threats, Enhancing Pandemic Preparedness, and Achieving Global Health Security		

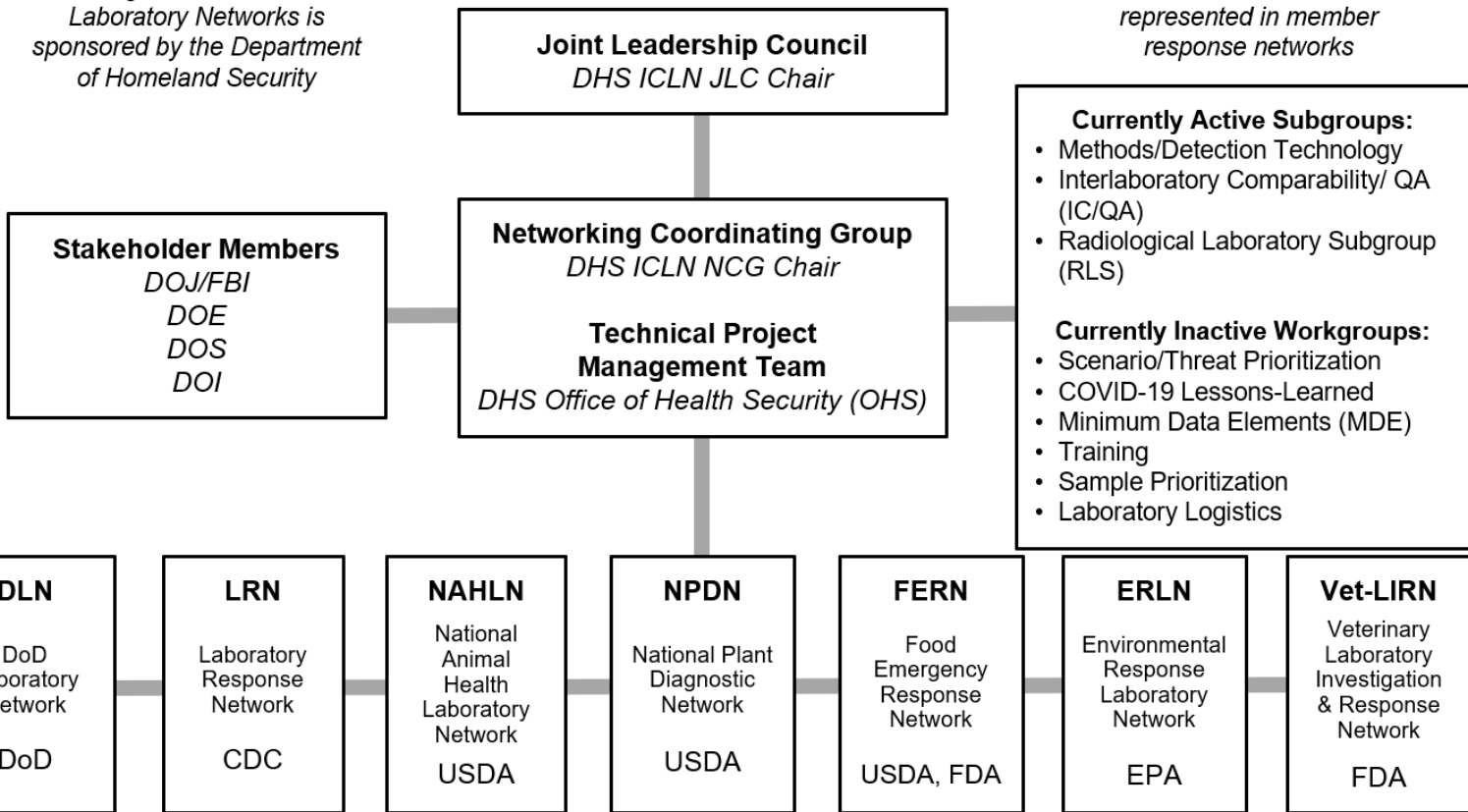


ICLN STRUCTURE

THE INTEGRATED CONSORTIUM OF LABORATORY NETWORKS

The Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks is sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security

More than 450 distinct labs represented in member response networks





TWO COORDINATING ELEMENTS OF THE ICLN:

- **Joint Leadership Council (JLC):**
 - Strategic level entity.
 - Made up of one senior policy member from each Department or Agency participating in the ICLN.
 - JLC is charged with *“assuring an appropriate strategy is in place to support an effective all-hazard laboratory response capability.”*
- **Network Coordinating Group (NCG):**
 - Operational level entity.
 - NCG is composed of senior technical (e.g., laboratory managers) and program representatives.
 - The NCG is charged with *“promoting enhanced commonality and integration of network functions.”*
 - **There are presently seven networks within the NCG: DLN, ERLN, FERN, LRN, NAHLN, NPDN, and Vet-LIRN.**



ICLN NETWORK FOCUS

Network Name	Primary Network Focus
DLN: DoD Laboratory Network; Agency: DoD	Human clinical, animal (e.g., zoonotic surveillance), vector-borne (e.g., mosquito and tick surveillance), environmental, and food matrices of the military
ERLN: Environmental Response Laboratory Network; Agency: EPA	Environmental matrices
FERN: Food Emergency Response Network; Agencies: HHS/FDA and USDA/FSIS	Food consumed by humans and animal feeds
LRN: Laboratory Response Network; Agencies: HHS/CDC	Clinical specimens as well as environmental, water, and food samples
NAHLN: National Animal Health Laboratory Network; Agency: USDA	Animal clinical/live animals in the field
NPDN: National Plant Diagnostic Network; Agency: USDA	Plants/crops in the field
Vet-LIRN: Veterinary Laboratory Investigation & Response Network; Agencies: HHS/FDA	Regulatory compliance and safety of animal feeds and veterinary drugs by testing animal diagnostic samples



ICLN TOOLS

- **ICLN Portal:** A secure, password-protected web portal that can be used by member networks on a day-to-day basis as well as during an incident.
- **Combined Registry:** A password-protected database that houses the Methods Registry, network proficiency testing data and schedules, and the training calendar.
- **Standard Operating Procedure/Key Process Steps Checklist:** Provides guidance on how to request assistance for capability/capacity support from fellow networks; describes the processes/procedures to communicate about ongoing incidents/events; simplifies data reporting between network program offices; and assists with returning resources back to their home network.
- **Data Exchange Utility:** *[IN FINAL DEVELOPMENT STAGE]* A secure online system that supports the exchange of laboratory results data, in an agreed-upon standardized ICLN format, among participant networks in a joint response action.



ICLN PORTAL

External Portal

Internal Portal (Password-Protected)

Home

The Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks

The Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) coordinates federally sponsored analytical laboratory services for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. The ICLN does this through planning, identifying resources, providing laboratory surge capacity support, and defining key process steps for information exchange and data sharing during an incident.

- About
- Structure & Members
- Ask ICLN

Resources

The Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) provides resources in the form of subgroups, webinar, and trainings.

- Subgroups
- Webinar
- Training

ICLN

- Dashboard
- Incidents
- Meetings
- Messages 575
- Calendar
- SecureSend
- Directory
- Support

Log Out

Welcome to ICLN

Where should we start today?

- Active Incidents**
Review list of incidents that you may access.
[List Now](#)
- Register Incident**
To register an incident, begin here.
[Start Now](#)
- Combined Registry**
Access to methods registry to search, find, and access data.
[Review](#)

Incidents

- Rad/Bio TTX**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings
- EXERCISE_TEST_EXERCISE 2022**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings
- ICLN GENERAL COMMUNICATION INCIDENT 2022**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings
- ICLN COVID-19**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings
- 20180918_CA_unknown agent pig death by Patrick Shiel**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings
- exercise-practice training DSR-wednesday 11-25-2015**
SOP Processes:
» Initiate or Update SITReps
» Virtual Meetings

**Federal laboratory partners can request an account by sending an email to ICLN@hq.dhs.gov.*



COMBINED REGISTRY

Combined Registry

Overview Manage Reference Data

Select Agent: Choose Agent

Select Threat: Choose Threat

Select Network: Choose Network

Add a Search term:

Active:

Go Clear All

Methods (265) Proficiency Testing Programs (31) Training (5)

+ Add Method

Show 100 entries Search:

Showing 1 to 100 of 265 entries

Agent	Threat Category	Network	Matrix	Technology / Assay Type	Point of Contact
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The Combined Registry is a multi-function application on the ICLN Portal. It provides the ICLN community with the ability to securely access and share Methods, Proficiency Testing and Training information and schedules.



KEY PROCESS STEPS CHECKLIST:

		ICLN Key Process Steps Checklist August 22, 2023	
		ACTIVITY	ACTION
<p><input type="checkbox"/> If the activity for which the exercise is conducted is an EXERCISE EXERCISE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If feasible, DHS will be alerted if they receive a formal communication mechanism about an unconfirmed, developing incident by sending out a Preparedness Alert.</p> <p>1. NCG members should be alerted via a formal communication mechanism about an unconfirmed, developing incident by sending out a Preparedness Alert.</p> <p>2. NCG identifies the need for members to collaborate in a confirmed incident or event (e.g., exercise). An incident is considered "confirmed" when an official lab result has been received that identifies the agent of concern.</p>	3. NCG members should be alerted via a formal communication mechanism about a confirmed developing incident by sending out a Situation Report (SITREP) .	7. Resource needs change (they increase or decrease).	<input type="checkbox"/> Convene Zoom.gov virtual meeting to determine how to gain use of additional resources or how to demobilize resources that are no longer needed.
	4. Create a meeting to discuss seeking analytical/support resources from NCG members, as deemed appropriate.	8. Track Lessons Learned	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to the main screen within the Incident and find the "Lesson Learned" text box. Click "+Add Topic" in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Once topic has been created, click on it then select "Add post." Write your observations and comments in the area provided.
	5. Data Exchange Utility	9. Incident is nearing conclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to your Incident on the Portal. <input type="checkbox"/> Choose either the "Create SITREP" button in the flow chart <u>or</u> select the "Situation Report" "Add" option from the top of the page. <input type="checkbox"/> Send SITREP to members of the Incident. If this is the final communication of the Incident, note it as the "final" SITREP. <input type="checkbox"/> Verify that the SITREP has been sent by email to those included within the Incident email distribution list. Check in the "sent" email box to verify the email has been sent.
	6. New information becomes available about the Incident.	10. Hot Wash	<input type="checkbox"/> The NCG Chair will schedule the Hot Wash meeting within several business days of the end of the Incident or Exercise. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss "Lessons Learned" that were tracked during the Incident. <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the top three successes and the top three items needing improvement. <input type="checkbox"/> The NCG Chair and/or Lead Network Coordinator will be responsible for issuing a draft After-Action Report about the Incident approximately 30 business days after the Hot Wash meeting.
		11. Close Incident	<input type="checkbox"/> From within an incident, choose the "close event" option from the SOP Guidance Steps flow chart. Fill out the form and submit. If needed, a Word version of the form is available on the Incident landing page under the "SOP templates" area. Fill out the Incident Close-out form and send it to DHS ICLN email box at icln@hq.dhs.gov . NOTE: Incident cannot be closed until Portal Support Manager/Administrator approves this action.



KEY PROCESS STEPS CHECKLIST:

ICLN Key Process Steps Checklist August 22, 2023	
ACTIVITY	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> If the activity for which you are using the Portal is for an exercise, PLEASE remember to put the words, “ EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE ” in all communications.	
<input type="checkbox"/> If feasible, DHS will alert all members on the Emergency Contact list before the exercise starts so they will not be alarmed if they receive communications which cite there is an (notional) incident occurring.	
1. NCG members should be alerted via a formal communication mechanism about an unconfirmed , developing incident by sending out a Preparedness Alert .	<input type="checkbox"/> Enter the ICLN GENERAL COMMUNICATION INCIDENT on the Portal and create a Preparedness Alert (PA). <input type="checkbox"/> Click on “Create PA” in flowchart or select “Preparedness Alert” pull-down menu from top of page. <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out the PA form template on the Portal. If filling out the form and uploading manually, the format for Incident Name is as follows: year month day_location where incident started_contamination type (if known) . Example: 20120330_Denver_B.anthraxis . <input type="checkbox"/> Save the form and send the PA to members of the Incident. <input type="checkbox"/> Verify that the PA has been created and sent by reviewing the “Preparedness Alert” pull down menu at the top of the page and looking under “Prior PAs.” You can also check the “Latest Activity” blog within the incident or check the email inbox for the incident. <input type="checkbox"/> After the PA is created, it is suggested (although optional) to hold an initial Zoom.gov virtual meeting to discuss the developing incident and the current status of networks/agencies.
2. NCG identifies the need for members to collaborate in a confirmed incident or event (e.g., exercise). An incident is considered “confirmed” when an official lab result has been received that identifies the agent of concern.	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to the ICLN Portal (www.icln.org). <input type="checkbox"/> Enter email and password to gain access to the secure side of the Portal. <input type="checkbox"/> For network coordinator level representatives, on the main screen, click “Register Incident.” Follow prompts to create an Incident. Note whether it is an actual Incident or an Exercise. (Note: If you do not see the “Register Incident” button, you may need to have “guest” access [reduce functionality] to the Portal and may need your access level upgraded.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Incident <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Add members to the Incident. If you check each specific network, the network coordinators for that group will be added automatically. To add additional members, enter their last name in the “search” screen and hit enter. Select their “role” by using the pull-down menu under the “actions” header. Then click the button labeled “Add this contact.” Follow screen prompts to complete creation of the incident. <input type="checkbox"/> Activate the Data Exchange Utility by clicking on the “activate” button. <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Step 5 regarding the need to complete an Incident Specific Data Sharing Agreement prior to sharing data.



KEY PROCESS STEPS CHECKLIST:

ICLN Key Process Steps Checklist August 22, 2023	
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3. NCG members should be alerted via a formal communication mechanism about a confirmed developing incident by sending out a Situation Report (SITREP) .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access the Incident on the Portal and create a Situation Report (SITREP). <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out the SITREP template form on the Portal or complete a downloaded pdf of the form. Upload the completed form to the Incident. Use the "Incident Name" nomenclature format referenced above in the Preparedness Alert section. <input type="checkbox"/> If assistance is needed (e.g., resources), check the appropriate button under "Capacity Outlook/Status of Assistance" box. Assistance includes analytical capacity, data analysis, data entry, increase in reagents/supplies, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Save the form. Send SITREP to members of the Incident. <input type="checkbox"/> Verify that the SITREP has been created and sent by reviewing the "Situation Report" pull down menu at the top of the page and looking under "View" Or "History" options. You can also check the "Latest Activity" blog on the Incident Home page or check the email inbox for the incident.
4. Create a meeting to discuss seeking analytical/support resources from NCG members, as deemed appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access the appropriate Incident on the Portal. <input type="checkbox"/> Click on the appropriate "Access Incident" button. <input type="checkbox"/> Go to "Meetings" on the SOP Guidance Steps flowchart and pick "create meeting" or choose "Meetings" from the left side bar within the Portal and pick "+ add meeting." Fill out the form with the appropriate information. If the meeting is a recurring one, select that option at the bottom of the form and designate the frequency. <input type="checkbox"/> Set-up time for the zoom.gov virtual meeting. Verify time zone is correct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The earlier the incident team can be alerted of an upcoming zoom.gov electronic meeting, the more likely there will be good representation from necessary networks. o In the body of the message, type the time for the meeting including the appropriate time zone (e.g., The meeting will be at 1 p.m. EST/12 noon CST/11 a.m. MT/10 a.m. PST). o If feasible, provide an agenda for the meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> During the call, designate someone to take notes and generate minutes and action items resulting from the meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss what resources your network needs. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Do you need assistance with sample processing and analysis, data entry, data analysis, or an increase in reagents and/or supplies? <input type="checkbox"/> Determine what information is required to support data accumulation and analysis.
5. Data Exchange Utility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If you are at the step where data is to be shared through the Data Exchange Utility (DEU), complete the Incident-Specific Data Sharing Agreement (ISDSA) form. Select <i>at least the</i> required Minimum Data Elements variables in the form. Attain agreement between agencies/networks. <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize the DEU to upload data results into the appropriate incident. Data can be uploaded, merged, viewed, and utilized to help make a public health decision.
6. New information becomes available about the Incident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Update the PAs or SITREPs with the new information. <input type="checkbox"/> Verify that the PA or SITREP has been sent by email to those included within the Incident email distribution list. Check in the email inbox or the "Prior PA" or "Prior SITREP" box to verify the document has been sent out.

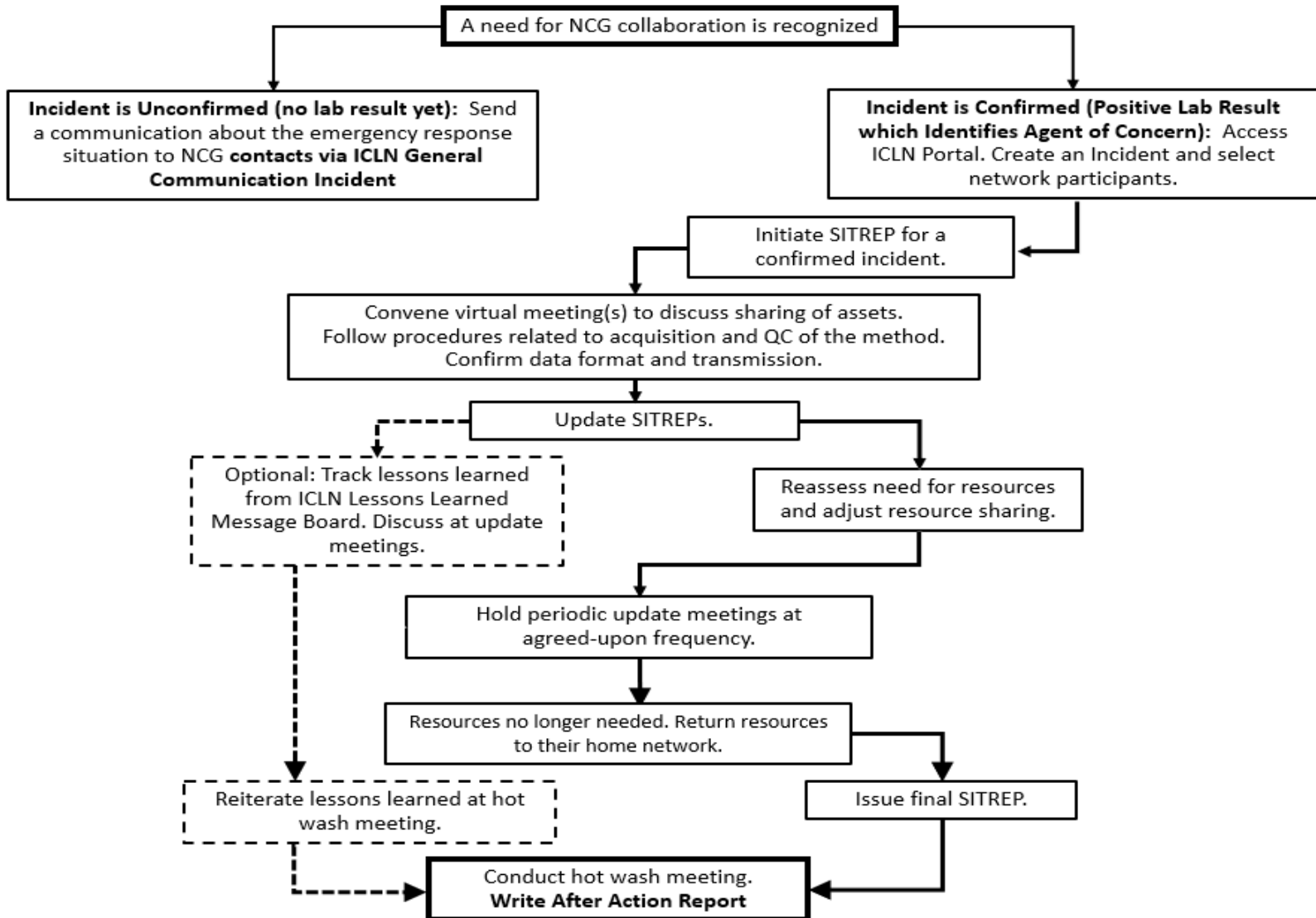


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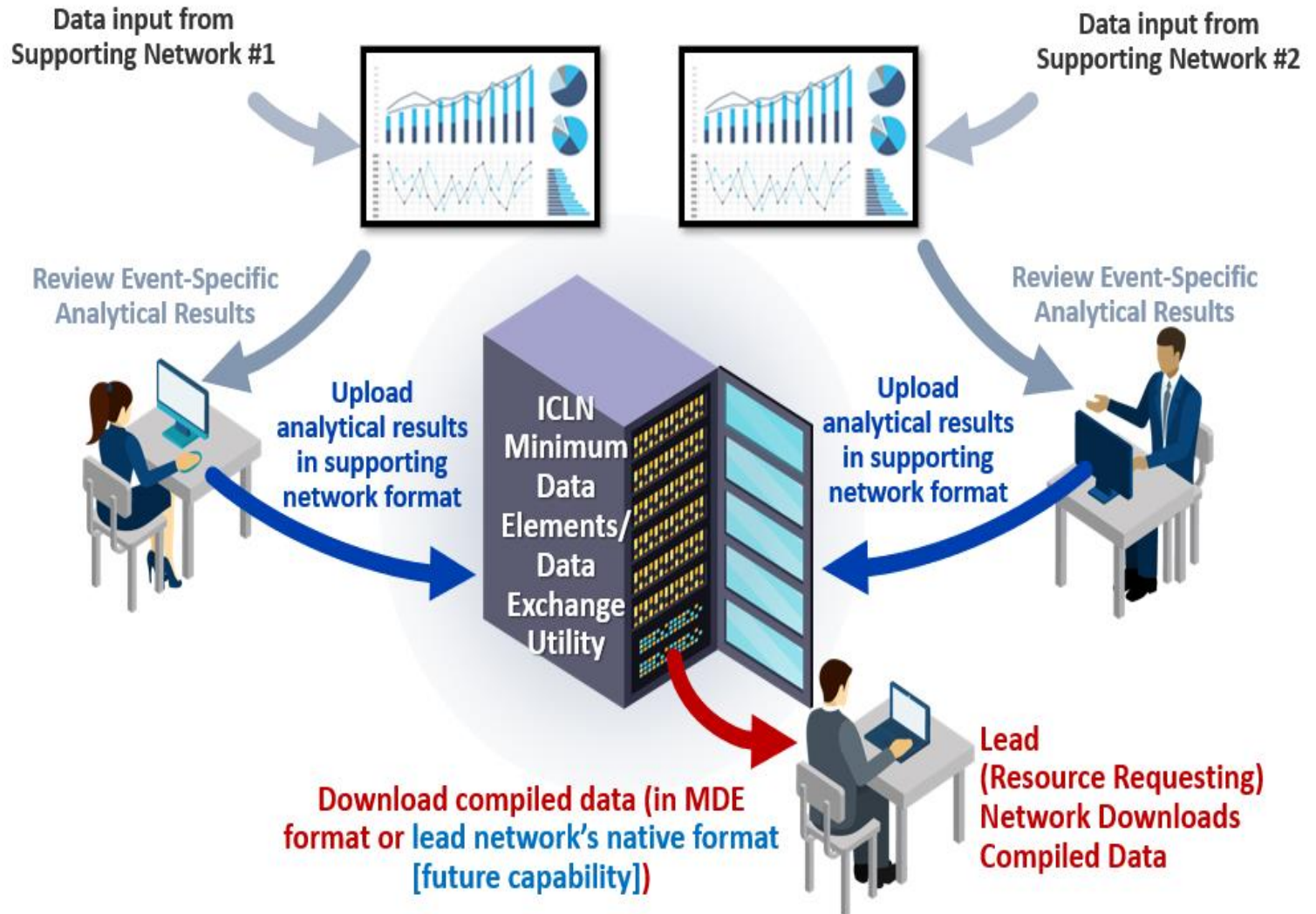


OPERATIONAL STEPS OF THE ICLN



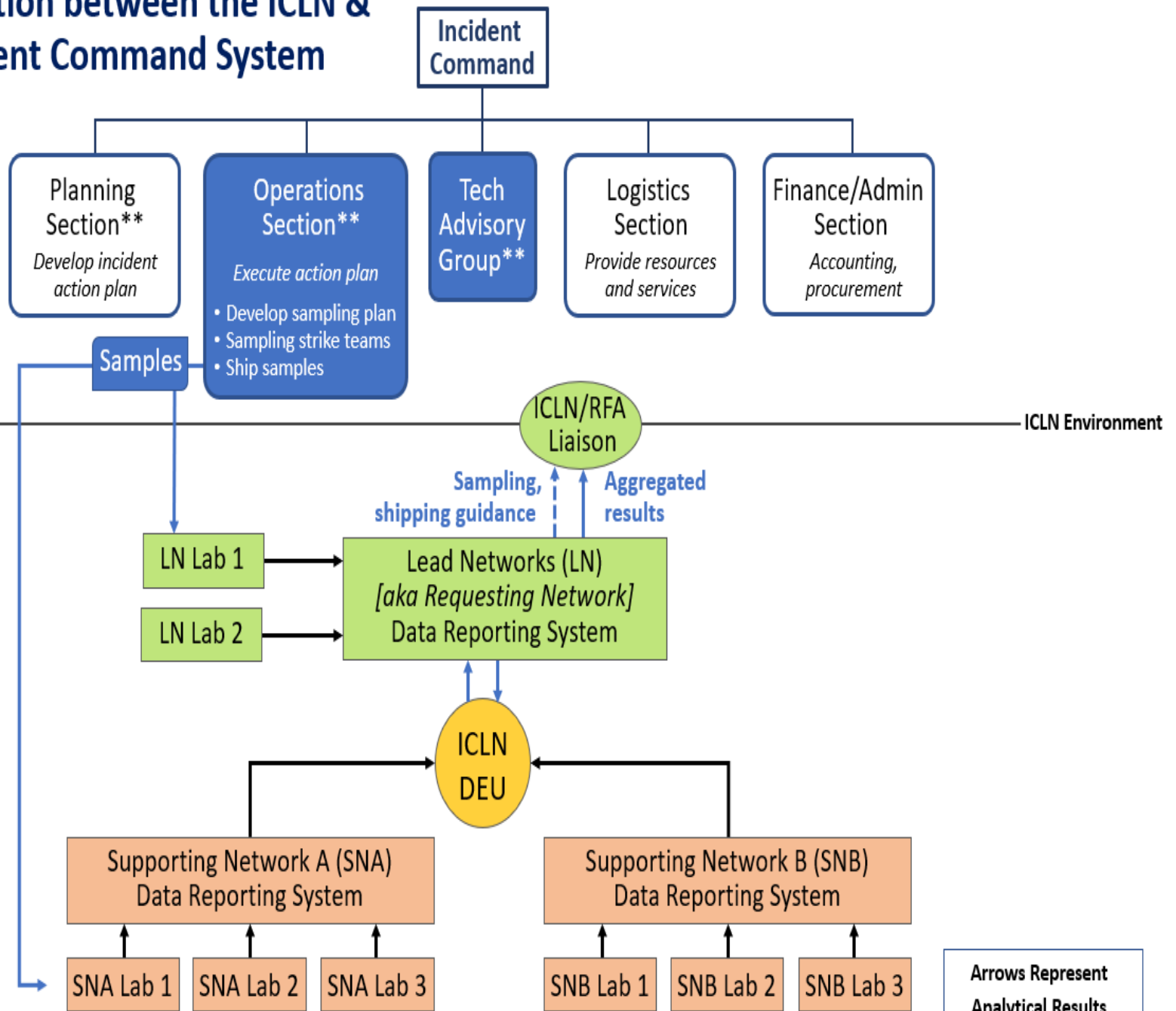


Data Exchange Utility on the ICLN Portal



Communication between the ICLN & the Incident Command System

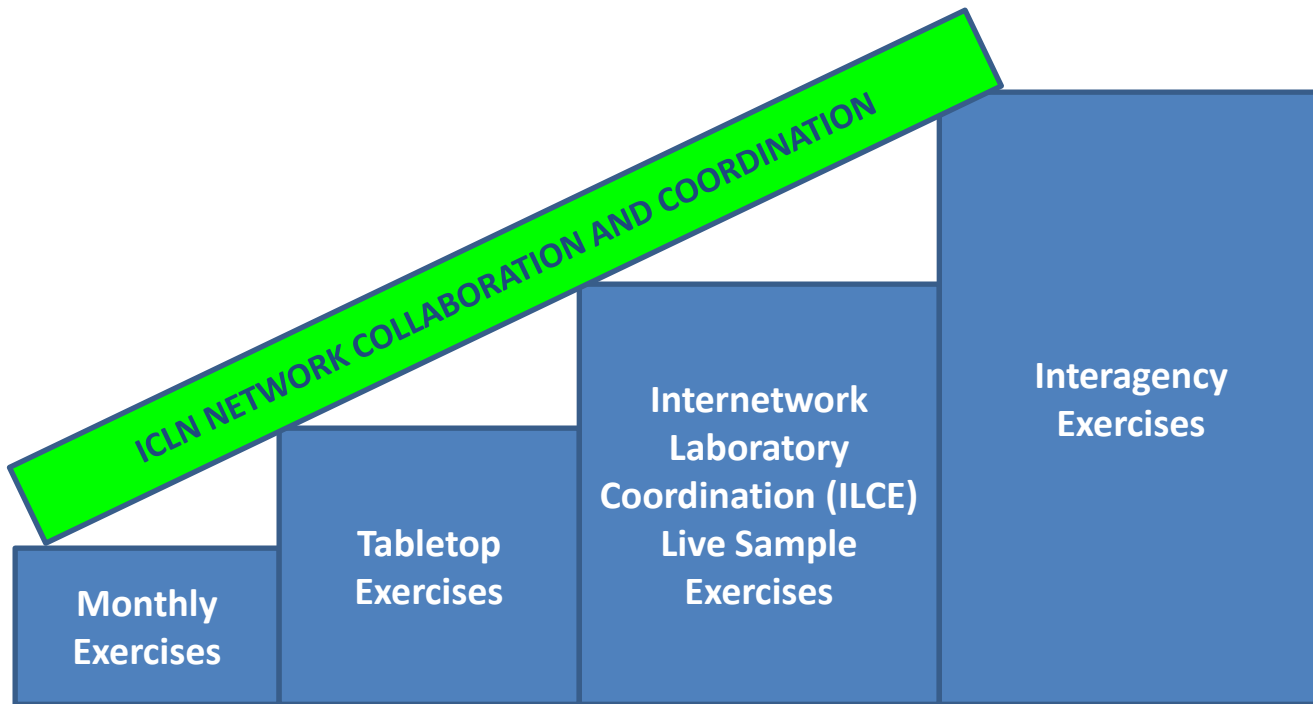
****NOTE:** Constant Communication between the Tech Advisory Group, Ops and Planning Sections based on data provided by RFA Liaison



Arrows Represent Analytical Results



EXERCISES



ICLN TABLETOP EXERCISES (TTXs) & INCIDENT COLLABORATION

➤ **Objectives of ICLN TTXs:**

- Networks learn about the procedures, policies of the other networks
- Promote collaboration of NCG network representatives
- Evaluate adequacy of guidance provided in the ICLN Standard Operating Procedure and utilize the Key Process Steps checklist
- Practice sending communication alerts through the ICLN Portal (www.icln.org)
- Enable exchange of analytical data in a common format through the Data Exchange Utility (within the ICLN Portal)
- Find areas where interoperability is lacking and move forward to address a solution

➤ **Prior ICLN TTXs (20 to date):**

- Biological: 9
- Chemical: 6
- Radiological: 3
- Mixed Agent (Chemical + Radiological): 1
- Mixed Agent (Biological + Radiological): 1

➤ **COVID-19 Pandemic Collaboration & Lessons-Learned Tracking**

OTHER AREAS OF PROGRESS

Representative Guidance Created by ICLN Subgroups:

- Chain of Custody guidance
- Methods Validation guidelines
- Sample Management Logistics guidelines
- Quality Assurance guidelines
- Tabletop Exercise (TTX) and Internetwork Laboratory Coordination Exercise (ILCE) Conduct guidelines
- Combined registry: methods, training, proficiency tests posted on Portal

Cross-Network Internetwork Laboratory Coordination Exercises (ILCEs) :

- These exercises are used to promote analytical confidence and performance between ICLN networks. Challenge samples are sent to volunteer participating labs in multiple networks, with aggregate performance across networks assessed for quality.
 - *Biological: 1*
 - *Chemical: 2*
 - *Radiological: 1*



CURRENT STATUS

- The ICLN Program has been active since 2005.
 - Between February 2019 and March 2020, the ICLN program was in a non-operational status (due to a lack of funding in the FY 2019 budget).
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ICLN was reactivated in April 2020 by the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) office of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
 - ***As of July 2022, the ICLN is now seated in the DHS Office of Health Security.***

Requirements to manage ICLN:

- ✓ **Program funding for contracts in ~\$750K/year range**
 - **ICLN Program Contract Support Team: Approximately 3,300 hours/year**
 - **Portal IT Operating Costs**
 - **Exercise Support**

Coordinated laboratory response is critical to resolution of CBR contamination or disease incidents.



RECENT ICLN INITIATIVES

- **COVID-19 Lessons-Learned Workgroup**
 - Included members from each ICLN network/department/agency supporting the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Summarized and prioritized lessons-learned and gaps, as reported by this group.
 - Defining solutions for prioritized workgroup outcomes.
 - **List of items was developed by network members for those supplies found to be in short supply during the pandemic.**
 - **Based on the concern regarding these supply shortages for laboratory items, a suggestion to create a *Strategic National Laboratory Stockpile* was discussed.**
- **BioRad Tabletop Exercise (2022) & BioRad2 Live Sample Exercise (2023)**
 - Goals included developing a list of labs that can analyze for mixed agent samples, addressing the types of samples that would be taken based on the scenario, outlining the process of screening/analyzing potentially mixed-agent samples, and verifying sample transport requirements.
 - **BioRad2 includes live sample analysis. Labs documented best practices and guidelines used to screen for and analyze mixed agent (rad + bio) samples.**



RECENT ICLN INITIATIVES (cont.)

- **Rad Lab Hub (Deployed in October 2023)**

- Developed by the ICLN Radiological Laboratory Subgroup (RLS).
- The Rad Lab Hub hosts a list of documents, trainings, and resources related to Radiological field.
- This resource is for public use and resides at: <https://www.icln.org/radlabhub/>

- **Analytical Laboratory Community of Interest (Future development)**

- The ALCOI is a proposed replica of our ICLN Community, but it would be for stakeholders such as State/Local/Tribal/Territorial (SLTT) and non-federal labs. The need for ALCOI is to help link in the non-federal lab entities to enable a “whole of nation” response with respect to public health preparedness and response.
- DHS is in the process of communicating with appropriate public health stakeholders to sound out the best way forward to create an ALCOI.



CONTACT INFORMATION



Email:

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andrew.scott@hq.dhs.gov (ICLN PM)

Public Website:

<https://www.icln.org/> for more info