

Getting help

- Access the I-Suite website at: <http://isuite.nwcg.gov>
- Contact the I-Suite Helpdesk at: (866) 224-7677

Understanding ICARS tables

Key data entry tables

- **Incident.** Describes the incident. The “Name” you enter here is the name that appears on top of all your reports.
Be sure to enter the two-digit state identifier.
- **Resources.** List of the resources assigned.
- **Daily.** Identifies the cost information by date by resource.
- **Divisions.** Created to meet your cost tracking needs.
ICARS divisions do not necessarily correspond with the physical divisions of an incident.

Key lookup tables

- **Kind.** Lists resources by NWCG mnemonic code, report groupings, and daily table defaults.
- **Rates.** Lists standard estimated rates for most resources.
- **Home Unit.** Identifies the NWCG mnemonic of the specified resource’s home unit.
- **Agency.** Identifies the agency or entity that “owns” the resource. Identifies the agency that has the fiscal responsibility to pay the resource through contract or agreement.
- **Obligation.** List obligation categories for grouping costs.

Customizing lookup tables

- Any changes will impact the current incident database only.
- Use caution when editing the Kind table, as changes will affect how resources are grouped for display in all reports and charts. If you add Kinds, you must notify IRSS users so they can complete the IRSS fields for the record you added.

Before editing lookup tables, refer to the ICARS User’s Guide.

Standards, tips, and tricks

Resource table

- **Naming conventions.** Be consistent. *For example, Hand crew-Prineville and Hand crew-Eldorado, or Prineville Hotshots and Eldorado Hotshots.*
- **Request #.** A required field. If unknown, enter a unique dummy/temporary request number so that you can identify it.
- **Resource traveling before the check-in date.** Enter an assign date earlier than the check-in date.
- **Check-in and release dates.** Must be later than the incident start date.

Daily table

- **Estimates vs. actual rates and costs.** Each resource table generates a standard rate type, units, quantity, and unit cost. Update these tables once you have your database built. Generating actual costs increases the accuracy of your data. In cost-sharing situations, enter actual costs whenever possible.
- **Rate Type and Units.** Unless the resource is paid at a daily rate, use the hourly rate type and the actual number of hours.
- **Short-term incidents or incidents only on federal lands.** Using mostly estimates may be acceptable.
- **Cache van on site.** Enter cache supplies at \$25 per person per day. Estimate costs for local purchases.
- **Caterer costs.** Prior to receiving actual invoices, estimate at \$45 per person per day, based on total number of people in camp.
- **R&R, travel home, and COP.** ICARS assumes 8 hours of work time from ITS postings.

Other tips

- **ICARS automatically saves your data.**
- **ICARS includes a rates table with standard rates.** You can update these rates or set up a specific rate area to override the default rates.
- **Round numbers up.** Since ICARS numbers are estimates, round numbers up when submitting daily costs to the situation unit leader. *For example, report \$4,068,000 as \$4.1 million.*

Resource table screen functions

Exit. Exit the table.

Add. Open an empty data entry form.

Copy. Open a data entry form with resource records of the highlighted record.

Delete. Delete the highlighted record.

Lock/Unlock. Lock/unlock records in the displayed daily record.

Create Daily. Create daily records for all resources.

Refresh. Synchronize the database with I-Suite.

Apply ITS. Update Daily records with costs/hours from ITS.

Sort/Filter. Sort/filter entire table.

Print Grids. Print the screen as displayed.

Display Daily. Toggle on/off daily table display.

Flow Down. Toggle on/off the flow down in the daily table.

Sum. Toggle on/off display of the total cost for the highlighted line.

Filter - Incident. Display table by incident.

Filter - Resources. Display table by resource category.

Filter - Not Released. Display to show only active resources.

Progress. Shows the progress of filter processing.

Search. Search a column for a specific entry.

Rate Area. Identify specific area rates to override the defaults.

Obligations

Key points about obligations

Found on the ICARS main menu for extracting certain obligation categories into obligation reports. Can now track and report obligations through ICARS. Based on the Request #, Agency, Kind, Incident State, Contracting Agency, and AD identifier, the obligation field on the Resources table is auto-filled from the Obligation table. For Forest Service resources, run these reports daily and send to the appropriate administrative unit as directed.

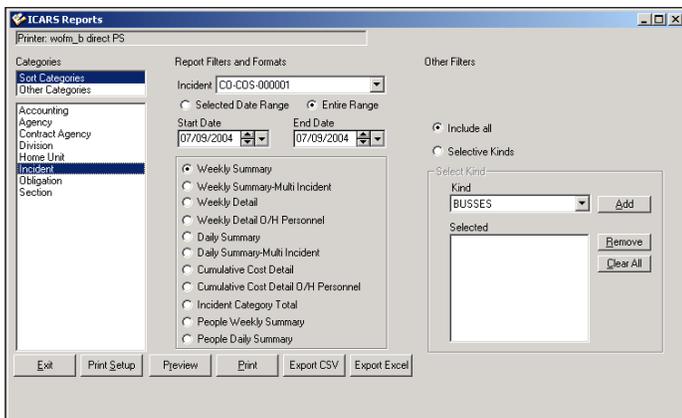
Reports

Key points about reports

Found on the main menu under Reports. Typically, you will run Daily and Weekly Summaries under Incident reports. There are a variety of other reports by Division, Contracting Agency, Agency, Obligation, Home Unit, Cost Share, Acres/NVC, Aircraft, and Resource Cost. The other reports tab contains a new reporting section for cost analysis and cost accountability.

For all reports, you can select all or some categories and specify date ranges.

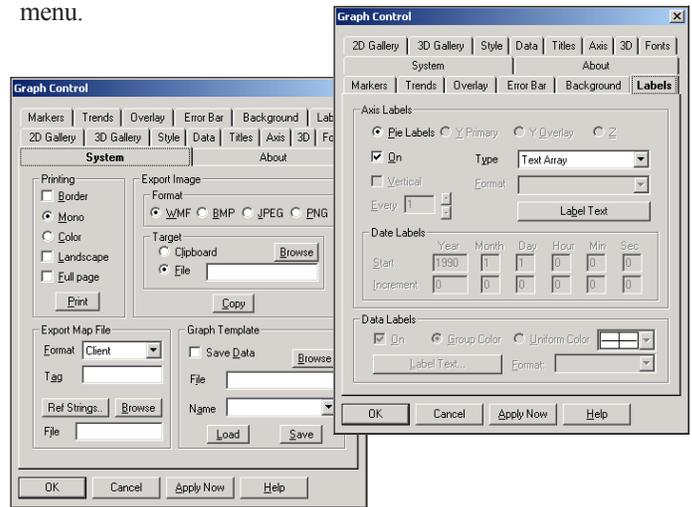
- **Weekly Summary & Weekly Summary-Multi Incident.** Lists days across the top and cost categories along the side.
- **Daily Summary and Daily Summary-Multi Incident.** A summary, listing current days costs and cost to date across the top and cost categories along the side.
- **Weekly Detail and Weekly Detail -O/H Personnel.** The same format as the Weekly Summary, except details each resource.
- **Cumulative Cost Detail & Cumulative Cost Detail-O/H Personnel.** Lists each resource with all detail. Prints all resource and daily detail.
- **Category Total.** Lists categories across the top, such as agencies, or divisions) and cost categories along the side.
- **Analysis-Exception.** Lists information about resources that may have incorrect postings.
- **Analysis-Accountability.** Lists common ratios and support cost for use as comparative benchmarks.



Graphs

Key points about graphs

Found on the main menu under Graphs. Typically, you will generate Total Cost (pie) and costs by date (area or stacked bar). You can also generate graphs for aircraft and divisions. Use can customize by using the menu bar at the top of each graph and refer to the online help module. Save your customizations as a template using the Systems tab on the menu.



Cost Sharing

Key points about cost sharing

Many Federal, State, and other agencies use ICARS to track cost for cost sharing purposes. While the basis of the cost sharing will vary, it is usually based on the assignment of divisions to resources. The cost sharing module in ICARS allows you to track and report costs by resource by division. Be sure to obtain proper training before attempting cost sharing. The accuracy of cost data usually becomes a critical factor.

FEMA

Key points about tracking costs for FEMA reimbursement

Using ICARS for tracking costs for FEMA reimbursement requires a high level of accuracy. You may also be required to break down costs by specific cost centers. In place of tracking the actual division where the resource worked, you can use the division field and reports to track FEMA costs center.

Projections

Key points about projecting overall future costs

ICARS calculates support costs projections by determining a support cost per direct person (total support costs/total direct personnel) and projecting based on the total number of direct persons in your projections. If you need more detailed projections that use different support assumptions, such as using retaining a camp vs. using motels, a spreadsheet may be more appropriate.