



**City of Winchester
Fire & Rescue Department
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**



Section: Fire Suppression Operations	SOP: 8.2
Subject: Incident Command System	Executed: September 1, 2006 November 5, 2007 Revised: March 8, 2010 October 22, 2012
Approved:  Scott Cullers, Fire Chief	

PURPOSE

To provide a defined consistent method of incident management for all types of emergency incidents that is used by department personnel.

SCOPE

This procedure follows the Incident Command System adopted by the National Fire Academy (NFA) and conforms to the requirements prescribed by the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, Management of Domestic Incidents. The following guideline shall be used by all personnel operating at the scene of any emergency within the City of Winchester. These guidelines will be used to assist the Winchester Fire & Rescue Department (WFRD) in the implementation of an Incident Command System.

RESPONSIBILITY

All Career & Volunteer Officers of the Winchester Fire & Rescue Department are responsible to comply with and ensure that personnel under their supervision are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this procedure.

All members of the Winchester Fire & Rescue Department have the responsibility to learn and follow this procedure.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

This program uses the following to set the minimum requirements for all levels of the Incident Command System. Requirements may exceed but not fall below any of these standards:

- NFPA 1001 Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualifications
- NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Development Qualifications

NFPA 1521 Standard for Fire Department Safety Officer

NFPA 1561 Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System

NFPA 1584 Standard on the Rehabilitation Process for Members during Emergency Operations and Training Exercises

NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Development of Fire Suppression Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System (ICS) provides a management tool to enable WFRD officers and fire fighters to manage any incident. The “Incident Commander (IC)” title applies equally to a fire fighter or to the department’s chief, regardless to current rank.

The ICS organization has the capability to expand and to contract to meet the needs of the incident, but all incidents, regardless of the size or complexity, will have an IC. A basic ICS operating principle is that the IC is responsible for on-scene management until command authority is transferred to another person, who then becomes the IC.

Upon the arrival of the initial unit officer, command procedures must begin. The analysis and handling of an incident must follow a systematic and practiced incident command procedures.

The structure of the Incident Command System (ICS) allows for the expansion of the management staff, depending upon the needs of the incident commander (IC). The ICS shall be used at all incidents. It shall begin with the arrival of the first fire department unit or officer and remain in effect until emergency response resources are released from the scene.

On large, multi-agency incidents, the ICS shall make provisions to include personnel from the various agencies involved in a Unified Command. The ICS provides for the following types of operations:

- Single jurisdiction and single agency.
- Single jurisdiction and multi-agency.
- Multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency.

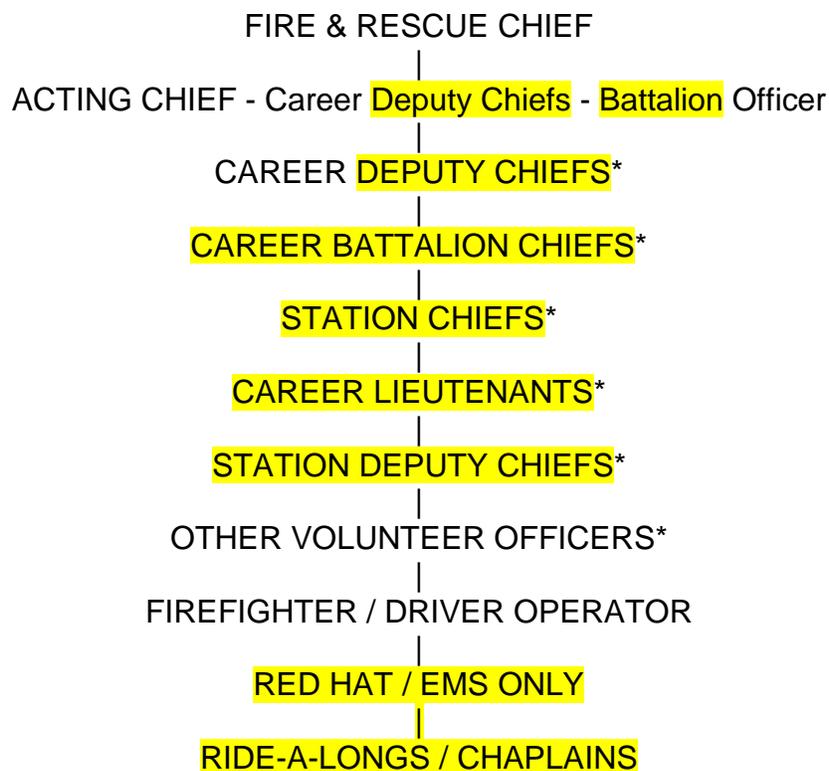
SPAN OF CONTROL

An ICS helps establish a manageable span of control and creates a unity of command. Span of control refers to the number of personnel reporting to any given individual. Effective span of control varies from three to seven people. A ratio of one **officer** to five subordinates is recommended. Unity of command is a direct result of span of control. Unity of command dictates that each individual reports to only one **officer**. Unity of command helps deter freelancing.

Span of control can be driven by several factors:

- Training & Experience level of subordinates.
- Complexity of the incident.
- Type or time frame of the incident

OPERATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR EMERGENCY INCIDENTS



* All officers must have the following to serve as an operational officer within Winchester Fire & Rescue chain of command and with the approval from the Fire & Rescue Chief; at a minimum, certifications in: Fire Officer Level 1 (NFPA 1021), NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 800 and a working knowledge of this SOP.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY

It is essential that all cooperating agencies understand and utilize a standard terminology for organizational functions, resource elements, and facilities. Such standardization generates effective communications between all agencies involved at an emergency scene.

1. Command Post

Designated as the CP, the Command Post will be the location from which the incident operations are directed. There is only one Command Post for the incident.

In a Unified Command structure where several agencies or jurisdictions are involved, the responsible individuals designated by their respective agencies would be co-located at the command post. The Planning function is also performed at the Command Post.

2. Unified Command

In a multi-jurisdictional incident, key officials from each jurisdiction contribute to the process of:

- Determining overall incident objectives
- Selection of strategies
- Ensuring joint planning for tactical activities
- Ensuring integrated tactical operations
- Making maximum use of all assigned resources

The Unified Command structure could also be used to bring together different functional departments within a single jurisdiction.

The implementation of the action plan will be done under the direction of a single individual - the Operations Section Officer - who is normally drawn from the agency having the greatest jurisdictional involvement.

3. **Staging Area(s)**

These are established by the Operations Section Officer for temporary location of available resources on short notice. A Staging Area can be anywhere in which mobile equipment and/or personnel and equipment can be temporarily parked awaiting assignment. The Operations Officer may establish, move and/or discontinue the use of Staging Areas.

The Operations Officer will assign a Staging Area Manager to each Staging Area. The Staging Area Manager is responsible for the checking of all incoming resources, dispatching of resources at the request of the Operations Officer, and requests for services from the Logistics Section necessary for resources located in the Staging Area.

4. **Divisions**

Divisions are assigned to specific geographical areas. Structural situations will be designated by the letter system for the sides of the building with "Side A or Side ALPHA" being the front of the building (or street address side of the building), and numbers shall be used for floors i.e. Division 5 for the fifth floor

5. **Groups**

Groups (Functional units) will be identified by the function they perform (Salvage Group, Ventilation Group, Triage Group, etc.). Unit Officers will report to the Division/Group Supervisor and receive orders prior to deploying their company to task work.

6. **Sections**

As the operation increases in size and complexity, it shall be the responsibility of the IC to assign Sections. Sections are used when the number of divisions or groups become more than the recommended span of control. Sections will be supervised by a section Chief who reports directly to the IC. Sections may recommend to the IC the need for additional Divisions/Groups.

7. Task Force

Any combination of resources with common communications and a leader. Task Forces can be pre-designated to meet local needs.

8. Strike Team

Are a set number of resources of the same kind and type, which have an established minimum number of personnel. Strike Teams will always have a leader and will have common communications among resource elements.

9. Branches

As the span of control begins to become complex, or the incident has two or more distinctly different operations (i.e. Fire suppression, Medical, hazmat, etc.) the organization can be further divided into Branches report to the Section Officers (most often the Operations Section) and oversee Divisions/Groups.

Branches should ideally operate in their area of responsibility on separate radio channels (talk groups) and communicate to Operations on a different channel if possible. The radio designation of Branches should reflect the objective/function of the Branch (i.e. Fire Branch, EMS Branch, Haz-Mat Branch, etc.)

When Operations implements Branch Directors, the Division/Group Supervisors should be notified of their new supervisor. This information should include:

- What Branch the Division/Group has been assigned to
- The radio channel/talk group that the Branch is operating on

Generally, when the number of Division/Groups exceeds the span of control for the Section Officer, the IC should designate a multi-Branch structure and allocate the Division/Groups within those Branches.

10. Rapid Intervention Team(s)

A team of at least two (2) fresh firefighters, equipped with minimum equipment of (refer to SOP 8.4 Two In, Two Out) search lines, forcible entry tools etc. and staged in an area that facilitates an immediate and rapid deployment in the event of emergencies involving lost or trapped firefighters on the fire ground.

At large incidents, a larger team or several Rapid Intervention Teams may be staged near the various Divisions for more expedient deployment.

Rapid Intervention teams will report directly to the IC.

COMMUNICATIONS

Emergency operations will quickly produce an overwhelming amount of communications that can overpower an incident commander. When the volume of poorly timed and

structured communications overwhelms the incident commander, the incident may deteriorate.

1. Use short, specific and clear messages

- Know what you are going to say.
- Choose precise, short terms so your message can be understood.
- Avoid words that can have two meanings.
- Use common language and standard fire fighting terms that are familiar to everyone (See **Glossary of Terms** for Approved Communication terms.)
- Operational orders should be specific and eliminate options.

2. Avoid distracting mannerisms

- Formulating the message before engaging the microphone button eliminates the long "ugh" pause.
- Use an effective natural tone without whispering or shouting. Be careful about lapsing into mumbling, blubbing, stuttering or other distracting mannerisms.
- Command decisions are jeopardized by poor communications.
- Set priorities on messages.

3. Communicate critical messages first

- Do not jam radio traffic with unimportant messages (i.e. Calling for traffic control while the first arriving company is trying to give an on scene report).
- Maintain an awareness of the situation and how you fit into it, so that you can judge the priority of your message.
- Maintain radio discipline, avoid informality and do not interrupt radio messages unless you have emergency traffic.
- Listen before you transmit, to make sure the frequency is clear.
- Pause between consecutive messages to make it clear when each separate message has been completed.

4. Speak in a clear tone, at a steady rate and use self-control

- Talking too fast will make your message hard to understand.
- Talking too slowly will tie up the radio unnecessarily.
- All personnel communicating over the radio must make a conscious effort to control emotions that can otherwise lead to garbled messages.
- Also, excitement can be contagious; if you lose control, others may too. For effective operations, an emergency incident demands well organized messages and a calm manner that reflects confidence and authority.

5. Communicating with resources

- When speaking to a crew from a specific unit the sender shall address the unit in his or her communication ("**Command** to Engine 5")

- When speaking to the driver operator for a specific unit the sender shall address the unit driver. (“**Command to Engine 5 Driver**”)
- Crews should use face to face communications as much as possible when working in proximities to other crews. This will reduce unnecessary radio traffic.

6. Use Proper Radio Etiquette

- In order for proper actions to be performed proper radio traffic must be transmitted and received. To obtain confirmation that the IC’s (or any other message sender) radio message/order was received, understood, and the receiver is taking action, the radio message must be repeated.
- This repeat does not need to be word-for word. However, it needs to be brief and concise summary of the intent of the message or order from the sender.
- The repeat should assure the IC (or other sender that the message was received by the intended receiver that it was understood, and that the receiver is taking correct action(s).

EXAMPLES

“**Command to Engine 4, lay a supply line to side Charlie of the building and advance a hand-line and check for extension. You’ll be Division Charlie**”

“**Engine 4 to command, lay a supply line to side Charlie, and advance a hand-line to extinguish the fire. I’m division Charlie**”

“**Command to Engine 4, Negative! Lay a supply line to side Charlie, take a hand-line through the rear door and check for extension.**”

“**Engine 4 to Command, copy, lay a supply line to side Charlie and take a hand-line through the rear door and check for extension. I’m division Charlie.**”

ESTABLISHING COMMAND

1. COMMAND SEQUENCE

Highly dynamic situations require sound, organized thinking. The Command Sequence is a standardized sequential thought process, which enables the Incident Commander to analyze situations, identify problems, and implement solutions based on basic skills and knowledge.

a. The Command Sequence consists of four parts:

1. Incident Priorities:

- Life Safety - actions which reduce the threat of life or injury which involves civilians as well as responders. Life safety is always the first priority!

- Incident Stabilization - Activities designed to stop the escalation of the incident.
 - Property Conservation - Efforts to reduce the long-term economic and social impact of the incident.
2. Size Up: Size up involves gathering information about an incident, evaluating the information, and determining how a specific incident should be handled.
3. Goals and Objectives:
The application of information gathered in size up to determine the desired results of the operation. Goals considered in relation to incident priorities are listed as follows:

RECEO

- Rescue
- Exposures
- Confinement
- Extinguishment
- Overhaul

SMART Objectives

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action Oriented
- Reasonable
- Timely

4. Tactical Operations:

Specific actions carried out to accomplish goals and objectives. Tactical operations can be considered to be the solutions to the problems.

2. Performing Size Up:

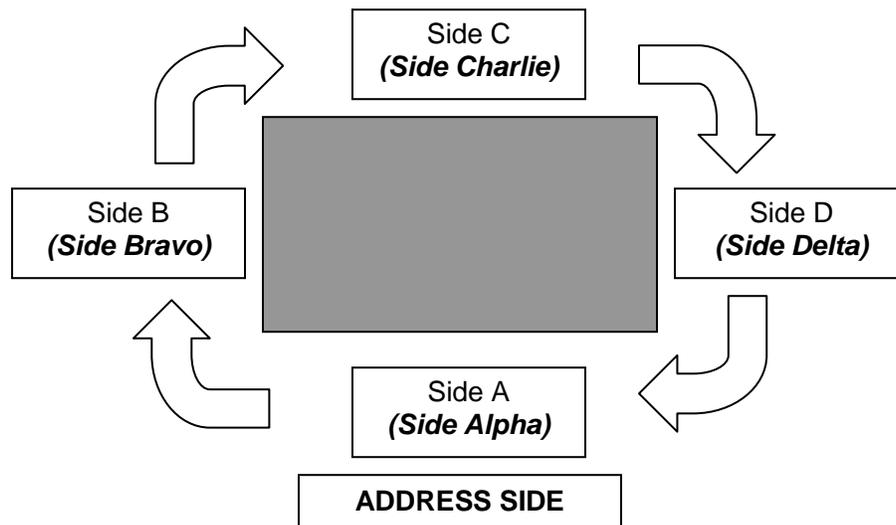
The first unit to arrive at the scene of an incident must transmit an arrival and size up report along with the establishment of Command. The initial Incident Commander shall remain in Command until Command is transferred or passed, or the incident is stabilized and terminated. The first arriving unit activates the Command process by giving an initial radio report. This report should include:

- Unit designation of the Company/unit arriving on scene
- A brief description of the incident situation, (i.e. building type and dimension, hazmat release, mass casualty incident, etc.)
- Obvious conditions (working fire, vapor release, multiple patients, etc.)
- Brief description of action taken
- Declaration of Strategy (this applies to structure fires i.e. fast attack mode)
- Any obvious safety concerns

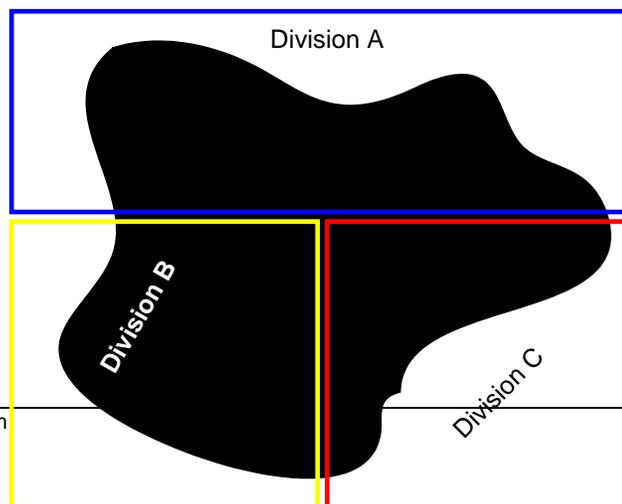
- Assumption, identification and location of Command (“**Lt. Smith** will have command on side **Alpha** at Engine 1”)
- Request or release of resources as required
- Identification and location of command shall be by geographical location.
- Accountability drop-off point.

3. Scene Geographic Designation

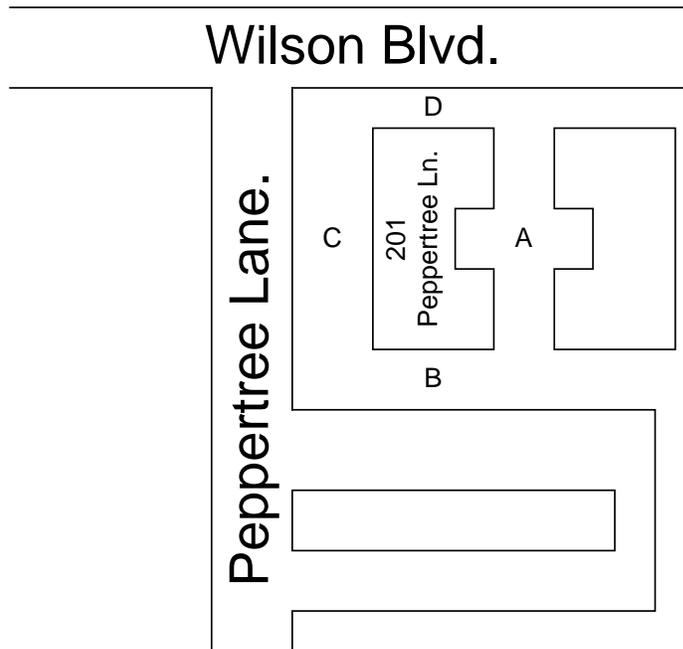
- With the arrival of the first unit; the scene must be divided into operational areas. This shall be accomplished by labeling each side of the structure with alphabetic lettering or alpha phonetic coding (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta). The use of the (ITU) International Telecommunications Union phonetic alphabet helps to accurately identify which side or division due to poor pronunciation.
- The front or address side of the structure will be known as “Side A” or “Side Alpha.” The labeling of the sides or division will continue in a clockwise motion until all four basic sides are labeled (See figure below).



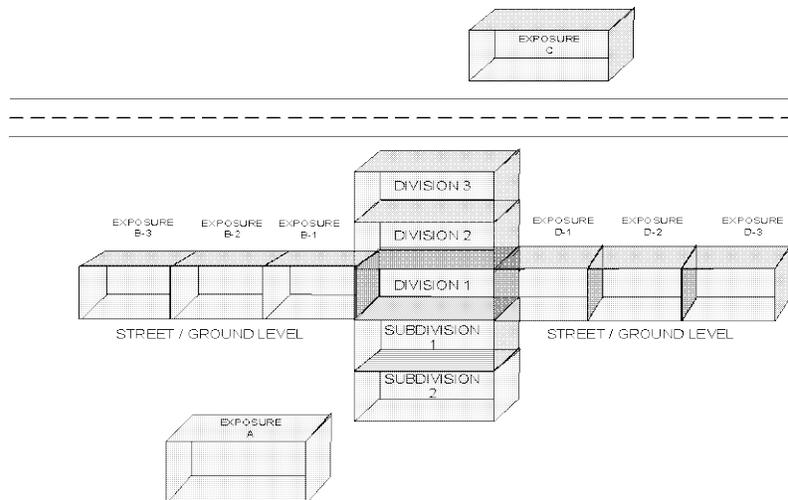
- On incident that occupies a large area, the incident scene must be divided into separate divisions in order to control several operations. This type of incident will still have an incident commander and most likely use a Unified Command structure.



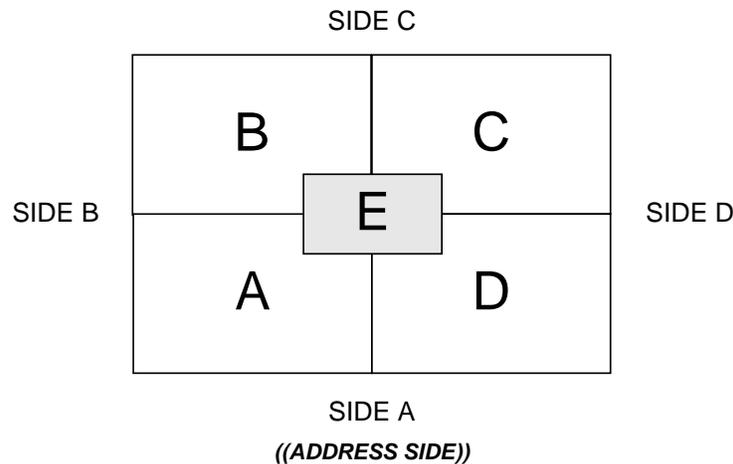
- d. In some instances the address side may not be the front of the structure. When these instances occur the IC shall announce to all units on the scene as to which side of the structure will be considered “Side A” (ALPHA).



- e. On Large structures or multiple floor buildings (three or more floors) the incident needs to be labeled by geographical areas. In addition, exposures need to be identified. Exposures adjacent to a given side of the structure will assume the designation of that particular side. For example, if you have an exposure on side **Charlie** of the incident building, then that exposure will be know as “Exposure **Charlie**.”



- f. When multiple exposures are evident they too need to be labeled with the exposure designation. However the exposures will need to be placed in order. This is accomplished by assigning a number to the exposures. The example above illustrates how this is to be accomplished.
- g. In addition to labeling the exterior of the structure, the interior shall be divided into four quadrants which are also labeled alphabetically beginning with the front left corner which will be know as “Quadrant A” and continue clockwise. When buildings consist of a central corridor (lobby, stairwells, elevators, etc.) this area is to be labeled “Quadrant E.”



4. Radio Designation

The radio designation "Command" will be used along with the geographical location of the incident (i.e. "Monmouth Street Command" or "University Command"). If the unusual situation should present that there are two incidents on the same street, the "hundred block" designator, defining a more exact location shall be used, (i.e. 100 Monmouth Street Command). This designation will not change throughout the duration of the incident.

Units responding or on the scene will use radio designations to identify themselves to Command or other units. Companies operating on portable radios will be known as the apparatus to which they are assigned. The Driver/Operator of apparatus will be known as "Driver."

EXAMPLE:

"Command to Engine One" refers to the officer and crew from E-1 operating on portable radio. *"Command to Engine 1 Driver"* refers to the Driver/Operator of the apparatus.

COMMAND OPTIONS

The responsibility of the first arriving unit to assume command of the incident presents several options, depending on the situation. If a Department Officer or unit without tactical capabilities (i.e. staff vehicle, no equipment, etc.) initiates Command, the

establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents the initial Incident Commander will be a Unit or Company Officer.

The following Command options define the Company Officer's direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of Command that may be utilized.

1. Nothing Showing Mode

These situations generally require investigation by the initial arriving company while other units remain in a staged mode. The officer should go with the company to investigate while utilizing a portable radio to Command the incident.

Example: *"Engine 1 is on the scene of a two story office complex, nothing showing from sides Alpha, Bravo, Delta. Engine 1 establishing Berryville Ave. Command and going to Nothing Showing Mode".*

2. Attack Mode

Situations that require immediate action to stabilize and require the Company Officer's assistance and direct involvement in the attack. In these situations, the Company Officer goes with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision. Examples of these situations include:

- Offensive fire attacks (especially marginal situations)
 - Critical life situations which must be achieved in a compressed time
 - Any incident where the safety and welfare of firefighters is a major concern
- a. When fast intervention is critical, utilization of the portable radio will permit the Company Officer's involvement in the attack without neglecting Command responsibilities.
 - b. The fast attack mode should not last more than a few minutes and will end with one of the following:
 - The situation is stabilized
 - The situation is not stabilized and the Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior and establish a Command Post. At some point, the Company Officer must decide whether or not to withdraw the remainder of the crew, based on the crew's experience or the crew will be radio communications capabilities.
 - Command is transferred to another ranking officer.

3. Command Mode

Certain incidents by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid escalation, require immediate, strong, direct, overall Command. In such cases, the Company Officer will initially assume an exterior, safe, effective and visible command position and will maintain that position until Command can be assumed by a higher Ranking Officer. Due to the Company Officer's distraction of having to run Command, the balance of the crewmembers shall not be assigned any perilous duties until the officer can rejoin them.

Example: *"Engine 5 is on scene of an overturned chemical tanker with a large vapor cloud traveling east. Engine 5 is in Command Mode and is establishing Valley Ave Command"*.

4. Summary

A Company Officer assuming Command has a choice of modes and degrees of personal involvement in the tactical activities, but continues to be fully responsible for the Command functions. The initiative and judgment of the Officer are of great importance. The modes identified are guidelines to assist the Officer in planning appropriate actions. The actions initiated should conform to one of the above mentioned modes of operation.

PASSING COMMAND

In certain situations, it may be advantageous for a first arriving Company to pass Command to the next arriving Company. This is indicated when initial commitment of the first arriving company requires a full crew (i.e. multi story or immediate rescue situation) and another company is in a position to assume Command.

Passing of Command to an officer who is not on scene shall be not advisable. The "Passing of Command" to a unit that is not on scene creates a gap in the Command process and compromises incident management. It is preferable to have the initial arriving Company Officer continue to operate in the fast attack mode until Command can be passed to an on-scene unit.

When an Officer arrives at the same time as the initial arriving company(s), the Officer should assume Command of the incident.

Should a situation occur where a later arriving Company or Chief Officer cannot locate or communicate with Command (after several radio attempts), they will assume Command and announce this over the radio, and initiate whatever actions are necessary to confirm the safety of the missing crew.

TRANSFER OF COMMAND

1. General Considerations

The arrival of a ranking officer (refer to section 5) on the incident scene does not mean that Command is automatically transferred to that officer. Command is only transferred when the outlined transfer of Command process has been completed.

Chief Officers and Staff Personnel should report directly to the Command Post for assignment by the Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander has the overall responsibility for managing an incident. Simply stated, the Incident Commander has complete authority and responsibility for the incident. If a higher-ranking officer wants to effect a change in the

management of the incident, he/she must be present on the scene and then utilize the formal transfer of Command procedure.

2. Transfer Procedure

As an incident escalates or de-escalates, there may be a need to transfer command. The following guidelines outline the transfer of command:

- a. The Company Officer or Command Officer shall have command established and when possible, have established a visible command post. As soon as is practical, the necessary tactical worksheet or command board shall be utilized for the tracking of personnel and on-scene units.
- b. Command can be transferred by radio, but should be done as a face to face briefing which includes: **What do you have? What have you done? What needs to be done? Location of personnel and their tasks. What safety issues?**
- c. Arrival of a Ranking Officer on a scene does not automatically cause command to be transferred. Assumption of command based on several factors, including potential escalation of the incident, personnel considerations, and IC capabilities, etc.
- d. In formally transferring command, once the face to face is completed and the tactical worksheet reviewed, command will notify communications of the transfer.

Example: *"Command to Headquarters; be advised **Chief 6** will be assuming Amherst Street Command".*

- e. It may be advantageous to have the officer being relieved remain with the new Incident Commander, in the role of the IC Aide or Operations Section Officer, since the initial action plan was established by this officer.
- f. This formal process for transfer of command shall be used both as the emergency escalates and in the demobilization phase as situations are brought under control.

Example: *"**Chief 6** to Headquarters; be advised FF Smith will now be Amherst Street Command".*

STAGING OPTIONS

It is imperative that the Incident Commander anticipates the need for additional resources early on in the incident. It is just as important that additional uncommitted resources are poised or stages near the incident for rapid deployment should the incident escalate or an unexpected turn of events suddenly occur. There are two levels of staging used to accomplish this objective.

1. Level 1 Staging

Level one staging occurs automatically during the initial stages of an incident unless directed otherwise by the Incident Commander. The first alarm assignment will respond to the scene and position in a manner to avoid cluttering or "boxing in" the scene. Typically, the second due engine at a fire response will stage at the nearest hydrant, check the hydrant for operability and be prepared to charge the supply line. At this level, there is no Staging Officer.

2. Level 2 Staging

This is a more formalized and organized staging procedure. During Level two staging, a formal staging area(s) are designated. A Staging Officer (**first arriving officer on a second alarm**) may be assigned by the IC. If the IC does not assign a staging officer the first arriving suppression unit shall assume the staging area responsibilities. Staging areas should be located in large open areas such as parking lots or fields and may be several blocks from the incident.

It is extremely important that crews in a staging area(s) remain with their unit and do not wander off. The crew and apparatus should be ready to deploy at a moment's notice. Units in Level two staging should park or be arranged so as not to block each other in and allow direct access to or away from the incident.

Level two staging areas can be identified simply as "Staging" when only one staging area has been designated or, when two or more staging areas are used they can be identified by function or location, (i.e. EMS Staging, Fire Staging, West Staging, or K-Mart Staging).

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT & COMMAND POSITIONS

This Command System is quite flexible in that the Incident Commander can activate, consolidate, or delete various positions depending upon the needs of the incident. Although this structure is designed for full or partial implementation, it is important that all position roles are reviewed to ensure vital functions are not overlooked.

The ICS organizational structure develops in a modular fashion based on the kind and size of an incident. This modular escalation will allow a manageable span of control for all participants throughout the incident.

The ICS staff builds from the top down with the responsibility and performance placed initially with the Incident Commander. As the incident becomes more complex and the span of control is exceeded, the IC may need to activate additional command staff and general staff positions

1. Incident Commander:

**INCIDENT
COMMANDER**

The one function that always will be filled at every incident, regardless of size, is the IC's position. The IC has the responsibility for overall management of the incident.

The following list outlines the basic responsibilities of the IC at every incident. Each of these responsibilities is discussed in detail in the following sections.

The IC's Responsibilities include:

- Assesses the incident priorities.
 - Although many of the IC's responsibilities do not fall into any particular rank order (and change as a particular situation develops), this is not true with incident priorities. They must be the first items that an IC identifies at all incidents. The three incident priorities are:
 - Life Safety
 - Incident Stabilization
 - Property Conservation
- Determines the incident's objectives and strategy(s).
- Establish immediate priorities.
- Establishes an incident Command Post.
- Develops an incident command structure appropriate for the incident.
- Approve and authorize the implementation of the Incident Action Plan.
- Serves as the ultimate incident Safety Officer; responsible for preventing firefighter injuries and/or death.
- Coordinates activities of the Command and General Staff.
- Coordinates with key people and officials.
- Approves requests for additional resources or release of resources.
- Keep Department and City Administrator informed of incident status.
- Approve the use of trainees, and auxiliary personnel (CERT).
- Authorize release of information to the news media.
- Order demobilization of the incident when appropriate.

2. Command Staff Positions

In an incident command organization, the Command Staff consists of the Incident Command and various special staff positions. The special staff positions are specifically designated, report directly to the Incident Command, and are assigned responsibility for key activities that are not a part of the ICS General Staff functional elements.

Three special staff positions are typically identified in ICS: Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. Additional positions may be required, depending on the nature, scope, complexity, and location(s) of the incident(s), or according to specific requirements established by the IC.

There are no guidelines as to which positions would be activated first. The complexity of the incident, experience, training, and the judgment of the Incident Commander will determine the order of activation.

An important consideration in ICS is that those positions not activated remain the responsibility of the Incident Commander.

a. Public Information Officer

The PIO is responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.

The PIO typically will be the Fire Chief or his designee. No other personnel should discuss the incident with the media unless authorized by the incident commander.

The PIO develops accurate and complete information on the incident's cause, size, and current situation; resources committed; and other matters of general interest for both internal and external consumption. The PIO may also perform key public information monitoring role.

Whether the command structure is single or unified, only one incident PIO should be designated. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved. The IC must approve the release of all incident-related information.

b. Safety Officer

The Safety Officer (SO) monitors incident operations and advises the IC on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of emergency responder personnel. The ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of incident management operations rests with the IC or DC and supervisors at all levels of incident management.

The SO is, in turn, responsible to the IC for the set of systems and procedures necessary to ensure ongoing assessment of hazardous environments, coordination of safety efforts, and implementation of measures to promote emergency responder safety, as well as the general safety of incident operations.

The SO has emergency authority to alter, suspend, and/or prevent unsafe acts during incident operations. The IC, SO and the Operations Section Chief must coordinate closely regarding operational safety and emergency responder health and safety issues. The SO must also ensure the coordination of safety management functions and issues across jurisdictions, across functional agencies, and with private-sector and nongovernmental organizations.

c. Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer (LNO) is the point of contact for representatives of other governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and/or

private entities. Representatives from assisting or cooperating agencies and organizations coordinate through the LNO.

Agency and/or organizational representatives assigned to an incident must have the authority to speak for their parent agencies and/or organizations on all matters, following appropriate consultations with their agency leadership.

Assistants and personnel from other agencies or organizations (public or private) involved in incident management activities may be assigned to the LNO to facilitate coordination.

d. Aide

In the context of large or complex incidents, Command Staff members may need one or more assistants to help manage their workloads. Each Command Staff member is responsible for organizing his or her assistants for maximum efficiency.

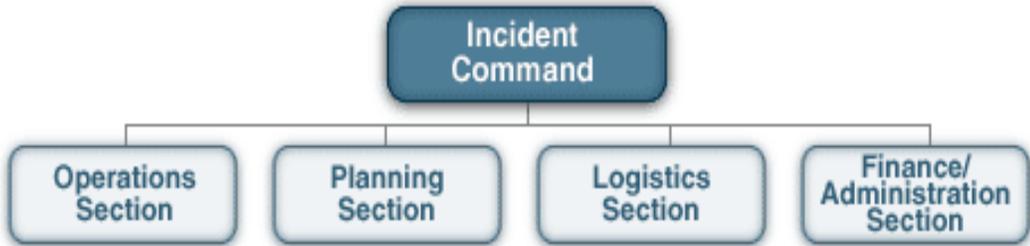
e. Additional Command Staff

Additional Command Staff positions may also be necessary depending on the nature and location(s) of the incident, and/or specific requirements established by the IC. For example, a Medical Advisor may be designated and assigned directly to the Command Staff to provide advice and recommendations to the IC in the context of incidents involving medical and mental health services, mass casualty, acute care; vector control, epidemiology, and/or mass prophylaxis considerations, particularly in the response to a bioterrorism event.

3. General Staff Positions

The General Staff represents and is responsible for the functional aspects of the incident command structure. The General Staff typically consists of the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections.

Each of these Sections has a role in the broad scope of the ICS. However, for the basis of this procedure the main section that will be discussed is the Operations Section. The Operations section will more likely be used more often on emergency scene(s). Managers at this level are titles Section Chief.



a. Operations Section

This section is responsible for all activities focused on reduction of the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoration of normal operations.

The figure below depicts the primary organizational structure template for an Operations Section. Further expansions of this basic structure will vary according to numerous considerations and operational factors.

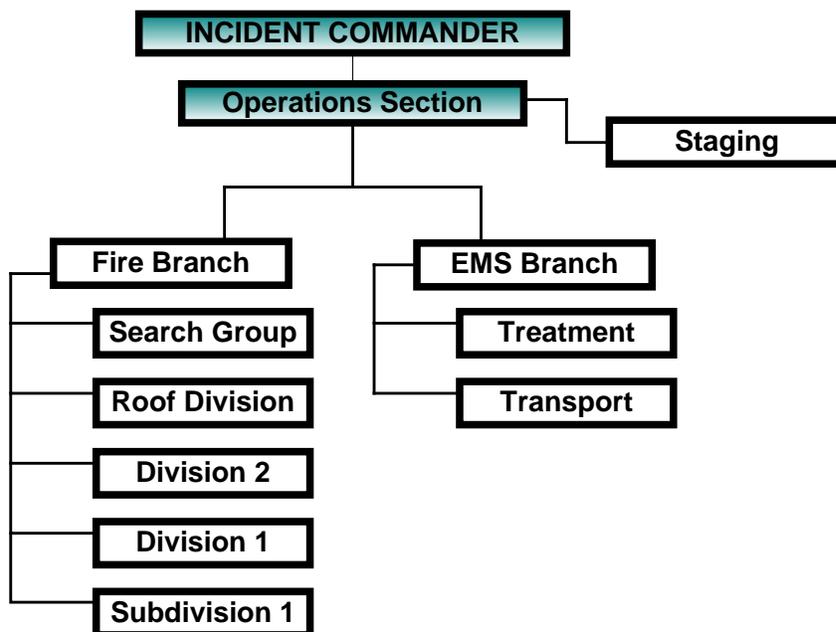
b. Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief is responsible to the IC for the direct management of all incident-related operational activities. The Operations Section Chief will establish tactical objectives for the operational period.

The Operations Section Chief may have one or more deputies assigned. All tactical radio communication will go through the Operation Section and then the Operations Section Chief will relay pertinent information to the IC.

c. Branches

Branches may be used to serve several purposes, and may be functional or geographic in nature. In general, branches are established when the number of divisions or groups exceeds the recommended span of control of one supervisor to three to seven subordinates for the Operations Section Chief (a ratio of 1:5 is normally recommended).



d. Divisions and Groups

Divisions and Groups are defined as tactical-level management positions in the ICS. Divisions and Groups are established when the number of

resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the IC and the Operations Section Chief. Divisions represent geographic responsibilities such as “Division **Charlie**” (the rear of the structure). Groups represent functional (job) responsibilities such as the Ventilation Group.

It is essential to understand that Divisions and Groups operate at the same command level. Divisions do not work for groups and Groups do not work for Divisions. However, a Group’s functional responsibility may cross established division boundaries.

EXAMPLE: A ventilation group may be working in the same area as the interior Division. Once a specific assignment is given to a group, the division is no longer responsible for that task, concentrating instead on all other tactical activities in that geographic location.

Divisions and Groups are managed by “Supervisors.” These supervisors’ responsibilities include:

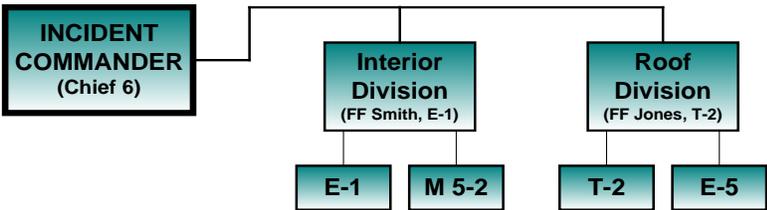
- Provide accountability
- Coordination for companies,
- Ensuring safety and survival of personnel.
- Implementation of their assigned tasks
- Keep the IC informed of the status of the resources
- Evaluate the resources needed, and making adjustment when necessary.

Note: It is essential that the IC be informed of any needs for resource adjustments.

Each Division and group supervisors require certain information from the IC. This shall include:

- Their radio designation (Division **Alpha** or Ventilation Group)
- Their assigned objectives
- The resources under their command

When developing a command structure, establish Divisions and Groups based on the needs of the Incident and available resources. All Divisions, Groups, or even the same combination of Divisions and Groups will always be used. For example, if you have limited resources, it may be more effective to use divisions in order to get all tasks addressed.



e. Resources

Resources refer to the combination of personnel and equipment required to enable incident management operations. Resources may be organized and managed in three different ways, depending on the requirements of the incident:

- i. Single Resource – These are individual personnel and equipment items and the operators associated with them. (ie: Engine 1)
- ii. Task Forces – A Task Force is any combination of resources assembled in support of a specific mission or operational need. All resource elements within a task force must have a communications and a designated leader. (ie: Engine 5, Engine 21, Truck 2)
- iii. Strike Teams – Strike teams are a set number of resources of the same kind and type that have an established minimum number of personnel. (ie: Engine 5, Engine 13, Engine 4, Engine 18)

STATUS REPORTS / PAR CHECKS

Status reports provide the IC with information on the incident. This information allows the IC to make decisions that will affect the incident nature. Status reports are to be transmitted on regular intervals and when assigned tasks have been completed. Status reports shall include the following information:

- Unit Identification
- Situation status
- What actions are being performed
- Do you need assistance

The IC is also responsible to relay incident status reports to the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) on ten minute intervals and when incident priorities change (Fire under control, offensive to defensive, RIT Deployment, etc.). ECC shall begin the timer at the time they receive the call and announce to the IC on 10 minute intervals until asked to “stop the timer”. This status report is recorded for documentation purposes.

- 10 minutes – Enhanced situation report
- 20 minutes – Par Check
- 40 minutes – Par check including personnel not in IDLH

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

1. The following procedures shall be used for an emergency requiring immediate evacuation from inside a structure or away from the hazard zone of an emergency scene.

2. Any person that recognizes a potential evacuation condition (i.e. building collapse, flashover, HAZMAT release, etc.) shall notify the Incident Commander immediately.
3. The Incident Commander shall make the decision to evacuate. The IC will announce *"EMERGENCY TRAFFIC"* and have the dispatch center sound the radio alert tone, and state, *"ALL PERSONNEL EVACUATE THE BUILDING OR AREA IMMEDIATELY"*. This shall be repeated twice.
4. When the order to evacuate is given, available and appropriately equipped units in the immediate vicinity will blow air horns for three (3) cycles of three (3) long blasts for three (3) seconds each intermittently (three seconds on, one second off) for 3 times. Radio silence shall be maintained and only used when the IC requests information from personnel and units.
5. All personnel shall immediately evacuate the building or area, report to a pre-designated safe area, and report to their assigned supervisor as soon as possible.
6. After the evacuation radio tone and sounding of the units air horns the IC shall conduct a PAR Check. Supervisors shall report their status and that of their personnel to their Division/Group Officer as soon as possible.
7. Division/Group Supervisors shall report their status and that of their personnel to Operations Section (or Command) as soon as possible. It shall be the responsibility of Command to confirm that all personnel have been evacuated and accounted for.
8. If any personnel cannot be accounted for, all unnecessary operations shall be suspended and the focus of all resources shall be devoted to locate the missing personnel.
9. Once learning that a fire fighter(s) is missing and the IC has completed the PAR check; the IC shall immediately initiate RIT operations and advise ECC of the change in the incident priorities to a fire fighter rescue. The IC shall also request additional resources.
10. Command shall notify ECC when all personnel have been accounted for.

DEMOBILIZATION

Demobilization is the process in which personnel and equipment are placed in service. When the incident is determined under control or all operations are completed the IC may not need the abundance of resources. The IC will notify ECC of the units that can be released for service.

Once all personnel and equipment from a particular unit are assembled; the Officer in Charge (OIC) or the Driver/Operator can notify ECC that the unit is *either "AVAILABLE" or "UNAVAILABLE"*. There will be no other jargon or slang used when relaying the unit's

availability status. "IN TRANSITION" may be used when moving from 1 site to another. (ie. fire attack to rehab)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affirmative - That is correct. A "yes" answer to a question. The opposite of "negative."

Agency Representative - An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident. Agency representatives report to Command or to the incident liaison officer, depending upon the structure of the incident organization.

Available - A unit is in-service and can respond if dispatched.

Branch - An organizational level that has a functional or geographic responsibility for major segments of incident operations.

Brush Truck - A light, mobile vehicle, having limited pumping and water capacity.

Command - The act of directing, ordering, and controlling resources as specified by legal or agency authority.

Command Post (CP) - That location at which primary command functions are executed.

Company - A group of firefighters assigned to a vehicle that has specific equipment capabilities including engine companies, ladder companies and rescue companies.

Company Officer - The individual responsible for supervision of a company.

Copy - Used to acknowledge receipt of a message. NOT an affirmative answer to a question. (See "affirmative.")

Crew - Personnel assembled for an assignment such as search, ventilation, or hose line deployment. The number of personnel in a crew should not exceed the recommended span-of-control of three to seven. A crew operates under the direct supervision of a crew leader.

Disregard - Disregard the last message.

Division - A part of the incident organization that has responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area.

Emergency Evacuation - All personnel are to evacuate the affected area immediately. Drivers of all equipment on the scene are to blow their air horns three long blasts for 3 seconds each intermittently (three seconds on, one second off) for 3 times for one minute. ECC is to stop all radio traffic on the channel being used, sound an alert tone and repeat the Emergency Evacuation message three times. Personnel are to drop what they are doing immediately. They are not to remove tools or perform any functions

other than to get out. Personnel are to report to their company officers/supervisors for a head count and Command is to perform a PAR check.

Engine Company - A group of firefighters assigned to a pumper who are primarily responsible for pumping water and fire attack, but may perform other operations as assigned.

Enroute - Used when a unit is moving from one location to another, but NOT in response to an alarm. (See "responding.")

Fill In - Move to a fire station to provide coverage.

Group - A part of the incident organization that has responsibility for a specific function (ventilation, salvage, water supply, etc.).

Incident Action Plan - The strategic goals, tactical objectives, and support requirements for the incident. All incidents require an action plan. For small incidents the action plan is not usually written. Large or complex incidents may require a written action plan.

Incident Command System - A system for managing responses to incidents that specifies components of an organizational structure for the use of resources. The organizational structure for handling a particular incident is built using the components deemed necessary by the incident commander.

Incident Commander - The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations.

Initial Attack - The first actions taken on the scene to control a fire.

Ladder Company - A group of firefighters assigned to a vehicle that is equipped with an aerial ladder, portable ladders, and other equipment. The ladder company's functions vary according to the incident, but often include rescue, forcible entry, ventilation, and salvage.

Leader - The individual responsible for command of a crew, task force, strike team, or other functional unit.

Level I Staging - The first alarm assignment will respond to the scene and position in a manner to avoid cluttering or "boxing in" the scene.

Level II Staging - Staging companies that are dispatched to an incident, but are not the first alarm assignment. Units are to park approximately one block from the incident in their direction of travel, uncommitted until assigned by Command. When responding to structure fires, typically the first-arriving battalion chief, engine and ladder proceed into the scene and all other companies stage as described.

Negative - That is not correct. A "no" answer to a question. The opposite of "affirmative."

On the Scene - Indicates that a unit has arrived at the location of an incident.

Operations Section - When established, this sector is responsible for all tactical operations.

Out of Service - Indicates that a unit can not respond to alarm.

Planning Section - Is created at large incidents to anticipate the need for new strategic goals and tactical objectives as the incident progresses. Planning also tracks the status of the incident, resources, water supplies, and documents the incident.

Primary Complete - Indicates that a primary search has been completed.

Public Information Officer - An individual who is responsible for liaison with the media or other appropriate agencies that require information from the incident scene.

Rescue Company - A group of firefighters assigned to a vehicle that carries rescue equipment and has primary responsibility for rescue operations.

Responding - Indicates response to an alarm, whether the response is emergency or non-emergency.

Secondary Complete - Indicates that a secondary search has been completed.

Sector - The geographical identification of the exterior and exposures of an incident. Also functional areas of responsibility as designated by the incident commander.

Single Resource - An individual company, crew or functional unit.

Span of Control - is defined as the number of subordinates one supervisor can manage effectively. In emergency situations, the accepted limit is five.

Staging Area - The location where personnel and equipment are assigned near an incident for immediate deployment.

Strategic Goals - The overall plan that will be used to control the incident. Strategic goals are general and are achieved by the completion of tactical objectives.

Strike Team - Five of the same kind and type of resources with common communications and a leader.

Tactical Objectives - The objectives that must be accomplished to achieve strategic goals. Tactical objectives must be both specific and measurable.

Tanker - A vehicle capable of transporting at least 1500 gallons of water.

Task Force - A group of not more than five of any type and kind of resources, with common communications and a leader, that is temporarily assembled for a specific mission.

Technical Specialists - Personnel with special skills who are activated only when needed. Technical specialists may be needed in such areas as water resources, environmental concerns, and training. Technical specialists report initially to the Planning Section but may be assigned anywhere within the ICS organization as needed.

Under Control - Indicates that the incident has been stabilized.

Un- Available - Reference Out of Service.