



COMMAND OFFICER OPERATIONS

Developed through a cooperative effort
of the Fire and Rescue Departments of:

Arlington County
City of Alexandria
City of Fairfax
Fairfax County
Fort Belvoir
Loudoun County
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

Committee members who developed this book

Chair Battalion Chief Joe Bailey, Loudoun County
Deputy Chief Jeff Coffman, Fairfax County
Battalion Chief George Lyon, Arlington
Battalion Chief Tim Lasher, Airport Authority
Assistant Chief David Rohr, Fairfax County
Battalion Chief Robert Rhea, Fairfax County
Battalion Chief John Caussin, Fairfax County
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Northern Virginia Fire and Rescue Department's Command Book

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1 THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Effective command procedures are essential for all fire and rescue operations regardless of the magnitude or the amount of departmental resources committed to mitigate the situation. Structured incident command procedures must be in place and used on all incidents to avoid confusion when a major incident occurs. As an incident rapidly intensifies, more supervision, management and support functions are required. At incidents with complicated or rapidly changing situations, considerable confusion and excitement may accompany early operations. Such disorder at an intensifying incident can contribute to extensive property damage or, at worst, result in unnecessary loss of life. The goal of an effective command organization is to increase the safety of our members, eliminate confusion, and prevent the loss of life at these incidents.

1.1.2 This Incident Command System Operating Chapter is compatible with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as indicated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, *Management of Domestic Incidents*.

1.2 PURPOSE

1.2.1 The Incident Command System (ICS) provides a management tool to enable fire and rescue officers to manage efforts to mitigate any incident, whether of routine or major disaster proportion. In order to effectively manage personnel and resources and provide for their safety and welfare, we will always operate within the ICS at emergency incidents. The "incident commander" title applies equally well to a company officer or to the department's chief, regardless of the nature of the incident.

1.2.2 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.

1.2.3 Management of an incident cannot and must not be left to chance. Upon the arrival of the initial unit officer, command procedures must begin. The analysis and handling of an incident must follow a well-defined and practiced system of incident command procedures. The ICS provides the needed management tools to coordinate the resources assigned to combat the effects of an incident.

1.3 FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

- 1.3.1 The ICS is based on basic management concepts and principles. Each of these contributes to the efficiency of the overall structure and system.
- 1.3.2 ICS establishes common terminology that permits diverse incident management and support entities to work together toward the common goal of mitigating the problem. Common terminology encompasses:
- 1.3.2.1 Organizational Functions. Major functions and functional units are named and defined. Terminology for the organizational elements is standard and consistent.
- 1.3.2.2 Resource Descriptions. Major resources, including personnel, facilities, and major equipment and supply items are given a common name and “typed” with respect to their capabilities. This avoids confusion and improves interoperability.
- 1.3.2.3 Incident Facilities. Common terms are used to designate the facilities in the vicinity of the incident area that will be used in the course of incident management activities.
- 1.3.3 The structure of the ICS allows for expansion of the management staff, depending upon the needs of the IC to control the incident. The ICS shall begin with the arrival of the first fire department officer and remain in effect until emergency response resources are released from the scene.
- 1.3.4 Qualified members must staff the ICS. On large, multi-agency incidents, the system shall use members from the various agencies for their expertise.
- 1.3.5 The system provides for the following types of operations:
- Single jurisdiction and single agency.
 - Single jurisdiction and multi-agency.
 - Multi-jurisdiction and single agency.
 - Multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency.
- 1.3.6 The organizational structure of the ICS will adapt to any emergency incident to which the fire department is expected to respond.
- 1.3.7 The system is designed to allow for expansion from the initial attack operations into the multi-level management of a major disaster.

- 1.3.8 The ICS is comprised of the following five functional areas which are required to manage the resources at every incident. (A sixth area, Intelligence, may be established if required.)
- 1.3.8.1 **Incident Commander:** The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations.
- 1.3.8.2 **Operations Section:** Responsible for all tactical operations at the incident.
- 1.3.8.3 **Planning Section:** Responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources.
- 1.3.8.4 **Logistics Section:** Responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident.
- 1.3.8.5 **Finance/Administration Section:** Responsible for all costs and financial actions of the incident. Includes Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and the Cost Unit.
- 1.3.8.6 **Information and Intelligence Function:** The analysis and sharing of information and intelligence are important elements of ICS. Intelligence includes not only national security or other types of classified information but also other operational information, such as risk assessments, medical intelligence, weather information, geospatial information, structural designs, toxic contaminant levels, and utilities and public works data that may come from a variety of different sources. Traditionally, information and intelligence functions are located in the Planning Section. However, in exceptional situations, the IC may need to assign the information and intelligence functions to other parts of the ICS organization such as Operations (especially when law enforcement is part of the Unified Command) or establishing as an additional General Staff Section. Information and intelligence must be appropriately analyzed and shared with personnel, designated by the IC, who have proper clearance and a “need-to-know” to ensure that they support decision making.
- 1.3.9 In small-scale incidents, one person, the IC, may manage all of the components. Large-scale incidents usually require that each component, or *section*, be set up separately. Each of the primary ICS sections may be divided into smaller functions as needed.

1.3.10 The primary goals of all major ICS component functions are to:

- Save lives and protect property endangered by an incident (civilian and emergency response personnel).
- Reduce duplication of efforts and resources.
- Increase inter-jurisdictional flexibility and upgrade joint capabilities to handle major incidents.
- Provide a predictable, coordinated, effective and acceptable response to emergencies from various agencies within the jurisdiction.
- Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel. This priority is ongoing throughout the incident.

1.4 ORGANIZATION

1.4.1 The ICS offers a flexible, modular-based organizational structure containing the functions necessary to manage the emergency resources on an incident. The organization emanates from the IC downward, initially with responsibility for command placed on the first-arriving unit officer. The IC is responsible for the command of all incident activities within their span of control, including the development and implementation of strategic goals and incident action plan (IAP). The roles of safety, liaison, and public information shall remain a command function at all times.

1.4.1.1 IAP (IAP) provides a coherent means of communicating the overall incident objectives in the contexts of operational and support activities.

1.4.1.2 Span of control is the key to effective and efficient incident management. Within the ICS, the span of control of any individual with incident management supervisory responsibility should range from three to seven subordinates. The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all influence span-of-control considerations.

1.4.2 As the need for additional resources including apparatus, staff and supervision arises, the IC shall activate additional components of the ICS as necessary to meet command objectives.

1.4.3 The modular concept is based on the following considerations:

- Develop the form of the organization to match the function or task to be performed
- Staffing only the functional elements that are required to perform the task
- Observing recommended span-of-control guidelines
- Performing the function of any nonactivated organizational element at the next highest level
- Deactivating organizational elements no longer required

Table 1.4.3 describes the distinctive title assigned to each element of the ICS organization at each corresponding level, as well as the leadership title corresponding to each individual element.

<u>Organizational Element</u>	<u>Leadership Position</u>
Incident Command	Incident Commander (IC)
Command Staff	Officer
Section	Section Chief
Branch	Branch Director
Division & Groups*	Supervisors
Unit**	Unit Leader

*The hierarchical term *supervisor* is only used in the Operations Section.

**Unit leader designations apply to the subunits of the Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administrative Sections.

1.4.4 Levels of Incident Scene Organization.

1.4.4.1 Strategic – IC and Command Staff operate and are responsible for command functions.

1.4.4.2 Tactical – Branch, Division, or Group officers manage the tactical activities for their assigned area or function, responsible for a piece of the incident.

1.4.4.3 Task – Where strategic and tactical objectives are accomplished, where the work actually is done. Companies rescue victims, put out the fire, and protect the customer's property.

1.4.5 Delegation of Functional Responsibility

1.4.5.1 Increasing the number of incident management positions can overload the ICs ability to effectively manage an incident. When this occurs, it is necessary to delegate component functions to qualified personnel. When a given component function is delegated, a designated individual becomes responsible for the tasks of that component. Operational managers are responsible for achieving the strategic goals established by the IC.

1.5 UNIFIED COMMAND (UC)

1.5.1 When there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions, UC is required. Agencies work together through the designated members of the UC to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single IAP. Often the senior people from agencies and/or disciplines participate in UC. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

1.5.2 The following are examples of when Unified Command is applied:

- Incidents that impact more than one political jurisdiction
- Incidents involving multiple agencies (or departments) within the same political jurisdiction
- Incidents that impact (or involve) several political and functional agencies

1.6 MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION SYSTEMS (MACS)

1.6.1 In order to facilitate the process of unified command, a multi-agency coordination system must be in place. This system is a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications integrated into a common system with responsibility for coordinating and supporting incident management activities.

1.6.2 The primary functions of MACS are to: support incident management policies and priorities; facilitate logistics support and resource tracking; inform resource allocation decisions using incident management priorities; coordinate incident related information; and coordinate interagency and intergovernmental issues regarding incident management policies, priorities, and strategies.

- 1.6.3 Direct tactical and operational responsibility for conducting incident management activities rests with the Incident Command.
- 1.6.4 The system elements for the MACS may contain an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and multi-agency coordinating entities.
- 1.6.4.1 The EOC represents the physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities normally takes place. The Incident Command Post (ICP) located at or near an incident site, although focused on the tactical on-scene response, may perform EOC like functions in a smaller-scale incident or during the initial phase of a larger, more complex event. EOCs activated to support larger, more complex events are established in a more central facility; at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.
- 1.6.4.2 Department Operations Centers (DOCs) focus on internal agency incident management and response and are linked to, and usually are physically represented in a higher level EOC. ICPs should be linked to DOCs and EOCs to ensure effective and efficient incident management.
- 1.6.4.3 Multi-agency coordination entities typically consist of principals (or their designees) from organizations and agencies with direct incident management responsibility or with significant incident management support or resource responsibilities.
- 1.6.4.4 The principal functions of multiagency coordination entities include:
- Ensuring that each agency involved in incident management activities is providing appropriate situational awareness and resource status information
 - Establishing priorities between incidents and/or Area Commands in concert with the IC or UCs involved
 - Acquiring and allocating resources required by the incident management personnel in concert with the priorities established by the IC or UC
 - Anticipating and identifying future resource requirements
 - Coordinating and resolving policy issues arising from the incident
 - Providing strategic coordination as required

1.7 PUBLIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1.7.1 Systems and protocols for communicating timely and accurate information to the public are critical during crisis or emergency situations. The Public Information Officer (PIO) is a key staff member supporting the incident command structure. The PIO represents and advises the IC on all public information matters relating to the incident.

1.7.2 The Joint Information System (JIS) provides an organized, integrated, and coordinated mechanism to ensure the delivery of understandable, timely, accurate, and consistent information to the public. It encompasses all public information operations related to an incident, including all federal, state, local, and private organizations PIOs, staff, and Joint Information Centers (JIC) established to support an incident. Key elements include:

- Interagency coordination and integration
- Developing and delivering coordinated messages
- Support for all decision makers
- Flexibility, modularity, and adaptability

1.7.3 A JIC is a physical location where PIOs from organizations involved in incident management activities can collocate to perform critical emergency information, crisis communications, and public affairs functions. The following must be noted:

- The JIC must include representatives of each jurisdiction, agency, private-sector, and nongovernmental organization involved in incident management activities.
- A single JIC location is preferable, but the system should be flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate multiple JIC locations when the circumstances of an incident require such. Multiple JICs may be needed for a complex incident spanning a wide geographic area or multiple jurisdictions.

1.8 AREA COMMAND

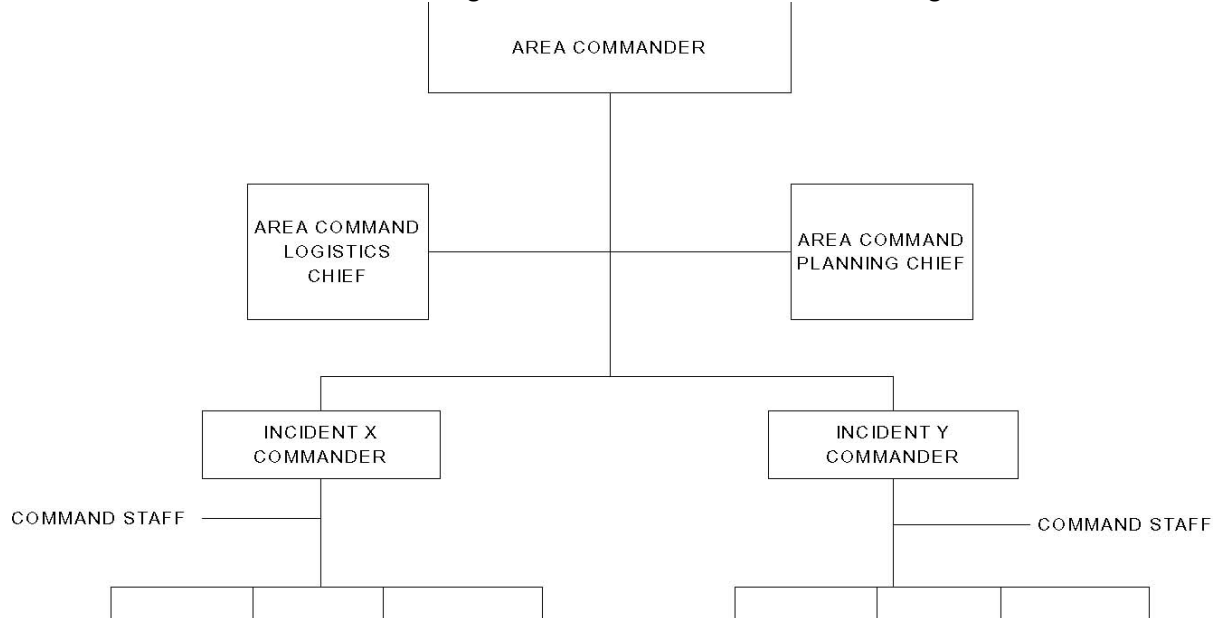
1.8.1 Area Command is an expansion of the incident command function primarily designed to manage a very large incident that has multiple incident management teams assigned. However, an Area Command can be established at any time that incidents are close enough that oversight direction is required among incident management teams to ensure conflicts do not arise. The functions of Area Command are to coordinate the determination of:

- Incident objectives
- Incident strategies
- Priorities for the use of critical resources allocated to the incident assigned to the Area Command.

1.8.2 The organization is normally small with personnel assigned to Command, Planning, and Logistics. Depending on the complexity of the interface between the incidents, specialists in other areas such as aviation may also be assigned to Area Command.

1.8.3 When an area command is established, the oversight of all activities within the geographic area remains the responsibility of the area commander. Units are no longer dispatched by the communications center directly to incidents. Rather, Area Command requests resources to the established "Base". The communications center forwards incident requests to the area command. Area command then prioritizes calls for assistance and deploys units appropriately.

1.8.4 Area Command organization for two Incident Management Teams



1.9 POSITION CHECKLISTS

1.9.1 Area Commander (Single or Unified Area Command).

- 1.9.1.1 The Area Commander is responsible for the overall direction of incident management teams assigned to the same incident or to incidents in close proximity. This responsibility includes ensuring that conflicts are resolved, incident objectives are established, and strategies are selected for the use of critical resources.

1.9.1.2 Area Command also has the responsibility to coordinate with local, state, federal, and volunteer assisting and/or cooperating organizations. These actions will generally be conducted in the order listed.

- Obtain briefing from the agency executives(s) on agency expectations, concerns, and constraints
- Obtain and carry out delegation of authority from the agency executives for overall management and direction of the incidents within the designated Area Command
- If operating as a Unified Area Command, develop working agreement for how Area Commanders will function together
- Delegate authority to ICs based on agency expectations, concerns, and constraints
- Establish an Area Command schedule and time line
- Resolve conflicts between incident realities and agency executive wants
- Establish appropriate location for the Area Command facilities
- Determine and implement an appropriate Area Command organization, and keep it manageable.
- Determine need for technical specialists to support Area Command
- Obtain incident briefing and IAPs from ICs, as appropriate
- Assess incident situations prior to strategy meetings
- Conduct a joint meeting with all ICs
- Review objectives and strategies for each incident
- Periodically review critical resource needs
- Maintain a close coordination with the agency executive
- Establish priority use for critical resources
- Review procedures for interaction within the Area Command
- Approve ICs requests for and release of critical resources
- Coordinate and approve demobilization plans
- Maintain log of major actions/decisions

1.9.2 AREA COMMAND PLANNING CHIEF

- 1.9.2.1 The Area Command Planning Chief is responsible for collecting information from incident management teams in order to assess and evaluate potential conflicts in establishing incident objectives, strategies, and the priority use of critical resources.
- Obtain briefing from Area Commander
 - Assemble information on individual incident objectives and begin to identify potential conflicts and/or ways for incidents to develop compatible operations
 - Recommend the priorities for allocation of critical resources to incidents
 - Maintain status on critical resource totals (not detailed status)
 - Ensure that advance planning beyond the next operational period is being accomplished
 - Prepare and distribute Area Commander's decisions or orders
 - Prepare recommendations for the reassignment of critical resources as they become available
 - Ensure demobilization plans are coordinated between incident management teams and agency dispatchers
 - Schedule strategy meeting with ICs to conform with their planning processes
 - Prepare Area Command briefings as requested or needed
 - Maintain log of major actions/decisions.

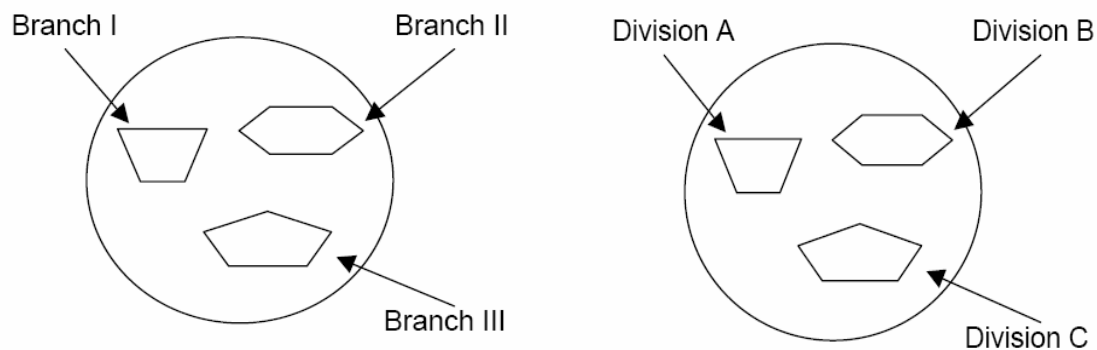
1.9.3 AREA COMMAND LOGISTICS CHIEF

- 1.9.3.1 The Area Command Logistics Chief is responsible for providing facilities, services, and material at the Area Command level, and for ensuring effective use of critical resources and supplies among the incident management teams.
- Obtain briefing from the Area Commander
 - Provide facilities, services and materials for the Area Command organization
 - Ensure coordinated airspace and temporary flight restrictions are in place and understood
 - Ensure coordinated communication links are in place
 - Assist in the preparation of Area Command decisions
 - Ensure the continued effective and priority use of critical resources among the incident management teams
 - Maintain log of major actions/decisions

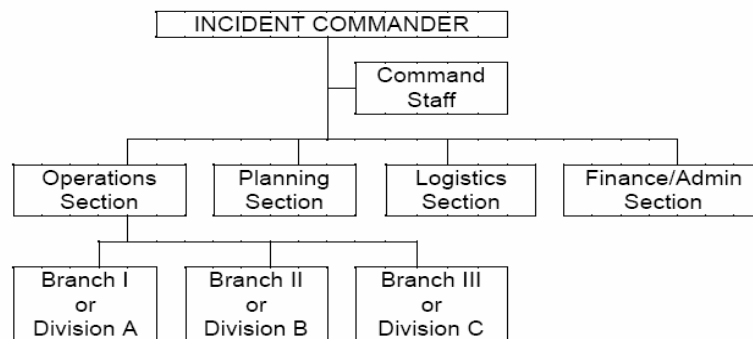
1.10 COMPLEX

1.10.1 A complex is two or more individual incidents located in the same general proximity assigned to a single IC or Unified Command to facilitate management. These incidents are typically limited in scope and complexity and can be managed by a single entity.

The diagrams below illustrate a number of incidents in the same general proximity. These incidents may be identified as Branches or Divisions within the Operations Section.



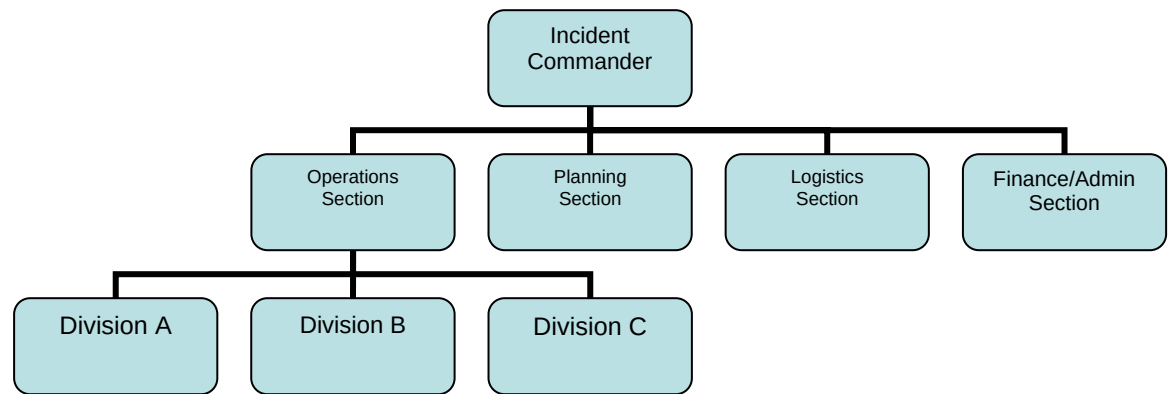
A typical organization would be as follows:



Management responsibility for all of these incidents has been assigned to a single incident management team. A single incident may be complex, but it is not referred to as a "Complex". A complex may be in place with or without the use of Unified and/or Area Command.

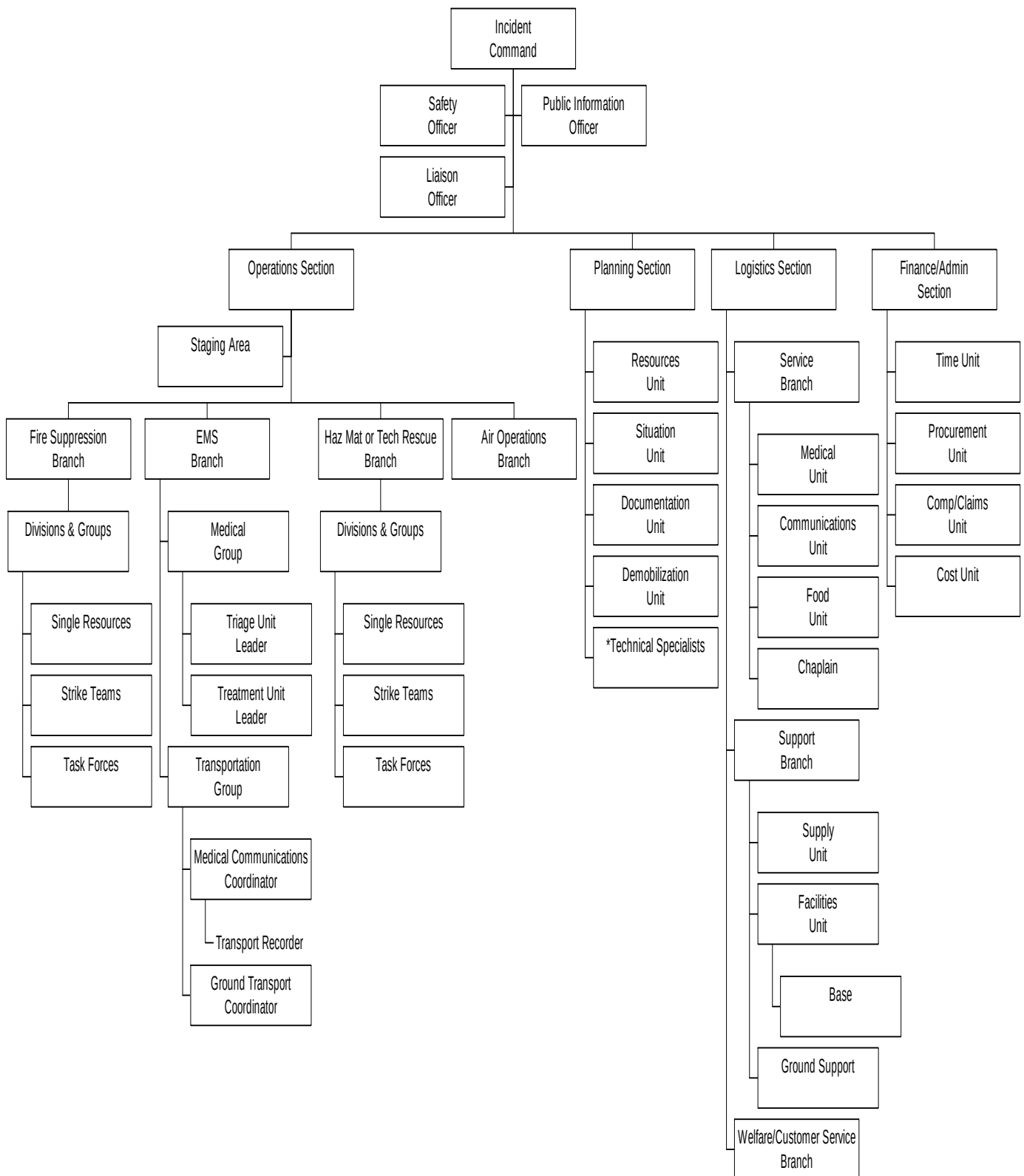
1.10.2 Management responsibility for all of these incidents has been assigned to a single incident management team. A single incident may be complex but it is not referred to as “complex.” A “complex” may be in place with or without the use of Unified or Area Command.

1.10.3 A typical organization would be as follows:



1.11 ICS Organizational Chart.

1.11.1 This chart illustrates the command and functional relationships used throughout the ICS.



*Technical Specialists may be assigned wherever needed in the ICS system.

1.12 OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS

1.12.1 The major components of the ICS are Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration. Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections are referred to as the General Staff.

1.12.2 The Command Function

1.12.2.1 The command function is directed by the IC, who is the person in charge at the incident. The IC must ensure that incident goals are established, strategies are selected, planning activities are accomplished, and available resources are effectively used and tracked.

1.12.2.2 It is imperative that the strategy is communicated down through Operations to the Division, Group, and Single Resource level. This is essential if supervisors are to coordinate incident tactics and tasks. More specifically, the IC and Operations Chief must ensure that all resources are cognizant of the mode of operations whether it be offensive, defensive, or in transition between one of the two modes.

1.12.2.3 Delegating responsibilities at an incident gives the IC the capability of dividing an incident into more manageable work areas or functions. By dividing the incident and delegating tactical responsibilities, the IC can concentrate on the overall strategy while remaining at the command post.

1.12.2.4 Major responsibilities for the IC include:

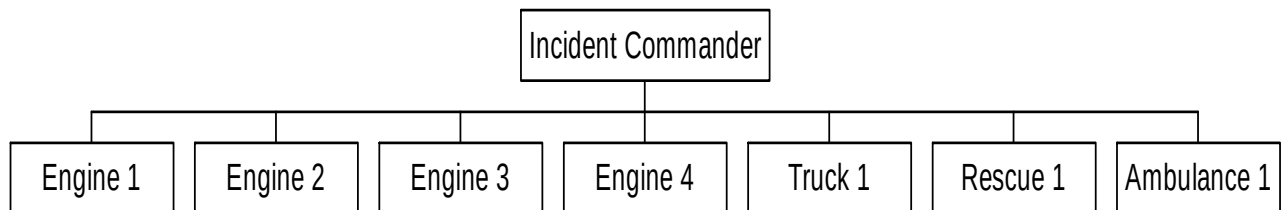
- Performing command activities, such as establishing command and establishing the Incident Command Post (ICP)
- Protecting life and property
- Controlling personnel and equipment resources
- Maintaining accountability for the responders and the public's safety, as well as task accomplishment
- Establishing and maintaining the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) function
- Establishing and maintaining an effective liaison with outside agencies and organizations

1.12.2.5 Management of the incident encompasses:

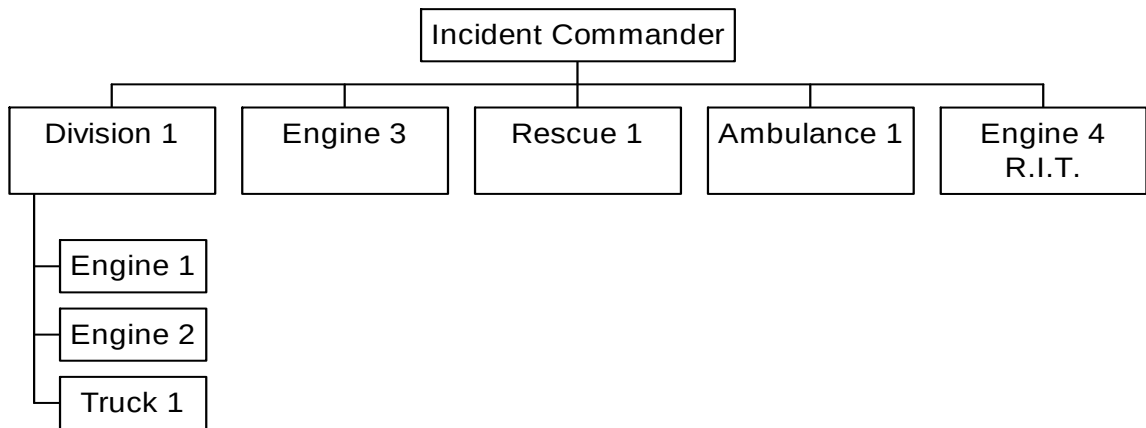
- Assessing incident priorities based on risk/benefit analysis
- Determining operational objectives
- Developing and implementing the Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- Developing an appropriate organizational structure for the incident
- Maintaining a manageable span of control
- Managing incident resources
- Coordinating overall emergency activities
- Coordinating the activities of outside agencies
- Authorizing the release of information to the media
- Tracking costs

1.12.2.6 The effective IC must be assertive, decisive, objective, calm, and a quick thinker. To deal with all the responsibilities of the role, the IC also needs to be adaptable, flexible, and realistic about his or her limitations. The IC must have the capability to delegate positions appropriately for the incident.

1.12.2.7 It is **extremely** important to remember that on the majority of incidents, the Incident Command System should be built from the bottom up. This is to say that the IC should only implement those elements of the system that are necessary to maintain a span of control of three-to-seven people with five being ideal. A simple incident may require nothing more than the example below.



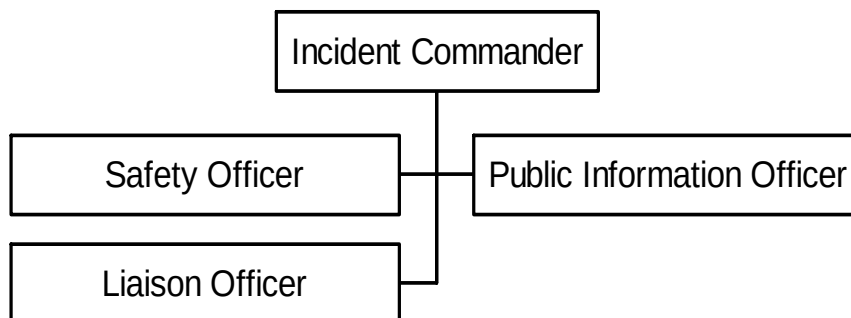
1.12.2.8 On some incidents, a level of direct supervision over some of the units would be delegated. However the result would be a similar command structure, yet still remain simple.



1.12.2.9 The individual in command and location of the command post must be clearly communicated and identified in the initial phase of the ICS build-up.

1.12.3 COMMAND STAFF

1.12.3.1 Command staff positions (not to be confused with general staff positions of operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration) are established to assume responsibility for essential activities that are not part of the line organization. There are normally three positions in this staff; Safety Officer, Public Information Officer and Liaison Officer; however, the IC may elect to expand this staff to include other functions depending upon the need. Personnel assigned to these functions shall report directly to the IC and work out of the command



post.

1.12.3.2 Safety Officer

1.12.3.2.1 The Safety Officer assesses hazardous and unsafe situations. The Safety Officer's function is to develop and recommend measures for ensuring personnel safety and to assess and anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations.

1.12.3.2.2 Responsibilities

- Obtain briefing and direction from IC
- Participate in planning meetings
- Identify unsafe conditions associated with the incident and develop measures to ensure personnel safety
- Situations of imminent danger requiring immediate action shall be halted at once by the Safety Officer, and the IC will be notified
- Review the incident action plan for safety implications
- Ensure adequate rehabilitation for personnel
- Work in unison or as liaison with the specialty branches (e.g., Haz Mat, Tech Rescue, Marine) designated Safety person in the development of the safety plan
- Organize, assign, and brief safety assistants as needed
- Size-up the need for and effectiveness of:
 - Accountability plan and procedure
 - Rapid intervention plans/procedure
 - Protective clothing needs of personnel
- Identify, establish, and maintain safety zones
- In situations where immediate action is not necessary, the Safety Officer shall advise the IC of the situation and make recommendations
- Maintain a log and prepare a report of findings at close of incident as required

1.12.3.3 Public Information Officer (PIO)

1.12.3.3.1 The PIO develops accurate and complete information regarding incident cause, size, current situation, and resources committed and other matters of general interest for release to the media. The PIO normally shall be the point of contact for the media and other governmental agencies that desire information about the incident.

1.12.3.3.2 In either a single or unified command structure, only one PIO is designated. However, assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.

1.12.3.3.3 Responsibilities

- Obtain briefing and direction from the IC
- Establish area to meet with news media personnel
- Determine from the IC if there are any limits on information release
- Obtain media information that may be useful to incident planning
- Serve as the on-scene link to the JIS, or on large scale incidents the JIC
- Meet with news media at regular intervals
- Maintain log of activity, if required

1.12.3.4 Liaison Officer

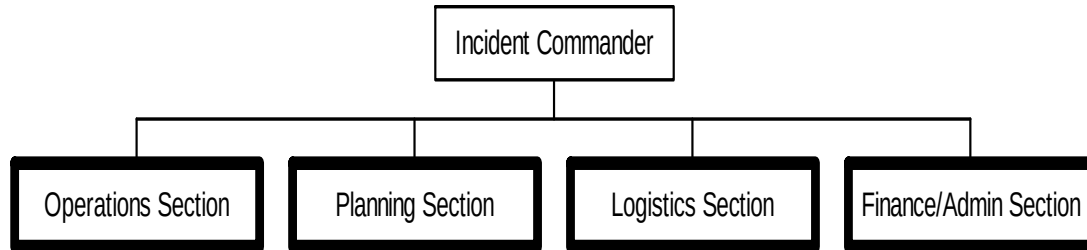
1.12.3.4.1 The Liaison Officer is the point of contact for assisting and cooperating with other agencies (such as Police, Red Cross, Public Works, etc.). The representatives from assisting agencies shall coordinate their activities through the Liaison Officer. Agency representatives assigned to an incident should have the authority to speak on all matters for their agency.

1.12.3.4.2 Responsibilities:

- Obtain briefing and direction from IC
- Provide contact point for assisting agencies
- Maintain list of assisting and cooperating agencies and agency representatives
- Assist IC in meetings with assisting agency representatives
- Keep agencies supporting the incident aware of incident status
- Monitor incident operations to identify current or potential inter-organizational problems
- Maintain log of activity, if required

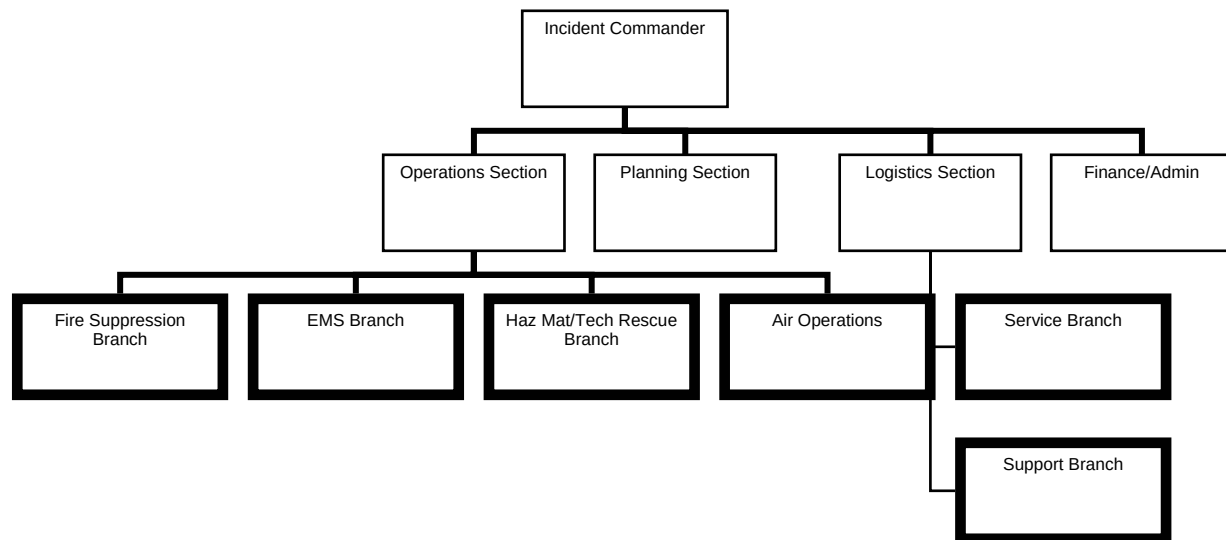
1.13 ICS STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

1.13.1 Sections



- 1.13.1.1 The section level is organizationally between the branch level and the IC. This management level is a member of the IC's General Staff (not to be confused with the Command Staff positions of Safety, Information, and Liaison) and is responsible for managing a primary segment of incident operations. These sections are Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.
- 1.13.1.2 The Incident Management Team (IMT) consists of the ICs Command Staff (Liaison, Safety, PIO) and the General Staff (Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration).
- 1.13.1.3 A Deputy is a fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a Deputy can act as relief for a superior and, therefore, must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the IC, general staff, and branch directors.

1.13.2 Branches



1.13.2.1 The Branch Level is the organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility. The Branch Level is organizationally between Section and Division or Group in the Operations Section and between Sections and Units in the Logistics Section. Depending on the magnitude and or type of incident, the operational functions may require further division into smaller segments for efficient use of resources. However, they are not always essential to the organization of the operations sections.

1.13.2.2 When the numbers of divisions exceed the recommended span-of-control for the Operations Section, a multi-branch structure should be put in place and the divisions allocated within those branches. Examples of branches can be fire suppression, evacuation, hazardous materials, EMS and technical rescue.

1.13.2.3 Branch directors should be situated at operational locations and may be assigned names. Branch directors communicate directly with the section chief under whom they are assigned to operate.

1.13.2.4 The Branch Director, when activated, is utilized to provide management of a complex operation when the incident involves more than one of the major operational components such as suppression, hazardous materials, technical rescue or EMS. This Branch Director reports directly to the Operations Chief. The Branch Director makes changes in the action plan as required to combat the incident, requests or releases resources as needed, and reports changes to the Operations Chief. However, branches are not limited to the Operations Section. Branches will be named to reflect their operational objective or geographic area of responsibility. The Branch Director is then responsible for achieving the tactical objectives assigned to that Branch by the IC.

1.13.3 Divisions

1.13.3.1 Divisions are the organizational levels having total responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. For example, on an incident with a working fire on the fourth floor of a ten-story building, the IC will typically place all units operating on that floor under the direction and supervision of a Division Supervisor. This supervisor's designator would be "Division 4". This supervisor will be responsible for the activities in that geographical area.

1.13.3.2 Establishing a division provides a system to divide an incident into manageable geographical areas. Routine communications inside a division can be accomplished more effectively in a face-to-face mode. This eliminates tactical information exchanges on the radio.

1.13.4 Groups

1.13.4.1 Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operations. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. Using the same example of fire on the fourth floor of a ten-story building, the IC may assemble and assign a group to ventilate the floors above the fire floor in the fire building. He or she would designate a group supervisor and may use the designation of "Vent Group". The Vent Group could be operating on the seventh through the tenth floor performing the function of ventilation.

- 1.13.4.2 Groups are located between branches and individual companies in the Operations Section. When a group is established, the functional responsibilities of that group must be defined by the IC or Operations Section Chief. For example, a ventilation group may be responsible for all ventilation operations throughout the incident or the group may be given specific parameters within which they must work. In most cases in building fires, it is not advised that groups work in the same area when divisions are already operating. It is recommended that the supervisor in charge of a specific division should remain responsible for all tactics carried out within that division. If a group is established and given an assignment that will involve that group working within an already established division. The division supervisor must be informed of that decision.
- 1.13.4.3 On the organization chart, Divisions and Groups are located between Branches and individual companies in the Operations Section. Divisions and Groups along with single resources (individual companies) are responsible for achieving tactical objectives.
- 1.13.4.4 The Division or Group Supervisor reports to the next higher level of supervision currently in place. This may be the Branch Director, Operations Chief, or the IC depending on the size and complexity of the incident. The supervisor is responsible for the implementation of the assigned portion of the Incident Action Plan, assignment of resources within the Division or Group, and reporting on the progress of control operations and status of resources within the Division or Group.
- 1.13.4.5 Groups may work in or pass through Divisions. Lateral communications between Divisions and Groups will be necessary to coordinate tactical efforts.

1.13.4.6 THE FOLLOWING FACTORS SHOULD BE GIVEN CONSIDERATION WHEN DETERMINING THE NEED FOR DIVISIONS OR GROUPS:

- The situation has the potential for growing beyond the ability of command to directly control incident resources
- When companies are operating from tactical positions, where one designated individual from that location is assigned as the immediate supervisor to maintain communications and coordination with Command (Look at tactical command lists)
- When companies are involved in complex operations
- When the situation is hazardous and close control of operating resources is needed; division officers must be in a position to ensure the safety and accountability of the resources assigned to them

1.13.5 Strike Team

1.13.5.1 A Strike Team is comprised of a set number of the same type single resources. Meaning that the strike team is made up of the same type companies (e.g. five engine companies).

1.13.5.2 The companies that make up the strike team are under the supervision of a Strike Team Leader and have common communications among the team.

1.13.5.3 ~~A Strike Team may be assembled on scene by the IC or it may be a predetermined complement of resources that can be requested and dispatched by the communications center.~~

1.13.5.4 For example, considering the labor and resource intensive requirements of a trench cut on a commercial occupancy, the IC or Operations Chief may request, assemble and deploy a strike team (made up of truck companies) to accomplish this task.

1.13.6 Task Force

1.13.6.1 A task force is a combination of resources. The task force can be made up of several different type companies (e.g. 3 engine companies, 1 truck company, and one medic unit).

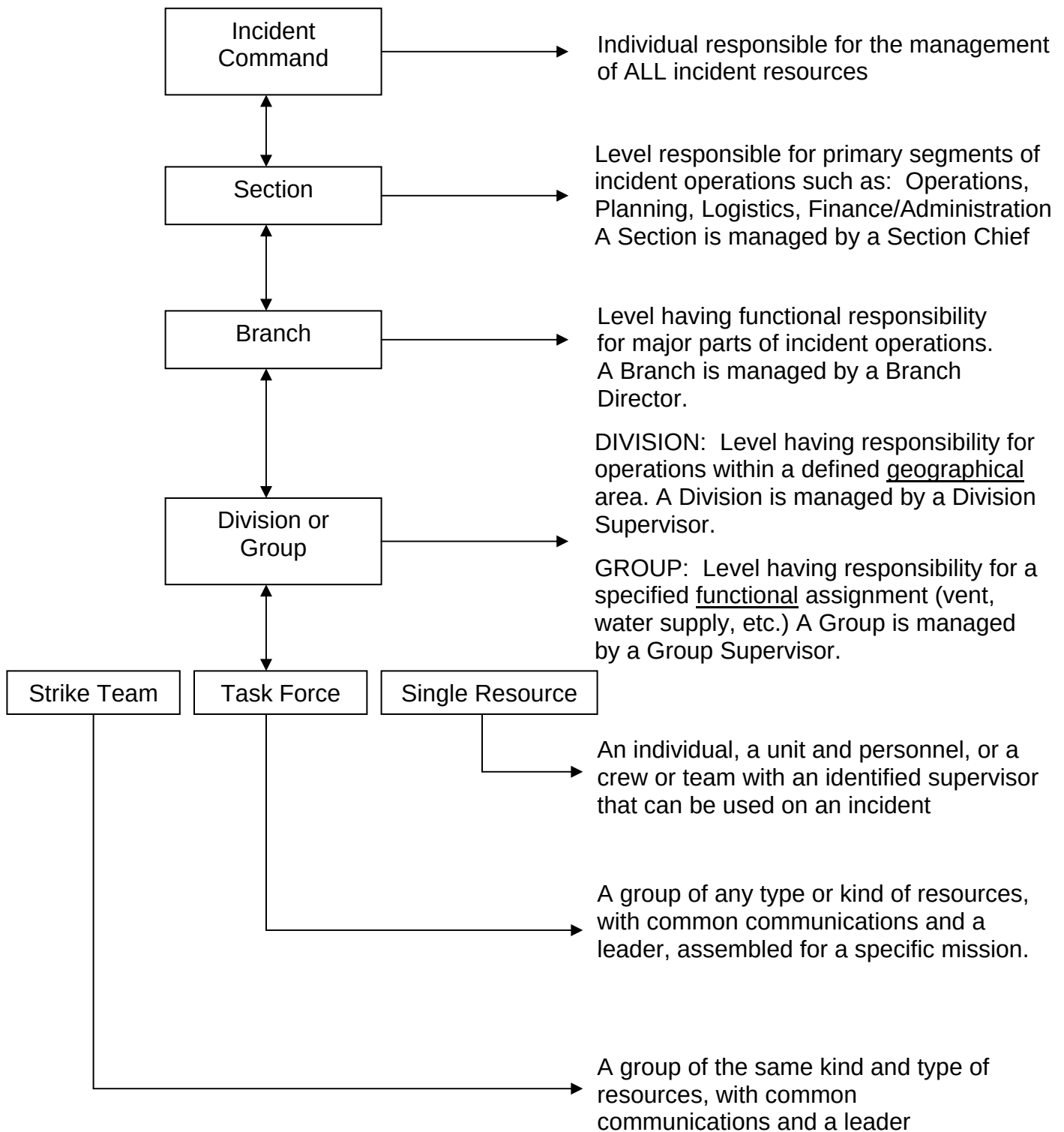
1.13.6.2 The task force is under the supervision of a task force leader who reports to the next higher level of command that has been established and has common communications.

1.13.6.3 ~~A Task Force may be assembled on scene by the IC or it may be a predetermined complement of resources that can be requested and dispatched by the communications center.~~

1.13.6.4 For example, on a multi casualty incident an “EMS Task Force” may be requested, or assembled, and deployed by the IC (e.g., 2 medic units, 2 ambulances, and a EMS Supervisor).

1.13.7 Single Resource

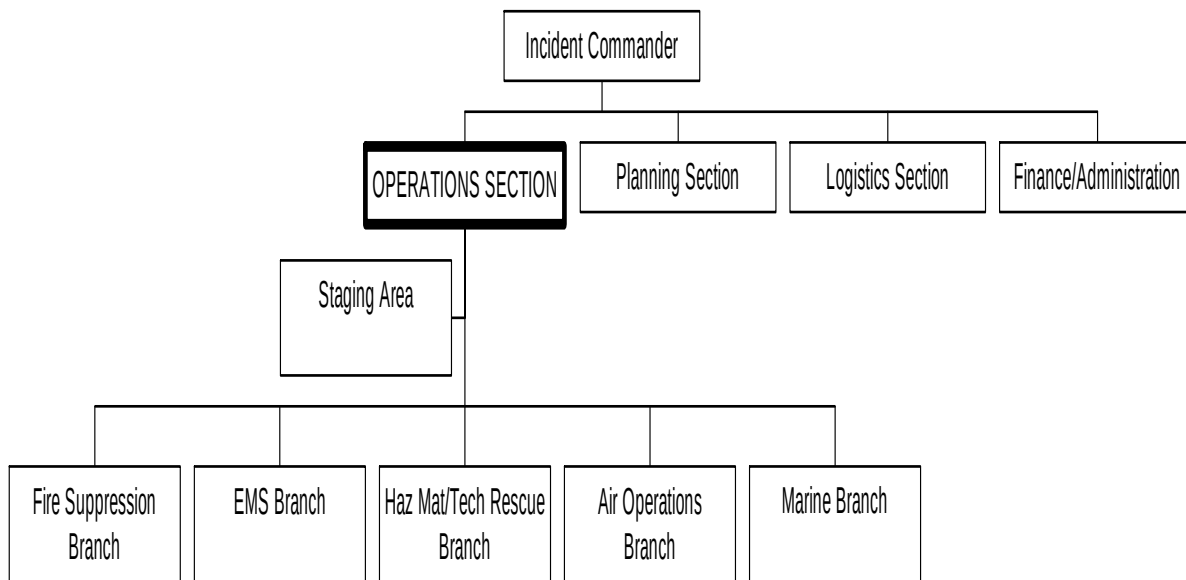
1.13.7.1 An individual unit that retains its own unit identification (i.e. E429).



1.15 ICS Position Descriptions and Responsibilities

1.15.1 This section will highlight the responsibilities for each of the general staff positions, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration, as well as those Branches, Divisions, Groups, and Functions that fall under their domain.

1.15.2 Operations Section Chief



1.15.2.1 The Operations Section Chief reports to the IC and is generally located at the command post. In conjunction with the IC, the Operations Chief assists with the formulation of the incident action plan and is responsible for the management of all incident tactical activities that are applicable to the primary mission. The Operations Chief develops tactical objectives to accomplish strategic goals and supervises operations to ensure adherence to the plan, making necessary changes in the plan, and advises the IC of these changes.

1.15.2.2 The Operations Chief requests or releases resources as needed through the Staging Manager. The Operations Chief may have one or more deputies (preferably from other agencies in multi-jurisdictional incidents).

1.15.2.3 The Operations Chief may establish branches, divisions, or groups, as needed to manage suppression, hazardous materials, technical rescue, EMS functions, evacuation, or other appropriate disciplines.

1.15.2.4 Responsibilities

- Obtain briefing and direction from IC
- Develop, implement, evaluate, and change the operations portion of incident action plan as required
- Brief and assign personnel involved in the operation
- Supervise all incident operational functions (i.e., suppression, HazMat, EMS, etc.)
- Determine resource needs, and request or release resources as required through the IC
- Ensure that adequate safety measures and accountability procedures are in place.
- Report changes in incident conditions to IC on a regular basis
- Establish and maintain the appropriate level and location(s) of the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) function
- Maintains log of activity as required.

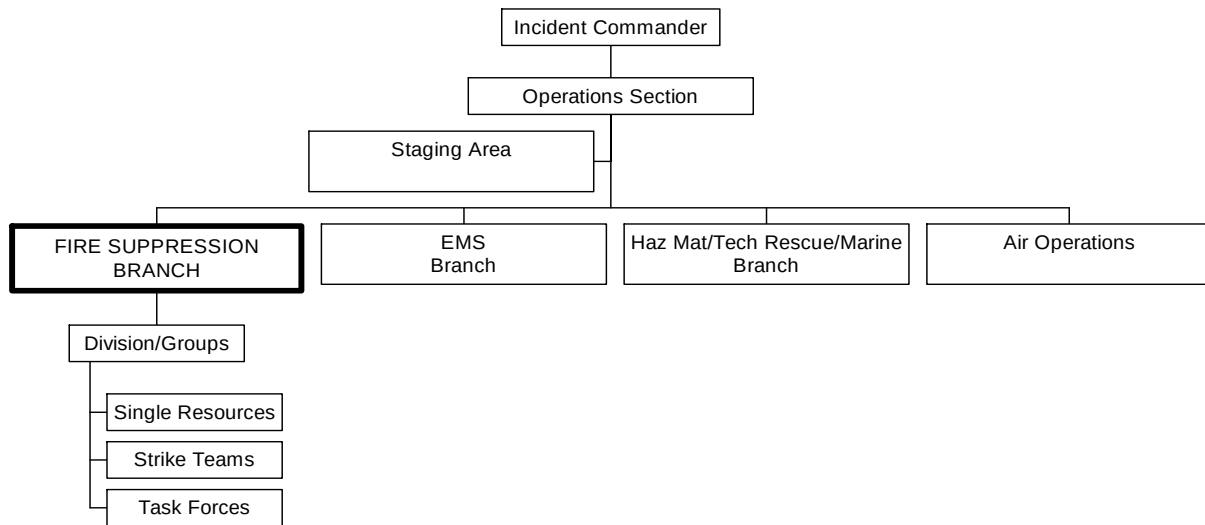
1.15.3 Staging Area Manager

1.15.3.1 Coordinate staging area activities.

1.15.3.2 Responsibilities:

- Establish staging area layout
- Establish check-in function as appropriate
- Maintain the Staging Area in an orderly condition
- Post areas for identification and traffic control
- Respond to requests for resource assignments (Note: May be direct from Operations or via the CP)
- Determine required resource levels from the Operations Section
- Advise the Operations Officer when reserve levels reach minimums
- Maintain and provide status to Resource Unit of all resources in Staging Area
- Demobilize Staging Area in accordance with Incident Demobilization Plan
- Maintain Log of activity as required

1.15.4 Fire Suppression Branch Director

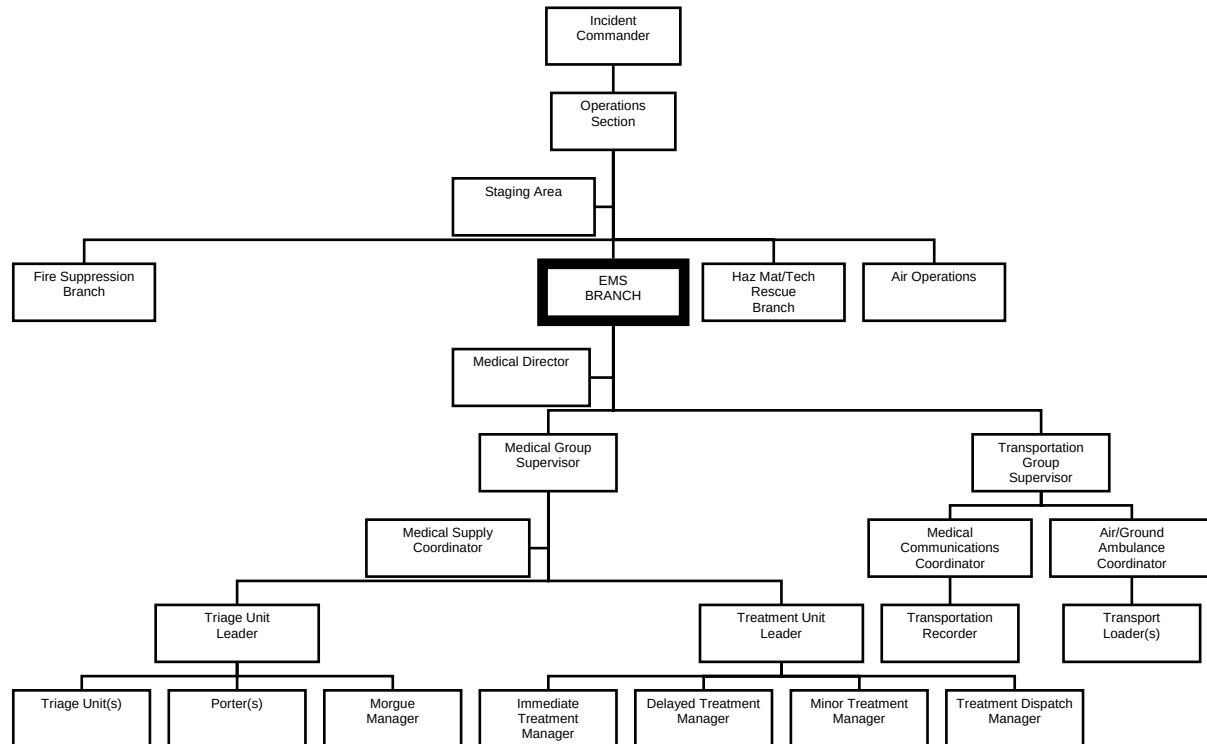


1.15.4.1 The Fire Suppression Branch Director reports directly to the Operations Section Chief or to the IC. He or she makes changes in the action plan as required to combat the fire situation, reports changes, and requests or releases resources as necessary through the Operations Section Chief.

1.15.4.2 Responsibilities

- Report to and receive briefing from supervisor
- Brief and assign resources, and supervise fire suppression operations; determine need for and requests additional resources
- Provide operations section chief with information on changes and progress of incident operations

1.15.5 EMS Branch Director



1.15.5.1 The EMS Branch Director shall report to the Operations Section Chief or to the IC and is responsible for the development of the emergency medical plan for the incident and shall direct all aspects of EMS operations. This includes obtaining medical treatment and transportation of civilian casualties at an incident. **NOTE: The Medical Unit, under the Logistics Section, is responsible for medical care of fire and EMS members.**

1.15.5.2 Responsibilities

- Obtains briefing
- Determines EMS needs and develops plan, and advises operations officer of needs and plan
- Assigns appropriate EMS management positions to subordinates (e.g., Medical Group, Transportation Group)

1.15.5.3 Medical Director

1.15.5.3.1 The senior physician or medical director provides medical assistance to the EMS Branch Director in the management of patient care. The doctor also provides technical expertise in areas of on-scene triage, treatment, and transportation of injured.

1.15.5.3.2 Responsibilities

- Obtain briefing from EMS Branch Director
- Coordinate efforts of medical personnel
- Maintain required records

1.15.5.4 Medical Group Supervisor

1.15.5.4.1 Reports to the EMS Branch Director and supervises Triage Unit Leader, Treatment Unit Leader, and Medical Supply Coordinator. The Medical Group Supervisor establishes command and control of the activities within a Medical Group, in order to ensure the best possible emergency medical care to patients during a multi-casualty incident.

1.15.5.4.2 Responsibilities:

- Participate in EMS Branch/Operations Section planning activities.
- Establish Medical Group with assigned personnel; request additional personnel and resources to handle the magnitude of the incident
- Designate Unit Leaders and Triage and Treatment Area locations as appropriate
- Isolate Morgue and Minor Treatment Area from Immediate and Delayed Treatment Areas
- Request law enforcement/coroner involvement as needed
- Determine amount and types of additional medical resources and supplies needed to handle the magnitude of the incident (medical caches, backboards, lifters, and cots)
- Establish communications and coordination with Patient Transportation Group Supervisor
- Ensure activation of hospital alert system and local EMS/health agencies
- Direct and/or supervise on-scene personnel from agencies such as Coroner's office, Red Cross, law enforcement, ambulance companies, county health agencies, and hospital volunteers
- Direct medically trained personnel to appropriate Unit Leader
- Document activity

1.15.5.5 Medical Supply Coordinator

1.15.5.5.1 Reports to the Medical Group Supervisor and acquires and maintains control of appropriate medical equipment and supplies from units assigned to the Medical Group.

1.15.5.5.2 Responsibilities

- Acquire, distribute and maintain status of medical equipment and supplies within the Medical Group
- Request additional medical supplies. (If Logistics Section is established, this position would coordinate with the Supply Unit Leader)
- Distribute medical supplies to Treatment and Triage Units

1.15.5.6 Triage Unit Leader

1.15.5.6.1 The Triage Unit leader coordinates the assessment of patients according to severity of injuries. The triage officer is responsible for assessing all patients' injuries, and directing them to an area for proper care. Supervises morgue manager.

1.15.5.6.2 Responsibilities

- Report to and obtain briefing from Medical Group Supervisor or EMS Branch Director
- Establish triage area
- Ensure patients are assessed and re-evaluated as necessary
- Coordinate movement of patients from the triage area to the appropriate treatment area or to the morgue area

1.15.5.7 Treatment Unit Leader

1.15.5.7.1 The Treatment Unit Leader is responsible for overseeing the emergency treatment of patients. This includes coordinating activities with the Triage Unit Leader and the Transportation Group Supervisor.

1.15.5.7.2 Responsibilities

- Report to and obtain briefing from Medical Group Supervisor or EMS Branch Director.
- Establish communications with Triage Unit Leader.
- Determine needs and establishes the treatment area to provide patient care.
- Request needed personnel and medical treatment supplies through the Medical Group Supervisor.
- Secure processing of treated patients through the transportation group supervisor.

1.15.5.8 Transportation Group Supervisor

1.15.5.8.1 The Transportation Group Supervisor reports to the EMS Branch Director and supervises the Medical Communications Coordinator and the Air and Ground Ambulance Coordinators. Responsible for the coordination of patient transportation and maintenance of records relating to patient identification, injuries, and mode of off-incident transportation and destination.

1.15.5.8.2 Responsibilities

- Report to and obtain briefing from EMS Branch Director
- Establish plan for staging area as well as access and egress from incident site
- Request needed resources through the chain-of-command
- Direct the transport of patients as determined by the Treatment Unit Leader
- Ensure patient information and destination is recorded
- Communicate with Air/Ground Transport Coordinator
- Coordinate requests for air ambulance transport through the Air Operations Director
- Establish air ambulance landing zone (LZ) with the EMS Branch and Air Operations Director
- Maintain required records

1.15.5.9 Medical Communications Coordinator

1.15.5.9.1 This position communicates with the hospitals and coordinates patient routing to medical facilities. Medical Communications Coordinator communicates individual patient destinations to the Transportation Group Supervisor. (Formerly known as the Disposition Officer.)

1.15.5.9.2 Responsibilities:

- Report to and obtain briefing from Transportation Group Supervisor
- Determine and maintain status of hospital/medical facility availability and capability
- Coordinate activities with Treatment Unit Leader and Transportation Group Supervisor
- Contact control hospital, determine hospital capacity, and advise of number of patients en route
- Give hospital assignments to Air/Ground Transport Coordinator.
- Maintain required records and triage tags

1.15.5.10 Command Hospital

1.15.5.10.1 On significant multi-casualty incidents within the Northern Virginia region, a command hospital (Fairfax Hospital) may be established to handle the bulk of the duties of the Medical Communications Coordinator. This is based on prior agreements between the medical community and the fire department.

1.15.5.11 Air/Ground Transport Coordinator

1.15.5.11.1 Report to the Transportation Group Supervisor and manages the Air/Ground Ambulance Staging Area and dispatch ambulances as requested. (Formerly known as the Transportation Officer).

1.15.5.11.2 Responsibilities:

- Establish appropriate staging areas for ambulances
- Establish routes of travel for ambulances for incident operations.
- Establish and maintain communications with the Air Operations ranch Director
- Maintain communications with Medical Communications Coordinator
- Ensure proper coordination is maintained with Staging Area Manager

1.15.6 Hazardous Materials Branch Director

1.15.6.1 The Hazardous Materials Branch Director reports directly to the Operations Section Chief, or to the IC, and is responsible for overseeing the actions of those resources assigned to mitigate any hazardous materials situation at the incident.

1.15.6.2 Responsibilities:

- Report to and obtain briefing from the Operations Section Chief or IC
- Brief and assign hazardous materials resources on incident action plan, determines need for and requests additional resources through the Operations Chief or IC
- Assign tasks to hazardous materials personnel
- Give situation reports and updates to the operations section officer or IC
- Prepare needed documentation for the IC

1.15.7 Technical Rescue Branch Director

1.15.7.1 The Technical Rescue Director reports to the Operations Section Chief, or to the IC, and is responsible for the technical rescue operations at the incident.

1.15.7.2 Responsibilities:

- Report to and obtain briefing from the Operations section Chief or IC
- Brief and assign technical rescue resources on incident action plan, determine need for and requests additional resources through the Operations Chief or IC
- Provide information on the status of technical rescue operations to the operations officer or IC
- Prepare needed documentation for the IC

1.15.8 Marine Branch Director

1.15.8.1 The Marine Branch Director reports to the Operations Section Chief or IC. The Marine Branch encompasses operations related to boat or swift water operations on the waterways associated with a particular incident.

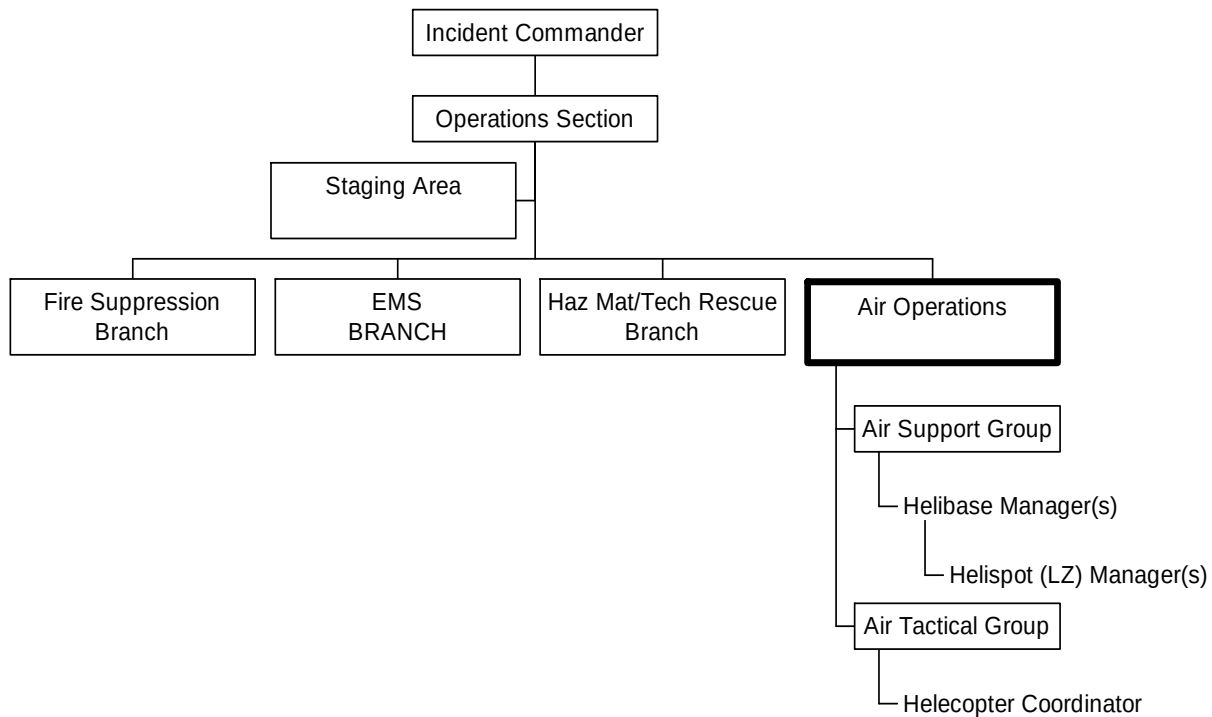
- 1.15.8.2 Responsibilities:
- Report to and obtain briefing from the Operations section Chief or IC
 - Brief and assign marine resources on incident action plans, determine need for and request additional resources through the Operations Chief or IC
 - Provide information on the status of marine operations to the operations officer or IC
 - Prepare needed documentation for the IC

1.15.9 Division or Group Supervisor

1.15.9.1 The Division or Group when activated shall report directly to the next higher level of supervision. The Division or Group Supervisor is responsible for implementation of their assigned portion of the incident action plan, assignment of and tracking of resources within the Division or Group, and reporting on progress of operations and status of resources.

- 1.15.9.2 Responsibilities
- Obtain briefing before assuming command of the assigned Division or Group
 - Brief company officers on incident action plan
 - Assign tasks to units and directly supervises the activities within the division or group
 - Ensure that adequate safety measures and personnel accountability procedures are in place
 - Coordinate activities with adjacent divisions or groups
 - Report to next level of supervision when the action plan is changed, additional resources are needed, or the resources are available for reassignment
 - Give situation status reports as required and tracks assigned resources

1.15.10 Air Operations Branch Director



- 1.15.10.1 The Air Operations Branch Director, who is ground based, is primarily responsible for preparing the air operations portion of the incident action plan.
- 1.15.10.2 The Air Operations Branch Director is responsible for providing logistical support to helicopters operating at the incident.
- 1.15.10.3 Implementation of an Air Operations Branch is anticipated when the IC and incident action plan has identified the need for extensive aviation support in mitigating or supporting the incident.
- 1.15.10.4 The personnel staffing the Air Operations Branch Director, Air Tactical Group Supervisor, Helicopter Coordinator, Air Support Group Supervisor, Helibase Manager, and Helispot Manager positions must have had formal training or experience in air operations.
- 1.15.10.5 It is anticipated that these personnel would come from the appropriate agency under a unified incident command system.

1.15.10.6 Responsibilities

- Organize preliminary air operations
- Request declaration (or cancellation) of restricted air space area (FAA Regulation 91.137)
- Participate in preparation of the IAP through the Operation Section Chief. Ensure that Air Operations portion of the IAP takes into consideration the Air Traffic Control requirements of assigned aircraft
- Perform operational planning for air operations
- Determine coordination procedures for use by air organization with ground Branches, Divisions, or Groups
- Supervise all Air Operations activities associated with the incident
- Evaluate helibase locations
- Establish procedures for emergency reassignment of aircraft
- Inform the Air Tactical Group Supervisor of the air traffic situation external to the incident
- Consider requests for non-tactical use of incident aircraft
- Resolve conflicts concerning non-incident aircraft
- Coordinate with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Update Air Operations Plans
- Report to the Operations Section Chief on air operations activities
- Report special incidents/accidents
- Arrange for an accident investigation team when warranted

1.15.10.7 Air Tactical Group Supervisor

- 1.15.10.7.1 This position is primarily responsible for the coordination of aircraft operations when fixed and/or rotary wing aircraft are operating at the incident. The Air Tactical Group Supervisor performs these coordination activities when airborne. The Air Tactical Group Supervisor reports to the Air Operations Branch Director.

1.15.10.8 Helicopter Coordinator

- 1.15.10.8.1 The Helicopter Coordinator is primarily responsible for coordinating tactical or logistical helicopter mission(s) at the incident. The Helicopter Coordinator can be airborne or on the ground, operating from a high vantage point. The Helicopter Coordinator reports to the Air Tactical Group Supervisor. Activation of this position is contingent upon the complexity of the incident and the number of assigned helicopters. There may be more than one Helicopter Coordinator assigned to an incident.

1.15.10.9 Air Support Group Supervisor

1.15.10.9.1 Primarily responsible for supporting and managing helibase and helispot (LZ) operations. This includes providing fuel and other supplies; maintenance and repair of helicopters; keeping records of helicopter activity; and enforcement of safety regulations. These major functions are performed at helibases and helispots. During landing and take-off and while on the ground, helicopters are under the control of the Air Support Groups, Helibase, or Helispot Managers. The Air Support Group Supervisor reports to the Air Operations Director.

1.15.10.10 Helibase Manager

1.15.10.10.1 Responsible for security and coordination of all activities at the base of helicopter operations.

1.15.10.11 Helispot (Landing Zone) Manager

1.15.10.11.1 This position is most frequently established on aeromedical transport of patients from an incident.

1.15.10.11.2 Responsibilities:

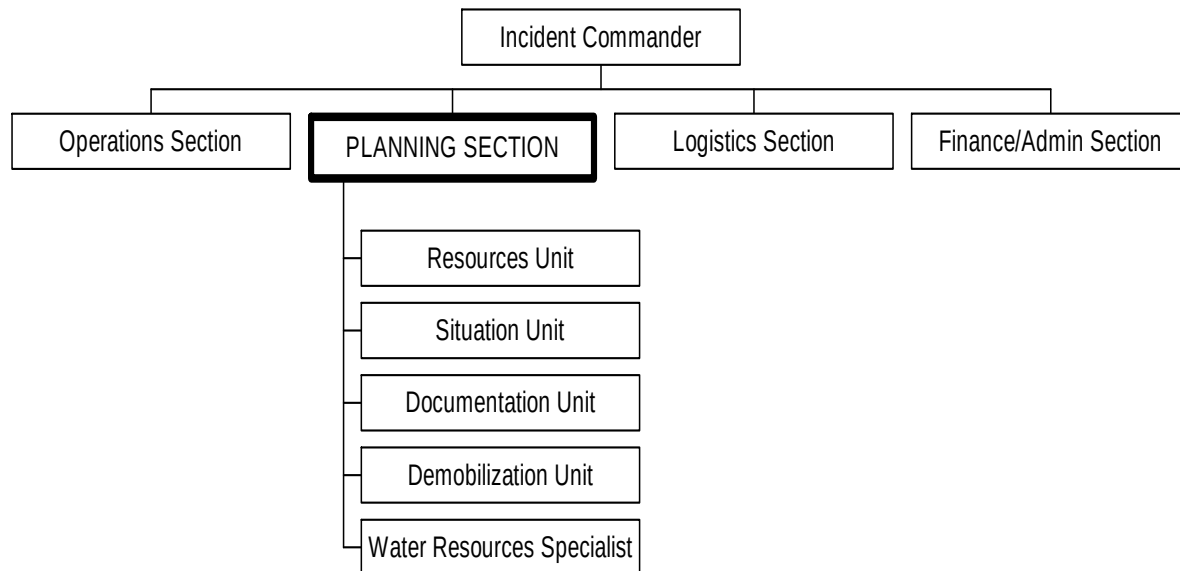
- Responsible for security and coordination of all activities at the helispot area
- Coordinate air traffic control and communications with pilots, Helibase Manager, Helicopter Coordinator, and Air Tactical Group Supervisor when appropriate
- Ensure crash-rescue services are available
- Ensure that dust control is adequate, that debris cannot blow into the rotor system, that touchdown slope is not excessive, and that rotor clearance is sufficient
- Coordinate with pilots for proper loading and unloading and safety problems.

1.15.10.11.3 The Helispot Manager must ensure coordination when multiple helicopters have been dispatched to a specific incident and/or landing zone.

1.15.10.11.4 In the event that multiple helicopters are dispatched to an incident, the helispot manager shall establish communications with the flight crew(s) on a separate frequency.

1.15.10.11.5 The Helispot Manager shall direct the helicopters into the LZ in an assigned order based on estimated time of arrival or other pertinent factors.

1.15.11 Planning Section Chief



1.15.11.1 The Planning Section Chief ("Plans Chief") shall be responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information on an incident. The Planning Section Chief is a member of the IC's General Staff. The planning section is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information about the development of the incident and status of resources. Information is provided to the IC to predict the probable course of events and prepare alternative strategies and control operations for the incident. This section maintains information about the incident and provides technical specialists to assist the IC in formulating the overall plan for managing the incident. The technical specialists report to the planning officer. (See Appendix A, ICS forms).

1.15.11.2 On larger scale incidents, command of this component will generally be assigned to a senior command member of the fire department.

- 1.15.11.3 Responsibilities:
- Report to and obtain briefing from IC
 - Supervise the development of the incident action plan under the guidance of the IC
 - Predict incident potential
 - Assemble information on alternative strategies
 - Identify need for specialized resources
 - Perform operational planning jointly with operations section
 - Establish special information collection activities as necessary (e.g. weather, environmental, toxins, etc)
 - Secure technical specialists as required by IC
 - Compile and display situation status and resource status
 - Oversee preparation and implementation of incident demobilization plan
 - Compile incident status information and documents all incident activity for permanent historical record of incident
- 1.15.11.4 Resource Unit Leader (RESTAT)
- 1.15.11.4.1 The Resource Unit Leader is responsible for maintaining the status of all assigned resources (primary and support) at an incident and reports to the Plans Chief. This is achieved by overseeing the check-in of all resources, maintaining an accountability system indicating current location and status of all resources, and maintenance of a master list of all resources, e.g. key supervisory personnel, primary and support resources, etc.
- 1.15.11.4.2 Responsibilities
- Establish check-in function at incident locations
 - A Check-in Recorder reports to the Resources Unit Leader and is responsible for accounting for all resources assigned to an incident
 - Maintain and post the current status and location of all resources
 - Maintain master roster of all resources checked in at the incident

1.15.11.5 Situation Unit Leader (SITSTAT)

1.15.11.5.1 The Situation Unit Leader is responsible for the analysis of the situation as it progresses and reports to the Planning Section Chief.

1.15.11.5.2 Responsibilities:

- Begin collection and analysis of incident data as soon as possible
- Prepare, post, or disseminate resource and situation status information as required, including special requests
- Prepare periodic predictions as requested
- Diagram the incident and track activities that need to be accomplished, are underway, and have been completed
- Provide photographic services and maps if required
- Prepare appropriate directories (e.g., maps, instructions, etc.) for inclusion in demobilization plan
- Distribute demobilization plan (on and off site)
- Supervise execution of Incident Demobilization Plan
- Brief Planning Section Chief on demobilization progress

1.15.11.6 Documentation Unit

1.15.11.6.1 The documentation function is an important aspect of command post support. The Planning Section Chief at the command post should address this requirement. A dedicated position for this function should be filled on a working incident that escalates to a significant size, increases dramatically in complexity, or provides the indication that it will span multiple 12-hour operational periods.

1.15.11.6.2 Documentation is responsible for the capture of information from the command boards as the incident progresses and changes. Digital photographs work well for this task.

1.15.11.6.3 Documentation should obtain preplans or other relevant incident information for use by command staff as necessary.

1.15.11.7 Demobilization Unit

1.15.11.7.1 The Demobilization unit function is an important aspect of command post support. The Planning Chief at the command post should address this requirement. A dedicated position for this function should be filled on a working incident that escalates to a significant size, increases dramatically in complexity, or provides the indication that it will span multiple 12-hour operational periods.

1.15.11.7.2 The assessment of what units can be demobilized should begin to be assessed once it is clear that the event is (or will soon be) declared “stable”. Coordination with dispatch regarding coverage needs for the rest of the jurisdiction can be made on the Command channel and factored in to this assessment.

1.15.11.7.3 An assessment of the best order of demobilization should be developed into a release plan. Other factors such as units having equipment committed to the scene (hose laid out, pumpers on hydrants, etc.) would be factored in to the demobilization plan. Additional conditions such as units being placed out of service for mechanical reasons; units requiring alternate assignments (CISM debriefings, etc.), assignments for station fills would be factored in.

1.15.11.8 Technical Specialists

1.15.11.8.1 Technical specialists are advisors with special skills needed to support incident operations (These specialists do not need to be members of the fire department). Technical specialists may report to the planning section officer; may function within an existing unit (e.g., structural engineers,) or be reassigned to other parts of the organization (e.g., operations section).

1.15.11.9 Water Supply Officer

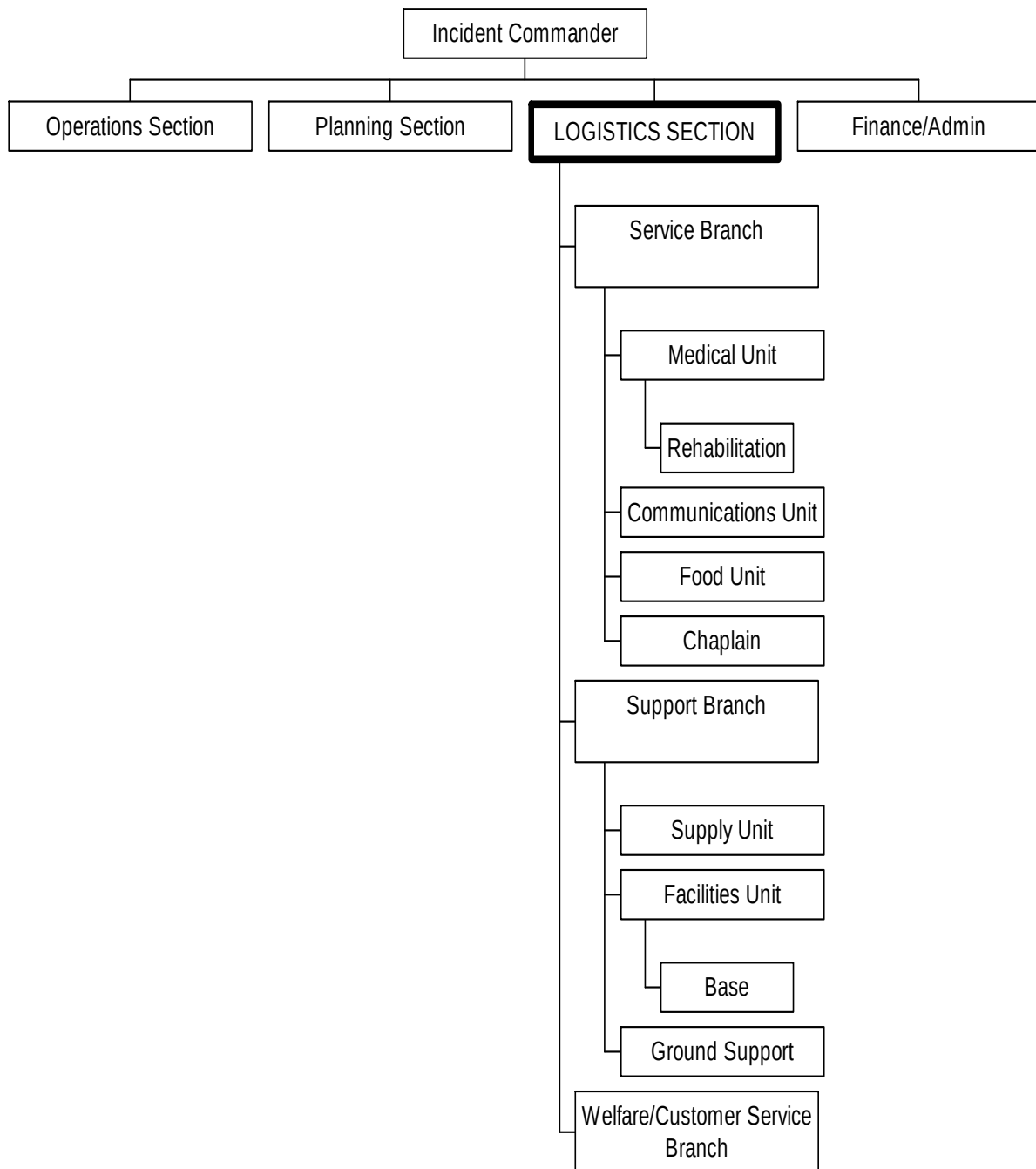
1.15.11.9.1 Depending on the levels of the ICS that have been implemented, this position reports to and obtains briefing from the IC, Operations, or Planning Section Chief.

1.15.11.9.2 Responsibilities

- Determine current needs and project future requirements
- Prepare contingency plan for water supply

1.15.12 LOGISTICS SECTION CHIEF

1.15.12.1 The Logistics Section Chief is a member of the IC's General Staff. The Logistics Section is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials in support of the incident. This component secures all resources that are not a normal requirement of the Fire Department (e.g., supplies, fuel, food, facilities and equipment maintenance), including support resources unique to the particular incident.



- 1.15.12.2 Responsibilities:
- Report to and obtain briefing from IC
 - Participate in the preparation of the IAP
 - Assemble needed resources in close coordination with other members of general staff
 - Communicate with Resources Unit as Logistics Section resources are activated including names and locations of assigned personnel
 - Assemble and brief Branch Directors and Unit Leaders
 - Coordinate and process requests for additional resources
 - Identify service and support functions needed on the incident
 - Receive Demobilization Plan from Planning Section
 - Plan and coordinate stairwell support function at high-rise incidents
 - Maintain log of requests for, and of, any materials received and used

1.15.12.3 Service Branch Director

1.15.12.3.1 When activated, the Service Branch Director is under the supervision of the Logistics Section Chief, and is responsible for the management of all service activities at the incident. The Service Branch Director supervises the operations of the Communications, Medical, and Food Units.

1.15.12.3.2 Responsibilities:

- Determine level of service required to support operations
- Participate in planning meetings of Logistics Section personnel
- Review IAP
- Organize and prepare assignments for Service Branch personnel
- Maintain documentation of unit activity

1.15.12.4 Medical Unit Leader

1.15.12.4.1 Under the direction of the Service Branch Director or Logistics Section Chief, the Medical Unit Leader is primarily responsible for the development of the Medical Plan pertaining specifically to firefighters, paramedics, police officers, and any other emergency services personnel operating on the incident scene. Also responsible for obtaining medical aid and transportation for injured and sick incident personnel, and preparation of reports and records. The Medical Unit Leader must provide an organized response for the physical well-being of members operating on an incident. To accomplish this task, a designated rehabilitation area(s) must be established. The safety and well-being of emergency personnel is the paramount objective of this position.

1.15.12.4.2 Responsibilities

- Participate in Logistics Section/Service Branch planning activities
- Prepare the Medical Plan
- Respond to requests for medical aid, medical transport, and medical supplies of the fire and rescue and/or other emergency responders working at the incident
- Determine the rehabilitation needs for members
- Identify a Rehabilitation Manager when required

1.15.12.5 Rehabilitation Manager

1.15.12.5.1 Reports to the Medical Unit Leader and is responsible for the rehabilitation of members who are suffering the effects of strenuous work and/or extreme conditions. The Rehab Manager and all units assigned to Rehab shall be using the Command channel for communications.

1.15.12.5.2 Responsibilities:

- Designate responder rehabilitation location(s) and ensure that the location(s) are announced via radio, with radio designation "Rehab"
- Request the necessary resources to evaluate the medical condition of personnel being rehabilitated
- Ensure all units assigned to Rehab remain together and are advised of the correct radio channel
- Request necessary resources for rehabilitation of members, e.g., water, juice, staffing
- Request food through Food Unit or Logistics Section Chief as necessary for members
- Reassign rehabilitated members to the Staging Manager when ready for deployment. Members should NOT be assigned to Staging until Rehab ensures the crew is ready to re-engage, i.e. cylinders full, tools ready, etc.
- Maintain documentation and appropriate records

1.15.12.6 Communications Unit Leader

1.15.12.6.1 Under the direction of the Service Branch Director or Logistics Section Chief, the Communications Unit Leader is responsible for developing plans for the effective use of incident communications equipment and facilities; installing and testing communications equipment; supervising the Incident Communications Center; distributing communications equipment to incident personnel; and the maintaining and repairing communications equipment.

1.15.12.6.2 Responsibilities:

- Determine unit personnel needs
- Prepare and implement a Communications Plan
- Ensure the Incident Communications Center and Message Center is established
- Ensure a communications equipment accountability system is established
- Provide technical information as required for:
- Adequacy of communications systems currently in operation
- Geographic limitations on communications systems
- Equipment capabilities/limitations
- Amount and type of equipment available
- Maintain documentation on all communications equipment
- Recover communications equipment as units are relieved and/or released

1.15.12.7 Food Unit Leader

1.15.12.7.1 Responsible for supplying the food needs for the entire incident. On small-scale incidents, the IC usually addresses this need through use of a canteen unit.

1.15.12.7.2 Responsibilities:

- Determine food and water requirements
- Determine method of feeding to best fit the situation
- Order sufficient food and potable water from Supply Unit
- Maintain inventory
- Supervise caterers, cooks, and other Food Unit personnel
- Maintain food service area to health and safety standards

1.15.12.8 Chaplain

1.15.12.8.1 The Lead Chaplain reports to the Logistics Section Chief and supports command staff as required. He/she shall also establish and direct support for the necessary religious support positions needed to assist on the incident as directed by the Logistics Chief.

1.15.12.8.2 Each Chaplain and Clergy member assigned and working in the area of the incident scene will be issued a temporary identification card by the jurisdiction in which the incident occurs. These cards will be issued once the Lead Chaplain has verified the credentials.

1.15.12.8.3 Responsibilities:

- Verify credentials of Chaplains and Clergy
- Deploy Chaplains and Clergy where needed/requested
- Check on well-being of personnel
- Provide religious support for emergency workers and victims

1.15.12.9 Support Branch Director

1.15.12.9.1 Under the direction of the Logistics Section Chief. Responsible for the development and implementation of logistics plans in support of the IAP. The Support Branch Director supervises the operations of Supply, Facilities, and Ground Support Units.

1.15.12.9.2 Responsibilities:

- Obtain work materials
- Identify Support Branch personnel dispatched to the incident
- Determine initial support operations in coordination with Logistics Section and Service Branch Director
- Prepare initial organization and assignments for support operations
- Resolve problems associated with requests from Operations Section
- Maintain documentation of activity

1.15.12.10 Supply Unit Leader

1.15.12.10.1 Responsible for ordering personnel, equipment and supplies, receiving and storing all supplies for the incident; maintaining an inventory of supplies; and servicing non-expendable supplies and equipment.

1.15.12.10.2 Responsibilities:

- Participate in Logistics Section/Support Branch planning activities
- Determine the type and amount of supplies en route
- Review IAP for information on operations of Supply Unit
- Develop and implement safety and security requirements
- Order, receive, distribute, and store supplies and equipment
- Maintain inventory
- Service reusable equipment
- Submit reports to Support Branch Director

1.15.12.11 Facilities Unit Leader

1.15.12.11.1 Primarily responsible for the layout and activation of incident facilities, e.g., Base and the Incident Command Post. The Unit provides sleeping and sanitation facilities for incident personnel and manages Base operations. Base is assigned a manager who reports to the Facilities Unit Leader and is responsible for managing the operation of the facility. The basic functions or activities of the Base Manager are to provide security service and general maintenance. The Facility Unit Leader reports to the Support Branch Director.

1.15.12.11.2 Responsibilities:

- Review IAP
- Participate in Logistics Section/Support Branch planning activities
- Determine requirements for each facility
- Prepare layouts of incident facilities
- Notify Unit Leaders of facility layout

1.15.12.12 Base Manager

1.15.12.12.1 The Base Manager shall be responsible for stockpiling and cataloging resources (personnel, apparatus, tools and equipment) necessary, but not immediately available, for incident operations. A base area and Base Manager will be typically assigned at incidents that are large-scale and long-term. Base will also be established at structure fires where the staging area is located separate from the apparatus, such as at a high-rise building or shopping mall fire. Base is the location at which apparatus is parked. Base reports to Logistics, or the IC.

1.15.12.12.2 Responsibilities:

- Report to and obtain briefing from the Logistics Officer, and select location for base area
- Obtain necessary equipment and supplies
- Ensure that all facilities and equipment are set up and functioning to include sanitation facilities (including showers), and sleeping facilities
- Designate sleeping area assignments
- Ensure facility maintenance services with appropriate personnel are identified and provided for base area

1.15.12.13 Ground Support Unit Leader

1.15.12.13.1 Primarily responsible for 1) support of out-of-service resources; 2) transport of personnel, supplies, food, and equipment; 3) fueling, service, maintenance, and repair of vehicles and other ground support equipment; and 4) implementing the Traffic Plan for the incident.

1.15.12.13.2 Responsibilities:

- Participates in Logistics Section/Support Branch planning activities
- Develop and implement a Traffic Plan
- Support out of service resources
- Notify Resources Unit of status changes on support and transportation vehicles
- Arrange and activate fueling, maintenance, and repair of ground resources
- Provide transportation services
- Collect user information on rented equipment
- Requisition maintenance and repair supplies (e.g., fuel, and spare parts)
- Submit reports to Support Branch Director

1.15.12.14 Welfare/Customer Service Branch Director

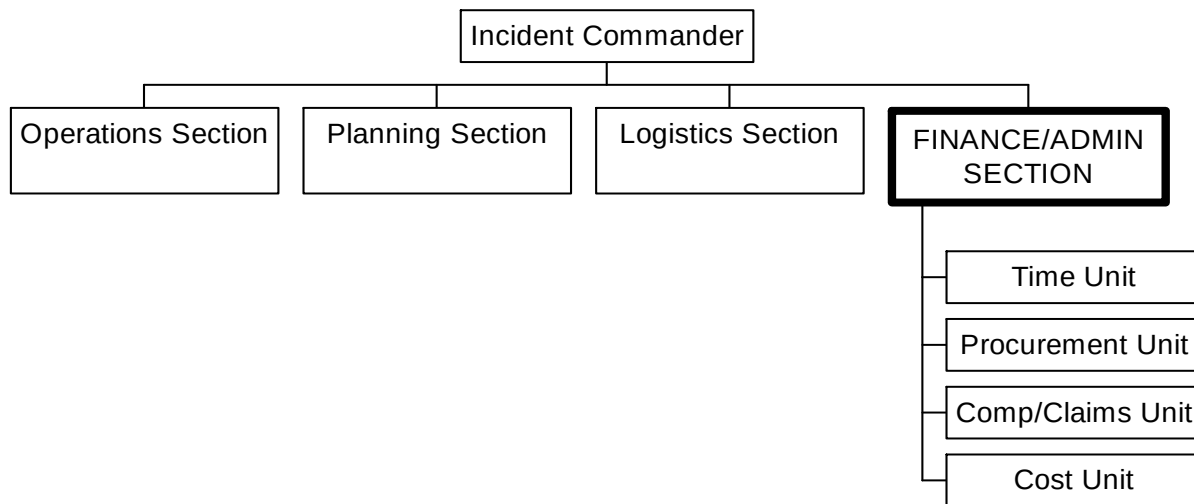
1.15.12.14.1 The Welfare Director is responsible for providing an organized response for the physical well being of civilian evacuees on an incident. To accomplish this task, it may be necessary to establish refuge areas and/or evacuation centers.

1.15.12.14.2 Responsibilities:

- Obtain briefing from the Logistics Officer
- Determine the welfare needs for civilian evacuees
- Determine if needs of chaplain are necessary
- Establish refuge area and/or evacuation center
- Coordinate with logistics officer to obtain food and fluids
- Work through Liaison Officer to obtain assistance from outside agencies (e.g., Red Cross, Salvation Army)

1.15.13 FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION CHIEF

1.15.13.1 The Finance/Administration Chief is a member of the IC's General Staff and is responsible for addressing any and all documentation needs, overseeing record keeping and documentation for potential cost recovery efforts or litigation on an incident. This section manages all financial matters relating to the agency's involvement in incident operations. This section should be utilized at an incident that poses a significant liability or financial commitment for the department.



1.15.13.2 Responsibilities

- Obtain briefing and direction from IC
- Assemble needed resources
- Document and record incident activities for cost recovery efforts
- Handle documentation for potential cost recovery efforts
- Manage financial issues for securing assistance from outside agencies

1.15.13.3 Time Unit Leader - Responsible for record keeping of time for personnel assigned and working at an incident.

1.15.13.4 Procurement Unit Leader - Responsible for financial matters involving the vendors providing material resources required for the incident.

1.15.13.5 Compensation/Claims Unit Leader - Responsible for financial concerns resulting from injuries and fatalities of response personnel at an incident.

- 1.15.13.6 Cost Unit Leader - Responsible for tracking expenses, analyzing cost data, making cost estimates and recommending cost-savings measures.
- 1.16 Initial Activation of the Incident Command System
 - 1.16.1 Overview
 - 1.16.1.1 An emergency incident presents a complicated and rapidly changing situation. Effective command organization will assist in the elimination of confusion at the incident and assist in accounting for all personnel operating within areas that pose immediate danger to life and health (IDLH).
 - 1.16.1.2 The IC is tasked with developing an incident action plan and managing the resources assigned to mitigate the incident.
 - 1.16.1.3 Initially, the first positions to activate are those involved in the management of operational duties (fire suppression and/or emergency medical services). This provides the IC with information on the location, progress, and current status of committed resources. Members may be divided into suppression, EMS, and support function resources.
 - 1.16.1.4 Incident Command procedures shall be initiated and a command statement made when three or more companies are investigating an incident or actively engaged in operational tasks.
 - 1.16.1.5 This makes it perfectly clear to all units enroute and on-scene, that someone has established "Command" and that any subsequent unit actions or observations must be communicated and coordinated through "Command".
 - 1.16.1.6 Early establishment of command provides the basic infrastructure for effective deployment and accountability of resources.
 - 1.16.1.7 Routine medical calls do not require formal implementation and announcement of the ICS. It is inferred that the officer from the suppression function dispatched to the call will assume the responsibilities of the IC (additional resources, notifications, etc). The EMS provider will be free to manage patient care.
 - 1.16.1.8 On single unit responses, the officer in charge will be responsible for all ICS components.

- 1.16.1.9 The system should be implemented anytime the incident officer feels his or her span of control has become saturated, and the need for additional management exists.
- 1.16.1.10 Examples of such situations may include, but are not limited to:
- Vehicle accidents that require the efforts of an engine company, rescue company, and medic unit or ambulance
 - Medical calls (resulting from assaults etc.) with multiple patients and/or multi agency response
 - A brush fire where several suppression units are assigned and operating remotely from one another
 - Working structure fires of any magnitude
 - Hazardous materials incidents, including natural gas leaks
 - Technical rescue incidents involving complex or extensive operations such as building collapse, below-grade rescue, train derailment, aircraft accident, etc.
 - Marine operations
- 1.16.2 Designation of Command
- 1.16.2.1 The first arriving officer, as defined by local jurisdiction, shall advise communications that the ICS is implemented by the use of the term "command."
- 1.16.2.2 The physical location of the CP must be communicated (i.e., "*E106 on the scene, assuming Arlington Boulevard Command at the front of E428*").
- 1.16.3 Transfer of Command
- 1.16.3.1 The objective of transferring command is to strengthen the management function and provide increased support for operational resources.

1.16.3.2 Procedure for transferring command:

1.16.3.2.1 Upon the arrival of the dispatched command officer the following actions should be addressed:

- Name of command will reflect the geographical location of the incident (i.e., "*Arlington Boulevard Command*")
- Assess a suitable location to set up the incident command post
- The specific designation of command helps keep communications concise during complex incidents. The designated name of command should not change during an incident
- A clear view of the incident scene is extremely important. Sufficient space for access and egress of additional units into the area should be considered
- The standard radio designation of "command" stays with the IC throughout an incident regardless of whether the IC is a company officer or a chief officer, and is automatically transferred as the position of IC is transferred
- The chief officer assuming command shall contact the current IC face-to-face if possible, which is why it is imperative for the initial command location to be announced

1.16.3.2.2 Prior to assuming command, the following information should be obtained from the initial IC:

- What was the situation?
- What is the current situation?
- What are the strategy and tactics?
- What units are committed and where?
- What units are available?
- Any obvious safety concerns.

1.16.3.3 The first arriving officer who has initiated an offensive attack and plans to transfer command must remain cognizant of the fact that they are still in command until the transfer of command has been confirmed.

1.16.3.4 The first arriving officer (initial IC) must complete an initial size-up. If in a condition of investigation, the officer will in most cases retain command. When the initial actions call for an aggressive attack, the first officer will advise the chief of the need for transfer of command, typically via the radio.

1.16.3.5 The transfer of command is complete when it is confirmed and announced.

- 1.16.4 Staging
- 1.16.4.1 One of the first responsibilities of the IC at an emergency incident is to identify the need for and request additional alarms or specific resources.
- 1.16.4.2 Efficient management of fire and rescue resources assigned to an incident may require the establishment of a staging area for those resources not committed to incident operations.
- 1.16.4.3 Staging describes a standard system for assembling apparatus and personnel before assignment at an incident. The staging manager shall report to the Operations Chief. The Operations Chief shall designate the staging area.
- 1.16.4.4 On incidents where the Operations Section is not filled, the IC shall be responsible for staging.
- 1.16.4.5 The staging area location shall be designated by the appropriate command officer in an area remote from, but easily accessible to, the incident scene.
- 1.16.4.6 Staged units should reach the incident within three minutes of receiving an assignment. Reflex time must be kept to a minimum.
- 1.16.4.7 The IC or Operations Chief has the option to assign the staging manager. In the absence of such an assignment, the first engine company officer to arrive at the staging area shall assume or assign the role of staging manager. Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, a single crew member or the entire crew may be used to manage the staging or base function of the incident.
- 1.16.4.8 For clarification purposes, a Base Area manager will be typically assigned at incidents that are large-scale and long-term. Base will also be established at structure fires where the staging area is located separate from the apparatus, such as at a high-rise building or shopping mall fire. Base is the location at which the apparatus is parked. Base reports to Logistics, or the IC.
- 1.16.4.9 Due to the limited number of truck and rescue companies, only engine company officers or crew members shall serve as staging managers.
- 1.16.4.10 If the other members from the designated staging manager's company are reassigned, they shall be tracked within the Accountability System.

- 1.16.4.11 The Staging Manager shall compile a log of available apparatus and personnel.
- 1.16.4.12 The Staging Manager shall report to the Operations Chief or IC if the Operations Section has not been established. The Staging Area manager shall remain on the Command Channel but must also monitor the tactical channel. Units in Staging will remain on the command channel until deployed to operational areas at which time they will switch to the assigned Tactical Channel. The Staging Manager will be responsible for units who are arriving on the scene and have not yet received a tactical assignment.
- 1.16.4.13 Units coming out of Rehab will contact the Staging Manager when released for another assignment. See Sections 1.19.7 and 1.19.8.
- 1.16.4.14 Effective utilization of the staging procedures will:
- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene and enhance the accountability of personnel
 - Allow time for command to evaluate conditions before assigning companies
 - Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate assignment that is more effective by command (**Note:** In some cases apparatus will be located at Base; therefore, the proper complement of equipment should be taken with the crew based upon their assignment)
 - The Base Manager should begin organizing units by function, and parking them in an orderly fashion. This would include parking units on diagonals along one side of the street to allow for easy egress, and to keep a travel lane open. Parking all the engines, trucks, medics, and rescue in groups of like vehicles, helps facilitate the operation
- 1.16.4.15 Under normal staging operations, the Staging Manager shall advise the Operations Chief (or IC when Operations has not been assigned) as to what resources remain in the staging; the operations officer shall determine if additional resources are needed and will make the request to communications. The Staging Manager must also keep the command post apprised of changes in the availability of units in staging.

- 1.16.4.16 When the IC or Operations Chief has identified a minimum level of resources to remain available in staging or base, the staging or base manager must maintain an open line of communications with Rehab in order to know the timeframe of the availability of units. When resources cannot be replenished from those already on scene, Staging shall keep the command post aware of the shortage of ready units.
- 1.16.4.17 As the Operations Chief determines the need for resources, the Operations Chief shall contact staging and request the specific resources needed, giving the location where companies are required and the tactical channel. The Staging Manager shall then relay that information to the units that will fulfill the assignment.
- 1.17 Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)
 - 1.17.1 The IC is responsible to ensure that the RIT function has been assigned as defined in the Rapid Intervention Team Command and Operational Procedures. The unit assigned as the RIT shall announce on the tactical channel their arrival on the scene and confirm the assignment and location.
 - 1.17.2 The IC must be proactive in increasing the level of RIT capability based on the dynamics of the incident.
- 1.18 Personnel Accountability System
 - 1.18.1 Personnel accountability must be an integral part of the command process.
 - 1.18.2 All supervisors shall maintain a constant accountability of the position and function of all members assigned to operate under their supervision.
 - 1.18.3 The accountability of all personnel operating at any incident scene will be in accordance with the Accountability Chapter of this manual.
 - 1.18.4 All personnel, when involved in operations in the IDLH or that require the use of SCBA, shall operate as a member of a team. That team must maintain contact with each other at all times by sight, voice, and/or touch. Each team member should also have a portable radio to allow immediate contact with his or her supervisor.

1.19 Rehabilitation Area

- 1.19.1 Extensive fire and/or rescue operations can affect the physiological condition of emergency personnel. Command officers operating on an incident must maintain an awareness of the condition of the personnel working under them, and initiate the establishment of a rehabilitation area to prevent excessive fatigue and exhaustion.
- 1.19.2 The Medical Unit Leader is responsible for providing an organized response to the rehabilitation needs of the personnel operating on an incident.
- 1.19.3 A Medical Unit may be established whenever deemed appropriate by the IC to meet the needs of operational personnel.
- 1.19.4 The major factors of consideration shall be to provide for medical evaluation, food and fluid replacement, and protection from the elements for those personnel engaged in incident operations.
- 1.19.5 A Medical Unit shall be established early during an incident whenever extreme conditions exist.
- 1.19.6 The Medical Unit Leader shall ensure that personnel are rehabilitated within the parameters and criteria outlined in the NOVA Regional Fire Departments Rehabilitation Operations Book (when issued).
- 1.19.7 The Rehab manager reassigns rehabilitated personnel to the Staging manager when ready for deployment. Members should NOT be assigned to Staging until Rehab ensures the crew is ready to re-engage, i.e., cylinders full, tools ready, etc.
- 1.19.8 It is recognized that units will become available from Rehab and may receive another assignment without formally reporting back to Staging. Units also may report to Staging via radio without physically reporting to the Staging area. For example, a unit may complete the Rehab process, become available for assignment, report to Staging by radio, and remain near the Rehab area awaiting next orders by radio.

1.20 Personnel and Equipment Management

- 1.20.1 Resources are the combination of personnel and equipment used on tactical incident operations. These resources must be managed according to the incident's requirements.

- 1.20.2 Unit officers shall report to their designated supervisor when:
- Assignment is completed
 - Unable to complete assignment
 - There is a safety problem
 - Additional resources are required to complete assignment
- 1.20.3 This will assist in the formulation of tactical objectives by the officer responsible for supervising the operational function.
- 1.20.4 The four status conditions that shall be used to describe resources are:
- Assigned – performing active function
 - Available – ready for assignment
 - Out-of-service – not ready for assignment
 - In transition from one location to another
- 1.21 Instructions for units dispatched and reporting to the incident scene.
- 1.21.1 Units responding on mutual boxes shall mark “enroute” by voice to the controlling jurisdiction’s communications center. The transmission is to be made on the assigned operating channel for first alarm units. Greater alarm units typically will be assigned to the Command channel. Units should also confirm their response order, i.e., “Engine 206 is enroute to Box 7109 as Third-due due Engine.” Units are confirming their dispatch order, not assigning themselves to a position. ~~If a unit is substituted for another, the dispatcher will confirm the position in the assignment, i.e., “Engine 410 is on the box as Third due, Engine 206 you are now Fourth due, Engine 428, go in service”.~~
- 1.21.2 First-alarm units mark on the scene **verbally** indicating your position and function based upon NOVA Operating Manual procedures, i.e., “Engine 106 has the water”, or “Engine 431 has Lobby Control”.
- 1.21.3 Greater alarm units who have received a tactical assignment must also give a verbal “on scene and confirmation of assignment on the assigned tactical channel”.

- 1.21.4 Only the company officer shall report to or communicate with the command post to receive an assignment. Units not assigned by established procedures or those units who have not received orders from command, shall report to Staging, or Base, and:
- Await orders
 - Organize and brief subordinates before beginning operations
 - Provide periodic updates on progress of assigned tasks
- 1.21.5 Administrative staff officers and chief officers responding to the incident shall report to the command post for assignment.
- 1.21.6 Agency representatives from assisting or cooperating agencies shall report to the liaison officer at the command post.
- 1.22 Strategic Modes
- 1.22.1 Incident strategy will fall into one of three general modes:
- 1.22.2 **Offensive Mode:** Situation that requires immediate action and commitment of resources to the fire building. This may include interior or exterior operations.
- 1.22.2.1 When operating in an Offensive Mode or Strategy, officers must make a decision on their command position. Either the officer will be investigating, or attacking.
- 1.22.2.2 If in a condition of investigation, the officer will in most cases retain command. For example, "Engine 108 is on scene, nothing showing and investigating with a crew of 3, retaining command."
- 1.22.2.3 When the situation calls for units to become operationally engaged, the first officer will advise the Chief of the need for transfer of command. The situation report will reflect the actions of the first unit. "Engine 203 is on scene, fire from 3 windows, second floor advancing a 1-¾ inch. Advise the Chief I need to transfer command". The Chief will then assign command to another unit on the scene or simply retain command if arriving momentarily.
- 1.22.2.4 The first-due chief must make the decision whether to assign command to another unit or to announce that he will be assuming command upon arrival. Command will not automatically be transferred to the second-due engine.

- 1.22.2.5 The IC and/or Operations Chief, as well as supervisors down the line, must continue to assess the structure, fire conditions, and progress of the offensive attack to determine if units are operating in the appropriate mode.
- 1.22.2.6 Division, Group, and Unit officers must keep their respective supervisors advised on conditions in their area of responsibility.
- 1.22.2.7 The IC must not hesitate to change from an offensive to defensive mode when indicated. This must be a decisive and rapid transition.
- 1.22.3 **Defensive Mode:** This is essentially a holding action used to keep the incident from spreading and protecting exposures until additional resources arrive. The defensive mode also is appropriate when the incident cannot be controlled and the operation must protect exposures until the threat is reduced or eliminated. Typically, command will not be transferred in this mode except on the arrival of the chief.
- 1.22.3.1 Once adequate resources are in place, the mode may transition to an offensive exterior, or even limited interior offensive mode.
- 1.22.4 **Transition Mode:** This mode is simply moving from an offensive to a defensive strategy, or defensive to offensive strategy, based on constant size-up and risk benefit analysis by the IC.
- 1.22.4.1 Strong command and control must exist and be maintained when transitioning between modes of operation.
- 1.22.4.2 It is during the transitional period that a heavy commitment of resources should be expected. Units that were engaged in offensive operations will be involved in an orderly retreat while other units are in the process of setting up for defensive operations concurrently. A "PAR" check must be completed prior to commencing defensive operations.
- 1.23 Two-In, Two-Out
- 1.23.1 The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Commission (VOSH) enacted legislation that establishes parameters for minimum staffing levels during initial firefighting operations. These parameters focus on the minimum level of personnel who must be on the scene before committing personnel to enter any hazardous area where there is immediately dangerous to the life and health (IDLH) of firefighters.

- 1.23.2 The term “two-in, two-out” refers to incident scene operations where the minimum number of firefighters (two) may enter an IDLH while a minimum number of firefighters (two) remain outside the IDLH area as the “standby team” to monitor the activity of the interior crew and effect rescue if necessary.
- 1.23.3 This minimum number applies during the initial stages of operations and may be increased, but never decreased, unless justified by the unit officer in charge (OIC) based on a known or perceived life hazard.
- 1.23.4 The two-in, two-out rule is applicable to those incidents (during the initial stages of operations) where there may be a hazard to firefighters entering the IDLH area. Effective and efficient pre-planning will allow greater coordination of effort during the few times insufficient staffing is immediately available during initial operations. It is imperative that all firefighters operating within any hazardous area always operate in teams of two or more; maintain constant communication with each team member through visual, audible, physical, or safety device; and maintain close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of an emergency. Therefore, units with staffing of less than four members shall not enter an IDLH until another fire department unit arrives, unless the OIC has confirmed or identified a perceived life hazard.
- 1.23.5 Officers must apply effective size up skills before committing a crew with less than four members on-scene. If indicators of life hazard are present, rescue and support functions may be initiated.
- 1.24 The initial IC and Operational Build-Up
- 1.24.1 The first-arriving officer, as defined by local jurisdiction is the initial IC.
- 1.24.2 The initial IC is responsible for performing the functions of command, which are:
- Arrive, assume, and announce command
 - Evaluate situation (size-up)
 - Communications
 - Identify strategy, develop an action plan
 - Deployment
 - Organization
 - Review, evaluate, and revise action plan
 - Continue, transfer, and terminate command

- 1.24.3 Under most circumstances, the initial IC will be the officer of the first-due engine company. This officer shall give a name to command and identify him or herself by that name. For example, "E439 will be holding Leesburg Pike Command." Until such time as command is transferred, the unit in command shall identify themselves on the radio as "Command." Once command is transferred, the unit will revert to its unit designator. In this case, Engine 439.
- 1.24.4 If the rescue company or truck company happens to arrive first at the incident, the officer should consider the arrival time of the first engine prior to assuming command.
- 1.24.5 If the engine company is delayed, the truck or rescue company officer is obligated to assume command and to direct incoming units. The unit in command should then notify the first-due chief of the need to transfer command.
- 1.24.6 Due to the limited number of rescue and truck companies responding and their specialized functions, engine company officers should routinely handle the incident command responsibilities.
- 1.24.7 In most instances, the command officer is only a matter of minutes from being on the scene. When the first engine advises the need to transfer command and the Chief will be delayed, the Chief will assign command to a later arriving engine officer. The company officer placed in the command position will have the balance of his/her crew available for tasks. The officer should have a general guideline or plan in place in anticipation of this situation. Crew unity should be maintained whenever possible. Considerations and options include:
- The experience of the crew
 - The priorities of the incident
 - Assist the officer with command post functions
 - In the event the members are of equal rank and assigned to a task without the company officer, a crew leader must be appointed
 - Assign the crew to the back-up line, place them under the supervisor of the initial attack line
- 1.24.8 Each situation will dictate different needs. Appropriate supervision is the objective. For example, assigning two inexperienced firefighters to an attack line to a basement fire is not appropriate.

- 1.24.9 The initial IC will be operating on all three organizational levels, strategic, tactical, and task, so he/she must be efficient in the use of their time.
- 1.24.10 The officer will state that they will be “command” and assign a name based on the geographic location of the incident. For example, an incident at 200 Prince Street would be “Prince Street Command.” By naming command, confusion can be reduced during peak incident periods (e.g., thunder storms) where several “working” events are not uncommon.
- 1.24.11 The initial IC should not normally need to make assignments to other units unless conditions require a change from the assignments outlined in the Firefighting and Emergency Operations Manuals and S.O.Ps. On those incidents that are not covered by standing procedures, the initial IC will need to make unit assignments.
- 1.24.12 Command responsibility rests with the initial arriving officer until the officer who will assume command arrives on the incident scene.
- 1.24.13 Transferring command to a responding officer not on the scene creates a gap in command and compromises incident management. To prevent this gap in command function, the command position cannot be transferred to an officer who is not on the scene, including the battalion chief.
- 1.24.14 In situations where command is transferred via the radio, both officers shall confirm the transfer. Command may be transferred only once at the company officer level.
- 1.24.15 If the second arriving engine arrives on the scene and it is unclear if command has been established, the officer shall contact the Chief to clarify the command assignment.
- 1.24.16 It is critical that the initial IC as well as the chief officer, who will be assuming command, continually perform a risk benefit analysis of all tasks to be accomplished on every incident. Considerations should include:
- Life Safety (First Priority) - Risk their lives in a calculated manner to save a life
 - Incident Control (Second Priority) - Place themselves in situations with moderate risk to save property
 - Property Conservation (Third Priority) - Risk nothing to try and save lives or property already lost

1.24.17 The initial tactics and tasks at the incident are assigned and take place in rapid fashion. It is especially important for the initial IC to consider personnel safety factors and tactical coordination when making these assignments (i.e., no opposing attack lines, no master stream operations while members are operating on the interior etc.)

1.24.18 The following actions establish the basic infrastructure for effective incident command as the incident progresses:

- Voiced on-scene/situation report, which shall include a reconnaissance lap around the structure or a view of the rear whenever possible
- Size-up and risk/benefit analysis
- Formal announcement of the establishment of command
- Identification of the overall strategy, mode of operation (offensive, defensive, etc.) and tactical assignment
- Assessment and request of additional resources
- Effective tracking of tactical assignments, units and personnel
- Transfer of command upon the arrival of a ranking officer

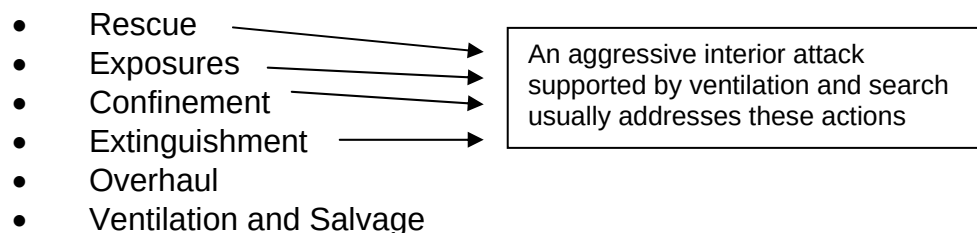
1.25 Size-Up

1.25.1 When the initial assessment of an incident has been completed, management of the incident begins. Size-up is the foundation of incident management. Decisions made during size-up determine strategic goals and tactical objectives identify the operations necessary to achieve the goals and objectives.

1.25.2 Key considerations when sizing up an incident are:

- What is the problem?
- Where is the problem?
- If fire, where is the fire going?
- Who or what is in danger because of this incident?
- Safety considerations
- Additional resource needs

1.25.3 Based upon the initial size-up, the IC should set objectives at fires within the following areas:



- 1.25.4 Factors that affect establishing of objectives at mass casualty incidents would include:
- Severity of Injuries
 - Access to Victims
 - Number of Victims
 - Location
 - Weather
 - Accessibility to Scene
- 1.25.5 In conducting the initial size-up and setting operational objectives, the IC must be concerned with the possibility of incident escalation (increased seriousness or complexity), and shall formulate a plan to meet this potential.
- 1.25.6 When escalation occurs, the IC shall activate additional component functions of the ICS as required. **Safety and accountability of personnel shall be given prime consideration on every incident.** This system will allow ICs to use available resources most effectively to accomplish the primary operational objectives.
- 1.26 Radio Reports
- 1.26.1 Elements of the On-Scene Report:
- Water supply information when applicable
 - Unit identification and location
 - Description of the incident conditions including:
 - Building height, occupancy type, and construction.
 - Hazardous Materials event (to include staging position and Hot Zone)
 - Multi-vehicle accident with number of vehicles
 - Incident condition (e.g., fire showing from two windows on the first floor)

1.26.1.1 Example of an On-Scene Report

- *“Engine 611 to Loudoun, Engine 611 is on the scene, Side Adam, three-story garden apartment, wood-frame construction, with fire showing on the second floor. We laid a line from 201 N Furman Stree..”*

Note: there are times when the water supply statement will be made separate from and prior to the “on-scene” report. In those cases, the layout location can be made directly to the second-due engine without having the message relayed by the communications center.

1.26.2 Elements of the initial Situation Report

- Size-up the situation
- Describe the extent of the problem
- Give a brief description of actions that you will be taking and orders for other units arriving on-scene if conditions require a change from the assignments outlined in the Firefighting and Emergency Operations Manuals and S.O.Ps
- Initiate requests for additional resources or greater alarm as determined during the size-up
- Announcement if command will be retained or transferred through the Chief

1.26.2.1 Example of a Situation Report:

- *“Engine 611 Loudoun, we have fire from 3 windows on the second floor on the Baker side. I’m establishing Sterling Boulevard Command. We will be advancing an attack line to the second floor with a crew of two. Transmit the 2nd alarm. Advise the Chief I need to transfer command.”*

1.26.2.2 Additional Situation Reports. All officers and members have a responsibility to notify command of any pertinent information or unsafe conditions that have not yet been reported. For example, a structure is three stories on side Charlie and only two stories on side Adam. The first engine may have indicated that they were on the scene of a 2-story building. When the first unit gets to the Charlie side, the difference in number of stories is critical, especially if fire is indicated on the lowest level. People showing on the rear would be just another example of critical information that should be transmitted when discovered.

- 1.26.2.3 The initial IC identifies the initial strategic and tactical tasks with the situation report. This is why the situation report plays such an important role at the front end of the operation.
- 1.26.3 Elements of the Progress Report
 - 1.26.3.1 Progress reports are radio reports that provide information on the evolution of an incident. Progress reports may indicate that an incident is continuing to escalate or is being brought under control. Progress reports should also represent a “picture” of the activities underway and the degree of success of the operation.
 - 1.26.3.2 The first “progress report” should be given at approximately 10 minutes into an operation. Subsequent progress reports should be given after each “PAR” check and can be much shorter and to the point than the first. However, if the overall strategic mode has changed, the format for the first progress report should be repeated.
 - 1.26.3.3 All progress reports shall be given on the command channel once that channel is established.
 - 1.26.3.4 Progress reports are given at least every 10 minutes or more frequently as necessary. Progress reports are intended to keep officers and companies informed on incident status as well as to provide a recorded documentation of the incident. Units that are still responding or who have arrived at Staging or Base should pay particular attention to progress reports in order to have an understanding of the situation before becoming engaged.

1.26.3.5 A template for the first progress report is provided below along with an example:

- Contact controlling communications center
- Confirm the address or location of the incident
- Define commitment of resources
- Define the hazard
- Describe the building or involved area
- Define strategic mode
- Status of search
- Define extent of involvement or hazard
- Brief description of major tactical operations
- Describe the level of containment of the fire or hazard
- Describe the fireground layout or operational area
- Estimate time prediction for holding units

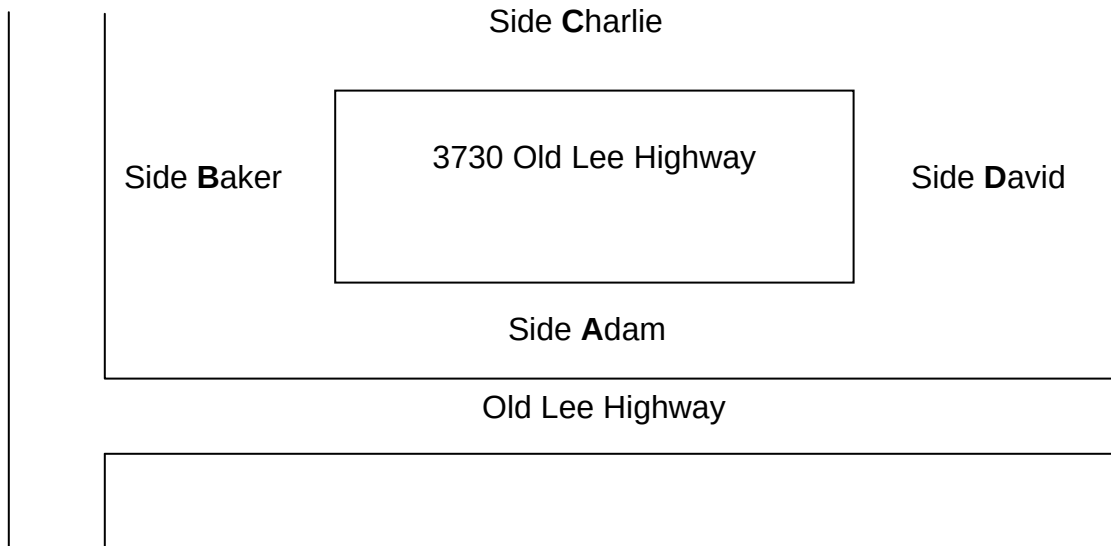
Note: the first progress report is quite comprehensive. This provides the best picture of the incident and its development.

- Example of an initial progress report: “Duke Street Command to Alexandria. At 1203 Duke, we are using all hands from the first alarm for a fire on the third floor. Building is a four-story multiple dwelling, 50’ x 100’, of wood-frame construction. We are in an offensive strategy. Primary search is negative on fire floor and still underway on the floor above. Fire is on one floor with 25% involvement. We have three lines stretched and two in operation. Horizontal ventilation is underway. The fire has been contained, but not yet under control. Exposure Adam is the street, Baker is a similar building, Charlie a courtyard and David a three-story office. We will be holding all units in excess of an hour”.

Note: at times the progress report can be shortened. For example, if there are no exposures, then simply say, “There are no exposures”, rather than individually addressing each side.

- Example of follow-up progress reports: “Duke Street Command to Alexandria. We are continuing to use all hands. Fire is still not under control but it is contained. Primary search is complete and negative. Continuing to hold all units for more than an hour”.
- “Duke Street Command to Alexandria. Fire is under control. We are evaluating resource needs and will be releasing some units in the next 15 minutes”.

- 1.27 Identification of All Building Sides and Geographic Areas
- 1.27.1 Common terminology is a founding principle of ICS. The ICS uses alphabetical phonetic identifiers for the designation of building sides, quadrants, and exposures.
- 1.27.2 Used alone, the alphabetical letters are easily misunderstood over the radio. Therefore, the “police type” phonetic alphabet shall be used for radio communications.
- 1.27.3 The phonetic alphabet used by communications centers and dispatchers are listed below.
- 1.27.3.1 Adam, Baker, Charlie, David, Edward, Frank, George, Henry, Item, John, King, Lincoln, Mary, Nancy, Ocean, Paul, Queen, Robert, Sam, Tom, Union, Victor, William, Xray, Young, Zebra.
- 1.27.4 Determination of Building’s Exterior Sides
- 1.27.4.1 Side **A**dam: The side of the building, which is utilized as the building address. In most cases, this would be the side that includes the main entrance or foyer.
- 1.27.4.2 Side **B**aker: The left side of the building, when facing Side Adam.
- 1.27.4.3 Side **C**harlie: The opposite side of Side Adam.
- 1.27.4.4 Side **D**avid: The right side of the building, when facing Side Adam.

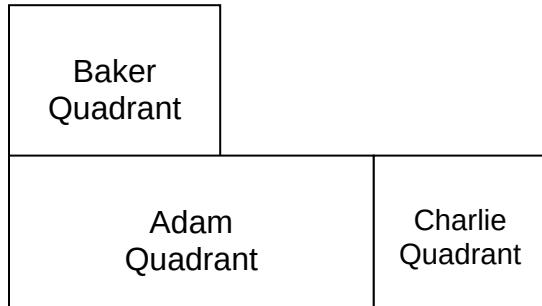


- 1.27.5 In those situations where the building location or configuration is unusual, the officer shall designate the sides of the building using a landmark, (e.g., parking lot, swimming pool, etc.).
- 1.27.6 All radio transmissions shall reflect the appropriate side or exposure. (Examples: "The command post will be located on Side Adam". "Engine 403 on the scene, heavy smoke on Side Charlie".)
- 1.27.7 When it is necessary, place a unit on the corner of a building to maintain clarity, denote the corner by using the intersection of the two building sides. (Example: "Truck 403, set up on the Baker/Charlie corner".)
- 1.28 Geographic Designations
- 1.28.1 Interior Identification Process
- 1.28.1.1 The interior of the buildings shall be divided into quadrants A, B, C and D, starting at the left front of the building. Again, the phonetic alphabet shall be used when identifying the quadrants. The floor number shall be used to identify the level of the building. (Example: "Engine 403, check the 5th Floor, quadrants Adam and Baker".)



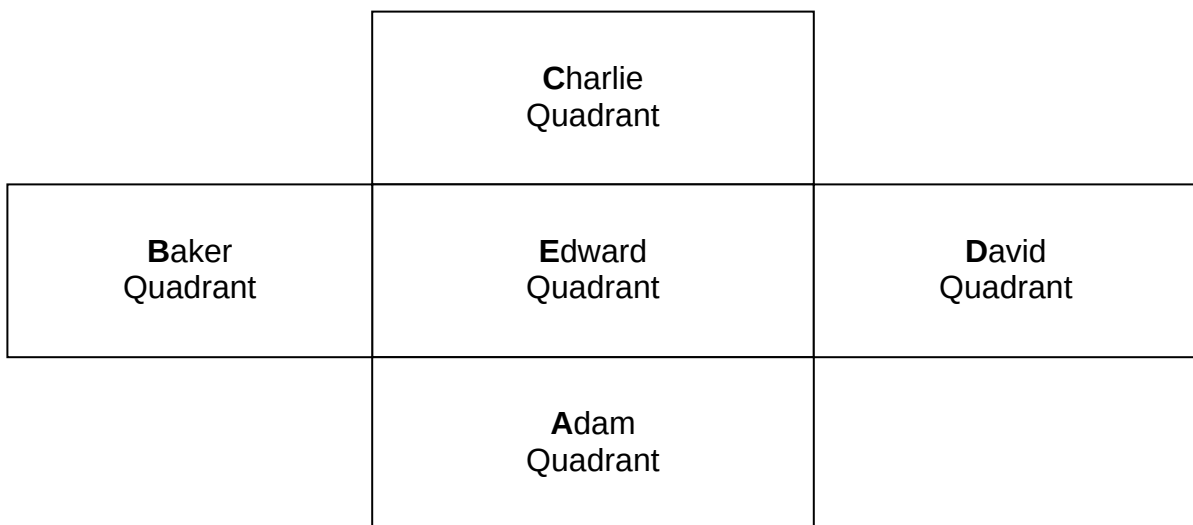
10330 Main Street

- 1.28.2 The wings of the building may be broken down into quadrants or sections by the officer in charge whenever this will facilitate operations. All company and command officers must be advised of the quadrant designations.



9503 Blake Lane

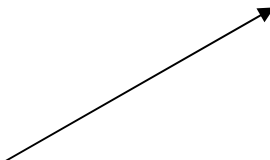
BLAKE LANE



2900 Sherwood Hall Lane

SHERWOOD HALL LANE

DIVISION 5	Fifth Floor
DIVISION 4	Fourth Floor
DIVISION 3	Third Floor
DIVISION 2	Second Floor
DIVISION 1	First Floor
Sub-Floors	

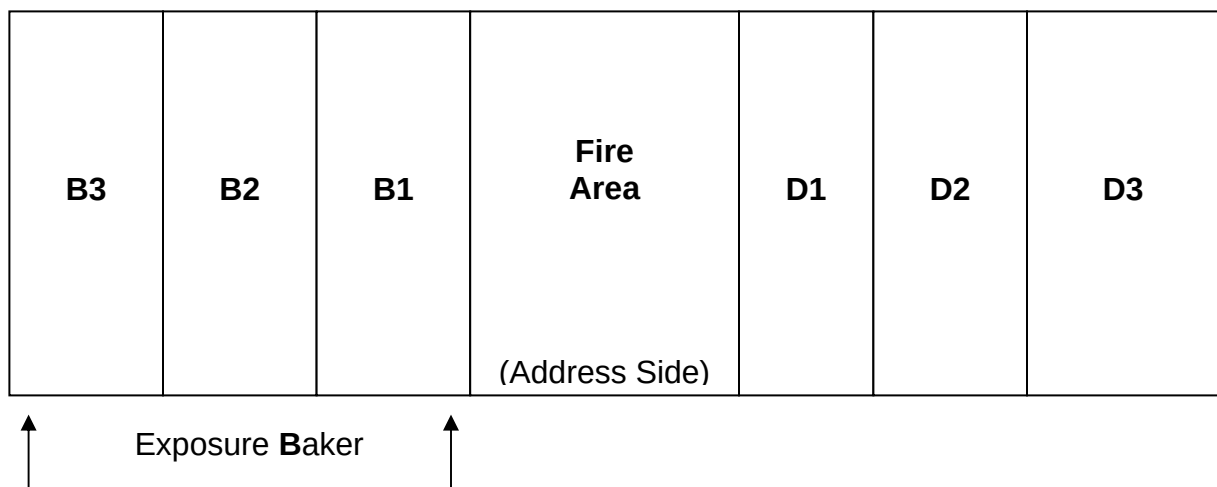
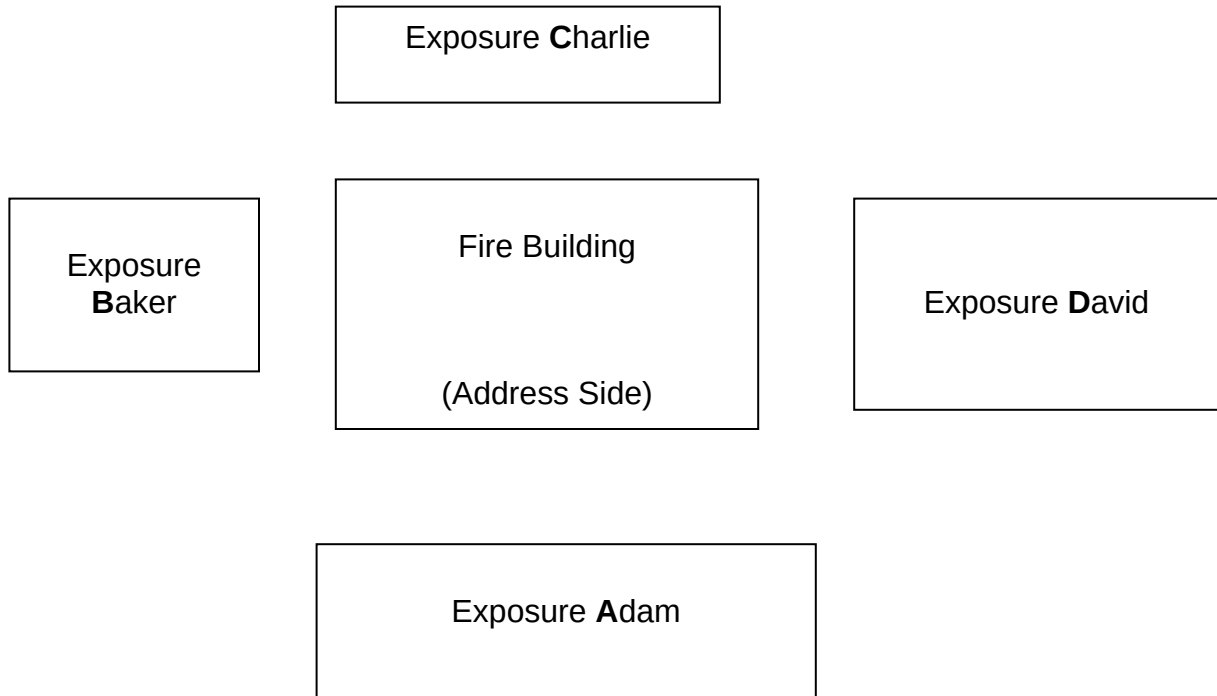


Sub-floors will be designated as the actual name of the sub-floor.

Examples: Basement, Mezzanine, P1, P2

1.30 Exposure Identification

- 1.30.1 When referring to an exterior exposure, the exposure closest to the fire building side shall be used to identify the exposure.



May refer to entire exposure or individual unit as necessary.

1.31 Summary

1.31.1 The Incident Command System has been developed to provide for an organized response and deployment of resources to mitigate an inherently chaotic and unorganized event.

1.31.2 Appropriate and proficient application of the ICS is a direct result of frequent familiarization and review, as well as the routine use of the components of the system.

2 TACTICAL COMMAND OPERATIONS

2.1 Definition of tactical command

2.1.1 Tactical command is a function on a fireground or other incident that is assigned to provide close supervision and direction to a group of companies assigned to a particular function or area. Group or Division Supervisors typically operate at the tactical level of Command. However, Branch Directors may be required to operate at the tactical command level as well. The tactical commander has overall authority and control of their assigned area or function. A Chief Officer best fulfills this function. This allows the individual company officer the ability to remain in direct control with the company. However, it is recognized that there will be occasions that will require the position to be assigned to a company level officer. When that is the case, careful consideration should be to the experience of the individual selected. It should be noted that Tactical Command is a function and not a title used for communication. For example, a Chief may be in charge of the 18th floor at a high-rise fire. This Chief is operating as a tactical commander whose radio designator is Division 18.

2.1.2 The purpose of tactical command is to provide a level of command or supervision that:

- Provides closer supervision and direction by an experienced command-level officer in dangerous or complex operational areas
- Has the advantage of being close to the operation for enhanced command and control
- Provides for a direct ongoing tactical size-up for a specified operational area or task
- Provides a level of supervision with the sole perspective of coordinating multiple companies without the addition of unit-level responsibility.
- Enhances the level of safety in the operation by providing oversight by a single individual responsible for maintaining a broader ongoing evaluation of the situation.

2.1.3 A classic example of tactical command is the 2nd-due chief commanding the fire attack function at a high-rise fire. This chief is responsible immediately for direction and supervision of the operations on the fire floor. Initially, this will involve directing and coordinating the work being done by two engines and one truck.

- 2.2 The need for a chief in tactical command.
- 2.2.1 Assigning officers to tactical command positions increases and strengthens the decentralized command structure of the IC. Complex and dangerous operations should be provided with a close level of supervision or oversight. As members become engaged in these operations, it becomes imperative that an individual, who is not also occupied with task-level supervision or direct involvement in the work at hand, be assigned to provide ongoing evaluation of the progress being made as well as with the continual size-up of the situation. Even though a tactical commander is close to the action it is important that they not get involved in the task-level activity. The tactical commander is responsible for managing and coordinating activities in their area of responsibility, not to perform them. He/she must keep the IC informed of first-hand conditions in his/her area of responsibility.
- 2.2.2 It is the responsibility of the officer in a tactical command position to provide the oversight with safety in mind. Firefighter and civilian safety during the operation is of paramount importance. This officer must maintain a continuing tactical size-up while the operation progresses. A tactical commander must make adjustments to the operation under his direction based upon the continuous size-up.
- 2.2.3 This individual must be cognizant of activities proximate to his/her area of responsibility. Information gained simply from radio traffic in other areas of the incident is part of the tactical size-up.
- 2.2.4 These officers must be skilled in recognizing critical cues. Cues are signs and symptoms that help you make a correct diagnosis. This skill is the ability to identify something as typical or non-typical and is gained through personal experience. This is the basis for an “experienced” officer in these roles. The novice decision-maker cannot be supplied with rules that replace experience. The experienced officer does not try to choose the “most” correct course of action, but instead uses cues developed through experience to choose the actions that best satisfy the needs of the situation.
- 2.2.5 The benefit of assigning a Chief Officer to this function is that they are more accustomed to managing multiple unit incidents with a broader operational perspective. It also allows the individual company officer the ability to remain in direct control with the company.

- 2.3 Recommended equipment
- 2.3.1 Personal safety equipment should include full PPE, SCBA, portable radio, handlight, and cell phone (if available).
- 2.3.2 Tools that are needed include an appropriate command board, clipboard and pad of paper, pen, pencil, and markers.
- 2.4 Aide to a Tactical Commander (TC)
- 2.4.1 It is recommended that an individual be assigned to operate as the aide to the TC. It is imperative, if the tactical command assignment will require entry into a dangerous or IDLH environment. This individual must be highly competent with communications and accountability equipment and procedures, capable of accurately tracking assignments of resources, knowledgeable in firefighting and rescue operations, and able to think independently.
- 2.4.2 The aide must have the same safety equipment as the TC. In addition, the aide should also carry a forcible entry tool for team safety.
- 2.5 Responsibilities of a tactical commander
- 2.5.1 A tactical commander has six primary responsibilities:
- Safety and accountability of the crews operating under his command
 - Continuous size-up of the tactical assignment
 - Provide close supervision, direction, and coordination
 - Continuous evaluation of operational effectiveness
 - Monitoring overall ongoing incident progress (this may require monitoring a different radio channel)
 - Update next level of supervision with regular progress reports
- 2.5.2 In order to effectively fulfill the role of tactical commander, this officer will often need to make face-to-face contact with the units operating under his command and personally observe the situation. This is particularly important for the officer who is in charge of a division or group. An example would be the officer-in-charge of the roof division. This officer must periodically make short forays into the area of responsibility to observe and assess fire conditions, structural integrity, and operational progress; provide direction, and make adjustments to operating positions. The commander who is responsible for a branch is less likely to have need for the personal observation within the assigned divisions or groups.

- 2.6 Safety and accountability of the crews.
 - 2.6.1 A TC must monitor the situation and environment in which the crews under his command are operating. The individual unit officers continue to be responsible for the safety of their own crews. A TC has responsibility for the assigned operational area. Maintaining radio contact with the units and well as monitoring radio traffic is an important component in crew safety for the TC.
 - 2.6.2 Tactical Commanders should get the Passports for each assigned unit from the command post when receiving assignment. Tactical Commanders are responsible for accounting for all units assigned to them. It is recommended that an aide be assigned to assist the TC with accountability and communications.
- 2.7 Continuous size-up of the tactical area.
 - 2.7.1 Once briefed on the overall strategy by the next higher level of supervision currently in place, tactical size-up must be carried out as soon as the “chief” arrives at the assigned area. This entails gathering information on the status of the situation as it currently exists via radio traffic, face-to-face communications with officers operating in the area, and perhaps most importantly, personal reconnaissance.
- 2.8 Providing close supervision and coordination.
 - 2.8.1 Complex and dangerous operations should be provided with a close level of supervision or oversight. The TC is in command of all operations within the assigned area or function and is responsible to change or adjust tactical assignments as necessary. As units become engaged in these operations, it becomes imperative that an overall evaluation of progress and continual size-up of the situation be maintained. The officer in the tactical command position is not occupied with task-level supervision or direct involvement in the work, but is responsible to provide this close level of coordination.

- 2.9 Continuous evaluation of operational effectiveness.
 - 2.9.1 The TC must continuously evaluate the fire conditions, structural stability, progress, and effectiveness of the operations. The TC is in the best position to maintain a constant evaluation of the situation in the area of responsibility and focus his attention on the particular operation for which he has responsibility. It is this continual evaluation that guides the TC in making changes or adjusting tactical assignments as well as requesting additional resources as necessary.
- 2.10 Monitoring overall incident progress.
 - 2.10.1 It is important that the TC maintain an awareness of the operational progress in areas that may or may not be immediately adjacent to the TC assignment. The success or lack thereof, has a direct bearing on safety and effectiveness of the actions taken by the TC. The TC may have to monitor radio channels other than the tactical channel. An example would be the Search and Evacuation (S and E) Group/Branch operating on the floors above the fire would need to monitor the progress of fire attack in Division 16.
- 2.11 Updating the next level of supervision through regular progress reports.
 - 2.11.1 The tactical commander must keep the IC informed first-hand of conditions in their area of responsibility. The TC must give an initial report upon arrival at the assigned area of responsibility. Additional reports should be given when significant changes occur, major problems are encountered, or benchmarks are met.
- 2.12 Decision making guidelines.
 - 2.12.1 Officers assigned to tactical command positions almost always will be forced into making quick decisions with somewhat incomplete information and rapidly changing circumstances.
 - 2.12.2 The process of gaining information for decision-making is known as size-up. The size-up must be ongoing, relevant to the situation, and commensurate with their assigned area of responsibility. For example, the keys to the tactical size-up for an officer assigned to a roof division should be quite different than a tactical size-up for the search and evacuation branch.

2.13 Communications

2.13.1 Tactical commanders should make an effort to use as much face-to-face communications with their unit officers as possible. Reducing the radio traffic ultimately improves communications and keeps the channels open for critical messages. Officers must ensure they clearly understand radio channel assignments and to whom they are to report. (See appendix entitled “Transition to Command Channel with Multiple Tactical Channels”).

2.14 Some examples of tactical command positions include, but are not limited to:

- Rescue Group
- Division 18
- Division “Charlie”
- Roof Division
- Search and Evacuation Group or Branch
- Ventilation Group
- Extrication Group

2.14.1 **Note:** that some tactical command positions at times may require the officer to enter an IDLH atmosphere to evaluate conditions, assignments and progress.

3 COMMAND POST OPERATIONS

3.1 Initial Command – Company-Level Officer.

3.1.1 The following actions set the basis for effective incident command as the incident progresses:

- On-scene report
- Effective size up and risk/benefit analysis
- Provide situation report
- Retention or transfer of Command
- Assessment and request of additional resources
- Effective tracking of tactical assignments, units and personnel
- Prepare for transition of command

3.2 Transition of Command to Chief Officer.

3.2.1 Upon the arrival of the dispatched command officer (usually a battalion chief), the following actions should be addressed:

- Assessment of a suitable location to set up an incident command post
- Obtain the following information from the original Incident Commander (IC):
 - What was the situation?
 - What is the current situation?
 - What are the strategy and tactics?
 - What units are committed and where?
 - What units are available?
 - Any obvious safety concerns

3.2.2 Announce the change in command.

3.3 STRATEGIC BENCHMARKING

3.3.1 The IC must work to achieve the established incident objective through the use of an incident action plan (IAP). On most incidents, this plan is established somewhat informally. That is, no written formal IAP is developed or distributed.

3.3.2 At most incidents such as building fires, hazardous materials incidents, technical rescue incidents, and multiple casualty incidents the basic concept of addressing the five basic tactical objectives applies:

- Rescue
- Exposures
- Confinement
- Extinguishment
- Overhaul

3.3.3 A critical benchmark is that of the 10-minute event timer notification. It is at this point that the IC should evaluate the progress of operations. For example, a fire in an occupied residential occupancy should have a primary search underway as its highest priority. By the 10-minute benchmark, the search should either be completed or the IC should have heard what the progress or lack thereof is on this objective.

3.4 Locating and Establishing the Command Post

3.4.1 A visible command post is vital for managing complex incidents. Under most circumstances, the location of the command post generally shall be in a position where the IC can see the fire building or incident scene. Providing oversight of the incident and the companies operating is an integral part of the IC's responsibility.

3.4.2 Park the command vehicle where it is visible and where it gives the best position to manage the incident. Remember to keep clear of incoming apparatus. A clear view of the incident site is extremely important. Communicate the command post name and location to the dispatch center (e.g., "Assuming Main Street Command, Command Post location is on Side Adam"). It is imperative that while the command post must have a good vantage point, command vehicles MUST stay clear of tactical positions for apparatus. Adjoining driveways or yards may be a possibility as well as sidewalks.

3.4.3 It is imperative that the IC be able to focus intently on the ongoing strategy, tactics, radio communications, and unit assignments.

3.4.4 The chief must do a size-up and confer with the initial IC. Once the Chief is prepared to assume command of the incident, the decision must be made if it is best for the Chief to initially position inside the command vehicle or to set up at the rear of the vehicle. If the Chief operates outside the vehicle, the IC shall don the IC vest and set up at the rear of the vehicle. Radio headsets should be utilized to ensure that the IC can maintain full attention to the ongoing operation minimizing distractions, especially during the critical early phases of incident engagement. An aide is required to assist the IC in order to allow the IC to focus on the current strategy and implementation of the action plan.

3.5 Command Aide Duties.

3.5.1 The Command Aide has primary responsibility in support of the IC in three functional areas:

- Resource Status
- Situation Status
- Command Post Communications

Note: A single command aide may not be able to single-handedly manage all three of the primary responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the IC to ensure they are completed and to get assistance for the aide as necessary.

3.5.2 Tasks that may be required to fulfill these functions include:

- Determine and track status of resources
- Track units and members
- Anticipate need for additional FD resources based upon assignments being made
- Manage command channel communications
- Provide progress reports
- Monitor secondary tactical channels if utilized in the operation
- Anticipate and recommend logistical needs to support the operation
- Brief incoming chief officers as necessary

3.5.3 Arrival of the aide.

3.5.3.1 The aide in some cases will be in a separate vehicle than the Chief, and in other cases they will arrive together. When the aide arrives prior to the Chief, the aide shall report to the officer in command and assist the IC with the three primary duties.

- 3.5.3.2 After conferring with the IC, the command aide's primary effort should be to set up the command post, while the IC maintains focused command. The IC will determine whether to operate from the front of the vehicle or to move to the rear.
- 3.5.3.3 Once the command post is set up and ready to support communications, resource and situation tracking, both the chief and the aide may operate from the rear of the vehicle using the command board(s) and radio headsets for incident management.
- 3.5.4 Resource Status.
- 3.5.4.1 The aide must set up and manage the accountability system. Proper collection and movement of passports is a major responsibility of the command aide.
- 3.5.4.2 The aide is responsible for tracking members and units who are operating as well as those who are in staging. This includes accounting for units:
- Assigned individually as a single resource
 - Assigned to groups, divisions, or branches
 - Assigned to staging and at base
 - Still en route
- 3.5.4.3 It is a function of the aide to advise the IC as units become engaged and the remaining staged resources are depleted.
- 3.5.5 Situation Status.
- 3.5.5.1 Tracking critical tasks that need to be assigned, are underway, or already completed, is the primary activity for situation status. The aide must be thoroughly familiar with the various command boards used in managing an incident.
- 3.5.5.2 The aide must document the activities taking place at the incident. This documentation should include consideration for sketching the building outline or footprint and showing the location of apparatus.
- 3.5.5.3 Progress reports are also a part of situation status. These reports provide a verbal update of the progress of the actions being taken. They also provide a mental picture for units and officers who may be monitoring the situation. These reports are recorded and allow for recovery of the information for evaluation purposes.

- 3.5.6 Command Post Communications.
- 3.5.6.1 The aide requests, sets up, and communicates on the Command channel.
- 3.5.6.2 The role of the aide is to support the IC. The aide is not there to run the incident, make strategic or tactical decisions, or issue orders. The aide is the voice of the IC and transmits additional alarms, directions to companies, progress reports, and relays information. The aide must be proficient in the use of the radio system, cell phones, the ICS, and the accountability system.
- 3.5.6.3 Additional assistance will at times be required at the command post. The aide should point out the need for such assistance to the IC. This assistance may be in the form of a fire company, EMS unit, or staff officers. The command post support staff, under the direction of the IC, primarily will be concerned with managing additional communications functions, maintaining accountability of operational units, and documenting situation status and information.
- 3.5.6.4 Special command units are available from the various departments. These units, such as a Field Command or Field Communications Unit, also should be considered to support command operations at large-scale or long-term incidents.
- 3.6 Considerations for Arrival of Senior Chief Officers.
- 3.6.1 As an incident escalates or its complexity increases, higher ranking command officers may respond. Most agencies have procedures in place whereby higher ranking chief officers may assume command from the initial battalion chief, usually as greater alarms are requested. The same transition of command information is necessary to ensure continuity of operations.
- What was the situation?
 - What is the current situation?
 - What are the strategy and tactics?
 - What units are committed and where?
 - What units are available?
 - Any obvious safety concerns
- 3.6.2 When a higher-ranking chief arrives and is preparing to assume command, the aide should be prepared to brief the chief on situation and resource status. Once this has been accomplished, at an opportune time, the higher-ranking chief must have an update from the chief in charge before command is transferred.

- 3.7 Higher Ranking Chief Officer Acting as a Senior Advisor.
- 3.7.1 The higher ranking chief officer may decide to act as a senior advisor to the current IC instead of assuming command. In the role of senior advisor, the higher ranking chief should consider the following issues:
- Review and evaluate the incident action plan and suggest any needed changes
 - Provide ongoing review of the overall incident
 - Review the organizational structure, and suggest change or expansion to meet the incident needs
 - Provide liaison with other city/county agencies and officials, outside agencies, and property owners and tenants
 - Forecast and react to the effect this incident will have on the community
- 3.8 Assumption of Command by Higher Ranking Chief Officer.
- 3.8.1 The higher ranking chief officer may decide to assume command. When this occurs it may be appropriate to assign the previous IC (battalion chief) to a tactical position or to another position at the command post.
- 3.8.2 One option could be to assign the battalion chief to a tactical command position. This assignment would be most appropriate for moderate scale incidents deemed not likely to expand (i.e., 2nd alarm commercial building or apartment fires, etc.) but that require intermediate supervision of tactical operations.
- 3.8.3 Another option would be to assign the battalion chief to the Plans Section Chief. By assigning the original IC to the Plans Section, historical knowledge of what has taken place at the incident will be maintained at the command post. In this case, the command post support staff assigned to Resource and Situation Status would continue to assist under the Planning Section.
- 3.8.4 A third option would be to assign the battalion chief to the Operations Section Chief position. This essentially results in only an ICS position change for this individual, who would continue to address ongoing incident management.

3.8.5 This reappointment ensures seamless continuity of command, while allowing the new IC to address and focus on the overhead issues. This option should be considered for complex incidents or those that could expand to large-scale operations. As the incident expands, subsequent operational positions, (branches, divisions, and groups) would be assigned under the Operations Chief to maintain span of control.

3.9 Utilization of Extra Alarm Battalion Chiefs.

3.9.1 Additional arriving chief officers will be utilized to fill ICS general staff positions, to manage tactical units within a branch, division, or group, or to assist with command post operations.

3.10 Command Worksheets and Boards

3.10.1 Initial Incident Worksheet or Board

INITIAL INCIDENT COMMAND WORKSHEET – NOVA ICS												RIT	Staging
1st Alarm		ADDRESS:						Lobby Control:					
ENG		Tactical Channel:		Occupancy Type		Attack Stairwell:							
ENG		Command Channel:				Evacuation Stairwell:							
ENG		Channel:											
TRK		Floor, Division, Group, Branch		Floor, Division, Group, Branch		Floor, Division, Group, Branch		Floor, Division, Group, Branch					
TRK		OIC, Supervisor, or Director		OIC, Supervisor, or Director		OIC, Supervisor, or Director		OIC, Supervisor, or Director					
RSC		Unit	Task	Unit	Task	Unit	Task	Unit	Task				
M or A													
EMS													
2 nd BC													
2nd Alarm													
ENG													
ENG													
ENG													
TRK													
RSC													
M or A													
EMS													
SAF													
BC		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search					
Deputy													
Request	✓	Request	✓	Request	✓	Request	✓	Task	✓	Task	✓	Par Check	✓
Gas Co.		Fire Investigator		Police		VDOT		Elevator Status		CO Level Check		20 Minute	
Power Co.		Building Inspect.		Light/Air		Red Cross		Utility Control		EMS/Rehab		40 Minute	
Water Dept.		Health Inspect.		Canteen(s)		Building Eng.		Water Supply		HVAC		60 Minute	

3.10.1.1 An Initial Incident Command Worksheet has been developed to assist the IC in organizing and tracking units and information in the early phases of an incident. The Initial Incident Command Worksheet layout is duplicated on the Unit Command Boards. The Unit Command Boards also have a strip of Velcro on the back for attaching unit passports.

3.10.1.2 Incident unit and tactical assignment tracking must occur from the outset of incident operations. This begins with the first arriving unit officer establishing command and transfers to the dispatched command officer (battalion chief) after arrival and interface with the unit officer.

An Initial Incident Command Worksheet has been developed to standardize the process of initial scene management. This form identifies critical incident information in a fill-in format and allows for the tracking of up to two alarms of dispatch, initial division/group assignments and tactical/ functional considerations. It is intended that this form would be used by the IC early in the incident prior to the set up of the command area by the command aide.

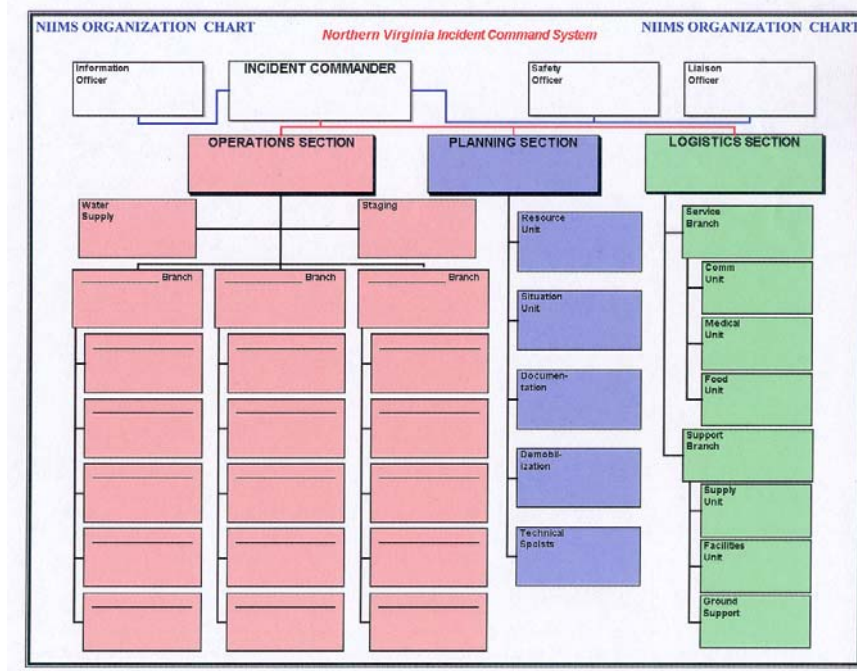
The standardized form is designed to easily transition to the ICS command boards that have been developed for broader incident tracking and command management at the battalion chief vehicle command area.

ICS Command Boards.

Consolidated Command Board

This board matches the information contained on the initial incident command worksheet and allows for rapid transfer of information from the initial incident worksheet to a single command board. It allows for the tracking of resources, tactical assignments, and incident benchmarks. This board can be used on many events as a stand alone command board.

3.10.3 NIMS Organization Chart



3.10.3.1 Unit and intermediate command positions and assignments would be tracked on the organizational chart. Velcro passport identifiers or erasable markers can be used to fill in information. This chart allows the span of control to be continually assessed.

Resource Status / Accountability

[illegible]

- 3.10.4.1 Division or group assignments, as well as other operational areas (i.e., Staging, Base of Operations, Rehab, etc.), would be tracked on this chart.
- 3.10.4.2 The name of the assignment would be labeled in the top row of each column.
- 3.10.4.3 The name of the officer of the unit would be labeled in the second row.
- 3.10.4.4 Units assigned to each location/activity would be denoted on the left side of the lower rows of each column, with the assigned activity denoted to the right, if applicable.
- 3.10.4.5 A column to denote successful PAR check is positioned on the right. A single slash mark can be used for the initial par check, with an alternate slash for the second, etc.

3.10.5 Incident Situation Status

Northern Virginia Incident Command System

SITUATION STATUS BOARD

ADDRESS:		MODE OF ATTACK: ☐ OFFENSIVE ☐ DEFENSIVE	
OCCUPANCY TYPE:		STAGING AREA LOCATION:	
CONSTRUCTION / SIZE:		PAR CHECKS: ☐ 20 min ☐ 40 min ☐ 60 min ☐ 80 min	
TACTICAL BENCHMARKS: (Incident Scene) ☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposures Checked ☐ Secondary Search			
RADIO CHANNELS: Tactical / _____ Command / _____ / _____ / _____			
TASK	✓	NOTES SECTION	
WATER SUPPLY		TIME IN	ISSUE / ACTION / EVENT
UTILITY CONTROL			
ESTABLISH REHAB			
EXTINGUISHMENT			
VENTILATION			
SALVAGE			
ELEVATOR STATUS			
HVAC			
CO LEVELS			
REQUESTS	C A		
GAS CO.			
POWER CO.			
WATER			
INVESTIGATOR			
BUILD. INSPECT.			
HEALTH INSPECT.			
POLICE			
LIGHT / AIR			
CANTEEN			
VDOT			
RED CROSS			
BUILDING ENGINEER			

- 3.10.5.1 Pertinent incident information should be filled in on the top lines of the chart. Of singular importance is the identification of the current mode of operation. All subordinate strategic and tactical decisions should conform to this constraint.
- 3.10.5.2 A list of tactical and support considerations is denoted on the left of the chart.
- 3.10.5.3 Radio channel assignments should be identified and tracked, in particular the initial tactical channel, which is identified at dispatch. The Command channel should be requested and utilized once the command post is established and staffed. However, in cases where a second alarm is transmitted prior to the arrival of the first chief and formation of the command post, the command channel shall be assigned and announced to the 2nd alarm units. All greater alarm units shall monitor both the tactical and the command channels. The controlling dispatch center shall monitor the command channel for any traffic. The first-due engine on the 2nd alarm is still responsible for establishing a staging area unless the IC assigns that unit directly to a tactical assignment. Otherwise, the first engine to arrive at the staging area will assume responsibility for establishing "Staging".

- 3.10.5.4 The Staging Manager is the communications link for the IC and the 2nd alarm units when the command post is still in the initial stages of being established. The IC will contact this officer to make any assignments to 2nd alarm units on the tactical channel. Once the command aide is in place, requests to the staging officer will then be handled on the command channel.
- 3.10.5.5 The 20-minute PAR accountability checks should be tracked.
- 3.10.5.6 Other ancillary issues or activities are tracked in the “Notes” section. Originating and completion times should be identified for each.

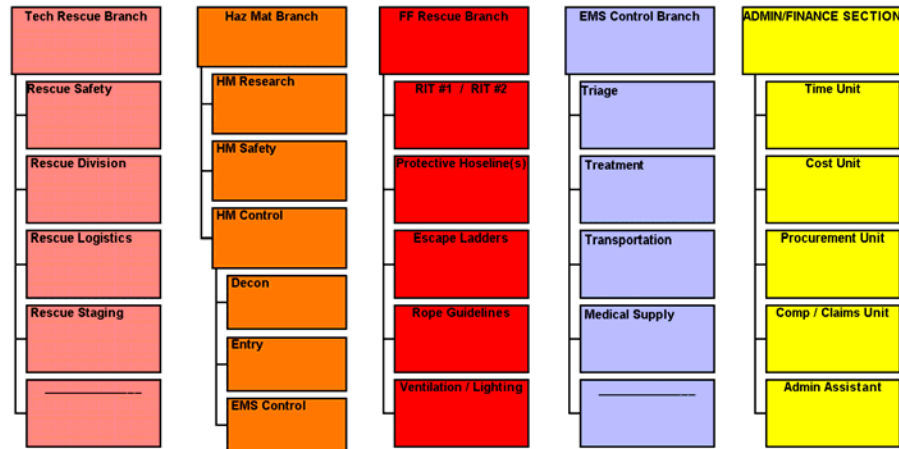
3.10.6 Incident Site Sketch

Northern Virginia Incident Command System
INCIDENT SITE SKETCH BOARD

ADDRESS:	
SIDE CHARLIE	SIDE DAVID
SIDE ADAM	SIDE BAKER

- 3.10.6.1 A general sketch of the incident site and building(s) should be drawn. Unit placement, hydrant(s), standpipe connections, supply line and hoseline layouts, and other pertinent information should be illustrated.
- 3.10.6.2 Support areas (i.e., Staging, Rehab, etc.) should be identified.
- 3.10.6.3 General building dimensions should be estimated.
- 3.10.6.4 The sketch is useful in apprising unit and command officers of ongoing operations as they report in and assume assigned tactical responsibilities.
- 3.10.6.5 The sketch also provides useful information after the incident for critiques or other follow-up. A digital camera can be used to take a picture of each command board to document the event.

3.10.7 Specialty Templates



3.10.7.1 Specialty templates can be overlaid (taped) on the NIMS Organization Chart to identify and track specialty team operations and position assignments.

3.10.7.2 The ICS boards are designed to be displayed in a vertical or upright fashion so that they are easily viewed by the command post personnel, other unit officers reporting for assignment, and subsequent command and chief officers reporting in to the incident, without distracting or crowding the IC.

3.10.8 Displays.

3.10.8.1 Displays are vitally important for briefings that take place during incident operations, especially in long duration incidents requiring multiple operational periods. Usually command officers from the off-going shift are brought together with their counterparts from the on-coming shift to provide continuity of operations. Display charts of the ICS command boards may be available in a larger size. These can be used in briefing areas to depict the incident organization, resource and situation status, and area site sketch or other related information for visual reference to a larger audience. Computer-generated displays and photo enlargements with the use of LCD projectors can also be used to enhance information exchange.

3.11 Vests.

3.11.1 Individuals assuming a command assignment must be visually conspicuous on the incident scene. Use of the ICS vests ensures that personnel operating at the incident site can identify and interact effectively with the command staff.

3.11.2 The support staff at the command post should ensure that assigned command positions are provided with a vest at the time of the assignment. In most cases, the person being assigned has reported to the command post to receive the assignment and incident information and can be provided the vest immediately. In some cases, where appointment is made via radio transmissions, the command post support staff should attempt to provide the appropriate vest by runner.

3.11.3 Officers in tactical command positions should NOT use a vest if they will be entering an IDLH environment. Vests can compromise the effectiveness of personal protective equipment.

3.11.4 Members requiring identification vests:

- Incident Commander
- Public Information Officer
- Safety Officer
- Section Chief(s)
- Branch Director(s)
- Staging Officer
- Senior Physician
- Treatment Unit Leader

3.11.5 Command Vest Inventory.

3.11.5.1 Command vests should be carried in all command vehicles. It is recommended that a lesser complement of the total vest inventory be carried on battalion chief and EMS officer vehicles. As a recommendation, the following 12 vests should be immediately available:

- 1 - Incident Commander
- 1 - Planning Section Chief
- 1 - Resource Status
- 1 - Situation Status
- 1 - Operations Section Chief
- 1 - Logistics Section Chief
- 2 - Branch Director
- 4 - Division/Group Supervisor

3.11.5.2 A full complement of all identified ICS vests should be carried in the agency senior command vehicle(s), (i.e., on-duty Operations Deputy Chief, etc.) as well as on any command units, PODS, or support vehicles.

3.12 Identification Flag or Light.

3.12.1 Lights or flags should be used to identify the following areas:

- Command Post
- Staging Area
- Treatment Area
- Public Information Area

3.12.2 Other functional areas may be set up to accomplish management of the incident but they need not be identified by flags or their personnel by vests.

3.13

Color Coding Identification

Function or Area	Flag or Light	Vest Colors
Command Post	Green Light	
Incident Commander		Blue
Other Operational Positions		Blue with two white stripes
Staging Area	Green Flag	
Staging Officer		Green
Treatment Area	Orange	
Treatment Unit Officer		White with one orange stripe
Public Information Area/Officer	White Flag	White
Safety Officer		Red

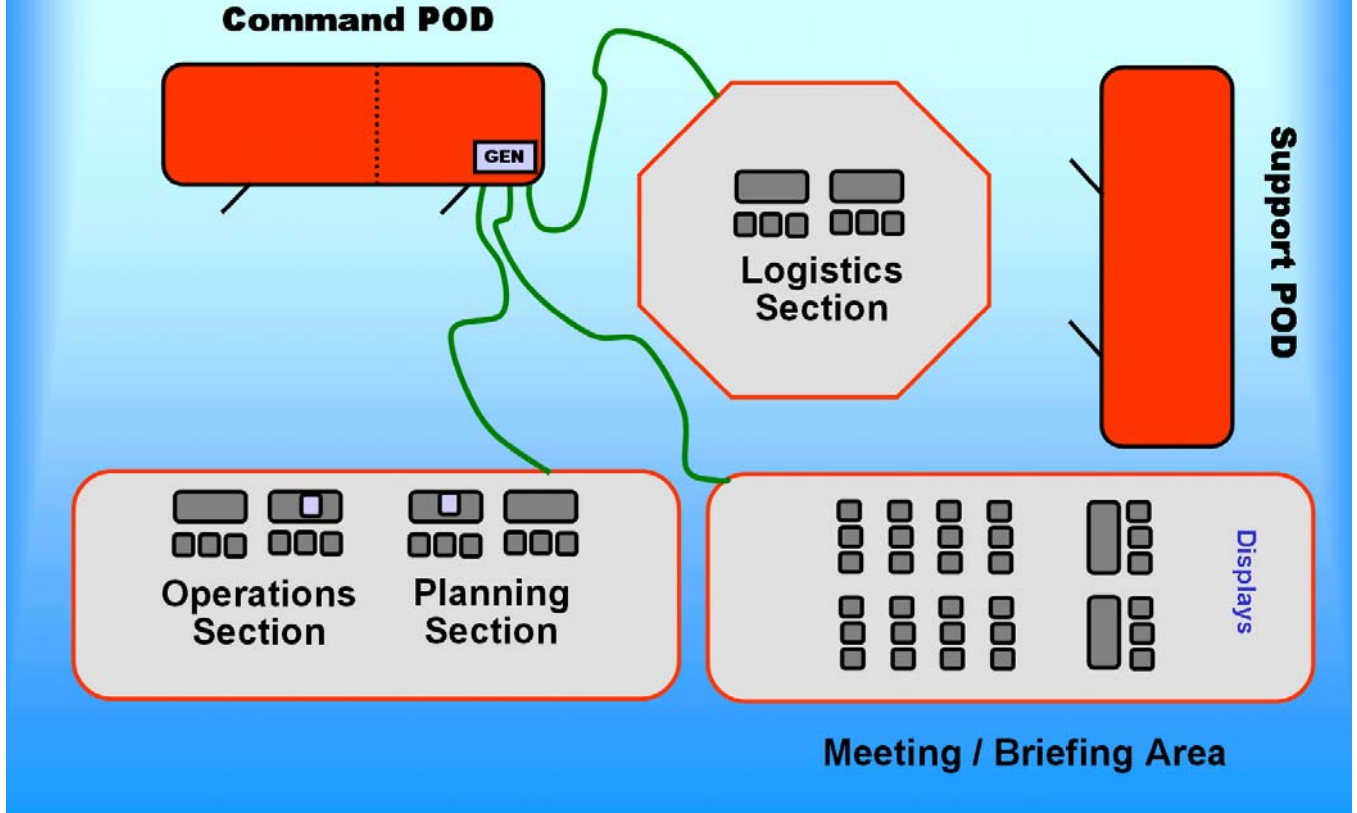
- 3.14 Command Post Communications Requirements
 - 3.14.1 In conformance with NFPA Standard 1561, three primary channels will be used for incident dispatch and management.
- 3.15 Dispatch Channel.
 - 3.15.1 The main channel used by the agency dispatch center where units are dispatched and then directed to transfer to an assigned Tactical channel.
- 3.16 Tactical Channel.
 - 3.16.1 Channel assigned by the dispatch center where all initial units on the assignment transfer to for incident operations. This channel is maintained throughout the course of the incident. All radio traffic for tactical operations remains on this channel from initial dispatch through termination of command post operations.
 - 3.16.2 The initial IC directs tactical operations on this channel.
 - 3.16.3 As an incident escalates or increases in complexity or duration, an intermediate command position (i.e., Operations Section Chief, etc.) may be assigned by the IC to direct tactical operations. All assigned units and this command position remain on this channel.
 - 3.16.4 The radio designator for the command post on the tactical channel shall be "Command", i.e. "Engine 206 to Command".
 - 3.16.5 As an incident continues to escalate, the need for additional tactical channels may arise. An additional command aide should be assigned to the command post for each additional tactical channel.
- 3.17 Command Channel.
 - 3.17.1 After adequate command support staff has been assigned and the command post set up is complete, an alternate Command channel should be requested and assigned. However, in cases where a 2nd alarm has been transmitted, the command channel shall be assigned when the additional alarm is dispatched.
 - 3.17.2 This channel would be used for all ancillary radio communications from the command post to the dispatch center or other location as necessary. These radio transmissions would be addressed by support staff from the command post.

- 3.17.3 Use of this alternate channel for ancillary radio transmission lessens the load on the Tactical channel. This should improve the effectiveness of communications between the IC and assigned units. This is especially important to ensure that any Urgent or Mayday emergency transmission can be made and received.
- 3.17.4 Incident time marker transmissions, requests for additional resources, progress reports, and other necessary communications are carried out on the Command channel.
- 3.17.5 Greater or special alarm requests would be assigned to the Command channel once it has been established. These units marking en route and on scene (at the staging area or as assigned) on the command channel allows the command post support staff to track and account their status. As the IC makes an assignment for an activity to an available unit (en route, in Staging, etc.), the assigned unit would be contacted by the command post support staff on the Command channel, given the assignment and directed to switch to the appropriate Tactical channel. (See appendix entitled, "Transition to Command Channel with Multiple Tactical Channels").
- 3.17.6 The radio designator for the command post on the command channel shall utilize the geographic location along with "command," i.e. "Columbia Pike Command to Arlington."
- 3.18 Safety Channel.
 - 3.18.1 Some jurisdictions use an alternate non-repeating radio channel (Channel O) as an alternate means of communications.
 - 3.18.2 This channel must be continuously monitored at the command post. This can be accomplished by having one or more portable radios switched to this channel.
 - 3.18.3 The units assigned as the RIT are to continuously monitor the Safety channel, as well as the tactical channels.
- 3.19 Additional Incident Channels.
 - 3.19.1 As incidents become more complex, additional channels might be ordered by command. The more complex the incident, the greater amount of radio traffic there will be. It may be necessary to assign a separate tactical channel for specific needs. EMS may be a large operation within the incident. Hazmat or Technical Rescue may be engaged in a major tactical operation. These functions will have a large amount of radio traffic among themselves.

- 3.19.2 Tactical commanders should make an effort to use as much face-to-face communication with their unit officers as possible. Reducing the radio traffic ultimately improves communications and keeps the channels open for critical messages. When additional channels are assigned, the person at the next level of supervision must monitor these channels. It may be necessary that Command Post Company(s) be assigned to facilitate this.
- 3.19.3 In the cases where a tactical function calls command on their assigned tactical channel and does not get a response, command should then be called on the command channel. Units should NOT switch to another tactical channel as this will lead to confusion and loss of control of incident communications.
- 3.20 Radios and radio headsets.
- 3.20.1 When operating from command vehicles and using the more powerful mobile radios, the IC (and supporting staff at the command post) should make use of available radio headsets to maximize their effectiveness in making and receiving radio transmissions. This greatly improves incident efficiency and heightens safety for all involved. A missed transmission at the command post could have dire consequences.
- 3.20.2 Availability of headsets varies from agency to agency. It is recommended that command vehicles have the capability of radio headsets:
- Battalion chief/EMS supervisor vehicles — front seat and rear vehicle command location for at least one position
 - Senior command officer — front seat and rear vehicle command location for at least one position
 - Command Unit/POD — multiple sets of radio headsets to support a comprehensive command staff (four or more positions)
- 3.21 Ancillary Supplies.
- 3.21.1 Battalion Chief vehicles may carry ancillary command supplies that include additional command boards, pre-plans, water supply maps, aerial photos and/or GIS mapping information to enhance decision making capabilities. In addition, some small amounts of office supplies should be included to assist with incident documentation.

- 3.22 Command Vehicles/Command Post Facilities.
 - 3.22.1 Initial Command Post-Battalion Chief Vehicle.
 - 3.22.1.1 Establishing a command post at a command vehicle that is equipped for this function is a priority at all working incidents. A vehicle that provides appropriate work space for the command staff, lighting, communications equipment, supplies, reference material, and some isolation from outside distractions will make command more effective.
 - 3.22.2 Mobile Command Post Vehicle
 - 3.22.2.1 This is a vehicle that is larger than a battalion chief vehicle and allows for rapid support assistance to an operating incident command post. These units may be a bus or other larger vehicle that have a variety of support equipment available, including radio communications, telephones, computers, printers, and, in some cases, video cameras and display equipment. In addition, these vehicles allow for a larger work area for the command post staff.
- 3.23 Long-Term Command Post Setup
 - 3.23.1 A more comprehensive command post capability exists for large scale or long-term incidents. This will use large command vehicles and/or PODs along with a complement of portable shelters as well as supporting lighting, wiring, tables and chairs.
 - 3.23.2 The philosophy of the long-term command post set up is to establish an adequate work area for command staff to work in support of a large scale incident that require multiple work schedule rotations. These incidents are typically multi-day events. The long-term command post set up will support the command staff's need for enhanced office automation equipment, work stations for decision making and incident action plan development, and operational briefing areas.

LONG TERM COMMAND POST



3.24 Fixed Facility.

3.24.1 In some situations, it may be advantageous to acquire a fixed facility for command post operations. This is often advantageous when it is known that an emergency incident will be expanded in scope and will require multiple operational periods. The fixed facility command post can often be established by requesting the use of a nearby government or private sector property that allows for a controlled work environment, adequate room for decision making and operational briefings, and will not be affected by adverse weather conditions. Larger work and briefing areas are often required when multiple agencies and/or multiple jurisdictions are required to manage an emergency event. In addition, adverse weather conditions may make the use of the long-term command post camp that requires portable shelters and command vehicles impractical.

4 PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Accountability procedures enhance the safety of firefighters operating on emergency incidents by providing the Incident Commander with a system to track the number of members and their areas of operation. This information is vital, especially when an evacuation occurs or a serious event happens that requires immediate accounting for all members involved.

4.1.2 The Personnel Accountability System is initiated when the first unit arrives on the scene and continues until the IC determines it is no longer necessary. Accountability responsibilities expand as the Incident Command System (ICS) expands. Accountability procedures shall be strictly followed to ensure the effectiveness of the system and the safety of all members.

4.1.3 The Personnel Accountability System in no way reduces the Company Officer's primary responsibility to supervise crew members, provide for their safety, and maintain communication with Command.

4.1.4 Passports, unit rosters, and unit command boards shall be considered part of apparatus inventory and shall be maintained as such. Name tags shall be considered an issued item of personal protective equipment. All members are responsible for these items. An inspection of the accountability system components shall be included in the daily check of all apparatus.

4.2 SYSTEM COMPONENTS

4.2.1 Name Tags.

4.2.1.1 Every member of the Fire Department shall be issued six name tags. The tags shall have the rank and department identification number engraved on them. Name tags shall be color-coded as follows:

- White = Officers
- Blue = EMS members. Note that some EMS providers cannot enter an IDLH
- Yellow = Technicians and Firefighters
- Red = Those not yet certified to enter an IDLH environment

4.2.1.2 Members shall store their name tags under the brims of their helmets when not in use.

4.2.2 Unit Designator.

4.2.2.1 A white unit designator shall be placed on each passport as well as each Unit Roster. In addition, command vehicles shall also carry a supply of unit designators for all NOVA fire and EMS vehicles. The unit designator is the same size as the name tags.

4.2.3 Helmet Identification.

4.2.3.1 Every helmet shall be marked with a unit identification designator so as to identify the member's current assigned unit.

4.2.4 Passport.

4.2.4.1 The primary passport will be constructed of flexible Velcro (2" x 4") with one removable and one permanently affixed unit designator tag. The name tags of members who normally will be remaining outside the hazard area, such as vehicle drivers, shall be placed upside-down on the passport. When possible, portable radio cases shall be equipped with a strip of Velcro so a passport can be attached.

4.2.4.2 A portable radio on some companies may also carry a second passport with the unit designator followed by the letter "X". This allows the unit officer the flexibility of having two teams if staffing permits. Command must be notified when a company splits into two teams to work in two distinctly separate areas or functions. The team using the "X" passport shall use the term "X-ray" when communicating by radio, for example, Truck 208 X-ray. X-ray will be used to distinguish reference to a unit's second crew. The leader of the "X-ray" team will then report to the next higher level of supervision in the ICS. Command will often need to assemble a separate passport for the "X-ray" team as this split often occurs once units are operating.

4.2.5 Unit Rosters.

4.2.5.1 Unit Rosters shall be 2" x 4" pieces of hard-backed Velcro that is attached to either the dash or the officer's door of every unit. It will have one unit designator permanently affixed and one removable unit identification tag. The unit roster will contain the names of all members who are assigned to staff that particular unit.

4.2.6 Riding Cards.

4.2.6.1 The riding card is a duplicate of the passport. The riding card stays with the unit officer. It is the officer's responsibility to ensure that the unit Riding Card is maintained as changes occur throughout the day. This card is to be carried in the officer's turnout coat radio pocket. The purpose is to ensure the officer has the names of members riding that unit readily available at all times. This is particularly important when the passport has been given to command or appropriate tracking position in the ICS. Often a member is riding a unit who is not a familiar individual to the officer. If something goes wrong, the officer then has the names of the crew in his or her possession to help account for each member. For these reasons, the riding card must be kept current.

- 4.2.7 Unit Command Board.
- 4.2.7.1 The Unit Command Board contains the Initial Incident Command Worksheet on the front, and the back will have Velcro strips for the collection of the Passports. Unit Command Boards, which will be carried on all vehicles, are for use when operating as an initial IC or division/group supervisor.
- 4.2.8 Initial Incident Command Worksheet.
- 4.2.8.1 The Initial Incident Command Worksheet is designed to track units and assignments throughout an incident.
- 4.2.9 Consolidated Command Board.
- 4.2.9.1 The Consolidated Command Board includes areas for tracking units and assignments.
- 4.2.10 Apparatus Passport Drop-Off Point.
- 4.2.10.1 The driver's door of every suppression unit shall have an area with Velcro to serve as a passport drop-off point. Responding units shall affix their passports to the drop-off area of the first arriving suppression unit or give them to the IC. Any exception shall be announced by the dispatch center.
- 4.2.11 Accountability Kits.
- 4.2.11.1 Accountability kits shall be carried in all Battalion Chief's' vehicles. Items from these kits shall be used for replacement during incidents, if needed. Unit Command Boards from the kit shall be distributed to division/branch officers when necessary. Accountability kits contain the following items:
- Blank name tags (white, yellow, red, and blue)
 - Passports (green)
 - Appropriate writing implements
 - Spare Velcro strips
 - Several Unit Command Boards

4.3 IMPLEMENTATION.

4.3.1 The Personnel Accountability System shall be implemented on all emergency incidents when members are operating in an IDLH, hazardous area, when using SCBA, or at the discretion of the IC. Members reporting for duty shall take two of their name tags and place one each in the following areas:

- The Unit Roster located on the dash of their assigned apparatus
- The Passport of the assigned unit
- Members shall also ensure the riding card is updated

4.3.2 Members shall remove the name tags of firefighters they relieved.

4.3.3 The unit officer's name tag shall be attached to the top of the Unit Roster and Passport, underneath the unit designator. The driver's name tag shall be placed under the Officer's tag. The name tags of members who will normally be remaining outside the hazard area, such as vehicle drivers, shall be placed upside down on the passport and unit roster.

4.3.4 Members shall place the Unit Identification Designators on their helmets.

4.4 Emergency Operations.

4.4.1 Initial Arriving Officer Responsibility.

4.4.1.1 The initial officer places the passport on the driver's door. This officer shall then voice pertinent command information to other responding units, to include any change to the normal accountability drop-off point.

4.4.2 IC Responsibility

4.4.2.1 The IC is responsible for ensuring the passports are collected from the on-scene apparatus or from the designated drop-off point. Passports will be placed at a designated passport collection area at the Command Post. Unit designators will be utilized on the appropriate command board.

- 4.4.3 Division/Group Officer Responsibility.
 - 4.4.3.1 The Division/Group Supervisor must maintain accountability of the units assigned to their area of responsibility. Division/Group Supervisors will utilize the Unit Command Boards with passports for the units assigned to that particular Division/Group.
 - 4.4.3.2 It is the responsibility of the division/group officer to advise command when units are moving between divisions/groups.

Example: "Staging to command, Engine 324 is leaving Staging going to Division 2". Command shall advise Division 2 and note the location change on the appropriate Command Board. Command should indicate that the unit is in transition by moving the unit identifier to the destination, in this case Division 2, and place it upside down. The Division 2 officer will advise command when Engine 324 arrives and the unit identifier should then be placed right-side-up.
 - 4.4.3.3 It is the responsibility of the unit officer to collect their passport from the Division/Group Supervisor and take them to the next assignment Supervisor.
- 4.4.4 Remote Entry.
 - 4.4.4.1 When units must enter a hazardous area (or presumed hazardous area) remote from the initial passport drop-off point, unit officers shall place their passports on the driver's door of the first unit at the remote entry point. This new information needs to be conveyed to dispatch center for a general announcement. Other units entering at that point shall place passports at the designated remote drop-off point.
 - 4.4.4.2 The tracking of those units at a remote entry point shall become the responsibility of the IC until a Division/Group is in place.
 - 4.4.4.3 An example would be units entering a shopping mall at the opposite side of the command post.

4.4.5 PAR Check Procedures.

- 4.4.5.1 To ensure the safety of members, the dispatch center will announce the duration of the incident every ten minutes. The event timer will be started when the first unit arrives on the incident scene. This timer announcement shall be made on the command channel once that channel is operational.

Example: "Alexandria to King Street Command, you have been operating on the scene for ten minutes". This shall continue until command advises that the timer is no longer necessary.

- 4.4.5.2 The IC shall determine the welfare of all members operating in the hostile environment at the first 20-minute PAR check. This may be done visually or via radio if necessary.

- 4.4.5.3 **40-minutes into the incident, all** members on the incident scene including those operating in non-hostile areas will be PAR checked by the appropriate division supervisor or incident commander. This shall be repeated every 40 minutes thereafter. An example would be checking on the driver of a water supply engine that is out of sight of the incident scene.

- 4.4.5.4 **60 minutes into the incident, and every 20 minutes thereafter,** command must account for those members who are operating in the hostile environment.

- 4.4.5.5 The IC shall acknowledge the 20-minute notification and initiate a PAR check. Example: "Command to all units, stand-by for PAR check". If Divisions or Groups have been established, the Division or Group Supervisor accounts for the units working under his/her command. Divisions and Groups should conduct their PAR check face-to-face with their units as much as possible. The results of the PAR check are then reported up the chain-of-command. The IC must be aware that the PAR check done by a Division or Group will take a few minutes before the results are reported.

- 4.4.5.6 Officers shall account for all members under their command and be prepared to report this when called.

- 4.4.5.7 The Unit Officer shall report the total number of members assigned to their unit, the area they are operating in, and indicate the number of people operating outside of the hazard zone.
- Example: Engine 208 responds to a scene with a total of three people. The officer and bucket person enter the hazard zone while the driver remains outside with the engine. At each PAR check the unit officer will respond, "E-208 is operating on the second floor, quadrant B, two in, driver is outside".
- 4.4.5.8 Divisions must report which units are operating under their command.
- 4.4.5.9 The IC shall be responsible for the welfare of units/members not assigned to a Branch/Division/Group, outside truck person, or engine driver.
- 4.4.5.10 After all elements of the command structure have been PAR checked, the IC shall document the time and note on the command board that all members were accounted for, or which members were not accounted for.
- 4.4.5.11 **If any units were not accounted for during the PAR check, the IC, Branch Director, or Division/Group Supervisor, as appropriate, shall recall the missing unit(s). This shall be done on the assigned tactical channel as well as on the Safety Channel which is channel "O" throughout Northern Virginia. If there is no success in contacting the missing unit(s), the RIT shall immediately be deployed. Operations shall be conducted in accordance with the R.I.T. book.**
- NOTE: An unaccounted member or crew shall not stop PAR check from other elements of the command structure.** The IC can assign a resource to check on the unaccounted crew but PAR check must continue to determine if more than one person or crew is unaccounted for.
- 4.4.5.12 Branch Directors or Division/Group Supervisors shall attempt to locate "missing" members or units within their own areas. All units operating in the command structure shall maintain their current positions and assignments unless otherwise directed.

4.4.5.13 The IC may initiate a PAR check to check the status of members at *anytime* that he or she deems necessary. Some situations in which this shall be done include, but are not limited to:

- Report of a member or crew missing or trapped
- When a unit/crew cannot be contacted in the Hazard Zone after three consecutive attempts at radio contact
- Sudden hazardous change on the incident scene
- Incident conditions deteriorate to a point that evacuation is ordered
- A change from an offensive to a defensive mode
- When the incident is declared under control

4.5 COMPLIANCE

4.5.1 A mechanism to quickly account for members must be available to the IC at any point during the incident. In order to ensure the effectiveness of this system and the subsequent safety of all members, accountability procedures shall be strictly followed at all times.

4.5.1.1 The name tags shall be considered an issued item of personal protective equipment.

4.5.1.2 Unit rosters and passports shall be considered part of apparatus inventory and shall be maintained as such.

4.5.1.3 If name tags, unit rosters, or passports are lost or misplaced, replacement items shall be obtained as soon as possible from the jurisdiction's appropriate resource. Temporary items shall be obtained from the battalion chief's accountability kits. Company officers shall ensure that replacements are ordered as soon as possible.

4.5.1.4 Each member's name tags shall be inspected when the member's personal protective equipment is inspected.

4.5.2 Fire department members shall always operate as a crew of two or more people when functioning in a hazardous environment. A **minimum** crew shall be considered two people and a portable radio.

4.5.2.1 No one shall operate alone in the hazard zone.

- 4.5.2.2 No crew shall operate without a portable radio.
- 4.5.2.3 Crews shall always go in and come out together
- 4.5.2.4 Members operating as a crew shall be in contact with the crew "leader" by voice, touch, or sight.
- 4.5.2.5 Each team member of a crew must be able to:
- Provide direct help
 - Call for help
 - Go get help for an injured team member



Appendix A

ICS Forms and Instructions

The ICS Forms and Instructions are located on the Department's Intranet in Forms.

Command Boards and Progress Report Guideline

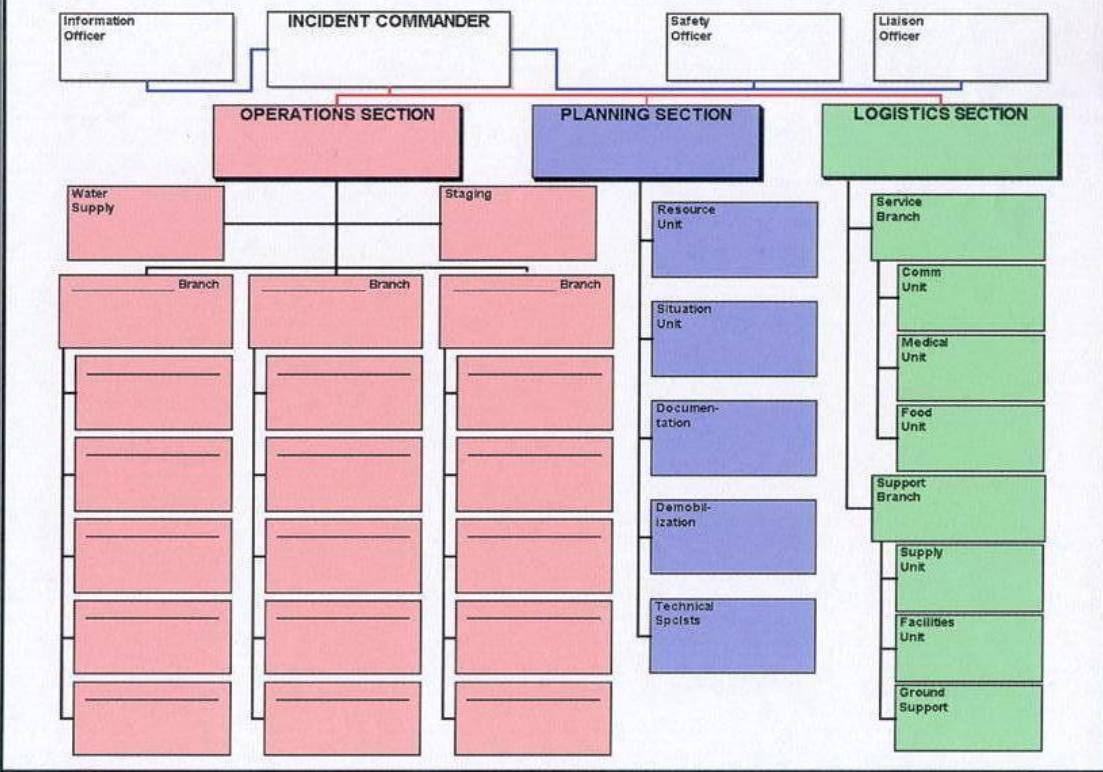
1 st Alarm										INITIAL INCIDENT COMMAND WORKSHEET - NOVA ICS										RIT		Staging	
ENG		ADDRESS:				Lobby Control:																	
ENG		Tactical Channel:		Occupancy Type		Attack Stairwell:																	
ENG		Command Channel:				Evacuation Stairwell:																	
ENG		Channel:																					
TRK		Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch									
TRK		Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch				Floor, Division, Group, Branch									
RSC		CIC, Supervisor, or Director				CIC, Supervisor, or Director				CIC, Supervisor, or Director				CIC, Supervisor, or Director									
M or A		Unit	Task	Log	Unit	Task	Log	Unit	Task	Log	Unit	Task	Log	Unit	Task	Log							
EMS																							
2 ND BC																							
2 nd Alarm																		Notes					
ENG																							
ENG																							
ENG																							
TRK																							
RSC																							
M or A																							
EMS																							
SAF																							
BC																							
Deputy		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search				☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search				☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search				☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search									
Request	✓	Request	✓	Request	✓	Request	✓	Task	✓	Task	✓	Par Check	✓										
Gas Co.		Fire Investigator		Police		VDOT		Elevator Status		CO Level Check		20 Minute											
Power Co.		Building Inspect.		Light/Air		Rad Cross		Utility Control		EMS Rehab		40 Minute											
Water Dept.		Health Inspect.		Canteen(s)		Building Eng.		Water Supply		RVAC		60 Minute											

[illegible]

NIIMS ORGANIZATION CHART

Northern Virginia Incident Command System

NIIMS ORGANIZATION CHART



Northern Virginia Incident Command System

SITUATION STATUS BOARD

ADDRESS:		MODE OF ATTACK: ☐ OFFENSIVE ☐ DEFENSIVE	
OCCUPANCY TYPE:		STAGING AREA LOCATION:	
CONSTRUCTION / SIZE:		PAR CHECKS: ☐ 20 min ☐ 40 min ☐ 60 min ☐ 80 min	
TACTICAL BENCHMARKS: <i>(Incident Scene)</i> ☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposures Checked ☐ Secondary Search			
RADIO CHANNELS: Tactical / _____ Command / _____ / _____ / _____			
TASK		NOTES SECTION	
	✓		
WATER SUPPLY		TIME IN	ISSUE / ACTION / EVENT
UTILITY CONTROL			ASSIGNED TO
ESTABLISH REHAB			TIME OUT
EXTINGUISHMENT			
VENTILATION			
SALVAGE			
ELEVATOR STATUS			
HVAC			
CO LEVELS			
REQUESTS	C A		
GAS CO.			
POWER CO.			
WATER			
INVESTIGATOR			
BUILD. INSPECT.			
HEALTH INSPECT.			
POLICE			
LIGHT / AIR			
CANTEEN			
VDOT			
RED CROSS			
BUILDING ENGINEER			

RESOURCE STATUS / ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

Floor Chosen Group Search			Floor Chosen Group Search			Floor Chosen Group Search			Floor Chosen Group Search			Floor Chosen Group Search			
SIC Supervisor or Designer			SIC Supervisor or Designer			SIC Supervisor or Designer			SIC Supervisor or Designer			SIC Supervisor or Designer			STAGING
Unit	Task	X	Unit	Task	X	Unit	Task	X	Unit	Task	X	Unit	Task	X	
		/			/			/			/			/	
		/			/			/			/			/	
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☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search	☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search	☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search	☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search	☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search	☐ Primary Search ☐ Under Control ☐ Exposure Checked ☐ Secondary Search		REHAB

Northern Virginia Incident Command System

INCIDENT SITE SKETCH BOARD

ADDRESS:		
SIDE BAKER	SIDE CHARLIE SIDE ADAM	SIDE DAVID

THE FIRST PROGRESS REPORT

- Contact controlling communications center
- Confirm the address or location of the incident
- Define commitment of resources
- Define the hazard
- Describe the building or involved area
- Define strategic mode
- Status of search
- Define extent of involvement or hazard
- Brief description of major tactical operations
- Describe the level of containment of the fire or hazard
- Describe the fireground layout or operational area
- Estimate time prediction for holding units

Appendix C

Transition to a Command Channel with Multiple Tactical Channels

1. Command established by 1st arriving unit on the assigned Tactical Channel
2. Command assumed by Battalion Chief after size up and transfer of Command from initial IC on the Tactical Channel
3. Command Channel is to be requested on working incidents after arrival of staff assistance/aide (Dispatcher, Staging, Rehab, and units on additional alarms on Command Channel)
4. IC remains on the initial Tactical Channel, Aide on Command Channel, RIT monitors the Tactical and "O" Safety Channels
5. On large incident a higher ranking officer will assume Command and the person (aide) communicating on the Command Channel will be assigned to the new IC to continue communications on this channel
6. In most cases the initial IC will continue in charge of the Branch/Divisions/Groups assigned to the original Tactical Channel. During the early stages of the incident it is recommended that units operating on this channel continue to refer to this position as Command to avoid confusion
7. Communications at the CP between initial IC and the new IC will normally be face to face or if necessary on the Command Channel
8. If additional Tactical Channels are assigned to specific Branches or Divisions/Groups, these Leaders need an aide with a radio to monitor and communicate with the IC on the Command Channel.
9. If the IC appoints an Operations Section Chief it is recommended that this position take over the Tactical Channel and at least for a period of time continue to use the radio terminology of Command to avoid confusion with operational units
10. The IC (operating at the strategic level) should at this point communicate with the Section Chiefs face to face or if necessary on another channel assigned specifically for this purpose. The original Command Channel may actually become the Operations Channel at a large expanded incident.

Appendix D

Department of Homeland Security

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Access to the Department of Homeland Security NIMS Document should be accessed via:

➤ www.fema.gov/nims

- NIMS Resources
 - National Incident Management System Document (7.24 MB)