

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 1 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

PURPOSE

Effective functioning at the scene of an emergency requires clear, decisive action and command responsibility. The Incident Command System (ICS) will establish the daily procedures normally utilized in making decisions at the scene of a fire or other emergency situation. This SOG also establishes the foundation that will be employed to control and manage incidents and events regardless of size and complexity incorporating aspects of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The establishment of this policy for the Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association will:

1. Provide for the safety of personnel operating at emergency incidents through improved command and control (or management of emergencies).
2. Improve the use of resources and tactical effectiveness.
3. Meet the OSHA/EPA regulations requiring the use of an Incident Command System for hazardous materials incidents.
4. Meet the NFPA Standard 1500 section 8.1 recommendations for the use of an Incident Command System for operations at all emergency incidents.
5. Ensures compliance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive No.5 and provide a media for future compliance directives through the National Incident Management (NIMS) Integration Center.

The Incident Command System identifies the suggested operating guidelines to be employed in setting up the command post and establishing command responsibility at the emergency scene.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. All fire department chiefs are responsible to comply with and ensure that personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this guideline.
2. All personnel have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.
3. All personnel shall use proper terminology identified in this SOG when functioning in ICS system.
4. This guideline will be adopted by the Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association and should be adopted by all fire agencies dispatched by Lancaster County-Wide Communications (LCWC).

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 2 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

DEFINITIONS

Agency Executive or Administrator. A chief executive officer (or designee) of an agency or jurisdiction that has responsibility for the incident.

Agency Representative. An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency that has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency’s participation at the incident. Agency representatives report to the Incident Liaison Officer.

Area Command. 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.

Assistant. Title for subordinates of Command Staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be used to supervise unit activities at camps.

Assisting Agency. An agency directly contributing suppression, rescue, support, or service resources to another agency.

Base. That location where the primary logistics functions are coordinated and administered (incident name or other designator will be added to the term "Base"). The Incident Command Post may be co-located with the base. There is only one base per incident.

Branch. That organizational level having functional, geographical, or jurisdictional responsibility for major parts of the incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section, and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of Roman Numerals, by function, or jurisdictional name.

Camp. A geographical site, within the general incident area, separate from the base, equipped and staffed to provide food, water, and sanitary services to incident personnel.

Command Staff. The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer who report directly to the Incident Commander.

Company Unity. A term to indicate that a fire company or unit shall remain together in a cohesive and identifiable working group, to ensure personnel accountability and the safety of all members. A company officer or unit leader shall be responsible for the adequate supervision, control, communication and safety of members of the company or unit.

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 3 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Complex. A complex is two or more individual incidents located in the same general proximity that is assigned to a single Incident Commander or Unified Command to facilitate management.

Cooperating Agency. An agency supplying assistance other than direct suppression, rescue, support, or service functions to the incident control effort (e.g., Red Cross, telephone company, etc.).

Delegation of Authority: A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Agency Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Many agencies require written Delegation of Authority to be given to Incident Commanders prior to their assuming command on larger incidents.

Deputy. An individual assigned to the Incident Commander, General Staff, or Branch Directors with equal qualifications and delegated authority when acting in their absence.

Division. That organization level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. The Division level is organizationally between the Strike Team and the Branch (see also "Group").

General Staff. The group of incident management personnel comprised of the Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief.

Group. Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. Groups are located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section. (See Division).

Hazardous Materials Incident. The uncontrolled release or threat of release of a hazardous material that may impact life, the environment, or property.

Helibase. A location within the general incident area for parking, fueling, maintenance, and loading of helicopters.

Helitanker. A helicopter equipped with a fixed tank, Air Tanker Board Certified, capable of delivering a minimum of 1,100 gallons of water, retardant, or foam.

Incident Action Plan (IAP). A plan that contains objectives that reflects the incident strategy and specific control actions for the current or next operational period.

Incident Command Post (ICP). That location at which the primary command functions are executed and usually collocated with the incident base.

Incident Objectives. Statements of guidance and direction that are achievable, measurable, and necessary for the selection of appropriate strategy (ies), and the tactical direction of resources.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 4 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Joint Information System (JIS): Integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, timely information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated inter-agency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the IC; advising the IC concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

Jurisdictional Agency. The agency having responsibility for a specific geographical area or function as designated by statute or contract.

Landing Zone A location where a helicopter can take off and land.

Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS). The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications integrated into a common system with responsibility for coordination of assisting agency resources and support to agency emergency operations.

Operational Period. The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of tactical actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan.

Personnel Accountability Reports (PAR). Periodic reports verifying the status of responders assigned to an incident.

Planning Meeting. A meeting, held as needed throughout the duration of an incident, to select specific strategies and tactics for incident control operations and for service and support planning.

Qualified. A person meeting a recognized level of training, experience and certification for the assigned position.

Rapid Intervention Team/Company (RIT/C). A crew or company designated to standby in a state of readiness to rescue emergency personnel.

Resources. All personnel and major items of equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incident tasks on which status is maintained.

Section. The organization level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident management (Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration). The Section level is organizationally between Branch and Incident Commander.

Single Resource. An individual piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or an established crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used on an incident.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 5 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Site Safety and Control Plan (ICS Form 208). An emergency response plan describing the general safety procedures to be followed at an incident involving hazardous materials, and prepared in accordance with CCR Title 8, Section 5192, and 29 CFR 1910.120.

Staging Area. That location where incident personnel and equipment are assigned on a three-minute available status.

Strategy. The general plan or direction selected to accomplish incident objectives.

Strike Team. Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.

Tactics. Deploying and directing resources on an incident to accomplish the objectives designated by current incident strategy.

Task Force. A group of resources with common communications and a leader that may be pre-established and sent to an incident, or formed at an incident.

Technical Specialists. Personnel with special skills who are activated only when needed.

Triage. Screening and classification to determine priority needs in order to ensure the efficient use of personnel, equipment and facilities.

Unified Command. Unified Command is a team effort that allows all agencies with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility or accountability.

Unit. An organizational element having responsibility for a specific function within the Operations, Plans, Logistics, or Finance Sections.

Working Incident. Any incident fire, rescue, hazardous materials incident that will require commitment of resources to mitigate the incident.

PROCEDURES

1. Theory

The one function that will always be filled at every emergency incident, regardless of size, type, or jurisdiction that the incident occurs in, is the Incident commander (IC) position. The IC has the responsibility for overall management of the incident and safety of response personnel.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 6 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Incident command procedures are designed to accomplish the following:

- A. Fix responsibility of command with a designated member through a standardized identification system, based on arrival sequence and other variables.
- B. Insure that visible, direct, effective command be established as early as possible upon arrival at the incident scene.
- C. Establish an effective framework within which the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander can be properly addressed.
- D. Provide a system for accomplishing the orderly transfer of command from the initial Incident Commander to later arriving Command Staff.

2. Initial Command

It shall be mandatory that the officer or other fire department member arriving first on the scene of an emergency incident initiate the basic incident command function, establish a command post, and assume all related command responsibilities. This shall be performed regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. The initial Incident Commander shall retain these responsibilities until one of the following occurs:

- A. Command is passed to the next arriving person qualified to be the Incident Commander (only once per incident).
- B. Command is officially transferred. (See Transfer of Command Procedures)
- C. The incident is terminated.

Passing command is not to be confused with Transferring command. Command is passed only when the situation requires the immediate active participation of the first member or official on the scene that prohibits them from establishing a fixed command position. When this occurs, the next arriving qualified member shall be notified and will assume command of the incident. **Command can be passed only once!**

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 7 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

3. Command Responsibilities

Within the broad structure of the basic incident command function, certain command options are available to the Incident Commander. These options or “command modes” will be explained in detail below. However, it must be understood that regardless of the command option chosen, the initial Incident Commander retains responsibility for all command functions until relieved of them or delegated according to the standardized methods detailed in this guideline.

The person assuming **Command** is responsible for the following:

- A. Assuming an effective command location when the fixed command mode is chosen.
- B. Calling on the scene and transmitting the initial radio report and size-up as outlined in Section 5 of this chapter if it is a “working incident”,
- C. Assign a name to the incident itself. For example, a working incident at 125 Elm Road could be called “Command 100”, or Command 100 Elm Road” if there is more than one incident in a fire district. A “working incident” is defined as any emergency situation that requires more than one company to be tied up, or units are operating in an IDLH atmosphere. A “working incident” can be a fire, hazmat emergency, water rescue, emergency medical operation, etc.
- D. Assessing the incident priorities. (Life Safety, Incident Stabilization, Property Conservation)
- E. Determining the incident’s objectives and completing applicable forms if in fixed command mode. **ICS Form 201 or SCTF Tactical Worksheet.**
- F. Approve and authorize the implementation of an Incident Action Plan.
- G. Developing an incident command structure appropriate for the incident.
- H. Assessing resource needs and orders, deploying needed resources.
- I. Coordinating overall emergency activities.
- J. Ensure that adequate safety and accountability measures are in place.
- K. Coordinate with key people and officials.
- L. Authorizing information release to the media
- M. Order the demobilization of the incident when appropriate.
- N. Ensure Incident Status Summary (ICS 209) is complete and forwarded to appropriate higher authority.
- O. Ensure planning meetings are scheduled as required.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 8 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

4. Command Modes

The first arriving official or fire department member must decide on an appropriate commitment for each assigned company, including his/her own. This decision will usually result in command being exercised according to the provisions of one of two (2) general modes. They are:

Fixed Command Mode
Mobile Command Mode

A. Fixed Command Mode

The fixed command mode is defined as a command structure that maintains a fixed Incident Command Post location, which is usually outside of a structure and in which the Incident Commander devotes all of his/her energies to command. The fixed command mode is desirable and should be used unless conditions dictate otherwise.

NOTE: the location of the fixed Incident Command Post should be easily identifiable. If the Incident Commander chooses to leave the interior of his/her vehicle, then he/she should be easily identifiable.

B. Mobile Command Mode

Included are incidents requiring immediate action in order to stabilize the situation, and where due to staffing and/or experience factors, the Crew Leader feels that it is necessary for him/her to accompany his/her crew in their initial efforts. This may include situations where there is “nothing showing” and the Crew Leader assuming command accompanies his/her crew in order to investigate the situation.

WHENEVER THE MOBILE COMMAND MODE IS CHOSEN, IT SHOULD BE CONCLUDED VERY RAPIDLY, WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

- a. The situation is quickly stabilized by the initial offensive attack or the preliminary investigation reveals no problem requiring the Incident Commander’s active participation. In either case, the Crew Leader should then return to a fixed command location and continue to discharge his/her command responsibilities.
- b. The situation is not likely to be quickly stabilized, or initial investigations indicate possible long-term involvement. The Crew Leader should recognize these situations and assign supervision of his/her company to a qualified member of the crew, return to a fixed command location and continue to function as the Incident Commander until relieved of this responsibility.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 9 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

- c. Command is passed to the next arriving company or officer.

NOTE: the “Passing of Command” can occur only once during any given incident, and may be initiated only by the first arriving official or fire department member, and should be confined to “Mobile Command Mode” operations.

In addition, it must be understood that this command option is not to be used as a means of circumventing established incident command procedures or otherwise shirking required command responsibilities.

When the first arriving member determines the need to “pass” command, the initial radio report will include an announcement that the next arriving company should assume command.

5. Establishing Incident Command and Initial Size-up

The person establishing command should use the standard procedures outlined below. If the person assuming command is not an official, or is not normally assigned to a company, then this transmission should be adjusted accordingly. When command is established, an initial radio report and size-up should be given:

- A. Identify transmission by giving: Company, unit establishing Command, the location of the Command Post (if other than the front of the occupancy/incident), and, if more than one command in the same response district, the name assigned to the incident.

Example: “Engine 100-1 on location, Engine 100-1 is Command 100, or Command 100 Main St., Command is located on Side Bravo.”

Until command is transferred or passed, the original Incident Commander will remain in charge of the incident.

- B. The apparent extent of the emergency –

Example: “Nothing Showing, Situation Contained, Working fire, Second alarm, etc.”

NOTE: If the first arriving member gives no information such as smoke showing or working fire, etc., it will be assumed by incoming companies that nothing is showing.

IF THE INCIDENT COMMANDER DETERMINES THAT A WORKING INCIDENT IS IN PROGRESS, THE INITIAL RADIO REPORT SHALL INCLUDE;

- C. General size of structure – one story, two story, multi-story, high-rise, etc.

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 10 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

NOTE: If the location of the incident or facility is well known, the name will suffice.

- D. Type of construction – fire resistive, non-combustible, ordinary construction, mill, or frame.

NOTE: Use the text description, not the Type Code 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Use caution when giving the type of construction. It can be difficult to determine the exact construction type by external appearances. Unless there is pre-incident intelligence of the building, providing the type of construction may be best avoided but should be determined as soon as possible.

- E. Occupancy – residential (specific type such as apartment, multi family, single family), high occupancy, special care, hotel, business, commercial, industrial, storage, etc.
- F. Action being taken (**Offensive or Defensive**) – laying supply line, leading off with 1 ¾ line and tank, etc.

- G. Apparatus in service – Engine 100-1, Truck 100, etc.

NOTE: Decide early if there is a necessity to call for additional assistance. Additional help should be standing by at or near the scene, prepared to go into action if the possibility exists that the incident may exceed the capabilities of the companies working at the incident. The notification of a “working incident” shall initiate a dedicated RIT following Departmental policy.

The following examples illustrate the initial establishment of Command:

“Engine 100-1 on the scene, Engine 100-1 is Command 100. We have a well-involved vehicle on the first floor of a 2-story wood frame storage building. Engine 100-1 and Truck 100 are going in service with two 1 ¾ inch hand lines. All other companies stage one block out.”

“Engine 100-1 on the scene, Engine 100-1 is command 100 located in the parking lot across the street. We have a working fire in a second floor bedroom of a two-story single-family dwelling. Leading off with one 1 ¾ and tank water.”

“Engine 100-1 on the scene, Engine 100-1 is Command 100. We have a small trash fire at the rear of a frame garage; situation is under control, holding to Engine 100-1.”

“Engine 100-1 on the scene. We have a working fire in a two-story multi family dwelling. Passing command to the next arriving company.”

Other crew leaders (company officers) on the scene should be advised of existing situations; initial decisions made, and plan of operation.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 11 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

When only one company responds to an emergency such as an auto fire or trash fire, the crew leader shall transmit a brief initial radio report upon arrival. As soon as it has been determined that no additional help will be required, a “situation under control” will be transmitted to County.

6. Transfer of Command

When circumstances allow, the Incident Commander being relieved will brief the official assuming command. This brief may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A. Incident factors, objectives and strategies
- B. Strategies that have been assigned and that need to be assigned.
- C. Evaluation of strategies (Effective or not Effective)
- D. Personnel safety concerns

Should any higher ranking official decide to officially assume command of the incident, the official shall locate the Incident Command Post, if established, and follow the transfer of command guideline whenever possible.

After the transfer of command has actually taken place, the officer assuming command shall announce such transfer over the radio, stating the name and rank of the new Incident Commander.

Example: County from Command 100. Chief 100 is now Command 100.

At this time, the official assuming command will assign the former Incident Commander to a new duty. This new assignment may be to assume a command or general staff function, to rejoin and take supervision of his/her crew, or any other assignment deemed necessary by the new Incident Commander.

NOTE: If preceded to the scene by the companies of another department, the official responding from the department having jurisdiction shall report to the Incident Commander. Regardless of rank, this officer is responsible for the incident and shall have the option of assuming command, or allowing the original Incident Commander to remain in charge of the incident.

Expanding the Command Structure

The command structure at any incident must correspond to the complexity of the situation. To effectively control an emergency, the incident should be divided into manageable modular units. In this section, we will examine some of the options the Incident Commander can use to manage an incident.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 12 of 26

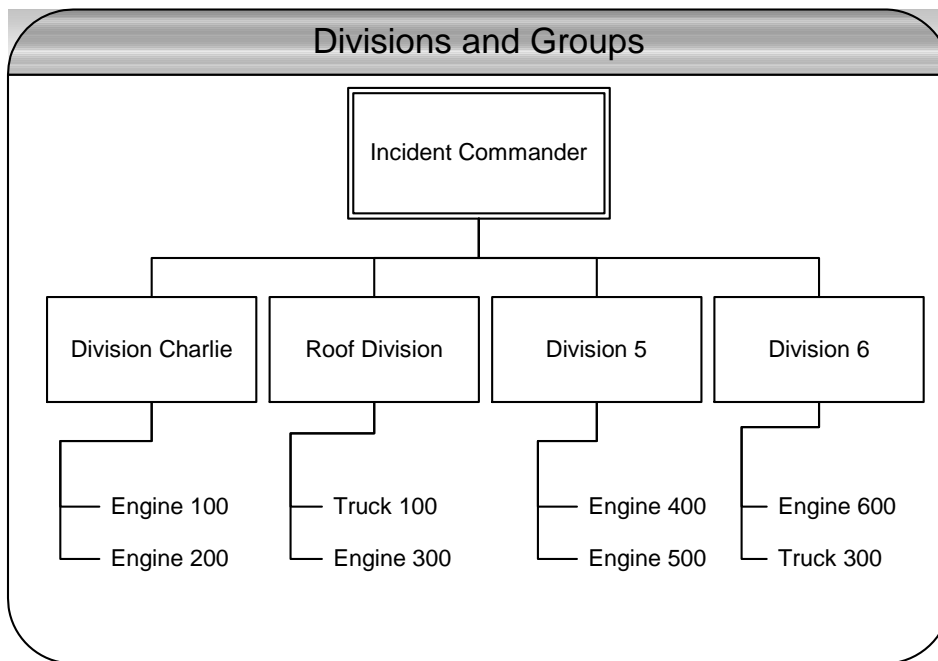
Date: December 12, 2008

While it is important to have a sufficiently large command structure at an incident, don’t use more than the situation requires. The command structure should not contribute to the complexity of the incident. Consider the command options available as a toolbox full of tools. Use only the tools you need to fix the problem. Remember that any member can hold any command or general staff position. It is the Incident Commander’s responsibility to assign the appropriate person to command or general staff functions.

NOTE: Terminology to describe these functions/positions should not vary between different organizations in accordance with the intent of ICS and NIMS. Common terms that are acceptable include **branches, divisions, and groups**. The recommendations identified in NIMS for adopting the basic tenets of the incident Command System (ICS) will be used.

1. Divisions and Groups

- A. Divisions: Divisions are an organizational level responsible for operations in a specified geographical area at an incident. You could have an interior division (within a building) or a division outside a building. Some examples are: Division Charlie, Division 5, Roof Division, etc.



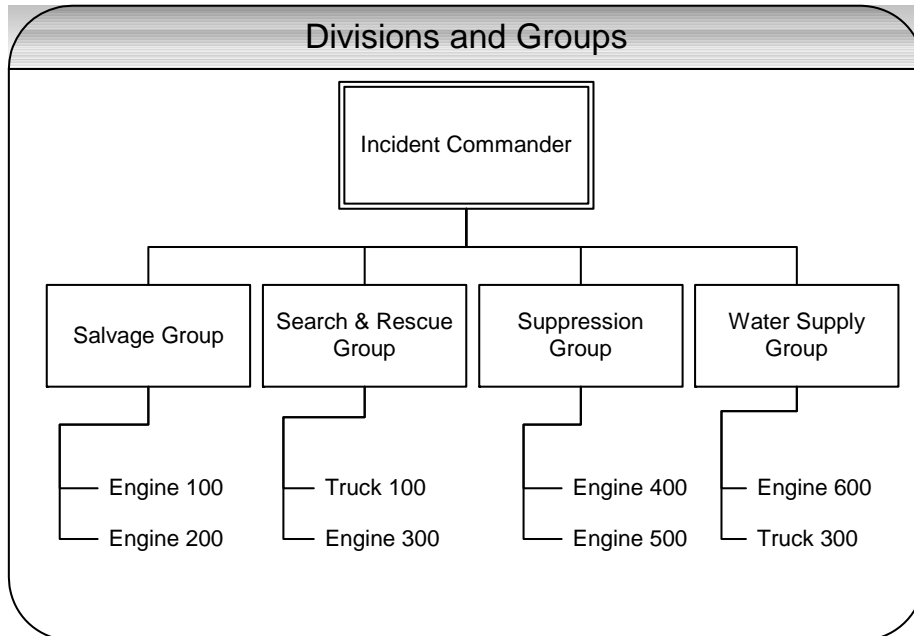
SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 13 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

B. **Groups:** Groups are an organizational level responsible for a specified functional assignment at an incident. Examples are salvage group, search and rescue group, fire suppression group, water supply group, etc.



Divisions and Groups are both commanded by **Supervisors**. Divisions and Groups operate at the same command level. Divisions do not work for Groups and Groups do not work for Divisions. They are organizationally at the same level. However, a Group’s functional responsibility may cross Division boundaries. For example, a Ventilation Group may be working in the same area as the Interior Division. Once a specific assignment is given to a Group, the division is no longer responsible for that task, concentrating instead on all other tactical activity in that geographic area.

Divisions and Groups address the following three significant management principles:

1. They reduce/solve span-of-control problems at an incident.
2. They provide essential coordination at a designated area or for a specific function.
3. They fix personnel accountability.

Division and Group Supervisors provide accountability and coordination of single resources, ensuring maximum safety and survival of response personnel. They are also responsible for the implementation of their assigned portion of the overall Incident Action Plan and they

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 14 of 26

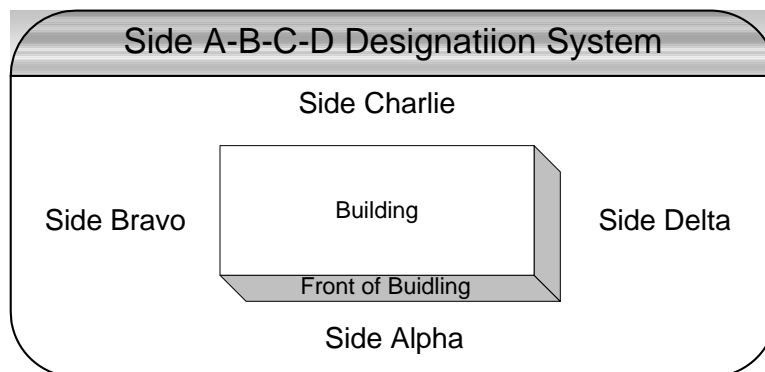
Date: December 12, 2008

coordinate activities within their assignment. Division and Group **Supervisors** keep the next higher level of command informed of the status of resources within their area of responsibility and evaluate the resource needs, making adjustments as needed. It is essential that the next higher level of command be made aware of any needs for resource adjustment. Each Division or Group **Supervisor** requires certain information from the Incident Commander. They must know their radio designation (Division Alpha or Ventilation Group), their assigned objectives and strategies, and the resources under their command.

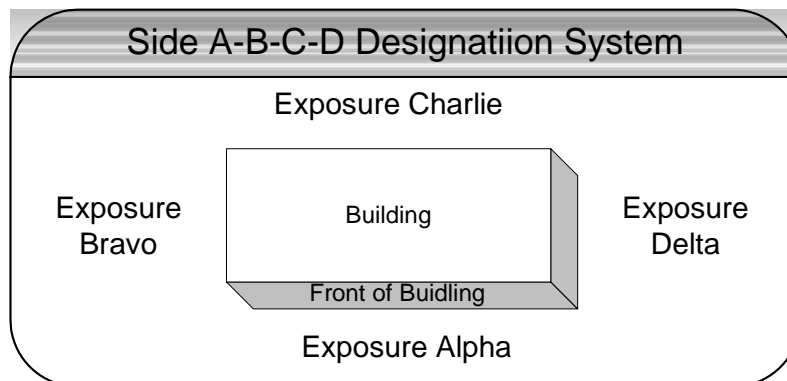
Each functional or geographical assignment does not need to be commanded by a Division or Group **supervisor**. An activity that only requires one single resource to effectively handle the situation would not necessitate the implementation of a Division or Group; there is not a coordination problem and the assignment does not cover a large area or require the deployment of several single resources.

2. Dividing the Incident

To insure uniformity, there needs to be a standard means of dividing an incident. The following designation system will be used whenever it is necessary to divide an incident:



There will be a letter designation for each exterior side of the incident area. Normally, the addressed or street side of the incident will be designated as "Side Alpha" and the letter designations move clockwise around the incident. Exposures may also be identified with a similar system. The supervisor assigned to a side where tactical operations will be initiated shall be designated as Division (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta – whichever is appropriate).



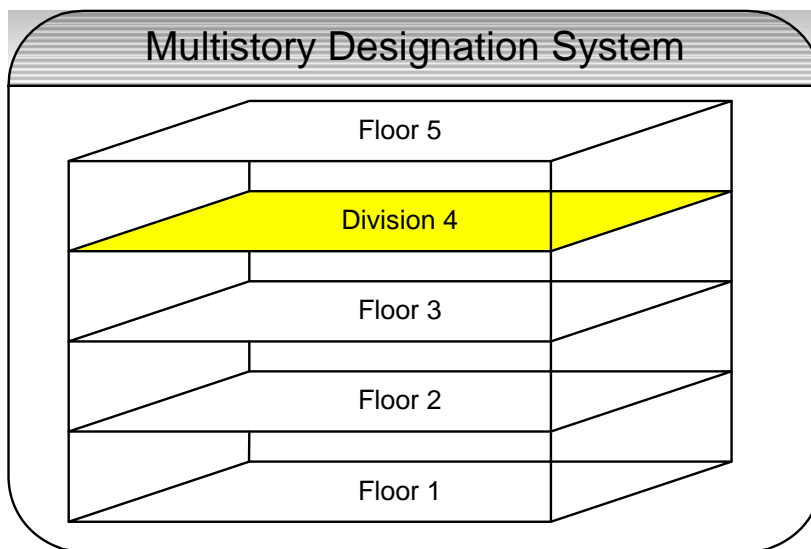
SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 15 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

When operating in a multistory structure, it may be necessary to designate geographic Divisions Supervisors by the floor number. For example, the fourth floor designated as Floor 4 or Fourth Floor, however, after a Division Supervisor has been assigned to supervise activities on that floor, the ICS position title of Division 4 can be used.



3. Branches

At large-scale or complex incidents, the number of Divisions and/or Groups may create a significant span-of-control problem (3 to 7). When this occurs consideration should be given to the implementation of Branches. Branches are also of great value when large numbers of resources are committed to a specific functional activity. A good example would be a fire incident with a major Medical problem. A **Medical Branch** could be implemented to alleviate these problems.

A Branch is a organizational level having functional, geographical, or jurisdictional responsibility for major parts of the incident operations and led by a **Branch Director**. The Branch level is organizationally between Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section, and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of Roman Numerals, by function, or jurisdictional name.

The specific responsibilities of a **Branch Director** are:

- A. Implements the portion of the incident action plan appropriate to the Branch function.
- B. Coordinates the activities of the resources within the Branch.
- C. Evaluates objectives and strategies within the Branch and requests additional resources, if needed.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 16 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

- D. Keeps his/her supervisor, whether the IC or the Operations or Logistics Section Chief informed of the status in the Branch’s area of responsibility.
- E. Assigns specific tasks to Divisions or Groups within the Branch.
- F. Resolves logistical problems associated with the units deployed in the Branch.

4. Command Staff Positions

At large-scale or complex incidents, consideration may have to be given to the functions of safety, liaison and information. If the Incident Commander cannot effectively handle any of these functions, they must be delegated.

These functions should be staffed when their demands begin to affect the IC’s ability to perform his/her command functions.

A. Safety Officer

The individual given the Safety Officer’s assignment must monitor and assess the safety hazards and unsafe situations and develop measures for ensuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer will be required to operate in an area(s) other than the Command Post.

The **Safety Officer** position is implemented to manage the safety of all personnel and to relieve the Incident Commander of direct involvement in this responsibility. The Safety Officer also keeps the IC informed of present problems and potential hazards. He/she should not only identify problems, but should also suggest solutions to minimize the risks. The Incident Commander will use the information provided by the Safety Officer during development of the incident action plan.

The **Safety Officer** has the authority to bypass the chain of command when it is necessary to correct unsafe acts immediately, such as removing all personnel from areas of imminent danger. **The IC must ALWAYS be informed of these corrective actions.**

For the **Safety Officer** to be truly effective, he/she must have a broad knowledge of the risks associated with the incident.

B. Liaison Officer

A **Liaison Officer** is the point of contact for assisting or coordinating agencies. This function is assigned since the Incident Commander may become overloaded by questions from the number of assisting agencies that some incidents attract.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 17 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

One of the most important responsibilities of the **Liaison Officer** is to coordinate the management of assisting or coordinating agencies. This is essential to avoid the duplication of efforts. It allows each agency to perform what it does best. Liaison management provides lines of authority, responsibility, and communication, and increases the control necessary to provide for the safety of personnel from all involved agencies.

C. Public Information Officer

The **Public Information Officer** is responsible for interface with the media and other appropriate agencies. This function is implemented to relieve the Incident Commander of needing to work with the media, taking him/her away from command responsibilities. The media needs are real and must be met. They need accurate and consistent information.

The IC shall designate a PIO and be available at the CP as necessary depending on the incident type and complexity. At large and complex incidents the PIO shall be in charge of all PIO activities.

At smaller incidents, the IC shall ensure the PIO receives the proper information.

The **Public Information Officer** acts as a central clearing point for the dissemination of information, reducing the risk of generating conflicting information from multiple sources.

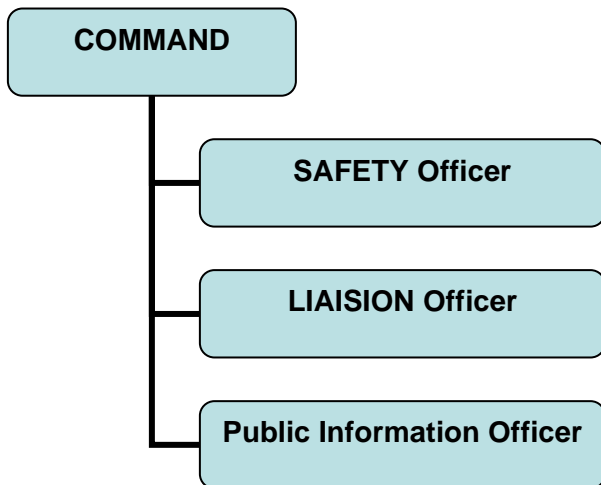
The **Public Information Officer** must coordinate all releases of significant information with the Incident Commander. The IC will decide on sensitive topics, such as the cause of the incident, victims’ name, and any other information that should not be (and does not have to be) released immediately to the press.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 18 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008



5. General Staff Functions

As incidents increase in complexity or size, it often becomes necessary for the Incident Commander to delegate major functional responsibilities to maintain an effective workload and span of control.

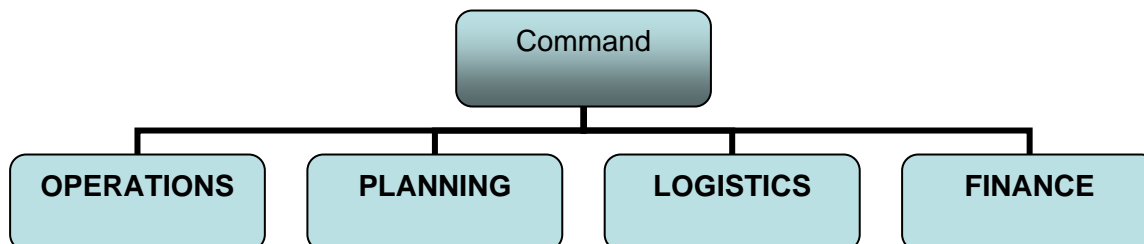
Effective incident management involves more than just stabilizing the incident. The IC needs to be aware of the full range of management tools that are available to handle the entire incident. If major functional authority for Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance is not delegated, the IC must perform those functions. (Use only the tools necessary to safely and effectively manage the incident.)

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 19 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008



A. Operations Section Chief

Operations Section Chief is responsible for management of all tactical operations at the incident. **The person in charge of Operations is called the Operations Section chief.** (Deputies may also be assigned). Operations is implemented when the Incident Commander is faced with a complex incident having major demands in one or more of the remaining major functional areas. For example, the IC may be faced with a rapidly escalating incident with a significant need to evaluate incident objectives and strategies. Faced with a major functional responsibility in addition to management of tactical Operations, the IC may choose to staff Operations.

Another reason to staff Operations would be multiple functional demands placed on the Incident Commander, such as the Planning, Logistics and Finance workload generated by a large or complex incident. When several major functions have been delegated, the IC may need to staff Operations to maintain an effective span of control.

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for the direction and coordination of all tactical Operations. As a part of this overall responsibility, Operations also:

- i. Assists the IC in developing goals and strategies for the incident.
- ii. Implements the incident action plan
- iii. Works directly with other assisting agencies (law, public works etc.)
- iv. Consults with the IC about the overall incident action plan.
- v. Keeps the IC informed of situation and resource status within Operations.
- vi. Supervises the staging area manager and calls for additional resources.
- vii. Insures required ICS forms are completed.

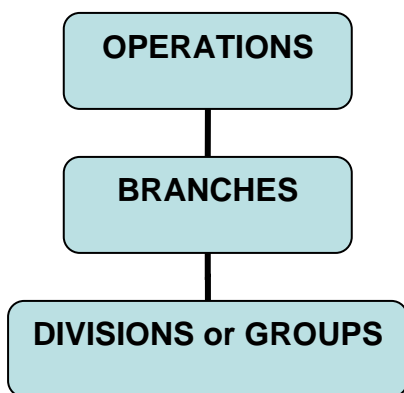
SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 20 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

The most common reason for staffing Operations is to relieve span of-control problems for the Incident Commander. A complex incident, in which the IC needs assistance determining strategic goals and tactical objectives, may also require implementing Operations. Operations are not necessary for small incidents where span of control is not exceeded. For smaller incident the use of Group or Division Supervisors is appropriate.



B. Planning

Planning is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources. **The person in charge of Planning is called the Planning Section Chief.**

When faced with a complex, or rapidly escalating incident, or one requiring designated operational periods, the Incident Commander may require assistance with the Planning function.

Planning must include an assessment of the present and projected situation. In addition to assessment of the situation status, there is a critical need to maintain information about resources committed to the incident and projected resource requirements.

The Planning Section Chief is responsible for managing information about incident status and resources. As a part of this major responsibility, Planning also performs the following functions:

- i. Collection of information regarding the incident and resources.
- ii. Evaluation of information received from a variety of sources.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 21 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

- iii. Dissemination of information to the IC, Operations, and incident personnel, as necessary.
- iv. Use of information in preparation of the incident action plan.

Planning assists the Incident Commander in:

- i. Developing an effective incident action plan based on incident goals
- ii. Modifying the incident action plan to meet changing needs
- iii. Anticipating changing resource needs.
- iv. Preparing alternate strategies and tactical options based on incident potential.
- v. Planning meeting

The **Planning Section Chief** may need to establish functional units to maintain an acceptable span of control. These units may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- SITUATION STATUS UNIT (SITSTAT)
- RESOURCE STATUS UNIT (RESTAT)
- DOCUMENTATION UNIT
- DEMOBILIZATION UNIT
- TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS

Each unit within the Planning Section will have a **Unit Leader** who is responsible for specific functions within each unit and completing necessary ICS forms required for the IAP.

C. Logistics

Logistics is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident. **The person in charge of Logistics is called the Logistics Section Chief.** (Deputies may be assigned)

As incidents grow in size, complexity, and duration, the logistical needs of the operating forces also increase. Even in a relatively simple structure fire, there are requirements for breathing air supply, drinking water, and emergency medical care. Long duration incidents of any type require provisions for feeding personnel, toilet facilities, refueling of apparatus, and a myriad of other service and support resources.

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 22 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

The **Logistics Section Chief** manages service and support resources required for the incident. The Logistics Section Chief is responsible for all logistics functions needed for an incident. This individual should establish functional units when needed to maintain an acceptable workload and span of control. Branches may be required within Logistics to maintain span of control when several functional units are established. **The person in charge of each Branch is called Branch Director.**

SERVICE BRANCH

- COMMUNICATIONS UNIT
- MEDICAL UNIT (for emergency personnel, not civilians)
- FOOD UNIT

SUPPORT BRANCH

- SUPPLY UNIT
- FACILITIES UNIT
- GROUND SUPPORT UNIT

Each unit within the Logistics Section will have a unit leader who is responsible for specific functions within each unit and completing necessary ICS forms required for the IAP.

D. Finance

Finance is responsible for tracking all incident costs and evaluating the financial considerations of the incident. **The person in charge of Finance is called the Finance Section Chief.** (Deputies may be assigned)

Financial issues normally are not a major factor during daily incident operations. However, when a department is involved in large complex incidents involving significant expenditures originating from multiple sources providing assistance to the incident the financial documents and funding sources become critical to the operation and recovery process.

The **Finance Section Chief** must provide for the documentation of all incident costs, and provide guidance to the Incident Commander on financial issues that may have an impact on incident operations. These responsibilities include:

- i. Future payments
- ii. Future budgeting
- iii. Payment of personnel costs
- iv. Cost recovery

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 23 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

The Finance section is usually staffed in large-scale or complex incidents. Personnel for this position should be identified prior to an incident including municipal financial departments.

The **Finance Section Chief** is responsible for all finance functions needed for an incident. This individual should establish functional units when needed to maintain an acceptable workload and span of control. These units would include:

- TIME UNIT (responsible for ensuring accurate recording of daily personnel time)
- PROCUREMENT UNIT (responsible for financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts, leases, & fiscal arrangements)
- COMPENSATION/CLAIMS UNIT (documents potential Worker’s Compensation incidents and initiate processes)
- COST UNIT (provides all incident cost analysis)

Each unit within the **Finance Section** will have a unit leader who is responsible for specific functions within each unit and completing necessary ICS forms required for the IAP.

6. Incident Management Team (IMT) Response Guidelines (Local AHJ)

- A. The Incident Commander of all incidents, regardless of that persons rank has the responsibility of taking care of various duties. These duties are, but not limited to life safety, incident stabilization and property conservation. During the initial arrival or as the incident escalates the IC may feel that he may need additional support for command staff positions.
- B. These positions are in the Command Staff, General Staff and EOC.
- C. The South Central Task Force has developed an IMT that can be requested to fill Command and General Staff positions.
- D. The IMT Leader will receive a briefing from the initial IC and will shadow him/her to gather additional information.
- E. As IMT members arrive, they shall meet with the IMT Leader for a briefing to receive assignments (incident objectives and strategies) and begin to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the function they represent.
- F. The IMT Planning Section Chief, and additional Planning staff, will immediately set up the Planning Section. These personnel will start to develop the IAP and necessary contingency plans as well as complete the necessary ICS forms.

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 24 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

- G. The IMT Logistics Section Chief, and additional Logistics staff, will immediately set up the Logistics Section. These personnel will begin to order necessary resources required to control the incident and provide incident support and service needs. The Local AHJ Finance personnel will work hand and hand with logistics at this level.

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association

SOG # : 500.001

Title: Incident Command System

Page: 25 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Forms Appendix

Note: Will be completed once revised ICS Forms are available.

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chief’s Association

SOG # : 500.001

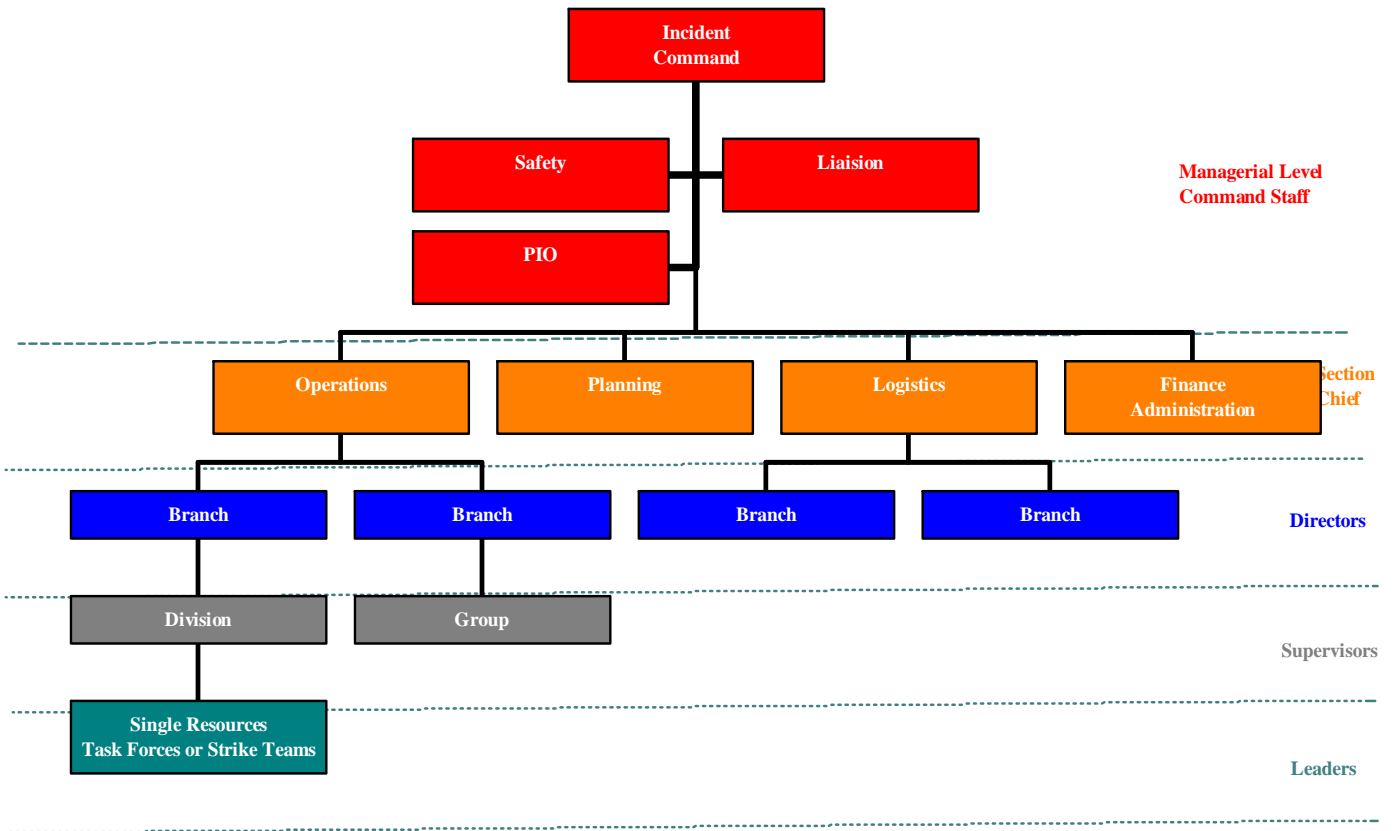
Title: Incident Command System

Page: 26 of 26

Date: December 12, 2008

Example of expanded ICS with the Command Staff, General Staff, Single Resource, Groups, Divisions and Branch assigned.

NIMS Organizational Structure



Assign "Units" to Planning Section & Finance /Administration and to Logistics under the Branch Directors