

Hurricane Fire & Rescue

Hurricane, WV

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Operation Guidelines

Purpose: To establish Incident Command at incidents within Hurricane Fire & Rescue

Scope: All Personnel

Responsibility: It shall be the responsibility of all personnel to adhere to this guideline.

Incident Management System Command Procedures

The Hurricane Fire & Rescue responds to a wide range of emergency incidents. This guide identifies standard operating guidelines that are to be employed in managing and establishing Command in emergency incidents and training exercises. The system provides for the effective management of personnel and resources, as well as a safety link for implementing all components of the Incident Management System for structural/fire operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations.

All members of Hurricane Fire & Rescue who could be assigned within the incident management system will be trained in this protocol, as well as trained to assume the initial role of Incident Commander until relieved by a higher-ranking officer. All officers who may assume the role and function of Incident Commander, Branch, Division, and or Division Officer or fulfill one of the roles of the Command Section and Command Staff will be trained in using this IMS protocol.

The hierarchy of Hurricane Fire & Rescue for emergency incidents is: Lieutenants (Line Officer), Captain, Assistant Chief, Chief (Command Officers) or any officer assigned to fill a specific ICS position.

Command Procedures are designed to:

1. Assign the responsibility for Command to a specific individual through a standard identification system, depending on the arrival sequence of members, companies, and officers.
2. Ensure that a strong, direct, and visible Command will be established from the onset of the incident.
3. Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander and to other individuals operating within the Incident Management System.
4. Provide a system to gather and process information that supports the incident management system through, planning, safety, and other command functions.
5. Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving officers and agencies.

Types of Command

The command function within our Incident Management System will be one of two types: single or unified.

Single Command - When the incident is in our district and there is no overlap of jurisdictional boundaries or responsibility with outside agencies, a single Incident Commander will be established and will be responsible for the incident.

Unified Command – In a unified command, objectives, strategies, action plans, etc., are made jointly, as opposed to a single commander as above. This type of Command is necessary when the incident is in our district or borders on another department's district, or more than one outside department (agency) shares management responsibility due to the nature of the incident. Examples include brush fires-Division of Forestry; E.M.S. incidents, Special Operations Emergency Management, hazardous material teams; plane crash- Federal Aviation Administration, etc.

Responsibilities of Command

The Incident Commander is responsible for the overall coordination and direction of all the activities and tactical priorities.

Tactical Priorities

1. Provide for life safety by removing endangered occupants.
2. Stabilize the incident and treat the injured.

3. Conserve property and minimize environmental impact.
4. Provide for the safety, accountability and welfare/rehabilitation of emergency response personnel.
5. Ensure that the functions of extrication, triage, treatment, and transport are completed.
6. Serve as the Safety Officer until position is assigned to another member.

Tactical deployment, functions, positions, priorities are to be based on the following risk management model:

1. We will risk our lives to save lives that are savable.
2. We will moderately risk our lives to save lives that might be savable.
3. We will not risk our lives for lives that are lost and not savable.

Functions of Command

The Incident Commander is responsible for building a Command structure that matches the organizational needs of the incident. The Functions of Command define standard activities that are performed by the Incident Commander to achieve the tactical priorities. This may be one or more of the following which are carried out by the Incident commander until assigned, if necessary.

The Functions of Command include:

1. **Establish Command/post** - Establish an appropriate Command structure based on staffing and the operational mode. When possible, locate the command post in the best tactical location based on the operational mode. The command post should be identified by a green flashing light. The incident commander should be identifiable by wearing an Incident Commander vest.
2. **Conduct size-up** - Rapidly evaluate the situation and control access to hazard area.

3. **Communications** - Initiate, maintain, and control the communication process. Request and assign tactical channel/s as needed from Putnam County Communications.
4. **On major incidents where multiple outside Fire/EMS agencies will be called in for assistance, the communications plan in appendix D is to be used for tactical radio assignments.**
5. **Declare mode as nothing showing, offensive, or defensive, for structure fires/special operations** - Identify overall strategy, develop an incident action plan, and assign companies and personnel consistent with plans and standard operating guidelines/procedures, based upon the situation and risk management model.
6. **Develop an effective Incident Management Organization structure-** Based upon the situation, staffing, and the possibility of the incident escalating.
7. **Personnel Accountability System** - Establish for location and function of all personnel on the scene. (See Accountability Protocol)
8. **Assign Safety Officer** - Safety Officer Functions are to be established at all incidents. Any member may act as Safety Officer on many incidents. Ensure rehab is established as required. (See Rehabilitation Protocol)
9. Establish a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT), depending on the situation. (See RIT protocol)
10. Review, evaluate, and revise the incident action plan, as needed.
11. Provide status reports to the dispatch center as necessary. When working a high-risk incident, status reports should be done frequently.
12. Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command.
13. Provide liaison/coordination with other cooperating/assisting agencies.

The Incident Commander is responsible for all of these functions unless delegated to other members. As Command is transferred, so is the responsibility for these functions.

The first seven functions must be addressed immediately from the initial establishment of Command.

Establishing Command

Formal incident management operations will be established for incidents that require the response of two or more companies. This applies to suppression, emergency medical and special operation incidents. The first fire department member, unit or company to arrive at the scene will establish Command of the incident. The initial Incident Commander will remain in Command until Command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.

1. A single company response (trash fire, EMS call, car fire, power lines down, etc.) will only require that company or unit to acknowledge their arrival on the scene. The IMS management in this case is informal.
2. For incidents that require the response of two or more companies, the first unit or company on the scene must establish and announce "Location Command", (i.e., Corkscrew Command), and develop an Incident Command Structure appropriate for the incident and staffing. A tactical channel shall be requested from the dispatch center while en route to the scene.

The first arriving fire department unit activates the Command process by giving an initial radio report.

The radio report shall include:

1. Designation of the unit arriving on the scene.
2. A brief description of the incident situation (i.e., building size, occupancy, Haz-Mat release, multi-vehicle accident, etc.).
3. Obvious conditions (smoke showing, working fire, Haz Mat spill, multiple patients, etc.). Nothing showing.
4. Establishment and identification of command.
5. Declaration of strategy (this applies to structure fires and special operation calls at a minimum): offensive or defensive mode investigating.
6. Tactical radio channel assignment for incoming units as assigned by dispatch.
7. Brief description of action taken, if high risk incident.
8. Any obvious safety concerns, if high risk.
9. Request or release resources, as required.

Example:

For an offensive structure fire-

"Engine 812 is on the scene of a single story residential structure with smoke showing. 801 will be establishing Command, with offensive operations on Tac 8."

For a defensive structure fire-

"Engine 813 is on the scene of a medium size warehouse fully involved with exposures to the east. 801 will be establishing Corkscrew Command, with defensive operations on Tac 8."

For an EMS incident-

"Squad 817 is on the scene. 801 will have command."

For a single company incident-

“Engine 811 is on the scene of a small dumpster fire. 811 will be busy extinguishing.”

Command Radio Designation

The radio designation “Location Command” will be used when working a single incident (i.e., Coconut Command, Corkscrew Command) additional incidents will use the radio designation “Location Command” and request the next available tactical channel from the dispatch center. These Command designations will not change throughout the duration of the incident. The designation of “_____Command” will remain with the officer currently in Command of the incident throughout the event. NOTE: the use of clear text communications (plain English) is to be used on all radio communications.

Modes of Operation

The responsibility of the first arriving member or unit is to establish Command of the incident. If a chief officer, member, or unit without tactical capabilities (i.e., staff vehicle, lack of equipment, etc.) initiates Command, the establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents, the initial Commander will be a company officer. The following Command options define the company officer’s direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of Command that may be utilized.

Nothing Showing (Investigative) Mode

These situations generally require investigation by the initial arriving company while other units remain staged (See staging protocol). In this case, the officer should go with the company to investigate the situation while utilizing a portable radio to command the incident. Staged units may be assigned as ordered by Command.

Offensive Mode

These situations require immediate action to stabilize the incident, provide search and rescue, save lives, control and extinguish the fire, etc. This mode will usually require the Company Officer’s assistance and direct involvement in the attack. In these situations, the Lieutenant will go with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision. Passing Command to the next arriving officer.

Example:

- Fast fire attack.
- Critical life safety situation must be achieved in a compressed time.
- Any incident where the safety and welfare of firefighters is a major concern.
- Multiple locations of victims.

Where fast intervention is critical, utilization of the portable radio will permit the Company Officer’s involvement in the offensive mode without neglecting Command responsibilities. The offensive mode should not last more than a few minutes (15-20) and will end with one of the following:

1. Situation is stabilized.
2. Situation is not stabilized and the Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior and establish a Command Post or pass on command to an officer on the exterior.

At some time, the Company Officer will decide whether or not to withdraw the remainder of the crew. **No crews shall remain in a hazardous area without radio communication capabilities unless working in a bomb threat or explosive area.**

Defensive Mode

Certain incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, exposure, or potential for rapid expansion, inability to save lives, require immediate strong, direct, overall Command. In such cases, the officer may initially assume a safe, exterior, effective Command position and maintain that position until relieved by a higher-ranking officer. A tactical worksheet shall be initiated and utilized to assist in managing this type of incident.

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

If modes are changed during operations, it is essential that all emergency personnel working on the scene be advised of the change of operational mode, withdrawn from the hot zone if necessary, and a Personnel Accountability Report is completed.

Passing Command

In certain situations, it may be advantageous for a first arriving Officer to pass Command to the next Officer on the scene. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first arriving company requires a full crew (i.e., high-rise or an immediate rescue situation) and another company is on the scene.

“Passing Command” to a unit that is not on the scene creates a gap in the Command process and compromises incident management. To prevent this “gap,” **Command should not be passed to an officer who is not on the scene.** It is preferable to have the initial arriving Officer continue to operate in Command, until Command can be passed to an on-scene officer.

When a higher-ranking officer arrives at the scene simultaneously with the initial arriving company, the higher-ranking officer may establish Command.

Should a situation occur where a later arriving company or higher-ranking officer cannot locate or communicate with Command (after three radio attempts, two verbal and one page), he/she will assume and announce their assumption of Command with the members on the scene and the dispatch center, initiate a Personal

Accountability Report (PAR), and initiate whatever actions are necessary to confirm the safety of the missing officer and or possibly the crew.

Transfer of Command

Command is transferred to improve the quality of the Command organization. The following guidelines outline the transfer of Command process:

Example:

1. The first apparatus arriving on the scene will establish Command. This will normally be an Officer, such as a lieutenant, but could be any fire department member, including the Chief.
2. The first arriving Officer will assume Command after the transfer of Command procedures has been completed (assuming an equal or higher-ranking officer has not already assumed Command).
3. In certain situations, it may be necessary for the Officer to transfer Command to the next higher Officer on the scene.
4. The first arriving higher-ranking officer should assume Command of the incident following transfer of Command procedures.
5. Later arriving Chief Officers may choose to assume Command or assume a Command section/staff position.

The arrival of a higher-ranking officer on the scene does not mean that Command has been automatically transferred to that Officer. Command is only transferred when the outlined transfer of Command process, below, is completed.

The actual transfer of Command should be as follows:

- A. The officer assuming Command will communicate with the person being relieved face-to-face.
- B. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming Command, indicating at least the following:
 1. Incident conditions (fire location and extent, hazardous material spill or release, number/condition of patients, etc.).
 2. Initial Incident action plan.
 3. Progress toward completion of the tactical objectives (action plan).
 4. Deployment and assignment of operating companies and personnel.
 5. Safety considerations.
 6. Appraisal of need for additional resources.
- C. The person being relieved of Command should review the tactical worksheet with the officer assuming Command. This sheet provides the most effective framework for Command transfer as it outlines the location and status of

personnel and resources in a standard form that should be well known to all members.

The officer assuming Command, as needed, may reassign the person being relieved of Command to the best advantage.

Terminating Command

Command will be terminated when the incident has de-escalated to a point where the remaining Officer can safely and effectively supervise the remaining activities, or when all companies have been cleared to return to service. The Incident Commander will ensure the following is complete prior to terminating Command:

1. The Incident Action Plan has been completed.
2. The Incident Management Organization can be effectively and safely terminated.
3. All emergency personnel will have been accounted for by a PAR.
4. The report has been completed.
5. The scene has been safely and properly secured and turned over to the proper authority, if available.
6. Tactical channel(s) have been cleared.
7. The Dispatch Center is advised that Command has been terminated and all remaining companies and units are cleared of the scene.

Command Assignments and Orders

All assignments and orders issued by the Incident Commander, Branch, Division, Division Officers, members of the command section and staff will be carried out as ordered. Where conflicting assignments/orders are received at any level, the officer or individual receiving the conflicting order will inform the officer/individual giving the order that a conflict exists. If the conflicting order is required to be carried out, the individual giving the conflicting order will so inform the officer/individual who initiated the order.

Emergency Radio Communications

Emergency messages/hazardous conditions: When a member, crew, Division, or Branch has an emergency message they are to call Command stating “**Priority Traffic**” and state their message/hazard. Once Command has the message, it will be announced to all units on the scene. Next, Command will have each division/branch acknowledge the message. After acknowledgement of all divisions/branches, Command or operations will announce that radio traffic may return to normal, dependent upon the emergency condition.

Injured/missing, trapped emergency personnel: When a member or crew becomes injured (and can't remove themselves) or trapped, they are to call their Division/ Branch Command stating “**May Day-May Day**” and state their situation. Upon Command notification, they will call for radio silence, announce the emergency message, and if required, move all non-affected Divisions/ Branches to the next available tactical channel. This will now leave Command the injured or trapped member/crew and the rapid intervention team on the main tactical channel to conduct search and rescue for the member/crew. A member of the Command section will then conduct a PAR with all the non-affected Divisions/Branches.

Immediate evacuation from the hazard area: Whenever any member on the scene becomes aware of an immediate life safety threat to members operating in a hazardous

area, they are to announce “**Priority Traffic**” and state the situation and location. Command Branches/Divisions will have a fire truck air horn activated for approximately 15 seconds. Command will ensure that all Divisions/ Branches have been notified of the situation and immediate evacuation. All personnel/crews exiting the hazard area are to report to a safe area and conduct a PAR. This PAR is to be given to the Division/Branch Officer who will pass it to command/accountability. The exiting crews will reunite and wait for further orders. Command may order a second blast of the air horn. Command will then order the appropriate action. If Command is first aware of an immediate life safety threat, they will order the air horn activation and state the situation.

DIVISIONS AND DIVISION OFFICERS

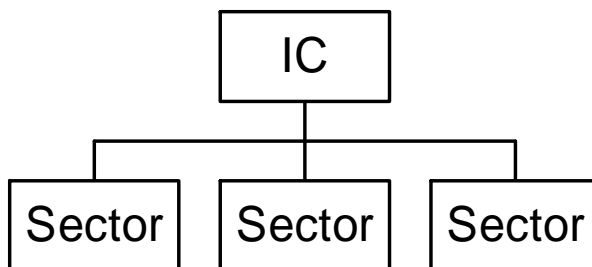
Division Officers

Emergency situations often exceed the capability of one officer to effectively manage the entire operation. The Incident Commander should group members and companies to work in divisions. Divisions reduce the span of control to more manageable and smaller-sized units. Divisions allow the Incident Commander to communicate principally with Division Officers, rather than multiple, individual Company Officers, thus providing an effective Command structure and incident scene organization.

Division responsibilities should be assigned early in the incident, typically to the first company assigned to a function (Salvage Division, Triage Division, etc.). This early establishment of divisions provides an effective Incident Command organization framework on which the operation can be built and expanded.

As divisions are implemented, Command continues to operate at the strategic level, determining the overall strategy to deal with the incident.

The term division is generic and represents functional operations.



Divisions

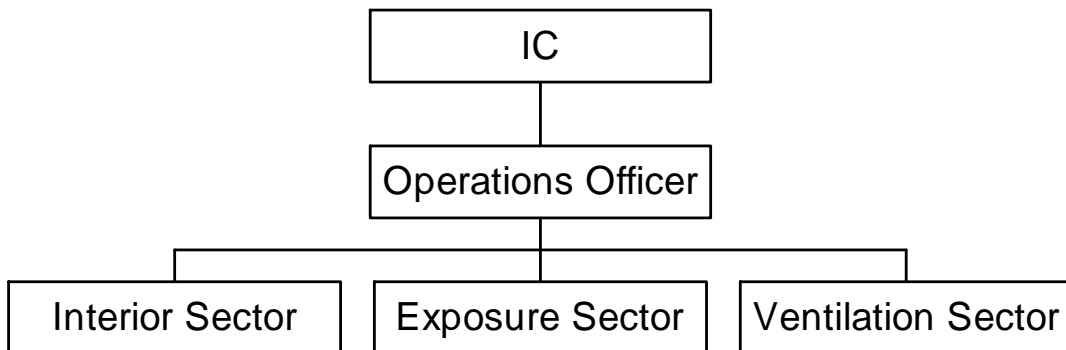
Normally, at this level of incident, a Company Officer can effectively supervise his/her own crew, and direct and coordinate the efforts of three or four additional companies assigned to his/her division. As operations expand in complexity and size, and as additional higher-ranking officers become available, the Incident Commander should assign them to relieve Company Officers and assume division responsibilities.

The use of divisions in the Command organization provides a standard system to divide the incident scene into smaller subordinate Command units or areas.

The number of divisions that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commander varies. In fast moving, complex operations, a span of control of no more than five divisions is indicated. In slower moving, less complex operations, the Incident Commander may effectively manage more divisions.

When the number of divisions exceeds the span of control that the Incident Commander can effectively manage, or at any point that the Incident Commander chooses, the incident organization should establish an Operations Division. The Operations Officer is responsible for Branches/Divisions and Divisions. Each division is responsible for several divisions and should be assigned a separate tactical channel. As a general rule no more than five companies should be assigned to each division, no more than five divisions should be assigned to each division, and no more than five divisions should be assigned to a branch.

Division procedures provide an array of major functions that may be selectively



implemented according to the needs of the incident. This places responsibility for the details and execution of each particular function on a Division Officer.

When effective divisions have been established, the Incident Commander can concentrate on overall strategy and resource allocation, allowing the Division Officers/Operations Officer to manage their assigned units. The Incident Commander determines strategic goals and assigns tactical objectives and resources to the divisions. Each Division Officer is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources at his/her disposal in order to complete the tactical objectives assigned by the Incident Commander/Operations Officer. Division Officers are also responsible for communicating needs and progress to Command or the Operations Officer, if established.

Divisions reduce the overall amount of radio communications. Most routine communications within a division should be conducted in a face-to-face manner between Company Officers and their Division Officer. This process reduces radio traffic and increases ability to transmit critical radio communications.

The safety and accountability of fire fighting and emergency personnel represents the major reason for establishing divisions. Each Division Officer must maintain communication with assigned companies to control both their position and function. The Division Officer must constantly monitor all hazardous situations and risks to personnel. The Division Officer must take appropriate action to ensure that companies are operating in a safe and effective manner.

Command should begin to assign divisions based on the following factors:

1. Situations, which will eventually involve a number of companies or functions. Command should initially assign division responsibilities to the first companies assigned to a function until higher-ranking officers are available.
2. When Command can no longer effectively cope with or manage the number of companies currently involved in the operation.
3. When companies are involved in complex operations. (Large interior, MCIs or equivalent, and special operations)
4. When companies are operating from tactical positions, which Command has little or no direct control over. (i.e. out of sight)
5. When the situation presents special hazards and close control is required over operating companies (i.e., unstable structural conditions, special operations, heavy fire load, marginal offensive situations).
6. When Command desires to have divisions established.
7. When staffing levels are below normal and outside agencies will be responding to the incident.

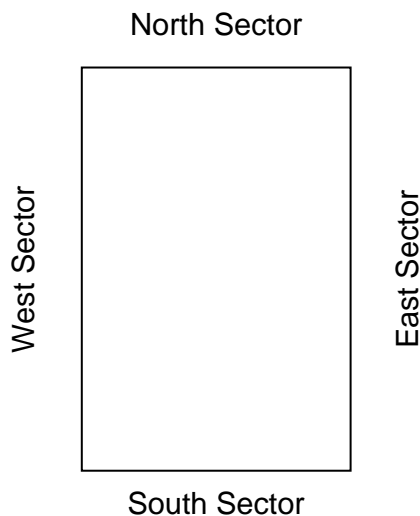
When establishing a division, the Incident Commander will assign each Division Officer the following:

1. Tactical objectives (Stop forward progress of the fire).
2. A radio designation (Roof Division, Triage Division, etc.).
3. The identity of resources assigned to the division.
1. A separate tactical channel, if necessary.

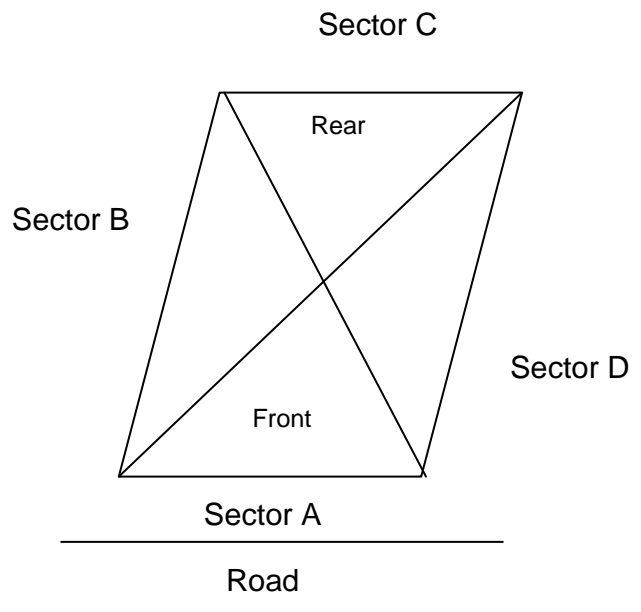
Divisions will be regulated by the following guidelines:

1. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to assign divisions as required for safe emergency operations; this assignment will relate to functional divisions.
2. Command will advise each Division Officer of specific tactical objectives. The overall strategy and plan will and should also be provided; (time permitting) so the Division Officer has some idea of what is going on and how his assignment fits.
3. The number of companies assigned to a division will depend on the conditions within that division. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of companies operating within a division and the capability of that Division Officer to effectively direct operations. If a Division Officer cannot control the resources within the division, he/she should notify the Incident Commander so that a new division can be established or other corrective action taken. In most cases, five companies represent the maximum span of control for a Division Officer.
4. Divisions assigned to specific operating areas will be designated by directions (East Division, North Division, etc.). Where incidents involve odd geographic boundaries (with no obvious North, South, East, West) it may be confusing to assign directional designations to divisions (East Division, etc.). Therefore, an alternate use of Division A, B, C, D should be used. Division "A" is the front of the building and the other divisions proceed clockwise around the building in alphabetical order.

Example: Geographical



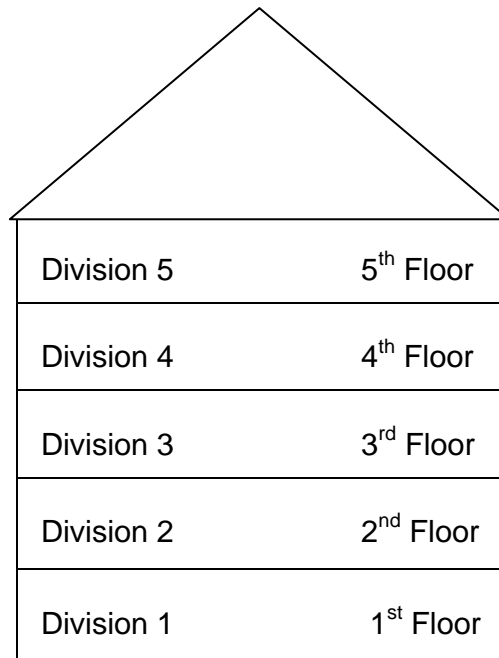
Example: Alphabetical



Note: In multi-story occupancies, a floor will be a geographical area-designed as a division with the floor number. (Division 10 indicates 10th floor.)

In some cases the floor division may be subdivided into functional divisions. Functional divisions will be identified by the function. (Salvage Division, Search Division, Ventilation Division, etc.). **Brush fires will also be geographical and designed Divisions possibly expanded to Branches.**

Example: Multistory



Division Officers will use the division designation in radio communications (i.e. “Interior Division to Command”).

Divisions will be commanded by a Division Officer. Division Officers may be any fire department members designated by Command. In many cases, the initial division responsibility will be given to the Company Officer who receives the initial assignment to a basic tactical function (treatment, roof, etc.).

When necessary, Command will assign a higher-ranking officer to assume division responsibilities.

Regular Transfer of Command procedures will be followed in transferring division responsibility.

In some cases, a Division Officer may be assigned to a function initially to evaluate and report conditions and advise Command of needed tasks and resources. The assigned officer will proceed to the division, evaluate and report conditions to the Incident Commander, and assume responsibility for directing resources and operations within his/her assigned area of responsibility.

The Division Officer must be in a position to directly supervise and monitor operations. This will require the Division Officer to be equipped with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment for his/her area of responsibility.

Division Officer Responsibility

Division Officers will be responsible for and will have the full authority to carry out all assigned functions within their division. This requires each Division Officer to:

1. Complete objectives assigned by Command.
2. Account for and monitor all assigned personnel, if an Accountability Officer is not assigned to the division.
3. Ensure that operations are conducted safely. Stop/correct any unsafe operation/act in their section.
4. Monitor work progress.
5. Redirect activities as necessary.
6. Coordinate actions with related activities and adjacent divisions.
7. Monitor welfare of division personnel.
8. Request additional resources as needed.
- 9. Provide Command with essential and frequent progress reports every 15 minutes or as major changes occur.**
10. Re-allocate resources within the division.

The Division Officer should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible.

The primary function of Company Officers working within a division is to direct the operations of their individual crews in performing their assigned task. Company Officers will advise their Division Officer of work progress, preferably face-to-face. All requests for additional resources or assistance within a division must be directed to the Division Officer. Division Officers will communicate with Command or Operations.

Each Division Officer will keep Command informed of conditions and progress in the division through regular progress reports every 15 minutes, or more frequently if the incident is high risk. The Division Officer must prioritize progress reports to essential information only.

Command must be advised immediately of significant changes, particularly those involving the ability or inability to complete an objective, hazardous conditions, accidents, structural collapse, etc.

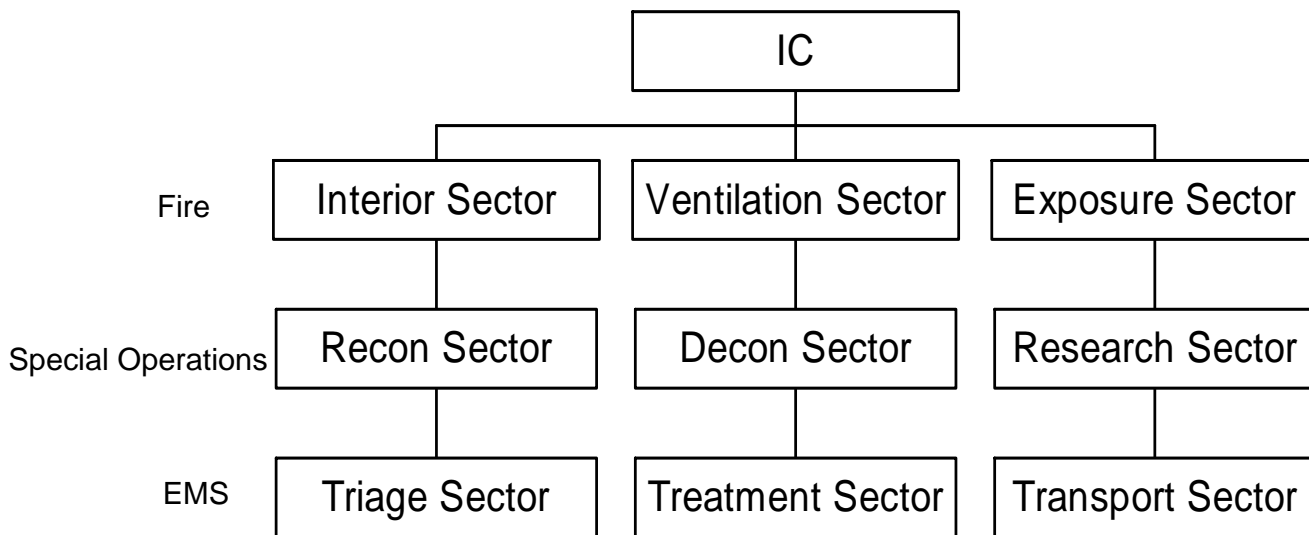
When a company is assigned from Staging to an operating division, the company will be told to which division and Division Officer they will be reporting and the radio channel on which the division is working. The Division Officer will be informed of which particular companies or the Incident Commander has assigned units. It is the responsibility of the Division Officer to contact the assigned company to relay any instructions relative to the specific action requested.

Division Officers will monitor the condition of the crews operating in their division. Relief crews will be requested to maintain the safety of personnel and progress toward the division objectives.

Division Officers will ensure an orderly and thorough reassignment of crews to the Rehab Division. Crews must report to rehab intact to facilitate accountability.

TYPES OF DIVISIONS

The types of divisions and general functions to be established are based upon the incident type, complexity, and size as a general rule. The three most common types of incidents seen are fire, EMS, and special operations.



Example:

SUPPRESSION

Geographical Divisions - These divisions are based upon supervisory tasks covering all the activities within each division, as defined by the Incident Commander, i.e., North, South, East, and West divisions or Divisions A, B, C, and D.

Functional Divisions - Based upon both function and supervisory tasks these might include:

- A. **Search and Rescue** - This division is responsible for conducting a primary and sometimes a secondary search.
 1. A primary search is an initial search for victims.
 2. A secondary search is a search for victims once the fire has been extinguished/knocked down and visibility has improved.

- B. **Reconnaissance (Recon)** - This division is responsible for gathering information on the fire and relaying it to the Incident Commander, i.e., fire location, fire extension (actual/probable), structural conditions, exposure, hazards, amount of acreage involved, etc.
- C. **Attack** - This division is responsible for searching and extinguishing the main seat of the fire and other fire extension areas. This division may also be involved with search and rescue of victims.
- D. **Roof** - This division is responsible for opening ventilation holes in a structure. Note: This division may have other responsibilities than ventilation when assigned to the roof area. This division may also be called the Ventilation Division.
- E. **Ventilation** - This division is responsible for carrying out the required ventilation of a structure or defined area.
- F. **Site Control** - This division is responsible for locating and securing utilities (lock-out/tag-out) that may present a hazard on the emergency scene.
- G. **Exposure** - This division is responsible for protecting exposures adjacent to the fire building/area from catching on fire.
- H. **Interior** - This division is responsible for all assigned interior operations that may take place in a structure or a specific area in a structure. Note: There may be more than one interior division in a structure at a time.
- I. **Exterior** - This division is responsible for assigned fire ground operations located outside of the fire building.
- J. **Overhaul** - This division is responsible for finding and extinguishing any remaining fires in the structure. Another function of this division is to ensure that there is no extension from the main fire area.
- K. **Rehabilitation** - This division is responsible for evaluating, monitoring, and replenishing the physical state of emergency personnel. Injuries and illnesses are treated in this division.
- L. **Base** - This division serves as the initial check-in area for emergency personnel, equipment and apparatus at high-rise structures/incidents. It is established outside the building at a location determined by the Incident Commander. All emergency personnel and equipment are assigned from this division to a working division.

- M. **Lobby** - This division is responsible for locating/relaying information from the fire alarm panel, running the elevator/elevators, controlling emergency personnel and civilians in and out of the structure (high rises) from floors above and below the lobby, directing emergency personnel to the elevators and stairwells, controlling the building's public address system.

When no accountability section is assigned, the Lobby Division is responsible for accounting for all emergency personnel involved in operations above/below the lobby floor.

- N. **Accountability** - This division is responsible for tracking and accounting for all emergency personnel on the emergency scene and working in the hazard area/zone.
- O. **Rapid Intervention Team** - This division consists of a crew/crews assigned only for the purpose of providing emergency rescue of emergency personnel on an incident.
- P. **Staging** – This is a location where personnel and apparatus are to stand-by until assigned where to report to or assigned a specific task.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

This includes the following types of rescue categories: confined space, hazardous materials, high/low angle rope, machinery, structural collapse, trench/excavation, water, and wilderness search and rescue.

The following are the most common divisions and general functions that may be implemented in the majority of the special operation categories:

Site Control -This division is responsible for identifying the boundary zones (cold, warm, and hot), establishing access routes to the hazard site, moving individuals and other objects from in and around the hazard site, preventing the spread of contaminate material if present, conducting lock-out/tag-out and blocking and blinding procedures, if necessary.

Research - This division attempts to secure all the information on products involved in the incident. Information at a minimum: product identification, product handling, health hazards, fire hazards, environment hazards, and required personal protective clothing.

Entry - This division consists of crews, varying in number depending on category, that will be operating in the hot zone to carry out various functions, from victim rescue to hazardous material control.

Back-up/Rescue - This division consists of crews that will be operating in the hot zone to provide emergency back-up to the primary entry team, should an emergency situation occur that may require rapid and or assisted removal. **NOTE: This division may also be called the Rapid Intervention Team.**

Decontamination (decon) - This division is responsible for providing all primary and secondary decontamination of emergency personnel and equipment. This division may also provide decon to victims of the incident.

Ventilation - This division is responsible for ventilating confined spaces and specific areas as required. It may also be responsible for atmospheric monitoring in some situations.

Supplied Air - This division is responsible for setting up and monitoring the remote air system and lines that may be being used by entry and back-up teams.

Rigging/Hauling - This division is responsible for setting up the proper mechanical system required for raising/lowering of rescuers/victims (low/high angle rescue) as well as lowering/raising rescuers/victims from confined spaces.

Rapid Intervention Team - This division consists of a crew/crews assigned only for providing emergency rescue of emergency personnel on an incident.

Staging – This is where personnel and apparatus are to stand-by until assigned where to report to or assigned a specific task.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INCIDENTS

The following are the most common divisions and general functions that may be implemented in emergency medical incidents (MCI's):

Extrication- this division is implemented in incidents that require physical disentanglement and removal of trapped patients. This division may also be responsible for locating, determining the number of victims, disentanglement, initial treatment, and delivering patients to the triage, treatment, or collection point.

Staging – This is where personnel and apparatus are to stand-by until assigned where to report to or assigned a specific task.

Triage - This division is responsible for the evaluating and classifying patients to determine their medical treatment priority. This evaluating is based upon the S.T.A.R.T. triage system.

Treatment - This division is established to provide medical treatment to the three categories of ill/injured patients until transported or released from the scene.

Transport - This division is responsible for determining and arranging for transport (through Command) of the necessary patients from the treatment area. Transportation from this division is through ground units, air units, buses, etc. Movement of patients from the treatment division to the transport divisions is also a function of this division.

Divisions and Division Officers

As the incident requires or as the incident organization grows in complexity and the span of control with divisions is maximized, the Incident Commander may divide the incident into geographical divisions. The Division level, an intermediate level, of the organization is designed to provide COORDINATION between the divisions and command. Division Officers supervise and manage usually no more than five Division Officers, and report to the established Branch officer or Operations Officer.

Division Officers should be utilized at incidents where the situation requires the incident be divided into geographical areas, the span of control with divisions is maximized, incidents involving two or more different, major management components, (i.e., a large fire with a major evacuation, a large fire with a number of patients) or established earlier if desired by the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander may elect to assign Division Officers as forward positions to coordinate the activities between divisions.

The intent of the division level of the Command structure is to split an incident into manageable geographical components and reduce span of control. Division Officers will normally be utilized at large-scale incidents that involve one or two major components. The following types of incidents are examples where Division Officers may be utilized:

1. Multi-jurisdictional incidents
2. Special operation incidents
3. Incidents that require a major evacuation. (Flooding)
4. A large-scale incident spread over a wide geographical area. (i.e., brush fires)
5. An incident with mass casualties and a significant hazard (i.e., fire, haz-mat, plane crash, floods, etc.)
6. High-rise fires
7. An incident where the number of divisions exceed the span of control that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commander or the Operations Officer.

The Division Officer's roles and responsibilities are to manage and direct activities of Division Officers. Division Officers will have the full authority to complete such activities. Additionally, they are to stop/correct any unsafe operation/act in their division. Each Division Officer must maintain communications with assigned Division Officers to control both their position and function. Division Officers should operate on separate tactical channels, if possible. The radio designation of Division Officers should reflect the geographic area. (i.e., Fire Division, West Division, Division A, etc.). An orange colored vest labeled Division Officer should identify the Division Officer. When Command implements Division Officers, the Division Officers should be notified by Command of their new supervisor. This information should include:

1. What division the Division is now assigned to.
2. The officer in charge of the Division.
3. The tactical channel the Division (and Division) is assigned to.

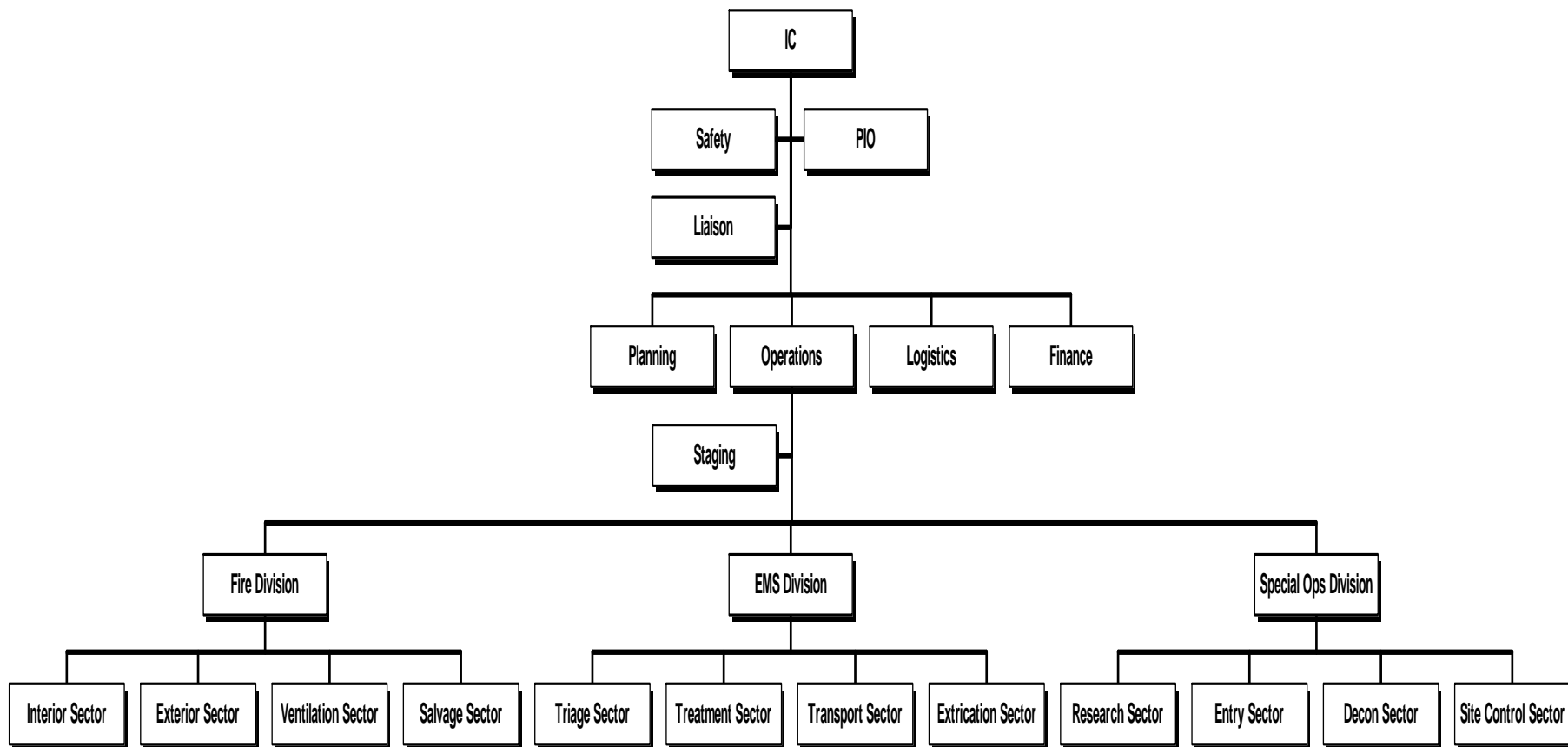
Radio communications should then be directed from the Division Officer to the Division Officer – instead of Command or Operations. Division Officers will relay this information to the companies working in their Division.

Division Officer positions should be assigned to higher-ranking officers or chief officers. Depending on the situation, Division Officers may be located at the Command Post or at a remote location. When located at the Command Post, Division Officers can communicate on a face-to-face basis with the Operations Officer or the Branch Officer, if established. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area it may be more effective to have Division Officers in forward operating positions. In these situations, Command must assign officers in the Command Post to monitor each division tactical channel.

The Incident Commander may occasionally be faced with a situation where he/she has very little control over operational division(s). This would include divisions in conflicting positions (personnel blasting one another with hose streams), multiple divisions spilling into each other, defensive fire operations in one area and offensive operations in the adjoining fire area. Command should utilize a Division Officer in these types of situations to go to a forward position and coordinate the activities of these divisions.

The Division Officer should give a status report, at a minimum, every 30 minutes to the Operations Officer or the Branch Officer, if established

Example: Overall with Divisions



Branches and Branch Officers

As the incident organization continues to grow in complexity, and the span of control within the division is maximized, the Incident Commander may implement an additional organizational level within the Command organization. The Branch Level, functionally or geographically based, of the organization is designed to provide COORDINATION between the divisions and Command. Branch Officers supervise and manage usually no more than five Division Officers, and report to the Incident Commander or Operations Officer.

Branch Officers should be utilized at incidents where the incident requires the situation being divided into functional or geographical areas, where the span of control with divisions is maximized, incidents involving two or more different major management components, (i.e., a large fire with a major evacuation, a large fire with a number of patients) or established earlier if desired by the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander may elect to assign Branch Officers as forward positions to coordinate the activities between divisions.

The intent of the branch level of the Command structure is to split an incident into manageable components and reduce span of control. Branch Officers will normally be utilized at very large-scale incidents that involve two or more major components. The following types of incidents are examples where Branch Officers may be utilized:

1. Multi-jurisdictional incidents
2. Special operation incidents
3. Incidents that require a major evacuation. (Hurricane)
4. A large-scale incident spread over a wide geographical area. (i.e., brush fires)
5. An incident with mass casualties and a significant hazard (i.e., fire, haz-mat, plane crash, floods, etc.)
6. High-rise fires
7. An incident where the number of divisions exceed the span of control that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commander or the Operations Officer.

The Branch Officer's roles and responsibilities are to manage and direct activities of Division Officers. Branch Officers will have the full authority to complete such activities. Additionally, they are to stop/correct any unsafe operation/act in their branch. Each Branch Officer must maintain communications with assigned Division Officers to control both their position and function. Branch Officers should operate on separate tactical channels, as assigned. The radio designation of Branch Officers should reflect the function or geographic area of the branch (i.e., Fire Branch, Medical Branch, etc.). An orange colored vest labeled Branch Officer should identify the Branch Officer. When Command implements Branch Officers, the Division Officers should be notified by Command of their new supervisor. This information should include:

1. What branch the division is now assigned to.
2. The officer in charge of the branch.
3. The tactical channel the branch (and division) is assigned.

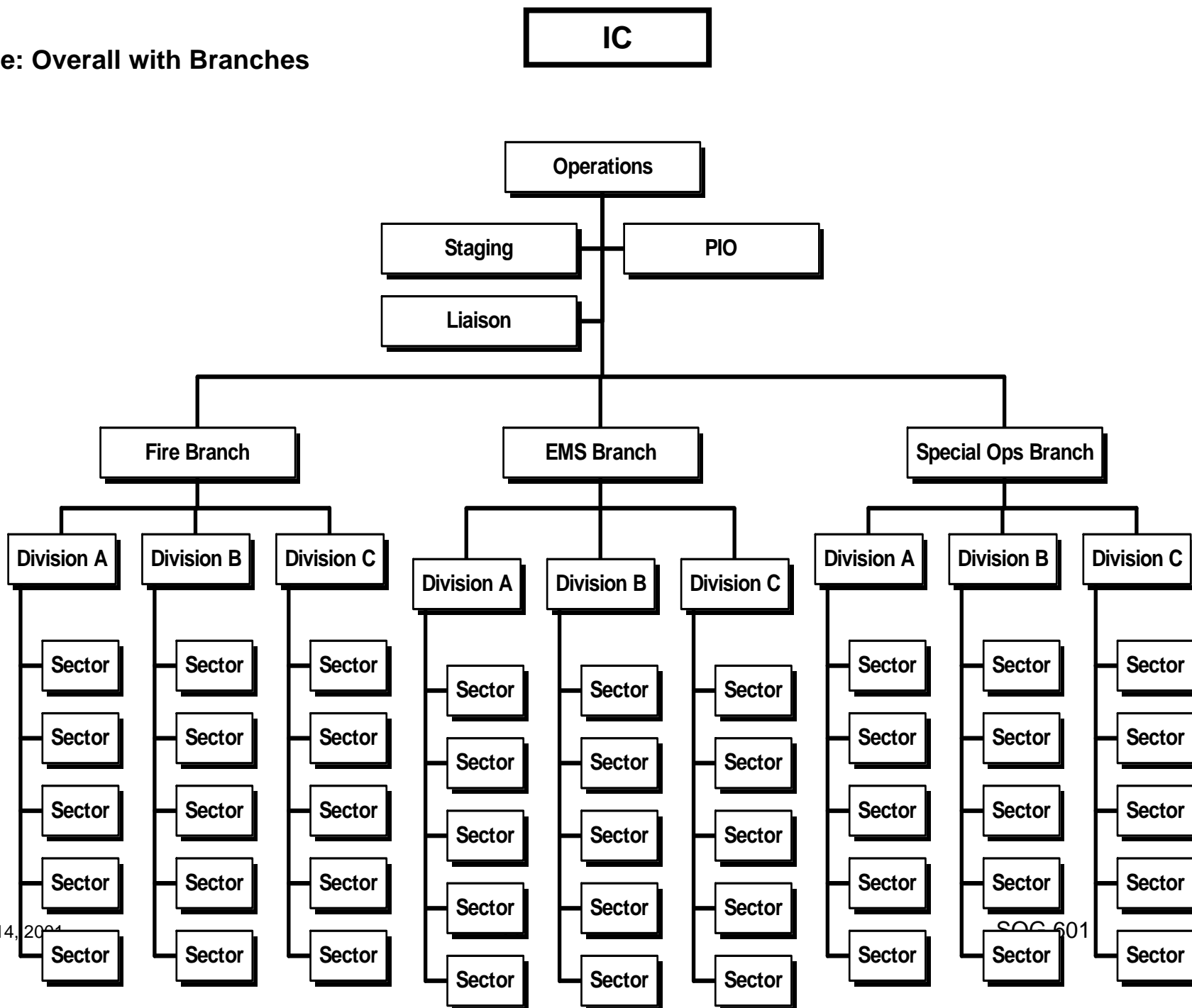
Radio communications should then be directed from the Division Officer to the Branch Officer – instead of Operations, if established. **Branch Officers should**

give status reports, at a minimum every 30 minutes to Operations. Division Officers will relay this information to the companies working in their division.

Branch Officer positions should be assigned to higher-ranking officers or chief officers. Depending on the situation, Branch Officers may be located at the Command Post or at a remote location. When located at the Command Post, Branch Officers can communicate on a face-to-face basis with the Incident Commander and/or the Operations Officer. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area it may be more effective to have Branch Officers in forward operating positions. In these situations, Command must assign officers in the Command Post to monitor each branch tactical channel.

The Incident Commander may occasionally be faced with a situation where he/she has very little control over operational divisions. In this case, Command should utilize a Branch Officer in these types of situations to go to a forward position and coordinate the activities of these divisions.

Example: Overall with Branches



Command Sections

Command section positions are implemented individually or entirely as required by each type of incident--large or small, simple or complex. On large incidents the span of control may become stretched as more branches/divisions and divisions are implemented. In addition, the Incident Commander can become quickly overwhelmed and overloaded with management information, assigning companies, filling out and updating the tactical worksheets, planning, forecasting, requesting additional resources, talking on the radio, and fulfilling all the other functions of Command. The immediate need of the Incident Command is support. Crewmembers, higher-ranking officers and staff personnel may be needed to fill the Command section and command staff positions.

Generally in small incidents, special operations, or during the initial phase of large incidents, the Incident Commander normally carries out these four section functions. When these sections are established, they are to be filled by the most appropriate individual, higher-ranking officer, or a chief officer. These four sections are:

1. Operations
2. Planning
3. Logistics
4. Finance/Administration

These four sections comprise the General Command Sections in an incident organizational structure.

Sections and Their Functions

Section level positions can be implemented at any time and or based on the needs of the incident. One of the first sections typically implemented is the Operations Section Officer.

Operations Section

The Operations Section is responsible for the direct management of all the incident tactical activities, the tactical priorities, and the safety and welfare of the personnel working in the Operations Section. The Operations Section Officer uses the appropriate radio channel to communicate strategic and specific objectives to the branches/divisions and/or divisions.

The Operations Section is most often implemented (staffed) as a span-of-control mechanism. When the number of branches/divisions and divisions exceed the capability of the Incident Commander to effectively manage, or at the Incident Commander's desire, he/she may staff the Operations Section to reduce their span-of-control and thus transfer direct management of all tactical activities to the Operations Section Chief. The Incident Commander is then able to focus all attention on management of the entire incident rather than concentrating on tactical activities.

Operations Section Officer

The Incident Operations Section Officer's role and responsibility is to direct management of all incident tactical activities and should have direct involvement of preparation of the action plan for the period of responsibility. The Operations Officer will have the full authority to complete his/her role and responsibilities, as well as direct the branches/divisions and divisions under his command. An orange colored vest labeled Operations Officer should identify the Operations Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Manages incident tactical activities
2. Coordinates activities with the Incident Commander
3. Implements the Action Plan
4. Assigns resources to tactical level areas based on tactical objectives and priorities
5. Builds an effective organizational structure through the use of Branches/Divisions and/or Divisions
6. Provides tactical objectives for branches/divisions and/or divisions
7. Controls Staging and Air Operations
8. Provides for life safety by stopping/correcting any unsafe operation/act
9. Determines needs and requests additional resources
10. Consults with and informs other sections and the Incident Command Staff as needed
11. Maintains communications with branches/divisions to control position and function

Planning Section

The Planning Section role and responsibility is gathering, assimilating, analyzing, and processing information needed for effective decision-making. The planning Section/Officer shall have full authority to complete such. Information management is a full-time task at large and complex incidents. The Planning Section Officer serves as the Incident Commander's "clearing house" for information. This allows the Incident Commander's staff to provide information instead of having to deal with dozens of information sources. Critical information should be immediately forwarded to Command (or whoever needs it). Information should also be used to make long-range plans. The Planning Section Officer's goal is to plan ahead of current events and to identify the need for resources before they are needed. An orange colored vest labeled Planning Officer should identify the Planning Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Documents Organizational Structure
2. Evaluates current strategy and plan with the Incident Commander
3. Maintains resource availability/status/deployment and personnel accountability
4. Refines and recommends any changes to plan with input from Operations
5. Evaluates incident organization and span-of-control
6. Forecasts possible outcome(s) and evaluates future resource requirements
7. Gathers maps, pre-fire plans, blue prints, etc., as necessary
8. Utilizes technical specialist as needed

9. Evaluates tactical priorities, specific critical factors, and safety
10. Gathers, updates, improves, and manages situation status with a standard systematic approach
11. Coordinates with any needed outside agencies for planning needs
12. Plans for demobilization
13. Maintains incident records

Logistics Section

The Logistics Section is the support mechanism for the organization. Logistics provides services and support systems to all the organizational components involved in the incident including facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance, fueling, feeding, communications, and medical services, including emergency personnel rehabilitation. The Logistics Section/Officer will have the authority to complete such. An orange colored vest labeled Logistics Officer should identify the Logistics Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Provides for emergency medical care for incident personnel and manages responder rehab
2. Coordinates immediate critical incident stress debriefing function
3. Provides and manages any needed supplies or equipment
4. Forecasts and obtains future resource needs (coordinates with the Planning Section)
5. Provides for communications plan and any communications equipment
6. Provides fuel and needed repairs for equipment
7. Obtains specialized equipment or expertise per Command
8. Provides food and associated supplies
9. Secures any needed fixed or portable facilities
10. Provides any other logistical needs as requested by Command
11. Supervises assigned personnel
12. Coordinates transportation requirements as needed

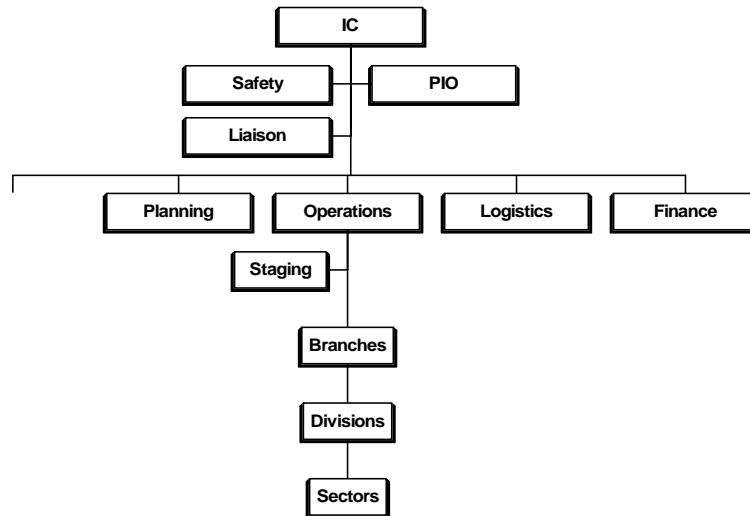
Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is established on incidents when the agency (ies) that are involved have a specific need for financial services. When established, the Finance/Administration Section/Officer will have the full authority to complete such. Not all agencies will require the establishment of a separate Finance/Administration Section. In some cases where only one specific function is required, i.e., cost analysis, that position could be established as a Technical Specialist in the Planning Section. An orange colored vest labeled Finance Officer should identify the Finance/Administration Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Procures services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the fire department, as requested by Command (coordinates with Logistics)
2. Documents all financial costs of the incident
3. Documents for possible cost recovery for services and/or supplies
4. Analyzes and manages legal risk for incidents (i.e., hazardous materials clean up)
5. Documents for compensation and claims for injury
6. Serves as liaison with county, state, and federal agencies
7. Documents incident-related times

The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts.



The Incident Commander

Role and Responsibilities after activation of an Operations Section Officer

Once the Operations Section is in place and functioning, the Incident Commander's focus should be on strategic issues, overall strategic planning and other components of the incident. This focus is to look at the "big picture" and impact of the incident from a broad perspective. The Incident Commander should provide direction, advice, and guidance to the Command and General Staff in directing the tactical aspects of the incident.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Reviews and evaluates the plan, and initiates any needed changes
2. Provides on-going review of the overall incident (The Big Picture)
3. Selects priorities
4. Provides direction to Command and General Staff Officer
5. Reviews the organizational structure, initiates change or expansion to meet the incident needs
6. Stages Command and General Staff functions as necessary
7. Establishes liaison with other external agencies and officials, property owners and/or tenants

Command Staff

Command Staff and Their Functions

Command staff positions are implemented individually or entirely as required by the type, size, and complexity of the incident. Command Staff positions are established to assume responsibility for key activities, which are not part of the line organization. These positions will be assigned by the Incident Commander and should be assigned to individuals with the most availability/qualifications/experience in the required area. The specific staff positions are:

1. Support Officer
2. Public Information Officer
3. Safety Officer
4. Liaison Officer

Additional positions might be required, depending upon the nature and location of the incident, or requirements established by Incident Command.

Support Officer

The support officer's role and responsibility is to assist the Incident Commander in the following:

- A. Defining, evaluating, monitoring, and recommending changes to the incident action plan
- B. Providing recommendations relating to tactical priorities
- C. Evaluating the need for additional resources
- D. Assisting with logistic functions
- E. Assisting with tactical worksheets
- F. Assisting with accountability and safety
- G. Monitoring radio communications and assisting as necessary
- H. Fulfills other command staff positions if necessary

The support officer should be established as required by the incident type, size, and/or complexity. An orange colored vest labeled Support Officer should identify the Support Officer.

Public Information Officer

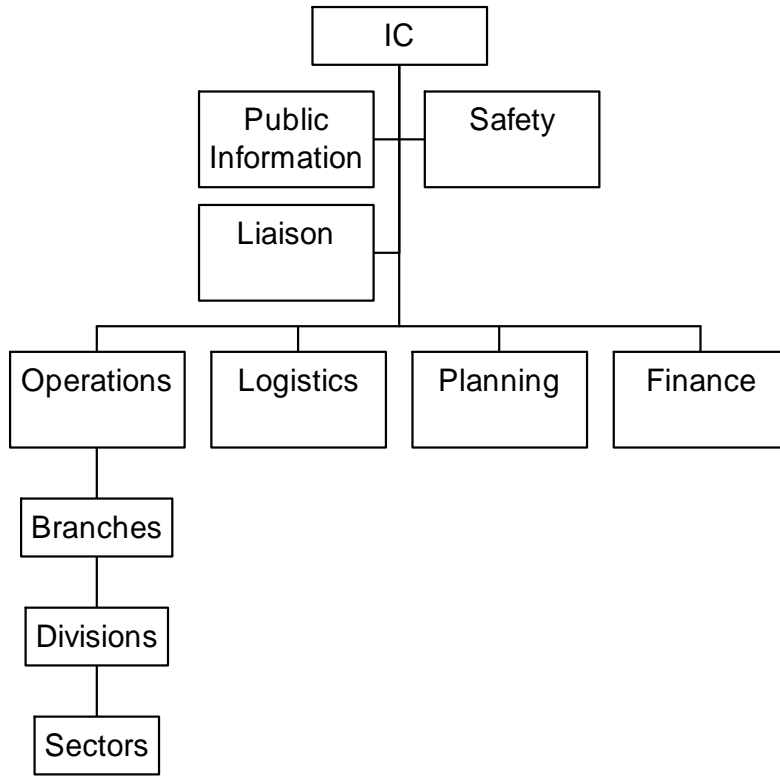
The Public Information Officer's role and responsibility is to develop accurate and complete information regarding the incident and other matters of general interest. The Public Information Officer will normally be the point of contact for the media. The Public Information Officer will have the authority to complete such tasks in the name of the Incident Commander, unless stated by the Incident Commander, in his/her position. The designated Public Information Officer will respond on all major working fires, MCIs, working special operations calls as requested by the Incident Commander. The Public Information Officer will be briefed by the Incident Commander or Support Officer and then assume the position functions. An orange colored vest labeled Public Information Officer should identify the Public Information Officer.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer's role and responsibility at the incident is to assess hazardous and unsafe situations and develop measures for assuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer has emergency authority to stop/correct any imminent and non-imminent operation/act and prevents unsafe acts. Actions taken will require notifying the Incident Commander/Operations Officer as soon as possible. On non-imminent situations the Safety Officer will consult with the Incident Commander/Operations Officer first, before taking action. The Safety Officer is also responsible for the establishment and monitoring of emergency personnel rehab. The Safety Officer will have the full authority to complete such tasks in his/her position. The designed Safety Officer will respond on all major working fires, MCIs, and working special operations calls and as requested by the Incident Commander. The Safety Officer will be briefed by the Incident Commander or Support Officer and then assume position functions. An orange colored vest labeled Safety Officer should identify the Safety Officer.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer's role and responsibility is to be a point of contact and coordination for representatives from outside agencies. The Liaison Officer shall identify all current and potential needs for such agencies. Outside agency representatives assigned to an incident should have authority to speak on all matters for their agency. The Liaison Officer will have the full authority to complete such, unless stated by the Incident Commander, in his/her position. An orange colored vest labeled Liaison Officer should identify the Liaison Officer.



OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146 (J) (1-6)
Confined Space

(j) *Duties of entry supervisors.* The employer shall ensure that each entry supervisor:

(1) Knows the hazards that may be faced during entry, including information on the mode, signs or symptoms, and consequences of the exposure;

(2) Verifies, by checking that the appropriate entries have been made on the permit, that all tests specified by the permit have been conducted and that all procedures and equipment specified by the permit are in place before endorsing the permit and allowing entry to begin;

(3) Terminates the entry and cancels the permit as required by paragraph (e)(5) of this section:

(4) Verifies that rescue services are available and that the means for summoning them are operable;

(5) Removes unauthorized individuals who enter or who attempt to enter the permit space during entry operations; and

(6) Determines, whenever responsibility for a permit space entry operation is transferred and at intervals dictated by the hazards and operations performed within the space, that entry operations remain consistent with terms of the entry permit and that acceptable entry conditions are maintained.

1910.146 (e)(5)(i-ii)

(5) The entry supervisor shall terminate entry and cancel the entry permit when:

(i) The entry operations covered by the entry permit have been completed; or

(ii) A condition that is not allowed under the entry permit arises in or near the permit space.

**OSHA CFR 1910 Hazardous Waste
Operations and Emergency Response
1910.120 (q) (3) (i-x)(IV) (v) (A-F)**

(3) *Procedures for handling emergency response.* (I) The senior emergency response official responding to an emergency shall become the individual in charge of a site-specific Incident Command System (ICS). All emergency responders and their communications shall be coordinated and controlled through the individual in charge of the ICS assisted by the senior official present for each employer.

NOTE TO (Q)(3)(I).- The “senior official” at an emergency response is the most senior official on the site who has the responsibility for controlling the operations at the site. Initially it is the senior officer on the first-due piece of responding emergency apparatus to arrive on the incident scene. As more senior officers arrive (i.e., battalion chief, fire chief, state law enforcement official, site coordinator, etc.) the position is passed up the line of authority which has been previously established.

(ii) The individual in charge of the ICS shall identify, to the extent possible, all and shall address as appropriate site analysis, use of engineering controls, maximum exposure limits, hazardous substance handling procedures, and use of any new technologies.

(iii) Based on the hazardous substances and/or conditions present, the individual in charge of the ICS shall implement appropriate emergency operations, and assure that the personal protective equipment worn is appropriate for the hazards to be encountered. However, personal protective equipment shall meet, at a minimum, the criteria contained in 29 CFR 1910.156(e) when worn while performing fire fighting operations beyond the incipient stage for any incident.

(iv) Members engaged in emergency response and exposed to hazardous substances presenting an inhalation hazard or potential inhalation hazard shall wear positive pressure self-contained breathing apparatus while engaged in emergency response, until such time that the individual in charge of the ICS determines through the use of air monitoring that a decreased level of respiratory protection will not result in hazardous exposures to members.

(v) The individual in charge of the ICS shall limit the number of emergency response personnel at the emergency site, in those areas of potential or actual exposure to incident or site hazards, to those who are actively performing emergency operations. However, operations in hazardous areas shall be performed using the buddy system in groups of two or more.

(vi) Back-up personnel shall stand by with equipment ready to provide assistance or rescue. Advanced first aid support personnel, as a minimum, shall also stand by with medical equipment and transportation capability.

(vii) The individual in charge of the ICS shall designate a safety official, who is knowledgeable in the operations being implemented at the emergency response site, with specific responsibility to identify and evaluate hazards and to provide direction with respect to the safety of operations for the emergency at hand.

(viii) When activities are judged by the safety official to be an IDLH condition and/or to involve an imminent danger condition, the safety official shall have the authority to alter, suspend, or terminate those activities. The safety official shall immediately inform the individual in charge of the ICS of any actions needed to be taken to correct these hazards at the emergency scene.

(ix) After emergency operations have terminated, the individual in charge of the ICS shall implement appropriate decontamination procedures.

(x) When deemed necessary for meeting the tasks at hand, approved self-contained compressed air breathing apparatus may be used with approved cylinders from other approved self-contained compressed air breathing apparatus provided that such cylinders are of the same capacity and pressure rating. All compressed air cylinders used with self-contained breathing apparatus shall meet U.S. Department of Transportation and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health criteria.

(v) (A-F) On Scene Incident Commander

(v) *On scene incident commander.* Incident commanders, who will assume control of the incident scene beyond the first responder awareness level, shall receive at least 24 hours of training equal to the first responder operations level and in addition have competency in the following areas and the employer shall so certify:

(A) Know and be able to implement the employer's incident command system.

(B) Know how to implement the employer's emergency response plan.

(C) Know and understand the hazards and risks associated with members working in chemical protective clothing.

(D) Know how to implement the local emergency response plan.

(E) Know of the state emergency response plan and of the Federal Regional Response Team.

(F) Know and understand the importance of decontamination procedures.

Appendix C 6. Incident Command System

Incident command system (ICS). Paragraph 1910.120 (q)(3)(ii) requires the implementation of an ICS. The ICS is an organized approach to effectively control and manage operations at an emergency incident. The individual in charge of the ICS is the senior official responding to the incident. The ICS is not much different than the "command post" approach used for many years by the fire service. During large complex fires involving several companies and many pieces of apparatus, a command post would be established. This enables one individual to be in charge of managing the incident, rather than having several officers from different companies making separate, and sometimes conflicting, decisions. The individual in charge of the command post would delegate responsibility for performing various tasks to subordinate officers. Additionally, all communications are routed through the command post to reduce the number of radio transmissions and elate confusion. However, one individual makes strategy, tactics and all decisions.

The ICS is a very similar system, except it is implemented for emergency response to all incidents, both large and small, that involve hazardous substances.

For a small incident, the individual in charge of the ICS may perform many tasks of the ICS. There may not be any, or little, delegation of tasks to subordinates. For example, in response to a small incident, the individual in charge of the ICS, in addition to normal command activities, may become the safety officer and may designate only one member (with proper equipment) as a back-up to provide assistance if needed. OSHA does recommend, however, that at least two members be designated as backup personnel since the assistance needed may include rescue.

To illustrate the operation of the ICS, the following scenario might develop during a small incident, such as an overturned tank truck with a small leak of flammable liquid:

The first responding senior officer would implement and take command of the ICS. That person would size-up the incident and determine if additional personnel and apparatus were necessary; determine what actions to take to control the leak; and determine the proper level of personal protective equipment. If additional assistance is not needed, the individual in charge of the ICS would implement actions to stop and control the leak using the fewest number of personnel that can effectively accomplish the tasks. The individual in charge of the ICS then would designate him/herself and the safety officer and two other members as a back-up in case rescue may become necessary. In this scenario, decontamination procedures would not be necessary.

A large complex incident may require many members and difficult, time-consuming efforts to control. In these situations, the individual in charge of the ICS will want to delegate different tasks to subordinates in order to maintain a span of control that will keep the number of subordinates that are reporting, to a manageable level.

Delegation of task at large incidents may be by location, where the incident scene is divided into divisions, and subordinate officers coordinate activities within the division that they have been assigned.

Delegation of tasks can also be by function. Some of the functions that the individual in charge of the ICS may want to delegate at a large incident are: medical services; evacuation; water supply; resources (equipment, apparatus); media relations; safety; and, site control (integrate activities with police for crowd and traffic control). Also for large incidents, the individual in charge of the ICS will designate several members as back-up personnel; and a number of safety officers to monitor conditions and recommend safety precautions.

Therefore, no matter what size or complexity an incident may be, by implementing an ICS there will be *one individual in charge* who makes the decisions and gives directions; and all actions, and communications are coordinated through one central point of command. Such a system should reduce confusion, improve safety, organize and coordinate actions, and should facilitate effective management of the incident