Concepts of Incident Command System for the Caribbean Region

A Manual for Participants

PAHO
Pan American Health Organization
World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas

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Contents

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Course Description

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool for coordinating incidents or events that may exceed the daily capacity to respond. Most Caribbean countries have adopted the ICS as their standard for emergency response and operational deployment. It is critical to provide training for all first responders (i.e., law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical services personnel) who may be called upon to function in an ICS environment. The need for training extends to NGOs as well.

This course introduces the concepts and principles of the ICS. It includes several scenarios, examples, and opportunities for participants to apply what they have learned, when deployed. For participants seeking to expand their knowledge of the ICS, the website of the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a range of independent courses. Consult the section on References at the end of this course manual.

Target Participants

The course will be of value to all persons likely to be involved in a community's response to major events or mass casualty incidents, namely: police officers; fire officers; health and medical personnel; first responders; ambulance service personnel; coast guard and military personnel; airport and sea port authorities; airline employees; disaster managers; para-military; and non governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Red Cross volunteers and security staff.

Course Aims

- Identify the five functions of the ICS and the main responsibilities of each function.
- Identify where your agency fits into the ICS structure.
- Define key ICS terminology.
- Describe how the ICS structure expands or contracts to meet the needs of an incident.
- Name the primary incident facilities and describe how each is used and managed.

- List the kinds and types of resources that are encountered at incidents and describe how and why resources are managed.
- List the steps that you should take to prepare for, participate in, and demobilize from an incident.

Course Requirements

Students are required to actively participate in at least 90% of all class activities. Students also will be required to participate in all group work and training exercises. A written test will be given prior to and upon completion of the course to reflect individual learning milestones. Practical tests will reflect group response efforts. Please note that a minimum score of 70% on the final written exam is required for the individual participant to successfully complete this course.

UNIT 1

Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)

Unit Objectives

- Define what an Incident Command System (ICS) is.
- Identify three purposes of the ICS.
- Identify when the ICS is used.
- What are the benefits of the ICS?
- What are the functions of ICS?
- What are the drawbacks of ICS?

What is Incident Command System (ICS)?

Incident Command is a standardized, on-scene, incident management concept that involves command, control and coordination of an all-hazards emergency management program that includes mitigation (including prevention), preparedness, response, and recovery activities. It provides a means to coordinate the efforts of individual agencies as they work towards the common goal of stabilizing the incident, with a view to protecting life, property, and the environment.

The Incident Command System (ICS) allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS also provides a structure and an organizational language that allows different kinds of agencies to work together effectively in response to a disaster. The goal is to simplify communications and establish clear lines of authority and command.

The ICS uses principles that have been proven to improve efficiency. It is a flexible and proven management system, based on successful business practices.

When is the ICS Used?

The ICS has been proven effective for responding to all types of incidents, including:

- Hazardous materials (HazMat) incidents.
- Planned events (e.g., celebrations, parades, concerts, official visits, etc.).
- Response to natural hazards.
- Response to epidemics requiring multi-sector response.
- Single and multiagency law enforcement incidents.
- In situations that lack a comprehensive resource management strategy.
- Incidents involving multiple casualties.
- Multijurisdictional and multiagency incidents.
- Air, rail, water, or ground transportation accidents.
- Wide-area search and rescue missions.
- Pest eradication programs.
- Private sector emergency management programs.

A Brief History of the ICS

United States

The ICS concept was formed in 1968 in the United States, patterned on the hierarchy of the U.S. Armed Forces. ICS was fully developed in the 1970s in response to a series of major wild-

fires in southern California. At that time, municipal, county, state, and federal fire authorities collaborated to form the FIRESCOPE: Firefighting Resources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies.

Several recurring problems involving multiagency responses were identified, such as:

- Nonstandard terminology among responding agencies.
- Lack of capability to expand and contract as required by the situation.
- Non-standard and non-integrated communications.
- Lack of consolidated action plans.
- Lack of designated facilities.

To address the difficulties noted, the original ICS model was developed for effective incident management. ICS has evolved into a system that is appropriate for all types of emergency incidents or events. Much of the success of ICS has resulted directly from applying a common organizational structure and standardized management principles.

United Kingdom

The UK Metropolitan Police created the Gold - Silver - Bronze command structure in 1985 following a serious riot in North London, during which it was identified that normal rank structure proved inappropriate under such circumstances. It is used by UK emergency services to establish a framework for the command and control of major incidents and/or disasters. It is also used in the Caribbean by police personnel and some fire departments when they are tasked to provide a unified coordinated response to events and emergencies.

The designations 'Gold' (strategic), 'Silver' (tactical), and 'Bronze' (operational) relate to the functions adopted by each of the emergency services. These designations are role-related rather than rank-related.

Most incidents will require a tactical or operational level of command. If the scale of resources is insufficient or the level of decision-making exceeds the capacity of the Silver Commander or authority, a strategic or Gold command will be necessary.

Gold Command (Strategic) the most senior level in an operation; it rarely comes into play in single-resource operation. It is most commonly used in multi-service operations, such as major incidents, large-scale civil disorder, or wide-area flooding.

- Each Gold has overall command of the resources of their own organization, but delegates tactical decisions to their respective Silver(s).
- Gold does not deal directly with operations on the ground, or at the tactical level. It often involves political consideration and policy level decisions extending beyond single organization.
- Gold command is exercised at a distance from the scene of the incident. It takes a longer view of the situation and the time frame for Gold is in days rather than hours.

Silver Command (Tactical) will attend the scene, take charge and be responsible for formulating the tactics to be adopted by their service to achieve the strategy set by Gold. Silver

should not become personally involved with activities close to the incident, but remain detached. This is the level of overall command of the incident on the ground, ensuring that operational levels are supported and, if there are several sectors operating, ensuring that all operations are coordinated to achieve maximum effectiveness. An incident may formally be structured with multi-agency Bronze and Silver command functions, without a Gold being added.

Bronze Command (Operational) is the level at which command of immediate hands-on or task level work is undertaken at the incident. If the incident develops into a need for several agencies to work effectively together, each sector becomes a Bronze Command in line with other agencies.

- Even if an incident is 'multi-agency,' the operational-level role would not formally be labelled Bronze unless a tactical or Silver level is in place, and usually when a multi-agency Silver group had been formed.
- Bronze will control and deploy the resources of their respective service within a geographical sector or specific role and implement the tactics formulated by Silver.
- If an incident is widespread geographically, different Bronzes may assume responsibility for different areas.

Incidents, whether large or small (such as HazMat spills), motor vehicle accidents, house or bush fires, and major disasters (such as hurricanes, or flooding), will require emergency response from different agencies. Regardless of the size of an incident, a coordinated effort is required to ensure an effective response and the efficient and safe use of resources. See Activity 1.

What is an ICS Designed to Do?

ICS is designed to meet the needs of incidents of any kind or size. It allows personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure, while providing logistical and administrative support to operational staff.

Why is an ICS Structure Needed?

An Incident Command System provides a systematic, proactive approach that guides departments and agencies at all levels of government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations to work and prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from effects of an incident. It also allows emergency agencies to put measures in place prior to and during the response.

Several factors help to explain the need to establish an ICS:

- The use of non-standardized terminology between and among responding agencies.
- The lack of capacity to expand or contract as required by the situation.
- Non-standardized and non-integrated communications.
- Lack of consolidated action plans.

Activity 1

Example 1: A public service vehicle has collided with a utility pole after the driver lost control; a number of passengers are injured. There is potential for further incident.

Potential Response Agencies:

Potential Resources:

Example 2: Rough seas have caused severe flooding in low-lying areas. Seaweed and other debris has washed ashore across the roadway, causing many vehicles to stall along costal roads. This will take some time to clear. However, a severe weather system is due to impact the island in the next 36 hours, raising the possibility of further flooding.

Potential Response Agencies:

Potential Resources:

- Lack of designated facilities.
- The limited response capability of individual agencies, leading to the possible prolongation of an incident.

In situations where there is a lack of a coordinated ICS structure, incident response will typically result in:

- Lack of accountability, including unclear chain of command and supervision.
- Poor communications due to the inefficient use of available systems and terminology.
- Lack of an orderly planning process.
- No common flexible management structure to enable commanders to delegate responsibilities and manage workloads efficiently.
- No pre-defined methods to effectively integrate interagency requirements into the management structure and planning process.

Advantages/Benefits of an ICS

ICS provides a structured command to:

- Prevent chaos.
- Prevent individualism.
- Prevent injury and further damage.
- Avoid the prolongation of the incident.
- Prevent interagency freelancing.

Because an ICS is designed to be interdisciplinary and organizationally flexible, its benefits include:

- Meeting the needs of incidents of any kind or size.
- Allows personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Provides logistical and administrative support to operational staff.
- Is cost effective, by avoiding duplication of efforts.

By using management best practices, an ICS helps to ensure:

- The safety of responders.
- The efficient use of resources.
- Achievement of response goals and objectives.
- Only the areas that are required are filled/staffed.
- A greater span of control and better coordination by clearly establishing lines of supervisory authority and reporting relationships.

UNIT 2

Organization of the Incident Command System

Unit Objectives

- Identify the five major ICS management functions.
- Identify the position titles associated with the command staff.
- Describe the functions of the Incident Commander and Command Staff.
- Describe the roles and functions of the General Staff.

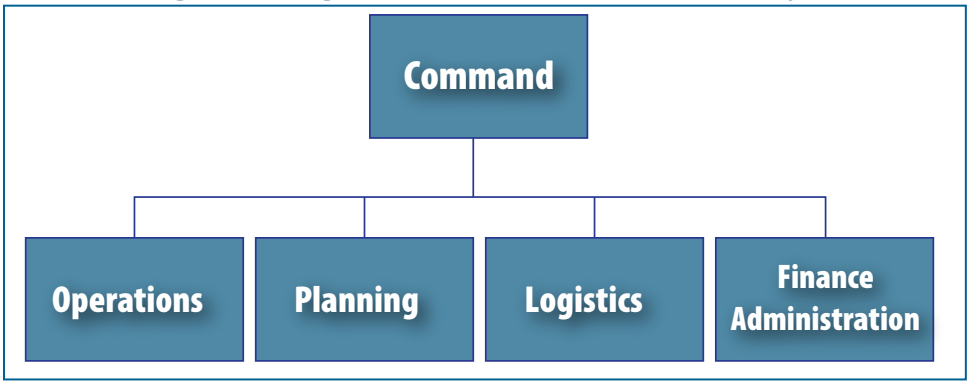
Identify the Five Major ICS Management Functions

To coordinate the effective use of all available resources, agencies need a formalized management structure that lends consistency, fosters efficiency and provides direction during a response. The Incident Management System provides such a structure.

The ICS organization is built around five major components:

- Command
- Planning
- Operations
- Logistics
- Finance/Administration

Figure 2.1 - Organization of the Incident Command System



These five components, which provide the foundation of the ICS, apply to a routine emergency, when preparing for a major event, or when managing a response to a major disaster.

In small-scale incidents, one person, the Incident Commander, may manage all components. However, large-scale incidents will usually require that each component or section be set up separately.

The organization of the ICS can be expanded or contracted to meet the specific needs of an incident. However, **all incidents, regardless of size or complexity, will have an Incident Commander**.

Incident Commander

The Incident Commander assumes the command function. He/she is in charge at the site of the incident and must be fully qualified to manage the response. The role and responsibilities of the Incident Commander include the following:

- Assess the extent of the incident; the required resources; and hazards and risks. Prioritize objectives and develop action plans. Communicate, evaluate and control the effectiveness of the plans.

- Perform command activities, including establishing the Incident Command Post (ICP).
- Protect life and property.
- Manage personnel and equipment resources and track costs.
- Be accountable for the safety of responders and the public, as well as for accomplishing tasks.
- Establish and maintain effective liaison with outside agencies and organizations, including the EOC, when it is activated.
- Assess priorities and determine operational objectives; evaluate overall strategy on a continual basis.
- Develop and implement the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Develop an appropriate organizational structure.
- Maintain a manageable span of control.
- Coordinate overall emergency activities.
- Coordinate the activities of outside agencies.
- Provide information to external and internal stakeholders; authorize the release of information to the media.

The Incident Commander's overall management responsibilities include establishing objectives, planning strategies, and implementing tactics. The position of Incident Commander is the only one that **always** must be staffed in the ICS. In small-scale incidents, the IC may carry out all management functions. Regardless of the scale of the incident, the IC is responsible for all ICS functions until such time as these functions are delegated.

Who Serves the Role of Incident Commander?

In most Caribbean Islands, the Police Department will assume charge of an incident over other participating organizations. As an exception, if the incident involves fire or other hazardous materials, the Fire Service will take overall charge inside the inner cordon, where firefighting and/or rescue is taking place. Once the area is deemed safe, command is then handed over to the Police. The Incident Commander should have the required level of training, experience, and expertise to serve in this capacity. In some circumstances, the IC may not be the highest-ranking official on scene.

The most senior first responder to arrive on the scene assumes command. As additional responders arrive, command will transfer on the basis of who has primary authority for overall control of the incident. As incidents become more complex, the responsible jurisdiction or agency may assign a more highly qualified Incident Commander.

In cases where an incident involves a specific owner/operator facility, that facility will appoint a senior officer to liaise with the Incident Commander or his/her designee. The first responding agency arriving on site will assume command until the most senior fire / police officer arrives. Once safety of the site has been established, the site shall be handed over to the

designated Incident Commander. In some situations or agencies, a lower ranking but more qualified person may be designated as the Incident Commander.

Qualities of an Incident Commander

The Incident Commander should possess the qualities of a good leader, as he/she will have to make decisions that may not be pleasing to everyone. The Incident Commander should be able to delegate responsibilities to individuals/positions as needed for an incident. Situational awareness and life safety are paramount. Listed below are some of the qualities one would expect from a leader:

Assertive	Confident
Decisive	Attitude and Aptitude
Objective	Diligent
Calm and Quick Thinker	Diplomatic skills
Adaptable	Enthusiastic
Flexible	Good judgment

The Incident Commander must be realistic about his or her limitations and know when to hand over command if they are overwhelmed or out of their element.

Deputy Incident Commander (should have same leadership skills as the IC)

- Performs specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander.
- Performs the incident command function in a relief capacity.
- Represents an assisting agency that may share jurisdiction or have jurisdiction in the future.

Command Staff Positions

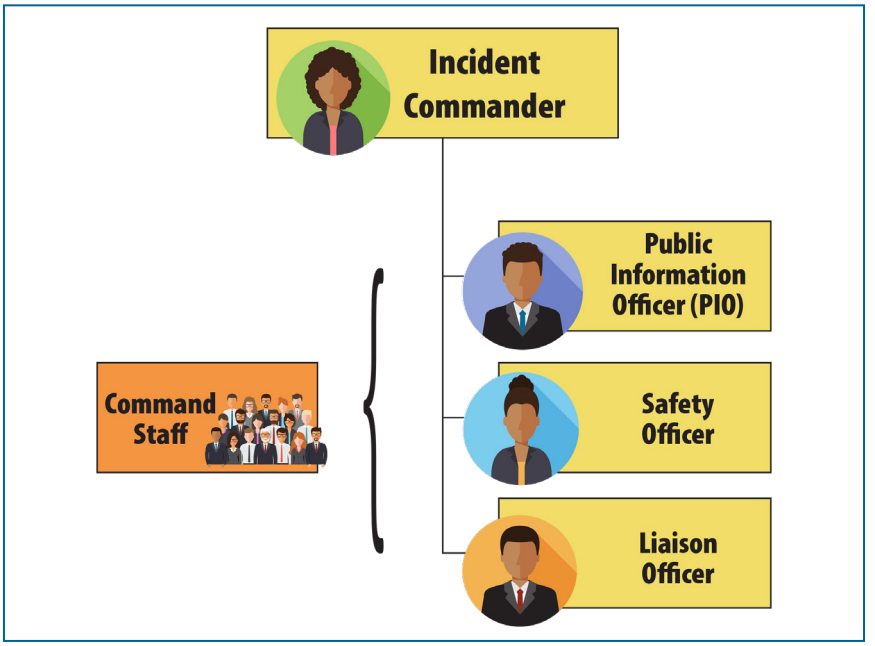
As an incident expands, the Incident Commander may delegate authority for different activities to others, as required. When expansion is required, the Incident Commander will establish Command Staff positions.

Command Staff Functions

The Public Information Officer

- Advises the Incident Commander on information dissemination and media relations.

Figure 2.2 - Command Staff Positions



- Obtains information from and provides information to the Planning Section, the community and the media.
- Maintains communication with other information officers (PROs/PIOs) from other agencies and the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

The Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, unsafe situations, and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety.

- Advises the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety.
- Works with Operations to ensure safety of field personnel.
- Ensures safety of all incident personnel.
- Correct unsafe acts or conditions and exercise emergency authority to prevent unsafe acts when immediate action is needed.
- Investigates accidents within the incident area.

The Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer is the on-scene contact for other agencies assigned to the incident.

- Assists the Incident Commander by serving as the point of contact for representatives from other response organizations.

- Provides briefings to and answers questions from supporting organizations.

Agency Representative

An individual assigned from an assisting or cooperating agency, who has been delegated **full authority** to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation.

General Staff and Management Functions

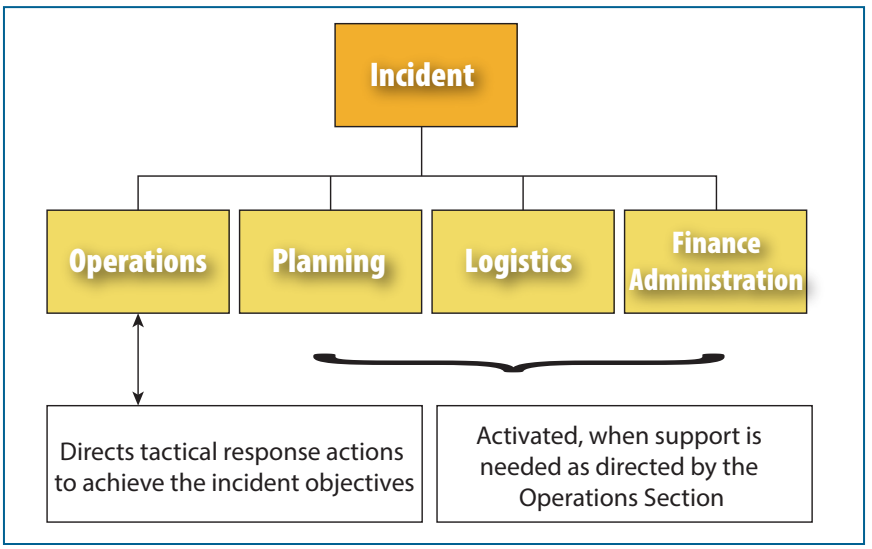
The Incident Commander will base the decision to expand (or contract) the ICS organization on three major incident priorities:

- **Life safety.** The Incident Commander's first priority is safeguarding the lives of emergency responders and the public.
- **Incident stability.** The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the strategy that will:
  - Minimize the effect that the incident may have on the surrounding area.
  - Maximize the response effort, while using resources efficiently.
- **Property conservation.** The Incident Commander is responsible for minimizing damage to property while achieving incident objectives.

Regardless of the size of an incident, every incident requires that certain management functions be performed.

- Problems must be identified and assessed, a plan to deal with the incident developed, and strategies implemented.
- The necessary resources must be procured and paid for.

Figure 2.3 - General Staff Management Functions

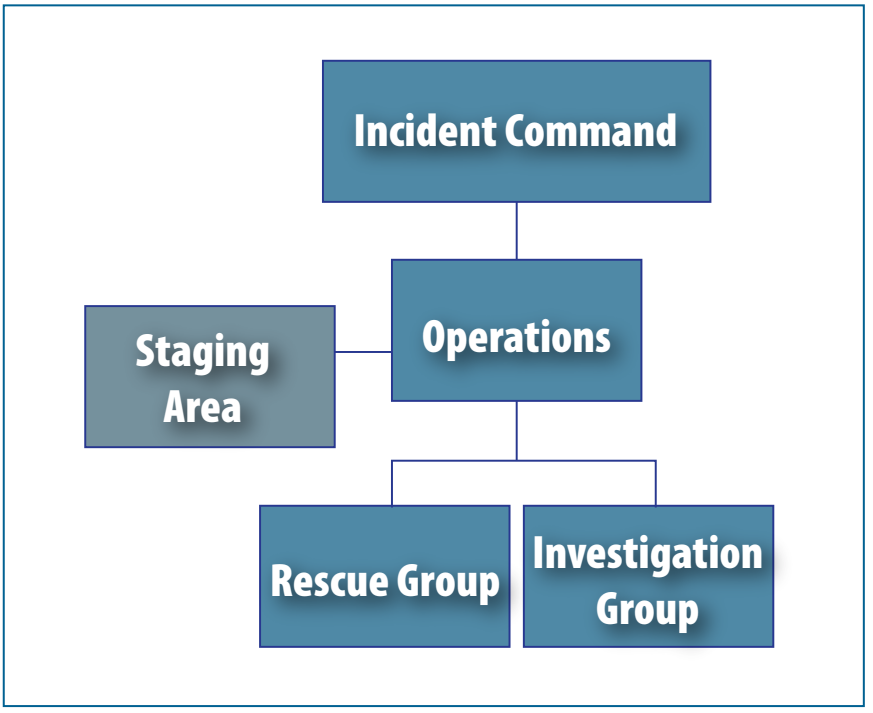


As incidents become more complex, the Incident Commander may activate additional staff sections as needed, including Planning, Operations, Logistics and Finance/Administration. Each Section Chief, in turn, has the authority to expand internally to meet the needs of the situation.

Operations Section

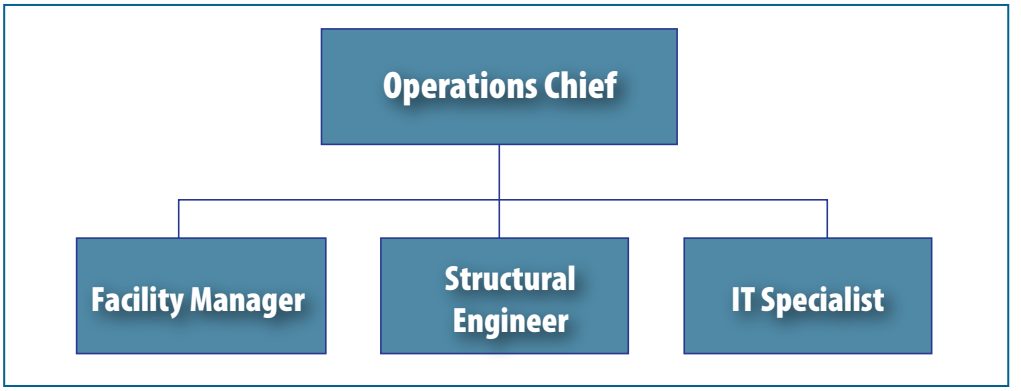
- Responsible for the response activities described in the IAP and coordinates all operational resources, ensuring the safety of operations section personnel.
- Assists the IC in developing response goals and objectives for the incident
- Implements the IAP and keeps the IC informed of situation and resource status.
- Is typically one of the first organizations assigned to the incident.
- Expands from the bottom up.
- Has the most incident resources.
- May have staging areas and special organizations.
- Requests (or) releases resources through the IC.

Figure 2.4 - The Operations Section



In smaller-scale incidents, the Operations Section may be comprised of an Operations Section Chief and single resources.

Figure 2.5 - Operations Functions



Responsibilities of the Operations Chief

- Has primary responsibility for receiving and implementing the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Establishes communication procedures with the Incident Commander and subordinates.
- Determines the need for immediate and anticipated resources and organizational structure within the Operations Section.
- May have one or more deputies assigned.

Planning Section

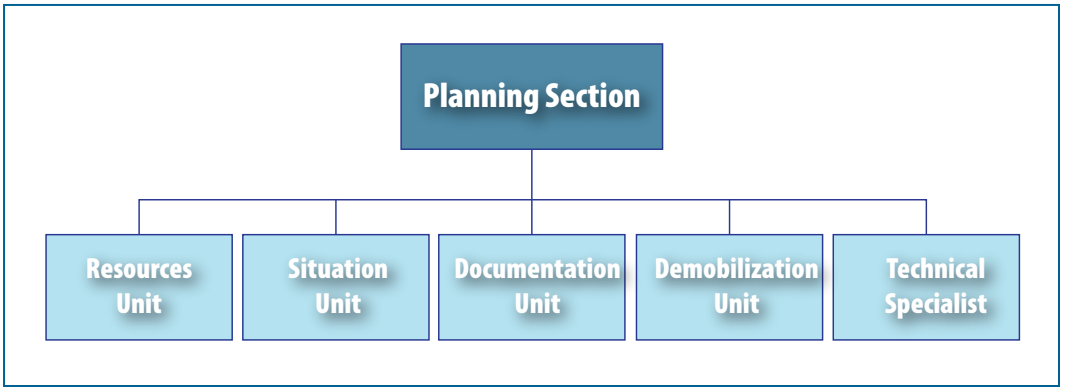
The functions of the Planning Section include the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the incident as it develops and the status of resources. This Section's responsibilities can also include creation of the IAP, which defines the response activities and resource utilization for a specified time period. (IAPs will be described in more detail later in this course.)

Roles and responsibilities of the Planning Section

- Maintain the status of all resources.
- Maintain and display situation status.
- Prepare an Incident Action Plan.
- Develop alternative strategies and provide documentation services.
- Prepare the demobilization plan.
- Provide a primary location for technical specialists assigned to an incident.

The Planning Section can be further staffed with Units.

Figure 2.6 - The Planning Section



Resource Unit

- Conducts all check-in activities and maintains the status of all incident resources.
- Plays a significant role in preparing the written Incident Action Plan.

The Situation Unit

- Collects and analyzes information on the current situation.
- Prepares situation displays and situation summaries.
- Develops maps and projections.

The Documentation Unit

- Provides duplication services, including the written Incident Action Plan.
- Maintains and archives all incident-related documentation.

Demobilization Unit

- Assists in ensuring that resources are released from the incident in an orderly, safe, and cost-effective manner.
- The Planning Section may also include Technical Specialists who provide special expertise.

The Logistics Section

The Logistics Section is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials, including personnel to operate the requested equipment for the incident. This Section takes on great significance in long-term or extended operations.

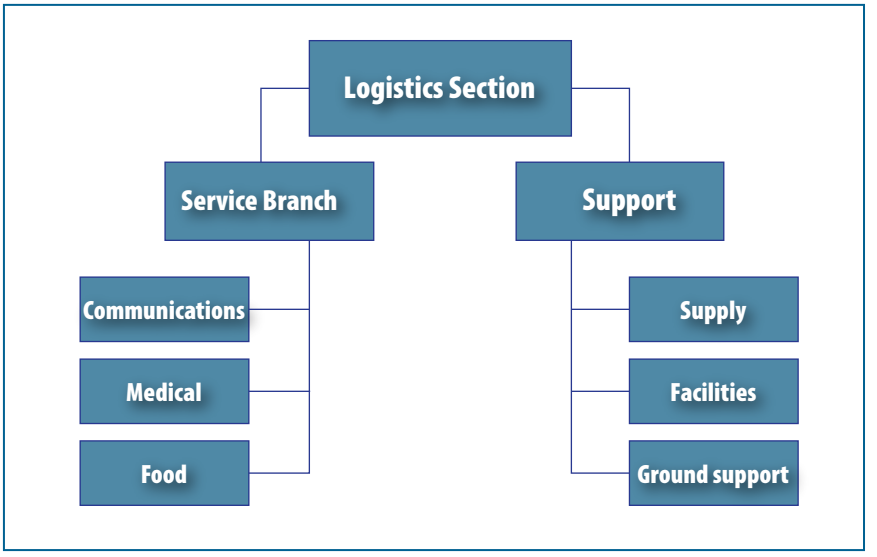
Note that the functions of the Logistics Section are geared to supporting the incident responders. For example, the Medical Unit in the Logistics Section provides care for the incident responders, not for civilian victims.

The Logistics Section is responsible for:

- Communications.
- Ordering, obtaining, maintaining, and accounting for essential personnel, equipment, and supplies.
- Medical support to incident personnel.
- Food for incident personnel and supplies.
- Setting up and managing incident facilities.
- Ground support.

The Logistics Section can be further enlarged with Branches and Units. Each unit is named based on its functions.

Figure 2.7 - The Logistics Section



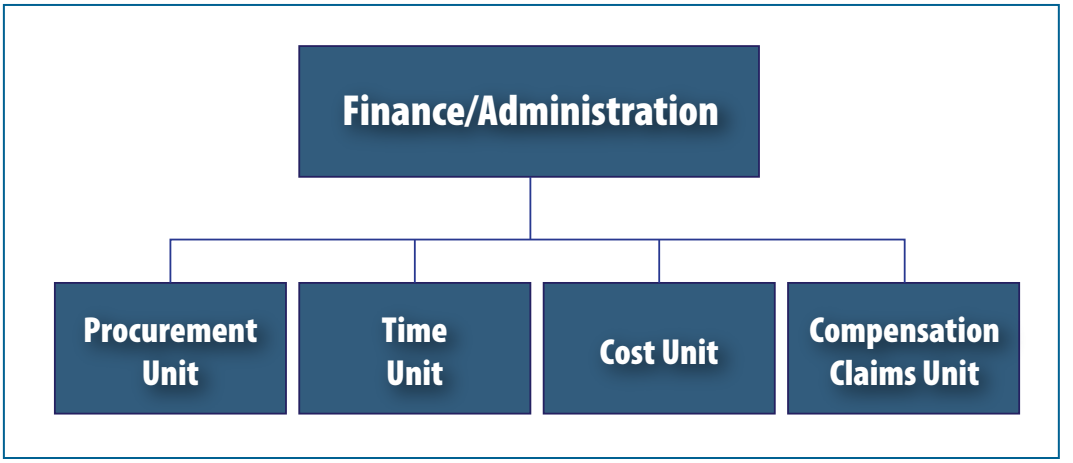
Finance/Administration Section

Major Activities

Although sometimes overlooked, the Finance/Administration Section is critical for tracking incident costs and reimbursement accounting. Unless costs and financial operations are carefully recorded and justified, reimbursement of costs is difficult, if not impossible.

The Finance/Administration Section is especially important when the incident is of a magnitude that may result in a State of Emergency. Each of these functional areas can be expanded

Figure 2.8 - The Finance/Administration Section



into additional organizational units with further delegation of authority. They also may be contracted as the incident deescalates.

The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:

- Contract negotiation and monitoring.
- Timekeeping.
- Cost analysis.
- Compensation for injury or damage to property.
- Documentation for reimbursement (e.g., under MOUs).

The Procurement Unit is responsible for managing all financial matters pertaining to:

- Vendor contracts and leases.
- Fiscal agreements.

The Time Unit is responsible for incident personnel time recording.

The Cost Unit

- Collects all cost data.
- Performs cost effectiveness analyses.
- Provides cost estimates.

The Compensation/Claims Unit is responsible for management and direction of administrative matters pertaining to:

- Compensation for injuries.
- Claims-related activities kept for the incident.
- Recommendations for cost savings.

UNIT 3

Concepts and Principles of the Incident Command System

Unit Objectives

- Describe the basic concepts of the Incident Command System.
- Review the guidelines for common terminology.
- Understand the ICS modular organization.
- Define chain of command.
- Define the difference between unity of command and unified command.

The ICS structure is adaptable. It is comprised of major components to ensure the quick and effective commitment of resources and to minimize disruption to the normal operating policies and procedures of responding organizations. Remember that ICS concepts and principles have been tested and proven over time—in business and industry and by response agencies at all governmental levels. ICS training is required to ensure that all who may become involved in an incident are familiar with ICS principles.

The ICS Structure

The ICS structure should include:

- Common terminology.
- A modular organization.
- Integrated communications.
- Unity of command.
- A unified command structure.
- Consolidated Incident Action Plans.
- A manageable span of control.
- Designated incident facilities.
- Comprehensive resource management.

In an Incident Command System, major organizational functions, facilities, and units are pre-designated and given titles. ICS terminology is standard and consistent among all agencies involved. To prevent confusion when multiple incidents occur at the same time within a given area, or when the same radio frequency is used for multiple incidents, the Incident Commander will specifically name his or her incident. As mentioned above, the structure of the major components of the ICS is designed for quick and effective resource commitment and to prevent major disruption to daily procedures (SOPs) of responding agencies.

Common terminology is essential in emergency management, especially when responding agencies have different meanings for terms.

- Using standard terminology helps to prevent confusion when multiple incidents occur at the same time or when responders are on the same radio frequency.
- The Incident Commander will name his or her incident, i.e. an incident occurring at # 1 Bush Hill may be called "Bush Hill Command;" One that occurs at #1 Mount Hill may be called Mount Hill command.

Response personnel should use common names for all personnel and equipment resources, as well as for all facilities in and around the incident area. Radio transmissions should be spoken in plain English, without using 'ten' codes or agency-specific codes.

The need to establish common terminology applies to all points mentioned below.

- Common names for personnel and equipment.

- Organizational functions.
- Incident facilities.
- Resource descriptions.
- Position titles.
- Incident locations.

At all incidents, a modular organization or structure develops from the top down. This allows for the command function to be established by the first arriving officer, who becomes Incident Commander. Other functional areas will be added as needed. In approximately 95% of all incidents, the operational structure is comprised of Command and single resources (e.g., one police vehicle, an ambulance or fire vehicle).

The structure of the Incident Command is based on:

- Size, type, and complexity of the incident.
- Specifics of the hazardous environment created by the incident.
- Incident planning process and incident objectives.

The organization of the Incident Command differs from day-to-day organizational structures and positions in the following ways:

- It uses unique ICS position titles and organizational structures. Personnel are assigned based on expertise, not rank. For example, a director may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.

Although there are no hard-and-fast rules, remember that:

- Only those functions or positions that are necessary are filled.
- Each activated element must have a person in charge.
- An effective span of control must be maintained.

Delegating to the lowest level possible allows ICS supervisors to:

- Assign responsibilities to subordinates. Until a task is delegated, the supervisor must assume responsibility for completing it.
- Maintain a manageable span of control.

A manageable span of control is defined as the number of individuals that one supervisor can manage effectively. In ICS, the span of control for any supervisor falls within a range of three to seven resources, with five being the optimum. If those numbers increase or decrease, the Incident Commander should reexamine the organizational structure.

Chain of Command

The chain of command is an orderly line of authority within the response organization. It allows incident managers to direct and control the actions of all personnel under their supervi-

sion. This avoids confusion by requiring that orders flow from supervisors. It does not prevent personnel from sharing information.

The principles used to manage an incident differ from day-to-day management approaches. Effective incident management relies on a tight command and control structure. Although information is exchanged freely throughout the ICS structure, the top-down direction must be strictly adhered to. To make the ICS work effectively, all involved must commit to following this command and control approach.

Unity of Command

Unity of command is the concept by which an individual reports to only one designated person. Unity of command means that each individual has a designated supervisor to whom they report at the scene of the incident. Everyone receives work assignments only from their designated supervisor.

Unified Command

Managing an incident is a team effort. Unified command enables all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan.

Each participating agency maintains its individual authority, responsibility, and accountability. A unified command allows Incident Commanders to make joint decisions by establishing a single command structure, thus maintaining unity of command. Each responder reports to only one supervisor.

A unified command allows for a number of options:

- Dividing an incident geographically or functionally so that each jurisdiction or agency can establish its own ICS organization.
- Creating a single ICS incident structure and process that has an effective and responsible multijurisdictional or multiagency approach.
- In advance of tactical operations, each jurisdiction/agency authority establishes policies, objectives, and strategies jointly.
- Organization: Various jurisdictional or agency on-scene senior representatives (agency Incident Commanders) operating within a Unified Command structure.
- Resources: Supplied by the jurisdictions and agencies that have functional or jurisdictional, legal, and financial responsibility. Resources (personnel and equipment) stay under the administrative and policy control of their agencies.
- Operations: Directed by one person, the Operations Section Chief, who controls tactical resources. There is still unity of command.
- Operationally, the tactical resources (e.g., police, fire, etc.) respond to tactical assignments, under the coordination and direction of the Operations Section Chief.

In a Unified Command:

- Jurisdictions and/or agencies blend into an integrated, unified team.
- The mix of participants depends on the location and type of incident. All members must function together as a team in order to achieve tactical objectives.
- A single Incident Command Post allows the Unified Command to maintain a coordinated effort.

The Unified Command will meet initially to assess the situation, set priorities, discuss authorities, determine strategies, and establish the organization. At the onset of each operational period, it will develop or update objectives. Incident Commanders within the Unified Command must concur on the selection of the General Staff Section Chiefs. The Operations Section Chief must have full authority to implement the tactics within the IAP.

The Initial Unified Command Meeting:

- Includes all members of the Unified Command.
- Takes place before the first operational period planning meeting.
- Provides the responsible agency officials with an opportunity to discuss and concur on important issues prior to joint incident planning.

Each designated agency Incident Commander functioning in a Unified Command must:

- Act within the limitations of his/her jurisdiction or agency.
- Inform the other Commanders of any legal, political, jurisdictional, or safety restrictions.
- Be authorized to perform certain activities and actions on behalf of the jurisdiction or agency he/she represents.
- Manage the incident to the best of his/her ability.

One of the Incident Commanders may be designated as the spokesperson to:

- Serve as a designated channel of communications from Command and General Staff members.
- Provide a point of contact, as necessary, for the Command and General Staff.

UNIT 4

Incident Action Planning

Lesson Objectives

- Describe methods and tools used to assess the complexity of the incident/event.
- Describe types of agency(s) policies and guidelines that influence management of incident or event activities.
- Describe the process for developing incident objectives, strategies, and tactics.
- Describe the steps in transferring and assuming Incident Command.
- As part of an activity, develop incident objectives for a simulated incident.

The Incident Commander is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of an Incident Action Plan (IAP). In small-scale incidents, the Incident Commander may be the person preparing the IAP, and in this case, it may be a verbal plan rather than a written plan. In more complex incidents, the IAP will be a written document that is developed by the Planning Section, under the direction of the Incident Commander. IAPs are always based on incident needs and the ICS organization. They must be flexible and must be reevaluated constantly. IAPs are developed for specified time periods. These time periods, called operational periods, are determined by the needs of the incident. All incident supervisory personnel should be given appropriate direction and have a clear understanding of the tactical actions for an operational period (e.g., 12-24 hours). In rapidly escalating or very complex incidents, the operational periods should be shorter to allow for rapid response to changing events. In smaller, less complex incidents, the operational periods may be longer.

Planning for Incidents

The planning team must take the following into account when planning for an incident:

- Time is of the utmost importance.
- An unstable, changing situation.
- Potential rapid expansion of the incident and response.
- Incomplete communications and information.
- Lack of experience managing expanding incidents.
- Type of event.
- Location, size, expected duration, history, and potential for escalation, in order to project incident objectives.
- Number of agencies involved: single or multi-jurisdiction.
- Command Staff needs.
- Kind, type, and number of resources required.
- Projected aviation operations.
- Staging Areas required.
- Other facilities required.
- Kind and type of logistical support needs.
- Financial considerations.
- Known limitations or restrictions.
- Available communications.

The initial response actions for planning and resource management include:

Planning and Resource Management

- Assume command and establish Incident Command Post.

- Establish immediate incident objectives, strategies, and tactics.
- Determine resource needs.
- Establish initial organization that maintains span of control.

Assessment and Safety

- Size up the situation.
- Determine if life is at risk.
- Ensure personnel safety.
- Identify environmental issues to address.

The first responder to arrive must assume command and size up the situation by determining:

- Nature and magnitude of the incident.
- Hazards and safety concerns.
- Hazards facing response personnel and the public.
- Evacuation and warnings.
- Injuries and casualties.
- Need to secure and isolate the area.
- Initial priorities and immediate resource requirements.
- Location of Incident Command Post and Staging Area(s).
- Entrance and exit routes for responders.

A thorough size-up provides information needed to make initial management decisions. It allows the management team to establish objectives, set strategy, and select tactics and have them implemented. In addition to the information collected during the size-up, the Incident Commander must take into account authority, policy and other stakeholders involved.

IAPs should cover all objectives and support activities needed during the operational period. A written plan is preferable to an oral plan because it demonstrates responsibility, provides documentation, and protects against liability suits. Key elements of an IAP include:

- What do you want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?

Table 1 - Examples of Policies and Guidelines

- Pre-incident plans
- Standard operating procedures
- Emergency operations plans
- Community preparedness plans
- Mutual aid and assistance agreements (MOU's)
- Corrective action plans
- Mitigation plans
- Recovery plans
- Mass casualty Plans
- Field operations guides
- National disaster plans

Developing Objectives

In small incidents, the Incident Commander is solely responsible for developing incident objectives. Larger incidents require the involvement of Command and General Staff in the development of the incident objectives.

Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

- Objectives state what will be accomplished.
- Strategies establish the general plan or direction for accomplishing the incident objectives.
- Tactics specify how the strategies will be executed.

Definition of an Objective

A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources. Objectives should be specific and easy to measure bearing in mind that all planning strategies serve to create policy.

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Initial decisions and objectives are established based on the following priorities:

- #1: Life safety
- #2: Incident stabilization
- #3: Property conservation

The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

Step 1: Understand agency policy and direction.
Step 2: Assess incident situation.
Step 3: Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.
Step 4: Perform tactical direction.
Step 5: Provide necessary follow up.

Writing 'SMART' Objectives

Specific – Should be precise and unambiguous. When setting specific objectives, consider the following 'W's'.

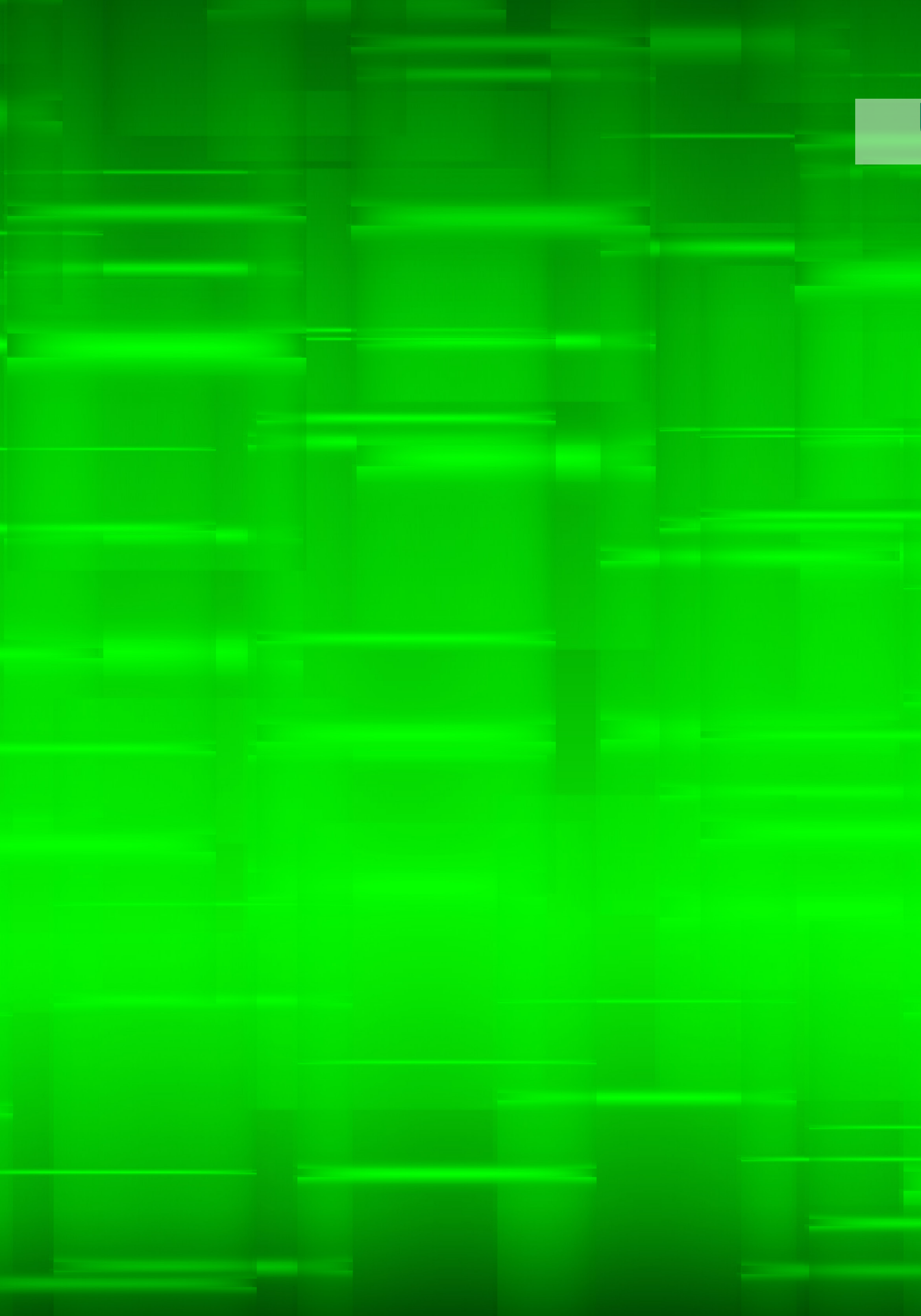
- **Who:** Who is involved?
- **What:** What do you want to accomplish?
- **Where:** Identify the location of the incident?).
- **When:** Establish a time frame (operational period).
- **Which:** Identify requirements and constraints (resources and equipment).
- Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

Measurable – How will achievements be measured?

Action Oriented – Is an action verb used to describe expected accomplishments?

Realistic – Is the outcome achievable with available resources?

Time Sensitive – What is the timeframe (if applicable)?



UNIT 5

Expanding the Organization of the ICS

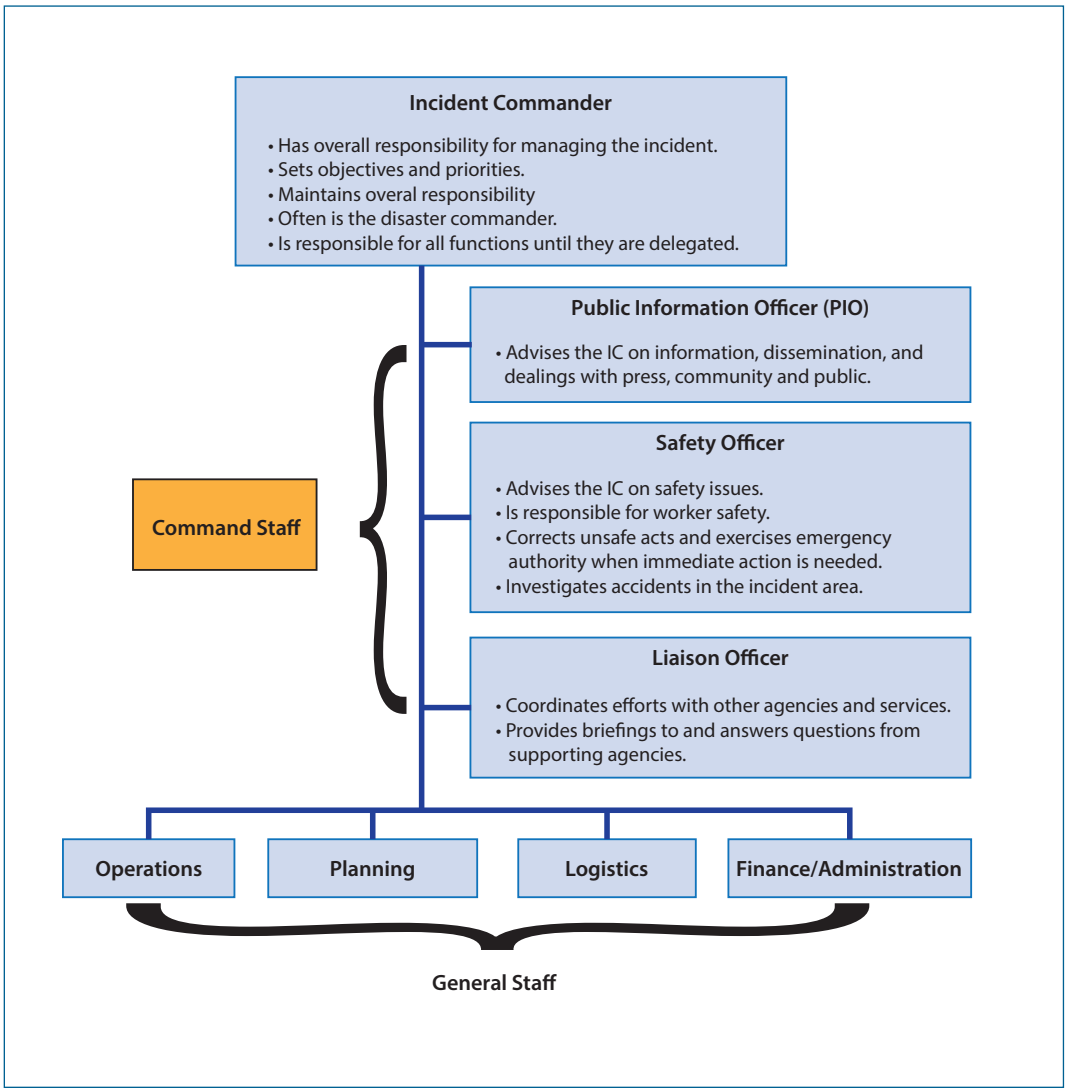
Unit Objectives

- Explain how the organization of the ICS expands or contracts to meet operational needs of an incident.
- Describe the use of branches, divisions, groups, and units and identify the position title associated with each.
- Prepare a transfer briefing.

The Incident Command System is designed to handle both small and large incidents. It can be expanded from the management of very small routine operations into a system capable of handling larger incidents. Many incidents will not require full activation of all sections of the ICS. However, others may require several or all sections to be activated. This unit describes the elements in an expanded Incident Command System, including resources and an expanded organizational structure (divisions, branches, groups, units, strike teams, and task forces, including the functions of these units).

The organizational structure of the Incident Management System is modular. The system's five major management activities are: Incident Command; operations; planning; logistics; and finance/administration. The structure of ICS remains the same, regardless of the nature of the disaster. The difference is in the particular experience of the key personnel. Figure 5.1 depicts the hierarchy of the ICS.

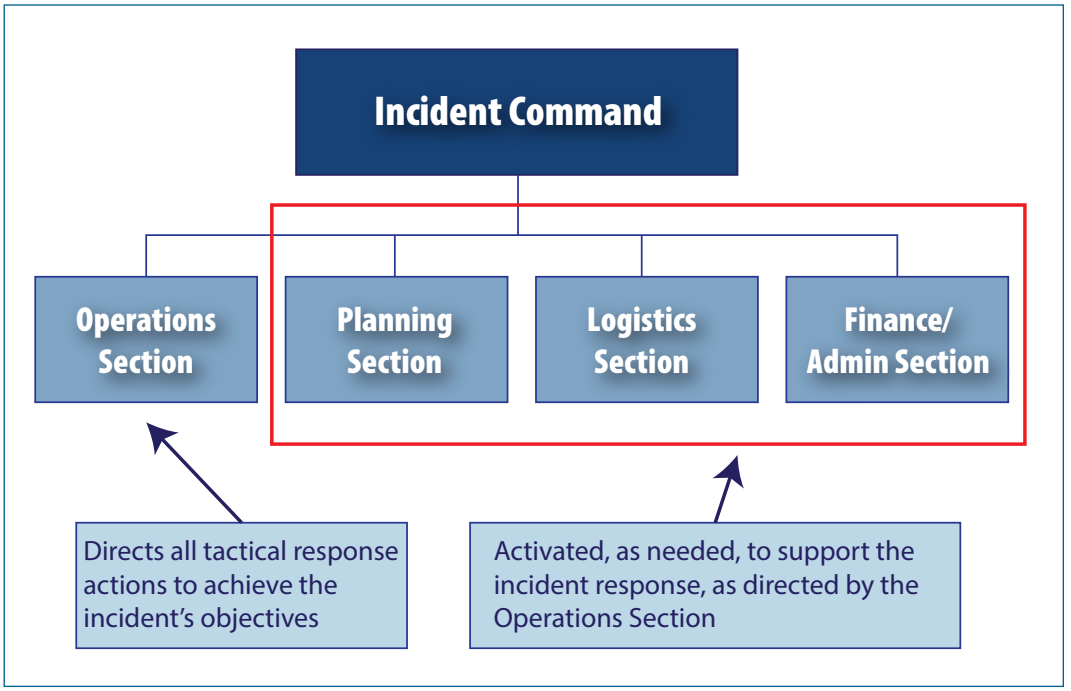
Figure 5.1 - Hierarchy of the Incident Command System



Expanding Incidents

Incidents that begin with single resources may rapidly expand over time, requiring significant additional resources and support. Expanding incidents may add supervisory layers to the organizational structure.

Figure 5.2 - Managing the ICS



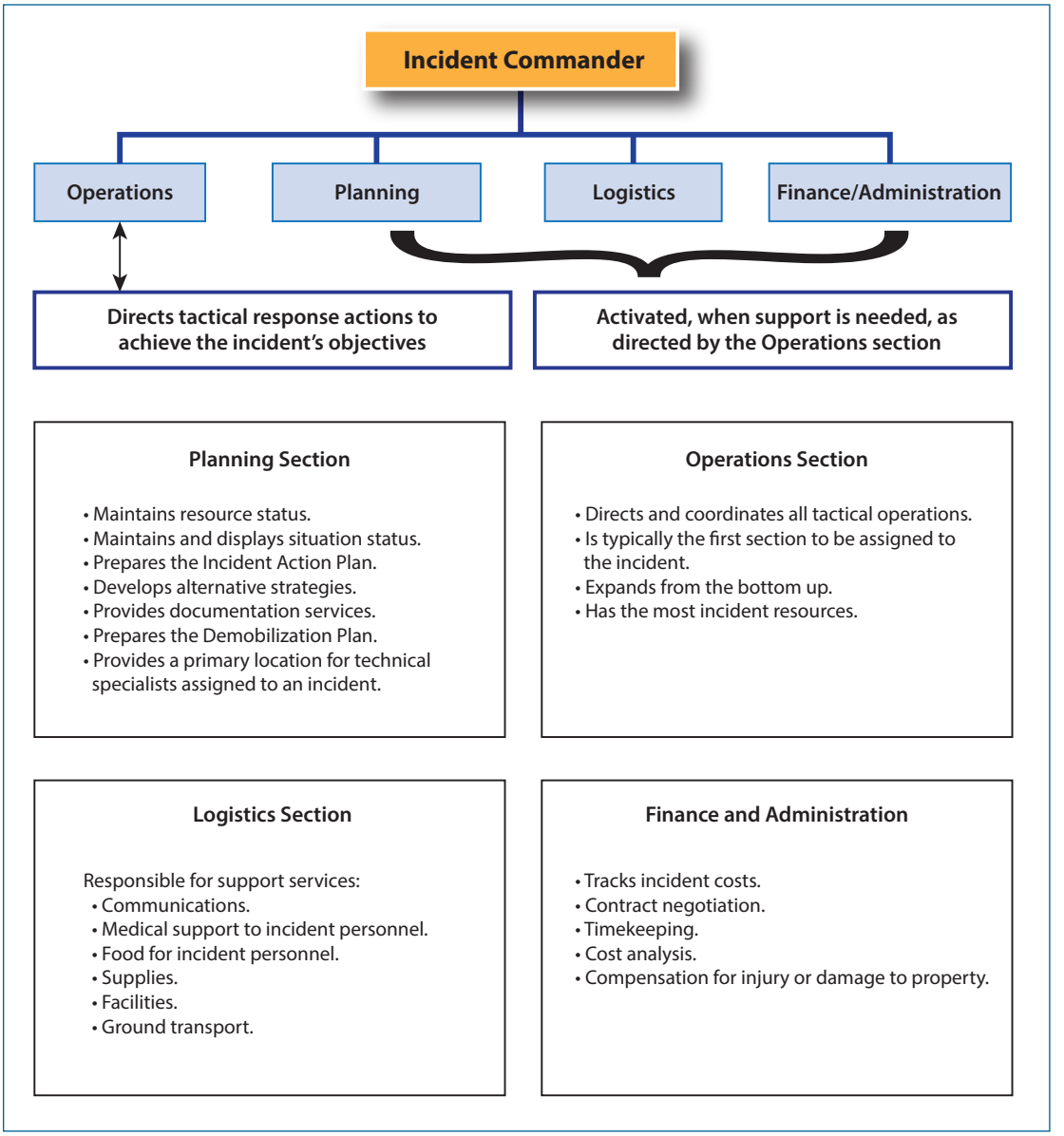
As shown in Figure 5.2, the Incident Command System may be further expanded to include sections that are responsible for general management functions. The functions or responsibilities assigned to these sections are shown in Figure 5.3.

The IC will decide to expand or contract the structure based on the following priorities:

- Incident stability.
  - Minimize the effect on the surrounding areas.
  - Maximize the response effort while using resources efficiently.
- Property conservation.
- Complexity of the incident rather than its size (geographic complexity or available resources).

A manageable span of control is defined as the number of individuals that one supervisor can manage effectively. In the ICS, the span of control for any supervisor falls within a range of three to seven resources, with five being the optimum. If those numbers increase or decrease, the Incident Commander should reexamine the organizational structure.

Figure 5.3 - General Staff Management Functions



Single resources may be organized into teams. Using standard ICS terminology, the two types of team configurations are:

- Task Forces, which are a **combination of mixed resources** with common communications, supervised by a Team Leader.
- Strike Teams, which include all **similar resources** with common communications, supervised by a Team Leader.

Scenario: Expanding the ICS

The following scenario will illustrate how the ICS structure can be expanded, if necessary. Keep in mind that every incident is different and will expand differently.

Scenario: *The Fire Service has received a call reporting smoke coming from a department store on the main street.*

Problem: Identify and assess the possible consequences.

Sizing up the Incident

Sizing up an incident is a continual and ongoing process during the response. The size up allows responders to:

- Gather facts.
- Assess damage.
- Consider probabilities.
- Assess the situation.
- Establish priorities.
- Make decisions.
- Develop a plan of action.
- Take action.
- Evaluate progress.

Initially, a size up of the situation is the responsibility of the first officer to arrive on scene. The size up continues throughout the response, updating the following:

- What is the nature of the incident?
- What hazards are present?
- How large an area is affected?
- How can the area be isolated?
- What location would make a good staging area?
- What entrance and exit routes and safe routes would be good for the flow of rescue personnel and equipment?

Scenario continues . . .

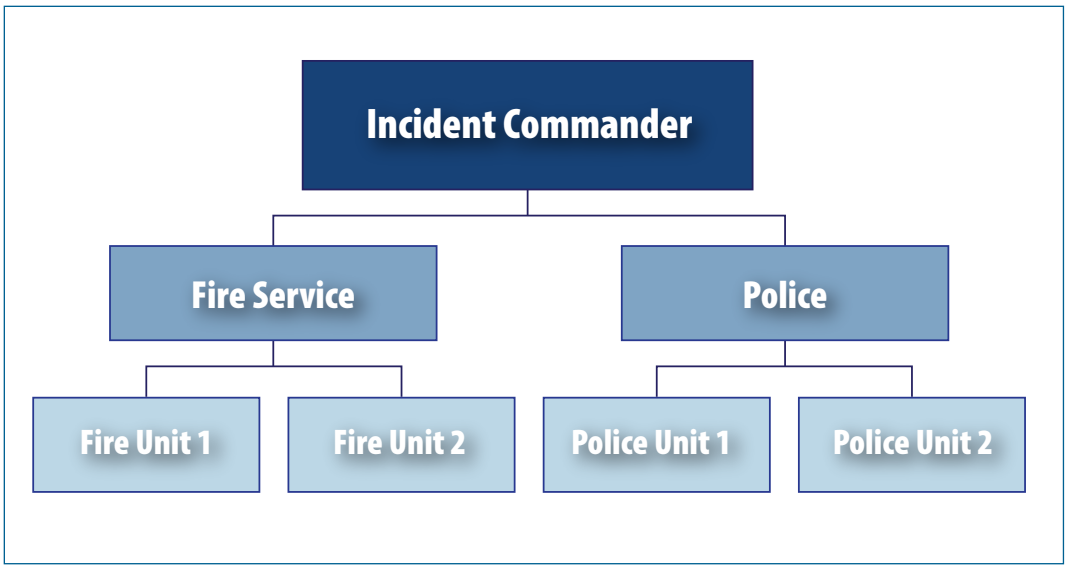
Two fire vehicles arrive on scene but are unable to enter the area. The crowd continues to swell and is becoming unmanageable. Upon arrival, the officers notice that the fire is in a major department store and a large crowd is gathering. Persons are seen exiting the store with goods in their hands. Minor skirmishes between security guards, the storeowners, and looters create a cause for concern.

Police vehicles arrive at the scene, with four officers in each vehicle. They have a difficult time controlling the scene.

Single Resource

A single resource is an individual, a piece of equipment, and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used at an incident.

Figure 5.4 - Expanded ICS

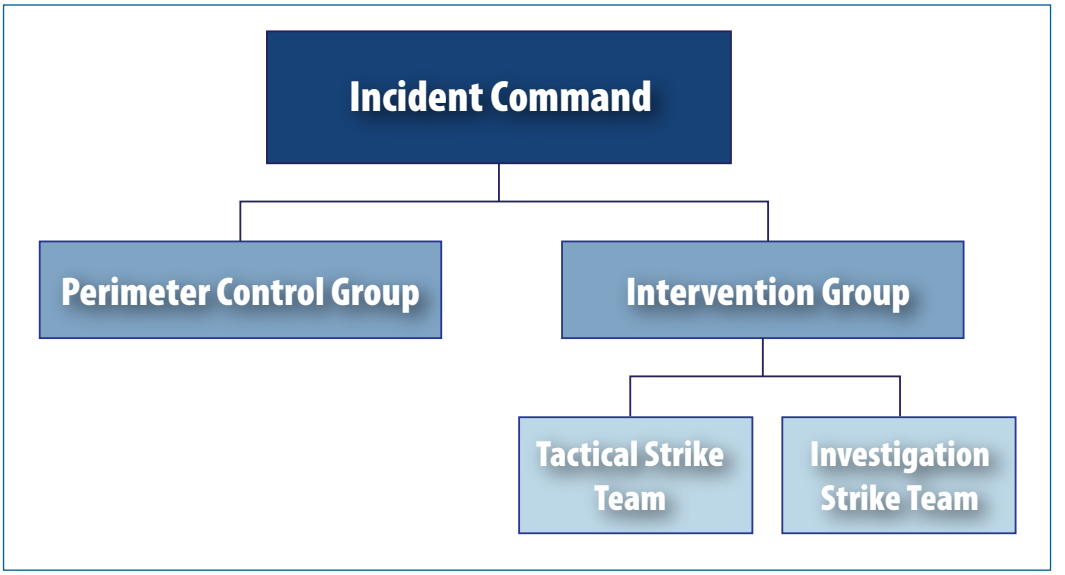


Scenario continues . . .

The fire is spreading to the adjoining building. Looting is now rampant. Fighting erupts between the police and offenders, resulting in mounting casualties. A mass casualty incident is declared and the hospital is informed. A number of persons can be seen on the roof of the building, unable to get down. All stairways are engulfed in flames.

Continuous size up of an incident helps the Incident Commander to identify priorities (i.e., whether to control the scene or the fire). The size up of the incident will also indicate if additional resources are needed at the scene. Keep in mind how these additional resources will affect the reasonable span of control. Should the organization of the ICS need to expand. Figure 5.5 offers an example of a possible expanded structure.

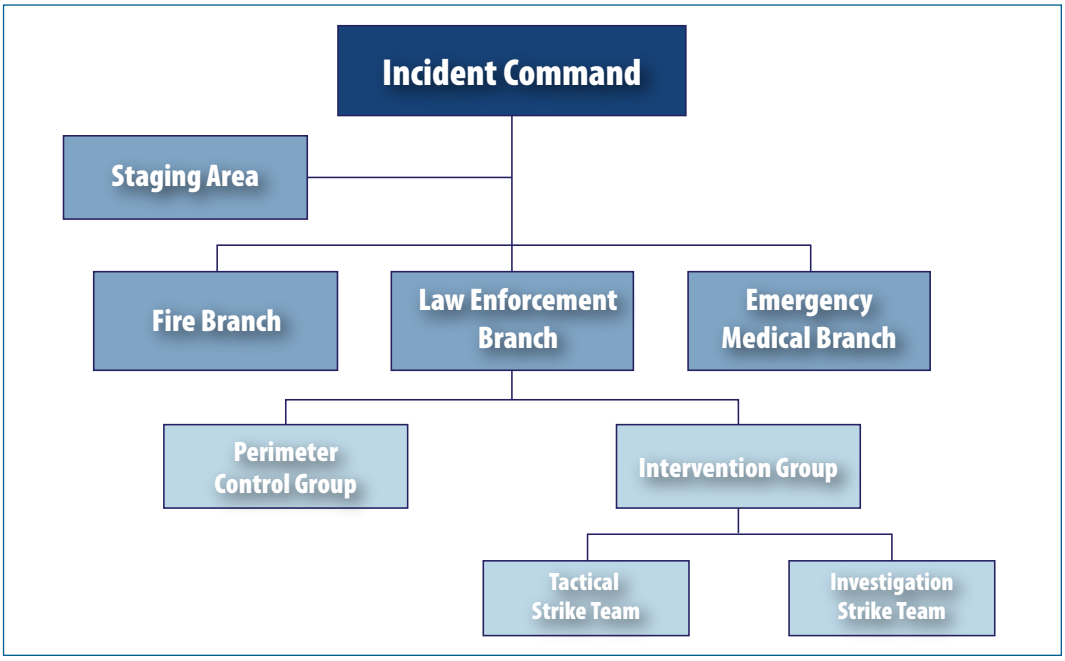
Figure 5.5 - Expanding the ICS



As seen in the above figure, the Incident Commander has determined that it is not necessary to activate an Operations Section or to assign an Operations Section Chief at this time. However, the incident is continuing to escalate. Additional levels of supervision must be added as the number of teams expands.

Each group is responsible for a **specific functional assignment** (perimeter control, evacuation, medical control, etc.). A Group Supervisor manages these functions.

Figure 5.6. Expanding the ICS



At each level of organization of the ICS, individuals with primary positions also have specific titles, as shown below:

Primary Position Title	Title	Support Position
Incident Commander	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff Officer	Officer	Assistant
Section Chief	Chief	Deputy
Branch Director	Director	Deputy
Division/Group	Division/ Supervisor	N/A
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	N/A
Unit	Leader	Manager
Single Resource	Use Unit Designation	N/A

The following supervisory levels can be added to help manage the span of control in the Operations Section:

- Divisions
- Groups
- Branches

Divisions

A Division is the organizational level responsible for operations within a defined geographic area. This organizational level falls between Single Resources, Task Forces and Strike Teams and the Branch Level. See Figures 5.7 through 5.10.

Figure 5.7 - Operations Section: Divisions

- Divided geographically based on the needs of the incident.
- Labelled using alphabet characters (A, B, C, etc.).
- Managed by a supervisor.

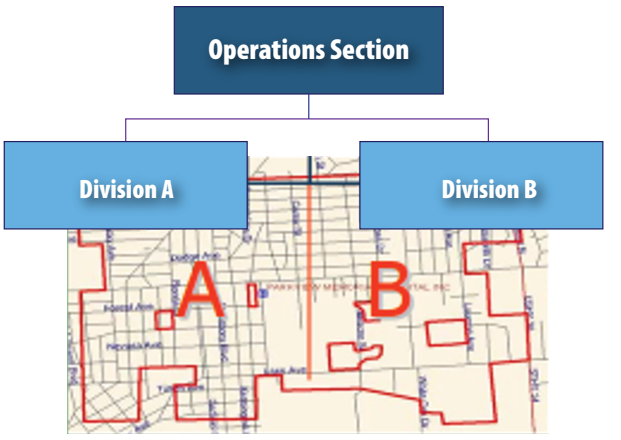


Figure 5.8

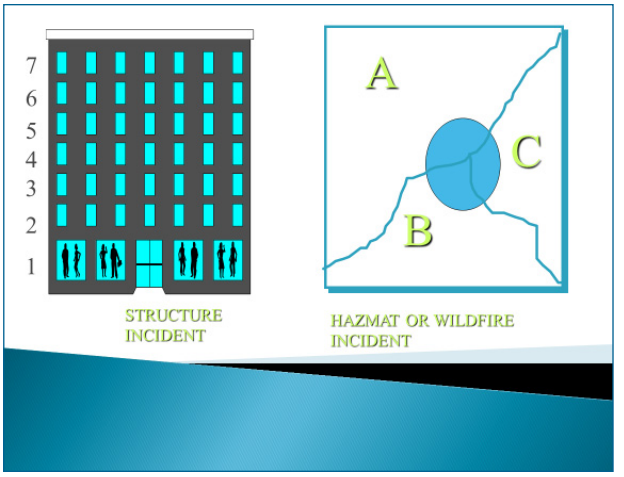


Figure 5.9 - Example of Sectors

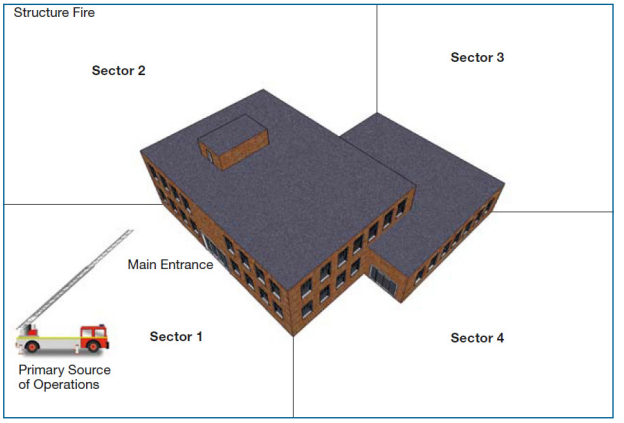
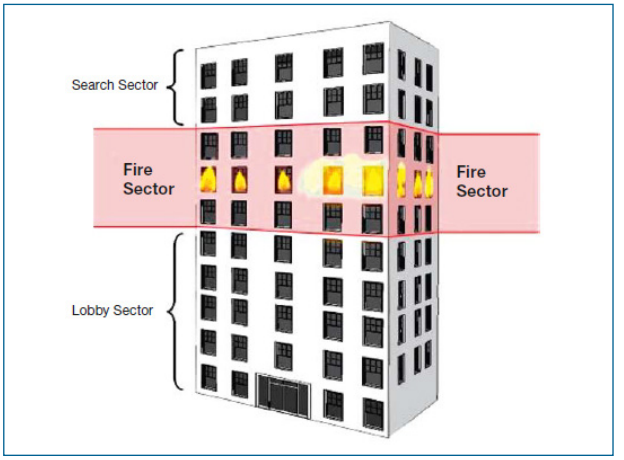


Figure 5.10 - Example of Sectors

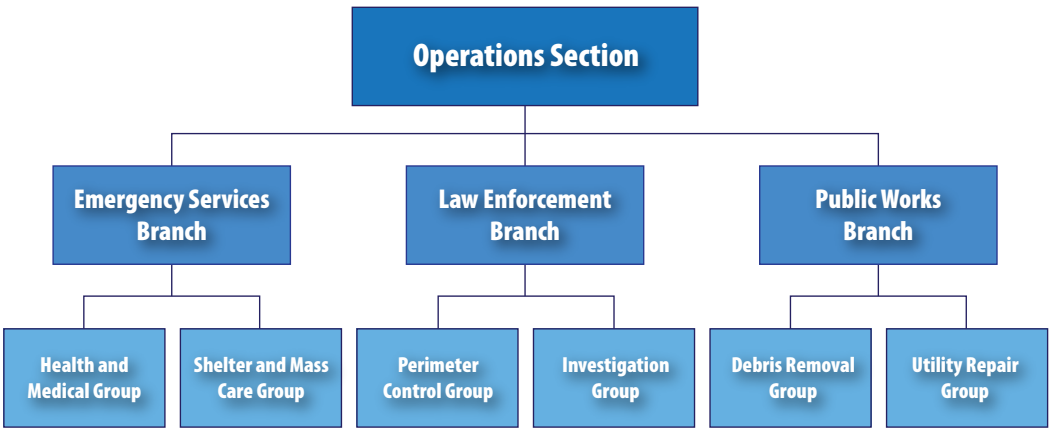


Branches

A Branch is an organizational level that has functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of an incident's operations. The Incident Commander may establish geographic Branches to resolve span-of-control issues—or may establish functional Branches to manage specific functions (e.g., law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, etc.). A Branch is identified by Roman numerals or a functional name. A Branch Director manages a Branch.

Figure 5.11 - Operations Section: Branches

- Established if the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control.
- Have functional or geographical responsibility for major parts of incident operations.
- Identified by Roman numerals or functional name.
- Managed by a Branch Director.



Groups

A Group is the organizational level responsible for a specified functional assignment at an incident and is labeled accordingly (e.g., perimeter control, evacuation, fire suppression, etc.). A Group Supervisor manages a Group. A Group works wherever its assigned task is needed and is not limited geographically.

Figure 5.12 - Operations Section: Groups

- Established based on the needs of an incident.
- Labled according to the job they are assigned.
- Managed by a Supervisor.
- Work wherever their assigned task is needed and are not limited geographically.

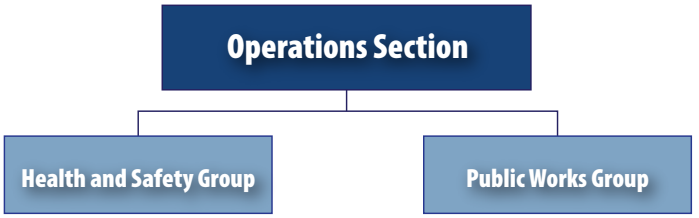


Figure 5.13 - Examples of Functional Groups

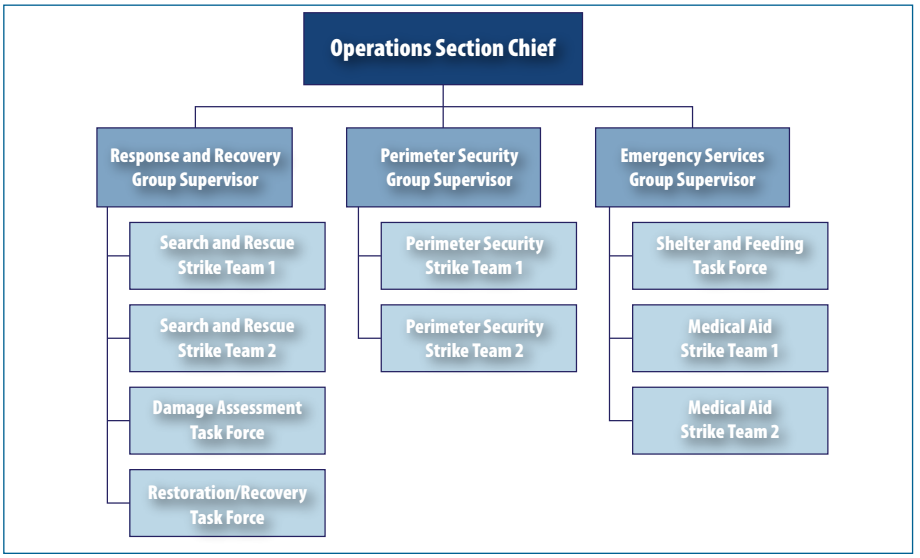
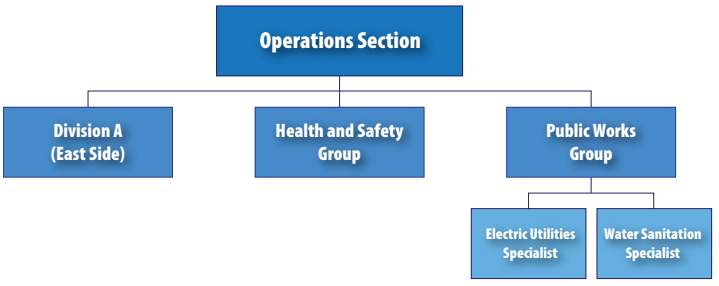


Figure 5.14 - Operations Section: Divisions and Groups

Divisions and groups:

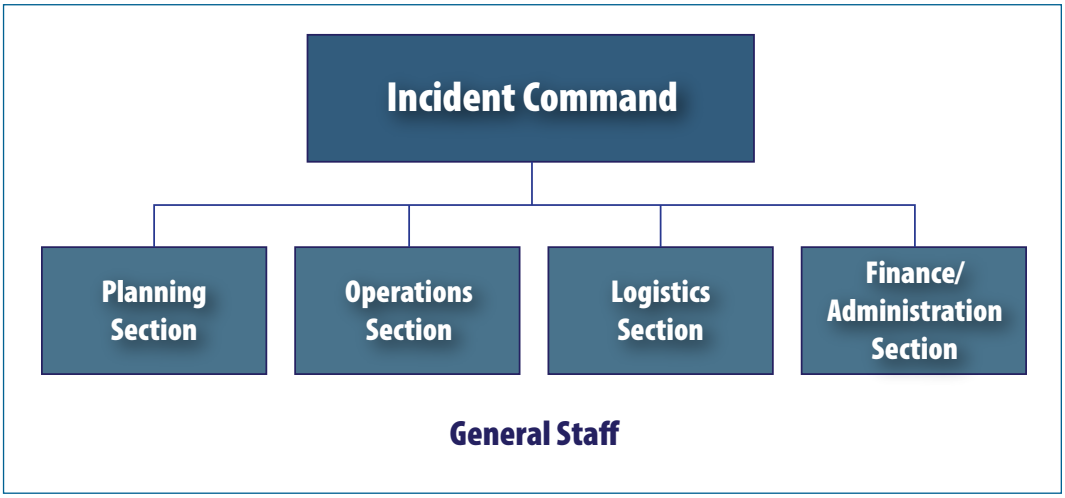
- Can be used together on an incident.
- Are at an equal level in the organization.
- One does not supervise the other.



Sections

Sections are organizational levels with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident. A Section is located organizationally between Branches and the Incident Commander.

Figure 5.15 - Expanding the ICS: Sections



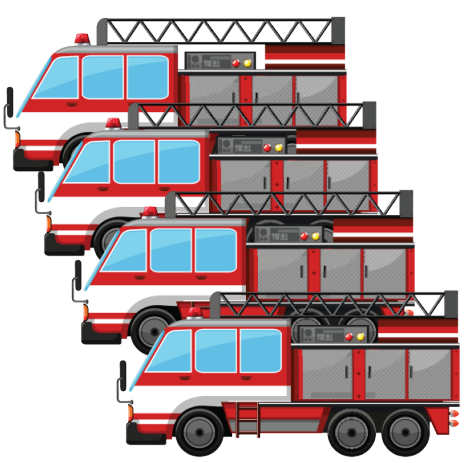
Strike Teams and Task Forces

Strike Teams are set numbers of resources of the same kind and type (single resources) with common communications. They operate under the direct supervision of a Strike Team Leader. Communications should flow between the Strike Team and its leader. Strike Teams may report to the Incident Commander, the Operations Section Chief, or to a Division or Group Supervisor, depending on the level of expansion of the ICS organization.

Task Forces are a combination of mixed resources with common communications, assembled for a particular operational duty. They operate under the direct supervision of a Task Force Leader. Each Task Force must have a leader and its own transportation as well as communications capability between the leader and the next-level supervisor. Task Forces may report directly to the Incident Commander, the Operations Section Chief, or to a Division or Group Supervisor, depending on the level of expansion of the ICS organization.

Grouping single resources into Task Forces and Strike Teams offers the Incident Commander several advantages for resource management, including:

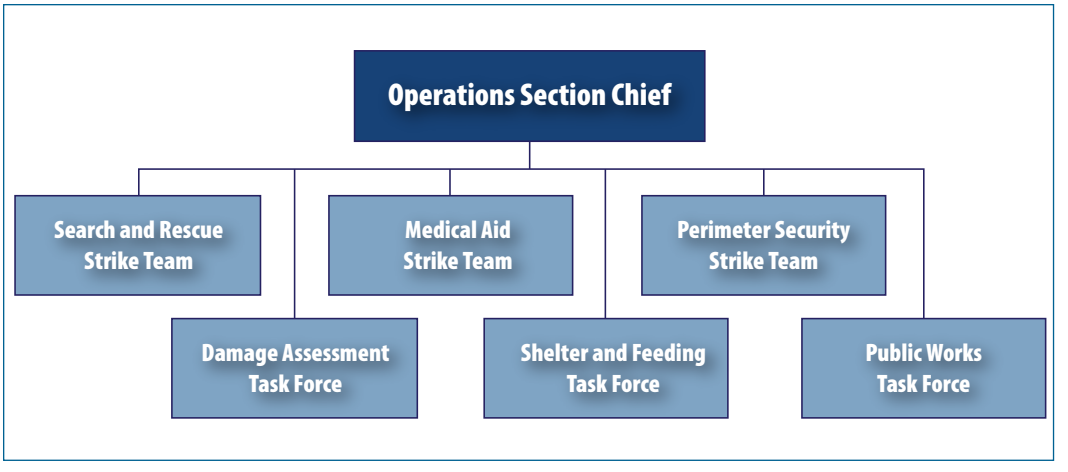
- Providing a more effective way to plan and request resources.
- Reducing radio traffic.
- Improving organizational expandability for large operations, while maintaining a good span of control.



Example of a Strike Team

Example of a Task Force

Figure 5.16 - Examples of Strike Teams and Task Forces



Scenario continues . . .

The situation begins to get out of control. There is the threat of full-scale violence between criminals and the police. Workers and customers are trapped inside the building. Their exact location is unknown. The crowd is becoming restless. Realizing that the incident is becoming more widespread than initially reported, the IC decides to use the strike team differently. Divisions are established.

Figure 5.17 - Expanding the ICS: Divisions

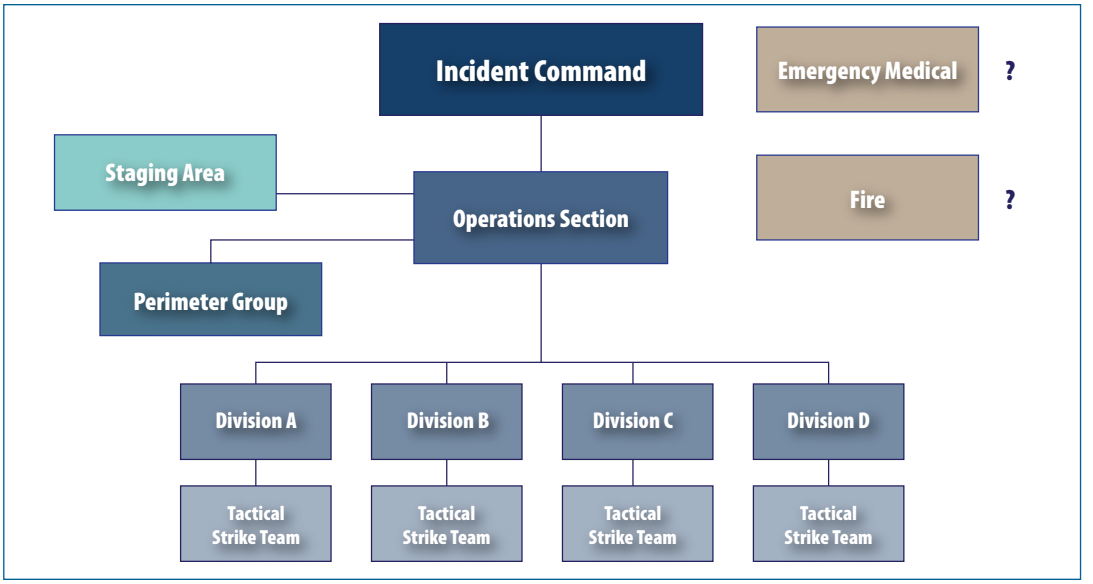
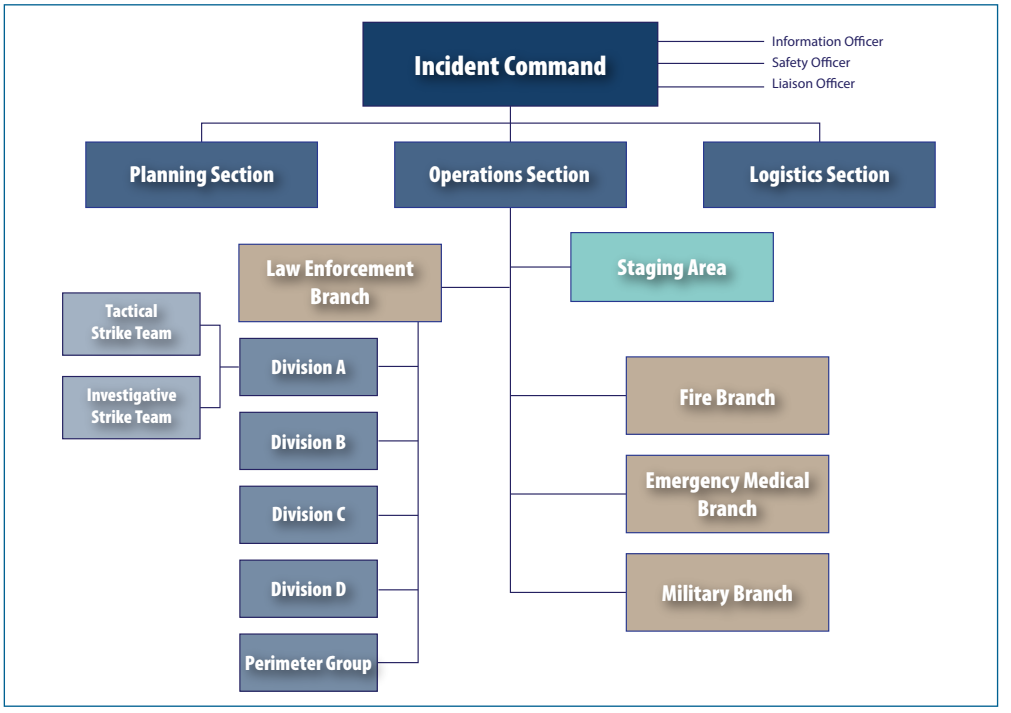


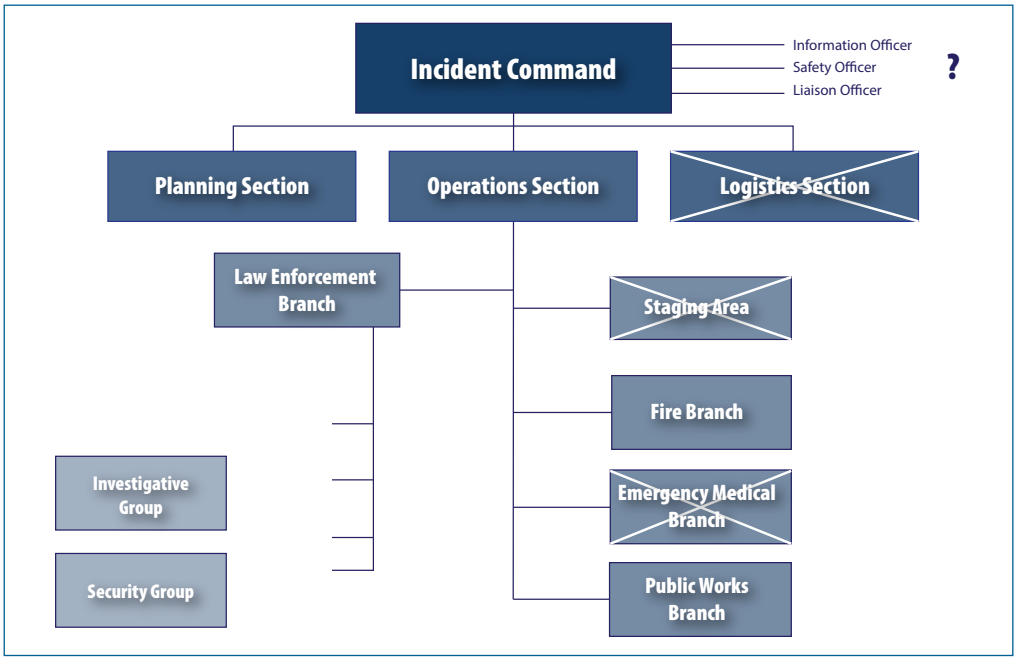
Figure 5.18 - Expanding the ICS: Divisions



Gradually the situation is brought under control. There is a return to normalcy; however, there is tension in the air.

With the gradual return to normalcy, the Incident Commander determines what is no longer needed. The Planning Unit establishes a Demobilization Unit to debrief the recently released personnel before they return to their respective agencies.

Figure 5.19 - Preparing to Contract the Expanded ICS



With the incident under control, the Incident Commander begins to determine which Units are no longer needed and can be demobilized. To ensure that all personnel are debriefed and equipment is released to its parent agencies, a Demobilization Unit is established under the Planning Section.

As illustrated in the previous exercise, the ICS structure is expanded to accommodate additional resources, when necessary. When the incident is under control and normalcy returns, the level of response will demobilize.

UNIT 6

Demobilization and Transfer of Command

Unit Objectives

- List the major components of a Demobilization Plan.
- Identify the need for transfer of command or close-out.
- Identify the process involved in a closeout meeting.
- Identify the impact of agency-specific policies, procedures, and agreements on demobilization planning.
- Identify the ICS titles of personnel who are responsible for developing and implementing the Demobilization Plan; list their duties.

Demobilization is the release and return of resources that are no longer required to manage an incident. Demobilization may occur at any time during or after the incident/event.

Demobilizing Non-expendable and Expendable Resources

Non-expendable Resources	Expendable Resources
Account for resources returned.	Account for all resources used.
Restore resources to workable status.	Return and replenish items used.
Replace items damaged or lost.	They have good air exchange. Check respiratory rate (RR).

Demobilization planning helps to:

- Ensure a safe, controlled, efficient, and cost-effective release process.
- Eliminate waste.
- Minimize or eliminate potential fiscal and legal consequences.

Demobilization policies and procedures depend on the size of the incident and may involve:

- Budgetary/legal policies and procedures.
- Work rules.
- Special licenses and/or other requirements.

Who is responsible for demobilization?

- Incident Commander: Is in command, approves all resources, and orders the demobilization.
- Operations: Identifies the operational resources that are no longer needed for the incident (only essential resources remain); prepares the list for demobilization.
- Planning: Develops and implements the demobilization plan.
- Logistics: Handles all transport requirements.
- Finance and Administration: Processes claims, keeps records of time and incident costs, and assists with the release of resources.

Demobilization Information

Required Information	Who is Responsible?
Excess resources; release priorities.	Supervisors and Managers
Resource information, demobilization procedures.	Planning Section

Required Information	Who is Responsible?
Continuing needs for tactical resources.	Operations Section
Transportation, communications, and maintenance.	Logistics Section
Cost of individual resources being released.	Finance/Admin
Agreements with other agencies.	Liaison Officer
Physical condition and needs of personnel.	Safety Officer
Reassignment/return of resources.	Agency Dispatch

Transfer of Command

As described earlier, the senior-most person responding to an incident becomes the Incident Commander. However, as the incident escalates, it may be necessary to transfer command of the incident to a more experienced person—or to an Incident Commander designated by local law. When transfer of command is necessary, the transfer must be made as efficiently as possible and, whenever possible, in person.

When transferring command, the person being relieved must brief the incoming Incident Commander, providing information about:

- The incident conditions (e.g., the current situation, objectives, priorities, hazards, resource needs, etc.).
- The Incident Action Plan and its current status.
- Safety considerations and concerns.
- Deployment and assignment of operating units and personnel.

The **outgoing** Incident Commander also should review the status board, which shows resource status and deployments, with the incoming Incident Commander. Dispatch (and other designated persons) must be advised of the command change. He/she should:

- Assess the situation with incoming IC.
- Deliver the briefing.
- Agree on appropriate time for transfer of command to take place.
- Notify all players of change of command.
- Accept new assignments or demobilize.

The Incoming Incident Commander should:

- Assess the situation with the current IC.
- Receive the briefing.
- Determine appropriate time for transfer of command.
- Notify others of command change.

- Reassign or demobilize current IC.

The briefing checklist for transfer of command should include:

- Situation outcome.
- Remaining resources and status.
- Areas of concern (political, community interest, etc.).
- Logistical support needed or retained.
- Handover of incident records and all relevant information.

The Closeout

The position of Incident Commander will remain staffed until the conclusion of the incident. On closeout, a debriefing of all stakeholders should occur. This allows for the following:

- A summary of the incident.
- Documentation, including components that are not finalized.
- Agency representatives can voice concerns.
- Events that may have consequences in the future.
- Final evaluation of incident management by the agency officials.

Incident management teams or other teams should have a closeout debrief to discuss any issues, team performance and lessons learned.

Conducting an after-action review is essential to answer key questions:

- What did we set out to do?
- What actually happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What can/will we do differently next time?
- Are there lessons learned that should be shared?
- What follow up is needed?

UNIT 7

Incident Facilities and Resources

Unit Objectives

- Name critical facilities used in ICS operations and explain the purpose of each.
- Identify which facilities may be co-located at an incident.
- Describe how the various incident facilities are managed to support incident operations.
- Identify the map symbol that is associated with each incident facility.

Incident activities may be carried out from a variety of operational locations and support facilities. The Incident Commander identifies and establishes the necessary facilities, depending on the incident's needs. Standardized names are used to identify different types of facilities. Some incidents may require facilities that are not included on the standard list.

In order to ensure consistency and integrate all responders, it is important to be familiar with the standard ICS facilities. These facilities meet the requirements for most incidents. However, in some instances, the Incident Commander may determine the need for other facilities.

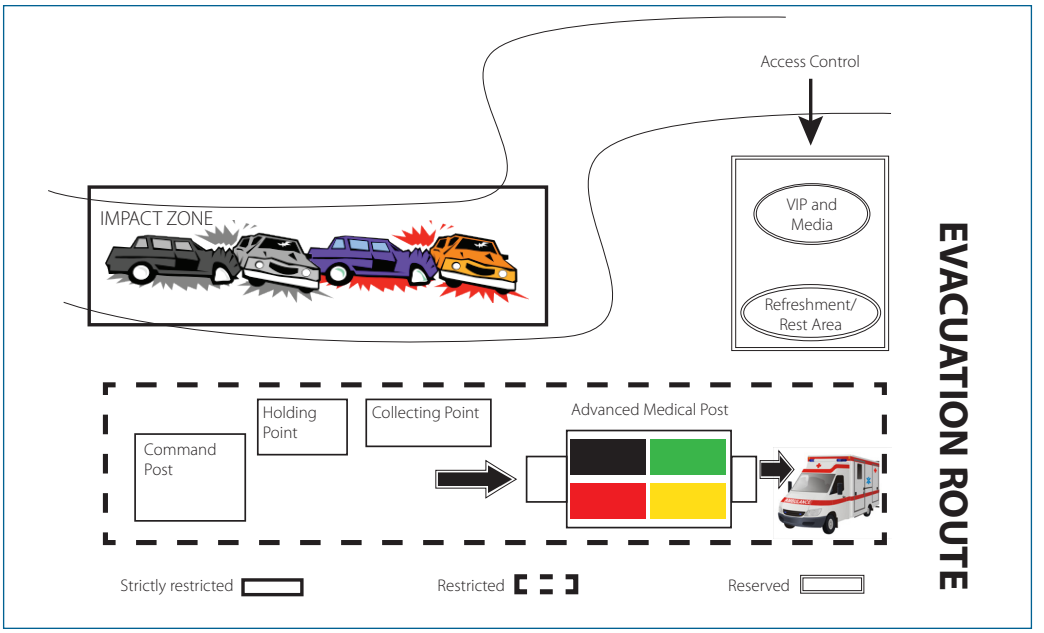
The four main ICS facilities are:

- Incident Command Post (ICP).
- Staging Area.
- Base.
- Camp.

Other facilities can also be established at mass casualty scenes. These include:

- Casualty collection point.
- Holding point.
- Advanced medical post.
- VIP and press area.
- Triage centres.
- Helibase.
- Temporary morgue.

Figure 7.1 - Facilities in a Mass Casualty Incident



When determining which facilities are required, the Incident Commander will:

- Prioritize the needs of the incident.
- Determine the length of time that the facility will be in operation.
- Estimate how much it will cost to establish and operate the facility.
- Identify environmental considerations that affect the facility.

The Incident Commander's first responsibility is to establish command. By establishing command, the Incident Commander also establishes clear lines of authority and communication for the incident.

Incident Command Post (ICP)

The Incident Command Post is a multi-sectoral control unit, staffed by senior representatives of all agencies responding to the scene. This location should accommodate all communications (visual, radio, and road). It is established to coordinate the various sectors involved in field management; link with back-up systems to provide information and mobilize necessary resources; and supervise victim management.

- The ICP is established at the field location where primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed.
- The ICP may be collocated with the incident base or other incident facilities.

The Incident Command Post is the location from which the Incident Commander oversees all incident operations. There is only one ICP for each incident—even for incidents that involve multiple agencies and/or multiple jurisdictions—whether operating under a single or a unified command. Initially, the ICP may be located in a vehicle, trailer or tent. As it becomes clear that the incident is escalating in size, complexity, or risk, the Incident Commander will establish a more permanent facility.

When establishing an ICP, the Incident Commander will follow several proven guidelines:

- Position the ICP **away from** the general noise and confusion associated with the incident.
- Position the ICP **outside** the area of present and potential hazards; yet close enough to the incident to maintain command.
- Position the ICP **within view** of the incident, when possible.
- Select a location that can be expanded, if necessary, as the incident expands.
- The ICP must be large enough to accommodate a sufficient working area and other necessary facilities (e.g., restrooms) for a potentially large number of individuals who will be working there.
- Provide security and control access to the ICP. Unauthorized personnel should not be able to gain ready access to the facility.
- All responders must be able to clearly identify the ICP.

The ICP should be identified with a green and white flag, lights, and/or other identifiable marking. The standard symbol for identifying ICPs is shown in the figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2 - Facilities in a Mass Casualty Incident

After selecting a location for the ICP, the Incident Commander must ensure that the location is communicated to all responders and to dispatch, so that all personnel are aware of its location.

An expanded Incident Command Post may be required for:

- Long-term incidents.
- Multiagency incidents under a unified command.
- Incidents requiring an on-scene communication center.
- Incidents requiring activation of the Planning Section.
- Incident requiring the use of the Command Staff and agency representatives.

Staging Areas

As an incident escalates, additional resources will be required to avoid problems that could result from the convergence of too many resources and to manage the available resources effectively.

A staging area is a temporary location at an incident where personnel and equipment are kept while awaiting tactical assignments. There may be more than one Staging Area at an incident and it may be co-located with the ICP, Bases, Camps, Heli-bases, or Heli-spots. The Staging Area should be clearly marked. If necessary, the Staging Area may be relocated as the incident unfolds.

Figure 7.3 - Map Symbol for Staging Area

When selecting a location for a Staging Area, the following factors should be considered:

Proximity of Staging Area to Possible Hazards

- Should be located close enough to the incident for a timely response, but far enough away to be out of the immediate impact zone.
- The Staging Area should be located out of the way of any possible direct hazard.

Access Routes

- The Staging Area must have a different route for incoming and outgoing resources.

Space

- The Staging Area must be large enough to accommodate available resources and should be large enough to expand if the incident escalates;

Security

- The Staging Area must offer security for both personnel and equipment.

Establishing a Staging Area helps to:

- Increase responder safety and resource accountability.
- Prevent premature deployment of resources.
- Prevent personnel from entering the incident area on their own.
- Provides a place where personnel and equipment can be checked in.
- May be controlled by a Staging Area Manager.

Staging Area Manager

- Reports to the Operations Chief (OC) or to the IC if the OC has not been activated.
- Oversees the check-in procedure for personnel and equipment.
- Responds to requests for resources by assigning available resources.
- Keeps the IC or OC informed of the status of the resources in the Staging Area.

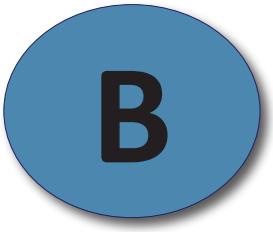
The Operations Section Chief must brief the Staging Area Manager(s) about:

- Expected number, kind, and type of resources.
- Communications to be used.
- Minimum resource levels that should be maintained.
- Procedures for obtaining additional resources.
- Expected duration for use of the Staging Area.
- Procedures for obtaining logistical support.

Bases

If an incident covers a very large area or if the Incident Commander expects that the incident will continue for an extended period of time, requiring the need for a large number of resources that rotate in and out of operation assignments, he or she may establish a Base. A Base offers primary services and support activities for an incident. Normally, a Base is used to provide a place for uncommitted or out-of-service resources to be located. The Logistics Section is located at the Base. There is only one Base for an incident, and like the ICP and Staging Areas, the Base will be named. When the Incident Commander establishes a Base, he or she will designate a Base Manager, who will operate within the Facilities Unit of the Logistics Section in a fully expanded ICS structure. If the Logistics Section is not activated, the Base Manager will report directly to the Incident Commander or his or her deputy. The staging area may be collocated with the Incident Command Post.

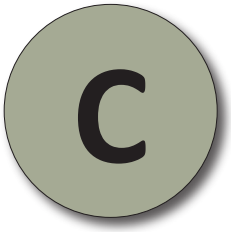
Figure 7.4 - Map Symbol for Bases



Camps

A camp is a geographic site, within the general incident area, separate from the Incident Base. It is equipped and staffed to provide food, water, and sleeping and sanitary facilities to incident personnel. In the case of an incident related to a wild land fire, Base activities may be performed at a Camp.

Figure 7.5 - Map Symbol for Camps



Helibases and Helispots

Helibases and helispots will be used in incidents that require air operations. A helibase is a location in or around an incident area at which helicopters may be parked, maintained, fueled, and equipped for incident operations. It is generally used on a more long-term basis. In very complex incidents, more than one helibase may be required.

Figure 7.6 - Map Symbol for Helibase

A helispot is a temporary location where helicopters can land and load and offload personnel, equipment, and supplies. Complex incidents may have several helispots.

Figure 7.7 - Map Symbol for Helispot

Casualty Collecting Point(s)

A Casualty Collecting Point (CCP) is set up in the event that rapid clearance of the impact zone is needed. Although not an official ICS facility, a CCP can prove useful in serving to triage, treat, and transport victims in a mass casualty incident.

Holding Point

A Holding Point is established for un-assisted walking wounded. This will allow rescuers to determine casualties that may need to be taken by stretcher from the impact zone.

Figure 7.8. Holding Point

Advanced Medical Post (AMP)

The AMP is an extension of the Emergency Department and functions as a field hospital. This treatment area is staffed by doctors, nurses, paramedics, records clerks, orderlies/porters, volunteers, and a manager. Medical actions are geared towards ensuring a victim will tolerate transport conditions and any incidental delayed hospital treatment by providing adequate resuscitation and intervention at the field level. There should be a clearly marked entrance to which victims will be brought from the field for medical triage and a clearly marked exit through which evacuation will take place.

The AMP space is subdivided into three treatment areas for Red (immediate), Yellow (delayed), and Green (walking wounded) patients and a holding area for Black (dead). Note that these treatment areas can be physically separate, depending on the nature of the incident, the size of the victim pool, and available treatment space.

The AMP should be located as close to the impact zone as is safely possible. There is wide latitude in selecting the site of the AMP—from any available open space, to tents, to mobile trailer space, etc. Nearby buildings can also be commandeered. The time of day and type of mass casualty incident, weather conditions, topography, and available resources will all influence the decision regarding the location of the AMP.

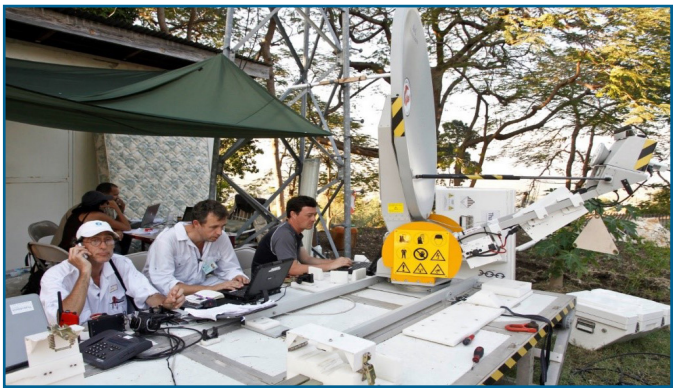
Figures 7.9 and 7.10 - Advanced Medical Post

Reserved Area

Most disasters will attract the press and, in some cases, politicians. In the interest of security, privacy for the victims, and a free working area, a Reserved Area is established.

- The Reserved Area is located outside of the restricted area.
- Information officers, who relay communiqués from the Incident Commander, staff it.
- There must be communication capability between this post and the Incident Command Post at all times.

Figure 7.11 - Reserved Area



Activity: Locate the ICS Facilities

Emergency Operations Center

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the protected site location where management decisions are made and where coordinated responses to an emergency incident are orchestrated.

An EOC is designed and equipped to provide staff support to the National Disaster Management Office, helping to guide the coordination and response to emergency incidents. It supports the Government's emergency response efforts by utilizing both government and NGO resources to strategically manage the incident, including localized mitigation, response and recovery efforts.

The EOC may be established at the regional or local level. An EOC may range in size from dual-use conference rooms to a complete stand-alone facility. The main functions of an EOC are to receive, monitor and assess disaster information, track available resources, assist in making policy decisions and proclaiming local emergencies as needed.

The following scenario will demonstrate how time and lives can be saved when people work together during an emergency. In this scenario, the Incident Command structure and the EOC work together with the same goals, but function at different levels of responsibility. The Incident Command operation is responsible for on-scene response activities, and the EOC is responsible for the entire community-wide response to the event. (Note that the EOC also can function under an ICS structure.)

If the EOC does operate under the ICS structure, it is important not to confuse personnel at the EOC with the same personnel on site. As you can see, ICS is a management system that works both for the responding agencies and for the community.

Scenario

A train derailment has caused a hazardous materials spill along a railroad track in a community of 10,000 people. Fire, law enforcement, and public works authorities have responded to the incident. An ICS Incident Command Post (ICS/ICP) is established with the Fire Battalion Chief as Incident Commander.

As the situation deteriorates, the Incident Commander orders a limited evacuation of 150 people in the immediate area, which is within the Incident Commander's statutory authority. Recognizing the threat of an explosion, the Incident Commander wants a larger area cleared as a precautionary measure and transmits this concern to the Fire Chief at the main station. The Fire Chief asks the Mayor to issue an evacuation order for over half the city. The Mayor does so under State statutes and directs that the EOC be activated.

The Incident Commander has overall command of the incident scene, with the committed resources under his command and direction. The large-scale evacuation, which is beyond the capabilities of the ICS/ICP to manage effectively, will be managed by the EOC.

The EOC manages the community-wide resources that are needed to complete the evacuation. The EOC requests resources (through mutual aid agreements) and establishes traffic control points at key evacuation junctions.

The EOC establishes shelters with the cooperation of the city's social services agency and the American Red Cross. The EOC uses the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to transmit regular public service messages containing evacuation directions. Meanwhile, the ICS Information Officer briefs reporters at the scene of the emergency on the current events surrounding the incident.

After a period of time, the Incident Commander sends a request to the EOC for personnel to relieve incident scene teams. The EOC locates the resources, directs them to staging areas established by the ICS operation, and releases them to the Incident Commander's control.

Meanwhile, the EOC requires status updates from the Incident Commander to determine how long the shelters must remain open. The EOC determines the resources needed to distribute food and provide sanitation facilities to the shelters operating under the ICS network.

Resources

Resources are personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is maintained. Resources at an incident must be managed effectively. Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date picture of resource utilization is a critical component of incident management.

To assist the Incident Commander further, resources are categorized. As mentioned in previously, single resources are individual pieces of equipment or a crew of individuals with an identified supervisor for an operation at an incident.

- A single resource is commonly used early in an incident and may be typed to reflect capability, (e.g. police motorcycle, fire truck, medical team).
- A Task Force is any combination and number of single resources assembled for a particular operational need.

As an example of a scenario involving resources:

- A car runs into a utility pole, knocking down the pole and causing injury to the driver.
- As the first to arrive on scene, the police officer requests a fire truck, a utility truck and an ambulance; these are all deemed **single resources**.

Examples of Task Forces

- Public works: 2 bulldozers, 2 dump trucks.
- Fire Suppression: 2 engines, one bulldozer.
- Multiagency: 5 police officers, 5 fire engines, 2 medical teams.

Requirements for Strike Teams

Strike teams are composed of the same kind and type of resources. Strike Teams must have a leader and lines of communication must be available between the resources and the leader.

- Usually used for major incidents.
- Operates within span of control limits (3-7)
- Report to IC, Operations Chief, and Division or Group supervisor, depending on level of ICS expansion.

Grouping single resources into Task Forces and Strike Teams offers the Incident Commander several advantages for resource management, including:

- Providing a more effective way to plan resources.
- Providing an effective way to request resources.
- Reducing radio traffic.
- Improving organizational expandability for large operations, while maintaining a good span of control.

Tracking Resource Status

All operational resources at an incident will be in one of three status conditions:

- Assigned resources that are performing active functions.
- Available resources that are ready for immediate assignment.
- Out-of-service resources, which are not ready for assignment or available status.

Note that resources may be out-of-service due to:

- Mechanical servicing required for vehicles and equipment.
- Personnel that require a rest period.
- Personnel levels below an operational threshold.
- Environmental reasons, such as weather or darkness.
- Cost reasons—the cost of using the resource is prohibitive.
- Usually, out-of-service resources will be located at a Base (if a Base has been established).

The status of resources during an incident is maintained and updated by the supervisor who controls the resource. Depending on the level of expansion of the ICS organization, changes in resource status may be made by the Incident Commander, the Operations Section Chief, or a Division or Group Supervisor. If a Staging Area is activated, the Staging Area Manager will maintain the status of resources in the Staging Area and report changes in status upward through the chain of command. All changes in status of more than a few minutes must be communicated to the appropriate organizational element.

In large-scale incidents, a Resource Unit Leader also will maintain status on all assigned resources. The Resource Unit Leader will not, on his or her own authority, change the status of any resource.

There are several status-keeping methods that can be used to record resource status. Communities may select a method based on the size or complexity of the incident, the number of personnel available to track status, or the degree of automation available at the incident.

Operational resources include all personnel and major items of equipment that are available, or potentially available, for assignment. For consistency, resources are described by:

- **Kinds of Resources:** Describe what the resource is (for example: medic, firefighter, Planning Section Chief, helicopters, ambulances, combustible gas indicators, bulldozers).

- **Types of Resources:** Describe the size, capability, and staffing qualifications of a specific kind of resource.

An up-to-date list of the resources that each agency can provide for an incident should be maintained in the agency's functional annex to its Emergency Operations Plan. To further define resources, they may be categorized into:

- **Single Resources,** which are individual pieces of equipment or a crew of individuals, with an identified work supervisor, that can be used in an operational application.
- **Task Forces,** which are combinations of single resources, organized within the limits of span of control. Task Forces may be a mix of different kinds of resources but, together, they must serve a specific function.
- **Strike Teams,** which are resources of the same kind and type. Strike Teams must have a leader and the ability to communicate with

Grouping single resources into Task Forces and Strike Teams:

- Promotes effective resource planning.
- Provides an effective way to request resources.
- Reduces radio traffic.
- Improves organizational expandability while maintaining an effective span of control.

Authority to Order Resources

Approving Orders: The Incident Commander approves all resource orders.

Placing Orders: The Incident Commander, Logistics Section Chief, and Supply Unit Leader are authorized to place orders.

In smaller incidents, where only one jurisdiction or agency is primarily involved, the resource order is typically:

- Prepared at the incident.
- Approved by the Incident Commander.
- Transmitted from the incident to the jurisdiction or agency ordering point.

The following check-in information is used to track and assign resources and financial purposes:

- Date and time of check-in
- Name of the resource
- Home unit or agency
- Departure point, date, and time
- Order request number
- Crew Leader name and number of personnel
- Other qualifications
- Travel method
- Incident assignment

Mobilization

Agencies and resources should only mobilize to an incident when requested or when dispatched by an appropriate authority. Make sure that you receive a complete deployment briefing.

- Descriptive location and response area.
- Incident check-in location.
- Specific assignment (e.g., position, team designation, etc.)
- Reporting time.
- Communications instructions (e.g., incident frequencies).
- Special support requirements (e.g., facilities, equipment transportation and off-loading, etc.).
- Travel arrangements (if needed).

Effective accountability during incident operations is essential. Individuals must follow their agencies' protocols and guidelines. The following principles must be followed:

Check-In

All responders must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander. At any incident:

- The situation must be assessed and the response planned.
- Managing resources safely and effectively is the most important consideration.

The check-in process helps to:

- Ensure personnel accountability.
- Track resources.
- Prepare personnel for assignments and reassignments.
- Locate personnel in case of an emergency.
- Establish personnel time records and payroll documentation.
- Plan for releasing personnel.
- Organize the demobilization process.

Check in **only once** at an authorized location:

- At the Incident Command Post.
- At the Base or Camp(s).
- At the Staging Areas.
- At the Helibase.
- With the Division/Group Supervisor.

- Check-in information is usually recorded.

If you are a supervisor, you must:

- Maintain a daily Unit Log, indicating the names of personnel assigned and a listing of the major activities that occurred during the operational periods to which you were assigned.
- Provide briefings to your subordinates, adjacent forces, and replacement personnel.

Responders must be responsible for their actions and:

- Adhere to the chain of command and unity of command.
- Take direction from a single supervisor.
- Communicate potential hazards and changing conditions using clear text and plain English.
- Act professionally and avoid/report prohibited activities such as:
  - Sexual harassment or discrimination.
  - Use of illegal drugs or alcohol.

References

This Manual is made available to all participants of the PAHO/WHO course on Concepts of the Incident Command System. It supports and guides participants in their course work.

The ICS manuals produced by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can be used to further prepare individuals for this course. They provide a more in-depth look at the Incident Command System.

The following manuals were used to supplement the content of this workbook.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency Management Institute. Independent Study. IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100 (2018). Online at: https://bit.ly/37tviGd.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency Management Institute. Independent Study. IS-200.C: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response (2019). Online at: https://bit.ly/2V2HI5c.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency Management Institute. National Incident Management System (NIMS) 2017: Learning Materials. Online at: https://bit.ly/2vBXlpS.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency Management Institute. Incident Command System Resource Center. Online at: https://bit.ly/38x95sl.

United Kingdom. Fire Services Manual, Volume 2, Fire Service Operations: Incident Command, 3rd Edition, 2008. Online at: https://bit.ly/2STi1Bs.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool for coordinating incidents or events that may exceed the daily capacity to respond. Most Caribbean countries have adopted the ICS as their standard for emergency response and operational deployment. It is critical to provide training for all first responders (i.e., law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical services personnel) who may be called upon to function in an ICS environment. The need for training extends to NGOs as well.

PAHO

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