# INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

SILVER LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT
September 2009

**Table of Contents**

# INTRODUCTION

The ICS Operational System Description Manual describes the Incident Command System including elements that can be used when functioning at a disaster involving multiple governmental agencies.

## History Of The ICS

In the early 1970's, a series of major wildland fires in Southern California prompted municipal, county, state, and federal fire authorities to form an organization known as Fire fighting Resources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies (FIRESCOPE) Organizational difficulties involving multi-agency responses were identified by FIRESCOPE. Other difficulties included ineffective communications, lack of accountability, and lack of a well-defined command structure. Their efforts to address these difficulties resulted in development of the original Incident Command System for effective incident management. Although originally developed for wildland settings, the system ultimately evolved into an "all-risk" system, appropriate for all types of fire and non-fire emergencies.

Due to the need for, and an increased interest in, a model emergency incident management system, the National Curriculum Advisory Committee on the Incident Command Systems/Emergency Operations Management Systems recommended the adoption of ICS as an all-risk/all-agency system. The Incident Command System has been adopted by the National Fire Academy as the model system.

## Laws and Standards

The Silver Lake Fire Department must have a management system to handle the chaos at any incident. Additionally, several laws and standards require a system to manage emergencies. These are explained briefly below. For further information, or copies, contact the appropriate federal agency (Environmental Protection Agency for SARA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for its 1500 and 1561 standards, Presidential directive 5 and the National Response Framework for it’s National Incident Management requirements.

## SARA

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA) requires organizations handling hazardous materials incidents to operate with an incident command system (ICS).

## OSHA

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rules and regulations state, 'The ICS shall be established by those employers for the incidents that will be under their control and shall be interfaced with the other organizations or agencies who may respond to such an incident." Non-OSHA states are required under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules to use an ICS at hazardous materials incidents.

## Petris Act

Senate Bill No. 1841 CHAPTER 1069

An act to add Article 9.5 (commencing with Section 8607) to Chapter 7 of Title 2 of the Government Code, and to amend Section 13025.5 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to disaster preparedness. (See full version on Appendix E)

## Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)

The tragic 1991 East Bay fire prompted a new law requiring major changes to the way California responds to disasters. The resulting Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) regulations were developed to help ensure that the people and agencies responding to disasters have an organized and standard approach to the situation. The SEMS regulations apply to local governments, special districts, and all state agencies. Organizations called upon to supply resources such as fire fighting resources, shelter, transportation, medical and mental health assistance, or water, must abide by the regulations. To be eligible for reimbursement of personnel costs related to disaster response, local governments and special districts must follow the regulation.

## Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5

To prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies, the United States Government shall establish a single, comprehensive approach to domestic incident management. The objective of the United States Government is to ensure that all levels of government across the Nation have the capability to work efficiently and effectively together, using a national approach to domestic incident management.

Directed Secretary, DHS to develop and administer:

- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
    - ♦ Core set of concepts, principles and terminology for incident command and multi-agency coordination
- National Response Framework (NRF)
    - ♦ All-discipline, all-hazards plan

## National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- A system that provides a consistent nationwide approach for incident management
- Requires Federal, State, tribal, and local governments to work together before, during, and after incidents
- Involves preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from domestic incidents
- All causes, sizes, and complexities of incidents

There are six NIMS components

- Command and Management
- Preparedness

- Resource Management
- Communications and Information Management
- Supporting Technologies
- Ongoing Management and Maintenance

To comply with NIMS

- All Federal department and agencies required to adopt
- DHS to publish Federal, state, local, tribal compliance criteria by October 2004
- State and local organizations must adopt NIMS to receive Federal preparedness assistance (grants, contracts, etc.) by FY-2005
- Adopting the basic tenets of the Incident Command System constitutes initial compliance
- Other components (e.g. data and communications systems interoperability) require additional NIMS development
- DHS to publish additional standards, guidelines, and compliance protocols

# Incident Command

## SECTION 1. ICS FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

The purpose of the ICS is to provide for a systematic development of a complete, functional Command organization designed to allow for single or multi-agency use which increases the effectiveness of Command and firefighter safety. This system combines command strategy with organizational procedures.

The key elements of the system are:

- The systematic development of a complete, functional organization with the major functions being Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

- Designed to allow for multi-agency adoption in federal, state, and local fire agencies. Therefore, organizational terminology used in the ICS is designed to be acceptable to all levels of government.

- Designed to be the basic, everyday operating system for all incidents within each agency. Therefore, the transition to large and/or multi-agency operations requires a minimum of adjustment for any of the agencies involved.

- The organization builds from the ground up, with the management of all major functions initially being the responsibility of one or just a few persons. Functional units are designed to handle the most important incident activities. As the incident grows in size and/or complexity, functional unit management is assigned to additional individuals in order to maintain a reasonable span of control and efficiency.

- Designed on the premise that the jurisdictional authority of the involved agencies will not be compromised. Each agency having legal responsibility within its jurisdiction is assumed to have full Command authority within its jurisdiction at all times. Assisting agencies will normally function under the direction of the Incident Commander appointed by the jurisdiction within which the incident occurs.

- Multi-jurisdictional incidents will normally be managed under a Unified Command management structure involving a single incident Command Post and a single Incident Action Plan (applicable to all agencies involved in the incident).

- The system is intended to be staffed and operated by qualified personnel from any agency, and a typical incident could involve the use of personnel from a variety of agencies, working in many different parts of the organization.

- The system expands and contracts organizationally based upon the needs of the incident. Span-of-control recommendations are followed closely; therefore, the organizational structure is never larger than required.

Although the focus of this document is structural fire - the document recognizes the importance to the fire service of coordinating incident response with responders of other disciplines, such as medical, law enforcement, and public works. An effective incident management system must provide an integrated multi-discipline approach. The ICS model, while capitalizing on the strengths of fire ground Command, provides an overall structure that allows the successful integration of multiple disciplines, allowing application to the "all risk" nature of emergency incidents.

Other response disciplines (law enforcement, public works) are encouraged to address their specific tactical needs within the Command/Operations Sections in the detail given to fire ground Command, while retaining the overall ICS structure. On multi-discipline incidents, experience has proven the critical necessity of integrating response agencies into one operational organization managed and supported by one structure. For this reason, the ICS supports an integrated, multi-discipline organization over separate incident management systems for each organization.

The FIRESCOPE Program believes that any incident management system should be procedure - driven for the following reasons:

- Written procedures reflect Department policy on incident management.
- Procedures provide a standardized approach to managing any incident.
- Procedures provide predictable approaches to incident management.
- Procedures should be applied routinely.
- Procedures provide a training tool for firefighters' reference.
- Procedures provide a baseline for critiques and review of incidents.
- Procedures make the Incident Commander's operations more effective.

This model reflects a procedural approach to the overall organization structure of the ICS.

## OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

The design requirements for the ICS are the following:

1. Can provide for the following kinds of operations:
   a. single jurisdiction/single agency involvement
   b. single jurisdiction with multi-agency involvement
   c. multi-jurisdiction/multi-agency involvement
2. Organizational structure can be adapted to any emergency or incident to which fire protection agencies would be expected to respond.
3. Can be applicable and acceptable to users throughout the country.
4. Should be readily adaptable to new technology.

5. Must be able to expand in a logical manner from an initial attack situation.
6. Must have basic common elements in organization, terminology, and procedures. This allows for the maximum application and use of already developed qualifications and standards, and ensures continuation of a total mobility concept.
7. Implementation should cause the least possible disruption to existing systems.
8. Must be effective in fulfilling all of the above requirements and yet be simple enough to ensure low operational maintenance costs.

## COMPONENTS OF THE ICS

The ICS has a number of components. These components working together interactively provide the basis for an effective ICS concept of operation:

1. Common terminology
2. Modular organization
3. Integrated communications
4. Unified command structure
5. Consolidated action plans
6. Manageable span of control
7. Designated incident facilities
8. Comprehensive resource management

## ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS

The ICS has five major functional areas:

1. Command
2. Operations
3. Planning
4. Logistics
5. Finance

# SECTION 2. COMMAND PROCEDURES

The Silver Lake Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergency incidents. The purpose of this manual is to identify standard operating procedures that can be employed in establishing Command. The system provides for the effective management of personnel and resources providing for the safety and welfare of personnel. It also establishes procedures for the implementation of all components of the Incident Command System for all emergencies.

Command Procedures are designed to:

- Place the responsibility of Command on a specific individual through a standard identification system, depending on the arrival sequence of members, companies, and chief officers.
- Ensure that a strong, direct, and visible Command will be established from the onset of the incident.
- Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander and to other individuals operating within the Incident Command System.
- Provide a system to process information to support incident management, planning, and decision making.
- Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving officers.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMAND

The Incident Commander is responsible for the completion of the tactical priorities. The Tactical Priorities are, but not limited to:

- Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured
- Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety
- Conserve property
- Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel. **This priority is ongoing throughout the incident.**

The Incident Command System is used to facilitate the completion of the tactical priorities. The INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC) is the person who drives the Incident Command System towards that end. The Incident Commander is responsible for building a Command structure that matches the organizational needs of the incident to achieve the completion of the tactical priorities for the incident. The Functions of Command define standard activities that are performed by the Incident Commander to achieve the Tactical Priorities.

## FUNCTIONS OF COMMAND

The Functions of Command Include:

- Assume and announce Command and establish an effective operating position (Command Post)
- Rapidly evaluate the situation (size up)
- Initiate, maintain, and control the communications process
- Identify the overall strategy, develop an incident action plan, and assign companies and personnel consistent with plans and standard operating procedures
- Develop an effective Incident Command Organization
- Provide tactical objectives
- Review, evaluate, and revise (as needed) the incident action plan
- Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command

The Incident Commander is responsible for all of these functions. As Command is transferred, so is the responsibility for these functions. The first five (5) functions must be addressed immediately from the initial assumption of Command.

## ESTABLISHING COMMAND

The first Fire Department member or unit to arrive at the scene shall assume Command of the incident. The initial Incident Commander shall remain in Command until Command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.

- The first unit or member on the scene must initiate whatever parts of the Incident Command System are needed to effectively manage the incident scene.
- A single company incident (trash fires, single patient EMS incidents, etc.) may only require that Company or unit acknowledge their arrival on the scene.

The first arriving Fire Department unit activates the Command process by giving an initial radio report.

The **Radio Report** should include:

- Unit designation of the unit arriving on the scene
- A brief description of the incident situation, (i.e.. building size, occupancy, HazMat release, multi-vehicle accident, etc.)
- Obvious conditions (working fire, HazMat spill, multiple patients, etc.)
- Brief description of action taken
- Declaration of Strategy
- Any obvious safety concerns
- Assumption, identification, and location of Command
- Request or release resources as required

Example:

**For an offensive structure fire:**

"Engine Eleven is on the scene of a large two story school with a working fire on the second floor. Engine Eleven is laying a supply line and going in with a hand line to the second floor for search and rescue. This is an offensive fire attack. Engine Eleven will be 7th Street Command."

**For a defensive structure fire:**

"Engine One is on the scene of a medium size warehouse fully involved with exposures to the east. Engine One is laying a supply line and attacking the fire with a master stream and hand line to the exposure for search & rescue and fire attack. This is a defensive fire. Engine One will be Buckeye Command."

**For an EMS incident:**

"Truck 11 is on the scene with a multi-vehicle accident. Special call two more ambulances and a Rescue Captain. Truck 11 will be Parkway Command."

**For a single-Company Incident:**

"Engine 6 is on the scene of a dumpster fire with no exposures. Engine 6 can handle."

The radio designation "Command" will be used along with the geographical location of the incident (i.e., "7th Street Command", "Metro Center Command"). This designation will not change throughout the duration of the incident. The designation of "Command" will remain with the officer currently in Command of the incident throughout the event.

## COMMAND OPTIONS

The responsibility of the first arriving unit or member to assume Command of the incident presents several options, depending on the situation. If a Chief Officer, member, or unit without tactical capabilities (i.e., staff vehicle, no equipment, etc.) initiates Command, the establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents the initial Incident Commander will be a Company Officer. The following Command options define the Company Officer's direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of Command that may be utilized.

## NOTHING SHOWING MODE (INVESTIGATIVE MODE)

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

## FAST ATTACK MODE

Most situations require immediate action to stabilize and requires the Company Officer's assistance and direct involvement in the attack. In these situations the

Company Officer goes with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision. Examples of these situations include:

- Offensive fire attacks (especially in marginal situations)
- Critical life safety situations (i.e. rescue) which must be achieved in a compressed time
- Any incident where the safety and welfare of firefighters is a major concern
- Obvious working incidents that require further investigation by the Company Officer

Where fast intervention is critical, utilization of the portable radio will permit the Company Officer's involvement in the attack without neglecting Command responsibilities. The Fast Attack mode should not last more than a few minutes and will end with one of the following:

1. The situation is stabilized.
2. The situation is not stabilized and the Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior and establish a Command Post. At some time the Company Officer must decide whether or not to withdraw the remainder of the crew, based on the crew's capabilities and experience, safety issues, and the ability to communicate with the crew. No crew should remain in a hazardous area without radio communications capabilities.
3. Command is transferred to another Higher Ranking Officer.

## COMMAND MODE

Certain incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion, require immediate strong, direct, overall Command. In such cases, the Company Officer will initially assume an exterior, safe, and effective Command position and maintain that position until relieved by a Higher Ranking Officer. A tactical worksheet shall (ICS 201) be initiated and utilized to assist in managing this type of incident (See Appendix G).

If the Company Officer selects the Command mode, the following options are available regarding the assignment of the remaining crew members:

1. The officer may "move up" within the company and place the company into action with two or more members. One of the crew members will serve as the acting Company Officer. The collective and individual capabilities and experience of the crew will regulate this action.
2. The officer may assign the crew members to work under the supervision of another Company Officer. In such cases, the Officer assuming Command must communicate with the Officer of the other company and indicate the assignment of those personnel.
3. The officer may elect to assign the crew members to perform staff functions to assist Command.

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

## PASSING COMMAND

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

"Passing Command" to a unit that is not on the scene creates a gap in the Command process and compromises incident management. To prevent this "gap", COMMAND SHALL NOT BE PASSED TO AN OFFICER WHO IS NOT ON THE SCENE. It is preferable to have the initial arriving Company Officer continue to operate in the fast attack mode until Command can be passed to an on-scene unit.

When a Chief Officer arrives at the scene at the same time as the initial arriving company, the Chief Officer should assume Command of the incident.

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

## TRANSFER OF COMMAND

Command is transferred to improve the quality of the Command organization. The following guidelines outline the transfer of Command process. The transfer of Command through various ranking officers must be predetermined by the local departments. Below is an example.

1. The first arriving fire department member on the scene will automatically assume Command. This will normally be a Company Officer, but could be any fire department member up to and including the Fire Chief.
2. The first arriving Company Officer will assume Command after the transfer of Command procedures have been completed (assuming an equal or higher ranking officer has not already assumed Command).
3. The first arriving Chief Officer should assume Command of the incident following transfer of Command procedures.
4. The second arriving Chief Officer should report to the Command Post for assignment.

5. Later arriving, higher-ranking Chief Officers shall assume Command.
6. Assumption of Command is discretionary for the Deputy Chief and the Chief of Department.

Within the chain of Command, the actual transfer of Command will be regulated by the following procedure:

1. The Officer assuming Command will communicate with the person being relieved by radio or face-to-face. Face-to-face is the preferred method to transfer Command.
2. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming Command indicating at least the following:

    a. Incident conditions (fire location and extent, HazMat spill, number of patients, etc.)
    b. Incident action plan
    c. Progress towards completion of the tactical objectives
    d. Safety considerations
    e. Deployment and assignment of operating companies and personnel
    f. Appraisal of need for additional resources

3. When not in Fast Attack: The person being relieved of Command should review the tactical worksheet with the Officer assuming Command. This sheet provides the most effective framework for Command transfer as it outlines the location and status of personnel and resources in a standard form that should be well known to all members.

The person being relieved of Command will be assigned to best advantage by the Officer assuming Command.

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The response and arrival of additional ranking officers on the incident scene strengthens the overall Command function. As the incident escalates, the Incident Commander should use these Officers as needed.

A Fire Department's communications procedures should include communications necessary to gather and analyze information to plan, issue orders, and supervise operations. For example:

- Assignment completed
- Additional resources required
- Unable to complete
- Special information

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

The Incident Commander has the overall responsibility for managing an incident. Simply stated the Incident Commander has complete authority and responsibility for the Incident.[1] If a higher ranking officer wants to affect a change in the management of an incident, they must first be on the scene of the incident, and then utilize the transfer-of-Command procedure.

[1] Anyone can effect a change in incident management in extreme situations relating to safety by notifying Command and initiating corrective action.

# SECTION 3. COMMAND STRUCTURE

It will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander to develop an organizational structure utilizing standard operating procedures as soon as possible after arrival and implementation of initial tactical control measures. The size and complexity of the organizational structure, obviously, will be determined by the scope of the emergency.

## INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM OPERATION

The ICS should be considered the basic incident management system to be used on any size or kind of incident. The only change in using the ICS on a very large incident rather than a small incident is the method of growth of the basic emergency management organization to meet the increased needs. Thus, the full establishment of the ICS should be viewed as an extension of the existing incident organization. The determination to expand the organization will be that of Command and would be done when a determination is made that the initial attack or reinforced attack will be insufficient. That determination would be made by the Incident Commander at the scene.

### ICS Organizational Development

The following examples are guides in using the basic Incident Command System Organization for various size incidents.

- Initial Response - 1-5 Increments/1st Alarm
- Reinforced Response – Additional Units/Greater Alarm/Mutual Aid

### Initial Response

The first arriving unit or officer will assume Command until arrival of a higher ranking officer.

Upon arrival of a higher ranking officer, they will be briefed by the on-scene Incident Commander. The higher ranking officer will then assume Command. This transfer of Command is to be announced. The officer being relieved of Command responsibilities will be reassigned by the new Incident Commander.

### Reinforced Response

A reinforced response will be initiated when the on-scene Incident Commander determines that the initial response resources will be insufficient to deal with the size or complexity of the incident.

## COMMAND ORGANIZATION

The Command organization must develop at a pace which stays ahead of the tactical deployment of personnel and resources. In order for the Incident Commander to

manage the incident, they must first be able to direct, control, and track the position and function of all operating companies. Building a Command organization is the best support mechanism the Incident Commander can utilize to achieve the harmonious balance between managing personnel and incident needs. Simply put, this means:

- Large scale and complex incidents = Large Command organization
- Small scale and "simple" incidents = Small Command organization
- The Incident Commander should have more people working **than Commanding**
- The basic configuration of Command includes three levels:
  1. Strategic level - Overall direction of the incident
  2. Tactical level - Assigns operational objectives
  3. Task level- Specific tasks assigned to Companies

The Strategic level involves the overall Command of the incident. The Incident Commander is responsible for the strategic level of the Command structure. The action plan should cover all strategic responsibilities, all tactical objectives, and all support activities needed during the entire operational period. The Action Plan defines where and when resources will be assigned to the incident to control the situation. This plan is the basis for developing a Command organization, assigning all resources, and establishing tactical objectives. The strategic level responsibilities include:

**Offensive or Defensive**

These should be well defined in SOPs

- Determining the appropriate strategy
- Establish overall incident objectives
- Setting priorities
- Develop an incident action plan
- Obtaining and assigning resources
- Predicting outcomes and planning
- Assigning specific objectives to tactical level units

The Tactical level directs operational activities towards specific objectives. Tactical level officers include Branch Directors, Division, and Group Supervisors, who are in charge of grouped resources. Tactical level officers are responsible for specific geographic areas or functions, and supervising assigned personnel. A tactical level assignment comes with the authority to make decisions and assignments, within the boundaries of the overall plan and safety conditions. The accumulated achievements of tactical objectives should accomplish the strategy as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.

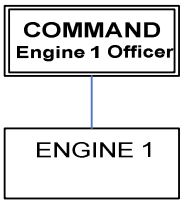
## COMMAND STRUCTURE - BASIC ORGANIZATION

The Task Level refers to those activities normally accomplished by individual companies or specific personnel. The task level is where the work is actually done.

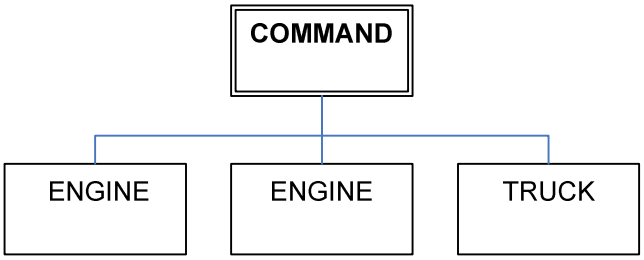
Task level activities are routinely supervised by Company Officers. The accumulated achievements of task level activities should accomplish tactical objectives.

**Examples:**

The most basic Command structure combines all three levels of the Command structure. The Company Officer on a single engine response to a dumpster fire determines the strategy and tactics, and supervises the crew doing the task.




The basic structure for a "routine" incident, involving a small number of companies, requires only two levels of the Command structure. The role of Command combines the strategic and tactical levels. Companies report directly to Command and operate at the task level.

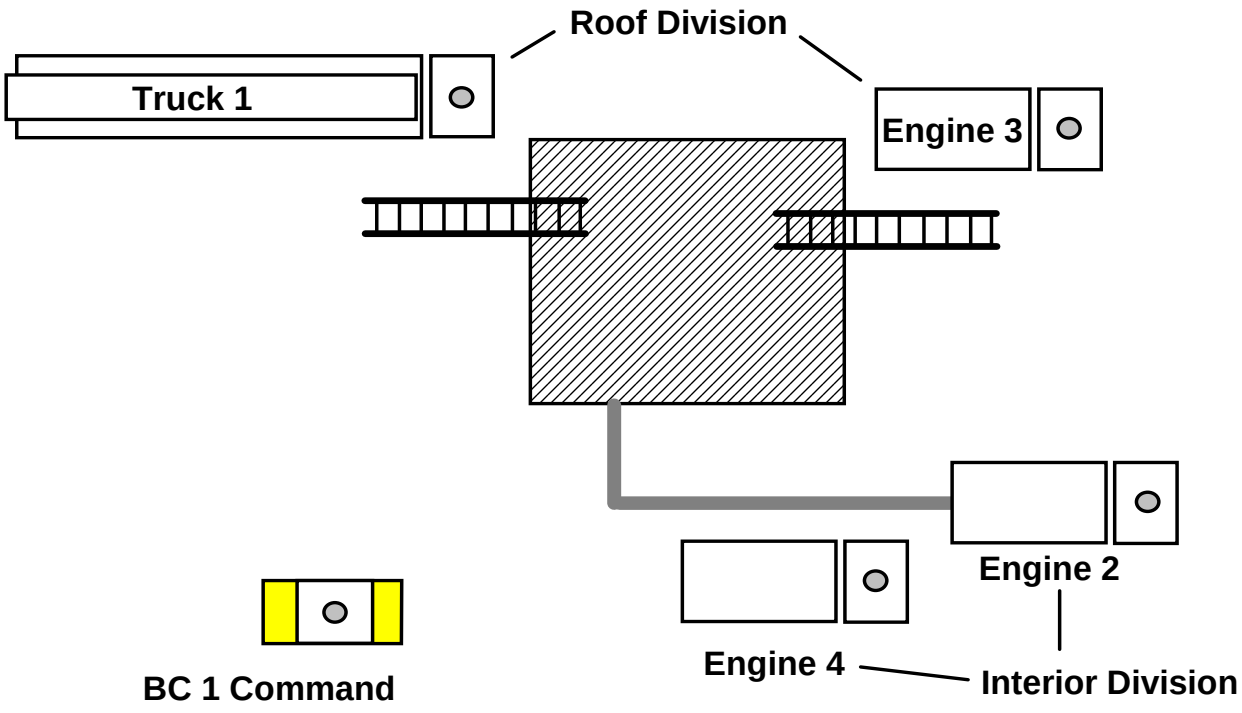


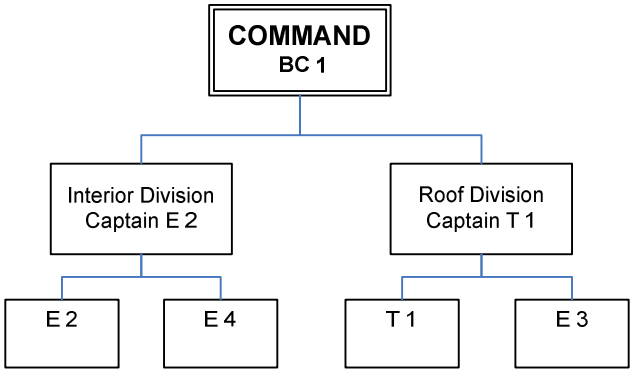

## Command Structure (Division/Group)

The terms Divisions or Groups are tactical level management units that group companies. Divisions represent geographic operations, and groups represent functional operations. The following examples illustrate the use of these terms.

## Tactical Level Officers (Division/Group)

As an incident escalates the Incident Commander should group companies to work in Divisions/Groups. A Division is the organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. In order to effectively use the Division terminology, a department must have a designated method of dividing an incident scene.



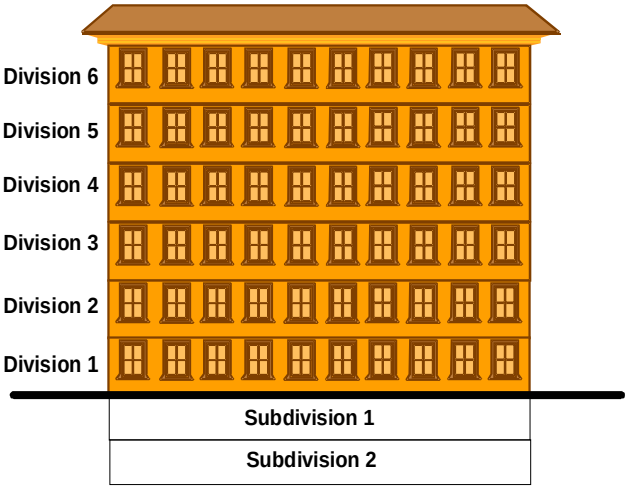



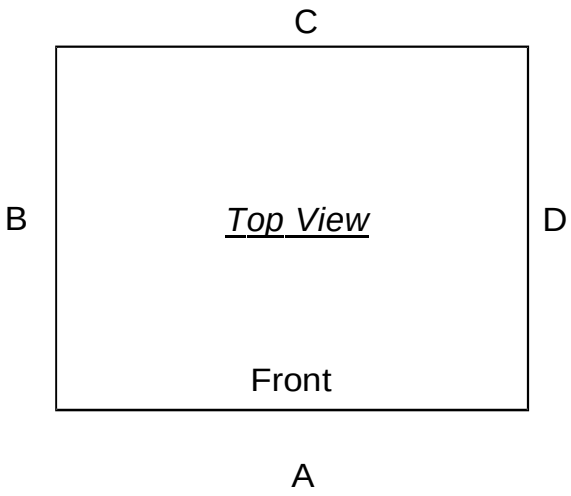

## DIVISION DESIGNATION

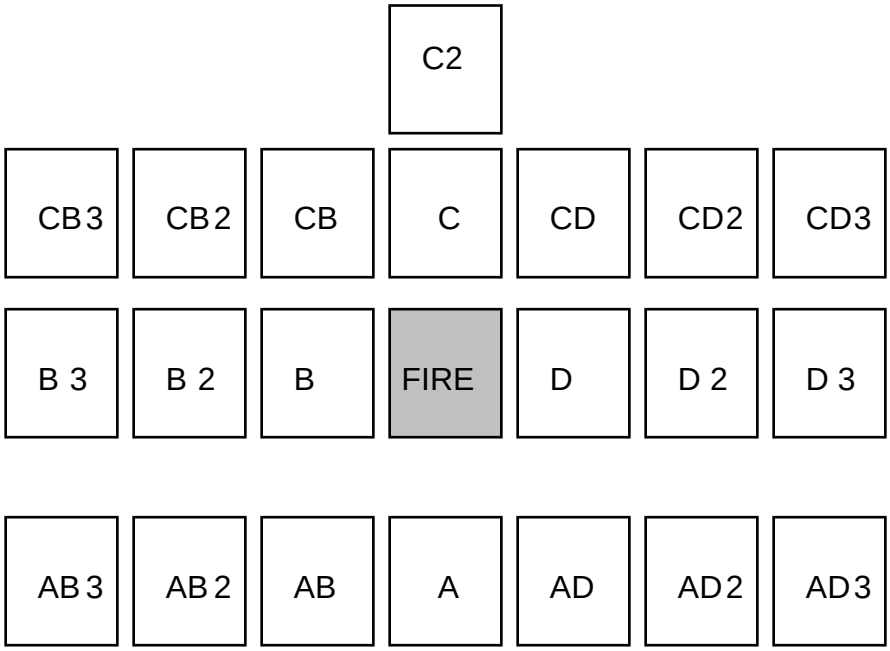
### Tactical Assignments for a Multi-Story Incident

In multi-story occupancies, divisions will usually be indicated by floor number (Division 6 indicates 6th floor). When operating in levels below grade such as basements, the use of subdivisions is appropriate.

Exterior designations are identified by alpha letter identifiers. Starting at the front of a building and progressing clockwise around the building as illustrated.




**Bird's eye view of multiple buildings and their ICS designations**

## Division/Group Designation

A Division is that organization level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. The Division level is organizational between Single Resources, Task Force, or the Strike Team and the Branch.

Groups are an organizational level responsible for a specified functional assignment at an incident. Examples are Salvage Group, Search and Rescue Group, HazMat Group and Medical Group.

## Command Structure - Division/Group; Basic Operational Approach

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

Complex emergency situations often exceed the capability of one officer to effectively manage the entire operation. Divisions/Groups reduce the span-of-control to more manageable smaller-sized units. Divisions/Groups allow the Incident Commander to communicate principally with these organizational levels, rather than multiple, individual Company Officers, providing an effective Command structure and incident scene organization. Generally, Division/Group responsibilities should be assigned early in the incident, typically to the first Company assigned to a geographic area or function. This early establishment of Division/Group provides an effective Incident Command organization framework on which the operation can be built and expanded.

The number of Divisions/Groups that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commander varies. Normal span-of-control is 3-7. In fast moving, complex operations, a span-of-control of no more than 5 Divisions/Groups is indicated. In slower moving less complex operations, the Incident Commander may effectively manage more Divisions/Groups.

Where the number of Divisions/Groups exceeds the span-of-control that the Incident Commander can effectively manage, the incident organization can be expanded to meet incident needs, by assigning an Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section is responsible for the Branches, Divisions/Groups. Each Branch is responsible for several Divisions/Groups and should be assigned a separate radio channel if available.

Division/Group procedures provide an array of major functions which may be selectively implemented according to the needs of a particular situation. This places responsibility for the details and execution of each particular function on a Division/Group.

When effective Divisions/Groups have been established, the Incident Commander can concentrate on overall strategy and resource assignment, allowing the Divisions/Groups to manage their assigned units. The Incident Commander determines strategy and assigns tactical objectives and resources to the Divisions/Groups. Each Division/Group Supervisor is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources at their disposal, in order to complete the tactical objectives assigned by the Incident Commander. Divisions/Groups are also responsible for communicating needs and progress to Command.

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

The safety of fire fighting personnel represents the major reason for establishing Divisions/Groups. Each Division/Group must maintain communication with assigned

companies to control both their position and function. The Division/Group must constantly monitor all hazardous situations and risks to personnel. The Division/Group must take appropriate action to ensure that companies are operating in a safe and effective manner.

The Incident Commander should begin to assign Divisions/Groups based on the following factors:

- Situations which will eventually involve a number of companies or functions, beyond the capability of Command to directly control. Command should initially assign Division/Group responsibilities to the first companies assigned to a geographic area or function until Chief Officers are available.

- When Command can no longer effectively cope with (or manage) the number of companies currently involved in the operation.

- When companies are involved in complex operations. (Large interior or geographic area, hazardous materials, technical rescues, etc.)

- When companies are operating from tactical positions which Command has little or no direct control over (i.e., out of sight).

- When the situation presents special hazards and close control is required over operating companies (i.e., unstable structural conditions, hazardous materials, heavy fire load, marginal offensive situations, etc.).

When establishing a Division/Group, the Incident Commander will assign each Division/Group:

1. Tactical objectives
2. A radio designation (Roof Division, Division A)
3. The identity of resources assigned to the Division/Group.

## DIVISION/GROUP GUIDELINES

Divisions and Groups will be regulated by the following guidelines:

- It will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to assign Divisions/Groups as required for effective emergency operations; this assignment will relate to both geographic and functional Divisions/Groups.

- Command shall advise each Division/Group of specific tactical objectives. The overall strategy and plan will and should be provided, (time permitting) so the Division/Group has some idea of what's going on and how their assignment fits into the overall plan.

- The number of companies assigned to a Division/Group will depend upon conditions within that Division/Group. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of companies operating within a Division/Group and the capability of that Division/Group to effectively direct operations. If a Division/Group cannot control the resources within the Division/Group, they should notify the Incident Commander so that Division/Group responsibilities can be split or other corrective action taken. In most cases 3-7 companies represent the maximum span-of-control for a Division/Group.

- The incident scene should be subdivided in a manner that makes sense. This should be accomplished by assigning Divisions to geographic locations (i.e., Roof Division, Division A, etc.) and assigning functional responsibilities to Groups (i.e., Ventilation Group, Salvage Group, etc.).

Division/Group Supervisors will use the Division/Group designation in radio communications (i.e.., "Command, this is Roof Division").

Divisions/Groups will be commanded by Chief Officers, Company Officers, or any other Fire Department member designated by Command.

The guideline for span-of-control with Divisions/Groups is five. This applies to Operational Division/Group. Many of the functional responsibilities (PIO., Safety, etc.) are preassigned to certain individuals and are driven by standard operating procedures. These types of functional responsibilities should operate automatically and as such should not be included in the Incident Commander's span-of-control.

Regular Transfer of Command procedures will be followed in transferring Division/Group responsibility.

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

The Division/Group Supervisor must be in a position to directly supervise and monitor operations. This will require the Division/Group Supervisor to be equipped with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment for their area of responsibility. Division/Group Supervisors assigned to operate within the hazard zone must be accompanied by a partner.

Division/Group Supervisors will be responsible for and in control of all assigned functions within their Division/Group. This requires each Division/Group Supervisor to:

- Complete objectives assigned by Command
- Account for all assigned personnel
- Ensure that operations are conducted safely
- Monitor work progress

- Redirect activities as necessary
- Coordinate actions with related activities, and adjacent Divisions/Groups
- Monitor welfare of assigned personnel
- Request additional resources as needed
- Provide Command with essential and frequent progress reports
- Re-allocate resources within the Division/Group

The primary function of Company Officers working within a Division/Group is to direct the operations of their individual crews in performing assigned tasks. Company Officers will advise their Division/Group Supervisor of work progress, preferably face-to-face. All requests for additional resources or assistance within a Division/Group must be directed to the Division/Group Supervisor. Division/Group Supervisors will communicate with "Command". The Division/Group Supervisor should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible.

Each Division/Group Supervisor will keep Command informed of conditions and progress in the Division/Group through regular progress reports. The Division/Group Supervisor must prioritize progress reports to essential information only.

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

When a company is assigned from Staging to an operating Division/Group, the company will be told to what Division/Group, and the name of the Supervisor they will be responding to. The Division/Group Supervisor will be informed of which particular companies or units have been assigned by the Incident Commander. It is then the responsibility of the Division/Group Supervisor to contact the assigned company to transmit any instructions relative to the specific action requested.

Division/Group Supervisors will monitor the condition of the crews operating in their Division/Group. Relief crews will be requested in a manner to safeguard the safety of personnel and maintain progress toward the Division/Group objectives.

Division/Group Supervisors will insure an orderly and thorough reassignment of crews to Responder Rehab. Crews must report to Responder Rehab intact to facilitate accountability.

# SECTION 4. COMMAND STRUCTURE—EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION

As a small incident escalates into a major incident, additional organizational support will be required. The Incident Commander can become quickly overwhelmed and overloaded with information management, assigning companies, filling out and updating the tactical worksheets, planning, forecasting, requesting additional resources, talking on the radio, and fulfilling all the other functions of Command. The immediate need of the Incident Commander is support. As additional ranking officers arrive on the scene, the Command organization may be expanded through the involvement of Officers and staff personnel to fill Command and General Staff Positions.

Section and Unit level positions within the Incident Command System will be activated only when the corresponding functions are required by the incident.

Until such time as a Section or Unit is activated, all functions associated with that Section or Unit will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander or the appropriate Section Chief. It is recommended that two or more units must be combined into a single unit. However, an individual may be assigned responsibility for managing more than one unit. This method of organization allows for easy expansion and demobilization of the system.

The Command structure defines the lines of authority, but it is not intended that the transfer of information within the Incident Command System be restricted to the chain of Command. An individual will receive orders from a superior, but may give information to any position in a different part of the organization within the guidelines specified in the operational procedures for each position.

The majority of positions within the Incident Command System will not be activated until the initial response is determined to be insufficient to handle the situation. When this occurs, qualified personnel are requested through normal dispatching procedures to fill the positions determined to be required for the type of incident in progress. If it is later determined that a specific position is not needed, the request can be canceled. Some agencies have elected to use a modular form of dispatching; e.g., entire units.

The transition from the initial response to a major incident organization will be evolutionary and positions will be filled as the corresponding tasks are required.

During the initial phases of the incident the Incident Commander normally carries out these four section functions.

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

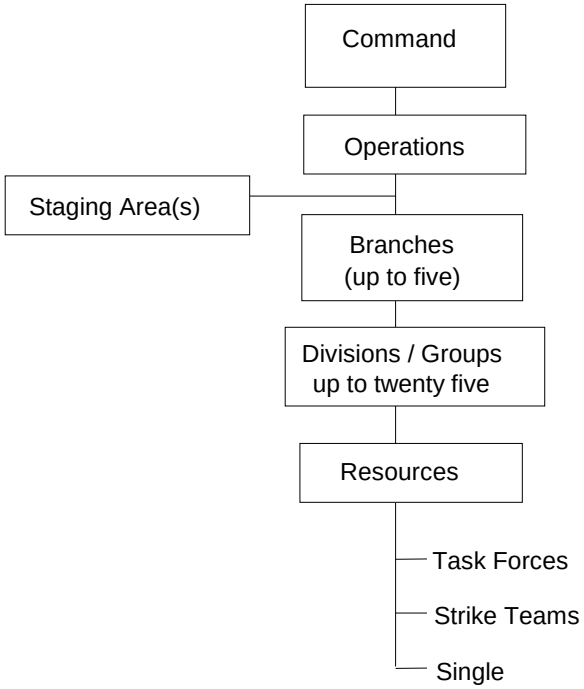
These comprise the General Staff within a fully expanded incident organizational structure.

## EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION—SECTIONS

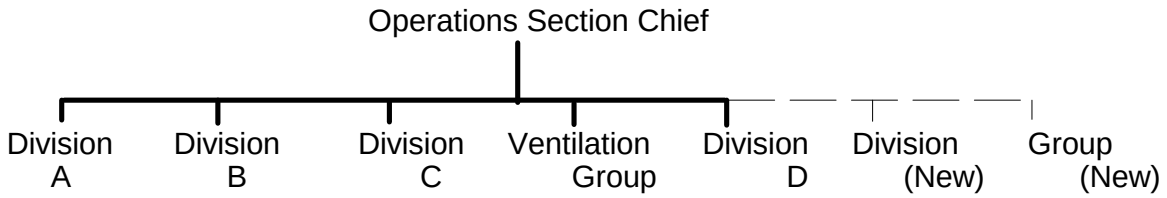
Section level positions can be implemented at any time, based on the needs of the incident. One of the first sections typically implemented is the Operations Section Chief. Other section level positions will be discussed in “Expanding the Incident Command Organization".

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

The Operations Section is most often implemented (staffed) as a span-of-control mechanism. When the number of Branches, Divisions/Groups exceeds the capability of the Incident Commander to effectively manage, the Incident Commander may staff the Operations Section to reduce their span-of-control and thus transfer direct management of all tactical activities to the Operations Section Chief. The Incident Commander is then able to focus their attention on management of the entire incident rather than concentrating on tactical activities.



# PRIMARY ORGANIZATION: DIVISIONS / GROUPS REPORTING DIRECTLY

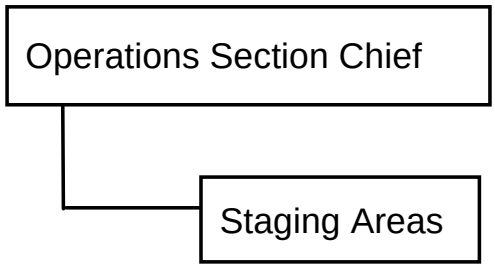



**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Manage incident tactical activities
- Coordinate activities with the Incident Commander
- Implement the Incident Action Plan
- Assign resources to tactical level areas based on tactical objectives and priorities
- Build an effective organizational structure through the use of Branches and Divisions/Groups
- Provide tactical objectives for Divisions/Groups
- Control Staging and Air Operations
- Provide for life safety
- Determine needs and request additional resources
- Consult with and inform other Sections and the Incident Command Staff as needed

**Operations Sections Chief**

The Incident Operations Section Chief is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities and should have direct involvement in the preparation of the Action Plan for the period of responsibility.




**Staging Areas**

Staging Areas are locations designated within the incident area which are used to temporarily locate resources which are available for assignment.

The incident scene can quickly become congested with emergency equipment if this equipment isn't managed effectively. For major or complex operations, the Incident

Commander should establish a central Staging Area early and place an officer in change of Staging. A radio designation of "Staging" should be utilized.

In this expanded organizational structure Staging reports to the Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section Chief may establish, move and discontinue the use of Staging Areas. All resources within the designated Staging Areas are under the direct control of the Operations Section Chief and should be immediately available. If needed, Staging will request logistical support (e.g., food, fuel, sanitation) from the Logistics Section.

## EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION—BRANCHES

### Divisions/Groups

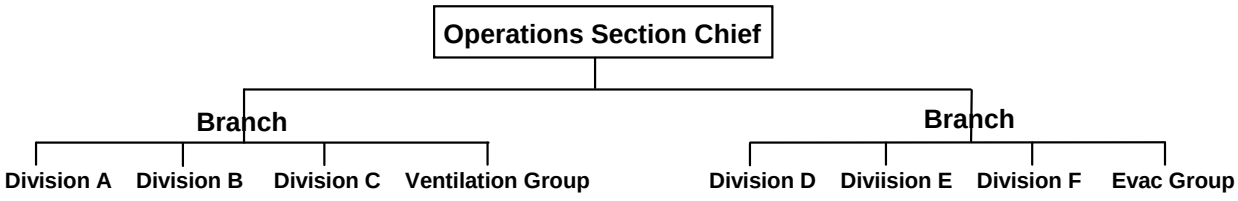
As previously discussed in this procedure, Divisions/Groups identify tactical level assignments in the Command Structure. As the span-of-control begins to be excessive, the incident becomes more complex, or has two or more distinctly different operations (i.e. Fire, Medical, Evacuation, etc.), the organization can be further sub-divided into Branches.

Branches may be established on an incident to serve several purposes. However, they are not always essential to the organization of the Operations Section.

In general, branches may be established for the following reasons:

- Span of Control
- Functional
- Multi-Jurisdictional
- When the numbers of Divisions/Groups exceed the recommended span-of-control for the Operations Section Chief. The Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief should designate a Multi-Branch structure, and allocate the Divisions/Groups within those Branches. In the following example the Operations Section Chief has one Group and four Divisions reporting with two additional Divisions and one Group being added. At this point, a two-Branch organization should be formed.

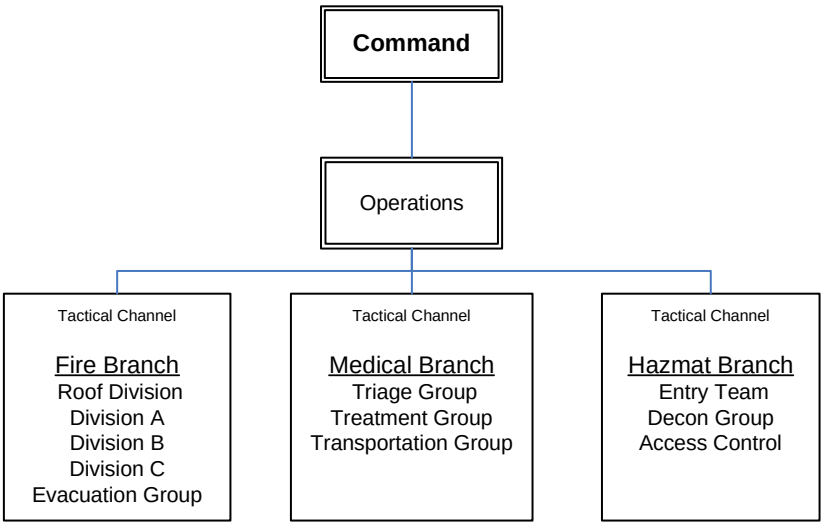
### Two Branch Organization



Branches should operate in their area of responsibility on separate radio channels and communicate to Operations on a different channel if possible. The radio designation of Branches should reflect the objective of the Branch, when designating functional branches, (i.e., HazMat Branch, Multi-Casualty Branch, etc.). Tactical Branches are designated numerically (i.e., Branch 1, Branch 11, Branch 111, etc.). When Operations implements Branch Directors, the Division/Group Supervisors should be notified of their new supervisor. This Information should include:

1. What Branch the Division/Group is now assigned to.
2. The radio channel the Branch (Division/Group) is operating on.

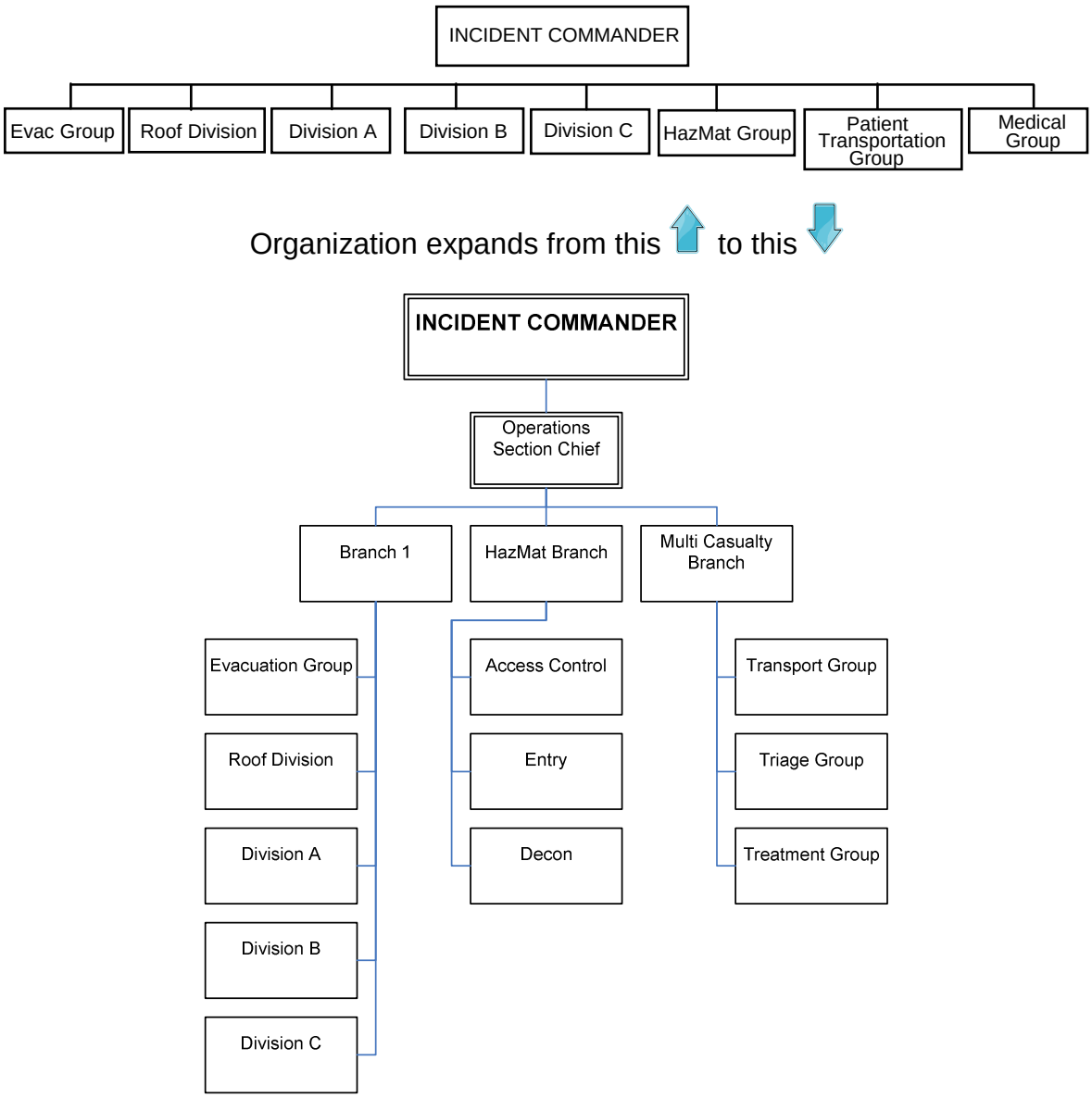
Radio Communications should then be directed from the Division/Group Supervisor to the Branches - instead of Operations. Division/Group Supervisors will relay this information to the Companies working in their tactical operating area.




Depending on the situation, Branches may be located at the Command Post or at operational locations. When located at the Command Post, Branches can communicate on a face to face basis with the Operations Section Chief and/or Incident Commander. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area, it may be more effective to have Branches in tactical locations. When Branches are sent to tactical positions they should immediately implement Command and control procedures within their Branch. In these situations Operations must assign someone to monitor a "Command Channel".

Branches are not limited to Operations. Any of the Section Chiefs may recommend the implementation of Branches within their sections with approval of the Incident Commander.

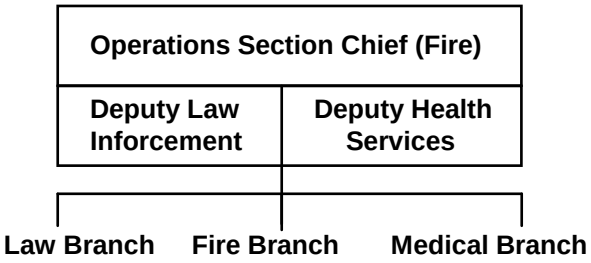
Each Branch should have their own tactical channel to manage their branch. Communications with Operations will be on the Operational channel designated by the Operations Section Chief.



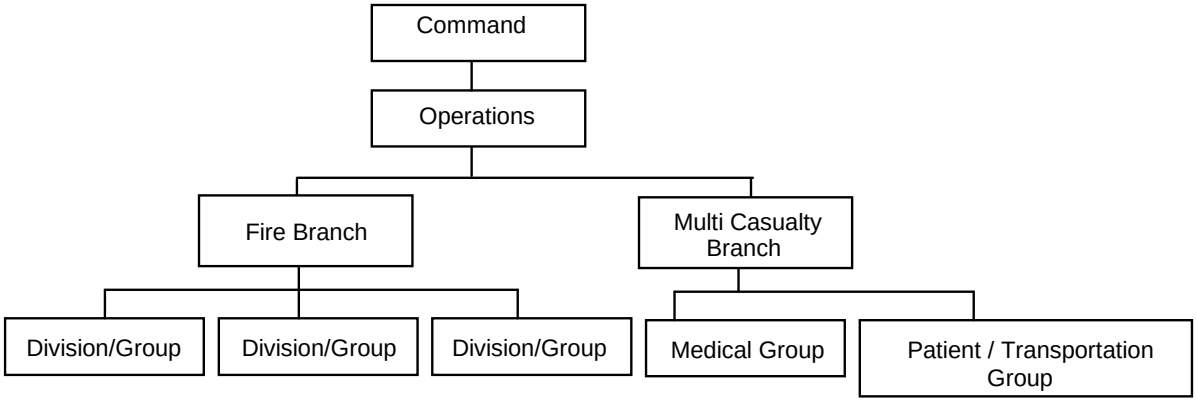

## FUNCTIONAL BRANCH STRUCTURE

When the nature of the incident calls for a functional Branch Structure, (i.e., a major aircraft crash within a jurisdiction), three departments within the jurisdiction (police, fire, and health service), each has a functional Branch operating under the direction of a single operations Section Chief. In this example the Operations Section Chief is from the fire department with deputies from police and health services departments. Other alignments could be made depending upon the jurisdiction plan and type of emergency. Note that Incident Command in this situation could be either Single or Unified Command depending upon the jurisdiction.

## Functional Branches

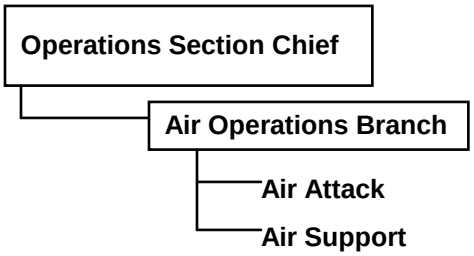



When the incident is multi-jurisdictional, resources are best managed under the agencies which have normal control over those resources.




Branches should be utilized at incidents where the span-of-control with Divisions/Groups is maximized, incidents involving two or more distinctly different major management components (i.e. a large fire with a major evacuation, a large fire with a large number of patients). The Incident Commander may elect to assign Branches to forward positions to manage and coordinate activities.

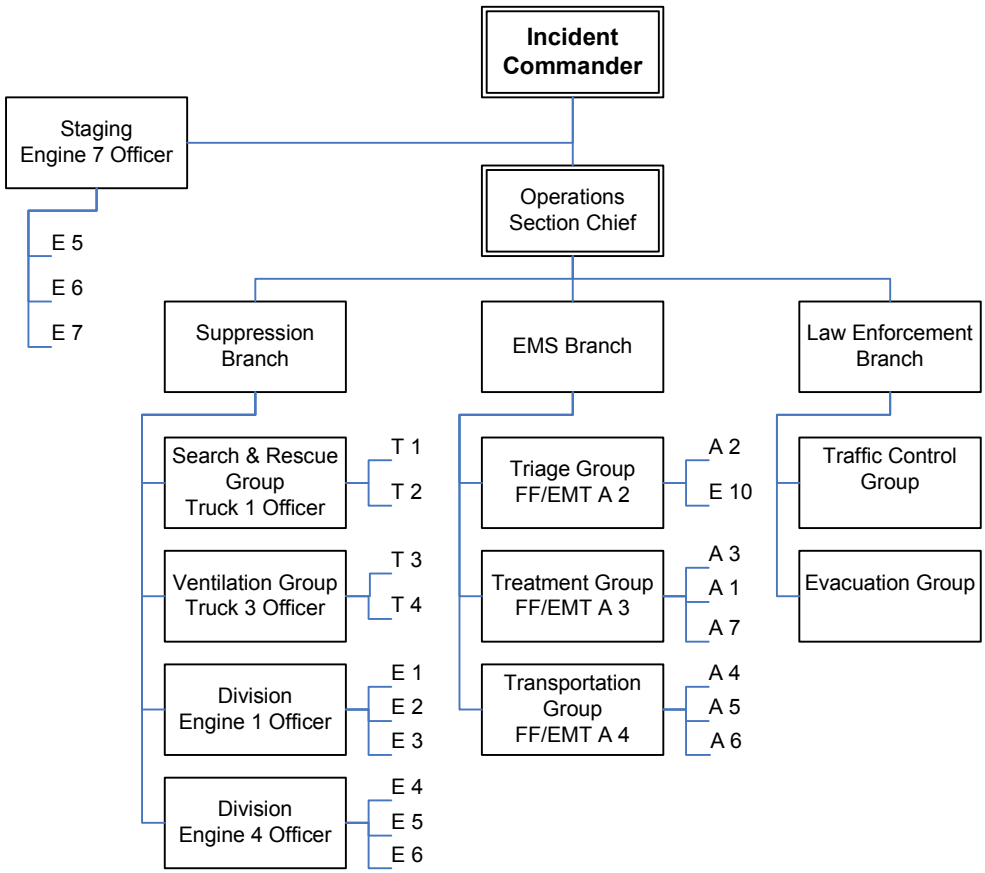
When the incident requires the use of aircraft, such as for the transportation of victims from a multi-casualty incident, high-rise roof top rescue, swift water rescue, or wild land fire, the Operations Section Chief should establish the Air Operations Branch. Its size, organization, and use will depend primarily upon the nature of the incident, and the availability of aircraft.



# EXPANDING THE INCIDENT COMMAND ORGANIZATION

As the organization expands to deal with a major incident, the Incident Commander will need additional Command Post support. The Operations Section Chief is one of the first to be implemented.

The following organizational charts are examples of how the Incident Command System can expand to fit the size and complexity of various types of incidents.




## Organizational Hierarchy

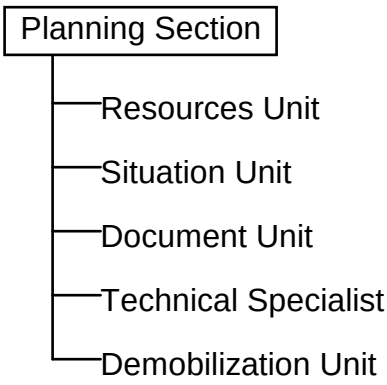
The ICS organizational structure develops in a modular fashion based upon the kind and size of an incident. The organization's staff builds from the top down with responsibility and performance placed initially with the Incident Commander. As the need exists, four separate Sections (Plans, Operations, Logistics, and Finance) can be developed, each with several Units which may be established. The specific organization structure established for any given incident will be based upon the management needs of the incident. If one individual can simultaneously manage all major functional areas, no further organization is required. If one or more of the areas requires independent management, an individual is named to be responsible for that area.

For ease of reference and understanding, personnel assigned to manage at each level of the organization will carry a distinctive organizational title.

1. **Command.** Refers to the Incident Commander.
2. **Officer.** Title that refers to a member of the Command Staff (Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer).
3. **Section Chiefs.** Title that refers to a member of the General Staff (Planning Section Chief, Operations Section Chief, Finance/Administration Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief).
4. **Directors.** Title that refers to the positions of Branch Director, which is in the Operations Section, or Logistics Section between the Divisions/Groups, and the Operations Section Chiefs (Branch Directors, Air Operations Branch Director, Service Branch Director).
5. **Supervisors.** Title that refers to the positions of Division/Group Supervisor, which is in the Operations Section and lies between the Branch Director and Strike Team/Task Force Leader.
6. **Leader.** Title that refers to a position with supervision and management responsibility of either a group of resources or a unit, such as Ground Support, Medical, Supply, etc.
7. **Manager.** Title that refers to the lowest level of supervision within the Logistics Section: Equipment Manager, Base Manager, Camp Manager. The only exception to this is the Staging Area Manager who reports directly to the Operations Section Chief.
8. **Single Resources.** Engine Company, Truck Company, with a company officer and crew.

## Planning Section

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

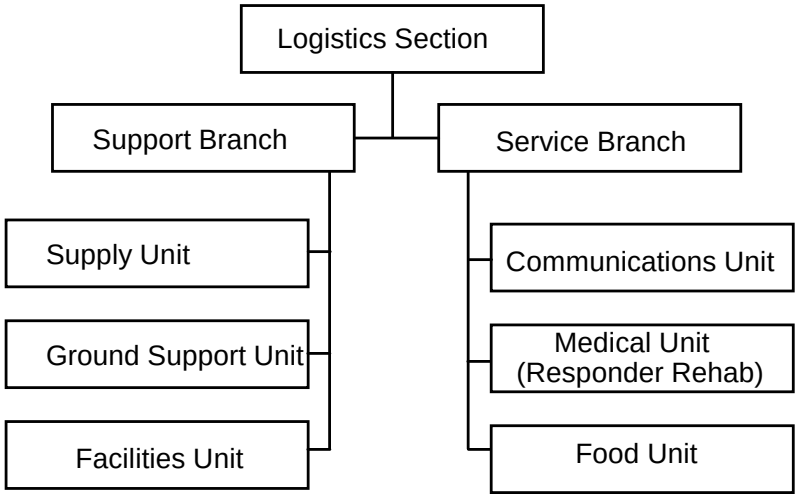



**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Evaluate current strategy and plan with the Incident Commander
- Maintain resource status and personnel accountability
- Refine and recommend any needed changes to plan with Operations input
- Evaluate incident organization and span-of-control
- Forecast possible outcome(s)
- Evaluate future resource requirements
- Utilize technical assistance as needed
- Evaluate tactical priorities, specific critical factors, and safety
- Gather, update, improve, and manage situation status with a standard systematic approach
- Coordinates with any needed outside agencies for planning needs
- Plan for incident demobilization
- Maintain incident records

## Logistics Section

The **Logistics Section** is the support mechanism for the organization. Logistics provides services and support systems to all the organizational components involved in the incident including facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance, fueling, feeding, communications, and medical services, including Responder Rehab.

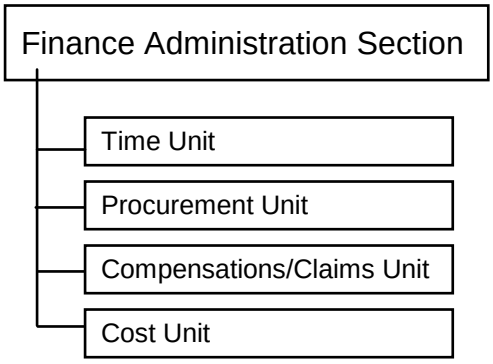


**Roles and Responsibilities**

- Provide for medical aid for incident personnel and manage Responder Rehab
- Coordinate immediate critical incident stress debriefing function
- Provide and manage any needed supplies or equipment
- Forecast and obtain future resource needs (coordinate with the Planning Section)
- Provide for communications plan and any needed communications equipment
- Provide fuel and needed repairs for equipment
- Obtain specialized equipment or expertise per Command
- Provide food and associated supplies
- Secure any needed fixed or portable facilities
- Provide any other logistical needs as requested by Command
- Supervise assigned personnel

## Finance/ Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is established on incidents when the agency(ies) who are involved have a specific need for financial services. Not all agencies will require the establishment of a separate Finance/Administration Section. In some cases where only one specific function is required; (e.g., cost analysis), that position could be established as a Technical Specialist in the Planning Section.




**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Procurement of services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the Fire Department or City as requested by Command (coordinates with Logistics
- Documenting all financial costs of the incident
- Documenting for possible cost recovery for services and/ or supplies
- Analyzing and managing legal risk for incidents (i.e., hazardous materials clean up)
- Document for compensation and claims for injury

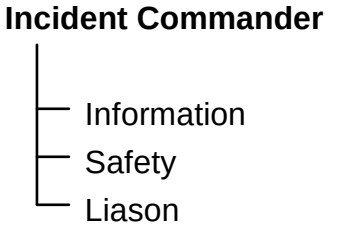
The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts.

# THE INCIDENT COMMANDER

Role and Responsibilities after activation of an Operations Section Chief

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

**Incident Command Staff**




**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Review and evaluate the plan, and initiate any needed changes
- Provide on-going review of the overall incident (THE BIG PICTURE)
- Select priorities
- Provide direction to the Command and General Staff Officer
- Review the organizational structure, initiate change or expansion to meet incident needs
- Stage Command and General Staff functions as necessary
- Establish liaison with other internal agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners and/or tenants

# COMMAND STAFF

Command staff positions are established to assume responsibility for key activities which are not a part of the line organization. Three specific staff positions are identified:

**Public Information Officer (PIO)**

The Information Officer's function is to develop accurate and complete information regarding incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed, and other matters of general interest. The Information Officer will normally be the point of contact for the media and other governmental agencies which desire information directly from the incident. In either a single or unified Command structure, only one Information Officer would be designated. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.

## Safety Officer

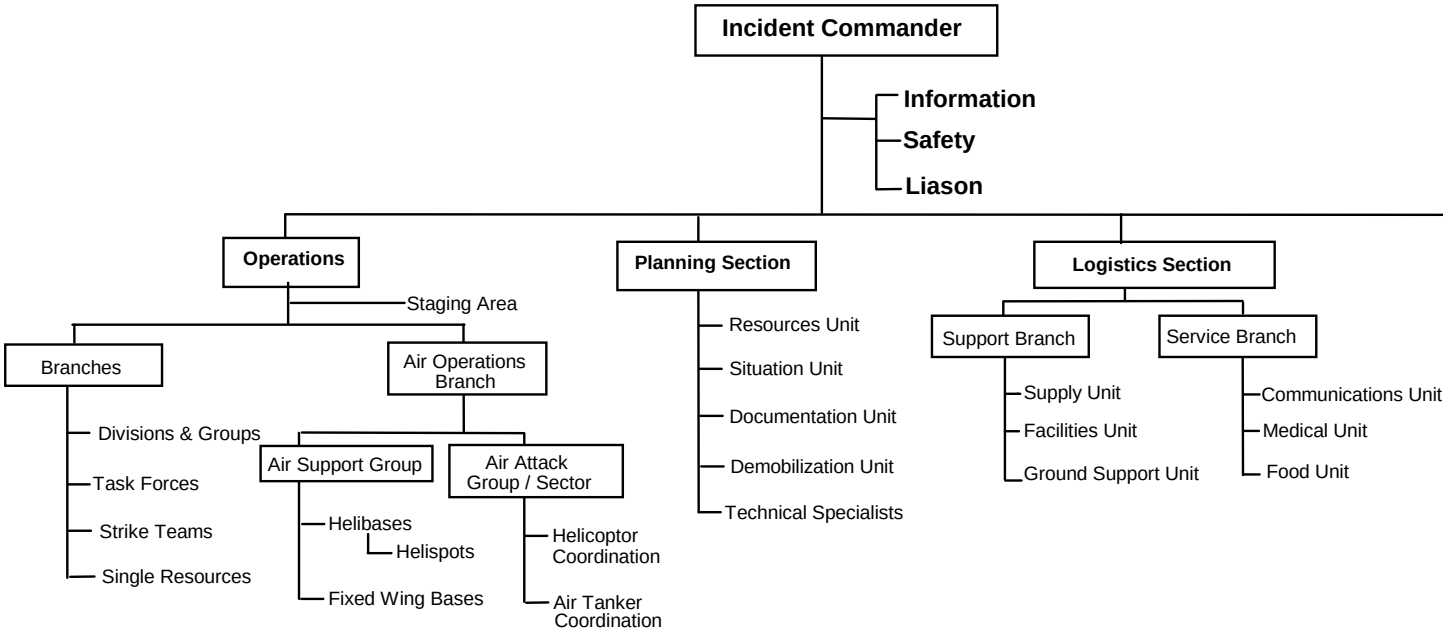
The Safety Officer's function at the incident is to assess hazardous and unsafe situations and develop measures for assuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts. In a Unified Command structure, a single Safety Officer would be designated. Assistants may be required and may be assigned from other agencies or departments making up the Unified Command including the need for Responder Rehabilitation assessment.

## Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer's function is to be a point of contact for representatives from other agencies. In a Single Command structure, the representatives from assisting agencies would coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Under a Unified Command structure, representatives from agencies not involved in the Unified Command would coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Agency representatives assigned to an incident should have authority to speak on all matters for their agency.

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

# INCIDENT MANAGEMENT



# SECTION 5. UNIFIED COMMAND

## COMMAND—SINGLE AND UNIFIED

Command is responsible for overall management of the incident. Command also includes certain staff functions. The Command function within the ICS may be conducted in two general ways:

- Single Command
- Unified Command

### Single Command - Incident Commander

Within a jurisdiction in which an incident occurs, and when there is no overlap of jurisdictional boundaries involved, a single Incident Commander will be designated by the jurisdictional agency to have overall management responsibility for the incident.

The Incident Commander will prepare incident objectives which in turn will be the foundation upon which subsequent action planning will be based. The Incident Commander will approve the final action plan, and approve all requests for ordering and releasing of primary resources. The Incident Commander may have a deputy. The deputy should have the same qualifications as the Incident Commander, and may work directly with the Incident Commander, be a relief, or perform certain specific assigned tasks.

In an incident within a single jurisdiction, where the nature of the incident is primarily a responsibility of one agency; e.g., fire, the deputy may be from the same agency. In a multi-jurisdictional incident, or one which threatens to be multi-jurisdictional, the deputy role may be filled by an individual designated by the adjacent agency. More than one deputy could be involved. Another way of organizing to meet multi-jurisdictional situations is described under Unified Command.

### Unified Command

A Unified Command structure is called for under the following conditions:

The incident is totally contained within a single jurisdiction, but more than one department or agency shares management responsibility due to the nature of the incident or the kinds of resources required; i.e., a passenger airliner crash within a national forest. Fire, medical, and law enforcement all have immediate but diverse objectives.

The incident is multi-jurisdictional in nature; i.e., a major flood.

### Single/Unified Command Differences

The primary differences between the Single and Unified Command structures are:

- In a Single Command, a single Incident Commander is solely responsible, within the confines of their authority, to establish objectives and overall management strategy associated with the incident. The Incident Commander is directly responsible for follow-through, to ensure that all functional area actions are directed toward accomplishment of the strategy. The implementation of planning required to effect operational control will be the responsibility of a single individual (Operations Section Chief) who will report directly to the Incident Commander.

- In a Unified Command structure, the individuals designated by their jurisdictions, or by departments within a single jurisdiction, must jointly determine objectives, strategy and priorities. As in a Single Command structure, the Operations Section Chief will have responsibility for implementation of the plan. The determination of which agency or department the Operations Section Chief represents must be made by mutual agreement of the Unified Command. It may be done on the basis of greatest jurisdictional involvement, number of resources involved, by existing statutory authority, or by mutual knowledge of the individual's qualifications.

# SECTION 6. APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A—GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Agency Representative.** Individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated full authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident. Agency Representatives report to the Incident Liaison Officer.

**Allocated Resources.** Resources dispatched to an incident that have not yet checked in with the Incident Communications Center.

**Ambulance.** A ground vehicle providing patient transport capability, specified equipment capability, and personnel (basic life support ambulance or advanced life support ambulance, etc.).

**Assigned Resources.** Resources checked in and assigned work tasks on an incident.

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

**Available Resources.** Resources assigned to an incident and available for an assignment.

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

**Base (SLFD).** In the SLFD operational procedures, Base is used to stage apparatus and equipment at emergencies when the "Staging Area" is located in an area other than at grade level.

**Branch.** That organizational level having functional/geographic responsibility for major segments of incident operations. The Branch level is organizational between Section and Division/Group.

**Brush Patrol.** A light, mobile vehicle, having limited pumping and water capacity for off-road operations.

**Chief.** ICS title for individuals responsible for command of the functional Sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance.

**Clear Text.** The use of plain English in radio communications transmissions. No Ten Codes or agency-specific codes are used when using Clear Text.

**Command Officer.** An Officer who is not a part of the staffing of a Single Resource.

**Command Post (CP).** That location at which primary command functions are executed; usually co-located with the Incident Base.

**Command Staff.** The Command Staff consists of the Safety Officer, Liaison

Officer, and Information Officer, who report directly to the Incident Commander.

**Command.** The act of directing, ordering, and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority.

**Communications** Unit. Functional Unit within the Service Branch of the Logistics Section. This unit is responsible for the incident communications plan, the installation and repair of communications equipment, and operation of the Incident Communications Center. Also may refer to a vehicle (trailer or mobile van) used to provide the major part of an Incident Communications Center.

**Company** Commander. The individual responsible for command of a Company. This designation is not specific to any particular fire department rank (may be a Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, or Chief Officer, if responsible for command of a single Company).

**Company.** A ground vehicle providing specified equipment capability and personnel (Engine Company, Truck Company, Rescue Company, etc.)

**Company**. Any piece of equipment having a full complement of personnel.

**Compensation/Claims Unit.** Functional Unit within the Finance Section. Responsible for financial concerns resulting from injuries or fatalities at incident.

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

**Coordination.** The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command authority (for its decision) of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives. The coordination process (which can be either intra or interagency) does not, in and of itself, involve command dispatch actions. However, personnel responsible for coordination may perform command or dispatch functions within limits as established by specific agency delegations, procedures, legal authority, etc.

**Cost Unit.** Functional Unit within the Finance Section. Responsible for tracking costs, analyzing cost data, making cost estimates, and recommending cost-saving measures.

**Crew Transport.** Any vehicle capable of transporting personnel in specified numbers.

**Crew.** A specific number of personnel assembled for an assignment such as search, ventilation, or hose line deployment and operations. The number of personnel in a crew should not exceed recommended span-of-control guides (3-7). A Crew operates under the direct supervision of a Crew Leader.

**Demobilization Unit.** Functional Unit within the Planning Section. Responsible for assuring orderly, safe,

efficient demobilization of resources committed to the incident.

**Director.** ICS title for individuals responsible for command of a Branch.

**Dispatch Center. A** facility from which resources are directly assigned to an incident.

**Dispatch.** The implementation of a command decision to move a resource or resources from one place to another.

**Division.** That organization level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. The Division level is organizational between the Single Resource, Task Force or Strike Team and the Branch.

**Documentation Unit.** Functional Unit within the Planning Section. Responsible for recording/protecting all documents relevant to incident.

**Engine Company. A** ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water and hose capacity, and personnel.

**Engine. A** ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water, and hose capacity but with less than the specified level of personnel.

**Facilities Unit.** Functional Unit within the Support Branch of the Logistics Section. Provides fixed facilities for incident. These facilities may include the Incident Base, feeding areas, sleeping areas, sanitary facilities and a formal Command Post.

**Finance Section.** Responsible for all costs and financial considerations of the incident. Includes the Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and the Cost Unit.

**Food Dispenser.** Any vehicle capable of dispensing food to incident personnel.

**Food Unit.** Functional Unit within the Service Branch of the Logistics Section. Responsible for providing meals for personnel involved with incident.

**Fuel Tender.** Any vehicle capable of supplying fuel to ground or airborne equipment.

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

**Ground Support Unit.** Functional Unit within the Support Branch **of** the Logistics Section. Responsible for fueling/maintaining/repairing vehicles and the transportation **of** personnel and supplies.

**Group.** That organizational level having responsibility for a specified functional assignment at an incident (ventilation, salvage, water supply, etc.).

**Incident Action Plan.** The strategic goals, tactical objectives, and support requirements for the incident. **All** incidents require an action plan. For simple incidents the action plan is not usually in written form. Large or complex incidents will require that the action plan be documented in writing.

**Incident Command System (ICS).** The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure with

responsibility for the management of assigned resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives pertaining to an incident.

**Incident Commander (IC).** The individual responsible for the management **of** all incident operations.

**Information Officer.** Responsible for interface with the media or other appropriate agencies requiring information direct from the incident scene. Member of the Command Staff.

**Initial Attack.** Resources initially committed to an incident.

**Kind.** The basic nature or purpose of a Company (Engine, Truck, etc.).

**Ladder Company.** See Truck Company.

**Leader.** ICS title for individuals responsible for command of a Crew, Task Force, Strike Team, or functional Unit.

**Liaison Officer.** The point of contact for assisting or coordinating agencies. Member of the Command Staff.

**Logistics Section.** Responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident. Includes the Communications Unit, Medical Unit, and Food Units, within the Service Branch and the Supply Unit, Facilities Unit, and Ground Support Units, within the Support Branch.

**Medical Unit.** Functional Unit within the Service Branch of the Logistics Section. Responsible for providing emergency medical treatment of emergency personnel. This Unit does not provide treatment for civilians.

**Officer.** ICS title for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information. Also used when a single individual performs a Unit function within Planning, Logistics, or Finance.

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

**Operations Section.** Responsible for all tactical operations at the incident. Includes up to **5** Branches, 25 Divisions or Groups, and 125 Single Resources, Task Forces, or Strike Teams.

**Out-of-Service Resources.** Resources assigned to an incident but unable to respond for mechanical, rest, or personnel reasons.

**Overhead Personnel.** Personnel who are assigned to supervisory positions, including Incident Commander, Command Staff, General Staff, Directors, Supervisors, and Unit Leaders.

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

**Planning Section.** Responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the development of the incident and the status of resources. Includes the Situation Status, Resource Status, Documentation, and Demobilization Units as well as Technical Specialists.

**Procurement Unit.** A functional Unit within the Finance Section. Responsible for financial matters involving vendors.

**Reporting Locations.** Any one of six facilities/locations where incident-assigned resources may check in. The locations are: Incident Command Post - Resources Unit (RESTAT), Base, Camp, Staging Area, Helibase, or Division Supervisor for direct line assignments. (Check in at one location only.)

**Rescue Company.** A ground vehicle providing specified rescue equipment, capability, and personnel.

**Rescue Medical.** Any staffed ground vehicle capable of providing emergency medical services.

**Resource Status Unit (RESTAT).** Functional Unit within the Planning Section. Responsible for recording the status of resources committed to incident and evaluation of: resources currently committed to incident, the impact that additional responding resources will have on incident, and anticipated resource needs.

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

**Safety Officer.** Responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety. Member of the Command Staff.

**Section.** That organization level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident operations, such as: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance. The Section level is organizational between Branch and Incident Commander.

**Service Branch. A** Branch within the Logistics Section. Responsible for service activities at incident. Components include the Communications Unit, Medical Unit, and Foods Units.

**Single Resource.** An individual Company or Crew.

**Situation Status Unit (SITSTAT).** Functional Unit within the Planning Section. Responsible for analysis of situation as it progresses. Reports to the Planning Section Chief.

**Staging Area.** That location where incident personnel and equipment are assigned on an immediately available status.

**Strategic Goals.** The overall plan that will be used to control the incident. Strategic goals are broad in nature and are achieved by the completion of tactical objectives.

**Strike Team.** Five (5) of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.

**Supervisor.** ICS title for individuals responsible for command of a Division or a Group.

**Supply Unit.** Functional Unit within the Support Branch of the Logistics Section. Responsible for ordering equipment/ supplies required for incident perations.

**Support Branch. A** Branch within the Logistics Section. Responsible for providing the personnel, equipment, and supplies to support incident operations.

Components include the Supply Unit, Facilities Unit, and Ground Support Units.

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

**Task Force.** A group of any type and kind of resources, with common communications and a leader, temporarily assembled for a specific mission (not to exceed five resources).

**Technical Specialists.** Personnel with special skills who are activated only when needed. Technical Specialists may be needed in the areas of fire behavior, water resources, environmental concerns, resource use, and training. Technical Specialists report initially to the Planning Section but may be assigned anywhere within the ICS organizational structure as needed.

**Time Unit.** A functional Unit within the Finance Section. Responsible for record keeping of time for personnel working at incident.

**Truck Company.** A ground vehicle providing an aerial ladder or other aerial device and specified portable ladders and equipment capability, and personnel (Engine Company, Truck Company, Rescue Company, etc.).

**Type.** The defined capability of a specified kind of company (e.g., pumping, hose, water, and staffing of an Engine Company).

**Unit.** That organization element having functional responsibility for a specific incident's Planning, Logistic, or Finance activity.

**Water Tender.** Any ground vehicle capable of transporting specified quantities of water.

# APPENDIX B—COMPLEX INCIDENTS

In the application of ICS to very complex and large incidents (e.g. an earthquake affecting a large area of the City), it is possible to use a modified ICS organizational structure to meet the needs of the incident. Although these incidents are extremely rare, there is always the possibility that the Department will be placed in the position of managing a catastrophic incident.

This section provides a brief explanation of large incident management techniques which may be employed. Not all situations are alike, and other forms of organization than those described here may be as suitable.

**Dividing an Incident Command Organization**

When an incident covers an extensive area, and is now so large that the management of both the Planning and Logistics operations have become very complex, it may be necessary to divide the Incident Command Organization.

- It is assumed that the incident has until this time been run under a Unified Command organization.
- If the Unified Command determines that the Incident Command Organization should be divided into two separate Incident Commands, the following should be accomplished:
- An Area Command Authority (ACA)* should be established.
- A decision would be made by the ACA on how best to divide the Incident Command.
- Incident Commanders, Command and General Staffs would be selected by the ACA for the newly created Incident Command Organizations.
- Supporting organizations, facilities, locations, etc., would be established.
- An appropriate time would be established for identifying the separated Incident Command Organizations with individual names.
- A description of the Area Command Authority (ACA) is provided on the following page.
- The ACA would be responsible to ensure that jurisdictional objectives are being met through the respective Incident Action Plans, and that necessary procedures are established and functioning to ensure inter-incident coordination on all matters.

## Area Command Authority (ACA)

The Area Command Authority (ACA) is an individual and/or organization established to ensure inter-incident coordination for command, operations, planning and logistical matters. The ACA may be located at either of the Incident Command Posts or at a separate nearby location. It may also function from a regional facility. When in existence, the ACA may change the priorities/objectives at any of the incidents under its authority.

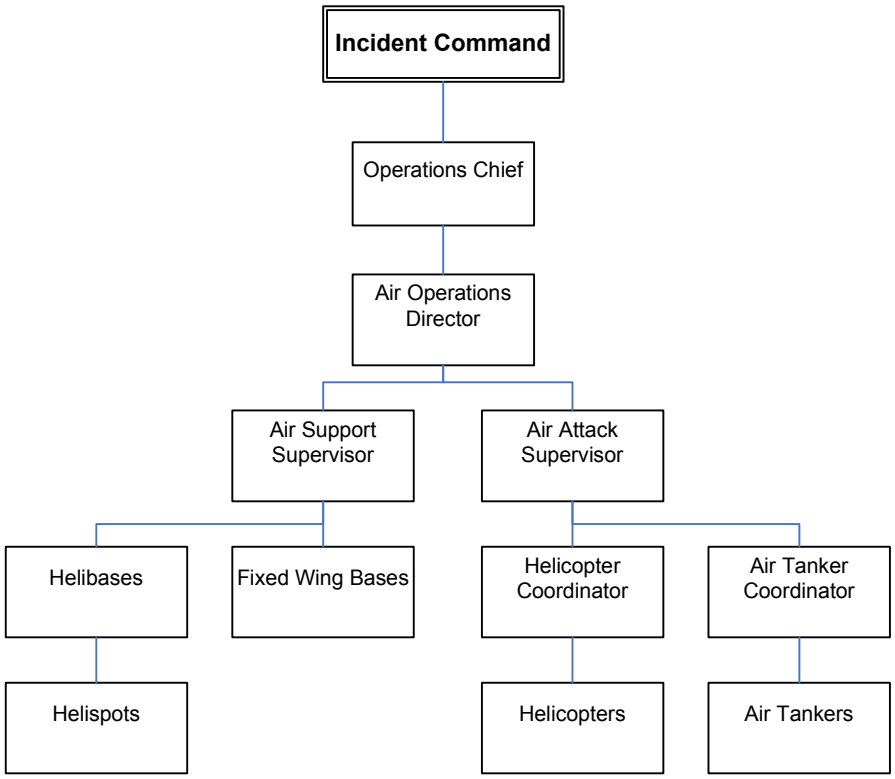
### Considerations

If the Incident Planning and Operations functions are adequate, and have room for growth, but the Logistics section is not adequate, then the decision should be to establish another Logistics section. This procedure would save the cost of establishing an entirely separate Incident Command Organization with its attendant facilities. Similarly, if Operations and Logistics appear to be adequate but detailed action planning can no longer be accomplished by a single entity, then from an effectiveness standpoint, it would be better to allow Branch Action Planning and ensure that appropriate planning coordination takes place.

If the incident is divided into two main segments by geographical barriers, is separating naturally, or if it appears that any two of the major functional Sections of the ICS will require extensive augmentation, the most effective solution would be to create two separate Incident Command Organizations.

## Air Operations

The Air Operations Organization is established by the Operations Chief. Its size, organization and use will depend primarily upon the nature of the incident, and the availability of aircraft. A method of organizing Air Operations for maximum load conditions is depicted below. On large incidents, the Air Operations Director may deal with the Air Attack Supervisor, who in turn will coordinate all airborne activity through a Helicopter Coordinator and an Air Tanker Coordinator. In other cases (e.g.: where only a single helicopter is used), the helicopter may be directly under the control of the Air Operations Director.




The Operations Chief may establish an Air Operations Director position when:

1. The complexity of air operations requires additional support and effort.

2. The incident requires both a mix of tactical and logistical use of helicopters and other aircraft.

The Air Support Group is responsible for establishing and operating helibases and helispots, and for maintaining required liaison with fixed-wing air attack bases off the incident. The Group is responsible for all time-keeping for helicopters assigned to the incident. The Air Attack Supervisor position is established as a separate position whenever both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft will be simultaneously operated within the incident air space.

## Designated Incident Facilities

**Incident Base**—The Incident Base is the location at which primary support activities are performed. The Base will house all equipment and personnel support operations. The Incident Logistics Section, which is responsible for ordering all resources and supplies, is also located at the Base. There should only be one Base established for each incident, and normally the Base will not be relocated. If possible, Incident Base locations should always be included in the pre-attack plans.

**Camps**—Camps are locations from which resources may be located to better support incident operations. At Camps, certain essential support operations (e.g.: feeding, sleeping, sanitation) can be maintained; also at Camps, minor maintenance and

servicing of equipment will be done. Camps may be relocated if necessary to meet tactical operations requirements.

**Helibases**—Helibases are locations in and around the incident area at which helicopters may be parked, maintained, fueled, and loaded with retardants, personnel, or equipment. More than one Helibase may be required on very large incidents. Once established on an incident, a Helibase will usually not be relocated.

**Helispots**—Helispots are more temporary and less used locations at which helicopters can land, take off, and in some cases, load water or retardants.

## CS Radio Networks

Radio networks for large incidents will normally be organized as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Command Net** | This network should link together the Incident Commander, key Staff members, Section Chiefs, Division and Group Supervisors. |
| **Tactical Nets** | There may be several tactical networks. They may be established around agencies, departments, geographical areas, or even specific functions. The determination of how nets are set up should be a joint Planning/Operations function. The Communications Unit Leader will develop the plan. |
| **Support Net** | A support network will be established primarily to handle status changing for resources as well as for support requests and certain other non-tactical or command functions. |
| **Ground to Air Net** | A ground to air tactical frequency may be designated, or regular tactical networks may be used to coordinate ground to air traffic. |
| **Air to Air Net** | Air to air networks will normally be pre-designated and assigned for use at the incident. |