INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

Structure Fire Operations
ICS - 500

10/3/2024

This document contains information about the Incident Command System (ICS) component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This is the same Incident Command System developed by FIRESCOPE.

Additional information and documentation can be obtained from the following sources:

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FOREWARD

FIRESCOPE's Structure Fire Operations ICS-500 was last revised in 2015 to meet the growing needs of the California fire service. In 2022, it was determined that a revision was needed due to advancements in fire behavior research and information gathered from firefighter near-misses and line-of-duty deaths. The fireground has evolved to include volatile fuel loads, increased use of lightweight construction, and clandestine illegal drug operations.

The National Institute of Occupational Health & Safety (NIOSH) has reviewed all line-of-duty deaths (LODD) in the American fire service. There are five common contributing factors consistently found in LODDs. They are referred to as the NIOSH 5. They are as follows:

- Improper Risk Assessment
- Lack of Incident Command
- Lack of Accountability
- Inadequate Communications
- Lack of, or failure to, follow Standard Operating Procedures

The goal of this revision is to stay current with best industry practices based on relevant issues facing fireground operations and consistent application of the Incident Command System.

FIRESCOPE recognizes that most structure fires are short-term incidents(less than one operational period). Due to the compressed time frame, most structure fire incident command systems incorporate only the Command and Operations functions. For longer-term incidents requiring the implementation of the Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration functions, the FIRESCOPE Field Operations Guide ICS 420-1 (FOG) is an associated reference.

The Incident Command System (ICS) provides an organized method to apply goals and objectives to structure fire incidents.This system helps to provide fire ground safety and accountability.

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

- Industry best practices for incident management
- Provide a standardized approach and terminology to managing any incident
- Provide predictable approaches to incident management
- Routine application
- Provide a training tool for firefighter reference
- Provide a baseline for after-action review and assessment of incidents
- To make the Incident Commander’s operations safe, effective, and efficient

This model reflects a guidelines approach to the overall organizational structure of the ICS.

COMMAND GUIDELINES

Purpose:

This document identifies standard operating guidelines for establishing command at a structure fire incident. The system provides for the effective management of personnel and resources while providing for the safety and welfare of personnel. It also establishes guidelines for the implementation of all components of ICS for structure fire operations.

Command Guidelines are designed to:

- Establish the responsibility for command on one individual through a standard identification system, depending on the arrival sequence of members, companies, and chief officers.
- Ensure formal command will be established from the onset of the incident. Consideration should be made to provide for liaison and coordination with all other cooperating agencies.
- Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander and other individuals operating within ICS.
- Provide a system to process information to support incident safety, accountability, 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 overall management of the incident. The safety, welfare, and accountability of personnel are taken intoconsideration when achieving the following incident priorities:

1. Life Safety
2. Incident stabilization
3. Property Conservation
4. Environment protection

ICS is used to facilitate the completion of the tactical priorities. The INCIDENT COMMANDERis the person who drives ICS towards that end. The Incident Commander is responsible for building an ICS organization that matches the current and anticipated needs of the incident to complete the tactical priorities.

Functions of Command:

- Rapidly evaluate the situation (size up)
- Assume and announce command
- Provide strategic objectives and tactical priorities (See Appendix D)
- Initiate, maintain, and control the communication plan (See Appendix B)
- Establish and announce the location of an effective operating position (Incident Command Post)
- Develop an Incident Action Plan and assign companies and personnel to include RIC, consistent with plans and standard operating guidelinesRequest appropriate resources when necessary
- California fire departments can utilize the ICS 201 or create a Tactical Worksheet that meets the minimum information standard of the ICS 201
- Ensure the utilization of an Incident Clock, when appropriate
- Develop an appropriate ICS organization using divisions and/or groups to maintain the span of control
- Coordinate activities with other agencies and cooperators (Law Enforcement, EMS, Utilities, Building Department, etc.)
- Continuously assess incident conditions and review, evaluate, and revise the Incident Action Plan, as needed
- 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.

Additional Key Incident Command Elements:

- The organization builds from the ground up by managing all significant functions, initially being the responsibility of one or just a few persons. Functional units are designed to handle the most critical incident activities. As the incident grows in size and/or complexity, additional functions are assigned to individuals to maintain an effective span of control and efficiency.
- It is 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 levelsof government.
- It is designed to be the primary, everyday operating system for all incidents within each agency. Therefore, transitioning to large and/or multi-agency operations requires minimal adjustment for the agencies involved.
- It is designed to ensure that the jurisdictional authority of the involved agencies will not be compromised. Each agency with legal responsibility within its jurisdiction is assumed to have complete command authority. Assisting agencies will generally function under the direction of the Incident Commander appointed by the agency having jurisdiction.

- Multi-jurisdictional incidents will generally be managed under a Unified Command management structure involving a single Incident Command Post and a single Incident ActionPlan – applicable to all agencies involved.
- The system is to be staffed and operated by appropriate personnel from any agency, and a typical incident could involve personnel from various agencies working in many different parts of the organization.

Although this document focuses on structure fire operations, it recognizes the importance of coordinating incident response with responders of other disciplines, such as medical, law enforcement, and public works, in the fire service. An effective incident management system must provide an integrated multi-discipline approach.

The ICS provides an overall structure integrating multiple disciplines, allowing application to the “all-hazard" nature of emergency incidents.

Risk Assessment:

The most important responsibility of an Incident Commander is to conduct a proper Risk Assessment. The Incident Commander must determine the life safety profile of the incident and apply the most appropriate level of risk to first responders. Risk assessment involves identifying and prioritizing hazards and applying appropriate control measures to reduce or eliminate their effect on victims and firefighters. Risk assessment is a continuous process throughout the incident and only terminates when the incident is mitigated.

Risk assessment principles can be found in the International Association of Fire Chiefs Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Survival.

IAFC Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Survival

Risk management principles:

1. Extend VIGILANT and MEASURED Risk to Protect and Rescue SAVABLE Lives
2. Extend LIMITED Risk to Protect SAVABLE Property
3. DO NOT Risk Your Life for Lives or Property That Cannot Be Saved

These risk management principles are employed by supervisory personnel at all levels of the Incident Command System. When evaluating risk, the severity of the risk and the frequency of occurrence are of concern. High-risk events that occur infrequently pose the greatest threat to responders because of the likelihood they will have limited experience in dealing with such events (The NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide and NFPA 1550 outline a complementary Risk Management Process).

One of the most critical actions in assessing risk is evaluating the situation and risks involved. Critical indicators that support gaining **Situational Awareness** and evaluating risk include:

- Structural Triage
  - Limited ways in and out
  - Cannot tell what the building is being used for
  - Cannot tell where the fire is
  - Has the potential to have been burning undetected
  - Compromised structural integrity (renovation, demolition, previous fire activity)
  - Cannot determine floor plan or layout (no pre-fire intel)
  - Construction Type (I-V) and features that frequently result in unexpected fire behavior
  - Evidence of explosion (roof misaligned, blown out windows and doors, etc.)
- Smoke Conditions
  - Volume and density
  - Pressure and velocity
  - Color
  - Rate of change
  - View all sides of the building (360 assessment)
  - Compare volume to building size
  - Zero visibility
- Fire Conditions
  - Fuel load (what is burning?)
  - Contents vs. structure
  - Burn time
  - Rate of spread
  - Heat levels
  - No ventilation
  - Observable abnormal fire behavior
  - Blue and orange flame
  - High-pressure venting
  - Lack of smoke conditions for the volume of fire
- Lack of Progress
  - Progress not matching expectations
  - Inadequate resource availability
  - Lack of water supply availability
  - Repeated acknowledgment of Incident Clock
  - Delay in forcible entry
  - Delay in ventilation
  - Delay in water application
  - Fire attack and ventilation not coordinated

There are a variety of actions available to assist in the management of risk. Together, these actions provide a solid framework for protecting responders from the risks of emergency operations. These actions include:

- Provide effective training
- Establish standard operating guidelines
- Communicate a well-defined Incident Action Plan that incorporates contingencies.
- Continuous Risk Assessment throughout the incident to evaluate the situation and risk (size-up)
- Utilize full personal protective clothing
- Provide effective incident management (Company Unity, Unity of Command, Appropriate Span of Control)
- Ensure effective communications
- Establish safety procedures and utilize Safety Officers
- Ensure adequate resources are available
- Assign Rapid Intervention Crew/Company(s)
- Ensure Rules of Air Management
- Provide for Incident Medical Needs
- Provide for decontamination and rehabilitation of personnel
- Conduct an After Action Review, correct weakness/sustain strengths
    - What was planned?
    - What actually happened?
    - Why did it happen?
    - What can we do next time?

After Action Review:

An After Action Review is a professional discussion of an event focused on performance standards that enables personnel and agencies to discover what happened, why it happened, and how actions can be improved in the future. The AAR is a critical leadership tool used to ensure maximum effectiveness, safety, and proficiency.

Command Process:

The first fire department member to arrive is the Incident Commander. The initial Incident Commander shall remain in command until command is passed, transferred, or the incident is stabilized and terminated:

- A single company incident (trash fires, small exterior fire, etc.) may only require that the company acknowledge its arrival on the scene.
- For incidents requiring multiple companies' commitment, the first member on the scene must establish and announce "command" and initiate an ICS organization appropriate for the incident.
- When a Chief Officer arrives at the scene at the same time as the initial arriving company, the Chief Officer should establish command of the incident.

Initial Radio Report/Size up:

The first arriving resource initiates the command process by giving an initial radio report. The following items are recommendations, and official initial radio reports may be agency-specific.

- Unit designator at scene with number of crew members
- Confirmation of incident location
- A brief description of the building
  - Occupancy (house, apartment, strip mall, box store, high-rise, church, etc.)
  - Size (large, medium, small, or dimensions, i.e., 100'x150')
  - Height/number of floors
  - Construction type
- Incident conditions
  - Nothing Showing
  - Smoke showing (amount, location, color, pressure)
  - Fire Showing (amount and location)
  - Exposures
- Brief description of action taken by officer and crew members
  - Select the option for command
  - Actions of crew members
- Any safety hazards
- Establish Orientation of the incident (A side is address side unless otherwise stated)
- Identification and location of Incident Commander
- Request required resources when necessary

Radio Designation:

The radio designation "Incident Commander" or "IC" will be used alongwith the geographical location of the incident (i.e., "7th Street Incident Command" or "Metro Center IC"). This designation will not change throughout the incident. The designation of "Incident Command" or "IC" will remain with the officer in command of the incident throughout the event.

Examples:

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

"Engine Eleven is on scene of a one-story, single-family structure. Flames are visible through the windows on the A side of the structure. The life safety status is unknown. Engine Eleven is deploying a hose line for an interior attack. The next engine on scene will be assigned water supply. Engine Eleven will be establishing 7th Street Incident Command."

“Engine One is on the scene of a 100’ x 150’ warehouse, fire showing through the roof, with exposures to the Bravo side of the structure. Engine One is laying a supply line, attacking the fire with a master stream, and establishing a handline for exposure protection. This is a defensive fire. Engine One will be establishing Buckeye IC.”

360 Assessment:

The initial IC must attempt to perform a 360 assessment. A 360 assessment can be reassigned to another resource if the IC cannot complete. An updated radio report will be given after the 360. However, important updates must be given during the walk-around (power lines down, discovery of basement, victim found), and this information must betransmitted immediately.

If a 360 cannot be completed due to the size of the building or extenuating circumstances, assign it to another resource to complete. If conditions do not allow a 360 to be completed, it should be verbalized over the radio as incomplete.

Follow-up Radio Report:

This report may include any information gathered during the 360 assessment.

- Confirm 360 is completed and report findings
- Search and Rescue opportunities
- Confirm Strategy (Offensive vs Defensive)
- Credible information given by occupants or bystanders
- Report on exposures
- Update on fire/smoke location and conditions
- Flow Path (if determined)
- Utilities secured during the 360
- Confirm assignments of deployed resources
- Request additional resources as needed
- Any other pertinent information

Course of Actions for Command:

The command responsibility of the initial Incident Commander presents several options depending on the situation. If a Chief Officer or member without tactical capabilities (i.e., staff vehicle, no equipment, etc.) initiates command, establishing an Incident Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents, the initial Incident Commander will be a Company Officer. The following define the Company Officer’s direct involvement in tactical activities and the options of command:

Investigation:

These situations generally require investigation by the initial arriving company while other units remain staged. The officer may go with the company toinvestigate while utilizing a portable radio, or they may remain stationary and assign other resources to support the company.

Command (Establish):

Many incidents require immediate formal command due to size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion. The Company Officer will initially assume an exterior, safe, and effective command position. The Incident Command System should be initiated. The incident commander will maintain that position until relieved by an equal or higher-ranking officer. Adequate personnel must be at scene prior to entering the IDLH to meet OSHA regulation 1910.134(g)(4). This regulation is commonly referred to as 2 in/2 out in the fire service. If adequate personnel are not on scene operations must be performed outside the IDLH.

When the Company Officer establishes command, the following options are available regarding the assignment of the remaining crew members:

- The Company Officer may place the company into action with two or more members who must carry a portable radio. The crew's collective and individual capabilities and experience will regulate this action.

- The Company Officer may assign the crew members to work under the supervision of another Company Officer. Both company officers must acknowledge the reassignment of crew members.

- The Company Officer may assign the crew members to perform staff functions to assist them as the Incident Commander (Dedicated Incident Command Support Company).

Rescue:

This option is selected when quick, immediate action can prevent life loss or injury. After a credible analysis is preformed and a rescue is determined, the Incident Commander can direct personnel to enter the IDLH prior to the establishment of 2 In/2 Out. These situations require immediate action to stabilize the incident and necessitate the Company Officer's direct involvement with the rescue. The Company Officer accompanies the team to ensure the appropriate level of supervision. Utilization of the portable radio allows the Company Officer to remain involved without neglecting the responsibilities of the Incident Commander. Command should be passed to the next arriving officer upon arrival.

*The Rescue course of action is in alignment with: OSHA regulation 1910.134(g)(4)

Rescue will end when:

- The situation is stabilized (e.g., rescue performed, fire confined, extinguishment)
- The situation is not stabilized, and the first officer must switch to Establishing

command. The Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior, establish an Incident Command Post, and announce on the radio that the course of action has changed to Establish command.

- Command is passed to the next arriving Company Officer, who should remain outside and establish an Incident Command Post. The Company Officer must determine how best to utilize the remainder of the crew based on the crew's capabilities.
- Command is transferred to a higher-ranking officer. When a Chief Officer assumes command, they may return the Company Officer to their crew or assign them to a subordinate position.

A Company Officer establishing command has a choice of degrees of personal involvement in the tactical activities but continues to be fully responsible for the Incident Commander's functions. These courses of actions for command identified are guidelines to assist the Company Officer in planning appropriate actions. The actions initiated should conform to one of the above courses of actions for command.

Passing Command:

Command can be passed from the first arriving Company Officer to the next arriving Company Officer ON SCENE. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first arriving company requires a whole crew (i.e., high-rise or an immediate rescue situation) or the incident complexity prohibits the first arriving Company Officer from fulfilling the responsibilities of the Incident Commander.

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

If the second arriving Company or Chief Officer cannot locate or communicate with the IC engaged in Rescue (after several attempts), they should assume and announce 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 ICS organization. The local departments must predetermine the transfer of command through various ranking officers. The following guidelines outline the transfer of command process.

- The first fire department member arriving on the scene will establish incident command. Typically, this will be a Company Officer, but it could be any fire department member up to and including the Fire Chief.

- A higher ranking Officer will assume command after the transfer of command procedures have been completed (assuming an equal or higher-ranking officer has yet to assume command).

- The first arriving Chief Officer should assume command of the incident following the transfer of command procedures.

Within the chain of command, the transfer of command should include the following:

- The officer assuming command will communicate with the person being relieved. Face-to-face is the preferred method to transfer command. If face-to-face communication is not possible, radio communication is permissible.
- The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming command, indicating at leastthe following:
- Situation status
- Incident objectives and priorities (Incident Action Plan)
- Resource assignments
- Resources enroute and/or ordered
- Communications plan
- Safety considerations

- The person relieved of command should review the tactical worksheet (i.e., ICS 201)with the officer assuming command. A tactical worksheet provides an effective framework for command transfer as it outlines the location and status of

personnel and resources.
- The person relieved of command may be reassigned by the officer assuming incident command according to incident needs.
- Whenever a transfer of command occurs, the Incident Commander must announce the change on all radio frequencies used for the incident.

Fire Ground Considerations:

The response and arrival of additional ranking officers on theincident scene strengthen the overall ICS organization. The Incident Commander should use these officers as needed as the incident increases in complexity.

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

Chief Officers and Staff Personnel should report directly to a designated location for assignment by the Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander has the overall responsibility of managing an incident. As stated, the Incident Commander has complete authority and responsibility for the incident.

* 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, then the transfer-of-command guideline must be used.

* Anyone can affect a change in incident management in extreme situations relating to safety by notifying the Incident Commander and initiating corrective action.

A fire department's communications guidelines 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

Mayday:

Upon notification of a "Mayday" situation, the Incident Commander must remain in control of the incident. The rescue of the firefighter is now the priority of the incident. Assigned resources should maintain task discipline and continue suppression efforts, while rescue activities are initiated.

The Incident Commander should delegate the mayday operations to appropriate resources. Additional resources should be ordered, and the ICS should be expanded to support the needs of the incident.

* For further information on Mayday operations reference FIRESCOPE ICS 910 Firefighter Incident Safety and Accountability Guide.

Emergency Traffic:

"Emergency Traffic" is used to clear radio traffic for a significant fire ground emergency condition. For example: "All units Emergency Traffic, we've had a building collapse."

- All radio traffic should cease on any channel where "Emergency Traffic" has been requested unless directly related to the "Emergency Traffic" situation.
- After the event has been reported to or announced by the Incident Commander, the Incident Commander should report the event to the dispatch center.
- If equipped, broadcast an emergency alert tone followed by a concise, clear text descriptionof the emergency.
- After the "Emergency Traffic" situation, the Incident Commander should transmit "All Clear, resume normal radio traffic" to end the emergency.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Incident Commander will be responsible for developing an organizational structure utilizing standard operating guidelines as soon as possible after arrival and implementing initial tactical control measures. The emergency's complexity will determine the organizational structure.

Incident Command System Operations:

ICS is an essential incident management system that should be used on any size or type of incident. The ICS organization is easily expandable as an incident increase in complexity. Thus, the full establishment of the ICS should be an extension of the initial incident organization.

* For a detailed example of ICS structure and expansion, refer to FIRESCOPE 420-1 Field Operations Guide.

Command Organization:

The ICS organization must develop at a pace that stays ahead of the tactical deployment of personnel and resources. For the Incident Commander tomanage the incident, they must first be able to direct, control, and track the position and function of all resources. Building an ICS organization is the best support mechanism the Incident Commander can utilize to achieve the balance between managing personnel and incident needs. This means:

Small scale incidents = Initial/Reinforced ICS organization

Large scale and complex incidents = Multi Branch ICS organization

The basic configuration of command includes three levels:

Strategic– Overall direction of the incident

Tactical– Assigns operational objectives

Task– Specific tasks assigned to companies

The strategic level involves the overall command of the incident. The Incident Commander isresponsible for the strategic level of the ICS organization. The Incident Action Plan should cover all strategic responsibilities, all tactical objectives, and all support activities needed during the entire operational period.

The Incident Action Plan defines where and when resources will be assigned to the incident to control the situation. This plan is the basis for developing an ICS organization, assigning/accounting for resources, and establishing tactical objectives.

The strategic responsibilities include the selection of the strategy for the incident based on the Risk Assessment.

NFPA 1700 Guide for Structural Fire Firefighting 2021 defines Offensive and Defensive strategy as:

> OFFENSIVE- The plan for the actions and movements of arriving fire department units to control the fire, effect rescue, start searches for occupants, and extinguish the fire with the intent of commencing operations inside the fire building.
>
> DEFENSIVE- The plan for the actions or movements of fire department units to protect exposures and contain the main body of fire to the already affected areas with the intent of confining operations mostly outside of the fire building.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Identify incident priorities
- Establish overall incident objectives
- Develop, implement, and evaluate an Incident Action Plan
- Request and assign resources

The tactical level directs operational activities towards specific objectives. Tactical-level officers include Branch Directors and Division/Group Supervisors, who are in charge of specific resources. Tactical-level officers are responsible for specific geographic areas or functions, supervising assigned personnel and requesting additional resources as needed. 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 outlined in the Incident Action Plan.

The task level refers to those activities typically accomplished by individual companies or specific personnel. The task level is where the work is done. Company Officers routinely supervise task-level activities. The accumulated achievements of task-level activities should accomplish tactical objectives.

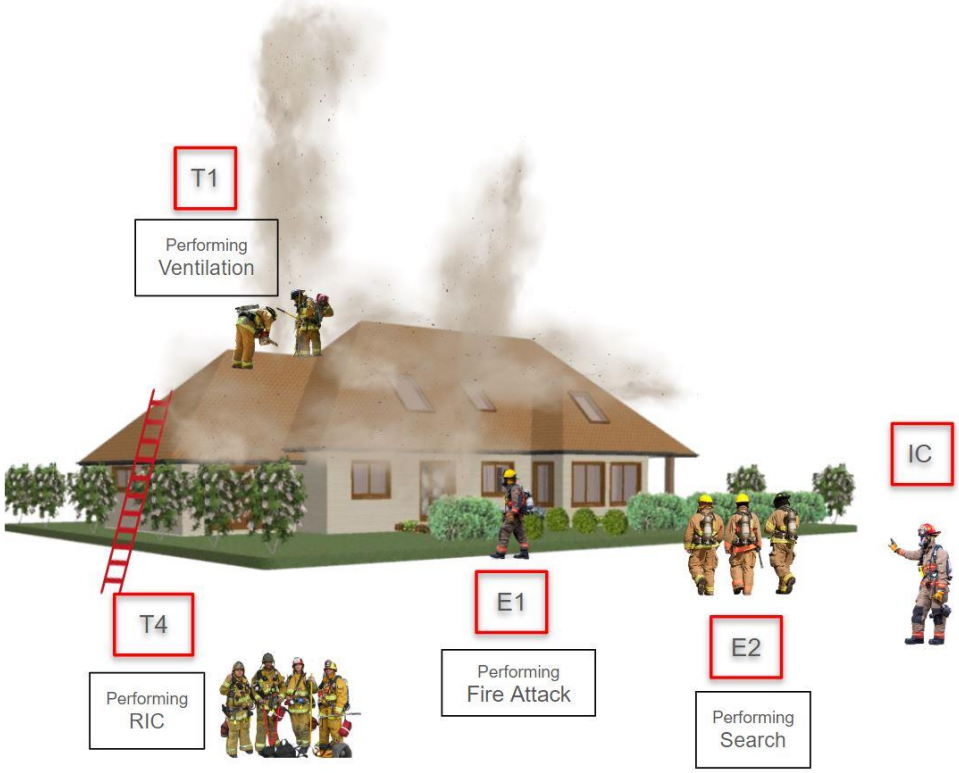
Command Structure – Initial Attack Organization

Examples:

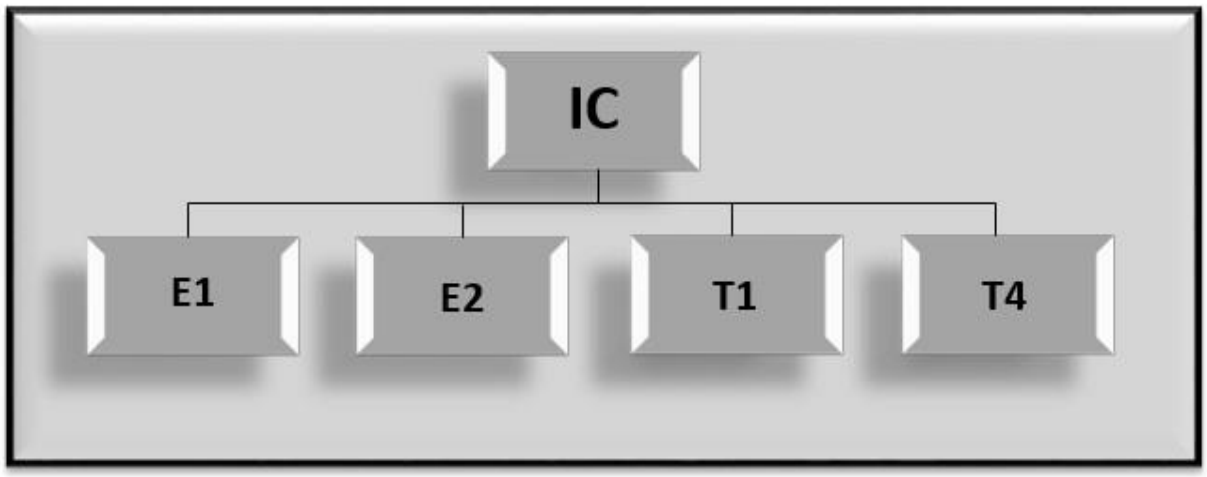
The most basic ICS organization combines all three levels of command (Strategic, Tactical, and Task). The Company Officer on a single-engine response to a dumpster fire determinesthe strategy and tactics and supervises the crew doing the task.

The basic structure for a "routine" incident involving a few companies requires only two levels of command (Strategic/Tactical and Task). The role of command combines the strategic and tactical levels. Companies report directly to the Incident Commander and operate at the task
level.

ICS Structure Utilizing Single Unit Identifiers



The above example illustrates single companies executing tactical assignments given by the Incident Commander.



Initial Attack Response organizational chart (Single Companies)

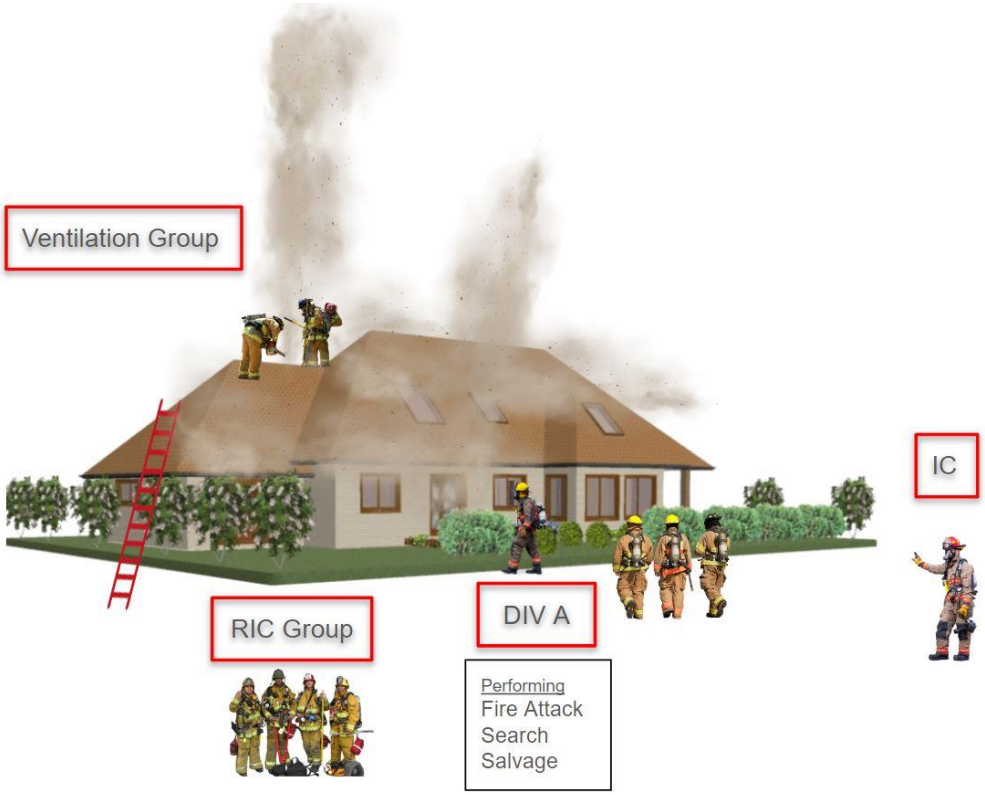
Command Structure-Reinforced Response

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

Reinforced Response (Division/Group)

The Incident Commander should assign companies to work in Division/Groups as an incident escalates. A department must have a designated method of dividing an incident scene to use Division terminology effectively.

ICS Structure Utilizing Functional Groups and Geographic Divisions



Division Designation:

Tactical Assignments for a Multi-Story Incident

In multi-story occupancies, divisions will usually be indicated by the floor number listed on the interior stairwell. Using subdivisions is appropriate when operating in levels below grade, such as basements. Interior crews must confirm the floor number they will operate on with the Incident Commander.

Example: Division 5 indicates the fifth floor

Divisional Identification for a Split Level Occupancy

A structure can appear from the front as having fewer levels than it has. The illustration above emphasis the importance of a 360 assessment.

* See FIRESCOPE ICS 501-Hillside Structure Fires for further explanation.

Tactical Assignments for a Multi-Unit Incident(Strip Mall)

The Incident Commander is responsible for clearly identifying areas of responsibility at multi-unit incidents. The incident commander must begin by identifying the primary fire unit.

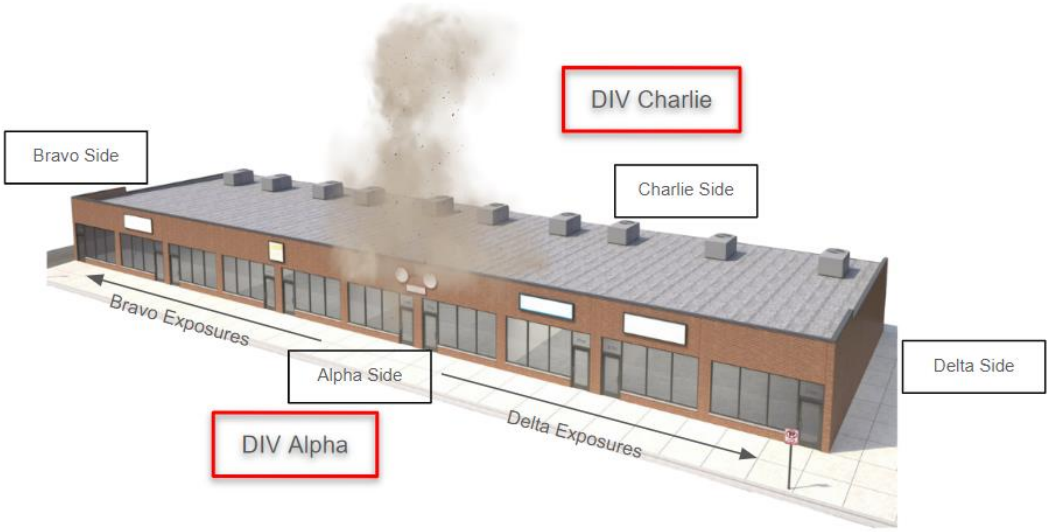
In multi-unit occupancies, exposures can be indicated by an alpha letter identifier for the side of the extension followed by a number that starts adjacent to the unit on fire.

The identifier for an exposure occupancy may be used for identification only and may not necessitate the assignment of a Division Supervisor.

Example:

In multi-unit strip malls, exposed occupancies can be indicated by a letter identifier for the side of the extension followed by a number that starts adjacent to the unit on fire. For a strip mall where a fire attack is initiated on Division A (Alpha side), and fire is extending to the B (Bravo) side, the IC will start with Bravo exposure, and or Delta exposure to identify occupancies requiring resources. See example. The occupancy name may be used in a clear text communication form for identification purposes. The identifier for an exposure occupancy may be used for identification only and may not necessitate the assignment of an additional supervising officer.

In a multi-story strip mall, use the appropriate floor numbers for divisional assignments, i.e., three-story buildings will utilize Div 1, Div 2, and Div 3. Exposures to the Division Bravo side on the first floor would be identified as Div 1-Bravo exposure, Div 1-Delta exposure. Each Division identifier must be stated with the exposure unit.



Command Structure: Division/Group, Basic Operational Approach

Divisions/Groups in the ICS organization provide a standard system to divide the incident scene into smaller subordinate management units or areas. Complex emergencies often exceed the capability of one officer to manage the entire operation effectively.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 for effectivecommand and incident scene organization. Division/Group responsibilities should be assigned early in the incident, typically the first company assigned to a geographic area or function. The early establishment of a Division/Group provides an effective Incident Command organization framework to build and expand the operation.

The number of Divisions/Groups that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commandervaries. The typical span of control is three to seven. In escalating, complex operations, a span of control of no more than **five** Divisions/Groups is recommended.

When the incident exceeds the span of control that the Incident Commander can effectively manage, the incident organization should be expanded to meet incident needs by assigningBranches and/or Operations. The Operations Section is responsible for the Branches. EachBranch is responsible for several Divisions/Groups and should be assigned a separate radiochannel if available.

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

Assigning Divisions/Groups allows the Incident Commander to concentrate on overall strategy and resource assignment, communicating this down the chain of command. (IC>Ops>Branch>Grp/Div). This allows the Division/Group Supervisor to supervise their assigned units. The Incident Commander determines strategy and assigns objectives and resources to the Divisions/Groups. Each Division/Group Supervisor is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources to complete the objectives assigned by the Incident Commander. Division/Group Supervisors are also responsible for communicating needs and progress through the chain of command.

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

Through the chain of command, each Division/Group Supervisor will inform the Incident Commander of conditions, actions, and needs through regular progress reports (CAN reports) to effectively handle tactical priorities. The Division/Group Supervisor must prioritize these reports for essential information only.

The safety of firefighting personnel represents the primary reason for establishing Divisions/Groups. Each Division/Group Supervisor must communicate with assigned companies to control their position and function. The Division/Group Supervisor must constantly monitor all hazardous situations and risks to personnel. The Division/Group Supervisor must take appropriate action to ensure that companies operate safely and effectively.

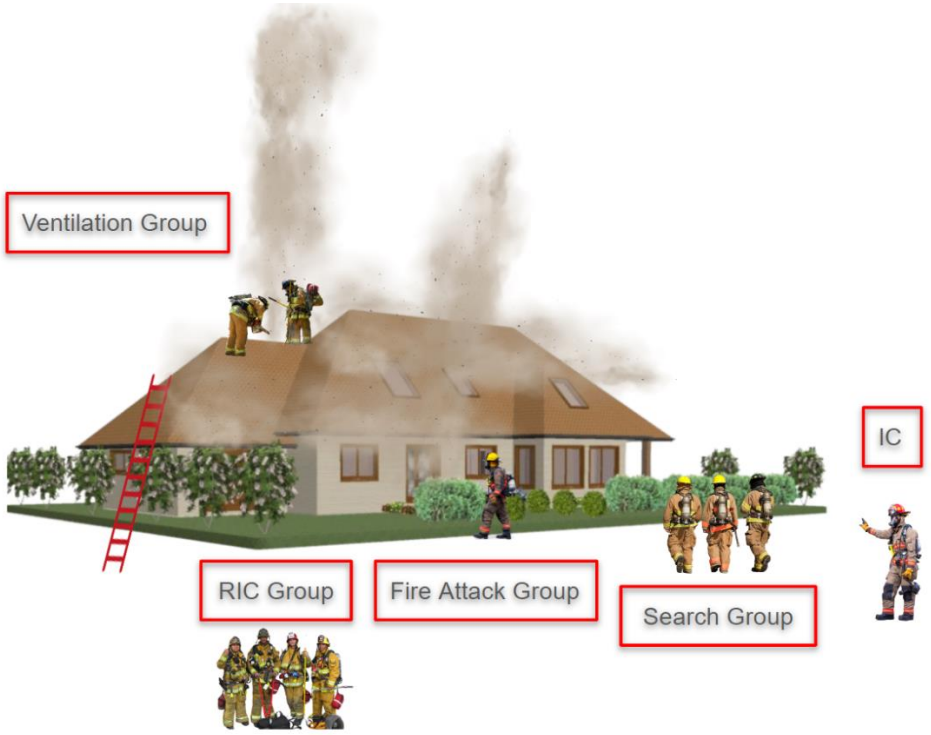
The Incident Commander should begin to assign Divisions/Groups based on the following factors:

- Situations that will eventually involve several companies or functions beyond the capability of the Incident Commander to control directly. The Incident Commander should assign the Division/Group responsibilities to a company assigned to a geographic area or function based on need or complexity.
- The Incident Commander may assign a Company Officer to evaluate and report on the conditions of a Division/Group. The Incident Commander may assign the Company Officer a Division/Group assignment based on the reported information.
- When the Incident Commander can no longer effectively manage the number of companies and involved in the operation.
- When companies are involved in complex operations (Large interior or geographic areas,hazardous materials, technical rescues, etc.).
- When companies operate from tactical positions, the Incident Commander has little or no direct control over (i.e., out of sight).
- When the situation presents special hazards, close control is required over operatingcompanies (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. A supervisor
2. Define the Division's geographical area or the Group's function
3. Tactical objectives
4. The identity of resources
5. Communications
6. A radio designation (Roof Division, Division A, Salvage Group)

ICS Structure Utilizing Functional Groups



Division/Group Supervisor Guidelines:

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

- Provide for life safety, both civilian and firefighting force
- Complete objectives assigned by the Incident Commander
- Maintain accountability of assigned resources
- Ensure that operations are conducted safely, including air management
- Must be in a position to supervise and monitor operations directly
- Should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible
- Coordinate actions with related activities and adjacent Divisions/Groups
- Monitor the welfare of assigned personnel and rehab personnel as needed
- Request additional resources to support tactical objectives
- Provide the Incident Commander with essential and frequent progress reports
- Reallocate resources within the Division/Group
- When transferring Division/Group responsibility, the guidelines outlined in Transfer of Command should be followed

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

A partner should accompany a Division/Group Supervisor when assigned to operate within an IDLH.

When a Division/Group Supervisor can no longer manage the responsibilities within a Division or Group, they will communicate to the Incident Commander so appropriate actions can be taken.

- Example of situations where the Division/Group Supervisor should communicate to the Incident Commander
  - Conditions within Division/Group assignment grow in complexity
  - Resources currently assigned exceeds the span of control
  - Geographical boundary change
  - Any safety issues affecting the incident
  - Objectives are completed

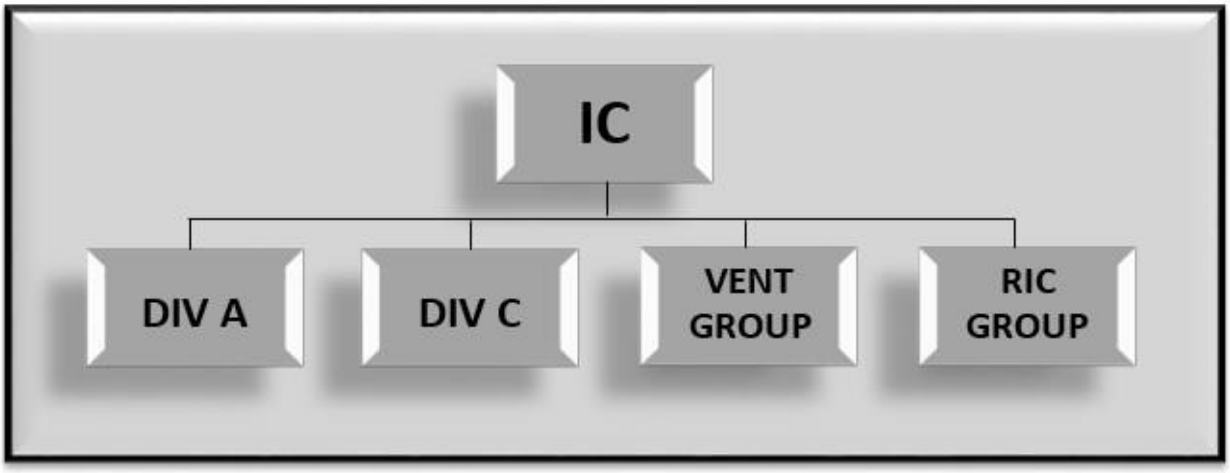
The primary function of Company Officers working within a Division/Group is to direct the operations of their crews in performing assigned tasks. Company Officers, preferably face-to-face, will advise their Division/Group Supervisor of work progress. All requests for additional resources or assistance within a Division/Group must be directed to the Division/Group Supervisor. Division/Group Supervisors will communicate with the Incident Commander.

Through the chain of command, each Division/Group Supervisor will inform the Incident Commander of conditions, actions, and needs through regular progress reports. These progress reports are also called CAN reports. The Division/Group Supervisor mustprioritize progress reports to essential information only.

As resources are assigned to a Division/Group, ensure the following information is provided:

- The name of the Division/Group
- Define the division geographical area or the group’s function
- Tactical objectives to be completed
- Assigned radio frequency for the Division/Group
- The Division/Group Supervisor will be informed of which companies or units have been assigned by the Incident Commander

Division/Group Supervisors will monitor the condition of the crews operating in their Division/Group. Relief crews will be requested in a manner that safeguards the safety ofpersonnel and maintains progress toward the Division/Group objectives. Crews must report to Rehab intact to facilitate accountability.



Reinforced Response organization chart (Divisions and Groups)

Command Structure – Expanding The Organization

As a minor incident escalates into a significant incident, additional organizational support will be required. The Incident Commander can become quickly overwhelmed with information management, assigning companies, accountability, requesting additional resources, and other command functions. The Incident Commander's immediate need is incident managementsupport. As additional ranking officers arrive on the scene, the ICS organization may be expanded by involving officers and staff personnel to fill Command and General Staff Positions.

The transition from the initial response to an expanding incident organization will be evolutionary, and positions will be filled as the corresponding tasks are required. Section and Unit level positions within ICS will be activated only when the corresponding functions are needed for the incident.

During the initial phases of the incident, the Incident Commander typically carries out thesefour section functions. These comprise the General Staff within a fully expanded incident organizational structure.

1. OPERATIONS
2. PLANNING
3. LOGISTICS
4. FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION

Expanding the Organization – Sections:

Section-level positions can be implemented at any time based on the needs of the incident.

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 theOperations Section. The Operations Section Chief uses the appropriate radio channel to communicate strategic and specific objectives to the Branches and/or Divisions/Groups.

The Incident Commander may staff the Operations Section to reduce their span of control andthus transfer direct management of all tactical activities to the Operations Section Chief. The Incident Commander is then able to focus their attention on the management of the entire incident rather than concentrating on tactical activities:

Roles and Responsibilities:

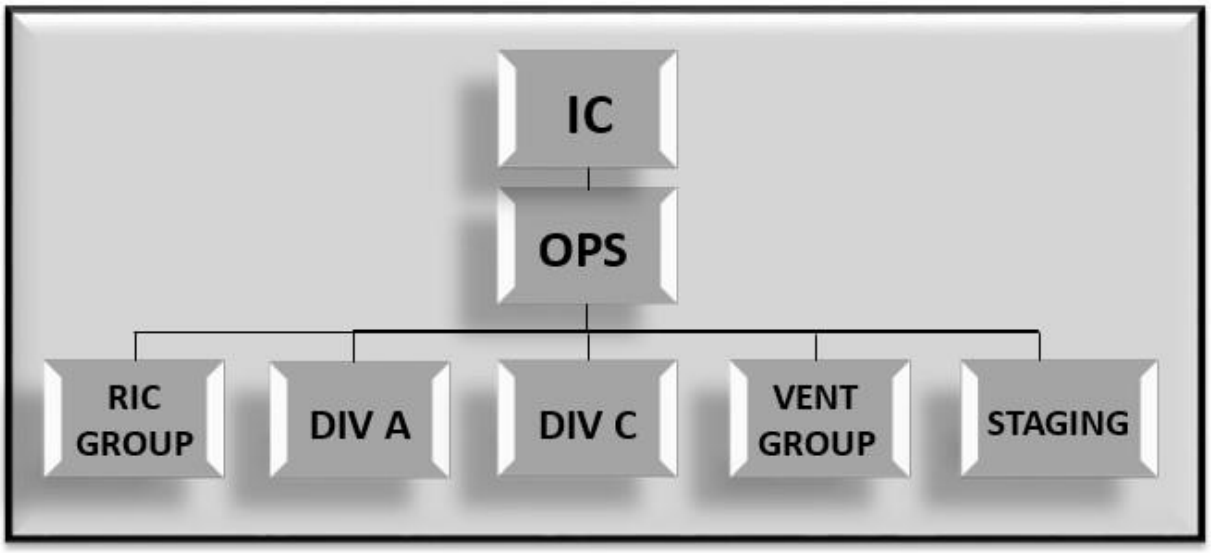
- Provide for life safety
- Maintain Command and Control
- Manage incident tactical activities
- Coordinate activities with the Incident Commander
- Implement the Incident Action Plan
- Assign resources to tactical-level areas based on tactical objectives and priorities
- Assign Branches and Divisions/Groups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

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

Staging Areas: Staging Areas are locations designated within the incident area that temporarily locate resources that are available for assignment.

The incident scene can quickly become congested with emergency equipment if this equipment is not managed effectively. The Incident Commander should establish a central Staging Area early and place an officer in charge 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 using Staging Areas.All resources within the designated Staging Areas are under the direct control of the Operations Section Chief and should be immediately available.



Reinforced Response organization chart (Operation Section Chief Assigned)

Expanding the Organization – Branches:

Divisions/Groups: As previously discussed in this guideline, 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.), and the organization can be further subdivided into Branches.

Branches may be established on an incident to serve several purposes. However, they are only sometimes essential to the organization of the Operations Section.

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

- Geographical
- Span of Control
- Functional
- Multi-jurisdictional

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

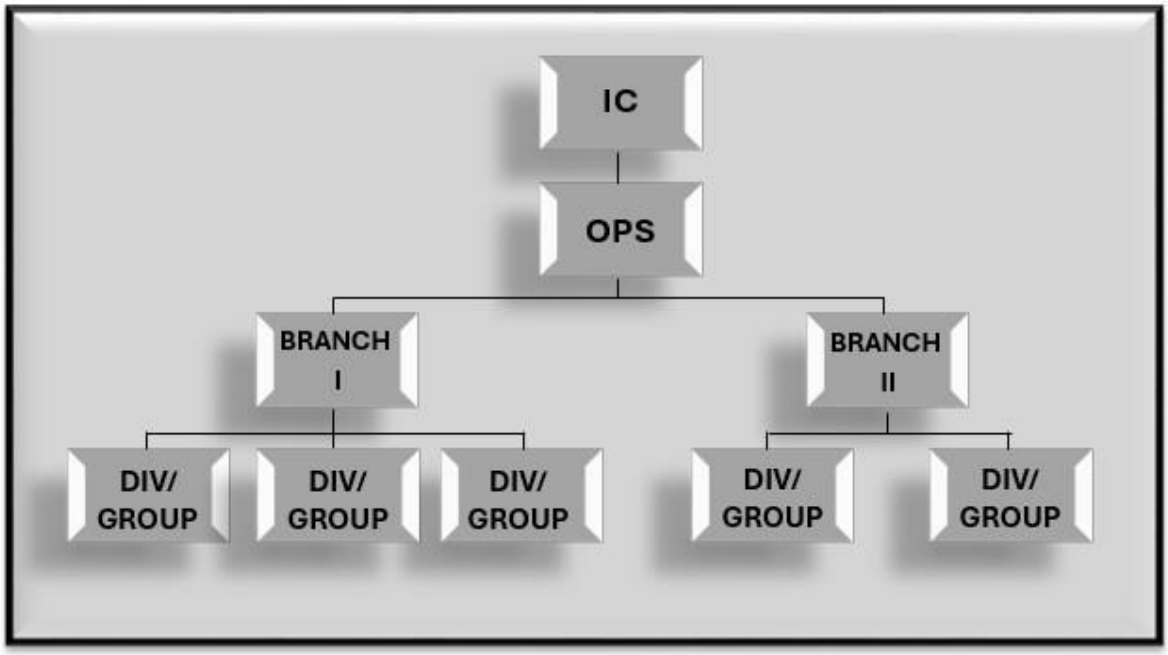
Branches should operate in their area of responsibility on separate radio channels and communicate to Operations on a different channel if possible. The radio designation of Branches should reflect the objective of the Branch when designating functional

branches (i.e., Haz Mat Branch, Multi-Casualty Branch, etc.). Geographical Branches are designatednumerically (i.e., Branch I, Branch II, Branch III, etc.). When Operations implements BranchDirectors, the Division/Group Supervisors should be notified of their new supervisor. This information should include:

1. To what Branch the Division/Group is now assigned, and the Branch Identifier
2. The radio channel on which the Branch and Division/Group are operating on
3. Branch responsibilities (Functional/Geographical)

Radio communications should be directed from the Division/Group Supervisor to the Branch Directors – instead of Operations. Division/Group Supervisors will relay this informationto the companies in their tactical operating area.

The Branch Director may be located at the Incident Command Post or at operational locations. When located at the Incident Command Post, the Branch Director can communicate face-to-face with the Operations Section Chief and/or Incident Commander. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area, having the Branch Director in tactical locations within their Branch may be more effective.



Multi-Branch Response organization chart

Organizational Structure:

The ICS organizational structure develops modularly based on 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 can be developed, each with several units established. The specific organizational structure established for any given incident will be based on the management needs of the incident. No further organization is required if one individual can simultaneously manage all major functional areas. If one or more areas require independent management, an individual is named to be responsible for that area.

For further explanation of the Incident Command System and expansion of the organizational structure, reference FIRESCOPE Field Operations Guide 420-1.

Summary

The overall mission of the fire service is to protect lives, property, and the environment and provide for firefighter safety. This document aims to provide a standard to which the incident command system is applied to structure fires.

This document is intended to assist officers' experience, initiative, and ingenuity in overcoming fireground complexities. It highlights the essential components of the incident command system tailored for structure fires. It emphasizes effective management through comprehensive risk assessment, a 360 evaluation, prompt command establishment, and appropriate resource allocation.

This document was revised with collective input from various agencies throughout California. Consideration was given to all fire agencies of various sizes and capabilities to meet the guidelines outlined within this document.

This document is designed to be consistently reviewed and revised as the dynamics of the fireground evolve. A periodic review of best industry practices will keep this living document current. Relevancy ensures that FIRESCOPE Structure Fire Operations ICS-500 will remain one of the guiding documents for structural firefighting operations.

APPENDIX A:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

FIRESCOPE GLOSSARY OF TERMS ICS-010-1

Agency Representative: Individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperatingagency who has been delegated full authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agencies 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 withthe Incident Commander.

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 serviceresources to another agency.

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

Branch: That organizational level having functional/geographic responsibility for significant segments of incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between Section andDivision/Group.

Buddy System: Two individuals working as a team in the hazard area and two individuals present outside this hazard area for assistance or rescue at emergency operations where entryinto the danger area is required. The standby members shall be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number and identity of members operating in the hazardous area, their location and function, and time of entry. The standby members shall remain in radio, visual, voice or signal line communications with the team (NFPA 1500 6-4.4).

CAN Report: A field report from personnel operating on the fire ground to Command thatincludes three elements:

C - Conditions (Current fire conditions)
A - Actions (A description of the actions that they are taking)
N - Needs (A request for any resource needs)

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

Command Post (ICP): That location at which primary incident command functions areexecuted, usually co-located with the Incident Base.

Command Staff: The Command Staff consists of the Information Officer, Safety Officer, andLiaison Officer who report directly to the Incident Commander.

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

Company Officer: 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 (EngineCompany, Truck Company, Rescue Company, etc.).

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, utility company, etc.).

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 (three to seven). A Crew operatesunder the direct supervision of a Crew Leader.

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

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

Division: 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.

Emergency Traffic: "Emergency traffic" shall be used as a designator to clear the radio traffic for an emergency affecting the incident and can be declared by any member who becomes aware of an emergency affecting the incident. When a memberdeclares "emergency traffic," that person shall use clear text to identify the type of emergency, change in conditions, or tactical operations. Once the emergency is concluded, the IC shall transmit the message "all clear, resume radio traffic" to end the emergency situation or to re-open the radio channels to communication after announcing the emergency message.

Engine Company: A ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water, hosecapacity and personnel.

Finance Unit: Responsible for all costs and financial actions of the incident. Includes theTime Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and the Cost Unit.

Flow Path: The movement of heat and smoke from the higher pressure within the fire area toall lower air pressure areas both inside and outside of a fire building.

Formal Command: Within the Incident Command System (ICS), refers to the established hierarchy of authority and responsibility for managing an incident. It typically involves the appointment of an Incident Commander (IC) who holds overall responsibility for directing the response efforts, making strategic decisions, and

ensuring coordination among all involved parties. The IC operates within a structured framework to effectively manage the incident and ensure the safety of responders and the public.

General Staff: The group of incident management personnel comprised of the OperationsSection Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance Section Chief.

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

Incident Action Plan (IAP): The strategic goals, tactical objectives, and support requirementsfor 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 Clock: The fire department communications center should start an incident clock forworking structure fires or hazardous materials incidents, or when other conditions appear to betime sensitive or dangerous. The dispatch center shall notify the incident commander at predetermined incremental time periods that resources have been on the incident until the fire is knocked down or the incident becomes static. The incident commander shall be permitted tocancel the incident clock notification through the fire department communications center basedon the incident conditions.

Incident Command System (ICS): An Incident Management System with a standard organizational structure with responsibility for the management of assigned resources toeffectively accomplish stated objectives pertaining to an incident.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for the management of all incidentoperations.

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

Initial Attack: Resources initially committed to an incident.

Ladder Company: See Truck Company.

Leader: The individual responsible for command of a Task Force, Strike Team, or FunctionalUnit.

Liaison Officer: The point of contact for assisting or coordinating agencies. Member of theCommand Staff.

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

Mayday: “Mayday” shall be used as the designator to identify when a member is in a life-threatening situation and in need of immediate assistance and can be declared by any member who becomes aware of a member who is in a life-threatening situation and in need ofimmediate assistance. The incident commander shall conclude the “Mayday” by transmitting “Mayday cleared, resume normal radio traffic.”

Officer: The Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information.

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

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

Out-of-Service Resources: Resources assigned to an incident but unable to respond formechanical, rest, or personnel reasons.

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

Rescue Company: A unit providing specified rescue equipment, capability, and personnel.

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

Responder Rehab (Rehabilitation): That function and location that shall include medicalevaluation and treatment, food and fluid replenishment, and relief from extreme climatic conditions for emergency responders, according to the circumstances of the incident.

Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (RIC) A crew or company designated to standby in astate of readiness to rescue emergency personnel.

Safety Officer: Responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, 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, Finance/Administration. TheSection level is organizationally between Branch and Incident Commander.

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).

Single Resource: An individual Company or Crew.

Staging Area: That location where incident personnel and equipment are assigned on animmediately available status.

Strategic Goals: The overall plan that will be used to control the incident. Strategic goals arebroad 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 communicationsand a leader.

Supervisor: Individuals responsible for Command of a Division/Group.

Tactical Objectives: The specific operations that must be accomplished to achieve strategic goals. Tactical objectives must be both specific and measurable. Tactical operations are typically handled at the Division/Group level or below.

Task Force: A group of any type and kind of resources with common communications and aleader 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 fire behavior, water resources, environmental concerns, resource use, and training. Technical Specialists report initially to thePlanning Section but may be assigned anywhere within the ICS organizational structure as needed.

Transitional Fire Attack: In the context of firefighting strategy where firefighters initially attack a fire from the exterior of a structure before transitioning to an interior attack. This approach allows firefighters to quickly knock down the bulk of the fire from a safer position outside the structure before entering to fully extinguish the remaining fire and perform search and rescue operations inside. The goal is to gain control of the fire more efficiently while minimizing risks to firefighters and occupants.

Truck Company: A ground vehicle providing an aerial ladder or other aerial device andspecified portable ladders and equipment capability and personnel.

Unit: That organization element having functional responsibility for a specific incident'sPlanning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration activity.

VEIS: Vent-Enter-Isolate-Search. A method of searching for fire victims that consists of ventilating an enclosed space, such as a bedroom, closing the door to isolate the room from the fire, and then quickly searching for any possible victims.

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

APPENDIX B:

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

Integrated Communications

Communications at the incident are managed through the use of a standard communications plan and an incident-based communications center established solely for the use of tactical and support resources assigned to the incident. All communications between organizational elements at an incident should be in plain English (“clear text”). No codes should be used, andall communications should be confined only to essential messages. The Communications Unitis responsible for all communications planning at the incident. This will include incident- established radio networks, on-site telephone, public address, and off-incident telephone/microwave/radio systems.

Radio Networks Radio networks for large incidents will usually be organized as follows:

Command Frequency	This net should link together Incident Command, key staff members, Section Chiefs, Division and Group Supervisors.
Tactical Frequency	There may be several tactical nets. 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 net will be established primarily to handle status-changing for resources as well as for support requests and certain other non-tactical or command functions.
Air to Ground Net	A Air to Ground tactical net may be designated or regular tactical nets may be used to coordinate Air to Ground traffic.
Air-to-Air Net	Air-to-air nets will normally be pre-designated and assigned for use at the incident.

APPENDIX C:

SAMPLE TACTICAL WORKSHEETS

Sample Tactical Worksheets

California fire departments can utilize the ICS 201 or create a Tactical Worksheet that meets the minimum information standard of the ICS 201.

FIRESCOPE Form ICS 201

APPENDIX D:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND TACTICAL PRIORITIES

Strategic Objectives and Tactical Priorities

Scientific studies conducted by the International Society of Fire Service Instructors and Underwriters Laboratories have shown that structure fires today are more volatile than in yearspast due to an increase in synthetics used in furnishings, lightweight building construction, and energy-efficient features in structures. These new fuels and construction techniques have challenged the fire service to reevaluate how it extinguishes structure fires.

As the command officer arrives, **RECEO-VS** is an effective acronym to use for overall strategic objectives guiding the incident. The acronym **SLICERS** was created to guide initial engine company operations. It is effective as an initial attack sequence for the initial arriving officer to determine tactical priorities.

RECEO-VS

RECEO-VS continues to be effective from a command perspective to recall incident prioritiesafter the initial engine company's actions to ensure rescue has been made, exposures managed, and extinguishment taken place. The ventilation and rescue components can be accomplished at any time that a need or opportunity arises.

Rescue: Human life is the most important consideration at an incident. Tactics employed towards removing people from the hazardous environment must be the priority.

Exposure Protection: Preventing a fire from spreading to uninvolved buildings or separateunits. After determining that no people are inside a fire building, initial efforts may be the protection of nearby buildings.

Confinement: Preventing the fire from extending to uninvolved portions of the building. A common example is a strip mall with a common attic. Tactics must be employed to stop the firefrom spreading throughout the building via the attic or other corridors of travel.

Extinguishment: This is simply putting water on the fire. The proper method of extinguishment is incident-driven. The size of the fire, the site type and age of the construction, and the contents of the occupancy must all be considered when determining the tactics for extinguishment.

Overhaul: Ensuring that the fire is completely out is the purpose of overhaul. This is a dangerous aspect of the incident. Personnel are more relaxed, tired, and perhaps less alert. The danger of collapse is an issue during the overhaul portion of the incident. Dangerous gasses are still present, and personnel may be tempted to remove their breathing apparatus. Also, if aninvestigator has been requested for the incident, it is imperative the overhaul process is coordinated with the investigator so that important evidence is not destroyed.

Ventilation: Ventilation may need to occur at any time in the incident for different reasons andmay utilize different tactics.

Salvage: After the preservation of life, the conservation of property is one of the most important tenets of the fire service-yet often overlooked. Salvage operations include, but are not limited to, the removal of property from the structure and the protection of property from water damage. Prior to leaving the incident, crews should consider actions that can be taken toprotect the property from weather and intruders.

SLICERS

The first five actions are sequential:

Size up: Consists of three components. The first component is all of the information the Incident Commander had prior to the incident (weather conditions, staffing, pre-fire plan information, etc.) The second component is the information garnered when the Incident Commander arrives on scene and conducts a 360 walk around. These may include type of occupancy, visual smoke and fire, reports of victims, etc. The final component recognizes thatsize-up is a continuous process throughout the incident.

Locate the fire: The location of the fire, as well as the location of super-heated gasses produced by the fire, need to be determined. An effective tool to help locate the fire is theuse of a thermal imaging camera, if available.

Identify and control flow path: If a flow path is identified, attempt to control it by controlling thedoor or window. Forcible entry openings should be considered as ventilation. Simply openingthe door can cause increases in temperatures inside the fire building. If a flow path is not present, don't create one until resources are properly positioned.

Cool the space from the safest location: Early application of water is important to reduce the thermal threat to firefighters. Water has been shown to improve the conditions of the fire building forthe occupants and firefighters. Given the information from the size-up, location of the fire, and flowpath, a decision is made on where and how to cool the super-heated area of the building. Thewater may be applied from the exterior if appropriate, or interior application may be needed to cool the heated compartments (large buildings, attic fires).

Extinguish the fire: Completely extinguish the fire with direct water application.

The final two actions are actions of opportunity and can be taken at any point duringoperations:

Rescue: Life safety is the highest tactical priority on the fireground, personnel may have an opportunity to remove trapped or endangered occupants any time during an incident.

Salvage: Personnel should use compartmentalization to control fire spread and smoke whenpossible. Proper water application and removal of property from the structure also increases salvage.