



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 801 – Incident Command System

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.01 THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)

- A. ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.
- B. ICS has considerable internal flexibility. It can grow or shrink to meet different needs. This flexibility makes it a very cost effective and efficient management approach for both small and large situations.

.02 THE INCIDENT COMMANDER

A. Incident Commander's Overall Role:

- 1. The Incident Commander has overall responsibility for managing the incident by objectives, planning strategies, and implementing tactics. The Incident Commander must be fully briefed and should have a written delegation of authority. Initially, assigning tactical resources and overseeing operations will be under the direct supervision of the Incident Commander.
- 2. Personnel assigned by the Incident Commander have the authority of their assigned positions, regardless of the rank they hold within their respective agencies.

B. Incident Commander Responsibilities:

- 1. In addition to having overall responsibility for managing the entire incident, the Incident Commander is specifically responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring incident safety;
 - b. Providing information services to internal and external stakeholders;
 - c. Establishing and maintaining liaison with other agencies participating in the incident.
- 2. The Incident Commander may appoint one or more Deputies, if applicable, from the same agency or from other agencies or jurisdictions. Deputy Incident Commanders must be as qualified as the Incident Commander.

C. Selecting and Changing Incident Commanders:

- 1. As incidents expand or contract, change in jurisdiction or discipline, or become more or less complex, command may change to meet the needs of the incident;
- 2. Rank, grade, and seniority are not the factors used to select the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander is always a highly qualified individual trained to lead the incident response;
- 3. Formal transfer of command at an incident always requires a transfer of command briefing for the incoming Incident Commander and notification to all personnel that a change in command is taking place.



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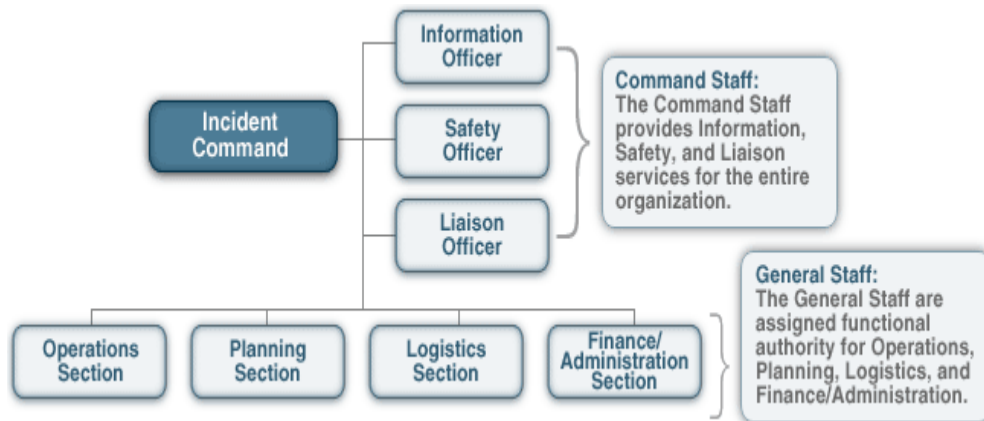


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.03 COMMAND STAFF

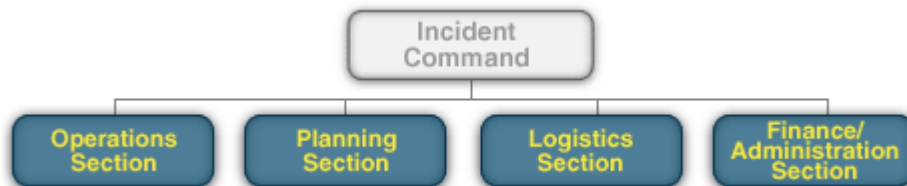
Depending upon the size and type of incident or event, it may be necessary for the Incident Commander to designate personnel to provide information, safety, and liaison services for the entire organization. In ICS, these personnel make up the Command Staff and consist of the:

- A. Public Information Officer, who serves as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders, including the media or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event;
- B. Safety Officer, who monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel;
- C. Liaison Officer, who serves as the primary contact for supporting agencies assisting at an incident;
- D. The Command Staff reports directly to the Incident Commander.



.04 GENERAL STAFF

- A. Expansion of the incident may also require the delegation of authority for the performance of the other management functions. The people who perform the other four management functions are designated as the General Staff. The General Staff is made up of four Sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.



- B. The General Staff reports directly to the Incident Commander.

.05 ICS SECTION CHIEFS AND DEPUTIES

- A. As mentioned previously, the person in charge of each Section is designated as a Chief. Section Chiefs have the ability to expand their Section to meet the needs of the situation. Each of the Section Chiefs may have a Deputy, or more than one, if necessary. The Deputy:



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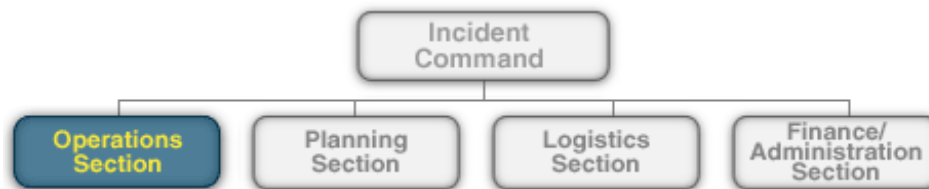


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1. May assume responsibility for a specific portion of the primary position, work as relief, or be assigned other tasks;
 2. Should always be as proficient as the person for whom he or she works.
- B. In large incidents, especially where multiple disciplines or jurisdictions are involved, the use of Deputies from other organizations can greatly increase interagency coordination.

.06 OPERATIONS SECTION

- A. Until Operations is established as a separate Section, the Incident Commander has direct control of tactical resources. The Incident Commander will determine the need for a separate Operations Section at an incident or event. When the Incident Commander activates an Operations Section, he or she will assign an individual as the Operations Section Chief;



B. Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief will develop and manage the Operations Section to accomplish the incident objectives set by the Incident Commander. The Operations Section Chief is normally the person with the greatest technical and tactical expertise in dealing with the problem at hand;

C. Operations Section: Maintaining Span of Control

1. The Operations function is where the tactical fieldwork is done. Therefore, most incident resources are assigned to the Operations Section. Often the most hazardous activities are carried out there. Because of this, it is necessary to monitor carefully the number of resources that report to any one supervisor. The following supervisory levels can be added to help manage span of control:
 - a. Divisions are used to divide an incident geographically;
 - b. Groups are used to describe functional areas of operation;
 - c. Branches are used when the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control and can be either geographical or functional.

D. Operations Section: Divisions

1. Divisions are used to divide an incident geographically. The person in charge of each Division is designated as a Supervisor. How the area is divided is determined by the needs of the incident;
2. The most common way to identify Divisions is by using alphabet characters (A, B, C, etc.). Other identifiers may be used as long as Division identifiers are known by assigned responders;
3. The important thing to remember about ICS Divisions is that they are established to divide an incident into geographical areas of operation.



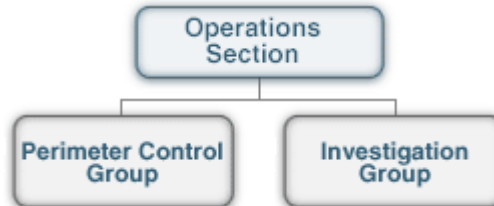
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E. Operations Section: Groups

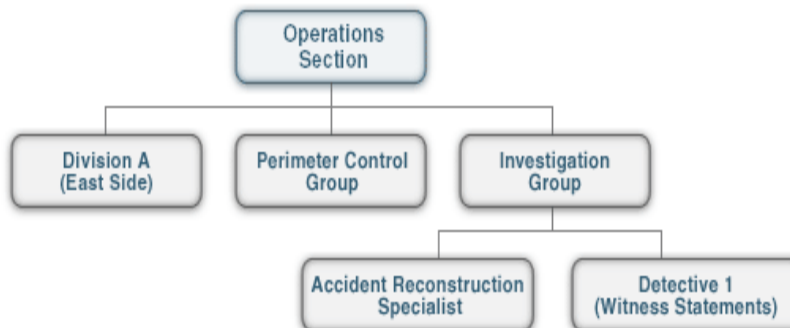
1. Groups are used to describe functional areas of operation. The person in charge of each Group is designated as a Supervisor;



2. The kind of Group to be established will also be determined by the needs of an incident. Groups are normally labeled according to the job that they are assigned (e.g., Human Services Group, Infrastructure Support Group, etc.). Groups will work wherever their assigned task is needed and are not limited geographically.

F. Operations Section: Divisions and Groups

1. Divisions and Groups can be used together on an incident. Divisions and Groups are at an equal level in the organization. One does not supervise the other. When a Group is working within a Division on a special assignment, Division and Group Supervisors must closely coordinate their activities.





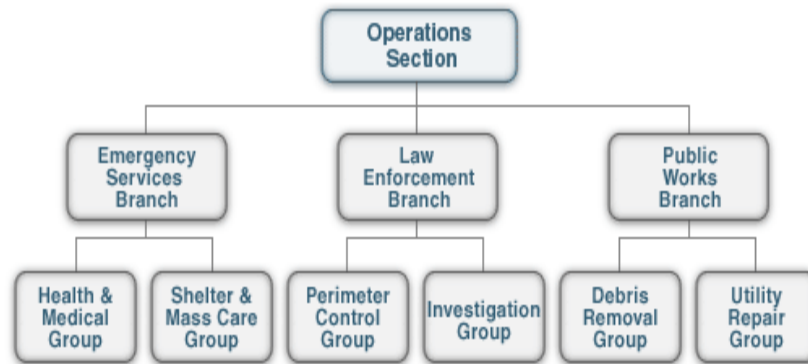
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G. Operations Section: Establishing Branches

1. If the number of Divisions or Groups exceeds the span of control, it may be necessary to establish another level of organization within the Operations Section, called Branches. The person in charge of each Branch is designated as a Director. Deputies may also be used at the Branch level. Branches can be comprised of Groups or Divisions—or can be a combination of both.



H. Operations Section: Branches, Other Factors

1. While span of control is a common reason to establish Branches, additional considerations may also indicate the need to use these Branches, including:
 - a. Multi-discipline Incidents. Some incidents have multiple disciplines involved (e.g., Firefighting, Health and Medical, Hazardous Materials, Public Works and Engineering, Energy, etc.) that may create the need to set up incident operations around a functional Branch structure;
 - b. Multi-jurisdiction Incidents. In some incidents it may be better to organize the incident around jurisdictional lines. In these situations, Branches may be set up to reflect jurisdictional boundaries;
 - c. Very Large Incidents. Very large incidents may be organized using geographic or functional Branches.

I. Managing the Operations Section

While there are any number of ways to organize field responses, Groups and Branches may be used to organize resources and maintain span of control.

J. Operations Section: Expanding and Contracting

1. The Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief at an incident may work initially with only a few single resources or staff members;



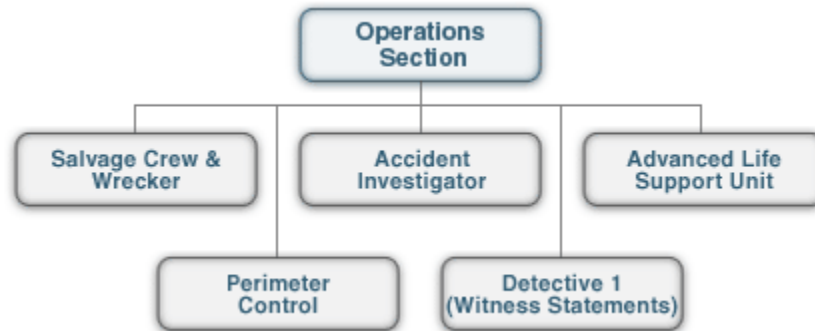


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- The Operations Section usually develops from the bottom up. The organization will expand to include needed levels of supervision as more and more resources are deployed;



- Task Forces are a combination of mixed resources with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Leader. Task Forces can be versatile combinations of resources and their use is encouraged. The combining of resources into Task Forces allows for several resource elements to be managed under one individual's supervision, thus lessening the span of control of the Supervisor;



- Strike Teams are a set number of resources of the same kind and type with common communications operating under the direct supervision of a Strike Team Leader. Strike Teams are highly effective management units. The foreknowledge that all elements have the same capability and the knowledge of how many will be applied allows for better planning, ordering, utilization and management;



- Single Resources may be individuals, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified supervisor that can be used at an incident;



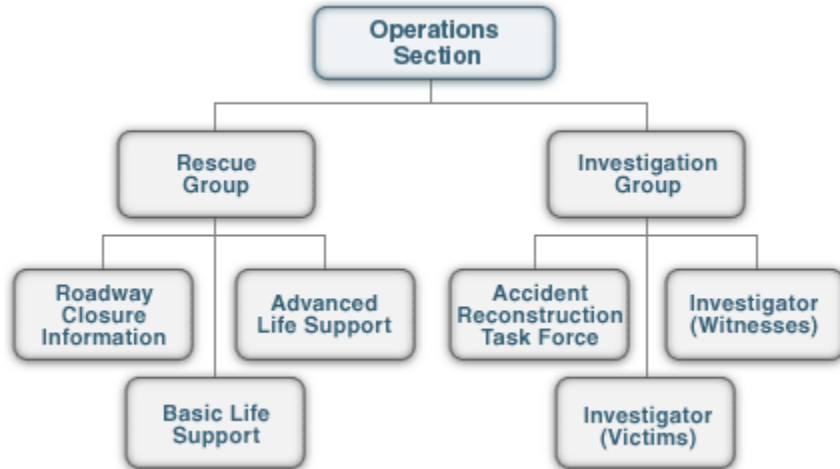


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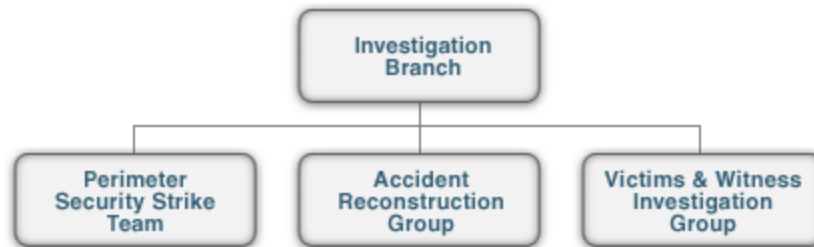


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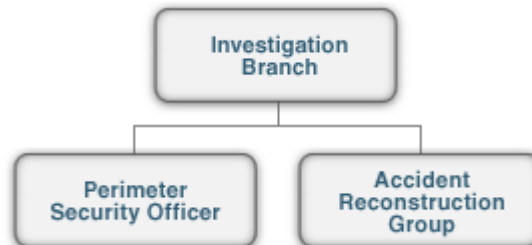
6. Maintaining span of control can be done easily by grouping resources into Groups or Branches;



7. Another way to add supervision levels is to create Branches within the Operations Section;



8. At some point, the Operations Section and the rest of the ICS organization will contract. The decision to contract will be based on the achievement of tactical objectives. Demobilization planning begins upon activation of the first personnel and continues until the ICS organization ceases operation.



.07 PLANNING SECTION

The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Planning Section and designate a Planning Section Chief. If no Planning Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all planning functions. It is up to the Planning Section Chief to activate any needed additional staffing.



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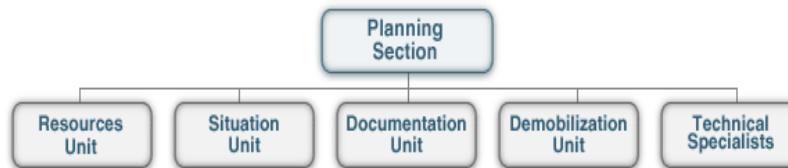
A. Planning Section: Major Activities

The major activities of the Planning Section may include:

1. Collecting, evaluating, and displaying incident intelligence and information;
2. Preparing and documenting Incident Action Plans;
3. Conducting long-range and/or contingency planning;
4. Developing plans for demobilization;
5. Maintaining incident documentation;
6. Tracking resources assigned to the incident.

B. Planning Section: Units

1. The Planning Section can be further staffed with four Units. Technical Specialists may also be assigned to work in the Planning Section. Depending on the needs, Technical Specialists may also be assigned to other Sections in the organization:



- a. Resources Unit: Conducts all check-in activities and maintains the status of all incident resources. The Resources Unit plays a significant role in preparing the written Incident Action Plan;
- b. Situation Unit: Collects and analyzes information on the current situation, prepares situation displays and situation summaries, and develops maps and projections;
- c. Documentation Unit: Provides duplication services, including the written Incident Action Plan. Maintains and archives all incident-related documentation;
- d. Demobilization Unit: Assists in ensuring that resources are released from the incident in an orderly, safe, and cost-effective manner.

.08 LOGISTICS SECTION

The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Logistics Section at the incident, and designate an individual to fill the position of the Logistics Section Chief. If no Logistics Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all logistical functions. The size of the incident, complexity of support needs, and the incident length will be considered by the Incident Commander to determine whether a separate Logistics Section is established. Additional staffing is the responsibility of the Logistics Section Chief.

A. Logistics Section: Major Activities

The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs, including:



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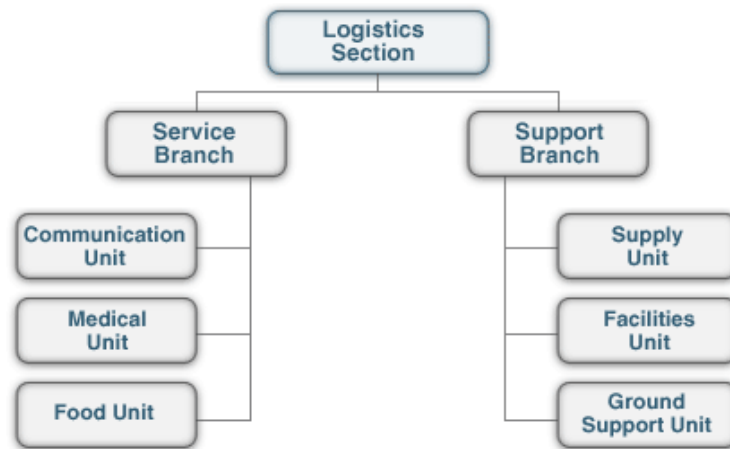


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1. Ordering, obtaining, maintaining, and accounting for essential personnel, equipment, and supplies;
2. Providing communication planning and resources;
3. Setting up food services;
4. Setting up and maintaining incident facilities;
5. Providing support transportation;
6. Providing medical services to incident personnel.

B. Logistics Section: Branches and Units

The Logistics Section can be further staffed by two Branches and six Units. Not all of the Units may be required; they will be established based on need. The titles of the Units are descriptive of their responsibilities.



C. The Logistics Service Branch can be staffed to include a:

1. **Communication Unit:** Prepares and implements the Incident Communication Plan (ICS-205), distributes and maintains communications equipment, supervises the Incident Communications Center, and establishes adequate communications over the incident;
2. **Medical Unit:** Develops the Medical Plan (ICS-206), provides first aid and light medical treatment for personnel assigned to the incident, and prepares procedures for a major medical emergency;
3. **Food Unit:** Supplies the food and potable water for all incident facilities and personnel, and obtains the necessary equipment and supplies to operate food service facilities at Bases and Camps;

D. The Logistics Support Branch can be staffed to include a:

1. **Supply Unit:** Determines the type and amount of supplies needed to support the incident. The Unit orders, receives, stores, and distributes supplies, and services nonexpendable equipment. All resource orders are placed through the Supply Unit. The Unit maintains inventory and accountability of supplies and equipment;
2. **Facilities Unit:** Sets up and maintains required facilities to support the incident. Provides managers for the Incident Base and Camps. Also responsible for facility security and facility maintenance services: sanitation, lighting, cleanup;



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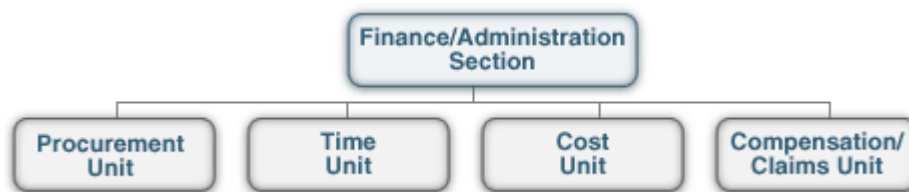
3. Ground Support Unit: Prepares the Transportation Plan. Arranges for, activates, and documents the fueling, maintenance, and repair of ground resources. Arranges for the transportation of personnel, supplies, food, and equipment.

.09 FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION

- A. The Incident Commander will determine if there is a need for a Finance/Administration Section at the incident and designate an individual to fill the position of the Finance/Administration Section Chief;
- B. If no Finance/Administration Section is established, the Incident Commander will perform all finance functions;
- C. Finance/Administration Section is set up for any incident that requires incident-specific financial management. The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:
 1. Contract negotiation and monitoring;
 2. Timekeeping;
 3. Cost analysis;
 4. Compensation for injury or damage to property.
- D. Finance/Administration Section: Increasing Use
 1. Increasing larger incidents are using a Finance/Administration Section to monitor costs. Smaller incidents may also require certain Finance/Administration support;
 2. For example, the Finance/Administration Section Chief may establish one or more Units of the Finance/Administration Section for such things as procuring special equipment, contracting with a vendor, or making cost estimates for alternative response strategies.

E. Finance/Administration Section: Units

The Finance/Administration Section may staff four Units. Not all Units may be required; they will be established based on need;



1. Procurement Unit: Responsible for administering all financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts, leases, and fiscal agreements;
2. Time Unit: Responsible for incident personnel time recording;
3. Cost Unit: Collects all cost data, performs cost effectiveness analyses, provides cost estimates, and makes cost savings recommendations;
4. Compensation/Claims Unit: Responsible for the overall management and direction of all administrative matters pertaining to compensation for injury and claims related activities kept for the incident.



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.10 ICS MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

A. Common Terminology and Clear Text

1. A critical part of an effective multi-agency incident management system is for all communications to be in plain English. That is, use clear text. Do not use radio codes, agency-specific codes, or jargon;
2. Even if you use radio codes on a daily basis, other responders may not. The goal is to ensure responders from all agencies can communicate with one another.

B. Modular Organization

1. In ICS, only those functions or positions necessary for a particular incident will be filled;
2. The ICS organizational structure is flexible. When needed, separate functional elements can be established and subdivided to enhance internal organizational management and external coordination. As the ICS organizational structure expands, the number of management positions also expands to adequately address the requirements of the incident;
3. The ICS organizational structure develops in a top-down, modular fashion that is based on the size and complexity of the incident, as well as the specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident. As incident complexity increases, the organization expands from the top down as functional responsibilities are delegated.

C. Management by Objectives

All levels of a growing ICS organization must have a clear understanding of the functional actions required to manage the incident. Management by objectives is an approach used to communicate functional actions throughout the entire ICS organization. It can be accomplished through the incident action planning process, which includes the following steps:

1. Step 1: Understand agency policy and direction;
2. Step 2: Assess incident situation;
3. Step 3: Establish incident objectives;
4. Step 4: Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives;
5. Step 5: Perform tactical direction (applying tactics appropriate to the strategy, assigning the right resources, and monitoring their performance);
6. Step 6: Provide necessary follow-up (changing strategy or tactics, adding or subtracting resources, etc.).

D. Reliance on an Incident Action Plan

1. Incident Action Plans provide a coherent means of communicating the overall incident objectives in the context of both operational and support activities. The plan may be oral or written except for hazardous materials incidents, which require a written IAP.
2. At the simplest level, all Incident Action Plans (oral or written) must have four elements:
 - a. What do we want to do?
 - b. Who is responsible for doing it?



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- c. How do we communicate with each other?
- d. What is the procedure if someone is injured?

E. Manageable Span of Control

- 1. Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during emergency response incidents or special events. Maintaining an effective span of control is particularly important on incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority;
- 2. Span of control is the key to effective and efficient incident management. The type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources all influence span of control considerations;
- 3. Effective span of control on incidents may vary from three (3) to seven (7) reporting elements, and a ratio of one (1) supervisor to five (5) reporting elements is recommended;
- 4. If the number of reporting elements falls outside of these ranges, expansion or consolidation of the organization may be necessary. There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.

F. Pre-designated Incident Locations and Facilities

- 1. Incident activities may be accomplished from a variety of operational locations and support facilities;
- 2. Facilities will be identified and established by the Incident Commander depending on the requirements and complexity of the incident or event.