COMMAND

INTRODUCTION

Despite the ideal availability of tested and ready resources, the highest skill proficiencies of personnel, and the most favorable circumstances of time and weather, an emergency response effort can only be as effective as its command structure is sound.

The authoritative control of actions performed to minimize the multifaceted threat of any emergency depends not only upon "the person-in-charge" but also upon a practiced and disciplined chain-of-command and a support system that guarantees the timely flow and integration of information and resources into a coordinated effort. Leadership is not to be measured in terms of some vaporous, innate capacity of the individual but, rather, in the objective evidence of smoothly coordinated, flexible, self-correcting, purposeful, and effective actions.

Whether there is advance notice or not, and regardless of its initial nature, any emergency may rapidly expand in extent and complexity, with high risk not only for responding personnel but also for the surrounding community. Moreover, given the social and political complexity of contemporary society, any emergency is highly likely to involve the response services and diverse jurisdictional authorities and responsibilities of a multitude of local, state, and/or national governmental agencies. The command structure of effective emergency response, therefore, must (a) be flexible enough to control emergencies of any type or size, including routine and major emergencies, and (b) provide for the efficient and effective integration of diverse response services and responsible authorities.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a single standard incident management system, originally developed (1980) in California in response

to the threat of wildland fires, that has rapidly become the command system used not only by all U.S. Federal agencies having wildland fire management responsibilities, but also by a large number of U.S. Federal and state agencies as well as operational agencies of other nations that have jurisdictional authority over various types of emergencies, including: fires; oil and hazardous chemical releases; earthquakes, storms and other natural disasters; and terrorism.

The basic organization if ICS (Fig. 4.1) includes five key functional groups referred to as Sections:

I. Command

In incidents involving responders from a single jurisdictional authority (i.e., a single-jurisdiction incident), the Incident Commander (IC) is the individual who has final responsibility for the management of response
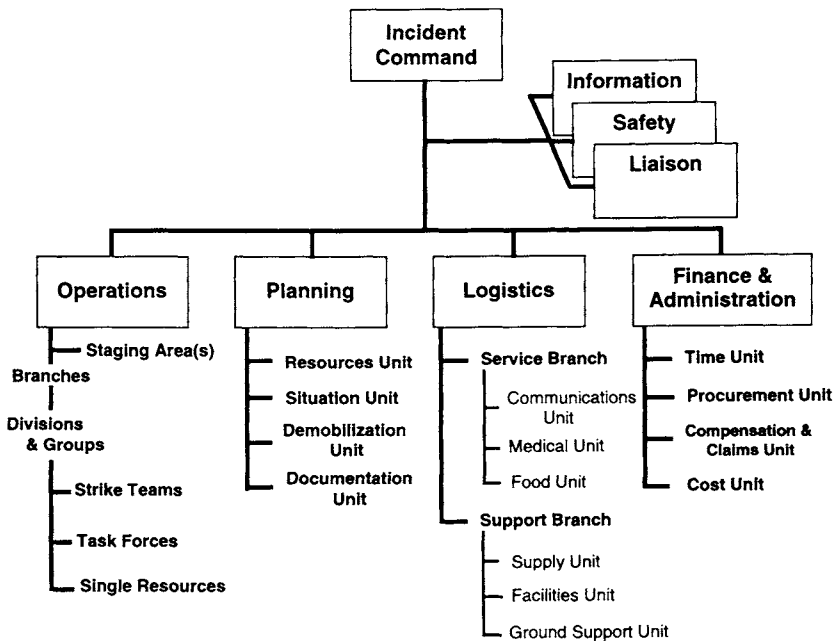

FIGURE 4.1   Overview of structure of incident command system (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 3 [NFES No. 2443]).
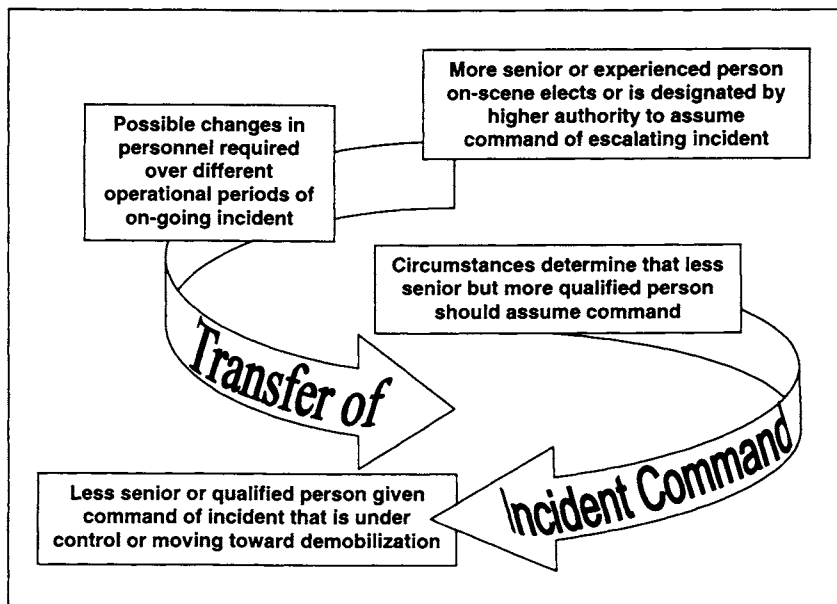
FIGURE 4.2   Circumstances typically involving transfer of incident command.

activity. Depending upon various circumstances (Fig. 4.2), Incident Command may be transferred from one individual to another.

In incidents involving more than one agency (i.e., a multijurisdiction or multiagency incident), the command function is assumed by the Unified Command (UC), which may consist of a number of different Federal and state officials as well as other authorities (e.g., emergency coordinator(s) from the industrial facility(ies) primarily involved in the incident). However, whether the command function is assumed by the IC or the UC, there is always one person who has final responsibility for the overall response effort.

2. Operations

Operations is responsible for directing and coordinating all tactical operations required by the response effort. At the time of an initial response, operations consists essentially of the first responders, who report directly to the IC; however, depending upon the developing incident, operations may expand or contract, becoming a separate Operations Section under an Operations Section Chief if the incident significantly expands in geographic extent and/or complexity.

3. Planning

Depending on need, the IC may establish a Planning Section under a Planning Section Chief, having responsibility for preparing and maintaining specific plans (e.g., Incident Action Plan; Demobilization Plan) and status reports (resources committed to the response; available backup resources) required by command and operations. Of special importance is the need to anticipate problems and situations that may occur as the incident expands.

4. Logistics

Logistics is inclusive of all services performed to support personnel and other resources (e.g., vehicles) assigned to response activities. As established by the IC, the Logistics Section (under the Logistics Section Chief) provides for communications, medical support to responders, food for responders, supply (personnel, equipment, and other needed supplies), facilities, and ground support (i.e., transportation vehicles, fuel for vehicles).

5. Finance/Administration

Until such a time as a Finance/Administration Section may be activated by the IC, the IC is responsible for all finance-related activities. Upon activation, this section is responsible for (a) monitoring all costs related to the incident, and (b) procuring and administering any contracts required to implement the response effort.

Perhaps the most useful way to appreciate the overall structure of ICS is to compare the basic functions of ICS to the basic needs of any objective-oriented team effort, whether related to incident response or not. For example, any effort that depends upon coordination among team members to achieve specific objectives requires the following:

• Someone with clear authority and responsibility for making key decisions and who gives specific direction to the overall effort. This is the ICS *Command* function.

• Personnel with the clear responsibility for carrying out the decisions made by responsible authority. This is the ICS *Operations* function.

• Personnel who can provide on-going information on actual and potential changes in circumstances and provide alternative plans for consideration by responsible decision-makers. This is the ICS *Planning* function.

• Personnel who can provide the basic tools (e.g., personnel, materials, equipment, supplies) needed to accomplish specific tasks. This is the ICS *Logistics* function.

Incident Commander

The Incident Commander is the overall manager of the incident. In single-jurisdiction incidents, the command is carried out by a single Incident Commander. In multi-jurisdiction incidents, command may involve a number of individuals having specific jurisdictional authority and responsibility; however, even in multi-jurisdiction incidents, there is always one person who is ultimately in charge.

Major Responsibilities:

- Assess the situation and/or obtain a briefing from the prior Incident Commander
- Determine incident objectives and strategy
- Establish immediate priorities
- Establish an Incident Command Post
- Establish an appropriate organization
- Ensure planning meetings are scheduled as required
- Approve and authorize the implementation of an Incident Action Plan
- Ensure that adequate safety measures are in place
- Coordinate activity for all Command and General Staff
- Coordinate with key people and officials
- Approve requests for additional resources or for the release of resources
- Keep agency administrator informed of incident status
- Approve the use of trainees, volunteers, and auxiliary personnel
- Authorize release of information to the news media
- Order the demobilization of the incident when appropriate

Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for managing all tactical operations at an incident. The Incident Action Plan provides the necessary guidance. The need to expand the Operations Sections is generally dictated by the number of tactical resources involved and is influenced by span of control considerations.

Major Responsibilities:

- Manage tactical operations
- Ensure interaction is taking place with other agencies
- Assist in the development of the operations portion of the Incident Action Plan
- Supervise the execution of the operations portion of the Incident Action Plan
- Maintain close contact with subordinate positions
- Ensure safe Tactical operations
- Request additional resources to support tactical operations
- Approve release of resources from active assignments (not from the incident itself)
- Make or approve expedient changes to the operations portion of the incident Action Plan
- Maintain close communication with the Incident Commander

FIGURE 4.3 Major responsibilities of incident commander and section chiefs in ICS (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 12).

- Personnel who can provide the financial and administrative tools needed to undertake and complete the effort. This is the ICS *Finance & Administration* function.

Planning Section Chief

The Planning Section Chief is responsible for providing planning and status services for the incident. Under the direction of the Planning Section Chief, the Planning Section collects situation and resources status information, evaluates it, and processes the information for use in developing action plans. Dissemination of information can be in the form of the Incident Action Plan, formal briefings, or through map and status board displays.

Major Responsibilities:

- Collect and manage all incident-relevant operational data
- Provide input to the Incident Commander and Operations Sections Chief for use in preparing the Incident Action Plan
- Supervise preparation of the Incident Action Plan
- Conduct and facilitate planning meetings
- Reassign personnel already on site to ICS organizational positions as needed and appropriate
- Establish information requirements and reporting schedules for Planning Section units
- Determine the need for specialized resources to support the incident response
- Assemble and disassemble task forces and strike teams not assigned to Operations
- Establish specialized data collection systems as necessary (e.g., weather)
- Assemble information on alternative strategies and contingency plans
- Provide periodic predictions on incident potential
- Report any significant changes in incident status
- Compile and display incident status information
- Oversee preparation of the Demobilization Plan

Logistics Section Chief

The Logistics Section Chief determines the need to activate or deactivate a subsidiary logistics unit (i.e., supply, facilities, ground support, communications, food, and medical units). If a subsidiary unit is not activated, responsibility for that unit's duties remains with the Logistics Section Chief.

Major Responsibilities:

- Manage all incident logistics
- Provide logistical input to the IC in preparing the Incident Action Plan
- Brief subsidiaries as needed
- Identify anticipated and known incident service and support requirements
- Request additional resources as needed
- Review and provide input to the Communications Plan, Medical Plan and Traffic Plan
- Supervise requests for additional resources
- Oversee demobilization of Logistics Section

FIGURE 4.3—*continued*

Among the various characteristics of the ICS, of special importance is its insistence on a clear delineation of key responsibilities among individuals, including not only those in charge of the major functional Sections (Fig. 4.3), but also those who manage the various subsidiary components activated, as needed, by Incident Command (Fig. 4.4).
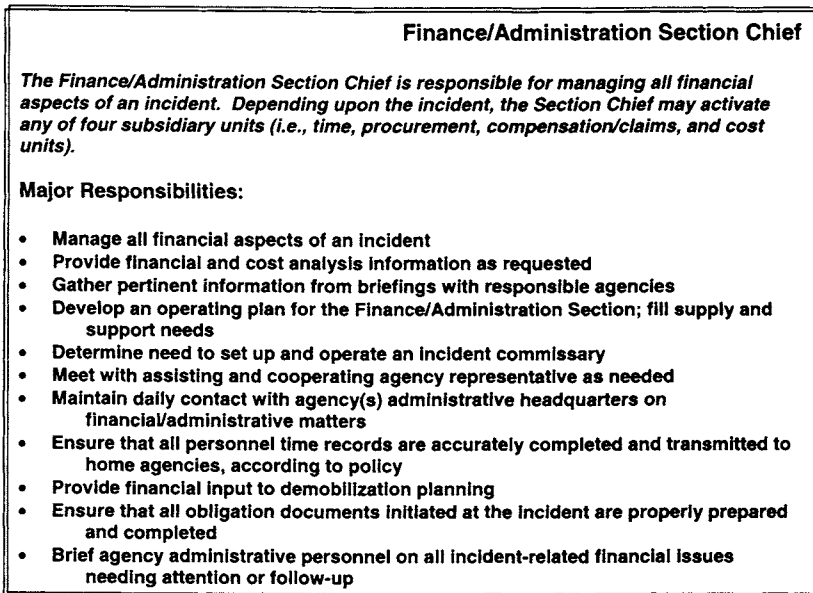

Finance/Administration Section Chief

The Finance/Administration Section Chief is responsible for managing all financial aspects of an incident. Depending upon the incident, the Section Chief may activate any of four subsidiary units (i.e., time, procurement, compensation/claims, and cost units).

Major Responsibilities:

- **Manage all financial aspects of an incident**
- **Provide financial and cost analysis information as requested**
- **Gather pertinent information from briefings with responsible agencies**
- **Develop an operating plan for the Finance/Administration Section; fill supply and support needs**
- **Determine need to set up and operate an incident commissary**
- **Meet with assisting and cooperating agency representative as needed**
- **Maintain daily contact with agency(s) administrative headquarters on financial/administrative matters**
- **Ensure that all personnel time records are accurately completed and transmitted to home agencies, according to policy**
- **Provide financial input to demobilization planning**
- **Ensure that all obligation documents initiated at the incident are properly prepared and completed**
- **Brief agency administrative personnel on all incident-related financial issues needing attention or follow-up**

FIGURE 4.3—*continued*

Another key characteristic of the ICS is, of course, its flexibility, much of which derives from its sub-Sectional organization.

Sub-Sectional Organization of Command

A number of the responsibilities of the Incident Commander pertain to (a) the dissemination of information to news media and relevant governmental agencies, (b) the safety of response personnel, and (c) liaison between command and other agencies and organizations, including those that directly participate in the response effort (*assisting agencies*) and those (e.g., Red Cross) that may otherwise become involved in the incident (*cooperating agencies*). Depending on the nature and extent of the emergency, the IC may establish separate Command Staff officers to take over these duties, including:

- Information Officer: While the Information Officer may designate assistants as necessary, there can be only one Information Officer per incident, even if the incident is a multijurisdictional or multiagency incident
- Safety Officer: Only one Safety Officer can be designated per incident; as needed, the Safety Officer may appoint one or more assistants, who may represent different agencies or jurisdictions in a multijurisdiction or
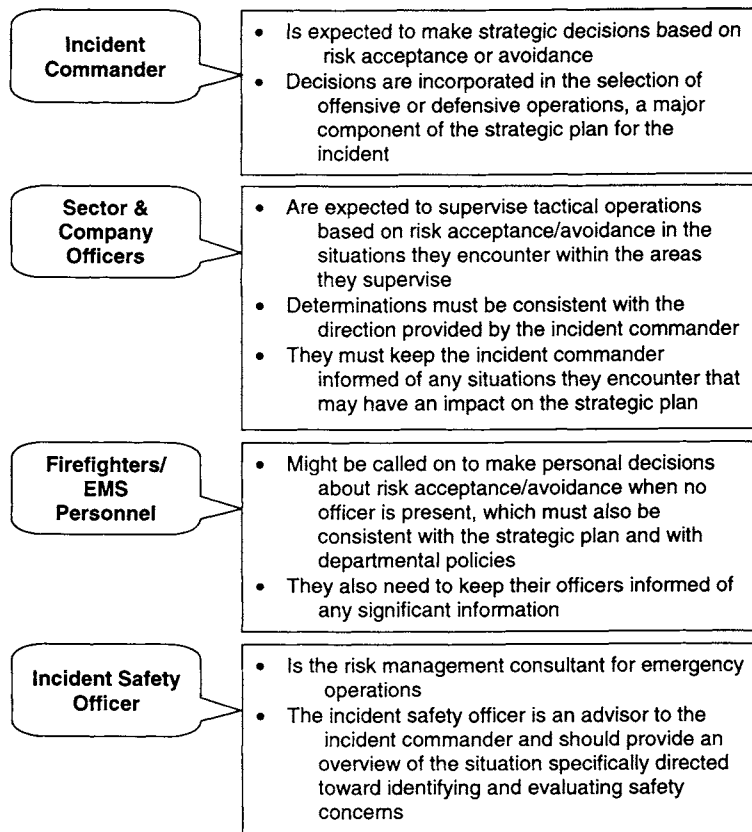
Incident Commander	• Is expected to make strategic decisions based on risk acceptance or avoidance • Decisions are incorporated in the selection of offensive or defensive operations, a major component of the strategic plan for the incident
Sector & Company Officers	• Are expected to supervise tactical operations based on risk acceptance/avoidance in the situations they encounter within the areas they supervise • Determinations must be consistent with the direction provided by the incident commander • They must keep the incident commander informed of any situations they encounter that may have an impact on the strategic plan
Firefighters/ EMS Personnel	• Might be called on to make personal decisions about risk acceptance/avoidance when no officer is present, which must also be consistent with the strategic plan and with departmental policies • They also need to keep their officers informed of any significant information
Incident Safety Officer	• Is the risk management consultant for emergency operations • The incident safety officer is an advisor to the incident commander and should provide an overview of the situation specifically directed toward identifying and evaluating safety concerns

FIGURE 4.4 Roles and responsibilities in operational risk management (adapted from U.S. Fire Administration, 1995: Risk Management Practices in the Fire Service [FA-166]).

multiagency incident. Having the primary responsibility for the safety of response personnel, the Safety Officer must develop measures for assuring the safety of personnel during the implementation of tactical response operations; the Safety Officer may also assume emergency authority to stop unsafe actions or procedures if those actions or procedures are likely to result in imminent, life-threatening risk to response personnel.

• Liaison Officer: Only one Liaison Officer may be designated per incident; as needed, the Liaison Officer may appoint one or more assistants, who may represent different agencies or jurisdictions in a multijurisdiction or multiagency incident. Agency representatives designated by assisting and cooperating agencies to work with the incident management team must report to the Liaison Officer.

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

FIGURE 4.5 Primary support positions in the various components of an ICS organization (adapted from U.S. Fire Administration, 1995: Risk Management Practices in the Fire Service [FA-166]).

As shown in Fig. 4.5, ICS provides specific nomenclature for designating primary and support personnel having managerial responsibility and authority not only at the command levels, but at all levels of any ICS organization.

Sub-Sectional Organization of Operations

The IC may designate one or more Staging Areas where in-service resources (i.e., personnel and equipment that are available for service on 3-minute notice) can be safely located until they are assigned to a specific task.

Each Staging Area is under the direct control of a Staging Area Manager, who reports to the IC or, if the Operations Section has been activated, to the Operations Section Chief.

The Operations Section may be administratively subdivided on the basis of geographic or functional considerations.

The Division is a specific geographic area defined relative to the incident and response effort. The IC may designate a number of Divisions simply to define the extent of the incident without activating individual Divisions. However, separate Division Supervisors should be designated whenever (a) resources (including personnel and equipment) assigned to any Division exceed the span of control (i.e., one-to-five), or (b) Divisions are not under the direct control of either the IC or Operations Section Chief.

In some instances, the IC may opt to organize response operations not on the basis of geographically specific Divisions, but on the basis of functional groups, such as Search & Rescue Groups and Medical Groups. Such groups may be under the direct supervision of the IC or, as designated by the IC, of Group Supervisors.

The IC may also opt to activate both Divisions and Groups, especially when one or more functional Groups (usually a specialized Group) must operate indifferent operational areas. In such cases, Division Supervisors and Group Supervisors are equal in rank; neither is subordinate to the other.

While Branches are the largest operational units, they are typically not activated unless more than 5 Divisions or Groups are in place (i.e., on the basis of span of control considerations). However, depending on the nature and extent of the incident, the IC may activate an Air Operations Branch and designate an Air Operations Branch Director to coordinate the use of aircraft. In smaller incidents that nonetheless require the use of aircraft, aviation personnel report directly to the IC or, if activated, to the Operations Section Chief.

As in the case of Divisions and Groups, Branches may be defined geographically, functionally, or on the basis of both geographical location and function. If activated, Branches are under the control of Branch Directors.

The basic types of tactical resources of Operations are the Single Resource, Task Force, and Strike Team (Fig. 4.6). As combinations of two or more Single Resources, Task Forces and Strike Teams provide important advantages, including (a) more effective planning for the use of resources, (b) effective means for obtaining precisely what is needed for effective response, (c) reduction in radio traffic as compared to that necessary when using only Single Resources, (d) increased capacity to expand operations for large incidents without sacrificing span-of-control guidelines, and (e) enhanced control and accountability of individual resources.

Single Resources

Single Resources are individual pieces of equipment, or a crew of individuals, with an identified work supervisor that can be used in a tactical application; usually the most common way of initially using resources at an incident.

Examples: ➡ Police motorcycle unit ➡ Fire engine company ➡ Medical team

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Task Force

A Task Force is any combination and number of single resources (within span of control limits) assembled for a particular tactical need. Task forces may be a mix of all different kinds of resources, be of the same kind but different types, or be several resources of one kind mixed with other resources.

Must have: a leader; communication between resources and the leader, and from the leader to the next level supervisor; transportation (as required).

Examples:
➡ Oil Spill Task Force (e.g., 5 berthing/food ships; 10 work boats; 1 tank barge)
➡ Search & Rescue Task Force (e.g., 1 helicopter; 1 alpine team; 1 medical technician)
➡ Fire Task Force (e.g., 2 engines; 1 bulldozer; 2 hand crews)

Strike Team

A Strike Team is a combination of any number of single resources (within span of control limits) of the same kind and same type.

Must have: a leader; communication between resources and the leader; transportation (as required).

Example: ➡ Fire Task Force (e.g., 5 Type 1 Engines, or 3 Type 2 Bulldozers)

FIGURE 4.6 General characteristics of ICS tactical resources (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 4 [NFES No. 2445]).

Sub-Sectional Organization of Planning

The management of all information relevant to an incident, including the collection, evaluation, processing, and dissemination of that information, often requires a wide range of technical specialists (e.g., flood control specialist, structural engineer, environmental impact specialist) who may be assigned to any one of the four Units of the Planning Section. Each Unit, under the direction of a Unit Leader, may be activated or deactivated by the Planning Section Chief on the basis of need.

Unit Leaders, regardless of location in ICS organizations (i.e., whether in Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration) have the following common responsibilities:

- Obtain briefing from respective Section Chief
- Participate in incident planning meetings, as required
- Determine current status of unit activities
- Confirm dispatch and estimated time of arrival of staff and supplies
- Assign specific duties to and supervise staff
- Develop and implement accountability, safety, and security measures for personnel and resources
- Supervise demobilization of unit, including storage of supplies
- Provide Supply Unit Leader (in Logistics Sections) with a list of supplies to be replenished
- Maintain Unit records, including the Unit Log

The Resources Unit maintains the status of all assigned resources (both primary and support). This requires (a) controlling the on-site check-in of all resources (Fig. 4.7), (b) maintaining a system for continually monitoring the location and status of all response resources, and (c) maintaining a master list of all resources (including primary and support) assigned to the incident.

The Situation Unit is responsible for collecting, processing, and organizing all information relevant to the on-going incident, including:

- Deploying Field Observers to collect information on the field situation
- Collecting weather information from weather services or through the efforts of an assigned meteorologist
- Posting information (obtained from field observers) on maps and status boards

The Documentation Unit is responsible for the maintenance of accurate, up-to-date files related to the incident. After the incident, such files are to be stored for legal, analytical, and historical purposes.

The Demobilization Unit is responsible for developing the Incident Demobilization Plan, and for distributing the approved plan to appropriate on- and off-site elements of the incident response team.

Sub-Sectional Organization of Logistics

With the exception of aviation support (which is handled by the Air Operations Branch of Operations), all incident support needs are provided by the Logistics Section, under the control of the Logistics Section Chief. The Logistic Section Chief may activate up to six units.

Actions Prior to Departure
Personnel to be notified of an incident assignment by established agency procedures

- Know incident type and name(or designation), check-in location, reporting time, and means of travel
- Receive instructions regarding communications
- Know Resource Order Number or (if applicable) Request Number
- Know your unit's radio designation

Check-in at the Incident
Check-in officially logs you in at the incident and provides important basic information that will be used for status keeping and for release and demobilization. The check-in process and information supports the following activities:

Check-in only once. Check-in Recorders may be found at Incident Command Post, Base or Camp(s), Staging Areas, Helibase. You may also report direct to Division/Group Supervisors.

If instructed to report directly to a tactical assignment, you should report in to the designated Division or Group Supervisor or to the Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander, depending upon the level of ICS activation. After release from tactical assignment, check-in at one of the above locations.

Responsibilities at the Incident
After check-in, locate your incident point of contact and obtain your initial briefing. The information you receive in your briefing will be important for your own planning and for passing on accurate and up-to-date information to your subordinates.

After receiving your briefing and activating your assignment, give a similar briefing to any personnel assigned to you.

Communications Discipline
- All incident personnel must observe strict radio/telephone procedures.
- Use clear text or plain English. Codes should be used in radio communications.
- Limit radio and telephone traffic to essential information. Pre-plan what you are going to say.

Incident Demobilization
- Complete all work assignments.
- Brief subordinates regarding demobilization.
- Complete and file required forms and reports.
- Follow incident and agency check-out procedures.
- Evaluate performance of subordinates prior to release from the incident.
- Return any incident-issued communications equipment or other non-expendable supplies.
- Report to assigned departure points on time or slightly ahead of schedule.
- As appropriate, stay with your group until you arrive at your final designation.

FIGURE 4.7   Guidelines for responders reporting to an incident (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 6 [NFES No. 2450]).
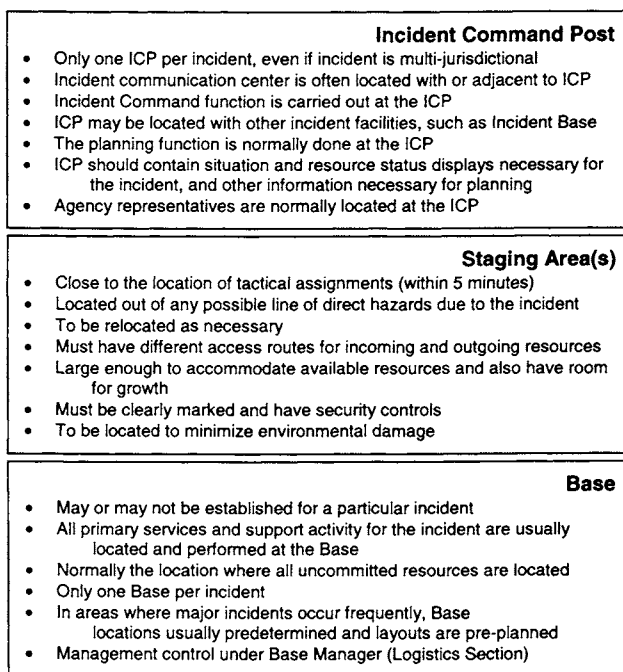
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│                                      Incident Command Post        │
│  • Only one ICP per incident, even if incident is multi-jurisdictional │
│  • Incident communication center is often located with or adjacent to ICP │
│  • Incident Command function is carried out at the ICP            │
│  • ICP may be located with other incident facilities, such as Incident Base │
│  • The planning function is normally done at the ICP             │
│  • ICP should contain situation and resource status displays necessary for │
│         the incident, and other information necessary for planning │
│  • Agency representatives are normally located at the ICP        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                              Staging Area(s)      │
│  • Close to the location of tactical assignments (within 5 minutes) │
│  • Located out of any possible line of direct hazards due to the incident │
│  • To be relocated as necessary                                  │
│  • Must have different access routes for incoming and outgoing resources │
│  • Large enough to accommodate available resources and also have room │
│         for growth                                               │
│  • Must be clearly marked and have security controls             │
│  • To be located to minimize environmental damage                │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                         Base      │
│  • May or may not be established for a particular incident       │
│  • All primary services and support activity for the incident are usually │
│         located and performed at the Base                        │
│  • Normally the location where all uncommitted resources are located │
│  • Only one Base per incident                                    │
│  • In areas where major incidents occur frequently, Base         │
│         locations usually predetermined and layouts are pre-planned │
│  • Management control under Base Manager (Logistics Section)     │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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FIGURE 4.8 Characteristics of ICS facilities (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 4 [NFES No. 2445]).

1. The Supply Unit is responsible for ordering, receiving, processing, and storing all on- and off-site resources related to incident response, including tactical and support resources (e.g., personnel, equipment) and all expendable and nonexpendable support supplies. Supply also is responsible for the storage, disbursement, and servicing of all tools and portable nonexpendable equipment used in incident response.

2. The Facilities Unit is responsible for the set-up, maintenance, and demobilization of all incident support facilities (Fig. 4.8) except Staging Areas, Helibases, and Helispots, which are under the management control of Operations. As needed, the Facilities Unit also provides security services.

3. The Ground Support Unit has responsibility for (a) the maintenance, service, and fueling of all mobile equipment and vehicles (except aviation equipment, which falls under the management control of Operations), (b) the ground transportation of personnel, supplies, and equipment, and (c) the development of the Incident Traffic Plan.

4. The Communications Unit has responsibility for (a) developing plans for the use of communications equipment and facilities, (b) installing

Camp(s)
• Temporary locations within general incident area equipped to provide sleeping, food, water and sanitary services to incident personnel
• Not to be located at the Incident Base
• Very large incidents may require two or more camps located in strategic areas
• All functional unit activities performed at Base may also be performed at Camp(s)
• Management under designated Camp Manager

Helibase
• Main location within general incident area for parking, fueling, maintenance, and loading of helicopters with personnel, equipment and supplies necessary for incident operations
• Often located at or near the incident Base; may also be located at nearby airport, or an another off-incident location
• Helibase designated by the name of the incident
• Large incident may have more that one Helibase
• Management under designated Helibase Manager

Helispot(s)
• Temporary location(s) within the incident area where helicopters can safely land and take off
• Can be used to load or off-load personnel, equipment and supplies
• Management under designated on-the-ground Helispot Manager who reports to the Helibase Manager
• If an incident has no established air operations organization but does have one or more Helispots designated, the Helispot Managers report to the Operations Section Chief

FIGURE 4.8—*continued*

and testing communications equipment, (c) supervision of the Incident Communications Center, and (d) the distribution and maintenance of communications equipment. Where an Incident Communications Center is established, the Incident Dispatcher is responsible for receiving and transmitting radio, telephone, fax, and computer messages, and for providing incident dispatch services.

5. The Food Unit is responsible for supplying food to all response personnel, whether on- or off-site. This responsibility requires careful coordination between Food, Supply, Ground, and Air Support Units.

6. The Medical Unit is responsible for medical services required only by response personnel; medical services for incident victims or the public are provided by the Operations Section.

Sub-Sectional Organization of Finance/Administration

Given the nature and extent of the emergency, it may not be necessary to activate the Finance/Administration Section. In such a case, a specific

function usually assigned to Finance/Administration may be assigned, instead, to the Planning Section. If activated, the Finance/Administration Section Chief may establish up to four units:

1. The Time Unit is responsible for (a) ensuring the accurate recording of daily personnel time, (b) compliance with specific policies of responding agencies regarding the recording of personnel time, and (c) managing commissary operations that might be activated at the incident site.

2. The Procurement Unit is responsible for (a) managing all financial matters related to vendor contracts, leases, and other fiscal agreements pertaining to incident response, and (b) maintaining all time records for the use of equipment during the incident. The Procurement Unit must coordinate closely with the Supply Unit (in Logistics Section) because procurement procedures of different agencies sometimes have different requirements.

3. The Compensation/Claims Unit is responsible for all matters related to compensation for injury and other legal claims involving property associated with or involved in the incident.

4. The Cost Unit (a) provides all incident cost analysis, (b) ensures the proper identification of all equipment and personnel requiring payment, (c) maintains written records of all cost-related data, (d) analyzes and prepares estimates of incident costs, and (e) maintains accurate records of incident costs.

ADAPTATION OF ICS TO OTHER COMMAND STRUCTURES

As discussed above, much of the flexibility of ICS derives from the various options available to the Incident Commander (and, subsequently, to appropriate incident response managers) regarding the activation of subsidiary components of the ICS management organization. These options are based on the assessment of the on-going developing nature and extent of the incident. Another aspect of the flexibility of ICS derives from the different modes of coordinating and directing incidence response on the basis of (a) multijurisdictional responsibilities, (b) the occurrence of two or more incidents in close proximity, and (c) multiagency and multijurisdictional responsibilities within an extended geographic region.

Because of the importance that must be given in the United States to jurisdictional responsibilities of different agencies at federal, regional, state, and local levels, the ICS must be flexible enough to accommodate these differences without, at the same time, sacrificing efficiency and effectiveness. This is accomplished by extending and adapting ICS to meets the needs of

**Incident
Command
System
(ICS)**

> The management system used **to direct all operations at the incident scene.** The Incident Commander (IC) is located at an Incident Command Post (ICP) at the incident scene.

**Unified
Command
(UC)**

> An application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction. **Agencies work together through their designated Incident Commanders at a single ICP to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan.**

**Area
Command/
Unified Area
Command
AC/UAC**

> Established as necessary **to provide command authority and coordination for two or more incidents in close proximity.** Area Command works directly with Incident Commanders. Area Command becomes Unified Area Command when incidents are multi-jurisdictional. **Area Command may be established at an EOC facility or at some location other than an ICP.**

**Multi-Agency
Coordination
Systems
(MACS)**

> An activity or formal system used **to coordinate resources and support between agencies or jurisdictions.** A MAC Group functions with the MACS. MACS interact with agencies or jurisdictions, not with incidents. MACS are useful for regional situation. **A MACS can be established at a jurisdiction EOC or at a separate facility.**

**Emergency
Operations
Center
(EOC)**

> Also called Expanded Dispatch or Emergency Command and Control Centers. EOCs are used in varying ways at all levels of government and within private industry **to provide coordination, direction, and control during emergencies. EOC facilities can be used to house Area Command and MACS activities as determined by agency or jurisdictional policy.**

FIGURE 4.9   Comparison of alternative emergency management systems under ICS (adapted from National Interagency Fire Center, 1994: Incident Command System National Training Curriculum, Module 1 [NFES No. 2468]; Module 16 [NFES No. 2470]).

Guidelines: Unified Command and the Incident Command System

1. For the ICS/UC(Incident Command System/Unified Command) to be effective, the following elements should be in place well before an incident occurs:

   - The structure must be formalized in the planning stages and must be accepted by all parties concerned,
   - Specific functions and responsibilities must be well defined,
   - Individuals must be designated for each function and the reporting mechanisms defined and accepted,
   - The participating organizations must make a committed effort to respond as a team,
   - Area Contingency Plans (including facility/vessel response plans) must address training and ensure familiarity with ICS utilizing a Unified Command, and
   - Relationships to entities outside the ICS but relevant to the response structure (e.g., Regional Response Team, Natural Resource Trustees) must be defined.

2. The NCP does not attempt to prescribe specifically how a particular organization or individual fits within a given response structure. The FOSC (Federal On-Scene Coordinator) and the Area Committee are responsible for developing, adopting, and implementing a response management system, through the ACP (Area Contingency Plan). A NIIMS-based (National Interagency Incident Management System), ICS/UC can be used as the model for response management in the ACP to ensure an effective response. Because key players differ from area to area, however, Area Committees must have flexibility to adapt the ICS/UC in order to be effective in each specific area.

3. In addition, when developing an ICS/UC, it is important to recognize that the key players in the response management system maintain a separate internal management infrastructure during a response; they do not relinquish authority, responsibility, or accountability.

4. The following items should be considered when developing the Area Contingency Plans:

   - Jurisdictional responsibilities,
   - Roles of all levels of government in the Unified command,
   - Relationship between the OSC (On-Scene Commander) and other officials who also have decision-making authority but are not part of the UC (Unified Command),
   - Financial agreements,
   - Information dissemination,
   - Communications,
   - Training and exercises,
   - Logistics, and
   - Lessons learned.

5. When plans and procedures are understood, agencies can support each other effectively. However, each response results in new lessons learned, which necessitates a continuing need to refine the procedures and processes, develop better methods, and mesh agency needs and actions.

6. Planners and responders at all levels need to understand the authorities and resources each response organization brings to a specific incident. ICS/UC is an important concept to practice as part of response exercises and to include in local and area contingency plans. Such exercising and planning will facilitate coordination and cooperation between federal, state, local and private party responders when the ICS/UC is implemented for a specific incident.

FIGURE 4.10 General guidelines pertaining to unified command and the ICS system (adapted from U.S. National Response Team [NRT]. Managing Response to Oil Discharges and Hazardous Substance Releases under the NCP: Technical Assistance Document, NRT Electronic Reference Library).

(a) Unified Command, (b) Area Command, (c) Multiagency Coordination Systems, and (d) Emergency Operations Centers (Fig. 4.9). The full range of these adaptations of ICS not only ensure proper involvement of diverse responsible authorities in incident response, but also ensure that the response to a particular incident will not unduly detract from local and regional resources that may be needed in response to other incidents.

It must be understood that there is no (nor should there necessarily be any one) compelling consensus regarding all possible relationships (or even terminology) regarding multiagency coordination and management of incident response. The appropriate relationships among response components (as well as precise definitions) ultimately depend upon the specific procedures in place in particular agencies and organizations at the time and place of the incident. The ICS therefore provides a flexible framework of management, rather than a definitive algorithm.

For example, The U.S. National Response Team has promulgated guidelines for adapting the Incident Command System to meet the needs of a Unified Command (Fig. 4.10). As noted in these guidelines, no attempt is made "to prescribe specifically how a particular organization or individual fits within a given response structure." Despite the lack of prescriptions regarding specific assignments, however, these guidelines to give explicit directions for ensuring that the accommodation of diverse jurisdictional interests of various public agencies and private organizations do not detract from those clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability (Fig. 4.11) that are firmly established by ICS.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is very likely that, upon a first introduction, the apparent intricacies of ICS management seem overly complex. That is one way to look at it.

Another way is to step back and consider, for a moment, just what is involved in mounting any effort—any effort composed of variously trained and available personnel, a huge potential arsenal of different equipment and services that may or may not be available, and a collage of diverse public and private authorities—toward the time-constrained objective of minimizing the loss of life and property suddenly at risk in the midst of total confusion and manifest anguish. The fact of the matter is that it is CRISIS which is complex!

The ICS is a practical and comprehensive framework that provides for flexible, efficient, authoritative, and accountable response to the extraordinary challenge of life-threatening crisis. But even in the best of circumstances, it can accomplish absolutely nothing in the absence of serious, preincident planning and training.
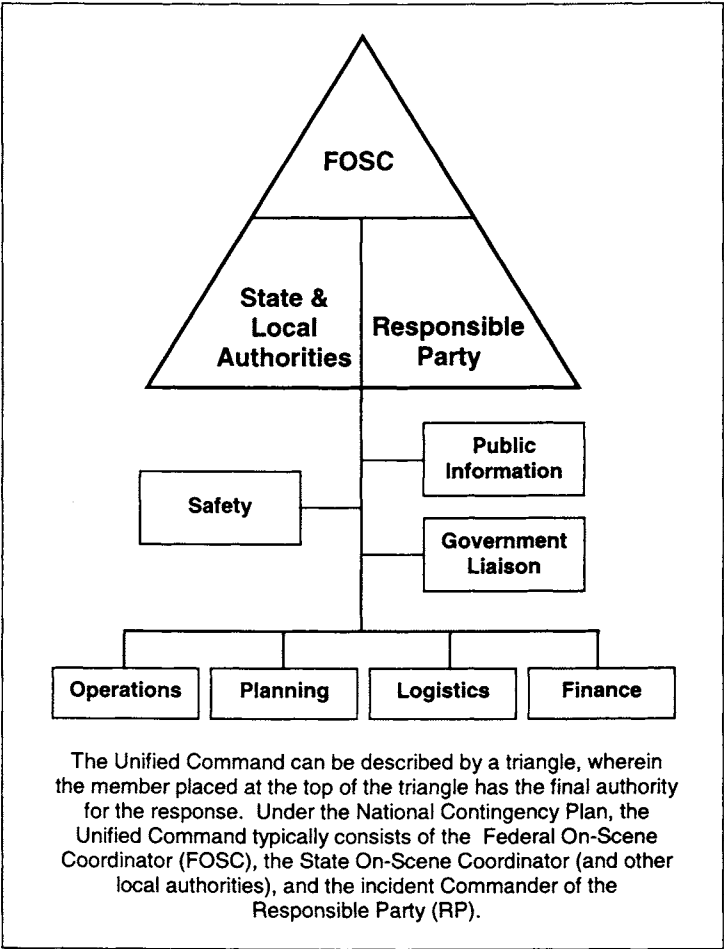
The Unified Command can be described by a triangle, wherein the member placed at the top of the triangle has the final authority for the response. Under the National Contingency Plan, the Unified Command typically consists of the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC), the State On-Scene Coordinator (and other local authorities), and the incident Commander of the Responsible Party (RP).

FIGURE 4.11 Relationship between unified command and ICS (adapted from U.S. National Response Team [NRT]. Managing Response to Oil Discharges and Hazardous Substance Releases under the NCP: Technical Assistance Document, NRT Electronic Reference Library).

Administration	Logistics

Before the Emergency

• Establish a written emergency management plan • Maintain training records • Maintain all written communications • Document drills and exercises and their critiques • Involve community emergency response organizations in planning activities	• Acquire equipment • Stockpile supplies • Designate on and off-site emergency facilities • Establish training facilities • Establish mutual aid agreements with other industrial facilities or with other organizations • Prepare a resource inventory

During & After the Emergency

• Maintain telephone logs • Keep a detailed record of events • Maintain record of injuries and follow-up actions • Account for personnel • Coordinate notification of family members • Issue press releases • Maintain sampling records • Manage finances • Coordinate personnel services • Document incident investigations and recovery operations	• Provide utility maps to emergency responders • Provide Material Safety Data Sheets to emergency responders • Move backup equipment into place • Repair parts • Arrange for medical support, food and transportation • Arrange for shelter facilities • Provide for backup power • Provide for backup communications

FIGURE 4.12 Basic administrative and logistical functions (adapted from Federal Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry, FEMA Electronic Reference Library).

Whether implemented by public or private organizations, ICS is based upon the premise that what is done during an emergency is no more important than what is done before and after the emergency—before the crisis, because any adequate response must be conditioned by previous planning (Fig. 4.12), and after the crisis, because we must both learn from our mistakes and, even in the process of learning, prepare for the next crisis.