



BRIEFING PAPER: **UNDERSTANDING THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)**

The complexity of modern emergency management has increased the need for a standard incident management system that can be used by all emergency response disciplines. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the model management system used by the nation's fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical services agencies.

ICS is a standardized on-scene incident management concept designed specifically to allow responders to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of any single incident or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS provides a means to coordinate the efforts of individual agencies as they work toward the common goal of stabilizing the incident and protecting life, property, and the environment.

Federal law requires the use of ICS for response to HAZMAT incidents. Many States are adopting ICS as their standard for responding to all types of incidents. ICS has been endorsed by the American Public Works Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and has been adopted by the National Fire Academy as its standard for incident response. ICS is included in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) "Recommended Practice for Disaster Management." ICS is also part of the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS).

ICS has been tried, proven, and highly refined since its conception. Its effectiveness as an emergency management system is recognized and utilized by public transportation systems throughout the United States. Large operators, such as Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), New York City Transit (NYCT) and Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), organize their emergency response activities according to ICS principles. Consequently, their Emergency Plans have been prepared to establish ICS as the basis for response to all incidents. Smaller transit operators, building closer working relationships with local law enforcement, are applying key ICS features, such as designated liaisons, and shared responsibility for public information and incident action planning. ICS functional aspects make it equally applicable to small and large operators in all areas of the country.

Management of an event, incident or disaster based on ICS principles allows responding agencies to communicate using common terminology and operating procedures. The ICS begins developing from the time an incident occurs and continues until the requirement for management of the response and coordination of services no longer exists. ICS can be utilized for any type on size of event or incident. ICS enables integrated communication and planning by establishing a manageable span of control. In achieving these objectives, ICS divides an emergency response into five functions essential for emergency response operations: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance and Administration. Figure 1 below shows a typical ICS structure.



FIGURE 1: INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM STRUCTURE

The following is a list of the duties generally associated with each ICS function.

- π The **Incident Commander (IC)** is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations.
- π The **Command Staff** is responsible for public affairs, health and safety, and liaison activities within the incident command structure. The IC remains responsible for these activities or may assign individuals to carry out these responsibilities and report directly to the IC.
 - The **Information Officer's** role is to develop and release information about the incident to the news media, to incident personnel, and to other appropriate agencies and organizations.
 - The **Liaison Officer's** role is to serve as the point of contact for assisting and coordinating activities between the IC and various agencies and groups. This may include Congressional personnel, local government officials, and criminal investigating organizations and investigators arriving on the scene.
 - The **Safety Officer's** role is to develop and recommend measures to the IC for assuring personnel health and safety and to assess and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. The Safety Officer also develops the Site Safety Plan, reviews the Incident Action Plan for safety implications, and provides timely, complete, specific, and accurate assessment of hazards and required controls.



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π The **General Staff** includes **Operations, Planning, Logistics,** and **Finance/Administrative** responsibilities. These responsibilities remain with the IC until they are assigned to another individual. When the Operations, Planning, Logistics or Finance/Administrative responsibilities are established as separate functions under the IC, they are managed by a section chief and can be supported by other functional units.

- The **Operations** Staff is responsible for all operations directly applicable to the primary mission of the response.
- The **Planning** Staff is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating the tactical information related to the incident, and for preparing and documenting Incident Action Plans (IAPs).
- The **Logistics** Staff is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident response.
- The **Finance and Administrative** Staff is responsible for all financial, administrative, and cost analysis aspects of the incident.

Incident Commander

The IC is faced with many responsibilities when he/she arrives on scene. Unless specifically assigned to another member of the Command or General Staffs, these responsibilities remain with the IC. Some of the more complex responsibilities include:

- π establish immediate priorities especially the safety of responders, other emergency workers, bystanders, and people involved in the incident;
- π stabilize the incident by ensuring life safety and managing resources efficiently and cost effectively;
- π determine incident objectives and strategy to achieve the objectives;
- π establish and monitor incident organization;
- π approve the implementation of the written or oral Incident Action Plan; and
- π ensure adequate health and safety measures are in place.

ICS must be organized to provide for the following kinds of operation (depicted in Figure 2 below):

- π **Single Command:** which typically includes single jurisdiction responsibility with single agency involvement, and, depending on the type of incident, may include single jurisdiction responsibility with multi-agency involvement, where supporting agencies provide representatives to coordinate with the agency in command.
- π **Unified Command:** which typically includes multi-jurisdictional responsibility with multi-agency involvement, and depending on the type of incident and the responders involved, may also include single jurisdiction responsibility with multi-agency involvement.

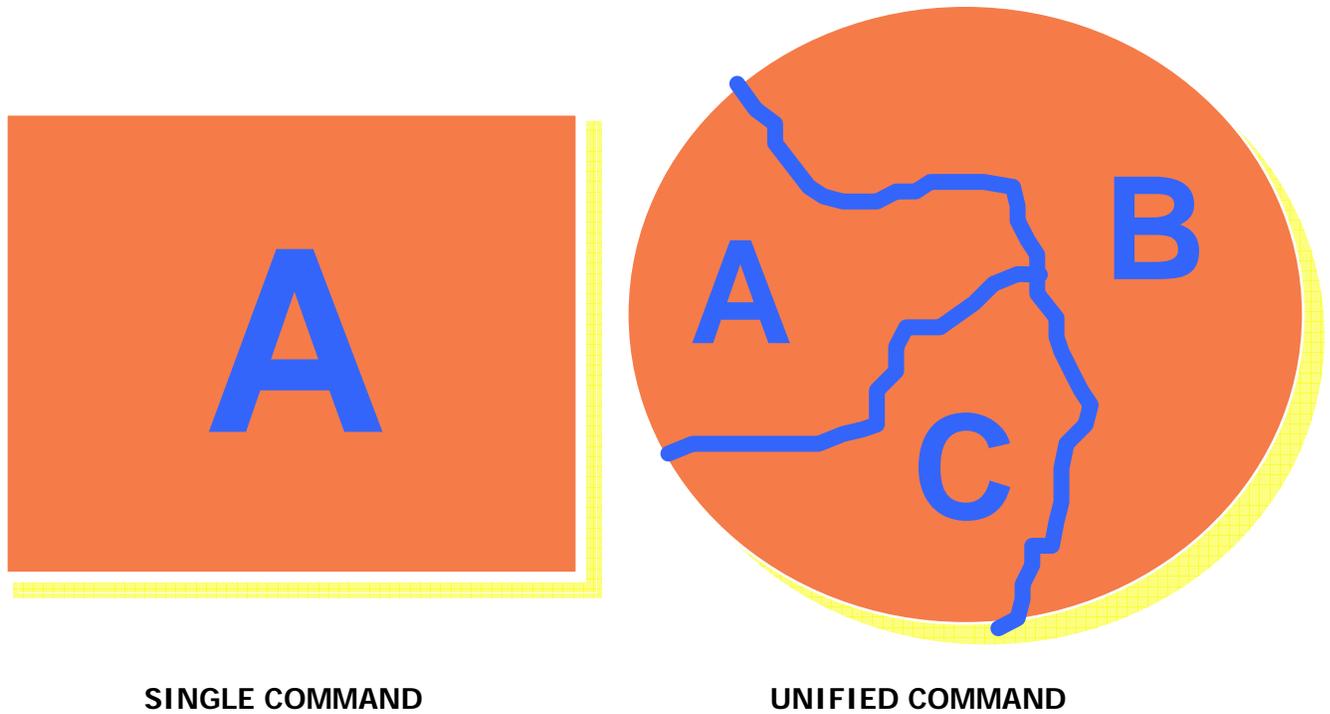


FIGURE 2: TYPES OF COMMAND IN ICS

EXPANDING RESPONSE USING ICS

Initially, the Incident Commander will be the senior first-responder to arrive at the scene. As additional responders arrive, command will transfer on the basis of who has primary authority for overall control of the incident. As incidents grow in size or become more complex, the responsible jurisdiction or agency may assign a more highly qualified Incident Commander. At transfer of command, the outgoing Incident Commander must give the incoming Incident Commander a full briefing and notify all staff of the change in command. The ICS organizational structure builds from the top down, expanding through the following organizational levels (see Figure 3 below):

- π **Section:** ICS organizational level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident operations, including: Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.
- π **Branch:** ICS organizational level having functional responsibility for major segments of incident operation. The Branch level is organizationally situated between Section and Groups in Operations and Section and Units in Logistics.
- π **Group:** Established to divide the incident into functional areas of operations. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division.



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- π **Division:** ICS organizational level responsible for operations within a defined geographic area or with functional responsibility. The Division level is organizationally situated below the Branch.
- π **Unit:** ICS organizational level having functional responsibility. Units are commonly used in incident Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration sections and can be used in operations for some applications. Units are also found in Emergency Operations Center (EOC) organizations.
- π **Single Resource:** These are teams comprised of individual pieces of equipment, the personnel required to properly utilize it, and communications.
- π **Task Force:** Any combination of resources with common communications and a leader. Task Forces can be pre-designated to meet local needs. Typically, the maximum number of units to properly utilized it and the communications.
- π **Strike Team:** Includes a set number of resources of the same kind and type, which have an established minimum number of personnel. Strike Teams will always have a leader and will have common communications among resource elements. Strike Teams can be made up of fire engine companies, or rescue units or hazmat units, or any kind of resource where a combination of similar elements becomes a useful tactical resource.

In addition to the Incident Commander and the Command Staff (Safety, Liaison, and Public Information Officers), position titles for activating this organization include:

- π Section Officer or Chief (i.e. Operations Section Officer or Chief)
- π Branch Director (i.e. EMS Branch Director)
- π Division Supervisor (i.e. Division "C" Supervisor)
- π Group Supervisor (i.e. Ventilation Group Supervisor)
- π Task Force Leader
- π Strike Force Leader

As incidents grow, the Incident Commander will establish the other positions. The first designation typically made by the Incident Commander is the Operations Section Chief, who may then designate Branch Supervisors with management responsibility for various functions within the section. The Branch Supervisors may then designate Team Leaders with responsibility for specific tasks. The type and number of management levels is always based on the needs of the incident. The Incident Commander may delegate functional authority, but retains ultimate responsibility for the incident. See Figure 3.

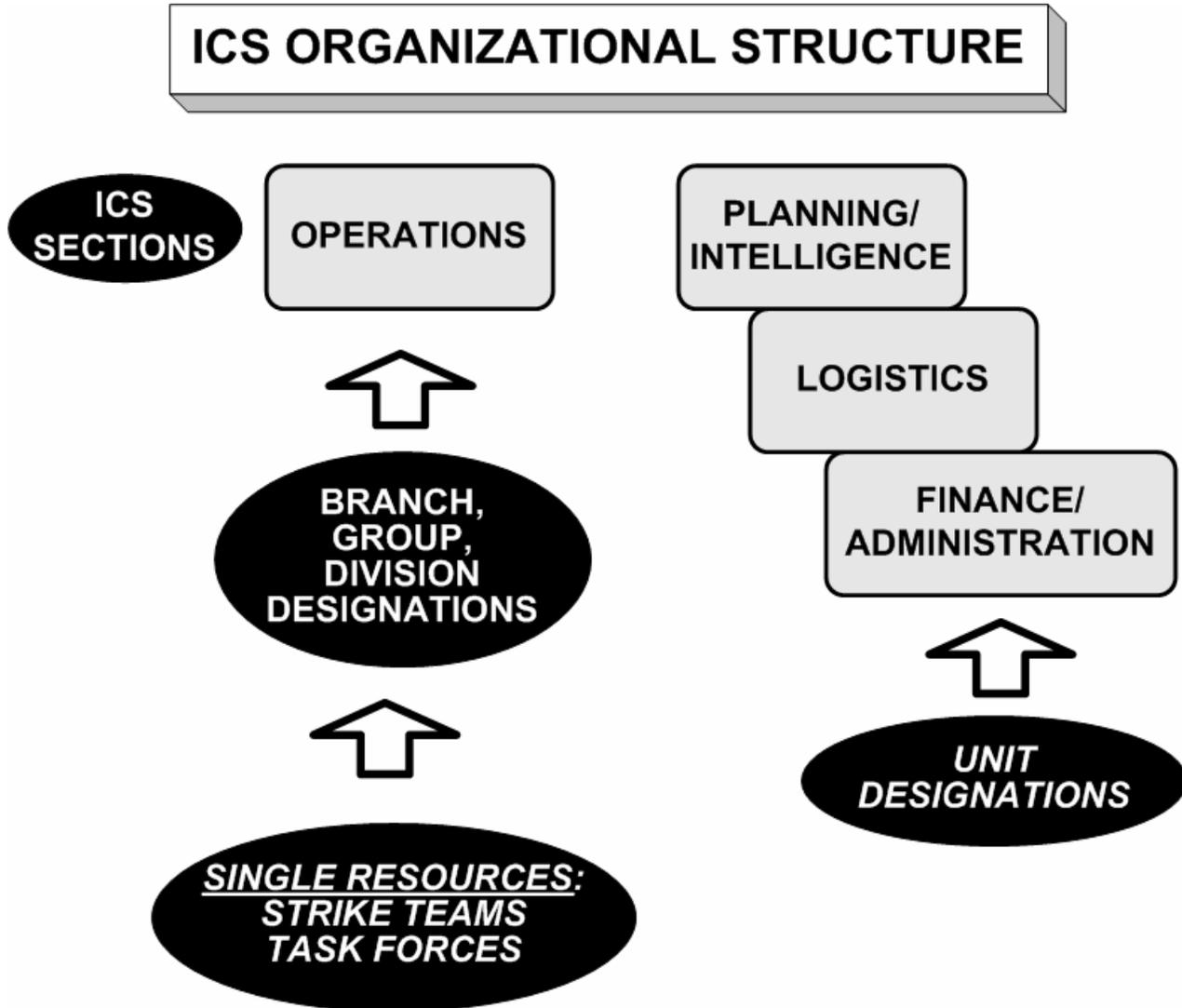


FIGURE 3: ICS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Throughout expansion of the organization, incident management under ICS must meet the following objectives:

- π establishing and maintaining command;
- π ensuring responder safety;
- π assessing incident priorities and determining operational objectives;
- π developing and implementing the incident action plan (IAP);
- π maintaining a manageable span of control;
- π managing incident resources and coordinating overall emergency activities;
- π coordinating the activities of outside agencies;
- π authorizing the release of information to the media; and
- π keeping track of costs.



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In fulfilling these objectives, it is essential that all cooperating agencies understand and utilize a standard terminology for organizational functions, resource elements, and facilities. Such standardization facilitates effective communications between all agencies involved at an emergency scene, and enhances the organization of the response. The following terms are central features of ICS:

- π **Command Post:** Designated as the CP, the Command Post will be the location from which the incident operations are directed. There is only one Command Post for the incident. In a Unified Command structure where several agencies or jurisdictions are involved, the responsible individuals designated by their respective agencies would be co-located at the command post. The Planning function is also performed at the Command Post, and normally the field communications center would be established at this location. The CP may be co-located with the incident base if communications requirements can be met.
- π **Incident Base:** The Incident Base is the location at which primary support personnel activities are performed. The Base will house all equipment and personnel support operations. The Logistics Section may be located at the Base and normally the Base will not be relocated. If possible, Incident Base locations should always be included in the pre-incident plans.
- π **Staging Areas:** A Staging Area is a temporary location at (an incident where personnel and equipment are kept while awaiting tactical assignment. In all cases, equipment and resources (people) in a staging area are always in or on available status. That is to say, ready to go out on assignment within three minutes. There may be multiple Staging Areas assigned for specific needs. For example: Medical, Fire, Police, etc. Each staging area should have different access routes for incoming and outgoing resources. Each staging area must be located out of any possible line of direct hazard effects, to minimize risk to resources. Staging Areas should be large enough to accommodate anticipated resources and have room for growth.
- π **Resource Status:** All tactical resources at an incident will be in one of three status conditions:
 - Assigned - Resources working on a tactical assignment under the direction of a supervisor
 - Available - Resources ready for deployment.
 - Out-of-Service - Resources that are not ready for available or assigned status (all not in A or B above). Reasons for being out-of-service can include:
 - Equipment service required
 - Rest (personnel)
 - Staffing (insufficient personnel to operate the equipment)
 - Environmental (darkness or weather)

The IC shall determine the initial need for Groups and Divisions. As the operation increases in size and complexity, it shall be the responsibility of the Section Officers to recommend to the IC the need for additional Divisions/Groups. Safety of personnel and maintaining span of control is the primary reason for using Divisions and Groups. Divisions are assigned to specific geographical areas. Structural situations, such as are commonly involved in fires,



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are designated by the letter system for the sides of the building with Division "A" being the front of the building (or legal street address side of the building), and numbers shall be used for floors i.e. Division 5 for the fifth floor. Functional units (Groups) will be identified by the function they perform (Salvage Group, Triage Group, etc.). Unit Officers will report to the Division/Group Supervisor and receive orders prior to deploying their company to task work. This configuration is presented in the Figure 4 below. Other configurations are presented in Figure 5.

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

- π **Life safety.** The Incident Commander's first priority is always the life safety of the emergency responders and the public.
- π **Incident stability.** The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the strategy that will: Minimize the effect that the incident may have on the surrounding area and maximize the response effort while using resources efficiently.
- π **Property conservation.** The Incident Commander is responsible for minimizing damage to property while achieving the incident objectives. As incidents become more involved, the Incident Commander can activate additional General Staff sections (that is, Planning, Operations, Logistics, and/or Finance/Administration), as necessary.

There are 36 basic positions in the complete ICS organization. The Command Staff, Branch Director, Division Supervisor, Task Force Leader, Team Leader, and some other positions may be duplicated (following span-of-control guidelines) if necessary to expand the organization for each of its functions.

- π With all positions filled, ICS can manage up to 5,200 people.
- π It is extremely rare that they all will be activated; only a major and very complex incident would require the full organization.

A basic rule of the organization is that the duties of any position not filled will be assumed by the next higher position. Thus, for moderately complex incidents where only perhaps one-third of the positions are activated, the complete range of duties and responsibilities would still be assigned to a specific person.

- π For instance, if Command decides not to activate the Finance or Logistics sections, then Command must still be responsible for these functions.
- π Or, if the Logistics Section Chief (or OIC) has only a moderate workload, a decision not to activate the Service and Support Branch Director positions may be made. In such case, the Logistics Section Chief/OIC would assume the duties of the positions not filled.

This basic rule of delegation increases accountability and tends to encourage a stronger managerial perspective from Command and Section Chiefs. Figure 6 presents the organizational components of a fully expanded ICS.

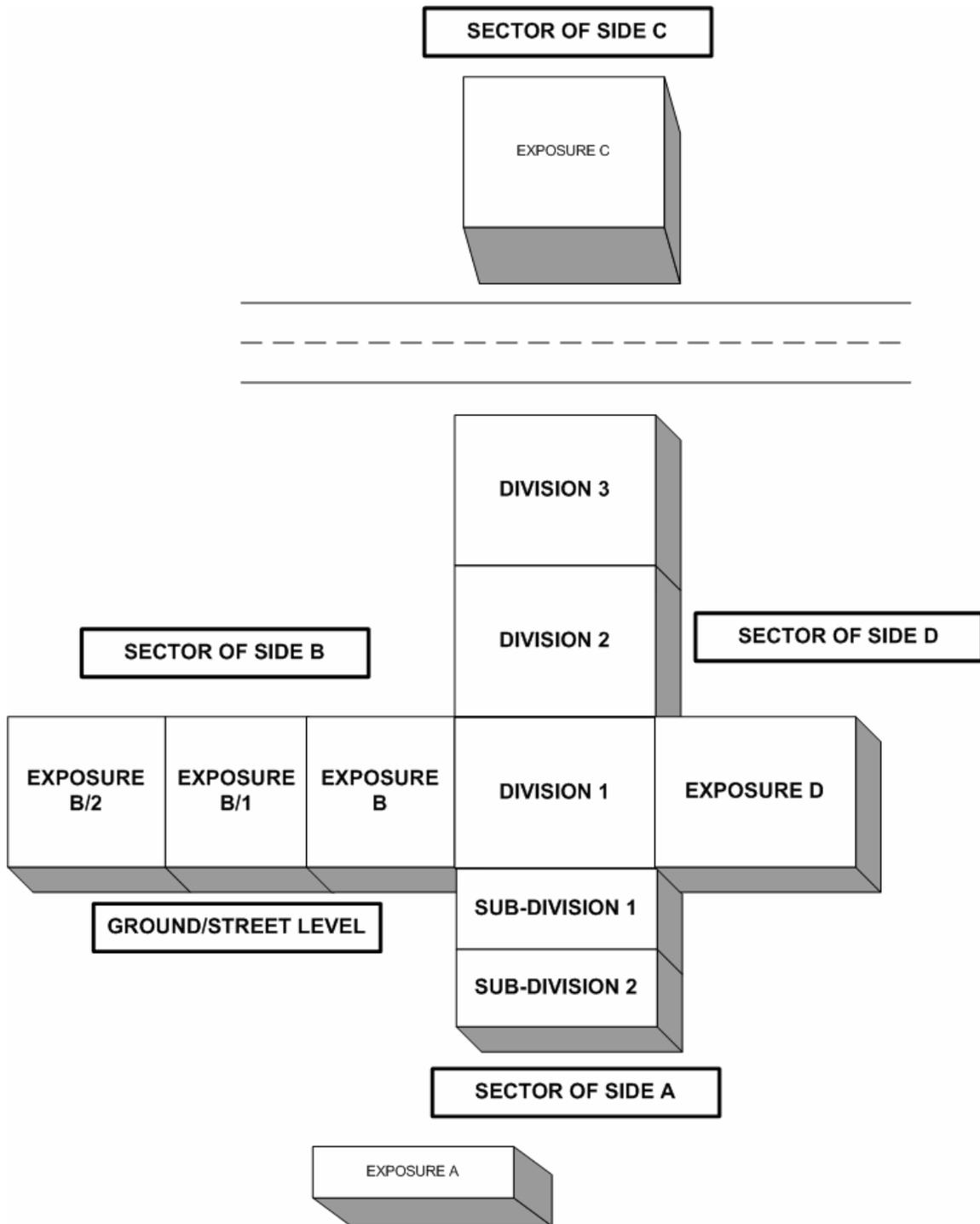


FIGURE 4: ICS SCENE MANAGEMENT CONVENTION FOR STRUCTURE/BUILDING

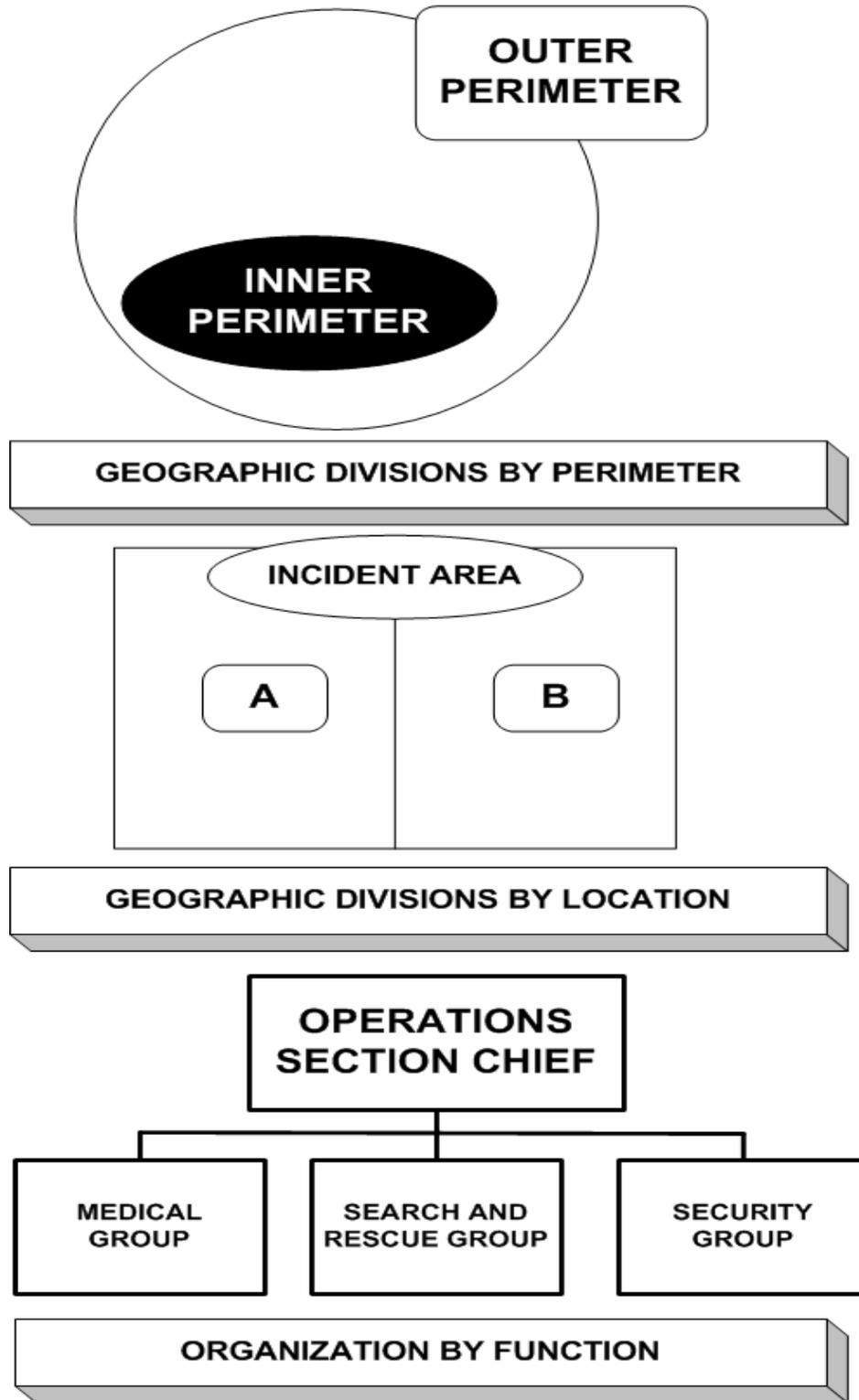


FIGURE 5: OTHER CONFIGURATIONS USED FOR ORGANIZING ICS RESPONSE



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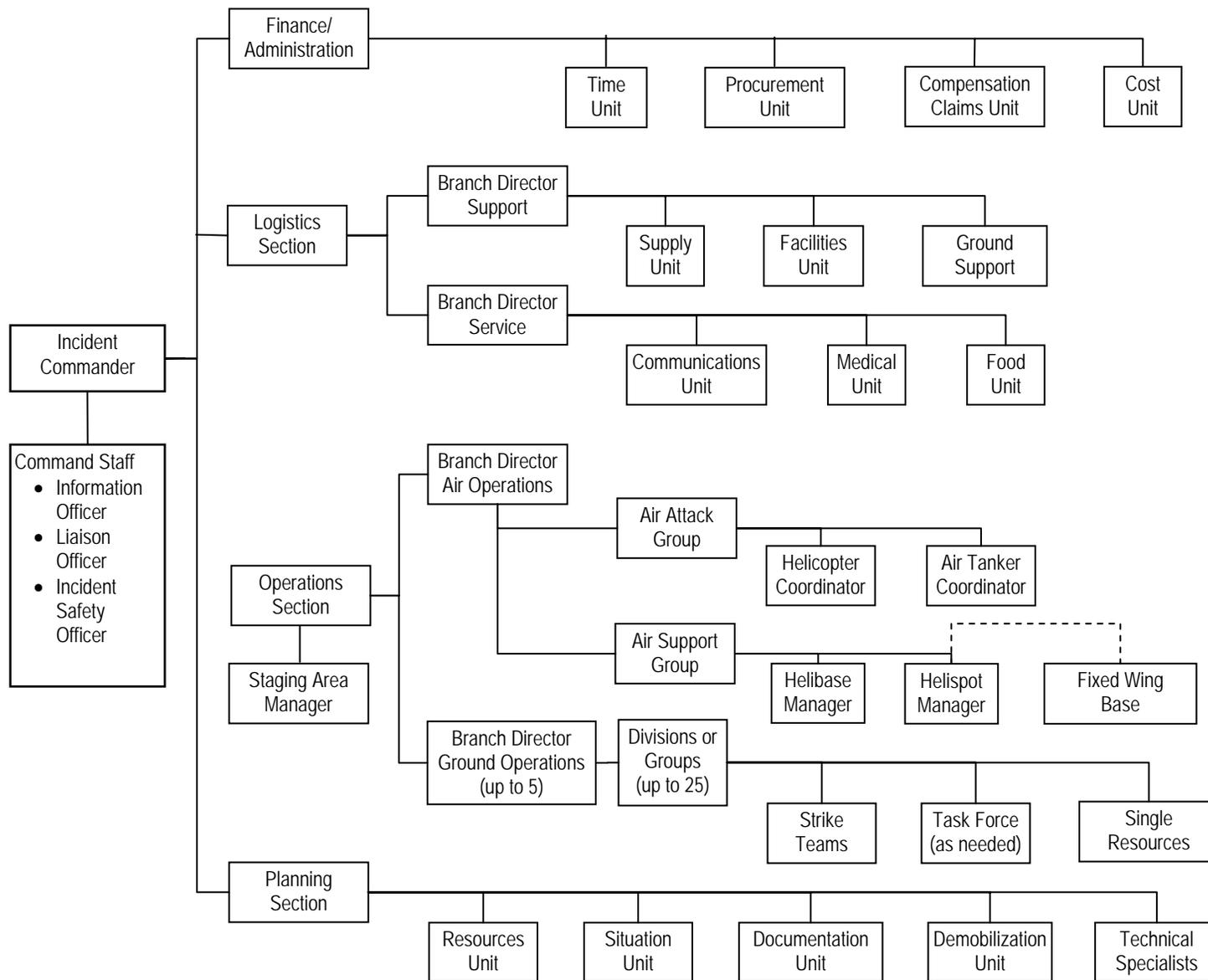


FIGURE 6: FULLY EXPENDED ICS



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In staffing the ICS organization, supervisory positions are designed to provide ratios that meet modern management practice.

- π The general rule is five subordinate units per supervisory position, although allowance is made to vary this ratio under special circumstances.
- π If tasks are relatively simple or routine, taking place in a small area, communications are good, and the incident character is reasonably stable, then one supervisor may oversee up to eight subordinate units.
- π Conversely, if the tasks are demanding, taking place over a large area, and incident character is changing, then the span of control might be reduced to one supervisor per two or three subordinates.

ICS is designed to provide the most efficient leadership possible under crisis conditions.

At each incident, command is assured through formal articulation of jurisdictional responsibilities, incident objectives, strategy development and selection, and tactic definition appropriate to the strategy to direct available resources. The Incident Commander's strategy is documented in an Incident Action Plan (IAP), which may be communicated to command staff in a verbal briefing or as a written plan. The IAP is intended to provide supervisory personnel with a common understanding of the situation and direction for future action. The IAP typically includes a statement of objectives, organizational description, assignments, and support material such as maps and lists of available resource. An **Incident Briefing Form** may be used on smaller incidents. Written plans are desirable when two or more jurisdictions are involved, when State and/or Federal agencies are assisting local response personnel, or there has been significant turnover in the incident staff.

UNIFIED COMMAND

More than 90% of emergencies that occur daily in the United States are readily managed by local agencies using only their own resources. On a small percentage of emergencies, the responsible agency may exhaust its own resources and call on neighboring jurisdictions for assistance. Many agencies are experienced with these "automatic aid" responses and assist each other on a routine and problem-free basis. These incidents do not call for Unified Command and are best handled under a single command structure. However, about 5% of all emergencies become serious enough to require the response of several agencies, each with its own legal obligation to perform some type of action, not just assist their neighbor. It is in these critical, multiple--involvement emergencies that Unified Command is called for. Some examples:

- π *Incidents that affect more than one geographical jurisdiction.* The classic example is of a wildland fire starting in one jurisdiction and burning into one or more others. Floods and hazardous-materials incidents could be similar. The incident is essentially the same challenge in each jurisdiction, but the political and geographic boundaries mandate multi-agency involvement.
- π *Incidents that affect more than one functional jurisdiction.* Major commercial airplane crashes are an example. The crash occurs in one geographical jurisdiction, but will involve fire suppression, law enforcement, medical response, Federal Aviation Administration, National Transportation Safety Board, and perhaps other agency



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response. All of these entities have different missions to perform, all at the same time, and all in the same place. The different functional roles, or statutory obligations, bring about their multiple involvements.

- π *Incidents affecting geographical and functional jurisdictions.* These are typified by the Mt. St. Helens volcanic eruption and the Three Mile Island nuclear accident. In these types of incidents, large numbers of federal, state, and local agencies become involved. The emergencies cross geographical boundaries and overlay multiple functional authorities.

In today's world, the public, private, and political values at risk in major emergencies demand the most efficient methods of response and management. Meeting this demand when multiple and diverse agencies are involved becomes a very difficult task. The Unified Command concept of ICS offers a process that all participating agencies can use to improve overall management, whether their jurisdiction is of geographical or functional nature.

The goals of the Unified Command concept are to:

- π improve the information flow between the agencies involved;
- π develop a single collective approach to the management of the incident;
- π reduce or eliminate functional and geographical complexities;
- π optimize the efforts of all agencies; and
- π reduce or eliminate duplications of effort.

These are practical goals. They have been achieved with relative ease on actual incidents involving multiple fire agencies, incidents requiring fire and law enforcement coordination, and emergencies that included fire, law, and medical disciplines. As the ICS becomes more completely implemented by agencies across the country, the goals will be met with greater regularity and greater effectiveness.

ICS Characteristics Pertinent to Unified Command

Above all, ICS is based on commonality. The commonality is a major departure from the traditional ways agencies have operated, and it creates significant opportunities for improvement over old methods. When agencies involved in a major emergency use ICS (the same organizational structure, the same terminology, and the same management procedures), there are few, if any, differences in operations. In essence, they are "one" organization, and can be managed as such. Instead of several command posts operating independently, the total operation can be directed from only one location. Instead of preparing several sets of plans (with no guarantee of coordination among them), only one set need be prepared to inform all participants. In place of several logistical and communications processes, only one system of collective and integrated procedures is used.

These five ICS characteristics (one organizational structure, one Incident Command Post, one planning process, one logistics center, and one communications framework) create a strong synergy. By meeting and working together at one location, preparing a single plan of action, and using other common procedures, the senior officers (Unified Commanders) from many agencies bring their collective powers to bear on the incident. They are able to share



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information, coordinate actions, improve resource utilization, greatly improve communications, and rapidly cope with changing incident conditions. This unified effort is supported and reinforced by the ICS Planning Process.

The Planning Process for Unified Command

The planning process for Unified Command is the same as for single Command, except that more people are involved. The process follows the Management-by-Objectives sequence, uses the same worksheets and forms, and allows for both functional and geographic response authorities to combine objectives and actions.

The process starts with documentation of each Commander's objectives, just as though it were a single-agency incident. These objectives may be widely different depending on incident character, agency roles, and other factors. It is extremely important to understand that these separate, and perhaps diverse, objectives do not have to be forced into a consensus package. Unified planning is not a "committee" process that must somehow resolve all differences in agency objectives before any action can take place. It is, however, a "team" process, and that promotes open sharing of objectives and priorities. Through the process, the team formulates collective (which is significantly different than common") directions to address the needs of the entire incident.

Once collective objectives and priorities are documented, the process continues as it would for single-agency involvement, except that all agencies are included.

- π The organization is designed to utilize multi-agency resources according to all span-of-control, unit integrity, and functional clarity guidelines.
- π Support, services, and communications requirements are obtained and assigned.
- π Branch, division, and unit assignments are detailed.
- π Financial considerations are defined and agreements are documented.
- π "Reality checking" is accomplished by staff of all agencies.
- π The developed multi-agency plan is returned to the Unified Commanders for approval.

Unified Command Configuration

In addition to all of its other attributes, ICS is a common-sense system. It is designed with a great deal of inherent flexibility. This allows modification of the on-scene organization to meet specific conditions, complexities, and workloads for different incidents. There are also various ways that a Unified Command group may be formed. The guidelines for deciding who should be in command are simple and apply at any level of incident complexity:

- π **Agency Role:** Responding agencies will be filling one of two roles. They will be either jurisdictional, with direct statutory responsibility and authority, or they will be supporting agencies who have been called for help. Only jurisdictional agencies with statutory responsibility on some part of the incident can assign one of the Unified Commanders.
- π **Agency Authority:** The agencies who assign Commanders must have the authority to order, transport, and maintain the resources necessary to meet Command objectives. This authority is not dependent on size or budget level since even very small agencies



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may participate in a Unified Command. It is dependent upon legitimate capability to pay the bills. (In the case of small agencies, this capability may come from state and federal assistance, but is nevertheless the required capability.) Only agencies with fiscal authority may assign one of the Unified Commanders.

- π **Applicability:** These guidelines apply equally to multi-geographical, multi-functional, and multi-geographical-functional incidents. The guidelines can and should be modified to meet exceptional conditions. An incident of disaster proportions will involve state and/or federal agencies, and officials from those government levels may be appropriate members of the Unified Command Group.
- π **Alternatives to Command Participation:** There is a practical limitation on Unified Command participation. Once a group exceeds about eight persons, the effectiveness of that group begins to deteriorate. ICS concepts recognize this and recommend that no more than eight people fill the Unified Command Group. During incidents where more than eight agencies have legitimate legal and fiscal authority, there are alternative ways to encourage total participation without having all in command. These and other alternatives have been used successfully on multi-agency and multi-disciplinary incidents. It requires training and experience to make the process work effectively. Pre-incident meetings, planning, and agreements facilitate the process.

THE INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

The Incident Action Plan (IAP) is the plan developed which contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy, specific tactical actions, and supporting information for the next operational period.

It is important that all incidents have some form of an IAP. The plan is developed around a specified duration of time called an operational period, and will state the objectives to be achieved and describe the strategy, tactics, resources, and support required to achieve the objectives within the time frame. Generally, the length of the operational period is determined by the length of time needed to achieve the objectives.

The IAP may be oral or written. Small incidents with only a few assigned resources may have a very simple plan, which may not be written. As incidents become larger, or require multi-agency involvement, the action plan should be written. IAPs will vary in content and form depending upon the kind and size of the incident. ICS provides for the use of a systematic planning process, and provides forms and formats for developing the Incident Action Plan. The general guideline for use of a written versus a verbal action plan is when:

- π two or more jurisdictions are involved;
- π a number of organizational elements have been activated;
- π the incident continues into another planning or operational period;
- π it is required by agency policy.

For multi-agency incidents being run under a Unified Command, the IAPs should be written. This provides all agencies with a clear set of objectives, actions, and assignments. It also provides the organizational structure and the communications plan required to manage the



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incident effectively under Unified Command. Written IAPs have four main elements that should be included:

- π **Statement of Objectives** - Statement of what is expected to be achieved. Objectives must be measurable.
- π **Organization** - Describes what elements of the ICS organization will be in place for the next Operational Period.
- π **Tactics and Assignments** - Describes tactics and control operations, including what resources will be assigned. Resource assignments are often done by a Division or Group.
- π **Supporting Material** - Examples could include a map of the incident, a communications plan, medical plan, a traffic plan, weather data, special precautions, and a safety message.

Whether verbal or written, the IAP process relies on the management-by-objectives (MBO) framework and the use of forms to aid response:

- π **Management-by-Objectives Framework** -- Core organizational functions are assured.
 - ***Policy, objectives, and priorities are set by Command (the executive function).*** The organization required to meet the objectives is designed by Operations and Planning.
 - ***Support and service needs, including communications requirements, are clearly identified from the beginning of the incident,*** typically by Logistics.
 - ***Financial abilities and constraints are considered.*** This may be done by an activated Finance position, or reserved by Command.
 - ***A "reality-checking" review of the initial work is carried out.*** All participants in the process examine the tentative plan for completeness, feasibility, and capability to meet objectives. Results of the review are used to revise or strengthen the plan.
- π **Forms Aid the Process** -- The experienced emergency responders who developed ICS spent over a year designing the forms that are used in the planning process. Their work was focused on preparing documents that would:
 - follow the MBO concept;
 - answer the questions, "What do we need to know?" and "What do we need to do?" on complex incidents;
 - be relatively easy to complete; and
 - be of real assistance, not just an exercise in paperwork, for incident personnel working under crisis conditions.



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After more than 20 years of experience with these tools, general consensus is that these requirements have been met. There are two types or categories of forms used in the incident action planning process:

- π "Action" forms are those necessary to set objectives, assign the organization, and outline the tasks to be done. These are combined into the written Action Plan and provided to the personnel who will do the work.
- π "Support and recording" forms are the remainder. They assist incident management by providing worksheets for systematic plan development, assuring that data and records are available and that resources are accounted for, integrating communications capabilities, and documenting decisions.

SUPPORT FOR THE ICS: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS

Response to major emergencies not only requires a field response, but also a policy component, to oversee and coordinate all off-site activities, and to make decisions that relate to the jurisdiction's authority and legal position. ICS, which is a jurisdiction's field response system, is closely coordinated with a sister policy organization, typically managed through an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

EOCs are normally activated at the request of the Incident Commander or based on the occurrence of incidents that meet specific thresholds required for activation. EOCs provide overall system direction and control, coordination and resource support for the Command Post.

The EOC will focus on such issues as staff scheduling, and obtaining, coordinating and directing highly specialized resources for the agency to fulfill its mission. The Agency Executive (chief of Police, etc.) may be located at the EOC. When an EOC is activated, local authorities may establish a policy group comprised of the head of the local authority (e.g. Mayor) and other elected officials and senior executive officers in order to provide the EOC Director with policy direction. An example of this level of policy direction is the declaration of a "state of local emergency".

Five EOC functions typically performed include:

- π Management: Responsible for overall emergency policy and coordination; public information and media relations; agency liaison; and proper risk management procedures, through the joint efforts of local government agencies and private organizations. Activities support the ICS Command staff.
- π Operations: Responsible for coordinating all jurisdictional operations in support of the emergency response through implementation of the jurisdiction's Action Plan.
- π Planning: Responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating information; developing the jurisdiction's Action Plan and Situational Status in coordination with other functions; maintaining all EOC documentation.



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- π Logistics: Responsible for providing facilities, services, personnel, equipment and materials.
- π Finance/Administration: Responsible for financial activities and other administrative aspects.

Through these activities, EOCs ensure the activation and implementation of the locality's Emergency Operations Plan and mutual aid agreements.