

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE - 4.2.1

TOPIC - INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM - GENERAL

PURPOSE:

To promote effective emergency scene management which consistently identifies the roles and responsibilities of each person operating at the scene.

GENERAL:

Through the application of principles and procedures which identify priorities and maintains a manageable span of control, each emergency scene can be organized in a standard manner promoting a greater degree of scene safety.

GUIDELINE:

BASIC PROCEDURES

1. Upon arrival the first unit must communicate an initial radio report following the Operating Guideline 2.4.1.
2. The first unit arriving on the scene of an emergency has the obligation to establish command of the scene.
 - a. Command is best in a stationary position, the location should be identified and communicated to in-coming units.
 - b. Command may be temporarily mobile whenever there is a need for the commander to function as a part of a task unit.
 - c. Name Command, usually using the road name of the incident, to identify which command is communicating.
3. Retain or transfer the command function as the incident dictates.
4. Size up the situation, rapidly considering all emergency scene factors.
5. Secure communications.
 - a. Ensure that all units are on the assigned working radio frequency.
 - b. Assign other radio frequencies as necessary.
 - c. Provide for radios in critical strategic locations and functions.
 - d. Use other personnel as information runners whenever radios are not available.
 - e. Assign a communications officer during large complex incidents.
 - f. Follow all communication guidelines as they may apply.
6. Organize the scene into manageable units, designating divisions, groups, and the leaders of those teams.

7. Develop a plan of action based on tactical priorities.
 - a. Choose a strategy, offensive or defensive.
 - b. Adapt to changes as they occur throughout the duration of the incident, and change the plan accordingly.
8. Secure necessary resources.
 - a. Identify immediate needs.
 - b. Anticipate projected needs.
 - c. Consider necessary outside resources.
9. Make assignments based on tactical priorities, components of the action plan and the availability of appropriate resources, fulfilling the most critical needs first.
10. Stage resources which have not received an assignment.
 - a. Level 1 staging is used to reduce scene congestion prior to assignment, while keeping those resources in a position of readiness.
 - b. Level 2 staging is used for large complex incidents. This level of staging will require the identification of a location and the assignment of a staging officer.
11. Command functions must be continuously supported throughout the duration of the incident. Command may be transferred:
 - a. Whenever the Commander is in a mobile mode on a working incident.
 - b. Whenever the initial Incident Commander needs a break.
 - c. Whenever a more experienced officer is on the scene who can provide more capable management and the initial Commander is over-taxed by the situation.
12. Termination of command.
 - a. Release crews and units as soon as possible based on existing and forecast scene conditions.
 - b. Notify dispatch that Command is terminated.