

BERRIEN COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

Purpose

This guideline identifies the responsibilities of incident command, and a consistent approach to incident command, to improve fireground management and safety, along with a standardized vision of the strategies that will be used on the fireground.

Guideline

To provide firefighters with firefighting options that allow for safer incident outcomes. Most importantly utilizing the most efficient resources, clarifying strategy, and developing an incident action plan that ensures strong management and coordination of resources.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of members of the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association to follow this policy to allow for effective and efficient command and interoperability on the fireground.

Initial Size-up and Initial Radio Report:

The initial Radio Report should include the following:

- Announcement of arrival on the scene
- Building/Area Description
- Occupancy type
- Problem Description:
 - Conditions
 - Location of the Problem
 - Initial Incident Action Plan (Tasks, Locations, and Objectives)
- Strategy Declaration:
 - Offensive Strategy - Interior Fire Attack
 - Defensive Strategy - Exterior Defensive
- Resource Determination
 - Requesting any additional resources needed.
 - Requesting responding units downgrade to non-emergency or cancel.
- Assume and Name Command.

360° Size-up:

A 360° size-up with a thermal imager is recommended at all incidents and should be completed before entry into a structure:

- If an officer encounters a developing situation requiring immediate action, that officer should assign another member of his/her crew, if possible, to address the developing situation and the officer should continue with the 360° size-up.
- If unable to complete the 360° size-up, due to building size or obstructions, the IC should delegate an individual or company to continue the process so that all sides of the incident are visualized. Every attempt should be made to get a basement report in this situation.

Follow-Up Report:

The IC will announce a follow-up report after completing the 360 stating:

- Whether 360° size-up is complete/incomplete.
- Results of the 360° size-up and safety concerns or hazards.
- A basement report – is there exterior access?
- Confirmation of strategy or changes to the IAP.

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- Provide the geographic location of the first-in apparatus and Accountability location.

Issuing assignments to arriving crews:

- Arriving crews should Level 1 Stage. Upon arrival, the IC should assign crews according to the needs of the IAP and the next tactical objective. ***The IC should not assign tasks to crews that are still responding unless the task is to alter their direction of approach.***
- Whenever assignments are issued, the order model should be used, and each company should be told their task, location, and objective (TLO).
- Arriving crews should be told where to position their apparatus if it is needed to accomplish a tactical objective.

Command Transfers:

- The Command Officer coming on scene summarizes the current IAP; with the Task, Location, and Objective of each assigned unit in the Hazard Zone; and will request a CAN report from the IC.
- The current IC should confirm or correct the summarized IAP and TLO of assigned units and provide a CAN Report.
- The incoming Command Officer should contact Dispatch and announce their:
 - Assumption of command.
 - Current strategy for the incident.
 - Request for additional resources if needed.

Assigning Sectors, Divisions, and Groups:

- When three (3) or more companies are assigned to the same geographical area, the IC should designate one company officer or preferably a Chief Officer as the Tactical Level Supervisor.

Review, Evaluation, and Revision (Ongoing Size-ups):

- The IC should conduct an ongoing size-up and change the operational strategy or tactics as needed. Additional size-ups should occur whenever significant events occur. The “20-Minute Incident Clock” should be used by the IC to help forecast the incident and assess the current IAP.

Continue, Support, and Terminate Command:

- Once all fireground factors have been mitigated the incident can be de-escalated, and command can be transferred to a lower-ranking officer. The same Command Transfer is used whether transferring command up or down.
- On-scene companies should conduct gross decontamination, rehab, and an on-scene After-Action Review (AAR) before demobilizing.

Personnel Accountability Reports

A PAR should be required when:

- Any personnel are unaccounted for, missing, or trapped.
- When critical incident benchmarks have been met.
- There is a change from offensive to defensive operations.
- Any sudden hazardous event related to the incident – hostile fire event or collapse.
- Any time the IC believes such is necessary.
- A “NO-PAR” policy will be in effect once a MAYDAY has been transmitted. This means that unless an operating unit DOES NOT have a PAR, PAR information is not to be transmitted.

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Fireground Priority Traffic

The following procedure will be used to clear radio traffic for priority communication when necessary to address potentially dangerous circumstances.

- To clear all radio traffic on the fireground talk group, the firefighter requesting exclusive use of the talk group must announce their unit ID and declare "**PRIORITY TRAFFIC.**" No other radio traffic should be transmitted until the nature, location, and type of situation is identified.
- The "**PRIORITY TRAFFIC**" declaration must be given to the IC (or a Tactical Supervisor if assigned) and is reserved for reporting critical information that will most likely require a significant adjustment to the IAP or the incident's overall strategy.

Fireground Emergency Traffic

The IC is the only person who can initiate an **emergency traffic** report. Companies operating in and around the Hazard Zone will contact the IC with **priority traffic** reports, and the IC will determine the need for emergency traffic and the corresponding tones. If the IC declares the need for emergency traffic they will then give directions to units operating on the fireground.

Emergency Evacuation Signal

Personnel on the fireground will **maintain radio silence** except to transmit traffic relevant to a Mayday, Priority Traffic, or Status Change. Emergency traffic will receive the highest communications priority from Dispatch and the IC. Once the situation has been mitigated (PARs obtained, Mayday cleared), the IC should contact Dispatch and clear the Emergency Traffic.

Offensive to Defensive Strategic Shift

The announcement of a change to a defensive strategy will be made as follows:

- The emergency alert tone is transmitted along with 3 long blasts of an air horn.
- Announce to all units:
 - We are shifting to the defensive strategy.
 - All units must "exit" or "abandon" the structure.
 - **Exit**—An orderly withdrawal where interior lines and equipment will be removed and repositioned/shut down when changing to a defensive strategy.
 - **Abandon**—An emergency retreat where all hose lines and heavy equipment are left in place, and all members in the Hazard Zone will exit the structure as quickly and safely as possible.
 - All units must report PARs upon exit.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer can bypass the chain of command when it is necessary to correct unsafe acts. The IC must be immediately informed of these corrective actions. If a Safety Officer is not assigned, the IC is also the Safety Officer. The responsibilities of the Safety Officer include:

- Monitor and assess safety hazards and unsafe conditions.
- Suggest measures to reduce risks to firefighting personnel.
- Inform IC of safety problems and hazards
- Assure Personnel Accountability has been established and is being monitored.
- Coordinate firefighter rehab with EMS and IC

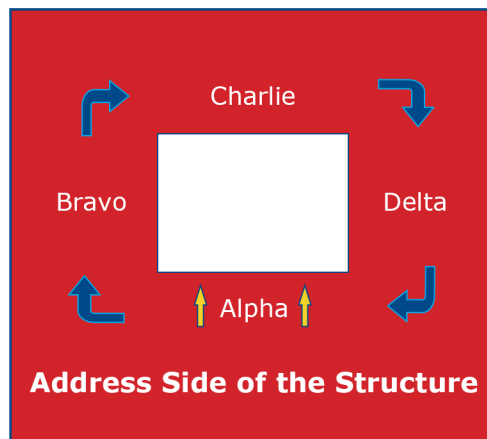
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Procedures for Implementing Branches

Branches may be established for the following reasons:

- At a large incident or as an incident continues to escalate and the number of resources exceeds a manageable span of control.
- The most common branches implemented at an incident will be the EMS Branch or the Water Supply Branch, the terms EMS Command and Water Command should NEVER be used on the fireground!

APPENDIX Geographical Area Designations



Division Designations

Floor 4- Division 4
Floor 3- Division 3
Floor 2- Division 2
Floor 1- Division 1
Sub-Floor 1- Basement 1
Sub-Floor 2- Basement 2

Exposure Types & Designations

