

	<h1>COMMERCE FIRE DEPARTMENT</h1>
	<h2>Standard Operating Guidelines</h2>
	Subject: Incident Command System (ICS)
	Reference Number: 3.00
	Effective Date: 3-1-2014 Last Date Revised: 9/1/2015
Approved By: Chief Kevin Dean	

Purpose: This guideline was developed as a multi-level tool to be used by the personnel of this department in providing the following:

1. The safety of departmental personnel while operating at emergency incidents through effective communications used by all personnel.
2. A manageable span of control by the incident commander to assure personnel accountability and safety.
3. Increase efficient use of personnel resources and personnel.
4. Assure compliance with national standards for incident management such as NIMS, OSHA (CFR 29. 1926), *NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*, and/or *NFPA 1201, Standard for Providing Emergency Services to the Public*.
5. Unification of command with other response agencies to assure effective incident management.

Policy: The Incident Command System will be used on all fire and fire related responses when deemed necessary.

Scope: This SOG applies to all Commerce Fire Department members.

Terminology: Terminology:

1. (ICS) Incident Command System - The system of communication and supervision by which personnel of this department shall manage each and every incident, training exercise, and event coordinated by this department.
2. Command - A multi-leveled management tool that provides for a reasonable scope of supervision at each level.
3. Incident Commander - The officer responsible for managing the operations, safety, and other command functions for the incident.
4. Command Mode - The location of the command for an incident in regards to the situation at hand. This may be tactical or fixed.
5. Incident Communications - The radio, telephone, or face-to-face relay of pertinent information for the incident in question.

6. Command Staff - The Command Staff is responsible for the overall management of the incident. This includes functions to assist the incident commander. Examples of command staff functions include Public Information Officer (PIO), Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer.
7. General Staff - The General Staff comprises the incident management personnel who represent the major functional elements of the ICS including the Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief and Finance/Administration Section Chief.
8. Branches - Branches are established when Divisions or Groups exceed the span of control. Branches can be either functional or geographic in nature.
9. Divisions - Divisions are used when the number of resources exceeds the span of control. Divisions are used to divide the incident into physical or geographic areas.
10. Groups - Groups are established when the number of resources exceeds the span of control. Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas.
11. Incident Action Plan - Operational plan for the incident. In large scale incidents the IAP will cover preset operational periods set by the Incident Commander.
12. National Incident Management System - Presidential mandated incident management system that assures interoperability among response agencies.
13. Unified Command - Bringing together of all response agencies at one location to assure the effective management of the incident. Each agency retains operational control and responsibility for its responding units.

Incident Command System (ICS)

1. The ICS shall be used for all incidents, events, and training exercises that require the response of this department.
2. An Incident Commander shall be established for all appropriate incidents or events. The Incident Commander shall be any member of the department deemed qualified to manage the incident by a senior officer of this department. A senior officer shall monitor the incident and offer assistance or assume command if the incident overwhelms the designated Incident Commander.
3. In order to be clear on who and where command is, the Officer establishing command shall transmit via radio an appropriate command designation that states the commander's title and command location. ' The location of command shall be identified as a one-word designation. The officer establishing command shall communicate as the IC until command is terminated, assumed, or transferred to another officer.
4. Once Command is established, the IC shall be responsible for the following areas:
 - A. Assessment of incident priorities that include:
 - I. Life safety of Firefighters and Civilians
 - II. Incident Stabilization
 - III. Protection of the Environment
 - IV. Property Preservation

B. Assess and communicate an incident "size up" to include the following:

- I. The physical address of the incident (1234 Elm Street)
- II. The construction type (wood, steel, concrete, etc.) and size of the structure if applicable
- III. General description of the incident scene
- IV. 360 degree size up of the incident
- V. Initial assignments for all other in-coming units (continue, slow down, or cancel units, etc.)
- VI. Additional resources needed (personnel, equipment, and support Agencies)
- VII. Location of hydrant.

A "size up" is not intended to be a one-time communication. The Incident Commander shall be prepared to update the "size up" each 30 minutes or so during the incident.

C. Selection of the "strategic mode" for the incident. These "strategic modes" are best described by the following terms:

- I. The use of an "Offensive Mode" shall be the standard mode of attack as long as operations can be supported in a safe manner for all personnel. "Offensive Mode" would indicate that operations are either underway or beginning that would lend assistance to the public and preserve property endangered by the incident.
- II. The use of a "Defensive Mode" may be necessary when fire or safety conditions dictate. The use of this type of "strategic mode" shall be implemented any time during operations when the immediate safety and well-being of personnel is jeopardized by furthering an "Offensive" operation. Should the Incident Commander or the Incident Safety Officer change the strategic mode of operations to a defensive mode the following evacuation signal shall be transmitted:
 - 1) Immediate clearing of the incident talk group by the Incident Commander. Dispatch shall then strike the evacuation alert tone and transmit the changing of the strategic mode to defensive.
 - 2) An immediate Personnel Accountability Report or PAR to account for all personnel on the incident scene. If all personnel are accounted for and clear that the mode of attack has changed to defensive, then no further action is warranted.
 - 3) If after the PAR report personnel are unaccounted for or not clear that the mode of attack has changed, then three, three second blasts of all apparatus air horns at the incident scene shall be performed.
 - 4) When the evacuation signal is transmitted, personnel shall evacuate from interior operations and report to designated personnel staging area.
 - 5) If safety becomes an issue because of fire conditions or an imminent

collapse, then the air horns shall be sounded and all personnel shall evacuate immediately and report to staging area as soon as possible.

- 6) When the span of control becomes unmanageable for the incident commander, he shall delegate the supervision of areas of operation in the following areas:
 - a) Safety
 - b) Operations
 - c) Water Supply
 - d) Medical Services
 - e) Operational Branches
 - f. Support Functions
 - f) Communications
 - g) Public Information Officer or PIO
- 7) Each of these specialized areas should be staffed with competent personnel that report to their assigned section chief or to the Incident Commander.

D. Selection of "strategic goals" that are to be accomplished by the operations of the department at that incident scene. These "strategic goals" must consider the department's incident priorities which are:

- I. Life Safety
- II. Incident Stabilization
- III. Protection of the Environment
- IV. Property Conservation
 - e. The Incident Commander shall continue in the role of Commander until one of the following occurs:
 - I. The incident is completed as far as the resources of this department and the "Command" is terminated by the Incident Commander via the radio in the following manner:

"Commerce Command to Radio, Commerce Command is terminated"
 - II. The incident command is transferred to another officer that is competent to perform the role. This should be done face to face between the two officers whenever possible. The officer receiving command shall then transmit to Dispatch that the command has been transferred and provide an incident Operational update.
 - III. The emergency response agency, other than Commerce, having jurisdiction requests that the command function for the incident be transferred to a person of equal or greater position which is on the incident scene and represents the jurisdiction's authority.

5. The communications between personnel operating at an emergency incident and between the emergency incident and Dispatch shall be the responsibility of the Incident Commander or his/her designee in the following format:

- a. All communications (radio) shall be transmitted clearly and concisely in a "clear text format".
- b. Once a communications transmission has been completed, the sender shall await an immediate reply from the recipient that repeats the message sent.

Example:

Commerce Command Sends: "*Commerce Command to Engine 1*"
Engine 1 sends: "*Engine 1, go ahead Commerce Command*"
Commerce Command Sends: "*Protect the exposure on side "C"*"
Engine 1 sends: "*Engine 1 is clear to protect the exposure on side "C"*"
Commerce Command Sends: "*Affirmative*"

- c. Units for this department shall be dispatched on the Fire/EMS Dispatch Channel. When assigned to a Tac Channel all units shall immediately change to the assigned channel to assure they are monitoring the necessary communications for that incident. These channels shall be identified as:

- I. Tac-2
- II. Tac-3
- III. Tac-4

- d. Additional channels are available to the incident commander if needed due to a channel being busy from large amounts of radio traffic.

6. During critical points of incidents in which an Incident Commander must immediately communicate information via a radio channel and cannot be interrupted by additional radio conversation, the term "Clear the channel" shall be used to transmit the needed information. At any time the term "Clear the channel" is transmitted, all communications on the talk group shall cease for the duration of the urgent communications. Example:

Commerce Command sends: "*Commerce Command to Radio, "Request a clear channel"*"

Radio Sends: "*Radio to all units, Commerce Command requests a clear channel"*"

Commerce Command sends: "*Commerce Command to radio, respond an additional Engine to this incident"*"

7. In the event that any time during an incident any member of the department were to become involved in a situation that may pose danger to that member or others and is not at liberty to use clear text to communicate, that employee shall use the term Mayday to summons assistance. Example:

Commerce Command sends: "*Commerce Command to radio"*"

Radio sends: "*Go ahead Commerce Command"*"

Commerce Command sends: "*Commerce Command declaring a mayday, request a clear channel"*"

8. Units of this department may at the direction of the Incident Commander utilize any of the Tac channels available to facilitate effective communications.
9. Units will change back to the Fire/EMS Dispatch when released from the incident scene.

NOTE: If preceded to the scene by the companies of another department, the officer responding from the department having jurisdiction shall report to the Incident Commander. Regardless of rank, this officer is legally responsible for the incident and shall have the option of assuming command, or allowing the original Incident Commander to remain in-charge of the incident.

Geographic Designation System:

1. The ICS shall consist of a unique set of designations that are standardized to develop a communications tool that all personnel assigned to an incident can understand. Standardized labeling of geographic areas for an incident shall be done in the following manner:
 - a. Each exterior side of a structure or similarly located side of an incident shall be given a letter designation. The side of the incident facing the main approach avenue shall be referred to as the "A" Side. The remaining sides shall be labeled in a clockwise manner using sides B, C, D, etc.
 - b. Exposures that are affected by the incident are labeled in the same manner A-D, etc, in a clockwise fashion.
 - c. The interior floors of the structure shall be labeled 1, 2, 3, etc.
 - d. The basement, attic, and roof areas shall be designated by their accepted names.

ICS Organizational Structure:

1. The ICS shall be utilized to provide a tool that will maintain an effective span of control and workload for supervisory personnel. The system of ICS can be managed down to an indefinite level with the incorporation of standardized terminology such as:
 - a. Branches - Branches are established when Divisions or Groups exceed the span of control. Branches can be either functional or geographic in nature.
 - b. Divisions - Divisions are used when the number of resources exceeds the span of control. Divisions are used to divide the incident into physical or geographic areas.
 - c. Groups - Groups are established when the number of resources exceeds the span of control. Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas.

Staging of Units and Personnel:

1. When the Incident Commander or Standard Operating Guidelines have not defined an assignment for units that are either on the incident scene or are still responding to the scene, the Incident Commander shall establish a "staging" location for the unit and transmit the status of the unit along with a "staging" location to Dispatch.
2. Staging of Units shall be defined by two common terms:
 - a. "Level Two" staging shall be located within a five minute response time to the incident scene. Units in this staging are not committed to the incident. Units in level two staging are to be in a standby mode and ready to respond to the incident if needed.
 - b. "Level One" staging shall be located in close proximity to the incident with a one minute or less response to the incident. Units in level one staging are committed to the incident although they are not presently engaged in the operations. Apparatus are to be kept running and personnel shall be dressed in full PPE to assure readiness if they are needed at the incident.
 - c. The level one staging officer shall keep the Incident Commander informed of the availability of resources located in the staging area. The officer is also responsible for the integrity of the units and personnel located there.
 - d. The Incident Commander will establish a personnel staging area at the incident scene; this area is designated as the "Personnel Staging Area". Unless otherwise indicated by the Incident Commander, the default location for the "Personnel Staging Area" will be the rear area of the first arriving engine. The "Personnel Staging Area" is used to track personnel and assist with effective scene operations. It also assists the IC with accounting for personnel assigned to the scene.