



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 3.16 Organization



COMMAND FUNCTION #6 – ORGANIZATION

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 Replaces: 803 Incident Management and Command Procedures
 Approved: Fire Chief Mike Kennedy

I. COMMAND FUNCTION #6 – ORGANIZATION

There are three operational levels that function at the scene of every hazard zone.

- A. Strategic Level - This organizational level is designed around the IC (and Command Team) operating in the Command position, working out of a stationary command post. The Strategic level involves coordinating the activities necessary for overall operational control, determining the incident’s strategy, and developing an IAP that completes the incident’s tactical objectives.
- B. Tactical Level - The first management “subdivision” of the incident scene is done by assigning Sector/Division/Group (SDG) responsibilities. SDG Officers are responsible for the tactical deployment and supervision of all assigned resources in their assigned area. These tactical assignments are made directly by the IC to specific units.
- C. Task Level - Is where the work is performed by assigned companies. The Strategic and Tactical levels are in place to support the task level. Task level activities are supervised by Company Officers working with the members of their companies directly in the hazard zone. The task level is the most important level on the incident site because it solves the incidents problems while taking place in an IDLH atmosphere that can kill the workers. All activities outside the hazard zone are in place to support units working on the task level.

II. FAST ATTACKING IC

For the majority of the local incidents we respond to, the responsibility for managing all three organizational levels is handled by the officer of the first arriving company, and they will become the initial IC for the incident, IC #1. A fast attacking Company Officer IC is the only person on the entire response team who will operate on all 3 organizational levels.

The Command system also calls on the fast attacking IC to assign the next arriving one to two engine companies and the first in ladder company to support the initial Incident Action Plan. In most cases, this initial, well-coordinated attack wave usually eliminates the incident hazards and there is no urgent need to upgrade the positions on the strategic or tactical levels. Incidents that are not quickly controlled, are escalating, or are significant in scope and size upon our arrival, must have the strategic and tactical operational levels upgraded as required.

The strategic level of command on these types of incidents will usually be the first operational level that is upgraded. When the initial arriving Command Officer, IC #2, arrives on scene and transfers command from the fast attacking Company Officer IC, they assume responsibility for the strategic level of the operation.



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III. SUBDIVIDING THE INCIDENT SCENE

An IC must have a system in place where the rate of assigning companies to the emergency scene doesn't exceed their span of control. The IC accomplishes this by forecasting and establishing geographic and functional responsibilities that divides the incident scene into smaller, more manageable tactical sub-divisions.

Division is a geographical subdivision of the incident site.

The term "sector" is used to name both geographic and functional work groups. IC's manage strategic level accountability by controlling both the position and function of all hazard zone units using a tactical worksheet. All units assigned into the hazard zone must be assigned to a specific geographic location where they will be responsible for the completion of all tactical priorities in their assigned area.

IV. ESTABLISHING GEOGRAPHIC & FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The IC must forecast where the overall event is going, subdivide the hazard zone into manageable tactical units and then assign geographic responsibilities early on in the incident in order to build an effective incident organization.

Geographic subdivisions are most effective when they are assigned in anticipation of their need, rather than in a crisis because it is very difficult to play catch-up in fast paced, escalating incidents.

Subdividing the incident site provides tactical supervision, direction and support to units assigned and operating in a hazard zone. This delegated management also helps the IC to achieve the incidents tactical objectives much more safely and effectively. Utilizing the appropriate subdivisions will:

- Reduce the IC's span of control.
- It streamlines and creates more effective incident scene communications.
- They allow the IC to focus on the Strategic elements of the incident from a stationary command post.
- Gives the IC an array of functions to choose from and match to the particular needs of each Incident.
- It greatly improves the accountability system
- It places strong tactical direction and leadership where the work is actually taking place. Improves firefighter safety by having dedicated Officers directly manage and control the position and function of the operating companies assigned to them.

Offensive fires usually do not last very long. We either put the fire out in the limited time frame we have (less than 20 minutes), or we do not put the fire out, we exit the structure and then get away from the incident problem. Building large incident organizations on offensive fires does not happen very often. But there are many situations that can facilitate long duration, over 30 minute, offensive operations. Some of these offensive situations include:

- Multi-Unit residential structures where the fire has extended into the concealed spaces or into adjoining units.
- Other highly compartmentized structures with fire extension in concealed and common attic spaces



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- Sprinkler controlled, large area cold smoke fires
- Defensive fire situations where we operate in offensive positions in the exposed structures
- Compartmentized Mid & High Rise Structures

As the resource required to bring the incident under control escalates, the Strategic level (the IC) and the Tactical level (S/D Officers) must also be supported. This support needs to be included in the regular dispatch system. The standard response elements of additional staff and response chiefs on greater alarms will give the IC the needed resource to implement an organization that keeps up with, and outlasts the event.

V. TACTICAL SUPERVISION – COMPANY OFFICER

Generally, in the front end of escalating or large scale events, the IC will assign - the company officer of the first arriving unit to a work location - initial S/D Officer responsibilities. These initial S/D assignments start to subdivide the incident scene early on, and they keep the IC ahead of the deployment process.

When two or more units are working in the same S/D, the IC should designate one of the company officer's (usually the first arriving unit to the location) as the S/D Officer. This will prevent two companies working in the same area from reporting the same information to the IC. When assigning a unit to deploy to and/or assume initial geographic or functional responsibilities, the IC needs to transmit:

- Location or function of the subdivision
- S/D appropriate name
- Tactical objectives to be addressed in the S/D

VI. TACTICAL SUPERVISION – COMMAND OFFICER

When S/D supervision is transferred from a company officer to a command officer, it elevates S/D management with a true tactical level boss. This greatly facilitates the completion of the S/Ds objectives and firefighter safety. As the IC assigns subsequent arriving command officers to assume S/D responsibilities it quickly builds and embeds powerful tactical and safety elements across the entire incident scene. This places the IC in the strongest strategic position to manage the position and function of all assigned resources.

When assigning a command officer to assume geographic or functional responsibilities, the IC needs will need to transmit:

- Location of the S/D
- S/D appropriate name T
- Tactical objectives to be addressed in the S/D
- Units currently assigned to the work area
- Current S/D supervisor they will be replacing (if any)

The S/D Officer will need to position themselves just outside of the hazard zone in their S/D. Entering into the hazard zone would place the S/D Officer at the same disadvantage as interior companies working in the S/D and entry should be avoided. The best position to manage the S/D is in the warm zone of the S/D at the entry point.



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This location puts the S/D officer in the most ideal position to manage, coordinate, and account for all the S/D resource.

There are two main functional areas a S/D Officer must manage in their assigned S/D. They are:

- **Tactical** level requirements to run the S/D
- **Embedded Safety** requirements to run the S/D

V. OFFENSIVE HAZARD ZONE TACTICAL LEVEL SUPERVISION

The goal of the deployment and S/D system is to always have enough workers assigned performing the work, to have enough workers that are assigned to on-deck positions within the S/D that are ready to go to work, and then have enough of a tactical reserve in staged positions, waiting to be assigned to go to work.

The IC must use the “3-deep” deployment model to supply a steady, adequate stream of companies to the various S/Ds. This approach to deployment places ready-to-go resources in all the key operating positions around the incident site and it greatly enhances firefighter safety and effectiveness.

As working companies properly manage their air supplies and cycle out of the hazard zone, on-deck companies should be positioned within the S/D to quickly take their place. This deployment model also allows exiting companies to actually have a face-to-face briefing with the S/D officer and the companies that are relieving them. This reduces the amount of radio traffic on the tactical channel and streamlines the communication process for the entire incident.

The communications flow chart should overlay and reflect the organization the IC has implemented. The IC gives orders and makes assignments to establish the overall organization and to implement an effective IAP. After the organization is in place, the IC should shift from primarily ordering units into position, to requesting, listening and reacting to critical working area(s) CAN reports.

The IC should avoid automatically assigning more resources to established S/Ds. Once the organization is implemented, these SDG officers should report to the IC on the conditions in their area, the actions they are taking and any necessary resources or support (Needs). This allows the IC to operate on the strategic level, serving as a resource allocator to the SDGs based on each tactical area’s needs.

V. DEFENSIVE HAZARD ZONE TACTICAL LEVEL SUPERVISION

A defensive situation is where the incident problem has evolved to the point that lives and property are no longer savable, and offensive tactics are no longer effective or safe. The entire defensive strategy is based on protecting firefighters.

Firefighter safety is the number one defensive priority. No firefighter should be injured on a defensive fire.



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Arrangement becomes a major critical factor with defensive fires. The way the main fire compartment/area is arranged to its neighboring exposures will dictate our operating positions on a defensive emergency scene.

All exposures, both immediate and anticipated, must be identified, searched and protected. The first priority in defensive operations is personnel safety; the second is exposure protection.

The defensive perimeter and collapse zone must be identified and all operating units will remain behind those defined boundaries —this perimeter must not be crossed. S/D Officers who are in charge of defensive operations should use hazard zone tape to identify the defensive fire perimeter and collapse zone that must not be crossed by firefighting forces. This tape perimeter will greatly assist the S/D officer in managing firefighter "creeping".

S/D officers should also shut down all small-diameter handlines (unless they are being used to directly protect exposures). This diverts that water into master-stream devices that can apply large amounts of water directly on the fire and the exposures. These actions also reduce creeping.