

### 3.1.4.3 Incident Scene Management



YOUR ORGANIZATION  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

**TITLE:** Incident Scene Management

**SECTION/TOPIC:** Command and Control

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**PREPARED BY:**

**APPROVED BY:**

X

Preparer

X

Approver

These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197

#### 1.0 POLICY REFERENCE

CFR

NFPA

NIMS

#### 2.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure/guideline addresses general procedures for activating the Incident Command/Incident Management System, ICS/EOC interface, designating an Incident Safety Officer, organizing the scene, use of control zones, placing resources, supervising personnel, controlling access, controlling bystanders and crowds, coordinating with other agencies, etc.

The City Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergency incidents. In order to effectively manage personnel and resources and to provide for the safety and welfare of personnel, we will always operate within the Incident Command System at the incident scene. This procedure identifies the Standard Operating Procedures to be employed in establishing Command components of the Incident Command System and applicable components of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

#### 3.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are pertinent to this SOP/SOG.

## 5.0 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

### 5.1 General Procedures for activating the Incident Command/Incident Management System:

Command Procedures are designed to:

- Fix the responsibility for Command on a certain individual through a standard identification system, depending on the arrival sequence of members, companies, and Command officers.
- Ensure that a strong, direct, and visible Command will be established from the onset of the incident.
- Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the Incident Commander (IC) and the other individuals operating within the Incident Command System.
- Provide a system to process information to support incident management, planning, and decision-making.
- Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving officers.
- Ensure a seamless transition from a Type 5/4 incident to a Type 3/2/1 (NIMS).

#### Roles and Responsibilities within the Incident Command System

Shift Commanders City (North and South Deputy), City2 (West Deputy) and City3 (East Deputy)

- Manage Battalions and supervise Battalion Chiefs.
- Occupy the position of Senior Advisor (Incident Advisor) on the Command Team (Incident

Advisory Team) during first and greater alarm incidents. Battalion Chiefs

- Manage companies and supervise company officers.
- Occupy the position of Incident Commander (IC) when appropriate.
- Occupy the position of Sector Officer when appropriate.
- Occupy the position of IC on the Command Team (Incident Advisory Team) during first and greater alarm incidents.

Company Officers (Captains)

- Occupy the position of IC when appropriate.
- Occupy the position of Sector Officer when appropriate.
- Manage task level activities and supervise firefighters.

#### Responsibilities of Command

The Incident Commander is responsible for the completion of the tactical objectives. **The Tactical Objectives (listed in order of priority) are:**

- A. Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured.
- B. Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety.
- C. Conserve property.
- D. Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel. This priority is ongoing throughout the incident.

The Incident Command System is used to facilitate the completion of the Tactical Objectives. The Incident Commander is the person who drives the command system towards that end. The Incident Commander is responsible for building a Command structure that matches the organizational needs of the incident to achieve the completion of the Tactical Objectives for the incident. **The Functions of Command** define standard activities that are performed by the Incident Commander to achieve the Tactical Objectives.

#### Functions of Command

The Functions of Command include:

- 1. Assume and announce Command and establish an effective initial command position (Command Post).
- 2. Rapidly evaluate the situation (size up).
- 3. Initiate, maintain, and control effective incident communications.
- 4. Provide and manage a steady, adequate, and timely stream of appropriate resources.
- 5. Identify the incident strategy, develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP), and assign companies and personnel consistent with plans and standard operating procedures.
- 6. Develop an effective incident organization using Sectors/Divisions/Groups to decentralize and delegate geographic and functional responsibility.
- 7. Review, and revise (as needed) the strategy to keep the IAP current.
- 8. Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command.

The Incident Commander is responsible for all of these functions. As Command is transferred, so is the responsibility for these functions. The first six (6) functions must be addressed immediately from the initial assumption of Command.

#### Establishing Command

The first fire department member or unit to arrive at the scene of a multiple unit response shall assume command of the incident\*. The initial Incident Commander shall remain in Command until Command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and Command is terminated.

- One or two company responses that are not going to escalate beyond the commitment of these companies do not require the first arriving unit or officer to assume Command. The first arriving unit or officer will, however remain responsible for any needed Command functions. Examples would include:
  - Single unit response Check Welfare
  - Check Hazard
  - Any EMS call requiring only one or two companies

The first arriving fire department unit initiates the command process by giving an initial radio report.

The standard **Initial Radio Report** includes:

- Clear alarm.
- Unit designation/on the scene.
- Building/area description.
- Obvious/problem conditions.
- Action taken.
- Declaration of Strategy.
- Any immediate safety concerns.
- Accountability started (announce the initial accountability location).
- Disposition of resources (hold/add/return)
- Command confirmation with name.
- Announce the status of IRIC/RIC.

Example:

*For an offensive structure fire -*

Clear alarm and when acknowledged "Engine 11 is on the scene of a large two story school with a working fire on the second floor. Engine 11 is laying a supply line and going in with a hand-line to the second floor for search and rescue. This is an offensive fire attack. Pump 11 will be North side accountability. Balance to a 1st Alarm, Engine 11 will be 7th Street Command."

*For a defensive fire –*

Clear alarm and when acknowledged "Engine 11 is on the scene of a medium size warehouse fully involved with exposures to the east. Engine 11 is laying a supply line and attacking the fire with a stang gun and a hand-line to the east exposure to check for extension. This is a defensive fire. Pump 11 will be North side accountability. Balance to a 1st Alarm, Engine 11 will be Buckeye Command.

*For an E.M.S. incident -*

"Ladder 11 is on the scene with a multi-vehicle accident. Give me the balance of a 2 and 1 medical with three ambulances. Ladder 11 will be Parkway Command."

### Radio Designation

The radio designation "**COMMAND**" will be used along with the occupancy or address of the incident (i.e. "7th Street Command", "Metro Center Command"). This designation will not change throughout the duration of the incident. The designation of "Command" will remain with the officer currently in command of the incident throughout the event.

### Command Options

The responsibility of the first arriving unit or member to assume Command of the incident presents several options, depending on the situation. If a Chief Officer, member, or unit without tactical capabilities (i.e. staff vehicle, no equipment, etc.) initiates Command; the establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority. At most incidents the initial Incident Commander will be the Company Officer. The following Command options define the Company Officer's direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of Command that may be utilized.

#### Investigative Mode (Nothing Showing):

This is a mobile IC on a portable radio, moving around and evaluating conditions while looking for the incident problem. The company officer should go with the company to investigate while utilizing a portable radio to command the incident.

#### Fast Attack:

Visible working fires in houses or commercial occupancies. IC #1 arrives and his/her direct participation in the attack will make a positive difference in the outcome (search and rescue, fire control, and crew safety). They give an initial radio report and quickly assign an attack team (2 engines and ladder) coming in behind them. Next arriving units all stage. IC #1 goes inside (when in the offensive mode) with a portable radio supervising their crew in the attack. Examples of these situations include:

- Visible working fire in a house or small commercial occupancy.
- Critical life safety situations (i.e. rescue that must be achieved in a compressed time.
- Any incident where the safety and welfare of fire fighters is a major concern.
- Obvious working incidents that require further investigation by the Company Officer.
- Combined crew experience level

In fast attack mode, the IC must initiate and continue command until a command officer arrives and the transfer of command is completed. The entire team responding in behind the fast attackers must realize that the IC is in an attack position inside the hazard zone attempting to quickly solve the incident problem. Responding companies must critically listen to radio traffic, update, review and reinforce the initial size up, verify the safety, welfare, and accountability of the fast attackers, and back up the basic attack.

The Fast-attack-mobile Command mode should not last more than a few minutes and will end with one of the following:

- A. Situation is stabilized.
- B. Command is transferred from the fast attack company officer IC to a later arriving command officer.
- C. If the situation is not stabilized, the fast attack company officer IC must move to an exterior (stationary) command position and is now in the Command mode. The company officer must decide whether or not to withdraw the remainder of the crew, based on the crew's capabilities and experience, safety issues, and the ability to communicate with the crew. No crew will remain in a hazardous area without radio communications.

Command Mode - Stationary Command Post:

Certain incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion, demand early, strong, stationary command from the outset. In these cases, the first arriving IC will assume command and, from the very beginning stay out of the hazard zone in a stationary exterior command position. The IC must remain there until the incident is terminated or command is transferred. The tactical worksheet shall be initiated and utilized to assist in managing these types of incidents.

If the Company Officer assumes a Command mode, the following options are available with regards to the assignment of the remaining crew members.

- A. *"Move up" an acting officer within the Company.* This is determined by the individual and collective capabilities and experience of the crew.
- B. *Assign the crew members to perform staff functions to assist the IC.* Staff functions include recon/reporting, communications assistance; help with tactical worksheet tracking etc.
- C. *Assign company personnel to another Company.* This creates a larger work group with an officer. This must be acknowledged by both the original and the receiving officer and by their inclusion in the accountability system.

Transfer of Command

Command is transferred to improve the quality of the Command organization. When Command is transferred it should trigger upgrades in the Command structure. The following guidelines outline the transfer of Command. Using a standard routine for both establishing and transferring command creates the capability within the responding units for the IC to effectively and safely establish and continue command. Using a fast attack company officer IC (IC #1) in the initial stages of an offensive incident, and then having a subsequent arriving response command officer (IC #2) transfer, strengthens and continues command within the IAP from an upgraded Command Post (CP), in a vehicle, outside the hazard zone, creates a strong, safe, and under control approach. The benefits of an upgraded CP include:

- Provides IC #2 with a Support Officer
- Establishes an Incident Safety Officer (FIT) (ISO)

- IC #2 has a wider view of the fireground
- Improves communication
- Creates a lighted, warm (or cool), and dry environment for IC #2 to operate in

#### Transfer of Command process

- A. The first fire department member arriving on the scene will automatically assume Command. This will normally be a Company Officer, but could be any fire department member up to and including the Fire Chief.
- B. The first arriving Company Officer will assume Command after the Transfer of Command procedures have been completed (assuming an equal or higher ranking officer has not already assumed Command). IC #1 is usually a Company Officer.
- C. The first arriving Command Officer should assume Command of the incident following Transfer of Command procedures and becomes IC #2.
- D. Subsequent arriving Command Officers should report their location to the IC, and wait for an assignment. The first arriving Shift Commander (preferably from the appropriate city that the incident is located in if available) will assume the roll of Senior Advisor and assist the IC. The second arriving Shift Commander sets up the Command Van (CV) and manages the movement of Command to the CV. The Senior Advisor, IC and Support Officer become the Command Team (Incident Advisory Team). The Command Team may assign additional staff such as a Safety Officer (relieves the Support Officer's ISO responsibility) and a Staging Officer.
- E. Assumption of Command is discretionary for Assistant Chiefs and the Fire Chief.
- F. Local events that are of long duration or require long term evacuations may require a larger Command staff including Planning Chief, Liaison, and Public Information Officer (PIO). The Assistant Chief of Operations may provide additional support by assisting the Senior Advisor while a Shift Commander manages the evacuation and Command staff.
- G. When an incident is so large or of such duration that State or Federal resources are called to assist, an Incident Management Team (IMT) may be assigned to manage these resources. In this case the local jurisdiction having authority (JHA) will maintain Command or delegate authority for managing resources to the IMT. In either case the JHA retains authority to set incident objectives and determine when the IMT, State, and Federal resources are no longer needed.

In certain situations, it may be advantageous for the first arriving IC (i.e. Company Officer) to transfer Command to the next Company ON SCENE. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first arriving Company requires a full crew (i.e., high-rise or an immediate rescue situation) and another Company or Command Officer is on the scene. When a Chief Officer arrives at the scene at the same time as the initial arriving Company, the Chief Officer should assume Command of the incident.

"Passing Command" to a unit that is not on the scene creates a gap in the Command process and compromises incident management. To prevent this "gap", COMMAND SHALL NOT BE TRANSFERRED TO AN OFFICER WHO IS NOT ON THE SCENE.

Should a situation occur where a later arriving Company or Command officer cannot locate or communicate with Command (after several radio attempts), they will assume and announce their assumption of Command and initiate whatever actions are necessary to confirm the safety of the missing crew.

**Within the chain of Command, the actual transfer of Command will be regulated by the following procedure:**

- A. The officer assuming Command (IC #2) will communicate with the person being relieved (IC #1) by radio or face-to-face. Face-to-face is the preferred method to transfer Command.
- B. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming Command indicating at least the following:
  - 1. General situation status:
    - a. Incident conditions (fire location and extent, Hazmat spill or release, number of patients, etc.)
    - b. Incident Management Plan.
    - c. Completion of the Tactical Objectives.
    - d. Safety considerations.
  - 2. Deployment and assignments of operating companies and personnel.
  - 3. Appraisals of need for additional resources.
- C. When an incident becomes so large that an Incident Management Team (IMT) is requested, Command will not transfer to the IMT (Type I/III) unless a formal written Delegation of Authority has been signed by both the JHA and the IMT.

The arrival of a ranking Officer on the incident scene does not mean that Command has been automatically transferred to that Officer. Command is only transferred when the Transfer of Command process has been completed. The person being relieved of Command will be assigned to the best advantage by the Officer assuming Command.

A ranking Officer may elect to have a subordinate continue the role of Incident Commander. In cases where an individual is effectively commanding an incident, and satisfactory progress is being made to bring the incident under control, it may be desirable for that person to continue in an active Command role. The ranking Officer must determine that the Incident Commander is completely aware of the position and function of operating companies and the general status of the situation. In these cases, the arriving ranking Officer may assume a supportive role in the overall Command organization.



The response and arrival of additional command officers strengthens the overall Command organization. As the incident escalates, the IC should use these Command Officers to fill Sector (Division), Branch, and Section positions. Command should consider adding a command officer to any sector with three or more operating companies. Strengthening the Command organization:

- Improves safety
- Decreases the span of control
- Improves communication
- Improves accountability
- Improves management of the Sector

When the first arriving unit is a Command Officer, efforts should be automatically directed towards establishing a Command Post and fulfilling the Command functions. A Command Post in a vehicle equipped for this purpose is a priority at all working incidents. A vehicle that provides appropriate work space for the Incident Commander and staff personnel, lighting, communications equipment, supplies reference items, and some isolation from outside distractions will make Command more effective.

Company and Command Officers should eliminate all unnecessary radio traffic while responding, unless such communications are required to ensure that Command functions are initiated and completed. This requires the initial Incident Commander to give a clear initial radio report and continue to give updated progress reports as needed.

Chief Officers or Battalion Chiefs should stage over the radio. Staff Personnel should report directly to the Command Post to notify the Incident Commander of their availability to assume incident duties. These personnel should park their vehicles in a location that does not restrict access to the scene.

The IC is responsible for managing the incident. The fire department empowers the IC with the authority to turn his/her decisions into actions (develop an IAP and assign companies). Simply stated, the Incident Commander outranks everybody\*. If a higher ranking Officer wants to affect a change in the management of an incident, he/she must first be on the scene of the incident, and then follow the Transfer of Command procedure.

\*Anyone can effect a change in incident management in extreme situations relating to safety by notifying Command and initiating corrective action.

The Incident Command System (ICS) never "sleeps". The ICS is in a constant state of readiness. When there are no working incidents the Alarm Room Battalion Chief and Supervisor share the responsibility of initiating the ICS. When the Alarm Room receives notification of a working incident (normally via the telephone) they start the ICS process by giving instruction to the caller and dispatching the appropriate response. The Alarm Room continues in an active management role by ensuring that the

first on-scene unit takes Command. The Shift Commanders share this responsibility by virtue of being the highest ranking on duty members.

#### Command Team (Incident Advisory Team)

**Note:** The roles and responsibilities of the **Command Team** are identical to the roles and responsibilities of the **Incident Advisory Team**. The Command Team consists of the Incident Commander (IC), Support Officer, and Senior Advisor. On the Incident Advisory Team these roles are filled by the Incident Commander (IC), Support Advisor, and Incident Advisor respectively. Our system uses Command Team terminology but as previously stated the roles and responsibilities for each position remains the same.

A Command Team is an organizational response to quickly provide enough command and control to rapidly bring a significant incident under control. The primary players in the Command Team are the IC, Support Officer, and Senior Advisor.

The incident scene is often dynamic and intense. As the incident grows into and past the requirements of a first alarm assignment, the IC can become overwhelmed with information management, assigning Companies, filling out and updating the tactical worksheet, planning, forecasting, calling for additional resources, talking on the radio, and fulfilling all the other functions of Command. The immediate need of Command at this point is support. In some organizations the ICs driver (FIT, ISO, BSO etc.) fulfills the role of Support Officer, in organizations without this advantage the IC may choose to utilize the next arriving Command Officer as a Support Officer. The IC may decide to assign the second Command Officer to a Sector (Division) if he/she feels the presence of a Command Officer in a particular Sector will improve safety and communications in that Sector by reducing the span of control.

#### Establishing an Incident Command Team

The first in command officer, usually a BC with a FIT, or ISO, assumes command (IC #2) from the initial IC (IC #1, usually a company officer). Once IC #2 assumes Command the FIT becomes his/her Support Officer and the designated Incident Safety Officer (ISO) (**Note:** Some members of the consortium may slightly differ in assigning responsibilities to the FIT/ISO/BSO according to their department's SOPs). If the initial assignment stabilizes the situation, this is as far as command needs to grow. If the situation is not stabilized and continues to grow, so does the command organization. The next in command officer (usually a BC) stages on the radio. IC #2 normally assigns this BC to a Sector but if IC #2 does not have a FIT the second BC may be assigned as IC #2's support officer (and ISO) as described earlier in this M.P.

The IC and the Support Officer are the first and second members of the Command Team.

#### It is the Responsibility of the IC to perform the Functions of Command to achieve the Tactical

### Objectives.

1. Assume and announce Command and establish an effective initial command position (Command Post).
2. Rapidly evaluate the situation (size up).
3. Initiate, maintain, and control effective incident communications.
4. Provide and manage a steady, adequate, and timely stream of appropriate resources.
5. Identify the incident strategy, develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP), and assign companies and personnel consistent with plans and standard operating procedures.
6. Develop an effective incident organization using Sectors/Divisions/Groups to decentralize and delegate geographic and functional responsibility.
7. Review, and revise (as needed) the strategy to keep the IAP current.
8. Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of Command.

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Support Officer:

- Define, evaluate, and recommend changes to the incident action plan.
- Provide direction relating to tactical priorities and specific critical fireground factors.
- Become the Incident Safety Officer
- Evaluate the need for additional resources.
- Assign logistics responsibilities.
- Assist with the tactical worksheet for control and accountability.
- Evaluate the fireground organization and span of control.
- Other duties as necessary.

The third member of the Command Team is the Senior Advisor. The Senior Advisor is normally the highest ranking member of the Command Team. The first arriving Shift Commander (North, South, East or West Deputy) usually fills the role of the Senior Advisor. The Officer serving as "Command" and the Support Officer will focus on the completion of the tactical priorities, the strategic and tactical plan and the other components of the incident. The Senior Advisor's focus is looking at the entire incident and its impact from a broader perspective and providing direction, guidance and advice to the IC and/or Support Officer.

### Role and Responsibilities of the Senior Advisor

- Review and evaluate the incident action plan, and initiate any needed changes.
- Provide on-going review of the overall incident (THE BIG PICTURE).
- Review the organizational structure, initiate change or expansion to meet incident needs.
- Initiate Section and Branch functions as required.
- Provide a liaison with other city agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners and/or tenants.
- Forecast and react to the effect this incident will have on surrounding neighborhoods, Public Officials, and city staffing.

- Prepare to transition to long-term operations by establishing operational periods and advising the Assistant Chief of Operations as to the need for an All Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT), state or federal assistance.
- Provide a transitional briefing to the incoming IMT if one has been assigned to the incident.

In order to maintain continuity and overall effectiveness, the Senior Advisor and Support Officer must be in the Command Post with the IC. The result is there are three people performing the functions of Command. They are working as a team to enhance the Command process and make the functions of Command more effective. The Officer assigned to communicate directly to Companies, Sectors (Divisions or Groups), or Branches will use the radio designation "**Command**", and should be the only member of the Command Team talking on the tactical radio channel.

### Command Structure

It is the responsibility of Command to develop an organizational structure, using standard operating procedures, to effectively manage the incident scene. The development of the organizational structure should begin with deployment of the first arriving fire department unit and continue through a number of phases, depending on the size and complexity of the incident. The Command organization must develop at a pace which stays ahead of the tactical deployment of personnel and resources. In order for the Incident Commander to manage the incident, he/she must first be able to direct, control, and track the position and function of all operating Companies. Building a Command organization is the best support mechanism the Incident Commander can utilize to achieve a balance between managing personnel and incident needs. Simply put, this means:

Large scale and complex incidents = Big Command organization.

Small scale and "simple" incidents = Little Command organization.

- The Incident Commander should have more people working than commanding.
- The basic configuration of Command includes three levels:

Strategic Level - Overall direction of the incident.

Tactical Level - Objectives assigned to Sectors (Divisions or Groups)

Task Level - Task objectives assigned to Companies.

**Strategic** – This organizational level is designed around the IC and Command Team, operating in the Command Mode, and working out of a stationary command post. The strategic level involves the activities necessary for overall operational control, considering critical fireground factors and risk management plan to determine the strategy and develop an IAP, establishing objectives, managing the strategy, setting priorities, allocating resources, and thinking ahead. Strategic Level responsibilities include:

- Determining the appropriate strategy: **OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE**

- Establishing a strategic plan for the incident.
- Setting priorities.
- Obtaining and allocating resources.
- Predicting outcomes and planning.
- Assigning specific objectives to tactical level units.

**Tactical** - The first management “subdivision” of incident scene organization is accomplished by assigning Sector (Division or Group) responsibilities. Sector officers are responsible for the tactical deployment of assigned resources, evaluation, and communication with the IC. They are assigned by the IC and supervise directly at the site of the assigned activity in order to meet the operational objectives given to them by the IC.

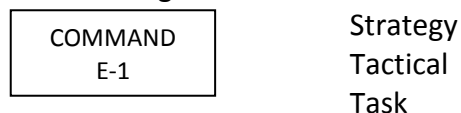
**Task** – The level of the organization where the work is performed by assigned companies and other resources. The Strategic and Tactical levels are in place to support the task level. Task level activities are routinely supervised by Company Officers. The accumulated achievements of Task Level activities accomplish Tactical Objectives.

#### Command Structure - Basic Organization

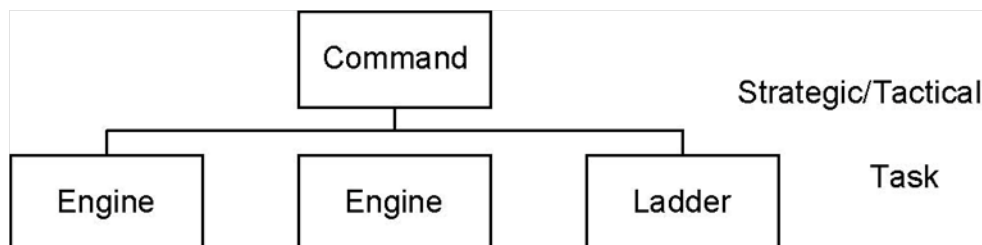
Incident organization is the function of command that the IC uses to track, communicate with, and account for resources in order to meet the incident objectives. For fires this is RESCUE – FIRE CONTROL – PROPERTY CONSERVATION – CUSTOMER STABILIZATION.

#### Examples:

The most basic Command structure combines all three levels of the Command structure. The Company Officer on a single engine response to a dumpster fire determines the strategy and tactics and supervises the crew doing the task.



The basic structure for a "routine" incident, involving a small number of Companies, requires only two levels of the Command structure. The role of Command combines the strategic and tactical levels. Companies report directly to Command and operate at the Task Level.



### Command Structure - Sectors Basic Operational Approach

A Sector is a smaller, more manageable unit of incident scene organization. Sectoring is a standard system of dividing incident scene command into smaller units or pieces. Whenever there are three or more companies operating in a sector, the IC should assign a Battalion Chief and FIT to that sector. The maximum number of Sectors that an IC can effectively manage is called the span of control. The span of control is usually five sectors and should never exceed seven sectors.

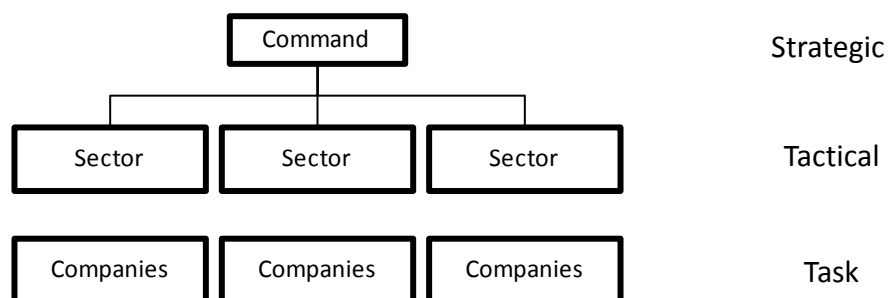
### Sectors

**NOTE:** Sectors may be assigned by their geographic location (North Sector) or function (Ventilation Sector). Divisions are assigned by their geographic location (North Division). Groups are assigned by their function (Ventilation Group). For the remainder of this M.P. we will refer to Sectors with the understanding that either Divisions or Groups may be used where appropriate.

A significant problem occurs when the IC requests and assigns additional companies, at a rate that exceeds the development of the incident organization. In short order, the IC will become overloaded with the details of managing a large number of companies scattered all over the incident site. The IC will soon be in the odd situation of being overwhelmed, yet still in need of more resources to accomplish their tactical objectives.

Command must develop and build an organization that matches the deployment of resources to the incident scene. The IC accomplishes this by breaking the incident scene down into manageable subunits called sectors. Sectors are geographic or functional and are managed by Sector Officers.

As Sectors are implemented, Command continues to operate at the strategic level, determining the overall strategy and Incident Action Plan to deal with the incident.



When the number of Sectors exceeds the span of control that the Incident Commander can effectively manage, the Incident Organization should be divided to Branches. Each Branch is

responsible for several Sectors and should be assigned a separate radio channel. Branches will be addressed later in this M.P.

Once effective sectors have been established, the IC can concentrate on the overall strategy, incident action plan management, evaluation, and resource allocation. Each of the sector officers becomes responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources assigned to his/her sector and communicating needs and progress back to Command.

Utilizing Sectors provides the following advantages:

- **Reduces the IC's span of control** – divides the incident scene into more manageable units.
- **Creates more effective incident scene communications** – permits the IC to exchange information with a limited number of individuals (Sector Officers) who directly supervise teams of firefighters. This reduces overall radio traffic by allowing firefighters and sector officers to communicate face to face instead of by radio.
- **Provides a standard and logical system to divide large geographical incidents into effectively sized units** – allows the IC to concentrate on strategy from one standard command post location.
- **Provides an array major support functions** – these are to be selected and assigned according to the particular needs of each situation. The execution and details of these specific operations becomes the responsibility of the sector officer, not command.
- **Improves firefighter safety** – allows each sector officer to maintain more direct control of the position and function of the companies assigned to their sectors at all times. Sector officers concentrate on their assigned areas and are in a position to move personnel based on incident conditions and the IC's decisions.

#### **Command Should Assign Sectors Based on the Following Factors:**

- When the number of assigned and operating companies threatens to overload the IC's ability to command. Direct tactical-level control should be delegated (earlier than later) to sector officers before the IC's ability to manage is exceeded.
- When the IC forecasts that the situation will become a major operation, soon exceeding his/her span of control.
- When companies are involved in complex operations (Large interior or geographic area, hazardous materials, technical rescues, etc.)
- When companies are operating from tactical positions which Command has little or no direct control over (i.e. out of sight).
- When the situation presents special hazards and close control is required over operating companies (i.e., unstable structural conditions, hazardous materials, heavy fire load, marginal offensive situations, etc.).
- Name the sector according to its function or geographical location.

When establishing a Sector, the IC will assign each Sector Officer:

- A. Tactical Objectives.
- B. A radio designation (Roof Sector, East Sector, etc.)
- C. The identity of resources assigned to the Sector.

Sectors Will Be Regulated By The Following Guidelines:

- It will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to assign Sectors as required for effective emergency operations; this assignment will relate to both geographic and functional Sectors.
  - Command shall advise each Sector Officer of specific Tactical Objectives. The overall strategy and plan will and should be also provided (time permitting), so the Sector Officer has some idea of what's going on and how his assignment fits in.
  - The number of Companies assigned to a Sector will depend upon conditions within that Sector. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of Companies operating within a Sector and the capability of that Sector Officer to effectively direct operations. If a Sector Officer cannot control the resources within the Sector, he/she should notify the Incident Commander so that Sector responsibilities can be split or other corrective action taken. During offensive fires five (5) companies represents a reasonable maximum span of control for a Sector Officer. During defensive fires seven (7) companies represents a reasonable maximum span of control.
  - Sectors assigned to specific operating areas will be designated by directions (East Sector, North Sector, etc.). Where the incident has odd geographic boundaries (Grand Avenue) it may be confusing to assign directional designations to Sectors (East Sector, etc.). An alternate use of Sector A, B, C, or D may be used (see page 18). Sector "A" would be the front (street address side) of the building and the other Sectors would go clockwise around the building in alphabetical order.

In multi-story occupancies, Sectors will usually be indicated by floor numbers (Sector 15 indicates 15th floor). In some cases the floor Sector identification may be subdivided into geographic areas such as "Sector 15 East" or "Sector 15 West" depending on stairwell and floor access.

- Functional Sectors will be identified by the function (Loss Control Sector, Safety Sector, Ventilation Sector, etc.).

Sector Officers will use the Sector designation in radio communications (i.e. "North Sector to Command").

In many cases, the initial Sector responsibility will be given to the Company Officer who receives the initial assignment to a basic tactical position or function (north, treatment, roof, etc.)

As the incident expands, Command Officers will be assigned Sector responsibilities.



Command will assign a Command Officer to assume Sector responsibilities as soon as possible.

Regular Transfer of Command procedures will be followed in transferring Sector responsibility.

In some cases, a Sector Officer may be assigned to an area/function initially to evaluate and report conditions and advise Command of needed tasks and resources. The assigned Officer will proceed to the Sector, evaluate and report conditions to the Incident Commander, and assume responsibility for directing resources and operations within his/her assigned area of responsibility.

The Sector Officer must be in a position to directly supervise and monitor operations. This will require the Sector Officer to be equipped with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment for his/her area of responsibility. Sector Officers assigned to operate within the hazard zone must be accompanied by a partner (normally a F.I.T.). The Sector Officer should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible.

Sector Officers will be responsible for the following basic functions:

- A. Directly supervise work in the sector.
- B. Monitor personnel safety, accountability, and welfare.
- C. Develop a sector IAP that integrates with the overall IAP.
- D. Monitor work progress.
- E. Redirect activities as necessary.
- F. Coordinate actions with related activities, and adjacent Sectors.
- G. Monitor welfare of Sector personnel.
- H. Request additional resources as needed (on-deck crews etc.).
- I. Manage Maydays within the Sector.
- J. Advise the IC of situation status, changing conditions, progress, completion, and exception reports.
- K. Re-allocate resources within the Sector
- L. Provide information for both formal and informal After Action Reviews (critiques).
- M. De-commit companies as operations are completed.

When a command officer is assigned Sector responsibilities the FIT/ISO becomes the Sector Safety Officer.

Role of the FIT/ISO as a Sector Safety Officer (partnered with BC)

- Perform Sector Safety Officer function/role
- Assess safety concerns within sector
- Assist the BC with managing the sector (stay together)
- Manage accountability within the sector (hose tags too)
- Provide air management within the sector

- Manage work/rest cycles within the sector
- Manage the sector's On-Deck crews recycle and rehab
- Establish communications with Safety Section (you will call them 'Command') once the IC has established the position and assigned a Safety Channel
- Coordinate with other sector safety officers

The primary function of a Company Officer working within a Sector is to direct the operations of their individual crews in performing assigned tasks. Company Officers will advise their Sector Officer of work progress, preferably face-to-face. All requests for additional resources or assistance within a Sector must be directed to the Sector Officer. Sector Officers will communicate with "Command".

Each Sector Officer will keep Command informed of conditions and progress in the Sector through regular progress reports. The Sector Officer must prioritize progress reports to essential information only.

Command must be advised immediately of significant changes, particularly those involving the ability or inability to complete an objective, hazardous conditions, accidents, structural collapse, etc.

When a Company is assigned from Staging to an Operating Sector, the Company will be told what Sector and which Sector Officer they will be reporting to. The Sector Officer will be informed of which particular companies or units have been assigned by the Incident Commander. It is then the responsibility of the Sector Officer to contact the assigned Company to transmit any instructions relative to the specific action requested.

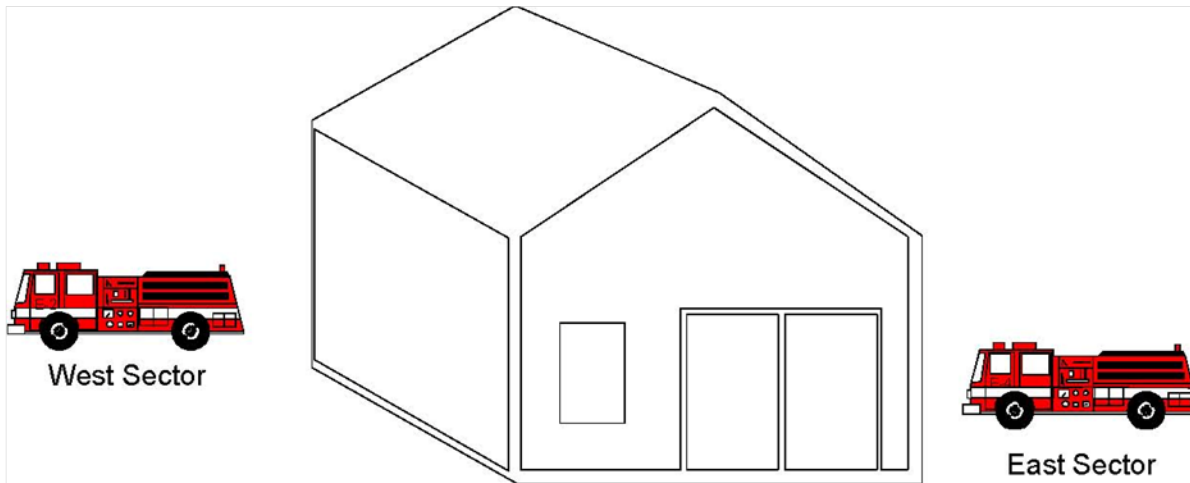
Sector Officers will monitor the condition of the crews operating in their Sector. Relief crews will be requested in a manner to safeguard the safety of personnel and maintain progress toward the Sector objectives.

Sector Officers will insure an orderly and thorough reassignment of crews to Rehab Sector. Crews must report to rehab intact to facilitate accountability.

## SECTOR DESIGNATION



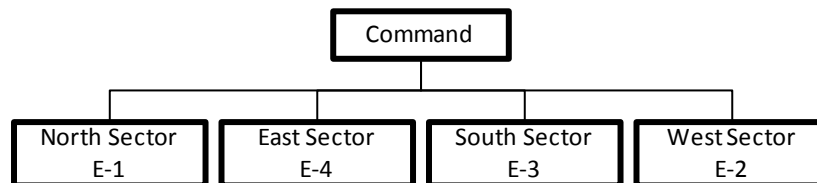
**North Sector**

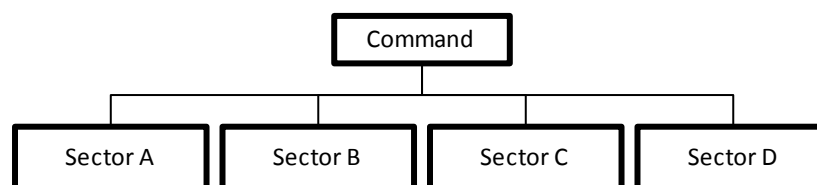
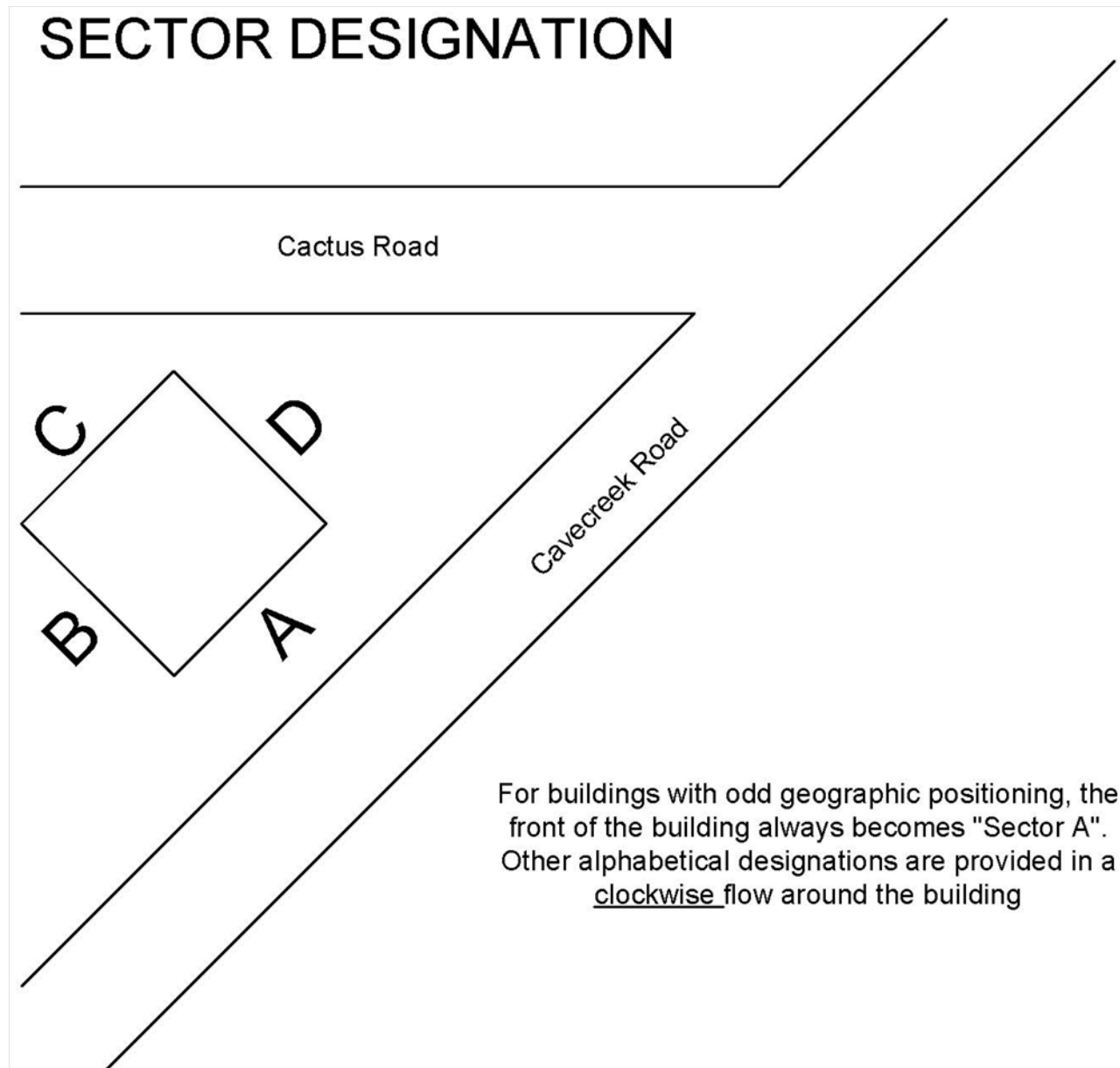


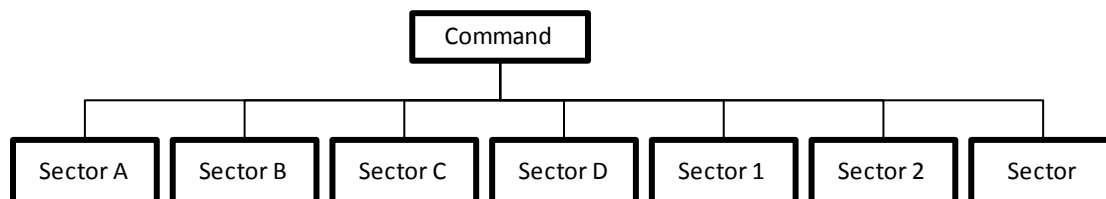
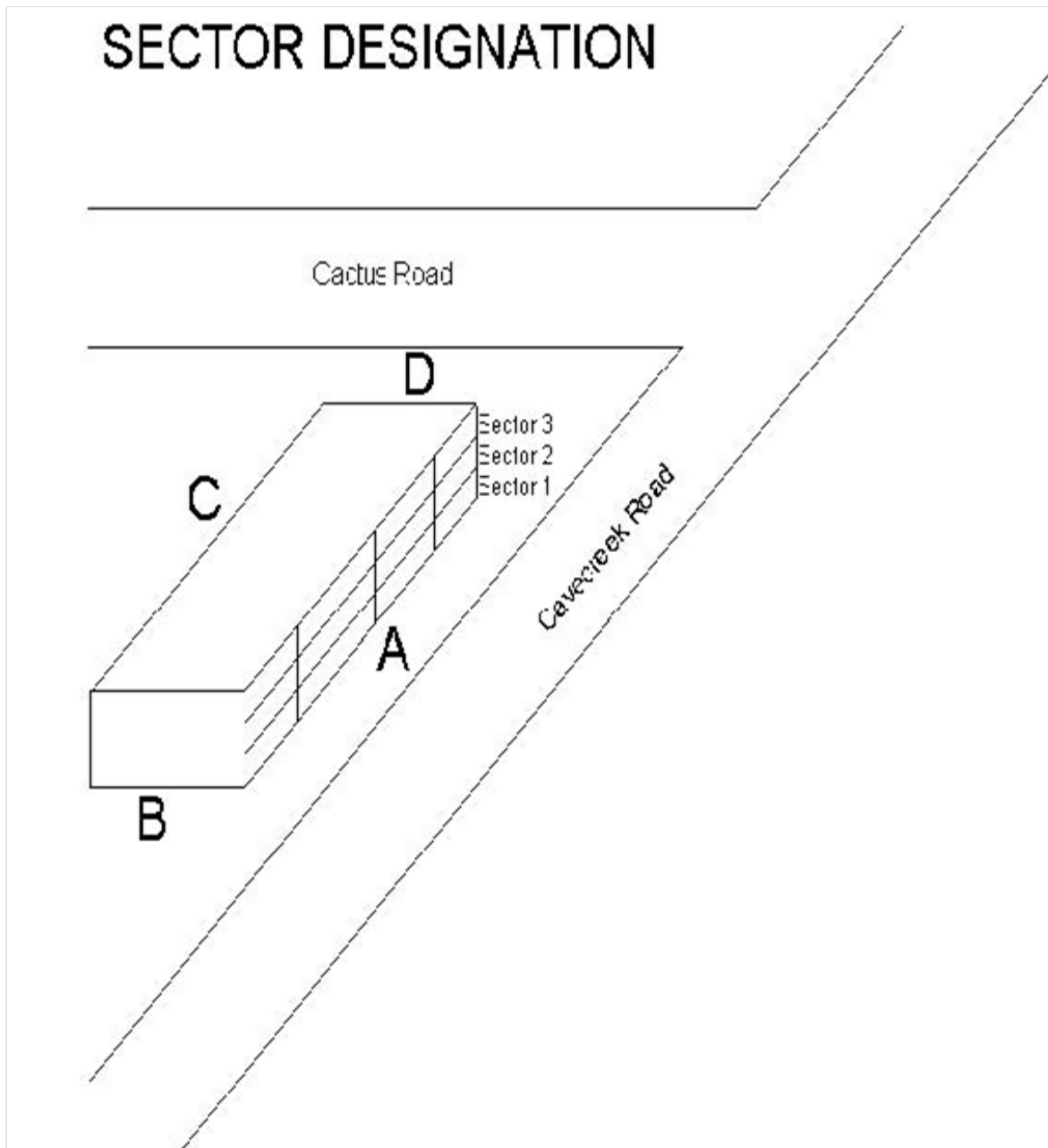
**South Sector**

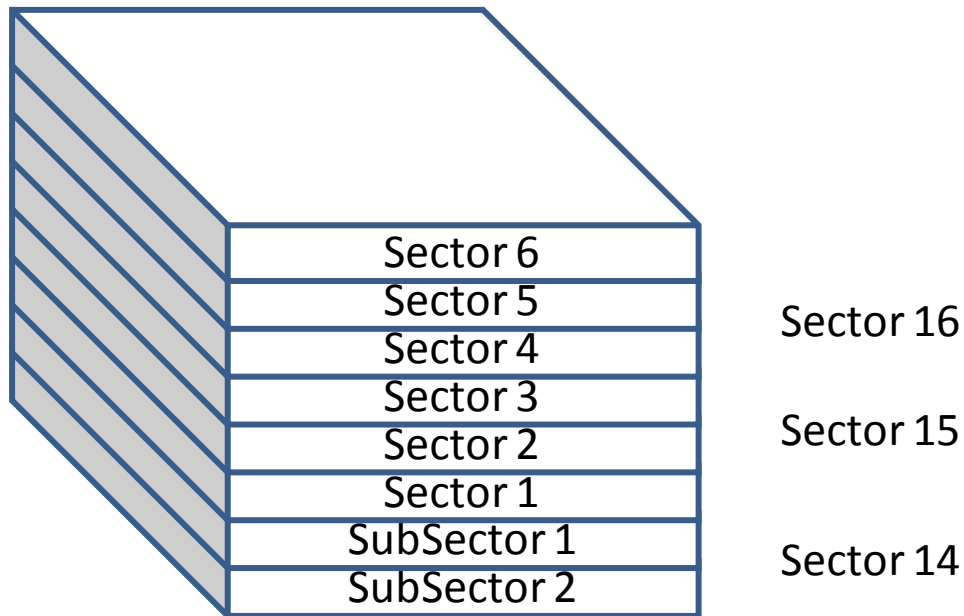


**Command**









In multi-story occupancies, Sectors will be designated by floor number (Sector 6 indicates the 6th floor). In some cases the floor division identification may be subdivided into geographic areas such as "Sector 6 West" or "Sector 2 North" depending on stairwell and floor access. When operating in levels below grade such as basements the use of Sector is appropriate.

#### Command Structure - Expanding the Organization; Branch Officers

The Branch level of the organization is designed to provide COORDINATION between the Sectors and Command. Adding Branches to the incident organization decreases the communication load on the IC. Branch officers supervise and manage a number of Sector Officers, and report to the Incident Commander.

As the incident organization grows in complexity, and the span of control with Sectors is maximized, the Command Team (described on pages 9 & 10), may determine that an additional intermediate level within the Command Organization is needed. The Command Team will be working in a stationary command post (the Command Van) and the Senior Advisor has the responsibility to decide whether or not to expand the organization to include branches.

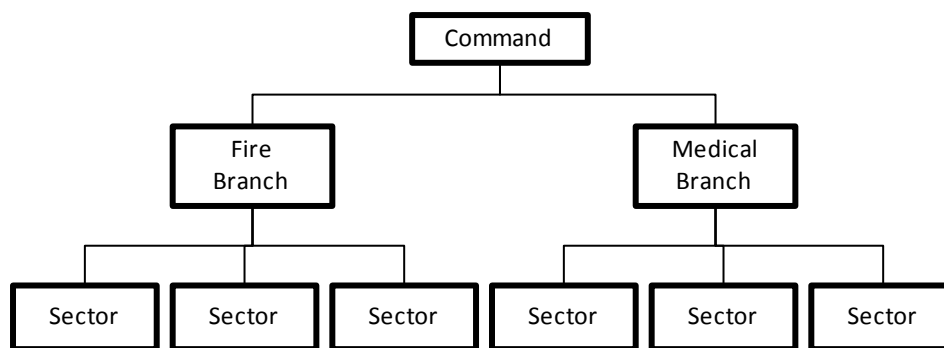
Strategic Level - Incident Commander

Coordination Level - BRANCH OFFICERS

## Tactical Level - Sector Officers

## Task Level – Companies

Branch Officers should be utilized at incidents where the span of control with Sectors is maximized or incidents involving two or more distinctly different major management components (i.e. a large fire with a major evacuation, a large fire with a large number of patients). The Incident Commander may elect to assign Branch Officers as forward positions to coordinate the activities between Sectors.



The intent of the Branch Level of the Command structure is to split an incident into manageable components and reduce the span of control. Branch Officers will normally be utilized at very largescale incidents that involve two or more major components. The following types of incidents are examples where Branch Officers should be utilized:

- A Haz mat incident that requires a major evacuation.
- A large-scale incident spread over a wide geographic area.
- An incident with mass casualties and a significant hazard (for example: fire, Haz mat, plane crash, floods, etc.)
- Campaign high-rise fires
- Any incident where the number of Sectors exceed the span of control that can be effectively managed by the incident commander.

Branch Officers manage and direct activities of Sector Officers. Branch Officers operate on the Tactical Channel when sending or receiving information from Command. The radio designation of Branch Officers should reflect the function or geographic area of the Branch (for example: Fire Control Branch, Medical Branch, West Branch, etc.).

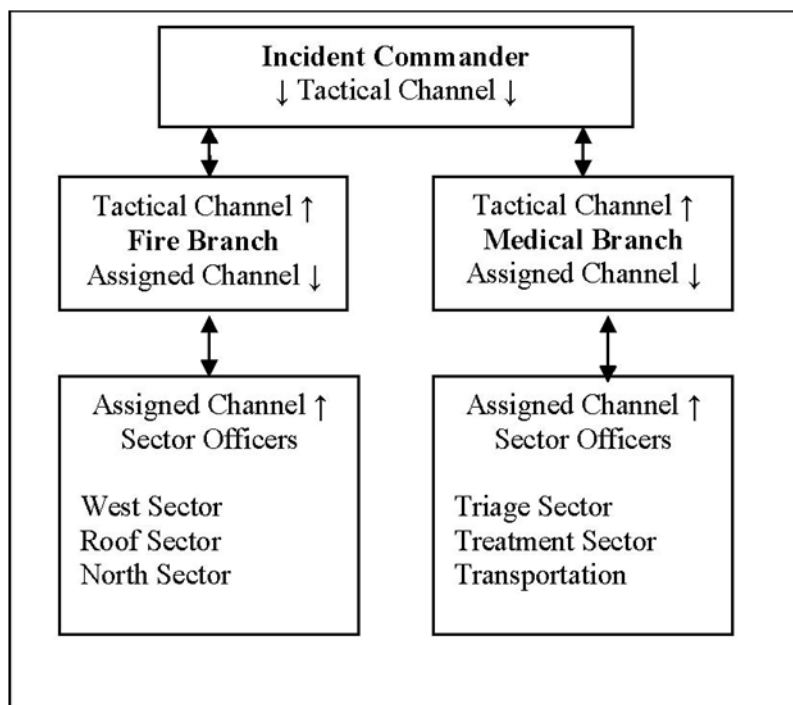
When Command implements Branch Officers the IC will assign a separate radio channel (not the tactical channel) for communications within the Branch. Sector Officers should be notified by Command of their new supervisor. This information should include:

- A. What Branch the Sector is now assigned to.
- B. The radio channel the branch (and Sector) is operating on.

Radio Communications will then be directed from the Sector Officer to the Branch Officer. **Sector officers will still use the radio designation of Command when contacting their Branch Officer.** Sector Officers will relay Branch and radio channel information to the Companies working in their Sector. **Note: When providing radio information to the companies in their sector, Sector officers should obtain a PAR and insure that all members working in the sector are operating on the assigned radio channel.**

Communications between the IC and Fire Branch are on the Tactical radio channel and radio designations are: “Command to Fire Branch” and “Fire Branch to Command”.

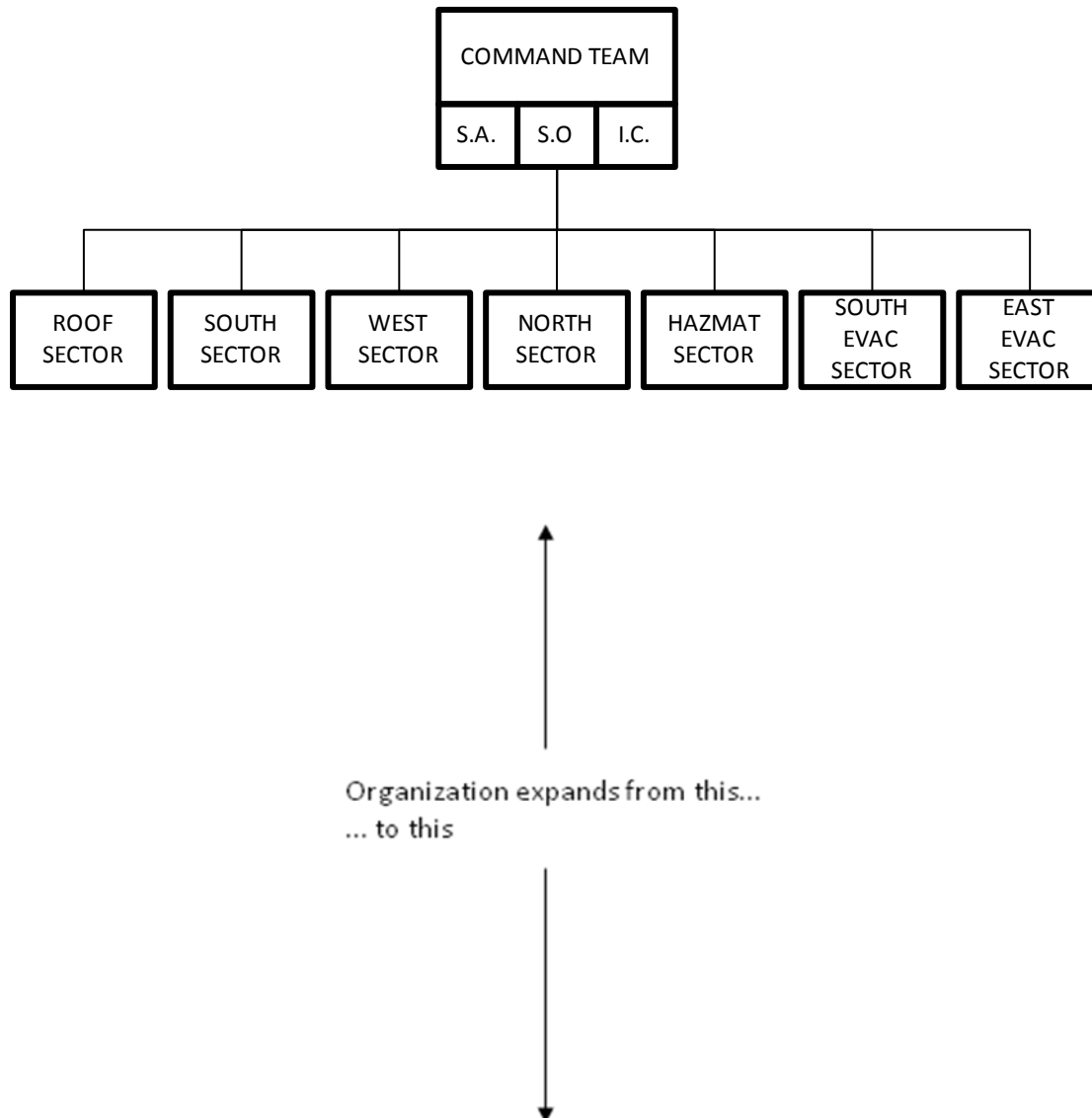
Communications between Fire Branch and West Sector are on channel A and radio designations are: “Command to West Sector” and “West Sector to Command”

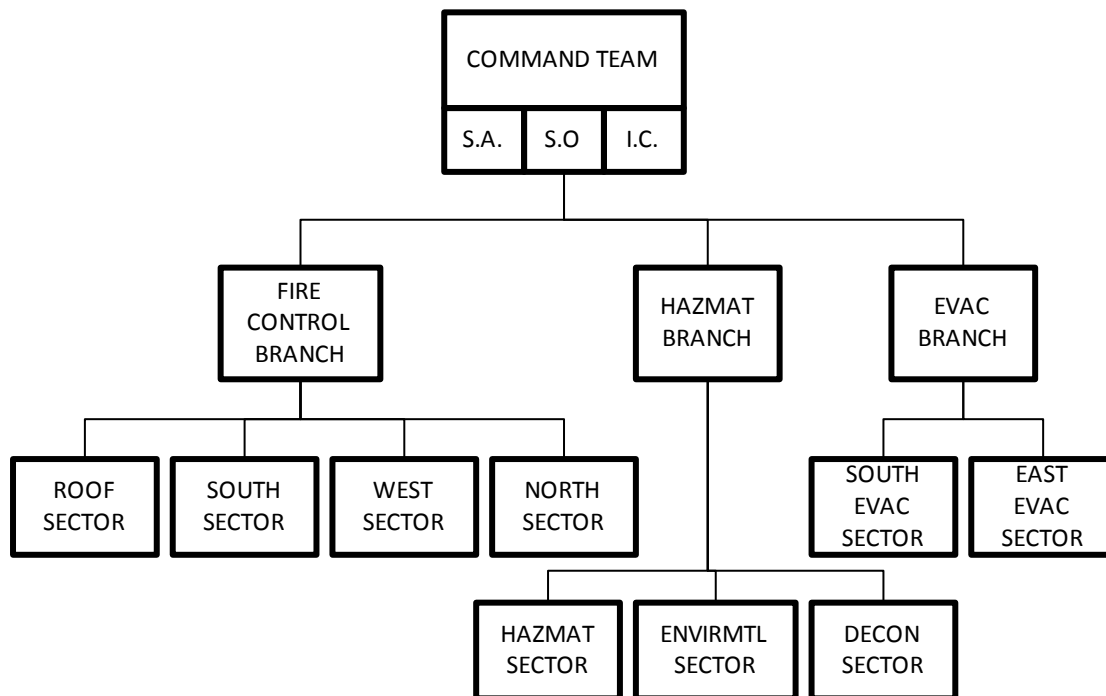


Branch Officers positions should be assigned to Chief Officers. Branch Officers operate in forward positions. They should utilize a Command Officer's vehicle as a forward Branch Command Post (when feasible). In these situations, Command must assign Officers in the Command Post to monitor each Branch radio channel.



Branch Officers are not limited to Operations. Any of the Section Officers may implement Branches within their individual sections as needed.





### Command Structure - Expansion to Major Operations

#### Sections

As a small incident escalates into a major incident, additional organizational support will be required. As additional ranking Officers arrive on the scene, the Command Post organization (Team) may be expanded through the involvement of Command Officers and staff personnel to fill section positions. Section Officers assist the Incident Command Staff with the long term management of the incident and operate at the Strategic Level. The Incident Commander implements Sections as needed, depending on the situation, and priority of needs (One incident may only require a Logistics Section while another incident may require all the sections to be implemented.)

Where the communications system permits, Section Officers should operate on separate radio channels and utilize the radio designation that identifies their section (Planning, Logistics, etc.).

During the initial phases of the incident the initial Incident Commander and his/her staff normally carry out these four section functions. The Fire Department's involvement and needs at the incident scene can be divided into four sections. They are:

LOGISTICS SECTION

PLANNING SECTION

## OPERATIONS SECTION

### ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

**The Logistics Section** is the support mechanism for the organization. Logistics provides services and support systems to all the organizational components involved in the incident. Command may assign the Logistics Section its own radio channel. The Logistic Section Officer may establish Sectors or branches for his/her section as needed.

#### Roles and Responsibilities:

- Provide rehab.
- Manage staging
- Provide and manage any needed supplies or equipment.
- Forecast and obtain future resource needs (coordinate with the Planning Section).
- Provide any needed communications equipment.
- Provide fuel and needed repairs for equipment.
- Obtain specialized equipment or expertise per Command.
- Provide food and associated supplies.
- Secure any needed fixed or portable facilities.
- Provide any other logistical needs as requested by Command.
- Collect and provide information for an After Action Review.
- Supervise assigned personnel

**The Planning Section** is responsible for gathering, assimilating, analyzing, and processing information needed for effective decision-making. Information management is a full-time task at large and complex incidents. The Planning Section serves as the Incident Commander's "clearing house" for information. This allows the Incident Commander to have a single person provide him/her with information instead of having to deal with dozens of information sources. Critical information should be immediately forwarded to Command (or whoever needs it). Information should also be used to make long-range plans. The Planning Section Chief's goal is to plan ahead of current events and to identify the need for resources before they are needed.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

- Evaluate current strategy and plan with the Incident Commander.
- Refine and recommend any needed changes to plan.
- Evaluate Incident Organization and span of control.
- Forecast possible outcome(s).
- Evaluate future resource requirements.
- Utilize technical assistance as needed.
- Evaluate tactical priorities, specific critical factors, and safety.
- Gather, update, improve, and manage information with a standard systematic approach.
- Facilitate an After Action Review and After Action Report.

- Liaison with any needed outside agencies for planning needs.

**The Operations Section** is responsible for the tactical priorities, accountability, safety and welfare of the personnel working in the Operations Section. The Operations Section Officer uses the tactical radio channel to communicate strategic and specific objectives to Sector Officers and/or Branch Officers.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate activities with the Incident Commander.
- Implement the Incident Management Plan.
- Assign units to Sectors/Branches based on Tactical Objectives and priorities.
- Build an effective organizational structure through the use of Branches and Sectors.
- Provide Branches and Sectors Tactical Objectives.
- Manage Operation Section activities.
- Personnel Accountability.
- Provide for life safety.
- Determine needs and request additional resources.
- Consult with and inform other sections and the Incident Command Staff as needed.
- Collect and provide information for an After Action Review.

If the Operations Officer is located at the Command Post, he/she should use the radio designation of "Command". The vast majority of incidents can be effectively managed without an Operations Officer, or with the Operations Officer located at the Command Post. If the Operations Officer is located out of the Command Post at a "forward" position (i.e. in a high-rise building), he/she should use the radio designation of "Operations".

Implementing an "Operations" radio designation in the middle of a major incident can create confusion with radio communications. It is absolutely essential that all personnel operating at the incident be made aware of the activation of "Operations". All Sector Officers and/or Branch Officers must then direct their communications to the "Operations" Officer.

The Operations Officer will communicate with the Incident Commander to request additional resources, provide progress reports, etc.

Once implemented, "Operations" becomes a forward Command Post. As such the Operations Officer will need some personnel assigned to assist as staff members to help with radios, tactical worksheets, etc.

**The Incident Commander - Role and Responsibilities after Activation of an Operations Officer**

Once the Operations Officer is in place and functioning, the Incident Commander's focus should be on the strategic issues, overall strategic planning and other components of the incident. This focus is

to look at the "big picture" and the impact of the incident from a broad perspective. The Incident Commander should provide direction, advice and guidance to the Operations Officer in directing the tactical aspects of the incident.

- Review and evaluate the plan, and initiate any needed changes.
- Provide on-going review of the overall incident (THE BIG PICTURE).
- Select priorities.
- Provide direction to the Operations Officer.
- Review the organizational structure, initiate change or expansion to meet incident needs.
- Initiate Section and Branch functions as required.
- Establish liaison with other city agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners and/or tenants.
- Collect and provide information for an After Action Review.
- Other duties as necessary.

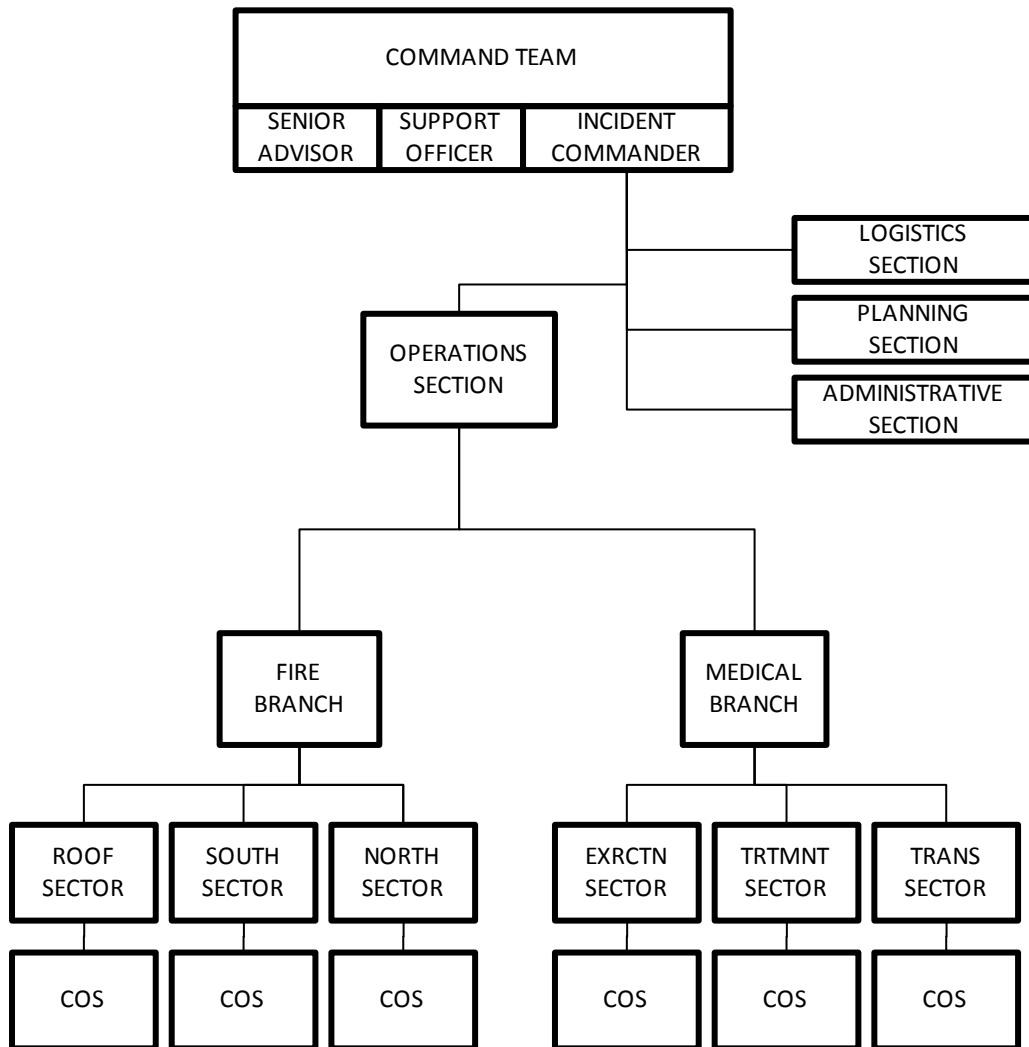
In order to maintain continuity and overall effectiveness, the Incident Commander and Operations Officer should normally be in the Command Post together.

**The Administration Section** evaluates and manages the risk and financial requirements for the Fire Department's involvement in the incident.

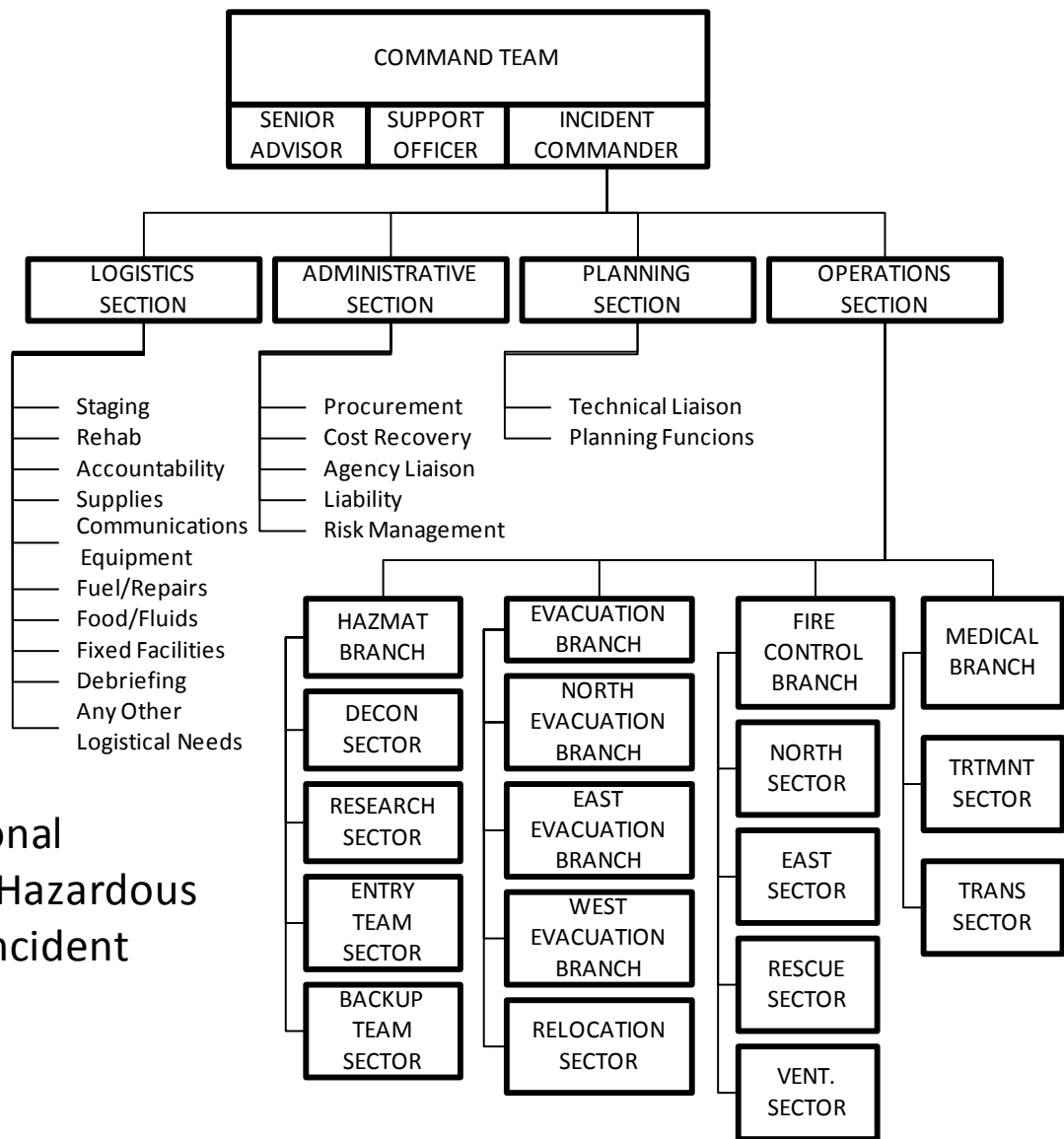
**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Procurement of services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the Fire Department or City as requested by Command (coordinates with Logistics).
- Documenting all financial costs of the incident.
- Documenting for possible cost recovery for services and/or supplies.
- Analyzing and managing legal risk for incidents such as, a hazardous materials clean up.
- Serves as the Incident Commander's liaison with: City officials, Litigators (and other lawyer types). Regulatory agencies (EPA, OSHA, DOT, FBI, etc.).
- Monitors and coordinates emergency service delivery to the rest of the community during major incidents to ensure adequate coverage.
- Serves as the E.O.C. representative in the Command Post and provides briefings to the E.O.C. staff.
- Manage investigations (arson, etc.).
- Collect and provide information for an After Action Review.

The Administration Section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts, or litigation, including criminal charges.

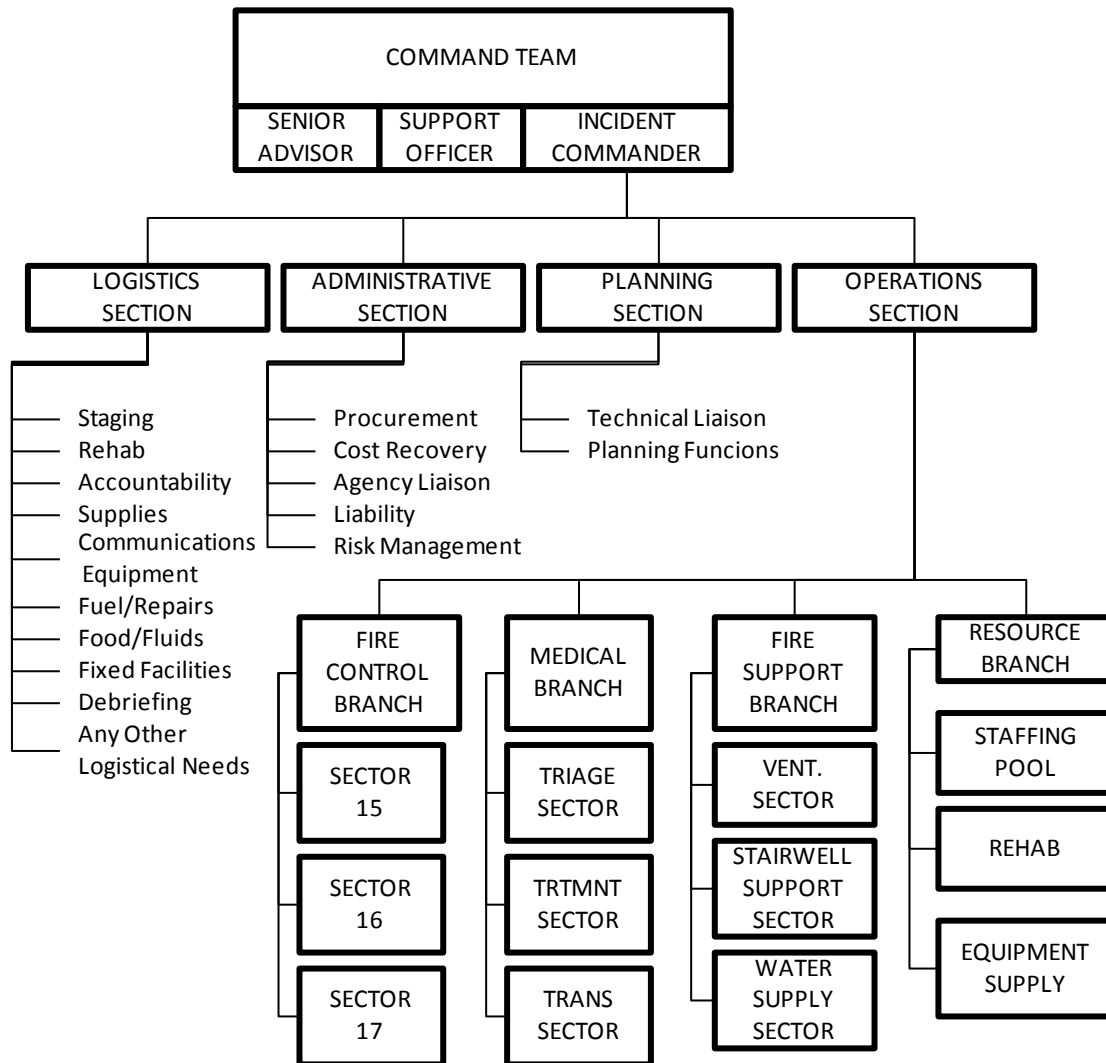


Command Structure -- Expanding the Organization; Sections in place.



Organizational  
 Chart for a Hazardous  
 Materials Incident

Expanding the Organization -- Major Incident



Organizational Chart for a  
 High-rise Fire  
 Expanding the Organization -- Major Incident

## 5.2 ICS/EOC Interface:



**5.3 Designating an Incident Safety Officer:**

**5.4 Organizing the Scene:**

**5.5 Use of Control Zones:**

**5.6 Placing Resources:**

**5.7 Supervising Personnel:**

**5.8 Controlling Access:**

**5.9 Controlling Bystanders and Crowds:**

**5.10 Coordinating with other Agencies:**