

<b>TITLE</b> OPERATIONS MANUAL	<b>STANDARD</b> INSTRUCTION 01		<b>DEPARTMENT</b> FIRE
<b>SUBJECT</b> FIRE SUPPRESSION: INCIDENT COMMAND PROCEDURES	<b>SECTION</b> 01	<b>PAGE</b> 1 of 17	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> 06/01/07

I. INCIDENT COMMAND PROCEDURES

A. Introduction

1. The effective functioning of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department units and personnel at operating incidents requires clear decisive action on the part of an Incident Commander. This procedure identifies the standard operating procedures to be employed in establishing Incident Command and operating an Incident Command Post. It also fixes responsibility for the Incident Command function and its associated duties on one individual at any time during the operation.
2. Incident Command Procedures are designed to accomplish the following:
  - a. Fix the responsibility for Incident Command on a certain individual through a standard identification system depending on arrival sequence of members, companies, and officers.
  - b. Ensure that strong, direct, and visible Incident Command will be established as early as possible in the operation.
  - c. Establish an effective framework outlining the activities and responsibilities assigned to Incident Command.
  - d. Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Incident Command to later arriving officers.

B. Incident Command

The Incident Commander is responsible for incident activities including the development and implementation of strategic decisions and for approving the ordering and releasing of resources.

C. Responsibilities assigned to Incident Command shall include the following:

1. Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured.
2. Confine and extinguish the fire.
3. Conserve property after fire control is achieved.
4. Ensure the safety and survival of emergency personnel.

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D. Establishing Incident Command

1. The first Fire Department unit or officer to arrive at the scene of a multiple unit response shall assume Incident Command and remain in Command until relieved by a higher ranking officer or Incident Command is passed to the next arriving engine company because of circumstances, or until the incident is terminated.
2. Due to the limited number of truck companies, when the first arriving officer is a Truck Captain he/she shall assume Incident Command. The officer will transfer Incident Command to the first arriving Engine Company Captain.
3. A multiple unit response is defined as two or more emergency response units.

E. Incident Worksheets/Response Cards

1. To facilitate assumption of Incident Command, all officers responding to multiple unit assignments will record the following information on an incident work sheet.
  - a. Address of alarm
  - b. Proper radio channel
  - c. Responding units
2. At working incidents, Incident Command will use a Tactical Worksheet (FD-1024) or other approved method to outline and record assignments and to assist in the transfer of Incident Command.
3. All units responding to multiple unit incidents will follow Standard Company Operations and Staging Procedures to support Incident Command.
4. Incident Command procedures are designed to offer a practical framework for operations and to effectively integrate the efforts of all members, officers, and companies. The time involved in performing the listed functions at the beginning of a tactical operation should produce on-going time savings in the form of a more effective rescue and fire control outcome. An arriving officer, assuming Incident Command, can quickly and efficiently perform the standard procedures. This will facilitate an organized and orderly tactical operation and a more effective effort. This is particularly important in more complex situations and when Incident Command must be transferred to ranking officers.

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F. Incident Command Responsibilities

The first five tasks are initial Incident Command responsibilities. The continuing responsibilities stay with Incident Command whether the initial officer remains in Command or Incident Command is transferred to later arriving officers.

1. Initial:

- a. Assume an effective Incident Command position.
- b. The person assuming Incident Command shall transmit a brief initial radio report including:
  - 1) Unit designation of the unit arriving on the scene.
  - 2) A brief description of the incident situation, (building size, occupancy, HazMat release, multi-vehicle accident, etc.)
  - 3) Brief description of action taken.
  - 4) Any obvious safety concerns.
  - 5) Assumption and identification of Incident Command.
- c. Rapidly evaluate situation (size-up).
- d. Develop an incident action plan.
- e. Assign units as required; establish staging.

2. Continuing:

- a. Provide continuing overall Incident Command and progress reports within the framework of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department fireground procedures until relieved by a ranking officer.
- b. Review and evaluate attack efforts and safety conditions, revising plan of attack as needed.
- c. Request and assign additional units as necessary.
- d. Return companies to service and terminate "INCIDENT COMMAND."

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G. Incident Command Options

1. In cases where the initial arriving officer assumes Incident Command, efforts should be directed towards establishing an Incident Command Post and fulfilling the listed responsibilities.
2. An initially arriving Company Officer must decide upon an appropriate commitment for the company. This will usually fall into one of three general modes as listed below:
  - a. Nothing Showing Mode: These situations generally require investigation by the first arriving engine while holding staged companies at a distance. Normally, the officer can go with his/her company to investigate while utilizing the portable radio to continue Incident Command.
  - b. Fast Attack Mode: Situations which demand immediate action to stabilize the situation, such as interior fires in residences, apartments, or small commercial occupancies, require that the officer quickly decide how to commit the company. Where a fast interior attack is critical, the officer can take advantage of the portable radio to permit the necessary involvement in the attack without neglecting Incident Command responsibilities. This mode should not last more than a few moments and will end with one of the following:
    - 1) Situation is stabilized
    - 2) Ranking officer arrives and Incident Command is transferred.
    - 3) Situation is not stabilized and the officer retreats to a normal Incident Command position.
  - c. Incident Command Mode: This mode is dictated by situations that require by virtue of the size of the emergency strong, direct, overall Incident Command from the outset. In such cases, the officer will initially assume an Incident Command position and maintain that position until relieved by a ranking officer.
3. If a Company Officer assumes Incident Command and elects not to join his/her company in action, the Captain may operate within the following options regarding the assignment of the crew:
  - a. Company Officer can "move up" within his/her company and place the company into action with three people. The individual and collective capability of the crew will regulate this action.

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- b. The Captain can assign company members to perform staff functions.
  - c. The Captain can assign company members to another company officer. In such cases, the assigning officer must communicate with the receiving officer and indicate the assignment of his/her personnel.
4. The Company Officer assuming Incident Command has a choice of modes and degrees of personal involvement in the attack, the officer continues to be fully responsible for the identified tasks assigned to the Incident Command function. In all cases, the initiative and judgment of the officer are of great importance. The modes identified are not strict rules, but general guidelines to assist the officer in planning his/her actions.

H. Transfer of Incident Command

- 1. The first San Diego Fire-Rescue officer to arrive on the scene will assume and retain Incident Command until relieved by another Captain or ranking officer within the following guidelines:
  - a. The first arriving Company Officer will automatically assume Incident Command. Truck officers will relinquish Incident Command to the first arriving engine company officer.
  - b. The first arriving Battalion Chief will assume Incident Command after transfer of Incident Command procedures has been completed.
  - c. Later arriving, higher-ranking Chief Officers may choose to assume Incident Command, or assume staff/advisory positions.
  - d. Assumption of Incident Command is discretionary for the Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs.
- 2. Within the chain of Incident Command indicated above, the actual transfer of Incident Command will be regulated by the following procedures:
  - a. Arriving ranking officers assuming Incident Command will communicate with the officer being relieved by radio or preferably face-to-face after arrival.

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- b. The officer being relieved will brief the officer assuming Incident Command with the following:
  - 1) General situation status:
    - a) Incident conditions (fire location and extent, HazMat spill or release, number of patients, etc.)
    - b) Incident action plan.
    - c) Completion of the tactical priorities.
    - d) Safety considerations.
  - 2) Deployment and assignments of operating companies and personnel.
  - 3) Appraisals of need for additional resources.
  - 4) The officer being relieved should review the tactical worksheet (FD-1024) with the ranking officer in complex situations; this sheet provides the most effective framework for Incident Command transfer as it outlines the location and status of resources in a standard form that should be well known to all members.
3. Command Officers should eliminate all unnecessary radio traffic while responding unless such communications are required to ensure that Incident Command functions are initiated and completed.
4. The arrival (in itself) of a ranking officer on the fireground does not mean Incident Command has been transferred to that ranking officer. Incident Command is transferred only when the outlined procedures have been followed.
5. The arrival of ranking officers on the fireground strengthens the overall Incident Command function. All officers will exercise their Incident Command prerogatives in a supportive manner that will ensure a smooth transition and the effective on-going function of Incident Command.
6. The officer relieved of Incident Command will be utilized to best advantage by the officer assuming Incident Command.
7. In cases where Incident Command is effectively handling a tactical situation and is completely aware of the location and function of operating companies and the general status of the situation, it may be desirable for that officer to continue in an active Incident Command role. In these cases, the ranking officer may assume a supportive role in the overall Incident Command function. A ranking officer

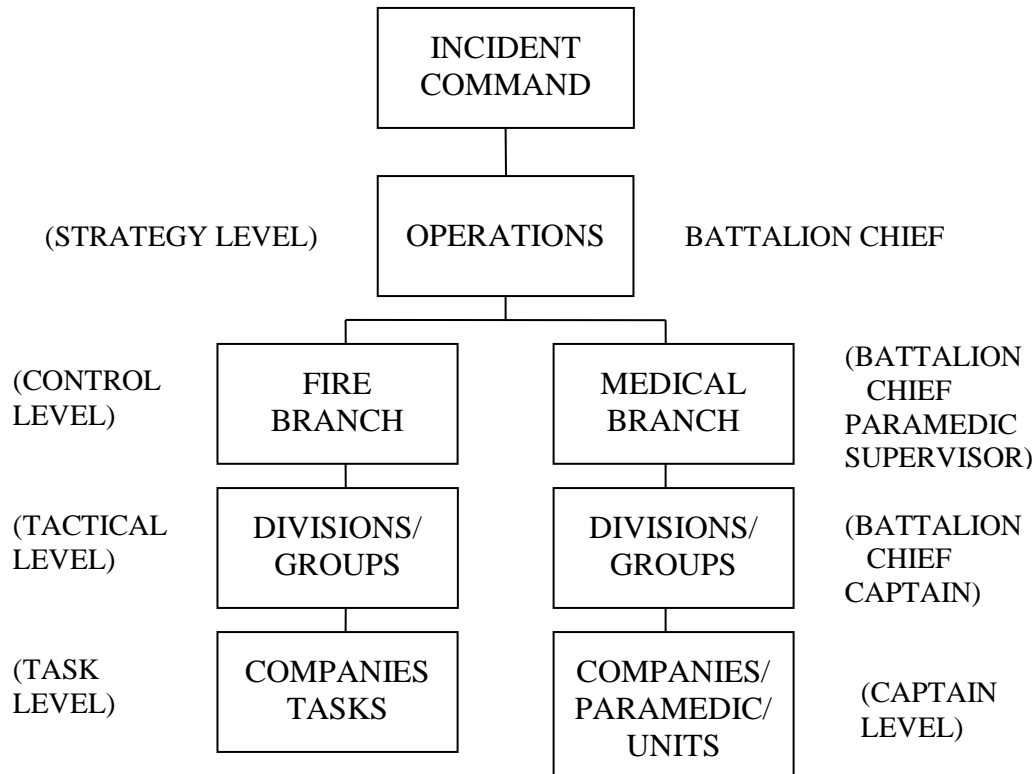
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electing not to assume Incident Command may not delegate his/her responsibility for the proper conduct of an incident.

I. Incident Command Structures

1. It will be the responsibility of Incident Command to develop an organizational structure utilizing standard operating procedures as soon as possible after arrival and implementation of initial tactical control measures. The size and complexity of the organization structure will be determined by the dimensions of the particular emergency situation.
2. If an incident escalates past the point where 1st, 2nd, and 3rd alarm companies can handle the emergency, Incident Command may request strike teams of structural engines, brush engines, etc. Additional equipment may also be ordered by single increment or task forces of specialized equipment; e.g., light units, chemical units.
3. Additional medical units or medical support shall be requested by the Medical Operations, once established. All requests, except to hospital base stations, shall be made through the Incident Commander.
4. The ideal structure of a complex incident should include four (4) levels:
  - a. Strategy Level (Incident Command)
  - b. Control Level (Operations)
  - c. Tactical Level (Divisions/Branch)
  - d. Task Level (Companies)

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J. Incident Command

Incident Command refers to those functions necessary for overall control and accomplishment of strategic objectives. The Incident Command level should be staffed by the highest ranking officers who will plan overall strategy, develop an adequate and effective Incident Command structure and fireground organization and provide the necessary support to meet these objectives.

1. Incident Command Functions

a. Safety Officer

The Safety Officer, a member of the Incident Command Staff, is responsible for monitoring and assessing hazardous and unsafe situations and developing measures for assuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer will correct unsafe acts or conditions through the regular line of authority, although the officer may exercise emergency authority to stop or prevent unsafe acts when immediate action is required.



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b. Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer is a member of the Incident Command Staff and is responsible for the release of information about the incident to the news media and other appropriate agencies and organizations.

c. Planning Section Chief (PLANS)

The Planning Section Chief, a member of the General Staff, is responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information about the development of the incident and status of resources. Information is needed to:

- 1) Understand the current situation
- 2) Predict the probable course of incident events
- 3) Prepare alternative strategies and control operations for the incident.

d. Logistics Section Chief (LOGISTICS)

The Logistics Section Chief, a member of the General Staff, is responsible for providing facilities, services and materiel in support of the incident. The Section Chief participates in development and implementation of the Incident Action Plan and activates and supervises the Branches and Units within the Logistics Section.

e. Operations Section Chief (OPERATIONS)

The Operations Chief is a member of the General Staff. Operations refer to those organizational elements in situations that are complex enough to require an intermediate, or control level, in the organizational structure. Operations is an optional level which may be implemented when Incident Command finds it necessary to group divisions together to lessen Incident Command's span of control. Generally, operations elements will assume command of several divisions and will answer to "Incident Command."

This level should be staffed by experienced Incident Command officers, usually of Battalion rank, who plan and control the functions of several branches or divisions and/or groups.

The Operations Chief is responsible for the management of all operations directly applicable to the primary mission. The Operations Chief activates and supervises organization elements in accordance with the Incident Action

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Plan.

The Operations Chief is subordinate to the Incident Commander and may be assigned by Incident Command to: 1) remain at the Incident Command Post; 2) take a position near the incident to give additional supervision for the control of an incident; or, 3) be assigned to survey an incident and provide added supervision and comprehensive status reports to the Incident Commander.

1) Branch Director

The Branch Directors, when activated, are under the direction of the Operations Section Chief, and are responsible for the implementation of the portion of the Incident Action Plan appropriate to the Branches. A Branch Director supervises Divisions and/or Groups.

2) Divisions or Groups

Divisions (geographical) or Groups (functional) are identified as the intermediate tactical level of Incident Command in the organizational structure. Divisions are commanded by Battalion Chiefs, Captains or Medical Supervisors who concentrate on the more specific areas and tasks needed to meet the overall operational objectives. Generally several companies will be assigned to each division/group with the Division/Group Supervisor answering to a Branch Director, Operations or, if the Operations or Branch level has not been established, answering directly to Incident Command.

3) Companies

The task level in the organizational structure refers to those functions at company level operations and individual accomplishments, which, when accumulated, add up to the achievement of division/group objectives. These are company functions with the company officer answering to the Division/Group Supervisor.

4) The Staging Area Manager, when activated, reports to Operations, or if not activated, reports directly to Incident Command.

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2. Medical Multi-Casualty Incident

a. Medical Branch Director ("Medical Branch")

Medical Branch is directed by the Ranking Officer or Manager. Incident Command may assign a first responder officer until arrival of an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Supervisor. The Paramedic Operations Supervisor (P.O.S.) may authorize a qualified paramedic to act in his/her position until the P.O.S. arrives on scene.

The Medical Branch Director shall coordinate with the Incident Commander for all medical operations at the scene and assignment of Medical Group/Division personnel. The Medical Branch Director shall establish Triage, Treatment, and Transportation Groups as needed. They report to and coordinate with the Incident Commander the establishment of medical staging, loading, and triage and treatment areas within the framework of the overall operational structure.

Requests for additional resources, such as litter bearers, more medical personnel, higher levels of medical care at scene, aeromedical evacuation, additional ambulances; shall be made through the Incident Commander.

Reports to the designated EMS Area Base Hospital on treatment and transportation of victims will be through the 800 MHZ radio. Requests to enact the San Diego County Medical Operations and Mass Casualty Plan (Annex D), alerting hospitals, activating the American Red Cross and Casualty Collection Points, requesting triage/treatment teams to the scene from hospitals, obtaining medical direction, patient destinations and instructions for incoming private Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances shall be through the base hospital. The base hospital will notify the Sheriff's communications center and each receiving hospital in the affected area.

The Incident Commander may assign a Medical Coordinator/Liaison with the Medical Branch Director to facilitate communications, requests for resources, and coordination with the overall Incident Command System. Direct patient care and treatment shall remain the responsibility of the highest ranking qualified medical person on scene. Management and supervision of medical operations shall remain the responsibility of the Incident Commander and his/her designees within the Medical Branch.

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b. Triage Group ("Triage")

The Medical Group Supervisor will assign the highest qualified medical person as Triage Group Supervisor. This position will start with the highest qualified medical person available and successively build as more medically qualified personnel become available at the scene. This position may be filled by a First Responder Officer, Paramedic, Paramedic Operations Supervisor, nurse, or physician.

The Triage Group Supervisor is responsible for field triage, directing incoming medical personnel to victims needing triage and casualty loading areas where victims may be assembling.

Requests for personnel and logistic support are made to the Medical Branch Director.

c. Transportation Group ("Transportation")

The Medical Branch Director will initially assign a paramedic or first responder as Transportation Group Supervisor. This position will be filled by an EMS Supervisor as available.

The Transportation Group Supervisor is responsible for establishing medical staging for ambulances, buses, helicopters or other medical transportation; including casualty loading areas for each level of victims: immediate, urgent, walking wounded, in the areas approved by the Incident Commander via the Medical Branch Director. Requests for additional transportation, personnel or logistic support are made to the Medical Branch Director.

The Transportation Group Supervisor shall ensure that the duties of the Medical Communications Leader, Transportation Recorder and the Ambulance Staging Leader are being performed adequately.

d. Treatment Group ("Treatment")

Depending upon the scope of the incident, victims may require treatment beyond the initial stabilization for transportation to hospitals. The Medical Branch Director, with consultation from the designated Area Base Hospital, the ranking qualified medical authority on scene, and the Incident Commander, may activate an on-scene Treatment Unit.

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If activated, the Medical Branch Director will assign the most medically qualified person to direct patient treatment on scene as Treatment Group Supervisor. This position will be filled successively until replaced by a qualified physician, if appropriate. If all available medical personnel on scene are needed for triage or direct patient care, then a First Responder Officer or EMS Supervisor may be assigned Treatment Group Supervisor by the Medical Branch Director.

The Treatment Group Supervisor is responsible for treatment, stabilization, first aid and casualty loading areas, in conjunction with personnel from the Triage Group as triage terminates.

Requests for personnel and logistic support are made to the Medical Branch Director.

K. Physicians Arriving On Scene

It is recognized that physicians arriving on scene may have a legal right to assume direction of patient care and treatment. To facilitate an effective and coordinated effort, physicians reporting to the scene shall be directed to the Medical Branch Director for size up and assignment to triage and/or treatment roles within the Incident Command System. The most qualified medical person on scene shall be assigned Triage Unit Leader or Treatment Unit Leader, unless his/her skills are more appropriately utilized for direct care for victims.

Physician direction of patient care shall be within the Incident Command System, and requests for additional resources and logistics support made through the Medical Branch Director.

L. Chain of Command

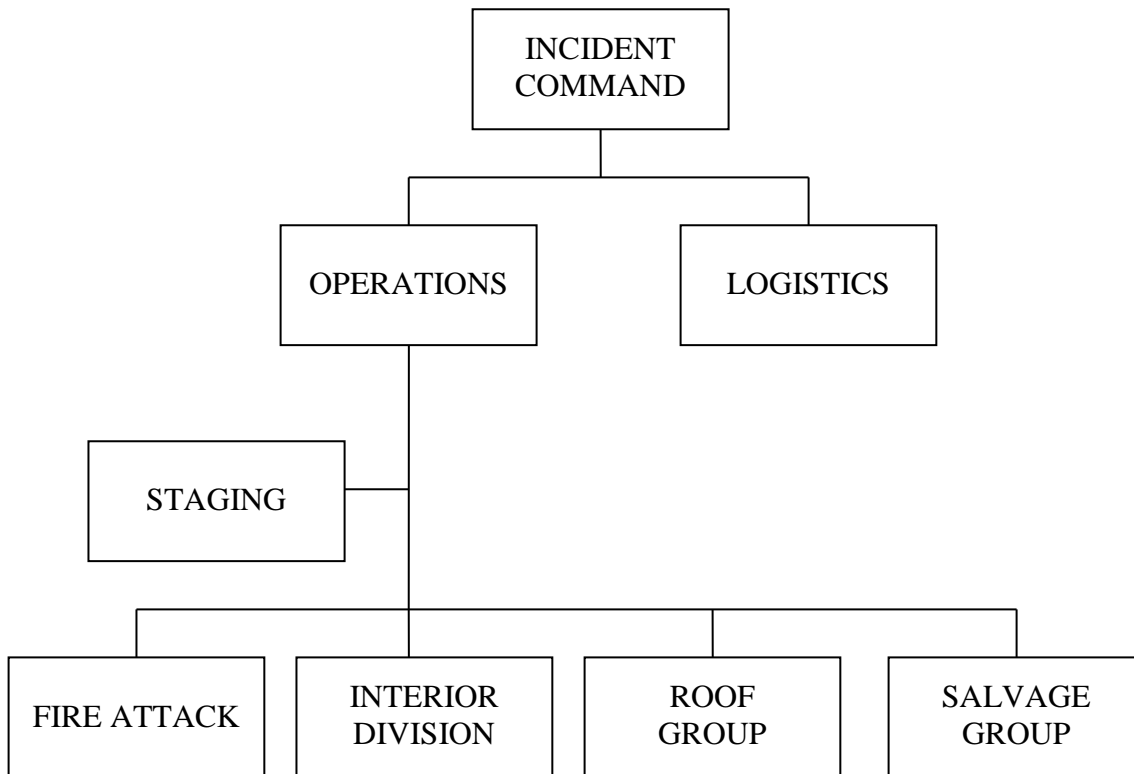
During a multi-casualty incident (MCI), it is recognized that personnel from several agencies must be organized into a single operating group to best stabilize and control the incident. Therefore, personnel from the San Diego Fire and Life Safety Services, City of San Diego Paramedics Services, private EMS agencies, hospitals and individual health care professionals must work closely, and cooperatively together. All people assigned duties within the Incident Command System shall report to, and receive direction from, the person filling the position superior to them in the structure, regardless of this person's agency.

Conflicts or concerns should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Command Officer, particularly any issue of personal safety for victims or responding personnel.

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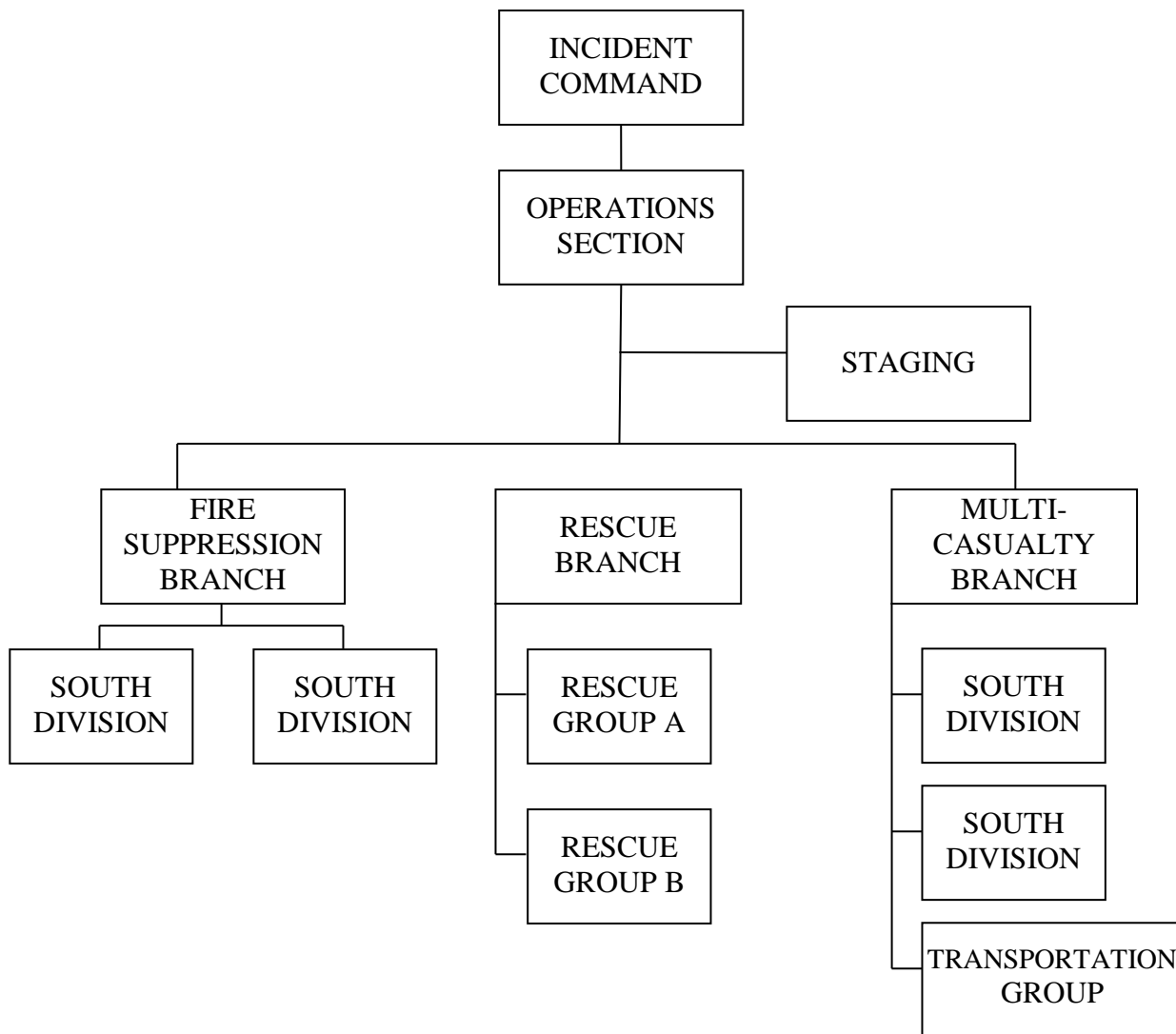
It is recognized that each incident will present special and possibly unique challenges to which all persons involved must coordinate their efforts for the most appropriate care available to the victims and protection of all persons on scene. The Incident Commander is charged with overall coordination.

M. Fire Emergency



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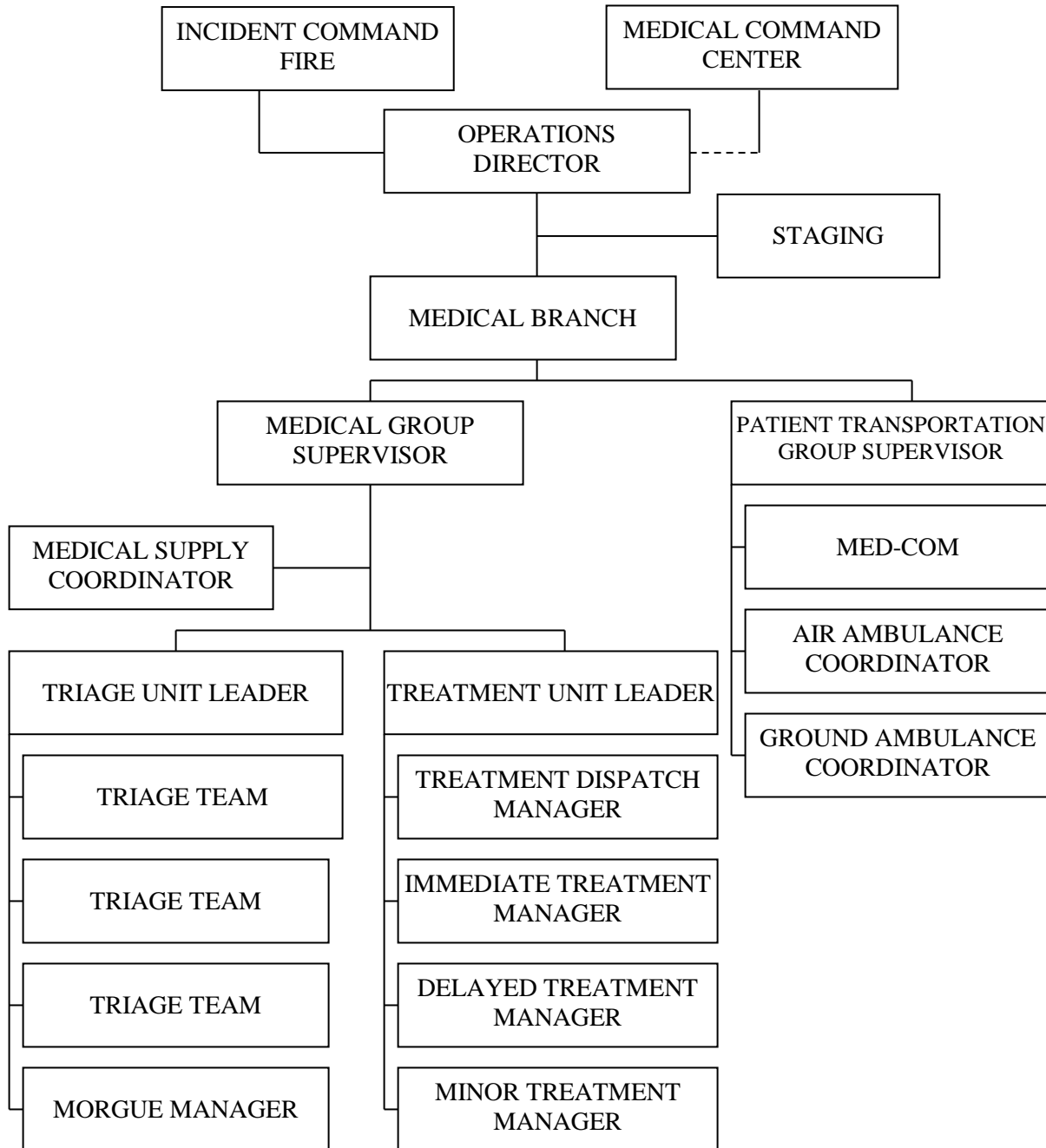
N. Fire Emergency with Numerous Victims



In order to provide the resource for an effective tactical organization, the Incident Commander may request the response of additional on-duty Battalion Chiefs. Dispatch will provide battalion coverage for the City by recalling off-duty Battalion Chiefs or on-duty staff Battalion Chiefs.

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O. Major Medical Emergency





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P. Multi-Agency Command System

