

# Lake County Fire Service Standard Operating Guidelines

Command Structure – Expanding the Operation	SOG: 003 Effective Date: April 1, 2011 Supersedes: Approved: <hr/> President, Lake County Association of Chiefs of Fire Page 1 of 19
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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 As a small incident escalates into a major incident, additional organizational support will be required. The Incident Commander can become quickly overwhelmed and overloaded with information management, assigning companies, filling out and updating the tactical worksheets, planning, forecasting, requesting additional resources, talking on the radio, and fulfilling all the other functions of Command. The immediate need of the Incident Commander is support. As additional ranking officers arrive on the scene, the Command organization may be expanded through the involvement of Officers and staff personnel to fill Command and General Staff Positions.

## 2.0 DIVISIONS AFFECTED

- 2.1 All Fire Department personnel.

## 3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 All Officers are responsible to comply with and ensure that personnel under their command are adequately trained, fully understand, and comply with this guideline.
- 3.2 All members have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.
- 3.3 The Incident Commander is responsible for expanding the organization. The decision to expand the organization should be based on the size and scope of the incident. Until such time as a Section or Unit is activated, all functions associated with that Section or Unit will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander.
- 3.4 A Command Team should be established early in the incident, as additional command level officers arrive. The Command Team consists of a Senior Advisor and a Support Officer.

## 4.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Section and Unit level positions within the Incident Management System will be activated only when the corresponding functions are required by the incident.

- 4.2 Until such time as a Section or Unit is activated, all functions associated with that Section or Unit will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander or the appropriate Section Chief. It is recommended that two or more units not be combined into a single unit. However, an individual may be assigned responsibility for managing more than one unit. This method of organization allows for easy expansion and demobilization of the system.
- 4.3 The Command structure defines the lines of authority, but it is not intended that the transfer of information within the Incident Management System be restricted to the chain of Command. An individual will receive orders from a superior, but may give information to any position in a different part of the organization within the guidelines specified in the operational procedures for each position.
- 4.4 The majority of positions within the Incident Management System will not be activated until the initial response is determined to be insufficient to handle the situation. When this occurs, qualified personnel are requested through normal dispatching procedures to fill the positions determined to be required for the type of incident in progress. If it is later determined that a specific position is not needed, the request can be canceled.
- 4.5 The transition from the initial response to a major incident organization will be evolutionary and positions will be filled as the corresponding tasks are required.
- 4.6 During the initial phases of the incident, the Incident Commander normally carries out these four section functions:
- |               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. OPERATIONS | 3. LOGISTICS              |
| 2. PLANNING   | 4. FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION |

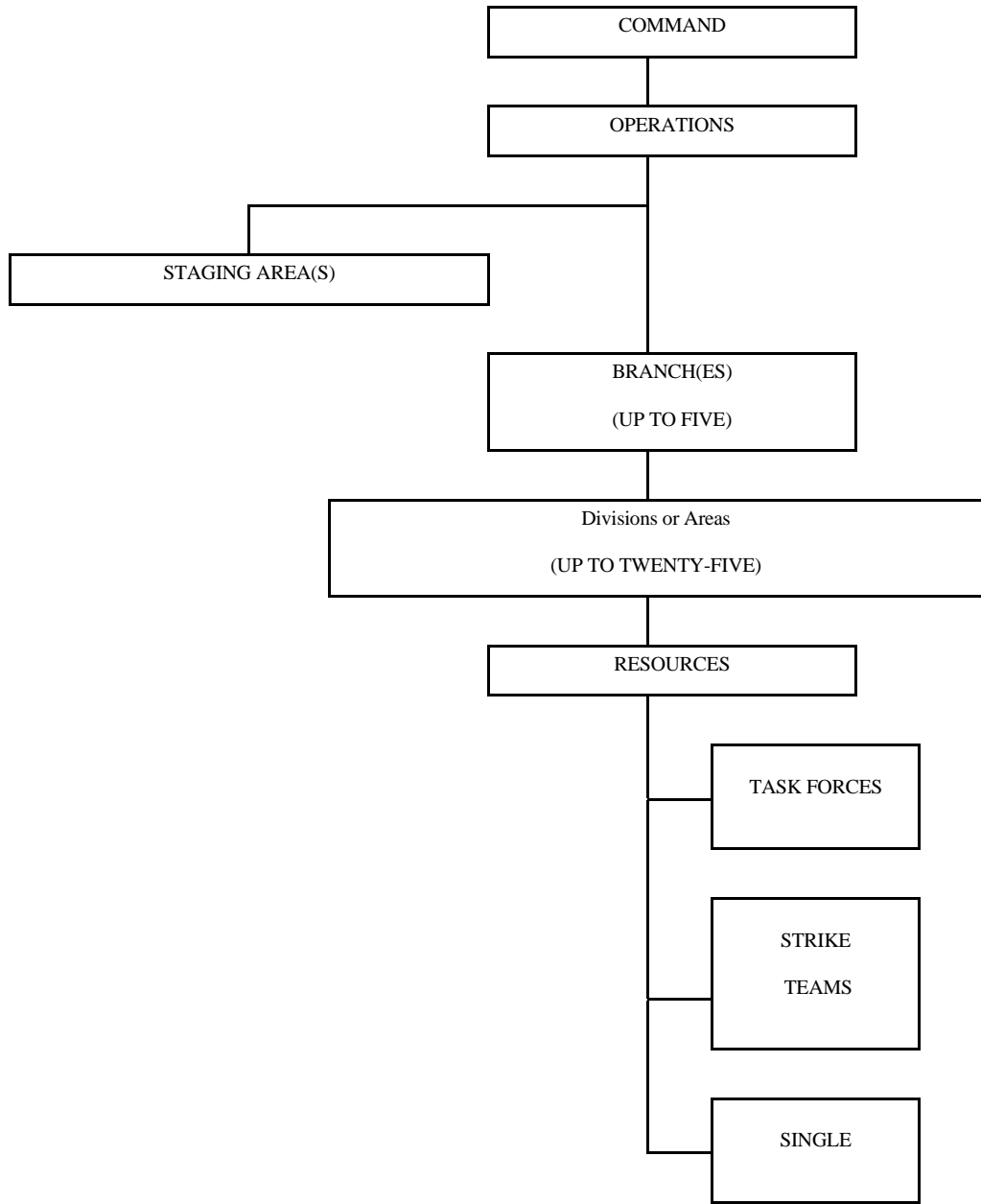
These comprise the General Staff within a fully expanded incident organizational structure.

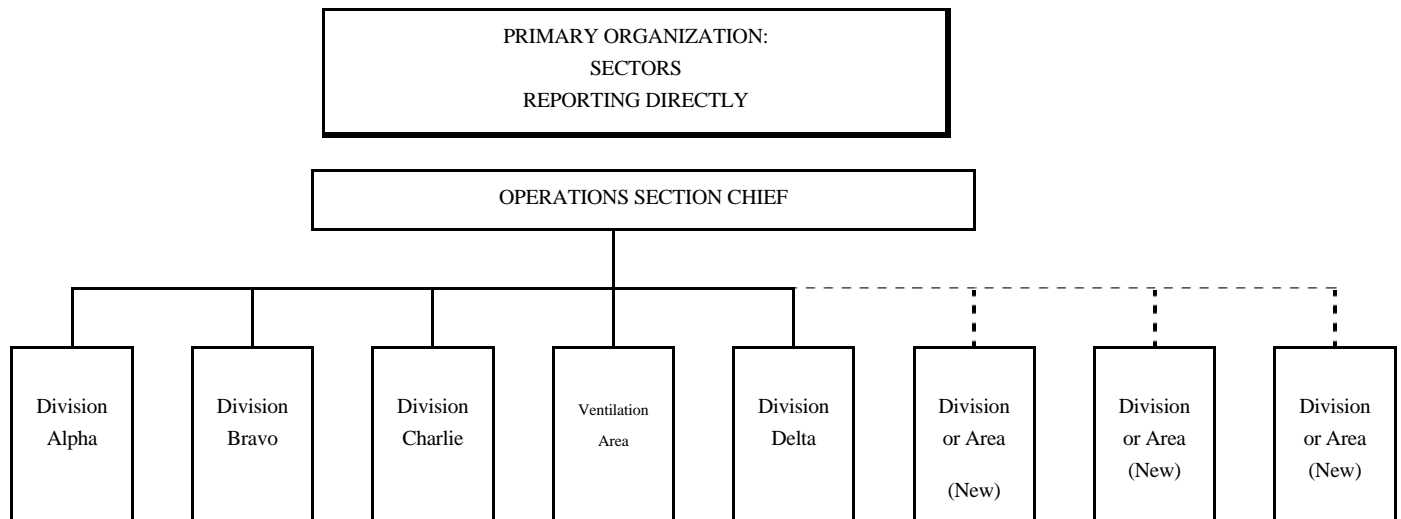
## 5.0 EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION – OPERATIONS SECTION

- 5.1 Section level positions can be implemented at any time, based on the needs of the incident. One of the first sections typically implemented is the Operations Section.
- 5.2 Operations Section
- A. The **Operations Section** is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities, the tactical priorities, and the safety and welfare of the personnel working in the Operations Section. The Operations Section Chief uses the appropriate radio channel to communicate strategic and specific objectives to the Branches or Sectors/Divisions/Groups.

- B. The Operations Section is most often implemented (staffed) as a span-of-control mechanism. When the number of Branches or Sectors / Divisions / Groups exceeds the capability of the Incident Commander to effectively manage, the Incident Commander may staff the Operations Section to reduce their span-of-control and thus transfer direct management to all tactical activities to the Operations Section Chief. The Incident Commander is then able to focus their attention on management of the entire incident rather than concentrating on tactical activities.

Command Structure – Expanding the Organization SOG 003





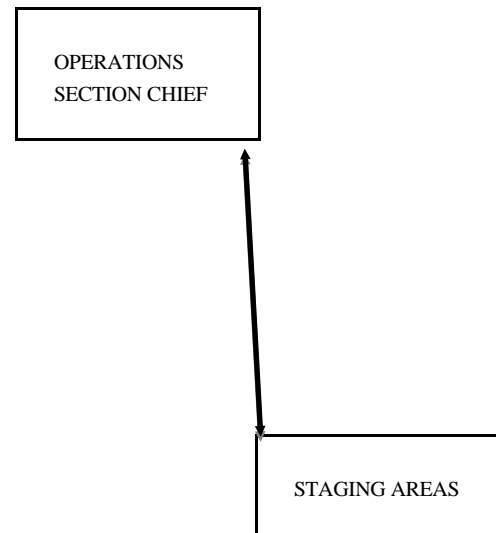
C. Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Manage incident tactical activities.
2. Coordinate activities with the Incident Commander.
3. Implement the Incident Action Plan.
4. Assign resources to tactical level areas based on tactical objectives and priorities.
5. Build an effective organizational structure through the use of Branches or Divisions or Areas.
6. Provide tactical objectives for Divisions or Areas.
7. Control Staging and Air Operations.
8. Manage Operation Section activities.
9. Provide for life safety.
10. Determine needs and request additional resources.
11. Provide progress reports to Command.
12. Consult with and inform other Sections and the Incident Command Staff as needed.

- D. The Incident Operations Section Chief is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities and should have direct involvement in the preparation of the action plan for the period of responsibility.

### 5.3 Staging Areas

- A. Staging Areas are locations designated within the incident area which are used to temporarily locate resources which are available for assignment.
- B. The incident scene can quickly become congested with emergency equipment if this equipment isn't managed effectively. For major or complex operations, the Incident Commander should establish a Level II Staging Area early and place an officer in charge of Staging. A radio designation "Staging" should be utilized. (TAC 5 is default)

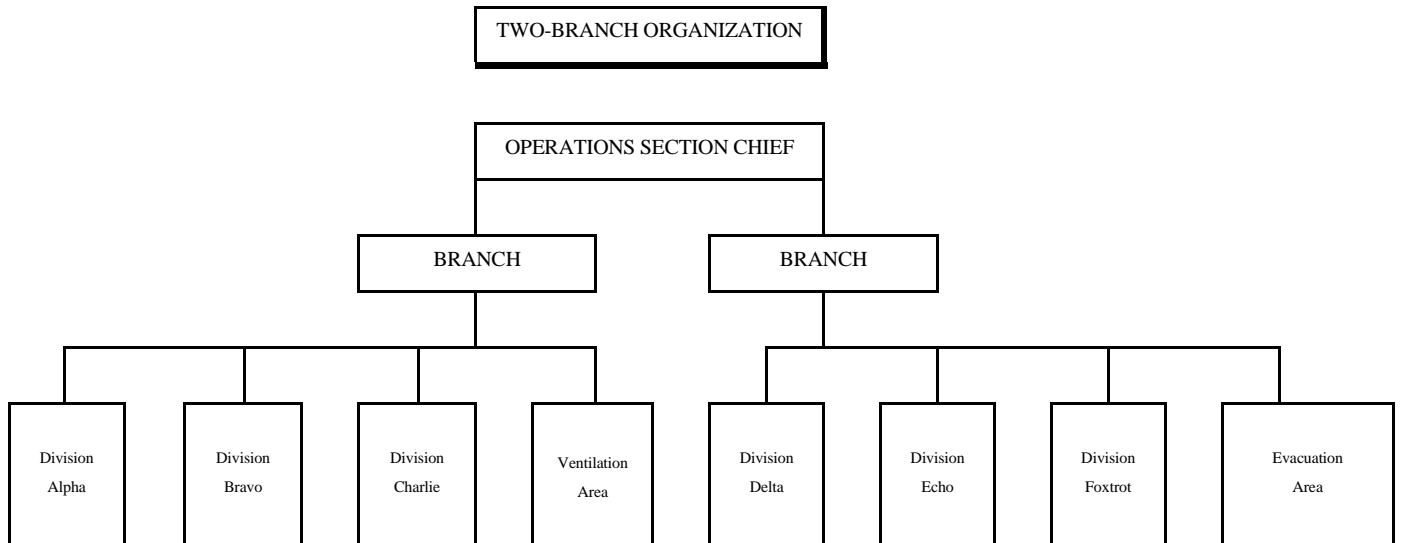


- C. In this expanded organizational structure, Staging reports to the Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section Chief may establish, move and discontinue the use of Staging Areas. All resources within the designated Staging Areas are under the direct control of the Operations Section Chief and should be immediately available. Staging will request logistical support (e.g., food, fuel, sanitation) from the Logistics Section.

## 6.0 EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION – BRANCHES

- 6.1 Divisions or Areas identify tactical level assignments in the Command Structure. As the span-of-control begins to be excessive, the incident becomes more complex, or has two or more distinctly different operations (i.e., Fire, Medical, Evacuation, etc.), the organization can be further sub-divided into Branches.
- 6.2 Branches may be established on an incident to serve several purposes. However, they are not always essential to the organization of the Operations Section.
- 6.3 In general, branches may be established for the following reasons:
  - A. Span of Control
  - B. Functional
  - C. Multi-Jurisdictional

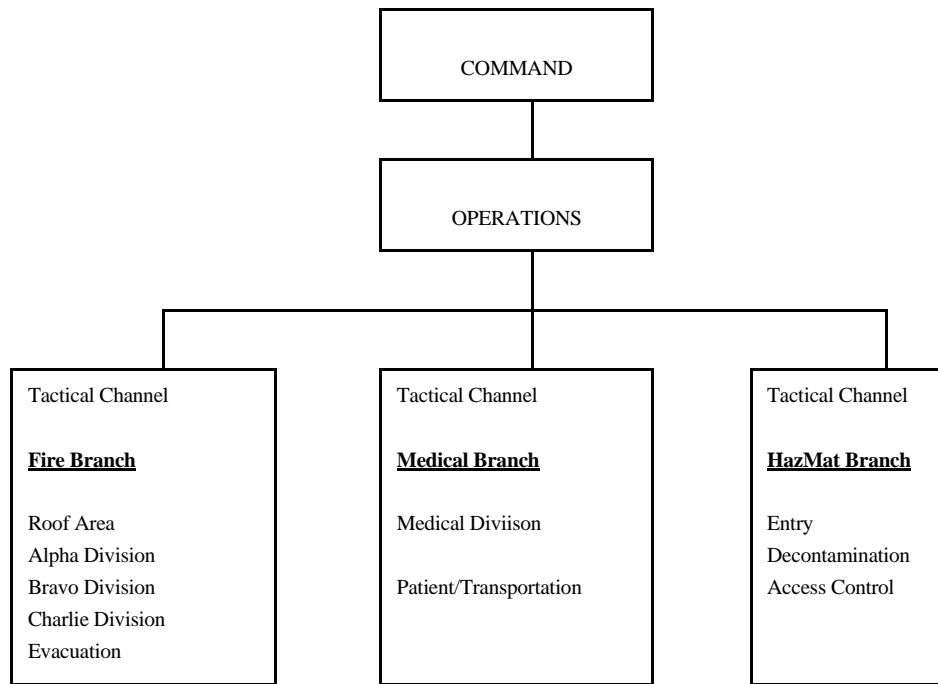
The Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief should designate a Multi-Branch structure, and allocate the Divisions or Groups within those branches. In the following example the Operations Section Chief has five Divisions/Groups reporting with two additional Divisions/Groups being added. At this point, a two-Branch organization should be formed.



6.4 Branches should operate in their area of responsibility on separate radio channels and communicate to Operations on a different channel if possible. The radio designation of Branches should reflect the objective of the Branch, when designating functional branches, (i.e., HazMat Branch, Multi-Casualty Branch, etc.). Tactical Branches are designated numerically (i.e., Branch I, Branch II, Branch III, etc.). When Operations implements Branch Directors, the Division/Group Supervisors should be notified of their new supervisor. This information should include:

1. What Branch the Division/Group is now assigned to.
2. The radio channel the Branch is operating on.

Radio Communications should then be directed from the Division Supervisor to the Branches – instead of Operations. Branch Supervisors will relay this information to the Companies working in their tactical operating area.

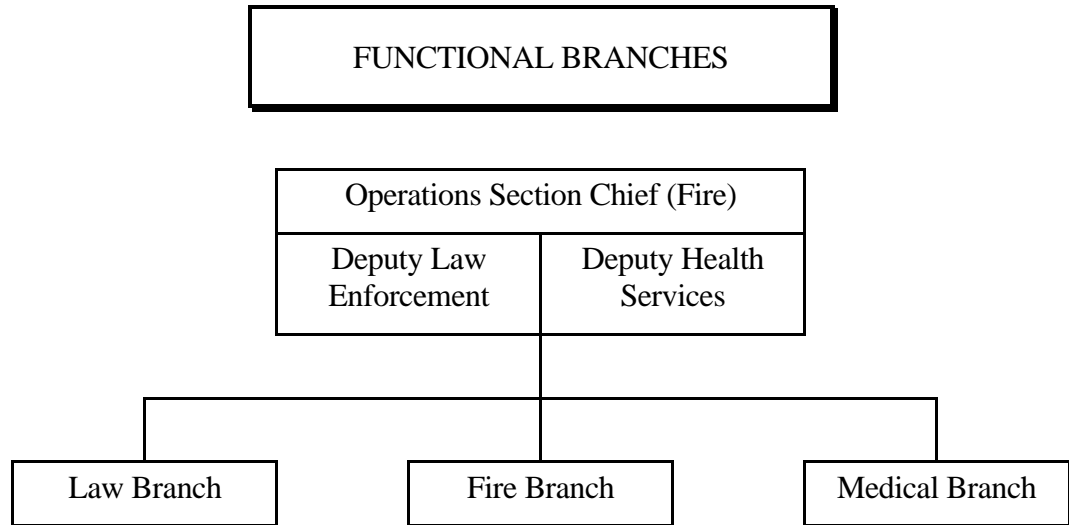


6.5 Depending on the situation, Branches may be located at the Command Post or at operational locations. When located at the Command Post, Branches can communicate on a face-to-face basis with the Operations Section Chief and/or Incident Commander. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area, it may be more effective to have Branches in tactical locations. When Branches are sent to tactical positions, they should immediately implement Command and control procedures within their Branch. In these situations Operations must assign someone to monitor a "Command Channel".

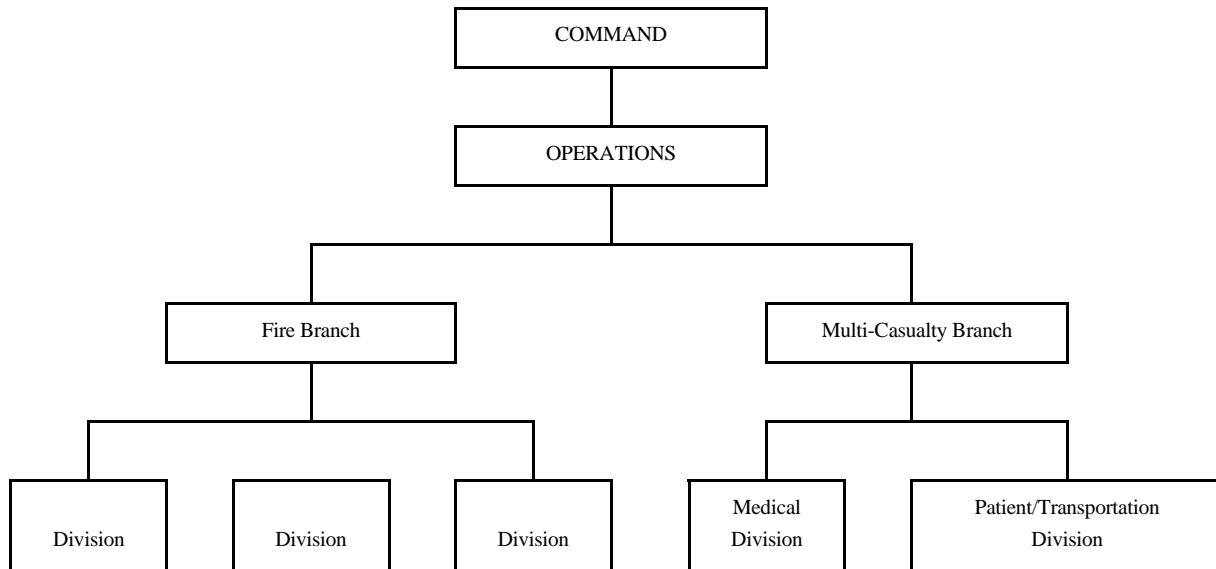
6.6 Branches are not limited to Operations. Any of the Section Chiefs may recommend the implementation of Branches within their sections with approval of the Incident Commander.

6.7 Functional Branch Structure

When the nature of the incident calls for a functional Branch structure; i.e., a major aircraft crash within a jurisdiction, three departments within the jurisdiction (police, fire, and health service), each has a functional Branch operating under the direction of a single Operations Section Chief. In this example, the Operations Section Chief is from the fire department with deputies from police and health services departments. Other alignments could be made depending upon the jurisdiction plan and type of emergency. Note that Incident Command in this situation could be either Single or Unified Command depending upon the jurisdiction.



- 6.8 When the incident is multi-jurisdictional, resources are best managed under the agencies which have normal control over those resources.
- 6.9 Branches should be used at incidents where the span-of-control with S/D/Gs is maximized, 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 Branches to forward positions to manage and coordinate activities.



- 6.10 When the incident requires the use of aircraft, such as for the transportation of victims from a multi-casualty incident, the Operations Section Chief should establish the Air Operations branch.
- 7.0 Expanding the Incident Command Organization
  - 7.1 As the organization expands to deal with a major incident, the Incident Commander will need additional Command Post support. The Operations Section Chief is one of the first to be implemented.

7.2 The following organizational charts are examples of how the Incident Management System can expand to fit the size and complexity of various types of incidents.

## 8.0 ORGANIZATIONAL HIERARCHY

8.1 The IMS organizational structure develops in a modular fashion based upon the kind and size of an incident. The organization's staff builds from the top down with responsibility and performance placed initially with the Incident Commander. As the need exists, four separate Sections can be developed, each with several Units which may be established. The specific organizational structure established for any given incident will be based upon the management needs of the incident. If one individual can simultaneously manage all major functional areas, no further organization is required. If one or more of the areas requires independent management, an individual is named to be responsible for that area.

8.2 For ease of reference and understanding, personnel assigned to manage at each level of the organization will carry a distinctive organizational title.

- COMMAND
- OFFICER
- SECTION CHIEFS
- DIRECTOR
- SUPERVISOR
- UNIT LEADER
- MANAGERS
- SINGLE RESOURCES

**COMMAND:** Refers to the Incident Commander.

**OFFICER:** Title that refers to a member of the Command Staff (Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer).

**SECTION CHIEFS:** Title that refers to a member of the General Staff (Planning Section Chief, Operations Section Chief, Finance/Administration Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief).

**DIRECTORS:** Title that refers to the positions of Branch Director, which is in the Operations Section, or Logistics Section between the Sectors, and the Operations Section Chiefs (Branch Directors, Air Operations Branch Director, Service Branch Director).

**SUPERVISORS:** Title that refers to the positions of Sector Supervisor, which is in the Operations Section and lies between the Branch Director, the Company Officer, or Strike Team/Task Force Leader.

**LEADER:** Title that refers to a position with supervision and management responsibility of either a group of resources or a unit, such as Ground Support, Medical, Supply, etc.

**MANAGERS:** Title that refers to the lowest level of supervision within the Logistics Section: Equipment Manager, Base Manager, Camp Manager. The only exception to this is the Staging Area Manager who reports directly to the Operations Section Chief.

**SINGLE RESOURCES:** Engine company, truck company, with a company officer and crew.

### 8.3 Planning Section

- A. 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's staff to provide 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.

#### **PLANNING SECTION**

- **RESOURCES UNIT**
- **SITUATION UNIT**
- **DOCUMENTATION UNIT**
- **DEMOBILIZATION**
- **TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS**

B. Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Evaluate current strategy and plan with the Incident Commander
2. Maintain resource status.
3. Refine and recommend any needed changes to plan with Operations input.
4. Evaluate incident organization and span-of-control.
5. Forecast possible outcome(s).
6. Evaluate future resource requirements.
7. Utilize technical assistance as needed.
8. Evaluate tactical priorities, specific critical factors, and safety.
9. Gather, update, improve, and manage situation status with a standard systematic approach.
10. Coordinates with any needed outside agencies for planning needs.
11. Plan for incident demobilization.
12. Maintain incident records.

### 8.4 Logistics Section

- A. 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 including facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance, fueling, feeding, communications, and medical services, including Responder Rehab.

- B. Roles and Responsibilities:
1. Provide for medical aid for incident personnel and manage Responder Rehab.
  2. Manage personnel accountability within the hazard zone.
  3. Manage staging.
  4. Provide and manage any needed supplies or equipment.
  5. Forecast and obtain future resource needs (coordinate with the Planning Section).
  6. Provide for communications plan and any needed communications equipment.
  7. Provide fuel and needed repairs for equipment.
  8. Obtain specialized equipment or expertise per Command.
  9. Provide food and associated supplies.
  10. Coordinate immediate critical incident stress debriefing function.
  11. Secure any needed fixed or portable facilities.
  12. Provide any other logistical needs as requested by Command.
  13. Supervise assigned personnel.

#### 8.5 Finance/Administration Section

- A. The **Finance/Administration Section** is established on incidents when the agency(ies) who are involved have a specific need for financial services. Not all agencies will require the establishment of a separate Finance/Administration Section. In some cases where only one specific function is required; e.g., cost analysis, that position could be established as a Technical Specialist in the Planning Section.

#### **FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION**

- **TIME UNIT**
- **PROCUREMENT UNIT**
- **COMPENSATION/CLAIMS UNIT**
- **COST UNIT**

- B. Roles and Responsibilities:
1. Procurement of services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the Fire Department or City as requested by Command (coordinates with Logistics).
  2. Documenting all financial costs of the incident.
  3. Documenting for possible cost recovery for services and/or supplies.
  4. Analyzing and managing legal risk for incidents (i.e., hazardous materials clean up).
  5. Document for compensation and claims for injury.

- C. The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts.

9.0 The Incident Commander — Role and Responsibilities after activation of an Operations Section Chief.

- 9.1 Once the Operations Section 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 Command and General Staff in directing the tactical aspects of the incident.

**INCIDENT COMMAND STAFF**

INCIDENT COMMANDER

- INFORMATION
- SAFETY
- LIAISON

9.2 Roles and Responsibilities:

- A. Review and evaluate the plan, and initiate any needed changes.
- B. Provide on-going review of the overall incident (THE BIG PICTURE).
- C. Select priorities.
- D. Provide direction to the Command and General Staff Officer.
- E. Review the organizational structure, initiate change or expansion to meet incident needs.
- F. Stage Command and General Staff functions as necessary.
- G. Establish liaison with other internal agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners and/or tenants.

10.0 Command Staff

- 10.1 Command staff positions are established to assume responsibility for key activities which are not a part of the line organization. Three specific staff positions are identified:

- Information Officer
- Safety Officer
- Liaison Officer

Additional positions might be required, depending upon the nature and location of the incident, or requirements established by Incident Command.

## 10.2 Information Officer

The Information Officer's function is to develop accurate and complete information regarding incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed, and other matters of general interest. The Information Officer will normally be the point of contact for the media and other governmental agencies which desire information directly from the incident. In either a Single or Unified Command structure, only one Information Officer would be designated. Assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.

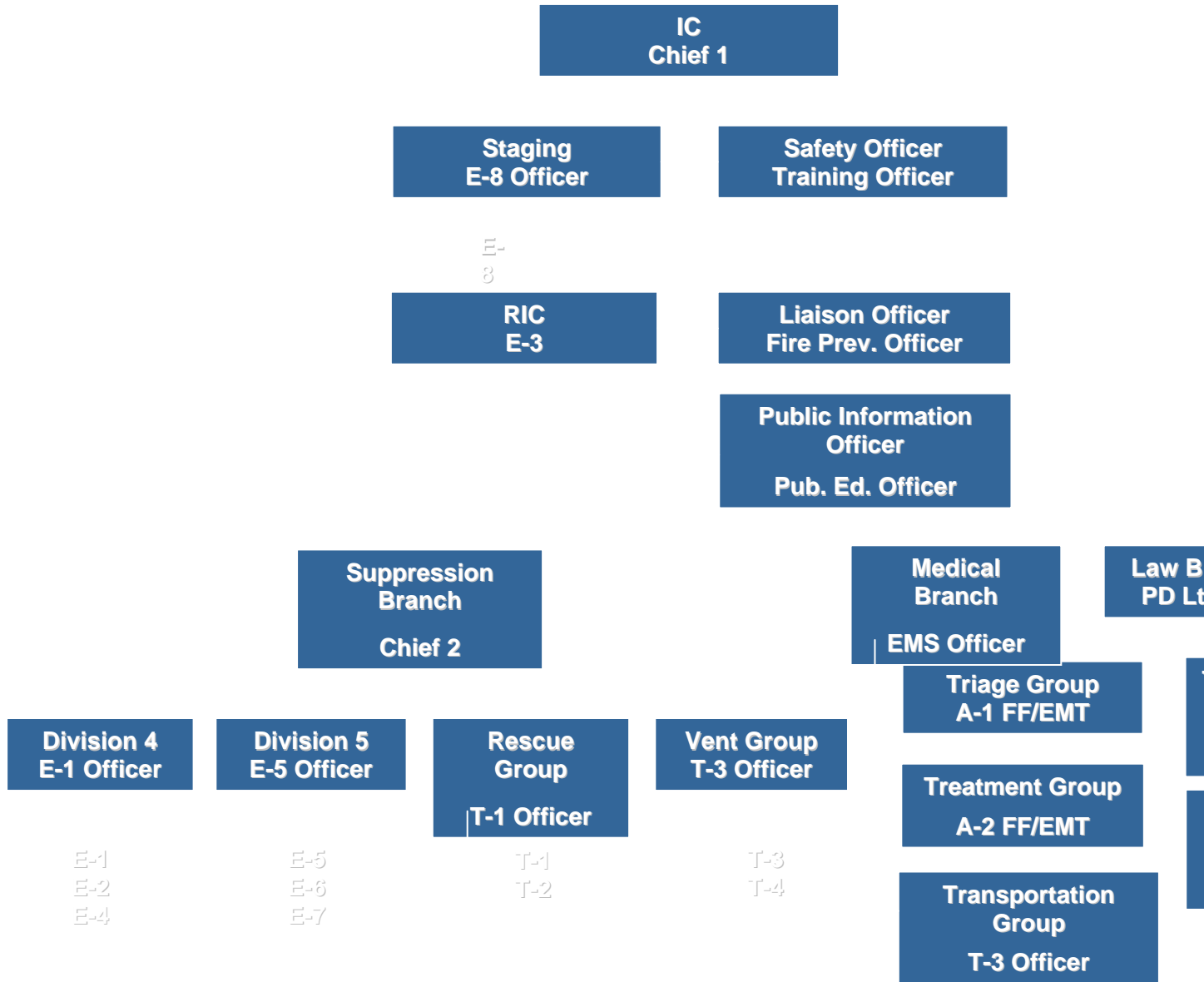
## 10.3 Safety Officer

The Safety Officer's function at the incident is to assess hazardous and unsafe situations and develop measures for assuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts. In a Unified Command structure, a single Safety Officer would be designated. Assistants may be required and may be assigned from other agencies or departments making up the Unified Command including the need for Responder Rehabilitation assessment.

## 10.4 Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer's function is to be a point of contact for representatives from other agencies. In a Single Command structure, the representatives from assisting agencies would coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Under a Unified Command structure, representatives from agencies not involved in the Unified Command would coordinate through the Liaison Officer. Agency representatives assigned to an incident should have authority to speak on all matters for their agency.

**EXPANDED ORGANIZATION — INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**



**OPERATIONS SECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Obtain "Operations" vest and clipboard.

- Operations reports to: Command
- Radio designation: Functioning at Command Post – "Command", otherwise "Operations".

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish and maintain radio contact with:

_____ Command	_____	_____ frequency/channel
_____ Staging	_____	_____ frequency/channel
_____	_____	_____ frequency/channel
_____	_____	_____ frequency/channel
_____	_____	_____ frequency/channel
_____	_____	_____ frequency/channel

\_\_\_\_\_ Manage incident tactical activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate activities with the Incident Commander.

\_\_\_\_\_ Implement the incident management plan.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assign units to Divisions/Groups/Branches based on tactical objectives and priorities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Build an effective organizational structure through the use of Branches and Divisions/Groups.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide tactical objectives to Branches or Divisions/Groups.

\_\_\_\_\_ Control Staging and Air Operations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Manage Operation Section activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide for life safety.

\_\_\_\_\_ Determine needs and request additional resources through Command.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide progress reports to Command.

\_\_\_\_\_ Consult with and inform other Sections and the Incident Command Staff as needed.

## PLANNING SECTION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain vest, "Planning" clipboard, and any orders from Incident Command.
  - Planning reports to: Command
  - Radio designation: "Planning"
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish and maintain radio contact with:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Command      \_\_\_\_\_ frequency/channel
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Logistics      \_\_\_\_\_ frequency/channel
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluate current strategy and plan with the Incident Commander.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Maintain resource status.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Refine and recommend any needed changes to plan (with Operations input).
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Liaison with any needed outside agencies for planning needs.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan for incident demobilization.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Maintain incident records.

**LOGISTICS SECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ Obtain vest, "Logistics" clipboard, and any orders from Incident Command.

- Logistics reports to: Command
- Radio designation: "Logistics"

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish and maintain radio contact with:

_____ Command	_____ _____ frequency/channel
_____ Rehab	_____ _____ frequency/channel
_____ Staging	_____ _____ frequency/channel
_____ Personnel	_____ _____ frequency/channel
_____ Planning	_____ _____ frequency/channel

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide for medical aid for incident personnel and manage responder rehab.

\_\_\_\_\_ Manage personnel accountability within the hazard zone.

\_\_\_\_\_ Manage staging.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide and manage any needed supplies or equipment.

\_\_\_\_\_ Forecast and obtain future resource needs (coordinate with the Planning Section).

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide for communications plan and 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.

\_\_\_\_\_ Coordinate immediate critical incident stress debriefing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide any other logistical needs as requested by Command.

\_\_\_\_\_ Supervise assigned personnel.

**FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain vest, "Finance/Administration" clipboard, and any orders from Incident Command.
  - Finance/Administration reports to: Command
  - Radio designation: "Finance/Administration"
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish and maintain radio contact with:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Command \_\_\_\_\_ frequency/channel
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Procure services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the Fire Department or City as requested by Command (coordinates with Logistics).
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Document all financial costs of the incident.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Document for possible cost recovery for services and/or supplies.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Analyze and manage legal risk for incidents such as a hazardous materials cleanup.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Document for compensation and claims for injury.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Administration Section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts, or litigation, including criminal charges.