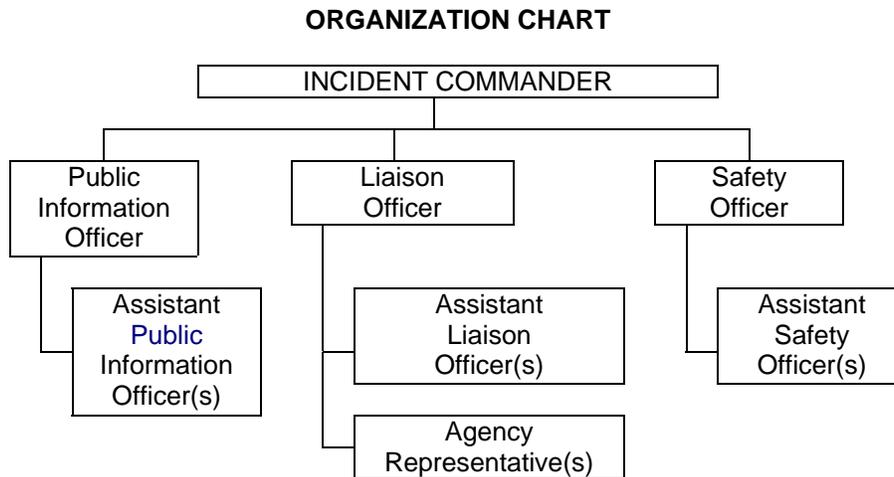


**CHAPTER 5**

**COMMAND**

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### **ESTABLISHMENT AND TRANSFER OF COMMAND**

The highest-ranking official of the jurisdictional agency (ies) at the scene of the incident initially establishes Command. The Incident Commander is responsible for overall management of the incident. It is his/her responsibility to prepare the Incident Objectives that, in turn, will be the foundation upon which subsequent incident action planning will be based. Incident Objectives will be based on the requirements of the agency and the incident. They should be broad, measurable and follow an ordered sequence of events.

The Transfer of Command checklist below provides a basic guideline that can be used in almost any incident situation. This information may be captured on the Incident Briefing (ICS Form 201). However, agency policies and incident specific issues may require alterations to the transfer of command process.

When it is determined that a Transfer of Command (face-to-face) briefing needs to take place, the minimum essential information should include the following:

- a. Situation Status
- b. Objectives and Priorities
- c. Current Organization
- d. Resource Assignments
- e. Resources En Route and/or Ordered
- f. Facilities Established
- g. Communications Plan
- h. Prognosis, Concerns – Related Issues

As incidents grow in size or complexity, most agencies will transfer command one or more times. Whenever the transfer of command briefing takes place, the information conveyed should be recorded and displayed for easy retrieval and subsequent briefings.

## POSITION CHECKLISTS

**INCIDENT COMMANDER** - The ICT1-5's responsibility is the overall management of the incident. On most incidents, a single ICT1-5 carries out the command activity. However, Unified Command may be appropriate. The ICT1-5 is selected by qualifications and experience.

The Incident Commander may have a Deputy, who may be from the same agency, or from an assisting agency. Deputies may also be used at section and branch levels of the ICS organization. Deputies must have the same qualifications as the person for whom they work for, as they must be ready to take over that position at any time:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (Page 1-2).
- b. Assess the situation and/or obtain a briefing from the prior Incident Commander.
- c. Determine Incident Objectives and strategy.
- d. Establish the immediate priorities.
- e. Establish an Incident Command Post.
- f. Consider the need for Unified Command.
- g. Establish an appropriate organization.
- h. Ensure planning meetings are scheduled as required.
- i. Approve and authorize the implementation of an Incident Action Plan.
- j. Ensure that adequate safety and personnel accountability measures are in place.
- k. Coordinate activity for all Command and General Staff.
- l. Coordinate with key people and officials.
- m. Approve requests for additional resources or for the release of resources.
- n. Keep agency administrator informed of incident status.
- o. Approve the use of trainees, volunteers, and auxiliary personnel.
- p. Authorize release of information to the news media.
- q. Ensure Incident Status Summary (ICS Form 209) is completed and forwarded to appropriate higher authority.
- r. Order the demobilization of the incident when appropriate.
- s. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214).

**Delegation of Authority:** A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Agency Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Many agencies require written Delegation of Authority to be given to Incident Commanders prior to their assuming command on larger incidents.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER** - The PIO1-2, PIOF is responsible for developing and releasing information about the incident to the news media, to incident personnel, and to other appropriate agencies and organizations.

Only one Public Information Officer will be assigned for each incident, including incidents operating under Unified Command and multi-jurisdiction incidents. The Public Information Officer may have Assistant Public Information Officers as necessary, and the Assistant Public Information Officers may also represent assisting agencies or jurisdictions.

Agencies have different policies and procedures relative to the handling of public information. The following are the major responsibilities of the Public Information Officer that would generally apply on any incident:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (Page 1-2).
- b. Determine from the Incident Commander if there are any limits on information release.
- c. Develop material for use in media briefings.
- d. Obtain Incident Commander's approval of media releases.
- e. Coordinate with Joint Information Center (JIC) if established.
- f. Inform media and conduct media briefings.
- g. Arrange for tours and other interviews or briefings that may be required.
- h. Obtain media information that may be useful to incident planning.
- i. Maintain current information summaries and/or displays on the incident and provide information on status of incident to assigned personnel.
- j. Assign Assistant Public Information Officers as appropriate.
- k. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214).

**LIAISON OFFICER** - Incidents that are multi-jurisdictional, or have several agencies involved, may require the establishment of the LOFR position on the Command Staff.

Only one Liaison Officer will be assigned for each incident, including incidents operating under Unified Command and multi-jurisdiction incidents. The Liaison Officer may have assistants as necessary, and the assistants may also represent assisting agencies or jurisdictions. The Liaison Officer is the point of contact for the Agency Representatives assigned to the incident by assisting or cooperating agencies:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (Page 1-2).
- b. Be a contact point for Agency Representatives.
- c. Maintain a list of assisting and cooperating agencies and Agency Representatives.
- d. Assist in establishing and coordinating interagency contacts.
- e. Keep agencies supporting the incident aware of incident status.
- f. Monitor incident operations to identify current or potential inter-organizational problems.
- g. Participate in planning meetings, providing current resource status, including limitations and capability of assisting agency resources.
- h. Assign Assistant Liaison Officer(s) as appropriate.
- i. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214).

**AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES** - In many multi-jurisdiction incidents, an agency or jurisdiction will send a representative to assist in coordination efforts.

An Agency Representative is an individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident.

Agency Representatives report to the Liaison Officer or to the Incident Commander in the absence of a Liaison Officer:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (Page 1-2).
- b. Ensure that all agency resources are properly checked in at the incident.

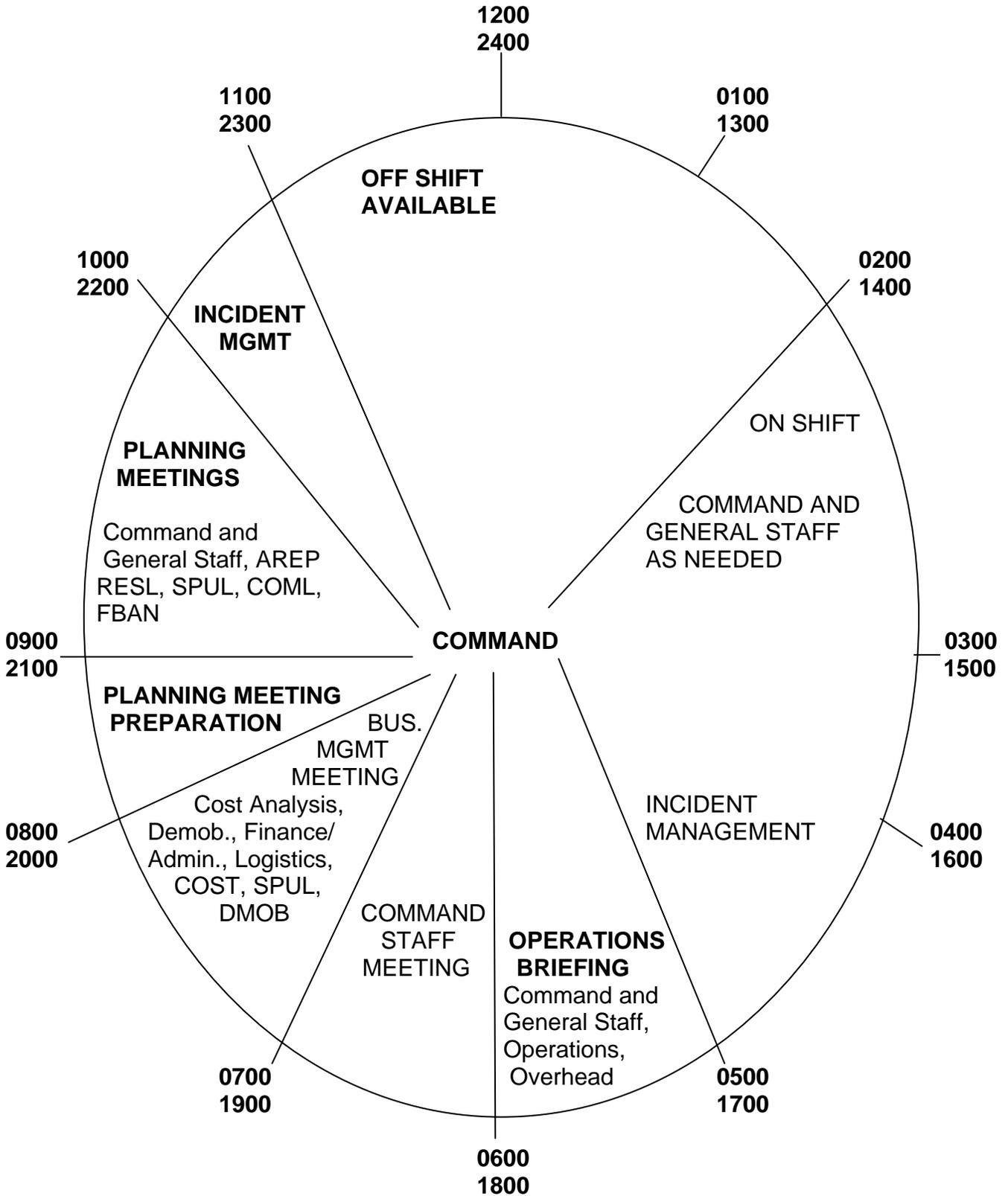
- c. Obtain briefing from the Liaison Officer or Incident Commander.
- d. Inform assisting or cooperating agency personnel on the incident that the Agency Representative position for that agency has been filled.
- e. Attend briefings and planning meetings as required.
- f. Provide input on the use of agency resources unless resource technical specialists are assigned from the agency.
- g. Cooperate fully with the Incident Commander and the General Staff on agency involvement at the incident.
- h. Ensure the well being of agency personnel assigned to the incident.
- i. Advise the Liaison Officer of any special agency needs or requirements.
- j. Report to home agency dispatch or headquarters on a prearranged schedule.
- k. Ensure that all agency personnel and equipment are properly accounted for and released prior to departure.
- l. Ensure that all required agency forms, reports and documents are complete prior to departure.
- m. Have a debriefing session with the Liaison Officer or Incident Commander prior to departure.
- n. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214).

**SAFETY OFFICER** - The SOF1-2's function is to develop and recommend measures for assuring personnel safety, and to assess and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. Having full authority of the Incident Commander, the SOF1-2 can exercise emergency authority to stop or prevent unsafe acts.

Only one Safety Officer will be assigned for each incident. The Safety Officer may have Assistant Safety Officers as necessary, and the Assistant Safety Officers may also come from assisting agencies or jurisdictions as appropriate. Assistant Safety Officers may have specific responsibilities such as air operations, urban search and rescue, hazardous materials, or for specific geographic or functional areas of the incident:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (Page 1-2).
- b. Participate in planning meetings, and advocate effective risk management.
- c. Identify hazardous situations associated with the incident.
- d. Review the Incident Action Plan for safety implications.
- e. Exercise emergency authority to stop or prevent unsafe acts and communicate such exercise of authority to the Incident Command.
- f. Investigate accidents that have occurred within the incident area.
- g. Assign Assistant Safety Officers as needed.
- h. Conduct and prepare an Incident Safety Analysis (ICS Form 215-AG/AW) as appropriate.
- i. Initiate appropriate mitigation measures, i.e., Personnel Accountability, Fireline EMT's, Rapid Intervention Crew/Company, etc.
- j. Develop and communicate an incident safety message as appropriate.
- k. Review and approve the Medical Plan (ICS Form 206).
- l. Review and approve the Site Safety and Control Plan (ICS Form 208) as required.
- m. Maintain Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214).

### Command and General Staff Planning Cycle Guide



Example Based on 12-Hour Operational Period