

Subject:	EMERGENCY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS – INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM
Section:	PPG# 4400.10
Chapter:	Operations
Effective Date:	7/1/98

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1** It is the policy of Thurston County Fire Protection District No.5 & 9 that all emergency incidents shall be managed by an Incident Command System (ICS). The National Interagency Incident Command System (NIIMS) has been selected as our model.
- 1.2** The first fire department or unit to arrive at the scene shall assume command of the incident. The initial incident Commander shall remain in command until command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.
- 1.3** The first unit or member on the scene shall initiate whatever parts of the Incident Command System are needed to effectively manage the incident scene.
- 1.4** At emergency incidents, the incident commander shall:
- a) establish an organization with sufficient supervisory personnel to control the position and function of all members operating at the scene and
 - b) ensure that safety requirements are satisfied.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1** ***Accountability system:*** A system of fire fighter accountability that provides for the tracking and inventory of all members.
- 2.2** ***Incident Commander:*** The person in overall command of an emergency incident. This person is responsible for the direction and coordination of the response effort.
- 2.2.1** The first arriving officer is the Incident Commander until relieved by a higher-ranking officer.
- 2.3** ***Incident Command System (ICS):*** A system that includes: Roles, responsibilities, operating requirements, guidelines and procedures for organizing and operating an on-scene management structure.

- 2.4** ***Risk Assessment:*** To set or determine the possibility of suffering harm or loss, and to what extent.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1** At an emergency incident, the Incident Commander shall have the responsibility to:
- 3.1.1** Assume and confirm command and take an effective command position
 - 3.1.2** Perform situation evaluation that includes risk assessment
 - 3.1.3** Initiate, maintain, and control incident communication.
 - 3.1.4** Develop an overall strategy and attack-plan and assign units to operations.
 - 3.1.5** Develop an effective incident organization by managing resources, maintaining an effective span of control, and maintaining direct supervision over the entire incident by creating geographical and/or functional areas as appropriate for the scope and size of the incident.
 - 3.1.6** Review, evaluate and revise the operational plan as required.
 - 3.1.7** Continue, transfer, and terminate command.
- 3.2** At an emergency incident, the Incident Commander shall be responsible for the overall safety of all members and all activities occurring at the scene.
- 3.2.1** As command staff are assigned a safety officer shall be designated when in the opinion of the Incident Commander, the emergency has reached a level that requires additional safety precautions.
 - 3.2.2** A safety officer should be selected from members trained to be an On Scene Safety Officer if they are available for assignment. An on-scene Incident Safety Officer is required at:
 - (a) Structure Fires
 - (b) Multiple Company Operations
 - (c) Mutual aid operations
 - (d) Hazardous Materials Incidents
- 3.3** The Safety Officer's responsibilities at emergency incidents shall include:
- 3.3.1** Assessing hazards, and unsafe situations.
 - 3.3.1** Working through the Incident Commander in developing safety plans.
 - 3.3.3** Having emergency authority to stop or prevent unsafe actions.
 - 3.3.4** Providing information to the Incident Commander to help mitigate the incident.

- 3.4 All members shall have the responsibility to maintain an awareness of their physical condition of members and ensure that adequate steps shall be taken to provide for their safety and health. The command structure shall be utilized to request relief and reassignment of fatigued members/crews.
- 3.5 Thurston County Fire Protection District No.5 & 9 shall be responsible for providing initial and on-going ICS training for all department members.
- 3.6 It shall be the responsibility of Thurston County Fire Protection District No.5 & 9 to ensure that the ICS is properly utilized.

4.0 GUIDELINES

- 4.1 Thurston County Fire Protection District No.5 & 9 has adopted the NIIMS Incident Command System and all related publications and procedures related for the utilization of the ICS.
 - 4.1.1 The ICS guidelines apply to all members involved in emergency operations.
- 4.2 All members involved in emergency operations shall be familiar with the NIIMS
- 4.3 All members shall receive on-going ICS training that is conducted frequently enough to ensure that each member is able to perform assigned ICS duties and functions satisfactorily and in a safe manner.
- 4.4 At an emergency incident, the Incident Commander shall be responsible for the overall safety of all members and all activities occurring at the scene through the utilization of department adopted risk management and accountability policies.
- 4.5 The Incident Command System shall provide for control of access to hazardous areas of the incident scene by department members.
- 4.6 The ICS employed by Thurston County Fire Protection District No.5 & 9 shall provide for:
 - (a) A single jurisdiction/single agency
 - (b) Single jurisdictions with multiple-agency involvement
 - (c) A multi-jurisdictional/multi-agency involvement
- 4.7 Upon arrival at the emergency scene, the officer-in-charge shall observe the following order of action:
 - 4.7.1 Examine the scene, taking into account the general conditions, which exist.
 - (a) Transmit a brief initial radio report which will include:
 - (b) Unit identification, arrival at scene, assumption or passage of command.

If command assumed, Command identification and Command Post location.

- (c) Description of incident/occupancy.
- (d) Conditions
- (e) Actions to be taken.
- (f) Assignments for incoming units.
- (g) Call for additional resources (if needed).

4.7.2 Call for help if manpower or equipment is not sufficient for containment.

4.7.3 Effect life saving efforts as soon as possible.

4.7.4 Limit the possible extension of the fire or aid work.

4.7.5 Keep the fire from extending by covering perimeter with sufficient hose lines.

4.7.6 Begin fire extinguishment and treatment.

4.7.7 Begin ventilation and overhaul whenever adequate manpower and equipment are available:

4.8

The first-in officer shall set up and assume a command post. The command post should be centrally located for ease of operation with a view of two sides of the incident. In the event that the first-in officer must assist with the initial problem, he/she shall, whenever possible, instruct the driver to set up and assume command post at that first-in vehicle.

4.9

Responding companies shall comply with the dispatch center 's request and use the assigned radio frequency. Responding companies shall maintain radio silence whenever possible, allowing the officer-in-charge at the scene the use of the assigned frequency so assignments of arriving companies are communicated.

4.10

The following guidelines for transfer of command will apply to all incidents.

4.10.1 The first arriving officer shall assume command unless he/she chooses, due to conditions at the incident scene, to pass command to a subsequently arriving officer.

4.10.2 After command has been established, officers arriving at the scene who are of a rank greater than the incident commander may assume command.

4.10.3 Combat orders (except under extreme conditions) shall not be issued without coordinating with the officer-in-charge.

4.11

The arriving officer, who will be assuming command, will communicate with the officer being relieved. The officer being relieved will brief the officer taking command covering the following area's:

- (a) General situation status and status board.
- (b) Deployment and assignments of operating companies.
- (c) Plans, goals and objectives.
- (d) Appraisal of needs for additional resources.

- 4.12** Command is only transferred when the outlined communications functions have been completed. When the transfer of command has been completed it shall be announced to the dispatch center and to all personnel at the incident scene via radio on all incident scene frequencies.
- 4.13** Command will assign divisions/group and division/group tasks.
- 4.13.1** Division/group supervisor will use their division/group designation in all communications.
 - 4.13.2** Division/group supervisors will report completion of tasks to command.

5.0 REFERENCES

WAC 296-305-05001