

**Laconia Fire Department
Standard Operating Procedure**

Effective Date: Sept. 5, 2014	SOP Category & General Identification Number: Command Procedures 201	Revision:1
SOP Title & Number: Incident Command System – Command Team 201.06		
Approved by: Kenneth L. Erickson, Fire Chief	Re-evaluation Date:	Number of Pages: 4

PURPOSE: To provide Command the resources to manage an escalating incident and ensure the safety of responding personnel.

SCOPE: If an incident is not stabilized within the first few minutes, or escalates beyond a first alarm a Command team is created to assist Command

PROCEDURES: When the first arriving officer is a Command Officer, efforts should be directed towards establishing a Command Post and fulfilling the Command functions. A Command Post at 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 with 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 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, or supports the Command Post.

Strengthening the Command organization:

- Improves safety of personnel
- Decreases the span of control
- Improves communication
- Improves accountability
- Improves management of the Division/Group

COMMAND TEAM

A Command Team is an organizational response to quickly provide enough command and control to rapidly bring a significant incident under control. 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 the incident management responsibilities. The immediate need of Command at this point is support. The Command Team consists of the Incident Commander (IC), Safety Officer, RIC Group Officer, Logistics/Resource Officer, and Senior Advisor(s).

Establishing an Incident Command Team

The first in Command Officer, assumes command (IC #2) from the initial IC (IC #1). Once IC #2 assumes Command, the next in Command Officer is assigned as needed based on incident priority. In general the next- in Command Officer gets assigned to the most critical Division – interior, attack, roof, Division C. After this the next assignment should be Incident Safety Officer, then Logistics/Resource Officer. 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. If a RIC is established then a RIC Group Officer is assigned as soon as possible to supervise the RIC group. The RIC Group Officer does not deploy with the RIC. That is delegated to the company officer level. The RIC Group supervises the RIC and any rescue functions.

The IC should assign in-coming Command officers to the position that he/she feels best supports the incident.

The role of Logistics/Resource Officer is critical in escalating incidents.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Logistics/Resource Officer:

- Define, evaluate, and recommend changes to the incident action plan.
- Provide direction relating to tactical priorities and specific critical fire ground factors.
- Evaluate the need for additional resources.
- Manage logistics responsibilities – resource unit leader and accountability.
- Manage incoming resources for Command – provide assignments and track. All incoming personnel should flow through logistics/resource
- Assist with the tactical worksheet for control and accountability.
- Evaluate the fire ground organization and span of control.
- Other duties as necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities of the RIC Group Officer

Rapid Intervention Group Officer Responsibilities

- The RIC Group Officer will be identified as "RIC Group".
- Until a RIC Group Officer is designated by the Incident Commander the company officer of the initial RIC will assume the RIC Group Officer responsibilities.
- The RIC Group Officer shall confer with the Incident Commander and Initial RIC to obtain the current situation status.
- The RIC Group Officer will also work with the Safety Officer(s) to assess potential life-threats and scene hazards that need to be mitigated. Access and egress points will be a part of the dynamic process that the RIC team will continually evaluate.
- The Safety Officer will also assess (and advise the IC) of RIC deployment to make sure adequate coverage of RIC teams is provided.
- A RIC Action Plan shall be developed by the RIC Group Officer to include the search parameters for lost/trapped firefighter(s). The RIC Group Officer will assign companies to Objective Based Deployment tasks such as:
 - Conduct a walk around size-up of the fire building
 - Assess conditions, develop response plans
 - Determine equipment/resource needs
 - Assign RIC to duties to enhance safety – throw ground ladders, portable lighting, remove obstructions, etc.

The Senior Advisor is normally the highest ranking member of the Command Team. The Officer serving as "Command" and the Resource 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 Logistics/Resource 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 Division 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, other City Departments, and city staffing.
- Prepare to transition to long-term operations by establishing operational periods and advising the Command Team and Lakes Region Mutual Aid as to the need for an All Hazards Incident Management Team, or state or federal assistance.
- Provide a transitional briefing to the incoming IMAT if one has been assigned to the incident.

In order to maintain continuity and overall effectiveness, the Senior Advisor and Logistics/Resource 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, Divisions, 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 always have more people working than commanding. The basic configuration of Command includes three levels:

1. Strategic Level - Overall direction of the incident.
2. Tactical Level - Objectives assigned to Divisions, Groups, Branches
3. Task Level - Objectives assigned to Companies and crews.

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 fire ground 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/DEFENSIVE/TRANSITIONAL
- Establishing an Incident Action Plan.
- 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 Division responsibilities. Division 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 crews and 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 and senior firefighters. 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 the objectives are:

1. RESCUE
2. FIRE CONTROL
3. PROPERTY CONSERVATION
4. CARE FOR THE CUSTOMER
5. CARE FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS

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.