


|  | <b>Standard Operating Guideline</b> |  |
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|  | <b>SOG Name:</b>                    | <b>Incident Command System</b>             |
|  | <b>SOG Number:</b>                  | <b>100.1</b>                               |
|  | <b>Standard:</b>                    | TBD  |
|  | <b>Guideline Owner:</b>             | Emergency Operations – Incident Operations |
|  | <b>Implementation Date:</b>         | June 1, 2021                               |
|  | <b>Date of Last Revision:</b>       | June 1, 2021                               |
|  | <b>Authority:</b>                   | Larry H. Williams, Jr, Fire Chief          |

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Incident Command System (ICS) is to effectively command and control all on-scene resources, keep members safe, maintain unity of command, provide an effective span of control, account for personnel, and to prevent "free-lance" company operations.

## A. GENERAL

### SECTION 1

The operational guidelines of the Dothan Fire Department Incident Command System shall be followed at **all** incidents. All Dothan Fire Department policies and guidelines utilize NIMS as the foundation for our incident management system. This SOG covers overall incident command. For specific incident ICS needs, see the appropriate SOG for that type of response. A listing of incident specific SOGs is contained in Addendum 1 of this SOG

### SECTION 2

The first arriving Dothan Fire Department officer/member (battalion chief, captain, sergeant, firefighter, assistant fire marshal, supply runner, etc.) shall establish command and assume all responsibilities of the Incident Commander until properly relieved by a higher ranking officer.

1. All members will use their radio designations when assuming command (Battalion 1, Training 1, Fire Marshal 4, Special Ops 2, Supply 1, Battalion 2A, Engine1, Truck 1, etc.).
2. When a member arrives and assumes command from another individual, the assuming member will notify the individual being relieved by the most practical means possible. There should be no question or doubt about the transfer of command. During the transfer of command process, the following information must be exchanged: current Incident Action Plan (include Mode of operation), results of that plan, resource status, projected resource needs, and forecasted incident outcomes. The officer/member assuming command will notify the **Communications Center** and the on-scene personnel that they are assuming command by radio. The member being relieved of command will re-broadcast this message over the radio.
3. In certain situations, it may be advantageous for the first-arriving company to pass Command to the next arriving company to the scene or a member on-scene not actively engaged in incident operations. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first-arriving company requires a full crew (i.e. immediate rescue situation) and another company/member is on scene. Command can be passed to an incoming unit, but cannot be assumed until the arriving officer contacts the original officer/member and then assumes command.

4. The general rule for transferring command is, “command should only be transferred to improve overall incident management.”

**SECTION 3**

The Incident Commander shall formulate and regularly update an Incident Action Plan (IAP). The plan must include strategy, tactics, resource needs, and projected outcomes. The IAP must be communicated to all groups, divisions, branches and units. The IAP must be evaluated constantly and updated as the need indicates. Modes of operation (Investigative, Offensive & Defensive) should also be updated every 10 minutes (unless significant change in conditions) and confirmed by the Incident Safety Officer. Checklists should also be used where applicable and are a part of the IAP. The IAP shall be written using the appropriate ICS Forms (located on the server) when the incident is expanded, reinforced or when incidents result in extended response (>24-hours); Hazmat level II or Rescue level III.

**SECTION 4**

The Incident Commander shall expand the Incident Command System as required to meet the needs of the IAP and manage all on-scene resources. Typically, this function is driven by the span of control principal. Ideally, the desired span of control ratio is 5 to 1 (subordinates to supervisor).

**SECTION 5**

Incident Management requires members to be trained on and proficient in the incident command system. DFD members are required to complete all required NIMS training in addition to being knowledgeable in all incident management processes used by the DFD in order to fill any assigned position. For a listing of NIMS training requirements see Addendum B of this SOG.

**SECTION 6**

The Dothan Fire Department has specific structural fire SOGs and for other types of incidents (HazMat, TRT, Water, Aircraft, etc). Each member should have working knowledge of all ICS SOGs.

**SECTION 7**

NIMS uses slightly different terminology in the different positions throughout the ICS structure. The following is a brief listing of terminology and positions used throughout the ICS within NIMS:

**Branch:** organization level having functional or geographical responsibility for major aspects of incident operations; assists with maintaining the span of control within an ICS organization. Examples: Law Enforcement Branch, HazMat Branch, Special Operations Branch, etc. Branches can also be established when there is a multi-jurisdictional element involved. Titles for personnel in charge of a Branch are “Director.”

**CAN Report:** Format utilized for incident updates at incidents. **C**onditions, **A**ctions & **N**eeds. During a CAN report, confirmation of the operational mode is also provided.

**Command Staff:** consists of three specific staff positions to assume responsibility for key activities that are not a part of the line sections. These include: Public Information Officer (PIO), Safety Officer (SO), and the Liaison Officer (LNO).

**Division:** geographical designation; organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. Multi-story occupancies divisions are the floors (sixth floor = division 6); exterior approaches are identified by alphabetical letter identifiers, the front of the building (address side) is “A” and progress clockwise around the structure. Titles for personnel overseeing a division are “Supervisor.” **NOTE: use phonetic alphabet for clarity of the radio (“Alpha”, “Bravo”, “Charlie”, and “Delta”).**

**Department Operation Center (DOC):** used to manage department emergency operations (see SOG 100.12); focus on the internal agency incident management and response and should be linked to Incident Command Posts (ICP) and Emergency Operations Centers (EOC)

**General Staff:** consists of the Operations, Finance/Administration, Logistics, and Planning functions of an ICS organization. The titles of the individuals manning these positions are as follows: Operations Section Chief (OSC), Finance/Administration Section Chief (FSC), Logistics Section Chief (LSC), and Planning Section Chief (PSC). These are job titles and can be filled by anyone appointed by the Incident Commander.

**Group:** functional designation; organizational level responsible for a specific functional assignment at an incident. Examples include but are not limited to: Search group, rescue group, HazMat group, medical group, etc. A group may be made up of a variety of resources needed to accomplish that task for which they are organized. Titles for personnel overseeing a division are “Supervisor.

**Modes:** Three modes utilized by DFD

- **Investigating**—First arriving unit declares due to the unknown extent of the incident; alarms sounding and/or a report of an odor of smoke. Other units (except first arriving BC & Ladder Truck) Level I stage unless directed otherwise
- **Offensive**—strategies that require immediate action and commitment of resources
  - **Rescue Mode** is a form of an offensive mode and will be treated as an action of opportunity (e.g. SLICE-**RS**). This mode means that all resources will work towards the saving of life (e.g. ISO & RIT are passed to another incoming unit, etc.)
- **Defensive**—essentially a holding action to keep the incident from spreading and also protecting exposures until additional resources arrive. Also for when the incident cannot be controlled and the operations must protect exposures until the threat is reduced or eliminated.

**Reinforced (expanded) response:** is initiated when the on-scene IC determines that the initial response resources are insufficient to deal with the size or complexity of the incident

**Single Resource:** an individual or individual unit that retains its own unit identification (e.g. E-6 or Battalion 2C)

**Staging Area Manager (STAM):** reports directly to the Operations Section Chief; maintains a staging area as directed by the IC (See Section E, below); requests logistical support from the Logistics Section

**Unified Command:** used when an incident meets one of the following criteria:

- a) contained within a single jurisdiction but more than one department or agency shares management responsibility due to the nature of the event or resources required; or
- b) when the incident is multi-jurisdictional
- c) multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional

## **B. BRIEF INITIAL REPORT**

### **SECTION 1**

The first arriving officer/member on the scene is responsible for transmitting a Brief Initial Report (BIR), and other arriving officers/members need not duplicate this report. The *Communications Center* shall rebroadcast the Brief Initial Report utilizing the "Command Order Model."

### **SECTION 2**

A Brief Initial Report should be given in the following sequence:

1. Confirm Address
2. Incident Description
3. Incident Conditions
4. Request Assistance (If Needed)
5. Initial Action Plan
  - a. State operational mode: Investigating, Offensive, or Defensive
6. Establishment of Command Using Street Name

### **SECTION 3**

An example of a Brief Initial Report would be as follows:

"Engine 1 to *Communications*; On scene, at 700 Denton Road, with a two-story wood frame, multi-family dwelling with heavy smoke showing. Offensive mode, conducting interior attack. Engine 1 is Denton Road Command."

### **SECTION 4**

Name the command by street name. Avoid using the business name. Ensure that no other incidents are named with similar names. If more than one incident is occurring on the same street, use a cross street as the command name.

## **C. CONFIRMED COMMUNICATIONS**

### **SECTION 1**

The receiver shall confirm all strategic assignments, tactical assignments, and reports by repeating the message.

## SECTION 2

An example of the correct procedure follows:

- IC:** "Denton Command to Engine 1, stretch a 2 1/2" attack line to the second floor."  
**E 1:** "Engine 1 to stretch 2 1/2" attack line to second floor."  
**IC:** "Affirmative Engine 1."

## SECTION 3

If the receiver does not repeat the order, the sender shall ask for the message to be confirmed.

- IC:** "Command to Engine 1, confirm the message."

## SECTION 4

If the receiver does not repeat the order accurately, the sender shall state "negative" and say the message again.

- E 1:** "E 1 to stretch 2 1/2" attack line to first floor."  
**IC:** "Negative E 1, stretch a 2 1/2" attack line to second floor."  
**E 1:** "E 1 to stretch 2 1/2" attack line to second floor."  
**IC:** "Affirmative E 1."

## SECTION 5

When given a tactical group or division assignment (e.g. "Attack", "Ventilation", "Rehab", etc), the officer (including acting) will respond with that assignment.

Note: See terminology for the difference between group and division.

- BC:** "Battalion 2 to *Communications*."  
**Communications:** "Go Battalion 2."  
**BC:** Battalion 2 has arrived on scene and will be assuming Evert Command; E 2 you are now 'Fire Attack.'  
**Communications:** "Copy Battalion 2 is assuming Evert Command; Engine 2 is now 'Fire Attack.'  
**E 2:** "Copy Battalion 2 is assuming Evert Command; Engine 2 is now 'Fire Attack.'  
**E 2:** "Attack to Command."  
**IC:** "Command to Attack, go ahead."  
**E 2:** "Water on Fire..."

**D. INCIDENT PRIORITY BENCHMARKS****SECTION 1**

The Incident Priority Benchmarks<sup>1</sup> shall be as follows:

1. **"All Clear"**
2. **"Under Control"**
3. **"Loss Stopped"**

**SECTION 2**

The Incident Commander will use these benchmarks for incident management and communicating the completion of the incident priorities. The benchmarks will be announced from the Incident Commander to Division or Group Supervisors and units operating on the assigned radio frequency. If the incident is operating on Tac 1, the Incident Commander will transmit the benchmark on Tac 1. Once a benchmark is achieved, the IC will notify Communications to page out the incident benchmarks.

**SECTION 3**

The **"All Clear"** benchmark indicates the primary search is complete. In situations where fire units are investigating a smell of smoke, smell of gas, or other conditions where it is safe for building occupants, the **"All Clear"** may be announced with people inside the building. When responding to a structure fire and the building is fully involved and completion of the primary search is impossible, an **"All Clear will not be transmitted."**

**SECTION 4**

The **"Under Control"** benchmark will be announced at all incidents. It indicates that the incident is stable and will not extend to other properties, uninvolved areas, or require additional resources. This benchmark will be transmitted to the *Communications Center* by radio according to standard radio procedures, and a request to page this out should also be made.

**SECTION 5**

The **"Loss Stopped"** benchmark indicates that property damage due to incident conditions and responder actions (i.e. ventilation, damming/diking, etc.) has been stopped. In a structure fire this would be no more heat, smoke, and water damage. For a hazardous materials incident, this would be the product that has escaped has been contained and/or dissipated.

**SECTION 6**

Division/Group supervisors shall use the benchmarks to report on the accomplishment of tactical objectives in their functional areas. See Addendum 3 for ICS Organization Chart Examples.

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<sup>1</sup> Benchmarks "water on fire" and "fire knock down" will be utilized for fire related incidents and are placed in specific fire response/incident SOGs.

**SECTION 7**

The 10-minute point from arrival on scene, *Communications* will notify the IC and advise him/her they have been on scene 10 minutes. At this time stamp the IC shall update Communications of the <sup>2</sup>conditions, actions, and needs of the incident along with confirming the mode (investigating, offensive or defensive).

**SECTION 8**

At the 20-minute mark a CAN report will be completed along with a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR). The PAR will be done in a roll call format and will also be conducted at benchmarks as outlined in Emergency Operations SOG #100.4.

**E. STAGING****SECTION 1**

The functional position of Staging is directly subordinate to the Operations Section. Units/crews in staging shall be prepared and ready for immediate assignment into an operational position.

**SECTION 2**

*Level I staging as outlined in each specific response SOG* shall be adhered to when responding to multi-company structure fire incidents; however the Incident Commander can establish Level I Staging at his or her discretion.

**SECTION 3**

Level II Staging as outlined in each specific response SOG shall be adhered to. Each incident has differing and specific response needs; however the following guidelines can be applied:

1. Level II Staging shall be used to properly manage resources or whenever the Incident Commander deems necessary.
2. The staging location shall be announced by radio.
3. All units not assigned shall report to the staging area and check in with the Staging Area Manager (STAM).
4. If a Staging Area Manager is not appointed by the Incident Commander, the first arriving officer arriving at staging will assume the Staging Area Manager's position and advise the Incident Commander.
5. All staged units will announce "In Staging" upon arrival into the area.
6. All staged apparatus and personnel will be prepared and ready for immediate assignment into an operational position.
7. The Staging Area Manager shall keep track of staged resources, communicate with the Incident Commander, and call for additional resources as prescribed by the Incident Commander.

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<sup>2</sup> CAN Reports

8. All staged units will stay off the air and not generate any radio traffic with the exception of the following:
  - a. Acknowledgement of an operational assignment.
  - b. If the staged unit observes a critical tactical need, they will advise Command of the conditions and actions.
  - c. If it becomes apparent that Command has forgotten a staged unit, they shall re-advise Command (or Operations if an Operations Section is established) that they are in Staging.

#### **SECTION 4**

Level II Staging will be activated at specific/designated locations. Units and/or crews will report to the designated Staging area when Level II Staging is announced by the IC and check in with the STAM.

- F. Future: Expanding ICS/IMS to Type III, Type II Incidents  
To be added by BC Messer with updated DOC and City Wide Emergency  
Operations Center for transitioning from a single incident to a city wide and higher  
type incident.**

#### **Signature on File**

Larry H. Williams, Jr.  
Fire Chief  
DOTHAN FIRE DEPARTMENT



**Addendum 1**  
**ICS SOGs Listing (new number format)**

- Operations SOG 100.1—Incident Command System
- Operations SOG ( 100.2—Incident Safety Officer
- Operations SOG 100.3—Mutual Aid/Automatic Aid
- Operations SOG ( 100.4—Personal Accountability, Rapid Intervention (MAYDAY) & Evacuation Signal
- Operations SOG 100.5—Operational Communications Process
- Operations SOG 100.6—Residential Fire Response
- Operations SOG 100.7—High Rise Fire Response (DRAFTED)
- Operations SOG 100.8—Commercial Building Fire Response
- Operations SOG 100.9—Structural Response to an Aircraft Incident
- Operations SOG 100.10—HazMat Response (DRAFTING)
- Operations SOG 100.11—TRT Response (DRAFTING)
- Operations SOG 100.14—Duty Officer Program (DRAFTING)
- Operations SOG 150.6—Water Rescue

**Addendum 2  
NIMS Training Requirements**

All members are required to complete the following training upon being assigned to DFD:

- NIMS 700, NIMS an Introduction
- NIMS 100, Introduction to ICS
- NIMS 200, Basic ICS
- NIMS 800, National Response Framework

Operations Captains are required to complete the above training AND:

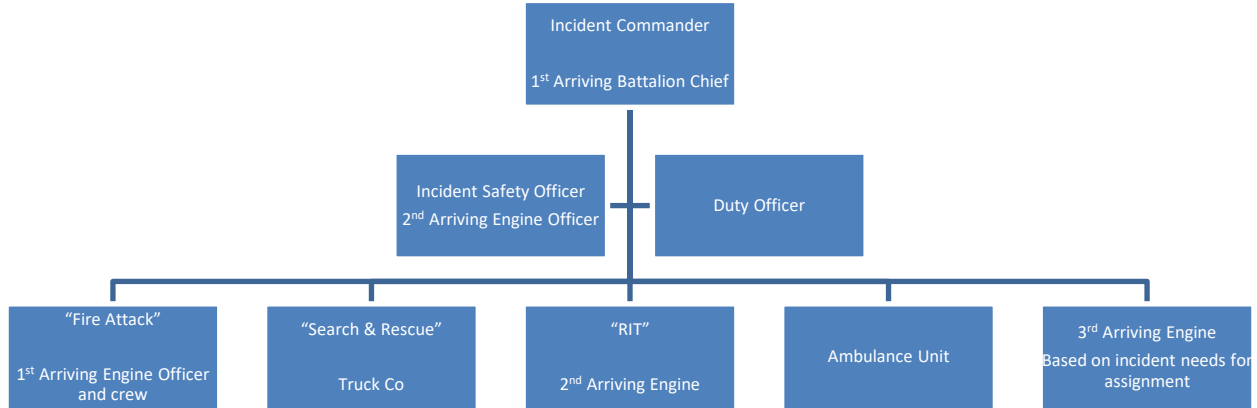
- NIMS ICS 300, Intermediate ICS

Staff members (all ranks) are to complete the above AND:

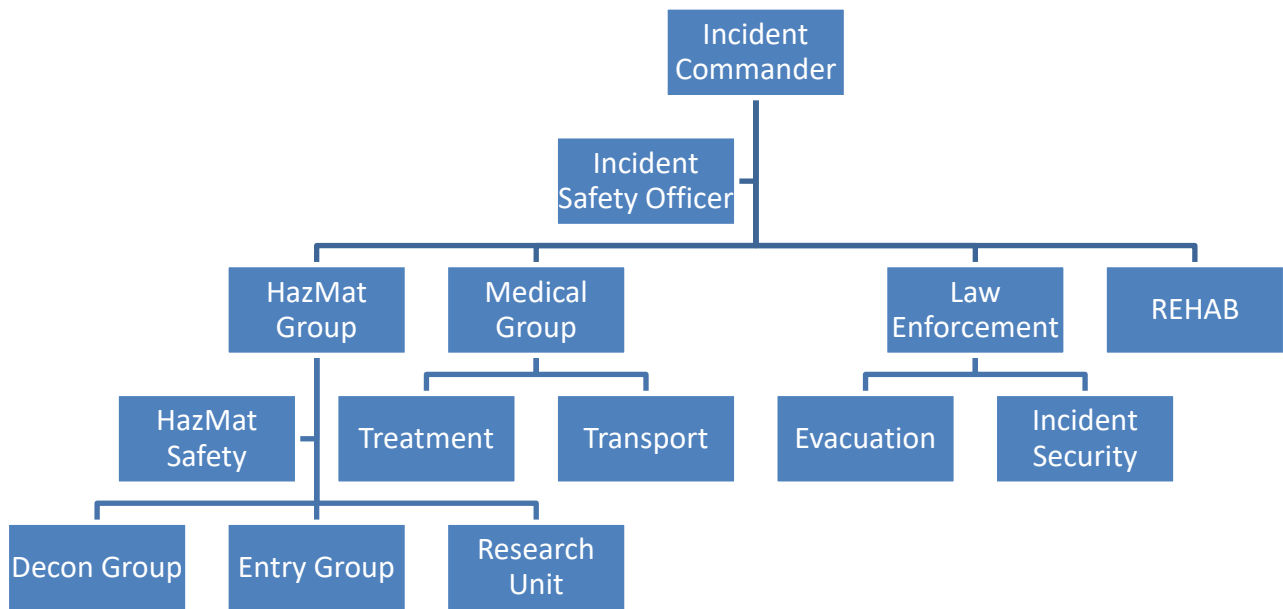
- NIMS ICS 400, Advanced ICS
- NIMS 703, Resource Management
- NIMS 775, Emergency Operations Center

**Addendum 3**  
**ICS Org Chart Examples**

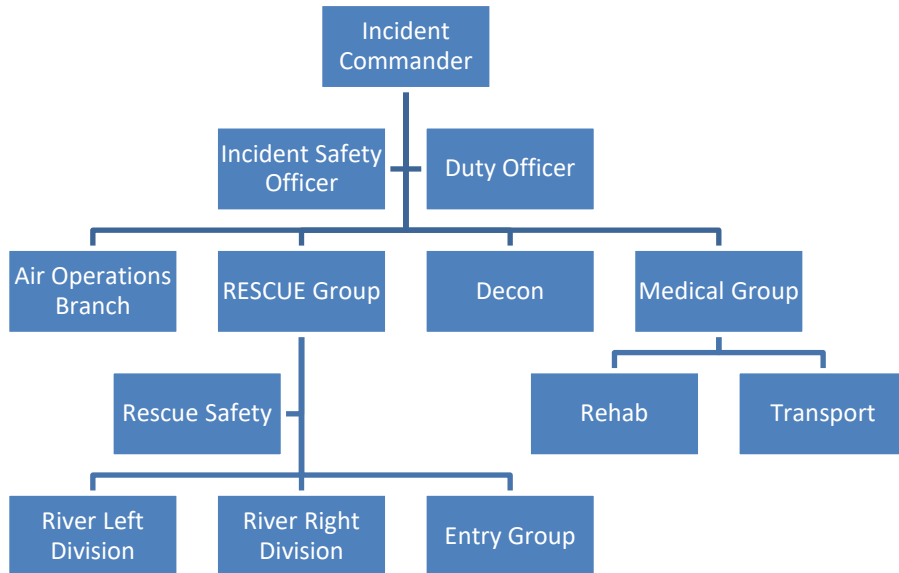
Residential Structure Fire (<3000 sq. feet)



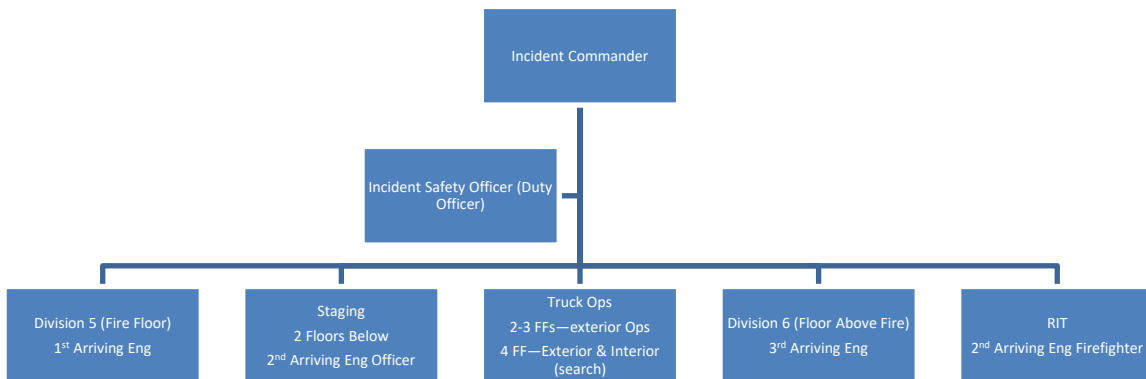
HazMat Level II Incident Example



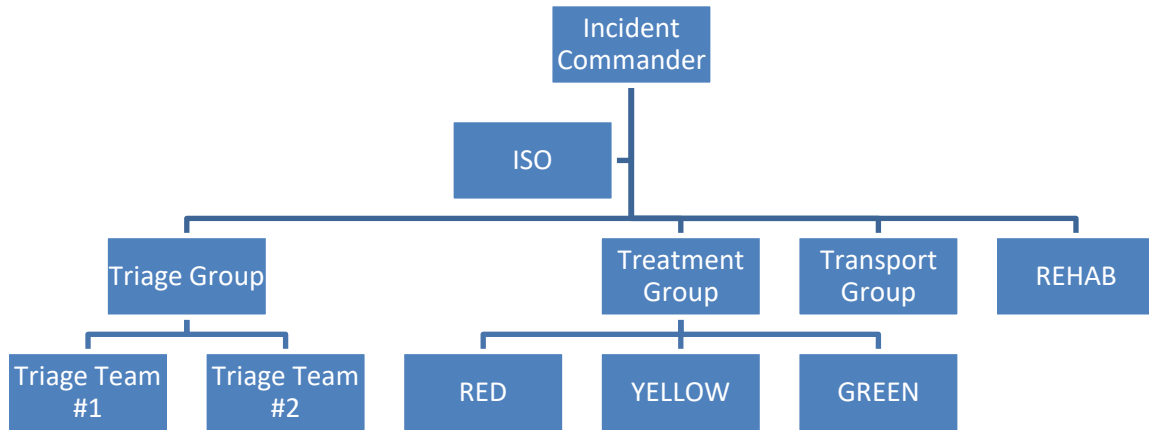
Water Rescue Level III Example



High Rise Structure Fire Example



Mass Casualty Incident Example



**Addendum 4  
DFD ICS Terminology Examples****Groups—Functional Assignments**

- Fire Attack, Search & Rescue, Ventilation, Exposure, Water Supply
- R.I.C.
- Safety
- HazMat
- Decon
- Evacuation
- Monitoring
- Entry Team (#)
- Rigging

**Divisions—Geographic Assignments**

- Building Side: A-Alpha, B-Beta, C-Charlie, D-Delta)
- Interior
- Exterior
- Division (floor #, side of structure)
- Exposure (A-Alpha, B-Beta, C-Charlie, or D-Delta)
- Roof
- River Right or River Left

**Branches—Division and/or Groups; maintain the span of control within large incidents/events**

- EMS
- HazMat
- Law Enforcement
- Fire
- Evacuation
- Air Operations—always a branch

**Single Resources—can be assigned to sections, branches, groups, and divisions. Once assigned they work for that entity**

- Unit #
- Ambulance, Engine, Truck, etc.
- Documentation Unit
- Duty Officer
- Safety Officer