

	BEDFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & RESCUE Standard Operating Guideline	
	Discipline: Operations	DATE: June 1, 2022
	Reference Number: F/R-10	
	APPROVED BY: Chief Janet Blankenship	
	SUBJECT: Incident Command & Initial Operations	

Purpose:

The purpose of this guideline is to establish standard operating guidance for Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue in accordance with NFPA 1720 Section 4.2 and NFPA 1710 Section 6.2.2 for Incident Management.

Scope:

The SOG applies to all responses under the authority of the Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue.

Definitions:

Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 *Management of Domestic Incidents* directed the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Response Plan. The National Incident Management System is adhered to by Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue, which enables organizations to work together using a common incident management framework during incidents.

Incident Management System (IMS) was established to provide an effective incident organization, defining the activities and responsibilities assigned to the incident in order to mitigate the incident efficiently. The IMS is meant to provide a system to process information and to support incident management by providing:

- Common Terminology
- A Modular Organization
- Integrated Communications
- A Command Structure
- Consolidated Action Plans
- Manageable Span of Control

All Clear: An “All Clear” will be transmitted when the primary search and secondary search of the structure have been complete.

Assigned: Resources currently committed to an assignment.

Available: Resources that have checked in at the incident but are not currently assigned.

Branch: Used at large, complex incidents when the number of Divisions and/or Groups exceeds the span-of-control. Examples: Fire Branch, EMS Branch, Law Enforcement Branch.

CAN Report: Conditions, Actions, Needs Report is a quick way to determine the situation needs on the incident.

Command: The function of directing ordering, and controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, of delegated authority.

Command Post: The physical location where primary command functions are executed.

Divisions: The grouping of resources at the organizational level that is responsible for operations within a defined geographic area. Divisions are utilized on large incidents where more than one geographic area has been assigned.

Division Supervisor: The person responsible for overseeing the operations of a division, this person provides information to the Incident Commander about activities within the division.

Geographic Designations: This system has been established to uniformly identify particular segments and exposures, which will allow responders to carry out operations in a coordinated manner.

Building Side Designations:

- Side Alpha: Designates the address side of the structure. For incidents that do not involve a structure side, Alpha will be determined by the first arriving officer.
- Side Bravo: Designates the left side of the incident, when facing side Alpha.
- Side Charlie: Designates the opposite side of Alpha, typically the rear of the structure or incident.
- Side Delta: Designates the right side of the incident when facing side Alpha.

Quadrants:

- The interior of structures are divided into quadrants starting at the left front when facing side Alpha and moving clockwise.
- Wings are broken down into quadrants to enhance safety of operations.

B	C
A	D

Group: The organizational level that is responsible for a specified functional assignment at an incident, examples: fire attack group, rescue group, salvage group, transport group, ventilation group, water supply group, etc.

Group Supervisor: The person responsible for overseeing the operations of a group. This person provides feedback to the Incident Commander about the operations of the group and is the direct link for communication between the group and the Incident Commander.

Incident Action Plan (IAP): The plan for managing the incident that indicates the strategic goals and tactical objectives that must be achieved to mitigate the incident.

Incident Commander: The individual responsible for overall management of all incident operations. The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the incident strategy, formulating or approving the Incident Action Plan and coordinating and directing all incident resources to implement the plan and meet its stated objectives.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR): An Accountability Report of all personnel on scene. This is a confirmation that each crewmember in a company is accounted for. The Division/Group Supervisor is responsible for maintaining visual, physical, or verbal contact with the crew in which they are supervising and will report a PAR at appropriate times. Incident Commanders should request a PAR if:

- There is a report of missing or trapped personnel
- There is a change from offensive to defensive fire attack
- There is a sudden event such as flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc.
- An emergency button is activated, or emergency traffic received
- At 20-minute intervals when the incident is not under control
- There is a change in the Incident Commander

Rehabilitation: An area designated to provide rehabilitation for personnel who have been relieved from active operations.

Single Resource: Individual personnel, equipment or apparatus, which act as a resource to the incident.

Staging: An area designated by the Incident Commander ideally away from the command post, where additional resources shall report and wait for an assignment.

Strike Team: Set number of resources of the same kind and type.

Span of Control: 3-7 people that one person can effectively manage.

Supervisor: Person in charge of a division or group.

Task Force: A combination of resources in support of a specific mission or operational need.

Procedure/Requirements:

Each apparatus officer or attendant in charge shall be responsible for:

- Supervision and control of personnel under his/her command.
- The safety and welfare of personnel under his/her command.
- Instituting the accountability system in accordance with SOG F/R-08.
- Reporting conditions found and progression made to the appropriate Division/Group Supervisor or the Incident Commander.
- Maintaining communications with the Incident Commander or appropriate Division/Group Supervisor and providing personnel accountability reports at appropriate intervals.

Radio communications should be established using common terminology and plain English when responding to an incident.

General Communications Expectations:

- Ensure radios are on the appropriate assigned tactical operations channel.
- Listen before transmitting to ensure that the channel is clear and available.
- Depress the push-to-talk button.
- Be clear and concise.
- Speak in clear voice relaying information in a clear manner, keeping radio traffic to a minimum.
- Use plain English. Address the name of the unit being contacted then continue with the transmission of the message. Example: Bedford, Medic 14-1 (the member on Medic 14-1 is trying to reach dispatch).

Any person on-scene of an incident shall be assigned to a specific job function or staging. Assignments can include command staff positions, operational positions, staging, assigned to rehab, etc. Personnel operating on the fire ground without an assignment are freelancing.

Upon receipt of a call to Bedford E-911 center, the Communications Officer shall dispatch the appropriate agency/agencies and tones will be activated followed by the agency number requested, the incident address, and the nature of the call. Example: Tone out with pager tones, Company 1, Medic 14-1, respond to 800 Burks Hill Road for a motor vehicle accident with injury, Ops 1.

When apparatus mark enroute, responding units will be assigned an operations tactical channel. Upon arrival of the first apparatus, a size up shall be given on the assigned operations tactical channel and a 360 will be performed and findings relayed over the ops channel. If a 360 cannot be performed, due to building size/features or need for imminent rescue efforts, this should be relayed over the radio so the next arriving unit can complete it.

Size-Up: The size-up paints the picture of the incident and conditions found and shall include:

- A brief description of the incident scene (structure fire incidents should include: number of stories, construction type, occupancy type, and smoke/fire conditions). MVCs should include number of vehicles involved, extent/type of damage, and number/condition of patients if known
- Obvious safety concerns
- Access/egress issues

When a person with adequate knowledge, skills, and abilities arrives on-scene, an update can be given to paint a more thorough picture and declare the operational strategies. This person will assume Command and identify an adequate location for a Command Post. The size-up information shall be repeated by the Communications Officer over the appropriate tactical operations channel.

Initial Command Procedure: If the first unit officer must remain with the crew to promote safe and effective operations, he/she may establish Working Command and make assignments for other responding units. When another officer arrives on-scene, Command should be passed to that individual and formal Incident Command established for remaining duration of the incident.

In order to give an adequate size-up, it is important for the Incident Commander to view all sides of the incident. The above diagram demonstrates the limited view seen from the street. In order to view Side C of the structure, it is imperative that a walk around of the incident be complete upon arrival of the person establishing Incident Command.

The Incident Commander should have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage the incident. The IC will monitor the safety, accountability, and operations of personnel throughout the duration of the incident. Accountability system will be used to track personnel and units on single and multi-company incidents in accordance with SOG# FR-08.

The functions of the Incident Commander include but are not limited to:

- Assuming and announcing Command and establishing a Command Post.
- Implementing the Incident Management System.
- Evaluating the scene and giving size-up information over the assigned tactical operations channel.
- Initiate, maintain, and control the communication process and resources.
- Maintains accountability of personnel.
- Identify the overall strategy, develop an action plan, and assign personnel to the tactical operations objectives.
- Develop an Incident Management System.
- Continually update the E-911 Center of conditions.
- Review, evaluate, and revise the Incident Action Plan.
- Provide for the continuity, transfer, and termination of the Command.

Tactical assignments will be given by the Incident Commander to personnel responding which could include command staff assignments, operational assignments, and assignments to staging. Tactical assignments should be based on the risk assessment with consideration given for life safety, risk versus benefit, property conservation, and incident stabilization. Additional individual resources or full company responses can be requested by the Incident Commander and should be communicated through the dispatch center.

The Incident Commander may assign additional personnel to oversee specific command functions within the Incident Management System in accordance with the needs of the incident. The Command Staff positions that can be assigned include:

- Safety Officer-Monitors incident operations and advises the IC on all matters related to operational safety.
- Liaison Officer-Point of contact for other agencies and private sector organizations involved in incident.
- Public Information Officer-Interfaces with the public and media with incident-related information.

The Incident Commander may also assign personnel to functional aspects of the incident which include:

- Operations Section Chief-Responsible for all activities that reduce immediate hazard, save lives and property, and establishes situational control. Directs the tactical operations to meet the strategic goals and tactical objectives.
- Planning Section Chief-Responsible for collecting, documenting, evaluation and disseminating the incident situational information and intelligence to the Incident Commander.
- Logistics Section Chief-Responsible for all support requirements needed to facilitate effective and efficient management to include ordering resources from off-incident locations. There are two Branches that can be formed under Logistics which are Support Branch and Logistics Branch.
- Finance/Administration Section Chief-Established when the agencies involved require finance and other administrative support services.

Various strategies can be utilized during an incident and are not limited to the ones indicated here. Strategies that are implemented should be communicated to all personnel responding and assigned on the assigned operational tactical channel.

- Investigating-A strategy used to further investigate an incident. All units except for the first arriving apparatus shall stay manned and stage away from the scene so that units can move into position as needs are identified.
- Rescue-Remove endangered occupants to an area outside the hazard zone to treat the injuries.
- Incident Control-Stabilization of the incident and providing for life safety.
- Property Conservation-Conserving the property and prevent further loss.
- Offensive-Selection of an offensive mode involves taking direct action to mitigate the problem. This means personnel have selected to utilize an aggressive interior attack by one or more companies. This is often a strategy selected when initial crews believe there is a chance that occupants may be inside the IDLH environment and conditions may be survivable.
- Defensive-The defensive mode is chosen to isolate or stabilize an incident to reduce the possibility of it getting worse. This strategy is used when risk outweighs benefits, this may mean sacrificing the building/structure to promote the safety of personnel.
- A defensive strategy should be initiated when fire conditions prevent an interior attack:
 - Unstable structure without civilian rescue impacts
 - Unsafe for personnel entry
 - Fire is beyond control of traditional hand lines

The Incident Commander shall use “Benchmarks” to indicate when certain tactical priorities/functions have been completed and the operation can move forward to the next priority. Benchmarks include:

- “All Clear”-The primary search and secondary search have been complete, and the structure cleared of occupants.
- “Under Control”-The forward progress of the incident has been controlled or stopped.
- “Loss Stopped”-Property conservation is complete. No further damage to the structure or environment is anticipated.

When incidents are prolonged, extensive or when a person with knowledge, skills, and abilities to handle the incident arrives on scene, it may be necessary to transfer command. The following guideline should be used to transfer Command:

The transfer of command is done by communicating with the person being relieved, preferable through a face-to-face briefing. The person being relieved shall brief the officer assuming Command with the following information:

- The Incident Condition
- The Incident Action Plan
- Progress toward completing tactical operations
- Safety Considerations
- Deployment and assignment of operating companies and personnel and length of time
- Appraisal of needs for additional resources
- Review the Tactical/IMS Worksheet or Command Board-this provides the most effective framework for Command transfer as it outlines the location and status of personnel and resources in a standard format (example: Attachment A).

The person transferring Command will announce the transfer of Command and the location of the Command Post, so that all personnel are made aware of the transfer. After the transfer of command is complete, the IC will be responsible for performing a PAR count of all committed resources, in accordance with SOG F/R-08.

Enforcement

It is the responsibility of each agency under the direction of Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue to implement and enforce the policy to promote safe operations on any incident.

Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue Basic ICS Worksheet

BEDFORD COUNTY



Upon arrival (Check as complete)

Size-up	
Working Fire or Investigation	
Walk-Around Conditions, Actions, Needs	
Command Post Established	
Physical Location: _____	Command
Offensive or Defensive	

Initial Responding Resources

W- ____ R- ____ P- ____ L- ____ T- ____
 Boat- ____ Brush- ____ Co- ____ M- ____
 Law Enforcement- ____

Initial Assignments

PAR:

Safety/ Accountability: _____
 Command Assistant: _____
 2-out/ RIT: _____ 2nd egress: _____
 Water Supply: _____
 Search/Rescue Group: _____
 Attack Recon: _____
 Ventilation Group: _____
 Exposure Group: _____
 Medical Group: _____
 Utility Control: _____

Exposure B	Quad B	Quad C
Exposure A	Quad A	Quad D

Address Side A
Exposure A

Additional Responding Resources

(Utilize unit number for identification)

E- ____ W- ____ R- ____ P- ____ L- ____ T- ____
 Co- ____ M- ____ Tanker Taskforce- ____ LE- ____
 Rehab- ____ SOC- ____ Haz-Mat- ____
 Investigation- ____ Air Unit- ____
 Utility Company- ____ VDOT- ____ BRWA- ____
 Other- ____

Additional Assignments

Backup Water Supply: _____

 Staging: _____

Radio Channels:

Operations:	
Water Supply:	

PAR Counts

20 Minute	
40 Minute	
60 Minute	
80 Minute	
100 Minute	

Benchmarks

Walk Around Complete	
Attack Lines Established	
Initial Search All Clear	
Secondary Search All Clear	
Under Control	
Loss Stopped	
Demobilizing Units	