General ICS Overview Part 1

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Course Outline

- Part 1:Terminology and Concepts
  - Incident Command System
  - Command/General Staff Overview
  - Expanding Incidents
- Part 2: Command and General Staff Positions/Responsibilities

Incident Command System

Terminology and Concepts

What Is an Incident?

▶ An incident is . . .

. . . an occurrence, caused by either human or natural phenomena, that requires response actions to prevent or minimize loss of life, or damage to property and/or the environment.

. . . a planned event which requires structure for organization and communication.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The following characteristics are the foundation of incident command and coordination under NIMS and contribute to the strength and efficiency of the overall system:

- Common Terminology

- Management by Objectives

- Manageable Span of Control

- Comprehensive Resource Management

- Establishment and Transfer of Command

- Chain of Command and Unity of Command

- Dispatch/Deployment

- Modular Organization

- Incident Action Planning

- Incident Facilities and Locations

- Integrated Communications

- Unified Command

- Accountability

- Information and Intelligence Management

What Is ICS?

- The Incident Command System:

  - Is a component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) assisting with 'Command and Coordination' of incidents

  - Is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept.

  - Allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

ICS Purposes

- Using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:

  - The safety of responders and others.

  - The achievement of tactical objectives.

  - The efficient use of resources.

Standardization: Common Terminology

▶ Using common terminology helps to define:

 ▶ Organizational functions.

 ▶ Incident facilities.

 ▶ Resource descriptions.

 ▶ Position titles.

Use of Position Titles

- Using specific ICS position titles:
  - Provides a common standard for performance expectations.
  - Helps to ensure that qualified individuals fill positions.
  - Standardizes communication.
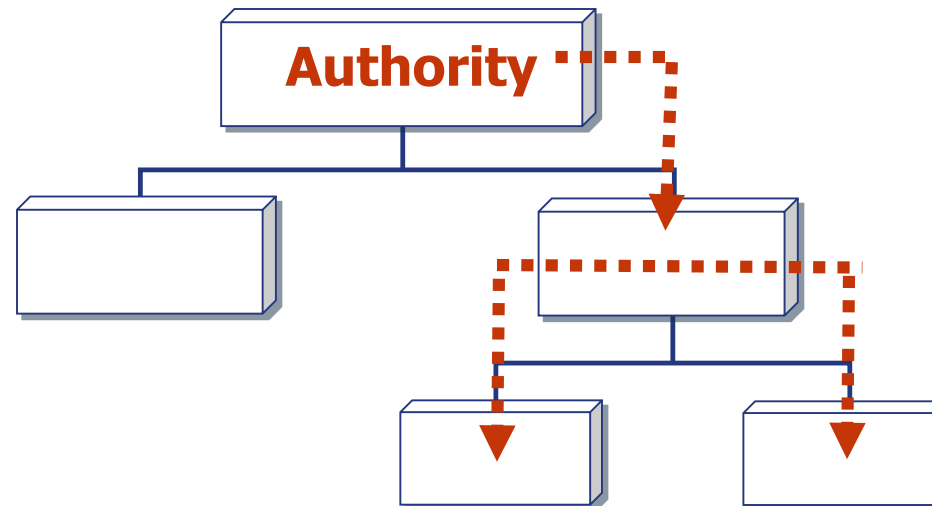 - Describes the responsibilities of the position.

ICS Supervisory Position Titles

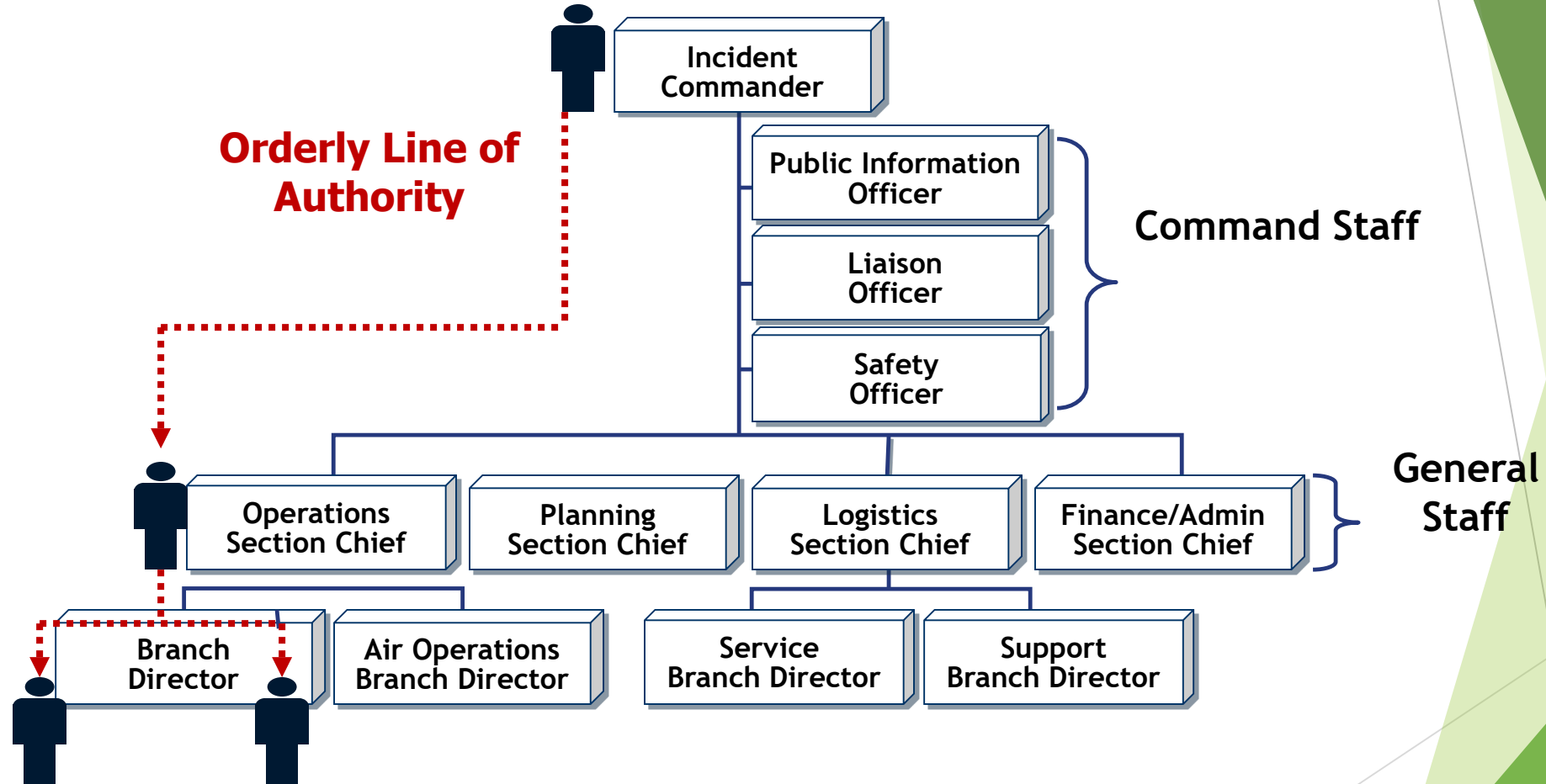Titles for all ICS supervisory levels are shown in the table below.

Organizational Level	Title	Support Position
Incident Command	Incident Commander	Deputy
Command Staff	Officer	Assistant
General Staff (Section)	Chief	Deputy
Branch	Director	Deputy
Division/Group	Supervisor	N/A
Unit	Leader	Manager
Strike Team/Task Force	Leader	Single Resource Boss

Chain of Command

Chain of command is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the incident management organization.

Authority

Chain of Command

Orderly Line of Authority

Incident Commander

Public Information Officer

Liaison Officer

Safety Officer

Command Staff

Operations Section Chief

Planning Section Chief

Logistics Section Chief

Finance/Admin Section Chief

General Staff

Branch Director

Air Operations Branch Director

Service Branch Director

Support Branch Director

Unity of Command

Under Unity of Command, personnel:

- ▶ Report to only <u>one</u> supervisor.

- ▶ Receive work assignments only from their supervisors.

**Don't confuse UNITY of command
with UNIFIED Command!**

Unified Command

Unified Command:

▶ Enables all responsible agencies to manage an incident together by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.

▶ Allows Incident Commanders to make joint decisions by establishing a single command structure.

▶ Maintains unity of command. Each employee only reports to one supervisor.

Unified Command

Fire Agency   Law Agency   EMS Agency

Operations Section Chief

Resources

Formal Communication
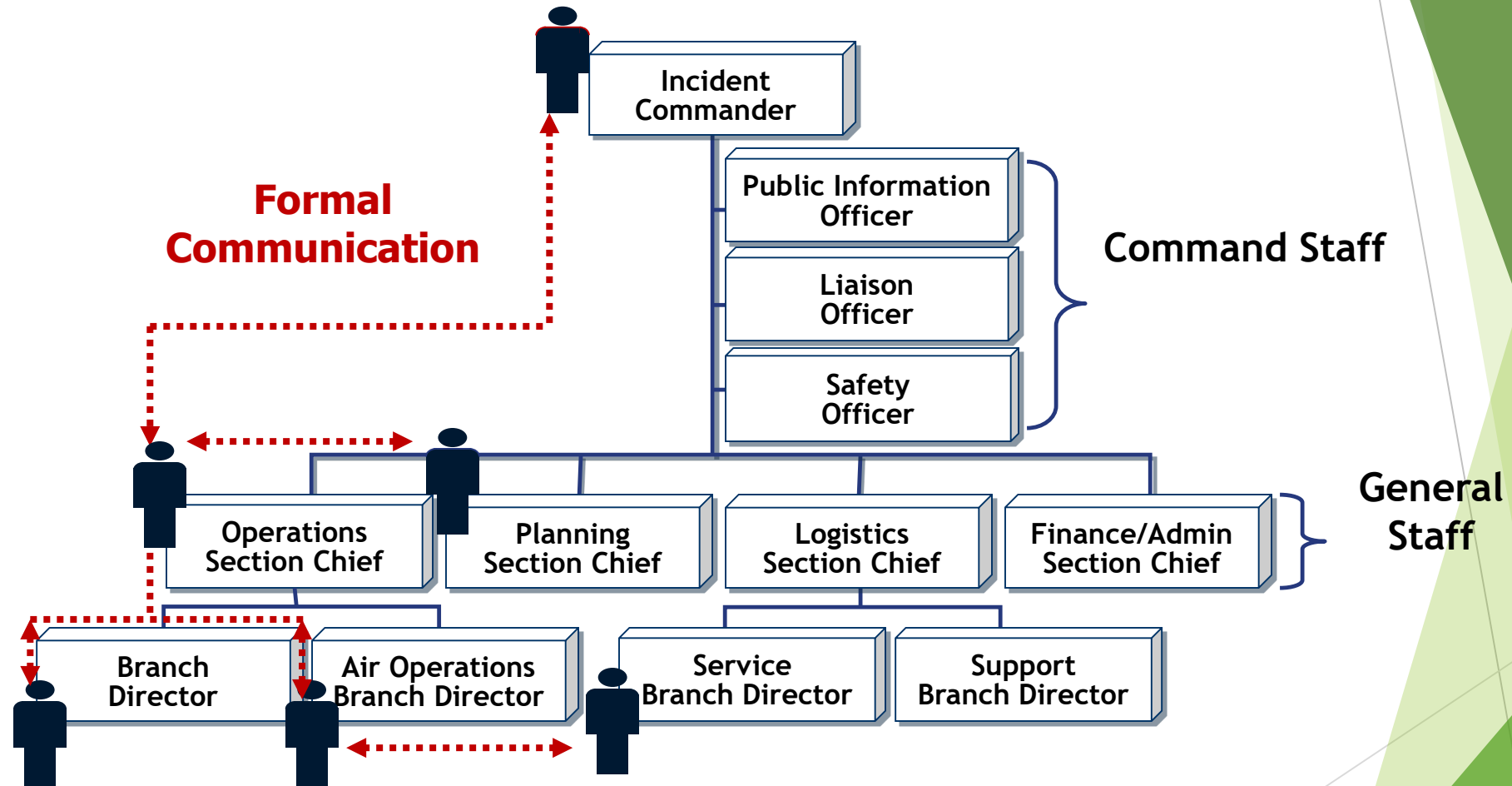
When To Use Formal Communication

Use formal communication when:

- ▶ Receiving and giving work assignments.

- ▶ Requesting support or additional resources.

- ▶ Reporting progress of assigned tasks.

Informal Communication

- Is used to exchange incident or event information only.
- Is NOT used for:
  - Formal requests for additional resources.
  - Tasking work assignments.

Within the ICS organization, critical information must flow freely!

Informal Communication: Examples

▶ The Food Unit Leader may directly contact the Resources Unit Leader to determine the number of persons requiring feeding.

▶ The Cost Unit Leader may directly discuss and share information on alternative strategies with the Planning Section Chief.

Planning Section

Logistics Section

Resources Unit

Food Unit

Planning Section

Finance/Admin Section

Cost Unit
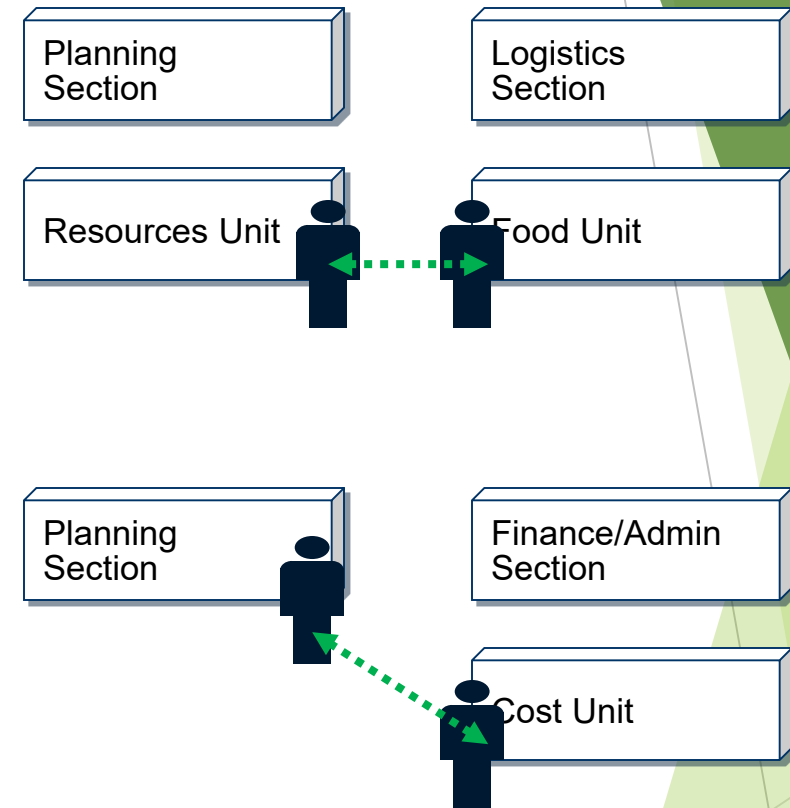
Integrated Communications

Incident communications are facilitated through:

- ▶ The development and use of a common communications plan.
- ▶ The interoperability of communication equipment, procedures, and systems.

Before an incident, it is critical to develop an integrated voice and data communications system (equipment, systems, and protocols).

Modular Organization

▶ Develops in a top-down, modular fashion.

▶ Is based on the hazard environment created by the incident.

▶ Is based on the size and complexity of the incident.

    ▶ Incident objectives determine the organizational size.

    ▶ Only functions/positions that are necessary will be filled.

   ▶ Each element must have a person in charge.
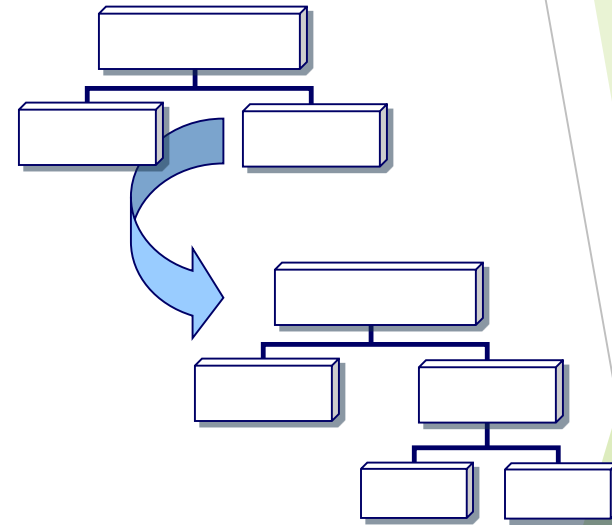
ICS Organization

In the ICS organization:

- There is no correlation with the administrative structure of any other agency or jurisdiction. This organization's uniqueness helps to avoid confusion over different position titles and organizational structures.

- Someone who serves as a chief every day may not hold that title when deployed under an ICS structure.

Manageable Span of Control

Span of control:

- ▶ Pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident.

- ▶ Is key to effective and efficient incident management.
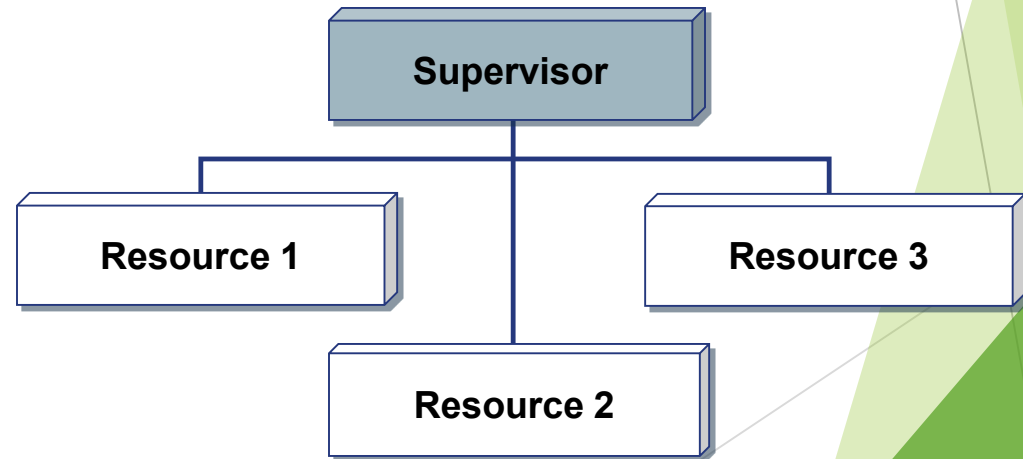
Span of Control Considerations
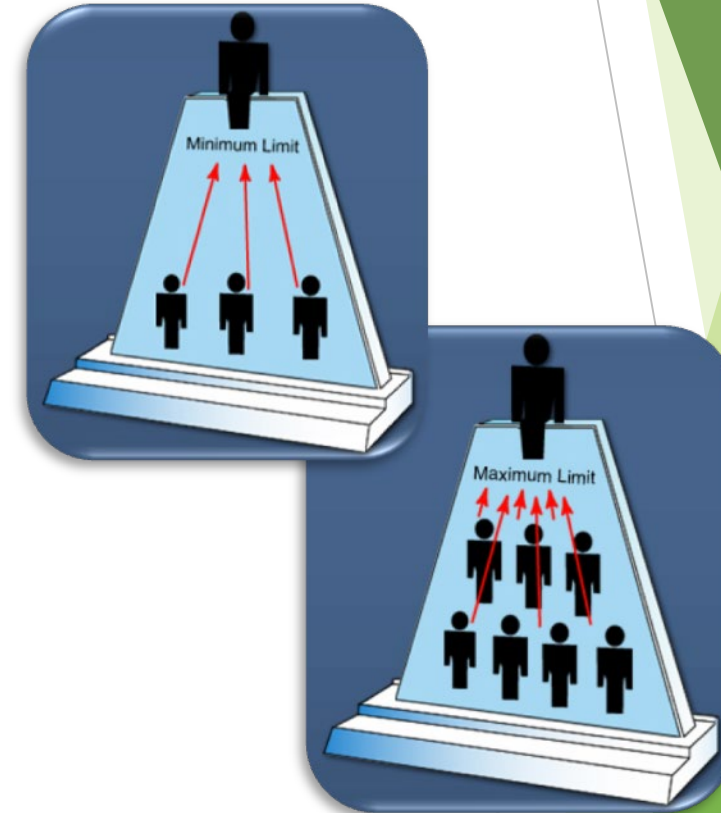
Span of control considerations are influenced by the:

- ▶ Type of incident.

- ▶ Nature of the task.

- ▶ Hazards and safety factors.

- ▶ Distances between personnel and resources.

ICS Management: Span of Control

ICS span of control for any supervisor:

- Is between 3 and 7 subordinates.
- Optimally does not exceed 5 subordinates.

Things To Avoid

▶ Do not combine ICS positions to save on staffing. Individuals may supervise multiple units, but the positions should remain distinct.

▶ Do not use nonstandard titles or hybrid positions. These titles may be unrecognizable to assisting or cooperating personnel.

Bob

Supply and Ground Support Unit

Bob

Supply Unit

Ground Support Unit
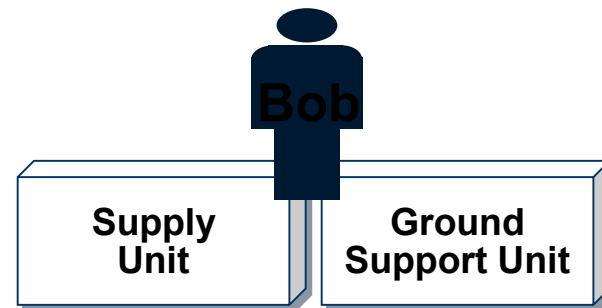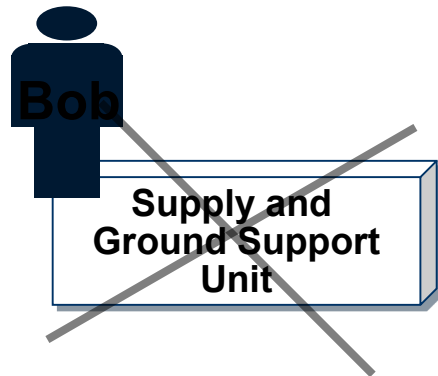
Accountability

The following principles must be adhered to:

- **Check-In.** All responders must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.

- **Incident Action Plan.** Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the IAP.

- **Unity of Command.** Each individual will be assigned to only one supervisor.

- **Span of Control.** Supervisors must be able to adequately supervise and control their subordinates, as well as communicate with and manage all resources under their supervision.

- **Resource Tracking.** Supervisors must record and report resource status changes as they occur.
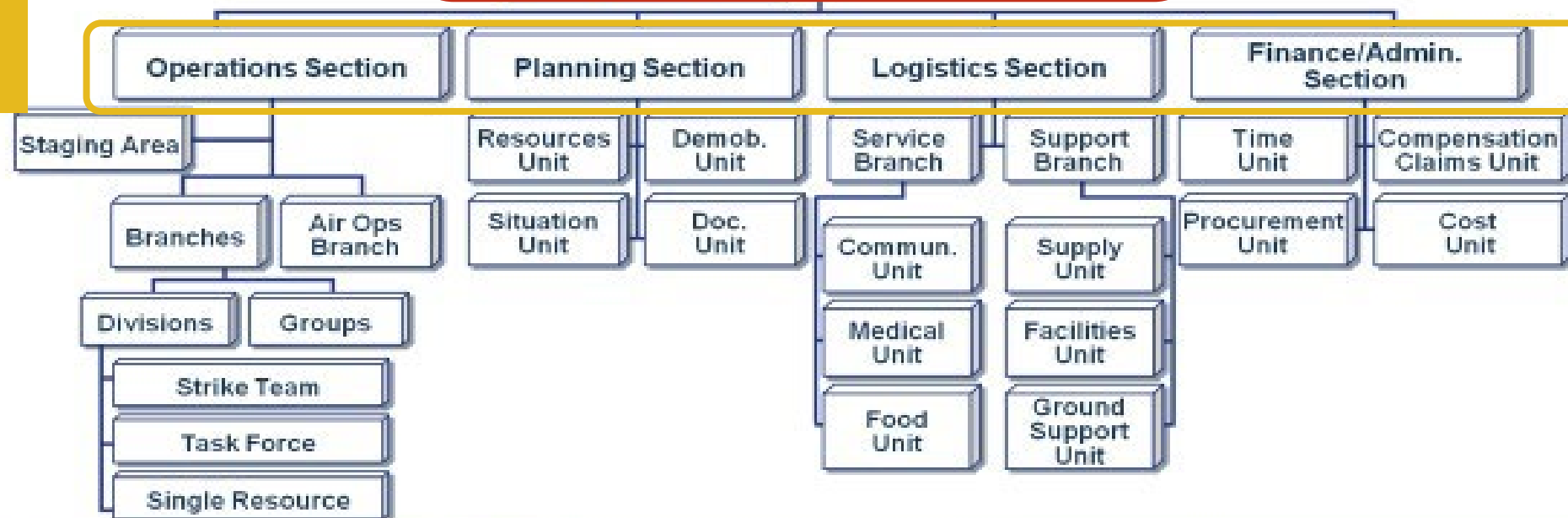
Command and General Staff Overview

Terminology and Concepts

ICS Organizational Components

COMMAND STAFF

GENERAL STAFF

Visual 2.21

Incident Commander/ Command Staff

▶ Unified Command – commonly used when incident involves multiple agencies or authorities

▶ Command Staff

    ▶ Public Information Officer

    ▶ Liaison Officer

    ▶ Safety Officer

General Staff

- Comprised of 4 Sections
  - Operations Section
    - Tasked with performing actions during an incident; "Boots on the Ground"
  - Planning Section
    - Tracks and directs operations (surveillance, depopulation, disposal, tracing, laboratory reports, permits) and resources
  - Logistics Section
    - Tasked with ensuring health/well-being of respondents and getting resources
  - Finance/Admin Section
    - Tasked with 'paying' for the incident and enforcing administrative processes, such as time/attendance, leave, contracts

Expanding Incidents

Terminology and Concepts

Expanding Incidents

Expanding incidents may add supervisory layers to the organizational structure as needed.

Command

Incident Commander

Sections

Operations Section Chief

Branches

Units

A   B

Divisions
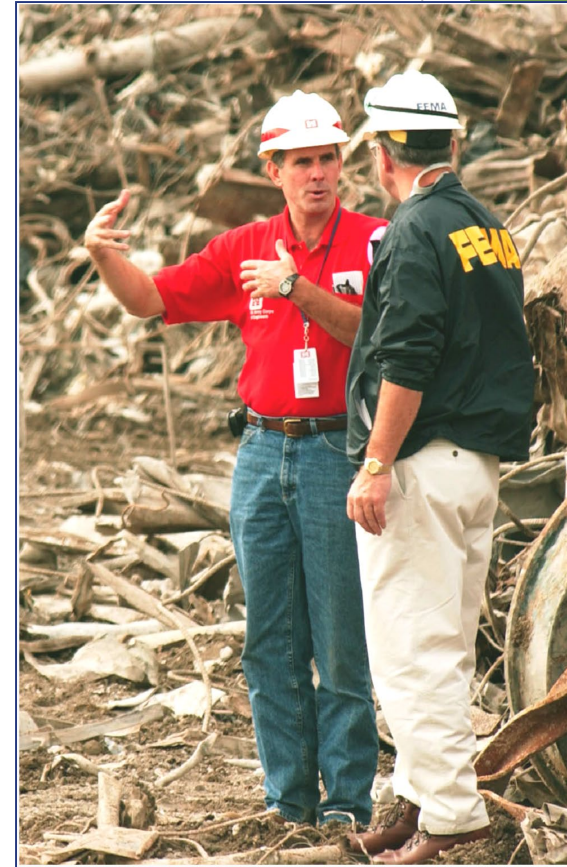
Groups

Single Resources

Authority

- **Authority** is . . .

  . . . a right or obligation to act on behalf of a department, agency, or jurisdiction.

Scope of Authority

An Incident Commander's scope of authority is derived:

- ▶ From existing laws and agency policies and procedures, and/or

- ▶ Through a delegation of authority from the agency administrator or elected official.

Delegation of Authority

▶ Grants authority to carry out specific functions.

▶ Issued by chief elected official, chief executive officer, or agency administrator in writing or verbally.

▶ Allows the Incident Commander to assume command.

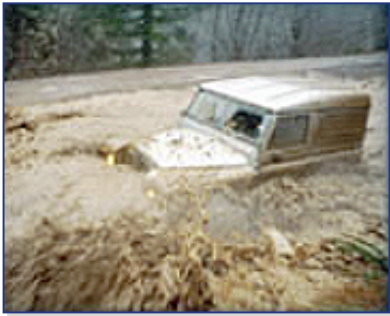▶ Does NOT relieve the granting authority of the ultimate responsibility for the incident.

Mayor

Incident Commander

Delegation of Authority: When Not Needed

A delegation of authority may not be required if the Incident Commander is acting within his or her existing authorities.

An emergency manager may already have the authority to deploy response resources to a small flash flood.

A fire chief probably has the authority (as part of the job description) to serve as an Incident Commander at a structure fire.

Delegation of Authority: When Needed

- ▶ If the incident is outside the Incident Commander's home jurisdiction.

- ▶ When the incident scope is complex or beyond existing authorities.

- ▶ If required by law or procedures.

Delegation of Authority: Elements

- Should include:
  - Legal authorities and restrictions.
  - Financial authorities and restrictions.
  - Reporting requirements.
  - Demographic issues.
  - Political implications.
  - Agency or jurisdictional priorities.
  - Plan for public information management.
  - Process for communications.
  - Plan for ongoing incident evaluation.

Delegation of Authority
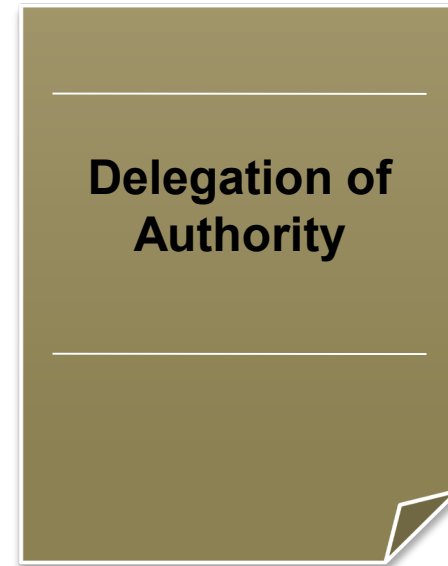
Implementing Authorities

Within his or her scope of authority, the Incident Commander establishes incident objectives, then determines strategies, resources, and ICS structure.

Incident Commander → **Incident Objectives** → **Strategies**, **Resources**, **ICS Structure**
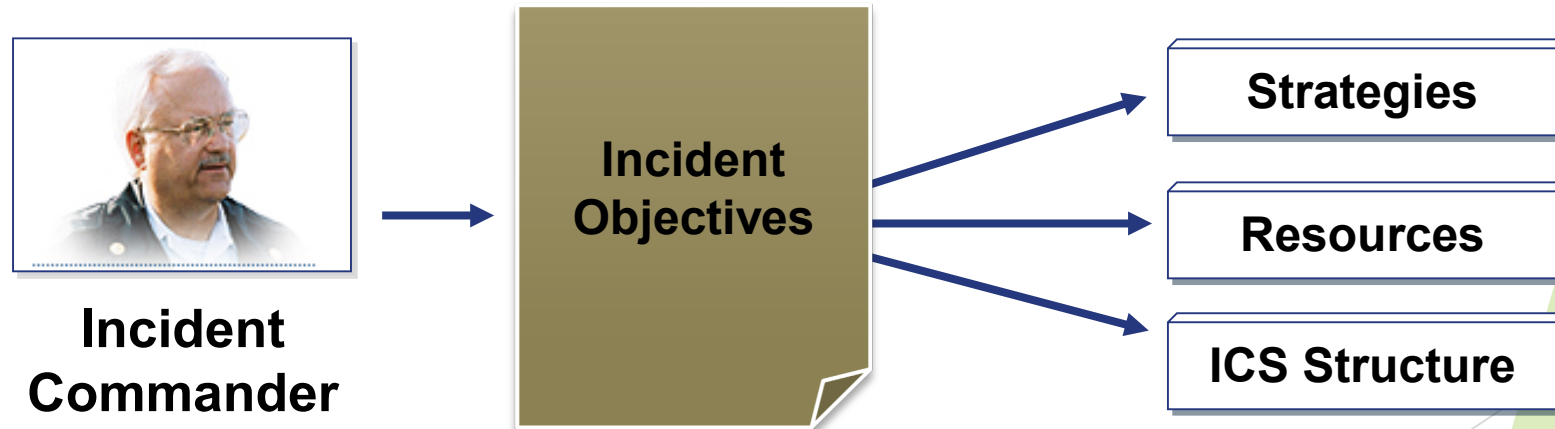
Management by Objectives

- ICS is managed by objectives.

- Objectives are communicated throughout the entire ICS organization through the incident planning process.

Management by Objectives:

▶ The steps for establishing incident objectives include:

- ▶ Step 1: Understand agency policy and direction.

- ▶ Step 2: Assess incident situation.

- ▶ Step 3: Establish incident objectives.

- ▶ Step 4: Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.

- ▶ Step 5: Perform tactical direction.

- ▶ Step 6: Provide necessary follow-up.

Overall Priorities

Incident objectives are established based on the following priorities:

▶ **#1:** Life Safety

▶ **#2:** Incident Stabilization

▶ **#3:** Property Preservation

Initial Response: Size-Up

- The first responder to arrive must assume command and size up the situation by determining:
  - The nature and magnitude of the incident.
  - Hazards and safety concerns:
    - Hazards facing response personnel and the public
    - Evacuation and warnings
    - Injuries and casualties
    - Need to secure and isolate the area
  - Initial priorities and immediate resource requirements.
  - The location of the Incident Command Post and Staging Area.
  - Entrance and exit routes for responders.

Changing Incident Commanders

Command may change to meet the needs of the incident when incidents:

- Expand or contract.

- Change in jurisdiction or discipline.

- Become more or less complex.

Transfer of Command

- Moves the responsibility for incident command from one Incident Commander to another.

- Must include a transfer of command briefing (which may be oral, written, or both).

- Transfer of command occurs when:

  - A more qualified person assumes command.

  - The incident situation changes over time, resulting in a legal requirement to change command.

  - There is normal turnover of personnel on extended incidents.

  - The incident response is concluded and responsibility is transferred to the home agency.

Questions?

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