



Sheridan Police Department  
Policies and Procedures  
21.2 Replaces 407.3  
Chapter 21 – Emergency Operations  
Section 2 – Incident Command System

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Signature:

Incident command system (ICS) is an on scene management tool used to establish chain of command and resource allocation to resolve situations.

#### Definitions

##### Incident -

An occurrence or event, either human caused or natural phenomena, that requires action by emergency service personnel, to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and natural resources and the environment.

##### Incident Command System (ICS) -

ICS is the model for command, control, and coordination of a response. It provides a means to coordinate the response efforts toward mitigation of an incident.

##### National Incident Management System (NIMS) -

NIMS provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, and local governmental agencies to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare, prevent, respond to, and recover from incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

##### Unified Command (UC) -

An important element in multijurisdictional or multi-agency incident management. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan, and interact effectively.

##### Incident Action Plan (IAP) -

An IAP includes the overall incident objectives and strategies established by the incident commander or the unified command. The IAP addresses tactical objectives and support activities for one operational period. ICS forms are used when developing a written IAP. When complete, the incident action plan will have a number of attachments. Command is encouraged to maintain two (2) operational plans, with the second plan providing direction in the event the situation should escalate.

Operational Period -

The time scheduled for executing a given set of operational actions, as specified in the incident action plan. Operational periods can be of various lengths, although they are commonly set at twelve (12) and twenty-four (24) hours.

### **21.2.1 Incident Command Uses**

- A. The Sheridan Police Department will operate under the incident command system when dealing with the following:
  - 1. Large scale emergency situations involving personnel from multiple bureaus or divisions of the department;
  - 2. Situations where the event is expected to last longer than twenty-four (24) hours;
  - 3. Situations requiring extensive coordination with outside agencies; and
  - 4. Other situations where ICS would prove beneficial.
- B. ICS can be utilized in any situation that a member of the Sheridan Police Department may encounter.

### **21.2.2 ICS Structure**

An ICS organization is comprised of six (6) major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration, and intelligence.

#### **A. Incident Command**

The incident commander is responsible for all incident or event activities. Although other functions may be left unfilled in the command area, there will always be an incident commander. Command staff positions under the incident commander include the public information officer, safety officer, and liaison officer. At a minimum, an incident commander will approve objectives and ensure the following activities occur as needed:

- 1. Activation of the incident command system:

An on-scene member, supervisor, or command officer may formally activate the ICS at major emergencies and/or multi-agency response incidents. The incident commander will assign personnel to each of the primary elements as needed to conduct the operation. The incident commander exercises all control for the incident and directs the efforts of the personnel in charge of each of the following functions: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration.
- 2. Establishment of a command post:

An on-scene supervisor will be responsible for establishing the initial command post. Proximity to the scene, safety, and facilities should be taken into consideration when designating a command post.
- 3. Notification and mobilization of additional personnel:

The incident commander will request additional personnel as needed through the command structure. On-duty members will be utilized first. Off-duty members will be notified and mobilized until staffing is sufficient to adequately respond to the situation. When the size or scope of an incident overwhelms personnel resources, outside agency assistance may be needed.
- 4. Determine additional support and resources needed from outside agencies and initiate requests:

As needed and appropriate, other law enforcement agencies having concurrent jurisdiction (see section 3.2.4) will be contacted to provide additional support and resources. Law enforcement agencies beyond this jurisdiction may be requested per mutual aid agreements (see section 3.2.5).

5. Establish staging areas:  
The incident commander will be responsible for establishing a staging area. The staging area will be the location where resources will be stored and personnel will initially report during deployment to the incident. Distances from the impacted area, overall safety of arriving personnel, and parking should be taken into consideration when designating a staging area.
6. Provide public information and media relations:  
The incident commander will approve media releases pertaining to the incident. When a response involves a unified command structure, media releases will be approved by the unified command. A public information officer will be assigned to perform these duties. Information pertaining to an emergency/disaster will be released in a manner consistent with section 23.1.4.
7. Maintain the safety of all affected personnel to the highest degree practical:  
A safety officer will be designated at incidents where ICS is activated. The safety officer will have the authority to bypass the chain of command to correct unsafe acts and remove persons from imminent danger. The safety officer will be responsible for:
  - a. Monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations;
  - b. Developing measures for ensuring personnel safety;
  - c. Keeping the incident commander informed of present or potential hazards;
  - d. Offering suggestions and strategies for minimizing risks;
  - e. Reviewing plans for safety considerations with the incident commander; and
  - f. Establishing a re-hab center as needed.
8. Post incident review:  
The incident commander should meet with all personnel involved in the incident at a scheduled time and place at the conclusion of the incident, or when practical, to discuss the events that took place. Personnel are encouraged to speak of events that went well and address areas needing improvement.
9. Prepare a documented after action report:  
Within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of department involvement in an incident, the incident commander, with assistance from other designees, will complete a detailed after action report (AAR). The AAR should serve as a lessons-learned guide for responses to similar incidents in the future. After action reports will be completed for the following situations:
  - a. Hostage/barricaded persons;
  - b. Natural disasters;
  - c. Manmade disasters;
  - d. Civil disturbances; and
  - e. Special events.
10. The after action report will include:
  - a. A review of positive performance and areas requiring improvement;
  - b. The number of personnel involved;
  - c. A summary of the incident;

- d. Significant actions taken;
- e. Problems encountered;
- f. Actions taken to address problems;
- g. Damage to department equipment;
- h. A summary of expended supplies;
- i. A list of damages to civilian property that resulted from agency action;
- j. A list of all injuries or deaths sustained by agency and civilian personnel;
- k. Significant or heroic actions taken by department, other agency, or civilian personnel; and
- l. Limiting factors or obstacles to the response of department personnel.

## B. Operations

The operations section is responsible for directing tactical actions to meet incident objectives. Divisions and groups may be established within the operations section when the number of resources exceeds the operations chief's manageable span of control. Divisions describe physical or geographical areas of operation within the incident area. Groups define functional areas of operation for the incident such as rescue, fire, or law enforcement. Operations function personnel will address the following activities, when necessary:

1. Establish perimeters:  
The incident commander will ensure both an inner and outer perimeter is established. Support personnel will not be allowed to operate inside the inner perimeter until the incident is resolved. The incident commander will call for additional members and set an outer perimeter to keep bystanders and other unauthorized personnel at a safe distance from the incident.
2. Conduct evacuations:  
The evacuation of persons from areas varies from small-scale to large-scale incidents, depending on the situation and a variety of other factors. The incident commander or unified command will initiate evacuation orders. Prior to ordering an evacuation, the incident commander or unified command may seek input from responders at the scene or personnel from other involved agencies.
3. Maintain command post and scene security:  
Operations section personnel will maintain security of the command post and the incident scene. As an incident evolves, maintaining an appropriate level of security at the command post and incident scene may require additional personnel and other resources (i.e. - barricades, traffic cones, crime scene tape, etc.).
4. Provide for detainee transportation and processing:  
Detainees will be transported, processed, and managed according to the procedures contained in section 10.1.
5. Determine arrangements for detainee confinement:  
Arrangements for detainee confinement, particularly when mass arrests are possible, will be coordinated with the sheriff's office.
6. Traffic direction and control:  
The department will be responsible for ensuring adequate personnel are available to address traffic direction and control concerns related to emergency/disaster incidents.

## C. Planning

The planning section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating tactical information pertaining to an incident. Planning section personnel maintain information and

intelligence on the current and forecasted situation, as well as the status of resources assigned to the incident. Planning section personnel will:

1. Prepare a documented incident action plan (IAP):  
Preparation of the IAP consists of the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of all operational information concerning the incident. The IAP should contain the overall strategy for responding to the incident including specific tactical actions and supporting information for an operational period. An IAP must contain a clear statement of objectives. Participation from all levels of the command structure is required to develop a comprehensive IAP. ICS forms, available at [www.fs.fed.us/fire/planning/nist/ics\\_forms.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/planning/nist/ics_forms.htm), should be used to develop the IAP.
2. Gather and disseminate information and intelligence:
  - a. Responding employees will obtain as much information as possible related to the incident. This information will help determine resources necessary to properly handle the incident, including precautionary measures to be taken by responding personnel. Information gathered will be forwarded to the incident commander for evaluation.
  - b. The incident commander will approve dissemination of information and intelligence related to the incident. Disseminated information and intelligence will be considered when developing IAPs for future operational periods.
3. Plan post-incident demobilization:  
To ensure orderly withdrawal of resources committed to an incident response, a demobilization plan will be prepared and executed. The demobilization plan will include:
  - a. A timetable for orderly withdrawal of personnel;
  - b. Employee time accounting information specific to the incident;
  - c. Accountability procedures for expended supplies;
  - d. Additional procedures for the documentation of damaged or destroyed equipment; and
  - e. Specific reimbursement information related to expenses incurred by the employee during the incident response.

#### D. Logistics

The logistics section meets all support needs for the incident, including the ordering of resources. The logistics section will address the following needs:

1. Communications:  
Multi jurisdictional and multi-agency responses will require interoperable communications. Interoperable radio communications will be supplemented through the use of cellular telephones and in-car computers. Communications equipment in the mobile command unit may be used to further optimize interoperable communications during incident responses.
2. Transportation:  
Department employees responding to emergencies, disasters, and other critical incidents will usually respond in their assigned vehicles. Special purpose vehicles may be required during incident responses.
3. Medical support:  
Department members may be required to provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first responder emergency medical treatment during an incident response.

Emergency medical service personnel and fire department medical personnel will provide primary patient care during an emergency/disaster incident.

4. Expendable Supplies:

Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used to protect against infectious or contagious diseases as outlined in section 7.2. PPE will be used during incident responses to safeguard against contact with body fluids. The budget and procurement division will maintain a sufficient inventory of PPE items and other supplies to enable timely replenishment of expended resources.

5. Specialized or technical teams and equipment needs:

Specialized teams to supplement the department response (i.e. - search and rescue units, emergency medical teams, tactical team, K-9 teams and fire units), should be requested as soon as possible. Specialized teams will determine if additional specialized equipment is needed during their response to incidents. The logistics section will provide assistance to specialized units to facilitate the procurement and delivery of equipment.

6. Facilities, equipment maintenance, lodging, and food service for incident personnel:

The logistics section will provide support for facilities used during an incident response (i.e. - command posts, staging areas, lodging, and maintenance areas). The logistics section will facilitate maintenance of vehicles and other equipment used during an incident response and will procure fuel used in vehicles and generators. The logistics section will also make arrangements to provide meals for personnel responding to an emergency/disaster incident.

E. Finance/Administration

The finance/administration section is responsible for keeping track of incident-related costs. At a minimum, the finance/administration section will perform the following tasks:

1. Ensure the recording of time worked by personnel assigned to the incident:

Non-exempt department employees will note time worked during an emergency/disaster response on their time sheets.

2. Procuring additional resources in conjunction with the logistics section:

The finance/administration section will work in conjunction with the logistics section to procure durable and expendable resources. Emergency procurements will be made in accordance with section 27.2.1.

3. Record expenses associated with the incident:

Expenses related to the response will be properly documented and invoices will be promptly submitted to the finance/administration section.

4. Document injuries and liability issues:

Injuries sustained to on-duty employees during an incident response will be promptly documented according to the procedures contained in section 7.1.2.

F. Intelligence

Traditionally, information and intelligence functions are located in the planning section; however, in exceptional situations or larger scale incidents, the incident commander may assign information and intelligence functions to other parts of the ICS organization. The information and intelligence function may be organized in one of the following ways:

1. As a separate command staff section:

The information and intelligence function may be most appropriately positioned as a separate command staff section when an incident is heavily influenced by intelligence

factors or when there is a need to manage and/or analyze a large volume of classified or highly sensitive information or intelligence. A response to a terrorist incident would be an example where the information and intelligence function would be better served as a separate command staff section.

2. Within the command staff:

Assigning the information and intelligence function within the command staff may be most appropriate in responses to smaller incidents with little need for tactical or classified intelligence.

3. Within the planning section:

Placing the information and intelligence function within the planning section would be most appropriate when information needs to be quickly available and does not involve classified information.

4. As a branch in the operations section:

Assigning the information and intelligence function as a branch within the operations section may be appropriate when responding to incidents with a high need for tactical or classified intelligence.

### **21.2.3 Procedure**

A. Establishing command

The first officer at the scene of a major incident will be the incident commander until command is either transferred or terminated. Depending upon the nature and severity of the incident and who has primary responsibility for the event (i.e. - fire, police, etc.) the first officer should quickly but thoroughly assess the scene and either establish a command post or report to an already established incident command post. To ensure a high level of coordination among other agencies at or near the scene, the identified police incident commander should be present in the incident command post established by the agency having overall charge of the situation. In any case, and in accordance with the national incident management system (NIMS) each event shall have only one (1) incident command post. At a large-scale or complex incident, especially one that involves a unified command post, all agencies with a stake in the incident should be represented at the command post.

B. Initial report

The first officer at the scene of a major incident will provide the communications center a report of the conditions present at the scene to include:

1. A brief description of the situation;
2. Obvious incident conditions;
3. Confirmation of command being established and the radio designation of the incident commander. Incident commanders shall respond to the term command, preceded by geographical location, and is not established by specific officer or unit designation. Example: "Dispatch, this is Richards Command". As the scene develops, and the command is shifted from one individual to another, the command name stays the same;
4. Location of the incident command post; and
5. Actions being taken by personnel at the scene.

C. Designating personnel for command staff and general staff positions

The incident commander may designate personnel to fill command staff and general staff positions when necessary and delegate responsibilities to ensure span of control is not exceeded. These positions may include the following:

1. Command staff
  - a. Public information officer;
  - b. Liaison officer; and
  - c. Safety officer.
2. General staff
  - a. Operations;
  - b. Planning;
  - c. Logistics; and
  - d. Finance/Administration.

D. Command transfer guidelines

Command can be transferred to improve the quality of the response. Transfer of command is at the discretion of the ranking officers at the scene. The overall incident responsibilities rest with the ranking officer on the scene, whether or not he or she assumes command. Incident command can be delegated to a qualified individual from another agency that is willing to take the responsibility. This would be of consideration when key personnel with the initiating agency are required to oversee a field operation in order to fulfill specific objectives.

1. Method of command transfer:

Transfers of command should occur on a face-to-face basis; however, some conditions may necessitate a transfer of command via radio or cellular communications.
2. Briefing session:

A briefing session will occur between the incident commander and the former incident commander being relieved. The following information will be exchanged during the briefing session:

  - a. Incident conditions;
  - b. Updates to the incident action plan;
  - c. Safety considerations;
  - d. Assignments of responding units; and
  - e. Additional resources needed.

E. Communications

Under ICS, command acts as a focal point for radio traffic. The incident commander is ultimately responsible for communications to dispatch, staging, and divisions and groups established to handle the tactical operations of the incident. Division and group supervisors report to command. Officers assigned to a specific division or group report to their supervisor. Individual officers assigned to a specific division or group should not attempt to contact dispatch, or other operational divisions or groups directly to allow for the most efficient transmission of necessary information.

F. Incident action plan (IAP)

When the incident command system is used, an IAP will be completed. The IAP will include all necessary ICS forms. ICS forms are available at:

[www.fs.fed.us/fire/planning/nist/ics\\_forms.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/planning/nist/ics_forms.htm)

1. Simple incidents of short duration:



For simple incidents of short duration, the incident commander will use guidelines contained in the incident briefing form (ICS form 201) to develop the IAP. The IAP will be communicated to other personnel through a verbal briefing. Smaller incidents not necessitating a written IAP will require communicating the following information to assigned personnel:

- a. Incident objectives;
- b. Strategy (one or more);
- c. Tactics; and
- d. Assignments.

2. IAP decision:

The decision to prepare a written IAP will be made by the incident commander; however, a written IAP will generally be prepared for incidents with an operational period of twelve (12) hours or more. Generally, a written IAP should be prepared when:

- a. Two (2) or more jurisdictions are involved;
- b. The duration of the incident exceeds one (1) operational period;
- c. Several operational personnel are assigned to the incident.

3. IAP essential elements include:

a. Statement of objectives:

The statement of objectives will succinctly describe what is expected to be achieved. Objectives must be realistic and attainable. An incident objective form (ICS form 202) shall be used to record the objectives for each operational period. Weather forecast and general safety messages are also included on the incident objectives form.

b. Organization:

The organization section of the IAP describes the elements of the ICS organization that will be in place during the next operational period. The organization assignment list (ICS form 203) is used to record the names of personnel assigned to positions in the ICS organization for each operational period.

c. Tactics and assignments:

Tactics used during the operational period and the assignments of human and equipment resources are included in the division assignment list (ICS form 204). A division/group communications summary is also included on ICS form 204.

d. Supporting Material:

Maps of the incident area, communications plans, medical plans, traffic plans, weather data, special precautions and safety information are examples of supporting material included with the IAP.

G. Divisions

Division designation allows command to break up the incident into manageable proportions. Division 1 (Side 1) is always the main door of the building facing the street. Division 2 (Side 2) is clockwise of Division 1, etc.

1. Other common divisions based on location could be:

- a. Basement;
- b. Roof;

- c. First floor, second floor, etc;
- d. Interior;
- e. Outer perimeter; and
- f. Inner perimeter.

H. Groups

Group designation allows command to break up human resources into manageable proportions. Common groups based on agency specific duties could be:

- 1. Tactical;
- 2. Investigations;
- 3. Evidence; and
- 4. Negotiations.

#### **21.2.4 National Incident Management System Training**

All personnel will be trained in the national incident management system (NIMS) corresponding to their respective levels and assignments as outlined in current standards as published by the NIMS National Integration Center.