

# GENERAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject:  
**Incident Command System**

| Topic          | Series     | Number    |
|----------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>HSC</b>     | <b>800</b> | <b>02</b> |
| Effective Date |            |           |
| <b>TBD</b>     |            |           |

Related to:  
**Standard Operating Procedures for the Incident Command System (ICS)**

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## I. BACKGROUND

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a methodical tool used for the command, control, and coordination of emergency responses of all sizes. ICS allows the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to work on scenes of all complexities, in conjunction with other governmental agencies, both local and Federal. In addition, the ICS will allow for the use of common terminology and operating procedures for the control of personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications. The mandatory use of ICS is outlined in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

## II. POLICY

The policy of the Metropolitan Police Department is to utilize the Incident Command System for command, control and coordination of scenes of various complexities, with the common goal of stabilizing an emergency in an effort to protect life, property and the environment.

## III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

1. Advanced Incident Management Team (AIMT) – A group of highly trained members of the Office of Homeland Security and Counter-Terrorism (OHSCT) and the Special Operations Division, responsible for the management and oversight of a major incident or disaster, or an Area Command.
2. Area Command – An expansion of the Incident Command function, primarily designed to manage a very large incident that has multiple incident management teams assigned. However, an Area Command can be established anytime when incidents are close enough that oversight is required among incident management teams.

3. Branch – The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between the Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section, and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section.
4. Chief – The ICS title for individuals responsible for the command of functional Sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.
5. Demobilization – The closing of an incident to include the collection of reports and the release of personnel and equipment.
6. Deputy – A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, could be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a Deputy could act as relief for a superior and, therefore, must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the Incident Commander, General Staff, and Branch Directors.
7. Division – The organization level having responsibility for operation within a defined geographic area or with functional responsibility. The Division level is organizationally between the Task Force/Team and the Branch. (See “Group” also).
8. Command and General Staff - The group of incident management personnel comprised of the Incident Commander (IC), Information Officer (IO), Safety Officer (SO) Liaison Officer (LO), Operations Section Chief (OSC), Planning Section Chief (PSC), Logistics Section Chief (LSC), and the Finance/Administration Section Chief (FSC)
  - a. Command Staff positions include the IC, SO, and LO.
  - b. General Staff positions include the OSC, PSC, LSC and the FSC.
9. Group – A composition of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. A group is established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. (See “Division” also.) Groups are organizationally located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section.

10. Incident Action Plan (IAP) – The IAP, which is initially prepared at the first meeting, contains general control objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy [ICS Form 201 (Incident Briefing)], and specific action plans for the next operational period. When complete, the Incident Action Plan will have a number of attachments.
11. Incident Management Team (IMT) – Pre-designated Command and General Staff ICS positions that have been pre-identified by each patrol district commander.
12. Incident Objectives – Statements of guidance and direction necessary for the selection of appropriate strategies, and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow for strategic and tactical alternatives
13. Joint Information Center (JIC) – A facility established within or near an Incident Command Post where the Information Officer and staff can coordinate and provide information about the incident to the public, media and other agencies.
14. Joint Information System (JIS) – An organized, integrated, and coordinated mechanism to ensure the delivery of understandable, timely, and accurate information to the public in a crisis. It includes representatives from all applicable agencies, with one (1) public spokesman.
15. Joint Operations Command Center (JOCC) – MPD's twenty-four (24) hour Operations Center.
16. Resources – All personnel and major items of equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incident tasks on which status is maintained.
17. Section – That organization level having functional responsibility for primary segments or incident operations such as: Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance. The Section level is organizationally between Branch and Incident Commander.
18. Span of Control – The number of organizational elements that may be directly managed by one (1) person. Span of Control may vary from

three (3) to seven (7) and a ratio of one-to-five (1:5) reporting elements is recommended.

19. Strike Team – Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.
20. Task Force – A combination of single resources assembled for a particular tactical need, with common communications and a leader.
21. Unified Command (UC) – A unified team which manages an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without loss or abdication of agency or organizational authority, responsibility or accountability.

#### **IV. REGULATION**

Members of the Department shall familiarize themselves with the Incident Command System (ICS); to include its deployment, expansion, and its contraction or demobilization.

#### **V. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

- A. In most cases the highest-ranking member on the scene of an incident will be the Incident Commander (IC). However, ICS is designed to allow experience and training to be the primary factor for determining the Incident Commander. Accordingly, there may be times when the IC may not be the highest-ranking member.
- B. The Incident Command System shall be utilized on scenes: [See GO-OPS-803.04 (Emergency Response Plan)].
  1. Involving more than one (1) District, Division or Unit;
  2. Spanning more than one (1) tour of duty;
  3. Involving multiple government agencies;
  4. Involving more than four (4) units, scout cars, or other personnel assignment;
  5. Whenever the JOCC is activated;
  6. During any Special Event requiring mobilization of Civil Disturbance Units; or

7. Any other incident, as directed by a supervisor.
- C. In all cases, the span of control for any one supervisor shall be no more than one (1) supervisor to seven (7) subordinates.
1. The IC shall designate as many deputies as needed to maintain appropriate span of control.
  2. Section Chiefs shall work in concert to meet the incident objectives and create as many groups, units, task forces, and strike teams as necessary to fulfill the mission, and maintain the proper span of control.
- D. Implementation of the ICS
1. Upon the decision to implement the ICS, the IC shall:
    - a. Determine the incident objectives and strategy to be used; and
    - b. Consider alternative strategies that may be employed. (If possible, an alternative strategy should be considered for each incident objective.)
  2. Incident Management
    - a. On small incidents, the IC shall develop incident objectives and strategies.
    - b. On large or complex incidents that IC shall expand his/her organization to include all of the Command Staff and General Staff.
    - c. The expansion of the organization shall facilitate incident objectives.
    - d. In the case of larger incidents, members of the General Staff and others shall contribute to the development of incident objectives and strategies.

E. Documentation

1. When ICS is implemented, the appropriate ICS forms shall be completed and copies forwarded to the OHSCT through the chain-of-command within five (5) business days, including but not limited to:
  - a. ICS Form 201 (Incident Briefing).
  - b. ICS Form 202 (Incident Objectives).
  - c. ICS Form 203 (Organization Assignment List).
  - d. ICS Form 204 (Assignment List).
  - e. ICS Form 205 (Incident Radio Communications Plan).
  - f. ICS Form 206 (Medical Plan).
  - g. ICS Form 207 (Incident Organization Chart).
  - h. ICS Form 213 (General Message Form).
  - i. ICS Form 214 (Unit Log).
  - j. ICS Form 215 (Operational Planning Worksheet).
2. After every implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the IC shall complete an after-action report and forward it to the OHSCT, not later than five (5) business days after the conclusion of the incident.

F. Public Information [See GO-SPT-204.01 (Media)].

1. The IC must approve the release of all incident-related information.
2. Only one Public Information Officer (PIO) shall be designated for any one particular incident.
3. In a Unified Command, assistants to the PIO may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.
4. During a major incident the PIO shall operate using the JIS and JIC concept.

### G. Unified Command [See GO-RAR-310.04 (Mutual Aid Agreement)]

1. A Unified Command shall be used for incidents involving:
  - a. Multiple jurisdictions;
  - b. A single jurisdiction with multiple agencies sharing responsibility; or
  - c. Multiple jurisdictions with multi-agency involvement.
2. Unified Command shall be structured so that responding agencies and/or jurisdictions with responsibility for the incident share incident management.
3. Representatives from participating agencies or jurisdictions that share responsibility for the incident shall respond to a single Incident Command Post.
4. A single, coordinated Incident Action Plan shall be used to direct all activities. The IC/agency representatives will supervise a single Command and General Staff organization and provide a collaborative response.

### H. Area Command

1. An Area Command shall be established when the complexity of the incident and incident management span of control determine a need. The Chief of Police or his/her designee will make the decision to establish an Area Command.
2. A MPD Area Command shall be established in the JOCC and a Unified Area Command will be established at the District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Operations Center.

### I. Demobilization

1. The Planning Unit shall be responsible for Demobilization.

Note: Requirements for demobilizations may vary considerably depending on the incident.
2. The IC or Planning Unit Chief shall ensure demobilization guidelines are followed. At a minimum, section members shall:

- a. Complete all work assignments and required ICS forms/reports.
  - b. Brief replacements, subordinates, and his/her supervisor.
  - c. Evaluate the performance of subordinates.
  - d. Follow MPD check-out procedures (e.g., TACIS). See General Order 206.1 (Time and Attendance).
  - e. Return any incident-issued equipment or other nonexpendable supplies. See GO-OPS-805.03 [Specialized Equipment Unit (SESU)] and GO-101.11 (Uniforms and Equipment).
  - f. Complete post-incident reports, critiques, evaluations, and medical follow up. MPD sworn member injuries shall be reported as outlined in GO-PER-100.11 (Medical Services).
- J. All supervisory officials shall ensure that the ICS is instituted, when applicable, as outlined in this General Order.
- K. The AIMT shall utilize the ICS concept.

## VI. CROSS REFERENCES

- A. General Orders
1. GO-PER-100.11 (Medical Services)
  2. GO-PER-110.11 (Uniforms and Equipment)
  3. See GO-SPT-204.01 (Media)
  4. General Order 206.1 (Time and Attendance)
  5. GO-RAR-310.04 (Mutual Aid Agreement)
  6. GO-OPS- 803.04 (Emergency Response Plan)
  7. GO-OPS-805.03 [Specialized Equipment Unit]
- B. Related Materials
- National Incident Management System



**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment A: ICS Organizational Chart
2. Attachment B: Standard Operating Procedures for ICS

Charles H. Ramsey  
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CHR:SOA:DAH:DEP:re:pas

*A typical ICS Organizational Chart is shown below:*

