Blue Card SOP Introduction:

Public safety agencies (Police and Fire) are many times the agency of last resort. We get called because something in our community has gone wrong, and it is now jeopardizing people and/or property. We must always start out all of our emergency responses in a standard manner, where we will base our actions on a standard set of critical factors, in order to achieve a standard incident outcome. Every incident we respond to is different in some way. The things that protect us from these different, every time incident elements, is the command system that we use to manage our Hazard Zone operations. It must be used and applied the same way, for every incident we respond to. This prevents the incident from managing us. When we operate within our SOP's, we can effectively manage the incident while we protect our members operating inside of a Hazard Zone.

1.0 - Command Function #1 – DEPLOYMENT

The major goal of Command Function 1 is to provide and manage a steady, adequate, and timely stream of appropriate resources. This Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) describes the standard deployment process used in the Blue Card Hazard Zone management system.

1.1 - Company Status

How responders are dispatched and put to work when they arrive on the scene is an essential component of our Incident Management System (IMS). When this front-end Deployment management occurs in a regular, orderly manner, the Hazard Zone workers become part of the IC's overall plan. This creates a safe and standard operational beginning.

The essence of incident control is the ability of every IC to create, manage, and—if necessary—move the position and function of all the resources operating in the Hazard Zone.

The IC is the resource allocator for the incident and is responsible for managing all assigned resources work cycles on the strategic level. The standard Deployment management that an IC must manage on every incident is the following items:

- Dispatch
- Standard incident response
- Staging
- Assignments to the incident scene by the IC
- Accountability in a Hazard Zone
- Work/Rest Cycle
- On-Deck
- Recycling
- Rehabbing
- Ready for reassignment
- Placing companies back into service

This creates a resource delivery system that allows the IC to deploy resources according to his/her IAP and it also provides a system that allows an IC to be supported in order to manage and track accountability on the strategic level as incidents continue to escalate.

1.2 – Dispatch Center

The major goal of the local the Dispatch Center is to dispatch the appropriate amount and type of resource(s) to the scene of an emergency immediately after the receipt of the appropriate information.

The call taker must make an initial determination of the appropriate Nature Code, based on the information received from the caller.

Structural fire alarms, Hazardous Materials incidents, Serious MVA's, and MCI incidents should be dispatched using pre-determined dispatch packages. These standard dispatch packages should also include the command support required to manage the different amounts and types of resource responding.

1.2.1 - Blue Card Standard Structural Fire Dispatch Packages

FD's – Put your standard, local dispatch packages and resource profiles here. The following Blue Card resource packages match up to the Blue Card Training and Certification Program.

Still Assignment: A one (1) unit Engine Company response to a reported fire that poses no significant danger/threat to people or property.

3-1 Assignment: A multi-unit response dispatched to a reported fire in a normal sized residence or a reported fire that can be easily controlled by one (1) full attack team. A 3-1 assignment consists of:

- 3 Engine Companies
- 1 Ladder/Truck Company
- 2 total Response Chiefs, Safety Officers, Training personnel, or Staff Officers (a combination of at least 2)
- 1 Medic/Ambulance

1st Alarm/Box Assignment: A full multi-unit response dispatched to a reported fire in a commercial structure or high life safety structure. A 1st Alarm assignment consists of:

- 5 Engine Companies
- 2 Ladder/Truck Companies
- 5 total Response Chiefs, Safety Officers, Training personnel, or Staff Officers (a combination of 5)
- Larger Command Vehicle (CV) if available
- 1 Medic/Ambulance

Balancing a 1st alarm from a 3-1 assignment: Initial arriving officers of a dispatched 3-1 assignment must fill out, or balance, the1st Alarm before requesting more resource greater than the 1st Alarm. This will ensure that all dispatched 1st Alarm resource will respond directly to Level 1 Staging positions, while operating on the incident's assigned tactical radio frequency.

Greater Alarms/Boxes: Additional alarms should somewhat reflect the resource of a full 1st alarm assignment, but because enough Chief Officers or additional command help was sent on the 1st Alarm/Box, the need for the same amount of Chief Officers will vary from incident to incident and should be specified when calling for additional alarms. This could also be the same case for Ladder/Truck companies.

1.2.2 - Working Fire policy

The term "Working Fire" indicates a situation that will at least require the commitment of all responding companies. This report advises dispatch that the companies will be engaged in tactical activities and will be held at the scene for an extended period of time. The Dispatch Center will monitor radio traffic on all incidents to anticipate the needs of Command.

Working Fire Upgrade: When the IC declares a "Working Fire" incident, the Dispatch Center will automatically dispatch a 4th Engine Company and a Rehab Unit for an original 3-1 assignment. For a 1st Alarm "Working Fire" declaration, a 6th Engine Company, and a Rehab Unit will be dispatched, along with staff officer notifications going out to all needed support personnel.

When notified of a Working Fire First Alarm, the Dispatch Center should:

1. Upgrade the dispatch to a Working Fire assignment
2. Isolate a tactical channel
3. Dispatch a Fire Investigator
4. Dispatch PD for traffic and crowd control
5. Dispatch gas and electric companies
6. Make move-ups to affected areas
7. Document progress reports, SDG assignments, emergency traffic, and elapsed time notifications
8. Be prepared to assign additional TRO's to monitor/work Staging and other SDGs created by the IC
9. Be prepared to dispatch further assistance
10. Be prepared to dispatch any special agencies or equipment when the need is indicated
11. Make notifications to pertinent personnel

Any fire at a public school facility requires the State Fire Marshal to be contacted. The on-duty State Fire Marshal will use his/her discretion as to a response.

Elapsed Time Notifications (ETN): When an offensive Working Fire or Haz Mat incident is declared, it will prompt the TRO to begin elapsed time notifications (an IC can also request ETN's whenever they feel it is necessary). The TRO will announce over the tactical frequency an elapsed time notification every five (5) minutes once a working incident has been declared and will continue ETNs until the incident is placed under control, or until command requests to discontinue or restructure the ETN's.

The IC must verbally acknowledge each ETN by re-announcing the incident's strategy over the assigned tactical radio frequency until the incident is placed under control, or until command requests to discontinue or restructure the notifications.

Move ups, back fills, and maintaining system wide service coverage: IC's should keep the Dispatch Center aware of the amount of resource(s) needed and a predicted length of time the resource will be required to control the situation. The Dispatch Center has the responsibility to back fill critical areas of the community in order to continue to deliver core services to the department's customers with reasonable response times. These Units may also be needed in the future to quickly respond to the current working incident.

FD's – Put your local back fill and move-up procedures – mutual aid stuff here . . .

1.2.3 – Dispatching Incidents

Channel 1: All emergency incidents will be dispatched on Channel 1. Each incident dispatched will be assigned a tactical radio frequency that is different than Channel 1. At no time should an incident be run on a main dispatch channel where subsequent dispatches could cover critical Hazard Zone communications.

One tactical radio frequency can host several EMS incidents at once, but for incidents that are declared "Working Fire", the assigned tactical radio channel should be cleared of other incidents, or, if there is credible call information, the call should be assigned on its own separate tactical radio channel upon dispatch if available.

All Hazard Zone transmissions shall be carried out on one (1) tactical radio frequency.

Some incidents may require the use of multiple radio frequencies in order to support operations outside of the Hazard Zone (Level 1 & 2 staging, Rehab, Safety, Planning, Logistics, etc.). Each additional channel activated for the incident must have a dedicated person assigned to manage that channel at all times. The IC must only be responsible for the operation of one (1) tactical radio frequency while an active Hazard Zone exists.

The Tactical Radio Operator (TRO): Handles all communications between units assigned to an incident and the Dispatch Center on the incident's assigned tactical radio frequency.

Dispatched acknowledgement: All units responding to an incident shall acknowledge the Dispatch Center by radio on the assigned tactical channel or by Mobile Computer Terminal (MCT) if equipped. If the Dispatch Center does not receive an acknowledgment within one (1) minute of dispatch, the TRO will request acknowledgment by radio on all channels (starting with the assigned tactical channel) and via the MCT if equipped. The Dispatch Center should send a cover assignment if no reply is received after three (3) attempts to contact the unit or within a two (2) minutes of the original dispatch.

The Dispatch Center should continue to attempt to make contact with the original company while the cover unit is responding. If unable to contact the original unit, the company will be placed unavailable and the unit's appropriate supervisor should be notified of the circumstances.

Self-Dispatch: There are many times when units are making standard, non-emergency apparatus movements where they will witness or see something that requires an emergency response and some type of mitigation. In these situations, the officer or member initiating the incident will contact the Dispatch Center on Channel 1 and will give the following information:

- Nature of the incident
- Exact location of the incident
- Resource request required to control the incident

Once reported, the Channel 1 Operator should assign a separate tactical frequency for the incident and dispatch any additional resource required on Channel 1. Because the requesting Unit is typically close to the scene, they should give the recently dispatched responders (if any) at least 1 minute to start their response out before transmitting a standard Initial Radio Report (IRR) on the assigned tactical radio frequency. This time lag will give everybody who is dispatched the needed time to get into a responding status in order to receive the IRR information.

Adding an additional Unit to a dispatched incident: Unit's may add themselves to a dispatched incident by contacting the TRO on the incident's assigned channel. Companies adding on to an assignment must advise the TRO if they are substituting for another unit or responding in addition to the original assignment. The TRO should cancel the original unit dispatched if the substituting unit is closer to the scene (EMS).

Unit response statuses

Code - 1: not assigned to a service call, following all state/local driving regulations.
Code - 2: assigned to a non-emergency service call, following all state/local driving regulations.
Code - 3: assigned to an emergency call using lights and sirens in the response.

Units while responding:

- The TRO will act as the initial IC until the 1st unit or member arrives to the scene and transmits a standard Initial Radio Report.
- All fire and EMS responses will be Code-3 unless otherwise indicated by the Dispatch Center or Command.
- Minor medical incidents and some service calls may be dispatched Code-2.

- Company Officer’s may make the decision based on the dispatch information to respond Code-2 on a dispatched Code-3 incident. When this occurs, the Officer must advise his/her TRO of the status change on the assigned tactical channel.
- Similarly, if the Company Officer makes the decision to respond Code-3 on a dispatched Code-2 call, he/she must advise his/her TRO on the assigned tactical channel.
- While responding, companies may communicate with one another if radio traffic permits. Effective communications during this period can set the stage for effective action and improve the overall rescue and fire attack effort. Factors such as occupancy hazards, access, traffic conditions and response routes should be communicated when necessary.
- Company Officers should review tactical information on their MCT, map books and any pre-fire planning info available while enroute.
- Subsequent arriving units must monitor all radio traffic on the assigned channel to be fully informed of the situation based on the reports of the first arriving units.

Additional Incident Information: The TRO will relay any additional critical information gained from subsequent callers to responding units as soon as possible. Critical information and/or updates must be transmitted via radio on the assigned tactical frequency to all dispatched units.

Companies needing specific additional information shall send these requests through the TRO.

1.3 - Response and general scene safety

A prompt, safe response shall be attained in the following standard manner:

- All members must maintain the ability to respond quickly to dispatched incidents (always stay close to the truck).
- All personnel shall be mounted on board, properly attired for the call, and seated with seat belts securely fastened before the truck moves.
- All radios are set to the assigned channel.
- Station doors fully open.
- Follow all emergency response SOP’s.
- Drive defensively and professionally at all times.
- Know where you are going.

- Use warning devices to move around traffic and to request the right-of-way in a safe and predictable manner.
- All responding apparatus should have 2 members in the front seats of the apparatus whenever possible. The driver is responsible for operating the vehicle safely.
- The Co-driver is responsible for being a second set of eyes and ears anytime a unit is responding to or returning from a response.
- Driver and Co-drivers must be focused on intersection management any time their response vehicle enters into an intersection.
- The unique hazards of driving on or adjacent to the fire ground requires the Driver and Co-driver to use extreme caution and to be alert and prepared to react to the unexpected.
- Drivers must consider the dangers their moving vehicle poses to fire ground personnel and spectators who may be preoccupied and focused on the emergency scene, and may inadvertently step in front of or behind a moving vehicle.
- When stopped at the scene of an incident, vehicles should be placed to protect personnel who may be working in the street and warning lights shall be properly used to make approaching traffic aware of the incident.
- No personnel may exit a vehicle or piece of apparatus until it comes to a complete stop.
- Personnel dismounting the apparatus must look both ways and verify the outside surroundings before stepping off of the apparatus.
- When waiting for personnel to return to the truck before repositioning closer to the scene, the driver/operator shall keep the apparatus at a full stop at all times.
- At night, vehicle mounted floodlights and any other lighting available shall be properly used to illuminate the scene.
- All personnel working in or near traffic lanes shall wear high visibility vests.
- Drivers shall avoid backing whenever possible: Where backing is unavoidable, spotters shall be used.

1.3.1 - Emergency Response Driving Procedures

The use of sirens and warning lights does not automatically give the right-of-way to the emergency vehicle. These devices simply request the right-of-way from other drivers, based on their awareness of the emergency vehicle presence. Emergency vehicle drivers must make every possible effort to make their presence and intended actions known to other drivers and must drive defensively to be prepared for the unexpected, inappropriate actions of others.

- All department employees are required to use seat belts at all times when operating a vehicle. Anyone riding as a passenger/attendant in a vehicle is also required to use seat belt at all times when in a moving vehicle.
- The Company Officer of the vehicle will confirm that all personnel and riders are on-board, properly attired, with seat belts on, before the vehicle is permitted to move.
- The Office-in-Charge (or driver in a single occupant vehicle) of the vehicle is responsible for the safety of all vehicle operations and managing compliance of this procedure.
- Fire Department vehicles are authorized to exceed posted speed limits only when responding Code-3 under favorable conditions. This applies only with light traffic, good roads, good visibility and dry pavement. Under these conditions a maximum of 10 mph over the posted speed limit is authorized.
- Under less than favorable conditions, the posted speed limit is the absolute maximum permissible.
- When emergency vehicles must travel in center or oncoming traffic lanes, the maximum permissible speed shall be 20 mph.
- Intersections present the greatest potential danger to emergency vehicles. When approaching and crossing an intersection with the right-of-way, drivers shall not exceed the posted speed limit.
- When emergency vehicles must use center or oncoming traffic lanes to approach controlled intersections, (traffic light or stop sign) they must come to a **complete stop** before proceeding through the intersection, including occasions when the emergency vehicle has green traffic lights.
- When approaching a negative right-of-way intersection (red light, stop sign) the vehicle shall come to a **complete stop** and may proceed only when the driver can account for all oncoming traffic in all lanes yielding the right-of-way.
- Units responding to calls using a freeway for access only, will precede Code-2 while on the freeway unless otherwise ordered by command or Dispatch Center.
- For incidents that are located directly on a freeway, company officers must use their best judgment on the proper response (Code 2 or 3) based on the critical factors present.

Code-3 response is authorized only in conjunction with emergency incidents. Unnecessary emergency response shall be avoided. In order to avoid any unnecessary emergency response, the following rules shall apply:

- When the first unit reports on the scene with "nothing showing" or an equivalent report, any additional units shall continue into the scene using a Code-2 response.
- The first arriving unit will advise additional units to respond Code-2 whenever appropriate (EMS runs after the pt(s). has been triaged and downgraded).

1.4 - Establishing Command (Function #2)

Command shall be formally declared on all incidents where two (2) or more Units are dispatched. The first Unit or member to arrive to the scene of a multi-unit dispatched incident should assume command of the incident by transmitting a standard IRR (there are a few exceptions to this procedure that will be covered in Function #2).

Once Command has been established, all routine communication between the Dispatch Center and the incident will be directed through Command.

1.5 - Calling for additional resources

The IC is the person that has to match (and manage) the work that must take place at the incident scene to the people and equipment that will be doing the work. Matching these two constants (tasks and workers) requires that the IC have a good grasp of the available area personnel, equipment, apparatus and the systems used to activate and manage those resources.

The IC will need to connect the profile of the incident to the profile of the local deployment process by quickly answering a set of closely connected questions that create a basic response profile for the incident:

- What resources are on the scene?
- When will the responding resources arrive on the scene?
- How much work can the responders on the initial assignment do and for how long?
- How much work is there beyond the capability of the initial assignment?
- How many geographic/functional points need resources assigned to them to cover the incident and get ahead of the power curve?
- What is the profile of the additional resources that will be required?
- What type of command support do I need to manage the dispatched resource?

The IC must automatically, instinctively, and quickly develop and compare these two profiles (**event vs. response**) and then call for the additional resources that will be required to bring the response model up to effectively engage and (hopefully) overpower the problem the event is creating.

Alarm upgrades and addition structural fire alarms/boxes, Hazardous Materials request, and EMS manpower requests should be dispatched using pre-determined dispatch packages. These standard dispatch packages should also include the command support required to manage the different amounts and types of resource responding.

1.6 - Staging Procedures

The IC is the resource allocator for the incident and is responsible for managing all assigned resources work cycles on the strategic level.

Level 1 and 2 Staging procedures place resources into positions where the IC can assign them based on his or her incident action plan. When the IC identifies a task that needs to be done, they choose the proper resource, confirm their availability, and then order them into action. Managing incident operations in this fashion is how we coordinate and incorporate all of the efforts of multiple units into a single, cohesive operation. If you don't have and follow SOP driven staging procedures, you can't apply IMS to the incident scene.

Staging creates a resource delivery method that allows the IC to deploy resources according to his/her IAP and provides a system that allows the IC to manage accountability on the strategic level. If companies do not stage when they get to the scene they will not be assigned according to the IC's plan.

Units that disregard staging procedures and "auto-assign" themselves (freelance) in a Hazard Zone do nothing but make the scene unsafe for everybody else who followed the staging procedures. Therefore, officers or members who disregard the staging procedures will be dealt with in a corrective, progressive and lawful manner.

1.6.1 - Level 1 Staging

Effective utilization of the Level 1 Staging procedures:

- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.

- Allows time for the IC to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
- Places apparatus in uncommitted locations close to the immediate scene to facilitate a more effective assignment by Command.
- Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
- Facilitates fireground accountability
- Allows Command to formulate and implement an IAP without undue confusion and pressure.

Level 1 Staging procedures are in effect for all units dispatched on the 1st alarm assignment.

Level 1 Staging procedures are automatically activated when the initial arriving unit clears the Dispatch Center to give their Initial Radio Report and assumes command.

This action causes all later arriving resources to Level 1 stage in an uncommitted position one block from the scene and announces that they are Level 1 staged at the scene over the tactical radio channel.

For engine companies this means that they don’t pass their last water source (in an area with hydrants). Ladder/Truck companies don’t pass their last access point into the incident site. All Level 1 Staged units must wait for an assignment from the IC before proceeding out of their Level 1 Staging location.

- Applies to all initial responders on the 1st Alarm
- 1st Unit & BC respond directly to the scene
- Immediately goes into effect with Initial Radio Report from IC #1
- All subsequent arriving until stage 1 block away in their direction of travel while not passing their last tactical objective
- Each unit Level 1 Staging will simply state their unit is Level 1 staged “E-1 is Level 1”

There will be occasions where a Mobile IC has placed themselves inside the Hazard Zone and they are unaware of a significant critical factor that needs to be addressed. Company officers can make a conscious, deliberate decision to address a critical, tactical need that they see while driving their response vehicle or while Level 1 staged in these circumstances. *It is important to note that these situations are rare and generally involve some type of severe life safety issue. At no time however, will a unit auto assign themselves into the hazard area without notifying the IC of their actions. That is defined as freelancing and it is absolutely prohibited.

1.6.2 - Level 2 Staging

Level 2 Staging procedures are used for greater alarm assignments. Level 2 Staging is defined as: a centralized staging location, adjacent to the incident scene where later arriving resources will assemble. Level 2 Staging should be close enough to the incident scene to provide timely access but is located in an area that is out of the way and not exposed to the incident's hazards.

Dispatched greater Alarm/Box Units should be dispatched to a Level 2 Staging location on a different radio frequency from the Hazard Zone frequency. This frees up available airtime on the tactical radio channel. It also allows the IC to focus on the units that are assigned to the Hazard Zone, helping to eliminate radio distractions from later arriving resources that are not yet part of the Hazard Zone IAP.

When requesting addition alarms/boxes, the IC should designate a Level 2 Staging location and put companies responding to Level 2 on a separate radio frequency.

- The Dispatch Center will notify additional units dispatched to the incident that Level 2 Staging is in effect and the location of the Level 2 Staging area.
- The Dispatch Center will notify greater alarm Units of the tactical frequency of Level 2 Staging
- Units dispatched to the Level 2 Staging area will report in person to the Level 2 Staging Manager. The most preferable method of communication in the Level 2 Staging is face-to-face.

Command may designate a Level 2 Staging Manager who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this procedure. In the absence of such an assignment, the first fire department officer to arrive at the staging area will automatically become the Level 2 Staging Manager and should notify Command upon their arrival to the Level 2 Staging area. The arrival notification should first be made to Command on the assigned Level 2 Staging channel. Level 2 Staging responsibilities can be transferred to a later arriving chief, or staff officer if needed.

If the first arriving unit to the Level 2 Staging location is an Engine company, the engine company officer has the following options for their crew:

- They can assist the Company Officer with Level 2 Staging operations until relieved.
- Assigned them as manpower to another company in Level 2 Staging.
- The crew can be moved up to form a minimum of a 2-person company and they can be assigned into the Hazard Zone as a unit.

Once Level 2 Staging is implemented, all communications involving staging will be between Staging and Command (or the Operations Section Chief if established).

The Level 2 Staging Manager will perform the following duties.

- Notify the IC (or Ops Section Chief) upon their arrival at the staging area on the assigned Level 2 Staging channel.
- Verify the companies available at the staging location
- Determine from the CP the minimum complement of units to be maintained in the Level 2 Staging area
- Contact the CP for additional resources when the number of companies in the staging area falls below the established minimum
- Maintain a current list of available companies in the staging area
- Organize the apparatus so it can be easily deployed out of the staging area if necessary
- Maintain a list of companies that have been deployed to the incident site and their initial assignments from the Level 2 Staging area
- Relay the assignment of units from the CP using face-to-face to the staged companies when possible
- Relay to companies the following information when they are assigned out of Level 2 Staging
    1. Any tasks, the location and the objectives assigned to the unit
    2. The area where to report to, or the Division Supervisor to whom they are to report to
    3. The tactical channel on which they are to operate on

Once dispatched, all greater Alarm companies responding to a Level 2 Staging location should stay off the air unless contacted by the Dispatch Center, the Level 2 Staging Manager, or Command. Once arriving to Level 2 Staging, the Company Officer of the Unit should report in person to the Level 2 Staging Manager. The crew should then standby with their unit, with the crew intact, with apparatus warning lights turned off until they are assigned to incident site duties, or released from the scene.

When assigned, companies leaving staging should communicate directly with Command or their assigned S/D Supervisor for further instructions (if needed).

There will be incidents where the IC will need to quickly assign response chiefs Hazard Zone management roles. In these circumstances, the IC will need to make a determination when calling for additional resources on whether the response chiefs on greater alarms should Level 1 or Level 2 stage.

The arrival of Staff Officers (no IDLH work) can enhance the Command organization and incident management. These later arriving officers should assume or transfer Level 2 Staging Manager duties from any Company Officers who are filling the role. This will allow them to be available to be assigned into a Hazard Zone with their unit.

Because there are so few Ladder/Truck companies in the response system, when they arrive in Level 2 Staging first, they should assume Level 2 Staging and start performing the roles of the Level 2 Staging Manager. Once the first Engine Company or staff chief has arrived to the Level 2 Staging location, they should transfer Level 2 Staging duties from the Ladder/Truck so they can be assigned to the incident site.

Vehicle parking at the incident site can be very limited. Un-needed, subsequent arriving apparatus should be left out of the way in the Level 2 Staging area. Many times, companies will need to manually transport all of the needed tools and equipment to the Hazard Zone when they are assigned out of Level 2 Staging.

IC’s must maintain an awareness of in transit times when these types of assignments are made. Long in transit times from a Level 2 Staging area should be concluded with the company notifying the IC or Division Supervisor that they have arrived at their assigned work location.

Staff Officers should also leave their vehicles in the Level 2 Staging in a manner that does not block access if their vehicle is not needed at the scene.

Apparatus in the Level 2 Staging area should be arranged in manner that allows for easy access in and out of the staging area. Apparatus not needed at the scene site, which is left in the Level 2 Staging location, should be positioned/parked in a manner that does not congest or compromise access in or out of the Level 2 Staging area.

1.7 - IC assigning Units into a Hazard Zone

Incident operations are conducted around the completion of the tactical priorities. Incident communications should mirror this simple concept. When the IC assigns companies based on a well thought out IAP, everything seems to naturally fall into place and companies will base their progress reports on the original orders the IC gave them. This keeps the operation focused on what we showed up to do – making sure everyone is out and okay, elimination of the incident problem, and reducing the harm/damage/loss to the customer's property.

IC's will need to use the following structure when assigning any unit into the Hazard Zone:

- Tasks
- The Location of those tasks
- The Objectives of the tasks

One of the IC's major objectives is to control both the position/location and function of all resource assigned to the Hazard Zone. Being very specific about the location and the objectives of the tasks that need to be performed goes a long way in helping the IC (and the rest of the team) know where everybody is and what they are doing. Much more on assigning units in Command Function #5 – Communications.

1.8 - Hazard Zone Accountability

Each level of the incident organization has its own accountability responsibility. No organizational level can do the accountability responsibilities for another level.

1.8.1 - Company/Task level accountability responsibilities

Companies working on the task level have the greatest stake in the accountability system because they operate inside the Hazard Zone. No Hazard Zone management system can outperform unsafe behaviors on the task level.

Task level responsibilities include:

- Following all staging procedures
- Being properly assigned into the Hazard Zone
- Properly using the passport accountability system

- Staying together as a company
- All members inside are attached to a hoseline
- Always maintaining an adequate air supply to safely exit the Hazard Zone
- Maximum depth into a structure – 175-200 feet – based on air supply
- No freelancing

The following rules will be adhered to at all times on the task level:

The minimum number of personnel assigned to a crew or a team operating in a Hazard Zone shall be two firefighters with a least one portable radio.

Crews or teams always go in and come out together.

All personnel shall be in contact with their Company Officer by either:

- Voice (radio)
- Vision (TIC),
- Touch (hoseline)

Company Officers shall give an accountability report upon exiting the Hazard Zone to either the IC or their assigned S/D Supervisor.

Any member whose job assignment is to operate outside of the hazard area is NOT to enter the hazard area without the express permission of the member's company officer, S/D Supervisor or the IC.

NO member shall operate in the Hazard Zone alone.

1.8.2 - Tactical level accountability responsibilities

Whenever two (2) or more units are assigned to one geographical area, a tactical level boss, or Division Supervisor, should be designated to the area before a 3rd unit is assigned to the same geographic area. This supervision should be upgraded with a command level officer (or Safety Officer) to manage the entry point.

The Hazard Zone tactical level of the incident organization is managed by S/D Supervisors. When the IC assigns companies to an operational area, the Office-in-Charge of that area is responsible for managing the companies assigned to the area.

In many cases, the initial tactical level responsibility may be assigned to the first Company Officer assigned to the area. As the number of work cycles, the span of control and or the risk increases, a command level officer should be used to replace the initial Company Officer.

Here is the list of the responsibilities for a Chief Officer assigned as a S/D boss:

- S/D Plan matches IC Plan
- Risk Management in the S/D
- Complete Tactical Priorities in the S/D
- Positions always match conditions in the S/D
- Implement and manage the S/D IAP
- Coordinate w/ other S/D's when needed
- Manage the Passport Accountability System
- Assist with S/D Air Management
- Manages Work-Rest Cycles
- Manages On-Deck crews
- Manages Recycle & Rehab

Much more on the tactical level accountability/management responsibilities in Command Function #6 - Organization.

1.8.3 - Strategic level accountability responsibilities

The IC manages strategic level accountability by strict command & control; deploying resources to specific tasks, locations and objectives; maintaining the whereabouts of all resources in the Hazard Zone; maintaining an accurate tactical worksheet and ensuring that frequent CAN and situational awareness reports are delivered from the key tactical areas of the operation.

The key to strategic level accountability for escalated incident operations is to build an effective incident organization. It is the IC's responsibility to account for all resources until delegated to tactical level supervisors. The IC does this by assigning S/D responsibilities to Chief Officers. Chief Officers physically position themselves at the entry point in their assigned area in order to manage their assigned piece of the incident operation. This places strong supervision, management and leadership in forward positions where the hazard s are present. Organizing in this fashion greatly enhances firefighter safety and is one the most significant tool an IC can use to increase his/her strategic level capability, especially for escalating incident operations.

1.8.4 - Tactical worksheets: The best way to remember something is to write it down. This is particularly true when you are managing something as dynamic and dangerous as a fire. The strategically placed IC (working out of command post) has a continual deployment-management challenge to somehow keep track of what is happening. As more responders show up, go to work, and the incident starts to "move fast and spread out," these dynamic conditions can quickly exceed the IC's mental capability to maintain a current awareness of "who's where, doing what."

A major deployment-management function involves the IC performing the on-scene "bookkeeping" activities required to keep track of all the responders assigned to the incident and their ongoing operational status. The system also must account for the work in progress, the work still to be completed, and everyone's safety. A tactical work sheet is the best, basic form that the IC typically uses to record resource details and work activities.

1.8.5 - PAR's and Roll-Calls

PAR: A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) involves a roll call and confirmation that all personnel assigned to a crew, or multiple crews assigned to one (1) geographic area of the Hazard Zone working under the supervision of one (1) tactical boss, are accounted for and have an adequate air supply to safely exit the Hazard Zone.

PAR Reports should be conducted face-to-face whenever possible. When A S/D Supervisor is in place, the S/D Supervisor will deliver the Division's Par Report to the IC. Without a S/D Supervisor in place, the Company Officer will delivery the PAR Report directly to the IC.

Roll-Calls: A Roll Call is an accountability report from all Company Officers of an individual crew assigned to the Hazard Zone, or S/D Supervisors reporting on all personnel working in a specific geographic area of the Hazard Zone at one specified area in the incident.

When the IC makes a general announcement to all units on the fireground to initiate a roll call, all individuals, units, and/or S/D's shall.

- Notify their Company Officer of their condition and location.
- Notify the Supervisor of their assigned S/D of their condition and location.
- S/D Supervisors shall be responsible for the count and location of all personnel assigned under their command who are located in the Hazard Zone.

- After all companies or S/D have been accounted for, the IC shall transmit a PAR to the Dispatch Center for the entire incident.

The IC must drive the roll call to avoid multiple units contacting him/her first. Unless a Unit DOES NOT have a PAR, they should maintain radio silence until contacted by the IC to report their PAR.

A formal roll call should be conducted for the following circumstance:

- Changing from an offensive to a defensive operation

Other situations that may require a roll call include:

- Missing or unaccounted for members.
- Sudden, unexpected events in the Hazard Zone.
- A Mayday (depending on the circumstances).
- Anytime the IC feels it is necessary.

1.8.6 - Passport Accountability System

When properly used, the passport accountability system will increase firefighter safety and provide the Initial Accountability Officer and S/D Supervisors with a means to track the location and function of all firefighters working in a Hazard Zone.

Accountability Hardware

Accountability equipment for each piece of apparatus shall consist of:

- Passport (including members name tags)
- Helmet ID stickers
- Hose ID tags (1 permanently marked with the company ID – 1 blank)
- Grease pencils
- Passport pouch (with extra helmet ID's)
- All response chiefs carry a S/D management board in their RIC bag

Passports are colored tags, which measure approximately 3 by 4 inches that are permanently marked with the company identification. Name tags of the crew members assigned to each apparatus are affixed to the passport, which is placed in the passport pouch.

Each individual in a riding position is issued individual nametags. One nametag for each member presently assigned to the company is required to be placed on the passport. Extra individual nametags should be kept on the underside of the member's helmet.

All helmets shall always reflect the proper ID of the company the member is presently assigned to. All personnel are required to keep their helmet IDs accurate. Extra helmet ID stickers should be kept with the passport in the passport pouch.

Passport Application and Use

Each Company Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the passport and MCT roster reflects only the members presently assigned to the company. Passports shall reflect only those crewmembers who are about to enter the Hot Zone. When entering the Hot Zone with a partial crew, such as when an engineer remains at the engine to pump lines, the Company Officer must remove the nametags of those members not entering the Hot Zone. The nametags of these members may be returned to the member, placed on the Company Officer's helmet Velcro strip or placed in his/her coat pocket.

Implementation of the passport system will occur at any incident that requires the use of an SCBA. The use of the accountability system will commence as the first unit arrives on the scene. The first arriving company will give an IRR and assume command. In the follow up report, their accountability unit identification and geographic location will be announced, "E-1 will be the Alpha side accountability location".

As staged units are assigned, Command will give assignments, which will include their respective accountability unit identification and geographic location. Each crew/unit will deliver their passport to the engineer of the accountability engine where they deployed a handline from the accountability engine.

When the engineer charges the stretched hoseline with water, their unit's passport, passport pouch, and hoseline ID tag are placed on the discharge gate at the pump panel (or accountability board located nearby the Engineer). The passports on the discharge gates identifies crews and crew members on each hoseline and makes the pump panel the initial accountability location for that geographic area.

Hoseline ID tags are removed from the passport pouch at the discharge gate and placed on each respective hoseline. These hoseline ID tags provide a means to identify the individual hoselines that crews entered the building on, providing a reference point if there is a need to find lost or trapped firefighters operating on that particular handline.

As additional companies arrive to the accountability location, their passports/ pouches are delivered to the engineer, and the process is repeated.

Ladder crews will leave their passport on the apparatus dash when going to the roof to perform a roof report. When going to the interior of the structure, each ladder crew will deliver their passport to the accountability location at their point of entry.

Once a passport is delivered to the pump operator, the passport will remain on the designated discharge gate indicating the "point of entry" to the Hazard Zone until supervision is upgraded in the area with a Chief/Safety Officer.

Upon re-assignment (released or assigned to rehab) the Company Officer must retrieve their passport. Both the Company Officer, Engineer or S/D Supervisor will be responsible to see that passports are retrieved.

Crews exiting at a different location other than the original point of entry must immediately notify their original S/D Supervisor and/or Accountability Officer of their changed status. Their passport must also be retrieved.

Tactical Level Passport Accountability

When S/D supervision is transferred to a Command Officer, it elevates S/D management with a true tactical level boss vs. a working boss. This greatly facilitates the completion of the S/D objectives, it enhances the accountability process, and it increases firefighter safety in the S/D.

Command officers assigned to manage a S/D, will need to be fully turned-out, then transport and place the BC RIC bag close to the entry point of your assigned area. The BC RIC bag contains a S/D accountability and air management board to assist in running the accountability process and managing the work/rest cycle of the companies assigned to your work location. Once the accountability board is retrieved, go to the initial accountability engine where the passports are located and place them on the accountability/ air management board.

Interview the engineer/pump operator to roughly determine the current interior work times of your assigned units in the Hazard Zone. Estimate the exit times required for the units assigned to your area. Write them on the board.

Return to the entry point and start performing the standard responsibilities of a S/D Supervisor described in Command Function #6 – Organization.

A company being assigned to a location that already has a Chief Officer in place in the S/D, will report to the S/D Supervisor face-to-face, give him/her the company passport, and await an assignment from the S/D Supervisor while remaining intact as a crew in an On-Deck position.

The S/D Supervisor will need to help manage the air supply of the Units assigned to their area. This is one of the main functions of the accountability/ air management board. The board is set up to enter Unit's entry times, the standard on air working times, and the expected exit times of the Unit's assigned to the S/D.

S/D Supervisors assisting assigned Unit's with their air management times in no way takes away or diminishes the Company Officer's responsibility for managing his/her crews air supply.

Companies exiting the Hazard Zone should perform a PAR face-to-face with their S/D Supervisor. One item to cover in the face-to-face communication is the physical condition of the crew exiting the Hazard Zone. S/D and Company Officers are responsible to monitor the welfare of their personnel at all times and determine if S/D recycling or a formal rehab is appropriate.

If the company is able to recycle, they will retain their assignment to the S/D, and the S/D Supervisor will retain the Unit's passport on their accountability board, noting the company is recycling.

If the company is sent to rehab, the S/D Supervisor will return the passport to the Unit being sent to rehab and they will notify command of the status change of the company ("Charlie to Command, I'm sending E-2 to Rehab and I need another engine company to replace them").

Terminating the passport system

Passport accountability will be maintained throughout the entire incident. Accountability will be terminated once the last passport is returned to the last company exiting the Hazard Zone.

Upon termination and release from the incident, Company Officers and crewmembers will ensure that the passport / pouch are accurate and returned to the dash of their apparatus.

General passport rules:

- Passports will be delivered to the assigned accountability location prior to entering the Hazard Zone.
- Passports will reflect only those personnel presently assigned to the Unit who are ready to make entry into the Hazard Zone.
- Passports will be maintained at the point of entry in the Warm Zone.
- Passports never enter the Hazard Zone.
- Passports will be retrieved by crews upon exiting the Hazard Zone.
- Initial passport accountability location is the 1st engine to a geographic location where crews deployed hoselines.
- When S/D management is bumped up to a Command Officer, all passports are managed by the S/D Supervisors who are responsible for the Units in that work location.
- No Passports in the Command Post

1.9 – Two in – Two out / Immediate Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

In January of 1998, OSHA implemented the two in two out regulations to the Occupational Safety and Health Standard (PART 1910) - section 1910.134(g)(4). The link to the standard is below.

There are many critical factors to meeting the two in two out standard on a local level. Individual departments will need to consider several variables when complying with the standard that could include:

- Overall resource levels of the department
- Company staffing levels of the department
- Response times and order of arrival times of the department
- Volunteer vs. part time vs. career deployment practices

Click on the link to view 1910.134(g)(4) - OSHA Procedures for interior structural firefighting.

1.9 - Managing the Work/Rest Cycle

Members are totally dependent on the air that they bring with them into the Hazard Zone. We must base our operations around the realistic working times of our SCBA's. Company officers must maintain an awareness of their crew's air levels and the decision to exit the Hazard Zone must be governed by maintaining an adequate enough air reserve to deal with any sudden or unplanned events while exiting.

It is the IC's responsibility to allocate sufficient amounts of resource to key tactical areas early on in the event to prevent companies from working past safe air reserve times. This type of proactive deployment management prevents Maydays from occurring.

IC's, S/D Supervisors, and Company Officers must all agree to realistic SCBA work times in the Hazard Zone. These work times must give the workers a margin of safety in case something goes wrong while exiting. Company Officers must manage this on the task level and keep the IC or S/D Supervisor informed of their air supply and projected work times.

Company Officers must base their decision to exit the Hazard Zone on their air supply. This decision cannot be based on being relieved, or if problems still exist in their S/D.

S/D Supervisors need to use the accountability system hardware tools to assist them in managing their assigned company's work/rest cycle, air supply, and S/D accountability.

S/D Supervisors assisting assigned Unit's with their air management times in no way takes away or diminishes the Company Officer's responsibility for managing his/her crews air supply.

1.10 - The 3-Deep Deployment Model

The IC must always provide a steady, adequate stream of resources. 3-Deep is the concept where an IC always has a steady stream of workers for the required tasks based on the incident's critical factors.

The 3-Deep Deployment process starts out with the initial arriving workers who have been assigned into and are working in the Hazard Zone – the first layer.

After these key tactical positions have been covered, subsequent arriving units are assigned to On-Deck positions (described shortly) at the entry points already utilized by initial arriving Unit's. This gives the IC a rapidly assignable resource and S/D support in the form of On-Deck companies – the second layer.

Once all of the critical tactical areas are adequately backed up with On-Deck Units, subsequent arriving units will either Level 1 or 2 Stage. These staged Units now give the IC the tactical reserve needed to replace companies or to back fill any companies addressing a sudden incident problem.

This model gives you workers "**3-Deep**". Workers working in the Hazard Zone, workers ready to go to work right outside of the Hazard Zone and having replacement workers waiting for an assignment in staged positions.

This involves the IC first requesting/acquiring and then effectively and proactively assigning later arriving units to On-Deck positions while keeping a tactical reserve in staged positions.

1.11 - In Transit

"In Transit" is defined as: the time it takes for a company to reach their assigned work area after receiving an order. It often varies due to:

- Distance between staging and the incident
- Size of the incident perimeter
- Amount of equipment the company needs to assemble

The IC or S/D Supervisor will lose direct accountability of these companies while they're In Transit. It is the responsibility of the Company Officer to monitor the tactical radio channel while In Transit. For long in transit times (over 5 minutes or more) upon arrival to the assigned work area, the Company Officer should provide a radio announcement to the IC that the company is intact and in the assigned work area.

1.12 – On-Deck

"On-Deck" is defined as; a forward staging position located just outside the immediate Hazard Zone, safely distanced from the entrance of a tactical position/S/D.

Once a crew is assigned to an On-Deck position, they are first and foremost a Rapid Intervention Crew until they are given an assignment into the Hazard Zone. The On-Deck deployment model greatly assist an IC with managing Hazard Zone units work/rest cycles and their air supplies.

On-Deck crews will be supervised either by the S/D Supervisor or the Company Officer and they will remain On-Deck until assigned by the IC or S/D Supervisor. The most likely assignments for On-Deck companies are:

- Reinforce a position within an assigned sector
- Crew relief within an assigned sector
- Any other tactical position assigned by the IC
- Deploy as a RIC unit

Once the IC has deployed units to the critical S/D around the incident scene, the IC must then take a proactive aggressive approach to assigning additional resources to those S/D's. This is best achieved by assigning staged resources as On-Deck crews to those areas as soon as they arrive in staged positions. Layering On-Deck crews around the fire ground will also provide the IC with the tactical reserves to manage the standard work cycle or sudden and unexpected incident events.

Assigning On-Deck crews is done simply by contacting a staged company and directing them to go On-Deck in a specific S/D. The order would sound like this: "Command to Engine 5, go On-Deck on the Charlie side of the structure, Engine 1 is your accountability and resource location, you are assigned to Charlie sector".

A crew assigned to an On-Deck position will need to park their apparatus in a manner that doesn't block access to the scene. Crews must be intact with full PPE, bring as many spare air cylinders as possible and the RIC bag. Upon arrival, the On-Deck company must contact the IC or their S/D Supervisor and inform them that they are in position and ready to go to work.

On Deck crews must remain intact, in a ready state and monitor the tactical channel at all times. On-Deck crews must also size up the area that they are assigned to, this size up should include:

- Locating the structures entrance/exit points in their assigned area
- Interior and exterior conditions
- Unit ID of crews operating inside the structure
- Approximate location of interior crews
- Identify which crews are operating each hoseline

When an On-Deck crew is used as a relief crew, the On-Deck Company Officer should do a face-to-face and transfer information with the officer exiting the structure. The information transferred should include:

- Interior conditions
- Routing instructions to the work area
- Interior obstructions
- Additional tools/resources required
- S/D objectives

1.13 - Company Recycling

Companies operating within a S/D will require the refilling of air and fluid replacement in predictable time frames. At large scale incidents Command should establish at least 1 Rehab location. Most of the time, crews that are assigned to rehab will be placed back in service after rehabbing. The rehab area may be located quite a distance from the work area and this distance creates the potential for:

- Command losing direct accountability of companies in transit to rehab
- Difficulty reassembling and reassigning crews in a timely manner from rehab

Recycling is defined as: a timely and efficient means of air replacement and re-hydration of companies while maintaining their S/D assignment. If conditions permit, a company's work cycle could be up to 2 to 3 air cylinders. In order to maintain a steady stream of resource in critical S/D, crews being relieved and exiting their S/D should recycle themselves in a timely manner. Companies being relieved and recycled will remain in their assigned S/D, refill their air supply, re-hydrate, then report back to their S/D Supervisor or the IC that they are ready to go back to work.

Command/S/D Supervisors have the option of assigning/requesting an Air/Light unit to geographic divisions. Air/Light Units assigned to geographic areas on the fire ground will help expedite the recycle of companies within the S/D.

Company Officers should forecast the length of time they will be working in an assigned S/D and should bring spare air cylinders if necessary. This will enable a company to recycle close their S/D in a timely manner when a utility truck is not available in their S/D or area. The S/D Supervisor may need to request additional resources to replace on deck crews or have recycled crews assume vacated on deck positions.

S/D Supervisors and Company Officers are responsible to monitor the welfare of their personnel at all times and determine if S/D recycling or a formal rehab is appropriate.

1.14 - Rehab

Companies operating within a S/D will require the refilling of air and fluid replacement in predictable time frames. At working incidents, Command should establish at least 1 Rehab location.

Rehab is an assignment to a formal rehab location (close to the emergency scene) where Units will be medically evaluated, rehydrated, and replenished.

Rehab should operate on the staging/logistics channel and will inform the command post when they are close to the scene. The CP should inform rehab where to set up on the incident site. The Rehab Officer is usually the individual who drove the rehab unit to the scene, but the Rehab Officer should be upgraded as required. All necessary medical personnel shall be assigned to rehab to monitor members' welfare.

S/D Supervisors and Company Officers working a Hazard Zone are responsible to monitor the welfare of their personnel at all times and determine if S/D recycling or a formal rehab is appropriate. When a formal rehab is appropriate, the S/D Supervisor or the Company Officer will notify the IC of a status change and the re-assignment of a Unit(s) to rehab. The IC must notify the Rehab Officer of all units who are re-assigned to rehab

Units assigned to rehab must do a face-to-face with the Rehab Officer when arriving to rehab and deliver the company's passport.

The Rehab Officer will notify the CP when each individual Unit arrives to the rehab location. This will prevent the IC from losing accountability of a company in-transit to the rehab location.

Once rehabbed, units can be assigned back to the Incident scene through the rehab officer, but most of the time they will be placed back into service. If this is the case, the Rehab Officer will confirm with the CP that company is being placed back into service and will return the company's passport when they are leaving the rehab area.

In the rare instances when a company will be re-assigned back to an active S/D, the Rehab Officer will take on the role similar to a Level 2 Staging Manager, returning the Unit's passport, and giving them the following information:

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1. Any tasks, the location and objectives assigned to the unit
2. The area where to report to, or the S/D boss to whom they are to report to
3. The tactical channel on which they are to operate on