

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 1 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Purpose**

This purpose of the guideline is to define Albuquerque Fire Department's definition of Incident Command. This guideline identifies the responsibilities of Command at all emergency incidents for which AFD maintains management responsibility.

It defines the functions of Command, the Incident Command System (ICS), and other Command considerations in order to provide for the safety of personnel operating at emergency incidents; to improve the use of resources and tactical effectiveness; to meet OSHA and EPA regulations requiring the use of an Incident Command System for Hazardous Materials Incidents; and to meet NFPA Standard 1500 requirements for the use of an Incident Command System for operations at all emergency incidents.

**Guideline**

The Albuquerque Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergency incidents. In order to effectively manage personnel and resources, and to provide for the safety and welfare of personnel, all personnel will work within the Incident Command System (ICS) at an incident scene. Within ICS, the Incident Commander is responsible for building a command structure that matches the organizational needs of the incident to achieve the systematic completion of the tactical priorities for the incident.

**Operational Guidance**

**I. Responsibilities of Command**

- A. The Incident Commander is responsible to provide for the safety, accountability and welfare of personnel. This is to be ongoing through the duration of the incident.
- B. The Incident Commander is responsible for the completion of the tactical objectives.
  - 1. Tactical objectives, listed in order of priority, include the following:
    - a. Remove endangered occupants and treat the injured.
      - i. The benchmark for completing this is "All Clear."

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 2 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

b. Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety.

i. The benchmark for completing this is “Fire Under Control.”

c. Conserve property.

i. The benchmark for achieving this is “Loss Stopped.”

**II. The functions of command**

A. These define standard activities that are performed by the Incident Commander to achieve the tactical objectives.

B. The functions of command include the following:

1. Assume and announce Command, and establish an effective operating position (or Command Post).

2. Rapidly evaluate the situation (perform a size-up).

3. Initiate, maintain, and control the communications process.

4. Identify the overall strategy, develop an incident action plan (IAP), and assign companies and personnel consistent with pre-fire plans and Standard Operating Guidelines.

5. Develop an effective Incident Management Organization.

6. Provide tactical objectives.

7. Review, evaluate, and revise the IAP as needed.

8. Command goals and objectives.

a. Establish a strong, direct, and visible Command from the onset of the incident.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 3 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- b. Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities of all individuals operating within the Incident Command System.
- c. Provide a system to process information to support incident management, planning, and decision-making.
- d. Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command to subsequent arriving officers.

**III. Incident Command System (ICS) operations**

- A. Command is the responsibility of the Incident Commander.
- B. The Incident Command System should be considered the basic management system to be used on any size or type of incident.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to develop an organizational structure.
  - 1. The scope of the emergency determines the size and complexity of the organizational structure.
  - 2. The full establishment of the ICS should be viewed as an extension of the existing incident organization.
- D. The determination to expand the organization will be that of Command.

**IV. Establishing command**

- A. The first fire department member or unit to arrive at the scene will assume command of the incident.
  - 1. This initial Incident Commander shall remain in command until command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and terminated.
- B. The first unit or member on the scene must initiate whatever parts of the Incident Command System that are needed to effectively manage the incident scene.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 4 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- C. A single company incident (such as a trash fire or single patient EMS incident) may only require that the responding company or unit announce their arrival on-scene.
- D. For incidents requiring the commitment of multiple companies or units, the first unit, or member, on-scene must establish and announce "Command" and develop an ICS appropriate to the incident.
- E. The radio designation "Command" will be used along with the geographical location of the incident (such as, "7th Street Command," "Convention Center Command").
  - 1. This designation will remain throughout the duration of the incident. The designation of "Command" will remain with the officer currently in Command of the incident throughout the event.

**V. Radio reports**

- A. In addition to assuming and announcing Command, the first arriving fire department unit will give an initial radio report (size up).
- B. The radio report will include the following information:
  - 1. The arriving unit's designation.
  - 2. A brief description of the incident situation (such as building size, occupancy, HazMat release, or multi-vehicle accident).
  - 3. Obvious conditions (such as working fire, HazMat spill, or multiple patients).
  - 4. A brief description of actions taken.
  - 5. Declaration of strategy (as they apply to structure fires).
  - 6. Any obvious safety concerns.
  - 7. Identification and location of Command.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 5 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

8. Announcement of Accountability location.

**VI. Command options**

- A. It is the responsibility of the first arriving unit or member to assume command of the incident.
  1. This presents several options, depending on the situation. If a chief officer, member, or unit without tactical capabilities (such as a staff vehicle or equipment) initiates command, the establishment of a Command Post should be a top priority.
  2. At most incidents, the initial Incident Commander will be a company officer.
- B. Command options define the Company Officer's direct involvement in tactical activities and the mode of command that may be used.
  1. Investigative mode (Nothing Showing).
    - a. These situations generally require investigation by the initial arriving company while other units remain in a staged mode.
    - b. The officer should go with the company to investigate while using a portable radio to command the incident.
  2. Mobile Command mode (Offensive attack strategy).
    - a. These are situations that require immediate action to stabilize the incident, and require the company officer's assistance and direct involvement in the attack.
    - b. In these situations, the Company Officer goes with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 6 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- c. Examples of these situations may include the following:
  - i. Offensive fire attacks (especially in marginal situations).
  - ii. Critical life safety situations (such as, rescue) which must be achieved in a compressed time.
  - iii. Any incident where the safety and welfare of firefighters is a major concern.
  - iv. Obvious working incidents that require further investigation by the company officer.
- c. Where fast intervention is critical, utilization of the portable radio will permit the company officer's involvement in the attack without neglecting Command responsibilities.
- d. The Mobile Command mode should not last more than a few minutes and will end with one of the following:
  - i. The situation is stabilized.
  - ii. The situation is not stabilized and the Company Officer must withdraw to the exterior and establish a command post. At some time, the company officer must decide whether or not to withdraw the remainder of the crew, based on the crew's capabilities and experience, safety issues, and the ability to communicate with the crew. No crew should remain in a hazardous area without radio communications capabilities.
  - iii. Command is transferred to another higher-ranking officer. When a command officer is assuming command, the battalion commander may opt to return the company officer to his/her crew, or assign him/her to a subordinate position.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 7 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

3. Stationary Command mode incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion, require immediate strong, direct, overall command.
  - a. In such cases, the Company Officer will initially assume an exterior, safe, and effective Command position and maintain that position until relieved by a higher-ranking officer.
  - b. A tactical worksheet should be initiated and used to assist in managing this type of incident.
  
4. If the company officer selects the Stationary Command mode, the following options are available regarding the assignment of the remaining crew members.
  - a. The officer may “upgrade” within the company and place the company into action with two or more members.
    - i. One of the crew members will serve as the acting company officer and must be provided with a portable radio.
    - ii. The collective and individual capabilities and experience of the crew will regulate this action.
  - b. The officer may assign the crew members to work under the supervision of another company officer.
    - i. In such cases, the officer assuming Command must communicate with the officer of the other company and indicate the assignment of those personnel.
  - c. The officer may elect to assign the crew members to perform staff functions to assist Command.
    - i. A company officer assuming Command has a choice of modes and degrees of personal involvement in the

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 8 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

tactical activities, but continues to be fully responsible for the Command functions.

- ii. The initiative and judgment of the officer are of great importance. The modes identified are guidelines to assist the officer in planning appropriate actions.
- iii. The actions initiated should conform to one of the above-mentioned modes of operation.

**VII. Passing command**

- A. In certain situations, it may be advantageous for a first-arriving Company Officer to pass Command to the next company on the scene.
  - 1. This is indicated when the initial commitment of the first-arriving company requires a full crew (such as at a high-rise fire or an immediate rescue situation) and another company is on the scene.
- B. "Passing Command" to a unit that is not on the scene creates a gap in the Command process and compromises incident management.
  - 1. To prevent this "gap," Command will not be passed to an officer who is not on-scene.
  - 2. It is preferable to have the initial arriving Company Officer continue to operate in the Mobile Command mode until Command can be passed to an on-scene unit.

**VIII. Transfer of command**

- A. Command is transferred to improve the quality of the Command organization. The following guidelines outline the transfer of Command process.
  - 1. The officer assuming Command will communicate with the person being relieved by radio or face-to-face.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 9 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- a. Face-to-face communication is the preferred method to transfer Command.
2. The person being relieved will brief the officer assuming Command indicating at least the following information:
    - a. Incident conditions (such as, the fire location, extent of Haz-Mat spill or release, or number of patients).
    - b. Incident action plan (IAP).
    - c. Progress made toward completion of the tactical objectives.
    - d. Any safety considerations.
    - e. The deployment and assignment of operating companies and personnel.
    - f. Appraisal of need for additional resources.
- B. The first-arriving Command Officer may assume Command of the incident following transfer of Command.
  - C. The second-arriving Command Officer should report to the command post for assignment.
  - D. Later arriving, senior Command Officers may choose to assume Command, or assume adviser positions.
  - E. Assumption of Command is discretionary for Deputy Chiefs and the Fire Chief.
    1. Within the chain of Command, the actual transfer of Command will be regulated by the following guideline:
      - a. The person being relieved of Command should review the tactical worksheet with the Officer assuming Command.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 10 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- i. This tool provides the most effective framework for Command transfer as they outline the location and status of personnel and resources in a standard format.
- ii. The person being relieved of Command will be assigned to best advantage by the officer assuming Command.

**IX. General considerations**

- A. The response and arrival of additional ranking officers on the incident scene should strengthen the overall Command function.
  1. As the incident escalates, the Incident Commander should use these officers as needed.
- B. The arrival of a ranking officer on the incident scene does not mean that Command has been transferred to that officer.
  1. Command is transferred only when the outlined transfer of Command process has been completed.
  2. Chief officers and staff personnel should report directly to the Command Post for assignment by the Incident Commander.

**X. Command Staff**

- A. As the incident grows into and past the requirements of a first-alarm assignment, the Incident Commander can become overloaded and overwhelmed with information management, assigning companies, filling out and updating the tactical worksheet, planning, forecasting, calling for additional resources, talking on the radio, and fulfilling all the other functions of command.
- B. The immediate need of command at this point in the incident is support.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 11 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

1. The Incident Commander should utilize the next-arriving Battalion Commander as a support officer.
  2. If the Incident Commander is still playing “catch up” with the functions of Command, the only reason to assign the second Battalion Commander to a sector is if safety is an extreme concern in that sector.
- C. Roles and responsibilities of the Support Officer.
1. Define, evaluate, and recommend changes to the IAP.
  2. Provide direction relating to tactical priorities, specific critical fireground factors, and safety.
  3. Evaluate the need for additional resources.
  4. Assign Logistics responsibilities.
  5. Assist with the tactical worksheet for control and accountability.
  6. Evaluate the fireground organization and span-of-control.
- C. Roles and responsibilities of the Senior Advisor.
1. The Senior Advisor will normally be the senior Battalion Commander, the Operations Deputy Chief, or the highest-ranking officer in the command post.
  2. The officer serving as “Command” and the support officer would focus on the completion of the tactical priorities, the strategic and tactical plan and the other components of the incident.
    - a. The Senior Advisor’s focus is looking at the entire incident and its impact from a broader perspective and providing direction, guidance and advice to the “Command” and/or support officer.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Incident Command

SOG 5-7-01

Page 12 of 12

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- b. In this role the Senior Advisor is essentially acting as the overall Incident Commander.
- 3. Specific roles and responsibilities of the Senior Advisor Include the following:
  - a. Review and evaluate the IAP, and initiate any needed changes.
  - b. Provide on-going review of the overall “Big Picture” incident.
  - c. Review the organizational structure, initiate change or expansion to meet incident needs.
  - d. Initiate section and branch function as required.
  - e. Provide a liaison with other city agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners and/or tenants.
- D. In order to maintain continuity and overall effectiveness, the Senior Advisor and the Support Officer must be in the Command Post with the Incident Commander.
  - 1. When a Support Officer and Senior Advisor are supporting “Command” in the command post, there are three people performing the functions of Command, as shown in Table 1.
  - 2. They are working as a team to enhance the command process and make the functions of command more effective.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Command**

**SOG 5-7-01**

**Page 13 of 12**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

Table 1.

Command Team		
Senior Advisor	Support Officer	Incident Commander

- E. The officer assigned to communicate directly to companies, sectors, or branches will use the radio designation "Command" and should be the only member of the command team talking on the tactical radio channel.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 1 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

## **Command Structure**

It will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander to develop an organizational structure utilizing standard operating procedures as soon as possible after arrival and implementation of initial tactical control measures. The size and complexity of the organizational structure, obviously, will be determined by the scope of the emergency.

### **Incident Command System Operations**

The Incident Command System should be considered the basic incident management system to be used on any size or kind of incident. The only change in using the Incident Command System on a very large incident rather than a small incident is the method of growth of the basic emergency management organization to meet the increased needs. Thus, the full establishment of the Incident Command System should be viewed as an extension of the existing incident organization. The determination to expand the organization will be that of Command and would be done, when a determination is made that the initial attack or reinforced attack will be insufficient. That determination would be made by the Incident Commander at the scene.

### **ICS Organizational Development**

The following examples are guides in using the basic Incident Command System Organization for various size incidents.

Initial Response	1-5 increments/First Alarm
Reinforced Response	Greater Alarm/Mutual Aid

#### **Initial Response**

The first arriving unit or officer will assume Command until arrival of a higher ranking officer.

Upon arrival of a higher ranking officer, they will be briefed by the on-scene Incident Commander. The higher ranking officer may then assume Command. This transfer of Command is to be announced. The officer being relieved of Command responsibilities will be reassigned by the new Incident Commander.

#### **Reinforced Response**

A reinforced response will be initiated when the on-scene Incident Commander determines that the initial response resources will be insufficient to deal with the size or complexity of the Incident.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Command Structure

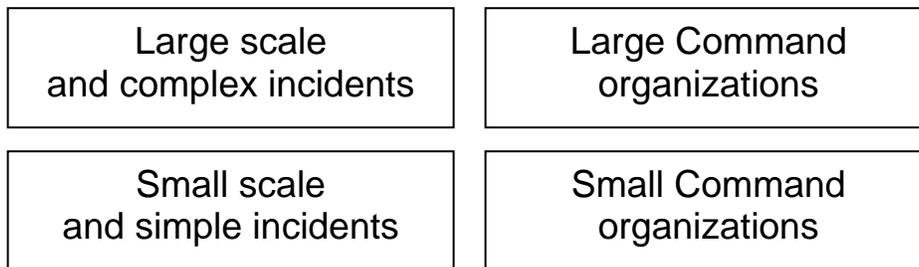
SOG 5-7-02

Page 2 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

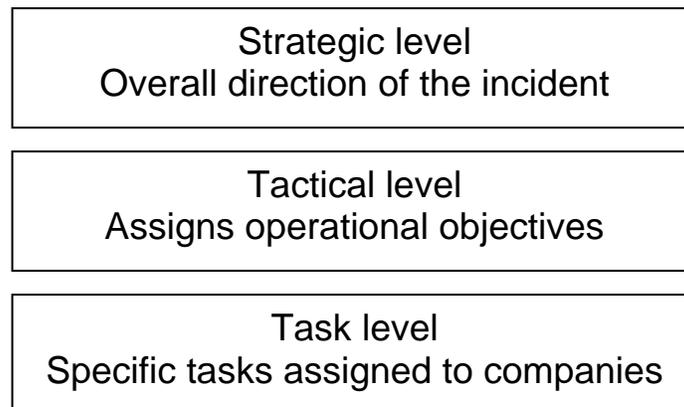
**Command Organization**

The Command organization must develop at a pace which stays ahead of the tactical deployment of personnel and resources. In order for the incident Commander to manage the incident, they must first be able to direct, control, and track the position and function of all operating companies. Building a Command organization is the best support mechanism the Incident Commander can utilize to achieve the harmonious balance between managing personnel and incident needs. Simply put, this means:



**Note:** The Incident Commander should have more people working than Commanding.

*The basic configuration of Command includes three levels:*



**Strategic Level:**

The Strategic level involves the overall Command of the incident the Incident Commander is responsible for the strategic level of the Command structure. The action plan should cover all strategic responsibilities, all tactical objectives, and all support activities needed during the entire operational period. The Action Plan defines where and when resources will be assigned to the incident to control the situation. This plan is the basis for developing a Command organization, assigning all resources, and

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 3 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

establishing tactical objectives.

The strategic level responsibilities include:

- Offensive, Defensive, or Rescue in Progress
- Determining the appropriate strategy
- Establish overall incident objectives.
- Setting priorities.
- Develop an incident action plan.
- Obtaining and assigning resources.
- Predicting outcomes and planning.
- Assigning specific objectives to tactical level units.

**Tactical Level:**

The Tactical level directs operational activities toward specific objectives. Tactical level officers include Branch Directors and Sector Officers who are in charge of Sector resources. Tactical level officers are responsible for specific geographic areas or functions, and supervising assigned personnel. A tactical level assignment comes with the authority to make decisions and assignments, within the boundaries of the overall plan and safety conditions. The accumulated achievements of tactical objectives should accomplish the strategy as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.

**Task Level:**

The Task Level refers to those activities normally accomplished by individual companies or specific personnel. The task level is where the work is actually done. Task level activities are routinely supervised by Company Officers. The accumulated achievements of task level activities should accomplish tactical objectives.

**Command Structure - Basic Organization**

*Examples:*

The most basic Command structure combines all three levels of the Command structure. The Company Officer on a single engine response to a dumpster fire determines the strategy and tactics, and supervises the crew doing the task.

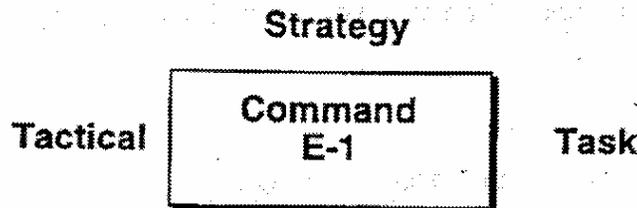
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Command Structure

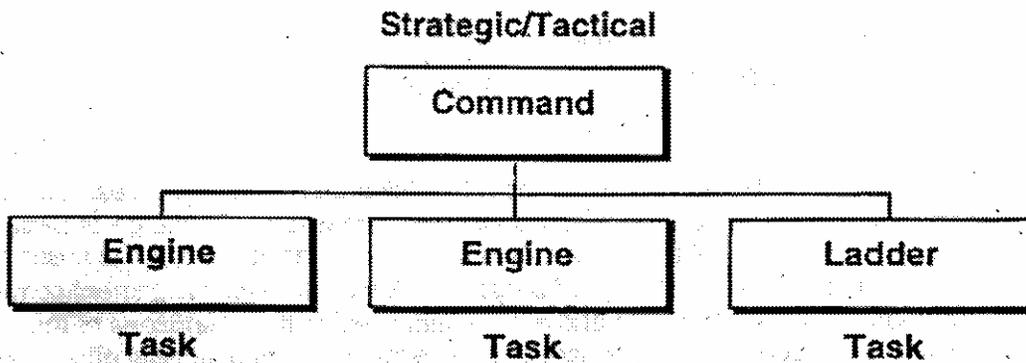
SOG 5-7-02

Page 4 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
----------------------	----------------------	----------	----------------------



The basic structure for a "routine" incident, involving a small number of companies requires only two levels of the Command structure. The role of Command combines the strategic and tactical levels. Companies report directly to Command and operate at the task level.



**Command Structure: (Sector)**

Sectors are tactical level management units that group companies. Sectors represent both geographic and functional operations. The following examples illustrate the use of this term.

**Tactical Level Officers: (Sector)**

As an incident escalates, the Incident Commander should group companies to work in Sectors. A Sector is the organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area or specific function. In order to effectively use the Sector terminology, the Albuquerque Fire Department has adopted the following method for dividing an incident scene.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

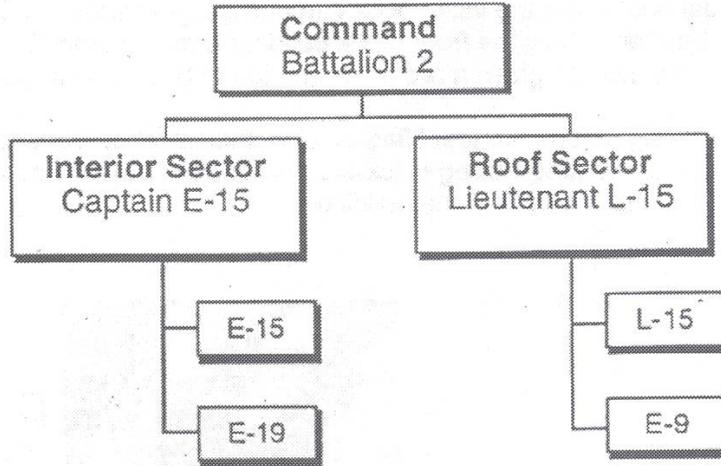
Command Structure

SOG 5-7-02

Page 5 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
----------------------	----------------------	----------	----------------------

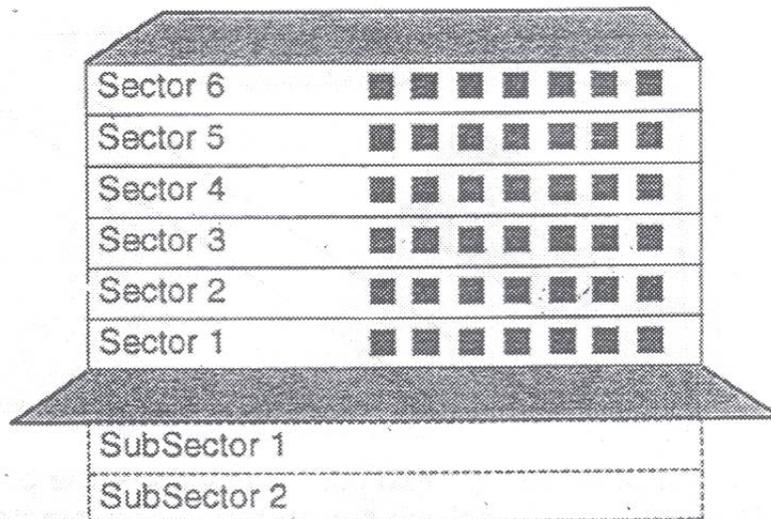
Sector Designation



Sector Designation

Tactical Assignments for a Multi-Story Incident

In multi-story occupancies, Sectors will usually be indicated by floor number (Sector 6 indicates 6th floor). When operating in levels below grade, such as basements the use of sub Sectors is appropriate.



ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Command Structure

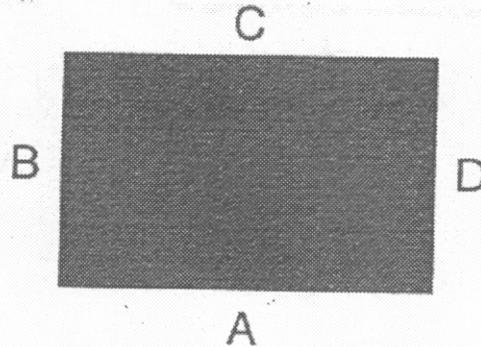
SOG 5-7-02

Page 6 of 11

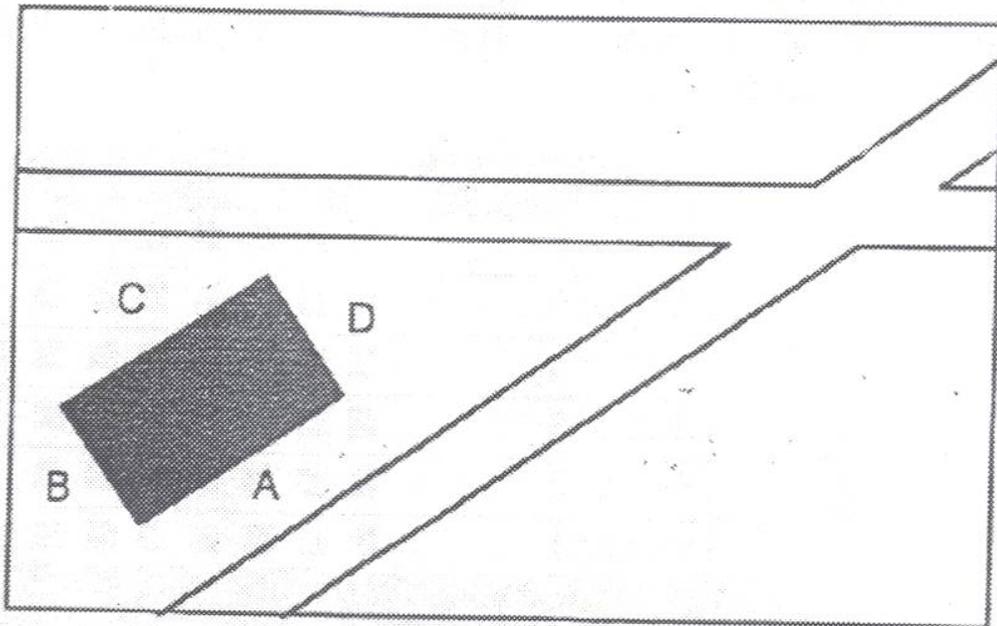
SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Sector Designation**

For situations where the incident has an odd geographical layout - not obvious North, South, East and West the front of the building is designated "Sector A" and the remaining sides are given a radio designation of B, C, D in a clockwise manner. Exterior designations are identified by alphabetical letter identifiers. Starting at the front of a building and progressing clock-wise around the building as illustrated. Sector A will always indicate the front of the building.



For Example:



**Note:** For clarity of purpose during radio communications, the phonetic designations of "Alpha", "Bravo", "Charlie" and "Delta" are suggested. For example: "Delta Sector to Command."

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

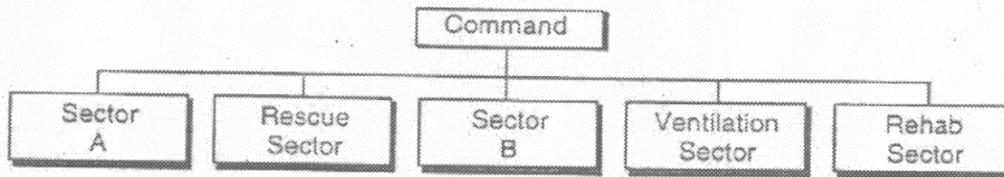
**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 7 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

A Sector is that organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area or for a specific functional assignment. The Sector level is the organization level that falls between single resources, or a task force, and the Branch level.

**Sector Designation:**



**Command Structure - Sector: Basic Operational Approach**

The use of Sectors in the Command organization provides a standard system to divide the incident scene into smaller subordinate management units or areas.

Complex emergency situations often exceed the capability of one officer to effectively manage the entire operation. Sectors reduce the span of control to more manageable smaller-sized units. Sectors allow the Incident Commander to communicate principally with these organizational levels, rather than multiple, individual Company Officers providing an effective Command structure and incident scene organization. Generally, Sector responsibilities should be assigned early in the incident, typically to the first Company assigned to a geographic area or function. This early establishment of Sectors provides an effective Incident Command organization framework on which the operation can be built and expanded.

The number of Sectors that can be effectively managed by the Incident Commander varies. Normal span of control is 3-7. In fast-moving, complex operations, a span of control of no more than 5 Sectors is indicated. In slower moving less complex operations, the Incident Commander may effectively manage more Sectors.

Where the number of Sectors exceeds the span-of-control, that the Incident Commander can effectively manage, the incident organization can be expanded to meet incident needs by assigning an Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section is responsible for the Branches or Sectors. Each Branch is responsible for several Sectors and should be assigned a separate radio channel if available.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 8 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

Sector procedures provide an array of major functions, which may be selectively implemented according to the needs of a particular situation. This places responsibility for the details and execution of each particular function on a Sector.

When effective Sectors have been established, the Incident Commander can concentrate on overall strategy and resource assignment, allowing the Sectors to manage their assigned units. The Incident Commander determines strategy and assigns tactical objectives and resources to the Sectors. Each Sector Officer is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources at their disposal, in order to complete the tactical objectives assigned by the Incident Commander. Sectors are also responsible for communicating needs and progress to Command.

Sectors reduce the overall amount of radio communications. Most routine communications within a Sector should be conducted in a face-to-face manner between Company Officers and their Sector Officer. This process reduces unnecessary radio traffic and increases the ability to transmit critical radio communications.

The safety of firefighting personnel represents the major reason for establishing a Sector. Each Sector must maintain communication with assigned companies to control both their position and function.

The Sector must constantly monitor all hazardous situations and risks to personnel. The Sector must take appropriate action to ensure that companies are operating in a safe and effective manner.

The Incident Commander should begin to assign Sectors based on the following factors:

- Situations which will eventually involve a number of companies or functions, beyond the capability of Command to directly control. Command should initially assign Sector responsibilities to the first companies assigned to a geographic area or function until Battalion Commanders are available.
- When Command can no longer effectively cope with (or manage) the number of companies currently involved in the operation.
- When companies are involved in complex operations (large interior or geographic area, hazardous materials, technical rescues, etc.)
- When companies are operating from tactical positions which Command has little or no direct control over (i.e., out of sight).
- When the situation presents special hazards and close controls is required over operating companies (i.e., unstable structural conditions, hazardous materials, heavy fire load, marginal offensive situations, etc.).

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 9 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

When establishing a Sector, the Incident Commander will assign each Sector:

1. Tactical objectives
2. A radio designation (Roof Sector, Sector A, etc.)
3. The identity of resources assigned to the Sector

### **Sector Guidelines**

Sectors will be regulated by the following guidelines:

- It will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to assign Sectors as required for effective emergency operations; this assignment will relate to both geographic Sectors and functional Sectors.
- Command shall advise each Sector of specific tactical objectives. The overall strategy and plan will and should be provided, (time permitting) so the Sector has some idea of what is going on and how their assignment fits into the overall plan.
- The number of companies assigned to a Sector will depend upon conditions within that Sector. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of companies operating within a Sector and the capability of that Sector to effectively direct Operations. If a Sector cannot control the resources within the Sector, they should notify the Incident Commander so that Sector responsibilities can be split or other corrective action taken. In most cases 3-7 companies represent the maximum span of control for a Sector.
- The incident scene should be subdivided in a manner that makes sense. This should be accomplished by assigning Sectors to geographic locations (i.e., Roof Sector, Sector A, etc.) and assigning functional responsibilities to a Sector (i.e. Ventilation Sector, Salvage Sector, etc.).

Sector Officers will use the Sector designation in radio communications (i.e., "Roof Sector to Command").

Sectors will be commanded by Battalion Commanders, Company Officers, or any other Fire Department member designated by Command.

The guideline for span-of-control with Sectors is five. This applies to Operational Sectors. Many of the functional responsibilities (P.I.O., Safety, etc.) are preassigned to certain individuals and are driven by standard operating procedures. These types of functional responsibilities should operate automatically and as such should not be included in the Incident Commander's span of control.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 10 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

Regular Transfer of Command procedures will be followed in transferring Sector responsibility.

In some cases, a Sector Officer may be assigned to an area/function to evaluate and report conditions and advise Command of needed tasks and resources. The assigned officer will proceed to the Sector, evaluate and report conditions to the Incident Commander, and assume responsibility for directing resources and operations within his/her assigned area of responsibility.

The Sector Officer must be in a position to directly supervise and monitor operations. This will require the Sector Officer to be equipped with the appropriate protective clothing and equipment for their area of responsibility. Sector Officers assigned to operate within the hazard zone must be accompanied by a partner.

Sector Officers will be responsible for and in control of all assigned functions within their Sector. This requires each Sector Officer to:

- A. Complete objectives assigned by Command.
- B. Account for all assigned personnel.
- C. Ensure that operations are conducted safely.
- D. Monitor work progress.
- E. Redirect activities as necessary.
- F. Coordinate actions with related activities, and adjacent Sectors.
- G. Monitor welfare of assigned personnel.
- H. Request additional resources as needed.
- I. Provide Command with essential and frequent progress reports.
- J. Reallocate resources within the Sector.

The Sector Officer should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible.

The primary function of Company Officers working within a Sector is to direct the operations of their individual crews in performing assigned tasks. Company Officers will advise their Sector Officer of work progress, preferably face-to-face. All requests for additional resources or assistance within a Sector must be directed to the Sector Officer. Sector Officers will communicate with "Command."

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Command Structure**

**SOG 5-7-02**

**Page 11 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

Each Sector Officer will keep Command informed of conditions and progress in the Sector through regular progress reports. The Sector Officer must prioritize progress reports to essential information only. Command must be advised immediately of significant changes, particularly those involving the ability or inability to complete an objective, hazardous conditions, accidents, structural collapse, etc.

When a company is assigned from Staging to an operating Sector, the company will be told to what Sector, and the name of the Supervisor they will be reporting to. The Sector Officer will be informed of which particular companies or units have been assigned by the Incident Commander. It is then the responsibility of the Sector Officer to contact the assigned company to transmit any instructions relative to the specific action requested.

Sector Officers will monitor the condition of the crews operating in their Sector. Relief crews will be requested in a manner to safeguard the safety of personnel and maintain progress toward the Sector objectives. Sector Officers will ensure an orderly and thorough reassignment of crews to rehabilitation. Crews must report to rehabilitation intact to facilitate accountability

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 1 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Purpose**

This guideline defines the approved methods by which Albuquerque Fire Department implements Command during large-scale events that require an expansion of the basic Incident Command System (ICS). It identifies the required positions that should be implemented, and the most effective management structure.

**Guideline**

As a small incident escalates into a major incident, maintaining an effective span-of-control may become difficult as more sectors are implemented. The Incident Commander additionally may become overwhelmed and overloaded with the many facets of information management. The Incident Commander is responsible for assigning companies, updating the tactical worksheet, planning, forecasting, requesting additional resources, radio communications, and fulfilling all the other functions of Command. At times like these, the Incident Commander's most immediate need is functional support. As additional ranking officers arrive on-scene, the Command organization may be expanded through implementation of branches and sectors. It will additionally require the involvement of company officers and other staff personnel to fill the required Command and General Staff positions. Sector level positions will be implemented as they are needed, based on the needs of the incident.

**Operational Guidance**

**I. Expanding the organization**

- A. One of the first sections typically implemented is the operations section chief. The operations section is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities, the tactical priorities, and the overall safety and welfare of all personnel working in the operations section.
  - 1. An Incident Commander should choose to implement and staff an operations section as a span-of-control mechanism. When the number of branches or sectors exceeds the capability of the Incident Commander to manage effectively, the Incident Commander may staff the operations section to reduce their span-of-control, thereby transferring the direct management of all tactical activities to the operations section chief.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 2 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. The operations section chief will use appropriate radio channels to communicate strategic and specific objectives to the branches or sectors.

**II. Development of branches**

- A. Sectors identify tactical level assignments in the command structure. As the span-of-control begins to be excessive, or the incident becomes more complex, or when there are two or more distinctly different operations concurrently ongoing (i.e., fire suppression, EMS, evacuation, etc.), the organization should be further sub-divided into branches. Branches may be established during an incident to serve several purposes; however, they are not always essential to the organization of the operations section.
- B. In general, branches may be established for a number of reasons.
  1. To ensure an effective span-of-control.
  2. When there are multiple, different and distinct functional sectors operating at the same time and event.
  3. When the event involves multiple jurisdictions.
  4. When the numbers of sectors exceeds the recommended span-of-control.
- C. The Incident Commander or operations section chief should designate a multi-branch structure, and allocate sectors within those branches. In the following example, the operations section chief has five sectors reporting to him, with three additional sectors being added. At this point, a two-branch organization was formed.
  1. Figure 1 shows the organization before expansion to a multi-branch structure.

**Figure 1**

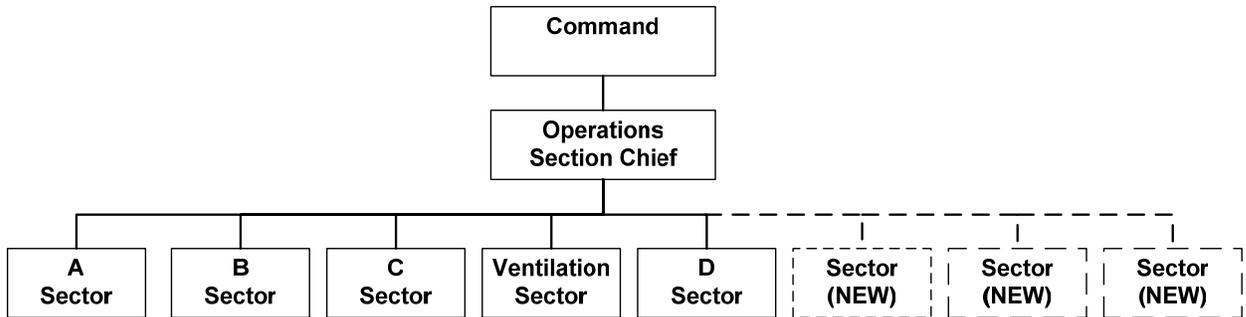
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 3 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------



ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

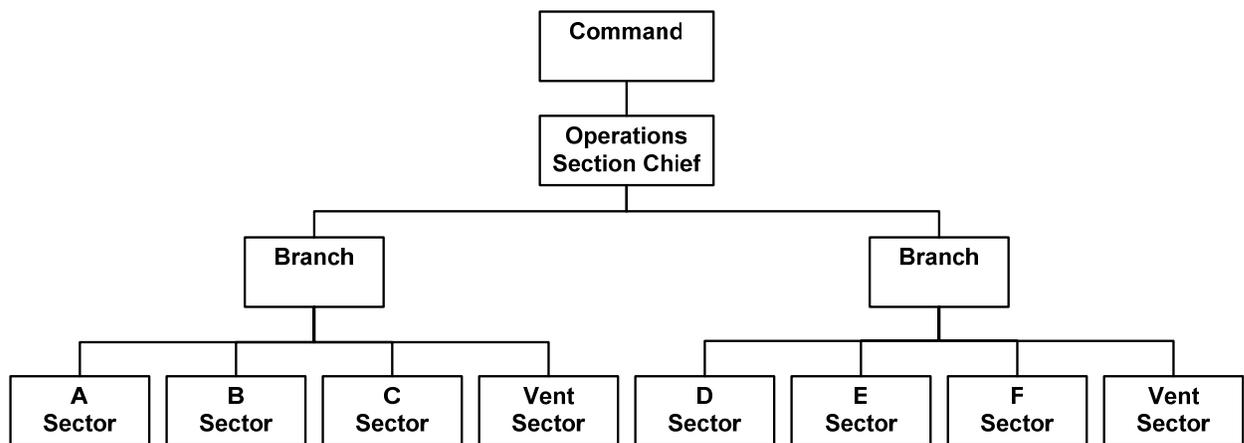
SOG 5-7-03

Page 4 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. Figure 2 shows the organization with a two-branch organization.

Figure 2



- D. Operations section branches should operate in their area of responsibility on their own (separate) radio channels and communicate to operations on a different channel if possible.
1. The radio designation of branches should reflect the objective of the branch when designating functional branches, (such as, HazMat branch or Multi-casualty branch). Tactical branches may be designated numerically (such as, branch I, branch II, or branch III).
  2. When the Incident Commander implements branch directors, the sector officers should be notified of their new supervisor. This information should include the following:
    - a. To which branch the sector has been re-assigned.
    - b. The radio channel on which the branch is operating.
  3. Radio communications should be directed from the sector officer to the branches - instead of to the Incident Commander or operations. Branch directors will receive direction from the Incident Commander or operations. They will then relay that information to sectors within their respective branches.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

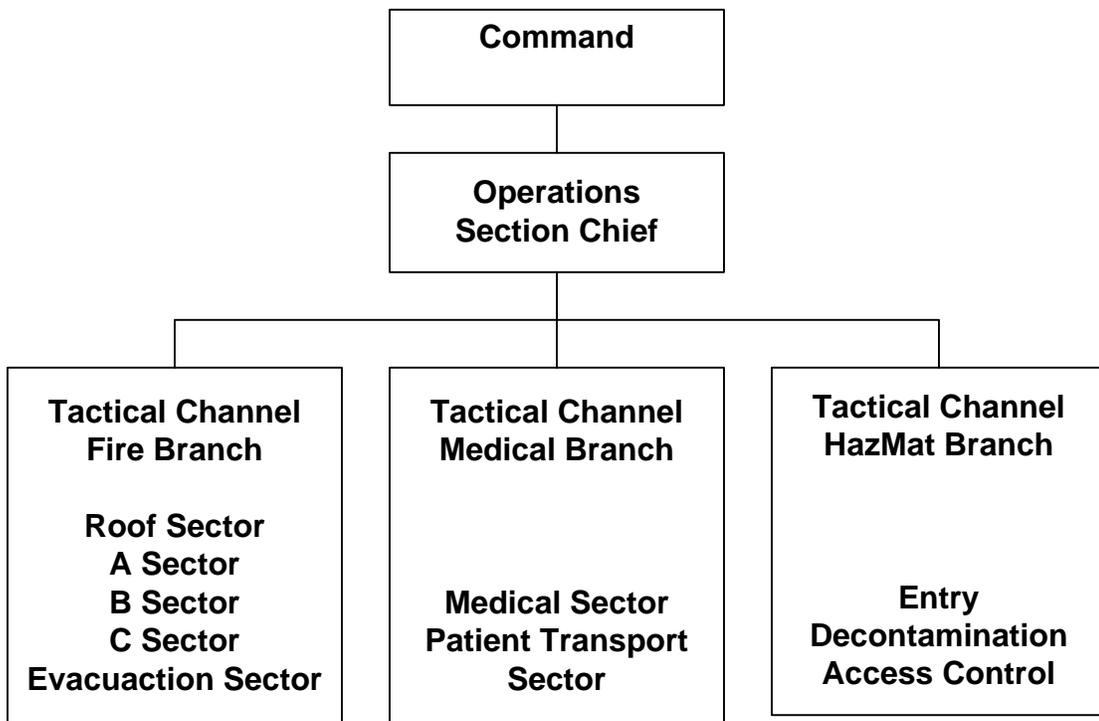
**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 5 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

4. Figure 3 illustrates an expanded organizational structure that includes functional branches and subordinate sectors.

**Figure 3**



- E. Depending on the situation, branches may be located at the command post or at operational locations. When located at the command post, branches can communicate on a face-to-face basis with the operations section chief and/or Incident Commander.
1. When an incident encompasses a large geographic area, it may be more effective to have branches in tactical locations. When branches are sent to tactical positions, they should immediately implement command-and-control within their respective branches. In these situations, operations must assign someone to monitor a "Command Channel."

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

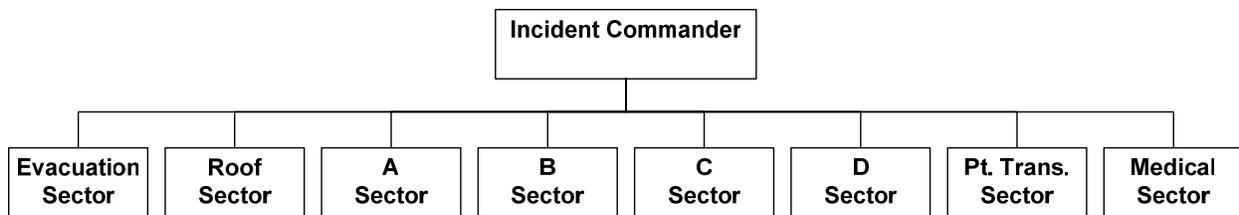
SOG 5-7-03

Page 6 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. Branches are not limited to operations. Any of the section chiefs may recommend the implementation of branches within their sections -- with approval of the Incident Commander.
3. The organization expands from an over-tasked one with multiple sectors, as shown in Figure 4:

Figure 4



4. To a more efficient one, with the incorporation of branches, as shown in Figure 5:

Figure 5

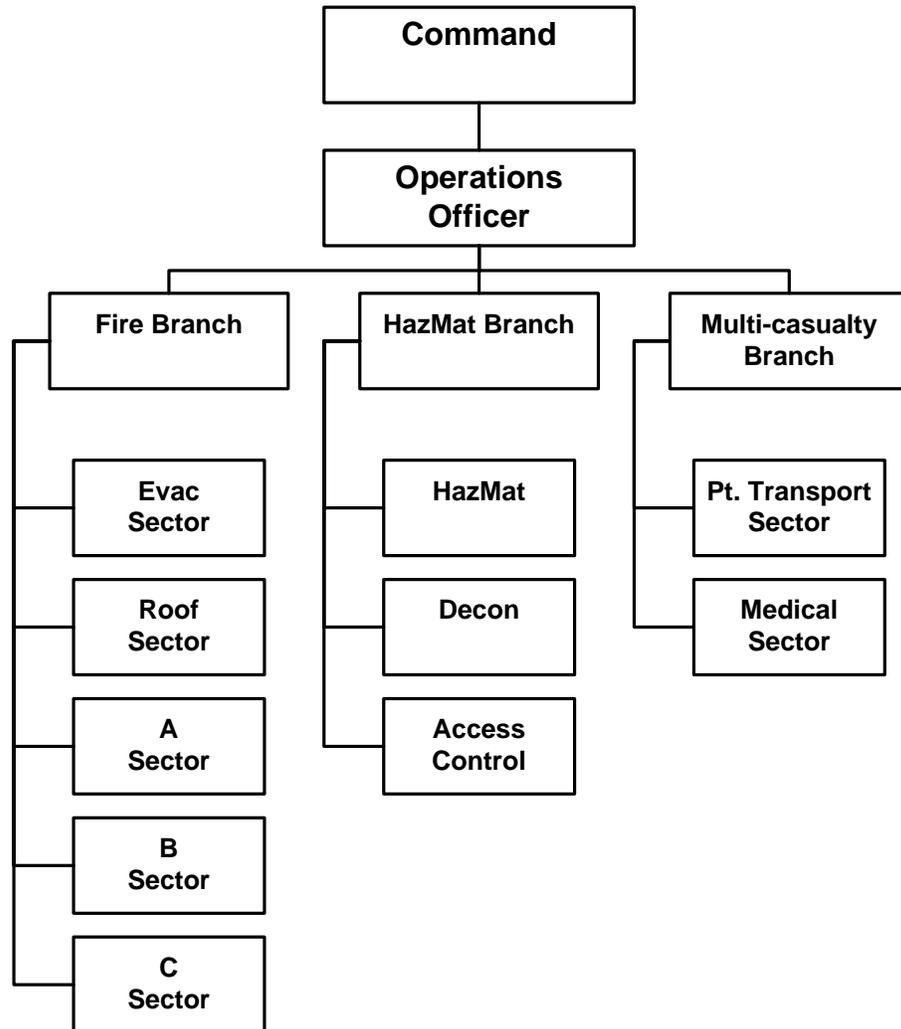
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 7 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------



**III. Functional branches**

- A. When the nature of an incident calls for a functional branch structure, (such as a major aircraft crash within a jurisdiction, involving three separate departments within that jurisdiction: police, fire, and health service), each department would maintain its own functional branch, and all would operate under the direction of a single operations section chief.
- B. As illustrated in Figure 6, the operations section chief is from the fire department and is working with deputies from police and health services

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

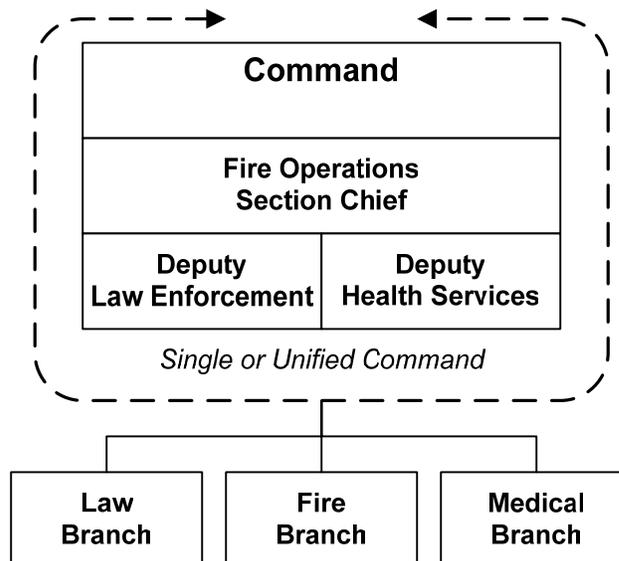
Page 8 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

departments. Other alignments could be made depending upon the jurisdiction plan and type of emergency.

1. Note that Incident Command in this situation could be either *Single* or *Unified Command*, depending upon the jurisdiction.

Figure 6



IV. Multi-jurisdictional incidents

- A. When an incident is multi-jurisdictional, resources are best managed by the agencies that have routine control over those resources. Branches should be utilized at incidents where the span-of-control with sectors is maximized.
- B. Incidents involving two or more distinctly different major management components (such as a large fire with a major evacuation or a large fire

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

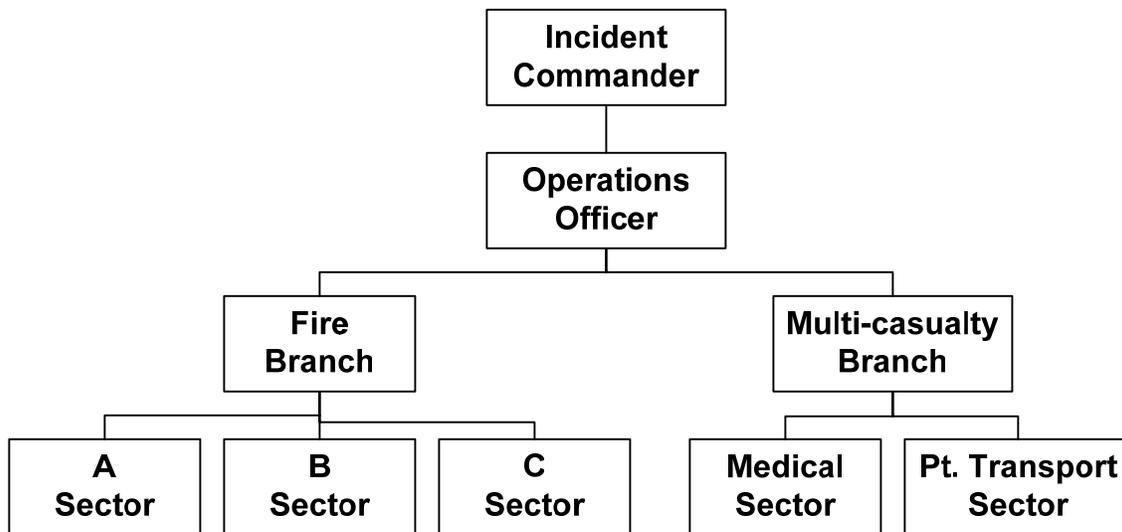
SOG 5-7-03

Page 9 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

with a large number of patients). The Incident Commander may elect to assign branches to forward positions to manage and coordinate activities, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7



V. Aircraft

- A. When the incident requires the use of aircraft, such as for the transportation of victims from a multi-casualty incident, high-rise roof top rescue, swift water rescue, or wildland fire, the operations section chief should establish the Air Operations branch. Its size, organization, and use,

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

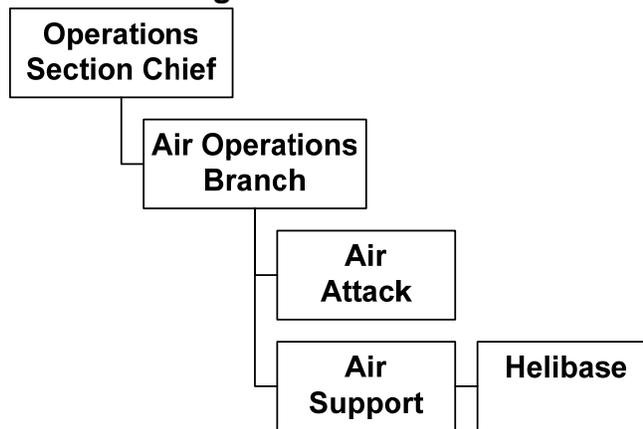
SOG 5-7-03

Page 10 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

will depend primarily upon the nature of the incident and the availability of aircraft. See Figure 8.

Figure 8



VI. Expanding the Incident

- A. As the organization expands to deal with a major incident, the Incident Commander will need additional command post support. The operations

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

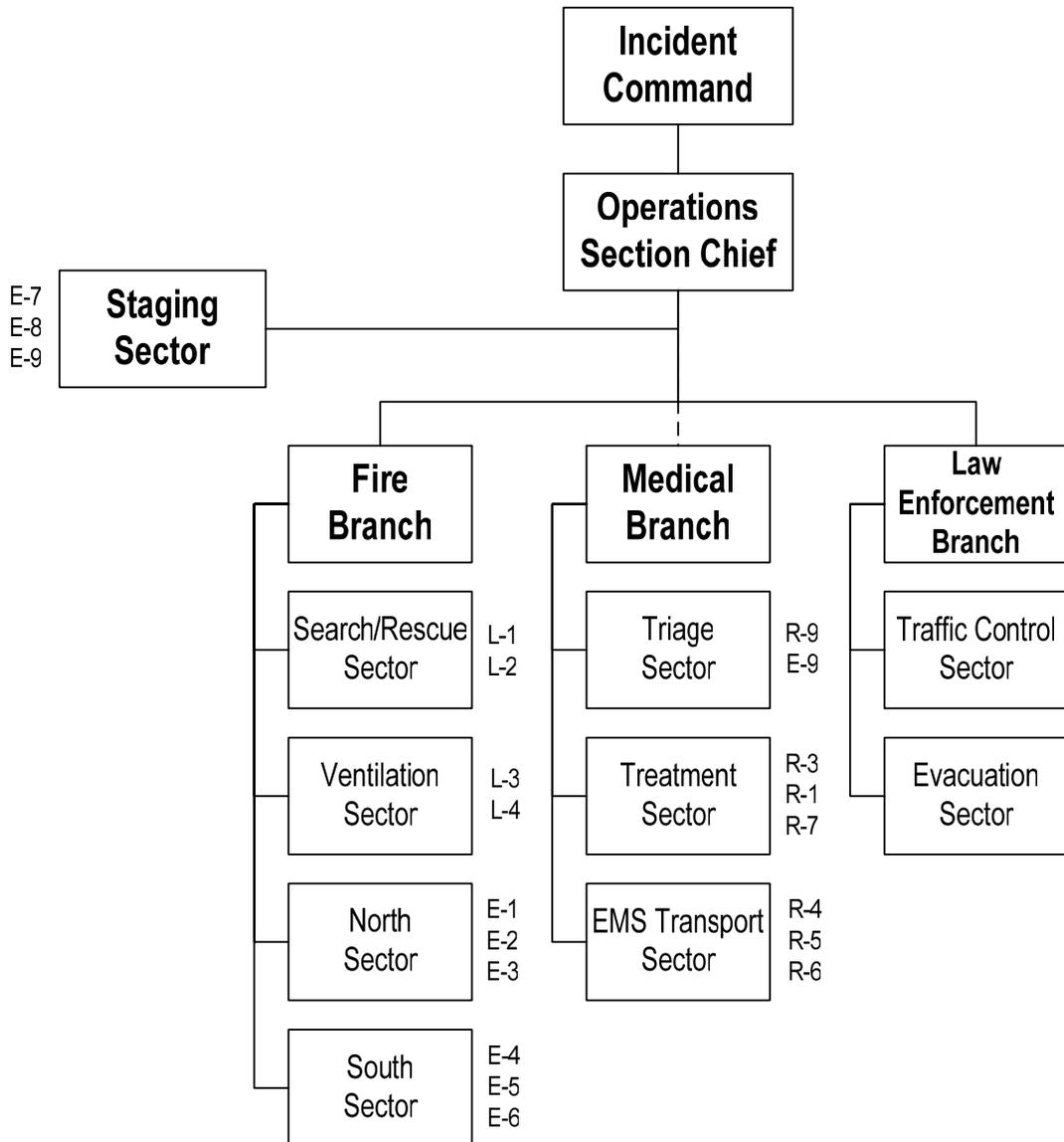
**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 11 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

section chief is one of the first to be implemented. Figure 9 is an example of how the Incident Management System can expand to fit the size and complexity of various types of incidents.

**Figure 9**



**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 12 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**VII. Organizational hierarchy**

- A. The Incident Management System organizational structure develops in a modular fashion, based on the type and scope of an incident. The organization's staff builds from the top down; responsibility and performance is initially placed with the Incident Commander.
- B. As the need exists, four separate sections can be developed, each with several sub-units that may be established. The specific organizational structure established for any given incident will be based on the management needs of the incident. If one individual can simultaneously manage all major functional areas, no further organization is required. If one or more of the areas requires independent management, an additional officer should be assigned responsibility for that area.
- C. For ease of reference and understanding, personnel assigned to manage at each level of the organization will carry a distinctive organizational title.
  - 1. Command refers to the Incident Commander.
  - 2. Officer refers to a member of the command staff (Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer).
  - 3. Section chief refers to a member of the general staff (planning section chief, operations section chief, finance and administration section chief, logistics section chief).
  - 4. Director refers to the positions of branch director, which is in the operations section, or logistics section between the sectors and the operations section chiefs (branch directors: air operations branch director or service branch director).
  - 5. Supervisor refers to the positions of sector officer, which is in the operations section and lies between the branch director and strike team/task force leader.
  - 6. Unit leader refers to a position with supervision and management responsibility of either a sector of resources or a unit such as ground support, medical, or supply.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 13 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

7. Manager refers to the lowest level of supervision within the logistics section, such as the equipment manager, base manager, or camp manager. The only exception to this is the staging area manager, who reports directly to the operations section chief.
8. Single resources are engine companies, ladder truck companies, HazMat units, Heavy rescue units, or light rescue units with a company officer and crew.

**VIII. Single resources**

- A. As a small incident escalates into a major one, additional organizational support will be required. As additional ranking officers arrive on the scene, the command organization may be expanded through the involvement of officers and staff personnel to fill command and general staff positions.
- B. Section and unit level positions within the Incident Management System are to be activated only when the corresponding functions are required by the incident. Until such time that a section or unit is activated, all functions associated with that section or unit will remain the responsibility of the Incident Commander or the appropriate section chief.
- C. It is recommended that two or more units not be combined into a single unit; however, an individual may be assigned responsibility for managing more than one unit. This method of organization allows for easy expansion and demobilization of the system.
- D. The command structure defines the lines of authority, but it is not intended that the transfer of information within the Incident Management System be restricted to the chain-of-command. An individual will receive orders from a superior officer, but may give information to any position in a different part of the organization.
- E. The majority of positions within the Incident Management System will not be activated until the initial response is determined to be insufficient to handle the situation. When this occurs, qualified personnel should be requested through normal communications with dispatch to fill the positions deemed to be required for the event. If it is later determined that a specific position is not needed, the request can be canceled.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 14 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- F. The transition from the initial response to a major incident organization will be evolutionary, and positions will be filled as the corresponding tasks are required. During the initial phases of an incident, the Incident Commander normally carries out four section functions that comprise the general staff within a fully expanded incident organizational structure.
1. Operations.
  2. Planning.
  3. Logistics.
  4. Finance and administration.

**IX. Sections**

- A. Section level positions can be implemented at any time, based on the needs of the incident. One of the first sections typically implemented is the operations section chief.
- B. Operations section
1. The operations section is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities, the tactical priorities, and the safety and welfare of personnel working in the operations section. It is most often implemented and staffed as a span-of-control mechanism.
  2. The operations section chief is responsible for the direct management of all incident tactical activities and should have direct involvement in the preparation of the action plan for the period of responsibility. The roles and responsibilities of the section chief include the following:
    - a. Managing incident tactical activities.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 15 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- b. Coordinating activities with the Incident Commander.
  - c. Implementing the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
  - d. Using tactical objectives and priorities to assign resources.
  - e. Using the ICS to build an effective organizational structure.
  - f. Providing tactical objectives for sectors.
  - g. Controlling staging and air operations.
  - h. Providing for life safety.
  - i. Determining needs and requesting additional resources.
  - j. Consulting with, and informing, other sections and command staff.
3. Figure 10 illustrates the subordinate tactical activities under the control of the operations section chief.

**Figure 10**

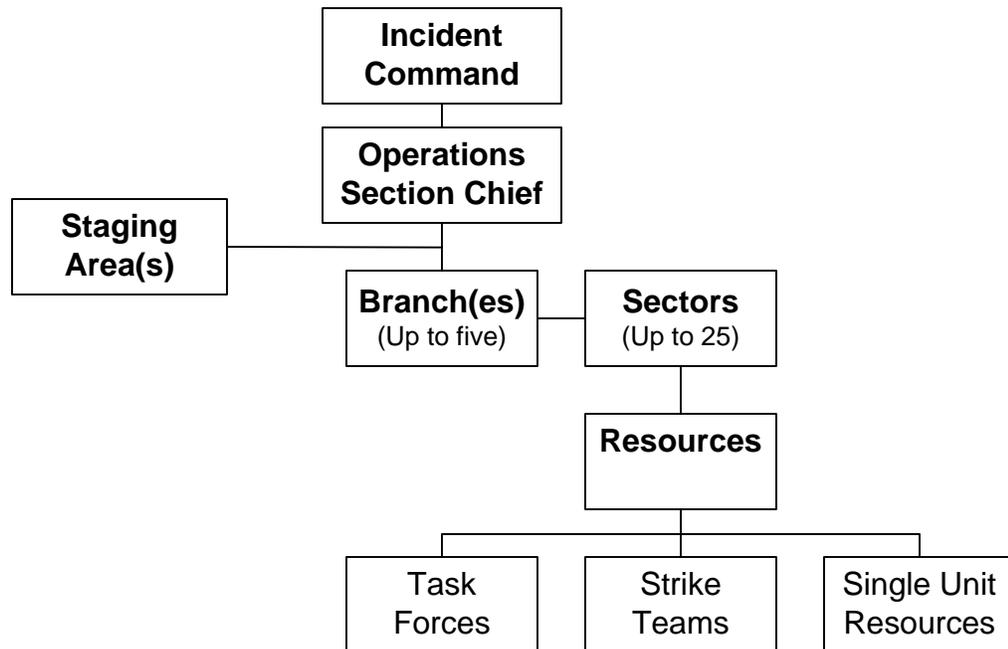
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 16 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------



**X. Staging areas**

- A. Staging Areas are locations designated within the incident area, and are used to temporarily locate resources that are available for assignment. If arriving apparatus is not managed effectively, the incident scene can quickly become congested. At major or complex operations, the Incident Commander should establish a central staging area early, and place an officer in charge of staging. The radio designation of “Staging” should be used.
- B. In the expanded organizational structure, staging reports to the operations section chief. The operations section chief may establish, move, or discontinue the use of staging areas. All resources within the designated

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 17 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

staging areas are under the direct control of the operations section chief, and should be immediately available.

- C. Staging will request logistical support (such as food, fuel, or sanitation) from the logistics section.

**XI. Planning section**

- A. The planning section is responsible for gathering, assimilating, analyzing, and processing information needed for effective decision making. Information management is a full-time task at large and complex incidents.

- 1. The planning section serves as the Incident Commander's "clearing house" for information. This allows the Incident Commander's staff to provide information instead of having to deal with dozens of information sources. Critical information should be immediately forwarded to the Incident Commander (or whoever needs it). Information should also be used to make long range plans.

- 2. The planning section chief's goal is to plan ahead of current events and to identify the need for resources *before* they are needed. Figure 11 is an example of the subordinate resources for which the planning section may be responsible.

**Figure 11**

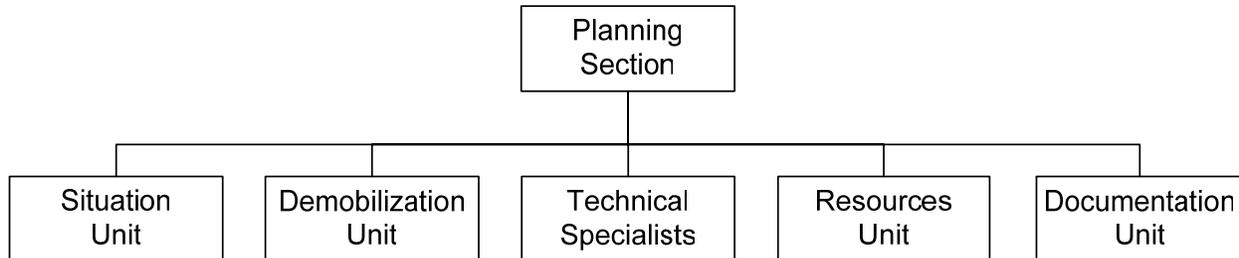
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 18 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------



3. The roles and responsibilities of the planning section chief include:
  - a. Evaluating strategies and plans with the Incident Commander.
  - b. Maintaining resource status and personnel accountability.
  - c. Refining and recommending any needed changes (with input from the Incident Commander).
  - d. Evaluating the incident organization and span-of-control.
  - e. Forecasting possible outcomes.
  - f. Evaluating future resource requirements.
  - g. Using technical assistance as needed.
  - h. Evaluating tactical priorities, critical factors, and safety issues.
  - i. Using a standard systematic approach to gather, update, and manage situation status.
  - j. Coordinating planning needs with outside agencies.
  - k. Planning for incident demobilization.
  - l. Maintaining incident records.

**XII. Logistics section**

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

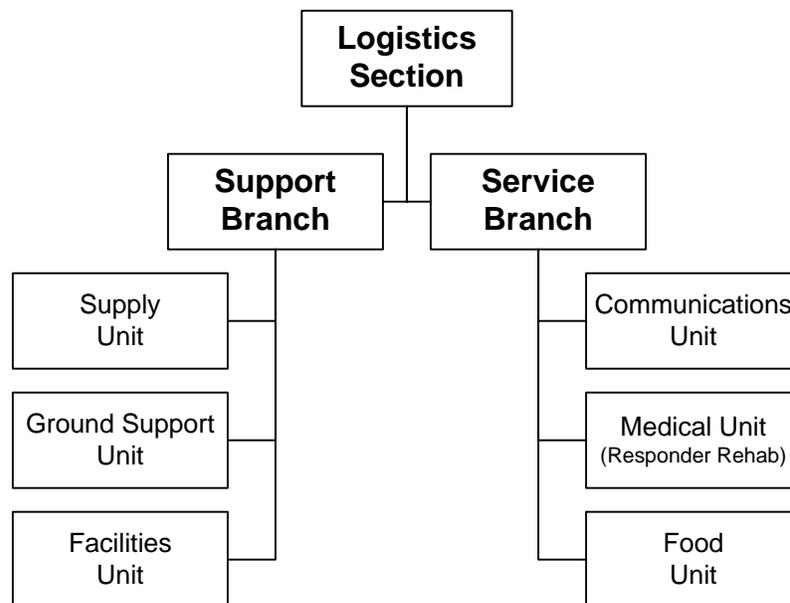
SOG 5-7-03

Page 19 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- A. The logistics section is the support mechanism for the Incident Command organization. Logistics provides services and support systems to all organizational components involved in the incident, including facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment maintenance, fuels, food, communications, and medical services. Logistics is also responsible for responder rehabilitation. Figure 12 illustrates the subordinate services for which the logistics section is responsible.

Figure 12



- B. The roles and responsibilities of the logistics section include the following:
1. Provision of medical aid for incident personnel.
  2. Management of responder rehabilitation.
  3. Coordination of immediate critical incident stress de-briefing.
  4. Provision and management of supplies or equipment.
  5. Forecasting and acquisition of projected resource needs.
  6. Provision of communications plans and equipment.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 20 of 21

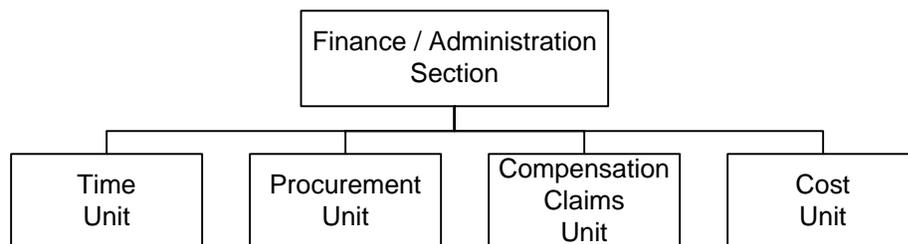
SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

7. Provision of fuels and coordination of equipment repairs.
8. Acquisition of specialized equipment or expertise.
9. Provision of food and associated supplies.
10. Coordination of fixed or portable facilities.
11. Provision of any logistical needs requested by the Incident Commander.
12. Supervision of assigned personnel.

**XIII. Finance and administration section**

- A. The finance and administration section should be established on incidents when the agency(ies) involved have specific needs for financial services.
- B. Not all agencies will require the establishment of a separate finance and administration section. In cases where only one specific function is required, such as cost analysis, that position could be established as a technical specialist in the planning section. Figure 13 illustrates the subordinate services for which the finance and administration section may be responsible.

**Figure 13**



- C. The roles and responsibilities of the finance and administration section include the following:
  1. Procurement of services and/or supplies from sources within and outside the fire department or City as requested by the Incident Commander.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 21 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. Documentation of all incident financial costs.
3. Documentation of possible cost recovery for services and/or supplies.
4. Analysis and management of legal risk for incidents (such as, hazardous materials clean-up).
5. Documentation of compensation and claims for injury.
6. The finance and administration section is responsible for obtaining any and all needed incident documentation for potential cost recovery efforts.

**XIV. The incident commander**

- A. Once the operations section is in place and functioning, the Incident Commander's focus should be on the strategic issues, overall strategic planning, and other components of the incident. Their focus should be on "the big picture" and the impact of the incident from a broad perspective.
- B. In directing the tactical aspects of the incident, the Incident Commander should provide direction, advice, and guidance to the command and general staffs. Figure 14 shows the relationship dynamic of the command staff.

**Figure 14**

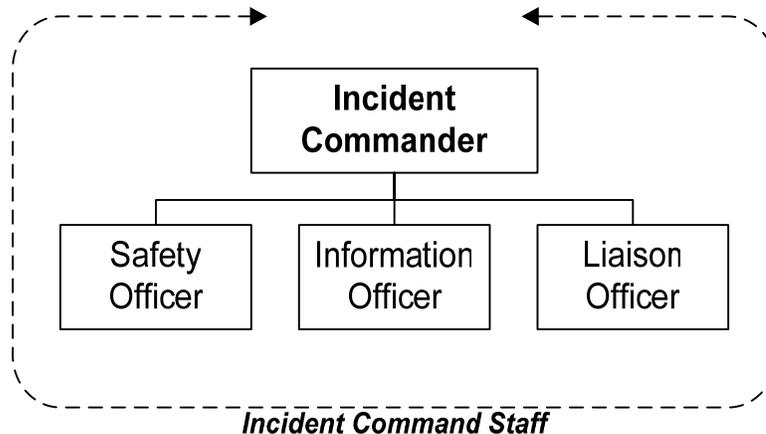
ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Expanding the Organization

SOG 5-7-03

Page 22 of 21

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------



- C. The roles and responsibilities of the Incident Command Staff include:
1. Reviewing and evaluating the plan, and initiating any needed changes.
  2. Providing ongoing review of the overall incident (The Big Picture).
  3. Selecting priorities.
  4. Providing direction to the command and general staff.
  5. Reviewing the organizational structure, and initiating change or expansion to meet incident needs.
  6. Staging command and general staff functions.
  7. Establishing liaison with other internal agencies and officials, outside agencies, property owners, and/or tenants.
- D. Command staff positions are established to assume responsibility for key activities that are not a part of the line organization. Responsibilities for the three staff positions identified in the Incident Command staff chart are identified below:

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 23 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

1. The function of the information officer is to develop accurate and complete information regarding an incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed, and other matters of general interest. The Information Officer will normally be the point of contact for the media and other governmental agencies needing information directly from the incident. In either a single or unified Command structure, only one Information officer would be designated, although assistants may be assigned from other agencies or departments involved.
  
2. The safety officer's function at the incident is to assess hazardous and unsafe situations, and to develop measures for assuring personnel safety. The safety officer has emergency authority to stop and/or prevent all unsafe acts. In a Unified Command structure, a single safety officer should be designated. Assistants may be required and assigned from other agencies or departments making up the Unified Command. This may include the need for a responder rehabilitation assessment.
  
3. The liaison officer's function is to serves as a point-of-contact for representatives from other agencies. In a single-command structure, the representatives from assisting agencies would coordinate through the liaison officer. Under a unified command structure, the representatives from agencies not involved in the unified command would coordinate through the liaison officer. Agency representatives assigned to an incident should have authority to speak on all matters for their agency.
  - E. Additional positions may be required, depending upon the nature and location of the incident, or by requirements established by the Incident Commander.
  - F. An example of incident management, and an expanded organization, at a major HazMat incident, is shown on Figure 15.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

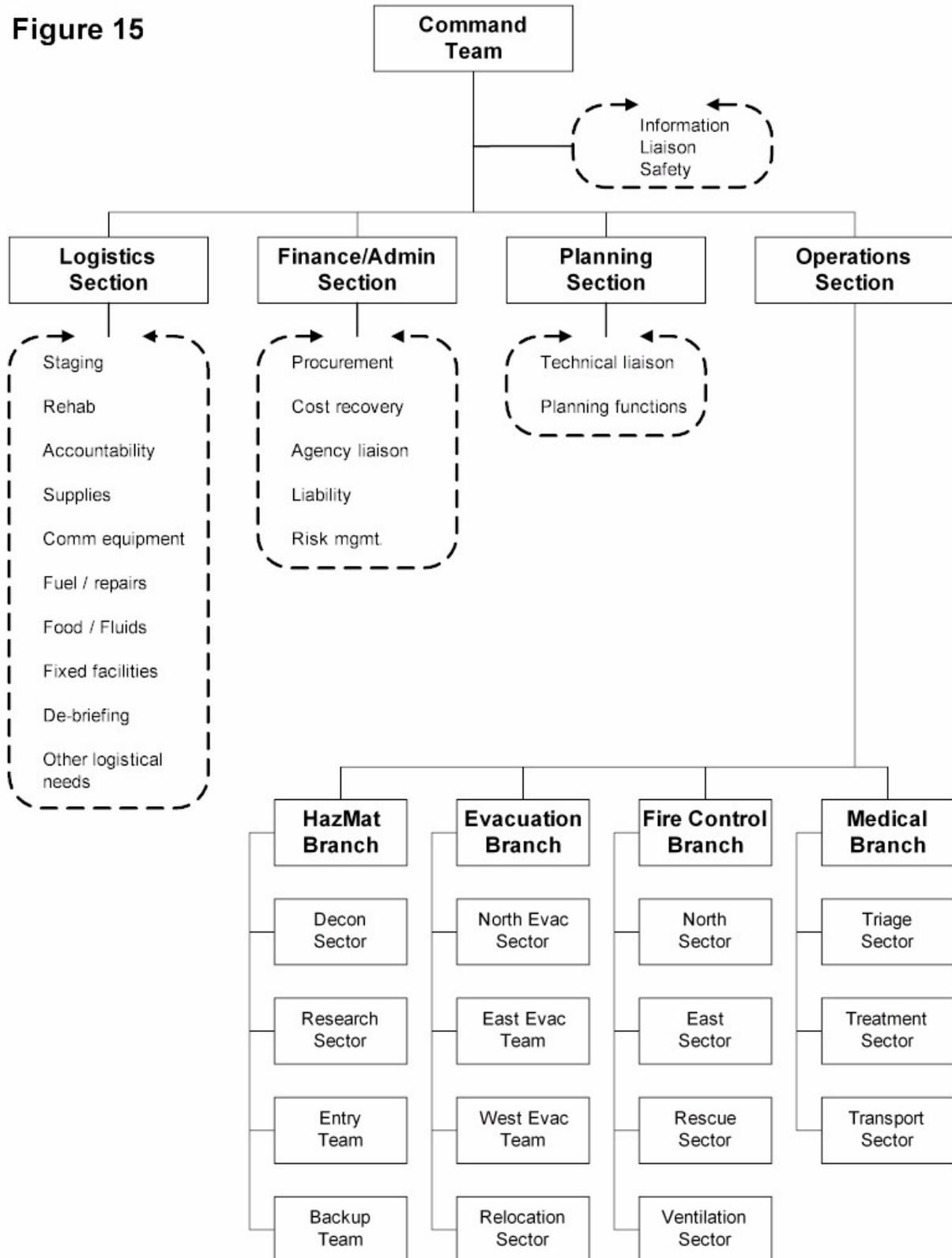
**Expanding the Organization**

**SOG 5-7-03**

**Page 24 of 21**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
----------------------	----------------------	----------	----------------------

**Figure 15**



**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Unified Command**

**SOG 5-7-04**

**Page 1 of 2**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Purpose**

This purpose of this guideline is to establish the Albuquerque Fire Department's approach to using Single Command or Unified Command at major incidents.

**Guideline**

The Command function for overall management of a given incident may utilize one of two approaches, Single Command or Unified Command, depending on the circumstances of the event. This guideline details both approaches and when they are appropriate.

**Operational Guidance**

**I. Single command - Incident Commander**

- A. Single Command in the form of one Incident Commander is appropriate for an event which occurs wholly within one agency's jurisdiction
- B. When the Single Command structure is utilized:
  - 1. A single Incident Commander is solely responsible, within the confines of their authority, to establish objectives and overall management strategy associated with the incident
  - 2. The Incident Commander is directly responsible for follow-through, to ensure that all functional area actions are directed toward accomplishment of the strategy
  - 3. The Incident Commander will approve the trial action plan, and approve all requests for ordering and releasing of primary resources
  - 4. The Incident Commander may have a deputy
    - a. The deputy should have the same qualifications as the Incident Commander, and may work directly with the Incident Commander, be a relief, or perform certain specific assigned tasks

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Unified Command**

**SOG 5-7-04**

**Page 2 of 2**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- b. In an incident within a single jurisdiction, where the nature of the incident is primarily a responsibility of one agency, e.g., fire, the deputy may be from the same agency
- c. In a multi-jurisdictional incident or one which threatens to be multi-jurisdictional, the deputy role may be filled by an individual designated by the adjacent agency
- d. More than one deputy could be involved

**II. Unified command**

A. Unified Command structure is called for under the following conditions:

- 1. The incident is totally contained within a single jurisdiction, but more than one department or agency shares management responsibility due to the nature of the incident (e.g., a passenger airliner crash within a national forest)
- 2. The incident requires resources not available from only one agency and coordination between agencies is required (e.g. a major hazardous materials release requiring mitigation and evacuation)
- 3. The incident is multi-jurisdictional in nature (e.g., a major flood)

B. In a Unified Command structure, the individuals designated by their jurisdictions, or by departments within a single jurisdiction, must jointly determine objectives, strategy and priorities

- 1. As in a Single Command structure, the Operations Chief will have responsibility for implementation of the incident plan
- 2. The determination of which agency or department the Operations Chief represents must be made by mutual agreement of the Unified Command.
- 3. The assignment of the Operations Chief may be done on the basis of greatest jurisdictional involvement, number of resources involved, by existing statutory authority, or by mutual knowledge of the individual's qualifications.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Unified Command**

**SOG 5-7-04**

**Page 3 of 2**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 1 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this guideline is to define the Albuquerque Fire Department's approach toward developing an effective Command Structure at emergency incidents. This guideline additionally delineates the use of Sectors as part of the Incident Command System.

### **Guideline**

The use of Sectors provides a standard system of dividing the emergency incident into smaller subordinate command units or areas. All Albuquerque Fire Department officers are responsible to comply with and ensure that the personnel under their command are adequately trained in, fully understand, and operate in compliance with this guideline. All Albuquerque Fire Department members have the responsibility to learn and follow this guideline.

### **Operational Guidance**

Complex emergencies can quickly exceed the capability of one officer to effectively manage the entire operation. Sectors reduce the span-of-control of the overall command function to manageable smaller-sized units. Sectors allow Command to communicate principally with sector officers, rather than with individual fire companies, thereby providing an effective command structure and defined fireground organization.

#### **I. Command considerations**

- A. Sector responsibilities should be assigned early in the incident, typically to the first company assigned to a geographic area or function. This early establishment of sectors provides an effective incident command organization framework on which the operation can be built and expanded.
  - 1. The number of Sectors Command can effectively manage varies. Fast moving, complex operations require a smaller span-of-control (no more than five sectors).
  - 2. In slower moving, less complex operations, Command may effectively control more sectors.
- B. In situations where the number of sectors exceed the span-of-control that Command can effectively control, the incident should be divided to

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 2 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

branches. Each branch is responsible for several sectors and should have its own radio channel if possible.

**II. Tactical considerations**

- A. The utilization of sectors provides an array of major functions that may be selectively implemented according to the needs of a particular situation. This places responsibility for the details and execution of each particular function on a sector officer.
- B. Once Command establishes effective sectors, he or she can concentrate on the overall strategy and resource allocation, allowing sector officers to manage various tasks.
- C. Command determines strategic objectives and assigns available resources to the sectors. Each sector officer is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources at his or her disposal towards completing Command objectives. They are additionally responsible for communicating their respective needs and progress to Command.
- D. Sectors reduce the overall amount of fireground radio communication. Most routine communications should be conducted within the sector in a face-to-face manner between company officers and their sector officers. This process eliminates unnecessary radio traffic.
- E. Safety of firefighting personnel represents a major reason for establishing sectors. Each sector officer must maintain communication with assigned companies to control both their position and function. Sector officers must constantly monitor all hazardous situations and risk to firefighters, and take appropriate corrective action to ensure that companies are operating in a safe and effective manner.

**III. Criteria for sector assignment**

- A. Those situations that will eventually involve a number of companies or functions beyond the capability of Command to directly control.
  - 1. Sectors should be assigned to the first-arriving companies based on geographic or functional needs.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 3 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- B. When Command can no longer effectively cope with the number of companies currently involved in the operation.
- C. When companies are involved in complex operations, such as large interior or geographic area, hazardous materials events, or technical rescue.
- D. When companies are operating from tactical positions over which Command has little or no direct control.
- E. When the situation presents special hazards and close control is required over operating companies, such as unstable structural conditions, hazardous materials, heavy fire loads, or if the event is a marginal offensive situation.

**IV. Sectors**

- A. It is the Incident Commander's ongoing responsibility to assign sectors as required for effective emergency operations. The assignment relates to both geographic and functional sectors.
- B. The Incident Commander shall advise each sector officer of specific objectives. The overall strategy and plan will and should be provided where appropriate, as time permits.
- C. The number of companies assigned to a sector will depend on conditions within that sector. Five companies represent the maximum span-of-control for a sector.
  - 1. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of companies operating within a sector and the capability of that sector officer to effectively direct operations.
- D. Sectors assigned to specific operating areas will be designated by direction (East sector, North sector, West sector, South sector). When incidents involve odd geographic boundaries (e.g. Grand Avenue), and Command chooses geographic designations (such as, North sector), the Incident Commander must provide each sector with specific geographic boundaries to identify that sector's area of responsibility area.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 4 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- E. An alternate sector designation: A, B, C, or D may also be used. Sector A is always the front of the building; the designation of other sectors is defined by going clockwise (from A) around the building.
- F. In multi-story occupancies, sectors will usually be indicated by floor number (Sector 15 indicates 15th floor). In some cases, the floor sector identification may be subdivided into geographic areas (such as Sector 15 East or Sector 15 West) depending on stairwell and floor access.
- G. Functional sectors will be identified by the function (e.g. salvage sector, treatment sector, or ventilation sector).
- H. Sector officers will use the sector designation in all radio communications (i.e., North Sector to Command).
- I. Sectors will be commanded by a sector officer, who can be chief officers, Commanders, company officers, or any other AFD member as designated by the Incident Commander.
- J. In the cases, a sector officer may initially be assigned as a reconnaissance officer, into a geographic area or to evaluate tactical needs. In such cases, he or she will proceed to the sector, evaluate conditions, and assess responsibility for directing resources and operations within the assigned area of responsibility, then will advise the Incident Commander of needed tasks and resources.

**V. Sector officer responsibilities**

- A. Sector officers will be responsible for, and in control of, all assigned functions within their area.
  - 1. Complete objectives assigned by Command.
  - 2. Account for all assigned personnel.
  - 3. Ensure a safe operation.
  - 4. Monitor work progress of those within their sectors.
  - 5. Re-direct activities as necessary.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 5 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

6. Coordinate with related activities and/or sectors.
  7. Monitor welfare of area personnel.
  8. Request additional resources as required by the event.
  9. Provide Command essential and frequent progress reports.
  10. Re-allocate resources within the area.
- B. The sector officer must be in a position to directly supervise and monitor operations. This will require the sector officer to be equipped with appropriate protective clothing and equipment for his or her area of responsibility.
- C. The sector officer should be readily identifiable and should maintain a visible position as much as possible.
- D. The primary function of Company Officers working within an area is to direct the operations of their individual crews in performing assigned tasks.
1. Company Officers will advise their Sector Officer of work progress, preferably face-to-face.
  2. All requests for additional resource or assistance must be directed to the sector officer.
- E. Each sector officer will keep Command informed of conditions in their sector through regular progress reports. They must prioritize progress reports to include only essential information.
- F. When a company is assigned from Staging to an operating area, the company will be advised to what area they are assigned, and to which sector officer they will be reporting.
1. The sector officers will be informed of which companies or units have been assigned to them by Command.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**ICS Sectors**

**SOG 5-7-05**

**Page 6 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. It will be the responsibility of the sector officer to contact the assigned company, and to transmit any instructions relative to the specific action requested.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Safety Division or Group**

**SOG 5-7-06**

**Page 1 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Purpose**

The purpose of this guideline is to define the Albuquerque Fire Department's protocol for the establishment and operation of Safety Division/Groups. It identifies the need and process for expanding the Command organization to incorporate the safety Division/Group into emergency operations.

**Guideline**

It is the direction of the Albuquerque Fire Department to implement a "safety Division/Group" at any multiple alarm incident, special operations rescue, trench rescue, confined space rescue, or first alarm HazMat incident. A safety Division/Group will be implemented at any incident of a special hazard that presents an unusual risk to firefighters or to the community.

These guidelines do not diminish the responsibility of each AFD member to commit to safe work behaviors and to operate within standard operating guidelines at all times. Company officers carry the additional responsibility of ensuring that all members of their crews are operating in a safe manner. It is the responsibility of all Command officers and Division/Group officers to ensure that safe operations are conducted.

**Operational Guidance**

**I. Command and control**

- A. Command will be established by the first-arriving member or company.
- B. The Incident Command System (ICS) will be implemented at all working incidents involving three or more companies.
- C. The Incident Commander will be responsible for the early establishment of a safety Division/Group at any incident that requires it.
- D. An AFD Incident Safety Officer will normally respond to multiple alarms, trench rescue, confined space rescue, or other significantly high-risk incidents.
  - 1. The AFD Safety Officer is on-call, and can be dispatched by AFD Dispatch.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Safety Division or Group**

**SOG 5-7-06**

**Page 2 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

2. Command may request the AFD Safety Officer to any incident.
  3. Upon arrival on-scene, the Safety Officer will notify command and receive an initial briefing, then assume safety Division/Group responsibilities.
  4. In order to maintain control of accountability and scene management, Command must be notified of the assumption of safety Division/Group responsibilities.
- E. It will be the responsibility of Command to establish a strategy or action plan that includes a safety plan for the incident.
1. The safety plan must be communicated to the safety Division/Group and other Division/Group officers.
  2. Command may request that the safety Division/Group develop and recommend an appropriate safety plan.
  3. The safety Division/Group works directly for Command and has full authority to terminate, alter, or suspend any unsafe condition or activity.

**II. Safety Division/Group intervention**

- A. Intervention by the safety Division/Group at scene operations involves three approaches.
1. The first approach involves life-threatening situations.
    - a. Any life threatening conditions will be corrected immediately and directly. Where time permits, Command must be notified. Corrective action will be immediately initiated by the Incident Commander.
    - b. In obvious life threatening situations that do not allow time for Command's intervention, the safety Division/Group shall immediately stop any action, or countermand any order, under these circumstances by direct and immediate intervention (such as, ordering crews out of a building, countermanding an order for crews to go to the roof, etc.).

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Safety Division or Group**

**SOG 5-7-06**

**Page 3 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- c. Such action may be taken with the understanding that the safety Division/Group works for Command and is accountable to Command for actions taken.
  - d. Command must be immediately advised of any direct intervention by the safety Division/Group under these circumstances.
  - e. A change of strategy and/or tactics by Command or Division/Group officers may be required as a result of the Safety Officer's actions. Division/Group officers may have to be notified of hazards, required safety corrections, or updated on the strategic plan, tactics, and objectives.
  - f. "Emergency Traffic" should be used for any critical emergency notification/alerts required at the incident scene.
  - g. Command must be kept abreast of any and all corrections that affect overall site operations, or the strategic plan, via frequent and timely progress reports.
2. The second approach is for non-life-threatening situations.
- a. This approach involves a "one-on-one" correction of safety problems with individual firefighters, company officers, and/or Division/Group officers (such as, requirement of SCBA or correct ladder position). It often does not affect incident strategy, and is the most frequent type of interaction.
  - b. Where corrective action does not affect Command's strategy, Command may not need to be notified. Corrected items should, however, be noted for discussion at a future critique of the incident.
3. The third approach occurs in the on-going incident planning process.
- a. Upon the implementation of a safety Division/Group, Command must provide the safety Division/Group with an

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Safety Division or Group**

**SOG 5-7-06**

**Page 4 of 5**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

overview of the incident action plan, and with specific details of the safety plan.

- b. The safety officer will confirm that a safety plan is in effect, review it, and provide recommendations as needed. In some cases command may request that the safety Division/Group officer propose a safety plan and recommendations for Command.
  - c. The safety Division/Group or safety officer must remain a part of the on-going planning process with Command and/or the Planning section chief.
- B. The safety officer, upon assuming safety Division/Group responsibilities, may utilize any previous safety Division/Group officers to his/her best advantage, coordinating resources and incident assignments as approved by command.

**III. Safety Division/Group responsibilities**

- A. Ensure that all crews and personnel are operating safely and consistently within existing safety standards.
- B. Review and ensure that Command has an effective safety plan as part of the incident's strategic plan.
- C. Cause the termination, suspension, or alteration of any unsafe operations or actions.
  - 1. Operate as the safety eyes and ears of command.
  - 2. Ensure that safe work measures are practiced.
- D. Observe all areas of the incident and identify any structural or hazardous conditions which could create a risk to firefighters or other personnel working at the incident and initiate corrective action.
- E. Ensure that all personnel are wearing proper protective clothing and equipment.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Safety Division or Group

SOG 5-7-06

Page 5 of 5

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- F. When assigned by Command, the safety Division/Group will coordinate the use of Fire Protection Engineers, Building Department Officials, and other technical specialists, in the continuous evaluation of an incident's risk, and provide corrective measures as needed.

**IV. Planning Section responsibilities in safety**

- A. The Safety Officer will perform the following functions.
1. Monitor the health and welfare of all personnel and insure that they are not overextended, and are rehabilitated in an effective manner.
    - a. The Rehabilitation Division/Group should be a component of the safety plan.
  2. Provide Command with frequent progress reports on safety-related issues.
  3. Maintain a liaison with Command and/or the Planning section chief to update and revise the on-going incident safety plan.
  4. Participate in any post-incident critique emphasizing firefighter safety by reinforcing safety behaviors, assessing the level of safety, and identifying areas where safety improvements can be made.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Incident Accountability System

SOG 5-7-07

Page 1 of 8

SOG Committee  
Action

Implemented  
07/01/08

Revision

Implemented  
07/01/08

## Incident Accountability System

### Purpose

This procedure identifies a system of incident site firefighter accountability. The purpose is to account for all firefighters, at any given time, within a small geographic area, within the “hazard zone” of an incident. Use of the system will provide enhanced personal safety for the individual firefighter, and will provide Command an improved means to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.

The hazard zone will be defined as any area that requires an SCBA or in which a firefighter is at risk of becoming lost, trapped, or injured by the environment or structure. This would include entering a structure reported to be on fire, operating in close proximity to the structure during exterior operations, confined space or trench rescue, etc.

### Accountability

*Accountability involves a personal commitment to work within the safety system at an incident.*

- Command will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at an incident.
- Command will always be responsible for including accountability as a major element in strategy and attack planning, and must consider and react to any barriers to effective accountability.
- Sector Officers will always maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of crews assigned to them. This will require the sector officer to be in his/her assigned area and maintaining *close* supervision of crews assigned to them.
- All crews will work for Command or a sector officer *no* free-lancing.
- Crews arriving on the scene should remain intact for all intents and purposes. A minimum crew size will be considered two or more members and a radio will be required.
- All crews entering a hazard zone must be supervised by a designated supervisor or other ranking individual.
- All crews will go in together, stay together, and come out together. Reduced visibility and increased risk will require *very tight togetherness*.
- If a radio fails while in the hazard zones the crew will exit unless there is another working radio with the crew.

### Passports

To enhance accountability and to improve tracking of firefighters in the hazard zone, the “PASSPORT” system will be used. PASSPORTS involve a plastic card with the crew members names affixed that is turned in to an accountability officer. The accountability

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 2 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

officer may be a pumper driver, a sector officer, or a designated accountability officer, depending on the nature, type and complexity of the incident.

The first arriving company will announce their accountability location as part of the “onscene

report and assumption of command” following the initial “size-up” of the incident.

This report should include the accountability unit identification and their geographic side (i.e. North side, South side or side A).

**Example:** “Engine Two on scene at a two story residential occupancy with smoke showing, Engine two attacking with an 1 3/4” line going in for search and rescue. Engine two will be Sycamore Command.”

(Alarm repeats)

“Command to Alarm, Engine Two will be East side accountability”

Alarm copy - “Engine Two is East side accountability”

As staged units are assigned, command will give their respective accountability unit and the geographic locations along with any other instructions.

Alarm will repeat initial assignment of accountability locations.

### **PASSPORT Equipment**

The PASSPORT system equipment involves two 2” x 4” plastic cards with the company's ID etched on it. Both of the PASSPORTS should contain the names of all personnel *presently* assigned to that company. The *primary* passport will have the small unit designators attached to the individual name tags

The PASSPORTS will always be located on the dash of the apparatus at the company officer position or passenger side. A velcro strip will allow the PASSPORTS to be affixed on the dash and easily removed.

Each firefighter will be issued three individual name tags. These will be affixed to velcro strips on the under side of their helmet.

All engines, ladders, rescues, and specialized units will be equipped with an 8” X 11” sector/status board. This will be used to affix PASSPORTS on and will always be located on the inside door of the driver’s position. The sector/status board will be attached with velcro to permit easy removal.

The company officer will be responsible for ensuring that the PASSPORT always reflects only currently assigned personnel. When entering a hazard zone with a partial crew (i.e., engineer remains at the engine to pump lines), the company officer must remove the name tags of those members entering the hazard zone and attach them to the sector/status board under the appropriate sector. The name tags of members not entering the hazard zone will remain on the PASSPORT which will then be attached to the sector/status board.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 3 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

All PASSPORTS will be considered as safety equipment and will be inspected quarterly as other safety equipment and will be repaired or replaced as soon as possible on a priority request.

**Tactical Benchmarks**

Several accountability benchmarks are included in tactical operations. The Personnel Accountability Report or “PAR” involves a roll call of personnel assigned. For the company officer, a “PAR” is a confirmation that members assigned to his/her crew are visually accounted for. For the sector officer, a “PAR” is an accounting for all crew members of all companies assigned to his/her sector. Reports of PARs should be conducted face-to-face within the company or within the sector whenever possible.

**Example:**

“Engine 17 to Roof Sector, I have a PAR” (all members accounted for).

*A personnel accountability report will be required for the following situations:*

- Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter (Command initiates a PAR of all crews on the scene).
- Any change from offensive to defensive (Command initiates a PAR of all crews on the scene).
- Any sudden hazardous event at the incident - flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc. (a PAR is initiated by Command).
- By all crew(s) reporting an “All Clear” (Company Officers of crews responsible for search and rescue will ensure they have a PAR for their crews at the time they report an all clear).
- At 10 minute elapsed time.
- At a report of fire under control.

**Accountability Officers**

Accountability officers may be drivers, sector officers, or personnel specifically assigned to a sector to serve as accountability officers for the sector officer.

The first engine to each geographic side of the incident will serve as the *initial* accountability location. The driver will serve as the initial accountability officer. All crews entering the incident will deliver their PASSPORTS to the accountability location closest to their “point of entry” prior to entering the hazard zone. As sectors are implemented, sector officers, will manage PASSPORTS only if he/she *is not entering* the hazard zone (i.e., defensive operation). PASSPORTS will remain on the first engine (accountability location). As staff officers arrive on the scene and stage, they will be assigned accountability responsibilities for a given sector. These officers will report to their assigned sector officers to manage accountability for that sector (i.e., ventilation sector).

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 4 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

As the incident escalates and staff officers fill accountability positions for each sector, these accountability officers will be assigned to a radio channel designated by Command. Depending on the situation, accountability officers will report to either Command or Logistics.

At incidents with a critical need for accountability officers to assist sector officers, Command may chose to split up a company and distribute the crew members to different sectors to act as accountability officers.

### **Accountability Sector**

As the incident escalates to the level that accountability officers are assigned, Command should implement an accountability sector to coordinate accountability officers.

The accountability sector officer will be assigned to logistics and will operate on the assigned logistics radio channel. The accountability sector officer should be located in the Command Post.

*The Accountability Sector Officer's responsibilities include:*

1. Develop and implement a plan designed to track and account for all personnel working in the hazard zone.
2. Ensure that accountability officers are implemented in each sector as necessary.
3. Request and manage sector resources as needed.
4. Provide progress reports to Command.
5. Initiate PARs upon benchmarks or as needed.

### **Trade of Shift, Overtime Shift, Transfer**

Arriving crew members will be responsible for *immediately* updating the company PASSPORTS as they arrive to duty - including any member working a trade of shift, partial overtime shift or following transfer from another station.

Arriving crew members will remove the name tag from the PASSPORTS of the crew member they are replacing.

For those crew members not permanently assigned, the name tag should be placed on velcro strip of their helmet on the underside of the rear brim.

Company Officers are responsible for ensuring that the PASSPORTS *always* remain current. PASSPORTS must reflect only those members presently assigned to the company and only those crew members about to enter the hazard zone.

### **Rules of Thumb**

PASSPORT implementation should consider the following basic rules of thumb:

- PASSPORTS never enter the hazard zone
- PASSPORTS must be maintained at the point of entry to the hazard zone.
- PASSPORTS must reflect only those personnel *presently* in the hazard zone.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 5 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- Crews must turn in their PASSPORTS upon entering and must *retrieve* their PASSPORTS upon exit from the hazard zone.

**PASSPORT Implementation - The Incident**

Implementation of the PASSPORT system will occur at any incident that requires the use of SCBA.

The objective of the PASSPORT system is always to have the crew members PASSPORTS near the point of entry and that they be accurate, reflecting only those members entering the hazard zone. For those situations where it is not clear-cut as to when and where to turn in PASSPORTS, crews should consider the above-cited objective for their decision.

For single company incidents, the PASSPORT remains on the apparatus dashboard. The Engineer will assume accountability sector responsibilities.

Command must maintain an awareness of which engine companies are serving as accountability locations, and provide this information to companies being assigned to each geographic side of the incident (sector).

*For First Alarm assignments and greater, the PASSPORT system will function as follows:*

The first engine to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial accountability location for all later arriving companies to that side of the incident.

- The driver becomes the initial accountability officer until PASSPORTS are collected later in the incident by the sector officer or accountability officer who assumes accountability responsibilities.
- Crews of the initial assignment that have apparatus parked in *very* close proximity (i.e., 50 feet or less) of the initial engine (accountability location) may leave their PASSPORTS on the dash of their apparatus or take them to the first engine (accountability location).
- The driver of the first engine (accountability location) will collect the PASSPORTS from these additional companies, time permitting, and mount them on the sector/status board at the accountability location.
- Any crew whose apparatus is more than 50 feet away must deliver their PASSPORTS to the accountability engine and place the PASSPORTS on the sector/status board. The sector/status board will always be located on the inside panel of the driver's door.
- Ladder companies on the initial assignment (first alarm) may leave their PASSPORTS on the dash of the apparatus if they are parked at a position that would not permit easy delivery of the PASSPORTS to the accountability engine.
- Any ladder company assigned to a sector will deliver the PASSPORT to the sector officer, or a designated accountability officer (designated by the sector officer or Command).

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 6 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- As the incident escalates, and sector officers and/or accountability officers are assigned, all PASSPORTS will be delivered to these officers prior to entry into the hazard zone.
- Where the sector officer is operating within the hazard zone. PASSPORTS must remain *outside* the zone with a designated accountability officer (i.e., initial driver or staff officer) serving as an accountability officer. A sector officer operating within the hazard zone will not have PASSPORT accountability responsibilities.

**Point of Entry Control**

PASSPORTS will remain with the designated accountability officer near the “point of entry” to the hazard zone. Upon entry, crews will turn in their PASSPORT. Upon exit, the crew *must* retrieve their PASSPORTS. The sector/status board will contain only the PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone.

Crews exiting at a different location than the original point of entry, must immediately notify their original sector officer and/or accountability officer of their changed status. The PASSPORT must be retrieved.

Where physical distance/barriers prevent easy retrieval of the PASSPORT, and where the crew is being reassigned to another sector, a “make-up” PASSPORT must be assembled. Crew members will provide the new sector officer another name tag. Where another “make-up” PASSPORT is not available, the individual name tags will be placed on the sector/status board.

The original sector officer and/or accountability officer must be made aware of the change.

**Multi-Story/High-rise**

Multi-story or highrise incidents present modifications in the standard approach to PASSPORT accountability.

PASSPORTS for those companies assigned to the interior of the highrise structure are to be placed on the accountability board located in the Lobby Control Sector.

Companies in Staging will deliver their PASSPORTS to the Lobby Control Sector only when assigned a function within the highrise structure.

The Lobby Control Sector will be responsible for collecting the PASSPORTS of the initial companies as soon as possible.

Once the Resource Sector is established, the Resource Sector Officer will collect the PASSPORTS of all crews *assigned to fire control* positions. The Resource Sector will assign accountability officers at each point of entry to stairwells, etc.

PASSPORTS for crews assigned to the Lobby Control Sector or any *support sectors* within the building (non-hazard zone crews) will be maintained by the sector officer.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Incident Accountability System

SOG 5-7-07

Page 7 of 8

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Terminating The PASSPORT System**

PASSPORT accountability will be maintained through a report of “fire under control,” at which time a PAR for all crews must be obtained. Command will determine at that time, based on the situation and risk, as to whether to continue with the PASSPORT system. If visibility is still impaired or a significant hazardous condition still exists, Command may choose to extend the PASSPORT system further.

Upon termination and release from the incident, Company officers and crew members will ensure that the PASSPORT is returned to the dash of their apparatus and that the PASSPORT is up-to-date.

**Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT)**

As the incident escalates, and/or crews are operating at a special hazard (i.e., confined space rescue). Command will assign “Rapid Intervention Teams” (RITs) to each side of the incident or point of entry. These crews will serve as stand-by rescue teams during all hazardous operations.

**Lost/Missing Firefighter**

An absent member of any crew will *automatically be assumed to be lost or trapped* in the hazard zone until otherwise determined safe. Company Officers must *immediately* report any absent members to sector officers or Command. For any reports of missing firefighters, Command must request the next greater assignment or alarm (i.e., a first alarm goes to a second alarm) and consider requesting a Heavy Technical Rescue (HTR) task force. Command must next initiate an immediate roll call (PAR) of all companies assigned to duty in the hazard zone. Command must also send the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search. Simultaneously with these actions, Command must adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort.

**Summary of Accountability Responsibilities**

*Accountability will work only with a strong personal commitment to the safety system. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:*

**Firefighter** - Responsible for staying with his/her crew at all times and ensuring that his/her name tag is on the PASSPORT at all times.

**Driver** - The Driver of the first engine to each geographic side of the incident becomes the initial Accountability Officer. The Driver must collect PASSPORTS from crews and apparatus assigned to his/her side of the incident (sector) and manage accountability until relieved by a sector officer or accountability officer.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Incident Accountability System**

**SOG 5-7-07**

**Page 8 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Company Officer** - Responsible for keeping his/her crew intact at all times and that the PASSPORT is current and accurate. The PASSPORT *must* reflect only those personnel entering the hazard zone. The PASSPORT must be turned in at the point of entry and retrieved upon exit.

**Sector Officer** - Responsible for accounting for all crews in his/her assigned sector, maintaining an awareness of their exact location, and maintaining accurate PASSPORTS of those crews in the hazard zone. In those situations where the sector officer must enter the hazard zone, PASSPORTS will continue to be managed by the driver of the first engine to each side of the incident or a designated accountability officer for his/her sector.

**Accountability Officer** - Responsible for teaming up with the assigned sector officer and to manage all accountability for that sector. The accountability officer must collect all PASSPORTS from drivers, apparatus, or the sector officer. The accountability officer must maintain close coordination with other accountability officers.

**Accountability Sector Officer** - Responsible for managing accountability officers and system. Causes PARs to be initiated at tactical benchmarks or as needed.

**Command** - Responsible for tracking the location of all crews. Must advise later assigned crews of which engine is serving as the accountability location for PASSPORTS or that the sector officer or accountability officer will be accepting PASSPORTS at the point of entry. Assigns "make-up" PASSPORTS as necessary

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 1 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

## **Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

### **Scope/Purpose**

This procedure identifies individual, company and Command level activities for the search and rescue of a lost or trapped firefighters.

The rescue of trapped or lost firefighters in a burning building is especially time sensitive. There is a very narrow "window of survivability" for a firefighter who is out of SCBA air supply or trapped by approaching fire. Individual firefighters must not delay reporting to Command if they become lost, trapped or in need of assistance. Company officers must also not delay the reporting of lost firefighters or inability to complete accountability reports. Command and Sector officers must always assume that the missing firefighter is lost in the building until the firefighter can be accounted for. Command must also restructure the strategy and action plan to include a priority rescue effort.

### **Lost or Trapped Firefighters**

Rescue needs generally fall into two categories. Either the firefighter (or firefighters ) is trapped by a collapse or lost in a smoke filled and burning building. The most significant problem and difference between the two categories is that the search area can be substantially larger for a lost firefighter than that encountered in a collapse situation. On the other hand, a collapse presents a major extrication situation. In some cases, lost or trapped firefighters may be able to radio to Command that they are lost and in need of rescue, prior to being incapacitated when the SCBA goes empty. Other problems may include: a possible secondary collapse, separated and scattered crews and confusion of the last known location of the crew (or member).

### **"May-Day" Radio Message**

The radio message: "May-Day" will be used by lost or trapped firefighters to report their status as being in trouble and needing rescue. Any member may use "May-Day" to report a lost firefighter. Any report of "May-Day" will receive priority radio traffic. The term "May-Day" will be reserved *only* to report lost or trapped firefighters. The term "Emergency Traffic" will be used to report other emergencies.

### **Command Response to a Missing Firefighter**

The Incident Commander *must always* assume that the missing firefighter is lost or trapped in the building until the firefighter is accounted for. Rapid, concise decisions and actions must be taken to increase survivability. The following is a list of actions to be taken by Command for a reported missing or trapped firefighter. These are guidelines and do not necessarily need to be accomplished in the order listed. The first five (5) must be accomplished very rapidly.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 2 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Emergency Traffic**

Immediately upon a report of a missing or trapped firefighter "Emergency Traffic" will be sounded to alert all personnel working on the fireground of the situation.

**Change the Plan to a High Priority Rescue Effort**

The incident Commander must restructure the plan to include a high priority firefighter rescue effort. A rapid, well thought out, rescue plan must be developed and the command organization expanded. The plan and objectives must be communicated to other Command staff and Sector Officers for implementation.

**Immediately Request Additional Alarms**

At least one additional alarm should be immediately requested including a medical component. Additional multiple alarms may be requested based on circumstances and potential. Level two staging should be implemented. Early consideration should be given to heavy equipment resources and Heavy Technical Rescue (HTR) assistance in structural collapses.

**Fireground Accountability**

A Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) must be immediately requested from all companies operating on the fireground. This is especially important in situations of structural collapse. Command cannot develop an effective rescue plan until accurate information is available on the number of missing firefighters, their identify, their last reported work area, and which companies are affected.

**Commit the Rapid Intervention Team**

Command will immediately send the rapid intervention team(s) (RIT) to the most appropriate location to initiate search and rescue efforts (typically the last reported work area). The RIT will be designated as "Rescue Sector" and coordinate activities at that location. Additional available resources in staging may also be committed to rescue efforts.

**Withdraw Companies from the Affected Area**

In some situations, such as collapse, crew members can get separated. The only practical method to obtain an accurate roll call for a PAR may be to withdraw crews to the exterior. Withdrawal is a judgment call based on circumstances at the time, information available, and resources. It may not be practical or possible to do. However, the absolute need for an accurate roll call (PAR) and information on missing firefighters remains a critical priority.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 3 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Do not Abandon Fire Fighting Positions, Provide Reinforcement**

Abandoning firefighting positions during the rescue effort should be avoided. Command and crews should take aggressive measures to protect trapped or missing firefighters from the effects of the fire. Efforts should be concentrated on reinforcing existing positions and keeping the fire out of the rescue area and providing appropriate ventilation and lighting. In some situations it may be appropriate to write off some areas of the building in order to relocate companies and crews to better protect the rescue effort.

**Assign Command Officer to the Rescue Sector**

A Command Officer should be assigned to direct the Rescue Sector and rescue operations. Depending on the size of the rescue area and the complexity of operations, more than one Command Officer may be needed to fill additional support positions or sectors. The Sector Officer will assign specific areas or grids of the building to each rescue team (company) to conduct searches before entering the building. Search efforts must be closely coordinated between Sectors and Command must be kept informed.

**Assign a Safety Sector**

Rescue operations are high risk. The rescue operation may be taking place in a postcollapse environment or a flashover may have occurred. Emotions may be high and firefighters will tend to want to free-lance and take chances. A Safety Sector in the affected area will help control the risk taking. A Safety Sector must be implemented. An available Command Officer should assume this Sector as soon as possible. Other Safety Sector responsibilities will be to conduct an assessment of the hazards, thus, allowing time for the Rescue Sector Officer to concentrate on the critical rescue effort. These Sector Officers must work hand in hand to insure that a safe and effective rescue operation is conducted.

**Expand the Command Organization**

With additional resources enroute, along with the critical rescue needs, the Command organization must expand ahead of the demand. The incident may eventually escalate to a Branch level operation. The Incident Commander must be proactive and aggressive in developing and expanding the Command organization.

**Special Call Chief/Command Officers**

Additional Chief/Command Officers will be needed to fill key Sectors and Command team positions. Command should special call additional Command Officers, and initiate a call back of off-duty Command Officers, as needed.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 4 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Early Establishment of Treatment and Transport Sectors**

The Incident Commander must have treatment personnel in a position to immediately treat any rescued firefighters. A Transportation Sector must also be in place and coordinating activities with the Treatment Sector Officer.

**Open/Unlock all doors if Appropriate**

All doors in the immediate area should be unlocked or forced open, and at least the immediate interior area quickly searched. In most cases the doors should be left open to provide an emergency escape route, unless doing so will have negative effects on the fire fight. In all cases, the doors must remain unlocked.

**Ventilate Maintain Tenability/Lighting**

Reducing smoke conditions, through effective ventilation, improves the air quality for any victims, and will enhance search and rescue capabilities through increased visibility of the interior. Both vertical and positive pressure ventilation should be aggressively employed. Early fighting of the operation (both interior and exterior) needs to be included.

**Coordinate and Control the Search Effort**

The Incident Commander must insure that a complete, coordinated and controlled search is conducted. Close coordination of all search efforts is a must in order to eliminate duplicate searches that waste time. All areas must be thoroughly searched.

**RIT - SCBA Rescue**

Each rescue team should enter the building with an additional SCBA for each reported lost/trapped firefighter. Missing firefighters may have exhausted their SCBA air supply or may be trapped and cannot be quickly extricated. In each case the firefighter must be provided "clean" air to increase survivability.

**Heavy Technical Rescue Teams**

Heavy Technical Rescue Teams (HTR) and other specialized equipment should be requested at all structural collapses that have trapped firefighters.

**Watch for Structural Stability of the Building**

All personnel must watch the structural stability of the building throughout the rescue effort. Where a structural collapse has occurred, or the fire or other event has compromised the structural integrity of the building, a structural engineer affiliated with the New Mexico, Urban Search and Rescue Taskforce-1 should be called in to evaluate the structure. A Heavy Technical Rescue taskforce (HTR) may be called upon to assist with shoring the rescue area, or for the use of other specialized equipment.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 5 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Strong Supervision Required**

Strong supervision and control will be required by all officers. Emotions will be very high. Firefighters in this situation will tend to want to free lance or take higher risk. Treatment personnel will need to be restricted to only those needed. Crowd control of our own non-essential personnel may be required.

**Media Control**

Command will need to control the media early and throughout the incident. Information on the identities and conditions of lost firefighters must be restricted until after next of kin are notified. Media film crews should be restricted to areas that are safe and at a distance that will prevent visual/facial identification of any victims.

**Welfare Sector/Branch**

A Welfare Sector or Branch will need to be established early. This will aid in notification of next of kin and allow Command to stay ahead of the media identification. Chief officers should be assigned to direct this Sector/Branch. Additional Chief or Staff Officers will be needed to fill subordinate positions within the Sector or Branch.

**Ensure that Alarm Monitors All Radio Channels**

Command must ensure that Alarm monitors all radio channels. Should a lost firefighter declare emergency on a channel other than the fireground tactical channel, Command must be immediately directed to the lost firefighters channel for direct communications.

**Rapid Intervention Stand-by Teams**

Due to the high risk nature of rescue operations, Command must establish another RIT to protect rescue crews. The RIT should stand-by at a location near the rescue operation. More than one RIT may be needed. (See Rapid Intervention Team procedures SOG 112)

**General Considerations**

When searching for a lost member, rescue crews should consider the following:

- Visible sighting of trapped firefighters such as arms or legs.
- Knowledge of their last known location.
- The sound of the PASS device's audible tones.
- Shouts for help from the collapsed area.
- Tapping noise, etc.
- Sounds of portable radio broadcast in the collapse area.
- Breathing, moaning sounds.
- The sound of the SCBA bell sounding.
- Radio request for help from portable radios from within the collapse area.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 6 of 8**

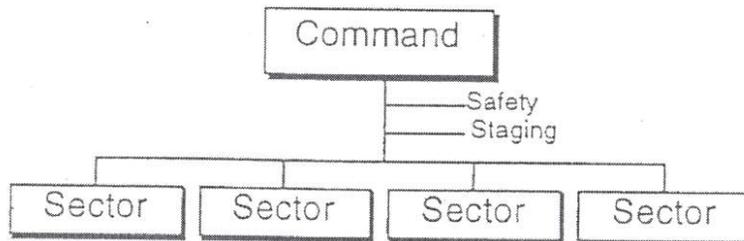
SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
----------------------	----------------------	----------	----------------------

- Tracing attack hoselines into the collapse area.
- Tracing of life lines into the area.
- Evidence of building structures or locations that were described by lost firefighters.
- Flashlight beams.
- Location of ladders, fans, lights, or other equipment being used by missing

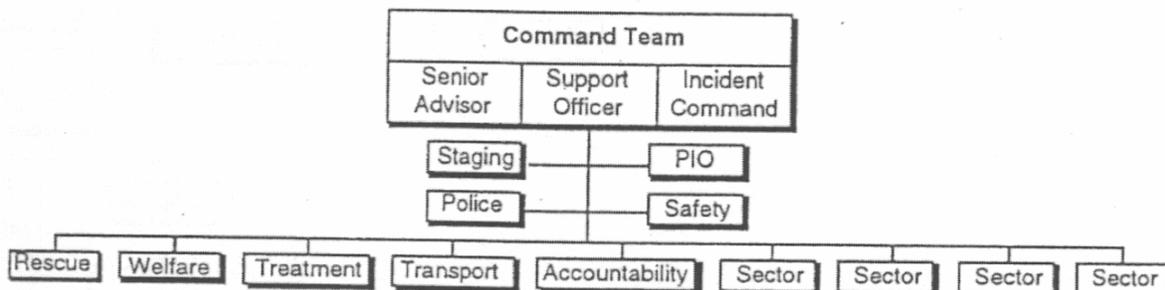
**firefighters.**

- Open or unlock all doors.
- Search the immediate area of doorway first.
- Search hallways before interior rooms.
- Search exterior walls (interior sides) before searching interior spaces.
- Search large interior spaces in a detailed grid pattern.
- Ensure all areas are searched.
- Take one SCBA for each lost firefighter in the search area.
- Use life lines when searching “off hoseline” to ensure safety of rescuers

Lost Firefighter Command Organization (initial Command organization)



Expanded Command Organization



ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

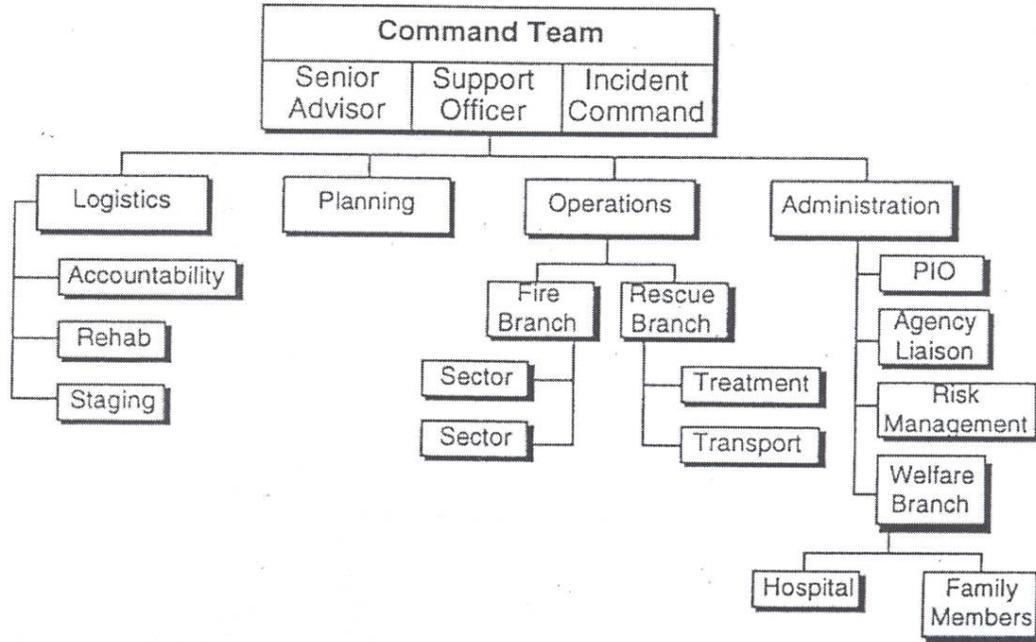
Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities

SOG 5-7-08

Page 7 of 8

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
----------------------	----------------------	----------	----------------------

Lost Firefighter Expanded Command - Section Organization  
Logistics Planning Operations Administration



**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Lost-Trapped FF's Command Responsibilities**

**SOG 5-7-08**

**Page 8 of 8**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Safety Checklist: "May-Day" - Lost or Trapped Firefighter**

- o Emergency Traffic
- o Change the plan to high priority rescue effort
- o Request additional alarms
- o Conduct a PAR - withdraw crews if needed
- o Assign RIT - assign Rescue Sector
- o Don't abandon firefighting positions
- o Provide reinforcement to firefighting efforts
- o Assign Command Officer to Rescue Sector
- o Assign Safety Sector
- o Expand Command organization
- o Special call Chief/Command Officers
- o Establish Treatment and Transport Sectors
- o Open/unlock all doors
- o Ventilate maintain tenability
- o Provide lighting
- o Coordinate and control search and rescue efforts
- o Assess need for Heavy Technical Rescue Teams
- o Monitor structural stability of building, call for structural engineer
- o Media control - PIO
- o Welfare Sector/Branch
- o Alarm Room to monitor all radio frequencies

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 1 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**Purpose**

The purpose of this guideline is to define the roles and responsibilities of Albuquerque Fire Department personnel when releasing information regarding AFD policy or department participation in any incident. It also defines the role of the AFD Public Information Officer (PIO), and appropriate times to have the PIO dispatched.

**Guideline**

The Albuquerque Fire Department recognizes the need to provide timely information to the general public and to the news media, and to serve as an information resource for the community. It is the goal of the Albuquerque Fire Department to maintain an open and mutually productive association with the news media as a means by which to promote fire department activities and to coordinate the release of pertinent information to the public.

These guidelines are implemented in order to responsibly meet the goal of providing the factual and consistent release of fire department information regarding fire, EMS, or other emergency response incidents, as well as any other department-related information.

**Operational Guidance**

**I. Command considerations**

- A. At a fire, EMS, or other emergency, the on-scene Incident Commander will be responsible for tracking information at the incident. The Incident Commander will also be responsible for the prompt release of that information to the news media as appropriate.
- B. If a PIO is unavailable, each Incident Commander (or designee) will be responsible for addressing media inquiries in the areas under their command. The information will be provided to the next shift officer so that he or she can address inquiries that may occur after the shift change.
- C. The PIO will be dispatched to all second and greater alarms, to incidents that result in a civilian or fire fighter injury or fatality, and to all incidents specifically identified in this guideline. Any Incident Commander may request, through AFD Dispatch, that the PIO be dispatched to assist in coordinating the release of incident information to the media.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 2 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

**II. Public Information Officer responsibilities**

- A. The department acknowledges the need that the news media has for a point-of-contact for timely and complete information; however, the department also recognizes the responsibility to ensure confidentiality on sensitive issues.
  - 1. In order to meet each of these needs, the PIO will be the department spokesperson for the release of all AFD emergency scene information.
  - 2. While on-scene, at an incident, the PIO will be responsible for the coordination of all media requests for information, access to emergency scenes, and/or interviews with fire department personnel.
  - 3. The PIO will also track ongoing arson investigations for updates and will address information requests from the media.
  
- B. The PIO will coordinate the release of any significant information with the on-scene Incident Commander. The Incident Commander will determine what information will or will not be immediately released to the media.
  
- C. At an incident, the PIO will be stationed at the incident command post, and work under the direction of the Incident Commander. A media briefing area will be established at a location that is visible, readily accessible, and is away from the command post.
  - 1. Media representatives will be made aware of the briefing area and of the need for them to report there. At no time will they be allowed to compromise fireground or emergency scene operations.
  - 2. The PIO will keep the media periodically informed of pertinent events as they develop within the incident.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 3 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- D. When released from the scene of an incident, the PIO will prepare an updated summary of the incident and transmit a copy of the press release to local radio, television, and print media.
1. Local media will be advised of the method by which primary dissemination of information from the department will be transmitted.
    - a. The methods currently in use include facsimile or email.
  2. A copy of all press releases will be provided to the Fire Chief and to the Mayor's Communications Officer.
- E. The PIO will advise AFD Dispatch upon his or her arrival and departure from the incident, using standard department radio protocol.
- F. The release of any issues related to Albuquerque Fire Department administrative policy or personnel will be directed to the Fire Chief or his designee.

**III. Media access**

- A. At some time during the incident, arrangements may be made for the media to have the opportunity to interview the Incident Commander or other responding personnel. The interview will take place away from the command post, when appropriate.
- B. When deemed safe and appropriate, the media may be provided the opportunity to tour and/or photograph or film the incident. The PIO will obtain permission from the Incident Commander to allow media access to the emergency scene.
- C. If the situation warrants only limited access, the PIO will request that the media members present on-scene coordinate an agreement to pool and distribute among themselves any photographs, film, or videotape of the scene.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 4 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

1. In fairness to all media present, this should be done as expediently as possible. If an agreement among various media members cannot be reached, no access will be allowed.
2. The PIO will advise all media members of the dangers inherent in a fire, rescue, or emergency scene, and the risk posed to those entering the scene.

**IV. Role of on-scene personnel**

- A. AFD units arriving on-scene are often faced with inquiries from news reporters seeking immediate information.
- B. In many cases, this may occur before an initial size-up is complete or before fire/rescue operations are underway. In these situations, AFD personnel should observe specific initiatives.
  1. Designate one assembly point and advise media members to assemble there while initial fire ground operations take place.
  2. Advise media members that they may photograph, film, or videotape as long as they do not interfere with incident operations.
  3. As soon as possible, the Incident Commander should arrange to meet with media representatives to provide the basic facts regarding the incident.
    - a. The information released should follow that compiled on the press release guide sheet.
    - b. The guide is attached as an appendix to this guideline.
  4. All fire department personnel will be aware that it is AFD policy to never release the names of injured or deceased persons involved at an incident until the next of kin have been notified.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 5 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- a. Names of the deceased or injured will not be used over radio transmissions.
  - b. Notification is generally conducted by local law enforcement agencies or the Office of the Medical Investigator (OMI).
5. Personnel should make every effort to cooperate with the media; however, if media personnel compromise incident safety or otherwise hinder incident operations, the request that they leave should be made in a positive, non-confrontational, manner.
- a. If this is not possible, the matter becomes a police issue.
  - b. APD assistance should be immediately requested.

**V. Fire investigations**

- A. In fulfilling their responsibility to provide professional fire investigations, AFD arson investigators will also be responsible for providing timely information regarding the cases to which they are assigned.
1. The department acknowledges the implicit necessity of confidentiality of information regarding open cases and maintains the right to keep such information restricted.
  2. Fire origin and cause, and/or any other information that may be of interest to the public will be released, through a Public Information Officer press release, as soon as it is made available by fire investigators.
  3. Fire investigators will make a reasonable effort to provide this information to the Public Information Officer in a timely manner.

**VI. Dispatching the PIO**

- A. An incident commander may request that the Public Information Officer be dispatched to any incident, day or night. The following are incidents requiring automatic dispatch for the PIO:

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 6 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

1. When there is a need for the coordination of reporters and/or photographers at an emergency or non-emergency incident, and/or to all incidents where the dissemination of information may be warranted.
  2. To any mass casualty incident (MCI).
  3. To any fire-related fatality.
  4. To any fire, HazMat, and/or explosion at a public or private school.
  5. To any gas leaks in lines of ¾" or larger.
  6. To any fire fighter injury requiring transport to a hospital.
  7. To any Heavy Technical Rescue (HTR) incident.
  8. To any evacuation of more than two single-family dwelling units.
  9. To any Wildland Task Force incident (with the dispatch of additional units).
  10. To any swiftwater or flood channel rescue dispatch with a confirmed victim.
  11. To any incident that requires a dispatcher dedicated to the incident for communications.
- B. The PIO will be notified of any incident that may generate media and/or public interest, including confirmed structure fires.
- C. All contacts between AFD personnel and the news media should be reported to the PIO, in the event that additional information needs to be released or for the clarification of information or department policy.

**VII. Routine incidents of special interest**

- A. Often, routine but "unusual" incidents occur that ordinarily would not get media coverage. These incidents may be of interest to the public and often would illustrate AFD operations in a positive manner.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 7 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- B. Department personnel are welcome to report information of this type to the Public Information Officer. Incidents of special interest to the public can cover a wide range, but may include those illustrated through the following examples.
1. The development or implementation of a new program or equipment.
  2. When a member of the public wakes a neighbor to alert him or her that their house is on fire, even if the fire causes minimal damage.
  3. A baby is delivered by firefighters.
  4. The first chimney fire or Christmas tree fire of the year.
  5. When firefighters collect food, clothing, or money for a needy family, or when firefighters volunteer to help rebuild a home lost to fire.
  6. Any incident or issue that department personnel would like to see addressed in the media.
  7. Any incident where an EMD saves a life by providing pre-arrival instructions.
  8. Any rescues involving children and/or animals.

**VIII. Requests for information**

- A. AFD routinely receives requests for department information from private industry, community organizations, and various government agencies. As a subsidiary entity of the City of Albuquerque, all operations and activities of the department are public information.
- B. The department will fulfill all reasonable requests for information as long as they are a matter of open public record. Information that will not be released includes personal information regarding department personnel; any information that would breach the rights of patient confidentiality, including the names or addresses of those injured or deceased at an AFD incident; or any information regarding open or on-going fire investigations.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 8 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- C. All requests for information should be directed to the Public Information Officer at AFD Fire Administration. All requests for information regarding department policy will be addressed by the Fire Chief or his designee.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Public Information

SOG 5-7-09

Page 9 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

Appendix

This appendix provides a press release guide to be used for the dissemination of information to the news media. This appendix includes a guide sheet and instructions for completing it.

This is a guide for completing Appendix A.

1. **Date.** The date the incident occurred.
2. **Incident type.** Situation found, such as, house fire, chemical spill, building collapse, etc.
3. **Address.** Address at which the incident occurred.
4. **Occupancy type.** Single-family residence, place of assembly, school, etc. Provide the name of the business, apartment complex, and/or school.
5. **Times.** The media and public are concerned with response and incident control times.
6. **Reported by.** Note the person who reported the incident: neighbor, passerby, police, or resident.
7. **Occupant(s).** Note primary occupants.
8. **Owner(s).** Note of occupancy owners.
9. **Address of owner.** Note address of occupancy owner(s).
10. **Fire cause and origin.** As determined by the Incident Commander and/or fire investigator.
11. **Brief description of incident.** A brief summary of the incident telling the who, what, why, when, and how of the incident. Also describe the actions taken by fire personnel. Detail the type of attack and/or rescue actions performed.
12. **Estimate of total property value.** Provide an estimate in either monetary value or an estimate of occupancy size in square feet.

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Public Information

SOG 5-7-09

Page 10 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

13. **Estimate of property saved.** Note an estimated value of the property and the extent saved by firefighters (in a percentage of the whole or in estimated square footage).
14. **Is the occupancy insured.** Note whether or not the occupancy was reported to be insured.
15. **Were there working smoke detectors?** Note whether or not smoke detectors were installed in the occupancy, and whether they were reported to be operational.
16. **Units and personnel on scene.** Note the identification of all AFD units on-scene at the incident; note the number of personnel assigned to those units. Also note other units, such as Red Cross, PNM, or other agencies that were on-scene at the incident.
17. **Injuries / fatalities.** In the event of either fire department or civilian injuries or fatalities, note the full name, age or date of birth, and extent of injuries. Note whether the patient was treated and released or where transported (if appropriate). It is AFD policy to never release names or critical information regarding a patient to protect patient confidentiality. Be aware of AFD policy prohibiting the release of names of the injured or deceased until next of kin notification is confirmed.

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 11 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

Public Information

SOG 5-7-09

Page 12 of 11

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

PRESS RELEASE GUIDE SHEET

Incident # \_\_\_\_\_

1. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_
2. Incident type: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Address: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Occupancy: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Dispatch time: \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_
- Arrival time: \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_
- Scene control time: \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_
- Time that units cleared: \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_
6. Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Occupant(s): \_\_\_\_\_
8. Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_
9. Address of owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_
10. Fire cause and origin: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Brief description of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Estimate of total property value: \$ \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ total square feet.
13. Estimate of property saved: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALBUQUERQUE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Public Information**

**SOG 5-7-09**

**Page 13 of 11**

SOG Committee Action	Implemented 07/01/08	Revision	Implemented 07/01/08
-------------------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------------------

14. Is the occupancy insured?: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Were there working smoke detectors? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Units and personnel on-scene:

Apparatus / Unit	Unit Identification	Number of personnel
Engine		
Ladder		
Rescue		
HazMat		
Battalion Commander		
Other units		
Total		

17. Injuries / fatalities:

Name	Age	Address	Injuries	Disposition