

SCOTTS VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT		
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES	ARTICLE: II	SOP: 2701
	SECTION: 2700 INCIDENT COMMAND FIREGROUND OPERATIONS	
	SUBJECT: FIREGROUND OPERATIONS	

Purpose: To provide a consistent means of managing incidents.

Scope: This procedure will be adhered to by all district personnel. This procedure is general in order to provide flexibility, but is rigid to assure consistent fireground command procedures.

Procedure:

1. Incident Command System (ICS)

The incident command system is designed to become the basic operating system for all incidents. It begins to develop from the time the incident occurs until the requirement for management and operations no longer exist. All members shall be familiar with the principles and terminology of the ICS management system.

- A. All members shall utilize ICS and its terminology for every incident. Whereas it being a part of our day-to-day operations, it should require a minimum amount of transition for members to adapt to a larger incident.
- B. The incident commander is responsible for the command function at all times. The incident commander is a title which implies the function that is to be carried out.
- C. The incident commander title can apply equally to any officer or member of a fire or law enforcement agency regardless of rank.

2. Establishing Command

The first-in unit or officer to arrive at the scene shall assume the responsibility of command and remain in command until relieved by a higher ranking officer.

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3. Command Responsibilities

The command position shall be responsible for:

- Assuming an effective command position
- Transmitting to dispatch
- Issuing a brief size-up statement
- Command post location (if applicable)
- Obtaining tactical frequencies as needed
- Evaluating the situation
- Developing a plan and assigning tasks
- Assigning ICS positions as needed
- Documenting plans and activities
- Reviewing and evaluating all actions and progress
- Returning engine companies to service and terminating command

4. Chief Officers and the Command Position

- A. A chief officer shall respond to all structure and wildland fire incidents
- B. A chief officer shall respond to all Level II and Level III hazardous materials incidents.
- C. A chief officer shall have the discretion to respond to any other type of incident depending upon the nature, type and extent, or at the request of a company officer.
- D. When a chief officer is the first-in on an incident, his/her efforts shall be directed towards fulfilling the responsibilities listed in section 3, *Command Responsibilities*.

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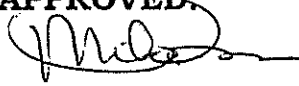
5. Company Officers and the Command Position

When a company officer arrives first-in on the scene, he/she must not only address the responsibilities of command, but also decide if his/her efforts as a team leader will be needed to stabilize the situation. A quick rescue or an immediate interior attack most often requires the assistance of the company officer. There are three different levels or modes the company officer operates in:

- A. *Command Mode:* Such situations, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential, require a strong and direct overall command position from the onset.
- B. *Action Mode:* These situations require the company officer to participate with the crew in performing initial life/property-saving operations. The use of a portable radio permits the officer to help with initial operations without neglecting command responsibilities. This mode should not last more than a few moments and will end with one of the following:
 - Situation controlled
 - Situation is not controlled and the officer must remove himself/herself to a primary command position or transfer command.
- C. *Investigative Mode:* These situations generally require investigation by the first-in arriving engine company, while holding staged companies at a distance. Normally, the officer can go with the company to check, while utilizing a portable radio to continue command.

6. Transfer of Command

- A. The first-in fire unit or officer to arrive on the scene will assume command until relieved by a ranking officer within the following guidelines:
 - 1) The first-in arriving company officer will automatically assume command.
 - 2) The arriving duty chief shall assume command of all working incidents after proper transfer procedures have been completed.

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3) Assumption of command by a ranking chief officer other than the duty chief shall be discretionary.

B. The actual transfer of command will be regulated by the following procedures:

- 1) Arriving ranking officers assuming command will communicate with the officer being relieved, preferably face-to-face, on arrival or by radio if necessary.
- 2) The officer being relieved will brief the officer assuming command. This briefing should include the following:
 - Conditions and actions taken
 - Operational plan
 - Resources committed
 - Effectiveness of the control efforts
 - Appraisal of needs
- 3) All officers will exercise their command prerogatives in a supportive manner that will assure a smooth transition and effective ongoing command function. The officer relieved of command will be utilized to the best advantage by the officer assuming command.

Note: The arrival of a ranking officer on the incident scene does not mean command has been transferred to that officer. Command is only transferred when the outlined communication functions have been completed. This, however, does not preclude the option of the first arriving company officer having another company officer arriving at the same time or close behind take command. This can be done by pre-arrangement or may be necessitated by circumstances. In either case, it shall be confirmed by both parties by radio.

7. Size-Up

A. On all multiple unit responses, the first-in unit or officer arriving at the scene will transmit a *size-up* statement over the radio.

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- B. A *size-up* statement shall be brief and consist of the following:
- 1) The **OBJECT** (house, vehicle, wildland, etc.).
 - 2) What is the **CONDITION** (flames, smoke, nothing showing, etc.).
 - 3) **ACTION** taken (interior attack, investigation, evacuation).
 - 4) **ASSIGNMENT** to incoming units and requests for additional resources.

- C. After the *size-up* statement, he/she will then address the remaining command responsibilities or transfer the command to a ranking officer.

8. Apparatus Placement

The objective of this procedure is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus and personnel. Effective utilization of this procedure will:


- Prevent apparatus congestion at the scene.
 - Allow time for command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
 - Reduce radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
 - Allow time for the incident commander to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
- A. Unless otherwise directed, the first-in company shall respond to the scene and take the position of best operational advantage, securing a water supply if needed.
- B. The second-in company, in the absence of an assignment, will stage themselves in their direction of travel at:
- The wrapped hydrant or dropped supply line of the first-in unit
 - Next available hydrant
 - Approximately one block from the scene
- C. The third-in unit will stage at a location designated by the incident commander.

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- D. Staged units shall report their positions to the incident commander. If no assignment has been received after a reasonable amount of time, they shall contact the incident commander for an assignment.

- E. All off-duty and paid call personnel responding to the incident scene in private vehicles shall report to the command post for role call purposes and assignments.

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