



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

Subject: Incident Management System  
Fire/EMS Response

Revised: 7/29/08, 11/15/08

#### Purpose

The purpose of this SOG is to establish a method of managing SFD response to emergencies, to define the responsibilities of the individuals involved, and to identify specific actions that must occur.

#### 21.01 Incident Management System {IMS}

An incident management system is designed to maintain and preserve the concept of span of control. It provides for the systematic development of a command organization that enhances firefighter safety and the effectiveness of emergency operations. Incident management procedures are design to accomplish the following:

- Assign the responsibility for Command to a specific individual.

- Ensure that a strong, direct and visible Command is established from the onset of the incident.

- Establish an effective incident organization defining the activities and responsibilities of those within the IMS.

- Provide a system for the orderly transfer of Command when appropriate.

The IMS used by the Stamford Fire Department and described herein is based on the National Incident Management System. It is each SFD officer's responsibility to assist in training the member/employees in the management principles and techniques found in this section in order to ensure effective operations under all conditions.

#### 21.02 Establishing Command

It shall be the policy of the SFD that Command be established at every incident involving more than two (2) SFD fire apparatus, or requests for mutual aid.

The first arriving officer shall give a brief report and select the most appropriate command option. The radio report should include:

- The identification of the unit arriving on the scene

- A brief description of the situation (i.e building size, type and occupancy, haz-mat release, mutli-vehicle accident etc.)

- The assumption, identification, and location of command; or the announcement that the company is in the attack or investigation mode.

- Any apparent safety concerns

- Request for additional resources (if needed) and/or instructions for incoming units (if necessary).



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

The radio designation “Command” shall be used. If multiple incidents occur at the same time, the word “Command” shall be prefixed with a brief description of the incident location. (i.e. Walmart Command, Swenson Ranch Command, etc.).

#### 21.03 Command Options

The first arriving officer has several command options from which to choose depending on the situation. These options are listed below and define the company officer’s direct involvement in tactical activities and the modes of command that may be utilized.

##### 21.03a Investigation Mode

If the initial report is “nothing showing”, the officer shall report that they are investigating. If the response is to a single family dwelling, and the initial report is “nothing showing...” all other responding units will discontinue emergency response but proceed toward the scene until otherwise directed. Responding officers may use their discretion on the nature of their own response.

E-4 will stage at the nearest hydrant to respond quickly if needed. E-2 shall report to the scene to assist E-1 crew with the incident.

The second arriving officer must assume and maintain command until relieved by a higher-ranking officer.

##### 21.03b Attack Mode

These situations require both immediate action and the company officer’s direct involvement. The company officer advances with the crew to provide the appropriate level of supervision. The officer must still provide an initial report as described in 21.03a of this SOG and utilize a portable radio to communicate with responding units. The second arriving officer automatically assumes command until relieved by a higher ranking officer.

##### 21.03c Command Mode

Certain incidents, by virtue of their size, complexity, or potential for rapid expansion, require immediate command. In such cases, the company officer will initially assume an exterior, safe and effective command position and focus their efforts on the overall management of the incident until relieved by a higher ranking officer.

When an officer selects the command mode, the remaining members of the company may be utilized in one of the following ways:

The company can be given an assignment with one of its members designated as team leader in the officer’s absence.

The company can be assigned to the supervision of another company officer. In such cases, this must be communicated to the company officer receiving additional manpower.

The company can be assigned to assist command.



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

#### 21.04 Responsibilities of Command

21.04a The Incident Commander has the responsibility and implicit authority for managing the emergency incident involving the SFD. The Incident Commander's mission is to ensure the successful completion of any, and all, of the following objectives that are applicable to the incident.

Provide for life safety and treat the injured.

Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of emergency response personnel throughout the incident.

Stabilize the incident and mitigate any hazards.

Conserve property and the environment and prevent unnecessary damage.

Provide excellent customer service and ensure that all reasonable actions are taken to assist victims.

21.04b To facilitate the completion of the objectives listed in 21.04a, the Incident Commander must perform the following activities:

Assume and announce Command and establish an effective operating position.

Rapidly evaluate the situation.

Initiate, maintain and control the communication process.

Identify the overall strategy, tactical objectives and action plan.

Give companies and personnel specific assignments, and require regular status reports.

Develop a command organization that matches the needs of the incident.

Review and revise the action plan as needed.

Keep track of the companies assigned to the incident and the assignment of each of those companies.

Provide for the continuity, transfer (if appropriate), and ultimate termination of command.

#### 21.05 Transfer of Command

The arrival of a higher ranking officer does not mean that command has been transferred to that officer. Should it become advantageous to transfer command, the following guidelines outline the transfer of command process.

21.05a The officer assuming command must communicate with the person being relieved. This may be by radio, however, face-to-face is the preferred method. Command is transferred only after this process has been completed.

21.05b The person being relieved of command shall, at a minimum, brief the officer assuming command on the following items:

Incident conditions

Action plan

Progress

Safety considerations

Assignments of companies and personnel

Appraisal of need for additional resources



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

21.05c Any higher ranking officer who wishes to imitate a change in the management of an initiate a change in the management of an incident must be present at the scene. Upon arrival, a higher ranking officer may elect to assist the Incident Commander or assume command.

#### 21.06 Command Organization

To effectively manage an incident, an Incident Commander must first be able to direct, control, and monitor the position and function of all operating fire companies. The command organization must develop at a pace that stays ahead of the tactical deployment of resources. The size and scope of the incident will determine the size and complexity of the command organization.

21.06a Incidents are managed by addressing issues on three levels: strategic, tactical, and tack  
The strategic level involves the overall command of the incident and includes: developing and action plan, establishing major objectives, predicting outcomes, assigning resources, and assigning specific tactical objectives. The Incident Commander is responsible for the strategic level of the incident.

The tactical level involves directing operational activities toward specific objectives. On relative small incidents, the Incident Commander may retain responsibility for the tactical level. During larger incidents, he/she will assign another officer(s) to be responsible for the tactical level of the incident. The accumulated achievements of the tactical objectives should accomplish the strategy outlined in the action plan.

The task level involves these activities normally accomplished by individual companies or specific personnel. Task level activities are routinely supervised by company officers. The accumulated achievements of task level activities should accomplish the tactical objectives.

21.06b "Simple" incidents involving a single company combine the responsibility for all three levels in the command organization. The company officer determines the strategy and tactics, and also supervises the crew doing the tack.

Command  
E-1

Strategic  
Tactical  
Task



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

21.06c “Routine” incidents involving a small number of companies usually require an additional layer in the command organization. The Incident Commander retains responsibility for the strategic and tactical levels. Companies operate at the tack level and report directly to the Incident commander.

21.06d Larger or more complex incidents involving several companies or mutual aid usually require three layers in the command organization. As the size or nature of an incident begins to exceed the Incident Commander’s capability to effectively manage the entire operation. The IC must assign another officer(s) to be responsible for the tactical level of the incident.

Tactical level officers are utilized to manage a group of resources operating in a Specific geographical area or performing a specific function, and have the authority to make decisions and assign resources within the boundaries of the overall action plan. Tactical officers report directly to the IC. Companies operate at the tack level and report directly to a tactical officer. The IC retains responsibility for the strategic level.

Note: Divisions, groups, and sectors are all terms commonly used throughout the fire service to describe tactical level operating groups. Divisions represent geographical and functional operations. The SFD will continue to use the term “Sector”, however, it is important for personnel to be familiar with the terms other departments may use.



# Stamford Fire Department

## 201 E McHarg

### Stamford, Texas 79553

21.07e As an incident continues to escalate and additional sectors are established, the number of sectors may exceed the span of control that can be effectively managed by the IC. When this occurs, the command organization can be expanded to meet the needs of the incident through the implementation of branches and sections. Staff officers can be utilized to fill branch and section positions as needed. SFD personnel must be familiar with large command organizations that utilize branches and sections. Detailed information on expanding the command organization can be found in chapter three of the *Model Procedures Guide for Structural Firefighting* referenced in Section II of this procedure.

#### 21.07 Sector Operations

21.07a It is the ongoing responsibility of the IC to assign sectors as required to effectively manage the operation. The use of tactical officers (sectors/divisions) reduces the span of control and provides an effective command organization. When sectors have been established, the IC can concentrate on overall strategy and resource management, allowing sector officers to manage their assigned tactical objectives

21.07b Generally, sector responsibilities should be assigned early in an incident, typically to the first company assigned to a particular area or function. Whenever possible, sectors shall be commanded by company officers.

21.07c The IC should assign sectors or divisions based on the following factors:

- At incidents which will eventually involve a Mutual Aid response or numerous functions and exceed the capability of the IC to directly control.
- When the IC can no longer effectively manage the number of companies currently involved in the operation