



SHROPSHIRE

Fire and Rescue Service

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Part 1

**Incident Command
procedures**

Reference

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Part 1 – Incident Command procedures

Purpose

This Brigade Order gives guidance on the incident command procedures adopted by Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. It details the roles and responsibilities of the three levels of command and the various functional roles of support Officers. The Order also so includes the responsibilities of the Command Support functional team.

Strategic aims and objectives

Strategic aim No 2. Protect life, property and the environment, from fire and other emergencies.

Strategic aim No 3. Secure the highest level of health safety and welfare for all staff; by providing effective supervision, training, equipment and systems of work.

Roles, responsibilities and review

The **Head of Operational Response** is responsible for ensuring this Order is implemented across the Brigade.

The Incident Commander will be responsible for the day to day operation of the Order.

The **Head of Operational Response** will review this Order biennially in November and as and when organisational changes take place.

Introduction

Incident Command is the means by which SFRS provides supervision at all Operational Incidents. One person assumes overall command of personnel and other resources at the scene.

The Incident Commander is responsible for Fireground management and must employ special management systems designed to consider:-

- The hazards and risks
- Compressed time
- Incomplete and inaccurate information
- Difficult communications and
- Confusion on the Fireground

Level 1 Incident Command

Level 1 Incident Command is the means by which SFRS will establish control at all incidents immediately on arrival. This level of Incident Command will always be established by the most **Senior Ranking Officer on the initial attendance**.

On-coming Officers of a higher rank , **may take command** of the Incident if they deem it necessary, or **may** if the Incident is progressing satisfactory, allow the present Incident Commander to continue in that role. They should then monitor, support and assist the I.C. during the incident.

Responsibilities

The Level 1 Incident Commander will be responsible for the Command and Control of **all** Brigade resources at the incident until either the incident is successfully dealt with or a higher level of command is established.

Identification

The importance of all personnel being aware of who is in charge cannot be over emphasised. The Level 1 Incident Commander **will** don the Incident Command Tabard and will not remove this until either the incident is successfully dealt with or a higher level of command is established.

Declaration of Tactical Mode

At the earliest possible opportunity (First Informative) the Incident Commander must declare which "Tactical Mode" is in operation. Declaration of Tactical Mode acts as a confirmation that the Incident Commander has carried out a **Dynamic Risk Assessment**.

The options for “Tactical Mode” are:

Oscar – Offensive The incident is being tackled aggressively, for example BA crews committed to a house fire with firefighting media.

Delta – Defensive the incident is being tackled defensively as the risks of offensive operations outweigh the potential benefits, for example using cooling sprays on an acetylene cylinder that has been involved in fire.

Tango- Transitional this mode is declared when there is a combination of **Defensive** and **Offensive** operations being carried out at a single incident simultaneously. For example at a factory fire operations may be **Defensive** in one sector where jets may be being used to prevent fire spread at the same time **Offensive** salvage operations may be underway in another sector, thus the Tactical Mode is **Tango Transitional**.

The “Tactical Mode” must be reviewed as the incident progresses and if there is a change to the Mode then a message must be sent to Fire Control advising of the change.

Level 1 Control Sheet

The purpose of the Level 1 Control Sheet is to facilitate a routine management approach to operational incidents. Its advantages are:

- It is a standard form
- It is the same for all incidents
- It provides information on resources
- It acts as an aide memoir
- It supports the handing over of command
- It assists decision making
- It provides an ongoing account of events.

The Level 1 Control Sheet can be completed for any incident; it **must** be completed for any “Make Up”. The completion of the Level 1 control sheet may be delegated by the Incident Commander to any crew member. The Incident Commander must check the details entered on the control sheet.

Handing over command

On the attendance of an Officer responsible for the implementation of a higher level of Command, the Level 1 Officer **WILL** (when instructed) pass all information regarding the incident to that Officer, including the completed Level 1 Control Board. The Level 1 Officer will then remove the Incident Command Tabard and carry out such duties as directed by the Level 2 Incident Commander.

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Level 2 Incident Command

This is the means by which the Brigade will provide increased levels of supervision at incidents identified as likely to escalate or where there is life risk.

This level of command will normally be established by the dedicated Level 2 Incident Commander. If for any reason the Level 2 Commander is already committed, or otherwise unavailable, the Contingency Officer will fulfil this role.

On the rare occasions when both the Level 2 Commander and the Contingency Officer are committed, then the Level 3 Principal Commander will fulfil the role of Level 2 command. The second Incident Command Vehicle (TW2I) will be mobilised on request by the Officer fulfilling the role of Level 2 Commander.

Should the incident involve hazardous substances, the Contingency Officer will attend and take overall command of the incident.

Responsibilities

- The Level 2 Commander will be responsible for Command and Control of all Brigade resources at the incident until either the incident is successfully dealt with or a higher level of command is established.
- The importance of all personnel being aware of who is in charge cannot be overstressed; all personnel must be made aware that a change in the “Command System” has taken place; Fire Control must be informed that Level 2 Command has been instigated, confirming the name of the Level 2 Incident Commander.
- The Level 2 Incident Commander **will** don the Incident Command Tabard and will not remove this until the incident is successfully concluded.

Fireground management

The dedicated Level 2 commander will use the Incident Command vehicle with its onboard management facilities.

The Contingency Officer or Level 3 Commander (Principal Command) **may** when mobilised as the Level 2 Commander, request the second Incident Command Vehicle (TW2I) to be mobilised to the incident when it becomes apparent that Level 2 command management facilities will be required.

Handing over command

On the attendance of an Officer responsible for implementation of a higher level of Command, the Level 2 Commander **will** (when instructed) pass all information to that Officer. The Level 2 Commander will then carry out such duties as directed by the Level 3 Commander (Principal Command).

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Level 3 Incident Command

This is the means by which the Brigade will provide for a higher level of command as any incident escalates and an ever increasing range of strategic support functions are required.

Persons responsible

This level of command will be established by the Principal Officer of the day. Should the Principal Officer be committed or otherwise unavailable, then the duties will be fulfilled by the Executive Officer.

Responsibilities

The Level 3 Principal Commander will be responsible for Command and Control of all Brigade resources at the incident until the incident is successfully dealt with.

Identification

All personnel must be made aware that a change in the "Command System" has taken place; Fire Control must be informed that Level 3 Command has been instigated, confirming the name of the Level 3 Incident Commander.

The Level 3 Incident Commander **will** don the Senior Fire Officers Tabard and will not remove this until the incident is successfully concluded.

Fireground management facilities

The Level 3 Commander will use the Incident Command Vehicle (Call sign TW2I) with its onboard management facilities.

Specialist Support Officers

Specialist Support Officers will be mobilised to incidents in order to fulfil the various functional roles required. A specialist officer will be mobilised automatically to any incident which becomes a "Level 2" or to any "make pumps 4". Additional specialist officers will be mobilised on request of the Level 2 Incident Commander.

Breathing Apparatus Specialist Support

An officer will be mobilised to any incident which requires more than six BA wearers to act as BA Support Officer.

Hazmat Officer

The provision of a Hazmat Officer is the means by which the Brigade will provide a high level of expertise, to ensure a safe and effective conclusion to all incidents involving hazardous materials.

The Hazmat Officer will hold the role of Group Manager or above and will have attended a Fire Service Hazardous Materials Course (or similar).

Mobilising

A Hazmat Officer will be mobilised to all incidents where hazardous materials are known or suspected to be involved and on arrival will assume overall command of the incident, (unless Level 3 Command is in operation) and will be assisted by the Level 2 Incident Commander.

Details of the responsibilities of the various "Functional Roles" are contained in SOPS.

Sectoring

Definition:

Sectoring is the means by which the Brigade will use a standard system on the fireground for dividing Incident Command into smaller units or blocks.

Persons responsible

Sectors will be assigned by the Incident Commander based on the needs of the particular situation. Sector responsibilities can therefore be delegated to anyone on the fireground within the limits of their apparatus, equipment and expertise.

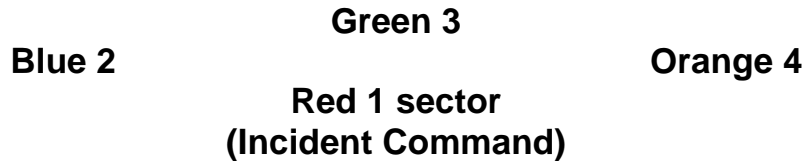
Procedures

1. Sectoring allows the Incident Commander to divide the fireground into more manageable units.
2. Sectors may be designated for functional areas other than firefighting e.g., Water Supply, Staging etc.
3. Sector Officers have responsibility for control of the position and function of a limited number of crews thereby improving firefighter safety.
4. **Level 1 Incident Command.**
The number of Sectors under this level of Command will be limited because of the number of personnel available.
Sector Officers should still be allocated sectors as required. The ***name and sector location*** of each Sector Officer should be entered onto the Level 1 Incident Control Board.
5. **Level 2/Level 3 Incident Command.**
When an Incident Command vehicle is in attendance, tabards will be issued to Sector Officers by the Incident Commander.

Identification of sectors

Designation of sectors.

When necessary the Incident Commander will divide the fireground into colour coded **and numbered** sectors as follows:



This system will also allow for the clear designation of further sectors should more than four sectors be required and is in line with the nationally accepted numbering system. Sector Officer tabards will be coloured red, blue, green and orange.

Duties of Sector Officers

1. **Don** the appropriate 'Sector Officers' tabard
2. **Supervise** all operations in the sector allocated.
3. **Carry out Dynamic Risk Assessment and monitor** the Health and Safety of personnel assigned to the sector.
4. **Redirect** sector activities as required.
5. Request additional **resources** from the Incident Commander.
6. **Co-ordinate** activities with other sectors.
7. Keep the Incident Commander **briefed** as to **situation changes** and **progress** within the sector.
8. Keep crews **informed** of the overall strategy for dealing with the incident.
9. **De-commit** resources as operations are completed.
10. Sector Officers, call sign, "**Red sector**", "**Blue sector**" etc. will communicate with their crews 'face to face', or on radio channel 4 and with the Incident Commander on channel 1 unless otherwise instructed.

Setting up initial Control Point

The first appliance in attendance at all incidents will be the Control Point for the incident and will book "In Attendance" using the MDT. In the event of failure of the MDT the OIC will book in attendance using the appliance radio.

The address included in the first message from the incident should be the full address to indicate to Fire Control that the appliance is attending the correct location. (If the Incident is located at an address different to the address given on mobilisation this is to be indicated in the "Attendance" message i.e. From SY8 in attendance at change of address 15 High Street Shrewsbury". The incident will then be repositioned on the MDT and Fire Control will be informed that repositioning has taken place).

The blue flashing light on this appliance will be left continuously operating to indicate the location of the Control Point to all personnel attending. One firefighter must be in attendance at the Control Point (usually the driver of the fire appliance) at all times to operate the radio and collect the Nominal Roll Board from oncoming appliances.

If, owing to urgent operational requirements in the initial stage of the incident, the Control Point is not staffed, the Officer-in-Charge of the second appliance will detail a firefighter to undertake this duty. Subsequent appliances closing at the incident will turn off blue flashing lights and main scheme radios except as detailed below.

If the Officer-in-Charge of the incident considers it desirable to change the Control Point from one vehicle to another then he/she will originate the following message to Fire Control:-

'Control Point for incident at (state name and address) is now (state call sign of vehicle).

The Nominal Rolls and message pad will then be transferred to the new Control Point and the blue flashing lights and radio will be turned off on the first Control appliance and turned on at the new Control Point.

In most instances only the blue flashing lights on the Control Point will be left operating. However, if it is necessary to give warning of stationary appliances to oncoming traffic, then at the discretion of the Officer-in-Charge, the blue flashing lights on other appliances may be left turned on.

Blue flashing lights will not be switched off on motorway incidents.

At an incident where an **Incident Command Vehicle** is in attendance and Level 2 Command has been instigated, the vehicle will be identified by red flashing beacons.

Nominal rolls and personnel tallies

Allocation

The allocation of Nominal Rolls within the Brigade is as follows:-

One Nominal Roll Board on each appliance to be carried inside the cab.
One personnel tally for each Officer who is likely to proceed to an incident, independent of an appliance.

Use of Nominal Rolls

The Officer in Charge of each appliance staffed by a wholetime crew is responsible for ensuring that at the commencement of watch (and other times as necessary) the Nominal Roll is completed and maintained with accurate information. When an appliance rider is relieved at the time other than at the changeover of watches, it is the responsibility of the person being relieved to amend the Nominal Roll.

The Officer in Charge of each appliance manned by a retained crew is responsible for ensuring that the crew members are listed on the Nominal Roll as soon as possible on receipt of a call.

Rank, name and initial should be entered on the Nominal Roll Board. B.A. operators are to be indicated by means of a tick placed after their name in the column marked B.A.

All Officers-in-Charge of appliances attending an incident will report immediately on their arrival to the Control Point and hand in their Nominal Roll. In the event of level two staging being in operation (See SOP 9) the OIC should book "In Attendance" at the Staging Area and then report to the Control Point and hand in their Nominal Role.

All Officers and any other persons arriving at an incident (e.g. Brigade Photographer, Fire Investigation Officers, etc) whose name is not listed on a nominal roll board, will report to the Control Point, deposit their personal tally and ensure that their attendance is recorded. If the Incident Command Vehicle is in attendance, this information will be entered on the Incident Log, including details of any Brigade vehicle (i.e. U.V., Land Rover, etc).

In the event of an appliance from another Brigade arriving at an incident without a Nominal Roll, the names of the riders on the appliance will be entered on the Incident Log if the Incident Command Vehicle is in attendance. If the ICV is not in attendance the person in charge of the Control Point must ensure that details of riders are fully recorded in a clear and concise manner.

Officers-in-Charge of appliances will collect Nominal Rolls from the Control Point before leaving the fireground.

Parking of appliances

When necessary, assistance messages should include details of a “Staging Area” for oncoming appliances which should be located to permit easy deployment to the fireground. Details of “Staging Procedures” and the duties of Staging Officers are contained in Standard Operating Procedure No 9.

Where vehicles and appliances are parked in line they should be spaced as shown below:-



This will allow for deployment of a vehicle or appliance and assist in the removal of equipment should it be required. The option to close off streets should not be overlooked in this context.

Deployment of crews

Crews must **not** leave their appliances until instructed to do so. So far as possible crews should be allowed to work as complete units, possible exceptions to this rule being when it is necessary to use BA wearers and special appliance operators as reliefs.

Care should be taken to ensure individuals or crews are not permitted on the fireground unless they are being **usefully** employed. Personnel surplus to immediate requirements should be withdrawn to a defined holding area preferably near the Control Unit from which crews can be drawn as the need arises.

At large BA incidents wearers should be directed to a holding area which may be defined by roping off with general purpose lines. The holding area must be located close to the incident but in an area which is unaffected by smoke.

Incident Command Vehicle

Function

The main functions of the Incident Command Vehicle are as follows:-

- To assist the Incident Commander in the efficient management of the fireground.
- To act as a reception for all agencies attending the incident.
- Act as a base for liaison between the Incident Commander and other Officers as required.
- Maintain a communications link between the incident and Fire Control.

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- Maintain a record of messages to and from the incident.
- Receive and marshal reporting personnel.
- Maintain an accurate record of the disposition of appliances and Officers in attendance.
- Obtain and supply information required in relation to the incident.
- Supply information required by other Services and Authorities.

Command Support Level 2.

The Incident Command Vehicle will normally be staffed by a wholetime crew who will be mobilised to all incidents at which Level 2 Command is instigated to carry out the function of Command Support. If a wholetime crew is not available a crew from Tweedale will be mobilised as Command Support. The duties of the Command Support Team are detailed below:

- Ensure all crew don a Command Support tabard.
- Power up the vehicle via a generator to be taken off the nearest appliance.
- If not already turned on, turn on the MDT computer and the fax computer. Turn on both printers.
- Turn on both Smartboard screens and the repeater screen.
- Turn on the Hand Held Radio Booster Repeater if required. The repeater is located in the off side battery compartment.
- Send and receive all radio messages. Vehicle Call sign is **India One**.
- Log all radio messages and any other information relating to the incident in the Incident Log Book.
- Prompt the Level Two IC every 20 minutes for message updates.
- Receive, and return when required, all appliance and Officer Tallies.
- Hand out any required tabards, hand held radios, torches etc and log in the Equipment Log Book.
- Ensure all items handed out are accounted for at the end of the incident.
- Complete and update information required on the Level Two board, i.e.; information from the Level One board, sectors, plan etc.

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- Bring up on the MDT any maps, plans, , premises information, SIPS and SOPS etc as requested by the Incident Commander and copy them into a Smartboard notebook.
- Send and receive any faxes as directed by the Level 2 IC.
- Erect and set up the vehicle inflatable shelter if required.
- Liaise with Fire Control regarding provision of relief crews.
- Organise provision of fireground feeding.
- Carry out any other duties as requested by the Level 2 IC.

Command Support Level 3

For all Level 3 incidents the second Incident Command Vehicle located at TW (TW2I) will be mobilised with a crew from TW.

Location

The locating of the Incident Command Vehicle will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander. When positioning the ICV the following must be considered:-

Ensure a good radio reception is obtained having regard to other Services radio vehicles and appliances using other channels.

Position clear of smoke and heat.

Do not block roadways, causing congestion for reinforcing appliances and operations during the incident.

Position where it can easily be seen by Officers and crews attending the incident.

Fireground Communications

The Communications procedure is the means by which the Brigade will organise and allocate radio communications to assist in effective incident command.

1. The standard radio structure for the various levels of Incident Command is laid out in pictorial format in the **SOP No 8 Communications**. In addition to this, the radio channel allocations for specific roles are indicated on each hand held radio.
2. The Incident Commander may appoint a **Communications Officer** during an incident to assist with communications. This role may be designated to a member of the "Command Support Team"
3. The Communications Officer will liaise with the Incident Commander on all matters concerning communications and will be responsible for ensuring radio procedure is adhered to.
4. The Communications Officer, call sign '**Communications**' will communicate with the Incident Commander and other command functions 'face to face' or on radio channel 1, unless otherwise instructed.

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Gold Command

SFRS has entered into an agreement with colleagues in Hereford and Worcestershire to share Gold Command responsibilities on a rota basis. Gold Command is set up to provide strategic command of the most serious incidents involving multi-agency partners, such as “Boscastle” or “Buncefield” and will normally convene at Hindlip Hall (Police HQ). Officers responsible for Gold Command on any given day will be annotated on the Officers Rota.

References:

Fire Service Manual Vol 2 “Incident Command”
SFRS Standard Operating Procedures No’s 1 - 10
Guide to Operational Risk Assessment
Aide Memoir Command Support

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