

# Incident command system

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## Incident Command System

A designated Incident Commander will head an organization that will be activated when a disaster event has been identified and declared. The Incident Commander shall be pre-designated and identified during the disaster planning ahead of any disaster. An infinite succession mechanism that will allow for the seamless designation of a new incident commander shall be established if in case the primary Incident Commander is unable to perform or cannot effectively perform this function. All Incident Commander shall be stationed in the Incident Command Centre where all information necessary for the management, direction, and operation of the disaster response plan shall be concentrated (McEntire, 2007). The position of the Incident Commander shall be imbued with all the powers necessary to direct the operation, manage the resources and implement the disaster mitigation, preparedness and response plans of Irvin, Texas. The Incident Commander shall have discretionary power to spend the allocated funds reserved by the county in case of an event disaster. The funds shall be set-aside and finalized by the county and shall only be used in case of an event identified as a disaster (General Accounting Office, 2008).

The position of the Incident Commander should not be elected, designated or even chosen during the event itself. All identified and designated Incident Commanders shall always give their locations and their contact numbers to the Command Centre. This is to ensure that in case of an impending event the nearest and most accessible available Incident Commander would be able to arrive at the Command Centre before the onset of the event. Before and during the detection of an event the shift supervisor shall act as the

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Incident Commander until such time that the Incident Commander arrives at the command center. This mechanism will prevent confusion, conflicting orders and misallocation of resources of personnel.

Communication shall be through radio and cellular phones or any other available means permitted by the event/disaster including runners or messengers. To disseminate information to the general public the television, radio and actual runners shall be utilized to ensure that only authenticated information is from the command center. There shall only be one source of information and that would be the information coming from the Command Centre's Public Information officer. Regular update from one hour to every thirty minutes interval shall be broadcasted to ensure and assure the population that the command center and the entire leadership is functioning and is in control. This will provide a psychological and emotional anchor for the population to hold on to.

At the actual event disaster, a survey team shall first be dispatched to assess and provide triage information to the command center. This will systematize the allocation of the right amount of resources to areas that are in need of it the most at the shortest possible time allowed by circumstances. Triage will ensure that the most number of survivors will be attained in any event/disaster.

It should be noted that Disaster Preparedness includes conducting drills and practice runs to instill in the minds of the first responders that the order of priority will be the safety of the rescuers first. The rationale for this is that one live and able rescuer can save more lives during a disaster, thus their safety should be assured. The second priority in a disaster event is the triage response. It should be noted that resources during an event disaster may

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become scarce since isolation of a county or a locality is a real possibility. Conducting triage and strictly following the triage process shall save more lives and shall save much needed medical and personnel resources in the long run. Any decision that will violate these established processes and criteria can be considered reckless. Independent decision shall only be considered and allowed for circumstances that will put into conflict the policies and procedures of the disaster response plan and the safety and health of individuals or a group of person (Moral del & Walker, 2007). Independent inputs from well-meaning individuals shall be taken in and considered in the event that an established procedure, plan or process have not been prepared in response to the event disaster. However, independent inputs shall not be allowed nor considered that run contrary to the disaster response plan. The Incident Commanders are given enough power in order for him to effectively respond, manage and implement the disaster response plan distractions such as inputs from well-meaning individuals should be kept to a minimum. This should be directed to the information and public relations officer.

Lastly, any disaster response plan should be communicated to all stakeholders and participants. Practice drills and dry-runs should be conducted and evaluated regularly to expose holes for the purpose of plugging them. Continuous drills and dry runs will also inculcate the discipline needed to practice effective triage during an event disaster. Any concerns that would include the qualification and nomination of the Incident Commander and his successors shall be discussed and deliberated during the preparation and before the approval of the Disaster Response Plan of Irvin, Texas.

## Bibliography

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