

Policy Number: 2020-008

Effective Date: 05/25/2020

Last Review Date: _____

Waterloo Vol Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Incident Command System

Command procedures are designed to offer a practical framework for emergency operations and to effectively integrate the efforts of all members, officers, and firefighters. This will facilitate an organized and orderly tactical operation and a more effective effort. All members involved in emergency operations will be trained to the appropriate level in the National Incident Management System (NIMS.) Those who function in command staff positions shall train further to the advanced ICS levels.

The Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for managing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority. The individual responsible for the overall management of the response is called the Incident Commander.

The IC is responsible for all aspects for the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations both written and verbal. The IC sets priorities and defines the ICS organization for the particular response. Even if other positions are not assigned, the IC will always be designated.

The IC is faced with many responsibilities when he/she arrives on scene. Unless specifically assigned to another member of the Command or General Staffs, these responsibilities remain with the IC.

Responsibilities of Command

- Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety
- Conservation of property
- Conservation of environment
- Remove endangered occupants and treat injured
- Assure the safety and welfare of department personnel

Function of Command

- Assume Command
- Size up the incident
- Evaluate Conditions
- Develop a plan
- Assign units
- Provide continuing command
- Request additional units

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- Disregard and return units to service
- Terminate Command

Assuming Command

The first department member or unit to arrive on the scene of an incident shall establish command of the incident. The initial incident commander shall remain in command until command is transferred or the incident/command is terminated.

Scene Size Up and Initial Report

The member or unit establishing command initiates the command process with an initial radio report. The initial radio report shall contain the following:

- Identify unit arriving on the scene
- Give a brief description of the incident
- Speak clearly
- Use common language
- State any safety concerns
- Establish and name command based on location

Transfer of Command

A. The first arriving Unit on the scene will establish and continue command until transferred within the following guidelines:

- A face-to-face briefing between command, and the officer command is being transferred to, must be completed.
- The officer command is being transferred to is willing to accept the responsibilities of command.
- Under NO circumstances will command be transferred to a unit that is not on scene.
- Once the officer that command is being transferred to has been briefed, The Incident Command will advise dispatch that the officer taking command has been briefed and is now command of the Incident.

B. The arrival of a ranking officer on the incident scene does not mean “command” has automatically been transferred. Command is only transferred when the transfer of command process has been completed. In cases where an individual is effectively

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commanding the incident and satisfactory progress is being made to bring the incident under control, it may be desirable for that person to continue an active command role. If upon arrival a higher-ranking officer declares the command to be ineffective they can assume command as long as it is communicated to all involved in the incident. All officers will exercise their command prerogative in a supportive manner that will insure a smooth transition and the effective ongoing function of command.