

	Queen Anne's County Fire & EMS Commission Operations Manual	No. 02.05
		Effective Date: December 1, 2001
	Incident Command System	Revised Date: December 1, 2015

I. SCOPE

- A. This policy applies to all Queen Anne's County Fire and EMS service personnel.
- B. Provide for the safety of personnel operating at an emergency incident through improved command and control procedures.
- C. Improve the use of resources and tactical effectiveness.
- D. Meets Homeland Security Presidential Directive – 5.
- E. Meets the OSHA and SARA regulations requiring the use of an Incident Command System for hazardous materials incidents.
- F. Meets the NFPA Standard 1500 and 1561 requirements for the use of an Incident Command System for operations at all emergency incidents.

II. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish an Incident Management System designed to control personnel, facilities, equipment and communications throughout an emergency incident. It is designed to begin developing from the time an incident occurs until the requirement for management and operations no longer exists. The structure of the Incident Command System can be established and expanded upon the changing conditions of the incident. It can be used for any type or size of emergency from a minor incident to a major one involving several agencies. It is intended to be staffed and operated by qualified personnel from any emergency services agency and may involve personnel from a variety of agencies. The establishment of this policy for the emergency services of Queen Anne's County will be as followed.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All personnel affiliated with a Queen Anne's County Fire Department will be responsible for being familiar with this policy and fully functional in any position that he/she might reasonably be expected to fill.

IV. DEFINITION

1. Area Command – An organization established to 1) oversee the management of multiple incidents that each are being handled by an Incident Command System organization or 2) to oversee the management of a very large incident that has multiple Incident Management Teams assigned to it.
2. Base – The location where the primary Logistics functions are coordinated and administrated.
3. Branch – The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major segments of incident operations.
4. Brief Initial Report – The initial status report, which includes all of the information necessary to established the operations at an incident.
5. Brief Progress Report – Periodic information on the status of an incident designed to keep interested parties informed about the progress of the incident.
6. Division – That organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. They are identified by alphabetic characters (A, B, C, D) for horizontal application and by floor numbers for vertical application.
7. Group – That organizational level having responsibility for a specific functional assignment. Examples: would be Vent Group, Rescue Group.
8. Incident Command System – The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organization structure with responsibility for the management of assigned resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives pertaining to an incident.
9. Incident Commander (IC) – The individual responsible for the management of incident activities, specifically responsible for determining incident priorities, developing goals and objectives.
10. Liaison Officer – A member of the Command Staff who serves as a point of contact for coordinating with assisting or cooperating agencies.
11. Medical Group/Branch – An organizational element providing an expandable system for handling patients at the emergency scene.

12. Public Information Officer – A member of the Command Staff responsible for interface with the media or other appropriate agencies requiring information directly from the incident scene.
13. “Queen Anne” – Department of Emergency Services.
14. Rapid Intervention Crew – A crew or company designed to stand by, with necessary tools and equipment, to rescue firefighters should it become necessary.
15. Resources – All personnel and major items of equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incident tasks on which status is maintained.
16. Safety Officer – Responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations and developing measures for ensuring personnel safety.
17. Staging Area – That location where personnel and equipment are assigned on an immediately available status.
18. Strategic Goals – The overall plan that will be used to control the incident. Strategic goals are broad in nature and are achieved by the completion of tactical objectives.
19. Strategic Mode – The mode of attack as specified by the availability of resources compared to the resource requirements of the incident. Examples: Offensive Mode is an aggressive attack due to the fact that available resources exceed that required by the incident. Defensive Mode is a protective attack or defense due to the fact that the incident requires more resources than are available.
20. Strike Team – A functional element of up to five units of the same kind and type, with common communications and a leader.
21. Tactical Objectives – The specific operations that must be accomplished to achieve strategic goals. Tactical objectives must be both specific and measurable.
22. Task Force – A combination of single resources with common communications and a leader. May be resources of different types, generally assembled for a specific assignment.

V. **POLICY**

A. Responsibilities of Command

1. In order to develop a well-orchestrated response to any incident scene, clear lines of authority, responsibility and accountability must be defined.
 - a. Command procedure

- 1) The effective functioning of all units and personnel at any incident requires clear, decisive action on the part of an Incident Commander.
- 2) This procedure fixes responsibility for the **Command** function and its associated duties on one individual at any time during an incident.
- 3) Command procedures are designed to accomplish the following:
 - a) Fix the responsibility for **Command** on a specific individual.
 - b) Strong, direct and visible **Command** will be established as early as possible in the operation.
 - c) Establish an effective framework for activities and responsibilities.
 - d) Provide a system for the orderly transfer of **Command** to subsequent arriving authorities.

b. Command Responsibilities

- 1) Assess incident priorities.
- 2) Determine strategic goal(s).
- 3) Determine tactical objective(s).
- 4) Develop incident action plan.
- 5) Establish a Command Post (if necessary).
- 6) Establish Field Communications (if needed).
- 7) Develop appropriate Organizational Structure.
- 8) Delegate job responsibilities.
- 9) Manage incident resources.
- 10) Request additional resources.
- 11) Coordinate overall incident activities.
- 12) Ensure safety of on-scene personnel.
- 13) Coordinate activities of outside agencies.
- 14) Authorize release of information to media.

B. Initial Operating Procedure

1. The first-arriving company officer, acting officer, or otherwise senior individual on the first-arriving suppression unit shall be responsible for, and shall have the authority to exercise all **Command** functions deemed reasonable and prudent until such time as they are relieved by proper authority. The first-arriving unit will go on location, give a brief initial status report and either assume **Command** or pass **Command** to the next arriving piece of emergency apparatus. If the first unit on location is other than a suppression unit the individual riding in that unit must give a brief initial status report. It is recommended that the individual then consult with the incoming company officer or acting officer, unless the situation warrants an immediate lifesaving decision, and should make those decisions based on the incident priorities. Queen Anne must advise the first-incoming officer or acting officer the status of the incident.

C. Normal Operating Procedures

1. The first-arriving Company Officer, acting officer, or otherwise senior individual on the first-arriving suppression unit shall be responsible for, and shall have the authority to exercise, all **Command** functions deemed reasonable and prudent until such time as they are relieved by proper authority.
2. The first-arriving company officer, acting officer, or otherwise senior individual on the first-arriving unit shall:
 - a. Perform a size up in accordance with normal size up procedures.
 - b. Determine the appropriate strategies and tactics.
 - c. Assign tactical objectives as required, including support.
 - d. Transmit a brief initial status report to Queen Anne and other responding units.
 - e. Determine the need for assistance and request such assistance as necessary.

D. Addressing the Command Function

1. Passing Command
 - a. May only be done by the first-arriving company officer, acting officer or otherwise senior individual on the first-arriving unit.
 - b. May be done only after all other necessary **Command** functions have been completed according to the brief initial status report.
 - c. Shall be the result of a conscious decision by the Company officer or acting officer that they must necessarily commit themselves to a tactical objective, and therefore cannot be in an appropriate position to adequately manage the incident.
 - d. If the first-arriving officer or acting officer passes the **Command** responsibilities to the next arriving piece of apparatus, they must notify Queen Anne that they are passing **Command**. Example; “Engine 11 on the scene, one story single family dwelling, with fire showing from Side B, Passing **Command**”.
 - e. Queen Anne will then advise all units responding; “Attention, all units responding on Box 1-1, Engine 11 is on the scene of a single family dwelling, with fire showing from Side B, passing **Command**”.
 - f. When **Command** is passed, the next arriving officer or acting officer MUST report to the scene instead of staging and **Assume Command**.

2. Assuming the Role of Incident Commander

- a. If the company officer or acting officer is assuming the position of the Incident Commander, they must notify Queen Anne that they are establishing **Command**. **Command** will be designated by the specific street location and the word **Command**. Example: “Chief 1 on location, Officer 101 establishing Main Street **Command**”. Queen Anne will broadcast an alert tone followed by: “Attention, all units on the scene and responding on Box 1-1, Officer 101 establishing Main Street **Command**.”

3. Assuming Command

- a. Is the result of a conscious decision by the Company officer or acting officer on the first-arriving unit that the incident requires immediate **Command** and control or that there are sufficient resources available to handle the necessary tactical objectives adequately. In this situation, the Incident Commander must remain in a position to manage the incident appropriately.
- b. Must be done by the company officer or acting officer in the next arriving unit if **Command** was passed by the first-arriving officer or acting officer.
- c. May be done by the company officer or acting officer in the first-arriving unit if, after having already passed **Command**, he or she decides that assuming **Command** is now warranted as a result of changes in the situation.
- d. May be done by higher-ranking officers as the incident dictates.

E. Considerations for Passing / Assuming Command

1. Size and extent of the Incident

- a. Small or less complex incidents where your immediate assistance in a tactical operation would have a positive impact on the outcome might indicate the need to **Pass Command**.
- b. Investigating where the status reported is nothing evident. This constitutes a tactical objective that might place you in an inappropriate position to manage the incident adequately should something go wrong. **Passing Command** may be appropriate.
- c. The magnitude or type of incident may require immediate **Command** and control of resources. Assuming **Command** would be appropriate.

2. Availability of Relief

- a. If senior authority is close at hand, **Passing Command** may be appropriate.
- b. If senior authority will be significantly delayed, assuming **Command** may be appropriate.

F. Transfer of Command

1. Transfer of **Command** refers to the act of one individual relieving another individual of authority, responsibility, and accountability as it pertains to the execution of the function of **Command** on any given incident. The progressive chain-of-command principle shall be used.
 - a. Should an Incident Commander be of a non-officer grade, they shall be relieved as soon as practical by the first-arriving officer.
 - b. The first-arriving officer to assume **Command** shall retain **Command** until formally relieved by a higher-ranking officer. Ranking officers shall have the discretionary authority to relieve a subordinate officer of **Command**. However, the senior officer present assumes accountability regardless of whether or not they assume Command.

G. Transfer of Command Procedure

1. At all times possible, transfer of **Command** shall be done face to face. When face to face transfer cannot be accomplished, the incoming senior individual may assume **Command** immediately, but should make every effort to gain the necessary information as soon as possible.
2. The individual preparing to assume **Command** shall, at an appropriate moment, request a status report from the Incident Commander.
3. The incident Commander shall brief the incoming individuals to:
 - a. The current situation.
 - b. Any injuries, loss of life, etc.
 - c. All current control efforts and the status of those efforts.
 - d. The anticipated course of the incident.
 - e. The location of on scene resources.
 - f. Any other pertinent information.
4. When the incoming individual is fully prepared to assume **Command**, they shall then formally relieve the current Incident Commander and reassign them.

5. All transfers of **Command** shall be transmitted over the appropriate radio channel. Queen Anne will rebroadcast this change of **Command** to all units on the scene.

H. Brief Initial Report

1. A BIR shall be required on any and all incidents involving a response of multiple units, regardless of the types of units. This procedure is particularly important where one or more units initially report to the scene and all other units' stage away from the scene. The following elements, in the specific order listed, shall be included in the initial report of any incidents when such reports are required.
 - a. Unit (ID) arrived on location.
 - b. Location of unit in relation to the overall incident.
 - c. Description of situation found.
 - d. First unit's tactical assignment(s).
 - e. Request additional assistance if necessary.
 - f. Identify the Level I staging area if necessary.
 - g. Address the **Command** function.

I. Brief Progress Report

1. A Brief Progress Report shall be required on all incidents that initially required a BIR. The first BPR shall be transmitted approximately 10 minutes after the BIR. Thereafter, BPR's shall be transmitted at intervals deemed appropriate by the Incident Commander. The BPR shall consist of the following information:
 - a. Description of the current situation.
 - b. Description of current tactical objectives.
 - c. Status of resource needs.
 - d. Length of time holding units from the first unit to the last unit.
2. A Brief Progress Report (BPR) is essential to any ongoing incident in that it keeps all concerned parties abreast of a dynamic situation. It is designed to provide information that:
 - a. Allows Queen Anne latitude in filling vacant stations.
 - b. Permits continuous documentation of an ongoing incident.

J. Staging

1. Level I Staging – used by all responding units up to and including a full first-alarm assignment, regardless of the type of incident.
 - a. The first-arriving company shall report to the most appropriate position on scene to carry out the duties specified in the Responsibilities of **Command**.

- b. In lieu of orders to the contrary, all other units shall remain outside of the incident scene.
 - c. No unit shall commit itself to any operation without having received orders from **Command**.
2. Level II Staging – Used by all responding units beyond the first-alarm assignment.
- a. Level II staging shall use an area suitable to park, organize and coordinate the anticipating response of additional resources.
 - 1) **Command**, upon requesting additional resources, shall inform dispatch of the designated location of the Level II staging area.
 - 2) The first-company officer or acting officer arriving at the Level II staging area, and without orders of the contrary, shall assume staging area manager.

K. Geographic Designations

- 1. The exterior walls of any structure shall be designated as SIDES and identified in alphabetical order by counting clockwise beginning with SIDE A.
- 2. Side A shall be defined as that side containing the street address. Under unusual circumstances the Incident Commander may designate any side as Side A. All other sides shall be identified in accordance with item 1.
- 3. The side of the involved structure to which it is exposed shall identify exposures. Example: The exposure facing Side C would be identified as Exposure C.
- 4. The interior floor area of a structure shall be known as a DIVISION and shall be identified by its floor number such as DIVISION 3 (3rd floor).
- 5. The roof shall be designated as the ROOF DIVISION.
- 6. The attic shall be designated as the ATTIC DIVISION.
- 7. The basement shall be designated as the BASEMENT DIVISION.
- 8. Personnel assigned to supervise a geographic area shall be designated as and identified by that geographic area. The supervisor of the interior of a single story structure would be identified as DIVISION 1.

L. Establishing a Command Post

- 1. If necessary, a Command Post should be established using a piece of apparatus other than the first due unit. It should be positioned so the incident scene is

visible from the Command Post but away from the noise and congestion, and adverse effects from the weather, smoke and fumes.

2. The Command Post should be marked for visibility on the incident scene by a flag or green strobe. The number of personnel at the Command Post should be limited.

M. Communications

1. All radio communications to and from Queen Anne will go through the Incident Commander ONLY. The exception will be if **Command** has not been established and an EMS unit is first on the scene; they may request additional resources under certain criteria's from Queen Anne. Queen Anne will dispatch any resource requested prior to **Command** being established. When the first arriving officer establishes **Command**, Queen Anne will notify the Incident Commander of the resources that have been requested.
2. Once **Command** has been established, Queen Anne will call for the Incident Commander by saying the specific location and the word **Command**. Example: Engine 12 is on the scene of a 1 story single family dwelling, with nothing evident, Officer 102 establishing Main Street **Command**. "Queen Anne to Main Street **Command**".
3. When requesting additional resources, the Incident Commander will not request specific units. The IC should request the type of unit he needs and let Queen Anne determine from the box alarm assignments the appropriate station to alert. Only under special circumstances can the Incident Commander special request a unit. Example: Chief 5: "Brodie Lane **Command** to Queen Anne, Special Request Caroline County Tanker 704".
4. All units responding to the incident will be given assignments from the Incident Commander. No emergency personnel will leave their apparatus without being assigned to an officer. All officers will be given an assignment from the IC.
5. The Incident Commander is the only officer that can cancel equipment, cancel assignments, or place units available. This shall be accomplished by the IC notifying Queen Anne of what apparatus is still operating on the scene and what apparatus can go available.

N. Assignments

1. Delegating jobs to other officers is very vital to making the Incident Command System work efficiently. The Incident Commander will appoint all assignment officers.

- a. Operations Officer – (Blue vest with white stripe and white lettering) is responsible for the direction and coordination of all tactical operations. They assist the Incident Commander in developing strategic goals and tactical objectives for the incident. They develop operational plans and requests or releases resources through the IC. He also consults with the IC about the overall incident action plan.
- b. E.M.S. Officer – (White vest with orange lettering) is responsible for the direction and coordination of triage, treatment and transportation for all victims involved in an emergency. The EMS Officer is the liaison between the medical personnel operating on the scene and the IC.
- c. Safety Officer – (Red vest with white lettering) is responsible for the identification and correction of health and safety hazards. The Safety Officer shall have the authority to cause immediate correction of situations that create an imminent hazard to personnel. The Safety Officer shall immediately inform the incident commander of any actions taken to correct imminent hazards at an emergency scene.
- d. Staging Officer – Is responsible for the inventory and direction of all units in staging. The Staging Officer is utilized when staging goes to Level II. They would be the officer on the first arriving unit in staging and would remain in staging and perform the staging officer duties for the remainder of the call. The Staging Officer will park apparatus in such a manner as to avoid congestion and allow easy movement. They will dispatch resources as directed by the Incident Commander. Directions to units should be Verbal so as not to tie up radio channels.
- e. Rehab Officer – Is responsible for setting up an area for firefighters and EMS personnel rehabilitation using the County Rehab Policy.

William H. Faust, Chairman
Queen Anne's County Fire & EMS Commission