



using their air units. During an MCI, they may provide force protection, security for critical assets, and create cordons.

**California Highway Patrol:** Provides law enforcement to the State and Federal highways within San Francisco and provides protection and security for state facilities and buildings. During an MCI, they may provide force protection, provide security for critical assets, and create cordons.

**Auxiliary Communication Service (ACS):** Coordinated by the Dept of Emergency Management's Division of Emergency Services, ACS provides amateur radio operators with equipment for disaster response and large special events. In a MCI, ACS may provide amateur radio operators to field, hospital, and emergency operations centers or be used to replace or to augment communication capabilities.

**San Francisco Office of the Medical Examiner:** Investigates, and determines cause and manner of death for cases under the Office's legal jurisdiction. During a large MCI, the Medical Examiner's Office is responsible for identifying and handling decedents and their personal effects.

## **Section 2.7 Interagency Coordination**

### **2.7.1 Scene Organization**

NIMS and SEMS are based on the Incident Command System (ICS) and are used to provide the basic organizational structure for all incident operations including MCI field operations. ICS is designed to coordinate the efforts of all involved agencies at the scene of a large, complex, emergency situation, as well as the small day-to-day situation. The organizational structure of ICS may be expanded in a modular fashion based upon the changing conditions and/or size/scope of the incident.

ICS has been summarized as a "first-on-scene" organizational structure, where the first responder to arrive on scene assumes command until the incident is resolved or there is a formal transfer of command to a more-qualified individual arriving later.

The essential elements of ICS are:

- **Command:** Overall management and setting of objectives for the response.
- **Operations:** Direct control of tactical operations and the implementation of response objectives.
- **Planning:** Development of a plan for response operations.
- **Logistics:** Coordinates acquisition and distribution of resources.
- **Finance:** Purchases resources. Records what resources were involved in the response for purposes of reimbursement.



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## **2.7.2 Single vs. Unified Command**

The Incident Commander is responsible for the overall management and setting of objectives for the incident response. Depending on the size and duration of the MCI, the Incident Commander may directly supervise operations or delegate this responsibility to an Operations Section Chief. EMS Multi-Casualty Field Operations are within the responsibility of the Operations Section.

### **Single Command**

Most incidents involve a single Incident Commander. In these incidents, a single person commands the incident response and is the final authority for decision-making. A single incident commander is chosen when a single agency has responsibility for an incident. The Incident Commander is usually the individual first on scene representing the public safety agency having primary investigative authority. There may be exceptions to this rule, based the characteristics of the incident.

In San Francisco, the following are examples for when a single command may be implemented. Any of these scenarios may evolve from a Single Command into a Unified Command.

- *San Francisco Fire Department* – Fires, rescues and EMS incidents.
- *San Francisco Police Department* – Crime related incidents, civil disorders, and most mass gatherings and pre-planned events.
- *San Francisco Department of Public Health* – Contagious diseases and other public health emergencies.
- *California Highway Patrol* – Accidents or incidents on all freeways, including right of way.
- *US Military/Department of Defense* - National Defense Areas including a military reservation or an area with "military reservation status" that is temporarily under military control, e.g., military aircraft crash site.
- *FBI* – Terrorist incidents. However, most consequence management functions will continue to be managed by local agencies, such as police and fire.
- *US Secret Service/US Department of Homeland Security* – Events that are designated as National Special Security Events.



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## Unified Command

Unified Command is used for larger incidents usually when multiple agencies are involved. A Unified Command functions as a single entity. Unified Command typically includes a command representative from the involved agencies with one person from that group designated to act as the *group spokesperson*, and not as an Incident Commander. Unified Command is used anytime an incident crosses jurisdictional boundaries or exceeds the responsibility of a single agency. It allows all agencies with responsibility for an incident to establish a common set of incident objectives, strategies, plans, and priorities to jointly execute the incident operations and maximize the use of assigned resources. Most significant incidents in San Francisco will involve unified command with San Francisco Fire and Police fulfilling lead roles. However, any of the above agencies may be involved in Unified Command.

### 2.7.3 Field Command - Single Site Incidents and Multi-Site Incidents

In **Single Site Incidents**, all MCI field operations are at one location usually under a single ICS command structure. **Multi-Site Incidents** are two or more related or unrelated MCIs regardless of type, occurring simultaneously within a single Operational Area.

The size and configuration of the ICS structure and command for a single site or multi-site incidents depends on various factors such as jurisdictional complexity, size of involved geographic area, span of control, logistical needs and potential for growth. Incident Complexes or Area Command are ICS structures and command for major incidents. An *Incident Complex* is two or more individual incidents located in the same general proximity assigned to a single Incident Commander or Unified Command to facilitate management. These incidents are typically limited in scope and complexity and can be managed by a single entity. *Area Command* is NOT used in the San Francisco Emergency Management structure.

In the ICS structure, EMS MCI field operations are under the responsibility of the Operations Section in the Medical Group. For single-site incidents that are small, only one Operations Section - Medical Group will be established. For larger incidents or multi-site incidents with more than one Operations Section - Medical Group, a Medical Branch with several Medical Groups will be established. The Medical Branch structure maintains the appropriate span of control to manage large patient incidents.

## Section 2.8 In-County Coordination

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For large or multi-site incidents, higher-level support facilities above the field level may be activated. These facilities provide logistical and administrative support or in some instances, set response priorities and objectives to ensure efficient use of resources. Activated facilities may include the Emergency Operations Center and / or Departmental Operations Centers.