

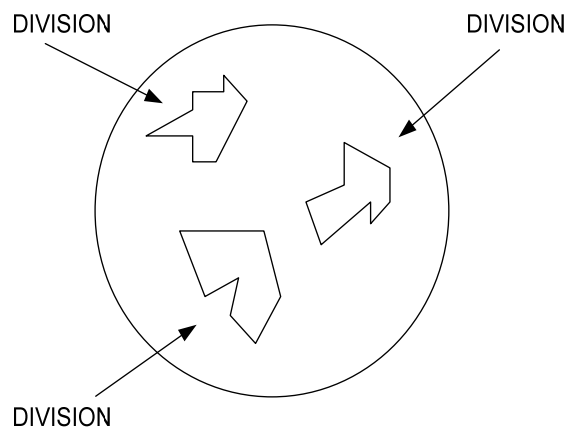
CHAPTER 4

COMPLEX

Most of the time an Incident Commander (IC) and/or Incident Management Team will be in command of only one (1) incident at a time; however, there are situations when conditions are such that it is more efficient or necessary for an Incident Commander to have command of multiple incidents. There are some operational differences in managing a single large incident versus a number of smaller incidents (some may be larger than single incidents the IC normally commands), but the management principles are the same. As long as the "Components of ICS" (common terminology, modular organization, integrated communications, unified command structure, consolidated action plans, manageable span-of-control, pre-designated incident facilities and comprehensive resource management) are followed, the results should be similar.

A multiple incident management situation is organized and supported much like a single incident situation with a single IC (or multiple, if a Unified Command is utilized) and a single Command and General Staff. Multiple incidents managed by a single Incident Management Team are commonly referred to as a "complex." How individual incidents are handled operationally can vary depending on the conditions, situation and personal preferences. Some examples of different approaches are:

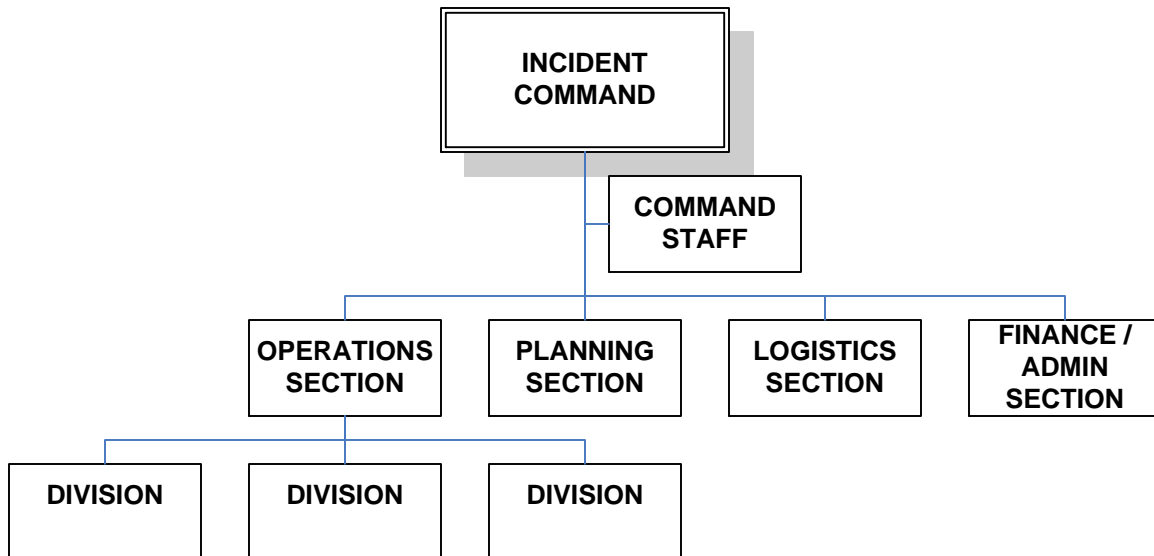
1. Each individual incident is designated as a division or branch.
2. Groups of incidents are designated as a division or branch.
3. Some individual incidents are designated as divisions/branches and others are grouped into a division/branch.
4. In some cases, numbers, size, and complexity of incidents may necessitate the establishment of branches to meet span-of-control considerations.



Managing multiple incidents with a single Incident Management Team is a common practice when multiple incidents occur. Two keys to successfully managing multiple incidents are to:

1. Maintain the integrity of the "Components of ICS".
2. Recognize when the complexity of the situation has exceeded the abilities of the Incident Management Team and either bring in a more qualified team or assign an experienced additional team to divide the workload.

A typical organization would be as follows:



SPOKANE COUNTY MAJOR INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAM

Spokane County has an on call Major Incident Support Team (MIST) that is activated and dispatched by the Spokane County Combined Communications Center (CCC) when any incident becomes a Third Alarm or at the request of an On-Scene Incident Commander. The MIST is equivalent to a Type III Incident Management Team.

The MIST consists of:

- MIST Incident Commander (MIST IC)
- Planning Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Operations Section Chief
- Resource Unit Leader
- Situation Unit Leader
- Safety Officer
- Information Officer

The role of the MIST is to support the needs of the Host IC in meeting incident objectives. The MIST is an added resource, not a "take over" group. Operations and Safety are deputy roles to those already in place in these positions. Plans, Logistics, Resource and Situation Unit Leaders and Information respond prepared to assume primary responsibility for these functions. More detailed information is available in the Spokane County Fire Resource Plan.

MIST INCIDENT COMMANDER: The Major Incident Support Team Incident Commander (MIST IC) is primarily responsible to direct and coordinate the activities of the Major Incident Support Team in its role as a support staff for a host Incident Commander. The role of the MIST IC is to assist the host IC as needed in the development and implementation of strategic decisions and assisting in the overall management of the incident until relieved. The following are the major responsibilities of the MIST IC:

- a. Review Common Responsibilities (page 1-2).
- b. Assess the situation and/or obtain a briefing from the Agency Administrator and host Incident Commander.
- c. Communicate with Area Coordinator on incident status and requirements.
- d. Assist as needed in determining Incident Objectives and strategy.
- e. Assist as needed in establishing immediate priorities.
- f. Establish, supervise and coordinate a MIST at the Incident Command Post.
- g. Recommend an appropriate organization.
- h. Order additional resources for incident operations and support from Expanded Dispatch.
- i. Ensure MIST planning and strategy meetings are scheduled as required.
- j. Supervise the MIST in the development of an Incident Action Plan.
- k. Review safety measures and make recommendations as needed.
- l. Assist in transition to a Type 2 or Type 1 Incident Management Team if incident escalates or in developing a demobilization plan if incident is controlled.