

Multi-Agency Incident Management



Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience

AUSTRALIAN DISASTER RESILIENCE
HANDBOOK COLLECTION

Multi-Agency Incident Management

Manual 17



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

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The first publications in the original Australian Emergency Manual Series were primarily skills reference manuals produced from 1989 onwards. In August 1996, on advice from the National Emergency Management Principles and Practice Advisory Group, the Series was expanded to include a more comprehensive range of emergency management principles and practice reference publications.

In 2011, Handbooks were introduced to better align the Series with the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*. Compiled by practitioners with management and service-delivery experience in a range of disaster events, the handbooks comprised principles, strategies and actions to help the management and delivery of support services in a disaster context.

In 2015, the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) was appointed custodian of the handbooks and manuals in the series. Now known as the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection, AIDR continues to provide guidance on the national principles and practices in disaster resilience in Australia through management and publication of the Collection.

The Handbook Collection is developed and reviewed by national consultative committees representing a range of state and territory agencies, governments, organisations and individuals involved in disaster resilience. The Collection is sponsored by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department.

Access to the Collection and further details are available at www.knowledge.aidr.org.au.

Australian National Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection (2011 –)

Handbook 1 Disaster health

Handbook 2 Community recovery

Handbook 3 Managing exercises

Handbook 4 Evacuation planning

Handbook 5 Communicating with people with a disability – National Guidelines for Emergency Managers

Handbook 6 National Strategy for Disaster Resilience – community engagement framework

Handbook 7 Managing the floodplain: a guide to best practice in flood risk management in Australia

Guideline 7-1 Guideline for using the national generic brief for flood investigations to develop project specific specifications

Guideline 7-2 Technical Flood Risk Management Guideline: flood emergency response classification of the floodplain

Guideline 7-3 Technical flood risk management guideline: flood hazard

Template 7-4 Technical project brief template

Guideline 7-5 Technical Flood Risk Management Guideline - flood information to support land-use planning

Guideline 7-6 Technical flood risk management guideline: assessing options and service levels for treating existing risk

Practice Note 7-7 Considering flooding in land-use planning activities

Handbook 8 Lessons management

Handbook 9 Australian Emergency Management Arrangements

Handbook 10 National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (*plus supporting guideline*)

Guideline 10-1 National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: practice guide

Handbook 11 *renamed Guideline 10-1 National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: practice guide*

Handbook 12 *Spontaneous volunteer management*

Australian Emergency Management Manual Series

The most recent list of publications in the Manuals series includes 46 titles.

The manuals have not been reviewed since 2011 or earlier and the Manual Series is undergoing a review which will see relevant Manuals move into the Handbook Collection. Current and past editions of the Manuals will remain available on the AIDR Knowledge Hub at www.knowledge.aidr.org.au.

Manual Series Catalogue: 2004 - 2011

Manual 1 Emergency management concepts and principles (2004)

Manual 2 *Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (superseded by Handbook 9)*

Manual 3 Australian Emergency Management Glossary (1998)

Manual 4 Australian Emergency Management Terms Thesaurus (1998)

Manual 5 *Emergency risk management – applications guide (superseded by Handbook 10)*

Manual 6 *Implementing emergency risk management – a facilitator’s guide to working with committees and communities (superseded by Handbook 10)*

Manual 7 Planning safer communities – land use planning for natural hazards (2002, currently under review)

Manual 8 *Emergency catering (2003, archived)*

Manual 12 Safe and healthy mass gatherings (1999)

Manual 13 Health aspects of chemical, biological and radiological hazards (2000)

Manual 14 Post disaster survey and assessment (2001)

Manual 15 Community emergency planning (1992)

Manual 16 Urban search and rescue – capability guidelines for structural collapse (2002)

Manual 17 Multi-agency incident management (replaced by AIIMS)

Manual 18 Community and personal support services (1998)

Manual 19 *Managing the floodplain (superseded by Handbook 7)*

Manual 20 Flood preparedness (2009)

Manual 21 Flood warning (2009)

Manual 22 Flood response (2009)

Manual 23 Emergency management planning for floods affected by dams (2009)

Manual 24 Reducing the community impact of landslides (2001)

Manual 25 Guidelines for psychological services: emergency managers guide (2003)

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- Manual 26** Guidelines for psychological services: mental health practitioners guide (2003)
 - Manual 27** Disaster loss assessment guidelines (2002)
 - Manual 28** Economic and financial aspects of disaster recovery (2002)
 - Manual 29** Community development in recovery from disaster (2003)
 - Manual 30** Storm and water damage operations (2007) (information may not be appropriate to all situations)
 - Manual 31** Operations centre management (2001)
 - Manual 32** Leadership (1997)
 - Manual 33** National Land search operations (2014) (refer to the Land Search Operations Manual website)
 - Manual 34** Road rescue (2009)
 - Manual 35** General and disaster rescue (2006)
 - Manual 36** Map reading and navigation (2001)
 - Manual 37** Four-wheel-drive vehicle operation (1997)
 - Manual 38** Communications (1998)
 - Manual 39** Flood rescue boat operation (2009)
 - Manual 40** Vertical Rescue (2001)
 - Manual 41** *Small group training management (1999, archived)*
 - Manual 42** *Managing Exercises (superseded by Handbook 3)*
 - Manual 43** Emergency planning (2004)
 - Manual 44** Guidelines for emergency management in culturally and linguistically diverse communities (2007)
 - Manual 45** Guidelines for the development of community education, awareness and education programs (2010)
 - Manual 46** Tsunami (2010)

FOREWORD

This Guide has been developed by Emergency Management Australia (EMA) in conjunction with State and Territory emergency management organisations and emergency response agencies. It is intended as a national reference for guidelines on the effective management of emergency incidents involving two or more of these response agencies. (The official stated aim of the Guide appears at paragraph 2, Chapter 1.)

Proposed changes to this Guide should be forwarded to the Director-General, EMA, through the respective State/Territory emergency management organisation.

This publication is provided free of charge to approved Australian organisations. Copies are issued to relevant users, upon request, from their State/Territory Emergency management organisations.

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PREFACE

Incidents resulting from natural and technological hazards occur regularly in the community. Those which require attendance by a number of agencies may present complex situations. In such cases, it is particularly important for all involved to have a common understanding of command, control and coordination arrangements. In recognition of this, the National Emergency Management Committee invited Emergency Management Australia to convene a national working party to develop a guide for multi-agency incident management.

This Guide is the result of a collaborative effort by representatives from the State and Territory emergency management organisations as well as the primary agencies normally involved in incident response including police, fire, ambulance and State/Territory Emergency Services. It also complements the work being conducted under 'Project Cooperation' in the development of Competencies for Command, Control and Coordination.

Some of the material within the Guide may appear similar to elements of the Australian Interagency Incident Management System (AIIMS). However, the material contained in this document is drawn from a number of sources and no preference is inferred.

Chapter 1 contains general principles and fundamentals that provide a basis for further explanation in detailed operating instructions. Chapter 1 has been agreed in principle nationally for use as a reference document, and acknowledges that State and Territory laws and practices will continue to take precedence. Chapter 2 provides additional guidance for incident managers.

CHAPTER 1

MULTI-AGENCY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

INTRODUCTION

1. Each day, agencies¹ from the emergency services respond to a wide range of incidents. Many of the responses involve only one agency using internal standardised procedures that have been developed to meet its responsibilities. Some incidents, however, require a response from more than one agency. As each agency often uses different procedures and terminology, a common approach will facilitate their working together so as to manage incidents as quickly and effectively as possible.

Aim

2. The aim of this Guide is to provide agencies of the emergency services involved in multi-agency response with guidance on incident management that is compatible with State² emergency management plans and arrangements and which facilitates national inter-operability.

MULTI-AGENCY INCIDENTS

Management Problems

3. Many multi-agency incidents can be managed with relative ease, but there can be significant problems in managing a complex incident which could:
 - involve more than one agency;
 - pose significant communication problems;
 - require the commitment of significant response and support resources;
 - result in injury, death or illness;
 - result in major damage to property or the environment;
 - extend over a long time;
 - produce a high degree of stress and trauma;
 - generate a high level of media interest; and
 - involve agencies that are not routinely involved in incident response.

¹ The term 'agencies' relates to police, fire, ambulance and State/Territory Emergency Services, but can also include other support services or organisations called out in response to an incident.

² The term 'State' includes the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and the offshore Territories

The combination of some or all of these factors requires simplicity in management, familiarity with the approach and high levels of cooperation.

Incidents at Separate Sites

4. While multi-agency incidents may occur at a single location, some may cover a number of geographically-separate sites with each being individually managed, and therefore may require an higher-level management structure. In such cases, the agency with prime responsibility for the hazard will normally exercise overall control through its operations centre. During complex incidents, other agencies' operations centres may also need to provide support to the operations centre of the responsible lead agency. These arrangements may be outlined in State, regional/district and local emergency management plans.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TERMINOLOGY

Manager, Team and Point

5. Terminology used in this paper is 'umbrella' terminology. For this reason such neutral terms as *Incident Manager*, *Incident Management Team* and *Incident Management Point* have been used. Within individual States, or within agencies, terminology used to describe these functions will differ and it is important that the terms in this Guide be related to those in common use within agencies. A Glossary is provided at Annex A to Chapter 1.

Command, Control and Coordination

6. Multi-agency incident management requires a clear understanding of the differences between command, control and coordination. The following definitions, which are widely accepted in Australia, have been adopted in this Guide:
 - **Command**—The direction of members and resources of an agency in the performance of that agency's role and tasks.
 - Command relates to agencies and operates vertically within an agency.
 - Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an agency.
 - **Control**—The overall direction of emergency management activities in a emergency or disaster situation.
 - Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.
 - Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan, and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation.
 - **Coordination**—The bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure an effective emergency response.

- It is primarily concerned with the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisational, personnel and equipment) in accordance with the requirements imposed by the hazard or impact of an emergency. It operates vertically within agencies as a function of the authority to command, and horizontally across agencies as a function of the authority to control.

CONCEPTS OF INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Incident Manager

7. Management of the incident will include the three clearly delineated functions of command, control and coordination. The overall *control* of events should be the responsibility of one person known in this Guide as the *Incident Manager*. It is essential that a single person with such responsibility be appointed and be easily identified.

Incident Manager Responsibilities

8. The Incident Manager is responsible for the control of the incident and will task agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. The Incident Manager specifies:
 - what needs to be done;
 - by which agency; and
 - by what time.
9. *The Incident Manager may task agencies with specific response requirements but the individual agencies are responsible to determine how it is to be done.*

Incident Manager Duties

10. These normally include:
 - taking control of the incident and establishing an Incident Management Point;
 - assessing the situation and advising the appropriate authorities and agencies;
 - determining priorities and time constraints;
 - determining the structure of the Incident Management Team;
 - developing an incident plan in conjunction with members of the Incident Management Team;
 - tasking response agencies and supporting services;
 - coordinating resources and support (in some States coordination is the responsibility of a separate person);
 - monitoring events and responding to changing circumstances;
 - reporting actions and activities to the appropriate agencies and authorities;

- ensuring safety of all personnel at the incident;
- establishing media liaison procedures; and
- initiating recovery actions.

Incident Manager Role(s)

11. During the initial stage of an incident, the Incident Manager may fulfil more than one role, being also an agency commander (see Figure 1:1). As the incident progresses, it may be more practical to separate these functions, especially if the incident is likely to escalate in complexity. Where incidents are likely to continue for extended periods, arrangements need to be established to ensure the incident can be managed on an around-the-clock basis and a series of reliefs and shifts may need to be established. Incident management can also involve implementing initial recovery actions.

Incident Management Team

12. The Incident Manager may form an *Incident Management Team* made up of personnel to assist in the management of the incident. An Incident Management Team will assist in some or all of the following functions:
 - **Planning**—Assessing resource requirements, maintaining status on allocated resources and developing the incident plan.
 - **Intelligence**—Gathering, maintaining, and reporting of information.
 - **Operations**—Assisting the incident manager in the control and coordination of the incident, assisting in the development of the incident plan, and maintaining the incident log.
 - **Logistics**—Identifying and coordinating the provision of support, equipment and supply services for the incident.
 - **Communications**—Establishing and coordinating communications between agencies at the incident site and to the Emergency Operations Centre (if activated).
 - **Media**—Liaising with the media, and developing/implementing a media plan for the incident (might not be part of the incident management team, but must have direct access to it).
13. The Incident Management Team should not be seen as a rigid organisation, but may grow and contract in size and composition to meet the Incident Manager's requirements. However, the Incident Manager should not allow the team to become too large and unwieldy as it may over-extend the manager's span of control.

Team Location and Authority

14. Depending on State arrangements, the Incident Management Team may work from:
 - an *Incident Management Point* located at the incident site; or
 - a *lead agency operations centre* remote from the actual site. (If the incident management team is separated from the incident site, a site management structure will still be required for the control/coordination of agencies at the site.)
15. During most incidents, direct control will usually be exercised at the incident site by the Incident Manager through the Incident Management Team. High level and long-term considerations are best left to the lead agency's operations centre or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) which will normally monitor operations at the incident site. However, under some State arrangements, the EOC can override decisions made at the incident site.

Emergency Operations Centre/Emergency Coordination Centres

16. On some occasions, usually limited to more complex and protracted incidents, an *Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)* may be established to exercise overall control. If this is done, care must be taken not to interfere with detailed control at the lower levels, as changing control during response to an incident can create unnecessary problems. It will be more normal for an EOC to be activated to coordinate support to the incident. In some States an *Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC)* may be activated at municipal, regional or State level to coordinate and organise emergency provision of resources to support the incident.

EOC(s) and Incident Team Inter-Communication

17. For those more complex incidents, for which it is planned that an EOC will exercise control, the EOC will carry out similar functions to that of an agency operations centre. An EOC should have representatives from, or contact with, the key response agencies involved at the incident site. Such representatives must be in a position to provide competent advice and, if necessary, obtain resources to support the operation. They must be in regular communication with their agency's operations centre. The Incident Management Team and the EOC must maintain regular contact. Schematic incident management layouts for a simple and a more complex incident are shown in Figures 1:1 and 1:2 respectively.

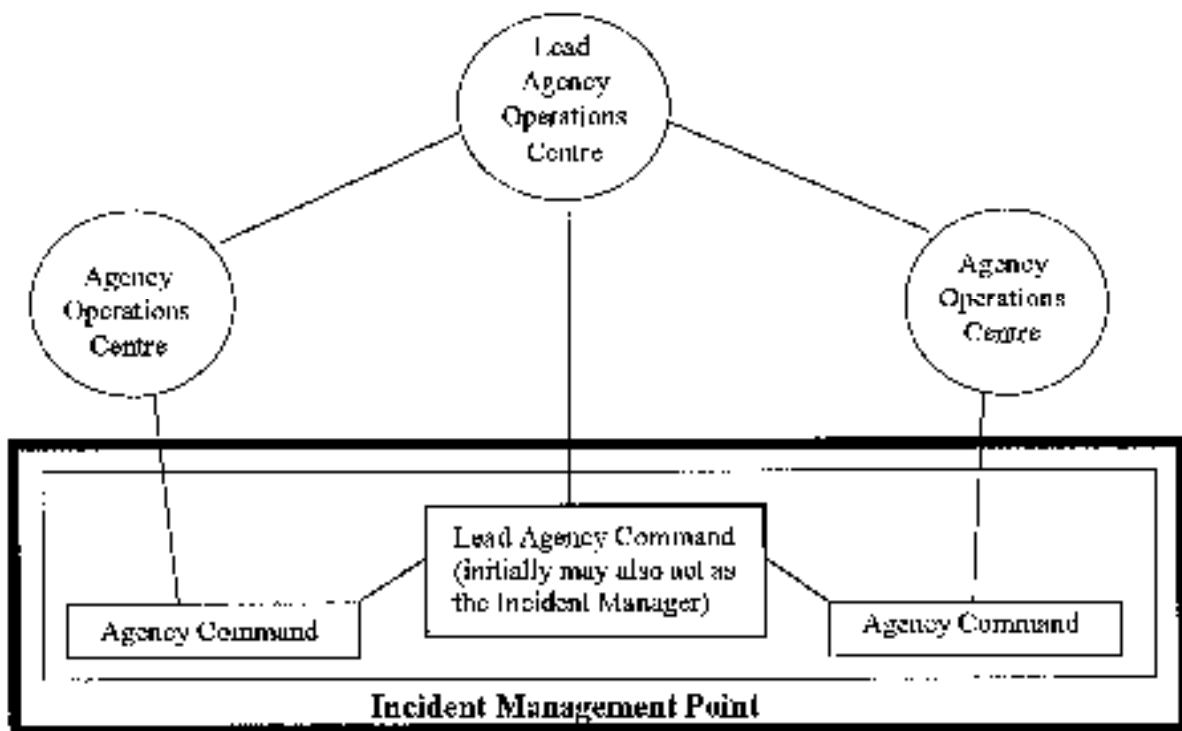
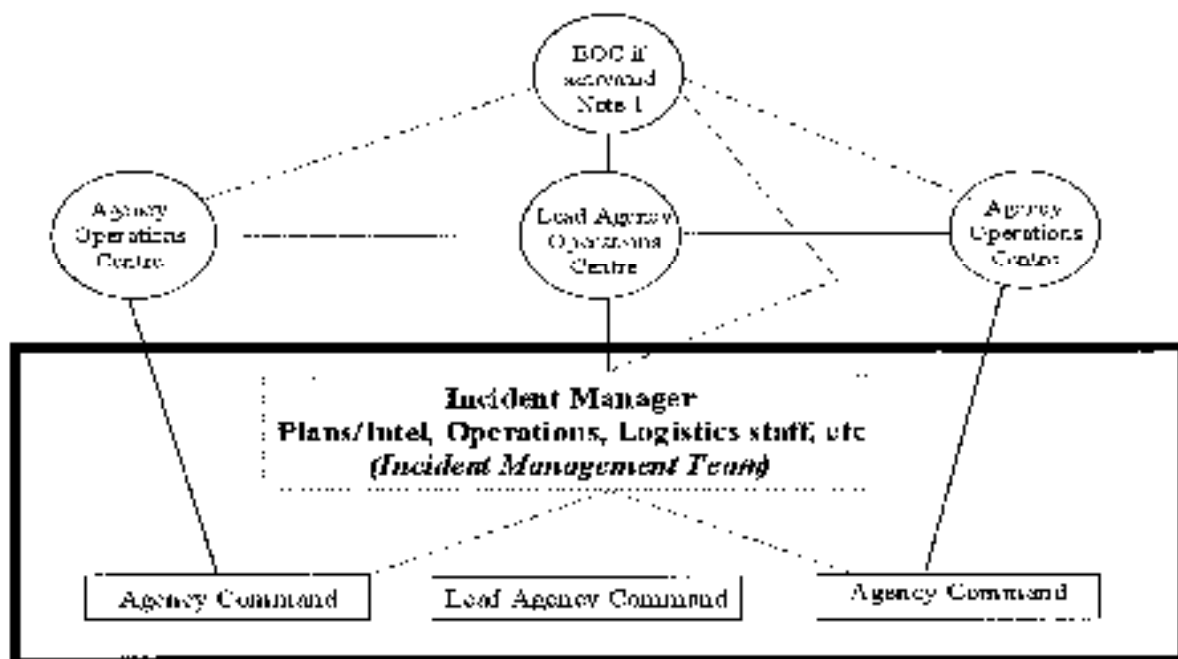


Figure 1:1— Incident Management Schematic—Simple Incident



Note 1. EOC can be activated to control incident or coordinate support.

Figure 1:2— Incident Management Schematic—Complex Incident

Control Arrangements

18. Depending on the type of incident, such as a major fire, a lead agency may have the responsibility for control of the activities within an inner perimeter with the control of the overall incident site being the responsibility of the Incident Manager. In some States, a lead agency may have the responsibility for control of the incident with other agencies operating under its direction. It is imperative that all agencies responding to the incident know who is the designated Incident Manager. Legislation and regulations may also have allocated responsibility to a lead agency for particular types of incidents. This should be reflected in emergency management arrangements and plans as well as in relevant agencies' Standing Operating Procedures.

Agency Internal Arrangements

19. Incident management arrangements must not interfere with the internal arrangements of responding agencies. Response agencies have well-established chains of command and detailed internal management arrangements, and normally have specific responsibilities during particular types of incidents. This is part of the command function.

Agency Responsibilities

20. Agencies likely to be involved in response to a complex incident should:
 - confirm their specific areas of responsibility;

- undertake assigned tasks as specified by the Incident Manager in the incident plan;
- have adequate and sustainable communications to enable rapid information exchange as this is fundamental to command, control and coordination;
- foster close inter-agency coordination to ensure effective multi-agency incident management;
- regularly review liaison arrangements to ensure that there are no gaps or duplication in areas of responsibility; and
- practise inter-agency liaison as a fundamental aspect of each agency's training.

Noting these points, some degree of organisational autonomy may have to be sacrificed in the interests of effective coordination.

Agency Field Commanders

21. Agency field commanders are responsible to their own agencies. However, they must also be responsive to the Incident Manager for the performance of allocated tasks and may be part of the Incident Management Team. Commanders are usually located with their agency at the site, or they may be located either at an agency operations centre or an EOC/ECC. They must maintain communications with the Incident Management Team. This can also be achieved through the employment of a liaison officer.

Liaison Officers

22. The Incident Management Team should include Liaison Officers from the attending response agencies. Liaison Officers are agency representatives who must be authorised to commit their agency's resources and, therefore, must have communications with their agency. Liaison Officers are provided by the supporting agency to the supported agency and may be the commanders of agencies. Liaison When requested, Liaison Officers should locate themselves at the Incident Management Point or controlling agency operations centre, or both, as soon as possible. They should depart as soon as their services are no longer required. Duties of Liaison Officers include:
 - keeping their agency informed of the situation;
 - keeping the supported agency informed of their own agency's situation;
 - advising on the resources available from their agency;
 - providing technical advice on agency capabilities;
 - assisting in the development of the incident plan;
 - establishing and maintaining communications with their agency headquarters and commander of their agency at the incident site; and
 - relaying directions and tasking to their agency on behalf of the Incident Manager.

CONCLUSION

Application of Guide

- 23.** Each State has established emergency management plans and arrangements that designate agency responsibilities for specific types of incidents. In some States, the arrangements also specify the responsibility for incident management according to the type of incident, and may allocate this responsibility to the Lead Agency responsible for the incident. Application of this Guide will, therefore, need to be tailored to meet the specific responsibilities as specified in each State.

Fundamental Requirements

- 24.** Regardless of regional differences, the fundamental requirements for management of multi-agency incidents remain as outlined in this document.

Annex:

- A. Glossary of Incident Management Terms

GLOSSARY OF INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TERMS

The following terms are used for the purpose of this document. Exact meaning and interpretations may vary from State to State.

Agency Field Commander

The officer responsible for commanding the activities of an agency in the field.

Agency Operations Centre

A facility from which a particular agency's resources are commanded, controlled, coordinated and assigned to an incident.

Lead Agency

An organisation which, because of its expertise and resources, is primarily responsible for dealing with a particular hazard. In some States this may be referred to as the 'Lead Combat Agency/Authority or Control Agency'.

Liaison Officer

A representative of an agency/organisation. Liaison officers should have the capability to communicate with the agency they represent. They should have the authority to commit their agencies' resources.

Emergency

The threatened or actual impact of a hazard, natural or otherwise, which endangers the environment, property or the safety or health of persons or animals, and requires a coordinated response.

Emergency Coordination Centre

A facility established to coordinate and organise emergency provision of resources

Emergency Operations Centre

A facility established to control and coordinate the response and support to an incident or emergency.

Incident

An emergency event or series of events which requires a response from one or more of the statutory response agencies.

Incident Manager

The person responsible for the overall control of an incident.

Incident Management

The process of controlling the incident and coordinating resources.

Incident Management Team

The team headed by the Incident Manager which is responsible for the overall control of the incident.

Incident Management Point

The location from which the Incident Manager controls and coordinates the activities of the response agencies.

Incident Plan

The plan of action developed by the Incident Manager, usually in conjunction with the Incident Management Team, to deal with an incident. The plan may be issued orally or in writing.

STATE AGENCY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The space below is for use by State agencies to add additional or amplifying information specific to their procedures relating to incident management.

CHAPTER 2

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MULTI-AGENCY INCIDENT OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

1. This chapter contains general information on incident operations that may be of use to an Incident Manager. The application of this guidance may vary from State to State due to specific legislation/regulations and plans.

Incident Phases

2. An incident usually conforms to the following phases:
 - Initial receipt of information.
 - Build-up.
 - Withdrawal.
 - Reporting and inquiry.

INITIAL RECEIPT OF INFORMATION

Reconnaissance

3. Information on the incident may come from a number of sources. Police may be the first on the site. The first attending officer should not engage in rescue work. It is vital that a quick reconnaissance is conducted and the initial information on the incident is confirmed. This should include:
 - type of incident;
 - exact location of the incident, and recommended approaches to the incident scene;
 - severity of damage;
 - existing hazards (eg fire, explosion, floodwater, high winds, downed electrical wires, weakened structures, chemical spills);
 - numbers and types of dead, injured and uninjured;
 - numbers of trapped victims; and
 - those emergency services present and those required.

Initial Priority Actions

4. *Key response agencies need to be informed as soon as possible and, depending on the size of the incident, the next level of emergency management should also be advised. Major incidents should receive an immediate priority and local emergency plans activated. Immediate actions to prevent further*

casualties should be implemented and a temporary Incident Management Point established. Securing the site and ensuring access for response agencies should also be early tasks. This may involve traffic diversion, crowd control and property protection. The establishment of a written log should occur to record key events and times.

BUILD-UP

Key Management Tasks

5. During the build-up, it is likely that management of the incident will be handed over to a senior officer who will become the Incident Manager. The following is likely to occur:

- ***Incident Management Point Established***—The Incident Management Point needs to be carefully sited. It must be close to the site of operations, but not in a position of danger or where it could cause traffic difficulties. In some circumstances there are advantages if the incident site can be observed from this point. Its location needs to be widely advertised and easily distinguished. Ideally this should be either through a flashing light or flag. Liaison Officers from responding services must report to the Incident Management Point as soon as possible. The Incident Management Team will usually operate in this area. Individual services may establish their own command post at the incident site for the control of their agency. These include:

- Forward Command Post —Police;
- Forward Command Post—Ambulance;
- Fire Ground Command—Fire Service; and
- On-Site Command/Control Centre—State/Territory Emergency Service.

(Command Post terms may vary from State to State.)

The location of each of the services command post, if established, will be influenced by the requirements to direct the actions of their service. However, there are advantages in having them located in close proximity to the Incident Management Point. To avoid confusion where an agency mobilises more than one control/command vehicle to the scene, one vehicle should be clearly delineated as the main control vehicle. The siting of agency command vehicles should allow for adequate space to accommodate all anticipated agencies, and be able to quickly relocate should the hazard increase. In a major incident, an area such as a open car park may be suitable.

- ***Identification of Key Personnel***—Key personnel need to be clearly identifiable at the incident. Tabards, clearly marked with appointments, able to be quickly donned and reflective at night, should be worn. Key appointments that should be identified include:
 - Incident Manager;

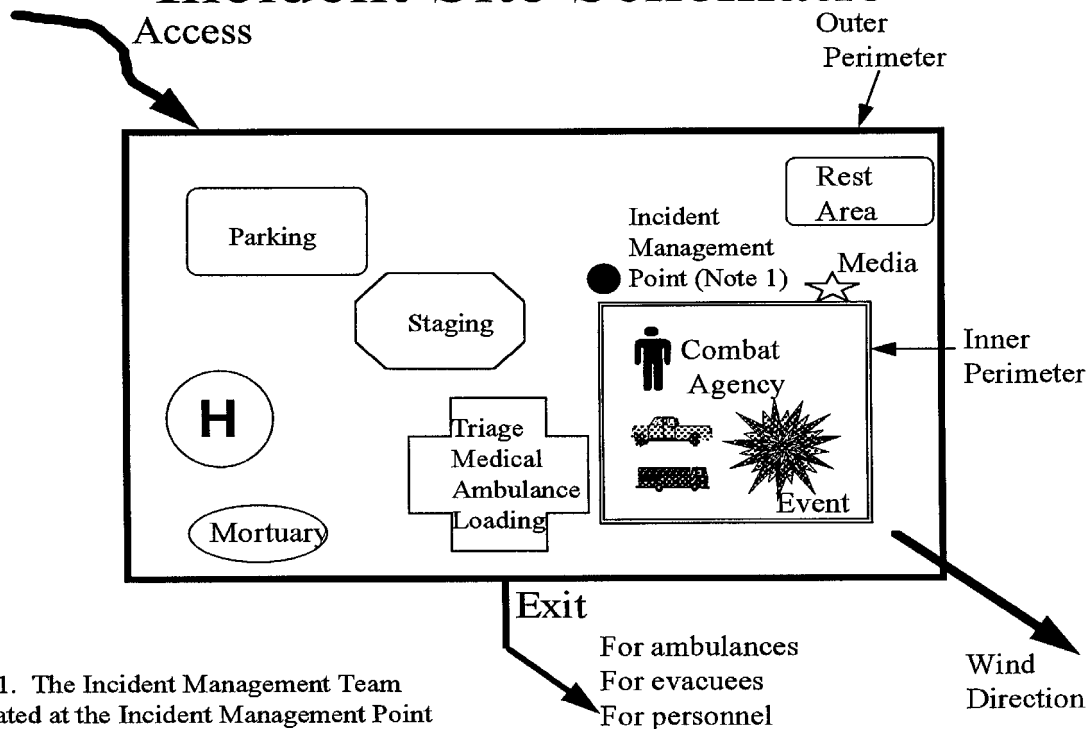
- Planning, Operations, Logistics and Communications Officers;
 - Liaison Officers from each service or agency;
 - Media Liaison Officer; and
 - Agency Field Commanders/Officers in Charge of response services or agencies eg, Police, Fire, Ambulance, State Emergency Service.
- ***Development and Implementation of an Incident Plan***—The Incident Manager, in conjunction with the Incident Management Team, should develop an Incident Plan. This may be in written form, especially for a major incident, and where it is likely to involve shift changes of management personnel. During the planning process the Incident Manager will need to:
 - quickly conduct an appreciation, or size up of the situation, based on available information (see Annex A);
 - develop an Incident Plan (see Annex B) that includes:
 - * a mission statement of what is to be achieved;
 - * a strategy of how it is to be achieved (may be expressed by listing a number of key objectives);
 - * assignment of tasks to response services, including times by which they are to be achieved;
 - * safety instructions;
 - * logistic and administrative details (eg feeding, shifts, special equipment); and
 - * communications instructions (eg nets, frequencies, telephone numbers).
- ***Conduct Briefings/Debriefings***—The Incident Manager should conduct an initial briefing detailing the Incident Plan to the Incident Management Team and the Field Commanders/Officers in Charge of the response services and agencies involved in the incident. These should then be followed by regular updated briefings, especially when circumstances at the incident site have altered significantly. Details of the Incident Plan should be passed to the agency operations centre and to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) if activated. Regular updates may be called for or provided as Situation Reports (See Annex C). Briefings must aim at getting the correct information to the right people and are one of the most important facets of incident management—*briefings can often make or break an operation*. They should occur for people coming on shift, be in a quiet and sheltered location of adequate size, and can be either oral or written, or both. Often, written tasking assignments help reduce confusion. The Incident Management Team should be debriefed when going off shift. Each service should debrief their own personnel. Debriefing should:
 - record each person’s contact details;
 - if possible, be completed before personnel leave the incident site;
 - confirm the activities that went well;

- identify problem areas from an individual's perspective; and
- identify any recommendations for improvement.
- ***Establishment of Appropriate Communication Networks***—Without adequate communications, coordination of the incident will be extremely difficult. Police, Fire, Ambulance and SES usually have sufficient communications for their own purposes, and are generally able to communicate with each other on common frequencies. Other services such as public utilities and support services may not have adequate communications facilities. The use of mobile phones may provide an alternative. However, while they allow discrete one on one communications, this must be balanced against the importance of keeping others in the picture, as occurs when using radio. An 'incident coordination net' may be established for use by the Incident Manager to coordinate the operation, communicating mainly with officers in charge of the responding services, Agency Operations Centres, and to the local Emergency Operations Centre if activated. The size of this net has potential to grow rapidly, and should be limited to include only the key management members involved at the incident. Additional communications can be established by the laying of expedient telephone lines. In a large incident a number of radio nets may be required including:
 - Incident Coordination Net;
 - tactical nets for internal use by each responding service; and
 - support nets for use by supporting services (eg catering).
- ***Activation of the Emergency Operations/Coordination Centre***—Depending on the type and scale of the incident, activation of the Emergency Operations/Coordination Centre (EOC/ECC) may be necessary. This would occur as specified in emergency management plans.

Incident Site Management

6. The following diagram illustrates some generic requirements that relate to most incidents. Special requirements in addition to those mentioned below may be necessary for particular types of incidents eg, hazardous materials.

Incident Site Schematic



Note 1. The Incident Management Team is located at the Incident Management Point

7. Other incident site management requirements are as follows:

- **Designation of Access/Egress Routes for Response Services**—Clear access for service vehicles must be established and maintained as blockage of access routes by damaged or parked cars can have serious consequences. Priority routes from the incident site to hospitals may need policing to ensure rapid transit of serious casualties and traffic diversions may be necessary. The media may be of assistance in the transmissions of traffic bulletins.
- **Access Control**—An Inner and Outer Perimeter should be established early to isolate the incident site from onlookers. This should be clearly marked, usually by tape and unauthorised personnel should be excluded from the site. A system of identity cards or passes may need to be implemented for access control. The area between the Outer and Inner perimeter is usually controlled by the Incident Manager. The area inside the inner perimeter is usually controlled by the lead agency responding to the incident.
- **Designation of Vehicle Marshalling and Assembly Areas**—All vehicles not required at the site of operations should be parked in an orderly fashion in a designated area, usually within the outer perimeter. This will assist the service to which it belongs and preserve a general sense of order. The person in charge of this area should advise the incident management team and agency command of arrivals. Marshalling and Assembly areas may also be useful for briefing and debriefing and recuperation for persons involved in arduous work at the site. As the incident winds down, utilities and contractors may need to maintain the marshalling area for recovery of their equipment.

- ***Designation of Medical Triage, Ambulance Loading Points***—These are normally established by ambulance and medical services in consultation with the Incident Manager. Their siting should not impede other aspects of the operation. Hard-standing is preferred for Ambulance Loading Points and should be sited to avoid long stretcher carries if possible.
- ***Designation of Rest/Feeding Areas***—Circumstances may often call for the provision away from the site of shelter, rest, warmth and food for evacuees or for those slightly injured or shocked. A local school or church hall may suffice. The provision of food and drink for service agencies should be given a high priority if the incident is to last longer than 3–4 hours.
- ***Designation of Temporary Mortuaries***—In the event of deaths, the Coroner's office should be advised as soon as possible. A suitable site should be earmarked for a temporary mortuary. A covered building is preferable, but it may be necessary to use an open secluded area in the first instance. This area needs to be adequately staffed and kept separate from areas holding survivors or injured. Deceased persons should be left in-situ and not taken to first aid/casualty collection points. The position in which bodies are found should be clearly marked and where possible bodies should be photographed in-situ before removal.
- ***Establishment of Media Liaison***—An officer responsible for media liaison may need to be appointed. Media representatives should be given such facilities as are reasonable in the prevailing conditions at the incident site, but they must not be allowed to impede operations. Preferably, the officer appointed for media liaison should have undertaken prior training in media affairs. It is essential that such officers are well organised and able to work under pressure. Lack of an effective plan for information dissemination during and after a crisis only worsens the crisis. Regular conferences will help maintain a satisfactory relationship, especially if timed to meet media news broadcast deadlines. The person responsible for media liaison should:
 - have immediate access to the Incident Management Team;
 - have access to all information;
 - have knowledge of the media;
 - be trusted by the media; and
 - be available when needed.
- ***Establishment and Maintenance of an Incident Log***—An incident log should be mandatory for major incidents. A person should be designated as being responsible at the Incident Management Point to maintain a log of events. All events, including requests for and supplies of personnel and equipment should be recorded along with the names of Field Commanders/Officers in Charge of service agencies. This log will form a useful document when reports are subsequently written. The use of tape recorders should be considered to record radio messages and to record

conferences between the Incident Manager and service officers in charge and other responsible officials.

- **Visits by VIPs**—During a major incident, VIP visits should be anticipated. If adequate crowd control measures and vehicle marshalling areas are in place, such an event should not cause a major disruption to operations.

Supervisory Staff Relief

8. The incident may become protracted and it is essential that those holding supervisory positions also receive the necessary relief, usually through a series of shifts. Correct procedures for shift hand-overs need to be established. Off-going staff should not depart until on-coming shifts are fully abreast of the situation and in a position to take over.

Terrorist Incident Considerations

9. For known or suspected terrorist incidents, all personnel should be aware of the possibility of secondary devices. Arrangements should be made to check staging areas, incident management points and agency parking areas for suspicious objects.

WITHDRAWAL

On-Site Recording and Debriefing

10. Undue haste in withdrawing from the incident is unwise. Completion of records at the site while key personnel are still available and while events are still fresh in their minds may save time and frustrations later when memories may have faded. Personnel need to be debriefed and key points recorded while at the site for later evaluation.

REPORTING AND INQUIRY

Involving Principal Personnel

11. It is unlikely that the final report on an incident of some magnitude will be compiled by a single officer. It is likely to take shape only after conferences have taken place between the principal personnel concerned and all the operational activity has been reviewed and clarified. Major or controversial incidents may be subject to an inquiry and Incident Logs, Incident Plans, briefing notes and actions will be subject to close scrutiny.

Annexes:

- A. Operational Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
- B. Incident Plan Format
- C. Situation Reports

OPERATIONAL PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING

1. During an incident, Incident Management Team members will need to find the best solutions to a range of problems, to make decisions, and to give directions based on the conflicting issues accompanying most problems.
2. Solving operational problems always calls for:
 - a clear definition of the issue/s which need to be resolved or determined;
 - the collection of all facts which are relevant to the problem and its solution;
 - a careful and logical examination of the problem and its associated facts;
 - the development and consideration of all possible and reasonable solution options; and
 - the selection of the final solution.

PROBLEM SOLVING—THE APPRECIATION

3. An appreciation is a logical and systematic process through which a workable plan can be prepared in response to an operational problem. Appreciations may be quick mental analyses and decisions or, if the problem is complicated, prepared fully in writing.
4. An accepted process exists involving four steps:
 - **Step 1**—Define the **aim**;
 - **Step 2**—Identify relevant **factors** and make **logical deductions**;
 - **Step 3**—Determine possible **courses open**; and
 - **Step 4**—Select the **best course** and **plan** its implementation.

THE PROCESS

5. **Aim:** The *aim* defines the problem which has to be solved, and states what is intended to be achieved through its solution. It is the starting point of the process. An *aim* must be:
 - clear;
 - concise;
 - practical; and
 - attainable
6. *Aims* should always begin with an active verb, ie to *do* something. Typical *aims* are:

'To rescue trapped personnel from the collapsed ACME building.'

'To transport 65 evacuees from Newingham to Blackville by 1800 hrs.'

7. **Factors:** These are the facts which are relevant to the problem which has to be solved. Some *factors* which may have to be considered in any operational situation are:
 - time and distance, weather;
 - the type of hazard;
 - access;
 - resources available (human/material);
 - support (requirements/availability); and
 - communications.
8. **Logical Deductions:** Each factor will have one or more *logical deductions* flowing from it: ie you should be able to say—*If this is the case, therefore...*
9. The Factors section of an appreciation may be set out in this manner:

Factors:

'Rescue team available only between 0900 and 1200 hours.' [TIME]

Deductions:

 - *'Plan must provide for maximum use during this time.'*
 - *'I must plan for the period after 1200 hours, in case the team does not finish its tasks.'*
10. **Courses Open:** These are the *possible solutions* to the problem. They are derived from a consideration of all the factors and their logical deductions.
11. Each possible solution may be considered in terms of its advantages and disadvantages, and it may be set out in the following manner:
 - **Problem:** *to protect residences from a toxic cloud that is blowing from a chemical spill.*
 - *Course 1:—I can evacuate the residents to a location up wind.*
 - * *Advantage: Residents are removed from the hazard. High school is available as an evacuation centre.*
 - * *Disadvantage: I must divert SES personnel and transport resources from their primary task at the rescue site.*
 - *Course 2:—I can allow residents to shelter in their homes until the hazard is past.*
 - * *Advantage: Disruption to the residents is minimal. Toxic cloud should pass in about 45 minutes.*
 - * *Disadvantage: I must divert police resources to warn residences who are tasked with traffic and crowd control.*
 - *Course 3:—etc*

12. **Plan:** The *plan* will be the best of the courses open. It will be the solution with the most important advantages, and the least important disadvantages.
13. The *plan* must be *simple*. Complicated plans do not work effectively. It must also relate directly to the aim, enabling you to achieve what you set out to do and in the best possible manner.
14. A suggested pro-forma for preparing a simple appreciation is attached.

Appendix:

1. Appreciation Format

APPRECIATION FORMAT

1. **AIM:**
2. **FACTORS:**
 - a. Deductions:
 - b. Deductions:
 - c. Deductions:
 - d. Deductions:
3. **COURSES OPEN:**
 - Course 1 Advantages:
Disadvantages:
 - Course 2 Advantages:
Disadvantages:
 - Course 3 Advantages:
Disadvantages:
4. **PLAN:**

INCIDENT PLAN FORMAT

1. Incidents plans will vary according to the type of incident and additional headings may needed. Plans may be issued orally or in writing. During major incidents, written Incident Plans help reduce confusion and provide a useful record for later reporting. They also assist on-coming shifts of the Incident Management Team, including the on-coming Incident Manager, to quickly get abreast of the situation.
2. Incident plans may be divided into five major headings:
 - **Situation**
 - **Mission**
 - **Execution**
 - **Administration and Logistics**
 - **Control/Coordination and Communications**
3. **Situation** is a summary of the incident circumstances as they have developed to a specific point in time, it could include such detail as:
 - **area**—topography, surroundings, hazards;
 - **victims**—number of casualties, homeless and their location; and
 - **resources**—operating in area and their location.
4. **Mission** is a short *action* statement specifying exactly what is to be done eg:
 - ‘To rescue trapped persons from the collapsed ACME building.’
5. **Execution** contains the necessary detail required to accomplish the mission. It clearly:
 - states the objectives and strategies of the incident operation;
 - states task priorities, and allocates specific tasks to each resource;
 - sets time deadlines for completion of tasks;
 - states action to be taken if hazards occur; and
 - states action to be taken on completion of tasks.
6. **Administration and Logistics** describes those elements which are to support the operation. These may include:
 - transport;
 - fuel supply;
 - feeding arrangements; and
 - primary equipment re-supply.

7. **Control/Coordination and Communications** define the incident management/ coordination structure, and the means of communication, to be applied as follows:

- Who reports to whom?
- Who is responsible for specific tasks?
- How teams or people are to work together?
- Briefing times and location.
- Shift Timings.
- How they are to communicate (ie frequencies/telephone numbers).

SITUATION REPORTS

1. A Situation Report (SITREP) is a means by which details of an operation are passed to adjacent agencies or higher headquarters/Emergency Operations Centres. It is an on-going description of all events occurring during an incident and provides information upon which important decisions are made. SITREPS must be accurate and timely. There are a number of formats that may be used. The following is one example.

INCIDENT SITUATION REPORT

- a. Report Number
- b. Date/Time
- c. Incident Type
- d. Incident Site Location—Grid Reference/Street Reference
- e. Incident Management Point location/Contact details
- f. Casualties
 - (1) Dead
 - (2) Injured
 - (3) Evacuated
 - (4) Homeless
- g. General Situation and Damage
- h. Action in Progress
- i. Assistance Required
- j. Future Intentions/Prognosis

STATE AGENCY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This space is for use by State agencies to add additional or amplifying information specific to their procedures relating to incident management.

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