
during some incidents will indicate that fundamental ICS management concepts either are missing or are not functioning as designed. Therefore, to avoid such difficulties, agencies/organizations using an ICS design should incorporate the following basic management concepts:

Span of Control: Span-of-control is the most fundamentally important management principle of ICS. It applies to the management of individual responsibilities and response resources. The objective is to limit the number of responsibilities being handled by, and the number of resources reporting directly to, an individual. ICS considers that any single person's span of control should be between three and seven individuals, with five being ideal. In other words, one manager should have no more than seven people working under him/her at any given time.

When span-of-control problems arise around an individual's ability to address responsibilities, they can be addressed by expanding the organization in a modular fashion. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. An Incident Commander can delegate responsibilities to a deputy and/or activate members of the Command Staff. Members of the Command Staff can delegate responsibilities to Assistants, etc.

There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.

Incident Action Plans: "Consolidated Incident Action Plans" means that for the specific event, the response is coordinated and managed through one plan of action. The consolidated Incident Action Plan (IAP) can be verbal or written (except for hazardous material incidents, where it has to be written), and is prepared by the Planning Section. The consolidated IAP means that everyone is working in concert toward the same goals set for that operational time period. The purpose of this plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with direction for actions to be implemented during the operational period identified in the plan. Incident Action Plans include the measurable strategic operations to be achieved and are prepared around a time frame called an Operational Period. Incident Action Plans provide a coherent means of communicating the overall incident objectives in the context of both operational and support activities. The consolidated IAP is a very important component of the ICS that reduces freelancing and ensures a coordinated response.

At the simplest level, all Incident Action Plans must have four elements:

- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?

Unity of Command: Unity of Command means that each individual participating in the operation reports to only one supervisor. This eliminates the potential for individuals to receive conflicting orders from a variety of supervisors, thus increasing accountability, preventing freelancing, improving the flow of information, helping with the coordination of operational efforts, and enhancing operational safety. Unity of Command also means that all personnel are managed and accounted for.

Accountability: Effective accountability during incident operations is required at all levels within the facility. The following guidelines are adhered to:

- **Check-In:** All employees and responders must report in to receive an assignment in accordance with the procedures established by the Incident Commander.
- **Incident Action Plan:** Response operations must be directed and coordinated as outlined in the IAP.