	Allegany County **Emergency Services Board** **Policies and Standards**	
Subject: Incident Command	**Approved:** December 13, 2022	
Approved: _____ , **Emergency Services Board Chair**		
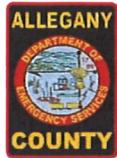
SUMMARY: This policy establishes a system of incident management that provides an expandable structure, standard terminology, and uniform procedure to ensure the most effective incident control and promote maximum safety for personnel and the public during emergency incidents. This policy also establishes the minimum training requirements that all department officers and members complete the on-line ICS 100 and 700 Incident Management System courses and chief officers shall complete the ICS 300.

BACKGROUND: Emergency incidents require many resources to allow command personnel to develop control. The ICS assists the Incident Commander by providing a systematic application of resources to assure that standard emergency objectives are accomplished safely. The Incident Command System (ICS) builds its structure progressively from minor incidents to major disasters. Any operational incident may be managed by ICS activating resources or functions appropriate to a specific level of emergency or type of incident. The primary tasks are established as supervisory or functional positions to provide a systematic structure, enabling the Incident Commander to delegate tasks and responsibilities so more time may be spent managing the overall incident.

PURPOSE: To adopt a system of incident management that provides an expandable structure, common terminology, and uniform procedures to assure safe and effective emergency incident control efforts.

APPLICABILTIY: This policy applies to all Allegany County fire and rescue personnel, mutual aid companies and other allied resources that respond to an emergency incident in Allegany County, Maryland

POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of the county to establish controls to provide for the effective management or fire and EMS incidents and to ensure the safety and welfare or fire and EMS personnel and the public.

PROCEDUE:

Definitions

CAN report - A CAN report is a report based on the Conditions, Assessment and Needs of the division, group or individual crew working on the scene so the IC can make adjustments or assign more crews to areas needed. The IC asks the crew for a CAN report.

Command: The act of directing, ordering and/or controlling resources by delegating, ordering and assigning tasks and functions to personnel.

Command Post: The location from which primary command functions are executed. The command post should be located in an un-exposed area where much of the incident can be viewed, preferably Side A, with a view of as much of the building/scene as possible. The front seat of the Command Unit (Chief's Vehicle).

Division: The organizational level that is responsible for operations within a defined geographic area. Example: Division 1 = first floor, Division 2 = second floor; Roof division = roof. Radio designations should mirror. Division 1, Division 2, Roof Division, etc.

Division/Group Supervisor: The unit officer that is responsible for the division or the group. Example. Division 1 officer may be the first engine in officer. Vent group supervisor would be the officer in charge of doing ventilation on any level of the structure or area.

Group: The organizational level that is responsible for a specific functional assignment at an incident. Groups perform the function anywhere in the structure or area. Example. Vent group, Extrication group, hazard control group.

Incident Commander (IC): The individual who is responsible for the overall management of all incident operations.

Incident Management Chart: A chart that the IC uses to maintain management of the incident.

Operations Officer: The individual that is responsible for all tactical operations at the incident scene.

Safety Officer: Member of command staff who is responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards, addressing unsafe situations and developing measures to ensure personnel safety.

4 C's Effective Communication Model

4 C's	What?	Example
Connect	Before you can send information over the radio you must ensure that you are talking to the intended receiver. As the sender you must connect with the receiver.	Use the "Hey you, it's me" model (e.g., Quint 17. "Chief 17 from Quint 17")
Convey	Having "Connected" with the intended receiver you can now "Convey" the message.	Engine 1-2: "Chief 1 from Engine 1-2" Chief 1: "Chief 1" Engine 1-2: "Need additional crew to assist with search on second floor"
Clarify	Repeat the directive. It not only confirms the message was received but also that it was understood.	Dispatch: "Medic 513 from Allegany" Medic 513: "Medic 513" Dispatch: "FPD needs you to stage until they advise." Medic 513: "Medic 513 copy. Stage until FPD advises."
Confirm	The confirmation from dispatch of the read back from Medic 513 is the "period" that ends the conversation.	Dispatch: "Affirmative Medic 513."

Command Communications

Safe and effective incident command and control depends upon prompt, complete and frequent communications. Routine progress reports should be given every 20 minutes. Having said that, radio communications should be limited and precise. The person that establishes command should announce that command has been established and the location of the command post. County Dispatch will broadcast who and where the CP is located. Effective communications are critical to emergency operations. Ideas, plans, objectives, and orders are useless until they are communicated. Effective communication speaks to more than the allocation of time for talking. It also requires that supervisors issue orders with clear objectives and intent. Personnel must know what is expected of them.

Examples:

"Allegany from Deputy Chief 1, I'll have command. Command post is at the command vehicle on Side A/Alpha."

"Allegany from Engine 1, Captain 1 will establish command".

After command has been established, do a quick size up and provide a detailed update of the conditions.

Examples:

Allegany from Command, we have a 2-story, single family house, nothing evident.

Allegany from Command; we have a 3-story, multiple-occupancy with fire showing on sides Alpha and Bravo, Divisions 1 and 2. We also have a single-family dwelling as "Exposure D/Delta."

Allegany from Command; we have 2 vehicles involved, confirming entrapment."

NOTE: "Showing verses "Evident"." The word "showing" is **only** used when there is something showing or apparent. Otherwise, the proper phrase is, "Nothing evident."

All units and/or unit officers assigned to a group or division will use that designation.

Examples:

"Command from Division 1; we have food on the stove with extension. I need Division 2 and the basement to checked for extension."

Messages on the incident scene should be clear and precise. Use common language and phrases and avoid the use of 10 codes or other uncommon language. Incident commanders need to identify how he/she is interpreting the number of floors when looking at buildings. Terrace level apartments may be referred to as basements by some or ground floors by others. Utilizing divisions and groups means that the I.C. is only calling the officer or 1 person but the message is getting to all in the division or group. Units should practice Crew Resource Management or CRM. CRM is a theory of if you see something, say something. If you see a pending hazard such as wall leaning or holes in floors report this to your officer, division or group supervisor immediately. Stay on your assigned talk group. Don't be surfing around talk groups and miss important messages or assignments.

Complex incidents often exceed the span of control. One officer cannot manage the entire incident. Assignments of Groups/Divisions reduce the span of control. Division officers, typically the unit officer of the apparatus will be assigned as the Group/Division Supervisor. Group and Division officers are responsible for maintaining crew integrity and reporting wants and needs to the IC. Groups and Division supervisors are responsible for tactical deployment of units and resources assigned to that Division/Group. Updates should be given every 20 minutes or when pertinent information needs to communicated.

The outcome of the incident depends on group/division supervisors monitoring the crews work, providing reports and recognizing the need for more help and the safety of the personnel.

Command should begin to assign Groups/Divisions as soon as the IC foresees the incident escalating and eventually involving multiple units. This will maintain the span of control among units operating on the incident.

Staging Apparatus.
This tactic provides the IC a system of placing units at a designated area and assigning units as needed. Personnel, equipment as well as apparatus can be placed in a staging area. All units and personnel assigned to a staging area need to stay with their crew/apparatus. Typically, the IC should assign a staging officer. The IC will call the staging officer and pull units from staging. Allegany County will utilize the following staging modes:

     Level I staging – units stage not past the last hydrant or in a positon to complete water supplies by split or reverse lays.

     Level II staging – Units are to report to a designated geographic area to stage. Typically this may be a parking lot or other sufficient area for apparatus and the first arriving engine company officer assumes the Staging Officer role and reports directly to the I.C.

Incident Commanders and first on scene unit officers should always utilize one of the modes of staging during a size up or after command has been established.

Incident Perimeters.
The perimeters of an incident are designated as:

Side "C" (Charlie)

Quadrant "B"	Quadrant "C"
Quadrant	"E"
Quadrant "A"	Quadrant "D"

Side "B" (Bravo)　　　　　　　　　　　　Side "D" (Delta)

Address Side

Side "A" (Alpha)
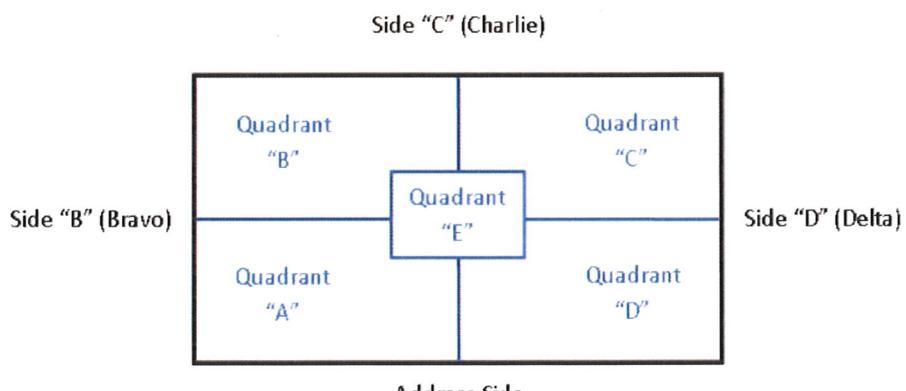
Quadrants divide the structure into five parts. Each of the four outer quadrants is identified as A-D. The center core of the where all four quadrants meet is quadrant E.

Exposures will be identified by their proximity to the incident side. Exposure D is to the right side of Side D. The exposure next to exposure D will be, Exposure D1 and so on.

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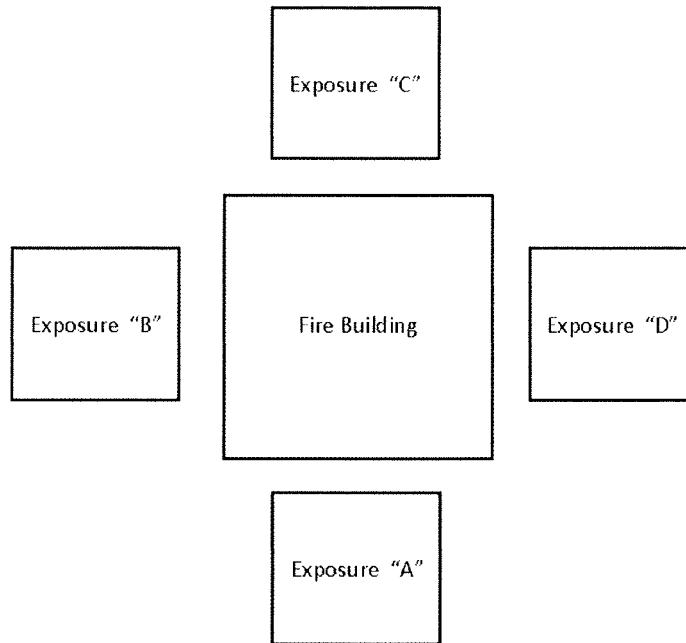
Size Up

Command Officers as well as unit officers should always be doing a mental size up of the incident. The size up begins when the department is dispatched and continues to the termination of the incident.

Size up should include:
- The location of incident, type of building and occupancy, interstate/highway, or buildings at FSU and how to access.
- Time of day
- Life hazards
- Exposures
- Resources that will be needed
- The placement of apparatus, the route to get to scene, establishing a water supply and leaving room for the truck.

Incident Priorities

The Incident Commander must use all available training, education, and tools to create and communicate a vision for a successful incident outcome. This vision is communicated by the issuance of clear incident objectives.

1. Incident objectives may be embedded by a standard operating procedure.
2. SOPs do not restrict the exercise of discretion by an Incident Commander

The incident priorities are Life Safety, Incident Stabilization, and Property Conservation. Ideally, all the incident priorities are addressed simultaneously. When available resources do not allow for simultaneously addressing the priorities, they must be addressed sequentially and in the listed order.

Life Safety - Life safety means to account for people possibly in danger. Personnel must use the fastest, most prudent, methods available to ensure the safety of people. Life safety concerns include civilians and firefighters alike. Once the decision is made to enter a hazard area, a search of the hazard area must occur. This search must occur regardless of reports that "everyone" is out of the structure or area. The assessment of whether entry is prudent comes first and independently; the search comes as a matter of course. There will be occasions where there are reports of persons trapped or unaccounted for inside a hazard area. Personnel must never treat these reports lightly but they must not accept them blindly. As the risk, inherent in search or other operational efforts increases, personnel must make a proportionally greater effort to ensure that the information they are acting on is current and valid. Survivability is an assessment of how likely people are to survive an emergency. Personnel will accept extreme risk to assist people who are known to be in danger and who are within our capability to save. Despite our best efforts there may come a point where people in danger are beyond our ability to save them. This does not mean that personnel "gives up" on people. We will not "give up" on people in the sense that we refuse to accept risk to save them, but you must recognize that human life operates within narrow environmental ranges. The separation provided by compartmentation can provide an effective barrier from most hazards. Untenable conditions tend to be specific to individual compartments, such that while one compartment is untenable, an adjacent compartment might be tenable. Personnel must not rule out survivability in all compartments based on conditions in a single compartment.

Incident Stabilization - Incident stabilization means stopping a problem from getting worse. Incident stabilization is situational. Personnel must first stop the spread of a danger or risk before addressing the risk directly. It is often the case that a direct attack on a given problem is the best solution for preventing the problem from growing worse, but not always.

Property Conservation - Property conservation is often the most meaningful act to those we serve. Property conservation must be considered as part of all actions. All responders should demonstrate your role as servants of the community and stewards of their property by our conservation efforts. Personnel must constantly be on the lookout for opportunities to maximize property conservation.

Situational Awareness

Situational awareness is the ability to identify, process, and comprehend the critical elements of information about what is happening at the incident. Situational awareness is a process. It is knowing what is going on around you. Accountability This term has two

meanings. First, it means that all personnel are responsible for ensuring they know where their subordinates are, and that their supervisors know where they are. Secondly, it means that all personnel are responsible for all their actions.

Safety – When operating on incidents the I.C. has a responsibility to ensure their health, safety, welfare, and accountability of its personnel, this does not replace the need for everyone to ensure their own health, safety, and welfare.

Risk Assessment

Risk describes the relationship between hazards and harm. More specifically, risk is the product of the chance that a certain hazard will cause harm and the severity of the harm if it were to occur. A risk assessment is a dynamic process of gathering information about the operational environment as it relates to risk, and then comparing the identified risks to the expected benefits of a given action. Stated differently, it is the process of making the decision of whether it is "worth it" to conduct a given operation. In the context of incident operations, the benefits are usually framed in terms of lives saved, significant injury reduced or avoided, and reduction in property loss. The risks may include injury or death.

Crew Resource Management

Crew Resource Management (CRM) is a system of organizational behavior that focuses on how team member attitudes and behaviors impact safety. It considers the team rather than the individual as the standard operating unit. CRM encourages leadership and teamwork skills by supporting input from the entire team while preserving chain of command.

Establishing Command

Command should be established based on the needs of the incident, as indicated by the initial size up. The first arriving officer establishes command. The initial IC retains command until command is transferred or the incident is terminated. The scope of establishing Incident Command is when *3 or more resources are working,* and it is anticipated that more units are responding. Establishing command is not solely an identifier for the person that is in charge. Routine local one or two company responses typically do not need to establish command. The first arriving unit officer uses the apparatus designation as the unit officer in charge of the event. This does not mean that a unit officer cannot establish command once it is determined that the incident is escalating or span of control needs to be managed. County Dispatch will not hail a unit as "Command" unless command has been established. County Dispatch will use the designation of the first unit on the scene, fire chief or other chief officer or another officer that has responded when hailing a unit. Establishing command sends a clear message to all on scene units and units responding that the incident is expanding and escalating.

Units approaching the scene should monitor the radio closely and anticipate the need for water supplies and proper positioning of truck companies. Units should not commit to a point of no return. Unit officers should not barrage the Incident Commander with repeated

calls for instructions. If no instructions are given, Level I stage your unit and advise you are staged at a hydrant, intersection etc. Establishing command should be unique to expanding and escalating incidents and not confused with minor incidents local or adaptive alarms. Command that is established on every call can be confusing especially when there may be a large-scale incident(s) working across other talk groups and where incident command needs to be established.

Command can be transferred ONE time by radio. After that transfer of command has to be done face to face. The first arriving unit officer may choose to transfer command to the next arriving unit or Chief Officer because the unit officer has to engage in fire attack with his crew, assist with rescues or other fire ground duties. The next arriving unit officer (Chief or unit officer) will assume Command by radio when units are operating in either Investigative or Attack Mode. The next arriving Chief officer/unit officer will communicate by radio with the first due unit officer who has Command, receive a situation report, and then assume Stationary Command Post operations. If the first arriving unit officer/command officer cannot contact the Unit Officer with Command either face to face or by radio, the next arriving unit officer/command officer will assume Command, and announce this assumption of Command by radio.

Allegany County recognizes two methods of managing incident command within the scope of this document: Tactical Command and Stationary Command.

A. Tactical Command. Tactical Command describes the situation where the Primary Unit Officer is engaging in direct action with his/her crew. Tactical Command is in effect simply by a unit being on the scene of an incident. Tactical Command can be used for both initial incident investigation and for initial engagement in emergency operations. Tactical Command is designed to be used for a short duration. If the entity with Tactical Command cannot resolve the incident in short order and no other command officer is on the scene, the Incident Commander must either pass the Command or establish a Stationary Command.
B. Stationary Command describes when a Primary Unit Officer other command officer is dedicated solely to performing the incident command function from a fixed location where at least 2 sides of the structure can be seen.

Safety Officer – The I.C. should appoint an Incident Scene Safety Officer or ISSO.

The I.C. should announce the appointment of the ISSO on the talk groups.

The ISSO can appoint assistants if needed.

The ISSO should not engage in tactical operations.

If an imminent life-threatening situation exists, the ISSO has the authority to stop or alter the action. If this action is taken it must be immediately reported to the Incident Commander.

Radio Reports:
- **Water Supply report** – Direct from Attack Engine to Supply
  - Example:
    - "Engine 1-3 from Rescue-Engine 1. I am dropping my line at the corner of Bedford Street and Marshall Street"
    - "Engine 1-3 copy: We will pick up the line at Bedford Street and Marshall Street"

On-scene Report:
- Correcting the address
- Unit identification and side of structure apparatus is positioned.
- Number of floors of structure and type of structure.
- Occupancy Type
- Detailed report of conditions evident (To include side of the structure conditions are evident, quadrant located, and description of conditions).
- Fire conditions, number of vehicles in crash.
  - Example:
    - "Allegany from Rescue-Engine 201. Rescue-Engine 201, on the scene side Alpha of a two-story, single-family dwelling, fire showing from one window, floor number one, quadrant Delta, side Delta. Rescue-Engine 201 will be conducting a lap".

Situation Report & Command Statement: After completing lap
Complete 360 lap of structure/incident and advise
- Number of floors above grade in front.
- Number of floors above grade in rear.
- Specific location of fire, if visible.
- Presence of basement, conditions present (if any), and location of access to the basement.
- Label floors.
- Any hazards observed.
- Presence of exposures, if any.
- Occupant status, if able to obtain.
- Request additional resources, as needed.

Provide your tactical plan and location of entry. Provide tasks to other on scene units or tasks you need completed by the next arriving units. Provided a clear and concise Command Statement based upon your decided tactical actions.

Example:

- Allegany from Rescue-Engine 201. Lap complete; two in the front, three in the rear. The fire is located on floor number 1, quadrants Charlie and Delta. Basement is clear of smoke and fire; access is on side Charlie to the basement. The structure will be labeled basement, 1st floor, and 2nd floor. Unable to confirm occupant status. Rescue-Engine 201, is stretching a 1 ¾" line through the front door with a crew of three. Rescue-Engine 191 is conducting a primary search of floor 2 with a crew of 2, two remaining outside to throw ground ladders.

Examples:

Fire
- "Engine 1 is on scene. I have a 2 story single family dwelling with fire coming from side B. E 1 is deploying a hand line to the front door for fire attack. I am (requesting to transfer) command or I am establishing command".
- "Truck 1 is on scene. I have a 5 story apartment building with nothing evident from side A, B. I am establishing command and am investigating".

Rescue
- "Squad 1 is on scene. I have a 2 vehicle accident with people still in the cars. I will advise and give a report".
- "Engine 1 is on scene. I have a 2 vehicle crash with people trapped. I will have command".

Initial On-Scene Reports set the tone for the incident. Providing a through report of a working fire, occupants trapped in a car will prepare incoming units of what to expect and their responsibilities and sets in motion operating procedures such as County Dispatch upgrading the call or the need for extra manpower and resources. The first actions, consider the outcome. Throughout the incident the IC should get periodic updates from divisions, groups and individual units. A CAN report or a report from the group, division or officer on CONDITIONS, ASSESMENT AND NEEDS is a simple concept that will allow the IC and all others on scene to obtain a picture of what's going on in and around each crew operating on the scene.

Throughout the incident unit officers and/or Incident Commanders should provide updates to County Dispatch. Updates will keep County Dispatch apprised of apparatus depletion in areas and the need for transfers. Updates will prepare dispatchers to be cognizant of pending calls and can preplan for upgrades, transfers and setting up for additional alarms.

Typical positions and initial actions:

1st Engine – After viewing as many sides as possible, the 1st engine should park in a position to allow for rapid advancement of hose lines into the structure, leaving priority position for the truck company. The following shall be communicated via radio: on-scene report, layout,

size-up 360 lap, and situation report. Primary actions will be deployment of initial attack line, search as the line is advanced.

2nd Engine – The 2nd engine should ensure a water supply, ensure 1st line is operational, and deploy the 2nd line.

3rd Engine – The 3rd engine shall position to allow the crew rapid access to the structure while maintaining access and egress to the incident for additional resources. The engine should take a position to prepare for providing a secondary water supply and visual inspection of side Charlie and the basement and report findings to command, check for extension, and possible exposure line.

4th Engine – The 4th engine shall position out of the way, so as to not block access for incoming truck and assume the position of RIT. If needed, the driver may be assigned to supply water to the 3rd engine.

1st Truck/ Special Service – The preferred position for the 1st truck company at fires will be side Alpha. This will allow for rapid deployment of ground ladders (front & rear) as a primary concern. Other duties will be to force entry, conduct primary search, and coordinated ventilation.

2nd Truck/Special Service – Position as close as possible to the scene and assist the 1st truck/ special service with forcing entry, search, coordinated ventilation, ladders and controlling utilities.

The 2-Out

The 2-out is two personnel staged at the point of entry who are prepared to assist the initial entry team should they face an emergency situation. The 2-Out must be on the scene and prepared to act before the first unit makes entry into the hazard area, except when there is a known immediate life hazard.

One member of the 2-Out must maintain contact with the initial entry team visually, verbally, or by radio. Maintaining the connection with the initial entry team must be their only focus. The second member must not be assigned to functions that would endanger the initial entry team if they were abandoned.

For this reason, engine drivers and Incident Commanders may not be used to meet the 2-Out requirement. The second member of the 2-Out must wear all their structural PPE and have their SCBA immediately available. The second member of the 2-Out may assist with firefighting operations only as listed below with assisting with the movement of the primary attack line outside the structure or placing ladders as secondary egress for the initial attack crew.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC)

The RIC is a crew of at least two firefighters who join up with the 2-Out and form the initial component of the RIC. The RIC must be on the scene and prepared to act before the 2-Out is relieved. The primary purpose of the RIC is to begin the rapid intervention size up. The RIC can engage in tasks, such as additional laddering, removing egress hazards, securing utilities, etc., except as necessary to immediately save a life or prevent an emergency from occurring. The RIC officer must ensure that all their personnel are immediately available for rapid intervention duties.

Deploying RIT Crews

Before a RIT crew is deployed the I.C. should use the RIT rescue continuum. Upon receiving a MAYDAY, the incident commander can first:
    -summon the down firefighter, talk with the firefighter calmly. Determine air supply and if he/she can free themselves or what resource are needed.
    - Call the crew the firefighter was working with to search for the down firefighter.
    - Deploy units in the division to search and rescue the firefighter.
    - Deploy the RIT Team to search for the firefighter.

Incident Duration Reminders IDR.

It is the I.C. responsibility to track personnel during working events when crews are working in IDLH atmospheres. This information is valuable for many reasons, including the establishment of work cycles, determining the need for additional resources, and evaluating of the impact of fire on structural components. County Dispatch will provide an Incident Duration Reminder 10 minutes into the event and every 20 minutes thereafter. This will prompt I.C. to evaluate initial crew's welfare status and needs for rehabilitation needs. IDR's can also be used to prompt personal accountability report. IDR's will continue until the I.C. advises County Dispatch that IDR's are no longer required.

Isolation Zones and Action Circles

1. Some incidents require the establishment of isolation zones. Isolation zones define incident action areas based on their relative hazard. Isolation zones are not always based on concentric circles. The nature of the incident hazards determines the shape of the zones. The Incident Commander should ensure that the zones are clearly identified.

2. The hot zone is where the incident action is occurring and represents the area of the highest hazard.

3. The warm zone is an area of lesser hazards that represents a transitional space between the high hazard area and the no hazard area.

 4. The cold zone is an area free of incident hazards. The incident command post is located in the cold zone.

5. For some events, such as vehicle collisions, these hot and warm zones may be referred to the inner and outer circle respectively.

Hot wash and After-Action Reports

The term AAR applies to the full range of post incident reviews beginning with the on-scene hot wash and extending to detailed written reports that may be ordered by the local Fire Chief. A properly conducted AAR can have a powerful influence on the climate of the organization. It is part of the communication process that educates and motivates people by allowing them to learn from the actions of others.

 AAR's should focus on key aspects of incident operations with a focus on the effective distillation of lessons available for learning and recommendations for future improvement.

The AAR process begins with the hot wash. The hot wash is led by the Incident Commander and involves the key decision makers of the event. During the hot wash the primary objective is to respectfully and openly engage decision makers to describe what they saw, how they framed the situation, and how their individual actions helped or hindered the operation as a whole.

It is important for the hot wash to be non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and open. The point is for all participants to engage in candid discussion as equals. The next step after the hot wash is an Initial Written AAR. The Initial Written AAR captures the information from the hot wash, adds an analysis from the Incident Commander, and is shared throughout the organization.

NOTE:
This Incident Command policy is designed and will fit the scope of responding to day to day incidents which would include up to multiple alarm fires, hazardous materials incidents that are local which may not mean full scale evacuations, large woods/brush fires as an example.

Once incidents get much broader such as evacuations needed, relocating residents of a nursing home, major specialty team responses, apparatus depletion to multiple incidents and gets to a point of lack of apparatus to respond to other incidents, severe unexpected weather incidents or when state and federal responses and resources will be utilized or required this policy should be incorporated with a much broader IMS Plan and/or IAP implemented by County Emergency Management.