

# Central Joint Fire District

## Standard Operating Procedure



Central Joint Fire District

SUBJECT: Incident Commander

SOP Number: 421

Effective Date: 1/8/92

Revised Date:

Approved:

**PURPOSE:** It is the intent of this standard to provide a orderly method by which one individual can assume command of an incident and by delegating his/her authority can successfully manage all the resources at his/her disposal.

**SCOPE:** This standard is to be used by anyone who finds him/herself in a position of command at an incident which will require multiple resources.

**ENFORCEMENT:** The responsibility for adherence to this standard rests with anyone who finds him/herself in a position of command at an incident. The Incident commander is a direct extension of the Fire chief's authority and has the same responsibility and duties during an emergency incident.

### DEFINITIONS:

Incident Commander – The most senior person initially arriving on the scene of an incident.

Senior person – determined by time in rank.

Resource – any vehicles or personnel arriving in addition to the first unit on the scene.

### APPLICATION:

#### 421.1 Assumption of Command

The first officer or acting officer arriving at an incident where multiple resources will be committed to that incident shall assume command of the incident until properly relieved by a superior officer.

The incident commander shall formally establish command by transmitting a brief initial report containing:

Description of the incident.

Report of conditions

Designation of individual assuming command

Example A) Unit #\_\_\_ on location. We have fire showing from first floor of a two story dwelling. Unit #\_\_\_ is command.

Example B) Unit #\_\_\_ on location. We have a two car accident with three patients. Unit #\_\_\_ is command.

The Incident Commander will be designated as “COMMAND” in all radio traffic.

#### 421.2 Selection of Command Mode

The first arriving officer must quickly evaluate conditions and decide which of the following commitments should be made.

Nothing Showing – Officer and crew of first arriving unit investigate. All other responding units shall stage.

Fast Attack – Selected when immediate offensive attack is required to stabilize the incident. If the Incident Commander is part of the attack crew, command shall be passed to and assumed by the second arriving officer.

Command Mode – First arriving officer assumes a stationary exterior command position. This mode is chosen due to the fire size, complexity of occupancy, or possibility of extension.

#### 421.3 Transfer of Command

If command has been established by a fire fighter, command may be transferred to the first arriving officer.

Command may be transferred from the initial officer to a later arriving superior officer. Transfer to a superior is discretionary. A superior officer may elect to allow a subordinate to retain command of the incident, however this does not remove the responsibility for the incident from the higher ranking officer. Transfer of command shall take place on a face to face basis to facilitate effective communication and feedback and shall include communication for the following information:

- The status of the current situation
- Resources committed and responding, as well as present organizational structure
- Assessment of the current effect of tactical operations

Following transfer of command the present Incident Commander may return the previous Incident commander to his/her crew or assign to a subordinate a management position within the Incident Command Structure. The new Incident commander shall announce over the radio the transfer of command.