	Standard Operating Guideline: OPS7	
	Subject:	Incident Command and Accountability
	Effective Date:	November 12, 2012
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Director:	<i>William Ferguson</i>	

Purpose

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool which enables personnel to manage efforts to mitigate any incident, whether routine or of a major disaster proportion. FCDPS will always operate within the ICS at emergency incidents in order to effectively manage personnel and resources, while providing for their safety and welfare. The Incident Commander (IC) title applies to qualified personnel as it does to the department chiefs and line officers, regardless of the nature of the incident.

The ICS organization has the capability to expand and to contract, in order to meet the needs of the incident. All incidents, regardless of size and complexity, will have an IC. A basic ICS operating principle is that the IC is responsible for on-scene management until command authority is transferred to another person, who then becomes the IC.

Management of an incident cannot and must not be left to chance, upon arrival of the initial unit officer. Command procedures must begin. The analysis and management of an incident must follow a well-defined and practiced system of incident command procedures. The ICS provides the needed management tools to coordinate the resources assigned to mitigate an incident.

ICS OVERVIEW

Organization

The ICS offers a flexible, modular-based organizational structure containing the functions necessary to manage the emergency resources on an incident. The organization emanates from the IC downward; initially with responsibility for command placed on the first-arriving unit officer. The IC is responsible for the command of all incident activities within their span of control. This includes the development and implementation of strategic goals and the incident action plan (IAP).

The Command Function

The command function is established by the IC and is the person in charge at the incident. The IC must ensure that incident goals are established, strategies are selected, planning activities are accomplished, and available resources are effectively used and tracked.

It is imperative that the strategy is communicated down through Operations to the Division, Group, and single resource level. This is essential if supervisors are to coordinate incident tactics and tasks. More specifically, the IC and Operations Chief must ensure that all resources are cognizant of the mode of operations; whether it is offensive or defensive.

Delegating responsibilities at an incident gives the IC the capability of dividing an incident into more manageable work areas or functions. By dividing the incident and delegating tactical responsibilities, the IC can concentrate on the overall strategy, while remaining at the command post.

Unified Command

When there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction, or when incidents cross political jurisdictions, Unified Command (UC) is required. Agencies work together through the designated members of the UC to establish a common set of objectives, strategies and a single IAP. Often the senior managers from the agencies and/or disciplines involved participate in UC. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

The following are examples of when Unified Command is applied:

- Incidents that impact more than one political jurisdiction.
- Incidents involving multiple agencies (or departments) within the same political jurisdiction.
- Incidents that impact (or involve) several political and functional agencies.

Levels of Scene Organization

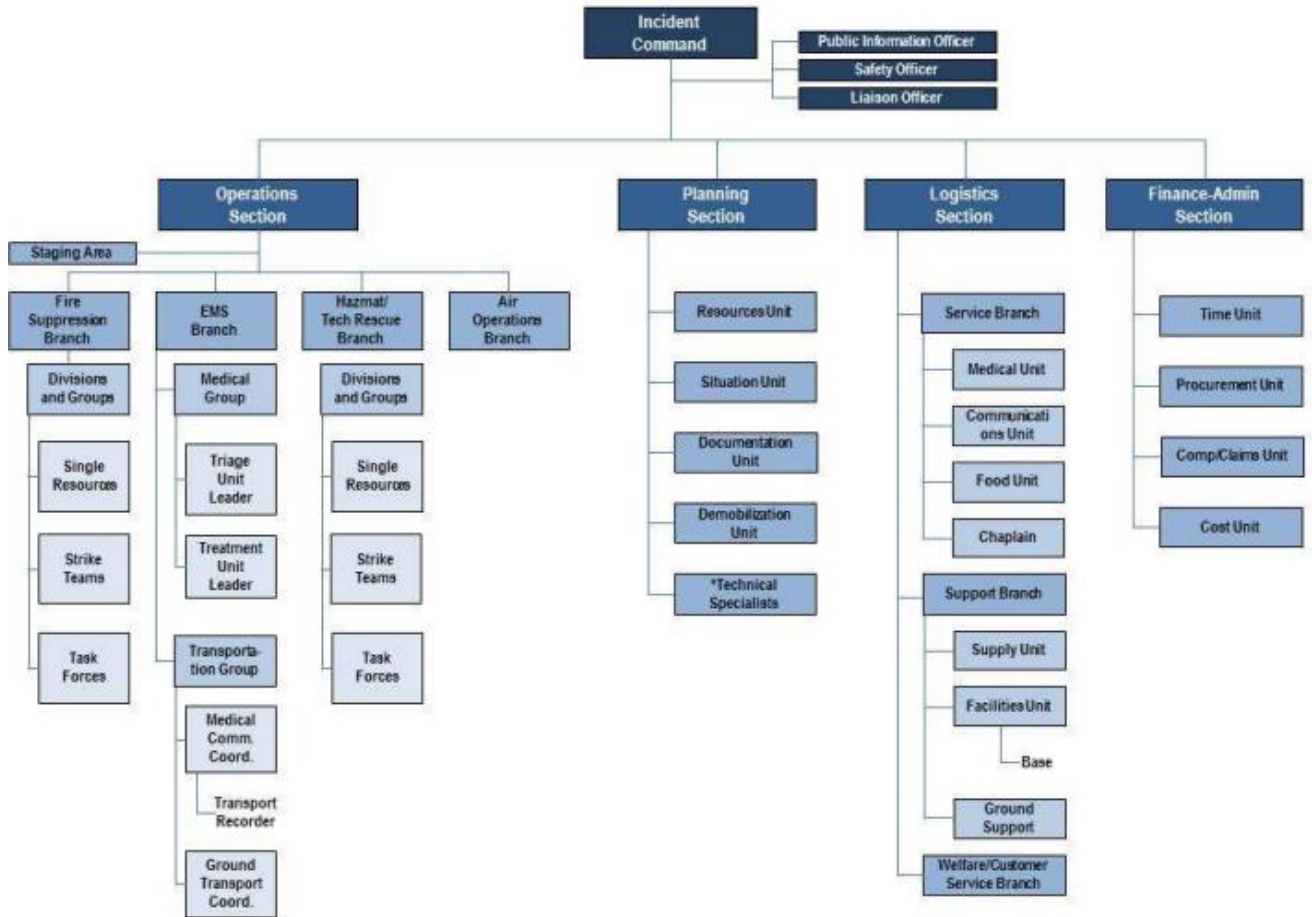
The levels of scene organization are as follows:

- Strategic – IC and Command Staff operate, and are responsible for command functions.
- Tactical – Branch, Division, or Group Directors and Supervisors manage the tactical activities for their assigned area or function, i.e., responsible for a piece of the incident.
- Task – The level where strategic and tactical objectives are accomplished, i.e., where the work actually is done. Fire companies rescue victims, put out the fire, and protect the customer's property.

The effective IC must be assertive, decisive, objective, calm, and a quick thinker. To deal with all the responsibilities of the role, the IC also needs to be adaptable, flexible, and realistic about their limitations. The IC must have the capability to delegate positions appropriately for the incident.

It is extremely important to remember that on the majority of incidents, the Incident Command System should be built from the bottom up. This is to say that the IC should only implement those elements of the system that are necessary to maintain a span of control of three-to-seven people, with five being ideal

Safety and accountability of personnel shall be given prime consideration on every incident. This system will allow ICs to use available resources most effectively to accomplish the primary operational objectives.



Command and Functional Relationships used in ICS

Organizational Element	Leadership Position
Incident Command	Incident Commander (IC)
Command Staff	Officer
Section	Section Chief
Branch	Branch Director
Division and Groups*	Supervisors
Unit**	Unit Leader
*The hierarchical term <i>supervisor</i> is only used in the Operations Section.	

Leadership Titles

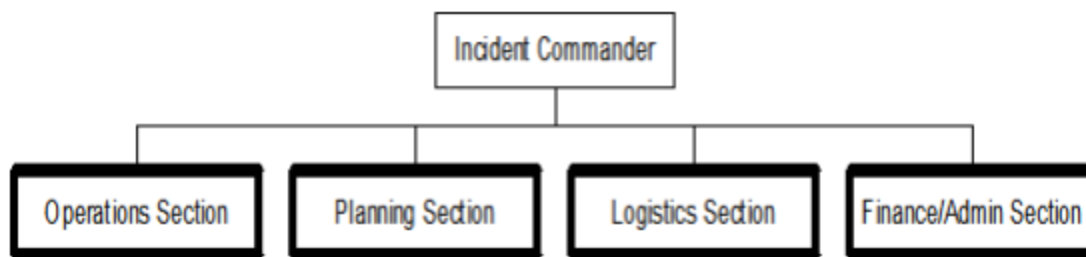


Command Staff Positions

Sections

The Section level is organizationally between the Branch level and the IC. This management level is a member of the IC’s General Staff, not to be confused with the Command Staff positions of Safety, Information, and Liaison, and is responsible for managing a primary segment of incident operations. These sections are Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

The Incident Management Team (IMT) consists of the IC’s Command Staff (Liaison, Safety, PIO) and the General Staff (Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration).

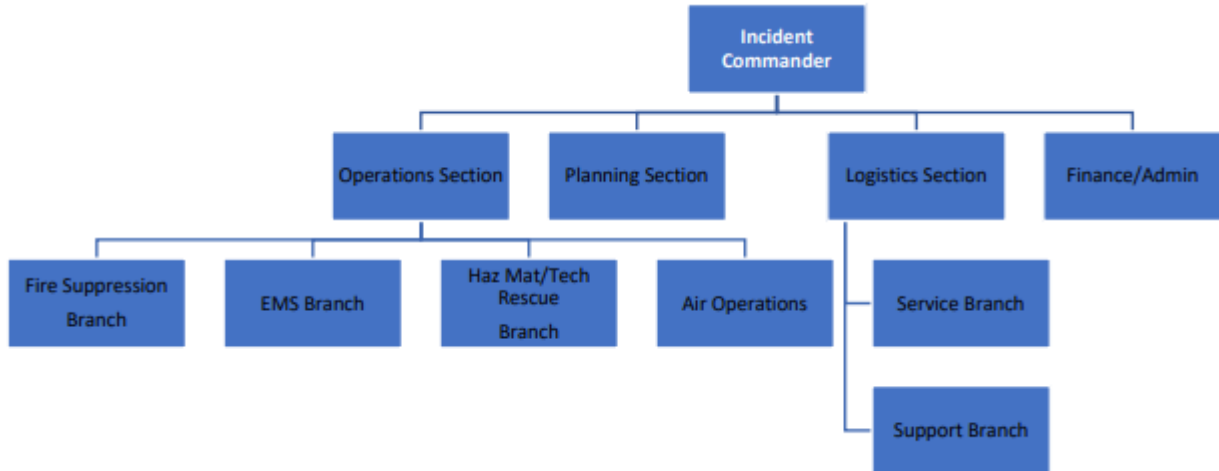


ICS General Staff

Branches

The Branch Level is the organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility. The Branch Level is organizationally between Section and Division or Group in the Operations Section, and

between Sections and Units in the Logistics Section. Depending on the magnitude and or type of incident, the operational functions may require further division into smaller segments for efficient use of resources. However, they are not always essential to the organization of the Operations Section.



Branch Level

Divisions

Divisions are the organizational levels having total responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area. For example, on an incident with a working fire on the fourth floor of a ten-story building, the IC will typically place all units operating on that floor under the direction and supervision of a Division Supervisor. This supervisor's designator would be Division 4. This supervisor will be responsible for the activities in that geographical area.

Establishing a division provides a system to divide an incident into manageable geographical areas. Routine communications inside a division can be accomplished more effectively in a face-to-face mode. This eliminates tactical information exchanges on the radio.

Groups

Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operations. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. Using the same example of fire on the fourth floor of a ten-story building, the IC may assemble and assign a group to ventilate the floors above the fire floor in the fire building. The IC would designate a Group Supervisor and may use the designation of Vent Group. The Vent Group could be operating on the seventh through the tenth floor performing the function of ventilation.

Units assigned to a group or division shall report/go directly to the supervisor for any needs, not directly to the IC.

FCDPS INCIDENT COMMAND AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Establishing Command

It is imperative that command and control be established at minimum on the following events:

- Structure Fires
- Large brush or outside fires
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- HAZ MAT Incidents
- EMS events requiring multiple units to mitigate (stokes operation, search, shootings, etc)

Formal command does not need to be established on single unit responses. It is known that the OIC of the unit is in command of the incident.

The initial arriving unit officer or command level officer shall establish command. **A radio transmission should be made announcing the location of the command post and a name given to the command.**

Example:

Captain 1: *“Captain 1 establishing Franklin Street Command, Side Alpha in front of Wagon 1.”*

Or

Chief 4: *“Chief 4 is on the scene establishing Old Franklin Turnpike command on side Bravo.”*

Command can be transferred to a higher-ranking officer and is preferred to take place in a face-to-face setting. The transfer of command should also be communicated to dispatch over the assigned tactical channel.

Divisions and Groups

As the incident escalates, the IC should divide up the incident into groups and divisions as necessary. FCDPS preferred group and division names include but not limited to:

- Charlie Division (units operating in the rear of the structure out of the ICs field of vision)
- Water Supply Group (critical ICS component in non-hydrant areas)
- Division 2 (units working on the second floor)
- Fire Attack Group – unit(s) responsible for deployment of handlines and extinguishment.
- Search Group – unit(s) assigned to complete primary and secondary searches
- Recon Group – unit(s) responsible for the size up of a large-scale event (train, aircraft, etc)
- Ventilation Group – unit(s) responsible for the coordination of ventilation
- Medical Group (includes EMS support and Rehab) – assigned to second arriving EMS unit.

When only one unit is operating as a single resource in an area or specific task, the unit designator should be used as the radio ID. When more than one unit is working in a particular area or task, divisions and groups shall be established to reduce radio communication and improve the span of control. When a division or group has been assigned, and a supervisor identified, the radio ID changes to the division or group title.

Example:

Engine 3 is working alone on an exposure line. Engine 3's radio designator remains "Engine 3".

Engine 1 has been assigned as the ventilation group and Rescue 1 assigned to assist. Engine 1's radio designator now becomes "Ventilation Group".

Staging

One of the first responsibilities of the IC at an emergency incident is to identify the need for and request additional resources.

Efficient management of fire and EMS resources assigned to an incident may require the establishment of a staging area for apparatus and personnel not committed to incident operations. **Un-assigned resources should be controlled and assigned to stage in a particular area.**

Staging describes a standard system for assembling apparatus and personnel before assignment at an incident or when they are released from rehab. On incidents where the initial unit is investigating and the IC does not need personnel to assist immediately, the IC may transmit the order for personnel to stage on their apparatus. This allows for personnel to remain non-committed but in close proximity to incident to execute the standard assignments.

Units assigned to staging should be positioned to reach the incident within three minutes of receiving an assignment. Reflex time must be kept to a minimum.

Incident Intelligence

Prior to committing resources to the IDLH, the incident commander will need to confirm the completion of the 360 and incident size up.

Elements of the 360°	
	Elevation of structure (front vs. rear)
	Presence of basement and location of access
	Location of fire
	Label the floors
	Any hazards observed
	Presence of exposures
	Status of occupants
	Access and egress points

ACCOUNTABILITY

Resources are the combination of personnel and equipment used in incident operations. These resources must be managed, tracked, and accounted for during the duration of the incident in accordance with NFPA 1500-39. In order to account for and identify personnel working in hazard zones, it is imperative all fire and rescue agencies within FCDPS utilize the accountability system.

The incident commander should consider the appointment of a command aide to assist in tracking all resources utilizing a command sheet/board.

A passport style accountability system is utilized to account for all personnel operating at emergency scenes. Each apparatus will have an apparatus identification tag identifying the apparatus unit ID. Personnel will have individual identification passport name tags identifying the individual responder and their operations capability. The passport system is utilized in conjunction with the Incident Management System.

All apparatus in Franklin County Department of Public Safety will have an apparatus identification passport issued and affixed to the inside of the apparatus cab. Apparatus identification tags will be considered part of the apparatus basic equipment.

All active personnel, career and volunteer, will be issued (3) individual passport name tags. Individual passport name tags will be considered part of the minimum issued PPE. Individual identification passport name tags shall be affixed to the inside rear of issued fire helmet using a Velcro backed adhesive strip.

The following colors and markers will be utilized as indicators of skill and training:

Yellow: Operations outside the hazard zone, personnel not able to perform interior fire operations.

Green: VDFP Firefighter I/HazMat Operations or higher certification authorized for interior and exterior operations. ALS providers will also have a star of life emblem added to their tag.

White: Lieutenants and above

Orange: Special Operations

Procedure:

- A. During morning apparatus check, FCDPS personnel shall immediately remove one of their individual identification passport name tags and give it to the person riding in the passenger seat (AIC/OIC). The individual passport name tags should be placed on the apparatus identification tag. All passport tags left from previous shifts will be removed, to reflect only current personnel on apparatus. As volunteer crews assemble, tags should be added to the unit passport or given to the incident commander upon arrival.

- B. The driver or person riding in the passenger seat of the emergency apparatus should take the apparatus identification tag with affixed individual identification passport name tags to the Incident Command Post before making entry into the IDLH or fulfilling other incident assignments. If command has not yet been established, the passport should remain in the vehicle or with the crew. Once command is established, the IC should collect (send a runner) passports and affix them to the command board.
- C. The Incident Commander or Accountability Officer should affix the apparatus identification tag to an Incident Management board. It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at the incident; **Incident Commanders are encouraged to appoint an Accountability Officer/Command Assistant to help with this task.**
- D. All department or apparatus personnel will be accountable to the Incident Commander, at no time shall freelancing be permitted. **Any personnel arriving by POV or individually on apparatus must report to the IC, with their accountability tag, for an assignment.** All grouped personnel shall arrive at the incident and stay together unless individuals are given specific orders to split from crews by the Incident Commander.
- E. Any group entering a hazard zone is required to have at a minimum (1) operational portable radio, set up to appropriately assigned tactical operations channel, operating in a team of two or more personnel.
- F. The Personal Accountability Report (PAR) is a roll call of personnel assigned to an incident and an accountability report of all companies on scene. PAR checks will be utilized as a confirmation that each crew member in a company is accounted for. The incident commander should call units/groups/division asking for a PAR check.

Example:

IC – *“Charlie Division from command, PAR check”*

Charlie Division – *“Charlie Division is PAR with E4 and E15 on side Charlie.”*

- G. The Division/Group Supervisor is responsible for maintaining visual, physical or verbal contact with the crew in which they are supervising and will report a PAR at appropriate times. Commanders should request a PAR if:
 - 1. There is a report of missing or trapped personnel.
 - 2. There is a change from offensive to defensive fire attack.
 - 3. There is a sudden event such as a flashover, backdraft, collapse, etc.
 - 4. An emergency button is activated, or emergency traffic received

(MAYDAY).

5. At (20) minute intervals when the incident is not under control.
6. There is a change in the Incident Commander.

- H. Upon completion of the assignment, the person that took the apparatus identification tag to the Incident Command Post is responsible for retrieving the apparatus identification tag from the Incident Commander. The same person is responsible for accounting for all personnel that have passport tags affixed to the apparatus identification tag.

Benchmarks and Incident Documentation

When a fire attack has commenced (water on the fire), the IC will notify the controlling dispatcher who make a notation in the CAD remarks. This benchmark is required in the ESO fire report.

When an incident is declared stable by the incident commander, he/she should inform the tactical channel dispatcher that the incident now under control. The dispatcher will make a note within the CAD remarks.

For motor vehicle accidents with entrapment, the IC will notify the controlling dispatcher to start the extrication timer once personnel arrive on scene and begin extrication. When the extrication is complete, the IC will notify the controlling dispatcher who will notate both time stamps into the CAD remarks.

Unit Officers or an incident commander if applicable can declare an incident “can handle” indicating the resources on scene are sufficient and no other responding resources are required. Any unit still enroute can disregard and return to service.

Unit officers/personnel shall report to their designated supervisor when:

- Assignment is completed.
- Unable to complete assignment.
- There is a safety problem.
- Additional resources are required to complete assignment.

Unit reports denoting the progress of specific unit action can be defined by the acronym C.A.N., which stands for conditions, actions, and needs. By using this report model, the person giving the report easily identifies the conditions faced, actions taken, and any support or resource needs.

C – Conditions (“We have a fire on the second floor in quadrant alpha”)

A – Actions (“We have one hose line in place knocking down the fire and the truck is performing a primary search.”)

N – Needs (“We do not need any additional resources on the fire floor now.”)

Enforcement

It is the responsibility of each department to implement and enforce this policy to ensure safe operations. This commitment involves the following:

- **Personnel** are responsible for staying with assigned crew at all times and ensuring individual passport name tags are on the apparatus identification tag, and reporting damage/loss of tags, or change in training status.
- **Company Officers** are responsible for constantly keeping the company intact and ensuring all accountability tags/reports are accurate.
- **Incident Commanders** are responsible for command and control, tracking the location of all companies, assigning personnel, and overseeing tracking of personnel on scene.

RIT AND MANAGING THE MAYDAY

RIT is a designated crew that will serve as a stand-by rescue team for personnel and be available for the immediate search and rescue of any missing, trapped, injured or unaccounted for fire fighter(s). This team shall be fully equipped with the appropriate personal protective clothing, protective equipment, SCBA and specialized rescue equipment needed as based on the specifics of the operation that is underway.

When personnel are required to operate in an IDLH, the Incident Commander shall establish a RIT as soon as resources arrive on the scene:

- A RIT is established with a minimum of two firefighters certified in Virginia Department of Fire Programs Firefighter I.
- The preferred number of personnel assigned to RIT is four certified Firefighters.

After initial hose lines are in place, and the primary search is underway, **the next incident priority for the incident commander will be assigning personnel to the RIT function.**

RIT may perform other exterior fire ground tasks as long as they do not interfere with their ability to affect an immediate rescue. These duties include:

- Ladders
- Utility Control
- Exposure Control
- Exterior Fire Attack

At a *minimum*, the RIT should assemble the following:

- Full personal protective equipment with self-contained breathing apparatus.
- A radio
- A rope bag with 150 feet of rope
- Extra air cylinder with extra face mask (RIT Pak)
- A prying tool and a smashing tool
- A thermal imaging camera (TIC)
- A chain saw and/or a rotary saw with a metal blade.

Requirements for rapid intervention are addressed in NFPA Standard 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, Section 5.2.3.1.2, and NFPA Standard 1720, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*, Section 3.3.23.

Dispatch Procedures Following a Mayday


- Ensure the IC acknowledged the Mayday call. Advise the IC of the Mayday ONLY if the Mayday was not acknowledged by the IC.
- Maintain radio discipline. Document actions into the CAD notes.
- Assign a dispatcher to closely monitor all radio traffic on the tactical channel.
- Do not initiate operational responsibilities until directed by the IC (i.e., Emergency Evacuation tones, etc.)
- Dispatch an additional EMS transport unit.

- If the dispatcher receives a Mayday from an individual not operating on the assigned incident channel/zone, the dispatcher shall immediately notify the Incident Commander.
 - o Gather LUNAR/UCAN information from the firefighter.
 - o Do not have firefighters attempt to switch channels.
 - o Maintain open communication with the firefighter calling the Mayday.

IC Initial Actions upon Receiving a Mayday Call

1. Acknowledge the Mayday and deploy nearby resources and the RIT to the last known location. Maintain communication with Mayday firefighter and/or crew
2. Make an incident scene announcement to communicate the Mayday and a desire for Emergency Traffic only and all that personnel shall maintain their current positions/assignments.
3. Confirm pertinent information from downed firefighter (i.e., UCAN or LUNAR). Maintain communication with the firefighter in trouble
4. Request accountability of crew that initiated the Mayday
5. Initiate a PAR check to confirm accountability of all personnel operating in the IDLH. Additional Actions after Receiving a Mayday Call
6. Backfill the initial RIT for continued fire ground operations as soon as possible.
7. As the situation dictates and resources become available, consider using additional radio channels for fire ground operations.
8. Development of a rescue action plan is critical.
9. Consider/request additional resources (EMS transport units).
10. Withdraw and control unassigned resources from the search and rescue area.

FCDPS INCIDENT COMMAND BOARD

<i>Address:</i>				RIT	<i>C</i>					
E	E	E	E		<i>B</i>		<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	
T	T	R	M	M	<i>A</i>		<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>		
K	K	K			<i>B2</i>	<i>B1</i>	<i>Fire Unit</i>	<i>D1</i>		
FRANKLIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY										
Fire Attack		Search		EMS/Medical		Water Supply		Notes		
GROUP/DIV		GROUP/DIV		GROUP/DIV		GROUP/DIV				
Ladders		Utilities/AEP		RIT		Attic		LableFloors		
Primary Search		Primary Water		Basement		Salvage		Exposures		
Confirm Name/Location		Activate RIT/Nearby Units		Request Additional EMS		PAR Check		Fire Attack		

Areas highlighted in yellow are memory joggers for critical fire ground tasks.
 Areas highlighted in red are memory joggers for the ICs response to a MAYDAY.