

MIAMI VALLEY FIRE/EMS ALLIANCE STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

**Subject: Incident Management Teams –
On-Scene Operations**

SOG Number: B-3

Effective Date: September 16, 2003

PURPOSE:

The Miami Valley Fire/EMS Alliance has established a regional support structure for local Incident Commanders (IC's) at large scale and complex incidents – Alliance *Incident Management Teams (IMT's)* – as detailed in Alliance *SOG Number B-2*. The *IMT* program provides two to five chief/command level officers from Alliance fire agencies who have been trained to function as part of the team. These officers are to supplement the requesting department's command staff and to assist in filling the various ICS functions, or other roles as assigned, during major incidents.

The following guidelines provide an overview of how these officers may be used at an incident scene when a fully-developed Incident Management System (IMS) or Incident Command System (ICS) structure is not needed.

DEFINITIONS:

Incident Management Team (IMT):

An *Incident Management Team (IMT)* consists of two to five chief/command level officers from Alliance fire agencies who have been trained to function as part of the team. The individual *IMT* members may act as Senior Advisor to the Incident Commander, Operations, Planning, Safety, Sector Officer, P.I.O., Liaison, Logistics, Finance or any other function at the direction of the I.C. Teams will be activated for large or complex incidents and those expected to last two-hours or longer.

Incident Action Plan (IAP):

Describes the basic actions that will be required to bring the situation rapidly under control, within the identified strategy. Must be announced early to all crews and on-scene operating units. Should be repeated on a regular basis as new crews and personnel arrive on the scene and as the IAP is changed or adjusted.

Example (Offensive Strategy):

...fast, aggressive interior attack to hold fire to room/area of origin, with concomitant search and rescue operations. Ladder crew to provide access, check for extension, ventilation, salvage and overhaul support.

Incident Action Plan – IAP (Continued):

Example (Defensive Strategy):

...deck gun operations supported with ladder pipes on the C & D sides of the building, to contain fire to occupancy of origin. Handlines to interior of D exposure to check and contain any extension of the fire. All operating units and equipment shall stay clear of collapse zones.

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM/COMMAND TEAM (IMT) –
ON-SCENE OPERATIONS:**

Helps IC by providing “span of control” support. Fills the gap when a full-blown IMS or ICS (safety, ops, planning, logistics, etc.) is not needed but the incident demands are sufficient enough to tax even the most seasoned IC. Major positions include: IC, support officer, senior advisor, support members.

Incident Commander – the individual ultimately responsible for bringing a safe and successful conclusion to the incident at hand. Generally, first arriving chief officer.

Support Officer – initially evaluates and recommends changes to the IAP, assists IC to keep the IAP and strategy current, and to ensure that no significant aspects of the incident are overlooked. Generally, the second arriving chief officer. Other responsibilities:

- ⇒ Provide a check and balance to the tactical priorities, critical incident factors and incident safety.
- ⇒ Evaluate the need for additional resources.
- ⇒ Assign logistical responsibilities.
- ⇒ Assist with the tactical worksheet for resource control, accountability and tracking.
- ⇒ Evaluate incident organization and span of control.

Senior Advisor – generally the highest ranking member of a command team (if from the same department) or other area department chief as agreed to in advance between the parties. Focuses on the big picture. The overall incident and its immediate and probable future needs and demands. Offers advice, direction, guidance and wisdom to rest of IMT. Other responsibilities:

**INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM/COMMAND TEAM (IMT) –
ON-SCENE OPERATIONS (CONTINUED):**

Other responsibilities:

- ⇒ Review and evaluate incident action plan and initiate/recommends needed changes.
- ⇒ Continuous monitoring of the “big picture.”
- ⇒ Review and revise organizational structure as needed.
- ⇒ Cause needed sections and branches to be established.
- ⇒ Coordinate and communicate with other outside and community agencies, officials, etc., as needed.
- ⇒ Handle media relations so IC can concentrate on the incident at hand.
- ⇒ One note on the difference between a Support Officer and a Senior Advisor – the Support Officer may be intimately involved with managing the incident, e.g., assigning logistical responsibilities, assisting with the tactical worksheet, accountability, etc.; the Senior Advisor maintains a level of independence, looking at the incident as a whole and sometimes beyond, e.g., consequence management issues, and offering recommendations and advice to the IC.

Support Members – later arriving chief/company officers used to fill out needed sections, branches or sectors as the incident evolves.

Communications Officer – Communications has been identified as a primary concern in most major incidents and has been identified as a major pitfall in most major incidents. One member of the IMT may be designated as a “Communications Officer”. The communications officer should have experience and knowledge of Communications Systems and be able to determine compatibility of various radios and systems on a fire ground. The primary function of this officer will be to assure communications between IMT members and the IC. In larger incidents this officer will begin to determine and mitigate communication solutions for the entire fire ground to assure good communications between personnel on the scene.