



SYKESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Incident Command

General Order 6-22

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I. PURPOSE

The Sykesville Police Department has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the primary method to prepare for, respond to, and manage critical incidents. NIMS is a comprehensive national approach to incident management, applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. It provides a consistent nationwide Incident Command System (ICS) approach for Federal, state, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently.

ICS may be utilized for any size or type of critical incident or event as a means to coordinate the efforts of individual members and other responding agencies as they work toward the stabilization of the incident. The ICS may expand or contract depending on the complexity of the incident and the on-scene requirements, as determined by the incident commander.

II. POLICY

The Sykesville Police Department shall utilize the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS) in conjunction with other agency policies and procedures as outlined in various written directives. These policies, plans, and agreements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Critical Incident Responses
- Emergency Operations Plans
- Public Demonstrations and Civil Disorders
- Hazardous Material Incidents
- Lost or Missing Persons
- Planned Special Events
- City Emergency Management Plans
- Mutual Aid Agreements
- Hostage/Barricade Situations
- Natural or Man-made Disasters
- Bomb Threats/Disposals
- Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents
- Terrorist Acts

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. National Incident Management System (NIMS): A system mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) that provides a consistent nationwide approach for state, local, and tribal governments; the private sector; and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause,

size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among state, local, and tribal capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies these as the incident command system; multiagency coordination systems; training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualification and certification; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

- B. Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized on-scene emergency management system that provides for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It can be used for all kinds of emergencies, and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.
- C. Incident: An occurrence natural or human-caused that requires an emergency response to protect life, property, or both. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.
- D. Event: A scheduled occurrence that may require use of the ICS to be successfully completed.
- E. Incident Action Plan (IAP): An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. It may include the identification of operational resources and assignments, as well as plans and contingencies for the demobilization of resources at the conclusion of the operation. It may also include attachments that provide direction and important information for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.
- F. Incident Management Team (IMT): The IMT consists of the incident commander and appropriate command and general staff personnel assigned to the incident.
- G. Unified Command (UC): This is an application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction, or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through designated members of the UC, often the senior person(s) from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the UC, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies, appoint a single operations section chief, and approve a single IAP. The IC responsibility is shared within the UC, with the function most important at the time taking the lead role. The lead responsibility may shift as the incident progresses. For example, at a

crash involving hazardous materials, the fire department would assume the lead role until the HAZMAT concerns are mitigated. Then, as the incident progresses to the crash investigation phase, the lead role would shift to the police department.

- H. Unity of Command: A chain of command designed to ensure efficiency in meeting a specific objective. Every individual assigned to an incident or event reports to one supervisor. If a responder is assigned to the HAZMAT group, he or she reports to the HAZMAT group supervisor. That supervisor, in turn, reports to a branch director, who reports to the operations section chief. In this manner, there is less confusion about who is in charge of specific functions. The exception to this is when the section chief reports to a unified command.
- I. Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all operations at the incident site. Responsibilities of the IC can be assumed by the officer handling the original call to the chief of the department and any additional qualified officers, depending on the size, scope and complexity of the incident or event.
- J. Command Staff: In an incident management organization, the command staff consists of the deputy incident commander and the special staff positions of public information officer, safety officer, liaison officer, and other positions as required (such as an intelligence officer), who report directly to the IC. They may have an assistant or assistants, as needed.
- K. Function: Function refers to the General Staff functional areas in ICS: (1) command, (2) operations, (3) planning, (4) logistics, and (5) finance/administration. The term function is also used when describing the activity involved, e.g., the planning function. A sixth function, intelligence, may be established, if required, to meet incident management needs.
- L. Section: A section is the organizational level with responsibility for one of the General Staff functional areas of incident management.
- M. Section Chief: The title for individuals responsible for management of one of the General Staff functional sections: operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration, and intelligence (if established as a separate section). A section chief reports directly to the IC or UC and works with the command and general staff to develop and implement IAPs.
- N. General Staff: The general staff is a group of incident management personnel organized according to function and reporting to the IC. The general staff normally consists of the section chiefs of the five main functional activities.

- O. Deputy: A deputy is a fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a deputy can act as relief for a superior and, therefore, must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the IC, general staff, and branch directors.
- P. Assistant: This is the title for subordinates of principal command staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be assigned to unit leaders.
- Q. Safety Officer: This officer oversees the safety of all operations within the incident or event, and has the authority to stop an operation if it is unsafe. The safety officer and his or her assistants oversee tactical operations to ensure the safety of responders and the general public.
- R. Liaison Officer: A member of the command staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies.
- S. Public Information Officer (PIO): This officer prepares and dispenses all public information regarding the incident, with the approval of the IC. In a large or complex incident, there may be many PIOs operating under a joint information system (JIS) and out of a joint information center (JIC), but there shall be only one overall PIO for the incident or event. This individual is usually assigned from the agency having primary control of the incident. All agency PIOs enter their input for the public information release, help edit it, and agree to its contents. It is then approved by the IC or UC before being released to the public. A media staging area shall be designated to ensure that media access will not interfere with law enforcement operations. The location of the media staging area should be communicated to media outlets to help ensure their cooperation. The IC shall approve all media releases prior to the PIO giving them to the media.
- T. Operations Section: This component has the responsibility for all tactical operations at the incident site directed toward reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoring normal conditions. The operations section is responsible for implementing the IAP and achieving the objectives set forth in that plan.
- U. Operations Section Chief (OSC): The OSC is responsible for all tactical operations within the incident or event, ensuring implementation of the IAP, and helping to develop the IAP for the oncoming shift.
- V. Planning Section: The planning section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and processing tactical information in order to develop an IAP with the IC, command, and general staff. Planning should establish a documentation unit, as needed.

- W. Planning Section Chief (PSC): The PSC is the individual responsible for monitoring the current operation and determining the needs for personnel and activities for the oncoming shift. The PSC develops, writes, and disperses the IAP after it is approved by the IC.
- X. Documentation Unit: The documentation unit maintains a master record of all personnel and components involved in the response to a critical incident, and is comprised of status recorders who maintain a chronological log, personnel rosters, and a record of all telephone communications. The unit leader ensures maintenance of all files and documentation deemed necessary to complete situation or resource status reports and required after action reports.
- Y. Logistics Section: The logistics section is responsible for meeting all support needs for the incident through appropriate procurement of facilities, food service, transportation, supplies, communications, equipment maintenance and fueling, medical services for incident personnel, and personnel for expanding incidents or relief on long incidents. Logistics is responsible for ensuring the safety of responders when they are in a base, camp or staging area prior to deployment and ensuring that relief personnel and equipment are available for deployment as needed.
- Z. Logistics Section Chief (LSC): The LSC is responsible for ensuring that the activities for the incident or event can be sustained. This includes obtaining, securing, and maintaining the facilities needed to sustain the operation, including a base, camp, or staging area.
- AA. Finance/Administration Section: The finance/administration section is responsible for incident management activities that require finance and other administrative support services. This includes the record keeping requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); processing payroll during a critical incident; collecting and maintaining all records necessary for reimbursement of qualified expenditures; and administering all financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts and claims for reimbursement.
- BB. Finance Section Chief (FSC): The FSC ensures that personnel time, expenditures, and procurements are tracked and used in an efficient manner.
- CC. Intelligence: Intelligence can be its own section (especially in police incidents), an officer assigned to Command, or an officer within each section. This function is responsible for managing internal information, intelligence, and operational security requirements. These may include information security and operational security activities, as well as the complex task of ensuring that sensitive information of all types (e.g., classified information, law enforcement sensitive information, proprietary information, or export-controlled information) is handled in a way that not only safeguards the information, but also ensures that it is

disseminated to those who need access in order to perform their missions effectively and safely. This section may be part of the command staff; assigned to the general staff; or assigned to a subset of the operations, planning, or logistics sections, depending on the need. Each section may need its own intelligence branch, group, or unit.

- DD. Division: Divisions are created in order to partition an incident into geographical areas of operation. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the OSC.
- EE. Branch: A branch has functional or geographical responsibility for major aspects of incident operations. Branches are identified by the use of Roman numerals or by functional area.
- FF. Group: A group is often a specialized unit within a division or branch. Examples include a HAZMAT group, traffic control group, or SWAT group.
- GG. Incident Command Post (ICP): The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. The ICP may be located jointly with the incident base or other incident facilities and is normally identified by a green rotating or flashing light.
- HH. Base: A base is the location where primary logistics functions are coordinated and administered. The ICP and the base may share a location. An incident can have more than one base, with each base name containing an appropriate designator to prevent confusion. If the incident is so geographically large that one base cannot support it, a second logistics section can be activated. A deputy IC (logistics) can be assigned to monitor the logistics needs of each base.
- II. Camp: A location where personnel not currently assigned to the incident can rest and recuperate. A camp is often adjacent to a base with the term base/camp referring to both.
- JJ. Staging Area: Staging areas are established to assemble resources while awaiting a tactical assignment. The operations section manages staging areas.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Incident Assessment

1. The first responder shall assess the operational situation immediately upon arrival and proceed according to applicable policies and procedures.
 - a. The initial responsibility for management of assigned resources lies with the first responder on scene. The initial IC will be responsible for the following duties:

- (1) Assess the situation;
 - (2) Establish the command organization based on the needs of the incident and the assets available;
 - (3) Establish immediate priorities;
 - (4) Ensure adequate safety measures are in place;
 - (5) Coordinate with key people and officials; and
 - (6) Authorize release of information to the media.
- b. The first responder shall maintain command and control of the incident or event until relieved by a higher authority, if necessary.
 - c. The chief of police or his or her designee shall exercise command and control over all law enforcement resources committed to an incident or event that is citywide or multijurisdictional in nature.
2. Determining which incidents warrant ICS implementation is a matter of good judgment, although the use of ICS is encouraged on small or everyday recurring events to gain experience. Factors to consider for implementation include the following.
- a. Size. How large a geographical area is or will be affected?
 - b. Scope. How many resources are likely to be involved? What will be necessary to achieve stabilization and/or containment?
 - c. Duration. How long can one reasonably expect the event or incident to last with or without ICS intervention?
 - d. Multi-Agency Involvement. Will other police agencies and emergency responding departments, such as the fire department, be involved?
 - e. Will specialized teams be deployed, such as SWAT or search and rescue?

B. ICS Activation

1. The on-duty supervisor or highest ranking officer shall determine whether the incident warrants an ICS response.

2. The first responder shall serve as the initial IC. Prior to being relieved, the first responder shall have the latitude and authority to assign any person to any assignment or task, regardless of rank.

C. Establishing Command

1. As soon as practical following ICS activation, the responsibility of the initial IC shall be assumed by a ranking member, if necessary. Most often, this will be an on-duty patrol supervisor. However, depending upon the nature of the incident, command may be first assumed by a higher ranking or more qualified member.
2. Various components of the ICS should be activated depending on the size and complexity of the incident or event. Operational need is the primary factor in determining which components or functions are activated. In addition to establishing a command post and function, the IC, utilizing the standardized ICS structure, shall activate those components necessary for the particular incident. These components are represented graphically in Appendix A and include the following:
 - a. Sections (operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration, and intelligence, if necessary)
 - b. Branches (subdivisions within the operations section formed to manage the broad span of control issues)
 - c. Divisions (geographical subdivisions)
 - d. Groups (functional subdivisions)
3. The IC shall specify the components to be activated and designate an officer in charge of each component. If a section is not activated for the incident, the IC shall be responsible for performing that function.
4. Sworn personnel and select support staff shall be activated and assigned by the IC, or his or her designee, as warranted. Additional agency personnel, or assistance from other localities, shall be requested by the IC in accordance with the emergency operations plans, mutual aid agreements, or mutual aid as permitted by state law.
5. All section chiefs shall report directly to the IC.
6. All requests for additional staffing or specialized units shall be authorized by the IC.

7. The IC shall establish an Incident Command and determine an incident designator to be used by all responders. This designator shall be one or two geographical words, such the street name or specific place name of the incident. Examples include: “Main Street Command,” or “Washington Bridge Command.” The designator chosen shall clearly distinguish the event and not be easily confused with other locations.
8. The IC will determine the ICP location. This location should be carefully chosen based on such factors as incident size, need for security, proximity to the incident, and support issues such as communications, shelter from the elements, and related considerations. The ICP can be moved at a later time if necessary.
9. The IC will inform communications of the establishment of command and the ICP’s specific location. For example, the “ICP location will be in the service yard at the west end of the Washington Tunnel.”
10. Documentation Unit
 - a. The unit is also responsible for preparing and maintaining the following:
 - (1) Status reports and intelligence on the current situation;
 - (2) Status of resources assigned to the incident;
 - (3) Situation summaries (situation status reports [SITSTAT], resource status reports [RESTAT]) and projections for future events;
 - (4) Incident and area maps;
 - (5) Accurate and complete incident files;
 - (6) Incident demobilization plan to include specific instructions if needed; and
 - (7) Technical specialists to deal with special areas of expertise.
 - b. For events that can be planned, the PSC or his designee should assign members to assist in planning the event with other county, public safety, or (such as fairs, holiday parades, major sporting events), shall be maintained, updated, and disseminated prior to the event.
11. Personnel Accountability

- a. The IC, or designee, shall maintain strict personnel accountability and shall be continually updated by the section chiefs in order to keep an ongoing, accurate assessment of the entire operation.
- b. If the IC establishes command after units are already actively deployed, the IC should conduct (or have conducted) a radio roll call to determine their positions. In ICS mode, communications shall maintain and keep the IC apprised of the location of all deployed units.
- c. During major incidents, the IC may appoint a safety officer who shall have the responsibility and authority to stop an operation or part of it if safety requirements are not being met.
- d. Depending on the size and duration of the incident, consideration should be given to relief provisions for operations personnel.

12. Transfer or Assumption of Command

- a. Incident command can be transferred to an officer of higher rank, to a more qualified member, an individual with particular expertise, or to a larger IMT in order to help maintain a manageable span of control. Transfer of command may also be necessary in order to relieve a member who has been in command for an extended period of time. Prior to the transfer of command, the following actions are required.
 - (1) Assess the current situation with the current IC;
 - (2) Receive a briefing from the current IC and document the transfer. At minimum, the incoming commander should be apprised of the current situation, assignment of resources, and tactical and strategic needs;
 - (3) Determine an appropriate time for the transfer of command;
 - (4) Notify others of the change in incident command; and
 - (5) Assign the current IC to another position in the incident organization (such as OPS).
- b. There shall be a transfer of command briefing wherein all sections are briefed and all involved personnel are advised of the new command.

13. Demobilization

- a. The planning section shall develop a demobilization plan for large incidents or events.
- b. When the incident has been resolved or stabilized to such a point that command is no longer necessary, the IC shall notify communications that the incident is being terminated.
- c. Communications shall rebroadcast the message, and members will return to their normal supervisory chain of command unless otherwise advised.

D. After Action Report

- 1. The IC shall submit an after action report which should include, but may not be limited to, the following:
 - a. A brief description and outcome of the incident;
 - b. A statement of personnel and equipment utilized;
 - c. Cost analysis to include salaries, equipment, food and incidentals;
 - d. A copy of incident/event logs and all submitted reports;
 - e. Any maps, forms, or related documentation;
 - f. A summary of deaths and injuries to members and citizens and an assessment of damage to private and public property;
 - g. Any information relating to the status of criminal investigations and subsequent prosecutions;
 - h. A final evaluation and any subsequent conclusions relating to the agency's overall response to the critical incident or event, to include:
 - (1) Any problems encountered regarding personnel, equipment, resources or multiagency response;
 - (2) Suggestions to revise policy or improve training and equipment; and
 - (3) Any other consideration that would improve the agency's response to critical incidents or events in the future.

E. Training and Review

1. The training unit shall:
 - a. Conduct NIMS/ICS training. The training director shall ensure that annual training is conducted in the form of tabletop or actual field exercises and should include multiple agencies. The director or a designee shall prepare an after-action report following each training exercise. Awareness-level NIMS courses are required for all sworn members. Advanced NIMS courses are required for supervisors, to coincide with increasing levels of responsibility.
 - b. Be responsible for facilitating and documenting NIMS/ICS training as required by the Department of Homeland Security.
2. With input from command and supervisory personnel with specific incident command and emergency management responsibilities, the planning unit shall conduct an annual review of established NIMS/ICS procedures and perform departmental updates as required.