

5-06/110.35 - Incident Commander

The incident commander may change several times during the course of an operation and may extend to the Sheriff, should the incident warrant his personal attention.

The passing of command should not be deemed a separate operational phase, but merely a continuation of activity which preceded the transfer.

If an operation conducted by a specialized unit (excluding Special Enforcement Bureau) evolves into an emergent request for local station resources, the station's unit commander or their designated representative shall become the incident commander.

If an operation conducted by a specialized unit (excluding Special Enforcement Bureau) evolves into or occurs in an outside agency's jurisdiction and requires additional Department resources, the nearest station's unit commander or their designated representative shall become the incident commander. Operational command and responsibilities shall be transferred upon his or her arrival on scene and after being briefed by the current incident commander.

The newly designated incident commander may retain all previous incident commanders as his or her staff for consultation and to assist in communications with Department executives, or to assist with operations, intelligence, and logistics.

Regardless of the rank of the incident commander, he or she shall be responsible for the overall control and coordination of the operation. Therefore, the incident commander shall consider avoiding performing specific tasks and instead delegate them.

The incident commander shall be responsible for the following:

- Managing the overall operations - all personnel shall report to the incident commander and respond to his or her directions;
- Primary containment;
- Secondary containment;
- Necessary notifications;
- Establishment of a command post;
- Requesting required resources;
- Managing/coordinating resources;
- Activating elements of the incident command system;
- Establishing a communications network (tactical frequencies);
- Managing incident operation, i.e., traffic control;
- Deployment of chemical agents;
- Press liaison; and
- Follow-up investigation.

The incident commander shall make the following notifications in the most expedient manner possible:

- Watch commander, who shall respond to the scene without delay;*
- Unit commander, who shall respond if necessary;
- Area commander or duty commander who shall respond if necessary;
- Sheriff's Information Bureau, who shall dispatch a representative for press liaison;
- The Sheriff and major executives of the Department must be personally notified for decisions involving extraordinary incidents, e.g., skyjackings, public figures, political/revolutionary/terrorist groups, those involving numerous suspects and hostages, and/or the safety of large numbers of citizens or employees;
- Emergency Operations Bureau, in the event of a sustained operation; and
- Aero Bureau in the event a temporary airspace flight restriction becomes necessary.

* Absent exigent circumstances, the watch commander shall ensure an experienced sergeant remains at the station/unit to perform routine watch commander duties. If there is no one qualified at the station/unit, the watch commander shall arrange for a sergeant from the closest station/unit who has worked as a watch commander to respond to his or her station/unit in order to assume that role. This concept is known as "moving up resources."
