



**ARCADIA FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE**

**INCIDENT COMMAND**

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**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**PURPOSE**

The Incident Command System (ICS) is designed to control and direct the resources committed to an incident. In this manner incident objectives can be accomplished effectively and in priority order. The process begins with the first arriving officer and system is implemented as the incident dictates.

This policy is designed to assure that all members of the department understand the implementation of the Incident Command System during emergency incidents.

**POLICY**

The Arcadia Fire Department shall implement and operate within the Incident Command System at all emergencies

All Arcadia Fire Department personnel shall meet the minimum requirement of ICS 200 in-order to comply with Federal Government NIMS implementation by January 1, 2005. We will accomplish this by complying with the following:

- ❖ All members shall utilize ICS Publication 420-1 (Field Operations Guide) and ICS Publication 120-1 (Operational System Description) as outlined in our department Size-Up Policy.
- ❖ All fire department personnel shall be trained at a minimum level of ICS 200
- ❖ All members shall successfully complete an Incident Command training program provided by the Arcadia Fire Department.
- ❖ All members shall be required to have a minimum of four hours of training a year on the Incident Command System.

**PROCEDURE**

The Arcadia Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergency incidents. In order to effectively manage personnel and resources and to provide for the safety and welfare of personnel, the following procedures shall be implemented:

**Size-up:** The first unit on scene shall provide an initial size-up report to Verdugo dispatch and responding units.

**Assuming Command:** The first in Officer assumes command and shall retain command until relieved by the Battalion Chief or a superior officer. If the incident requires immediate intervention by the first arriving unit, the company officer may pass command to an appropriate unit on scene. Upon assuming command, the command post location shall be announced and manned.

**Incident Name:** The geographic name should be a one or two syllable word. The name can be a street, landmark or town, e.g., “Duarte IC”, “ Fairview IC”, “Race Track IC”. The most appropriate time to announce the incident name is during the “follow-up” report.

**Command Post:** The first vehicle to arrive will often be used as the incident command post. When this is not practical, the IC may use another vehicle or a geographical location (e.g. Fire Station 107) to identify the incident command post. The most appropriate time to announce the Command Post location is during the “follow-up” report. Command sheets and incident command boards shall be initiated by the first in chief officer at the command post.

**Passing Command:** During the early stages of incidents, the IC may need to leave the command post for a size-up or supervision of personnel. If this can be accomplished with a quick return to the command post, it is unnecessary to transfer command. A protracted absence from the command post necessitates the transfer of command to a specified officer on an assisting company. The initial IC will remain in command until an assisting company arrives at scene. At that time command may be passed with a radio transmission (e.g. “Engine 105 from Engine 106, I am passing command to you”). This initial radio transmission shall include information required in the follow-up report. The new IC will make the follow-up report and command the incident.

**Transfer of Command:** After the initial IC has implemented the initial Incident Action Plan, preparation for the transfer of command to the first arriving chief officer shall be made. The following information shall be transferred:

- General situation status.
- Initial Incident Action Plan.
- Deployment and assignments of operating companies.
- Appraisal of the needs for additional resources at that time.
- Specific safety hazards, life and property loss potentials.

**Automatic Holding:** All incoming companies shall stop and “hold” approximately one block (or ¼ mile for brush) from the incident and announce their holding position to the IC (e.g. “First Avenue IC, Engine 107, holding on Santa Anita and Huntington”). IF an intersection is not appropriate, use direction and distance (e.g. “First Avenue IC, Truck 105 holding ¼ mile east”).

**Check-In:** Check-in is required on all greater alarm incidents and is encouraged any time the IC wants to reduce radio traffic during the early stages of command.

The purpose of check-in is to provide an accounting of all resources that responded to an incident. The IC can check-in resources without assistance on most incidents; however, when responding resources exceed five to ten companies, the IC can become overloaded attempting to assign the resources one at a time. The IC can prevent this problem by assigning the check-in manager function to a company or individual located at the Command Post, Base, or Staging. The steps for this process are as follows:

- Decide on a logical location for easy access to the incident.
- Assign a Company or individual as Base or Staging.
- Brief the Base or Staging company / individual.
- Report the location, travel routes, and radio designation to the Verdugo Dispatch
- Personnel shall remain as a team in staging, base, etc., until assigned.

**Radio Communication:** There are three standard reporting formats: Size-up, Follow-up, and Status. Size-up and Follow-up are reported to Verdugo Dispatch. Status reports are from resources or division/group supervisors to the IC.

### **Recommended Size-Up Report Format**

#### Structure Fires

- Location of fire by address.
- Description of occupancy
- Numerical floor height and type of occupancy, e.g., two story commercial
- Products of combustion, e.g., fire, light/heavy smoke, nothing showing, etc.
- Special instructions if needed (e.g., exposures, location of fire within stated structure).

#### Brush Fires

- Location of fire by address or intersection. If an intersection, identify which side, e.g., N, W, S, E.
- Size of fire in acres.
- Type of fuel (e.g., light brush, grass, etc.)
- Speed of spread.
- Spread direction.
- Special instructions if needed (e.g., homes or values threatened).

#### Hazardous Materials Incidents

- Location of incident by address or intersection.
- Type of occupancy or carrier transporting hazardous material (e.g., railroad car, LPG tanker, gasoline truck, etc.)
- Type of material involved if known. Is incident moving or static (e.g., spill running into storm drains, spill confined to street by diking, cloud moving in N/W direction, etc.).
- Is incident with fire or without fire.

#### Multi-Casualty Incidents

- Location of incident by address or intersection.
- Type of incident (e.g., overturned bus, chemical spill, downed aircraft, etc.).
- Estimation on the number of victims.
- Follow-up Report

#### **Recommended Follow-Up Report**

The Incident Commander shall:

1. Identify the incident with a one or two syllable geographic name if possible (e.g., “Sunset IC”, “Foothill IC”, etc.).
2. Identify the Incident Command Post location.
3. State other pertinent information, e.g., additional resources required (e.g., second or third alarm assignment, specialized equipment, allied agencies, etc.)
4. State the “Check-In” location and travel routes, if required; this can be Staging, Base, Command Post, Division, Camp, Heliport, etc.
5. On incidents requiring two or more Divisions, the Incident Commander may request a command frequency assignment from Verdugo Dispatch.
6. Provide status reports to Verdugo when requesting additional resources and at 30-45 minutes intervals.

**Status Report:** The IC needs information from his Division/Group Supervisors to evaluate if the goals and objectives are being achieved in the Incident Action Plan. The standard format is as follows:

- Situation: Describe the problem(s) and related information.
- Progress: State progress since last report.
- Needs: Resource needs for handling the problems.
- Accountability

**Terminology:** Radio communications between units at an incident shall be on the assigned tactical frequency assigned. Radio traffic should be held to a minimum consistent with having adequate information for completing assignments and status reports. The intent of these guidelines is to provide brief, accurate communications.

1. When giving assignments, tell the officer the objective; state what you want, not how to do it. (e.g., “Engine 105 from IC protect the east exposure.”).
2. Companies will acknowledge radio assignments by repeating the order. (e.g., “IC from Engine 105 copied east exposure.”)
3. The Company Officer will use the Company Call Sign for communication to identify his company (e.g., “Engine 107”, “Truck 105”, “RA 106”, etc.).
4. When other members of a company want to communicate, they will use their company call sign and their rank. (e.g., “Engine 107 Engineer, Truck 105 Fire Fighter.”).

NOTE: When two Fire Fighters are assigned to the same company they must identify themselves by Unit, Rank, and Last Name. (e.g., Truck 105 Fire Fighter Smith.)

EXCEPTION: Command assignments will use proper terminology as indicated in current incident Command System literature. (e.g., Division/Group, Lobby, Staging, etc.).

5. Emergency Traffic: Emergency traffic should be used to report any danger occurrence or when incident objectives cannot be met. The individual can request emergency traffic through the IC. The IC will then request Verdugo Dispatch to clear the air.

#### APPENDICES

Appendix I: Radio Communication Examples

Appendix II: Definitions

## APPENDIX I

### Radio Communication Examples

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A STRUCTURE FIRE, NOTHING SHOWING.

Initial Size-Up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 105, 12 Bonita with nothing showing from a two story apartment building.”

Verdugo.’s size-up report:

(Alert tones), “ 12 Bonita, Engine 105 reports nothing showing from a two story apartment building.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 105, can handle, food on the stove, out 5 minutes.”

Verdugo’s follow-up report:

(Alert tone), “Engine 105 can handle, food on the stove, out five minutes.

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A STRUCTURE FIRE WITH SMOKE SHOWING.

Initial size-up report:

“Verdugo Engine 107, 123 W. Huntington with light smoke showing on the second floor of a three story (Apartment, commercial, etc.) building.”

Verdugo.’s size-up report:

(Alert tones), 123 W. Huntington, Engine 107 reports light smoke showing on the second floor of a three story building.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 107 and Truck 105 can handle, couch fire, out 20 minutes.”

Verdugo.’s follow-up report:

(Alert tone), “123 W. Huntington, Engine107 and Truck 105 can handle, couch fire, out 20 minutes.”

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A WORKING STRUCTURE FIRE.

Initial size-up report:

“Verdugo. Truck 105, 5100 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., with fire showing from a one story commercial building threatening exposures to the south.”

Verdugo.’s size-up report:

(Alert tones), “Truck 105, 5100 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. with fire showing from a one story commercial building threatening exposures to the south.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo. Truck 105 is Third Ave. IC and requesting a 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm. Staging at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Camino Real, approach from the north. Command Post in front of building, companies out one to two hours.”

Verdugo’s follow-up report:

(Alert tone), “Copied Truck 105 Third Ave IC, requesting 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm, staging at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Camino, approach from the north. Command Post in front of building, companies out one to two hours.”

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A BRUSH FIRE

Initial size-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 107 on scene Valencia Blvd. with smoke showing in one acre of heavy brush with 5 mph winds from the Northeast pushing fire uphill. No structures threatened at this time.”

Verdugo’s size-up report:

\*Alert tones), “Valencia Blvd., E107 reports smoke showing in one acre of heavy brush with 5 mph winds from Northeast pushing fire uphill. No structures threatened at this time.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 107 is Foothill IC, 1<sup>st</sup> Alarm can handle, out two hours. Command Post at Engine 107.”

Verdugo’s follow-up report:

(Alert tones), “Copied Engine 107, Foothill IC, 1<sup>st</sup> Alarm can handle, out two hours. Command Post at Engine 107.”

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A HAZARDOUS MATERIL SPILL.

Initial size-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 105 on scene 210 freeway, east bound at Santa Anita. With one overturned tanker leaking unknown product, no fire, wind from the North.”

Verdugo’s size-up report:

(Alert Tones), “210 freeway, Engine 105 reports one overturned tanker leaking unknown product, no fire, wind from the North.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 105 Freeway IC, requesting LA County hazmat to check-in at the Command Post at Engine 107, companies out three hours.”

Verdugo’s follow-up report:

(Alert tones), “Verdugo copied, Engine 105 Freeway IC, copied request for LA County hazmat to report to Command Post at Engine 105, companies out three hours.”

#### A TYPICAL SIZE-UP REPORT FOR A MULTI-CASUALTY INCIDENT:

Initial size-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 106 on scene 4700 S. Rosemead with one overturned school bus carrying 25 passengers.”

Verdugo’s size-up report:

(Alert tones), “4700 S. Rosemead Engine 106 reports one overturned school bus with 25 passengers.”

Follow-up report:

“Verdugo, Engine 106 Rosemead IC, requesting 2 Engines, 1 Truck, additional RA, 5 Ambulances to check-in at Rosemead and Huntington, Command Post at 4720 S. Rosemead. Notify Medical Alert Center (MAC) we have 10 critical and 15 minor injuries, companies out one hour.”

Verdugo’s follow-up report:

(Alert tones), “Verdugo copied Engine 106 Rosemead IC, requesting 2 Engines, 1 Truck, additional RA, 5 Ambulances to check-in at Rosemead and Grand. Notify MAC of 10 critical and 15 minor injuries, companies out one hour.”

## Appendix II

### Definitions

1. Allocated: Resources dispatched to an incident that have not yet check-in.
2. Assigned: Resources checked-in and assigned a work task on an incident.
3. Automatic Holding: A location for assisting companies to stop and “hold” one block (or ¼ mile for brush) from the incident and announce their holding position to the IC. This procedure notifies the IC that companies are ready for assignment and to allow a smooth implementation of the Incident Action Plan.
4. Check-In: Locations where resources check-in at an incident. The locations are: Incident Command Post, Incident Base, Camps, Staging areas, Helibases, Division Supervisors.
5. IC: Incident Commander.
6. ICP: (Incident Command Post): Center of authority at Emergency Incidents.
7. ICS: Incident Command System.
8. Incident Action Plan: (IAP) The plan, developed by the IC, that guides the strategical and tactical operations. In early command, this is a verbal plan (see 420-1 for information on written plans). A basic incident action plan is not complete unless it includes:
  - A clear definition of goals and objectives
  - Time limits