

# THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM





## **Disaster:**

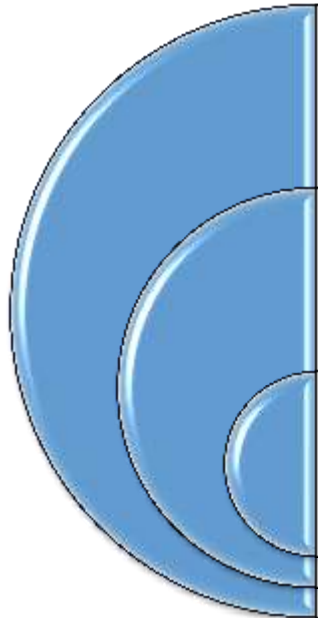
A sudden event, such as an accident or a natural catastrophe, that causes great damage or loss of life.

**WHAT RESPONSE CHALLENGES  
HAVE YOU  
STRUGGLED WITH?**

# **THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM**

# THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

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	<b>What is it?</b>
	<b>Where did it come from?</b>
	<b>Why is it needed?</b>

# WHAT IS ICS?

## ICS:

- Is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management concept
- Enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions, agencies, private companies and NGOs
- Establishes common processes for planning & management of resources
- Allows for integration within a common organizational structure

# WHY ICS?

## **Weaknesses in emergency response management were often due to:**

- Lack of personnel accountability
- Unclear chains of management and supervision
- Poor communication
- Lack of an orderly, systematic planning process
- No common, flexible, predesigned management structure
- No predefined methods to integrate other agencies into the management structure



# THE USE OF ICS IN THE UNITED STATES



Mandatory ICS training for all First Responders including:

- Fire
- Police
- Medical Personnel
- Road and Bridge
- Public Health agencies



NATIONAL INCIDENT  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

December 2008





# DISASTERS MANAGED WITH ICS

- Fires
- Tornadoes
- School Shootings
- Blizzards
- Public Health Emergencies
- Manhunts
- Presidential Visits
- Sporting Events
- 9-11 Attacks
- Hurricanes
- Religious Gatherings
- Hazardous Material Spills
- Mass Casualty Incident
- Landslides
- Terrorist Attacks
- Bridge Collapse
- Refugees and Displaced People

# ICS FEATURES:

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- **Command**
  - Establishment and transfer of Command
  - Chain of Command and unity of Command
- **Planning**
  - Management by objectives
  - Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- **Organizational Structure**
  - Modular organization
  - Manageable span of control
- **Standardization**
  - Common terminology
- **ICS Functions**
  - Command Staff
  - General Staff
- **Facilities**
  - Incident locations and facilities
- **Resources**
  - Comprehensive resource management
- **Communications/Information Management**
  - Integrated communications
  - Information and intelligence management

# COMMAND: DEFINITION

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Command: The act of directing by virtue of explicit authority.

# DISCUSSION QUESTION

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Why is it critical to establish Command at the beginning of an incident?

# COMMAND

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Establishing command and organization is crucial to a successful response. Typically it is established with the first arriving official, who assumes the Incident Commander role.

How is Command established in your countries?

# TRANSFER OF COMMAND

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Moves the responsibility for Command from one Incident Commander to another.

- A more qualified Incident Commander arrives
- A jurisdiction or organization is legally required to take charge
- Incident complexity changes
- The current Incident Commander needs rest

# DISCUSSION QUESTION

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What information would you include in a transfer of Command briefing?



# CHAIN OF COMMAND

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- Is an orderly line of authority within the response organization
- Allows Incident Commanders to direct the actions of all personnel under their supervision
- Avoids confusion by requiring that orders flow from supervisors
- Does not prevent personnel from sharing information

# UNITY OF COMMAND

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Under Unity of Command, personnel:

- Report to only one incident supervisor
- Receive work assignments only from the assigned supervisor

# ACTIVITY: ASSUMING COMMAND

***Scenario:*** An unexpected tsunami has struck your port. There is widespread damage, several people are injured, dead, or missing.

## ***Questions:***

1. What agencies are involved in the response?
2. Who's in charge?
3. What are the priorities?



# MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES

Incident objectives are used to ensure that everyone within the ICS organization has a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished.

Priorities for incident objectives typically are:

- 1: Life Safety
- 2: Incident Stabilization
- 3: Property/Environmental Preservation

# ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING OBJECTIVES

**Step 1:** Understand agency policy and direction.

**Step 2:** Assess incident situation.

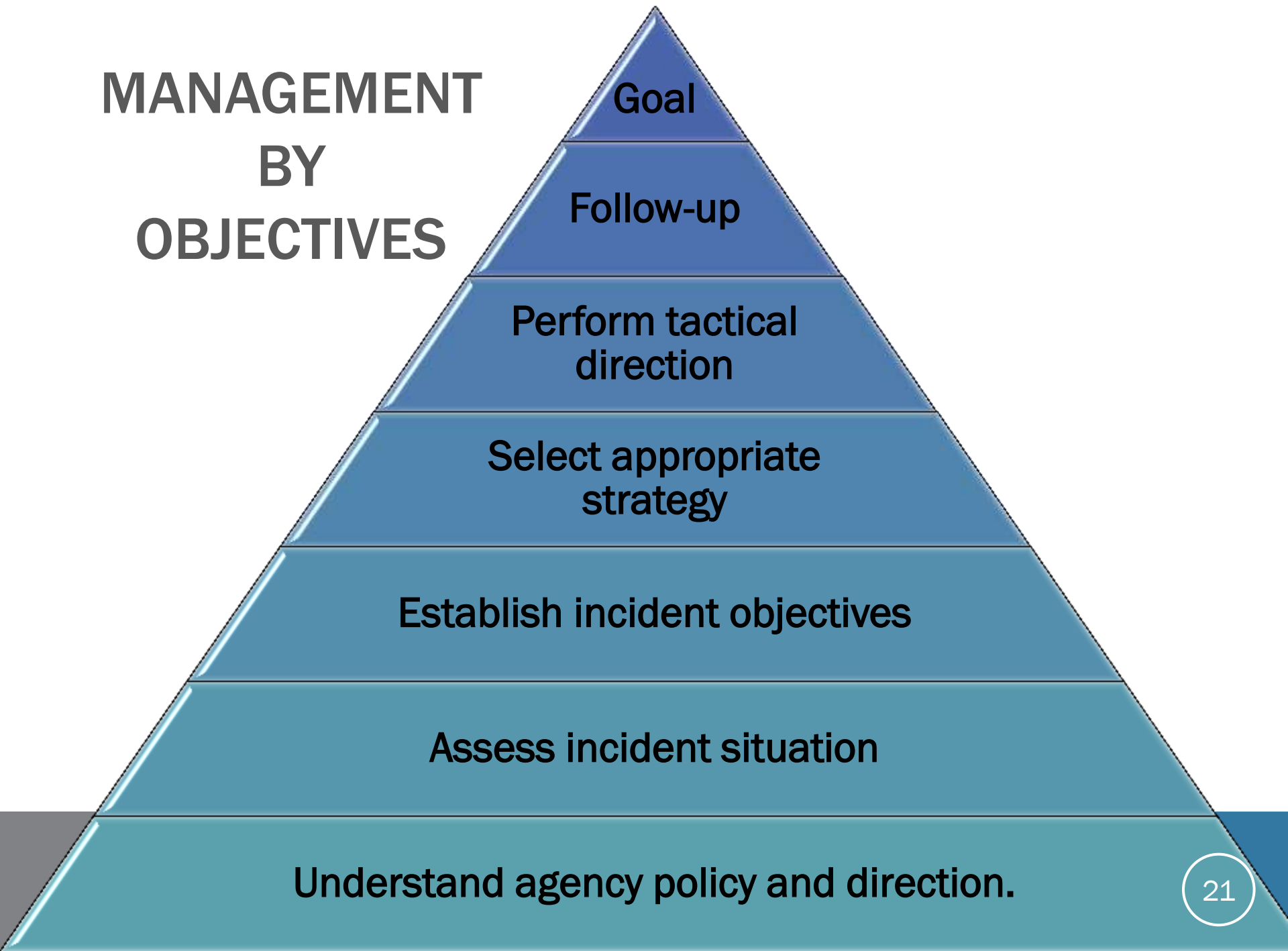
**Step 3:** Establish incident objectives.

**Step 4:** Select appropriate strategy or strategies to achieve objectives.

**Step 5:** Perform tactical direction.

**Step 6:** Provide necessary follow-up.

# MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES



# THE INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

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**It's important that the Incident Commander convey his or her “plan of attack” while managing the disaster. This helps ensure that everyone:**

- Is on the same page
- Knows the priorities
- Knows their assignment
- Knows who they report to





# INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING

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**Every incident should have an Incident Action Plan (IAP) that:**

- Specifies the incident objectives
- States the activities taking place
- Covers a specified timeframe, called a operational period

IAPs may be verbal (short incidents) or written (extended incidents)



**Incident  
Action  
Plan**

# ELEMENTS OF AN INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

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**Every IAP addresses the following questions:**

- What do we want to do?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- What is the procedure if someone is injured?

# ELEMENTS OF AN INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

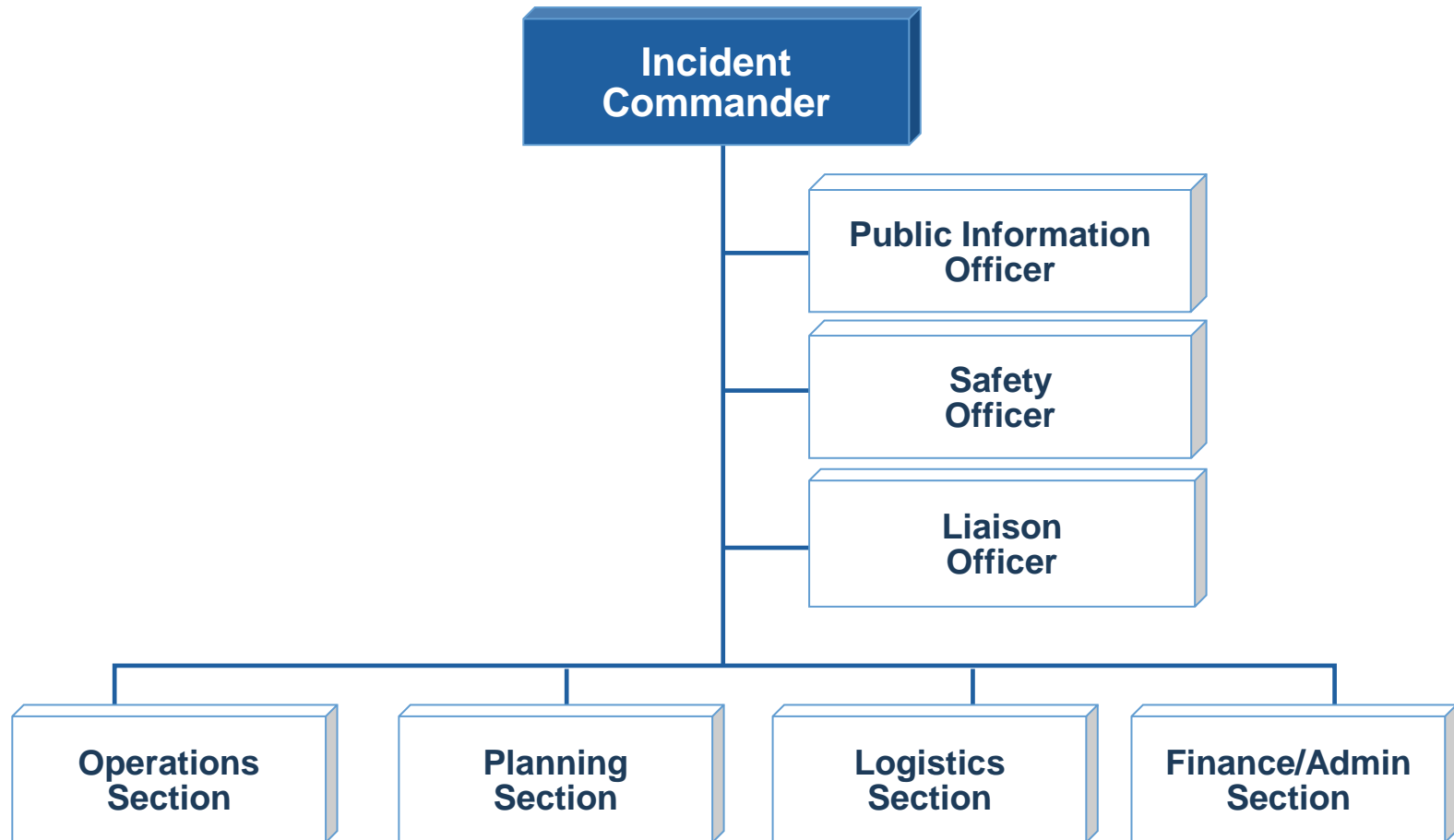
- The IAP is used to brief responders at the beginning of each operational period
- IAPs also provide information to the EOC, the policy group, and other stakeholders
- Work periods can vary based on the incident. During 24 hour operations that include a day shift and a night shift, there will be one IAP
- IAPs are typically only written for incidents that last more than 24 hours or for preplanned events

# ELEMENTS OF AN INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

- Goals and Objectives
- Organizational structure
- Situation Status
- Incident map
- Weather forecast
- Tactical assignments
- Public Information Message
- Communications plan
- Safety message

# THE ICS ORGANIZATION

# BASIC ICS ORGANIZATION



# ICS ORGANIZATION

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**Differs from day-to-day organizational structures and positions by:**

- Using unique ICS position titles and organizational structures
- Assigning personnel is based on expertise, not rank.





# MODULAR ORGANIZATION

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**Incident Command organizational structure is based on:**

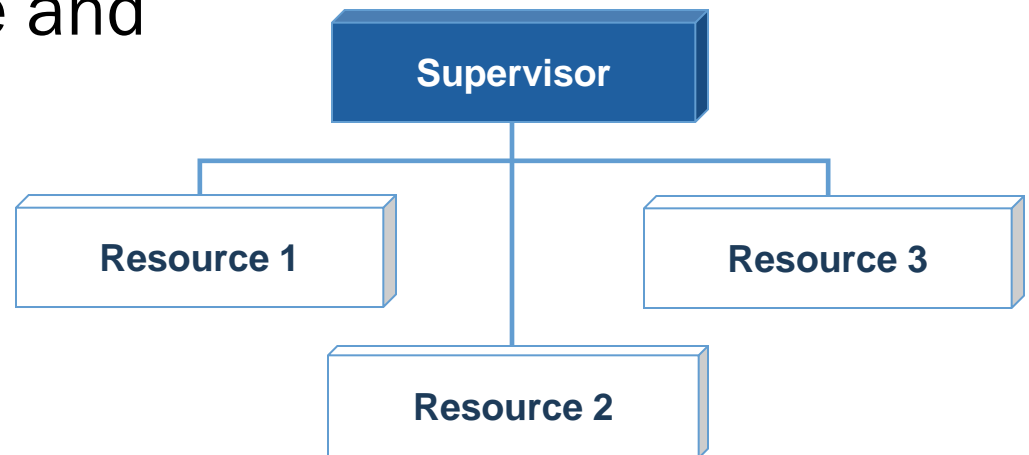
- Size, type, and complexity of the incident
- Specifics of the hazard environment created by the incident
- Incident planning process and incident objectives

# MANAGEABLE SPAN OF CONTROL

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## Span of control:

- Pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively during an incident
- Is key to effective and efficient incident management



# MANAGEABLE SPAN OF CONTROL

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## ICS span of control for any supervisor:

- Is between 3 and 7 subordinates
- Optimally does not exceed 5 subordinates



# STANDARDIZED TERMINOLOGY

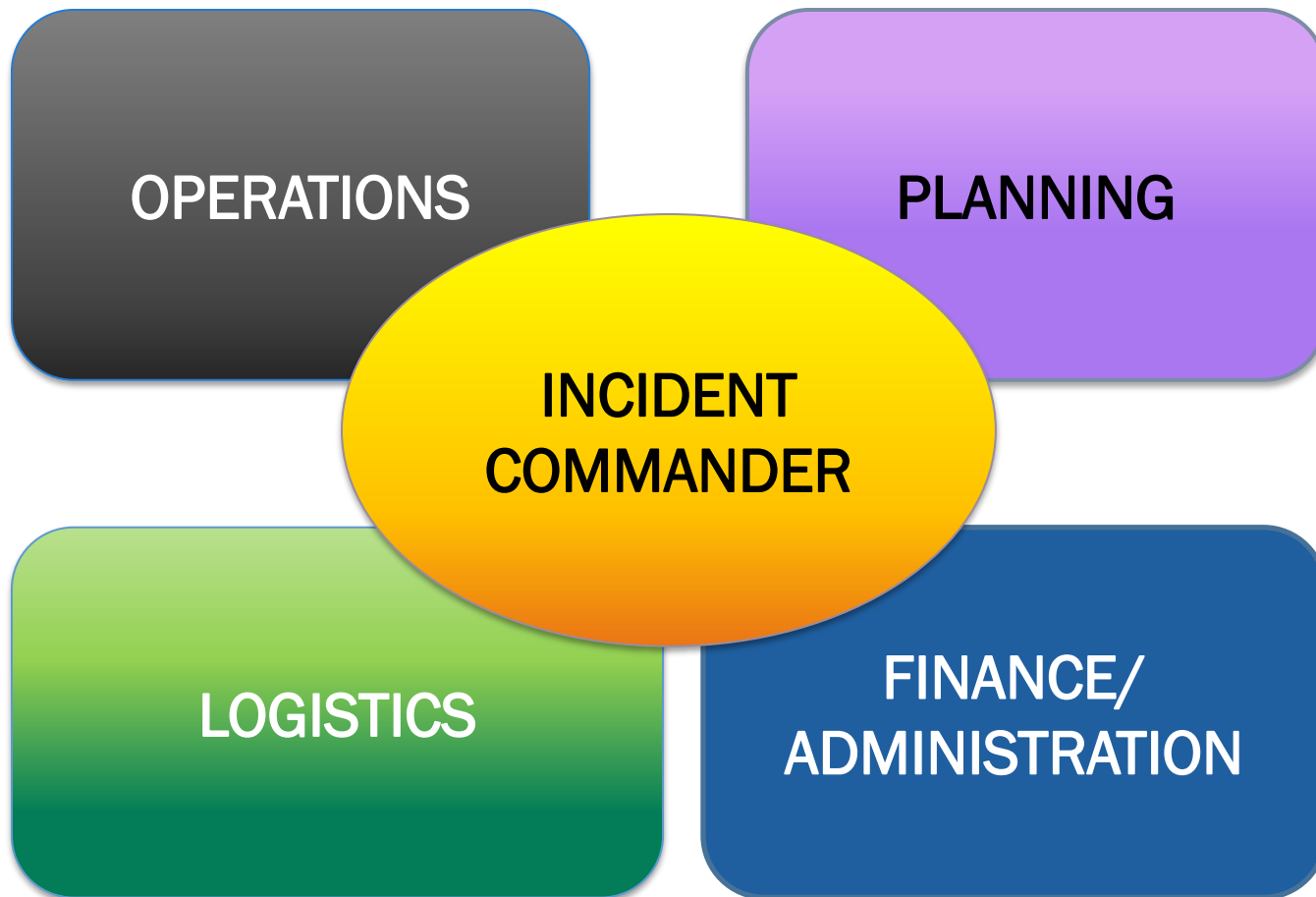
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Using common terminology helps define:

- Organizational functions
- Incident facilities
- Resource descriptions
- Position titles

# ICS FUNCTIONS

# FIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM



# MANAGEMENT FUNCTION DESCRIPTIONS

Function	Description
Incident Commander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes incident objectives, strategies, and priorities</li><li>• Assume overall responsibility for the incident</li></ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determines tactics and resources for achieving objectives</li><li>• Directs the tactical response</li></ul>



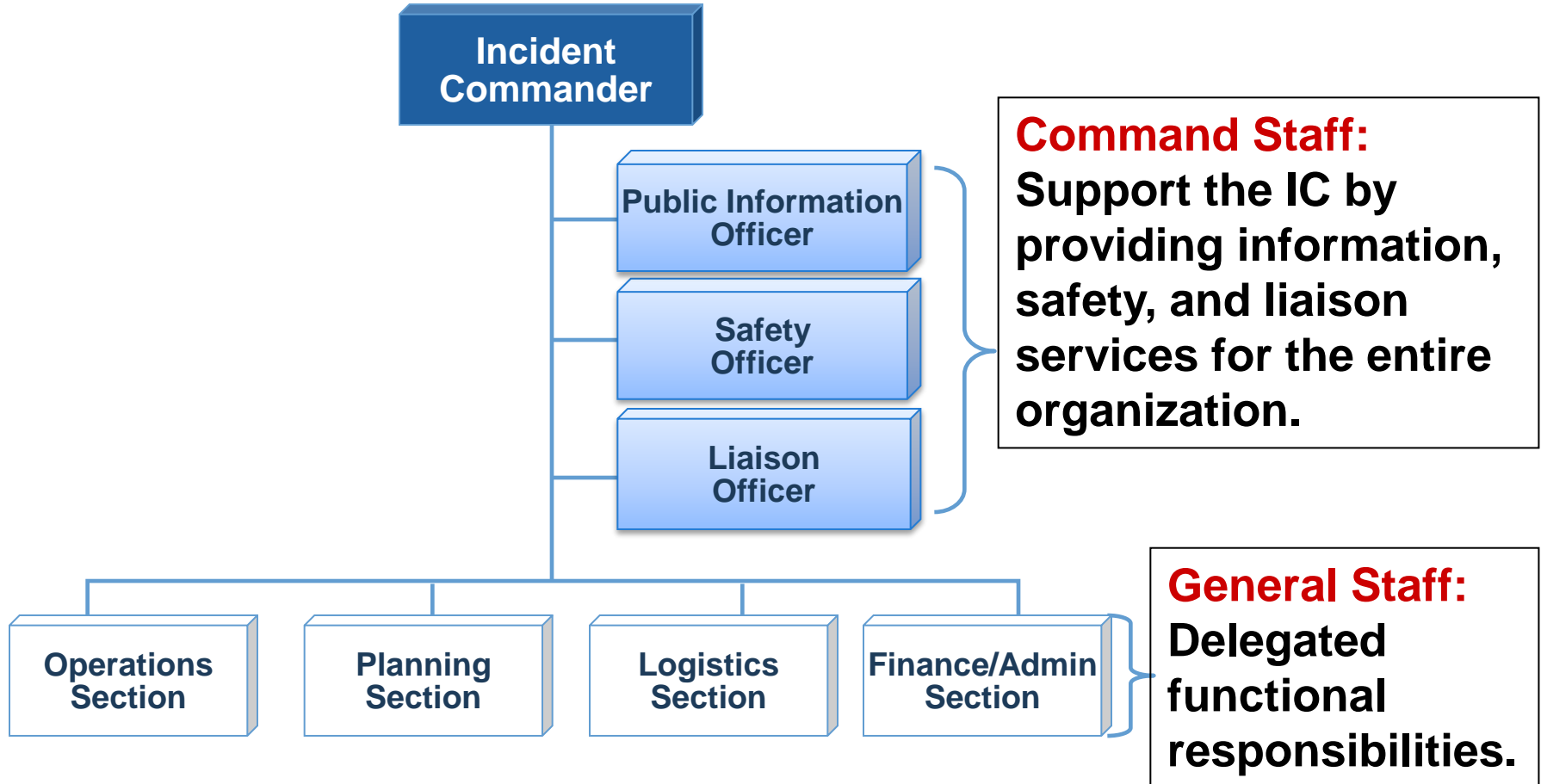
# MANAGEMENT FUNCTION DESCRIPTIONS

FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collects and analyzes information</li><li>• Tracks resources</li><li>• Maintains documentation</li></ul>
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides resources and needed services</li></ul>
Finance/ Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accounts for expenditures, claims, and compensation</li><li>• Procures needed resources</li></ul>

# **COMMAND STAFF**

PUBLIC INFORMATION/LIAISON/SAFETY

# THE ORGANIZATION



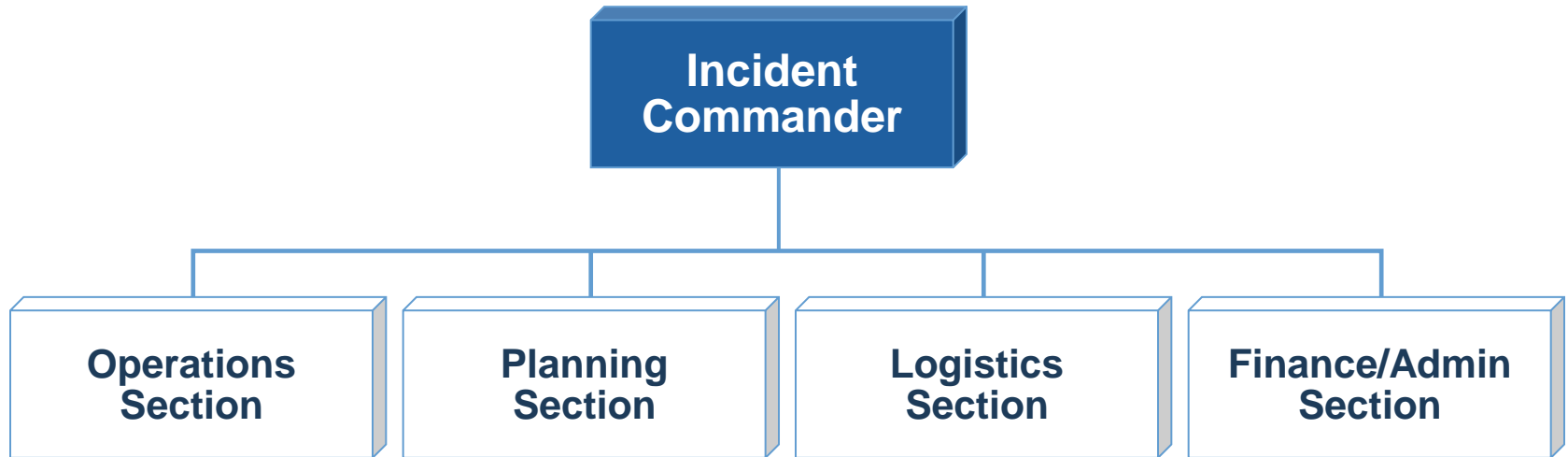
# INCIDENT COMMANDER

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**The Incident Commander** is responsible for all ICS management functions until they are delegated to someone else.

# DELEGATING INCIDENT COMMAND FUNCTIONS

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The Incident Commander only creates those Sections that are needed. If a Section is not staffed, the Incident Commander will personally manage those functions.

# INCIDENT COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

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## **The Incident Commander is also responsible for:**

- Ensuring incident safety
- Providing information to internal and external stakeholders
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with other ministries participating in the incident

# DEPUTY INCIDENT COMMANDER

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## **A Deputy (Assistant) Incident Commander may be designated to:**

- Perform specific tasks as requested by the Incident Commander
- Perform the incident Command function in a relief capacity
- Represent an assisting agency that shares jurisdiction

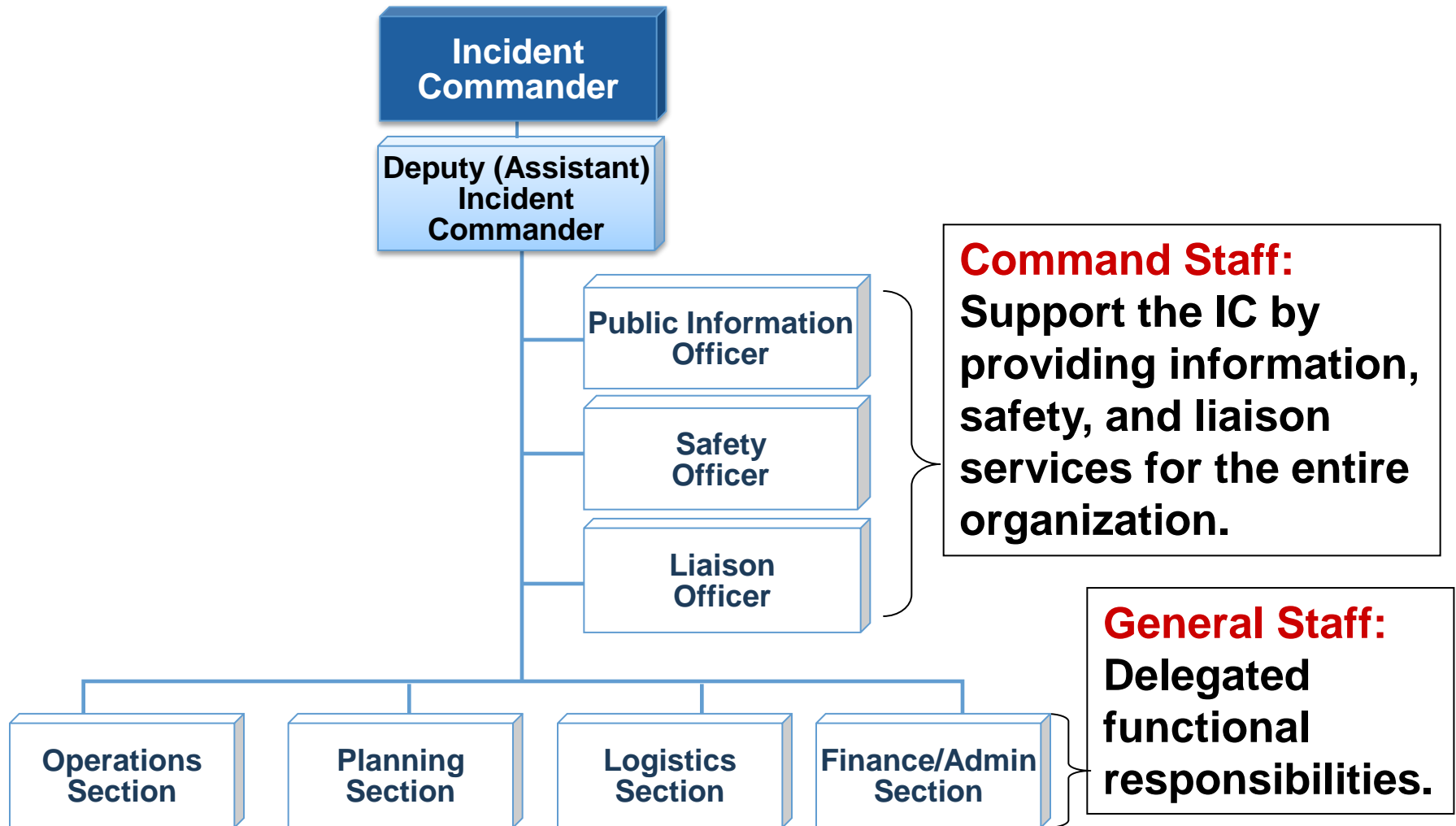
# DISCUSSION QUESTION

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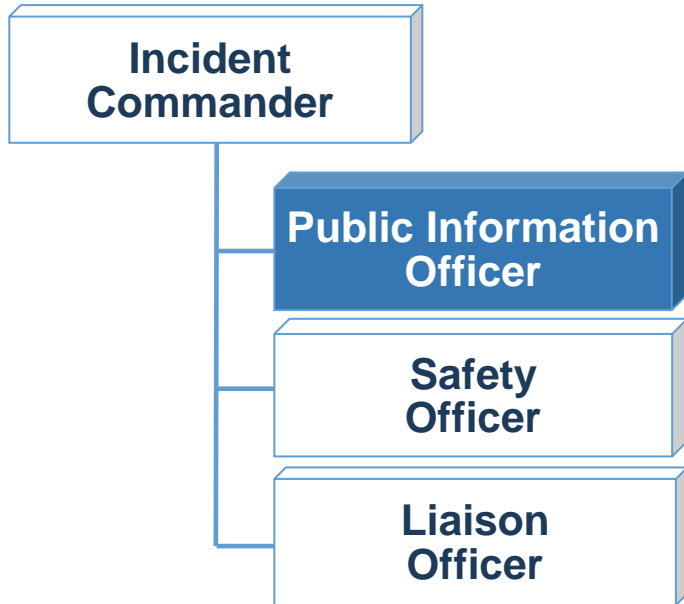
**What should take place before  
a Deputy Incident  
Commander assumes  
command of an incident?**



# EXPANDING THE ORGANIZATION



# PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)



## The Public Information Officer:

- Advises the Incident Commander on information dissemination & media relations
- Obtains information from & provides information to the Planning Section, the community, & the media

\* The Incident Commander approves information that the PIO releases.

# PIO'S ROLE & FUNCTIONS

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- Act as advisory resource for the Incident Commander.
- Inform the public via the media.
- Collect, verify, assemble and disseminate information.
- Manage the media at the scene
- Manage the flow of information

# PURPOSE OF INFORMATION

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## Save lives through:

- Evacuation or curfew orders
- Advising the public on how to seek medical attention
- Other safety instructions

# GOALS OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

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- Stop rumors and false information
- Educate and inform the public
- Change behaviors and attitudes
- Call people to act
- Create positive image
- Be truthful

# WHEN IS A PIO NEEDED?

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- Breaking news
- Response actions required
- Issue warnings and advisories
- News conferences and briefings
- Build confidence



# IT'S IMPORTANT FOR THE PIO TO:

- Know the community
- Build credibility with community and the media.
- Understand media needs and deadlines
- Communicate with community organizations

# DISCUSSION QUESTION

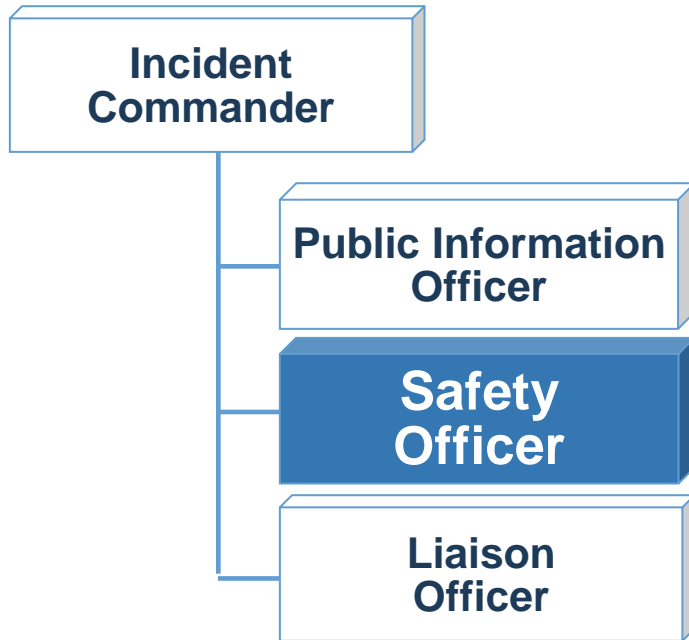
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Who's in charge of releasing information to the public during a disaster in your country?



# SAFETY OFFICER

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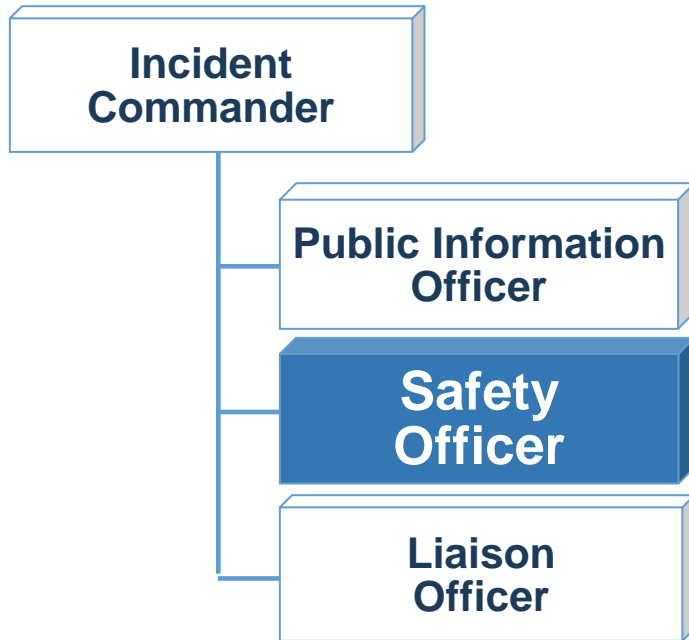


## The Safety Officer:

- Advises the Incident Commander on issues regarding incident safety
- Works closely with Operations to identify risks and hazards
- Can stop actions if deemed unsafe

# SAFETY OFFICER

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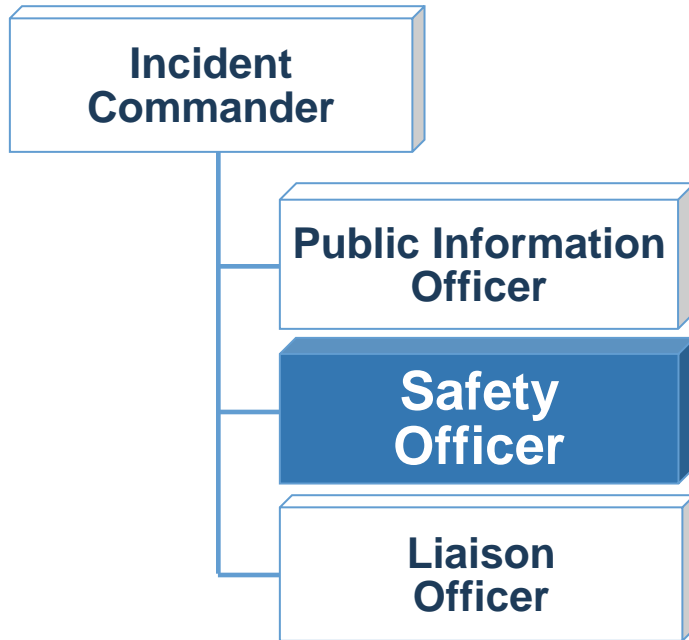


## The Safety Officer:

- Develops a Safety Plan
- May have assistants based on the size of the incident
- Determines proper safety gear and protective equipment based on hazards

# SAFETY OFFICER

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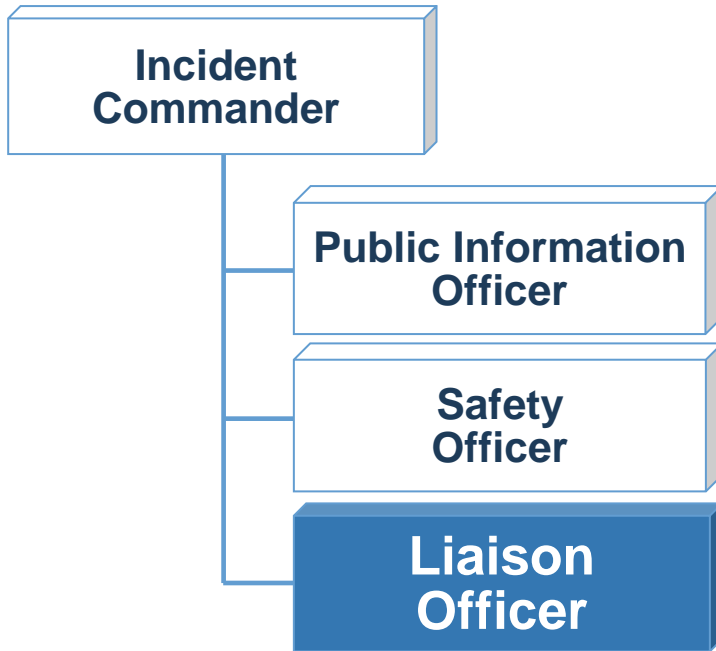


## Qualities of the Safety Officer:

- Has experience dealing with the incident at hand
- Is not afraid to speak up if he/she sees unsafe actions

# LIAISON OFFICER

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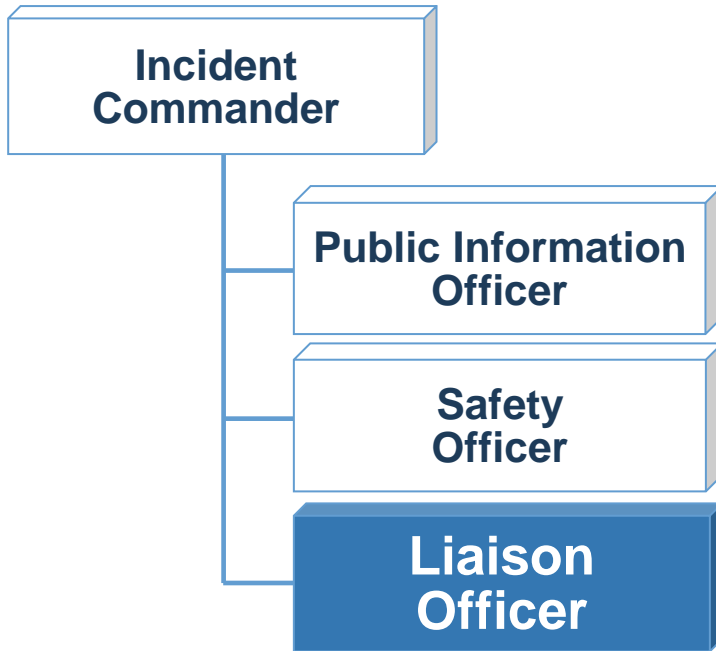


## The Liaison Officer:

- Assists the Incident Commander by serving as point of contact for representatives from other response organizations

# LIAISON OFFICER

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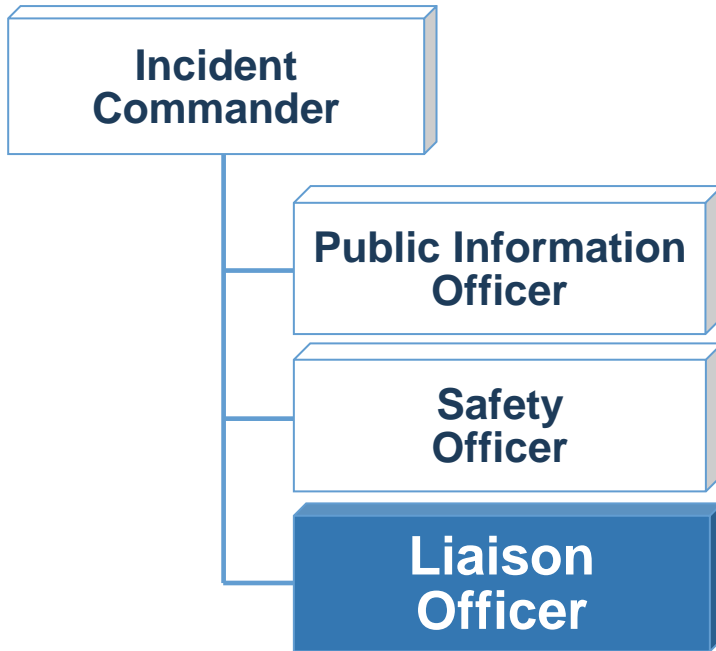


## The Liaison Officer:

- Develops a contact list of assisting and cooperating agency representatives
- Keeps them up to date with current information

# LIAISON OFFICER

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## Qualities of a Liaison Officer:

- Is detail oriented
- Follows through
- Is tactful and professional when interacting with other agencies

# ACTIVITY: COMMAND STAFF ROLES

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## DISCUSSION:

Based on the tsunami scenario:

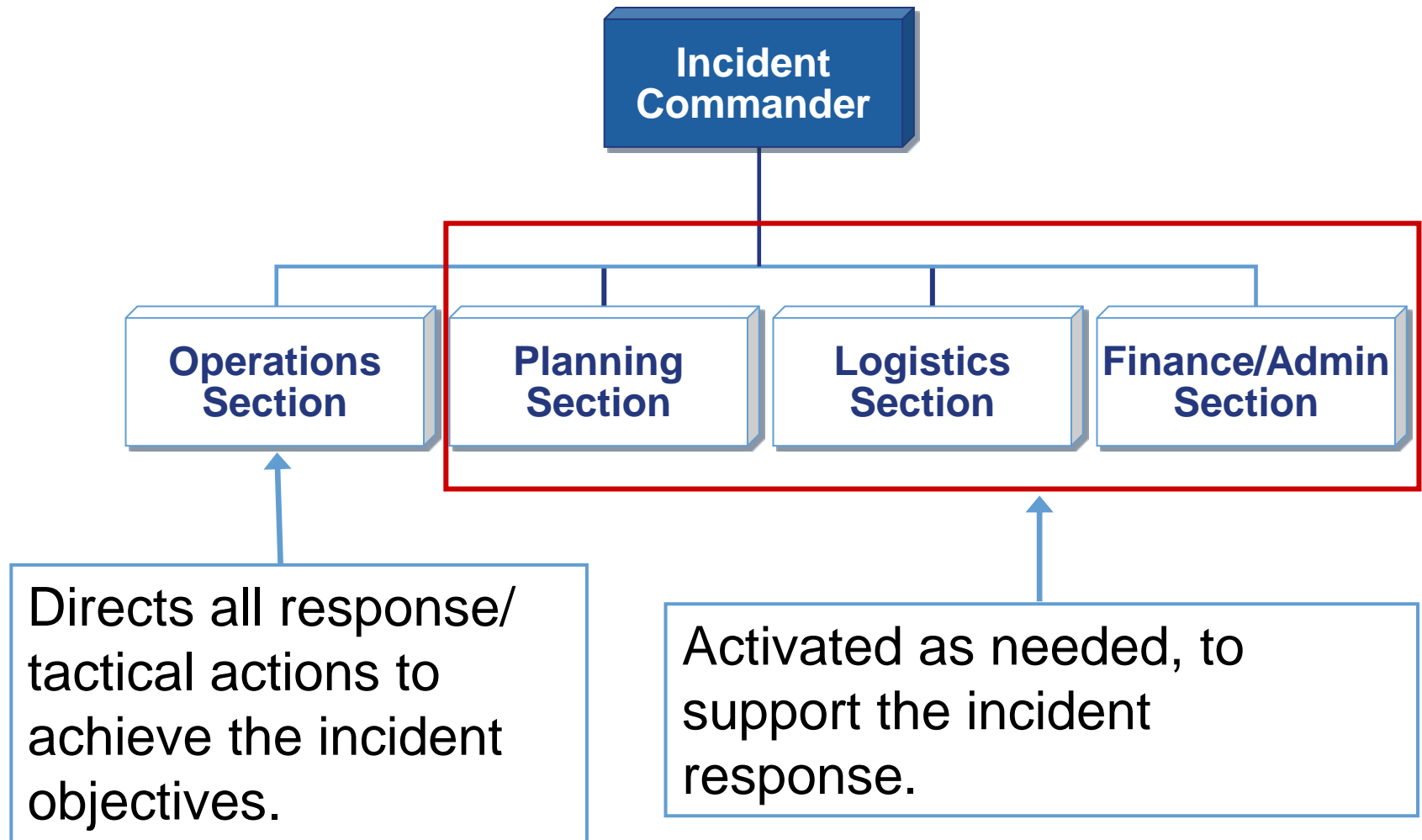
1. Which Command Staff positions would be assigned?
2. What specific activities would the Incident Commander delegate to each Command Staff member.

# **THE GENERAL STAFF**

OPERATIONS/PLANNING/LOGISTICS/FINANCE-ADMIN



# GENERAL STAFF OVERVIEW – EXPANDING INCIDENTS

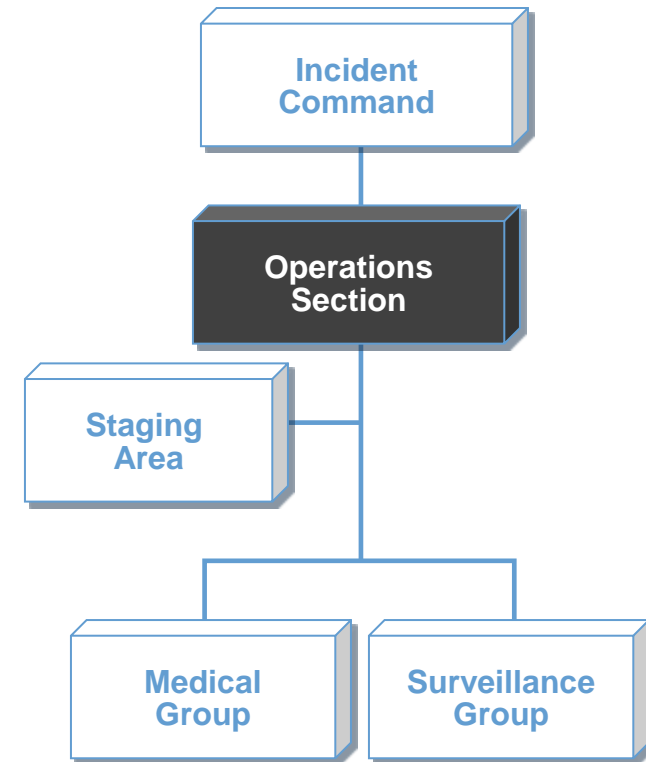


# THE OPERATIONS SECTION



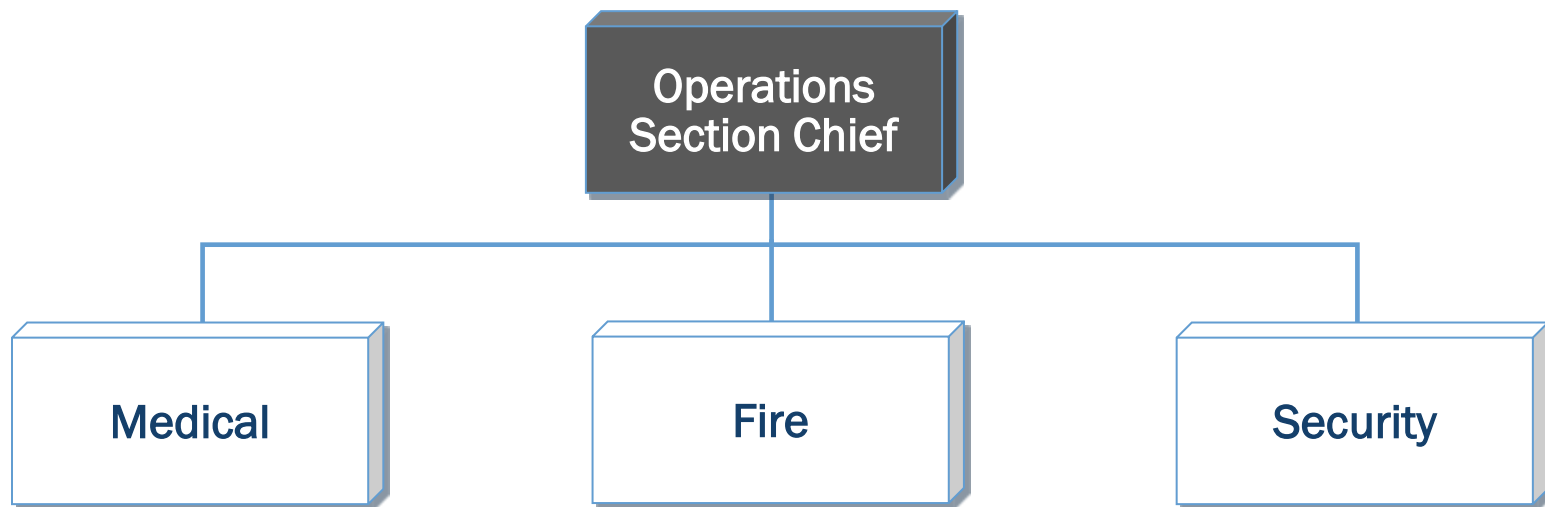
# OPERATIONS SECTION: MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- Directs & coordinates all incident tactical operations
- Is typically one of the first organizations to be assigned to the incident
- Expands from the bottom up
- Has the most incident resources
- May have Staging Areas & special organizations



# OPERATIONS: SINGLE RESOURCES

On a smaller incident, the Operations Section may be comprised of an Operations Section Chief and single resources.



# OPERATIONS: TEAMS

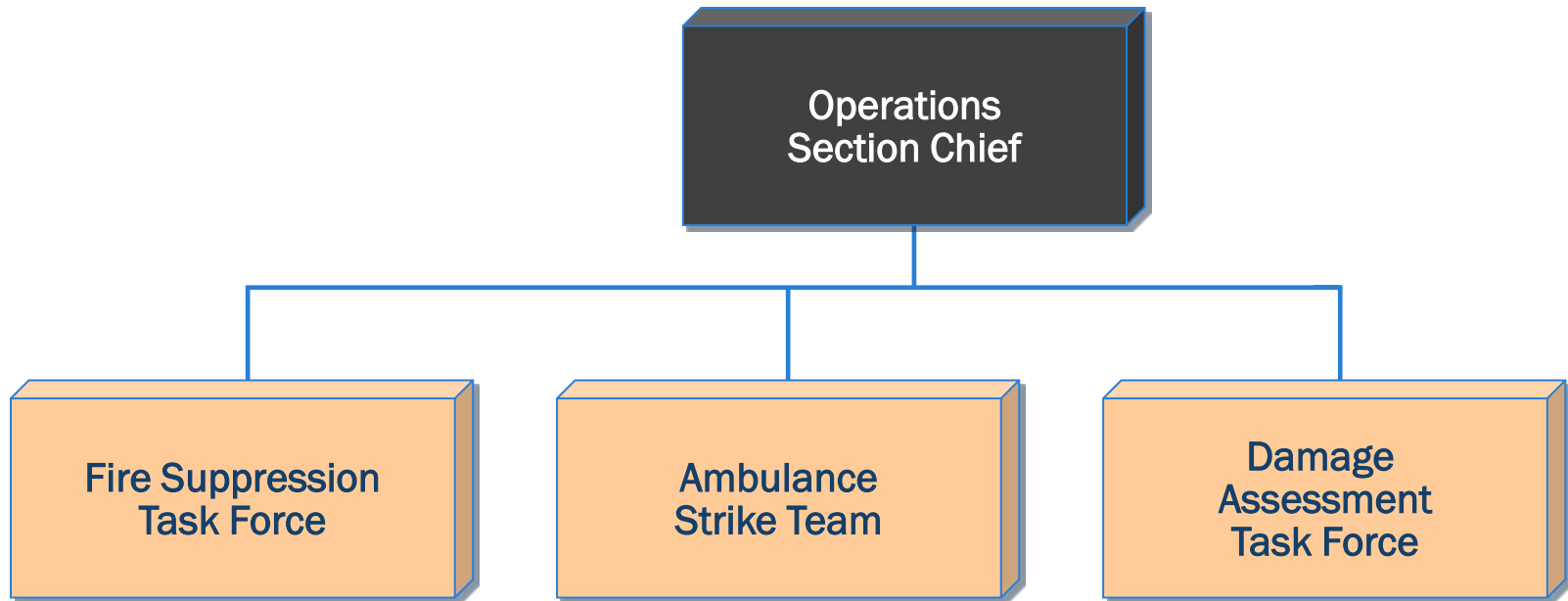
Single resources may be organized into teams. Using standard ICS terminology, the two types of team configurations are:

- **Task Forces**, which are a combination of mixed resources with common communications supervised by a Leader.
- **Strike Teams**, which include all similar resources with common communications supervised by a Leader.

**Benefits: Span of Control, more organized response**

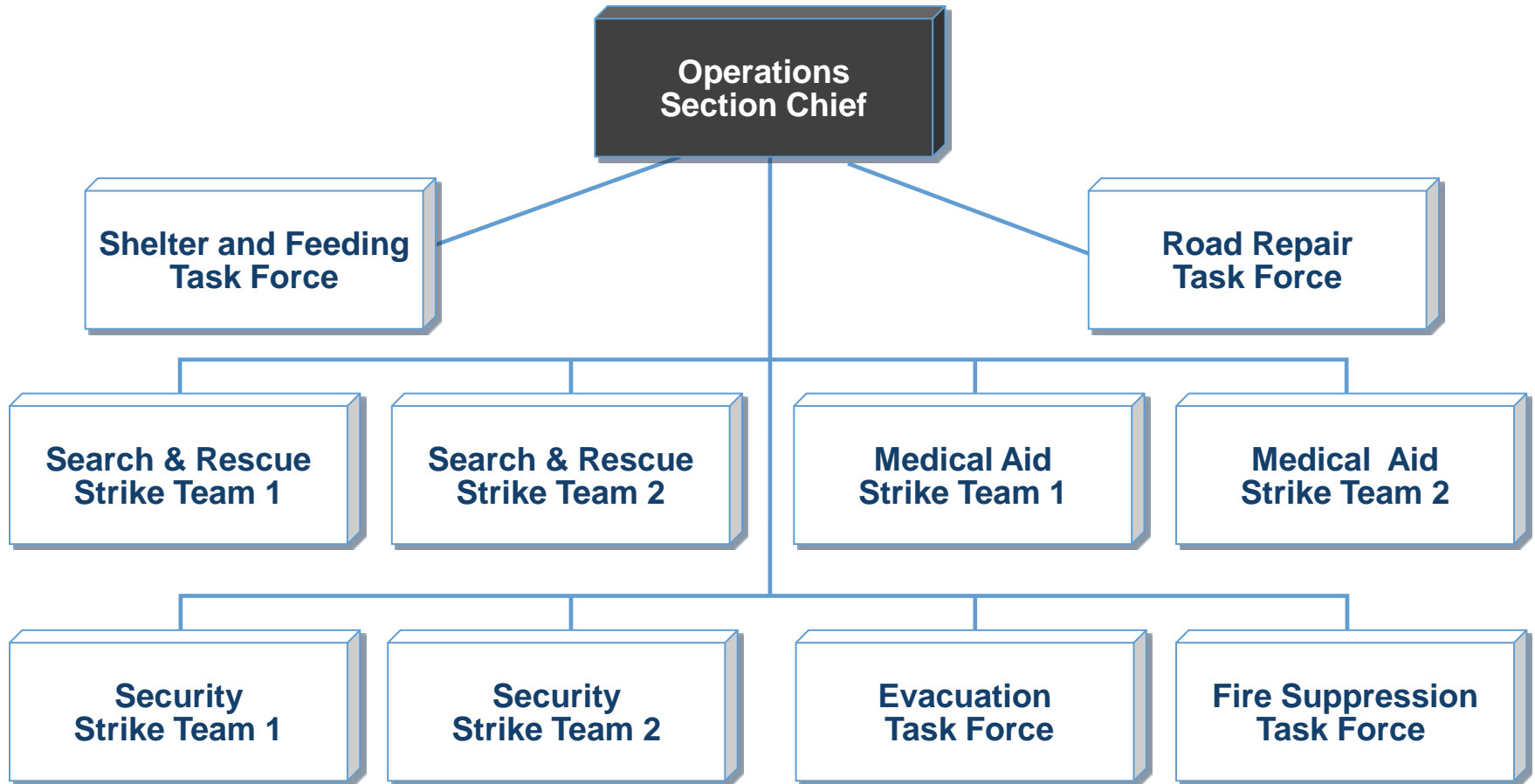
# SAMPLE STRIKE TEAMS & TASK FORCES

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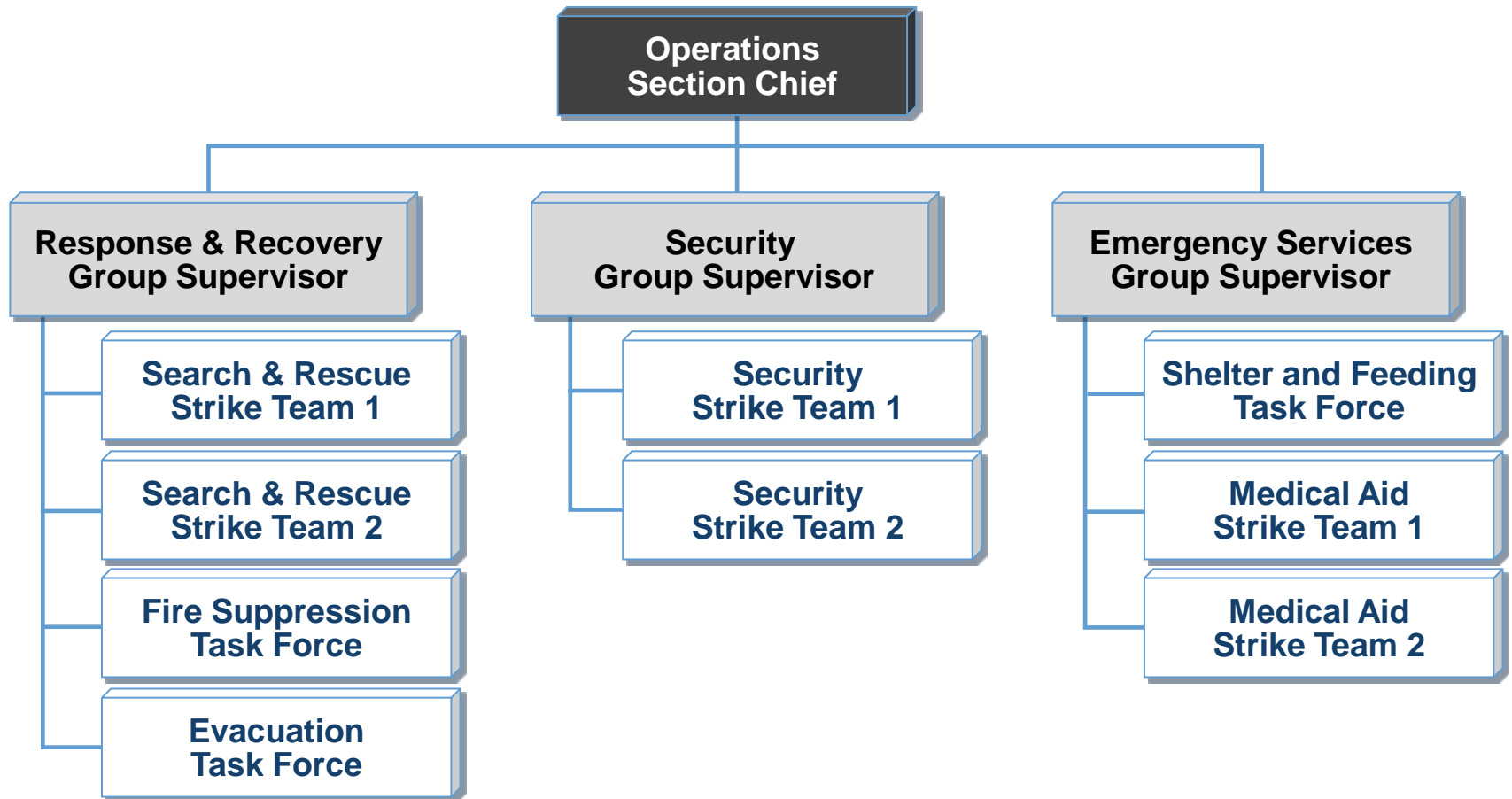
# OPERATIONS: TOO MANY TEAMS!

Additional levels of supervision should be added as the number of teams expands.



# THE SOLUTION: ADD FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

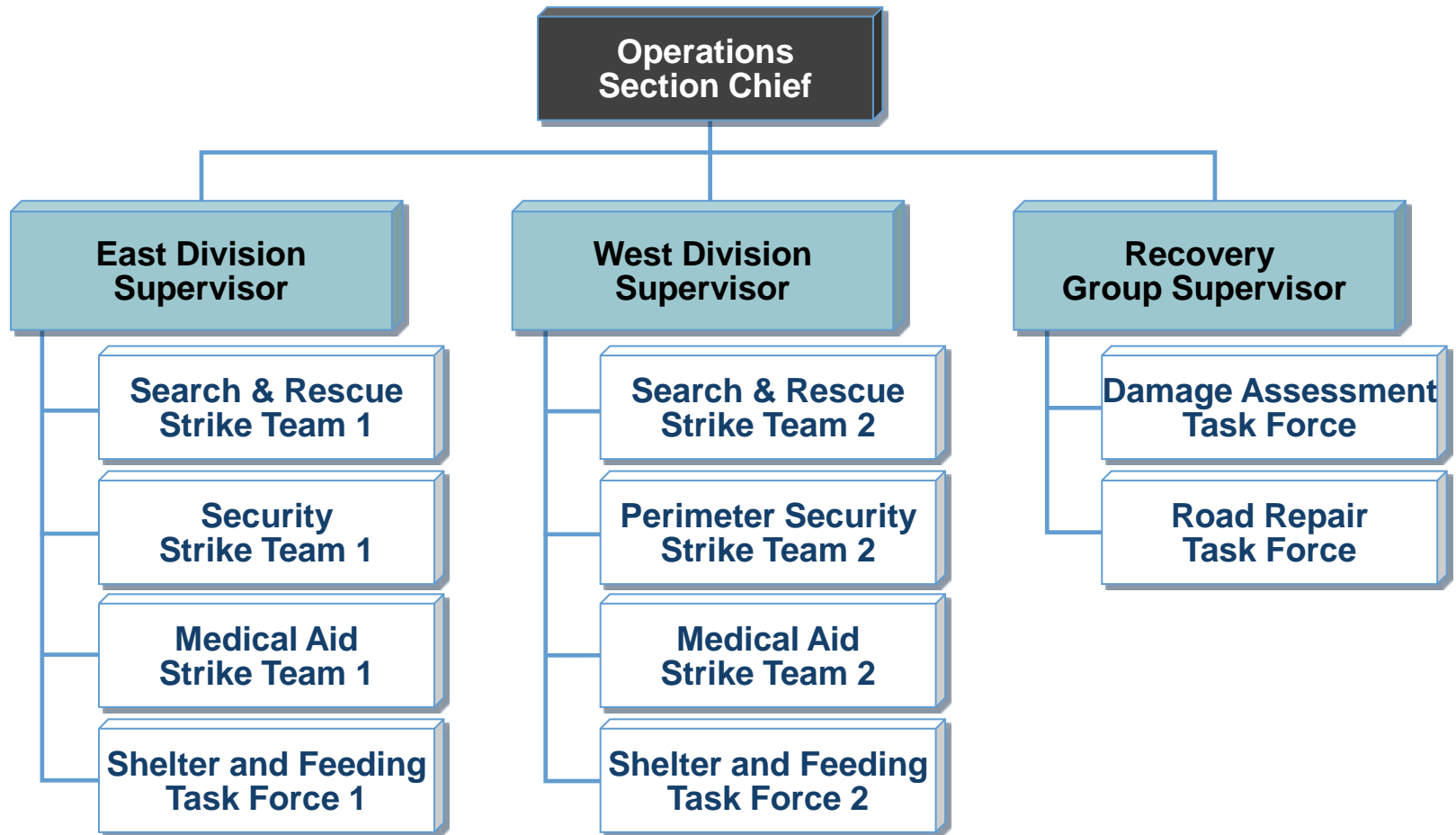
Groups, led by a Supervisor, are used to perform functional areas of operation.

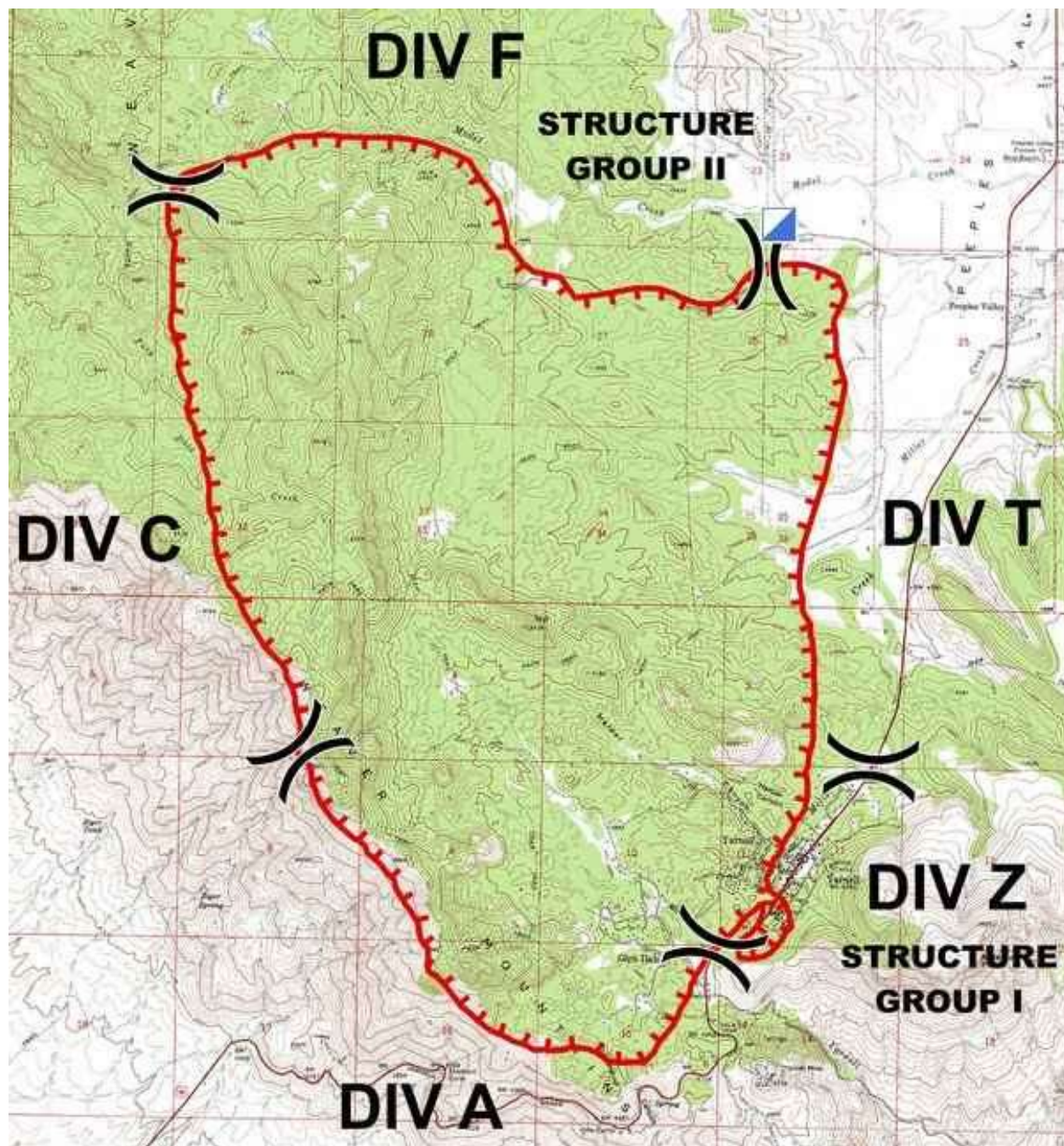




# GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS & GROUPS

Divisions, led by a Supervisor, are used to divide an incident geographically.

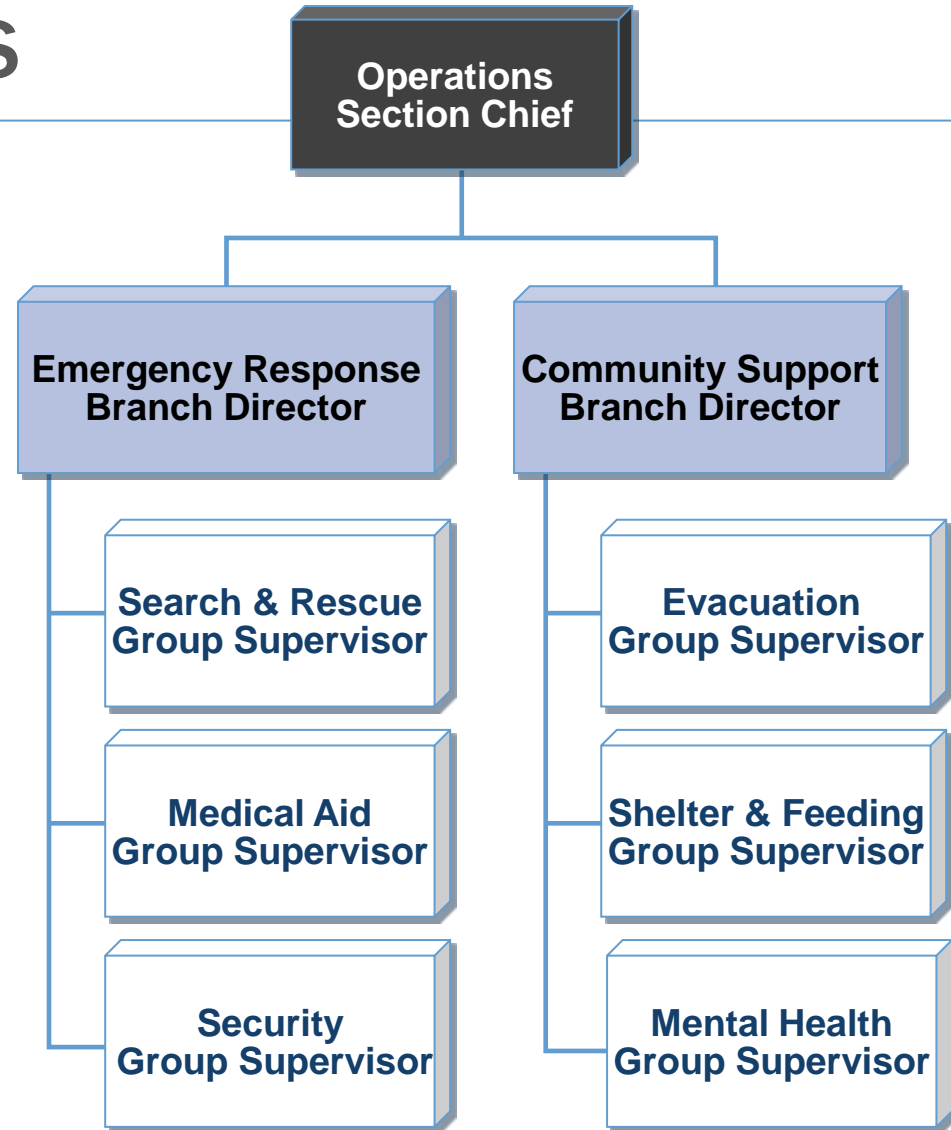




# COMPLEX INCIDENTS

## Adding Branches helps to:

- More effectively supervise multiple Groups and Divisions
- Improve span of control



# ACTIVITY: OPERATIONS SECTION

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## Discussion: Using the tsunami scenario

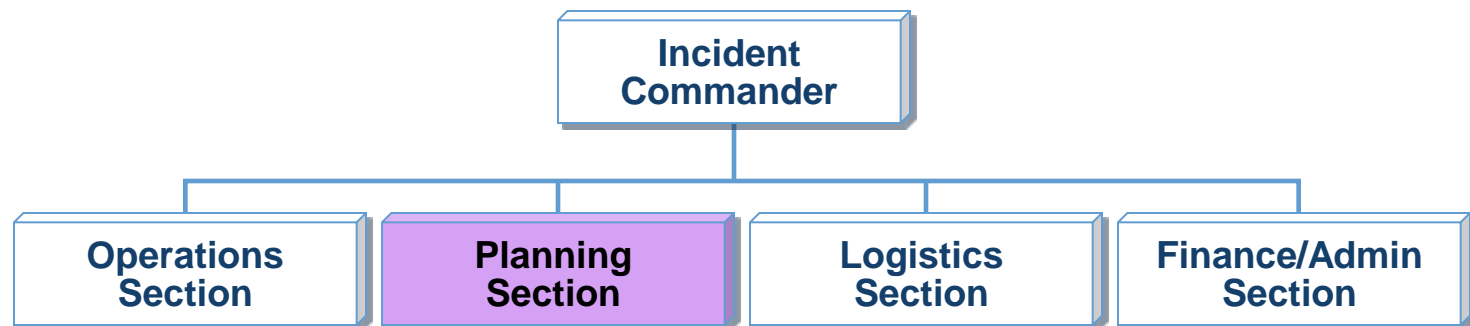
1. Develop an organization chart depicting how the Operations Section could be organized into teams.
2. Discuss the responsibilities of each team.

# THE PLANNING SECTION

# PLANNING SECTION: MAJOR ACTIVITIES

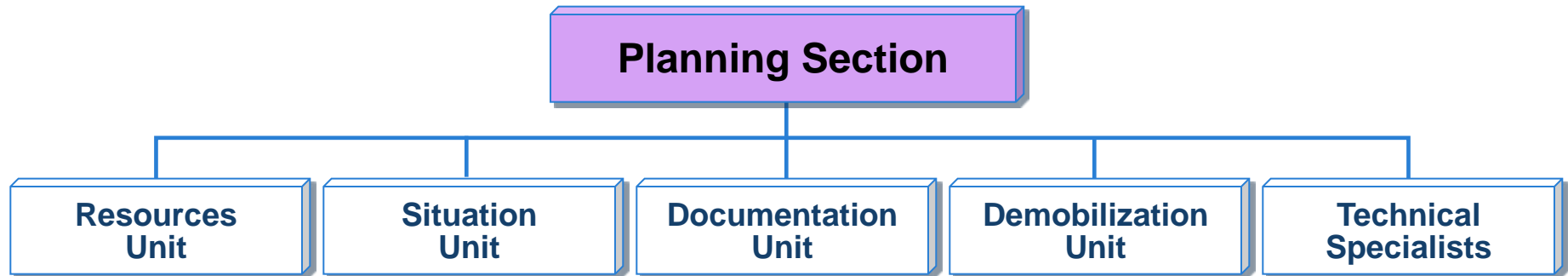
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- Tracking resources assigned to the incident
- Collecting, evaluating, & displaying incident intelligence and information
- Preparing Incident Action Plans
- Maintaining incident documentation
- Developing plans for demobilization



# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

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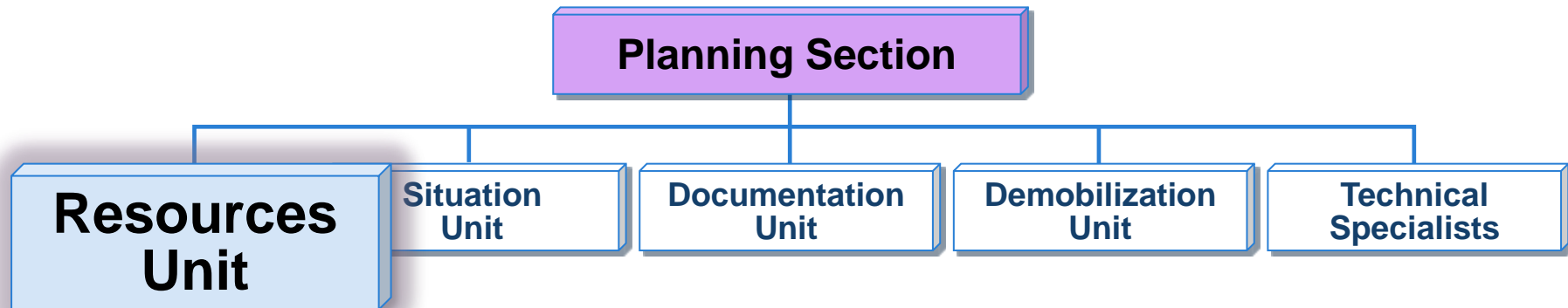


On more complex incidents, the planning section can be divided into these smaller units.

Technical Specialists can be assigned to the Planning Section, Operations, or report directly to the Incident Commander.

# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

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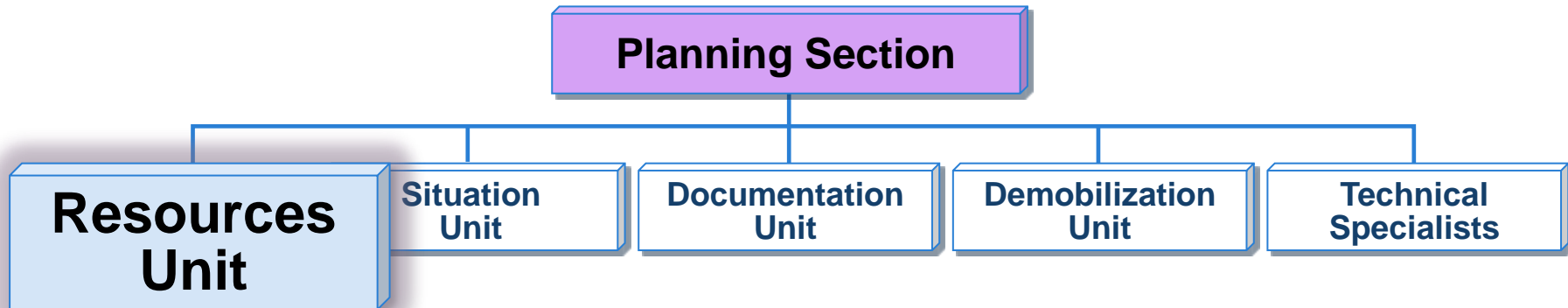


The Resources Unit is responsible for tracking all personnel & equipment assigned to the incident.

- Record all resources that have already been assigned to the incident
- Establish a “check-in” process
- Establish a “check-out” process
- Advise Operations what resources are available



# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

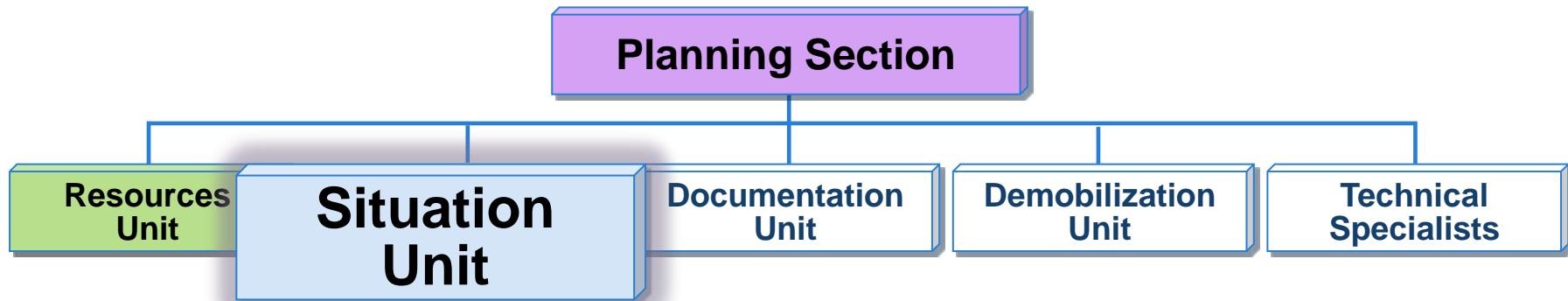


Name	Phone #	Assignment	Date/Time In	Date/Time Out
Nancy Drew	622-555-1212	Planning Section Chief	9 May, 2018 @ 1005	9 May 2018 @ 1815

A main principle of ICS is to keep people safe. Accountability, knowing where they are and how to contact them, is a big step towards safety.

# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

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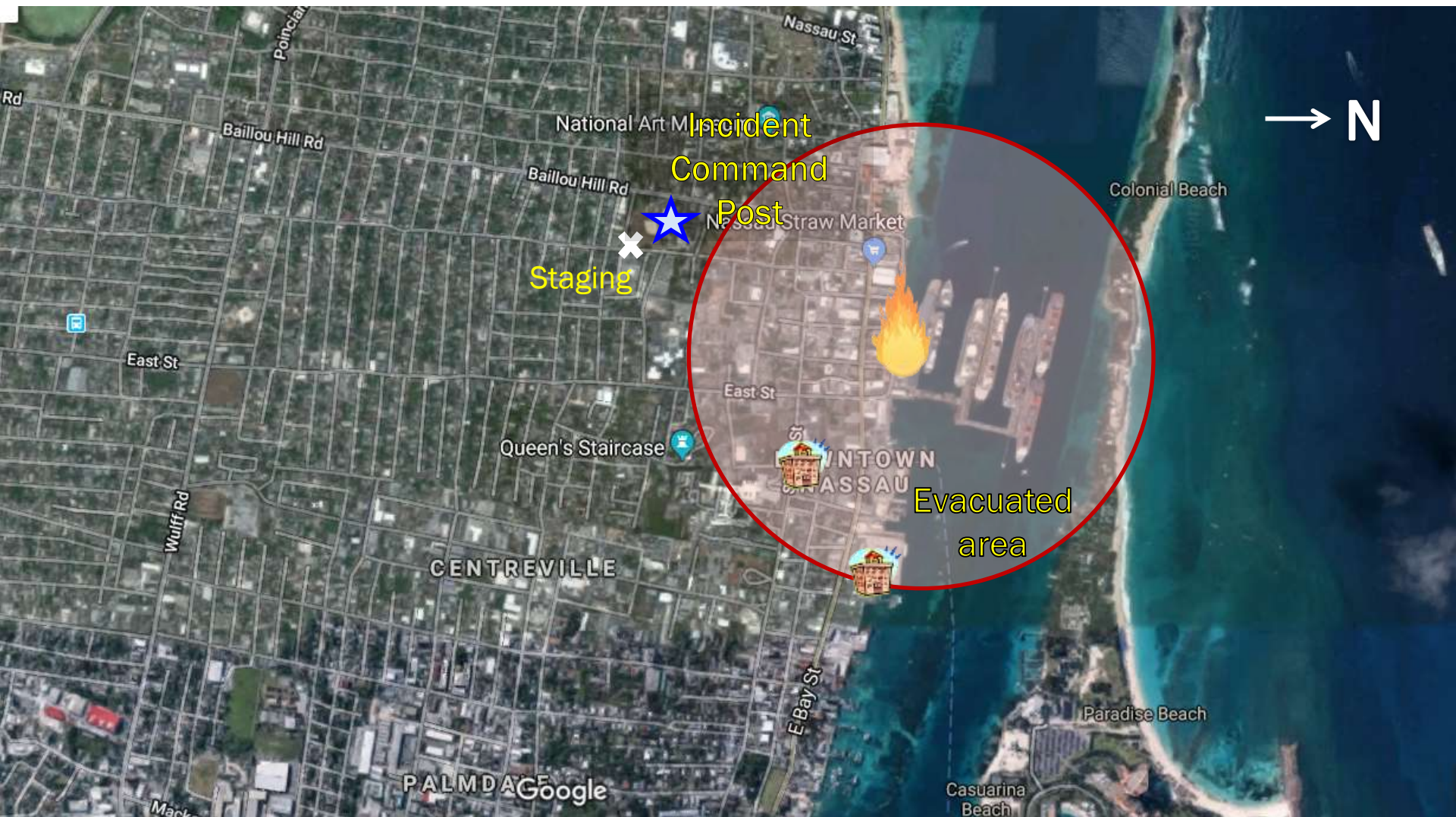


The Situation Unit is responsible for maintaining current information about the situation at hand.

This may include:

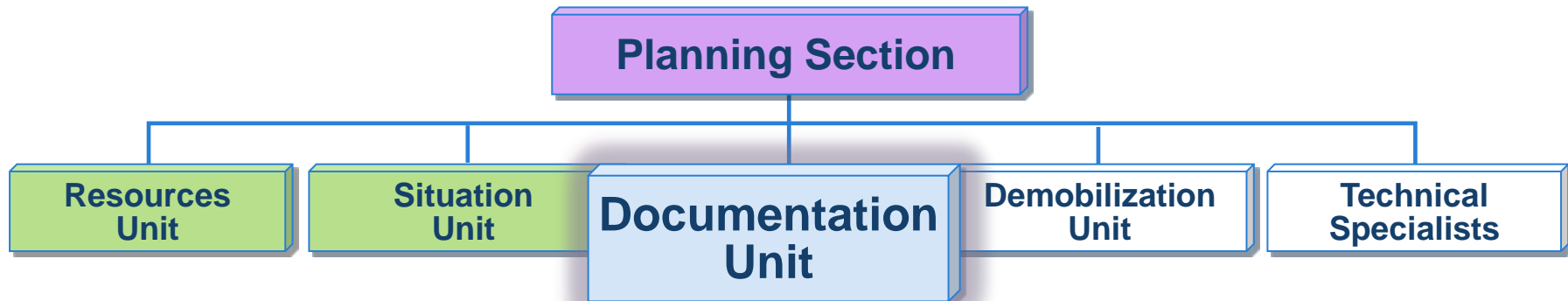
- Developing maps
- Counting & tracking injured, displaced & dead people
- Gathering other intelligence such as weather forecasts, terrorist or criminal activity, and other things that may affect the response.

# DEVELOPING AN INCIDENT MAP



# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

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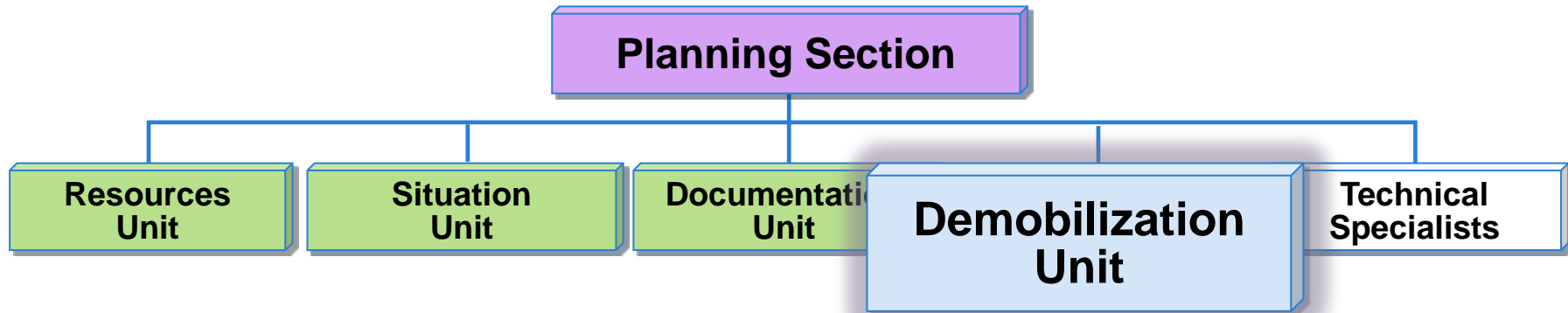
The Documentation Unit is responsible for maintaining all documents related to the response.

This may include:

- Copies of the Incident Action Plan
- Copies of check in/out sheets
- Activity logs
- Investigations or reports
- After-action report

# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

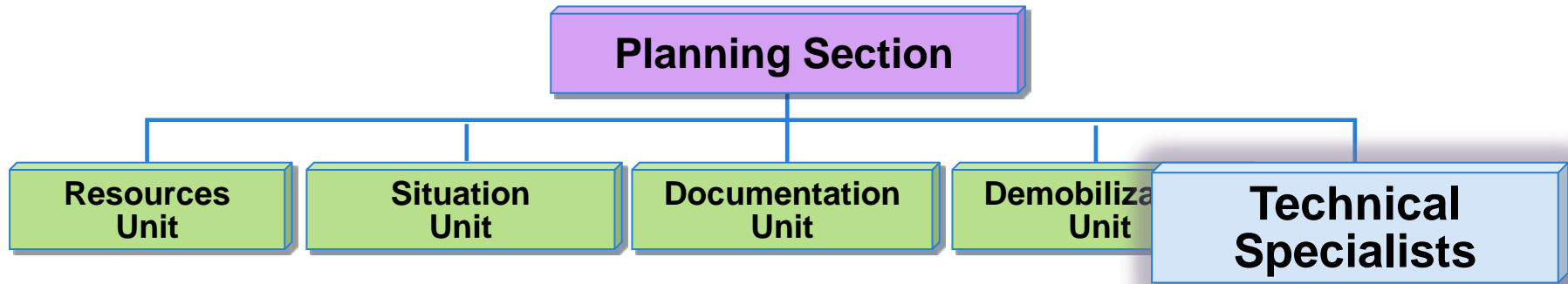
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The Demobilization Unit is responsible for developing a plan for demobilizing resources as the incident reduces in size and complexity.

# PLANNING SECTION: UNITS

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Technical Specialists are persons with specific knowledge or experience related to the incident.

For example:

- Structural engineer – earthquake or dam failure
- Chemical engineer – hazardous materials spill

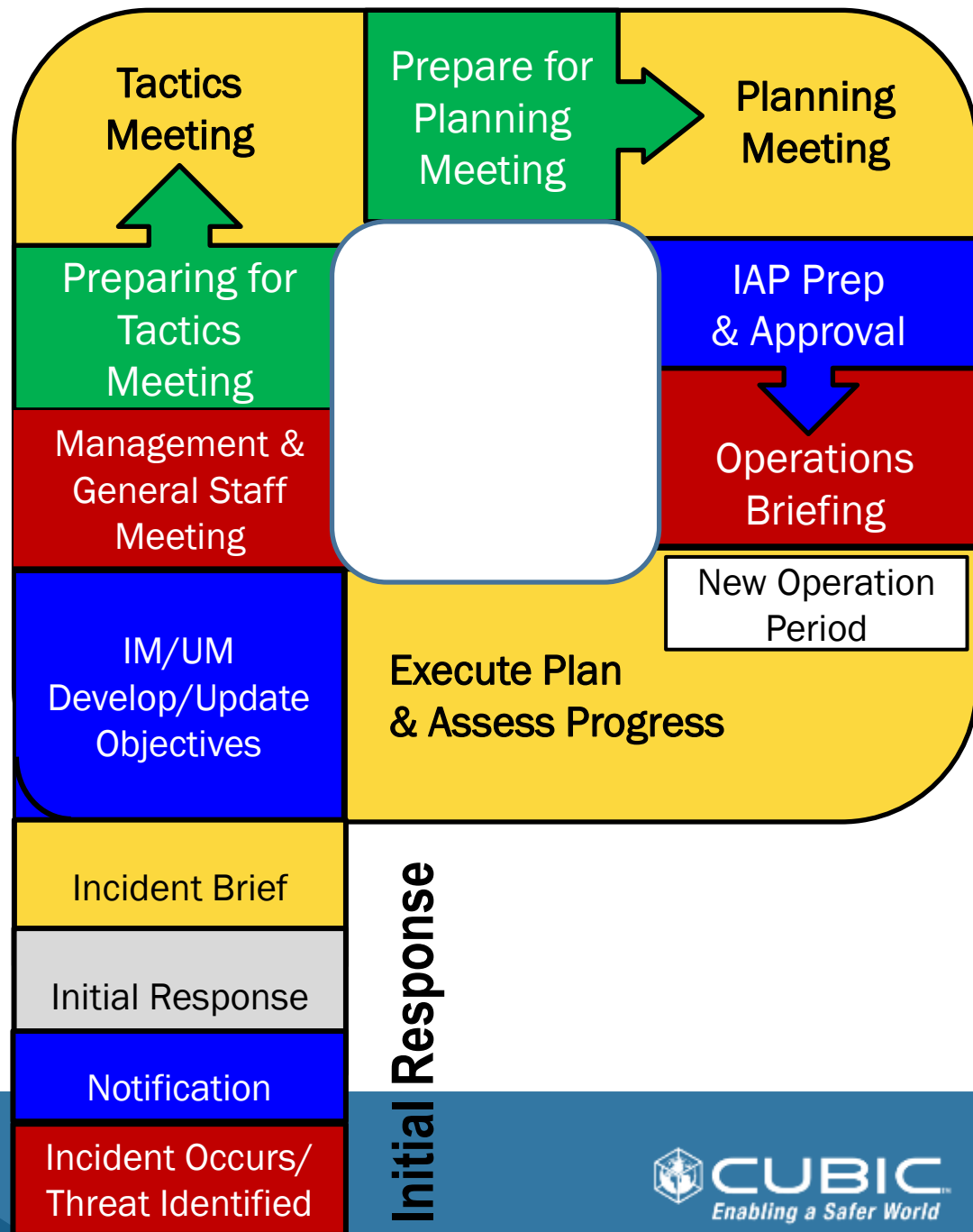
# THE PLANNING PROCESS

**First priority is developing a good understanding of the situation**

**It is the responsibility of the Planning Section to capture:**

- The size, scope, and location of the incident
- The number and types of resources that are committed to the incident, as well as those available to assist

# The Planning P



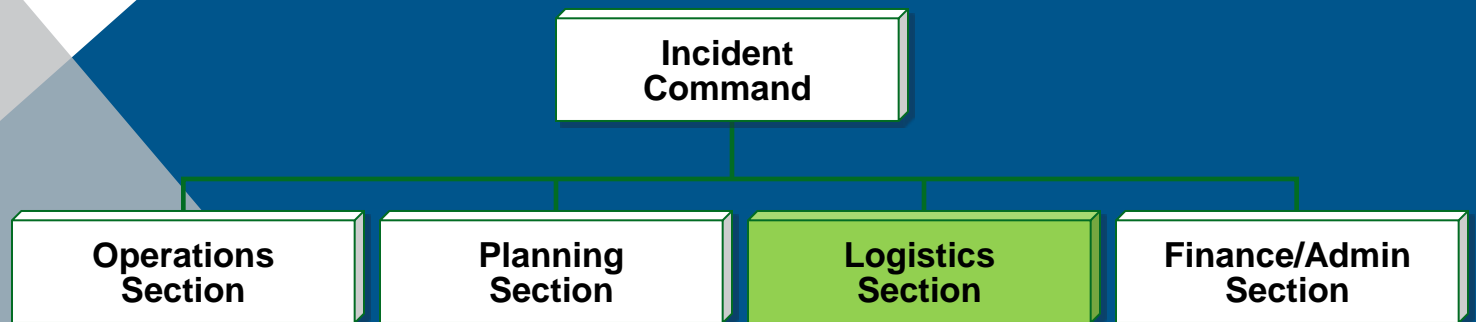


# INFORMATION & INTELLIGENCE MANAGEMENT

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The ICS organization & planning processes allow for the efficient exchange of information.

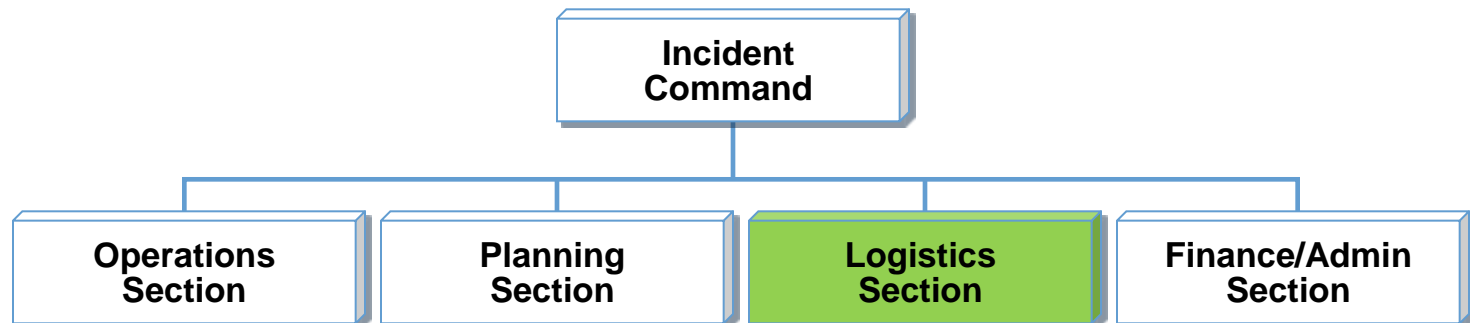
# THE LOGISTICS SECTION



# LOGISTICS SECTION: MAJOR ACTIVITIES

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- Ordering, obtaining, maintaining, and accounting for essential personnel, equipment, and supplies
- Providing communication support and resources
- Setting up food services for responders
- Setting up and maintaining incident facilities
- Providing support transportation
- Providing medical services for injured personnel



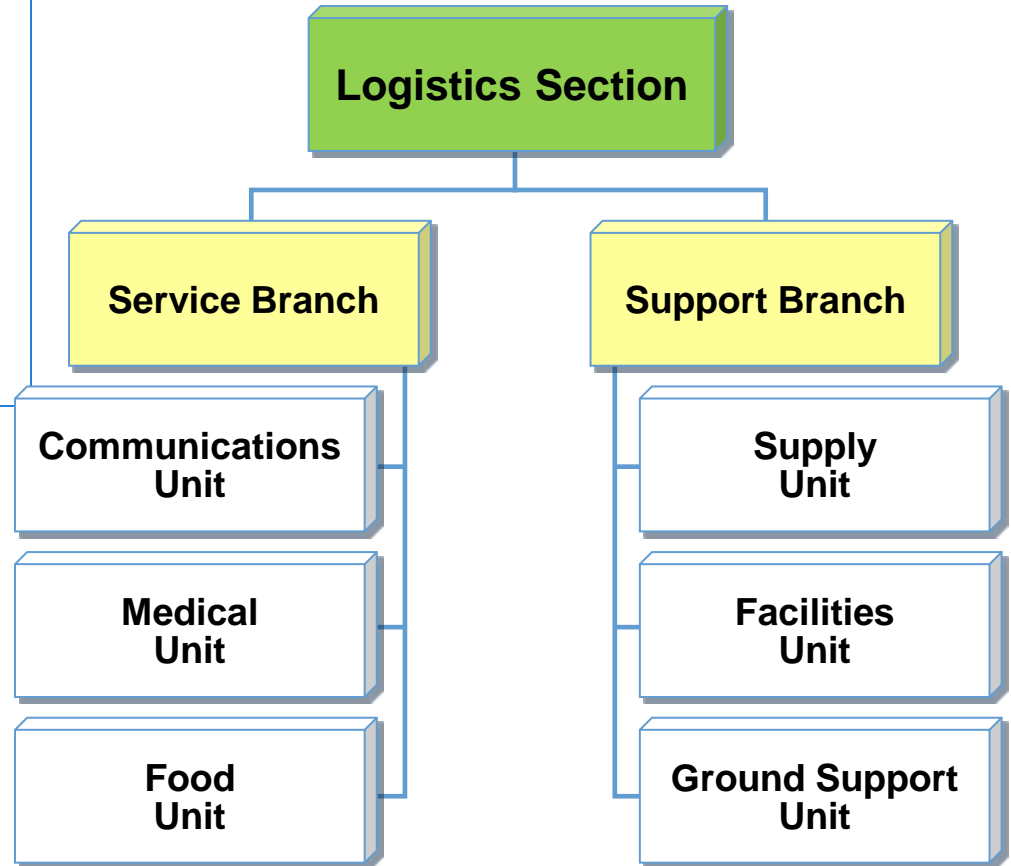
# LOGISTICS SECTION: MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- Anticipates future needs
- Communicates with the Planning Section so they have accurate numbers of people to feed.
- Orders supplies and equipment including drivers, fuel, etc.



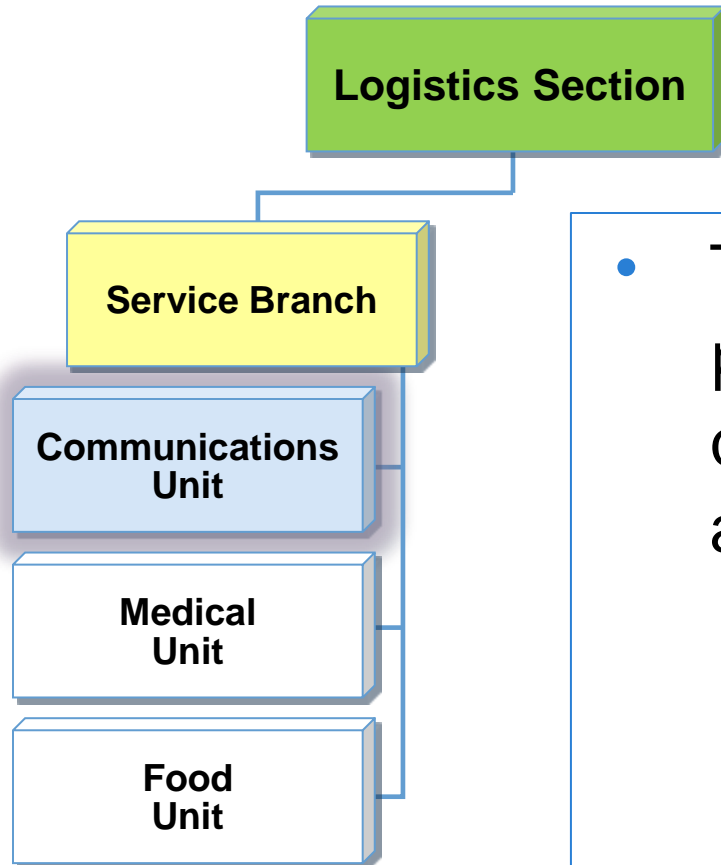
# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

- The Logistics Section can be further staffed by two Branches & six Units.



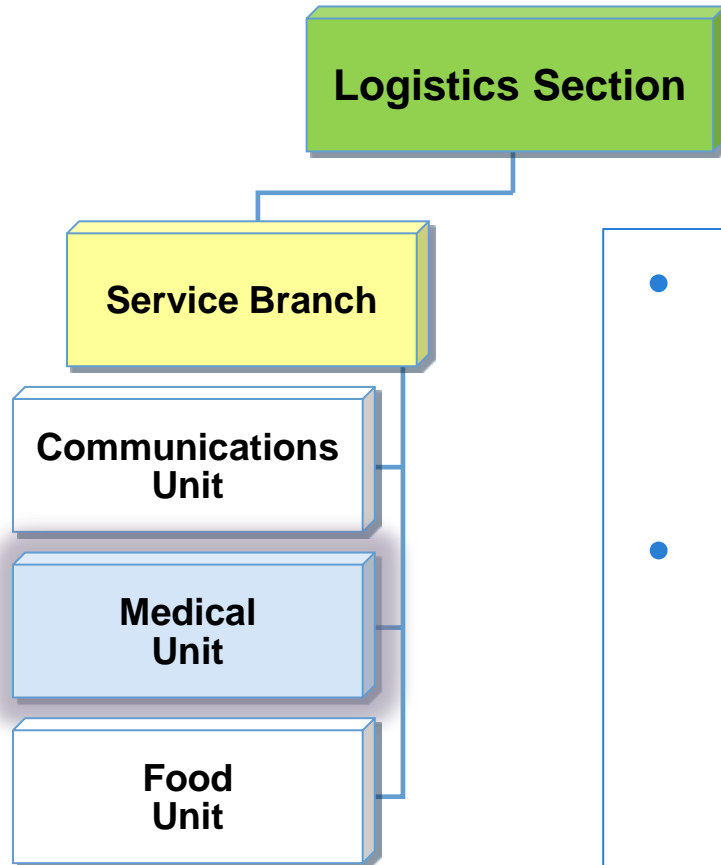
# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

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- The Communications Unit provides radios, phones and other communication devices and a communications plan.

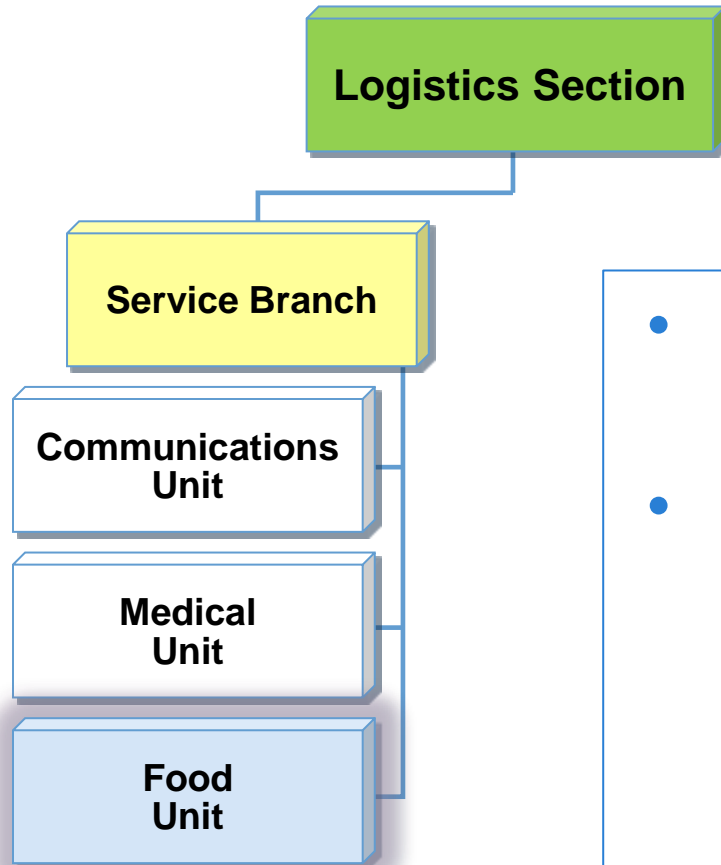
# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS



- The Medical Unit provides medical support to personnel assigned to the incident.
- It develops the Medical Plan which identifies locations of nearby medical facilities and a means to get there.

# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

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- The Food Unit is responsible for feeding all responders.
- It makes arrangement for food to be provided in outlying areas.

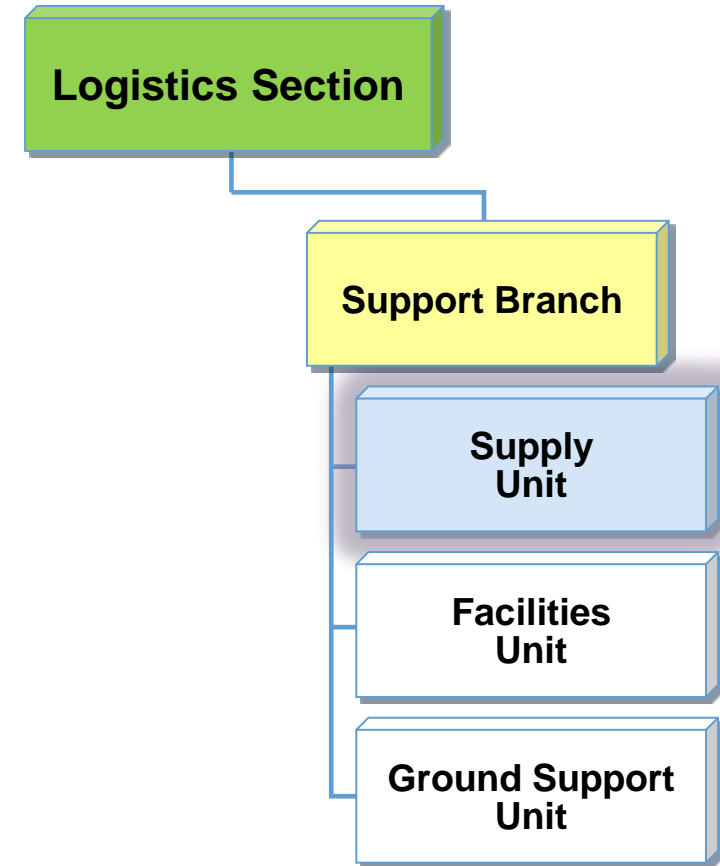


# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

The Supply Unit is responsible for procuring and distributing supplies to the responders

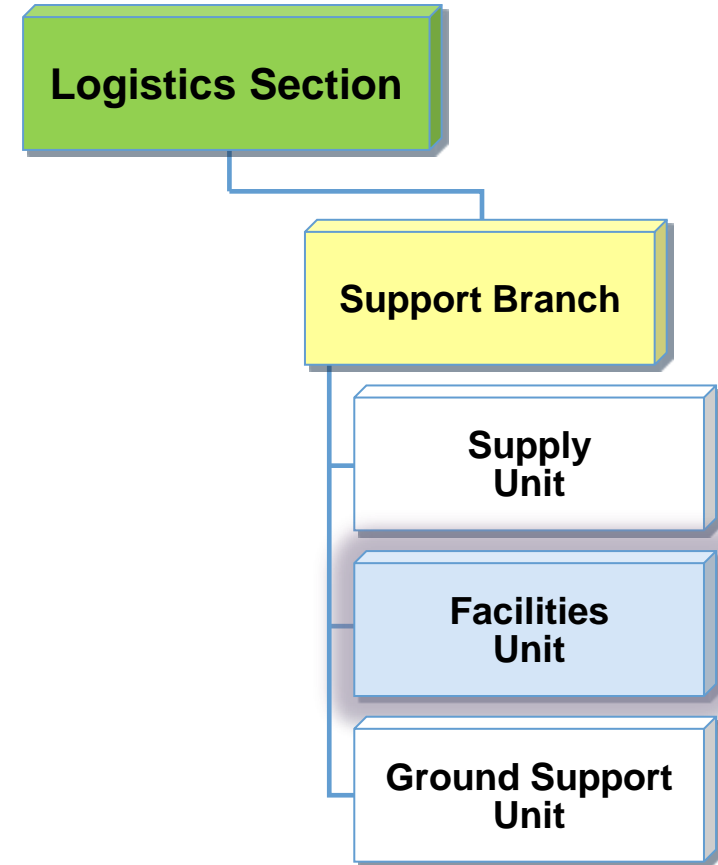
- This may include:
  - Gowns, masks & gloves
  - Medical supplies & vaccines
  - Shovels and other tools

It's important that accurate and current inventory be kept of all supplies



# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

- The Facilities Unit is responsible for establishing and supporting facilities that may be needed for the response.
- These may include Incident Command Posts, Operation Centers, Staging Areas.
- Other support might include computers, phones, internet, etc.



# LOGISTICS SECTION: BRANCHES & UNITS

- The Ground Support Unit is responsible for arranging transportation for responders and possibly the public in case of evacuation



**Logistics Section**

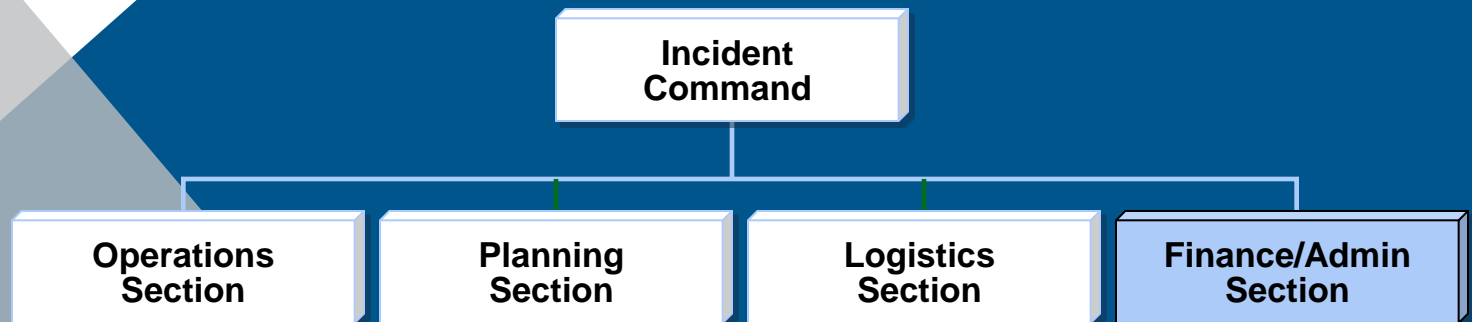
**Support Branch**

**Supply Unit**

**Facilities Unit**

**Ground Support Unit**

# THE FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION



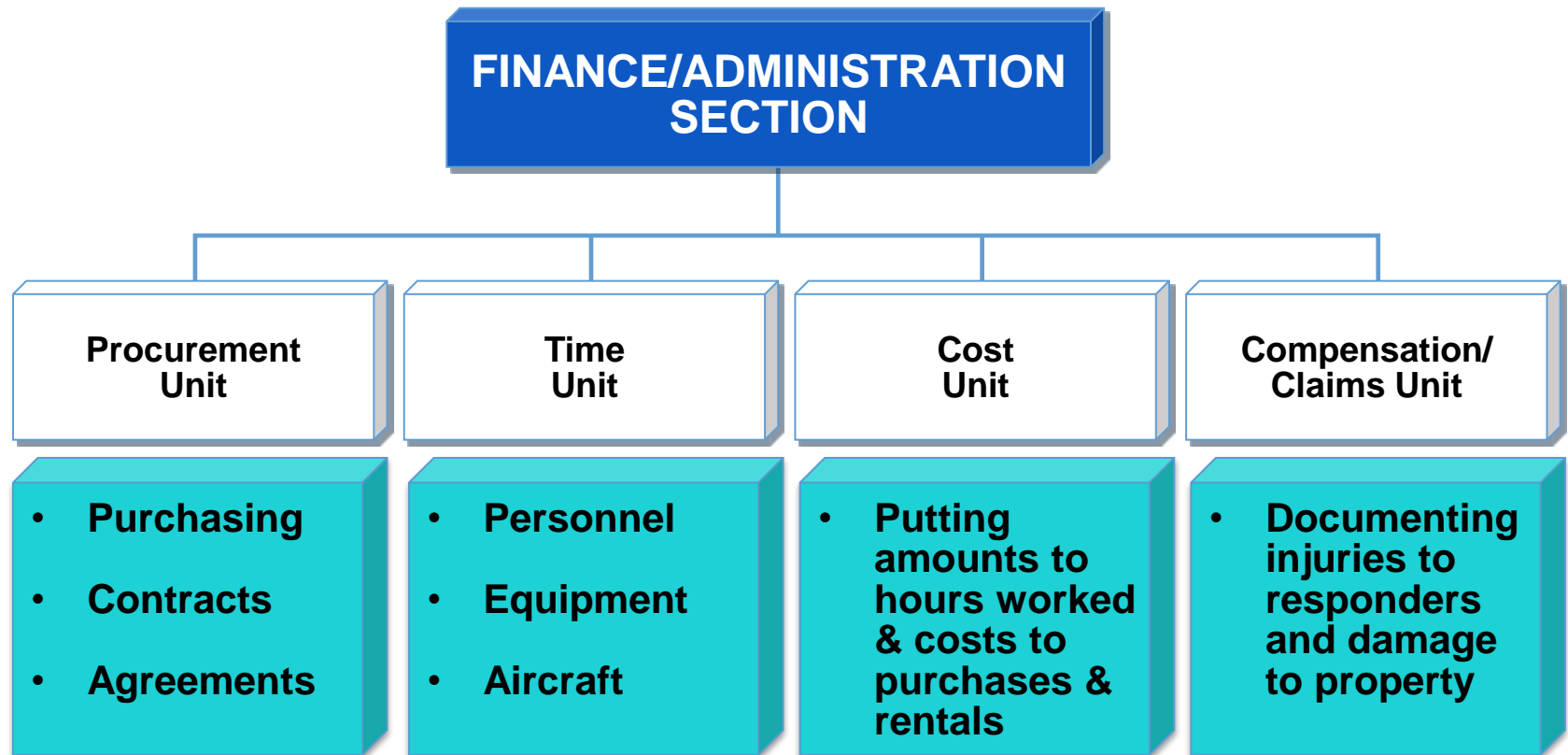
# FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION:

**The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for:**

- Contract negotiation and monitoring
- Timekeeping
- Cost analysis
- Compensation for injury or damage to property
- Documentation for pay

**They work closely with Logistics to track costs for supplies and equipment, and with the Planning Section to track costs for personnel.**

# FINANCE/ADMINISTRATION SECTION: UNITS



# EXPANDING INCIDENTS

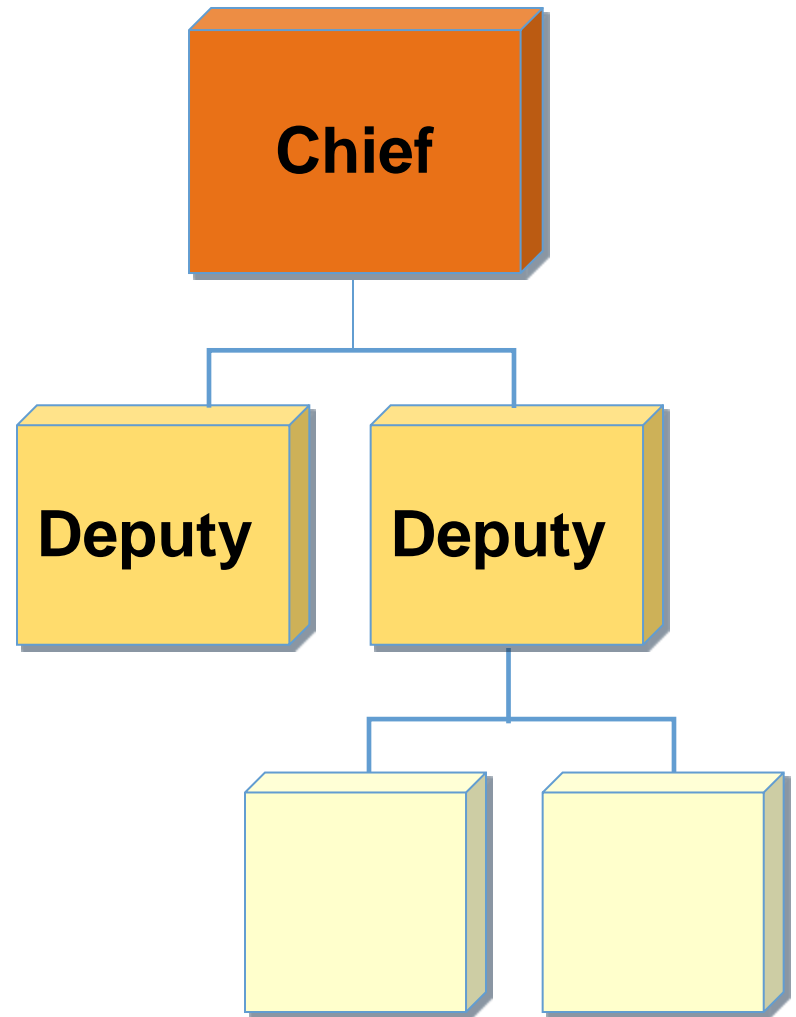
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**Expanding incidents may add supervisory layers to the organizational structure as needed.**

# ICS SECTION CHIEFS & DEPUTIES

Section Chiefs may have one or more deputies

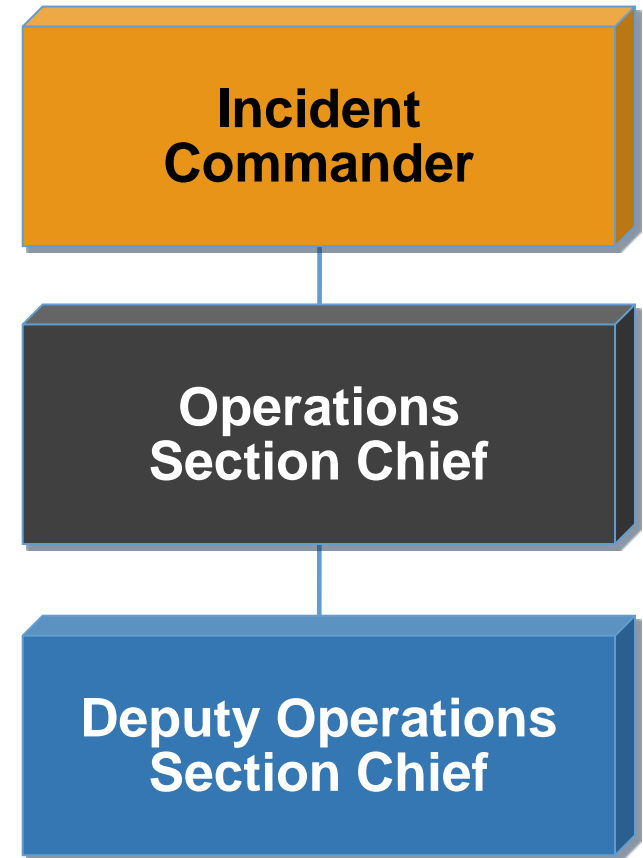
Deputies must be as proficient and qualified as the Section Chief





# INCREASING INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

When an incident involves multiple organizations, assigning Deputies from other organizations can increase interagency coordination.



# INCIDENT FACILITIES



# INCIDENT COMMAND POST

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- A single Incident Command Post should be established on all incidents—even small ones.
- Typically in the field located near the incident or event
- Has an Incident Commander
- Directs resources operating in the field
- May include other ICS functions as necessary

# INCIDENT FACILITIES:

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- Incidents may require additional facilities such as a base camp or a staging area
- Facilities and areas may be predesignated for use during an incident. For example: shelters, staging areas, and medical centers.
- A staging area is a location designated to hold resources until they are needed
- Larger incidents may require more than one staging areas.



# RESOURCES: DEFINITION

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Resources are personnel and major items of equipment available or potentially available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is maintained.



# COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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**Resource management includes processes for:**

- Categorizing resources
- Ordering resources
- Dispatching resources
- Tracking resources
- Recovering resources
- Reimbursing other organizations



**COMMUNICATIONS**

# INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

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Incident communications are facilitated through:

- The development and use of a common communications plan
- The interoperability of communication equipment, procedures, and systems



# UNIFIED COMMAND



# UNIFIED COMMAND

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The Unified Command organization consists of the Incident Commanders from the various ministries or organizations operating together to form a single Command structure.

# UNIFIED COMMAND BENEFITS

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- A shared understanding of priorities & restrictions
- A single set of incident objectives
- Collaborative strategies
- Improved internal & external information flow
- Less duplication of efforts
- Better resource utilization

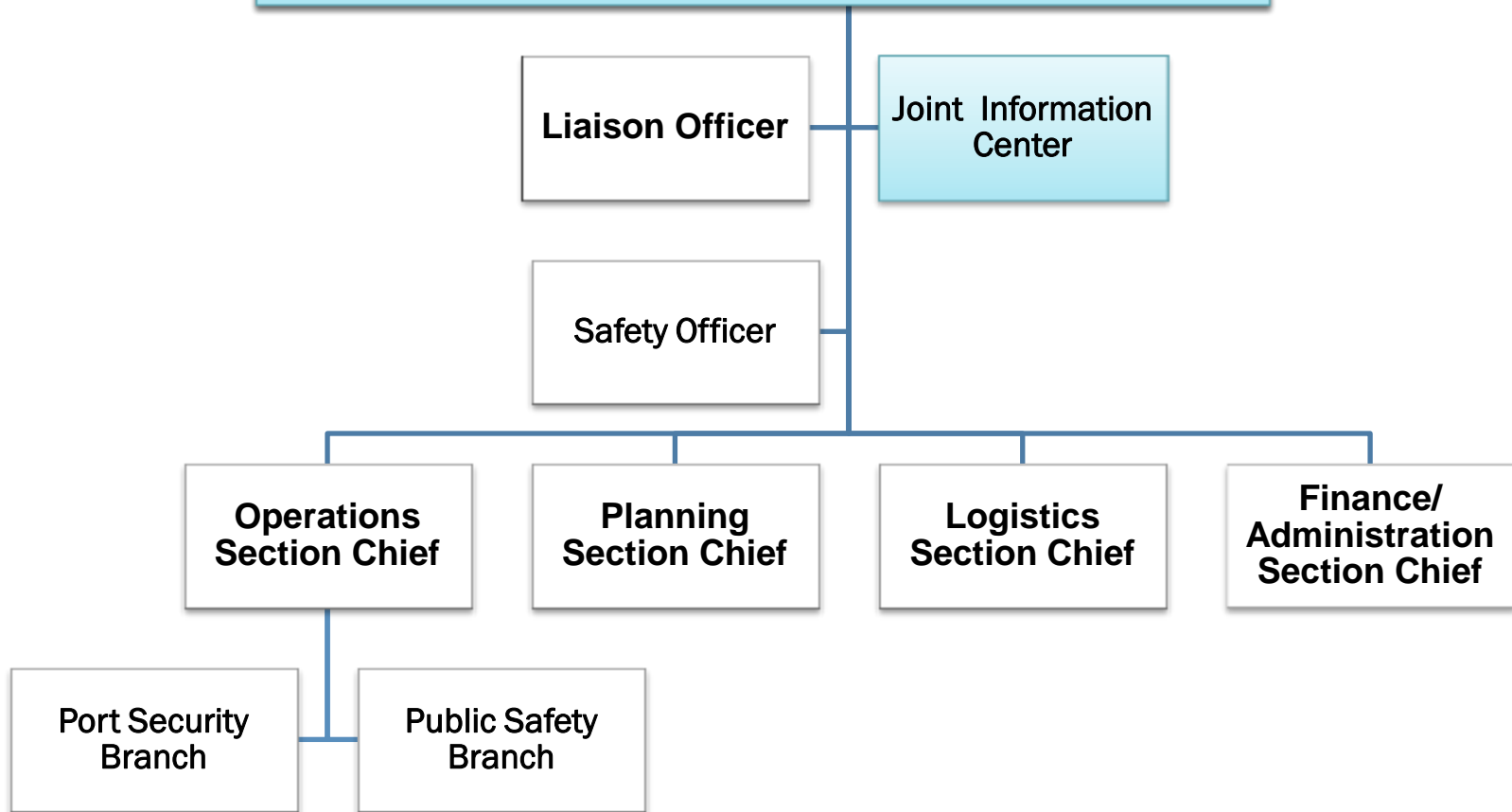
# UNIFIED COMMAND FEATURES

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- A single integrated incident organization
- Co-located (shared) facilities
- Single planning process, and Incident Action Plan
- Integrated General Staff – Only one Operations Section
- Coordinated process for resource ordering

# Unified Command

## Unified Incident Objectives



## DISCUSSION QUESTION

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**What are potential  
barriers to  
implementing Unified  
Command?**

# MAKING UNIFIED COMMAND WORK

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- Include key officials in planning
- Ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities
- Learn ICS
- Plan, Train & Exercise together

# INCIDENT COORDINATION

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Coordination activities are usually prior to the disaster and include:

- Establishing policy
- Collecting information
- Establishing priorities
- Resolving resource issues
- Facilitating support
- Synchronizing public messages



# JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

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## The Joint Information Center (JIC):

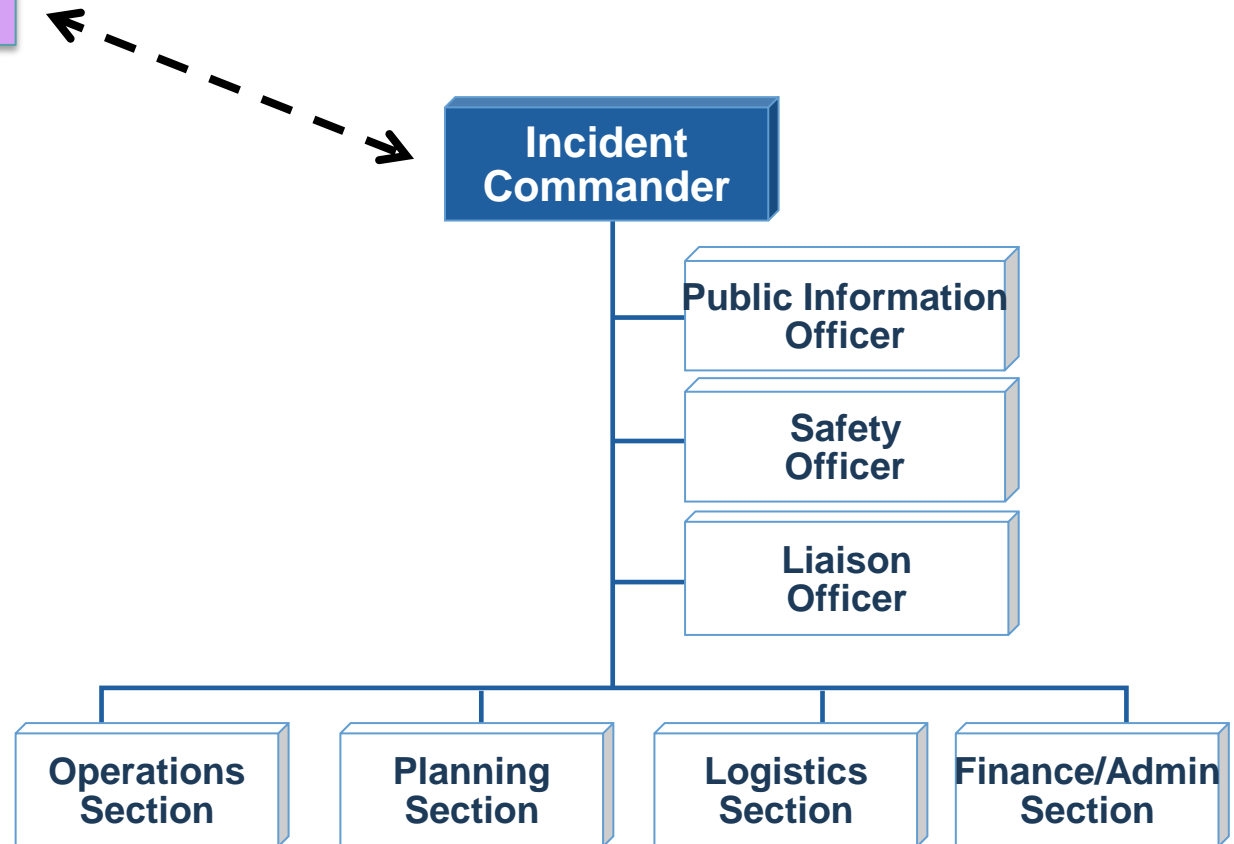
- Is comprised of Public Information Officers from the agencies represented in the Unified Command
- Is established to coordinate public information activities
- Serves as the central point of contact for all news media
- Helps improve consistent public messaging which builds public confidence

# **OTHER INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

## Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

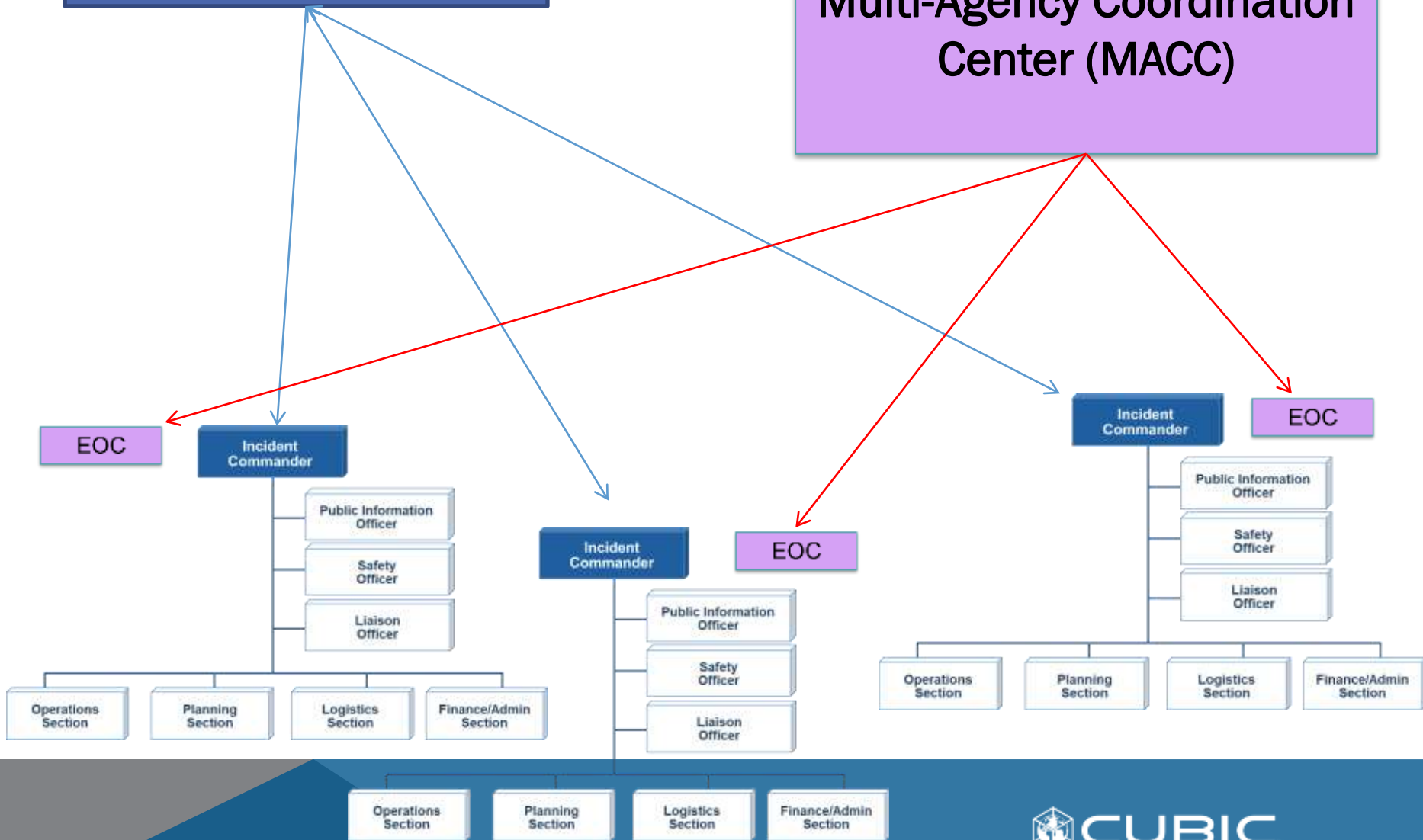
Provides:

- Logistical Support
- Strategic Guidance
- Plans for Long-term Recovery
- Link to Policy Makers



# Area Command

# Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC)



# ICS FEATURES:

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- **Command**
  - Establishment and transfer of Command
  - Chain of Command and unity of Command
- **Planning**
  - Management by objectives
  - Incident Action Plan (IAP)
- **Organizational Structure**
  - Modular organization
  - Manageable span of control
- **Standardization**
  - Common terminology
- **ICS Functions**
  - Command Staff
  - General Staff
- **Facilities**
  - Incident locations and facilities
- **Resources**
  - Comprehensive resource management
- **Communications/Information Management**
  - Integrated communications
  - Information and intelligence management

# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?