Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS

Standard Operating Procedure: 4.04	Effective Date: May 5, 2023
Subject: Incident Management System	Section: Fire Rescue Operations
Authorized: Chief Michael Robinson	Revision Date: N/A

I. PURPOSE

To establish a procedure that will provide a uniform "on-the-scene" management system for emergency operations

- Allows for initial implementation of an integrated emergency scene management system during fire/rescue incidents.
- Provides for the escalation of resources and command structure, as necessary to allow for an orderly transition of command and command functions.
- Can be expanded or scaled down to meet any situation that may be encountered.

II. DEFINITIONS

Assume (Command): This term describes the action of a Command Officer exercising his/her authority to become the Incident Commander.

Branches: The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of the Operations or Logistics functions. Branch Directors are responsible for command, control, and accountability of all assigned resources.

Command (Incident Commander): The person responsible for the overall incident

Command Restricted Talk Group: A mechanism for incident commanders to quickly and efficiently limit and control radio transmissions.

Command Post- The physical location from which command exercises command and control over the entire incident

Complex Incident: An incident that exceeds the span of control (more than 5 units) The incident will not be mitigated in less than 1 hour. There are no special operations components (hazmat, water rescue or technical rescue)

Division: Responsible for the operations within a defined geographical area under the direction of Command (Divisions are locations and don't move, i.e., Division 1, Division A

Group: Responsible for the operation with a specific functional assignment under the direction of command. (Groups are tasks and move around the incident, i.e.,Search Group, Vent Group.)

Incident Duration Reminders: Announcements issued by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) to advise the Incident Commander of the duration of the incident. The first IDR must be provided by CCECC 15 minutes after incident dispatch and at intervals not greater than 15 minutes as measured from the time of dispatch.

Incident Command System (ICS): An organizational structure protocol that supports an Incident Commander and is intended to promote communication, coordination, accountability, and effective action to respond to a natural disaster or other emergency.

Incident Scene Safety Officer (ISSO): A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations, and for developing measures for ensuring personnel safety.

Incident Strategies: There are 2 types of incident strategies "Offensive and Defensive"

Initial on-scene Status Report (ISOR): The first arriving Primary Unit Officer in both the front and the rear Side "A" & "C" of the structure must provide an Initial On-scene Status Report (ISOR) for that side.

L C A N: An acronym given to express **L**ocation, **C**onditions, **A**ctions, **N**eeds. A method for providing situation updates to command.

Liaison Officer: Responsible for coordinating with other agencies, as needed or requested by Command, including local, state, federal, and private sector.

Pass Command: When the Incident Commander transfers command of the incident to another party

Public Information Officer: Responsible for the dissemination of factual and timely reports to the news media.

Stationary Command: When the Incident Commander is dedicated solely to performing the incident command function from a fixed location, typically a command vehicle or other fixed position.

Staging: There are cases where the Incident Commander decides to stage additional resources. He/she may stage units to allow time for reconnaissance or to determine the most appropriate location for unit placement. There are three types of staging:

- Tactical Staging - Units take assigned positions, lay supply lines, provide required size-up reports, but the personnel remain on their apparatus prepared to immediately engage and complete assigned duties until otherwise directed.

- Level 1 Staging - Units stage 600 feet or 2 blocks, whichever is greater, away from the incident without engine companies passing the last available water source.

- Level 2 Staging - Units are assigned to a specific staging area. (a) The location is determined and announced by Command. (The first primary unit in staging will be the Staging Area Manager preferably an Engine)

Tactical Command: Tactical command describes the situation where the Primary Unit Officer is engaging in direct action with their crew. Because every incident has an Incident Commander tactical command it is in effect simply by virtue of a unit being on the scene of an incident. Tactical command can be used for both initial incident investigation and for initial engagement in emergency operations.

Tactical Worksheet: A tracking tool to provide the current status of the incident, the location of units and the resources committed. The Incident Commander shall prepare a tactical worksheet on all incidents to which they respond.

III.   POLICY

The ICS concepts shall be utilized during all incidents.

A. It is the policy of Carroll County that there is an Incident Commander for every incident.

B. The Incident Commander must use all available training, education, and tools to create and communicate a vision for a successful incident outcome. This vision is communicated by the issuance of clear incident objectives.

1.   Incident objectives may be embedded by a standard operating procedure.
2.   SOPs do not restrict the exercise of discretion by an Incident Commander.

C. The Incident Commander must ensure effective command which means ensuring that all the basic incident management functions are accomplished. Those functions are:

1. Situational Awareness;
2. Accountability;
3. Effective Communication;
4. Risk Assessment;
5. Established Objectives;
6. Initiating and Monitoring Action

D. There is a fundamental difference between the command function as exercised by a Primary Unit Officer and the command function as exercised by an Incident Commander operating from a stationary command post. The Primary Unit Officer cannot work with their crew and simultaneously provide effective command for complex incidents.

E. Complex incidents require the presence of an Incident Commander operating from a stationary command post whenever possible.

F. When a stationary command is established by the Incident Commander he/she:

1. Must attempt to position in a way that allows a view of at least two sides of the structure from the command post;
2. Must stay at the command post
3. Must use a tactical worksheet to track the incident objectives, resource allocation, and progress towards established objectives;
4. Must ensure that the changes in strategy are deliberate and communicated.
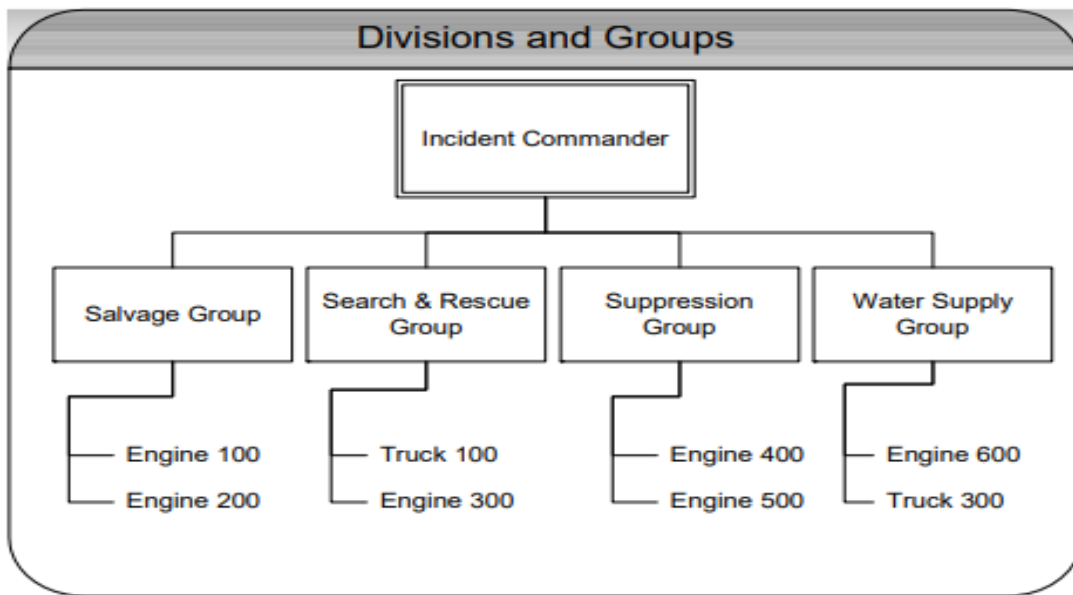
G. Exercising the Command Function

1. It is possible for units to respond to what was dispatched as a basic incident and find a complex one. When personnel arrive and find a complex incident they must ensure that a command officer is alerted.
2. Any unit officer may announce via radio that they have Command for an incident when the unit officer believes that announcing who has Command will improve incident operations
3. An EMS Unit Officer may act as Incident Commander only if another unit officer is not on the scene of an incident.
4. Whenever an EMS Unit Officer establishes Command the first arriving Primary Unit Officer must assume .
5. Primary Unit Officers are required to announce the unit identifier of the Incident Commander and "name" the Command - typically using the street name - for every complex event.
6. There are two methods of managing incident command within the scope of this document: Tactical Command and Stationary Command.

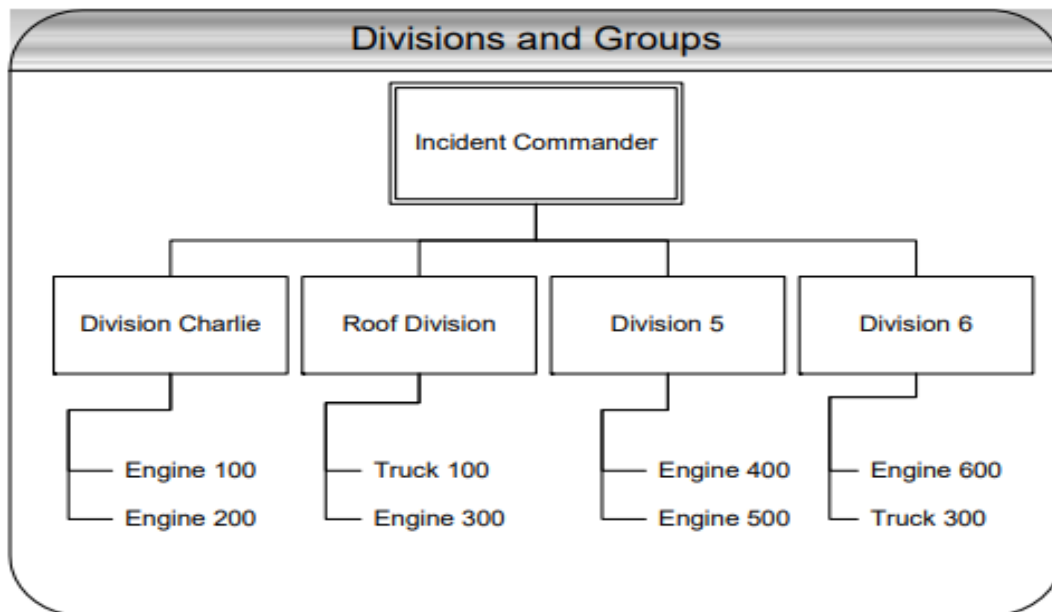H. Transfers and Assumptions of Command

1. Any unit officer who establishes Tactical Command must also maintain the integrity of their crew.
2. One Primary Unit Officer may not assume Command from another Primary Unit Officer.
3. The first arriving Primary Unit Officer may pass Command to another on scene Primary Unit Officer, who must then maintain a Stationary Command until relieved.
4. Command can only be passed once from one Primary Unit Officer to another.
5. If an EMS Unit Officer has established Command, they must pass it to the first arriving Primary Unit Officer.
6. When the first Incident Commander arrives he/she will assume a Stationary Command, generally after being provided a L-C-A-N report from the Primary unit Officer which originally established Command.

I. Use of IMS Components

1. All of the listed functions/positions are assigned by the Incident Commander or by standard operating procedure
2. Only the Incident Commander may assign IMS roles.
3. The Incident Commander should only use the components of IMS as necessary to maintain a reasonable span of control.
4. The IMS must be expanded as necessary to maintain an effective span of control
5. Common IMS Components:
    a. The list below contains common IMS terms and how they are expected to be applied on incidents within the scope of this policy.
        i. Incident Scene Safety Officer (ISSO)
        ii. Liaison
        iii. Branches
        iv. Groups: (Groups are an organizational level responsible for a specified functional assignment at an incident. Examples are salvage group, search and rescue group, fire suppression group, water supply group, etc.

Divisions and Groups

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                        ┌──────────────────────┐
                        │  Incident Commander  │
                        └──────────────────────┘
        ┌───────────────────┬───────────────────┬───────────────────┐
┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐
│ Salvage Group │ │ Search & Rescue│ │  Suppression  │ │  Water Supply │
│               │ │     Group      │ │     Group     │ │     Group     │
└───────────────┘ └───────────────┘ └───────────────┘ └───────────────┘
   ├── Engine 100    ├── Truck 100      ├── Engine 400     ├── Engine 600
   └── Engine 200    └── Engine 300     └── Engine 500     └── Truck 300
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v.   Divisions: (Divisions are an organizational level responsible for operations in a specified geographical area at an incident. You could have an interior division (within a building) or a division outside a building. Some examples are: Division Charlie, Division 5, Roof Division, etc

Divisions and Groups

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                        ┌──────────────────────┐
                        │  Incident Commander  │
                        └──────────────────────┘
        ┌───────────────────┬───────────────────┬───────────────────┐
┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐
│Division Charlie│ │ Roof Division │ │  Division 5   │ │  Division 6   │
└───────────────┘ └───────────────┘ └───────────────┘ └───────────────┘
   ├── Engine 100    ├── Truck 100      ├── Engine 400     ├── Engine 600
   └── Engine 200    └── Engine 300     └── Engine 500     └── Truck 300
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J. Incident Duration Reminders

1. It is important for the Incident Commander to track elapsed incident time.
2. This information is valuable for many reasons, including the establishment of work cycles, determining the need for additional resources, and evaluating the impact of fire on structural components.
3. The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) must provide incident duration reminders (IDRs) at regular intervals throughout an incident.
4. The first IDR must be provided by ECC 15 minutes after incident dispatch and at intervals not greater than 15 minutes as measured from the time of dispatch.
5. The ECC may delay an IDR in order to avoid interference with incident operations but must provide the IDR as close to the designated time as possible.
6. When the IDR is delayed, the ECC will provide the actual elapsed time post-dispatch.
7. Only the Incident Commander can cause the IDR cycle to be stopped and only after at least one announcement.

K. Resource Staging

1. There are cases where the Incident Commander decides to stage additional resources. He/she may stage units to allow time for reconnaissance or to determine the most appropriate location for unit placement. There are three types of staging:
   a. Tactical
   b. Level 1
   c. Level 2

L. Geographic Designations (see attached diagram)

1. Carroll County uses standard geographic designations to refer to structures.
   a. Building Sides and Quadrants
      i. It is assumed that each structure has generally four sides with the address side of the structure referred to as Side Alpha.
      ii. Each structure is divided into quadrants labeled clockwise, beginning in the left front corner as you face the address side of the building, Alpha thru Delta with the center core, where applicable, described as Echo
      iii. While the address side of the building is typically designated as Side Alpha, the Incident Commander may designate any side of the building as Side Alpha and the other sides will then be designated clockwise using the conventions outlined above. This change must be communicated

2. Exposures
    a. The designation of exposures is based on the designation of "sides". The exposure immediately adjacent to a given "side" assumes the same designation as that side.
    b. In a multi-story structure, the two floors above the fire and the floor below the fire are generally considered exposures
3. Floors
    a. Unless otherwise designated, floors will be numbered up from the ground entrance level with the entrance level being known as the first floor. Some buildings are arranged such that the ground level entrance is numbered other than first, when this is the case the floor will be known by its given designation.
    b. The floor designation is not a functional designation. The third floor is the third floor, not Division 3. Division 3 is a designation given by the Incident Commander typically to personnel on the third floor, but not necessarily.
    c. In many multi-family dwellings, there is a terrace level. A terrace level means that the primary entrance to the living space is via an interior common area (corridor or stair), but there is also a ground level exit through the rear of the main living area.
    d. There are structures that do not follow normal conventions and/or do not fit within the descriptions above. When this situation is encountered, the unit officers must advise Command of the building layout and the Incident Commander must ensure that the various levels of the structure are clearly designated.

M. Isolation Zones and Action Circles

1. Some incidents require the establishment of isolation zones. Isolation zones define incident action areas based on their relative hazard. Isolation zones are not always based on concentric circles. The nature of the incident hazards determine the shape of the zones. The Incident Commander should ensure that the zones are clearly identified.
2. The hot zone is where the incident action is occurring and represents the area of the highest hazard.
3. The warm zone is an area of lesser hazards that represents a transitional space between the high hazard area and the no hazard area.
4. The cold zone is an area free of incident hazards. The incident command post is located in the cold zone.
5. For some events, such as vehicle collisions, these hot and warm zones may be referred to the inner and outer circle respectively.

IV.   COMMUNICATIONS:

Effective incident scene communications is the responsibility of command. Emergency Communications should be considered an integral part of the Incident Commander's resource pool.

A. The terminology for incident identification shall be the incident's location, for example, *North Main Street Command*. Caution should be used so as not to use identifiers that might not clearly separate one incident from another.

B. In order to keep incident scene communications to a minimum, the "Command by Exception" principle should be utilized. This means that radio traffic directed to immediate supervisors should be limited as much as possible to:
   a. Announcing the completion of an assigned objective.
   b. Announcing when an assigned objective cannot be met.
   c. Announcing identified safety problems.
   d. Announcing the need for additional resources to accomplish an objective.
   e. Announcing other emergency or absolutely necessary information.
   f. Announcing when crews have entered and safely exited an operational area (i.e. and IDLH atmosphere, warm zone or other area that may pose a threat to crew member safety and wellbeing.)

C. Command Restricted Talk Group
   Acknowledging that effective communication is paramount to the safety and effectiveness of emergency scene operations, it is the intent of this policy to provide a mechanism for incident commanders to quickly and efficiently limit and control radio transmissions. When initiated, ALL RADIO TRANSMISSIONS on a Command Restricted Talk Group will be limited to the Incident Commander, the crew(s) actively participating in incident operational activities, and Emergency Communications. All other radio transmissions will be prohibited.

   Rules: Command Restricted Talk Group:
   a. At any time during an incident, the Incident Commander may request Emergency Communications to institute a "Command Restricted Talk Group."
   b. Upon the Incident Commander establishing a Command Restricted Talk Group, Emergency Communications will activate the Alert Tone and announce that Talk Group XX is now "Command Restricted."
   c. All radio transmissions on a Command Restricted Talk Group will remain restricted to transmissions by the Incident Commander and or crews involved in critical operations.
   d. Emergency Communications will maintain and monitor the radio restriction and notify any unit making an unauthorized radio transmission on the talk group that the group is Command Restricted, and to move to another talk group.
   e. Upon dispatching additional equipment to the incident, dispatch will announce the restriction over Main at the time of dispatch.

f. The Command Restricted Talk Group will remain restricted until the Incident Commander terminates the restriction, at which time normal radio transmissions may resume on the talk group.

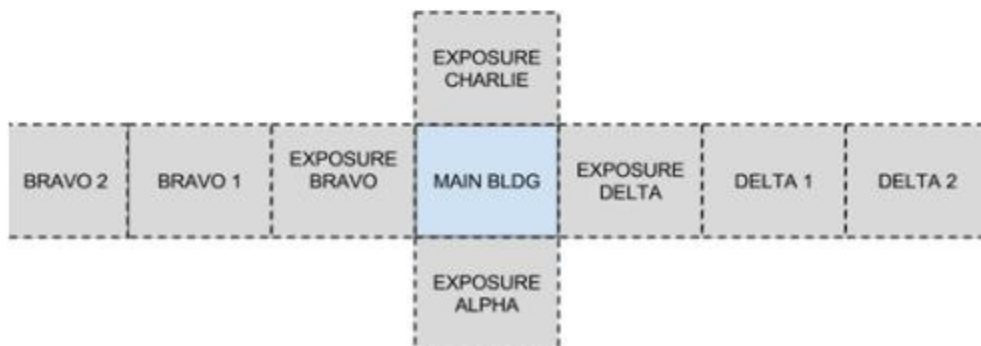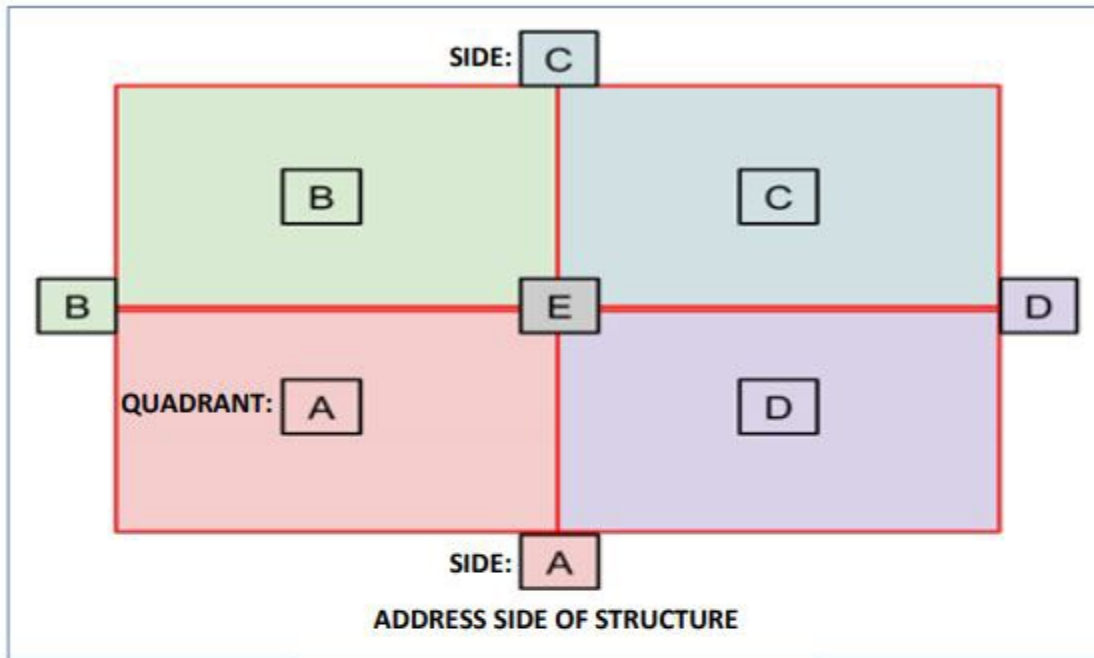## V.   RESPONSIBILITY:

All Personnel

VI.   PROCEDURE

A. Tactical Command
1. The first arriving unit officer will:
   a. Conduct a size-up viewing all sides of the structure/area whenever possible; (360)
   b. Give an Initial On Scene Report
   c. Exercise the appropriate method of command;
      i. Name the Command using a geographic designation, normally the street name.
   d. Determine the incident strategy
   e. Request additional resources as required;
   f. Announce their initial objective(s) as appropriate;
   g. Provide direction to incoming units if there is a need to deviate from the SOP
   h. Engage as necessary with their crew to manage the incident;
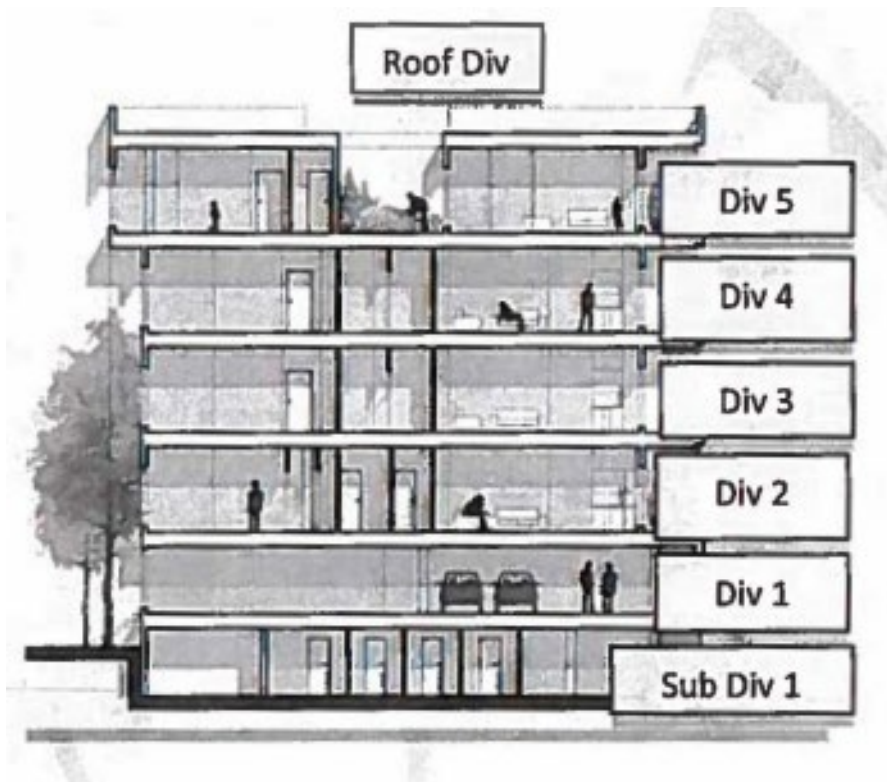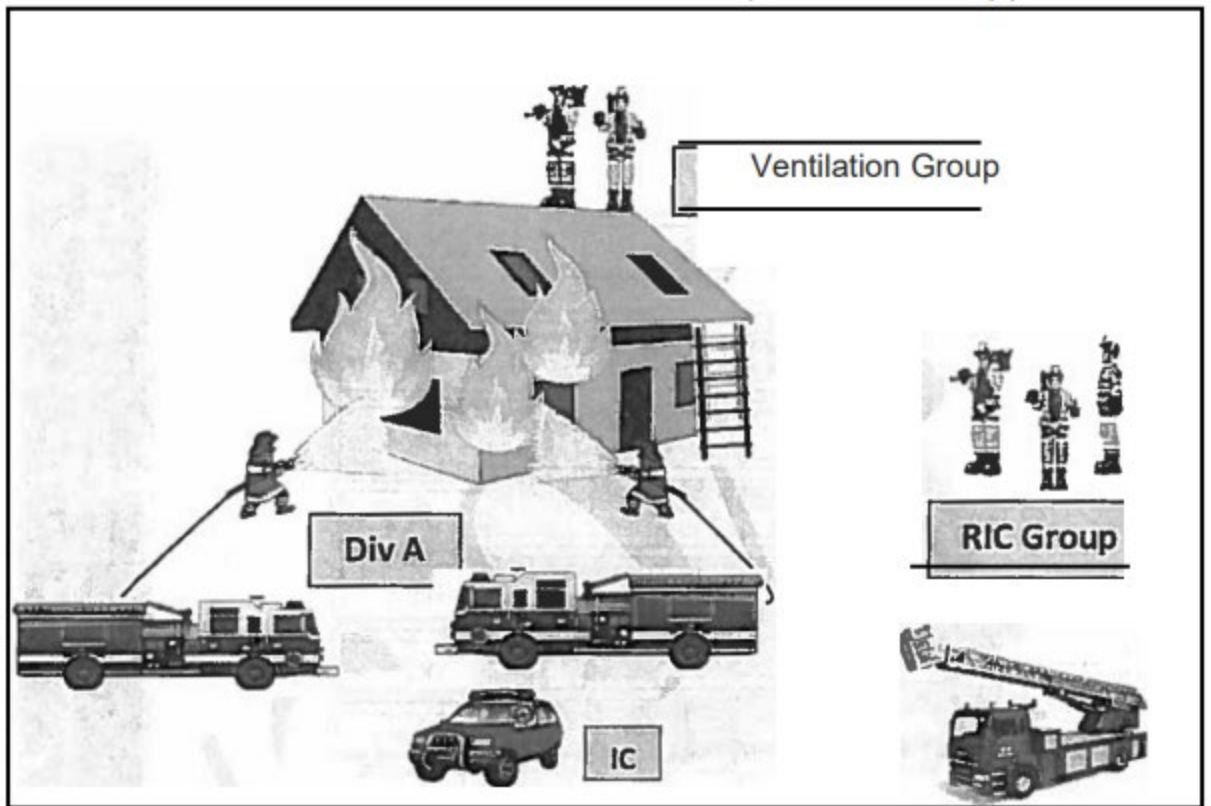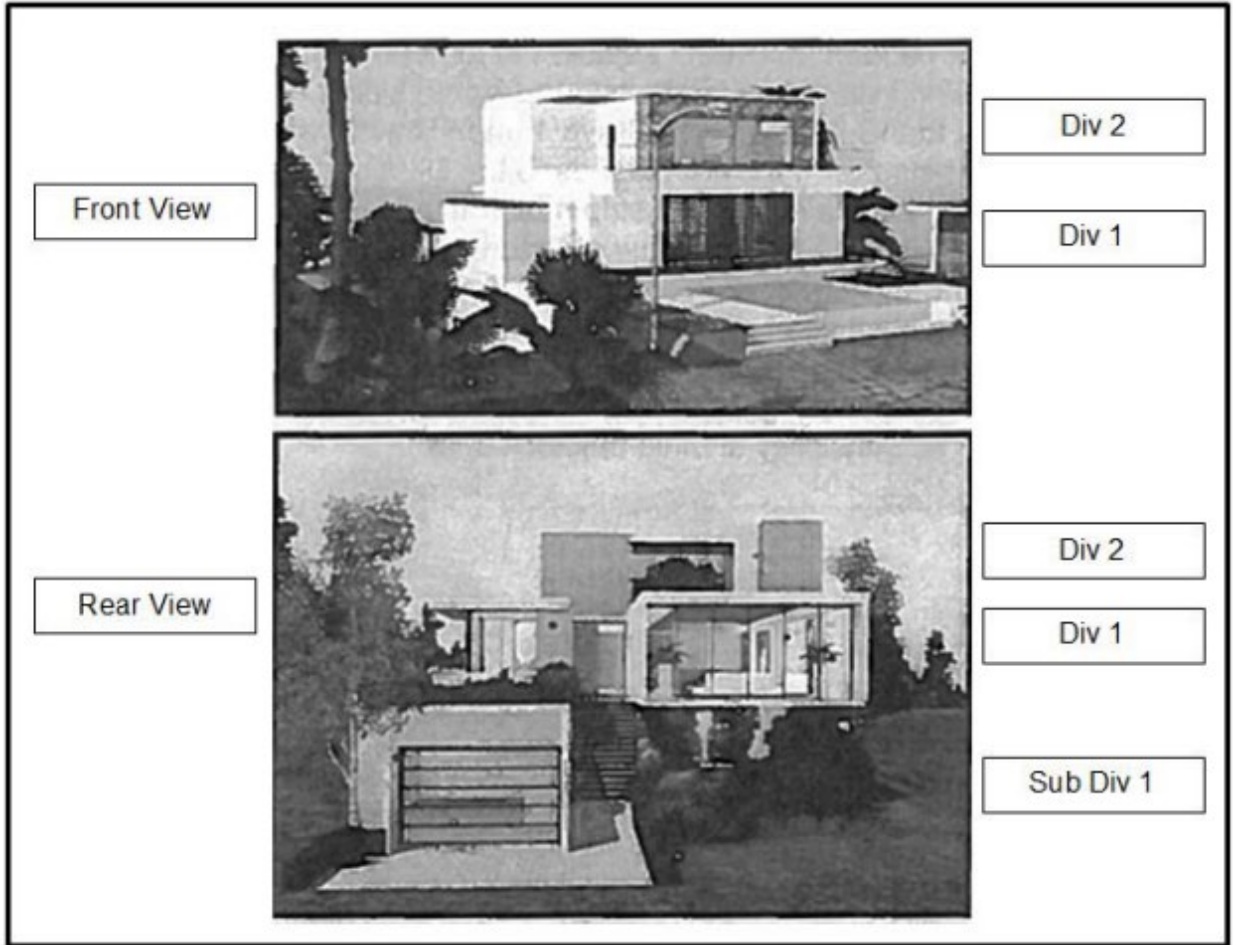   i. Provide radio reports and updates as required by other policies.

B. Stationary Command

1. The Incident Commander in Stationary Commander must:
   a. Ensure all aspects of the Tactical Command procedures have been met;
   b. Receive a report from the initial Incident Commander before establishing a stationary command if necessary;
   c. Establish incident objectives;
   d. Provide effective command and control for the duration of the incident;
   e. Develop a command team as necessary and appropriate;
   f. Track unit accountability using tactical worksheets
   g. Assign an ISSO as necessary;
   h. Use a visual method to track elapsed incident time; (watch, phone timer)
   i. Provide regular incident updates
   j. Conduct personnel accountability report (PAR) checks at regular intervals throughout the incident when units are operating in hazardous areas, at intervals not greater than 15minutes.

VII. APPENDIX

SIDE: C

B

B

E

QUADRANT: A

D

C

D

SIDE: A

ADDRESS SIDE OF STRUCTURE

| BRAVO 2 | BRAVO 1 | EXPOSURE BRAVO | MAIN BLDG | EXPOSURE DELTA | DELTA 1 | DELTA 2 |

EXPOSURE CHARLIE

EXPOSURE ALPHA

Tactical Level Officers (Division/Group)

Ventilation Group

Div A

RIC Group

IC

Roof Div

Div 5

Div 4

Div 3

Div 2

Div 1

Sub Div 1

VII.   RECISION
        This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Incident
        Management System or similar content previously issued for personnel of the Carroll
        County Department of Fire & EMS.