

## Incident Command for EMS

Drew Fried, EMT-B, CHSP, CHEP  
 Certified Healthcare Safety Professional  
 Certified Healthcare Emergency Professional



## Incident Command for EMS

This is not ICS 100 and will not cover  
 that material

***This course does not satisfy the  
 NIMS implementation***

requirements

## Incident Command for EMS

### Objectives

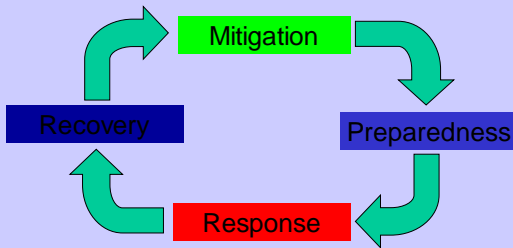
This course will discuss

- The role of Emergency Medical Services within the ICS
- Discuss the functional roles of the EMS Branch
- Will focus on command, operations, planning, and logistics, responsibilities of EMS personnel

## Modern Management Principle

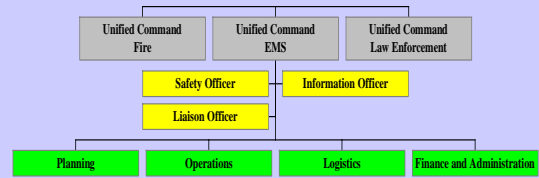
- Modern disasters can and must be managed
- Management principles used in routine functions must be applied to the non routine emergency

## Emergency Management Cycle



## Unity of Command

**More than one agency with statutory/jurisdictional responsibility**



Disasters overwhelm EMS and community responses because critical infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed



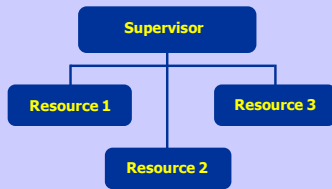
A mass casualty incident (MCI) is an event in which the number of patients exceeds the resources available to the initial responders

The ICS system is designed to control duplication of effort and free lancing.



## Span of Command

The number of subordinates responsible to a leader is called the “span of command”.



## Chain of Command

“Chain of command” is linked to unity of command and span of control and is defined as the flow of information from one command level to the next.

In the EMS Incident Command System balance between operations functions and support functions is vital



## EMS Incident Management System (EMS / ICS)

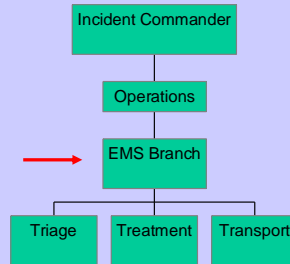
The key components are triage, treatment and transport.



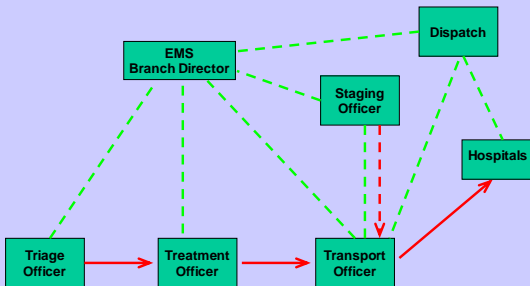
Staging is an additional section in a medical disaster.

Where will EMS usually fall in the IMS Structure?

Tactical activities are coordinated in an EMS Branch



### Incident Command System



In a large scale incident an Incident Management System is a must.



- A supervisor must assume command. This supervisor should not be touching patients.
- There will be a need for a team to begin triage to prioritize patient care

## Incident Commander

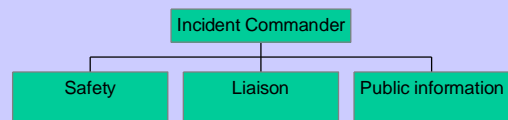
- What does the IC do?
- The IC does not command
- The IC coordinates and leads
- Ensures there is a flow of information, personnel and resources between support and operational functions.
- The IC is responsible for the outcome of an MCI



## Incident Commander Responsibilities

- Manages the EMS response to the incident
- Establishes the command post
- Works in cooperation with fire and police command officers
- Ensures the safety, of all EMS personnel
- Designates sector officers

## Command Level Officers



## Safety Officer

- A staff level position appointed as necessary by the EMS Incident Commander
- Reports to the IC
- Needs to have the authority to stop all work if necessary

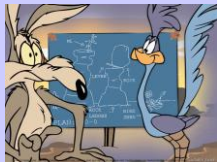
## Safety Issues

- Proper lifting
- Safe operations of tools and equipment
- Use of protective equipment
  - Head gear
  - Proper clothing
- Personnel accountability



## Requirement / Qualifications

- The safety officer should be an emergency service professional familiar with disaster operations.



## Requirement / Qualifications

- The safety officer should also be familiar with nationally accepted safety standards.

## Liaison Officer

- Serves as a link between the management system and other EMS agencies
- The primary function of the LO is to funnel outside agency resources into the appropriate section of the EMS / ICS

## Public Information Officer

- This position is not always needed
- Expedites the effective and accurate dissemination of information
- Obtain and communicate accurate information



## EMS Operations

- In the EMS Incident Command System the treatment of patients is the mission.
- All of the functions exist to support treatment operations

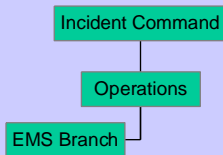
## EMS Operations

- Medical treatment operations involves triaging patients, treating them in a logical order and transporting them to a medical facility.



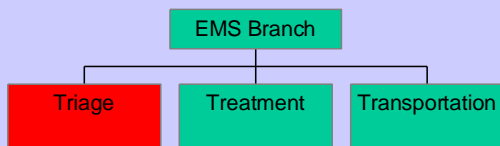
## EMS Branch

- Responsible for all EMS sectors (triage, treatment, transportation) and coordinating with operations



## Medical Incident Command

- Branch leader supervises the primary roles of the medical group.
- Responsible for the
  - Triage
  - Treatment
  - Transportation



### Triage

Responsible for receiving patients and utilizing the START triage system to determine triage categories

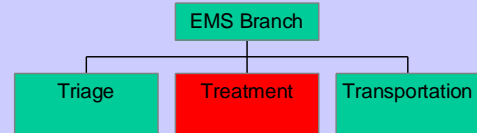
## Triage

- As the number of patients increase the triage rules change.
- At normal incidents the best level of care is possible.
- At large scale incidents we need to do the great good for the greatest amount of people.



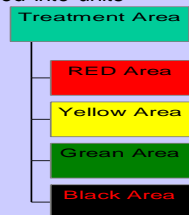
## Triage Officer / Unit

- Ultimately in charge of counting and prioritizing patients.
- The triage units primary duty is to ensure that every person receives initial assessment of his or her condition.
- Treatment should not begin until all patients are triaged or you will compromise your triage efforts



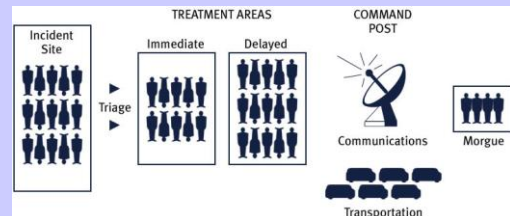
- The treatment sector is divided into units based on triage categories

- RED
- YELLOW
- GREEN
- BLACK



## Triage

- "Greatest good for the greatest number of casualties"
- Psychological impact
- Classification:
  - Red*
  - Yellow*
  - Green*
  - Black*
- Limitations:
  - Time consuming
  - User variability
  - Lack of familiarity



Treatment areas must be staffed to adequately handle patient flow

Treatment must be properly supplied

## Treatment Officer

- The treatment officer reports to the EMS Branch Officer and supervises all medical treatment units.
- Responsible for all treatment activities, coordinates with triage, transport and medical supply.
- Do not allow any one area to become overwhelmed.



## Treatment Unit

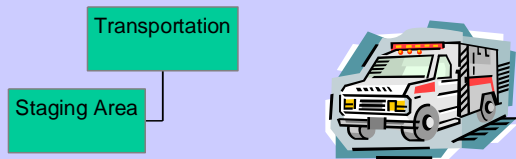
- Separate patients by each priority category
- Assign crews to treat patients
- Communicate with transportation officer
- Responsible for safety of all members in area
- Ensure sufficient supplies and personnel
- Provide update to EMS Branch Director

## Morgue

- The morgue area is for patients with no vital signs and should be segregated from treatment areas and bystanders
- Will need security to control entry
- Rotate personnel to avoid stress
- Every disaster team should have a funeral director as a consultant.



## Transportation



## Transportation

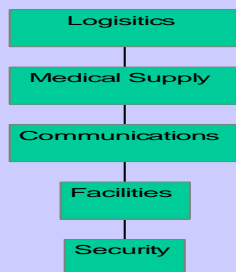
- Moves patients from treatment section to ambulances
- Coordinates transportation of patients to medical facilities in priority order.

## Staging Officer

- Establishes staging areas for ambulances, maintains record of available units, assigns ambulances based on requests from transport



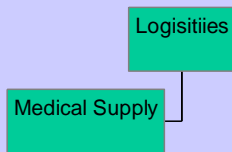
## Logistics



- Obtains EMS resources, supplies, and equipment. Coordinates volunteer operations, communications, and facilities.
- Logistics section should operate at the command post, position requires intense communications.

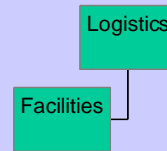
## Management of EMS Supplies

- Maintains inventory and distributes EMS supplies to all sections, coordinates directly, with treatment, coordinates with logistics.



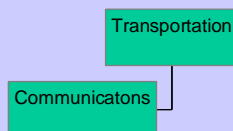
## Facilities

- Facilities is responsible for all facilities including rehabilitation, food, water, sanitation and aux. power.



## EMS Communications

- Services as a single point of contact . Reports to transport the patients information from transportation to medical control and others.



## EMS Mass Casualty Incident Management System Site Management

- Command and communication
  - Should be in an area to provide overall scene assessment and coordination
  - Provides overall EMS command and control leadership, direction and resource allocation.
  - Provides central location for arriving units.

- Command allocates and assigns resources
- Establishes and maintains security
- Controls information release.

## Effective Disaster Assistance

- Careful preplanning
- The ability to quickly implement a plan
- The application of effective triage
- The ability to organize and utilize fully all emergency personnel.
- The ability to adapt the plan to meet special conditions, such as inclement weather or isolated locations.

Drew Fried  
Pre-Hospital Care Concepts  
defried@optonline.net

