The Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System™

A Management System for any Emergency

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Foreword

The 'Australian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS)' was developed in Australia during the mid-eighties, its genesis being the American National Inter-agency Incident Management System. Since the introduction of AIIMS, the frequency and complexity of multi agency operations both within and across State borders have increased. This has placed greater emphasis on the need for a consistent, universally understood and applied system. AIIMS is a robust incident management system that will enable the seamless integration of activities and resources of multiple agencies when applied to the resolution of any emergency situation.

AIIMS will operate effectively for any type of incident, imminent or actual, natural, industrial or civil, and the many other situations in which emergency management organisations will be involved. Equally the system and the principles upon which it is based can be applied to the management of non-emergency response situations such as major sporting and cultural events, exhibitions and conferences.

AIIMS achieves this by providing a common management framework for organisations working in emergency management roles that assists the more effective and efficient control of incidents. The framework can be applied to any size incident as it provides the basis for an expanded response as an incident grows in size and complexity.

The management of an incident may involve various agencies:

- Emergency and non emergency services
- Having a variety of roles and responsibilities beyond the incident in question
- Having a range of jurisdictional powers and priorities.

In the Australian context, an incident has the potential to impact at four generic levels as shown in the diagram.
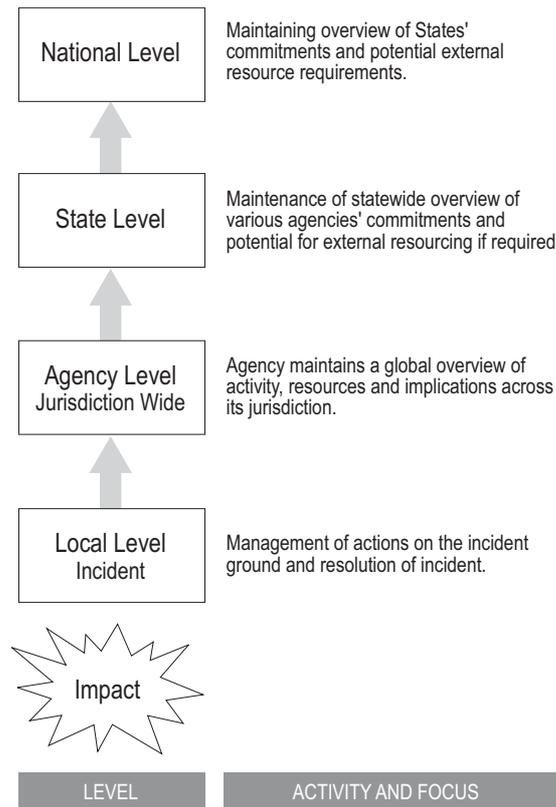
Diagram 1 Four levels of impact

Issues relating to how an individual agency chooses to manage incidents are of no consequence outside the agency until there is a need for several agencies to respond to the same incident. Then the smooth, effective and efficient resolution of an incident is highly dependent upon the degree to which the operational protocols and procedures of different agencies are able to integrate into a unified management system for resolution of the incident.

A system that provides a standard framework for operations, that is used by all services likely to be engaged in the resolution of an emergency, will provide for the smooth, effective and efficient integration of all efforts into a unified management system for resolution of an incident.

AIIMS is the building block necessary for the establishment of effective standing protocols for liaison and coordination across agencies having different jurisdictional roles through all stages of pre-planning, preparedness, response and recovery. Whilst AIIMS operates at the incident level, it provides a common, well structured foundation for greater understanding and interaction at the State and National levels across the various agencies emergency and non-emergency alike. Through greater understanding, a common language, and a consistent approach to emergency management, AIIMS enables the better formulation of

emergency management arrangements at the State and National levels, supra-coordination arrangements in Diagram 2.
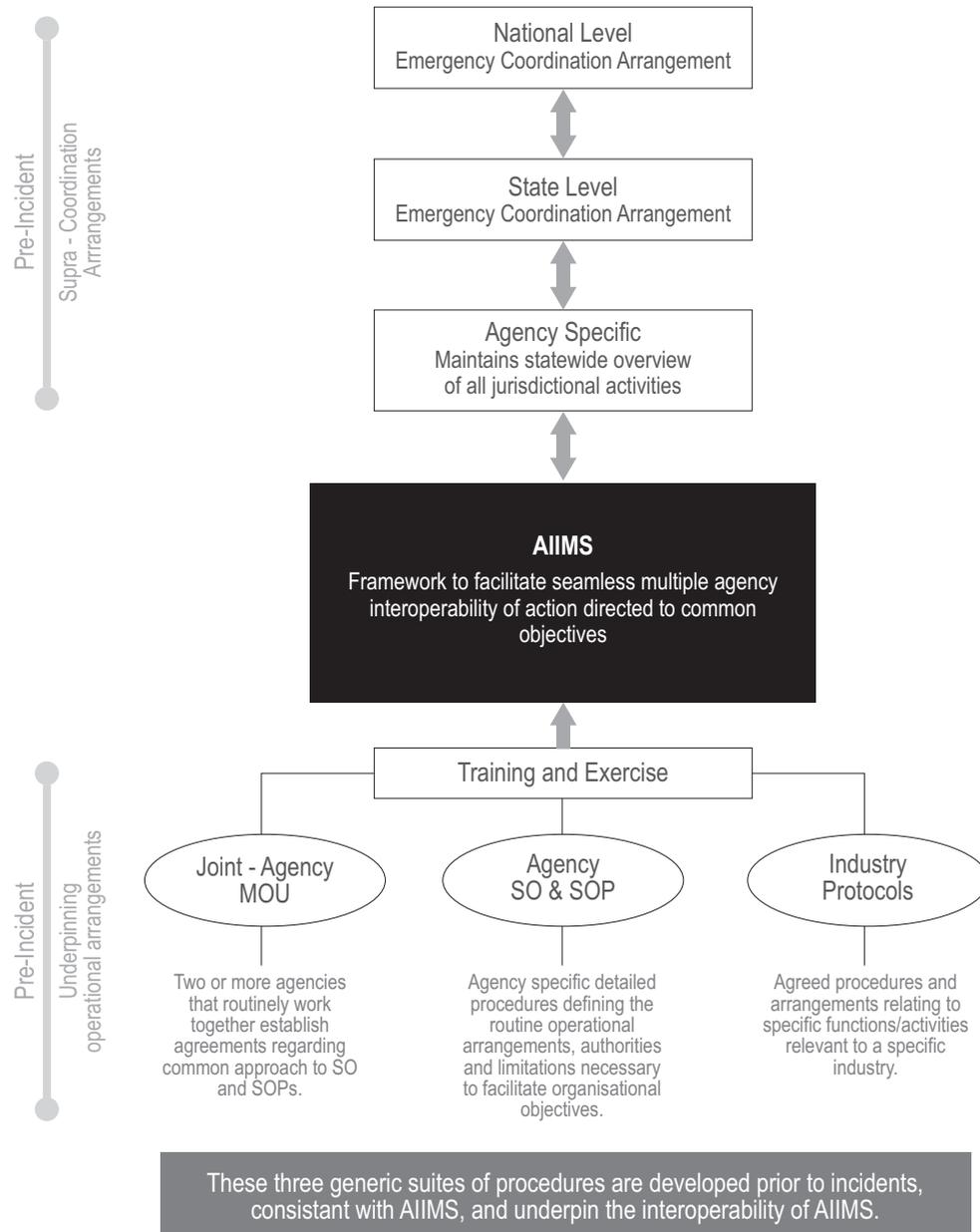
Organisations that adopt AIIMS as their management framework for incident control will need to establish detailed internal procedures to ensure that AIIMS can be integrated into their specific operational environment.

Individual agencies will require detailed, specific standing orders and standard operational procedures defining the routine operational arrangements,

authorities and limitations required and necessary to facilitate achievement of their objectives and responsibilities.

There are many instances and situations where two or more agencies will routinely work together to achieve similar objectives. In such circumstances, the establishment of memoranda of understanding outlining a common approach to relevant standard operational procedures are desirable.

On an industry-wide basis (eg Police sector) there may be opportunities for, or indeed the need for, agreed protocols establishing a common approach to key strategic issues affecting all members within the sector. Such protocols may assist the more efficient access to and utilisation of scarce resources.

In all cases, whether it is the establishment of standing orders, standard operating procedures, memoranda of understanding or industry-based protocols, the procedures and arrangements put in place need to remain consistent with the principles and framework of AIIMS to ensure the seamless interoperability of agencies when working together.

The procedures and arrangements discussed above underpin the effective implementation of AIIMS. However, alone they are not sufficient. Wide-spread understanding of, and familiarity with, the procedures is essential. Both training and exercising in the use of AIIMS and underpinning procedures and arrangements are vital to establish the level of understanding required. Training and exercising within an agency will assist understanding in relation to internal arrangements.

Joint agency training and exercises will engender the greater understanding necessary for interoperability. Further joint exercises enable standing orders, standard operating procedures and protocols to be tested, re-evaluated and adjusted or improved.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1

**Introduction to the Australasian
Inter-Service Incident Management
System™**

Context

The Australian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) was introduced in the early 1990s and has been principally used by the fire and land management agencies. Since then, there has been increasing recognition of the benefits of a coordinated public safety approach to incident management involving all of the emergency service providers. This has been reflected in legislation, government policy, and disaster/emergency management planning arrangements established within and between public safety organisations.

In addition to the formally nominated emergency services, it is also widely recognised that there is a significant number and range of other bodies that contribute to incident management. AIIMS provides a management system that facilitates the coordination of all activities, by all parties involved, in the resolution of any emergency.

A significant initiative that reflects this trend, and one which directly aligns the use of AIIMS, has been the introduction of the Public Safety Training Package. The Package has resulted in nationally agreed industry-wide competencies for control, command and coordination for Police, Fire, Defence, State and Territory

Emergency Services and the Emergency Management sectors. For example, the Public Safety Training Package contains the following agreed industry-wide competencies:

- Control Multi-agency Emergency Situations
- Command Agency Personnel within a Multi-agency Emergency Response
- Coordinate Resources within a Multi-agency Emergency Response.

Public Safety organisations in Australia have an agreed set of competencies required for incident management from the supervisory level through to senior operational management positions. The incident management framework established by AIIMS links directly to the Public Safety competencies for Control, Command and Coordination.

This document has been produced to provide a consistent national framework for the introduction and implementation of AIIMS across all organisations involved in delivering public safety outcomes to the community.

Application

Throughout Australia a number of statutory authorities and government departments are responsible for the management and control of emergency incidents such as those arising from the natural environment, technological/industrial events or civil/political unrest. Organisations that have a significant role to play include the emergency management organisations, and state and local government.

AIIMS is designed to work within the legislative, policy and operational arrangements applying within any particular organisation or jurisdiction.

AIIMS provides a common management framework to assist with the effective and efficient control of incidents. The framework applies across a whole range of incidents from small to large and provides the basis for an expanded response as an incident grows in size or complexity.

The control system of AIIMS involves a structure of delegation to ensure that all vital management and information functions are adequately performed. The control system is made up of four functional areas: Control, Planning, Operations and Logistics.

The system brings together personnel, procedures, facilities, equipment, and communications to facilitate the efficient management of an incident. The system is based on a common organisational structure which has the responsibility for

managing the allocation of resources so that stated incident objectives and outcomes are accomplished effectively.

AIIMS provides an incident management framework that starts at first response and grows with an incident. From first notification, incident management procedures are implemented and incident control issues of resourcing and operational planning are considered.

The Incident Controller will be engaged in planning strategies, consideration of resources and additional actions to resolve the incident. As the size or complexity of an incident escalates, the Incident Controller may delegate some functions to others.

AIIMS will operate effectively for any type of incident, including floods, cyclones, search and rescue, earthquakes, fire, wind storm, aircraft accidents, dangerous goods or hazardous substance spillages, tunnel collapse, outbreaks of disease, transport accidents, and the many other situations in which emergency management organisations will be involved.

AIIMS is adaptable and scalable and can be used effectively for Incident Management either by a single organisation, or by two or more organisations working together.

AIIMS promotes effective multi-agency operations through the use of common terminology and a structure that provides for appropriate communication between organisations at all levels of the incident and establishes a cohesive chain of command within the incident management structure.

System Outcomes

Controlling any incident or series of events, particularly those that are large or very complex, requires strong leadership and management aligned to the achievement of the incident objectives and associated strategies. AIIMS is a management system that is designed to assist an organisation to control a particular incident, or number of incidents, and to achieve the following outcomes:

- provide a safe working environment
- minimise the impact on the community and environment
- provide for the welfare of people involved in controlling the incident
- effectively and efficiently control the incident.

From planning through to operational implementation, decisions at an incident include due consideration of their likely impact on the achievement of the above outcomes.

System Features

AIIMS provides a common management framework for organisations working in emergency management roles. Organisations that adopt AIIMS as their management framework for incident control will invariably need to develop more detailed procedures to ensure that AIIMS can be integrated into their operational environment.

AIIMS is based on three key principles:

- management by objectives
- functional management
- span of control.

Management by Objectives

Is a process of consultative management where the Incident Controller, in consultation with the Incident Management Team, determines the desired outcomes of the incident. These outcomes, or incident objectives, are then communicated to everyone involved, so they know and understand the direction being taken during the operation. At any point in time, each incident can only have one set of objectives and one Incident Action Plan for achieving these. This is to ensure that all incident personnel are working towards the one set of objectives.

Functional Management

In the context of AIIMS, functional management means the utilisation of specific functions to manage an incident. AIIMS utilises the following four functions:

Control The management of all activities necessary for the resolution of an incident.

Planning The collection, analysis and dissemination of information and the development of plans for the resolution of an incident.

Operations The tasking and application of resources to achieve resolution of an incident.

Logistics   The acquisition and provision of human and physical resources, facilities, services and materials to support achievement of incident objectives.

For every incident, an Incident Controller is appointed who is responsible and accountable for all of the above functions. Depending on the size and complexity of an incident, the Incident Controller may elect to delegate one or more of the functions of planning, operations and logistics.

Functional management dictates that there can only be one Incident Controller managing an incident at any one time.

Span of Control

Is a concept that relates to the number of groups or individuals which can be successfully supervised by one person.

Where span of control is exceeded, the supervising officer should consider delegating responsibility to others. Conversely, where the span of control is lower or the tasks are fewer (for example in a de-escalating incident) the supervisor may reassume responsibility or reorganise delegation to contract the structure to fit the tasks required.

During emergency incidents, the environment in which supervision is required can rapidly change and become dangerous if not managed effectively. Under the principle of span of control, up to five reporting groups or individuals is considered to be desirable, as this maintains a supervisor's ability to effectively task, monitor and evaluate performance.

AIIMS Attributes

The attributes of the incident management system, that provide the basis for a common and effective incident management framework and can deliver upon the three key principles, are:

- defined functions
- uniform terminology
- an adaptable and scalable approach
- defined incident management structure
- clearly defined roles and responsibilities

- an effective resource management system

- a risk management approach (See Appendix 1)

- clearly defined communication flows

- comprehensive planning processes

- provides for a competency-based approach to filling positions

- a system for review and modification

- a system that meets the needs of, and caters for, all incidents and events.

The success of AIIMS depends on these attributes being planned for and in place. It is important that these attributes are also taken into account when more detailed procedures designed to incorporate AIIMS into an organisation's operating environment are being developed.

System Benefits

User managed system	AIIMS strengthens and formalises inter-service coordination and control whilst at the same time ensuring that individual organisational responsibility for command of personnel is not compromised.
Standardisation	Increased understanding and communication results from the acceptance and use of uniform terminology, supporting a single incident management structure based on uniform-agreed procedures.
Safety, health and welfare	Designated responsibility for these important matters will assist in effectively meeting the needs of incident personnel. Effective incident action planning will also result in a safer and more efficient working environment at an incident.
Adaptable and scalable approach	AIIMS will accommodate a variety of incident types, complexities, sizes and operational environments. Particular functions and operational elements are activated only at the time and to the extent dictated by the operational requirements of each specific incident.
	AIIMS can be applied at small to very large, simple or complex incidents and provides for a logical and smooth expansion of structures and functions as the response to the incident grows, thereby maintaining effective span of control.

Universal	AIIMS can be effectively applied by all emergency management organisations and provides for the incorporation of other supporting organisations.
Economy	Mutual benefit to all organisations at an incident results from sharing resources, enhanced communications, and through working together on a local, state or national basis.
Roles not just for emergency service personnel	AIIMS provides opportunities for participation by non-operational personnel with skills that support the resolution of the incident. Many of the roles within AIIMS do not require the expertise and experience of emergency service personnel.

Establishing a Safe Work Environment

All emergency service organisations have a legislative responsibility to provide a safe working environment for personnel working at an incident. This includes personnel from other organisations and contractors.

Summary

- The successful introduction of AIIMS is dependent upon acceptance of the concepts and principles outlined in this document and a commitment of effort and understanding to make them work.

- The key to the effective implementation of AIIMS is the translation of its principles into an effective practical structure supported by local arrangements and organisational procedures.

- The three key principles upon which AIIMS is based are:

    – management by objectives

    – functional management i.e. control, planning, operations and logistics

    – span of control.

- AIIMS is an incident management system that is designed to:

    – provide a safe working environment

    – minimise the impact on the community and the environment

    – provide for the welfare of people involved in controlling the incident

    – effectively and efficiently control the incident.

- The attributes of AIIMS provide the basis for a common and effective incident management framework.

- The effective implementation of AIIMS relies substantially on the initiative, training, teamwork and commitment of those involved.

Chapter 2

Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System

AIIMS is a flexible system, that builds with the incident with overall responsibility being vested in the Incident Controller.

AIIMS provides a structure and process of delegation to ensure that all vital management and information functions are adequately performed. AIIMS is made up of four functional areas: control, planning, operations and logistics.

During the initial response phase of an incident, the Incident Controller may perform all of these functions. As the incident grows and its management becomes more demanding, any or all of the functions of planning, operations and logistics may be delegated.

Once the Incident Controller appoints delegates to any of the four functional roles, an Incident Management Team results. The Incident Management Team comprises those people responsible for the four functional roles; control, planning, operations and logistics.

Control, Command and Coordination

AIIMS uses the terms control, command and coordination as they have been defined and agreed upon in the Public Safety Training Package.

Control

Control refers to the overall direction of emergency management activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across organisations.

Command

Command is the internal direction of the members and resources of an organisation's roles and tasks by agreement or in accordance with relevant legislation. Command operates vertically within an organisation.

Coordination

Coordination refers to the bringing together of organisations and other resources to support an emergency management response. It involves the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisational, human and equipment) in an emergency situation.

Note: Coordination does recognise the different operational imperatives, cultures, expertise, capability and legislative responsibility amongst the organisations involved in an emergency. The emergency plan defines which organisation is going to be the controlling agency. The organisation will determine how the Incident Controller is appointed. Pre-incident management planning will take these considerations into account.

The Control, Command and Coordination Functions
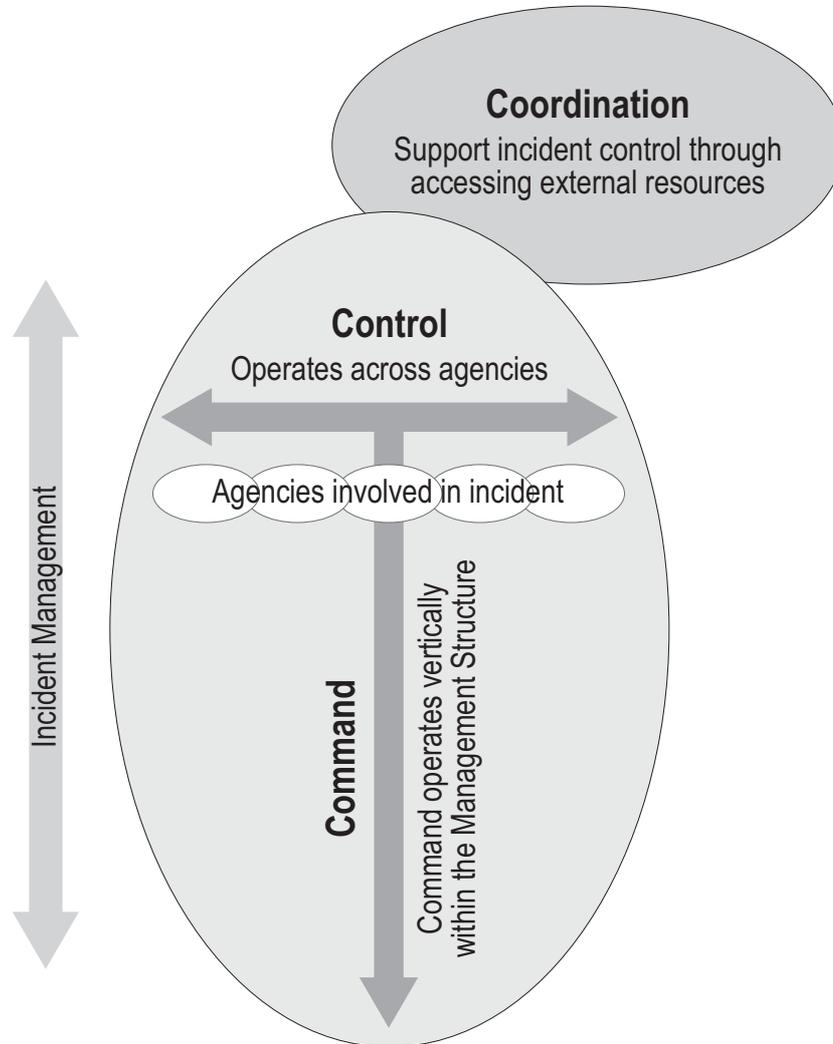
Figure 1: Demonstrating the relationship between Control, Command and Coordination

AIIMS Structure

AIIMS provides a management structure whereby the Incident Controller holds overall responsibility for managing all activities to control the incident. The Incident Controller is also responsible for managing the Incident Management Team.

To manage an incident, the Incident Controller will establish a management structure designed to deliver the key functions of control, planning, operations and logistics.

The way in which these functions are managed will depend on the size and complexity of the incident. At a small incident, or during the early phases of what may become a large or complex incident, the Incident Controller may effectively manage all functions. As the incident develops in size or complexity, the Incident Controller may choose to delegate responsibility for managing these functions to other people. The management structure might eventually expand to have separate people and teams managing the delivery of each of the planning, operations and logistics functions

The responsibilities of the Incident Controller are the same whether the consequences of the incident are of a minor or major nature. However, incident control becomes more of a managerial role as the structure expands and the functions of planning, operations and logistics are delegated.

Delegation of the Incident Controller's responsibilities to persons performing subordinate functions depends upon the type of incident, location, resources required, control, difficulties and assets at risk. Once the Incident Controller appoints a delegate to one of the functional positions, an Incident Management Team results. At all times, however, the Incident Controller retains the overall responsibility for management of the incident and for appointment and supervision of the Incident Management Team.

A major benefit of AIIMS is that the management structure can grow as the incident develops. The Incident Controller develops a structure to match the incident by delegating responsibilities. To initiate this development, the Incident Controller needs to recognise the early warning signs of being unable to respond to requests effectively.

Incident Management Team

Where all functions have been delegated, an Incident Management Team comprises the Incident Controller, the Operations Officer, Planning Officer and Logistics Officer. The Incident Management Team should meet as necessary, as determined by the Incident Controller, to assist the Incident Controller to ensure that control of the incident is being:

- properly planned
- adequately resourced within the constraints of the agencies
- suitably implemented
- provides for the safety and welfare of people involved in controlling the incident
- minimises impacts on the community and the environment and

- is effective and efficient.

For a large or complex incident where each of the planning, operations and logistics officers has chosen to establish sections, the Incident Control Structure would look similar to Figure 2. Each of the components of this structure is explained in the relevant chapters of the document.
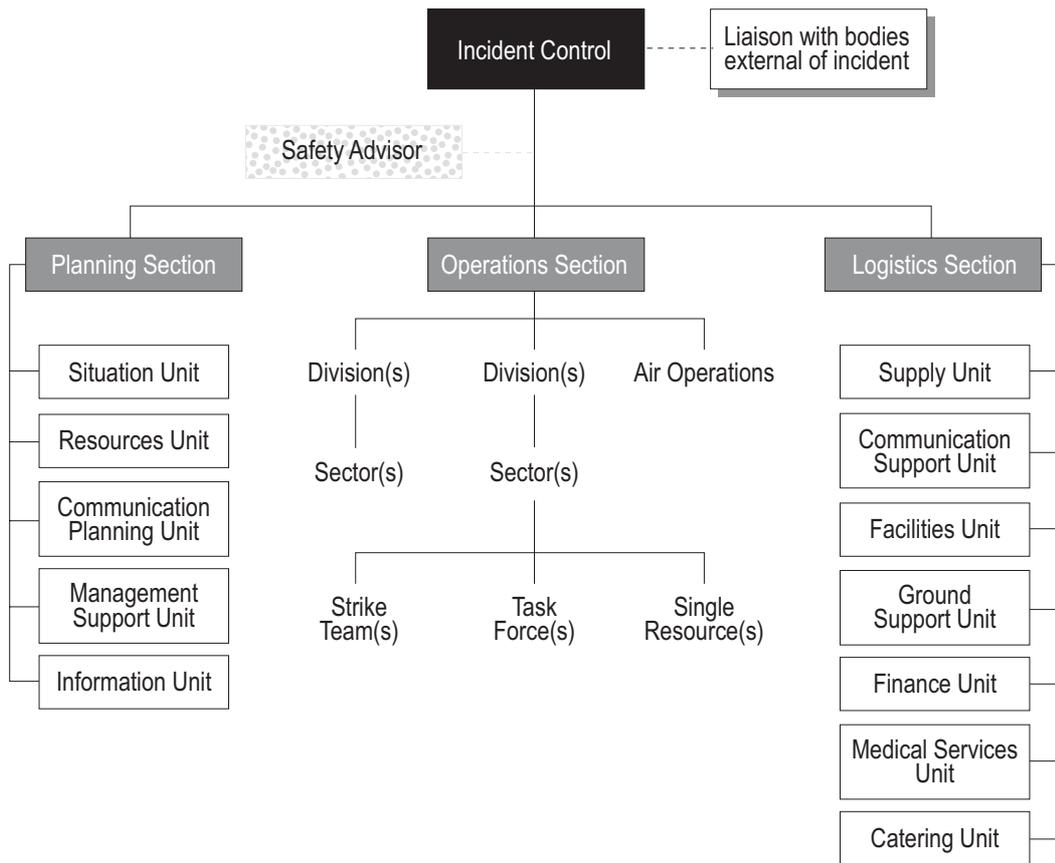
Figure 2: AIIMS Structure

Functions and Responsibilities of the Incident Management Team

Incident Control

An Incident Controller will be appointed to take responsibility for controlling the incident. The process whereby organisations delegate their authority to an Incident Controller is specific to each organisation. Responsibilities of an Incident Controller include:

- setting and achieving incident objectives

- establishing procedures to identify and manage all risks

- providing a safe work environment

- keeping all relevant people, including those in any affected community and in the involved organisations, informed and aware of incident progress.

The Incident Controller will approve the incident objectives and the selection of strategies. The incident objectives are the foundation upon which subsequent action planning will be based. It is the Incident Controller's responsibility to approve the Incident Action Plan.

Refer to Chapter 3 for further information on the role and responsibilities of the Incident Controller.

Planning

A Planning Officer, if necessary, may be appointed by the Incident Controller and delegated with the authority to:

- take responsibility for preparation and delivery of the plans and strategies required to help control the incident

- maintain a resource management system for all of the resources that have been allocated to the incident

- assemble, maintain and provide incident information

- establish and manage a planning section, if necessary, given the size and complexity of the incident.

Refer to Chapter 4 for further information on the role and responsibilities of the Planning Officer.

Operations

An Operations Officer, if necessary, may be appointed by the Incident Controller and delegated with the authority to:

- take responsibility for managing those resources allocated to the Operations Section to resolve the incident

- manage all of the resources that have been allocated by the Incident Controller to resolve the incident

- establish and manage an operations section, if necessary, for large and complex incidents.

Refer to Chapter 5 for further information on the role and responsibilities of the Operations Officer.

Logistics

A Logistics Officer, if necessary, may be appointed by the Incident Controller and delegated to take responsibility for managing activities and resources necessary to provide logistical support during the incident. While all operational resources are under the control of the Operations Officer, unserviceable resources will be managed by the Logistics Officer.

Refer to Chapter 6 for further information on the role of the Logistics Officer.

Classification of Incident

As incidents grow in size and/or complexity management becomes more demanding and the Incident Controller needs to consider the delegation of responsibility. In smaller incidents, the Incident Controller may have the capacity to undertake more than one role and delegate others. As an incident develops, the Incident Controller may elect to delegate additional functions to enable her to devote more attention to the control function.

Level 1 Incident

A Level 1 incident is characterised by being able to be resolved through the use of local or initial response resources only. In a Level 1 incident the major function is operations, that is to resolve the incident. Control of the incident is limited to the immediate area, and, therefore, the operations function can usually be carried out by the Incident Controller. Being relatively minor, the other functions of planning and logistics will, generally, be undertaken concurrently by the Incident Controller.

Incident Controller performs the following roles:
Control, Operations, Planning and Logistics

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies
external of incident

First response
crew(s)
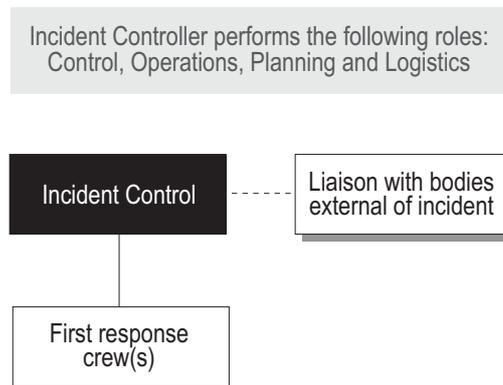
Figure 3: Example of possible Level 1 incident.
First response crew, local response arrangements

The Incident Controller has retained the roles
of Operations, Planning and Logistics and
manages three crews.

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies
external of incident

Safety Advisor
(if appointed)

Crew

Crew

Crew
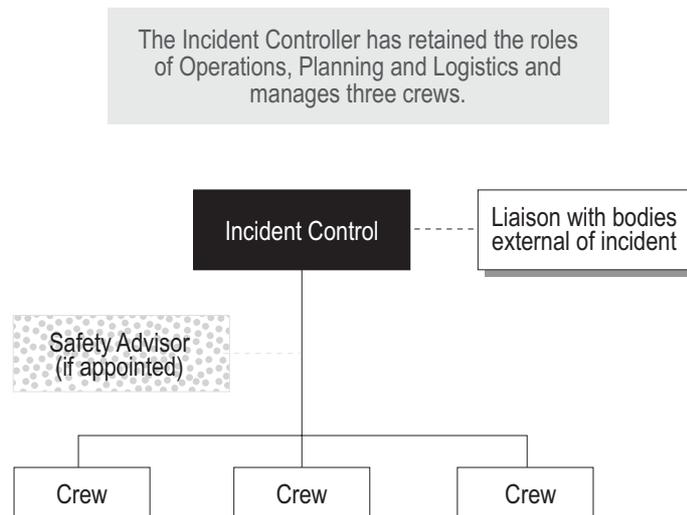
Figure 4: Example of possible Level 1 incident structure.
Local arrangements are for first response by several local resources

Level 2 Incident

Level 2 incidents are more complex either in size, resources or risk. They are characterised by the need for:

• deployment of resources beyond initial response:

OR

• sectorisation of the incident

OR

- the establishment of functional sections due to the levels of complexity

OR

- a combination of the above.

The Incident Controller has decided to retain the roles of Planning and Logistics and delegate Operations.

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies external of incident

Safety Advisor (if appointed)

Operations

Crew

Crew

Crew
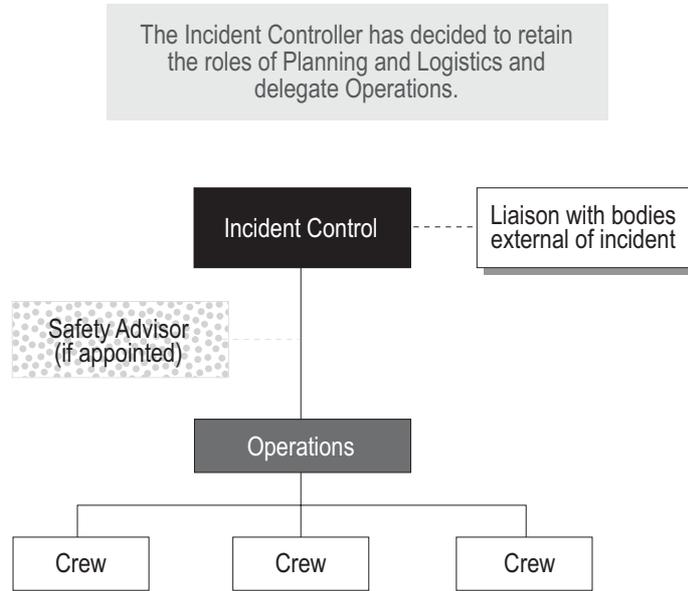
Figure 5a: Example of possible Level 2 incident.
One function, operations, delegated resulting in Incident Management Team of 2

The Incident Controller has decided to retain Operations and has delegated Planning and Logistics.

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies external of incident

Safety Advisor (if appointed)

Planning and Logistics

Crew

Crew

Crew

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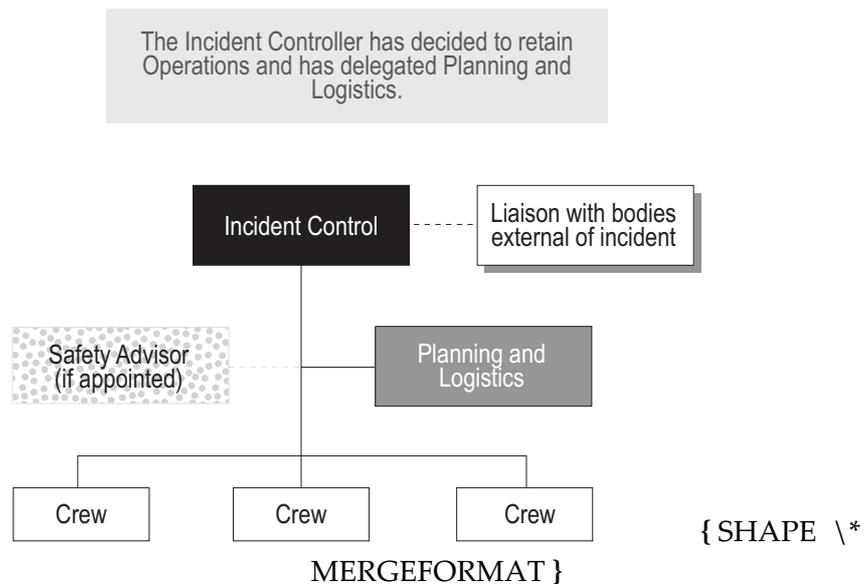
Figure 5b: Example of possible Level 2 incident.
Incident Controller appoints another officer to perform Planning and Logistics resulting in an Incident Management Team of 2

The Incident Controller has decided to delegate Operations to one officer and Planning and Logistics to another.

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies external of incident

Safety Advisor (if appointed)

Operations

Planning and Logistics
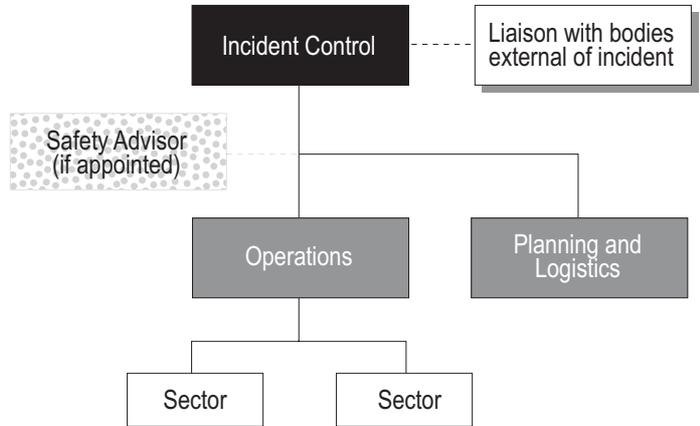
Sector

Sector

Figure 6a: Example of possible Level 2 incident.
Incident Management Team of 3 and Sectorisation of Incident

The Incident Controller has delegated the operations, planning and logistics functions.

Incident Control

Liaison with bodies external of incident

Safety Advisor (if appointed)

Planning

Operations

Logistics
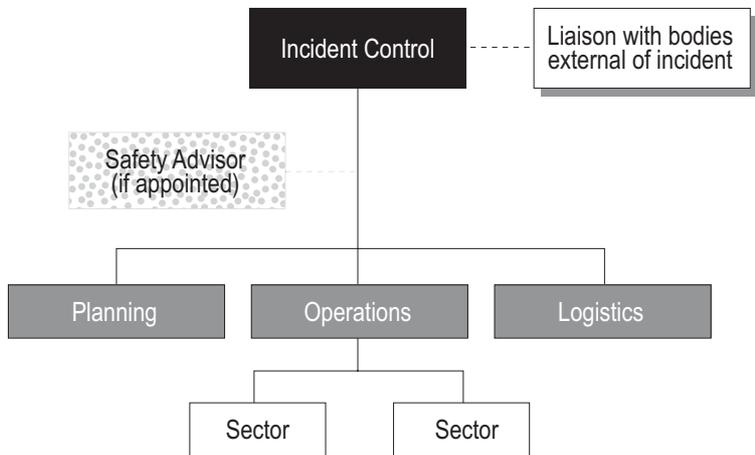
Sector

Sector

Figure 6b: Example of possible Level 2 incident.
Incident Management Team of 4 and Sectorisation of Incident

Level 3 Incident

Level 3 incidents are characterised by degrees of complexity that may require the establishment of Divisions for effective management of the situation. These incidents will, usually, involve delegation of all functions.
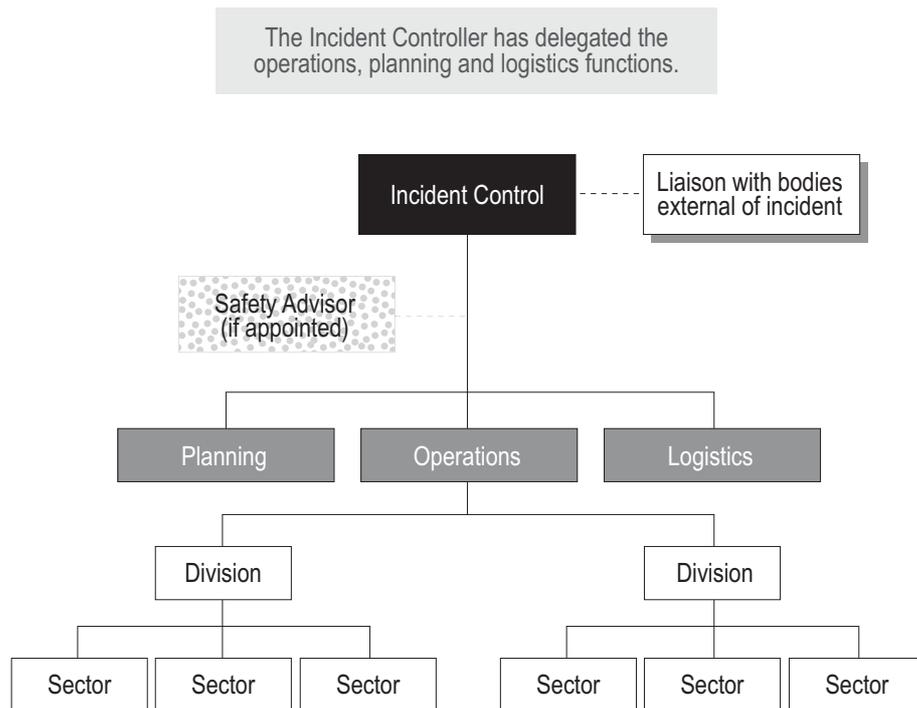
Figure 7: Example of possible Level 3 incident.
Incident Management Team of 4; Sectors and Division Established

Locations for Incident Management

A number of locations may be established to effectively manage an incident. The size and complexity of the incident will determine which type of facilities will be required.

Control Facilities

Regardless of the number of agencies at the incident, it is important that only one facility is identified as the place from which the incident is controlled.

The Incident Controller may operate from a field location (known as an Incident Control Point) or an established facility (known as an Incident Control Centre.)

An Incident Control Centre may be established for any size incident to cater for the needs of the incident. The location of this centre may be pre-determined by agencies likely to be involved and has the infrastructure necessary to manage a prolonged incident.

Operations Facilities

These facilities may include:

Operations Point	The Operations Point is the location from which the overall field operations are commanded by the Operations Officer, once this role has been delegated. An incident will only have one Operations Point.
Division Command Point	If required, the Division Command Point is the location at an incident from which the Division Commander of that division operates.
Sector Command Point	When the incident has been sectorised, if required the Sector Command Point is the location at the incident from which the Sector Commander of the section operates.
Staging Area	A location established to support the incident where prepared personnel and equipment are mustered and available for deployment to the incident ground. A Staging Area will be managed by a Staging Area Manager. A Staging Area my include the provision of welfare and equipment maintenance facilities to cater for the resources assembled there.

Logistics Facilities

Logistics Facilities include those established to provide permanent and temporary facilities where personnel may rest, sleep, be fed and where equipment may be maintained or repaired away from the incident ground.

Leadership and Management

At any incident achieving control requires strong leadership and management at a number of levels throughout the AIIMS structure, and not just merely the adoption of a management structure based on AIIMS.

All supervisory personnel in key functional areas need to provide strong leadership and direction.

Effective leadership and management in incident control require more than technical proficiency in the role. As a leader, an individual needs to be mindful:

- that sound and timely decisions are made
- that incident objectives are understood, supervised and accomplished
- of the safety and welfare of all people involved in an incident
- that timely, adequate and appropriate information is available to all affected parties
- of the need for a cohesive team
- of the need for effective communication skills
- to match personnel to roles according to skills and abilities
- to recognise limitations and seek appropriate assistance to overcome these
- to accept responsibilities and accountabilities
- to use delegations to effectively manage shortcomings
- to understand that delegation does not transfer accountability to others
- to set the example.

Knowing the Team

It is not only desirable that each member of the AIIMS structure be competent for their appointed position, it is also vital that the individual is able to work effectively with other members.

Although it may not always be possible, it is advantageous that members have had the opportunity to train and/or exercise together as a team in order to gain experience by working together.

One way to achieve this is through the establishment of pre-determined teams available to be deployed to major incidents. Deployment of these experienced teams may also provide mentoring and coaching opportunities for less experienced personnel participating in the incident.

Summary

- AIIMS is a flexible management system that builds with the incident, with overall responsibility being vested in the Incident Controller.

- AIIMS provides a structure and process of delegation to ensure that all vital management and information functions are adequately performed.

- The Incident Management Team comprises the people delegated the functional roles of Control, Planning Officer, Operations Officer and Logistics Officer.

- Incidents are categorised as Level 1, 2 or 3 according to their size, complexity, resources or risk.

- The size and complexity of an incident will determine the type, location and number of facilities required for its management.

- Achieving control requires strong leadership and management by all supervisory personnel in key functions within the AIIMS structure.

Chapter 3

The Incident Control Function

Scope of the Incident Control Function

The incident control function includes:

- responsibility for the management of all activities undertaken to control the incident

- management of the interface with organisations and people working outside the incident management structure

- management of the interface with organisations, communities and people affected by, or likely to be affected by, the incident.

The Incident Controller

An Incident Controller will be appointed to take responsibility for managing all activities related to an incident. The Incident Controller is normally appointed by the organisation with the legislative responsibility for overall management of the incident (the Control Authority).

In some instances, the appointment of an Incident Controller may be a legislative requirement for that specific incident. Confusion can arise when more than one organisation is responsible for the incident. In these instances, a predetermined process for the appointment of the Incident Controller is desirable to ensure resolution of the incident occurs effectively.

Whatever rules apply to the appointment of Incident Controllers, it is essential that the:

- appointment to the position of Incident Controller is formally delegated and then well communicated and understood by all persons interacting with the incident

- Incident Controller is readily identified and

- Incident Controller is competent (that is, has the appropriate skills, experience and confidence) for the size and/or complexity of the incident concerned.

The need for pre-incident planning and the establishment of emergency management arrangements is emphasised in situations where more than one organisation is responsible for the incident, for example, vehicle accident rescue. In these instances a pre-determined response plan is useful to ensure that control of the incident occurs effectively and that the roles and responsibilities of participating organisations are clearly defined.

No Incident Controller can work in isolation. The Incident Controller will be dependent on the organisations involved for, among other things, policy advice and provision of resources and other logistical and planning support. In turn, the organisations will be dependent on the Incident Controller for advice on progress in controlling the incident. However, it is essential that the Incident Controller is delegated the authority necessary to manage the incident, and that decisions are not taken elsewhere about how the incident should be managed, or the resources provided to manage the incident, without the full understanding and agreement of the Incident Controller.

It is therefore essential that the relationship between the Incident Controller and the person, or people conducting broader management roles within the various organisations providing support to the Incident Management Team, is clearly defined and understood by all relevant personnel.

For major incidents lasting several days the Incident Controller and Incident Management Team will normally be rostered on shifts. The duration of these shifts will be dependent on the type of incident and industrial requirements.

Responsibilities of the Incident Controller

The overarching responsibilities of the Incident Controller are to:

- control the incident

- approve plans and strategies (Incident Action Plan) to control the incident

- establish effective liaison and cooperation with all relevant persons, including the affected community, external to the incident

- manage the incident as effectively and efficiently as the circumstances allow

- establish systems and procedures for the safety and welfare of all persons working at the incident.

The specific tasks related to these responsibilities include:

- Establish and take control

- Establish a control facility

- Establish and maintain a management structure

- Establish procedures to permit control to be exercised

- Assess the situation, identify risks and determine priorities

- Monitor and review safety and welfare

- Facilitate media management

- Develop the Incident Action Plan

- Implement and monitor the Incident Action Plan

- Communication within the control structure

- Communicate progress and key risks to delegating authority and affected parties.

- Conclude and review emergency activities

Establish and Take Control

The establishment of control of an incident by the Incident Controller is of vital importance. The incident scene can be very confusing during the initial response phase and attending personnel need to know who is in control.

Clear identification of the Incident Controller will reduce this initial confusion. The identity of the Incident Controller should be communicated to participating

organisations and to other stakeholders as early as practicable. When taking control of an incident, the Incident Controller may also identify the nature and complexity of the emergency through liaison with relevant personnel/authorities.

AIIMS utilises tabards as a means of identification of the functions within the system. The wearing of tabards by all members of the Incident Management Team and other officers in the structure is important for the effective identification of key personnel at an incident. Tabards are function-specific and are not related to rank structure or the chain of command of organisations.

Establish a Control Facility

The Incident Controller needs to establish a focal point for control at the incident. An Incident Control Point is normally located near the incident in its early stages but may be relocated to an Incident Control Centre established where more permanent and convenient facilities and services are available. The Incident Control Point at an incident needs to be readily identified.

The establishment of the control facility should be communicated to participating and relevant personnel and authorities using the communications systems and procedures established to facilitate the functions of control.

Establish and Maintain a Management Structure

The Incident Controller establishes a management structure that is appropriate to the type, size and complexity of the incident. The structure may be simple or complex and encompass a number of participating organisations. A key attribute of an effective structure is that it can be expanded or contracted in response to changes during the incident.

At an incident, it is important:

- flow of information is clear, accurate and timely

- human, physical, fiscal resources and communication systems are identified, allocated and deployed

- accurate recording and reporting systems are in place.

Therefore, the Incident Controller should consider appointments to the positions of Planning Officer, Operations Officer, Logistics Officer, and liaison and safety as the nature, size or complexity of an incident changes and places additional demands on these matters.

The issues to consider when delegating are:

- span of control

- current and predicted incident condition or status

- resources required to resolve the incident

- assets at risk

- geographical features which may determine operational boundaries

- filling positions based on required competencies.

The ultimate responsibility for managing an incident always remains with the Incident Controller whether an Incident Management Team has been established or not.

Establish Procedures to Permit Control to be Exercised

The Incident Controller needs to understand his/her levels of authority in the given situation: often such will be prescribed in existing organisational policies, procedures, and protocols.

The Incident Controller should:

- establish communications with all participating agencies

- establish communications and reporting procedures and schedules

- confirm the chain of command within the established control structure, and

- ensure that all participating personnel are appropriately managed.

Assess the Situation, Identify Risks and Determine Priorities

The initial assessment of the incident by the Incident Controller begins before arrival at the scene. General information is often available from the initial call. Local knowledge of the area and pre-incident plans may further create a picture of what to expect upon arrival at the scene.

It is important that the Incident Controller is kept informed of key risks of the incident itself, prospective control actions and their potential implications.

The Incident Controller's assessment of on-scene information should be used to alter, amend or develop the Incident Action Plan.

An ongoing assessment of the nature, extent and potential of the incident and key risk exposures should occur. Analysis of relevant information will assist the

establishment of priorities and determine incident objectives. It is important that the Incident Controller sets clear and justifiable incident objectives and priorities. These should be regularly reviewed in the light of available information, updates, reports and feedback.

Monitor and Review Safety and Welfare

The Incident Controller has ultimate responsibility for maintaining the safety and welfare of combating crews, supporting personnel and the public who may be involved in the incident. This, however, is not solely the responsibility of the Incident Controller. Providing a safe working environment for people at an incident is a responsibility of the Incident Controller, each member of the Incident Management Team and all persons involved at the incident at their respective levels.

General occupational health and safety principles relating to any workplace are based on the principle that each individual, as well as the organisation, has a shared responsibility for workplace safety. Taking individual responsibility for safety must be part of the culture of all present at the incident. All personnel have a responsibility for their own welfare, their workmates and the people they may be supervising. The occupational health and safety policies of the control authority must be adhered to during the incident.

Safety at an incident will depend upon a number of factors including:

- activities undertaken prior to the incident including the preparation of plans and actions to minimise risks

- a process in place to identify, mitigate and report risks

- competence of the people deployed to the incident

- suitability of the equipment deployed to the incident

- inclusion of safety considerations in the formulation of the Incident Action Plan

- recognition by all people working at the incident that they have a specific responsibility to deliver a safe working environment.

The Incident Controller may appoint a Safety Adviser to oversee the occupational health and safety function at an incident.

If appointed, any Safety Adviser will report directly to the Incident Controller or nominated functional delegate (ie. Planning Officer and Operations Officer). Information available through the use of a Safety Advisor should be considered in incident planning.

Many urban incidents involve reduced time and space dimensions compared to some rural incidents and lend themselves to the deployment of a Safety Adviser directly on the incident ground.

However, the geographic extent of an incident may preclude the deployment of a designated Safety Adviser on the incident ground for example, at a rural fire or flood extending over many hectares. In such circumstances, a role that undertakes safety analysis and provides advice directly to the Incident Controller is considered more appropriate.

Safety issues or potential problems affecting one or more sections of the structure needs to be raised and discussed at the level affected and reported up through the structure as early as practicable.

Facilitate Media Management

Part of the Incident Controller's role is to facilitate timely and accurate provision of information is provided to the media for dissemination to the public as required. This may be through the appointment of a Media Officer within the Information Unit if established (See Chapter 4.)

Develop Incident Action Plan

The Incident Controller is responsible for determining the appropriate strategies for achieving the objectives of the incident. Action planning is continuous and plans are constantly under review taking into account the current situation reflected in regular situation reports. Report to Appendix 2.

Regular meetings between the Incident Controller and the Incident Management Team (if established) or crew leaders should occur to assess the effect of previous strategies and may develop new ones.

Once an Incident Action Plan has been completed it must be approved by the Incident Controller, prior to its implementation.

Implement and Monitor Incident Action Plan

Once the strategy is in place to combat the incident, the Operations Officer is responsible for implementation and will allocate tasks appropriately. The tasks need to be specific within the time constraints identified. The resources required for each task are identified and placed under the command of a responsible officer. Status reports are required from the officer undertaking the task. The

Incident Controller will determine the level of detail in these reports and their frequency.

The Incident Controller will also monitor the allocation of components of the strategy to operational and support organisations. In addition, the plan is monitored to meet changes in conditions and modified where necessary. The Incident Controller should ensure that regular reports are received to ensure that progress and emerging risks are monitored.

Communication within Control Structure

The Incident Controller is responsible for:

- communicating to organisations, relevant authorities and individuals who have an interest in the emergency

- supporting personnel require clear direction on their role and safety at incidents. Their organisations require regular reports and information on the resources they have committed and their likely future requirements.

- communicating effectively between the controller and all supporting

- the control centre is the focal point for liaison with supporting organisations and external bodies. The types of liaison necessary will depend on the size and nature of the incident and level of support from other organisations.

Briefings

The Incident Controller should ensure that briefings occur at all levels of the structure and that Planning, Operations and Logistics conduct appropriate briefings within their sections.

Debriefings

In incidents that progress beyond one shift, debriefings are as important as effective briefings. Debriefings can provide valuable new information and/or confirm details concerning the incident through feedback from crews and personnel coming off shift.

Debriefings should be conducted prior to release of personnel at changeovers. Information gained in debriefing personnel can provide additional intelligence to be used in the updating of Incident Action Plans. The same issues covered in debriefings parallel those covered in briefings with information being fed back from the field upwards through the incident management structure.

Debriefs provide information on progress of incident against the Incident Action Plan, the actual situation found on the incident ground and details of any risks identified or encountered.

Communicate Progress and Key Risks to Delegating Authority, Stakeholders and Affected Parties

During the management of emergency situations, public and political interest is usually high.

Part of the Incident Controller's responsibilities is to facilitate the flow of adequate and appropriate information to the delegating authority and, thereby, to the responsible politicians. Such relevant information may include details of the incident, key risk exposures and how these are being managed and, in particular, key exposures that are unable to be managed and the reasons why.

Relevant information could include notification to communities likely to be impacted upon by the incident and advice about any actions that they may take to prepare themselves.

It is also important to consider the desire of potentially affected parties to be aware of how the situation may impact on them. Therefore, an Incident Controller should consider dissemination of information to the communities likely to impacted upon by the incident and provide advice on any actions that they may take to prepare themselves.

Conclude and Review Emergency Activities

The Incident Controller has responsibility for initiating planning for recovery operations and establishing and overseeing plans for demobilisation of operational resources, the accounting of resources and completion of all necessary records.

> More detailed discussion on information flows within and external to an incident are provided in the section of the Information Unit.

Incident Controller Support

At a large and/or complex incident, the management responsibilities of the Incident Controller may be so demanding that the position requires additional direct support. Critical functions that may be delivered by persons working directly for the Incident Controller include:

- intra-organisational liaison
- inter-organisational liaison
- oversight of safety performance
- liaison with affected persons and/or communities
- specialist advice.

Circumstances may be such that the Incident Controller may specifically appoint a Deputy Incident Controller to assist to manage the number and array of issues involved at an incident. The Deputy will report directly to the Incident Controller, and be delegated responsibility for particular functions as determined by the Incident Controller. It is critical that, if appointed, the Deputy Controller is not given responsibilities that have already been assigned to others in the management structure.

If appointed and required to do so by the Incident Controller, the Deputy Incident Controller will act as the Incident Controller in his/her absence. Any such transition in the management arrangements, however temporary, must be communicated to the other senior personnel within the management structure.

In appointing people to the various Incident Management Team roles, or supporting roles within the Incident Management Team, there may be opportunities for shadowing/mentoring to occur to enable persons fulfilling these roles to increase their knowledge through experiential learning.

Technical Advisers

Technical advisers provide expert advice where required. They may be present for the entire duration of the incident or called in to answer a specific question. In some circumstances, the complexity of an incident may require significant involvement by technical advisers or a stand alone technical adviser unit may be established within the Planning Unit.

Summary

- The Incident controller is responsible for:
    - Establishing and taking control
    - Establishing a control facility
    - Establishing and maintaining a management structure
    - Establishing procedures to permit control to be exercised
    - Assessing the situation, identifying risks and determining priorities
    - Monitoring and reviewing safety and welfare
    - Facilitating media management
    - Developing the Incident Action Plan
    - Implementing and monitoring the Incident Action Plan
    - Communication within control structure
    - Concluding and reviewing emergency activities
    - Communicating progress and key risks to delegating authority stakeholders and affected parties.

- The Incident Controller is normally appointed by the Control Authority or the appointment may result from a legislative requirement for that specific incident.

- Incident Controllers are managers. They require the technical training and experience to control the incident and to be capable of using sound managerial practices to implement their strategies in the safest and most efficient manner.

- The Incident Controller needs to organise people to allow sufficient time to consider the issues critical to the incident.

- The Incident Controller must be kept informed with relevant information and be available to the principal members of the Incident Management Team to make the important decisions.

Chapter 4

The Planning Function

Scope of the Planning Function

The planning function is almost exclusively involved with information management. It provides support for control of the incident through:

- collection, evaluation and dissemination of information on the current and forecast situation

- preparation and dissemination of the plans and strategies that are to be used in controlling the incident

- collection and maintenance of information about the resources that are allocated to the incident.

- provision of management support services.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Planning Officer

Planning is an important function of AIIMS. The Planning Officer is delegated the role and responsibility for planning at an incident by the Incident Controller.

The Planning Officer's roles and responsibilities include:

- obtain a briefing from the Incident Controller

- provide a safe working environment for all Planning personnel

- collect information on the current and projected incident situation

- provide weather and other necessary specialist information and incident behaviour predictions

- identify key risk exposures relating to the incident

- disseminate information relevant to controlling the incident and potential safety issues

- develop alternative incident objectives and strategies and identify the risks and likely outcomes associated with each

- identify the preferred incident objective and strategies, including justification, for discussion by the Incident Management Team and approval of the Incident Controller.

- conduct planning meetings

- document the Incident Action Plan for the subsequent operations period (see Appendix 2)

- develop, and review as necessary, an appropriate Communications Plan

- prepare mapping information as appropriate

- develop and maintain an effective register of all resources requested, en route, allocated to, and released from the incident

- regularly communicating progress against the Incident Action Plan to the Incident Controller

- consider rehabilitation in Incident Action Plans

- develop information sharing and transitional arrangements with recovery organisation(s)

- provide incident information services as appropriate to incident personnel, the media and the public

- provide management support services (radio/telephone/computer operators and administrative support)

- collect, collate and store incident records.

Planning Briefings

A briefing to a Planning Officer should include the:

- current and projected situation

- key risk exposures

- current incident objectives, strategies and their rationale

- current and expected resourcing at the incident

- alternative strategies and the economic, social, public health and environmental risks associated with each

- current arrangements for information dissemination

- arrangements are in place to facilitate planning function

- arrangements for record keeping

- opportunity to clarify understanding.

Units within Planning Section

The complexity of an incident may dictate that the Planning Section comprises units and specialist resources dedicated to particular tasks or functions such as:

- Situation Unit

- Resources Unit

- Communications Planning Unit

- Management Support Unit

- Information Unit

- Technical Advice

When all the functions within the Planning Section have been delegated, the Planning Officer's function is mainly managerial. By co-ordinating these units the Planning Officer ensures effective planning.

The Situation Unit	Monitors and predicts the incident's behaviour, prepares alternative strategies and identifies the risks and likely outcomes associated with each.
The Resources Unit	Gathers, maintains and presents information on incident resources and contributes to plans for demobilisation.
Communications Planning Unit	Prepares Communications Plan with technical advice which may be available from the Communications Support Unit within Logistics.
The Management Support Unit	Provides administrative services and operates communications equipment within the Incident Control Centre (and other facilities as necessary).
The Information Unit	Prepares and disseminates information summaries based upon the Resource and Situation Unit outputs.
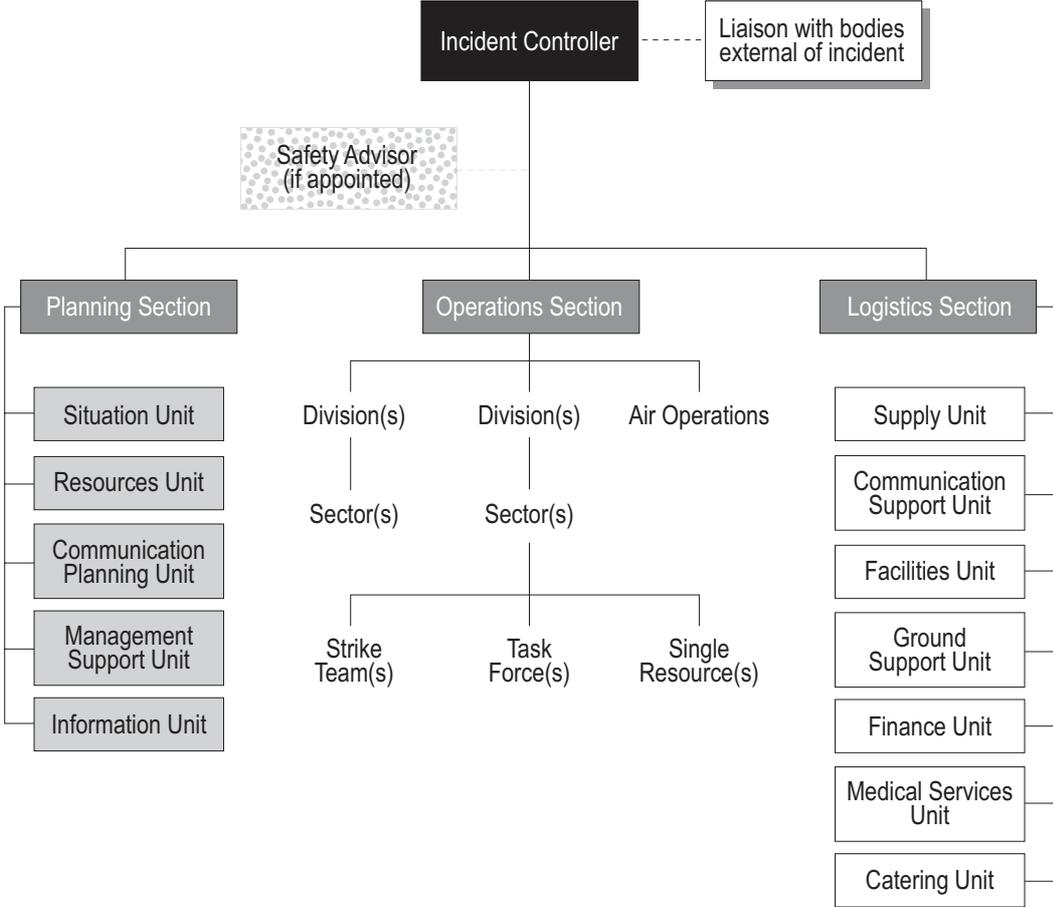
Figure 8: Relationship of Planning Section and Units within AIIMs structure
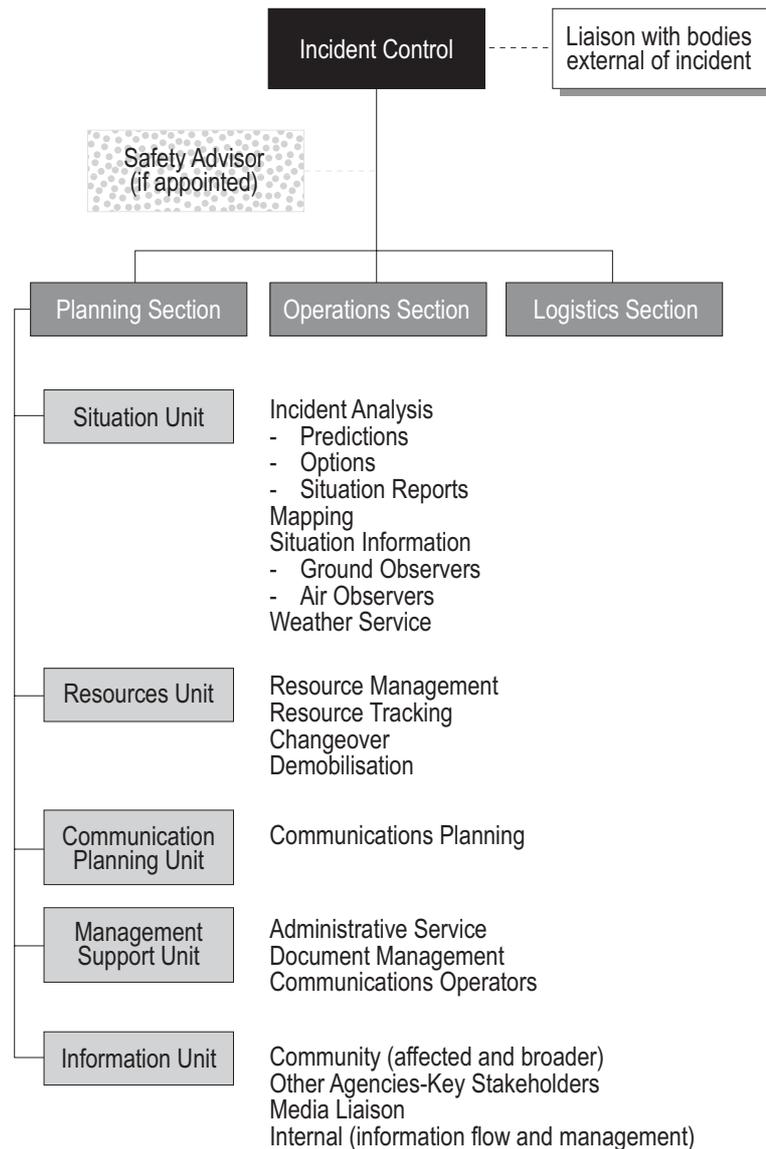
Figure 9: Units within Planning Section

Situation Unit

The Situation Unit is engaged in the collection, processing and organising of situation information. It summarises this information, develops projections and forecasts of possible future events. It also prepares maps and intelligence information for use at the incident. The Situation Unit also prepares a range of alternative strategies, and identifies their associated risks and likely outcomes, for consideration at planning meetings.

The Situation Unit may require the expertise of technical advisers in the evaluation of situation material and scenario planning.

The components of the Situation Unit are:

Incident Prediction/ Options Analysis	This component of the Situation Unit uses knowledge of the current situation and existing modelling tools to predict incident behaviour and to develop alternative strategies for discussion with the Incident Management Team.
Mapping	In complex incidents, mapping information, with relevant supporting documentation, is important for summarising and describing the incident situation. The information may be used to record and communicate intelligence, strategies and tactics, to facilitate briefings and provide a valuable record of the incident's activities.
Collecting, Processing and Organising Situation Information	Establishing Ground and Air Observers, aerial reconnaissance and other methods to obtain field information, and transferring this information onto maps and situation summaries for use by the Incident Management Team.

When an incident involves significant time or space considerations, the use of Ground and Air Observers to gather field information to feed directly into the Situation Unit may be considered. Ground Observers should not be mobilised onto the incident ground without formal advice and acknowledgement by the Operations Officer. Under all circumstances when Ground Observers are used, appropriate safety procedures should be implemented and Operations kept informed of the locations of Ground Observers at all times. |
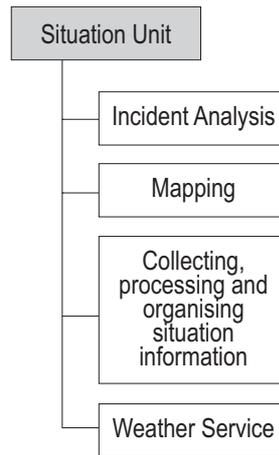| **Weather Service** | Arranging special forecasts for the incident area and coordinating weather observations. Arrange provision of field weather observers and/or specialists, and portable weather equipment if required. |

{ SHAPE * MERGEFORMAT }

Figure 10 Situation Unit

Resources Unit

The Resources Unit is tasked with establishing and maintaining a Resource Management System for the tracking of resources (for example, people and vehicles) and may require support from the Logistics Officer to achieve its establishment and operations.

The Resources Unit requires knowledge of where resources are deployed and what they are doing. It is necessary to show resources as allocated (working), available (within a short time), en route, demobilised or unserviceable. A summary list of key personnel and resources used in the incident will be maintained. The Resources Unit works closely with the Staging Area when established to ensure effective communication flow. Through the collection and maintenance of this information, the Resources Unit will have a significant role in the planning for successful changeover and demobilisation.

Requests by the Operations Section for additional resources are processed by the Resources Unit. If sufficient resources are unavailable at the incident, the request is processed by the Logistics Section.

Time recording operates within the policy and guidelines of the organisation concerned and involves the use of forms and procedures relevant to that organisation. Personnel carrying out this responsibility must be familiar with these procedures and will work closely with the Supply and Resources Unit in the Planning Section to maintain records of personnel as they move to and from the incident.

Communications Planning Unit

In many cases agencies will have existing communications arrangements and default pre-incident plans in place that adequately cater for the incident. However, where it is necessary to develop additional communications arrangements to adequately manage an incident, the Communications Planning Unit will identify the needs and requirements to facilitate operations. The Unit, with technical advice from the Communications Support Unit, will develop and monitor the implementation of the Communications Plan as part of the Incident Action Plan.

Management Support Unit

The Management Support Unit's tasks include:

- provision of individuals as administrative support to the Incident Controller and others as required

- administrative services such as photocopying, typing, and reception

- document management and record keeping

- provision of personnel to operate communications equipment (such as computers, facsimiles machines, telephones and radios) within the Incident Control Centre (and other facilities as required).
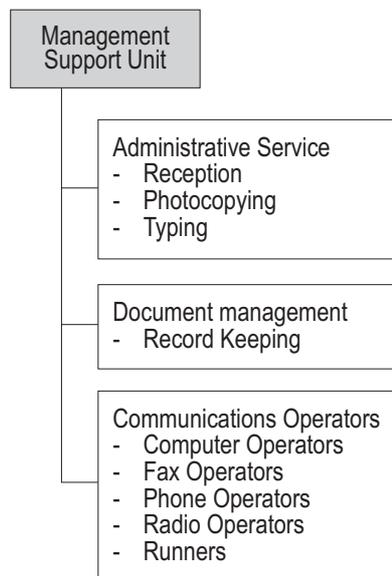
Figure 11: Management Support Unit Structure

The Management Support Unit is located within the Planning Section because it is a key facilitator of information flow throughout the incident. It has a major responsibility for the collation, production and distribution of the Incident Action Plan documents.

Information Unit

The accurate and regular flow of information both within the incident and to parties external of the incident is a critical part of effective incident management. The sharing of information reduces second guessing and leads to better decision making for all those directly involved with the incident or otherwise supporting incident management.

Figure 12 illustrates the five generic information flows that underpin effective communication in relation to an incident.

Incident Information Flows

Figure 12: Incident Information Flows

In order to facilitate appropriate communication flows, the Information Unit compiles accurate information regarding the incident's cause, size, current situation, resources and other matters of general interest and is also the first point of contact for the media, the public and other agencies for general information about the incident.

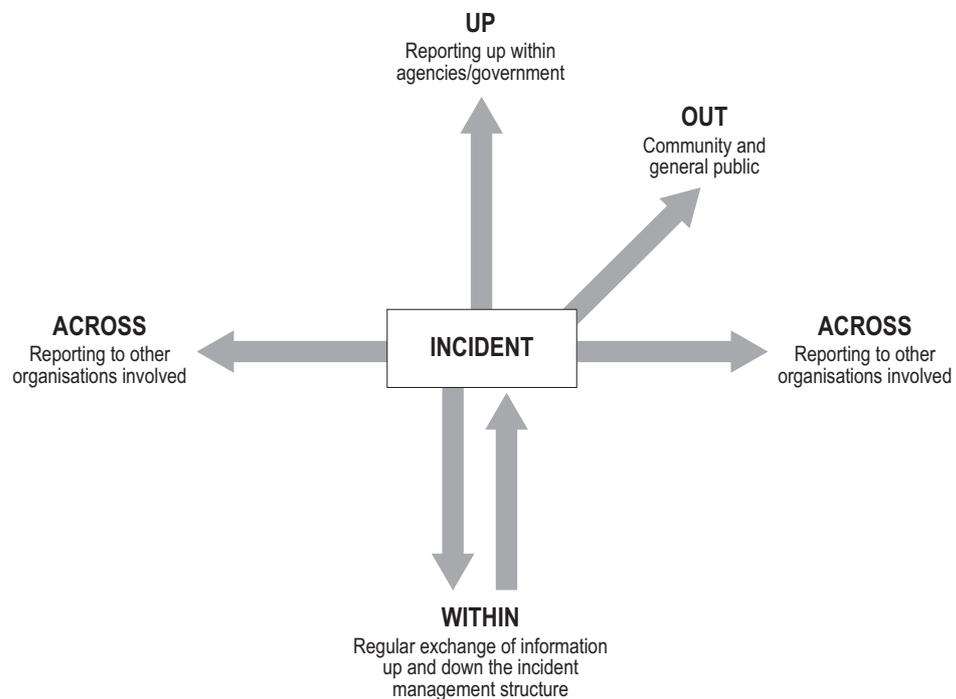For any incident, the provision of information should be coordinated through a single Information Unit. Multi-agency incidents may require several agencies to allocate resources to this single Unit.

The key functions of the Unit include provision of timely, accurate and relevant information to a range of stakeholders, including government, other agencies and community. Community includes both the local community directly impacted by the incident, as well as the broader community for general information. The release of incident information should be authorised by the Incident Controller.

Information collection and release to the news media and other appropriate organisations is vital. The media can provide a useful conduit for the broad dissemination of information.

Proactively working with the media can be advantageous and can assist an Incident Controller to get timely and accurate information to the community who are key stakeholders.

Often this requires the Incident Controller to take action to ensure a Media Officer is appointed within the Information Unit of the Planning Section. If a Media Officer is appointed, some of the roles and responsibilities may include:

- preparation of media releases for authorisation

- provision of public information

- capacity to facilitate awareness of media needs and deadlines.

This officer needs to be familiar with the requirements of the different types of media and their deadlines (for example, radio news required at a quarter to the hour).

Community engagement

Good communication is also two-way, and stakeholder groups and the community can often offer valuable local knowledge and information regarding risks that may have been overlooked in the planning process.

For incidents (particularly prolonged incidents) that are perceived to pose a risk to stakeholder groups or the community, the Information Unit may organise meetings as a forum for two-way communication. Depending upon the risk

involved, the Incident Controller and other representatives of the Planning Section may also attend.

The purpose of these meetings is to:

- provide stakeholders and the community with accurate information about the incident

- identify risks that may have been overlooked

- provide an opportunity for community and stakeholder input and feedback.

Develop the Incident Demobilisation Plan

In demobilisation, the co-ordination and teamwork used in developing the Incident Action Plan are employed in closing down the incident and returning the resources. Issues for consideration may include:

- identifying surplus resources and probable release times

- evaluating logistics and transportation capabilities to support demobilisation plan

- identifying release priorities and procedures within demobilisation plan

- supervising execution of demobilisation plan

- brief planning officer on demobilisation progress.

Recovery and Rehabilitation Planning

Consideration of minimisation of adverse impacts of incident control activities and the impact of the incident itself needs to be included in incident planning from a very early stage. Where necessary, recovery and rehabilitation activities may need to be planned to occur concurrently with operational activities implemented to bring resolution to the incident. In considering the development for the demobilisation from and conclusion of involvement in an incident, the planning section should incorporate plans for a seamless transition of control of incident site from the Control Authority(ies) to those responsible for recovery and reinstatement.

Definition of Recovery and Rehabilitation

Recovery
The coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being.
Measures which support emergency-affected individuals and communities in the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, economic and physical well-being.

Rehabilitation
The operations and decisions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring a stricken community to its former living conditions, whilst encouraging and facilitating the necessary adjustments to the changes caused by the disaster.
From: Australian Emergency Management Glossary (1998)

Summary

- The Planning Officer is responsible for:

    - managing the Planning Section

    - collecting, analysing and utilising incident information

    - risk analysis of the incident itself and the potential control actions

    - developing alternative general control objectives and strategies

    - developing Incident Action Plan(s)

    - organising incident demobilisation

    - disseminating incident information.

- The Planning Officer is delegated the role and responsibility for planning an incident by the Incident Controller.

- At all times the Planning Officer should consider that the following questions:

    - What is the current incident situation?

    - What are the key risk exposures caused by the incident?

    - What is the predicted incident situation?

    - What is the current status of the incident's resources?

    - What are the current incident objectives and strategies being employed?

- If the current incident objectives and strategies can not be achieved, what are the alternatives and their associated risks?

- Is the existing Incident Action Plan appropriate given the current and forecast situation information?

- Is adequate management support being provided to support the incident?

- Are records being maintained?

- Is adequate information being disseminated to incident personnel, other organisations, the media and the public?

- How well are the Planning Section staff performing?

- Are the current incident display maps up to date?

- Which areas of the Planning Section need additional or less resources, training or skills?

- The Planning Officer must communicate with the other members of the Incident Management Team.

- The Planning Officer manages the development of plans to transfer control of the incident site from the Control Authority(ies) to those responsible for recovery and reinstatement.

Chapter 5

Scope of Operations Function

The operations function includes:

- management of all activities that are undertaken directly to resolve the incident

- management of all resources (people and equipment) assigned to the Operations Section.

An Operations Officer may be appointed by the Incident Controller when an incident reaches such proportions that the Incident Controller is unable individually to fulfil the operations function and still effectively carry out other responsibilities. The Operations Officer is delegated responsibility by the Incident Controller to implement strategies to resolve the incident. The Operations Officer is responsible to the Incident Controller.

Responsibilities of the Operations Officer

The overarching responsibilities of the Operations Officer are to:

- establish an operational structure and allocate resources to enable safe work practices to be implemented by personnel on the incident ground

- implement procedures for the welfare of Operations personnel

- contribute to the development of the Incident Action Plans

- establish effective liaison arrangements and cooperation with all relevant persons

- effectively and efficiently implement Incident Action Plans at the incident

- implement process for briefing personnel prior to deployment at the incident

- ensure personnel are properly equipped for the tasks given to them

- ensure personnel are only tasked to undertake the activities for which they are qualified

- keep personnel informed of the situation at the incident; in particular in relation to any issues that could affect their safety or welfare

- implement process for debriefing of personnel before being released from the incident or shift concerned

- provide regular progress reports to the Incident Controller

- identify new and emerging risks at the incident (including political, economic, social, public safety or environmental) and ensure these are either managed effectively and/or communicated to the Incident Controller as appropriate.

The specific tasks related to these responsibilities include:

- obtain briefing from Incident Controller

- exchange information with the Planning and Logistics Section on a regular basis

- develop operations portion of the Incident Action Plan

- establish an Operations Section of size and structure appropriate to the incident and approved by the Incident Controller

- brief and allocate operations personnel in accordance with the Incident Action Plan

- manage and supervise operations at the incident and monitor progress

- advise Planning Section and Incident Controller of incident situation, control progress and emerging risks

- establish and maintain staging areas

- determine need for and request additional resources

- determine need for logistical support

- assemble and disassemble Strike Teams/Task Forces from allocated single resources as appropriate

- reallocate or release Strike Teams/Task Forces allocated to the Operations Section
- initiate recommendations for release of resources
- report events and accidents
- maintain a log of activities.

Briefing to Operations Officer

Upon initial appointment of an Operations Officer and at changeovers, briefings to an Operations Officer will include the following:

- the current situation
- progress to date and projected development
- Incident Action Plan, incident control objectives, strategies and their rationale
- resources and their deployment
- current Incident Management Team and incident management structure
- special factors and safety issues relevant to incident
- communications arrangements
- shift and welfare arrangements.

Conduct of Operations

Operations will be conducted in accordance with the Incident Action Plan approved by the Incident Controller. Specific tactics to be used by the operations section are developed from the incident objectives and strategies contained in the Incident Action Plan.

Operations within AIIMS are accomplished by resources (that is, Strike Teams, Task Forces or Single Resources). At major incidents, Strike Teams, Task Forces and Single Resources will normally report to a Sector or Division Commander. Specific tactics will be directed by the Commanders who report to the Operations Officer via the chain of command. Sector and Division Commanders are responsible for the supervision of all resources allocated to them and to monitor all activities within their area of responsibility.
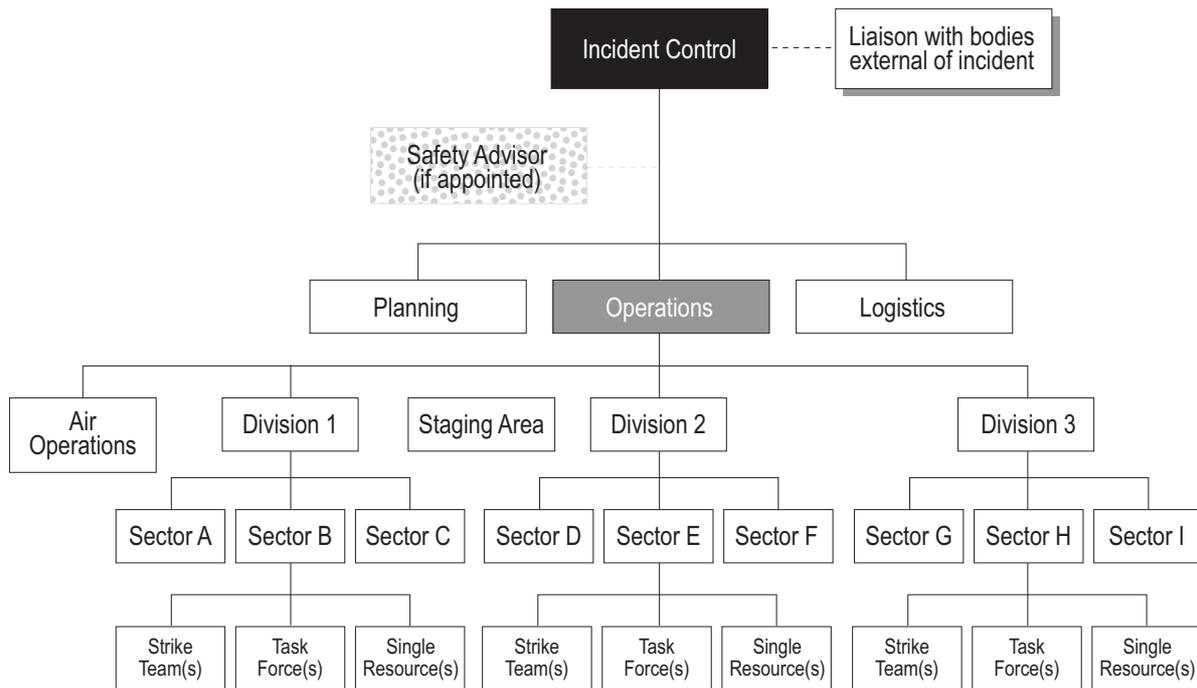
Figure 13: Generic { SHAPE * MERGEFORMAT }Structure of Operations Section for a major incident

All Sectors and Divisions must be readily identified by name and communicated to all concerned. The establishment of Sections and Divisions needs to take account of factors (e.g. spatial separation) that may affect the ability of commanders to effectively exercise supervision over their resources at all times.

Resource Identification

At any incident, all resources must be uniquely and clearly identified in accordance with the identification system adopted at the incident.

The incident identification system used must be standard across the incident and advised to all involved through the Communications Plan.

An effective identification system can reduce confusion and assist managers to effectively allocate and direct resources at the incident. In particular, the benefits of resource identification are that it:

- assists in recording the location of resources or groups of resources

- organises resources into the Incident Control Structure and the chain of command, assisting and controlling communications

- provides for clear directions and orders to be given.

It should be possible, at all stages of the incident, to match personnel names with resources at the incident and to be able to identify their whereabouts.

Development of an Incident

With the development of an incident or as it becomes more complex, the emphasis of the Operations Officer role is shifted away from frontline activity into appraising the performance of several Sectors and/or Divisions. The Operations Officer's time is allocated to:

- managing and supporting Sector/Division Commanders
- providing advice and direction to Sector Commanders/Division Commanders
- strategic planning
- briefing the Incident Controller
- ensuring that communication systems are effective and
- issues resolution.

As an incident develops with a consequential increase in the number of resources, the management skills required of the Operations Officer become increasingly more important.

Roles and Responsibilities of Commanders and Leaders

Operations Section Structure

The Operations Section may include:

- Operations Officer appointed to control Operations
- Leaders to command Strike Teams/Task Forces/ Single Resources (See Chapter 2)
- Sector and Division Commanders appointed to command resources
- Air Operations Officer (if required)
- Staging Area Manager.

Strike Teams/Task Forces/Single Resources

Strike Team and Task Force leaders are responsible for ensuring that duties allocated to their Strike Team or Task Force are efficiently carried out.

Single resources are assigned as primary tactical units under the command of a Crew Leader and the direct supervision of a Sector Commander.

For the more effective use of these resources and to reduce management workload at major or protracted incidents, it may be desirable that single resources be organised into Strike Teams or Task Forces.

Duties and responsibilities of Strike Team, Task Force and Crew Leaders and their reports include:

- maintaining ongoing exchange of information with Sector Commander by providing regular reports on work progress, resource status and accuracy and reporting any significant changes or emerging risks.
- briefing crews
- reviewing assignments with subordinates and allocate tasks
- ensuring safety and welfare of crews
- maintaining a log of activities.

Sub-division of Incidents

Sectors or Divisions may be established according to geographic or functional requirements of an incident. The decision to establish sectors and divisions can be influenced by a variety of factors:

- span of control is exceeded
- complexity of the incident requires their establishment
- access, time and/or space factors dictate
- hazardous conditions are present
- environmental and climatic factors dictate
- geographical factors determine operational boundaries
- better management of a specific operational function, e.g. aircraft operations
- better management of communications coverage.

Sector Commanders

Sector Commanders report to the Operations Officer (or Division Commander if appointed). Their tasks include:

- for implementation of their portion of the Incident Action Plan

- the allocation of resources within their Sector

- reporting on incident situation, the progress of operations, emerging risks and the status of resources within the Sector.

Sector Commanders will be advised of the incident objectives and strategy for their sector by the Operations Officer or their Division Commander (if established). The selection of actual tactics to implement the strategy will, however, usually be determined by the Sector Commander. However, tactics applied on one Sector may impact on other Sectors: Division Commanders (or the Operations Officer if a Division is not established) provide the continuity of tactical operations across Sectors.

The Sector Commander's role includes:

- Maintaining ongoing exchange with the Division Commander (or the Operations Officer if a Division is not established) on incident situation, progress towards achievement of allocated tasks and reporting when:

  – Incident Action Plan is to be modified

  – additional resources are needed

  – surplus resources are available

  – hazardous situations are present, and significant events occur

- providing a briefing to Strike Teams, Task Forces and Single Resources within the sector

- reviewing, allocating and modifying specific tasks in relation to their sector

- observance of safe work practices within the sector

- resolving identified logistics problems within sector

- coordination of activities with adjacent sectors

- maintain log of activities.

Division Commanders

Division Commanders are under the direction of the Operations Officer and are responsible for the portion of the Incident Action Plan that relates to their division.

Divisions may be geographical or functional and will consist of a number of sectors to which specific tasks are allocated. A log of activities will be maintained and, if requested by the Operations Officer, the Division Commanders will attend planning meetings.

The Division Commander's role includes:

- Maintaining ongoing exchange of information with, the Operations Officer on incident situation, progress towards the achievement of Incident objectives and emerging risks and reporting when:

  – Incident Action Plan is to be modified

  – additional resources are needed

  – surplus resources are available

  – hazardous situations are present, and significant events occur

- providing briefings to Sector Commanders within the division

- reviewing allocating and modifying specific tasks in relation to their division

- resolving identified logistics problems

- reporting to Operations Officer

- observance of safe work practices at the incident within the Division

- coordination of activities with adjacent divisions

- maintenance of a log of activities.

Air Operations Manager

The Air Operations Manager is responsible for setting priorities and tasks for aircraft deployed at the incident and providing the Air Operations portion of the Incident Action Plan.

Summary

- Operations Officer responsibilities checklist:

  – obtain briefing

  – develop operations portion of the Incident Action Plan

  – brief and allocate operations personnel

  – manage, supervise and monitor operations

- – advise Planning Section and Incident Controller of incident situation, control progress and emerging risks

- – establish and maintain staging areas

- – assemble and disassemble Strike Teams/Task Forces and Single Resources

- – report special incidents/accidents

- – maintain a log of activities.

- Operations Officer is appointed by the Incident Controller.

- The actions of the Operations Officer, when appointed, support those of the Incident Controller.

- The functions of Planning and Logistics support the Operations Section and provide information and advice throughout the incident.

- Structure of sections is determined and approved by the Incident Controller.

- Span of control considerations will influence determination of Operations Section structure.

- Operations will be conducted as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.

- Any changes to the plan must be approved by the Incident Controller and relayed to other members of the Incident Management Team.

- Operations Officer needs to interact with all other sections.

Chapter 6

The Logistics Function

Scope of the Logistics Function

The logistics function includes support for control of the incident through the obtaining and maintaining of:

- human and physical resources

- facilities

- services

- materials.

At a small incident the Incident Controller may deliver the logistics function. However, if considered necessary by the Incident Controller, a Logistics Officer may be appointed and be delegated to:

- take responsibility for managing those resources allocated to the Logistics Section

- manage those activities necessary to provide logistical support during the incident.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Logistics Officer

The Logistics Officer's responsibility is to obtain and maintain human and physical resources, facilities, services and materials.

The Logistics Officer's roles and responsibilities are to:

- provide a safe working environment for all Logistics personnel
- obtain briefing from Incident Controller
- develop the Logistics Section's component of the Incident Action Plan
- plan organisation of Logistics Section
- allocate tasks to section personnel
- support control of the incident through the procurement and maintenance of human and physical resources, facilities, services and materials
- facilitate effective liaison and cooperation with all relevant persons
- provide progress reports on logistical support for the incident to the Incident Controller
- estimate future service and support requirements.
- establish and maintain staging areas if required.

Logistics Briefings

A briefing to a Logistics Officer should:

- explain the current situation
- explain what has happened so far
- outline the objectives, strategies and their rationale
- identify current and expected resourcing at the incident
- identify alternative strategies
- identify key logistical needs of incident resources
- identify key risks related to the provision of logistical support for incident resources.

Units within the Logistics Section

As necessary to satisfy the needs of the incident, the Logistics Section may be organised into units dedicated to specific tasks/activities such as:

- Supply Unit

- Communications Support Unit

- Facilities Unit

- Ground Support Unit

- Finance Unit

- Medical Services Unit

- Catering Unit

When all functions within Logistics have been delegated, the Logistics Officer's function is mainly managerial.
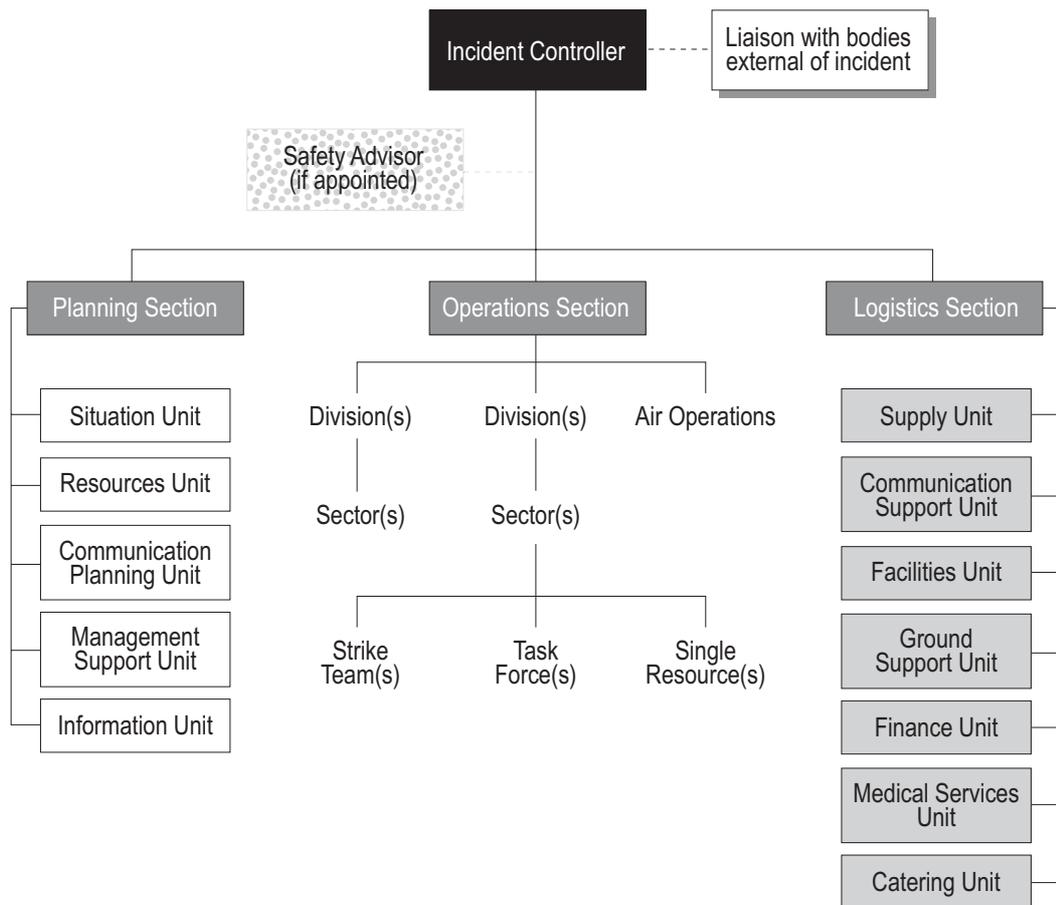
Figure 14: Relationship of Logistics Function and other Units within AIIMs structure

By coordinating these units, the Logistics Officer ensures the effective obtaining and maintenance of resources, facilities and services.

Incident Control		
Planning Section	Operations Section	Logistics Section

Supply Unit	Acquisition Storage Distribution
Communication Support Unit	Acquisition, installation and maintenance of communications equipment Technical advice Communications support
Facilities Unit	Temporary facilities establishment Facilities maintenance Facilities security Base camp
Ground Support Unit	Transport Water supply Fuel Mechanical service and vehicle security Maintenance - small gear, hose Traffic
Finance Unit	Accounts Insurance/Compensation Costs Analysis Costs Recovery
Medical Services Unit	Medical support First aid Medical transport
Catering Unit	Catering support

Figure 15: Units within Logistics

Supply Unit

The Supply Unit acquires and distributes equipment, materials for infrastructure support. The Supply Unit ensures that supplies are appropriately stored and maintained.

Communications Support Unit
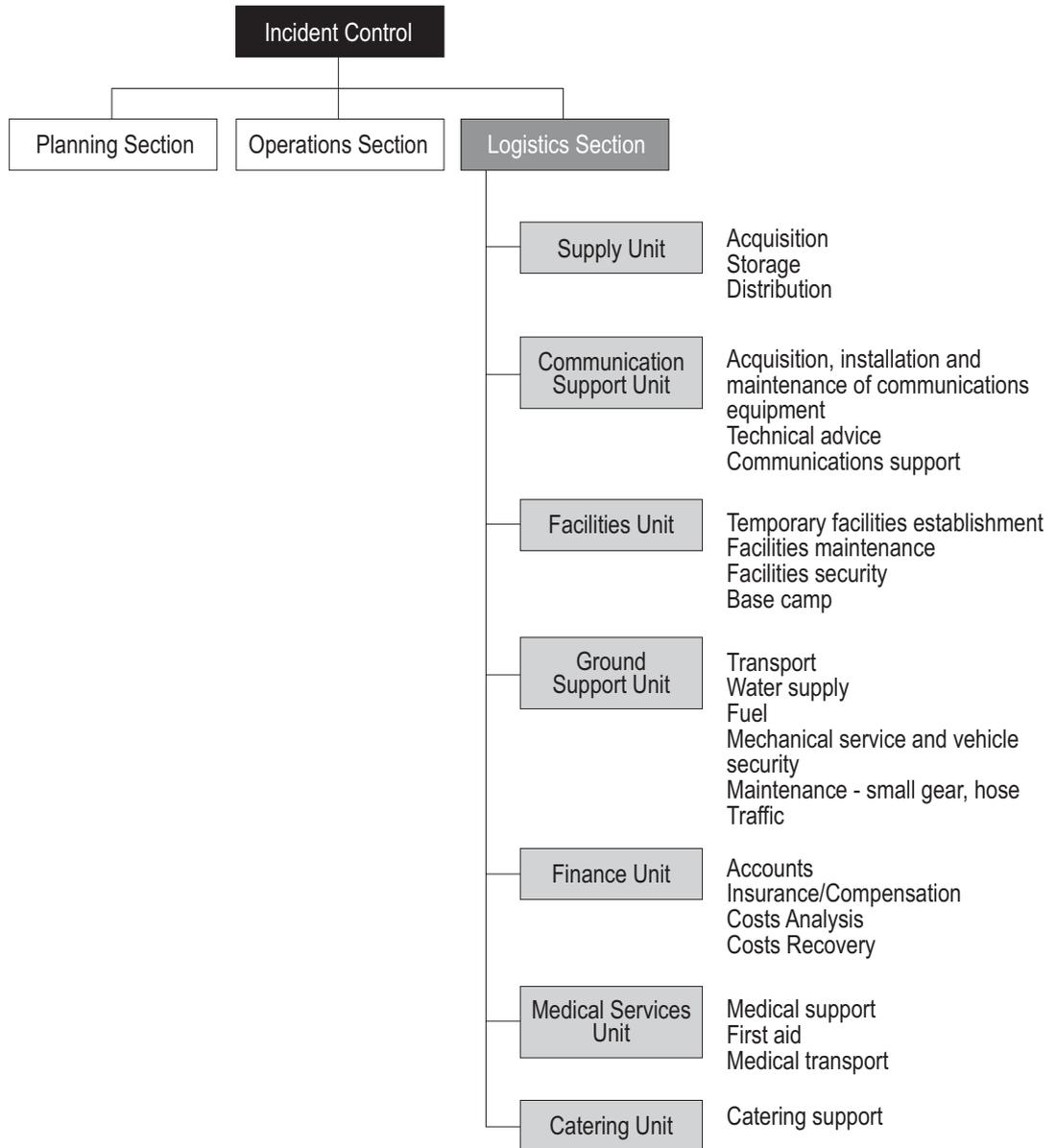
The Communications Support Unit has the responsibility for providing input in areas of the acquisition, installation and maintenance of communications equipment. It provides technical advice and equipment placement for communications (radio, telephones and information technology). It provides assistance to the Planning Section to produce the Communications Plan.

Facilities Unit

The Facilities Unit obtains and manages the necessary facilities and accommodation to support operations and incident control and will maintain them in working order. In many incidents, existing buildings are adapted for emergency service functions. Community halls, schools and other buildings are utilised for Incident Control Centres, feeding, sanitation and accommodation. Where these buildings are not readily available temporary facilities will be necessary. Ovals and recreation grounds may be used for incident staging areas, base camps or for other purposes.

The Facilities Unit obtains and manages the permanent or temporary locations where personnel work, sleep, cook, maintain and repair equipment. This includes the maintenance, security and restoration of facilities during and after operations.

Ground Support Unit

Where a Ground Support Unit is established, it is responsible for providing transport for personnel, equipment, supplies and food, together with fuelling, mechanical maintenance and security of all equipment and vehicles at the incident. The organisation of traffic in and around the incident is achieved by the Ground Support Unit developing and implementing a Traffic Plan

Finance Unit

This Unit, which may develop a major role at large incidents, is responsible for:

- accounts for purchases of supplies and hire of equipment

- insurance and compensation for personnel, property and vehicles, and

- collection of cost data, performing cost effective analyses and providing cost estimates for the incident.

Most finance functions are catered for on a day-to-day basis within organisations, therefore this Unit may function as an extension of that process.

Accounts for Purchase of Supplies and Hire of Equipment

The processing of accounts should follow the normal operating procedure for the relevant organisation. This function also must work closely with Supply to ensure effective records are maintained during the ordering, delivery and invoicing of supplies so that the certification of accounts for payment can proceed without undue delay. Where plant or equipment is hired there is a requirement to maintain accurate records of its procurement, use and release.

Compensation and Insurance for Personnel, Property and Vehicles

Personnel may suffer injury, their personal property may be lost or damaged, and vehicles or equipment damaged or destroyed. Most organisations have procedures in place for these events and legislation and policy direction determine the actions to be taken. For obvious reasons, prompt processing of claims for compensation and insurance is desirable.

Collection of Cost Data, Performing Cost Effective Analysis and providing Cost Estimates for the Incident

Expert financial personnel may be required to perform this function. Due to budgetary and economic pressures, it is very likely cost conscious agencies will be required, in the future, to maintain detailed financial records of incident operating costs.

Medical Unit

When established, the Medical Unit of the Logistics Section provides medical support such as first aid, medical transport to personnel involved in managing the incident.

Catering Unit

The provision of food and drink to personnel becomes more complex as the incident expands. With more personnel in attendance, more locations for feeding are required and differing meal times are necessary for on and off duty shifts. In many instances planning has already been completed and procedures established to cater for this requirement.

Summary

- Logistics Officer's responsibilities checklist:

    – provide a safe working environment for all Logistics personnel

    – obtain briefing from Incident Controller

    – plan organisation of Logistics Section

    – allocate tasks to Section personnel

    – develop Logistics Section of Incident Action Plan

    – organise resources

    – estimate future service and support requirements

    – provide progress reports on logistical support to the Incident Controller

    – provide technical advice to the Planning Section in preparation and implementation of Incident Action Plan.

- The Logistics Officer is appointed by the Incident Controller.

- Units within the Logistics Section are utilised only as necessary; with additional positions and duties being added, as required.

- The Logistics Officer must be prepared to delegate responsibility for key functions when it is clear there is a demand for additional resources. The expansion of this section into functional units requires the placement of additional personnel (some with specialist skills), who are delegated responsibility and supervised by the Logistics Officer.

- The Logistics Officer needs to interact with all other sections.

Appendix 1

Risk Management as the Foundation

Risk Management

'Risk' is a concept that describes the likelihood of harmful consequences arising from the interaction of hazards, communities and the environment'. (Emergency Management, 1998, p. 85). Risk management may be defined as the 'culture, processes and structures that are directed towards the effective management of potential opportunities and adverse effects (Standards Australia, 1994, p.4.) The importance of adopting a risk management approach within the profession of emergency management is also reflected in the development of the Emergency Risk Applications Guide by Emergency Management Australia (EMA, 2000.)

AIIMS is a system designed to facilitate the better management of the treatment phase of the risk management cycle. The implementation of AIIMS will require that agencies engage in the identification and evaluation of risks relevant to their jurisdiction. As a result of such, agencies will need to develop their detailed procedures and arrangements to prevent, prepare and instigate against risks. The following provides a very brief overview of approaches currently available within Australia.

Risk Management Cycle
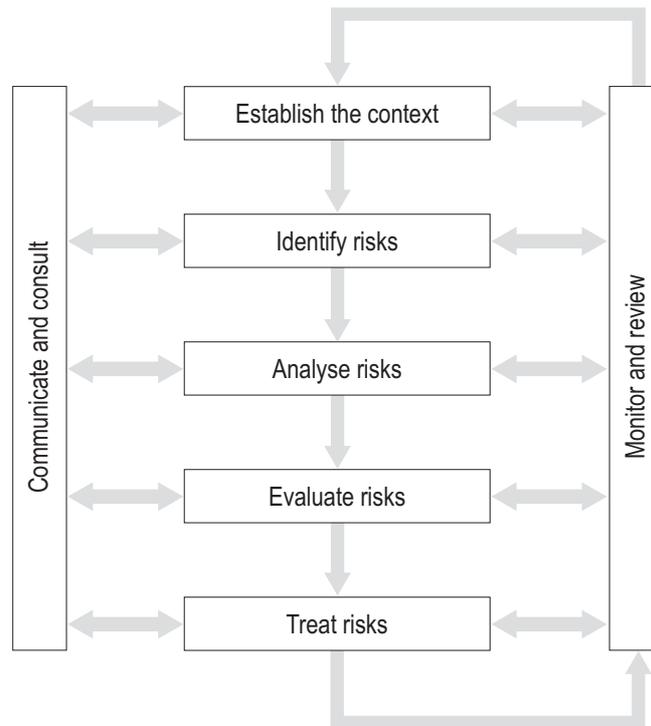
(AS/NZS 4360 Risk Management)

The Risk Management Standards (ASA/NZS 4360, 1999) identifies the following categories of risk treatment options:

- avoid the risk by not undertaking activities that generate risk

- reducing the likelihood of the event, for example through inspection and process controls

- reducing the consequences of the event, for example implementing disaster recovery plans

- transferring the risk, for example by having adequate insurance coverage, and

- retaining the risk, for example through acceptance that residual risk remains.

Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Model

An alternative way of thinking about risk treatment options where emergency services have a meaningful role to play is to use the Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) model originally developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Unites States during the early 1980s. The PPRR framework is widely used and is also the basis for the emergency management arrangements that currently operate in most Australian states. These elements may be defined as:

- prevention: the identification of hazards, the assessment of threat to life and property and the taking of actions to avoid the hazard.

- preparation: the arrangements or plans to deal with an emergency or the effects of an emergency.

- response: the process of combating the hazard and providing immediate relief to affected people, and strategies to be adopted to achieve the defined incident objectives

- recovery: returning the affected community to its normal level of functioning after an emergency.

These four elements of the PPRR model are often wrongly described as four 'phases' of an emergency. This suggests that the activities are sequential and that prevention and preparedness activities must always be undertaken prior to the impact of an event.

Pre-impact

Authorities will have sufficient understanding and experience in their operating environment to undertake a comprehensive risk analysis prior to any incident occurring. Risk management flows initially from an organisation's policies. The first element of a risk management approach is to establish the context in which an event is envisaged.

Risk management plans (often referred to as incident pre-incident plans) identify the key risks and analyse them to establish the treatments to be applied to mitigate them. The identification of risks and options for their treatment during pre-planning should involve consultation with key stakeholders. These plans should be prepared and reviewed regularly.

Treatments may include actions to avoid an event (prevention), reduce the impact of an event should it occur, and preparation of systems and equipment to respond to an event (preparedness). The role to be played by the community and

other stakeholders in prevention, preparedness and response should be included in preplanning.

Impact

A risk management plan prepared prior to an incident will, ideally, provide an overview of the range of risks that may be present during an incident and include a checklist of actions and options to assist the Incident Controller, and others to manage the incident at least in the early stages. Throughout the course of an incident, a risk management approach underpins the ongoing review of incident action plans and the management of incidents. In considering issues during the course of an incident, a risk management approach would also consider the implications of proposed strategies in terms of subsequent recovery and rehabilitation of the community.

The risks examined should include those of the incident itself, prospective control actions and any aftermath of both the incident and control actions. The risks considered should include political risks (for example loss of organisational reputation through poorly selected strategies and associated public outrage), economic risks (for example, loss of community earnings as a result of the incident or incident control), social (for example, risk to communities), public safety and environmental risks (such as ill considered use of fire retardants or chemicals that may effect future water quality in catchments).

It is incumbent upon the Incident Management Team to familiarise itself (or seek advice) on relevant legislation and take measures to ensure compliance. This includes Occupational Health and Safety Legislation and environmental legislation.

Many emergency management organisations operate under legislation that overrides other legislation. However, this is not to the exclusion of the other legislation to which due consideration must be given.

Post impact

As resolution of the incident becomes apparent, a greater focus on planning is placed upon recovery and rehabilitation of the community. Depending upon the nature of the incident, the management of recovery and rehabilitation may be transferred to another organisation. The combatant authority may still have a role in assisting in components of the recovery/rehabilitation phase. Following the conclusion of the response phase, attention should be given to the collection of information that will assist in the identification of improvements to organisational systems, processes, policies and procedures. This is normally

achieved through formal debriefs and provides the monitoring and review elements of the risk management approach.

The information gained through post-incident analysis provides organisations with a new context to review their risk management approach to future incidents.

Appendix 2

Planning

Incident Action Planning

Incident action planning is a process supporting the incident management system. After consideration of all factors affecting an incident, an Incident Action Plan is developed to manage the incident and as a tool to communicate the incident objectives. The function of an Incident Action Plan is to:

- describe the overall incident objectives and strategies

- identifies key risk exposures (including the impact on the community and the environment)

- ensure continuity of control operations

- provide effective use of resources and

- identify total anticipated resources.

It contains incident objectives and strategies with specific time frames, which will be reviewed at subsequent planning meetings and, when adopted by the Incident Controller, is distributed to the required level of the control structure and to supporting organisations. It is possible that the equivalent of such a plan may have been prepared prior to the incident and that it exists in, for example, a pre-incident-plan, major hazard plan or similar document.

The Incident Action Plan provides information describing the incident and how it will be managed for a specific period of time, called the operational period, and is usually (but not always) based on a shift.

At a small incident, the Incident Controller may develop a mental Incident Action Plan. This mental Incident Action Plan would be based on an initial assessment upon arrival and knowledge of pre-existing plans and standard operating procedures. Should an incident develop beyond that catered for in a pre-incident plan and standard operating procedures, so should the Incident Action Plan. For incidents that have a potential for extended involvement, the Incident Action Plan should be documented. However, during rapidly escalating incidents it can be extremely difficult for a written plan to be prepared in the initial stages. Nevertheless, an assessment of the situation should still occur and an objective be determined. As soon as practicable, a written plan should be prepared, in case the incident increases in complexity and to record the information for subsequent incident analysis and debriefs.

A well-designed Incident Action Plan will include:

- a statement of the current situation and predictions of the incident's likely development (including key risk exposures)
- incident objectives to be achieved
- strategies to be adopted to achieve the defined incident objectives
- provide information on alternative and/or 'fallback' strategies
- a Structural Chart depicting the personnel in the AIIMS Structure if one has been established
- management arrangements that are to apply, including the establishment of any Sectors and/or Divisions and, if so, their respective roles
- identification of the resources to be allocated to each Division and/or Sector
- maps and/or site plans of the incident's location showing Divisions, Sectors and the area affected
- a Medical Plan and/or consideration of occupational health and safety issues
- a Communications Plan including information on all agencies involved and appropriate contact details
- timings of meetings and changeovers
- accommodation and welfare arrangements
- information regarding necessary logistical arrangements
- a traffic management plan, if required, showing direction of travel around the incident

- information plan for dissemination of information to all stakeholders.

Whether or not the Incident Action Plan is in written form, it must be approved by the Incident Controller.

It is also essential that the Incident Action Plan is communicated effectively throughout all levels of the structure that is in place to manage the incident.

A written Incident Action Plan consists of parts which may stand alone. Only appropriate parts of the plan need to be circulated to the officers responsible for its implementation.

Given that the purpose of the Incident Action Plan is to effectively communicate information, an effective plan will exhibit the following characteristics:

Accuracy In a rapidly changing incident environment, it is important to base the decision making process on as accurate information as possible without compromising the timeliness of the development of the Incident Action Plan. Regular situation and Ground Observer reports, ready access to technical advice and pre-incident planning documents and tools (such as databases) can facilitate accurate decision making.

Timeliness It is important that an Incident Action Plan is developed and distributed in a timely manner. Development of an Incident Action Plan can be time consuming. Therefore, it is important to plan its development with identified timeframes for task completion to ensure the Incident Action Plan is produced on time. Distribution of the Incident Action Plan should be supported by a briefing. If briefings are being held in a number of locations, production of the Incident Action Plan will need to take into account how and when it will be delivered to support changeovers at remote locations.

Relevance and Conciseness An Incident Action Plan is designed to assist incident management for a particular operational period. The Incident Action Plan should not be unwieldy. It should summarise relevant incident information. Cumbersome or unnecessarily lengthy documents may hinder information flow and decision-making rather than assist it.

Completeness An Incident Action Plan should provide critical information to users to enable them to do their job. Lack of information may, at worst, compromise safety and, at best, hinder efficiency.

Objective Setting

An objective is critical for the effective management of an incident. The objective should be able to clearly communicate to all those involved what is to be achieved. A well worded objective has meaning and provides direction for every person at an incident

As Incident Controller has responsibility for the control of the incident, this officer sets the objective. It will state what the Incident Controller wants done, when and why. The objective may change with circumstances, there may be a different objective for each shift under escalating circumstances, and a static but relevant objective for a stable or deescalating incident.

A good objective will include:

- an intent (what)

- a time parameter (when)

- a space parameter (where).

Modern management theory and practice suggests that an objective be a SMART objective; that is:

- specific

- measurable

- achievable

- relevant

- timeframed.

At the end of each shift, it is desirable that the Incident Controller and Incident Management Team review progress against their stated objectives and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented during the shift. This information can assist an incoming shift in reviewing/implementing the new Incident Action Plan and strategies they may adopt.

Strategies

A strategy outlines how an objective will be implemented. In the AIIMs system, the Operations Officer in conjunction with the Planning Officer determines the strategies for each Sector and Division. Generally only incident objectives and strategies are included in an Incident Action Plan.

Tactics

Tactics are the detailed activities implemented to achieve a strategic outcome. Tactics and tasks to achieve the specified strategies within an Incident Action Plan are determined in the field close to where the action is to take place. Therefore, tactics may be determined at the Division, Sector or Crew level as the incident requires.

The Planning Meeting

When appointed, the Planning Officer should have the primary responsibility for developing and documenting the Incident Action Plan. Input from others, including members of the Incident Management Team, is essential. Therefore, the development of a written Incident Action Plan usually involves planning meetings.

The purpose of a planning meeting is to:

- ensure that all the Section Officers (for example, Planning, Operations and Logistics Officers) have current situational information
- determine/confirm the objectives
- determine the strategies for the incident
- discuss the relevant components of the Incident Action Plan.

Planning meetings are attended by the Incident Management Team and other personnel requested by the Incident Controller, and should be held at regular intervals throughout the incident as necessary given the dynamics of the emerging situation. In preparing for this planning meeting the Operations Officer, who is responsible for the direct management of all incident operations, checks that activities, size and structure of the Operations Section is appropriate to the current and predicted incident and approved by the Incident Controller.

In the initial phases of an incident, the draft incident objective and strategies are prepared by the Planning and Operations Sections and include consideration of the following:

- the current situation
- key risk exposures to incident personnel, the community and the environment
- current control operations
- availability of resources
- weather and its influence on the incident

- pre-incident planning for the area

- safety, logistics and communications considerations

- a range of control options and the risks involved with each and

- recommended option and justification.

This information is made available to a planning meeting to discuss and consider options, refine as necessary and to recommend incident objectives and strategies for approval by the Incident Controller. Whilst strategies and tactics to manage the emerging situation may of necessity change to reflect the new factors impacting upon it, the incident objectives will normally not change through the course of an incident except to reflect new or unusual circumstances.

Appendix 3

Briefings

Communications within the Control Structure

It is essential that all those at an incident understand the:

- objectives
- strategies to control the incident
- safety issues associated with controlling the incident
- role they are to play in controlling the incident
- reporting relationships.

It is therefore important that people be properly:

- briefed before being dispatched to the incident
- briefed before being deployed at the incident
- briefed at regular intervals during the incident
- debriefed before finishing their work period at the incident
- debriefed before being dispatched from the incident.

Managers at all levels must be in regular contact with the people in their group throughout their work period at the incident, to ensure:

- progress on the tasks assigned to them is reported regularly to the Incident Controller or Incident Management Team

- necessary changes in the strategies being adopted to control the incident can be determined and approved by the Incident Controller if required

- all people are aware of any factors that may affect their safety

- individuals feel empowered to ask questions and report any concerns and contingencies.

Briefings are a key component of effective incident management as they maintain an effective flow of information to those involved. Whilst in many situations information may not be available to brief first responding crews, subsequent responding resources should be briefed prior to being tasked at the incident. For protracted incidents it is desirous to brief crews prior to their despatch, if possible, then upon arrival at an incident, at regular intervals and at changeovers.

Briefings before arrival

At a briefing prior to despatch the following type of information should be provided where possible:

- the functional role that an individual or crew will undertake and required competencies

- the type and size of the incident

- physical resource requirements

- to whom the individual or crew should report upon arrival at the incident

- the location of where to report

- opportunity to clarify understanding.

Briefings upon arrival and at regular intervals during the incident

Briefings may vary according to the role within the structure.

A briefing to an Incident Controller and Incident Management Team should include, where possible, the following informaton:

- the current situation

- what has happened so far

- the incident objectives, strategies and their rationale

- current and expected resourcing at the incident

- alternative strategies

- political, economic, social, public health and environmental risks

- key locations (for example, the Control Facilities/Staging Area/s etc)

- the boundaries of all Sectors and Divisions

- the strategies for each Sector and Division

- chain of command including personnel in the Incident Management Team

- factors affecting the management of the incident such as terrain, nature of vegetation, special hazards, weather and exposures

- location of Incident Management Team personnel

- provide information on the Communications Plan

- occupational health and safety issues

- define shift times, changeover arrangements

- accommodation and welfare arrangements

- opportunity to clarify understanding.

Briefings to Sector and Division Commanders

Briefings to Sector and Division Commanders should include, where possible, the following information:

- current and projected situation

- key risk exposures to be aware of or managed

- control activities and progress to date

- incident objectives and strategies and their rationale

- key operations points (for example, the Control Centre/Point, Staging Area/s, BA Control Point/s)
- sector and any Division boundaries and identification
- strategies and tactics for each Sector and/or each Division
- the chain of command
- the Communications Plan
- occupational health and safety issues.
- crew safety, welfare and support issues
- opportunity to clarify understanding.

Briefings to crews or a crew leader or Officer in Charge, where possible, should include:

- the current and projected situation
- key risks
- control activities to date
- the incident objectives and broad strategies
- their area of responsibility
- an explanation of the tasks assigned to them
- their supervisor and contact arrangements
- the person to whom their supervisor will report
- safety issues
- safety refuge areas and escape routes
- crew safety and welfare and support arrangements
- communications arrangements
- opportunity to clarify understanding.

Appendix 4

Changeovers

Flows Between Shifts

A changeover is a process to hand-over the incident to the next shift and brief them on the current situation. It involves:

- the physical replacement of resources at any or all levels of the structure

- debriefing outgoing personnel

- briefing incoming personnel

- distribution of necessary documents, supplies and equipment

- the provision of any necessary crew welfare services and equipment, maintenance and resupply.

That is, a changeover involves the changing of personnel and equipment and the relaying of information. It is important that the information be handed over before personnel are changed and that 'the old must brief the new'. How the Incident Controller decides to do this is up to the individual.

Shift cycles vary for a number of reasons:

- the organization involved often dictates the shift times (through award conditions and standard operating procedures)

- the circumstances of the incident may influence the shift times (for example, tides, night-time)

- the size and complexity of the incident

- whether the incident is gearing up or down

- provision of accommodation

- transportation requirements

- need to vary shift lengths because of pre-existing fatigue load.

In a protracted incident, the changeover of incident management personnel is a critical stage.

Before the incoming Incident Controller arrives at the control centre, the outgoing Incident Controller needs to prepare the following details for a briefing session:

- current situation

- incident objectives and strategies for the incident

- special hazards

- key risk exposures (political, economic, social, public health, and environmental)

- current Incident Action Plan

- Incident Action Plan for subsequent shift

- key contacts (such as inter-organisation and community contacts).

This information is essential to the incoming Incident Controller to facilitate continuity of incident management.

Achieving Efficient Changeovers

The Incident Controller is responsible for an efficient changeover, but its planning and management will be usually delegated to a specified officer in the Planning Section.

Some guidelines to achieve better changeovers are:

- it is preferable to changeover personnel in daylight hours. This also provides personnel with the ability to become familiar with the territory in the daylight and improves safety

- plan and prepare for the changeover

- ensure changeover planning includes consideration at all levels; Sector/Division/ Task Force/Strike Team/Single Resources; Section Units and Sub-Units and Single Resources.

- briefings specific to each level are developed

- crews changeover at a suitable safe location close to where they will be deployed

- transport personnel in groups relating to their destination

- feed incoming shift before changeover, and feed outgoing shift after changeover

- avoid times critical to incident management.

Glossary

AFAC	The Australasian Fire Authorities Council is the body representing urban, rural and land management agencies within Australia and New Zealand with a responsibility for the protection of life and property from fire and other emergencies.
Agency representative	An individual allocated to an incident from an assisting agency who has been delegated full authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident.
AIIMS structure	The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organisational structure with responsibility for the management of allocated resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives relating to an incident.
Allocated resources	Resources working at an incident.
Available resources	Resources at an incident and available for allocation at short notice.
Base camp	A location where personnel are accommodated and fed for a period of time. A camp base usually contains catering, ablution and accommodation facilities, a water supply and a lighting system., and may include other facilities such as car parking, maintenance and servicing.
Control Authority	The Agency, Service, Organisation or Authority with the legislative responsibility for control of the incident. (Also referred to as the Responsible Authority or Agency.)
Command	Command is the internal direction of the members and

	resources of an agency in the performance of the organisation's roles and tasks. Command operates vertically within an organisation.
Communications plan	Details the methods and systems for people to communicate with each other; the incident management structure, including the actual radio channels/mobile phone numbers.
Control	Control refers to the overall direction of emergency management activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across organisations.
Coordination	Coordination refers to the bringing together of organisations and other resources to support an emergency management response. It involves the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisational, human and equipment) in an emergency situation.
Division	That organisational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area or with a functional responsibility.
Division Command Point	Location at an incident from which the Division Commander of that division operates.
En route resources	Resources despatched to an incident that have not yet checked in.
Equipment	Is all material supplied to an incident excluding personnel and vehicles.
Facilities	Permanent and temporary facilities where personnel sleep, cook, maintain and repair equipment.

Function	There are four functions incorporated into the AIIMS system: Control, Planning, Operations and Logistics.
Incident	Any unplanned event requiring emergency intervention
Incident Action Plan	Is the plan used to describe the incident objectives, strategies, resources and other information relevant to the control of an incident.
Incident Controller	The individual responsible for the management of all incident control activities across a whole incident.
Incident Control Centre	The location where the Incident Controller and various members of the Incident Management Team provide overall direction of response activities.
Incident Control Point	Field location from which the Incident Controller operates.
Incident Management Team	The group of incident management personnel comprised of the Incident Controller, and the personnel appointed to be responsible for the functions of Planning, Operations and Logistics.
Incident objective	An incident objective is a goal statement indicating the desired outcome of the incident. Incident objectives guide the development of the Incident Action Plan and must reflect the policies and needs of the control authority supporting agencies. All factors affecting the incident and its potential impact must be considered before determining the objective.
Incident strategies	The incident strategies will be developed from the incident objectives and will describe how the Incident Management Team plan to resolve the incident. There is a requirement for strategies to be developed throughout the incident and they should be reviewed for each operational period.
Logistics Officer	When appointed by the Incident Controller, responsible for obtaining and maintaining resources, facilities, services and materials to support control of the incident.

Management by objectives	Is a process of consultative management where the Incident Management Team determines the desired outcomes of the incident. These outcomes or incident objectives are then communicated to the commander and crews involved in the Operation.
Operations Officer	When appointed by the Incident Controller, responsible for managing all activities to resolve the incident and resources allocated to the Operations Section.
Operational period	The period of time scheduled for execution of the Incident Action Plan.
Operations Point	Location from which the overall field operations are commanded by the Operations Officer.
Planning meeting	A meeting to prepare the Incident Action Plan attended by the Incident Management Team and others and held as required.
Planning Officer	When appointed by the Incident Controller, responsible for information management and planning at an incident.
Resource Management System	System established to capture and manage information regarding the status of resources allocated to an incident.
Resources	All personnel, vehicles, plant and equipment available, or potentially available, for incident tasks.
Section	That organisational level having responsibility for the functional segments of incident management: planning, operations and logistics.
Sector	That organisational level having responsibility for operations within a defined area of a division or having a specific functional responsibility.
Sector Command Point	Location within a sector from which the Sector Commander of that sector operates.

Span of control	Is a concept that relates to the number of groups or individuals which one person can successfully supervise. Up to five reporting groups or individuals is considered desirable, as this maintains a supervisor's ability to effectively task, monitor and evaluate performance.
Staging Areas	Is an area where resources are mustered and prepared for allocation to an incident. It may include the provision of welfare and equipment maintenance facilities.
Strike Teams	A set number of resources of the same type that have an established minimum number of personnel. Strike Teams always have a leader (usually in a separate vehicle), and have a common communications system. Strike Teams are usually made up of five resources of the same type such as: vehicles, crews, earth moving machinery, etc.
Supporting agency	An Agency, Service, Organisation or Authority providing assistance to the controlling authority.
Tactics	These are the tasking of personnel and resources to implement the incident strategies. Incident control tactics are accomplished in accordance with appropriate agency procedures and safety directives. Tactics are normally determined at Division/ Sector level with a corresponding allocation of resources and personnel.
Task force	Is a combination of resources that can be assembled for a specific purpose. Task Forces always have a leader (usually in a separate vehicle), and have a common communications system. Task Forces are established to meet tactical needs and may incorporate a mixture of different resource types.
Technical advisers	Are advisers with special skills needed to support incident activities/functions.
Unit	A small cell of people working within one of the sections undertaking a designated set of activities.
Unserviceable resources	Resources at an incident but unable to respond for mechanical, rest or personal reasons.