

INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

In the incident command system, considerable emphasis is placed on developing effective incident action plans. A planning process has been developed as a part of the ICS to assist planners in the development of a plan in an orderly and systematic manner. The steps outlined in this chapter will allow for the development of an incident action plan in a minimum amount of time. Incidents vary in their kind, complexity, size, and requirements for detailed and written plans. The planning process described in this chapter is based on the development of incident action plans to support major wildland fire incidents, but are applicable to any type emergency. Not all incidents require detailed written plans. Recognizing this, the following planning process provides a series of basic planning steps which are generally appropriate for use in any incident situation. The determination of the need for written incident action plans and attachments is based on the requirements of the incident, and the judgement of the Incident Manager.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The general responsibilities associated with the planning meeting and the development of the incident action plan are described below. The planning section chief should review these with the general staff prior to the planning meeting.

Planning Chief

- o Conduct the planning meeting and coordinate preparation of the incident action plan.

Incident Manager

- o Provide overall control objectives and strategy.
- o Establish the procedure for off-incident resource order.
- o Approve request for off-incident action plan by signature.
- o Approve completed incident action plan by signature.

Finance Chief

- o Provide cost implications of control objectives as required.
- o Evaluate facilities being used to determine if any special arrangements are needed.
- o Ensure that the action plan is within the finance limits established by the incident commander.

Operations Chief

- o Determine division work assignments and resource requirements.

Logistics Chief

- o Ensure that incident facilities are adequate.
- o Ensure that resource ordering procedure is made known to appropriate agency dispatch center(s).
- o Develop transportation system to support operations needs.
- o Ensure that section can logistically support the action plan.
- o Place order for resources.

PREPLANNING STEPS

Planning Section Chief - (If possible obtain completed Incident Briefing Form ICS 201] prior to the initial planning meeting.)

- o Evaluate current situation and decide if the current planning is adequate for remainder of operation al period (i.e., until next plan takes effect).
- o Advise incident commander and operations chief of any suggested revisions to current plan as necessary.
- o Establish planning cycle for the incident commander.

- o Determine planning meeting attendees with the incident commander.
- o For major incidents, attendees should include:
 - ___ Incident Manager
 - ___ Command staff members
 - ___ General staff members
 - ___ Resource unit leader
 - ___ Situation unit leader
 - ___ Air operations branch director
 - ___ Communications unit leader
 - ___ Technical/Specialists (As Required)
 - ___ Agency representatives (As Required)
 - ___ Recorders
- o Establish location and time for planning meeting.
- o Ensure that planning boards and forms are available.
- o Notify necessary support staff (recorders etc.) of meeting and assignments.
- o Ensure that a current situation and resource briefing will be available for meeting.
- o Obtain estimate of regional resources availability from agency dispatch for use in planning for next operational period.
- o Obtain necessary agency policy, legal or fiscal constraints for use in planning meeting.

CONDUCTING THE PLANNING MEETING

The planning meeting is normally conducted by the planning section chief. the checklist which follows is intended to

provide a basic sequence of steps to aid the planning section chief in developing the incident action plan. The planning checklist is intended to be used with the ICS planning Matrix board, and/or ICS Form 215 - Operational Planning Worksheet. (The worksheet is laid out in the same manner as the planning matrix board.) Every incident must have an action plan. However, NOT ALL INCIDENTS REQUIRE WRITTEN PLANS. The need for written plans and attachments is based on the requirements of the incident and the decision of the Incident Manager.

CHECKLIST ITEM	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
Briefing on situation and resource status PS	
Set control objectives	IM
Plot control lines and division boundaries OP	
Specify tactics for each Division/Group OP	
Specify resources needed by Division/Group OP,PS	
Specify facilities and reporting locations plot on map OP,PS,LS	
Place resource and overhead personnel order LS	
Consider communications, medical and traffic plan requirements PS,LS	
Finalize, approve and implement incident action plan PS,IM,OP	

Brief on Situation and Resource Status

The planning section chief and/or resources and situation unit leaders should provide an up-to-date briefing on the situation as it currently exists. Information for this briefing may come from any or all of the following sources:

- o Initial attack incident commander
- o Incident Briefing Form (ICS 201)
- o Field observations
- o Operations reports
- o Fire behavior modeling
- o Regional resources and situation reports

Set Control Objectives

This step is done by the Incident Manager. The control objectives are not limited to any single operational period, but will consider the total incident situation. The Incident Manager will establish the general strategy to be used, and state any major policy, legal or fiscal constraints in accomplishing the objectives and appropriate contingency\ considerations.

Plot Control Lines and Division Boundaries on Map

This step is normally accomplished by the operations chief (for the next operational period) in conjunction with the planning section chief who will determine control line locations, establish division/branch boundaries for geographical divisions, and determine need for functional group assignments for the next operational period. These will be plotted on the map.

Specify Tactics for Each Division

The operations chief after determining division geographical assignments, will establish the specific work assignments to be used for each division for the next operational period. (Note that it may be necessary or desirable to establish a functional group in addition to geographical divisions.) tactics (work assignments) must be specific and must be within the boundaries set by the IM's general control objectives (strategies). These work assignments should be recorded on the planning matrix. the operations chief, incident commander, and logistics section chief should also at this time consider the need for nay alternative

strategies or tactics and see that these are properly noted on the planning matrix.

Specify Resources Needed by Division

The operations chief AFTER specifying tactics for each division and in conjunction with the planning section chief will determine the resource needs by division to accomplish the work assignments. The resource needs will be recorded on the planning matrix. Resource needs should be considered on basis of the type of resource e required to do the assignment. For example, use Type 2 handcrews in certain division for mop-up situations, rather than Type 1 crews.

The planning section chief should also ensure that the Air Operations Summary (ICS 220) is being developed by operations section chief or air operation director as appropriate. The air operations summary worksheet brings together in one place, all tactical and logistical air assignments, with information on kinds and numbers of air resources required, reporting locations, and designation of resources assigned. Information is obtained from ICS 215, the Operational Planning Worksheet, and is used by planning, operations, and logistics in establishing the incident air program for the next operational period.

Specify Operations Facilities and Reporting Locations - Plot on Map

The operations chief in conjunction with planning and logistics section chiefs should specify and facilitate location needed to accomplish the operations section work assignments. These will normally be staging areas and helispots. Depending upon the situation, it may be appropriate to establish a camp or helibase location. Operations should also at this time indicate the reporting time requirements for the resources and any special resource assignments.

At the conclusion of this step, operations personnel at the planning meeting may be released, if desired.

Place Resource and Personnel Order

At this time, the planning section chief should perform a resource needs assessment based on the needs provided by the operations chief, and resources data available from the planning sections resources unit. the planning matrix when properly completed will show resource requirements and resources availability to meet those requirements. By subtracting resources available from those required, any additional resource needs can be determine. From this assessment, a new resource order can be put together and provided to the Incident Manager for his approval and then placed through normal dispatch channels by the logistics section.

Consider Communications, Medical and Traffic Plan Requirements

The incident action plan will normally consist of the Incident Objectives (ICS 202); Organization Chart (ICS 203); Division Assignment List (ICS 204); and a map of the incident area. Larger incident may require additional attachments, such as a separate Communications Plan (IC 205); a Medical Plan (ICS 206); and possibly a traffic plan. the planning section chief must determine the need for these attachments to nay written plan and ensure that they are prepared by the appropriate units. For major incidents, the incident action plan and attachments will normally include:

ITEM	WHO PREPARES
1. Incident Objectives (202) Recorder	Planning
2. Organization List (203)	Resources Unit
3. Division Assignments Lists (204) Recorder & Resources Unit	Planning
4. Communications Plan (205)	Communications Unit
5. Medical Plan (206)	Medical Unit
6. Map	Situation Unit
7. Traffic Plan	Situation Unit

Prior to the completion of the plan, the planning section chief should review the division/group tactical work assignments for any changes due to lack of resource availability.

Recorders may then transfer division assignment information including alternatives from the planning matrix board or form (ICS 215) onto the Division Assignment Lists (ICS-204).

Finalize, Approve, and Implement Incident Action Plan

The planning section is responsible for seeing that the incident action plan is completed, reviewed and distributed. The sequence of steps to accomplish this is listed below.

- o State time action plan attachments are required to be completed.
- o Obtain plan attachments and review for completeness and approvals.
- o Determine numbers of incident action plans required.
- o Arrange with documentation unit to reproduce plan.
- o Review action plan to ensure it is up-to-date and complete prior to operations briefing and distribution of plan.
- o Provide briefing on the action plan as required and distribute plans prior to beginning of new operational period.