

**DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO SELECT AND ESTABLISH A SUITABLE  
INCIDENT COMMAND POST OR STAGING AREA**

**CONDITIONS**

You are an incident commander and must select and establish a suitable incident command post or staging area to support the current incident.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Prepare the student to establish a suitable incident command post.
2. Prepare the student to establish a suitable staging area.

**TRAINING AND EVALUATION**

**Training Outline**

Incident Command Posts

1. The Incident Command Post (ICP) is the location at which the primary command functions are performed. The Incident Commander will be located at the ICP. All incidents must have a designated location for the ICP. There will only be one ICP for each incident, even multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional incidents operating under a single or a unified command. The ICP can be located with other incident facilities.

The initial location for the ICP should consider the nature of the incident, whether it is growing or moving, and whether the ICP location will be suitable in size and safe for the expected duration of the incident.

The ICP may be located in a vehicle, trailer, tent, or within a building, to name just a few examples. On long-term incidents, it is desirable to provide an ICP facility that will provide adequate lighting and/or protection from the weather.

2. Larger and more complex incidents will often require larger ICP facilities. Examples of incidents that usually require an expanded ICP facility include:

- a. Multi-agency incidents run under a Unified Command
- b. Long-term incidents
- c. Incidents requiring an on-scene communications center
- d. Incidents requiring a separate planning function
- e. Incidents requiring the use of Command Staff and Agency Representative positions

3. ICPs will be designated by the name of the incident, e.g., Woodstock ICP. Some incidents may be large enough to have an on-site communications center to dispatch assigned resources. The communications center is often associated with or adjacent to the ICP. Also, some incidents will require space at the ICP to allow for various Command Staff and Planning Section functions.

4. The following are some general characteristics of the ICP that should be known and understood:

- a. There is only one ICP per incident, even if the incident is multi-jurisdictional.
- b. The incident communications center, if established at an incident, is often located with or adjacent to the ICP.

- c. The Incident Command function is carried out at the ICP.
  - d. The ICP may be located with other incident facilities such as the Incident Base.
  - e. The planning function is normally done at the ICP.
  - f. The ICP should be large enough to provide adequate working room for assigned personnel.
  - g. The ICP should contain situation and resource status displays necessary for the incident, and other information necessary for planning purposes.
  - h. Agency Representatives are normally located at the ICP.
  - i. Once established, the ICP will normally not be relocated. On expanding incidents it would be appropriate to move the ICP if an improved location is required or would facilitate command operations.
5. The following are general guidelines to be used in establishing the ICP:
- a. Position the ICP away from the general noise and confusion associated with the incident.
  - b. Position the ICP outside of the present and potential hazard zone.
  - c. Position the ICP within view of the incident (when appropriate).
  - d. Have the ability to expand the ICP as the incident grows.
  - e. Have the ability to provide security and control access to the ICP as necessary.
  - f. Identify the location of the ICP with a distinctive banner or sign.
  - g. Announce the activation and location of the ICP via radio or other communications media so that all appropriate personnel are notified.

#### Staging Areas

1. A Staging Area is a temporary location at an incident where personnel and equipment are kept while awaiting tactical assignments. An incident may have more than one Staging Area.
2. Staging Areas can be set up to meet specific functional needs. For example: for ambulances, fire equipment, police cars, etc. Some incidents may use the Staging Area(s) for only certain kinds of resources. For example, all police vehicles or all ambulances may be located in one Staging Area. A Staging Area could even be established in a harbor location for boats used in a water incident.
3. In locations where major incidents are known to occur frequently, it is advisable to designate possible Staging Area locations, and to plan their layouts in advance. Staging Areas may and probably will include temporary fueling and sanitation facilities.
4. Resources in a Staging Area are always in or on an available status, which means they are ready for assignment within three minutes. Staging Areas should be located within five minutes travel time to the area of expected need. These are important considerations for resource use planning and should be closely adhered to.

5. All Staging Areas will have a Staging Area Manager. The Staging Area Manager reports to the Operations Section Chief, or to the Incident Commander if an Operations Section has not been established.
6. Staging Areas will be given a name that describes their general location, e.g., Webster Park Staging Area. A Staging Area may be in the same general area or adjacent to other incident facilities; however, it should have its own separate location and name to avoid confusion should the staging area need to be moved in the future.
7. Staging Areas should have the following characteristics:
  - a. Be close to the location of tactical assignments (within five minutes).
  - b. Be located out of any possible line of direct hazard effects to minimize risk.
  - c. Be relocated if necessary.
  - d. Have different access routes for incoming and outgoing resources.
  - e. Be large enough to accommodate available resources and have room for growth.
  - f. Be clearly marked.
  - g. Be located to minimize environmental damage.
  - h. Have necessary security controls.
8. Listed below are several, but probably not all, of the benefits from the use of Staging Areas at an incident. Staging Areas:
  - a. Provide locations for immediately available resources to await active assignments.
  - b. Provide locations to allow resources to be formed into operational units such as task forces and strike teams.
  - c. Provide for greater accountability by having available personnel and resources together in one location.
  - d. Provide safe locations for personnel and equipment to await assignments.
  - e. Prevent resources from freelancing or "doing their own thing."
  - f. Minimize excessive communications of resources calling for assignments.
  - g. Control and assist the check-in of personnel who arrive at the incident via privately owned vehicles or other private means.
  - h. Allow the Operations Section Chief or IC to properly plan for resource use, and to provide for contingencies.

### **Additional Information**

More detailed information on this topic is available in the mission base staff reference text.

### **Evaluation Preparation**

**Setup:** Prepare a narrative describing the incident resources and requirements available so that the student can adequately decide how to establish an incident command post or staging area for an incident.

**Brief Student:** Based on the requirements established, ask the student to establish a suitable incident command post or staging area.

### **Evaluation**

<u>Performance measures</u>	<u>Results</u>
1. Student selects and establishes a suitable incident command post as outlined in the incident command post section of this task.	P F
2. Student selects and establishes a suitable staging area as outlined in the staging area section of this task.	P F

Student must receive a pass on performance measure number one or number two to qualify in this task. If the individual fails a measure, show what was done wrong and how to do it correctly.