



# CHAIN OF COMMAND

## 1. PURPOSE

The Chain of Command provides the lines of accountability and responsibility to all operational members of the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS). It should be read in conjunction with the *Tasmania Fire Service – Standard Operating Procedures*, *Inter Agency Fire Management Protocol* and with reference to the *Fire Service Act 1979* (Act).

## 2. SCOPE

The Chain of Command is determined by the State Fire Commission in accordance with Section 42 of the Act and applies to all operational personnel.

## 3. ORDER OF SENIORITY

The following chart sets out the order of seniority of personnel for operational purposes:

Powers apply to any person acting in, or performing the function of that rank or position.



### \*Note

For the purposes of this Chain of Command all references to *Brigade Chief*, in his or her absence, can be taken to mean the most senior officer of that brigade present.

## 4. INCIDENT CONTROL SYSTEM

All incidents shall be managed in accordance with the AIIMS Incident Control System (ICS).

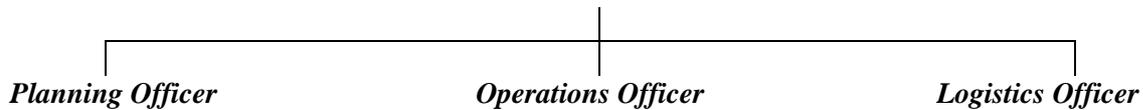
ICS provides a functional structure to facilitate appropriate management and control of an incident from the time it occurs until the requirement for incident management no longer exists.

ICS has a flexible structure that can be expanded as needed by the changing conditions of the incident. The system can be utilised for any type or size of emergency ranging from a minor situation involving a single brigade to a major emergency involving many brigades and a number of agencies.

ICS management is divided into four functional areas, which are: *Incident Control*, *Operations*, *Planning and Logistics*. For small incidents or during the initial response phase to an incident, the Incident Controller may perform all of these functions. As the incident develops and management becomes more complex and demanding, one or more of the roles of operations, planning and logistics may be delegated by the Incident Controller. An Incident Management Team is established when at least one of the ICS management functions is delegated by the Incident Controller.

## 5. ICS FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

### *Incident Controller*



## 6. INCIDENT TYPE CLASSIFICATION

### **Level 1 Incident**

An incident requiring the deployment of local TFS resources, typically of short duration, managed by an incident controller without the need to expand to a full incident management team.

### **Level 2 Incident**

An extended duration incident requiring the use of significant numbers of TFS resources and management by a full incident management team.

### **Level 3 Incident**

A complex extended duration incident, typically involving more than one land tenure and fire fighting agencies/emergency services, requiring the use of large numbers of resources and management by a full incident management team.

## 7. BRIGADE RESPONSE AREAS

- a) Brigades (excepting volunteer support brigades) are assigned a primary response area. This is the area that the brigade has responsibility for response to all incidents.
- b) Where additional support may be needed to manage an incident other brigades may be deployed to assist. These deployments are known as support responses.

## 8. DELEGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Seniority at Incidents**

- a) In the absence of the Brigade Chief, the most senior officer of the brigade present has the powers and functions of the Brigade Chief provided by the Act.
- b) The Brigade Chief of the first arriving crew shall take control as Incident Controller.
- c) Where the primary response brigade is not the first arriving brigade, the role of Incident Controller shall pass to the Brigade Chief of the primary response brigade upon his/her arrival.
- d) Where a Brigade Chief does not hold the required competence or skills to manage a particular incident or does not believe he or she has the confidence to manage it, they must pass control of the incident to a person, where present, that does, or immediately seek appropriate assistance. On arrival of an appropriate person they must pass control of the incident to that person.
- e) Where two brigade officers of equal rank from the same brigade are attending an incident, the senior officer shall be the one who first arrived at the incident, or otherwise shall be determined by mutual agreement.
- f) Where an incident is attended by a composite or support brigade, the Incident Controller shall be a career officer or, in his/her absence, the most senior volunteer officer present.

## **Command**

- g) Command operates within brigades, i.e. members of a brigade can only receive commands from more senior officers in that brigade.
- For example, where two or more brigades are co-operating during incident operations, brigade members receive commands only from their respective senior officers present.
- Where an Incident Management Team has been established, Brigade Chiefs may receive direction from the Incident Controller, the Operations Officer, Divisional Commanders or Sector Commanders.

## **Appointment of Incident Management Teams**

- h) Level 1 Incidents shall be managed in the first instance by a Brigade Chief who shall be the Incident Controller, subject to the provisions of 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8k, 8l, 8m and 8n.
- i) Level 2 Incidents shall be managed by an Incident Management Team appointed by a District Officer or more senior officer.
- j) Level 3 incidents shall be managed by an Incident Management Team appointed by a Regional Officer or more senior officer. Where the incident occurs on land being the responsibility of TFS and/or FT and/or PWS, the IMT may be jointly appointed.

## **Incident Controllers**

- k) The Incident Controller is accountable and responsible for incident control. Only a more senior officer may take control or appoint another Incident Controller. An appointed Incident Controller shall remain in the position unless an officer more senior than his/her appointor takes control or appoints another Incident Controller.
- l) An Incident Controller may pass control to any more senior officer present or by mutual agreement to another Brigade Chief. A volunteer Brigade Chief may pass control to a career officer.
- m) In the event that a more senior officer takes control or appoints another Incident Controller he or she must notify the Brigade Chiefs of all brigades present.

## **Group Officers**

- n) The Brigade Chief of a primary response brigade operating at Level 1 incident may by mutual agreement, pass control of the incident to a Group Officer.
- o) A District Officer or more senior officer may appoint a Group Officer to a position in an Incident Management Team.
- p) As a Level 1 incident develops, a Group Officer may take steps to establish a structure to support effective management of the incident, where
  - i) more than two brigades are working on the incident,
  - ii) no formal IMT has been established,
  - iii) in the opinion of the Group Officer, the incident's complexity, duration and/or resourcing threatens to exceed the incident controller's span of control

J B Gledhill  
**CHIEF OFFICER**

Approved by the State Fire Commission at its meeting of 15 December 2004