

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURE**

**DATE:** DECEMBER 29, 2020  
**NUMBER:** 8.03 – CRITICAL INCIDENTS  
**SUBJECT:** INCIDENT COMMAND POSTS  
**RELATED POLICY:** [8.02](#)  
**ORIGINATING DIVISION:** OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
**NEW PROCEDURE:**   
**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:**  **NO CHANGES**  
**SUPERSEDES:** DP 8.03 – 04/05/2018

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**I. PURPOSE**

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for command post operations during critical incidents.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

**III. BACKGROUND**

- A. Critical incidents often involve multiple disciplines (fire, police, medical, public works, etc.) and, in some cases, multiple jurisdictions. To ensure that the incident is effectively managed, a single location of command should be established. This “point” is the Incident Command Post (ICP). It is at this location that the primary incident command functions (Command, Planning & Intelligence, Operations, Logistics, and Finance & Administration) are performed.
- B. Only one ICP should be established per incident. However, the ICP may include numerous vehicles (i.e., SDPD van, San Diego Fire-Rescue Department motor home, etc.). This ensures that those disciplines and agencies involved in the management of an incident are co-located. When the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department is also involved in an incident, the senior SDPD officer involved will coordinate with the Fire-Rescue Department to determine the site location of the ICP.

#### IV. TYPES OF INCIDENT COMMAND POSTS

Incident Command Posts can utilize a variety of locations and/or vehicles. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. A supervisor's vehicle - in most cases, the initial ICP will be the first supervisor's vehicle;
- B. Fixed sites such as park and recreation centers, schools, libraries, police stations, etc.; and,
- C. Mobile vehicles – the SDPD has several types of vehicles available for use as, or to augment, the Incident Command Posts. These include:
  - 1. A 40-foot Mobile Command Post Vehicle (Mobile 1);
  - 2. A 24-foot Mobile Command Post Vehicle (Mobile 2);
  - 3. A 44-foot Mobile Decontamination/Prisoner Processing Vehicle with two holding cells (Mobile 3); and,
  - 4. A Portable Restroom Trailer with four toilets (Mobile 8).
  - 5. Mobiles 1 and 2 are completely self-contained command posts designed to provide the Incident Commander with a mobile base of operation. These vehicles contain specialized command, control, and communications equipment to assist with this mission. In the event of a catastrophic communications breakdown, Mobile 1 may be used as a back-up communication center. **Personnel from Critical Incident Management Unit/Homeland Security, or their designees, will operate, maintain, and remain with these vehicles when they are deployed.** Mobiles 1 and 3 require a Class B license to operate.
  - 6. Mobile 3 is a custom-built 44-foot vehicle designed for Decontamination and Prisoner Processing. This vehicle is typically deployed during pre-planned events and staffed by the requesting command. Mobile 3 requires a Class B license to operate.
  - 7. All mobile command vehicles are maintained by CIMU/HS and can be reserved for pre-planned events using the Mobile Equipment Reservation Form found in the LAN system, on the "F" drive at F:\Critical Incident Management Unit\ Equipment & Vehicle Reservation Form. Completed forms should be faxed to (619) 525-8454. In emergency situations, the mobile command vehicles can be requested through the Watch Commander.

**V. INCIDENT COMMAND POST SET UP**

- A. When selecting a site for the establishment of an ICP, the following factors should be considered:
1. Strategic, but safe site (resist setting up too close to the incident);
  2. Upwind and uphill (if possible) of incident;
  3. Accessible to responding personnel and vehicles;
  4. Defensible against crowds, snipers, fire, bombs, weather elements, etc.;
  5. Sufficient space for responding personnel, equipment, and room for growth;
  6. Accessible to restroom facilities;
  7. Communication capabilities or access to telephones, radios, television, etc.;
  8. Accessible to electricity and water service;
  9. Contains areas for personnel briefings and protection against weather; and,
  10. Storage space and area for vehicles to park.
- B. When establishing the ICP, the following information needs to be considered:
1. Advise Communications Division of:
    - a. Location of the ICP and staging area;
    - b. Name of incident commander;
    - c. Name of the Incident (i.e., “Market Street command”); and,
    - d. Radio frequency for contacting the ICP.
  2. Request sufficient personnel for the ICP staff;
  3. Identify routes to the ICP and the staging area;
  4. Appoint ICP staff;

5. Request additional assistance needed (air support, mutual aid, other departments/agencies, etc.);
6. Identify and isolate the ICP area with banner tape or ropes;
7. Identify an area for the Public Information Officer (PIO) to coordinate news media activities;
8. Maintain communications with dispatcher(s);
9. Keep all concerned personnel briefed on the status of the problem; and,
10. Notify other concerned agencies (fire, schools, public agencies, hospitals, etc.).

## **VI. STAFFING THE INCIDENT COMMAND POST**

- A. Department Procedure 8.02, Incident Command System (ICS), outlines the various positions within the ICS and their general duties.
- B. The incident commander determines the ICS positions to be filled.

## **VII. STAGING AREA**

- A. Whenever an ICP is established, a Staging Area should also be designated. The Staging Area should not be located immediately next to the ICP to avoid the noise and interference associated with incoming resources.
- B. Initially, resources are committed directly to the incident. However, as soon as practical, incoming resources should be directed to the Staging Area for check-in, briefing, and assignments.
- C. The Staging Area should be large enough to accommodate personnel, equipment, and growth.

## **VIII. ICP SETUP DIAGRAM**

The type of incident, weather, terrain, and other factors will determine the exact set up in each incident.

NOTE: Whenever possible, the Emergency Negotiations Team (ENT) Command Van shall be set up within 300 yards of a barricaded individual.

**SAMPLE INCIDENT COMMAND POST SET UP**

