

**SUBJECT:** INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**SECTION:** 304.01**REVISED:** JANUARY 3, 2006**PAGE(S):** 2

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## PURPOSE

The NIMS Incident Command System enhances Firefighter safety by providing a modular organizational structure that can be used at all incidents both emergency and non-emergency. Additional components of the ICS will include common terminology, integrated communications, unity of command, a unified command structure, consolidated incident action plans, a manageable span of control, and designated incident facilities.

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## REFERENCES

1. *National Incident Management System, Homeland Security, 2004.*
2. *NFPA 1500, Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, 2007.*
3. *NFPA 1561, Emergency Services Incident Management System, 2005.*
4. *Model Procedures Guide for Structural Firefighting, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2000.*
5. *Model Procedures Guide for Emergency Medical Incidents, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003.*
6. *Model Procedures Guide for High Rise Firefighting, Second Edition, National Fire Service Incident Management System Consortium, 2003.*
7. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Structural Collapse and US&R Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998.*
8. *IMS Model Procedures Guide for Hazardous Materials Incidents, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 2000*
9. *Fire Ground Command, Second Edition, Alan V. Brunacini, 2002.*

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## POLICY

- A. The Reading Fire Department will utilize the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which contains the Incident Command System (ICS) on all responses.
- B. It shall be the policy of the Reading Fire Department to implement and use the Incident Management System in the following situations:
  1. Emergency responses consisting of two or more engine or truck companies,
  2. Emergency responses to hazardous material spills,
  3. Mass casualty incidents,
  4. Any other response or situation in which the on-scene commander feels that the IMS is required for safe and effective emergency operations.

- C. It is recommended that IMS principles be implemented and used for all emergency responses; however, the IMS does not need to be formally implemented.
- D. The procedures used for the IMS are those procedures detailed in the above listed references.
- E. It shall be the responsibility of the first arriving company or chief officer to assess the situation and determine if the IMS is needed. If the IMS is needed, that officer shall assume command (Incident Commander or IC) and begin implementing the IMS.
- F. The IC shall adapt the IMS framework to the requirements of the specific emergency situation at hand. This includes assigning necessary staff and sector positions.
- G. The IC shall continuously monitor the current status of the IMS and the changing needs of the emergency situation. The IC shall adapt the IMS as required to accommodate those needs while maintaining an effective span of control.
- H. A higher ranking officer may request command be transferred to that officer but should not assume command until command has been formally transferred.
- I. The IC should transfer command to another officer only after that officer has been briefed on the current status of the situation. Transfer of command should be announced on the command radio channel.
- J. The IC shall terminate command only after the emergency situation has been mitigated and the incident has de-escalated below the thresholds established for IMS implementation.

## TRAINING

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- A. All members of the Reading Fire Department will receive training in the IMS as part of their initial training requirements.
- B. All members should receive on-going annual training in the IMS.
- C. Whenever appropriate, the IMS should be used in training activities and drills

## CONCLUSION

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The IMS is an important part of safe and effective emergency operations. The Reading Fire Department is committed to its use both formally as defined above and informally on all other responses. Effective use of the IMS comes from the continuous application of its principles in all emergency operations and training activities.