

Standard Operating Procedures

Volume 1

Section 1

Note 3

Supplement 1

Incident Command Model

Document Overview

This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the procedures to be adopted by SYFR personnel when responding to operational incidents.

Document Management No.	#26429
Author	G Howe
Date Written	October 2009
Date Ratified	February 2010
Date for Review	February 2012
Version No.	3
Managers Handbook Reference	



South Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue
WORKING FOR A SAFER
SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Incident Command Model
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Volume 1, Section 1, Note 3, Supplement 1

1	Aide Memoire	3
2	Introduction.....	4
3	The Deciding Stage	5
4	The Acting Stage.....	7
5	One Model - Many Uses	9
6	Associated Documents	10

1 **Aide Memoire**

Actions en route

- Information held by SYFR such as 7(2)(d) records and site specific plans;
- Information based on the local knowledge of personnel or Specialist Officers;
- Information communicated when mobilised by Control;
- Information available from other Agencies;
- Information based on what can be seen visually;
- Consider possible resource requirements;
- Consider possible Hazards and risks and inform crews.

Initial Actions

- Confirm the above information;
- Information from members of the public, owners and occupiers;
- Conduct a dynamic and analytical risk assessment;
- Progress with making a plan and confirming objectives or sequence of planned events;
- Communicate the plan and actions to the incident ground and control;
- Implement an incident command system to control firefighting actions.

Ongoing Considerations

- Evaluate and modify the plan and objectives with changing information, Hazards and risks and resources.

2 Introduction

The Incident Command Model is a decision-making tool incorporated into the Incident Command System which has been formulated to improve operational command by helping Incident Commanders to identify and evaluate their thought processes and actions throughout an incident.

The model formalises the natural decision making process of Incident Command and can therefore be used to train future Incident Commanders and assess their performance.

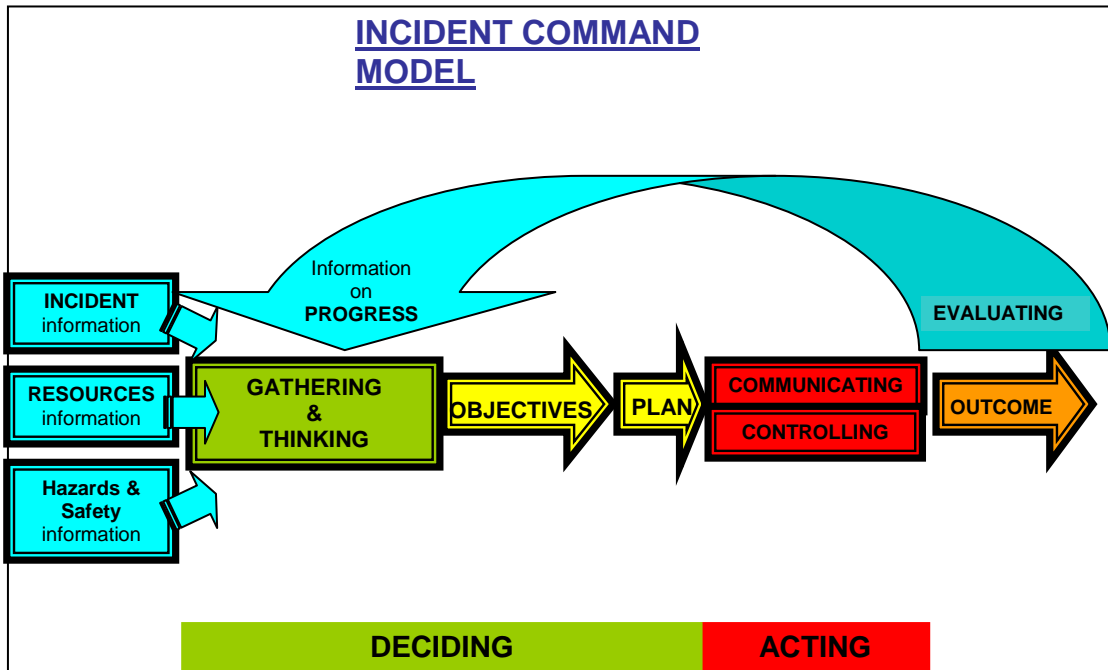


Figure 1. The Incident Command Model

Construction of the Incident Command Model

The Incident Command Model comprises of two major components. These are the DECIDING and ACTING stages.



In seeking to resolve an Incident Commander will use their knowledge and experience to identify the objectives to be achieved and formulate an appropriate plan of action.

3 The Deciding Stage

3.1 Information: The Incident

Before making any decision the Incident Commander requires information which will need to be gathered and then prioritised. Information relating to the **INCIDENT** may be based on:-

- Information held by SYFR such as 7(2)(d) records and site specific plans;
- Information based on the local knowledge of personnel or Specialist Officers;
- Information communicated when mobilised by Control;
- Information available from other Agencies;
- Information from members of the public, owners and occupiers;
- Information based on what can be seen visually.

3.2 Information: Resources

The Incident Commander will need to take into account the available **RESOURCES**. This will include the number of appliances and personnel either in attendance or en-route, the available resources on-site, and the resources available from other Agencies.

3.3 Information: Hazards and Safety

The Incident Commander and all FRS personnel must consider any potential **HAZARDS** and how these may affect the **SAFETY** of personnel, members of the public, equipment or the environment. Based on this information the Incident Commander will conduct **dynamic** and **analytical risk assessments**, identify the risks present and take action to address them.

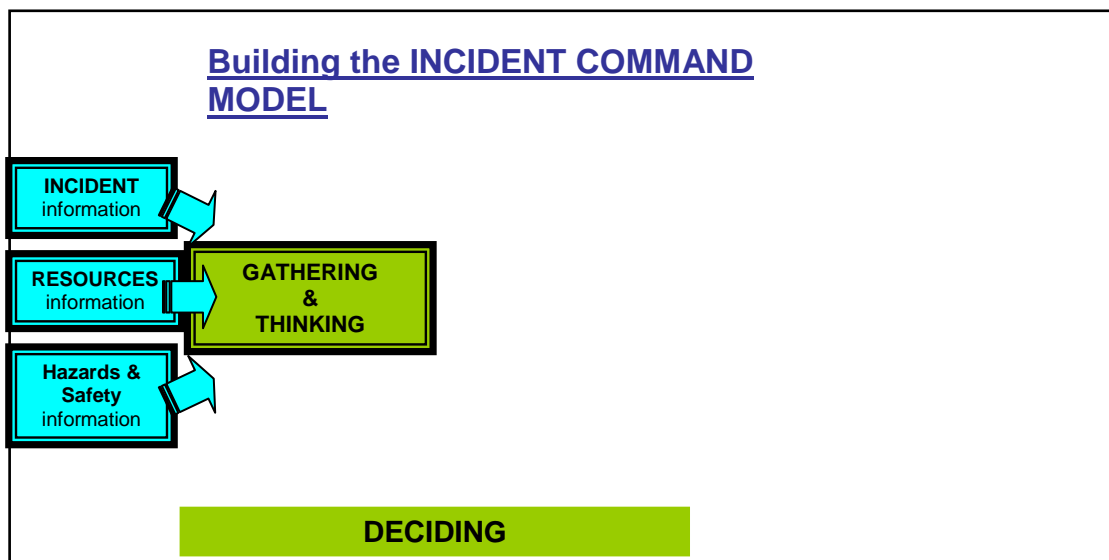


Figure 2. Shows the information from the various sources that will need to be considered.

3.4 Objectives

Once all the available information has been gathered and considered the Decision Maker will be able to identify and set a number of **OBJECTIVES** that need to be achieved and the priority or sequence in which to achieve them.

The objectives and the plan subsequently developed to implement them should provide outcomes that are achievable with an acceptable level of risk for the situation.

3.5 Plan

Having identified the objectives the Incident Commander needs to formulate a **PLAN** of action. This plan will need to take into account all the resources available and any identified hazards or safety concerns which may effect implementation of the plan. There will be a constant need for the Incident Commander to consider balancing any risk present against the benefit of achieving the objective.

The first Incident Commander at a large incident will be faced with large amounts of conflicting information and they will need to consider that information to set their objectives and formulate a plan. This initial plan may not necessarily be the optimum plan but needs to be sufficient to deal with the immediate situation. These initial decisions will rely heavily on the Incident Commanders personal experience and acquired knowledge. In contrast subsequent Incident Commanders tend to have fewer but more complex decisions to make however, they will have the benefit of being able to base their decisions on more accurate information.

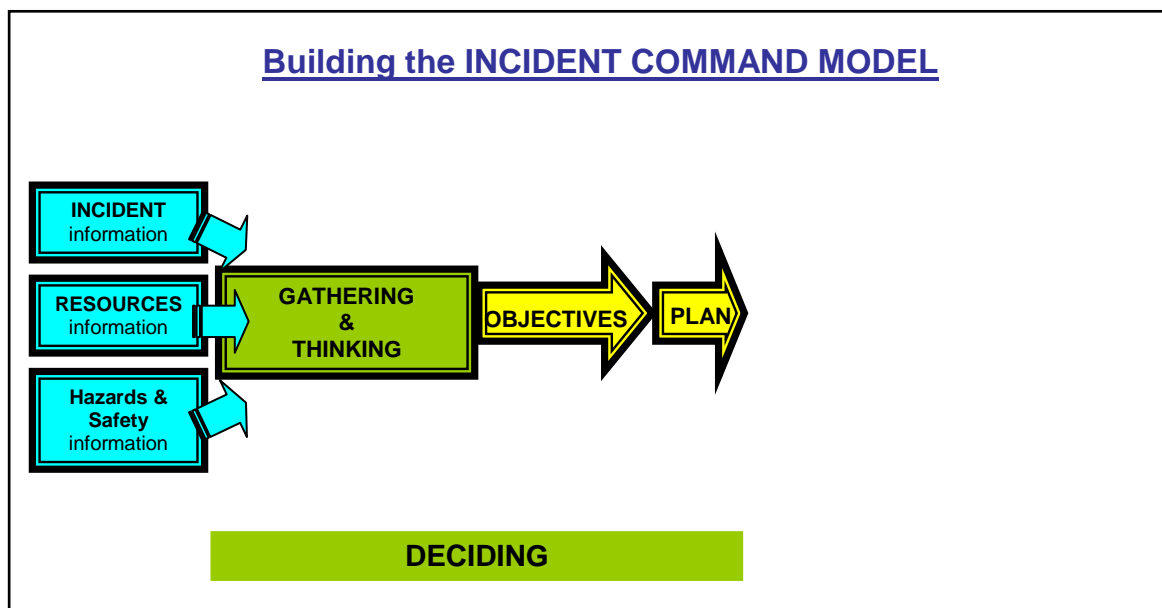


Figure 3. Using the available information to determine the objectives and the plan to achieve them.

4 The Acting Stage

4.1 Communicating

Having decided on the plan the Incident Commander now needs to **COMMUNICATE** to the relevant personnel their part in achieving the plan and the resources being made available to them.

For example: Sector Commanders or Function Officers will need to know the general outline of the overall plan and the approach being taken to deal with the incident. They can then be given their delegated tasks in greater detail and the resources with which to achieve them.

This tasking and any subsequent changes to the plan will need to be communicated using the appropriate resources such as FRS hand-held radios.

4.2 Controlling

Once the plan is in place the Incident Commander will need to **CONTROL** its implementation to ensure the objectives are being met in accordance with the plan. This control is achieved by use of the appropriate command structure. At small incidents this may only require an Incident Commander however, at larger incidents the structure may include an Operations Commander, Sector Commanders, Command Support and Function Officers.

The close link between communications and control is best appreciated when considering that without effective communications, the control of activities to meet set objectives will be compromised.

The **ACTING** elements when added to the Incident Command Model are shown in the following figure.

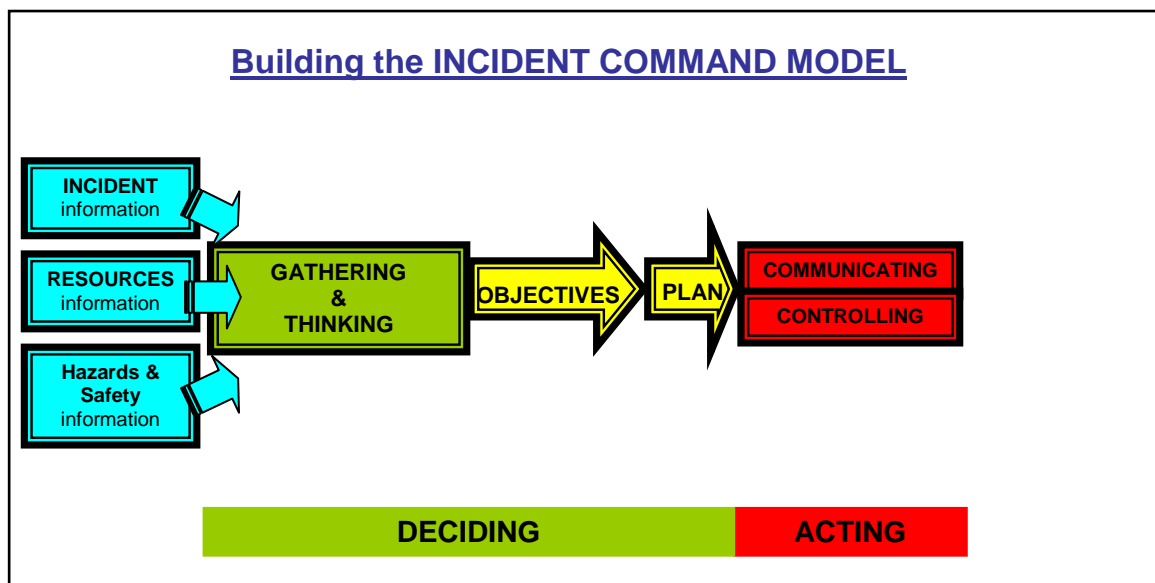


Figure 4. Communicating the plan and controlling its implementation.

4.3 Evaluation

By **EVALUATING** the progress we are using these indicators to ensure the effectiveness of the plan. If progress is not being achieved this will provide information for the Incident Commander to consider. A plan not meeting these indicators will require the plan to be amended which may lead to, for example, a decision to re-allocate or request additional resources, change the prioritisation of the objectives. The Incident Commander will now need to consider who needs to be informed of these changes.

Evaluation provides the feedback loop for the Incident Command Model. The model now looks like that in Figure 5.

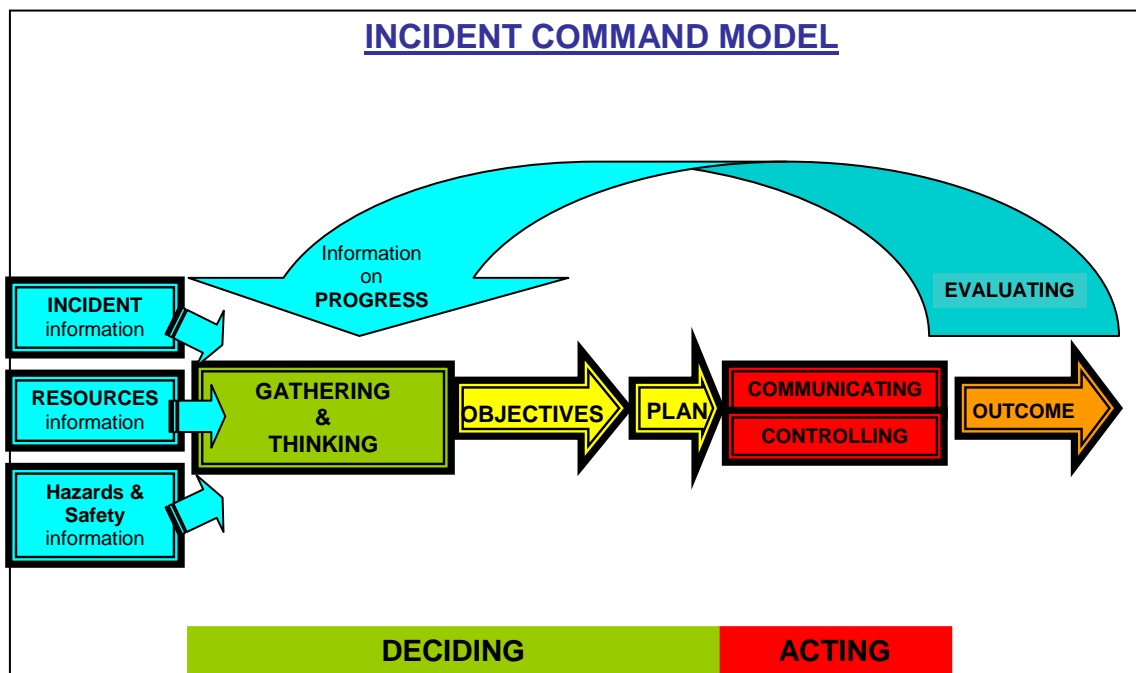


Figure 5. Evaluating the outcomes leads to thinking about are the objectives being met using the current plan.

4.4 Outcome

The outcome will be achieved successfully when the objectives are met with minimal exposure to Risk.

On each occasion that new information, from any source, is introduced into the event the Decision Maker will evaluate the objectives, plan and control the structure in light of this information, through use of the Decision Making Model, to ensure safe systems of work are maintained and resources are being used to best effect.

Finally, it must be stressed that the use of the Incident Command Model should be continuous throughout an event. In the early dynamic stages it may be used many times and as the event becomes more controlled and less dynamic the model may be used less frequently.

5 One Model - Many Uses

The Incident Command Model being used by the Incident Commander covers the overall tactical deployment of resources to bring the incident to a successful and safe conclusion. The Incident Commander will have tasked the Sector Commanders or Functional Officers and their activities should contribute to meeting the outcomes of that model.

In turn the Sector Commander or Functional Officer will develop their own Incident Command Model in which they determine the objectives to meet the tasks they have been given. They will communicate those tasks to the crew commanders or individuals they have been allocated by the Incident Commander.

It can be seen that there is a hierarchy of models in use at the different levels of the command structure all the way down to and including individual firefighters.

Example of a hierarchy of Incident Command Models in use

The Incident Commander - at an incident involving a fire in a light industrial unit the Incident Commander has determined the aim; to extinguish the fire by offensive action. To meet this aim there are a number of objectives to be achieved. One of those objectives may be to gain forcible access via the doors in a particular sector to allow a hoseline to be used within the premises. This objective, forming part of the Incident Commander's plan, is then delegated to the Sector Commander to achieve using the allocated resources.

The Sector Commander - is seeking to achieve an outcome that entails two objectives, i.e. gaining access to the premises via the doors and having a hoseline deployed into the premises via that entry point. To achieve this aim the Sector Commander delegates the task of providing the hoseline to a Junior Officer and details a firefighter to use the cutting gear from an appliance to cut an access through the doors.

The firefighter – uses their version of the Incident Command Model based on the 'task' information provided by the Sector Commander, i.e. to gain access for a hoseline via the doors using cutting gear (Incident information).

The firefighter identifies the nearest appliance with cutting gear (resources), identifies that lifting and manoeuvring the cutting gear requires a two-person lift (hazards and safety). The firefighter needs to find someone (resources) to assist in the lift and carrying of the cutting gear.

The firefighter's objective is to get the cutting gear from the appliance to the scene of operations safely and in a timely fashion. To achieve that objective a quick plan is established as how the objective should be achieved.

The Firefighter needs to communicate with a second firefighter to gain their assistance and on arrival to let the Sector Commander know the equipment is in place and cutting operations are about to commence.

To ensure the safety of the firefighters the lift and manoeuvring of the cutting gear will have to be coordinated and controlled.

Incident Command Model

The firefighter, in achieving the delegated task will be **evaluating** the progress i.e. has the cutting gear been obtained, placed in the correct location, and is the cutting operation effective in allowing a crew to gain access with a hoseline.

6 Associated Documents

Volume	Section	Note	Supplement	Title
1	1	3		Incident Command System
1	1	3	2	Incident Command Board