**STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**APPROVED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION**

**FIELD COURSE**

# INCIDENT RESOURCES

**MODULE 5**
**I-200**

**PARTICIPANT**
**REFERENCE**
**MANUAL**
**2003**

**STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**APPROVED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION**

**FIELD COURSE**

# MODULE 5

# INCIDENT RESOURCES

**2003**

**PARTICIPANT REFERENCE MANUAL**

# Table of Contents

Subjects covered in this module include:

- Descriptions of the kinds of resources often used in incidents and events.
- Why resource status keeping is important to effective incident operations.
- Examples of how resources are typed for various applications.
- Three ways of using resources on an incident.
- Resources status conditions.
- Changing and maintaining status on resources.

Objectives:

1. Describe the need for proper incident resource management.
2. Describe three ways of managing resources and the advantages of each.
3. Explain the purpose of resource typing.
4. Describe the three resource status conditions used at an incident, and the purpose and limits associated with each.
5. Explain how resource status is changed, how notification of changes is made, and how status is maintained at an incident or event.
6. In a small group exercise, list various kinds of resources which may be encountered on incidents in which the participant is or may become involved. Participant groups will provide typing for these resources.

## I. Importance of Resource Status Keeping

On any incident, the effective management of tactical resources is a vital consideration. The ability to select the right resource for the task to be done is essential to properly accomplish the job, ensure resource safety, and be cost effective.

Maintaining status of all resources assigned to the incident is an important aspect of resource management. A tactical resource, e.g., a helicopter, will have a wide variety of capabilities and uses. It is obviously not enough to just order a helicopter. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that the various kinds of resources used within ICS be typed whenever possible.

In addition, not all tactical resources at an incident may be usable at any given time. For a variety of reasons, some resources may be temporarily out-of-service or placed into an available (ready) but not assigned status. This module will describe tactical resource use on an incident. Later, in Module 9, resource management will be covered in more detail.

## II. Definition of Resources

In ICS applications, tactical resources consist of all personnel and major items of equipment available or potentially available for assignment to incidents. Equipment resources will include the personnel required to operate/staff them.

Resources can be described both by kind and by type.

### A. Resource Kinds

The kind of resource describes what the resource is, e.g., patrol vehicle, helicopter, fire engine, oil skimmer vessel, bulldozer, plow, etc. The kinds of resources can be as broad as necessary to suit the incident application.

Some of the same kind of tactical resources may be used by different agencies on a variety of incidents. For example, both police and fire departments will often use helicopters, fuel tenders, and crew transports.

Other kinds of resources, e.g., patrol cars, search dogs, or fire engines, are specific to the user agency and to the application area.

### B. Resource Types

The type of resource describes a performance capability for that kind of resource. For example, in the California Fire Service Field Operations Guide, a Type 1 helicopter will carry up to 16 persons. A Type 3 helicopter will carry up to five persons.

Resources are usually typed by a number, with 1 being the highest capability or capacity; 2, the next highest, etc. However, a higher capacity does not necessarily mean that it is the right resource for the job to be done.

For example, a Type 1 fire engine which has the greatest pumping capacity may not, because of terrain considerations, be able to access the area where the resource is needed.

The specific capability of the resource must always be clearly spelled out in the type descriptions.

There are three distinct advantages to typing resources:

1. In Planning

   Knowing the specific capabilities of the various kinds of resources helps planners decide the type and quantity of resource best suited to perform activities required by the Incident Action Plan.

2. In Ordering

   Ordering resources by type saves time, minimizes error, gives a clear indication of exactly what is needed, and reduces nonessential communications between the incident and the off-site order point.

3. In Monitoring Resource Use

   An awareness of the type of tactical resource assigned enables the manager to monitor for under-or-over-capability, and make changes accordingly. Careful monitoring of resource performance can lead to the use of smaller or less costly resources, which can result in increased work performance and reduced cost.

   While resource typing is a good idea, there are only a few typing standards currently available nationally, and these are primarily in the wildland fire services.

C. Typing For Other Disciplines

Typing is recommended as a goal for the future for Law Enforcement, Public Works, Water Utilities and other agencies who consistently deploy specific kinds of resources, e.g., patrol vehicles, earth moving equipment, waterlines, pipelines, etc. At a minimum there should be a standard typing system on a statewide basis, to facilitate ordering of mutual aid resources.

## III. Options for Using Resources on an Incident

There are three ways of using resources at an incident:

- As Single Resources
- As Task Forces
- As Strike Teams, Squads, Mobile Field Forces.

Each of these has certain features:

A. Single Resources

Single Resources are individual pieces of equipment, or a crew of individuals, with an identified work supervisor that can be used in a tactical application on an incident.

A Single Resource is often the most common way of initially using resources on an incident.

Single Resources can be typed to reflect capability. Unless a Single Resource is typed, its specific resource capabilities may not be clear to everyone.

Examples of Single Resources:

| KIND | TYPE |
|---|---|
| Police Motorcycle Unit | * |
| Fire Engine Company | 1 |
| Medical team | * |
| Helicopter | 2 |
| Search Dogs | 2 |

***** Typing of resources other than fire has not been done on a broad scale.

B. Task Forces

Task Forces are any combination and number of single resources (within span of control limits) assembled for a particular tactical need. Task forces may be a mix of all different kinds of resources, be of the same kind but different types, or be several resources of one kind mixed with other resources. We will look at some examples in a moment.

Requirements of a Task Force:

- Must have a leader.
- Must have communication between resources and the leader, and from the leader to the next level supervisor.
- Must have transportation as required.
- Must be within span of control limits.

Task Forces are very flexible in their makeup with no limitations other than span of control.

Listed are some examples of how agencies may use Task Forces.

Examples of Task Forces:

- Public Works Task Force:

  Two Bulldozers
  Two Dump Trucks

- Fire Task Force:

  Two Engines
  One Bulldozer
  Two Hand Crews

- Search and Rescue Task Force:

  One Helicopter
  One Alpine Search and Rescue Team
  One Medical Technician

- Oil Spill Task Force:

  Five Berthing/food ships
  Ten Work Boats
  One Tank Barge
  Four Skimmer Vessels

- Law Enforcement Task Force:

  One Swat Team
  One K-9 Team
  One Fire Engine
  One Ambulance

- Multi-agency Task Force:

  Two Patrol Vehicles
  Five Engines
  Three Medical Units

C. Strike Teams, Squads, Mobile Field Forces

Requirements of Strike Teams, Squads, Mobile Field Forces:

- All resources must be of the same kind and type.
- Must have a leader.
- Must have communications between resources and the leader.
- Must have transportation (as required).
- Must operate within span of control limits.

Example of a nationally recognized Strike Team:

- Fire:

  Five Type 1 Engines or
  Three Type 2 Bulldozers

Strike Teams have proven to be very valuable for use in large wildland fire incidents. In those kinds of incidents Strike Teams are regularly used for managing engines, hand crews, and bulldozers. The use of Strike Teams in other application areas is more limited.

D. Management of Task Forces and Strike Teams

A requirement for all Task Forces and Strike Teams is that they must have a leader and common communications.

Depending upon the level of organization established for the incident, Task Force and Strike Team Leaders will report to the Incident Commander, the Operations Section Chief, or to a Division or Group Supervisor.

E. Advantages of Task Forces and Strike Teams

There are at least five advantages of using Task Forces and Strike Teams:

1. Enables more effective resource use planning.

2. Provides an effective way of quickly ordering just what is necessary.

3. Reduces radio traffic by communications going to a task force or strike team leader, rather than to each single resource.

4. Increases the ability to expand the organization for large incident operations while maintaining good span of control.

5. Provides close resource control and accountability.

## IV. Resource Status

All tactical resources at an incident will be in one of three status conditions.

A. Assigned

Resources working on a tactical assignment under the direction of a supervisor.

B. Available

Resources ready for deployment.

C. Out-of-Service

Resources that are not ready for available or assigned status. Reasons for resources being out-of-service can include:

- Mechanical (vehicle or equipment services required)
- Rest (personnel)
- Staffing (insufficient personnel to operate the equipment)

In addition, in some situations resources could also be out-of-service for:

- Environmental reasons (darkness or weather)
- Financial (exceeded allowed overtime costs).

Resources can go out-of-service during an active assignment for mechanical or staffing reasons. Usually resources out-of-service for other reasons will be located at the incident base or at camps if these facilities have been established.

## V. Changing Resource Status

Resource status on an incident, is maintained and changed by the supervisor who has the resources under assignment. On larger incidents a Resources Unit, if established, will also maintain status on all resources assigned to the incident. The Resources Unit will not on its own authority change the status of resources.

All changes in status that last for more than a few minutes must be communicated to the appropriate organizational element.

The individual who makes the status change is responsible for making sure the change is communicated to the person or unit responsible for maintaining overall resource status at the incident.

Depending on the levels of activation within the incident organization, changes in resource status may be made by the Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, Division or Group Supervisor.

Information about the status change will be passed to the Resources Unit of the Planning/ Intelligence Section.

Normally, the persons who can change status of resources on an incident could include:

- The person in charge of the single resource.
- A Task Force or Strike Team Leader.
- A Division or Group Supervisor.

- The Operations Section Chief or Incident Commander.

## VI. Resource Status Keeping Systems

There are several status keeping methods or systems which can be used to keep track of resources at incidents. Several of them will be briefly mentioned, however no single system is recommended.

A. Manual Record Keeping on Forms

The resources summary of the Incident Briefing Form (ICS 201), the Check-In List (ICS 211), and the Division Assignment List (ICS 204) provide formats for recording information about resources and their assignments.

B. Card Systems

Several versions are available which allow for maintaining status of resources on cards. One of these systems has different colored T-shaped cards for each kind of resource. The cards are formatted to record various kinds of information about the resource. The cards are filed in racks by current location.

C. Magnetic Symbols on Maps or Status Boards

Magnetic symbols or icons are sometimes used. These can be prepared in different shapes, sizes, and colors with space to pencil in the resource designator. The symbols are placed on maps or on boards which have locations designated to match the incident.

D. Computer Systems

A laptop computer can be used with a simple file management or spreadsheet program to maintain information on resources. These systems can be used to compile check-in information and then be maintained to reflect current resource status.