

# National Operational Guidance - Incident Command

Provisional Impact Review

OFFICIAL – Sensitive  
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## Introduction

National Operational Guidance (NOG) – Incident Command was published on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The guidance is published in two parts:

- Incident Command policy – for FRS policy writers <https://fireandrescue-public.sharepoint.com/Pages/Guidance-Catalogue.aspx?guidanceid=120>
- Foundation – knowledge and understanding for Incident Commanders for individuals and FRS learning & development teams. <https://fireandrescue-public.sharepoint.com/Pages/Guidance-Catalogue.aspx?guidanceid=121>

The policy document 'Introduction' states ... *"Other Emergency Services will base their expectation of the fire service response to multi agency incidents on the incident command system contained within this guidance. For this reason fire and rescue services are expected to adopt this guidance. This guidance is likely to be considered as national best practice in any review or inquiry following a significant incident."*

The Health, Safety and Welfare Framework in the Operational Environment (Section 5, sub section 4) states ... *"Fire and Rescue Authorities should ensure adequate systems and processes are in place to identify the implications of national guidance"*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-safety-and-welfare-framework-for-the-operational-environment>.

These two statements are further supported by LGA Fire and Rescue Service Operational Assurance – in relation to services ensuring their response arrangements are organised to reflect the changes in key legislation and guidance.

It is therefore clear that LFB need to review, identify the impact of the new guidance and make any necessary changes to their training requirements and policy framework.

This report will highlight the main changes in the new guidance, the impact on Incident management policy and wider organisational impacts and endeavour to identify 'owners' in order to fulfil the requirements detailed above.

## National Operational Guidance

The Incident Command Guidance developed by a project team led by CFO Simon Pilling (WYFRS) in consultation with the fire and rescue service, representative bodies and HSE and approved by NOG Programme Strategy Board (including LGA, CFOA and DCLG).

Whilst there will be some impact on Incident Management Policy (IMP) and Operational Policy (OP) departments the most significant impact will be organisational changes around services principles, culture, selection and development to deliver safe, assertive and effective incident commanders.

The NOG Programme Implementation Forum have suggested a 'go live' date of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 for the Incident Command guidance to assist cross border working arrangements.

It should also be borne in mind that LFB Operational Policy are in discussions with the NOGP regarding implementation arrangements for the whole activity framework, in view of the wide ranging impact of this guidance it is recommended (1) that these arrangements are established to provide oversight of the implementation progress.

### Organisational impact

The Foundation for Incident Command document predominantly details the qualities and skill requirements for Incident Commanders and strategic arrangements that need to be implemented regarding selection, development and assessment in order to achieve command competence.

The contents of this document will need to be considered as part of the LFB review of command competence. As the author of much of the content and lead for the LFB review this will be dealt with by DAC Cohen-Hatton, Learning & Development (Appendix 1- item 1).

Mary-Anne Oates & Tom Houghton, HR / Recruitment and Selection should be involved in this process due to the impact on selection processes (Appendix 1 - item 2).

The Foundation and Policy documents both include sections on Safety Management including the following areas:

Positive Safety Culture – this introduces the concept of five principles that fire and rescue services should adopt together with a new firefighter safety maxim which will need to be considered by Adrian Beven, H&S dept (Appendix 1 – item 3).

Dynamic, Analytical and Personal Risk Assessment including the concept of operational discretion – Ops Policy have developed and are currently training station based personnel on LFB Operational Risk Assessment policy. GM A’Court, Ops Policy will review to identify impact. (Appendix 1 – item 4).

Throughout the document there are references to messages in relation to sectorisation, tactical mode and firefighter emergency these will be dealt within the Incident Management policy review but will need to be reflected in the LFB messages policy (Appendix 1 – item 5).

The guidance refers to joint decision making with other agencies and signposts the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles. IM policy will reflect this but it is also suggested that LFB Major Incident policy is reviewed by GM Frost, SOG to ensure compliance (Appendix 1 – item 6).

The guidance highlights the requirement for policy in respect of emergency evacuation and firefighter emergency. It is recommended (2) the Head of Operational Assurance & Health and Safety considers the necessity for an LFB critical incident policy to support these and detail strategic procedures in case of such an event.

### Incident Management Policy

The publication of the guidance has provided an opportunity to review the LFB Incident Management policy framework. It is suggested for consideration that in order to change the focus from ‘management’ to ‘command’ that as part of the changes following the top management review the team name is changed.

It can also be seen, as shown in appendix 2, that there is duplication in a number of areas and that the total number of policies could be reduced.

CFO Simon Piling made it very clear at the Incident Command Conference that the 'Decision Control Process' does not replace the Decision Making Model (DMM), which will significantly reduce the potential impact of the guidance on LFB as it is mentioned in and the foundation of many policies. The decision control process is an illustration of how Incident Commanders think and will therefore be a useful tool for selection and development but should not lead to wholesale changes in the DMM or other policies. However, the decision controls (why, expectations & benefits) will be incorporated into the gathering and thinking (deciding) area of the DMM policy (Appendix 1 – item 7).

Command support at incidents and appropriate training is covered within the guidance and there is a CFA national working group looking at Command Support qualifications. In view of the recent CMB decision regarding Command Support Units it is recommended (3) that any changes to these policies is included within the scope of the project responsible for implementing these changes.

The Performance Review of Command policy will need to be updated in order to reflect the principles of a positive safety culture, in particular in respect of Principle 4 which states that a decision shall be judged on the quality of the decision making not the outcome (ref: HSE striking the balance) (Appendix 1 – item 8).

The most significant change for IM policy is in respect of tactical modes with the removal of transitional and clarification of offensive and defensive modes – which whilst simplified and will improve identification of hazard zones, is contrary to current LFB application and will have implications for training requirements (Appendix 1 – item 9). It is recommended (4) that a CBT package is developed by Babcock and issued as mandatory training with Ops News (Dec) which already includes an article on NOG. Existing IC training courses can also then be updated.

Due to the changes to tactical mode procedure there is a knock on implication for messages from incidents in respect of sectorisation, emergency evacuation and tactical withdrawal (Appendix 1 – item 10) – training for this can be captured in recommendation 4.

The review of IM policies will be complete by the end of Sept 2015 which will be followed by a period of Head of service and Staff side consultations. It is therefore anticipated that implementation of changes could be complete by end Dec 2015, depending on a decision as to whether a 'confidence factor' of completion of associated training is required by the Director of Operations – recommendation 5. This would delay publication until March 2016.

## Recommendations

- 1) Establish cross department working group led by Op Policy to co-ordinate implementation.
- 2) Head of Operational Assurance & Health and Safety to consider the necessity for an LFB critical incident policy.
- 3) Changes to LFB Command Support policies added to scope of project implementing CU changes.
- 4) A CBT package is developed by Babcock and issued with Ops News (Dec).
- 5) Director of Operations to determine if a 'confidence factor' is required for Ops News tactical mode training prior to policy implementation.

## Appendix 1

National Operational Guidance - Incident Command

LFB Implementation.

<b>Version number</b>	1
<b>Date last updated</b>	30/07/2015
<b>Updated by</b>	LD

### Organisational

ID	Item	Policy	Raised by	Owner	Date Escalated	Review	Date Closed	Outcome
1	Command competence (training, development & assessment)	L&D	LD	SCH - HR				
2	Selection	HR	LD	SCH - HR				
3	Positive Safety Culture	PN597 Health & Safety	LD	AB – H&S				
4	Operational Risk Assessment		LD	JA'C - OP				
5	Messages	PN518	LD	JA'C - OP				
6	Major Incidents	PN263	LD	IF - SOG				

Incident Management Policy

ID	Item	Policy	Raised by	Owner	Date Escalated	Review	Date Closed	Outcome
7	Decision controls	PN431	LD	LD	30/7/15			
8	PRC - principles	PN421	LD	LD	30/7/15	10/8/15		
9	Tactical modes	PN435	LD	LD	14/7/15	15/7/15		
10	Sectorisation, emergency evacuation & tactical withdrawal (messages)	PN 434 & 496	LD	LD	14/7/15	15/7/15		



Appendix 2 - Incident Management Policy Review								
Number	Name	Review date	Comments	Reviewer	Peer Review	HoS review	BJHSW	TCAP
238	Incident Command procedures	Apr-17	Review required in light of CU changes - also see Command support at incidents					
162	Officer responsibilities at incidents	31/03/2015	Review to include NOG - review to include command support roles	LD				
408	Incident Command	31/03/2015	Review to include NOG- incorporate with 431	LD 15/7/15				
431	Incident Commander	31/03/2015	Review to include NOG - incorporate with 408	LD 15/7/15				
435	Tactical mode procedure	31/03/2015	Review to include NOG	LD 15/7/15				
434	Sectorisation at incidents	25/10/2015	Review to include NOG	LD 15/7/15				
433	Sector Commander	25/10/2015	Review to include NOG - Delete include in PN162 or PN434	LD 15/7/15				
432	Operations Commander	25/10/2015	Review to include NOG - Delete include in PN162 or PN434	LD 15/7/15				
424	Monitoring Officer	31/03/2015	Review to include NOG - Incorporate into Incident Monitoring Process PN414	LD 15/7/15				





