# Overview of the Incident Command System as Practiced in the United States

US Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

# Basic ICS Concepts

- The ICS is a disaster response management organization structure: specific technical competency skills are integrated in the ICS organization
- ICS used on day-to-day basis for routine incidents as well as for major emergencies; activated at first response

# For Example:
# Day to Day Routine Incident
# Structure Fire or Motor Vehicle Accident

# ICS Features

- Clear objectives and priorities
- Defined operational objectives and organization
- Incident Action Plan
  - Objectives and Priorities
  - Tactical Assignments
  - Communication Plan
  - Weather
  - Travel Routes/Maps
  - Organization Chart
  - Medical Plan
  - Air Operations Plan
  - Safety
- Common terminology

# ICS Features (cont)

- Common communications
- Uniform resource typing
- Written Position Descriptions
  - Roles and responsibilities defined
  - Clear lines of authority, chain of command and reporting requirements
- Standardized personnel qualifications and training – national coordinating group

# Five Major Management Activities

- Command
  - Sets objectives
  - Sets priorities
  - Overall responsibility at the incident
- Planning
  - Develops the action plan to accomplish the objectives
  - Collects and evaluates information
  - Maintains resource status
  - Maintains incident documentation

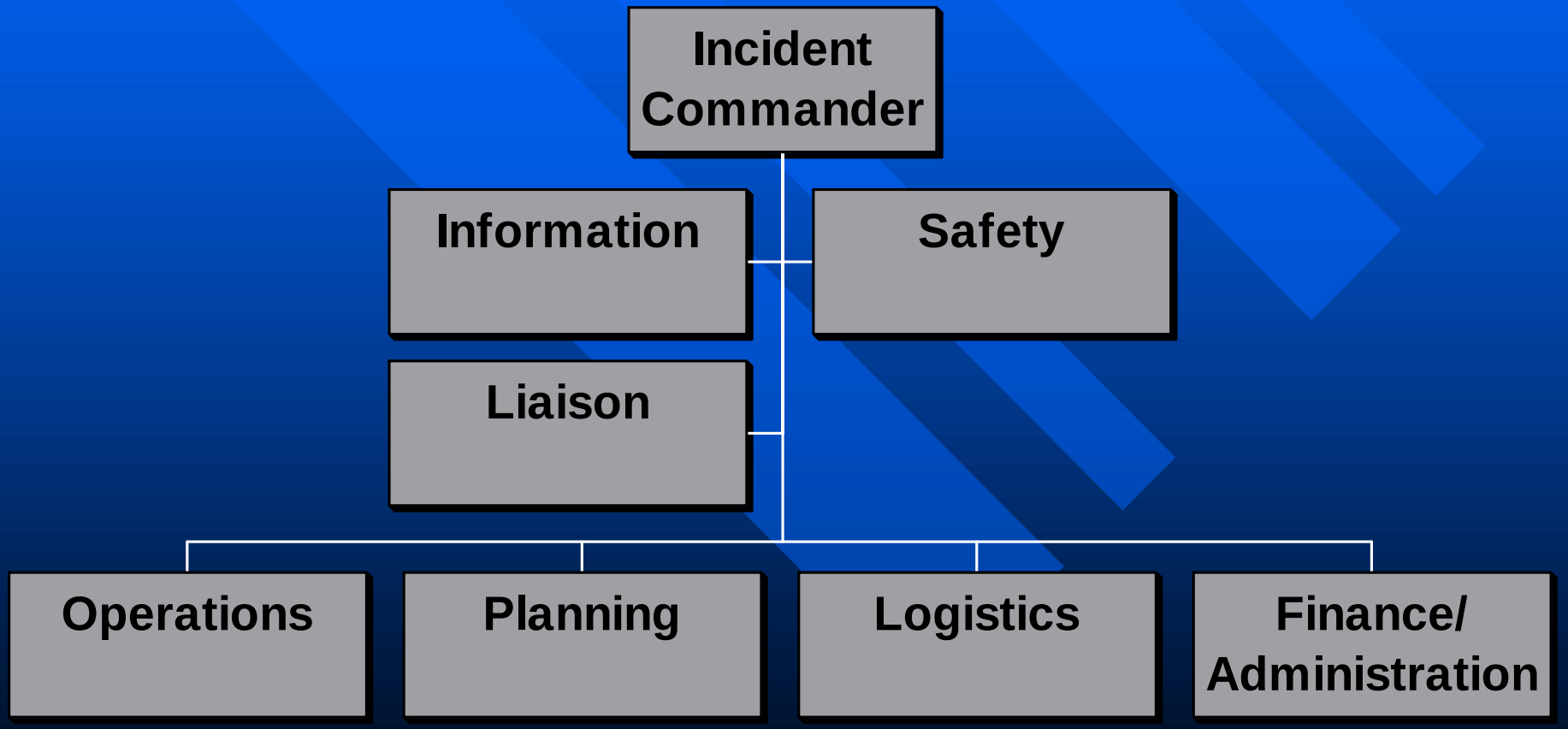
# Five Major Management Activities

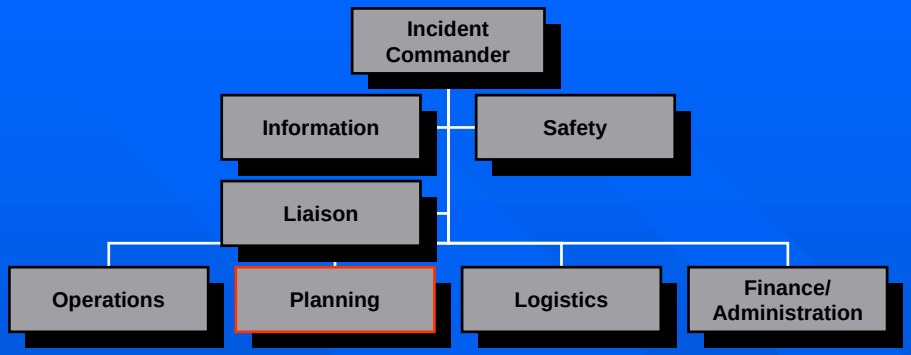
- Logistics
  - Provides support to meet incident needs
  - Provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident
- Finance/Administration
  - Monitors costs related to incident
  - Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses

# Five Major Management Activities

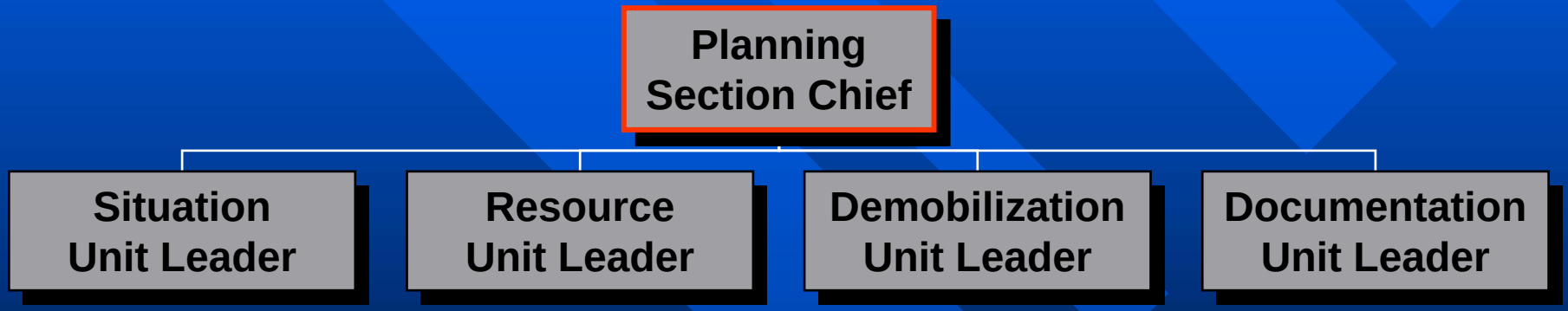
- Operations
  - Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan
  - Develops the tactical objectives, organization, and directs all resources

# ICS
# Major Organization Functions




Incident Commander
Information
Safety
Liaison
Operations
Planning
Logistics
Finance/ Administration

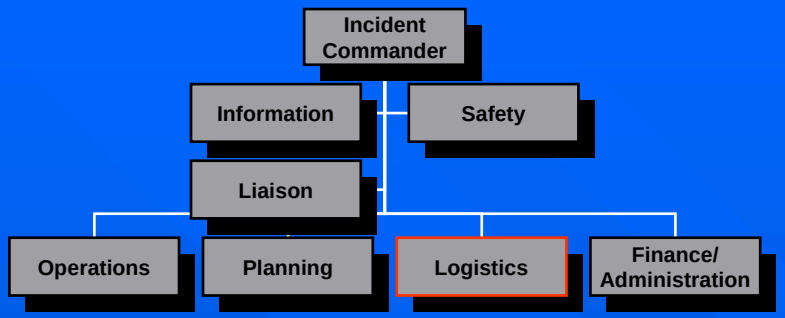
# Planning


Planning Section Chief
Situation Unit Leader
Resource Unit Leader
Demobilization Unit Leader
Documentation Unit Leader

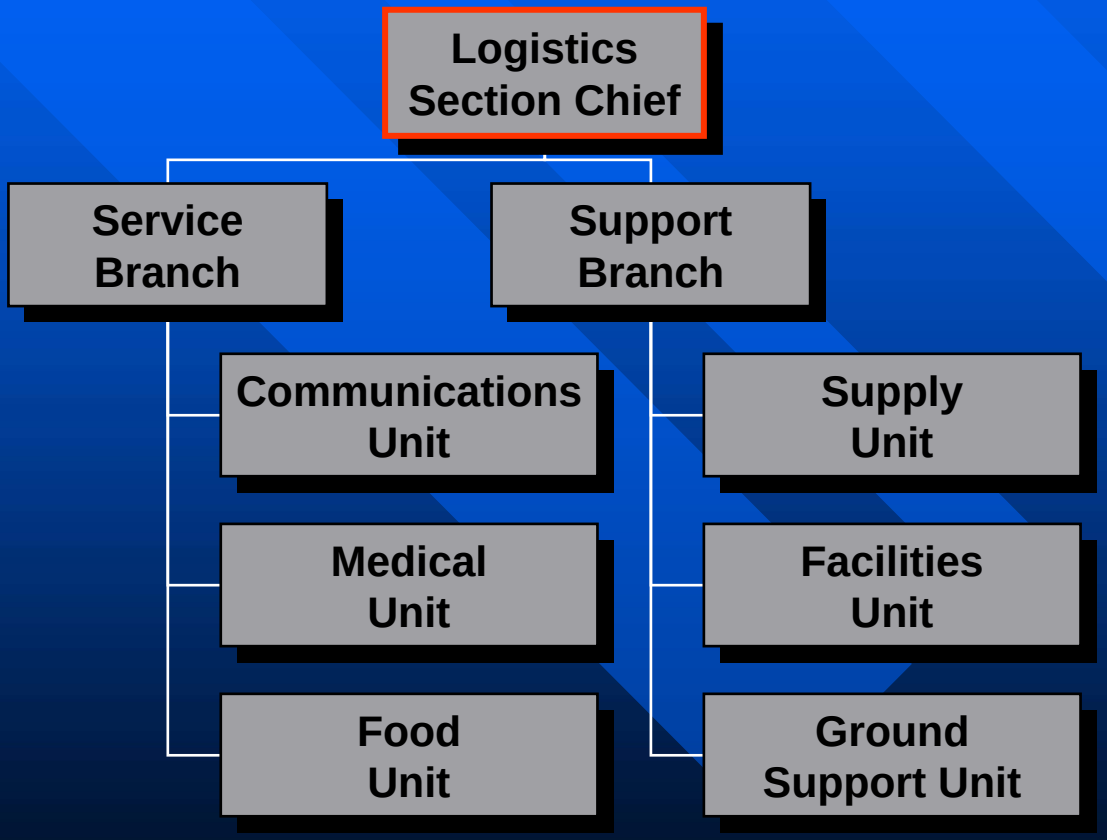
# For Example:
# World Trade Center

# The World Trade Center 11 September, 2001

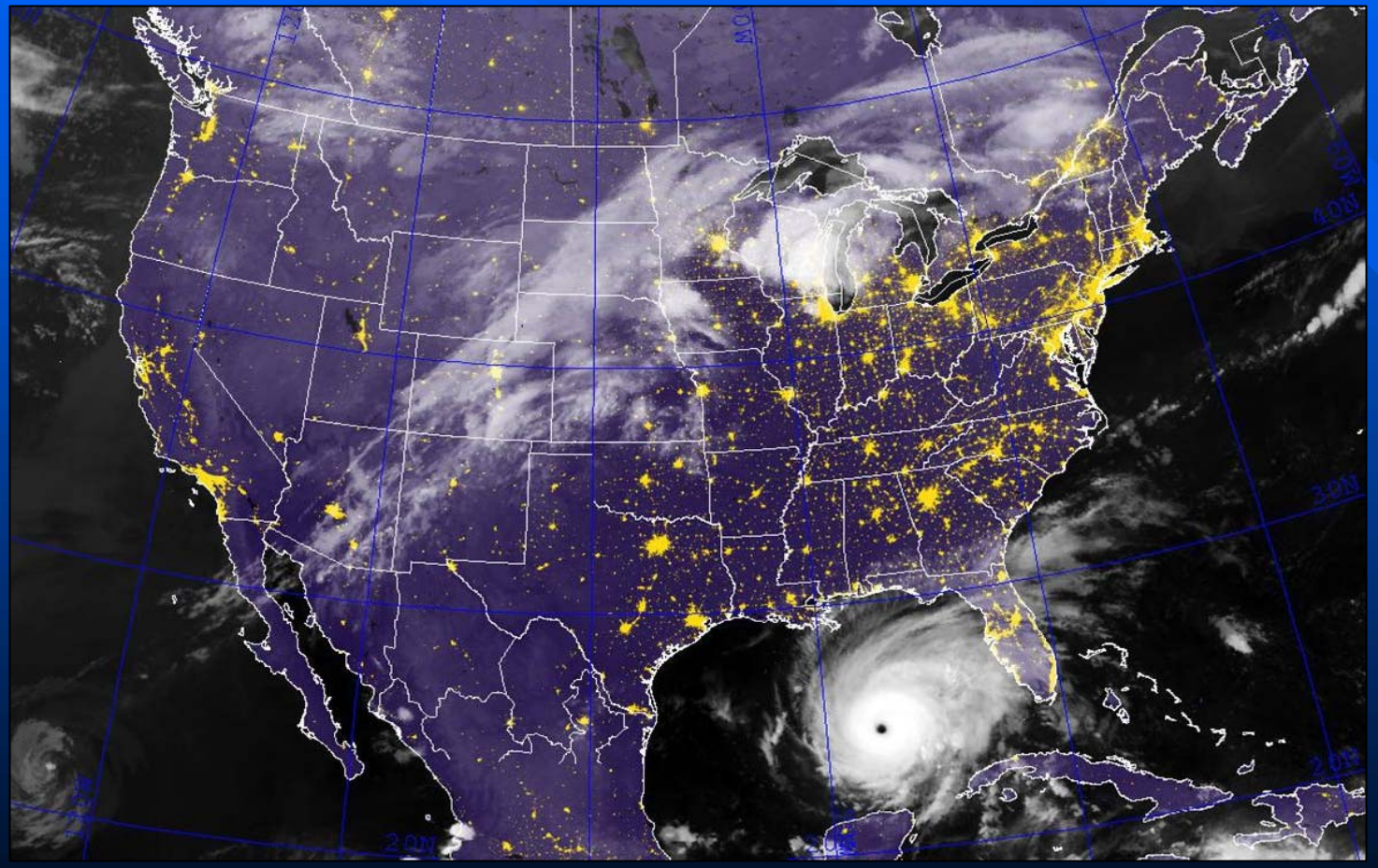
- The planning section was asked to develop a comprehensive plan for the rescue and recovery of the World Trade Center Disaster
- The Incident Action Plan included a summary of the cooperating agencies (26+), objectives, daily assignments and accounted for resources.


Incident Commander
Information
Safety
Liaison
Operations
Planning
Logistics
Finance/ Administration

# Logistics


Logistics Section Chief
Service Branch
Support Branch
Communications Unit
Medical Unit
Food Unit
Supply Unit
Facilities Unit
Ground Support Unit

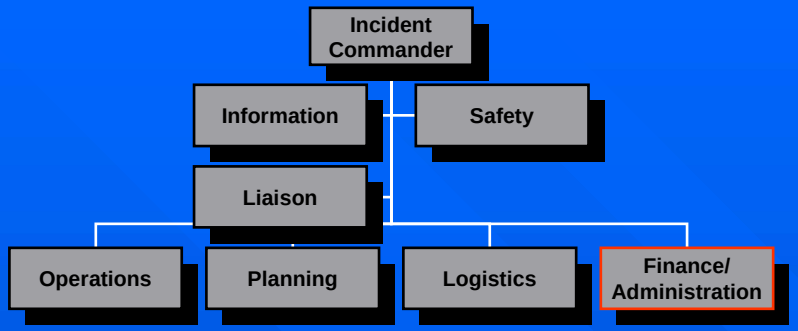
# For Example: Hurricane Rita



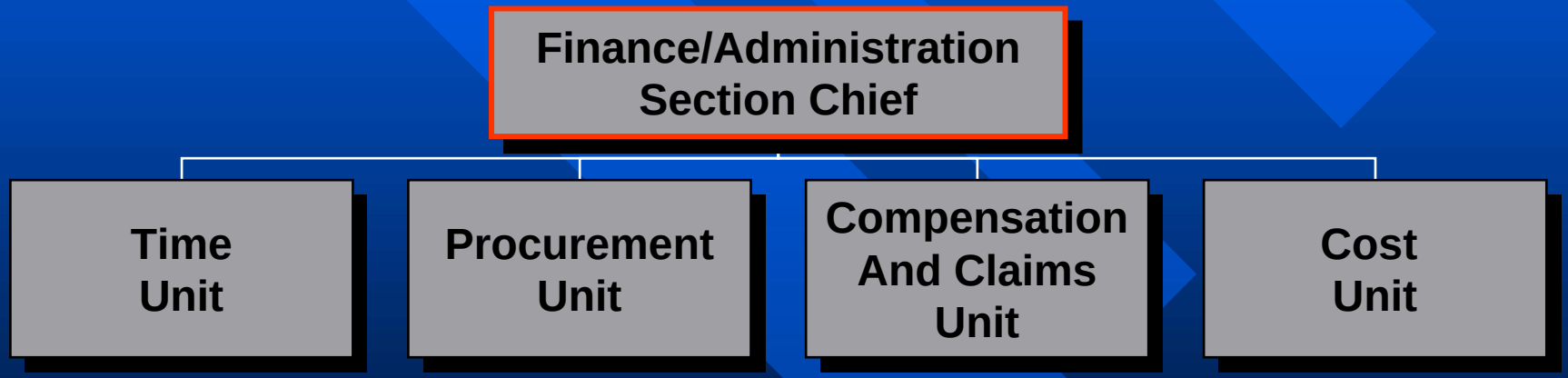
# The challenge of bringing supplies while the evacuation is occurring…

# Hurricane Rita
# Texas

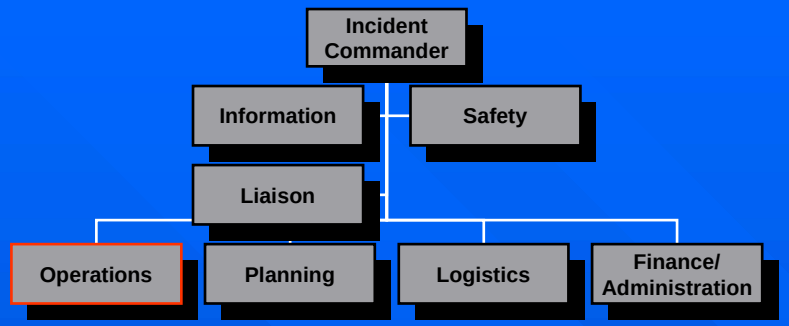
- An incident base was developed and managed to support in excess of 3,000 rescue personnel assigned to Eastern Texas.




# Finance/ Administration



# For Example:
# The Columbia Shuttle Recovery




# Operations

Operations Section Chief

Branches

Air Operations Branch

Divisions & Groups

Strike Teams & Task Forces

Single Resources

Air Tactical Group

Air Support Group

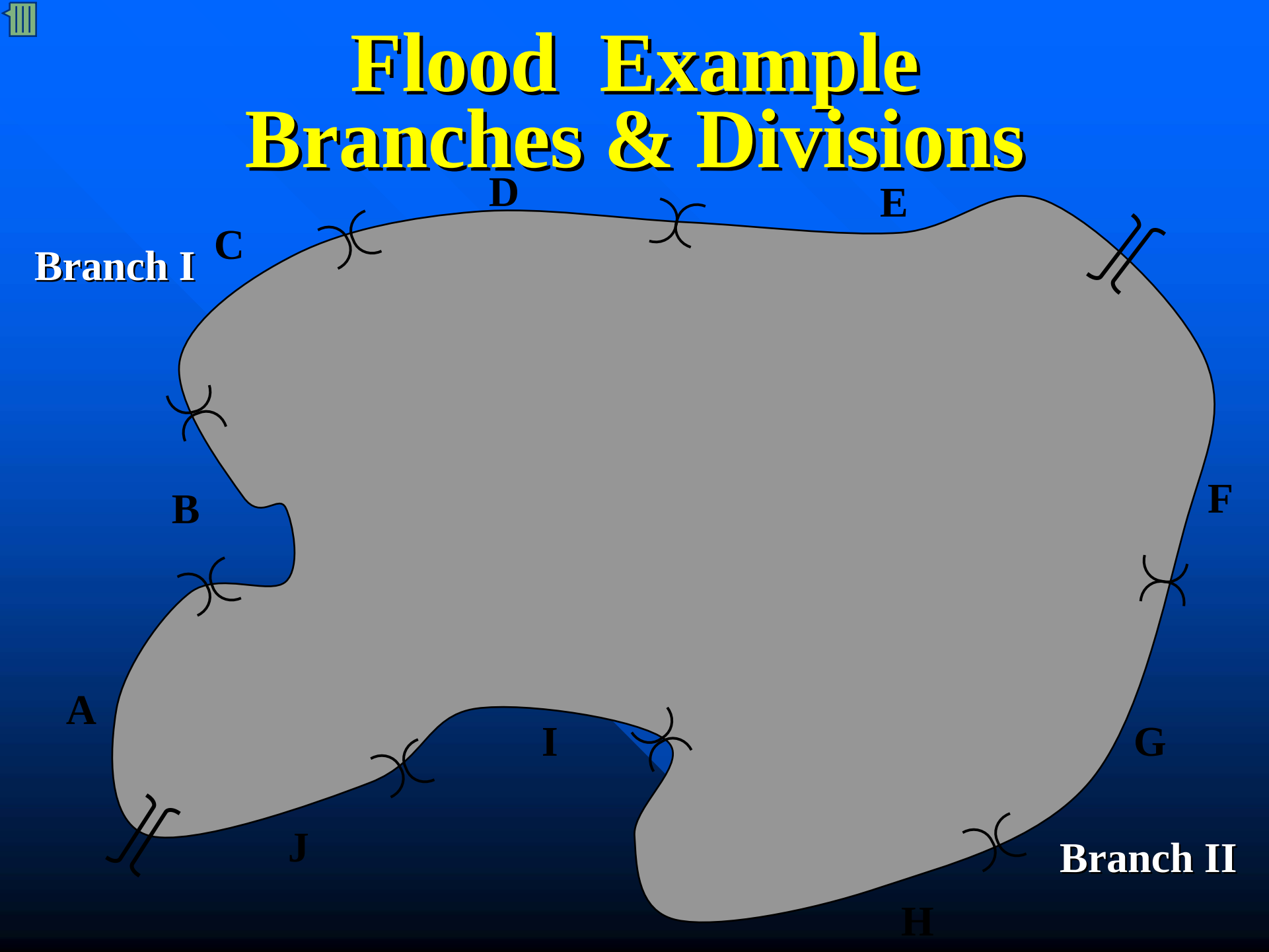
# Initial Response

# Span of Control

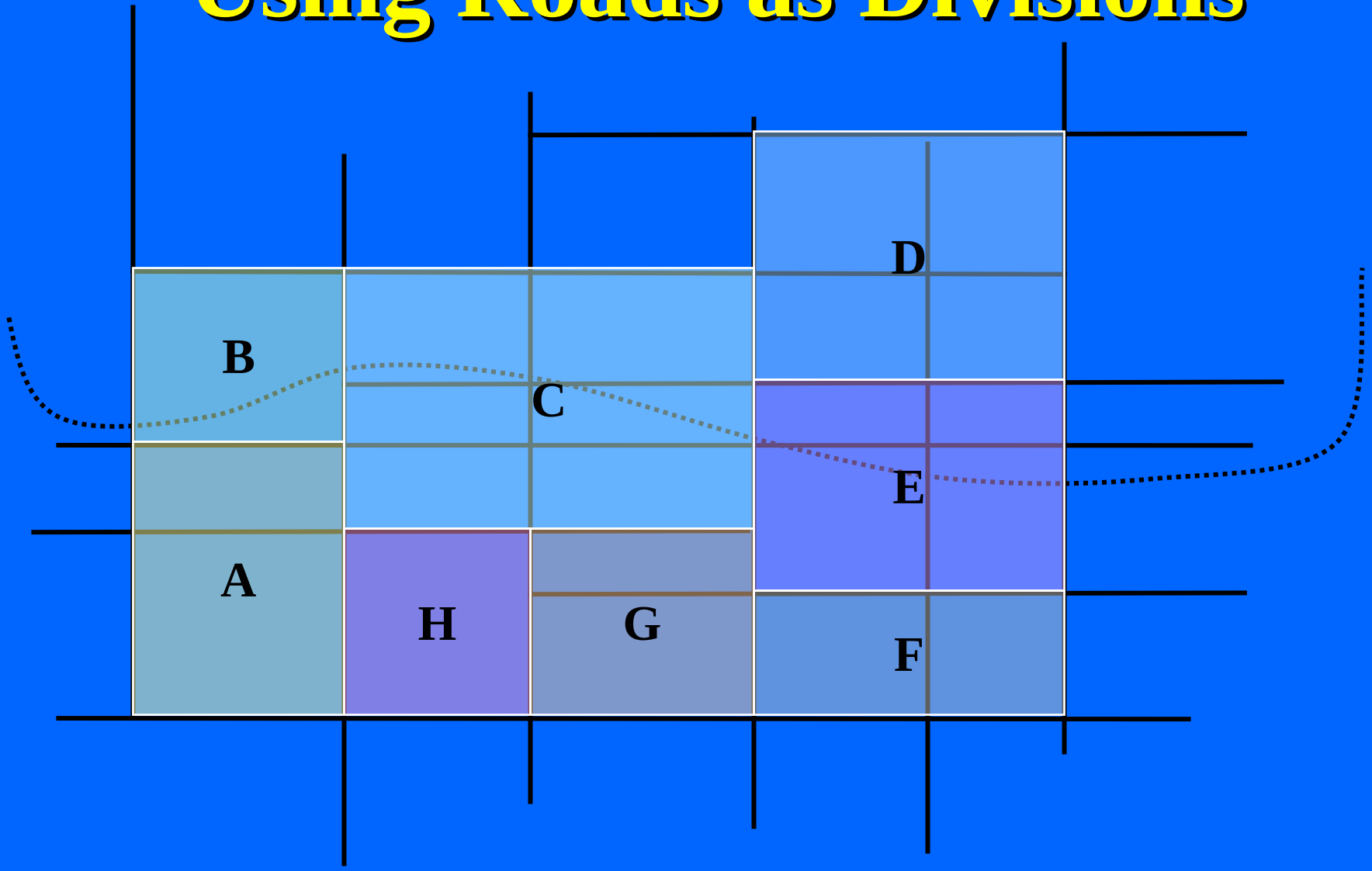
- Number of resources
- Complexity of the incident
- What is needed
- Safety
- Cost effectiveness
- Resource protection
- Effective leadership

# Flooding

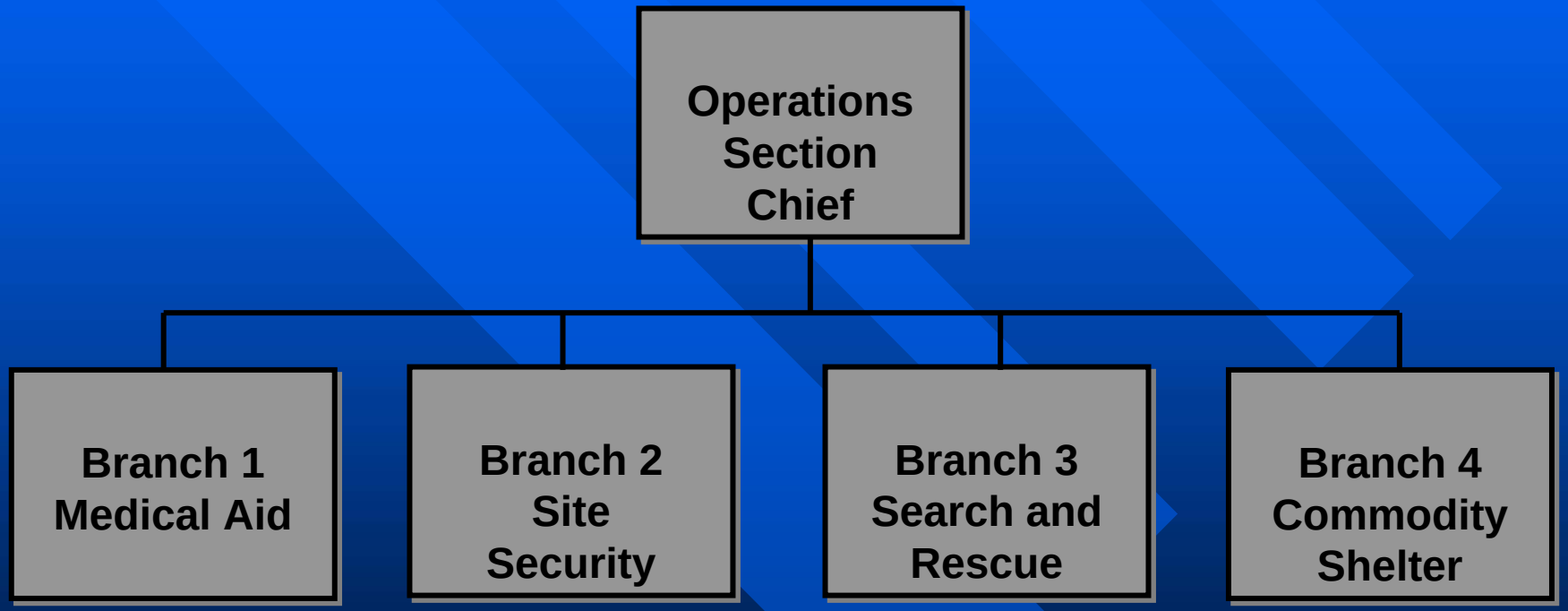
# Flood Example
# Branches & Divisions



# Earthquake Example – Using Roads as Divisions



# Earthquake Example – Functional Groups

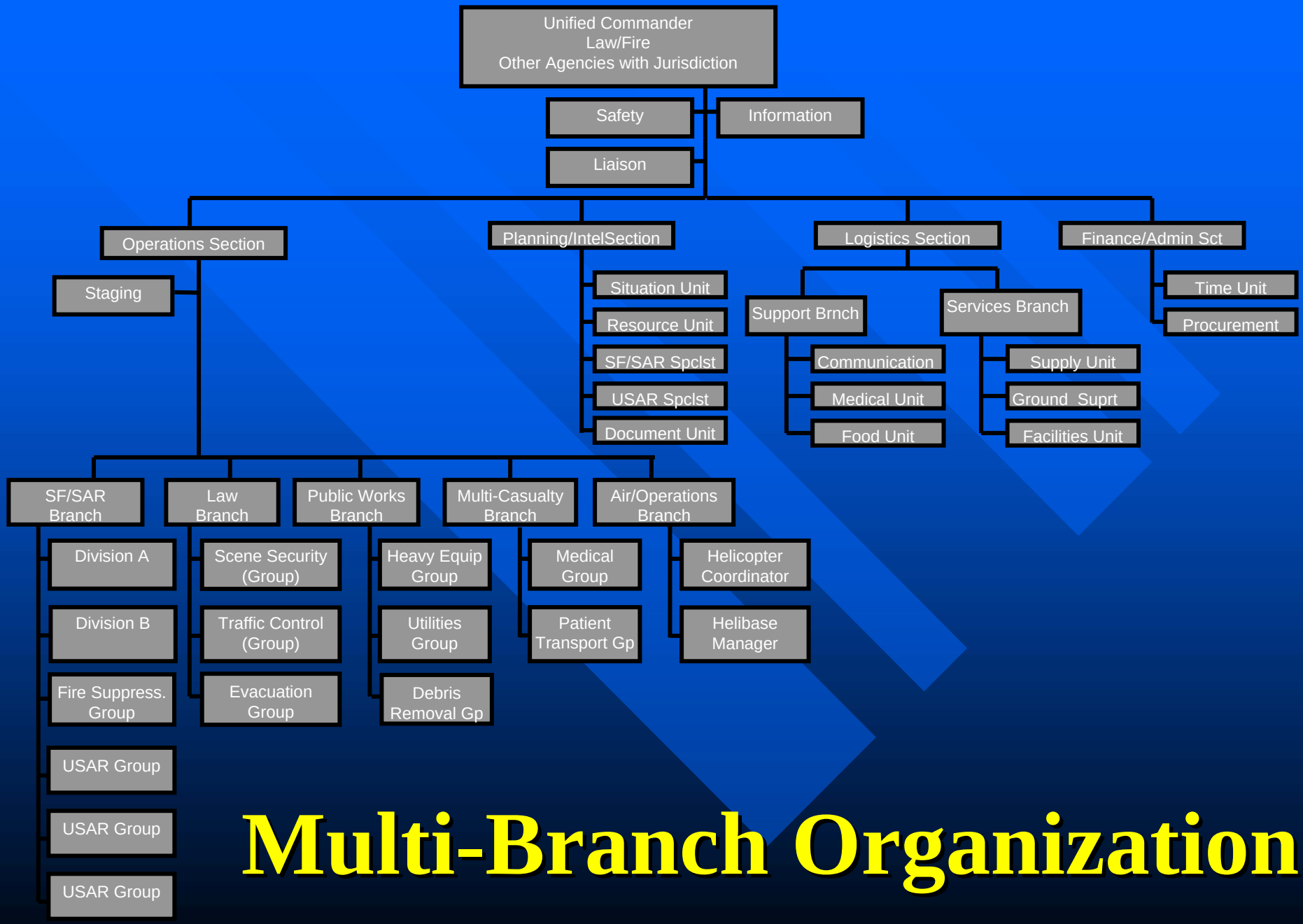


# Example: Small Incident Mt. Saint Helens – Volcano

- The responsible official requested an Incident Management Team comprised of the Command and General Staff to monitor and develop a public safety and education program while the volcano was active and presented a potential threat to local communities.

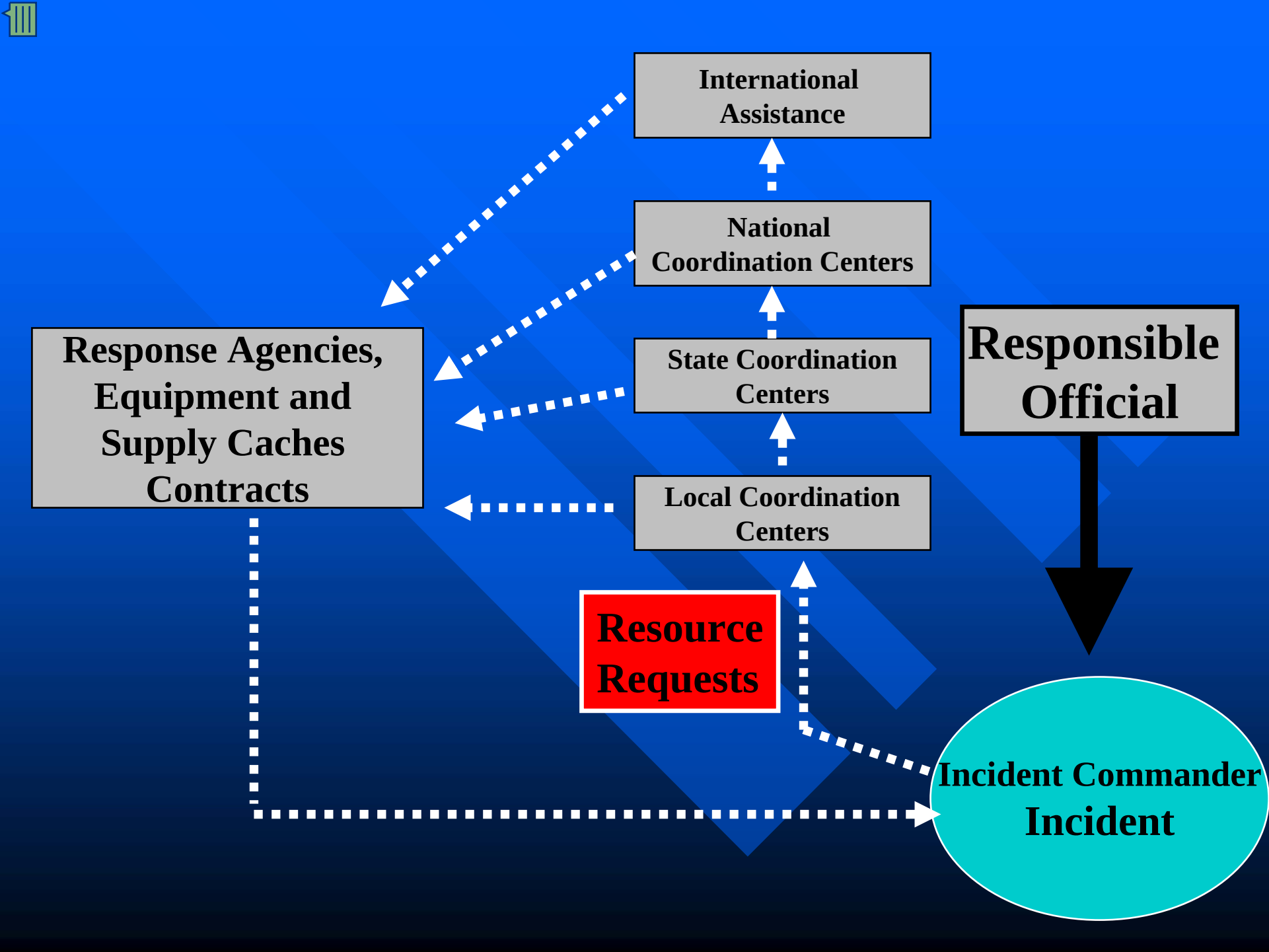
# Example: Small to Complex Incident
# Fire – Dynamic

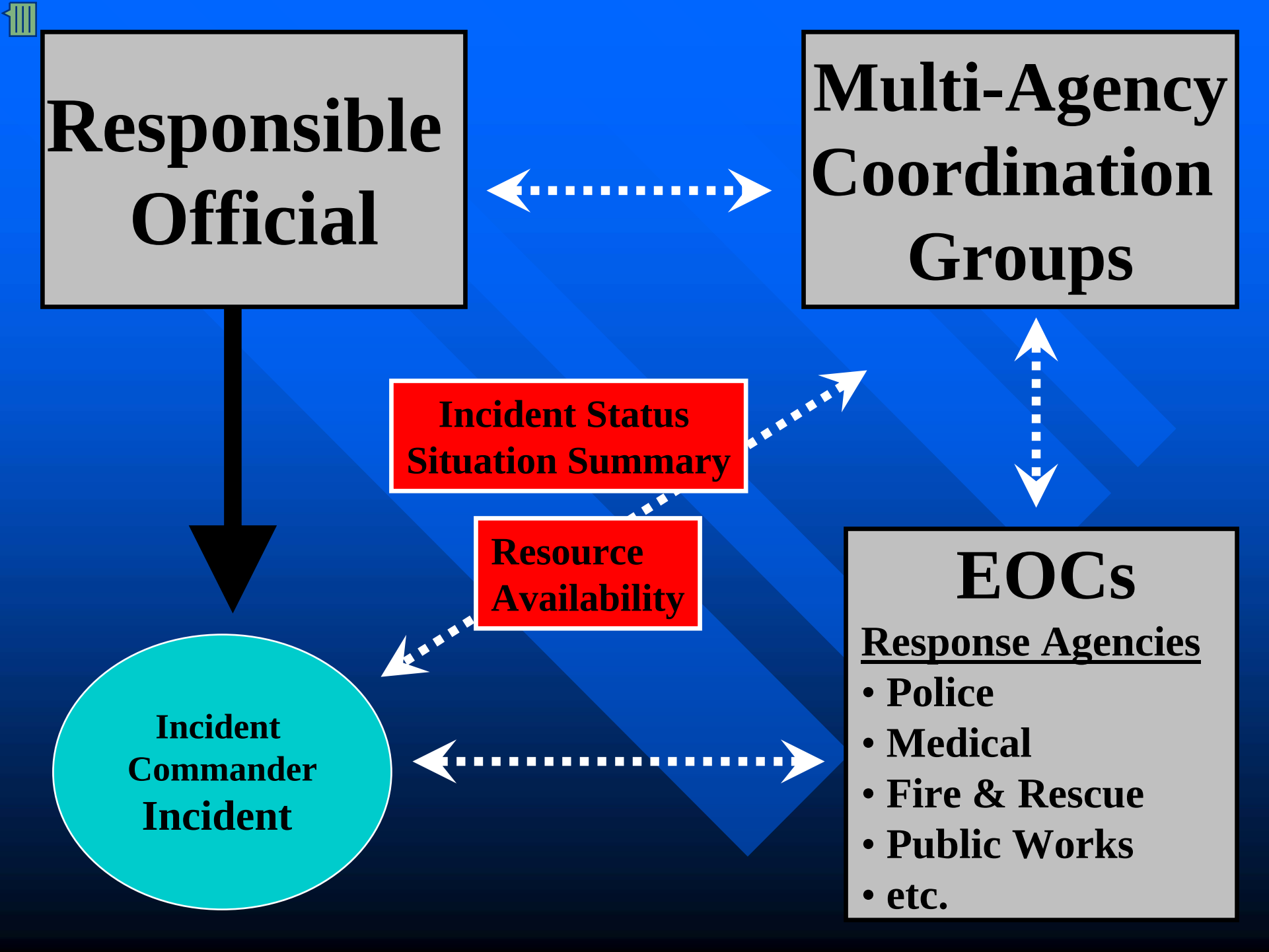
# Example of a Complex Incident Hurricane Ivan: Multi-Branch

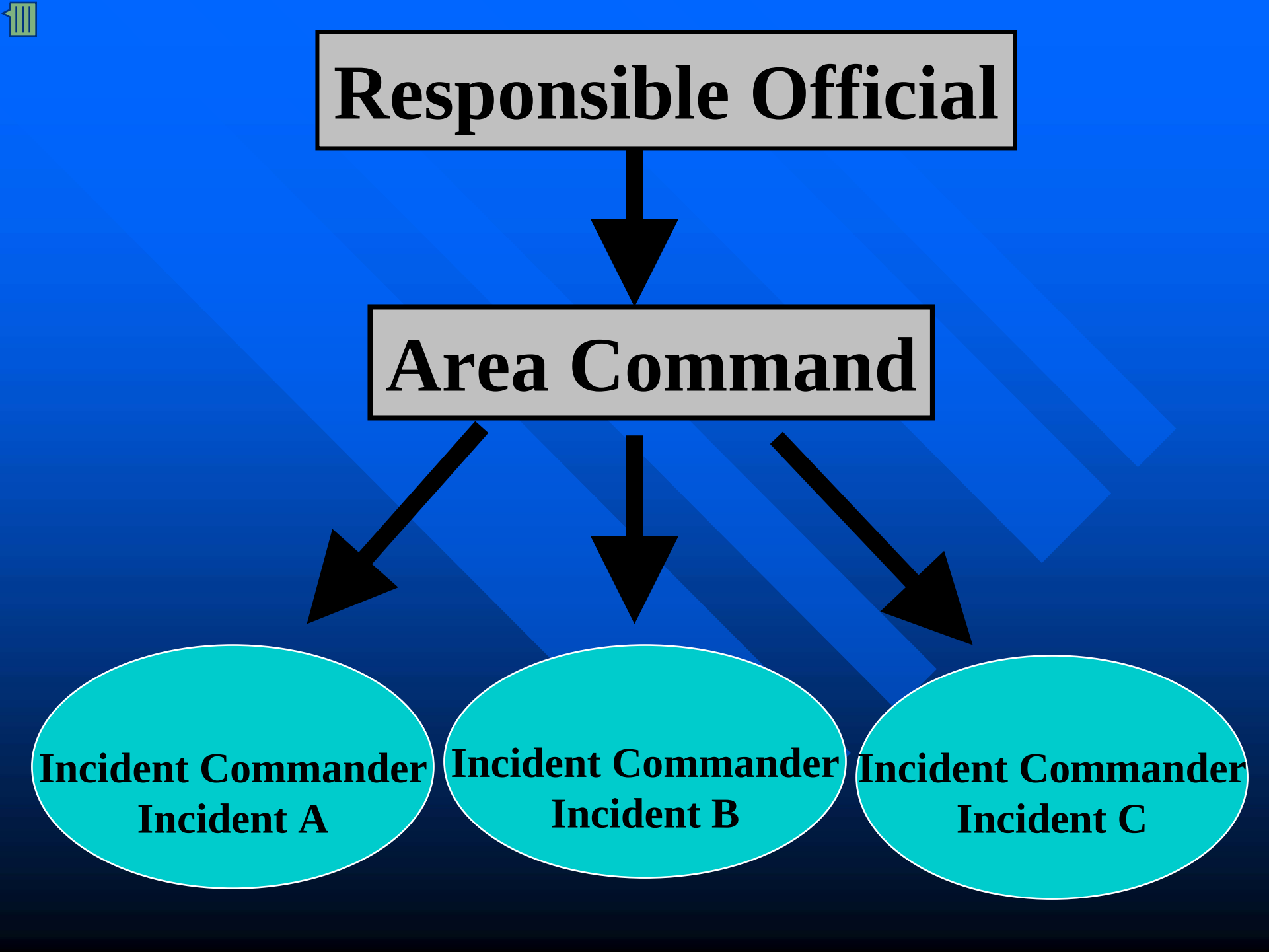



# Multi-Branch Organization

Responsible Official
Local Incident Commander
Type 2 Incident Commander
Type 1 Incident Commander


International Assistance
National Coordination Centers
State Coordination Centers
Local Coordination Centers
Response Agencies, Equipment and Supply Caches Contracts
Responsible Official
Resource Requests
Incident Commander
Incident


Responsible Official
Multi-Agency Coordination Groups
Incident Status Situation Summary
Resource Availability
EOCs
Response Agencies
• Police
• Medical
• Fire & Rescue
• Public Works
• etc.
Incident Commander Incident


Responsible Official
Area Command
Incident Commander
Incident A
Incident Commander
Incident B
Incident Commander
Incident C

# Key Points of ICS

- Delegation of Authority
- Flexible and dynamic
- Provides consistency
- Relies on functionalism
- Works on all incidents no matter the scope or size

# Summary
# Incident Command System

- Provides a Plan
- Organizes the resources
- Implements the actions
- Supports all personnel
- Effective Leadership Model

# Questions?