CHAPTER 3—EXTENDED ATTACK

CONTENTS

SAFETY FIRST—NO EXCEPTIONS

DEFINITION OF EXTENDED ATTACK

An Extended Attack Incident is the phase of the incident when Initial Attack capabilities have been exceeded. This has a high potential for more serious accidents and injuries. All planned actions must consider firefighter and public safety as the number one priority.

When complexity levels exceed Initial Attack capabilities, the appropriate ICS positions should be added to the command staff, commensurate with the complexity of the incident. Complexity is usually Type 3, however, could be typed at any complexity level.

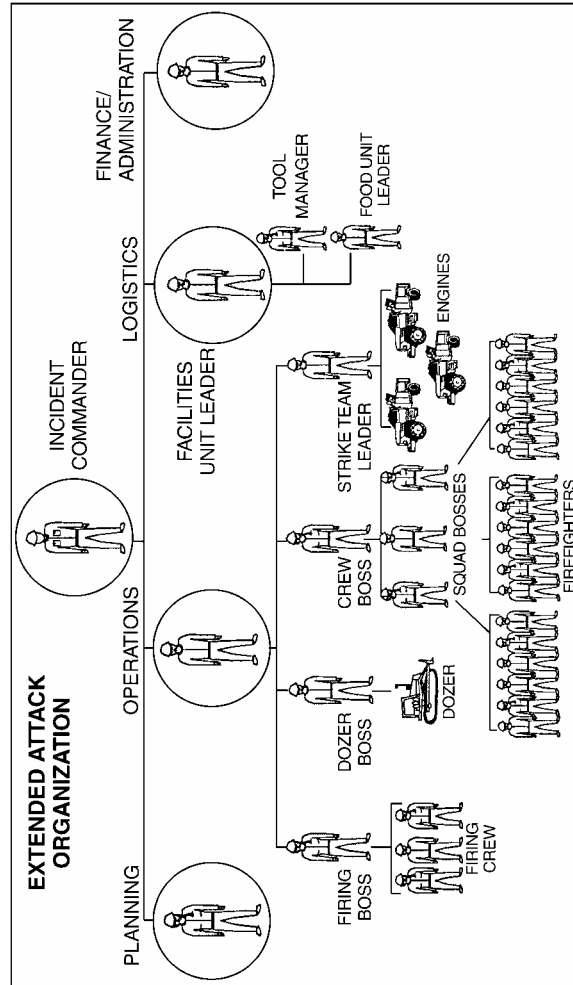**CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EXTENDED ATTACK INCIDENT**

An Extended Attack Incident is normally characterized by:

- Usually less than 100 acres in size, however, size is only one determining factor.

- Firefighting resources vary from several single resources to several Task Force/Strike Teams.

- The incident may be divided into divisions, but would not meet the Division/Group Supervisor complexity.

- The incident is not expected to be contained/controlled in the first operational period.

- Generally, a written Incident Action Plan would not be needed or prepared.

- Some of the Command and General Staff functions such as Operations, Planning, Logistics, Safety, and Liaison may be staffed.

- Staging areas may be utilized and in some instances a small incident base established.

EXAMPLE OF AN EXTENDED ATTACK ORGANIZATION

General staff positions filled as needed.

CHANGE FROM AN INITIAL ATTACK INCIDENT TO AN EXTENDED ATTACK INCIDENT

Early recognition by the Initial Attack IC that the initial attack forces will not control a fire is important. As soon as the Initial Attack IC recognizes that additional resources are needed or knows additional forces are en route, IC may need to withdraw from direct fireline suppression and must prepare for an Extended Attack mode of operation. The following items should be addressed by the Initial Attack IC when changing to an Extended Attack incident:

DUTIES OF EXTENDED ATTACK INCIDENT COMMANDER (IF ALL POSITIONS NOT FILLED)

- Establish an Incident Command Post (ICP) and check-in location(s) to receive, brief and assign incoming resources.

- Utilize complexity analysis to validate organizational needs (Appendix A).

- Follow the risk management process in Chapter 1. Review and update regularly during the incident.

- Employ strategy and tactics that will:

  ✓ Follow the Standard Firefighting Orders.

  ✓ Watch Out Situations are mitigated.

  ✓ Ensure work/rest requirements are met.

  ✓ Entrapment situations are avoided.

- Determine and document incident objectives. Included in the objectives will be triggers or decision points for disengagement.

- Complete and document incident complexity.

  - ✓ Type 3 or greater complexity incidents require an incident commander without collateral duties such as logistics, planning or duty officer.

- Use an Incident Briefing Form (ICS 201) to:

  - ✓ Sketch a map of the fire and identify resource assignments.

  - ✓ Document the fire organization.

  - ✓ Keep track of all resources that are on scene, en route, and ordered.

  - ✓ Document strategy, tactics, and current actions.

- Review Extended Attack Safety Checklist.

- Keep dispatch, or other higher level officer, informed of:

  - ✓ Status of the fire

  - ✓ Progress of the suppression effort

  - ✓ Additional resources needed

  - ✓ Weather conditions, especially changes

- ✓ Special situations such as values threatened, etc.

- As additional resources arrive:

  - ✓ Divide the fire into areas of responsibility, such as right and left flank or Division A and Division B.

  - ✓ Assign individuals responsibility for these areas. At first these will usually be Single Resources Bosses, but as multiple single resources arrive consideration should be given to aggregating them into Task Forces with a Task Force Leader to reduce span-of-control (recommended no more than 1:5) and increase suppression efficiency.

- As the incident continues to escalate, there may be a need to staff functional areas. These may be staffed by personnel at the unit leader level or by individuals that can complete the duties. Should the complexity require a fully qualified section chief, then the transition to a Type 2 Organization should begin.

- A person to directly supervise the suppression efforts.

- A person to begin assessing logistical needs such as feeding, fuel, sleeping arrangements, special equipment, etc.

- A person to address incident planning needs:

  - ✓ Establish formal check-in and resource status.

  - ✓ Gather, record, and provide on-site information to firefighting personnel and dispatch.

  - ✓ Take on-site weather and obtain weather reports and forecasts.

  - ✓ Start written Incident Action Plan, if required by IC.

  - ✓ Prepare maps.

  - ✓ Assist in developing a Wildfire Situation Analysis.

  - ✓ A Liaison Officer is especially important in multiple agency/jurisdiction incidents.

  - ✓ A Safety Officer.

CONTROL OR TRANSFER TO TYPE 2 INCIDENT

At some point the fire will be contained/controlled or a decision made to transition to a larger, more complex organization.

Key indicators as to when to make this transition are:

- Incident objectives will not be met.

- The fire will not be controlled in the first or next operational period.

- A written Incident Action Plan will be needed for the next operational period.

- Logistical support is needed, such as an Incident Base or camps to feed, sleep, and supply personnel on the fire.

- There is a need to fill most or all of the Command and General Staff positions.

- Fire complexity exceeds capability of extended attack organization.

If the Extended Attack IC follows the above-identified procedures, the efficiency of the suppression action will be optimized and the fire will either be controlled or the stage will be set for a smooth transfer of Command to the incoming Type 2 Organization.

The primary objective of all IC's is to provide for firefighter and public safety. Discharge of this objective applies the appropriate suppression response. This objective may require transfer of command. A measurable performance element with safety implications is the execution of this transfer of command. Adequate staffing, ordering of needed resources, good planning, good documentation and quality briefings are all important elements of transfer of command.

EXTENDED ATTACK SAFETY CHECKLIST

After your initial size-up of the fire and/or transition from an Initial Attack (IC), answer the following questions (repeat this analysis whenever there is a change in conditions on the fire or a predicted change in fire conditions).

YES	NO	
		Do you have a current fire weather forecast for the fire location?
		Is the observed fire weather consistent with the forecast?
		Can you control the fire with the resources available (on the incident or soon to be on the incident) under expected conditions?
		Have you developed a plan to attack the fire? Direct or indirect, anchor points, escape routes, head or flank attack, priority areas. Have you communicated this to all personnel assigned to the incident, including new arrivals?
		Lookouts or you can see all of the fire area?
		Can you communicate with everyone on the fire and with dispatch?
		Escape routes are established. If you are using the black, is it completely burned and without a reburn potential?
		Safety and the Standard Firefighting Orders are being followed?
		Will you control the fire before the next operational period?
		Have you reported the status of the fire to dispatch?
		Do you have a complete list of what resources have been ordered for the fire?
		Cost-share issues present?
		Have all personnel on the fire been informed of the transition to an extended attack incident and any change of plans?
		Fire complexity has exceeded management capability of extended attack organization.
		Has this transition of command been documented in writing and through Dispatch?

IF THE ANSWER IS "NO" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, YOU MUST TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION IMMEDIATELY.