INCIDENT COMMANDER
Position Introduction:

The Incident Commander is responsible for all on-site operations, family assistance center operations, and temporary morgue operations unless the responsibility is delegated to a subordinate ICS position. This toolkit provides a basic position checklist and a number of tools that the acting Incident Commander can utilize to ensure a safe and more effective operation.

Contents of the Toolkit:

1. Position Checklist
2. Initial Mass Fatality Assessment Form
3. Family Assistance Center (FAC) Site Selection Criteria
4. Managing and Preventing Stress Fact Sheet for Disaster Response Workers
ICS POSITION: INCIDENT COMMANDER

Position Checklist

- Coordinate initial assessment using the “INITIAL MASS FATALITY ASSESSMENT” form
- Coordinate incident operations with Justice of the Peace for the impacted area
- Coordinate with Operations Section Chief to determine appropriate personnel for the Mass Fatality Site Operations Branch Director, Morgue Branch Director, and Family Assistance Center Branch Director
- Notify local/county Emergency Management Coordinator of the occurrence of a mass fatality incident (provide copy of the INITIAL MASS FATALITY ASSESSMENT)
- Identify facilities to house the temporary morgue and family assistance center
- Coordinate with Logistics Section Chief to ensure availability of:
  - Communications (telephones, fax machines, land-lines, data access, etc.)
  - Fatality Management Tools (body bags, vacuum sealant systems, etc.)
  - Storage Solutions (refrigerated trucks, etc.)
  - Transportation for personnel and fatalities (cars, vans, trucks, etc.)
  - Security (for scene, Family Assistance Center, Temporary Morgue, etc.)
  - Identification (ID badges for all personnel)
- Identify a Public Information Officer (utilize lines of succession for multiple shifts as necessary)
- Coordinate the establishment of a Joint Information Center with the Public Information Officer
## INITIAL ASSESSMENT – MASS FATALITY INCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of Incident Location:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Incident:</th>
<th>Scene Hazards:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Transportation</td>
<td>□ Chemical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Natural</td>
<td>□ Biological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Criminal</td>
<td>□ Radiological</td>
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<td>□ Nuclear</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Other:</td>
<td>□ Explosive</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Number of Fatalities:</th>
<th>Positive ID Challenges:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ 0-5</td>
<td>□ Burns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ 6-25</td>
<td>□ Fragmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ 26-50</td>
<td>□ Other: _________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ 51-100</td>
<td></td>
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<td>□ &gt;100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Other Pertinent Information & Notes: |
A SUMMARY OF CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF A FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER (FAC)

☐ SITE SELECTION FACTORS:

- Type of disaster event and number of fatalities
- Location in relation to the disaster site and the morgue
- Availability of neutral, non-religious site (e.g., hotels, schools, etc.)
- Needs of the many participating agencies

☐ AVAILABILITY OF THE FACILITY – IMMEDIATE AND LONG TERM

☐ INFRASTRUCTURE:

- Electrical power
- Telephone service
- A sufficient number of toilets
- Controlled heat/air conditioning, water, and sewage
- Adequate parking
- Security options, including securing the media room
- Disability accommodations

☐ SPACE AND FLOOR PLAN – ACCOMODATING THE PERFORMANCE OF MANY FUNCTIONS AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES. SPACE SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR:

- Operations center and administrative offices
- Large general assembly room with a public address system
- A media area that is physically separated from the families to not allow media access to victims families
- Reflection room
- Death notification room
- Private counseling rooms for the staff members or response workers and for victims family members to use
- Medical area
- Reception area
- Kids play area with items to keep children occupied
EMERGENCY AND DISASTER RESPONSE WORKERS: MANAGING AND PREVENTING STRESS

☐ COMMON REACTIONS TO A DISASTER INCIDENT
- No one who responds to a mass fatality incident is untouched by it
- Profound sadness, grief, and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event.
- You may not want to leave the scene until the work is finished
- You will likely try to override stress and fatigue with dedication and commitment
- You may deny the need for rest and recovery time
- We each have different needs and different ways of coping
- Acknowledging our feelings helps us recover

☐ SIGNS THAT YOU MAY NEED STRESS MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE
- Difficulty communicating thoughts
- Difficulty remembering instructions
- Difficulty maintaining balance
- Uncharacteristically argumentative
- Difficulty making decisions
- Limited attention span
- Unnecessary risk-taking
- Tremors/headaches/nausea
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- Colds or flu-like symptoms
- Disorientation or confusion
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of objectivity
- Easily frustrated
- Unable to engage in problem-solving
- Unable to let down when off duty
- Refusal to follow orders
- Refusal to leave the scene
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Unusual clumsiness

☐ WAYS TO HELP MANAGE THE STRESS
- Limit on-duty work hours to no more than 12 hours per day
- Make work rotations from high stress to lower stress functions
- Make work rotations from the scene to routine assignments, as practicable
- Use counseling assistance programs available through your agency
- Drink plenty of water and eat healthy snacks like fresh fruit and whole grain breads and other energy foods at the scene
- Take frequent, brief breaks from the scene as practicable.
- Talk about your emotions to process what was has been seen and done
- Stay in touch with your family and friends, if possible spend time with them
- Participate in memorials, rituals, and use of symbols as a way to express feelings
- Pair up with a responder so that you may monitor one another’s stress

* When to seek help: If self-help strategies are not helping or you find that you are using drugs/alcohol in order to cope, you may wish to seek outside or professional assistance with your stress symptoms.