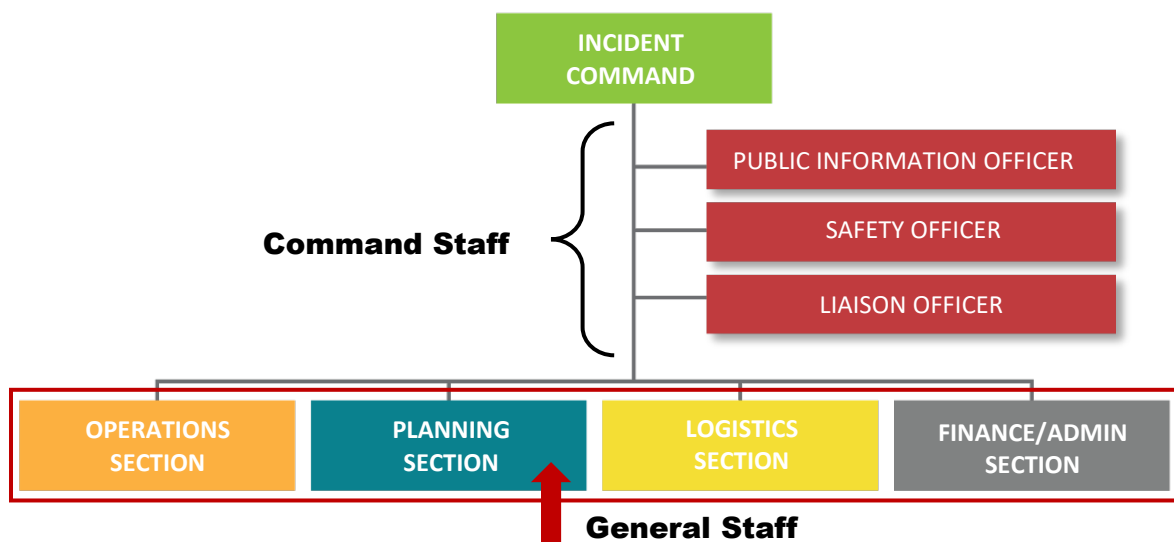


TOOLBOX MEETING GUIDE

TOPIC 7: PLANNING SECTION CHIEF



The Planning Section Chief is an integral part of the Incident Action Planning process. The Planning Section Chief organizes briefing meetings, provides key advice on objectives, and anticipates future needs. As part of the General Staff, the Planning Section Chief is part of the leadership team tasked with determining incident objectives and strategies for the assigned operational period. Their section is responsible for maintaining the Incident Action Plan and tracking the status of each objective. The Planning Section determines the times and locations for incident status briefing meetings.

Once the role has been assigned, the Planning Section Chief should refer to their checklist and associated Incident Command System (ICS) forms. Other Planning Section positions* can then be activated as necessary, such as:

- ☐ Documentation Unit
- ☐ Demobilization Unit
- ☐ Situation Unit
- ☐ Environmental Unit
- ☐ Resource Unit

*Depending on the number of responders available and the scale of the incident, some subordinate roles will not need to be assigned, or the role can be assumed by the Planning Section Chief or other members of the Planning Section.

Use Your Checklists – All Planning Section roles should have associated checklists. Whether fulfilling one role or multiple roles, personnel must remember to use all applicable checklists. Keep in mind, not all tasks on a checklist may need to be completed - let the pace and needs of the incident determine the required tasks. In many cases, checklists are divided into phases of the incident, such as: **Initial Response, Ongoing Response, and Demobilization**. Remember, you only need to address the checklist items according to the current stage of the incident. To make a comparison, airline pilots refer to their take-off checklist first before they look at one for the landing process.

Span of Control/Chain of Command – It is important to maintain a manageable span of control so personnel in leadership and critical decision making positions are not overwhelmed. Span of control should be maintained between three and seven, and a ratio of one supervisor to five direct reports is optimal. It is essential personnel respect the chain of command and ensure they only answer to their direct supervisor, not directly to the Incident Commander (IC). Sharing the incident organization chart with all responders will help ensure these lines are understood.

Incident Action Plan (IAP) - The Planning Section develops the IAP, while input from the Operations Section, the IC and the Safety Officer are integral to create an effective blueprint for the response and management of the incident.

A sample IAP may contain the following information:

Objectives	Strategies	Tactics	Status
1. Responder Safety	2 Modes of Communication. - PPE. - Confirmed Hazard Planning Zone. - Hazard Assessment.	Assign radio channel, ensure cell coverage, callbacks every 15 minutes (Ops/Logistics). Ensure intrinsically safe equipment (Safety/Logistics). Pull out map and determined HPZ (Planning). Check weather (wind speed & direction, precipitation, temperature) (Planning).	Completed Ongoing Checks Ongoing Last Check 11am
2. Public Protection	- Isolation (RB's, air monitoring). - Determination of affected parties in HPZ. - Contact with affected parties.	Roadblocks – two needed (OPS). Rovers – sweep the isolation area and ensure transients are evacuated, occupied dwellings are checked (OPS). Telephoners assigned to call affected parties (EOC). Mobile air monitoring (OPS).	50% 2 Rovers, 90% done EOC calling, completed
3. Control and Containment	- Investigate incident. - Order response resources. - Isolate incident at site.	Minimum two people, full PPE (OPS). Vac truck, fire suppression unit, (Logistics). ESD, manual valve shut off, if needed, etc. (OPS).	Not done ETA 1:30pm Closed & verified
4. Environment	- Determine initial impact of incident. - Obtain additional resources for immediate spill containment.	If spill/release is off-lease, determine nearest waterway (Plans). Use soaker pads or booming to contain liquid (OPS). Use equipment to build berms (OPS).	Verified off lease 1 boom set Excavator ETA 3pm

The Planning Section will also develop a contingency plan, review current and anticipated incident and resource statuses, develop alternative strategies, identify resources required to implement the contingency plan, document alternatives for presentation to the IC and Operations, and include in the written IAP.

Briefing Meetings – Status briefing meetings should occur at regular intervals and be scheduled by the Planning Section in conjunction with the Incident Commander. The Planning Section Chief will compile and display incident status summary information outlined in these meetings. They are also responsible for gathering information from the subordinate roles to present at each update meeting. Once the meeting is over, it is the role of the Planning Section Chief to relay the updated information back to any subordinate personnel.

Active Response – The Planning Section will provide input throughout the evolution of the incident and the IAP. In addition to developing initial operational objectives, the Planning Section should assume the “what-if” role and consider potential threats to completing the IAP (such as a weather event), develop alternate strategies to meet objectives, maintain awareness of on-scene resource requests, and look at long-term staffing considerations. Throughout the incident, the Planning Section is responsible for managing a resource tracking system, coordinating with logistics to identify and meet future needs, developing/maintaining incident maps, and maintaining awareness of on-scene resource requests.

Demobilization – During the demobilization phase, the Planning Section is responsible for preparing a demobilization plan, collecting all documentation at the conclusion of the incident, and contributing information to the post-incident report that will be submitted to the regulator(s).

Forms: ICS forms are an integral part of proper documentation processes and all roles should be familiar with the forms applicable to them. Documentation provides vital evidence of not only decisions and actions taken, but of what information was available to decision makers at specific times. These records support post-incident analysis, and can be legally admissible in a court of law.

Common ICS Planning Section Forms: Incident Briefing; Incident Objectives; Organization Chart and Incident Status Summary.