HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
OPERATIONS POLICY

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Sheriff

All Hazards (NIMS)

Distribution:	All Employees		Policy Number:	OPS 0731
Responsible Unit:	Special Operations Division		Rescinds:	*NEW POLICY*
Original Issued Date:	04/04/24	Revision #:	Latest Revision Date:	04/04/24
Latest Required Review was Completed:	04/04/24		Next Review Due:	04/04/27

1. Purpose

The Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the primary method to prepare for, respond to, and manage critical events. NIMS is a comprehensive national approach to incident management, applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. It provides a consistent framework for Federal, state, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently.

2. Policy

The HCSO will utilize the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS) in conjunction with other Agency policies and procedures as outlined in various written directives. These policies, plans, and agreements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Critical Incident Responses
- Emergency Operations Plans
- Public Demonstrations and Civil Disorders
- Hazardous Material Incidents
- Lost or Missing Persons
- Planned Special Events
- City Emergency Management Plans
- Mutual Aid Agreements
- Hostage/Barricade Situations
- Natural or Man-made Disasters
- Bomb Threats/Disposals
- Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents
- Terrorist Acts

3. Definitions

Command Staff: in an incident management organization, the command could consist of the deputy incident commander and the special staff positions of public information officer, safety officer, liaison officer, and other positions as required (such as an intelligence officer), who reports directly to the Incident Commander (IC). They may have an assistant or assistants as needed.

Documentation Unit: the documentation unit maintains a master record of all personnel and components involved in response to a critical incident and is comprised of status recorders who maintain a chronological

log, personnel rosters, and a record of all telephone communications. The unit leader ensures maintenance of all files and documentation necessary to complete situation or resource status reports and required after-action reports.

Incident: an unplanned occurrence, natural or human-caused, that requires an emergency response to protect life, property, or both. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

Incident Action Plan (IAP): an oral or written plan containing general objective reflecting the overall incident management strategy. It may include identifying operational resources and assignments, as well as plans and contingencies for the demobilization of resources after the operation. It may also include attachments that provide direction and important information for the management of the incident during one or more operational periods.

Incident Commander (IC): the IC has overall authority and responsibility for organizing incident operations and is responsible for managing all operations at the incident site. Responsibilities of the IC can be assumed by the officer handling the original call to the department's chief and any additional qualified officers, depending on the size, scope, and complexity of the incident or event.

Incident Command System (ICS): a standardized on-scene emergency management system that adopts an integrated organizational structure. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in managing resources during incidents. It can be used for all kinds of emergencies and applies to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

Incident Management Team (IMT): the IMT consists of the incident commander, appropriate command, and general staff personnel assigned to the incident.

Intelligence: intelligence can be its own section (especially in police incidents), an officer assigned to Command, or an officer within each section. This function manages internal information, intelligence, and operational security requirements. These may include information security and operational security activities, as well as the complex task of ensuring that sensitive information of all types (e.g., classified information, law enforcement sensitive information, proprietary information, or export-controlled information) is handled in a way that not only safeguards the information, but also ensures that it is disseminated to those who need access to perform their missions effectively and safely. This section may be part of the command staff; assigned to the general staff; or assigned to a subset of the operations, planning, or logistics sections, depending on the need. Each section may need its intelligence branch, group, or unit.

Liaison Officer: a command staff member responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies.

Logistics Section: the logistics section is responsible for meeting all support needs for the incident through appropriate procurement of facilities, food service, transportation, supplies, communications, equipment maintenance and fueling, medical services for incident personnel, and personnel for expanding incidents or relief on long incidents. Logistics is responsible for ensuring the safety of responders when they are in a

base, camp or staging area before deployment and ensuring that relief personnel and equipment are available for deployment as needed.

Logistics Section Chief (LSC): the LSC is responsible for ensuring that the activities for the incident or event can be sustained. This includes obtaining, securing, and maintaining the facilities needed to sustain the operation, including a base, camp, or staging area.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): a system mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) that provides a consistent nationwide approach for state, local, and tribal governments; the private sector; and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among state, local, and tribal capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies these as the incident command system, multiagency coordination systems, training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualification and certification, and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

Operations Section: this component is responsible for all operations at the incident site directed toward reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoring normal conditions. The operations section is responsible for implementing the IAP and achieving the objectives outlined in that plan.

Operations Section Chief (OSC): the OSC is responsible for all operations within the incident or event, ensuring implementation of the IAP and helping to develop the IAP for the oncoming shift.

Planning Section: the planning section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and processing tactical information to develop an IAP with the IC, command, and general staff. Planning should establish a documentation unit, as needed.

Planning Section Chief (PSC): the PSC is responsible for monitoring the current operation and determining the personnel and activities needed for the oncoming shift. The PSC develops, writes, and disperses the IAP after the IC approves it approves it.

Safety Officer: the Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander (IC) or Unified Command on all matters relating to operational safety, including the health and safety of incident personnel. The Safety Officer ensures personnel safety by identifying and anticipating, correcting, and communicating about unsafe situations.

Staging Area: staging areas are established to assemble resources while awaiting a tactical assignment. The operations section manages staging areas.

Unified Command (UC): this is an application of ICS used when there is more than one Agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross jurisdictions. Agencies work together through designated members of the UC, often the senior person(s) from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the UC, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies, appoint a single operations section chief, and approve a single IAP. The IC responsibility is shared within the UC, with the function most important at the time taking the lead role. The lead responsibility may shift as the incident progresses. For example, at a crash involving hazardous materials, the fire department would assume the lead role until the HAZMAT concerns are

mitigated. Then, as the incident progresses to the crash investigation phase, the lead role would shift to the police department.

Unity of Command: every individual assigned to an incident or event reports to one supervisor. If a responder is assigned to the HAZMAT group, he or she reports to the HAZMAT group supervisor. That supervisor, in turn, reports to a branch director, who reports to the operations section chief. In this manner, there is less confusion about who oversees specific functions. The exception is when the section chief reports to a unified command.

4.   Procedure

A. Incident Assessment

1. The first Deputy will assess the operational situation immediately upon arrival and proceed according to applicable policies and procedures.

   a. The initial responsibility for managing assigned resources lies with the first Deputy on the scene. The initial IC will be responsible for the following duties:

      i. Assess the priority of life;

      ii. Establish the command organization based on the needs of the incident and the assets available;

      iii. Establish immediate priorities;

      iv. Ensure adequate safety measures are in place;

      v. Coordinate with key people and officials; and

   b. The first Deputy will maintain command and control of the incident or event until relieved by a higher authority, if necessary.

   c. The Sheriff or his or her designee will exercise command and control over all law enforcement resources committed to an incident or event that is countywide or multijurisdictional.

2. Determining which incidents warrant a formal ICS implementation is a matter of good judgment, although using ICS is encouraged on small or everyday recurring events to gain experience. Factors to consider for implementation include the following:

   a. Size. How large a geographical area is or will be affected?

   b. Scope. How many resources are likely to be involved? What will be necessary to achieve stabilization and/or containment?

   c. Duration. How long can one reasonably expect the event or incident to last.

    d. Multi-Agency Involvement. Will other police agencies and emergency responding departments, such as the fire department, be involved?

B. ICS Implementation

1. Arriving units will memorialize ICS activation by announcing it on the radio talk group.

2. The first Deputy on the scene will serve as the initial IC. Before being relieved, the Deputy will have the latitude and authority to assign any person to any assignment or task, regardless of rank.

C. Establishing Command

1. As soon as practical following ICS activation, the responsibility of the initial IC will be assumed by a ranking member, if necessary. Most often, this will be an on-duty patrol supervisor. However, depending upon the nature of the incident, command may be first assumed by a higher-ranking or more qualified member.

2. Various components of the ICS should be activated depending on the size and complexity of the incident or event. Operational need is the primary factor in determining which components or functions are activated. In addition to establishing a command post and function, the IC, utilizing the standardized ICS structure, will activate those components necessary for the incident. These components are represented graphically in Appendix A and include the following:

    a. Sections (operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration, and intelligence, if necessary).

    b. Branches (subdivisions within the operations section formed to manage the broad span of control issues).

    c. Divisions (geographical subdivisions).

    d. Groups (functional subdivisions).

3. The IC will specify the components to be activated and designate an officer in charge of each component. If a section is not activated for the incident, the IC will perform that function.

4. Personnel and select support staff will be activated and assigned by the IC, or his or her designee, as warranted. Additional Agency personnel or assistance from other localities will be requested by the IC.

5. All section chiefs will report directly to the IC.

6. The IC will authorize all requests for additional staffing or specialized units.

7. The IC will establish an Incident Command and determine an incident designator to be used by all responders. This designator will be one or two geographical words, such the street name or specific place name of the incident. The designator chosen will clearly distinguish the event and not be easily confused with other locations. Will use street name.

8. The IC or designee will determine the location of the Incident Command Post (ICP). This location should be chosen based on factors such as incident size, need for security, proximity to the incident, and support issues such as communications, shelter from the elements, and related considerations. The ICP can be moved later if necessary.

9. The IC will inform dispatch of the establishment of command and the ICP's specific location.

10. Documentation Unit

    a. This unit is also responsible for preparing and maintaining the following:

       i. Status reports and intelligence on the current situation;

       ii. Status of resources assigned to the incident;

       iii. Situation summaries (situation status reports [SITSTAT], resource status reports [RESTAT]) and projections for future events;

       iv. Incident and area maps;

       v. Accurate and complete incident files;

       vi. Incident demobilization plan to include specific instructions if needed; and

       vii. Technical specialists to deal with special areas of expertise.

    b. For events that can be planned, the PSC or his designee should assign members to assist in planning the event with other county, public safety, or law enforcement agencies. Additionally, plans for events that occur annually (such as fairs, holiday parades, and major sporting events) will be maintained, updated, and disseminated before the event.

11. Personnel Accountability

    a. The IC, or designee, will maintain strict personnel accountability and be continually updated by the section chiefs to keep an ongoing, accurate assessment of the entire operation.

    b. If the IC establishes command after units are actively deployed, the IC should conduct (or have conducted) a radio roll call to determine their positions. In ICS mode, communications will maintain and keep the IC apprised of all deployed units' locations.

    c. During major incidents, the IC may appoint a safety officer, who will have the responsibility and authority to stop an operation or part of it if safety requirements are not being met.

    d. Depending on the size and duration of the incident, consideration should be given to relief provisions for operations personnel.

12. Transfer or Assumption of Command

a. Incident command can be transferred to an officer of higher rank, to a more qualified member, an individual with expertise, or to a larger IMT to help maintain a manageable span of control. Transfer of command may also be necessary to relieve a member in command for an extended period. Before the transfer of command, the following actions are required:

  i. Assess the current situation with the current IC;

  ii. Receive a briefing from the current IC and document the transfer. At a minimum, the incoming commander should be apprised of the current situation, assignment of resources, and tactical and strategic needs;

  iii. Determine an appropriate time for the transfer of command;

  iv. Notify others of the change in incident command and

  v. Assign the current IC to another position in the incident organization (such as OPS).

b. There will be a transfer of command briefing wherein all sections are briefed, and all involved personnel are advised of the new command and memorialize on radio.

13. Demobilization

  a. The planning section will develop a demobilization plan for large incidents or events.

  b. When the incident has been resolved or stabilized to the point that command is no longer necessary, the IC will notify communications that the incident is being terminated.

  c. Communications will rebroadcast the message, and members will return to their normal supervisory chain of command unless otherwise advised.

D. After Action Report

  1. An After-Action Report will be completed in accordance with OPS 0730.

E. Training and Review

  1. The Harford County Sheriff's Office Training Academy Director will:

  a. Assign a course coordinator per HCSO PER 0810 (mandated course needs to be placed in training academy SOP SS 22-1)

  b. In the absence of any Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) mandated recurring training, the Training Director will coordinate with the command staff to determine any command-directed training for an upcoming in-service training year per HCSO 0804.

2. ICS 100 and ICS 700

    a. This is an introductory-level online course with an instructor. Entrance Level students will take a test at the end of the course, and certificates will be issued by the academy. This is given during the entrance level academy.

3. ICS 200

    a. This should be an offered class and be encouraged to anyone in a leadership position within HCSO. This should be mandatory and completed within 2 years of promoting to the rank of corporal rank.

4. ICS 300

    a. This should be an offered class and be encouraged to anyone in a leadership position within HCSO. This should be mandatory and completed within 2 years of promoting to the rank of LT.
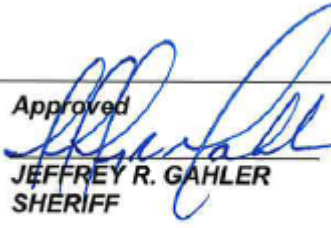
5. ICS 400

    a. This should be an offered class and be encouraged to anyone in a commander position within HCSO. This should be mandatory and completed within 2 years of promoting to the rank of Captain.

6. Reinforcement of NIMS Concepts

    a. The Course Coordinator will schedule with a Commander and facilitate training on ICS with tabletop scenarios every other year.

    b. All documentation will be forwarded to the Academy for records keeping.

    c. Upon approval of an HCSO Supervisor School critical incident management course, ICS principles and concepts will be reviewed.
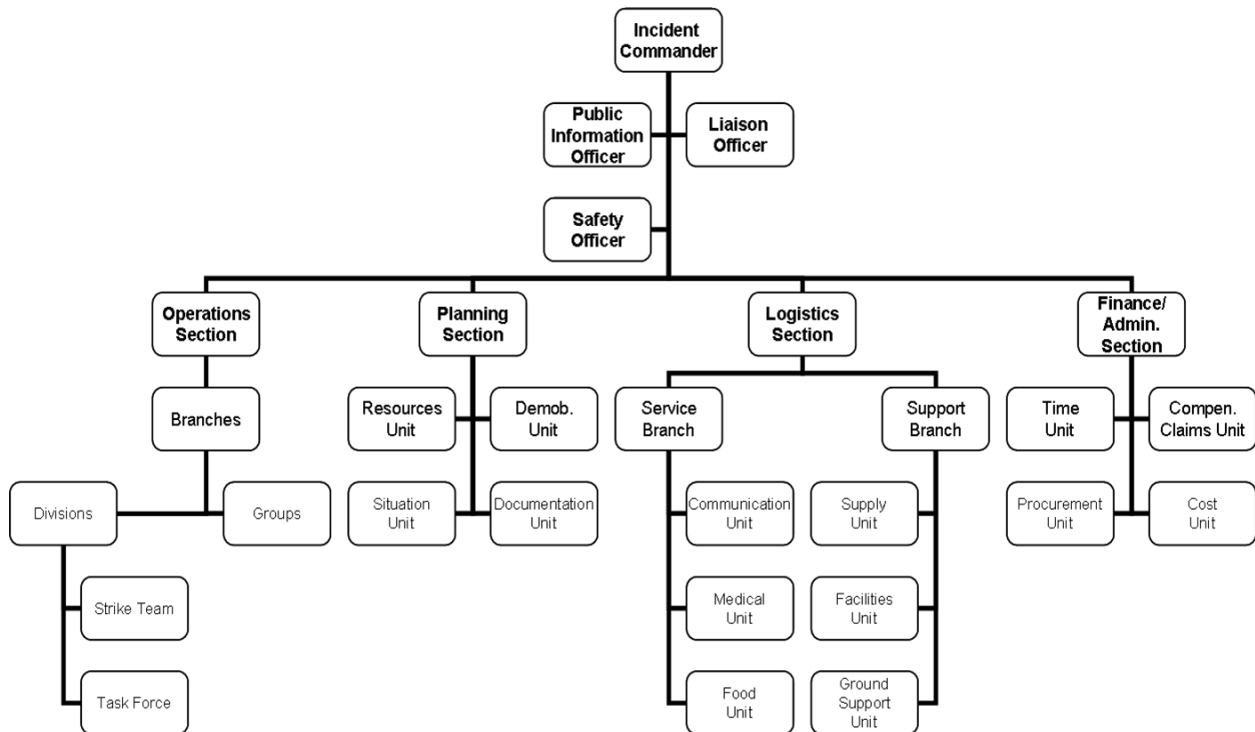
5. Summary of Changes

A. 04/04/2024 NEW POLICY

Approved
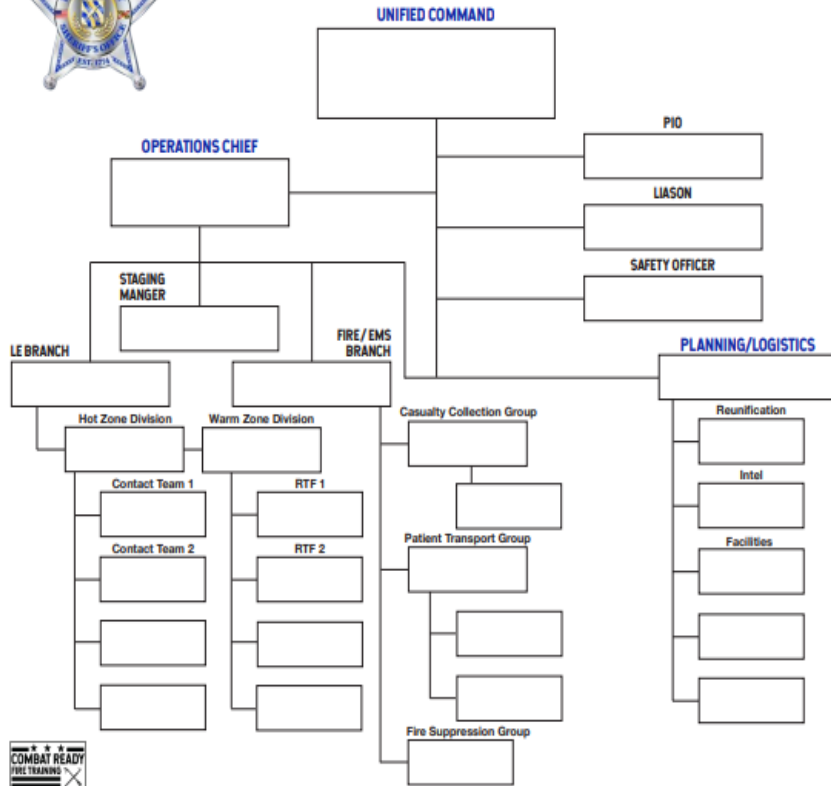
JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF

DATE 4. 4. 2024

APPENDIX A

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Organizational Chart

COMPLEX INCIDENT TACTICAL WORKSHEET

Incident Location: _____ Date: ____/____/____ Incident #: _____ IC: _____

UNIFIED COMMAND

OPERATIONS CHIEF

PIO

LIASON

SAFETY OFFICER

STAGING MANGER

LE BRANCH

FIRE / EMS BRANCH

PLANNING/LOGISTICS

Hot Zone Division

Warm Zone Division

Casualty Collection Group

Reunification

Contact Team 1

RTF 1

Intel

Contact Team 2

RTF 2

Patient Transport Group

Facilities

Fire Suppression Group

RADIO CHANNELS

☐ LE ☐ EMS

HOT ZONE:
_____

SUSPECT:
_____

VICTIMS = Priority 4:   Priority 1:

INCIDENT NOTES

COMBAT READY
FIRE TRAINING
COMBATREADYFIRE.COM
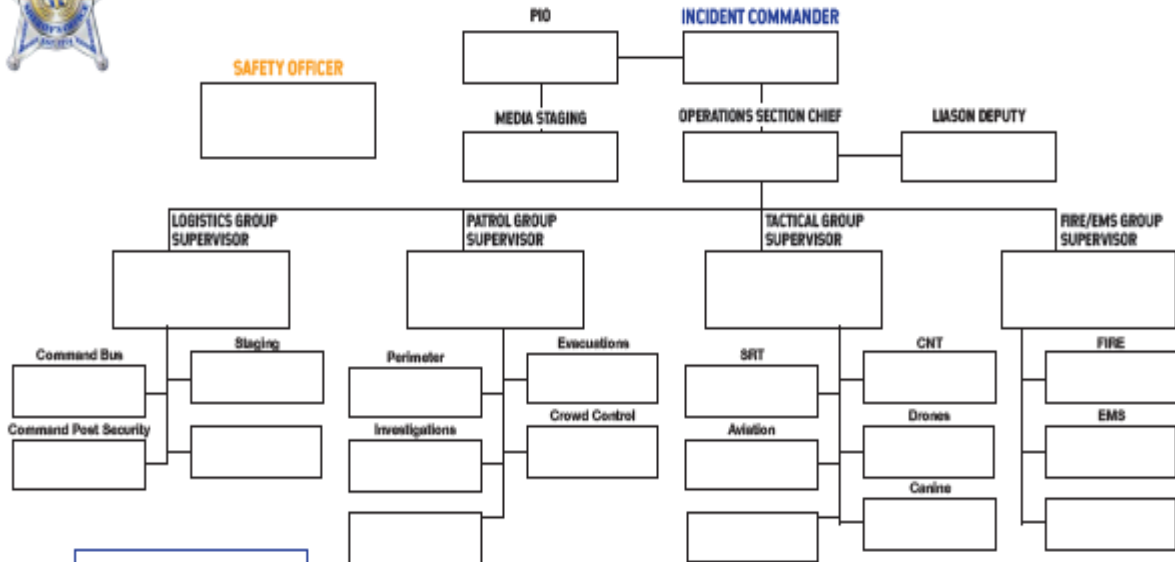
HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE INCIDENT COMMAND WORKSHEET

Incident Location: _____ Date ___/___/___ Incident #: _____ IC: _____

SAFETY OFFICER

PIO

INCIDENT COMMANDER

MEDIA STAGING

OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF

LIASON DEPUTY

LOGISTICS GROUP SUPERVISOR

PATROL GROUP SUPERVISOR

TACTICAL GROUP SUPERVISOR

FIRE/EMS GROUP SUPERVISOR

Command Bus	Staging	Perimeter	Evacuations	SRT	CNT	FIRE
Command Post Security		Investigations	Crowd Control	Aviation	Drones	EMS
					Canine	

- First arriving give **Brief Incident Report.**
- Establish **COMMAND**, provide your exact location.
- Additional needs/resources/ notifications.
- Assign tasks/divisions to complete your objectives.

SMART OBJECTIVES
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

NOTES

Continue notes on back.

COMBAT READY
FIRE TRAINING
COMBATREADYFIRE.COM

ACTIVE ASSAILANT INCIDENT MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST
REMEMBER YOUR SAFETY PRIORITIES

IMMEDIATE TASKS

The following tasks should be considered immediately by first responding units

- ☐ Secure COMMUNICATIONS
  - ○ Clear frequency channel
  - ○ Routine traffic to another channel
  - ○ Separate channels for areas such as Perimeter and Tactical
- ☐ Identify the HOT ZONE
  - ○ Limit exposure to citizens and responders
  - ○ Control movement in and out of this area
  - ○ Communicate boundaries for this area
- ☐ Establish the INNER PERIMETER (Control/Contain)
  - ○ Prevent responder/public injury
  - ○ Replace plainclothes with uniformed officers
- ☐ Establish the COMMAND POST & Conduct SIZE UP
  - ○ Identify representatives from responding agencies
  - ○ Identify representatives for Unified Command
  - ○ Number of suspects
  - ○ Types of weapons
- ☐ Establish the OUTER PERIMETER
  - ○ Crowd and traffic control
  - ○ Control movement
  - ○ Prevent gridlock
- ☐ Establish the STAGING AREA (personnel), and BASE (equipment)
  - ○ Stage personnel for immediate deployment
  - ○ (3 mins) between inner and outer perimeter
  - ○ Base - park equipment that is not immediately needed
  - ○ Provide security for Base

- ☐ Request appropriate RESOURCES
  - ○ Fire
  - ○ EMS
  - ○ HazMat
  - ○ Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD)
  - ○ Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)
  - ○ Utility Companies
  - ○ K-9 for perimeter (other support activities)
- ☐ Form RESCUE TASK FORCE
  - ○ Coordinate between Law Enforcement & EMS
  - ○ Law enforcement should remain with EMS
  - ○ Warm Zone integration
- ☐ Send Community ALERT MESSAGE
  - ○ Threats to the public
  - ○ Direct citizens to avoid the area
- ☐ Establish CASUALTY COLLECTION POINT (CCP)
  - ○ Warm Zone
  - ○ Walking wounded directed to CCP
  - ○ Triage
  - ○ Enhanced definitive treatment
  - ○ Transport to medical facility
- ☐ Secure WITNESSES
  - ○ Identify holding location for witness interviews with Law Enforcement
  - ○ Law Enforcement should remain with witnesses
  - ○ Consider length of time witnesses are held for interviews
  - ○ Determine accountability of witnesses and coordinate with family reunification efforts
- ☐ Maintain SCENE SECURITY
  - ○ Look for/scan for IEDs, including Inner & Outer Perimeter, Command Post, Staging and Base areas
  - ○ Look for/be aware of additional suspects, second wave attacks and complex coordinated attack

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FIRST ARRIVING UNIT CHECKLISTS

The following tasks should be considered immediately by first responding units

First Arriving LE OFFICER
- ☐ Communicate a size up and provide a brief initial report to dispatch & any incoming units
- ☐ Develop exclusionary zones (hot/warm/cold) if obvious
- ☐ Pass or assume command - may need to use mobile command and issue directives as a greater understanding is developed
- ☐ Mobile command should be used in situations when command is passed, and entry is being made with the intent of contact

Second through Fourth LE OFFICERS
- ☐ Assemble and communicate response actions
- ☐ Coordinate search area
- ☐ Establish Contact Team

Fifth LE OFFICER
- ☐ Assume Command from Contact Team until Command is transferred to LE supervisor, especially if mobile command situation
- ☐ When Command is transferred, assume Tactical Group Supervisor role until relieved/GS role is transferred
- ☐ Establish Unified Command with other responding agencies
- ☐ Gather information
- ☐ Ensure area is secured
- ☐ Ensure evacuation and holding area
- ☐ Establish Staging Area - coordinate incoming resources and deploy resources from Staging Area

- ☐ Request additional resources
- ☐ Develop and assign more Contact Teams as necessary

First Law Enforcement SUPERVISOR
- ☐ Obtain briefing
- ☐ Assume Command
- ☐ Identify and establish Command Post location - request mobile command post if appropriate
- ☐ Determine the need for Unified Command if not already established
- ☐ Assign Staging Area Manager
- ☐ Assign Perimeter Group
- ☐ Assign Medical Branch
- ☐ Provide for overall scene security

Second Law Enforcement SUPERVISOR (higher rank)
- ☐ Obtain briefing
- ☐ Assume Command
- ☐ Begin transition to Unified Command not already established
- ☐ Request additional resources
- ☐ Transition first LE Supervisor from Command to Law Enforcement Branch
- ☐ Assign Intelligence/Investigation Section
- ☐ Assign Lead Public Information Officer (PIO) - intention to develop a joint information system/center
- ☐ Assign EMS Branch (EMS/Fire Supervisor

Law Enforcement (LE)