

MODULE 15

AREA COMMAND

MODULE OVERVIEW

- **Description of Area Command**
- **Differences between Area Command, Inter-agency Coordination, and EOCs**

MODULE OVERVIEW

- **Establishing Area Command**
- **General responsibilities**

MODULE OVERVIEW

- **Position responsibilities and checklists**
- **Area Command exercise**

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Define Area Command
- Identify differences between Area Command, Unified Command, Inter-agency Coordination, and Emergency Operations Centers

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- List the principal advantages of using Area Command
- Describe how, when, and where Area Command would be established
- Describe the Area Command organization

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Identify six primary functional responsibilities of Area Command
- Working with a simulated scenario, develop an Area Command organization

FOR THE SMALL GROUP EXERCISE AREA COMMAND TEAMS WILL:

- **Develop an Area Command organization**
- **Determine Area Command staffing requirements**

FOR THE SMALL GROUP EXERCISE AREA COMMAND TEAMS WILL:

- Describe Area Command facility and support needs
- Develop statement of agency policy to be given to Incident Commanders

FOR THE SMALL GROUP EXERCISE AREA COMMAND TEAMS WILL:

- **Establish resource priorities**
- **Establish Area Command supplemental resource needs**

FOR THE SMALL GROUP EXERCISE AREA COMMAND TEAMS WILL:

- **Develop questions to ask the Agency Executive**



DEFINITION OF AREA COMMAND

- **Oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by an Incident Command System Organization**

DEFINITION OF AREA COMMAND

- **Oversee the management of a very large incident that has multiple incident management teams assigned to it**

SYSTEM/PROCESS COMPARISON TABLE

SYSTEM / PROCESS	DESCRIPTION
INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM	The Management System Used to Direct All Operations at Field Level Incident Scenes. The Incident Commander (IC) Is Located on Scene at an Incident Command Post (ICP)
UNIFIED COMMAND	An Application of ICS Used When There Is More Than One Agency With Incident Jurisdiction. Agencies Work Together Through Their Designated ICs at a Single ICP to Establish a Common Set of Objectives and a Single ICP. The Ops. Section Chief Has Delegated Authority to Implement and Manage the Operations Portion of the IAP

SYSTEM/PROCESS COMPARISON TABLE

SYSTEM / PROCESS	DESCRIPTION
<p>AREA COMMAND (UNIFIED AREA COMMAND)</p>	<p>Established As Necessary to Provide Command Authority and Coordination for Two or More Incidents in Close Proximity. Area Command Works Directly With Incident Commanders. Area Command Becomes Unified Area Command When Incidents Are Multi-Jurisdictional. Area Command May Be Conducted As a Separate Activity at an EOC Facility or at Some Other Location Other Than an Incident ICP</p>

SYSTEM/PROCESS COMPARISON TABLE

SYSTEM / PROCESS	DESCRIPTION
INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION	An Activity Used at All SEMS Levels to Coordinate Support to Emergencies Between Agencies Within a Jurisdiction or Between Jurisdictions
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOCs)	EOCs Are Used in Varying Ways at All Levels of Government and With Private Industry to Provide Coordination During Emergencies. Inter-Agency Coordination is a Part of EOC Functioning at All SEMS Levels. (Refer to Module 17 for Further Clarification Between EOCs and Area Command)

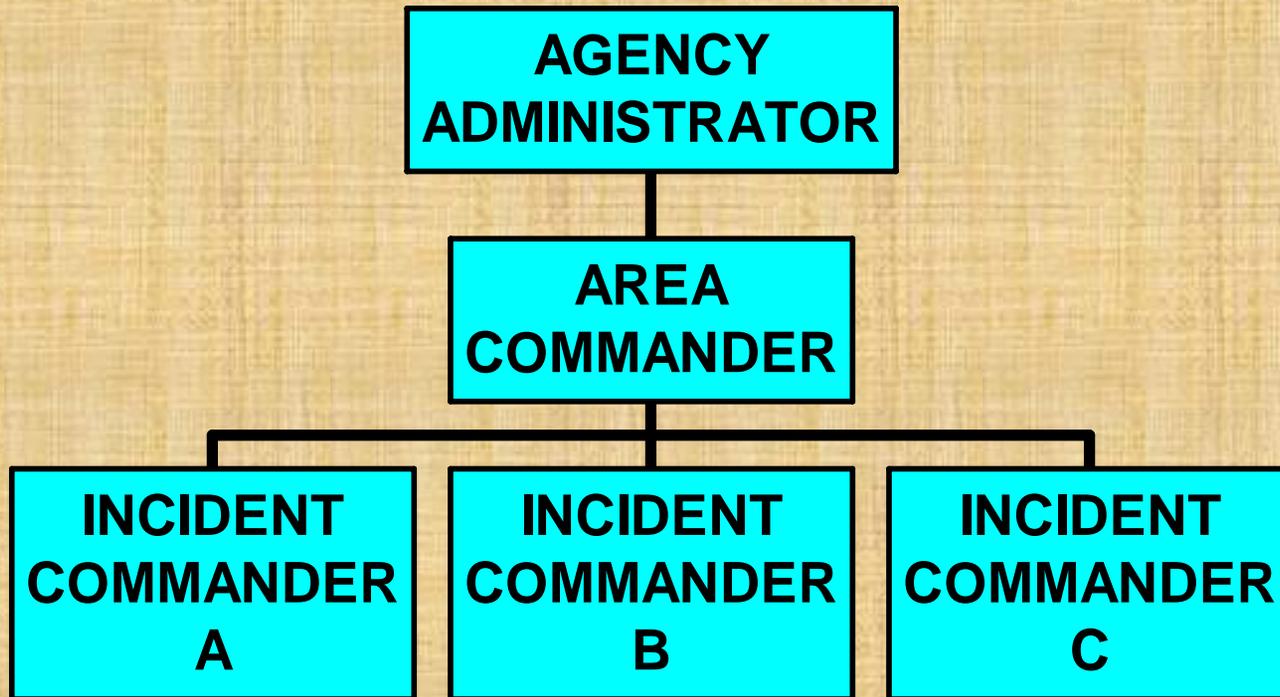
AREA COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Set overall agency incident related priorities**
- **Allocate critical resources based on priorities**

AREA COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES

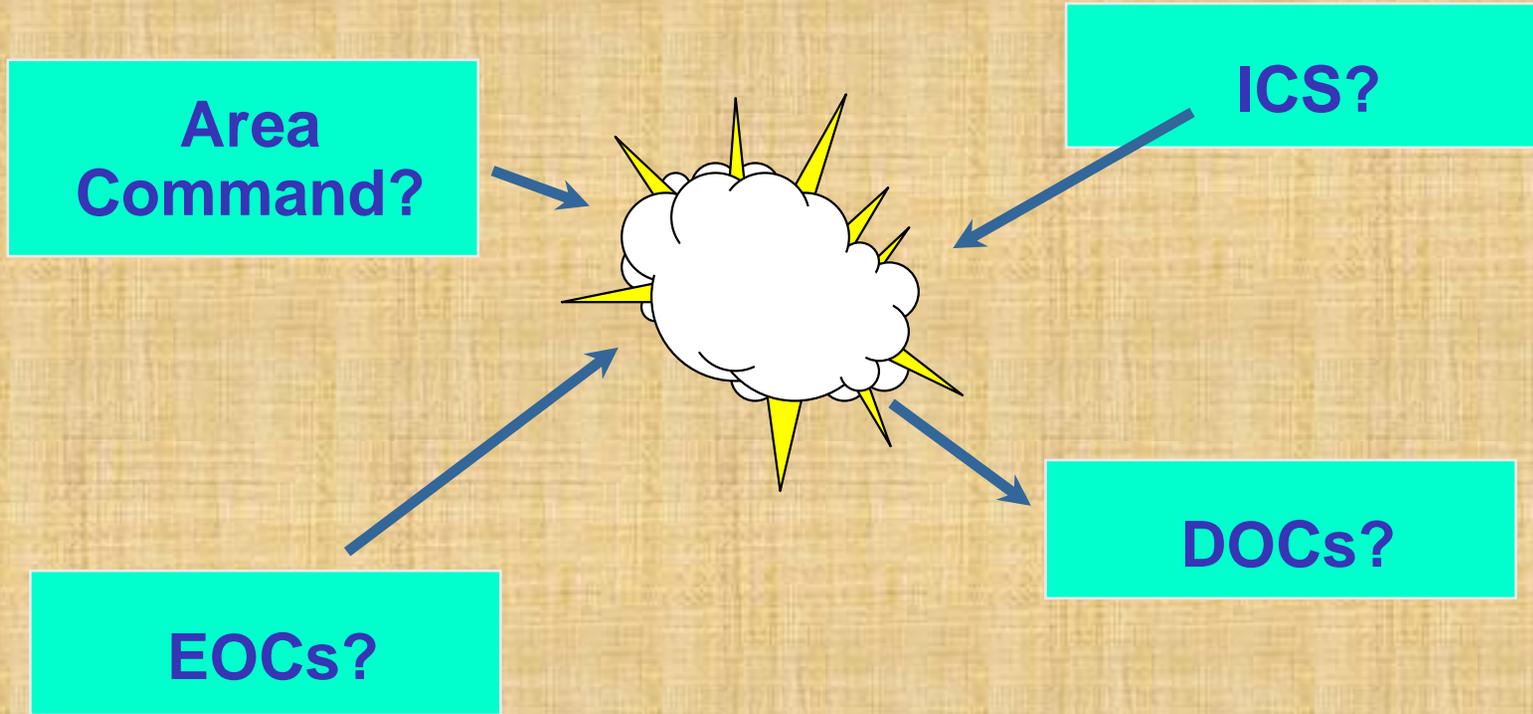
- **Ensure that incidents are properly managed**
- **Ensure that incident(s) objectives are met and do not conflict with each other or with agency policy**

CHAIN OF COMMAND AND REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS



RELATIONSHIPS

Who Is In Charge?



AREA COMMAND AND ICS

- Area Command can be established over ICS management when necessary

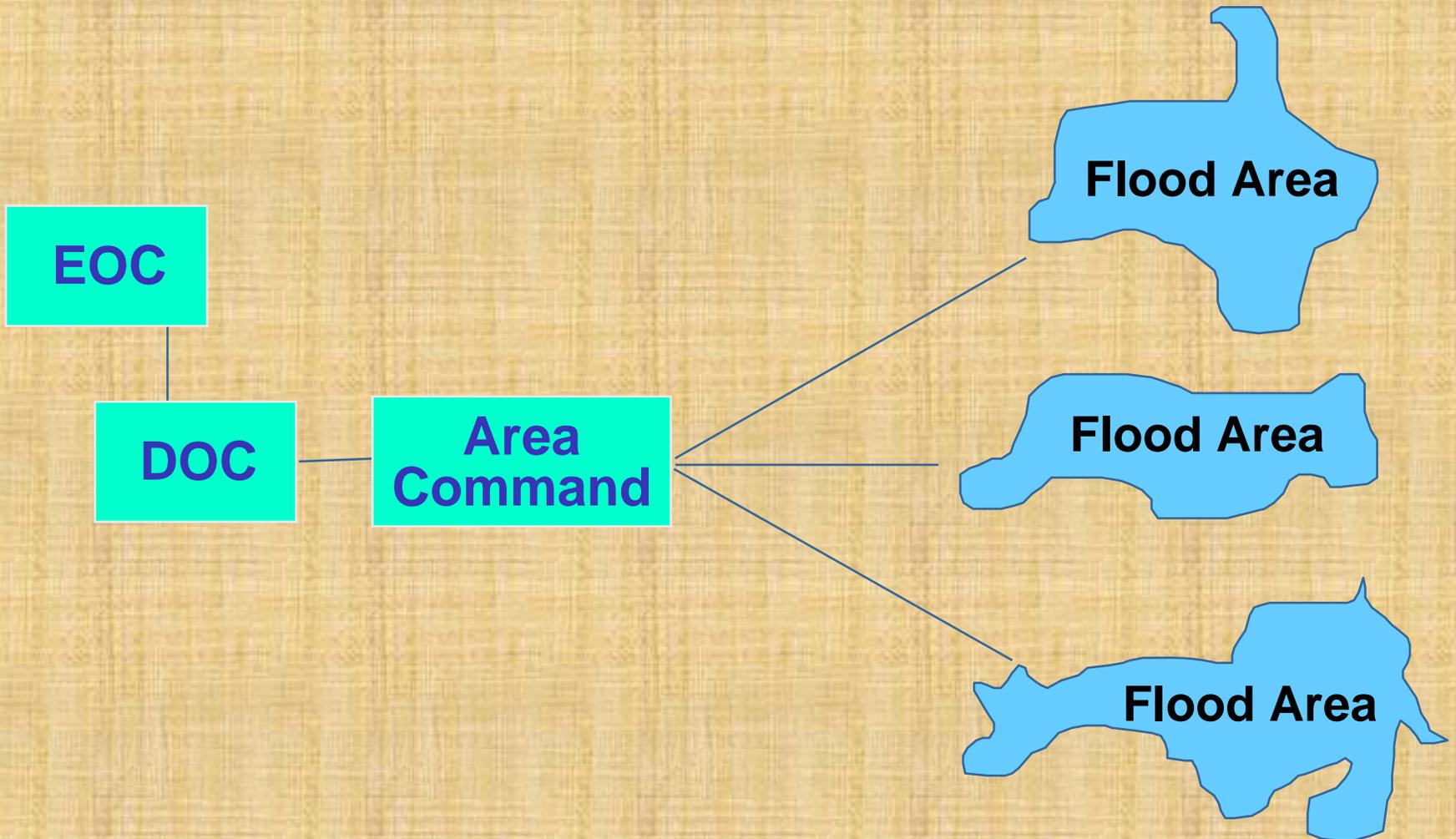
AREA COMMAND AND DOCs

- If incidents are primarily single discipline, area command functions would normally be done at the DOC
- The discipline (e.g., fire or law) could set up Area Command over some incidents

AREA COMMAND AND EOCs

- Generally EOCs are coordination centers and do not exercise Area Command functions
- In some jurisdictions EOCs may have incident oversight

USUAL RELATIONSHIP WHEN AREA COMMAND IS APPLIED



AREA COMMAND

- WHERE?
- HOW?
- WHEN?
- WHY?



CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AREA COMMAND

- **Span of control**
- **Geographic considerations**
- **Resource competition**

WHEN SHOULD AREA COMMAND BE ESTABLISHED?

EARLY ... AND:

- **When several active incidents are in close proximity**
- **When critical human or property values are at risk due to incidents**

WHEN SHOULD AREA COMMAND BE ESTABLISHED?

- When incidents will continue into the next operational period
- When incidents are using similar and limited critical resources

WHEN SHOULD AREA COMMAND BE ESTABLISHED?

- **When difficulties are encountered with inter-incident resource allocation and coordination**

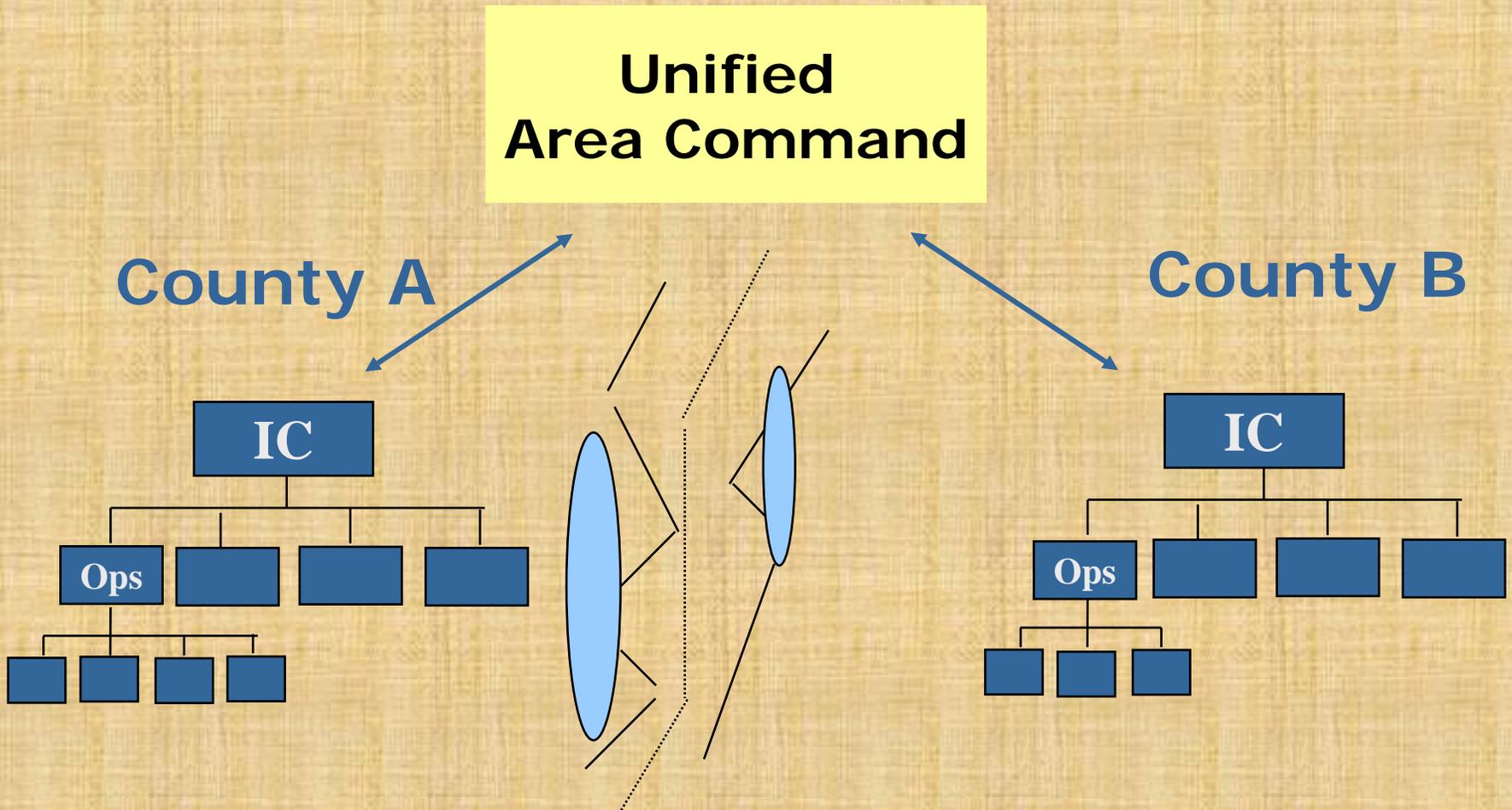
AREA COMMAND

- Established by agency executive
- Given written delegated authority
- Patterned after ICS Command and General Staff

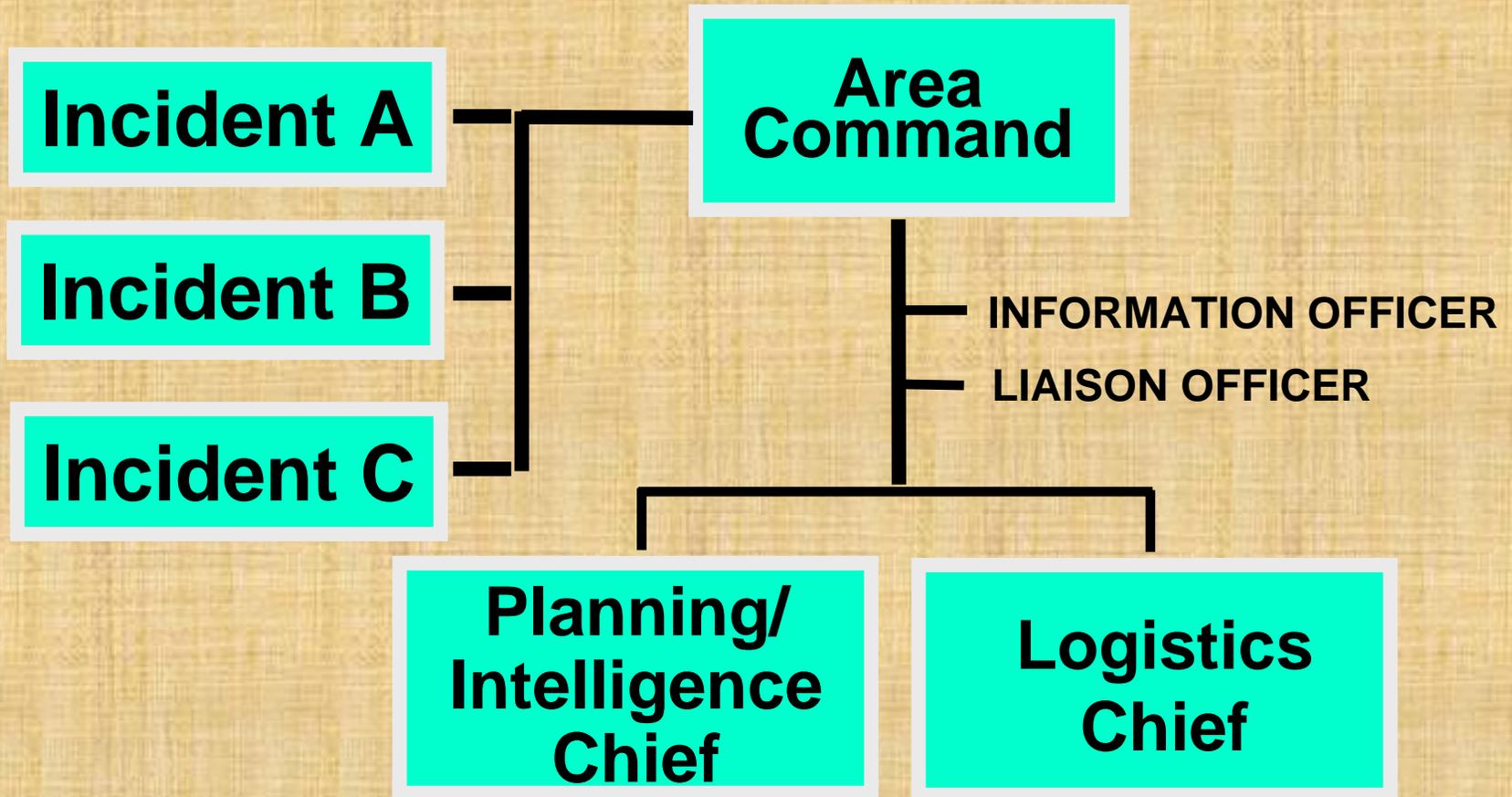
AREA COMMAND

- Operates under same principles of ICS
- Organization should be kept small

MULTI-JURISDICTION INCIDENT UNIFIED AREA COMMAND



AREA COMMAND ORGANIZATION



EXAMPLE OF TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS AT AN AREA COMMAND

- **Aviation Specialist**
- **Hazardous Materials Specialists**
- **Environmental Specialists**
- **Communications Specialists**

CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND FACILITY

- **Close to incidents**

- ❖ **not at an ICP**

- **Sufficient size**

- ❖ **for staff, displays & conferences**

CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND FACILITY

- Capable of continuous operations
- Adequate communications facilities
 - ❖ Telephones
 - ❖ Fax
 - ❖ Computer connections

CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND FACILITY

- **Availability of backup power**
- **Capable of supporting radio communications to incidents and agency offices**

CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN AREA COMMAND FACILITY

- Adequate and secure parking
- Near sources of food and lodging

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF AN AREA COMMAND

- Provide agency or jurisdictional authority for assigned incidents
- Ensure a clear understanding of agency expectations, intentions, and constraints

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF AN AREA COMMAND

- Establish critical resource use priorities between various incidents
- Ensure that incident management team personnel assignments and organizations are appropriate

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF AN AREA COMMAND

- **Maintain contact with officials in charge, other agencies and groups**
- **Coordinate the demobilization or reassignment of resources between assigned incidents**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- **General situation**
- **Incidents assigned**
- **Jurisdictional delegation
of authority**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- **Assumption of command timing and notifications procedures**
- **Names and qualifications of assigned Incident Commanders**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- **Incident operating under Unified Command**
- **Limitations on the Area Commander's authority over Incident Commanders (should be in the delegation of authority)**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- **Incident Action Plans available**
- **Policies, political factors, or other constraints**
- **Agency advisor assigned**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- **Area Command facility designated**
- **Status of communications systems to incidents and agency/ jurisdictional headquarters**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

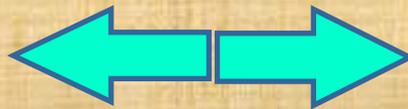
- **Critical resource designations**
- **Policy and expectations for interaction with the media**

CHECKLIST FOR AREA COMMANDER - AGENCY EXECUTIVE MEETING

- Area Command reporting responsibility to agency
- Schedules for required briefings and contacts



**AGENCY
EXECUTIVE**



AREA COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Set overall objectives
- Establish priorities
- Allocate/reallocate critical resources



AREA COMMAND CONSIDERATIONS

- Area Command is usually established to support incidents which are already underway
- Objectives, strategies, and Incident Action Plans should already be in place

AREA COMMAND CONSIDERATIONS

- Area Commander must rapidly assess each incident and ensure the incident action planning is addressing the priorities and direction set by the agency executive

AREA COMMAND CONSIDERATIONS

- Area Commander should establish, in writing, priorities related to incidents. This information should be part of the delegation of authority from the agency executive
- Area Commander should develop procedures to be followed

AREA COMMAND PROCEDURES SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Incident and agency/
jurisdictional priorities**
- **Priorities for assignments
of critical resources**

AREA COMMAND PROCEDURES SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Schedules of meetings and briefings**
- **Reports & Incident Action Plans**

AREA COMMAND PROCEDURES SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Points of contact with agency executives**
- **Media relations and contact procedures**

AREA COMMAND PROCEDURES SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Unusual situation or emergency procedures reporting
- Demobilization procedures

AGENDA FOR AREA COMMAND MEETING WITH INCIDENT COMMANDERS

- **Obtain concise individual incident briefings**
- **Explain the responsibilities and the role of an Area Commander**

AGENDA FOR AREA COMMAND MEETING WITH INCIDENT COMMANDERS

- Review policy and direction received from agency executive
- Resolve any conflicts
- Review appropriate procedures as outlined

AGENDA FOR AREA COMMAND MEETING WITH INCIDENT COMMANDERS

- **Open for questions**
- **Collect available Incident Action Plans and other essential documentation**

ESTABLISH PRIORITIES AMONG VARIOUS INCIDENTS BASED ON INCIDENT NEEDS AND AGENCY POLICY AND DIRECTION

- **Priorities among incidents (often related to the degree of life and property at risk)**
- **Priorities related to allocating critically needed resources**
- **Priorities related to demobilization**

THE MANAGEMENT TEAM MUST BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE INCIDENTS

- **Recommend/make appropriate important personnel changes and moves only as necessary**
- **Ensure that appropriate incident organization activation have been made**

THE MANAGEMENT TEAM MUST BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE INCIDENTS

- **Determine if temporary flight restrictions are adequate or need revision**

COORDINATING SERVICES DONE BY AREA COMMAND

- **Between agency / jurisdictional executives and Incident Commanders**
- **Between Area Command, incidents and assisting and cooperating agencies**
- **Between the media and the incidents**

COORDINATE DEMOBILIZATION OF ASSIGNED INCIDENTS

- **Establish procedures with incidents and agency dispatch centers on demobilization**
- **Determine demobilization priorities and procedure for handling critical resources**

AGENDA FOR AREA COMMAND MEETING WITH INCIDENT COMMANDERS

- **Provide incidents with a list of critical resources and instructions for clearing releases with Area Command**
- **Incidents must provide Area Command with copies of demobilization schedules**