



Nelson County Emergency Services Council
Nelson County, Virginia

<i>Nelson County Emergency Services Council Standard Operating Guideline</i>	
Subject:	Incident Command
Reference Number:	OPS 02-005
Effective Date:	1-Jan-16
Last Revision Date:	
Signature of Approval	David Graves, President

Purpose:

To establish a procedure for identifying persons in charge of incident scenes.

Procedure:

The successful outcome of every emergency call relies upon the minute by minute management of the call. To maintain safety and efficiency, it is essential that dispatch and all persons working on the scene know who is in command.

A formalized command structure is needed on every call other than an ordinary medical call.

The first arriving unit shall provide a report which includes observations regarding fire, smoke, structure type, occupancy, hazards, etc. At the conclusion of the report, the responder should announce their name and that they have command.

Example: "Nelson Dispatch, Medic 91 is on location at 393 Front Street. We have a single story commercial structure with light smoke showing from side bravo. Medic Bickley will have command until the arrival of first in fire apparatus."

Upon arrival of the fire apparatus, a face to face transfer of information will occur between the person in command and the person taking command. Once this has occurred, dispatch will be notified.

Example: "Nelson Dispatch, Chief 11 is assuming command of 393 Front Street."

All calls to Dispatch shall reference the address. For example; "Front Street Command". This is necessary to avoid confusion if there are multiple calls working with commanding officers at the same time.

During the escalation phase of an incident, command may transfer several times, however should always transfer to a person with higher training/experience. Each time there is a transfer of command, there must first be a face-to-face transfer of information and dispatch must be informed. Once an incident is stabilized, command may be transferred to persons with less experience.

A Chief from an agency not primarily assigned to the incident may take command if requested, however they may not demand to take command.

The commanding officer shall provide updates to Nelson Dispatch as frequently as feasible. These updates should include requests for mutual-aid, cancellation of automatic aid, requests for utility companies, etcetera. Only the commanding officer may mark a situation under control.

At the conclusion of the event, the commanding officer shall inform Nelson Dispatch that command has been terminated.

Every piece of apparatus in Nelson County shall have an Incident Command vest which will be worn by the person in command. Ideally the commander will wear this vest on every call, and will stand in a place highly visible to all persons operating at the scene. A commanding officer who is constantly moving around is quite possibly not contributing in a positive manner. At no point should there ever be two persons wearing an Incident Command vest on one scene. If this situation occurs, both persons wearing the vest should immediately come together to determine which person has command.

- Because persons from an ambulance crew will have command for such a short period of time, it isn't necessary for them to don a command vest.