

BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRE SERVICE



S - 230 (for the
Province of BC)

Introduction to
Supervision

TRAINEE WORKBOOK

Wildfire Suppression Training



S-230 (BC)

Introduction to Supervision

TRAINEE WORKBOOK

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Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural
Resource Operations and Rural Development**



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Errors and omission:

Great effort has been made to ensure that the material contained within the *S-230 Introduction to Supervision* course is complete and factual, however errors may still exist. Please email any comments to Forests.ProtectionBranchOffice@gov.bc.ca.

Acknowledgements

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Initial B.C. course content developed by:

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COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the trainee supervisor will develop a basic understanding of the following fundamentals necessary to manage a wildfire crew in British Columbia:

- ✓ Why we use the Incident Command System (ICS) and where the Crew Leader fits into that system;
- ✓ How to properly supervise a wildfire crew;
- ✓ The importance of setting a good example for crew members by using proper safety practices;
- ✓ How to maintain the safety and welfare of a wildfire crew;
- ✓ Techniques for motivating a crew to be productive;
- ✓ How to maintain crew discipline in a firm and fair manner;
- ✓ Why we need to maintain good communications with all supervisory personnel.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The purpose of this course is to assist potential crew leaders with learning the roles, responsibilities and functions required to be an effective supervisor. This course was designed for delivery to fire wardens, industry foremen and contract crews working in cooperation with the Province of British Columbia. It is to be taught by experienced wildfire supervisors including senior BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) and contracted service providers who are qualified to instruct the course.

The S-230 course was initially developed in the United States as a three-day instructional session by the US Forest Service and has been modified to incorporate the BCWS standards. The length of this course has decreased significantly since it was adopted and is now taught during a single day. The course emphasizes the structure of the Incident Command System (ICS) including the role a Crew Leader (also known as a Single Resource Leader) has in the system. In addition, this introductory training will provide participants with an idea of the decisions a supervisor must make during an operational period while on a wildfire.



THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)

Every wildfire in British Columbia is organized using the principles of the **Incident Command System**. This system will be in place whether dealing with a small fire with only one crew leader and two firefighters, or a large fire with several hundred personnel.

There will be an Incident Commander (IC) assigned to a wildfire and this individual is responsible for all aspects of that fire. A single supervisor may become overwhelmed by these responsibilities thus additional ICS functions need to be implemented. There are five functions within this system including the Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration Sections. The IC can activate more of these rolls as a wildfire grows and complexity is added by asking for additional resources. Eventually, an Incident Management Team (IMT), which has staff dedicated to all five ICS functions established prior to an incident, may need to assume control of a large fire to ensure it is properly managed.

COMMAND

Has the overall responsibility for managing an incident and will determine the objectives and priorities for fire suppression.

OPERATIONS

This section will establish the strategies and tactics to be used for fire suppression. The Operations Section Chief will develop safe and efficient tactical objectives while organizing and directing all resources used on the fire.

PLANNING

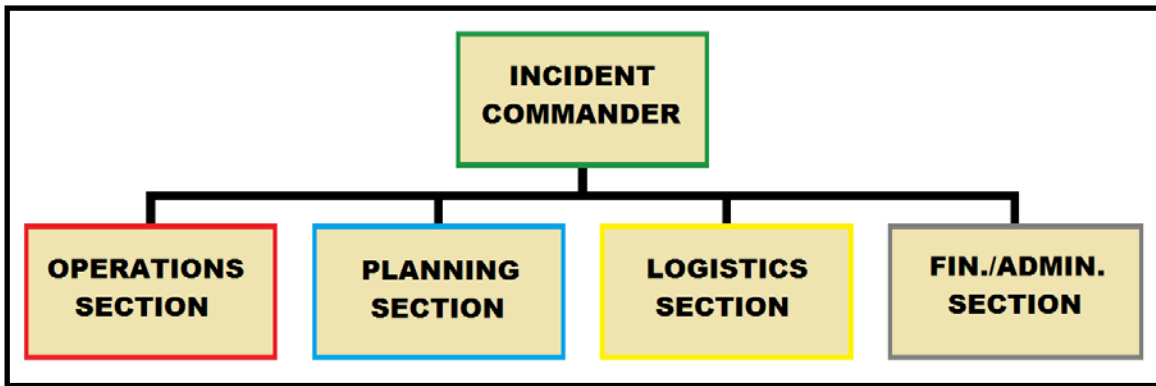
Is responsible for developing the Incident Action Plan (IAP), which dictates how resources will be used to accomplish the incident objectives. The Planning Section Chief will collect and evaluate relevant information while maintain resource status. This section also collects all documents.

LOGISTICS

The logistics team will provide support for fire personnel to meet the incident needs. The Logistics Section Chief determines the support resources needed to manage a wildfire including accommodations, equipment needs, meals and vehicle repairs.

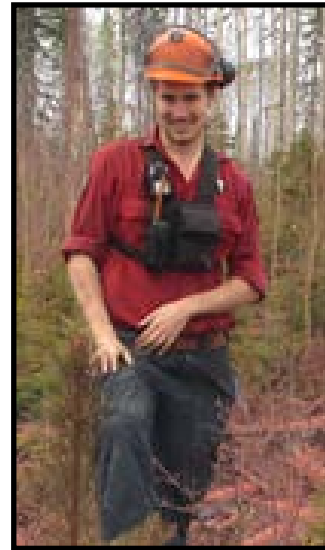
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

This section is tasked with monitoring all costs attached to an incident, and will provide accounting, cost analysis, procurement and time recording service for the entire Incident Command System including individual resources.



FIRELINE ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL

The position of the Crew Leader in the fireline organizational structure will depend on the size and type of wildfire being suppressed. The crew leader position can be assigned many different roles in the Incident Command System. The organizational structure varies with the size of the fire, values at risk, forest fuels adjacent to the fire, topographical hazards and weather conditions. The predicted fire behaviour is another critical factor when deciding the resources needed to successfully suppress a wildfire. The following section has examples of fire scenarios including the appropriate fire personnel required for each situation using the ICS framework.



The Crew Leader

The **Crew Leader** is considered a Single Resource Leader in the ICS and will direct up to seven firefighters to perform different tasks in specific areas of the fire. The crew leader reports to a Crew or Division Supervisor on larger fires. On smaller fires, the Crew Leader either takes charge as the Incident Commander or reports directly to an Incident Commander.

The Chain of Command

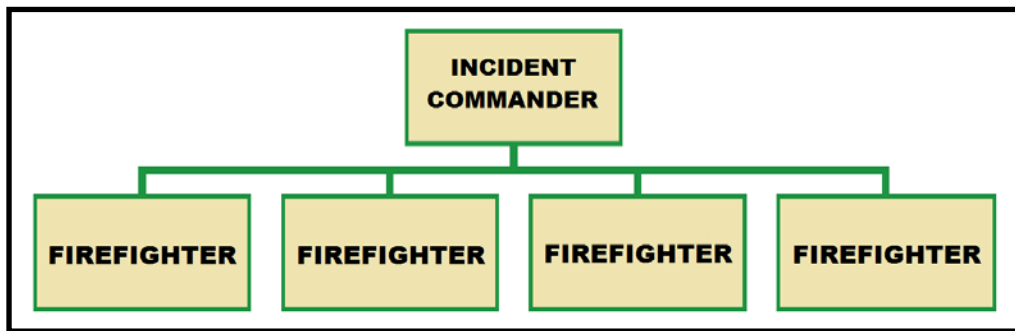
Firefighter safety and work output is the responsibility of their immediate supervisor. The key to ensuring that firefighters are working safely and effectively at all times is the **Chain-of-Command**. The chain of command rule states that firefighters have “one boss and one boss only.” Firefighters will report to and take direction from their immediate supervisor only; regardless of what supervisory staff may be in the area. This rule is respected always for reasons of safety. Firefighters need to ensure that they do not change locations without their supervisor’s knowledge.

Span of Control

Supervisors must only supervise up to a maximum of seven people for safety and efficiency reasons. An optimum **Span of Control** is one supervisor to five subordinates. On a small fire, the Incident Commander may directly supervise up to seven firefighters. A large fire (51 to 100 + firefighters) may require an Operations Chief, Division Supervisors and Crew Leaders to ensure that the Incident Commander and all other supervisors are only directly responsible for a maximum of seven fire personnel.

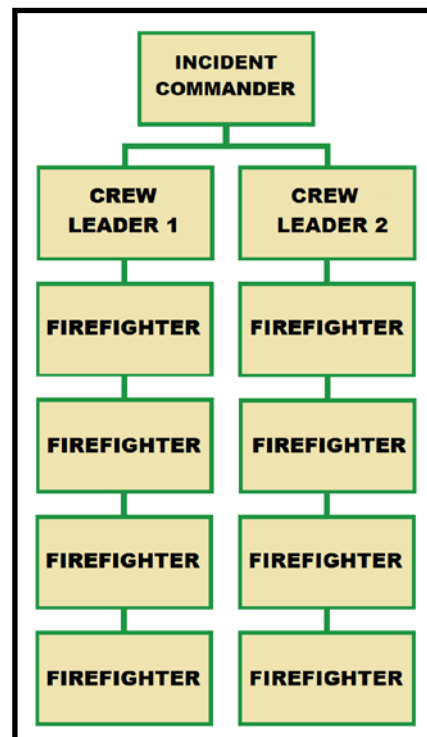
Small Fire/Incident (Type 4/5)

These fires require a Single Resource Leader or Type 4 Incident Commander who will manage all five ICS functions. Many Initial Attack (IA) incidents are classified as small fires with one to three crews working on fire suppression together. Occasionally, Unit Crew squads of four or five firefighters and a crew leader will be asked to join in these efforts.



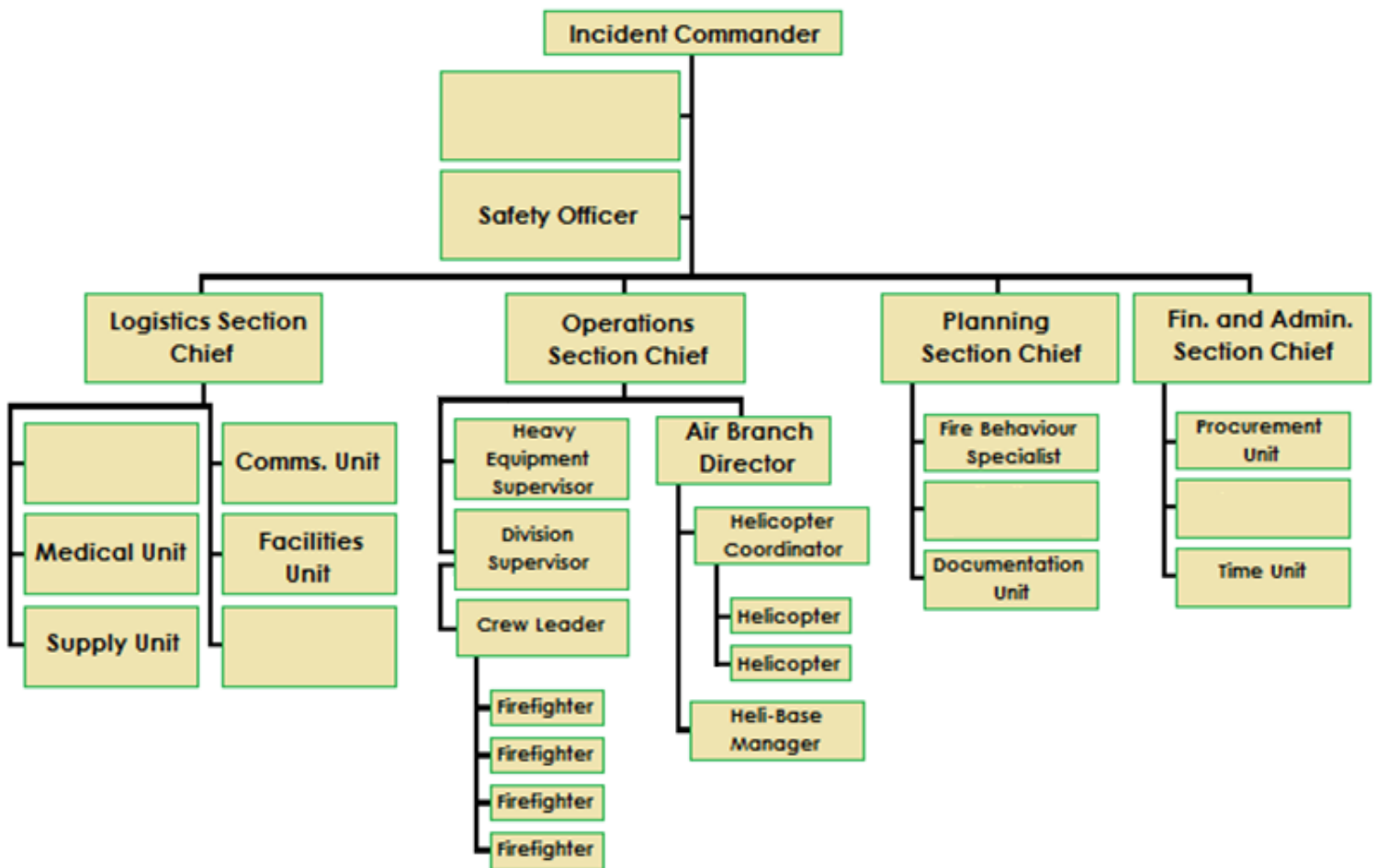
Small to Moderate Fire/Incident (Type 3/4)

These fires require a Type 3 or 4 Incident Commander who will manage most of the ICS functions. Some IA incidents that are classified as small fires may grow into moderate sized fire, which need to be supported by Expanded Attack (EA) crews. Occasionally, an entire 20-person Unit Crew will be requested to aid in suppression efforts. Fire that reach this size will generally take more than one operational period to fully extinguish.



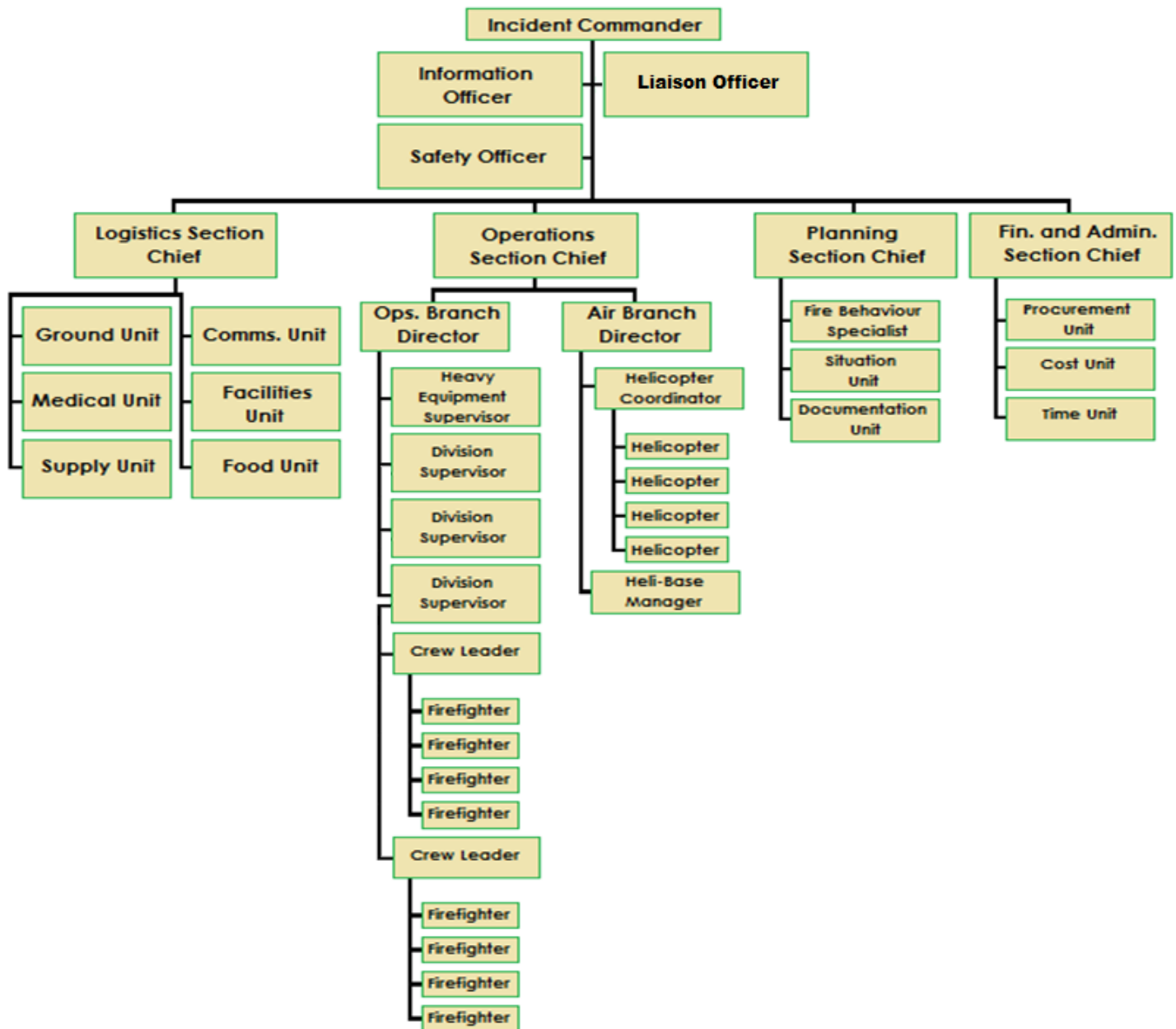
Moderate to Large Fire/Incident (Type 2/3)

An incident that rapidly grows in size or complexity will require additional resources to fill the ICS functions. A Type 2 or 3 Incident Commander is needed to effectively manage such an event. Numerous expanded attack crews will work to suppress the fire, which may be split into different divisions. The division and crew supervisors will work together to divide the tasks evenly amongst the crews.



Large Project Fire/Incident (Type 1/2)

The Incident Commander has people performing in all command staff functions and most general staff functions. These incidents are of a significant size and complexity so adding staff in each section is necessary. However, only the positions that need to be filled to manage the specific incident are required. The Type 1 and 2 fires in British Columbia will have an IMT take over expanded attack resources that have been deployed. A team will perform all the ICS functions until the incident can be downsized and local fire personnel are able to comfortably sustain suppression activities.



NOTES:

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THE ICS GENERAL STAFF POSITIONS

The General Staff consists of the following:

- 1) Operations Section Chief
- 2) Planning Section Chief
- 3) Logistics Section Chief
- 4) Finance and Administration Section Chief

1. Operations Section

This section will manage the tactical operations during an incident. The Section Chief will interact with a level lower (Branch or Division/Group) to develop the operations portion of the Incident Action Plan. This individual will also supervise the execution of the Incident Action Plan to ensure all of the strategies and tactics are understood. The Operations Section as a whole is responsible for developing safe strategies for fire suppression activities. The Section Chief will maintain close communications with the IC to pass on critical updates about progress and setbacks.

There will be Branch Directors in place during larger incidents who take over specific operational functions or geographical areas. Every director needs to be briefed by the Operations Section Chief and assignments will then be passed on to Division or Crew Supervisors in the field. The Branch Director will monitor and assess progress, which leads to a change in strategies if deemed necessary to increase safety or productivity.

a) Division or Group Supervisor

The Division Supervisors are responsible for obtaining a briefing from the Operations Section Chief or an appropriate Branch Director. Will keep supervisors informed of hazardous situations and significant fireline events. This individual must Review assignments with all subordinates including Crew Leaders, so all fire personnel are working together to accomplish the same goal. Division Supervisor makes sure that assigned personnel and equipment get to and from all assignments in a timely and orderly manner.

b) Task Force or Strike Team Leader

These supervisors have numerous responsibilities including the review of assignments with subordinates and the allocation of specific tasks. Such fire personnel will travel to and from active assignment areas with appropriate resources. A Task Force Leader will monitor and assess progress to make all necessary changes to an assortment of speciality resources that work together to accomplish a common task. A Strike Team Leader will do the same for resources that all perform the same functions.

c) Single Resource

An individual who is deployed to a wildfire and has a single tactical function during fire suppression is considered a Single Resource. Such fire personnel are in charge of a single aspect of the wildfire and will be given a unit designation if necessary (i.e. a heli-base manager, a danger tree coordinator or contract crew supervisor).

d) Staging Area Manager

The Staging Area Manager reports to the Operations Section Chief or to the Incident Commander if the Operations Section Chief position has not been filled. This individual is responsible for the layout and maintenance of the Staging Area.

**e) Air Operation Branch Director**

This Branch Director need to receive a daily briefing from Operations Section Chief and must organize all Air Operations. They perform operational planning for Air Operations during an incident if there is a large amount of aircraft present. Must supervise air operations branch personnel and coordinate with all aircraft on site and off site to maintain safety protocols.

f) Air Tactical Group Supervisor

- Helicopter Coordinator
- Fixed Wing or Air Tanker Coordinator

g) Air Support Group Supervisor

- Heli-base or Heli-spot Manager
- Flight Coordinator
- Fueling Manager
- Load Master
- Parking/Landing Tender
- Take Off and Landing Controller
- Helicopter Time Keeper



2. Planning Section

The Planning Section collects, evaluates, processes and disseminates information for use at the wildfire. When activated, the Section is managed by the Planning Section Chief who reports to the Incident Commander.

There are four units within the Planning Section that can be activated if needed:

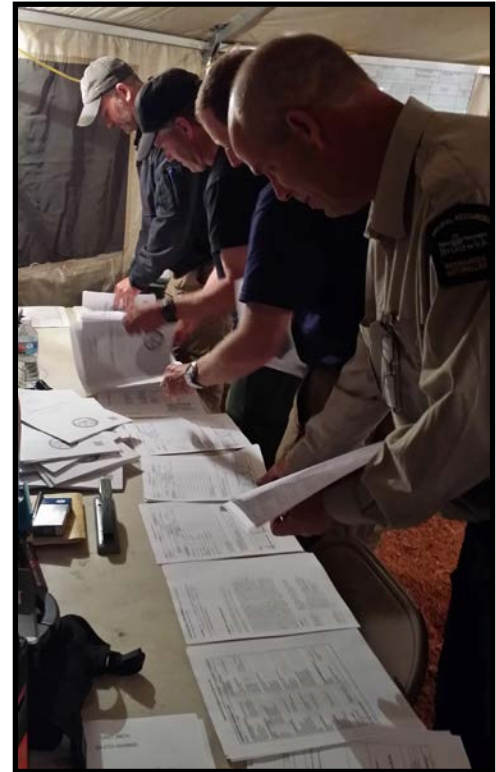
- Resource Unit
- Situation unit
- Documentation Unit
- Demobilization Unit

Planning Section Chief

The Section Chief is responsible for the collection and analysis of situation information about the wildfire to improve suppression activities. This individual will supervise the daily preparation of the Incident Action Plan, which is based on any changes that occur on the wildfire. They must provide input to the Incident Commander and Operations Section Chief while preparing the IAP. This supervisor also reassigns any idle resources that are already on site and give each a task within the ICS organizational structure that is required.

Unit Leader Responsibilities

There are several Unit Leader responsibilities that are common to all of the units in the wildfire organization when reviewing the ICS. These responsibilities are listed in the Planning Section Units below and many key points will not be repeated in the remaining sections.



a) Resource Unit

This unit is responsible for maintaining the status of all assigned resources (primary and support) at an incident. It achieves this task by interacting with the Operations Section as well as the other Planning Unit Leader. The resource unit has a critical role when determining where resources can be utilized best in the IAP.

b) Situation Unit

The Situation Unit will collect pertinent incident information to be processed and organized for operational uses. The unit prepares future projections of wildfire growth, maps of the incident and intelligence information. This information needs to be passed on to the proper supervisors to ensure personnel safety.

c) Documentation Unit

The Documentation Unit is responsible for maintaining accurate and up to date incident files. Duplication services will also be provided by this unit. All incident files will be stored for legal, analytical and historical purposes.

d) Demobilization Unit

The Demobilization Unit is responsible for developing the incident demobilization plan. On project fire, demobilization can be quite complex and it requires a separate planning supervisor. Note that not all agencies require specific demobilization instructions.

Technical Specialists

Certain incidents or events may require the use of Technical Specialists who have specialized knowledge and expertise. Technical Specialists may function within the Planning Section or be assigned wherever their services are required.

3. Logistics Section

All incident support needs are provided by the Logistics Section except for any aviation support. All aviation support requirements are handled by the Air Support Group in the Air Operations Branch. The Logistics Section is managed by the Logistics Section Chief.

Logistics Section Chief

Responsibilities include management of all incident logistics. Provide logistical input to the IC and Planning Sections for preparing the Incident Action Plan. Brief the Branch Directors and Unit Leaders as needed. The Section Chief must identify and anticipate the possible incident service and support requirements.



a) Supply Unit

The Supply Unit is responsible for ordering, receiving, processing and storing all incident related equipment resources. All off incident resources will be ordered through the Supply Unit.

b) Facilities Unit

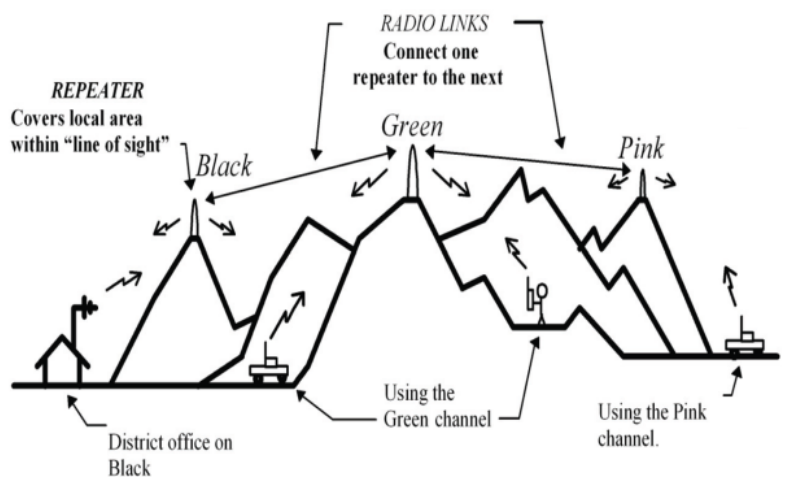
This unit is responsible for setup, maintenance and demobilization of all incident support facilities except staging areas. The Facilities Unit will also provide security services to the incident as needed.

c) Ground Support Unit

The Ground Support Unit is primarily responsible for the maintenance, service, and fueling of all mobile equipment and vehicles with the exception of aviation resources. This unit also has responsibility for the ground transportation of personnel, supplies and equipment. The Unit Leader needs to develop an Incident Traffic Plan.

d) Communications Unit

The Communications Unit is responsible for developing plans for the use of incident communications equipment and facilities. The unit technicians need to install and test all communication equipment. The Unit Leader supervises the Incident Communications Center as well as the distribution and maintenance of additional communications equipment.

**e) Food Unit**

The Food Unit is responsible for supplying all food needs for the entire incident including all remote locations (e.g. Camps, Staging Areas, etc.) as well as providing food for personnel who unable to leave tactical field assignments.

f) Medical Unit

The Medical Unit will develop an Incident Medical Plan (to be included in the IAP). This unit must develop procedures for managing major medical emergencies, provide medical aid and assist the Finance and Administration Section with processing injury related claims. The Unit Leader makes the decision whether or not additional contracted medical personnel are required.

4. Finance and Administration Section

The Finance and Administration Section is responsible for managing all financial aspects of an incident. Not all incidents will require this section to be activated. Only when the agencies involved have a specific need for Finance and Administration services will this function be deployed.

There are four units that may be established within the Finance and Administration Section:

- Time Unit
- Procurement Unit
- Compensation and Claims Unit
- Cost Unit

Finance and Administration Section Chief

The Section Chief is responsible for all financial aspects of an incident. This section provides financial and cost analysis information as requested by the Command Staff. The supervisor gathers significant information from briefings with responding agencies. The Section Chief ensure that all fire personnel time records are accurately completed and transmitted to home agencies using the appropriate policy guidelines.



a) Time Unit

The Time Unit is responsible for ensuring the accurate recording of daily personnel time sheets, compliance with specific agency time recording policies and managing commissary operations if established at the incident. All personnel time records will be collected and processed for each operational period as needed.

b) Procurement Unit

All financial matters pertaining to vendor contracts, leases and fiscal agreements are managed by the Procurement Unit. This unit is also responsible for maintaining equipment time records.

The Procurement Unit establishes local sources for equipment and supplies, manages all equipment rental agreements and processes all rental and supply documents for invoices. The unit works closely with local fiscal authorities to ensure efficiency.

c) Compensation and Claims Unit

In the ICS, Compensation for Injury and Claims are contained within a single unit. However, separate personnel may perform each function because of their differing activities. These functions are becoming increasingly important on all incidents.



Compensation for Injury oversees the completion of all forms required by Worksafe BC and the local agencies. A file of injuries and illnesses associated with the incident will also be maintained, and all witness statements will be obtained in writing if necessary. Close coordination with the Medical Unit is essential to operating this unit effectively.

The claims personnel are responsible for investigating all claims involving property associated with or involved in the incident. This can be an extremely important function on wildfires where property is destroyed.

d) Cost Unit

The Cost Unit provides all incident cost analysis. These personnel ensure that the proper identification of all equipment and personnel requiring payment is in order. The Unit Leader records all cost data analysis and prepares estimates of incident costs for the Command Staff. The unit also maintains accurate records of incident costs for future use including legal matter and billing processes.

DAILY TIME REPORT										# Pre-printed
FULL LEGAL COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL NAME: HARVEY SYMES DBA SYMES CONTRACTING										
INCIDENT #:					DATE: AUGUST 27, 20XX					
EVACUATION ☐ ALERT ☐ ORDER					TIME RELEASED FROM INCIDENT: 2200					
REHABILITATION: ☐ YES Type:					(i.e. Crown Land, Private, IR etc)					
PERSONNEL & EQUIPMENT BILLABLE HOURS										
Name/Equipment	Fireline Position	24 Hr Clock		Break time taken (i.e. 0.5)	Total Hours Work	Total Hours Standby	Vehicle Km/day or standby	Initial		
		Start	Stop						POH/Trans port	On - Site
DOZER		0700	2200		14					
EQUIPMENT INFORMATION										
Make: CAT Type: DOZER		Unit Assigned #: 5				Year: 1980				
Model/Size: D7H		Operator: (printname) HARVEY SYMES				Point of Hire Location: Chilcotin				
Lowbed Company Used: SYMES LOWBED										
Equipment Hauled For:					Equipment Hauled:					
ATTACHMENTS/MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT										
☐ TANK Size ☐ PUMP Size ☐ CHAINS Size # of Sets List all WMB requested/required attachments (i.e. 4X4, LGP etc) and Industry Equipment (i.e. Radios, GPS, ATV's etc)										
The above noted attachments are billable as per FS101 and Schedule A										
FUEL DEDUCTION: # of Ltrs					MINISTRY SUPPLIED ACCOMMODATION ☐ YES MEALS ☐ B ☐ L ☐ D					
SIGNATURES										
Contract Rep or Individual					Fireline Supervisor			Time Recorder		
					N/A			NC		
Ministry Qualified Receiver					Print Name			Employee Number		
Comments										

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

An individual needs to adhere to the following in order to successfully perform the tasks required of a Crew Leader:

- Be alert, think before acting, act decisively and use common sense rather than making assumptions;
- Have a working knowledge of fire behaviour, be able to 'size-up' the fire situation on arrival at the scene and interpret weather information;
- Understand the 3 attack methods, how to locate and construct a control line and how to properly complete burn operations;
- Know about 'spot fires' and 'hot spots,' how to combat them and mark the location of this activity;
- Have a working knowledge of fire suppression equipment and machinery, the correct use of water as well as retardants and the use of a map and compass;
- Understand Mop-Up procedures and Cold Trailing;
- Understand night suppression activities, and the use of flashlights or headlamps;
- Be able to locate and construct helicopter access;
- Be familiar with time keeping and the use of a daily time sheet;
- Know when to take fireline notes.

Fire Suppression Basics

The following information is designed to be a quick review of many important fire suppression principles. A supervisor should be able to review these concepts as needed. Please refer to the S-100 Trainee Manual or New Recruit Boot Camp Manual if there are any further questions.



1. The **Fire Triangle** consists of the following elements, which are required for a wildfire to be produced by way of combustion:

- Fuel - the forest vegetation
- Heat - from lightning or human activity
- Oxygen - in the air



2. The **Fuel** side of the triangle is usually removed when trying to contain a wildfire. Eventually, **Heat** is taken away from the fire by soaking burning materials with water or by smothering these materials to reduce the **Oxygen** available for combustion.

Fuel + Heat + Oxygen = Fire



3. The main factors influencing fire behavior are **fuel**, **weather** and **topography**.

Fuel



Weather

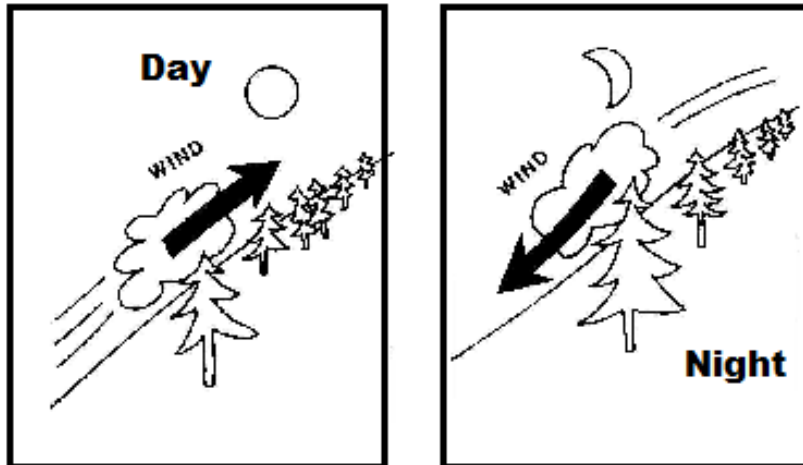


Topography

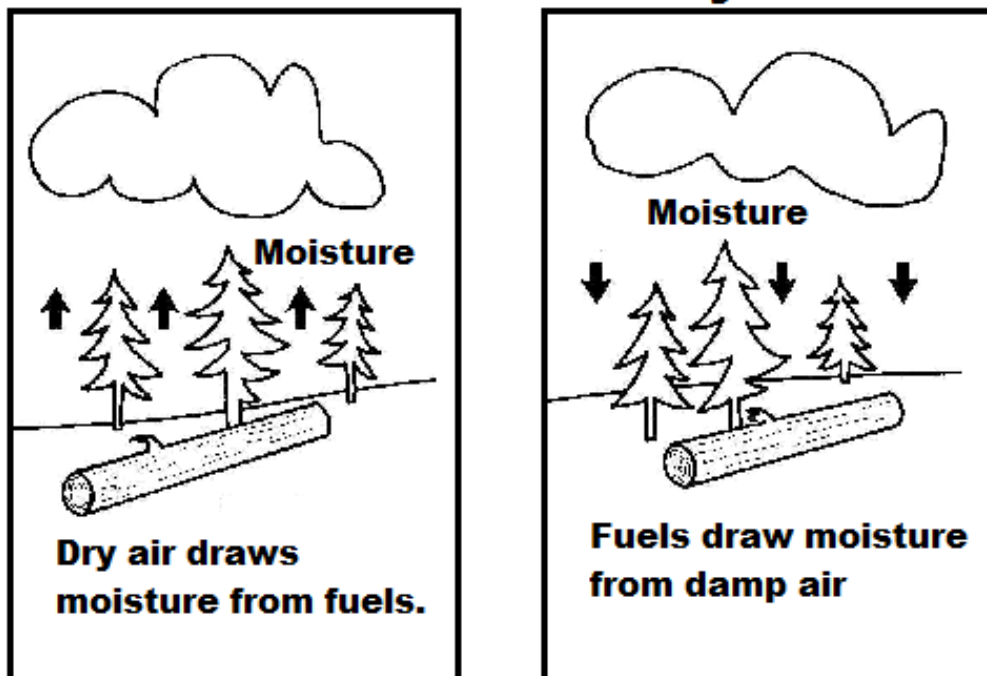


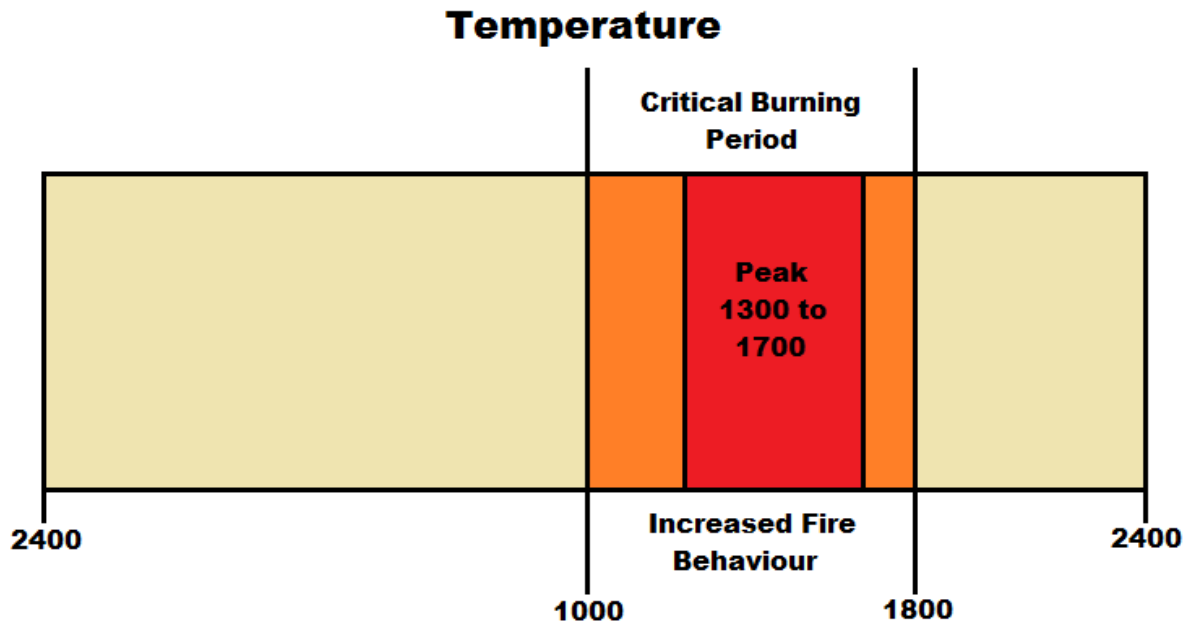
4. The weather factors that have the greatest effect on fire behavior are **wind**, **relative humidity** and **temperature**.

Wind



Relative Humidity



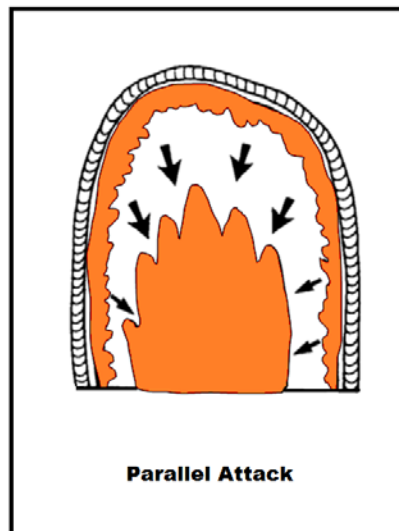
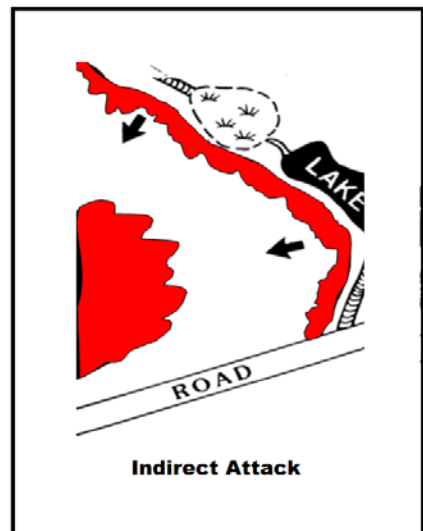


5. The **Direct Attack** method involves directly suppressing the fire immediately adjacent to the burning fuels.

6. The **Parallel Attack** method involves building a control line as close to the fire as flames and radiant heat permit, and then burning out the fuel between the fire's edge and the control line.

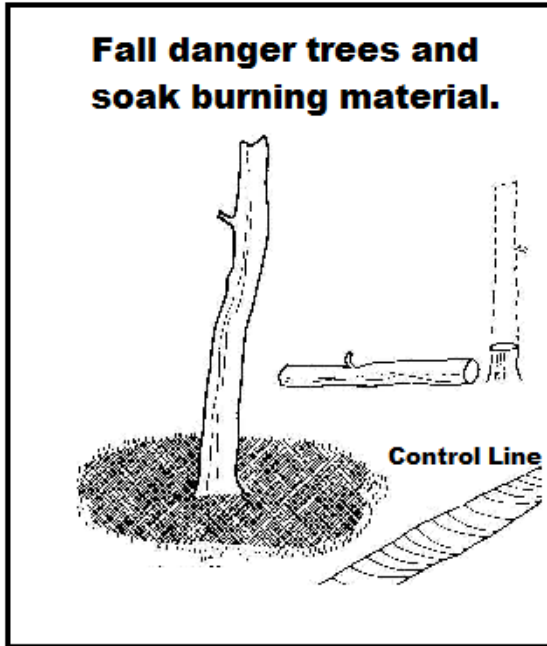
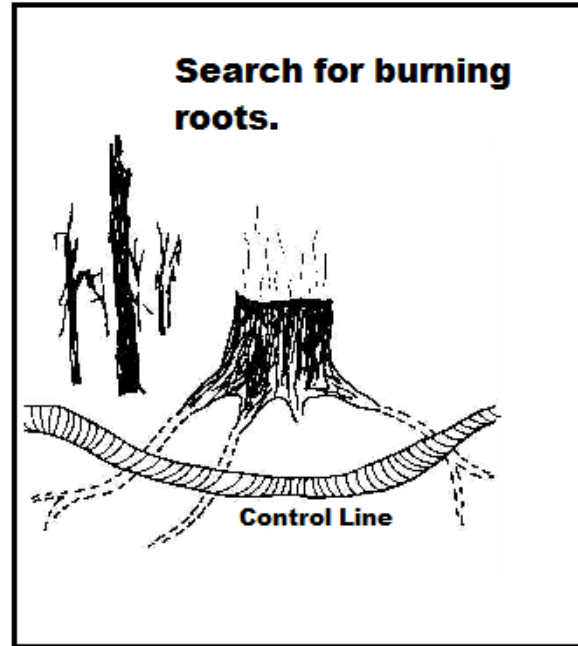
7. The **Indirect Attack** method is used on large, fast-moving fires which cannot be contained by Direct or Parallel Attack. A control line is established well ahead of the main fire, which takes advantage of favorable terrain and natural breaks. This is followed by creating another fire to burn out the fuel between the control line and the main fire in as wide a strip as possible. This is known as backfiring.

Fire Attack Methods



8. The purpose of **burning** fuels is to widen the control line and to clean up unburned sections in an attempt to improve fire containment.

Mop-Up Activities



9. Mop-up begins as soon as the control line is in place and there is a safe section of fireline to work on that is free of fire entrapment hazards.



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Crew Safety and Wellbeing

A Crew Leader or supervisor needs to complete a fire assessment and 'size-up' the incident before any fire suppression work takes place. A pre-work safety briefing must be completed by a supervisor and the **LACES** safety system must be in place to address any fire entrapment hazards. No work will ever take place until **LACES** have been determined. A Crew Leader is responsible for the following aspect while on an incident:

- Upon arrival at an incident, the crew leader should learn the layout and routine of the camp including the sleeping, feeding, warehouse and sanitation arrangements. The supervisor needs to setup sleeping quarters for the crew that facilitates quick mobilization. A crew lead will hold briefings with and maintain control of the crew in camp.
- An evaluation of each crew member's wildfire experience and capabilities should be made before this employee is sent to work on the fireline. In addition, firefighters may be deployed to the fireline without extensive experience thus hands on training and in-depth instructions will be required to facilitate learning.
- The crew leader is responsible for the crew's safety; therefore, this individual must train crew members to work safely and react calmly in emergencies. All supervisors must set an example by demonstrating a safety-first attitude and using proper safety practices. A crew leader should ensure that crew members are spaced 10 feet (3 metres) apart when working on the fireline.
- The crew leader must be able to recognize hazardous situations and know how to deal with emergencies. It is important that supervisors are kept informed about the location of all firefighters and know where the fire is at all times. A crew leader will explain where all escape routes and safety zones are to any firefighters on that section of fireline. The supervisors are responsible for making certain that all crew members are evacuated if necessary.



A Crew Leader will also need to be aware of the following issues:

- The crew should be given information on the common types of injuries that occur on the fireline and how to avoid each. All firefighters need to be aware of the common hazards encountered on the fireline including those associated with heavy equipment and aircraft as well as danger trees.
- The crew leader must always remain in control of his/her emotions. The fire crew should discourage the crew from shouting constantly to avoid confusion and missed instructions.
- The crew leader should know when to take a break and how to recognize signs of fatigue in other fire fighters.
- Any injured crew members must receive prompt treatment from first aid attendants. In the event of injury to the crew leader, either the Division Supervisor or Incident Commander needs to be contacted immediately for instructions. An acting crew leader will have to be appointed or the crew members may need to be divided amongst the remaining crew leaders. All injuries must be recorded.
- Contact with Division Supervisors, Crew Supervisors and other Crew Leaders should be maintained while on the fireline. These communications should be kept as brief as possible.
- The crew leader ensures that all firefighters have been provided with drinking water and food rations for the operational period.
- The crew leader should inspect the physical condition, clothing and equipment of all direct subordinates before and after fireline duty. Any problems must be correct (e.g. synthetic clothing - not to be worn).



Crew Organization and Supervision

A crew leader is responsible for supervising all subordinates during transport to a wildfire, while at fire camp and throughout each operational period. Fire crew members must be trained and capable of completing all tasks they are assigned. A crew leader will establish expectations with the fire crew members for each of these scenarios in order to hold every firefighter accountable for personal behaviour.

During an operational period, a crew leader must:

- Remain with the fire crew on the fireline throughout shift;
- Carry out on site training regarding proper work habits when using tools, equipment and machinery to achieve maximum efficiency while working in a safe manner;
- Supervise the work to ensure maximum progress with fire suppression;
- Organize the crew to efficiently accomplish specific tasks;
- Assign the most experienced and capable crew members to key positions;
- Ensure prompt action is taken to suppress spot fires and hot spots;
- Inspect the fireline frequently to make certain that work assignments are being performed to required standards;
- Maintain daily notes regarding work progress and accomplishments as well as setbacks;
- Report fire progress, work accomplishments, the location of burning operations, spot fires, hot spots and danger trees to the relief crew leader before leaving the fireline;
- Report the day's progress and problems to a supervisor or the IC.

While off shift or when completing regular work, a crew leader must:

- Maintain a record of the names and functions of all crew members;
- Prepare or sign a time sheet for his crew each day;
- Maintain the crew as an operational unit;
- Be familiar with the suppression plans on large fires - particularly those in the crew's section;
- Maintain security and a record of all equipment assigned to the crew;
- Assign the work at the beginning of the shift and briefing the crew on the day's work activities as a whole;
- Determine the duration of the shift and the chain of command;
- Always supervise the crew including during transport to and from the fireline or project work sites.

Motivation and Discipline

Motivation

The crew leader will have success motivating the crew members if his/her leadership qualities are strong. Good communication is essential for effectiveness, safety and crew morale. Crew morale may be uplifted when the leader performs regular firefighting task; however, a supervisor should do this only when his training, safety and supervisory responsibilities fulfilled.

A crew leader is required to:

- Set realistic goals for crew members and for fire suppression;
- Continuously update fire crew members about the successful work activities and progress on the fireline;
- Display self-confidence, honesty and leadership;
- Give compliments and support when appropriate;
- Be able to explain and demonstrate techniques to accomplish tasks safely and efficiently - particularly to inexperienced and unskilled crew members;
- Be able to motivate crew members to attain good productivity;
- Be able to communicate effectively during person to person and person to group scenarios.



Discipline

Maintaining crew discipline may be a crew leader's most difficult job requirement. It will take time and experience to effectively manage any disciplinary situations. A firm-but-fair approach is the best.

A crew leader is required to:

- Know how and when to discipline crew members;
- Be able to recognize and handle a trouble maker;
- Understand types of discipline (verbal warnings, written warning, transfers) and how to apply each;
- Understand and apply leadership principles regarding discipline - set a good example and follow crew rules.

Sample Disciplinary Problems and Solutions

Problem: A crewmember is blatantly critical or defiant in front of the others.

Solution: Take him aside for a private warning and avoid an open confrontation.

Problem: Someone refuses to wear a hard hat or follow safety regulations.

Solution: Explain the hazards and the firefighter of the importance of safety. If the individual still refuses, remove the worker from the fireline and report the incident to a supervisor.

Problem: A crew member is endangering personal safety as well as the safety of others by working outside the common work practices.

Solution: Give proper instructions and stress that everyone must have an appreciation for the safety of themselves and co-workers.

Problem: Someone is slacking off or volunteering for easy jobs.

Solution: A verbal warning emphasizing that there is no room for a team member who is not sharing the workload. A second chance should be given - be patient but very firm.

Problem: Equipment is being used improperly or carelessly.

Solution: Warn the individual and show this firefighter the correct uses.

Problem: A crew member comes to work intoxicated or uses drugs while on the fireline.

Solution: Immediate verbal and written warning or suspension of this worker. Report the incident to a supervisor.



A crew leader should also know:

- How to discipline employees - if the person is an unsatisfactory employee, performance or safety wise, it is essential to address the issue and take corrective measures as necessary. Ensure to document the reasons as evidence for future reference should justification be required.
- In some cases, a crew member may be an unsatisfactory employee for any number of reasons and release of this individual may need to occur. It should be expedited by the fire crew and this is the responsibility of the employer.
- A transfer from one crew to another may overcome personality conflicts. Transfers should be initiated immediately to rectify the problem.

The following principles of leadership will help to establish a good relationship with you crew members:

- Be loyal to those above and below;
- Be understanding;
- Set a good example;
- Be reliable, responsible and trustworthy;
- Think and make effective decisions;
- Be approachable and flexible.



NOTES:

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