

MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!



### Awareness Level

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

### Objectives

- More thorough size up and victim profiling
- Clearer communications with less radio traffic
- Proactive and decentralized incident command
- Rapid and agile deployment of ICS
- More civilian rescues
- Reduced loss of life and property
- No firefighter fatalities
- No significant firefighter injuries
- Better service to the community
- Better succession planning and promotional training

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#### Home Fire Incidents and Deaths, 1980-2021



Metric	1980	2021	Change
Reported Home Fires per 1,000 People	8.8	8.8	▲ 13%
Home Fire Deaths per 1,000 Reported Home Fires	3.2	1.3	▼ 66%

**It's About Life!**

We must change because we are losing the battle!

3

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Lesson 1

"Begin with the end in mind"

Steven Covey

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People



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CALM THE CHAOS!



Published in America Burning (1973)



"I think your firefighters saved his life!"

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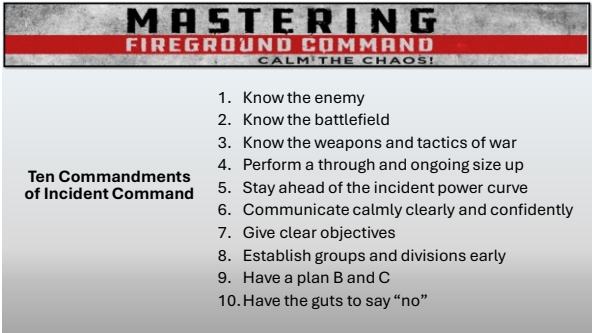
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Lesson 3

- Size Up
- Risk / Gain Management
- Communications



13

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CALM THE CHAOS!

FPODP

- **Facts**
  - ✓ What you know for sure
- **Probabilities**
  - ✓ Educated guess to the extent of the threat
- **Own Situation**
  - ✓ Current responding resource level
- **Decision**
  - ✓ Strategy
- **Plan of Operation**
  - ✓ Tactics

14

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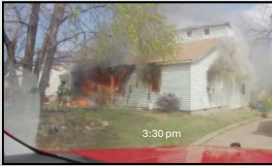
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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!



3:30 pm

**Facts**

- ✓ Working fire 1<sup>st</sup> floor of a 2-story single family residential. High victim profile

**Probabilities**

- ✓ Potential parties trapped and potential for extension to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

**Own Situation**

- ✓ 1<sup>st</sup> arriving Chief with an Engine company on scene pulling an attack line with a truck company arriving, two more engines and an ambulance on the way.

**Decision**

- ✓ Offensive Strategy

**Plan of Operation**

- ✓ E 1 initiate fire attack, T 1 initiate search, M 1 Medical group at the BC vehicle, E 2 into the scene for tank transfer and second line, E 3 secure a water supply.

15

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Arrival Reports

- This is not another size - up

ARRIVAL REPORTS

IDENTIFY

\*Unit    \*Location

OBJECT

What Is It ?

CONDITIONS

What Is It Doing ?

ACTIONS

What Are You Doing ?

NEEDS

\*What Do You Want The Next-In Companies to Do ?  
\*What Additional Resources Do You Need ?

16

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"Survivability" Profiling VS "Victim" Profiling





17

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Victim Profiling – ALL Incidents Start with a Victim Profile



Used to determine the presence, status and location of victims

- LOW
- MODERATE
- HIGH
- CONFIRMED (Get the "SIGNAL")

18

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Low

Credible Occupant Tells You Everyone is Out  
Ask: "How do you know?"  
NOT AN "ALL CLEAR"



19

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Moderate

- During the Day
- No One/No RP On Scene



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High

- Homes at night
- Multi-Family 24-hours-a-day



21

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Confirmed

- Dispatch or Credible RP on Scene Confirms
- Get the SIGNAL



22

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Get the SIGNAL

- Species (Is it human?)
- Inc capacity (Beyond unconscious)
- Gender
- Number (How many victims?)
- Age (Predictable behavioral patterns)
- Location (Saves time!)

23

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Conditions

Actions

Needs

- \*Command from Div A. We have moderate smoke conditions from a center exposure unit"
- \*"I've got E7 pushing in with a line"
- \*"I need at least 1 additional company incase we find fire in this unit"

24

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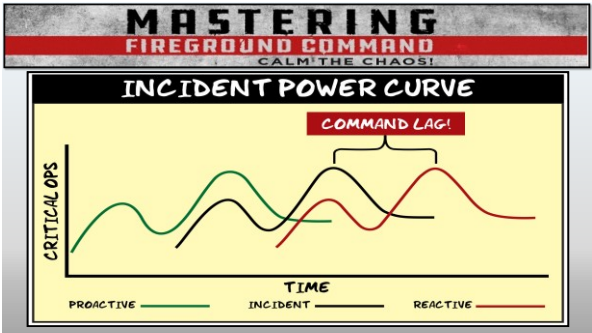
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**MASTERING**  
**FIREGROUND COMMAND**  
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**Lesson 4**  
 Incident Action Planning  
 &  
 Organizing

26

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**MASTERING**  
**FIREGROUND COMMAND**  
 CALM THE CHAOS!

**Incident Alignment**

- Incident Priorities
  - Life Saving
  - Incident Stabilization
  - Property / Environmental Conservation
- Incident Strategies
  - Offensive
  - Combination
  - Defensive
- Operational Tactics
  - Fire Attack
  - Rescue
  - Vent
  - Medical

27

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CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Command Tactical Objectives  
RECEO-VS

• Rescue

• Exposures

• Confinement

• Extinguishment

• Overhaul

• Ventilation

• Salvage

• Medical

• RIC/2-Out

• Support

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28

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Out of Alignment  
  
Samoa Fire



29

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Tactical Supervision  
  
Olive Branch Incident



30

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31

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FIRE ENGINEERING  
BOOKS

USE CODE  
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**SAVE 30%\***  
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\*Excludes new titles



32

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CALM THE CHAOS!

**Strategic:**  
See the Scene



Then/What if?

**Tactical:**  
See the Work



What comes next

**Task:**  
See the Job



Happening Now

**Bridging the Tactical Gap**

- Task Level – Now (0-6')
- Tactical Level – Next (6-50')
- Strategic Level – Then/What if? (>50')

33

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Tactical Supervisor

Jobs

- Tactical supervision – Make decisions
- Active Accountability – Eyes-on, hands-on
- Communicate – Face-to-face
- Ongoing size up – Risk assessment
- Safety Officer – Embedded

Needs to Know “BRO…”

- Boundaries – Area of responsibility
- Resources – Those assigned as direct report
- Objectives – Expectations

Skills and Attributes “...HAM”

- Hostile – Strong command presence
- Agile – Think in the “next”
- Mobile – In, out, around the area

34

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USE OF DIVISION & GROUP SUPERVISORS

REDUCE SPAN OF CONTROL

MORE FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

EMBEDDED SAFETY OFFICERS

CLARIFIES BOUNDARIES, RESOURCES, AND OBJECTIVES



35

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Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

> Small 1-Story Home

> Bedroom Fire into the Attic

> One Alarm =

IC

DIV A

ROOF

RIC

IMED

SMALL SINGLE-STORY HOME



36

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12

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

➤ Large 2-Story Home

➤ Heavy Fire Two Floors

➤ One or Two Alarms =

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RIC

MED

LARGE 2-STORY HOME

37

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

➤ 2-Story Duplex

➤ Fire in One Unit

➤ One Alarm =

IC

DIV A

ROOF

RIC

MED

LARGE 2-STORY DUPLEX

38

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

➤ Large 2-Story Duplex

➤ Heavy Fire Extending into Exposure

➤ One or Two Alarms =

IC

DIV A

DIV D

ROOF

RIC

MED

LARGE 2-STORY DUPLEX WITH EXTENSION

39

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

➤ MF Rowhouse + Heavy Fire + Multi-Alarm =

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RIC

MED



40

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

➤ MF Rowhouse + Heavy Fire + Multi-Alarm =

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RIC

MED

➤ MF Row House

➤ HF and Known Rescue

➤ Multi Alarm =

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RSQ

MED



41

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

➤ Multi-Family Garden Style\*

➤ Known Rescues

➤ One or Two Alarms =

IC

FA

RSQ

ROOF

MED

\* Known Rescues In:


• Large Homes

• Duplex, Tri-plex, 4-plex

• Condominiums

• Town Homes

• Garden Apartments



42

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

STRIP MALL

Large One-Story Strip Mall

Heavy Fire Extending into Attic

One or Two Alarms

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RIC

MED



43

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE FIRE

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

Large One-Story Commercial

Heavy Fire Extending into Attic

One or Two Alarms

IC

DIV A

DIV C

ROOF

RIC

MED



44

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

HIGHRISE INITIAL ALARMS

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Building

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

14-Story Highrise

Heavy Fire on 10 Extending into 11

Multiple Alarms

IC

STAGING

BASE

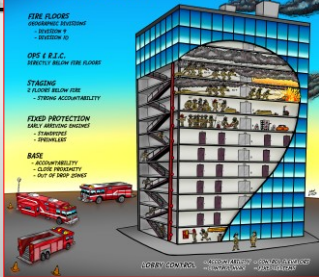
DIV 10

LOBBY

DIV 11

EVAC

T MED



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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

Size/Fuel

+ Conditions

+ Resources = ICS

> 2-Acre grass in light/flashy fuel

> Structures Threatened, Potential for 10 Acres

> 5 Mobile Attack, 3 WT, 5 Type 1, 2 Trk, 2 Med =

IC

STAGING

DIV B

DIV O

DIV X

MED

VEG FIRE

FLAT FIELD LIGHT FUEL



46

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Incident Templating & ICS Formula

> Building + Conditions + Resources = ICS

Apartment Fire - 1st Gen Dr.

Staging

BC3

ALB1

RA36

BC1

Sub 1

Division 1

Division 2

Ventilation

RIC Grp


Med Grp

Resources Estimate

Rehab

Task

Tactical



47

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CALM THE CHAOS!



Status Levels

Assigned

Forward Staged

Level 1 Staging

Level 2 Staging

Unavailable (Rehab / OOS)

48

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**MASTERING**  
**FIREGROUND COMMAND**  
CALM THE CHAOS!

**Lesson 5**  
Aggressive  
Command and  
Tactics for Life

A group of firefighters in full gear, including helmets and masks, are gathered around a young child. One firefighter is holding the child, while others look on. The scene is outdoors, possibly at a training exercise or a real incident.

49

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**MASTERING**  
**FIREGROUND COMMAND**  
CALM THE CHAOS!

A night scene showing a fire burning brightly. A firefighter is visible in the foreground, and another is further back near the fire. The scene is dark, with the fire providing the main light source.

**It's About Life!**  
**Theirs and Ours**

- Life and Death Decisions
- Limited Information
- Compressed Timeframe

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**MASTERING**  
**FIREGROUND COMMAND**  
CALM THE CHAOS!

**MEDIOCRITY IS UNACCEPTABLE**  
  
Punchlines are Problems

- "I've never been to a fire that didn't go out"
- "Water on the fire and everything else gets better"
- "The fire went out and nobody got hurt"

Two firefighters are standing outdoors. One is wearing a helmet and looking at a clipboard held by the other. They appear to be in a discussion or training exercise.

51

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CALM THE CHAOS!

Trends of the Past 20 Years

- RIC
- TIC
- Transitional/Indirect Attack
- Clean Cab

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52

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

For the New Fireground:

- Rapid and appropriate risk/gain management
- Bridge the Tactical Gap
- Tools and tactics to reduce reflex time to rescue civilian victims

SAVE MORE SAVEABLE LIVES!!!



53

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MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

FIRES BURN AND SMOKE KILLS

- CO and HCN are the two most common and deadliest fire gases
- CO displaces O2 and adheres to hemoglobin 212 times faster than O2
- HCN paralyzes the respiratory system



54

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CALM THE CHAOS!

FirefighterRescueSurvey.com

- Victims found and removed within six minutes of fire department arrival have the greatest survivability rate.
- The more we know about the location of the victims, the higher the survivability rate.
- It is more likely that a crew without a hoseline will successfully find and remove a victim who survives.
- Most victims are not found behind closed doors.
- The victims found behind closed doors have a higher survivability rate.

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55

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

FirefighterRescueSurvey.com

- The highest number of rescues (64%) within a 12-hour window occur between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The highest three-hour window is between 3:00 and 6:00 a.m. (24%). Our period of longest likely turnout time also is the period of greatest potential for rescue.
- Fires in single-family dwellings with a victim will, on average, have more than one victim.

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56

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

FirefighterRescueSurvey.com

- Fires in apartment with victims will, on average, have three victims.
- Victims have an eight times higher survivability rate if they are found pre-knockdown.
- VES as a search tactic has the highest survival rate for the civilian at 86%.

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57

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FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Rescue is a Cycle

- Locate, remove, triage, treat, transport, backfill.
- Unless the victim is located in the very last place you look, search must be resumed.
- Where there is one victim there may be more and search must be resumed.
- Critical patients may require crews to ride in.
- 1 ambulance per victim + 1

58

MASTERING  
FIREGROUND COMMAND  
CALM THE CHAOS!

Four Critical Objectives Are Required to Save Lives:

- **Fire Attack**
- **Rescue**
- **Vent**
- **Medical**

\* Specifics Tactics are Situational

59

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Working Command/  
Mobile Command

60

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20



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Training Saves Seconds,  
Seconds Save Minutes,  
Minutes Save Lives!!!

- Rig Check/Set Up
- Routing and Response
- Step Off for Rescue
- Fireground Pace
- "Rescue Mindset"

61

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62

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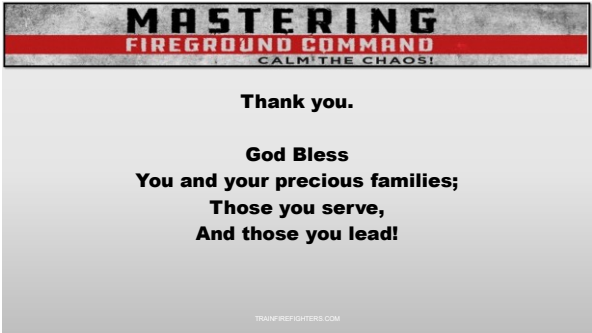
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