TRAINING BULLETIN

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Part of our mission as the Los Angeles Police Department is to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve. When called to various incidents to accomplish this mission, we must always be guided by our overarching value of reverence for human life. Command and Control must be established as quickly as possible to contain, de-escalate, and minimize the negative impact of an incident. The purpose of this Training Bulletin is to provide a better understanding of, and accountability for, Command and Control, and how it is used to manage incidents.

DEFINITION

Command and Control is the use of active leadership to direct others while using available resources to coordinate a response, accomplish tasks and minimize risk. *Command* uses active leadership to establish order, provide stability and structure, set objectives and create conditions under which the function of control can be achieved with minimal risk. *Control* implements the plan of action while continuously assessing the situation, making necessary adjustments, managing resources, managing the scope of the incident (containment), and evaluating whether existing Department protocols apply to the incident.

There are four key components to Command and Control:

- *Active Leadership* – Using clear, concise, and unambiguous communication to develop and implement a plan, direct personnel, and manage resources.
- *Using Available Resources* – Identifying and managing those resources that are needed to plan and implement the desired course of action.
- *Accomplishing Tasks* – Breaking down a plan of action into smaller objectives and using personnel and resources to meet those objectives.
- *Minimize Risk* – Taking appropriate actions to mitigate risk exposure to those impacted by the incident, including the community and first responders.

EXPECTATIONS

Initial Responsibility

The senior officer, or any officer on-scene who has gained sufficient situational awareness, shall establish Command and Control and begin the process to develop a plan of action. Although awareness can begin while responding to an incident (e.g. radio calls and broadcasts), situational awareness best occurs after arrival on scene where observations and conditions are witnessed firsthand. Generally, the person responsible for establishing Command and Control will declare themselves the Incident Commander (IC) and initiate the Incident Command System (ICS).

One of the primary responsibilities for the officer initiating Command and Control is the direction and guidance of subordinate personnel, which includes but is not limited to:

- Ensuring reasonable numbers of Designated Cover Officers (DCO) for both lethal and less-lethal cover.

  > **Note***:* Reverence for human life is the primary consideration in developing tactics and strategies to resolve critical incidents. Regarding lethal force, an essential goal of Command and Control is to manage the number of officers who are assigned lethal cover responsibilities. In the event of an officer-involved shooting, the reasonable management of lethal cover will help lessen both the number of officers who discharge their firearms and the number of rounds fired. Consequently, danger to the community may also be reduced by minimizing the number of rounds fired. Although guided by the person who has assumed Command and Control, each individual officer is ultimately responsible for articulating the reasonableness of their decision to draw, exhibit, or discharge their firearm.

- Reducing over-response or over-deployment to specific duties and responsibilities.
- Maintaining officer safety through personnel location and assignment.

Individual Officer Responsibility

All officers on scene, at some level, are responsible for Command and Control. In addition to their initial assessment, individual officers must identify the IC - or whomever is responsible for Command and Control at that time. While taking appropriate action based on their assessments, officers must be ready for, and receptive to, direction and orders from the IC. Every officer plays a crucial role in the management and handling of critical incidents and must understand their role within the Command and Control scheme. Officers should be ready to deploy or re-deploy as necessary.

For example, officers arrive on scene where a single subject is threatening suicide with a handgun. Two officers are already at scene with lethal cover on the subject. The arriving officers must decide (unless given other direction) if the situation requires additional officers to provide lethal cover, or, if fulfilling an ancillary role (less-lethal options, traffic control, perimeter responsibilities, etc.) would better serve the overall goals of Command and Control and de-escalation. *In this example*, the arriving officers decide they do not need to deploy additional lethal cover, but instead, assume ancillary roles.

Fulfilling ancillary roles as opposed to automatically deploying as lethal cover serves to:

- Reduce simultaneous commands to subjects or suspects,
- Reduce the possibility of excessive amounts of lethal force being deployed,
- Potentially reduce danger to the community,
- Minimize the potential for contagious fire,
- Ensure deployment of less-lethal options, and
- Reduce over-response or over-deployment to specific duties and responsibilities.

  Note: Over-response includes response to an incident where a "Code Four" has been previously broadcast. Officers should avoid responding to incidents where a "Code Four" has already been broadcast.

Individual officers are responsible for assessing their role continuously during a critical incident. Because incidents can be fluid and change rapidly, officers must consistently assess their role and adapt when appropriate.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Preservation of Life

Concurrent with the goal of containment, officers must assess any immediate danger to the community and to initial responders. Following the assessment, the IC must direct available personnel and coordinate appropriate measures to mitigate the threat.

Immediate threats may include:

- Outstanding and possibly armed suspect/s
- Active shooter/s
- Environmental hazards (fires, flooding, downed power lines, etc.)
- Those in need of immediate medical care
- Multiple victims – establish triage and request medical response
- Establish force protection for fire personnel, if necessary

After appropriate measures have been taken to mitigate risks and preserve human life, the officer who established Command and Control should continue to develop a plan. The plan should include the assignment of tasks to available personnel and the organized use of available resources.

Making Decisions

Decision-making is a principal component of leadership and Command and Control. Every Los Angeles Police Officer, regardless of rank or position, is a leader. Leadership requires an ability to make rapid, logical, and reasoned recommendations and decisions, based on consideration of the potential risks and benefits involved in various courses of action. Often, decisions are made during high-stress situations. Consequently, one must react appropriately and immediately to rapidly developing situations by instantaneously calling upon experience, training, and knowledge to formulate and then implement strategies. Officers are expected to exercise leadership, make timely decisions, and accept responsibility for their decisions regardless of outcome.

ESTABLISHING COMMAND AND CONTROL

Implementing Command and Control involves utilizing *active leadership* to *use available resources*, *accomplish tasks*, and *minimize risk*. Major events or incidents that require Command and Control include both natural disasters and tactical situations. Existing Department concepts can be used as tools to aid in establishing Command and Control, based on the type and complexity of the incident. Examples include the PATROL acronym and the Tactical Four C's:

PATROL	*Tactical Four C's*
• **P**lanning, • **A**ssessment, • **T**ime, • **R**edeployment and/or Containment, • **O**ther Resources, and • **L**ines of Communication	• **C**ontrol • **C**ommunicate • **C**oordinate • **C**ontain
Use of Force-Tactics Directive No. 16, Tactical De-escalation Techniques	*Use of Force-Tactics Directive No. 3.2, Foot Pursuit Concepts*

> **Note**: All elements of these tools involve the continuous endeavor to reduce, minimize, or mitigate risk.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Incident Command System (ICS) is the primary tool used by the Department to implement Command and Control. ICS has the flexibility and adaptability to be applied to the management of almost any incident. It provides a scalable, standardized framework to manage incidents, and can be applied to both small incidents and large multi-agency incidents or events. ICS allows the IC to quickly organize resources, assess information, plan and set operational goals, and assert a clear command structure from which to manage the incident or event. Just as with the key component of *accomplishing tasks*, the IC should strive to, in ICS terms, *manage by objectives*.

ICS incorporates five management functions to help the IC maintain control over and incident: Incident Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Administration/ Finance. These management functions are always used, and can be managed by a single person when the incident is small. As the incident grows and the IC recognizes that they will soon be overwhelmed by a particular function, they will appoint a person to manage that function. That appointment allows the IC to maintain control of the incident and all assigned resources. This is known as managing the *Span of Control*.

>**Note**: There is no specific rank requirement to assume the role of an IC, establish a command post, or initiate the ICS. Initially, the senior officer or highest-ranking person at scene will take responsibility and act as the IC. Officers, supervisors and command staff should think in terms of Command and Control when responding to an incident or event.

SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for Command and Control lies with the senior officer or any officer on scene who has gained sufficient situational awareness. Supervisors shall take responsibility for exercising Command and Control. Supervisors shall also declare themselves the IC until relieved by a higher authority. It is the expectation of this Department that the highest-ranking supervisor at scene assume the role of IC and communicate the transfer of command to all personnel involved.

>**Note**: Although it is preferable for a supervisor to establish Command and Control, any officer or first responder can fill that role given sufficient situational awareness and the ability to *actively lead* personnel through the four key components of Command and Control.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Any Commanding Officer who has the responsibility to evaluate tactical incidents, adjudicate Uses of Force, or review after-action reports should compare the concepts of Command and Control with the actions taken during the relevant incident. Commanding Officers should identify who was responsible for establishing Command and Control during the incident and evaluate if the actions taken were congruent with the four key components of Command and Control and the concepts in this Training Bulletin.

CONCLUSION

Command and Control is a process where designated personnel use active leadership to command others while using available resources to accomplish tasks and minimize risk. Active leadership provides clear, concise, and unambiguous communication to develop and implement a plan, direct personnel and manage resources. The senior

officer or any person on scene who has gained sufficient situational awareness shall initiate Command and Control and develop a plan of action. Command and Control will provide direction, help manage resources, and make it possible to achieve the desired outcome. Early considerations of PATROL will assist with the Command and Control process.

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