

NATIONAL POLICY ON THE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM NATIONAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

The potential for disasters in Trinidad and Tobago, whether man-made or natural is very real. Not only are we susceptible to major hurricanes, but also each year we experience some degree of flooding and earthquakes, which also pose a threat to people and property. Additionally, the presence of petrochemical facilities and operations increases the probability of the occurrence of a hazardous incident.

In addition to the hazards to which the country is exposed, there are a number of large-scale events, both cultural and sporting, which require careful planning and coordination for the management of emergencies. These include;

- Annual Carnival Celebrations
- Annual International Cricket Test Series
- Other International Sports Events
- Concerts and other entertainment

1.2 Definition

The 1st draft of the National Policy attempted to modify the Incident Command System (ICS) to suit the Trinidad and Tobago context. The ICS is *“A model tool for command, control and coordination of a response and provides a means to coordinate the efforts of individual agencies as they work toward the common goal of stabilizing the incident and protecting life, property and the environment.”*

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are as follows;

- To ensure the efficient multi-sectoral approach to the management of an incident
- To avoid the relocation or growth of the disaster from the scene to elsewhere

ICS can be incorporated into the emergency management programmes for the following but not limited to;

- Hazardous Materials
- Planned events (sporting events, parties and concerts)
- Emergencies caused by Natural Hazards (Landslides, Earthquakes, Floods and Hurricanes)
- Forest Fires
- Transportation accidents
- Single and multi-agency law enforcement incidents
- Health and Vector Control programmes

A secondary objective is to modify the Incident Command System to ensure that the on-scene management of an incident is well coordinated amongst the first response agencies (Fire Service, Police Service and Health), with the necessary support from the second responders.

Existing Initiatives

In recognition of the potential for incidents/emergencies and disasters in Trinidad and Tobago, the response to which will incorporate several agencies working together, NEMA, in collaboration with PAHO embarked upon Incident Command System training for the Protective and Health Services, as well as facility owner/operators. This initiative started in September 2000. Subsequently, a programme to implement the ICS in Trinidad and Tobago was developed in August 2002. The first Training for Instructors (TFI) was conducted in September 2002.

In January 2003 and April 2004, Working Group Meetings involving all stakeholders and partners were conducted to review the 1st and 2nd drafts of the National Policy for the Incident Command System. At these meetings recommendations were made for the ICS to be renamed Incident Management System. Other recommendations and suggestions are incorporated in the following 3rd and final draft of the National Policy for Incident Command.

The ICS system works in tandem with the Mass Casualty Management (MCM) System and Search and Rescue (SAR). It is integral to the effective management of any MCM and SAR operation.

2 POLICY ISSUES

2.1 Management and Control

In this document incidents are generally classed into two categories

Hazardous Incidents which include fires (whether forest or urban in nature); hazardous materials incidents (oil spills, chemical or toxic releases, etc); mass casualty incidents (resulting from sporting or cultural events etc) search and rescue events resulting from landslides or mudslides, floods, earthquakes, traffic accidents etc) and conflict incidents such as civil unrest, riots, armed robberies, etc.

For hazardous incidents the most senior Fire Officer on duty will be the Incident Manager.

- According to the laws of Trinidad and Tobago, Chapter 35:50 1980 Amendment Act. No. 10 of 1997 (41: 3) “At a fire or at a scene of any other hazard to life and property, the senior officer of the Fire Service present has the sole charge and control of all operations for firefighting and other purposes of the Fire Service”
- The saving of lives and property is the Fire Service’s primary objective thus, the skills and services of the Fire Service are needed in most hazardous incidents.
- Police and Defence Force priorities and focus are on searching, capturing and defending and decisions made may not always be in the best interest of the potential victims.

Where the incident is one of conflict the Protective Services will be in command with the assistance of the Defence Force on request.

All agencies involved in response activities on the scene will established a common set of incident objectives and support activities. Having clear objectives and developing an Incident Action Plan (IAP)- according to the priority of action (discussed later) should resolve any disagreement in the command and control positions.

Incidents on Heavy Industry sites and Plant Operations

On arrival at the scene the Incident Manager must consult/seek the advise or information from the Plant Owners/Operators or Operation Manager for decision making. On the impact -where the Fire Service is not on the scene - the Emergency Operations Plan will be activated. All personnel will act in accordance with the plan. The then Incident Manager will transfer command to the most senior Fire Officer on arrival.

Incidents on air and sea ports

On arrival at the scene the Incident Manager will consult/seek the advise or information from the Facility Owners/Operators or Operation Manager.

The Incident Manager makes the necessary decisions, based on the priority of action and common goals.

2.2 IMS Organization in Trinidad and Tobago

NB. The IMS organization has the capability to expand or contract to meet the needs of the incident.

Incident Manager (IM)

All incidents will have an Incident Manager (regardless of size or capability). The Incident Manager undertakes the management function. The IM may delegate authority for performing certain activities to others, as required. When expansion is required, the IM will establish the other Management Staff positions (Annex B).

Incident Management Post (IMP)

An Incident Management Post must be established from which all on scene operations will be coordinated.

Delegation of Responsibilities

At small incidents, both the Management Staff and General Staff positions may be filled by one individual, the Incident Manager. As the incident expands, however, the Incident Manager will assign the Management Staff positions of Information Officer, Safety Officer and Liaison Officer (also see Annex B for specific emergency function teams). Additionally, he/she may also assign Section Chiefs for the Planning, Operations and Logistics Sections.

Priority of Action

The Incident Manager (IM) will base the decision to expand (or contract) the IMS Organization on four major incident priorities:

- **Life Safety:** The Incident Manager's first priority is always the life safety of the emergency responders and the public
- **Incident Stability:** The Incident Manager is responsible for determining the strategy that will (a) minimize the effect that the incident may have on the surrounding area (b) maximize the response effort while using the resources efficiently.
- **Property Conservation and Evidence Preservation:** The Incident Manager is responsible for minimizing damage to property and safeguarding evidence while achieving the incident objectives.
- **Continuity of Operation:** Returning to a state of normalcy.

Incident Action Plan (IAP)

The IM will develop the Incident Action Plan (IAP) which will state clearly the response goals, operational objectives and support activities. Where necessary, for example large-scale events the IM will establish a Planning Group to develop such a plan. The plan must be documented.

2.3 Specific Emergency Function Teams

Medical teams

Medical Teams operating according to the Mass Casualty Management Plan of Trinidad and Tobago will work with the established Incident Management Post and Incident Manager. The Mass Casualty Management System is designed to incorporate the Incident Management System (schematic 1).

Search and Rescue

The ongoing project for establishing Land Search and Rescue teams in Trinidad and Tobago incorporates the Incident Management System. The SAR teams will (according to the SAR Plan and Procedures) function in tandem with the IMS (schematic 1).

Sectoral Plans

The Disaster Preparedness Plans/Contingency Plans for individual sectors or agencies will provide the necessary support (financial, logistical or other) to the incident management post. Sectoral plans must incorporate Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency Response inclusive of the Incident Management System. Examples of Sectoral plans are as follows but not limited to:

- The Ministry of Health Disaster Preparedness Plan
- Regional Health Authorities Disaster Preparedness Plans
- The Fire Service Emergency Response Plans and Standard Operating Procedures
- The Police Service Emergency Response Plans and Standard Operating Procedures
- The Regional Corporations Emergency Preparedness Plans
- The Social Services Emergency Preparedness Plans
- The Ministry of Works and Transport Emergency Preparedness Plans
- National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP)
- Trinidad and Tobago Emergency Mutual Aid Scheme (TTEMAS) Emergency Response Plan
- National Emergency Telecommunications Plan

2.4 Integrated Communications

The Ministry of National Security Communications Network System will be utilized for intra and inter agency communications within divisions of National Security (Fire Service, Defence Force, Police Service, NEMA, Cadet Force, Prison Service and Forensic Science Centre). The Ministry of Health is to be included on this system.

An effective communications system is the backbone of any emergency operations. The success of this venture is based on functional radios in the hands of essential personnel. For the success of any emergency operations the ability to reach seniors and heads of divisions is crucial. In that regard it is imperative that systems are always tested, located on personnel and kept in operation.

3 LEGISLATION

3.1 Existing Relevant Legislation

- Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Act 4 of 1976 Ch. 1:01 4 *Rights enshrined; Ch. 5 Executive Powers*
- Fire Service Act Ch. 35:50 Act 10 1997 - Amendments to the Fire Services Act Ch.35:50
- Police Service Act Ch. 15:01
- The Regional Health Authorities Act No. 5 of 1994
- The Coroner's Act. Ch. 6:04
- The Disaster Measures Act Ch. 16:50
- The Defence Act, Chapter 14:01
- Protective Services Compensation Act No. 22 of 1996
- Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 1 2004
- Telecommunications Act of 2000
- TTEMAS Act No. 8 of 2000
- Supplemental Police Act Chap. 15:02

3.2 Required Legislation

Disaster Management Legislation

Welfare of Response Teams – medical coverage
Liability Issues

Medical legislation for Paramedic functions in the field

4 PROCEDURES

4.1 Level 1 Emergency

An emergency is described as being at level 1 when the response required is well within the human and resource capabilities of the first response agencies (Police, Fire and Health) to provide. Detailed descriptions of levels of emergencies are documented in specific plans such as the Mass Casualty Management Plan and the Search and Rescue Plan.

On arrival at the scene the first responding agency (whether Fire, Police or Health - EHS) will establish the Incident Management Post, and assume the role of Incident Manager. The IM will transfer command to the most senior Fire Officer for hazards or, Defence and Protective Services for conflict, on arrival (“Top down” or modular organization). The Incident Manager will then manage the incident and all other agencies will support the IM.

If the situation warrants it, the Municipal Corporations Regional EOC (REOC) will be activated to support the IMP.

The facility’s emergency operations plan will be activated. An Incident Management Post will be established. Relevant sector (according to the Emergency Operations Plan) will take charge of the scene until the Fire Service arrives on the scene. The transfer of management of this incident will be undertaken.

4.2 Level II

When the response required to cope with an incident/s has/have exceeded the human and resource capacity of the first response agencies as well as that of the secondary response agencies that reside within the Municipal Corporation, then additional resources will be requested from neighboring divisions, branches and Regional Corporations as appropriate.

The Incident Manager continues to take charge of that incident, but as the situation grows larger or continues for an extended period of time it will be necessary to implement a rotation of staff and command.

Several REOCs may be activated to support the incident manager/s. The REOCs will have a much larger view of situation/s and will prioritize resources. When several REOCs have been activated, and the incident/s has/have still exceeded their capacity to cope, the National EOC (NEOC) will be activated to access a greater range of national resources at the national level.

Higher order or lower order ranks of a level II emergency exist. This is basically distinguished according to the extent of resources required.

4.3 Level III

Where the national capacity to deal with the event has been exceeded the NEOC will then be responsible for accessing international assistance and overall management of the disaster. The Incident Manager continues to take charge of that incident until goals and objectives are met.

5 ON SCENE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Schematic 1 illustrates the proposed on scene organization.

As stated above the Incident Manager has overall command and control; however (as is required by the nature of the incident) Specific Emergency Function Teams for Search and Rescue, Medical Management of Mass Casualties, Fire Suppression, Traffic Control and Law Enforcement, Transport etc. will have designated team leaders who will liaise with the Incident Manager on all situations and circumstances during response operations. The Team leaders will provide the IM with the necessary information to develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Where the scale of the incident results in the IM being overwhelmed and his/her span of control have been exceeded then the IM must make the decision to set up the Operations Section with an Operations Chief to coordinate the teams.

Where the stabilization of the incident requires technical or specialist information (e.g. an incident on an industrial plant involving hazardous materials) the IM must make the decision to establish a Planning Unit. The Planning Unit will assist with the development of the IAP and provide details on available resources.

6 OTHER ISSUES

6.1 Training

The success or failure in the use of the IMS depends on its incorporation into the training programmes of all the agencies concerned. Some agencies, - the Fire Services and Ministry of Health and Emergency Health Services and the Police Service - will have to include Mass Casualty Management into their training programme. Additionally, the Fire Services and the Health Services will have to incorporate “evidence preservation” into their training programme.

6.2 Finance

The role of the incident manager is purely one of managing available resources (personnel and equipment) that will be responding to the incident. In the Trinidad and Tobago context the IMS must be supported by Institutional Contingency Plans.

ANNEX A

A.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Incident Manager

- Performs overall command, control and coordination of field operations
- Protect life and then property
- Receives reports from other officers in the management post
- Continuously assess the general situation
- Coordinates request between sectors in the field
- Ensures links between sectors
- Ensures the welfare of all staff involved in field operations
- Maintain a manageable span of control
- Continuously liaise with central headquarters (EOC)
- Establish a documentation center (can be just an officer or two to document all actions taken in response to the incident).
- Documenting the following:
 - All decisions taken at the Incident Manager Post (listing the reasons for these decisions).
 - Resources and personnel involved in the event.
 - Accessing additional support
 - Contact Regional Corporation/Ministry of Works and Transport regional offices for assistance with the removal of debris, clearance of road etc.
 - Preparing Situation Reports to forward in a timely manner to the Regional EOC or the National EOC.
 - Conduct an After Action Review of events for the following;
 - Review all actions undertaken
 - Compile the information received from SAR Team leaders; MCM Team Leaders etc.
 - Challenges
 - Strong points
 - Lessons learnt
 - Areas for improvement
 - Arrange for a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) for all response personnel.
 - Handles all media relations on the scene. But also forwards information to the REOC.

ANNEX B

B.1 SPECIFIC EMERGENCY FUNCTION TEAMS

The Incident manager will liaise with team leaders of the specific emergency function teams. The team leaders will comprise of the Management Staff. These specific functions are as follows (but not limited to)

Mass Casualty Management Team- according to Mass Casualty Management Plan

Traffic Control and Law Enforcement Team - according to Police Plan

Fire Suppression Team - according to Fire Service Plan

Search and Rescue Team – according to Search and Rescue Plan

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of National Security

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Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Health

.....

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Local Government

.....

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Energy

.....

Chief Fire Officer
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service

.....

Commissioner of Police
Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

.....

Chief of Defence Staff
Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force

.....

Chief Medical Officer
Ministry of Health

.....

President
Trinidad and Tobago Emergency Mutual Aid
Scheme (TTEMAS)

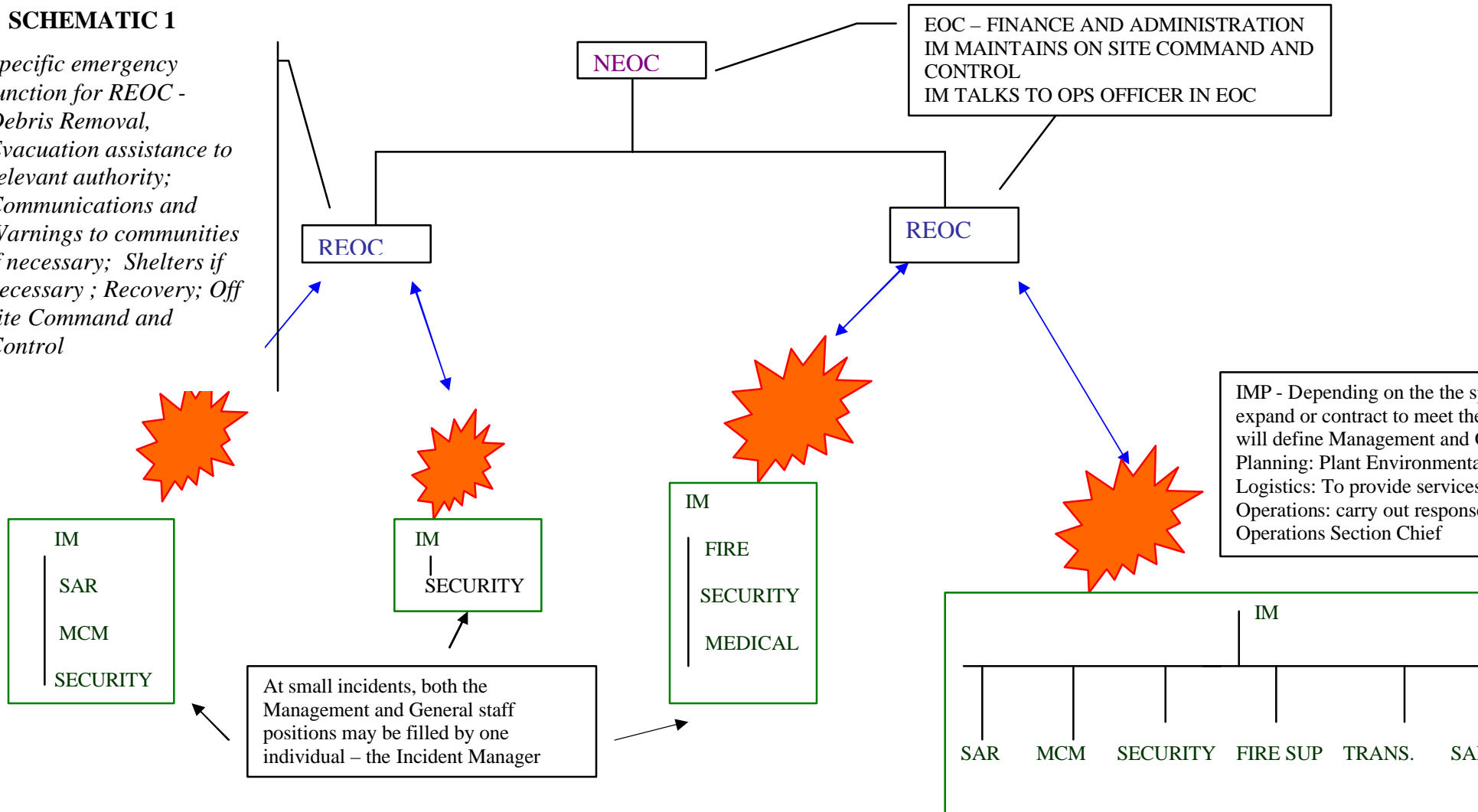
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Director
National Emergency Management Agency

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SCHEMATIC 1

Specific emergency function for REOC - Debris Removal, Evacuation assistance to relevant authority; Communications and Warnings to communities if necessary; Shelters if necessary; Recovery; Off site Command and Control



SPECIFIC EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS

MEDICAL – MEDICAL STABILIZATION ; MCM PLAN AND PROCEDURES 2ND TRIAGE AND 3RD TRIAGE

SAR – LOCATION AND RESCUE SAR PLAN FOR URBAN/LAND SAR AND PROCEDURES 1ST TRIAGE

FIRE SUPPRESSION

SECURITY

TRANSPORT OFFICER

NB: SPAN OF CONTROL 7 ; WHEN EXCEEDED USE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM INTRODUCE OPERATIONS/STAGING ETC

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

TRAINING – MCM SAR IMS PART OF GENERAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR ALL SERVICES

MCM – EHS; RHA’S FIRST RESPONSE FOR TTFS, TTPS, TTDF, TTPS; TTCF, NGOS

IMS- TTFS; TTPS;

SAR- TTFS; TTDF;

RESOURCES – COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK AND SYSTEMS - EQUIPMENT

PPEs FOR TRAINED PERSONNEL

OTHER

MCM STANDARDIZED TRIAGE TAGS; FLAG FOR IMP; AMP; MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL INTO THE FIELD

WELFARE FOOD SANITATION; STAFF ROTATION; SAFETY