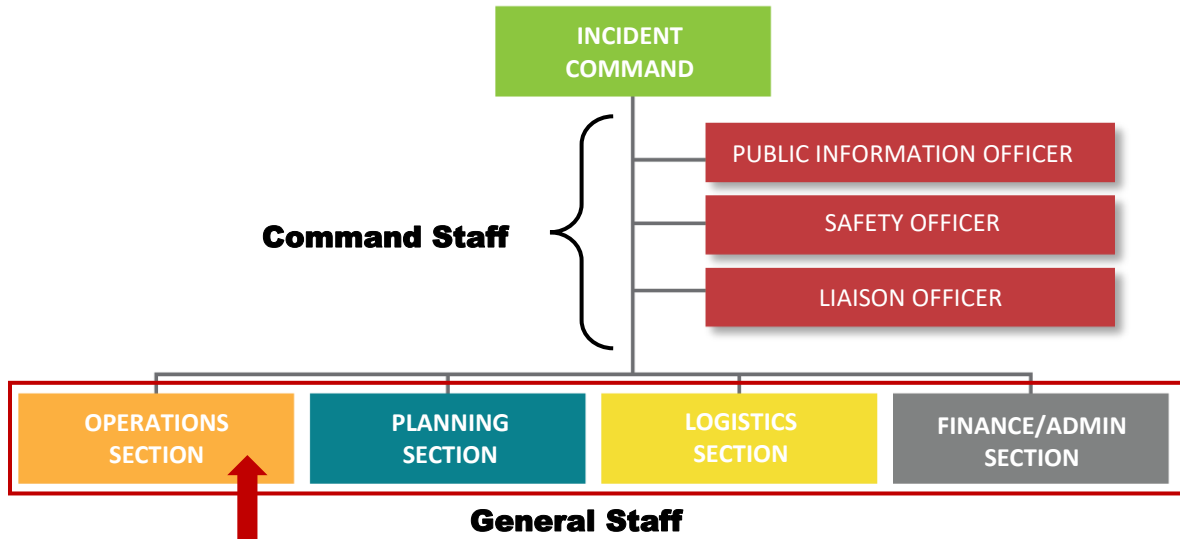


# TOOLBOX MEETING GUIDE

## TOPIC 6: OPERATIONS SECTION CHIEF



The role of the Operations Section Chief (Ops Chief) is to oversee and direct all incident-related tactical activities. The Ops Chief is also an integral part of developing the Incident Action Plan (IAP) by providing key advice from a tactical perspective on meeting the objectives necessary to successfully manage the incident at site level, while working closely with the Planning Section to anticipate future needs.

As part of the General Staff, the Ops Chief is a part of the leadership team. Once assigned, they are responsible for assigning subordinate roles\* as necessary, such as:

- On-site Supervisor
- Public Protection Supervisor
- Roadblock Crews(s)
- Rovers
- Telephoner
- Staging Area Manager

\*Depending on the number of responders available and the scale of the incident, some subordinate roles will not need to be assigned, or the role can be assumed by the Ops Chief.

If the Ops Chief does not have sufficient staff to meet all public safety requirements, the Logistics Section should immediately be contacted to bring in additional resources, such as a flagging crew to staff roadblocks, or other operators through mutual aid agreements. For all protective measures, speed is essential.

**Use Your Checklists** – All Operations roles should have associated checklists. When fulfilling multiple roles, personnel must remember to use all applicable checklists. Keep in mind, not all tasks on a checklist may need to be completed. In many cases, the incident will determine the required tasks. Checklists are divided into phases of the incident, such as: **Initial Response, Ongoing Response, and Demobilization**. Remember, you must respond at the pace dictated by the incident, and address the checklist items according to the current stage of the incident. To make a comparison, airline pilots refer to their take-off checklist first before they look at one for the landing process.

**Span of Control/Chain of Command** – It is important to maintain a manageable span of control so personnel in leadership and critical decision-making positions are not overwhelmed. Span of control should be maintained between three and seven, and a ratio of one supervisor to five direct reports is optimal. It is essential personnel respect the chain of command and ensure they only answer to their direct supervisor, not directly to the Incident Commander (IC). Sharing the incident organization chart with all responders will help ensure these lines are understood.

To maintain the span of control, supervisory roles such as an On-site Supervisor or Public Protection Supervisor may need to be assigned to lower the number of personnel answering directly to the Ops Chief.

**Incident Action Plan (IAP)** - The Planning Section develops the IAP, while input from the Operations Section, the Incident Commander and the Safety Officer are integral to create an effective blueprint for the response and management of the incident. A sample IAP may contain the following objectives (see the Planning Section Chief Toolbox Guide for further information on IAP development):

- Responder Safety**
- Public Protection**
- Control and Containment**
- Environment**

**Briefing Meetings** – Status briefing meetings should occur at regular intervals and be scheduled by the Planning Section in conjunction with the Incident Commander. The Ops Chief will gather information from their subordinate roles to present at each update meeting. Once the meeting is over, it is the role of the Ops Chief to relay the updated information and associated task assignments back to any subordinate personnel, setting timelines for status updates and task completion.

The Operations Section provides valuable input on the IAP objectives for Public Protection, and Control and Containment of the incident. Throughout the incident, the Ops Section is responsible for updating the status of each objective, considering alternate strategies when meeting objectives, and maintaining awareness of on-scene resource requests. This role also works closely with the Logistics Section Chief for resource requests to assist with these objectives.

**Demobilization** – Once a stand-down has been confirmed with the regulatory agency (BC Oil and Gas Commission), demobilization can begin. During the demobilization phase, the Ops Chief ensures final documentation is submitted to the Planning Section, coordinates securing the scene for investigation by internal and external agencies, and verifies the air quality within the Hazard Planning Zone (HPZ) and within homes to ensure any evacuated residents can return home.

**Forms:** Incident Command System (ICS) forms are an integral part of proper documentation processes and all roles should be familiar with the forms applicable to them. Documentation provides vital evidence of decisions and actions taken, and the information available to decision makers at specific times. These records support post-incident analysis, and can be legally admissible in a court of law.

**Common ICS Planning Section Forms:** Incident Briefing; Incident Objectives; Organization Chart and Incident Status Summary.

**Common Examples of Operations Section Forms:**

ICS 214 – Unit/Activity Log (Time and Event/Activity Log)

ICS 215 – Operational Planning Worksheet

ICS 260 – Resource Order Form – *can be used for resource requests from Logistics*