

Division/Group Supervisor Interaction

Who do I talk to?

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Accidents:

Accidents fall into three categories: vehicle/equipment, aircraft, or personnel. Minor vehicle/equipment and personnel accidents you should handle yourself. You may need to turn the supervision of the Division to a task force leader or an adjoining DIVS while you're dealing with the accident. Depending on the severity of the accident, you may be able to wait till the end of shift before you notify OSC. At the end of the shift, advise finance and safety, and do your documentation.

All aircraft accidents are a big deal. Notify the OSC, safety, and air attack right away. For vehicle/equipment accidents that are serious, notify the OSC and safety right away, and then follow up with finance. If vehicle accident, make sure appropriate law enforcement is notified. If personnel accident is serious, medical unit should be first notification, then OSC, safety, and finance.

Aircraft Use:

Scouting – If you have a need to scout your Division from the air, contact the AOBD or ATGS; air attack if one is over the fire.

Tactical – Use of aircraft for tactical missions is a top priority. Your IAP should define assignment of air resources. For assistance, contact the air tactical group supervisor or helicopter coordinator.

Medevac – Your IAP should define procedure for medevac. If you are unsure, ask the OSC or medial unit leader prior to operational period.

Logistical – The AOBD usually coordinates logistical use of aircraft. If you have a need, contact the OSC, air attack, or helicopter coordinator (follow designated chain of command).

Altercation/Confrontation:

Altercations or confrontations between personnel may occasionally arise. These situations need to be handled immediately. Notify the OSC. The HRSP should be notified by the OSC to assist. You will need to make a written statement for the HRSP.

Branch Director:

The Branch Director is there to assist you in managing your Division. When a Branch Director is assigned, you will report to him/her in place of the OSC.

Briefings:

You are to be at the briefing for your assigned operational period. After the IAP briefing, you are to provide a crew briefing to your assigned crew bosses, field observers, lookouts, strike team, and task force leaders. This is your opportunity to give more specific tactical direction to your Division resources prior to them leaving camp for the line.

Communications:

If you have a compatible radio, the COML will program it to the incident frequencies. If you do not have a radio, the communications unit will supply one. If you are having problems communicating on the Incident, notify the COML and the OSC of the problem areas. If you have a cellular telephone, exchange the numbers with the COML. Be sure that you have a battery pack for disposable batteries. Get enough AA batteries for two shifts.

Control Line:

Always communicate and coordinate your Division breaks and control line location with adjoining Divisions. If the line cannot be located as the IAP indicated, communicate this to the OSC. If you need information about what is ahead, contact air attack (air tactical group supervisor).

If a resource advisor is available, discuss rehabilitation plans or thoughts, archeological concerns, soil questions, and visual impacts before line construction if possible. If you lose a portion of your line or have enough spotting that you question your ability to control or hold your line, advise crews, strike team leaders/task force leaders, and adjoining Divisions immediately. As soon as practical, notify the OSC. If available, request air support.

Demobilization:

You will be notified by the Planning Section or the OSC when you are to demobilize. You will go through the OSC for your evaluation, to logistics for equipment, plans for your paperwork, and to finance for final time reporting. If you have a need for an emergency demobilization, contact the OSC.

Deployment (Shelter):

Attempt to contact the OSC or air attack prior to deployment. If possible, advise adjoining Division Supervisor, give details, location, fire behavior, and number of people. While deployed, contact all crew members with a radio as often as possible. Use a tactical or crew net frequency, if available. After it is safe to come out, contact the OSC and air attack, and advise them of the situation. If there are injuries, see that the MEDL is advised. If you have fatalities, follow the injury/fatality procedures outlined in the IRPG.

Discrimination/Inappropriate Behavior:

Contact the offender immediately and advise him/her that they must immediately cease the offending behavior. Advise their supervisor. After shift, contact human resources and advise the OSC of the situation. Remember to document your actions.

Division Assignment Questions:

If you are unclear of your assignment for the operational period, contact the OSC after the IAP briefing. If you have any questions about the forecast or fire behavior, contact the FBAN. If you are unclear of aircraft issues, contact the OSC or the AOB. Be sure to brief with your crew bosses, strike team, and task force leaders after the IAP briefing.

Environmental Accident:

If products are spilled or applied in a manner that they are not intended to be (such as foam or retardant in or near a water course), notify the OSC immediately. If the accident is air application related, notify the air attack, lead plane, or helicopter.

Equipment:

If you “sign up” equipment on the Division, advise the OSC. After shift advise the RESL and the finance section chief. When contract equipment is on the line be sure to interact with the supervisor and see that all time repots (shift tickets) are done correctly. If the performance is poor, equipment is inappropriate, or you no longer require the equipment, advise the equipment supervisor and the OSC. Before any equipment can be used, it must be inspected to ensure it meets safety requirements and/or terms of their contract. Often, a Division may have multiple water tenders or other pieces of equipment. It may be necessary to assign a task force leader to organize and supervise the multiple resources.

Escape Routes:

When planning escape routes it is important to consult with adjoining Divisions to be sure the route can handle the number of people involved. If your escape route is a road, you should ensure that staging area managers or law enforcement along the route understand your plans. If you will need crew transports moved from a staging area to a drop point for escape, be sure the staging area manager is aware and keeps enough transports to move everybody. Communicate the plan to everybody when you do your crew shift briefings. If you have to use an escape route, notify the OSC as soon as possible. If an air attack is up, notify them of your need for additional look out assistance.

Extreme Fire Behavior:

If the fire activity is significantly different than the IAP forecast, notify adjoining Divisions and crew supervisors within your Divisions. If it appears that you are not going to be able to complete assignments or must pull back, notify the OSC and adjoining Divisions. If you are seeing indicators you are uncomfortable with, you may be able to contact the FBAN and discuss the issue. You can also get feedback from air attack or helicopters if they are up.

Field Observers:

If field observers (FOBS) are assigned to your Division, stay in contact with them. They usually will give weather hourly to communications; listen to the report. If you miss it, call them and ask for it. If you have concerns about a portion of the fire, discuss it with them and make sure they notify you if they see something. If adjoining Divisions are firing out their line, have their FOBS keep an eye on the firing operation for your Division and the adjoining Divisions safety. You are responsible for FOBS or any other miscellaneous overhead on your Division. Make sure you know where they are and maintain communications with them.

Firing Operations:

If you receive direction to backfire on the IAP, make sure you understand clearly what is desired and when. If unclear, contact the OSC after the briefing. If you have weather concerns, discuss them with the FBAN after the briefing. Be very clear and detailed in the shift crew briefing. If you cannot meet the criteria in the IAP, contact the OSC before proceeding to light. If a firing boss is not assigned, ask at the crew brief if anyone is firing boss qualified. If not, consider using a strike team leader. If you have problems during firing operations, STOP. Contact the OSC. Make sure you notify adjoining Division Supervisors before starting. If the firing is complicated or crews are inexperienced, ask the OSC for help, such as a FBAN, field observer, lookouts, or possibly a crew swap with a neighboring Division.

Food:

If you are in a remote camp and meals are not delivered as arranged, contact logistics. If it is going to be a problem, advise the OSC. If crews are going to be late getting into camp and you need to have meals held, contact logistics early. If crews arrive on the line without lunch, relay an order to supply. If they cannot get them to you, send someone to camp and have them picked up.

Garbage:

It is very important to move garbage off the line and out of drop points. If garbage is on the line and too far to carry to the drop point or vehicles, advise air operations that you will need garbage back hauled by helicopter. Make sure that ground support is advised of garbage at drop points and needs to be back hauled. Use any available vehicles to back haul garbage at the end of shift. Be sure to order garbage bags from supply and have enough bags to put all the trash in.

Hygiene:

Health and welfare of the crew is important. Occasionally, you will encounter crews that are not showering enough. Discuss your concerns with the crew boss. You may also see crews that have quite a few members sick. Frequently, this occurs from riding in a crew transport with other sick people. Discuss with the crew boss about putting these people on sick leave. This is difficult because they don't want to lose paid work time. If you are unable to resolve the issue with the crew boss, advise the OSC and contact the SOF and HRSP.

Incident within an Incident:

If you are involved in an incident that is related to, but different than the ongoing incident, such as a vehicle accident during a wildfire, contact the OSC immediately. Request assistance as appropriate (medical, law enforcement). Advise adjoining Division Supervisors and crew bosses or strike team/task force leaders. Secure coverage for your Division or pull forces back to a safe area while you are committed. Incident management teams should have a plan in place to handle the "Incident within an Incident."

Injury:

If you are injured on the line, contact your strike team leader/task force leader or crew boss immediately. Make sure adjoining Division Supervisors are advised. Contact the MEDL for medical assistance and contact the OSC. If possible, make sure someone takes charge of the Division immediately until the OSC makes other arrangements. If one of your people is injured, your IAP should provide you with the appropriate procedures. If the IAP does not contain the information, contact the MEDL for assistance. If the injury is serious or affects the crew(s), advise the OSC of the situation. If unable to contact the MEDL, contact the OSC immediately.

Line Spike:

If you believe there is a need to “line spike” or “coyote” out, you should contact the OSC and discuss your ideas. In most instances, it will require 24 hours to support logistically. If you are flown into a Division you may be forced to spike or coyote due to weather or aircraft availability. Whenever you are flown in, make sure you have special supplies for 24 hours, including rain flies. Discuss this possibility with OPS before you think this might happen. Make sure you know the difference between line spike/coyote tactics and establishing remote camps.

Lookouts:

If you need lookouts and cannot staff the position from your Division personnel, contact the OSC. When lookouts are posted, make sure you have a good communications, and stay in contact. Advise adjoining Divisions of lookouts. Discuss safety zones and escape routes with lookouts.

Loss of Equipment:

If items issued to your Division cannot be accounted for, contact the last crew boss to use the item and obtain a statement. Contact logistics and provide the crew boss statement and your statement. If you believe the equipment to be stolen, advise the incident law enforcement officer and the OSC.

Mapping:

Provide current updated map information of your Division to the SITL at the end of each operational period.

Media:

Unescorted media should not be in a Division. Contact the incident information officer, SOF, or law enforcement. Advise the OSC.

Mobilization:

When requested for an incident, be sure to get all the appropriate information including a dispatch center or incident communications center phone number. If you have problems en route or your estimated time of arrival will be later than you originally stated, contact the dispatch center or incident by phone and make sure they advise the plans section of your status change.

OSC:

Your OSC is available to assist you so that you can manage you Division and accomplish you assigned tasks. His/her primary responsibility is for planning and organizing for the next 24 to 96 hours. In almost all situations that you encounter on your Division, it is expected that you will take appropriate action to deal with the situation and advise the OSC at the appropriate time.

While it may be inappropriate to advise the OSC of a major event during the afternoon strategy meeting, it is not appropriate to interrupt the OSC for minor or normal occurrences that you should be capable of handling. Once each shift, usually at 1400 (day shift) and 0200 (night shift) hours, be prepared to discuss the status of the Division and the anticipated resource requirements for your next operational period.

Have an ICS 215 (Operational Planning Worksheet) ready prior to the meeting. Be sure to identify logistical needs as well as tactical resources. Have notes prepared that describe any events or actions that you need to advise the OSC of. In most cases, this will be the only extensive dialogue you have with the OSC that operational period, so be prepared.

It is critical that you have a positive relationship and quality communications with the OSC. If you are concerned or uncomfortable with the situation between you and the OSC, tell them. Force a dialogue that is positive and builds the team relationship.

Parking Problems:

Be very careful to manage the parking, staging or distribution of equipment in your Division. It is very easy and quite common to see escape routes clogged up with crew transports, low boys, and water tenders. If you have numerous pieces of equipment within your Division, ask the OSC for personnel to manage the parking or staging. Make sure you communicate with adjoining Divisions. Don't let them use your escape routes as their parking or staging area.

Personal Supplies:

If you arrive at an incident missing some equipment or use your supply of equipment, don't go to the line ill-equipped. Contact supply and check out what you need. Make sure you have enough radio batteries for at least 24 hours. Be sure and contact the COML prior to going on the line and have your radio programmed and checked and that you have ample batteries. On a wildfire, take a tool to the line.

Remote Camps:

Whenever travel times are interfering with work on the line, are exceeding one hour, or involve hazardous travel, the establishment of a remote camp should be considered. The Division Supervisor should discuss this with the OSC as early as possible. It typically will take 24 to 48 hours after the decision is made to establish and support a remote camp. In most instances, it is expected that a Division Supervisor will stay in the camp.

Once the camp is established you will need to work closely with the base camp manager to assure that it operates smoothly. Occasionally you may have crew problems while off-shift. Usually the base camp manager will attempt to deal with logistical issues that arise in the camp. If the base camp manager is unable to take care of the problems, you should provide whatever assistance is needed. In some situations, you may be asked to spike out at the end of your current shift. You need to see what food and water you have and what the weather forecast is. Advise the OSC of any logistical support you will need to spike out.

Resources:

Missing – Resources that are assigned to your Division may not arrive. If you cannot contact them by phone or radio, check with neighboring Divisions. Contact the communications unit to see if they might know their status. Check with plans and finance to see if they are checked-in. Advise the OSC of your findings.

Unassigned – You may find resources that are not assigned to your Division. If you or a neighboring Division does not need them, send them to Plans. If you need them, check/inspect, make sure they are qualified, assign the appropriate supervision, and advise the OSC. Make sure they check-in with Plans and Finance at the end of the shift.

Surplus – During an operational period, resources may become surplus to your Division. Check with adjoining Divisions. If no one else needs them, advise the OSC. Usually you will send them back to plans and finance.

Problems – As a Division Supervisor, you will encounter numerous types of problems with resources. These vary from mechanical problems, unqualified personnel, and poor work practices to safety issues. It is expected that you will handle these issues yourself. In some cases you will need to counsel the supervisor or individual. You may be able to reassign the resource within the Division to tasks they are qualified for. If you encounter discipline or safety issues that cannot be reconciled, you will probably need to demobilize the resource. In those instances, send them back to camp. Advise finance, plans, and the OSC of your actions.

Resource Advisor:

On some incidents, particularly Federal, there will be a resource advisor. This individual is able to assist you with many of the details particular to the area. Such things as line placement, archeological and cultural sites, erosion concerns and history, fire history and mop-up/rehab standards. It is critical to communicate early and often with the resource advisor. The position will normally be a technical specialist in the planning section and will usually be on the line daily.

Safety:

Introduce yourself to the incident SOF early. Find out if there are any issues or concerns. Each SOF has different items that are important to them. Keep the SOF informed of issues and events within your Division. Don't be afraid to ask questions about how to handle a situation.

On some Divisions, because of the complexity or number of resources, you will be assigned a line SOF. This person still works for the incident SOF and can be a very valuable resource. Use them to monitor activities that you cannot get to personally. Discuss the health and fatigue factors of the crews. They are there to help you; they are not there because someone thinks you are not competent.

Occasionally you will discover a crew or individual working in an unsafe manner. Stop the unsafe act and meet with the supervisor or individual. Make them aware of what you see. Attempt to resolve or modify the actions. If you are not able to proceed in a safe manner, for whatever reason, change what is happening. Change the assignment, reassign or demobilize. If you must demobilize, advise the OSC, the incident SOF, and document the incident. Also advise plans and finance.

Safety Zones:

In some situations you may find that you are unable to locate or construct adequate safety zones. Contact the OSC immediately. When identifying safety zones, make sure to communicate with adjoining Divisions. Safety zones may not be large enough for the number of resources that are planning on using them. Make sure that flagging for escape routes and safety zones is commonly identified and used consistently throughout the incident. Make sure you communicate the escape routes and safety zones at every crew briefing. If you are forced to move into a safety zone, advise adjoining Divisions, air attack or the lead plane, and the OSC immediately.

Sleeping Facilities:

In most camps, overhead is assigned a particular sleeping area. Check with the facilities unit leader. The OSC usually would like to know where the Division Supervisors are sleeping. Advise him/her.

Staging Areas:

On some larger incidents you may find that you have a staging area assigned to your Division, or you share an area with one or two other Divisions. Determine who the staging area manager's supervisor is. In many cases the staging areas will be a parking lot for crew and equipment transports. Communicate your escape route plans with your staging area manager. If crew transports are leaving the incident during the day to fuel, etc., set a minimum number of transports that must be in staging with drivers. Make sure equipment transports are parked out of the way. Establish and maintain a communications line with the staging area manager.

Strategy Meetings:

You must provide the OSC with detailed information each operational period for the planning meeting. You should also ask the OSC if you are supposed to attend the planning meeting. The information should include current progress, any anticipated problems, and a detailed list of anticipated needs for the next operational period.

Strike Team/Task Force Leaders:

A large percentage of your interaction will be with strike team leaders. You should plan on speaking face to face with each one at least once during the operational period, preferably before providing the OSC your daily report. You should also try and face to face with each one at the end of each operational period while conducting your after action review.

Consider the use of a task force leader when your number of strike team leaders exceeds your span of control (2-3 strike team leaders reporting to a task force leader). Be careful not to overextend the task force leader's span of control. You also may use task force leaders to supervise segments of your Division. Advise the OSC when doing this.

Structure Protection:

Structure protection assignments can be very high stress situations. It is important to discuss ahead of time with the OSC on the types of information that should be communicated to him/her immediately. You also need to be informed on your specific responsibility. Do you fight the wildfire around the structure, fight fire on the outside of the structure, or do any interior work. Is it appropriate to burn out around the structures and if so how and when. Also determine what to do and who to contact if civilians are in the area.

Supplies:

It is common to request supplies on a daily basis for delivery to a drop point. Sometimes you can place the order ahead when you turn in your tomorrow needs for the strategy meeting. Other times you will find you need supplies after the IAP briefing or even after you arrive on the line. The chances of getting what you need decrease as you shorten your lead time. Orders go directly to supply from the Division.

When you order, ask supply if they are going to arrange transportation or if you need to. If supplies don't arrive at the drop point as expected, advise supply and ground support. Don't reorder unless you determine exactly what happened to the first load. Be very careful about keeping a list of what showed up. You could be held accountable for missing items. In some cases the wrong supplies may be delivered to your drop point.

Contact supply and ground support. In some cases you may need to supply by helicopter. Make sure you have qualified personnel, if you are going to have cargo slings loaded in. If you don't have any long line qualified personnel, you will need a helispot manager. Advise air operations of your needs. If available, give consideration to supply by pack train instead of helicopter. Supply can be done at night when helicopters cannot fly or when they are committed to tactical missions.

Thievery:

Be alert to the equipment being loaded on vehicles to return to camp. Make sure everything that is going to camp arrives there. If you suspect that someone is stealing equipment, you must determine whether to ask them or notify logistic and the OSC. On some incidents you may not have a night shift. If you leave equipment on the line it is important to inventory the equipment at the end of the shift and before starting in the morning. If anything is missing, notify the OSC and logistics immediately. This is a good thing to do each shift, even when you have a night shift. You may be confronted with the theft of items within a crew. If there is a law enforcement officer assigned, advise them of the situation. If not, advise the OSC.

Time Reporting:

Be sure to keep your time reporting up to date. If you are in a remote camp, arrange to have your time back hauled by your supply team every 2-3 days. Be very careful that time reported is accurate. If you have problems, talk to the crew supervisor. If you are unable to resolve the problems, advise the OSC. Shifts on the line should not exceed 16 hours of reported time. If you are going to exceed 16 hours, notify the OSC immediately. Time over 16 hours may need to be approved by the Incident Commander.

Training Assignments:

Frequently, you will be asked to sign task books during line assignments. This is a secondary priority. In reality, the only people you should be evaluating and signing PTBs on are the individuals assigned to your Division on a training assignment. If you have questions or problems, you need to contact the incident training specialist.

Transportation:

When assigned as a Division Supervisor, try and take a vehicle with you that is suitable for the assignment. If you are flying to an incident or don't have a suitable vehicle for the conditions, advise the ground support unit leader when you check in. When you receive your assignment, you may find that your crew transports are not capable of accessing their work area or drop point. Contact the OSC immediately to work out other transportation or switch crew assignments.

Weather Conditions:

You should closely monitor the weather utilizing field observers, lookouts, and your own observations. If the IAP predictions don't match the observed weather, discuss this with the FBAN. If you observe critical weather changes, communicate these to other Division Supervisors. If the weather changes are going to challenge control actions, advise the OSC. Take appropriate actions to assure the safety of your crew.

Wildlife:

You may have unwelcome visitors to your fireline in the form of bears or cougars. Crews will sometimes leave food for bears hoping for a good camera shot. Leaving garbage on the line will also encourage bears or cougars to hang around. Pick up the garbage each shift. If bears or cougars are visiting you, advise the OSC and the SOF. You should have a game department representative come out and trap or euthanize the animal. If you encounter (large) burned over animals either alive or dead, advise the OSC and SOF for disposal.

Work/Rest Ratio:

During the transition from initial to extended attack on a major fire, you may inherit resources that have been working an extended duty period. If those resources have worked 16 or more hours straight through, they should be released back to rest. If this will impact your ability to complete your assigned tasks, advise the OSC immediately.

If you are in a situation where resources on your Division may be on the line for more than 16 hours, contact the OSC and advise him/her as soon as possible. Shifts of 16 or more hours will require approval of the Incident Commander in most cases. Driving time of one or more hours to camp may be a problem. If your crews are driving over one hour to their work area, discuss the alternatives with the OSC. On large incidents with interagency crews, you need to determine each crew's assignment duration. They vary from three to four to 21 days. Check with your crew supervisors and factor them into the line assignments.

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