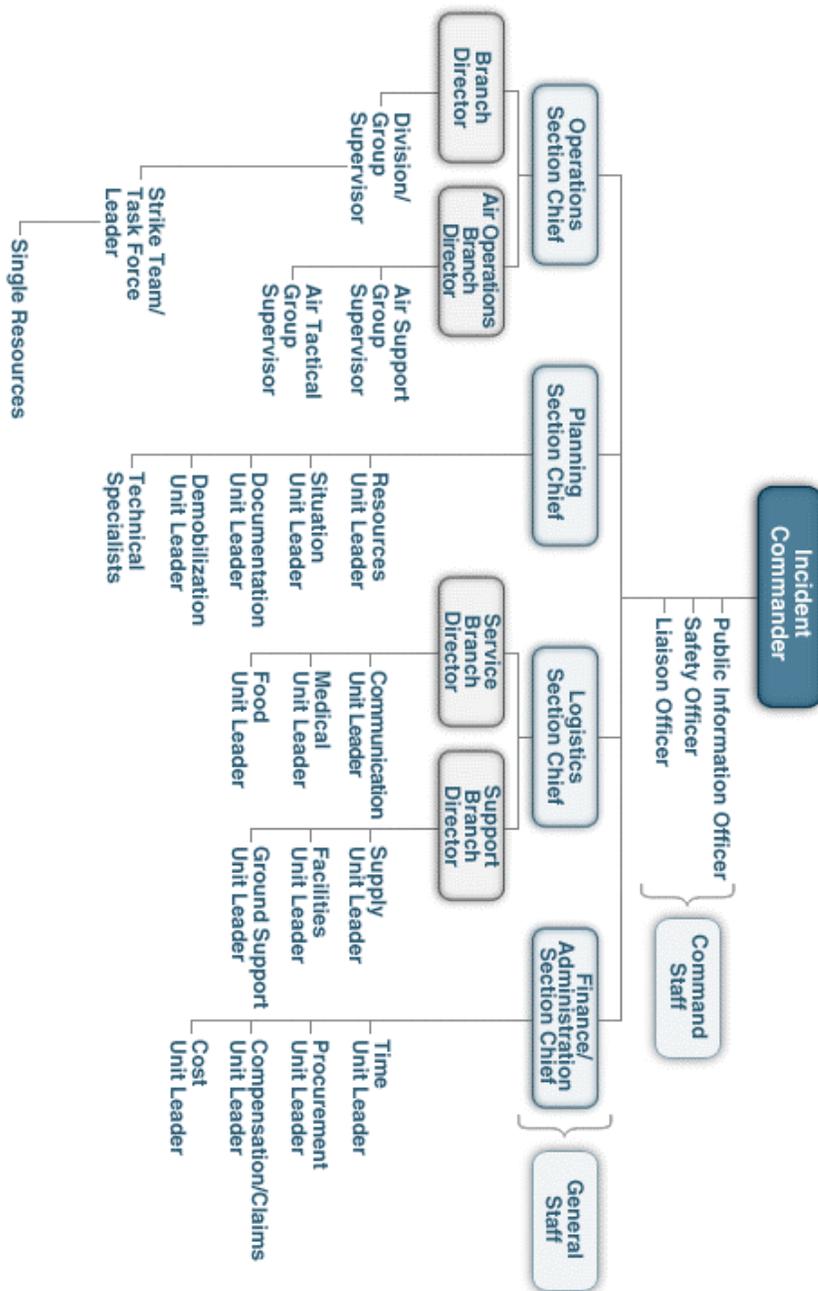


1 Working Successfully in the Incident Command System

Deepwater Horizon MS-252 Oil Spill

KEY POINT: The Incident Command System brings structure to the chaos!

The Incident Command System is a standardized management tool representing best practices for emergency or non-emergency events. ICS works when properly implemented, and we are all responsible for doing our part. ICS also allows for flexibility in adjusting to changing conditions (for instance, the FWS is currently managing the deployment/check-in for the resources and staff coming from the agency). FWS personal deployed to the Deepwater Horizon MS-252 Oil Spill should be familiar with the Incident Command System (ICS).



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On larger, more complex incidents, a **Joint Information Center (JIC)** may be established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities at the incident. The JIC supports the demands of the media. The JIC for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill is now in New Orleans. The USFWS and other agencies keep high-level liaisons at this location.

ICS requires only one leader for a resource at a given time.

ICS puts limits on the amount of resources that can be supervised by a leader. This is called **span of control**. The optimal ratio is 5 individuals or teams reporting to one supervisor. However, the span of control may range from 3 to 7. It is important to not over organize or under organize an incident. You should discuss/address span of control needs as/if the incident grows

ICS Resource Typing is used to classify resources based on their capabilities, staffing and other factors. You may or may not see these numbers on reports if you are involved in deploying/managing resources (Type I, largest and/or most complex/capable to Type IV, smaller and least complex/capable). Typing is commonly used for helicopters, hand crews, boats, engines, dozers, and aircraft.

*****Incident Action Plan (Make Sure To Get Your Copy Every Morning):**

Every incident needs a plan, and the more complex the incident, the more the need for a well written plan. Each incident has an Incident Action Plan (or IAP), created for each operational period, or shift. The IAP provides the organizational structure for the Operations Section, Wildlife Branch. The IAP is the place where responders receive their work instructions for the operational period. Supervisors translate the daily assignments and information contained in the IAP to their workers by conducting a daily shift briefing with their assigned resources.

The IAP contains the incident objectives, the incident organizational info, current and predicted weather report, specific operational assignments, a safety message, medical plan, information about air operations and a communications plan. Other relevant information may also be contained in the IAP.

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PERSONNEL INVOLVED

Overall personnel responding: more than 38,900 (*as of June 30, 2010*) personnel responding.

Spill Movement and Trends

- Oil is mostly moving in an easterly direction with natural ocean currents. Oil washed onshore in the Florida Panhandle. However, oil continues to hit the Houma and Mobile sectors, heavy in some sections, and storms could push oil back into bays and wetlands.
- There are 36 National Wildlife Refuges at risk from the BP Oil Spill. These precious National resources are home to dozens of threatened and endangered species, including six species of beach mice, West Indian manatees, whooping cranes, Mississippi sandhill cranes, wood storks and five species of sea turtles.

So far, oiled wildlife recovered has been at a low, but steady level, but the number could increase as the incident continues.

Currently, most of the jobs being conducted by deployed FWS biologists are related to bird recovery. The various jobs will be covered in the next section.

The Threat to Wildlife

- Many species of wildlife face grave risk from the spill.
- Birds can be exposed to oil as they float on the water or dive for fish through oil-slicked water. Oiled birds can lose the ability to fly and can ingest the oil while preening.
- Sea turtles such as loggerhead, leatherback, green, Kemp's ridley, and hawksbill, can be impacted as they swim to shore to nest. Turtle eggs may be damaged if an oiled adult lies on the nest.
- Oil has the potential to persist in the environment long after a spill and have long-term impacts on fish and wildlife.
- Impact could be a large geographic area (USFWS led bird surveys included over-flights from Sarasota, FL to Key West FL, and from Marathon, FL to Tampa, FL).

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Partners and the Roles

Responding agencies: Federal, state, British Petroleum (BP) – the responsible party

The key natural resource agencies are:

Louisiana Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – reconnaissance (recon) and rescuing stranded wildlife; patrolling closed fishing areas daily.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – focused on the condition of the ocean and the atmosphere — concerned about marine contamination in the underwater plumes of oil.

NOAA-NMFS (**National Marine Fisheries Service**, “Fisheries Service”):

- focusing on turtles and marine mammals OFFSHORE (when they are ONSHORE, they become USFWS responsibility)
- NOAA is sending turtles recovered to the Audubon aquarium in New Orleans for rehabilitation.

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – dispersant monitoring, data sampling, air quality concerns, sediment sampling, water sampling.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – testing food safety.

Louisiana and Mississippi Departments of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Alabama Department of Public Health – seafood safety and environmental issues.

- Also working with DOI’s NRDAR

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – anticipating, monitoring and responding to any potential public health hazards that may affect human health.

Department of the Interior’s Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program (NRDAR) – to assess damages as a result of the oil spill.

1 Working Successfully in the Incident Command System

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Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research and International Bird Rescue Research Center (Tri-State-IBRRC, respectively) – bird triage and rehabilitation (rehab); turtles—coordinate with NOAA and Fort Jackson Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

Occupational Safety and Health Administration OSHA –health and safety law enforcement — regulatory — use of dosimeters to monitor exposure of workers

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) – sole point of contact for oil and chemical spills—Incident Commander of spill is **U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Thad Allen** and is the Coast Guard **Commandant**

And Many Others (Other DOI agencies like MMS, NPS, USGS; COE; Other State agencies, universities, non-Government organizations/partners, contractors, etc.)