
Unit 4:

Area Command



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Visual 4.1

Unit Terminal Objective

Given a scenario, develop an Area Command organization.



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Visual 4.2

Unit Enabling Objectives

- **Define the Area Command organization.**
- **Identify primary functional responsibilities of Area Command.**
- **List the principal advantages of using Area Command.**
- **Explain considerations (when, where and how) for establishing an Area Command.**

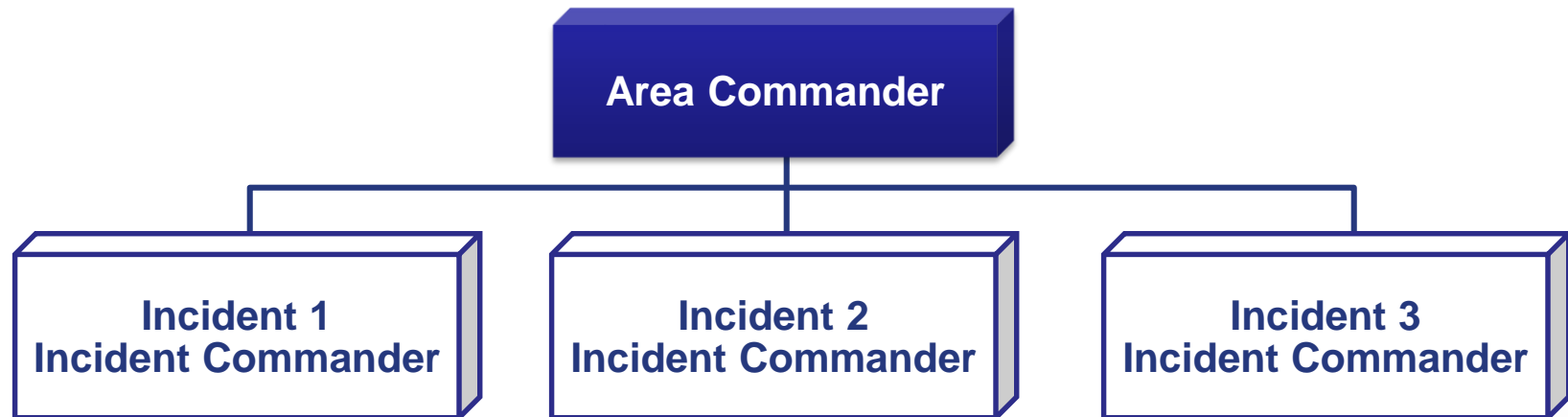


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Definition of Area Command

Area Command is used to oversee the management of:

- **Multiple incidents that are each being handled by an Incident Command System organization; or**
- **A very large incident that has multiple Incident Management Teams assigned to it.**



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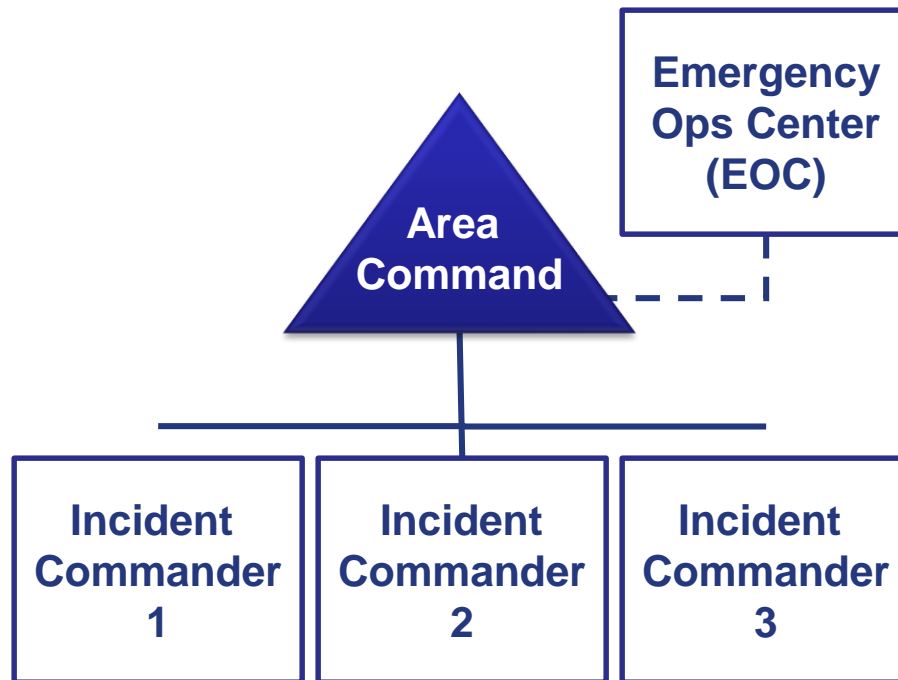
Area Command: Primary Functions

- **Develop broad objectives for the affected area.**
- **Coordinate development of incident objectives and strategies for each incident.**
- **Allocate or reallocate resources as priorities change.**
- **Ensure that ICs/UC properly manage incidents.**
- **Ensure effective communications and data coordination.**
- **Ensure that incident objectives are met and do not conflict.**
- **Identify and report needs for scarce resources.**
- **Ensure that short-term recovery is coordinated with the EOC staff.**



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Responsibilities and Relationships



An Area Command oversees management of multiple incidents, while EOCs coordinate support. MAC Groups provide policy guidance and strategic direction to Area Command and EOCs.



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Visual 4.6

Unified Command vs. Area Command

**What is the difference
between Unified
Command and Area
Command?**



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Visual 4.7

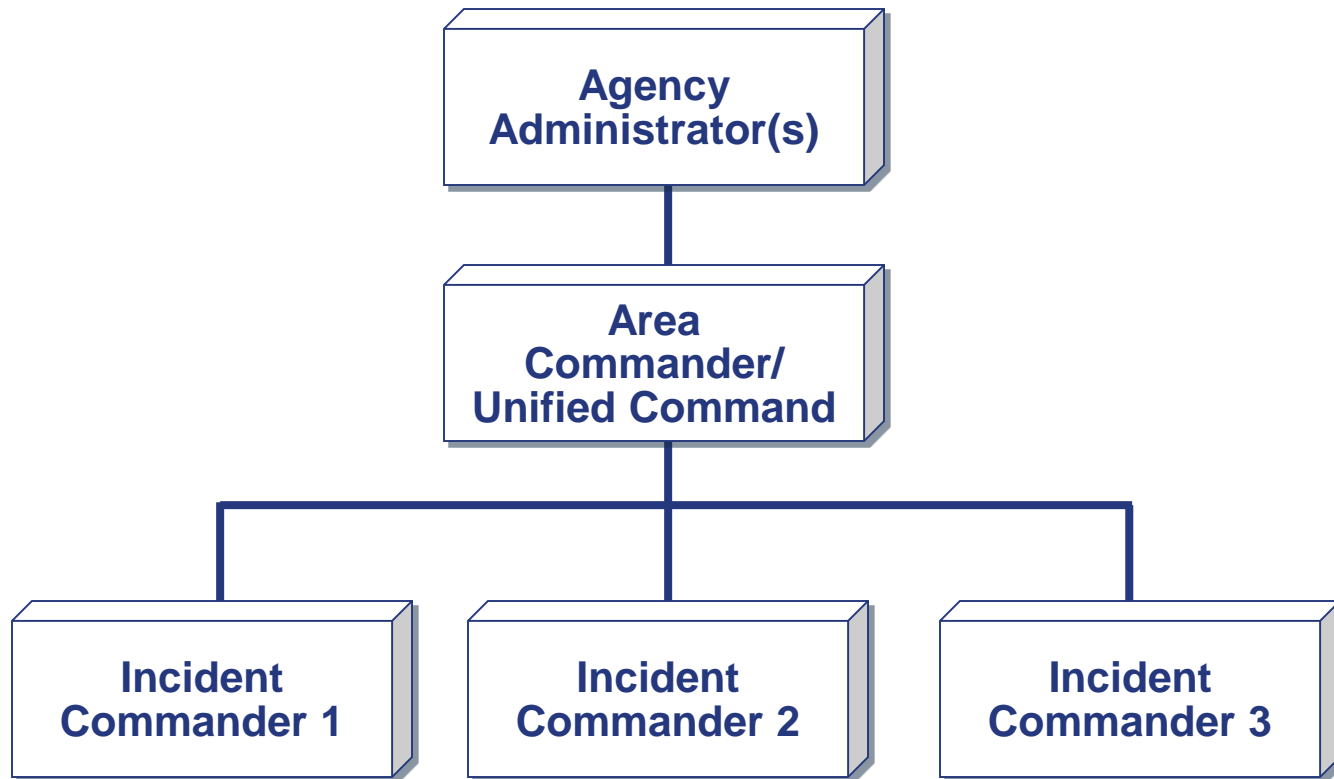
Advantages of Area Command

- **Coordination between incidents.**
- **Establishes broad objectives, ensures that incident objectives are met.**
- **Setting priorities deconflicts resource requirements.**
- **Communicates policies, priorities, constraints, and guidance.**
- **Assist in maintaining shared situational awareness.**
- **Plan for future requirements – demobilization, transition to recovery,**
- **Reduces the workload of the EOCs/MAC Group.**



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Chain of Command & Reporting Relationships



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Area Command: Best Practices

Area Command should:

- Receive its authority through a written delegation of authority.
- Notify Incident Commanders of its authorities and roles.
- Be staffed with qualified and experienced personnel.
- Operate under standard ICS principles.
- Be as small as practical.



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Activity 4.1: Katrina Area Command Scenario

Allotted Time: 15 minutes



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Visual 4.11

When Should Area Command Be Established?



As soon as possible when:

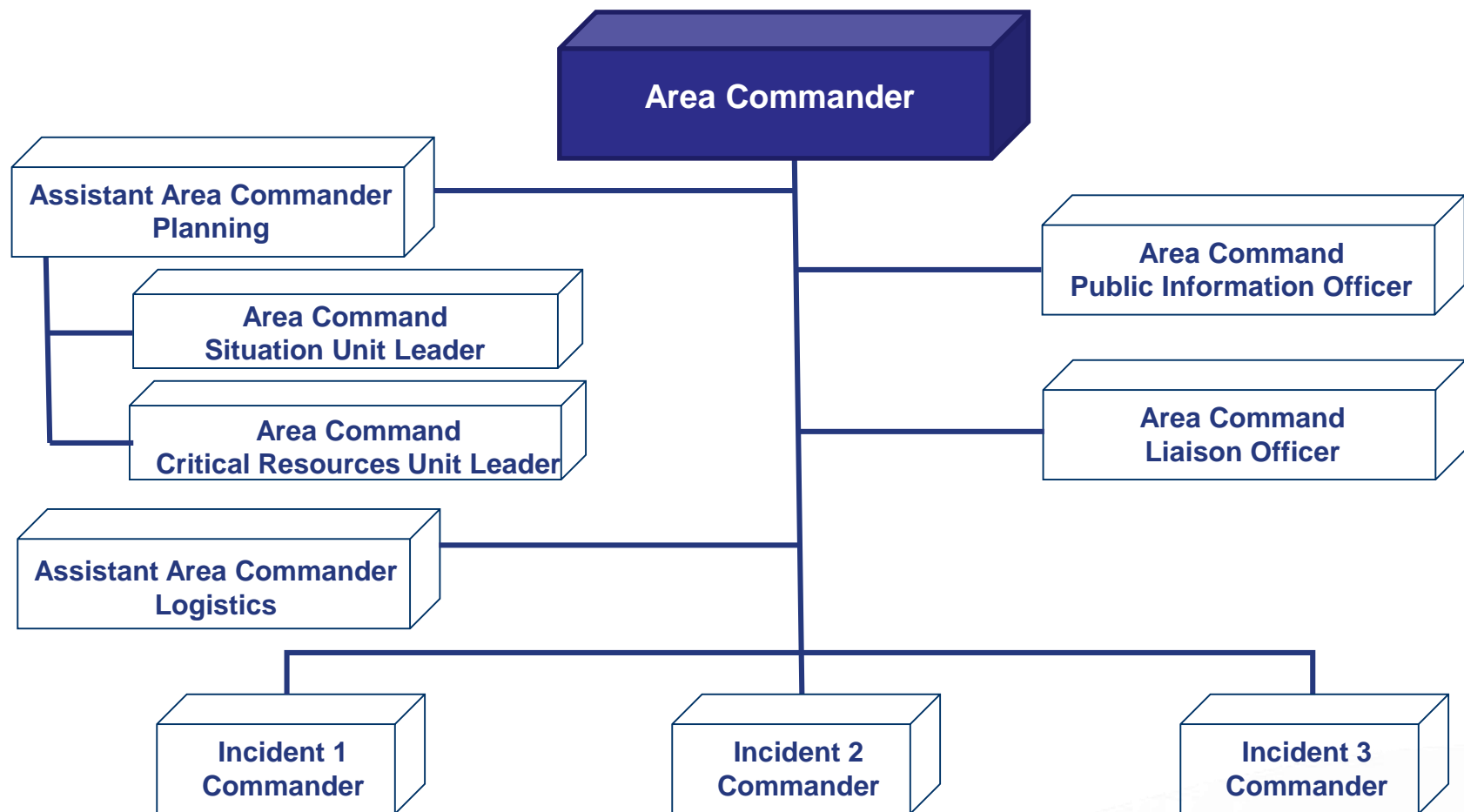
- **Several active incidents are in close proximity.**
- **Critical life saving or property values are at risk due to incidents.**
- **Incidents will continue into the next operational period.**
- **Incidents are using similar and limited critical resources.**
- **Difficulties are encountered with inter-incident resource allocation and coordination.**



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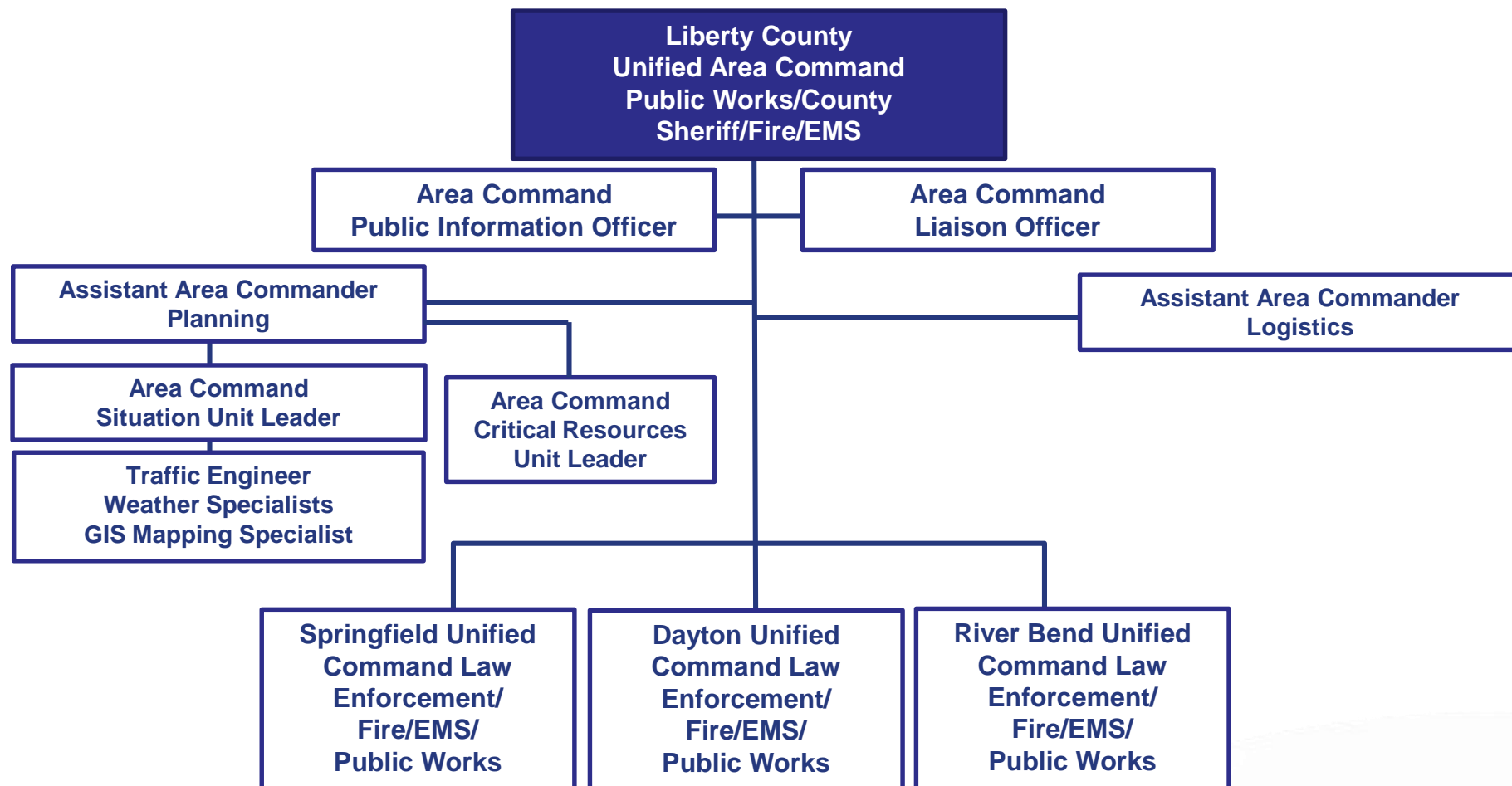
Visual 4.12

Area Command Organization



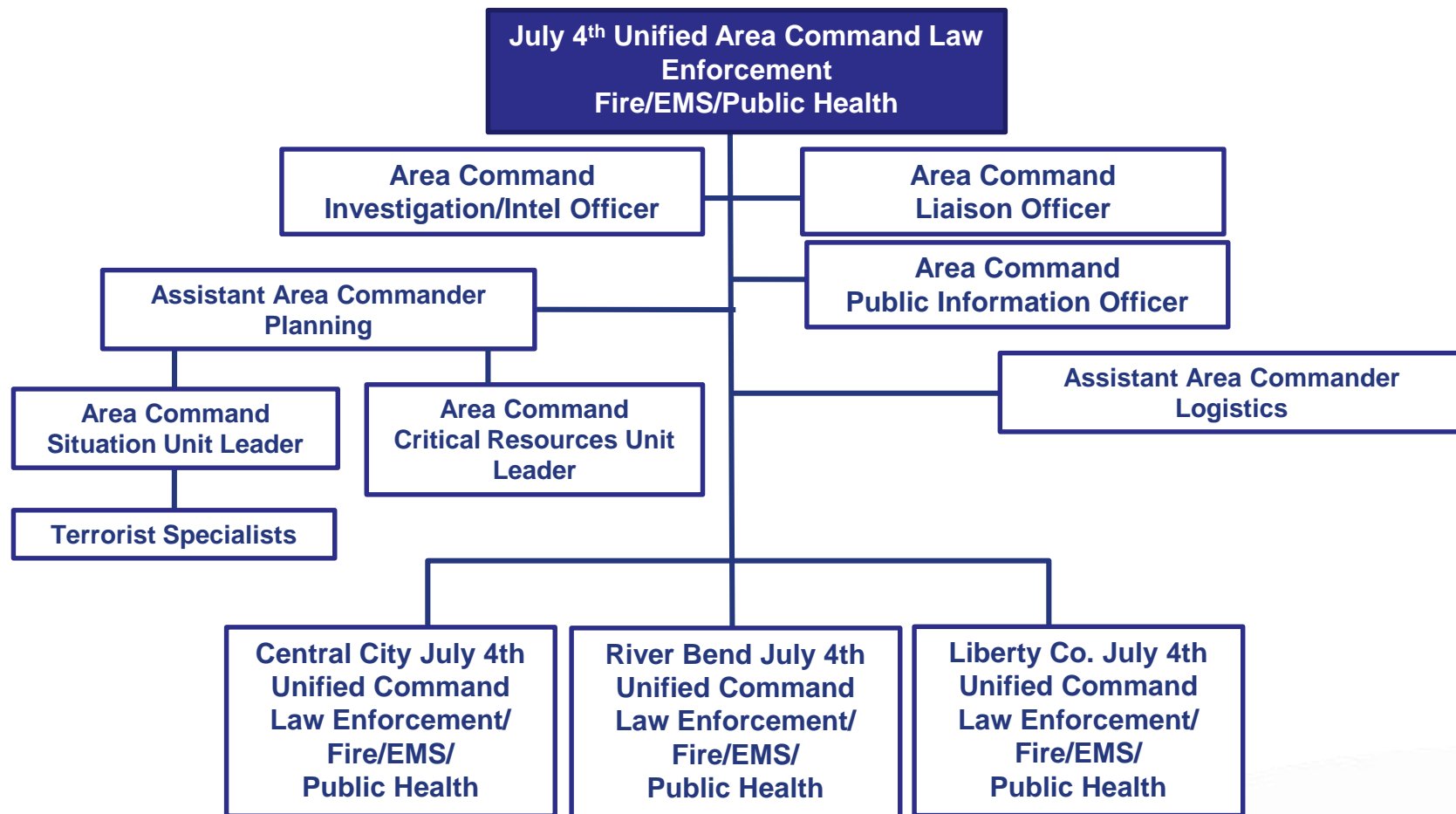
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Area Command: Storm



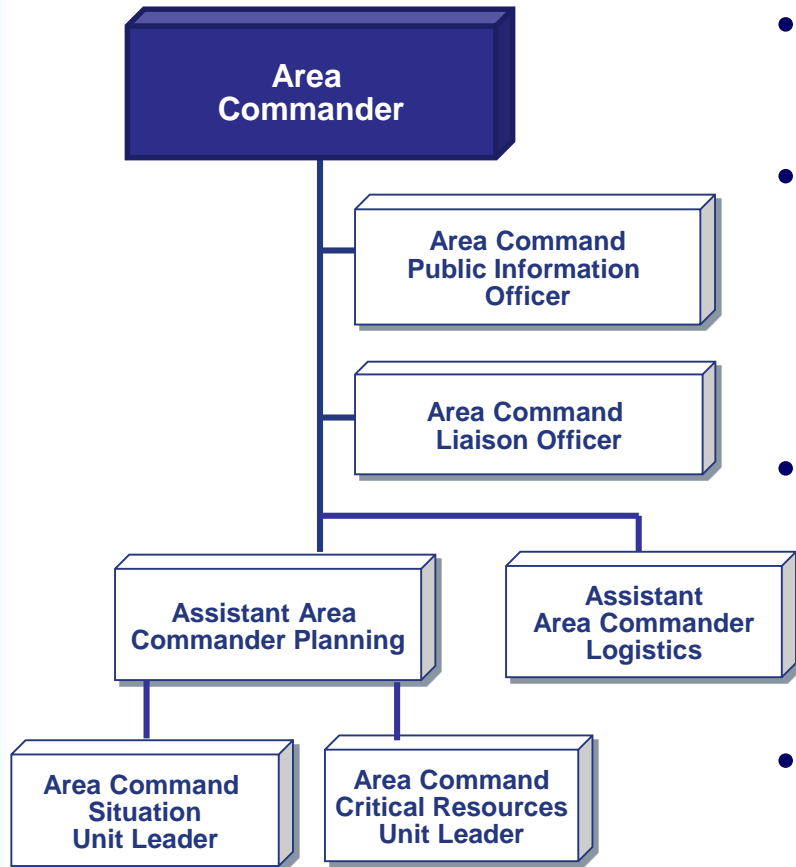
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Area Command: July 4th Celebrations/ Terrorist Threat



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Area Commander/Unified Area Command: Responsibilities



- Overall direction of assigned incidents.
- Ensure conflicts resolved, incident objectives established, strategies for scarce resources selected.
- Coordinate with local, state, tribal, territorial, and Federal depts/agencies, NGOs and private sector.
- No operational responsibilities but prioritizes scarce resources among the incidents.



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Area Commander: Critical Activities

Assess

**Rapidly assess
each incident.**

**Establish
Priorities**

**Communicate
priorities to
Commanders.
Ensure plans
support priorities
and policies.**

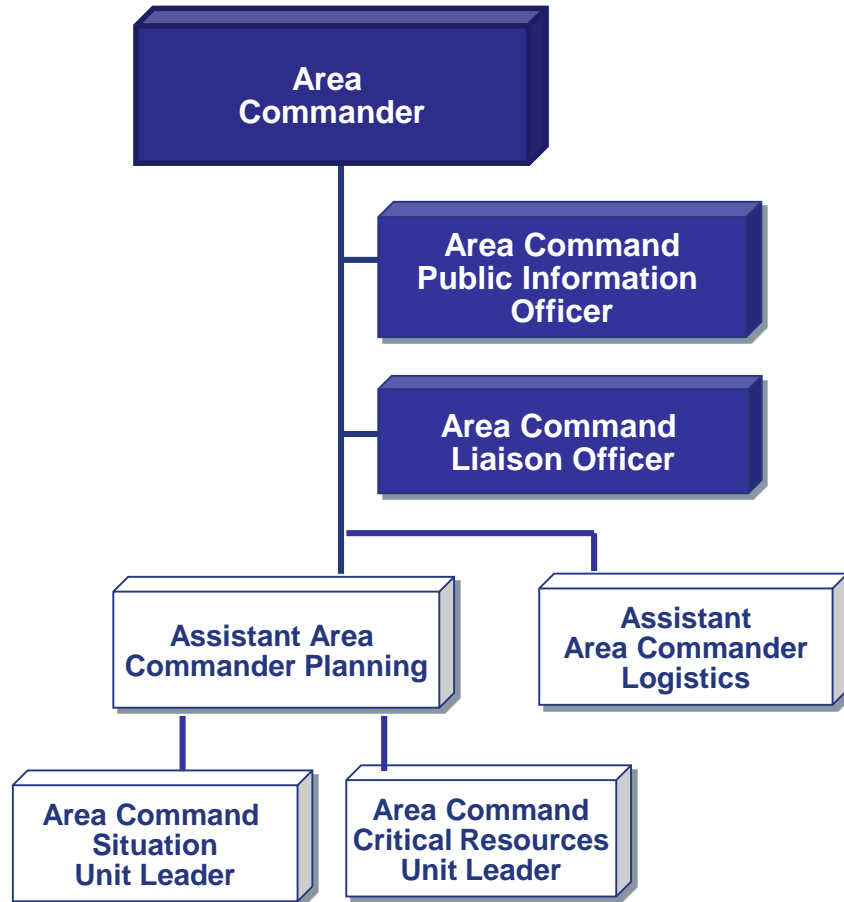
**Allocate
Resources**

**Allocate/ reallocate
critical resources.
Plan resource
demobilization.**



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Area Command Officers



Public Information Officer:

- Public Info coordination between Incidents.
- Media POC for Area Command.
- Uses JIS through a JIC (if established).

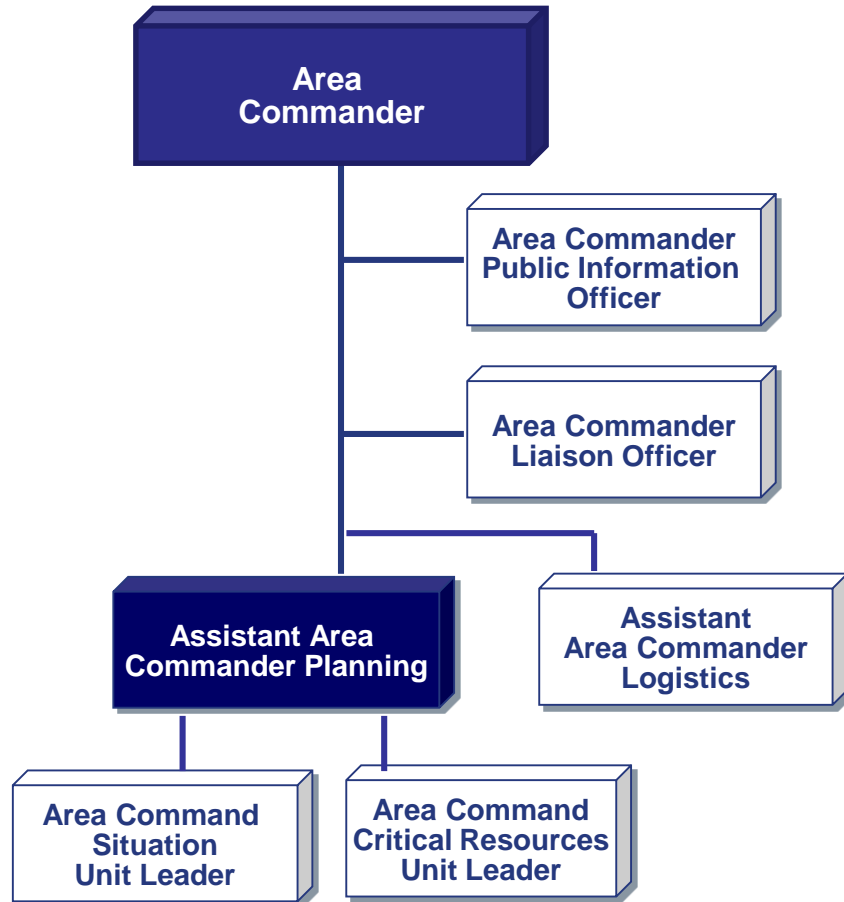
Liaison Officer:

- Maintains off-incident interagency contacts and coordination.



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Assistant Area Commander – Planning

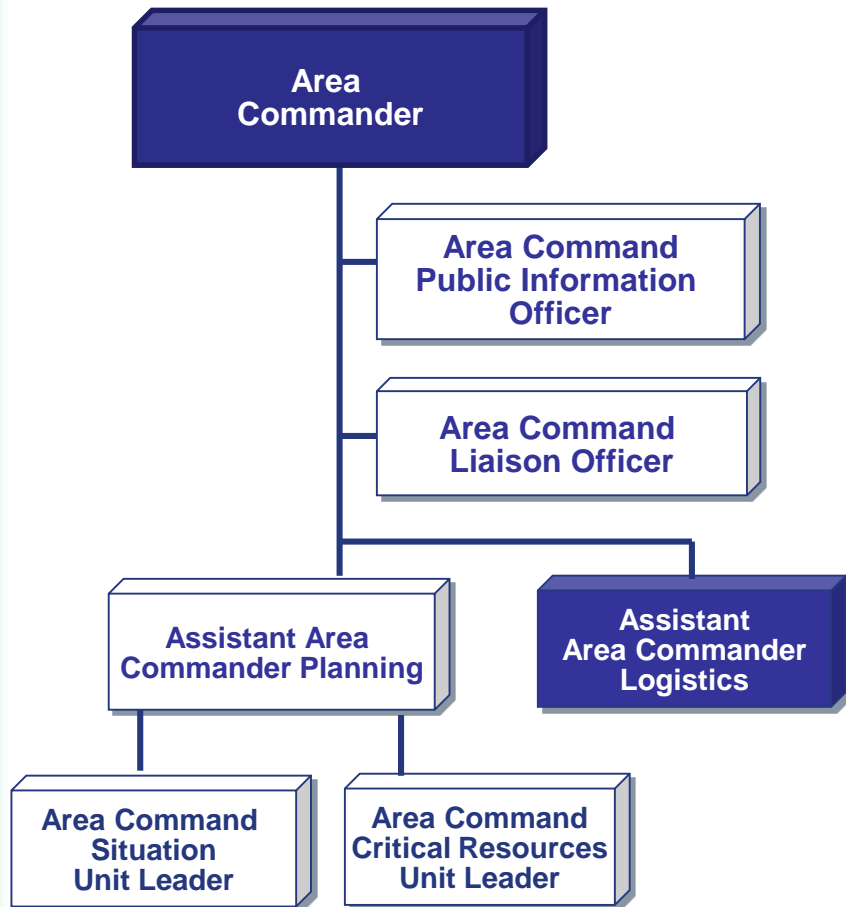


The Assistant Area Commander – Planning collects information from various incidents to assess and evaluate potential conflicts in establishing incident objectives, strategies, and priorities for allocating scarce resources.



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Assistant Area Commander – Logistics



The Assistant Area Commander – Logistics provides facilities, services, and materials at the Area Command level (by ordering resources needed to support the Area Command) and ensures the effective allocation of scarce resources and supplies among the incidents.



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Area Command Aviation Coordinator

- **Assigned when aviation resources at multiple incidents compete for common airspace and scarce resources.**
- **Coordinates with incident aviation organizations to:**
 - **Evaluate potential conflicts,**
 - **Develop common airspace management procedures,**
 - **Ensure aviation safety, and**
 - **Allocate scarce resources IAW Area Command priorities.**



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Area Command Technical Specialists

Assign technical specialists as additional command advisors, depending on the nature, scope, complexity, and location(s) of the incident(s), or according to specific needs the Incident Commanders or Unified Commands establish.



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Visual 4.22

Agency Administrator Briefing

- ✓ General situation and incidents assigned
 - ✓ Jurisdictional delegation of authority
 - ✓ Assumption of command timing and notifications procedure
 - ✓ Names and qualifications of Incident Commanders (indicating those under Unified Command)
 - ✓ Limitations on the Area Commander's authority
 - ✓ Current IAPs
- ✓ Policies, political factors, or other constraints
 - ✓ Agency advisor
 - ✓ Area Command facility
 - ✓ Status of communications systems
 - ✓ Critical resource designations
 - ✓ Policy and expectations for interaction with the media
 - ✓ Area Command reporting responsibility to agency
 - ✓ Briefing and contact schedules



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Area Commander Incident Briefing With IC/UC

- Concise incident briefings (including IAPs and other documentation).
- Area Command roles and responsibilities; conditions of Area Command's delegation of authority.
- Policy, direction, and priorities.
- Conflict resolution procedures.
- Communication procedures, meeting schedules, etc.
- Resource ordering process.
- Critical resource needs.



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Incident Commanders & Critical Priorities

Why must Incident Commanders accept the need for Area Command to establish critical priorities?



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Area Command Meeting and Briefings



- Incident situation
- Incident priorities
- Technical specialist reports
- Identification of critical resource needs
- Allocation and reallocation of resources
- Public Information Officer report
- Liaison Officer report
- Demobilization of resources and transition to recovery



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Demobilization and Transition to Recovery

Demobilization

- **Area Command coordinates the demobilization of critical resources with the ICs.**
- **Area Command must ensure that personnel and equipment resources being released from demobilizing incidents can be made available to other active or growing incidents if needed.**

Recovery

- **Area Command coordinates with EOCs to ensure necessary actions to support recovery efforts.**



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Activity 4.2:

Design an Area Command Organization and Process for a Simulated Incident.

Allotted Time: 2 hours



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Visual 4.28

Objectives Review

- **How do you define the Area Command organization?**
- **What are the primary functional responsibilities of Area Command?**
- **What are the principal advantages of using Area Command?**
- **What are the considerations (when, where and how) for establishing an Area Command?**



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