

# KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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ISSUE: 25-11

## TRAINING BULLETIN

DATE: April 7, 2025

### Incident Command Responsibilities During Multi-Operational Period Critical Incidents

#### PURPOSE

This training bulletin outlines the protocol for the **Kern County Sheriff's Office Countywide Services Section (CSS), Special Enforcement Division (SED)**, to assume incident command responsibilities during critical incidents, such as **natural disasters** (fires, floods, earthquakes) or **mass casualty events**. These protocols apply to incidents expected to extend beyond a single 12-hour operational period and where a **Unified Command Structure** has been established.

The objective is to define the chain of command, staffing assignments, and roles and responsibilities of management and supervisory personnel to ensure public safety, efficient coordination of resources, and continuity of law enforcement services throughout the duration of the incident.

#### OVERVIEW

During critical incidents involving prolonged operational periods, effective incident command management is essential for the safety of the community, efficient resource utilization, and the continuation of law enforcement services. The CSS will assume command, implement a structured response, and maintain order and support throughout the incident's duration.

#### TRANSITION OF COMMAND

When a Section Lieutenant determines that an incident will require **multiple** operational periods to manage effectively **and** has established a **Unified Command Structure** with another agency, such as Kern County Fire, the CSS will assume full Sheriff's Office incident command responsibilities at the start of the next **daytime operational period**. An operational period is typically 12 to 24 hours and is used to systematically plan and execute specific response objectives. When transitioning Incident Command responsibilities to the CSS, the next operational period will begin at **0700 hours** on the day following the start of the incident.

The SED Commander will lead operations from the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), serving as the primary liaison with local and state agencies. Concurrently, the CSS Lieutenant will oversee field operations at the Incident Command Post (ICP),

ensuring all actions align with the established objectives for the incident. This organized approach ensures a unified and effective response, prioritizing safety, communication, and operational efficiency.

## **1. Command Structure**

County Emergency Operations Center (EOC):

- The SED Commander will assume responsibility at the Kern County EOC, coordinating with other county agencies, including Fire, Public Works, and Health Services.

Incident Commander:

- The CSS Lieutenant will assume the role of Incident Commander, overseeing field operations, resource allocation, and immediate response actions from the Incident Command Post (ICP).

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

Section Lieutenants:

- Section Lieutenants will work closely with the Incident Commander to coordinate local resources and implement command directives. They will ensure efficient information flow between the ICP and field units. In the absence of the CSS Lieutenant, Section Lieutenants may serve as the Incident Commander.

Watch Lieutenants:

- Provide shift supervision, monitor personnel safety, and deliver real-time updates to the Incident Commander. Once an Incident Commander has taken over, Watch Lieutenants may be relieved to address operational needs for the county beyond the incident.

Nighttime Incident Management:

- During nighttime hours (1900-0700), a Night Watch Sergeant may assume the role of Incident Commander to ensure continuous oversight and effective management. This practice accounts for the reduced operational activity during night hours, allowing efficient resource allocation while maintaining command presence.

Personnel Assignments:

- Deputies from patrol, investigations, detentions, and specialized units may be reassigned to support the incident. Duties may include staffing roadblocks, managing evacuation operations, and providing logistical support.
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Tracking for Reimbursement:

- Track vehicle mileage during operations and complete required ICS forms (e.g., ICS 214) to ensure accountability, proper documentation, and reimbursement tracking.

### **3. Staffing and Resources**

Resource Allocation:

- The Lieutenant in command will manage the deployment of personnel and resources, ensuring efficient use across the incident zone.

Shift Planning:

- Staffing schedules will be adjusted for continuous coverage during extended incidents. Area and Watch Lieutenants will assist in creating and managing schedules to minimize fatigue and maximize effectiveness.

### **4. Communication and Reporting**

Chain of Communication:

- The SED Commander will manage inter-agency communication and report regularly to the Sheriff's Office Command Staff. Incident updates will be shared periodically to keep all stakeholders informed.

Documentation:

- Comprehensive incident reports will include resource usage, personnel assignments, and operational actions. These reports will be reviewed post-incident for evaluation and training purposes.

### **5. Expectations and Accountability**

Personnel Conduct:

- All personnel are expected to adhere to Kern County Sheriff's Office policies and exhibit professionalism and responsiveness during critical incidents.

Supervisory Oversight:

- Supervisors are accountable for ensuring assigned duties are carried out effectively and for maintaining a coordinated, comprehensive response to the incident.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Kern County Sheriff's Office Countywide Services Section's assumption of incident command during extended critical incidents is essential for protecting the community and ensuring an organized response. By adhering to this standardized protocol, the CSS will

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effectively manage complex emergencies while upholding public safety and operational efficiency.

All sworn personnel of the Deputy Sheriff, Reserve Deputy, Special Deputy, Detentions Deputy, and Park Ranger ranks are required to review this training bulletin. By acknowledging this training bulletin, you certify you have reviewed this bulletin. **Your review and acknowledgment of these policies are due no later than May 7, 2025.**

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