

1.2.1 Incident Command System Overview

An **Incident Command System (ICS)** is a management system designed to enable effective and efficient responses to emergencies of any scale, large or small, by integrating five functional areas for management of all major incidents:

- Command
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance/Administration

The National Precedent

The original Incident Command System was established in the mid-1970s by the US Forest Service and several other California agencies. It was designed to improve and help coordinate responses to catastrophic wildfires in California. By 1981, ICS was used widely in Southern California in response to fire and non-fire incidents, and its success led to its application in a broad variety of emergency situations.

In March 2004, ICS was included as a mandate in the National Incident Management System, which is managed by the Department of Homeland Security. It applies to Federal, State, and Local Governments, and to all first-response agencies such as police and fire departments.

Suffolk University Response

While colleges and universities are not first response organizations, Suffolk University recognizes its role in the community, and the importance of protecting its students, faculty, and staff in the event of an emergency. Planning for the Suffolk Incident Command System began in 2005.

Currently, many members of the Suffolk community have been certified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in Incident Command.

Incident Support Team – This group is made up of representatives from; the President’s Office, Public Affairs, Provost’s Office, Deans of Students, Facilities, Human Resources, ITS, OEHS, the Risk Manager, SUPD, Media Services, and Government Relations and Community Affairs. This is a tactical level group that generally meets monthly and provides guidance and logistical support for preparing for incidents that may affect the University, and supporting the incident commander during an actual event, as appropriate.

The IST primary responsibilities include:

- During the preparedness phase, discussing plans, protocols, and updates to the Suffolk Emergency Plan, debriefing of prior incidents, and identifying and selecting resources, including personnel, to accomplish tasks.
- During an event/emergency, staffing the Emergency Operations Center, providing tactical guidance and support during response and recovery operations, identifying, and obtaining resources necessary to mitigate and recover from an incident, as well as advising on strategic policy and direction for the recovery and resumption of normal operations.

Reviewed by	Date
Emergency Manager	03 Dec 2021