

9 STRIKE TEAMS AND TASK FORCES

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Strike Teams and Task Forces are groups of resources deployed as tactical units to significant incidents. However, they may be formed in the preparedness phase of an incident, due to predicted weather conditions etc.
- 9.1.2 The use of Strike Teams and Task Forces ensures that the ICS principle of a manageable span of resource control is applied.

9.2 Application

- 9.2.1 The application of Strike Teams and Task Forces increases the efficiency of resources, whilst reducing the management workload at significant incidents. Their formation enables Division and Sector Commanders to implement incident tactics while maintaining an effective span of control over resources.
- 9.2.2 This guideline applies whenever ICS is implemented at significant incidents, and provides information relating to the purpose, formation and operation of Strike Teams and Task Forces.

9.3 Strike Teams

- 9.3.1 A **Strike Team** is a tactical unit that is assembled for a non-specific purpose. It:
- comprises of between 4 and 7 **similar** resources, normally 4; and
 - is used for rapid response and generally for up to **24 hrs** commitment.

*An example of a **Strike Team** is a unit formed with four/five pumpers, Composites and /or water tankers that is to be deployed as part of bushfire response.*

9.4 Task Forces

- 9.4.1 A **Task Force** is a tactical unit that is assembled for a specific purpose. It:
- comprises of between 4 and 7 **specific** resources, normally 4; and
 - is used for rapid response and is established to meet **particular** tactical needs. Once the purpose is **accomplished**, the Task Force is **disbanded** and **resources** may be **reallocated**.

***Example 1** - A unit formed with specific resources such as a HazMat appliance, USAR appliance, rescue appliance, aerial appliance and a pumper, that is assigned to deal with rescue duties following an earthquake.*

***Example 2** - A unit formed with specific resources such as a bulldozer, water tanker, pumper, and rescue appliance, that is assigned to deal with a township evacuation and property protection for an approaching bushfire.*

9.5 Formation and Response

9.5.1 When a decision is made to form either a Strike Team or a Task Force, an officer (usually Inspector rank) is appointed as Strike Team/Task Force Leader with a vehicle.

9.5.2 Strike Teams/Task Forces are formed and responded by:

- GSA - Response Co-ordinator Sydney Communication Centre; and
- Country Zones - Zone Commander in consultation with Communication Centres and using Zone resources; and
- whenever the Major Incident Co-ordination Centre (MICC) is activated - by the Operations Officer, MICC.

9.6 Strike Team/Task Force Leaders' Responsibilities

9.6.1 Upon arrival at an incident Strike Team/Task Force Leaders will report to the Incident Controller, or the nominated deputy for further instructions.

9.6.2 Strike Team/Task Force Leaders may act as Sector Commanders or command tactical operations of the Strike Team/Task Force as required by the Incident Controller.

9.6.3 Strike Team/Task Force Leaders are responsible for:

- all resources and personnel under their direct control;
- ensuring that all duties allocated to their Strike Team/Task Force are carried out efficiently;
- updating Sector /Division Commanders via regular SITREPS (to include work progress, resource status, any significant changes in situation and any injuries sustained); and
- maintaining a log of all activities undertaken by their Strike Team/Task Force.

9.7 Tactical Operations

9.7.1 While Strike Teams/Task Forces will travel together, incident conditions may require that the team be dispersed (within their Sectors), and given individual tasks at an incident. In this case, each appliance will communicate with the appropriate Strike Team/Task Force Leader or Sector Commander.

9.7.2 Strike Teams and Task Forces will have a nominated call sign. Single resources within the Strike Team/Task Force will communicate to the Leader. The Leader will provide regular SITREPS to the Sector Commander or Operations Officer.