

# FIREHOUSE®

## Weekly Drill

### DRILL #75:

### INTELLIGENCE/INVESTIGATIONS

#### Introduction

We all have taken our fair share of Incident Command classes and can recite the Command and General staff positions by heart, but how many of us remember that under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) another section was added – that of Intelligence/Investigations.

In general, most of us can relate to operational information and situational intelligence as being a management function located within the Planning Section. Within the Planning Section we focus on three basic areas of intelligence: situational status, resource status and the anticipated or escalation of the incident status. All of this information is then used by those in the management and decision-making process for the incident.

#### Intelligence/Investigations Functions

Some incidents, however, require the gathering of a different type of intelligence and investigation that is not really noticed that much by many Incident Commanders. The Intelligence/Investigations functions here can be defined in one of two ways. First, we can look at information that leads to the prosecution of the individuals responsible for possible criminal activities, including terrorist incidents. Secondly, we can look at the information that leads to the determination and cause of the incident, or provides information that will assist with limiting the impact of said incident.

The Incident Command System (ICS) allows for the flexibility of placing or embedding the Intelligence/Investigation function into one of several areas: the Planning Section, as a separate General Staff Section, within the Operations Section or as a part of the Command Staff. Regardless, the mission is to ensure that all investigative and intelligence operations are addressed.

#### Organized Functions

The functions often will cross all boundaries and departments operating on an incident. Certain functions are directly related to law enforcement and their area of responsibility to apprehend and prosecute. In any event, the functions are organized.

- Prevent or deter any additional activity, incidents or attacks



- Collect, process, analyze and appropriately disseminate intelligence information
- Conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation
- Identify, process, collect, create a chain of custody for, safeguard, examine/analyze and store all probative evidence
- Determine the source or cause of the incident and control its spread and impact in the investigation of emerging incidents (fire, disease outbreak, etc.)

The Intelligence/Investigations functions can be organized in one of the following Groups:

- Investigative Operations Group
- Forensic Group
- Investigative Support Group

Some of the other responsibilities that fall within this group are that of ensuring that missing or unidentified persons and/or human remains are investigated and identified, along with any necessary notifications that need to be made.

*–Prepared by Russell Merrick*