

## Handout 3-2: Option 2: Divide Incident into Two or More Single Incidents

Some incidents become so geographically or functionally dispersed that they can best be managed as separate incidents.

### ICS Organizational Strategy

A single incident may be divided when it:

- **Spreads into other jurisdiction(s) and Unified Command is not feasible.**

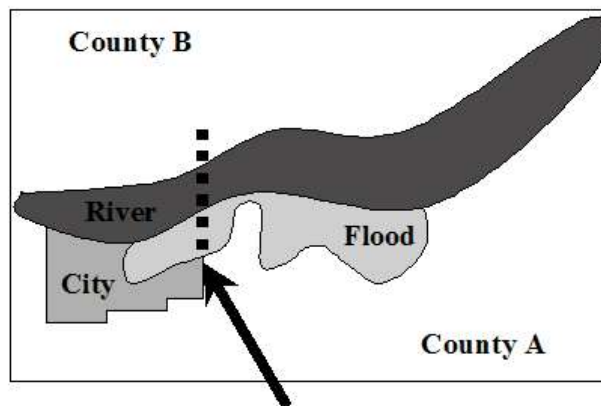
For example, a flooding situation may be divided by jurisdiction.

- **Is difficult to manage from one location due to terrain and access.**

For example, an incident such as an earthquake, tornadoes, significant flooding, or wildland fire, where terrain and access affect operational or logistical mobility and the ability to manage from one location, may be divided geographically.

- **Has objectives that are naturally separating into two functionally-separate operations.**

For example, a bioterrorism incident that includes immediate public health objectives and longer-term investigation objectives may be divided into two operations.



**Divide into two incidents**

In addition to the characteristics of the incident itself, management issues also may make it advisable to divide an incident. Dividing an incident should be considered if two or more Sections are overtaxed due to the size of the incident. Examples include when:

- The Planning Section, even with additional resources, can no longer adequately provide planning services because of:
  - The size of the incident.
  - The varying objectives and strategies needed.
- The Logistics Section can no longer, or will soon not be able to, serve the widespread facilities and operations from a single Incident Base.
- The Operations Section cannot manage the number of resources required without exceeding span of control.

### **Considerations in Dividing an Incident**

1. Determine how best to divide the incident.

This division could be done in several ways, depending upon:

  - Terrain and access considerations.
  - Locations of future resource and logistical support.
  - Jurisdictional/administrative boundaries.
  - Current Operations Section structure (Branches, Divisions, etc.).
2. Assign separate Incident Commanders and Command and General Staff for each incident.
3. Designate additional supporting organizational facilities, locations, etc.
4. Designate an appropriate time for establishing two separate incidents (each with a unique name).
5. Coordinate planning strategies and use of critical resources between the incidents for at least the next operational period.
6. Consider the need for Area Command to be established over the incidents.