



S-420 Unit 8: Determining Goals and Objectives

Summary:

Incident Objectives describe the quantifiable end state of an Agency Administrator's intent for an incident. Quality objectives lead to clarity of purpose and unified effort across divisions through a clearly articulated incident strategy. The Command and General Staff (C&G) meeting is the primary place where an Incident Management Team (IMT) discusses how and if they can achieve incident objectives and where, when necessary, alternative strategic options are discussed.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to write an effective incident objective.
- Describe the intent of the Command and General Staff meeting.

Instructor Note:

The content of this unit is applied by the students in Simulation (SIM) Phase 1b and SIM Phase 2. Unit instructor should review these SIM Phases prior to instruction. Unit instructor and SIM Coordinator should discuss how the unit content and SIM interact.

Unit at a Glance:

Topics	Method	Duration
Develop/Update Incident Objectives	Presentation	10 Minutes
Writing Effective Objectives	Exercise	20 Minutes
The Command and General Staff Meeting	Presentation	20 Minutes
Strategic Planning Meeting	Presentation	40 Minutes
Total Unit Duration		1 Hour 30 Minutes

Materials:

- Ability to display images and video on large screen.
- White board or easel access for group breakout.
- Handout:
 - HO_08_Strategic_Planning_Process
- Flip chart, paper and markers (1 per small group).

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Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to write an effective incident objective.
- Describe the intent of the Command and General Staff Meeting.

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- Review unit objectives.

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Develop/Update Incident Objectives

- At the initial Incident Command meeting the IC, Unified Command, and/or others (if invited) develop objectives for the entire incident (all jurisdictions) based on agency direction documents and discussion with AA.
- The IC is responsible for the meeting and may invite some C&G members to attend or facilitate.

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- Objectives set the stage for the IMT. When members of the team clearly understand the intent behind the objectives, they are equipped to act decisively and make better decisions.
- The Incident Commander (IC) develops incident objectives based on this strategic direction from the AA and documents them in the incident objectives form, ICS 202. These objectives should reflect agency strategic direction as well as important agency considerations such as responder safety and initial attack responsibility.
- These objectives may last the lifespan of the incident. However, they must be re-evaluated by the IC every operational cycle and every time a strategic assessment is conducted in order to ensure that they remain valid as conditions change.

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Incident Objectives

- Strategic, Management, or Incident Objectives
- Tactical, Operational or Control Objectives

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- Different types of objectives are used on wildland fire incidents, for example:
 - Strategic management or incident objectives: Strategic Objectives for the incident are generally documented by the AA in the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) Decision and/or Delegation of Authority. Additional strategic direction is provided to the IMT through a variety of sources including the Leader's Intent document, Fire Management Plans, Community Protection Plans, the Agency Administrator Inbriefing, and the outgoing IC briefing.
 - Tactical/operational/control objectives: Tactical/operational/control objectives are shorter-term objectives that may change daily, and are typically site specific (such as division). These objectives are usually documented in the Assignment List form, ICS 204.

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Objectives Exercise

Based on what you've learned in the pre-course work, rewrite the following generic incident objectives to be more effective. Create your own details as necessary to meet the criteria of an effective objective.

- Keep the fire as small as possible using full suppression.
- Keep fire out of sage grouse habitat.
- Minimize damage to values at risk.

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Exercise: Incident Objectives (20 minutes)

Purpose: To write effective incident objectives.

1. Facilitate a discussion about effective incident objectives.
2. Review students pre-course work assignment.
 - a. Creating Incident Specific WFDSS Objectives.
 - b. WFDSS Incident Objectives – Findings from Review of 2014 and 2015 Published Decisions and Recommendations.
 - c. What recommendations do these reports make? For example, is there a need to improve specificity of incident objectives by addressing the what, where, and when, and why:
 - i. What? Identify what you are trying to do, what you want to protect etc.
 - ii. Where? Be specific about the location; use names.
 - iii. When? If an action is time based, use that information. Times are often not used.
 - iv. Why? Provide clear, specific descriptions of the resource values and importance.
3. Share examples of incident objectives from real incidents and discuss if the objectives clearly explain the What, Where, When, and Why.

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Command and General Staff Meeting

The purpose of the C&G meeting is for the IC to share Leader's Intent, connect incident objectives to the operational plan, and for the team to have a common operating picture of the incident.

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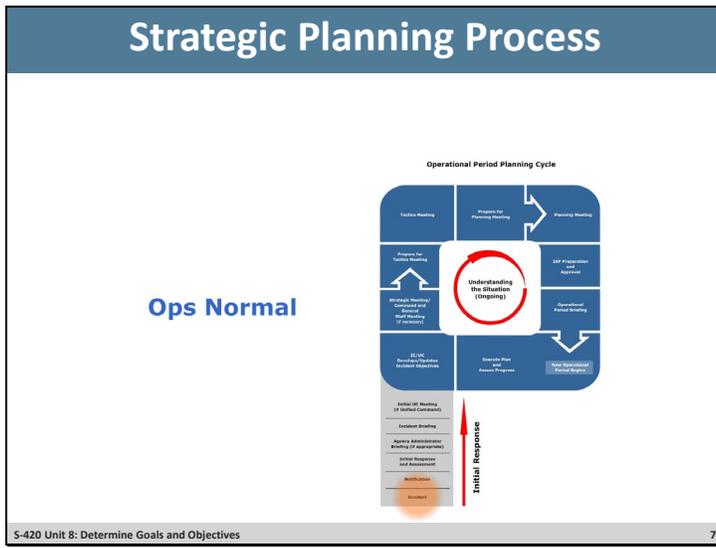
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- At the C&G meeting, the following may happen:
 - The schedule for meetings and briefings will be determined.
 - C&G members share critical information. Each C&G should critically consider how their functional area will be able to support the incident strategy.
 - Confirm that the chosen strategy is still viable. If it is not then a separate Strategy meeting may be called for to discuss and develop alternative strategies for AA approval. This is discussed in detail below and practiced in SIM Phase 2.
 - C&G members identify what needs to be done to prepare the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the next operational period.
- This is the IC's meeting; however, the Planning Section Chief (PSC) may facilitate the meeting. All C&G members should attend.
- The IC determines when to hold C&G meetings. They are generally held one or two times a day and timing is variable; every IMT has a different standard, and the needs of the incident may influence the schedule.

What Right Looks Like: Cadre may role play a C&G meeting demonstrating how it is conducted and how each functional area contributes to the meeting.

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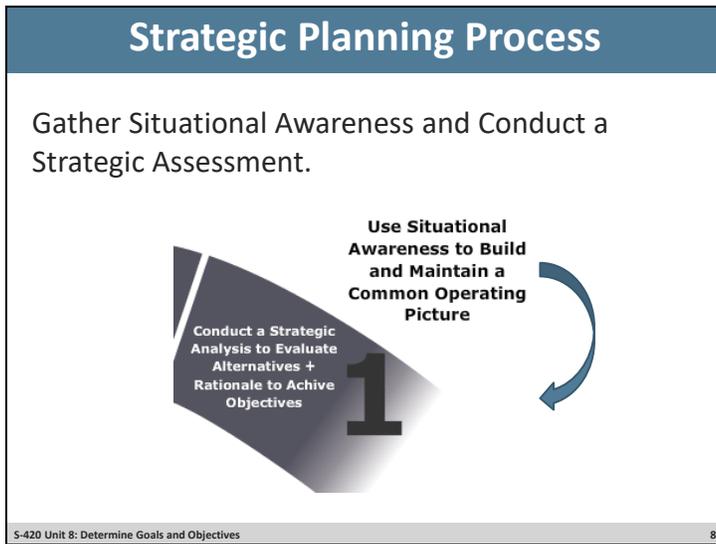
Note to Instructor

The video presents three operational periods followed by a strategic planning process after a change in the situation is noted. The video continues with three more operational periods prior to another strategic planning process. Explain to students that the strategic planning process is implemented when needed, not after three operational periods.

- The goal of any strategic planning process is to anticipate how the incident will change in the next 3-5 days or longer, develop alternative strategies, and brief the AA.
 - All IMT C&G contribute to the discussion and the AA should also be given an opportunity to contribute.
 - Remember, the IMT develops the alternative strategies but the AA is responsible for selecting a strategy and approving its implementation. Each C&G should be prepared to answer specific questions from the AA relative to their function.
 - While there is no interagency agreed-upon process the following steps outline the process of developing alternative courses of action to handle the complexities of the incident. Other processes may be used.
- Distribute HO_08_Strategic_Planning_Process handout as students will utilize as a reference for slides 8-10.

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Ongoing: Gather Situational Awareness and Conduct Strategic Assessments

As we arrive at an incident and gain situational awareness we evaluate the current courses of action and validate the strategy the AA has set for us. Are the current courses of action still appropriate for achieving the strategic objectives? Are there better ways to achieve objectives?

As the incident progresses we continually seek out information through observation and communication with others. When conditions change we conduct additional Strategic Assessments, to evaluate whether our courses of action continue to meet the strategic objectives of the incident.

A Strategic Assessment builds on our situational awareness and helps build and maintain the team's Common Operating Picture (COP) when shared throughout the incident, including the crucial transition periods involving mobilization, inbriefing/shadow periods, transitions, and transfer of command.

Strategic Assessment Questions

- Status of the incident? Locally, regionally, nationally? Unified Command? Area Command? Planning Level?
- What are the Values at Risk?
- What is the probability of those values being impacted and what are the consequences if they are impacted?
- What is the Low Probability/High Consequence event?
- What contingency or emergency plan needs to be developed? Medical Plan?
- What are the current incident objectives? What kinds of strategies have they resulted in?
- Has the tactical implementation of the strategies been successful?
- Are they viable from both a socio/political and operational perspective?
- Input from host unit to help determine/compare to WFDSS & Delegation.

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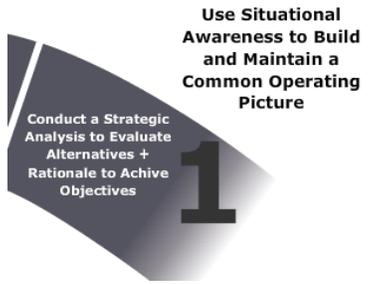
- Who are the “externals” (cooperators, stakeholders) who will be impacted by this incident?
- What are their issues?
- How might externals affect incident objectives and strategies?
- What will success look like to these externals?
- What internal issues are identified or predicted?

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Strategic Planning Process

Step 1. Conduct a Strategic Analysis to evaluate alternatives and rationale to achieve objectives .



Use Situational Awareness to Build and Maintain a Common Operating Picture

Conduct a Strategic Analysis to Evaluate Alternatives + Rationale to Achieve Objectives

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- The primary focus of strategic analysis is to evaluate whether the current strategy and courses of action are appropriate for meeting incident objectives as the incident evolves and to prepare alternatives for presentation to the AA.

Note to Instructor

The discussion serves as an open platform for C&G members to update and validate their COP. The discussion is key.

- The strategic analysis process includes the following:
 - The Operations Section develops one or more alternative 3-5 day operational plans including resource requirements, estimated time to completion, and the relative operational merits and drawbacks of each.
 - All of C&G contribute to the strategic analysis by determining whether and how they can support alternatives as well as the relative merits and drawbacks of each.
 - *Safety*: What are the risk trade-offs between the alternatives? Do any of the alternatives being considered present new hazards?
 - *Logistics*: Can an alternative be logistically supported in the time required to carry it out? Will an alternative require additional facilities, communications systems, or other support, or services?
 - *Finance*: What will be the expected costs associated with each alternative? Will any require an update to the WFDSS cost estimate? Will any alternatives necessitate the need to enter into a Cost Share Agreement?
 - *Liaison*: What will be the effects of the alternatives on stakeholders? Do any of the alternatives bring any new stakeholder groups into the equation?
 - *Public Information*: What information will need to be communicated to the public relative to the different alternatives? Will an alternative require changes to area closures?

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- *Planning:* How will the updated incident strategy be communicated to the assigned resources? Does the IMT have the most current information from IMET, FBAN, LTAN, etc.? What products need to be developed by the Situation Unit?

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Strategic Planning Process

Strategic Analysis Tool

S-420 Pre-Work

APPENDIX B – Strategic Analysis Worksheet

	Considerations Resource Type Risk Exposure Operability Priority Logistics Political, Social Public	Plan of Action What are you going to do? How are you going to do it? How long will it take?	Management Action Points Pros & Cons What do you need to make success? What needs to happen before this option is viable?	Probability of Success
Option 1				
Option 2				
Option 3				
Option 4				

Standard Operating Procedures for Student BMF

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- The Strategic Analysis Tool serves to frame different alternatives and includes:
 - Considerations: What is required to implement this alternative?
 - Plan of action: What is going to be done? Consider Risk to Firefighters, Risk to Public, and Risk to Values.
 - Management Action Points and Pros and Cons: Where will the alternative be implemented? Describe the pros and cons of this alternative relative to other alternatives presented.
- The outcome of this process should be a range of alternatives that can be supported by the IMT. Although the IMT may have its own preferred alternative, it is important to remember that the AA is ultimately responsible for selecting a strategy.

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Strategic Planning Process

Step 2. Present Alternatives to AA



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- The primary focus of this step is to present and discuss the alternatives developed by the IMT with the AA using the Strategic Analysis Tool (or other method) for them to evaluate and select their preferred alternative. This preferred alternative becomes the strategy for the incident and the basis for strategic planning.
- The meeting serves as an open platform for C&G members and the AA to update and validate their COP. This discussion is key.
- While the IMT initiates the strategic planning process the AA is ultimately responsible for choosing an alternative for the IMT to implement. This becomes the incident strategy.

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Strategic Planning Process

Step 3. Display and Brief the Strategic Plan

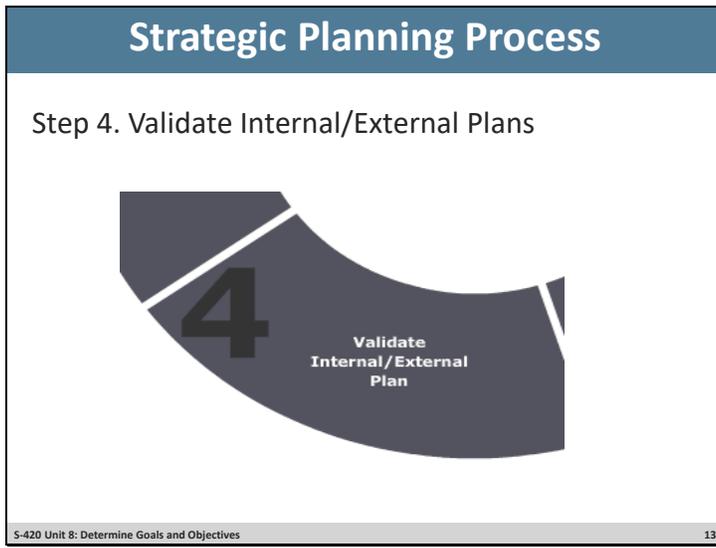


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- Once a new strategy is selected it must be communicated by the IMT to firefighters, cooperators, and the public. Courses of action, briefings, and products must be adjusted to align with the updated strategy.
- Tools for accomplishing this include:
 - PACE
 - Management Action Point (MAP) Map
 - IAP
 - Incident Status Summary (ICS 209)
 - WFDSS Decision
 - Operational Briefings and Planning meetings

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- There must be continuity between what AAs support in a Planning meeting and what the IMT implements in the next Operational Period.
- Validate or update operation plans:
 - IAP.
 - Incident Status Summary (ICS 209).
- Validate/update other plans that may be effected:
 - Communication Plan.
 - Repair Plan (READs, BAER).
 - Evacuation Plan/Repopulation Plan (EOCs, County Sheriffs, Department of Transportation).
 - Cost Share Agreement (INBAs).
 - Security/road closures (National Guard, LEOs).
 - Long-Term Plan.
 - Demobilization Plan (Expanded Dispatch).
 - Transition/Transfer of Command Plan.

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Strategic Planning Process

Step 5. Anticipate Transition and Transfer of Command



Anticipate
Transition and
Transfer of
Command

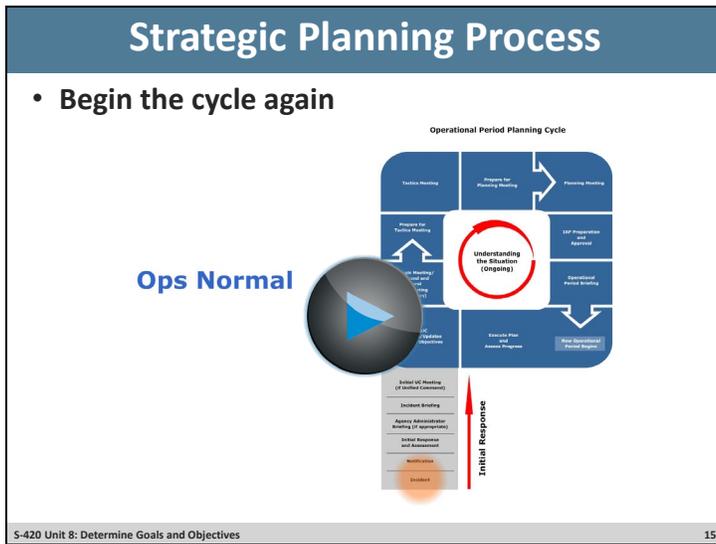
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- When is a transition or transfer of command likely to be needed?
- What needs to be done to prepare for it?

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- Updates are made to the incident objectives to meet AA direction. These updates are then fed into the Operational Planning Cycle and products are adjusted accordingly.
- The new strategy is implemented until conditions change again and prompt a re-evaluation of the chosen strategy.

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Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to write an effective incident objective.
- Describe the intent of the C&G meeting.

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- Review unit objectives.