**PH CERT Incident Commander (IC) Quick Start Guide**

Go to the relevant PH CERT Area Incident Command Post (ICP)/Assembly Area.

* The key to the PH CERT Area storage containers is available from:
  + The PH CERT Area Coordinator or designee
  + Pleasant Hill Police Department; Jim Bonato’s in-box on the second floor
  + Other PH CERT Area-specific arrangement(s)
* If you are the first to arrive, you are the CERT Area Incident Commander (IC) – **don’t panic**

As the **Incident Commander**, perform the actions listed below to initiate a response

**Things to Consider:**

* Depending on the situation and the number of persons on site, the order of these actions may vary.
* Initially, several of these actions can be performed by the same person.
* The goal is to activate the response as efficiently and promptly as possible.
* Avoid setting up a perfect or complete ICS organization structure before acting.
* Act as soon as you have resources appropriate for the situation.

**Actions:**

**The Incident Commander performs these functions until other individuals arrive.**

1. Open the PH CERT Area storage container (cache) and locate/begin using what is needed immediately, such as radio equipment, forms, PH CERT Field Operations Manual (FOM), hanging pocket organizer (for 3”X5” personnel cards/assignments).
2. Sign in and confirm status (CERT vs. convergent) of arriving volunteers.
3. Establish communications and set up enhanced equipment such as antennas.
   1. FRS/GMRS radio

* Tune a GMRS radio to the PH CERT Area primary emergency channel.
* Open the FRS/GMRS radio net as a first priority by calling out via radio to announce opening and seek responses.
* Set up the 30-foot GMRS antenna and attach a GMRS radio to the antenna as soon as possible. Two or three people are needed to set up this antenna.

In some PH CERT areas, an antenna may be needed on an urgent basis to establish area-wide communication because of the area’s terrain.

* 1. Ham radio
* Set up the ham radio and antenna.

One person can probably set up the ham radio antenna.

* When a ham radio operator arrives, establish communication with the PH Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the PHPD on ham radio frequency 147.495 and document radio communications using forms ICS 213 – PH and PH ICPCOMLOG.

1. As PH CERT Area members arrive, assign individuals to carry out these priority activities:

* Record the observations reported by arriving volunteers, ideally on General Message forms (ICS 213 - PH).
* Gather and brief (e.g. what is the disaster, to the extent known, and what are we planning or being asked to do at the moment) arriving PH CERT Area members and convergent volunteers in a common staging area within the CERT Area ICP, interview and assign individuals as appropriate based on skills and needs, and track their assignments using CERT Form #2 – and 3” X 5” cards in the hanging pocket organizer.
* Record FRS/GMRS radio messages coming from PH CERT Area members who have not yet reported to the ICP and later from PH CERT Area Search and Rescue (SAR) teams in the field using ICS 213 – PH and PH ICPCOMLOG forms.

1. Considerations for the IC in Making Initial Assignments and Taking Actions

As more volunteers arrive and are given assignments to perform the various duties and activities detailed above, there will be a point where the Incident Commander may be directly supervising volunteers that begin to number that which is beyond an effective span of control, e.g. six or seven at most. The IC should be aware when this point is being reached and make assignments with future delegations of groupings of activities in mind. Some groupings to consider are as follows:

* 1. Assign someone to begin to help set up the ICP sections with tables, chairs, signage, canopies, etc. This person could be the person who oversees signing in arriving personnel and may become the CERT Area Planning Section Chief and/or the Logistics Section Chief.
  2. Assign someone to sign out and track equipment that is removed from the PH CERT Area storage container using CERT Form #7 - PH. This person will act as the Logistics Section Chief and may perform other duties as assigned.
  3. Begin to prioritize the incident reports from PH CERT Area members, neighbors, bystanders, convergent volunteers, etc., using PH TRACKLOG. The IC is responsible for assessing this information and beginning to formulate an Action Plan for the CERT Area’s emergency response.
* Prioritize **life** over property.
* Identify situations that **PH CERT can handle** and those where additional help is needed.
  1. Assign a CERT Area Operations Section Chief to assist with recording observations and incident reports, collaborating with the IC to assist with developing prioritization of actions needed, reviewing arriving volunteers for assignment to SAR teams, ensuring effective FRS/GMRS communications
  2. Establish Search and Rescue (SAR) teams – a minimum of three people (two to enter buildings, and one to remain outside for safety and to record information).
  3. Ensure readiness of SAR teams when deploying to field, e.g., wearing protective gear, radio check, backpack adequately equipped, clear task assignment, etc.

1. Depending on what you know and resources available,
2. Send the SAR teams to specific zone(s) to report back what they see and hear, using CERT Form #3 – PH to track their assignment(s).
3. Send the SAR teams where they are needed most (**life** takes precedence over property) using CERT Form #4 – PH, and CERT Form #1a - PH, PH SARASSESS, ICS 213 – PH, as appropriate.
4. Send convergent volunteers to be sworn in (location is currently PH City Hall).

**Detailed Initial Roles and Responsibilities/Forms**

The Pleasant Hill CERT Field Operations Manual (FOM) contains detailed roles and responsibilities for key staff at a CERT Area Incident Command Post (ICP). Unlike the early stages of setting up a CERT Area ICP that are highlighted in this checklist, the FOM describes a fully operational ICS organization structure. It can serve as a vision for how the CERT Area ICP will evolve, and is a useful reference for guiding an Incident Commander forward as the ICS organization grows. The formal positions that form the basis for a PH CERT Area ICS are summarized below.

Initially, one person may perform more than one role until enough people arrive at the CERT Area ICP.

Listed below are the first positions to consider.

* PH CERT Area Incident Commander:
  + All responsibilities until additional individuals arrive.
* PH CERT Area Ham Radio Operator/Scribe:
  + Maintains communication with the PH EOC using ICS 213 – PH and PH ICPCOMLOG.
* PH CERT Area FRS/GMRS Radio Operator/Scribe:
  + Has arriving personnel record their observations on General Message forms (ICS 213 - PH).
  + Records FRS/GMRS messages coming from PH CERT Area members who have not yet reported to the ICP on ICS 213 – PH and PH ICPCOMLOG forms.
* PH CERT Planning Section Chief
  + Signs in people and keeps track of their assignments using CERT Form #2 - PH
  + Keeps track of information and other documentation.
* PH CERT Logistics Section Chief:
  + Signs out (and in) and tracks equipment that is removed from the PH CERT Area storage container using CERT Form #7.
* PH CERT Operations Section Chief
  + Assembles, assigns, and tracks SAR teams using CERT Form # 1a – PH, CERT Form #3 – PH, CERT Form #4 – PH, PH SARASSESS, ICS 213 - PH.

**Initial Equipment**

* Communication equipment
  + Ham radio and antenna
  + GMRS radio and antenna
* Forms
* Field Operations Manual (FOM)
* Hanging pocket organizer (for 3”X5” personnel cards/assignments)
* Tables and chairs
* Canopies
* Supplies for SAR teams such as radios, triage tape, CERT Field Operations Guide (FOG)