

# Incident Command System:

A Standardized System for Managing Large Scale Incidents/Events



# Case Study: Hangar Incident

Orange County Fire Authority

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## USMC Hangar History

Naval Air Station Santa Ana (NAS) was established in 1942 as a lighter-than-air base by the US Navy.

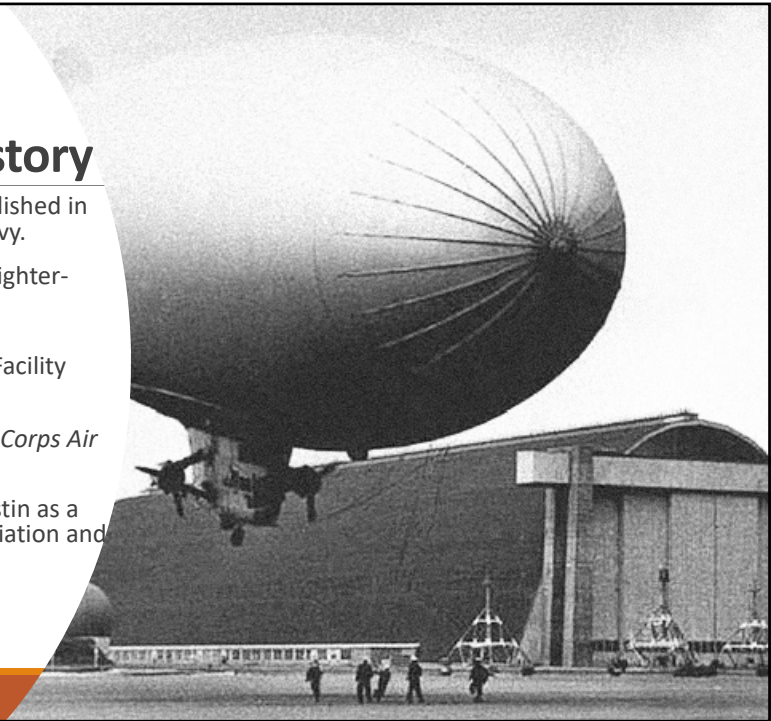
The Hangars were built to store and repair Lighter-than-Air units

- Decommissioned in 1949
- Reactivated in 1951 as Marine Corps Air Facility Santa Ana to support the Korean War

In 1979, the Hangars were renamed *Marine Corps Air Station Tustin*

In the 1990's, the USMC used Air Station Tustin as a major center for Marine Corps helicopter aviation and radar of the Pacific Coast

July 1999 - operational closure of the base



## Size of Structure

17 stories tall, arched roof structure

- Heavy timber
- Metal roofing material
- 17 story doors at both ends of the structure
- Previously damaged roof on Charlie side

1,000 ft. long

- Offices running along both Bravo and Delta sides
- Access issue into offices

300 ft. wide





## Pre-Incident

Entire area around the Hangars is fenced and secured

Limited access through only two gates off public streets

Tustin Police Department provided monitoring as part of their area patrol

Hydrants were removed and water mains were closed on the site

North Hangar had roof damage on the north end due to winter storm (2013) and was supported by steel cables

South Hangar was used by the city of Tustin for events

- Fundraisers
- Movies and TV shows



## Incident Dispatch

Initial 911 call to OCFA on November 7, 2023 at 0053 hours

The reporting party reported seeing a fire, roughly the size of a car on fire, but unknown what was on fire

OCFA dispatched two fire engines as part of the initial response

The first engine arrived on-scene with smoke and fire showing on the East side of the hangar, requested additional units, and established command

Battalion 3 arrived on-scene and upgraded to a Third Alarm (additional 10 units) and assumed command





## Hangar Fire

Recognition of an extended incident:

- Size
- Location/Access
- Water Supply
- Structural Stability
- Resources
- Incident Support



## Water Supply Issues

Hydrants were removed or dry within the fence line

The closest hydrant was over 2,500 feet away

Utilized seven engines for relay pumping operations

- Supplied one truck company and two handlines

Extended time to construct water supply

Water tenders utilized

Boost of pressure from Irvine Ranch Water District

Utilized water-dropping helicopters





## Incident Challenges

- Discontinuing fire suppression operations and letting the fire burn itself out
- Closure of businesses, schools, public parks, streets, and right-of-ways in three different cities
- Management, inspection, testing, and clean-up of potential Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) on city, public, and private properties
- Pressure from residents and the general public demanding information
- Local, state, and federal agencies working in silos with no collaboration
- Lack of common objectives or coordination.
- Stakeholders: City, County, EPA, AQMD, OC HCA, School Districts, Irvine, Santa Ana, HOAs, Business owners, Department of Toxic Substances, Cal OES
- Integration of the city and various environmental stakeholders into the IMT process
- The incident impacted three cities, public, county, and private lands and properties



## November 7-10

- Conference Calls with Navy
- CC with Tustin PD/City (EOC)
- AQMD – “Nothing Significant” at 1700 on 11/7
- OC Health Press Release 11/8 – Tustin Hangar Fire presents health risk?
- AQMD sets a 300’ perimeter just before lunch on 11/8 – This led to shutting down overhaul operations and prohibited entry.
- Virtual meetings with:
  - County CEO, Emergency Management; County Health officer; AQMD; EPA; PD; CM;
  - EPA rep made it clear that this would be a large scale clean up effort
- Tustin PD/City would run the recovery efforts; Opened up their EOC
  - Local DC was asked to be a part of the EOC/Operations to assist with ICS
  - City department heads working independently
  - Securing contracts for CACs and Restoration Company

11/10 – significant changes and complexities in the recovery situation led to the request of an IMT



# Orange County All-Hazards Incident Management Team



- The initial organization consisted of 12 Command & General Staff Positions
  - IC, LOFR, PIO, SOFR, FSC, LSC, OSC, DIVS, PSC, SITL, GISS, IT Spec
- Expanded to 17 Command & General Staff Positions
  - Added (2) OSC, (2) Asst SOFR, (1) GISS
- Initial observations and discussions
  - Organizational Structural Planning
  - Objectives & Management
  - Response not in alignment with severity of incident
  - Need to bring structure to incident
  - Organize and align silos and cross-pollinate staff
  - Define lanes of work assignments and responsibility
  - Assist city with mentoring, coaching staff, establishing process and battle rhythm



## Implementation of Team Process (IMT)

- Incident Management Team
  - Group of highly trained and qualified personnel within defined disciplines working together on an incident or event bringing organizational structure and planning process
  - Assembled to manage resources, provide logistical support, and coordinate responses to ensure the safety of life, property, and the environment
  - Teams are comprised of Command (IC, Safety, PIO, Liaison) and General Staff (Finance, Logistics, Operations, Planning) functions
  - Addresses Unity of Command
  - Common Terminology
  - Management by Objective,
  - Coordination
  - Comprehensive Resource Management





## Incident Command Addresses



- Lack of accountability, including unclear chain of command and supervision
- Poor communication due to both inefficient uses of available communications systems and conflicting codes and terminology
- Lack of an orderly, systematic planning process
- No effective predefined way to integrate inter-agency requirements into the management structure and planning process
- “Freelancing” by individuals within the first response team without direction from a team leader (IC) and those with specialized skills during an incident and without coordination with other first responders
- Lack of knowledge of common terminology during an incident
- Single ordering point



## Evaluation of Progress

Utilization of the OODA Loop process

- **Observe:** Our plan
  - Effectiveness
  - Resources
  - Structure
- **Orient:** What have we done and where is it going
- **Decide:** How effective, resource use, re-direct plan, outcome
- **Act:** Changed strategy and tactics to meet current objectives from the IC and Agency Administrator

