

Deputies and Assistants

Key positions on the Incident Management Team (IMT), including all Command and General Staff positions, as well as Unit Leaders, may have Deputies, Assistants, or other forms of support personnel.

Deputies and Assistants are not interchangeable. A Deputy must have the same qualifications as the position they are subordinate to, as they must be ready to take over that position at any time, while an Assistant is assigned to aid in managing the workload. Assistants may bring a particular functional or technical expertise to augment the position they are supporting (e.g., Assistant Safety Officer, Aviation).

Deputies and Assistants are commonly used in an incident to:

- Assist with span-of-control
- Support the primary position during periods of high operational tempo
- Perform specific tasks that require their particular knowledge or expertise
- Provide relief to the primary position holder
- Assist with transition

Organizational Element	Primary Position Title	Support Position Title	Examples
Incident Command	Commander	Deputy	Deputy IC
Command Staff	Officer, Advisor	Assistant, Advisor ¹	Public Information, Liaison, Legal
General Staff	Chief	Deputy, Assistant ²	Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Admin
Branch	Director	Deputy	Air Operations, LE, Fire
Division / Group	Supervisor	N/A	Div: Div A, Div C Groups: SAR, LE, Wildlife
Strike Team / Task Force	Leader	N/A	ST #5, TF #10
Single Resource	Unique Identifier	N/A	LE Car 54, Helo 6568, Ambulance #2
Unit	Leader	Assistant, Manager, Coordinator	Environmental, Cost, Time, Resources, Food, Facilities, Situation
Facility Location or Functional Area	Manager	Assistant	Staging, Security, JIC, Camp

¹ The 2017 edition of the U.S. National Incident Management System (NIMS) formally allows for Command Staff to consist of Officers and Advisors.

² The 2017 NIMS formally allows for General Staff positions to be supported by Assistants, in addition to Deputies.