

2.1

I-5 Multi-vehicle, Multi-casualty Incident

December 11, 1997

Tentative Analysis

(as of 1/29/98)

Incident Facts

- 17 engines
- 1 Aerial ladder truck
- 11 ambulances
- 3 helicopters
- 4 water tenders
- 1 hazardous materials team
- 1 heavy foam unit
- 1 rescue/extrication squads
- 2 light plant trucks (scene lighting)
- 2 air compressor units
- 12 chief officers
- 5 other support staff personnel
- 4 "other" specialized apparatus
- 140 fire service personnel (approximately)
- 8 fire agencies contributed (Elk Grove, Sacramento City, Sacramento County, American River, Courtland, Wilton, Galt, and Walnut Grove).

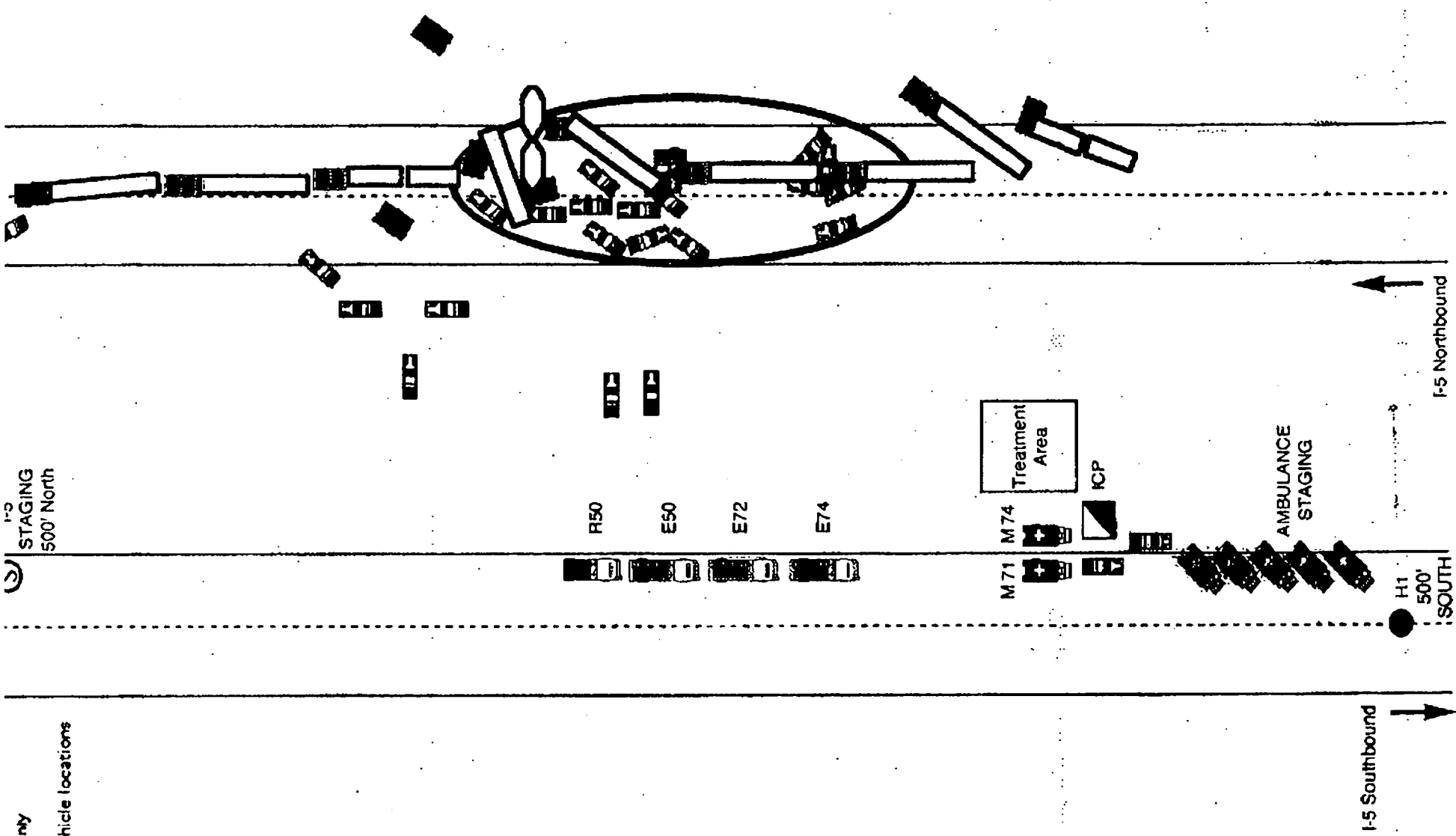
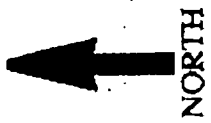
- 36 vehicles involved in the accident
 - 27 passenger vehicles or pickup trucks
 - 9 commercial trucks (one of which was a double trailer tanker)
 - Approximately 19 of the vehicles burned

- Total of 31 casualties
 - 23 treated and transported to area hospitals by ground or air ambulance
 - 3 treated but refused transport
 - 5 fatalities at scene

- 5 hospitals treated patients
 - Sutter General
 - Mercy General
 - U.C. Davis Medical Center
 - Methodist
 - Kaiser – South

- Allied Agencies
 - California Highway Patrol
 - California Office of Emergency Services (Fire/Rescue Division)
 - Cal Trans
 - Haz. Mat. Division of the Sac. County Environmental Management Department
 - Salvation Army
 - Sacramento County Coroner's Office

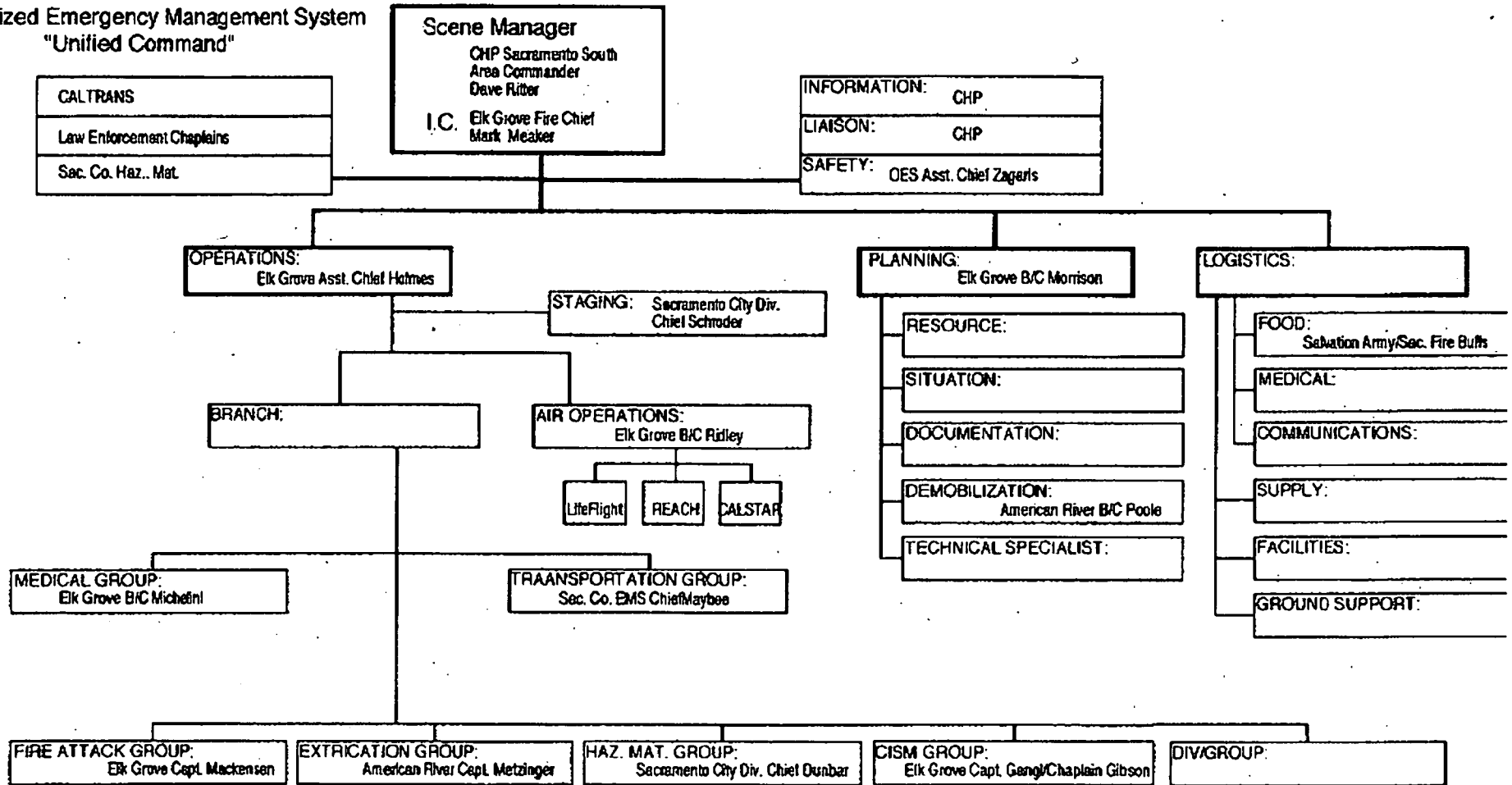
For orientation purposes only
Not to scale
Not an accurate map of vehicle locations



Tactical Objectives Given To The Operations Chief

- **First Priority: Remove victims from area of fire danger, triage, treat, and transport them, and simultaneously cool the exposed tanker to prevent a possible Boiling Liquid, Expanding Vapor Explosion (B.L.E.V.E.).**
- **Second Priority: Stop the lateral spread of the fire to the uninvolved vehicles to the north and south of the main fire area.**
- **Third Priority: After the first two priorities are accomplished, and the additional water tenders and the heavy foam unit have arrived, launch a final offensive attack on the main body of the fire to knock it down and complete extinguishment.**

Standardized Emergency Management System
"Unified Command"



5

I-5 INCIDENT

Tasks Well-Handled

- **Concise and detailed initial size-ups by the first arriving captain.**
- **Magnitude of incident realized early:**
 - **MCI declared immediately**
 - **Early call for lots of medic units (ambulances), water tenders, helicopters, the heavy foam unit, the Haz. Mat. Team, and overhead support staff.**
- **Effective strategy and tactics.**
- **Effective “Unified Command” with all allied agencies**
- **Strong medical organization established per the MCI protocols:**
 - **Medical group supervisor & Pt. transportation supervisor appointed; triage, treatment, transportation functions quickly established; early use of UC Davis’ Disaster Control Facility.**
- **Total absence of inter-personal/inter-agency conflicts.**
- **No parochialism – Full integration of personnel from other agencies into Elk Grove’s ICS structure.**
- **Effective media inter-action and cooperation**

I-5 INCIDENT
Opportunities For Improvement

- **Needed multiple tactical channels earlier than were requested (ASAP after multiple additional resources)**
- **I.C. needed an aid to assist with radio traffic early on**
- **Initial treatment area too close (realized & corrected) (was primarily the result of victims self-locating)**
- **Incoming companies needed to stage out until formal staging was established.**
- **Better control of air space was needed; we had at least one near miss between helicopters (medical and media).**

Why was the operation effective?

- **Effective “Scene Management” by Capt. Dave Ritter of the CHP.**
- **Professionalism of the responding personnel (fire service, law enforcement, and other allied agencies).**
- **Centralized, single dispatch center and system for nearly all Sacramento city and county fire agencies.**
- **County-wide complete boundary drop for sharing of all fire resources by all fire agencies.**
- **Establishment by the county’s fire services of a coordinated and seamless Emergency Medical first responder and patient transportation system.**
- **The fire service’s long history of developing and using the Incident Command System, combined with the state’s SEMS law that has resulted in an effective Unified Command structure on major incidents across agency lines.**

- **Long history of continuous joint training exercises between the various fire agencies:**
 - **Fall of 1997, Elk Grove Fire Department hosted numerous south county fire agencies in a series of multi-agency drills on handling a large scale MCI.**
 - **Fall of 1997, Sacramento City Fire Department hosted numerous county-wide fire agencies in a series of drills on terrorism preparedness.**
 - **Most Sacramento County fire agencies, including Elk Grove, recently participated with the City and County of Sacramento in their joint EOC exercises.**