**Hazardous Materials: Managing the Incident, Fourth Edition**

**Chapter 10: Implementing Response Objectives**

**Chief Concepts**

* The Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for determining the best strategic goals and tactical objectives which will produce the most favorable outcome of the incident.
* The operational strategy for an incident is developed based upon the IC’s evaluation of the current conditions and a forecast of future conditions. The effectiveness of this phase of the incident is directly related to how well the hazards were identified and the risks evaluated. The IC’s hazmat strategic goals include rescue, public protective actions, spill control (confinement), leak control (containment), fire control, and transfer and recovery.
* Tactics are the specific objectives the IC uses to achieve strategic goals. Tactics are normally decided at the section or group/division levels in the command structure. Strategy and tactics can be implemented by the IC in the offensive, defensive, or nonintervention mode. Usually, the IC uses a combination of tactics to manage the problem.
* Saving lives is the IC’s number one mission! Life safety should always be the IC’s highest priority, but remember that in some cases doing nothing and letting the incident run its course is the smartest and safest strategy. As emergency responders we cannot save everyone, and time often works against the responders and the people you are trying to rescue. The IC must weigh the chance for a successful rescue against the hazards and risks.
* Product removal and recovery operations usually begin after the emergency has run its course (e.g., all leaks have been controlled). Product removal and recovery operations should not begin until after the incident site is stabilized and the area has been re-evaluated for hazards and risks. Stabilization means that all fires have been extinguished, ignition sources have been secured, and all product releases have been controlled.
* Product removal and transfer operations involve moving the contents from the damaged or overloaded cargo tank(s) into an undamaged and compatible receiving tank(s), such as a tank car, cargo tank truck, intermodal tank, or fixed tank.
* Product transfer and removal operations are typically performed by either product/container specialists or environmental contractors working on behalf of the carrier or shipper. Public safety responders will often continue to be responsible for site safety and will oversee the implementation of all product transfer and removal.
* Understanding our emergency response culture and history provides perspective. Stated a different way, understanding where we have been in the past helps you better understand where you need to go in the future. Doing it better and safer in the future is our goal!
* As a hazmat professional it is not good enough to simply know what the regulations and standards require; you should understand how and why these standards evolved. Many fire fighters and law enforcement officers gave their lives to help keep their communities safe from hazardous materials. Others have suffered debilitating injuries. Learn from their lessons!