

The Incident Dispatch Team from an Incident Commander's viewpoint

The Incident Dispatch Team spearheaded by the Communications Division of the San Jose Fire Department has proven itself as a valuable resource time and time again at various emergencies. My experience working as the Incident Commander at various emergencies over the last ten years, the personnel and resources brought with the Command Van have become a valuable resource to the Command Staff at major incidents.

The Incident Dispatch Team has assisted at more than 200 incidents over the last ten years, many of which I have been personally involved. A few examples are a fatality fire on Rochelle Drive back in February 1996, the multiple alarm fire and wall collapse at First and Julian in February 1999, and the Santana Row fire in 2002.

Having the Incident Dispatch Team personnel on scene to assist with Resource Status, Situation Status and the radio communications, especially on the Command Channel, allows the Incident Commanders to concentrate on the strategy and tactics at hand. While the Command Van and the equipment inside such as the radios, phones, faxes, copy machines and such are of great value to the Incident Commander, it is the IDT personnel that make the difference.

I want to extend my thanks and that of the Citizens of San Jose to Randall Larson and the entire Incident Dispatch Team who have provided this valuable resource to enhance our City's emergency response.

- Fire Chief Darryl Von Raesfeld

The IDT covers every aspect of: incident radio traffic, command post communications; organizational structure development; resource status tracking; mapping, planning and forecasting that the Incident Commander can not personally handle. That is often quite a bit of assistance!

- (former) Fire Chief Dale Foster

I have been fortunate enough to work several times with IDT members. My experience has been that they are invaluable in providing support to emergency scene operations and management.

- Deputy Chief Dana Reed, BAS

"As a field battalion chief, I can tell you that our IDT is an invaluable aspect to any incident. I believe the IDT is an integral asset in firefighter accountability and IC overload."

*- Kevin Conant, Battalion Chief,
San Jose Fire Department*

"In addition to dispatchers in the control room, we had IDT in the City EOC and IDTs at each of the two command posts. Until the arrival of IDT, true resource tracking was not accomplished. Not one fatality or serious injury occurred at this historic 11-alarm fire, due partly to the command and control provided by our IDT."

*- Kevin Conant, Battalion Chief,
San Jose Fire Department
On Santana Row Fire, August, 2002*