

# BOSSIER CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS PROCEDURE

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<b>STRUCTURE FIRE COMPANY OPERATIONS</b>			

**I. PURPOSE:** To provide for organized, coordinated, safe, and efficient operations on the fire ground.

**II. OBJECTIVE:** To establish standards to be used in structure fire incidents by:

- A. Assigning basic fire ground functions and activities to the various companies based upon the capabilities and characteristics of each type of unit.
- B. Assigning major fire ground functions to the particular company who can best accomplish the operations.
- C. Integrating the efforts of Engine Companies, Ladder Truck Companies, Heavy Rescue Companies and Trauma Units to achieve effective rescue, fire control and property conservation.
- D. Increasing the awareness and confidence of Company Members in the standard performance of other Companies operating on the fire ground.
- E. Reducing the amount and detail of orders required to get companies into action on the fire ground.

**III. PROCEDURES**

- A. Fire scenes can be chaotic and busy. It requires specific responsibilities to be assigned to responding Companies to reduce confusion and allow for rapid initiation of tactics. The following procedures will be used by company officers in order to ensure maximum use of personnel and to have a well-coordinated and aggressive attack. These procedures serve as guidelines to enhance efficiency of operations but may be modified as needed by the Incident Commander. Company Officers are expected to make any necessary adjustments to these operating procedures to properly adapt to the particular situation and if adjusted, Incident Command will be notified of the alteration.

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- B. Personnel shall don turnout gear before disembarking the apparatus. The SCBA will be in use, along with wearing of all protective gear including hood, gloves, and helmet before entering a working fire area. Crews shall have all necessary tools and equipment when reporting to Incident Command for assignment.
- C. Personnel shall complete all assignments from Incident Command. When a Company begins a standard operation, such as search and rescue, fire attack, ventilation, salvage and overhaul, etc., the Company Officer shall notify Incident Command and provide status updates on all assignments.
- D. Personnel shall maintain crew integrity. No freelancing. Company Officers will know the location of each member of their Company. All personnel operating inside fire structures shall work in groups of at least two. No one shall enter a fire structure alone.

#### **IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Backup line- A hoseline used to protect a working hose line position.
- B. Benchmark- The verbal acknowledgement to the Incident Commander of the start and completion of an assignment or tactic by the company. The crew shall be prepared to receive further direction. Benchmarks are also significant developments such as knockdown/control of fire, search results (all clear), and fire out.
- C. Branch- Incidents can escalate beyond the span of control in Sectors. Incident Command can implement Branches to alleviate this problem. A Branch is an organizational level having functional / geographic responsibility for major segments on incident operations. A good example would be a fire incident with an MCI. An EMS Branch should be implemented. This level falls between Incident Command and Sector. Branch Officers shall use the Branch radio designation in all radio communications. (i.e. "Fire Branch to Charlie Sector", "Transportation Sector to EMS Branch")
- D. Sector- A Sector is an organizational level having responsibility for operations within a defined geographic area or having a specific functional assignment at an incident. The use of Sector Officers can help ease the span of control and provide a more manageable incident. Sector Officers are accountable for the tactical deployment of resources and assignments to complete the objectives of Incident Command. Sector Officers shall use the Sector radio designation in all radio communications. (i.e. "Bravo Sector to Command", "Command to Medical Sector")

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- E. Crew Integrity- Keeping all members of a Fire Company intact to accomplish an assigned task.
- F. Freelancing- The act of an individual leaving their Fire Company and roaming about the fireground. Freelancing can also be defined as a Company acting independently on the fire ground without Incident Commands knowledge. These are both dangerous acts and shall not be tolerated.
- G. Apparatus- Shall be defined as an Engine, Ladder Truck, Heavy Rescue or Trauma Unit.
- H. Company- shall be defined as an Engine Company, Ladder Truck Company or Heavy Rescue Company. Trauma Units are not classified as a Company.
- I. Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) – A designated rescue team consisting of a minimum of three (3) firefighters with at least one (1) being an Officer to provide assistance or rapid rescue of Fire Department personnel operating at emergency incidents where an immediate danger to life and health atmosphere exists. RIT members may be allowed to perform other functions on scene outside of the IDLH environment, if necessary, as long as abandoning their activities does not place other firefighters in danger.
- J. Immediate Danger to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere – An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual’s ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
- K. Incident Safety Officer (ISO) – The officer assigned the responsibility of monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations and for developing measures to ensure personnel safety at the scene of an incident.

## **V. GENERAL OPERATIONS**

- A. Normal operations at a structure fire shall involve the first arriving Engine Company reporting to the front of the building, or other point of attack, and initiating rescue and/or fire attack operations.
- B. The second arriving Engine Company shall establish water supply for the first arriving Engine Company when needed and shall assist and support the operations the first arriving Engine Company.
- C. Whenever possible, all fire attack lines should be taken from the first engine.

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- D. Salvage operations shall be started as soon as possible to limit damage to contents.
- E. Following fire knock down, overhaul shall be made to ensure that there is no further fire danger. The on-scene Fire Investigator should be involved in this phase of the operation. To ensure a well investigated incident, Companies should allow the investigator time to determine what areas should be salvaged and overhauled first to protect possible evidence of the fire investigation.
- F. If any building hazards exist at the completion of operations, the building owner or manager shall be notified. The Fire Department shall assist with securing the building after operations, such as placing visquene (plastic) over holes in roof and boarding doors and windows. Often at larger fires, it will be necessary for the insurance company to send construction personnel to secure the building.
- G. Tasks performed by crews at structure fires other than Engine Companies are commonly known as “truck work”, because they are typically the responsibility of Ladder Truck and Heavy Rescue Companies. Properly performed “truck work” can and often does prevent or reduce loss of life in structure fires. When these operations are needed they must be performed quickly and safely. In structure fires, fire attack crews and truck/rescue personnel work side by side. While their goals are the same (saving lives and property) their respective roles and functions are different.

## VI. TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As Company Officers and Incident Commanders size-up conditions and consider their tactical options, the following aspects shall be considered in the decision making process:

- A. **Size-Up is continuous:** Officers shall monitor the changing environment.
- B. **Utilize the three Tactical Fire Priorities:** Tactical priorities identify the three separate tactical functions that must be completed in order to stabilize any fire situation. These priorities also establish the order in which these basic fireground functions must be performed. These functions should be regarded as separate, yet inter-related activities, which must be dealt with in order. Basic Tactical Priorities are as follows:
  - 1. Rescue / Life safety
    - a. The activities required to protect occupants, remove those who are threatened and to treat the injured.
    - b. Recorded as Benchmark “ALL CLEAR”.

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*Note: The term “ALL CLEAR” relates only to a PRIMARY / SECONDARY search completion report and is not to be used in reporting fire conditions. “NOTHING SHOWING” indicates the absence of smoke/fire.*

2. Property Protection (Fire Control)

- a. The activities required to stop the forward progress of the fire and to bring the fire under control.
- b. Recorded as Benchmark “FIRE KNOCKED DOWN”.

3. Containment (Property Conservation)

- a. The activities required to stop or reduce additional loss of property.
- b. Recorded as Benchmark “FIRE OUT”.

*Note: All three tactical priorities require somewhat different tactical approaches from both a Command and an operational standpoint. While the objective of each function must be satisfied in its priority order, Command must in many cases overlap these activities to achieve the required benchmark.*

**C. Cool the environment / soften the target**

1. We do not generally pass fire inside a structure to get to fire. The same theory should be applied while approaching a fire. Companies should look to reduce temperatures that will be encountered by interior crews. An indirect attack with a straight stream will reduce heat and energy production and create a safer working environment for interior Companies.
2. Exterior attack transitioning into an interior attack can reduce risks crews encounter inside. Whether it is directed into a second floor bedroom or a first floor kitchen window, this offensive attack method begins cooling the environment from a safer location.

**D. The three C’s of Operations**

1. Coordinate: Suppression and ventilation operations shall coordinate their efforts on the fire ground. What are we attempting to accomplish? When we create an opening we create air flow, which has a direct impact on the fire and life safety.
2. Communicate: Exterior ventilation officers shall communicate with Incident Command and interior crews prior to creating openings to reduce the risk of creating dangerous flow paths.

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3. Control: Control airflow into the interior of a structure with a working fire. If limited or delayed water supply, control the doors and windows to reduce airflow into the fire. This also applies while deploying hose lines (extended or multiple) that may take longer than normal to reach the fire.

#### **E. The four W's of Ventilation**

1. What: What are we attempting to accomplish with ventilation? When we create an opening we create air flow, ventilation crews must consider the impact of air on the fire.
2. Where: Consider the impacts of Horizontal and Vertical ventilation and the location of the opening.
3. When: Ventilation crews must coordinate and communicate with interior crew prior to creating openings.
4. Why: Why are we venting? For occupant life safety, but do we create an airflow bringing hotter temperatures or flashover when we take out a window?

#### **F. Utilize Risk Management:**

1. We will risk our lives a lot, in a calculated and controlled manner, to save savable lives.
2. We will risk our lives a little, in a calculated and controlled manner, to save savable property.
3. We will **not** risk our lives at all for lives or property that is already lost.

### **VII. Chief Officer Duties**

- A. Upon arrival the Chief Officer shall establish a command post preferably in front of the structure and announce the location of it. Generally this will be around the vicinity of the first engine.
- B. The Chief Officer is responsible for coordinating all resources on the scene to mitigate hazards according to the basic "Tactical Fire Priorities". (rescue / life safety, fire control and property conservation)
  1. Receive appropriate briefing from initial Incident Command before assuming command.
  2. Request additional and/or appropriate resources to cope with the situation.
  3. Utilize continuous Risk Assessment.

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4. **Designate RIT using personnel from first alarm units where an IDLH atmosphere exists.**
5. **Designate an Incident Safety Officer.**
6. Ensure compliance with SOP's.
7. Implement scene accountability. (safety officer, PARS, staging, emergency evacuations, benchmarks upon task completion)
8. Direct fire control, extinguishment and ventilation efforts.
9. Ensure fire structure is appropriately laddered.
10. Ensure utility control.
11. Ensure 360 size-up of the structure.
12. Ensure companies give appropriate benchmarks upon completion of assignments.
13. Give appropriate progress reports to Fire Dispatch.
14. Establish appropriate sectors and / or branches if needed. (Fire, Bravo, Ventilation, Medical, Transportation, Triage, etc.)
15. Ensure salvage and overhaul (searching for fire extension) are completed.
16. Demobilize fire units and return to service if not needed.
17. Ensure property is secure before Fire Dept. leaves. Call for board up if needed.
18. Call for assistance if needed for displaced occupants.

#### **VIII. COMPANY OPERATIONS:**

The following items represent, but are not limited to, the standard operations that will normally be performed by Engine Companies, Ladder Truck Companies and Heavy Rescue Companies. These basic responsibilities will provide the framework for field operations for these Companies. It is the Officers and Fire Fighters responsibility to apply them as safely and in control as possible as individual situations dictate. This does not limit a Company to only its listed function. Every Company will be expected to perform all basic functions within their capability, and it will be the ongoing responsibility of Incident Command to integrate other required tasks and functions as required with the on-scene Units.

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## A. Engine Company Duties

The Engine Company shall operate according to the standard fire ground priorities (rescue / life safety, fire control, property conservation). Upon approach to the fire structure, take time to observe fire conditions and report scene size-up to Fire Dispatch and responding units. Complete 360 scene size-up and communicate the selected operational mode to crew members and Fire Dispatch or Incident Commander if established.

### 1. Officers are responsible for:

- a. Designating the location of operations and apparatus placement having due regard for ease of operations, personnel safety, apparatus safety, need for Ladder Company placement, location of water source, wind conditions, probable fire spread, protection of trapped victims.
- b. Ordering the specific mode of operation (i.e. interior, exterior, transitional, offensive, defensive) selected to address the emergency using appropriate hoselines and nozzles.
- c. Utilize continuous Risk Assessment and communicate regular progress reports to Incident Command. (Sector Officers if assigned)
- d. Providing a regular progress report to the Incident Commander. (Branch or Sector Officers if assigned)
- e. Communicating with ventilation crews for timely and appropriate ventilation efforts.
- f. Selecting the appropriate nozzle and sized hoseline for the chosen tactic.

### 2. Crew members shall be prepared to:

- a. Initiate Fire attack.
- b. Deploy and pump hoselines. (utilize water supply to best advantage)
- c. Lay supply lines, water supply.
- d. Advancement of hoselines.
- e. Operate nozzles and master streams.
- f. Ventilation, forcible entry.

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- g. Search and rescue.
- h. Maintain a proactive stance on all RIT assignments.
- i. Perform salvage and overhaul.

## **B. Ladder Truck Company Duties**

The Ladder Truck Company shall operate according to the standard fire ground priorities (rescue / life safety, fire control, property conservation). Their focus shall be on ventilation, however, depending on the incident and their arriving position in relation to the Heavy Rescue Company, the crew may need to focus on search and rescue instead of ventilation.

1. Upon arrival the Ladder Truck shall report to the Incident Commander and when ordered consider the following operational responsibilities.
  - a. Place apparatus in most advantageous position with consideration of responding Engine Companies.
  - b. Ventilation. (coordinated with suppression efforts)
  - c. Forcible entry.
  - d. Search and rescue.
  - e. Raise ladders. (ground and aerial)
  - f. Place ladders for rescue and egress.
  - g. Primary search of building perimeter.
  - h. Locate means of egress.
  - i. Provide access, check for fire extension.
  - j. Utility control.
  - k. Provide light.
  - l. Operate Tower nozzle.
  - m. Perform salvage and overhaul.
  - n. Maintain a proactive stance on all RIT assignments.
  - o. Assist Engine Companies with fire suppression as directed. (attack lines, back-up lines, exposure lines, hoseline advancement, etc.)

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- p. Utilize continuous Risk Assessment and communicate regular progress reports to Incident Command. (Sector Officers if assigned)
- q. In the absence (or delay) of the Ladder Truck Company, Incident Command should assign Truck functions to the Heavy Rescue or an Engine Company. The Ladder Truck Company may be assigned Engine Company functions as well.

### **C. Heavy Rescue Duties**

The Heavy Rescue Company shall be used according to the needs of the incident and operate according to the standard fire ground priorities (rescue / life safety, fire control, property conservation). Their focus shall be on search and rescue, however, depending on the situation and their arriving position in relation to the Ladder Truck, the crew shall be prepared to assume Ladder Truck duties.

1. Upon arrival, the Heavy Rescue shall report to the Incident Commander and when ordered consider the following operational responsibilities:
  - a. Position apparatus giving consideration to the operational requirements of the responding Engine Companies and Ladder Truck.
  - b. Survey building and building layout.
  - c. Forcibly entry, search and rescue.
  - d. Extrication.
  - e. Ventilation. (coordinated with suppression efforts)
  - f. Assist locating the fire.
  - g. Remove obstructions from windows. (Burglar bars, window units etc.)
  - h. Remove security gates obstructing doors.
  - i. Check for building stability.
  - j. Perform salvage and overhaul.
  - k. In absence or delay of a Ladder Truck Company, Incident Command may assign Ladder Truck functions to the Heavy Rescue.
  - l. Maintain a proactive stance on all RIT assignments.

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- m. Assist Engine Companies with fire suppression as directed. (additional attack lines, back-up lines, exposure lines, hoseline advancement, etc.)
- n. Utilize Continuous Risk assessment and communicate regular progress reports to Incident Command. (Sector Officers if assigned)
- o. In the absence (or delay) of the Heavy Rescue Company, Incident Command should assign Heavy Rescue functions to the Ladder Truck or an Engine Company. The Heavy Rescue Company may be assigned Engine Company functions as well.

### **VIII. Trauma Units and EMS Supervisor functions**

- A. The EMS Supervisor will be responsible for establishing the Medical Sector and Rehabilitation. The EMS Supervisor shall also monitor other radio channels for Trauma Unit availability. Fire Dispatch will notify the EMS Supervisor when all other trauma units are on a call or out of service.
- B. Two Trauma Units shall be dispatched to all structure fires. The first arriving Trauma Unit shall stage their unit with an unblocked exit path, don turnout gear with SCBA and report to Incident Command for assignment. If not reassigned to a Company and at the direction of Incident Command, report to the Medical Sector Officer. The second arriving Trauma Unit shall stage their apparatus with an unblocked exit path; stay available for transport and report to the Medical Sector Officer with their stretcher and EMS equipment.
- C. The EMS Supervisor shall make a request to the Incident Commander if one of the Trauma Units is needed to respond elsewhere. If the second Trauma Unit is needed to respond elsewhere, the Incident Commander should assign the first Trauma Unit to the Medical Sector Officer with their stretcher and EMS equipment.
- D. If a Trauma Unit is not needed, it should be returned to service as soon as possible.