

## **General Operational Guideline - #2** **Staging Procedures**

Adopted: June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003      Due for Review: January, 2004

Effective: September 1st, 2003

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### PURPOSE:

- A. This objective of this guideline is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.
- B. Effective utilization of this guideline:
  - Will prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene
  - Will allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies
  - Places apparatus in a uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command
  - Produces more effective communications by virtue of reducing radio traffic during critical initial stages of fire operations
  - Allows Command to formulate and implement a plan without confusion and pressure
- C. Staging will involve two levels;
  - Level I
  - Level II
- D. Command and Staff Vehicles will not stage on arrival at an incident. These vehicles will be parked in a location outside the operation area where they will not restrict access to the scene
- E. At major incidents these vehicles should be parked in an orderly arrangement at a location which maintains access routes.

### STAGING LEVEL - I:

#### I. LEVEL I STAGING:

- A. This procedure will automatically apply to all regular alarm responses and will involve:
  - 1. The first Engine Company will respond directly to the scene and will operate to its best advantage.
  - 2. The first Ladder Company will respond directly to the scene and will place themselves to their best advantage, generally in front of the building.
  - 3. All other units (**regardless of alarm**) will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical operations with regard to access, direction of travel, water supply, etc. should be selected.
  - 4. All apparatus will pull map books and reference immediate fire area.

## STAGING LEVEL – I (cont'd):

- B. Staged Companies or units will, in normal response situations, report company designation, standing by and direction (“*Engine 1 staging at hydrant*”); it may be necessary to be more specific when reporting staging positions in extraordinary response situations. An acknowledgement is *not* necessary from either Dispatch or Command. Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command, unless they have become forgotten by Command; in such cases, after a reasonable amount of time, they will contact Command and readvise him/her of their staging status.
- C. These Staging procedures attempt to reduce routine traffic, but in no way should reduce effective communications or the initiative of officers to communicate. If staged companies observe *critical* tactical needs they will advise Command of such critical conditions and their actions.
- D. Companies should continue response to the scene until a company reports on the scene. While a first arriving company reports on the scene, Level I staging will begin within these guidelines.

## II. LEVEL II STAGING:

- A. Level II Staging will relate large, complex-type field situations requiring an on-scene reserve of companies and will involve formal staging in an area designated by Command. The Staging Area should be away from the Command Post and from the emergency scene in order to provide adequate space for assembly and for safe and effective apparatus movement. When Command announces a formal Staging Area, all responding companies will report to and remain in the Staging Area until assigned. When going to Level II staging, Command will formally announce “**Level II Staging**” and will give approximate location of the Staging Area. Level II staging will automatically supercede Level I Staging: Companies already staged in Level I will remain in Level I until assigned.
- B. When calling for assistance, Command should consider Level II Staging at the time of the call. This will be more functional calling for Level II Staging while units are enroute.
- C. Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this directive. In the absence of such an assignment, the first Fire Department Officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer, will notify Command of his/her arrival, and will assume “Staging Sector”, of the Staging Area.
- D. If the first arriving officer is a special service officer he/she will transfer Staging Sector to the first arriving *non-special service* company officer. In cases where the first Fire Department Officer arrives with his company, he/she will assign their personnel to report to Command for assignment.
- E. The radio designation for the Staging Officer, Area and function will be: “**Staging Sector**”. All communications will be between Staging and Command or Staging and “Operations” level if established.

STAGING LEVEL – II (cont'd):

- F. When requested by Command, the Staging Officer will verbally assign companies to report to specific sectors, telling them where and whom to report. He will then advise Command of the specific unit(s) assigned. The operating Sector Officer may then communicate directly with the company by radio.
- G. Staging will give Command periodic reports of available companies in Staging.
- H. The Staging Officer will also be responsible for the following functions:
  - Insure that all apparatus is parked in an appropriate manner.
  - Maintain a log of companies available in the Staging Area and inventory all specialized equipment that might be required at the scene.
  - Review with Command what resources must be maintained in the Staging Area and coordinate the request for these resources with Headquarters.
  - To assume a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged units.
- I. Unless otherwise instructed by Command, Staging will advise Command when the level of resources in the Staging Area is depleted to two Engine Companies and one Truck Company or less. Command will make a decision whether or not to call for additional units or to strike an additional alarm.
- J. Command may instruct Staging to maintain a base level of resources until further advised. In such circumstances, Staging will communicate directly with Headquarters to request additional units.