

	MULTI-FAMILY STRUCTURE FIRES		2014revB
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Procedure:

Size-Up Considerations

The size-up is one of the most critical components for the development of an incident action plan. The size-up provides an initial evaluation of the situation confronted by the first arriving unit or member. The first arriving officer, unit or member shall consider the following questions when preparing for an “On Scene” radio report and ensuing Incident Action Plan:

- What has happened?
- What is happening now?
- What is likely to happen?

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall consider the following factors when preparing for an “On Scene” radio report while only committing to what can be seen from the cab:

Description of Event

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall look at the building size, number of stories, occupancy, fire location, smoke conditions, visible victims and other features that help describe the conditions being faced by the first arriving officer, unit or member.

Action Taken

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall complete a 360 and transmit they will be conducting a 360 during the “On Scene” report. If other available resources are on scene, such as the Fire Investigation Technician (FIT), Community Safety Division (CSD), Chief and/or Captain, using them to complete the 360 may be utilized in place of the first arriving unit. If the first arriving officer, unit or member recognizes that this cannot be

accomplished upon arrival, the member shall transmit that a 360 cannot be completed or announce that a 360 was not completed during the “Follow Up” radio report.

Staging Location

The first arriving engine, truck and battalion chief shall respond in to the scene. However, the first arriving officer, unit or member may recommend a different placement for apparatus based on terrain or location of the involved structure.

All other units assigned to the incident shall stage at the last tactical option (i.e. hydrant for second arriving engine or intersection for truck).

Establishment of Command

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall assume and name command based on street address or location. The first arriving officer, unit or member can retain command or pass command to the battalion chief if determined to be a working incident. Verbalization of passing command to the battalion chief can occur during the “On Scene” report or during the “Follow Up” radio report. The actual upgrade of command will occur when the battalion chief arrives on scene of the working incident; however, the initial incident commander still has command until the battalion chief formally accepts it upon arrival.

Resource Needs

The first arriving officer, unit or member may address any immediate resource needs based on current conditions or events. Some examples of immediate resource needs are as follows:

- Victim rescue (e.g., VEIS Operations, single or multiple)
- EMS personnel for immediate patient care
- Upgrade to 2nd alarm
- Type of water supply needs or ability to obtain own water supply

“On Scene” Report

As mentioned earlier, the “On Scene” report is a description of what the first arriving officer, unit or member encounters. LFRA has adopted and modified the Blue Card Certification program to establish a standard method of initiating command. Therefore, the following is an example of the standard method of transmitting an “On Scene” report:

“200, Engine 6.... Engine 6 is on scene of a large, three-story multi-family apartment complex with fire and thick, black smoke showing from the Alpha/Bravo window on the second floor. E6 has established its own water supply, stretching the alley line for fire attack, have all units continue and stage. This will be ‘Main Street’ command. I’ll be passing command to Battalion 1 upon his arrival. I’ll be completing a 360. Upgrade to a second alarm.”

Incident Action Plan (IAP) Considerations

The development of the Incident Action Plan (IAP) is based on the conditions, actions and resources available to the incident commander. In reference to multi-family structure fires, it is imperative that the first arriving unit or member understand the need for established strategies and tactics to be used at the incident as they relate to the Incident Priorities.

The development of the IAP initially begins with the dispatch information, but does not get communicated until after the first arriving officer, unit or member arrives on scene and completes the 360 and transmits the “Follow Up” report. The “Follow Up” report shall serve as the foundation of the IAP along with the Incident Priorities.

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall consider the following factors when preparing for a “Follow Up” radio report and developing the IAP:

360 Complete

The 360 shall be completed by first arriving officer, unit or member if conditions, size of the structure and terrain permit. Again, other resources (FIT, CSD, Command Staff, etc.) may be utilized to complete the 360. This also serves as a benchmark and indicates that an Incident Action Plan is about to follow.

Location and Description of Fire

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall provide greater detail on the location of the fire and relay that information to incoming units during the “Follow Up” report.

If not noted on the initial size-up, this is where the first arriving unit or member can state the volume, velocity, density and color of the smoke conditions or provide a better idea of where the fire might be located and/or may have extended (next floor, attic, exposure, etc.).

Building Features

This is a critical component of the IAP as it will assist with the tactics to be used for the first arriving unit as well as incoming resources.

Apartment Building vs. Apartment Complex:

- Building (stand-alone multi-unit) which has 10 or fewer units, tactical challenges are less than complexes.
- Complex (multiple buildings) tactical challenge with arrangements of buildings as it relates to exposures, water supply, handline lengths, ladder/truck access, possible standpipes issues, master stream application, etc.

Critical building features that should be identified are building type/construction, special features (e.g., fire walls) and arrangement. Critical factors that should be relayed are extended hose lay operations, access issues, specific apparatus placement needs and any other features that may be an extreme hazard to incoming firefighters.

Strategy and Risk Profile

During the “Follow Up” report, the first arriving officer, unit or member shall transmit the risk profile of the incident (i.e., Very High, High, Medium or Low). A description of the risk profile is listed under “Benchmarks” of this guideline.

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall also transmit the strategy they will be deploying for the situation they face. Members shall select “Offensive” or “Defensive” strategy based on the fire involvement of the structure as well as the risk versus benefit analysis.

[Actions](#)

The actions of the first arriving officer, unit or member shall be described in simple terminology. This provides incoming resources a quick briefing on the course of action being taken by the first arriving officer, unit or member.

For example, the first arriving unit may state, *“E5 will be stretching an alley line through the alpha side stairwell for fire attack on the second floor. We’ll be securing our own water supply.”*

[Assignments](#)

The relay of fire ground tasks to incoming units is the final step of the IAP. Incoming resources have either been assigned to staging or they have been given tasks in alignment with the IAP and Incident Priorities.

It has been determined that the tasks for second arriving engines are generally the 2nd line and water supply (unless obtained by the first arriving unit). Potential assignments for the second arriving engine are listed below under “Company Level Functions.”

It has also been determined that the tasks for the first arriving truck or support company will be to conduct a vent/search assessment. Potential assignments based on fire conditions are listed below under “Company Level Functions.”

The first arriving unit or member shall have the ability to deviate from these predetermined functions based on fire conditions, victims or other potential hazards.

[Communications](#)

Once assignments have been given by the incident commander, the assigned units or members shall complete the communication loop upon arrival. If arriving units fail to

complete the communication loop, the incident commander shall repeat any needed information for clarification or confirm that the message has been received.

“Follow Up” Report

The “Follow Up” report is a description of what the first arriving unit or member encounters upon completion of a 360. LFRA has adopted and modified the Blue Card Certification program to establish a standard method of initiating command. Therefore, the following is an example of the standard method of transmitting a “Follow Up” report:

“All incoming units... 360 complete with a room and contents fire on the Alpha/Bravo corner of the 2nd floor. Fire is showing from the 2nd floor window with extension to the third floor and eaves on the Alpha side roof. This will be an offensive strategy, high risk profile. E6 will be stretching an alley line through the alpha side stairway for fire attack on the second floor. We’ll be securing our own water supply. Next due engine... 2nd line. First due truck... vent assessment and search.”

Company Level Functions

First Arriving Engine

The method for how an incident will unfold is often based on the actions and positioning of the first arriving engine. The responsibilities of the first arriving engine are often based on the decisions of the first arriving unit or member and the formulation of the IAP.

The following are some of the responsibilities of the first arriving engine:

- Position in a manner for the best tactical advantage in accordance with the Incident Priorities as well as consideration for future anticipated needs.
- Pull past the involved structure to allow the officer to see three sides.
- Provide room in front of the involved structure for ease of access for support companies or for the aerial device and to protect the most life/property loss potential.
- Development of initial “Incident Action Plan” and modes of operations (i.e., offensive or defensive) with Incident Priorities as the main focus.

- Provide and secure an adequate water supply (if within reasonable distance for the engineer to obtain on his/her own).
- Place the appropriately selected initial attack hand line into service.

Second Arriving Engine

The second arriving engine's responsibilities will be determined by the initial incident commander. These responsibilities may include the following, but are not limited to:

- Provide and secure an adequate water supply to 1st due if not established.
- Place the "2nd Line" into service. Either the floor above or, if no higher floor, look to protect the 1st line's hallway/stairwell/breezeway.
- Supply fire department connections, master streams or other fire suppression devices.
- Deploy other assigned hose lines.
- Provide room in front of the involved structure for ease of access for support companies or for the aerial device.

Due to the sheer size and potential complexity of the incident, a standard "Two-Box" structure fire system may not be established. After the incident commander has successfully completed an "upgrade" in command, the assuming incident commander will decide and determine the command structure based on the incident's anticipated needs; which will be received by visual and CAN reports. Based on the intel, fire extent and complexity, Divisions and Groups may be created.

Third Arriving Engine

The third arriving engine's responsibilities will be determined by the initial incident commander. These responsibilities may include the following, but are not limited to:

- Any additional assignments as determined by command.
- Establish the Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC)
- Establish water supply to the Charlie side of the structure for fire suppression operations.
- Support VEIS operations
- Deploy to a different level within the structure fire suppression operations.

- Supply fire department connections, master streams or other fire suppression devices.

Truck and/or Support Companies

The first arriving truck or support company's responsibilities will be determined by the incident commander. These responsibilities may include the following, but are not limited to:

- Ventilation – based on height and complexity, this will be the tower and/or aerial's initial operation if vertical ventilation is determined
- Search and rescue
- Forcible entry
- Ladder the building (secondary means of egress)
- Control utilities
- Salvage and overhaul
- Assist with fire cause determination

The first arriving truck officer should expect to be a working member of his or her crew based on the delegated assignment from Incident Command and the Incident Priorities.

Benchmarks

The following benchmarks are utilized with residential structure fires to ensure that the incident priorities are being obtained, as well as to determine that the appropriate risk profile is being assigned to the incident:

360 Complete

The 360 shall be completed by first arriving officer or member if conditions, size of the structure and terrain permit. This benchmark can also be completed by the battalion chief or with assistance from the officer of a second arriving apparatus.

Primary Search All Clear

This benchmark shall be completed by the crew(s) assigned “Search” by the incident commander. Completion of this benchmark may move the risk profile to a “medium risk” level.

Fire Under Control

“Fire Under Control” shall be determined when the main body of fire is knocked down, concealed spaces opened (if needed) and there is no fire extension. Overhaul work is still needed, but the fire is not going anywhere. Completion of this benchmark may move the risk profile to a “low risk” level.

Loss Stop

This benchmark shall be announced once overhaul and ventilation have been completed.

Risk Profile

The risk profile is established by the first arriving unit or member. The risk profile can be modified based on a change in conditions (offensive to defensive) or as the incident progresses from arrival to extinguishment (high to low). Additional information can be located in the LFRA ICS Guidelines.

Validation Summary:

No additional validation testing requested given the practices outlined in this document have been in use for an extended time.

Revision History:

Revision B-Updated by C. Pollema to reflect the current formatting. No change in content.

References:

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