

	WILDLAND FIRES		2014revB
	AUTHORED BY: Capt. Mark Lyons	FESSAM #: 5K.4	EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/28/2014
	APPROVED BY: Fire Chief Mark Miller <i>Mark Miller</i>		REVISION DATE: 9/28/2017

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 essentially provides an 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 size of the fire, fuel type, fuel continuity, weather or terrain influences, threatened structures or other special hazards and features that help describe the conditions being faced by the first arriving officer, unit or member.

Staging Location

The first arriving engine and battalion chief shall respond 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 fire.

All other units assigned to the incident shall stage at the last tactical option.

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.

Action Taken

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall attempt to scout the fire and transmit that they will be scouting the fire during the “On Scene” report. If the first arriving officer, unit or member recognizes that this cannot be accomplished upon arrival, the member shall transmit “Unable to complete scouting” during the “Follow Up” radio report.

If the first arriving officer, unit or member does not have obvious signs of smoke or fire, they shall transmit that they will be investigating during the “On Scene” report.

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 resources needs are as follows:

- Structure protection
- Left/Right flank fire attack
- Upgrade to Wildland 2nd Alarm
- Type of water supply needs or ability to obtain 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 3.... Engine 3 is on scene of a medium-sized, wind-driven wildland fire. Have all units continue and stage. This will be ‘Glade Road Command’. I’ll be passing command to Battalion 1 upon his arrival. Engine 3 will scout the fire.

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 wildland 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 begins with the initial dispatch information but does not get communicated until after the first arriving officer, unit or member arrives on scene and scouts the fire and transmits their “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:

Scouting Complete

Scouting shall be completed by the first arriving officer, unit or member if conditions, size of the fire and terrain permit. This also serves as a benchmark and indicates that an IAP is about to follow.

Fire Status

The first arriving officer, unit or member shall provide greater detail on the status 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 fuel model, slope and aspect, wind direction and estimated speed as well as any structures threatened or provide a better idea of needs and assignments.

Hazardous 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.

Hazardous features that should be relayed are fuel characteristics, terrain, wind, fire behavior and access issues.

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., 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 “Direct” or “Indirect” strategy based on the fire behavior 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, *“E3 will begin a direct attack on the right flank with a 1 ½” progressive hose lay.”*

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.

Potential assignments for the second arriving engine 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.

Communication

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 to 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 scouting. 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... Scouting complete, with a wildland fire burning in grass and brush on a south aspect on less than 10% slope, wind from the northwest at less than 5 mph, no structures threatened . This will be a direct attack on the right flank, low risk profile. Anchor point established at Engine 3. E3 will be stretching a 1 ½” progressive hose line on the right flank for fire attack. Next due company... spot on the anchor point and begin a direct attack on the left flank.

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
- Provide room for ease of access for additional companies
- Development of initial “Incident Action Plan” and modes of operations (i.e., direct or indirect) with Incident Priorities as the main focus
- Anticipate the need for an adequate water supply (portable tanks and/or tender shuttles)
- Place the appropriately selected initial attack hand line into service

In the established incident command system, the first arriving engine officer shall anticipate being assigned as a “Division or Group Supervisor” by the incident commander after an “upgrade” in command has been established.

Second Arriving Engine

The second arriving engine’s responsibilities will be determined by the initial incident commander. These responsibilities may include the following:

- Provide water supply
- Place the “2nd line” into service
- Deploy other assigned hose lines
- Structure protection
- Provide room for ease of access for additional companies

In the established incident command system, the second arriving engine officer shall anticipate being assigned as a “Division or Group Supervisor” by the incident commander after an “upgrade” in command has been established.

Third Arriving Engine (If Requested By Incident Command)

The third arriving engine shall be requested to the scene by the incident commander. The third arriving engine may be assigned the following responsibilities:

- Division or Group Supervisor
- Structure protection
- Evacuation

Benchmarks

The following benchmarks are utilized with wildland 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:

Scouting Complete

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

LCES In Place

This benchmark shall be completed by the crew(s) assigned to the incident. Completion of this benchmark should be aired by each crew before engaging in their assignment.

Anchor Point Established

This benchmark shall be completed by the first arriving company officer when they begin their “Direct or Indirect” fire attack.

Fire Contained

“Fire Contained” shall be determined when a containment line has been constructed around the perimeter of the fire and the threat of any fire escaping the containment line has been eliminated.

Fire Under Control

“Fire Under Control” shall be determined when the main body of fire is knocked down. Overhaul work is still needed but the fire is not going anywhere.

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 (Direct to Indirect or structure protection) 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:

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)

Incident Response Pocket Guide, PMS 461, NFES 001077 January 2014

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