

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

SOG #:	6.235	Effective Date:	9/26/2004
Title:	Fire Ground Operating Procedures	# of pages:	5
Category:	Fire Ground Operations	Classification:	Red

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to define a standard for firefighters to follow during critical events at an incident and to achieve safe fire ground operations.
2. **PROCEDURES:** It is the policy of South Portland Fire Department to act according to the standards provided within from the South Portland Fire Department's Standard Operating Guidelines pertaining to Safe Fire Ground Operations.

Risk Management: Operating at Emergency Incidents poses an inherent risk of injury – or worse, death. The purpose of this procedure is to describe the Regional Operating policy regarding risk assessment and safety management of emergency incidents.

We are committed to providing the safest possible work environment for our members. It is important that all members operating at incidents operate in a safe manner. Each must practice as a "Safe Person" for their own safety, as well as to minimize risk to others. Towards that goal, all members are expected to operate under the following risk management profiles.

- We Will risk our lives a lot, in a calculated manner, to save SAVABLE lives.
- We Will risk our lives a Little, in a calculated manner, to save SAVABLE property.
- We Will Not risk our lives at all for lives or property that are already Lost.

This risk management profile will be applied to all emergency incidents and will be continuously re-assessed throughout the incident operation.

When considering the SURVIVAL profile of any victims, members must consider the conditions present in the "compartment" or area of fire conditions or other conditions affecting survival. A fire in a rear bedroom of a house, with smoke throughout the house may allow a survivable environment if a search and rescue effort is initiated quickly. We may extend risk, in a calculated manner, with these conditions.

A significant fire in a residence with dense smoke under pressure to floor level throughout the building likely means victims could not survive. A very cautious, calculated rescue and fire control operation would be warranted.

A well-involved building would likely represent a zero survivability profile. Similar conditions in an abandoned building would indicate little survivability and little property to be saved and members should avoid an offensive fire fight.

Victims buried by a trench collapse or under water for 60 minutes or more, would be unlikely to survive therefore an extremely cautious and a well-planned, safe, recovery operation is required.

Rescuers should consider notification time, dispatch processing time, response time, and time on-scene as part of the calculation.

Actions in a calculated manner require:

- Incident Command established (where applicable)
- Proper personal protective equipment
- Accountability system established.
- Safety procedures in place.
- Continuous risk assessment by all members

Definitions:

Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmosphere

For this purpose, any area inside a structure or any area outside a structure that requires the use of self contained breathing apparatus for the protection from smoke products of combustion, toxic vapors, potentially harmful particulate matter or an oxygen deficient atmosphere.

IDLH Level Structure Fire (Working Fire)

Any fire that requires the advancement of a 1.75-inch or larger attack line and also requires the use of self contained breathing apparatus.

Rescue Team Back up Team

A designated two- (2) member rescue team (back up team) assigned to be present outside the IDLH atmosphere during the Initial Stage of an Operation. This two- (2) person team shall have full turn out gear on including SCBA's. All other equipment, which may be necessary, will be readily available. These people shall remain together and one shall serve as the accountability officer for persons entering and/or leaving the atmosphere. To insure the safety of personnel of the South Portland Fire Department, at no time shall the Incident Commander be considered as part of this team. It will further be the intent not to utilize the pump operator for this position with the exception of extenuating circumstances as designated by the incident commander.

Rapid Intervention Team

A specifically designated rescue team (minimum of two persons, maximum determined by incident) with full protective clothing, SCBA, hand tools, and a charged hose line, at the scene of an emergency operation beyond the initial stage. This team is designated to provide personnel for the rescue of fire department members operating at the incident should the need arise.

Initial Stage

The period of an incident where tasks are being undertaken by the first two (2) arriving companies with only one team assigned to work or operate in the IDLH atmosphere.

Operation Stage (All Hands)

The period of time after the Initial Stage until the incident is stabilized. Having deployed more than one (1) team operating in the IDLH atmosphere indicates this period of the incident.

Buddy System

Operating in teams of two or more firefighters. Under this system, no single firefighter shall be assigned a task to perform alone in an IDLH atmosphere.

Signal 1000

A signal 1000 is an alert tone transmitted over the radio so that all personnel become aware of a hazardous situation and hold all radio traffic not pertaining to the incident.

- **If actions are initiated that involve entering a structure, with less than four (4) on scene, due to an imminent life threatening situation to rescue trapped occupants, dispatch shall be immediately notified of said action. Dispatch shall re-transmit said action to all responding units that the first in company (ies) have deployed to a rescue mode. The next arriving company shall insure the initiation of a rescue team unless otherwise directed by command.**
- **If any “rescue team or Rapid Intervention team” is required to enter the IDLH atmosphere to rescue a fire fighter, dispatch shall be notified prior to entry. Dispatch shall at that point transmit a toned announcement to all units working and or responding to the incident that a fire fighter rescue is on progress.**
- **Upon activation that a firefighter rescue is in progress, dispatch will automatically indicate a “Signal 1000” and all non-essential radio traffic shall cease immediately. The incident commander shall then assign all necessary personnel and equipment to assist in the rescue as required.**

Exceptions for Imminent Life Hazards

- If upon arrival the incident commander finds an imminent or potentially imminent, life threatening situation where immediate action is required to prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted to commence with less than four (4) persons on the scene, when the probability of a rescue is made in accordance with normal size-up indicators.
- An imminent life-threatening situation is defined as one in which there are direct reports or persons inside, or signs of persons inside in accordance with normal size-up indicators.
- If actions are initiated that involve entering a structure, with less than four (4) on scene, due to an imminent life threatening situation to rescue trapped occupants, dispatch shall be immediately notified of said action.
- Dispatch shall re-transmit said action to all responding units that the first in company has deployed to a rescue mode. The next arriving company shall insure the initiation of a rescue team unless otherwise directed by command.

- In the event that a decision is made to enter a hazardous (IDLH) atmosphere prior to assembling four (4) persons on scene, the person making the decision shall forward a written report of his or her actions to the Chief of Department.
- Said report shall fully describe the condition (s) that warranted such action and shall be forwarded to the Chief of Department within twenty-four (24) hours of said incident.

Procedures:

Standard company operations assign basic fireground functions and activities to companies based upon the capability and characteristics of each type of unit.

Standard company operations assign major fireground functions to the particular company who can best accomplish the operation.

Standard company operations integrate the efforts of engine, ladder, and rescue companies to achieve effective rescue, fire control, and loss control activities.

Standard company operations increase the awareness and confidence of company members in the standard performance of other companies operating on the fireground.

Standard company operations reduce the amount and detail of orders required to get companies into action on the fireground.

The following items represent the standard operations that will normally be performed by engine, ladder, and rescue companies. These basic functions will provide the framework for field operations for these companies:

Engine/Company Functions:

- Search, rescue and treatment
- Stretch hoselines
- Operate nozzles
- Pump hoselines
- Loss control

Ladder /Company Functions:

- Search, rescue, and treatment
- Ventilate
- Forcible entry
- Raise ladders
- Provide access/check fire extension
- Utility control
- Provide lighting
- Operate ladder pipes (aerials and platforms only)
- Perform overhaul
- Extrication
- Loss control

Rescue Company Functions:

- Transportation of sick and injured to hospitals.
- Search, rescue, and treatment--Rescue companies should communicate commitment and location to Command and maintain a retrievable status for victim treatment and transportation.
- General fire fighting duties as assigned by Command.

In Level I Staging situations, first arriving engine, ladder, and rescue companies will perform these functions as required and ordered by Command. These companies will advise Command on the type of function they are performing.

Company officers will determine, based upon conditions and the risk management profile, the priority of the functions for their company unless otherwise ordered by Command.

This does not limit a company to only its listed functions. Every company will be expected to perform all basic functions safely within the limits of their capability, and it will be the on-going responsibility of Command to integrate tasks and functions as required with the on-scene units.

In the absence (or delay) of ladder company response, Command should assign ladder functions to an engine company: "Engine 11, perform ladder functions." In such cases, engine companies will perform all ladder functions within the capability of their company.

The assignment of these basic operations represents a standard fireground plan for tactical operations designed to improve the effectiveness and safety of all units working together. This plan should in no way limit the initiative of any officer and should enhance the decision making process of all officers by establishing a standard operational

3. REFERENCES:

- None

By Order Of:

Kevin W Guimond

Kevin W. Guimond
Fire Chief