

Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue

OPERATING PROCEDURE

No. 201

Minimum Staffing

Effective Date: June 27, 2017

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Revision Date: April 16, 2018

Forms:

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PURPOSE

To define the meaning of a minimally staffed suppression unit and methodology behind the replacement of understaffed units during emergency response in an effort to increase firefighter safety and operational efficiency.

SCOPE

Applies to all personnel operating with the Fauquier County Department of Fire-Rescue as well as the Fauquier County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association and its associated departments.

I. PREFACE

This operating procedure defines and outlines the meaning and purpose behind recognition and replacement of minimally staffed suppression apparatus. This policy is to ensure a timely and adequate response capable of mitigating any emergency call type encountered and dispatched for service.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Minimum Staffing** is the minimum number of qualified personnel that constitutes a staffed suppression apparatus
- B. **Suppression Apparatus** is any unit dispatched for the intent of mitigating fire and rescue hazards associated with firefighting or rescue operations.
- C. **Understaffed** means a unit is not meeting the minimum staffing definition.
- D. **Driver Operator** is someone meeting the pre-designated qualifications set forth within the Fauquier County approved driving manual.
- E. **Officer in Charge (OIC)** is personnel approved per department chief or his designee to make decisions associated with a functional response unit.
- F. **Firefighter** is personnel having completed an approved course in firefighting and approved by his/her chief officer to act in an IDLH environment.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

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- G. **IDLH** is any environment deemed to be Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health.
- H. **Primary Response Unit** is a unit deemed to be the primary responsibility of an individual fire and or rescue company by the department chief.
- I. **Dual Response** is a procedure in which units or stations are placed in a state of deficiency therefore requesting predesignated response from neighboring departments or apparatus to ensure adequate response.
- J. **Approved Driving Manual** is the document adopted that governs the process for qualifying personnel to drive and operate apparatus.

III. Minimum Staffing

- A. Minimum staffing is defined above as the minimum number of qualified personnel to constitute a staffed suppression apparatus. Suppression apparatus should be considered any unit dispatched for the purposes and intent of fire and rescue operation. Minimum Staffing shall be considered as the following:
 - 1. Engine Company, Rescue Company, Truck Company (3 personnel)
 - OIC: Personnel meeting the definition of firefighter and approved by his/her chief to make decisions associated with a functional response unit.
 - Driver Operator: An individual meeting the requirements set forth in approved driving manual
 - Firefighter: Personnel having completed an approved course in firefighting and approved by his/her chief to operate within an IDLH environment.
 - 2. Tanker (1 personnel)
 - Driver Operator: An individual meeting the requirements set forth in approved driving manual
 - 3. ALS Ambulance (2 personnel) (driver and Crew 1 may be the same individual)
 - Driver: personnel certified and meeting the requirements set forth in approved driving manual
 - Crew 1: personnel certified at the EMT-Basic level per current state and local jurisdiction requirements
 - Crew 2: personnel certified and eligible to provide care at the EMT-Enhanced, Intermediate, or Paramedic level in compliance with state and local jurisdiction requirements

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4. BLS Ambulance (2 personnel)

- Driver: personnel certified and meeting the requirements set forth in approved driving manual
- Crew 1: Personnel certified and eligible to provide care at the EMT-Basic level by state and local jurisdiction requirements

IV. Understaffed Units

- A. Any unit making an emergency response for the purposes of mitigating an incident requiring firefighting or rescue operations which does not meet the above criteria for minimum staffing.

V. Replacement of Understaffed Units

- A. Any properly staffed units, as defined in section III, making a response to mitigate a fire or EMS emergency incident will mark responding on the radio by stating their unit identifier is responding (e.g. “Engine 22 responding”).
- B. Any unit responding that does not meet minimum staffing as defined in section III will mark responding on the radio by stating their unit identifier is responding understaffed (e.g. “Engine 22 responding understaffed”).
- C. Any unit responding to an event type listed in section V.F. and is understaffed shall immediately request to be replaced with the next due unit in an effort to secure the minimum staffing standard set forth above.
- D. During incident response communications will prompt the responding command officer of any units which have met the criteria associated with being understaffed and not requested replacement, it will then be the responsibility of the responding command level officer to ensure the additional resources needed to meet the minimum staffing requirement are requested.
- E. If incident command is established prior to the arrival of the command level officer, all requests for additional resources to meet the minimum staffing standard should be coordinated through the incident commander. Communications personnel will then inform the responding command officer of the incident commander’s request.

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F. The following are communications call types which shall be deemed “IDLH” or manpower intensive. These call types require understaffed units to request additional resources to supplement the incident and adequately address the hazard presented:

- Above/Below Grade Rescue
- Accident w/Entrapment
- Accident w/Entrapment I66
- Active Shooter
- Aircraft Accident
- Barn Fire
- Bomb Threat
- Building Collapse Dwelling
- Chimney Fire
- Chimney Fire Multi-Family
- CO Alarm w/Symptoms
- Collapse Commercial
- Commercial Vehicle Fire
- Fuel Leak Over 15
- Hazmat Incident
- Industrial Accident
- Inside Gas Leak Commercial
- Inside Gas Leak Dwelling
- Outside Fire w/Exposure
- Overturned Tanker
- Smoke Odor Inside
- Structure Fire Commercial
- Structure Fire Dwelling
- Structure Fire Institutional
- Structure Fire Multi-Family
- Structure Fire Schools In
- Train Accident
- Vehicle Fire Commercial
- Vehicle into Building
- Water Rescue

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VI. Dual Response Criteria

- A. Any department chief or his/her designee may choose to place their respective station or apparatus on “dual response”.
- B. “Dual Response” may be requested during operational periods when a known shortage of staffing for primary response units exists. It shall be the duty of the respective chief officer or his/her designee to ensure appropriate response capabilities and timely response to all emergency responses.
- C. During periods of “Dual Response” the individual station will be provided with a courtesy tone and the next due station will be added automatically to ensure limited or no delay in services occurs.
- D. The procedure for placing a station or unit on “dual response” is defined simply by making contact with communications and requesting to be placed on “dual response”.
- E. “Any unit or station placed on “dual response” will be noted within the twice daily CAD pages provided by communications.

VII. EMS Unit Response

- A. In regard to EMS staffing and dispatch, communications will continue to follow the established guidelines which states they are to dispatch the closest appropriately staffed station given the call type.

- 1. Excerpts from established policy:

“An adequate response shall be met when an ambulance responds with enough personnel to transport a patient.”

“Fauquier will continue to tone EMS units until a staffed transport capable ambulance is enroute.”