



PURPOSE

This policy provides information on the staging function as it relates to Incident Command.

POLICY

Personnel reporting to the scene of an incident shall report to a designated staging area, unless otherwise instructed by Command. When the IC has not defined an assignment for on-scene or responding resources, staging shall be established. For structure fire responses, the staging area for personnel shall be at the first arriving engine company.

Staging – Basic Operational Approach

The objective of staging procedures is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

Effective utilization of these procedures will:

1. Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
2. Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
3. Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
4. Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
5. Allow Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
6. Provides a resource pool from which Command may assign units and resources at his/her leisure.

Staging involves two levels: **LEVEL I** and **LEVEL II**

Level I Staging

Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents with two or more companies responding.

During any multi-company response, companies should continue responding to the scene until a company reports on the scene. In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers shall utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion.

Once a company announces arrival on the scene, Level I Staging will be implemented in the following manner:

The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate operations.

The first arriving ladder company will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate operations.

Approved

Fire Chief



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The first chief officer will go directly to the scene and assume Command

The second arriving engine company will position to provide a maximum of possible tactical options regarding access, direction of travel, water supply, etc. If the second arriving company is assigned water supply, the apparatus should be positioned for the next step of the operation (staging at the first-in engine for reverse lay, FDC, etc.)

All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command.

Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command. If it becomes apparent Command has forgotten the company is in a staged position, the company officer shall contact Command and advise him/her of their staged status.

These staging procedures attempt to reduce unnecessary radio 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.

Level II Staging

Level II Staging is utilized when Command desires to maintain a reserve of resources on-scene and when the need to centralize resources is required. Large incidents may require a formal staging area under the direction of a Staging Area Manager. If Command does not assign an individual to this function, it shall be performed by the first arriving officer in Staging.

When an incident is escalating or has not yet been stabilized, sufficient resources to meet potential incident development should be available in Staging until the incident has been stabilized.

Command shall establish Staging by defining its location and communicating this information to the Dispatch Center. The Dispatcher shall inform all responding resources of the location of staging.

The Staging Area should be established in such a manner that resources can respond immediately when assigned. Apparatus shall not be in a position that requires movement of other units or personnel to respond.

The Staging Area Manager shall check in resources (individuals or companies), respond to requests for resources, keep Command or Operations informed of the status of resources (including availability) in staging and maintain status of resources in staging.

Resources in Staging shall retain integrity (remain with their company) and be available for immediate assignment and deployment.

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Personnel in Staging shall be assigned to an apparatus or formed into crews. Establishment of a leader or officer is essential in order to reinforce the “Unity of Command” concept. All personnel should know to whom they report.

To reduce communication loads on Command, the Staging Area Manager shall verbally dispatch resources when requested by Command.

Command or Operations shall request on-scene resources through the Staging Area Manager and shall specify where and to whom those resources shall report.

If a formal staging area is established, a separate radio channel shall be assigned for the incident to minimize interference with other incidents.

Staging can also facilitate the formation of Task Forces or Strike Teams. Task Forces and Strike Teams should have common communications and an identified leader. If the leaders do not have communications capability with Command or Operations, a radio should be provided if available. This is particularly important when mutual-aid companies are operating.

Approved

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