



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:
Section:
Original Date:
Revised Date:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide information on the use of safety practices, traffic calming devices and operational deployment at incident scenes in and around the roadway.

POLICY

This policy clearly defines the operational practices for the Russellville Fire Department when operating on vehicular roadways. This procedure is designed to provide maximum protection and safety for personnel operating in or near moving vehicular traffic. Members shall always operate from a defensive posture on roadways. Moving traffic is an immediate threat to firefighter safety and shall be treated as such. Incidents that may involve the use of this policy include car fires, motor vehicle accidents, medical emergencies, natural gas leaks near roadways, and even structural fires. Any incident that involves equipment, apparatus, or personnel operating near moving vehicular traffic should be considered applicable to this policy.

The following rules shall be considered fundamental while operating at roadway incidents:

1. Never trust the motoring public.
2. Stage apparatus in a defensive posture to protect the incident scene.
3. ALL emergency personnel will use high visibility ANSI-compliant traffic vests.
4. Reduce the use of warning lights to block the right-of-way.
5. Use traffic cones and warning signs early.
6. Remove bystander/civilian vehicles from the roadway as soon as possible to reduce congestion.

All emergency personnel are at great risk of injury or death while operating in or near moving traffic. There are several specific procedures that should be taken to protect all company members and emergency service personnel at the incident scene.

Roadway Incident Operations

Roadway emergencies pose a high risk to emergency personnel because of the motoring public. It is the responsibility of local law enforcement to manage traffic; however the RFD will protect the incident scene and conduct necessary traffic measures in accordance with the most current version of the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

The first-arriving non-ambulance apparatus will position itself to protect the scene, patients and emergency personnel. The first apparatus should block the immediate area to establish a physical barrier between the crash scene and approaching vehicular traffic.

Approved

Fire Chief



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Apparatus should be parked at an angle of 30 degrees away from the curb, upstream of any traffic incident. This is referred to as block positioning. This is the preferred method of positioning and the safest. There are two types of block positioning, left front (Figure 2) and right front (Figure 3). The driver's side front bumper is considered left front and the company officer's side is considered right front.

At a minimum at least one lane next to the incident lane should be closed when prudent to do so. Additional lanes of traffic may be closed, if needed. When possible, it is best to keep traffic moving to prevent additional accidents further upstream on the initial incident.

During some incidents it may become necessary to dispatch, or have dispatched, an additional fire company to take a blocking position further upstream to increase the warning time for oncoming traffic. During highway operations all hoselines deployed shall be pulled from the protected zone, not near vehicular traffic.

During daytime operations all emergency lights shall be left on to warn drivers. During nighttime operations, however, headlights should be turned off and warning lights should be reduced to just those necessary to properly warn oncoming traffic. Crews should exit from the non-traffic side of the apparatus whenever possible and should be diligent to close compartment and apparatus doors.

Traffic safety vests shall be utilized by all department members on a roadway incident scene. The only exception to this rule will be firefighters engaged in active firefighting activities. Bunker gear does not provide the same reflectivity or fluorescence as ANSI-compliant traffic safety vests.

Protective Equipment

The following safety equipment is available:

1. Chevron
2. LED Arrow Stick
3. Structural PPE
4. Helmet
5. Brush Jacket/Pants
6. Safety Vests
7. Safety Glasses/Goggles
8. Cones
9. Emergency Lighting

All of these items shall be deployed at all traffic incidents as soon as practical after arrival. It is the responsibility of the apparatus operator to properly stage the fire apparatus to block the right-of-way and distribute the traffic cones. Traffic cones should be placed and retrieved while facing oncoming traffic. Cones should be placed 300 feet upstream of the blocking apparatus to provide for adequate warning to drivers. Cones should be tapered in the direction in which traffic flow is to be directed and spaced approximately fifteen feet apart. The RFD shall only use a minimum of 28" upright traffic cones with dual reflective collars. All other cones will not be acceptable for use on apparatus for emergency scene purposes.

Approved

Fire Chief



Operational Scene Setup

The incident scene should be set up so that the rear of a fire apparatus is the first vehicle to be seen in the upstream lanes of the emergency incident. The incident should be framed with traffic cones so that adequate protection can be provided for responders. Law enforcement officers investigating the scene and ambulances should park in the protected zone downstream of the fire apparatus and within the area framed by cones. The photo below (Figure 1) demonstrates a desirable traffic incident management scene setup.

(Figure 1)



High-Volume, Limited Access Highway Operations

High-volume, limited-access highways specifically include Interstate 40, but could describe other multi-lane roadways within the RFD response areas. A desire to keep the traffic flowing on these high-volume roadways is inherent in all operations. When deemed necessary by the incident commander for the protection of personnel and patients involved, any or all lanes may be shut down. This however should be a rare occurrence and should be exercised for the shortest time possible.

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Kirk Stone".

Fire Chief



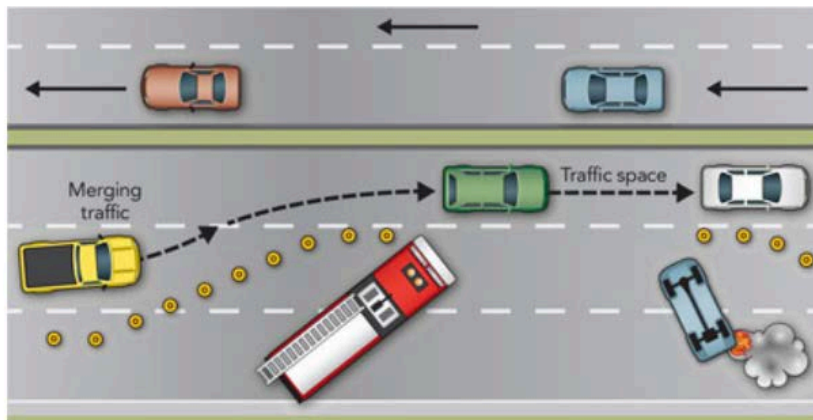
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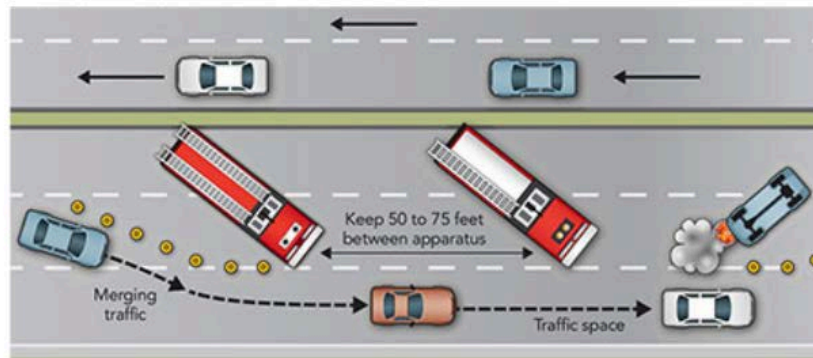
Multi-lane designation shall occur based on the direction of traffic flow with lanes designated as left, center, and right. Shoulders shall be referred to as left shoulder or right shoulder. The first arriving company should establish command and begin traffic control by blocking the primary affected lane(s) and shunting traffic accordingly. This company should communicate to additional companies the direction of travel with accurate incident location and specific assignments for apparatus positioning. For example an incoming unit might be told to park safely in the protected area or “block upstream of the incident in the eastbound I-40 right lane and right shoulder.”

When blocking more than one traffic lane, the initial apparatus should be placed approximately 100’ from the incident with the upstream apparatus positioned at least 100’ but not greater than 300’ from the first arriving unit. The upstream apparatus will position in a manner that allows traffic to move to the left or right with an area of transition prior to reaching the initial apparatus. When patient care or extrication efforts are required the rescue, medic unit, and command vehicle shall be positioned in the safe area established by the blocking apparatus or downstream of the incident.

(Figure 2)



(Figure 3)



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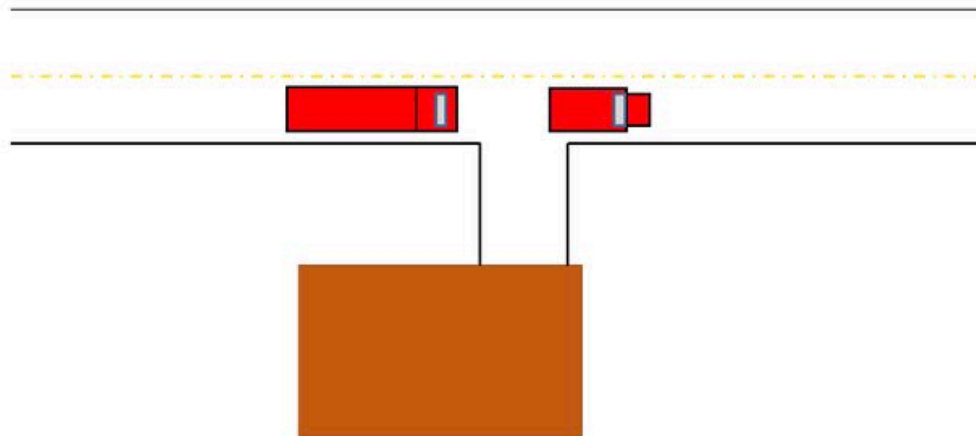


It is appropriate to position apparatus with the pump panel facing the car fire for shielding the pump operator from traffic and the crew fighting fire at the same time. For example, in the above figure, if the car fire were in the far right lane, it would be appropriate to use the same right front positioning to protect the driver and crew. The second-due apparatus should position left-front behind the apparatus to indicate the direction in which traffic should flow.

Surface Street Operations

1. The first arriving engine company shall position the apparatus so as to provide protection of the incident scene. Apparatus positioning shall be determined by actions to be taken during operations.
2. For medical incidents, patient loading zones are the priority for protected areas. Position apparatus to protect this area, using the apparatus as a shield. Apparatus should be positioned before the driveway if possible (Figure 4).

(Figure 4)



3. For fire incidents, placement of apparatus will be determined by operations required and be determined by the company officer. For multi-company operations and extended incidents the street may be completely closed off until operations are complete.

References:

Traffic Incident Management
Guide to IAFC Model Policies and Procedures for Emergency Vehicle Safety
Best Practices for Emergency Vehicle and Roadway Operations Safety in the Emergency Services

Approved

Fire Chief