

	TRAVIS COUNTY ESD #5 MANCHACA FIRE RESCUE Department Policy / Best Practices	B203
	Authorized by:  Fire Chief Chris Barron	Effective: 1/1/2020 Rescinds: Reference: Application: Shift Personnel
Split Crew Response		

I. Purpose

On occasion, a call type dictates that multiple apparatus be brought to the scene for the right tools to be present to address the incident. Splitting a crew to deliver multiple apparatus is an acceptable practice as long as crew members have been properly trained and are qualified to respond in their delegated role.

II. Policy/Best Practices

A. Prerequisites for split response. In order to respond in a split crew configuration there must be a reasonable need for the capabilities of the two vehicles. This may be derived from the call type, familiarity with the location, or call text/dispatch information.

1. **Qualifications.** In order to respond multiple units, there must be personnel on duty with the qualifications to drive and operate each apparatus.

B. Discretion to split crew. The Officer should consider splitting the crew to bring more than one apparatus to an incident for the following call types:

1. **Wildland incident.** For Grass, Light Brush, and Brush alarms, consideration should be given to responding with the first out engine and the brush truck. A Driver/Operator or Lieutenant rank individual should respond on the brush truck along with a Firefighter. The other Firefighter should respond on the engine with the remaining supervisor level member (DO or LT).
2. **Structure fire incident with no or limited hydrant coverage.** In areas with no hydrants or poorly supplied hydrants (in district or outside of district), consideration should be given to responding with a tender or tenders. This may occur in a couple of ways, depending on Officer discretion:
 - a. **Engine 501 plus Tender.** When the crew is operating from Engine 501, the crew may split with 3 members on the engine and one qualified member bringing one of the tenders for additional water supply.

b. **Engine 511 with or without Tender 501.** If the crew is already operating on Engine 511, they may directly respond to the incident as a full crew or split with one member bringing Tender 501.

c. **Transfer to Engine 511.** A crew that is currently assigned to Engine 501 may elect to transfer to Engine 511 and respond with that unit in lieu of Engine 501. Due to the equipping of Engine 511, the crew should only need to transfer their PPE and ensure they have a radio on them in order to respond.

3. **Hazardous Condition.** Large vehicles (18-wheelers, buses, etc.) on fire are typically dispatched or upgraded to a hazardous condition call type. These incidents may require additional water supply than typical apparatus water tanks to extinguish. A tender response in addition to the engine response should be considered. This is especially true for incidents on the interstate, where hydrants are not readily accessible.

C. **Dispatch Staging.** When making apparatus additions/changes in a response, Dispatch must be notified of the appropriate status for the involved units.

1. **Additional units.** When adding an additional unit to the response, the Officer or the member responding the additional apparatus must inform Dispatch of the response. This may be accomplished by radio or use of the self-assign button on the MDC incident screen.

2. **Transferring units.** If the entire crew is transferring to another apparatus and leaving the regular unit in station (typically ENG501), Dispatch must be informed that the regular apparatus is not responding and needs to be placed out of service. This will prevent an accidental dispatch of an unstaffed apparatus while the crew is responding on other apparatus.

3. **Statusing and return to service.** The personnel on any additional responding apparatus is responsible for properly staging the unit throughout the incident (responding, onscene, clear, available station, etc.). Upon return to station, non-frontline units should be placed "Available station, Reserve Status".

D. **Out of station response.** If the crew is dispatched to an incident while away from the station, they shall not typically return to the station to split into a second apparatus unless the request for response was for a specific apparatus or the response results in passing by the station. Even if passing by the station, it will be the Officer's discretion as to whether to divert to pick up the second apparatus.

E. **Utilization of crew on arrival.**

1. **Wildland incidents.** On arrival, the brush truck crew will typically engage in fire attack operations. The engine crew's duties may vary depending on incident needs. Possibilities for the engine crew include fire attack from a fixed position, water supply and fill site for brush trucks, structural protection, or command post to oversee and direct incident operations.

2. **Responses with tender(s).** When responding with one or both tenders, a decision must be made on arrival as to the water supply strategy.
 - a. **Nursing operation.** If the decision is made to supply water through a stationary nursing operation, the driver of the second tender shall position as close as practical to the attack engine and then rejoin the Officer to provide a crew of three for assignment on the fireground. The driver of the first unit (Engine or Engine/Tender) shall be responsible for operating both apparatus and managing the nursing operation.
 - b. **Shuttle operation.** If the decision is made to supply water through a shuttle operation, the entire crew will focus on establishing the shuttle. This may be through the setup of dump tanks, drafting, and fill site operations or through direct transfer to the attack or backup pumper. If not established, the Officer may suggest to Command that they assume the Water Supply Group Supervisor role.