	Williamson County Fire Chiefs Association **Capitol Area Fire Chiefs Association** **Central Texas Regional Procedures**	
#03	**STRUCTURE FIRE INCIDENTS STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**	Adopted October 1, 2021 UPDATED December 6, 2023

PURPOSE

To provide the safest possible fireground work environment for all Williamson County and Travis County Fire Department personnel operating at structure fire incidents with automatic aid response, recognize the inherent risks at every scene, simplify decision-making requirements under potentially stressful situations and to meet the requirements of the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP).

BACKGROUND

Information contained in this standard operating guideline (SOG) is to be considered an overview of structural firefighting operations. While operating at emergency incidents poses an intrinsic risk to firefighters, fire departments can minimize the potential casualties to firefighters by following common operating guidelines and accepted safety practices.

On February 1, 2020 an Automatic Aid Agreement commenced between members of the Capitol Area Fire Chiefs Association (CAFCA) and the Williamson County Fire Chiefs Association (WCFCA). Central Texas Regional Procedure #02 *Structure Fire Incidents SOG* is a cooperative effort between all members to ensure personnel and resources operate in a like manner across Williamson and Travis Counties. The foundations for this regional procedure are the *Williamson County Fire Chiefs Association Regional Procedure #06 – Incident Command System* and the *Austin Fire Department A101.4 – Fireground Operations.*

DEFINITIONS

Aerial Apparatus: A vehicle equipped with an aerial ladder or aerial platform (Truck – aerial ladder platform, Ladder – straight aerial ladder or Quint – straight aerial ladder with hose and water tank)

Backup: The initial tactical assignment of deploying a backup hoseline and when needed, water tank transfer to the apparatus performing Fire Attack. Deploying a backup hose line is performed by a team of at least two firefighters who are in the same level of protective equipment as the fire attack team, and are positioned to provide protection and/or rescue of the interior crews.

Chief Officer: A responder assigned to a Command Vehicle that has a "Command Element" capability to respond to an incident.

Blitz Attack: Using a solid or straight stream to quickly knock down and reset the fire from the exterior prior to an interior attack. This is a tactic used during the offensive strategy.

Branch: A supervisory level established in either the operations or logistics function to provide a span of control. [NFPA 1561]

Command: The incident commander or the incident command function.

Companies/Crews/Teams: Groups of two or more individuals who have been assigned a common task, are in communication with each other, coordinate their activities and support the safety of one another.

Division: A supervisory level established to divide the incident into geographic areas of operation [NFPA 1561]

Fire Attack: The initial tactical assignment of fire confinement and/or extinguishment.

Flow Path: The path between an inlet opening and an exhaust opening that allows the movement of heat and smoke from a higher-pressure area within the fire area towards lower-pressure areas accessible via doors, windows and other openings.

Group: A supervisory level established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. [NFPA 1561]

Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) Atmosphere: any atmosphere that poses an immediate hazard to life or produces irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere. IDLH atmospheres include unknown atmospheres, oxygen deficient atmospheres, and atmospheres that contain concentrations of toxic, corrosive, or asphyxiate substances. This will require Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Incident Safety Officer: a member of the "Command Staff" who works directly under and with Command to help manage the risks that firefighters face at emergencies.

Interior Structural Firefighting: the physical activity of fire suppression, rescue or both, inside of buildings or enclosed structures that are involved in a fire situation beyond the incipient stage. These conditions involve an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health, (IDLH), atmosphere. (TCFP Chapter 421.5 [25])

Inside Division: The Division Supervisor responsible for the fire area inside of the structure. This area would be the entire interior of a typical single-family dwelling. However, in a multi-family, commercial, or high-rise structure, this area may only be a portion or a floor of the structure. The tactical functions of fire attack, Inside Truck Work, backup lines, overhaul, and secondary search are performed in this area. This IMS position will normally be assigned to the Company Officer performing Inside Truck Work.

Inside Truck: The initial tactical assignment of Forcible Entry, Horizontal Ventilation, Primary Search, Checking for Fire Extension, and Salvage. Any Company may be assigned Inside Truck Work.

Incipient Stage Fire: a fire that is in the initial or beginning stage and that can be controlled or extinguished by portable fire extinguishers, Class II standpipes or small hose systems, without the need for protective clothing or breathing apparatus (TCFP Chapter 421.5 [24]). Any interior structure fire beyond the incipient stage is considered to be an IDLH atmosphere.

Level 1 Staging: Staging of resources responding to an initial alarm that have not yet been given an assignment by SOG or Command. Engines should stage at hydrants close to the scene and all other apparatus should stage in a location that provides the maximum of possible tactical options regarding access and potential positioning.

Level 2 Staging: A centralized staging location used for staging resources at multiple alarm incidents.

Medic Unit: An EMS ambulance staffed with a minimum of one ALS system credentialed Paramedic and one credentialed EMT.

On-Deck: A tactical assignment for resources to be staged for use in a Division or Group.

Outside Division: The Division Supervisor responsible for the areas not assigned to the Inside Division. This area would be the entire exterior of a structure of a typical single-family dwelling. However, in a multi-family, commercial, or high-rise structure, this area may also include sections or floors of the structure that are out of the fire area. The tactical functions of Outside Truck, exposure protection, water supply, RIC, and defensive operations readiness are performed in this area. This IMS position will normally be assigned by the Company Officer performing Outside Truck Work.

Outside Team: Two fire protection personnel who remain outside the IDLH to comply with the TCFP two-in/two-out rule. One member of the outside team must actively monitor the status of the fire protection personnel inside the IDLH and cannot be assigned any other duties.

Outside Truck: The initial tactical assignment of Laddering, Horizontal and Vertical Ventilation, Additional Forcible Entry, Utility Control, and Salvage. Any Company may be assigned Outside Truck Work.

Pumping Apparatus: A vehicle equipped with a fire pump and hose for fire attack and water supply (normally an Engine, a Quint may also be used to fulfill that assignment).

Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (RIC): A minimum of two fully equipped responders who are on site and assigned specifically to initiate the immediate rescue of injured, lost or trapped responders. [NFPA 1561] However, for an increased level of firefighter safety, a complete company of three of four members should be assigned as RIC when possible.

Recycle: A company refilling their air bottles while maintaining accountability to their assigned Division or Group.

Rehab: An Intervention designed to mitigate against the physical, physiological, and emotional stress of fire fighting in order to sustain a members' energy, improve performance, and decrease the likelihood of on-scene injury death. [NFPA 1584]

Rescue Unit: A special service apparatus equipped with firefighting, hazmat and technical rescue equipment and is staffed with members who maintain advanced levels of training and expertise in technical rescue disciplines.

Squad: A pickup truck or brush truck type vehicle that is normally staffed with two members. A Squad cannot replace a pumping apparatus or aerial apparatus in a response plan. However, a Squad may respond to a structure fire incident as an addition to the response plan and be giving an appropriate assignment by Command.

Working Structure Fire: a fire within a building that requires the deployment of a fire service hoseline for extinguishment.

Ventilation-Controlled Fire: The point in a fire's growth when the size of the fire becomes limited due to the available oxygen which creates a potential for rapid fire progression.

Water Supply: The initial tactical assignment of providing a sustained (hydrant or tender) water supply to the initial apparatus performing Fire Attack.

Water Supply Group Supervisor: An IMS assignment to manage the resources that are responsible for providing the water supply necessary for a structure fire incident.

PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

A. Auto Aid departments shall develop and maintain departmental policies that are in compliance with this Regional Structure Fire Incidents SOG.

B. Auto Aid departments shall develop and maintain departmental policies that are in compliance with TCFP rules contained within sections 435.15 Operating At Emergency Incidents and 435.17 Procedures for Interior Structural Fire Fighting (2-In / 2-Out Rule).

C. The WCFCA/CAFCA Incident Management System shall be used at all structure fire incidents (see Central Texas Regional Procedure #01 Incident Management System).

D. All structure firefighting operations shall be conducted with fire service incident priorities as the overall focus:
   1. Life Safety – The First Priority for scene operations. Life safety refers to those activities and operations necessary to ensure emergency personnel life safety as well as civilian life safety. Fire extinguishment, evacuation of occupants and the search for and rescue of trapped and threatened civilians are integral components of the life safety priority.
   2. Incident Stabilization – The Second Priority. Incident Stabilization refers to those activities and operations necessary to bring an incident under manageable control.
   3. Property Conservation – The Third Priority. Property Conservation refers to those activities and operations aimed at reducing property and environmental damage.
   4. Societal Restoration -- strategies to return public and private sector functions to normal levels.

RESPONSE

A. Each Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) shall determine the appropriate response plans for the alarm types within their jurisdiction. Per the Automatic Aid Agreement, these response plans shall be rostered with the geographically closest and most resource appropriate unit(s) based upon resource typing within the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, regardless of jurisdiction. (Automatic Aid Agreement) Response plans will meet the minimum requirements for number of firefighters to respond to structure fires per NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1500. Residential Fire – 16, 17 if aerial used, Commercial/Apartment – 27, 28 if aerial in use, High Rise – 42, 43 if fire pump in use.

FIREFIGHTER SAFETY

A. Two-In/Two-Out
   1. In accordance with TCFP §435.17 Procedures for Interior Structural Fire Fighting:
      a. a team of at least four fire protection personnel must be assembled before an interior fire attack can be made when the fire has progressed beyond the incipient stage;
      b. at least two fire protection personnel to enter the IDLH atmosphere and remain in visual or voice (not radio) contact with each other;
         i. Visual means that the fire protection personnel must be close enough to see each other.
         ii. Voice means that the fire protection personnel of the entry team must be close enough to speak to one another without the use of radios.
      c. at least two fire protection personnel remain located outside the IDLH atmosphere to perform rescue of the fire protection personnel inside the IDLH atmosphere;
      d. all fire protection personnel engaged in interior structural fire fighting use self-contained breathing apparatus and be clothed in a complete set of protective clothing;
      e. all fire protection personnel located outside the IDLH atmosphere be equipped with appropriate retrieval equipment where retrieval equipment would contribute to the rescue of the fire protection personnel that have entered the IDLH atmosphere;
      f. one of the outside fire protection personnel must actively monitor the status of the inside fire protection personnel and not be assigned other duties. The second outside fire protection personnel may be assigned to an additional role, including, but not limited to, incident commander, safety officer, driver-operator, command technician or aide, or fire fighter/EMS

personnel, so long as this individual is able to perform assistance or rescue activities without jeopardizing the safety or health of any fire protection personnel working at the scene;

g. the fire protection personnel outside the IDLH atmosphere must remain in communication (including, but not limited to, radio) with the fire protection personnel in the IDLH atmosphere. Use of a signal line (rope) as a communications instrument for interior fire fighting is not permitted by the commission. This does not preclude the use of rescue guide ropes (guide line or lifeline or by what ever name they may be called) used during structural searches; and
h. each outside fire protection personnel must have a complete set of protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus, immediately accessible for use if the need for rescue activities inside the IDLH atmosphere is necessary.
i. The fire department shall comply with the 2-in/2-out rule as described in this section except in an imminent life-threatening situation when immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of four fire protection personnel are assembled.

B. Backup Team
1. According to Texas law, whenever an offensive attack is made on an interior structure fire, two firefighters must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere and monitor the firefighters inside the structure. However, it is not likely that this "outside team" would be in position or equipped to rescue a downed firefighter. Therefore, a backup team should be established as soon as possible to be able to assist the outside team in the event of a firefighter rescue.

C. Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (RIC)
1. RIC should normally be assigned from the first alarm complement to ensure the highest level of safety possible for the firefighters.
2. The Rapid Intervention Company should:
   a. Obtain the RIC equipment, deploy a dry hose line or identify an existing hoseline that can be used and then announce that RIC has been established and its location.
   b. Assume the outside team responsibilities in accordance with the Two-In / Two-Out rule.
   c. Monitor the designated fireground channel for emergency communications.
   d. Monitor the fireground for firefighter safety and perform proactive functions to reduce risk to firefighters.
3. At structure fires, if the fire is quickly knocked down by one fire attack hose line and the backup team is in place outside the IDLH atmosphere, the backup team may serve as the RIC.

D. Incident Safety Officer (ISO)
1. The assignment of an Incident Safety Officer shall only be of an officer who has obtained the appropriate Incident Safety Officer training and certification.
2. Upon arrival or assignment as the Safety Officer at an incident, they shall obtain a situation-status briefing from Command or designee that includes the verbal incident action plan.
3. The Safety Officer shall monitor conditions, activities, and operations to determine whether they fall within the criteria as defined in the risk management plan.
   a. When activities are judged by the Safety Officer as posing an imminent threat to responder safety, the Safety Officer shall have the authority to stop, alter, or suspend those activities.

The Safety Officer shall immediately inform Command of any actions taken to correct imminent hazards at the emergency scene.

b. When a Safety Officer identifies unsafe conditions, operations, or hazards that do not present an imminent threat to responder, the Safety Officer shall take appropriate action through Command to mitigate or eliminate the unsafe condition, operation, or hazard at the incident scene.

4. The Safety Officer and Assistant Safety Officer(s) shall be readily identifiable at the incident scene by "Safety" being indicated on their green helmets.
5. The Safety Officer shall ensure that the incident scene rehabilitation area has been established and post fire decon is performed.
6. The presence of an Incident Safety Officer on the scene, in no way diminishes the responsibility of all officers for the safety of their assigned personnel, and of each and every member to utilize common (safety) sense and work within the intent of established safety procedures at all times.
7. Any firefighter, company officer, or chief officer on the emergency scene, regardless of assignment, has a duty to immediately stop an unsafe act or, to communicate an unsafe condition to Command. The firefighter, company officer, or chief officer who stops the unsafe act, including the removal of firefighters from an IDLH atmosphere, must immediately communicate their actions to Command. (Automatic Aid Agreement)

E. Accountability System
1. Travis County and Williamson County departments use different systems for maintaining accountability of personnel assigned to resources that respond to incidents.

a. Travis County departments shall maintain an accurate and current list of their company members on the Travis County CAD Log-In system on the apparatus MDC.

b. Williamson County department shall maintain an accurate and current list of their company members using the Passport System described in Williamson County Regional Procedure #5 Firefighter Accountability.

2. Command will maintain firefighter accountability for all assigned resources at all incidents.
3. Command is responsible for tracking and documenting company assignments utilizing a tactical worksheet and an incident action plan (IAP).
4. Division/Group Supervisors shall maintain accountability of all Companies and number of personnel operating in their charge.
5. Company Officers are responsible (accountable) for themselves and their crew. Maintaining company integrity is the responsibility of the Company Officer. The Company Officer must also know what Division/Group to which they are assigned.
6. Firefighters are responsible (accountable) for themselves, and must know where their Company Officer is at all times.

F. Control Zones
1. Fireground control zones are not necessarily marked by any warning devices. Where a hazard exists, fire scene tape may be used to identify the specific areas where special precautions are necessary. Control zones can also be utilized for the purpose of emergency incident contamination control.

a. Hot Zone – (red tape) - is the area that presents the greatest risk of injury or contamination exposure to the members and often be classified as an IDLH atmosphere; therefore all members shall wear the appropriate PPE necessary for the risks that might be encountered in the hot zone. Members should not enter the hot zone unless they have an assigned task.
b. Warm Zone (yellow tape) - shall serve as a limited access area for members direction aiding or in support of operations in the hot zone where significant risk of human injury can still exits and where preliminary exposure reduction are employed and the threat of cross contamination persists. Yellow tape is intended to keep civilians, spectators and non-assigned emergency personnel out of an area where a hazard exists or where operations are in progress. Yellow tape also indicates that personnel should be aware of a hazards and should cross the tape only when precautions have been taken and appropriate PPE for their assignment is being utilized. Gross decon will normally be performed in the warm zone.
c. Cold Zone - (green tape) shall establish the public exclusion or clean zone where there are minimal risks for human injury or exposure, or both, in this zone. PPE is not required in the cold zone. The cold zone is normally where the command post is located and rehabilitation is performed.
d. No-Entry Zone (red/white chevron tape) – is the area at an incident scene that no person(s) shall be permitted to enter due to imminent hazard(s), dangerous condition, or the need to protect evidence. Where a no-entry zone is designated, no personnel shall enter regardless of PPE unless specifically authorized by Command. Red/white chevron tape is used to define a special hazards such as areas involving hazardous materials, live power lines, structural collapse areas, and similar dangers.

G. Ventilation-Controlled Fires
1. Modern fire research has proven that most structure fires will be in a ventilation-controlled state when firefighters arrive. Therefore, a risk/benefit analysis must be performed before entering into a structure with a working fire inside.
2. Firefighters should not be placed in a ventilation-controlled environment for fire attack due to the associated high risks, such as high heat, low visibility, a toxic IDLH atmosphere and the very likely possibility of rapid fire progression with the addition of oxygen from any opening. Instead, actions should be taken to remove the ventilation-controlled environment before entry for fire attack. These actions include proper ventilation, cooling with hose streams from the exterior and/or changing the fire attack entry point. A blitz attack before interior entry can significantly reduce the risk to firefighters and any potential victims.
3. If the decision is made to place a firefighter in a ventilation-controlled environment due to an imminent threat to life, the firefighter must close an interior door to prevent the creation of a flow path from the fire toward the firefighters' entry point.

H. Recycle/Rehab
1. Companies working in Divisions and Groups may need to use a second SCBA air bottle to complete their assigned tasks. Companies may “recycle” by refilling their air bottle while maintaining accountability to their assigned Division or Group. Companies should normally only be recycled once (use a second air bottle) before being assigned to Rehab.
2. Rehab will normally be established at all working fires. Some auto aid departments have specialized Rehab vehicles and equipment which may be requested when needed.

3. When assigned to Rehab, Companies will go directly to the Rehab Area. Company Officers will notify the Rehab Manager of their Company's presence and all members of the Company will remain in Rehab until the Rehab Manager relays reassignment orders to them.
4. When necessary, a Medic Unit may be utilized for medical monitoring of the personnel in Rehab.

I. Post-Fire Decon
1. In accordance with TCFP §435.1 Protective Clothing, Command and the Incident Safety Officer shall ensure that post-fire decontamination procedures are employed when PPE is worn and exposed to smoke and other byproducts of combustion.
2. Firefighters exposed to smoke and products of combustion will perform on-scene gross decontamination prior to doffing PPE and prior to reporting to Rehab.
3. Firefighters should "shower within the hour" and change clothes as a best practice for minimizing exposure to fire ground carcinogens.
4. If technical decontamination of PPE is required, firefighters should follow the procedures established by their department.

COMMUNICATION

A. Radio Channels
1. Structure fire incidents shall be assigned radio channels that are to be utilized only for that specific incident.
2. When assigned to an incident, Companies will change their radios to the channel designated for their response to the incident.
3. All structure fire incidents will initially be assigned two radio channels. Any other channel(s) must be requested by Command.

    a. Tactical Channel – main channel utilized for tactical incident operations.

    b. Alternate/Scene Channel – secondary channel that can be used for multiple alarm staging, Command level communication, etc.

B. Radio Reports
1. To ensure clear and consistent communication on structure fire scenes, standard radio reports should be utilized.
2. Initial Radio Report – the report given by the first arriving Officer on a scene.

    a. Assume Command on assigned Tactical Channel

    b. Building Description (stories, construction, occupancy, roof)

    c. Fire/Smoke Conditions

    d. Strategy (Investigation, Offensive, Defensive)

    e. Tactical assignment and actions being taken (hoseline deployment with intent, etc.)

    f. Conducting a 360

    g. When needed, assignments for other companies (if not covered by or different than SOG assignment)

3. Follow Up Radio Report (360 Complete/Not Complete Report) – the report given after the first arriving Officer completes a 360 degree survey of the scene.
    a. 360 complete/not complete
    b. Additions or corrections to size up from initial radio report
    c. Actions/directions if different from initial radio report
4. Entry Report – the report given before making entry into a structure on fire.
    a. Entry location
    b. Heat conditions (evaluated with a TIC)
    c. Smoke/visibility conditions
    d. Two-In / Two-Out compliance (or reason for not)
5. Command Transfer between Company Officers Report – the report given when Command is transferred between Company Officers to improve the quality of Command.
    a. Assume Command
    b. Tactical Assignment
    c. Designate/Confirm Alpha Side
    d. Give tactical assignments as needed (Water Supply, RIC, etc.)
6. Command Transfer to a Chief Officer (Command Element) Report
    a. Assume and name Command
    b. Command Post Location
    c. Additions/Changes to previous initial radio reports
    d. Confirm/Change Strategy (Investigation, Offensive, Defensive)
    e. After Dispatch Repeats Initial Radio Report then:
    f. Assign Divisions/Groups and confirm accountability
    g. Ask for CAN report from Division and Groups, as needed
7. CAN Report
    a. Conditions (location in structure, heat/fire/smoke/visibility)
    b. Actions (describe current actions being performed)
    c. Needs (resources/actions needed or “No Needs” if none)
8. PAR – a report given to ensure accountability of personnel.
    a. Firefighters report to their Company Officer face-to-face (or by radio if necessary).

b. Company Officers report to their Division or Group Supervisor face-to-face (or by radio if necessary).

c. Division and Group Supervisors give PAR reports by radio or face-to-face to Operations or Command.

d. Fire Dispatch can monitor the PAR roll call and assist with tracking unit status but Command has ultimate responsibility for making sure all units are accounted for.

C. Emergency Terminology

1. "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday" - shall be used to alert responders that a member(s) need immediate help.
2. "Emergency Traffic" – shall be used to warn responders of an extraordinary hazard or change in condition that creates an imminent danger to personnel. Any member may use Emergency Traffic on the radio to identify the situation. Command has the responsibility to respond to a report of Emergency Traffic and provide orders to mitigate the hazard.
3. "Vacate, Vacate, Vacate" – shall be used as an order to immediately leave the IDLH or structure, leaving hose lines and equipment.
4. "Tactical Withdrawal" – shall be used as an order to leave the IDLH or structure, safely and quickly, taking hose and tools while exiting.

STRUCTURE FIRE INCIDENT ACTION PLAN (IAP)

A. Risk Assessment

1. Command must conduct an initial risk analysis to consider the risk to firefighters in order to determine the strategy and tactics that will be employed. Command must continually reevaluate conditions to determine if the level of risk has changed and if a change in strategy or tactics is necessary.
2. The Rule of Thumb for risk/benefit analysis is characterized by the following phrase:

   a. We will risk a lot, within a structured plan, to save a savable life.

   b. We will risk a little, within a structured plan, to save savable property.

   c. We will risk nothing to save nothing (lives or property that cannot be saved).

B. Strategic Mode of Operation

1. An IAP shall only utilize one strategic mode of operation at any time:

   a. Investigation Strategy – used when more information must be gathered before selecting the offensive or defensive strategy.

   b. Offensive Strategy - characterized by aggressive interior activities. These operations are generally high risk as personnel are operating in the hazard area or interior of a structure fire, or any environment that consists of an IDLH atmosphere.

   c. Defensive Strategy - conducted when the risk/benefit analysis indicates that unacceptable risks to firefighters would result from offensive operations. These defensive operations are primarily

characterized by exterior activities to confine and extinguish the fire, which are not necessarily passive but are designed to minimize risk to personnel.

2. Offensive to Defensive Strategy transition is taken when the risk of the Offensive strategy is too great for what is able to be saved. When ordering a strategy transition, Command should:
    a. Announce Emergency Traffic for the strategy transition.
    b. Order personnel out of the structure using the appropriate emergency terminology.
    c. Ask Fire Dispatch to provide a tone and repeat the order.
    d. Conduct a PAR.
    e. Revise the IAP and reassign resources to appropriate Divisions and Groups.

C. Incident Objectives
1. Command is responsible for determining and communication the incident objectives. For a structure fire incident, the common objectives include:
    a. Rescue – of trapped or threatened individuals.
    b. Exposure – ensuring exposure protection through protective hose lines, confinement, and extinguishment or through moving the exposure.
    c. Confinement – of the fire or hazard to the smallest geographic area possible.
    d. Extinguishment – ensures all fire is extinguished.
    e. Overhaul – sifting through fire debris and extinguishing all traces of fire and ensuring complete fire extinguishment.
    f. Ventilation – the systematic removal of heat and smoke from an enclosed area to assist in fire attack and rescue operations, and to reduce property damage.
    g. Salvage – efforts made to save the occupants' personal property and reduce the amount of fire and fire control damage.
2. These objectives are most often addressed simultaneously.

D. Benchmarks
1. Benchmarks are points of reference from which measurement toward the achievement of the Incident Priorities can be made.
2. Any Company that is given a tactical assignment, whether by Standard Operating Guideline or by Command, must announce on the Tactical Channel their radio designation and the tactical function(s) they will perform.
3. Tactical/Task Benchmarks: In order to allow measurement of progress, companies and teams must provide information to the Officer issuing the assignment. Information that should be communicated includes:
    a. Assumption or acknowledgment of assignment.
    b. Completion of assignment.

c. Inability to complete assignment.

d. Any significant delay in completing assignment.

e. The need for more resources to complete an assignment.

4. Command Benchmarks: The following benchmarks should be reported by Command to indicate progress in achieving the Incident Priorities. (When completed within a Division or Group, that Supervisor should report the completion to Command.)

a. Outside Team Established – When the Outside Team is in place to monitor the safety of the Interior Team.

b. Entry Size-Up – When firefighters prepare to make entry into a structure for fire attack, a report must be given of the interior conditions the firefighters will enter to advance towards the fire. The assessment of the interior conditions should be made with a TIC when possible.

c. Backup Team Established – When a backup team is in place to protect the firefighters inside the structure. The location of the backup team should also be reported.

d. RIC Established – When the RIC is in place with the RIC equipment and a hose line for firefighter rescue has been identified. The location of the RIC should also be reported.

e. Safety Officer Assigned – When the assignment of Incident Safety Officer is given. The Officer given the assignment should also be reported.

f. Primary Search Complete – When the initial search for victims in the fire area is complete. Whether any victims were found or not should also be reported.

g. Secondary Search Complete – When the second, more thorough search of the fire area is completed by a Company other than the Company that completed the primary search. Whether any victims were found or not should also be reported.

h. Fire Knocked Down – When the initial fire stream is applied to the main body of fire significantly reducing the flame and heat production. This includes when a blitz attack is used to knock down the fire from the exterior. Although knocking down a fire indicates significant progress toward incident stabilization, the hazards associated with a structure fire may still exist including the possibility of the rapid return of fire.

i. Fire Under Control – When the forward progress of the fire is stopped, no additional units will be required and there is no increasing danger to firefighters.

j. Fire Extinguished – When overhaul/extension search has confirmed that all fire is extinguished.

k. Salvage Complete – When property damage from the fire and/or fire control activities is completed and loss is stopped.

E. Dividing the Fireground

1. The incident ground is divided for quick reference and clarity. NIMS recognizes three designations to denote geographic and functional areas of operation (Branch, Division, and Group).

a. Branches are major components within the Operations Section, established when the number of Division/Groups exceeds the recommended span of control.

b. Divisions are operational elements that may be assigned to vertical or horizontal geographical areas.

i. Divisions that are assigned to specific horizontal geographical areas are designated by a name such as inside and outside or according to their relationship to the building.
ii. The Alpha side of the structure should be designated by one of the first arriving companies. The sides are then designated, in a clockwise direction using the phonetic designations Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, etc.
iii. Internal areas are designated using "Division" plus the number of the floor (Example: Division 6 = sixth floor).
iv. Basements should be designated as "Subdivisions," and numbered downward for additional levels below grade beginning with Subdivision 1.
v. Internal and external exposures are designated by the Division in which they are located and then numbered 1, 2, 3, etc.

c. Groups are responsible for specific tactical functions such as Search Group, Vertical Ventilation Group, Evacuation Group, Water Supply Group, etc. Groups are not limited to specific geographical areas.

2. When assigning Division and Group responsibilities, Command should assign the Supervisor a radio designation, identify the resources assigned and describe the objectives to be accomplished by that Division or Group.

F. Tactical Worksheet

1. Chief Officers (Command Elements) who assume Command of a working fire shall utilize a fire scene tactical worksheet or white board to document tactical assignment and IMS assignments in order to increase safety, maintain accountability, and to properly and efficiently deploy/demobilize resources.

TACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS/IMS ASSIGNMENTS

A. Tactical and IMS assignments on a structure fire scene can be given by SOG or by Command. Assignments given by SOG are effective for approximately 90% of incidents. When they are utilized, SOG assignments reduce radio traffic, ensure all critical assignments are assigned and simplify the decision-making requirements under stressful conditions. For the remainder of incidents that are not a good fit for SOG assignments, Command will have to give incident specific assignments. The following options, should be used for giving assignments

1. Option 1: Resources arriving on scene of a structure fire incident assume assignments as directed by SOG based on the structure type and strategy declared by Command (Investigation, Offensive, or Defensive). See Table One (SOG Tactical Assignments).
2. Option 2: Command modifies the SOG assignments based on the needs of the specific incident as long as the deviations are justifiable and communicated.
3. Option 3: Command determines that due to the response plan, response times, incident circumstances, etc., that the SOG assignments are not the appropriate assignments for the incident, first two arriving apparatus and first chief officer proceed to the scene and all other responding units

level 1 stage as advised by command until given an assignment. When making the incident specific assignments, Command should use the tactical assignments as defined within the SOG.

B. The SOG tactical and IMS assignments provided in this SOG are based on a standard structure fire response plan of four pumping apparatus (Engine) and two aerial apparatus (Truck, Ladder, Quint). At incidents with a different type of response, Command should modify the assignment as described in Option 2 above but still strive to accomplish all of the assignments given by this SOG. Departments with specialized apparatus may develop procedures for their tactical assignments in place of an apparatus in the standard response as long as the apparatus staffing is similar. For example, the Austin Fire Department uses Rescue Units for Aerial Apparatus assignments. Departments may also utilize specialized apparatus with reduced staffing in addition to the standard response model. For example, a Squad or a Medic Unit staffed with two members. These types of specialized apparatus, with reduced staffing, should not take an SOG tactical assignment but should be given a tactical assignment by Command based on incident needs or assigned to another company to assist with their tactical assignment.

C. Investigation Strategy SOG Tactical Assignments:
1. 1st Pumping Apparatus – to the scene to investigate
2. 2nd Pumping Apparatus – to the scene to prepare for Backup
3. 1st Aerial Apparatus - to the scene to investigate
4. All other resources Level 1 Stage until given assignment by Command

D. Investigation Strategy SOG IMS Assignments:
1. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Inside Division Supervisor
2. 1st Chief Officer - Command

E. Offensive Strategy IMS SOG Tactical Assignments:
1. 1st Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack
2. 2nd Pumping Apparatus –Backup
3. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Inside Truck
4. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Outside Truck
5. All other resources Level 1 Stage until given assignment by Command

F. Offensive Strategy SOG IMS Assignments:
1. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Inside Division Supervisor
2. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Outside Division Supervisor
3. 1st Chief Officer – Command
4. For multiple story buildings such as apartments, Division 1, 2, 3, etc. may be utilized.

G. Defensive Strategy SOG Tactical Assignments:
1. 1st Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack (protect exposures/confine fire)
2. 2nd Pumping Apparatus –Water Supply
3. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Master Stream Operation
4. All other resources Level 1 Stage until given assignment by Command

H. Defensive Strategy SOG IMS Assignments:
1. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Alpha Division
2. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Charlie Division
3. 1st Chief Officer – Command

I. Mid-Rise structures (4 stories or more up to 75' tall) and High-Rise structures (greater than 75' tall) require additional resources and different tactical and IMS assignments due to the unique operations that must be taken when fighting a fire in those types of structures.

J. Mid-Rise Structure SOG Tactical Assignments:
1. 1st Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack 1
2. 2nd Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack 2
3. 3rd Pumping Apparatus – Water Supply
4. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Inside Truck
5. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Evacuation
6. 3rd Aerial Apparatus - Ventilation
7. 4th Aerial Apparatus - Outside Truck
8. All other resources Level 1 Stage until given assignment by Command

K. Mid-Rise Structure SOG IMS Assignments:
1. 3rd Pumping Apparatus – Water Supply Group Supervisor
2. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Evacuation Group Supervisor
3. 3rd Aerial Apparatus – Ventilation Group Supervisor
4. 4th Aerial Apparatus - Outside Division Supervisor
5. 1st Chief Officer – Command
6. 2nd Chief Officer – Fire Floor Division Supervisor

L. High-Rise SOG Tactical Assignments:
1. 1st Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack 1
2. 2nd Pumping Apparatus – Fire Attack 2
3. 3rd Pumping Apparatus – Water Supply
4. 4th Pumping Apparatus – Lobby Control
5. 1st Aerial Apparatus – Inside Truck
6. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Recon
7. 3rd Aerial Apparatus – Logistics and Systems Control
8. 4th Aerial Apparatus – Interior Staging
9. All other resources Level 1 Stage until given assignment by Command

M. High-Rise SOG IMS Assignments:
1. 3rd Pumping Apparatus – Water Supply Group Supervisor
2. 2nd Aerial Apparatus – Recon Group Supervisor
3. 3rd Aerial Apparatus – Logistics Section Chief
4. 4th Aerial Apparatus – Interior Staging Manager
5. 1st Chief Officer – Command
6. 2nd Chief Officer – Fire Floor Division Supervisor

N. On-Deck Assignment
1. Once all initial tactical assignments have been filled (including RIC), it is appropriate to provide resources to Division or Group Supervisors in anticipation of the need for rotating companies performing the work. This assignment is called "On-Deck."
2. When giving an On-Deck assignment, Command should inform the Company Officer to which Division or Group the company is being assigned and also notify the Division or Group Supervisor to ensure accountability.

3. If a company is assigned On-Deck when there is no responsible Supervisor, Command must maintain accountability for that company, preferably by keeping the On-Deck company near and in view of the Command Post.

O. AHJ Command Element
   1. When appropriate, the AHJ may assume Incident Command for all multi-unit responses. The arrival of the AHJ on the incident scene does not mean that command should be automatically transferred to the AHJ. Command should only be transferred when the AHJ is completely aware of the position and function of crews operating at the scene and has an understanding of the overall Incident Action Plan (IAP). (Auto Aid Agreement)

MULTIPLE ALARMS

A. For structure fire incidents where Command determines additional resources are necessary to successfully and safely bring the incident under control, multiple alarms should be requested as needed. When requesting a second alarm, Command should inform Fire Dispatch of the Level 2 Staging location for the additional resources.
B. When Command requests a second alarm, a radio channel shall be assigned for the response of the additional resources.
C. The first arriving Engine on a second alarm will normally be assigned as the Staging Manager. Once a Staging Manager has been assigned, resources arriving on the multiple alarm(s) will report their arrival to the Staging Manager on their assigned radio channel except for Chief Officers who should report their arrival on scene directly to Command or to the Command Post.
D. In order to reduce the time from resources in Staging getting to their assigned Division or Group, it is acceptable to move companies up to a Staging Area closer to the incident scene. If this is done, the area where all the apparatus are parked will become the Incident Base.
E. As the number of Divisions and Groups increases, Branches may be used to maintain an acceptable span of control. Branches may also be proactively assigned for complex, expanding incidents.
F. Multiple alarm incidents should also normally have a Chief Officer assigned as the Operations Section Chief.

POST-FIRE ACTIVITIES

A. Command is responsible for developing a demobilization plan for when the incident objectives have been achieved and the fire is under control. The release of auto aid companies from the scene should normally occur before the AHJ resources.
B. The AHJ Command is responsible for determining the origin and cause for the structure fire and notifying Fire Investigations as required by the AHJ policy.
C. The AHJ Command is responsible for assigning resources as necessary to ensure the occupants of the structure have their immediate needs met and are provided resources to assist in their recovery.
D. The AHJ Command is responsible for completing the full NFIRS report for the incident. All other auto aid departments on scene should complete the shorter “auto aid given” NFIRS report.
E. Post-Incident Review (PIR) should be conducted on any working structure fire where automatic aid units were utilized on the fire ground. The PIR will include units and command elements from all assisting jurisdictions. (Automatic Aid Agreement) The goal of the PIR will be to produce lessons learned that can be shared with all Auto Aid departments by discussing what went well, what could be improved and the reasons for any deviations from this SOG.

CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL PROCEDURES – STRUCTURE FIRE INCIDENTS SOG Tactical Assignments					
	Investigation	**Offensive**	**Defensive**	**Mid-Rise Offensive**	**High-Rise**
1st Pumping Apparatus	Investigate	Fire Attack	Confine Fire & Protect Exposures	Fire Attack 1	Fire Attack 1
2nd Pumping Apparatus	Prepare for Backup	Backup and Second Water Source	Water Supply for Large Flow	Fire Attack 2	Fire Attack 2
3rd Pumping Apparatus	Level 1 at Hydrant	Level 1 at Hydrant	Level 1 at Hydrant	Water Supply	Water Supply
4th Pumping Apparatus	Level 1 at Hydrant	Level 1 at Hydrant	Level 1 at Hydrant	Level 1 at Hydrant	Lobby Control
*1st Aerial Apparatus	Investigate	Inside Truck	Position for Master Stream	Inside Truck	Inside Truck
*2nd Aerial Apparatus	Level 1	Outside Truck	Level 1	Evacuation	Recon
*3rd Aerial Apparatus	Level 1	Level 1	Level 1	Ventilation	Logistics & Systems Control
*4th Aerial Apparatus				Outside Truck	Interior Staging

*For jurisdictions that have an AFD Rescue in their response plan, the Rescue may take an Aerial Apparatus assignment. When this occurs, the Rescue Apparatus must position so not to block an Aerial Apparatus from positioning in front of the scene.