



OPERATIONS BULLETIN 1.2

SEARCH COMPANY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS

Version I, Revised January 2016

The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department released a major revision of *General Order Division 06 – Emergency Operations, Chapter 1 – Standard Operating Procedures for Structural Fires* on January 15, 2016, that subsequently changed the responsibilities of the Rescue Squad operating on a Structure Fire from primarily Rapid Intervention, to the Search Company. In an effort to comply this new responsibility as expeditiously and thoroughly as possible this Operations Bulletin was created.

BACKGROUND:

To establish guidelines set forth by the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. for operating on incidents in which the Rescue Squad, or the Rescue Engine operating as a Rescue Squad, has to act as the Search Company in accordance with *Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department General Order Division 06 – Emergency Operations, Chapter 1 – Standard Operating Procedures for Structural Fires*.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Splitting Crews:** Dividing the complete crew into two (2) separate teams to maximize the ability of personnel operating as the *Search Company* to quickly and efficiently search a building or perform other necessary fire ground activities.
- **Primary Function:** Search and Rescue Operations in accordance with the Search Company's responsibilities.
- **Secondary Function:** Additional necessary fire ground activities as directed by the Incident Commander or when conducting a search in accordance with the Search Company's responsibilities.
- **Rescue Squad 827 Team – A:** Primary team tasked to carry out the primary function
- **Rescue Engine 827 Team – A:** Primary team tasked to carry out the primary function
- **Rescue Squad 827 Team – B:** Secondary team tasked to carry out the secondary functions
- **Rescue Engine 827 Team – B:** Secondary team tasked to carry out the secondary functions



OPERATIONS BULLETIN 1.2

SEARCH COMPANY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS

POLICY:

- A) The underlying mission of the Search Company is Life Safety and the rescue of civilians. If a “Mayday” is declared and a Rapid Intervention Team is not in position to be deployed. The Incident Commander may redeploy the Search Company to assist with the Mayday – crews must remain flexible and the Officer In Charge of Team – A will guide the actions of the teams.
- B) Minimum staffing for the Search Company (Rescue Squad or Rescue Engine acting as a Rescue Squad) is 4 personnel.
- C) Maximum staffing for the Search Company (Rescue Squad or Rescue Engine acting as a Rescue Squad) is 6 or 8 personnel depending on the apparatus.
- D) The Search Company (Rescue Squad or the Rescue Engine operating as the Rescue Squad) has the ability to split crews when the apparatus is staffed with 4 or more personnel
 - a. Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department requires all personnel operating in an IDLH environment, at a minimum, operate in teams of two (2) personnel.
 - b. Crews greater than four (4) personnel may be split at any point as long as no personnel are operating alone in an IDLH environment or on the incident scene.
- E) The responsibility lies with the Rescue Squad Officer In Charge to make the decision whether to split crews, whether on scene or en route to the incident, or even prior to the incident while establishing riding assignments.
- F) The Rescue Squad Officer In Charge will assume the responsibility of the primary crew, carrying out the primary function of the rescue squad.
- G) The Rescue Squad Driver or the Senior Member will be designated the leader for Team - B, carrying out the secondary function of the Search Company.



<p style="text-align: center;">OPERATIONS BULLETIN 1.2 SEARCH COMPANY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS</p>

H) Whenever operating as Team - A and Team - B, crews shall refer to themselves as the same when communicating via radio transmissions – “Rescue Squad 827 Team - B to Team - A the Primary on Division III is Negative”

- a. When ever possible, communications between Team - A and Team - B shall be face to face as to limit radio transmission.
- b. Typically the Officer In Charge will communicate with the Incident Commander as “Rescue Squad 827” or “Rescue Engine 827” and provide any updates or relay any information as needed.
- c. Team Leaders should report their progress to the Division Supervisor when possible, preferably Face-to-Face – “Rescue Squad 827 to Division II the Primary on Division II is Negative”. That allows the Division Supervisor to limit duplication of efforts and clearly relay all activity in their geographically defined area.
- d. When a Personnel Accountability Check is requested, it is acceptable for Team - A to raise Team - B, prior to providing the status. “Rescue Squad 827 Team - A to Team - B, your position and Accountability” – “4 Personnel operating on Division IV” – “Rescue Squad 827 is accounted for, four personnel operating on Division II, four personnel operating on Division IV”.

I) Generally the Rescue Squad or Rescue Engine operating as a Rescue Squad crew will be split as outlined below:

Rescue Squad 827 Team - A
Officer In Charge
Cutter/Entry - Irons
Spreader/Hook & Can
Glass/Hook & Bar

Rescue Squad 827 Team -B
Driver or Senior Man
Lights/Entry 2 - Irons
Cribbing/Hook – Hook & Can
Extra/Ladders – Hook & Bar

Rescue Engine 827 Team - A
Officer In Charge
Cutter/Entry - Irons
Spreader/Hook & Can

Rescue Engine 827 Team -B
Driver or Senior Man
Lights/Entry 2 - Irons
Cribbing/Hook – Hook & Can



OPERATIONS BULLETIN 1.2

SEARCH COMPANY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS

- J) While operating as the *Search Company* (Group), **Team – A** will go to the assigned position of the *Search Company* on the fire floor. Team – A will ensure they work with the Engine and Truck Companies assigned to that area and not impeded their progress; searching areas adjacent to the fire room(s) first. This will require them to “check-in” with the Supervisor if one has been established and relay all findings to that Supervisor.
- K) While operating as the *Search Company* (Group), **Team – B** will go to the floor above, the top floor or even the floor below, situation depending, in order conduct a primary search. They should be directed by Officer In Charge and focus on the greatest risk (closest to the fire room) first, unless they are directed to make a rescue by the Officer In Charge or Incident Commander.
- L) After primary searches are complete on all floors, it may be necessary for the two teams to swap areas to complete the secondary search. **Team - B** may be tasked with outside work or other tasks as directed by the Incident Commander depending on the size of the structure, its occupancy, and the needs of the incident (obvious rescues, ladders, ventilation, lighting, utilities, etc.).
- M) When appropriate the Search Company should consider *VEIS* (Vent, Enter, Isolate, Search) techniques to quickly deploy to a known area requiring Search and Rescue activities. It is important to understand that you are altering the ventilation of structure utilizing this practice, careful attention must be made to the condition/stability of the floor prior to entry and the members must isolate the area via a door or other means as quickly as possible.
- N) The Search Company teams must remain aware of the conditions of the fire, the area they are operating in, and monitoring other radio traffic that could assist or direct the Search Company in affecting a rescue.
- O) The “Methodology” for performing in the “OPERATIONS PHASE” of the Search Company as outlined by *General Order Division 06 – Emergency Operations, Chapter 1 – Standard Operating Procedures for Structural Fires*:
- Coordinate Primary Search with fire floor Division supervisor outside of the compartment (room) of origin.



OPERATIONS BULLETIN 1.2

SEARCH COMPANY FIREGROUND OPERATIONS

- Floor Above
- Top Floor
- Work down coordinating with each Division supervisor
- Exposures – most threatened, then others

P) Attachment #4 of *General Order Division 06 – Emergency Operations, Chapter 1 – Standard Operating Procedures for Structural Fires* includes the following items for consideration as well.

- Consider Rescue/Egress Priorities
- Support Rapid Intervention as directed
- Provide EMS Care to Rescue/Shelter victims

GENERAL ORDER 6-1 - STRUCTURE FIRE

SEARCH COMPANY (SEARCH) PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

UNIT		OIC/ID	
INC#		ENTRY	LOCATION
UNIT OBJECTIVES – COORDINATED/SYSTEMATIC SEARCHES THROUGHOUT, RESCUE, SUPPORT RIC			
DONE	TASK	DONE	TASK
SAFETY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND PERFORMANCE (ALWAYS)		REHABILITATION PHASE	
	MAINTAIN PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY		ALL PERSONNEL REPORT
	PROPER USE OF PPE AND SCBA		COMPLETE REHAB PROCESS
	PERFORMANCE OF UNIT TASK ASSIGNMENTS		MONITOR PERSONNEL HEALTH AND HYDRATION
PRE-ARRIVAL PHASE		MILESTONE ACHIEVED - PERSONNEL SAFE	
	SAFE RESPONSE TO THE REPORTED LOCATION		DEBRIEF UNIT PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE
	PRE-ARRIVAL CONSIDERATIONS*		
	RESPONSE MODE, AS DIRECTED		PARTICIPATE IN PERFORMANCE REVIEW
ARRIVAL PHASE		REHAB EQUIPMENT AND APPARATUS	
	POSITION - NOT BLOCKING ACCESS/EGRESS		DECONTAMINATE
	ACKNOWLEDGE TACTICAL COMMAND		APPARATUS
	STAGING*		EQUIPMENT
	INVESTIGATION*		PPE
	OFFENSIVE*		PERSONNEL
	DEFENSIVE*		
	SIZE UP REPORT* - IF CRITICAL	MILESTONE ACHIEVED - RETURN TO SERVICE	
MILESTONE ACHIEVED - ACKNOWLEDGE INCIDENT ACTION PLAN		DOCUMENT	
OPERATIONAL PHASE			RMS REPORT
	INTERIOR CREW		FM REQUIREMENTS
	CONSIDER RESCUE/EGRESS PRIORITIES		OPERATIONAL REPORTS
	FORCIBLE ENTRY		
	SAME ENTRY AS 1ST ENGINE		
	PRIMARY SEARCH		
	COORD w/ DIV SUP		
	FIRE FLOOR		
	FLOOR ABOVE		
	TOP FLOOR		
	WORKING DOWN		
	EXPOSURES		
	RESCUE/SHELTER		
	PROVIDE EMS CARE		
MILESTONE ACHIEVED - LIFE SAFETY			
	SUPPORT RAPID INTERVENTION , AS DIRECTED		
MILESTONE ACHIEVED - UNIT TASKS COMPLETED			
	CONSIDER REDUCED PPE/SCBA REQUIREMENTS		
	REPORT ACCOUNTABILITY W/ PAR CHECKS		
	REQUEST RELIEF CREW, AS NEEDED		
CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS			
	MAYDAY - LOCATION, UNIT, NAME, ASSIGNMENT, RESOURCES		
	RESCUE IN PROGRESS - NUMBER OF PATIENTS, EGRESS, RESOURCES, EMS CARE		
	SAFETY STOP - LOCATION, UNIT, PROBLEM		