



STRUCTURAL FIRE CONTROL

SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department and shall be adhered to by all members.

PURPOSE

To establish the methods that shall be utilized to conduct structural firefighting within the Stoney Point Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

Defensive Strategy - exterior attack directed to first reduce fire extension and then bring the fire under control

Member – any career, volunteer, staff, and auxiliary personnel affiliated with the department

Offensive Strategy - interior attack and related support directed toward quickly bringing the fire under control

RECEO VS – fire attack priorities acronym (Rescue, Exposures, Confine, Extinguish, Overhaul, Ventilation and Salvage)

Shall - indicates a mandatory requirement

Tactics - carefully planned actions designed to achieve a specific end state

GUIDELINES

Both offensive and defensive strategies and tactics are designed to stop fire spread and prevent further loss of life or property. It is imperative for the Incident Commander to determine which strategy will be utilized at an incident. This determination is made after consideration of the following factors:

- Extent, location, and composition of the fire
- Physical condition of the structure
- Safe entry and egress points
- Ventilation profile
- Ability to safely rescue occupants
- Available resources

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The strategic goals necessary to effectively manage any structure fire follow the acronym RECEO VS.

- Rescue – remove all victims from within the structure
- Exposures – protect nearby structures from fire spread
- Confinement of the fire – prevent the spread of the fire to other areas
- Extinguishment – eliminate all fire within the structure
- Overhaul – check for extension of the fire behind walls, in ceilings etc.
- Ventilation – remove the hazardous gases, heat, and smoke
- Salvage – protect property by removing and limiting fire or water damage

Not all these goals may be necessary nor must they be conducted in this order. Each incident is different; therefore the Incident Commander shall make the determination based upon existing factors as previously discussed.

Basic Offensive Plan

- Establish Incident Command, stand up RIT
- Primary attack line, fast aggressive interior attack
- Provide support activities (manpower, rehab, water supply etc.)
- Conduct Primary Search, quick thorough search for victims
- Secondary attack line, rapid advancement of back up line
- Conduct Secondary Search, methodical search for victims
- Rapidly request additional resources
- Monitor situation and exploit successes

Basic Defensive Plan

- Establish Incident Command, stand up RIT
- Evaluate fire spread, protect exposures
- Prioritize master stream devices
- Rapidly request additional resources
- Surround the structure and drown the fire with large volumes of water

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Important Considerations for Fire Ground Operations

Direction must be given by the Incident Commander to prevent wasted effort, freelancing and potential injuries. Prioritize attack operations to available resources and fire conditions. Assess the situation and request additional resources early. Time is a precious resource for life safety, property conservation and incident stabilization. Rapidly developing and relaying a strategic mode of operations for the incident will improve performance of all personnel at the incident.

First stop the spread, then bring the fire under control. Stabilizing the incident and preventing fire spread are aided by the rapid deployment of attack crews, larger attack crews and interior attack crews take longer to position. Conditions must dictate the resources to be utilized. Position attack crews to push the fire back into the burned areas. Do not waste effort or resources on lost property. Get ahead of the fire and protect unburned property. Do not play catch up!

Bringing a fire under control does not mean that the fire is extinguished. Controlling a fire refers to stopping the forward progress of the fire and the remaining fire can be extinguished with available resources. It is the Incident Commander's responsibility to relay to Dispatch that the "Fire is under control". Completely extinguishing the fire should be relayed using the "Fire is out" radio communication with Dispatch. Overhaul and salvage operations should then commence.

Personnel accountability and safety on the fire ground are the paramount consideration for the Incident Commander. The conduct of regular Personnel Accountability Reports assists the Incident Commander in maintaining situational awareness. An Incident Safety Officer shall be assigned to assist the Incident Commander in ensuring the safe conduct of operations and the safety of all personnel.

Offensive Operations

The Incident Commander shall decide to conduct offensive operations based upon favorable conditions, life safety, property conservation and incident stabilization factors. An evaluation of the fire extension, spread, location of victims and interior and exterior exposures should be rapidly conducted, and appropriate resources allocated to conduct offensive operations. It is important to evaluate what is not on fire, because that is where the fire may spread and should be the focus of fire control efforts. Offensive operations should be initiated from the interior portion of the unburned portion of the structure and directed to push the fire back into the burned areas, limiting fire spread. Limit the application of water to fire venting from the exterior of a structure, protect exposures.

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Initial offensive operations shall be directed toward supporting the primary search. The attack lines should be positioned between potential victims and the fire. Attack lines must also be utilized to protect avenues of escape, such as doors, windows, and ladders. Life safety is the primary responsibility of all emergency operations.

The Incident Commander is responsible for stabilizing the incident through the assignment of units to place water on the fire. Rescue, exposures, confinement, extinguishment, overhaul, and salvage are all aided by rapid and well-placed fire attack. Therefore it is imperative to establish an attack plan that overwhelms the fire with the application of water. Class A may be inducted at .01% to increase the effectiveness of the fire stream for offensive operations.

The attack plan is developed considering all seven sides of a structure (top, bottom, front, back, left, right, and interior). The attack should focus on the most dangerous course of spread of the fire and proceed to the less dangerous. Life safety, property conservation and incident stabilization must be considered. The basic considerations are as follows:

- **Location/Position of Attack** – Evaluate the existing options provided by structure openings (doors, windows, etc.) and the exterior exposures
- **Size of Attack** - Evaluate fire attack options (water supply, manpower, attack lines, master streams, etc.) to determine the number and size of attack lines
- **Support Functions** - Evaluate and establish activities necessary to facilitate offensive operations (forcible entry, ventilation, water supply, etc.)
- **Timing of Attack** - Evaluate and determine the sequence of offensive operations

Transitional Operations

Often a structure fire may not present as a clearly offensive or defensive strategy. In these cases a transitional operation shall be conducted. In situations where conditions favorable to an aggressive offensive operation are not immediately present, but can be achieved if properly managed, a transitional operation is the preferred strategy. The Incident Commander shall determine whether the initial use of defensive operations can set conditions favorable to offensive operations and relay the decision to all personnel.

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All offensive and defensive operational considerations apply to transitional operations. This is essentially an offensive fire attack that is initiated by an exterior defensive indirect fire attack operation to cool the involved portion of the structure enough to permit the transition to offensive direct interior fire attack, with coordinated ventilation operations. **The effect of the interior attack must be evaluated, and the attack abandoned if necessary, to return to defensive operations.** The Incident Commander must remain situationally aware and flexible to adjust the tactics to conditions.

Defensive Operations

The Incident Commander shall decide to conduct defensive operations based upon conditions unfavorable to offensive fire ground operations. Defensive operations preserve life safety and concede that the affected structure has been lost. Primary considerations include protection of exterior exposures, life safety and incident stabilization through extinguishing the fire.

If the decision to conduct defensive operations occurs after the initiation of offensive operations, it will be broadcast as emergency traffic immediately via radio and audio signals such as the apparatus air horn. All personnel will exit the structure and establish defensive positions at a safe distance. An immediate Personnel Accountability Report will be taken. Attack lines will be employed to protect exposures as a first priority. Master streams and attack lines may be utilized to extinguish the structure as a secondary priority.

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REFERENCES

NFPA 1410

Transitional Attack Definition

Strategies and Tactics for Initial Company Operations