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**Section: 4.6      Staging**

Effective Date: 03/01/2011

Revision Date: 01/18/2011

Approved by: SMFD Officers 03/01/2011

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**SCOPE**

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel responsible for emergency response.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this guideline is to provide a standard system of initial placement for responding apparatus, personnel, and equipment prior to assignment at tactical incidents.

**PROCEDURE**

Effective utilization of these procedures will:

- Prevent excessive apparatus congestion at the scene.
- Allow time for Command to evaluate conditions prior to assigning companies.
- Place apparatus in an uncommitted location close to the immediate scene to facilitate more effective assignment by Command.
- Reduces radio traffic during the critical initial stages of the incident.
- Allows Command to formulate and implement a plan without undue confusion and pressure.
- Provides a resource pool from which Command may assign units and resources at his/her leisure.

Staging involves two levels: LEVEL I and LEVEL II

**I. LEVEL I - STAGING**

- A. Level I Staging is automatically in effect for all incidents with three or more companies responding.
- B. During any multi-company response, companies should continue responding to the scene until a company reports on the scene. In situations where the simultaneous arrival of first due companies is possible, the affected officers shall utilize radio communications to coordinate activities and eliminate confusion. It will be the ongoing responsibility of dispatch to confirm the arrival of the first on-scene unit.
- C. Once a company announces arrival on the scene, Level I Staging will be implemented in the following manner:
  - 1. For Fires, Hazardous Materials, & Special Operations Incidents**
    - a) The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and initiate appropriate operations.
    - b) The first arriving ladder company will respond directly to the scene. They shall announce their approach to the scene so that Command may commit them to an assignment.
    - c) The first chief officer will go directly to the scene and assume Command, all other chief officers should report to Command.
    - d) Rescues (full-time/part-time) will stage in direction of travel, uncommitted approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. When responding from quarters, Rescues shall wait and allow engine and ladder companies to exit first. In the event a Rescue arrives first on the scene, they will

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make an on-scene report and assume Command until an engine, ladder, or chief officer arrives and Command is transferred.

- e) All other units will stage in their direction of travel, uncommitted, approximately one block from the scene until assigned by Command. A position providing a maximum of possible tactical options regarding access, direction of travel, water supply, etc., should be selected. At no time should units self-assign.
- f) All utility trucks will assume Level I staging. If Level II staging has been implemented, utility trucks will go to the Level II staging location.

**2. For Multi-Company Response to Medical Emergencies**

- a) For multi-company response to medical incidents, in addition to the above, the first arriving ALS unit will ALSO go directly to the scene and place their apparatus in a location that will provide maximum access for medical/Rescue support and not impede the movement of other units and indicate their action by radio.
  - b) The first arriving Rescue will ALSO go directly to the scene and park their vehicle in a manner that will allow quick and unobstructed exit for patient transportation.
  - c) All other companies will stage in their direction of travel, approximately one block from the incident.
3. Staged companies or units will announce their arrival and report their company designation and their staged location/direction ("Engine One, South").
  4. An acknowledgment is not necessary from either the Dispatch Center or Command. Staged companies will stay off the air until orders are received from Command. If it becomes apparent Command has forgotten the company is in a staged position, the company officer shall contact Command and advise him/her of their staged status.
  5. These staging procedures attempt to reduce unnecessary radio traffic, but in no way should reduce effective communications or the initiative of officers to communicate. If staged companies observe critical tactical needs, they will advise Command of such critical conditions and their actions.

**II. LEVEL II - STAGING**

- A. Level II Staging is utilized when Command desires to maintain a reserve of resources on-scene, and when the need to centralize resources is required. Level II Staging places all reserve resources in a central location and automatically requires the implementation of a Staging Division Officer.
- B. Level II Staging will be implemented for all greater alarm incidents. Level II staging should be considered for first alarm medical or hazardous materials incidents, or other incidents in which Command desires to centralize resources, or simply to park apparatus in a central, unobstructed location.
- C. Companies which are already staged (Level I) or en-route to Level I Staging, will stay in Level I unless otherwise directed by Command. All other responding units will proceed to the Level II Staging Area. When activating Level II Staging, Command will give an approximate location for the Staging Area and request a separate radio channel for the Staging Division.

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- D. The Staging Area should be some distance away from the Command Post and the emergency scene to reduce site congestion, but close enough for prompt response to the incident site.
- E. Command should consider Level II Staging when calling for additional resources and request a separate radio channel. This is more functional than calling for Level II Staging while units are enroute. The additional units will be dispatched to the Staging Area. Responding units should monitor both the tactical and staging channels.
- F. Command may designate a Staging Area and Staging Officer who will be responsible for the activities outlined in this procedure. In the absence of such an assignment, the first fire department officer to arrive at the Staging Area will automatically become the Staging Officer and will notify Command on arrival. The arrival notification will be made to Command on the assigned tactical channel.
- G. Due to the limited number of ladder companies, a ladder officer will transfer responsibility for Staging to the first arriving engine company officer. Staging Officers will assign their company members as needed to assist with Staging operations, or assign them to another company.
- H. All responding companies will stay off the air, respond directly to the designated Staging Area, and the Company Officer will report in person to the Staging Officer. The crew will stand by their unit with crew intact and warning lights turned off until assigned incident site duties, or released from the scene.
- I. When assigned to on-site duties, companies leaving staging will communicate directly with Command or their assigned sector officer for instructions.
- J. Once Level II staging is implemented, all communications involving staging will be between Staging and Command or Logistics.

**III. STAFF CHIEF OFFICERS AND CAPTAINS**

- A. Arrival on the scene of staff Chief Officers and Captains can enhance the Command organization and incident management. Unless arriving staff officers have predetermined responsibilities (i.e., Safety Officer, Haz Mat Leader), these officers should assume a Level I staging posture and announce their arrival on the tactical channel. If the Staging Division has been assigned a separate radio channel, notification should be on the designated channel.
- B. Vehicle parking at the site can be limited. Staff officers should leave their vehicles in the Staging Area, or park well off the road (i.e., parking lots) so as not to restrict on-site access by fire apparatus.