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**Section: 7.13      Civil Disturbance Response**

Effective Date: 08/26/2008

Revision Date: 08/04/2008

Approved by: SMFD Officers 08/25/2008

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**SCOPE:**

The guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Personnel.

**PURPOSE:**

In an effort to provide for a level of safety for our emergency responders in the event of a civil disturbance, the following procedures and guidelines are to assist the Officer in Charge (OIC) and other personnel in dealing with emergency operations in these types of situations.

**PROCEDURE:**

In the event of a local, large-scale disturbance, South Metro Fire should recommend the appropriate City's EOC be activated, with a SMFD officer present. Depending on the severity of the disturbance, the OIC should determine which of the following may need to be implemented.

- Interagency cooperation with the Police is essential. Ensure the police dispatch and talk groups are being monitored so we can communicate with them if necessary. Clear communication is critical so do not use ten codes or other acronyms, plain text language is needed.
- During a civil disturbance situation, chief and company officers are granted the flexibility of deviating from the operational procedures established by policy and procedure in those situations where it is deemed to be in the best interest of the involved personnel and Department assets.
- Responses must be prioritized. If a large scale event erupts, it may no longer be possible to deliver what we would consider "normal fire/EMS services". A police escort should **always** be used in areas where there is a potential for disruptive activities by protesters. Government buildings are a target so they should be given special consideration as well as buildings with the potential for a great loss of life or property.
- OIC should place a call-back for all off-duty personnel and request mutual aid if appropriate.
- Responding personnel should wear full PPE at all times on scene and while en route to and from the scene.
- SMFD personnel should wear clearly marked shirts identifying them as Fire Department personnel. SMFD T-shirts will be the uniform of choice with the polo shirt being secondary. All personnel will have T-shirts that are in good repair and not faded or have missing lettering, etc. No Badges or formal uniform shirts will be worn.
- Ballistic vests are available and they should be donned if the situation dictates.
- Remove all loose equipment on the outside of the vehicles such as axes, pike poles and anything else that may be used as a weapon against us.
- Placing duct tape on the inside and outside of the side windows in the shape of an "X" may keep glass from shattering and injuring responders inside.
- Always operate with a buddy and never leave the pump panel operator alone.
- Limited aerial company operations (life safety/rescue only). Consider elevated, unmanned water streams as necessary.
- No laddering of structures or personnel on the roof (life safety/rescue only).

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- Limited interior firefighting (life safety/rescue only). Emphasis will be fast attack, heavy streams to rapidly control and extinguish the fire and then to get out of the area. Routine salvage, ventilation and overhaul practices may be discontinued. Utilization of FDC may be the preferred method to extinguish a fire.
- In the event we see civil disturbance all companies remain in quarters unless responding to an emergency.
- Fire station in vicinity shall go into lock down.
- Apparatus shall be placed to allow for rapid unobstructed retreat. Apparatus shall be placed in a position to best protect crews.
- Our members must control our behavior. We should be prepared to back off in most potentially violent situations so that we don't fuel a major disturbance when it could have been avoided.
- Companies should travel in pairs.
- No wearing of SCBA (life safety/rescue only).
- Employ hit and run tactics, quickly knock down the fire and move on to the next incident. Short hose lays, rapid attack, and quick take up.
- Use deck guns when possible.
- Be prepared to leave vehicle and trash fires unattended if the situation warrants.
- Be prepared to provide decontamination for multiple individuals exposed to chemical agents such as CN or CS, etc.
- EMS may need to implement disaster procedures such as triage tags, casualty collection points and field treatment for minor injuries.
- EMS should also use police escorts to calls.
- Vehicles should respond without lights and sirens to avoid drawing attention to them.
- Return to quarters by way of alternate routes.
- In all cases, the safety of you, the responder is the number one priority. Make sure you and those working with you are always alert and aware of your surroundings. Protect yourself!