

STRUCTURAL FIRE
TACTICAL PRIORITIES
RESPONSIBILITIES

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TACTICAL PRIORITIES

Tactical priorities identify the three separate tactical functions that must be completed in order to stabilize any fire situation - these priorities also establish the order in which these basic fireground functions must be performed.

These functions should be regarded as separate, yet interrelated, activities which must be dealt with in order. Command cannot proceed to the next priority until the current function objective has been completed or sufficient resources have been assigned to complete it and it is being accomplished.

Basic tactical priorities are as follows:

- #1 - Rescue
- #2 - Fire Control
- #3 - Loss Control

Rescue = The activities required to protect occupants, remove those who are threatened and to treat the injured.

Fire Control = The activities required to stop the forward progress of the fire and to bring the fire under control.

Loss Control = The activities required to stop or reduce primary or secondary loss to property and the negative psychological and emotional impact of the event on the customers.

The objectives of each priority are reflected in the following bench marks of completion:

- #1 - Rescue - primary search (all clear)
- #2 - Fire Control - under control
- #3 - Loss Control - loss stopped

All three tactical priorities require somewhat different tactical approaches from both a command and an operational standpoint.

While Command must satisfy the objective of each function in its priority order, Command must, in many cases, overlap and “mix” the activities of each to achieve the current bench mark. Notable examples are the frequent need to achieve interior tenability with active/extensive fire control efforts before getting on with primary search, or the need to initiate loss control operations while active fire control efforts are being extended.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Standard company operations assign basic fireground functions and activities to the various companies based upon the capability and characteristics of each type of unit.

Standard company operations assign major fireground functions to the particular company who can best accomplish the operation.

Standard company operations integrate the efforts of engine, ladder, and squad companies to achieve effective rescue, fire control and property conservation.

Standard company operations increase the awareness and confidence of company members in the standard performance of other companies operating on the fireground.

Standard company operations reduce the amount and detail of orders required to get companies into action on the fireground.

The following items represent the standard operations that will normally be performed by ladder, engine and squad companies. These basic functions will provide the framework for field operations for these companies:

Ladder Company Functions (see separate Ladder Company S.O.P.):

- Search and rescue
- Ventilation
- Salvage
- Forcible entry
- Ladder raising
- Provide access/check fire extension
- Utility control
- Lighting
- Operation of ladder pipes (aerials and platforms only)
- Overhaul
- Extrication

Engine Company Functions (see separate Engine Company S.O.P.):

- Search and rescue
- Stretch hose lines
- Operate nozzles
- Pump hose lines

Squad Company Functions:

- Search, rescue and treatment - Squad companies should communicate commitment and location to Command and maintain a retrievable status for victim treatment and transportation

- General fire fighting duties as assigned by Command.

In Level I Staging situations, first arriving engine, ladder and squad companies will automatically perform these functions as required unless ordered otherwise by Command. These companies will advise Command on the type of function they are performing.

Company officers will determine, based upon conditions, the priority of the functions for their company unless otherwise ordered by Command.

This does not limit a company to only its listed functions. Every company will be expected to perform all basic functions safely within the limits of their capability, and it will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to integrate tasks and functions as required with the on-scene units.

In the absence (or delay) of ladder company rescue, Command should assign ladder functions to an engine company: “Engine 92, perform ladder functions”. In such cases, engine companies will perform all ladder functions within the capability of their company.

The assignment of these basic operations represents a standard fireground plan for tactical operations designed to improve the effectiveness and safety of all units working together. This plan should in no way limit the initiative of any officer and should enhance the decision making process of all officers by establishing a standard operational framework.