

Response to Calls for Service During Periods of Civil Disorder

506.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice MODIFIED

These procedures provide guidelines to members of the [agencyName] when responding to calls for service during periods of civil disorder.

Corresponding Policies:

- Active Shooter and Other Violent Incidents
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- Emergency Response
- Facility Security
- Fire Service Authority
- Incident Management
- Interim Directives
- Personal Firearms
- Post Incident Analysis
- Scene Preservation
- Soft Body Armor
- Staging
- Tactical Withdrawal

506.2 RESPONSE TO CALLS FOR SERVICE

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The instructions, guidelines, and steps throughout this procedure should be initiated and accomplished, to the extent each is practicable, considering civil disorder conditions confronted and anticipated by Officers in Charge (OICs) and members.

506.2.1 UPON RECEIVING A CALL FOR SERVICE

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Upon receiving a call for service, the OIC should:

- Conduct an initial threat assessment to determine, based upon all available information, whether conditions constituting civil disorder in the area of the responding unit's quarters would prevent response, and report those conditions to the communications center along with the decision not to initiate response.
- Where a response is initiated, with the information available, determine a route that avoids any hot or warm zones of civil disorder, related road closures, and demonstrating crowds blocking streets, and remain continually aware of any change in conditions that would require altering the chosen route.

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- Secure the fire station if it will be left unoccupied during the response. In addition to normal station security procedures, this includes but is not limited to:
 - All bay doors are closed and locked.
 - All access doors are locked.
 - All windows are closed and locked.
 - All exterior lights are on.

The fire station should also be secured in the event the decision is made to remove apparatus and personnel for their safety and security.

- Attempt to determine whether the scene is located in a hot, warm, or cold zone.
- If the scene is hot or warm, determine whether law enforcement is on-scene. If not on-scene, request a law enforcement response and stage accordingly.
- Cancel emergency lights and sirens when within hearing and sight distance of the scene and follow all traffic laws.

506.2.2 UPON ARRIVAL

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When approaching and upon arrival on-scene, the OIC should:

- Contact the communications center and provide the following information:
 - Unit/task force on-scene
 - Initial scene size-up, including the zone level and conclusions from on-scene threat assessment
 - Unit [command] IC
 - Location of a primary (Level 1) staging area, which may be a stage-away area until the scene is deemed safe
 - Confirm radio channel assignments and ensure all personnel are operating on the correct channel.
- If the scene is determined to be in a hot or warm zone and law enforcement is not yet on-scene, request an ETA. Keep in mind that law enforcement resources may not be available and factor the lack of these resources into your conditions assessment.
- Coordinate with other responding agencies to establish a Unified Command (UC) and determine an appropriate location to establish a UC post.
- Coordinate with UC to determine cold, warm, and hot operating zones.
- Establish the [agencyName] personnel accountability system and locate the system in a cold zone after the operating zones are established.
- Coordinate with UC for approach and scene entry.
- Create an incident IAP and communicate all aspects of the IAP to UC so all agencies are aware of potential movements and actions of fire units and their personnel. When

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operating in warm or hot zones, the IAP should minimize exposure of personnel to potential injury or death. This includes but is not limited to:

- Determining the fire attack mode.
- Minimizing exposure of personnel to the impact of social disorder.
- Immediately assigning a dedicated lookout.
- Request additional resources, as needed.

506.3 PROCEDURES

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506.3.1 RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT

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(a) Apparatus

1. Keep all apparatus cabinets and roll-ups closed and locked.
2. Remove all tools and equipment mounted on exposed surfaces and secure in cabinets. Mounted tools should only be kept inside the crew cabin when they can be secured against movement during travel.
3. During response to a call for service and return to the fire station, apparatus windows should be up and closed, and doors locked.
4. Placement of apparatus should be at the direction of the IC or UC if one has been established. The apparatus should be staged away from warm or hot zones.
5. The member assigned to lookout duties or, where personnel cannot be assigned, apparatus drivers, should:
 - (a) Monitor apparatus to ensure that doors and cabinets remain closed and locked.
 - (b) Keep non-agency persons away from apparatus, equipment, and hose lines. Lookouts should not exceed the authority granted to them by law or emergency declaration and should seek the help of law enforcement personnel to accomplish this task.
 - (c) Monitor the scene and surrounding area for changes in social disorder conditions and notify the IC or UC of any change, positive or negative.
 - (d) When duties do not require outside activity, remain in the apparatus cab.
6. Additional apparatus may be deployed as cover or concealment in warm or hot zones.

(b) Personnel

1. During response to a call for service and return to the fire station, personnel should respond in full personal protective equipment (PPE), including soft body armor, if provided, with coats fully collared and helmets on. Unless otherwise ordered, drivers are exempt from wearing turnout boots.

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2. Upon arrival, personnel should not leave the confines of the apparatus crew cabin until directed to a task by the unit commander or IC.
3. Personnel should not enter a warm zone before law enforcement is on-scene. However, based upon the continuing threat assessment, personnel may have to begin operations before the arrival of law enforcement. Personnel should not engage in any activities in a warm zone unless directed by the Fire IC.
4. No operations should occur in hot zones.

506.3.2 OPERATIONS

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(a) Coordination

1. The IC or UC should determine the safest paths for access and egress from the scene and continually monitor these paths as part of the continuing threat assessment.
2. All members should maintain situational awareness throughout the incident due to rapidly evolving scenes and communicate any changes to their commanding officer or the UC.

(b) Search, Rescue, Suppression, and Related Activities

1. All warm zone operations should be directed with the consideration of minimizing exposure of personnel to activities related to social disorder. This should include but is not limited to:
 - (a) Staging all personnel and apparatus not engaged in fireground operations in cold zones.
 - (b) Employing deck guns, monitors, and remotely controlled nozzles instead of hand lines for fire suppression.
 - (c) Going to a defensive mode, whenever fire conditions permit.
 - (d) Immediately removing victims and injured firefighters to cold zones for triage, treatment, and transport.

(c) Scene Preservation

1. In order to preserve scenes where criminal activity may require investigation, minimize the disturbance of conditions and evidentiary items when providing emergency mitigation services in and around scenes.

506.4 CONDUCTING TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL

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506.4.1 WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS

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- (a) During the response to an incident:

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1. The member responsible for initiating the withdrawal is responsible for notifying all responding units and the communications center of the withdrawal action. The relay of the withdrawal decision to individual units may be conducted by the member, or the member may choose to have the communications center notify all responding units to cancel their response or to respond to a defined staging area.
- (b) After arrival at an incident:
 1. When units are on-scene at an incident and a decision is made to initiate a tactical withdrawal, the IC or ranking supervisor is responsible for notifying all involved units (including those assigned to the incident but that have not yet arrived) of the withdrawal action. The IC should also notify the communications center of the tactical withdrawal and, if time and circumstances allow, the situation and reason for the withdrawal. Individual unit supervisors are responsible for notifying all of their assigned personnel of the withdrawal.

506.4.2 TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL GUIDELINES

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The following guidelines should be applied when the decision has been made to initiate a tactical withdrawal:

- (a) Personnel should quickly pick up all tools, appliances, hose, and other department equipment, place in or on the apparatus, and withdraw from a hot or warm zone to a defined staging area established by the Incident Command Structure at a safe location away from the incident scene. All involved units and personnel should withdraw to that staging area.
- (b) All involved units should withdraw from the incident scene as a single group. If that is not possible, individual units should attempt to congregate together, forming the fewest and largest groups possible, and withdraw in those groups.
- (c) After all units have been initially notified of a tactical withdrawal, individual unit supervisors are responsible for personnel accountability, ensuring all members of their crew are accounted for and withdrawing as directed. The IC is responsible for accounting for all units assigned to the call and ensuring that all units are withdrawing as directed.
- (d) If law enforcement is not on-scene and a tactical withdrawal is initiated, the communications center should immediately notify and request an immediate response by the appropriate law enforcement agency to provide security for the withdrawing units.
- (e) Two Personnel Accountability Reports (PARs) should be conducted:
 1. The first PAR should be conducted once the IC believes that all units and personnel assigned to the incident have withdrawn from an incident to confirm they have safely withdrawn. Individual unit supervisors shall confirm that all members of their crew are accounted for and safe.

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2. The second PAR should be conducted by the IC once all involved units have gathered at the staging area. If any person involved in the operation is unaccounted for, emergency procedures should be initiated.
- (f) After relocation to a cold zone staging area, equipment, tools, appliances, and hose should be packed and secured as per standard on-scene take-up and pack-up procedures.

506.4.3 RETURN TO QUARTERS OR ALTERNATE LOCATION

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The decision to return to quarters involves a threat assessment of civil disorder conditions at and around the fire station and finding a safe return route. Units should not return to their assigned quarters until the area and route are considered safe.

- (a) Where it is determined by ongoing threat assessment that it is not safe to return to the fire station or no safe route for return exists, the IC should direct units to an alternate location, preferably a fire station or public building, located in a cold zone.
- (b) If sent to an alternate location, the IC should ensure that the communications center is notified of the location, confirm arrival of all units, and response status of all units under their command.

506.5 POST INCIDENT CONSIDERATIONS

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506.5.1 POST INCIDENT ANALYSIS

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Post-Incident Analysis (PIA). Refrain from performing any type of analysis on-scene or at any staging area. PIA should be performed at quarters or assigned alternate location.

506.5.2 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

Response to calls for service because of or during periods of social disorder may be especially stressful for personnel. Officers should be instructed to review the CISM policy, be mindful of any changes in member behavior, remind crews to watch each other for signs and symptoms, and report sign and symptoms to commanding officers.

506.6 ABANDONING FIRE STATIONS

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Based upon a threat assessment concluding that, due to civil disorder conditions, the safety of firefighters and equipment can no longer be assured within the confines of a fire station, the ranking officer at a fire station, the Battalion Chief, or any other chief officer may order that a fire station be abandoned, and apparatus and members relocated to the nearest fire station in a cold zone.

506.6.1 RANKING OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

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Upon receiving an order to abandon a station, or ordering that a station be abandoned, the ranking station officer or the designated members should, to the extent possible considering the severity and immediacy of the threat, ensure that the following tasks are completed:

(a) Preparing to Abandon a Station

- All apparatus, including any reserve apparatus, have assigned drivers and all members are assigned to apparatus or a department-owned vehicle.
- All portable radios, personal communication devices, and battery chargers are located, gathered, and secured for removal on apparatus or department-owned vehicles.
- All self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) cylinders (bottles) not carried on apparatus are located, gathered, and secured for removal on apparatus or department-owned vehicles.
- All PPE of members is located, gathered, and secured for removal on apparatus or department-owned vehicles.
- If medications or controlled substances are stored at the fire station, they should be located, gathered, and secured for removal on apparatus or department-owned vehicles.
- Lock all interior doors, member lockers, controlled-substance storage, and department-owned computer hard drives.

(b) Abandoning a Station

- Move all apparatus and members out of the station.
- The ranking officer may authorize the relocation of member personal vehicles to inside the station. If authorized, member vehicles should be moved to the apparatus floor.
- Close bay doors.
- Shut down all utilities to the station. If the sprinkler system is not serviced by a separate line, keep water service in operation.
- Ensure that all exterior doors and windows are locked.
- Notify communications that the station is being abandoned and confirm to which fire station the members and apparatus are relocating. Request that this information is transmitted to the Battalion Chief or the next higher-ranking officer.
- Apparatus and department vehicles, with assigned members, proceed to the identified fire station together.