

ON SCENE: COMPANY OFFICERS



Take Action

As a company officer, you are responsible for ensuring the safety of your firefighters as well the efficient and effective completion of firefighting tactics. This role is one of the most important on the fireground. As such, your actions can severely affect an incident's outcome. This document reviews issues company officers should be concerned with on the fireground.

En Route

- Getting to the scene expeditiously is important, but arriving safely is more important. Do your firefighters understand that you expect both, but will not tolerate unsafe actions?
- **A factor in firefighter death and injury is not using seat belts.** The second leading cause of firefighter death is vehicle accidents. Do you set a good example in wearing and enforcing use of seat belts?
- Knowing your district is an important part of your job as well as your driver's. Is there ample opportunity for district familiarity training? Can it be combined with other types of calls (i.e., when returning from an EMS call)?
- Does district familiarity take into consideration hydrant or water source locations? Do you know when your local public works places hydrants out of service? When was the last time you maintained that dry hydrant in your district?
- What resources are responding to this call? Are they adequate for the situation? Will you be working with mutual aid departments and, if so, how will that change operations? Will Level One staging be used?

The First Five Minutes

Spend the week of June 19-25 focusing on the first five minutes of structural fire response at the chief, incident commander, company officer, and firefighter levels. Make sure all duty shifts are able to participate in the training throughout the week.

IAFC Rules of Engagement for Structural Firefighting

Section 1: Increasing Firefighter Survival provides lesson plans for firefighter survival. Section 3: Rules of Engagement provides resources for firefighters and incident commanders.

NVFC Volunteer Firefighter Health and Safety Priorities

Sets forth a series of B.E.S.T Practices for Behavior, Equipment, Standards and Codes, Training.

Stand Down Resources

All resources are available at www.safetystanddown.org.



On Location

- How will you conduct your initial and ongoing size-ups? Does your department use immediate on-scene, 'dashboard' reports? What is your next step to ensure you completely understand the situation at hand? Does this include a 360-degree appraisal, survival profiling, and risk assessments?
- Will you be establishing, assuming, or reporting to command? Do you know who your supervisor is and what their expectations for your crew on this incident are? Do you follow proper procedures for transferring command so no details are lost?
- Is your crew ready? Is PPE proper and effective? Are they able to perform the needed tasks with the tools they choose? Is that the right size line, correct ladder, or proper forcible entry system for the situation? Does your crew know what to do if a Mayday is called or if they need to evacuate or abandon the building?

Inside

- A company officer's primary responsibility is accountability of their crew. Accountability means keeping track of their location and safety but it also means ensuring the expectations of your supervisor are completed effectively and efficiently in as rapid a manner as the situation allows.
- Do you use thermal imaging and air management to aid you in accountability? How often are PAR checks and progress reports necessary for crew integrity? Do you have procedures in place to prompt timed PAR checks?
- What factors, current and future, could cause harm to your crew? Do the conditions inside match your initial size-up of the situation? Does radio traffic give you hints on the progress of the situation? Are significant tactical concerns being met: quick advancement of the initial hoseline, primary search, etc?
- In the event of an emergency, where is the nearest exit for your crew? Are ladders or other necessary resources available to a rapid egress of the area? If actions to escape a dangerous situation are not possible, a Mayday needs to be declared as early as possible.