

Salt River Fire Department Operating Guidelines

Response to Violent Incidents

May 2008 (Rev.)

205.06

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The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for the safe response of the Salt River Fire Department companies to incidents involving violence.

Violent incidents are defined as any type of incident in which Fire Department members may be exposed to harm as a result of a violent or threatening act.

DISPATCH AND RESPONSE POLICY

Based upon the circumstances of the violent incident, Alarm will process fire units according to one of two modes:

1. Stage for PD. Confirmed Patient(s)
2. Respond directly to the PD secured scene and proceed with caution.

RESPONSE

Command will be established on any assignment as needed (see Staging--Level I and Level II procedure).

Alarm will collect as much information as possible and rapidly communicate that information to responding companies via radio. Dispatch will provide responding units with the Police channel the call is being worked on. The call will be assigned a Fire Channel and the Dispatcher will closely monitor the incident.

The first-in company/unit should proceed with caution as they respond. All other units responding will follow established staging procedures. In all cases, the first arriving unit or Command will make the decision to stage or to go into the scene. The decision should be based on experience, what can be seen, what can be heard, what can be learned from the radio, prior experience in the area--and other factors.

The first-in Fire Company officer shall meet with the immediate Police Supervisor, and should try to gather information on scene safety, size of incident (one large related incident vs. several small spread-out incidents), number of patients, ect.

That Company Officer needs to communicate/coordinate with other responding fire units should they be responding to another call and/or location, related to this scene. The Fire Company Officer shall communicate that the scenes are related and staging until PD can secure the alternate scene should be a priority.

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If the decision to stage is made, the Company Officer shall notify the Communications Center that the unit(s) are staged and their location. This notification to Dispatch is in addition to any other communications to the Company Officer may initiate.

When the decision to stage is made:

1. Members should consider the hazards at hand and stage far enough away to avoid becoming a part of the incident--out of line of sight and out of the line of fire for gunshots.
2. Members should remember that the crowd may be a hazard.
3. Units should turn off warning lights when staged and then turn them back on when completing the response to the scene. Turning off warning lights at the scene may reduce crowd attraction to the incident.
4. The best plan may be to retreat if necessary to ensure the safety of the crewmembers. If Fire Department companies respond to an incident of an unknown nature and find themselves in a violent situation, they will immediately retreat to a safe location. Emergency traffic should be used if necessary and additional resources requested as needed. Alarm should be advised of the need for rapid police response.

During violent situations where fire crews are at risk of danger/injury and need police assistance immediately, use the radio code "905." Dispatch will immediately advise that a fire company is in trouble and has transmitted a "905" code, and needs police assistance immediately.

Company officers should provide details of the situation when able to do so. Under a "905" code, Alarm will not ask the company for details or why the police are needed.

In some unsecured violent incidents, with patients, it may be necessary for the Police Department to deliver the patient(s) to fire companies at the perimeter (they become the Extrication Sector).