PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to give Officers and Engineers direction on the safe and proper placement of fire/medical apparatus and staff vehicles on incidents.

SCOPE

The scope of this procedure applies to all department members.

ACCREDITATION REFERENCE

5E Fire Suppression

PROCEDURE

Apparatus function should dictate apparatus placement.

The placement of all apparatus on the incident scene should be a reflection of one of the following:

- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for first-arriving companies.
- Pre-arranged staging procedure.
- Direct order from the Incident Commander.
- Conscious decision or company officer, based on existing or predictable conditions.
- Ensure personnel, patient and scene safety.

FIRST ARRIVING APPARATUS

Effective apparatus placement begins with the arrival of first-arriving companies, based upon their initial size-up and the general conditions upon arrival.

Position to their maximum advantage to go to work. Utilize "key" positions that offer maximum fire attack access to the fire area, and supplied with large diameter supply lines as quickly as possible so subsequent arriving companies can operate hose lines from their apparatus.

Position working apparatus in a manner that considers the extent and location of the incident, pessimistically evaluating fire spread, building failure and anticipates the heat which may be released with structural collapse.

Apparatus should generally be positioned at least thirty (30) feet away from involved buildings, even with nothing showing. Greater distances are indicated in many situations. Beware of putting apparatus in places where it cannot be repositioned easily/quickly – particularly with only one way in or out, (i.e. yards, alleys, driveways, etc.).
Beware of overhead power lines when positioning apparatus. Do not park under lines.

**SUBSEQUENT ARRIVING APPARATUS**

Initiate Level 1 staging.

Level 1 staging is automatically activated when the officer of the initial arriving unit clears dispatch to give their initial radio report and assumes command. All other companies will level 1 stage (stop) in the direction of travel 1 block from the scene not passing their last tactical option.

Stage in a position that builds on the initial plan and allows for expansion of the operation.

**STAGED APPARATUS**

When staged at any time in violation of any traffic law, emergency lights should be used, at a minimum. The use of the 4-way yellow flashing lights is also recommended.

During night or limited ambient light operations, with passing traffic, consideration should be given to reduce flashing and white lights (e.g. headlights, ditch lights, beacons, wig wags and opticom), unless determined necessary for some operations.

Level 2 staging should be considered in large, complex and lengthy incident operations that require additional apparatus.

A centralized staging location, adjacent to the incident scene where later arriving resources will assemble prior to being assigned to the incident scene.

**INCIDENT COMMAND**

The Incident Commander (IC) must maintain an awareness that access equals tactical options, and that the immediate incident area can quickly become congested with apparatus.

The IC must regard apparatus on the incident scene in two categories:

- Working apparatus
- Parked apparatus “taxis”

Non-working apparatus should be staged/positioned in an uncommitted position that will not congest the area and will facilitate performing a maximum number of evolutions.

The IC, Divisions, Groups and all operating companies should attempt to maintain an access lane down the center of the street(s) wherever possible. Think of apparatus as an expensive exposure.
If apparatus becomes endangered, operate lines between the apparatus and the incident while the apparatus is re-position to a safe position. It is dysfunctional to move an apparatus repeatedly throughout the progress of an incident.

HYDRANTS, HOSE, AERIALS, EQUIPMENT

Hydrants closest to the fire area, with adequate water supply, are regarded as “key” hydrants.

Large diameter steamer hook-ups take maximum advantage of such hydrants and facilitate pumping multiple lines. Also, location of these hydrants produce shorter hose lays.

Do not hook up to hydrants so close to the fire building(s) that structural failure of fire extension will jeopardize the apparatus.

Take advantage of the equipment on working apparatus in the fire area instead of bringing in more units.

Fire hose (particularly large diameter) soon limits the general access to the fireground. IC/Divisions/Groups and Company Officers must park apparatus in key positions before limiting access to the building up with fire hose. Lines should be laid with attention to the access problems they present. Attempt to lay lines on the same side of street as the hydrant and crossover near the fire.

When an aerial apparatus is committed to fireground operations, the apparatus should be spotted where the aerial can be raised and used effectively without re-positioning.

When the aerial is not needed for upper level access or rescue, spot the apparatus in a position that would provide an effective position for aerial operation if the fire goes to a defensive.

Officers must consider extent and location of fire, most dangerous direction of spread, confinement, exposure conditions, overhead obstructions and structural conditions in spotting apparatus. The apparatus should be spotted where the aerial can be raised and used effectively without repositioning.

Position the command vehicle in a manner that allows maximum visibility of the fire building, surrounding area and the general effect of the companies operating on the fireground. The command vehicle position should be easy and logical to find and should not restrict the movement of other apparatus.

Medic apparatus should be staged so they do not become “locked in” should they be needed for transport.