



**ARCADIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE**

CIVIL DISTURBANCE RESPONSE

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the Fire Department's protocol dealing with incidents involving civil disturbances. The procedure describes response modes, security, command structures, and cooperative approaches with the Arcadia Police Department and other agencies.

DEFINITION

Within this procedure, a civil disturbance is defined as a situation involving a random act, or several random or specific acts of violence, directed at firefighters, other persons, or property.

PROCEDURE

The Arcadia Fire Department shall use a two-tiered approach to respond to incidents involving civil disturbances. It shall be the responsibility of all members to be alert to potential or actual hazards due to a civil disturbance. There are times when such potential is high and well known; however, at other times, a single act or incident can spontaneously escalate into a significant disturbance.

NOTIFICATIONS

Any company experiencing an act of violence against them shall immediately report the incident to Verdugo Dispatch Center. Verdugo will notify the Duty Battalion Chief. If the severity of the situation dictates that a Tier-One or Tier-Two response is in order, the following notifications will be made:

- Fire Chief
- Deputy Fire Chief
- Arcadia Police Dispatch

Verdugo shall be requested to notify all AFD stations of the situation. The notification will include a brief description; identify the boundaries, and duration of effect. When an incident occurs, the first due Company Officer, his/her Battalion Chief and a Supervisor from the Arcadia Police Department will meet to determine the appropriate level of response for the area in question.

TIER-ONE RESPONSE

When an actual act of violence towards firefighters has occurred at a specific location of the City (i.e., a random bullet fired at a fire apparatus, but resulting in no injuries), and there are no indications that the situation involves any other related acts, a perimeter shall be identified a minimum of 1/2 mile in each direction from which the act occurred. Until deemed to be safe by the on-duty Battalion Chief, Fire Department companies shall not respond into that area without a police escort, and shall stage according to the requirements of the Standard Operating Guideline 122, *Response to Violent Incidents*, when they do enter the area.

Any fire station located inside the established perimeter shall have all their resources reassigned to a station outside the perimeter or to a Level II staging area. All support apparatus will also be relocated.

Fire stations located adjacent to the perimeter area will remain in their stations but shall go into a "Lockdown" mode for security reasons. All doors will be closed and locked. Members will remain indoors until area is cleared by APD.

TIER-TWO RESPONSE

When a series of actual acts of violence have occurred in a specific area of the City (i.e., unrelated set fires, a series of assaults, or looting), a perimeter encompassing one or more square miles shall be established around the area. A Unified Command Post shall be established well outside that perimeter. Command shall establish Level II Staging near the Command Post and request appropriate resources.

Close communications shall be maintained between all assigned resources. The Command Post will direct all responses into the identified area. Verdugo will direct all requests for emergency service in the identified area to the Incident Commander. Verdugo will also advise Command of all emergency requests to perimeter areas. Command shall determine the appropriate response to the incident (if any), obtain a police escort, and actually direct the companies to respond.

All resources responding into the perimeter will be grouped (no single company responses) and with police escorts. Responding units will communicate only with Command. Request for additional assistance by a company/unit shall be directed to Command, utilizing the emergency traffic procedure if necessary. Upon completion of the call, account for personnel and return to Staging. In addition to Command, Verdugo must also monitor all radio traffic. If disturbances are occurring in more than one area of the City, this system may be duplicated in other locations. When operating in a Tier-Two situation, emphasis must be placed on stabilizing the incident as rapidly as possible, if safe to do so, and then pulling out.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- No single company responses will be permitted in Tier-Two situations.
- Police escorts will be required.
- All Fire Department personnel will respond to and from all emergencies in full protective clothing (helmet, bunkers, etc.) and body armor, personnel will remain in this level of PPE until returned to staging or their assigned fire station.
- Use of sirens and air horns within the perimeter should be avoided. Emergency lighting may be used.
- When responding to Tier-One and Tier-Two situations, apparatus must be placed in a manner that will allow for rapid, unobstructed, retreat from the area. Apparatus must also be parked in a manner that best protects the crew.
- When operating in Tier-One and Tier-Two modes, all tools and equipment located on the exterior of apparatus must be removed and placed in interior compartments.

- Crews should be careful about radio communications. Outside speakers on apparatus broadcast all messages (to the public). MCT's or cellular phones should be used as much as possible for sensitive communications.

TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Victims may be more effectively treated in a potentially violent situation if the victim is rapidly removed from the scene to a safe / exterior treatment area (scoop and run).
- When no lives are at stake, emphasis will be on protecting savable property. Buildings, vehicles, etc. that are fully involved with no or little exposure problem, may be left to burn.
- Emphasis will be fast attack, heavy streams to rapidly control and extinguish the fire and then exit the area. Routine salvage, ventilation and overhaul practices may be discontinued. Use of hand lines should be limited.
- All fire units will enter the perimeter as intact groups or Task Forces, travel in groups or Task Forces, operate in groups or Task Forces, and return in groups or Task Forces.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Any civil disturbance has the potential of escalating into a major situation.
- A fire station or other City facility, or school, if appropriately located, may make an excellent Command Post and staging area and can be easily secured. Think big! Schools may allow more effective space.
- Activation of the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC).