



EDINBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

SOGs

**STANDARD OPERATING
GUIDELINES**

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION IS TO PROTECT THE LIVES AND PROPERTY
OF THE CITIZENS OF EDINBURG FROM NATURAL AND MAN-
MADE EMERGENCIES UTILIZING MITIGATION EFFORTS,
CONTROL SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

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CHAPTER A
INCIDENT COMMAND MANAGEMENT/FIRE GROUND OPERATIONS

A-01-00 FIRST PRIORITY

A-01-01 Life Safety

1. Life Safety will be the primary responsibility of all Firefighters at the scene of any emergency.
2. No other activity will take priority over that of Life Safety for civilians and/or firefighting personnel during an emergency.

A-02-00 BASIC OPERATIONS

A-02-01 Basic Procedures

1. The Basic Operations Procedures at all incidents should be the following tactical functions in order of importance.
 - a. Life Safety (Search and Rescue)
 - b. Locate the fire
 - c. Confine the fire
 - d. Extinguish the fire
 - e. Protect Exposure
 - f. Ventilation
 - g. Property Conservation
 - h. Evidence conservation
2. It is understood that certain conditions could exist where it might be necessary to begin one or more of the tactical functions listed in order to conduct search and rescue operations.
3. An Incident Safety Officer may be assigned to the incident based on the magnitude and complexity of the incident. All officers are considered responsible for the safety of the team and area they are supervising over at all times. An Incident Safety Officer can be assigned by the Incident Commander of any incident.

A-02-02 Engine Company Responsibilities

1. The responsibility of the officer to arrive at the scene of an incident will be to size-up the incident, give information to responding units and what function his crew is committed to.
2. Fire attack and control tactics can begin immediately if it is necessary to provide protection for Firefighters performing search and rescue. However, life safety will have priority over fire extinguishment.
3. Once search and rescue responsibilities are satisfied, fire extinguishment operations will begin immediately utilizing basic fire attack and control tactics.

4. If the first arriving engine company has requested a supply line, the company officer of the second arriving engine company will make the decision as to how to supply water to the first arriving engine company.
5. If no call for water supply is made, the second arriving engine company will proceed to the scene to assist as needed or assume Incident Command responsibilities if the first engine company officer is committed. If the second engine company officer proceeding to the scene determines that water supply is needed, the officer will determine as to how to supply water to the scene.

A-03-00 INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

1. In order to better control and manage resources at an incident, the INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM will be used by the Edinburg Fire Department.
2. When responding to any emergency incident, all Edinburg Fire Department Officers will be responsible to implement the INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM.
3. The first arriving company officer will be the Incident Commander. The second arriving officer will be the Incident Commander if the first Company Officer has committed to a tactical function.
4. The Incident Commander will size up the fire using the UCAN acronym (Unit, Conditions on arrival, Actions being taken, what is Needed) and immediately give a situation report before beginning operations. In most cases, this situation report should be brief, utilizing common word terminology.
5. The Incident Commander has the authority to call for a Second Alarm.
6. When other responding companies are needed to service the fire, the INCIDENT COMMANDER will direct incoming companies to the location where they are needed and inform them briefly of the task they will perform. This should be done quickly and the Incident Commander should not wait until incoming engine companies have arrived to direct their activities.
7. The Incident Commander will be required to first satisfy life safety responsibilities. Depending upon the circumstances, the Incident Commander may request for supply lines to be laid into the incident to establish a continuous water supply. Supply lines can be laid by the first or second incoming engine companies.
8. The INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM is upgraded into functions, (i.e. groups, divisions, etc.) as the incident grows. Engine companies will be assigned accordingly to the functions needed by the INCIDENT COMMANDER.

9. The Incident Commander will be responsible for accountability of all fire department personnel at all emergency incidents.
10. During any major emergency, the INCIDENT COMMANDER will set up a COMMAND POST. The Command Post will be located as per the incident scene zones procedures. The Command Post should be located upwind and the INCIDENT COMMANDER should be able to observe at least two sides of the incident, when possible.
11. The INCIDENT COMMANDER will notify EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH giving the location of the Command Post.
12. During major emergencies, responding companies will automatically stage approximately one block away from the Command Post unless otherwise directed by the INCIDENT COMMANDER.
13. Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch will notify all incoming mutual aid engine companies to report to the staging area and give its location.

A-03-01 Chain of Command

1. The first arriving Officer at an incident is the INCIDENT COMMANDER.
2. If the first arriving Company Officer commits to a function at an incident, the second arriving Company Officer is in charge until relieved by higher authority.

A-04-00 STAFF OFFICERS

1. Any Staff Officer may respond to any incident.
2. Staff Officers, when responding to an incident will report to the Command Post. At the scene of an incident, the Incident Commander has the authority over any Staff Officer.

A-05-00 ACTIVATED ALARM RESPONSE

A-05-01 Purpose

To establish procedures for responding to activated alarms (box alarms).

A-05-02 Procedures

1. One unit will respond to all Activated Alarms and Code 3. All additional units will respond Code 1 unless requested by the Incident Commander to upgrade to Code 3.
2. The closest Engine Company will respond Code 3 to the Activated Alarm.
3. Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch will attempt to determine the estimated time of arrival of the owner/occupants and will advise the responding unit of this information.
4. If, while in route, Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch receives information from the monitoring company that the Fire Department should cancel, they are to advise the responding unit and the unit shall respond Code 1 to the scene for visual inspection and to gather information.
5. Upon arrival, the unit should attempt to make a visual inspection of the interior of the building for signs of fire.
6. If entrance cannot be made and there are no apparent signs of fire or water flow (i.e., smoke, fire, audible alarm, etc.), the Engine Company shall stand by until the owner/occupant arrives to allow access.
7. After a Company has been in a stand by mode for 20 minutes and there is no apparent sign of fire or water flow, and if dispatch has not been able to ascertain an estimated time of arrival of the owner/occupant the Company may leave the scene at the officers discretion, this will be noted on the officers report.
8. If the first arriving company reports that water is flowing and/or an alarm gong is operating:
 - a. The INCIDENT COMMANDER will request a Regular Alarm.
 - b. The first on scene Engine Company will connect to the Sprinkler System and wait for orders. When ordered, the Engine company will pump at 150 psi.
 - c. When life safety is not a priority, and the system valves are accessible, the officer of the first company will check all valves to assure they are fully opened. Once the valves are determined to be fully opened, the officer will proceed to the fire and give a second situation report.

9. All other responding engine companies and truck companies will assist as directed by the INCIDENT COMMANDER/OR OFFICER in charge of tactical functions.

A-05-03 System Shut Down

1. No sprinkler system is to be shut down or any valve turned off until after a control time is given except when the INCIDENT COMMANDER gives the order to shut the system down. The INCIDENT COMMANDER is the only person who has the authority to close a system after a fire has occurred. The owner, manager, employee, etc., will not be allowed to shut down a sprinkler system without the approval of the INCIDENT COMMANDER.
2. If control of excess water from open sprinkler heads is needed before the system can be shut down, sprinkler wedges/tools will be used to control the flow of excess water.

A-05-04 Inspections

1. Each sprinkler system will be inspected by Fire Prevention personnel annually or as needed.

A-06-00 OTHER EMERGENCIES

A-06-01 Major Disaster

1. The Edinburg Emergency Operations Plan is established to handle major disasters.
2. The Edinburg Emergency Operations Plan includes procedures to handle natural and man-made disasters.

A-06-02 Emergency Medical Assistance Procedures

1. Emergency Medical Service Agencies are required to perform at levels established by a number of agencies including the Department of State Health Services, U.S. Department of Transportation and others. In order to satisfy our responsibility and permit E.M.S. personnel to satisfy their responsibility, the following procedures will be observed by Firefighters:
 - a. When responding to a medical assistance incident, personnel do not have to wear full firefighting protective clothing.
 - b. Personnel are to use protective equipment and take universal precautions to avoid exposure to body fluids. EX: latex gloves, eye protection, etc.
 - c. If Firefighters respond to a medical call and EMS is not on scene, the primary responsibility of the fire fighters will be life safety and patient care.

- d. When EMS arrives on scene it will be their responsibility to provide patient care with Firefighters assisting where needed.
- e. EMS Companies have a policy of sending one ambulance to any incident. It is conceivable that Firefighters will arrive before the first ambulance and see a need for additional ambulances. The INCIDENT COMMANDER should request additional units, however, it will be the decision of the EMS company as to the number of ambulances sent.
- f. When requesting additional units, the Incident Commander should provide a detailed, concise description of the situation to the Emergency Police and Fire Dispatch.

A-06-03 Public Assistance

1. Due to the nature of Firefighter knowledge and the multitude of equipment and tools found on fire apparatus, the fire department is often called to provide various types of assistance to the citizens of Edinburg.
2. No call for assistance by any citizen of Edinburg will go unanswered. This can be a full alarm response or merely referring the caller to the proper agency to assist them. Every effort is to be made to assure the situation is taken care of. When in doubt, an appropriate alarm assignment is to be dispatched.
3. When the city limits are in question, a unit will be dispatched to the address given. Once the unit is back in station, the Incident Commander will investigate whether the incident was in or out of city limits.

A-07-00 MUTUAL AID TO OTHER CITIES AND MEXICO

1. The City of Edinburg Fire Department has a written agreement with most cities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley to provide Mutual Aid.
2. Officers responding to mutual aid calls will report to the Officer-In-Charge of the incident for orders.
3. The City to which we are responding, is the INCIDENT COMMANDER in their city and has full authority over all Edinburg personnel and apparatus until relieved. The ranking fire department officer should assure that orders given to our personnel, does not expose our personnel to undue safety and hazards.
4. The Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief and City Manager will be notified anytime Mutual Aid is provided to any other city. This will not apply on minor alarms such as; assisting neighboring cities at grass fires or stand-by at fire stations. Only major incidents.

5. Mutual Aid to Mexico must be authorized by the Edinburg Fire Chief, City Manager or Mayor of Edinburg before apparatus responds.
6. Mutual Aid requests from Mexico should be kept to the Reynosa city limits. If a neighboring or out of country city requests mutual aid, the request must come from an authorized person i.e., Fire Department Officer, Police Department Officer, City Official, Mayor or City Manager. The remarks section of the NFIRS Report and Dispatch Report will indicate phone number and who requested the mutual aid.

A-08-00 EMERGENCY RESPONSE ALARMS

The Incident Scene Zones and Incident Command System will be used by fire companies responding to an emergency incident. The INCIDENT COMMANDER can request multiple alarm responses as required.

A-08-01 Incident Scene

1. The incident scene is the actual site of the incident.
2. The incident scene can consist of: building, structure, vehicle, grass fires, hazardous materials, extrication, etc.
3. The boundaries of an incident scene will depend on the size of the incident and wind direction.

A-08-02 Hot Zone

1. The Hot Zone is a DANGER AREA and all safety precautions must be observed.
2. The Hot Zone boundaries will be dictated by the size of the incident and wind direction.
3. Full protective clothing and SCBAs will be used in the HOT ZONE area at all times.

A-08-03 Warm Zone

1. The Warm Zone is not necessarily a DANGER AREA but it is also not a SAFE AREA. CAUTION must be observed in this zone.
2. The Warm Zone boundaries can be any size from 25' - 200' or more from the incident depending on the size of the Hot Zone Area and wind direction.
3. All personnel in the Warm Zone Area can remove SCBAs, if safe to do so. Personnel must continue to wear full protective clothing and monitor conditions as a precautionary measure.

A-08-04 Cold Zone

1. The Cold Zone will be areas that are absolutely safe.
2. The Cold Zone will be outside the Warm Zone Area and be as far away from the incident as necessary depending on the size of the incident and wind direction.

3. SCBA and protective clothing do not have to be worn in the Cold Zone Area.
4. Personnel who have been relieved to rest will be staged in the Cold Zone Area.

A-08-05 Command Post

1. The Command Post should be located upwind in the Cold Zone.
2. If the Command Post can not be effectively located in a Cold Zone, it should be located in the safest area possible and all necessary precautions observed.
3. At the Command Post, the Incident Commander shall wear full protective clothing if the Command Post is not located in a safe area or if conditions warrant additional safety precautions.

A-08-06 All Clear

1. When an All Clear signal is given, the Hot Zone Areas and Warm Zone Areas cease to exist.
2. The All Clear signal must be given by the Incident Commander in coordination with the Operations Deputy Chief if present.

A-08-07 Silent Alarms

1. Units will respond Code 1.
2. No less than one unit will respond on any Silent Alarm.

A-08-08 Still Alarms

1. Units will respond Code 3.
2. No less than one unit will respond on any Still Alarm.

A-08-09 Regular Alarms

The following operations will utilize minimum of three (3) firefighters per pumper. In the initial stages of an incident where only one team is operating in the hazardous area at a working structure fire, a minimum of four (4) firefighters working as a team in the hazard area and two (2) firefighters present outside this hazard area for assistance or rescue in emergency operations where entry into the danger area is required, unless the known life hazard exception is invoked.

1. Apartment fire
2. Business fire
3. Check for fire

4. Electric fire
5. Explosion
6. House fire
7. Smoke in the apartment
8. Smoke in the business
9. Smoke in the residence

A-09-00 Multiple Alarms

1. When a regular alarm assignment is in need of more resources (personnel and equipment) multiple alarms are transmitted. The additional personnel and equipment respond to compliment the initial alarm assignment.

A-09-01 Rapid Intervention Team 2 in / 2 out

PURPOSE

To establish standard operational procedures, which serve as guidelines regarding the establishment and use of a rapid intervention crew where the atmosphere is assumed to be immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH).

GENERAL

Firefighters must be present outside the structure fire prior to a team entering and beginning interior structural firefighting operations where the atmosphere is assumed to be (IDLH). Interior structural firefighting is the physical activity of fire suppression, rescue or both inside of buildings of enclosed structures, which are involved in a fire situation beyond the incipient stage. An incipient stage fire is a fire which is in the initial or beginning stage and which can be controlled or extinguished by portable fire extinguisher. Class II standpipe or small hose systems without the need for protective clothing or breathing apparatus.

All firefighters performing interior structural firefighting operations are required to operate in a buddy system with two or more personnel, maintain voice or visual contact with one another at all times, wear full protective clothing and SCBA with PASS device and enter with charged hose line. They will enter together and will exit together. Radios may not be substituted for visual or voice contact between members of and interior team.

Two properly equipped firefighters (paid or volunteer), or rapid intervention team (RIT), will be assigned by the Incident Commander (IC) and must be positioned outside the structure and remain capable of rapid rescue of the interior team. A charged hose line will be made available to the RIC, as well as appropriate retrieval tools and equipment. Any task that the outside firefighters perform while in standby rescue status must not interfere with the responsibility to perform a rapid rescue of the interior team and must be such that the work can be abandoned, without placing personnel at additional risk.

For high-rise operations, the RIT would be staged below the IDLH atmosphere. It is not required to always have a separate “two-out” team for each team operating in the structure. However, if the incident escalates, if accountability cannot be properly maintained or if rapid rescue becomes infeasible, additional outside crews must be added.

For example, if the involved structure were large enough to require entry at different locations or levels, additional “two-out” teams would be required.

The interior team must have radio, visual or voices communication capability with firefighters outside the structure. One of the firefighters outside the structure must maintain constant awareness of the number and identify of members operating in the hazardous area. Therefore, as a minimum five firefighters must be on scene prior to the initiation of interior structural firefighting operations. That is two individuals working as a team in the interior of the structure fire, two individuals outside the structure for assistance of rescue and a fifth firefighter who will remain outside and perform functions, such as incident command, pump operator and/or accountability officer. Members that arrive on the scene of a working structural fire prior to the assembling of five persons can initiate exterior actions or defensive operations in preparation for an interior attack.

If initial attack personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life, and five members are not yet on scene (i.e. a RIT has not been established), deviation from the above standard may be permitted, as an exception. The members should carefully evaluate the level of risk that they would be exposed to by taking such action and will notify command and other responding units their intentions. This exception is for an imminent life-threatening situation, not for standard search and rescue activities.

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CHAPTER B **COMMUNICATIONS**

B-01-00 RADIO USAGE AND DISPATCHING

B-01-01 Federal Communications Commission (FCC):

1. The Federal Communications Commission, commonly referred to as the FCC, regulates two- way radio operations.
2. The FCC issues licenses and assigns frequencies for all radio systems.
3. The FCC requires radio operators to clear the radio using the proper signs when finished with radio traffic. It will not be necessary to clear the radio after each use because the 800 Trunking System has an automatic identification signal approximately every (10) ten minutes.
4. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD), personnel are assigned to handle Fire Department 911 emergency radio and telephone communications. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) personnel are located at the Edinburg Police and Fire Department.

B-02-00 SPECIAL CODES

B-02-01 Purpose:

To simplify radio communications, specific activities have been given codes. These codes give exact indication of what is required and helps eliminate confusion.

B-02-02 Response Codes:

1. To assure that the manner in which fire apparatus are to respond to an incident, response codes have been established.
2. Response codes for EMERGENCY VEHICLES are as follows:

CODE 1 - NON EMERGENCY respond at your convenience.

CODE 3 - EMERGENCY response - with all emergency warning lights, sirens, and headlights in operation.

CODE 17 – Bomb Threat

B-02-03 Accidents:

Due to numerous codes being used by various agencies to report accidents, the Fire Department will not utilize a specific code other than identifying it as a Minor or Major accident and if there are injuries involved.

B-02-04 10-Signals:

10-signals will no longer be used during any radio traffic. Only clear text will be used for all radio traffic.

B-03-00 STANDARD ALARMS

B-03-01 Silent Alarm

This is a non-emergency incident. No less than one unit will respond Code 1. Examples are gas spills, stand-by, investigation, etc.

B-03-02 Still Alarm

The following operations require a two (2) person crew to maintain safe performance of duties at the emergency scene. Normal staffing for these operations will be three (3) firefighters:

1. Dumpster fire
2. Elevator rescue
3. Fire alarm in a business
4. Fire alarm in a residence
5. Grass fire
6. Haz-mat emergency
7. Lightning strike
8. Natural gas leak
9. Power lines down
10. Transformer fire
11. Trash fire
12. Vehicle fire
13. Gas/fuel spill procedure (absorbent)
14. Major accident with/without entrapment

B-03-03 Regular Alarm

The following operations will utilize minimum of three (3) firefighters per pumper. In the initial stages of an incident where only one team is operating in the hazardous area at a working structure fire, a minimum of four (4) firefighters working as a team in the hazard area and two (2) firefighters present outside this hazard area for assistance or rescue in emergency operations where entry into the danger area is required, unless the known life hazard exception is invoked.

1. Apartment fire
2. Business fire
3. Check for fire
4. Electric fire
5. Explosion
6. House fire
7. Smoke in the apartment
8. Smoke in the business
9. Smoke in the residence

B-03-04 Mutual Aid

1. The City of Edinburg Fire Department has a written agreement with most cities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley to provide Mutual Aid.
2. Officers responding to mutual aid calls will report to the Officer-In-Charge of the incident for orders.
3. The City to which we are responding, is the INCIDENT COMMANDER in their city and has full authority over all Edinburg personnel and apparatus until relieved. The ranking fire department officer should assure that orders given to our personnel, does not expose our personnel to undue safety and hazards.
4. The Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief and City Manager will be notified anytime Mutual Aid is provided to any other city. This will not apply on minor alarms such as; assisting neighboring cities at grass fires or stand-by at fire stations. Only major incidents.
5. Mutual Aid to Mexico must be authorized by the Fire Chief, City Manager or Mayor before apparatus responds.

6. Mutual Aid requests from Mexico should be kept to the Reynosa city limits. If a neighboring or out of country city requests mutual aid, the request must come from an authorized person i.e., Fire Department Officer, Police Department Officer, City Official, Mayor or City Manager. The remarks section of the NFIRS Report and Dispatch Report will indicate phone number and who requested the mutual aid.
7. Mutual Aid to Mexico will only be allowed at the incident site when requested by a Edinburg Fire Department Incident Commander on-scene. The mutual aid request is required to come from the U.S. city that borders the Texas/Mexico border.

B-04-00 MULTIPLE ALARMS

B-04-01 Multiple Alarms

When a regular alarm assignment is in need of more resources (personnel and equipment) multiple alarms are transmitted. The additional personnel and equipment respond to compliment the initial alarm assignment.

B-05-00 RADIO TALK GROUPS

Radio talk groups were established to better manage the radio traffic during emergency and non-emergency situations.

B-05-01-00 Primary System (Talk Groups)

1. Fire Desk and all non-emergency radio communications (FDESK)
2. Fire Ground One (GRD-1)
3. Fire Ground Two (GRD-2)
4. Fire Ground Three (GRD-3)
5. Fire Ground Four (GRD-4)
6. Fire Ground Five (GRD-5)
7. Fire Ground Six (GRD-6)
8. Fire Ground Seven (GRD-7)
9. Auto 1 (AUT-1)
10. Auto 2 (AUT-2)
11. Fire Prevention
12. Special Event
13. Emergency Management 1
14. Emergency Management 2
15. City Wide
16. Hail

B-05-02 Crosspatch of Radios

1. When mutual aid is requested by or given by Edinburg Fire Department the Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch will have to cross patch Edinburg Fire Department radios with the mutual unit radios.

B-05-03 Radio Emergency Call Button

The Emergency Call Button is color coded **red** on portables and **red** on mobile radios. The purpose for the emergency call button is in case of an emergency when a firefighter is down and in need of assistance immediately.

1. When an emergency call button is activated the following procedures are:
 - a. All radio consoles at Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch are activated. Console screen will identify unit assigned radio call sign.
 - b. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will identify the radio having the emergency by the assigned radio call sign.
 - c. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will call back radio identified with the emergency no less than three times to confirm emergency.
 - d. If EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) does not get a reply, EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will call the Incident Commander to notify the Incident Commander of unit displaying alarm.
 - e. If during an emergency incident where there is a multi response of units the emergency call button is activated the Incident Commander is to be notified by radio immediately.
 - f. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) is not to reset the emergency call button until confirmation has been established that the emergency is over.
 - g. If emergency call button is unintentionally activated, Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch is to be notified immediately.

B-05-04 Testing Radios

1. All base stations and pagers will be tested daily at 0720 and 1920 hours.

B-06-00 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

B-06-01 Personal Telephone

1. All Edinburg Fire Department Personnel are required to have a personal telephone as per Edinburg Fire Department Rules & Regulations.
2. Personnel are required to report any changes in their telephone number to the Deputy Chief. The purpose of this requirement is to be able to contact off duty personnel in the event of an emergency requiring extra personnel to report to duty. This report is to be made during the first shift worked after the telephone number has been changed and the Firefighter is aware of his/her new number.
3. Telephone numbers of fire department personnel are not to be given to any person except their supervisor or a Chief Officer.
4. The Fire Chief's phone number will be given to anyone requesting it.

B-06-02 Fire Department Business Telephone

1. Personnel are directed to answer the phone immediately upon ringing in a professional manner (Ex: Edinburg Central Station; this is (state your rank and last name); how may I assist you).

B-06-03 Fire Department Sub Stations Emergency Telephone

1. The direct lines between the 911 Communications Center and the sub stations are primarily used for the EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) to communicate with the sub stations or for the sub stations to contact the EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) to report fire department official business. Non-emergency communications from the sub stations to the EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will be by using the business telephones
2. The emergency direct line telephones are to be used only to take or receive emergency calls.

B-07-00 RECORDING EQUIPMENT

B-07-01 City Policy

1. The designated radio transmissions to be recorded will be any frequency.

B-08-00 REPORTS AND RECORDS

B-08-01 Alarm Numbers

1. Each response by Fire Department emergency apparatus will be assigned a Report Number by the Edinburg Police and Fire Department in accordance with the fire alarm sequence.
2. The EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD), in establishing the proper Report Number, will provide this number at the end of each incident.

B-09-00 GENERAL UNIT RESPONSE PROCEDURES

B-09-01 Assure Units Respond

1. All Officers must assure that they acknowledge they are responding.

B-09-02 Fire Prevention

1. If the INCIDENT COMMANDER requests assistance from the Fire Prevention Division/Fire Investigator, the EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will contact the Fire Prevention Division personnel on call, relaying the request.

2. If a Fire Investigator cannot be contacted or respond, depending on the circumstances, the INCIDENT COMMANDER will assign a ranking officer to maintain custody of the scene, until an investigator is assigned.
3. In order to help the INCIDENT COMMANDER in making a decision to call the Fire Investigation Officer or Inspector that is off-duty, the following should be determined.
 - a. Is the incident an emergency, suspicious in nature that needs investigation by the fire investigator?
 - b. Must the investigation be performed now due to life/fire loss?
 - c. If the investigation is not performed by a Fire Investigator, the incident could cause future legal problems.
 - d. Is the Inspection needed due to possible fire code violation(s) that can cause an immediate life safety problem? Can the inspection wait until an inspector is on duty?
4. Once the Fire Investigator or Inspector is notified and is responding, the INCIDENT COMMANDER will remain at the scene or assigned someone to assist the Fire Investigator or Inspector. In addition, INCIDENT COMMANDER, when possible will assure that all Fire Department Personnel or other witnesses with pertinent information also remain at the scene to assist the Fire Investigator or Inspector.
5. At incidents outside the city limits which require a fire investigation or inspection, the INCIDENT COMMANDER will request the Hidalgo County Fire Marshal. If he/she is unavailable request the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office.

B-10-00 News Media

1. All inquiries by the news media should be referred to the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief will determine what information to release. The Fire Chief may appoint any officer to act as the Public Information Officer.

B-11-00 Non-Life Threatening Incidents

1. Responses to non-life threatening incidents will be no less than one unit responding Code 1.
2. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) are to screen calls to determine if calls are non-life threatening emergency i.e. gas spills, child rescue, investigation, etc.
3. Fire Department units responding to assistance for a person locked in a vehicle will respond Code 3 if requested by the Incident Commander, Police, or EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD).

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CHAPTER C
BOMB THREAT/EXPLOSIVE DEVICE PLAN

C-01-00 LINE OF AUTHORITY

1. The Edinburg Police Department will be in charge of all bomb threats or when a suspected explosive device is discovered.
2. In the absence of the Edinburg Police Department the Line of Authority will be the highest-ranking Edinburg Fire Department Officer as per Incident Command System.
3. The Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department will be in charge of all incidents outside the city limits.
4. Assist outside law enforcement agencies during incidents within our response jurisdiction.

C-02-00 NOTIFICATION

1. If notification of an incident is received from Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch or the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department, the Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch will:
 - a. Respond units as dictated by these procedures.
2. If notification of an incident is received from someone other than the Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch or Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department, the EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will:
 - a. Respond units as dictated by these procedures
 - b. Notify Edinburg Police Department or Hidalgo Sheriff's Department.
 - c. Complete "Bomb Threat Information Form" (C-17-00 Form Attached)
3. The Edinburg Police and Fire Dispatch should attempt to keep the caller on the line to gain more information. Information to record includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Exact time of call
 - b. What telephone line call was received
 - c. Where the device is located
 - d. Time of denotation
 - e. Background noises (equipment noise - music - other voices)
 - f. Race, sex - age of caller
 - g. Speech accent or speech impediments
 - h. Location of caller
 - i. All other information listed on "BOMB THREAT INFORMATION FORM"

NOTE: EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) ARE TO KEEP AT HAND A "BOMB THREAT INFORMATION FORM" TO BE COMPLETED ON EACH INCIDENT AND FORWARDED TO THE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE.

C-03-00 RESPONSE

1. The EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will dispatch a Silent Alarm.
2. Units will respond Code 1 to a location near the scene, (AT LEAST 500 FEET AWAY). Company Officer/Deputy Chief will be the Incident Commander for Fire Department Personnel.
 - a. Upon arrival will give on scene to EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD)
 - b. Will notify EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) of their location
 - c. Need not give a situation report (but can if necessary)
 - d. Stand-by ready in full bunker gear
 - e. Will not be used for searching activities
 - f. Gather information for the incident report after an all clear is given by Edinburg Police Department.

C-04-00 DEVICE FOUND

1. EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) will dispatch a Regular Alarm to the location of the first Company and stand-by.
2. Fire Department Incident Commander will formulate plans to handle situation if device detonates.

C-05-00 EXPLOSION

1. The Fire Department will assume command of fire and rescue operations as per Incident Command System.
2. Fire units standing-by will respond Code 3 to the scene.
3. IC will notify all other Engine Companies to stand-by.
4. IC will advise EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) to notify ambulance company to stand-by or respond.
5. IC will advise EDINBURG POLICE AND FIRE DISPATCH (EPFD) to notify hospitals to stand-by.

C-06-00 SAFETY

1. **NO 2 WAY RADIO TRAFFIC OR CELL PHONE TRAFFIC WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITHIN 500 FEET OF THE SCENE DURING SEARCH OPERATIONS**
2. All Fire Department personnel at or near the scene will be wearing full protective bunker gear at all times as per Incident Command Zones Procedures.
3. Fire Department Personnel will not be used to search for bomb devices.

C-07-00 OPERATIONS IN COUNTY

Basically the same procedures described in Section C-01-00 will be used.

C-17-00 Bomb Threat Information Form

Date _____ Report Number _____

Time Received _____

Exact Words of the Caller _____

Description of the Caller's Voice

Male _____ Female _____ Accent _____

Young _____ Middle Age _____ Old _____

Approximate Age _____ Tone of Voice _____

Background Noise _____

Is Voice Familiar _____ If so, who did it sound like? _____

Other Comments _____

Person who received the call: _____

CHAPTER D
EMERGENCY SCENE REHABILITATION

D-01-00 GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. It is the policy of the Edinburg Fire Department that no department member will be required to continue emergency operations beyond safe levels of physical or mental endurance. While Fire Department members cannot be completely insulated from the hazards and difficulties encountered during emergency operations, the intent of these procedures is to lessen the chance of injury resulting from sustained operations.
2. The purpose for these procedures is to:
 - a. Protect the life and health of personnel committed to emergency operations
 - b. Establish procedures for implementation and functioning of a Rehabilitation Officer during emergency operations.
 - c. Delineate the authority and responsibility for implementing these procedures.
3. It will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander to ensure the safety and welfare of all Firefighters. The Incident Commander shall establish a Rehabilitation Officer as soon as possible following the initiation of tactical operations whenever the following conditions exist:
 - a. Fire Department personnel are involved in emergency incidents at a level of work time likely to result in extreme physical exertion.
 - b. During any prolonged "emergency incident".
 - c. Adverse weather conditions, particularly high and low temperatures, create an additional physical hardship on personnel. Climatic or environmental conditions that indicate the need to establish a Rehab Station include both hot and cold temperatures.
 - d. Personnel have been exposed to hazardous materials.
 - e. At any incident when any of the characteristic of the incident dictates the need for Rehabilitation.

D-02-00 REHABILITATION OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

When the Incident Commander has made the decision to establish a Rehabilitation Officer, he will designate an individual not involved in on-going Operations to serve as Rehab Officer. The Rehab Officer will be responsible for the following duties:

1. Select a site for the Rehab operations:
 - a. the site should be upwind and off of the immediate incident site accessible to personnel coming from and going to the incident site.
 - b. The site must be in an area that has been declared a safe zone.
 - c. The site should be equipped with both an ambulance for medical treatment and may require a Rescue Unit for replenishment of air bottles.
 - d. IC will make contact with Weslaco F.D. or Mission F.D., and request a rehab vehicle, if he feels that the Rescue is not adequate, or requires a larger vehicle.
2. Request the Incident Commander have EMS dispatched to the scene if applicable.
3. Set up equipment, supplies, etc. necessary for the operation for the Rehab Station:
 - a. Equipment Located on Companies.
 1. Thermometers
 2. Blood Pressure Cuff
 - b. Supplies need to be purchased on an as needed basis.
 1. Body fluid replenishment liquids, i.e., "Gatorade"
 2. Appropriate high carbohydrate snack foods, i.e., granola bars, fresh or dried fruits.
 3. High carbohydrates and low fat contents, i.e., soup or stew.
4. Coordinate with command to receive companies into the Rehab Station and to release companies when rehabilitation is completed.
5. Direct the operations of the Rehab Station until Officer is dismissed by the Incident Commander.
6. Complete Company check - In/Out Sheet found on the Incident Command Vehicle. (Form - D-02-01 - Attached)

7. Complete Emergency Incident Rehab Report found on the Incident Command Vehicle (Form – D-02-02 – Attached)

D-03-00 ASSIGNMENT TO THE REHABILITATION STATION

1. All members of Companies will be assigned as a unit to the Rehab Station based on the following considerations:
 - a. A determination is made by the Incident Commander that a company or a particular company member is in need of rehab.
 - b. A determination is made by the Safety Officer that a company or a particular company member is in need of rehab.
 - c. A determination is made by any officer that a company or a member of a company is in need of rehab.
2. Assignment to Rehab station will be after a member of any company has performed 45 minutes of continuous work time.
3. Companies may be assigned to Rehab Station relatively early in an incident in order to facilitate the establishment of an effective company work rotation schedule.
4. All members of Companies will be assigned to the Rehab Station as a complete unit, with the exception of the Driver Operator if he is actively engaged in operating apparatus:
 - a. All members of Companies will check in with the Rehab Station as a unit, and will be released as a unit when rehab procedures are complete.
 - b. If a situation arises in which one member of a company will be required to remain in the Rehab Station for an extended period of time, the remaining members of the company may be released to resume operations. They are to be assigned to other Companies for accountability and assignment and will be recorded on the Check In/Out Sheet.
 - c. The Rehab Officer will actively communicate with the Incident Commander to provide timely information on the status of companies assigned to the Rehab Station.
 - e. The Rehab Officer will periodically check on the status of Apparatus Operators to determine their rehab requirements.

D-04-00 REHABILITATION STATION OPERATIONS

1. The following operations will be conducted at the Rehab Station as determined by the Incident Commander:
 - a. An initial set of vital signs will be taken and a routine assessment will be accomplished.

1. If a Firefighter's heart rate exceeds 110 beats per minute, an oral temperature will be taken.
 2. If the Firefighter's oral temperature exceeds 100.6 degrees F, he should not be permitted to wear protective equipment.
 3. If the temperature is below 100 degrees F and the heart rate remains above 110 beats per minutes, rehab time should be increased.
- b. EMS or Fire Department personnel assigned to the Rehab Station shall evaluate vital signs, examine Firefighters, and make proper disposition (return to duty, continued rehab, or medical treatment and transport). Continued rehab will consist of additional monitoring of vital signs, providing rest, and providing fluids for hydration. Medical treatment for members whose signs and/or symptoms indicate potential problems will be provided in accordance with standard EMS procedures. Medical Personnel will be assertive in an effort to find potential medical problems early.
 - c. Each company will rest a minimum of ten (10 minutes) replace body fluids, and if necessary be given oxygen or eat some food as determined by EMS or Fire Department personnel assigned to the Rehab Station.
 - d. A final set of vital signs will be taken and a second routine assessment will be accomplished before returning to the hot zone.
 - e. The Rehab Officer will advise Incident Commander of the company's ready status.
2. The Rehab Station will be appropriately supplied with the equipment and supplies necessary to adequately conduct rehabilitation operations:
 - a. During routine operations, the Rehab Station will have appropriate body fluid replacements available. Acceptable body fluid replacement liquids include water or a hydration solution consisting of a 50/50 mixture of water or a commercially prepared activity beverage such as "Gatorade".
 - b. During extended operations, the Rehab Officer will coordinate with the Incident Commander to obtain appropriate high carbohydrate snack foods such as granola bars, fresh or dried fruits, etc.
 - c. During operations the Rehab Officer will coordinate with the Incident Commander to obtain complete meals for operational personnel. Food for such meals should contain high carbohydrate and low fat content.

D-05-00 TEMPERATURE INJURY THREATMENT

TEMPERATURE INJURY THREATMENT

TEMPERATURE °F	DANGER CATEGORY	INJURY THREAT
BELOW 60°	NONE	LITTLE OR NO DANGER UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES
80° - 90°	CAUTION	FATIGUE POSSIBLE IF EXPOSURE IS PROLONGED AND THERE IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
90° - 105°	EXTREME CAUTION	HEAT CRAMPS AND HEAT EXHAUSTION POSSIBLE IF EXPOSURE IS PROLONGED AND THERE IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
105° - 130°	DANGER	HEAT CRAMPS OR HEAT EXHAUSTION LIKELY, HEAT STROKE POSSIBLE IF EXPOSURE IS PROLONGED AND THERE IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
ABOVE 130°	EXTREME DANGER	HEAT STROKE IMMINENT

SOURCE: NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY

EMERGENCY REHABILITATION REPORT

INCIDENT : _____

DATE : _____

NAME / UNIT #	TIME(S) IN REHAB	TIME/# BOTTLES	BP	PULSE	RESP	TEMP	SKIN	TAKEN BY	COMPLAINTS / CONDITIONS	TRANSPORT?

Form - D-02-02

CHAPTER E

PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

E-01-00 PURPOSE

To develop, maintain and use a personnel/resource accountability system that provides for a rapid accounting of all personnel at an emergency incident.

E-02-00 SCOPE

The Personnel Accountability System (PAS) shall be used on all incidents and shall be incorporated into all drill and training exercises where appropriate.

It shall be a requirement of this standard that all personnel working at emergency incidents actively participate in the PAS.

E-03-00 RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for assuring the overall utilization and effectiveness of the Personnel Accountability System (PAS) will fall on the Incident Commander.

E-04-00 DEFINITIONS

A. Accountability Sheet

A list of personnel assignments carried by the Incident Commander to provide a process for the rapid accounting of all Edinburg Fire Department personnel initially arriving on the emergency scene.

B. Team

Two or more firefighters assigned to perform specific functions on the emergency scene. These firefighters must remain in visual contact with each other once they enter the IDLH atmosphere. Should conditions deteriorate to the point that visual contact is not possible, the team must then maintain physical contact with each other until they are outside the IDLH atmosphere.

C. Team Leader

Member of the team responsible for the supervision of the team and for radio communications with command when giving Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) as well as other pertinent radio traffic.

D. Company

These are the members of an assigned apparatus that arrive and remain together, when performing specific functions on the emergency scene.

E. Sector

This refers to either a geographical area, or functional responsibility of the emergency scene, such as the inside of the fire building being designated at the interior sector. Sector can also refer to certain fire ground functions such as salvage sector, ventilation sector, or rescue sector.

F. Side

This is a uniform method of designating a geographical area of the emergency scene. For square or rectangle shaped buildings, the front of the building will be side A, which is where the command post will normally be located. Starting from the front of the building and moving clockwise each side will be designated as side A, B, C, and D.

G. Unified Command

This is the standard method to coordinate command of an incident where multiple agencies are operating or have jurisdiction. For the purpose of this SOP, a unified command will be established to coordinate assignments and accountability of mutual aid companies.

H. Emergency Traffic

All firefighters working at the emergency scene shall use the radio term “**emergency traffic**” as a designation to clear radio traffic. When a firefighter has declared an emergency traffic message, that firefighter shall use clear text to identify the type of emergency, change in conditions, or tactical operations. They will conclude the message by transmitting the statement “**all clear resume radio traffic**”.

I. May Day

This radio term shall be used only in the event that a firefighter or firefighting team become trapped and are in an imminent life-threatening situation in need of immediate rescue or other intervention. To transmit a “**may day**” the firefighter must first announce “**emergency traffic**” (to clear the radio) followed by the word “**may day**” (say may day three times). The firefighter shall then use clear text to identify the nature of the emergency as described above. Firefighter will activate emergency button on radio.

J. Emergency Evacuation Signal

To pre-empt a catastrophic event on the emergency scene the IC shall use the Emergency Evac Signal to rapidly evacuate the fire building. The signal for an emergency evacuation

will begin with the transmission “**command to dispatch-emergency traffic**” , followed by the words “**evac, evac, evac**”. The dispatcher will then transmit, “**this is an emergency evac signal, all companies evacuate the building immediately**”, and repeat. After this transmission all drivers on the emergency scene will sound their air horns for approximately 15 seconds as a fail safe in the event of radio failure.

K. Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)

The IC shall initiate a PAR from all sectors and entry teams on the emergency scene after the first twenty (20) minutes and every fifteen (15) minutes thereafter. Additional PARs shall be taken after changing from an offensive to a defensive mode or any catastrophic incident on the emergency scene.

E-05-00 RESOURCE/PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURE

- A. The IC shall control the accountability of resources on the emergency scene through the staging sector by the use of level one and level two staging.
- B. Any firefighters who arrive at the scene of the incident by means other than emergency response apparatus shall immediately report to the Incident Command Post and receive clear orders for assignment prior to advancing to any side, sector, company, or team within the IDLH atmosphere or on the emergency scene.
- C. Personnel Accountability Sheet

The IC shall have the accountability sheet in their possession at all emergency scenes. The IC is responsible for the overall accountability of resources and personnel. The RIT team leader is responsible for the accountability, tracking, and monitoring of personnel entering and leaving the IDLH atmospheres.

- D. PAR Procedure

When taking a PAR the IC shall notify all companies to stand by for a PAR. Then he shall call for a PAR from each individual company. The company officer or team leader will respond with the company or team designation and number of firefighters accounted for and location. **“Team one PAR times three interior side C”**.

- E. No PAR Procedure

If the team leader is unable to account for the whereabouts of any team member or does not have visual contact with any team member in the IDLH atmosphere the team leader shall respond with **“no PAR”** preceded by the team or company designation and announce **“emergency traffic”**, give the IC the number of the missing firefighters and their names. The IC must remember to complete the PAR procedure to determine if there are any additional firefighters missing, and then initiate search procedures to locate the missing firefighters.

- F. PAR Procedure – Involving Mutual Aid Companies

As mutual aid companies arrive and are deployed to assist or replace Edinburg Fire Department companies, the IC will assign these companies functions. The interior Commander will be responsible for maintaining accountability of additional companies deployed into the IDLH atmosphere. He shall communicate with the mutual aid company officer and relay PAR information to Command when requested.

- G. No Par – Involving Mutual Aid Companies

Should a mutual aid company respond with a NO PAR the IC will utilize the unified command system to identify the missing firefighters and initiate search procedures. The IC must continue PAR to determine that all firefighters are accounted for so long as an IDLH atmosphere exists.

- H. On large or escalating incidents involving multiple entry points or floors of involvement the IC shall secure resources to provide assignment of additional accountability officers based on the size complexity or needs of the incident.
- I. Firefighters shall be held accountable for remaining under the supervision of their assigned company, team, or sector officer at all times.
- J. All firefighters shall be responsible for following accountability system procedures.

ACCOUNTABILITY SHEET

Incident Commander

Unit _____

DRIVER FF FF FF

Unit _____

DRIVER FF FF FF

RIT TEAM

MUTUAL AID UNITS

INCIDENT SECTOR OFFICERS

C. _____

B. _____

Incident

D. _____

A. _____

CHAPTER F
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF STRUCTURAL FIRE FIGHTING PROTECTIVE ENSEMBLES

F-01-00 PERSONNEL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- A. Personnel are to wear all NFPA approved protective clothing provided to them while at the scene of an incident.
- B. When responding to an alarm Code 3, all personnel will wear full protective clothing (gloves and nomex hood are optional) with the exception of the driver who needs only to wear the bunker coat.
- C. Once drivers arrive at the scene of an incident, they will wear full protective clothing if required by the Incident Commander.
- D. If the driver of the apparatus is wearing shorts, the driver shall don their bunker pants prior to responding on the apparatus.
- E. Personnel may be issued other items such as goggles, medical plastic gloves, etc., these other items are to be worn when required by the nature of the emergency.
- F. All personnel will be issued nomex hoods for added protection. These hoods are to be worn when required by the nature of the emergency.
- G. Protective clothing or equipment that does not meet NFPA standards and/or which was not issued by the fire department, **will not be worn** by fire department personnel in the scope of their duties.
- H. A risk assessment shall be completed as per Texas Commission on Fire Protection to determine the proper type of structural firefighting gear needed in the City of Edinburg Fire Department.

F-02-00 MAINTENANCE OF PROTETIVE CLOTHING

- A. All personnel will be responsible for protective clothing issued to them. If protective clothing is lost or is damaged due to negligence, personnel will be required to replace lost or damaged protective clothing at their cost.
- B. Personnel are responsible for the maintenance of protective clothing issued them. All protective clothing will be inspected after each use and cleaned when necessary. Cleaning of protective clothing will be in accordance with the manufacturer's cleaning

instructions. All structural firefighting ensembles shall be inspected by Edinburg Fire Department personnel that are certified at the Advance Inspection Level to determine any need for repair or replacement. All structural pants and coats shall be sent to a third party contractor to be inspected at the advance level according to Texas Commission on Fire Protection.

- C. Personnel are not to alter in any way the protective clothing issued to them. Liners are not to be removed during usage.
- D. Personnel are not to repair damaged protective clothing.
- E. Protective equipment needing replacement will be exchanged at the earliest opportunity.

F-03-00 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING INSPECTIONS

- A. Helmets shall be maintained reasonably clean, face-shield and chinstrap shall be in good condition.

CLEANING: Helmets should be cleaned with hot tap water and mild (household) detergent. For stubborn smoke stains: Isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol), Windex (regular not ammoniated), Dishwashing detergent, Dupont Wash-Wax and Jeweler's polish for face-shield scratches. The use of other materials such as strong detergents, solvents, petroleum products, etc., will damage the shell and face-shield.

REPAIR: Helmets should be repaired if any of the following apply: Missing nuts on face-shield adapters, face-shield excessively scratched, chinstrap and assembly broken or torn, helmet liner worn, shredded, split or cracked or webbed suspensions broken.

REPLACE: Split face-shield, helmet with visible cracks or helmet which is warped from exposure to heat, helmet which has been exposed to mist or fumes which are known to weaken poly-carbons.

- B. Nomex Hoods

CLEANING: Use warm water and any mild detergent.

REPLACE: Holes in hood, hoods which are not fire department approved, hoods stretched out of shape.

C. Gloves

CLEANING: Use warm water and mild detergent.

REPLACE: Stitching worn or torn, glove insulation is worn through, leather split, holes in the gloves and gloves which are not fire department approved.

D. Turnout Coat and Pants

CLEANING: Liners and shell can be washed with mild detergent, heavily soiled spots can be removed with general spot cleaner and gear can also be machine washed at Station #2 with approved provided equipment and detergent.

REPLACE: Coats and pants on which the stitching is damaged beyond repair, coats and pants on which the fabric is worn through and coats and pants soiled to the point they cannot be cleaned or saturated with oil, tar, etc.

E. Boots

CLEANING: Use warm water and any mild detergent.

REPLACE: Any boot with holes in the sole or cuts in the body of the boot.

F-04-00 SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS

- A. Personnel will use SCBA's at all alarm where smoke is visible or where there is any possibility that toxic gasses, dust or any other respiratory danger might exist.
- B. Personnel utilizing SCBA's will operate at all times in teams of two or more personnel.
- C. No company will respond to any alarm unless it carries at least one (1) SCBA for each person responding on that unit. The SCBA will be in easy reach of each person operating on that unit except for the driver. The driver will have an SCBA available; however, it can be located in a compartment.
- D. When SCBA's are utilized, they are to be utilized in full compliance of the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- E. All components such as straps and belts are to be fastened in place. Waist belts are NOT to be altered, left loose or folded away. They must be in place and worn.
- F. The nomex hood is worn with an SCBA and it is to be worn outside of the face piece sealing.

- G. All personnel are to assure that facial hair does not interfere with face piece sealing. Regulations on facial hair for fire personnel are as follows:
1. No beards will be allowed.
 2. Sideburns are to be kept trim and to the point where they are not dense or thick to the point of preventing proper seal.
 3. Mustaches will be allowed as long as they do not prevent face piece sealing.
 4. Excessive head hair will not be allowed if it interferes with face piece sealing or proper operating of face piece straps.
 5. Eyeglasses are not to be worn when using SCBA's.
- H. SCBA's are to be used during overhaul operations.
- I. Do not remove your SCBA until the atmosphere has been determined to be safe to operate within (Control Time).
- J. The determination as to removal of SCBA's will be made by Chief's or Company Officer's at routine situations.
- K. All fire personnel shall be thoroughly trained in the use of SCBA's prior to being required to use the apparatus under hazardous conditions.
- L. After use inspection will consist of the following: refill cylinders, sanitize face piece and rinse as outlined in monthly inspection and clean harness as necessary.
- M. All SCBA's utilized by the fire department will comply with state law in regards to types purchased, tests, inspection, etc. A risk assessment shall be completed as per Texas Commission on Fire Protection to determine the proper type of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus needed in the City of Edinburg Fire Department. Annually Self Contained Breathing Apparatus in the fire department shall be tested by a third party contractor at the advance level as per NFPA and TCFP requirements.
- N. Breathing apparatus must be of a positive pressure design meeting NFPA requirements.

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CHAPTER G

WELLNESS AND FITNESS

G-01-00 PURPOSE

This Physical Fitness program is designed to address the physical well-being of our members. It represents the long-term commitment to our members in the area of physical fitness. This program is to reduce the frequency and severity of accidents and injuries and to promote the health and well-being and longevity of each firefighter.

G-02-00 SCOPE

This Physical Fitness Program is to provide the necessary time and equipment for each fire fighter to determine the appropriate physical activity that will fit their individual needs.

G-03-00 GENERAL

- 3.1 Each firefighter shall complete a minimum of one hour of physical activities each shift work day.
- 3.2 The firefighter may select the type of physical activity that they may feel will improve or maintain their strength, endurance or overall health.
- 3.3 Weight training equipment is provided for maintaining or increasing muscular strength. Aerobic equipment is provided to maintain or improve cardiovascular function and endurance.
- 3.4 During fitness activities, if firefighters respond to an alarm, the fitness activities are to be continued upon completion of alarm or reschedule to complete one hour of physical fitness activities during their shift.
- 3.5 If, firefighter chooses to run or jog, firefighter must remain within a distance of 500 feet or less from their assigned apparatus for timely response to alarms.

G-04-00 EXERCISE FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 To encourage and facilitate physical activities, the fire stations have been equipped with a weight lifting machine, tread mill, stair climber and an elliptical trainer.
- 4.2 All firefighters who utilize the physical fitness equipment are required to clean up after each use and abide by any rules that may be established. This would include returning equipment to its proper place, if moved, picking up towels, wiping off equipment and maintaining a clean facility.
- 4.3 Contact and semi-contact activities such as football, hockey, rugby, boxing and wrestling are not permitted at any time.

The tasks that firefighters are faced with on the fire ground are extremely demanding physically. Therefore, firefighters will participate in a physical fitness program.

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CHAPTER H **FIRE PREVENTION**

H-01-00 FIRE INVESTIGATION

Purpose

To determine the origin and cause of a fire. If the origin and cause cannot be Determined, the fire report may list the cause of a fire as either “unknown” or “undetermined”.

Objective

To provide for the organizational and systematic process in a fire origin and cause investigation.

Definitions

1. Arson Investigator: A certified firefighter of the Edinburg Fire Department who is a licensed peace officer, certified as an arson investigator.
2. Fire Investigator: A certified firefighter of the Edinburg Fire Department who is not a licensed peace officer but certified as a fire investigator.
3. Fire Official: A certified firefighter of the Edinburg Fire Department not assigned to the Fire Prevention Division, who is not a licensed peace officer, arson investigator or Fire Department investigator.
4. Personally Involved: Where the off-duty investigator, a family member, or a friend becomes engaged in a dispute or incident with the person to be arrested or any other person connected with the incident. This does not apply to situations where the investigator himself is a victim of a crime.
5. Deadly Force: Any use of force that is likely to cause death or serious bodily harm.
6. Non-Deadly Force: Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force.

Fire Official

The fire official is not a certified fire or arson investigator. The fire official is a certified Firefighter assigned to the Operation Division. The fire investigator and/or arson Investigator will assist a fire official when requested to do so.

Fire Investigator

The fire investigator is not a licensed peace officer. The fire investigator shall limit his investigation to the scope of practice on determining the origin and cause of a fire. If evidence of criminal conduct in violation(s) of the Texas Penal Code Chapter 28 (arson, criminal mischief and other property damage or destruction) is discovered, the fire investigator shall immediately transfer custody and control of the investigation to an arson investigator or Edinburg Police Department licensed peace officer. Violations of the Texas Penal Code such as Section 46.05 prohibited Weapons (incendiary bomb) or Section 42.06 False Alarm or Report (fire alarm) can be investigated by the arson investigator or Edinburg Police Department licensed peace officer.

Arson Investigator

The arson investigator will hold a current commission license as a peace officer with the Edinburg Fire Department. The arson investigator shall have the duties and powers of a licensed peace officer. The arson investigator's duties/responsibilities include, but not limited to, investigating arson, criminal mischief crimes involving property damage/destruction by fire, prohibited weapons offense involving incendiary bombs, and false alarm or report offenses involving fire protection equipment, within his jurisdiction. The arson investigator may execute Edinburg Municipal Court warrants. The arson investigator may be issued a Edinburg Municipal Court ticket book and have the authority to issue citations for traffic or non-traffic or non-traffic offenses and fire code violations.

"Field Notes" Forms

Field note forms have been developed to assist the investigator during the Origin and Cause determination investigation phase. The use of these forms is not mandatory or may be applicable in all fire related incidents. The forms are not designed or intended to be a complete report, but rather to serve as input for development of an origin and cause determination. These forms are also not intended to provide all known incident information.

These forms are designed to collect descriptive observations rather than definitive conclusions. The investigator, in most circumstances, may make a final determination as to the origin and cause of a fire. Not all forms will be utilized at all fire incidents. Several forms could be used on any specific fire incident, depending on the magnitude of the investigation or type of incident.)

Supplemental Investigation Report

The Fire Prevention Division investigative supplemental report may contain information derived from the “field note” forms. The investigator will submit an investigative supplement report, when required, to document the results of an origin and cause fire scene examination. In instances where an Edinburg Police Department offense report has been generated, the Arson investigator may exclude Fire Prevention Division supplemental report or “field notes”. The arson investigator can utilize the Edinburg Police Department supplement/narrative report forms.

Safety

Fire scenes by their nature are dangerous places. Fire scene examinations should not be undertaken alone whenever possible. If feasible, a minimum of two investigators or fire officials should be present, especially when the incident involves a heavily damaged structure. Investigators have a duty to themselves and to others, who may be endangered at the fire scene, to exercise due caution during their investigation. The incident commander at the fire scene will give an “All Clear” signal report before investigators enter the hot-zone area of a fire scene. Proper safety equipment, including safety shoe/boots, gloves, helmet, protective clothing or coveralls, etc., may be worn while investigating the fire scene. It is common for investigators to put in long periods of strenuous physical labor during a fire scene examination. Periodic rest, fluid replacement and nourishment should be provided. This is particularly necessary at a large or major fire incident.

Fire Scene Security

The fire scene will be secured from unauthorized entry when required. Custody and control will be maintained during a fire scene investigation when necessary. Unauthorized personnel shall not be allowed entry into the fire scene. This may be accomplished by placing a “Fire Line – Do Not Cross” barricade tape or any other barricade tape/device

indicating prohibited entry. The assistance of fire or police department personnel serving as guards may be necessary at the fire scene.

Photography

A visual documentation of the fire scene can be made using still photography. Other methods of documentation include the use of diagrams, maps, tape recordings, notes, etc. The exclusive use of video tape recordings, motion pictures, is not recommended. They can be used to supplement still photography. A 35mm camera or digital camera is preferred over other formats. A back-up camera that instantly develops prints can also be utilized. There are many types of film and film speeds available in both print and slide film. The color film may produce a final product that can show variation between objects and smoke stains. Black and white film may also be utilized at the fire scene. Film speed ASA/ISO ratings may vary from 25 to 1600 speeds. The use of any particular film speed is left to the discretion of the investigator. Photographs of the fire scene should include both exterior and interior shots and shots of the area of origin(s).

Evidence Collection

The decision on what evidence to collect rests with the investigator. The recommended container for collection of liquid and solid fire debris evidence is an unused, unlined/line metal container. The Diffusive Flammable Liquid Extraction (DFLEX) device may be used in conjunction with evidence collection methods. The arson investigator can use the Texas Department of Insurance, Fire Marshal's Office "Forensic Arson Laboratory Physical Submission Form" when submitting evidence. At times, the investigator may recover items from the fire scene that may be secured at the Fire Department Administration Building evidence room or other secured facility. A Fire Prevention Division Property description form is available for use by the investigator. This form can be used to document the release of any item taken from a fire scene, to an authorized person.

Fire Scene Examination

The investigator should make every attempt to conduct as thorough and accurate fire scene examination, as possible, unless special circumstances exit (i.e.: unable to do so, not requested, etc.)

The fire scene examination can generally be divided into the following areas:

- 1) Exterior
- 2) Interior
- 3) Area of origin(s)

If the fire cause is determined to be an arson or criminal mischief act, either an Edinburg Police Department peace officer or arson investigator will generate an offense report. The discovery of any other crime shall also be reported to the Edinburg Police Department or any other agency, as appropriate.

Canine/Handler Team

The utilization of specialized canine/handler team(s) will be left to the discretion of the investigator in charge of the case. Properly trained canine/handler teams may assist the investigator in location and determining the collecting of ignitable liquid samples for forensic laboratory analysis validation. Other evidence may also dictate locations where fire debris samples should be recovered. Ignitable liquid detection canines may be used in conjunction with, but not in place of, other fire investigation and analysis methods.

(Note: The Edinburg Fire Prevention Division fire investigation procedures are not intended to limit the arson investigator or fire investigator from exercising their judgment during any fire investigation process. It is designed merely as a guideline to assist the investigator(s) in conducting a systematic approach to fire investigations. This guideline describes procedures that can be used for collecting information and data in a consistent manner. This guideline is not intended to serve as a procedure to derive definite conclusions about a fire incident.)
Investigators will follow N.F.P.A. 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations manual.

H-02-00 LAW ENFORCEMENT – LICENSED PEACE OFFICERS ONLY

Applicability

Any certified firefighter assigned to the Fire Prevention Division who is licensed as a peace officer by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer (TCOLE), whose appointment was commissioned by the Edinburg Fire Department, certified as an arson investigator by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP), and is assigned to the Fire Prevention Division.

Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to describe suggested procedures and provide a general format overview for the arson investigator.

Body Armor

It is the intent of this procedure to provide arson investigators with guidelines for the proper use and care of body armor. It is the policy of the Edinburg Fire Department to maximize officer safety through the use of body armor in conjunction with the practice of prescribed safety procedures. While body armor provides a significant level of protection, it is not a substitute for sound, basic safety procedures.

Procedures

Issuance of Body Armor:

- a. All arson investigators in the Edinburg Fire Prevention Division will be issued body armor.
- b. All body armor issued must comply with current minimum protective standards.
- c. Body armor that is worn or damaged shall be replaced as soon as possible.

Use of Body Armor:

- a. Body armor must be worn while engaged in field activities such as:
 1. Executing arrest warrants.
 2. Executing search warrants.
 3. Assisting another law enforcement agency in executing a search/arrest warrant.
 4. When the arson investigator deems it necessary, for safety measures, to wear the body armor in any other field activity.
- b. Exceptions:
 1. When the arson investigator is involved in undercover or plainclothes work that his supervisor determines would be compromised by the use of body armor.
 2. When the arson investigator is assigned to perform an administrative function; or
 3. When the Fire Department determines that circumstances make it inappropriate to mandate body armor.

Inspection of Body Armor:

- a. Each arson investigator is responsible for ensuring that body armor is worn and maintained as indicated by this policy.

Care and Maintenance of Body Armor:

- a. Each arson investigator is responsible for the proper storage of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and daily inspections for damage and general cleanliness.
- b. Each arson investigator is responsible for reporting any damage or wear to the ballistics panels or cover as soon as possible.

Arrest Procedures

Citizens MAY BE arrested when:

- a. They have violated the LAW.
- b. Probable cause exists to do so.
- c. A misdemeanor violation was in VIEW.
- d. There is statutory authority to do so.
- e. When no EXEMPTIONS are provided by law.

When citizens are arrested they shall be:

- a. Treated with respect and dignity.
- b. Treated with compassion.
- c. Treated fairly and without discrimination.

Citizens who are arrested shall NOT be:

- a. Subject to the use of force other than what is required to affect a lawful arrest or a lawful search.
- b. Subjected to undue and deliberate humiliation and embarrassment.

Miranda Rights:

"You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you. Do you understand the rights I have just read to you?"

(Note: This policy is for Fire Prevention Division use only and does not apply to any criminal or civil proceeding. The department policy should not be construed as a creation of high

standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. (Violations of this section will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.)

Use of force (see : Use of force Standard Operating Procedure Chapter H)

Firearm – Weapon (see : Weapon, Ammunition and Equipment Standard Operating Guidelines Chapter H – Section H-06-00)

Handcuffing

Arson investigators shall handcuff (double locked) all prisoners with their hands behind their back with palms facing outward. Ankle-cuffs may also be used to restrain a prisoner. The arson investigator may handcuff the prisoner with his/her hands in front, or utilize other appropriate restraining devices where the prisoner:

- a. Is in obvious state of pregnancy; or
- b. Has a physical handicap; or
- c. Have injuries that could be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.

Transporting Prisoners

The arson investigator shall request an Edinburg Police Department unit to transport a prisoner.

Search/Arrest Warrants

Purpose: The purpose of this guideline is to provide the arson investigator with procedures for the execution of search and arrest warrants.

Search Warrants Procedures

1. The arson investigator may execute search warrants and establish a search team for the search operation if necessary.
2. The arson investigator's search team will at all times include at least one uniformed peace officer when possible. All non-uniformed peace officers shall be clearly identified by wearing distinctive badges, jacket or some other indicator.
3. The arson investigator will be equipped with body armor.
4. When necessary, the arson investigator should conduct a pre-entry briefing of the execution process with all search team personnel.

5. The arson investigator will be responsible for ensuring that the search warrant is valid and that the property about to be searched is the property listed on the warrant.
6. The arson investigator or uniformed peace officer shall notify person inside the search site, in a voice loud enough to be heard inside the premises, that he/she demands entry to the premises at once.
7. No-knock entries shall be made in accordance with state law.
8. A search warrant shall be executed as soon as practicable within the conditions stated in state law.

Arrest Warrants

Procedures:

1. The arson investigator may execute arrest warrants. When possible, the assistance of another peace officer will be utilized.
2. The arson investigator will request the assistance of a uniformed peace officer.
 - a. All non-uniformed peace officers shall be clearly identified by wearing a distinctive badge, jacket or some other indicator.
 - b. At times, the assistance of other uniformed or non-uniformed peace officers may not be necessary.

For example:

1. A person voluntarily turns himself/herself into law enforcement authorities.
2. A person is being detained at a jail facility.
3. The arson investigator will be responsible for ensuring that the arrest warrant is valid and that the person about to be arrested is the same person listed on the arrest warrant.
4. The arson investigator will be equipped with body armor.

H-03-00 PLEADINGS

The arson investigator requesting an arrest warrant from the Edinburg Municipal Court Judge or other Magistrate will submit the appropriate complaint for the specified offense. The arson investigator will also submit the appropriate complaint, along with the probable cause statement and identity of the person/suspect to be arrested. The Edinburg Police Department Criminal Investigation Bureau can make available, for the arson investigator,

the appropriate arraignment packet for the offense in which the person/suspect is being charged.

(Note: This policy is for the Fire Prevention Division use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceedings. This departmental policy should not be construed as a creation of higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with response to third party claims. Violations of this section will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.

H-04-00 LAW ENFORCEMENT – ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Reports

A written report will be required in the following situations:

- a. When a department issued firearm is discharged outside of the firing range in the normal course of duty.
- b. When a use of force results in death or injury.
- c. When a non-lethal weapon is used on a person

When a department issued firearm is discharged outside the firing range in the normal course of duty, the following Edinburg Fire Department personnel will be notified:

- a. Fire Chief
- b. Fire Marshal

The department's response to incidents involving a discharge of a firearm or use of force that results in death or injury may include the following:

- a. Where an arson investigator's use of force causes death or bodily injury, the arson investigator will be placed on administrative leave pending completion of any applicable administrative investigative inquires, and/or until it is determined by a mental health professional that the arson investigator is ready to return to duty.
- b. The department may conduct both an administrative and criminal investigation of the incident.

Administrative review of a critical incident is essential. All reported use of force incidents may be reviewed to determine whether:

- a. Department training is currently adequate;
- b. Department rules, policies or procedures were not followed;
- c. The relevant policy was clearly understandable and effective to cover the situation.

Continuing Education for License Peace Officer

The arson investigator has a responsibility to ascertain whether he has complied with the required minimum amount of continuing education class hours and mandated courses in accordance with current TCOLE rules.

Records of the arson investigator's firearm proficiency training and continuous education hours will be kept in the Edinburg Fire Department training files and/or with the Edinburg Fire Prevention Division.

Consent to Search

When a fire scene premises has been released to the property owner, occupant, authorized representative or other responsible person, the arson investigator will attempt to obtain consent to re-enter the premises. The consent shall be in a written format. When consent is not provided or refused by the owner, occupant, authorized representative or other responsible person, the arson investigator should decide whether to obtain a criminal search warrant, administrative search warrant or other appropriate process.

Request for Insurance Information

The arson investigator may request insurance policy information relevant to any fire loss.

Photographic Arrays (Line-ups)

Photographic arrays should be prepared and exhibited in a manner that demonstrates reliability and the absence of undue suggestiveness. In addition to the photograph of a suspect, at least five additional photographs will be incorporated, producing an array of six individuals. The photographs chosen for the array should depict individuals of the same race and sex, and having physical characteristics reasonably similar to the suspect. If one or more of the photographs portray some type of identifying information, the printed material should be covered. If it becomes necessary to partially cover one photograph to eliminate printed materials, all the photographs in the array should be

treated the same, regardless of whether they do or do not have identifying material on them. It is inappropriate for an arson investigator to suggest to a witness that the suspect's photograph may be in the array, or that someone else has already identified one of the individuals portrayed in the array as the suspect. It is also inappropriate for an arson investigator to suggest to the witness what photograph to select. If a witness identifies an individual in the photo array, the investigator should avoid indicating to the witness that he/she has made the correct identification. The arson investigator can refer to the Texas Family code for additional information concerning photographs of juveniles.

Juvenile Cases

Fire scenes can attract adult spectators as well as juvenile spectators. Juveniles may be interviewed at the scene by the arson investigator, fire investigator or fire official. The arson investigator, fire investigator or fire official may request an Edinburg Police officer to respond to the scene to assist with the investigation. When warranted, a juvenile may be detained at the fire scene and transported by the arson investigator or the Edinburg Police officer, to the designated juvenile processing office. Refer to the Texas Family Code for additional information.

Custody/Detainment of Juveniles

When a juvenile is charged with a crime, the Edinburg Police Department Jail Division can assist the arson investigator in processing and booking the juvenile.

Juvenile Witnesses

The arson investigator, fire investigator, or fire official may interview juvenile witnesses with the assistance of a juvenile police officer. Parental/guardian consent should be obtained if a juvenile witness voluntarily agrees to provide a written statement pertinent to the investigation.

Juvenile Forms

The arson investigator may determine which forms will be necessary, in a juvenile case investigation, by consulting with the Edinburg Police Department Juvenile Investigation Division. When a juvenile is detained and charged with an offense by the arson investigator, a probable cause statement will be submitted with the Edinburg Police Department

supplemental/narrative offense report. The arson investigator can also refer to the Texas Family Code for additional information.

Victims

The arson investigator will obtain an affidavit from a victim who wishes to file appropriate criminal charges. If a victim refuses to pursue criminal charges, the arson investigator may decide to close the case. The applicable clearance of the case will be indicated in the Edinburg Police Department supplemental/narrative report.

Polygraph Examination

The arson investigator may request the assistance of a licensed polygraph examiner employed by either a public or private agency. The use of polygraph examinations, in any investigation, is left to the discretion of the arson investigator in charge of the case, with the approval of the Fire Chief.

H-05-00 FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTIONS

PURPOSE

To facilitate the professional and thorough fire prevention inspections which are conducted by Edinburg Fire Department personnel.

POLICY

- A. All Fire Department members that are TCFP certified fire inspectors, when conducting fire prevention inspections shall expend their best effort to accomplish a professional, courteous and thorough inspection of each occupancy they may visit.
- B. Fire department members that are TCFP certified fire inspectors conducting fire inspections shall dress in the appropriate uniform for that inspection.
- C. All inspection forms will be checked for completion prior to being turned in.
- D. If using standard form the yellow colored copy of the completed inspection form shall be left at the inspection sight. The white copy of the completed form shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Office for review.
- E. If inspection is conducted on the iPad a digital copy should be emailed or printed for the owner and/or occupant.

RESPONSIBILITY

All Fire Department members that are TCFP certified fire inspectors are responsible for expanding best efforts towards accomplishing a professional and thorough inspections.

SPECIFIC CODES AND STANDARDS (NFPA)

Fire Department members shall enforce the International Fire Code current edition and references.

For specific code reference the following.

- International Fire Code 2012 (I.B.C. and I.M.C.)
- National Fire Protection association (NFPA)

H-06-00 WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND EQUIPMENT

PURPOSE

This chapter is designed to provide guidelines for the proper use, care and carrying of any firearms by authorized fire department personnel. These guidelines will be integrated with policy on the lawful use of varying levels of force, the use of deadly force and the discharging of firearms. This chapter will also provide guidelines covering firearms in both on duty and off duty settings.

AUTHORITY

The Code of Criminal Procedures (ART.2.12) clearly establishes the authority of commissioned members of the Edinburg Fire Department Arson Investigating Unit as peace officers. The Code of Criminal Procedures (ART.2.13) also outlines the duties of peace officers and the Edinburg Fire Department requires all of its commissioned officers to perform these duties with due caution and safety.

GENERAL

1. No member of the Arson Investigating Unit shall carry a weapon without the authorization of the Fire Chief; they must also be a commissioned Peace Officer of the State of Texas and be commissioned as an Arson Investigator.
2. Arson investigators are authorized to carry and have their weapons visible to the public in the course of their fire investigation duties, however they are to conceal their weapons in the course of their regular fire prevention duties. At all times they are to carry the weapon with consideration for safety, of both themselves and those around them.

3. When off duty and the fire department issued weapon is at the residence of the arson investigator, it must be stored in the fire department provided secured lock box or secured in the fire department assigned vehicle lock box.
4. Any authorized personnel carrying a weapon shall also have on his/ her person proper identification as a Texas Peace Officer. They will also be required to carry a Fire Marshal, Assistant Fire Marshal or Arson Investigator identification. Proper Identification will consist of Edinburg Fire Department issued I.D. card, issued badge and TCOLE Peace Officer license.
5. If the weapon is visible to the public, the arson investigator's badge must be clearly visible in one of the following three areas; either the breast pockets, on a neck lanyard or attached to the belt/waist area.

H-07-00 FIREARMS PROCEDURES

Weapon Proficiency Qualification:

The Edinburg Fire Department shall schedule regular training and qualification sessions for issued duty weapons and/or issued personal weapons at least once a year, which will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Fire Chiefs approval is required for the use of any personal weapons. A minimum passing score of 80% is required to achieve a passing grade. Arson investigators who fail to receive a passing score with their duty firearm will be required to re-qualify with their weapon. An arson investigator shall not be permitted to carry a firearm with which he has not been able to qualify during the most recent qualification period. A supervisor may required an arson investigator who has taken an extended leave of absence or suffered an illness or injury that could affect his use of firearms abilities, to re-qualify before being allowed to carry a duty firearm.

(Note: The Edinburg Fire Department firearm's instructor will be utilized to serve as the firearms proficiency control officer for the Edinburg Fire Department. The firearms proficiency control officer may establish the weapons proficiency qualification course and supervise all proficiency qualification activities.

A. On-Duty Weapons

1. Arson Investigators of this department may carry only firearms, ammunition and related equipment that meet department standards. Each arson investigator is responsible for attaining and maintaining a proficiency in the use of authorized firearms and must obey all Fire Department rules, regulations and procedures related to firearms, ammunition, qualifications and equipment usage.

2. The Department reserves the right to check all Arson Investigators firearms, ammunition and related equipment while on duty to determine if the firearm, ammunition and equipment are operational, clean and meet department standards. Firearms used on duty will not be modified from factory specifications, except for replacement of grips.

B. Off-Duty Weapons

1. Arson Investigators of this department may carry personal off duty firearms, ammunition and related equipment that meet department standards. Each Arson Investigator is responsible for attaining and maintaining a proficiency in the use of personal off duty carried firearms and must obey all Fire Department rules, regulations and procedures related to off duty firearms, ammunition, qualifications and equipment usage. All personnel who are authorized to carry an off duty weapon must qualify with that weapon and the information on the make , model and serial number of that weapon will be kept on file with the Fire Marshal's office.
2. The Department reserves the right to check all Arson Investigators off duty carried firearms, ammunition and related equipment while off duty to determine if the firearm, ammunition and equipment are operational, clean and meet department standards.

C. Handguns

The Fire Department issues a semi-automatic pistol in 40-caliber for use by on duty Arson Investigators. Qualification with an issued handgun used on duty is required.

D. Shotguns

The Fire Department does not issue shotguns to arson investigators, however if possible they may qualify for the use of shotguns if they wish to do so.

E. Ammunition

Ammunition carried by on duty arson investigators in the department issued firearms and pouches will be only that ammunition that is approved by the department. The department issues ammunition for on duty use and for qualification in 40-caliber. The only approved ammunition for the department issued handgun will be utilized. Substitutions of this load are strictly prohibited.

F. Back Up Guns

The use of back up gun by any Arson Investigator while on duty is strictly prohibited.

H-08-00 USE OF FORCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide the Arson Investigator with guidelines in the use of deadly force and non-deadly force.

POLICY

This department recognizes and respects the value and special integrity of each human life. In vesting Arson Investigators with the authority to use force to protect the public welfare a careful balance of all human interests is required. Therefore, it is the policy of this Department that the Arson Investigator shall use only that force reasonably necessary to effectively bring an incident under control while protecting the life of that officer and others.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Deadly Force:** Any use of force that is likely to cause death or serious bodily harm.
2. **Non-Deadly Force:** Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force.

PROCEDURES

Parameters for the use of force.

Arson Investigators are authorized to fire their weapons in order to:

1. Protect the Investigator or others from what is reasonably believed to be an immediate threat of death or serious bodily harm; or,
2. Prevent the escape of a fleeing felon whom the investigator has probable cause to believe will pose a significant threat to human life should escape occur.
3. Before using a firearm the investigators shall identify themselves and state their intent to shoot, where feasible.

An Arson Investigator may also discharge a weapon under the following circumstances:

1. During range practices or competitive sporting events.
2. To destroy an animal that represents an immediate threat to public safety.

Arson Investigators shall adhere to the following restrictions when their weapon is exhibited:

1. Except for maintenance or during training, investigators may not draw or exhibit their firearm unless circumstances create a reasonable cause to believe that it may be necessary to use the weapon in the conformance with this policy.
2. Warning shots are prohibited
3. Investigators shall not fire their weapons at or from moving vehicles unless circumstances create reasonable cause to believe that it may be necessary to use the weapon in conformance with Section 1 and Section 2 of this policy.
4. Firearms shall not be discharged when it appears that an innocent person may be injured.

Parameters for use of non-deadly force.

1. Where deadly force is not authorized investigators should access the incident in order to determine which non-deadly technique or weapon will best de-escalate the incident and bring it under control in a safe manner.
2. Arson Investigators are authorized to use department approved non- deadly force techniques and /or issued equipment for resolution of incidents, as follow:
 - a. To protect themselves or others from physical harm; or
 - b. To restrain or subdue a resistant individual: or
 - c. To bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control.

Training Qualifications

1. Deadly Weapons
 - a. While on duty, Arson Investigators shall carry only weapons and ammunition authorized and registered with the department.
 - b. Authorized weapons are those with which the Arson Investigator has qualified with and received training on its proper and safe usage, and that are registered and comply with department specifications.
 - c. In accordance with current rules of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Education, Section 211.004, the department shall schedule regular training and qualification sessions that will be graded on a pass/fail basis.
 - d. Arson Investigators who fail to receive a passing score with their on duty weapon(s) in accordance with department procedures shall not be allowed to carry a department issued weapon and will be scheduled for remedial firearms training.
 - e. Arson Investigators who fail to receive a passing score with their personal off duty weapon(s) in accordance with department procedures will not be allowed to carry their personal off duty weapon(s) while off duty and will have to qualify before being allowed to do so.

- f. An Arson Investigator that has taken an extended leave or suffered an illness or injury that could affect his ability to use an on duty weapon will be required to re-qualify before being allowed to carry an on duty weapon.

2. Non-Deadly Force Weapons and Methods

- a. An Arson Investigator is not permitted to use a Non-deadly weapon unless qualified with its use.

The following non-deadly weapons are authorized, if officer has been certified to use and approved by the Fire Chief:

1. Side handled Baton
2. Pressure Point Control Techniques (PPCT)
3. Riot Baton
4. Tear & irritant chemical aerosols sprays

Reporting uses of Force

1. A written report prepared according to department procedures shall be required in the following situations:
 - a. When a firearm is discharged outside a firing range.
 - b. When use of force results in death or injury.
 - c. When a non- deadly weapon is used on a person.
2. A supervisor will be immediately summoned to the scene and will comply with investigative procedures as required by the department in the following situations:
 - a. When a firearm is discharged outside a firing range.
 - b. When use of force results in death or injury.
 - c. When a non- deadly weapon is used on a person.
 - d. When a person complains that an injury has been inflicted.

Departmental Response

1. Deadly Force Incident
 - a. When an Arson Investigator's use of force causes death, the department's Post Shooting Critical Incident as outlined will be applied.
 - b. The department shall conduct both an administrative and criminal investigation of the incident with the assistance of the Edinburg Police Department if needed.
2. Administrative Review of Critical Incidents

- a. All reported uses of force will be reviewed by the department to determine whether:
 1. Departmental rules, policy or procedures were violated.
 2. The relevant policy was clearly understandable and effective to cover the situation.
 3. Department training requires revision.
- b. All findings of policy violations or training inadequacies shall be reported to the Fire Chief for resolution and/or discipline.

H-09-00 POST SHOOTING / CRITICAL INCIDENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines that shall be uniformly applied following any Arson Investigator- involved shooting or other critical incident that has resulted in death or serious bodily injury, in order to minimize the chances that involved personnel will develop or suffer from post-traumatic stress.

POLICY

Law enforcement duties can often expose personnel to mentally painful and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through normal stress coping mechanisms. Unless adequately treated, these situations can cause disabling emotional and physical problems. It has been found that personnel involved shootings resulting in death or serious bodily injury may precipitate such stress disorders. It is the responsibility of this department to provide personnel with information on stress disorders and to guide and assist in their deterrence. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this department to take immediate action after such incidents to safeguard the continued well being of all involved personnel.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder:** An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short-term severe stress, or the long-term buildup of repetitive and prolonged mild stress.
2. **Arson Investigator-involved shooting:** A line-of duty incident where shooting causes death or serious injury to an Arson Investigator or other person.

PROCEDURES

Handling of Arson Investigators at Scene of Shooting

1. Involved Arson Investigator's immediate supervisor shall be dispatched to the scene of the incident, and shall assume primary responsibility in caring for involved personnel.

2. The supervisor shall make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment.
3. During any period where the involved Arson Investigator is required to remain on the scene, but has no immediate duties to fulfill, the Arson Investigator should be taken to a quiet area away from the scene of the incident. A peer, supportive friend or fire officer should remain with the Arson Investigator, but should be advised not to discuss details of the incident.
4. The supervisor should arrange for others directly involved in the incident to leave the scene as soon as possible, and be taken to a quiet, secure setting.
5. Where possible, the supervisor shall briefly meet with those involved.
 - a. No caffeine or other stimulants or depressants should be given to those involved unless administered by medical personnel.
 - b. Only minimal, preliminary questions should be asked about the incident. Those involved should be advised that a more detailed debriefing would be conducted at a later time.
 - c. Any standard investigation that will occur concerning the incident should be discussed with those involved.
 - d. Those involved should be advised that they may seek legal counsel.
 - e. Those involved should be advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal or agency attorney, union representative or those investigating incident until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
6. The supervisor shall require that the Arson Investigator's weapon be taken. When the duty weapon is taken, the supervisor shall:
 - a. Take custody of the Arson investigator's weapon in a discrete manner; and
 - b. Advise the Arson investigator that it will be returned or replaced at a later time, as appropriate.
7. Those involved should notify their families about the incident as soon as possible. Where those involved are unable to do so an agency official shall personally notify the family of those involved and arrange for the transportation of family if needed.
8. At all times, when at the scene of the incident, the supervisor should handle all involved personnel in a manner that acknowledges the stress caused by the incident.

Post-Incident Procedures

1. Involved personnel may be removed from investigative duties pending evaluation but shall remain available for any necessary administrative investigations.
2. All personnel directly involved in the shooting incident shall be required to contact a department appointed specialist for counseling and evaluation as soon as possible after the incident. Involved support personnel should also be

encouraged to contact such specialists after a shooting incident. After the counseling sessions, the specialist shall advise the department;

- a. Whether it would be in the best interest of those involved to be placed on administrative leave or light duty, and for how long;
 - b. Where personnel were relieved of their duty weapon after an incident, at what point it should be returned;
 - c. What will be the best continued course of counseling.
3. The department strongly encourages involved personnel to take advantage of available counseling services.
 4. All department investigations of the incident shall be conducted as soon and as quickly as practical.
 5. The department should designate someone to brief department personnel concerning the incident so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Department members are encouraged to show involved personnel their concern.
 6. All personnel involved in a shooting should be advised that they are not permitted to speak with the media about the incident. They shall refer inquiries from the media to a designated department spokesperson, unless otherwise authorized to release a statement pertaining to the incident.
 7. In order to protect against crank or abusive calls, personnel should be advised to have phone calls answered by another person for several days if their names are released to the public.
 8. Arson Investigators directly involved in the shooting incident shall be required to re-qualify as soon as practical.
 9. As post-traumatic stress disorders may not arise immediately, or personnel may attempt to hide the problem, each supervisor is responsible for monitoring the behavior of the members of the Arson Investigative Unit for symptoms of the disorder.

Training

1. The department shall provide employees with training pertaining to the uniform procedures contained in this policy on a regular basis.
2. Supervisors are responsible for making available to their division members information about the department uniform procedures contained in this policy.

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