

GENERAL STRATEGIC GUIDELINES

Purpose:

- A. To facilitate more effective and efficient management of emergency operations.
- B. To provide guidelines for on-scene emergency operational planning.

Priorities:

- A. Priorities are identified as a result of the on-scene analysis of the emergency situation (size up).
- B. Priorities identify the most important or urgent factors of an emergency situation. Since emergencies are dynamic in nature and change as they progress and/or are affected by the efforts of the fire department, the priorities involved, in any given emergency situation will also change.
- C. Priorities provide the basis for determining operational objectives.
- D. In a general sense, the basic priorities may be divided into three broad categories. In basic order of importance, they are as follows:
 - 1. Life Safety – All factors and operations which affect the safety and well being of persons involved in the emergency. Involved persons include victims, bystanders and emergency personnel.
 - 2. Control – Those operations or activities required to stop the spread or growth of an emergency incident, and bring about its final termination.
 - 3. Property Conservation – Those operations or activities required to stop or reduce additional loss to property.
- E. Although priorities are normally placed into a hierarchy, overlapping can and does occur. Such a case of overlapping may be illustrated by a situation where rapid control of a fire is necessary to provide life safety.

Guidelines:

- A. Strategies:
 - 1. The choice of strategy is dependent upon the objectives which have been set. As with priorities and objectives, the chosen strategy must change in accordance with changes in the nature of the emergency.
 - 2. The following defines the three basic strategies:
 - a. Offensive – An aggressive attack or effort to bring about rapid control of a problem.
Example: A quick attack at the seat of a small fire.

- b. Offensive/Defensive – An effort to make a direct attack or attempt at control while simultaneously providing back-up resources for confinement operations.
Example: Attacking the main body of a fire while simultaneously providing lines to check fire extension.
- c. Defensive – Strictly an effort to confine a problem.
Example: Using heavy streams to protect exposures without attacking the main body of the fire.

Planning and Decision Making:

- A. On-scene emergency operations planning and decision making requires analysis of the factors involved; realistic projection and forecasting; identification of priorities, objectives and strategies; and evaluation of results.
- B. The following is a guide for on-scene emergency operational planning and decision making:
 - 1. Determine the nature and extent of the problem (size up).
 - 2. Estimate growth and spread potential.
 - 3. Determine priorities based on existing and projected conditions.
 - 4. Determine objectives based on priorities and available resources.
 - 5. Determine strategy based on objectives.
 - 6. Develop a plan of action based on objectives and strategy.
 - 7. Establish time frames and points of evaluation.
 - 8. Modify plans or actions as required by evaluation.