

PREFACE

The following Standard Operating Guidelines were developed to guide members of the Slackwood Volunteer Fire Company in the performance of their duties, on and off the incident scene. They are based on the requirements in NFPA 1500 – Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, and on appropriate federal, state, and local regulations.

The SOG's are not part of the Company Rules, but may be referred to in them. This is important from a number of reasons. First, the SOG's remain guidelines rather than rigid policies. Second, it allows the SOG's to be recognized as the basis of general rules of conduct expected from all members. Finally, it makes the SOG's the basis of the fire department's occupational safety and health program.

All Company members are required to sign a statement documenting they have received a copy of the Standard Operating Guidelines and have read and understand them.

SAFETY POLICY

The Safety Policy of the company is to provide and operate under the highest possible levels of safety for all members. The prevention of accidents, injury exposures and occupational illnesses are the goals of the company and shall be primary consideration at all times. The concern for safety and health applies to all members of the company and any other persons who may be involved in company functions.

The Safety Policy and Standard Operating Guidelines comprise the framework for the company's occupational safety and health program. The safety and health program will be reviewed by company officers annually and may be revised as necessary. Department members will be notified of changes to the program by way of amendment to the SOG's.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Presented on the following pages are the Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) of the Slackwood Volunteer Fire Company. They are to be used as reference pertaining to company procedures and regulations and to establish behavioral guidelines. The SOG's are intended to assist members to accomplish the mission of our company.

It must be stressed that under all circumstances, common sense must prevail. Emergency response situations are so varied that specific rules and regulations cannot always be followed in the strictest sense and may need to be altered according to the incident. The guidelines should be used as a tool to inform members of the direction their decisions and actions should follow.

The members of the Slackwood Volunteer Fire Company are a diverse group joined together in a common cause, providing a valued and outstanding service to Lawrence Township. Keep in mind, every member's personal conduct and behavior reflects on the company as a whole. It takes only one thoughtless, careless or selfish act to destroy the excellent reputation established through many years of dedication and hard work. Each of us is ultimately responsible for our decisions.

Additions or changes to the approved SOG's will be made as necessary by the Board of Fire Chiefs. These changes or additions will supersede all previous SVFC rules, policies, and procedures dealing with similar subject matter.

Article 1. Members

Section 1. Instruction of New Members

- A. Newly accepted members must report to the Fire Chiefs for orientation. They will be briefed by the Chiefs and will receive Fire Company By-Laws, SOG's, a door key, and PPE. A pager will be issue upon being trained and approved to respond to incidents.
- B. New members are not authorized to use blue lights in their POV's until they achieve their New Jersey Firefighter 1 certification or are authorized by the Fire Chief.

Section 2. Obligation of All Members

- A. Read, learn, and practice the company Standard Operating Guidelines. Be familiar with the company By-Laws.
- B. Recognize the chain of command and how the chain of command functions on and off the incident scene.
- C. Understand the personal responsibilities of a member, such as: conduct, attendance at drills and meetings, care use and maintenance of personal protective equipment, location and use of equipment on the apparatus.
- D. Recognize that personal safety is the primary obligation of all members. Report all injuries, illnesses, or exposures resulting from company activities to a fire line officer as soon as practical.
- E. Understand the Incident Command System used by the company.
- F. Follow Mercer County and Slackwood Volunteer Fire Company's radio procedures at all times when using two-way portable, mobile, or base station radios.
- G. Recognize the importance of responding to emergency calls.
- H. Recognize the importance of each and every member's role in promoting fire and life safety throughout the community and fire district.
- I. Promote a positive attitude about the fire company.
- J. Firefighters with beards or facial hair at any point where the SCBA face piece is designed to seal with the face, regardless of the specific fit test measurement that can be obtained shall be prohibited from wearing SCBA at any time.

Article 2. Fire Station Regulations

Section 1. Apparatus, Equipment, and Personal Protective Equipment

- A. Apparatus and equipment will remain available for service at all times. Apparatus and equipment will not be moved from the station or from service without the knowledge of a fire line officer.
- B. Personal Protective Equipment will remain at its assigned location in an orderly condition.
- C. Personal Protective Equipment will not be removed from the station without knowledge of a fire line officer.
- D. Personal Protective Equipment shall be worn at emergency incidents and training exercises at all times.
- E. SCBA to be worn at all times when inside an IDLH atmosphere.
- F. When backing in the apparatus, the driver will head down Slack Avenue towards Princeton Pike and turn on all emergency lights.
- G. No one under the age of 21 will drive Utility 21 to any alarms.
- H. Any member using Utility 21 for any company business other than alarms shall list on the Engine Room chalkboard name of driver and location of the truck. Personal use shall be approved or denied by a Chief Officer.
- I. Car 21, Car 21-1, Engine 21, Rescue 21, Snorkel 21, and Utility 21 shall be under the supervision of the Chief and all comments or problems shall be directed to him.
- J. Once the apparatus in the station is in motion, exiting, or backing in, no one is to board or unboard the apparatus.
- K. If Utility 21 is out on company business and Station 21 is dispatched for an assignment, it will return to the station to man needed apparatus. Exception if a fire line officer is accompanying the truck.

Section 2. Offices

- A. Board of Fire Chiefs Office: This office is provided in order to conduct the business of the fire company and fire district by the Fire Chiefs and is otherwise not available without permission.

B. Radio Room: This office is to be used for fire company business only. The only time this office shall be unsecured is if a Fire Line Officer is utilizing the office.

Section 3. Members Room, Meeting Room, Engine Bays

A. Members are responsible for maintaining these areas in a neat and orderly condition at all times.

B. No one is to use the main Engine Room bays or Snorkel bay for personal vehicle repairs or cleaning, except with the permission of the Fire Chief.

C. Members must obey the Fire Company House Rules at all times.

Section 4. Visitors

A. Visitors are permitted in the station and in or on apparatus when accompanied by a member. Members are responsible for the conduct and actions of their guests.

B. Visitors shall not respond to any alarm on apparatus, unless they are an active member of a Lawrence Township Fire Company and they have permission from a fire line officer.

Section 5. Special Staffing of Station

A. In the event of inclement weather, or a high number of incidents, the OIC may elect to staff the station in order to provide a more rapid response to emergency calls. The OIC will assure the station is manned with qualified firefighters.

B. If an overnight stay is required, the sleeping quarters will be the Bunk Room. If more than four members are staying overnight the couches in the Members Room will be utilized. Upon completion of the shift, each firefighter is responsible for the cleanliness of their area.

Article 3. Response to Alarms: General Conduct and Procedure

Section 1. Communications and Dispatch

A. Mercer County Central Communications will dispatch all alarms on Mercer County Fire 1. All Station 21 apparatus will respond on Mercer County Tac 2, unless otherwise directed. All apparatus radios will remain on Tac 2 when returning to the station. When on drivers training or road testing, the apparatus radio will be switched to Mercer Fire 1. On receiving an alarm, the radio will be changed to Tac 2 frequency. All radio transmissions will go through Mercer County Central Communications during an emergency incident.

B. Pagers will be issued to each firefighter by the company. Members are responsible for the care of the pager issued to them.

C. Fire Chiefs will be issued a portable radio. It is their responsibility for the care of the radio issued to them.

D. All Fire Company radios are to be used for official business only. The use of obscene language is specifically prohibited. Radio messages will be transmitted in a clear text dialogue.

Section 2. Members Response to Fire Calls

A. Firefighters shall use the utmost safety and care when responding to the fire station. Any member utilizing red or blue emergency lights must possess a valid permit from NJDMV.

B. Upon arriving to the fire station, firefighters shall don all personal protective equipment and take a position on appropriate apparatus.

C. Fire Line Officers shall don all personal protective equipment and take a position in the responding apparatus. In the event more than one fire line officer responds to the station, the ranking officer shall take the seat. The subordinate officer shall remain to take charge of the next responding unit or may take a riding position on the initial responding unit if needed.

D. The first qualified driver to arrive at the station shall take a position at the steering wheel of the responding apparatus. Other responding drivers should either put on all personal protective equipment to man the initial unit or remain back to drive the next due piece of apparatus.

E. Seat belts are to be worn at all times. The apparatus officer shall be responsible for ensuring all personnel are seated and belted.

F. The fire apparatus will not leave the station until the driver or unit officer know the proper incident address and most direct responding route.

G. All firefighters and officers responding to the station but not riding out on apparatus will stay to man the fire station until released by the officer in charge.

Section 3. Minimum Staffing for Fire Response

A. The minimum manning of an Engine responding to an alarm shall consist of four SCBA qualified members, including the driver. If the crew is not obtained, the apparatus officer or senior member present will notify the incident commander that they have a

short crew. The incident commander will then order the apparatus to respond shorthanded or request mutual aid to respond.

B. The minimum manning of a Snorkel responding to an alarm shall consist of at least four crew members including driver, officer or senior member, and two bucket operators. If the crew is not obtained, the apparatus officer or senior member present will notify the incident commander that they have a short crew. The incident commander will then order the apparatus to respond shorthanded or request mutual aid to respond.

Section 4. Responsibilities Enroute to the Incident Scene

A. The driver shall operate the vehicle in such a manner as to effect the most prompt and safe arrival to the incident scene. Safe arrival is the first priority.

B. The driver shall proceed at a speed that is safe for the weather, road conditions, and the route of travel, following all traffic regulations.

C. The driver shall devote all attention to driving. The Unit Officer will operate the radio, siren, and handle any necessary communications.

D. All firefighters responding on the apparatus will provide the Unit Officer with their accountability tag. If a call requires a command post, the Unit Officer shall be responsible for getting apparatus accountability ring with tags to the command post before engaging in fire ground activities.

E. Any apparatus responding to a cover-up shall respond at non-emergency response. No Junior Firefighters are permitted to respond on apparatus to cover-ups.

F. There will be a limit of one Junior member on the first responding apparatus unless otherwise instructed by the apparatus officer. The Junior member does not count as a crew member.

Section 5. Arrival at the Incident Scene

A. The Unit Officer of the first arriving apparatus will assume command of the incident and will determine appropriate actions to be taken.

B. Upon arrival of the first ranking officer command can be transferred to them if necessary. The Unit Officer will then take charge of the apparatus and personnel he originally arrived with.

C. The members comprising the crew of the apparatus will be ready to exercise the operations indicated by the Unit Officer and shall not leave the apparatus without orders.

D. If the scene is not secure upon arrival or appears to be hostile, apparatus and crew members shall stage at a safe distance and wait for the scene to be secured by law enforcement officials.

Section 6. General Conduct and Procedure on the Incident Scene

A. All personnel shall operate under the incident management system used by the company.

B. Firefighters shall only participate in activities for which they are properly trained or equipped for.

C. All Firefighters shall remove their second accountability tag upon entering a hazardous location. The tag should be given to an accountability officer or left by the entrance way. Upon exiting the hazardous location, firefighters may retrieve their tag.

D. Upon arrival of a working fire the first crew shall use the two in two out rule mandated by the state. EXCEPTION: If there is a possibility of an entrapment.

E. The Unit Officer on the first due apparatus shall obtain the necessary information on the fire call such as ownership, correct address, etc. and record it on the notebooks found in the cab. The unit officer of the first engine will be responsible for filling out the company run report upon returning to the fire station. Any firefighter reluctant to perform these tasks shall yield the front seat to another firefighter before the apparatus responds to an incident.

F. When second and third due engines respond to an alarm, they should look for the nearest water source and remain there until the officer in charge gives them orders.

G. The officer in charge shall give all progress reports to Mercer County Central Communications. All units will notify MCCC when returning and when in quarters.

H. The emergency evacuation signal at an incident shall be five (5) blasts on the apparatus air horn. Upon hearing the evacuation signal, all personnel shall immediately exit the fire building and report to the front of same and await further orders.

I. Each apparatus officer shall be responsible for his crew members. Free lancing at any incident will not be tolerated.

J. Upon completion of a job assignment, a crew will make itself available for further assignment. The apparatus officer will contact the OIC to obtain next assignment for the crew.

Section 7. Personal Protective Equipment

A. All firefighters shall wear appropriate personal protective equipment at all fire and rescue incidents, and during training evolutions at which real or potential hazards exist.

B. Face shields shall be used and gloves shall be worn whenever the need for eye and hand protection exists, specifically during forcible entry or vehicle extrication.

C. SCBA shall be worn in areas where: the atmosphere is hazardous, the atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous, or the atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous. This includes: areas of active firefighting, areas above a fire, incidents including gas leaks or fuel spills, hazardous materials incidents, vehicle fires, where invisible contaminants or products of combustion are present, at rescue incidents below ground level, and in areas which are or may be oxygen deficient.

D. Wear disposable medical gloves during any potential contact with injured patients or bloodborne pathogens.

E. The OIC shall determine when the use of PPE, including turn out gear or SCBA is no longer needed, based on existing conditions and the possibility of continued hazards.

F. Anytime firefighters are operating on or near an active roadway all firefighters shall wear PPE with reflective material.

G. Any PPE that is contaminated at any incident shall be removed and placed in red biohazard bags to be sent out to be properly cleaned.

Section 8. Returning to Station Routine

A. When the OIC determines the services of a unit are no longer needed at the incident scene, he shall direct the apparatus officer to return the unit to the station.

B. The apparatus officer and driver of a returning unit shall determine before leaving the incident scene that all equipment belonging to the unit are on board the apparatus.

C. Any contaminated equipment must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's instructions upon returning to the station.

D. When apparatus returns to the station after an assignment, all members present will assist driver and officer in putting apparatus back in full service. If apparatus is dirty

after call, it should be given a minimum of a rinse off and should be washed if possible. Any member leaving the station before equipment is put back in full service, not having been excused by a fire line officer, will not be given credit for the call.

E. If a member is confronted by the news media, they are to refer them to the Fire Chief or his designee.

Section 9. Guidelines for Hazardous Materials Response

A. Position apparatus safely with special consideration for the dangerous potential of the product. Typically, the safest position is uphill and upwind.

B. Give a preliminary report of the situation.

C. Establish a control zone (Hot Zone) beyond which entry is restricted.

D. Designate a staging area for incoming apparatus and assign a staging officer.

E. Execute only immediate lifesaving rescue, limiting as much as possible the endangerment of the health and safety of personnel until the material involved and hazards are identified.

F. Attempt to identify the product and obtain supplemental information.

G. Communicate with responding Hazardous Materials Response Team Officer.

Article 4. Use and Operation of Apparatus and Equipment

Section 1. On Alarms

A. All responding apparatus shall be appropriately staffed. Upon arrival, the first apparatus officer will relay the type of fire, visible conditions, and other pertinent information to responding units.

B. Personnel shall not ride on the rear step, hose bed, or on top of any apparatus at any time.

C. Drivers/Operators shall remain with their assigned apparatus at all times.

D. If a firefighter has been drinking any amount of an alcoholic beverage, he shall refrain from operating or manning the apparatus.

Section 2. Non-Emergency Situations

- A. Only qualified drivers/operators are permitted to drive and operate department apparatus. All normal traffic laws shall be obeyed.
- B. Training of new drivers/operators will be done with the approval of a fire line officer. A qualified driver will instruct a new driver from the officer's seat.
- C. Apparatus will not be driven without the knowledge of a fire line officer.

Section 3. Drivers Training/Qualifications

- A. Drivers must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and possess a valid driver's license, in order to drive any fire company vehicle. Upon reaching the age of twenty (20), anyone wishing to train to be a driver can drive while returning from an alarm with the permission of the officer in charge of the apparatus as long as a qualified driver is riding with same. No one is to ride any of the apparatus on the street or in the parking lot of the fire company without a qualified driver in the apparatus.
- B. You must be a member of the company for one (1) year before driving any of the apparatus and must have completed Firefighter 1.
- C. Anyone wishing to start drivers training shall ask permission from the Chief or his designee.

Section 4. Snorkel Basket Training

- A. Any operators who have not drilled or operated on the fire ground within six (6) months will have to be requalified by the Snorkel Captain or his designee.
- B. You must be a member of the company for one (1) year before you are eligible to become a qualified platform operator and must have completed Firefighter 1.
- C. All Snorkel Basket Training must be logged onto a training form and upon qualification, the training form will be put inside members training records folder.

Article 5. Department Issued Personal Property

Section 1. Turnout Gear

- A. Turnout gear consists of the following items: fire helmet, leather or rubber boots, bunker coat, bunker pants, nomex hood, firefighting gloves.
- B. Turnout gear will be distributed by a fire line officer.

C. Firefighters are responsible for the care and cleaning of their turnout gear. It should be cleaned and inspected on a regular basis. Members shall not alter turnout gear. Fire Line Officers will approve of any repairs required.

D. All members must wear turnout gear, appropriate to the type of activity they are engaged in.

E. Turnout gear will be donned prior to boarding apparatus (drivers may choose to complete their dressing upon arrival at an incident scene). Coats must be snapped/buttoned. Hoods must be worn.

F. Turnout gear shall be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Article 6. Training

Section 1. Department Training and Drills

A. The Chief or Training Officer will establish an annual schedule for those responsible for setting up training subjects..

B. Company Drills will be held on the second and forth Thursdays of each month.

C. Firefighters are encouraged to attend other local, regional, and state fire training.

D. All active firefighters shall attend the following mandatory training on a yearly basis: Respiratory Protection, Bloodborne Pathogens, Mask Fit Testing, Confined Space Awareness, and Hazmat Awareness. If you don't attend all mandatory training you turnout gear will be removed from the racks until you make up the training.

E. Anyone wishing to become a Fire Line Officer must attend state mandated advanced Incident Command training.

F. All firefighters will be trained on the use of the station cascade system before using.

Article 7. Injury and Exposure Reporting

Section 1. Notification/Documentation/Treatment

A. Any member suffering an injury or exposure shall notify their apparatus officer or fire line officer immediately.

B. Apparatus Officers or Fire Line Officers shall report any injury or exposure to the Chief or Safety Officer as soon as possible during an incident.

C. The member will obtain all injury paperwork from Lawrence Township and will need to have it filled out and turned into Fire Marshal 20 as soon as possible.

D. Any treatment or follow up treatment will be performed at Professional Healthcare in Lawrenceville, NJ.

E. Injured firefighters must get a written "Return to Work" form from Professional Healthcare before they will be allowed to participate in firefighting duties.