Stoney Point Fire Department

# STRUCTURAL FIRE CONTROL SOG

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**5A.002**
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## SCOPE

This guideline shall apply to all members of the Stoney Point Fire Department (SPFD) and shall be adhered to by all members.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOG is establish a guideline by which structural firefighting is to be accomplished by offensive or defensive strategy and tactics designed to stop fire spread and prevent further property loss.

## DEFINITIONS

**DEFENSIVE STRATEGY -** Exterior attack directed to first reduce fire extension and then bring the fire under control.

**OFFENSIVE STRATEGY** - Interior attack and related support directed toward quickly bringing the fire under control.

**SHALL -** Indicates a mandatory requirement.

**STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES (SOG)** - Documents that help establish how an organization will operate and how its members are expected to carry out specific duties outlined in general terms.

**TACTICS** - The specific operations that must be accomplished at the emergency incident to complete a safe and effective operation.

**GUIDELINE**

Command must define offensive/defensive mode based upon:

a. Fire extent

b. Structural conditions

c. Entry capability

d. Ventilation profile

e. Rescue ability of occupants

f. Resources

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The seven- (7) strategic goals on any structure fire are as follows:

1. Rescue
2. Exposures
3. Confinement of the fire
4. Ventilation
5. Extinguishment
6. Salvage
7. Overhaul

These goals may be interchangeable considering the type and stage of the given incident.

**Basic Offensive Plan:**

A. Take command establish RIC

b. First line - fast, aggressive interior attack

c. Provide support activities

d. Do primary search

e. Second line - back-up first/cover internal exposure

f. Quickly evaluate success and react

# *Tactical Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)*

**Basic Defensive Plan:**

a. Take command

b. Evaluate fire spread / write-off lost property

c. Identify key tactical positions

d. Prioritize fire streams

e. Provide big, well placed streams

f. Quick determination on additional resources

g. Surround and drown

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## Tactical Guidelines Offensive Operations

Many times offensive/defensive conditions are clear cut and Command can quickly develop a decision that relates to that mode. In other cases, the situation is marginal and Command must initiate an offensive interior attack, while setting up defensive positions on the exterior. **The effect of the interior attack must be evaluated and the attack abandoned if necessary**. Mode changes can develop almost instantly or can take virtually all night; Command must be aware and responsive to such mode changes.

Command / Division officers must consider the most dangerous direction and avenues of fire extension; particularly as it affects rescue activities, confinement efforts, and exposure protection. Resources should be allocated based on the fire-spread evaluation.

In some cases, the most effective tactical analysis involves an evaluation of what is **not** burning rather than what is actually on fire. The unburned portion represents where the fire is going and should establish the framework for fire control requirements.

Offensive fires should be fought from the INTERIOR-UNBURNED SIDE (interior capability is the principal offensive strategy factor).

Initial attack efforts must be directed toward supporting primary search - attack lines must go between the victims and the fire and protect avenues of escape.

Determine fire location and extent before starting fire operations (as far as possible). Do not operate fire streams into smoke.

Command cannot lose sight of the very simple and basic fire-ground reality that at some point the fire forces must engage the fire and fight. Command must structure whatever operations are required to PUT WATER ON THE FIRE. The rescue/fire control/ extension/exposure problem is solved in the majority of cases by a fast, strong, well-placed attack.

Effective fire control requires that water is applied directly on the fire or directly into the fire area. (Fire streams can be bounced off roofs and operated into smoke all night and the fire will progress until it runs out of fuel.) Command must establish an attack plan that overpowers the fire with actual water application. In order to make water more effective Class A Foam should be inducted at a .01% when attacking fires in offensive or defensive postures.

The attack plan must take into consideration the seven sides of a structure: top, bottom, front, back, both sides, and the interior. The plan must concentrate on the most dangerous directions and avenue of fire extension and provide a means to stop the fire in that direction. The remaining sides are then considered in order of danger.



The basic variables that command must manage in his attack plan are:

1. **Location/Position of Attack** - Evaluate options (offensive and defensive) provided by building openings (doors, windows, and arrangement of surrounding buildings).
2. **Size of Attack** - Evaluate options of fire attack (manpower, hand lines, master streams, etc.) and translate into the size and number of hose lines.
3. **Support Functions** - Evaluate the activities necessary to facilitate access and operations (forcible entry, ventilation, etc.) and integrate with other attack variables.
4. **Time of Attack** - Evaluate options of timing of fire attack (when to begin, duration, etc.)

Command develops an effective attack through the management of these factors.

**Time becomes an extremely important factor with regard to attack operations**. The bigger the attack, the longer it takes to get it going; the more interior the attack is positioned, the longer it takes. **Command must balance and integrate attack size and position with fire conditions** and his resources.

## *Tactical Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)*

Tactical realities many times require that pure placement principles are violated. Such violations generally relate to the factor of time versus pure placement. When such principles are violated, Command must implement back-up action to cover the "uncovered" area(s).

Lacking direction, when fire is showing, crews will many times lay hose and put water on the fire utilizing the fastest, shortest, most direct route. This process is called the **"candle moth syndrome"** - **everyone wants to go to the flame**.

Attack from the burned side generally will drive the fire, smoke, and heat back into the building and the interior fire control forces out of the building.



The fastest place to put water on the fire is generally from the outside at the point where the fire is burning out of the building - the very worst application point most of the time.

When fire is burning out of a building and not affecting exposures, let it burn out, and extend an interior attack from the unburned side. It is usually venting in the proper direction. It requires discipline on the part of control forces to do so and not submit to "candle moth" temptations.

Command must develop a fire control plan of attack that first stops the forward progress of the fire and then bring the fire under control. In large complex fires, Command will not immediately have adequate resources to accomplish all of the attack needs he faces - at that point, he must prioritize attack efforts, act as a resource allocator and determine the response he will eventually require. Accurate forecasting of conditions by Command becomes critical during this initial evaluation process.

Command must develop critical decisions that relate to cut-off points and must approach fire spread determinations with pessimism. It takes a certain amount of time to "get water" and the fire continues to burn while the attack gets set up. Command must actually go into operation; if he misjudges, the fire may burn past his attack/cut-off position. Don't play "catch up" with a fire that is burning through a building: project your set-up time, write-off lost property and get ahead of the fire. Set up adequately and overpower it.

Don't put water into burned property, particularly where there is unburned property left to burn. Many fire streams are directed into property that is already lost, many times at the expense of exposed unburned property. Write-off property that is already lost and go on to protect exposed property based on the most dangerous direction of spread. **Do not continue to operate in positions that are essentially lost.**

***Tactical Guidelines Defensive Operations***

The decision to operate in a defensive mode indicates that the offensive attack strategy has been abandoned for reasons of personnel safety, and the involved structure has been conceded as lost (written off).



**"FIRE UNDER CONTROL"** means the forward progress of the fire has been stopped and the remaining fire can be extinguished with the on-scene resources, it does not mean the fire is completely out.

The announcement of a change to a defensive mode will be made as Emergency Traffic and all personnel will withdraw from the structure and maintain a safe perimeter. **Communications center will sound alert tones and repeat Emergency Traffic message.** *Command and Divisions will account for the safety of their personnel.*

Interior lines will be withdrawn (or abandoned if necessary) and repositioned when changing to a defensive mode. Lines should be backed away to position that will protect exposures.

All exterior, both immediate and anticipated, must be identified and covered. The first priority in a defensive operation is to protect exposures.

**The second priority may be to knock down the main body of fire**. This may assist in the protection of exposures but does not replace it as a first priority.

Master streams are generally the most effective tactic to be employed in defensive operations. For tactical purposes, a standard master stream flow of 500 GPM should be the guideline. Adjustments may be made upward or downward from the figure, but it is very significant in the initial deployment of master streams.

When the exposure is severe and water is limited, the most effective tactic is to put the water on the exposure, once exposures coverage is established, attention may be directed to knocking down the main body of fire and thermal-column cooling. The same principles of large volume procedures should be employed.

The completion of bringing the fire under control is reported utilizing the standard radio reporting term, "FIRE UNDER CONTROL." **It is the responsibility of Command to transmit this report to the communication center**. The dispatcher will record this time.

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