



# SALT LAKE VALLEY FIRE ALLIANCE

## STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

<b>Title:</b>	<b>INITIAL APPARATUS PLACEMENT AND STAGING</b>
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### SCOPE

This document provides Initial Apparatus Placement and Staging guidelines and procedures for all Salt Lake Valley Fire Alliance member agency personnel operating at emergency incidents.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Holding Short:** Stopping the apparatus short of the incident, not committed to the block or complex; remaining readily deployable to any location on the incident or able to be released from the incident without passing by the incident location.

**Staging Area:** Designated area where all incoming resources will be staged and directed by an assigned Staging Area Manager or Incident Commander. Staging is primarily utilized on larger, complex, or campaign type incidents

**Staging Area Manager:** First arriving officer to the Staging Area, responsible for managing all activities within the staging area. Depending on the size and scope of the incident, best practice dictates assigning a chief officer as the Staging Area Manager in order to keep company officers assigned to their company.

**PURPOSE:** The objective of the Staging Guideline is to provide a standard system of initial placement of responding apparatus prior to assignment by Incident Commander (IC).

### PROCEDURE

#### 1.0 Effective Utilization of this Initial Placement and Staging Guideline:

- 1.1 Allows the Incident Commander to effectively place and utilize personnel and equipment on an emergency scene. Allows time for the Incident Commander to evaluate conditions and complete the "size-up" prior to committing companies to the scene.
- 1.2 Places apparatus in an "**uncommitted**" location close to the scene to facilitate orderly and effective assignment by the Incident Commander to an emergency scene.

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- 1.3 Facilitates more effective communications by reducing radio traffic during the initial stages of an incident.
- 1.4 Allows the Incident Commander to formulate and implement a plan without adding to the confusion and complexity to scene management.
- 2.0 **Initial Placement of Apparatus:** This guideline automatically applies to any full assignment, special called units, or subsequent alarms when a Staging Area has not yet been established or requested by command:
  - 2.1 The first arriving engine company will respond directly to the scene and position for the best tactical advantage, leaving key positions near the building available for truck company placement.
  - 2.2 The first arriving truck company (ladder or tower) will respond directly to the scene and will position for best tactical advantage, or as assigned by the Incident Commander.
  - 2.2 The first due chief officer will respond directly to the scene and position to best advantage for assuming the incident command responsibilities, ensuring engine and truck company access is not hindered. Subsequent arriving chief and staff officers will report directly to command unless directed otherwise by the IC.

***Note: Support units such as command vehicles, staff cars, ambulances, air utilities, medic units, etc., shall position in such a manner as to not block access for truck and engine company placement; also ensuring access is not blocked for later arriving units.***
  - 2.3 All other units responding (regardless of alarm) will “hold short” in their direction of travel, without committing to the block or complex of the incident until assigned by the Incident Commander.

**Apparatus holding short must be placed in an uncommitted location that provides the maximum of possible tactical options with regard to access, placement, water supply, etc. Apparatus should hold short in a location, such that if released, the unit may clear the scene without passing through the incident location.**
  - 2.4 Upon arrival to the holding short location, units will report apparatus number, direction of location from the incident, and number of personnel assigned to the apparatus (e.g., Engine 21, holding short, to the west with four). It may be necessary to relay more specific information in some cases, such as “holding short, to the west, on a hydrant.”

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- 2.4.1 An acknowledgement of arriving units is not necessary from fire dispatch or the Incident Commander.
- 2.4.2 Arriving units will stay “off the air” until an assignment from the Incident Commander is received. After a reasonable amount of time, a company may remind command of their status if missed or forgotten. (e.g., “*Command, Engine 21, still holding west with four*”).
- 2.5 These procedures are designed to reduce unnecessary radio traffic, but should not prevent the transmission of **critical information** as observed by a unit holding short to the Incident Commander.
- 2.6 Incoming company officers should utilize radio communications to coordinate possible simultaneous arrival of two companies. Dispatch shall **only acknowledge the arrival of the first unit and assumption of command.**
- 3.0 **Staging:** The implementation of a staging area pertains to larger incidents requiring a nearby reserve of apparatus.
  - 3.1 The Staging Area should be designated by the IC in an area away from the command post and away from the emergency scene. The Staging Area should provide adequate space for apparatus assembly and the safe movement and deployment of apparatus to the emergency scene.
  - 3.2 When calling for additional units, the Incident Commander should consider establishing a Staging Area early in the incident.
  - 3.3 The Incident Commander should designate a Staging Area location and a Staging Area Manager who will be responsible for all activities occurring within the Staging Area. In the absence of such an assignment, the first arriving engine company officer to the Staging Area will automatically assume the role of Staging Area Manager. The Staging Area Manager, will notify Command of their arrival, and will assume supervision of the Staging Area.
    - 3.3.1 Crewmembers of the first arriving engine company should be used to organize the Staging Area and direct incoming units to an appropriate parking location. Crewmembers may also assist the Staging Area Manager with unit accountability and traffic management.
    - 3.3.2 Units reporting to the Staging Area should be parked in such a way that units may be assigned to the emergency scene regardless of arrival to the staging location. Ideally, units should be parked side-

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by-side facing the exit of the Staging Area. This will allow for specialty units, or specific apparatus to be assigned to the incident without the need to move other apparatus in the Staging Area. An organized Staging Area will increase the efficiency of operations for the incident and will increase safety for personnel operating in the Staging Area.

- 3.4 Due to their limited resource, truck companies and specialty units (i.e. Heavy Rescues, Haz-Mats, etc.) will not be assigned Staging Area Manager responsibilities. For example, if a truck company is first to arrive in the Staging Area, they will automatically transfer supervision to the first arriving engine company officer.
- 3.5 The radio designation for the Staging Area Manager will be: "STAGING." All communications involving Staging will be between Staging and the Incident Commander (or Operations Section if established). All responding units will stay off of the incident radio channel and will respond directly to the Staging Area. Units assigned to Staging will announce their arrival on the designated Staging radio channel, which will be monitored by dispatch or the Staging Area Manager. Dispatch does not need to acknowledge the units arrival in staging. The companies will remain with their apparatus (crew intact) with warning lights turned off (as appropriate for safety).
- 3.6 When requested by the Incident Commander (or Operations Section Chief), the Staging Area Manager will assign companies from the Staging Area to the incident, telling them either verbally or on the Staging radio channel, where and to whom to report. Staging will then advise Command of the specific unit/s being assigned from Staging to the Incident. Once assigned to the incident, units will switch to the assigned incident radio channel. Division/Group Supervisors may then communicate directly with the assigned company.
- 3.7 The Staging Area Manager will communicate directly with dispatch when requesting additional units to respond to the Staging Area. Communication should be made on the assigned Staging radio channel or by cell phone.

### **4.0 Staging Area Manager Responsibilities:**

- 4.1 Coordinate with law enforcement for traffic control and to provide for the security of the staging area to allow access and unrestricted movement of units into and out of the Staging Area regardless of how they arrived.

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- 4.2 Ensure that all apparatus are parked in an efficient and appropriate manner. If space is restricted, apparatus shall be backed into position on an angle that allows for easy exit from the Staging Area.
- 4.3 Maintain accountability of companies available in Staging with an inventory of staffing numbers and specialized equipment/capabilities.
- 4.4 Communicate with the Incident Commander to coordinate the need for additional units. This communication should be done on a designated radio channel or by cell phone.
- 4.5 Units responding to Staging should maintain radio communications on the assigned Staging radio channel.
- 4.6 Assume a position that is visible and accessible to incoming and staged units. The Staging Area Manager may leave their warning lights operational to facilitate this.
- 4.7 Communicate the best direction of response for units to enter or access the Staging Area.
- 4.8 Maintain communication with Command about available resources in the Staging Area in order to maintain an appropriate number and type of resources in Staging sufficient to support incident operations.