

SOUTH PORTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

SOG #:	6.101	Effective Date:	11/29/2023
Title:	Emergency Vehicle Operations & Placement	# of pages:	4
Category:	General Operations	Classification:	Red

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for the operation and placement of emergency vehicles.
2. **POLICY:** It is the responsibility of all Fire Department members to be familiar with and follow this SOG when operating emergency vehicles.
3. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - a. Hot Response – a hot response will mean our staff will respond assuming time is critical to fire suppression and patient care, and will do so with emergency lights and sirens and waring devices operating.
 - b. Cold Response – a cold response is one where time has been determined not to be critical. In this mode our staff will respond to the scene using posted speed limits and will observe all traffic laws. Emergency lights and sirens will not be utilized on a cold response.
4. **PROCEDURES:**
 - I. Responses in General
 - a. All Fire Department vehicles shall be operated in a safe and efficient manner. All personnel shall be seated with safety devices properly engaged prior to vehicle movement.
 - b. Operation of any department vehicle, under other than emergency conditions, will be in accordance with existing state and city traffic regulations.
 - c. The driver is responsible for operating the vehicle safely. The Co-driver is responsible for being a second set of eyes and ears. Both should be accounting for clearance in all traffic lanes, accounting for all pedestrian traffic and announcing if it is clear or not clear to proceed through an intersection.

- d. There are six (6) levels of response using the Pro QAM/F system. The type of response will be generally dictated by the acuity level as determined by Pro QAM/F.

<u>Response Level</u>	<u>Response</u>
Omega	Cold
Alpha	Cold
Bravo	Hot
Charlie	Hot
Delta	Hot
Echo	Hot

Information received over the radio or via CAD may dictate an upgrade of the alarm. If the response is upgraded, this information should be announced.

When responding out of the city to mutual aid, crews should make notification to the receiving dispatch center if they are responding “Cold.” Upgrades requested by first responders can be honored.

When initiating a “Hot Response” the vehicle shall be operated with both the emergency lights and the siren. In circumstances in which emergency lights are used, the siren will be activated as reasonably necessary to protect the public. At no time shall the emergency lights be used without intent to use the siren. While some circumstances may not require constant siren use, the siren shall be operated in conjunction with the emergency lights whenever approaching:

- i. An intersection
 - ii. Obscured roads and driveways
 - iii. Corners
 - iv. When encountering vehicle or pedestrian traffic
- e. At no time will department vehicles exceed the posted speed limits by more than 10 miles per hour. Under less than favorable conditions, the posted speed limit is the absolute maximum permissible. When emergency vehicles must travel in center or oncoming traffic lanes, the maximum permissible speed shall be 20 mph.
- f. When approaching and crossing an intersection, drivers shall not exceed the posted speed limit. Department vehicles shall slow down when approaching intersections and shall be able to come to a complete stop at a red light, stop sign, an active railroad crossing, or when encountering a stopped school bus with flashing warning lights (may proceed when school bus driver indicates it is safe).

- g. When parking a vehicle, the operator will ensure that the emergency brake is set and chocks are properly placed at the wheel.
- h. Drivers should always attempt to position the apparatus so that the need for backing will be not be required or will be reduced as much as possible. Prior to backing up, the co-driver and operator shall decide if backing up can be done safely. When backing up, a spotter shall be used. If at any time the operator loses sight of the spotter(s) or is not confident where the vehicle is the vehicle shall be STOPPED and the situation reassessed.
- i. All electronic communications while a fire department vehicle is moving needs to be conducted by the Co-driver only. All use of electronic devices while driving a fire apparatus is forbidden. This includes texting and voice calls by the driver.

II. Apparatus Placement

- a. Apparatus should generally adhere to the following guidelines for initial placement:
 - i. IC – Approach to observe conditions and position for Command Post
 - ii. First Due Engine – Position to allow access for ladder companies and to maximize hose stretch
 - iii. First Due Ladder – position to set for rescue, exposure control or ventilation
 - iv. First due Ambulance – Position not to be blocked by fire apparatus
 - v. Second due Engine – Position at the nearest hydrant
 - vi. Third Due Engine – Consider alternate approach and/or additional water supply
 - vii. Second due Ladder – Consider alternate approach and prepare to set ladder for rescue, exposure control or ventilation
 - viii. Additional apparatus – Report to staging area as designated by IC

III. Aerial Ladder Spotter

- a. Before an aerial ladder is placed into operation, including training, maintenance, or testing, the following steps shall be followed:
 - i. The operator of the apparatus shall identify a second person to act as a safety spotter.
 - ii. The operator and the safety spotter shall conduct a 360 degree walk around the apparatus and together identify any physical features or obstructions, which may cause personal injury or damage to the apparatus (i.e. power lines, trees, buildings, etc.). The area to be evaluated shall be defined as the area within the reach of the aerial device plus 20 feet. Ex: 107' ladder = 127' area.

- iii. The safety spotter shall position themselves on the ground, a safe distance from the apparatus where they can observe the aerial during operation to insure it does not contact any identified obstructions.
- iv. The operator and the safety spotter shall remain in visual and audible contact with each other at all times during the movement of the aerial device.
- v. At no time shall the operator, or the safety spotter, allow the aerial to come within twenty (20) feet of an energized electrical power transmission line. The only exception would be for a life safety situation where encroaching on the 20 foot zone would result in saving a life.
- vi. If the safety spotter sees the aerial approaching an obstruction, he or she shall make the operator aware by visual and audible hailing. The operator shall stop movement of the aerial, confirm the situation noticed by the safety spotter and make the necessary adjustments.
- vii. The operator and the safety spotter shall not allow anyone to approach the apparatus while the aerial is in motion.
- viii. Only in extreme emergencies such as a life/death situation where there is not sufficient staff on scene, shall a spotter not be required (similar to violating the Federal 2 in 2 out laws). After any operation at a scene where a spotter was not used, a written report will be written by the operator and signed by the officer of the vehicle. The report will document transpired to violate this SOG. This report will be sent to the Safety Chief and the Fire Chief within twelve (12) hours of the event.

By Order Of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. P. S.', written over a horizontal line.

Fire Chief