

**ADDISON COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION
MUTUAL AID SYSTEM
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The fire department should be organized with a minimum of twenty (20) Firefighters under the direction of a Fire Chief. Efficiency is developed if the chief and officers are appointed/elected and trained to today's fire service standards. If a fire department is unable to meet the minimum of 20 firefighters the ACFA will, if requested, provide guidance on recruitment.
2. The Fire Department will hold monthly meetings as well as monthly trainings.
3. The Addison County Firefighters Association Inc. (ACFA) will provide personnel to assist with the organization of the fire department, as well as acquiring qualified instructors to assist in the training of firefighters.
4. The fire department will provide insurance coverage for its firefighters, and will show proof of insurance on an annual basis by notifying the secretary of the ACFA on/before the first quarterly meeting of the ACFA each year.
5. The fire department shall provide a means to satisfactorily housing all apparatus; provide rooms for meetings and training.

B. COMMUNICATIONS

1. The emergency phone number for all fire departments will be 911.
2. All ACFA fire departments must have a notification system, applicable to its individual fire district, to alert firefighters of an emergency.
3. The ACFA Tactical Channel is available to all fire departments and its use is recommended at all incidents and trainings.
4. The ACFA requests that all departments utilize a "tactical" channel at all incidents and trainings to minimize communications on primary dispatch frequencies.
5. VTAC Radio Channels are available to all fire departments during mutual aid incidents and trainings and use of these channels is recommended.

6. VTAC Communication Procedures. At all times strict radio discipline should be adhered to. The following rules for radio discipline are mandatory on all VCOMM radio nets. Every person/agency must adhere to the following:

- a. All comments must, in some way, relate to the current event or mission.
- b. Comments need to be brief, consistent with clarity.
- c. Radio checks are permitted but are only to be used when required.
- d. Basic Radio Transmission (example):
 - “Dispatch center, this is fire command”
 - “Fire command, this is dispatch, go ahead”
 - “Dispatch, requesting Tanker Task Force respond to our location”
 - “Fire command, Dispatch copies”
- e. In accordance with NIMS protocols, plain text language and common and consistent terminology will be used at all times.

7. ACFA Tactical channel and VTAC channels available for use on mutual aid incidents:

ACFA Tactical	-	Operations (primary)
VTAC-1	-	Water Supply
VTAC-2	-	
VTAC-3	-	Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)
VTAC-4	-	Air Transport

C. ACCOUNTABILITY

Each fire department should establish written standard operating guidelines for a Personal Accountability System that is in accordance with **NFPA 1561 Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System.**

- 1. Each fire department should consider local conditions and characteristics in establishing requirements of the personal accountability system. At a minimum, the ACFA recommends that a two (2) tag system is established.
- 2. It will be the responsibility of all firefighters operating at an emergency incident to actively participate in the personnel accountability system.
- 3. The incident commander will maintain an awareness of the location and function of all personnel at the scene of the incident.
- 4. Company officers and team leaders will maintain an ongoing awareness of the location and condition of all firefighters.
- 5. Firefighters are responsible for following personnel accountability system guidelines.
- 6. The personnel accountability system should be used at all incidents.

7. Each fire department should develop, implement, and utilize the system components required to make the personnel accountability system effective.

D. RESOURCES/EQUIPMENT

1. Pumper Fire Apparatus

At a minimum, all ACFA fire departments should provide one (1) **Pumper Fire Apparatus** that meets or exceeds the following standards:

- Pump capacity – 750 GPM
- Minimum tank capacity – 300 gallons
- One straight ladder equipped with roof hooks (14' minimum)
- One extension ladder (24' or 35')
- One folding ladder
- ***All ladders should meet minimum standards set by NFA 1932, Standard on Use, Maintenance, and Service Testing of In-Service Fire Department Ground Ladders.***
- Minimum of 20 ft. of suction hose or 15 ft. of supply hose
- Suction strainer
- Fire Hose 800' feet of 2.5" inch or larger
- Fire Hose 400' feet of 1.5", 1 ¾, or 2 inch
- One handline nozzle, 200 gpm minimum
- Two handline nozzles, 95 gpm minimum
- ***All hose should meet minimum standards set by NFA 1962, Standard for the Care, Use, Inspection, Service Testing, and Replacement of Fire Hose, Couplings, Nozzles, and Fire Hose Appliances.***
- One 6 lb. flathead axe
- One 6 lb. pickhead axe
- One 6' foot pike pole or plaster hook
- One 8' foot or longer pike pole
- Two portable hand lights
- One multipurpose dry chemical portable fire extinguisher capable of extinguishing Class A, B, C fires
- One 2 ½ gallon or larger water extinguisher
- ***All portable fire extinguishers should meet minimum standards set by NFA 10, Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers.***
- One first aid kit
- Four combination spanner wrenches
- Two hydrant wrenches
- One double female 2 ½" inch adapter
- One double male 2 ½" inch adapter
- One rubber mallet, suitable for use on suction hose connections
- Two salvage covers each a minimum size of 12' feet x 14' feet
- Two or more wheel chocks

- Five fluorescent orange traffic cones not less than 28” inches in height each equipped with a 6” inch retro reflective white band
- Five illuminated warning devices such as highway flares, unless the five fluorescent orange traffic cones have illuminating capabilities
- One automatic external defibrillator (AED)

2. Mobile Water Supply Fire Apparatus (Tanker)

At a minimum, all ACFA fire departments should provide one (1) **Mobile Water Supply Fire Apparatus (Tanker)** that meets or exceeds the following standards:

- Minimum tank capacity – 1,000 gallons
- Two or more wheel chocks
- Five fluorescent orange traffic cones not less than 28” inches in height each equipped with a 6” inch retro reflective white band
- Five illuminated warning devices such as highway flares, unless the five fluorescent orange traffic cones have illuminating capabilities

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- a. Fire Departments shall provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all firefighters meeting minimum standards set by NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.
- b. Fire departments shall provide Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) meeting minimum standards set by NFPA 1981, Standard on Open-Circuit SCBA for emergency services.
- c. Fire departments shall provide Personal Alert Safety Systems (PASS) for each SCBA in service meeting minimum standards set by NFPA 1982, Standard on Personal Alert Safety Systems (PASS).
- d. A minimum of four (4) SCBA are required by each fire department to meet Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.134(g)(4) [two-in/two-out] regulation. OSHA states that “once firefighters begin the interior attack on an interior structure fire, the atmosphere is assumed to be Immediately Dangerous to Life & Health (IDLH). OSHA requires that all firefighters engaged in interior structural firefighting must wear SCBAs. SCBAs must be National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH)-certified, positive pressure, with a minimum duration of 30 minutes. All firefighters engaged in interior structural firefighting operations must use SCBA and work in teams of two or more and maintain voice or visual contact with one another at all times.
- e. One traffic vest for each firefighter. Each vest should comply with ANSI/ISEA 207, Standard for High-Visibility Public Safety Vests, and have a five-point breakaway feature

Resource/ Equipment Considerations for all Fire Departments:

- **When new fire apparatus is purchased, the fire department should follow the recommendations of NFPA 1901, Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus.**
- **Fire departments will maintain all apparatus available for mutual aid response and ensure they are ready for immediate response to any emergency.**

- **The Chief or his/her designee will notify, by telephone or by radio, neighboring departments and their dispatch center of any apparatus that will be out of service for any extended length of time.**
- **All Hose and other adapter threads should be either National Standard (NH or NST) or National Pipe Straight Hose (NPSH or IPT). Quarter-turn couplings (storz) are acceptable, and are preferred on large diameter hose.**
- **All fire departments should maintain required/needed appliances, adaptors to be compatible with all neighboring mutual aid departments. The ACFA recommends that prior to any equipment changes that could potentially affect compatibility with mutual aid departments; the fire chief should communicate changes and discuss how compatibility issues will be addressed.**

E. TRAINING

1. The ACFA requests a report of fire department training hours annually to be submitted by December 15th of each year to the ACFA Training Committee Chairperson.
2. The ACFA recommends that all new firefighters enroll in the Vermont Fire Service Training Council approved Firefighter I program within the first year to be completed in two years of joining the fire service. The Firefighter I program meets minimum standards set by NFPA 1001, Standard for Professional Firefighter Qualifications.
 - a. Junior/Cadet Firefighters are encouraged to participate in the ACFA Insight Program.
3. The ACFA recommends that all firefighters currently not certified at this level, regardless of years of service, take the Firefighter I program to be compliant with today's standards.
4. The ACFA recommends that firefighters who want to qualify as Drivers/Operators meet the minimum standards set by NFPA 1002, Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications.
5. The ACFA recommends that fire departments comply with NFPA 1403 when conducting live fire training to ensure they are conducted in safe facilities and a safe manner for participants.
6. All fire departments will conduct monthly training drills with a competent officer or firefighter. Training will include the Fundamentals of Firefighter Skills, Apparatus Driving/Operations and other skills as needed.
7. The ACFA recommends all fire departments adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and that all departments incorporate and integrate NIMS into existing training programs and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's).

8. The ACFA recommends Incident Command System (ICS) training for all fire departments. The following are recommended training levels for fire department personnel:
 - a. **ICS 100/IS 100.b (Introductory):** This course is designed to introduce emergency personnel to the Incident Command System. All first responders, firefighters, emergency vehicle maintenance technician, emergency management and support personnel, critical incident dispatchers, and state, local and municipal personnel who would respond to an incident as an emergency responder shall take the ICS 100 course by October 1, 2014. ICS 100 must be completed within six months of start date for new members in the categories specified above.
 - b. **ICS 200 (Basic):** This course is designed to enable personnel to operate efficiently during an incident or event within the Incident Command System. This course focuses on management of single resources. All first responders, firefighters, emergency vehicle maintenance technicians, emergency management and support personnel, critical incident dispatchers, and state, local and municipal personnel who would respond to an incident as an emergency responder shall take the ICS 200 course by October 1, 2015. ICS 200 must be completed within two years of start date for new members in the categories specified above.
 - c. **ICS 300 (Intermediate):** This course is designed to train personnel on advanced applications of the Incident Command System. This course will target all first responder supervisors (e.g. Chief Officers, Captains, Lieutenants) and mid-level managers of their respective departments and members in a Multi-Agency Coordination Center who would serve with the Command or General Staff or as directed by the chief executive of the agency. – All Captain’s and Lieutenant’s (Company Officers or Line Officers)
 - d. **ICS 400 (Advanced):** This course is designed to train personnel on advanced applications of the Incident Command System during major catastrophes. The NIMS working group recommends that the chief executives of first responder organizations who would expect to function within a major catastrophe complete the course and evaluate who in their respective departments would need this advanced training. This course targets those personnel who would be in the Command and General Staff during a statewide catastrophic event involving federal resources.
9. Active participation in all county-sponsored fire training schools, seminars and any mutual aid training opportunities is highly encouraged.

F. RECOMMENDED PRACTICE FOR FIRE SERVICE REPORTS & RECORDS

Training Reports, Incident Reports and Personnel information have an important function in the administration of a fire department. As with any other community business, reports and records are an integral part of business management. Fire training/incident reports are often only part of the documentation that is necessary to meet legal and statutory requirements.

1. **Elements of a Training Report:** The ACFA recommends that all fire departments keep an accurate record of all trainings and include the following:
 - Date of Training
 - Time-in/Time-out
 - Training Topic
 - Instructor
 - Attendance Roster
 - Apparatus/Equipment used

2. **Elements of an Incident Report:** The ACFA recommends that all fire departments keep an accurate record of all incidents. A report should be completed for each incident and include the following:
 - Date of Incident
 - Incident Report Number
 - *Time-in/Time-out*
 - *Type of Incident*
 - *Personnel Roster*
 - *Apparatus/Equipment used*

All fire departments are required to enter data in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

3. **Personnel Files:** The ACFA recommends that all fire departments maintain accurate personnel files on all personnel.

G. ADMISSION PROCEDURE

1. Any organized fire department within Addison County may be considered for admission to the Addison County Mutual Aid System by meeting the following requirements:
 - a. Be in active service for one calendar year. Active service means from the time the fire department begins providing fire protection to the community.
 - b. The Chief of the department is required to submit a written letter to the ACFA Secretary at the end of the first year, requesting consideration for admission, and providing the following information:
 - Complete inventory of all fire apparatus
 - Complete inventory of all fire equipment
 - Roster of all personnel
 - Date/Time of regular monthly fire department meeting

- c. The ACFA Advisory Board will review the request using the Standard Operating Guidelines as a guide for admission. The County Secretary will then contact the fire chief of the applicant department and arrange a mutually agreeable date for an inspection. Upon completion of the inspection, the Inspection Team will submit a written report of their findings to the ACFA Advisory Board, who will vote to recommend acceptance or rejection at the next Quarterly Meeting of the ACFA. The ACFA will vote on the recommendation of the Advisory Board and the County Secretary will forward a letter to the fire chief of the applicant department, indicating the action of the ACFA. The effective date of admission will be included in the letter, and will be established by the vote of the membership of the ACFA at the Quarterly Meeting.
2. The fire department will be placed on one (1) year probation.

H. INSPECTION OF DEPARTMENTS

1. A team of four (4) inspectors will be appointed by the ACFA President with approval by the Advisory Board. The most qualified individual will be appointed chair of the committee. All inspectors must be active members of the ACFA. All new appointments or vacancies will be filled by the President with approval by the Advisory Board.
2. Each fire department on the mutual aid system will be inspected every two (2) years by the Inspection Team, who will prepare a written report of their finding for the Advisory Board, with a copy of the report presented to the fire chief of the department.

I. ENFORCEMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

1. Any department found to be in non-compliance with any of the Standard Operating Guidelines will be notified in writing and will be granted a ninety (90) day period (from date of mailing the certified letter) to correct the situation. If the correction is not made at the end of this 90-day period, the fire chief of the department will be advised in writing of automatic suspension from the mutual aid system and all benefits of the ACFA.
2. Any department finding it incapable of meeting all the guidelines may request permission from the ACFA Advisory Board to be placed on provisional status. Provisional status will permit a department to have an indefinite length of time to correct deficiencies, purchase new apparatus and equipment, construct a new fire station, etc. and can be granted on an annual basis by the ACFA Advisory Board.
3. A department, who has been suspended from the Mutual Aid System, and wishes to gain re-admission, will follow steps outlined in Admission Procedure section of this document.

J. REVISIONS & AMENDMENTS

1. These Standard Operating Guidelines will be reviewed by a committee appointed by the ACFA Advisory Board as needed. The committee may recommend revision and amendments to the Advisory Board for action.