



Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Survival

Size-Up Your Tactical Area of Operation.

Objective: To cause the company officer and firefighters to pause for a moment and look over their area of operation and evaluate their individual risk exposure and determine a safe approach to completing their assigned tactical objectives.

Determine the Occupant Survival Profile.

Objective: To cause the company officer and firefighter to consider fire conditions in relation to possible occupant survival of a rescue event as part of their initial and ongoing individual risk assessment and action plan development.

DO NOT Risk Your Life for Lives or Property That Cannot Be Saved.

Objective: To prevent firefighters from engaging in high-risk search and rescue and firefighting operations, which may harm them when fire conditions prevent occupant survival and significant or total destruction of the building, is inevitable.

Extend LIMITED Risk to Protect SAVABLE Property.

Objective: To cause firefighters to limit risk exposure to a reasonable, cautious, and conservative level when trying to save a building.

Extend VIGILANT and MEASURED Risk to Protect and Rescue SAVABLE Lives.

Objective: To cause firefighters to manage search and rescue and to support firefighting operations in a calculated, controlled, and safe manner while remaining alert to changing conditions during high-risk primary search and rescue operations where lives can be saved.

Go in Together, Stay Together, Come Out Together

Objective: To ensure firefighters always enter a burning building as a team of two or more members and no firefighter is allowed to be alone at any time while entering, operating in, or exiting a building.

Maintain Continuous Awareness of Your Air Supply, Situation, Location, and Fire Conditions.

Objective: To cause all firefighters and company officers to maintain constant situational awareness of their SCBA air supply, where they are in the building, and all that is happening in their area of operations and elsewhere on the fireground that may affect their risk and safety.

Constantly Monitor Fireground Communications for Critical Radio Reports.

Objective: To cause all firefighters and company officers to maintain constant awareness of all fireground radio communications on their assigned channel for progress reports, critical messages, or other information that may affect their risk and safety.

You Are Required to Report Unsafe Practices or Conditions That Can Harm You. Stop, Evaluate, and Decide.

Objective: To prevent company officers and firefighters from engaging in unsafe practices or exposure to unsafe conditions that can harm them and allowing any member to raise an alert about a safety concern without penalty and mandating the supervisor address the question to ensure safe operations.

You Are Required to Abandon Your Position and Retreat Before Deteriorating Conditions Can Harm You.

Objective: To cause firefighters and company officers to be aware of fire conditions and cause an early exit to a safe area when they are exposed to deteriorating conditions, unacceptable risk, and a life-threatening situation.

Declare a Mayday as Soon as You THINK You Are in Danger

Objective: To ensure the firefighter is comfortable with, and there is no delay in declaring, a mayday when a firefighter is faced with a life-threatening situation, and the mayday is declared as soon as they THINK they are in trouble.

The Incident Commanders Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Safety. Rapidly Conduct, or Obtain, a 360-Degree Situational Size-Up of the Incident.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to obtain an early 360-degree survey and risk assessment of the fireground to determine the safest approach to tactical operations as part of the risk assessment and action plan development and before firefighters are placed at substantial risk.

Determine the Occupant Survival Profile.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to consider fire conditions in relation to possible occupant survival of a rescue event before committing firefighters to high-risk search and rescue operations as part of the initial and ongoing risk assessment and action plan development.

Conduct an Initial Risk Assessment and Implement a Safe Action Plan.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to develop a safe action plan by conducting a size-up, assessing the occupant survival profile, and completing a risk assessment before firefighters are placed in high-risk positions on the fireground.

If You do Not Have the Resources to Safely Support and Protect Firefighters, Seriously Consider a Defensive Strategy.

Objective: To prevent the commitment of firefighters to high-risk tactical objectives that cannot be accomplished safely due to inadequate resources on the scene.

DO NOT Risk Firefighter Lives for Lives or Property That Cannot Be Saved. Seriously Consider a Defensive Strategy.

Objective: To prevent firefighters' commitment to high-risk search and rescue and firefighting operations that may harm them when fire conditions prevent occupant survival and significant or total destruction of the building is inevitable.

Extend LIMITED Risk to Protect SAVABLE Property.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to limit risk exposure to a reasonable, cautious, and conservative level when trying to save a building that is believed, following a thorough size up, to be savable.

Extend VIGILANT and MEASURED Risk to Protect and Rescue SAVABLE Lives.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to manage search and rescue, and supporting firefighting operations, in a highly calculated, controlled, and cautious manner while remaining alert to changing conditions during high-risk search and rescue operations where lives can be saved.

Act Upon Reported Unsafe Practices and Conditions That Can Harm Firefighters. Stop, Evaluate, and Decide.

Objective: To prevent firefighters and supervisors from engaging in unsafe practices or exposure to unsafe conditions that will harm them and allowing any member to raise an alert about a safety concern without penalty and mandating the incident commander and command organization officers promptly address the question to ensure safe operations.

Maintain Frequent Two-way Communications and Keep Interior Crews Informed of Changing Conditions.

Objective: To ensure that the incident commander is obtaining frequent progress reports and all interior crews are kept informed of changing fire conditions observed from the exterior by the incident commander, or other command officers, that may affect crew safety.

Obtain Frequent Progress Reports and Revise the Action Plan.

Objective: To cause the incident commander, as well as all command organization officers, to obtain frequent progress reports, to continually assess fire conditions and any risk to firefighters, and to regularly adjust and revise the action plan to maintain safe operations.

Ensure Accurate Accountability of Every Firefighter Location and Status.

Objective: To cause the incident commander and command organization officers to maintain a constant and accurate account of all firefighter locations and status within a small geographic area of accuracy within the hazard zone and aware of who is presently in or out of the building.

If After Completion of the Primary Search, Little or No Progress Toward Fire Control Has Been Achieved, Seriously Consider a Defensive Strategy.

Objective: To cause a benchmark decision point, following completion of the primary search, requiring the incident commander to consciously determine if it's safe to continue offensive interior operations where progress in controlling the fire is not being achieved, and there are no lives to be saved.

Always Have a Rapid Intervention Team in Place at All Working Fires.

Objective: To cause the incident commander to have a rapid intervention team in place ready to rescue firefighters at all working fires.

Always Have Firefighter Rehab Services in Place at All Working Fires.

Objective: To ensure all firefighters who endured strenuous physical activity at a working fire is rehabilitated and medically evaluated for continued duty and before being released from the scene.