

# JOINT RESPONSE AGREEMENT

## MODEL STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>STRUCTURAL FIRE ATTACK</b> <b>DEFENSIVE FIRE CONTROL</b>	<b>PAGE(S):</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>REVISED:</b>			

**STRUCTURAL FIRE ATTACK**  
**Defensive Fire Control**

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This guideline provides Department procedures for a DEFENSIVE fire control strategy.

The decision to operate in a DEFENSIVE mode indicates the OFFENSIVE attack strategy has been abandoned for reasons of firefighter safety and the involved structure has reached a point where offensive firefighting is no longer practical. Once a DEFENSIVE strategy has been declared, the Incident Commander has made the conscious decision to write off the structure involved in fire as lost. All firefighters and Incident Commanders should remember that it is possible to begin fire operations in a DEFENSIVE mode, when an OFFENSIVE strategy is not feasible at the beginning of the incident. If DEFENSIVE operations are conducted from the onset of the incident, the Incident Commander should notify Dispatch that due to condition present on the size-up a primary search will not be completed for the affected structure(s).

The announcement of a change to a DEFENSIVE mode shall be made by the Incident Commander as "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC". The Incident Commander shall call a P.A.R. and all personnel shall withdraw from the structure. Upon exiting the structure, all members should maintain a safe perimeter while accounting for all personnel in the company that they are operating with at that time. Company Officers should account for the safety of all personnel and should report it back to the Incident Commander with a P.A.R. for that company. Division/Group Supervisors shall verify that all resources assigned to them have vacated the building. Interior lines shall be withdrawn and repositioned, or abandoned if necessary. Lines should not be operated directly into doorways or windows, but should be backed away to positions which will protect exposures. If retreat is being delayed because of hose lines, and it's unsafe to stay in the building, hose lines should be abandoned.

After considering the seven tactical priorities described in the "GO or NO GO" philosophy, the following are guidelines to be used in DEFENSIVE fire attacks:

❖ **Evaluate fire spread/write off lost property.**

The Incident Commander should make the decision to WRITE-OFF PROPERTY THAT IS ALREADY LOST and go on to protect exposed property that will be affected by the most dangerous direction of fire spread. Do not continue to operate in positions that are essentially lost.

❖ **Protect Exposures.**

THE FIRST PRIORITY IN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS IS TO PROTECT EXPOSURES. All exposures, both immediate and anticipated, should be identified and covered. It is imperative to identify the key tactical positions that will allow firefighters to protect affected exposures. The proper placement of large hose streams can prevent further loss from exposure damage.

❖ **Provide/Maintain Adequate Water Supply.**

Master streams are generally the most effective tactic to be employed in defensive operations. For tactical purposes, a minimum master stream flow of 750 GPM should be used during DEFENSIVE operations. Adjustments may be made upward or downward from this figure, but it is very significant in the initial deployment of master streams to maintain a large water supply. A large water supply will allow adequate flows to be pumped and help maintain the large, well placed water streams that are necessary to conduct DEFENSIVE operations.

❖ **Knock Down the Main Body of the Fire.**

THE SECOND PRIORITY IN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS SHOULD BE TO KNOCK DOWN THE MAIN BODY OF FIRE. This may assist in the protection of exposures, but shall not replace exposure protection as a first priority. However, knocking down the main body of the fire will eventually reduce and end the exposure problem. Once the appropriate measures are taken to protect the exposures, operations should be directed at surrounding and controlling the main body of fire. The completion of bringing the fire under control is reported utilizing the standard radio reporting terms discussed in

Both firefighters and Incident Commanders should remember that knocking down the main body of the fire is an important principle that can be used in situations where a large amount of fire is showing from a portion of the structure upon arrival, but the fire has not consumed the entire structure. In an effort to save the unburned portion of the structure, first arriving companies may choose to employ an "exterior blitz attack." A portable or truck-mounted master stream may be used to knock down the main body of the fire, a DEFENSIVE tactic, and firefighters may then be sent into the structure in an OFFENSIVE mode, to extinguish the remainder of the fire. While this can be effective method of attack, it should only be utilized without compromising firefighter safety.

❖ **Rapid Determination of Additional Resources.**

Throughout the incident, the Incident Commander should quickly determine what additional resources are needed to improve the operations of the incident and request them. In a DEFENSIVE operation this may include, but is not limited to, increasing hydrant pressure in a particular area to improve water flows and requesting additional resources to aid in the time-consuming task of setting up master stream operations.