

Fire Fighter Fatality Guide for O&C and LODD Investigations

Remember scene should be treated as homicide until deemed otherwise

IC should immediately designate an Investigation Command (teams for O&C or LODD)

Inv. Command designates two specific teams: 1 for O&C and 1 for LODD to minimize overlap and error

O&C Immediate Steps – Within Minutes

Immediately secure the scene – LOCK EVERYTHING DOWN UNTIL DOCUMENTATION!!!!

- Scene safety and structural assessment
- Secure your scene and establish zones - (Fatality Area, Fire Ground Operations, Public)
- Secure Gear& Tools – Anything belonging to victim outside of fire scene (collect and secure)
- Secure Apparatus – Mark, document and inventory before any release, especially victim's truck

Determine if Rescue or Recovery

If Rescue:

Assign Inv. to accompany victim to hospital
Inv. should document, photograph and collect gear
On Scene – Secure victim's gear not transported
RIT should mark recovery location if possible

If Recovery:

Slow down and evaluate – Don't rush and ruin
Remove body ASAP after documenting in-scene
Leave tools, equipment for later documentation
Scene investigation should occur during daylight hours

Immediate Needs – Within the hour

Speak with Incident Command about minimal overhaul after suppression

Begin photography of both scene and apparatus positions before release of apparatus

Begin sketch of location and apparatus positions (Things will quickly move)

Identify and Interview Fire fighters:

- First-in fire fighters – Important to O&C
- Mayday fire fighters – Important to LODD

Immediate Needs – Within hours

Assign Evidence Custodian and begin Chain of Custody log

Liaison with law enforcement (Designate scene personnel and interview personnel)

*Witness Identification

*Neighborhood Canvas

*Video Canvas

Secure deceased's effects at fire station

*Locker

*Mailbox

* Vehicle

Notices – Reach out and put the following on notice

Other Investigators – Get help coming for both now and later

Medical Examiner – Request autopsy and toxicology (Pivotal – Cause of death needed for benefits)

Accelerant Detection Canine

Public Information Officer – You'll need someone to handle the swarm

Get consent or warrant as quickly as possible – Don't rely on exigency for too long

Secondary Duties – Next Morning

Additional Investigative Help

- Investigators
- Engineers (Electrical, Fire Protection, Structural)
- Utilities
- District Attorney's Office (Needed to initially secure radio traffic and 911 communications)

Forensic Mapping (Traffic Accident Investigation Units)

Heavy Equipment Needs

Set daily briefing times and briefing location for investigative participants

Staff Planning – Who covers the rest of jurisdiction during event

Weather Report

Local fire inspections/violation reports

Collection and cataloging of social media pictures and video

Bathroom and Meal planning

LODD/Administrative Immediate Needs

Incident Command

Appoint Investigative Command (This individual will delegate O&C and LODD responsibilities)

Manage operations and suppression – Logistics of personnel, rehab, and relief of effected FD

Scene investigation can't start until fire is extinguished – Need for minimal overhaul once suppressed

LODD OFFICER

LODD Officer assumes LODD obligations and responsibilities relieving IC to focus on fire

LODD Officer initiates the effected department's LODD protocol including:

Initial Notifications

- Notification of fire department chain of command
- Notification of family and assignment of family liaison

Identifications:

- Identification of all firefighting personnel on scene at time of event and command structure
- Identification and location of all apparatus on scene
- Identification and inventory of victim(s) apparatus (Truck Check-Off list and SCBA Check-Off list)

Identification of other factors: hydrants used, weather, abnormal events (ie. rioting, weather event, etc)

Secure fire ground radio traffic, department's training records, and fit testing reports

Establish location for those wanting to come to help –Preferably at station and not at the scene

Establish immediate aftermath fire coverage so effected department can grieve and recover

In immediate aftermath, designate who's handling logistics (ie. coverage) and who's handling funeral/event

LODD/Administrative Secondary Duties

Begin other Organization Notifications:

- SC State Fire
- SC OSHA – **Must be notified within 8 hours of death**
- National Fallen Firefighters Association LAST
- SC FAST unit
- Public Safety Officer's Death Benefits
- United States Fire Administration
- Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office – Verify autopsy/toxicology request!

Support of victim's family and department personnel peer support

SCBA Analysis by manufacturer and evaluation of gear and equipment

Long term media management