**PIERCE COUNTY**

**TACTICAL OPERATIONS MANUAL**

**OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE**

**FIRE GROUND STRATEGY**

**PURPOSE**

The following procedure outlines the fire ground strategy to be employed at structure fires.

Fire ground operations will fall in one of two strategies, OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE. The two

strategies are based on a standard Risk Management Plan that is to be employed at ALL structure fires. This is the basis for this procedure.

**WITHIN A STRUCTURED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LOT TO PROTECT *SAVABLE* LIVES.

WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LITTLE, IN A HIGHLY CALCULATED MANNER TO SAVE *SAVABLE* PROPERTY.

WE WILL NOT RISK OUR LIVES AT ALL TO SAVE WHAT IS ALREADY LOST.

Considering the level of risk, the Incident Commander will choose the proper strategy to be used at the fire scene. The strategy can change with conditions or because certain benchmarks (i.e. ALL CLEAR) are obtained.

The Strategy selected will be based on critical fireground factors:

* 1. The building
  2. Fire
  3. Occupancy/ Arrangement
  4. Life Hazard
  5. Resources
  6. Action
  7. Special circumstances

The building:

* + 1. Size- Area & Height
    2. Interior arrangement
    3. Construction type
    4. Age/condition/value
    5. Effect fire has had on structure/how much is left to burn

The Fire:

* + 1. How much involved
    2. How long
    3. Location
    4. Concealed spaces?
    5. Direction of travel
    6. Ability to operate on the fire

Occupancy:

* 1. Type-business, assembly, institutional, industrial etc.
  2. Value
  3. Status
  4. Contents
  5. Arrangement

Life Hazard:

* 1. Location of occupants
  2. Number of occupants
  3. Condition of occupants
  4. Incapacities of occupants
  5. Resources required for search
  6. Fire control required for search
  7. EMS needs

Resources:

* 1. Resources on scene and enroute
  2. Resources available
  3. Response time
  4. Condition of responders
  5. Capability of responders
  6. Command staff
  7. Water supply
  8. Protection systems

Action:

* 1. Effect of current actions
  2. Areas not yet covered
  3. Is IAP effective
  4. Effective command organization in place
  5. Operating positions effective
  6. Operating safely

Special circumstances:

* 1. Time of day/night
  2. Day of week
  3. Season
  4. Holidays
  5. Events
  6. Weather

The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the appropriate fireground strategy. Once

the appropriate strategy is initiated, it becomes the Incident Commander's job to ensure that all

personnel are operating within the strategy. By controlling the fireground strategy, the Incident

Commander is providing overall incident scene safety.

Managing fireground strategy must start with the arrival of the first unit and be constantly

monitored and evaluated throughout the entire incident. The initial Incident Commander *will*

*include the fireground strategy in the on-scene report*. As Command is transferred to later arriving officers, these officers assuming Command must reevaluate the fireground strategy based on the Risk Management Plan.

***THE ONLY REASON TO OPERATE IN MARGINAL SITUATIONS IS RESCUE*.**

The effect of the offensive ~~interior~~ attack must be constantly evaluated, and the attack abandoned if

necessary. Strategy changes can develop almost instantly or can take considerable time.

Command must match the strategy with the critical factors. The Incident Commander controls overall incident scene safety by determining the proper strategy to be used.

Command should abandon offensive attacks when:

* + 1. A primary all clear is obtained and the situation is still marginal.
    2. The roof is unsafe or untenable. Especially working fires in large unsupported, or lightweight
    3. trussed attic spaces.
    4. Interior forces encounter heavy heat and cannot locate the fire or cannot make any progress
    5. on the fire.
    6. Heavy smoke is being forced from the building under pressure and is increasing.