

---

S.O.P. #: 400-14

SUBJECT: FIELD OPERATIONS IN-SERVICE, COMPANY TRAINING, AND AFTER ACTION REVIEWS

DIVISION: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

---

Objective: To provide guidelines for all officers in training personnel under their command.

Section 1: Overview

- A. The department recognizes that a well-trained workforce is critical to the proficiency of all emergency responders. This policy aims to ensure that personnel meet the competencies necessary to remain skillful in effectively responding to any emergency in Baltimore County. Providing a standardized approach to department-wide training will assist company officers in implementing their schedule.

Section 2: Annual Training Plan

- A. By December 1 of each year, the Fire-Rescue Academy will release an annual training plan for the next calendar year. Adjustments to the Annual Training Plan shall only be released after approval of the Chief Officer of the Fire-Rescue Academy.
- B. The purpose of the Annual Training Plan is to ensure each member receives the minimum required training on a reasonable schedule. This plan only encompasses training which will be conducted on-duty or will be sponsored by the Fire-Rescue Academy.
- C. Members are strongly encouraged to submit ideas for inclusion into the Annual Training Plan. These ideas or topics should be submitted through the Battalion Training Facilitator, who will work with the Fire-Rescue Academy to implement.

Section 3: Battalion Training Facilitators (BTFs)

- A. There shall be twelve (12) members designated as Battalion Training Facilitators, one per battalion per shift. These members will be nominated by their respective Chief Officer and approved by the Chief Officer of the FRA. Individuals selected as a BTF shall possess the following minimum qualifications or obtain them within six months after appointment. Consideration should be given to individuals who have previously served as Recruit Training Cadre (RTC) for a recruit program:
  - 1. Firefighter II and cleared as entry personnel (e.g. White PAT Tag)
  - 2. Maryland Emergency Medical Technician and cleared to function independently
  - 3. MFRI Instructor I (or equivalent, as determined by the Chief Officer of the FRA)
- B. Battalion Training Facilitators shall be charged with ensuring that all aspects of the department's annual training plan are met within their battalion. This may include the coordination and scheduling of in-service and company-level training and the instruction of certain courses under the direction of the Fire-Rescue Academy.
- C. Twice per year, each BTF shall spend one (1) ten-hour day at the Fire-Rescue Academy working with Fire-Rescue Academy Instructors. During this time, the FRA staff will review upcoming training initiatives as well as provide additional training, as needed.

Section 4: Apparatus Out-of-Service for Training Activities

- A. The Fire-Rescue Academy, in conjunction with BTFs, on-duty Chief Officers, and EMS District Officers shall ensure that apparatus out-of-service for training activities at any given time is limited to the following:
  - 1. Four (4) engine companies
  - 2. One (1) truck company
  - 3. Three (3) EMS Transport Units (no more than one per battalion)
  - 4. One (1) EMS District Officer
- B. Any Chief Officer may make adjustments to this list at any time depending upon the operational necessity.
- C. Any training which is conducted under the requirements of this SOP must adhere to the training guidelines as specified in SOP 400-34, Weather-Directed Training Policy. Special exceptions to this rule may be made for specific instances of Special Operations Training (e.g. Ice Rescue Training). These exceptions shall be made by the Division Chief of Special Operations, in coordination with the Chief Officer of the Safety Division and the Chief Officer of the Logistics Division.

Section 5: Field In-Service Training

- 1. The Fire-Rescue Academy shall facilitate Fire/Rescue and EMS training on an annual basis. The Fire-Rescue Academy shall provide one four (4)-hour block of psychomotor Fire/Rescue Training and one four (4)-hour block of psychomotor EMS training per year, per member. The schedule for this training shall be included in the Annual Training Plan.
- 2. When feasible, and in coordination with the Baltimore County Police Training Academy, the FRA shall facilitate a Rescue Task Force (RTF) refresher training for the department annually. This schedule shall be included in the Annual Training Plan.

Section 6: Periodic Compliance Training

- A. Every sixty days, the FRA will release one (1) online training presentation to be completed through the department's learning management system. These presentations will be in addition to in-service and monthly training requirements.
- B. Operational Readiness Training (ORT) shall be conducted each year. The schedule for ORT shall be published in the Annual Training Plan.
- C. Special Operations Training (e.g. HAZMAT Technician Refresher, USAR classes, etc.) will be scheduled and coordinated by the Division Chief of Special Operations. The schedule of all trainings shall be provided to the Chief Officer of the Fire-Rescue Academy to be included in the department's Annual Training Plan for situational awareness, when feasible.
- D. Every member must also comply with any training requirement mandated by the Baltimore County Government for its employees (e.g., Security Mentor courses).
- E. All periodic compliance training shall be included in the Annual Training Plan.

Section 7: Company-Level Monthly Training

- A. Each month, each member of the department shall complete the following training activities:

1. SOP Review. Each member shall review one (1) SOP selected by the department. They will be responsible for individually taking, and passing with a 70%, a quiz on the SOP selected. This will be completed on the department's learning management system.
  2. Case Study/Tabletop Discussion. Company officers shall facilitate a discussion on a recent NIOSH Line of Duty Death, near-miss event, Baltimore County Fire Department After-Action Review, or EMS Case Study. Each member of the shift shall participate. The Fire-Rescue Academy, in coordination with the Safety Office, will distribute the report with a list of discussion points and other resources for officers to utilize in their discussion.
  3. Fire Drill of the Month. Each member shall complete one fire-related drill of the month as distributed by the Fire-Rescue Academy. Station Officers will be responsible for facilitating the drill with each of their assigned members. BTFs should be used as an available resource for this activity.
  4. EMS Drill of the Month. Each member shall complete one EMS-related drill of the month as distributed by the Fire-Rescue Academy. Station Officers will be responsible for facilitating the drill with each of their assigned members. BTFs should be used as an available resource for this activity.
- B. Officers are encouraged to tailor the activities to the specific needs of their shift or response area. Additionally, officers are strongly encouraged to develop a habit of routine training activities in addition to the requirements set forth in this SOP. Battalion Training Facilitators, Peer Fitness Trainers, and the Fire-Rescue Academy are available resources to assist with the development of station-level training.

Section 8: After Action Reviews

- A. The purpose of conducting an after action review is to systematically review incidents to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and the safety of personnel during future responses. After Action Reviews are designed to allow all members of the incident, regardless of rank, to address the incident from their perspective. It is not an exercise designed to assign blame for decisions made; rather, it is an avenue for the department as a whole to improve. Officers at all levels are charged with the responsibility of fostering an environment which is inclusive, respectful, and non-confrontational during the AAR process.
- B. There are two types of After Action Reviews which may be completed:
1. Informal After Action Review. The Informal After Action Review is conducted at the discretion of any officer at the station or battalion level. Companies are encouraged to conduct routine informal reviews of their responses in order to improve future incidents.
    - a. The officer facilitating an Informal After Action Review shall complete a Form 361 and submit it to [fire\\_aar@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:fire_aar@baltimorecountymd.gov) as soon as practicable following the completion of the discussion
  2. Formal After Action Review. A Formal After Action Review shall be conducted at the discretion of a Chief Officer when:
    - a. An incident results in a three (3) alarm or greater response
    - b. A near-miss incident has occurred
    - c. Significant equipment failures have occurred
    - d. The department has an operational role in an active assailant incident
    - e. A working hazardous material, technical rescue, or high-risk building incident has occurred.
    - f. Significant injury has occurred to a member or a line of duty death has occurred. In this case, the After Action Review shall be conducted in accordance with Personnel 16.

S.O.P. #: 400-14

SUBJECT: FIELD IN-SERVICE, COMPANY TRAINING, AND AFTER ACTION REVIEWS

---

- g. A “Mayday” has been declared on an incident
  - h. Upon recommendation of a Chief Officer or on-scene Safety Officer
  - i. The department responds on an incident with unusual circumstances or that has a valuable lesson to be shared with the entire agency.
  
- C. When a Formal After Action Review has been instituted, each officer on the incident will complete a Form 361-A and submit it within one tour of duty to [fire\\_aar@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:fire_aar@baltimorecountymd.gov).
  - 1. Officers are encouraged to gather input from other members of their crew or assignment to assist in the accurate completion of the forms.
  
- D. Information received as part of an Informal or Formal AAR will be utilized to produce a document which will be disseminated to the field.
  
- E. A representative from the Fire-Rescue Academy shall be included on any Formal After Action Review conducted.