

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY OPERATIONS AREA

POLICY and PROCEDURE

POLICY # 21

SUBJECT: Freeway and Highway Response			
Creation Date <i>May 2015</i>	<i>New</i>	Approved By Executive Chiefs	Pages 4
DISPOSITION: XCC OP Area Policy Manual			

INTRODUCTION:

This Policy provides best practices for Fire Department apparatus operations at incidents on Freeways and Highways. The use of these practices will provide an increased level of protection and safety for personnel operating in or near moving vehicle traffic. It also identifies several approaches for individual practices to keep firefighters safe while exposed to vehicle traffic.

PROCEDURE:

A. General

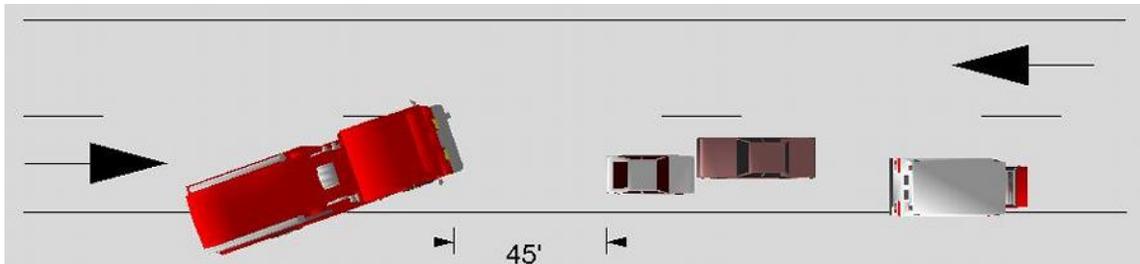
1. All personnel need to understand and appreciate the extreme risk that firefighters are exposed to when working in or near moving vehicle traffic.
2. All personnel shall operate from a defensive position.
3. All moving vehicles are a threat to your safety.

B. Safety Approaches

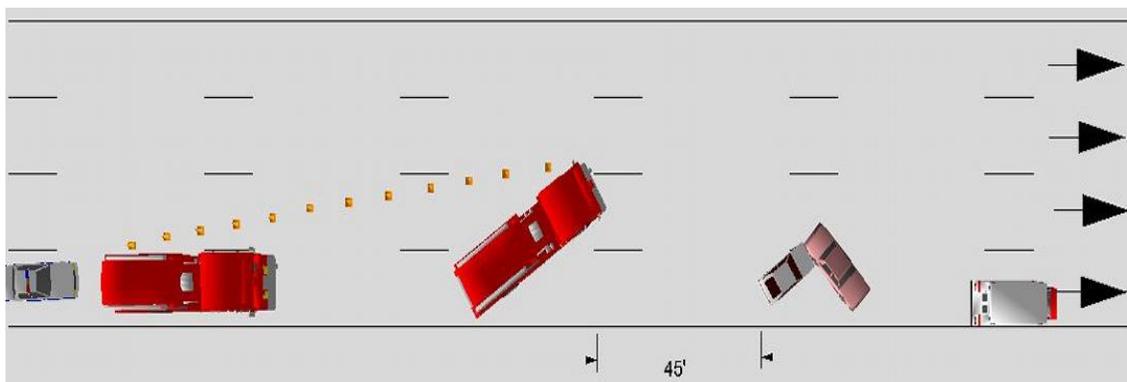
1. Park to properly protect the emergency scene.
2. Wear high visibility vests per agency policy.
3. Decrease vision impairment of drivers.
4. Use traffic signaling devices as appropriate such as: traffic cones, emergency lights, directional light bars, and flares.

C. Safety Standards

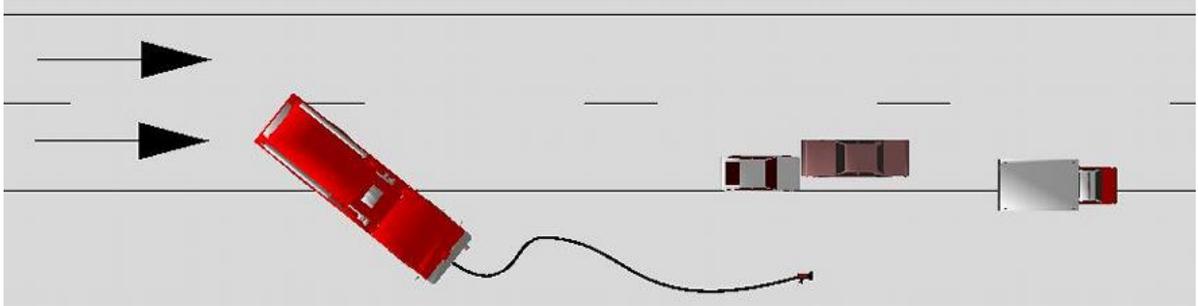
1. Maintain situational awareness at all times and understand the risks of operating in or around moving traffic. Look before you step off of responding apparatus and keep your eye on traffic.
2. Position apparatus to protect the emergency scene and provide for safe work areas. This includes emergency personnel from all responding agencies and disciplines. Locate apparatus at a 45 degree angle away from the curb and at a distance of approximately 45' – 60'. This will guide vehicles away from the scene. Apparatus must also allow for additional emergency equipment and create a safe work area for emergency responders. The emergency vehicles blocking the scene must locate in a manner that will keep moving vehicles from forcing fire apparatus into the work area.



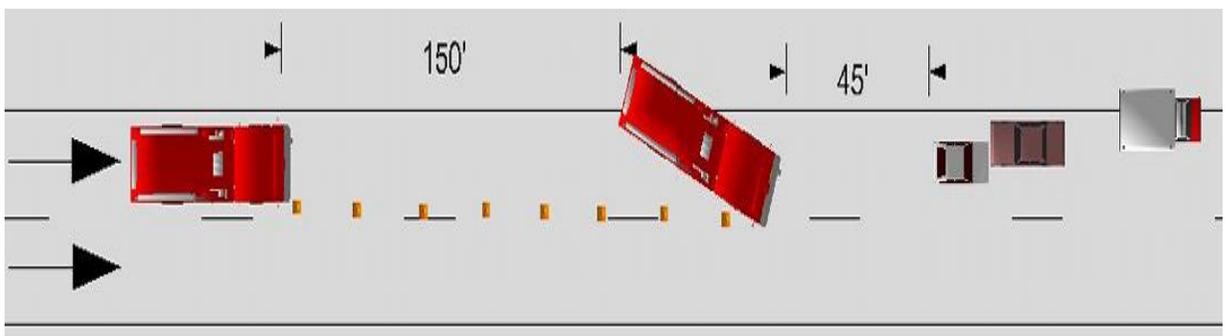
3. When operating at incidents on Freeways and Highways, **a minimum of the next due engine or truck** will be dispatched to provide a safe work area from the same direction. Additional resources may need to be requested to safely manage and protect the scene. Company officers should exercise their discretion to request additional resources. On larger scale incidents, the Incident Commander should consider requesting a tactical channel in order to improve scene coordination and reduce radio traffic on the dispatch frequency.



4. In the event that the first arriving engine deploys a charged hose line, the engine should be angled so the pump panel and pump operator are downstream on the opposite side of oncoming traffic. The crew should operate the hose line and work only in the protected area that the apparatus provides. This is critical for crew safety.



5. The Incident Commander must evaluate the parking needs of later arriving resources and direct the parking and positioning of these vehicles as they arrive on scene to provide additional protective blocking of the scene. For example: an engine has arrived on scene of a freeway accident east bound that requires additional scene protection. The next arriving company would park prior to the first unit east bound at a distance of approximately 150' – 200' from the incident to reinforce the protected area. Basically, you are stacking apparatus like barriers. The Incident Commander should also consider the parking location of incoming ambulances and crews. These responders should be placed beyond the incident in a safe location.



6. During daytime emergency operations leave ALL emergency lights on to provide maximum warning to oncoming drivers.
7. During night time emergency operations leave all emergency lights on and turn off Fire Apparatus headlights. This will reduce the blinding effect to approaching traffic.

8. Crew exiting from the apparatus should do so on non-traffic side of the vehicle whenever possible.
9. In the event that you need to walk around the apparatus that is parked next to moving traffic, walk as close to the apparatus as possible and constantly watch the traffic.
10. When selecting the location for the apparatus consider the need to protect the work area. This area must be protected to allow for patient extrication, treatment, movement around the scene and safe loading into awaiting ambulances.
11. When the scene is safely protected and blocked by apparatus, park or stage all additional vehicles off the roadway whenever possible. Additional resources should be provided with clear direction where to stage apparatus prior to arriving on scene. This includes ambulances. Consider parking ambulances in an area that provides a protected loading area to prevent working in or near passing traffic.
12. Per agency policy, use directional light bars, traffic cones, and/or portable warning devices to direct traffic away from the incident.
13. When Law Enforcement is available and on scene, make sure to coordinate with them regarding your traffic control needs.
14. The termination of the incident must be managed with the same aggressiveness as initial actions. Crews, apparatus, and equipment must be removed from the roadway promptly, to reduce exposure to moving traffic.