



Best Practices
RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Copyright Texas Fire Chiefs Association

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CHAPTER 1 – ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

The administration and organization of a fire service agency is crucial to the achievement of its mission. Clear lines of authority and responsibility are necessary to fix responsibility and assure performance. Critical issues of organization, budgeting, and financial management, policies and procedures, authority and jurisdiction, and asset management are covered in this chapter. Effective administration and organization will assist the agency in providing efficient and effective services to the citizens of the community.

1.01 Organization

The Agency has a current organizational chart depicting the organizational components available to all personnel. The chart is updated as needed but should be reviewed annually.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of current organizational chart, **And**
- Some method of showing annual review of the organizational chart (Review or issue date on chart or policy stating annual review), **And**
- Organizational charts are made available to all personnel, **And**
Signed for by officer as part of department policy manual, **Or**
Statement on DSF of how made available to personnel, **Or**
Photo of posting on bulletin board, **Or**
Observation of chart posted on bulletin board (On-site).

1.02 Budget

The Agency develops, submits, and manages a budget, and a written directive designates a position responsible for the budget.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of directive or memo designating who is responsible for the budget preparation and management, **And**
- Copy of written directive outlining budget process, **Or**
- Copy of instructions for budget preparation, **Or**
- Copy of submitted budget request, **And**

--Copy of monthly budget summary or status report.

1.03 Purchasing and Receivables

The Agency has a written directive instructing personnel on how to purchase products and services and process payments received with the intent to promote open and fair conduct in all aspects of the purchasing and receivables process.

Discussion: The Agency is responsible for complying with federal, state and local statutes regulating competitive sealed bids, competitive sealed proposals, professional services, high technology purchases, cooperative purchases, and emergency and sole-source purchases. In addition, the Agency often manages cash in any number of areas including petty cash transactions, receiving cash for permits, receiving cash for copies of reports, receiving cash for other services. The Document Submission Form should list the areas where cash is received by the agency and a written directive on how to handle and document those transactions must be developed.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive(s) that ensure person or position responsible for each cash fund is identified, **And**
- Copy of documentation for transactions, submission, or reconciliation, **And**
- Copy of cash account log, receipts, balance sheet, or ledger, **Or**
- Observation of cash account security, log, and transaction detail.

1.04 Written System of Agency Directives *(core standard)*

The agency has a written directive system in place that includes all agency policies, procedures, and practices. The written directive system must:

- a. Be numbered and organized in a manner that allows numerical reference.
- b. Require a periodic review and updating of directives to include that all directives are in accordance with applicable Texas Law.
- c. Require directives and updates be made available to, and reviewed by, all affected agency personnel in a manner designated by the Agency Director.
- d. Require maintenance of documentation proving receipt of directives by agency personnel in a manner designated by the Agency Director.

Discussion: It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure their written directives are in compliance with applicable Texas Law. In some cities, all policies must be reviewed by the city's attorney. In many cities, this task is left to the Fire Chief. A written statement from the Office of the Agency Director, that departmental written directives comply with all applicable

Texas Law, is required as part of this standard's proof of compliance. This can be a stand-alone letter or memo, or may be included in the written directive that the Chief, or a designee, is responsible for ensuring that all policies and procedures are in compliance with Texas Law.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of a sample policy, procedure, general order, etc., **And**
- Statement on DSF about how directives are made available to employees and evidence of that process, **And**
- Signature sheet or other proof that personnel receive copies or state they have reviewed, **And**
- Some documentation of periodic review of directives, **And**
- Some indication that polices are in compliance with State Law, **And**
- Observation of availability of written directives to all personnel (On-site).

1.05 Agency Jurisdiction *(core standard)*

The Agency has written documentation from a unit of government that authorizes the existence of the Agency and defines its jurisdictional boundaries.

Discussion: This is typically an Article within the City Charter or an ordinance passed by the City Council which establishes the agency. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) does not establish an agency. There must be some formal action on the part of a government body creating the agency.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of documents for Agency existence and jurisdiction, could be in City Charter or Ordinance documentation, **And**
- Copy of boundary ordinances or portions of Metes and Bounds book, **Or**
- Copy of map provided to employees with jurisdictional boundaries delineated.

1.06 Firefighter Authority *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive stating the authority of the firefighter and associated requirements to be a firefighter for that agency.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of agency directive outlining authority, **Or**
- Copy of city ordinance or charter regarding authority of firefighters, **Or**
- Copy of Texas Local Government Code Chapter 419.

1.07 Authority of the Agency Director *(core standard)*

The Agency has written documentation from a unit of government designating the authority of the Agency Director.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of City Charter or Ordinance giving Director authority over Department, **Or**
- Copy of Chief's letter of appointment, **Or**
- Copy of Chief's job description if approved by Council.

1.08 Duty to Obey Lawful Orders *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive requiring employees to obey lawful orders from a higher-ranking member and explaining how to respond to conflicting or unlawful orders.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of any Internal Investigations related to failure to obey orders, **Or**
- Copy of any supervisor counseling where officer failed to obey supervisor, **Or**
- Copy of sign-in sheet where officers trained on subject or received copy of policy.

1.09 Sworn Personnel Certification

The Agency has a written directive which requires that personnel hold a Texas Commission on Fire Protection and/or State Firemen and Fire Marshal certification before performing fire service duties.

Discussion: This standard may be met by showing copies of the firefighter's certification.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of firefighter's certification.

1.10 Accounting for Agency Owned Capital Assets

The Agency has a written directive for insuring accountability at least annually of all Agency owned capital property, equipment and other assets. Capital assets will be those assets with a value above a limit set by Agency policy. (Example, all items over \$5000 in value are capital

items, or other value determined by the Agency or governing body). The inventory results will be forwarded to the Agency Director.

Discussion: Required

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of recent agency asset inventory.

1.11 Approval for Personally Owned Equipment

The Agency has a written directive that requires all personnel to obtain written approval from the Agency Director or designee prior to carrying or using any personally owned equipment during the performance of their duties.

Discussion: Agencies which authorize employees to carry or use specific personally owned items in their directives and specifically prohibit any items (weapons, equipment or uniform items) other than those approved in their written directive, are not required to have a written approval process from the Agency Director. Since the Agency Director has already issued a list of personally owned items approved for carry, there is no need for an approval process unless, other items are sometimes allowed. The Agency Director must have control over what equipment and uniform items are carried and worn by the members of the agency.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of any request or approval of personally owned equipment by the Director, **Or**
- Proof of receipt by officers, **Or**
- Copy of any supervisory counseling or investigation for violating provision.

1.12 Agency Issued Property/Equipment

The Agency has a written directive which requires all personnel to sign for any Agency owned property/equipment issued to the employee, and includes a process for recovering the property/equipment when the employee leaves the Agency.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of property sheets for personnel signing for issued property/equipment, **And**
- Copy of property sheets for personnel returning issued property/equipment.

1.13 Strategic Plan/Master Plan

The Agency has a three to five-year strategic/master plan that lists the goals, objectives, and timelines of accomplishment of the objectives for the organization. The plan must be have stakeholder input.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of strategic plan, **And**
- Copy of surveys, meeting notes, etc, with stakeholders, **And**
- Proof of dissemination throughout the Department.

1.14 Fire Department Mission Statement

The Agency must have a mission statement that details the department's mission, purpose, and values.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Mission Statement, **And**
- Proof of dissemination throughout the Department.

1.15 Administrative Tactical Worksheets

The Agency shall develop administrative tactical worksheets to ensure that state, local, and departmental requirements are completed for such processes as hiring of firefighters, promotions, discipline, retirement, apparatus maintenance, equipment maintenance, adding-deleting from inventory control systems, etc.

Discussion: Just as a tactical worksheet for emergency incidents provides a list of reminders to be done during an emergency incident, there are administrative processes where steps could be overlooked and having these worksheets provides a means to better ensure that no requirements are overlooked.

Proof of Compliance:

--Copies of Administrative Tactical Worksheets covering a range of typical processes in a fire department.

1.16 Risk Management Program

The Agency shall develop a comprehensive risk management program that has a process of identifying, evaluating, prioritizing, and controlling risks which can impact the resources, including personnel and the activities of an organization in order to minimize the detrimental effects on that organization.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Risk Management Plan, **And**
- Proof of dissemination throughout the Agency.

1.17 Job Descriptions *(core standard)*

The Agency shall have a written description of the general tasks, functions, and responsibilities for each position in the Agency.

Discussion: The job description shall communicate clearly and concisely what responsibilities and tasks the position entails and to indicate the key qualifications of the position.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of job description for each position.

1.18 Succession Planning

The Agency must have succession plan identifying what skill and competencies are needed to succeed and define an in depth promotional track approach and training.

Discussion: Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing internal personnel with the potential to fill key leadership positions in the Agency.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of the Agency's Succession Plan, **And**
- Proof of dissemination throughout the Agency.

CHAPTER 2 – EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

(core standard)

The scope of the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) chapter pertains to the EMS service provided by the fire department and affiliated EMS organizations that provide transport service with the fire department's response area. The level of EMS service provided by the fire department is entirely up to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). The Texas Fire Chief's Association Best Practices Committee recognizes that organizations that decided to provide organized EMS service is required to be licensed by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) as a First Responder Organization (FRO) or EMS Provider.

The FRO and EMS provider organizations are required to have a Medical Director, medical protocols, specialized equipment, and state certified EMS personnel and many other requirements to be licensed by DSHS. In all cases for FRO's and EMS provider organizations making application for Best Practices must meet Texas DSHS minimum standards outlined in the current edition of Texas Administrative Code, Title 25 Health Services, Part 1 Department of State Health Services, Chapter 157 Emergency Medical Care.

To qualify for Best Practices the AHJ shall, at a minimum, remain in good standing with DSHS. In the event the requesting organization has recent or repetitive DSHS violations the visiting Best Practices assessors shall review reported DSHS infractions and make a judgment of the requesting organizations eligibility for Best Practices. It is the AHJ responsibility to provide all violations up front to the Best Practices Committee during the application process.

2.01 Non-EMS Provider

Fire Department does not provide any organized EMS within its response area.

Discussion: AHJ still can achieve Best Practices by training all of its members in CPR and AED to a national standard. AHJ will also be required to provide information on the organized EMS organization that is providing EMS within its response area.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Agreement that shows what organized EMS organization provides EMS service to the fire departments response area, **And**
- Copy of the current Texas DSHS EMS provider license of the organized EMS organization that is providing EMS within the fire departments response area, **And**

--Copy of training documentation on all members for CPR and AED training.

2.02 First Responder Provider

Fire Department provides an organized First Responder EMS within its response area.

Discussion: First Responder Organization (FRO) that provide EMS are required to have a medical director, medical protocols, specialized equipment, state certified EMS personnel, and have an affiliation with a Texas Licensed EMS provider for transport of patients from incidents. These are just a few of the requirements for FRO by DSHS Rule 157.14. To qualify for Best Practices the AHJ shall, at a minimum, remain in good standing with DSHS.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of current First Responder Organization License issued by Texas DSHS, **And**
- Copy of Agreement that shows what EMS Provider organization that provides EMS service to the fire department's response area, **And**
- Copy of the current Texas DSHS EMS provider license of the EMS organization that is providing EMS transport within the fire departments response area, **And**
- Copy of organization's current members licensed or certified to provide EMS service by DSHS, **And**
- Copy of training documentation on all members for CPR and AED training, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly, **And**
- AHJ has as an established periodic analysis of effectiveness of EMS services it provides to look for ways to improve EMS services to its citizens.

Note: DSHS First Responder renewal packet for Proof of Compliance can be used, it contains all the information listed and much more.

2.03 EMS Provider

Fire Department provides an organized EMS Provider within its response area.

Discussion: EMS Provider that provides EMS transport services are required to have a medical director, medical protocols, specialized equipment, state certified EMS personnel, and EMS units. These are just a few of the requirements for EMS Provider under DSHS Rule 157.11. To qualify for Best Practices the AHJ shall, at a minimum, remain in good standing with DSHS who regulates and inspects the EMS Provider.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of current EMS Provider License issued by Texas DSHS, **And**
- Copy of organization's current members licensed or certified to provide EMS service by DSHS, **And**
- Copy of mutual aid or inter-local agreement with other EMS provider organizations that may assist the fire department within their response area, **And**
- Copy of organization's license to operate as an EMS Provider, **And**
- Copy of training documentation on all members for CPR and AED training, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly, **And**
- AHJ has as an established periodic analysis of effectiveness of EMS services it provides to look for ways to improve EMS services to its citizens.

Note: DSHS EMS Provider renewal packet for Proof of Compliance can be used, it contains all the information listed and much more.

CHAPTER 3 – TRAINING

Fire departments are held accountable both by their community and through various regulating agencies. Employee's actions are guided by clearly written policy, by adequate supervision, and training. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection and State Firemen and Fire Marshal Association prescribes the minimum level of training for both entry into fire department operations and for continuing education after employed. These standards ensure these training mandates are completed and appropriate records are kept to prove the appropriate training was conducted.

3.01 Training Program

The fire department has an established training program that is responsible for the compliance, coordination, development, and presentation of training to meet the minimum requirements set out by the department and regulating agencies. The program should insure that all personnel have recurrent "hands-on" training and evaluation in skills set forth by the TCFP and/or SFFMA for firefighter certification. The program should also include guidelines and requirements for multi-company evolutions. The program must also address regular physical fitness training and participation requirements.

Discussion: This standard requires the department to provide the overall scope of their training program to ensure they are meeting the minimum requirements

Proof of Compliance:

- Training program SOP, **And**
- List of regulating agencies with minimum requirements, **And**
- Copy of instructor certifications.

3.02 Training Records ***(core standard)***

The fire department has a written procedure describing their employee training records system. The reporting system must meet guidelines set forth by the associated regulating agency. This system should also include EMS records.

Discussion: There is not set format for a training records system. Each department must maintain a complete set of records, including sign in sheets, for all training conducted or attended by its members. Records must be in an organized manner and easily accessible.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written procedure, **And**
- Observation of Training files On-Site, **And**

--Observation of EMS CE.

3.03 Probationary Firefighter Training Program

The department has a written Probationary Firefighter Training program for newly hired members. The program must have the following items:

- a. Require training be signed off by an officer.
- b. Be divided into phases of training based on departmental needs.
- c. Require newly certified or inexperienced firefighters to complete all phases of the training program prior to finishing their probationary period.
- d. Be a minimum of four weeks long.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Observation training records showing multiple phases and length.

3.04 Probationary Officer Training Program

The department has a written officer training program for newly promoted officers. The program must have the following items:

- a. Include categories based on department needs.
- b. Be divided into phases and completed within six months.
- c. Should include a training program for all officer ranks/supervisory levels.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Copy of training manual showing multiple phases and length.

3.05 In- Service Volunteer Firefighter Training

If the Agency has volunteer firefighters, a written directive requires that volunteer receive the same in-service training as regular firefighter full time personnel in the functions that the volunteer firefighters are designated by the Agency to perform. Prior to engaging in firefighting operations, volunteer firefighters must meet the criteria and training requirements set out by the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Observation of training records for Volunteer Firefighters.

3.06 EMS Training Program

If the department provides EMS or is a first responder organization, the department shall have a written program outlining what is required of personnel by the medical director to operate within the system and what recurrent training is required. Each level of certification shall be outlined with requirements.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Verification of personnel to be in compliance with the requirements.

3.07 Special Ops Training Program

If the department has any special operations programs, a program should be in place to outline the special operations performed by the department, training requirements for team member, and the training requirements to maintain proficiency by personnel.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Observation of training records for personnel involved in any special operations program.

3.08 Supervisor Training

The department provides for continuing education training for all supervisors appropriate to their position/rank on an annual basis.

Discussion: This additional training also applies to all supervisors (not just the initial supervisory rank) and includes non-sworn supervisors. They should be given training "appropriate to their position/rank". Training could include college hours, leadership conferences, the National Fire Academy, etc. Although we recommend formal training, an agency can conduct in-house training sessions as long as the training content is documented and contains sufficient information appropriate to the new rank or position.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Observation of supervisory training.

3.09 Field Training Officers/EMS Preceptors

The department should have an established policy and procedure for field training officers/EMS preceptors. The policy should outline what is required to become a FTO/Preceptor and what is required to maintain this status.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy and procedure for outlining requirements.

3.10 Probationary Firefighter Training Evaluations

The Agency has a written directive that requires probationary firefighters receive at least monthly evaluations by the probationary firefighter's officer. The evaluation will be reviewed with the new firefighter and the officer, and then filed in the training documents.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Observation of at least monthly documented review by new firefighter and officer.

3.11 Required Telecommunication Training *(core standard)*

If the Agency operates a communications center, personnel are trained in the operations in accordance with applicable agency requirements and in the procedures of the communications equipment and familiarity with departmental operations.

Discussion: Training in familiarity with department operations may be some form of formal training or by the provision and discussion of a departmental operations manual.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of training program.

3.12 Professional Development

The department should have lined out in policy the requirements for each position in the department. All recognized and/or promoted positions within a department must have minimum requirements and career paths that specify required education and experience and/or preferred classes/courses.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy and procedure for requirements, **And**
- Observation of training records or certificate.

3.13 Assistant Fire Chief Training

The Assistant Fire Chief(s) or second in command position(s) of the department have completed or are currently enrolled in advanced supervisory courses. It is also strongly recommended that all Fire Chiefs complete the Texas Fire Chiefs Academy training program.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of training records or certificate.

3.14 Fire Inspectors, Investigators, and Fire Marshal

The department should have an established policy and procedure for inspectors, investigators and the Fire Marshal. The policy should outline what is required to become an investigator, inspector or Fire Marshal and what is required to maintain this status in regards to continuing education, training including TCLOSE requirements (if applicable).

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy and procedure for requirements, **And**
- Observation of training records or certificate.

3.15 Training Facilities

The department should have access and use of a fire training facility. Departments not owning their own facilities should have an agreement with a certified fire training facility allowing the use of the facility for training purposes.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Ownership of a fire training facility, **And**
- Copy of an agreement for use of a fire training facility.

CHAPTER 4 – SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Scope of Special Operations Sections (Rope Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Trench Rescue, Structural Collapse Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, Dive Underwater Search/Rescue, and Hazardous Materials Response) The scope of these sections specifically pertains to the special team's training, operational response and equipment compliance and may or may not apply directly to every member of the agency. The section should be read and administered as it applies to the specific special team and not to normal fire department operations.

4.01 Rope Rescue (High Angle / Low Angle)

The agency having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall have the capability to safely respond and put in service a trained rope rescue team **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained rope rescue team for specialized high angle / low angle rescues. This section does not address cave or wilderness rope rescue situations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any rope rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency or regional rope rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “ The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to rope rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify rope rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for rope rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to High Angle/Low Angle rope rescues,
Or
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting High Angle/Low Angle rope rescue team, **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency's or regional rope rescue team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene "Accountability" of member, while maintaining member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for rope rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 5.2.2, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for "Entrance Requirements". The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 "Entrance Requirements" as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in rope rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter #6 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- Documentation and Training on rope rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope), harnesses, and hardware that is used for rope rescue that meets NFPA 1983 manufacture standards referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.1, **And**
- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope) that is rated for "General Use" that is designed to hold the weight of two individuals per NFPA 1983 which is referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.2 and 7.16.2.1 and any rope that is not a life safety rope shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescues or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed, **And**
- AHJ has a guideline on how a life safety rope (rescue rope) is visually and physically inspected before initial usage, annually, and after each use per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.3, 7.16.3.1, 7.16.3.2, and 7.16.4 that meets manufactures criteria that allows reuse of the rope and keeps it in service as a life safety rope. If for any reason the rope does not meet this standard it must be remove from

service as a life safety rope and shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescuer or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed. Any time a life safety rope is shock loaded it will be taken out of service permanently as a life safety rope, **And**

- AHJ keeps records on life safety rope starting when it was placed in-service, usage, visual and physical inspections confirming the life safety rope is still in-service. Each life safety rope will have its own record that will be maintain while the life safety rope is in service, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.5, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

4.02. Confined Space Rescue *(core standard)*

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and safely conduct a confined space rescue. The agency shall have a trained confined space rescue team **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained confined space rescue team for specialized confined space rescues.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any confined space rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency or regional confined space rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “ The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to confined space rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify confined space rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for confined space rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to confined space rescues **Or**
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting a confined space rescue team **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency's or regional confined space rescue team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene "Accountability" of member, while maintaining member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for confined space rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 7.2.4, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for its members entering confined space environment with PPE including SCBA and IDLH detection equipment for confined space rescue or training incidents, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for staffing and equipping intervention crew to rescue other members during IDLH environments; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 8.8 Rapid Intervention for Rescue Members when developing their guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for "Entrance Requirements". The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 "Entrance Requirements" as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in confined space rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter #7 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- AHJ has trained members on how to identify confined spaced entry hazards, **And**
- Documentation and Training on confine space rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope), harnesses, and hardware that is used for rope rescue that meets NFPA 1983 manufacture standards referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.1, **And**
- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope) that is rated for "General Use" that is designed to hold the weight of two individuals per NFPA 1983 which is referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.2 and 7.16.2.1 and any rope that is not a life safety rope shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescues or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed, **And**

- AHJ has a guideline on how a life safety rope (rescue rope) is visually and physically inspected before initial usage, annually, and after each use per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.3, 7.16.3.1, 7.16.3.2, and 7.16.4 that meets manufacturers criteria that allows reuse of the rope and keeps it in service as a life safety rope. If for any reason the rope does not meet this standard it must be removed from service as a life safety rope and shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescue or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed. Any time a life safety rope is shock loaded it will be taken out of service permanently as a life safety rope, **And**
- AHJ keeps records on life safety rope starting when it was placed in-service, usage, visual and physical inspections confirming the life safety rope is still in-service. Each life safety rope will have its own record that will be maintained while the life safety rope is in service, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.5, **And**
- AHJ has a gas detector that has the minimum detection capabilities of CO, LEL, and Oxygen levels with a guideline that addresses manufacturer maintained standards. This gas detector will be used to identify an IDLH environment during confined space rescue entries, **And**
- AHJ has an established guideline that all members that maybe called upon to wear a SCBA or Air-Respirators will have an annual fit test, meeting NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.12 Fit Testing, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacturer standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

4.03 Trench Rescue *(core standard)*

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and put in service a trained technical rescue team having the capability/training to perform trench rescue operations **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained trench rescue team for specialized trench rescue operations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any trench rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency or regional trench rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “ The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to trench rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify trench rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for trench rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to trench rescues, **Or**
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting trench rescue team **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency’s or regional trench rescue team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene “Accountability” of member, while maintaining member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for trench rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 11.2.3, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for its members entering trench environment with PPE including SCBA and Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) detection equipment for trench rescue or training incidents, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for staffing and equipping intervention crew to rescue other members during IDLH environments; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 8.8 Rapid Intervention for Rescue Members when developing their guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for “Entrance Requirements”. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 “Entrance Requirements” as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in trench rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter # 8 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- Documentation and Training on trench rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope), harnesses, and hardware that is used for rope rescue that meets NFPA 1983 manufacture standards referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.1, **And**
- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope) that is rated for “General Use” that is designed to hold the weight of two individuals per NFPA 1983 which is referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.2 and 7.16.2.1 and any rope that is not a life safety rope shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescues or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed, **And**
- AHJ has a guideline on how a life safety rope (rescue rope) is visually and physically inspected before initial usage, annually, and after each use per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.3, 7.16.3.1, 7.16.3.2, and 7.16.4 that meets manufactures criteria that allows reuse of the rope and keeps it in service as a life safety rope. If for any reason the rope does not meet this standard must be remove from service as a life safety rope and shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescuer or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed. Any time a life safety rope is shock loaded it will be taken out of service permanently as a life safety rope, **And**
- AHJ keeps records on life safety rope starting when it was placed in-service, usage, visual and physical inspections confirming the life safety rope is still in-service. Each life safety rope will have its own record that will be maintain while the life safety rope is in service, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.5, **And**
- AHJ has a gas detector that has the minimum detection capabilities of CO, LEL, and Oxygen levels with a guideline that address manufacture maintained standards. This gas detector will be used to identify an IDLH environment during trench rescue entries, **And**
- AHJ has an established guideline that all members that maybe called upon to wear a SCBA or Air-Respirators will have an annual fit test, meeting NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.12 Fit Testing, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

4.04 Structural Collapse Rescue

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and put in service a trained structural collapse rescue team having the capability/training to perform structural collapse rescue operations **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained Technical Rescue Team for specialized structural collapse rescue operations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any structural collapse rescue

capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency, regional or state structural collapse rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to structural collapse rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify structural collapse rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for structural collapse rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to structural collapse rescue, **Or**
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting structural collapse team, **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of other agencies, regional, or state structural collapse rescue team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene “Accountability” of member, while maintaining member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for structural collapse rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 6.2.2, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for its members entering structural collapse environment with PPE including SCBA and IDLH detection equipment for structural collapse rescue or training incidents, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for staffing and equipping intervention crew to rescue other members during IDLH environments; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 8.8 Rapid Intervention for Rescue Members when developing their guideline, **And**

- AHJ has established guideline when air-purifying respirators (APRs) and powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs) can be worn by its members; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.8.3.1, 7.8.3.2, 7.11.2 Supplied-Air Respirators and 7.11.3 Full Face-piece Air-Purifying Respirators when developing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for “Entrance Requirements”. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 “Entrance Requirements” as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in structural collapse rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter # 9 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- Documentation and Training on structural collapse rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope), harnesses, and hardware that is used for rope rescue that meets NFPA 1983 manufacture standards referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.1, **And**
- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope) that is rated for “General Use” that is designed to hold the weight of two individuals per NFPA 1983 which is referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.2 and 7.16.2.1 and any rope that is not a life safety rope shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescues or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed, **And**
- AHJ has a guideline on how a life safety rope (rescue rope) is visually and physically inspected before initial usage, annually, and after each use per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.3, 7.16.3.1, 7.16.3.2, and 7.16.4 that meets manufactures criteria that allows reuse of the rope and keeps it in service as a life safety rope. If for any reason the rope does not meet this standard must be remove from service as a life safety rope and shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescuer or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed. Any time a life safety rope is shock loaded it will be taken out of service permanently as a life safety rope, **And**
- AHJ keeps records on life safety rope starting when it was placed in-service, usage, visual and physical inspections confirming the life safety rope is still in-service. Each life safety rope will have its own record that will be maintain while the life safety rope is in service, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.5, **And**
- AHJ has a gas detector that has the minimum detection capabilities of CO, LEL, and Oxygen levels with a guideline that address manufacture maintained standards. This gas detector will be used to identify an IDLH environment during structural collapse rescue entries, **And**

- AHJ has an established guideline that all members that maybe called upon to wear a SCBA or Air-Respirators will have an annual fit test, meeting NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.12 Fit Testing, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

4.05 Swift Water Rescue

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and put in service a trained Swift Water Rescue Team having the capability/training to perform swift water rescue operations **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained Swift Water Rescue Team for specialized swift water rescue operations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any swift water rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency, regional or state swift water rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “ The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to confined space rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify swift water rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for swift water rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to swift water rescues, **Or**

- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting Swift Water Rescue Team **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency's or regional swift water rescue team, **then the following items listed below:**
- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene "Accountability" of member, while maintaining member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for swift water rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 9.2.3, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines on when its members need to wear personal flotation device that meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007 8.5.24 and reference NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 9.3.4 to other equipment that should be provide for members safety during water operations, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for "Entrance Requirements". The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 "Entrance Requirements" as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in swift water rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter # 12 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- Documentation and Training on rope rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope), harnesses, and hardware that is used for rope rescue that meets NFPA 1983 manufacture standards referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.1, **And**
- AHJ has life safety rope (rescue rope) that is rated for "General Use" that is designed to hold the weight of two individuals per NFPA 1983 which is referenced in NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.2 and 7.16.2.1 and any rope that is not a life safety rope shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescues or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed, **And**
- AHJ has a guideline on how a life safety rope (rescue rope) is visually and physically inspected before initial usage, annually, and after each use per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.3, 7.16.3.1, 7.16.3.2, and 7.16.4 that meets manufactures criteria that allows reuse of the rope and keeps it in service as a life safety rope. If for any reason the rope does not meet this standard must be remove from service as a life safety rope and shall be marked in a manner that members can easily recognize it is not to be used for rope rescuer or the rope is taken out of service and destroyed. Any time a life safety rope is shock loaded it will be taken out of service permanently as a life safety rope, **And**

- AHJ keeps records on life safety rope starting when it was placed in-service, usage, visual and physical inspections confirming the life safety rope is still in-service. Each life safety rope will have its own record that will be maintain while the life safety rope is in service, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.16.5, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

4.06 Dive Team

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and put in service a trained dive team having the capability/training to perform underwater search/rescue operations **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained dive team for specialized underwater search/rescue operations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of rescues depending on the need for specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized rescue does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to perform the rescue safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and rescuers. In the event that the fire agency does not have any underwater dive search/rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency, regional or state underwater dive search/rescue team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to underwater search/rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify dive underwater search/rescue internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for underwater search/rescue.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to water search/rescues, **Or**
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting dive team, **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency's or regional dive team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene "Accountability" of member, while maintaining member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines for members to recognize the need for underwater dive search/rescue and what initial response is needed to maintain member's safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 9.2.3, in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guidelines on when its members need to wear personal flotation device that meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements, per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007 8.5.24 and reference NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 9.3.4 to other equipment that should be provide for members safety during water operations, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for "Entrance Requirements". The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, 4.2 "Entrance Requirements" as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance requirements for members in underwater dive search/rescue Level I and Level II job performance requirements per NFPA 1006, Edition 2008, Chapter #13 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment, **And**
- Documentation and Training on underwater dive search/rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has established guidelines to confirm that "Grade E" breathing air for dive tanks during dive operations per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.4.2.4.3, **And**
- AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly, **And**

4.07 Hazardous Materials *(core standard)*

The agency shall have the capability to respond to and put in service a trained hazardous material team having the capability/training to perform hazardous materials operations **Or** have a mutual aid agreement in place to request a trained hazardous material team for specialized hazardous materials operations.

Discussion: Although the occurrence of hazardous material incidents need specialized training and equipment is rare for many fire agencies when a specialized hazardous material incident does present itself the fire department is called upon to respond. The capabilities of the fire agency and its members must be recognized to respond to hazardous material incidents safely and efficiently for the benefit of the public and responders. In the event that the fire agency does not have any hazardous material team rescue capabilities the agency will have provisions or agreements in place to request a neighboring fire agency, regional, or state hazardous material team to assist them, per NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, sections referenced below.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.1; “ The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish levels of operational capability needed to conduct operations at technical search and rescue incidents safely and effectively, based on hazard identification, risk assessment, training level of personnel, and availability of internal and external resources.”

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.1.3; “In jurisdictions where identified hazards might require a search and rescue capability at a level higher than awareness, a plan to address this situation shall be written”.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.1; “The AHJ shall conduct a hazard identification and risk assessment of the response area and shall determine the feasibility of conducting technical search and rescue operations”, in regards to confined space rescue.

NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, section 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5; The AHJ shall identify hazardous material internal resources and external resources to augment internal resources to respond to these type of incidents. There shall be a procedure to acquiring external resources for hazardous material incidents.

Proof of Training and Operational Response Compliance:

- Copy of written policy/directive on response to hazardous materials incidents, **Or**
- Copy of written policy/directive on requesting hazardous materials team **And**
- Copy of Mutual Aid Agreement providing request/response of another agency’s or regional hazardous material team, **then the following items listed below:**

- AHJ has established guideline for on-scene “Accountability” of member, while maintaining member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.12.1 and 4.1.12.2 as a reference in helping establish this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for members to recognize the need for hazard materials event and what initial response is needed to maintain member’s safety. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 472, Edition 2008, 4.1.1.1, in establishing this guideline which includes the members using the DOT Emergency Response Guidebook to initiate protective actions and notifications process to hazardous material incident, **And**

- AHJ has established guideline to establishing Hazard Control Zones (Hot, Warm, and Cold), per NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 8.6.2 hazard control zones, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for its members entering hazmat environment with PPE including SCBA and IDLH detection equipment for hazmat incidents or training incidents, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline for staffing and equipping intervention crew to rescue other members during IDLH environments; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 8.8 Rapid Intervention for Rescue Members when developing their guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established guideline when air-purifying respirators (APRs) and powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs) can be worn by its members; AHJ should reference NFPA 1500, Edition 2007, 7.8.3.1, 7.8.3.2, 7.11.2 Supplied-Air Respirators and 7.11.3 Full Face-piece Air-Purifying Respirators when developing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established a guideline for “Entrance Requirements”. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1006, Edition 2007, 4.2 “Entrance Requirements” as a reference in establishing this guideline, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance competencies for the member’s during a hazardous material incident per NFPA 472, Edition 2007, Chapter #4, #5, #6 and #7 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment. AHJ should reference Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) curriculum standards for Hazmat Materials in Chapter # 6 when determining the competencies, **And**
- AHJ has established job performance competencies for the incident commander during a hazardous material incident per NFPA 472, Edition 2007, Chapter # 8 or equivalent training based on AHJ needs assessment. AHJ should reference Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) curriculum standards for Hazmat Materials in Chapter # 6 when determining the competencies, **And**
- AHJ will have all members that are hazardous material technician level meet Texas Commission on Fire Protection continuing education standards, per Title 37, Part 13, Chapter 441, Rule 444.17 requirements, **And**
- Documentation and Training on rope rescue job performance requirements for members will be kept per AHJ standards. The AHJ should refer to NFPA 1670, Edition 2009, 4.1.10 Training through 4.1.10.5 Documentation, as a reference in establishing these guidelines.

Proof of Equipment Compliance:

- AHJ has a gas detector that has the minimum detection capabilities of CO, LEL, and Oxygen levels with a guideline that address manufacture maintained standards. Gas detector will be used to identify an IDLH environment during hazmat entries, **And**
- AHJ hazmat ensembles that meet NFPA 1991 Standard on Vapor-Protective Ensembles for Hazmat Material Emergencies and NFPA 1992 Standard of Liquid Splash-Protective Ensembles and Clothing for Hazmat Materials Emergencies shall be

cared for per manufactures recommended standards in regards to annual testing standards and climate controlled requirements, **And**

--AHJ has an established process making sure that all specialized equipment is meeting manufacture standards in regards to annual testing, calibrations, and testing to confirm the device is working properly.

CHAPTER 5 – RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Proper handling of agency records is critical to provide the agency with the information to properly manage its operations. Agencies must comply with the provisions of the Texas Government Code, Chapter 552, regarding Public Information and the Retention Schedule for Records of Public Safety Agencies prescribed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

5.01 Privacy and Security of Records *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive complying with applicable law for the privacy and security of records and provides appropriate training for the Agency designee responsible for records management. Records must be kept in a secure manner.

Discussion: Privacy and security of records requires departmental records such as personnel records, discipline documents, formal investigations, and other sensitive reports must be secured to prevent unauthorized access. This does not mean simply in a secure portion of the fire administration building. Records must be maintained in a locked room or locked cabinets with only authorized persons having access.

The training portion of this standard must be met by showing proof of some form of formal training, or specific topic training at a school, seminar, or class; clearly showing the topic of training, such as a class schedule, syllabus, lesson plan, power point, completion certificate, or other documentation. Computer based learning programs may also be used.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of training record of records management designee, **And**
- Observation of security of records On-Site.

5.02 Records Retention

The Agency has a written policy for the life cycle management of records in compliance with state law and the Retention Schedule for Records of Public Safety Agencies prescribed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. The policy should address all items in the Schedule PS. Examples listed below:

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Dispatch Reports | 3 years |
| Employee Records | date of separation +75 years |
| Incident Reports | 3 years |

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Medical/ Chemical Exposure | date of separation +30 years |
| PPE Inspection Reports | 3 years |
| SCBA inspection Reports | 3 years |
| Training Reports | 5 years |
| Vehicle Maintenance Reports | 3 years |

Discussion: Retention schedule is the Local Schedule PS for Public Safety Agencies available on the Texas State Library website. These standards may be already incorporated into citywide records retention plans and policies.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of records retention plan or procedures, (may be copy of city plan or may be in department policy).

5.03 Release of Information

The Agency has a written directive, in accordance with current law, regarding the release of information and open records requests, and provides training to appropriate employees.

Discussion: Department policy should clearly address what information in reports is releasable and what is not to be released. The policy should also address who is responsible for releasing information and/or responding to open records requests.

While a higher level of training is always encouraged, the training portion of this standard may be met by showing that employees have received and signed for a copy of the policy.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, (should address what information is releasable and what is not, and who is responsible for releasing information from reports), **And**
- Proof of training of employees in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by employees, **And**
- Proof of training of appropriate employees in Open Record Act.

5.04 Public Information Officer (P.I.O.)

The Agency has a designated person(s) to release information to the news media and the public about incidents or investigations. The designated person will have some type of training prior to releasing public information.

Discussion: The training portion of this standard must be met by showing proof of some form of formal training, or specific topic training at a school, seminar, or class; clearly showing the

topic of training. Computer based learning programs may also be used. Proof will be either sign in sheets or completion certificates.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of document appointing or informing agency who is P.I.O., **And**
- Copy of training record, lesson plan or training certificate in Public Information or Media Relations.

5.05 Data/Statistical Reporting *(core standard)*

The Agency shall report data, statistics, and /or incident information to at least the following agencies/databases. Reporting shall be done in compliance with the guidelines established by each agency responsible for that database.

- a. TxFIRS (Texas Fire Incident Reporting System)
- b. TRRN (Texas Regional Resource Network)
- c. FIDO injury reporting module (Firefighters: Individuals and Departments Online – Texas Commission on Fire Protection)

Discussion: The gathering and analysis of data is imperative to determine trends and developing proper training and procedures to address the issues identified by the data analysis. Timely submission of accurate data is key to effective analysis. Each of the above databases is capable of receiving online reports. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection allows for non-career agencies to voluntarily report their information through FIDO.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of report submissions.

CHAPTER 6 – FIRE OPERATIONS

Basic fire operations have developed over time with input from our community, the courts, professional fire service organizations, as well as advancements in technology. The standards provided in this section are the best practices in our industry for fire operations. They ensure agencies are meeting the most basic needs of both their employees and their citizens.

6.01 24-Hour Fire Service Response to Emergency Situations *(core standard)*

The Agency responds to requests for fire services 24 hours a day, or has arrangements with another agency to respond to those requests.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance: _____

- Staffing schedule, **And**
- Staffing plan that demonstrates the community needs.

6.02 Inspection of Fire Vehicle and Equipment *(core standard)*

The Agency requires personnel to inspect the contents, appearance, and operability of all Emergency Operations equipment assigned to, or provided for, an apparatus, trailer, and PPE through an established inspection schedule for a specific operational period, i.e. daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly etc.

Discussion: A copy of completed check sheets is sufficient proof of compliance with this standard if all parts of the standard requirements are covered on the check sheet.

- a. SCBA's
- b. Apparatus
- c. Assigned Equipment

Proof of Compliance:

- Documented requirement for apparatus/equipment to be checked prior to each operational period, **And**
- Copy of apparatus checklist, if used.

6.03 Alarms

The AHJ has a written directive on protocols for responding to alarms by agency personnel. Alarms may include, but are not limited to fire and medical alarms. The AHJ also has a false alarm policy. The written directive includes the following items:

- a. Protocols for Communication personnel who receive and dispatch the calls.
- b. Procedures for personnel responding to alarms.
- c. False Alarm policy.

Discussion: This written directive could include how alarms are dispatched and apparatus response procedures. Similarly, how the AHJ handles false alarms also must be documented.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy.

6.04 Pre-Fire Plan Target Hazards and/or All Commercial Occupancies

The agency has an established plan, policy or procedure in place describing how it addresses the pre-fire plan needs of its community.

Discussion: None

Proof of compliance:

- Copy of procedure or written directive, **And**
- Copies of pre-fire plans for commercial occupancies.

6.05 Hydrant Maintenance Program

The agency has an established program for the testing of all valid fire hydrants within their primary response region.

Discussion: Those appliances that are noted as flush valves or by the Texas Health and Safety Code section 341.0357 (<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/HS/htm/HS.341.htm>) do not meet the standards set forth for the use as a dynamic water source, shall be eliminated from testing.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of procedure or written directive, **And**
- Copy of or observation of documentation associated with the performance of said testing.

6.06 Post-Incident Analysis Program

The agency has an established procedure as to how it addresses post-incident analysis and an all events but specifically for events that are deemed to be outside of the scope of a day to day operation of your organization, i.e....multiple alarm fire, fatality fires, mass casualty event.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of procedure or written directive.

6.07 Near-Miss Program in Place

The agency has an established procedure that allows for the reporting of incidents that are categorized as “Near-Miss” situations as may be defined by the TCFP and/or National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (<http://www.firefighternearmiss.com/>). Documentation as to how it shares this same data within its own agency must also be provided.

Discussion: None

Proof of compliance:

--Copy of procedure or written directive, **And**

--Documentation of near-miss reviews and how it is disseminated within the department.

CHAPTER 7 – FIRE PREVENTION – RISK REDUCTION – COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Fire departments shall have an effective program to insure sufficient efforts and resources are invested in fire prevention, life safety, hazard risk reduction, and public education.

7.01 Fire / Life Safety Code

The fire department has adopted a process for review and adoption of the Fire/Life Safety codes and building codes. The version adopted should be no more than one edition older than the most current version of the code(s). Discussion: This standard requires the department to periodically review, update, and/or amend, if required, the applicable codes.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of resolution or minutes indicating adoption.

7.02 Compliance Program

The fire department has an established program to insure compliance with applicable fire protection laws/ regulations and building codes. The program must have the following items:

- a. Define compliance program and inspection frequency per occupancy type,
- b. Have adequate staff assigned to meet inspection schedule or Have agreements with a qualified agency for these services
- c. Have a system in place to review building plans prior to construction approval

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of written procedure or agreements, **And**
--Observation of inspection records.

7.03 Fire Cause Determination *(core standard)*

The department has a program for investigating the cause and origin of all fires within its jurisdiction. The program must have the following items:

- a. Have a written SOP/procedure for Fire cause determination
- b. Have adequate staff assigned to meet inspection schedule or
- c. Have agreements with a qualified agency for these services
- d. Have a database of past investigation results

e.Require periodic review of determined causes.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Observation of database.

7.04 Public Safety Education *(core standard)*

The department has a Public Safety Education program based on the agency's mission, incident history and identified hazards. The program must have the following items:

- a.Include categories based on department/community needs.
- b.Include individual, business and community components
- c.Be targeted towards specific audiences based on needs/impact analysis
- d.Allow for documentation of programs delivered
- e.Have a periodic analysis of effectiveness of the program(s)

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written program, **And**
- Observation of records of programs presented and analysis conducted

CHAPTER 8 – RESPONSE ANALYSIS

In order to meet fire department best practices the organization shall establish, record, report and annually evaluate the department's performance objectives in responding to emergency and non-emergency incidents. The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) shall establish the performance objectives for the organization's response area. NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720 provide a standard/reference fire departments can utilize to establish performance objectives for their response to specific emergency and non-emergency events.

8.01 Alarm Handling

The AHJ shall establish performance objectives for the handling of phone calls initiating alarms at the fire department or the jurisdiction's public safety answering point (PSAP). (NFPA 1710, Section 4.1.2.3.1 and 4.1.2.3.2) The fire department or PSAP shall have an established performance objective for the handling of an alarm, from receiving the alarm to notification of the fire department (NFPA 1710, Section 4.1.2.3.3 and NFPA 1221).

Discussion: The initial call by an individual requesting assistance from a fire department initiates the response time. This standard requires to the fire department or the jurisdiction's PSAP to establish set performance objectives to meet in receiving and processing calls for service. The performance objectives established by the AHJ shall be documented and recorded, reported and annually evaluated by the organization to determine if the level of service established by the AHJ is being met.

Recommendations:

- The AHJ shall establish a performance objective of having an alarm answering time of not more than 15 seconds for at least 95 percent of the alarms received and not more than 40 seconds for at least 99 percent of the alarms received (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.3.1).
- The AHJ should establish a performance objective, if applicable, for alarms that are received at one public safety answering point (PSAP) and transferred to a secondary answering point or communications center an alarm transferring time of not more than 30 seconds for at least 95 percent of all alarms processed (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.3.2).
- The AHJ shall establish a performance objective of having an alarm processing time of not more than 60 seconds for at least 90 percent of the alarms and not more than 90 seconds for at least 99 percent of the alarms (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.3.3).

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of established performance objective for alarm answering time, **And**

- Copy of established performance objective for handling of alarm, **And**
- Copy of alarm answering time report for the current twelve month period and previous two years, **And**
- Copy of alarm handling time report for current twelve month period and previous two years.

8.02 Turnout Time *(core standard)*

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the turnout time of the fire department in response to emergency and non-emergency alarms. Turnout time shall be defined as the period of time when the initial audible alarm is activated in the station or on the radio notifying response personnel of a call for service to the first assigned response unit going in route (beginning of travel time). (NFPA 1710, Section 4.1.2.4)

Discussion: This standard refers to the time between the initial notification of response personnel by the PSAP to the first response units going en route to the incident. Turnout time may vary depending on the time of day, activities being performed by response personnel or call volume at the time of the alarm but the organization shall have an established performance objective for responders to aim towards and meet. The performance objectives established by the AHJ shall be documented and the turnout times recorded, reported and annually evaluated by the organization to determine if set objectives are being met.

Recommendations:

- The AHJ should establish a performance objective of 80 seconds for turnout time for fire and special operations response and 60 seconds turnout time for EMS response for at least 95 percent of the alarms received (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1).

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of established performance objective for the organization's turnout time, **And**
- Copy of turnout time report for the current twelve month period and previous two years.

8.03 Travel Times

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the travel time of fire department responding units to emergency and non-emergency alarms. Travel time shall be defined as the period of time of the first unit en route to the emergency or non-emergency incident and ends when the first arriving unit arrives at the scene (NFPA 1710, Section 4.1.2.4).

Discussion: This standard refers to the time between when the first responding unit reports en route and ends when a responding unit arrives at the scene of the emergency or non-emergency incident. Travel time may vary depending on time of day, weather conditions, traffic conditions,

distance to incident, current assignments of response units, etc. It is recommended that the organization have response districts (see 8.04 Response Districts) when establishing performance objectives for travel times to incidents.

Recommendations:

- The AHJ should establish a performance objective of 240 seconds or less travel time for the arrival of the first arriving fire company at a fire suppression incident and 480 seconds or less travel time for the deployment of an initial full alarm assignment at a fire suppression incident not less than 90 percent of the time (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1).
- For departments providing EMS the AHJ should establish a performance objective of 240 seconds or less travel time for the arrival of a unit with first responder with automatic external defibrillator (AED) or higher level capability at an emergency medical incident not less than 90 percent of the time (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1).
- For departments not providing advanced life support (ALS) the AHJ should establish a performance objective of 480 seconds or less travel time for the arrival of an ALS unit at an emergency medical incident not less than 90 percent of the time where the service provided by the fire department is at a first responder with AED or basic life support (BLS) unit arrived in 240 seconds or less travel time (NFPA 1710 4.1.2.1).

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of established performance objective for the organization's travel time,

And

- Copy of travel time report for the current twelve month period and previous two years

8.04 Response Districts *(core standard)*

The organization shall establish geographic districts within the fire department's established jurisdictional boundaries. Depending on the size of the fire department and their response boundaries the number of districts may vary from having one district to tens of districts or more. Discussion: This standard refers to an organization establishing geographic boundaries within the organization's response area for the purpose of establishing performance objectives of travel times to specific defined districts.

Discussions: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of jurisdictions response/reporting district(s) map.

8.05 Fire Suppression Response *(core standard)*

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's response to structure fires that includes the minimum number of personnel and apparatus to sufficiently initiate fire suppression activities (NFPA 1710, Section 5.2.1).

Discussion: This standard refers to the number of personnel and apparatus the organization has determined is needed to respond to structure fires within their jurisdictional boundaries. The response may include any automatic or mutual aid resources responding, on initial alarms. The organization shall record and report apparatus and personnel responding and arriving on initial alarms for structure fires.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objectives for response to structure fires,
And
- Copy of department's policy regarding initial response assignments for structure fires,
And
- Copy of intergovernmental agreements regarding automatic aid and/or mutual aid, **And**
- Copy of department's box alarm assignments, **And**
- Copy of report of dispatched apparatus and personnel to structure fires for current twelve month period and previous two years.

8.06 Emergency Medical Service Response *(core standard)*

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's response to emergency medical calls that includes the level of EMS service, minimum number of personnel and equipment dispatched to sufficiently initiate EMS activities (NFPA 1710, Section 5.3).

Discussion: This standard refers to the level of EMS the AHJ has established it will provide, the number of personnel that will be dispatched initially to EMS calls and the equipment dispatched.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objective for response to EMS calls,
And
- Copy of department's policy regarding initial response assignments for EMS calls, **And**
- Copy of report of dispatched apparatus and personnel to EMS calls for current twelve month period and previous two year period.

8.07 Special Operations Response

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's response to special operations (Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, EOD, etc.) that

includes the minimum number of personnel and apparatus to sufficiently initiate special operation activities and response of automatic or mutual aid resources (NFPA 1710, Section 5.4).

Discussion: This standard refers to the special operations response performance objectives the AHJ has determined is acceptable for the risk present within the jurisdiction. The performance objectives should establish the acceptable response by a special operations team from recognition of the need for a special operations team, on scene arrival of the special operations team/resources and finally initiation of operations by the special operations team.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objective for response to special operations incidents, **And**
- Copy of department's policy regarding initiation of request for special operations teams and resources for incidents, **And**
- Copy of report of special operations incidents showing level of resources dispatched, including response times, for current twelve month period and previous two years.

8.08 Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Response

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's airport rescue and firefighting (ARFF) response, if applicable, that includes the minimum number of personnel and apparatus to sufficiently initiate ARFF operations and response of automatic or mutual aid resources (NFPA 1710, Section 5.5, & NFPA 403)

Discussion: This standard refers to the ARFF response performance objectives the AHJ has determined is acceptable for the risk present within the jurisdiction. The performance objectives should establish the acceptable response of the department's ARFF from recognition, on scene arrival of the ARFF personnel and resources and finally initiation of operations by the ARFF personnel.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objective for response to ARFF incidents, **And**
- Copy of department's policy/practice of responding to ARFF incidents, **And**
- Copy of report of special operations incidents showing level of resources dispatched, including response times, for current twelve month period, and previous two years.

8.09 Marine Rescue and Fire Fighting Response

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's Marine Rescue and Fire Fighting (MRFF) response, if applicable, that includes the minimum number of personnel

and apparatus/boats to sufficiently initiate MRFF operations and response of automatic or mutual aid resources (NFPA 1710, Section 5.6).

Discussion: This standard refers to the MRFF response performance objectives the AHJ has determined is acceptable for the risk present within the jurisdiction. The performance objectives should establish the acceptable response of the department's MRFF from recognition, on scene arrival of the MRFF personnel and resources and finally initiation of operations by the MRFF personnel.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objective for response to MRFF incidents, **And**
- Copy of department's policy/practice of responding to MRFF incidents, **And**
- Copy of report of MRFF incidents showing level of resources dispatched, including response times, for current twelve month period and previous two years.

8.10 Wildland Fire Suppression Response

The organization shall establish performance objectives for the department's Wildland Fire Suppression Response, if applicable, that includes the minimum number of personnel and apparatus to sufficiently initiate wildland fire suppression operations and response of automatic or mutual aid resources (NFPA 1710, Section 5.7).

Discussion: This standard refers to the wildland fire suppression response performance objectives the AHJ has determined is acceptable for the risk present within the jurisdiction. The performance objectives should establish the acceptable response of the department's wildland fire suppression response from recognition, on scene arrival of department personnel and resources and finally initiation of operations by the department personnel assigned wildland fire suppression.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of department's established performance objective for response to wildland fire suppression incidents, **And**
- Copy of department's policy/practice of responding to wildland incidents, **And**
- Copy of report of wildland incidents showing level of resources dispatched, including response times, for current twelve month period and previous two years.

CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNICATIONS

Basic communications operations are necessary to provide effective and efficient services to the citizens within a community. It is also necessary to ensure effective and efficient communication with all first responders during any emergency incident.

Understanding that a Communications Center may support several fire departments this chapter has a few considerations in those situations. When a fire department applies for Best Practices, and the Communication Center has already been reviewed and confirmed to have met the Best Practices standards within the past 18 months then the candidate fire department will receive all credit in regards to that communication center meeting these standards.

9.01 Communications Center (24 hour Operations) *(core standard)*

The fire department has a communications center, or uses a joint communications center, that is continually staffed for 24 hours operations for emergency and non-emergency communications with the general public.

Discussion: The communications center maybe used utilized by multiple organizations from multiple jurisdictions. The communications center dispatcher or dispatchers staff the communication area where radio traffic and 911 phones are monitored.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observation of Communications Center, On-Site, **And**
- Copy of staffing schedule, **And**
- Interview with Communications Center Supervisor(s), On-Site.

9.02 Facility Security

The communications center or joint communications center is required to secure and control access into the communication area from the general public. A method for restricting individuals from gaining unnecessary access into communication area shall be in place.

Discussion: Limiting the number of individuals within the communication area helps reduce background noise and unnecessary interruptions. Communication area is where 911 phones and all radio traffic are being monitored.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe Communications Center security On-Site, **And**
- Interview staff regarding security procedures, **Or**
- Copy of Communication Center security policy.

9.03 Playback System

The communication area has a continuous recording and immediate playback capabilities for all 911 phones as well as primary and secondary radio frequencies for first responders. Continuous recording is recommended for all non-emergency phones in the communication area.

Discussion: Immediate playback capabilities for 911 phones allows for a quicker retrieval process during an emergencies to obtain critical information in a timely manner. Immediate playback systems for radio transmissions are encouraged but not required if regular tape backup is accessible by on-duty dispatchers if needed.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe the continuous recording and immediate playback system to see it is functioning properly On-Site, **And**
- Interview personnel regarding training in its operation.

9.04 Back Up Power Source *(core standard)*

The communications center has access to a backup power source as well as uninterruptible power supply (UPS) for dispatch computer (s), or other alternate means of communications, in order to maintain operation of radios and telephones during a power failure. The backup power source or alternate means of communication has security measures to prevent unauthorized access or tampering. At least quarterly documented testing of the back-up system is required.

Discussion: If the back-up power source is a generator, then the generator “has security measures to prevent unauthorized access or tampering.” This can be achieved by any number of means including fencing with locked or secured gates; locking all access panels and fuel fill caps in some manner to prevent or clearly show evidence of tampering should it occur; or having the generator inside a secured area, such as a fenced back area of a station with secure access and locked panels and fuel fill cap. Having the area monitored by video cameras would provide additional security.

If the back-up system is a battery operated portable radio or other battery back-up system, the system must also be protected from unauthorized access or tampering. Battery backup systems must provide a minimum of 2 hours of continuous use to allow the agency administration to make alternate arrangements for continuous operations.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observation of back-up power system On-Site, **And**

- Observation of security measures to protect back-up power, **And**
- Documentation of periodic testing and maintenance requirements by AHJ.

9.05 Emergency Telephone Number

The communications center publishes the 911 phone number to the general public as the number to call for emergency help.

Discussion: There may be several administrative numbers that are published for non-emergency use. There should only be one emergency phone number published for the general public to call for emergency help. The 911 phone number should be published as the emergency number to call for help because it is commonly known nationally.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe incoming 911 lines that citizens use to obtain emergency help, On-Site, **Or**
- Copy of phone book page showing 911 published in the local community to call for emergency help.

9.06 24-hour Two-Way Radio Capability

The communications center has 24-hour two-way radio communication capabilities with on duty fire department members.

Discussion: Each fire department member who is on duty needs to carry a portable radio with them when they are away from their station or unit (apparatus) during non-emergency events and emergency incidents.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe communication area to confirm it has 24-hour capability On-Site,
- And**
- Observe dispatcher to confirm they are monitoring fire department radio frequencies.

9.07 Portable Radio Availability

All on duty fire department members will have a portable radio assigned to them while on duty. Fire department members will be trained on how to use the device properly including any lighting features and emergency activation features, if available on radio.

Discussion: On duty fire department members need to carry their assigned portable radio with them at all times when away from the station or their apparatus. The ultimate goal is to have every firefighter an assigned portable radio during emergency incidents. Each member should

have a unique call sign to their assigned position for easy identification. These radios should be checked daily confirming they are operating properly.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe proper usage of portable radio including emergency features, if available, **And**
- Observe portable radios being checked daily to confirm they are prepared for use, **And**
- Copy of radio policy established by AHJ that has a unique call sign for each on duty firefighter.

9.08 Emergency Radio Communications

AHJ has an established “Emergency Tone” to notify all fire department members at an emergency incident that an emergency message will follow over the radio frequency. AHJ has an established “Emergency Evacuation” notification to all fire department members to evacuate a specific location or structure.

Discussion: “Emergency Tone” is an alert tone that can be sent over the radio frequency, which will be followed by an emergency message to everyone. The “Emergency Evacuation” notification alert must be able to be activated on scene and sent over the radio frequency. The “Emergency Tone” can be used as the “Emergency Evacuation Tone” as long as all fire department members have been trained to understand how it will be used on scene.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe Communications Center dispatcher(s) activate “Emergency Tones” and “Emergency Evacuation” tone, **And**
- Copy of “Emergency Tones” and “Emergency Evacuation”, fire department and communications centers policies, **And**
- Observe fire department members activating “Emergency Evacuation” notification for on scene activation and review the policy, **And**
- Documentation that all fire department members and dispatchers are trained annually on “Emergency Tones” and “Emergency Evacuation” procedures.

9.09 Normal Radio Communications

AHJ has established plain English for all radio communications as the standard. No “10 Code” or any other code system should be used in fire department radio communications.

Discussion: Plain English during radio communications supports better understanding during any type of multi-jurisdictional emergency responses.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe fire department normal radio communications, **And**
- Copy of radio communication standards.

9.10 Communication Plan

AHJ has established a communication plan that supports local need addressing mutual aid responses and automatic aid with other fire responder organizations. This should include all of the different radio frequencies that would be needed during emergency responses.

Discussion: Communication plan should include radio frequencies listed with assigned channel on portable radio, mobile radio, and base stations for all fire department members to review.

Proof of Compliance:

- Observe fire department normal radio communications, **And**
- Copy of radio communication plan or policy.

9.11 Mayday Communications *(core standard)*

AHJ has an established “Mayday” communication policy that allows a lost or trapped firefighter to activate and declare an on scene emergency to notify other fire department members of their situation.

Discussion: Goal here is to confirm that firefighters practice and understand how to assist each other when time is critical to their survival. Policy should include some language for firefighters that find themselves in a situation where they need assistance to not hesitate on activating the “Mayday” before they use up their air supply. Communications Center dispatcher(s) should be involved in fire department “Mayday” training.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of “Mayday” policy, **And**
- Documentation that all fire department members are trained on the “Mayday” Policy annually, **And**
- Documentation that all fire department members and dispatchers are involved annually in an exercise that involves assisting a firefighter or crew that has activated a “Mayday” requesting help.

9.12 Communication Accountability Plan *(core standard)*

AHJ has established a communication accountability plan, commonly known as a Personnel Accountability Report “PAR”. AHJ has established a policy on how “PAR” checks will be accomplished including predetermined time intervals, certain situations, and loss of communications during emergency incidents and training events.

Discussion: “PAR” is designed to obtain accountability of all fire department members during any type of emergency incident or training event. This policy should have predetermined time intervals that required “PAR” checks such as every 15 minutes as well as any major changes in fire conditions or other defined situations.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of communication accountability plan, **And**
- Copy of all policies that utilize “PAR” checks, **And**
- Documentation that all fire department members have annually training on “PAR” standards.

9.13 Recommendations

Best Practices Committee recommends the following for the AHJ. We realize that funding and competing priorities may effect the ability to achieve this recommendation which is why it is recommended and not required.

Emergency Medical Dispatcher training for all communication dispatchers.

CHAPTER 10 – SAFETY AND HEALTH

There is nothing more important in a fire department than the safety and health of firefighters. While there are a number of issues addressed in various chapters in this Best Practices document related to this topic, this chapter will focus on those issues that have not already been addressed. Organizations that want to acquire a Best Practices designation must implement these minimum requirements and it is hoped that they will exceed them.

10.01 Wellness and Fitness *(core standard)*

The AHJ has an established internal guidelines and policies that focus on a, “Wellness and Fitness” program for firefighters. The leading cause of on duty deaths for firefighters continues to be cardiac related problems.

Discussion: Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) requires an SOP for “Wellness-Fitness Initiative” – Chapter 435.21. This first step in wellness-fitness initiative is a great start to improving the quality of work life within the fire service by firefighters it needs to be expanded upon.

Recommendation: Moving toward the next step in wellness-fitness there needs to be some type of annual testing from blood labs, physical testing, medical testing, and on-scene rehab policies that address on scene needs. One of the Sixteen Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives is to develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy for Wellness-Fitness initiative, **And**
- Copy of policy for on-scene rehab.

10.02 Breathing Hazards *(core standard)*

The AHJ has a policy in place that firefighters are not allowed to breathe smoke or other contaminants and this includes overhaul operations.

Discussion: Firefighters increase their risks of various diseases by breathing in smoke and other contaminants. While it has been a long-term practice to not wear an SCBA or some form of respirator protection during overhaul operations of structural, vehicle, and dumpster fires, this practice is no longer acceptable. Some departments measure CO levels as a determinant when to not require respiratory protection during overhaul operations, but research documents various harmful gases and particulates that negatively impact the health of the firefighter.

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of policy related to firefighters not being allowed to breathe smoke or particulate matter and defines IDLH parameters for use of respiratory protection.

10.03 On-Duty Injury or Fatality *(core standard)*

The AHJ shall have a policy on firefighter fatality incidents and also on the process of dealing with on-duty injuries. Additionally, there must be defined processes on recommendations being communicated to department members on how to avoid similar occurrences happening in the future within these policies, such as lessons learned.

Discussion: The organization has great hopes that no member will be killed in the line of duty, but the department must be prepared by having a policy on what needs to occur in the event it happens. Departments also need to report injuries and more importantly develop lessons learned to minimize risk in the future. The TCFP requires regulated departments to report injuries and this best practice ensures that there is a policy in place.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy on firefighter fatality incidents, **And**
- Copy of policy on reporting and investigating injuries.

10.04 Infection and Communicable Disease Exposures

The AHJ shall have a policy on documenting exposures to communicable diseases and other appropriate potential exposures that may endanger the firefighter's health within an Infection/Communicable Disease Program.

Discussion: Firefighters can potentially be exposed to diseases such as hepatitis and HIV. Additionally, they could respond to incidents with significant exposures to toxins such as pesticides and other hazardous materials. It is important to document these exposures in the event that the firefighter becomes ill or death occurs and could be potentially related to that documented exposure. It is acknowledged that firefighters may not be aware they have been exposed to a harmful substance, but a policy in place to document known exposures is very beneficial. An infection control officer shall be identified that has duties encompassing prevention, immunization, exposure, and follow-up. Record keeping is a critical component of this program. The Infection/Communicable Disease policy should also incorporate how surveillance and trending of firefighters in the department related to exposures is monitored.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Infection/Communicable Disease policy.

10.05 Seat Belt Safety *(core standard)*

The AHJ shall have a policy related to apparatus responses and also specify seat belt usage.

Discussion: The second leading cause of firefighter fatalities is apparatus accidents. It is very important for a fire department to define safe driving practices. It would be recommended that the department meet the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation seat belt pledge to further reaffirm the commitment of members wearing their seat belts.

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of apparatus response policy.

10.06 Critical Incident Stress Management

The AHJ shall have a policy for critical incident stress management to help members manage the stressful environment of being a firefighter.

Discussion: The days of firefighters being strongly discouraged from openly discussing stressful incidents for fear of appearing weak have fortunately passed. The emotional health of firefighters is as important as physical health. There have been a number of suicides among firefighters and a fire department that embraces critical incident stress debriefings, encouraging firefighters to get help from chaplains, employee assistance programs, and etc. are components of a positive work environment.

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of a critical incident stress management policy.

10.07 Courage to be Safe *(core standard)*

The AHJ requires all its firefighters to complete the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation Courage to be Safe Program.

Discussion: Presently, the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) requires all regulated firefighters to complete the Courage to be Safe program by 2015 and employees hired after that date to complete the course within one year of their hire date. This is a good program that reviews the Sixteen Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and reaffirm that it takes courage to be safe and modify culture and practices that run counter to that goal. Not all fire departments are regulated by the TCFP and those striving for the best practices designation need to have all their firefighters complete this course and have a policy in place that all future new hires complete the course within one year of joining the fire department.

Proof of Compliance:

--Copy of Courage to be Safe policy requiring all current firefighters to complete the course and future new hires to complete within one year of joining the organization.

10.08 Apparatus Driving

The AHJ shall have a policy on driving department apparatus and vehicles for emergency and non-emergency responses. The AHJ shall also have a driver training program that requires all members to complete a classroom or online class each year reviewing requirements within the apparatus and vehicle policy.

Discussion: Vehicle accidents continue to be the second leading cause of LODDs. Numerous injuries and vehicle damage are attributable to these incidents as well each year. Local fire departments must have a policy that outlines expectations related to apparatus and vehicles followed up with annual training to make sure members are knowledgeable of these expectations.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Apparatus and Vehicle policy, **And**
- Documentation showing all members complete an annual driver class.

CHAPTER 11 – RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The proper resources are essential for providing service to our citizens. Planning, procurement, maintenance and inspection of all department resources are critical functions to a safe and efficient operation. “Physical Resources” are defined as the stations, training facilities, apparatus and other capital expenditures that make up the property assets of an agency. The intent of this chapter is to require that a department pursuing “Best Practices” maintains the equipment, apparatus and facilities available to them in a manner that ensures the safety of responders and reliability of the resources while in use by personnel.

11.01 Testing Standards

The AHJ shall establish standards in the following areas: annual pump testing, annual ladder testing for aerial and ground ladders, scheduled fire apparatus and vehicle preventive maintenance including daily maintenance checks. The AHJ has a replacement schedule for apparatus and associated equipment.

Discussion: The AHJ shall meet current NFPA 1911 standards in regards to “Annual Pump Testing” for all fire apparatus and “Annual Aerial Ladder Testing”. The AHJ shall meet current NFPA 1932 standards in regards to “Annual Ground Ladder Testing”. AHJ has a well-defined maintenance program for first line and reserve fire apparatus and vehicles in “Scheduled Preventive Maintenance” and “Daily Maintenance Check”.

Recommendations:

- Developing a preventive maintenance program for fire apparatus refer to NFPA 1911 (Appendix C).
- Developing a pump testing standards for fire apparatus refer to NFPA 1911 (Appendix B).

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy and records of annual fire apparatus pump testing, **And**
- Copy of policy and records of annual aerial ladder testing, **And**
- Copy of policy and records of annual ground ladder testing, **And**
- Copy of certifications of fire apparatus maintenance personnel, **And**
- Copy of replacement schedule and written plan, **And**
- Copy of policy and records of daily maintenance check for fire apparatus and vehicles.

11.02 Life Safety Systems

The AHJ shall provide a level of early warning Life Safety systems for their fire station(s) and facilities as well as the occupants. These buildings at a minimum shall have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. When required by building codes the facilities shall have fire alarm systems and sprinkler systems. The AHJ has an established written plan that covers projected population and land growth in regards to future facility and organizational needs. All facilities are in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Discussions: The AHJ need to protect it facilities, apparatus, equipment, and all personnel. Annually fire inspections of the facilities, and annual testing of all fire alarms, sprinkler systems, smoke alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors is required for best practices. Any systems that are designed into the building to remove hazards such as exhaust fumes shall also be required to be inspected annually to manufactory standards.

Recommendations: All facilities should have a generator to provide power during any type of power outage. All overhead doors should be attached to generator and have a manual override to get the door open during power outages. These facilities should have remote fire alarm monitoring. Station cooking appliances should have automatic shut offs switch that is activated when crews get toned out an emergency.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy that all facilities have an annual fire inspection, **And**
- Copy of records that shows fire inspections have been completed annually, **And**
- Copy of records that shows fire alarm and sprinkler were tested annually, **And**
- Copy of written plan that discusses future facility and organizational needs.

11.03 Equipment Maintenance Standards *(core standard)*

Equipment is very important for the success of any operation. The AHJ shall establish internal guidelines / policies in protecting this equipment and inspecting, maintaining, and operating it per manufacture’s recommendations and NFPA standards in regards to the specific piece of equipment. The AHJ will have established guidelines / polices in conducting maintenance checks on equipment by qualified personnel.

Discussion: SCBA equipment shall meet all NFPA 1911 per onboard air (Chapter 14) and NFPA 1852 air-packs (SCBA) standards in regards to inspections and testing requirements. All fire protection gear (PPE) shall meet NFPA 1981 standards for inspections, care, and testing requirements. All fire hose needs to be tested and inspected per NFPA 1961 and manufacture standards.

The following Texas Commission Fire Protection (TCFP) standards shall be met; all chapters are attached for quick reference below:

- a. Protective Clothing Inspection Records that complies with NFPA 1851 – Chapter 435.1(3)

- b. Breathing Air Records that comply with NFPA 1989 Records – Chapter 435.3 (4)
- c. SCBA Cylinder Hydrostatic Test Records – Chapter 435.3 (5)
- d. SCBA Annual Full-Function Test Records – Chapter 435.3 (6)
- e. SCBA Duty Period Inspection Records for In-Service Units – Chapter 435.3 (3)
- f. Reserve SCBA Weekly Inspection Records – Chapter 435.3 (3)
- g. Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) In Service Duty Period Inspection Records – Chapter 435.9 (3)
- h. SCBA Maintenance Authorization Certificate – Chapter 435.9(8)
- i. SCBA Full Function Test Machine Calibration Certificate – Chapter 435.3(8)
- j. SCBA Bottle/Cylinder Hydrostatic Testing Vendor DOT Certificate – Chapter 435.3(5)
- k. SCBA cylinder fill records – Chapter 435.3(4) – NFPA 1989
- l. Inspect PPE and SCBA for On-Duty Personnel.

Recommendation:

- The AHJ shall have developed and have in place a policy on PPE inspection in compliance with NFPA 1851. The washing of PPE (Bunkers, Fire Gloves, Fire Hood) should be to manufacture standards and in a separate washing machine (industrial extractor) than personal and department items (station towels, uniforms, workout clothes, etc.).
- The AHJ shall have in place a policy outlining the inventory of equipment assigned to apparatus and vehicles. The intent of a scheduled (daily, weekly, monthly) inventory is to provide assurance to members that equipment is in place, clean and operational.
- Fire Hose, SCBA, SCBA Bottles, Breathing Air Compressor, SCBA Face Mask, Fire Bunkers (PPE), Fire Boots, Fire Helmet, Fire Gloves, Fire Hood, and Pass Device, Air Bags, gas detectors, and Hydraulic Tools. This list is not all inclusive of the tools and equipment that may need cleaning, preventive maintenance, and inventory. The AHJ should review and follow the maintenance and/or required practices as recommended by the manufacture to assure the operation of the tools and equipment through departmental written policies or directives.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of policy for Protective Clothing Inspections, Testing, Care and Maintenance, **And**
- Copy of policy and records for all SCBA equipment Inspections, Testing, Use, Care and Maintenance, **And**
- Copy of policy and records for PASS Inspections, Testing, Care and Maintenance, **And**
- Copy of policy and records for fire hose Inspections, Testing, Care and Maintenance, **And**
- Copy of policy and records for PPE (Bunkers, Fire Hood, Fire Boots, Fire Helmet) Inspections, Testing, Care and Maintenance, **And**
- Copy of maintenance policy and records on equipment, **And**
- Copy of certification of maintenance personnel, **And**
- Meets all TCFP standards listed above in this section.

CHAPTER 12 – PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND CONDUCT

All fire service agencies must have clearly delineated rules and regulations to guide member conduct and ensure the proper public image of the agency. These Code of Ethics and rules of conduct ensure the public that their fire service agency is properly supervised and held to a high standard of conduct. It ensures the public that complaints against members will be fairly investigated and acted upon if wrongdoing is found.

12.01 Code of Ethics *(core standard)*

The Agency has a Fire Department Code of Ethics as part of its Agency policy and personnel have been provided a copy of the Code of Ethics.

Discussion: Any commonly accepted Code or Canon of Ethics may be accepted as long as it is part of the agency's policy manual. The agency may also develop its own Code of Ethics if they desire.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive or Code of Ethics, **And**
- Proof of training or receipt by officers, **And**
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act must be adopted and posted in all stations.

12.02 Oath of Office *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive that requires every employee who is a firefighter, under Texas law, to take and sign an oath of office before conducting fire service duties for the Agency.

Discussion: Article 16 Section 1 of the Texas Constitution prescribes the specific wording of both the officer's statement and Oath of Office. Agencies may add to the Oath of Office but the basic requirements which are stated in the Texas Constitution must be met. The requirement for signing the "Statement of Appointed Officer" is part of this standard and is required for its completion.

On-line access to Texas Statutes is available at <http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us/statutes/statutes.html>. A printable copy of both the Statement of Appointed Officer and the Oath of Office is available on the Secretary of State website at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/statdoc/statforms.shtml#AUF>.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**

--Shall meet or exceed compliance of the Texas Constitution Article 16 Section 1: Oath of Office

12.03 Internal Investigations

The Agency has a written directive on how to receive, investigate, and conclude complaints against employees in accordance to Texas Government Code section/sections 614.022-023.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of receipt of training by member.

12.04 Time Limit on Internal Investigations

The Agency has a written directive that sets a time limit for completion of Internal Investigations including disciplinary action, if necessary, and includes procedures for request and approval of extensions of time if needed.

Discussion: Agencies should ensure that their time limits include the taking of disciplinary action if necessary. Time limits must be in a specific number of days and may allow for extensions if requested and approved by the Fire Chief.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of receipt of training by members, **Or**
- Review Internal Investigations or logs for compliance with time limits.

12.05 Complaints Requiring an Investigation

The Agency has a written directive requiring that complaints, alleging a violation of policy or law, be investigated, and identifies those that will require formal internal investigations, and those that will require investigation by line supervisors.

Discussion: In smaller agencies, the department may not differentiate formal or informal complaints. It is sufficient if all complaints are sent to the Chief who decides by whom and how they are investigated.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**

- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members, **Or**
- Copy of log or documents showing investigations.

12.06 Notification of the Fire Chief/Agency Director

The Agency has a written directive for notifying the Fire Chief/Agency Director, as soon as practical, of formal complaints against agency employees and agency volunteers (if any).

Discussion: In smaller agencies, the department may not differentiate complaints. It is sufficient if all complaints are immediately sent to the Chief. The intent of this standard is to notify the agency director of external complaints. The agency may determine when and how this notification is made, but should be done early in the complaint receipt and investigation process.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Copy of log, memo, or email showing Chief notified of complaint per directive.

12.07 Appeal Procedures for Disciplinary Actions

If the agency allows appeals of disciplinary action, the Agency has a written directive describing the appeal process and time limits, including which actions may be appealed and what level/position will constitute the appeal authority.

Discussion: If the agency uses or relies on an appeal process issued by a higher authority, such as City personnel rules or state civil service rules, the agency should submit those documents and they must meet the requirements of the standard.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members, **Or**
- Copy of an appeal case or memo to member of appeal process.

12.08 Records and Security of Complaints and Investigations

The Agency has a written directive that requires that complaint and investigation records be kept secure, consistent with the current Public Information Act requirements.

Discussion: The requirement that records be kept secure includes being secure from unauthorized access by agency employees. This requires the records to be kept in locked cabinets or rooms with only limited access by designated individuals.

The Public Information Act is Texas Government Code Chapter 552 which regulates Public Information retention and public access. Section 552.004 requires the agency to maintain any record created by the agency in accordance with records retention schedules adopted by the governmental unit.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Photograph of file security for file, **Or**
- Physical inspection of security of files.

12.09 Notification to Complainant

The Agency has a written directive to notify the person who files a complaint, against the agency or employee, of the results of the investigation.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive.

12.10 Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive that prohibits sexual or other unlawful harassment. The written directive must provide for reporting procedures that include when it is appropriate to make a report outside the chain of command or outside the Agency. The agency must provide training to all personnel.

Discussion: The training portion of this standard must be met by showing proof of some form of formal training, or specific topic training at a school, seminar, or class; clearly showing the topic of training, such as a class schedule, syllabus, lesson plan, power point, completion certificate, or other documentation. Computer based learning programs may also be used. Proof will be sign-in sheets and/or completion certificates. Training must be provided to all department personnel, firefighters and civilian members. The requirement for training does not have to be in the written directive, but proof of training must be shown.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by employees, **And / Or**
- Copy of training lesson plan and/or dated schedule, **And**

--Copy of sign-in sheet on file.

12.11 Professional Conduct

The Agency has a Professional Conduct written directive that identifies acceptable and unacceptable conduct and includes mandatory training of all personnel.

Discussion: This is typically the department's Code of Conduct or Rules of Conduct and may have numerous rules and regulations regarding what employees are required to do and what actions are prohibited.

The training portion of this standard may be met by showing that members have received and signed for a copy of the policy. Proof of training is required for both firefighters and civilian staff.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by employees (firefighters and civilian staff).

12.12 Appearance

The Agency has a written directive that describes uniform and personal appearance standards for firefighters and civilian employees, including when non-uniform clothing is approved for special assignments.

Discussion: This directive should describe the agency uniform standards and other appearance standards such as cleanliness, grooming, jewelry, tattoos, and other appearance guidelines. Standards for non-uniform positions should be included such as for administrative assistants, civilian managers, dispatchers, etc.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by employees, **And**
- Observation (On-Site) that employees reflect the organization's appearance policy.

12.13 Truthful

The Agency has a written directive requiring all employees to be truthful in all official verbal and written communications and reports. Employees will be truthful in any court related testimony or agency investigations.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members.

12.14 Political Activity

The Agency has a written directive that prohibits an employee's personal involvement in political issues or campaigns while on duty or in uniform.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members.

12.15 Attendance

The Agency has a written directive regarding attendance requirements for employees under normal duty assignments, training assignments, and other times identified by the Agency.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members, **Or**

12.16 Alcoholic Beverages *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive regarding the use of alcoholic beverages when reporting for duty and while on duty.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**

--Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members.

12.17 Drugs *(core standard)*

The Agency has a written directive regarding the illegal use of any drug including prescription drugs, and the taking of legal prescriptions when it would negatively impact the judgment or physical condition of an employee while on duty.

Discussion: These directives should prohibit any illegal drug use and the use of any prescription drug taken illegally (without specific prescription for that employee). It should also address the taking of any prescription drug when it would negatively impact the judgment or physical condition of the employee when on duty. This is usually handled by requiring employees to notify a supervisor whenever they are taking any medication which they believe will impair their performance.

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members.

12.18 Gifts/Gratuities

The Agency has a written directive regarding gifts and gratuities that may be offered to, or solicited by, employees.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of written directive, **And**
- Proof of training of members in policy, **Or**
- Proof of receipt of copy of policy by members.

12.19 Personnel Files

The agency maintains a Personnel File on each member which contains all originals or copies of all documents required by the TCFP, SFFMA, and/or by the appropriate local and State statutes.

Discussion: None

Proof of Compliance:

- Copy of Written Directive describing the files, if any, **And**
- Observation of members files for compliance (On-Site)