



Title: Rules of Engagement (Operations)

Effective Date: April 2008

Revised: November 2018

Review Date: April 2020

Directive No. D – 2074

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PURPOSE:

All firefighting and rescue operations involve an inherent level of risk to fire fighters. The Saskatoon Fire Department is committed to the safety and health of all staff. In an ongoing effort to optimize every opportunity to ensure the safety of fire fighters involved at all incidents, the Department has established the Rules of Engagement.

This directive is designed to implement the minimum acceptable level of risk assessment conducted by incident commanders, fire officers, assigned safety officer(s), and fire fighters involved in all aspects of departmental response.

The Department understands that a basic level of risk is recognized and accepted, in a measured and controlled manner, in efforts that are routinely employed to save lives and property as outlined in the Department's Mission Statement. **These risks are not acceptable in situations where there is no potential to save lives or property.**

Accordingly, a higher level of risk is acceptable only in situations where there is a **realistic potential** to save known endangered lives and the elevated level of risk shall be limited to operations **specifically directed toward rescue, the protection of rescuers, when there is a realistic potential to save the person(s) known to be in danger.**

PROCEDURE:

All reasonable measures shall be taken to limit or avoid the inherent risks to fire fighters through risk assessment, constant vigilance, and the conscientious application of Department policies and procedures.

The rules of engagement are as follows:

The only acceptable risk is for "savable lives and savable property".

Risk Assessment:

It is the responsibility of every Incident Commander to evaluate the level of risk in every situation and the evaluation shall include the assessment of the presence, survivability, and potential to rescue occupants. When there is no potential to save lives, fire fighters shall not be committed to operations that present an elevated level of risk.

The risk assessment shall include:

- The first arriving Company Officer shall establish command and communicate it.
- The Incident Commander shall conduct an initial risk analysis of the situation to consider risk to fire fighters.
- The initial risk analysis shall serve to determine the strategy and tactics that will be employed.
- The risk analysis of every incident shall be ongoing for the duration of the incident to monitor and determine changing levels of risk to fire fighters.
- The Incident Commander may change strategy and tactics should a change in levels of risk be determined.
- The Incident Commander will assign a Safety Officer(s) to monitor and evaluate conditions to support ongoing risk analysis.

A minimum risk analysis for structure fires shall include:

- Building Characteristics:
 - construction size and type
 - structural conditions
 - occupancy and contents

- Fire Factors:
 - location and extent of the fire
 - estimated time of involvement
 - fire and smoke conditions

- Risk to Building Occupants:
 - known or probable occupants
 - occupant survivability and rescue assessment

- Fire Fighting Factors:
 - available resources
 - operational capabilities and limitations
 - additional required resources

OTHER INFORMATION: N/A

APPROVAL:

Signature: 
Fire Chief

Date: December 19th, 2016