

**I-295 / I-76 / NJ 42 Incident Management Task Force
Policy and Procedures Manual**

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Endorsed by:
Camden County Fire Chiefs and Fire Officers Association of New Jersey

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	1
	Incident Definition	1
	Unified Incident Management System	1
	Lane Identification	1
2.	Recommended Equipment	2
3.	Incident Response	2
4.	Arriving on Scene	3
5.	Traffic Control	4
6.	Operating on Scene	5
	6.1 Vehicle Fires	5
	6.2 Motor Vehicle Accidents	5
	6.3 Brush/Grass Fire	7
7.	Highway Hazard/ Wash Highway	7
8.	Helicopter Stand By	7
9.	General Operation Safety	7
10.	Departing Scene	8

Appendix

A.	Organizations Impacted by These Guidelines	A-1
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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide incident responders, in the I-295/I-76/NJ 42 response area, uniform operational guidelines (OG) for safe operations at the scene of an incident. These operational guidelines are the result of discussions as well as debriefings of area responders representing each entity, which may operate at one of these incidents. It is intended that this document serve as a guideline for decision-making and can be modified by the incident responders as necessary to address existing conditions. A listing of the organizations for which these guidelines apply is provided in Appendix A.

Incident Definition

An incident is defined as any non-recurring event that causes a reduction of roadway capacity such as traffic crashes, brush fire, or vehicle fires. Improving the overall traffic incident management process will improve the safety of responding agency personnel, reduce the chance of an associated traffic accident and minimize the amount of apparatus and number of personnel responding onto the highway.

Unified Incident Management System

**SPECIAL NOTE*: The state police have statutory authority over all incidents which occur on highways covered by this document. As such, the senior trooper on the scene is the incident commander. In accordance with the Incident Management System, the senior fire department officer (FD) is designated as the Fire Branch (FB). This designation will be used throughout this document to delineate the responsibilities of the senior fire department officer. However, since the State Police do not have the ability to communicate on the Camden County emergency frequencies, the senior fire department officer will continue to utilize the command designation when communicating on the radio. A plain text designation will be utilized for highway responses (i.e. Route 42 command).*

Agencies responding to incidents in the response area covered by this document will utilize a Unified Incident Management System. The first arriving emergency responder will establish command, identify a command post location, and don a reflective vest for identification. All other responding agencies will send a representative to the command post. The agencies will cooperate and work together for the safe and efficient mitigation of the emergency. The fire, EMS, police and DOT representatives will be expected to make decisions based on their experience and expertise in their respective fields to contribute to the successful conclusion of the incident. Any decisions made will be communicated to the other agency representatives to ensure the coordination of efforts. The State Police will have the final say regarding any disputes which arise.

Lane Identification

For purposes of uniformity, the following will standardize travel lane identification. Lanes will be numbered in an ascending order from high speed lane to low speed lane (left to right). Example: On a three lane highway, lane one will be to the left (high speed lane) and lane three will be to the right (low speed lane). Shoulders will be designated as lane one shoulder or lane three shoulder. Acceleration and deceleration lanes will be designated as such.

2 RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

Agencies responsible for responding to incidents on limited access highways should consider the following safety related equipment for their vehicles:

- 2.1 A sufficient number of Class III Safety Vests for responding personnel;
- 2.2 A minimum of five (5) DOT approved reflective traffic cones (10 cones are preferable);
- 2.3 A minimum of one (1) case of traffic flares;
- 2.4 A lighted arrow stick or sign board, mounted as high as possible on the vehicle, for maximum visibility;
- 2.5 Addition of DOT approved reflective striping to the rear and sides of the vehicle;
- 2.6 Minimum compliment of Basic First Aid equipment will be part of apparatus inventory.

3 INCIDENT RESPONSE

- 3.1 A minimum crew of four firefighters is recommended for apparatus responding to incidents on the highway. A minimum crew of three will be necessary for response to an incident on a limited access highway.
 - 3.2 Responding members shall be properly seated in the vehicle and secured with supplied seat belts.
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- 3.3 Only official, marked vehicles will be permitted on the highway.
- 3.4 Companies will be assigned responsibility for a specific area of the highway, and will be directed to enter the highway via a designated ramp. Absent extenuating circumstances, or specific orders to the contrary, companies will utilize their assigned entry ramp whenever responding to incidents on the highway.
- 3.5 Responding apparatus will transmit their response via radio on the designated radio channel, and will communicate the total number of responders on their apparatus (i.e. E841 is responding with 5).
- 3.6 As a general rule, full size apparatus should utilize normal entrances and exits to reverse their direction of travel. Use of the median or paved U-Turns should be reserved for life threatening emergencies and extenuating circumstances.
- 3.7 Apparatus will communicate via radio when entering the highway (i.e. E932 is entering the highway).
- 3.8 At times, it is necessary for emergency vehicles to travel against the normal traffic flow to access an incident scene. **NO** apparatus or vehicles will employ this maneuver unless and until they receive specific approval from the incident commander or his designee. The FB must ensure that no traffic is flowing on the roadway to be utilized, and shall communicate his intentions to the State Police prior to authorizing the emergency vehicle to enter the roadway. Once approval is received, the emergency vehicle shall proceed with extreme caution, utilizing the shoulder portion of the roadway if possible.

4 ARRIVING ON SCENE

- 4.1 Operators of emergency response vehicles shall position their vehicles in a manner that best protects the incident scene, the patients, and the work area.
 - 4.2 Consideration should be given to traffic flow and to providing an avenue for additional resources to access the scene.
 - 4.3 Apparatus operators shall cancel any warning lights, which impair the vision of approaching traffic (i.e. headlights, spotlights, clear warning lights).
 - 4.4 When possible, crew members should exit their apparatus on the side opposite the traffic flow. Personnel should always check for approaching traffic before exiting.
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- 4.5 A sufficient safety zone should be employed around the apparatus to allow crew members to remove necessary equipment from the vehicle without being exposed to passing traffic.

5 TRAFFIC CONTROL

- 5.1 As a general rule, traffic control is the responsibility of the New Jersey State Police and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- 5.2 If the above agencies are not present, it is the responsibility of initial responders to establish measures to safely guide traffic around an incident scene or, if necessary, to stop the flow of traffic.
- 5.3 The closing of additional lanes not affected by the accident, to include on and off ramps, shall require the approval of the New Jersey State Police and/or the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- 5.4 Personnel should face traffic at all times when placing and retrieving traffic control devices.
- 5.5 Traffic cones, flares, and/or emergency vehicles are commonly used for this purpose.
- 5.6 Traffic should never be allowed to pass an incident scene on both sides of emergency workers. The traffic should be diverted to the left or the right of the scene.
- 5.7 For incidents which occur during light traffic conditions, when vehicles are approaching the scene at a higher rate of speed, at least one "buffer lane" should be provided between operating personnel and passing traffic.
- 5.8 The FB should consider designating a full-size fire apparatus to act as a blocker vehicle, thereby providing a physical barrier between emergency workers and passing traffic. This is especially important during times of low traffic volume, when vehicles are traveling at higher speeds. A cone taper should be deployed upstream of the blocking apparatus.
- 5.9 The FB is responsible for appointing a safety officer. The safety officer is responsible for ensuring the safety of all personnel operating on the scene, and should assume primary responsibility for ensuring that proper traffic controls have been established.
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6 OPERATING ON SCENE

**SPECIAL NOTE* If you are recalled by New Jersey State Police while enroute to any highway assignment, ALL companies shall go available and return.*

6.1 Vehicle Fires:

**SPECIALNOTE*: The term “primary engine” refers to the engine responding in the reported direction of travel. The term “secondary engine” refers to the engine responding opposite the reported direction of travel.*

- 6.1.1 The first engine company in each direction will enter the highway and announce same via radio. A second full size apparatus may enter the highway in the reported direction of travel. This apparatus will stage on the shoulder prior to the incident scene and prepare to act as a blocker if needed. The remainder of responding apparatus is to stage off the highway in the area of their assigned entry ramp.
- 6.1.2 The secondary engine should avoid passing the fire until verification is received that the primary engine is able to access the scene. If necessary, the secondary engine may park on the center median and stretch their hoseline(s) across the roadway to attack the fire. If the primary engine is able to access the scene, the secondary engine will exit the highway via the next available exit and stage, unless directed onto the highway by the FB. Recalled companies should avoid utilizing the highway to return to their station if traffic is congested.
- 6.1.3 The first arriving engine will position in accordance with (IAW) OG 3. The first arriving officer will establish command, perform a size-up, and determine the necessary resources to safely mitigate the incident. Any unneeded resources will be directed to stage off the highway and/or recalled.
- 6.1.4 The FB should attempt to identify the senior trooper at the scene, and request his/her presence at the command post to ensure a unified management system.
- 6.1.5 Additional responding apparatus will position IAW OG 3. The company officer will proceed to the command post for orders unless instructed otherwise.
- 6.1.6 Unless conditions dictate otherwise, hoselines used for fire attack should be stretched from the first arriving engine only.
- 6.1.7 Apparatus positioned in the travel lanes of the highway should be moved to the shoulder as soon as practical. If possible, apparatus should be moved prior to restoring hoselines and other equipment.

6.2 Motor Vehicle Accidents:

- 6.2.1 The first engine and rescue company in each direction will enter the highway and
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announce same via radio. An additional full size apparatus may enter the highway in the reported direction of travel. This apparatus will stage on the shoulder prior to the incident scene and prepare to act as a blocker if needed. The remainder of responding apparatus is to stage off the highway in the area of their assigned entry ramp.

- 6.2.2 Apparatus will position in accordance with operating guide (OG) 3, allowing a route of travel for arriving and departing E.M.S. vehicles. Only necessary apparatus will be positioned close to the scene.
- 6.2.3 The first arriving officer will establish command, perform a size-up, and determine the necessary resources to safely mitigate the incident. Any unneeded resources will be directed to stage off the highway and/or recalled.
- 6.2.4 The FB should attempt to identify the senior trooper and EMS member at the scene, and request their presence at the command post to ensure a unified management system.
- 6.2.5 Additional responsibilities of the FB
 - (a) Establish command and assign division/group officers.
 - (b) Don an approved incident management vest for identification purposes.
 - (c) Establish a command post staffed by representatives of operating units/agencies (State Police, DOT, EMS, etc.)
 - (d) Establish an "action circle" (20' radius if possible), by use of traffic cones or other appropriate barrier, around each vehicle involved.
 - (e) Designate an equipment staging area and a personnel pool at the edge of each action circle. Personnel will return to the personnel pool upon completion of assigned tasks.

**SPECIAL NOTE* Only assigned personnel should be inside the action circle.*

- 6.2.6 Extrication Group responsibilities:
 - (a) Coordinate with E.M.S. personnel to establish an action plan for patient extrication.
 - (b) Ensure ALL vehicles are properly stabilized prior to entry and extrication.
 - (c) Supervise extrication efforts utilizing the seven phases below:
 - (1) Size up and hazard control
 - (2) Access to patient for E.M.S.
 - (3) Patient assessment and immediate medical care.
 - (4) Disentanglement
 - (5) Patient packaging and treatment.
 - (6) Removal and treatment.
 - (7) Post rescue equipment servicing.

**SPECIAL NOTE* Ensure patient protection throughout extrication, taking whatever steps*

necessary to protect against further injury through breaking glass, forcibly removed vehicle components, and flying objects.

6.2.7 The Fire Suppression Group is responsible for mitigating any hazards which may result in a fire, including spilled fluids, vehicle power systems, electrical wires and/or the actions of rescue personnel, through any of the following methods, as dictated by conditions:

(a) Stretch and charge a minimum of a 1.5" hose line, staffed by a minimum of 2 personnel in full turnout gear and S.C.B.A. (Line should be placed at the edge of each action circle) Crew should also have a dry-chemical extinguisher at the ready.

(b) Ensure vehicle(s) is de-energized.

(c) Inspect vehicle(s) for leaking fuel or fluids, and secure same. Apply sand or oil dry to any spilled fluids causing slippery ground surfaces in work area.

6.2.8 Safety Group responsibilities:

(a) Monitor scene for any hazards that may arise during incident, and report to FB.

(b) Ensure all personnel on location are wearing the proper safety equipment and adhering to safe work practices.

(c) Detail unassigned personnel to personnel pool.

(d) Stop any act that may endanger the patient and/or rescuer.

6.3 Brush/Grass Fire:

* Adhere to Scene Management OG 6 {vehicle fires}

7. HIGHWAY HAZARD/ WASH HIGHWAY

* Adhere to Scene Management OG 6 {vehicle fires}

7.1 Apparatus will respond at reduced speed unless otherwise instructed.

8. HELICOPTER STAND BY

* Adhere to Scene Management OG 6 {vehicle fires}

9. GENERAL OPERATION SAFETY

9.1 Emergency personnel should consider the use of apparel, which will enhance their visibility. For FD members, full PPE (coat, pants, helmet) will be worn. Class III vests may be worn over the fire coat for increased visibility, and must be worn when the coat is removed. Personnel from other agencies should consider the use of Class III vests whenever working on the highway.

- 9.2 Personnel should monitor traffic at all times when operating on the scene.
- 9.3 The use of a spotter should be considered whenever personnel are working near a live lane.
- 9.4 Personnel shall never operate in a live lane. Walking or crossing a live lane should be done with extreme caution, and should be avoided when possible.
- 9.5 When possible, equipment deployed from the apparatus shall be taken from the side opposite of passing traffic (i.e. hose lines).

10 DEPARTING SCENE

- 10.1 The termination of the incident must be managed with the same aggressiveness as initial actions. Apparatus and equipment should be removed from the highway promptly, to reduce exposure to moving traffic and minimize traffic congestion.
 - 10.2 Vehicle operators shall ensure that all equipment has been properly returned to the apparatus, and all doors are closed and secure.
 - 10.3 All personnel should be properly seated and secured with seat belts.
 - 10.4 Vehicles which must merge into traffic traveling at highway speeds should consider employing a police vehicle or other marked emergency vehicle to assist them by providing a slow down.
 - 10.5 Emergency warning lights should be canceled only after the vehicle has completely merged into traffic.
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APPENDIX A - Organizations Impacted by These Guidelines

Police Departments

Barrington Borough
Bellmawr Borough
Brooklawn Borough
Camden City
Delaware River Port Authority
Deptford Township
Gloucester City
Hadden Heights Borough
Mount Ephraim Borough
NJ State Police
NJ Transit Police
Runnemede Borough
Westville Borough

Fire, Ambulance & EMS Departments

Barrington Borough
Bellmawr Borough
Bellmawr Park
Blackwood
Blenheim
Brooklawn Borough
Camden City
Chews Landing
Deptford Township
Gloucester City
Gloucester Township
Haddon Heights Borough
Haddonfield Borough
Mount Ephraim Borough
Lambs Terrace
Runnemede Borough
University of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ - EMS
Westville Borough

Other Agencies

Camden County Communications
Garden State Towman's Association
Gloucester County Communications
NJDOT – Traffic Operations and Maintenance