

Massachusetts FD – Fire Fighter Task Survey Analysis

Fire Fighter Essential Tasks:

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS FIRE FIGHTER TASK LIST
I. EMERGENCY SCENE RESPONSE: HANDS ON
A. INITIAL RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS:
Tasks occurring between the receipt of an alarm and initial fire fighting or emergency scene activities.
Dons protective turnout gear and equipment before and at emergency scenes.
Proceeds to assigned apparatus upon receipt of call for service.
Makes preliminary evaluation of incident based on alarm information received (e.g., alarm type, structure type, etc.).
B. WATCH DUTIES:
Stands watch to receive incoming alarms and information, answers phones, and monitors access to the station house.
Provides alarm communiqué to equipment operators/officers.
Tests alarms and dispatch equipment.
Notifies station personnel (over public address or through use of signals) of incoming alarms and required response (e.g., everybody goes, truck only, engine only, etc.).
Receives notification of multiple alarms, downtown alarms, and other significant emergencies through the Fire Alarm Office.
Records administrative and general information messages that come in over the computer dispatch.
Answers department and outside phone.
Opens and closes fire house doors to allow apparatus or Chief's car to depart/return to house.
C. DRIVING:
Drives apparatus to and from, and positions apparatus at, emergency scene.
Drives apparatus safely to designated place.
Selects most direct and expeditious route to alarm site.
Maneuvers and positions apparatus at incident scene.
Obtains knowledge of most direct and expeditious routes and studies them prior to incident response.
Obtains knowledge of traffic laws and street conditions in order to operate the apparatus safely and expeditiously.
Plans route and position based on anticipated actions (e.g., arrival routes) of other companies when driving to multiple alarm calls.
D. PUMP OPERATIONS:
Connects or hooks up apparatus to fire hydrant and operates pumps to supply water in appropriate pressure and volume -- using hydrant wrenches, couplings, hoses, spanner wrenches, and other tools.
Engages pumps.
Fills hose with water by hydrant pressure.
Connects and lays feeder line to supply water to fire.
Pumps sprinkler system and wet or dry standpipe systems.
Connects suction hose between hydrant and engine.
Monitors control panel (e.g., water temperature, oil pressure gauge, fuel gauge, hydrant pressure).
Pumps pre-connect hose-line.
Pumps master stream (e.g., aerial ladders).
Hooks up to ladder pipe to supply water during aerial ladder operations.
Notifies officer of any problems which occur while pumping.
Adjusts water pressure (by rule-of-thumb, according to pressure chart, and/or Rules and Regulations) in response to calls for more or less pressure.
Pumps specialty nozzles (e.g. drive-in, cellar distributor).
Implements cold weather procedures (e.g., tank circulation) when necessary.
Maintains pressure by adjusting pressure relief valve or automatic pressure governor.
Transfers from pressure stage to volume stage.

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Pumps booster lines.
Opens and flushes hydrant to ensure it is functional.
Shuts down pump when ordered to by officer.
Checks hydrant for proper drainage.
E. HOSE (AND EXTINGUISHER) OPERATIONS:
Stretches line or uses extinguisher to deliver water, foam and other extinguishing agents to emergency scene.
Operates nozzle at front of hose line and sprays water, foam or other agent onto fire or other hazard, or into involved structure, to extinguish, contain and/or control incident.
Locates seat of fire or other hazard (e.g., gas leak) by observing, smelling or listening for smoke, sound, flames, gas, vapors, etc.
Advances or assists in advancing hose to seat of fire or other hazard.
Disconnects hose from bed and attaches to discharge gate.
Determines type (size) and number of lengths of hose needed for operation.
Connects to standpipe during high rise incident command.
Connects hose lines to nozzles.
Uses extinguisher to extinguish, contain and/or control incident.
Selects type of extinguisher (e.g., foam, dry-chemical, etc.) needed for incident.
Feeds hose line to other fire personnel.
Determines proper nozzle and nozzle setting.
Operates stang on tower ladder to apply water to structures on fire.
Pulls hose off hose bed.
Flakes out or dekins hose line prior to charging or during extinguishment to ensure proper operations.
F. MECHANICAL LADDER OPERATIONS:
Stabilizes ladder trucks and elevates and operates aerial ladders and platforms in order to rescue victims, provides access for ventilation, operates master stream devices, etc.
Climbs mechanical ladders to perform search, rescue and other operations.
Operates ladder from ground controls or from platform controls, while watching for power lines, trees and other overhead obstructions.
Elevates, rotates and extends aerial or tower ladder for supported and unsupported operation, while watching for power lines, trees and other overhead obstructions.
Stabilizes elevating apparatus using wheel chocks, stabilizing pads, stabilizing jacks and outriggers.
Operates and directs ladder pipe to supply water during aerial ladder operations.
G. MANUAL LADDER OPERATIONS:
Carries, raises, extends and climbs manual ladders to perform search, rescue and other operations.
Extends manual (extension) ladders to reach victims.
Climbs manual ladder to perform search, rescue, and other operations.
Determines proper placement of manual ladder at scene.
Determines manual ladder type and size needed at incident scene.
Anchors and secures manual ladder (i.e., tying off) at scene.
Raises and positions manual ladder at incident scene.
Carries manual ladder from apparatus to incident scene.
Returns manual ladder to apparatus.
H. FORCIBLE ENTRY:
Pries open, cuts, or breaks down doors, or otherwise enters structures, vehicles, aircraft and other entrapments in order to search for and rescue victims and provide access to the emergency scene -- using axes, halligan tools, etc.
Gains entry into structures using axes, sledge hammers, battering rams, halligan tool and other forcible entry tools.
Cuts through surfaces using power saws and other power tools.
Determines best location for forcible entry.

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Pries open doors in structures using pry bars, halligan tools, bolt cutters and other tools.
Removes locks or hinges from doors using sledgehammers, battering rams, axes or other forcible entry tools.
Breaks holes in wooden, brick and masonry walls using sledge hammers, battering rams, axes and other tools.
I. VENTILATION:
Opens or breaks windows, chops or cuts holes in roofs, breaches walls or doors, and hangs fans in windows or doors to remove heat, smoke and/or gas from structures or entrapments.
Determines best location for venting structure based on location of hazard and fire personnel, roof type, and building construction.
Breaks windows and other points of entry using axes, ladders and other tools, to ventilate structure.
Cuts open walls, roof and other structures to ventilate structure.
Opens windows and other points of entry manually or by using pry bars, halligan tools, and other tools, to ventilate structure.
Hangs fans from ladders and in doors, windows, and holes in roofs or walls.
Uses fans for positive pressure.
J. SEARCH:
Searches assigned area in order to locate victims and to obtain further information about incident, following standard search procedures.
Searches floor or area of fire, or other hazard, for conscious and unconscious victims, sweeping assigned search area with arms, legs or tools.
Searches floors above and below fire, or other hazard, including stairwells and bulkheads, for inhabitants who need to be moved or rescued.
Views perimeter of the building to determine if there are victims needing assistance at windows, on ledges, or who have jumped.
Identifies hazardous conditions in course of search and informs others of the problem.
Determines search procedure or strategy needed to accomplish objectives.
Searches structures for seat of fire, or other hazard, and extensions.
K. RESCUE:
Assists, hoists, carries or drags victims from emergency area by means of interior access (stairs, hallways, etc.) or, if necessary, by ladders, fire escapes, platforms, or other means of escape – using rescue harnesses, ropes, etc.
Rescues drowning victims using life-saving techniques.
Conducts water rescues (i.e., river rescue, using boats) in accordance with established guidelines.
Evacuates persons from incident scene due to risk of fire, explosion, exposure to hazardous chemicals, etc.
Moves heavy objects and obstructions in order to free or gain access to trapped victims or bodies, using air bags, chains and hoists, jacks, shoring materials, hurst tools and other hydraulic tools.
Drags or carries victims from emergency scenes.
Hoists or lowers victims or fire personnel using ropes, knots and rescue harnesses.
Pries, breaks or cuts structures, vehicles, and/or aircraft to free victims involved in accidents, cave-ins, collapsed buildings or other entrapments -- using door openers, jaws, axes and other manual and mechanical equipment.
Instructs persons on upper floors as to appropriate actions (e.g., staying put, ascending to upper floors, descending to lower floors via fire escapes, etc.).
Digs to free victims trapped in tunnels, pipes, excavations, cave-ins or other entrapments using shovels, picks, spades and other equipment.
Places victims onto stretchers, backboards, stokes, etc.
L. SALVAGE:
Moves and covers furniture, appliances, merchandise and other property; covers holes in structures; stabilizes damaged structural components; and redirects or cleans up water in order to minimize damage -- using plastic and canvas covers, etc.
Tears down or shores up weak and dangerous structural components (e.g, floors, walls, roofs, overhangs and stairs) using hooks, axes, saws and other tools.

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Spreads salvage covers over property.
Protects the integrity of the incident scene, while performing salvage operations, in case of suspected arson.
Moves furniture and other objects to protect from water or other damage.
Removes water from floors using brooms, squeegees, mops, water chutes, catchalls and pumps.
M. OVERHAUL:
Opens up walls and ceilings, cuts or pulls up floors and moves or turns over debris, in order to check for hidden fires which could rekindle or spread -- using hooks, axes, saws and pitchforks.
Opens ceilings, walls, etc., to expose hot spots and other hazardous conditions with axes, pike poles, etc.
Searches for and extinguishes any hidden fires by looking, feeling or smelling for fire and smoke.
Checks and searches open areas, walls, open structures for fire extension.
Removes and neutralizes or disposes of flammable or hazardous materials from buildings.
Removes and extinguishes burned or smoldering debris from buildings.
Determines whether a smoke detector was present and functional.
N. CLEAN-UP/PICK UP:
Picks up, cleans and returns equipment to vehicle and rolls or folds hose, so that the company can go back in service.
Controls and cleans up the Fire Department's medical waste products.
Cleans and returns all tools, equipment, supplies and property in usable condition to appropriate vehicles.
Shuts down and drains lines at pumps.
Determines that all hoses used during response to incident are present and accounted for.
Cleans hoses using hose washers or brooms and brushes.
Backs lines out of structures.
Rolls and folds hoses after use and returns them to appropriate vehicle.
Cleans the apparatus.
O. FIRST AID:
Provides direct medical assistance to persons requiring emergency attention or assists others in providing medical assistance.
Administers CPR if necessary.
Determines priority of emergency medical treatment for victims.
Administers first aid other than CPR.
Operates oxygen and other medical equipment.
Assists EMS personnel in administering medical treatment.
II. STATION DUTIES AND MAINTENANCE
P. EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE:
Checks, cleans, and maintains personal gear and equipment to ensure proper and safe operation.
Checks S.C.B.A. for proper operation and adequate air pressure.
Checks medical equipment.
Checks turnout gear for safety and structural integrity.
Checks the condition of generators, blowers, lights, cords and fans.
Checks and maintains power equipment.
Places turnout gear on or near apparatus.
Checks extension ladders.
Checks hose on apparatus (proper bedding and amount).
Checks and performs ordinary maintenance on other portable equipment (e.g., checks oil levels, greases, etc.).
Cleans, reloads, and tests hoses.
Recommends that officer call for repairs on equipment.
Performs annual hose tests.
Inventories and performs regular maintenance on hand tools (e.g., paints, oils or stencils hand tools).
Changes over equipment and supplies from one apparatus to another.

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Paints other equipment as needed.
Q. APPARATUS MAINTENANCE:
Checks, cleans, and maintains apparatus to ensure proper and safe operation.
Checks ability of engine to pump water.
Checks engine pumper pressure.
Checks the aerial ladder sections, outriggers.
Recommends to officer that apparatus be kept out of service due to mechanical problems.
Performs normal daily apparatus check (e.g., oil, fuel & water levels; proper pressures and lubrications; batteries; lights; sirens; brakes; tires; etc.).
Recommends that officer call for repairs on apparatus.
Performs normal weekly apparatus check (e.g., hydraulic fluid levels).
Equips apparatus with traction devices (e.g., chains) as necessary.
Notifies officer of electrical or mechanical problems on apparatus.
Checks with Equipment Operator coming off duty regarding condition of apparatus.
Performs annual pump test.
Cleans motor and pump on apparatus.
R. FACILITY MAINTENANCE:
Checks, cleans, and maintains house facilities. This includes the performance, or assignment, of routine housekeeping chores.
III. FIRE PREVENTION AND INVESTIGATION
S. INSPECTION OF BUILDINGS & FIRE PROTECTION DEVICES:
Inspects buildings for fire prevention/hazardous materials code violations or hazards on a periodic basis or during the course of their activities. Inspects alarms, hydrants, sprinkler systems, etc.
Recognizes code violations (e.g., blocked exits, improper storage of chemicals, etc.).
Inspects buildings for code compliance.
Conducts inspections of schools.
Inspects buildings upon request of occupants/owners.
Conducts on-site inspections of fire protection devices (e.g., hydrants, alarms, sprinkler systems, etc.).
T. PRE-FIRE PLANNING:
Reviews or prepares plans in order to provide information regarding hydrant locations, exposures, hazardous materials and other areas or situations of high risk.
Conducts site surveys in district.
Tours buildings in order to identify or verify the presence of an unusual fire hazard or situation.
Recognizes a target hazard (e.g., a new high-rise or a building with hazardous materials) that may warrant the development of a pre-fire plan.
Conducts familiarity inspections in district.
Familiarizes self with layout of first and second alarm districts.
U. INVESTIGATIONS:
Examines incident scene, conducts interviews, collects and preserves evidence, and reviews forms and reports to help determine the cause of a fire or other emergency.
Responds to incidents of suspicious or undetermined origin.
Observes fireground conditions to detect possible arson.
IV. PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS
V. PUBLIC RELATIONS:
Engages in activities which have an impact on the department's image in the community. Such activities include providing information to the media, providing assistance and support to civilians seeking help or information, etc.
Deals with distressed individuals at emergency scene.
Meets civilians in the fire station, conducts tours and provides information.
Makes public presentations and conducts demonstrations of apparatus and equipment on behalf of the Fire Department.
W. PUBLIC TRAINING & EDUCATION:

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Oversees, develops, conducts and/or evaluates fire prevention and other educational programs for members of the public.
X. AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTION:
Operates audio-visual equipment and develops and produces audio-visual materials for internal use or for public broadcasting.
V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Y. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
Participates in training drills and classes to enhance job-related skills and abilities. Reads internal memos and bulletins to keep apprised of new developments in departmental operations and procedures.
Maintains knowledge of chemicals and other hazardous materials.
Maintains knowledge of building structures related to fire control.
Attends specialized training sessions (e.g., CPR certification, special schools (e.g., Foam, ICS), etc.).
Attends routine training drills and sessions.
Maintains knowledge of latest firefighting equipment and techniques.
Attends "live-incident" training drills.
Attends external seminars/workshops and college courses to be aware of current developments in the fire service.
Observes training videotapes.
Participates in external agencies and societies (e.g., NFPA).
Acts as a superior officer.
Receives training in superior's work activities.
Reviews internal Massachusetts Fire Department bulletins, memos, etc., to remain aware of departmental updates.
Reads professional journals and publications (e.g., Fire Command) to be aware of current developments in the fire service.
Z. OTHER DUTIES
Carries hose, tools and other equipment to and from emergency scenes.
Operates generator to supply electricity to the emergency scene.
Sets up electrical cords and lights.
Serves on special project committees to which he/she is assigned (e.g., Awards Committee, Hydrant Inspection, etc.).