

FIREHOUSE®

Weekly Drill

DRILL #81: INCIDENT ACTION PLANS: PART 2

Introduction

In Part 1 of this two-part series on Incident Action Plans (IAP), we left off looking at the five different levels of the command sequence.

- 1) Incident Priorities
- 2) Size-up
- 3) Strategies
- 4) Tactics
- 5) Tasks

This week we are going to break each of these levels down and help you identify their importance.

Incident Priorities – Incident Priorities are used to assist in putting together the strategies and tactics that will be used to mitigate the incident. The first priority is life safety. Life safety is always number one and should focus on the firefighters, other emergency response agencies, supporting organizations (utility company, American Red Cross) and civilians. The next priority is that of incident stabilization. This is the confinement of a fire, stabilizing patients, stopping leaks and confining spills at hazardous materials incidents. Lastly, property conservation will be needed in order to minimize damage to properties.

Size-up – Size-up begins with a preplanning process. Another way of looking at size-up is that of gathering information; from the initial dispatch, while responding, and on arrival at the incident scene. Stress can be added should life-savings actions arise at the incident. On arrival, a good habit to get into is that of conducting a 360-degree walk-around the building.

Is there a difference an officer's size-up and a firefighter's size-up? In general, no; however, the company officer will focus on actions that are going to have to be addressed by his/her company. A chief officer has some leeway, and can take a more in-depth approach to size-up, simply because his actions are to implement strategies and tactics and not that of performing tasks. Firefighters on the other hand will perform a very quick size-up and try to gather as much information as possible while advancing between the apparatus and the structure.

Strategies – Keep in mind, a size-up is a process used to identify problems that are going to need solving via the



strategies and tactics used at the incident. There are seven strategies that are quite often used and are referenced in the mnemonic RECEO-VS. There are Rescue, Exposures, Confinement, Extinguishment, Overhaul, Ventilation and Salvage; not necessarily used in this order as ventilation and salvage can be plugged in at any point within the operations.

Tactics – Tactics are attached to the strategies and add that important process of how you will perform the strategy. It may require several tactics to achieve a strategic goal. Identifying that these tactics are being accomplished will require that they be measurable and specific.

Tasks – Tasks are the actions performed by the firefighters, identified in the tactics and strategies. The incident commander (IC) is responsible for having the sufficient resources on hand to perform these tasks. As mentioned, using measurable and specific tactics provides a means for the IC to evaluate the IAP and determine if it is effective or not.

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