

ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICTS OF
ORANGE COUNTY
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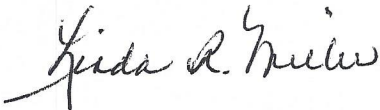
March 8, 2017

The enclosed correspondence is an informational letter regarding a policy for Mutual Aid Staffing and Response.

It includes frequently asked questions to many of your questions and answers.

Please take time to read the letter and forward it to the other Commissioners and the Chiefs of the Department. If there are any questions bring them to the next regular meeting of the Association of Fire Districts on April 25, 2017, at South Blooming Grove Fire House. Or you may contact Mr Turi or DFC Reynolds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda R. Miller".

Linda R. Miller
Secretary

Chiefs,

As all should be aware at this point, a Committee was put together in 2016 to develop a policy for Mutual Aid Staffing and Response. The intention of the policy was to establish a baseline of resources and expectations during mutual aid responses. The need for this was brought forth by concerns raised by multiple Chief Officers regarding insufficient resources being received during incidents requiring mutual aid. As I have stated in the many Battalion meetings during the progression of this project, there is a definite need for establishing a baseline for Chief Officers/Incident Commanders to adequately plan the number of resources needed to manage an incident. The policy also protects the Incident Commanders by ensuring that personnel meet training requirements (as set for by NYS PESH/OSHA) and possess the appropriate medical clearance necessary to perform assigned tasks. These aspects of the policy were derived directly from LODD findings, which I think we all can agree Fire Service Leaders have a duty to consider and learn from.

DFC Reynolds and I have fielded many questions. The following FAQ's of the common ones:

- 1) What if we are just short of the minimum staffing? As stated in the policy, any variation would require the approval or concurrence of the Incident Command requesting the specified resource. This approval may occur through direct communication channels that many departments have in place today with neighboring departments, or through Orange 911 checking with appropriate Incident Commander or individual requesting the resource.
- 2) What if we have an alternate arrangement with a neighboring department for pre-planned day to day automatic responses? This situation would be similar to item #1 above in that the pre-arrangement between Chief Officers would be considered pre-approval by the appropriate Chief Officers.
- 3) Is there a requirement to use this policy for out of county/state requests? This policy has been developed under the auspice of the Orange County Mutual Aid Plan. While we have received interest from neighboring counties to receive a copy of our policy for consideration in their counties, the policy would not extend to mutual aid requests to those respective counties. Departments would continue with their current policy and procedures for those instances.

4) Do we need to adhere to this policy for call in our own jurisdiction? No, this policy is developed to address Mutual Aid requests only. Department may adopt these for their own internal use for responses in their own jurisdiction at their discretion.

I would like to thank the Committee, led by 36-9 Communications Deputy Fire Coordinator Bob Reynolds Sr., for their efforts in developing this procedure. A tremendous amount of discussion and effort went into developing this policy. This is a major accomplishment for enhancing safety of each and every firefighter throughout Orange County. The Committee Members are as follows.

Chair – DFC Bob Reynolds Sr. (36-9)

DFC Michael Mattausch (36-14)

DFC Charlie Niemann (36-16)

Jerry Galu (Fire Advisory Board)

Tom Amodio (Fire Advisory Board)

Chris Sweeney

Darryl Vandermark

Giuseppe Cavaliere

Jason Brasier

Joe Morstatt Jr.

John Hank III

John Salka

Mike Trainor

Neal Russell

Terry Ahlers

Walt Szulwach

I ask that all Chief Officers take time to review and understand the policy. DFC

Reynolds and myself are free at any time to discuss questions that may be raised. Our sole intent here is to address needs of and to protect the Incident Commander. This policy is something that is discussed in many different counties. The fact that we are able to put something in place continues to set Orange County and our departments as a leader in the Fire Service Community.

This policy will be included in the 2017 updates to the Orange County Fire Mutual Aid Plan (scheduled to be available for signing over the summer). Departments may begin using this voluntarily any time prior to the signing of the updated mutual aid plan.