

# Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures

## Sectors

### 206.01

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#### BASIC OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Sectors describes a standard system of dividing fireground command into smaller command units or areas.

Complex situations exceed the capability of one person to effectively manage the entire operation. Sectors reduce the span of control to more manageable sized units.

Sectorization provides a system for Command to divide large scale operations geographically or functionally into effectively sized units. These sectors are responsible for operations involving a manageable number of companies in close proximity to each other.

Sector procedures also allow major functions to be selectively implemented according to the needs of a particular function of a sector officer, removing them from Command's attention.

When effective sectors have been established, Command can concentrate on overall strategy and resource allocation. Each sector officer is responsible for the tactical deployment of the resources at his disposal, and for communicating needs and progress to Command. Command determines strategic objectives and assigns available resources to sectors where they are most needed.

Sectorization reduces the overall amount of radio communication. Most routine communication is conducted within the sector more effectively, "face to face", between the companies and their sector officer. This process eliminates the details of company operations from radio communications.

Safety of personnel represents a major reason for sectorization. Each sector officer must maintain the capability to communicate with forces under his command so that he can control both the position and function of his companies.

Command should begin to assign sectors based on the following factors:

- . When he forecasts a situation which will eventually involve a number of companies beyond his capability to directly control. (In such cases, early recognition and sector assignment are critical.)
- . When he can no longer effectively cope with the number of companies currently involved in the operation.
- . Companies are involved in complex interior operations.
- . Companies are operating from tactical positions, over which Command has little or no control.
- . Situation is such that close company control is required: structural conditions, hazardous materials, heavy fire load, marginal offensive situation, etc.
- . In EMS situations where the number and/or location of patients presents complex management problems.

Sectors will be regulated by the following guidelines:

1. It will be the ongoing responsibility of Command to assign sectors, as required for effective fireground operations; this assignment will relate to both area sectors and sectors for specialized functions.
2. Command must advise each sector officer of the overall strategy and plan, in addition to the objective of the sector.
3. The number of companies assigned to a sector will depend upon conditions within that sector. Five to six companies represent the ideal span of control. Command will maintain an awareness of the number of companies operating within a sector, and the capability of that sector officer to effectively operate.
4. Sectors assigned to specific operating areas will be designated by directions (East Sector, North Sector, etc.). In some cases, landmarks may provide better designations for operating sectors (Roof Sector, Interior Sector). In high-rise fires, sectors will usually be indicated by floor numbers (Sector 15 indicates 15th floor). In other situations such as brush fires, sectors may be assigned by number.
5. Function sectors will be identified by the function (Salvage Sector, Medical Sector, Rescue Sector).
6. Designations that are indefinite, such as "Front" or "Rear" should not be used.
7. Sector officers will use the sector designation in radio communications.
8. Sectors will be commanded by a sector officer as designated by Command.
9. In some cases, a sector officer will be assigned to an area/function initially to evaluate and report conditions, and will advise Command of needed tasks and resources. A sector officer may also be designated during the course of ongoing operations. He will receive his assignment and mission from Command, along with assigned resources. He will then proceed to his sector, evaluate conditions, and assume command.
10. In many cases, the initial sector assignment will be given to the company officer who receives the initial assignment to a basic tactical position (rear, interior, roof, etc.). Command will indicate to such companies that they will be operating as both a Sector Command and as an operating company. Command will, in such cases, assign a Command Officer to relieve the company officer as sector command, as quickly as possible. Regular Command transfer procedures will be followed in transferring sector command.

This early establishment of sectors provides an effective framework on which the operation can be built.

11. Sector officers will be in command and control of all assigned functions within their sector. In accomplishing this, he will be responsible for the following:
  - A. Monitor work progress.
  - B. Redirect activities as necessary.
  - C. Coordinate with related activities.
  - D. Monitor safety and welfare of sector personnel.
  - E. Request additional resources as needed.
  - F. Communicate with Command as necessary.
  - G. Reallocate resources within his sector.
12. Sector officers will keep Command informed of conditions in his sector through frequent progress reports. He will advise Command immediately of significant changes in conditions in his sector, particularly those involving ability or inability to complete mission, hazardous conditions, accidents, collapse, etc. Command allocates overall resource to sectors and depends upon sector officers to advise on the resources required within that sector.

When a company is assigned to an operating sector, the company will be told to what sector and which sector officer the assignment was made. The Sector Officer will be informed which particular companies or units have been assigned to him by Command. It is then the responsibility of the Sector Officer to contact the company by radio, to transmit any instructions on the specific action requested.

13. Sector officers must be sufficiently mobile to be able to supervise the work of their assigned companies. This may include going into interior operating positions to monitor progress, while maintaining radio communications. The Sector Officer must be in full protective clothing and be equipped with SCBA. He should be readily identifiable and maintain a visible position as much as possible, but this does not mean that he must stay away from operating positions. The Sector Officer is a working foreman who must be with his assigned companies. Sector operations should not be conducted in a vehicle as this would make face-to-face communication extremely difficult.
14. The primary function of the company officer working within a sector is to direct the operations of his crew in performing assigned tasks. Company officers will advise their Sector Officer of work progress and will request additional resource from the Sector Officer as necessary.
15. Companies assigned to a sector will direct routine communications to their Sector Officer and should utilize face-to-face communication whenever possible. This does not preclude the use of radio communications within sectors.
16. Routine communications from a company to Command, if the company is assigned to a sector, will be redirected to the Sector Officer. Sector officers will conduct radio communications with Command and with other sector officers. (This procedure will apply only to routine communications - "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" may be initiated by anyone at anytime.

In certain situations, such as a major medical incident, appropriately marked vests may be used to help identify certain sectors, i.e., treatment, transportation, etc.

17. Command can assign sectors to perform the following standard functions or may assign multiple sectors to the same function in complex situations:

- Evacuation
- Extrication
- Firefighting
- Hazardous Materials
- Lobby Control
- Medical
- Public Information
- Rehabilitation
- Resource Pool
- Safety/Structural
- Salvage and Overhaul
- Staging
- Support
- Transportation
- Treatment

In addition to these standard sector functions, Command may set up special sectors to perform any other special functions, as required by the situation.