

TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE
SUBJECT CAPSIZED VESSEL	SECTION 51	PAGE 1 of 2	EFFECTIVE DATE March 28, 2024

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a response plan and guidelines when there is a capsized vessel with victims in the water requiring rescue and/or medical treatment.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all sworn San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

III AUTHORITY

The Fire Chief authorizes this policy.

IV. POLICY

A. The Capsized Vessel Response

1. Any lifeguard, fire officer, fire dispatch supervisor or the Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC) Battalion Chief (BC) may initiate a Capsized Vessel Response.
2. A Capsized Vessel Response is intended for use following a report(s) of multiple victims in the water requiring rescue and/or medical treatment. Information should be obtained from the Lifeguard Communications Center (LCC) or lifeguards on scene to determine if the vessel has landed or left the scene, and the number of victims in the water. A Capsized Vessel Response includes significantly more resources than a Lifeguard Water Rescue.
3. A Capsized Vessel Response includes the following resources:
 - i. Lifeguard Services Division
 - a) 1 Lieutenant (LT)
 - b) 1 Sergeant
 - c) 1 Rescue Vessel
 - d) 1 Land Unit
 - ii. Fire Operations
 - a) 1 BC
 - b) 1 Helicopter
 - c) 1 Engine
 - d) 1 Truck
 - e) 2 Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulances
 - f) Shift Commander Notification
4. Law enforcement should be requested for traffic control, crowd control, vessel accident and potential law enforcement components of capsized vessels.
5. Fire personnel will assist Lifeguard personnel with land-based operations. These may include:
 - i. Incident Command (IC)
 - ii. Treatment, care, and transportation of patients
 - iii. Land-based search and rescue

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iv. Establishment of multi-casualty operations

B. Communications

1. The “Capsized Vessel” dispatch will include fire command and tactical channels for use by all personnel. A lifeguard tactical channel will also be assigned.
2. The lifeguard tactical channel is for Lifeguard personnel effecting and monitoring rescues, and they will remain on this channel for the duration of the incident.
 - i. Lifeguards in the water are unable to change channels during an incident.
 - ii. Fire and ambulance personnel may only monitor the channel for situational awareness.
3. The IC will communicate with the Rescue Group Supervisor on the assigned fire channels.
4. The Rescue Group Supervisor will communicate with Lifeguard personnel on the assigned lifeguard tactical channel.
5. The IC, Operations, and any Rescue Group Supervisor may direct personnel to direct channels in some coastal areas.
6. Expanded incident communications may be established as necessary.