

BULLETIN

NO: 23-083
DATE: May 30, 2023
TO: All Personnel
FROM: David Gerboth, Assistant Fire Chief, Emergency Operations
SUBJECT: Operations Manual Update/Revision #23-11, SI 02 Section 02 Stand Back

Attached to this bulletin please find Operations Manual Update 23-11, Standard Instruction 02 Special Response Guidelines, Section 02 Stand Back Policy. All company officers are directed to ensure that personnel under their command are briefed on these revisions and comply.

The Stand Back Policy has been revised to reflect the recent changes on incidents requiring a Stand Back.

This is a policy revision. The additions or revisions have been highlighted. The removals are in red with a strikethrough.

The Operations Manual will be updated electronically in the "M" drive and in the 'Quick Links' section of VectorSolutions.

Any questions regarding this policy can be directed through your chain of command.

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| TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL | STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02 | | DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE |
| SUBJECT: SPECIAL RESPONSE GUIDELINES STAND BACK POLICY | SECTION 02 | PAGE 1 of 3 | EFFECTIVE DATE May 30, 2023 |

I. **PURPOSE**

To provide the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel and ambulance provider personnel with the information and guidance needed for "stand back" situations.

II. **SCOPE**

This policy shall apply to all SDFD personnel and ambulance provider personnel.

III. **AUTHORITY**

The Fire Chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. **STAND BACK POLICY**

This policy shall be used by Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC), Lifeguard Communications Center (LCC), and responding units regarding incidents involving dangerous and/or suspicious responses that warrant an increased law enforcement presence. It is imperative that a clear line of communication is established among all units responding and ECDC/LCC to avoid jeopardizing the safety of personnel during this type of incident. If responding personnel or ECDC/LCC perceive a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation that warrant an increased law enforcement presence, emergency operations should be delayed until law enforcement can secure the scene.

The guidelines identified below will be applied to all incident types, i.e. medical and non-medical related incidents if, in the opinion of the dispatcher and/or responding personnel, a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation exists that warrant an increased law enforcement presence.

A. **Stand Back Situations**

"Stand Back" shall be designated for responses with a violent patient and/or bystanders, and responses for victims of aggression when the suspect is known or suspected to be at scene or nearby. Law enforcement shall be notified to respond by ECDC/LCC or by lifeguard units on scene. Responding units shall stage a safe distance away from the scene until cleared by law enforcement. Conditions that would indicate this level of caution may include, but not limited to:

1. Incidents with an indication of violence, i.e. gunshot, stabbing or arson, or the suspect/assailant(s) is still at scene or nearby.
2. Domestic disputes.
3. A drug/alcohol overdose with violent or irrational behavior.
4. Threatening suicide with unknown means.
5. Fire/medical alarm with an attached panic or burglary alarm.
6. Premise/caution notes indicating a need to stage/stand back.
7. Any incident where ECDC/LCC believes dangerous circumstances may exist.

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B. Unit Discretion

If responding personnel perceive a dangerous or potentially dangerous situation, they should request law enforcement and may stand back. The reason for the request should be communicated to ECDC/LCC.

1. If discretion is used to make the incident a stand back:
 - a) Fire/EMS personnel - ECDC will notify the jurisdictional and/or closest SDFD battalion chief or the ambulance supervisor for Level 2/Level 3 incidents and provide incident details. The battalion chief or ambulance supervisor will determine if units should cancel and have the incident placed back into the pending queue as a "Stand Back Hold."
 - b) Lifeguard personnel - LCC, and the area lifeguard sergeant should be provided with pertinent incident details
2. Units should use discretion when responding to an incident in close proximity to a stand back incident.
3. If units determine the scene is safe, they have the discretion to cautiously approach.

C. Staging Location

1. Units should stage a safe distance from the incident. A safe distance generally means:
 - a) ~~Approximately two blocks away or~~ Within a one-minute response to the scene
 - b) Out of view from the incident
 - c) Accessible to all responding units and does not impact traffic
2. Units may only stage in quarters if the incident is in close proximity to the station or during times of civil unrest.
3. Lifeguard personnel in seasonal towers or satellite stations, the safest staging area may be in the Pacific Ocean or Mission Bay.
 - a) Lifeguards should advise a supervisor over Lifeguard Dispatch 1 prior to entering the water.
 - b) A Rescue Vessel should also be dispatched to the area to pick up staged personnel and cover water observation, as appropriate.

D. Stand Back Time

If Fire/EMS units are not cleared into the scene within 5 minutes after staging, ECDC will contact law enforcement to get an updated estimated time of arrival (ETA) and provide direction to crews.

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1. **If law enforcement is at scene or still en route, units will continue to stage.**
2. In cases where there is an immediate threat to life or property, units will continue to stage.
3. Units are permitted to add themselves to other incidents if determined to be closer than responding units and will make a significant difference. ~~First responders are permitted to add themselves to Level 1 medical and structure fire incidents if determined to be closer than other responding units and will make a significant difference in public and firefighter safety while staged.~~
4. If law enforcement has no units assigned, ECDC will cancel Fire/EMS units and return the call to the pending queue as a "Stand Back Hold."

~~D. Extended Stand Back Procedures~~

- ~~1. If first responders are not cleared into the scene within 10 minutes after staging, the company officer shall notify the ECDC which will notify the responsible battalion chief.~~
- ~~2. The battalion chief will contact the SDPD communications supervisor or watch commander directly or via ECDC to gather information and attempt to expedite the police response.~~
- ~~3. The SDPD will advise the battalion chief if any SDPD units are available and a possible ETA. If there is a possibility of a SDPD unit being assigned within five minutes, the battalion chief will stand by and reevaluate.~~
- ~~4. If SDPD has no resources to assign for an extended amount of time or after five minutes no SDPD unit is assigned to the response, the battalion chief will contact the ECDC and advise them to cancel the first responders and make them available.~~
- ~~5. The ECDC will contact SDPD Dispatch and advise our units have canceled and are available for reassignment until SDPD is able to assign a unit to clear the scene and has confirmed the need for first responders to be re-dispatched.~~

~~E. Special Situations~~

~~If a unit is staged in a location where the incident scene can be safely observed and evaluated, and the scene appears safe for entry, the unit may cautiously enter the scene. If any doubt exists as to the safety of the scene, the unit must not approach the scene until SDPD declares it safe.~~

~~F. Situation Monitoring~~

~~ECDC will closely monitor the progress of any stand back incident. The ECDC dispatcher will contact police dispatch to determine additional suspect and/or scene information. The ECDC dispatcher will also obtain updated information regarding estimate period of time until it is "clear to enter"~~