



INSTRUCT-O-GRAM

THE HANDS-ON TRAINING GUIDE
FOR THE FIRE INSTRUCTOR

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NFPA 1720 – A Working Guide (Part One)

TASK

The purpose of this month's **Instruct-O-Gram** is to provide volunteer firefighting personnel with an understanding of the use and importance of achieving operational and organizational success using the proper organizational components as articulated in **NFPA 1720 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2001 Edition**. This will be accomplished through the use of lecture and the attached checklist.

INTRODUCTION

The student should have a basic understanding of his or her role within the fire department, and the role he or she is expected to enact during all forms of suppression and station operations. In order to better participate in their role in the fire department, the students should have a basic

understanding of what organizations are and how they fit within the overall scheme of fire department operations.

CLASS OUTLINE

The instructor will review the outline with the class. The instructor may wish to use examples, or call for examples from the students. The instructor may also wish to encourage brainstorming sessions to create an enthusiasm amongst the students.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

A review of the **National Fire Protection Association Standard 1021, Standard for Professional Fire Officers Qualifications** makes the following reference to organizations. "...The organizational structure of the department; departmental operating procedures for administration, emergency operations, and safety; departmental budget process; information management

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and record keeping; the fire prevention and building safety codes and ordinances applicable to the jurisdiction; incident management system; socioeconomic and political factors that impact the fire service; cultural diversity; methods used by supervisors to obtain cooperation within a group of subordinates; the rights of management and members; agreements in force between the organization and members; policies and procedures regarding the operation of the department as they involve supervisors and members.”

This quotation tells us that the members of that technical committee expect that fire officers will understand how a fire department should be organized. **NFPA 1720** serves as a template for creating an effective and efficient volunteer fire department. We would also remind you that the provisions of this standard may also be applied to call and combination fire departments.

This is the first of two **Instruct-O-Grams** that will provide a checklist to help you understand the elements of an effective organization. We urge you to keep both this and the next edition of this document together in your files.

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Fire Suppression Organization

- ◆ Are fire suppression operations organized in such a way as to ensure that the fire department's fire suppression capability includes sufficient personnel, equipment, and other resources to efficiently, effectively, and safely deploy fire suppression resources?

- ◆ Are there written organizational, operational, and deployment procedures as specified in written administrative regulations, standard operating procedures, and departmental orders?
- ◆ Does the fire department participate in a process that develops a community risk management plan with respect to the risks associated with the storage, use, and transportation of hazardous materials?
- ◆ Are the specific roles of the fire department and other responding agencies defined by the community risk management plan for hazardous materials and other special operations?
- ◆ Do the fire department procedures clearly state the succession of command responsibility?
- ◆ Are the personnel who respond to fires and other emergencies organized into company units or response teams and provided appropriate apparatus and equipment?
- ◆ Has the fire department identified minimum staffing requirements to ensure that a sufficient number of members are available to operate safely and effectively?
- ◆ Does the fire department maintain a standard report containing specified information for each response?

- ◆ Do these reports include the location and nature of the fire or emergency and describe the operations performed?
- ◆ Does this report identify the members responding to the incident?
- ◆ Are there standard response assignments and procedures, including mutual aid response and mutual aid agreements predetermined by the location and nature of the reported incident, that regulate the dispatch of companies, response groups, and command officers to fires and other emergency incidents?
- ◆ Have the number and type of units assigned to respond to a reported incident been determined by either risk analysis and/or pre-fire planning?

2. Fire Suppression Operations

- ◆ Do your procedures assign one individual as the Incident Commander?
- ◆ Do your procedures require assumption and identification of command to be communicated to all units responding to or involved at the incident scene?
- ◆ Do your procedures require the Incident Commander to assume responsibility for the overall coordination and direction of all activities for the duration of the incident?
- ◆ Do your procedures require the Incident Commander to ensure that a personnel accountability system is immediately utilized to rapidly account for all personnel at the incident scene?

- ◆ Do your procedures require the company officer/crew leader to be aware of the identity, location, and activity of each member assigned to the company at all times?
- ◆ Do your procedures require each member of the company to be aware of the identity of the company officer/crew leader?
- ◆ Do your procedures require the orders addressed to individual members, particularly verbal orders and orders at incident scenes, to be transmitted through the company officer?

3. Initial Attack

- ◆ Upon assembling the necessary resources at the emergency scene, does your fire department have the capability to safely initiate an initial attack within two minutes 90 percent of the time?
 - ◆ Are the initial attack operations organized to ensure that at least four members are assembled before initiating interior fire suppression operations at a working structural fire?
 - ◆ Do your procedures require that in the hazardous area, two individuals work as a team?
 - ◆ Do your procedures require that outside the hazardous area, two individuals be present for assistance or rescue of the team operating in the hazardous area?
- Note - One of the two individuals assigned outside the hazardous area**

shall be permitted to engage in other activities.

- ◆ Do your procedures require that the assignment of any individuals not be permitted if abandoning their critical task(s) to perform rescue clearly jeopardizes the safety and health of any firefighter operating at the incident?
- ◆ Do your procedures require the initial attack operations be organized to ensure that if, upon arrival at the emergency scene, initial attack personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four personnel when conducted in accordance with NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program?
- ◆ Does your fire department have the capability for sustained operations, including fire suppression; engagement in search and rescue, forcible entry, ventilation, and preservation of property; accountability for personnel; a dedicated rapid intervention crew (RIC); and provision of support activi-

ties for those situations that are beyond the capability of the initial attack?

SUMMARY

In this month's issue of the **Instruct-O-Gram**, we have presented the first half of a checklist that you can use to assess your fire department's level of congruence with the new **NFPA 1720 Standard**. We urge you to continually assess the way in which your fire department is organized. You do not want to run afoul of the recognized standard for organizing and operating a volunteer, call, or combination fire department.

STUDENT REFERENCE

NFPA 1720 - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2001 Edition

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