

## CIVIL DISTURBANCE



This procedure describes the plan of operations for Fire Departments operating in Verdugo Fire Communications Center (VFCC) prior to, and during response to civil disturbances. It describes the actions to be taken by Fire Department personnel during a civil disturbance. The goal of the procedure is to ensure a safe, effective, and standardized response to such conditions. The most current version/revision is available from the Verdugo Communications Center.

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## CIVIL DISTURBANCE

### PURPOSE

This procedure describes the plan of operations for Fire Departments operating in Verdugo Fire Communications Center (VFCC) prior to, and during response to civil disturbances. It describes the actions to be taken by Fire Department personnel during a civil disturbance. The goal of the procedure is to ensure a safe, effective, and standardized response to such conditions.

### DEFINITION

A civil disturbance, also known as civil unrest or civil disorder, is an act of mass civil disobedience in which numerous participants demonstrate hostility toward authority and laws through physical actions, and authorities encounter difficulty in maintaining control or order over the group.

According to the U.S. Code, a person is engaged in civil disorder (civil disturbance) if he/she:

(1)"...teaches or demonstrates to any other person the use, application, or making of any firearm or explosive or incendiary device, or technique capable of causing injury or death to persons, knowing or having reason to know or intending that the same will be unlawfully employed for use in, or in furtherance of, a civil disorder which may in any way or degree obstruct, delay, or adversely affect commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce or the conduct or performance of any federally protected function; or...

(2)...transports or manufactures for transportation in commerce any firearm, or explosive or incendiary device, knowing or having reason to know or intending that the same will be used unlawfully in furtherance of a civil disorder; or...

(3)...commits or attempts to commit any act to obstruct, impede, or interfere with any firefighter or law enforcement officer lawfully engaged in the lawful performance of his/her official duties incident to and during the commission of a civil disorder which in any way or degree obstructs, delays, or adversely affects commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce or the conduct or performance of any federally protected function."

### BACKGROUND

There are three Tactical Alert Phases.

Phase One: A planning phase in anticipation of a civil disturbance based on information received from recognized public safety or government agency. This phase will generally be implemented on an area-wide basis and involves coordination with the respective law enforcement agencies and a continuous threat assessment. Phase One will be implemented based on reliable information that conditions exist such that a civil disturbance may occur within the foreseeable future.

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Phase Two: The initial implementation of the developed Tactical Alert Plan. It may include such actions as apparatus pre-positioning, augmented staffing, identification of command posts, staging areas, removal of tools and equipment from the outside of apparatus, briefing of all personnel, close coordination with law enforcement, multiple operational periods, and jurisdictional Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation, etc. Phase Two may be implemented based on information that the potential for civil disturbance exists within a 24 to 48 hour period, or is within the region.

Phase Three: All routine operations are suspended within the impacted areas. In conjunction with the responsible law enforcement agencies, a Unified Area Command (UAC) will be established as appropriate. Individual Incident Commands (IC's) may be formed as necessary and all fire department responses within the affected areas will be controlled by the UAC. Phase Three will be implemented when a civil disturbance is occurring within VFCC jurisdiction or involving the response of any Verdugo units into an adjacent jurisdiction impacted area.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **ACTIVATION RESPONSIBILITY**

A Phase One Tactical Alert may be activated by the Verdugo Duty Chief based on reliable information received from law enforcement, the news media, or reports from field units.

A Phase Two Tactical Alert will usually be activated by the Area C Coordinator, the Verdugo Duty Chief, or a jurisdictional Chief Officer.

A Phase Three Tactical Alert may be declared by any of the above referenced Officers when any VFCC units or jurisdictions are actively involved in a civil disturbance that is believed to have the potential for escalation.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

##### **Phase One**

At the declaration of a Phase One Tactical Alert, the Verdugo Duty Chief will convene such staff as deemed necessary to evaluate the situation and develop contingency plans for Phases Two and Three in consultation with the impacted jurisdictions' Fire Chiefs and the Area C Coordinator. In addition, jurisdictional Fire Chiefs shall ensure the following:

- Ensure that each unit has its full complement of body armor and tactical helmets for assigned personnel in a readily accessible location.
- Ensure that fire stations are prepared so that they can be easily secured if the company is deployed to a staging area.

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- Company Officers shall hold a safety briefing with all crew-members to discuss this procedure.
- All uniformed support personnel will operate under the provisions of this procedure.

### Phase Two

#### Verdugo Duty Chief:

- Upon notification, the Verdugo Duty Chief will respond immediately to VFCC and begin the preparations listed under the responsibilities for VFCC.

#### Field Battalion Chief:

- Return to the Battalion Headquarters and remain in close contact with the Verdugo Duty Chief and/or VFCC to obtain the most current intelligence. The Verdugo Duty Chief/VFCC will distribute specific information (communications plan, etc.) to implement the plan.
- Contact shall be made with all company officers to make them aware of the situation. Contact an officer from each station/company within the potentially affected areas to set up procedures for them to follow. A briefing should be provided to each company officer as soon as practical, including communication plans and impacted areas.
- A written plan should be provided to the Verdugo Duty Chief within the first 60 minutes, which at a minimum include the boundaries of the initial tactical alert area. (This information is critical to alert responding units of potentially areas that may present a risk to personnel, and will form the initial Unified Area Command perimeter.)
- Closely monitor all incidents for potential disturbances.
- Limit all outside activity to emergency operations only.
- An effective means of communication with impacted local law enforcement agencies and the fire agencies shall be established by the jurisdictional Chief Officer or Fire Chief.
- Ensure communication with appropriate PIO and establish a family communications plan to keep families of responders informed.

#### Company Officer:

- During a Tactical Alert, all personnel shall wear safety equipment such as helmet and wildland nomex jacket or turn out coat on all incidents. This will visually identify the wearer as a firefighter.
- Whenever a unit is driving or operating in or near an impacted area, a helmet and approved eye protection shall be worn in addition to the appropriate safety gear, including body armor.
- Review the tactical alert information to determine if your jurisdiction or fire station first in district is in a tactical alert area. Consult with Law Enforcement (LE) on the need for evacuation of the area. Consider preparation for evacuation of the fire station.

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- Remove all equipment mounted on the exterior of the apparatus. Those items that can be stored inside compartments should be and other items left at the fire station. Ladders, due to the difficulty of removing them may be left in place. Hose and nozzles should be placed well into the hose beds so that they cannot be easily reached from the ground. Compartments should be locked if able to do so, with keys available to assigned personnel.
- At the fire station, close and lock all exterior doors and gates; close all window coverings; perimeter lights should be left on; personnel should use caution near windows or in areas exposed to potential gunfire.

### Verdugo Fire Communications Center:

- Upon activation of a Phase Two Tactical Alert, ensure notification of the Verdugo Duty Chief.
- Notify Executive Management.
- Notify adjacent area dispatch centers.
- Notify all on duty Chief Officers of the Phase Two Tactical Alert.
- Direct all units in the field that are not on active incidents to return to quarters.
- Following existing procedures for major incidents, a separate dispatch console and dispatcher shall be immediately dedicated to the tactical area.
- Preparations shall be made to assign a communications plan for the tactical areas.

### **Phase Three**

When a Phase Three Tactical Alert is declared by the Area C Coordinator, the Verdugo Duty Chief, or a jurisdictional Chief Officer the following actions will be taken:

### Verdugo Duty Chief:

- Confirm the declaration of a Phase Three Tactical Alert. Ensure that the declaration is announced via simulcast over all active radio channels and sent as a priority message to all MCT's. The information should include a confirmation of the staging and Incident Base locations as established by a field Chief Officer or police agency and the established boundaries of the impacted area.
- Identify the boundaries of the tactical alert area and update as needed.
- Order all Verdugo units operating within the perimeter of the impact area to move immediately to specified staging areas.
- Confirm and disseminate the location of any incident facilities.
- Provide a full briefing for the Executive Management.

### Field Chief Officers:

Complete all actions required for a Phase Two Tactical Alert and:

- The Chief Officer of the area where the primary civil disturbance is occurring should respond to the law enforcement command post, meet with representatives from the involved police agencies at the command post, obtain a briefing and participate in an initial unified commanders meeting.

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- Advise the Verdugo Duty Chief of the location of any incident facilities, staging areas, Incident Command Post (ICP) and communication links. In consultation with the Verdugo Duty Chief, determine the impact area boundaries and whether or not a Unified Area Command (UAC) is being established.
- Once the UAC CP is established, the tactical area will be announced for the impacted area and a company accountability report (CAR) will be initiated for any resources in the impacted area.
- Based on the results of the CAR and any pertinent information from VFCC, a list of units and their locations requiring extraction may need to be provided to the UAC for force protection during extraction.
- Supervise the operations of VFCC resources in the designated tactical alert area. Coordinate with the LE UAC to assign resources as force protection for fire resources as appropriate to conditions.
- Chief Officers in uninvolved areas shall confirm receipt the Phase Three Alert, assess the current situation within their jurisdiction and monitor events by radio and the media.
- Consider augmenting staffing with off-duty personnel, staffing 200 series Engines, closing truck companies and staffing patrols and Type VI Engines for improved maneuverability in the tactical area for rapid control of fires.
- Consider staffing for multiple operational periods.
- Request activation of the jurisdictional EOC.
- Request an Information Officer to support incident media relations.

#### Company Officer/Supervisor

Complete all actions required for a Phase Two Tactical Alert and:

- Acknowledge the Phase Three Tactical Alert, respond to the CAR and be prepared to give an assessment of the conditions in the immediate area of the fire station or current location of the unit.
- If directed to relocate to a staging area or Incident Base, secure the station and if directed, take any unmanned relief apparatus stored at the station.
- Insure that all personnel remain in full personal protective equipment (PPE), including body armor and ballistic helmets.

#### LOGISTICAL SUPPORT ACTIONS

The Glendale Fire Department, as the current Operational Area Coordinator may request individual jurisdictions identify and establish suitable Staging and Base locations. These sites will serve as an assembly point for resources gathering in preparation for a response within or outside of their individual jurisdiction.

Upon initiating a Phase Two or Three Tactical Alert, the Duty Chief may request the activation of an appropriate Staging and Base location. Force protection should be considered for identified Staging and Base locations.

Activation of a jurisdictional EOC may also provide logistical support for a UAC.

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### **MUTUAL AID**

As resources are requested from individual jurisdictions, the Operational Area Coordinator may request mutual aid from Region 1. UAC's and IC's should anticipate that out of area mutual aid resources may be assigned to their UAC and arrive in the staging area. Prior to being assigned to an impacted area, UAC's should ensure resources possess the appropriate PPE and that they receive a safety briefing.

### **GENERAL STRATEGY**

Fire Department Officers shall consider the following general tactics when responding to or operating during civil unrest as follows:

- Provide LCES when operating at emergencies to ensure firefighter safety. Be aware of conditions surrounding the incident as well as the hazards of the specific incident.
- Reduce the potential for conflagration.
- Protect government infrastructure.
- Protect exposures with primary emphasis on residential occupancies.

### **ORGANIZATION**

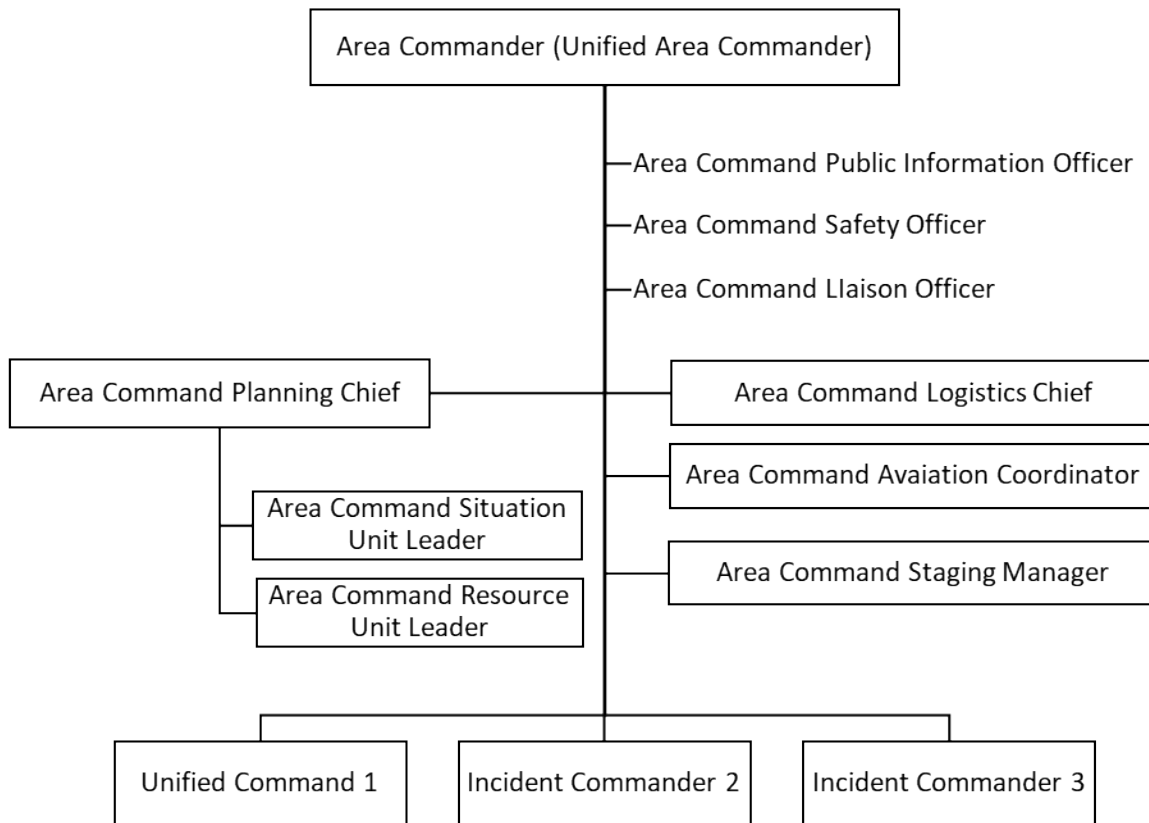
In situations where multiple incidents are occurring in a tactical area, the establishment of an area command makes incident commanders and agency or jurisdictional administrators more effective for the following reasons:

- Inter-incident coordination often required of each incident commander can be accomplished at the area command level, allowing the individual incident commanders within the identified area to focus attention on their assigned incident.
- Area command sets priorities between incidents and allocates critical resources according to priorities established by the agency or jurisdiction administrator.
- Area command helps agency or jurisdiction administrators by ensuring that agency or jurisdiction policies, priorities, constraints, and guidance are being communicated to the respective incident commanders.
- Area command reduces the workload of the agency, jurisdiction and the dispatch center, especially if there are multiple incidents occurring simultaneously.

Incident commanders covered by the area command must be notified that an area command is being established. The dispatch center must be capable of efficiently identifying incidents within any established tactical impacted area, assigning these incidents to the established area command for dispatch, and maintaining continuous communication with the area command. Any incidents transferred to area command that are determined to be outside the identified tactical area are immediately returned to the dispatch center. The area command organization operates under the same basic principles as used in the incident command system.



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### Tactics

Fire control tactics will be modified to increase safety.

- Fire Department resources should not operate alone and shall remain with the assigned force protection.
- Supply hose lines should be avoided if possible or limited to a single section of hose.
- Utilize "hit and run" firefighting - knock down, move on, or retreat to a safe area.
- Use of heavy (master) stream appliances as a primary tactic.
- Limited or no interior attack - unless one hand line can control the fire in a relatively short period of time or for rescue purposes.
- Do not use staffed aerial devices – aerial ladders with remote aerial stream operations should be used.
- Limit ladder and roof work to support actual rescue operations only.
- Truck companies requiring tiller operators are not to be used in or near areas under a tactical alert.
- Salvage operations will be limited during the initial phase of the incident.
- The best option for salvage will be a rapid, aggressive knock down.
- Limited "hydraulic overhaul" may be appropriate prior to moving on or relocating.

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- Resources will be assigned overhaul missions as impacted areas are returned to normal and the threat of intentional injury to firefighters is eliminated.
- Task Force elements should remain together.
- Fire Department units should be kept in a tight group at the fire scene to provide maximum protection for firefighters.
- If possible, block traffic to prevent civilian vehicles from passing in close proximity to (or behind) firefighters. Alert force protection to any security concerns.
- Position units so that pump panels are towards the involved buildings to serve as a shield for engineers and crewmembers.
- Avoid blocked/dead end streets or alleys, ensure an escape route. Position all apparatus for a quick exit.

### Communications

Whenever possible, each major geographical area experiencing civil disturbances shall be assigned a separate communications plan.

- VFCC will assign specific channels to AC and IC's. The AC will, in turn, have to assign or share those with the multiple incidents occurring within each area command.
- Once an area is designated as an impact area, all assignment of resources into that area will go through the established AC.
- A dispatch/record keeping function should be a high priority when establishing an ACP.
- Normal communications and dispatching for the areas unaffected by the tactical alert should continue without interruption.
- Due to the high volume of radio traffic that can be expected, strict radio discipline must be observed by all radio users.

### Personnel Safety

The primary responsibility of all officers and supervisors is to provide for the safety of the firefighters under their control while attempting to save lives and preserve property. During a civil disturbance situation, company officers are granted the flexibility to deviate from the operational guidelines established by this procedure in those situations where it is deemed to be in the best interest of the public or safety of fire department personnel.

- During Phase Two and Three Tactical Alerts, off-duty personnel will not wear their uniform to and from work.
- Maintain station security by covering windows, turning down interior lights, and posting a floor watch while units are in quarters.
- Be aware of surroundings at all times and be prepared for a quick exit.
- Keep personnel behind cover at all times to the extent possible.
- If attacked, keep moving if you are mobile. If committed, take cover and call for help. Abandon the position and withdraw if possible.

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### Safety While Responding

- All personnel will be either in the cab or in the jump seat area at all times.
- While the vehicle is in motion, the helmet and goggles or face shield will be worn to lessen the chance of injury from broken glass should the unit be hit by thrown objects.
- Apparatus windows shall remain closed.
- In areas where a large crowd has formed, consider delaying approach until adequate force protection is available.

### Safety while operating in the impact area

- Maintain company unity, keep the crew together. Utilize the buddy system.
- Do not confront individuals or groups.
- Remain aware of the attitude of the crowd. Be prepared to abandon the operation should the actions of the crowd turn confrontational.
- Wear SCBAs only when necessary for rescue operations, and as required in exterior contaminated atmospheres.

### Emergency Medical Services

While operating under a Phase Three Tactical Alert, the Area Commander may activate an Area Command Patient Transportation Coordinator. Area command should ensure that a centralized medical communication function is established that coordinates patient transportation destination for patients requiring transport.

Area commanders shall ensure:

- Request adequate ground ambulances are available for the impact area.
- Request a private ambulance company representative at the command post if necessary.
- Identify an ambulance staging area and appoint a manager.
- Coordinate with the Incident Operations to form up the necessary task forces
  - E.g. one engine; with one or more ambulances and law enforcement force protection. etc.
- Staff a medical communications coordinator (Medcom) and locate at the area command.
- Designate patient transportation routes.

Emergency Medical Service assistance requests from within the impact area will be routed as follows:

- Requests from incident personnel or any communications center will be directed to the Area Commander.
- The Area Commander or his designee will prioritize the request, assign the appropriate resource configuration and dispatch the units.

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### **LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPONENT**

This procedure shall guide the mutual Fire/Police coordination during incidents involving civil disturbances. Through good initial coordination and a strong unified command, other jurisdictions will be able to safely and quickly blend into the organization formed for the incident.

- The elements of this procedure may be implemented at any time during Phase Two Tactical Alert, and whenever a Phase Three Tactical Alert is declared.
- A unified area command should be established at the location designated by the responsible law enforcement agency for its command post. The VFCC will send a chief officer to the initial command post as the unified area commander. Both agencies can then share all tactical and intelligence information and set coordinated, mutually beneficial objectives.
- The primary law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the area of civil disturbance shall be responsible for providing force protection for fire and EMS units operating within the declared impact area. This will be carried out as outlined in the following Extraction procedure.

### **EXTRACTION MISSIONS**

During the early stages of a civil disturbance there is a possibility that VFCC units will be deployed in the impact area on incidents that began prior to the onset of the disturbance, or they may be housed in stations that are in the affected area. The purpose an extraction mission is to provide the fire department units operating in the impact area with adequate security and force protection out of the impact area to a designated staging area.

VFCC or the area commander will make the request for extraction missions to the law enforcement agency or police incident commander.

#### **Law Enforcement Responsibility**

Once the AC becomes aware of the need for an extraction mission, the AC should request the LE agency conduct the mission to provide force protection for resources in an impacted area. If the fire units are currently on an incident, the law enforcement units will remain with the fire units until they can reach the designated staging area upon completion of the incident. Once at the staging area, the law enforcement units may return to their assigned location.

### **SECURITY/ESCORT MISSIONS**

Force protection missions shall be requested by the UAC when responding into an area affected by civil disturbance. Fire and EMS equipment shall not attempt to enter impacted areas, until that area has been secured, or force protection is provided.

The level of protection provided to fire and EMS units will be set by the area commanders. It is intended that during a security/escort assignment, the law enforcement units will remain with the fire units for the entire time that they are deployed in the impact area.

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### DEFINITIONS

AC: Area Command(er)

IAP: Incident Action Plan

IC/AC: Incident Commander/Area Commander

ICP/ACP: Incident Command Post/Area Command Post

ICS: Incident Command System