



RIST CANYON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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ORGANIZATION BYLAWS

11/1/2007

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## BYLAWS - RIST CANYON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### ARTICLE I. NAME, INCORPORATION AND OBJECTIVES

**Section 1.** The name shall be “Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department” (RCVFD).

**Section 2.** This Organization shall be incorporated in its own name, as an IRS 501(4) c not for profit corporation, under the Laws of the State of Colorado.

**Section 3.** RCVFD shall be subject to the authority of its elected Board of Directors (BOD) and provides these services:

- A. Extinguish and prevent fires of all kinds,
- B. Provide emergency medical services (EMS) and associated rescue,
- C. Provide for public safety,
- D. Provide emergency response to natural disasters .

### ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION

**Section 1.** This Organization serves the area defined in Operations’ “Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)” and those areas defined by Mutual Aid Agreements.

**Section 2.** The fiscal year and officer term runs from January 1 through December 31.

**Section 3.** The rules in the current edition of "*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*," govern except when otherwise addressed in these bylaws.

**Section 4.** The Organization consists of two member categories:

- A. General Members, and
- B. Active Members

### ARTICLE III. GENERAL MEMBERS

**Section 1. General Members** include any person eighteen years or older who:

- A. Own or reside in property in the RCVFD response area, and
- B. Are represented by an annual household minimum monetary contribution of \$25.00.

**Section 2. Rights Conferred by Membership.**

- A. General membership confers the right to vote at Annual or Special membership meetings.
- B. A General Member is eligible for any BOD office but may hold only one office at a time.

**Section 3. Terms.** General Members are considered in good standing only in the fiscal year a monetary contribution is made.

**Section 4. Responsibilities and Duties.**

- A. Make the minimum monetary annual contribution,
- B. Attend Annual and Special Meetings,
- C. Vote at Annual and Special Meetings, and
- D. Actively support RCVFD by:
  - i. volunteering and
  - ii. recruiting General and Active Members

**Section 5. Dismissal.** The BOD has the right to request a General Member’s resignation for just cause. Just cause is defined as actions outside or inconsistent with Bylaws or Standard Operating Guidelines,

or not in best interest of the RCFVD as determined by a vote of the BOD. The General Member receiving a request for resignation may:

- A. Accept the BOD request by submitting a written resignation to the BOD, or
- B. Request referral of the matter to the General Membership for a vote.
- C. A General Member shall be dismissed by a simple majority vote at an Annual or Special meeting called for the purpose for dismissal.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** Section not applicable.

**Section 7. Manner of Balloting.**

- A. Each General Member is entitled to one vote.
- B. Abstention is neither a yes nor a no vote, and is not counted in vote tabulation for decision.
- C. If more than two candidates are nominated for the same BOD position, the candidate receiving the smallest vote count shall be dropped in successive ballots until one candidate receives a simple majority of votes cast.
- D. Proxy voting is not allowed at Annual or Special meetings.

**Section 8. Meetings.**

- A. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting to elect BOD officers and conduct other RCFVD business shall be held on a date designated by the BOD. At a minimum, written notice of the Annual Meeting shall be prepared and mailed to the last known Post Office address for every General Member. Notice shall be mailed no less than fifteen (15) days before the meeting and shall state the time, location, and the business. Additional notification methods may be employed. When a quorum is not present, the Annual Meeting shall be reconvened within 60 days. If the reconvened annual meeting falls after the beginning of the fiscal year, the previous year's membership eligibility applies to General Members. The meeting order shall be:
  - i. Call to Order
  - ii. Determine Quorum
  - iii. Review and Approve Agenda
  - iv. Read Minutes of Last Meeting
  - v. President's Awards
  - vi. Officer's Reports
  - vii. Audit Committee Report
  - viii. Old Business
  - ix. New Business
  - x. Presentation of Nominees and Receive Nominations from the Floor. BOD nominations may be made from the floor at the Annual meeting by any General Member provided the person nominated does not decline. A candidate not in attendance shall provide written statement to the President at the Annual Meeting signifying willingness to be a candidate.
  - xi. Elections
  - xii. Adjournment
- B. Special Meetings. A Special Meeting shall be convened by the President within 60-days of receipt of a written request signed by a minimum of five (5) General Members. At least thirty (30) days written notice of the meeting shall be provided to General Members and shall include business to be conducted. No other business shall be conducted at the Special Meeting. When a quorum is not present the Special Meeting shall be cancelled and the topic presented shall die for lack of General Member interest.

**Section 9. Quorum.** Twenty (20) General Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any Annual or Special meeting. In the event less than twenty (20) general members exist, fifty percent (50%) of the existing membership shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)**

**Section 1.** All BOD Officers shall be elected by and from the General Membership. The BOD members consist of President, Immediate Past-President, First Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Area Representatives and Newsletter Editor. Area Representatives are General Members whose residence or property is located in one of the areas defined in Attachment II.

**Section 2. Rights Conferred by Membership.** Right to vote at BOD meetings.

**Section 3. Terms.** Offices are one-year terms except when a new President is elected. In that case the Immediate Past-President shall serve on the BOD as an ex-officio member for one (1) additional year.

**Section 4. Responsibilities and Duties.**

A. The BOD is the administrative, governing and fund-raising body. It formulates policies, manages organization affairs, implements plans and performs designated duties. The duties for every BOD Officer are:

- i. Attend BOD, Annual and Special Member Meetings
- ii. Communicate actions/activities to members
- iii. Review and approve annual budget, and necessary interim increases
- iv. Review financial status and compare expenditures to approved budget
- v. Review and vote on annual and strategic plans when appropriate
- vi. Review and vote on the capital equipment plan when submitted by Operations
- vii. Maintain Job Descriptions for their position
- viii. Timely fulfill the office's duties and responsibilities
- ix. Maintain insurance for RCVFD
- x. Perform and note in the BOD Minutes an annual inspection of the Department's primary facilities and equipment prior to the Annual Membership Meeting
- xi. Review and vote on other BOD matters
- xii. Provide Insurance. The BOD shall require the Treasurer or any other office of the Association charged with the responsibility for the custody of any of its funds or property to be bonded, in such sum and with such surety as the BOD shall determine. The BOD at its discretion may also require other officers, agents or employees of the RCVFD to be bonded, in such amount and with such surety as it shall determine. The bonds or insurance, unless cash security is given, shall be furnished by a responsible bonding or insurance company and shall be approved by the BOD. The cost shall be paid by the RCVFD. The BOD shall also provide for the adequate insurance of the property of the RCVFD, or property which may be in the possession of the RCVFD or stored by it, and not otherwise adequately insured. The BOD shall provide for adequate insurance while serving in the line of duty covering liability for accidents, errors or omissions for active members and the BOD
- xiii. Supply chili for the annual meeting/chili supper

B. **Specific BOD Duties By Position**

- i. President:
  - a) Serve as chief administrative officer, prepare meeting agendas, appoint or replace BOD vacancies.
  - b) Call meetings.
  - c) Preside at meetings.
  - d) Vote to break ties.
  - e) Appoint committees.
  - f) Serve as the Immediate Past-President for one fiscal year after completing the President's term.
- a) First Vice-President: Perform President duties when President is unavailable or incapacitated.

- b) Oversee planning and implementing social activities with prior approval of the BOD.
  - c) Oversee planning and implementing the annual membership/fundraising drive with prior approval of the BOD.
- ii. Secretary:
- a) Determine if a quorum is present at all General, Special and BOD meetings before business is conducted.
  - b) Keep accurate records and attendance of all General, Special and BOD meetings.
  - c) Maintain Board of Director's Standard Operating Guidelines for their position.
- iii. Treasurer:
- a) Maintain RCVFD's fiscal books and records.
  - b) Change authorized check signatures, as required by BOD changes.
  - c) Collect and receive all moneys due.
  - d) Deposit all RCVFD moneys in a bank designated by the BOD, in the name of RCFVD.
  - e) Keep an accurate and timely accounting of all funds received and expended.
  - f) Make timely disbursements only with prior authorization of the BOD, or by simple majority vote of the General Membership.
  - g) Assure disbursements of more than \$5,000 contain two of the required signatures of Article VII.
  - h) Present complete financial reports to the BOD.
  - i) Present summary financial reports to the General Members.
  - j) File proper, timely reports with State, Local and Federal Governments.
  - k) Maintain an accurate roster of individuals or groups contributing; such records must be maintained on the fiscal basis.
  - l) Cooperate with President's appointed Audit committee before the Annual Meeting.
  - m) Draft proposed annual budget with the BOD and Operations.
  - n) Monitor expenditures against the budget and report over-expenditures to the BOD and Operations.
  - o) Maintain open books subject to inspection of any member and the Auditing Committee.
  - p) Serve as the Immediate Past-President for one fiscal year after completing the President's term.
- iv. Area Representatives:
- a) Represent their respective areas and community, and present interests to the BOD.
  - b) Assist the First Vice-President in the areas of social, annual membership and fundraising activities.
  - c) Conduct outreach to new residents and property owners to educate about RCFVD.
  - d) Promote membership and participation in RCFVD.
  - e) Provide information about new residents and outreach efforts to the BOD.
- v. Newsletter Editor:
- a) Prepare and distribute the RCVFD quarterly newsletter as directed by the BOD, including RCFVD editorial policy in each issue.
  - b) Use prudent editorial skills in drafting newsletter content.
  - c) Obtain newsletter content approval by a newsletter committee before publication or distribution.

**Section 5. Dismissal.**

- A. Any BOD Member missing three (3) consecutive BOD meetings without arranging an absence prior to the meeting with the President shall be dismissed immediately, without a vote of the BOD or the General Membership.

- B. The BOD has the right to request a BOD Member's resignation for just cause with a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the entire BOD. Just cause is defined as actions outside or inconsistent with Bylaws or Standard Operating Guidelines, unsafe, illegal, or not in best interest of the RCFVD as determined by a vote of the BOD. The BOD Member receiving a request for resignation may:
- i. Accept the BOD request by submitting a written resignation to the BOD, or
  - ii. Request referral to the General Membership for a vote, and then the BOD Member shall be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Membership present and voting at the special meeting called for that purpose.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** Any BOD officer position vacated shall be filled at the next Annual Meeting. In the interim, the BOD vacancy shall be filled by a person appointed by the President for the completion of the term.

**Section 7. Manner of Balloting.**

- A. All BOD decisions shall be made by simple majority of the BOD present and casting votes except as otherwise noted in these bylaws.
- B. Each BOD position is entitled to one vote.
- C. Abstention is neither a yes nor a no vote, and is not counted in vote tabulation for decision.
- D. The President votes only to break a tie.
- E. Proxy voting is not allowed.

**Section 8. Meetings.**

- A. BOD meetings shall be held monthly on a date set at the previous meeting unless cancelled.
- B. All BOD meetings are open.
- C. Executive sessions of the BOD are meetings closed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the BOD present when deemed necessary. Minutes of the Executive Session shall be maintained, discussions shall be confidential, the minutes shall be sealed and can only be opened at a subsequent Executive Session.
- D. BOD decisions/actions by email, facsimile or telephone:
  - i. Quorum is determined in accordance with Article IV, Section 9 (Quorum).
  - ii. Decisions are made according to Article IV, Section 7 (Manner of Balloting).
  - iii. The BOD decision/action shall be filed in writing, including the individual voting records which shall be noted in the next BOD meeting minutes.

**Section 9. Quorum.** Fifty-percent (50%) of the BOD Membership shall constitute a quorum for BOD meetings.

<b>ARTICLE V. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP - OPERATIONS</b>
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**Section 1. Active Members** shall be any person eighteen years or older, certified as a fire fighter, medical responder, or both, in accordance with this Article. All Active Members automatically qualify as General Members.

- A. Election to Active Membership. Any person desiring to become an Active Member shall apply, in writing, to the Fire Chief or designee. RCFVD is an equal opportunity organization and a decision to accept or deny an individual for Active Membership shall be based solely on operational factors.
- B. Applicants will become provisional Active Members and then full Active Members set forth in the Operations' "Standard Operating Guidelines" and when approved by the Fire Chief.
- C. Any Active Member may object to an application for Active Membership by another. A written objection must be submitted to the Fire Chief within thirty (30) days of an individual's initial membership application. All objections received by the Fire Chief shall remain confidential and will be considered by the Fire Chief and at least two (2) additional Operations Officers.

**Section 2. Rights Conferred by Membership.**

- A. Active membership confers the right to vote for Operations Officers.
- B. Any Active Member shall be eligible for any BOD or Operations office.

### **Section 3. Terms.**

- A. Active Members. Terms are indefinite while the active member meets physical, training and other requirements established in RCVFD Operations' "Standard Operating Guidelines."
- B. Operations Officers. All offices are a one-year (1) term.

### **Section 4. Responsibilities and Duties.** Duties of the Active Members are:

- A. Hold themselves and equipment ready to respond to an emergency according to the Operations' Standard Operating Guidelines.
- B. Maintain skills at certification levels specified in the Operations' Standard Operating Guidelines
- C. Elect Operations Officers.
- D. Abide by all the requirements specified in the Bylaws and Operations' Standard Operating Guidelines.

### **Section 5. Operation's Officers:**

- A. Elected Operations Officers are Fire Chief (Second Vice-President) Assistant Fire Chief, Captain, First and Second Lieutenants and Medical Officer. Operations Officers are elected by and from the Active Membership.
- B. The Fire Chief serves as Second Vice-President of the BOD member, with full BOD privileges including voting.
- C. Duties of the Fire Chief:
  - i. Have charge of all fire equipment owned by or assigned to the RCVFD
  - ii. Assure RCVFD is ready to provide emergency services consistent with the Bylaws, and BOD and Operations' Standard Operating Guidelines.
  - iii. Maintain regular contact, for operational considerations, with all local emergency service organizations.
  - iv. Represent RCVFD operations with building departments and other local agencies with regard to building issues.
  - v. Report to General membership whenever deemed necessary, or requested by the BOD.
  - vi. Report to the BOD and Members at Annual Meetings; such reports may include the equipment status, fires, medical responses, readiness, capital needs and plans, and other pertinent information.
  - vii. Perform or direct planning functions for training of members and certification of Active Members.
  - viii. Make decisions pertaining to the assignment of members to operational positions.
  - ix. Assure Active Member attendance records are kept at training sessions, fires, medical emergencies or other events to which RCVFD responds.
  - x. Suspend any Active Member from any operation if it is determined by the Fire Chief that the member is not fit for duty.
  - xi. Expend up to \$500 per month (but limited to \$2,000 per year) without prior approval for unanticipated expenditures to continue normal operations. A report of the expenditure will be provided to the BOD at the next meeting.
  - xii. Emergency expenditures that occur during a life or property threatening emergency can be authorized by the Fire Chief or the Incident Commander (as defined in the Standard Operating Guidelines) of the emergency. Said expenditures must be, in the best estimation of the authorizing officer, related to immediate life or property threat and, if at all possible, be reviewed by available Operations Officers prior to expenditure. A report of the expenditure will be provided to the BOD after the emergency has abated.
  - xiii. Delegate, at his/her discretion, any of these responsibilities to other Operations Officers or Active Members. During emergency operations, the Incident Commander will be determined using the protocol defined in Operations' Policies and Procedures.
- D. Duties of Assistant Fire Chief, Captain, First and Second Lieutenants and Medical Officer
  - i. The Assistant Fire Chief shall perform the Fire Chief's duties when the Fire Chief is unavailable or incapable of performing them.

- ii. First and Second Lieutenants - Perform duties as assigned by the Fire Chief.
- iii. The Medical Officer, or designee, shall file medical reports, as required by RCVFD's physician advisor, review certification of medical responders and organize monthly medical training. The medical officer shall also see that medical training attendance is recorded.

**Section 5. Dismissal.** Operations Officers have the power to expel any Active Member for just cause. Just cause is defined as actions determined by a simple majority of Operations Officers as The Operations Officers has the right to request an Active Member's resignation for just cause with a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Operations Officers.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** An Operations Officer vacancy shall be filled by the Fire Chief.

**Section 7. Manner of Balloting.**

- A. Operations Officers shall be elected by simple majority of Active Members present, providing a quorum is met.
- B. Each Active Member is entitled to one vote.
- C. Abstention is considered neither a yes or no vote, and is not counted in vote tabulation for decision
- D. If more than two candidates are nominated for the same position, the candidate receiving the smallest vote count shall be dropped in successive ballots until one candidate receives a simple majority of votes cast.
- E. Proxy voting is not allowed.

**Section 8. Meetings.**

- A. Operations meetings are held on a date set at the previous meeting unless cancelled.
- B. All Operations meetings are open to the public except Executive Sessions.
- C. Executive sessions are meetings closed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Operations members present when deemed necessary.
- D. The Operations Officers have the right to request another Operations Member's resignation for just cause with a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the entire Operations Officer Roster. Just cause is defined as actions outside or inconsistent with Bylaws or Standard Operating Guidelines, unsafe, illegal, or not in best interest of the RCVFD as determined by a vote of the Operations Officers. The Operations Officer receiving a request for resignation may:
  - i. Accept the request by submitting a written resignation to the Operations Officers, or
  - ii. Request referral to the Active Membership for a vote, and then the Operations Officer shall be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Active Membership present and voting at the special meeting called for that purpose.

**Section 9. Quorum.**

- A. A quorum for Operations Officers Meetings is four (4).
- B. A quorum for Operations Officers elections is 10 active members or 50% of the current roster – whichever is greater.
- C. There is no quorum requirement for Operations Meetings.

<b>ARTICLE VI. USE OF FUNDS</b>
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**Section 1. Expenditures.** No monies belonging to the Department shall be used for any purposes except those directly related to RCVFD operations. Monies shall be expended when authorized by at least one of the following:

- A. The BOD
- B. General Membership
- C. Fire Chief or Incident Commander during operations and emergencies.

**Section 2. Checks.**

- A. All checks drawn against RCVFD funds shall be signed by any of the following: Treasurer, President, First Vice-President or Fire Chief.
- B. Checks written for more than \$5,000 shall be signed by two of the authorized persons in Article VI. Section 2 (A). Written notification of such signature requirement shall be provided to the department's bank(s), and pre-printed on the blank check stock.

**ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

These by-laws, attachments excepted, shall not be repealed or amended unless written notice is given to the General Membership one month prior to action. Bylaws revisions shall be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Members present.

**ARTICLE VIII. DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1. Method.** Should it become necessary for the RCVFD to dissolve its organization, it shall be done:

- A. Only with a written affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) of all General Members,
- B. And, pursuant to Colorado State and federal laws and regulations relating to tax exempt, non-profit corporations.

**Section 2. Assets Distribution.**

- A. Assets of the RCVFD shall be distributed in a manner voted on by the General Membership except that none of the property, proceeds, or assets shall be free to any members or purchased by any members for significantly below fair market value. Preferably RCVFD property and assets would be disbursed in a manner that supports emergency services that serve the RCVFD area.

- Section 1. Nominating Committee.** The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of at least two (2) members to prepare, in advance of the annual election of officers, a slate of nominees for each Elective Office.
- Section 2. Auditor.** The President shall appoint an Auditor to prepare in advance of and for presentation at the annual meeting a written review of the Financial Records and related items.
- Section 3. Newsletter Committee.** The President shall appoint a Newsletter committee to support the Newsletter Editor. The Newsletter Editor is a member of the Committee.
- Section 4. Special Committees.** The President shall appoint special committees as necessary.
- Section 5. Data Base Manager.** The President shall appoint a Data Base Manager to maintain the RCVFD mailing records.
- Section 6. Festival Chair.** The President shall appoint a Festival Chair to coordinate operational activities for the Mountain Festival.
- Section 7. Fine Art Auction Chair.** The President shall appoint a Fine Art Auction chair to coordinate art activities and publicity for the Mountain Festival.

**Fire Response Area**

- A. Township Seven (7), Range Seventy (70) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Four (4), Five (5) and Six (6).
- B. Township Eight (8), Range Seventy (70) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Seventeen (17), Eighteen (18), Nineteen (19), Twenty (20), Twenty-eight (28), Twenty-nine (29), Thirty (30), Thirty-one (31), Thirty-two (32) and thirty-three (33).
- C. Township Seven (7), Range Seventy-one (71) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections one (1), Two (2), Three (3), Four (4), Five (5), Six (6), Eight (8), Nine (9), Ten (10), Eleven (11), Twelve (12), Thirteen (13), Fourteen (14), Fifteen (15), Twenty-three (23), Twenty-four (24).
- D. Township Eight (8), Range Seventy-one (71) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Thirteen (13), Fourteen (14), Fifteen (15), Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Twenty (20), Twenty-one (21), Twenty-two (22), Twenty-three (23), Twenty-four (24), Twenty-five (25), Twenty-six (26), Twenty-seven (27), Twenty-eight (28), Twenty-nine (29), Thirty (30), Thirty-one (31), Thirty-two (32), Thirty-three (33), Thirty-four (34), Thirty-five (35), and Thirty-six (36).

**Medical Response Area**

Includes all area described in Section 1 above plus:

- A. Township Seven (7), Range Seventy-one (71) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Eighteen (18), Nineteen (19), Twenty (20), Twenty-one (21), Twenty-two (22).
- B. Township Seven (7), Range Seventy-two (72) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Thirteen through Sixteen (13-16), Twenty-one through Twenty-eight (21-28) and Thirty-three through Thirty-six (33-36).
- C. Township Eight (8), Range Seventy-one (71) West of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.: Sections Eighteen (18) and Nineteen (19).

**Attachment III OFFICES OF THE AREA REPRESENTATIVES**

**Section 1. Area Representatives**, as defined by the BOD, shall include one Representative from:

1. Stove Prairie Road or its Tributaries other than the Buckhorn
2. Davis Ranch Road or its Tributaries
3. Stratton Park Road or its Tributaries
4. Rist Canyon Road or its Tributaries other than Davis Ranch, Stratton Park and Whale Rock
5. Whale Rock Road or its Tributaries
6. Buckhorn Road or its Tributaries
7. Representative(s) at Large

**Section 2. Additions.** Area Representatives may be added at the discretion of the BOD, to be elected at the next General Election, or a Special Election for that purpose.

**Section 3. Deletions.** Area Representatives may be eliminated by the board when no longer appropriate, providing the current office holder, if any, agrees.

<b>Attachment IV REVISION HISTORY</b>
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**Revision 4: Note:** Maintenance of revision history began with revision 4.

- Change of the fiscal year. Modified Article II, Section 3, Article III Section 5.
- Change to allow BOD determination of Area Representative Offices.
- Modified Article III Section 1 A. Added Attachment II.
- Definition of Newsletter Committee.
- Addition of Article XI, Section 1 C.

**Revision 5.**

- Amended to delete 2 years in an office and 3 years as member of board limitation that was in Article III, Section 4. Board members can now serve consecutive terms without specific term limits.
- Added Medical Response Area to Attachment II.
- Updated Fire Response Area in Attachment II.

**Revision 6. (November 1999)**

- Significant revisions throughout.

**Revision 7. (November 2007)**

- Significant revisions throughout. Complete re-order based on membership categories.

***Attachment V* OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS (DETAILED) AND  
OPERATING GUIDELINES**

# RCVFD Standard Operating Guidelines

Revision 10/2007 – change name to SOG

## 1. Introduction

Due to the unpredictable nature of fire or medical responses, these policies and procedures should be treated as guidelines, not rules and regulations. Decisions with respect to emergency response must be made in context of the current situation. In no case are these guidelines intended to be legally binding statements of policy. These policies are intended to:

- Provide guidance and a framework for decisions.
- Help familiarize the new RCVFD responder with RCVFD policies.
- Provide documentation of policies for intra and inter department communication.

They are **not**:

- A replacement for adequate training.
- An excuse for uninformed decisions.
- A rulebook for RCVFD response. It is not assumed that the authors know more about a given emergency response than a well-trained responder on scene.
- Cast in stone. They can, and should be, modified as RCVFD learns and changes.

### 1.1. Revisions and Limitations

This document is a work in progress and should be viewed as such. It is not comprehensive, and will change. See the Revisions Section.

### 1.2. REVIEW Policy

These Procedures and Policies are to be reviewed annually by all active responders.

## 2. RCVFD Capabilities and Commitments

The following is a general statement of RCVFD's capabilities and commitments.

*RCVFD is an all volunteer, rural fire department which provides fire suppression services (wildland – primarily initial attack, structural, vehicle and other fire), Basic Life Support (BLS) Emergency Medical Services, Light rescue and extrication and other 'general' emergency response in our defined response area as defined in the RCVFD by-laws. RCVFD's primary goal in guiding concern is safety of RCVFD responders in all cases – hence any response or tactic will be mitigated by that primary goal.*

### 2.1. Commitments

RCVFD, as an organization, is committed to providing, to the best of our ability and within constraints of providing for RCVFD responder safety, emergency response to; life and property threatening fires, life or property threatening emergencies such as natural disasters, medical emergencies, accidents and rescue situations. RCVFD operates within our response boundaries as defined in the RCVFD by-laws. RCVFD will also respond outside our response boundaries, to life and property threatening emergencies in neighboring areas when possible and requested by the responsible agency.

RCVFD's primary commitment is to its active responders and all responses will be governed by the safety of those active responders first.

It should be noted that RCVFD is fully staffed by volunteers and can make no guarantees of response time or capability beyond a commitment to respond to the best of our ability. In practice, RCVFD has never failed to respond to an emergency when such response was physically possible and when RCVFD was notified of the emergency. It is the goal and intention to maintain and improve response capability as the need arises.

Emergency response by RCVFD operates under the following priorities.

- 1) Safety and care of volunteer responding personnel during all aspects of the response, including: training, travel to the scene, actions at the scene and travel from the scene
- 2) Safety of the public at the scene or in route..
- 3) Care for patients or victims at the scene or in route.
- 4) Protection and salvage of personal property.
- 5) Protection of uninvolved structures and exposures from existing fires.
- 6) Size up, initial attack, containment and extinguishment of fires.

In all cases, RCVFD will place safety and protection of people (RCVFD responders and the public) before protection of any property or extinguishments of any fire. RCVFD operates on a completely open basis and input and participation of residents is welcome and encouraged!

### 2.2. Capabilities – Wildland Fire

RCVFD operates primarily as an *initial attack* wildland fire department. Our goal is to locate and size-up a fire, identify and initiate appropriate evacuations, notify appropriate emergency agencies including requesting appropriate additional emergency response from RCVFD and other agencies, protect the public, protect property and, finally, apply appropriate resources from RCVFD and other agencies to contain and extinguish the fire. The initial attack limitation indicates that RCVFD is often the first department on scene of a fire in our area and that, for larger fires or longer term fires, we expect further resources (not RCVFD) will be brought in to assist. Initial attack also means that the goal will often be to manage the fire for firefighter and public safety, not extinguish or contain the fire. Often, after initial attack or at an appropriate time, RCVFD will turn operations over to qualified paid fire personnel. Training levels for wildfire are consistent with and exceed typical "Red Card" requirements, though RCVFD responders may choose not to actually apply for a Red Card. RCVFD will issue to trained responders an "RCVFD Responder Certification." Training and physical fitness requirements for active responder status are noted in the "Active Responder Requirements" section of the RCVFD Procedures and Policies. RCVFD can provide structure protection from wildland fires when appropriate, safe, and when the structure is considered defensible.

RCVFD does not operate strike teams for extended out-of-area responses but will respond to local mutual aid requests.

### **2.3. Capabilities – Structure Fire**

RCVFD responds to and will aggressively attempt to extinguish structure fires within safety limits. However, it must be clear that RCVFD's structural response capabilities are limited by travel time, access, limited available water, interior fire attack equipment and experience. Interior attack on structure fires is not considered a normal RCVFD operational tactic. Interior attack may be initiated when fire spread is limited, the fire is in a contained location in the structure or other factors exist making Interior Attack an appropriate tactic given RCVFD's level of training and equipment. Determination regarding interior attack will be determined by the RCVFD Incident Commander on scene. See also Structure Fire Response in the RCVFD Procedures and Policies. RCVFD training for structural response is guided by Fire Fighter I requirements with limitations appropriate for our response area and capability. Safety of RCVFD personnel and public is always the 1<sup>st</sup> priority.

### **2.4. Capabilities – EMS and Rescue**

RCVFD provides Basic Life Support (BLS) emergency medical response and low-angle rescue. RCVFD will respond to medical emergencies and accidents and is able to perform light rescue, patient extrication and low angle rescue. For high angle rescue situations, RCVFD will request mutual aid from rescue organizations. RCVFD is equipped to transfer patients from a scene to the nearest available advanced life support facility such as an ALS ambulance or helicopter. RCVFD does not operate and ambulance service and, in general, cannot "transport" patients to the hospital with the exception of the case where the nearest ALS facility is the hospital (for instance, if no ambulance is available or able to travel to the patient). RCVFD cannot, by law, transport patients to the hospital when an ambulance is available.

### **2.5. Capabilities – Other Emergencies**

RCVFD will respond to other life or property threatening emergencies as deemed appropriate and possible by the RCVFD Incident Commander or Operations Officers. RCVFD will provide support, as appropriate, in situations that could become dangerous – for instance; RCVFD will often provide traffic control at a non-injury accident or during recovery from a car. The focus of this assistance is always public safety.

### **2.6. Capabilities – Non-Emergency Services or Operations**

Because volunteers operate RCVFD, RCVFD does not, in general, provide non-emergency services. For instance, RCVFD will not burn a resident's slash pile or old building. RCVFD does not, typically, "rescue cats from the tree," however, as neighbors we are willing to help neighbors. In general RCVFD cannot use emergency equipment for personal use, such as pulling a stuck vehicle out. RCVFD will provide literature, information, referral and limited consulting regarding fire and medical situations. Exceptions to these guidelines can be made by the operations officers when no other option exists for the resident or when the operation provides a viable training exercise for our volunteers.

## **3. RCVFD Priorities.**

The following priorities should drive all decisions:

- 1) Safety and care of volunteer responding personnel during all aspects of the response, including: training, travel to the scene, actions at the scene and travel from the scene
- 2) Safety of the public at the scene or in route..
- 3) Care for patients or victims at the scene or in route.
- 4) Protection and salvage of personal property.
- 5) Protection of uninvolved structures and exposures from existing fires.
- 6) Size up, initial attack, containment and extinguishment of fires.

## **4. RCVFD Incident Commander Determination and Designation.**

The following sections describe the RCVFD Command designation process and the responsibilities of the RCVFD Incident Commander in three major response categories, medical, wildfire and structural/vehicle fire.

#### 4.1. The RCVFD Incident Commander – Rist Canyon Command - definition.

This is the title or office given to the responder coordinating the response to, from and at the scene. The actual responder a fulfilling this position may (probably will) change as the response proceeds.

**NOTE:** Because of the chaotic nature of a response scene, it is **IMPERATIVE** that each responder, before or upon arrival, identify and contact the RCVFD IC. Do not assume you know who is in control. Find Out.

#### 4.2. Protocol for determination of RCVFD incident commander

The following protocol will be used to determine who is acting as RCVFD IC.

**Note:** generally command will transfer to higher ranking or more experienced responders as the response progresses, however this is not required.

##### 4.2.1. Prior to Arrival on scene.

During a response but *prior to arrival*, the commanding responder will be designated as **Rist Canyon Command**. Rather than call Rist Canyon 1, 2, etc. responders and dispatchers wishing to contact the coordinating responder will call for **Rist Canyon Command**.

The incident commander must always respond to "Rist Canyon Command"

**Rist Canyon Command** will be the first responder contacting 900 *willing to assume command for the response*. The protocol to establish Rist Canyon Command is as follows:

- Contact 900 using your responder radio call #.
- If very early in response, ask 900 if Rist Canyon Command has been established.
- If command not established, and you are willing and qualified to assume command establish Rist Canyon Command. ("900 - RC # is establishing Rist Canyon Command - [direct all command information to Rist Canyon Command] []-optional but recommended")
- If command not established and you are not willing to assume command, then advise 900 if you are responding or standing by. ("900 - RC # is in response in unit xx, ETA xx minutes" or "900 - RC # is standing by at xx")
- If **command has been established**, contact Rist Canyon Command. ("Rist Canyon Command - RC # on 4 ...")
- If later in the response, just contact Rist Canyon Command.

##### 4.2.2. After Arrival on scene of radio capable responders.

Upon arrival, the first responder with radio capability *has the option* of establishing "[Scene] Command" where [Scene] is replaced with an name designating the incident. If this is done, command and coordination of the response is transferred to that individual.

**Note:** The "Scene Commander" assumes the responsibilities of "Rist Canyon Command" as well. Note, the Scene Commander may assign logistics or non-scene aspects of the response to the original "Rist Canyon Command."

Before establishing "Scene Command" consider the following:

- Scene Command will become Rist Canyon Command – if you are not able, due to scene activity or conditions, to coordinate the full response, consider not establishing "Scene Command".

Protocol for establishing "Scene Command" is simply:

- "Rist Canyon # Establishing <scene name> Command"
- The current "**Rist Canyon Command**" **should** acknowledge the transfer.
- "Rist Canyon # - acknowledging command transfer to <scene name> Command"
- In the above <scene name> is a designation picked by the responder on scene. Guidelines for choosing the <scene name> are:
- Geographic or some other designating location.
- Simply "Rist Canyon Scene Command"

**Avoid:**

- Proper names.
- Name of those involved in the incident.
- Name of property owners.

For example, an appropriate name might be:

"Stratton Park Command"

An inappropriate name may be

"Joe's Place Command"

**Other notes:**

- The arriving responder has the option of **not** establishing "scene command"
- The arriving responder can transfer "scene command" back to the old "Rist Canyon Command" or any other responder using the protocol discussed under transferring command.
- The "Scene Commander" must also respond to "Rist Canyon Command"

**4.2.3. Transferring Rist Canyon or Scene Command.**

*In the following, Rist Canyon Command and Scene Command are synonymous.*

Rist Canyon Command can be transferred from individual responder to individual responder at any time via mutual agreement of the current Rist Canyon Commander and the receiving individual. This transfer may be accomplished either via radio, or by direct contact if the responders are collocated. For example, transferring command from to Rist Canyon via radio might involve the following radio traffic:

- Rist Canyon Command: "Rist Canyon 202, Rist Canyon Command on 4"
- Rist Canyon 202: "Rist Canyon 202"
- Rist Canyon Command: "Rist Canyon 202, do you wish to assume Rist Canyon Command"
- Rist Canyon 202: "Affirmative"
- Rist Canyon Command (old): "Rist Canyon Command transferred to you"
- Rist Canyon 202: "Assuming Rist Canyon Command"

The last two lines are optional, but are good protocol to clarify the transfer.

Throughout this process, to contact the current commander, simply call "Rist Canyon Command"

**4.3. Contacting Rist Canyon Command or Scene Command**

To contact the current commander, just call for "Rist Canyon Command" or "<scene> command" if you have heard Scene Command established.

**The designation "Rist Canyon Command" will always work provided command has been established for that response** (See Establishing Rist Canyon Command)..

The person that acknowledges is acting as Rist Canyon Commander.

Note:

- If the acknowledgment is "Rist Canyon Command" - the <scene> command has not been established.
- If the acknowledgment is "<Scene name> Command" then command has transferred due to arrival on scene.

**4.4. Rist Canyon Commander Responsibilities**

In general the Rist Canyon Commander is responsible for directing a safe and effective response under the proprieties in section 2. Typically, the Rist Canyon Commander will not be actively involved in performing duties at the scene (building fire line, making entry, performing patient care), however that may be mitigated by the needs and capabilities of the responders or the incident.

*Note: In all cases, every RCVFD responder is responsible for his/her personal safety and must make Rist Canyon Command aware of any concerns, limitation or situations they become aware of regarding safety of themselves, any other RCVFD responder or any other person.*

#### **4.4.1. General Responsibilities of RCVFD Commander - all incidents.**

The following are general responsibilities of the RCVFD Commander at all incidents.

##### **Note:**

- The RCVFD Commander may delegate implementation or certain aspects of the following responsibilities to other personnel.
- It is the Commander's responsibility to assure that all aspects are being prioritized and addressed.
- It is the responsibility of **all responders** to bring safety issues, deficits or omissions to the Commanders notice.

##### **Prior to arrival:**

- Attend to the safety of RCVFD personnel and public during response.
- Track all RCVFD personnel and resources in response.
- Direct responding resources and order additional resources as the situation requires.
- Maintain communication with other agencies and dispatch to keep them informed of the response, mitigating circumstances and resources required or enroute
- Consistent with primary priorities, maintain records of the incident (see **Incident Reporting**)

##### **On scene:**

- Attend to the safety of RCVFD personnel and public.
- Track all RCVFD personnel at the incident.
- If possible and practical track civilians.
- Direct resources as appropriate for the incident.
- Maintain Contact with authorities to keep them informed of the situation, actions, needs, and our departure.
- Consistent with primary tasks of Safety and Fire Suppression, Maintain records of the incident, including:
  - Dispatch, response, arrival, stand-down and out of service times.
  - Engines and personal vehicles (responder) on scene.
  - Responders on scene
  - Civilians on scene
  - Character and location of incident
  - Pertinent information regarding the incident
  - Location and contact information.
  - Mutual aid given or received.
  - Disposition of personal property
  - Injuries to civilians or responders.

##### **After the incident:**

- Assure ALL RCVFD personnel have returned safely, or at least, safely left the incident scene in route home. The job is not done till this is assured.
- Notify dispatch when RCVFD units leave the scene.
- Notify dispatch when all RCVFD units and personnel are out of service or assure each unit does so.
- File appropriate reports, including the standard RCVFD incident report and any reports requested by County, State and federal authorities.
- Issue press release if appropriate.
- Fill out an appropriate incident report.

#### **4.4.2. RCVFD Commander Responsibilities - Wild Fire Situations.**

In addition to the above, and consistent with RCVFD priorities, the RCVFD commander or designee shall:

- Attend to the safety of all responders on the scene.
- Attend to the safety of civilians on the scene (to the limits allowed by law).
- Direct resources for evacuation if needed.
- Enforce equipment and training requirements of personnel on scene.
- Order additional resources required by the incident.

- Direct RCVFD resources in all or some of the following fire fighting aspects as appropriate for the fire.
- size-up
- initial attack,
- containment, control, extinguishment
- mop-up
- Assign personnel for 24 hour checkup on fire if appropriate.

#### **4.4.3. RCVFD Commander Responsibilities Structure Fire Situations.**

RCVFD retains authority at the fire until or unless a secondary agency (such as PFA or Larimer County Emergency Services) formally assumes control (possibly upon RCVFD's request).

In addition to those actions provided for above, the RCVFD Commander will:

- Attend to the safety of all RCVFD and civilians on scene.
- Direct RCVFD resources in all or some of the following fire fighting aspects as appropriate for the fire:
  - size-up
  - rescue
  - initiate medical response if appropriate
  - initiate mutual aid requests if appropriate
  - initial attack
  - containment, control, extinguishment
  - overhaul
- Assist local relief agencies in assisting victims

#### **4.4.4. RCVFD Commander Responsibilities - Medical Responses.**

Medical Responses are somewhat different than fire, in detail, but not in structure. One key difference is that the commander probably will not be responsible for patient care or direction of patient care which will devolve to a medical commander. In this regard, the commander's responsibilities are more related to safety and logistics of medical response.

In addition to those actions provided for above, the RCVFD Commander will:

- Attend to the safety of all RCVFD and civilians on scene.
- Assure medical command has been established.
- Make determinations about road closures, traffic control and evacuations.
- Assist local relief agencies in assisting victims
- Provide logistical direction (or designation) for the medical response team.

#### **4.5. Transfer of Incident Command - Inter Agency (to another agency)**

Upon arrival of County, State or Federal authorities and their acceptance of Incident Commander responsibilities, the RCVFD Commander relinquishes Incident Command but retains command over all RCVFD personnel. Responsibilities of the RCVFD Commander are the same as prior to transfer excepting that the scope is limited to command of RCVFD personnel under the direction of the new Incident Commander.

It is the responsibility of the RCVFD Commander to assure other agency officials are, in fact, willing and capable to assume control of the incident.

When Incident Command is transferred, the title Rist Canyon Command will continue to be used, but Rist Canyon Command only directs Rist Canyon forces under direction of the new IC.

## **5. RCVFD Individual Responder Responsibilities**

### **5.1. Initial Responder Responsibilities.**

The responsibilities of the initial RCVFD member to respond to a fire or to a RCVFD station include:

- CONSIDER SAFETY FIRST. Do nothing you are unsure of.

- **BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS.**
- **Do nothing that is outside your physical capabilities or over-stresses you. If you are injured or become disabled, you will be a further drain on resources – not a help.**
- **Stop before you are forced to stop by your physical condition.**
- Contact Larimer County giving disposition of your resources and your intentions. What RCVFD units are responding, how many fire fighters you have and, what you are going to do. Consider that they may or may not know the capabilities of the unit you are responding in.
- Respond in the appropriate vehicle and at an appropriate time. There is no hard fast rule about responding by your self, waiting for backup or determining the appropriate vehicle for response. Be aware of the capabilities of the units you are familiar with and use them to your best advantage. For instance, response to an unconfirmed smoke report in a remote area would be most appropriate in a smaller, more agile unit. Response to a confirmed fire may be more appropriate in a tanker, particularly considering the speed of the larger units. However:
- Always try to communication your response to 900 or Rist Canyon Command – and tie in with a communications capable unit as soon as possible.
- At or near the fire scene, perform Size-up, and if appropriate, Initial Attack. Communicate your needs and evaluation to Larimer County.
- Mark your route in so that others may follow.
- If not in communication – prepare a report and move to a location where you will likely meet with other responding units. Relay your information at that time.

## 5.2. Responding Alone as an Initial Responder.

For this context, responding alone means

- Responding in a RCVFD unit when no one else has yet responded to your knowledge. It does not mean, responding by yourself when you know others are already responding.
- **RESPONDING TO A FIRE ALONE MAY BE** appropriate for **LONG RANGE SIZE-UP** (survey from a distance) or to **POSITION RESOURCES CLOSER TO THE FIRE SCENE.**

**REMEMBER:** Size up and scouting are potentially among the more hazardous of actions, particularly if you are unfamiliar with the area and if you don't know exactly where you are, where the fire is, its size, fuels involved, weather conditions existent and expected, especially at night.

The following Guidelines may be useful:

- Maintain communications. In general, do not respond alone if you do not have, or do not know how to use, a radio.
- Respond only if you have maps of the area in question or are very familiar with it and have the gear you required to direct others to your location (compass, map, **flagging**, etc.)
- **Mark your route in with flagging so others know where you went.**
- **DO NOT RESPOND TO A REMOTE LOCATION ALONE.** In this case, you should respond only to position resources closer to the fire scene.
- Do not respond in a vehicle you are not certified to drive.
- In general, those responding in Davis Ranch, Whale Rock or Buckhorn Units (#421, #641, #651) should probably respond immediately to a fire in those unit's defined response area, without waiting for additional RCVFD personnel.
- If responding from the fire station and others are likely to arrive soon, you should probably wait for additional RCVFD members. Circumstances may dictate that you respond immediately, however.
- Do not respond alone if you are unsure of your capability to do so.
- If unsure, wait.
- In any case, advise Larimer County that you are, to the best of you knowledge, responding alone and ask if other units/fire fighters have been in contact.

## 5.3. Fire Fighter Responsibilities.

- Upon arrival at the incident, RCVFD Responders **MUST** check in with RCVFD Fire Boss/CC.
- Look out for your safety and that of personnel at the scene.
- If you are the only RCVFD member on scene, you are IC, by definition. Review the responsibilities listed above.

- In general, do not leave the scene, attack the fire, perform independent scouting or other independent actions without the express knowledge of Rist Canyon Command or a designate. For example, pumper drivers should not independently relocate a pumper or commit it to a purpose without prior consultation with and approval of Rist Canyon Command.
  - **Note:** Safety is the primary concern regarding this guideline. If your safety dictates an action, and Rist Canyon Command is not available, act consistently with your safety. An example might be, preparing a truck for immediate evacuation, or indeed evacuating. In all cases, every attempt to contact Rist Canyon Command should be made until such contact is achieved.
- Obey the 10 standing orders.
- Observe the 18 Watch-Out Situations.
- Repeat back orders to officers to assure they are well understood and correct.
- Respect the chain of command. Fire fighters should be aware of their Rist Canyon Command and respect orders from that individual. If a higher ranking officer gives a FF direct orders without Rist Canyon Command's knowledge, Rist Canyon Command should be notified and concur with those orders.

#### 5.4. Response in a Personal Vehicle

Due to the response nature of our fire department, you may find yourself responding to a fire in a personal vehicle. In general, you should:

- Respond in a RCVFD vehicle if possible in a timely manner. For example, if you are driving past or near a fire station – get an appropriate RCVFD vehicle.
- Respond in a RCVFD vehicle if you KNOW that vehicle is needed at the incident and has not responded, even if the vehicle is out of the way.
- When responding in a private vehicle, join a responding RCVFD vehicle or another personal vehicle if possible.
- **When responding in a personal vehicle, you have no rights or legal authority to exceed posted speed limits. Drive in a 'normal' manner.**

Remember, congestion of roads at the fire scene can be a serious safety problem. Avoid it if possible, but do not greatly sacrifice response time as a result.

#### 5.5. Emergency Response (Lights and Siren)

When responding to an emergency, warning equipment (Lights and Siren) should be in full operation. The exception may be not using the siren in inappropriate circumstances, such as late at night or in remote areas. The emergency beacon light should always be in operation. Be aware that failure to use all emergency equipment could open RCVFD to liability in the event of an accident.

In all cases:

- Drive with EXTREME caution.
- In general – we should not be exceeding the speed limit by a significant amount.
- Drive at a safe speed for conditions.
- On dry, clear rural roads with speed limits less than 40 mph, do not exceed 50 mph. In many cases, 50 mph is much too fast.
- On major highways – do not exceed 75 mph or the 10 over the posted speed limit (whichever is lower).
- DO NOT FLAG private vehicles around a fire vehicle, even if the fire vehicle is slower. If people pass, they must do so on their own initiative.

#### 5.6. Non-Emergency Response

Periodically, the county will page us out as NON-EMERGENCY. In these situations, do not exceed the speed limit with no emergency equipment (lights and siren) in operation.

#### 5.7. Upon Arrival

In most cases, when you arrive you should:

- Switch to Yellow Flashing lights or emergency blinkers if your vehicle is so equipped

- Leave emergency beacon running if your vehicle is not equipped with yellow lights and you need to provide warning.
- Position vehicles such that:
- Evacuation is quick and easy if needed – in the case of a wildland fire – position the vehicles facing out.
- To protect the scene and personal from oncoming traffic.
- Effectively warn oncoming traffic.
- Establish traffic control if possible and needed.

## 5.8. Guarded Response

Certain situations, or response areas, may require what is known as a “Guarded Response.” Examples are domestic violence or assault situations, areas where residents are known to resent “official” intervention, such as fire departments or law enforcement, or where neighbors are known not to get along. The point of a guarded response is only to make RCVFD responders aware that there may be hazardous situations that are not fire/medical response related and that we may not be trained or ready to handle.

Guarded Response is not intended to imply or indicate that RCVFD will not respond to incidents in that location, only that special care may be required. In addition, RCVFD may request immediate police backup, or may require or be required to wait till law enforcement has determined that the situation is okay for fire or medical response.

### 5.8.1. Guidelines for Guarded Responses:

- Do not respond alone. Respond only in groups of 2 or more.
- Respond only in fire vehicles, no private vehicles, until the status of the situation is determined.
- Contact Rist Canyon Command or Larimer 900 (Dispatch) regarding the status of the situation before responding.
- Do not respond without good communications.
- Be cognizant of potential assault hazards or violent situations or behaviors.
- You may not want to respond until law enforcement has established a safe scene

If you find yourself in a threatening situation:

- Relay that information to dispatch and command and **back off** until law enforcement can respond.
- Use Code 0 traffic if necessary.
- Use extreme caution.

### 5.8.2. Notification of Guarded Response:

There are two methods by which RCVFD responders are notified of guarded response.

- 1) Standing guarded response for an area - notified via normal training.
- 2) Page says “Guarded Response”

### 5.8.3. Responder Specified Guarded Response.

If you have information that indicates a response should be Guarded, and it has not been indicated by page, let RCVFD Command or 900 Dispatch know. Specify to 900 that a page should be sent stating this is a Guarded response.

## 6. Active Responder Requirements

### 6.1. Compliance with by-laws.

All candidates for Active Membership shall agree to abide by all provisions of the by-laws. Failure to do so shall constitute cause for immediate dismissal. All Active Responders will continue to abide by all provisions of the by-laws.

### 6.2. Compliance with Policies and Procedures

It shall be the duty of Active Members to act within the RCVFD Policies and Procedures. Active Members need to maintain familiarity with RCVFD operations and the Policies and Procedures. Note, the RCVFD P&P is a document outlining guidelines, not hard and fast rules. As the need arises, active members may act outside the P&P provided they stay within the Departmental priorities outlined in section one of the P&P and listed below in section E. If an active member operates outside the P&P for good cause, that cause shall be documented and reviewed with the goal of including the factors in future revisions of P&P.

### **6.3. Physical Fitness**

RCVFD does not administer specific physical fitness tests. However, RCVFD does required all responders to be aware of and consider their own physical condition and to limit their activities to those within that physical condition.

#### **RCVFD Recommends:**

- Regular (annual) physical checkup by personal physician. That physician should be made aware of the individual RCVFD related activities. The responder may make use of the physical exam checklist provided by NFPA.
- Participation in a regular exercise/fitness program.

#### **RCVFD Requires:**

- Responders be aware of their own physical condition and modify their participation in RCVFD response related activities to a level consistent with that physical condition.
- Responders make the Fire Chief aware of any long term or permanent physical condition that may impact their response capabilities.
- Responders make the Incident Commander and/or their direct supervisor (crew boss, etc.) aware of any permanent or temporary physical/medical condition that may impact their ability at any given emergency scene.
- Responders carry, at all times, any required medication or treatment equipment they may need due to a physical condition.
- **Responders evaluate any assignments they are given with respect to their *current* physical condition at that time of assignment, and refuse any assignments that are not consistent with that physical condition.**
- **Responders make their immediate crew members and supervisor aware of any apparent medical or physical problem they observe in fellow RCVFD Responders or the public.**

### **6.4. Residence**

Active members will, in general, reside within the active response boundaries of RCVFD. However, exceptions may be made upon a case-by-case basis. The Operations Officers must unanimously approve exceptions to this requirement.

### **6.5. Duties**

It shall be the duty of all Active Members of the RCVFD to hold themselves in reasonable readiness to respond to emergency calls for the RCVFD area. Special consideration should be given to current physical condition as outlined above. All Active Members shall treat with respect and obey the orders and commands of superior officers, and exercise extreme care in execution of their duties. Any Active Member on duty who shall refuse orders properly given by RCVFD superior off officers shall be suspended from duty and may be dismissed as an active member (per the by-laws).

### **6.6. Training Requirements**

It shall be the duty of all Active Members of the RCVFD to maintain their skills at certification levels determined by the Fire Chief by attending fire calls, training and other meetings. A minimum of 50% of all training sessions must be attended to remain active. Medical and fire training are considered separately which means medical responders must attend 50% of medical training; fire responders must attend 50% of fire training.

### **6.7. Reserve Status and Dismissal Due to Lack of Training Attendance.**

If a responder does not maintain the required level of attendance for a period of 6 months, they are placed on a reserve status. If they do not attend at least 25% of training for 1 year, they are placed in an inactive status, required to turn in fire department equipment and re-apply for active membership. See exceptions below.

## **6.8. Reserve Status and Dismissal due to Lack of Response**

If a responder does not respond to at least 20% of all calls in 6-months, they are placed upon reserve status. If they do not respond to at least 20% of all calls in 1-year, they are placed in an inactive status, required to turn in fire department equipment and re-apply for active membership. Medical and fire calls are counted separately – i.e. a medical responder needs to respond to 20% of medical calls, etc.

Response is defined as being on scene, en-route to the scene, or on notified standby. It is the responsibility of the active responder to notify the Fire Chief or a designated record keeper of cases where they are in response, but do not reach the scene. For instance, if a responder is en-route but is stood down and never reaches the scene, they are considered to have responded to the call, but they must notify the Chief or designated record keeper.

See exceptions below.

## **6.9. Exceptions to response and training attendance requirements.**

Responders may request exception to the above, for a period up to one year, due to personal time commitments or travel. For example, a responder is unable to attend training due to a conflicting commitment. However, it is still the responsibility of the responder to maintain training levels on their own. Other exceptions to the above rules may be made for responders that have only a specific RCVFD task or a limited role. Request for exception must be made to the Fire Chief. In all cases, the Fire Chief reserves the right to make exceptions to training/response requirements for due cause provide it is consistent with the goals and policies of the department.

## **6.10. Notification of Reserve Status**

It is the responsibility of the Fire Chief or a designate to notify responders that they are falling behind in training and/or response and are being put in reserve status.

## **6.11. Responder Priorities.**

The following priorities should drive all operational decisions:

- 1) Safety and care of responding personnel during all aspects of the response, including: training, travel to the scene, actions at the scene and travel from the scene
- 2) Safety of the public.
- 3) Care for patients or victims at the scene or en-route
- 4) Protection and salvage of personal property.
- 5) Protection of uninvolved structures and exposures from existing fires.
- 6) Size up, initial attack, containment and extinguishment of fires.

## **7. Vehicle Related Guidelines.**

Each responder should be familiar with primary response units (611, Med14, 631) and with the units in their assigned fire station as listed below. In addition, all responders will be generally familiar with all RCVFD vehicles.

Familiarization includes:

- Familiarization with the vehicle and it's equipment – both fixed and portable,
- Periodic check of the vehicle. (Suggest rotating schedule).
- Reporting of any mechanical problems with the vehicle to the Fire Chief or other officer
- Periodic inventory of the vehicle.
- Restocking the vehicle IMMEDIATELY after an incident.

NOTE: it is the responsibility of the driver to assure the vehicle is restocked after the incident. If you drive a vehicle to a fire and are moved to another vehicle, or released

from the fire by Rist Canyon Command, you are still responsible for making sure some other RCVFD fire fighter has assumed this responsibility.

## **7.1. Vehicle Certification.**

If responding to a fire you must be certified in the vehicle. Certification depends on the truck and may be as simple as providing a valid drivers license and record. Larger type 4 and 5 engines (12, 13, 32, 34) require extensive checkout. If unsure about certification, contact an officer.

In any case, if you are uncomfortable with driving a vehicle, either due to some aspect of that engine, or the current road conditions, then it is your responsibility to seek further training and/or not operate that vehicle. RCVFD Responders are encouraged to periodically drive vehicles they are checked out in to refresh themselves with the operation of that vehicle. See “Practice and Familiarization” below.

## **7.2. Responsibilities of Vehicle Driver.**

Once a vehicle is taken out (driven) by an individual, that vehicle and it's contents are the responsibility of that individual (driver) until the incident is over, or the individual is formally relieved with knowledge of the RCVFD IC. The responsibilities of the driver include:

- Assuring the vehicle is restocked after the incident.
- Assuring the vehicle is returned to it's station after the incident
- Noting equipment taken from the vehicle, and it's disposition,
- Using the vehicle to perform activities as instructed by the IC.
- Notifying an officer of any problems with the vehicle.

**Note:** Report all accidents to the Fire Chief immediately.

Equipment should not be moved from vehicle to vehicle without the prior knowledge and consent of the Fire Chief. Posting a conspicuous notice of equipment redistribution on the vehicle is recommended.

## **7.3. Determining the Driver/Operator.**

When responding to a fire it may be desirable for the most experienced RCVFD fire fighters to ride as passengers and the less experienced to drive under their direction. This frees up the experienced FF for observation of the fire and conditions and communications. In particular, the incident commander, “Rist Canyon Command” should try to avoid driving so as to be available for coordination and communications.

## **7.4. Practice and Familiarization**

Once checked out in a vehicle, responders are encouraged to drive or operate the vehicle for practice. Generally, it is more efficient if multiple responders schedule together for test drives.

When taking a truck out for practice:

- Notify the Fire Chief or other officer if convenient.
- Remain in the general area of normal response for that vehicle.
- Carry your response gear and be prepared to respond at any time.
- Notify 900 you are in service for training. Be sure to check out with 900 when done.

If you are taking the vehicle out of area – for instance, for maintenance.

- Check with the fire chief first
- Make sure an information page has been sent to notify RCVFD the vehicle is out of service.

If, while exercising the vehicle, you encounter an emergency – and you have not displayed an “OUT OF SERVICE” sign:

- **You must respond to that emergency** – you will be viewed by the public as “in service” and may be legally bound to provide some level of response (maybe just notification of an emergency).
- Notify 900 of the emergency.
- Notify RCVFD via a page (Either requesting more resources, or notifying RCVFD of you condition with no further resources required).

- Even if you are, and have displayed “Out Of Service” – report the emergency to 900

## **8. Structure Fire Response. (See Capabilities and Commitments)**

RCVFD is not generally equipped or trained for:

- Entry to a burning structure except in limited burn conditions.
- Extinguishment of a freely burning structure.
- General Search of a burning structure.
- Ventilation of a burning structures (including back draft situations).
- These areas are becoming more available to RCVFD as training increases.

In General, RCVFD's responsibilities and directives with respect to Structure fires include:

- SCBA is required for approach.
- Assurance of FF/Public safety.
- Protection of exposures.
- Extinguishment of appropriate fires, such as those confined in area, chimneys, small structures, etc.

Remember that we are resource limited. The water used on trying to extinguish a large structure fire may be better used protecting exposures.

## **9. Vehicle Fires.**

Vehicle fires are VERY dangerous. The following guidelines should be obeyed:

- SCBA is required for approach.
- Do not approach the vehicle fire if you are not familiar with the special hazards associated with such fires.
- Approach the vehicle from 45 degrees.
- Be aware of fuel leaks under the fire and fuel spills that could ignite fires in nearby foliage.
- Be aware of potential explosive items such as; pressurized bumper mounts!, pressurized shocks, drive shafts, cylinders (propane, butane), starting fluids, etc., many of which may be in the trunk.

## **10.SAFETY.**

In all responses, safety is of primary concern. Never sacrifice safety for speed. Always:

- Obey the 10 standing fire fighting orders. (Appendix A).
- Respect the 18 watch out situations. (Appendix A).
- Use SCBA when required (Vehicle and structure fires).
- Carry a fire shelter (Wildfires).
- Maintain Communications.
- Establish Escape Routes or Safe Zones.
- Keep your HEAD UP.
- Maintain Training Level.
- Be aware of fatigue.
- Know where you are. Carry maps and compass.

**AND ALWAYS OBEY THE:**

**DANGER SIGNAL**

Repeated short blasts (5 or more) of a vehicle horn to alert RCVFD personnel of a dangerous situation requiring immediate recall of all firefighters.

### **10.1. Alcohol and Drug Use Policy.**

For liability reasons, as well as for safety reasons, RCVFD must be VERY CAREFUL with respect to alcohol or drugs at, before and after fires, fire dept. activities and other incidents. Statement of RCVFD alcohol/drug policy is required by our current insurance underwriter. Understand these policies are intended to protect RCVFD members and the public from unintentional injury due to alcohol or drug related impairment or to prevent a Public Relations problem with respect to alcohol consumption at a fire scene.

With respect to Alcohol:

- RCVFD responders shall not respond if they have been drinking to an amount which would impair their ability to perform their duties safely and effectively. (Consider 1 drink as a suggested limit).
- RCVFD responders shall not consume alcoholic beverages at a fire or emergency scene or afterward
- RCVFD responders shall not consume alcoholic beverages while in fire gear or fire equipment.

With respect to Drugs:

- Many prescription or non-prescription drugs may impair a responder's ability. Consider carefully responding if you are using a drug that causes drowsiness, etc.
- Use of illegal or controlled substances by a responder at a fire/emergency incident, or responding to a fire/emergency incident while under the influence of such is illegal and will be considered grounds for dismissal from RCVFD.

In all cases:

- The RCVFD Fire Boss/IC/Safety Officer has authority to remove from active duty, at a given incident, FF's which are impaired to an extent that Fire Boss/IC/Safety Officer feels is inappropriate for fire/emergency operations.

## **10.2. Always Obey the 10 Standing Fire Fighting Orders.**

- **FIGHT FIRE AGGRESSIVELY, BUT PROVIDE FOR SAFETY FIRST.**
- **INITIATE ALL ACTIONS BASED ON CURRENT AND EXPECTED FIRE BEHAVIOR.**
- **RECOGNIZE CURRENT WEATHER CONDITIONS AND OBTAIN FORECASTS.**
- **ENSURE INSTRUCTIONS ARE GIVEN AND UNDERSTOOD (REPEAT THEM BACK).**
- **OBTAIN CURRENT INFORMATION OF FIRE STATUS.**
- **REMAIN IN COMMUNICATION WITH CREW MEMBERS, YOUR SUPERVISOR, AND ADJOINING FORCES.**
- **DETERMINE SAFETY ZONES AND ESCAPE ROUTES.**
- **ESTABLISH LOOKOUTS IN POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS SITUATIONS.**
- **RETAIN CONTROL AT ALL TIMES.**
- **STAY ALERT, KEEP CALM, THINK CLEARLY, ACT DECISIVELY.**

## **10.3. Respect the 18 Watch Out Situations.**

These situations are ones that will be encountered. When they are, extra care is required. They are Watch Out Situations, not rules.

- FIRE NOT SCOUTED AND SIZED UP.
- IN COUNTRY NOT SEEN IN DAYLIGHT.
- SAFETY ZONES AND ESCAPE ROUTES NOT IDENTIFIED.
- UNFAMILIAR WITH WEATHER AND LOCAL FACTORS INFLUENCING FIRE BEHAVIOR.
- UNINFORMED ON STRATEGY, TACTICS AND HAZARDS.
- INSTRUCTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS NOT CLEAR.
- NO COMMUNICATION LINK WITH CREW MEMBERS OR SUPERVISORS.
- FIRE LINE HAS NO SAFE ANCHOR POINT.
- BUILDING FIRELINE DOWNHILL WITH FIRE BELOW.
- ATTEMPTING FRONTAL ASSAULT ON FIRE.
- UNBURNED FUEL BETWEEN YOU AND FIRE.
- CANNOT SEE MAIN FIRE, NOT IN CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO CAN.
- ON A HILLSIDE WHERE ROLLING MATERIAL CAN IGNITE FUEL BELOW.
- WEATHER BECOMING HOTTER AND DRIER.
- WIND INCREASES AND/OR CHANGES DIRECTION.
- GETTING FREQUENT SPOT FIRES ACROSS LINE.
- TERRAIN AND FUELS MAKE ESCAPE TO SAFETY ZONES DIFFICULT.
- TAKING NAP NEAR FIRELINE.

## 11. Civilian Response.

Often you will find private civilians at a fire scene when you arrive. They will likely want to help, but will probably NOT know how to do so. Be aware that:

- RCVFD has no legal authority over civilians, you cannot force them to leave, however, if evacuation is recommended, attempt to evacuate them.
- The exception is minors or those clearly unable to reason for themselves and are in a life or death situation. In this case, Law Enforcement should be called to handle the situation – but be aware, even Law Enforcement may be unable to force them to leave.
- RCVFD can deny civilians access. If they leave, they can be kept out.
- It is unclear, at this point, whether RCVFD's liability exposure will be increased or limited by actively directing civilians in activities related to the fire.
- You may find the civilian's aid critical in your attempts to control the emergency.
- While you should keep civilians in mind while at the fire, don't focus on them to the exclusion of the needs of the situation.

### These guidelines may be useful:

- Consider Safety First. Do your best to promote safe activities by civilians
- Insure citizens have appropriate attire. If not, advise them to leave, and explain why. If they refuse to leave due to improper attire, attend to the fire.
- Be aware of the physical condition of the citizen. Watch for overexertion. If a civilian has a heart attack fighting a fire you are in charge of, you may be liable if you did not attempt to prevent that heart attack. You will certainly be busy because of it.
- State of mind. Often citizens will be in a very stressful situation. Consider their state of mind and deal with potentially unstable reactions.
- Demonstrate you are in command. **Wear your fire gear** – it is a uniform of sorts. You have the training and experience to respond to the fire. situation correctly. If you exhibit that command, you are likely to have civilians respond better to your requests. Remember, however, you may have no direct authority over civilians.

## 12. Public Relations.

Always be aware of the fact that RCVFD FF's ARE RCVFD's public face. Deal with civilians in a courteous and reasonable manner as consistent with our primary task of safety and fire fighting. It is quite possible that you may need to deal with agitated or intransigent civilians. In cases where safety is concerned, deal with the problem in the manner required to assure maximum safety. If Sheriff Officers are present, refer the problem civilian to the Sheriff's Officer.

- For appropriate incidents, a Press Release will be issued. It is the responsibility of the RCVFD Fire Boss/Crew Chief to assure this is done. To aid in this task, use the standard RCVFD fire report.
- Always be courteous and kind if possible – but be firm.
- If you find you must be abrupt or rude due to an emergency situation, try to follow-up afterward and explain your behavior and concerns. Apologize if need be.

## 13. Amendments and Revision History.

- September 27, 1995. Initial version, Bob Gann, Fire Chief RCVFD.
- March 26, 1995. Added information about medical responses, extrication gear, radio call numbers, command protocol.
- April 1997, command protocols
- May 1998, General updates, command protocol and guarded response.
- October 1998, General cleanup – transported to Word Format – BGann.
- November 1999, Added responder responsibilities including training and response requirements as part of by-laws revision.
- Revision: 2003
- Included Capabilities and Commitments, added explicit statement of physical fitness standard, added responder signoff sheet, added annual review requirement, general updates.

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## 14. Acknowledgment and Signoff

As an RCVFD Responder I certify that:

- I have received and reviewed a copy of the Procedures and Policies.
- I agree to abide by the Procedures and Policies and the By-laws.
- I understand and agree to the training and response requirements to remain active.
- I understand and agree to the physical fitness requirements.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers License # \_\_\_\_\_ (required to drive RCVFD vehicle)

Drivers License Verified by \_\_\_\_\_

SS# \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

Detach this page and keep it for Fire Department Records.  
This signature page will be collected once per year.