



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

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Fire Administrator

M E M O R A N D U M

September 15, 2004

TO: Deputy Chief Guercio, Wheeler and Love

FROM: Chief Tom Carr

SUBJECT: DFRS Qualifications and Selection Criteria for Designated Heavy Apparatus Drivers and Approved Drivers

Please implement the below cited process as a component of the Safe Driving Action Plan.

Definitions:

- Designated Drivers: Either the primary or back-up driver listed for a specific piece of heavy apparatus.
- Heavy Apparatus: Includes Engines, Trucks, Towers, Rescue Squads, Tankers, and Heavy Support Units (i.e. Hazmat Units, Bomb Squad & Command Unit).
- Approved Drivers: Those personnel allowed to drive other vehicles (ambulances, utilities, sedans, etc.) under the department's insurance policy.

Establishment of Designated Drivers:

Captains and Battalion Chiefs must work together to select one primary driver and two back-up drivers for each piece of heavy apparatus on every shift and every station. The criteria below will be utilized to assure a consistent selection process. While the criteria provides baseline qualifications, driving continues to be a privilege and substandard driving performance will result in removal from the Designated and Approved Driver Lists. Officers continue to have the authority to immediately revoke an employee's driving privilege.

Division of Fire Rescue Services

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Selection of Primary and Back-up Designated Drivers:

- The MFR generally will be the unit specific primary driver.
- Any MFR or MPM may elect not to be a primary driver and a FF3 may become the primary driver of a specific unit.
- MPMs may continue to ride as OIC or may be selected as a primary or back-up driver.
- In a case where the MFR/MPM is not selected as the primary driver, the shift officer(s) are required to provide an explanation and documentation. The Battalion Chief will review the documentation, and an appropriate determination will be made in each case. The Shift Chief will be consulted in these instances and the Operations Deputy Chief will make all final decisions.
- The primary driver will drive their assigned unit when working their normal shift. When the primary driver is off, the unit will be driven by a back-up driver. In cases where there are no drivers for a specified unit working regular hours then any driver for that specific unit working overtime or on a CSB can be utilized.
- Driver selection will occur on an “as needed” basis to maintain a primary driver, and two back-up drivers, for every piece of heavy apparatus on every shift.
- Due to current staffing (we don't have drivers assigned to every unit) some Captains will have to work with their Battalion Chiefs to determine appropriate assignments and recommendations for placement on the Designated Drivers List.
- Tractor Drawn Aerial (TDA) designated drivers must be qualified to drive and operate both the tractor and tiller.

Licensure:

- All Designated and Approved Drivers must possess a valid state driver's license for the specific weight class being operated. If the driver operates under an out-of-state license, it must be equivalent to the specific emergency vehicle weight class to be driven in Maryland.

Driving Records for Designated and Approved Drivers:

- DFRS will annually obtain a copy of the driving records for all personnel that have a Maryland State driver's license.
- All DFRS drivers with out-of-state licenses will be required to annually provide a certified copy of their driving record from the state where their license is issued. Drivers with out-of-state licenses must provide a certified copy of their driving record by November 1, 2004 for the initial implementation of this program.
- By October 1, 2004 all personnel must assure their drivers license number and date of birth is up to date in Telestaff.

- Record retrieval and record keeping as it pertains to motor vehicle records will begin upon distribution of this document.
- Each driver must have a satisfactory motor vehicle record in Maryland or the driver's domicile state. A motor vehicle record is considered unsatisfactory if the driver has any of the following on their record:
 - 5 or more penalty points for moving violations such as speeding, failure to obey traffic signals, or reckless driving within the last 3 years.
 - Any conviction for DUI, DWI, or probation for either of these offenses or an aggressive driving violation, within the last 5 years.
 - Any felony convictions involving a motor vehicle.
 - Any DFRS driver who is convicted of any of the above must notify their supervisor immediately after such conviction.

DFRS Driving Record:

- Designated driver status will be removed when a driver:
 1. Has 2 preventable collisions with more than \$5000 in damage in the last 3 years; or
 2. Has 2 collisions involving personal injury in the last 3 years.
- Repeated preventable minor incidents, not meeting the criteria above, will be considered as substandard performance.

Driver List Review:

- In addition to the ongoing review of the Designated Drivers List, an annual review of each DFRS driver, including their MVA driving record, will be conducted by the Safety Office and a report will be forwarded to the Fire Chief.
- The Safety Office will periodically review driving records and will make recommendations to the Fire Chief for adjustments to the driver list.

Training:

- Primary drivers will be required to complete (in 2004) the DFRS Defensive Driver program (8 hours) to maintain their status as "primary" on the Designated Drivers List.
- Drivers will be required to attend periodic refresher training.

Impact on Personnel Assignments:

- This critical safety program will not impact non-competitive Fire Fighter 3 promotions.

- Details may occur in order to assure designated drivers are provided for each unit.
- At the present time, in most cases, transfers will not be affected by driving status unless a specific station has a need for a designated driver.

Desired Measurable Outcomes:

- A reduction in the severity and frequency of MCFRS emergency vehicle collisions.
- Improvement of operations at emergency incidents.
- Improvement in apparatus maintenance in the areas of record keeping, reporting of defects, routine repairs, and an overall improvement of the condition in the fleet.

The work group that developed this program will meet monthly to discuss feedback, evaluate program components, and to develop recommendations for continual improvement of the interim Safe Driving Action Plan.

TC/ld