EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATOR

Introduction, Motivation, Expectations

Module 1
COURSE ADMINISTRATION
ENROLLMENT AND DOCUMENTS

• Finalize registration
  o Enrolled – everyone present?
  o Waitlist

• Driver’s License & History
  o Need a photocopy of current non-provisional driver’s license
  o Need a non-certified copy of motor vehicle record

• Class Roster
  o Verify the pre-printed information and fill in the blanks
COURSE ADMINISTRATION

ATTENDANCE

• Sign-in – EVERY class

• Every session is mandatory
  o If you must miss, discuss with the lead instructor as soon as possible
  o Accommodations for absences – sole discretion of the lead instructor
  o Make-ups must be documented

• Refer to the syllabus
  o For session dates
  o For session times – note night driving sessions
  o For session topics
COURSE ADMINISTRATION
SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

• Written Exam
  o 70% is passing
  o Pre-Trip
  o Vehicle Systems
  o Safe Driving Principles & Laws

• Practical Exercises
  o Pre-trip inspection
  o Air brake test
  o Road behavior evaluation
  o Cone course – zero cones; <10 minutes
PROGRAM GOAL

To provide each driver/operator with the basic skills and knowledge required to safely, efficiently, and effectively operate light and medium vehicles.
What this program does not do:
- Teach you how to drive
- Teach you everything you need to know
- Make you read all applicable policies or directives
- Authorize you to drive an emergency vehicle

Individuals must take personal responsibility to expand upon the information and skills practice received in this course.
Motivation

- Apparatus operators make more independent decisions than any other member of the crew
  - Pre-response
  - In transit
  - Arrival
  - Operating
- Apparatus is the most valuable asset placed under your control
- Apparatus has the potential to cause unlimited liability personally and professionally
August 2004

A leading killer of firefighters: crashing the truck on the way to a call
This article was written by Matthew Mosk of the Washington Post, titled “Montgomery Fire, Rescue Crashes Rise.” Drivers of Montgomery County fire trucks and ambulances have had more than 1,100 accidents in the last five years. Service is at risk of losing its insurance coverage. Montgomery has received warnings from its insurance underwriter. Departmental reviews of the most serious accidents, including crashes that left one motorist dead and more than a dozen injured, have found that many could have been avoided had drivers slowed before entering intersections or followed proper procedures as they responded to emergency calls. Montgomery Officials have known for at least three years that their department’s driving record was deficient and that the numbers have been getting worse-up from 154 crashes in 1997-98 to 217 in 2001-02. The county’s underwriter, Volunteer Firemen’s Insurance Services Inc., has charged progressively higher premiums each year since 2000. In 2002, premiums rose 18 percent to $1.2 million. With accident costs still rising in December, the fire chief sent a bulletin...”due to the high number of claims.” “A major component of this problem is the number of preventable collisions we are currently experiencing,” the chief wrote.
HISTORY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
STATISTICS
COLLISIONS BY VEHICLE TYPE – 2013-2015

- EMS Unit: 43%
- Class B: 38%
- Other: 14%
- Class A: 5%
THE COST OF CRASHES

- Delay help to original incident
- Create a second emergency
- Damage to vehicles and property
  - Loss of use of apparatus
- Cause injury or death
- Effect public image
- Subject you and the organization to lawsuits
"Emergency vehicle" means any of the following vehicles that are designated by the Administration as entitled to the exemptions and privileges set forth in the Maryland Vehicle Law for emergency vehicles:

(2) Vehicles of volunteer fire companies, rescue squads, fire departments, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, and the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute;

(3) State vehicles used in response to oil or hazardous materials spills;

(5) Ambulances; and

(6) Special vehicles funded or provided by federal, State, or local government and used for emergency or rescue purposes in this State.
§ 16-102. Persons exempt from licensing requirements

(b) Regulations.

(1) The Administration shall adopt regulations that establish *mandatory training and testing requirements* that a political subdivision that operates a fire department, rescue squad, emergency medical services unit, or volunteer fire department must implement before the political subdivision may authorize an individual to operate an emergency vehicle in accordance with subsection (a)(12) of this section.
PRACTICAL SKILLS

Cone Course
Pre-Trip
Road Driving
PRACTICAL EXERCISES

• Pre-trip Inspection & Brake Test
• Controlled Course
  o Pivot Point Figure 8
  o Parallel Parking
  o Diminishing clearance
  o Confined space turnaround
  o Offset Alley
  o Alley dock
  o Serpentine
• Public Roadway - Driving Behavior
PRACTICAL EXERCISES
PRE-TRIP & BRAKE TEST

• PAGS – Pre-Trip Inspection
  o The candidate will explain the purpose of and perform a pre-trip inspection on the vehicle.
  o The pre-trip inspection will be completed in accord with Maryland Commercial Motor Vehicle Guidelines.

• PAGS – Brake Test
  o Candidate will conduct a pre-trip check of the vehicle air brake system per MVA guidelines in the order shown on the PAGS.
Purpose is to familiarize you with the turning characteristics, dimensions, and visibility of heavy apparatus

Performed under ideal conditions in a controlled area

Similar obstacles in the “real world” require greater assessment and pose much greater consequences if you make a mistake

Focus on vehicle position, proper hand and body position in the cab, and mirror use

- Learn to set yourself up for the next move
- Gain depth perception and blind spot awareness

Successful completion:
- Zero cones struck
- <10 minutes
PRACTICAL EXERCISES
CONTROLLED COURSE

• All students and instructors on the course must wear high-visibility attire
  o Must include reflective for night driving
• No students on the course unless driving or spotting
• Speeds below 15mph
• No horseplay, reckless driving, or other unprofessional behavior will be tolerated
• No use of portable electronic devices within the course area

The cone course area is IDLH – respect it as such
PRACTICAL EXERCISES
CONTROLLED COURSE

• Dress appropriately for the weather – you will be outdoors
  o Wear layers to adjust to your environment

• Stay hydrated and nourished
  o Bring a water bottle
  o Meal breaks are one hour

• If you see something – say something
  o Alert the instructors to safety issues
  o Alert the instructors to mechanical issues on the vehicles
Practical Exercises
Pivot Point and Parallel Parking

• Students become initially familiar with the dimensions and pivot points of the vehicles
• Vehicles differ due to steering cramp angle, wheelbase, number of axles, and vehicle width

Where does this vehicle pivot?
Helps the student to:

• Steer in a straight line while moving forward and backward
• Judge vehicle width as clearance changes
Helps the student to:

- Develop skills to turn around in narrow spaces
- Refine vehicle positioning to minimize backing
Practical Exercises

Alley Dock

Helps the student to:

• Position for backing into a defined area or bay
• Improve depth perception and locate the apparatus tailboard
• Encourage use of both mirrors
• Develop backing in a straight line
PRACTICAL EXERCISES
OFFSET ALLEY

Helps students to:
• Refine vehicle pivot points and develop precision positioning
• Learn vehicle dimensions
• Monitor multiple contact points on the vehicle at one time
PRACTICAL EXERCISES
SERPENTINE

Helps students to:
• Refine pivot points while in continuous motion
• Reduce over-steering
• Switch smoothly between mirrors
Students will be exposed to a variety of road types, times of day, and traffic conditions.

Students are evaluated on:
- Pre-departure checks
- Steering control
- Smith System application

Conducted during daylight and night.
Ties together the knowledge and skills reviewed in the course.
This class teaches skills and knowledge that should remain with you for the rest of your fire service experience.

Operating emergency vehicles is one of the most dynamic tasks you will do – high frequency/high risk.

The apparatus is a rolling billboard for the fire department – what message do you want to send?

For next class – you must bring a non-certified copy of your driving record.