

SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT

DIVISION OF TRAINING

TRAINING BULLETIN



TRAINING BULLETIN 95-3

**SIZE UP CONSIDERATIONS
FOR THE
COMPANY OFFICER**

FORWARD

Training Bulletins are an official publication of the San Francisco Fire Department Division of Training.

The intent of training bulletins is to enhance the knowledge of officers and members regarding SFFD operations and to help ensure operations are conducted as effectively, efficiently and safely as possible.

It is recommended the material presented in the training bulletin be used as subject matter for battalion, company drills and other training activities.

Officers are encouraged to contact the Division of Training with comments or suggestions regarding training bulletins.

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BASIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR SIZING-UP AN EMERGENCY

Introduction:

Although no two emergency responses are the same, a trained fire officer will use a logical systematic method in evaluating and arriving at a decision. To improve communications on the fire ground, every fire officer should understand this decision making process.

I. Size-Up

- A. When arriving at work, a fire officer begins to gather information which will be used in making a final decision.
- B. While every emergency will be different, a standard decision making process must be used to size-up any particular decision.
- C. The five basic components in the standard decision making process are:
 - 1. Knowing the facts
 - 2. Understanding the probabilities
 - 3. Assessing your own decision
 - 4. Making a decision
 - 5. Forming an action plan

II. Knowing the Key Facts:

- A. Time of emergency
 - 1. Day
 - 2. Night
- B. Weather conditions
 - 1. Wind (duration, velocity, and direction)
 - 2. Temperature
- C. Location of emergency

D. Nature of emergency

1. Fire
2. Explosion
3. Smoke conditions
4. Medical emergency

E. Life hazards

F. Exposures

G. Involved structure

1. Occupancy
2. Contents
3. Construction
4. Height
5. Size
6. Vertical and horizontal openings
7. Fire Protection equipment

H. Extent of fire

1. Volume
2. Floors involved
3. Phase of development

III. Understanding The Future Probabilities:

- A. Life hazard
- B. Fire extension
- C. Explosions
- D. Building collapse
- E. Change in weather
- F. Preventable damage

IV. Realistically Assessing Your Own Situation:

- A. Personnel available
- B. Equipment at hand
- C. Accessibility of additional resources
- D. Water supply available
- E. Action already taken

V. Making A Decision:

- A. Knowing the facts, understanding the probabilities and assessing officer's own situation are key ingredients of any informed decision.
- B. Decision making is an on-going process
- C. This process may well involve an initial decision and several additional decisions as the emergency progresses.

VI. Forming An Action Plan:

- A. Where should personnel and equipment be deployed
- B. What communications will be required
- C. Who will supervise activities
- D. What type of equipment is needed

VII. Summary:

The five (5) basic considerations in sizing-up an emergency are 1) knowing the facts; 2) understanding the probabilities; 3) assessing your own situation; 4) making a decision; 5) forming an action plan.