

Grand Forks Fire Department

Standard Operating Procedures

SOP# 100.02	Section Rules and Regulations	Title DEFINITIONS
Authored by:		Peter D. O'Neill, Fire Chief
Reviewed by:		Michael K. Flermoen, Deputy Fire Chief
Authorized by:		Peter D. O'Neill, Fire Chief
Effective date: 02/01/02	Implementation date: 02/01/02	Revision date:

The Grand Forks Fire Department, in both written and oral communications, commonly uses these terms with the following definitions:

1. Absent without leave (AWOL): Failure to report for duty without sufficient reason and without securing proper approval for leave in advance.
2. Acting: Serving temporarily in a position to which the member is not ordinarily assigned, usually in a position of higher rank.
3. Academy: A facility used to train recruits to be firefighters. May also refer to a facility or complex where in-service training is conducted.
4. After Action Review: A formal process following an incident and conducted by the personnel who responded so as to analyze their actions, identify those tasks that were performed correctly, and correct any potential deficiencies.
5. Aid station: Where triage takes place and necessary EMS personnel and equipment are located to provide aid to fire victims and fire service personnel. The person in charge may be either a fire service or an EMS person. The person assigned should be at least paramedic certified. The aid station may also be divided into sectors such as Triage, Treatment, and Transportation. All activities should be coordinated through the command post.
6. Alarm: An incident or event that requires a response by one or more fire companies or medical units.
7. All clear: A phrase used on completion of the primary search of a fire building indicating to all personnel that the search has been completed and that no victims were found.
8. Appeal of Disciplinary Action: See Civil Service Code 6-0605.

9. Arrival Time: The time as indicated on the radio log that the first unit arrived at an incident. Also, the time that other responding companies arrived. (10-23)
10. Assignment: (1) A predetermined designation of the units to respond to a given type of incident; (2) the entire complement of apparatus assigned to any given incident; (3) the assignment of any given unit.
11. Attack unit: Usually the first piece of fire apparatus on the scene, the attack unit sets up hoses to fight the fire. It can consist of more than one unit if necessary.
12. Automatic aid: A programmed plan that responds the closest available company to an incident even though the closest company may be from a different political jurisdiction.
13. Back in: A term used to indicate that a company is back in quarters.
14. Base station: A fixed two-way radio station located in either the Dispatch office or the watch office of a fire station.
15. Bereavement leave: See civil service code 6-0809
16. Call: An alarm for a fire or emergency.
17. Call back: The recall of off duty personnel back to duty for an incident, event or to fill a vacancy on a shift that is below minimum staffing levels.
18. Call back number: A telephone number provided by 911 to contact a person who reports a fire.
19. Chain of command: The line of authority from the fire chief, through a single subordinate, at each level of command.
20. City: The physical area within the defined boundaries of the city
21. Command: The radio identifier for the officer in charge of an incident. Also known as the incident commander or IC.
22. Command post: The designated location at an incident, at which the primary command functions are executed. The incident commander, support personnel, and representatives from other agencies, as required, staff the command post. The command post shall designate frequencies to be used by command support operations.
23. Compensatory time: See Civil Service Code 6-0417.

24. Controlled burn: Planned burning, allowed only by permit, conducted to remove fuel, abate a hazard, or clear a building site prior to construction.
25. Critique: A formal process similar to an After Action Review, following an incident and conducted by all personnel concerned (dept. personnel or other agency personnel). In order to, analyze actions, identify those tasks that were performed correctly, and correct any potential deficiencies.
26. Days off: The time off granted to each member without loss of pay after the member completes his regular tour of duty.
27. Detection: The act or system of discovering or locating fires.
28. Dismissal: The act of terminating the service of an employee.
29. Dispatch: (1) To order a fire company or medic unit to respond to a certain location, incident or event. (2) The radio identifier for the department's emergency communications center.
30. Disregard: An order to one or more responding units that their services are not needed and that they should return to service.
31. Divisions: Established to divide an incident into geographical areas of operations.
32. Drafting: Using a pump to lift water from a supply source, such as a river, pond, ditch, dump tank, coulee, etc.
33. Drill: A training session.
31. Drill tower: A multistory training structure.
32. Eligibility list: A list of eligible candidates certified by the Civil Service Commission as having qualified to be considered for employment in an entry-level position.
33. Emergency callback: Callback to duty when emergency conditions require additional personnel to mitigate the emergency. Employees shall be compensated for callback duty according to City policy.
34. EMS: Emergency medical service.
35. En route: Indicates that an apparatus or other unit is responding to an incident.
36. Exposure: A building, vehicle or other property that is endangered by fire in an adjacent building, a vehicle, or property.
35. False alarm: An alarm for which no fire or emergency existed.

36. Fill site: The location where the tank trucks go to get loads of water, such as a hydrant, draft site, storage tank, etc.
37. Fire code: Ordinance governing fire prevention as adopted by the City Council and referred to in City Code; presently 1994 Uniform Fire Code.
38. Fire danger: A term indicating the risk of a wildland fire due to such weather conditions as prolonged drought, high winds, low humidity etc.
38. Fireground: The operational area at a fire.
39. Fire school: An accredited university offering regular programs in fire science. May also refer to a recruit school or training academy or seminars of various lengths.
40. First due: The first company listed on an alarm assignment for a given location that is nearest in response time and travel distance.
41. First in: The first company or unit to arrive at an incident.
42. Forest Service: (1) An agency with fire control responsibility for wildland fire suppression. (2) U.S. Forest Service. An agency with fire control responsibility for wildland fire suppression in national parks, national forests, and other land owned by the federal government.
43. Front line: Apparatus normally staffed at all times.
44. Fully involved: A size-up report that indicates that the entire area of a building is so involved with heat, smoke, and flame that immediate access to the interior isn't possible until some measure of control has been achieved with hose streams.
45. Gender: Within this manual, the words "he" and "his" (when used) shall be construed to refer to both genders.
46. General bulletins: Written procedures used to clarify department policy or procedures or to disseminate information of a permanent nature.
47. General order: Written directives used to change the department's rules, regulations, or standard operating procedures. General orders shall be included in the Department SOP manual.
48. Groups: Established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation.
49. Hazard: Any condition that poses a threat to property or that might result in injury or death.

50. Immediately: The term "immediately" shall be construed to mean "as soon as possible and practicable."
51. Incendiary: A fire believed to have been deliberately set.
52. Incident: A fire, medical call, or other emergency that requires one or more fire companies or medical units to be dispatched to render aid. See also Alarm.
53. Incident commander (IC): The person with overall responsibility for a particular incident. The person will use the radio term Command and may use a geographical identifier when multiple operations occur-e.g. "Main Street Command."
54. IC Support officer: An aide appointed by the incident commander on the emergency scene and normally located in the command post.
55. Incident command system: A systematic plan for conducting operations during an incident. See SOP 600.02, Incident Command System.
56. Incipient: A fire of minor consequence or in initial stages.
57. Incompetence: The inability to satisfactorily perform one's duties or responsibilities.
58. Initial alarm: The first notification received by the department indicating that a fire or emergency exists.
59. In service: (1) A report indicating that an apparatus or ambulance is fully functional and available to respond to an assignment. (2) A radio message indicating that an apparatus or ambulance has completed its previous assignment and is available for the next call. (3) A radio message indicating that a company or medic unit has left its quarters and will be monitoring the radio for any assignments.
60. Inspection: The periodic exam of personnel, stations, or apparatus for appearance, readiness, fitness for duty, and attention to duty according to standards set out in the rules and regulations manual, standard operating procedures, and general orders.
61. Insubordination: The willful disobedience of any order, lawfully issued by a superior officer; or any disrespectful, mutinous, insolent, or abusive language toward a superior officer.
62. Investigation: (1) Sending an individual, company or unit to check for smoke, heat, steam, or other indication of fire. (2) The act of determining the cause and origin of a fire. (3) The act of determining whether or not a complaint received by the department concerning the actions of one or more of its employees was proper and within the scope of his duty.

63. Journal: (1) A day book or record book maintained by a captain of all activities, alarms, visitors, etc. (2) A computer program in which the same information is recorded.
64. Length of service: The period of time starting from the date an employee's employment begins until the present or until the date the member's employment ends.
65. Location: A specifically designated place to which fire apparatus or medical units are dispatched in answer to an alarm or request for assistance.
66. Log: A chronological record of events, such as the Dispatch log, Incident log or Daily log.
67. May, Should, Will and Shall: The word "May" is permissive. "Should" is advisory. "Will" and "Shall" are mandatory. Where used, the word "Should" implies that, while the procedure is not mandatory, it is in the best interest of everyone involved for the procedure to be followed.
68. Malicious false alarm: A false alarm of fire deliberately sounded to inconvenience the fire department and to cause a disturbance or excitement rather than one sounded by accident or error.
69. Members: A collective term applied to all persons on the department's payroll.
70. Message: A radio communication consisting of a contact call, response, text, and acknowledgment. (this is in regards to radio usage only)
71. Mutual aid: Two-way assistance by fire departments of two or more communities freely given under prearranged plans or contracts so that each will aid the other in time of emergency.
72. Neglect of duty: Failure to give proper attention to the performance of one's duty.
73. Non-sworn employee: A civilian, non-uniformed employee.
74. Nothing showing: A report given by the first-arriving unit at an incident indicating to Dispatch and other responding companies that no smoke, fire, or other emergency situation is apparent.
75. Oath of office: The oath each member takes at the time he is commissioned into the department and upon each promotion within the department.
76. On duty: An employee is on duty during the period of time when he is actively responsible for, or engaged in the performance of his duties.

77. Off duty: An employee is off duty on his days off and when on authorized leave and free of the responsibility of performing usual routine duties. An employee is subject to recall at any time.
78. Order: An instruction or directive, written or oral, issued by a superior officer to a subordinate or group of subordinates in the course of duty.
79. Over the air: Via radio transmission.
80. Overcome: The state of a person being incapacitated by heat, smoke, or toxic gases so as to be rendered helpless and possibly unconscious.
81. Patient: Someone who is sick or injured and requires the assistance of the department. A patient may also be referred to as a victim, citizen, customer, individual, person, man, woman, or child. A patient should never be referred to as a subject, perpetrator, or suspect!
82. Permit: Official permission given in writing to allow a special activity.
83. Personnel: Fire department employees.
84. Plural words: Within this manual, singular words include the plural and plural words include the singular.
85. Probationary period: The initial one year of new appointees' service, beginning with the date of employment.
86. Progress report: A periodic radio report required from an incident commander to update Dispatch and other units on the status of an incident.
87. Promotion: A change in a member's employment status to a position of greater responsibility or higher classification.
88. Quarters: The fire station to which a given company unit is assigned.
89. Rank: A grade of official standing. Each class of employees of the department constitutes a rank.
90. Ranking officer: The officer having the highest rank in grade for the longest period of time, unless otherwise designated by competent authority.
91. Rear: The side of a building or incident directly opposite the main street front or command position.
92. Reassignment register: A list of eligible candidates certified by the Civil Service Commission as having qualified for promotion.

93. Receiver: A mobile or base radio unit that allows a person to hear a radio message on a specific channel or frequency.
94. Recruit: (1) A new employee during the first 12 months of his employment. Also known as rookie, probie, etc. (2) The act of encouraging people to apply for employment with the department.
95. Recruit school: A formal training curriculum in which new employees are provided with at least the minimum number of training hours and subjects as required. Also known as an academy.
96. Rehab: This term can refer either to the actual rehab vehicle or to a designated location at an incident. The purpose of rehab is to provide rest, refreshments, and medical evaluation to working personnel.
97. Relieved: (1) Used to describe a fire company that is dismissed from further duty at the scene of an emergency. (2) Used to describe the routine act of changing shifts. (3) Used to describe the temporary dismissal of an individual by a supervisor due to a pending disciplinary action, see also relieved of duty.
98. Relieved of duty: An employment condition during which a member is not required or permitted to perform assigned duties but retains pay status. A member generally is relieved of duty when under investigation.
99. Rekindle: An instance where, due to re-ignition, the department is called back to a location where the fire was thought to have been extinguished.
100. Repeater: A radio that receives a signal from another radio and rebroadcasts the signal with greater signal strength.
101. Reserve: Apparatus not on frontline duty but available in case a frontline unit is undergoing repairs. It is also available to be staffed by off-duty personnel when necessary.
102. Resignation: See Civil Service Code 6-1006.
103. Response Area: A designated geographic area of service delivery normally covered by a single fire station. It may also refer to the entire area covered by a single fire department regardless of the number of stations.
104. Respond: To answer an alarm in accordance with a prearranged assignment or on the instruction of the Dispatcher. To proceed to the scene of an incident or other event.
105. Responding: A term indicating that orders to proceed to an alarm have been received and the apparatus or medical unit is on its way.

106. Response: The act of responding to an alarm. Also, the entire complement of personnel and apparatus assigned to an alarm.
107. Response time: An interval of time measured from the receipt of a request for emergency service until the first unit or apparatus arrives at the scene of an incident.
108. Retirement: Termination of a member's active service by reason of attainment of the statutory length of service and age requirements or because of an incapacitating disability.
109. Riser: A vertical water pipe used to carry water for fire protection to elevations above grade, such as a standpipe or sprinkler riser.
110. Roster: A list of fire department personnel and their duty assignments. Also, a list of apparatus motor vehicles owned by the department.
111. Rules and regulations: A written collection of administrative policies, operational procedures, and rules and regulations authorized by an order of the fire chief and included in the Department SOP manual.
112. Rural fire: A fire more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant.
113. Run: A fire, medical or other alarm. See also, incident.
114. Sector: A smaller, more manageable unit of command delegated by the incident commander to provide management and command for specific function or geographical areas. Usually a specific task assignment (e.g., Staging), a geographic area (e.g., north sector), or an operational area (e.g. interior sector) of an incident that is designated and assigned by the incident commander. This is a command and control function. Sector commanders should coordinate their activities with the incident commander and use their assignment as their radio identifier. During high-rise operations, the sector designation corresponds to the floor of the building.
115. Shift: (1) A working tour---e.g. 24 hours on, 24 hours off. (2) An organized group of firefighters who are assigned to work the same tour of duty or shift.
116. Shop: The department motor vehicle repair facility.
117. Sick leave: The period of time during which an employee is excused from active duty by reason of illness or injury that prevents him from performing his duties.
118. Signal: A radio message referring to the strength of a radio transmission and the listener's ability to hear and understand the message.
119. Special bulletin: A written, unnumbered procedure covering a specific situation or event and that applies for a limited period of time.

120. Special duty: Any duty that requires an employee to be excused from his regular duties
121. Special order: A written, unnumbered directive covering a limited period of time during which the rules, regulations, or standard operating procedures will be changed. Special orders shall be kept in a permanent file.
122. Staging area: A designated location(s) where incident personnel, apparatus, and equipment are assigned in an available status for deployment. The staging officer shall coordinate activities through the command post and will use the term Staging as his radio identifier. If necessary, the command post shall assign a staging frequency that will normally be the primary alarm channel. When more than one staging area is used at an incident, a geographic identifier will be used, such as Forward Staging.
123. Station: A building or quarters that houses on-duty personnel and apparatus.
124. Street Index: A complete listing of all streets, roads, and highways located within the department's response district. The Street Index is organized alphabetically and numerically by block number. In addition, the index lists cross streets and major landmarks and the box number and hydrants for each intersection. The Master Street Index is kept in the watchroom and is periodically updated by the fire officer assigned that responsibility.
125. Superior officer: Any employee with supervisory responsibilities, either temporary or permanent, over those of a lower rank.
126. Support: In incident command, those logistical functions that aid the resolution of the incident.
127. Suppression: The total work of extinguishing a fire, beginning with its discovery.
128. Suppression personnel: Individuals assigned to firefighting, EMS, and other response duties.
129. Suspension: An action taken whereby a member is denied the privilege of performing his duties as a consequence of dereliction of duty, breach of discipline, misconduct, or violation of regulations. See Civil Service Code 6-0604
130. Sworn employee: An uniformed employee.
131. Tanker: A fire truck used primarily to carry large quantities of water for rural firefighting.
132. Tanker shuttle: Using several tankers to transport water from a water supply source to a fire scene.

133. Tank truck: See tanker.
134. Tense: Words used in the present tense include the future tense.
135. Territory: A geographic area served by a single fire station or the entire area served by a department. See also District.
136. Through official channels: Through the hands of the superior officer in the chain of command. Written and oral communications may be passed through interoffice mail or voice mail unless the urgent or sensitive nature of the matter requires personal face-to-face contact.
137. Tied up: A fire company engaged for a period of time and unable to respond to incidents.
138. Tour of duty: The hours during which an employee is on duty.
139. Turn-out time: The interval of time as measured from the receipt of an alarm until a fire company reports en route or notifies Dispatch that it is responding.
140. Two-way radio: A mobile or base radio unit that allows both the transmission and receipt of audio messages.
141. Unavailable: A report indicating that an apparatus or ambulance is not available to respond to an alarm. This report should be accompanied by a message indicating the estimated length of time that the unit will be unavailable.
142. Under control: A fire is sufficiently surrounded and quenched so that it no longer threatens destruction of additional property.
143. Vacation leave: The vacation time granted to all employees of the department each year as established by the City. See Civil Service Code 6-0807.
144. Wash down: The cleansing or removal of gasoline, diesel fuel, or other petroleum products from a roadway following a motor vehicle accident. Originally meant to wash the product down into a ditch or storm sewer. Now the product has to be collected due to environmental regulations.
145. Watch: An interval of time during which a person is assigned to a specific duty. In some jurisdictions, this duty is served at the watch desk in the watch office.
146. Watch desk: The desk in a fire station at which the various communications equipment is placed and alarms are received and recorded.
147. Watch Room: A room in which the watch desk is placed.

148. Water supply: In incident command, the officer assigned to provide an adequate supply of water to meet the fire flow demand at a given incident.
149. Water tender: See tanker.
150. Wildland fire: A fire involving natural groundcover such as grass, brush, and trees; does not include cultivated lands.
151. Workman's Comp leave: The period of time during which a member is excused from duty by reason of being injured while on duty.
152. Working fire: A fire that requires firefighting activity on the part of most or all of the personnel assigned to the alarm. A fire that will require considerable effort to extinguish and may require an additional response of apparatus, such as additional engines, or such as tankers in rural operations