

ROGUE VALLEY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Document:	Traffic Control
Section & #:	Organizational Policy #3.03
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Developed / Updated By:	Chief Hussey
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Purpose

Working in and near roadways is potentially the most dangerous thing we do. This policy serves as the commitment to responder safety and establishment of best practices with partner agencies.

Policy

It is the policy of the RVFCA to recognize the national Traffic Incident Management Standards (TIMS) for safe operation during roadside incidents. These TIM concepts apply to all roadways where traffic accidents may occur – urban and rural.

Procedure

1. Agencies need to be familiar with the jurisdictions, capabilities and traffic movement priorities of local law enforcement, ODOT and public works agencies in their response area.
2. Positioning of emergency vehicles shall be done in a way to:
 - Protect responders performing their duties;
 - Protect road users travelling through the incident scene;
 - Minimize, to the extent practical, disruption of the adjacent traffic flow.
3. Safe traffic management may include slowdowns, crowding, detours or hard closures. Incident Commanders should be familiar with each and the benefit vs. consequences.
4. All road closures will be coordinated with law enforcement. Detours may produce greater impacts than the initial incident.
5. All vehicles on scene shall park on the same side of the road, parking as many OFF the road as possible.
6. Avoid emergency lighting overload. Once good traffic control is established, TIMS recommends reducing the amount of emergency-vehicle lighting.
7. Be considerate of approaching drivers during nighttime incidents. Turn off or adjust all unnecessary sources of vision impairment to approaching vehicles. Use traffic advisors if so equipped.

8. Advance Warning, Transition, Blocking, and Work Zones need to be big enough. Allow room for additional, more functional resources to stage ahead of less essential resources. Consider additional notification methods and expand advanced warning, when operating in reduced visibility (i.e. smoke, fog) or when road surface necessitates greater stopping distance.
9. All responders, within the right-of-way of a roadway who are exposed to traffic or to response equipment **SHALL** wear high-visibility safety apparel (HVSA).
 - Exception - Firefighters or other responders engaged in emergency operations that directly expose them to flame, fire, heat, and/or hazardous materials.
10. Utilize clear and concise hand signals when manually directing traffic.
11. Additional assistance with traffic control needs can be requested through the primary fire dispatch centers. Every attempt should be made to be specific in the resources needed and the location to report to.
12. Traffic control needs for extended periods (days) will be coordinated with local incident managers and agency representatives.

Interstate and Highway Response (in addition to the above)

1. ODOT quick response unit should be considered early and requested through dispatch.
2. The default is to NOT stop and cross the median or barrier on foot to access an incident. However, if the officer deems there to be a life-threatening emergency in which an appreciable difference can be made they can deviate. In this case the apparatus should remain in a position of tactical advantage while the crew crosses. Then the apparatus should proceed to the scene and create a standard block.
3. The default is to NOT drive through the median to access a scene. However, as above, that option exists when absolutely necessary. When crossing, companies should:
 - Approach at appropriate angles; do not scrape the apparatus on the roadside.
 - Assess the landscape: do not start a fire in dry grass, nor become stuck or entangled.
 - Do not impede traffic flow, slow early and cautiously seek return access. Do not expect it.
 - Be aware of the impact of headlights and warning lights on traffic from the opposing direction.
4. Do not stretch hose lines across travel lanes unless there is a confirmed road closure.

