**Chapter 11: Response and Size-Up**

**Chief Concepts**

* Response actions include receiving the alarm, donning protective clothing and equipment, mounting the apparatus, and transporting equipment and personnel to the emergency incident quickly and safely.
* Size-up is the systematic process of gathering information and evaluating the incident. It is essential for determining the appropriate strategy and tactics to handle the incident.
* You must be prepared to respond to an emergency at all times. Inspect your PPE and SCBA daily to ensure that it is ready for operations.
* The response process begins when the alarm is received at the fire station. Dispatch messages will include the location of the incident, the type of emergency, and the units that are due to respond.
* Don your PPE before mounting the apparatus. While riding in the apparatus, your seat belt should be secure, and you should be concentrating on mentally preparing for the emergency. Consider any relevant factors that could affect the emergency, such as the weather and the time of day.
* Upon arrival at the scene, traffic safety should be a major concern. Always check for traffic before exiting the apparatus. Follow departmental SOGs/SOPs to close streets quickly and block access for civilian vehicles to the incident.
* Fire fighters should always work in assigned teams and be guided by a strategic plan for the incident. Teamwork and disciplined action are essential to provide for the safety of all fire fighters and the effective, efficient conduct of operations.
* Upon arriving at the scene, check into the personnel accountability system.
* To protect the safety of fire fighters, controlling utilities is one of the first tasks to be accomplished. The electrical service and gas supply should be shut off and locked.
* Size-up is the first step in making plans to bring the emergency incident under control.
	+ The initial size-up is often conducted by the first-arriving company officer, who serves as the IC until a higher-ranking officer arrives at the scene and assumes command.
	+ The IC uses the initial size-up information to develop an initial plan. This plan is revised as additional information is gathered.
* Size-up relies on two basic categories of information: facts and probabilities.
	+ Facts are data elements that are accurate and based on prior knowledge, a reliable source of information, or an immediate, on-site observation.
	+ Probabilities are factors that can be reasonably assumed, predicted, or expected to occur, but are not necessarily accurate.
* The preincident plan contains facts that can be essential in creating a plan. It provides details about a building’s construction, layout, contents, special hazards, and fire protection systems. This information can be used in determining how to rescue occupants and attack a fire.
* The IC often operates out of a command post outside the structure and relies on company officers to provide reconnaissance reports. Progress reports from companies enable an IC to judge whether an operational plan is effective or needs to be changed.
* Probabilities refer to events and outcomes that can be predicted or anticipated, based on facts, observations, common sense, and previous experiences. Fire fighters frequently use probabilities to anticipate or predict what is likely to happen in various situations. The attack plan is also based on probabilities, predicting where the fire is likely to spread and anticipating potential problems.
* Resources for fire fighters include all of the means that are available to fight a fire or conduct emergency operations at any other type of emergency incident. Resource requirements reflect the size and type of incident. Resource availability depends on the capacity of a fire department to deliver fire fighters, fire apparatus, equipment, water, and other items that can be used at the scene of an incident.
* Based on information gathered during size-up, the IC develops an IAP that outlines the steps needed to control the situation. The IAP should be based on the five basic fire-ground objectives:
	+ Save lives—Protecting lives is the first consideration at a fire or any other emergency incident. Often the best way to protect lives is to quickly extinguish the fire.
	+ Protect exposures—The first priority in protecting property is to keep the fire from spreading.
	+ Confine the fire—Once the exposures are protected, the IC will focus on confining the fire to a specific area.
	+ Extinguish the fire—Depending on the size of the fire and the risk involved, the IC will mount either an offensive attack or a defensive strategy to extinguish a fire.
	+ Salvage property and overhaul the fire—Salvage is the removal or protection of property that could be damaged during firefighting operations. Overhaul operations completely extinguish any remaining pockets of fire.