



ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

OG - 600-203

FIREGROUND EMERGENCIES – FIRE FATALITY INVESTIGATIONS

1.0 PURPOSE

This plan is to be utilized when it is necessary to investigate a civilian fatality of an emergency related incident.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility to ensure that the above actions are taken in an appropriate manner are defined as indicated below:

- 2.1 Incident Commander/Office in Charge
- 2.2 Montgomery County Emergency Dispatch Services (EDS)
- 2.3 Abington Township Fire Marshal

3.0 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 The Incident Commander or Officer in Charge activates this plan by contacting the EDS or other dispatch center in use, and request assistance of the Abington Township Fire Marshal's Office, if not already on scene.
- 3.2 The EDS or dispatch center in use will page or call the Fire Marshal and/or Assistant to the scene.
- 3.3 The Fire Marshal and/or his/her representative will activate the Investigation Team.
- 3.4 The Incident Commander will isolate and secure the scene as is safe to do so.
- 3.5 The Investigation Team will follow established protocols and conduct the fatality investigation separately and independently from the origin and cause investigation.
- 3.6 Once assembled, the Investigation Team will;
 - 3.6.1 Identify the Problem.
 - 3.6.2 Ensure the scene has been isolated and is safe to enter.
 - 3.6.3 Collect Data.
 - 3.6.4 Document the scene.
 - 3.6.5 Photograph the scene.
 - 3.6.6 Document the body.
 - 3.6.7 Photograph the body.
 - 3.6.8 Develop sketches.
 - 3.6.9 Identify and interview witnesses.
 - 3.6.10 Develop a formal written report.

3.7 Secondary Actions to be performed by the Investigation Team

- 3.7.1** Conduct Interviews.
- 3.7.2** Obtain Records.
- 3.7.3** Develop a timeline.
- 3.7.4** Examine physical evidence.
- 3.7.5** Research Documents.
- 3.7.6** Obtain Expert assistance.
- 3.7.7** Obtain Legal Advice.

3.8 The Investigation Team will analyze all data and develop a formal written report.

3.9 The Investigation Team will cooperate with any and all other agencies with authorization to investigate or be comprised of events involved.

4.0 INVESTIGATION TEAM

4.1 The Investigation Team shall have the authority to conduct a complete and thorough investigation. It will be assembled and operated under a unified command system and consist of the following positions, others may be added as required by the circumstances;

- 4.1.1** Abington Township Fire Marshal or his/her designee.
- 4.1.2** Abington Township Detectives.
- 4.1.3** Montgomery County Detectives.
- 4.1.4** Pennsylvania State Police Fire Marshal.

5.0 REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS

5.1 The Coroner and PA. State Police will be notified as soon as possible of all fatalities.

6.0 RECORDS

6.1 All records, documents and evidence will be maintained by the Abington Township Fire Marshal's Office.

7.0 REFERENCES

7.1 All actions and procedures involved with a fatality investigation will be conducted utilizing guidelines established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and/or other applicable standards established following this plan.