

Section 1

Introduction to the SOP Manual

Chapter 1-1: Purpose and Intent of this Manual

These Standard Operating Policies and Guidelines were developed by and specifically for the Pewee Valley Fire Protection District of Oldham County, Kentucky. They are based on many different reference sources including standards developed by NFPA, OSHA, NIOSH, KRS and other agencies. Reference also comes from standards already developed and practiced successfully by other fire departments, as well as the previous experience of PVFD itself.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a learning guide and a written record of how the PVFD is organized and how PVFD accomplishes its mission. These documents are not intended to be written in an absolute context. Policies and procedures related to the fire department are constantly evaluated as they are applied. They are changed as necessary to reflect changes that affect the PVFD and to better fit the PVFD based on experience with their use.

This book contains 2 kinds of documents: Policies and Guidelines. Policies are written to be administrative in nature and deal mainly with how the department is organized or the intended behavior of the personnel of the department. Policies are relatively rigid in nature, since they are often based upon regulations that the PVFD is bound to follow by law.

Guidelines are written to be a general guide to explain the way PVFD accomplishes different parts of its mission, or to show how the PVFD carries out the rules set forth in its Policies. Therefore, guidelines are more flexible in their application than policies.

It is impossible to document every possible way to accomplish every aspect of how to run a fire department. The Guidelines are intended to show the most common or most effective known way to accomplish a goal. They account for the most common occurrences related to a subject. They should be followed until and unless a situation occurs that would cause an unwanted result if the specific details of the Guideline were to be followed. In this case, the situation must be handled based on the following: *What must be done to deal with the situation while trying to meet the intent of the Guideline, and what would a reasonable person do in this situation?* Common sense must always be applied when carrying out the details and intent of any policy or guideline. However, failure to follow the SOP or SOG without a valid reason may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Each chapter of this book is written as a stand-alone policy or guideline dealing with a particular subject. Related chapters are grouped together in sections. Previously created documents that support or clarify a chapter are added as an appendix within the relevant section.

The male pronouns shall be used throughout this book to refer to either the male or female gender unless a proper name is being referenced.