Chapter 8-6

Standard Operating Policy for

Effective 4-1-03 **Apparatus Operator Training** rev. 12-03-07

1. Purpose

This SOP outlines the PVFD's program for training fire apparatus operators (FAOs). Included in this SOP are titles and descriptions for each position in the progression of training and operation of fire apparatus. Each person who wants to participate must demonstrate their proficiency in each area. The Fleet Supervisor reserves the right to accelerate the training of members who consistently demonstrate outstanding proficiency. Members who exhibit marked decay of their proficiency, or fail to perform to acceptable standards for their next level, may be reverted to their previous position until their deficiencies are corrected.

Certification of each position is considered on-going, as long as the following criteria are met by each person:

-Proficiency is demonstrated through successful operation of equipment, at the respective rank level, at least three times annually, during actual incidents or training evolutions. Peer review by an engineer or higher will serve as the judge for this.

-If the FAO has not had opportunity to complete the previous requirement, they may be given an annual driving and operating competency test by the Fleet Supervisor or an officer. Successful completion of this test will complete their yearly requirement.

-Driver does not take leave from the department, or have consecutive absences, totalling greater than 3 months.

2. Progression of Training

Before a candidate begins the driver training process, the following pre-requisites must be met:

If the candidate is a current PVFD firefighter, they must be a level 1 firefighter, with at least 2 years on the department. The training officer must verify that this requirement is met.

If the candidate is a transfer to PVFD from another department, they must be a level 1 firefighter with at least 3 years previous experience. They must also have at least 6 months time served in PVFD as a firefighter. The candidate must receive clearance from the training officer and Chief after completion of the dept. physical and background check.

All candidates must not posess any physical or mental condition that would impair their ability to safely operate fire apparatus or equipment. Once the above conditions are met, the candidate's training will progress through the following steps. The titles are listed along with the description, requirements and duties of each position.

I. **Fire Apparatus Operator (FAO)** This person has met the minimum levels of performance to drive and operate an apparatus. This includes safe driving, knowledge of truck specific operations, pumping by using the SOP, ready-state servicing of apparatus, and use of all equipment on the apparatus. Certification is done one truck at a time.

II. **Engineer** This person has met all requirements to drive, operate, and pump all PVFD apparatus proficiently. Training must have been completed in the use of specialized equipment, such as foam systems, rural water supply equipment, and aerial devices. Engineers are responsible for assisting in the training of new drivers, and peer review of other drivers and engineers. This position includes knowledge in the following areas:

Preventive maintenance
Performing as the apparatus officer
Pre-plans as they relate to apparatus operations
Complex pumping scenarios
Diagnosing apparatus problems
Mutual Aid response guidelines

Operation of all equipment on the apparatus

III. **Fleet Supervisor** This is the person who is responsible for overall service of the apparatus and fire equipment. The Fleet Supervisor is an engineer who has demonstrated proficiency in apparatus operation and maintenance, and personnel leadership and instruction. This person will know the requisite theory and sources of information related to apparatus operation and maintenance. This position will be appointed by the Chief. Knowledge required and duties include:

Administration of a comprehensive apparatus training program
Administration of a comprehensive apparatus maintenance program
Principles of hydraulics, including detailed use of formulas
Emergency and preventive maintenance
Research and development of ideas to improve operations

3. Classifications and Requirements for Training

Training will be divided into the following four categories, based on a person's previous experience. Each candidate for training will be evaluated by the Fleet Supervisor and the dept. officers, and assigned the driver and pump operator status that best applies to them. The candidate's training will then be executed accordingly. If a candidate is assigned an "experienced" status and does not demonstrate it, they will be reverted to the "new" status requirements.

1. New Driver: This is a person who has no significant previous experience, either in the fire service or from other sources, in driving large trucks. This person must complete all required hours of training for each apparatus.

2. New Pump Operator: This is a person who has no significant previous experience in operating fire pumps or other fire equipment . Completion of all required pump training hours is required, and may be expanded if necessary until the person can demonstrate adequate proficiency at pump and equipment operation.

3. Experienced Driver: This is a person who has significant experience in driving large trucks, either in the fire service or from another source. The person must be able to verify this experience and must exhibit it during apparatus driving exercises. The driving hourly requirements may be shortened for this person, as long as the person and their trainers are comfortable with the person's abilities.

4. Experienced Pump Operator: This is a person who has significant experience in operating fire pumps and other apparatus equipment. The person must be able to verify this experience, and exhibit it during apparatus operations. The pumping hourly requirements may be shortened for this person, as long as the person and their trainers are comfortable with the person's abilities.

4. Hourly Requirements for Each Apparatus

This is the minimum of hours that a "new" driver or pump operator must complete before being eligible to be tested and authorized to operate the apparatus. These hours may be increased if the trainers feel that the person needs more time to learn. The hours may be decreased if the Fleet Supervisor and the dept. officers concur that the person has demonstrated excellent proficiency.

-8431: 5 hours day driving, 4 hours night driving, 4 hours pumping and tool operations

-8432: 5 hours day driving, 4 hours night driving, 4 hours pumping, including drafting

-8433: 5 hours day driving, 4 hours night driving, 4 hours pumping, including drafting

-8455: 5 hours day driving, 4 hours night driving, 4 hours pumping, 4 hours aerial ops

-8467: 5 hours day driving, 4 hours night driving, 4 hours pumping, including drafting, foam operations, and water shuttling

-8476: 4 hours day driving, 3 hours night driving, 2 hours pumping

5. Cross-Training on Apparatus

Time spent training on one apparatus may be credited toward time spent on another, due to similarities in the trucks and the skills required to operate them. The following list outlines the cross-training credit for each apparatus.

Certified Driver of:	Gets Credit for:
8431	2 day hours driving on 8433, 2 hours night driving on 8433 2 hours pumping on 8433
8432	2 day hours driving on 8467
8433	2 day hours driving on 8431, 2 hours night driving on 8431 2 hours pumping on 8431
8455	2 day hours driving 8431 or 8433, 2 night hours driving 8431 or 8433 2 hours pumping 8431 or 8433
8467	2 day hours driving on 8432
Any of the above	2 day hours driving 8476, 2 night hours driving 8476

6. Critical Failure of Eligibility to Drive

If a driver, of any rank, commits a knowingly reckless act while operating PVFD equipment, they will lose all driving priviledges. Other discipline may also be administered by the dept. officers. Driving priviledges will only be restored after the person has rectified the situation with the dept. officers and Fleet Supervisor, and they feel comfortable with returning the driver's status.

If a driver is involved in an at-fault incident while operating PVFD equipment, they will be placed on leave from driving until the incident can be reviewed. The driver will regain their status after completing remedial training, at the discretion of the dept. officers and the Fleet Supervisor.

If a driver training candidate commits a serious, unsafe act while operating PVFD equipment, they may be required to complete remedial training, or may be terminated from the driver training program, depending on the severity of the incident.

7. Testing and Certification of Fire Apparatus Operators

After completing required training hours as prescribed above, FAO candidates will be tested on their ability to drive, pump, and operate all apparatus systems. This will be done after training is completed on each apparatus. The test format will not be standardized, to prevent undue repetition. However, all tests will follow the basic format, and cover the relevant sections of, the latest NFPA 1002 standard on fire apparatus driver/operator qualification. The test will be administered by a PVFD officer or the Fleet Supervisor.

After completion of the first test, a verification test will be administered by a PVFD officer other than the one giving the original test. If the officer giving the second test has no concerns, the candidate is then considered fully qualified and certified to operate the apparatus. The certification will remain in effect subject to the details listed in section 1.

8. Certification as an Engineer

In order to become an Engineer, a candidate must be certified on all PVFD apparatus, and have at least 3 years total experience in fire apparatus operation. They must also take a written and practical test that covers the various aspects of the Engineer job description, as listed in section 2. The test will be created and administered by the Fleet Supervisor. FAOs who hold the title of Engineer at the time of the implementation of this SOP will be grandfathered, as long as they can demonstrate that their skills substantially meet the intent of the Engineer job description.