Pleasant Valley Fire District

Standard Operating Guidelines

SOG #1 - VEHICLE SAFETY TO AND FROM CALLS

PURPOSE: To ensure a safe response of the members of the Pleasant Valley Fire District and safety to the people in the community of Pleasant Valley. The term all apparatus refers to all vehicles owned and operated by the Pleasant Valley Fire District.

GUIDELINES:

1. All district apparatus will come to complete stop at all red lights, stop signs and at the end of the driveway at the stations and proceed only when it is safe to do so.

2. When responding to alarms on apparatus, all personnel are to be properly seated and seat belted in. No personnel shall ride the rear step or any other exterior part of the apparatus. (The only exception is when authorized by the District Chief or his/her designee).

3. Members shall not enter/exit a moving apparatus or don Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while apparatus is in motion.

4. Headlights shall always be illuminated on all district owned vehicles, including Chief's vehicles

5. Driver's window shall be kept open at least one third of the way in all district owned apparatus when responding to and returning from alarms.

6. Apparatus will respond with no more personnel than the vehicle has seating capacity.

7. All apparatus shall always be operated at a safe and prudent speed and with due regard.

8. Vehicle apparatus warning lights shall remain in the off position until the vehicle is fully staffed and ready to respond. When the warning lights are illuminated, all members shall stay a safe distance from the vehicle.

9. All emergency lights will be on when responding to an emergency as per posted running assignments. At all times response can be altered by the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the vehicle.

Code 1: No Lights or Sirens
Code 3: Lights and Sirens
Note - EMS priority 4 is a Code 1 response

10. Directions of the Fire Police for personal vehicle placement shall always be followed.

11. On all mutual aid and company assist relocates, the apparatus will not leave the station until it is staffed with three interior firefighters in addition to the driver, before second dispatch unless directed by the OIC.

12. Support or Probationary Firefighters will not respond to mutual aid assist calls unless directed by the OIC.

13. Non-interior qualified members can respond to mutual aid calls to fulfill and not to surpass their normal duties. All members shall respond on apparatus unless manpower to the scene is requested.

14. The driver of the apparatus will assume the ultimate responsibility for the safe operation of the vehicle. This would include, but not limited to the use of emergency lights in inclement weather, road condition or vehicle location. The OIC will assume the responsibility for all tactical decisions. If there is no officer on the scene, the driver of the first arriving apparatus on the scene shall assume the responsibility for both until relieved.

15. In the event that a vehicle is fully staffed by personnel qualified to do the anticipated job, and a line officer arrives at the station to ride before it responds, the lowest ranking person shall come off the apparatus and let the officer ride, providing there is no other officer on board. In the event there is more than one officer in the station responding to the alarm, the Lieutenant assigned to that vehicle will be given preference to ride.

16. All members responding to the fire station or the emergency scene and displaying a "blue" light on their vehicle are to remember that this light is only a courtesy light. All New York State vehicle and traffic laws are to be followed. All vehicles responding to an alarm and displaying a blue light will yield right of way to any district vehicle displaying red lights. (See New York State Vehicle and Traffic law below). The member must also have a Blue Light card issued by the Chief.

17. Before a vehicle departs from an operation, the driver shall perform a 360-degree vehicle walk-around.

18. No vehicle will back up at any time without a safety spotter. All emergency lights will be displayed while vehicles are backing up. For further information see SOG #14 – Backing Into Station.

19. No emergency vehicle will pass another emergency vehicle while responding to a call without the permission of the lead vehicle.

20. Traffic Advisor Lights (rear flashing yellow lights) shall always be used as per insurance requirements.

21. Only qualified operators shall move any Pleasant Valley Fire District apparatus.

22. At no time shall any apparatus pass a stopped school bus displaying flashing red warning

lights.

23. When responding in a personal vehicle, all drivers will maintain a minimum of 200 feet back when following any apparatus.

24. Drivers shall stay with their apparatus unless directed by the OIC.

25. In vehicles equipped with AM/FM radios, they are not to be used while responding to alarms. In addition, all applicable New York State laws pertaining to cell phone usage shall always be followed .

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law
Section 375 – Subsection 4
Colored and Flashing Lights

The provisions of this subdivision shall govern the affixing and display of lights on vehicles other than those lights required by law.

Blue Light - One blue light may be affixed to any motor vehicle owned by a volunteer member of a fire district or on a motor vehicle owned by a member of such person‘s family residing in the same household or by a business enterprise in which such person has a proprietary interest or by which he is employed, provided such volunteer firefighter has been authorized in writing to so affix a blue light by the chief of the district or company of which he is a member, which authorization shall be subject to revocation at any time by the chief who issued the same or his successor in office. Such blue light may be displayed by such volunteer firefighter on such a vehicle only when engaged in an emergency operation.