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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** | | |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** | |
| **SOG Number:** | |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** | | |

**After Action Reviews (AARs)**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Guideline:** Fire Department will conduct after-action reviews (AARs) at the task group level after all incidents. The review should include, but is not limited to, preparation, response, scene activity, clean-up, safety and operational/clinical effectiveness.

**Purpose:** The intent is to review the events of the incident while the activities performed throughout the event are “fresh” in the minds of the individual members of the task group. Results will help identify areas for improvement, training gaps and resources needed.

**Scope:** All personnel involved in the task group for the incident including agencies outside of the FD are to be included.

**Procedure:**

All After-Action Reviews should include the following key points whether they are informal or formal;

* Are conducted during or immediately after each event
* Focus on intended mission objectives
* Focus on emergency responder, officer/team lead and unit performance
* Involve all participants in the discussion
* Use open-ended questions
* Are related to specific standards
* Determine strengths and weaknesses
* Link performance to subsequent training opportunities

**Informal After-Action Reviews**

During (if practical) or immediately following an incident, at a time and location suitable to the individuals involved, the team leader, crew chief or officer (internal chain of command) should review the following key points

* What was the mission?
* What went well?
* What could have gone better?
* What might we have done differently?
* Who needs to know?

Informal after-action reviews are conducted on all incidents. If someone else needs to know, the next person in the chain of command is notified to determine whether to hold a formal after-action review or handle the training informally.

**Formal After-Action Reviews**

A formal after-action review may be required to address mission, training and/or safety issues among multiple task groups, external fire departments and other agencies involved in the incident. External observers and controllers should be included. Formal AARs take more time, require complex training aids, scheduled beforehand and conducted where best supported.

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

National Fallen Firefighter’s Foundation After-Action Review Poster

Leader’s Guide to After-Action Reviews – U.S. Army (1993)