PURPOSE

Tactical guidelines should be understood by all people operating on the fire ground. Understanding the expectations of firefighters and prioritizing the needs are critical to fire ground operations.

SAFETY CONCERNS

All firefighters and the Incident Command must understand the tactical priorities.

GUIDELINE

Tactical priorities identify the three separate tactical functions that must be completed in order to stabilize any fire situation. These priorities also establish the order in which these basic fire ground functions must be performed. These functions should be regarded as separate, yet interrelated, activities which must be dealt with in order. Command cannot proceed to the next priority until the current function objective has been completed or sufficient resources have been assigned to complete it and it is being accomplished.

Basic tactical priorities are as follows:

> **#1 Rescue**- The activities required to protect occupants, remove those who are threatened and to treat the injured. The benchmark for completion is "Primary search all clear" and is communicated via the radio to the Incident Command.

> **#2 Fire Control**- The activities required to stop the forward progress of the fire and to bring the fire under control. The benchmark for completion is "Fire is under control" and is communicated via the radio to the Incident Command.

> **#3 Loss Control**- The activities required to stop or reduce primary or secondary loss to property and the negative psychological and emotional impact of the event on the customers. The benchmark for completion is "Loss stopped" and is communicated via the radio to the Incident Command.

All three tactical priorities require somewhat different tactical approaches from both the Incident Command and the operational standpoint. While the Incident Command must satisfy the objective of each function in its priority order, Command must, in many cases, overlap and "mix" the activities of each to achieve the current objective. Notable examples are the frequent need to achieve interior tenability with active / extensive fire control efforts before getting on with primary search, or the need to initiate loss control operations while active fire control efforts are being extended.