

Approved by:   
Kerry Green, Fire Chief

Date: 04/24/11

## 1.0 PURPOSE

- The purpose for this procedure is to establish a safe and rapid response to emergency situations in the Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Protection District, District 17.
- Protect and provide life safety for the responders, residents, and motor vehicles within the response area.
- The focus for this procedure is to describe appropriate response procedure from the initiation of a call by Aiken County Dispatch or the Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Department (SBVFD) leadership to arrival upon the fire ground or emergency scene. For actions upon the fire ground, after arrival, refer to Procedure No. 03-II-001, Initial Fire Ground Operations.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS

Authorized Emergency Vehicle (AEV) – Defined by SC Code of Law, Title 56, Chapter 5. All fire apparatus owned and operated by the SBVFD or any POV operated by a member of the SBVFD during the response to an emergency situation within the fire district, responding to and while in mutual aid districts during an emergency, or as requested by outside City, County, or State government Emergency Response organization(s), provided the driver possesses a “Blue Card” (Attachment 2) properly issued by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer and their POV meets the requirement as set forth by the department for qualification and certification.

Blue Card – Card carried by the member, having the signature or mark of the Fire Chief or Chief Officer, issued to the member that affords the member the privilege to operate their POV as an AEV.

Emergency responder – A member of the SBVFD, qualified and certified by the SBVFD to respond to an emergency at an emergent pace.

Emergent response – A response to an emergency, using approved lights, sirens, and other emergency warning devices, as stipulated by South Carolina Law and as further restricted or augmented by the SBVFD SOGs and SOPs.

Firefighter – A member of the SBVFD, qualified and approved by the SBVFD to respond to and extinguish fires.

First Responder – A member of the SBVFD qualified and certified as an Emergency Medical System (EMS) First Responder and authorized by the SBVFD to respond as part of the Emergency Medical System in Aiken County.

Incident Commander (IC) – That person who has assumed and is recognized by personnel as having scene control and responsibility.

Personally Owned Vehicle (POV) – A vehicle used for emergency response, owned and licensed by a Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Department volunteer.

Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Department (SBVFD) – The incorporated entity providing emergency services within the Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Protection District

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Approved operating document the governs and controls specific fire department activities through specific step-by-step instructions, provides specific decision making information, or identifies specific methods or instruction for fire department activities. Characterized by the use of the word “Shall/Must”.

Standard Operating Guide (SOG) – Approved operating document that provides guidance for specific areas of fire department operations and sets a minimum standard of behavior for fire department members. Characterized by the use of the word “Should/May”.

Unsafe Behavior – Any action or behavior observed or presumed to have been undertaken by a member of the department that may place, cause, or expose, the member, other members, mutual aid firefighters, or the general public to risks that can be otherwise averted, shall be deemed an unsafe behavior.

### 3.0 POLICY

- The SBVFD has zero tolerance policy regarding unsafe behaviors while responding to emergency calls.
- Firefighters and emergency responders will respond to emergency situations within the Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire District and to adjoining districts under mutual aid requests.
- Firefighters and emergency responders will respond to emergency situations when dispatched by Aiken County or the SBVFD leadership, in a safe manner while operating either SBVFD vehicles or a POV.
- A POV may be used emergent by an emergency responder. This vehicle and the operation of such, will comply with the rules, regulations, and laws governing such use, as determined and defined by the State of South Carolina Code of Laws, Title 56, Chapter 5, and the SBVFD SOGs/SOPs. Violation of compliance may provide grounds for dismissal.

### 4.0 PROCEDURE

#### 4.1 Responding Requirements

##### 4.1.1 Driver and Vehicle Certification

- Operators of the SBVFD vehicle will be qualified and certified by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer(s). The Fire Chief, Chief Officer, or a delegated officer will issue a “Special Endorsement Fire-Fighter” sticker to all qualified firefighters for operation of SBVFD fire apparatus. Sticker is obtained through the SC Dept. of Motor Vehicles.
- This sticker will be attached to the back of the state issued Driver’s License in accordance with the SC DMV requirements.
- The SBVFD Fire Chief or Chief Officer(s) must inspect and approve privately owned vehicles used for emergent response. The inspection and vehicle certification will be placed on file in the SBVFD office. Successful completion of the requirement will allow the issuance of a “Blue Card” by the Fire Chief or Chief Officer(s) that will afford the member the “*privilege*” to operate a POV as an Authorized Emergency Vehicle, within the allowances of SC Code of Law, Title 56, Chapter 5, and as further restricted by SBVFD SOGs and SOPs. (Refer to Attachment 1 – Personal Vehicle Checklist and Attachment 2 – Blue Card)
- Firefighter/members of the SBVFD not certified through this notation, will not drive and/or operated SBVFD vehicles or respond to emergency situations in their POV using emergent response. Firefighter/members may however, respond in their POV using a non-emergent response.

4.1.2 SBVFD Apparatus – The SBVFD provides a fleet of emergency response Apparatus, strategically placed in one of two stations, providing emergency response services for the residents and property owners in the Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Protection District.

- The SBVFD will maintain and operate these apparatus.
- Insurance for these apparatus is maintained through the yearly SBVFD budget.

4.1.3 Personally Owned Vehicles (POV)

The firefighter/member of the SBVFD using a POV for emergency and non emergency response is responsible for properly licensing the vehicle, for providing adequate vehicle insurance and maintaining proper vehicle registration with the SC DMV.

POVs will comply with the South Carolina Code of Law, Title 56, Chapter 5, regarding emergency equipment and operation on state and/or federal roads. AEVs used emergent will be equipped, as a minimum with the following:

- A revolving red light visible 360° for a distance of 500 feet.
- A siren capable of producing an audible sound for a distance of 500 feet.
- A minimum of one flashing red light or an equivalent emergency light on the vehicle front, located below 54 inches above ground.
- A two-way radio, operating on identified Aiken County and/or SBVFD, fire frequencies.

4.1.4 AEVs in Emergent Vehicle Operation

- Operators of any apparatus, owned by SBVFD or POV owned by a member will comply with all traffic laws established by the State of South Carolina.
- The SBVFD policy is that an appropriately equipped vehicle, approved by the SBVFD Chief, may not exceed the speed limit greater than 15 miles per hour during emergent operations.
- All apparatus and AEVs will stop at all stop signs and/or red lights and railroad crossings, prior to proceeding through the intersection.

4.2 Responding to Emergency Calls

4.2.1 SBVFD Fire Response (fire calls within the SB Fire District boundaries)

- All personnel will proceed to the appropriate and assigned SB Fire stations until apparatus are in route. The top response priority is to get the fire response apparatus in transit to the emergency scene before any POV is allowed to proceed to the scene.
- 03-II-002, Appendix A provides the established procedure for geographic emergency response relative to the apparatus located in Stations 1 and 2.
- Although the firefighter is to report directly to the fire station, an officer may grant permission for a firefighter to proceed directly to the scene or location by radio.
- Personnel response from outside the fire district – Brush and vehicle fires normally do not require an emergent response from outside the district boundaries. As rule-of-thumb for acceptable emergent response
  - Brush or vehicle fire – Within 3 miles of Fire District boundaries
  - Structure fires – Within 7 miles of Fire District boundaries

4.2.2 SBVFD Mutual Aid Response (fire calls outside the SB Fire District boundaries)

- Mutual Aid Response is subject to details given by 03-II-003 Mutual Aid procedure.
- Responding to fire calls outside the SB Fire District is not allowed, unless mutual aid is requested.
- The SBVFD responds to auto-mutual aid and mutual aid requests with adjoining districts, provided adequate coverage is maintained within the SB Fire District.
- Standard vehicle response is outlined in 03-II-002, Appendix A with five (5) personnel, unless otherwise directed by responding officer.
- The use of POV for mutual aid response is allowed, subject to section 4.1 of this procedure.

4.2.3 Vehicle Incidents

- The same rules and procedures for response to a fire are applicable to a vehicle incident.
- The SBVFD does not automatically respond to a vehicle incident, unless dispatched by Aiken County or requested by the IC.
- Response using a POV is allowed, subject to section 4.1, and as directed by a SBVFD officer.
- Standard vehicle response is per 03-II-002, Appendix A, with five (5) personnel, unless otherwise directed by responding officer.

4.2.4 First Responder

- The same rules and procedures for response to a fire are applicable to a First Responder call.
- Response from within the SB Fire District is emergent, unless otherwise directed by a Silver Bluff Officer.
- If outside of the district, member is not to respond emergent unless notified by officer, or first responder on the scene.

4.3 Violation of Policy

4.3.1 Unsafe Behavior

- Should an unsafe behavior be observed and reported to any Chief Officer of the SBVFD regarding a member's safety behavior, the individual will be required to review the incident(s) with the Chief/Chief Officer(s) for appropriate closure of the incident(s).
- Should an unsafe behavior be associated with driving behavior regarding the privilege to operate a POV as an AEV, the Blue Card for that individual will be surrendered by the member to the Fire Chief or Chief Officer until such time as the incident can be cleared.

**Attachments:**

1. Personal Vehicle Inspection Form, Example
2. Blue Card, Example

**Appendix:**

Appendix A – Schedule for Vehicle Response

**Referenced Procedures**

03-II-001 Initial Fire Ground Operations  
03-II-002 Emergency Response, Appendix A  
03-II-003 Mutual Aid

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**CHANGE RECORD**

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
Rev. 0	08/06/03	Scott McMullin	Initial issue of procedure.
Rev. 1	04/24/11	Kevin Lancaster	Expanded Definitions, Identified SC Code of Law specific requirements, Included “Blue Card”, Added Section 4.3.

Attachment 1 – Personal Vehicle Inspection Form Example

**Fire Department POV Title 56 Inspection**

**SILVER BLUFF VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

1119 Williston Road  
 Aiken, South Carolina  
 (803) 652-3678

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Initial POV Inspection

POV Re-Inspection

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle Description \_\_\_\_\_ SC Tag# \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Law, Title 56, Chapter 5, and SBVFD Procedure 03-II-002, Authorized Emergency Vehicles must be properly equipped with lights and siren.

NEXT INSPECTION WILL BE WITHIN \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS.

X - Meets Requirement

N - Not Applicable

C - Comment number

Section 56-5-4700	X	N	C	Section 56-5-4970	X	N	C	Section 56-5-6230	X	N	C
Red Lights				Siren				Seatbelts Installed/Operational			
Oscilating, Rotating, or Flashing				Whistle							
Visible 360				Bell							
Visible - 500' normal sun				Audible from 500'							
Additional Lights as described											

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Member (sign) \_\_\_\_\_

Chief/Chief Officer(print) \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment 2 – Blue Card Example

Example of Front

**Silver Bluff Volunteer Fire Department**

1119 Williston Road  
Aiken, South Carolina 29803  
803-652-3678 Hqtrs.

**OPERATOR'S BLUE CARD**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Operator's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Make/Model/Tag No:

Form II-003-BC-R0

SC FDID #02217

EXAMPLE  
Example of Back

This card confirms the holder complies with SC Code of Law, Title 56, Chapter 5 for lights and sirens and all additional restriction imposed by SBVFD Standard Operating Procedures and is allowed the privilege to respond to emergency situation within the Fire District and extensions as an Authorized Emergency Vehicle.

Insurance  Valid DL  Registration  Inspection Report

Confirmation Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation by: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Chief  Chief Officer