Preparing for Civil Unrest

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is

set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the

language, ideas, expressions, or writings of others.

Signed: _David K. Donohue_____

Date: _March 3, 2019_____

Abstract

Civil unrest, while rare, can tax local resources, result in property damage, and lead to responder injury and death. While response to civil unrest falls first to law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) will be a major stakeholder during the response and recovery phase. While planning for civil unrest is required under National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500 (p. 31), most fire departments have not addressed the issue as part of their all-hazards, comprehensive, emergency planning process. The problem is that may departments lack guidance, preparedness, training, and equipment needed to prepare for and respond to incidents of civil unrest. Using a combination of qualitative research, this this applied research project identified the current state of preparedness activities by fire and EMS agencies with respect to preparing for civil unrest, identified and described practices, policies, and procedures used to prepare for and respond to these incidents.

The findings of this research identified a gap in planning and preparedness activities at the local level, coupled with weaknesses in integrating with law enforcement and other stakeholders during incidents, resulting in ineffective command and control during civil unrest incidents. In addition, an examination of after action reports from incidents and a review of operational guidance indicate a lack of standardized operational concepts, which may lead to difficulties integrating mutual aid units responding to areas of civil unrest, but operating under differing concepts of operations. This project recommends adopting standardized operational doctrine, reinforcing command concepts associated with the National Incident Management System across disciplines, and developing incentives and tracking methods to improve planning and measure effectiveness of these measures across the nation.

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Introduction

Whether called civil disturbances, riots, or civil unrest, the threat of community-based, violent protests exists in every community. As defined by federal law, "the term 'civil disorder' means any public disturbance involving acts of violence by assemblages of three or more persons, which causes an immediate danger of or results in damage or injury to the property or person of any other individual (18 USC 232)". Civil disturbances may be triggered by many things, including, "disputes over exploitation of workers, substandard living conditions, lack of political representation, poor health care and education, lack of employment opportunities, and racial issues" (FEMA, 1993, p. 18). While these incidents require a significant law enforcement presence to mitigate, Lockhart (1992) points out that, "firefighters, paramedics, utility workers, and others are often drawn into the conflict (p. 11)."

The problem is that many departments may lack guidance, preparedness, training, and equipment needed to prepare for and respond to incidents of civil unrest in their jurisdictions. The purpose of this ARP is to identify the current state of preparedness activities by fire and EMS agencies, in the United States, with respect to preparing for civil unrest and to identify and describe practices, policies, and procedures that used to successfully prepare for and respond to incidents of civil unrest. This research paper will use descriptive research to describe:

a) What actions have organizations taken to prepare for and respond to incidents of civil unrest?,

b) What plans have organizations developed and used/exercised for preparing for and responding to incidents of civil unrest?,

3) Are fire and EMS integrated into the jurisdictional intelligence/information gathering

and dissemination process?, and

d) What gaps exist in organizational guidance, preparedness, training, and equipment

needed to prepare for and respond to incidents of civil unrest?

Background and Significance

Since 2001, there have been at least 69 instances of civil unrest in the United States, which

does not count riots in public or private penal facilities (Wikipedia, 2019, Duncan, 2014,

Wikipedia, 2019, Armstrong Economics, 2013, Selk, 2018). Whether called civil unrest, rioting,

and civil disturbance, these incidents involve groups of people, united in confrontation, who

invoke violence that impact the community (unknown, 2011, U. S. Fire Administration, 1993,

Vernon, 2008). As discussed by Vernon (2008, p. 12), civil unrest may occur during or around a

variety of activities, including peaceful protests, concerts, sporting events, and political events.

Acts of civil unrest have occurred in large towns and small cities, college towns and at concerts

and fairs. As every community faces the potential of civil disturbance, planning and

preparedness for these incidents should be undertaken.

Of the 72 incidents of civil unrest documented in the United States, 14 have occurred in

relation to sporting events, 12 have been associated with parties, fairs, and concerts, 17 have

occurred following controversial actions by law enforcement, and 29 have been tied to political

and economic activities (Wikipedia, 2019, Duncan, 2014, Wikipedia, 2019, Armstrong

Economics, 2013, Selk, 2018). While civil unrest associated with sporting events and parties,

fairs, and concerts remain sporadic in nature, the frequency of civil unrest associated with

political and economic activities and law enforcement activities has increased over the past

several years. In fact, political and economic activity and law enforcement activity civil

disturbance are the only trigger identified from 2015 through 2018 (Wikipedia, 2019, Duncan, 2014, Wikipedia, 2019, Armstrong Economics, 2013, Selk, 2018). From 2001 through 2015, the number of civil disturbances in the U. S. trended similar to the number internationally; however, in 2015 and 2016, the number of riots in the U. S. increased and became a larger percentage of the total number of civil unrest incidents worldwide.
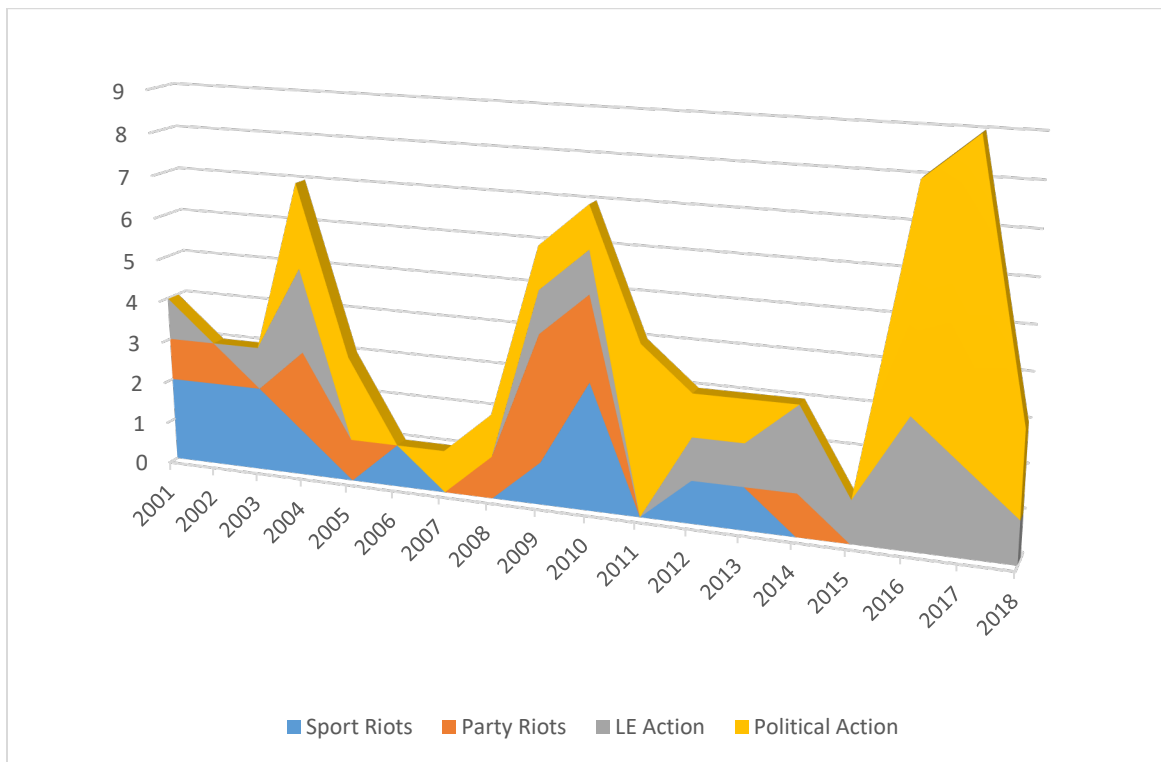

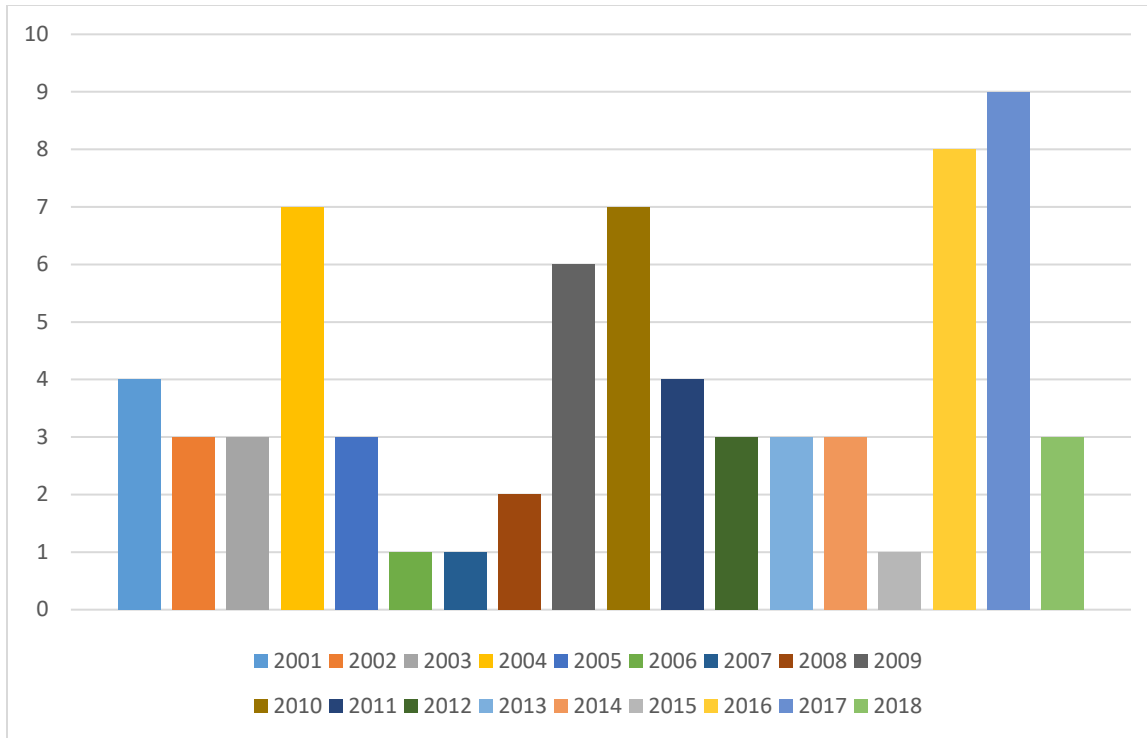*Figure 1.* U. S. civil unrest, by type, 2001 – 2018.

Figure 2. U. S. civil unrest incidents, by year, 2001 – 2018.
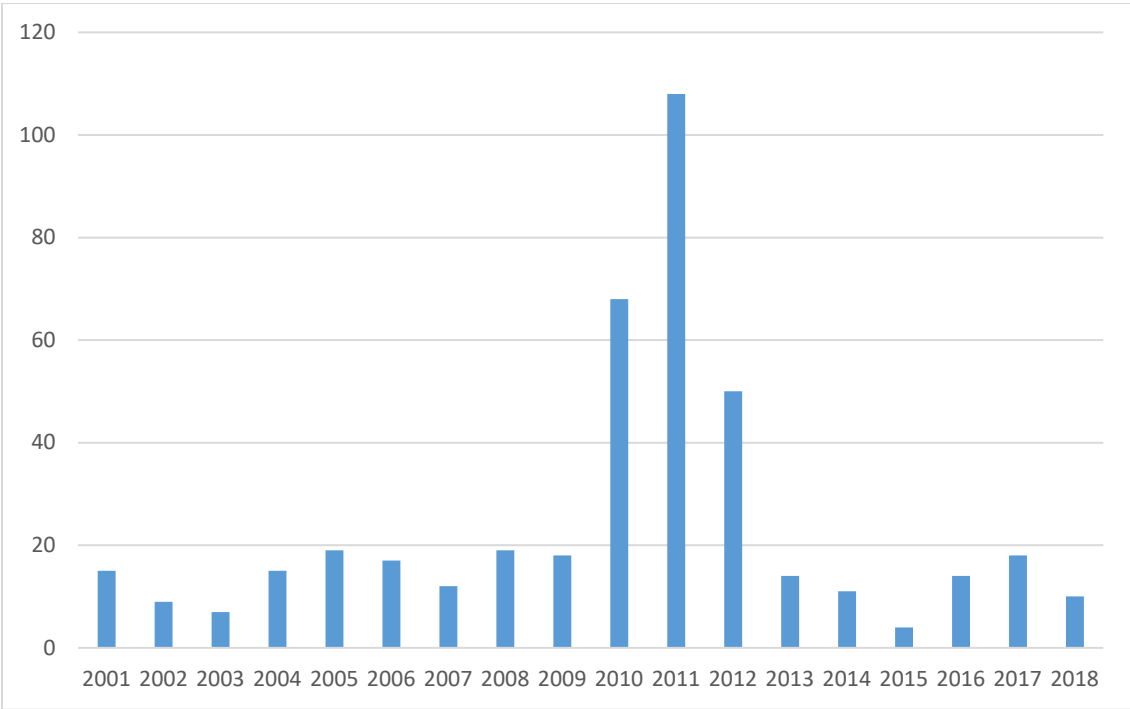
Figure 3. International incidents of civil unrest, 2001 - 2018
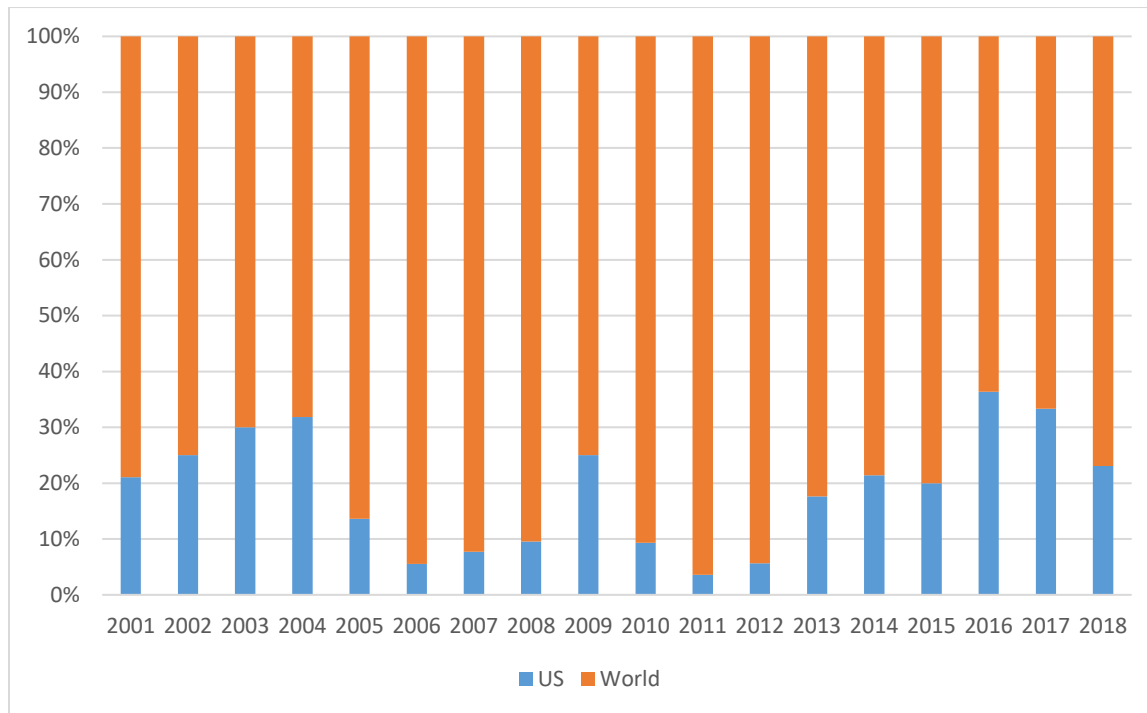
Figure 4. Civil unrest in the United States as a percentage of International incidents per year, 2001 – 2018.

Communities should recognize the potential for civil unrest incidents as part of a comprehensive, all-hazard, risk-based planning scenario. Consensus, standards-making organizations have addressed this need. National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness, directs fire service organizations to, " develop and maintain, in conjunction with the local law enforcement agency/agencies, written standard operating procedures that establish a standardized approach to the safety of members, and that shall govern the roles and responsibilities at incidents that involve violence, active shooters, unrest, or civil disturbance (2018, p. 31)" and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) strategic priority, "posture and build capabilities for catastrophic disasters (p. 7)." Both of which support planning and preparing for predictable

incidents, including civil disturbances. Planning for these incidents includes identifying gaps

through planning and exercises and ensuring that "partnership, tools, and resources" are in place

in order to support response and recovery (FEMA, pg. 7). The United States Fire Administration

(USFA) Strategic Goals two and three, "promote response, local planning and preparedness for

all hazards" and "enhance the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and

recovery from all hazards" (pg. 9) support FEMA's priorities. This provides motivation for fire

and emergency medical services agencies to prepare and plan for emergency incidents, including

civil disturbances.

Literature Review

Civil disturbance as a form of protest against governments have been documented for at least

several hundred years (Prosser, 2008, p. 21). While law enforcement plays a lead role in the

response to these incidents, many agencies and organizations will respond to the area of impact.

For example, during the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, also known as the Rodney King Riots or

South-Central Riots, included responders from over 180 agencies and organizations from outside

Los Angeles (FEMA, 1993, p. 18). These responders entered into an area of potential risk where

more than 12 attempts to kill fire fighters and paramedics were documented in the first three

hours of rioting, nine fire engines were destroyed, and fire fighters and paramedics were attacked

while going to and from work outside of the riot area (Rosegrant, 2000, p. B12, unknown, 2011,

p. 8 Prosser, 2008, p. 21). Prosser (2008, p. 21) attributes these attacks to the view that,

"firefighters were seen as closely allied with authority and the police in particular, although this

was due to the need for protection when dealing with fires. This had the potential to cause direct

attacks on crews and their vehicles.

There are four, primary triggers of civil unrest in the United States. These are incidents triggered by sporting events, by parties, fairs, and concerts, reactions to law enforcement actions, and because of political or economic activities (Wikipedia, 2019, Duncan, 2014, Wikipedia, 2019, Armstrong Economics, 2013, Selk, 2018). While civil unrest triggered by sporting events or parties, fairs, and concerts often have alcohol use, age of participants, and, for those triggered by sporting events, a tradition of civil unrest (Madsen, T. & Eck, J, 2006, p. a). However, unrest that grows from political or economic protest or in response to law enforcement actions may grow from legitimate protest that is controlled and protected. Links, O'Connor, and Sauer (2015) point out that, "mass demonstrations typically convene for the purpose of publicizing a message, drawing attention to a cause, and expressing support for or dissent against public policies, political issues, government or corporate conduct, social phenomena, and numerous other causes" (p. 5). The legitimacy of peaceful protest is echoed by the Urban Fire Forum (2015a), which points out that, "civil unrest events typically erupt from a group of people protesting against major sociopolitical issues through they may also evolve from major sporting events, concerts, block parties, abortion clinics, or political conventions." Communities need to balance freedom of speech and the ability of citizens to hold the democratic process accountable with the need to hold protesters accountable for their action and provide for the safety and security of the community (Wright, 2004, p. 12).

The initial intent of these protests is to create political stability through the exercise of free speech (Links et al., 2015, p. 5); however, FEMA (1993) posits that the community-law enforcement relationship, especially pre-incident interaction and social capital investment, are key factors in peaceful protest transitioning to civil unrest (p. 1). One tactic used to reduce the potential for riotous behavior is the establishment of negotiated crowd management during the

preparation phase of the protest. During this phase, law enforcement and the protest organizers develop a concept of operations that delineates protest actions and when, and to what degree, law enforcement will engage protestors. This is done with, "an underlying philosophy that values protection of free speech rights, tolerance for some disruption, de-escalation, and avoidance of police force unless absolutely necessary (Links et al., 2015, p. 7)." This is echoed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (2014, p. 4) which advocates that law enforcement should take only limited actions deemed, "necessary to maintain public safety and order." Links et al. (2005) state that, "the modern policing approach to mass demonstrations and protests includes managing rather than repressing demonstrators, protecting the First Amendment rights of free speech and peaceable assembly, and guaranteeing due process. Current best practices include being willing to listen, negotiate, tolerate minor infractions (with the goal of peacekeeping rather than strict enforcement of all laws), and keeping a low profile-using time, patience, and communication to facilitate lawful protest and obtain voluntary compliance (p. 5)."

FEMA (1993) indicates that the following factors lead to civil unrest rising from protest:

1. "Those concerned must perceive that a crisis exists.
2. Community members must perceive that all reasonable channels for bringing about effective change are closed to them, for example no representation in the local government and/or lack of support and protection from the police.
3. Community members must believe that rioting and violence will force those in authority to listen to their demands."
4. "The community must be relatively close-knit."
5. "There must be a substantial breakdown in previously accepted relationships between police and fire personnel and the community (p. 25)."

FEMA (1993) continues that there are four main causes of rioting. These are:

1. "The creation and circulation of rumors offering a riot as one solution or possibility.

2. The occurrence of a given event that typifies the kinds of complaints and grievances that a community has.

3. The convergence of large numbers of people around a precipitating event.

4. The communication of specific grievances throughout the forming crowd so that definite courses of action emerge and are followed by a substantial number of the converging crowd (p. 25)."

It must be remembered that, "crowd members make their own choices" and "while people may be influenced by others actions, there is no evidence to suggest that people lose their capacity to control their own behavior simply because others are present (Madsen and Eck, 2006, p. 6)." While rioters are responsible for their actions, Madsen and Eck, 2006 (2006), state that, "researchers and practitioners agree that the police usually play a significant role in forestalling or provoking disorders (p. 10)." This requires that law enforcement approach mass gatherings recognizing that,

1. "Police are servants of the law, not the private army of who happens to be in power.

2. The law and policy are being extended to tactics that had once been ignored and unregulated.

3. The law must be viewed flexibly and a broad pragmatic view of the likely consequences of police action needs to be taken.

4. The primary goal of police in conventional crowd situations is to manage them to see that they do not get out of hand.

5.   There is an emphasis on prevention rather than on responding after the fact.

6. There should be a "co-production of order" involving decentralized and delegated reliance on citizens to mobilize the laws and control themselves and others.

7. There is an emphasis on science and technology involving (a) relatively dispassionate intelligence gathering and analysis and (b) effort to engineer physical and social environments (Links et al. 2015, p. 5)."

Investing in developing, strengthening, and maintaining strong community relationships between the fire and law enforcement services with the community reduce the likelihood of civil unrest occurring and the ability to bring them to a peaceful conclusion with minimal impact to the community (Wright, 2004, p. 11, Urban Fire Forum, 2015a, p. 4). By intentionally engaging the community, formally and informally, emergency services organizations are able to build social capital that will be called on in preventing and during periods of civil unrest (Urban Fire Forum, 2015a, p. 4, Wright, 2004, p. 11, NFPA, 2016, p. 19). The National Fire Protection Association (2016) recommends that fire departments engage in activities to increase social capital within the community, including: gaining an understanding of who is in the community and what their needs are, developing and delivering cultural competence projects, inviting the community to view drills and exercises, engage community risk reduction programs, and engage major stakeholders in the community (p. 5-6).

According to Wright (2004), "civil disturbance requires a different set of operating parameters to daily activities (15)." It is important for agencies to recognize that during low frequency incidents, responding organizations will respond differently based on their jurisdictional priorities, mission, experience, training, and level of preparedness (FEMA, 1993). As multiple agencies will respond to these incidents, preparedness and planning that extends beyond the critical event (Links et al, 2015). The recommendation for preparedness and

preparation is in line with NFPA Standard 1500, which directs fire departments to establish standard operating procedures that align with the National Incident Management System, incorporate fire department and law enforcement leadership into a single, unified command post, annual training with law enforcement, the use of plain language and common communication pathways, and that law enforcement and fire departments develop standard operating procedures that address the safety of personnel and the roles and responsibilities of each discipline (p. 31).

As part of the preparedness process, a multi-disciplinary team of critical stakeholders should be brought together to develop a civil unrest annex to the communities all-hazards plan (Smith, 2017, p. 9, Wright, 2004, pg. 16, Urban Fire Forum, 2015a, p. 7, and Links et al., 2015, p. 36). Wright indicates that the plan should include identifying agency roles and responsibilities, command roles, operational concept of operations, communications planning, identifying and fulfilling logistical needs, public information and affairs, mutual needs and application, and a training and exercise concept plan (p. 16). National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500 supports planning and preparedness for civil unrest, directing that fire departments should develop and maintain standard operating guidelines that ensure the establishment of a single, unified command team, training with law enforcement at least annually, and standardized communication pathways that utilize clear text rather than codes (NFPA, 2018, p. 31). Lockhart credits the major emergencies that required statewide mutual aid, prior to the 1992 Los Angeles Riots as, "one of the factors that allowed the fire service, and some other agencies to work so well (p. 11)".

From the planning process, a joint understanding of the needs and expectations of both law enforcement and the fire service should be established so that each may support the other. According to the Responder Forum (2015), "law enforcement officers are expected to provide

direct and exclusive force protection for fire fighters called upon to respond to fires set by

protestors during the event area (p. 11)." This was one of the original findings from the U. S.

Fire Administration (1993), which put forth that law enforcement should be expected to protect

fire service personnel, provide information on law enforcement capabilities and limitations,

provide timely intelligence, communicate and coordinate at all levels, share law enforcement

needs, concerns, and expectations, participate in planning, training, and exercises, and identify

cost and reimbursement responsibilities (p. 41). The report further clarifies what law

enforcement expects from the fire service, specifically, protection for law enforcement

personnel, recognition of the limits and capabilities of law enforcement, fire services rapidly

engaging law enforcement leadership in the command process, sharing information such as pre-

incident plans, and joint training, mutual aid agreements, and emergency operations planning (p.

41). The U. S. Fire Administration (1993) advocates developing a "menu" approach that allows

law enforcement, fire, and EMS agencies to implement flexible plans of joint action, individual

agency action, or no action to address the civil unrest incident (p. 4). The ability for fire services

to operate effectively and deliver services during civil unrest, coordination of force protection

and support will depend largely on "pre-incident relationships, joint training events, and

briefings on the actions and needs of each agency while the incident is ongoing" (NFPA, 2006,

P. 21).

   Once the concept of operations and planning have been established, annual training, which

includes law enforcement, is required by NFPA Standard 1500 (2018, p. 31). Both the Urban

Fire Forum (2015a, p. 5) and Responder Forum (2016, p. 10) indicate that joint training should

include determining and prioritizing life safety concerns, concept of operations, command,

control, and communications, tactical coordination and deployment, public information and

affairs, and incorporating mutual aid into the response. In order to gain political and financial support for these efforts, the U. S. Fire Administration (1993) recommends that, "fire and law enforcement should work closely with local legislators and government officials to maintain or increase funding for joint training programs (p. 34)."

When incidents of civil unrest occur, fire and EMS agencies will operate in areas where unrest activities are occurring, using modified operational plans. In addition, fire and EMS stations may be located within the area of disturbance, requiring that personnel relocate to areas of comparative safety. National Fire Protection Association Standard 1500 prohibits fire department personnel from entering and operating in areas where violence is present without law enforcement presence and a declaration ensuring scene security and from engaging in operations related to crowd control or the dispersing of crowds (p. 31). Wright (2004) points out that, historically, fire and EMS personnel operating in areas of civil unrest have been the victims of, "shootings, missile throwing, verbal attacks, vandalism of fire houses and equipment (p. 13)."

If civil unrest may occur or apparatus and personnel are to enter into areas of unrest, apparatus should be readied and operational practices altered to improve the safety of fire department personnel. Prior to entry into an area of potential unrest, all tools should be removed from the exterior of all apparatus, interior attack, except to support rescue, will be prohibited, apparatus and personnel shall work in groups, and tactics shall revolve around rapid knock-down of fires from exterior locations and rapid departure from the area (Vernon, 2008). Prior to abandoning fire stations located in, or near, the area of unrest, the Responder Forum recommends that the facility be, "closed and secured except to facilitate the movement of apparatus and equipment. Doors, windows, and lockers should be locked and any parking area secured if possible (p. 12)". In addition, law enforcement personnel shall be assigned to

responding units, with an assignment to provide force protection and, if insufficient to ensure fire

fighter safety, fire service personnel shall exit the area until sufficient force can be assembled

(Cooper, 2017, p. 5, Urban Fire Forum, 2015a, p. 17, NFPA, 2018, p. 31).

The review of current literature leads to the understanding that there is sufficient consensus

that fire and EMS organizations should participate in the development and exercising of multi-

agency/multi-discipline plans related to preparing for and responding to civil unrest. These plans

should include coordinated operations supported by law enforcement, engaged in operations that

deviate from normal operations. Incident response activities should be focused on life safety

with limited fire suppression duties carried out using multiple apparatus and crews to conduct

rapid fire knock down followed by immediate departure from the incident scene. Law

enforcement personnel assigned to fire department teams serve as force protection assets, leaving

the suppression of criminal activities to other law enforcement assets. This concept of operations

requires coordinated command and communications, joint training and exercises, and a review

and improvement plan designed to improve efficiencies during incidents of civil unrest.

Procedures

The process of research began in late summer 2018 at the National Fire Academy (NFA).

Utilizing the Learning Resource Center (LRC) of the National Emergency Training Center

(NETC), which is co-located with the NFA. Research included reviewing periodicals, textbooks,

journals, and research papers related to civil unrest. This step provided background that

supported the development of questions to guide further research. Once the areas of further

research was defined, the process continued with additional literature review at the LRC, a

survey was conducted and distributed (Appendix A), Standard Operating Guidelines were

collected from several fire service departments and organizations (Appendix B), and interviews were conducted with command staff who responded to civil unrest within the past 10 years.

A web-based survey was developed which used mixed methods within the collection instrument (Creswell, J. W. and Cresswell, J. D., 2018, p. 16), using both open- and closed-ended response options. A survey link was distributed to students who attended on-campus courses at the NFA in September, 2018 and was distributed via the United States Fire Administrations TRADENET weekly newsletter distribution network (https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/programs/trade.html). The survey was developed using the on-line application SurveyMonkey ® (www.surveymonkey.com), with the respondents self-selecting to participate. A total of 64 individual responses were received and evaluated. The goal of the survey was to examine the issue of civil unrest from a wide audience in an effort to determine the extent of the civil unrest problem and the level of preparedness, with questions framed around common themes observed during the initial research process. The questions asked during the survey are:

1. Since 2000, has your community experienced one of more incident of civil unrest?

2. If yes, did any of the following events occur leading up to the civil unrest (check all that apply)?

3. During periods that may lead to civil unrest, does your department take any of the following preparatory actions?

4. Does your department have a civil unrest protocol?

5. Does your department have one of more members who are on the distribution list for law enforcement sensitive intelligence/information sharing?

6. If you have a civil unrest plan, who is authorized to implement it?

7. How are incidents within the area of civil unrest prioritized and assigned for response?

8. How is security maintained for responders?

9. Do you have a "no response" policy into high hazard areas, and, if so, what are the

    criteria?

Next, civil unrest procedures and guidelines were collected from several fire departments in the United States and from Melbourne, Australia. The departments compose large and small agencies in both urban and suburban settings. A total of six fire departments agreed to share their guidelines. The organizations willing to share their civil unrest guidelines are:

1. Fire District 12, Yakima, Washington

2. Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, Melbourne, Australia

3. St. Louis Fire Department, St. Louis, Missouri

4. Bremerton Fire Department, Bremerton, Washington

5. Baltimore City Fire Department, Baltimore, Maryland

6. Miami Fire Department, Miami, Florida

The guidelines were compared against each other and against the model guideline established by the Urban Fire Forum (2015b).

In addition to comparing organizational guidelines, After Action Reports from several recent incidents of civil unrest were reviewed for common themes and issues, with the results compared against the research in an effort to discover common elements that may not be addressed in current operational practice. After Action Reports from the following incidents of civil unrest were analyzed for common elements, issues, and areas for improvement:

1. Baltimore, Maryland

2. Charlottesville, Virginia

3. Ferguson, Missouri

Lastly, interviews were conducted with several individuals who served in command positions at recent civil unrest incidents, Ferguson, Missouri and Charlottesville, Virginia, to identify and describe organizational operational concepts and common areas of concern or areas of improvement that may guide future actions.

Several issues limited the scope and application of this project, the greatest being that civil unrest incidents are primarily law enforcement incidents. Consequently, fire and EMS department operations are, to a large extent, driven and limited by law enforcement guidance. As was, noted, the ability of law enforcement to provide force protection was noted as a limiting factor to fire and EMS operations within areas of hazard. A second limitation is the staffing and deployment models used for fire and EMS departments. There is not a standardized deployment model in use within the United States, consequently, fire and EMS concept of operations and field level guidance varies across jurisdictions, limiting comparison and analysis of response actions.

Results

After reviewing literature related to preparing for and responding to incidents of civil unrest, a questionnaire was developed to examine the prevalence and preparedness actions taken for dealing with civil unrest. The survey was distributed via a link, utilizing the SurveyMonkey ® (www.surveymonkey.com), web-based application, to students attending National Fire Academy classes in October, 2018. The survey was also distributed via the United States Fire Administrations weekly TRADENET electronic newsletter

(https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/programs/trade.html). Of the survey links shared, 63

responses were received.

The first question sought to determine the prevalence of civil unrest incidents in the United

States. Of the respondents, 41 (65%), have had at least one period of civil unrest in their

community since 2000.
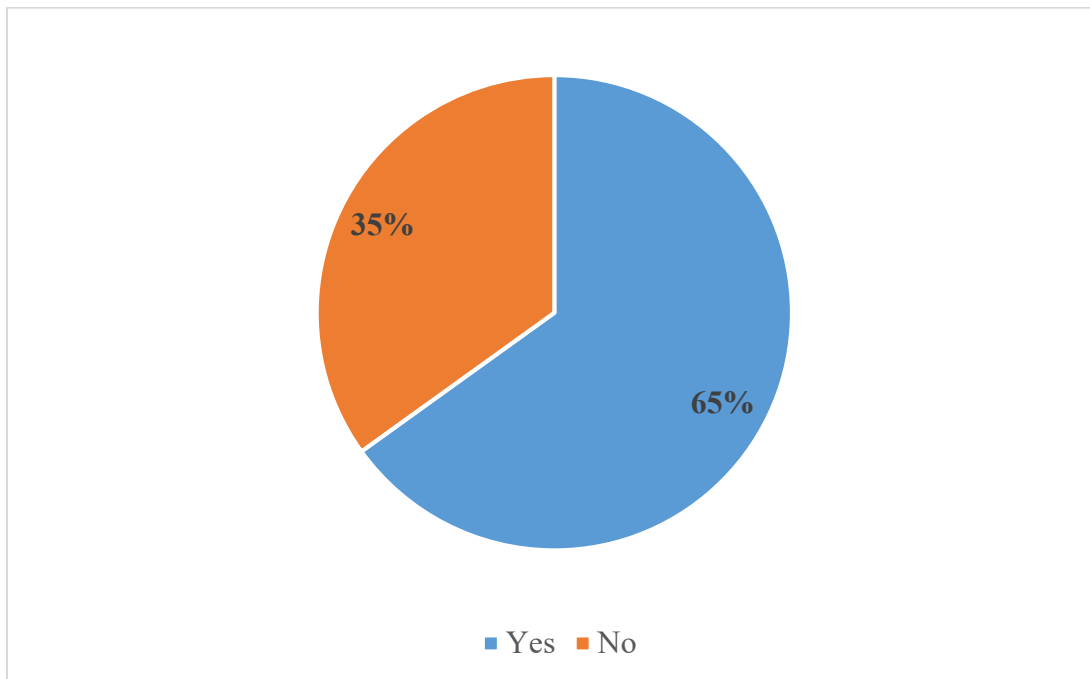
Figure 5. Communities having one or more civil unrest incident since 2000 (n=63).

After determining if civil unrest is a realistic threat to the community, the survey sought to

determine if there were common incidents that precipitated civil unrest incidents. Twenty-seven

respondents identified one of five causes as events that immediately preceded, and triggering or

aggravating, incidence of civil unrest. The survey revealed that the most frequently reported

initiating incident preceding civil unrest is controversial, law enforcement action, accounting for

44% of the reported events. Other common trigger incidents included controversial, public-

permit gatherings (22%), local sports team victories (19%), and controversial organizational

meetings (11%).
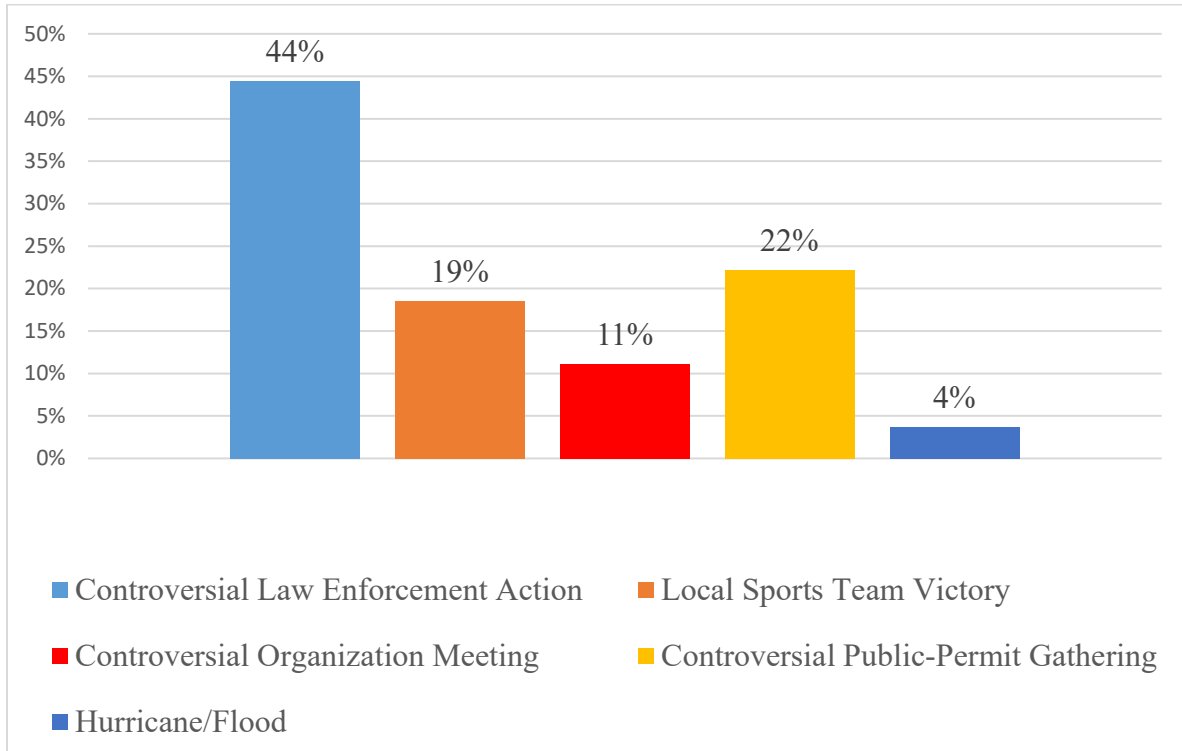
Figure 6. Events associated with civil unrest incidents (n=27).

The third question sought to find what actions fire and EMS agencies were taking in

preparation for anticipated civil unrest. Forty-one responses were logged, with over one-third

(39%) responding that the Emergency Operations Center was activated when civil unrest

potential existed. Other common actions included altering response assignments (17%),

attaching law enforcement to fire and EMS responses (15%) and attaching fire and/or EMS staff

to a law enforcement intelligence/information unit (12%).
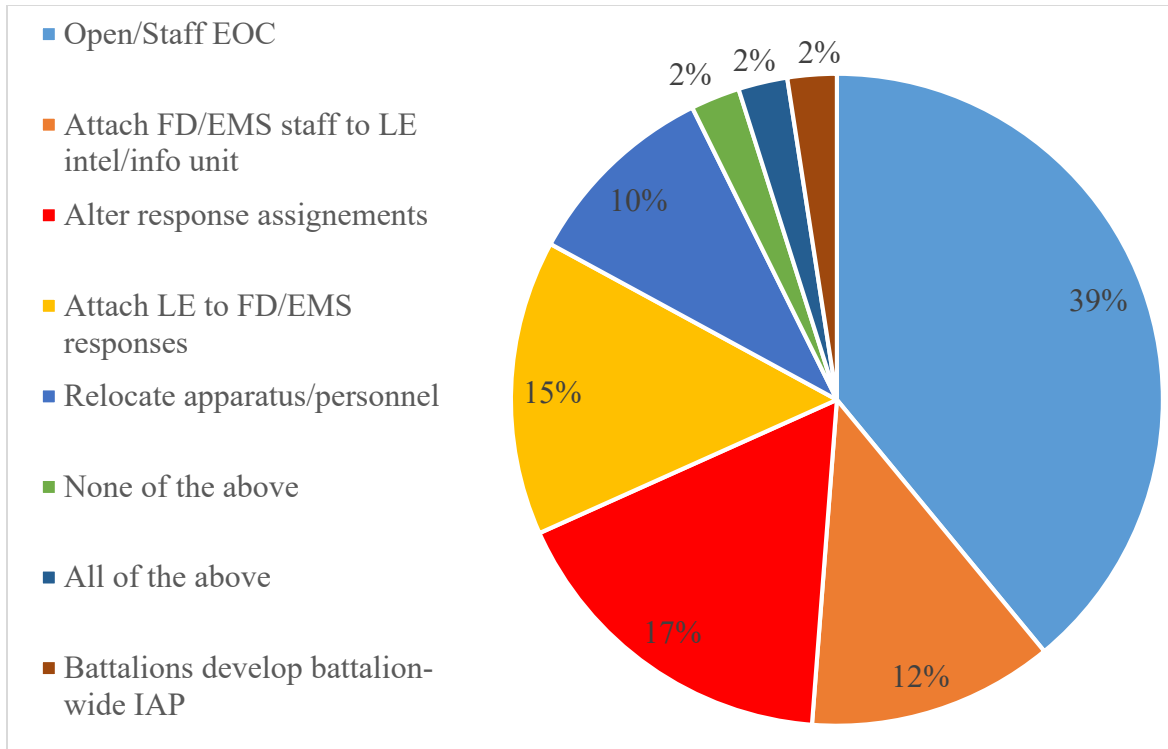
Figure 7. Preparatory actions for civil unrest (n=41).

Based on the recommendations of NFPA Standard 1500 (2018, p. 31), which requires fire departments to have a plan for responding to civil unrest, the next question simply sought to determine if respondents had developed and adopted a plan for civil unrest in their communities. Of the 63 respondents, 10 (16%) indicated that their departments had developed a plan for civil unrest incidents.
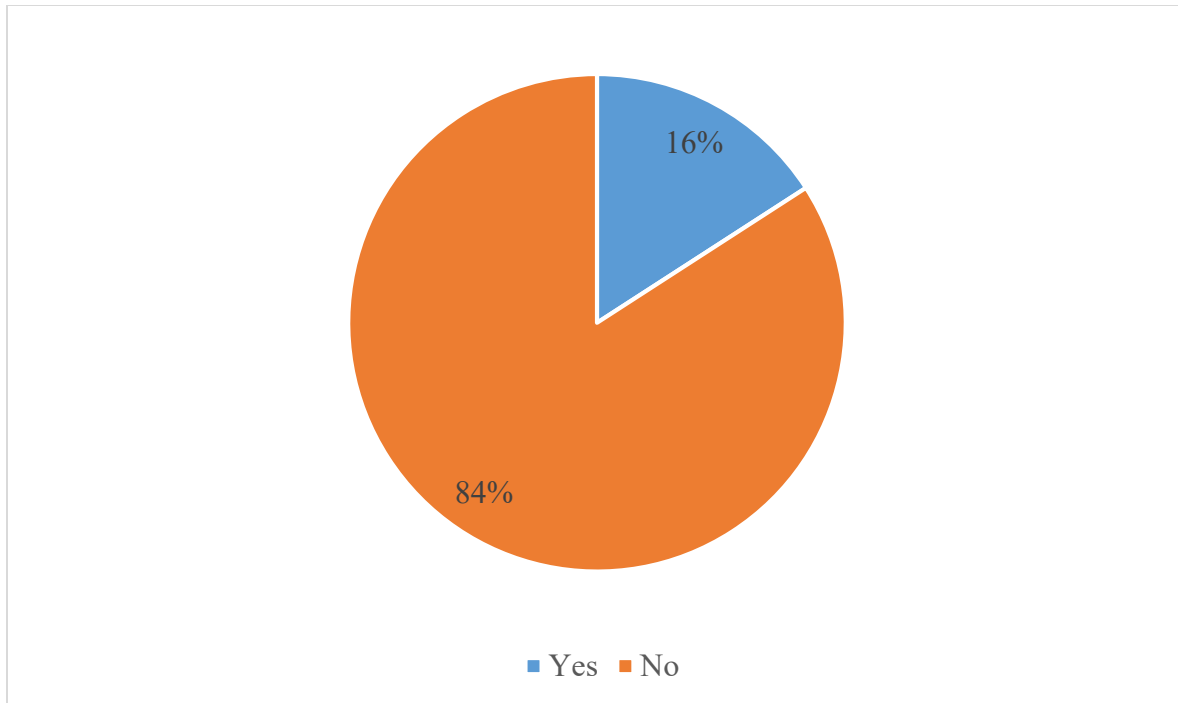
Figure 8. Departments with civil unrest protocols (n=63).

Question 5 sought to determine how integrated fire/EMS communities are with the law enforcement intelligence and information component but determining if fire and EMS agencies had members on the distribution list for Law Enforcement Sensitive briefing materials. Access to this information was documented as being critical for preparedness functions and responder safety in the fire and EMS communities (Unknown, 2011, p. 9, U. S. Fire Administration, 1993, p. 32, Responder Forum, 2016, p. 23). As was documented by Posner (2008, p. 22), the July 2001 Toxteth Riots were, "predicted by a blood-bath being planned", indicating that at least some incidents of civil unrest may be anticipated based on intelligence gathering and that sharing intelligence will improve preparedness activities. The survey indicated that over 77% of the departments responding had at least one person who received Law Enforcement Sensitive information and intelligence briefing materials.
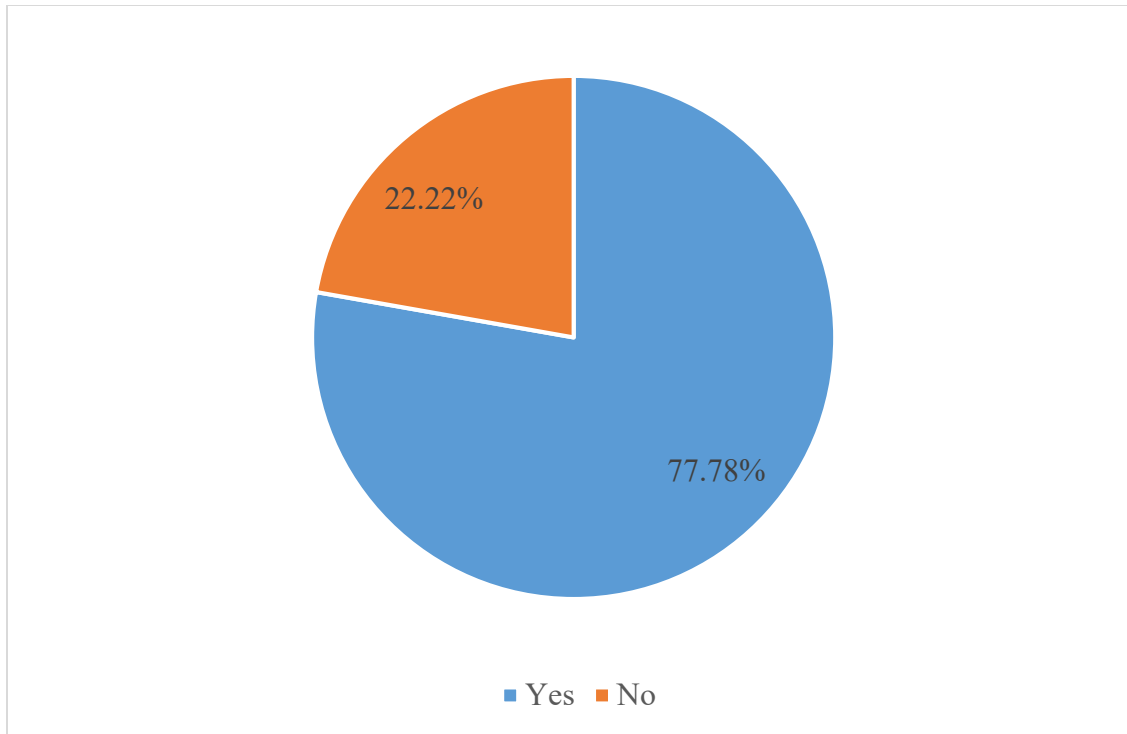
Figure 9. Departments with access to LES information and intelligence briefing materials

(n=63).

The survey also sought to identify who was responsible for determining priorities for response

and alterations to the response pattern in areas of civil unrest. Fifty individuals responded to the

question, with most (40%) indicating that the dispatch center is responsible for prioritizing

incidents and determining responding assets. Other areas where control of response is

coordinated include the Emergency Operations Center (24%) and an Incident Command Post.

Two of the respondents (4%) indicated that there was no change in their dispatch and response

policies during incidents of civil unrest.
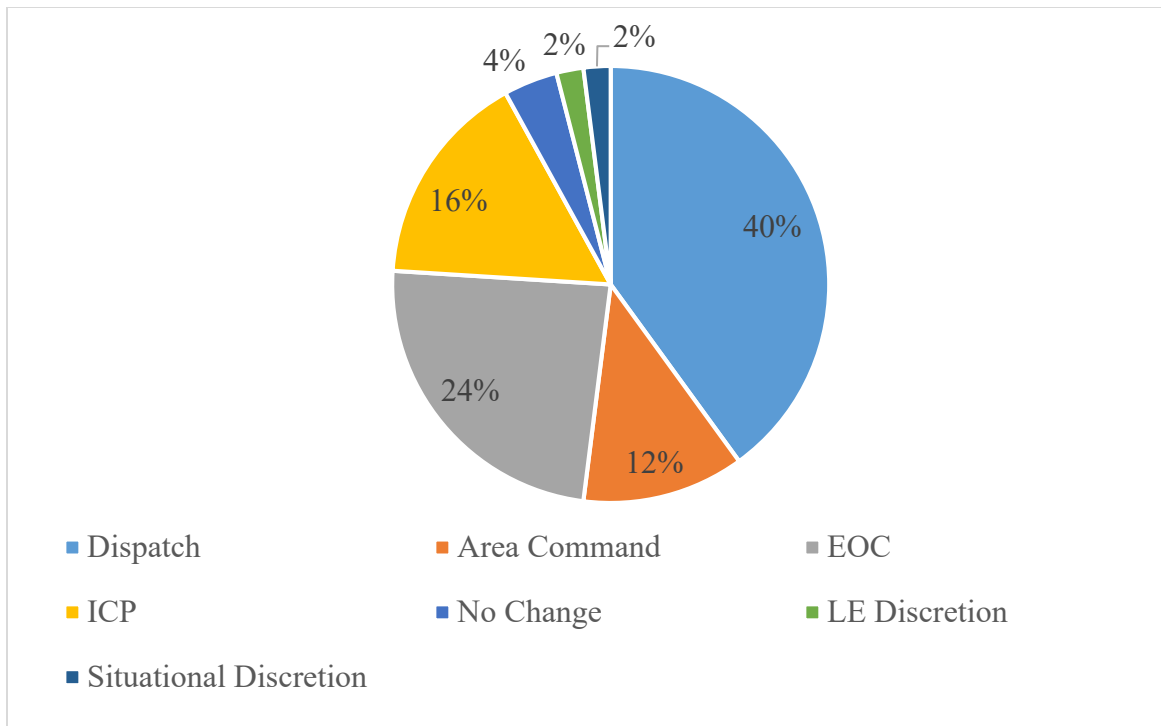
Figure 10. Responsibility for prioritizing and determining response at civil unrest incidents (n=50).

Maintaining the safety of emergency response personnel is critical to maintaining community health and safety through emergency response. The next question sought to identify methods used to maintain force protection for non-law enforcement responders. By far, assigning law enforcement personnel to emergency responses in some fashion, either with the incident dispatch, using law enforcement teams near the incident, or assigning law enforcement as part of fire/EMS task forces (41%, 6% and 4%) provided force protection for over half of all respondents (51%). Additional force protection measures included staging until incident scene is secured by law enforcement (20%), using ballistic protection (4%), and having fire department members openly carry firearms (2%). While assigning force protection is an industry standard (NFPA, 2018, p. 31), 12% of the respondents indicated that there policies, plans, and guidelines do not address responder force protection.

Legend:
- Unified Command
- LE assigned to unrest incident
- LE assigned to emergency incident/escort
- Stage until LE secures
- No change or not addressed
- FD members openly carry weapons
- LE assigned to FD Task Force
- Lock Down in Stations
- Normal response & retreat if confronted
- Use Rescue Task Forces for EMS response
- Armed Patrols at Fire Stations
- Wear Ballistic Protection

Figure 11. How is force protection addressed during civil disturbance incidents (n=51).

Finally, respondents were queried about incidents or locations that may be considered, "no-go". Cohen (2001, p. 24) and Artz, Little, Ridley, and Scott (2016) have indicated that there may be areas where force protection is unable to be secured, resulting in no response policies until the area can be secured. While not formalized, identifying unsecured areas of no response and altering response polices occurred as operational practices used during the 1992 Los Angeles Riots (Rosegrant, 2000). Forty-nine individuals responded to the question, with 35% (17) indicating that law enforcement may indicate areas where no fire or EMS response be initiated, while 33% (16) indicated that their organizational policies direct a response regardless of the ability to ensure responder safety.
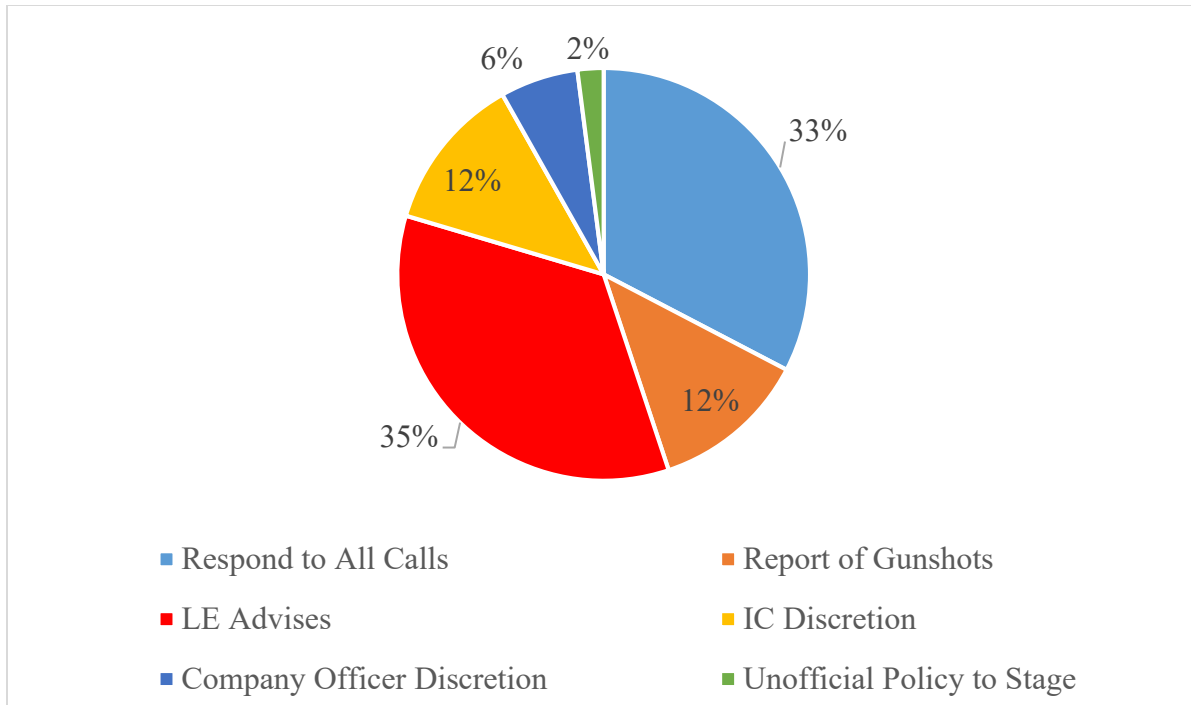
Figure 12. How does your organization determine if there are areas where no response can be initiated? (n=49).

Six fire departments provided organizational standard operating guidelines for responding to civil unrest. These documents were compared to each other and a model guideline developed by the Urban Fire Forum (2015b), which addresses a consensus of best practices and incorporates the requirements of NFPA Standard 1500 (2018). Of the guidelines reviewed, none fully comply with the model SOG and the only consensus across all guidelines is that personnel must wear structural fire protective clothing while riding in apparatus and that fire suppression guidance is to be altered during periods of civil unrest. The following figure demonstrates the level of consensus across the guidelines.
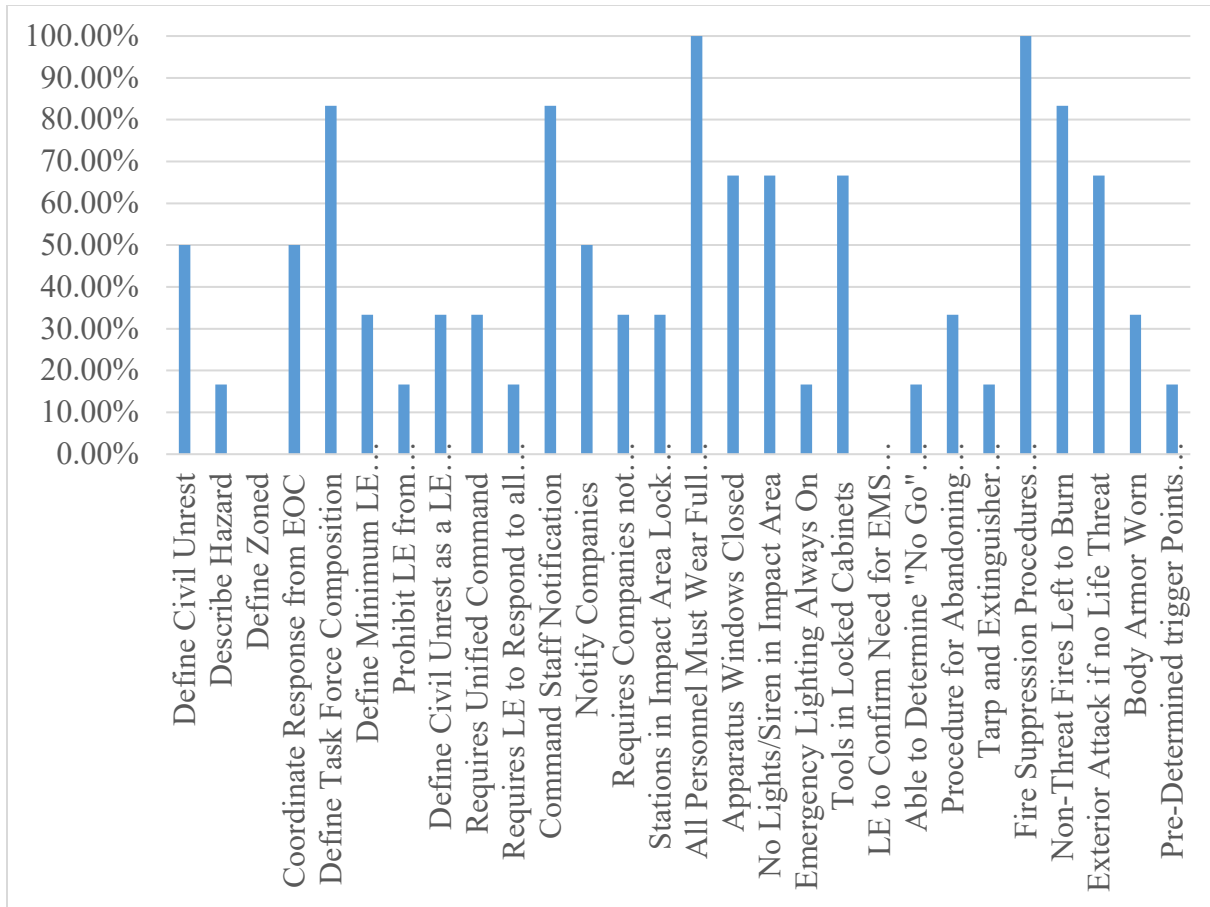
Figure 13. Comparison of select Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines for response to civil unrest incidents (n=6).

After Action Reports from recent civil unrest incidents in Baltimore, MD, Charlottesville, VA, and Ferguson, MO were compared to identify common areas for improvement (Links et al., 2015, Hutton and Williams, 2018, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015). Although spurred by different triggering events, these incidents resulting in significant property damage, required multiple agency and discipline response, and shared many common areas for improvement. The following chart identifies elements that were common across the reports:

Area for Improvement	Charlottesville, Virginia (2 incidents in 2017)	Ferguson, Missouri	Baltimore, Maryland
Protect responder safety and health			X
Ineffective use of incident command system	X	X	X
Ineffective use of Emergency Operations Center	X		X
Ineffective multi-agency, -discipline, -jurisdictional coordination	X	X	X
Failure to utilize Incident Management Team to full capability	X		X
Failure to effectively share intelligence and information to stakeholders	X	X	X
Failure to communicate effectively with the public	X	X	X
Technical communications issues (interoperability, system load, etc.)	X	X	X
Interpersonal/Inter-discipline communication issues	X		X
Public Safety Access Point workload	X	X	X
Public Safety Access Point technical capabilities (system expansion)	X	X	X
Lack of personal protective equipment	X	X	X
Coordination of response plans	X	X	X
Lack of training and exercises	X	X	X
Lack of multi-agency, -discipline, -jurisdictional training and exercises	X	X	X
Resource management (securing and distributing equipment and supplies)	X	X	X
Failure to develop and implement strategy and tactics	X	X	X
Lack of communication within the field (situational awareness) and with command	X	X	X
Aid agency capabilities, training, and experience	X	X	X
Multiple, disjointed, incident action plans	X	X	X

Chart 1. Common areas for improvement identified in after action reports from civil unrest incidents in Baltimore, MD, Ferguson, MO, and Charlottesville, VA.

Discussion

While it appears that the number of civil unrest incidents in the United States is relatively low, fewer than 20 per year, a scan of news reports indicates that the aggregate number of civil unrest incidents does not accurately reflect their frequency. Reviewing news reports and news aggregating services indicate that sporting riots, especially at the college level, and political protests with civil unrest activities are not accurately captured in reporting systems as civil unrest incidents (www.googlenews.org, www.fark.com). News aggregation sites indicate that there have been at least 18 incidents of civil unrest in the last six-months of 2018, which have not been collected and coded as civil unrest. This disparity in reporting creates issues of accurately determining the true frequency of these incidents. However, the concepts discussed are applicable to large group incidents with violence regardless of how they are coded or defined.

Planning for predictable, even if rare, realistic scenarios is required of fire and EMS departments as part of their risk-assessment process (NFPA, 2018). As Wright (2004) writes, "every potential scenario of fire service involvement will need to be strategized and exercised regularly, requiring skilled staff and resources (p. 15)." Lockhart (1992) indicates that, "the literature points out that planning for major emergencies is important and that it must include each of the agencies that may need to work together during the emergency (p. 5)." Links, et al. (2015) confirm the joint responsibility of planning and responding to civil unrest in their report on the Baltimore Riots, stating that, "virtually every recommendation has more than one primary owner, and multiple secondary owners. This implies that no recommendation is so-agency-specific that only one owner is necessary (p. 2)."

While recommendations from multiple incident and after action reports, best practice standards, and professional articles recommend the development of civil unrest response

guidelines, the results of the survey associated with this report indicate that a significant number

of fire departments have not addressed the eventuality. The failure to plan for civil unrest

incidents effects the ability of the department to effectively respond, protect property, and places

emergency responders at risk. Rosegrant (2000), quoting California Office of Emergency

Services Director Richard Andrews, who states that, "it is not at all uncommon, not just in riots,

but in natural disasters, for people to seriously underestimate how bad the situation is (B4)."

Cohen (2007) notes that attacks on fire crews is a world-wide problem that continues to grow

and yet remains generally unrecognized by fire service leadership (p. 24).

As with all emergency planning, fire department planning for civil unrest should include all

involved stakeholders, recognizing that, at least initially, the lead agency will be law

enforcement. The Responder Forum (2016) indicates that, "fire and law enforcement leaders

should work cooperatively with others in the community to address specific needs during periods

of civil unrest (14)". Planning should include identification of potential targets, including

religious institutions, chemical facilities, utility substations, transportation infrastructure, and

other critical infrastructure and key resources (NFPA, 2019, p. 14, Responder Forum, 2016, p.

19, Cooper, 2016, p. 17, Madsen and Eck, 2006, p. 21). Additionally, planning guidance should

identify agency roles, responsibilities, and expectations, terminology, concept of operations,

logistics, facility support, priorities, command, control, communications, intelligence and

information sharing, public information, and staffing and response configurations (Wright, 2004,

p. 17, Smith, 2017, p. 9).

Previous reports also indicate the need for standardized response roles, including modification

of fire department assignments, development of response task forces, and the use of law

enforcement for force protection (Urban Fire Forum, 2016, p. 17, Wright, 2004, p. 10, Lockhart,

1992, p. 8). The survey conducted for this report indicated that between two and four percent of

the departments have not addressed these issues in whole or part. Additionally, the 5

departmental standard operating guidelines that were compared show that the only common

areas of concern were the modification of fire suppression activities and a requirement for

responding personnel to wear structural fire protective clothing while responding.

Several common elements related to emergency operations found in the literature and

operating guidelines. These included the following:

- relocating equipment on apparatus to cabs or locked compartments,

- requiring personnel wear appropriate clothing,

- rolling up and taping all windows,

- keeping fire extinguishers and tarps in apparatus cabs,

- altering fire suppression activities to include only those activities which can be safely
  conducted outside of structures,

- using minimal equipment, with the goal being fire knockdown rather than complete
  extinguishment,

- responding in task forces with dedicated law enforcement personnel, and

- prohibition of ladder use except when rescue is required (Responder Forum, 2016, p. 20,
  Vernon, 2008, Smith, 2017, p. 10, U. S. Fire Administration, 1993, p. 58, Rosegrant,
  2000, B12, Artz, et al. 2016).

In addition, the use of response zones to guide response deployment is discussed as a means of

determining response deployment and tactical operations while ensuring that fire department

members are not operating in an area of civil unrest without the presence of law enforcement as

required by NFPA Standard 1500 (p. 31). Identification of hazard zones utilizes existing fire

service concepts to identify perceived hazard and guide response. Activities and hazards

associated with the zones include:

- Hot Zone: An area considered potentially unsafe. Entry into the zone requires law

  enforcement support for force protection.

- Warm Zone: An area of lower threat, but which may become unsafe. Law enforcement

  support is recommended for entry into the warm zone.

- Cold zone: An area of little to no threat of civil unrest or violence. Law enforcement

  support is optional for entry into the cold zone (Responder Forum, 2016, p. 17, Urban

  Fire Forum, 2016, p. 9).

The literature also strongly supports the establishment of unified command, with law

enforcement serving as the initial lead agency, and with representation of fire and EMS

leadership as part of the command team (Responder Forum, 2016, p. 8, Smith, 2017, p. 10,

Cooper, 2017, p. 18, Links et al., 2015, p. 21). The United States Fire Administration, (1993)

indicates that for, "successful collaboration among agencies will depend on:

1. Compatibility of the agencies

2. Adoption of a common technical terminology

3. A strong command structure

4. Regularly scheduled joint training exercises

5. Effective mutual aid agreements (p. 4)."

The review of After Action Reports from civil unrest incidents in Baltimore, MD, Ferguson,

MO, and Charlottesville, VA demonstrated a failure of disparate agencies and disciplines to

engage in either planning, in the case of the incidents in Charlottesville, or cooperative,

coordinated unified command to manage the unrest once it occurred (Links et al., 2015, Hutton

and Williams, 2018, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015). As the direction

established by command will guide the use of tactical resources, ensure responder safety, and

will assist in the effective and efficient mitigation of the incident, the continued failure to form a

cohesive unified command, a concept which has been codified and mandated is inexcusable

(Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, 6 U. S. C. 744, 1 (2003).

While a national model for fire department operational guidance has been developed (Urban

Fire Forum, 2015b), no department guideline reviewed reflected this guidance in its entirety or

another guideline. While modification for local conditions is acceptable, the concept of

operations, expectations, and operational guidance dramatically differs. This has the potential of

creating confusion and leading to loss, injury, and death when assistance from outside agencies is

received. According to Scott Avery, Area Commander during the civil unrest in Ferguson,

Missouri, at the time of the incident, there was no common Standard Operating Guide among the

42 fire departments within the county. However, as a result of the incident, there is now a

common civil unrest SOG (personal communication, February 27, 2019).

<center>Recommendations</center>

While they are unusual incidents, civil disturbances do occur and present challenges for fire

and EMS organizations in planning and response as well as maintaining the health and safety of

emergency responders and members of the public. This report puts forward several

recommendations based on the findings. These include providing incentives for using incident

command and unified command to manage incidents, rewarding organizations that develop

comprehensive emergency management and operational plans, and reward organizations that

develop and implement a comprehensive training and exercise plan that includes improvement planning.

The incident command system has been mandates as the standard for emergency response to all terrorist incidents. Under PL 107-296 (2002), the United States Department of Homeland Security, is charged with, "building a comprehensive national incident management system with Federal, State, and local government personnel agencies, and authorities, to respond to such attacks and disasters" and to, "consolidate existing Federal Government emergency response plans into a single, coordinated national response plan (6 USC 312)." Using the authority granted to the Department, funding mechanisms that provide incentives for using the National Incident Command System and Unified Command on a routine basis is easily achieved. Including an "incident command use" data capture as a special field within the National Fire Incident Reporting System and Uniform Crime Data Reporting System would begin this process. Agencies would identify when, and to what degree, incident command is established and utilized. While this requires self-reporting, attaching this requirement to receipt of federal funding across all emergency disciplines, would force agencies that resist integration to collaborate in order to receive funding.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency currently oversees a number of grant programs that fund emergency management planning programs. States and communities that receive federal funding must already comply with specific planning requirements. Expanding the planning requirements to include civil unrest would require a minor adjustment to the programs. In addition, utilizing a common template for operational guidance, which can be modified for local needs, as is common in emergency management, provides for easier integration of assistance from other organizations and allows the planning and operational guidance to be

easily integrated into a National Response Plan as required by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Section 502).

Under current Federal emergency management grants, funding for training and exercises is available, with the intent of identifying and addressing gaps at the local level. Adding civil unrest exercise development, training to meet plan requirements, and including after action report findings in an improvement plan, provides decision makers with the ability to identify gaps, prioritize, and fund their resolution. Exercise findings, gaps, are already eligible for funding under the Federal Emergency Management Agency Homeland Security Grant Program and some gaps may be eligible for funding from other programs such as the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program and mitigation funding under the Robert T. Stafford Act.

While the knowledge, skills, and capabilities developed through these are applicable to incidents of civil unrest, they are core capabilities that are applicable to a variety of high impact incidents. By addressing planning, command, control, and communication weaknesses, stakeholders are able to develop partnerships that improve community resilience, improve prevention practices, and mitigate the impact of incidents.

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Appendix A

Survey of Responders

1. Since 2000, has your community experienced one or more incidents of civil unrest?
   Yes   22
   No   41

2. If yes, did any of the following events occur leading up to the civil unrest (check all that apply)?
   Controversial law enforcement action   12
   Local sports team victory   5
   Controversial organization meeting   3
   Controversial public-permit required gathering 6
   Hurricane/floods   1

3. During periods that may lead to civil unrest, does your department take any of the following preparatory actions?
   Open/staff the emergency operations center 16
   Attach FD/EMS staff to LE intel/info unit   5
   Alter response assignments   7
   Attach LE to all fire/EMS responses   6
   Relocate apparatus and personnel   4
   None of the above   1
   All of the above   1
   Battalions develop battalion-wide IAPs   1

4. Does your department have a civil unrest protocol?
   Yes   10
   No   53

5. Does your department have one or more members who are on the distribution list for law enforcement sensitive intelligence/information sharing?
   Yes   49
   No   14

6. If you have a civil unrest plan, who is authorized to implement it?
   Chief Officer   16
   On-duty Chief   7
   Company officer   0
   Law enforcement   4

7. How are incidents within the area of civil unrest prioritized and assigned for response?
   Dispatch protocol   20
   Area command   6
   EOC   12
   ICP   8
   No change   2

Situational discretion   1
LE direction   1

8. How is security maintained for responders?
Unified command   2
LE assigned to the unrest   3
LE assigned to response/escort   21
Stage until secured by LE   10
No change/not addressed   6
FD members open carry   1
Task force   1
Lock down stations/SIP   2
Retreat if confronted   1
RTF for EMS calls   1
Armed patrols (LE/NG) at stations   1
Ballistic protection   2

9. Do you have a "no response" policy into high hazard areas and, if so, what are the criteria?
No policy/respond to all calls   16
Report of gunshots   6
LE advice   17
IC discretion   6
Company Officer discretion   3
Unofficial policy to stage when potential violence (i.e. domestic) 1

Appendix B

Comparison of Civil Unrest Operating Guidance

	NFPA Model	Yakima County Fire District 12, WA	Melbourne, Australia	St. Louis, MO	Bremerton, WA	Baltimore City, MD	Miami, FL
Defines civil unrest	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Describes hazards			Yes				
Defines Hot, Warm, and Cold Zones	Yes						
Coordinates response actions from Emergency Operations Center	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	
Defines Task Force composition	Yes[1]	Yes[2]	Yes[3]	Yes[4,5]	Yes[6]	Yes[7]	No[8]
Defines minimum law enforcement component size of fire department task force	Yes		Yes		Yes		
Prohibits LE from separating from task force	Yes		Yes				
Defines civil unrest as primarily a LE event with FD involvement	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Prescribes use of unified command with LE, FD, and EMS components	Yes		Yes	Yes			
LE responds to all FD incidents in demonstration area	Yes			Yes			
Notification to command staff if civil disturbance in progress	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Notification of all companies if civil disturbance in progress	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes

[1] 3 fire engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 BC with aide, 1 ALS unit, 2 LE units with 4 officers per unit. Task forces will be identified with a letter designator (Task Force A)

[2] 1 fire engine and 1 duty officer

[3] Consider TF. Normal response during civil unrest is 2 company response.

[4] Minimum of 2 companies and 1 BC. In areas of "major" disturbance, TF shall initially be composed of 3 companies (2 with pumps) and 1 BC. TF shall be identified by BC's identification number. LE will be attached when available. Full TF shall be 3 fire companies with 12 fire fighters, 1 BC with driver, 1 EMS unit with 2 paramedics, 4 LE units with 14 officers.

[5] EMS TF shall be 1 EMS unit with 2 paramedics, 1 fire company with 4 fire fighters, 2 LE units with 8 officers.

[6] 1 fire engine and 1 command officer.

[7] 3 fire engines, 1 truck, 1 BC after trigger point reached and shall be identified by command officer identifier. LE shall be assigned as units become available.

[8] Composition of TF is flexible, but preferred composition is TF commander, TF Aide, Fire Inspector, 2 engines, 1 aerial or quint, and 1 rescue.

	NFPA Model	Yakima County Fire District 12, WA	Melbourne, Australia	St. Louis, MO	Bremerton, WA	Baltimore City, MD	Miami, FL
Companies not involved in emergency response return to and remain in station	Yes	No			Yes		Yes
Fire stations in disturbance area lock down	Yes			Yes			Yes
All personnel, except EMS and drivers, will wear full gear, including gloves and boots while in apparatus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
All personnel riding will be in cab with closed windows	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
No lights, sirens, or horns in civil disturbance area	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Emergency lights shall always be on						Yes	
Tools kept in locked cabinets when not being used	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
FD does not engage in crowd control	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Avoid hostile exchanges with public	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	
LE to confirm fire/EMS need	Yes						
In consult with LE, determine no-go areas	Yes					Yes	
Procedure for abandoning fire stations	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Tarp and fire extinguisher kept in cab of apparatus	Yes					Yes	
Fire suppression procedures altered	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-threatening fires left to burn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Exterior fire attack preferred	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Use of air assets for size up	Yes						
If additional fire resources needed, additional task forces shall be used	Yes						
Personnel rest, rehab, and physical/mental well-being addressed	Yes						
Staging areas outside active area and not co-located with ICP	Yes		Yes	Yes			
Assembly area for creating task forces with reserve apparatus and recalled personnel addressed	Yes	Yes[9]		Yes			

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[9] Defined as fire stations outside of impact area.

	NFPA Model	Yakima County Fire District 12, WA	Melbourne, Australia	St. Louis, MO	Bremerton, WA	Baltimore City, MD	Miami, FL
Perimeter secured prior to initiating fire suppression	Yes						
Laddering and roof operations discouraged	Yes		Yes				
Plan for rapid evacuation	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Rescue Task Force concept option for EMS incidents	Yes						
EMS units shall have box locked to prevent entry		Yes					
Body armor to be worn				Yes		Yes	
Trigger Points for Action Identified						Yes	