

Building Fire (STB) Response

Supersedes: 06-17-14

Effective: 07-30-21

BACKGROUND

In March of 2007, the Boston Fire Department modified their criteria for declaring a suspected building fire or “Struck Box” incident. By adopting a more conservative approach to what constitutes a “Struck Box” incident, there has been a significant increase in the number of requests for an EMS standby at suspected fire related incidents. Fortunately, a relatively small percentage of STB incidents result in a need for EMS services. However, the routine dispatch of both BLS and Supervisory resources to unconfirmed incidents often results in units being committed for an extended period of time. Because of the relatively large number of available resources, the Boston Fire Department can typically arrive at an incident quickly and confirm whether or not there is a fire and / or smoke condition which would warrant an EMS response and standby.

PROCEDURE

1. Upon receipt of a STB (Building Fire- Struck Box) incident, the EMS Dispatcher will quickly note the location of reported incident and review any supplemental text.
2. EMS units should be dispatched as quickly as possible to any STB incident meeting any of the following criteria:
 - 2.1 STB incident between the hours of 23:00 and 07:00
 - 2.2 STB incident in which there are reported injuries or question of entrapment.
 - 2.3 STB incident at an Elderly Housing (EH), Hotel (HOTEL), Nursing Home (NH), Hospital (HOSP), MBTA Station (MBTA), or School (SCH).
 - 2.4 STB incident in which multiple calls are received (indicated by DUP incidents)
 - 2.5 Whenever a Police unit, private ambulance, or other agency official has on-sited a confirmed building fire.
3. Absent any of the above noted criteria, the EMS dispatcher may place the STB incident on HOLD pending an update from the first arriving Fire Company. Upon arrival, the first arriving company will provide an update to Boston Fire Alarm. Fire Alarm will add remarks noting a “CONFIRMED FIRE” whenever the fire companies on scene confirm a smoke or fire condition, at which time an EMS response will then be initiated.
4. When the incident is a confirmed fire, Dispatch Operations will ascertain the air temperature and wind speed and relay that to the responding units.
5. In a prolonged incident, the Incident Commander will make every effort to rotate crews at the one-hour mark.