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| F **R**  **O**  **M** | Name &  Title | Charles Svehla, BCFD Assistant Chief of Operations | City of  Baltimore  ***MEMO*** |  |
| Agency  Name &  Address | Baltimore City Fire Department401 E. Fayette Street, Mezzanine |
| Subject | City Council PSGO Request for Information Regarding Take Home Vehicles: BCFD Operations Division Response |

TO: The Honorable Nick J. Mosby, President DATE: October 12, 2021

And All Members of the Baltimore City Council

City Hall, Room 408

The below information was requested at the September 1, 2021 Public Safety and Government Operations (PSGO) committee meeting in reference to Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD) take-home vehicles:

* A list to include dates, times, and emergency incident type that each current individual with a take-home vehicle has had to report back to work to respond to while they were off-duty over the last 24-months.

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**Response:**

BCFD does not currently track each time an individual with a take-home vehicle reports back to work outside of his/her regularly scheduled work hours. Accordingly, in order to respond to this request, BCFD has had to retroactively create this record using various databases to the best degree possible. BCFD is, however, in the process of creating a procedure where this information will be tracked for all take-home vehicles going forward.

The below response relates to take-home vehicles assigned within BCFD’s Operations Division.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Baltimore City Fire Department Manual of Procedure 105 (attached) states: “In the event of a third alarm or when requested by the Assistant Chief -Operations, all off shift Deputy Chiefs will be required to report as directed.” This means that the Deputies or Shift Commanders respond in and are assigned as directed by the Assistant Chief of Operations.

Those assignments can vary from responding to stations of Battalion Chiefs in order to fill the holes or uncovered areas that have been created by those shift Chiefs currently working on the large-scale incident.

Another possible assignment would be to report to the Shift Commanders Office and assume charge of field operations to coordinate and organize transfers of BCFD units or request and assign Mutual Aid units so that the areas left uncovered by units that have responded to the multiple alarm are backfilled. This is done to ensure that the City of Baltimore still has coverage in case another emergency incident occurs.

The other option is to respond directly to the current incident and assume an operational function to assist the current Incident Commander.

In addition to third alarm or greater, there are times that the Deputy Chiefs respond in on large scale emergency incidents such as the Labyrinth Avenue gas explosion or the high angle rescue from the BGE building. These incidents did not meet the third alarm threshold but due to the amount of specialty personnel required to handle those incidents, BCFD resources were stretched thin and the incidents resulted in extensive operations that resulted in longer than normal timeframes.

Finally, multiple working fires or second alarms that occur at the same time in separate areas of the City would also require the Deputy Chiefs to respond to back fill in the same way as third alarm or greater incidents.

Below are the Third Alarm or greater incidents that have occurred in the City since 1/1/19:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2019-06-06 20:23:34.000 | F191570664 | 69E03 | 914 E MONUMENT ST, BAL | -76.605371 | AL3 |
| 2019-07-01 19:40:07.000 | F191820687 | 69E03 | 2120 W LAFAYETTE AV, BAL | -76.650961 | AL4 |
| 2019-07-23 22:12:32.000 | F192040685 | 69E03 | 2100 W FRANKLIN ST, BAL | -76.650822 | AL3 |
| 2019-08-06 18:14:54.000 | F192180672 | 69D03 | 1302 GREENMOUNT AV, BAL | -76.608308 | AL3 |
| 2020-05-21 00:59:30.000 | F201420021 | 69D05 | 1507-1525 CLIFTON AV, BAL | -76.643536 | AL3 |
| 2020-10-11 22:13:47.000 | F202850598 | WF | 4633 LANIER AV, BAL | -76.661810 | AL3 |
| 2021-04-20 15:05:24.000 | F211100476 | 69E03 | DOMINO SUGAR, BAL | -76.597721 | AL3 |
| 2021-04-23 13:47:51.000 | F211130396 | DW | 340 S FULTON AV, BAL | -76.645020 | AL5 |

Below are Incidents that did not reach the third alarm threshold but required at least one-off duty Deputy Chief to respond:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2019-10-04 17:19:19.000 | F192770559 | WF | 2564 W FAYETTE ST, BAL | -76.658153 | 39.288931 – AL2 | AL2 |
| 2019-10-04 20:16:49.000 | F192770687 | BOX | NORMANDY AV/EDMONDSON AV, BAL | -76.681204 | 39.293873– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2019-11-08 08:55:46.000 | F193120121 | 69CARD | 3994-3996 ROLAND AV, BAL | -76.633097 | 39.337048– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2020-12-09 05:33:03.000 | F203440059 | 69E03 | 200 N CENTRAL AV, BAL | -76.599912 | 39.293463– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2020-12-23 08:25:02.000 | F203580137 | 57D02X | 110 W FAYETTE ST, BAL | -76.617074 | 39.290569– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2020-12-23 13:26:34.000 | F203580349 | WF | 3420 7TH ST, BAL | -76.599266 | 39.238983– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2021-01-23 21:57:40.000 | F210230517 | 69D03 | EDMONDSON VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER, BAL | -76.692611 | 39.293540– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2021-03-23 13:19:45.000 | F210820411 | WF | 503 FREEMAN ST, BAL | -76.603521 | 39.237235– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2021-03-23 13:25:21.000 | F210820418 | BOX | 1343 GLENWOOD AV, BAL | -76.595518 | 39.352464– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2021-07-23 23:28:54.000 | F212040716 | WF | 2624 WOODBROOK AV, BAL | -76.645133 | 39.313680– AL2 | AL2 |
| 2021-09-23 19:52:15.000 | F212660646 | 69E06 | 632 S PAYSON ST, BAL | -76.647122 | 39.280307– AL2 | AL2 |

In addition to being on call and taking emergency responses, all Deputy Chiefs sit on various committees and/or have additional job functions that require them to go to meetings, attend events, attend planning sessions with stakeholders where they represent the BCFD and the BCFD’s interest, etc. They do this at times outside of their regularly scheduled shifts but they are still required to perform these duties as part of their job description which they thoroughly understand prior to promoting to the Deputy Chief rank.

They also are required to attend regular Fire Department Operational Meetings as well as Top Management Team Meetings, Stand Up for Safety Events and the National Night Event that started back up this year, all of which may occur outside of their regularly scheduled shifts.

Due to COVID-19, the majority of the meetings this past year were handled virtually but prior to the pandemic they had to personally attend BCFD Meetings as well as Stakeholder Meetings. This would involve Deputy Chiefs using their take home vehicles for transportation to those meetings in case a large-scale event happened while they were at the meeting. Once we regain some sense of normalcy from this pandemic, it is anticipated that their required physical presence will return.

Below is a breakdown of those non-emergency and emergency responses that did not involve responding to fire incidents:

Acting Deputy Chief # 1

* Assigned to the BCFD Fire/EMS Coordination Committee that meets quarterly. This Committee was put together at the direction of Chief Ford. ADC1 attended 10 meetings within the last 2 years.
* Serves as the Tactical Medic Team Leader that coordinates and responds to Police involved incidents that involve high risk duties mainly involving the SWAT Unit. ADC1 responded to a total of 50 incidents since 1/1/19 as well as attended 21 training sessions.
* ADC1 is also the BCFD liaison to Health Department Opioid Crisis Committee and attended regular meetings.

Deputy Chief #2

* DC 2 sits on the following committees and attends regular meetings:
  + BCFD Medals Day Committee
  + BOX 414 Organization
  + BCFD Honor Guard Committee
  + Fire and Police Retirement Board
  + Citywide Violence Prevention Task Force
* DC 2 is also a senior member of the BCFD’s Incident Management Team (IMT) that required him to work at various Baltimore City Events including AFRAM, Salibration and Artscape. Being a member of the IMT also requires him to attend planning meetings as well as training sessions.
* Although most City Events were cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City will eventually start holding these events and this will require DC2 to have a physical presence.

Deputy Chief #3

* DC3 is in charge of maintaining and keeping all of the BCFD’s policies and procedures up to date. This involves him periodically meeting and working with various Bureau Supervisors (Safety, Fire Marshall, Logistics, Finance, HR etc.) so that these policies stay current over time.
* DC3 oversees the BCFD Free Smoke Detector Installation Program. His duties involve making sure all the records for the installs are accurate which is important because the detectors are donated and having accurate accountability provides oversight. He also occasionally meets with auditors and the BCFD Financial Officer because our smoke detector program is one of the Department’s Budgets Measures. Much of this is done during his off time which will involve the use of his vehicle.
* DC3 works directly with our charitable stakeholders so that the BCFD can play an active role in Holiday Food and Toy Drives. This involves visiting members of the private sector that make donations to those charities to collect whatever is donated as well as setting up the events so that the adults and children that these charities help are able to have a nice holiday meal or toy distribution. Again, this is done on his off time. Those charities include Ronald McDonald House, Kennedy Krieger, Langston Hughes to name a few.
* DC 3 has the thankless job of being the lead when it comes to the untimely Line of Duty or Active Member deaths. DC3 and his team work directly with the families to work out any arrangements for services. This includes doing the leg work in an effort to make this process something the family does not need to take on.

Deputy Chief #4

* DC4 is the Deputy Chief in charge of all of the Special Events that require BCFD resources.
* He is also in charge of BCFD Incident Management Team as well as a senior member on the State of Maryland’s IMT. He has an active role in the planning and operations of all events that occur not only in Baltimore City but also in the State if the State IMT is activated. His responsibilities require a lot of travel on his off time in order to ensure the BCFD has the necessary resources in place and that the Stakeholders are satisfied with the level of Emergency Service we provide. It would be quite difficult to list every meeting, planning session and event he attends so I will list the majority of Special Event and Activities he is responsible for:
* Presidential and Elected Officials visits. This includes meeting with the Secret Service to coordinate the plans. These visits have occurred multiple times over last 2 years as well as the RNC Event at the Marriot Inner Harbor in 2019.
* Baltimore Book Festival
* Fleet Week Event and Air Show 2019 and prior to cancellation meetings for 2020
* Congressman Cumming Funeral Arrangements
* Possible Civil Unrest meetings and staffing
* BPD Planned Protests Preperations
* Afram
* Artscape
* Preakness
* Assisting Howard County as part of State IMT for the Ellicott City Floods and their Line of Duty Death
* Back to School Kick Off Events
* 4th of July and New Years Eve Fireworks Display.
* Baltimore Running Festival
* 9/11 Run and Ceremonies

Some of these events were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic but as previously stated once the City returns to normalcy these events will return and DC4 will be required to attend not only the events but all the preliminary meetings that take place in preparation for these events.

Deputy Chief #5 EMS

* DC 5 does not respond in on fires unless they reach a 4th alarm but he does respond in on anything such as the Labyrinth Rd explosion and High Angle rescue and any other event that may lead to Mass Casualty.
* DC 5 non-emergency meetings include meeting with Hospital Stakeholders, MIEMSS as well as other jurisdictions in the state and out of the state in an effort to evaluate and move forward with how the BCFD delivers their EMS services (e.g., meetings related to community paramedicine, mobile integrated health, etc.). Many of these meetings and seminars are again done outside of his normal day to day duties and sometimes involve weekend and evening hours.

Deputy Chief #6 Director of Training

* DC 6 is not required to respond until 4th alarm or greater but at various time will respond to incidents in an observation role. This allows her to watch the activities at that incident in order to have first hand knowledge of areas that the department does well and also areas that may need to be addressed with training bulletins or in-service hands-on training.
* DC 6 is a member of Maryland State Council of Academies that meets monthly at various jurisdictions around the state to discuss and compare training techniques as well as share ideas as far as training active members and new recruits.
* BCFD training is monitored by MIEMSS and Maryland Fire Rescue Institute. At times this requires her to travel to Aberdeen or College Park to attend meetings and information gathering sessions.
* DC 6 visits training academies outside our jurisdiction in an effort to gather and share training techniques and equipment. This also provides the opportunity to see other training props and academies in an effort to keep BCFD Training Academy up to date.

Accordingly, responding to incidents is not the only off duty responsibility that the six (6) Operation Deputy Chiefs have to fulfill. They have many other jobs that require them to report to work even though it is not their regular shift.

Finally, information related to the responses of the Special Operations team members who also have take-home cars are included in Attachment 2 to this Memo. This data was compiled from our CAD system and represents a two year period from 9/1/19 through 9/1/21.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Svehla

Assistant Chief Operations, BCFD

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Attachment 1: MOP 105

Attachment 2: Responses of Special Operations Team

1. BCFD still is in the process of compiling this information for the Department’s Community Risk Reduction Division and other sections. We will submit this information to the City Council as soon as it is complete. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)