

Seminole County Fire Department Information Bulletin #23-042



To: Fire Department

From: Operations

Date: May 16, 2023

Title: Critical EMS Saturation and Peak Load Rescue(s)

Recent events have brought to light the necessity of encompassing a proactive approach to reduced apparatus availability – specifically regarding Rescues. Seminole County Fire Department will continue operating two (2) peak load rescues Monday through Friday from 0900 hours until 1700 hours (or later as Critical EMS Saturation levels may necessitate).

Considerations for Critical EMS Saturation Levels:

Phase I Saturation (< 50% availability)

- Reduced response for mechanical fire alarms (directed by Comm Center Supervisor/Shift Commander)
- Begin evaluation of, and pull from, “non-critical” assignments as plausible (Battalion Chief)
- Contact Emergency Room Staff and/or Hospital EMS Liaisons to request expedited release of SCFD units (EMS1, Tech1, EMS AC & BC)
- At 1600 hours – Peak Load Units may be retained for 1 hour and re-evaluated every hour for continued utilization until alarm load permits their release from service (Battalion Chief/Shift Commander)
- Absolutely no units will self-assign to incidents as additions to the/a response assignment (except Chief Officers, Tech1, EMS1)

Phase II Saturation (< 40% availability)

- Fire Prevention personnel may be deployed to assist in response to Mechanical Fire Alarms (MFA) once it has been determined that no hazards exist (Battalion Chief/Shift Commander/Fire Marshal). Units on scene may return to service.
- On incidents which may normally require standby (i.e. power lines down, MFA, awaiting responder, etc.) units may return to service once it has been determined that no hazards exist, and the appropriate party has been notified.
- When more than one (1) “4th person” unit(s) is/are available, additional rescue(s) may be “up staffed” for 2 hours (Assistant Chief direction) utilizing designated reserve, immediately deployable rescues at designated locations.

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- When applicable, if multiple units are on delay at hospital, the last arriving Rescue will assume care for up to 3 patients (as patient condition/equipment availability permits).

Phase III Saturation (< 30% availability)

- Single unit EMS response (pre-alert) will be dispatched (preferably non rescue unless the call nature dictates otherwise)
- Pull units from Training and/or “non-critical” assignments (Battalion Chief/Assistant Chief)
- Tech1 and EMS1 respond to hospitals experiencing delayed off-load in an effort to facilitate turn-around of units awaiting transfer of patients
- Consider implementation of EMS Saturation Treatment/Transport Protocols (i.e. Red, Hot and Boom) (Assistant Chief, Medical Director)
- Consider limiting mutual aid (Assistant Chief)
- **Critical EMS Saturation Response Procedure** active (Comm Center Supervisor)

Critical EMS Saturation Response Procedure:

The ECC will dispatch a single unit for the initial EMS response regardless of ambulation status. If the CAD recommended units have comparable ETAs, then the “combo non-rescue” (suppression) will be dispatched to preserve rescue availability. Both units will be dispatched for high acuity chief complaints.

The ECC will initiate Priority Radio Traffic due to Critical EMS Saturation Response:

1. Activate fire station alert for all stations.
2. Transmit radio console alert tone 1 for 3-5 seconds on 9A and active operational tactical channels (except those with an active incident command established).
3. Announce “Seminole to all stations and units – Priority Radio Traffic in effect due to critical EMS saturation, repeating, Priority Radio Traffic in effect due to critical EMS saturation <time>”.

The saturation level should be continuously monitored, and operations returned to normal as unit availability permits. It is also important to maintain awareness of additional pending threats or occurrences, such as severe weather, time of day, special incidents, etc.

This is a dynamic situation and as such is subject to modification of both procedures and implementation.

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In coordination with the Critical EMS Saturation Response Plan we have determined the need to make some changes via the addition and utilization of the peak load rescues.

Currently, there are two (2) peak load rescues:

<u>Call Sign</u>	<u>Starting Location</u>	<u>Hours of Operations</u>
Rescue 14	Station 13	Monday-Friday 0900-1700*
Rescue 28	Station 21	Monday-Friday 0900-1700*

*Critical EMS Saturation Levels shall be considered daily to determine the time at which the crew will be permitted to go out of service. We will strive to ensure that the crews are dismissed as close to 1700 hours as feasible.

The aforementioned Peak Load units should be considered for primary transport utilization when permitted.

Daily, at 1600 hours, the unit saturation will be monitored to determine the necessity to retain the peak load rescues. The rescue (or rescues) shall be retained when the saturation is at 50% or less. A re-evaluation should occur every hour until such time that unit availability permits dismissal of the peak load units. The decision to retain or dismiss the peak load units shall be the responsibility of the Command Staff (Shift Commander and/or Battalion Chiefs).

Regardless of the time, Peak Load Rescues will remain in service and available until the unit and assigned personnel have returned to their respective station; but no earlier than the designated 1700 hours.