



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

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| General Order Number: 13-04 | Effective Date: January 2010 |
| Division: Public Affairs | |
| Chapter: Observer Program for Fireboat 858 | |
| By Order of the Fire Chief: Marc S. Bashoor | Revision Date: N/A |

POLICY

A uniformed procedure will be followed to establish a standard operational procedure when dealing with dignitary's, delegations and special VIP's to the County and the National Harbor Project.

It is imperative that the crews assigned to Fireboat 858 recognize the importance of these groups and strive to forge a professional working relationship to promote a positive public image.

This procedure is in place to ensure the safety and well being of all personnel, as well as all guests that will visit and those that are provided an operational tour on the Fireboat. It is a shared responsibility of all involved to see to the adherence of this procedure.

DEFINITIONS

Observers – persons who are not members of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department; this definition specifically includes members of other fire/rescue departments outside of Prince George's County and dignitaries who represent special interest to the County and the National Harbor Project.

Minimum staffing – three persons (Boat Crew) trained and certified to operate in Emergency Operations dealing with Water Related Emergencies and Water Rescue Operations.

Underway – A nautical term describing the state of a vessel or boat. A vessel is said to be underway if it meets the following criteria:

- It is not aground
- It is not at anchor
- It has not been made fast to a dock, the shore, or other stationary object.

PROCEDURES / RESPONSIBILITIES

1. General Provisions

Observers shall be at least 18 years of age. This shall be confirmed with a review of a driver's license and or picture identification card.

Observers shall sign the release form prior to boarding any Fire/EMS Department marine vessel. Signature shall be witnessed by the appropriate Battalion Chief or highest ranking officer. No one may sign for the officers.



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Observers shall review the rules governing this procedure, which will be acknowledged on the release form.

Unless the request is given through the appropriate command, it shall be the responsibility of the officer in charge to determine if the individual or group warrants a ride on the boat. Crews are to provide an informative interactive presentation of the fireboat and its operations.

2. Operational Guidelines

At no time are there to be more than 5 guests allowed to ride on the boat.

Operations of the boat are to be performed in a slow and extremely safe manner. At no time, while there are passengers on the vessel, shall the operator perform any high speed maneuvers to include High Speed Stops or High Speed Turns unless it is necessary to avoid a collision or to ensure the safety of the crew, personnel on board and the vessel.

3. Guidelines for all passengers

No guest will be allowed to operate or engage in any emergency operation while on the boat. Prior to getting underway all guest will be fitted for a Personal Flotation Device and instructed on the proper use of said device. The Personal Flotation Device shall be worn for the duration of the presentation.

All guests will be encouraged to sit in the cabin or stand while holding the handrail when the boat is underway for their safety.

Conditions acceptable to get underway:

- The Boat must be fully staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel.
- Prior to getting underway with a guest aboard, the crew shall check the marine weather channel 30 minutes prior to departure and ensure that none of the following conditions exist.
 - Small craft advisory prior to departure and for the duration of the ride.
 - Gail warnings
 - Thunder storm warnings for the immediate area.
 - Wind conditions in excess of 15 knots
 - Waves in excess of 1 to 2 feet
 - Flash flood warnings
 - Any condition that exist that would place guest in immediate danger

If any of the preceding conditions exist the vessel will not go underway.

It is preferable that all presentations are scheduled when the weather is clear and the wind is calm. If there is inclement weather or winds are in excess of 20 knots all rides will be postponed and rescheduled to a mutually agreeable time.



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4. Documentation

A list will be maintained and forwarded to the Major of the Special Operations Division weekly.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

Ride-Along Guest Observer Program Release Form



Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department

RIDE-ALONG OBSERVER PROGRAM RELEASE

In consideration of my receiving permission from the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department to enter upon the premises of any fire station or related entity, any other premises owned and/or operated and/or used by any fire station within Prince George's County, and in further consideration of receiving permission from said Fire/EMS Department to participate in a Ride-Along Observer Program, wherein I will be riding in, on, or upon Fire/EMS Department vehicles or using other apparatus, the undersigned hereby releases the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, Prince George's County Police Department, and any and all agents, officers, servants, employees, attorneys, or other representatives of the foregoing from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions and causes of actions, whatsoever, arising out of or related to any loss, property damage, physical injury, contagious disease, or death that may be sustained by me while in, on, or upon any premises, vehicles, or apparatus owned, occupied, or used by the foregoing, or which may be sustained by me while at the scene of any real or apparent emergency situation requiring a response of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department, or while commuting to and from the fire station(s) and other points.

I hereby certify that I am duly aware of the risks and hazards, including serious physical injury or death, inherent upon participating in the Ride-Along Observer Program, that such risks and hazards may exist even in non-emergency situations, and being duly aware of such risks and hazards, I hereby elect, voluntarily, to participate in the Ride-Along Observer Program. I hereby assume all risks of loss, damage, and/or injury, including death that may be sustained by me or by any of my property while participating in the Ride-Along Observer Program.

This release shall be binding upon my relatives, spouse, heirs, distributees, next of kin, executors, administrators, and any other interested parties.

In signing this release, I hereby acknowledge and represent:

1. I have read the rules and regulations outlined in General Order 1-3, Ride-Along Observer Program.
2. I have read the release, understand it, and signed it voluntarily.
3. I am over eighteen (18) years of age and I am of sound mind and of sound physical health.
4. I am not an agent, servant, or other employee of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.
5. Any injuries or other damage suffered by me will not be compensable by Worker's Compensation or any other insurance program maintained by the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.



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I also agree to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. I will abide by any and all applicable rules and regulations of the Fire/EMS Department.
2. I will not ride or attempt to ride or use or attempt to use, any vehicle or apparatus utilized within the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department until such time as a duly authorized officer has reviewed with me the procedures for riding or using same.
3. I also agree that I have no physical or mental handicaps that may affect me during my participation in this program or which may be aggravated by my participation in this program, except for the following:

Despite the Fire/EMS Department's knowledge of this disability or defect, I agree that their continuing grant of permission for me to participate in this program shall not subject them to any liability.

4. I also authorize and instruct the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department or their authorized representatives to notify the following person in case of any accident in which I am involved while participating in this program or while I am commuting to and from the fire station(s) or other points.

Name & Relationship

Address

Telephone Number(s)



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5. Have you been denied membership or career status in the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department for criminal record, background investigation, or medical reasons? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

6. Do you have any pending criminal charges against you? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

7. Do you have any Felony convictions? Yes ____ No ____

If so, explain _____

8. If you have been denied membership in another fire/rescue organization outside of Prince George's County, said reason(s) is to be disclosed to the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

9. Should I be a bona fide member of a fire/rescue association or department, I will disclose the name of such organization:

Name of Organization

Address

Telephone Number

President/Chief Officer



Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department

10. Upon request, a medical waiver statement from a physician shall be submitted to substantiate fitness to perform in a ride-along observer status on-the-scene of emergency operations.

This release form shall become a permanent record of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

Expected "Ride-Along Observer" dates and station:

_____ to _____ **Station** _____

At the end of this period, a new release form shall be obtained.

Signature

Printed Name of Participant

Address

Home Telephone

Work Telephone

Date of Birth

Approved and Witnessed by (Choose one):

Volunteer Chief Name (*Please Print*)

Signature/Date

Departmental Duty Officer Name (*Please Print*)

Signature/Date

Duty Chief Notified by: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Received By EOC:

Signature

Date