

This guideline provides North Zone procedures for operating in a defensive firefighting mode. The decision to operate in a defensive mode indicates the offensive attack strategy has been abandoned for reasons of personnel safety and the involved structure has reached a point where offensive firefighting is no longer practical.

Two modes of conversion exist from offensive to defensive mode:

**CATASTROPHIC CONVERSION:**

If operating in the offensive mode, any catastrophic conversion to a defensive mode will be made as "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC", and all personnel will withdraw from the structure and maintain a safe perimeter (**EOM 203.00**). Company Officers will account for the safety of all personnel. Division/Group Supervisors shall verify all resources assigned to them have vacated the building. Interior lines will be withdrawn and repositioned, or abandoned if necessary. Lines should not be operated directly into doorways or windows, but should be backed away to positions, which will protect exposures. All exposures, both immediate and anticipated, should be identified and covered.

**PLANNED CONVERSION:**

In the event the I.C. determines the need to change from an offensive to defensive action and there is no immediate life safety hazards to firefighters, the withdraw shall be organized. During this tactical withdraw, the individual managing Fireground Accountability shall ensure all assigned personnel are accounted for before the I.C. reassigns personnel.

THE FIRST PRIORITY IN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS IS TO PROTECT EXPOSURES.

THE SECOND PRIORITY IN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS WILL BE TO KNOCK DOWN THE MAIN BODY OF FIRE. (This may assist in the protection of exposures, but does not replace it as a first priority.)

Master streams are generally the most effective tactic to be employed in defensive operations. For tactical purposes, a minimum master stream flow of 500 GPM should be used. Adjustments may be made upward or downward from this figure but it is very significant in the initial deployment of master streams.

When the exposure is severe and water is limited, the most effective tactic is to put water on the exposure. Once exposure coverage is established, attention may be directed to knocking down the main body of the fire.

The completion of bringing the fire under control is reported utilizing the standard radio reporting term "FIRE CONTAINED" and then ultimately "FIRE UNDER CONTROL." It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to transmit this report to the Dispatch Center.