



Coffee Break Training - Management Science Program

Fire Department Control Systems

No. MS-2011-4 July 6, 2011

Learning Objective: The student shall evaluate the current control systems in use and then determine the most effective control systems for their departments.

The responsibility of controlling the activities of a fire department is the single most important function of management and one of management's primary responsibilities.

Control establishes clear lines of authority. Clear guidelines ensure continuity and coordination within the department. Clear reporting mechanisms allow a manager to determine whether subordinates are accomplishing the mission and for the manager to maintain control.

The nature of control in fire service/emergency medical services (EMS) has changed dramatically in the past decade. The rapid growth of many departments and the increased complexity of their mission have made it necessary to find new ways to control the expanded number of employees. The changing legal environment holds managers more accountable to justify and verify their decisions.

In the past, a chief's statement that an employee, program, or department was either good or bad stood on its own, without need for documentation. Today, clear factual documentation of the performance of the department and its individual members is a must; after all, the fire service is a business. Managers are held to a high standard of accountability for the evaluation of the performance of their subordinates. The use of effective control methods is important now more than ever for the manager.



Students attending the *Decision Making at Multi-Alarm Incidents* class.

CONTROL SYSTEMS

- The Budget
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Rules and Regulations
- Activities Reports
- Personnel Reports
- Performance Appraisals

For archived downloads, go to:

www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/coffee-break/