

# Standard Operating Guidelines / Standard Operating Procedures Helmet Camera

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Purpose:**

This SOG/SOP is intended to provide a frame work for the use of the fire helmet camera.

## **Scope:**

This SOG/SOP will discuss the benefits, operation, use, function, maintenance, permission, and consent aspects of the fire helmet camera.

## **Benefits:**

The obvious benefits of the fire helmet camera are varied and numerous. As a reliable recall device the fire helmet camera is an incredibly valuable tool of the fire service.

### ***Fire Investigations:***

When a firefighter or fire officer is asked by a fire investigator of the scene conditions upon arrival answers may be hindered by the limitation of human memory, the stress of multitasking, or inattentiveness because of other priorities. Those investigators who take the time to review the video from the fire helmet camera will see exactly what initial fire companies saw upon arrival.

### ***Other Investigations:***

Should the unimaginable happen, and a member of this department lose his/her life in the line of duty. The video and audio from the fire helmet camera maybe used by fire investigators to understand the circumstances surrounding the death.

### ***Critique:***

A million and one things are going on at the same time on a fire scene. It has been said that the first fifteen minutes of a fire reduces the life span of a firefighter by a forty-hour workweek. Fire department scene critiques are the best way to identify all of the aspects of a call and make changes as to the efficiencies of operations and techniques. Critiques can be greatly enhanced by the fire helmet camera. Company officers can go step by step through a call. All members of the company have the opportunity to see items that otherwise they may have not had the opportunity to see while on scene (i.e. illegal wiring, hazardous situations, conditions at other points of view, and other items of interest).

***Quality Assurance/Improvement:***

Using the fire helmet camera during a critique offers a quality assurance/improvement aspect similar to the written report of an EMS call. This quality assurance/improvement aspect is designed to better the fire department as a whole. It is not intended to be a disciplinary tool, but a learning tool. When the first dashboard cameras were mounted in police cars there was resistance by police officers and administrators alike. Today there are only two types of officers that do not appreciate the dash camera. First, is the incompetent, and second is the renegade, neither of which have any business in law enforcement. The dash camera has helped thousands of police officers identify threats that may save their life in the future. The fire helmet camera provides that same level of professionalism to the fire service. Identified risks and close calls are to be shared by all members of this department and by the fire service as a whole.

***Training:***

Fire department training officers may use the fire helmet camera on a recruit going through training mazes while vision is obscured. After the exercise the student can see items missed during primary and secondary search. Training videos can be created from the videos obtained by the fire helmet camera and used over and over to train others. The fire helmet camera may be used on all training events.

***Recruitment:***

The fire helmet camera will allow potential recruits to see what a real fire looks like. There is no Hollywood special effect or props.

***Hazmat:***

The fire helmet camera may be used during hazardous materials incidents on recon missions. The recon team will relay all information to the science sector by normal means. The fire helmet camera may be used to confirm findings to the science sector and provide an exact description of the scene to the incident command.

***Personal Protective Equipment Compliance:***

Using the fire helmet camera on emergency incidents will assist the company officer identify unsafe actions or lack of PPE compliance. PPE compliance will ultimately prevent injuries or even death.

***Tactics and Strategy:***

Using the fire helmet camera to review fore ground tactics and strategy can improve overall operations.

**Operation:**

The operation of the fire helmet camera will follow manufacturer recommendations. Only batteries recommended by the manufacturer will be used.

**Use:**

Use of the fire helmet camera shall not delay any fire suppression or rescue activities. The fire helmet camera may be used time permitting on responses except for EMS only calls and direct patient care.

**Function:**

The function of the fire helmet camera is to provide video and audio documentation of fire scenes. These recordings will serve as reliable recall of the events of an emergency incident.

**Maintenance:**

The fire helmet camera should be cleaned with water and a mild soap. If the outer housing of the camera is damaged it should be replaced.

**Permission:**

The following are the permitted items concerning the use of the fire helmet camera.

***Required/Allowed or Permitted:***

The fire helmet camera is permitted by members of this department for all incidents except for direct patient care.

***Posting, Uploading, or Emailing Video on the Internet:***

All video content will be reviewed by the fire chief or his/her designee before being posted, uploaded, or emailed.

***HIPPA/Privacy Requirements:***

The fire helmet camera may not be used to video or record private medical information or records. Patient care or other private and/or personal information shall not be disseminated with the aid of the fire helmet camera.

***Rescue Calls:***

The fire helmet camera may be used on rescue scenes. If the fire helmet camera inadvertently records a patient care event such as a rescue, the fire chief will have the last say in the use or purpose of the video.

***Eavesdropping/Illegal Activities:***

The fire helmet camera shall not be used for any illegal activities such as eavesdropping, listening to, or recording private conversations.

**Consent:**

A patient may give consent for a video of a rescue or other emergency event to be used in training, education, or any other usage desired by the fire department.

\_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department

**Video Usage Consent Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) give consent to  
the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department to use the  
video obtained on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_. I understand that I will not be  
compensated in any way for the use of this video. The video may be used for  
training, education, recruitment, uploading, downloading, or other uses as the  
department sees fit.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FD Rep: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: LH/RS  
May 1, 2008