

**Galveston Fire Department
Standard Operating Procedure
1500.02 Apparatus Backing**

Fire Chief _____

Implementation Date: July 18, 2008

Revision Date: August 2009

Review Date: July 2011

Apparatus Backing

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to ensure that all personnel understand the importance of having spotters when backing apparatus and the proper method to perform this assignment.

Anytime that it is necessary to operate a vehicle/apparatus in reverse, it will be required that no less than two personnel, acting as spotters, assist the Driver while the vehicle is being backed. There will be occasions where it is not possible to have spotters. In these situations, it will be the responsibility of the driver, to use mirrors and the back up camera (on the vehicles equipped with such), to safely back these vehicles.

When it is determined that a vehicle is to be backed up, all personnel on/in the apparatus shall exit the apparatus, with their assigned portable radio, after the apparatus has come to a complete stop. For apparatus with only 1 passenger, that spotter will move to the right rear of the apparatus, establish visual contact with the driver via the mirror and direct the apparatus back. For apparatus with 2 passengers, both spotters will move to the rear of the apparatus, one left and one right, establishing visual contact with the driver via both mirrors and direct the apparatus back. If an apparatus has more than two passengers, a third spotter shall be positioned at the front right, establishing visual contact with the driver through a window and direct the apparatus back. All spotters need to be aware of the other spotters and communicate as best as possible. All spotters shall remain in place until the need to back the apparatus is completed and the apparatus has come to a complete stop.

In the event that a spotter wants to stop the apparatus quickly, and they do not have visual contact with the driver, they shall state STOP! over the radio. Any driver who hears STOP! over the radio, while operating with spotters, shall immediately stop the apparatus until the reason for stopping can be identified.

It is important to understand that a fire department apparatus may have to operate on a street or roadway that is less than adequate for the size apparatus in use. It will be the responsibility of the entire crew to ensure that the operation is performed as safely as possible and that spotters are used whenever the driver and/or Officer feel that there is a need.