TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT

B-25 Funeral Drive-Bys

Non-Emergency Manual

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Policy/Procedure

A “Drive-By” is a ceremonial passing-by of a deceased members’ last assigned, or favorite fire station by the funeral procession en route to the cemetery. It is a formal ceremony conducted to allow the members of the decedent’s crew, or station co-workers, to pay last respects to the deceased member, family, and friends. All members of the Department, active and retired, as well as members of other departments are welcome to attend.

A “Drive-By” shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. The on-duty Battalion Chief responsible for the district in which the selected station resides shall schedule a combination of at least two fire apparatus to be parked outside on the approach. The Battalion Chief may assemble more rigs if he or she chooses. As the procession nears the station, the rig’s emergency lights shall be illuminated.

2. If possible, the fire shop will attempt to have a spare rig at the drive-by to supplement the apparatus in the event that one of the staged rigs respond to an incident.

3. Fire Museum personnel will ensure that a gong is present. The gong shall be positioned in a place of visibility, usually in the center of the approach to the station. As the funeral procession passes the station, the gong shall be struck once every 5 to 10 seconds for the duration of the procession. The Battalion Chief shall assign someone to ring the gong.

4. On-duty personnel shall be dressed in Class “B” fatigue shirts, ties, and hats. On-duty personnel lacking ties or hats shall be positioned behind those members in full uniform, when possible, or grouped together for the sake of uniformity.

5. Fatigue coats may be worn when conditions such as rain or cold demand. When worn, they shall be zipped, and snapped uniformly.

6. At no time shall polo shirts, shorts, or New York-style sweatshirts be worn.

7. Proper Class “A” uniforms may be worn by off-duty personnel. Members off duty, in uniform, shall adhere to the TFRD grooming policy.

8. The Battalion Chief shall be present and shall ensure that personnel fall into a straight, presentable formation in front of the rigs on the approach. In the interest of uniformity, personnel wearing Class “A” uniforms shall be separated from, or flanked by, personnel wearing Class “B” uniforms. Retired members shall be grouped together. A member possessing military experience may be recruited to assist the Battalion Chief with military protocol, such as “dress right dress” and additional duties related to the formation. There is no standard to adhere to other than to appear professional.

9. As the funeral procession nears and passes the assembled firefighters, the Battalion Chief or his or her designee shall direct the assembly’s order using the preparatory and action commands found below:

10. Firefighters shall be directed to stand at attention at the announcement of the commands,

- “Fire Fighters…Attention!”

Firefighters shall be directed to salute at the announcement of the commands,

- “Present…Arms!”

Firefighters shall be directed to lower their salute and return to a state of attention at the announcement of the commands,

- “Order…Arms!”

Firefighters shall be directed to disassemble at the announcement of the commands,

- “Fire Fighters…Dismissed!”
- The Salute is usually held during the entire funeral procession. However, factors such as procession length and weather extremes may precipitate the command “Order…Arms!” prior to the passing of the full funeral procession. At all times following the call to attention, firefighters shall remain at attention until dismissed.

Adherence to seemingly minute details will leave a member’s family and friends with a better memory of his or her passing. Members are encouraged not only to ensure they have a cap and tie available to them at all times, but also that they are familiar with their roles in the Drive-By ceremony.

The “Drive-By” is one of the final opportunities for active and retired members of the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department, or other department’s, to express their professional gratitude for services rendered by a deceased firefighter. It should be understood that deaths of members of the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department, or other departments nation-wide, often occur without notice or forewarning. Members should strive to maintain Class “A” uniforms, caps, and ties, in a state of readiness for use when the unexpected occurs.

See Also:

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