

ROGUE VALLEY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Document:	RVFCA After Action Review (AAR)
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Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to establish a procedure for conducting After Action Reviews (AAR) utilizing standardized forms. After-Action Reviews (AAR's) help provide personnel feedback on actions taken during incidents and training activities. Additionally, AAR's identify how to correct deficiencies, sustain strengths, and focus on performance of tasks and objectives.

The "spirit" in which AAR's are conducted is essential. The environment and climate surrounding an AAR must be one in which the personnel, firefighters to chiefs, openly and honestly discuss what actually transpired in sufficient detail and clarity that not only will everyone understand what did and did not occur, but why.

SAFETY

Safety is not a critical factor for this guideline.

PROCEDURE

Key points for all After Action Reviews:

- Are conducted during or immediately after each event
- Focus on intended training objectives
- Focus on individual, crew and battalion performance
- Involve all participants in the discussion
- Use open-ended questions
- Are related to specific standards
- Determine strengths and weaknesses
- Link performance to subsequent training

Types of After Action Reviews:

There are two types of AAR's; formal and informal.

- Formal AAR's are resource intensive and involves the planning, coordination, and preparation of supporting materials, a suitable site, and support personnel.
 - Have external observers and dignitaries

- Take more time
- Use complex training aids
- Are scheduled beforehand
- Are conducted where best supported

Types of After Action Reviews Continued:

- Informal AAR's (usually for individual, crew, and/or battalion training) requires less preparation and planning, usually occurring at the scene or at the station.
 - Conducted by internal chain of command
 - Take less time
 - Use simple training aids
 - Are conducted when needed
 - Are held at a suitable location (station or training center)

Four Steps of an After Action Review:

- *Step 1. Planning*
 - Identify when AARs will occur
 - Determine who will attend AARs
 - Select potential AAR sites
 - Choose training aids
 - Review the AAR plan
- *Step 2. Preparing*
 - Identify key events
 - Request/secure audio of the event from the dispatch center
 - Prepare a timeline of events
 - Incorporate video and/or photos (if available)
 - Prepare the AAR site
- *Step 3. Conducting*
 - Seek maximum participation
 - Maintain focus on objectives and key points
 - Do not dwell on unrelated issues
 - Take notes and ensure key points are recorded
 - Summarize key points identified during the discussion and end on a positive note, linking conclusions to future training opportunities

- Step 4. Following up (using AAR results)
 - Identify areas requiring training or a change in policy/procedure
 - Identify 3-5 “Action Items” for follow up or recommendation to command staff

Types of After Action Review Forms:

Utilize the templates provided on the RITA website under the RVFCA tab. These templates include:

- Structure fire worksheet
- Wildland fire worksheet
- Mobilization worksheet
- Technical rescue worksheet