



GUAM FIRE DEPARTMENT  
AGANA, GUAM

*J. C. [Signature]*

Page \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL ORDER:**

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Index As:		

**SUBJECT:** Guidelines for conducting Fire Department Funerals.

**PURPOSE:** The Guidelines in this section were compiled by the Officers of the Lancaster Bureau of Fire in 1977 and were based on their observance and experience as well as on a Handbook on Military Etiquette, a guideline used by the Philadelphia Fire Department, and the assistance of a local Funeral Director. These Guidelines are offered to assist other fire departments who may wish to honor a fallen comrade. The order of service was provided by the Cumberland County Fireman's Association.

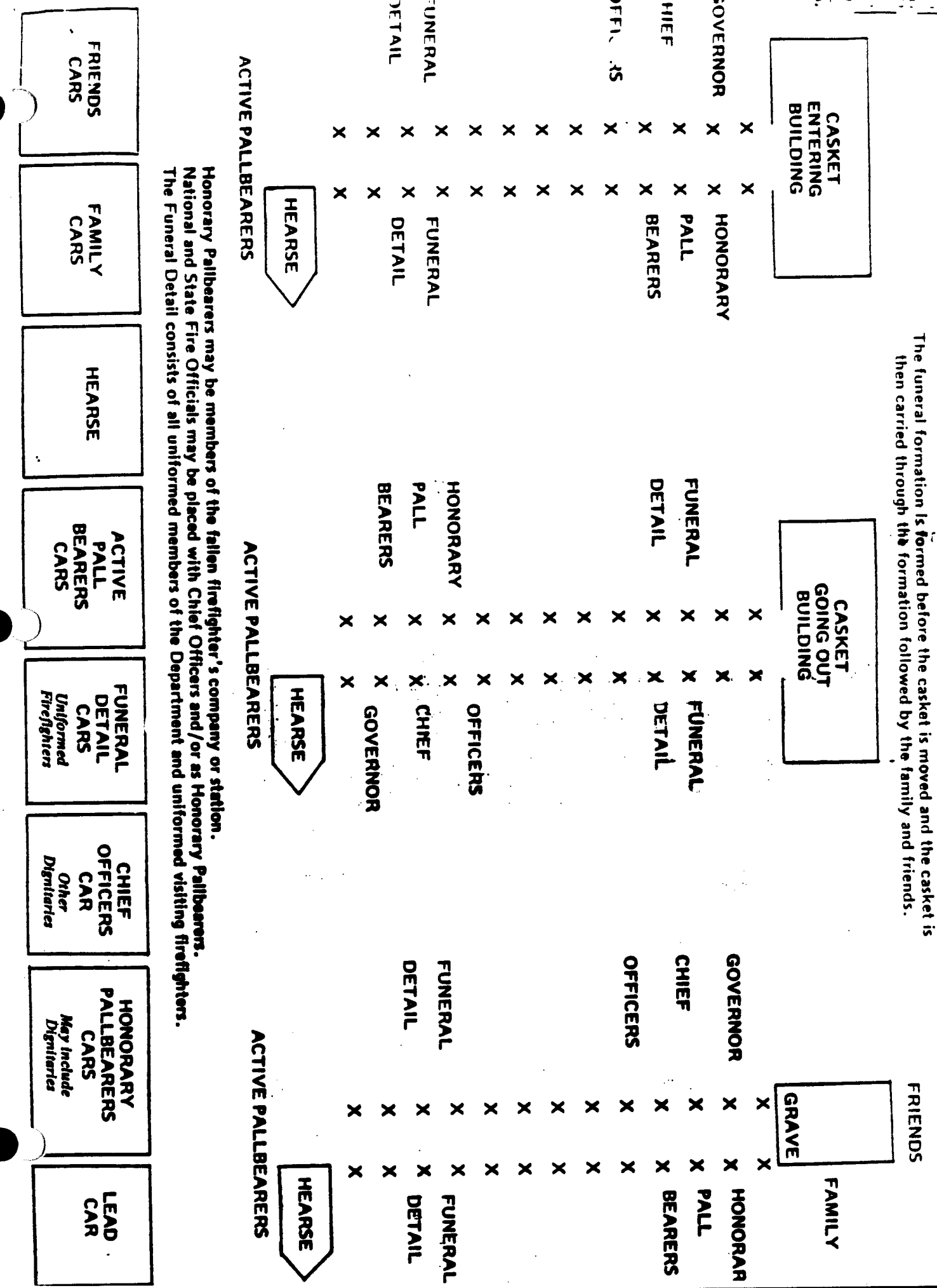
**THIS ORDER CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING NUMBERED SECTIONS:**

- I. GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL FORMATION
- II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF NOTIFICATION
- III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICER IN CHARGE (OIC)
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS
- V. INVENTORY OF NECESSARY EQUIPMENT
- VI. THE FIREMEN'S MEMORIAL HYMN
- VII. HONOR GUARD ROSTER (SAMPLE)
- VIII. A FIREMAN'S PRAYER

This Order supersedes all other Orders pertaining to conducting Fire Department Funerals.

GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL FORMATIONS  
(According to Military Etiquette)

The funeral formation is formed before the casket is moved and the casket is then carried through the formation followed by the family and friends.



Honorary Pallbearers may be members of the fallen firefighter's company or station. National and State Fire Officials may be placed with Chief Officers and/or as Honorary Pallbearers. The Funeral Detail consists of all uniformed members of the Department and uniformed visiting firefighters.

FRIENDS CARS

FAMILY CARS

HEARSE

ACTIVE PALL BEARERS CARS

FUNERAL DETAIL CARS  
*Uniformed Firefighters*

CHIEF OFFICERS CAR  
*Other Dignitaries*

HONORARY PALLBEARERS CARS  
*May Include Dignitaries*

LEAD CAR

## II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF NOTIFICATION

A. Death in the Line of Duty

1. Upon the death of a member in the line of duty the Officer in charge, if other than Chief, shall immediately notify the Chief of the Department.
2. The Chief or his Designated Representative (DR) shall notify the next of kin.
3. The Chief or his DR shall notify the Governor or Governor's Representative.
4. Within reasonable time after the death of a member in the line of duty and at a time when all companies are in quarters, the Chief or his DR shall instruct the dispatcher to transmit the following message (This applies if the department has more than one station or announcement is to be made to all departments on a central dispatching system.):
  - a. "Attention all companies, stand by to receive an announcement from Chief."
  - b. Upon receipt of such an announcement the man on watch will, if the company is not in roll call formation, cause the company to assemble in formation.
  - c. The Chief or his DR will transmit a message prepared and approved by the Chief, similar to the following:

"It is with deep regret that the Chief announces the death of (Rank, Name, Company) who lost his life in the line of duty while participating in operations on Fire Call (Number, Location, Date & Time).
  - d. Upon receipt of this message the man on watch shall record the same in the company's log book.
  - e. Upon receipt of a notice of a member killed in the line of duty the station flag shall be placed at half staff and the front of the station shall be draped with black bunting until seven days after the funeral.
5. A news conference or a formal news release should be arranged as soon as possible so that factual information is available for dissemination.
6. The Chief shall designate an Officer-In-Charge (OIC) who shall be responsible for the department's involvement in the funeral procedures.

B. Death Other Than in the Line of Duty

1. When the Chief learns of the death of an active or retired member, he or his DR will instruct the dispatcher to notify the companies of the death in the following manner:

"It is with deep regret that the Chief announces the death of (Rank, Retiree Name, on/at Time/Date)"

2. Upon receipt of such official notification from the dispatcher of the death of a member or retiree, the station flag shall be lowered to half staff until the day following the funeral.
3. As soon as it is convenient, the Chief or his DR shall notify the Governor's office or Governor's Representative of the reported death.
4. The Chief shall designate an Officer-In Charge (OIC) who shall be responsible for the Department's involvement in the funeral procedures.

NOTE: Some cities have adopted the policy that flags on city buildings other than on fire stations not be lowered to half staff for retirees, only for active employees.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICER IN CHARGE (OIC).

- A. The OIC shall contact the family of the deceased member and, in coordination with the funeral director, establish the family's desires as to fire department participation in the funeral. He shall assist the family in any way. He shall offer the fire department's services for the following situations:
  1. A formal funeral, at home, funeral home, church, or cemetery; involving use of pumper, active pallbearers, honorary pallbearers, and Funeral Detail, color guard, and bugler. (This type of honor shall be reserved for those members killed in the line of duty.)
  2. A semi-formal funeral at home, funeral home, church, or cemetery involving active pallbearers, honorary pallbearers, honor guard, and Funeral Detail.
  3. A non-formal funeral, at home, funeral home, church, or cemetery; there being no fire department involvement, other than members attending in a passive role either at the viewing and/or funeral service.
  4. Private funeral, at home, funeral home, church, or cemetery; respecting the family's wishes to have no outside participation at the funeral.

NOTE: With the exception of those honors reserved for members killed in the line of duty, any or all of the fire department's honors may be part of a member's funeral ceremony. The desires of the family shall be paramount and shall be given the fullest respect.

- B. Having established the wishes of the deceased, the OIC shall carry out any or all of the following in order to realize these wishes. The OIC shall continually be in communication with the Funeral Director as he arranges for the fire department's participation.

GENERAL ORDER NO.

## 1. Customary Funeral Arrangements.

- a. Arrange for an Honor Guard to stand duty during the viewing, minimum of four.
- b. Arrange for Active Pallbearers; six plus an officer. Arrange for necessary equipment.
- c. Arrange for Honorary Pallbearers. (Family, Company Officers, Retirees, etc.)
- d. Arrange for Funeral Detail. (All uniformed members in attendance.)
- e. Arrange for Bugler.
- f. Arrange for Color Guard.
- g. Obtain American flag for casket. (Funeral Director secures flag for veterans only.)
- h. Provide all members of the fire department with the information necessary to carry out their roles in the funeral.
- i. Survey the area of the funeral services and make provisions for placement of all attending units and provide information for map preparation.
- j. Designate an area of assembly for all attending chief officers and dignitaries (preferably in a building, funeral home, church, school or fire station.)
- k. Designate an area of assembly for all other members of the department and visiting fire fighters.

NOTE: This area should be a block or two away from the funeral home or church, preferably at a fire station, school, or park where ample parking and assembly area are available. This group will then march as a unit to the church or funeral home to act as Funeral Detail.

- l. Obtain sufficient rolls of black plastic tape along with small round tipped scissors that can be carried in a pocket and make them available in the assembly areas for all uniformed personnel to place a horizontal black band over the breast badge of all participating officers and men.
- m. The OIC or his delegated representative will coordinate all commands during the movement of the casket as prescribed in this directive.

## 2. Special Arrangements for Formal Funeral.

- a. A fire department pumper(s) designated by the Chief will be appropriately prepared with flowers and black bunting and stripped of hose for use to transport the casket.

NOTE: In case of multiple joint funeral, vans or station wagons could be substituted for pumpers.

- b. Arrange for the proper placement of all vehicles that will participate in the funeral procession.

NOTE: If a joint service is held and interment will be at two or more locations, separate processions must be established according to guest preference.

- c. A map of the areas involved will be prepared to expedite the proceedings and assist out-of-town guests. Map should include:

1. Location of fire department(s)
2. Location of funeral homes
3. Location of church
4. Location of chief officer and dignitary assembly area
5. Location of fire fighters' assembly area
6. Location of auxiliary parking areas
7. Location of hotel(s) for out-of-town guests
8. Location of vehicles for funeral procession
9. Route of funeral procession
10. Location of cemetery and grave in cemetery
11. Location of auxiliary parking at cemetery
12. Location of food service areas
13. Separate map or coding on a single map should designate location of multiple funerals and/or processions as required.
14. Any other information deemed necessary

- d. On the map or on a separate sheet, a copy of a diagram should show the proper arrangement and movement of personnel for various ceremonies and locations as necessary.

- e. Arrangements for reproduction of sufficient quantities of the two maps and firm commitment on delivery should be established.

- f. The OIC or his designated representative will coordinate all commands during the movement of the casket and personnel.

- g. Proper arrangement with the police department should be made to handle traffic and parking at the various locations involved and along the funeral procession route.

### 3. Photography Coverage (PIO's Responsibility)

Fire department photographer or private photographer should be assigned to cover the funeral.

### 4. Media Arrangements (PIO's Responsibility)

Establish guidelines for radio, television, and press

1. At the church inside and/or outside
2. Funeral home inside and/or outside
3. Cemetery: general photo coverage and/or coverage of the immediate grave

## 5. Arrangements for Out-of-Town Guests (PIO's Responsibility)

## a. Transportation

1. Airports
2. Hotel, motels
3. Funeral services
4. Cemetery
5. Food service areas

NOTE: Where there are insufficient fire department cars, consider use of other municipal cars, surplus police vehicles, and private vehicles of department members. Provide signs for these vehicles approximately 1½ feet long by 6 inches to read "FIRE DEPARTMENT COURTESY CAR."

## b. Arrange for housing as necessary for overnight guests

## c. Arrange for food service areas

1. Chief officers and dignitaries
2. Fire fighters

NOTE: Food service may be needed between morning and afternoon funeral services or following a funeral service at one or more locations. Consider help from the fire department Ladies Auxiliary or Auxiliary of mutual aid companies or Caterer. Depending on the cause and number of personnel involved in a fire or emergency-related fatal accident, the number of out-of-town guests could range from a few hundred to several thousand.

## IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- A. All members shall at all times maintain a clean, pressed, and properly fitted uniform for use at funerals and/or any other formal functions (if a department has uniforms).
- B. All off-duty members and those on-duty members, upon proper relief from normal duty, shall make every effort to honor their fellow members by attending the funeral services.
- C. All members of the fire department shall acquaint themselves with the prescribed courtesies of the fire department's funeral procedures as outlined in this operation guide.
- D. Honor Guard
  1. At least four Honor Guards are required.
  2. One member of the Honor Guard shall be designated as the Officer of the Guard (OG). He shall be responsible for obtaining the necessary equipment (white gloves, black badge bands, etc.), and for the scheduling of the Honor Guard members.
  3. Two Honor Guards, one for the head and one for the foot of the casket, shall be scheduled at ten-minute intervals.
  4. Honor Guards' uniforms shall be dress uniform, white gloves, and black badge bands.
  5. Honor Guards shall stand at attention at their assigned positions for the duration of their ten-minute tour of duty.

6. Honor Guard may be used during viewings and prior to the service as custom dictates.

#### E. Honorary Pallbearers

1. Men designated as Honorary Pallbearers, usually retirees or members of the deceased's company, shall at all times move ahead of the casket as it is moved.
2. The Honorary Pallbearers shall sit on the designated side of the church during the service.
3. Dress for Honorary Pallbearers.
  - a. Retirees will normally wear civilian clothes.
  - b. Active members shall be in dress uniform, if department has them.

#### F. Active Pallbearers

1. The active Pallbearer Detail shall consist of six pallbearers plus an officer.
2. The officer of the detail shall contact the funeral director for detailed instructions.
3. The pallbearers will remain covered at all times while acting in that capacity and will wear white gloves.
4. The pallbearers will not salute while acting in that capacity.
5. The flag shall be placed over the casket with the blue field at the head over the deceased's left shoulder.
6. If the casket arrives at the church from the funeral home, the Pallbearer Detail shall position themselves to receive the casket in front of the church (see diagram).
7. During the service the pallbearer detail will sit on designated side of the church with the funeral detail.
8. At the cemetery, after placing the casket over the grave site and upon the officer's command, the detail shall raise the flag to waist high over the casket and hold it there during the committal service. After the committal service is read, taps may be sounded. The flag is then folded, upon the officer's command, in the prescribed military manner and presented to the next of kin by the officer of the Detail.
9. The Detail, on orders of the officer, shall take a place with the funeral detail.
10. During the graveside service, where the flag is not draped over the casket, the Pallbearer Detail, after placing the casket over the grave site, on orders of the officer shall step back with the funeral detail and follow the procedures for the funeral detail.

#### G. Funeral Detail

1. All members of the department, not otherwise detailed, will act as the Funeral Detail, in dress uniform, no gloves required.
2. The Funeral Detail will arrive as a group from the staging area prior to the arrival of the funeral coach at the church and take a position in front of the church on the right-hand side as indicated on the diagram.



3. For formal and semi-formal funerals, the Funeral Detail will take a position in front of the church in two facing ranks with senior officer closest to the church.
4. As the Active Pallbearers move the casket from the coach, the Funeral Detail will be called to attention by the OIC. If the casket is draped with the flag the OIC will order a hand salute as the casket passes. The command shall be "Present arms!" The command to end the salute shall be "Order arms!"
5. After the casket passes, the OIC will order "At ease" and the Funeral Detail will file into the church according to rank and sit in the designated area of the church. Head covering is removed upon entering the church.
6. After the service the Funeral Detail, on order of the OIC, will file out of the church and, in the case of a formal funeral, take a position on the right of the entry as indicated on the diagram.
7. If semi-formal service, the Funeral Detail will form facing ranks on both sides of the entry with senior officers closest to hearse.
8. As the flag-draped casket is brought out of the church, the detail is brought to attention and a hand salute is executed on order of the OIC. If no flag covers casket, ranks stand at attention.
9. The Funeral Detail rides as a group in designated cars to the cemetery or between the funeral home and church.
10. The Funeral Detail at the cemetery again forms two ranks according to rank from the location of the hearse to the grave site, with officers closest to grave (see diagram).
11. As the flag-draped casket is removed from the hearse by the active pallbearers, the Funeral Detail executes a hand salute on order of the OIC. ("Present arms.") If the casket is not covered by the flag, they stand at attention.
12. After casket is placed over the grave the Funeral Detail forms ranks in front of the grave, highest rank on right (see diagram).
13. If taps are sounded, uniformed members should execute a hand salute on order of the OIC.
14. During religious graveside services all personnel will bow at words "Let us Pray."
15. All personnel, except the active pallbearers while holding the flag, will follow the example of the officiating clergy. If he uncovers, they will uncover; if he remains covered, they will remain covered.

NOTE: These procedures and formations are accepted courtesies but act as a guideline only and may be adjusted depending upon existing conditions at funeral home, church, etc.

V. INVENTORY OF NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

- A. On hand in fire department stock room
  - 1. Color guard standards
  - 2. Flag for casket
  - 3. Black plastic tape and/or elastic bands
  - 4. Round-tipped scissors
  - 5. 12 pairs of assorted sizes of white gloves
  - 6. Sign to read "Fire Department Courtesy Car," (approximately 6 should be inventoried)
  - 7. Black bunting for stations
  
- B. Where to obtain necessary items
  - 1. Flags: Supply or identify closest supplier
  - 2. Color Guards: American Legion or VFW
  - 3. Band: school or other local group
  - 4. Additional white gloves (Army and Navy Store or identify closest local supplier).
  - 5. Additional vehicles: police department, car dealers, members of the department
  - 6. Signs: identify a local sign painter who would be available on short notice
  - 7. Black bunting: identify local supplier

VI. THE FIREMEN'S MEMORIAL HYMN

(tune: ABIDE WITH ME)

In fond remembrance gathered here today,  
Tribute to pay to brothers passed away;  
Garlands of flowers placed upon the dead,  
Spring's brightest blossoms deck their quiet bed.

(tune: REVEILLE)

When duty called, our brothers they would go,  
Ever undaunted, met the fiery foe.

May guardian angels o'er them vigil keep,  
While they lie resting in eternal sleep.

(tune: TAPS)

Father in heaven, guide us on our way,  
Through storm and sunshine to eternal day;  
And when our duty here on earth is o'er  
Vouchsafe our journey to the gladdened shore.

VII. HONOR GUARD ROSTER (Sample)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Deceased) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date Deceased Passed Away)

As of \_\_\_\_\_ (date) at \_\_\_\_\_ Hours (time) the department will provide an Honor Guard for the Funeral of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Deceased) who will/will not be buried in his uniform.

Viewing will be held at:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Day and Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Time \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral will be held at:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Day and Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Time \_\_\_\_\_

Honor Guards will be scheduled at 10-minute intervals between \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ hours, \_\_\_\_\_ (day and date).

_____	(Time)	_____	_____
_____	(Time)	_____	_____
_____	(Time)	_____	_____
_____	(Time)	_____	_____

Honor Guard Uniform will be \_\_\_\_\_  
Department will furnish white gloves and black breast badge bands.

VIII. A FIREMAN'S PRAYER

When I am called to duty, God  
Wherever flames may rage,  
Give me strength to save some life  
Whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child  
Before it is too late  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert  
To the weakest shout  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling and  
To give the best in me.  
To guard my every neighbor and  
Protect his property.

And if according to my fate  
I am to lose my life  
Please bless with your protecting hand  
My family and my wife.

  
F. S. N. TAJERON