NFPA 904
Incident Follow-up Report Guide

1996 Edition

National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, PO Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101
An International Codes and Standards Organization

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NFPA 904

Incident Follow-up Report Guide

1996 Edition

This edition of NFPA 904, *Incident Follow-up Report Guide*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire Reporting, and acted on by the National Fire Protection Association, Inc., at its Annual Meeting held May 20–23, 1996, in Boston, MA. It was issued by the Standards Council on July 18, 1996, with an effective date of August 9, 1996, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 904 was approved as an American National Standard on July 26, 1996.

Origin and Development of NFPA 904

This guide was developed to encourage the collection of data beyond the basic system as described in NFPA 902M, *Fire Reporting Field Incident Manual*, on fires that are significant in terms of their magnitude, associated casualties, or other impact on the community. It was not intended to present a comprehensive fire investigation reporting form.

The original edition of this guide was published in 1981 with the text reconfirmed in 1986 and 1992. In preparation for this edition, the committee reviewed the data that it was suggesting be collected. The review included how useful the data was and how accurately it could be collected. A number of data elements were dropped or modified, while others that previously required the data to be classified after being recorded were changed to a direct entry format.

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NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on standard methods of compiling fire experience data by the fire service. The main purposes of this Committee are to develop standard occupancy and cause classification for use by cities and states in the reporting of fires, to suggest other useful information that needs to be collected, and to develop standard forms for these purposes.

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NFPA 904

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Information on referenced publications can be found in Appendix A.

Introduction

In order to provide insight into the causes and consequences of fires or other incidents, the fire service prepares incident reports, performs prefire surveys, and conducts follow-ups to provide additional information. The criteria for when such follow-ups should be conducted are determined locally. In general, such follow-ups are conducted for fires of suspicious origin, those resulting in loss of life, and those involving large property loss.

The recording of follow-up data on fire incidents and the necessary update of fire incident data on initial incident reports is a natural next step in the process of uniform reporting of fire incidents. This guide provides a standardized form for the collection of fire incident follow-up data and an explanation of the use of the form.

This guide contains appropriate references to NFPA 901, *Standard Classifications for Incident Reporting and Fire Protection Data,* for use by personnel responsible for classifying data. All references cite the 1995 edition of NFPA 901. A review of the discussion, terminology, definitions, and classifications in NFPA 901 can improve the quality of the reports.

Data can be compiled from the forms either by hand or by using electronic data processing. In either case, this data supplements the data from property surveys, incident reports, and casualty reports to support fire prevention activities, code enforcement, planning, data analysis, and administrative functions.

General Applications

This guide contains instructions for the completion of the Incident Follow-up Report, Form 904I. It is intended that Form 904I be used to record data from follow-ups. It is assumed that an incident report is already on file for each incident for which a follow-up investigation has been conducted. There are three main purposes for Form 904I:

1. To document some of the findings of the follow-up; for example, to provide characterization of the second item involved in the fire sequence.

2. To provide the basis for revision to or augmentation of the data reported on the incident report **,** or both, if the information from the follow-up is more accurate. It should not be assumed that follow-up information is more accurate than the information on the original report, but, in the event of conflicting information, the local jurisdiction then has the option of accepting one opinion or both opinions.

3. To provide additional details on special situations such as fires of incendiary or suspicious origin.

It is important to note that the follow-up is likely to produce more information than can be recorded conveniently on Form 904I. As with any fire incident report, the narrative portion constitutes an important part of the record.

Where a data element has an associated classification system, a space has been provided to record the classification number. Where the format of the data allows for direct entry (e.g., dates, times, and numeric data), persons using the form in connection with electronic data entry can create specific spaces or a special format for recording such data to aid in its transfer to electronic media.

The Technical Committee on Fire Reporting intends that this edition of NFPA 904, *Incident Follow-up Report Guide,* and the Incident Follow-up Report be used for structural fires only. Persons wishing to use the form for other than structural fires are encouraged to do so and to correspond with the committee regarding the changes needed to accomplish such use.

Examples

Two examples are presented on the following pages. The first shows a completed form for a fire follow-up after a suspicious fire in a building used to store mattresses resulted in $300,000 in losses. The second shows a completed form for a fire follow-up after a tenement fire in which four persons were killed.

Preparation of the Incident Follow-up Report Form 904I

This section of the guide is for reference in preparing the Incident Follow-up Report, Form 904I.

The explanation for completing Lines IA through IR and other information in this guide should be referenced when preparing the Incident Follow-up Report, Form 904I. (*See form on page 7.*)

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Incident Follow-up Report Form 904I

Anytown Fire Department

IA	FDID 1234	Incident No. 00249	Exposure No. 00	Alarm Date 12/17/95	Alarm Time 0343
IB	Location/Address 329 Mill Hollow Rd		City/Town Anytown		
IC	Property Management Private taxpaying | 1		Year of Construction 1974		
ID	Type of Weather Snow | 4	Temperature 25°F	Humidity 75%	Wind Direction NW | 8	Wind Speed 18 mph | 5
IE	Time from Ignition to Detection 15 min.		Method of Detection Police Patrol | 3 3		
IF	Time from Detection to Alarm 1 min.		Delay in Alarm None | 8		
IG	Time in Smoldering Stage None - did not smolder		Size of Fire on Arrival Full involvement | 6		
IH	Time Flame to Ceiling Less than 1 min.		Ceiling Height 30 feet		
II	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread Packaging | 5 5		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread Paper | 6 7		
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread Mattress | 3 1		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread Foam plastic | 4 4		
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread |		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread |		
IJ	Agent Application Time and Date 0350 hrs 12/17/95		Blackout Time and Date 0720 hrs 12/17/95		
IK	Number of Occupants at Ignition None	Obstacles Affecting Rescue None | 8			
IL	Number of Persons Assisted None	Obstacles Affecting Fire Control Windowless walls | 2			
IM	Persons Involved Harry Firebug Age 38 Sex M		Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices Fire walls on N/S - Good | 1		
IN	Performance of Special Hazard System N/A | 8		Performance of Exit System N/A | 8		
IO	Principal Insurance Carrier — Structure ACE Insurance Company		Principal Insurance Carrier — Contents FBN Insurance Company		
IP	Available Information: ☑ Police Rpt. ☑ Lab Rpt.	☐ Autopsy Rpt. ☑ Credit Rpt.	☑ Plan, Sketch ☑ Photos	☑ Ins. File ☐ Other	
IQ	Investigator Lt. J Kimball	Agency SFM	Date 12/27/95		
IR	Remarks Harry Firebug owner of the Softsleep Matress Co. which used the building for storage being held for Grand Jury District Attorney J. O'Sullivan handling the case.				

☐ Remarks continued on reverse side

This form is for use with NFPA 904, *Incident Follow-up Report Guide*. Users also should refer to NFPA 901, *Standard Classifications for Incident Reporting and Fire Protection Data*, for information on fire-reporting systems and data classifications to be entered on this form.

Example 1.

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Incident Follow-up Report Form 904I

Anytown Fire Department

IA	FDID 26402	Incident No. 5946	Exposure No. 00	Alarm Date 11/23/95	Alarm Time 0244
IB	Location/Address 42 Maple St.		City/Town Anytown		
IC	Property Management Private taxpaying | 1		Year of Construction 1932		
ID	Type of Weather Clear | 1	Temperature 20°F	Humidity 22%	Wind Direction South | 5	Wind Speed 10 mph | 3
IE	Time from Ignition to Detection 2½ hours		Method of Detection Neighbor | 4 | 3		
IF	Time from Detection to Alarm 4 min.		Delay in Alarm Tried to effect rescue first | 3		
IG	Time in Smoldering Stage 2 hours		Size of Fire on Arrival Complete involvement | 6		
IH	Time Flame to Ceiling 10 min.		Ceiling Height 8 feet		
II	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread Wall paneling | 1 | 5		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread Plywood | 6 | 4		
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread Window drapes | 3 | 6		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread Synthetic | 7 | 1		
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread | |		Type of Material that Contributed to Spread | |		
IJ	Agent Application Time and Date 0254 11/23/95		Blackout Time and Date 0339 11/23/95		
IK	Number of Occupants at Ignition 4	Obstacles Affecting Rescue None | 8			
IL	Number of Persons Assisted 0	Obstacles Affecting Fire Control None | 8			
IM	Persons Involved Sally Smith Age 35 Sex F		Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices N/A | 8		
IN	Performance of Special Hazard System N/A | 8		Performance of Exit System N/A | 8		
IO	Principal Insurance Carrier — Structure ACME Ins. Co.		Principal Insurance Carrier — Contents ACME Ins. Co.		
IP	Available Information: ☐ Police Rpt. ☐ Lab Rpt.	☑ Autopsy Rpt. ☐ Credit Rpt.	☑ Plan, Sketch ☑ Photos	☐ Ins. File ☐ Other	
IQ	Investigator J K Stubbins	Agency County Fire Marshal	Date 11/28/95		
IR	Remarks Fire started in a chair on first story living room. Smoldered before breaking into open flame. Discovered by S. Johnson, a neighbor, who forced the front door to effect rescue. He was unsuccessful. Four persons living in the dwelling were dead before fire was discovered. No evidence of foul play.				
	☐ Remarks continued on reverse side				

This form is for use with NFPA 904, *Incident Follow-up Report Guide*. Users also should refer to NFPA 901, *Standard Classifications for Incident Reporting and Fire Protection Data*, for information on fire-reporting systems and data classifications to be entered on this form.

Example 2.

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Incident Follow-up Report Form 904I

_____ Fire Department

IA	FDID	Incident No.	Exposure No.	Alarm Date	Alarm Time
IB	Location/Address		City/Town		
IC	Property Management			Year of Construction	
ID	Type of Weather	Temperature	Humidity	Wind Direction	Wind Speed
IE	Time from Ignition to Detection			Method of Detection	
IF	Time from Detection to Alarm			Delay in Alarm	
IG	Time in Smoldering Stage			Size of Fire on Arrival	
IH	Time Flame to Ceiling			Ceiling Height	
II	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread			Type of Material that Contributed to Spread	
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread			Type of Material that Contributed to Spread	
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread			Type of Material that Contributed to Spread	
IJ	Agent Application Time and Date			Blackout Time and Date	
IK	Number of Occupants at Ignition		Obstacles Affecting Rescue		
IL	Number of Persons Assisted		Obstacles Affecting Fire Control		
IM	Persons Involved	Age Sex		Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices	
IN	Performance of Special Hazard System			Performance of Exit System	
IO	Principal Insurance Carrier — Structure			Principal Insurance Carrier — Contents	
IP	Available Information: ☐ Police Rpt. ☐ Lab Rpt.	☐ Autopsy Rpt. ☐ Credit Rpt.	☐ Plan, Sketch ☐ Photos	☐ Ins. File ☐ Other	
IQ	Investigator	Agency		Date	
IR	Remarks				
				☐ Remarks continued on reverse side	

This form is for use with NFPA 904, *Incident Follow-up Report Guide*. Users also should refer to NFPA 901, *Standard Classifications for Incident Reporting and Fire Protection Data*, for information on fire-reporting systems and data classifications to be entered on this form.

Form 904I.

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Line IA Data

IA	FDID	Incident No.	Exposure No.	Alarm Date	Alarm Time

Fire Department Identification (FDID)

This space is provided for fire departments that participate in regional or state systems. If the fire department does not forward reports to a regional or state center, this data space can be left blank.

Incident Number

The incident number is a unique number assigned to an incident so that no two incidents in a given year have the same number. Record the number assigned to this incident.

Exposure Number

The exposure number, if any, can be obtained from the Incident Report.

Alarm Date

Record the date in month, day, and year format when the fire department received the alarm for the fire. This date should be the same as the date on the incident report.

Alarm Time

Record the time, using a 24-hour clock format, when the fire department received the alarm for the fire. This time should be the same as the time on the incident report.

Line IB Data

IB	Location/Address	City/Town

Location/Address

Record the complete address of the structure at which the fire occurred. This should include the city or town. This information is used primarily for cross-reference and manual identification purposes. The address should be cross-checked with that on the incident report.

Line IC Data

IC	Property Management	Year of Construction

Property Management

Describe the ownership or management, or both, of the specific property involved in the incident. Typical descriptions include private, local government, state government, federal government, foreign, and military. If privately owned, indicate whether it is taxable or nontaxable property. This information generally can be obtained from the local assessor's office, if necessary.

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 4-9, for the data classifications to use for Property Management.

Year of Construction

Record the actual year of construction of the property (e.g., 1968). If multiple years of construction exist, enter the year of construction of the area where the fire originated and note the other years in the Remarks.

Line ID Data

ID	Type of Weather	Temperature	Humidity	Wind Direction	Wind Speed

Type of Weather

Record the type of weather at the time the fire started.

Refer to NFPA 901, 7-6.1, for the data classifications to use for Type of Weather.

Temperature

Record the air temperature at the time the fire started. Temperature can be recorded in Fahrenheit or Celsius, but be sure to indicate which by indicating "F" or "C."

Humidity

Record the relative humidity at the time the fire started.

Wind Direction

Wind direction should be recorded to the nearest 45-degree compass point at the time the fire started. Wind direction is the direction from which the wind is blowing.

Refer to NFPA 901, 7-6.4, for the data classifications to use for Wind Direction.

Wind Speed

Record the wind speed at the time the fire started.

Refer to NFPA 901, 7-6.5, for the data classifications to use for Wind Speed.

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Line IE Data

IE	Time from Ignition to Detection	Method of Detection

Time from Ignition to Detection

Ignition occurs the moment heat or overheat reaches the point of self-perpetuated combustion in the combustible ignited, whether or not there is open flame. Detection occurs the moment a person senses the danger or when an automatic detector closes its contacts. Estimate and record the elapsed time in minutes from the moment of ignition until detection.

Method of Detection

If a person detected the fire, record the relationship of that person to the fire area (e.g., occupant, security guard, passerby). If an automatic system detected the fire, indicate the type of system. If the fire was not detected until after it self-terminated, indicate that fact.

Refer to NFPA 901, 7-5.1, for the data classifications to use for Method of Detection.

Line IF Data

IF	Time from Detection to Alarm	Delay in Alarm

Time from Detection to Alarm

Alarm occurs the moment the first signal light or sound arrives at the fire alarm center of the officially responding organization. This is generally a public fire department facility but could be an organized and staffed private fire department. It is not a building guard, a building manager, telephone operator, or a maintenance shop. Record the elapsed time in minutes from detection to the receipt of the first alarm. Under certain circumstances, no alarm will be transmitted, as in the case where a fire has already burned itself out when detected.

Delay in Alarm

Record the cause for any unusual delay in transmission of alarm to the fire department once the fire has been detected. If the alarm was transmitted promptly or no unusual delays occurred, indicate that to be the case.

Refer to NFPA 901, 7-5.3, for the data classifications to use for Delay in Alarm.

Line IG Data

IG	Time in Smoldering Stage	Size of Fire on Arrival

Time in Smoldering Stage

Record in minutes the estimated time during which smoldering fire conditions existed (i.e., the time from ignition to open flaming). Record open flaming ignitions as "Did not pass through smoldering stage."

Size of Fire on Arrival

Describe the extent to which the fire had grown at the time of arrival at the scene of the first fire service apparatus.

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 11-4, for the data classifications to use for Size of Fire on Arrival.

Line IH Data

IH	Time Flame to Ceiling	Ceiling Height

Time Flame to Ceiling

Record the estimated time from the first open flaming until the flame height reached the ceiling. For smoldering ignitions, this is the time between the transition from smoldering to flaming combustion and the time to the attainment of flame at the ceiling level. For open flame ignitions, it is the time from ignition to flame at the ceiling level.

Ceiling Height

Record the height of the ceiling in feet in the area where the fire started.

Line II Data

II	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread	Type of Material that Contributed to Spread
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread	Type of Material that Contributed to Spread
	Form of Material that Contributed to Spread	Type of Material that Contributed to Spread

Form of Material that Contributed to Spread

The first material ignited is typically reported on the incident report. However, that material might not be the most significant from the standpoint of fire development and spread. This report provides space for recording up to three materials that subsequently burned and contributed to the spread of fire or smoke.

Record the form or use of additional material(s) that ignited.

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Refer to NFPA 901, 6-6.1, for the data classifications to use for Form of Material that Contributed to Spread.

Type of Material that Contributed to Spread

The first material ignited is typically reported on the incident report. However, that material might not be the most significant from the standpoint of fire development and spread. This report provides space for recording up to three materials that subsequently burned and contributed to the spread of fire or smoke.

Record the type or composition of additional material(s) that ignited. This is the same material whose form or use was recorded in the previous data space.

Refer to NFPA 901, 6-6.2, for the data classifications to use for Type of Material that Contributed to Spread.

Line IJ Data

IJ	Agent Application Time and Date	Blackout Time and Date

Agent Application Time and Date

Record the time and date when an extinguishing agent first hits the flame. Sometimes an agent is applied before the alarm, as in the case of automatic systems, but, in most cases, the first agent is applied by the fire department. Do not consider the sporadic application of an agent, such as an attempt to use a fire extinguisher before calling the fire department, unless such application is continuous or successfully controls or extinguishes the fire.

Blackout Time and Date

Record the time and date when the fire is considered to have been blacked out. Blackout is considered to have occurred when all evidence of open flame or glow of burned material has been removed. Sometimes no agent application is necessary for the fire to be considered as blacked out, such as when the fire self-terminates.

Line IK Data

IK	Number of Occupants at Ignition	Obstacles Affecting Rescue

Number of Occupants at Ignition

Record the actual or estimated number of occupants in the structure at the time the fire started, regardless of what they did or what happened to them after ignition. Do not include persons who entered the structure after ignition.

Obstacles Affecting Rescue

Indicate any obstacles that impeded rescue operations or restricted fire service or other rescue capabilities.

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 5-15, for the data classifications to use for Obstacles Affecting Rescue.

Line IL Data

IL	Number of Persons Assisted	Obstacles Affecting Fire Control

Number of Persons Assisted

Record the number of persons assisted in leaving the building by the action of the fire department. Assisting persons can include notifying people of a fire in the building and directing them to an exit or physically walking with them to a point clear of the danger.

Obstacles Affecting Fire Control

Indicate any obstacles that impeded or restricted fire control operations.

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 5-15, for the data classifications to use for Obstacles Affecting Fire Control Operations.

Line IM Data

IM	Persons Involved	Age	Sex	Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices

Person Involved

If a person or persons were involved with the ignition, regardless of the reason, record the name, age, and sex of the person principally involved. Discuss their involvement in the Remarks section.

Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices

Fire spread limitation devices include enclosing walls, doors, dampers, and the like. If fire spread limitation devices were present, evaluate their performance in terms of their designed function. If no fire spread limitation devices were present, indicate "none."

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 8-8, for the data classifications to use for Performance of Fire Spread Limitation Devices.

Line IN Data

IN	Performance of Special Hazard System	Performance of Exit System

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Performance of Special Hazard System

A special hazard system is one that is designed and installed to protect a specific fire hazard or operation. Examples are a halon system protecting a computer room or a water spray deluge system protecting a processing operation. If such a system was present in the area of origin, evaluate and record its performance. If none was present, record as "no special hazard system in area of origin."

Refer to NFPA 901, 8-6.2.3, for the data classifications to use for Performance of Special Hazard System.

Performance of Exit System

Evaluation of exit system performance should take into account all building factors relating to the egress of occupants from a building under fire conditions. Record the exit system performance at the time when occupants were required to leave the structure or fire area. If no occupants were present, or if egress was not necessary, record as "not a factor."

Refer to NFPA 901, Section 8-9, for the data classifications to use for Performance of Exit System.

Line IO Data

IO	Principal Insurance Carrier — Structure	Principal Insurance Carrier — Contents

Principal Insurance Carrier — Structure

Record the name of the insurance company with the principal insurance coverage of the structure.

Principal Insurance Carrier — Contents

Record the name of the insurance company with the principal insurance coverage of the contents of the structure.

Line IP Data

IP					
Available Information:	☐ Police Rpt. ☐ Lab Rpt.	☐ Autopsy Rpt. ☐ Credit Rpt.	☐ Plan, Sketch ☐ Photos	☐ Ins. File ☐ Other

Available Information

This line is used to record the presence of supporting information in case files. It is used for reference only. Check all the blocks on this line that apply.

Line IQ Data

IQ	Investigator	Agency	Date

Investigator

The investigator should sign and date the report and indicate the agency affiliation.

Line IR Data

IR	Remarks
	☐ Remarks continued on reverse side

Remarks

No one form can meet the needs of all who use it or provide sufficient space and data elements to describe the incident for all purposes. The remarks area fills this need and is provided for the following purposes:

(a) To explain the data elements on the form in greater detail;

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(b) To expand the data already collected where room for only the most significant data is provided;

(c) To record data significant to the incident where no specific space on the form is provided.

Use the reverse side of the form and additional sheets of paper if necessary. If the reverse side is used, check the block at the bottom of the form. If additional sheets of paper are used, make certain they contain the identification information from lines IA and IB.

Appendix A Referenced Publications

A-1 The following documents or portions thereof are referenced within this guide for informational purposes. The edition indicated for each reference is the current edition as of the date of the NFPA issuance of this document.

A-1.1 NFPA Publication. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101.

NFPA 901, *Standard Classifications for Incident Reporting and Fire Protection Data*, 1995 edition.

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