**Purpose:**

*This procedure meets or exceeds the intent of applicable sections within Chapter 6, Emergency Operations, of NFPA 1500, Standards on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program. It also intends to meet requirements of the OSHA Respirator Protection Standard 1910.134 and OSHA 2 in/2 out Rule 308-134e.*

*The purpose of this procedure is to outline the procedures used for the rescue of personnel operating at emergency incidents if the need arises. It further outlines the procedures for members entering an IDLH atmosphere or working in an environment recognized to be unstable.*

Personnel assigned to perform this function will be designated as the Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). The composition and structure of the RIT shall be flexible depending on the type, size and complexity of the incident. Level 1 RIT will consist of no less than two trained members.

**Definitions:**

1. IDLH: (Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health)

A. Oxygen level below 19.5% or above 23%.

B. Lower Explosive Limits in excess of 10%.

C. Toxins in excess of the Permissible Exposure Level.

E. Confined Space, collapse or any other situation recognized to be unstable and could cause injury or death.

F. A condition that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual’s ability to escape from a dangerous condition. The interior of a structure involved in fire, beyond the incipient stage, is considered an IDLH condition.

2. Incipient Stage Fire:

A. A fire in the initial stage which can be controlled or extinguished using portable extinguishers, or small hose systems, without the need for protective clothing or a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

3. Level 1 Rapid Intervention Team (RIT):

A. A team consisting of a minimum of two trained members.

4. Level 2 Rapid Intervention Team(s) (RIT):

A. ~~At least two (2) teams each~~ Team consisting of a minimum of at least ~~two~~ Four (4) trained members ~~per team,~~ whose duties are to track, and rescue if needed, emergency personnel that enter a structure involved in fire beyond the incipient stage (IDLH atmosphere), or the rescue of emergency personnel who fall victim to an unstable situation (e.g. confined space, collapse) at a emergency scene (IDLH). ~~RIT teams shall be referred to as RIT-1, RIT-2, etc.~~

5. MAYDAY:

A. A ~~verbal~~ notification that immediate action is required to rescue or assist emergency personnel operating in emergency incidents.

6. Personal Accountability Report (PAR):

A. A communication, using the electronic notification of the T PASS 4 to account for each member at the incident. A PAR shall be done when ordered by the Incident Commander, Safety Officer, or Accountability Officer.

7. Roll Call:

A. Is the electronic activation of a members T PASS 4 in conjunction with radio/face-to-face with the Accountability Officer.

8. RIT ~~Group~~ Team Leader:

1. When assigned, a Sector Officer whose function is the tracking of the entry teams and performs no other function but tracking and rapid intervention.

9. Entry Team:

1. A team consisting of a minimum of two trained members with a transceiver entering an IDLH working within the Buddy System.

10. Buddy System:

1. The practice of working in teams of at least two emergency personnel with a transceiver. These teams, when working in an IDLH, shall remain in visual or voice contact with each other at all times. Radio contact between team members shall not be a substitute for visual or voice contact.

11. Interior Structural Firefighting and Related Duties:

1. The physical activity of fire suppression or rescue inside enclosed structures involved in fire beyond the incipient stage

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13. RIT Kit: (Rescue Equipment):

1. Necessary Equipment:

Secured Hand Line, Portable Radio, Forcible Entry Tools, Rescue Rope, Spare Transceiver, Room Ladder, Hand Light and Thermal Imaging Camera. After conducting a size-up of the incident scene, RIT may determine the need for additional equipment not listed above (e.g. Cutting Torch, Circular Saw, Ladders, etc.). RIT Kit to have as a minimum the following equipment: SCBA cylinder, spare mask, regulator, flashlight, search rope, door chocks and wire cutters.

14. TIC:

A. Thermal Imaging Camera

15. AWARE:

1. Trapped emergency responders hopes of survival depend on the following four critical needs being met:

 Air:

* RIT should first provide the victim with a redundant (primary and secondary) supply of air.

 Water:

* If the rescue involves fire, the next consideration is to provide a defensible space for the victim by using a hose line or distributor to protect the victim.

 A Radio:

* If the victim is conscious and able to communicate, RIT may want to provide the trapped victim with a transceiver to monitor his condition. Depending upon the size of the incident, a separate radio channel may be designated for the victim to use.

 Extrication:

* Removal of the victim.

**Procedure:**

1. RIT shall be implemented during the initial stages of an IDLH incident, except as noted below.

2. Multiple RITs may be established on large incidents (Level 2 RIT).

3. RITs shall be assigned to the ~~RIT Group Leader~~ Safety Officer. If a ~~RIT Group Leader~~ Safety Officer is not designated, then RIT will report directly to the Incident Commander. When designated, the RIT Group Leader will report to Command.

4. RIT shall stage near the entry point to an IDLH area, along with the RIT kit.

5. After sizing-up the incident with respect to RIT considerations, RIT shall gather and/or call for any additional tools or equipment, not carried in the RIT Kit that may be needed to affect a rescue. RIT shall stage all RIT equipment in a readily accessible location.

6. When a RIT Group Leader is designated he/she is responsible for the tracking of the Entry Teams. He/She is to coordinate this activity with the Accountability Officers. If the Accountability Officer is not available, RIT will use their company status board to track entry teams.

7. RIT members must maintain visual, voice or physical contact with one another at all times

8. RIT members may be utilized for other support activities at the incident scene, (provided that RIT members remain in contact as described above). However, these activities shall not, if abandoned due to rescue operations, place any personnel at additional risks. At least one (1) RIT member shall continue to monitor those persons in the IDLH condition. When an RIT Group Leader has been designated, the RIT Group Leader will monitor those persons in the IDLH condition.

9. RIT shall announce via radio to the Incident Commander that RIT has been established.

10 Whenever possible, the initial entry team shall bring the RIT kit from their apparatus as they prepare to enter the IDLH. The RIT kit shall be placed near the point of entry. The initial apparatus operator, after pump set-up, should verify the RIT kit has been placed as described. If not, the apparatus operator shall do so. Additionally, if practical, the apparatus operator should lay out a hose line for the Rapid Intervention Team so that establishing RIT can be done expeditiously.

**Entry Team:**

1. Except as modified elsewhere in this procedure, no Entry Team shall enter into an IDLH until RIT has been established. (See Exceptions to Two-in/Two-out)
2. Members engaged in interior firefighting operations, including rescue operations shall be in full turnout gear including SCBAs and PASS devices.
3. Entry Teams shall utilize the Buddy System at all times, including rescue operations.
4. Entry Teams shall follow (Personnel Accountability) when operating at emergency incidents.

**MAYDAY Procedure:**

1. Anytime emergency personnel operating at an incident feel they are trapped, injured, lost, or in any other condition placing them in imminent danger and in need of rapid assistance, they shall verbally signal a MAYDAY alert. Immediately following the MAYDAY alert, those personnel shall activate their “emergency identification button” on their portable radios and activate the manual alarm on their PASS devices.

2. They shall transmit the word “MAYDAY” via radio by announcing in increments of three “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY” followed by a radio message identifying themselves along with their location. Information pertaining to the location should be as specific as possible. **(e.g. MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, Engine 8 to Command, we are trapped in the basement on Side Charlie).**  This shall be repeated until acknowledged by either the Incident Commander/Operations Officer/Safety Officer/RIT Group Leader or Radio. If the Incident Commander does not acknowledge the MAYDAY alert, Radio shall immediately relay this information to command.

3. Command shall immediately deploy the necessary resources needed to effect rescue of personnel in the MAYDAY condition.

4. Other members operating on the scene should be aware of the “MAYDAY” situation. However, ***they******must*** *continue with their assigned tasks*. The task they are currently performing may very well limit injury to the person or persons in distress as well as assist the RIT team.

5. Upon the Mayday call, a Personal Accountability Report (PAR) shall be initiated using the In Command Accountability System or via radio as deemed appropriate by the incident commander or accountability officer.

6. The RIT team shall notify the RIT Group Leader when the person(s) in distress have been located and the actions being taken to remove them or if additional assistance is needed.

7. When a MAYDAY situation occurs, it is imperative that general radio traffic be minimized, so that the air is clear to communicate with persons in distress and to quickly affect their rescue.

**Exceptions to Two-in/Two-out:**

1. If the initial attack personnel find a known life hazard situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life, deviation from the two-in/two-out standard is permitted.

2. When rescue operations are initiated without a RIT in place, Command shall be notified and a RIT shall be established as promptly as crews can be assigned.

**Deployment of Rapid Intervention Team(s):**

1. RIT will only be deployed upon orders from the Incident Commander/Operations Officer/Safety Officer.

2. A backup RIT shall be established whenever the initial RIT is deployed.

3. Upon the report of a lost or trapped firefighter the RIT Group Leader will immediately see that all RIT members abandon any support activities they may be involved in and concentrate their efforts on rescue.

4. Unless already known, the person in charge of the RIT shall compare information with the Accountability Officer in determining the last known location of the missing personnel.

5. RIT members shall utilize the information from their on-going scene size-up to help determine the type of rescue that they may encounter.

6. If self rescue or a quick grab and go rescue is not possible, RIT members shall use the “AWARE” (*Air, Water, A Radio, Extrication*) principle while determining the method of rescue as well as the estimated time it will take to complete the rescue.

7. Tactics may be employed at the discretion of the RIT team leader at emergency scenes where these tactics may be effective in promoting firefighter self-rescue.

8. When RIT is deployed, the rescue shall come under the command of the RIT Group Leader when designated, otherwise the operations officer.

Response – Upon arrival the RIT team leader shall check in at the command post to receive a briefing and to gain a picture of the tactical situation at the emergency scene. The RIT leader shall provide the accountability officer with the teams’ accountability tags.

Communications – All RIT team members shall be equipped with a portable radio and shall monitor the fire channel to maintain situational awareness and to monitor for distress calls.

Incident Size-Up – The RIT officer is responsible for conducting a 360 degree size-up as soon as possible upon arrival. The RIT officer should then periodically repeat the procedure throughout the emergency event.

PROACTIVE MEASURES:

Ladder Placement – The RIT team should consider deploying ladders for the use of evacuating firefighters. Consideration should be given as to where fire fighters are operating and may have a need for rapid evacuation. Ladders should be placed on a shallow angle, around 60 degrees, with the tip of the ladder on the window sill for large windows (large enough for easy firefighter egress) and just below the window sill for smaller windows. The RIT leader should notify the fire ground via “burst” transmissions as to the placement of the ladders.

Security Bar Removal – The RIT team should consider removing any obstacles to quick egress such as security bars, doors and window sashes in effected area that have been already broken during firefighting efforts..

Back-up Hose Line - The RIT team leader should consider pre-deploying hand-lines in positions that may facilitate event stabilization or firefighter evacuation, or rescue.

Force Doors – The RIT team leader should consider forcing locked doors on the building in which firefighters are operating. The doors should be left closed in order to limit air entrainment or altering the ventilation package.

Scene Lighting – The RIT team leader should consider deploying scene lighting on all sides of the incident. Lighting the exterior surfaces of the building facilities safe exterior operations and may also aide firefighters working on the interior in identifying exterior openings which may be available for emergency egress.

Egress Point Lighting – The RIT team leader should consider deploying portable lighting inside egress points in order to identify them to crews working inside the structure. Disoriented firefighters can look for the lights as a means of reorientation to an egress point.

Secure Utilities- The RIT team leader should consider isolating utilities at the main shut off of the structure. *(See Electric and Gas shut-off SOP for further)*

Termination of RIT:

1. RIT can only be terminated when the incident does not meet any of the definitions of an IDLH.