

RAPID INTERVENTION

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Category:
Operational

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.

This policy will also lay out acceptable recommended proactive RIT procedures. It is permissible for the RIT team leader to employ these tactics to facilitate firefighter self-rescue, and to create a situation that seeks to eliminate the need for RIT team deployment for lost, trapped or disoriented firefighters.

General

IDLH-

- Immediately dangerous to life or health
- Oxygen level below 19.5% or above 23.5%
- Lower explosive limits more than 10%
- Toxins more than the Permissible Exposure Level
- Confined space, collapse, or any other situation recognized to be unstable and could cause injury or death.
- An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life could cause irreversible, adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere. The interior of a structure involved in fire, beyond the incipient stage, is considered an IDLH atmosphere.

Incipient Stage Fire:

- A fire in the initial stage which can be controlled or extinguished using portable extinguishers, class II standpipe (where 1 ½ inch hose lines are provided for use by building occupants until the fire department arrives), or small hose systems, without the need for protective clothing or a

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Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT):

- A team consisting of a minimum of two trained members 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 an emergency scene (IDLH).

Level 1 RIT- a team consisting of a minimum of two trained members.

Level 2 RIT- a team consisting of a minimum of four trained members.

MAYDAY

- A notification to the Incident Commander that immediate action is required to rescue or assist emergency personnel operating in emergency incidents.

RIT Team Leader

- A member of the RIT whose function is the tracking of the entry teams and performs no other function but tracking and rapid intervention. Works alongside the Accountability Officer whenever possible.

Entry Team

- A team consisting of a minimum of two trained members with a transceiver entering an IDLH working within the buddy system.

Buddy System

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

Interior Structural Firefighting and related duties

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

Two-in/ Two-out

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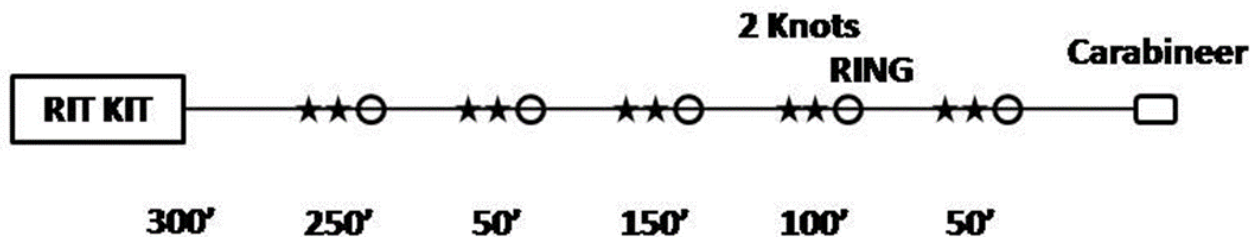
- The practice of having a minimum of two properly trained and equipped personnel available for possible rescue. They shall be positioned outside of any IDLH before a team makes entry.

TIC

- thermal imaging camera

RIT Kit: (Rescue equipment)

- Mandatory Equipment: Hotel Roll or secured Hand Line, Spare
- Transceiver, Spare SCBA, Room Ladder, Fire Ax, forcible entry tool(s), Pry Bar, Rescue Rope, Hand Light(s), Trauma Shears, EMT Jump Kit. The company should also include a Thermal Imaging Camera as part of their equipment.
- After conducting a size-up of the incident scene, RIT may determine the need for additional equipment not listed above (e.g., TIC, Facepiece, Additional Transceiver). RIT shall attempt to obtain this equipment by utilizing the apparatus at the incident scene. Rescue Units may also be requested for its variety of specialty tools and equipment if needed.



AWARE-

Air, Water, A Radio, Extrication

MetroSafe:

As standard operating procedure, MetroSafe will automatically dispatch three engine companies and two truck companies as a minimum response to all structure fires.

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1. A RIT may be implemented at two levels: Level 1 and Level 2
2. A Level 1 or Level 2 RIT shall be implemented during the initial stages of an incident.
3. Incident Commander deems it necessary. Multiple RITs may be established on large incidents.
4. RIT shall be assigned to the Safety Officer. If a Safety Officer is not designated, then RIT will report directly to the Incident Commander.
5. RIT shall report to the Command Post unless given a different assignment. They shall bring their Company Status Board and RIT Kit with them.
6. After RIT surveys the incident scene, the RIT Team Leader 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.
7. The RIT Team Leader is responsible for the tracking of the Entry Teams. He should work with the Accountability Officer when possible, to accomplish this. If the Accountability Officer is not available, RIT will use their company status board to track entry teams.
8. RIT members, except for the Team Leader, may be utilized for other support activities at the incident scene. However, these activities shall not, if abandoned due to rescue operations, place any personnel at additional risks. Apparatus Operators may be used as a RIT Team member if in a positive water source. RIT members must maintain visual or voice contact with the RIT Team Leader at all times.
9. RIT shall announce via radio to MetroSafe that a level 1 or level 2 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. 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

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1. Anytime emergency personnel operating on an incident feel they are trapped, injured or lost, shall signal a MAYDAY alert. Immediately following the MAYDAY alert, those personnel shall activate their “emergency identification button” on their transceiver 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 to Command identifying themselves along with their location. Information pertaining to the location should be as specific as possible. (**e.g., MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, Engine 65 to Command, we are trapped in the basement on the number 3 side.**) This shall be repeated until acknowledged by either the Incident Commander or MetroSafe. If the Incident Commander does not acknowledge the MAYDAY alert, MetroSafe shall immediately relay this information to him.
3. Command shall deploy the necessary resources needed to assist with a rescue.
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. All RIT operations will continue on the channel associated with down firefighter; fire ground operations may be moved to another channel at the discretion of the incident commander.

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 may be permitted.
2. If rescue operations are initiated without a RIT in place, Metro Safe shall be notified, and the second arriving company shall establish RIT.

Deployment of Rapid Intervention Teams

1. RIT will only be deployed upon orders from the Incident Commander.
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 Team Leader will immediately see that all members of his team abandon any support activities they may be involved in and concentrate their efforts on rescue.
4. RIT members 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. RIT shall be deployed to the last known location of the lost or trapped personnel.
7. If a self-rescue or a quick grab and go rescue is not possible, RIT members shall use the “AWARE” principle while determining the method of rescue as well as the estimated time it will take to

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complete the rescue.

8. 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.
9. It is a well-recognized fact that a firefighter who is lost or disoriented has a greater chance of survival if he accomplishes self-rescue when becoming lost or disoriented in an IDLH atmosphere. The RIT officer should seek to create situations that avoid the necessity of deploying the RIT team or that assist the distressed firefighters in their own rescue.
10. Level 2 RIT teams should comprise of no less than 4 personnel and should operate in teams of no less than two firefighters. The company officer of the RIT Company shall be known as the RIT team leader.

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.

Tool Cache

- The RIT team should develop a tool cache that may include a variety of tools depending on the anticipated needs that may develop on the scene:
 - Air bags and jacks
 - Rabbit tool
 - RIT pack
 - Spare cylinders
 - Hand tools
 - Portable lights
 - Ladders
 - Ropes

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- Saws
- Any other tool that may be anticipated

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 and doors.

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 –

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- 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)

AWARE Principle:

- 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.

Termination of RIT:

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

Training:

- Company Officers shall conduct annual training sessions to better prepare their company as a Rapid Intervention Team. Subject matter such as search techniques, tool use, wall breaching, and building construction, to name a few, are areas of expertise a member should have. Company Officers shall document the training in a company school report.

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- Training should involve various types of simulated rescues utilizing the AWARE principle to help develop the necessary skills to become a highly skilled RIT. Teamwork and coordination are vital to being an effective RIT.