

PURPOSE

To establish a fully equipped rescue team on scene and in a ready state to immediately act to locate, establish a defensible space, and rescue any injured and trapped firefighters. This guideline will be implemented at all hazardous incidents and working structure fires. In addition, it will establish safe operating procedures for missing or trapped firefighters or other circumstances where firefighters are compromised in a hazardous area.

PROCEDURE

1. Initial Operations – Two-In (Interior)/Two-Out (Stand-by)

- A. Prior to engaging firefighters in IDLH atmospheres, the Incident Commander (IC) will ensure that an adequate number of personnel are available to safely conduct emergency operations.
- B. Firefighters operating in hazardous areas will operate in teams of two or more.
- C. During initial operations, when only one team is operating in the hazardous area at a working structure fire, a minimum of six (6) individuals is required – two individuals working as a team in the hazard area, two individuals present outside this hazard area for protection of egress, and two individuals outside the hazard area available for assistance or rescue.
 - i. Two-In (Interior) utilizes the buddy system and ensures that contact is maintained between interior team members so they can monitor each other's situation.
 - ii. Two-Out (Standby) requires two people outside the structure to ensure that adequate personnel are immediately available to monitor and account for those team members on the interior team and to initiate rescue and call for stand-by personnel.
 - iii. Stand-by members' sole responsibility is to maintain a constant awareness of the number and identity of those operating in the hazard area, their location and function, and time of entry.
- D. Initial attack operations will be organized to ensure that if upon arrival at the emergency scene initial attack personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action will be permitted with less than six (6) personnel. These conditions fall into one of two categories:
 - i. Life threat is obvious through initial observations (e.g., firefighters see or hear victims, family members, neighbors, or coworkers, verify occupants are still in the threatened structure.), and the structure can be safely searched by two or three members (e.g., small commercial or residential structures). Confirmed rescue.

- 1. Action – Immediate entry can be made without the two-out, providing that communications have been relayed to other responding companies that rescue operations have begun without back-up. The use of District approved search aids (e.g., search lines, hose line) is strongly recommended.*
 - ii. Based on size-up indicators, the IC judges that an imminent life-threatening situation exists. Possible rescue.*
 - 1. Action – Company Officers confirm with responding Duty Officer that based on judgment an imminent life-threatening situation exists and immediate entry must be made.*
 - a. If the Company Officer cannot reach the responding Duty Officer by radio, then confirmation may be made with a secondary responding Company Officer.*
 - b. If unable to reach a secondary responding Company Officer, confirmation can be made with other crewmembers.*
 - c. Prior to entry, communications must be relayed to other responding companies that rescue operations have begun without back-up.*
- E. Priority will be given to subsequent arriving resources to ensure that the IC position is fully functional, two-out established and back-up safety lines are in place.*
- F. In all incidents where the two-out criteria was waived, the Safety Officer or designee shall review the incident.*

2. Sustained Operations – Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)

- A. When an incident escalates beyond the incipient stage, or when there is significant risk to firefighters due to the magnitude of the incident, the IC will upgrade the stand-by component to a fully established RIT that consists of a minimum of four (4) dedicated, fully equipped and trained firefighters.*
- B. The assignment of RIT will be clearly verbalized on the assigned working channel.*
- C. RIT must build their contingency plans based on the **AWARE** concept:*
 - i. **A**ir*
 - ii. **W**ater*
 - iii. **A** Radio*
 - iv. **E**xtrication equipment.*
- D. Initial activity:*

- i. Obtain and stage required equipment.
 - ii. Check-in: Report to Command and determine the approximate operating position of working crews/companies.
 - iii. Size-up: RIT will perform a 360° reconnaissance of the fire building to determine means of access to, and egress from, operating areas along with mitigating any hazards including softening the building as deemed necessary by the RIG Team Leader.
 - iv. Monitor: The RIT Team Leader must closely monitor the assigned working channel(s) along with the Mayday channel at all times for the activities and status of working companies. RIT will maintain knowledge of all company locations.
- E. The IC may assign more than one RIT, depending on the magnitude of the incident.

3. Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) Activation

- A. RIT will be activated primarily for the following two situations:
- i. Receipt of a mayday radio message (refer to Operational Guideline, *Emergency Communications*).
 - ii. Trapped or missing firefighter. The IC will assume that an individual is lost, trapped, or missing until that individual or crew is accounted for.
- B. Upon activation, RIT will be assigned to the Firefighter Rescue Branch as the Firefighter Search Group. The current Incident Safety Officer assumes control of the Firefighter Rescue Branch.
- C. The IC will designate a new RIT anytime the current RIT is activated

4. Command Responsibilities upon RIT activation

- A. If a company or individual firefighter cannot be located through a PAR, or any other time a firefighter is missing, a mayday message will be transmitted.
- B. Command will respond to a mayday by modifying the incident action plan to address both the firefighter rescue and firefighting operations. This plan must include:
- i. Commit the RIT.
 - ii. Order additional resources.
 - iii. Establish a Rescue Branch.
 - iv. Maintain RIT.
 - v. Assign another Safety Officer.
 - vi. Mandatory notifications (i.e. Fire Chief)

5. Firefighter Rescue Branch (FFRB)

- A. Assignment of firefighter rescue operations to a branch permits concentrated focus on this critical activity while continuing ongoing firefighting efforts.
- B. The current Incident Safety Officer assumes control of the FFRB.
- C. Key components may include:
 - i. Firefighter Search Group.
 - ii. Fire Control Group.
 - iii. Firefighter Rescue Branch Staging.
 - iv. Firefighter Extrication Group.
 - v. Medical Unit.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- The IC will assume that an individual is lost, trapped, or missing until that individual or crew is accounted for.
- Firefighting operations will not be abandoned and it may be necessary to reinforce those operations with additional resources.
- The IC will ensure that the Fire Chief is notified upon activation of RIT.