



# HR/LF

## FFCC—Policy/SOG Program

Operations

Safety—Rapid Intervention Team

Policy # 09-09

Issued: 09/30/09

**Subject:** Rapid Intervention Team

**Purpose:** This policy outlines the department procedure for the establishment of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). This policy is written to comply with Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulation 29 CFR 1910.134, NFPA 1500 and NFPA 1561.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all Fire Department personnel.

### Definitions:

#### Immediately Dangerous To Life Or Health (IDLH)

An atmosphere 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 atmosphere.

#### Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

A temporary team of at least two firefighters, fully equipped and trained, on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or rapid rescue, if needed. **An IRIC is only intended as a temporary, stand-by crew and is not intended for long term assignment where a formal Rapid Intervention Crew should be assigned.** The term IRIC can be used synonymously with "Two-Out".

#### Imminent Life-Threatening Situation

A situation in which immediate action is required to prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of four (4) firefighters is assembled and an IRIC has been established.

#### Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)

A team of at least three (3) firefighters on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or rapid rescue, if needed.

#### Level 1 PPE

Department issue fire fighting boots, bunker pants, coat, hood, helmet, gloves, and SCBA.

## **Philosophy**

The Fire Department responds to incidents that present the potential for high risk to firefighter safety. This policy identifies the requirements and operation of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). A RIT is a team of at least three (3) firefighters on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or rapid rescue, if needed. A RIT is intended to replace the IRIC after the first few minutes of the incident.

## **Policy**

### Establishment of RIT

The Incident Commander (IC) shall establish a RIT at any incident where personnel are required to operate in an IDLH and other incidents that present a high risk. The RIT shall either replace or include the personnel from the Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (if previously established). The number, size and location of RIT teams at the scene should be flexible based on the incident's size and complexity. After evaluating the scene the IC shall provide one or more RIT teams based on the risk presented.

### Reporting to the scene

En-route, potential RIT teams shall monitor the fireground radio channel(s) to begin gathering information on the incident. Upon arrival, companies designated or assigned to the RIT function will bypass staging and report directly to the Incident Commander. The RIT shall report to the Incident Commander in Level 1PPE and with basic tools and equipment based on an initial size up of the building and consistent with the RIT team checklist (vehicle dash card). Equipment shall be staged on a tarp in an area most readily accessible to potential rescues.

The RIT officer will meet face-to-face with the Incident Commander to receive a briefing on the incident. The briefing should include the following information:

- What is the Incident Action Plan (offensive or defensive)
- Significant events that have occurred
- How long crews have been operating in SCBA
- Location(s) of crews
- Other resources responding
- View of tactical worksheet

### Scene Size Up

The RIT is expected to perform an initial and on-going size up. RIT size up should be based on firefighter survival; on what may cause firefighters to be trapped, lost or become missing inside the structure, and how RIT can facilitate their escape or rescue.

Structure size up should include:

- Complete 360 degree walk around when possible
- Identifying hazards that will block or slow firefighter building evacuation
- Building construction, size, and occupancy
- Placement of windows and doors
- Placement of high security devices such as burglar bars
- Fireground tactics being used

### RIT activation

RIT shall be activated at any time a firefighter(s) is reported to be lost, trapped, or unaccounted for. The RIT shall deploy from the known or suspected last location of the firefighter(s) in distress with appropriate tools and equipment for the situation. The IC shall initiate actions consistent with policy # \_\_\_\_\_, *Lost/Trapped Firefighters*.

## Primary Tasks

The RIT shall be responsible for the following primary tasks:

- Scene size up
- Assemble minimum equipment at primary entry point
- Monitor radio and maintain contact with IC for quick response
- Assess where firefighters are working in structure and any special tasks assigned
- If situation dictates, open or cause to be opened any exit that is locked, blocked or non-existent

The RIT may complete additional activities providing it supports their primary tasks. These tasks shall not include situations requiring direct entry into the IDLH environment or impacting the RIT officers ability to focus on the status of interior operations. Task assignment shall take into account that the RIT should not be fatigued at any time.

By the order of: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Chief

Date: 09/30/09

## **References:**

- NFPA 1500, *Fire Department Occupational Safety & Health Program*, 2007 edition
- NFPA 1561, *Emergency Services Incident Management System*, 2005 edition
- OSHA: 29 CFR 1910.134

## **Resources *(click title to access resource)*:**

- USFA, *Special Report: Rapid Intervention Teams and How to Avoid Needing Them*
- NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Investigation Reports
  - Volunteer Fire Fighter Dies While Lost in Residential Structure Fire- Alabama
  - Two Career Fire Fighters Die and Captain is Burned When Trapped during Fire Suppression Operations at a Millwork Facility – North Carolina
  - A Career Captain and an Engineer Die While Conducting a Primary Search at a Residential Structure Fire - California
  - Nine Career Fire Fighters Die in Rapid Fire Progression at Commercial Furniture Showroom – South Carolina
  - Career Fire Fighter Dies and Captain is Injured During a Civilian Rescue Attempt at a Residential Structure Fire – Georgia
  - Career Fire Fighter Injured during Rapid Fire Progression in an Abandoned Structure Dies Six Days Later – Georgia

- Firefighter Close Calls.Com—Weekly Fire Drills (*available on website*)
  - RIT Volume 19-221: RIT Scenario #1 – No Exit
  - RIT Volume 19-220: Basic RIT Size-up
  - RIT Volume 19-225: RIT Scenario #5 – FF out of air
  - RIT Volume 19-218: Primary RIT duties
  - RIT Volume 19-217: RIT equipment
  - RIT Volume 19-222: RIT Scenario #2 – FF down at window
  - RIT Volume 19-223: RIT Scenario #3 – FF through the floor
  - RIT Volume 19-219: Secondary RIT duties
  - RIT Volume 19-228: RIT Scenario #8 – Disoriented FF
  - RIT Volume 19-227: RIT Scenario #7- FF trapped under collapse
  - RIT Volume 19-226: RIT Scenario #6 – FF through the roof
  - RIT Volume 19-224: RIT Scenario #4 – FF trapped by fire
  - 18-208: RIT vs. 2in/2out



## Rapid Intervention Team

### Required Equipment

Set of irons  
Sledge or maul  
Search rope  
Hand lights  
Thermal Imaging Camera  
SCBA with facepiece **or**  
RIT Pack  
8' or 10' pike pole  
Salvage tarp for staging

**Stage required equipment at primary access entry**

### Additional Equipment

Portable saws  
Oxygen / EMS equipment  
Stokes basket  
Extra SCBA cylinders  
Webbing  
Ground ladder (24')  
*Additional equipment as determined by sizeup*

### Response to LOST/TRAPPED firefighter

- Verify to IC on fireground channel entry location and PAR
- Bring equipment for rescue and victim access
- Progress to IC as needed (Rescue Group responsibility)
- Locate, assess & remove trapped firefighter

### Assignment

Monitor radio enroute

Advise staging of unit # and go to incident

Take required equipment to primary entry point

Briefing from Command

Size-up scene

Prepare for Primary Tasks

Complete secondary tasks as indicated

Rescue Group Supervisor will coordinate when assigned

**Designation: RESCUE GROUP**