

Standard Operating Guideline – Lancaster County Fire Chiefs Association

SOG # : 500.005

Title: Rapid Intervention Team

Page: 1 of 3

Date: December 10, 2008

Purpose: To reduce or eliminate injury and death to emergency responders who may become lost, trapped or otherwise injured at emergency incidents by establishing procedures for the implementation of a Rapid Intervention Team(s) and outline their duties and responsibilities for organization and deployment.

Scope: This guideline covers firefighters and specialized crews from any jurisdiction, or agency operating at the scene of an incident in Lancaster County.

Reference:

- A. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1500 - Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program
- B. 29 CFR Respiratory Protection - 1910.134 OSHA
- C. IFSTA Manual - Rapid Intervention Teams (May 2001)

Definitions: Initial Stage Operations - The tasks undertaken by the first arriving company with only one team assigned or operating in the hazardous area of an incident.

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.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) - A crew available for the immediate rescue of firefighters operating at emergency incidents, consisting of at least two firefighters for operations in the initial stages of the incident and at least four firefighters after more than one crew is operating.

Guideline:

1. At least one RIT in equal or greater levels of personal protective equipment (PPE) with appropriate rescue equipment, tools and training will be established at the following incidents.
 - a. Structural or building fires in the offensive mode requiring the use of SCBA and hand lines.
 - b. Hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction incidents requiring entry into the hot zone.
 - c. Specialized/technical rescue incidents with rescuers operating in the hot zone or hazard area.
 - d. Any other incident posing significant risks or hazards to firefighters as determined by the incident commander and/or safety officer.
2. Recommended Initial Stage Operation (one team operating):
 - a. Minimum of four (4) individuals are recommended during this operation, two (2) working in the hazard area and two (2) outside this hazard area for assistance or rescue as a standby team.
 - b. One standby member must be solely dedicated to the monitoring of the working team. This position shall maintain radio, visual, tag line or voice communication, track the identity, location and function of the working team and initiate firefighter rescue. This member must don proper PPE and SCBA and have appropriate rescue equipment available.
 - c. One standby member may perform other fire ground tasks such as incident commander or apparatus operator provided abandoning their task to assist or perform firefighter rescue operations would not clearly jeopardize the safety and health of any firefighter working at the incident. This position requires a radio, PPE and a SCBA nearby for rapid donning and deployment.
 - d. Once a second crew, team or company is assigned a task and operates in the hazard area, the incident shall no longer be considered in the initial stage, and at least one RIT shall be required.
 - e. Standard exceptions to initial stage operation standby team:
 - i. When an imminent life threatening situation is present where immediate action could prevent loss of life or injury.
 - ii. When a fire is in an incipient stage that could be controlled by a portable fire extinguisher.

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SOG # : 500.005

Title: Rapid Intervention Team

Page: 2 of 3

Date: December 10, 2008

3. RIT tasks, duties and responsibilities for organization and deployment.
 - a. The RIT Leader shall report to the incident commander for a briefing to include incident status, location of resources, operational mode/tactics and hazards present. The IC will also advise the RIT Leader who they will report to. (i.e., Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, Safety Officer, Function Branch Director, Group or Division Supervisor)
 - b. The Incident Commander should make every effort to assign the RIT function to a Truck or Rescue company due to their equipment and skill levels. At specialized incidents, an equal unit and crew should be assigned. (Haz Mat, technical rescue team, etc.)
 - c. Upon arrival and assignment, the RIT shall perform a size up of the incident scene and identify any potential hazards or problems, locate exits and determine equipment and PPE requirements.
 - d. The RIT shall report to a location, outside the identified hazard/collapse or hot zone that provides easy and timely access to the incident, possibly near their reporting ICS position.
 - e. The RIT Team Leader or designated member will perform a walk around to familiarize them self with the structure.
 - f. The RIT will remain in a constant state of readiness in required PPE and SCBA levels with equipment and tools available at all times to carry out firefighter search and rescue tasks.
 - g. The RIT shall not be assigned any other tasks or functions that would interfere with their duties as RIT.
 - h. The RIT shall closely monitor the assigned tactical channel(s) at all times to assist in tracking of resource locations, changes in the incident or building conditions, unsuccessful PARs or firefighter Mayday transmissions.
 - i. The IC may consider rotating the RIT at regular intervals as needed. The oncoming replacement RIT shall be fully briefed by the RIT crew leader.
 - j. Complex, high-rise or large-scale operations may require the need for the IC to assign multiple RIT or various technical RIT. In order to effectively manage, communicate and deploy the numerous RIT the IC should identify them by:
 - i. RIT Numbering: RIT 7-5, RIT 6-7, RIT 2-4, etc.
 - ii. Task: Haz Mat RIT 2-9, Trench RIT 6-5, etc.
 - iii. Geographic location: Roof RIT 7-5, Division #3 RIT 7-5, Exterior RIT 7-5, etc.
 - k. Upon report of a lost or trapped firefighter(s), Mayday or unsuccessful PAR, IC will deploy the RIT to the last known location of the lost/trapped firefighter(s).
4. Procedures for RIT Activation:
 - a. Establishment of a Rescue Group Supervisor to manage RIT resources.
 - b. Request additional and/or specialized resources.
 - c. Follow Mayday SOG procedures.
 - d. Establish a second RIT while initial RIT is working.
5. Termination of RIT:
 - a. IDLH atmosphere has been eliminated or none exists due to suppression/control actions.
 - b. Present and potential hazards no longer exist.
 - c. The IC has placed the incident under control.
 - d. When IC determines that emergency personnel operating at the incident are no longer exposed to harmful risk.

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Page: 3 of 3

Date: December 10, 2008

6. Minimum Portable Equipment in RIT Cache:

a. Residential Structures

- i. Thermal Imaging Camera
- ii. Stokes Basket
- iii. Folding Ladder
- iv. 14' Roof/Straight Ladder
- v. 50' Rope Bag
- vi. 100' Rope Bag
- vii. Ventilation Saw
- viii. Marriage (Flat Head Ax and Halligan)
- ix. 6' hook
- x. Tarp
- xi. RIT SCBA

b. Commercial and Industrial Structures add the following equipment:

- i. Rotary Saw w/metal cutting blade
- ii. 150' Rope Bag
- iii. Hydraulic Forcible Entry Tool
- iv. Hydraulic Rescue Tool if needed.
- v. Sledge Hammer

c. Special Considerations

- i. Identify locations of additional available hand lines if needed.
- ii. Identify locations of additional ground ladders if needed.

7. Recommended Training and Drills for RIT personnel:

a. Training Programs

- i. Essentials and or FFI & II
- ii. 16hr RIT Operations
- iii. 16hr Ropes and Rigging
- iv. VRT
- v. Building Construction
- vi. Structural Collapse Awareness

b. Drills

- i. RIT Pack hook up usage.
- ii. Drags and Carries for downed firefighters especially up narrow stairs.
- iii. Below grade or thru the floor rescue scenarios (Nance Drill).
- iv. Removal from 2nd floor or above via ladders and rope.
- v. Removal from window with limited access (Denver Drill).