

RAPID INTERVENTION TEAMS (RIT)

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish a guideline for the response, organization and operation of Rapid Intervention Teams (RITs) when needed.

Scope

This procedure is to be followed by all members regardless of the district in which it occurs. It will be established by the Incident Commander on all incidents where the members are placed into a “Hazard Zone” and could need immediate intervention.

Teams

1. RIT(s) should be assigned by the Incident Commander as soon as feasible following the entry of fire fighting personnel into the designated hazard zone.
2. RITs shall be composed of at least three firefighters.
3. Each RIT member should have a portable radio capable of communicating on the primary fireground channel. If portable radios are not available for all crew members the Team Leader shall have a radio.
4. RIT(s) will be assigned a “call sign” by the Incident Commander. The officer of the RIT(s) must assure that radio traffic is monitored and are aware of their “call sign.”
5. RIT(s) will report directly to the incident commander.
6. RIT(s) will be in full protective gear with SCBA's, including the constant wearing of face pieces. If necessary the RIT shall use the cab of the closet apparatus to the scene to “cool off.” Command must remain cognizant to the fact that the RIT(s) will become fatigued standing by in full PPE.
7. On all confirmed structure fires, one (1) additional engine company should be dispatched automatically to assure enough manpower is present on location to accomplish all critical fire ground activities and maintain at least one RIT.
8. If RIT(s) are deployed to perform a lost firefighter search and rescue, Command should immediately form additional RIT(s) to relieve deployed RIT(s) or assist with the rescue portion of the operation.

Team Responsibilities

1. RIT(s) should assemble as close to firefighting operations as possible yet not hamper or congest the operation.
2. RIT(s) assemble equipment and tools that could be used in a rescue operation. Tools should be placed on a tarpaulin. The tarpaulin should be in the immediate area but not congest the operation. Should an emergency arise, tools will be readily accessible.
3. Equipment and tools should be removed from apparatus and made readily available for use as soon as the designated team arrives on location. Tools should be taken from apparatus other than the primary or secondary attack apparatus when possible. Required equipment and tools RIT(s) should have immediately available:
 - a. Search/Tag line
 - b. Individual tag lines
 - c. Thermal Imaging Camera(s)
 - d. Gasoline powered chain saw/circular saw with metal blade.
 - e. Axes – pick head/flat head.
 - f. Halligan tool
 - g. 1 SCBA with facemask
 - h. RIT rescue pack with 1 hour bottle
 - i. Portable lights
 - j. Wire cutters, pliers and or lineman dikes

Recommended equipment and tools RITs should have readily available:

Rescue Rope

Sledge Hammer

Air Bags

Porta Power

4. After setting up equipment and tools, the RIT(s) should check all sides of the fire building looking for alternate escape routes, window and door layouts, and potential high-risk situations.
5. RIT(s) will verify placement of ladders to the upper floors of at least two sides of the involved structure as a secondary means of escape. If ladders have not been placed the RIT(s) will accomplish this task.
6. RIT(s) will verify rear and or side doors are available (unlocked) and capable of being utilized as a secondary means of exit. RIT(s) shall notify the Safety Officer and or incident commander prior to propping rear and or side doors open, as this could affect ventilation efforts and fire spread.

7. RIT(s) will verify that the scene is adequately illuminated. Exterior lights should be located on opposite corners of the building at night illuminating all four sides of the structure. On large structures additional exterior lighting may be necessary. Lights should be placed inside, out of the way, at each primary and secondary doorway. This task does not have to be performed by the RIT(s), this can be a task of other arriving driver/operators.
8. RIT(s) will periodically (10 - 15 minutes) perform a 360⁰ size up of the fire building, noting changes in fire conditions and structural integrity. Noted concerns should be reported to the scene safety officer and or the incident commander.
9. RIT members shall monitor primary fire ground radio traffic and stay in communication with the accountability officer(s) at all times.
10. If a MAYDAY is declared, the RIT(s) will:
 - a. Immediately communicate with the accountability officer and determine the lost firefighter(s) last known location
 - b. Turn the RIT passport over to the accountability officer, or activate department's accountability system.
 - c. Communicate with command and the scene safety officer prior to entering the structure
 - d. Enter the structure and begin their search in the lost firefighter(s) last known location
 1. Locate the lost firefighter(s)
 2. Immediately silence any alarming pass devices
 3. Verify the lost firefighter(s) has/have an adequate air supply and establish an air supply using the spare SCBA/Rescue Pack if necessary. Both lost firefighter(s) and RIT members, must be closely monitored throughout the rescue operation
 4. Notify command that the lost firefighter(s) has/have been located - This notification will include current Conditions in the area, Actions taken so far, and any additional Needs to free/extricate the lost personnel from the hazard area (CAN report)
 5. Extricate the lost firefighter(s)

11. Other Fireground Duties

- a. RIT members may be assigned other fireground duties as long as those duties do not require excessive physical exertion, can be immediately stopped at any time and not negatively effect fireground safety, and do not interfere with the teams primary job functions as stated above.

- b. Examples of such duties include:
 - 1. securing utilities
 - 2. marking/roping of scene hazards
 - 3. establishing additional exterior lighting
 - 4. setting up ventilation fans
 - 5. assisting with accountability
 - 6. assisting with rehab

- c. Under no circumstances shall RIT(s) or RIT members be committed to any fireground duties without the direct knowledge and consent of the scene safety officer and the incident commander.

12. Demobilizing Rapid Intervention Team(s)

- a. Command is the only individual that has the authority to demobilize RIT(s).
- b. Command should notify the scene safety officer prior to demobilizing RIT(s).
- c. RIT(s) should only be demobilized when the structure is no longer considered immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH).
- d. Prior to demobilizing RIT(s), Command must insure that all personnel are accounted for.