

Standard Operating Procedures

Barkhamsted Fire District

DRAFT October 21, 2004

Two in Two Out / R.I.T.:

PURPOSE:

To establish standard guidelines and procedures that will serve to provide a safe working environment for fire department emergency responders and to reduce the risk of injury or death as a result of response operations during structural fire attack. These guidelines and procedures will insure the highest level of fire ground safety when fire department personnel are operating in an IDLH, Immediately and Dangerous to Life and Health atmosphere as found in interior structural fire fighting. Also to meet the requirements of the OSHA 1910.134 Respiratory Protection Standard, (e)(3)(i), (e)(3)(ii), also 29 CFR 1910.120 and NFPA 1500.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander IC, Chief or a designated officer to assure that the Rapid Intervention Teams (RITS) are trained and assigned as necessary. The Incident Commander is responsible for the accountability of all personnel responding to the fire scene.

POLICY:

Definitions:

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) A specifically designated team of at least two members trained and equipped on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or to perform rapid rescue. They may be assigned for the following incidents: IDLH atmospheres, Incidents which pose a potential collapse and possible entrapment of personnel, Incidents where response personnel may become disoriented or lost.

Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH): An atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive or asphyxiate substance that poses an immediate threat to life or would cause irreversible or delayed adverse health effects or would interfere with an individuals ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.

Incipient stage: A fire in the initial stage, which can be easily controlled or extinguished with a portable fire extinguisher.

PAR: Personal Accountability Roll Call

“Mayday”: A universal term used to call for help.

PROCEDURES:

Minimum Staffing Scenario

Prior to initiating interior fire fighting operations, a minimum of four firefighters shall be on the scene. Two members can make a team to work in the IDLH atmosphere as long as two other members are present outside. OSHA allows one of the two individuals outside the hazard area to be engaged in other activities such as the incident commander or safety officer.

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The first arriving engine shall determine if the incident involves an IDLH atmosphere and if the fire is past the incipient stage. At no time shall individuals enter an IDLH atmosphere independently.

The exception to the policy is allowed only when arriving personnel find a known life hazard or known rescue situation which immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury. After completing the search and rescue of the structure or rescue of the occupants, fire fighters are to withdraw from the structure until 2 in 2 out can be implemented.

Tasks to be performed until minimum manpower arrives can include: establishment of water supply, exterior fire attack, establishment of a hot zone, utility control, ventilation, placement of ladders, forcible entry, and exposure protection or other exterior operations as deemed necessary by the IC.

ESTABLISHING an IC

The IC shall determine the number of RIT teams needed based on the specifics of the incident. When the RIT is established they shall be in full turn out gear and SCBA with mask ready. The RIT shall carry a portable radio and other required entry and rescue equipment. If possible a charged line should be dedicated to this team.

The RIT should be staged on standby as close to the command post to monitor the radio frequency for a potential "Mayday" call. The RIT **should not** be assigned any other task that would take them away from their primary duty as an emergency rescue team.

If the RIT team participates in other activities they shall in no way interfere with the ability to perform the specific duties as the standby team

All members responding in IDLH atmospheres must use SCBA and work in teams of two or more. They must also maintain voice or visual contact with each other at all times. **Portable radios and or safety rope tethering are not acceptable as replacements for voice and visual contact.**

Radios can and should be used for fire ground communications between interior and exterior teams.

If a firefighter becomes trapped, disabled or in need of assistance he/she should activate his PASS device and communicate a mayday signal and determine their possible location for rescue.

A "mayday call shall trigger immediate radio silence on the radio so the Incident Commander can communicate with the caller in distress and activate the RIT.

The RIT team shall provide continued information to the IC as to the progress and actions taken during the rescue.

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Minimal tools or equipment needed by the RIT: Search rope, Axe, Pry tool, Portable radio, Thermal imaging camera, Full turn out gear, SCBA and a spare SCBA.

General:

It is for the safety of every firefighter that the first arriving engine conducts an accurate initial size up of the fire. If interior operations must be conducted the appropriate amount of manpower must be available on the fire ground to conduct interior operations. If interior operations are conducted a RIT will be designated to assure a level of safety to the interior crew. Accountability is critical on the fire scene. All fire fighters must work in teams and maintain visual and voice contact. Fire fighters who become distressed or disoriented shall activate their PASS and radio a mayday with location. The RIT will be activated to provide emergency rescue operations. The benefit of providing a RIT may prove to save a life of one of our own.

Accountability

NOTE: We cannot approve this policy until the District purchases an accountability system.