


Title:	Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)			
Section:	400 Fire Operations			
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Effective Date:	January 1, 2024	Revised Date:		
Authorized By:	Fox River Fire District Chiefs			

A. PURPOSE

To ensure that, as standard practice, a properly equipped firefighter rescue team is readily available to the Incident Commander (IC) for immediate deployment. Further, to provide a guideline for action if the IC is made aware, or has reason to believe, that a firefighter or crew is lost, trapped, injured or disoriented in a hazard zone and/or IDLH area.

B. SCOPE

Wherever persons are operating in positions or performing functions, including special operations in a hazard zone that would subject them to danger of injury in the instance of equipment failure or sudden catastrophic event.

C. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- 1) IRIT: In the initial stages of an incident, the rapid intervention team shall be two on scene members designated and dedicated as the Initial Rapid Intervention Team (IRIT). These members shall don full personal protective equipment and SCBA and shall assemble outside of the immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) atmosphere.
- 2) RIT: A Rapid Intervention Team is a dedicated rescue team whose duties are to assist and/or rescue firefighters in trouble on the fire ground or in any hazardous area. The RIT shall be on immediate standby, fully prepared for emergency rescue. Fully donned protective clothing, including SCBA is necessary as well as a compliment of RIT tools.
- 3) IDLH Atmosphere: Any atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life; would cause irreversible health effects; or would impair an individual’s ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere. Interior structural firefighting beyond the incipient stage is considered an IDLH (Hazard Zone) atmosphere.
- 4) Immediate Life Hazard: A situation where a known civilian life hazard exists, and where immediate action could prevent the loss of life.

D. GUIDELINE

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of the first arriving officer to determine the presence or potential of an IDLH atmosphere and the presence of a known immediate life hazard.
 - a) If IDLH atmosphere does not exist, this standard does not apply.

b) If an immediate life hazard exists the officer in charge shall notify the dispatch center and incoming units of the imminent rescue attempt.

2) Members working inside the IDLH environment shall always work in pairs (minimally) with IRIT (maintain 2 in 2out) in place. Exceptions to this rule are:

a) When there is an immediate life hazard, or

b) When the fire is in the incipient stage.

3) Responsibilities of the first five members on scene:

a) Two members will operate as the interior fire attack/rescue crew. These members shall operate under the “buddy system”, and must maintain direct visual or voice contact at all times. Direct voice contact does not include radio communications between these two members. At no time will these crew members be separated from one another during interior operations.

b) Two members with full PPE and donned SCBA must assemble outside of the IDLH atmosphere. This team will function as IRIT. The function of these crew members is to account for, and if necessary, initiate a firefighter rescue. One member must take command and the other member is permitted to perform other tasks, but only if those tasks could be immediately abandoned without jeopardizing the safety and health of others in the IDLH.

c) The fifth member’s sole responsibility shall be as pump operator, and shall not be used as a member of the interior crew.

4) Rescue of trapped, lost, injured or disoriented fire fighters in a burning building or any other hazard zone is especially time sensitive. An immediate and well-organized search and rescue response must be implemented to take advantage of the very limited survival time element that our members may have.

5) The incident commander is responsible for assigning at least four (4) members to serve as a RIT at an emergency incident involving an IDLH or other hazard zone.

a) The composition of the RIT shall remain flexible, based on the type and size of the incident and the complexity of the operation. The IC shall evaluate the situation and the associated risks to operating teams and provide one or more RITs, depending on the circumstances. The IC shall ensure that the RIT reports to an assigned position location until the incident is declared stable. The best position for RIT members is at or near the point of entry by the members assigned to work in the hazard zone. The concept is to eliminate the time from determining a Mayday has occurred until help is activated.

b) Under normal circumstances, the RIT will not participate in essential fire ground tactics, but will remain vigilant to immediately respond to Mayday activation.

c) RIT member assignments and responsibilities:

i) **TEAR** (Team Leader, Extrication, Air, Rescue/ Removal)

(a) Crew Member 1 assignment - Team Leader:

Responsibilities:

- Overall size up of building, event location and current operations
- CAN reports and receives orders from command/operations
- Search rope or webbing
- Deploys search rope or webbing on the way in to downed firefighter
- Provides guidance to team members including the way in and out to team members rescuing the downed firefighter(s).

(b) Crew Member 2 assignment - Extrication:

Responsibilities:

- Overall size up of building, event location and current operations
- Irons or other tools expected to be needed
- Wire cutters
- Frees the downed firefighter from obstructions and restrictions
- Assists if needed with air cylinder switch over and firefighter rapid removal

(c) Crew Member 3 assignment – Air

Responsibilities:

- Knowledge of teams and/or crews in current operations
- Extra air supply and RIT bag(s)
- Ensure the downed firefighter has adequate air supply and switches the air supply to the carried in-supply, when needed
- Helps remove the downed firefighter(s)

(d) Crew Member 4 assignment – Rescue/ Removal

Responsibilities:

- Assist with and responsible for moving tools into position
- Responsible for the packaging/ removal of firefighter
- Picks up the search rope or tether to guide team out of hazard zone with downed firefighter

d) Required Equipment

- Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC)
- 150' of Search Rope
- Hand Light (each member)
- RIT Pack which includes 60 min 4500 psi air bottle, extra face piece, tether, wire cutters and cutters
- Tarp
- Irons (Flat head axe and Halligan)

e) Access to the following equipment (this equipment will be positioned with the team for long term events):

- 24' ground ladder
- Portable Hydraulic Tools
- Portable saws (gas and cordless)
- Sledge Hammer or maul
- Stokes Basket

6) The determination of which crew to utilize for the RIT shall be the responsibility of the IC. The IC is responsible for deploying the RIT as needed.

7) In the initial stages of an incident, the rapid intervention team shall be two on scene members designated and dedicated as the Initial Rapid Intervention Team (IRIT). These members shall don full personal protective equipment and SCBA and shall assemble outside of the immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) atmosphere.

8) As the incident expands in size or complexity the IC shall assign and dedicate a RIT team. The team given the task of RIT shall be assigned the RIT radio designation. The RIT shall remain on alert status until the IC decides the complexity of the operation no longer presents a significant risk to operating teams.

9) When the IC is made aware or has reason to believe that a firefighter is lost, missing, injured, disoriented or trapped the following actions should be taken:

a) RIT deployment. The RIT Team will deploy with appropriate tools and equipment for the situation. RIT will deploy to the location where the firefighter(s) are in distress or the last known location of the firefighter(s). RIT will operate on the initially assigned tactical channel.

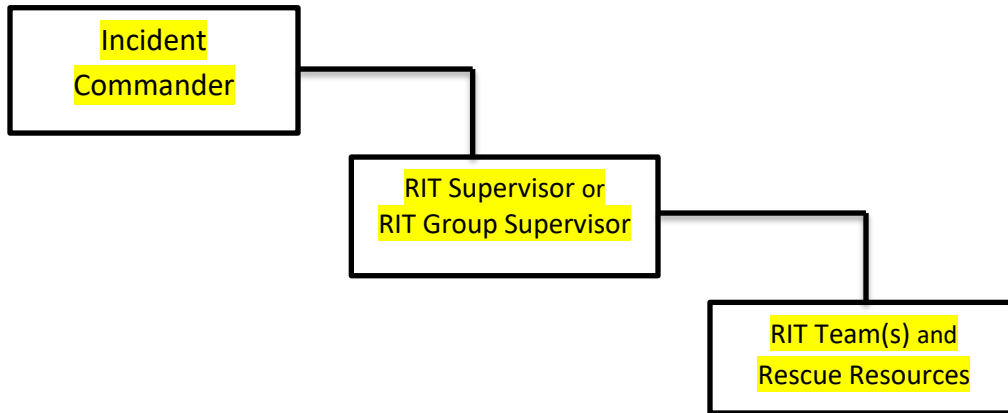
b) All other operations will be moved to a different tactical channel assigned by Command.

c) Conduct an immediate PAR on the fire ground on the newly identified tactical radio frequency.

d) Consider enacting the Mayday Protocol. Provide staging instructions and an additional radio channel for staging if needed.

e) Assign a second or more RIT(s).

f) Command to assign a capable officer to supervise RIT operations. This member will become RIT Supervisor on smaller incidents or RIT Group Supervisor on large scale incidents. Both will be reporting to Incident Command.



10) Personnel will not evacuate or abandon their position unless conditions or orders from IC require such action. While the need to rescue firefighters is paramount, other fire scene operations **MUST** continue so viable conditions can be maintained to support the firefighter rescue operation. For obvious reasons then, crews cannot freelance. Fire suppression operations should be bolstered during RIT operations to either hold or extinguish fire extension in, near or around trapped, lost, injured or disoriented members.

11) RIT Supervisor/Group Supervisor should monitor the following:

- a) A second RIT Team has been placed “on deck”

It should be emphasized that the likelihood of a single RIT Team (4 members) making entry into structure, locating downed or lost firefighter, securing the firefighters air supply and conducting extrication is highly improbable in medium/ large areas or under collapse or demanding conditions. It is imperative that a second RIT Team “on deck” be added as soon as possible. Further, all policies need to be followed to prevent RIT being needed.

- a) Ensure a hose team is in place for fire attack needs. That hose line should come from a separate water supply than the primary fire ground water supply. This water supply and hose line shall be made and staffed with additional members from a different company other than the ones assigned to RIT.
- b) Ensure all exits and doors are open for egress unblocked and protected. Consider fire spread and wind driven fire potential situations.
- c) Ensure ladders are placed for a secondary means of egress from the fire floor and roof areas.
- d) Evaluate structure for possible collapse or other hazards. Advise command for the need to evacuate or a change in fire conditions or effectiveness suppression operations (offensive to defensive)
- e) Illuminate entrances and exits of structure.
- f) Be the contact point between RIT group(s), RIT Branch and Command. Update Command with CAN reports and resources needed in RIT Division.

12) RIT will continue to operate in a rescue mode until firefighter(s) are located, assessed, evacuated from structure, and transferred to advanced life support (ALS) medical care, unless conditions prohibit further reasonable rescue attempts or if it is obvious that a successful rescue attempt is not possible. The decision to switch to a recovery mode will typically be made by Command, RIT Branch Director or the Incident Safety Officer.

13) RIT may be deactivated:

- a) After incident stabilization and when there are no existing IDLH atmospheres
- b) After consensus is reached between the RIT Group/ Division Supervisor, RIT Branch Director and the ISO.
- c) In all cases, the atmosphere will be monitored to ensure firefighter safety before deactivation occurs.

The Incident Commander must ensure that a RIT is maintained anytime members are in an IDLH environment. The IC will make the determination and announce to all companies working at the incident that RIT has been deactivated.

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