



WARE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

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SOG Title: Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT)		
Approved by:	Re-evaluation Date: January, 2007	Number of Pages: 4

Purpose:

- To assure compliance with the national standard, NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*, and other pertinent standards when operating in and around hazardous environments.
- To provide direction for operations in Immediate Danger to Life and Health (IDLH) or potential IDLH atmospheres.
- To define the response, tasks and organization of an initial response within IDLH, the establishment of an **initial, or "2 in/ 2 out" RIT**.
- To define the response, tasks and organization of a **dedicated RIT**.

Definitions:

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) is a unit of a minimum of two (2) (non-probationary) firefighters in full personal protective equipment, (including SCBA), with radio communication abilities, ready for immediate service.

IDLH: IDLH is an atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive or asphyxiant substance that:

1. Poses an immediate threat to life
2. Would cause irreversible or delayed adverse health effects
3. Would interfere with an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere

Atmospheres with a concentration of oxygen less than or potentially less than a healthy atmosphere will be considered as IDLH.

An atmosphere will be considered IDLH until proven otherwise.

Initial RIT: A team of a minimum of two fully equipped (full PPE, SCBA, radio communications, applicable rescue tools and equipment) fire-rescue personnel available to provide assistance to the interior personnel in the event of an emergency.

Dedicated RIT: A team of a minimum of two fully equipped (full PPE, SCBA, RIT bag, radio communications, applicable rescue tools and equipment) fire-rescue personnel in a ready state, to immediately react and respond to rescue injured or trapped fire-rescue personnel.

The initial RIT may be assigned other duties provided that such duties do not interfere with their abilities to perform specific function of an initial RIT or cause them to abandon their positions. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Perform a 360-degree assessment of the structure
- Flaking of hose lines
- Ground level exterior ventilation
- Equipment retrieval (if no >50' of stand-by position)
- Lighting
- Exposure protection
- Exterior fire attack (if appropriate)
- Laddering for emergency exits

In the event that the initial RIT must perform functions that would interfere with their mission, such as performing CPR, they will inform IC and IC will advise interior personnel to exit the IDLH area. Interior personnel will immediately withdraw from the IDLH area until another initial RIT can be assembled.

Duties and Responsibilities of a dedicated RIT:

A **dedicated RIT** (to be sized in number appropriate to the number of personnel within the IDLH) will be established at all incidents where fire department members are subject to hazards that would be immediately dangerous to life and health. Examples of such hazards include, but are not limited to:

1. Offensive Fire Operations
2. Hazardous Materials Incidents
3. Trench Rescue
4. Confined Space Rescue
5. Water Rescue
6. Any other incident having significant risks

Upon report of a lost, trapped or missing firefighter(s), Command shall dispatch the **dedicated RIT** to the last reported location of the lost/trapped/missing firefighter(s). The IC will immediately obtain PAR of all companies that are working at the incident.

It is the policy of the Ware Fire Department that the "buddy system" be used whenever an entry into any hazardous area is made. ***Personnel will not enter an IDLH area alone.***

- The dedicated RIT will consist of two or more personnel in full PPE with donned SCBA (with RIT bag) who are ready for immediate service, stationed just outside the hazardous area or as assigned by the IC and ready for immediate entry.
- A team leader will be designated by IC
- The team leader will be equipped with a portable radio.
- Upon assumption of dedicated RIT the team leader will direct a radio transmission to Command announcing the names of members that will be performing dedicated RIT duties. Dispatch/Emergency Communications will then rebroadcast/confirm this vital information.
 - Example: "Jones and Smith are assuming dedicated rapid intervention"
- The team leader will assure ongoing updates of progress, operations and findings to IC as appropriate
- The team leader will notify IC in the event of an emergency.

Who may be assigned to a RIT:

Any Officer, Shift Commander or experienced (non-probationary) firefighter in the Ware Fire Department or any Officer or firefighter in a mutual aid department may be designated to these roles and functions.

Scope:

The initial "2-in/2-out" requires a minimum two-person entry team "in" the hazardous area and the *required two-person stand-by initial RIT* positioned "outside" the hazardous area. It is the policy of the Ware Fire Department that the "buddy system" be used whenever an entry into any hazardous area is made. *Personnel will not enter an IDLH area alone.* As an incident progresses and higher numbers of personnel arrive on scene and operations expand, a *dedicated RIT* will be established to replace the initial RIT.

Enforcement:

- Prior to an entry "buddy team" entering an IDLH area, an initial RIT must be assembled outside the hazardous area.
- *The minimum number of personnel assembled on scene prior to entry into the IDLH area when hose lines must be deployed is 5:*
 - 2-entry team members
 - 2-initial RIT members
 - 1 pump operator
- *The minimum number of personnel assembled on scene prior to entry into the IDLH area when NO hose lines are deployed is 4:*
 - 2-entry team members
 - 2-initial RIT members
- *The only exception of entry of a BUDDY CREW (never individuals operating alone) into an IDLH area without an established RIT is for the crew to perform an immediate rescue of suspected occupants.*

Duties and Responsibilities of the initial RIT:

- The initial RIT will consist of two or more personnel in full PPE with donned SCBA who are ready for immediate service and assembled outside the hazardous area or as assigned by the IC
- A team leader (Officer if available) will be designated by IC
- The team leader will be equipped with a portable radio.
- The initial RIT will have a separate hose line charged and ready (if appropriate) along with any equipment needed to initiate a possible rescue of fire-rescue personnel.
- The initial RIT will monitor the radio and the activities of the interior team
- The initial RIT will maintain visual or voice contact with each other

Additional duties assigned to the initial RIT:

The initial RIT may NOT be assigned to duties that require their movement outside the hazardous area and their stand-by position. **Duties they may NOT be assigned include pump operation.**

- The dedicated RIT will have a separate hose line charged and ready (if appropriate) along with any equipment needed to initiate a possible rescue of fire-rescue personnel.
- The dedicated RIT will monitor the radio and the activities of the interior team(s)
- The dedicated RIT will remain stationed TOGETHER as assigned
- If called to initiate their mission, each team member is required to:
 - Provide assistance to fellow team members
 - Warn of hazards encountered
 - Routinely check on the welfare of fellow team members
 - Routinely advise IC of conditions. (Team leader)
 - Provide PAR (personnel accountability reports) to IC. (Team leader)

The dedicated RIT will have the same duties and functions as the initial RIT with the following changes:

- The dedicated RIT will be established as soon as possible. (Typically with arrival of the 6th and 7th fully-equipped, SCBA-donned fire-rescue personnel).
- The dedicated RIT **will NOT** be given additional duties. Their sole mission is to provide emergency assistance for the interior personnel in the event of lost or trapped or missing fire fighter(s).
- The dedicated RIT will be maintained until the IC determines that they are no longer needed. Typically this will be when there is no longer an IDLH atmosphere and the incident has been declared “under control”.

Prior to a “buddy team” entering an IDLH area, an initial RIT must be assembled outside the hazardous area (see exceptions and definitions above.)