


Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Book: 3 – Emergency Operations
Section: II – Fire Company Operations
Chapter: 12 – Rapid Intervention Team(s)
Date Approved: 2-3-2016 Revision No.: New Approved by: 
Review Date: 2019

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the response, tasks, and organization of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).

POLICY:

The objective of a RIT is to have a fully equipped rescue team onsite, in a ready state, to be immediately available to assist a firefighter(s) unable to self-extricate.

PROCEDURES:

Establishing a RIT

An established RIT should be considered by the incident commander (IC) for:

- Structural or building fires in the offensive mode requiring the use of SCBA and hand lines
- Hazardous materials or weapons of mass destruction incidents requiring entry into a hot zone

A RIT should be considered under the following conditions:

- Specialized/technical rescue incidents with rescuers operating in a hot zone or hazard area
- Any other incident posing significant risks or hazard to firefighters as determined by the incident commander and/or assigned safety officer

Ideally, a RIT should consist of a minimum of two personnel, with more assigned as needed and as staffing allows.


A RIT “Leader” should be assigned by the IC, and have the same responsibilities of a company officer or acting officer.

Activating a RIT

In the event of a “firefighter down” emergency (MAYDAY), or other indications that a firefighter requires immediate assistance; Incident Command should:

- Request “Emergency Radio Traffic”
- Request all other non-emergency traffic be minimized and moved to an alternative radio channel
- Request a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) of all personnel at the scene on the secondary channel
- Deploy the RIT. It is imperative that RITs not self-deploy

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- Other companies should continue with initial assignments, unless requested by the IC to assist in the rescue
- Ready a secondary/back-up RIT

RIT Responsibilities

RIT is designated, announced via radio, and assigned to a location by the incident commander. Typically RIT:

- Is located close to the point of entry of fire crews or at a position where they can be readily deployed
- Stands by intact, as a unit, in a state of readiness, monitoring all fire ground conditions and radio traffic
- Readies for immediate assignment in full protective clothing, with SCBA and radio
- Obtains the following information from IC:
 - Fire location
 - Interior team(s) entry point and last known location
 - Critical fire ground factors (scene conditions & hazards)
 - Type of construction and condition
 - Air management (elapsed time)
 - Potential firefighter rescue operations
- Stages the appropriate equipment, as determined by the hazards of the incident. Such equipment could include but is not limited to:
 - RIT-pack
 - Thermal imager
 - Box lights
 - Married set
 - Ladders
 - Pack-tracker
 - Medical bags, including AED
 - Rope
 - Chain saw
 - Pike poles
 - Long pry bar(s)
 - Backboard and/or stokes basket (Note: when practical, all tools assigned to RIT should not be used for other fire ground operations)
- Establishes a hose line, consider secondary water source when applicable
- Performs an initial RIT/rescue size-up (360 degree) and reports findings to the IC

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If activated, RIT should:

- Use any and all resources available to find the firefighter in distress
- Search rapidly, thoroughly, and with a purpose
- Upon finding the firefighter in distress, assess the usable air supply, major traumatic injuries, and level of consciousness
- Be prepared to protect the downed firefighter in place and determine needs and resources based on conditions
- Develop an extrication plan
- Call for additional help if needed

Terminating RIT

Termination of the RIT will occur via radio when the IC determines that:

- The IDLH atmosphere has been eliminated or no longer exists secondary to suppression/control actions
- On scene emergency personnel are no longer exposed to harmful risk(s)

REFERENCES:

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1407 – Standard for Training Fire Service Rapid Intervention Crews

Rapid Intervention Teams (1st Edition), Fire Protection Publications, Oklahoma State University (2001)