

Operating Guideline # 208

Rapid Intervention Teams

January 21, 2020



PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Operating Guideline is to establish practices for the establishment of a Rapid Intervention Team(s) (RIT) of a sufficient number of personnel to be prepared to rescue firefighters that may become lost or trapped at emergency situations.

GUIDELINE:

1. At any working structure fire where interior operations are being conducted or other situations where appropriate (Rescues), the Incident Commander shall designate a minimum of two experienced personnel (may not be the I/C or an individual assigned as another sector officer) to act as a RIT as part of the command process. These firefighters must be equipped and ready in full protective clothing, including SCBA and be able to be mobilized immediately upon direction from Command. The RIT team shall have a two way radio and shall monitor fire ground activities/radio transmissions continuously for any "Mayday" or other message affecting firefighter safety. More than one RIT may be required based on incident size or geographical considerations.

NOTE: RIT must also be established at any training evolution or incident where firefighters are required to enter a "warm" or "hot" zone including hazardous materials incidents, water/ice rescue incidents etc. and shall gather the necessary equipment and take whatever proactive actions are necessary based on a specific site hazard and risk analysis.

2. The RIT may not be assigned any other tactical or strategic level functions within the Incident Command system. This does not preclude the use of the RIT members for other incident functions provided they do not need to utilize SCBA, but these duties cannot take away from their primary purpose of a rescue team.

3. Personnel assigned RIT functions must be accounted for within the Accountability System established for each incident.

4. Where the number of personnel responding to an incident is not sufficient to carry out interior operations and RIT duties simultaneously, Command should request the response of additional resources (including mutual aid if necessary) to establish the RIT function.

5. All interior operations conducted before the establishment of an on-site RIT shall be undertaken only where a risk-benefit evaluation has been made by the Incident Commander and a savable life/rescue scenario has been confirmed. Where this occurs, an IRIT (Initial RIT) should be established using whatever resources are immediately available, and the Fire Chief and the Joint Health and Safety Committee shall be notified in each such instance as soon as possible following the incident. The Fire Chief shall cause an investigation of the circumstances to be made in each instance.

6. Once assigned, the RIT team should gather and stage the following equipment exclusively for their Team use (structure fire scenario):

- a. Thermal Imaging Camera
- b. RIT Pack
- c. Stokes Basket
- d. Set of irons (axe/haligan)
- e. Roof ladder

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f. Reciprocating saw and/or circular saw

g. Rope

7. In the case of a structure fire, the RIT shall conduct a 360 degree reconnaissance of the scene/structure and attempt to identify exits, floor layout, secondary means of egress and any obvious hazards.

8. Where locked exit doors are encountered in a structure, the RIT shall force open all exterior doors after notifying Command where such actions will not compromise interior firefighting activities (i.e. – create an unwanted flow path).

9. Where there is potential for interior crews to operate on the second or third floor of a structure, the RIT shall identify an emergency egress window on these floor levels and raise a ladder to the window. The positioning of these rapid egress ladders shall be communicated to all crews operating on the fire ground by the RIT leader.

10. Where a “Mayday” is transmitted by any firefighter, or a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) identifies one or more missing firefighters, the Incident Commander shall deploy the RIT and make immediate provisions for the establishment of a back-up RIT.

11. Firefighters returning from REHAB may be rotated to RIT duties in order to rotate fresh crews into all positions.

12. In order to remember the roles required the RIT should use the TEAR principle of

T – Team Leader

E – Extrication Tool carrier

A – Air management person, knowledgeable in SCBA pack and RIT kit

R – Rope person, able to deploy search line and has lines to help hoist members

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all Emergency Operations Division staff to comply with the provisions of this Operating Guideline.

REFERENCES:

- Section 21 Committee Guidance Note, GN 6-11, Rapid Intervention Teams
- All “Series 700” OG’s dealing with Incident Command
- MLFD OG 817, Mayday
- MLFD OG 833, Personnel Accountability Reports