

MONTGOMERY COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 9

Caney Creek Volunteer Fire Department



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SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

1.00 PURPOSE

- 1.01 To establish a guideline to assist in the implementation, and formation of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) in accordance with 29CFR1901.134, which in turn will increase the likelihood of survivability in the event that a firefighter becomes incapacitated, trapped, or lost at emergency incidents. The Officer can deviate from this guideline as deemed necessary.
- 1.02 To establish a guideline that will serve to provide a safer working environment for all members, and to reduce the risk of injury or death as a result of departmental operations at emergency incidents.

2.00 OBJECTIVES

- 2.01 To ensure a standby rescue team is prepared to provide a rapid rescue response to firefighters that become lost or trapped in an atmosphere that is immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH).
- 2.02 To define when an Interim Rapid Intervention Team (IRIT) and a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) is established and the actions they should take upon arrival at an incident.
- 2.03 To provide information on the basic tools and equipment needed for conducting Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) operations.
- 2.04 To provide information that will help firefighters take action if they become trapped or lost in a structure.
- 2.05 To meet the requirements stated in the Senate Bill 382 legislation regarding the safe operation of interior structural firefighting.

3.00 DEFINITIONS

- 3.01 Rapid Intervention Team: Also known as RIT, shall be defined as a dedicated team of at least two (2) Montgomery County ESD# 9 Fire Department (CCVFD), or Equivalent "Entry Level" (in accordance with the Texas Fireman's and Fire Marshal's Association, or the Texas Commission of Fire Protection). This team will relieve the IRIT as soon as possible.

3.02 Interim Rapid Intervention Team: Also known as an IRIT, shall be defined as an a temporary team of at least two (2) County ESD# 9 Fire Department (CCVFD), or equivalent "Entry Level" (in accordance with the Texas Fireman's and Fire Marshal's Association, or the Texas Commission of Fire Protection). This team will be used only until a dedicated RIT can be established. An example of an IRIT would be the pump operator and the Incident Commander.

3.03 Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health: (IDLH) is defined as an atmosphere that poses a threat of exposure to airborne contaminants when that exposed, is likely to cause death, or immediate, or delayed permanent adverse health effects, or prevent escape from such an environment.

3.04 Known Life Hazard: The Company Officer (CO) is either told that someone is inside, the CO sees or hears someone inside the IDLH atmosphere, or has a reason to believe someone is trapped inside.

3.05 "NO-GO" Situation: Should be considered as a structure that should not be entered by personnel until an IRIT team has been established.

Examples of situations are:

- A. Vacant structures without a KNOWN LIFE HAZARD.
- B. Commercial structures after hours of operation unless a KNOWN LIFE HAZARD has been identified.

4.00 GUIDELINES

4.01 Rapid Intervention Team Composition: The RIT shall be composed of at least two (2) ESD# 9 (CCVFD) (or equivalent) "Entry Level" firefighters. This is a minimum, the size and complexity of the incident may require larger or multiple RITs. The RIT will be located outside the IDLH atmosphere, and a minimum of one firefighter will have no other task than monitoring the attack teams inside.

4.02 Establishment of the Rapid Intervention Team: An IRIT should be assigned by the Incident Commander (IC) prior to the entry of firefighters into an atmosphere that is Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) until a formal RIT can be established.

The IC will notify the dispatcher one of the following conditions exists:

- A. Making an interior attack with an IRIT/RIT in place.**
- B. Emergency rescue, no IRIT/RIT is in place (When there is a known or suspected life hazard).**
- C. Making exterior attack until IRIT/RIT is in place (This is a "NO-GO" situation):**

1. The CO has determined the risk to personnel does not justify entry until an IRIT/RIT can be established.

2. There is no confirmed life hazard.

4.03 The IRIT/RIT will report directly to the Incident Commander, and remain available for immediate deployment.

4.04 Should the IRIT/RIT be deployed, the Incident Commander will immediately use resources available to form additional RITs. If the activation of the RIT is due to a lost, trapped, or missing firefighter, the Incident Commander will also request the next highest alarm in accordance with the Mayday Procedure.

4.05 Rapid Intervention Team Equipment: The IRIT, which may be composed of the Pump Operator on the first due Engine Company, will start to don his/her Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) after setting the pump pressure, securing a water supply, and checking necessary hose lines. The IC, Accountability Officer, or Safety Officer may do the same after their initial duties are established.

4.06 The RIT will have all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donned including SCBA. SCBA masks are not required to be donned when members are not in an IDLH atmosphere. (The Incident Commander must be cognizant of firefighter fatigue and heat related stress to the members of the RIT in high temperatures. The IC, or CO may allow the RIT to dress down to their bunker pants and boots providing the remainder of the PPE can be donned immediately if necessary. The RIT may have to be relieved, and rotated through the Rehab Sector). The RIT should be sheltered from weather when practical (i.e. EZ-up, carport, etc.).

4.07 Each member forming the RIT will have a portable flashlight, and a portable radio capable of communicating on the primary fire ground channel.

4.08 The RIT will also secure a Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC), a chainsaw/K-12, a RIT Bag, or equivalent equipment (spare air-pack with mask, irons, search rope, webbing, wire cutters, and door chocks). This equipment is not be used as a resource pool for firefighting activities.

4.09 The equipment listed below, but not limited to what is listed, should be considered and moved to a RIT resource pool:

- 1. Scott RIT Pack.**
- 2. 200' Search Line.**
- 3. 2 — 20' Tag Line.**
- 4. Sledge Hammer.**
- 5. Stokes Basket.**
- 6. Backboard with cervical collars.**
- 7. Folding Ladder.**
- 8. EMS Equipment.**
- 9. Portable Lighting.**
- 10. Hand line 1 1/4" or greater.**
- 11. Any other equipment deemed necessary.**

4.10 Rapid Intervention Team Function: The RIT will assemble as close as practical to the firefighting operation without congesting, or hindering the suppression activities after conferring with the IC as to the location of the staging area.

4.11 THE RIT WILL MONITOR THE FIRE GROUND CHANNEL AT ALL TIMES!

4.12 The IC should consider allowing the RIT to perform a 360 degrees walk-around to make notes of construction features, windows, doors, and other possible access/egress points. Consideration should be given to ladder placement as a point of egress to firefighters working above the ground floor.

4.13 The RIT should consider developing a tactical worksheet/drawing of the structure or incident site. Detail entry points where companies entered the structure, as well as any known hazard, and points of egress. This information should be updated as conditions change, and should be shared between the RIT and the IC.

4.14 Rapid Intervention Team Operations: When a firefighter is reported trapped, lost, or missing, firefighting positions must not be abandoned and Company and Sector Officers must control freelancing.

The IC will initiate the rescue effort by (in accordance with "MAY DAY" Procedure).

- A. Request a least one medic unit.**
- B. Requesting the next highest alarm through the dispatcher.**
- C. Requesting a PAR from the personnel operating on the scene.**
- D. Determining how many firefighters are trapped or lost.**
- E. Ascertaining what happened (i.e. explosion, collapse, etc.)**
- F. Attempt to determine the problem and location.**
- G. Determine structural stability and environmental conditions.**
- H. Continuation of essential operations and reinforce other tactical operations.**

4.15 After gaining as much information as possible about the trapped or missing firefighter(s), the IC should review a plan of action and develop a rescue plan.

4.16 If possible, the IC should brief the RIT on:

- 1. The number of missing firefighters.**
- 2. Their last known location.**
- 3. The entrance they used to enter the structure.**
- 4. Their path into the fire area.**
- 5. Known or possible building hazards.**

4.17 Although the RIT's primary mission is to rescue trapped or lost firefighter(s), team members must remember their personal safety is the top priority and proper communications are essential to safe operations. RIT members must remain in constant communication with the IC and provide frequent progress reports on:

- 1. Hazards encountered.**
- 2. Barriers and obstructions.**
- 3. Victim(s) location and condition.**
- 4. Request for needed supplies/resources.**

4.18 The RIT, in full PPE, will respond immediately to the last known location of the trapped or missing firefighter(s) with the following equipment.

- 1. RIT pack.**
- 2. Assigned portable radio and flashlight (1 per each member).**
- 3. Search rope.**

4.19 The RIT members should consider the following identifiers to assist in locating trapped or missing firefighters:

- A. Visible sighting of firefighters such as arms or legs.**
- B. Knowledge of their last location.**
- C. The sound of a PASS device, Vibra-Alert, or sounds of breathing.**
- D. Tapping noises, yelling, or a radio**
- E. Signs of a flashlight.**
- F. Follow their hose lines into the building.**
- G. Look for other equipment used by firefighters
(i.e. fans, lights, ladders, etc.).**
- H. Search immediate doorway first.**
- I. Search exterior walls (on interior) before searching interior open spaces.**
- J. Search large interior spaces in a detailed grid pattern.**
- K. Ensure all areas are searched.**

4.20 When the RIT locates the trapped or missing firefighter(s), the first priorities will be:

- A. To protect and preserve the immediate area and counter any life-threatening conditions that may be present.**
- B. Provide air via the RIT Pack SCBA.**
- C. If time and conditions permit, a rapid assessment of the firefighter, and immobilization should take place prior to removal.**

4.21 The following are methods that can be used to get out of a structure or fire area:

- A. Follow a hose line or tag line out.**
- B. Exit in a direct path of a light placed at a doorway by the entry team.**
- C. Escape via windows.**
- D. Forcible entry through doors.**
- E. Breaching walls.**

4.22 In some situations, the primary tactic of the RIT will be to locate trapped, missing firefighters, provide SCBA, and protect the member's environment.