



Burlington Fire Department



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Section: 01 - Suppression	
SOG Number: 01.34	Effective Date: Jan. 10, 2020
Subject: Rapid Intervention Crews	
By Order of Fire Chief Steven A. Locke	

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure the risks faced by our personnel who are engaged in operations in IDLH environments are minimized through sound risk management practices and safety procedures, by establishing a fully equipped rescue team on scene and in a combat ready state to deploy for rescuing injured and trapped firefighters.

II. Scope:

The scope of this guideline pertains to all uniformed Burlington Fire Department staff. This guideline shall be considered for all incidents where personnel are subject to hazards that would be dangerous to life and/or health or subject to danger from equipment failure or sudden change of conditions. A Rapid Intervention Crew shall be established on all structure fires that have grown beyond the incipient stage, other incidents where personnel are subject to hazardous environments or when the Incident Commander (IC) deems it necessary.

III. Definitions:

IDLH: Immediate dangerous to life or health. Exposure to airborne contaminants that are likely to cause death or immediate or delayed permanent adverse health effects or prevent escape from such an environment.

Incident Commander (IC): The person who is responsible for all decisions relating to the management of the incident and is in charge of the incident site. (NFPA 1500)

Mayday: Radio terminology indicating that a firefighter is in distress, including being lost, missing, trapped or requiring immediate assistance.

Personal basic tools: Tools that every firefighter should consider carrying on their person: Webbing, flashlight, knife, door chocks, wire cutters, radio, personal rope with carabineer or personal escape rope system.

Proactive: Within the rapid intervention discipline, being proactive refers to an officer or company that tends to prepare for an occurrence rather than react to an event after the fact. It is a position of anticipation.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC): A dedicated team of firefighters (minimum of 4) who are properly trained, equipped and assembled at a designated area on the scene of an incident with the sole purpose of affecting a rescue of fellow firefighters, should a situation deteriorate and require a firefighter rescue. The RIC shall have no other operational assignments during an incident.

Rapid Intervention Crew Leader (RIC Leader): NIMS compliant title for the assigned leader of a Rapid Intervention Crew.

Rapid Intervention Group: The individual crews, together make up the RIC Group. (IE: RIC 1, RIC 2, RIC 3)

Rapid Intervention (RIC) Group Supervisor: NIMS compliant title for the assigned leader of a Rapid Intervention Group. This position should be filled with a Captain or higher who is RIC trained.

RIC company basic tools: Tools used by the RIC for the purposes of finding, assisting and removing a downed firefighter. The minimum tools include a search rope, TIC, forcible entry tools, RIC sled and Air for the downed firefighter.

Situation specific tools: Tools or equipment needed to address specific situations, such as a tool needed for a specific task determined by the type, size and construction of the building. (Example: K12, chainsaw, reciprocating saw, ladder, hauling ropes, cutting torch, hydraulic tools, cribbing, pike poles and pry bars.)

Softening a Building: Forcing doors or removing devices such as security bars from windows to ensure quick access into a building by the RIC in the event of a firefighter rescue situation. Note: Softening a building does not include entering the IDLH environment.

Standby Mode: Full personal protective clothing including a SCBA donned with the face piece ready to be worn and proper equipment gathered and ready for use.

360-Recon: A 360-degree view of the structure for the purposes of gathering information such as fire conditions, building construction, access and egress and hazards found around the building. Commonly conducted by an RIC after arriving on scene.

IV. Guidelines:

A). RIC Assignment

1. Upon the completion of a risk benefit analysis and with the decision to employ an offensive attack or deployment into an IDLH environment, the IC shall establish a RIC in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134.
 - a. Initial Operations - Two In / Two Out – Refer to the following:
 - (1) 29 CFR 1910.134 (g)(3) Procedures for IDLH atmospheres
 - (2) 29 CFR 1910.134 (g)(4) Procedures for interior structural firefighting
2. If the RIC is deployed, the Incident Commander should assign a RIC Group Supervisor to oversee the RIC operations. The RIC Group Supervisor should have two portable radios which would allow him/her to monitor Channel 1 and the fireground Channel. This second portable radio is available on Battalion One or Rescue One.

B). RIC Size – Up

1. Once the RIC is designated, announced via radio and assigned to a location by the IC. The Group Supervisor and/or RIC leader and/or RIC will obtain a briefing from the IC and conduct a specific size up that will focus on:
 - a. Fire Location
 - b. Interior team(s) entry point and location
 - c. Critical fire ground factors (scene conditions and hazards)
 - d. Type of construction and building condition
 - e. Egress pathways and barriers to egress.
 - f. Air Management (time on air)
 - g. Firefighter fatigue
 - h. Radio communications
 - i. Potential firefighter rescue operations
2. During size-up every RIC member will be assigned a primary function by Rapid Intervention Crew Leader. Tools and equipment may vary based on situation and size of crew. If situation warrants the need for more personnel, the RIC Group Supervisor or Rapid Intervention Crew Leader shall request the need for additional personnel. Functions to be considered include:
 - a. Position #1: RIC Leader (Search Rope and TIC)
 - b. Position #2: Firefighter #1 (Halligan)
 - c. Position #3: Firefighter #2 (Flat-head axe and/or hydraulic forcible entry tool)

- d. Position #4: Firefighter #3 (RIT Air)
- 3. Once assigned to the position of RIC, the RIC leader and/or RIC will be proactive and conduct a 360-recon to determine the need for specialized rescue equipment based on building type, construction and access. The RIC should be observing:
 - a. Fire situation
 - b. Smoke
 - c. Building construction
 - d. Fireground operations
 - e. Possible hazards
 - f. Building variables
 - g. Access/egressAfter 360-recon is completed report back to assigned staging area and share observations with IC, RIC group supervisor or Safety officer as needed.
- 4. The RIC Group Supervisor and/or RIC leader should meet face to face with Safety Officer to discuss any concerns that may affect the RIC.

C). RIC Staging

- 1. The staging area is located taking the following points into consideration:
 - a. Size and type of incident
 - b. Location of fire and heaviest concentration of firefighters
 - c. Accessibility to the structure entrance (s).
- 2. The RIC Leader must assure personnel are ready based on assignments that were given during size up.
- 3. Based on size up, gather the necessary basic tools and situation specific tools that the RIC may need. Bring these items to the staging area where the crew is assigned.
- 4. RIC shall be immediately ready for assignment, wearing full protective clothing and SCBA, in standby mode. The RIC Leader and their crew must closely monitor the fireground tactical radio channel at all times to maintain awareness of the activities and status of working companies.
- 5. Consideration shall be given for the RIC to “Soften the Building” for rapid egress/ingress while maintaining a state of operational readiness.

A). RIC Deployment

- 1. The IC or RIC Group supervisor will order the deployment of the RIC upon transmission of a "Mayday" or upon receiving information that there is/are firefighter(s) in distress, lost, missing, or trapped. See SOG 06.24- Mayday and Urgent Radio Communications.
- 2. Once deployed the RIC shall stay together as a team. The RIC Leader must notify the RIC Group Supervisor or IC of the following:

- a. Conditions encountered (fire, smoke, heat, structural stability)
 - b. When they have located the firefighter(s)
 - c. Removal plans for the victim(s)
 - d. When they begin removal efforts
 - e. Need for special equipment (saws, airbags, etc.)
 - f. Need for additional RIC(s)
 - g. Plan for Emergency Medical Care and transportation of injured members
 - h. Any additional information pertinent to the operation
3. The IC or RIC Group Supervisor must monitor the primary fire ground channel and inform the deployed RIC crew(s) with timely updates for air consumption and/or changing fire ground conditions.
 4. If a Rapid Intervention (RIC) Group Supervisor has been established, the Rapid Intervention (RIC) Group Supervisor should relay progress reports to the Incident Commander with regard to the operation and success of the RIC operation.
 5. The Rapid Intervention (RIC) Group Supervisor will be directly responsible for the accountability of the RIC at all times. If a RIC Group Supervisor has not been established the IC or Operations Section Chief will account for the RIC members in accordance with SOG 01.02 Accountability.

B). RIC Restrictions

1. The RIC(s) should not be used for routine firefighting or relief purposes.
2. The RIC should not be rotated with other companies, unless the new RIC has been briefed on all aspects of the situation status.
3. The RIC members should:
 - a. Maintain constant watch of the fire ground.
 - b. Maintain a constant structural size-up of the building.
 - c. Watch the progress of the fire and crews.
 - d. Maintain a constant state of readiness throughout the incident.
4. In extreme circumstances (rescue of civilians, attack of fast spreading fire, etc.) the Incident Commander can use the RIC(s) for rescue or firefighting tasks other than RIC operations. In this event, the Incident Commander should immediately request another RIC.
5. The RIC should not enter an IDLH environment unless directed to perform RIC functions. Crews shall utilize preplans to gain knowledge of interior layouts.

C). Demobilizing

1. After the Incident Commander and the Incident Safety Officer have thoroughly evaluated the situation and the Incident Commander has decided the operation no longer presents hazardous risks to personnel necessitating the RIC, the Incident Commander may suspend the operations of the RIC(s). The Incident Commander shall advise over the radio that RIC is being terminated, so that all personnel on the fire ground are aware of this.

2. The Incident Commander should consider keeping the RIC available after active firefighting and suppression operations have ceased; yet operations such as salvage and overhaul are still active. Conditions such as openings in floors, weakened structural members, or other potentially hazardous circumstances may warrant the use of a RIC.

V. Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and follow this Standard Operating Guideline

Revision History			
Revision Date	Section	Summary	Principal Author
01.10.2020		Initial Release of Document.	Captain Valyou
04.14.2021	IV B 2 Definitions	Crew assignments changed to be consistent with Rope Assisted Search SOG LUNAR removed as Mayday and Urgent SOG utilizes “WHO, WHAT, WHERE”	LT. Petit
04.14.2021	Header	Corrected Labeling issue	DC Libby