

**JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**SOG 603**

**RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM**

**I. PURPOSE**

- A. The Fire District responds to incidents that present an unusually high risk to firefighter safety. This guideline is intended to increase the overall level of safety for fire district responders by identifying the requirements for and operation of standby rescue teams, or rapid intervention team (RIT team), during multiple alarm fires and special hazard operations.

The objective of rapid intervention team (RIT team) is to have a fully equipped rescue team on-site, in a ready state, to immediately react and respond to rescue injured or trapped firefighters or civilians.

**II. SCOPE**

- A. This procedure should be implemented at fires and other incidents where Fire District personnel are subject to hazards that would be immediately dangerous to life and/or health in the event of an equipment failure, sudden change of conditions, or mishap.

**III. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. It will be the responsibility of the Chief and the officers to insure that these guidelines are followed.

**IV. STANDARDS**

A. Risk Management

1. The Incident Commander will assign at least one appropriate engine or rescue company to standby duties at the incident. The establishment and location of the RIT team should be communicated to the Incident Safety Officer by the Incident Commander.
2. The Incident Commander will normally determine the standby location near the command post, at an entry point, or other selected location. All crew members will assume a ready state, including full protective clothing and SCBA. For incident types other than structure fires, the protective clothing and equipment will be appropriate for the hazards. The RIT team officer will closely monitor the tactical radio channel at all times. The RIT team must be able to react immediately to a sudden emergency event at the incident site.

3. The following equipment should be carried by the RIT team:
  - a. Full Personal Protective Equipment
  - b. SCBA donned; face pieces ready to be donned
  - c. 2 portable radios
  - d. 1 flathead axe
  - e. 1 halligan tool
  - f. 2 portable hand lamps
  - g. 100' guide rope
4. The RIT team should conduct a size-up of the building and/or other incident scene features. Particular attention should be made to the location of entrances and exits, access stairs, water supply sources, the type and location of specialized equipment (i.e., ladders, air bags, extrication equipment, cribbing, ropes, lighting, etc.) and other relevant information. The RIT team shall receive permission from the Incident Commander to conduct any reconnaissance of the incident scene that is not visible from the command post or other assigned location. Accountability must be maintained during any reconnaissance activity. Any unsafe acts or conditions observed by the RIT team shall be reported to the Incident Safety Officer or the Incident Commander.
5. The RIT team should be reserved for immediate life threatening situations, such as a firefighter trapped, injured, unaccounted for, or other critical situation. The RIT team could also be assigned to a civilian rescue situation, if needed.
6. During the course of an incident, the Incident Commander may elect to assign the RIT team to a tactical function, but should immediately replace the RIT team with another company, as long as the hazardous situation continues.
7. The Incident Commander will assign the radio designation "RIT One" to the Rapid Intervention Team. If additional personnel are assigned to this team, they will become a part of "RIT One". If additional separate teams are needed, or if RIT One is deployed, subsequent teams will be designated as "RIT Two", etc. When the RIT team is ordered into action, operations shall be considered of an extreme emergency and radio traffic should be held to a minimum. The RIT team shall be activated by utilizing the procedure established for "emergency traffic" over the tactical radio channel.
8. The Incident Commander may assign more than one company for RIT team duties if necessary. For extremely hazardous rescues (i.e., confined space rescues) there should be a minimum of two firefighter rescuers on standby for each firefighter involved in direct rescue efforts.
9. During multiple alarms, the Incident Commander should assign a RIT team from the second alarm complement whenever possible. In other situations, it may be necessary to special call additional companies for RIT team duties.
10. If a RIT team is needed to respond to a sudden emergency, in which a Division

Supervisor is incapacitated (physically or emotionally), the RIT team officer will assume the Division Supervisor duties for the area in which the emergency exists.

11. Strategically speaking, the RIT team activity shall be the priority objective until completed. Additional resources, including additional alarms, will be requested and sent to the rescue area as the emergency dictates.

B. Missing and trapped firefighters

1. Command Officers should consider loss of radio contact as a crew in trouble. Company Officers must immediately report any absent members to their Division Supervisor, who in turn must immediately report to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander must initiate an immediate roll call (Personnel Accountability Report - PAR) of all companies assigned to duty in the immediate danger zone.
2. The RIT team will be sent to the last reported working area of the lost firefighter to begin a search. The Incident Commander must simultaneously adjust on-scene strategies to a priority search and rescue effort.
3. Whenever a crew or individual is lost or missing, a "Mayday" shall be transmitted over the radio.
  - a. The radio message "Mayday" shall be used by firefighters to report their status as being in trouble and needing rescue. Any report of "Mayday" shall receive priority radio traffic. A "Mayday" transmission is reserved solely to report missing or trapped firefighters. An "Emergency Traffic" transmission will be used to report all other emergencies.

APPROVED:

DATE 2-13-2002

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