

TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 10	PAGE 1 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 2/10/2023

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish operational guidelines for the effective response, deployment and safe operation of Rescue Air Cushion (RAC) during high-angle rescues, potential suicidal "jumper", or hostage incidents at significant heights, at fires, explosions, terrorist attacks, and other emergencies that force victims to consider jumping from significant heights.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all sworn San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel, excluding lifeguards.

III. AUTHORITY

The Fire Chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. POLICY

A. Training

SDFD Technical Rescue Team (TRT) personnel shall receive initial and recurrent training in the RAC's response, deployment, storage, and care. Operations personnel shall receive awareness training.

B. Coordination of Response Resources

The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) or other law enforcement agency having jurisdiction shall be the lead agency in all potential suicide, hostage, and criminal incidents involving requests for the use of the RAC. Requests for the RAC during law enforcement incidents shall be approved by the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction.

C. Risk Management and Risk Assessment

1. Incidents involving potentially suicidal individuals are highly complex and require expertise solely from law enforcement negotiation teams.
2. Risk Management requires the incident commander, operations section chief, and safety officer, if designated, to evaluate existing and potential hazards. Additionally, operational decisions shall be made after balancing the potential risks versus the potential benefits (i.e., risk/benefit analysis). Decisions with increased risk will be made only if that risk is justified based on known factors such as patient status or other environmental issues that threaten patient or rescuer safety.
3. A specific threat in a potential jumper scenario is the potential for a falling body or another object to strike personnel deploying the RAC. All personnel shall wear structural firefighting helmets and a wildland jacket or structure coat during deployment operations to address this threat. Also, a lookout shall be established to warn personnel of falling hazards.

TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 10	PAGE 1 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 2/10/2023

D. Operational Procedures

1. Dispatch

- a. The request shall originate from the law enforcement incident commander for situations involving threatened jumpers, hostage situations, or other law enforcement-related incidents.
- b. For other non-law enforcement scenarios, the RAC may be requested by the incident commander of the agency having jurisdiction (AHJ).
- c. The RAC unit will be delivered to the incident as quickly as possible utilizing one on-duty TRT person who will deliver the unit and coordinate and direct the RAC deployment with on-scene personnel until callback personnel arrive.
- d. Fire Rescue Air Cushion Response
 1. ECDC will create an incident with RAC1 when requested and:
 - i. SC1, B5, E41, B32, B40
 - ii. Assign the closest utility to pick up and respond with the RAC unit
 - iii. Assign the closest agency having jurisdiction (AHJ) engine company
 - iv. Assign the closest SND BC as an agency representative (AREP)
 2. One TRT member shall respond in an available utility vehicle to tow the RAC.
 3. The closest AHJ engine will respond to assist with the deployment of the RAC.
 4. One SDFD BC shall act as an AREP and initially respond and contact the incident commander (IC). Contact info will be exchanged, and the BC should be released as soon as the RAC is on scene and deployed.

2. Communications

- a. All RAC responses will be assigned common command and tactical radio channels.
- b. SDFD personnel should consider establishing a common fire/law enforcement tactical channel for on-scene coordination.

3. Enroute and on-scene

- a. Units will contact the IC per established policy. If RAC is the first unit to arrive, then establish incident command as per policy.
- b. For law enforcement incidents, fire units shall contact law enforcement IC and be guided by their direction.
- c. For non-law enforcement incidents, the IC shall be responsible for the on-scene use of the RAC.

TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 10	PAGE 1 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 2/10/2023

- d. The RAC-qualified TRT member will remain on-scene the duration of the incident.
4. Incident termination
 - a. The RAC-qualified TRT member shall:
 1. Ensure the RAC is folded, cleaned and properly returned to the RAC trailer ready for service
 2. Refuel all equipment used to ensure readiness
 3. Return the RAC unit to its assigned facility
 4. Return the utility to its assigned facility