

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear description of responsibilities of an Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC) and Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC), provide guidelines for IRIC and RIC duties, communications, pre-deployment and deployment requirements. This policy will define the response tasks and organization of the Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC) and Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC).

Policy:

The policy shall apply during all incidents in which personnel may reasonably be expected to operate in an immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) atmosphere or situations where an equipment failure or sudden change in conditions may trap or injure personnel, or any incident that poses significant risk to firefighter safety.

It shall remain the responsibility of the Incident Commander (IC) to ensure that the intent of this policy is met throughout the incidents duration or until such a time that it is determined that personnel exposure to an IDLH atmosphere or other hazards no longer exists.

Procedure:

Two-In/Two-Out (IRIC/RIC) Rescue Exception

Initial attack operations shall be organized to ensure that, if upon arrival at the emergency scene, initial attack personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation which immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four personnel or without IRIC /RIC implementation, when conducted in accordance with NFPA 1500. No exception shall be permitted when there is no possibility to save lives. Any such actions taken in accordance with this section shall be thoroughly investigated by the fire department with a written report submitted to the Fire Chief (NFPA 1500, Fire Scope ICS 910)

Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

In accordance to NFPA 1500, entry into the hazard area will require at least four (4) personnel on the scene to accomplish the recognized Two-In/Two-Out requirement. For initial attack purposes, a minimum of two personnel shall be assigned to an entry crew, and a minimum of two personnel to the standby position. This standby position will be recognized as Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC). IRIC personnel shall be responsible to maintain a constant awareness of the number, identity, location and function of those operating in the hazardous area.

IRIC personnel shall remain in a constant state of readiness in the event of IRIC activation for rescue. Full personal protective equipment, inclusive of SCBA, shall be donned or readied for immediate deployment.

One IRIC member shall remain positioned at or as close to the point of entry of the crew entering the IDLH atmosphere as functionally possible. This member shall be dedicated to remain in constant radio, visual, voice or signal line communication with the entry crew without performing any other duties that will disrupt this responsibility and/or positioning.

One IRIC member shall be permitted to perform other duties outside of the hazardous area. Provided that the abandoning of these other duties does not jeopardize the safety of personnel on the incident and constant communication is maintained between the IRIC members and members of the crew in the IDLH. At no time shall a member of IRIC participate in firefighting activities unless it is necessitated by a rescue.

Once established, IRIC shall be maintained, staffed and functional until relieved by a full RIC or disbanded by the Incident Commander.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC)

It shall remain the intent of all Incident Commanders to ensure a fully staffed RIC be positioned to replace an IRIC as soon as reasonably possible. A RIC shall consist of a minimum of three (3) personnel led by a Company Officer. The RIC shall remain positioned outside the IDLH or Hazard area and shall remain in a constant state of readiness and available for rescue of fire personnel.

RIC personnel shall remain in a constant state of readiness in the event of RIC activation for rescue. Full personal protective equipment, inclusive of SCBA shall be donned or readied for immediate deployment.

RIC shall remain positioned at or as close to the point of entry of the crew entering the IDLH atmosphere as functionally possible.

A minimum of one RIC member shall be dedicated to remain in constant radio, visual, voice or signal line communication with the entry crew without performing any other duties that will disrupt this responsibility and/or positioning.

Members of the RIC shall be permitted to perform other duties outside of the hazardous area, provided that the abandoning of these other duties does not jeopardize the safety of personnel on the incident and constant communication is maintained between the RIC members and members of the crew in the IDLH. At no time shall a member of RIC participate in firefighting activities unless it is necessitated by a rescue.

Once established, RIC shall be maintained, staffed and functional until disbanded by the Incident Commander.

The composition and structure of RIC shall be permitted to be flexible based on the type of incident and size and complexity of operations.

IRIC/RIC Communications

Even though some of the 800 Mhz radio zones label specific talk groups as RIC channels, IRIC and RIC communications should be treated as any other tactical, division or group assignment. During IRIC assignments, the IRIC shall remain on the initial assigned operation channel(s) with very few exceptions. As the incident progresses or grows, the Incident Commander may assign one unit as RIC or multiple units to a RIC group as discussed elsewhere in this policy.

The Incident Commander may assign a separate tactical channel to the RIC or RIC group supervisor for coordination of their resources. If this tactical channel is assigned, it should be assigned exclusively to the RIC or RIC group supervisor. When this happens, RIC shall continue to monitor the assigned channels where crews are working in an IDLH to maintain situational awareness at all times.

Expansion of IRIC/RIC

In some instances, such as crews entering a structure via multiple and/or remote entrance points, the placement of multiple RIC elements should be considered. When this occurs, the expansion of supervision through the assigning of a RIC Group Supervisor may be appropriate to supervise positioning, deployment, communications with IC, and the accountability of these RIC's.

Upon the expansion of the RIC responsibilities and the implementation of a RIC Group Supervisor (RIC GRP SUP), the RIC GRP SUP shall obtain a briefing from the IC, Operations, and/or Resource Unit on the status, communications plan, and location of all assigned companies prior assuming the supervisor's role.

Naming of Multiple IRIC/RIC

If more than one RIC is required to safely support operations, they will be named based upon geographical positioning. For example, in a large single-level warehouse incident where multiple RIC's may be required to effectively meet the intent of this policy, RIC's are to be assigned as RIC Alpha, RIC Bravo, RIC Charlie, or RIC Delta. In a high rise incident with multiple levels of operations, the naming of the multiple RIC's would be assigned by a numeric identifier to identify the floor they are responsible for. For example, RIC 1, RIC 2, RIC 3 or Division 1 RIC, Division 2 RIC, Division 3 RIC. In a highrise structure with multiple stairwells

in use, it is conceivable to use both the numeric and alpha designators. With more than one RIC in place, the RIC on the third floor in the Bravo side stairwell would be known as RIC 3 Bravo or Division 3 RIC Bravo.

Staging of RIC

RIC(s) shall be located at a safe position, outside the IDLH/hazard area and still be able to monitor conditions by visual observation, communicate with assigned personnel and monitor radio traffic or assignment of assigned personnel.

Considerations of a staging location(s) for IRIC/RIC shall include:

- Initial entry point(s) of interior crew(s)
- Secondary egress points
- Hazards
- Building construction
- Size and Layout of the building or Hazard area
- Number of personnel working in the hazard area(s)

The RIC needs for an incident must be reassessed with the incident progression. The number of entry crew(s), geographical size of area(s) and number of entry points must constantly be monitored to ensure sufficient personnel are readily available to assist Fire personnel working in the IDLH or hazard area.

RIC shall be staged at a position as close to the point(s) of entry of the crew(s) entering the IDLH atmosphere as functionally possible to ensure rapid deployment when needed.

In high-rise fire incidents, the RIC should typically be located one floor below the fire-floor or point of entry for crews working in the IDLH or hazard areas. Another consideration for positioning RIC in a high-rise could be at Staging. Either of these locations would allow for RIC's to be deployed in a timely manner without staging the RIC in an IDLH environment.

Once a staging location for IRIC/RIC has been identified:

IC, Operations, and/or the RIC GRP SUP shall be notified of its location.

Staging location(s) of IRIC/RIC shall be transmitted on the incident's common operating channel.

Air monitoring in the RIC Staging area shall be accomplished if crews are staged inside a building or in an area that has the potential of having an IDLH atmosphere.

Staging of RIC shall be accomplished with consideration of suppression personnel traffic.

RIC equipment cache shall be placed with consideration of suppression personnel traffic.

Deployment of IRIC/RIC

In the event the IRIC/RIC is deployed for Firefighter rescue, they will continue to be called by their original incident assigned designator.

Upon receipt of a Firefighter in distress call or confirmed lack of accountability of personnel and once the IRIC/RIC is deployed, the IC will make a general announcement to incident personnel of an IRIC/RIC deployment. IC will announce "Emergency Traffic" and clear radio traffic on the channel designated for the rescue effort. In this announcement, the IC and the RIC GRP SUP (if established) will acknowledge the channel to communicate with the IRIC/RIC and where entry into the structure is made. IC/RIC GRP SUP will confirm communications with that RIC/IRIC and IC will notify Dispatch of the deployment.

Members working in the immediate area shall be notified by the Incident Commander or Operations to assist in the rescue effort if at all possible without jeopardizing incident stabilization efforts. Sufficient resources must remain focused on stabilization efforts of the incident and stay engaged in controlling or keeping at bay the spread of the fire and/or maintain hazard mitigation efforts.

In the event of a RIC activation or the assigning of multiple RIC's to an incident, it is highly recommended that if a RIC GRP SUP position is established, a Chief Officer be assigned to that position to directly oversee RIC operations. The RIC Group Supervisor will report directly to the IC or Operations Section Chief.

Upon deployment of an IRIC/RIC, an additional priority for the IC will be to re-staff the depleted or deployed IRIC/RIC position(s). This re-staffed RIC will be known as "Back-Up RIC" including any geographic identifier assigned to the deployed IRIC/RIC (i.e. Back-Up RIC or Back-Up RIC Bravo etc.) This Back-up team shall be equipped and positioned to assist with Firefighter rescue/retrieval efforts as determined necessary by the Supervising entity. This Back-up team can be positioned to potentially augment the current Firefighter rescue effort if needed or stage for an additional deployment if necessary.

Incident Commander Responsibilities

The IC shall continually reevaluate the incident situation and risks associated to the operating crews to determine the effectiveness of tactics and that the safety of personnel is maintained throughout the entire incident.

The IC will ensure that the number of RIC's is commensurate with the complexity of the incident.

The IC shall advise dispatch of a RIC deployment and ensure that Dispatch responds an additional alarm to the incident if warranted.

When multiple RIC's are assigned to an incident, or upon an IRIC/RIC activation, span of control may dictate that a RIC Group Supervisor be established.

Once RIC is deployed for a firefighter rescue, a new Back-up RIC will be established to replace the deployed RIC as soon as practical. This Back-up RIC Crew can be readied to utilize and assist/augment the Firefighter rescue effort or be maintained in the stand-by capacity.

Because of the 2-In/2-Out IRIC/RIC Exception, if the need for civilian rescue surfaces after a crew has been tasked with IRIC/RIC responsibilities, the IC may choose to utilize the IRIC/RIC to perform a Rescue Group function to aid in victim rescue. If this option is enacted, the IC shall designate a new IRIC/RIC as soon as possible. For the sake of Firefighter safety, the rescue of civilians will not eliminate the responsibility for the IC to maintain immediate Firefighter rescue capabilities in the event of Firefighter distress. The IC shall order additional resources as needed to maintain or establish IRIC/RIC functions.

Disbanding of IRIC/RIC

The disbanding of an IRIC/RIC component is critical information to disseminate to all personnel remaining at scene. When considering the disbanding of the IRIC/RIC, the IC shall ensure the following points are considered:

IRIC/RIC shall not be disbanded until all hazards have been mitigated or all crews are no longer working in a hazardous environment.

Communicate the disbanding of the RIC/IRIC to all incident personnel on the common operating channel.

Completing a final PAR to account for all incident personnel prior to disbanding the IRIC/RIC.

Continually monitor the scene for a change of events or conditions that may necessitate the reassigning of an IRIC/RIC.

Minimum RIC/IRIC Equipment Cache

Upon staffing of the RIC/IRIC position, an equipment cache must be positioned and accessible in the event of a RIC/IRIC deployment. Though a minimum equipment cache is identified, additional equipment may be added to the cache as necessary to augment rescue capabilities.

The minimum RIC/IRIC equipment cache is identified as follows:

Minimum Cache

Full PPE with SCBA
Portable radios
RIC bag with minimum 30 minute bottle
Pressure regulator
Universal Air Connection (UAC) hose
Consider adding a SCBA mask and Mask Mounted Regulator
Wire cutter
Small forcible entry tool
Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC)
Minimum 150' search/tag line
Portable lighting
Irons or forcible entry tools

Reference

The goal of IRIC is to comply with Cal OSHA Title 8, sec.5144, NFPA 1500 and FIREScope recommendations and guidelines. North, Central, East and Metro Zones Policies and Procedures were all referenced in the development of this document.