

TITLE O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT F I R E - R E S C U E
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 51	PAGE 1 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 28 November 2017

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 San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

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 response, deployment, storage, and care of the RAC. 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/or 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 extremely complex and require a level of expertise possessed solely by 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 would be made only when 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 scenarios is the potential for a falling body or other object to strike personnel deploying the RAC. To address this threat all personnel shall wear structural firefighting helmets and a wildland jacket or structure coat during deployment operations. Also a lookout shall be established to warn personnel of falling hazards.

TITLE O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT F I R E - R E S C U E
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 51	PAGE 2 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 28 November 2017

D. Operational Procedures

1. Dispatch

- a. For situations involving threatened jumpers, hostage situations or other law enforcement related incidents, the request shall originate from the law enforcement incident commander.
- b. For other, non-law enforcement scenarios, the RAC may be requested by the incident commander of the agency having jurisdiction.
- 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 can arrive.
- d. Fire Rescue Air Cushion Response
 - 1) On-duty deputy chief of operations notification at time request is received.
 - 2) One TRT member shall respond in an available utility vehicle to tow the RAC.
 - 3) One SDFD BC shall act as an agency representative (AREP) and will initially respond and make contact with the incident commander (IC). Contact info will be exchanged and the battalion chief should be released as soon as the RAC is on scene and ready.
 - 4) B32 shall be notified of the incident.

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 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.

4. Deployment

- a. Upon request for the RAC, Emergency Communications and Data Center (ECDC) will page the closest battalion chief who will facilitate the response of a utility vehicle and the RAC trailer with one on-duty RAC qualified TRT member to the incident.
- b. Once at scene, the RAC qualified TRT member will coordinate with the incident commander and provide direction to the on-scene resources for RAC deployment.

TITLE O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02		DEPARTMENT F I R E - R E S C U E
SUBJECT SPECIAL OPERATIONS: RESCUE AIR CUSHION	SECTION 51	PAGE 3 of 3	EFFECTIVE DATE 28 November 2017

- c. The RAC qualified TRT member will remain on-scene the duration of the incident.
- 5. 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