



HR/LF

FFCC—Policy/SOG Program

Operations

Safety—Initial Rapid Intervention Crew

Policy # 09-08

Issued: 08/31/09

Subject: Initial Rapid Intervention Crew

Purpose: This policy outlines the department procedure for the establishment of an Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC). This policy is written to comply with Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulation 29 CFR 1910.134. This regulation is commonly known as the Two In/Two Out rule.

Scope: This policy applies to all personnel of the Fire Department.

Definitions:

Interior Structural Fire Fighting

The physical activity of fire suppression, rescue or both, inside of buildings or enclosed structures where fire involvement is beyond the incipient stage.

Incipient Stage Fire

A fire which is in the initial or beginning stage and which can be controlled or extinguished by portable extinguishers.

Immediately Dangerous To Life Or Health (IDLH)

An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.

Initial Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC)

A temporary team of at least two firefighters, fully equipped and trained, on standby outside the structure to provide assistance or rapid rescue, if needed. **An IRIC is only intended as a temporary, stand-by crew and is not intended for long term assignment where a formal Rapid Intervention Crew should be assigned.**

The term IRIC can be used synonymously with "Two-Out".

Imminent Life-Threatening Situation

A situation in which immediate action is required to prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of five (5) firefighters is assembled and an IRIC has been established.

Level 1 PPE

Department issue fire fighting boots, bunker pants, coat, hood, helmet, gloves, and SCBA.

Level 2 PPE

Department issue fire fighting boots, bunker pants, coat, hood, helmet and gloves.

Policy

The first arriving fire department unit is required to determine if the incident involves an IDLH atmosphere. Prior to initiating interior structural fire fighting operations in an IDLH atmosphere, a minimum of five (5) firefighters shall be assembled on scene:

2 – interior team members

2 – IRIC members

1 – pump operator

Prior to the assembly of five firefighters, appropriate actions may include:

- Conduct a comprehensive size-up
- Protect exposures
- Establish water supply
- Prepare for interior operations prior to the second-due company's arrival
- Place ground ladders
- Control of outside utilities

To facilitate the prompt establishment of the IRIC, all companies, including ambulances, shall don **Level 2** PPE (exception – helmet and gloves) prior to response.

Exception to this is permissible in the following situations:

- Driver/Operators are allowed to respond without donning their **Level 2** PPE
- Situations where donning **Level 2** PPE prior to arrival at the scene would not be safe (i.e. company is out of quarters at time of alarm and stopping to exit vehicle to don PPE would pose a risk to safety)

Driver/Operators not involved with pumping or water supply operations are to don **Level 1** PPE upon arrival at scene.

When a minimum of five (5) firefighters are assembled on scene, a two firefighter team, equipped with portable radios, may begin an interior attack. The interior attack can only be initiated when the two outside firefighters have donned **Level 1** PPE.

The initial attack crew shall consist of at least two firefighters with a radio. While in the IDLH atmosphere the firefighters must remain in voice (not radio), visual or touch contact with each other.

1. Voice means that the firefighters must be close enough to speak to one another without requiring the use of a radio.
2. Visual means that the firefighters must be close enough to see each other.
3. Touch means close enough for physical contact.

The firefighters located outside the IDLH atmosphere shall be equipped with the appropriate tools and equipment that would contribute to firefighter rescue. The IRIC must actively monitor the status of the inside firefighters. The IRIC may be assigned an additional activity so long as they are able to immediately perform assistance or rescue activities. Examples of appropriate additional activities may include:

- Initial Incident Command
- Stretching of hoselines
- Ground level exterior ventilation
- Equipment retrieval
- Control of outside utilities
- Exposure protection and exterior fire attack (if appropriate)
- Placement of ground ladders

Additional duties assigned to an IRIC member shall not include pump operations. Additional activities will be restricted so as not to require the abandonment of the IRIC position directly outside the hazardous area.

In the event the IRIC must perform functions that would interfere with this assignment, they shall inform the Incident Commander who must either immediately assign another IRIC or advise interior personnel to exit the IDLH area until another IRIC can be assigned.

Exceptions

Incipient Stage Fire

Entry may be made while a fire is in the incipient stage. This is defined as a fire which can be controlled or extinguished by portable extinguishers.

Imminent Life-Threatening Situation

An imminent life-threatening situation exists when immediate action could prevent the loss of life or serious injury before the team of five firefighters is assembled. This determination must be based on reasonable, justifiable indicators that are present and not general assumptions.

Where initial arriving personnel find an imminent life-threatening situation, deviation from this procedure is permitted within the following parameters:

- Command shall notify Dispatch that a rescue is being attempted without an IRIC on scene. (Example – “Engine 4 is on the scene with a two-story house, fire showing, report of occupants on 2nd floor, Engine 4 is going interior without an IRIC”.)
- Dispatch shall notify all responding companies that entry is being made without an IRIC on scene and the location of the interior company. (Example – Dispatch to all responding companies, Engine 4 is on scene, going to the 2nd floor, attempting rescue without an IRIC.)
- After completing a search of the structure or rescue of the occupants, firefighters shall withdraw from the structure until Two-In/Two-Out procedures can be implemented with the arrival of additional personnel. Dispatch shall be notified when the firefighters have exited the building.

All exceptions to the Two-In/Two-Out policy shall be documented by the company officer through the chain of command, to the Fire Chief.

By the order of: _____

Fire Chief

Date:

References:

- NFPA 1500, *Fire Department Occupational Safety & Health Program*, 2007 edition
- NFPA 1561, *Emergency Services Incident Management System*, 2005 edition
- OSHA: 29 CFR 1910.134

Resources *(click title to access resource)*:

- USFA, *Special Report: Rapid Intervention Teams and How to Avoid Needing Them*
- NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Investigation Reports
 - Volunteer Fire Fighter Dies While Lost in Residential Structure Fire- Alabama
 - Two Career Fire Fighters Die and Captain is Burned When Trapped during Fire Suppression Operations at a Millwork Facility – North Carolina
 - A Career Captain and an Engineer Die While Conducting a Primary Search at a Residential Structure Fire - California
 - Nine Career Fire Fighters Die in Rapid Fire Progression at Commercial Furniture Showroom – South Carolina
 - Career Fire Fighter Dies and Captain is Injured During a Civilian Rescue Attempt at a Residential Structure Fire – Georgia
 - Career Fire Fighter Injured during Rapid Fire Progression in an Abandoned Structure Dies Six Days Later – Georgia
- Firefighter Close Calls.Com—Weekly Fire Drills *(available on website)*
 - RIT Volume 19-221: RIT Scenario #1 – No Exit
 - RIT Volume 19-220: Basic RIT Size-up
 - RIT Volume 19-225: RIT Scenario #5 – FF out of air
 - RIT Volume 19-218: Primary RIT duties
 - RIT Volume 19-217: RIT equipment
 - RIT Volume 19-222: RIT Scenario #2 – FF down at window
 - RIT Volume 19-223: RIT Scenario #3 – FF through the floor
 - RIT Volume 19-219: Secondary RIT duties
 - RIT Volume 19-228: RIT Scenario #8 – Disoriented FF
 - RIT Volume 19-227: RIT Scenario #7- FF trapped under collapse
 - RIT Volume 19-226: RIT Scenario #6 – FF through the roof
 - RIT Volume 19-224: RIT Scenario #4 – FF trapped by fire
 - 18-208: RIT vs. 2in/2out