
Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Procedures

Operations

Subject: Rapid Intervention Team
Revised: 7-1-09
Effective: 10-20-09
Approved: 9-24-09 (Fire Chief)
Section: 421.00

421.01 Purpose

To establish standard guidelines and procedures that will serve to provide a safe working environment and to reduce the risk of injury or death as a result of Department operations at emergency incidents. This policy will provide guidelines for affecting the rescue of personnel who become lost, trapped or disoriented during incident operations.

421.02 Policy

In order to ensure the safety of all members operating on emergency incidents, all personnel shall adhere to the following procedures.

421.03 Definitions

- A. Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) Atmospheres – An atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive or asphyxiate substance that poses an immediate threat to life, or would cause irreversible or delayed adverse health effects or would interfere with an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
- B. Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) – A specifically designated team assigned to provide personnel for the rescue of members operating at emergency incidents if the need arises.
- C. Qualified Firefighter – Any individual possessing Maryland State Firefighter One Certification or equivalent and has completed the annual training requirements as established by the Department.

421.04 Procedures

- A. A Rapid Intervention Team (a minimum of 2 qualified firefighters) will be established when operations are being performed in an IDLH atmosphere as soon as is practicable.

Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Procedures

- B. The establishment of a RIT is the responsibility of the Incident Commander and preferably will consist of more than the minimum of two members. The decision will be based on the following:
1. Incident type.
 2. Building construction.
 3. Size of building.
 4. Number of personnel operating within the IDLH atmosphere.
*Note: These are not meant to be limiting factors when establishing the RIT.
- C. If the incident is in a high or mid-rise structure, large area facility, or other areas with multiple IDLH atmospheres, the incident commander shall establish the necessary number of Rapid Intervention Teams so that the rescue can be accomplished without a deployment delay. A team should be considered for each remote access point on any large facility. The incident commander will be responsible for determining the number of teams needed based on the specifics of the incident.
- D. Due to the highly stressful and sometimes technical nature of incidents involving the rescue of emergency personnel, it is preferable that the RIT members be some of the more experienced and highly trained members.
- E. The incident commander will appoint a team leader after establishing the RIT. The Rapid Intervention Team leader reports directly to the incident commander throughout the incident, until deployed.
- F. Rapid Intervention Team Responsibilities
1. Immediately after being established the RIT leader will perform his own incident evaluation/size-up. The purpose of this is to assess the following:
 - a. Construction type of the building.
 - b. Building size (large structures may require more than one RIT).
 - c. Structural integrity.
 - d. Access/egress points.Upon completion of his evaluation, the RIT leader may make recommendations to the incident commander concerning deployment of the RIT (i.e. laddering the building, the need of more than one team...).
 2. Organize/procure the appropriate equipment necessary to affect a rescue of a lost, trapped, or disoriented member. The equipment chosen shall be influenced by the type of building construction, but a minimum should consist of the following:
 - b. A complete SCBA (regulator, face piece, air cylinder and frame).
 - c. Lifeline
 - d. Forcible entry, cutting and breaking tools.
 - e. Appropriate lighting.
 - f. Portable radio.
 - g. Small hand tools (pliers, wire cutters...).

Ocean City Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures

*Note: these are only suggestions for the minimum equipment that will be needed and should not be a limiting factor in selecting the equipment for use.

3. When deployed, the members of the RIT are to operate as a unit and report directly to the team leader. The assignment of the RIT is to locate, rescue and remove lost, trapped, or disoriented firefighters, using any means necessary.
 4. At no time during the incident should members of the RIT be assigned other fire ground tasks, unless the members can either be replaced or the alternate task does not interfere with deployment of the team. This is particularly important, as the task of the RIT is critical.
 5. Throughout the rescue effort the RIT will provide updates to the Incident Commander.
- G. As appropriate, the Incident Commander shall assign personnel to assist the RIT with the rescue effort. The Incident Commander shall also provide personnel to establish a second RIT when the original RIT has been deployed as, unfortunately, these members may also find themselves in need of being rescued.