

Travis County Emergency Services District No. 9
Westlake Fire Department
Standard Operating Guideline

Subject: Two-In-Two Out and Rapid Intervention Teams

Effective Date: January 15, 2004

Authorized By: Chief Paul Barker

I. Purpose

To establish a "2 IN – 2 OUT" Program in compliance with OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134 (g) (4), thus improving the safety of members operating at emergency scenes where IDLH atmospheres may exist and to establish standard guidelines for Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT).

This program applies to all work operations of the Department where personnel may be exposed to potentially hazardous environments.

II Policy

- A. In accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134 (g) (4) (1998), the Westlake Fire Department has adopted the following policy to be followed in all circumstances where there is an IDLH (immediately dangerous to life and health) atmosphere. According to OSHA Immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) means 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. Any interior structural fire beyond incipient stage is considered to be an IDLH atmosphere by OSHA. Also, OSHA defines an incipient stage fire in 29 CFR 1910.155(c)(26) as a "fire which is in the initial or beginning stage and which can be controlled or extinguished by portable fire extinguishers, Class II standpipe or small hose systems without the need for protective clothing or breathing apparatus."
- B. For those calls where it is reasonably expected that the atmosphere is IDLH as defined above, at least two SCBA-equipped interior firefighters / rescuers will be standing by (with) appropriate tools) prior to initiating operations in the IDLH atmosphere.
- C. Interior operations will be conducted by at least two properly trained SCBA-equipped individuals.

- D. **One exception to this policy is: if in the professional judgment of the firefighters present, immediate action must be taken to save life or prevent serious injury.** This exception is in place to allow firefighters that are present to affect a safe rescue if it can be accomplished prior to assembling at least four interior SCBA equipped firefighters. **This exception MAY NOT be used to conduct primary searches or for property protection activities.**
- E. Any exception taken to this policy must be preceded with a radio report of the situation, with a follow up written report detailing actions taken and why to the Chief.

III. Procedure – Initial RIT

- A. Interior crew members must be in visual or voice contact at all times and remains a team during interior operations. **Radio contact only between interior crew members is not acceptable.**
- B. One firefighter shall be assigned duties as the Primary RIT Member and one firefighter will assume the position as Secondary RIT Member.
- C. Only the individual assigned as the Secondary RIT Member would be permitted to perform additional tasks and only if those tasks could be immediately abandoned without jeopardizing the safety and health of others at the emergency scene.
- D. The RIT Bag, attack line, hand tools and hand light must be assembled before the RIT can be operational.
- E. At no time shall an interior attack be made with less than four qualified firefighters assembled and ready to perform their duties at the emergency scene. Additionally, an interior attack will not commence until the RIT is fully operational.
- F. If interior fire fighting operations are to commence prior to the arrival of the second due engine, the Engineer shall be permitted to assume the Secondary RIT position. Entry by the initial attack team must not occur until the Engineer has charged the attack lines, secured a continuous water supply, set the pump (including throttle, relief valves and discharge gates), donned protective clothing, SCBA and assembled other equipment needed to function in that role.
- G. The Engineer shall not assume the Secondary RIT position if the apparatus placement prevents communication by voice with the Primary RIT position.
- H. The RIT shall stage near the entry area of the first interior team. SCBA Masks shall not be donned, however, the RIT hose line **shall not** be charged.
- I. The IC and Staging Officers shall rotate the RIT into the next fire attack team when additional personnel arrive on scene and are ready to relieve the RIT. Consideration of the physical condition of the RIT by the IC, or his designee, will determine if the relieved RIT will rotate to interior operations.

- J. On mutual aid incidents, the highest ranking WFD officer or firefighter shall ensure that 2 In-2 Out proper procedures are in place during when WFD personnel are working in IDLH atmospheres.
- K. RIT Responsibilities
- Monitor tactical radio channel.
 - Initiate tactical worksheet (location/position of apparatus and interior crews) and pass the information to the next RIT.
 - Establish possible safety escape routes if a rescue is required.
 - Utilize standard staging procedures when swapping out teams.
 - Provide exterior support for initial entry team
- L. For high-rise fires, RIT's will be assigned to standby positions on the floor below the fire area, stairwell, or other appropriate location(s). A secondary standby location may be in the Lobby. RIT must take RIT bag to the Lobby or RIT Staging Area and standby.

IV. Procedures – Extended RIT

When it appears the offensive interior attack will last more than an hour, the IC, Safety and Staging Officers will review the following details for Extended RIT.

- A. Call for a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) after an hour, if it has not been done previously.
- B. Continue rotating crews from Rehab through the RIT. This gives firefighters an opportunity to be in the fireground and briefed on the action plan.
- C. Consider assigning incoming personnel or mutual aid personnel to the RIT.
- D. Keep the RIT in service until:
- Interior offensive attack is completed.
 - IDLH atmosphere conditions are no longer present.
 - As long as any danger of building collapse exists and teams continue working in the collapse area.
 - Unstable overhaul conditions are no longer a threat
 - Call for a PAR prior to demobilizing the RIT.

V. RIT Response

In the event the RIT must respond to rescue a downed firefighter, the following procedure shall be used:

- A. Sound the Mayday Alert and request a PAR from all team leaders.
- B. The deployment of the RIT will be by the IC and / or Safety Officer. **Under no circumstances will the RIT deploy without the knowledge of the IC and / or the Safety Officer.**
- C. Deploy the RIT and Safety Officer to locate injured or lost firefighters and render aid / assistance to the member.
- D. The RIC Company(s) will then report their position and conditions to the IC for deployment of appropriate rescue resources to extricate the member if necessary.
- E. The IC and Safety Officer will meet, review the conditions and decide if the fire / hazardous conditions will allow for continued rescue efforts.
- F. Replace the RIT with a fresh team until all members are safely outside of the danger area.