

# Rapid Intervention Team (R.I.T.)

## CHAPTER 15.1

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### Definition

NFPA 1500, Ch. 3.3.78: *“A minimum of two fully equipped members who are on-site and assigned specifically to initiate the immediate rescue of injured or trapped members.”*

### Purpose

Rapid Intervention is a progression from the *Two-in/Two-out* requirement of the Florida Administrative Code, Rule 69A-62.003, (which also references adoption of OSHA 29 C.F.R. 1910.134(g)(3) and 1910.134(g)(4)), that provides a dedicated crew of firefighters.

A Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) will provide immediate rescue or assistance to missing, lost, trapped, or injured firefighters.

### General Guidelines

- RIT shall be established on any incident where there is or may be an atmosphere that is Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) to fire personnel and the potential for being lost, missing, or trapped exists. Incident Commanders shall ensure that sufficient equipment/personnel are available to staff a RIT. Depending on incident size, more than one RIT may be assigned. This group may be assigned to peripheral duties and shall perform rescue operations for lost, missing, trapped or injured fire and rescue personnel when deployed.
- **If on arrival there are signs of a trapped person or reports of persons in the structure, with life threatening potential, every attempt shall be made to rescue these individuals without delay and without RIT being present.**
- The rapid rescue to save life shall be carefully considered by the first arriving officer on the incident or the IC using proper fire ground indicators (i.e.: time of day, accountability of persons present on the scene, type of structure involved, the amount of fire present, etc.).
- Caution should be taken in the event that a hazard may still be present in closed structures, as well as any collapse potential.

### Rapid Intervention Team Leader Responsibilities

The person designated as the RIT Leader shall

- Obtain a briefing from the IC and monitor radio traffic at all times.
- Perform Reconnaissance/Size up of the building:
  - Where is the fire? Where is it going? How is it going to get there?
  - Secondary means of ingress/egress?
  - Are there any types of security bars, gates, etc.?
  - Roof type?
  - Number of doors and windows? Locations?
  - Upon completion of Recon, the RIT Leader will relay to the IC any special equipment and/or resource needs, as well as any other pertinent information.
  - It may be beneficial to view interior through open windows or doors if smoke-obscured.
  - Develop a plan and ensure all members of the team understand it.
- Maintain control of the team. Do not allow freelancing.
- Monitor location and activities of personnel in structure.

### **Rapid Intervention Team Member's Responsibilities**

- Maintain contact with the RIT Leader. NO FREELANCING!
- Remain alert. Look, listen, and try to envision what is going to happen.
- Have assigned tools/equipment in a ready state. Be prepared to get involved. FF Rescue is the primary responsibility.
- Be mentally prepared. RIT is the firefighter's safety net. If assigned to a task that may interfere with the RIT, inform the person issuing the task that you are assigned to the RIT. Prior to commitment, inform the RIT Leader.
- Know the plan. Understand the plan explained by the RIT Leader. Know your part.

A RIT shall consist of a minimum of two firefighters, with minimum equipment to include:

- Full protective clothing/bunker gear
- SCBA
- Radios
- Department RIT bag or rope and a spare SCBA and mask
- Halligan or axe
- Thermal Imager
- Flashlight

### **Secondary Functions of the Rapid Intervention Team (Prior to deployment):**

The team's primary responsibility is RESCUE. You must maintain contact and readiness at all times.

Perform any function, with the approval of the IC, on the outside of the structure that may enhance rescue:

- Placement/positioning of a ventilation fan.
- Secondary egress ladder(s).
- Opening door(s), removing bars, etc.
- Secondary tasks will be performed without utilizing SCBA.

### **Assignment/Staging/Deployment:**

- A RIT Operation shall be established in a three-phase approach: Assignment, Staging, and Deployment.

### **Assignment**

- Assignment may be pre-arranged in CAD, at the discretion of a DC and their shift/crews at the start of a shift, while a unit is enroute, or when a unit arrives on scene. A RIT may be any Fire Apparatus, Squad, or Rescue Unit.
- Personnel Assigned shall establish individual responsibilities, such as:
- Determine Leader, determine tasks of rope bag, air, tools, TI, etc.
- Size up shall begin as soon as possible. (Size up factors covered
- above.)
- Due to the nature of the necessity of a RIT should one be needed, it should be made up of personnel with greater training and experience.

Therefore:

**Any Department member who does not feel comfortable with their own knowledge, training, or experience pertaining to a RIT Assignment shall notify Command as soon as possible so an alternate RIT may be assigned.**

### **Staging**

Staging shall be at the direction of Command. The RIT may be staged at the CP, near the common entry point, or a location determined to be most beneficial to Deployment by IC. Responsibilities at Staging include:

- Acquire the minimum equipment as noted above.
- Report to Staging area as directed by Command.
- Prepare and inspect RIT bag and equipment.
- Perform a size-up of conditions and lay-out of the structure. A walk-around should be performed by the Leader. Determine access and egress points. Consider ladder points at elevated areas. Determine any hindrances to rescue, i.e. fire, structure, doors, debris, etc.
- Monitor radio traffic and fire conditions. Maintain a constant state of

- readiness until Command declares the incident under control and no IDLH atmosphere exists.
- \* Consider a dedicated hose line, (with separate water supply if possible), for any RIT operation.

## **Deployment**

Deployment shall be initiated by Command after a Mayday or Personnel Accountability Report. A second RIT will be established by Command to back-up or assist the initial RIT after deployment.

- Anchor search rope at entry point.
- Upon entry, listen for PASS or sounds of distress.
- Utilize TI for quick search.
- Move rapidly and effectively. Keep rope straight and tangle-free.
- If a room search is necessary, one member to search, other members to remain at doorway. Change roles for successive rooms.
- Maintain voice or visual contact.

## **Located FF:**

When a downed FF is located Command must be notified and immediate removal may be initiated depending on location of exits. The initial RIT may have expended considerable air during the search or be a significant distance from an exit. This should preclude immediate removal and the RIT should begin an assessment of the victim and themselves. Training scenarios have resulted in rescuers becoming victims. Keep in mind that others are available and responding to assist.

If immediate removal is not an option, FF must be protected in place and assessed:

- Report situation to IC, who should immediately deploy the second RIT and assign a third crew.
- First turn off victim's PASS. Be prepared to reset as needed, including RIT PASS.
- Determine if FF is the one being searched for. Can they respond with name? Markings on helmet or gear? Radio ID? Advise IC of confirmation.
- Establish responsiveness. Able to speak? Light in face with eye response? Response to sternal rub?

Perform "modified" ABC's:

- Airway: Mask in place, intact? Replace if needed.

- Breathing: Listen at regulator. If none or inadequate, consider covering the regulator exhalation ports as much as possible with one hand while pushing the mask to the face, then open and close the bypass twice.
- Report findings to Command. Determine and request any resources needed.
- Circulation: Bottle pressure? Hoses intact? Transfill needed?
- Package for extraction.
- Convert SCBA harness into rescue harness.
- Place RIT SCBA on FF, if used.
- Consider Save-a-Jakes for easier moving.

RIT will exit when any successive RIT arrives.

Should one RIT member's low air alarm activate, that member will immediately exit with a second member. If a 3-member team, all will exit. The Buddy System will always be adhered to.

**Training:**

- RIT training shall be conducted on an annual basis at a minimum.
- Training evolutions shall include scenarios to train RIT to rescue lost, missing, trapped or injured fire and rescue personnel; MAYDAY, and RIT SOG's.
- All fire training that has a hazardous atmosphere will utilize a RIT.