

S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS #18

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

DIVISION: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

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Scope: The Baltimore County Fire Department puts the utmost priority on the safe and effective mitigation of all emergency incidents. This includes the safe return of all members following a response. This SOP will serve as a tool to provide for safe and effective operations during emergency incidents.

Section 1: Purpose

1. The purpose of this SOP is to establish command and operational procedures to provide a means to rapidly assist Fire Service Personnel who may become lost, trapped, or in need of immediate medical assistance while operating at emergency incidents.
2. This SOP will apply to all incidents that require Fire Service Personnel to enter and function in an environment that is Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH).

Section 2: Definition

1. MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY – will be the radio term used to notify the Incident Commander that Fire Service Personnel are lost, trapped, or in need of immediate assistance, where life threatening conditions may exist. Such a situation will be referred to in the text of this SOP simply as a “MAYDAY”.
2. LUNAR – (Location, Unit number, Name, Assignment, Resources needed for rescue) The acronym used to remember the necessary information to be relayed to the Incident Commander when reporting a MAYDAY.
3. Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) – “Any condition that poses an immediate or delayed threat to life or that would cause irreversible adverse health effects or that would interfere with an individual’s ability to escape unaided from a dangerous atmosphere.” (NIOSH/29 CFR\* 1910.120)
4. Rapid intervention Team (RIT) – Will be a company of at least 4 entry level (white tag) Fire Service Personnel established, equipped, identified, and solely committed to the locating of and rescuing of lost/trapped firefighter (s).
5. Rapid Intervention Task Force (RITF) – Will consist of the next due: Engine Company, Truck or Rescue Company, and an Advanced Life Support Medic Unit. In the event the Engine and/or Truck Company assigned to the RITF does not have a minimum of four (4) entry level personnel, the IC shall be notified as soon as practical to assist him/her with strategic planning.
6. Incident Commander (IC) – Is the individual responsible for overseeing and coordinating the incident operation.
7. Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) – A report given by a company officer or member indicating whether or not the officer or member has visual contact with the remaining members of their crew.
8. Personnel Alert Safety System (PASS) – The alerting system common to Self Contained Breathing Apparatus assemblies to indicate by audible tone a motionless or distressed Fire Service Personnel.
9. 2-In/2-Out – Simply stated this is the federally-mandated procedure by which initial crews operate in a buddy system where a minimum of two (2) entry personnel (white tag), equally trained and equipped, are dedicated as a standby team specifically for the rescue/assistance of the initial entry team (minimum of (2) white tag entry personnel). (See Tactical SOP #6)

Section 3: Command Procedures

1. The Incident Commander will ensure that a crew is assigned the sole responsibility of RIT. This crew must consist of a minimum of four (4) entry personnel (white tag).
  - a. The Fourth Engine to arrive on the scene will be assigned/designated the RIT; this does not prevent the Incident Commander from assigning earlier arriving companies or additional companies to the RIT based on the current conditions and/or staffing levels.

S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS #18

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

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- b. Rapid Intervention Team(s) will not be reassigned to any other non-critical function until relieved by adequate replacements. The IC will have a RIT team established within the first alarm, which will relieve the initial “2 out” requirements, of the “2in/2out” policy.
  2. The Incident Commander and/or the RIT Group Officer will develop a RIT Action Plan. The Incident Commander will redirect the incident to fulfill the priorities of the RIT Action Plan.
  3. The Incident Commander will ensure that all radio traffic is strictly monitored/controlled.
  4. The Incident Commander will deploy the RIT to the last/best known location of the lost/trapped firefighter(s).
  5. The Incident Commander will assign replacement RIT(s). (Ensure that a RIT Task Force is enroute)
  6. The Incident Commander/RIT Group Officer will ensure that a separate RIT apparatus staging area is established, and all companies assigned to RIT will report to this area. (RIT companies should not be sent to Level 2 Staging Areas)
  7. The Incident Commander will appropriately expand the IMS organization.

#### Section 4: Rapid Intervention Task Force

1. The Rapid Intervention Task Force (RITF) will consist of the next due: Engine Company, Truck or Rescue Company, and an Advanced Life Support Medic Unit. This assignment is in addition to the first or greater alarm assignment, and is an addition to the second alarm (if called prior to the “working fire” upgrade). In the event the Engine and/or Truck Company assigned to the RITF does not have a minimum of four (4) entry personnel, the IC shall be notified as soon as practical to assist him/her with strategic planning.
2. The Engine Company, Truck or Rescue Company, and Advanced Life Support Medic Unit from the Working Fire Dispatch will be considered the Initial RITF.
3. The need for a RITF response will be based on the Incident Commander’s judgment of the incident conditions. The Incident Commander should be proactive in assessing the potential for a MAYDAY situation to occur.
4. The RITF will automatically be dispatched in addition to the additional alarm for a Mayday declaration (if not already on the assignment). (see Mayday SOP)
5. The RITF will be automatically dispatched in addition to the Second Alarm assignment (if not already on the assignment i.e., “working fire”). The RITF will be identified and dispatched first, then the additional alarm will be identified and dispatched.
6. The Incident Commander may at any time request the dispatch of a RITF or multiple RITFs.
7. The RITF will be assigned as/to the RIT Group, and will be utilized to enhance the rescue capabilities of the initially assigned RIT.

#### Section 5: Rapid Intervention Group Officer Responsibilities

1. The RIT Group Officer will be identified as “RIT Group”.
  - a. Until a RIT Group Officer is designated by the Incident Commander the company officer of the initial RIT will assume the RIT Group Officer responsibilities.
2. The RIT Group Officer shall confer with the Incident Commander and Initial RIT to obtain the current situation status.
3. The RIT Group Officer will also work with the on-scene Safety Officer(s) to assess potential life-threats and scene hazards that need to be mitigated. Access and egress points will be a part of the dynamic process that the RIT team will continually evaluate.
  - a. The Safety Officer will also assess (and advise the IC) of RIT deployment to make sure adequate coverage of RIT teams if provided.
4. The RIT Group Officer will as soon as possible/practical establish RIT Entry Control.
5. A RIT Action Plan shall be developed by the RIT Group Officer to include the search parameters for lost/trapped firefighter(s). (See Appendix D)
  - a. LUNAR
  - b. Listen for potential radio communications from lost/trapped firefighter(s)
  - c. Listen for PASS unit activation
  - d. Information from other operating units
  - e. Use of Thermal Imaging equipment
  - f. Physical search

S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS #18

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

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- g. Utilization of the MSA A2 Accountability Information pertaining to crew and pack id
6. The RIT Group Officer will assign companies to Objective Based Deployment tasks.
  - a. Locate and maintain
  - b. Extrication
  - c. Resources
7. The RIT Group Officer will initiate actions to place, or have placed protective hoselines, and establish or have established ventilation in areas where Fire Service Personnel may become trapped.
8. The RIT Group Officer will identify support needs and request additional resources (i.e. Collapse Teams, ATR, Haz-Mat) from the Incident Commander.
9. The RIT Group Officer will review, further develop, and implement the RIT Action Plan.
10. The RIT Group Officer will assess the need for additional relief crews to be assigned to the RIT Group, and stage them outside the Tool Staging area.

#### Section 6: Rapid Intervention Team Operational Procedures

1. The establishment of a full (4 person) RIT will relieve the initial “2 out” requirements, of the “2 in/2 out” policy.
  2. The Fourth Engine to arrive on the scene will be assigned the RIT:
    - a. This does not prevent the Incident Commander from assigning earlier arriving companies or additional companies to the RIT as long as it is established as part of the first alarm, and based on the current conditions and/or staffing levels.
    - b. The establishment of the RIT shall be based on entry into an IDLH or potential IDLH atmosphere.
  3. Once established, the radio designation of the RIT will be “RIT Group”. Upon establishment of the RIT Group, companies assigned to the RIT group will maintain their usual identity. i.e. E-6 to RIT Group, S-303 to RIT Group, M-5 to RIT Group).
  4. Planning requirements of the RIT:
    - a. Conduct size-up of the structure or area, utilize pre-plan information when and if available, (See Appendix A)
    - b. Confirm location of all units working in the IDLH environment,
    - c. Determine all access points into the structure, and the most rapid access to the hazard area(s) including but not limited to:
      - Placement of ground ladders,
      - Exit Illumination (lighting of egress areas)
      - Forced entry points,
      - Plan where to acquire and deploy protective hose-line if needed for rescue,
      - above information.
    - d. Establish tool staging area for RIT tools, (See Appendix C)
    - e. Begin to develop the RIT Action Plan, (See Appendix D)
    - f. Monitor all radio traffic on the fire ground.
    - g. Assign crew deployment responsibilities.
  5. The focus of the initial RIT during Deployment is to:
    - a. Search, recon, and locate lost/trapped firefighter(s),
    - b. Evaluate and/or provide an air supply and emergency care to lost/trapped firefighter(s),
    - c. Remove the lost/trapped firefighter(s) if possible,
    - d. Communicate with the Incident Commander/RIT Group Officer on resources needed to protect and/or remove the lost /trapped Fire Service Personnel.
  6. Additional companies assigned to RIT will prepare for Objective Based Deployment tasks.
    - a. Locate and maintain
    - b. Extrication
    - c. Additional resources
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S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS #18

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

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#### Section 7: Downed Firefighter Location and Assessment Procedures

1. After locating lost/trapped firefighter(s), the deployed RIT will have to perform a quick assessment of the located firefighter(s) to determine if rescue is possible, or if they must protect in place. The Assessment procedure is as follows:
  - a) Upon locating the lost/trapped firefighter(s) deactivate the PASS device. Attach a lifeline to located firefighter(s);
  - b) Immediately notify the Incident Commander and/or RIT Group Officer that the lost/trapped firefighter(s) have been located. Provide the location and status of all Fire Service Personnel;
  - c) Air supply is the number one priority, therefore, determine how much air the located firefighter(s) have left, and review your options:
    - Guide located firefighter(s) out of building if possible,
    - Secure to spare SCBA and make your Exit,
    - Exit using the RIT BAG,
    - Exit while using the MSA ExtendAire II(buddy-breathe),
    - Use Confined Space Air Cart.
  - d) Sweep the perimeter of the bodies of all located firefighter(s) to determine if they are entangled or trapped, and review your options:
    - Disentangle the located firefighter(s), (be cautious of cutting electrical wires)
    - Remove the entrapment if possible,
    - Protect in place, and advise the Incident Commander and/or the RIT Group Officer of this decision, as well as what resources are needed to affect the rescue.
  - e) Exit with the located firefighter(s), or stay with them until replaced by, or assisted by another RIT.
    2. A search line should be deployed directly to the location of the located firefighter(s). This will allow for a rapid exchange of crews protecting the located firefighter(s). If this lifeline is attached to the lost/trapped firefighter(s) (as in Section 1a) you will have to manage/or remove this lifeline during the removal process.
    3. If a hoseline is needed to provide for protection during the rescue and removal use caution when flowing water. Consider the added weight, as well as runoff issues pertaining to the rescue. Sump pumps may be needed to assist in controlling flooding water.

#### Section 8: Tool Staging Area

1. A Tool Staging Area will be established for all RIT Operations by the initial RIT;
2. The Tool Staging Area should be positioned in an area that allows the quickest access to where potential problems have been forecast through the size-up;
3. The Tool Staging Area will be increased as the RIT Operation escalates;
4. If multiple RIT(s) are established because of geographical reasons, there should be a Tool Staging Area for each RIT;
5. The Tool Staging Area is designated by the orange RIT tarp. The RIT will gather the tools needed, based on the RIT size-up, and place them on the Tarp. Tools on the RIT Tarp will be for use by the RIT only. (See Appendix C)

**APPENDIX A**  
**RIT SIZE-UP CHECK LIST**

Gather the following information about the Incident:

Time of dispatch: \_\_\_\_\_  
Arrival time of 1<sup>st</sup> Crew/s on scene: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimated time of crew Entry: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Conditions Upon Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Gather the following information about the building:

Occupancy type: \_\_\_\_\_  
Building size: \_\_\_\_\_(L)x\_\_\_\_\_(W)x\_\_\_\_\_(H)  
Building Construction: \_\_\_\_\_  
Utilities Controlled ? YES / NO  
Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

Gather the following information about crews operating on the Incident:

1<sup>st</sup> Engine #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT  
2<sup>nd</sup> Engine #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT  
1<sup>st</sup> Truck #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT  
2<sup>nd</sup> Truck #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT  
3<sup>rd</sup> Engine #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT  
4<sup>th</sup> Engine #\_\_\_\_, Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_, Location: \_\_\_\_\_, INT/EXT

Check status of Means of Egress for ALL crews operating on the incident;  
 Confer with the Incident Commander on Incident Priorities, Strategies, and Tactics

Set-up Tool staging Area;

Monitor fireground talkgroups and track best known whereabouts for ALL crews;

Be prepared for deployment during ALL stages of the Incident:

Crew deployment responsibilities:

\_\_\_\_Tool FF; \_\_\_\_RIT Bag FF; \_\_\_\_Rope Bag FF; \_\_\_\_T.I.C. FF/Officer



## **APPENDIX B**

### **RIT BAG INVENTORY**

- 1-MSA RIT Bag;
- 1-MSA SCBA Frame;
- 1-MSA SCBA hose w/ multiple connectors;
- 1-Medium Facepiece;
- 1-MMR Pigtail;
- 2- Green Strobe lights;
- 1 Bright Orange RIT tarp
- 4-Carabiners;
- 4-Rescue Straps; (20' Tubular Webbing Sling)
- 1-Sling-Link (MAST) Rescue Strap;
- 2-Single Pulleys;
- 5- Lime Green Light sticks;
- 1pr- Linesman Pliers (Spring loaded);
- 1- Stopwatch;
- 1-Laminated RIT Size-up Check List;
- 1-Laminated Tool Staging Area Check List;
- 1-Laminated RIT Bag Inventory Check List;
- 1-Laminated RIT Action Plan Check List;
- 1-Laminated RIT Entry Control Worksheet.

S.O.P. #: TACTICAL OPERATIONS #18

SUBJECT: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM

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## APPENDIX C

### **TOOL STAGING AREA CHECK LIST**

#### **RECONNAISSANCE TOOLS: (NEEDED IMMEDIATELY)**

1-Bright Orange RIT tarp;  
1-RIT BAG;  
1-Thermal imaging camera;  
1-Master search rope  
4-Personal search ropes  
2-Axes;  
2-Halligan Tools;  
2-Handlights;  
Access to a hoseline if/when needed.

#### **RESCUE TOOLS: (NEEDED AS INCIDENT & RIT EFFORT ESCALATE)**

More hand-tools;  
Stokes Basket;  
Chainsaws  
Circular saws (gas/electric);  
Hydraulic/Pneumatic rescue tools;  
Port-o-powers;  
Confined space Air-Carts;  
Other ATR equipment.



**APPENDIX D**

**RIT ACTION PLAN**

Complete RIT Size-up Check-list:

**1) Update at each transfer of RIT Group Officer.**

Ensure Tool Staging Area is Progressing as needed;

Request resources to fulfill needs identified through the  
Size-up.

**1) Back-up Hoselines,**

**2) Ventilation.**

Monitor Fire-ground Radio Traffic to prepare for any Potential Deployment.

Monitor Egress points for:

**1) Forcible Entry Requirements,**

**2) Needed Ladders,**

**3) Exit Illumination,**

**4) Advise IC/RIT Group of actions and/or resources needed.**

As Soon as Possible Begin RIT Entry Control  
Worksheet;

Establish Primary and Secondary Plan of Attack

**1) Based on priorities forecast through the Size-up**

