



POLICY MANUAL

Emergency Operations Policy

Two In – Two Out

Revised: 02-20-08

Code: 1 – 2 – 8

Book Chapter Subject

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8.0 Purpose: Establish guidelines to comply with regulatory requirements for initiating interior fire attack on structure fires or other identified emergency incidents when personnel enter or could possibly enter an Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health atmosphere (IDLH).

8.01 Scope: All Emergency Response Personnel.

8.02 TWO IN – TWO OUT POLICY

Personnel shall not enter an environment that is immediately dangerous to life or health (at structure fires, where it is determined that interior fire conditions are beyond the incipient stage), until a minimum of five (5) firefighting personnel are on scene, using the guidelines listed below. This policy provides for exception in the case of possible rescue situations.

EXCEPTION: This policy is not meant to preclude firefighters from performing emergency rescue activities before the minimum number of personnel are assembled. (Ref. Title 8 CCR 5144(g))

8.03 DEFINITIONS

Appropriately Equipped:

In addition to required personal protective clothing, appropriately equipped includes positive pressure self-contained breathing apparatus and appropriate rescue equipment for removing the employee(s) who enter the hazardous atmospheres, or equivalent means of rescue where retrieval equipment is not required.

(* Examples of rescue equipment are identified in section 8.04.16)

IDLH: Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health.

IDLH Atmosphere:

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 structure fire beyond the incipient stage is considered to have an IDLH atmosphere.



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8.03 **DEFINITIONS** - (Cont.)

Incipient Stage Fire:

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 reel line, without the need for breathing apparatus.

Interior Structure Fire Fighting:

The physical activity of fire suppression, rescue, or both, inside of buildings or enclosed structures that are involved in a fire situation beyond the incipient stage.

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC):

RIC should be an engine or truck company led by an officer. Regulatory requirements is a minimum of two (2) properly trained and appropriately equipped personnel standing by to provide effective emergency rescue prior to any department personnel entering an IDLH atmosphere.

8.04 **GUIDELINES**

1. Initial arriving Company Officer shall determine what fire conditions exist and determine if the fire is beyond the incipient stage. (Nothing showing, working fire, visible flame and smoke, well involved, etc.) Size-up will indicate need for RIC, based on conditions.
2. The first arriving unit must exercise a high degree of self-discipline and control and not commit personnel into an IDLH atmosphere prior to a RIC being in place.

This guideline is not meant to preclude firefighters from performing emergency rescue activities before the minimum number of personnel are assembled. (Ref. Title 8 CCR 5144(g))



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8.04 **GUIDELINES** - (Cont.)

3. When size-up indicates an IDLH atmosphere, regulations require that at least two (2) firefighting personnel in addition to the initial attack crew are available on scene, appropriately equipped and prepared to perform accountability and rescue procedures before the initial fire attack personnel enter the IDLH atmosphere. For the purpose of this guideline, the assembly of outside personnel is referred to as the “RIC.” ([Reference: SOP 2-7-3 Firefighter Emergency Procedures](#))
4. All personnel entering an IDLH atmosphere shall operate utilizing a “Buddy System” (minimum of two members, “Two In”) and shall maintain voice or visual contact at all times. Radios or other electronic equipment shall not be used as a substitute for voice or visual contact.
5. The RIC shall be available outside of the IDLH atmosphere prior to any team of personnel entering the IDLH atmosphere. The RIC shall have the ability to contact the crews in the IDLH atmosphere by radio.
6. Once at least two (2) appropriately equipped firefighting personnel are available on-scene as the two-out crew, the initial fire attack personnel can enter the IDLH atmosphere.
7. RIC shall be deemed established by a company assigned by Command upon arrival of the assigned company to the incident scene. The assigned company should declare, “RIC established,” upon receiving the assignment and being available on-scene for the assignment.
8. The RIC shall at all times account for and be available to assist or rescue crew members operating in the IDLH atmosphere. RIC must conduct an exterior reconnoiter and plan potential rescue scenarios.

One member of the RIC shall be dedicated to the tracking of, accounting for personnel entering the IDLH atmosphere. The other RIC members are permitted to take on other roles: e.g., Safety Officer, Planning Officer, Utilities, etc. However, the other RIC members can not be assigned a task or duty that would place any employee at additional risk should that task need to be abandoned if rescue or other assistance is needed. RIC may soften the building to allow for firefighter rescue.



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8.04 **GUIDELINES** - (Cont.)

9. The responding Battalion Chief **will not normally be** considered an available standby person.

The Engineer/Apparatus Operator on a pumping engine **is not** considered an available standby person.

The initial arriving Captain, who may become the interim incident commander prior to the arrival of the responding Battalion Chief, **may be considered** an available standby person.

10. Should the RIC need to perform a rescue or provide other assistance, they shall also operate utilizing a “Buddy System.”
11. In the event of a need to assign the RIC to rescue firefighters, Command must restructure the plan to include a high priority rescue effort. A rapid, well thought out rescue plan must be developed and the command organization expanded.
- i. Consider appointing another officer (preferably a Chief Officer) to a Rescue Branch to oversee the rescue operation. Leave Rescue Branch on the initial fire ground frequency (or on whichever frequency the distressed personnel are reporting) and move all other activity to other frequencies.
 - ii. Assign resources to the Rescue Branch, including resources able to become additional RIC’s.
 - iii. Request additional resources from Communications, including EMS, and create a staging area with a manager.
 - iv. Insure the Rescue Branch deployed RIC, and developed an additional RIC.
 - v. Refer to Mayday Policy, 2-7-3
12. As stated (Ref. Title 8 CCR 5144(g)) deviation from this SOP guideline is only permissible when conducting emergency operations where immediate action is necessary to save lives. If initial attack personnel find a life hazard situation where immediate action could prevent the loss of life, deviation from this SOP guideline may be permitted as an exception to the Fire Department’s guidelines.

However, any deviation from the Department’s guidelines concerning entry into an IDLH atmosphere must later be substantiated in writing on the Department’s IDLH Report Form provided (attached). The Company



8.04 **GUIDELINES** - (Cont.)

Officer/Acting Company Officer deviating from this guideline must complete the form before the completion of his/her shift. The gold copy of the triplicate form will be kept by the officer filling out the form, green copy of the triplicate form will be forwarded to the on-duty shift Battalion Chief, and the white copy or original will be forwarded to the Fire Chief.

All completed IDLH forms received at Fire Headquarters (Fire Chief) will be stamped identifying date received and placed in an IDLH file maintained at Fire Headquarters.

13. **Examples of Other Identified Emergency Incidents**, that could require a RIC, but are not limited to, would include:
 - Hazardous Materials Incidents (IDLH, potential IDLH, or unknown atmosphere).
 - Trench Rescue.
 - Confined Space Rescue (IDLH, potential IDLH, or unknown atmosphere).
 - Any other incident having significant risk.

14. **High-Rise Fires**
For high-rise fires, RIC will be assigned to stand-by positions, such as the resource staging area, or other appropriate location(s). A secondary location could be the lobby staging area.

15. **RIC - Rescue Tools**
Once assigned as a RIC the assigned Company must obtain and ready at the scene the necessary rescue tools for that particular incident. Upon a report of a lost or trapped firefighter, the rescue tools must be taken to the rescue area.
Examples of rescue tools to be considered by the RIC could include:
 - RIC Pack
 - Flashlights
 - Power Saws
 - Thermal Imaging Camera
 - Forcible entry tools such as irons, bolt cutters
 - Hand Tools (channel locks, screw drivers, folding knives, wire cutters)
 - Search Ropes

16. A laminated, Rapid Intervention Team check list, (attached as Insert Sheet B to SOP 1-2-8), will be carried on each apparatus in the Pre-Plan Book for quick reference by crews assigned as RIC.



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8.05 IDLH REPORT FORM

See Insert Sheet A ([IDLH Report form](#))

8.06 RIC INTERVENTION TEAM CHECKLIST

See Insert Sheet B ([RIC Checklist](#))