

Falmouth Fire-EMS Operating Guideline

Rapid Intervention Team

Objective: The Falmouth Fire-EMS Department often responds to incidents that present a high risk to firefighter safety. This procedure identifies the requirements for and the operation of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). This guideline is intended to increase the overall level of safety for fire department employees operating at emergency incidents. It should integrate with procedures that are already in effect, such as the requirement for a back-up rescue team for hazardous materials entry.

General Information: The objective of a RIT company is to have a fully equipped rescue team on-site, in a ready state, to immediately react and respond to rescue injured or trapped firefighters or civilians.

Guidelines:

A. Use of RIT Companies

1. This procedure shall be implemented at all “working” structural fires (Working Fire) and other incidents where fire department employees are subject to hazards that would be immediately dangerous to life and/or health in the event of an equipment failure, sudden change of conditions, or mishap.
2. Examples of special hazards include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Structure Fires
 - b. Hazardous Materials Incidents
 - c. Any other incident having significant risk

B. Dispatch Implementation

1. Falmouth Incidents:
 - a. Falmouth Fire-EMS will provide an in-town RIT for Desk Box assignments within the town. The 3rd due Engine will be assigned as RIT. (Engine 1 will generally be the RIT for the West side and Engine 4 will be the RIT for the East side).
 - b. Upon the upgrade of an incident to a “Working Fire” or a multiple alarm incident, Cumberland Fire Department RIT will be requested to respond directly to the scene.
2. Mutual Aid to other Communities.
 - a. Falmouth Engine 2 will respond as RIT to mutual aid towns that request a RIT from Falmouth. Minimum crew size needed for RIT is 3 experienced interior firefighters. Preferred crew is 4 or 5 experienced firefighters plus a company officer.

- b. Falmouth Engine 4 will respond as RIT to the City of Westbrook. Minimum crew size needed for RIT is 3 experienced interior firefighters. Preferred crew is 4 or 5 experienced firefighters plus a company officer.

C. Response Procedures

1. The RIT Company should stage apparatus on scene in a location to maximize their options and await instruction from Command.
2. During major operations, RIT companies will normally be assigned a standby position near the Command Post.
3. Command may assign more than one company if necessary. Operations of a large or more complex nature may call for multiple RIT Companies to standby at different entry points.
4. After dispatch of a RIT company, Command has the following options for use:
 - a. Assign the company to RIT company duties and be designated RIT company
 - b. Cancel the company in route after the declaration of fire under control AND Personal Accountability Reports have been obtained from all companies operating at the scene.
 - c. Assigned to other duties, such as heat relief for working crews during overhaul operations, etc.
 - d. If assigned, anything other than RIT company duties Command should request an additional company as a RIT company to be available for emergencies affecting firefighters.
5. While in route, the RIT company officer should monitor the fire ground channel noting location of operating companies. Reporting on-scene, the RIT company officer should obtain a detailed briefing from Command on the status and location of all assigned companies. The RIT company officer will then brief their team.

D. Arrival and Setup

1. All RIT company employees will assume a ready state, including full protective clothing and SCBA. For other types of incidents the protective clothing equipment will be appropriate for the hazards. The RIT company officer will closely monitor the assigned fire ground channel at all times.
2. In some cases, the RIT Company may need to conduct recon to maintain awareness of working companies. The team must be able to react immediately to sudden emergency events at the incident site. In all cases, the RIT Company must have the ability to rapidly deploy. In some situations, protective hose lines may need to be pre-deployed.
3. If RIT company units are needed to respond to a sudden emergency, in which the Sector Officer is incapacitated (physically or emotionally), the RIT Company Officer will assume sector

responsibilities for the area in which the emergency exists. Additional resources, including additional alarms, will be requested through Command and the resources will be sent to the rescue area as the emergency dictates.

4. If not needed as a RIT company, Command may assign this company as a heat relief unit, but not until it is certain that all crews are out of danger and Personal Accountability Reports have been obtained.

E. Commitment to Rescue of a Lost or Trapped Firefighter

1. Upon a report of a lost or trapped firefighter, Command should deploy the RIT company to the last reported location of the lost/trapped firefighter(s). Appropriate rescue equipment and crews must be quickly assembled and organized.
2. Command should request an additional RIT company to respond to the scene.
3. Command should activate the MAYDAY procedures.

These guidelines may be changed or altered by the Fire Chief at any time.